This is an excellent and inspiring tale of the Huguenots, the French Calvinists. Calvin was a Frenchman and his reformation in the French speaking Swiss city of Geneva had a profound impact on his homeland. Until it was extirpated in blood in the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre and buried under the persecutions that overwhelmed the French Calvinists after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the reformation in France was of a power, purity, and popularity, that the whole nation would have become Reformed. The story of these heroic Christians and their struggles for the faith is an edifying exercise for those who desire to know more of their spiritual heritage.

The book starts with the history of pre-Reformation France covering the earlier reform movements of the Vaudois, and Cathars, etc. This less well known and fascinating part of history is a valuable addition to this work.

The book has thirty-six chapters. They are concise, relatively short, and very readable. To avoid having thirty-six web-pages, rather than as have been our practice of having a web-page for each chapter, the chapters have been grouped in sections by subject matter.

Table of Contents

Section ONE
Chapters 1-9
History of the Vaudois
Section Two
Chapters 10-14
The Reformation in France

Section Three
Chapters 15-23
The Battles for the Faith

Section Four
Chapters 24-36
Heroism and Tragedy

Section I
The History of the Vaudois

This section comprises the first nine chapters plus the Preface. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Preface
Chapter 1 The Vaudois
Chapter 2 The Provençals
Chapter 3 The Preaching of the Crusade
Chapter 4 Preparations for the Sacred War
Chapter 5 The Commencement of the Tragedy
Chapter 6  The Reign of Terror  
Chapter 7  The Revolt  
Chapter 8  The Final Massacre  
Chapter 9  The Interregnum

PREFACE

THERE is no page of history which is at once so fascinating in the dramatic interest of its scenes, and so momentous as that which records the story of the Huguenots—none more worthy of the careful study of thoughtful men. Whether judged by its motive, its influence, or its episodes, it is equally grand. Sublimer than any epic, it depicts a struggle to renovate the individual, the church, and society at large.

Isolated phases of the history of the Huguenots have been often and vividly portrayed in our English letters: poets have celebrated many thrilling episodes; romancists have given full play to the imagination; biographers have recited the lives of many illustrious men; historians have dwelt upon numerous stirring scenes: but these are the mosaics of history—broken voices, telling half the tale.

Nearly all of the English histories which bear upon this subject, deal with particular periods—with the epoch of the Vaudois, with the age of Calvin, with the era of Coligny, with the times of Henri Quatre, and with collateral reformatory movements. This volume covers five of the most eventful centuries since Christ: it traces the story up through the ages from the first murmur of dissent from Rome to the revocation of the edict of Nantes; and the sketch of the Vaudois, those early but much neglected teachers, is especially full. The story of the sixteenth century, distinctively the era of the Reformation, is not as minute in this volume as in some others, but an effort has been made to give an authoritative and succinct detail of all essential incidents.

The materials for the compilation of such a work are vast, but ill-digested; to collect and glean them has been no slight task. Most of the standard authorities have been consulted, and in addition to these, a thousand pages of subsidiary matter, personal narratives, diaries, memoirs, from the graphic pens of contemporaneous actors in the drama, have been liberally used. It is not necessary to recapitulate their titles, these will be found scattered through the body of the book; and numerous notes have been added, where they seemed likely to enhance the interest or to elucidate the text.

The series of which this volume is one has not been written for the instruction of mere scholars; no effort is made to pour light culled from pedantic lore upon mooted and nice points of history; they are plain tales of momentous eras.
They are sketched for the edification of the masses; written with attempted
care and accuracy, but compiled from every available and authoritative source,
and with no especial claim to originality. Whatever seemed vivid and important
and interesting, wherever it rested, has been seized and grouped into this
picture of "times that tried men's souls."

Of course a volume which covers so broad a field must be, in some sense, a
summary of events, and the problem which the historian has to solve is this:
How shall an epitome be made graphic, be vivified, be made to speak-to tell its
own story? How shall this summary be made to reflect an accurate likeness of
the past, and appear not to be a summary? "The reproduction of contemporary
documents," remarks a writer whose pages have become classic, "is not the
only business of the historian. He must do more than exhume from the
sepulchre in which they are sleeping, the relics of men and things of times
past, that he may exhibit them in the light of day. Men value highly such a
work, and those who perform it, for it is a necessary one; yet it is not
sufficient. Dry bones do not faithfully represent the men of other days. They
did not live as skeletons, but as beings full of life end activity. The historian is
not simply a resurrectionist; he needs-strange but necessary ambition—a
power that can restore the dead to life.

"When a historian comes across a speech of one of the actors in the great
drama of human affairs, he ought to lay hold of it as a pearl; he should weave
it into his tapestry in order to relieve the duller colors, and give more solidity
and brilliancy. Whether the speech be met with in the writings of the actor
himself, or in those of the chroniclers, is a matter of no importance; he should
take it wherever he finds it. The history which exhibits men thinking, feeling,
and acting as they did in their lifetime, is of far higher value than those purely
intellectual compositions in which the actors are deprived of speech and even
of life."

It is a favorite sophism of the Romanist philosophers, that Protestantism is a
mushroom growth, an upstart of yesterday, without antiquity or patristical
authority. But epigrammatic sneers do not overthrow plain historic facts. The
lineage of Christian dissent from the tenets of the papacy is as venerable and
as well ascertained as that of the Roman hierarchy. This antique dissent is
essentially that form of belief which is now denominated Protestantism.

"Nothing," says Brook," has so much obstructed the progress of Christianity in
the world as the absurd and selfish doctrines, the superstitious and slavish
practices, which have been blended with it by the wicked wit of man. As the
religion of Jesus Christ was for many centuries almost buried under so great a
mass of rubbish that it could scarcely be distinguished from the foulest
paganism; so to free Christianity from these heterogeneous mixtures, and to fix
it on its only foundation-faith in Christ—unclouded and unencumbered by
human appendages, is the noblest work of man, and the greatest benefit to society."

This was the effort of the Huguenots. They found the Bible silent, covered with the dust of ancient libraries, in some places secured by an iron chain—a sad image of the interdict under which it was placed in the Christian world. The Reformation was an enfranchisement; these words of Christ were its motto: "THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE." One of the chief lessons of the history of the Huguenots, is the sinfulness and the uselessness of persecution for religious opinion. It inculcates with persuasive eloquence the sacredness of conscience; it is at once an inspiration and an admonition; descanting upon the virtuous actions of the heroes of the past who fought the "good fight" for God and liberty, it repeats the scriptural command, "Go thou and do likewise;" depicting the vicious diplomacy of the Vatican, whose motto was then, as it is now, "The end justifies the means," and that other twin maxim, that "no faith is to be kept with heretics," it warns the present and the future to shun the vices of Babylonish Rome; as Seneca has hymned it:

"Consulere patria; parcer afflictis; fera
Caede abstinere; tempus atque irae dare;
Orbi quietem; saeculo pacem suo;
Haec summa virtus; petitur hac coelum via."

Liberty of thought, liberty of faith, liberty of worship—this was the aspiration of the Huguenots. It is singular what an inevitable tendency there was in the movement towards republicanism—as if the democracy of Christianity necessitated the democracy of politics. But the Christ they taught was not simply the apostle of political liberty. "The greatest and most dangerous of despotisms," says D'Aubigné, "is that beneath which the depraved inclination of human nature, the deadly influence of the world, sin, miserably subjects the human conscience. In order to become free outwardly, men must first succeed in being free inwardly. In the human heart there is a vast country to be delivered from slavery—abysses which man cannot cross alone, heights which he cannot climb unaided, fortresses lie cannot take, armies he cannot put to flight. In order to conquer in this moral battle, man must unite with One stronger than himself—the Son of God."

CHAPTER I

THE VAUDOIS.

THE venerable muse of history recites many lessons which are full of tears, but upon no occasion does her voice sink into deeper pathos than when she relates
the story of French Protestantism. From its inception in the gray dawn of the Christian era, down through the dismal centuries to the crowning disaster of the revocation of the edict of Nantes, it is one prolonged tragedy. The night of persecution is only illuminated by the marvelous constancy, the patient meekness, the Christian heroism, and the deep devotion of these earliest Protestants, who were called the VAUDOIS at the outset, and afterwards the HUGUENOTS.

God seems to have designed their moving story to be the convincing proof not only of the vitality of Christianity, but also of the woeful cost at which it has been planted and preserved. Such a consideration adds new grandeur to a chapter of history which is indeed intrinsically momentous, and makes it still more worthy of the attentive study of thoughtful minds.

History attests that the Sixteenth century was the epoch of the Reformation. But revolutions are not made—they grow. "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." The Reformation had its forerunner in the wilderness—its John the Baptist. It is not an isolated fact, a picture standing out upon the historic canvas without a background. There were preceding intellectual insurrections, which, however unhappy in their separate denouement, yet led inevitably to that triumphant movement which finally, by the aid of Faust’s type and Luther’s luminous eloquence, enfranchised Christendom.

Anterior to Luther, anterior to that Bradwardine who, in the cloister of the Oxford University, taught Wickliffe ethics, apostles were found who held tenaciously, and who zealously inculcated, both by their precepts and by their blameless lives, the essential tenets of the Reformation. And though the feudal system, which banished uniformity of laws and customs, and made each petty lord a despot in his own pocket-handkerchief territory, the obstacles to free intercourse between the nations, the prevailing ignorance, the absence of those mighty magicians, steam and the printing-press, which have conjured modern civilization into existence, and above all, the fanaticism of a priestly oligarchy, united their powerful hands to throttle the infant reform of these early teachers, we ought not for these reasons to withhold our grateful recognition of their faithful service and martyrdom; nor ought we to remain in ignorance of the momentous influence which these voices, raised in the dim twilight of Christianity, exerted upon medieval life and thought, long before Europe was animated by a murmur from the grave of Wickliffe, from the ashes of Huss, or from the vigils of Calvin.

In the fourth century, after enduring a persecution of remorseless severity with that patient, unfaltering heroism which is one of its most marked characteristics, Christianity, in the person of that Constantine who fought under the "flaming cross" which his heated imagination had descried in the heavens beneath the sun, with the inscription, "In hoc signo vinces"—By this sign thou shalt conquer—ascended the Roman throne, and thenceforward,
covered by the imperial purple, secured protection and controlled the
government; so that the successive bishops of that feeble church which St. Paul
had planted under the shadow of the throne of the Caesars, gradually
arrogated to themselves the supreme authority both in spiritual and in
temporal affairs. Under Constantine, and indeed so late as Charlemagne, these
bishops or popes were elected by the Priests, nobles, and people of Rome, and
this election could be voided by the veto of the emperor.—But the death of
Charlemagne was the signal for the most determined and unscrupulous effort
on the part of the Roman bishops, not only to free themselves from the
imperial trammels by securing the independence of papal election, but also to
usurp dominion over the western empire, and to subdue to unquestioning
vassalage the entire ecclesiastical and lay bodies. Unhappily this utter
departure from the primitive simplicity and humility was acquiesced in very
generally, until, under Hildebrand in the eleventh century, the stupendous
structure of the papal despotism gloomed upon the misty horizon, awful and
irresistible.

Then for five centuries the most atrocious vices, the most unchecked
wickedness, the most unbridled sacerdotal ambition, and the most meaningless
ceremonies corrupted and disgraced religion. It was the saturnalia of the
church. Nominal Christianity ruled Europe and some portions of the African
territory which fringed the Mediterranean sea, but vital piety lay torpid; *stat
nominis umbra*. A priest-caste anchored itself in the prejudices and
superstitions of the people; an oligarchy was built up, whose right hand was
usurped authority linked with spiritual pride, and whose left hand was
dogmatism and bigotry fiercer than the pagan.

Then a few true hearts revolted; they yearned to reinaugurate the primitive
practice of apostolic days, and this was the first dissent. But from the germ of
that feeble protest has grown the full flower modern civilization and
Christianity.

It was not until the eleventh century that Rome fully awoke to the danger
which menaced her unity from the new “heresy,” though from the fourth
century she had persecuted those isolated individuals who, through rashness or
regardless zeal, had overstepped that prudence which necessitated secrecy,
and ventured openly to proclaim the apostolic tenets. But now acting with her
accustomed energy and greatly startled by the spread of the dissent, and by
the increasing boldness of its advocates; she summoned those mailed crusaders
whom she had just hurled upon the Saracen, and bade them tread out the
reform under their iron heels.

The whole south of Europe was more or less infected with the dissenting
tenets, but their chief seat was in southern France, that beautiful country
which extends around the mouth of the Rhone, and sketches westward to the
city of Toulouse, and stretches westward to the Pyrenees—a territory which comprised the old governments of Avignon, Provence, and Languedoc.

Christian liberty is indebted to a sect of eastern faction, called, from their professed imitation of St. Paul, the Paulicians, for the impulse given in these early centuries to religious inquiry. By the various chances of war, of trade, of persecution, and of missionary enterprise—for they were indefatigable proselyters—the Paulicians spread from their Asiatic cradle throughout Southern Europe with singular rapidity; and the suddenness with which they sprang into existence, their simultaneous appearance in widely separated sections, and the secrecy with which they taught, gave them an imposing air of mystery, while it magnified their power and resources in the popular estimation.

Though the Paulicians were certainly, notwithstanding their vehement disclaimers, somewhat tainted with the Manichean errors, and with the principles of Gnosticism, and though they held some doctrines which could not but render them odious to the apostolic church: as that all matter was intrinsically depraved and the source of moral evil; that the universe was shaped from chaos by a secondary being, by whom the Mosaic dispensation was given, and by whom the old Testament was inspired; and that the body in which Christ appeared upon earth, and his crucifixion, were apparent, not real; yet they had not been debauched by the enormous corruptions of the Roman see, and they abhorred and incessantly inveighed against the worship of saints, the use of images, relics, pompous ceremonies, and ecclesiastical domination.

In different countries the Paulicians were known by different names. When they crossed the channel into England they were called *Publicans*, a probable corruption of the original designation. In Germany they were termed, from the blamelessness of their lives, *Cathari*, or the Pure. In France they were named *Bos Homos*, good men; while in Italy, and on the Alpine frontier, they were styled *Paterins.*

The mission of the Paulicians appears to have been to awaken a spirit of inquiry, to accustom men to hear the haughty and fraudulent pretensions of the Roman diocese denied, and thus to prepare the way for a higher and holier ecclesiastical development. Meantime upon these bold dissenters was launched the awful malediction of the church of Rome. Nor did that merciless hierarchy content itself with simply placing them under the ban; it used every weapon which wits could suggest or which a Satanic ingenuity could devise to exterminate the heresy.

While the din of this ecclesiastical strife still resounded throughout Europe, in the middle of the twelfth century a sect which wrapped itself in the apostolic mantle, which carried in its hand the primitive taper, and which is venerated
by the later Protestants, and respected even by the Romanists, reared its head and began to teach with authoritative mildness. The Vaudois commenced to propagate their tenets in the territories of the Aragonese in Southern France.

Standing midway between two mighty revolutions, the epoch of the Vaudois stretches forth a hand to both. It leans upon the period of the establishment of Christianity as its precursor, and brings forward the Reformation of the sixteenth century as its direct descendant. What then were its salient characteristics? Of what a warp and what a woof was the garment of its Christianity woven?

CHAPTER II

The PROVENCALS

FRANCE during the feudal period did not form a united monarchy. It was ruled by four independent kings; so that the north of France was Walloon, a name afterwards confined to the French Flemings, and which was then given to the language spoken by Philip Augustus; towards the west was an English France; to the east a German France; and in the south a Spanish or Aragonese France.

Spain also was somewhat similarly divided. The Moors, an exotic race, held most of the peninsula; Castile and Aragon were still separate and often inimical kingdoms. Although Catalonia, Provence, and Languedoc had originally formed portions of the swollen and clumsy empire of Charlemagne, yet when, no longer shaped by his plastic hand, the heterogeneous mass crumbled to pieces, these territories more or less completely allied themselves to the Aragonese throne; so that it was with difficulty that even the powerful Count of Toulouse, the hereditary lord of Provence and of Forcalquier, surrounded as he was by a brilliant retinue of vassals and loyal states, could maintain his independence of the Spanish king.

These territories were then the garden of the world, bright and sunny as that Goshen of old. They were the home of the exiled arts, of poetry, of painting, of music, of sculpture. The Provencal slopes bore up an industrious and intellectual race, who, more familiar with the Greek text than with the Greek phalanx, abjured war, garnered wealth in commerce, and found culture in study. The whole Pyrenean country offered the strongest contrast to the rest of Europe, which was wrapped in a darkness to be felt and seen, like that of Egypt.
During the feudal ages, the whole intellectual horizon of northern Europe was singularly clouded. Poetry was unknown. Philosophy was proscribed, as a rebellion against religion. A barbarous jargon of provincial dialects had supplanted that sounding Latin which had preserved so many trophies of thought and taste. Commerce was unknown. A library of a hundred manuscript volumes was esteemed a magnificent endowment for the wealthiest monastery. "Not a priest south of the Thames," in king Alfred's phrase, "could translate Latin or Greek into his mother-tongue." Not a philosopher could be met with in Italy, according to Tiriboschi. Europe was

"rent asunder—
The rich men despots, and the poor banditti;
Sloth in the mart, and schism within the temple;
Brawls festering to rebellion; and weak laws
Rotting away with rust in antique sheaths."

But these dismal shadows grow fainter and fainter as we advance towards the south, until, in Languedoc, in Provence, in Catalonia, the twilight reddened and broadened into day, "Knowledge," Said Lord Bacon, "is spread over the surface of a country in proportion to the facilities of education, to the free circulation of books, to the endowments and distinctions which literary attainments are found to produce, and above all, to the reward which they meet in the general respect and approbation of society." The Provencals understood this law which the great Englishman so finely states. The cornerstone of their prosperity was laid in fostered letters. "From Ganges to the Icebergs" there could be found no more civilized society.

"The arts Quit for their schools, the old Hesperides,
The golden Italy! while throughout the veins
Of their whole empire flowed in strengthening tides
Trade, the calm health of nations; and from the ashes
Of the old feudal and decrepit carcass,
Civilization, on her luminous wings, Soared, phoenix-like, to heaven."

This singular people had elaborated a language of remarkable beauty from the old French patois. It was distinguished from all the medieval dialects by its rich vocabulary, its picturesque phrases, and its flexibility.

The Provencal tongue, studied by all the genius of the age, consecrated to the innumerable songs of love and war, and to the stirring psalms of praise, appeared certain to become the most elegant of modern languages.

The various courts of the smaller princes among whom these Arcadian provinces were divided, aspired to be models of taste, politeness, and purity. Like all commercial communities, the Provencals were more addicted to the arts of peace than to the stern science of war. Their cities were numerous and
flourishing, their governments were framed on the ancient democratic models, and consuls, chosen by a popular vote, possessed the privilege of forming communes, as did those Italian republics, Venice, Genoa, Florence, with which they traded.

To the south of the Provencals lay the dominions of the Spanish Moors, a remarkably refined and civilized people. They were already masters of a great portion of the east, of the country of tire Magi and the Chaldeans, whence the first light of knowledge had shone upon the world; of that fertile Egypt, the storehouse of human science; of Asia Minor, the smiling land where poetry and the fine arts had their birth; and of burning Africa, the country of impetuous eloquence and subtle intellect. Yet, pushed by a territorial greed which knows no parallel, the Moriscoes had recently, by series of victories as brilliant as the Arabian conquests of Syria and Egypt added the Spanish peninsula to their enormous eastern domain. They had even attempted to, carry the fiery creed of their prophet from the Levant by way of the Danube to the Arctic ocean upon one side, and from the rock of Gibraltar to the English channel upon the other. Confined, however, within the limits of the Pyrenees by the prowess of Charles Martel at Tours, the Moors gave up the Mahommedan principle of conquest, and sought, by planting numerous schools and by patronizing learning, to conquer Europe by the Oriental philosophy, if they could not by Mahomet's sword; at the same time, by an admirable code of liberal laws, they strove to establish a peaceful and permanent dominion in the Spanish peninsula.

An active and profitable commercial intercourse with these polished infidels, and also with the Jews, had enlarged the capacity of the Provencals, and convinced them of the folly of the prevalent bigotry. Thus their land became the asylum of all dissenters from Rome. They respected the sacred rights of conscience at a time when the peoples to the north of the Loire not only rattled their secular chains, but when they lay lassoed at the feet of their priests, under the complete dominion of fanaticism.

At this period, the Spaniards also, afterwards the most bigoted of modern races, the unhesitating butchers of the Inquisition, the volunteer executers of the wildest caprices of the papacy, emulated the toleration of their Provencal cousins, for they still remembered the time when they had themselves been compelled to sue for religious freedom under the Moorish yoke. Indeed, a century before the Sicilian Vespers, the kings of Aragon were the declared protectors of all who were persecuted by the papal despotism. In imitation of the Castilian sovereigns, they were upon one occasion the mediators for the Vaudois at the court of Rome, and upon another, their mailed defenders in the field.

Even before the first mutter of the Vaudois dissent, the arrogant pretensions of the papal see had not imposed upon the enlightened Provencals, who despised
the licentiousness of the priesthood, the credulity of the Romish believers, and
the pompous ceremonies of the church.

The Troubadours, as those minstrel-poets were called who were formed in the
Moorish schools of Grenada, Cordova, and Seville, and who went from castle to
castle keeping aglow the embers of literature by reciting their tales and
chanting their madrigals, had very early launched their satirical verses at the
abuses of the papacy.

One of the most celebrated of the troubadours, Pierre Cardinal, who sang in
the twelfth century, leveled this *sirvente* at the Roman vices:

"Indulgences and pardons, God and the devil, the priests put them all in
requisition. Upon these they bestow paradise by their pardons; upon those,
perdition by their excommunications. They inflict blows which cannot be
parried. No one is so skilful in imposition, that they cannot impose upon him.
There are no crimes for which the monks cannot give absolution. To live at
ease, to buy the whitest bread, the best fish, the finest wine—this is their
object the whole year round. God willing, I too would be of this same order, if I
but thought that I could purchase my salvation at that price."

It will be seen from this recital how well the Catalonians and the Provencals
were prepared by their simplicity of manners, by their tolerant principles, by
their studious habits, by their active intelligence, by their commercial customs,
and by their preexisting prejudice against the Roman usurpations, for the
reception of that mild and primitive Christianity which was about to flood their
valleys with its light.

Towards the middle of the fourth century, while the newly converted emperor,
Constantine, was inscribing the bastard legends of a paganized Christianity
upon those banners which had before been surmounted by the hungry eagles of
the early empire, and cementing the foundations of the papacy, a few sincere
Italian ecclesiastics of Milan, dissatisfied with the increasing corruptions of the
grandly simple faith which they so dearly loved, withdrew from Italy, and
erected their Ebenezer in the beautiful, secluded, and labyrinthine valleys of
Piedmont.

Here, kneeling at their primitive altars, and shut out as well from the
temptations of the world as from its honors, the simple invocation, "Our
Father, who art in heaven," diffused light, liberty, and happiness around them,
as it did around those first Christians, who were ever found, in mountain desert
and in the open air, in dungeons and in fetters, yes, even in the awful Golgotha
of the catacombs, with the same sublime prayer upon their lips. Though these
inoffensive pilgrims were taunted by their enemies with the epithet,
Manicheans, yet it has been conclusively shown, by unimpeachable historians,
that their confession of faith, like that of their disciples, the Vaudois, was pure Protestantism, and would have obtained the approbation of Calvin or of Beza.

In 1124, three men, whose names ecclesiastical history loves to take upon its lips, Peter of Bruys, Henry, and Arnold of Brescia, and who are doubly dear on account of the martyrdom which they suffered for their sacred cause, lighted their torches at the pure altar of the Piedmontese, and carried the light of reformation from those obscure vales into the Provencal territories.

The first discovery of a congregation of this kind was at Orleans, in France, where several of the regular clergy, and numbers of the most respectable citizens were open adherents of the Piedmontese tenets. A council was immediately convened, which, after laboring in vain to reclaim the “Protestants,” had recourse to the final argument of the Roman church, and burned them all at the stake.

Some time after this event, the conversion of Peter Waldo, one of the finest names in history, and the chief promoter of the Vaudois, as the dissenters were now called, occurred.

This medieval teacher was, in 1150, a wealthy citizen-merchant of Lyons. Amid the toils and bustle of mercantile life, he had found leisure to study the belles-lettres of the epoch; he had also looked into the Scriptures.

While engaged in consultation with several other of the principal citizens, Waldo beheld one of the group stricken with sudden death. This occurrence is said to have so impressed him with a sense of human frailty and of the divine wrath, that he renounced all worldly pursuits, and ever after devoted his immense riches, as well as his rare eloquence, to the promulgation of the gospel.

He began with his own family; and then, as his fame spread, he admitted to his hearthstone and instruction a few others, until, by the year 1165, he had quitted his elegant home, and fully embarked upon an active apostolic career.

The Roman clergy, not only of Lyons, but of the whole neighborhood, set themselves to choke Waldo’s expositions of primitive Christianity, and they even opposed and prohibited his domestic instructions, but without avail; for the resolute reformer was led, by the obstacles which priestly malice threw in his path, to examine the more diligently into the opinions of the clergy, into the rites and customs of the papal régime; and then, since in his case as in that of the latter reformers examination meant emancipation from the thraldom of Rome, to oppose their antichristian usurpations the more decidedly.

That Peter Waldo was not destitute of erudition, Flacius Illyricus proves from evidence derived from the ancient writings; and perceiving, as Wickliffe did in
England not many years later, and as Luther did four centuries afterwards, that since the luminous tenets of his dissent from Rome were based upon the Scriptures, it was momentously important to unlock the treasure-house of biblical knowledge to the comprehension of the Provencal people, and to prove his doctrine from the inspired pages, he translated the Latin Bible into the vernacular language of Gaul.

The irreconcilable difference between primitive Christianity, with its later manifestations, called Protestantism, and the Roman heresy—for Rome is indeed the crowned and ermined heresiarch of the ages—is in no one instance more grandly shown than in the treatment of the Bible by the respective advocates of the two systems. The priests, like the juggling augurs of pagan Rome, and like their prototypes, the mutterers of the heathen legends of Egyptian Isis and Osiris, made a mystery of their religion, carefully concealed the sources of their divinity, padlocked that Bible which the apostle commanded mankind to search, and then, having hidden the evidences of their faith, preached a bastard Christianity of forms, of images, and of human merit and omnipotence.

Protestantism, on the contrary, has nothing to hide; believes in the popularization of knowledge; is democratic in its creed; knows no caste; asks nothing but, with the ancient cynic, that inimical systems "get out of its sunlight;" makes no secret of its tenets; proclaims the worthlessness of human merit; preaches the sole reliance of the human race, "By one man's disobedience lost," upon the gracious mercy of "Christ crucified" for a "recovered paradise;" and teaches justification by faith alone: and since it culls these precious truths from the sacred oracles, it marches down through the centuries with faith aglow in its heart, and an open Bible in its hands. This was why Luther in Germany, Wickliffe, in England, and, earliest of all, Waldo of Languedoc, translated the gospels into their respective mother-tongues.

It is interesting to notice how singularly this venerable Vaudois creed agrees with the essential articles of that Protestantism which we of to-day bury in our heart of hearts.

These were the chief articles of their faith, as recited by competent historians, both friendly and inimical:

I. The Vaudois held the holy Scriptures to be the source of faith and religion, without regard to the authority of the fathers or to tradition; and though they principally used the New Testament, yet, as Usher proves from Reinier and others, they regarded the Old also as canonical scripture. From their greater use of the New Testament, their adversaries charged them however with despising the Old Testament.

II. They held the entire faith according to all the articles of the apostles' creed.
III. They rejected all the eternal rites of the dominant church, excepting baptism and the sacrament of the Lord's supper, as, for instance, temples, ventures, images, crosses, pilgrimages, the religious worship of the holy relics, and the rest of the Roman sacraments; these they considered as inventions of Satan and of the flesh, full of superstition.

IV. They rejected the papal doctrine of purgatory, with, masses, or prayers for the dead, acknowledging only two terminations of the earthly state—heaven and hell.

V. They admitted no indulgences nor confessions of sin, with any of their consequences, excepting mutual confessions of the faithful for instruction and consolation.

VI. They held the sacraments of baptism and of the eucharist to be only symbols, denying the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine, as we find in the authoritative book of the sect concerning antichrist, and as Ebrard de Bethunia accuses them in his book Antihoeresios.

VII. They held only three ecclesiastical orders: bishops, priests, and deacons; other systems they esteemed mere human figments; that monasticism, then in great vogue, was a putrid carcass, and vows the invention of men; and that the marriage of the clergy was lawful and necessary.

VIII. Finally, they denounced Rome as the whore of Babylon, denied obedience to the papal domination, and vehemently repudiated the notions that the pope had any authority over other churches, and that he had the power either of the civil or the ecclesiastical sword.

Such was the remarkably enlightened and pure Protestantism of these early teachers; such were the tenets proclaimed by Waldo and the Vaudois, in the middle of the twelfth century, upon the rich Provencal plains, and upon the listening and willing slopes of the French and Spanish Pyrenees.

Is it strange that when an abused and neglected populace, disgusted by the palpable avarice, despotism, and mummery of the Roman see, beheld a brotherhood of Christians enthusiastic in their religion, blameless in their lives, humble in. their demeanor, honest in their dealings, and disclaiming all tyranny over the consciences of men, propagating their tenets by the eloquence of their actions, many were won to embrace the salvation so sweetly taught, and that all generous souls were stirred at least to admire, if not to sympathize with a religion dear to God, but which Rome's unhallowed bulls denominated "heresy?"
CHAPTER III

The PREACHING of the CRUSADE

At length Rome began to move. Innocent III, who in 1198 ascended the pontifical throne in the vigor of his life, was the first who appeared to be fully impressed with the importance of crushing remorselessly that independent and inquiring spirit which was rapidly assuming the character of a universal revolt from the Roman communion.

His predecessors, engaged in a tedious and perilous struggle with the secular power, with the two Henrys, and with Frederick Barbarossa, thought their entire force not too great to defend them against the emperors; and in those times they had themselves accepted the name of the paterins, or sufferers.

But Innocent III, one of the haughtiest and most flagitious of the pontiffs, whose genius aspired to govern the universe, was as incapable of temporizing as he was of feeling pity. At the same time that he destroyed the political balance of Italy and Germany; that he menaced by turns the kings of Spain, France, and England; that he affected the tone of a master to the sovereigns of Bohemia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Norway, and Armenia; in a word, that he directed or repressed at his will the crusaders who were occupied in overturning the Greek empire, and in establishing the Latin rule and the Roman theology at Constantinople—Innocent III, as if he had no other occupation, searched for, attacked, and punished all opinions different from his own, all independence of mind, every exercise of the faculty of thinking in the august domain of religion.

Though it was in the countries where the Provencal language was spoken, and especially in Languedoc, that the Vaudois reformation counted the majority of its disciples, yet it had also spread into other portions of Christendom, into Italy, into Flanders, into Germany, and into Spain.

Innocent III, both from character and policy, judged that the church ought to keep no faith with heretics. He thought that if it did not annihilate them, if it did not, in his phrase, "exterminate the whole pestilential race," and strike Christendom with horror, their example would be speedily followed, and that the fermentation of mind would be productive of a consuming conflagration throughout the Roman world.

Instead therefore of making converts, he charged his satellites to burn the chiefs of the Vaudois, to disperse their flocks, to confiscate their property, and to consign to perdition every soul who ventured to think otherwise than as he directed.
At first the wily priest required those provinces where the Reformation had made but small progress to set the example of persecution, thus feeling his way gradually towards a wider cruelty. In this way many leaders of the reformed church perished in the flames at Nevers, in 1198, and in the succeeding years.

Innocent next requested Otho IV, his imperial puppet, who danced as his master pulled the strings, to grant him an edict for the destruction of the Italian Vaudois, who were also called Gazari.

The Roman vulture then paused a moment and plumed his wings for a higher flight. Innocent determined that the lovely Provencal territory should be delivered over in the midst of its growing prosperity to the fury of countless hordes of armed fanatics, its cities razed, its population butchered, its commerce destroyed, its arts thrown back into barbarism, and its dialect degraded from the rank of a poetic language to the condition of a vulgar jargon.

There were a number of lords and high barons in Southern France who had themselves adopted the reformed opinions, and who, instead of persecuting, protected the Vaudois. Others saw in them only enlightened and industrious vassals, whom they could not destroy without affecting prejudicially their own revenues and military strength. But when did Rome permit her cherished plans to be baffled by the intervention of human rights or weighty obstacles? Innocent instantly armed a present interest and a brutal avarice against the calculating economy of the barons. He abandoned to them the confiscated property of all heretics, exhorting them to take possession of it, after banishing or murdering those whom they had plundered. At the same time this flagitious pontiff anathematized all who refused to seize upon the estates thus confiscated by his usurped power, and placed their dominions under an interdict.

In 1198, Innocent had dispatched two legates, monks of Citeaux, brother Guy and brother Regnier, into Languedoc, and the other heretical districts; but rather, as it should seem, for the purpose of exploring and menacing than actually to commence the contest. These legates were armed with full power, and it was enjoined upon the faithful to execute scrupulously their orders. Regnier having fallen sick, Innocent joined with him Pierre de Castelnovo, whose zeal, more furious than that of any of his predecessors, is worthy of those sentiments which the very name of the Inquisition inspires.

Presently afterwards a more numerous commission, the advance of the martial array, invaded the aunts of heresy, and brought the subtleties of the schools to the support of intimidation. This body received great additional efficiency from the accession of a young Spanish monk named Dominic, the founder of the most bigoted and servile of ecclesiastical orders, and who was afterwards canonized
as a reward for his diabolical cruelty in the ensuing Vaudois crusades. These itinerant spiritual missionaries were generally known by the title of Inquisitors, a name not indeed honorable or innocent even in its origin, but riot then associated with horror and infamy.

These inquisitors were at the outset empowered by the pope to discover, to convert, or to arraign before the ecclesiastical courts all guilty or suspected of heresy. But this was the limit of their mission. They did not at first constitute an independent, irresponsible tribunal, nor were they clothed with any judicial power. The process was still carried on according to the practice then prevailing, before the bishop of the diocese, and the secular arm was invited when necessary to enforce the sentence.

But this form of procedure was not found to be sufficiently rapid or arbitrary to satisfy the eagerness of the pope and his missionaries. The work of extirpation was sometimes retarded by the compunctions of a merciful prelate, sometimes by the reluctance of the barons or an unpopular sentence. In order to remove these impediments to the free course of destruction, there was no recourse but to institute in the infected provinces, with the direct cooperation of the ruling powers, a separate, independent tribunal for the trial of heresy. This was rendered more easy by the spread of the Franciscan and Dominican orders. As they were the faithful, unquestioning myrmidons of the Roman see, more devoted in their allegiance than either the secular or the regular clergy, they were invested with the separate jurisdiction. Such was the origin in the gloomy and heated brain of a fanatic pope of that ghastly court of inquisition, whose mere remembrance causes civilization to shudder.

Innocent's Languedocian inquisitors speedily offended all classes of society by their arrogance. Some bishops they accused of simony, others of negligence in the fulfillment of their duties. Under such pretences they deposed the archbishop of Narbonne, and the bishops of Toulouse and Viviers. Indeed they branded most of the regular clergy as heretics, and at the same time tormented the count of Toulouse and all the lords of the country by accusations continually renewed. Thus they deprived themselves of the means ofkindling so many fires as they could have desired. However, to gain a little popularity, they took the utmost pains to confound the heretics with the routiers, or hireling soldiers, afterwards so celebrated throughout Europe as the "Free Lances."

The companies of these, generally composed in great measure of strangers, were still known in the south by the name of Catalans, as they were in the north by that of Brabancons. The routiers were lawless banditti, who pillaged the churches and the priests for purposes of plunder, but having no connection with the Vaudois, nor indeed taking any interest in theological paradoxes and doctrinal disputation. This ruse of the legates did not meet with much success. The result was, that the Catalans also were offended at the
denunciations leveled at them, and in their turn they avenged themselves by plundering the ecclesiastics with heartier zest.

At the commencement of the thirteenth century, Raymond VI, count of Toulouse, was the sovereign of Languedoc and Provence, though his rule seems to have been shared to some degree by his nephew Raymond Roger, viscount of Alby, Beziers, Carcassonne, and Limoux, in Rasiz. Although Raymond of Toulouse, of whose history before the crusade little is known, had won some fame as a soldier, he was possessed of but little strength of intellect or vigor of purpose. He had succeeded to his father, Raymond V, in 1194, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, and had already, at the head of the routiers, of whom he had made himself captain, made war upon many of his neighbors.

He had disputed with some of the barons of Baux, and with the lords of Languedoc and Provence, his own vassals. This was apparently the reason why he had sought the alliance of Peter II of Aragon, while his ancestors had constantly endeavored to repress the encroaching ambition of that house. Raymond VI married his fourth wife, Eleanor, sister of the Aragonese king, in the year 1200; and five years later he promised his son, afterwards Raymond VII, to Sancha, the infant daughter of this same sovereign.

The Viscount of Alby, Count Raymond’s nephew, was made of sterner stuff. Now in his twenty-fifth year, generous, lofty, and enthusiastic, this prince was not of a temper to submit tamely to insult, nor would he stand quietly by and see his states mercilessly tarried. He had like his uncle succeeded to his father in 1194, and during his minority his dominions had been govern’d by guardians inclined to the Vaudois doctrines.

In the spring of 1207 these two princes were upon the borders of the Rhone, busied in quelling an insurrection of the barons of Baux, when the papal legate, Pierre de Castelnovo, ordered them to furl their banners and declare peace with the insurgents.

The legate had first visited the barons and obtained from them a promise that, if Count Raymond would acquiesce in their pretensions, they would employ their united forces in the extermination of heresy—in Castelnovo’s mind, “a consummation devoutly to be wished.” After agreeing with them upon the form of the treaty, the legate returned to the count of Toulouse, and required him to sign it.

But Raymond was nowise inclined to purchase, by the renunciation of his rights, the entrance into his states of a hostile army who were to pillage and kill those of his subjects whom the priests should indicate. He therefore refused his signature. Pierre de Castelnovo, in his wrath, excommunicated him, laid his country under an interdict, and wrote a hot letter to the pope, to obtain the pontifical confirmation of his sentence.
Audacious as was the conduct of his legate, Innocent III meant to uphold him. He sought for an opportunity to commence hostilities. He was desirous to adjourn the contest from the arena of argument, where his success was worse than dubious, to the arbitrament of arms. Tired of the subtleties of the schools, he invoked the subtleties of war. He was persuaded that, after the progress which it had made in public opinion, the heresy could only be destroyed by the swords of his crusaders. Accordingly he made no effort to medicine the wound, but, like a bungling surgeon, he applied an irritant.

On the 29th of May, 1207, he wrote personally to Count Raymond a letter confirming the interdiction, and beginning thus: "If we could open your heart, we should find, and would point out to you, the detestable abominations that you have committed; but as it is harder than the rock, it is in vain to strike it with the words of salvation; we cannot penetrate it. Pestilential man, what pride has seized your heart, and what is your folly, to refuse peace with your neighbors, and to brave the divine laws by protecting the enemies of the faith? If you do not fear eternal flames, ought you not to dread the temporal chastisements which you have merited by your so many crimes?"

So insulting a letter addressed to a sovereign prince must have been revolting to his pride. Nevertheless, the monk Pierre de Vaux Cernai informs us that "the wars which the barons of Baux, and others of the faithful, carried on against him through the industry of that man of God, Pierre de Castelnovo, together with the excommunication which he published in every place against the count, compelled him, at last, to accept the original terms of peace, and to engage himself by oath to their observance; but as often as he swore to observe them, so often he perjured himself."

The legate soon judged that the count did not proceed with adequate zeal. He sought Raymond, reproached him to his face with his tolerance, which he termed baseness, treated him as perjured, and again let fall upon him the bolt of excommunication. This violent scene occurred in January, 1208, at St. Gilles, where Count Raymond had granted De Castelnovo an interview.

The count of Toulouse was naturally very much provoked at the insolence of this upstart churchman, and he uttered some vague threats. The legate, disregarding his words, quitte the Provencal court without a reconciliation, and came to sleep, on the night of the 14th of January, 1208, in a little inn on the banks of the Rhone, which river he intended to cross on the morrow.

Meantime one of the count's gentlemen chanced to meet him there, or perhaps had followed him. In the morning this gentleman entered into a dispute with Castelnovo respecting heresy and its punishment. The legate had never spared the most insulting epithets to the advocates of toleration; and at length, the noble, already heated by the Roman's insolence to his sovereign, now feeling
himself personally insulted, drew his poignard, and striking Castelnovo in the side, killed him.

This unhappy event furnished innocent with the desired pretext for instant war. Although Raymond VI had by no means so direct a part in Castelnovo's death as Henry II of England had in Thomas à Becket's, his punishment was far more terrible; for innocent III. was more haughty and implacable than Alexander III.

Neither knowing nor desiring any better preachers of his creed than war, murder, fire, and incest, the excited pontiff began to preach a crusade against the Vaudois. In the commencement of 1208, Innocent addressed a bull to all the counts, barons, knights, and yeomen of southern Gaul, in which he affirmed that it was Satan who had instigated his prime minister, Raymond of Toulouse, against the sacred person of his legate. He laid under an interdict all places which should afford a refuge to the slayer of De Castelnovo; and demanded that the count of Toulouse should be publicly anathematized in all the churches. This furious bull closed with this remarkable declaration:

"As, following the canonical sanctions of the holy fathers, we must not observe faith towards those who do not keep faith towards God, or who are separated from the communion of the faithful, we discharge, by apostolic authority, all those who believe themselves bound towards this count by any oath either of alliance or of fidelity. We permit any man to pursue his person, to occupy and to retain his territories."

From this it should seem that the famous Jesuit phrase, "No faith is to be kept with heretics," though often attributed, with similar enormities, to Ignatius Loyola, is of far older origin. The fanatic Spaniard merely stole the atrocious sentiment from the decretes of Pope Innocent III, when he incorporated it in the constitution of his protean propaganda.

Having now reduced these dissenting Christians of Southern France to the same level, in a religious estimation with the Turk and the Saracen, Innocent next let loose an infuriated multitude of fanatics against them; and the word "crusade," which had hitherto signified only religious madness, was extended to the more deliberate atrocity of sectarian persecution.

Chapter IV

PREPARATIONS for the "SACRED WAR"
Innocent III had in November, 1207, exhorted Philip Augustus, the duke of Burgundy, the counts of Bar, of Nevers, of Drew, and others of the old crusaders who had fleshed their swords on the plains of Palestine, and gathered barren laurels on the Syrian shore, to marshal their hosts against the Vaudois.

But early in 1208 the flames of his hatred were fanned into increased fury by the bloody catastrophe of Castelnovo's death. The pontiff fulminated a series of epistles from the Vatican, which summoned all the faithful to the holocaust in Languedoc.

Galono, cardinal deacon of San Maria dello Portico, was dispatched into France by the crafty pontiff with these letters. He did not receive much consideration from Philip Augustus, who was now more occupied by his rivalry with the English king and with Otho of Germany than with obtaining the barren honor of heading another crusade in a sacred war. But notwithstanding the king's polite indifference, the monks of Citeaux, who had received full powers from Rome, began to preach the crusade among the nobility and the yeomen of France with a perseverance and enthusiasm which had not been surpassed by Fouldques de Neuilly, or by the fanatical eloquence of Peter the Hermit.

Innocent III offered to those who should take the cross against the Vaudois the utmost extent of indulgence which his predecessors had ever granted to those who fought for the deliverance of the Holy Land and the sepulchre of Christ. As soon as these new crusaders had assumed the sacred sign of the cross—which, to distinguish themselves from those of the East, they wore on the breast, instead of upon the shoulder—they were instantly placed under the protection of the holy see, freed from the payment of the interest of their debts, and exempted from the jurisdiction of all the tribunals; while the war which they were to wage at their doors, almost without danger or expense, was to expiate all the vices of a whole life—was warranted, by the impious usurper of the apostolic name at Rome, to efface the crimes of threescore years and ten from the heavenly records.

The belief in the efficacy of these indulgences, which in the sunlight of the nineteenth century we can scarcely comprehend, was then in its full flush. The barons of the feudal ages never doubted that, while fighting in the Holy Land, they had the full assurance of paradise.

But those distant expeditions had been attended with so many disasters; so many hundreds of thousands had perished on the scorching sands of Asia, succumbing either to the heat or to the Saracenic scimitars, or else had fallen by the way from hunger, misery, sickness, "and the thousand ills that flesh is heir to," that the boldest and most knightly hearts now wanted courage to essay the fight.
It was then with transports of joy that the faithful received these indulgences. War was their passion. The discipline of the holy wars was much less severe than that of the political, while the fruits of victory were much more alluring. In them they might without remorse, since *no faith was to be kept with heretics*, and without restraint from their officers, pillage and appropriate all the property, violate the women, and massacre the men of the interdicted territories.

The crusaders of the East well knew that the distance was so great as to afford them but small chance of bringing home the booty gained by their swords. But now, instead of riches which were to be sought at a distance amid great perils, and which must be torn from the resolute grasp of barbarians whose language they could not understand, the French knights were exhorted, nay, commanded, by an authoritative voice from the shekinah at Rome, to reap the bloody harvest of a neighboring field, to appropriate the spoils of a house which they might hope to carry to their own, while captives were abandoned to their desires who spoke the same language with themselves.

Never therefore had the cross been assumed amid greater enthusiasm or with a more unanimous consent. The first to engage in this atrocious harry, which was baptized with the name of a *sacred war*, were Eudes III, duke of Burgundy, Simon de Montfort, count of Leicester—a bloody monster who glooms yet upon the historic horizon, pilloried to the scornful horror of the ages—and the counts of Nevers, of St. Paul, of Auxerre, of Genéve, and of Foréz.

Meantime, though the crusaders were not ready to march in 1208, the din of their immense preparations resounded through Europe, and filled Languedoc with terror. Count Raymond, learning that Arnold, abbot of Citeaux, leader of the crusade, had, been appointed by the pope his legate in those provinces from which he designed to eradicate heresy, and that Arnold had convened a council of the chiefs of the sacred war at Aubenaz, in the Yivarais,

"To advise how war may best upheld
More by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage,"

repaired thither in company with his nephew, to see if haply the storm might be averted.

The legate received them with great haughtiness; and though they both protested that they were personally strangers to the heresy, that they were innocent of the death of Pierre de Castelnovo, and that they ought not to be judged and condemned unheard, yet the insolent prelate upbraided them with stinging emphasis, declared that he could do nothing for them, and informing them that if they wished to obtain any mitigation of the measures adopted
against them, they must apply to the pope, he motioned them from the council-chamber.

Then the differing characters of uncle and nephew were fully developed. Count Raymond, overwhelmed with terror, declared himself ready to submit to any terms, even to be himself the executer of the unhallowed violence of the ecclesiastics upon his best subjects, whose sole offence was their heroic devotion to primitive Christianity. The craven noble even stooped so low as to affirm his readiness to make war upon his own family, if thereby he might obtain the pontifical absolution.

Not so the heroic nephew, noblest of a noble band of martyrs. Perceiving from the legate’s language that nothing was to be expected from negotiation, and determined never peacefully to admit the crusaders into his states to ravage his clients, he boldly urged upon his uncle to place strong garrisons in the larger towns, to prepare valiantly for the defence of their country, and to take the initiative by at once commencing the campaign before the invading host could don its mail or draw its sword.

But the two relatives were unable to agree upon their policy, and they separated with reproaches and menaces.

Raymond VI, after assembling his most faithful servants at Arles, engaged the archbishop of Auch, the abbot of Condom, the prior of the Hospitallers of St. Gilles, and Bernard, lord of Rabasteens in Bigorre, to proceed to Rouen, in order to offer his complete submission to Innocent III, and to receive his indulgence.

The frightened count at the same time applied to his cousin, Philip Augustus king of France, and to Otho of Germany, for their protection. Philip at the outset received him with fair words, but afterwards refused him all assistance, on the pretext of his solicitations to his rival Otho. The German emperor did not deign even to notice his prayer.

The ambassadors of Raymond to the pontiff were, on the contrary, received with apparent cordiality. But it was required of them that their master should make common cause with the crusaders; that he should personally assist them in exterminating his subjects and in desolating his own territories; and that he should surrender seven of his best castles in the heart of his dominions, as a pledge of his fidelity. Upon these conditions, Innocent bade Raymond hope that he might eventually absolve him for the heinous crime of respecting the rights of conscience, and attempting to protect his subjects from slaughter.

But notwithstanding Raymond's servile submission and his own fair words, the implacable pontiff was far from having forgiven him in the bottom of his heart. His assurances of favor were, vox et preterea nihil—went no lower than his
throat. For while he was amusing the count's ambassadors with pacific declarations and paternal mandates, he wrote this real exposé of his sentiments to the bishops of Riez and Cansevans and to the abbot of Citeaux: "We counsel you, with the apostle Paul, to employ guile with regard to this same count; for in this case it ought to be called prudence. We attack separately those who are separated from our unity. Leave then the count of Toulouse for a time, employing towards him a wise dissimulation, that thus the other heretics may be more easily defeated, and that afterwards we may crush him when he shall be left alone."

Such was the equivocating morality, such the perfidious policy of a pontiff who claimed to sit as God, in the temple of God.

"We cannot but remark," says Sismondi, "that whenever ambitious and perfidious priests had any disgraceful orders to communicate, they never failed to pervert for this purpose some passage of the holy Scriptures. One would say that they had only studied the Bible to make sacrilegious applications of it."

Meantime the gallant young viscount of Alby, undeceived by the cunning politics of the Roman count, able

"To unfold
The drift of hollow states, hard to be spelled,"

preserving his honor and his governmental oath untarnished, retired to his states, labored like a Hercules to put them in a defensive condition, and at length, having done all that enthusiasm and devotion could do to protect his territories and to save the "lives, the fortunes, and the sacred honor" of a people in whose faith he did not share; the noble prince threw himself into the city of Beziers with a body of his armed retainers, and announced his purpose to hold it to the last for "Christ and liberty."

In the spring of 1209, the swarms of fanatics whom the harangues of the monks of Citeaux and the pope's indulgence letters had persuaded to devote themselves to the sacred war, began to move.

Different historians have variously estimated the numbers of these crusaders. They have been computed to have been three, and even five hundred thousand strong. But a very competent authority reckons but fifty thousand in this first campaign.

This calculation, however, did not include the ignorant and infuriated multitude which, following each preacher, armed with scythes and clubs, and sweeping through the country with a more desolating tread than the crusaders themselves, though in no condition to combat the chivalrous knights of
Languedoc, undertook at least to murder the women and children of the heretics.

Several places had been assigned for the rendezvous of these demoniac hosts. Arnold Amalric, abbot of Citeaux, legate of the pope, and chief director of the crusade, collected the greater number of combatants, principally those who had taken arms in the kingdom of Arles, and who were vassals of Otho IV, at Lyons: the archbishop of Bordeaux had assembled a second body in the Agenois; these were the subjects of the king of England: the bishop of Puy commanded a third body in the Valai, who were the subjects of Philip Augustus.

When Count Raymond learned that these terrible bands were about to be let loose, the naked sword in one hand and the blazing torch in the other, upon his beautiful states and those of his nephew, he represented to the pope that the legate Arnold, who conducted them, was his personal enemy. "It would be unjust," said he, "to profit by my submission, to deliver me up to the mercy of a man who would listen only to his resentment against me."

Then occurred another notable instance of the profound duplicity of the sovereign pontiff. In order, in appearance, to take from the count of Toulouse this motive for complaint, Innocent III named a new legate, his secretary Milon. But far from endeavoring to alleviate the woes of the Provencals by this means, or to restrain the hatred of the abbot of Citeaux, we are assured by the monkish historian Vaux Cernai, that the only aim was to deceive the Count. He adds exultingly, "For the lord pope expressly said to this new legate, 'Let the abbot of Citeaux do every thing, and be only his organ; for in fact, the count of Toulouse has suspicions concerning him, while he does not suspect thee.'"

The nearer the crusaders approached, the more the count of Toulouse gave himself up to terror. On the one hand, he endeavored to gain the affections of his subjects by granting new privileges to some, and pardoning the offences of others who had incurred his resentment; on the other hand, he consented to purchase his absolution by the most humiliating concessions. He consigned to the pontifical notary seven of his finest castles. He permitted the consuls of his best cities to engage themselves to abandon him if he should depart from the conditions imposed upon him. He submitted beforehand to any sentence which the legate should be pleased to pronounce upon fifteen unproved accusations laid against him by the inquisitors; and to crown all, he suffered himself, on the 18th of June, 1209, to be conducted into the church of St. Gilles with a cord about his neck; and there he received the discipline before the altar upon his naked shoulders. He was then, upon promising to become the guide of the invaders, allowed to take the cross against his own subjects, and against that gallant nephew who stood tranquilly awaiting the assault.
Chapter V

THE COMMENCEMENT of the TRAGEDY

The jubilant host of the crusaders, in the summer of 1209, wound slowly down into the smiling valley of the Rhone, through the friendly cities of Lyons, Valence, Montelimart, and Avignon, afterwards so celebrated as the seat of one of the two pontiffs between whom the immaculate and seamless robe of Roman unity was divided. The entrapped count of Toulouse repaired to Valence to meet these ferocious forces; from which city he conducted them to Montpellier, where they rested for several days.

The viscount of Alby, though hopeless of success, still determined to make one more effort to still the tempest conjured up against his innocent subjects by the cruel necromancy of the arch-juggler at Rome. To this end he went to Montpellier, and seeking the legate, told him, according to the ancient chronicle of Toulouse, that "he had done the church no wrong; that he but walked in the well-defined footsteps of his ancestors in granting toleration in his states; that as for himself lie was a servant of the church, wishing to live and die so."

But the legate was imperturbable. Taking his cue from the master-priest of the holy see, he told young Raymond Roger that what he had to do was to defend himself as best he might, for he should show him no mercy.

The viscount quitted the ancient walls of Montpellier sad but resolute. He had done his utmost—stepped to the verge of honor to avert the impending avalanche by diplomacy. Now nothing remained but to draw the sword and fling away the scabbard.

He immediately summoned to him all his vassals, friends, and allies; laid before them the representations which he had made to the legate; informed them of the manner in which he had been received; and upon calling on them for advice, found the whole body of his retainers as resolutely determined to defend their hearth-stones as he was himself.

Nor were all those who took arms with him heretics. Let it be written for the honor of human nature, that even in that sullen and ferocious age, there were not wanting gallant spirits ready and eager to die for the toleration of a creed in whose tenets they did not share.

The knightly gentlemen of those days resided in castles which were more or less strongly fortified, while their vassals lived in little cots scattered over the
estates at various distances from the fortilace. Languedoc was spotted with these chateaus; and now upon the approach of the crusaders, the yeomen rushed in vast numbers to the protection of these fortified walls; while the nobles, provisioning their larders for a siege, shut themselves up in their keeps with that nonchalance which is the offspring of long habit and danger often braved.

Some castles, as Servian and Puy-la-rouque, were abandoned ere the Roman banditti reached them. Others, among which the old historians mention Caussadi and St. Antonia, where it was not supposed that any heretics lurked, ransomed themselves by heavy contributions. Still others nobly met a sterner fate. Villeum was burned. Chasseneuil, after a vigorous defense, capitulated. The garrison, who were routiers, or “free lances,” obtained permission to retire with what they could carry; but the inhabitants, who were Vaudois, were abandoned to the mercy of the legate. The ghastly carnival now began. The town was fired; men, women, and children were precipitated into the hungry flames, amid the acclamations of their fiendish conquerors, and night only closed the frightful orgies.

From this sad opening scene even the pages of the monkish historians of the foray are blotted with pitying tears. The crusaders, rendered still more ferocious by this taste of blood, pressed fiercely on towards the viscount’s capital, Beziers, leaving, as was charged upon that Attila of old, no blade of grass nor any living thing behind them.”

In July, 1209, they arrived under the walls of Beziers, and formally summoned it to surrender. Raymond Roger had chiefly calculated upon the defence of his two great cities, Beziers and Carcassonne. He had divided between them his most valiant knights, and the routiers who were attached to his fortune. He had at first thrown himself into Beziers; but after assuring himself that the city was provided with every thing in his power to bestow, he quitted its walls for those of Carcassonne, a town built upon a rock, partly surrounded by a river, the Aude, and whose suburbs were environed by walls and ditches.

The citizens of Beziers felt themselves intimidated, when they knew that their young lord had left them for the stronger protection of Carcassonne, and their inquietude was redoubled when they beheld the three grand divisions of the Roman army, under the legate, the archbishop of Bourdeaux, and the bishop of Puy, arrive and unite before their city.

Just before the crusaders reached Beziers, they had been visited by the bishop of that city, Reginald de Montpeyroux, who delivered to the legate a list of those in the city who were accounted Vaudois, and whom he desired to see thrown into the flames. He then returned to Beziers, assembled the inhabitants in the cathedral of St. Nicaise, and after representing to them with vivid eloquence the vast numbers of the crusaders, and the impossibility of resisting
their onset, exhorted them not to draw down upon themselves, their wives, and their children the wrath of heaven and of the church by protecting their Vaudois fellow-townsmen, but to yield them up to the avengers of the faith.

"Tell the legate," replied the citizens, "that our city is good and strong, that our dear Lord God will not fail to succor us in great necessities, and that rather than commit the baseness demanded of us, we will eat our own children."

But though equal in courage and infinitely superior in generosity and Christian purpose to their savage foes, the unhappy citizens of Beziers were not equal to them in military skill or in the discipline of trained arms.

While the crusaders were occupied in tracing their camp, the citizens made a sortie, hoping thus to take their enemies by surprise. But instantly the united battalions of the besiegers precipitated themselves upon the disconcerted trainbands of the city, and forcing them to retire, pursued them so hotly that both parties entered the open gates together, and Beziers was captured before the crusaders had even formed their plan of attack.

Then the bloody orgies of Chasseneuil were reenacted on a broader theatre. Arnold Amalric, abbot of Citeaux, upon learning that he had triumphed almost without a struggle, and determined not to be baulked of the expected feast of blood, upon being asked by some of his companions in arms how the Romanist citizens were to be distinguished from the Vaudois, made that famous reply, worthy of Nero or Caligula: "KILL THEM ALL; GOD WILL WELL SHOW HIS OWN!"

The fixed population of Beziers did not perhaps exceed fifteen thousand persons; but all the inhabitants of the country, of the open villages, of the plains, and of the castles which had not been judged capable of safe defense, had taken refuge in Beziers, which was regarded as exceedingly strong. Even those who had remained to guard the strong chateaus had, for the most part, sent their wives, their children, and their helpless ones to the city.

At the moment when the crusaders became masters of the gates, the whole multitude thronged to the churches. The great cathedral of Nicaise contained the larger number. The canons, clothed in their choral habits, surrounded the altar and sounded the bells, as if to express their prayers to their furious assailants. But these supplications of brass were as little heeded as were those of the human voice. Still the bells ceased not to sound until, of that immense multitude, not one remained alive. The massacre spread equally to the other churches; seven thousand dead bodies were counted in that of Magdalene alone. Thus even the benefit of sanctuary, respected at that period for the vilest malefactors, was not awarded to the Vaudois.

An old Provencal historian has, by the simplicity of his language, augmented the terrors of this scene: "They entered the city of Beziers, where they
murdered more people than was ever before known in the world; for they spared neither young nor old, nor infants at the breast. They killed and murdered them all, which being seen by the said people of the city, they that were able did retreat into the great church of St. Nazarius, both men and women. The chaplains thereof, when they had so retreated, caused the bells to be rung until everybody was dead. But neither the sound of the bells, nor the chaplains in their priestly habits, nor the clerks, could hinder them from being put to the sword. One only escaped, for all the rest were slain and died. Nothing so pitiable was ever heard of or done before."

When the crusaders had completely pillaged it, and massacred every living creature, the city was fired in every part at once, and reduced to a vast funeral pile.

Historians differ as to the number of victims sacrificed on this awful occasion to the greed of the insatiable demon of persecution. The abbot of Citeaux, feeling some shame for the butchery which he had ordered, in the account which he transmitted to Innocent III, reduces the number to fifteen thousand. Other and more reliable contemporary chroniclers reckon it at from forty to sixty thousand.

Having "supped full of horrors" at Beziers, yet without being satiated, the crusaders pressed on through a deserted country—for the inhabitants preferred taking refuge in caves, woods, mountains, to waiting for such enemies within the enclosure of walls which might serve as a prison—towards Carcassonne. They reached this Vaudois citadel on the 1st of August, 1209, and pitching their tents, invested it in due form.

Although the generous heart of Raymond Roger had been terribly wrung by the massacre of his loyal subjects of Beziers, and by the destruction of his capital, he "bated no jot of heart or hope;" while the brave inhabitants of Carcassonne renewed their oath of allegiance to him, and of fidelity to each other.

Carcassonne was accounted almost impregnable. Built upon one side of the river Aude, in whose waters it bathed upon the right, it had been strongly fortified by the skill of the young viscount upon the more exposed angles. It was besides defended by a numerous and devoted garrison.

The attack commenced upon one of the suburbs without the city walls. Here the combat raged fiercely for two hours, during which time Raymond Roger on one side, and Simon de Montfort upon the other, gave evidence of extraordinary personal prowess. Eventually the suburb was taken by mere stress of numbers. The besieged retreated into the second suburb, which the assailants pressed on to attack. For eight days the viscount defended this redoubt with success, but on the ninth day he evacuated it, and, having fired
Meantime Raymond Roger had found means to communicate with his uncle, Don Pedro II, king of Aragon. The Aragonese sovereign had witnessed the oppression and outrage inflicted upon his relative with chagrin. He therefore quitted his kingdom, and hastening to the camp of the crusaders endeavored to negotiate a peace.

Having obtained permission of the legate to visit his nephew, the king entered Carcassonne to confer with the viscount. "My dear uncle," said the frank young soldier, "if you wish to arrange for me any honorable adjustment, I freely leave with you its form and manner, and I will ratify it without hesitation; for I see clearly that we cannot long maintain ourselves here, owing to the multitude of countrymen, women, and children who have taken refuge with us. We cannot reckon them, but they die alas, in great numbers every day. But were there only myself and my soldiers here, I swear to you that I would rather die of that ghastly famine which now stares us in the face than surrender to this same cruel legate."

The king of Aragon very injudiciously related this discourse to the wily legate, who, thus familiar with the precise condition of the viscount, was thereby enabled to offer, with some assurance of success, propositions much less generous than he would otherwise have ventured to make; for be it remembered, it was no part of this atrocious monk's purpose to accommodate affairs. He wished to glut the vengeance of a cruel faith. Still he did not dare absolutely to repel such a mediator as the king of Aragon. But knowing well the high and chivalric character of the viscount, he achieved his object by proposing terms which it wood be impossible for a gallant and knightly spirit to accept.

"Tell your nephew, sire," said the abbot of Citeaux, "that he himself, with any twelve others whom he may choose, may freely quit the city. But the remainder of the citizens and soldiers must be abandoned to our good pleasure." The king carried the message. "Now, out upon the priestly catiff," was the noble reply, "rather than submit to these disgraceful terms, I would suffer myself to be flayed alive. No, he shall not have the meanest of my people at his mercy; for it is on my account that they are now in danger."

The chivalric king approved the generous purpose of his nephew, and turning towards the assembled citizens and knights of Carcassonne, he informed them of the legate's conditions, and added, "You now know what you have to expect; mind and defend yourselves well, for he who acts the part of a brave man always finds good mercy at last."
Don Pedro of Aragon with his retinue had scarcely quitted the city ere the impatient crusaders hurled themselves upon its walls, but in vain; the gallant viscount fought as nobly as he talked. Streams of boiling water, blazing oil, immense stones, projectiles of every kind then known to the cruel skill of war—all were put in requisition; and at length, maimed, bleeding, and balked, the crusaders fell back within the entrenchments of their camp.

The greater part of the crusaders had taken the cross but for forty days. The time now approached for their service to end. General and sullen discontent reigned in the pontifical camp. The soldiers had been promised the intervention of a miracle in their favor. Yet after two prolonged and bloody assaults, they still stood without the walls of Carcassonne, while...

"Many a corpse lay ghastly pale beneath the setting sun."

The legate remarking these symptoms of demoralization, and true to the perfidious maxims of the church whose livery he wore, now determined to have recourse to stratagem, if haply he might accomplish by his arts what had been denied his sword.

Accordingly he renewed the negotiations. The viscount, ignorant of what was passing in the camp of the crusaders, and profoundly anxious for an honorable accommodation, received the legate's messenger with the utmost cordiality. Fully conscious of the rectitude of his own intentions and proceedings, he could not but believe that, when the injustice of which his country had been the victim should be known, it would excite the commiseration of the great barons and ecclesiastics arrayed against him, and stay the devastation. Filled with this Quixotic idea, and as incapable of suspecting deliberate treachery in others as he was of himself performing a perfidious deed, young Raymond offered to accompany the envoy to the camp of the crusaders, for the purpose of having a personal interview with the chiefs of the sacred war, provided his personal safety and return should be solemnly guaranteed.

The envoy flew to acquaint the legate with this offer. Arnold Amalric rubbed his hands gleefully when he heard this recital, and though he deliberately perjured himself by doing so, for he had instantly decided upon the confiding viscount's arrest, he yet sent the desired safe-conduct, to which he attached the seal of Rome.

The viscount soon made his appearance, accompanied by three hundred of his choicest chivalry. Repairing to the legate's tent, where the chiefs of the crusade were assembled, he nobly and powerfully vindicated his conduct and the policy of his ancestors, and again affirmed, that though the fast friend of religious toleration, he was still a true servant of the Roman church.
Then Rome gave another proof of the pitiless, unhallowed, and abandoned wickedness of her politics. Not only the legate, but the great lords who accompanied him, were penetrated with the diabolical maxim of Innocent III: "To keep faith with heretics is an offence against the faith." Accordingly watching for a propitious moment, the crusaders threw themselves upon the surprised and insignificant retinue of the Provencal prince, all of whom, after a brief struggle, were disarmed, and together with their young lord consigned to the care of Simon de Montfort.

Chapter VI

THE REIGN of TERROR

The crusaders thought that the flagitious perfidy exhibited by their chiefs towards the beloved prince of Alby would strike terror, like a dagger, into the hearts of the inhabitants of Carcassonne. It did indeed chill them with horror, but it also withdrew the entire population from the clutches of these bloodhounds of the Roman church.

There was an immense cavern, dark, freezing, and awful, which yawned in the bowels of the earth, and stretched away from the river-gate of Carcassonne three leagues, to the towers of Cabardes. To the protection of this gloomy sanctuary—for to their despair it was indeed a temple—the citizens rushed; and on, on, through the ooze of the dreadful cavern, which in happier times the boldest had shrunk from approaching, esteeming it haunted by hobgoblins, they tramped, willing to face the spirits of the yawning depth, if only they might escape the fiends who raged before their city walls.

Meantime, when the curtain of the night was lifted, and the light of day began to dazzle in the grey eastern horizon, the crusaders were astonished at not beholding the accustomed Vaudois sentries pacing the city walls. "Conscience does make cowards of us all," and remembering their own treachery of the day before, they feared that some stupendous mischief underlay the silence and desertion; for those of them who had grown greyest in the wars had never before seen a large population melt into nothing in a night.

At length however they entered Carcassonne, and the legate took possession of the spoil in the name of the church, excommunicating those of the crusaders who should have appropriated any part of it. But it long remained a mystery what had become of the teeming population which had vanished under cover of that August night.
The abbot of Citeaux thought himself obliged to dissemble the villainy to which he had had recourse, and which had succeeded so badly. Accordingly on the 15th of August, 1209, the day of the occupation of the city, he issued a proclamation, in which he unblushingly announced that he had signed a capitulation by which he had permitted all the citizens to quit Carcassonne with their lives only. And then, deeming it essential to the honor of the holy church that all the heretics should not escape him, he caused a number of Vaudois whom he had picked up upon his march, together with the knights who had accompanied the viscount of Alby and Beziers to his camp, to be collected in a group four hundred and fifty large. Then this wanton butcher selected out of that number fifty to be hanged, and the remaining four hundred were burned alive, to propitiate the malignant fury of his vengeful church.

All was now esteemed to have been accomplished. The count of Toulouse had submitted to the most degrading conditions ever before offered to or accepted by a sovereign prince. The beautiful and virgin Provencal plains had been rudely violated and soaked in blood. The gallant viscount of Alby and Beziers was a hopeless prisoner in the iron grasp of Montfort. The other Provencal nobles had published in their jurisdictions laws against the Vaudois even more severe, if that were possible, than Rome demanded.

The French lords who, to gain the indulgence of the church, had marched to the crusade, thought that they had done enough to effect the salvation of their souls; and weary of blood and ashamed of the violation of their plighted faith, they chafed to return to their castles.

All seemed satisfied, save the monks—save Dominic Guzman, and Francis d'Assise his companion in infamy, the founder of the despicable order of St. Francis, and at their head the abbot of Citeaux. The Vaudois were frozen with terror, but these fanatics thirsted for their blood. The heretics, leaving their homes to the pillage of the avaricious and to the incendiary torch of the marauder, had hidden in the mountains, and were outwardly silent; but these bigots knew that inwardly they prayed to that dear Jesus who for them had been nailed upon the tree, that the torch of primitive Christianity still smoked, if it did not blaze, and this thought would not let them rest.

The Vaudois were not exterminated. Their opinions would still secretly circulate. Resentment for outrages already suffered would alienate them yet more irreconcilably from the Roman communion. Their suffering would attach them still more devotedly to the tenets of their dissent, and the reformation would break out afresh. "To turn back the march of civilization, to obliterate the traces of a mighty progress of the human mind, to efface the foot-prints of the primitive and pure apostolic faith, it was not sufficient to sacrifice, as an example, hecatombs of victims; the nation must be destroyed. All who had participated in this grand development of evangelical knowledge, of Christian thought, of luminous science, must perish. None must be spared, save the most
boorish rustics, whose intelligence was scarcely superior to the beasts whose labor they shared."

Such was the flagitious _rationale_ of the Roman see—such the avowed policy of the abbot of Citeaux, and his twin jackals, Dominic and Francis d’Assise.

At the conclusion of the first crusade, just before the great lords separated, the legate assembled a council, and desired them to award the states of Raymond Roger, forfeit to the church, to some lord who would engage to extirpate the remnant of the Vaudois. The conquered territories were first offered to Eudes III, duke of Burgundy; but he refused them, saying that "he had plenty of domains and lordships without taking that, to disinherit this unhappy viscount; and that it appeared to him that they had done him evil enough, without despoiling him of his ancestral states."

This refusal, couched in such words, touched the honor of all the barons; and the counts of Nevers and of St. Paul, to each of whom the proffer was made, held the same language. Then the sovereignties were offered to Simon de Montfort, the most greedy and ferocious of the vengeful band. This infamous noble, then lord of but a single castle, Montfort Amaury, situated some ten leagues from Paris, though he was of an illustrious house, said to have been descended from king Robert by a natural son, after some feigned reluctance, finally accepted the bloody and usurped gift, thus by his ambition raising himself to the rank of the grand feudatories.

De Montfort had held the rightful sovereign of the states of which he had just taken possession a close prisoner in his donjon-keep ever since his capture. It now became necessary to sweep this obstacle completely from his path; for even in chains the young viscount haunted him, presaging evil to himself and to his house. Raymond Roger was a rare character. His neighbors loved him. His people idolized him, and prayed for him daily. The Vaudois especially enshrined him in their heart of hearts. Possibly his powerful and kingly relative of Aragon would be disposed to throw his royal ermine over his hapless nephew's defenseless form. Clearly it was Montfort's policy to get rid of his prisoner, too strong even in irons. With this ferocious and sullen fanatic, to decide was to act. Accordingly Montfort gave the necessary order for his death, at the same time spreading a report that the viscount had died of dysentery. But the fraud was too transparent. The public voice and conscience openly accused De Montfort of having poisoned his princely captive; and even Innocent III acknowledged that the viscount perished by violence.

Thus, in the flower of his age, ended the mortal career of Raymond Roger, viscount Alby and Beziers; chivalric as any Paladin of them all; a knight, like Bayard, _sans peur et sans réproche_, worthy to be a martyr in the grandest of all causes; a heroic soldier in the "good fight" which Bunyan has described; another victim added to the swollen catalogue of Roman intolerance and
depravity. History takes his name from the Roman rubric of heretical malefactors, and placing it among her jewels, writes proudly, RAYMOND ROGER, THE DEFENDER OF THE VAUDOIS.

Upon the conclusion of the campaign of 1209, Count Raymond of Toulouse, having submitted in every thing to the pontifical requisition, though himself sure of reconciliation with the church; but he was surrounded by men whose interest it was to prolong his punishment, if not to perpetuate it. The bishop of Toulouse, a recreant troubadour, Foulqué de Marseille, who had in other days gained some fame by his amatory verses, but who, disgusted with the world, had retired to a cloister, where he had fostered the passions of fanaticism and persecution, was Count Raymond's open foe. The two jackal inquisitors, Dominic and Francis, hated him because he had once tolerated the Vaudois. The abbot of Citeaux was his declared enemy; while Simon de Montfort, looking from his usurped viscountal palace at Carcassonne across upon Raymond's contiguous territories, thought how goodly his heritage would be if only the countship of Toulouse could be added to it. He was urged on therefore by the double motive of religious fanaticism and political ambition. These worthies, working tirelessly and secretly, defeated every measure which Raymond of Toulouse could elaborate for the procuration of his pardon. In the early part of 1210, the count had visited Rome, and in an interview with Innocent, had learned that the consideration of his case had been confided to an ecclesiastical council about to be convened at St. Gilles.

Raymond hastened home to meet the council. Meantime the abbot of Citeaux had harangued its members, and so prejudiced them against the count, that, without granting him an opportunity to clear himself of the charges laid against him, the council again fulminated an excommunication against him in the name of the church.

Simon de Montfort, with a powerful army—for though most of the great barons had retired, many, influenced either by that fanaticism which led them to take the cross, by the hope of securing a permanent establishment in a conquered country, or by the promise of plunder and adventure, still adhered to the banner of the crusade which the new viscount carried—had now the desired pretext for entering and ravaging Count Raymond's dominions. At the same time crowds of monks headed by Guy and Arnold Amalric of Citeaux, issued from their convents, and recommenced preaching the crusade. Gathering about them troops of ferocious and superstitious warriors, they proclaimed that there was no vice so deeply rooted, no crime so black, that a gala campaign of forty days in the south of France would not obliterate. Paradise with all its glories was opened to them, without the necessity of the slightest reformation of their conduct.

Accustomed to confide their consciences to their priests, to listen to the voice of Rome as to the thunders of the dread God of Sinai, never to submit what
appertained to the faith to the arbitrament of reason, these besotted crowds really regarded those beloved children of God's right hand, the Vaudois, as a nest of heretics who bred contagion.

So the roads were once more blocked with the advancing enthusiasts. Alice of Montmorency, De Montfort's wife, assumed the control of the forces raised by the exhortations of the monks.

At the commencement of Lent, 1210, her husband came to meet her at Pezenas. He no sooner found himself at the head of a large and well-appointed army, than he gave full sway to his evil passions.

A few lords still ventured to defend either the independence of their jurisdiction, or that of their conscience. De Montfort now essayed to crush this opposition by new judicial massacres. His fresh horde of fanatics swept through the country with desolating fury. The feudal state of independence had multiplied the isolated fortresses which served at once for residences and strong-holds. The smallest provinces were covered with citadels. These castles then received De Montfort's first attention. Many of them were abandoned on his approach. Others which ventured to resist, were razed, while their heroic defenders were either hung upon gibbets, or roasted alive for the honor of the mother church. The castle of Brom being captured by the crusaders on the third day of the siege, De Montfort selected a hundred of its wretched inhabitants, Vaudois who had been denounced by the priestly spies who sped before the men-at-arms to procure lists of heretics, and having torn out their eyes and cut off their noses, sent them in this state, under the guidance of a one-eyed man, to the neighboring Vaudois castle of Cabaret, to announce to that garrison the fate which awaited them.

When De Montfort found the citadels deserted, not being able to reach human beings, he wreaked his vengeance upon the twining vines, the olive trees, and the blooming gardens which lent rare beauty to the landscape, and made Provence the queen of nations, the idyl of territories.

The pen of history falters when it follows this rude butcher upon his devastating marauds, nor is it necessary to detail with absolute minuteness the harrowing scenes of this frightful war, which yet possesses strange interest.

The siege of the castle of Minerva was one of the most remarkable of the war, and is detailed at length by the ancient chroniclers. This citadel was built upon a steep and almost inaccessible rock, surrounded by precipices, and was regarded as one of the most impregnable strong-holds in the Gauls. It belonged to Guiraud de Minerva, a Vaudois nobleman, and one of the best knights in Southern France. The crusaders brought against it their finest men-at-arms, De Montfort and the abbot of Citeaux being present in person.
The Vaudois defended themselves for seven weeks with a valor which escorted the admiration even of De Montfort. But when, on account of the heat of summer—it was under the fierce sun of July—the water in their wells and cisterns failed, they demanded a capitulation. Terms were finally agreed upon; but when they were read in the council of war, one article, which provided that those Vaudois who were converted to the Roman faith might quit the castle alive, was violently opposed. "Robert de Mauvoisin," says the monk Vaux Cernai, "a nobleman entirely devoted to the papal see, cried that 'the pilgrims would never submit to this; since it was not to convert heretics, or to show mercy to them, but to kill them, that they had taken the cross.' The abbot Arnold, better acquainted with the obstinate devotion of the heretics, replied, 'Fear not, for I believe that very few will be converted.' "

Shortly after, the crusaders entered the castle chanting the *Te Deum*, and preceded by the cross and by the standards of Montfort.

God's children had assembled in two Vaudois churches, the men in one, the women in the other, and while the fanatical bands of Rome began to sing the *Te Deum*, they calmly responded by chanting one of their simple hymns of praise, pausing between each sob of the music to encourage each other by a mute caress, or to seek new strength in fervent prayer. Not one flinched; not one made the slightest effort to escape the awful doom which each knew awaited him. The honor of becoming a martyr for the holy cause of that sweet Jesus who was himself a man of sorrow, gave unwonted dignity to the rudest carriage. It was the ecstasy of religious faith, one of the grandest sermons to which that brutal band of heated zealots, smeared with martyr-blood, ever listened.

The abbot, Guy de Vaux Cernai, to fulfill the articles of capitulation, came to these Vaudois, and began to preach the Roman faith to them. He was instantly interrupted. "Sir priest," was the unanimous cry, "we want not your exhortations. We have renounced the church of Rome; we have become the children of a purer light; we draw our consolation from a higher source, even from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for evermore, Amen. Your labor is vain; desist. For neither life nor death can make us renounce that precious Bible whose truths we have embraced."

The abbot, surprised and strangely moved, next visited the assembly of Vaudois women. He found them as resolute, and still more enthusiastic in their declarations.

The ferocious De Montfort, in his turn, visited the Vaudois. Already he had piled up enormous masses of dry wood. The executioners, in their black gowns, stood ready. The impatient soldiery clamored hoarsely for the *fête* to begin. "*Be converted to the Roman faith,*" said the ruthless crusader, "*or ascend this pile.*" None were shaken. The wood was fired; the whole square was enveloped
in a tremendous conflagration. The greedy tongues of the lurid flame licked the crackling wood as if hungry and impatient for their human prey. The Vaudois were conducted to their funeral pyre, but no violence was necessary to compel them to enter the blazing, torturing fire; they voluntarily precipitated themselves into it, their sweet Provencal hymns quivering upon their lips, or else repeating that grandest of the beatitudes: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my safe. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." High above the fierce crackling of the flames, high above the hoarse roar of the fanatic multitude, rose the pathetic wail of the Vaudois supplication, until God came to their deliverance, and through the open and thrice welcome door of death their unfettered souls winged their way to that borne where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest."

The capture of Minerva was quickly followed by the siege of Termes, a strong castle upon the borders of Roussilon, which was commanded by its lord, a valiant captain named Raymond of Termes. This gallant soldier made a grand defense for "Christ and liberty." The patience of the crusaders was sorely tried, and De Montfort beheld his army terribly thinned by sickness and the Vaudois sword. He made a fresh appeal to the fanaticism of the French provinces, each of which, in response, dispatched in its turn a numerous contingent to his camp. Meantime, after four weary months of incessant combat, gaunt famine stared the Vaudois in the face, and thirst parched their throats. An attempt was made to escape from the castle into the surrounding mountains.

The Vaudois did indeed pass the first line of De Montfort's intrenchments, and dispersing in the shadowy recesses of the country, shaped their flight towards Catalonia. But soon their escape became known in the camp of the crusaders. The knights mounted in hot haste and scoured the roads; the men-at-arms, impressing peasants to guide them, searched the innermost recesses of the mountains. Each one exhorted the other not to let those who had cost the host so much sweat and blood escape their vengeance.

The unhappy Vaudois, encumbered by aged men, by women, by children, were speedily overtaken and remorselessly slaughtered where they stood. A few were conducted alive to the presence of Simon de Montfort, among the number the gallant Raymond of Termes. These, with the exception of their lord, were publicly burned alive for the edification of the crusaders. But De Montfort reserved Raymond of Termes for a more hapless lot. He confined him at the bottom of a tower in Carcassonne, in a damp dungeon whose walls were coated with ice, where, with exquisite cruelty, he suffered him to languish for many years, a prototype of the wretched prisoners of the Inquisition, or perhaps of that mysterious "iron mask," whose lineage is enshrouded with such gloomy interest in French history.
The miserable inhabitants of this unhappiest of countries found no asylum which could protect them. Neither woodland dell nor mountain cavern could screen them from the keen sight of the hunters of the Romish Babylon. Provence shivered in mute sympathy with the agony of her children. The pagan cruelty of the most monstrous of the Roman emperors was white when set against the blackness of De Montfort's infamy. Torquemada himself might have learned from him new lessons in the cruel skill of torture. Horror was heaped upon horror, until the benumbed and decimated Vaudois began to creep with languid footsteps across the borders of a territory surrendered to the ravage of demoniacs into happier lands.

Chapter VII

THE REVOLT

At length even the timid patience of Count Raymond of Toulouse was exhausted. He had surrendered every thing, promised every thing, submitted to every thing, in his efforts to court a reconciliation with the church. But cozened and maltreated by the perfidious minions of the pontifical see, he was now goaded to desperation, and like the hunted stag, turned at bay. Well would it have been for his knightly fame and for his Christian honor if, instead of faltering so long, he had at the outset united with his nephew in the defense of their mutual states.

He now formed a close alliance with the counts of Comiges and of Foix, with Gaston, viscount of Béarn, Savary de Mauléon, seneschal of Aquitaine, and the other lords of those provinces who were accused of heresy or of tolerance, and whose interests were united with his own.

Count Raymond also negotiated a treaty of offense and defense with Don Pedro of Aragon; and gathering his forces well in hand, dashed with gallant purpose against the invaders of his country.

De Montfort also was at the head of a fine army, inured to danger, well disciplined, and accustomed to victory.

He first advanced to Lavaur, a strong castle five leagues distant from Toulouse. This stronghold, afterwards raised to the rank of an episcopal see, was then the property of a widow named Guiraude, whom her brother Aimery de Montreal had recently joined, with eighty other knights like himself despoiled by the crusaders of their fiefs. Aimery, Guiraude, and most of their defenders, were
all open believers in the Vaudois creed. They had opened an asylum to those of
the reformed who were persecuted in the various adjacent villages; so that
their fortress, which was kept well stored and well manned, and which was
surrounded with strong walls and girded with deep ditches, was esteemed one
of the principal seats of the heresy.

The defence of Lavaur was long and stubborn. But at length the fanaticism, the
numbers, and the pernicious skill of the crusaders triumphed; the city was
taken by assault, and De Montfort, beholding his too ardent soldiers already
busied in the work of indiscriminate massacre, besought them rather to make
prisoners, that the priests of the living God might not be deprived of their
promised joys. "Very soon"—we here quote from the narrative of the monk of
Yaux Cernai, himself an eyewitness of the scene—"they dragged out of the
castle Aimery de Montreal and other knights to the number of eighty. The
noble count of Montfort immediately ordered these to be hanged; but as
Aimery, the stoutest of them, was strung up, the gallows fell, for in their haste
the executioners had not well fixed it in the ground. The count, seeing that
this would cause great delay, ordered the rest to be massacred; and the
pilgrims receiving the command with the greatest avidity, very soon slew them
on the spot. The lady of the castle, who was a sister of Aimery and an
execrable heretic, was, by the count's order, thrown alive into a pit, which was
slowly filled up with stones. Afterwards our pilgrims collected the innumerable
heretics who had fled to this citadel, and burned them alive with the utmost
joy.

Such is the gloating recital of an unblushing monk who was at once the witness
and the panegyrist of these freezing horrors.

The crusaders quitted the rains of Lavaur to hasten forward to the siege of
Toulouse, Count Raymond's capital.

"This city," says Sismondi, "was far from having been completely converted to
the reformation of the Vaudois; the Romanists still composed the greater
number of the inhabitants, though the Vaudois were numerous and counted
their disciples among the most enlightened citizens. The magistrates, when
asked why they did not drive out the heretics, replied, 'We cannot; we have
been brought up among them, we have relations among them, and we daily
witness the goodness of their lives.' The Romanism of Toulouse was therefore
very different from that of Northern France. The proverbial imprecation, 'I
would rather be a priest, than have done such a thing,' was as common in
Roman as in Vaudois mouths. Indeed the Romanism of Toulouse was so
unnaturally liberal, owing to the leaven of the Reformation, as quite to justify
the indignant affirmation of the most ancient historian of the crusade, that
Toulouse ought rather to be called Tota dolosa."
Still the bishop Fouquét had imbued a number of the most ignorant citizens with his own fanaticism. These formed themselves into a society called *The White Company*, five thousand of whom had joined De Montfort beneath the walls of Lavaur. This society had erected a tribunal by its own authority, before which it dragged those who were accused by its spies of being Vaudois. The partisans of the Reformation, reinforced by the friends of toleration, formed a counter association called *The Black Company*, whose object it was to resist and punish the lawless outrages of the fanatics. These two troops met often in the streets, armed, and with ensigns displayed; and many towns, which belonged to one side or the other, were alternately besieged. "Thus," says William Puy Laurens, a contemporaneous chronicler, "did our Lord, by the ministry of his servant the bishop, instead of a bad peace, excite among them a good war."

But while Fouquét was striving to kindle a war among his flock, Count Raymond was busied in restoring peace among his subjects. He succeeded so well that, when De Montfort appeared before the city and summoned it to surrender, the united voice of the city spoke in the tone of the consul, who said that Toulouse refused either to renounce its fidelity to its count, notwithstanding his excommunication, or to deliver up to punishment those of its citizens who were suspected of cherishing the Vaudois tenets.

Fouquét, bitterly angered at this refusal, instantly called in his priests, assembled them in a body at the cathedral, excommunicated all the Toulousians, and then quitted the city barefoot at the head of his monks, who carried the holy sacrament in the procession and chanted litanies as they marched.

However, Toulouse did not suffer the fate to which its charitable bishop had deserted it. On the contrary, Count Raymond, assisted by the counts of Foix and of Comiges, so pressed De Montfort, that he was not only compelled to raise the siege of Toulouse, but to retreat in his turn before the victorious Provencal squadrons to the shelter of one of his strong-holds, Castelnaudary.

But De Montfort's cry for aid soon brought another swarm of fanatics to his assistance. Count Raymond was repulsed. The country which, in his hour of misfortune, had vented its hate against him by rising in universal insurrection and spewing forth his garrisons, was again furiously harried; while Count Raymond retired into Aragon to recruit his forces and to form a junction with his royal ally and kinsman.

Marked by these and similar vicissitudes, several years passed sadly by. In the autumn of 1213 the disastrous battle of Murét was fought, in which king Pedro of Aragon, who had generously advanced to reinstate his brother in his dignities, lost his life, and Count Raymond's star, with that of religious toleration, seemed for ever sunk below the angry horizon.
The ferocious activity of De Montfort was not decreased by the victory of Murét, or by the voluntary exile of Count Raymond in the Aragonese territories. Entering upon that unhappy nobleman’s vacant countship, he ravaged it for the third time from corner to corner, and himself assuming the reins of government, with the congenial Fouquét as his adviser, gave full sway to his bigotry and insatiable ambition.

In 1216, Pope Innocent III died. His pontificate had been one of the most stormy and arbitrary in the papal annals. Possessed of remarkable executive talent, and of an ambition as far reaching as that of Lucifer, no one of the popes, excepting perhaps Hildebrand, had done so much to consolidate the Roman despotism. He was merciless in the execution of his ecclesiastical projects, steeled against the presumptuous wretch who ventured to reject his creed, impious in his profanation of God’s name and of the cross of Christ, and his memory is burdened with the inception of the Inquisition, with the incorporation of the most perfidious maxims into the canons of his church, and with the curses of those innocent children of the Most High, the Vaudois, whom his stentorian voice, echoing over Europe, first taught the nations to persecute.

Meantime Count Raymond was not idle. Secretly informed of all that was passing in Provence, he learned with joy that the barbarous and iron rule of Simon de Montfort was felt to be intolerable by the most tolerant people on the face of the globe. The inhabitants of Toulouse dispatched an embassy to invite him to return to them, and pledging themselves to support him with the heartiest and most loving zeal.

Encouraged by these attestations of attachment, the count raised an army in Aragon and Catalonia, at the head of which, after some reverses, he finally marched, in 1217, into Provence, entering once more his ancient capital amid the joyous acclamations of the populace.

De Montfort’s mingled fanaticism and ambition made him equal to the occasion. Instantly dispatching Fouquét, bishop of Toulouse, with James de Vitry, the historian of the last combats of the Holy Land, into France, to preach a new crusade, he summoned his brother Guy de Montfort and his son Amaury to his side, and hastening towards Toulouse, hoped to attack it before the citizens could rebuild their leveled walls, and while, haunted by the memory of former chastisements, they yet hesitated between affection and fear.

Appearing before the capital early in September, the crusaders at once made a vigorous assault. They were as vigorously hurled back into the surrounding ditches; while Simon’s brother Guy, together with his nephew the count of Bigorre, fell dangerously wounded.

De Montfort then commenced a regular siege, at the same time sending his wife Alice of Montmorency to the court of Philip Augustus, to solicit his aid.
Meantime the siege proved tedious. Prolonged through the winter, it dragged ineffectually into the ensuing spring and summer. Daily darting from their citadels, the Toulousians stung their besiegers with constantly increasing venom.

At length, on the 25th of June, 1218, Count Raymond made a sally, and pushing resolutely towards one of De Montfort's most destructive engines, called a "cat," because with its ponderous paw it beat breaches in the wall, captured it.

The butcher of the Vaudois was at mass when the news of the sortie was brought to him. Instantly arming himself, he headed his men-at-arms, and charged fiercely to the rescue of his favorite engine. He was successful. The Vaudois were repulsed. But while De Montfort stood with his battalion before the unwieldy paw of his strange machine, an enormous stone, cast with Titanic power and with vengeful certainty from a catapulta upon the city walls, struck the redoubted monster full upon the head, and hurled him maimed and lifeless to the ground, while his countenance was still distorted with a grin of sardonic satisfaction on account of his latest and last success.

Amaury de Montfort, the dead fanatic's son and heir, collected his scattered and affrighted soldiers, and receiving their homage and oath of fidelity as his father's successor, in the usurped courtship of Toulouse, for a little longer persisted in the siege of the jubilant city.

But in vain. In the latter days of July, 1218, he retired with his shattered cohorts into Carcassonne, where De Montfort was buried with great pomp.

Chapter VIII

THE FINAL MASSACRE

For a few brief years Provence enjoyed comparative repose. Its singular fertility, which the Vandal hoof of war was unable to tread out, soon made Languedoc begin once more to smile. After De Montfort's death, the demon of fanaticism fled with a shriek. Count Raymond, old and broken, delegated his government to his son Raymond VII, already rendered illustrious by high exploits, and who, possessed of a more experienced constancy and of a loftier character, seemed destined for a happier reign.

Rome, torn by internecine broils, and ruled by the irresolute scepter of Honorius III, who had succeeded the grasping innocent, appeared to relax its
vigilance. Northern Europe, engaged in preparing for another crusade against
the Saracens, was for a moment oblivious of Provence, where her knights
considered that they had drowned the Vaudois church in the blood of its
martyrs. Philip Augustus, busied in the west in wrenching English France from
the craven grasp of king John, was inclined to temporize with the Provencals.
The Vaudois nobles had united and driven out Amaury de Montfort from the
viscounty of Alby and Beziers, installing the son and heir of the murdered
prince, Raymond Roger, in his rightful states. The horizon was lit up with a
decceptive brilliancy—too soon, alas, followed by the devastating storm—and
the Vaudois church, rising from the sea of gore, enjoyed an apparent
resurrection, and with unshaken constancy relumed the lamp of the ancient
faith.

After the extinction of a fire, some sparks will still lie concealed under the
ashes. These, fanned by the gale, may kindle a new flame, which, after
devouring all the combustible matter within its reach, will in its turn be
quenched. So the momentary toleration in Provence recalled the preachers of
the crusades, re-attracted the attention of Europe, reawoke the napping
fanaticism of the faithful, and launched a new horde of brutal enthusiasts upon
the Vaudois, so that those of them who had escaped the first massacre were
mostly involved in the searching destruction of the second.

In 1222, while the gathering tempest soughed ominously in the scowling
heavens, but before the fell fury of the storm burst, Raymond VI died suddenly
at Toulouse. Though this prince had shown neither distinguished talents nor
force of character; though he had been early induced to assent to what he
disapproved, and to inscribe his name among those who came to ravish his
country, and who cherished the secret purpose of depriving him of his heritage;
though he had submitted with patient feebleness to all the ecclesiastical
censures, to all the personal outrages which the legates, the pope, and the
council of the Lateran could heap upon him, yet he died regretted and loved by
his Vaudois subjects, who did not forget that he had incurred all this contumely
by his indulgence towards them; that he had abhorred the bloodshed and
racking tortures inflicted upon his states by the crusaders; and that, spite of
the persuasion with which the crusaders had succeeded in inspiring him, that
his religious duty as well as his temporal interest demanded these
persecutions, he had always done his utmost to check the barbarous zeal of the
executioners.

His administration had been gentle. Public liberty in the cities, commerce,
manufactures, science, poetry—all had made rapid progress under his fostering
care. But he was accused of feeling compassion for heretics. For this reason he
was not only persecuted through life, but the spiteful vengeance of Rome
followed him even for ages after death. His son could never obtain the honors
of sepulture for his body. His coffin was deposited near the burial-ground of St.
John of Toulouse, waiting the permission of the holy see for its interment. It
was still there in the middle of the fourteenth century; but as it was only of wood, and as no one took care for its preservation, it was broken, and his bones were dispersed in the sixteenth century. The skull alone of the hapless count was long preserved in the chateau of the Hospitalers of St. John of Toulouse, to which order Raymond VI had once belonged.

In the year following the death of the count of Toulouse, 1223, Philip Augustus breathed his last. One of the ablest kings since the weighty scepter of Charlemagne swayed Europe, he aspired to consolidate an empire as vast as that of his great predecessor. He did indeed add materially to the grandeur of medieval France, leaving to his successor an enlarged kingdom whose resources were carefully husbanded.

The ferocious bishop Fouquét, who was at Rheims on the accession of Louis VIII, better known in history as Saint Louis, eagerly seized that opportunity to enlist the superstitious young king in a new crusade against the Vaudois. Louis listened approvingly to the seductive eloquence of the renegade troubadour, ordered the sacred war to be preached throughout France, persuaded Honorius III to kindle the zeal of Europe at large, and then, arming with avidity, swept like a vulture to the banquet of blood.

Then the cruelties of De Montfort’s régime were reenacted. The crusaders had returned with seven other devils worse than the first. Hell was once more in full chorus, while all good Romanists joined in the tune. Monks marched from city to city preaching ferocity, and then facilitating by perfidy the execution of their counsels. The fanatics pillaged towns and villages and castles; outraged women, and even little girls; and then forming in circles around the blazing stakes at which the Vaudois were burning, with an impious affectation of devotion, chanted in unison the hymn Veni Creator, while the wail of their tortured victims ascended to the pitying heavens.

No human calculation can ascertain with any precision the dissipation of wealth, or the wanton destruction of innocent life, which were the consequences of these crusades against a people whose only crime was that their lives bloomed with the beatitudes. Scarcely a peasant but reckoned some member of his family cut short in the flower of his days by fanatical violence; not one but had repeatedly seen his property ravaged and his household insulted by the crusaders. More than three quarters of the knights and landed proprietors of the proscribed territories had been despoiled of their fiefs.

Yet the sanguinary fury of fanaticism was not glutted. In 1229, the council of Toulouse established the Inquisition in Provence as a permanent institution. The military power was reinforced by the subtlety of the monks. A code of procedure, framed for the express purpose of entrapping overcautious heretics into unsafe admissions, was publicly circulated among the inquisitors.
The Vaudois supported their doctrines by the authority of the holy Scriptures—the most unlearned among them could repeat large portions of the Bible by heart. Therefore the first indication of heresy was considered to be the citation either of the epistles or of the gospels; the second was any exhortation against the vices of the day, or any assertion of the necessity of a change, of spirit in order to be saved; and the third was to show any compassion to the prisoners of the Inquisition.

The Council of Toulouse decided that the reading of the sacred Scriptures should not be permitted. "We prohibit," says the fourth canon of that memorable council, "the laity from having the books of the Old and New Testaments, unless it be, at the most, that any one wishes to have, from devotion, a Psalter, a breviary, or the hours of the blessed Mary; but we forbid them, even then, to have these translated into the vulgar tongue."

Another article read thus: "We command that whosoever shall be accused of the Vaudois heresy, or be noted with suspicion, shall be deprived in sickness of the assistance of a physician. Likewise, when a sick person shall have received the holy communion of his priest, it is our will that he be watched with the greatest care to the day of death or convalescence, that no heretic, nor any one suspected of heresy, may have access to such a one.

A little later, when executions became less frequent because it was more difficult to procure Vaudois for their *autos da fé*, it was decreed, that the scent of the human hounds might be rendered keener by a bribe, that the confiscated property of a heretic should be shared between the spy who denounced and the judge who condemned him.

The philosophy of Rome in these measures is evident. The reform had arisen from the first advancement in literature, and from the application of judicious reason to religious instruction. By thickening the darkness, by striking the developing mind and conscience of Christendom with a blight, this fermentation could be arrested, and mankind would bow once more in blind submission to their hereditary belief. "I can never admit," wrote Pasquier to the Dominican president, Brulart, "that the material arms of De Montfort would have overcome the Vaudois without the holy exhortations and the inquisitorial compulsions of St. Dominic and St. Francis."

The Vaudois met their fate with the meek heroism of the earliest Christians. Very few renounced their faith. Blood never ceased to flow, nor the flames to devour their victims in these provinces, now completely abandoned to the dark fanaticism of the inquisitors. Tranquility was never restored, persecution was never suspended, even by the death of its victims. The Provencals lived in a protracted agony.
Still the war raged. The French king had another motive besides the extirpation of heresy for its prosecution. The struggle had a political phase. The French court desired to round the empire into symmetrical form by adding to it these provinces, which bathed their feet in the blue waters of the Mediterranean. As this object was not definitively accomplished until the year 1243, the “sacred war” continued to devastate those fields which should have been covered by the richest harvests of the south, those cities which had been animated by commerce, industry, and intelligence, and to butcher that noble population whose devotion to their faith is the grandest legacy which the history of that time has bequeathed to posterity.

Beneath the accumulated tortures to which they were subjected the Vaudois melted slowly away. Their opinions ceased to influence society. The Provencal faith was no longer molded on the primitive apostolic model. By the middle of the thirteenth century the Vaudois had apparently disappeared. Terror was still extreme, suspicion universal. Though the teaching of the proscribed doctrine had seemingly ceased, yet the sight of a book caused a shudder, and ignorance was a salutary guarantee of safety.

The Vaudois died as grandly as they lived. No refinement of torture could rack from their suffering lips a disavowal of their belief. Often they scorned to stoop even to concealment. Entering voluntarily the lurid fires of the Inquisition, they showed how martyrs could die for “Christ and liberty.” Gaining strength from the devotional rapture of St. Paul, they earned a right to repeat with him,

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:31-39

· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
THE INTERREGNUM

The crime against the Vaudois was not the separate wickedness of a single nation. It was a mosaic of infamy, the legitimate, inevitable offspring of an ecclesiasticism which had employed every art to pervert the understanding and to corrupt the heart.

The Italian, Innocent III, first gave the signal for this outrage upon human nature; and he also bestowed the recompense. He continually sharpened the swords of the murderers, blunted in slaughter. When the fanaticism of Europe drooped, weary in its madness, he aroused it once more to raving fury by his clamorous appeals.

The two Spaniards, the bishop of Ozma and St. Dominic, the founders of the Inquisition, first taught the perfidious art of seeking out in the villages those whom the priests were afterwards to tie to their stakes. The Germans, invited by their monks, flocked from the extremities of Austria to glut their faith in massacre. And the English Matthew Paris renders zealous testimony to the activity of his countrymen in the same abandoned cause, and to their triumphant joy at the miracle—for so he called the treachery of Beziers—which had avenged the Lord.

But the crime from which individual nationalities are to be absolved, is to be laid upon the conscience of Europe at large, and especially upon the pernicious counsels of the Roman church, which incited it, and juggled mankind into believing that the elect could be saved by a baptism of innocent and Christian blood.

Thus the reformation, of which the church had so much need, the light which was to illuminate the mind, to restore to morals their purity, to reason its empire, and to religion its pristine flavor and omnipotence, was repelled for three whole centuries, and even much longer with regard to those Italian and Spanish provinces which spoke the Romanesque languages.

The Vaudois taught too soon. Spreading their pure instructions through all the countries of the western empire in the superstitious infancy of Europe; called to combat with an established and arrogant ecclesiasticism—while the intellect of the Slavonic, the Latin, the Anglo-Saxon, and the Germanic nations was not yet sufficiently awake to perceive the light, but saw men as trees walking—they had no fulcrum upon which to rest their lever. Their truth was throttled by the mailed hand of Rome.
As in the impious days of the crucifixion, “from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour,” so now, when Christ was crucified again in the person of his gospel, an awful darkness intervened. A frightful interregnum yawned through three hundred years.

The Vatican smiled happily. It flattered itself that it had for ever fettered the human mind, that it had for ever choked the wail of outraged conscience, that it had for ever crushed the insurrection of the soul. The Vatican was mistaken. The interregnum meant postponement, not conquest. For two hundred years the fires had been kindled, yet still at intervals Romanists abandoned the faith of their fathers to embrace that which must lead them to the flames. In vain did the Inquisition essay to compel the unfetterable mind to submission, and to establish an invariable rule of faith. It saw in the midst of the darkness which it had created some luminous points loom up on the horizon. It saw those sparks which it thought that it had for ever quenched, but scattered by its folly, to light the universe once more. It had no sooner conquered, than it was obliged to renew the combat.

The Vaudois were not exterminated, they were only dispersed. Proscribed, far from their country, now no more theirs, alas, they wandered from the shores of the Mediterranean to the borders of the frozen sea, from the Carpathian mountains to the Orkney islands. Many also found their way into those obscure Piedmontese valleys which had been the cradle of their reform.

Finding an asylum in the cottages of the peasants or poor artisans, whose labors they shared in profound secrecy, they taught their hosts to read the gospel in common, to pray in their native tongue without the ministry of priests, while they themselves continued to praise God and to submit gratefully to the chastisements which his hand had inflicted as the means of their sanctification.

The sufferings which they had endured for their sake made them cherish their tenets with the most reverential awe, and hand them down from generation to generation unaltered, uncorrupted, embalmed in the traditions of the Languedocian massacre. Unable under the jealous eye of Rome to enjoy the eternal consolations of religion, they were shut up still more to internal communion. They ceased to care for the visible world. They placed their hands in God's, and sobbed their griefs away upon His heart who is the great Consoler. They believed that heaven was the substantial world, that its joys were the real joys, even for the body and the sense, and that there was no delight except as it flowed from God into heaven, and as it descended from heaven into time.

Though robed in rags, they esteemed themselves clothed more richly than the earth is when she makes herself gay with flowers for her summer bridegroom; more richly than the firmament is when it wraps round itself the jeweled
mantle of the stars, puts constellations beneath its feet and sunlight galaxies upon its head. For the joy of God is woven into garments more splendid than those which wrap the flaming spheres.

The truths of salvation which Christ had taught, which he had embalmed for ever by his sacred sufferings, by the bloody sweat, and by the death on Calvary, were to them august beyond all pictured magnificence, radiant beyond all starry and all solar splendors, sweeter than the embodied essences of all odors which the spring pours in her jeweled cup before God, more musical than the harmonies that swell in grand cathedrals, that echo from lilt and vale in summer woods, that come borne in soft sweetness in the happy talk of lovers, in the song of storied saints, in voices of rapture pulsing by moonlight over time's dim sea. Before the supernal vision of God's judgment they could only kneel in speechless adoration; if they tried to sing, the hymn wailed out but brokenly through the imperfect human instrument.

After their dispersion, the Vaudois seemed to vanish from the sullen history of the time. Seeking safety in obscurity, they no longer, to the superficial observer, appeared to impress their creed upon the human mind. Yet a deeper view discloses that they were the scatterers of God's seed in the furrows of these centuries, that they carried the unflickering taper of the gospel from which the later reformers were enabled to light their torches. They were the bridge which spanned the black abyss which yawned between the overthrow of the Vaudois church in Languedoc and the birth of Luther.

Though it is not clear that any of the Provencal Christians established themselves in England, it can hardly be doubted that Wickliffe acquired his first evangelical conceptions from their preachers. Wickliffe was a profound politician before he became a luminous teacher of divinity. A favorite at the court of St. James, he was dispatched in early life by Edward III on several diplomatic missions to the popes at Rome and Avignon. Traveling therefore through the south of France at a time when the Vaudois were hunted and burned with patient vindictiveness, his acute and inquiring mind could not but occupy itself with investigating the grounds of their dissent. A little later, Wickliffe held and publicly taught precisely the same tenets which he had seen men roasted alive for holding in Provence.

It may therefore be legitimately concluded that the Vaudois convinced the great Englishman that the church of Rome itself was wallowing in heresy.

Many of the Vaudois took refuge in Germany and in Bohemia, where Peter Waldo, their most celebrated teacher, had found an asylum when driven by priestly spite from his native Lyons, from Dauphiny, from Picardy, from Saxony; and where he had died surrounded by the Bohemian mountaineers, the ancestors of Huss and Jerome. Thus it was that God inoculated Bohemia with the truths of primitive Christianity. When Wickliffe's writings became known,
the Bohemian Vaudois rallied, and resumed existence as an independent evangelical church.

An interesting historical episode proves that there were still some Vaudois remaining in Southern France in the middle of the fifteenth century. It is recorded that the Vaudois of the towns of Cabrières and Merindole, upon being menaced by the inquisitors—always busy, always ubiquitous through these sad years—dispatched deputies to Louis XII to plead their cause before that able and just king. Although the priests strove to prevent it, they secured an audience. The Vaudois ambassadors declared that they received and taught the plenary inspiration of the holy Scriptures, the apostles’ creed, the decalogue, and the Christian sacraments; but that they did not acknowledge the authority of the pope, nor adopt the antichristian dogmas of the Romish Babylon. Louis, surprised at the intelligence, moderation, and Christian appearance of the deputies, sent an envoy to inquire on the spot if their assertions were indeed correct. The commissioner, on his return, reported "that in those parts baptism was administered; that the articles of faith and the ten commandments were taught; that the Sabbath was solemnly observed; that the word of God was intelligently expounded, while portions of it were familiar to the most unlettered rustics; and that as to the fornications and poisonings of which they were accused, no instance of either could be found." "Wonderful!" ejaculated Louis, "these people are much better Christians than myself and all the rest of my orthodox subjects; let them remain undisturbed." And this fiat of the king was respected scrupulously throughout his life.

For some generations the Piedmontese Vaudois, although known to exist, were suffered to remain in despised security. But this may have been owing to the fact that the latter part of the thirteenth century and the commencement of the fourteenth were occupied with the fierce struggles between the rival factions in Italy of the Guelphs and Ghibelines. It is also possible that the preaching of another crusade in the East, Europe's last mighty effort to wring the Holy Sepulchre from the Saracen, left their persecution to abate.

But the Vaudois barely sufficed to keep aglow the sinking embers of the gospel in these dismal ages. Huss with his Bohemians, Wickliffe with his Lollards, were in too fearful a minority to inaugurate anything but feeble local reforms, trodden down, with those who launched them, as soon as the Roman sentinels descried them from the Vatican. They were powerless to reshape the character of their epoch; their opinions did not mold society at large. They could only wait and suffer and pray, floating down the centuries faith personified.

As proverbially it is darkest just before the morning smiles, so now the gloom wrapped the universe, thick, impenetrable, ominous. Then came those days never to be remembered without a blush, the age of dwarfish virtues and gigantic vices; the epoch of unreasoning superstition and unbridled wrong; the paradise of bigots. Swarms of licentious priests swept through Europe, sparing
neither man in their wrath nor woman in their lust. The misshapen carcass of 
nominal Christianity lay huge and drunken across Christendom. Grown lazy with 
wicked prosperity, Rome was almost too indolent to persecute.

Decked out in her gaudy rags, gay with silk and velvet and satin, the gilded and 
painted strumpet of the papacy thought only of fêtes, of feasts, of dances, of 
pantomimes; the very services of the altar were turned into a carouse. The 
church traded, like a Jewish huckster, in the relics of saints, and bartered her 
usurped rights for gold with which to fill her coffers, emptied in debauchery. 
Pontiffs, like Alexander VI, bloated with wine, with murder, with adultery, 
with incest, sat as God, in the temple of God, with horrible profanity cursing 
the saints, and bestowing the apostolic benediction upon sinners with drunken 
gravity. Indecent orgies were daily held in the Vatican, which were openly 
attended by the pontifical mistresses. Europe was surrendered to the 
domination of demons, while pandemonium held wild jubilee.

"Thus all did turn degenerate, all depraved, 
Justice and temperance, truth and faith forgot."

But God had long been preparing the way to a glorious reformation by a 
baptism of suffering. This reformation was to be the result of two distinct 
forces, the revival of learning and the resurrection of the gospel. The latter 
was the great motor power, but the former was necessary as a means. The 
ignorance of Europe had enabled Rome to stifle the cry of the Vaudois 
preachers. There was no public opinion to which they could appeal. There 
existed but two classes in society, lawless despots and breadless serfs.

The invention of printing insured the triumph of nascent Protestantism. By 
emancipating Europe from the thraldom of ignorance, it secured its deliverance 
from the harder slavery of Roman ecclesiasticism. Faust, under God, dug 
Christendom out of medieval Jesuitism. Henceforth truth could not be 
throttled. Its voice animated ten thousand never-weary witnesses. It spoke 
trumpet-toned and everlasting through the press.

Then came Luther. He set before mankind...

"The paths of righteousness, how much more safe 
And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come 
On their impenitence."

Thus Vaudoisism and learning, the study of the classics, of Greek, of Hebrew, 
the dawn of an eager and discriminating intelligence through the cultivation of 
letters, were the two laboratories of reform. A few earnest souls had 
discovered the light in lowly valleys; mankind were soon to discern it upon the 
lofty mountain tops.
The sixteenth century witnessed the resurrection of reform. The infant form of civil and religious liberty had been rocked in the cradle of an earlier epoch,
only to die in its bright youth. Now the veil of the tomb was rent, and it came forth armed with new strength. That era, like a first conqueror, founded a new realm, the realm of opinion. Instantly the customary, the medieval, received a check. The scholastic methods of the universities began to recede before the progressive spirit of emancipated philosophy. The further usurpations of paganized Christianity were vetoed by the authoritative voice of primitive faith.

The new instinct was so full and active, that it bubbled over into secondary spheres. It showed itself even in architecture; and the Gothic towers of the old royal keeps were replaced by creations formed on the models of chaste ancient art. It showed itself in war, and the mailed, mounted chivalry went down before the infantry and the artillery of innovating science.

Moral and political Europe, equally rotten, began to be revolutionized. Now, as always before, Rome set herself to subdue the rebellion against her theology and her politics, using her old weapons, thumb-screws, racks, unearthly dungeons, and slow fires, invoking the grim horrors of the Inquisition to aid her in chilling the rising lava-like enthusiasm for the truth.

But God was not mocked. He sat serenely in the blue heavens, making the wrath of man to praise him. It had been decreed in His councils who is from everlasting to everlasting, that the spiteful drama in which Rome played the part of Sir Omnipotent should not be lengthened into further acts without a vigorous and successful protest.

When the pontiffs condescended to recite the articles of their belief to medieval Europe, the Amen of Christendom was fiercely fervent. But at length Leo X stepped out upon the balcony of the Vatican, and commenced to intone his creed: We believe in the observance of the minutest trifles of the ceremonial law; we believe that human nature is neither hereditarily corrupt nor intrinsically depraved; we believe that the saints and martyrs had a superfluity of merit, which they delegated to the church, and which, placed in the huge tureen of Rome, may be ladled out to those hungry souls who are willing to buy heaven with a price; we believe in the theoretical celibacy of the clergy; we believe in the dogma of monachism; we believe that there exists in the priesthood of the holy see a mediatorial caste between God and man; we believe that the pope, sitting as God, in the temple of God, cannot err; we believe that salvation is to be obtained by good works, by ave Marias, by penances, and by gold.

And when the courtly Medici’s last cadence died quite away, as he ended his impious recital, while Europe stood ominously silent, a clear, resonant voice, echoing from the heights of the obscure town of Wittenberg, in semi-barbarous Germany, replied, "Oh nations, ye have listened to Pope Leo's Babylonian heresies: hark ye now to the Christian truth; for thus saith the Lord God: 'By
one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.'"

By these words Luther launched the Reformation, whose soul was, salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.

Then the mutterers of the mass and the children of the Bible joined battle to decide which should shape the future.

That struggle was the epic of the sixteenth century. The Roman publicists have affirmed, and certain rationalistic philosophers on both sides of the water have claimed, that it meant emancipation from the dominion of the religious principle—that it meant, not a reformation, but an abolition of Christianity.

But the choral song of the Reformation was not materialism. The movement which Luther inaugurated, and which Calvin organized, did indeed clasp hands with liberty and strike off chains; but only as a logical result, not as its chief purpose. The object of the Reformation was to reopen the path by which God and man unite. This path, which Christ had opened, had been blocked up in ages of superstition by the worship paid the Virgin, the saints, the host, by meritorious, magical, supererogatory works, by ecclesiastical formalities. Men awoke to protest; Protestantism arose from the inner impulses of European life.

Religion was long the terror of the world. It was attempted to dissipate it by amusing nations, or to pile it over with strata of society—a layer of soldiers, over that a layer of lords, and a king on top, with clamps of priests and hoops of castles. But the religious sentiment would penetrate this motley mountain which lay piled huge and unshapely upon the human conscience; it would burst the hoops, and rive the earthy matter laid on top of it...

"The ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious."

The reformers recognized the cheat, believed in a real unity, heard the cry of smothered conscience beneath the mountain of priest-caste which Rome had reared with the patient labor of ages, invoked God's earthquake to topple it over; and as layer after layer fell, while society grouped itself on the level of faith in God, not in men, the angels them selves sang pæans. The overthrow of an ecclesiastical oligarchy, God and man brought face to face through faith in
Christ, this was the grand work of the Reformation, whatever other beneficent results might follow in its train.

So far was Protestantism from involving a principle contradictory to religion: it simply sought to comprehend it, and to secure to mankind the liberty to understand it, in a more spiritual and unselfish disposition, in opposition to a worldly priesthood; it called on man to ground his faith, not on the word of a priest, but on the infallible word of God.

In 1519, two years after Luther had openly denied the infallibility of the church of Rome, the college of the Sorbonne, the most famous in medieval Europe, where Reuchlin had studied, where Erasmus had been graduated, but always the champion of Latin orthodoxy, denounced the new opinions. Twenty-four months later, the Parisian faculty of theology published their memorable condemnation of the Lutheran heresy.

At the same time Leo X was launching the thunderbolts of the Vatican upon the Reformation in Germany. Attracted by the universal hubbub, scholars paused in the first flush of their enthusiasm for resuscitated learning, to look up from their Greek text and inquire into the meaning of the din. The fascination of ancient letters was forgotten for a moment. Persons of the highest stations and of the lowest became curious to examine and weigh the merits of a controversy to which so much importance seemed attached. France especially was in a fever of excitement. Authentic records show that so early as 1523 there were in several of the provinces of that realm, and particularly in Southern France, Languedoc, Provence, the ancient seats of the Vaudois creed, great numbers both of the gentry and the commons who had embraced the reformed tenets; and even some of the episcopal order were tainted with Lutheranism.

In 1519, two of Luther's ablest and most eloquent disciples, Martin Bucer, all fire and energy, and Melancthon, the personification of calm, persuasive Christian philosophy, had visited France and created a desire for reform.

At the outset, the omens were favorable to the reception of the new theology in France. As the abuses of Rome were wide-spread, ripe, and pregnant, the dissenters made many and rapid converts. Francis I, who ruled the realm at the commencement of the Reformation, was the puppet of his own vanity, inordinately fond of gaiety, pomp, and dissipation. Without fixed principles of religion, he regarded questions of faith with indifference, so long as they did not trench upon the domain of policy. The historical rival of Charles V of Spain, when that cunning emperor temporized with the German dissenters, he also tolerated their brothers in France.

Thus it was that the Reformation secured time to ground itself in that kingdom; and this comparative immunity from persecution, this portentous stillness which ushered in a frightful storm, was so well employed that when the trial
hour came, it was found that half of France, headed by some of the most
historic names in her annals, were the devoted disciples of the reformed
teology.

The numbers and influence of these disciples of a pure faith soon made them
loom up into importance. It began to be thought that they might subvert the
established religion. Influenced by this fear, and pushed on by the incessant
solicitation of the churchmen resident at his court, as well as by the active
example of Charles V in the Netherlands, Francis I was persuaded to persecute
the reformers, timidly at first, but finally with Titanic energy.

The French prelates, though immersed in the lewd pleasures of the court, were
too clear-sighted not to see with alarm the precipice upon which their order
stood. They had sanctioned the aid furnished by Francis to foment the rebellion
of the German Protestants, in order that internecine broils might weaken and
perplex the political power of Charles V. But they were not disposed to
tolerate the new opinions in France, lest their ascendancy should despoil them
of their revenues, as it had already despoiled the Germanic bishops. It was the
dread of pecuniary loss, rather than care for religious unity, that urged these
worldly and foppish prelates, lapped in luxury, bloated with pride, and swollen
with license, to desert for an instant the arms of their mistresses, to button-
hole the king, and insist upon the adoption of sanguinary measures for the
extirpation of heresy; it was this which impelled them to admonish Francis that
the maintenance of the old faith in its integrity would be a full atonement for
all the sins he had committed or might commit—would be a passport to
paradise.

The effects of this policy of the courtier prelates were soon experienced. On
the 9th of June, 1523, a severe edict against the heretics was published. Then,
in the autumn of the middle ages, the reapers of intolerant Rome went out into
the field to glean once more a bloody harvest.

The first step of the victorious priests, under the king's decree, was to disperse
an influential and numerous congregation of reformers at Meaux. This city was
in the episcopal see of William Briconnét, an earnest and devout churchman,
who had studied the canons of the Scripture as well as the canons of the
church, and who, animated by the words of Luther, had himself ascended the
pulpit, proclaimed the doctrine of salvation by faith, and conducted himself as
a bishop should, by striving to instruct his flock, by identifying his interests
with theirs, instead of neglecting them to immerse himself, as most of his
order did, in the unhallowed dissipations of the gayest capital in Christendom.
But the platforms of the Sorbonne echoed with denunciation. The "novelties" of
Briconnét were placed under the ban, as the deviations of Wickliffe, of Huss, of
Jerome, of Luther, had already been, and the good bishop's instructive
elocuence died away in a stifled groan.
Lefèvre of Estaples was the friend and mentor of Briconnét. This patriarch of the Reformation had ventured to study the original records of the faith while Europe yet shivered in the chilly gloom of superstition. He drew from the Pauline epistles certain maxims concerning justification and faith, which a little later formed the soul of the reformed theology; and this indefatigable student, at the advanced age of eighty, preserving his vivacity and intellectual strength untouched by time, commenced a translation of the Bible, which forms the basis of the French version of the Scriptures.

For a time Francis I wavered in his determination. The fickle monarch, influenced by Erasmus, then the learned idol of lettered Europe, befriended Lefèvre, and even established a college for the cultivation of the ancient languages, in opposition to the Sorbonne. The deep religious spirit of the age touched for a moment the callous, selfish heart of the knight-errant king. With his mother and sister he frequently read the Scriptures, and they were heard to remark that the divine truth—which seemed to them to be there—ought not to be denominated heresy. Luther was frequently lauded at the court, while the Sorbonne sullenly lamented that the persecution of the followers of the heretic and the destruction of his writings, despite the king's decree of the 9th of June, met with obstructions from the Louvre.

But Francis remained for a little under the influence of his sister and the scholars of the empire. He even spoke of nullifying his edict, and was heard to regret the dispersion of the Meaux assembly; affirming at the same time that he saw no reason why Roussel and Aranda—two celebrated orators of the Reformation—should not preach at the court.

The shuttlecock king soon had a relapse. When Erasmus nudged his elbow, he was tolerant; when the prelates pointed to the rising tide of the reform, and bade him beware lest it swamp his throne, he grew alarmed.

The first symptom of the change was an auto da fé.

In the initial days of the Reformation, Louis de Berquin, one of the earliest opponents of the Sorbonne, an eminent scholar, an enthusiastic Christian, enjoyed the special favor of Francis, who, like all pedants, loved to surround himself with literati, with artists, with sculptors, and who petted Leonardo da Vinci with one hand, while he patted French scholarship upon the shoulder with the other.

Berquin's boldness soon impelled him to cross swords with the Sorbonne. The consequence was, that while his royal master, captured by Charles V at Pavia, languished in a Spanish prison, he lay in the dungeons of the Inquisition. Francis, on his return to France, liberated the incarcerated scholar, who was no sooner out however, than, making it a point of honor not to retire before his
persecutors, he recommenced the combat, undertaking to convict Beda, the syndic of the Sorbonne, of himself holding heretical opinions.

Berquin relied upon the monarch’s support. But meantime Francis, who had hurled himself upon Italy like an avalanche, was once more foiled by the calm tactics of the wily emperor, and returned into his kingdom with shattered health, a decimated army, and weakened authority; for, as Erasmus remarked in a warning to Berquin, the king’s defeat had weakened his domestic power.

The Sorbonne saw the opportunity, seized it, actually secured the consent of the king to their program of procedure, and taking Berquin, in 1529, publicly burned him on the Place de Grève. The Parisian populace, over whom the preachers of the Sorbonne exercised unlimited influence, are said to have shown less sympathy for this hapless victim than they ordinarily exhibited for the most abandoned criminals.

Francis I never afterwards paused. The demon of persecution took full possession of him. To the end of his life he continued to slaughter his subjects with an indiscriminate malignity which bordered on frenzy.

To this chapter of persecution, the Jesuit Fleury refers with an unfeeling jeer: "From time to time some false prophet appeared upon the scene, to publish his fanaticism or to sound the disposition of the court. But repression was prompt: it cost dear to one Berquin of Arras, to Jean Leclerc, a wool-carder of Meaux, and to Jaques Parané, a clothier of Boulogne. They were all burned alive, and a dread of the fire silenced the spirit of several oracles. History doubtless mentions these despicable names to perpetuate the reproach of their birth or their impiety, rather than to celebrate these vile founders of the Calvinistic church."

Rail on, proud mocker, at God’s lowly poor. But these despised and scattered members of a torn body were made one again in Jesus Christ; while from their ashes they spoke with grander, more persuasive eloquence than that with which antique art endowed him who...

"Fulmined over Greece
To Macedon, and Artaxerxes’ throne."

Chapter XI

THE COURT of FRANCIS I
The opening phases of the Reformation bear the impress of two illustrious women.

The first of these was Renée, duchess of Ferrara, and daughter of Louis XII. This lady had been early won to adopt the resurrected tenets of the gospel. Under the beautiful sky of fatal Italy she listened to the hurried words of the flitting reformers who ventured to mutter their opinions in an undertone even beneath the very throne of Leo X. The situation of her husband's estates in the near vicinity of Rome, made him fearful of exciting either the temporal or spiritual wrath of the pontiff, lest that arbiter both of this world and the next should pounce upon him and despoil him of his heritage.

Therefore Renée concealed her sentiments during the duke of Ferrara's life. But a little later, become a widow, she quitted the stifling atmosphere of Italy, and taking possession of the castle of Montargis, an hour's ride from Paris, openly avowed her adherence to the reformed theology, and gave the warmest of welcomes to the evangelical preachers, besides offering to the persecuted the safest of asylums.

The other of these ladies was Margaret de Valois, queen of Navarre, the daughter, the sister, the wife, the mother of kings, the greatest woman of her age.

Margaret, like Renée, had given her cordial assent to the teachings of the "evangelicals," as the French reformers were sometimes called.

The sister of Francis I lived much at the court, figured in state ceremonies and in the councils at the Louvre, at St. Germaine, at Fontainebleau; yet she preserved her sweet simplicity, her religious zeal, her calm faith, amid the wicked fascinations of her brother's court, giving her heart to the three things she loved best—the king, France, and the gospel of her Christ.

Margaret went wrapped in the respectful veneration of Europe. The scholars of Christendom were especially proud of one who had devoted her way of life to literature and divinity, who wrote and spoke with equal grace and eloquence, who was familiar with Latin, with Greek, with Hebrew; they enthroned her as their princess, they hailed her as their Mæcenas.

She had also been early initiated into politics. The diplomats counted her one of the best heads in Europe; and Dandolo, the Venetian ambassador, affirmed her to be the ablest politician in France.

Margaret is said to have been beautiful and stately in her person; and thus accomplished, influential, politic, and courageous in her Christian belief, she walked through the kingdom binding up the wounds of the hunted dissenters, succoring the needy, befriending the outlawed professors of the hated truth,
earning the benediction of the sixth beatitude: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."

"A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit pure and bright,
with something of an angel's light."

After Francis had decided to fight heresy under the banners of the Sorbonne, Brantome relates that the constable, Anne of Montmorenci, when conversing with him upon the most effectual mode of extirpating heresy, did not scruple to say that "his majesty should begin with his court and his own relations," naming Margaret as one of the most dangerous of the heretics. Francis replied, "Nay, speak no more of her; she loves me too well not to believe what I believe," with which equivocating phrase he turned off his overzealous counselor.

Margaret has been finely called the mother of French reform. She did indeed by her life, by her precepts, by her station, by her enthusiasm, attract many to the gospel. Her influence in the upper tiers of society was especially marked. But there is always danger when princes turn missionaries. When the Bible spoke through the eloquent lips of the most beautiful woman of the day, there were some who yielded an apparent assent, not because they were penetrated by the truth, but because they were fascinated by the bewitching speaker; for when Margaret exhorted, who so stout as not to bow his head, and at least simulate conviction? But such Christianity was of course but superficial at the best; and when danger lowered, these fair-weather disciples skulked away. Others yielded an intellectual assent to the truths of Protestantism, but preserved the heart icy and untouched—a sad error, decomposing to the religious life of a church, destructive of the existence of nationalities.

Thus from one cause or another it chanced that there were many enlightened consciences in the upper ranks of French society, but there were few consciences which were smitten by the word of God. This weakened even the apparent strength of the Reformation in Latin Europe. For as Merle D'Aubigné has well said, "Conscience is the palladium of Protestantism, far more than the statue of Pallas was the pledge of the preservation of Troy in the heroic fable of the Odyssey."

When, a little later, Margaret, who had been already wed to the duke of Alencon—a prince of the blood, but a man without courage, amiability, or understanding, chief cause of the disaster at Pavia, from which field he lad fled in disgrace, and eventually died of shame—married again Henry d'Albrét, king of Navarre, the companion in arms of Francis, a prince brave, gay, accomplished, handsome, witty, learned, and eloquent, the young queen wrote religious toleration upon the first line of the first page of her code of laws, and
opened an asylum for the persecuted "evangelicals," which even kings long hesitated to violate.

Meantime the persecution continued with increased severity. The reform saw her children around her, some already dead, some in chains, all threatened with a fatal blow. Martyrdom followed martyrdom. Such havoc was made among the "evangelicals," that an annual procession was instituted to render thanks to the Almighty that they had been permitted to spill so much heretical blood. When Dymond Leroy, with five others, suffered in 1528, Francis went personally to witness the execution, and stood bareheaded while the fires were kindled. When the fête was over, the monarch marched away from the scene at the head of a procession of monks and priests.

Of course the encouragement king's personal attendance at an *auto da fé* could not but be productive of increased enthusiasm in persecution. France bled from every pore. To record these sufferings would convert these pages into a martyrology.

Francois, archbishop of Lyons and cardinal of Tournon, was the chief instigator of these massacres. This haughty and intolerant prelate was the representative of an ancient family. He had entered the church at an early age, and had risen rapidly through the various ecclesiastical grades—monk; abbé, bishop, archbishop—until, in 1530, in his forty-second year, he received the red hat of a cardinal.

Tournon was celebrated as a negotiator and as a statesman, but it is as a persecutor that he achieved his widest fame. To use his panegyrist's expression, "He made it as dangerous to converse in secret as to discuss in public. Nothing escaped this great man, who seemed to multiply himself in order to discover artifice or punish temerity; so that foreign princes were accustomed to say that he alone was equal to an inquisition in France."

The overweening pride and bigotry of this inflated prelate had been sharply curbed by Margaret while she resided at the court. But upon her departure for her kingdom of Navarre, the emancipated cardinal became the confidant and adviser of the king. He was thus enabled to give loose rein to his atrocities.

Under the iron hand of Tournon, the vacillating monarch was kept sternly immovable in the policy of blood. On one occasion when Margaret had persuaded her brother to listen to a sermon by one of her favorite preachers, Lecoq, curate of St. Eustache, who ventured "to preach the doctrines of Zwingli," as we are assured by Maimbourg, "though the king could not at first discern the venom concealed under his fine phrases," the cardinal compelled Lecoq publicly to retract, and imposed a penance on Francis for listening to his sermon.
At another time the queen of Navarre so highly extolled the piety and genius of Melancthon, that Francis consented to invite him to a conference with the French divines upon the best means of restoring harmony to the divided church.

The clergy were in consternation. The prospect of contending with the learned and eloquent St. John of the Reformation alarmed them as greatly as it elated the evangelicals. Francis had already dispatched the invitation; but Tournon undertook even at the last moment to prevent the visit. His scheme for changing the king's opinion is described by Maimbourg as worthy of immortality.

He entered the royal apartment apparently absorbed in the pages of a book which he held in his hand. Francis, noticing his abstraction, inquired the name of the volume which interested him so deeply. The prelate paused in his measured walk, looked up with a well-affected start, and replied, "Sire, it is a work by St. Irenaeus." He then instantly directed the monarch's attention to a passage where Irenaeus had given full scope to his feelings against heretics, showing that the apostles would not even frequent any public place where they were admitted. The wily cardinal then expressed his grief that, with such examples before him, the eldest son of the church should have sent for a heresiarch who was the most subtle and celebrated of Luther's disciples. Francis, surprised and shocked, instantly sent to revoke his invitation, protested by all the saints in the calendar that he would never renounce his hereditary faith, and, to give emphasis to the declaration, issued orders for the persecution of the heretics with additional vigor. "This sudden and generous resolution," moralizes the Jesuit who chronicles the episode, "fell like a thunderbolt upon the Protestants, who felt secure from such a reverse under the protection of the queen of Navarre."

The prospects of reform grew gloomier every day. The provinces were abandoned to the cruelty of the prelates. The capital was governed by the court. The court was controlled by two harlots.

It was during the reign of Francis I that women acquired that ascendancy at court which enabled them, under the two or three succeeding sovereigns, to nominate and to depose ministers, marshals, and judges—to dictate the policy of France. Francis, fond of gallantry and intrigue, thought that the charms of the softer sex would smooth the rough manners of his courtiers into becoming gentleness. From that idea sprang the new régime. The age of iron was succeeded by the age of debauchery. Ladies flocked to the court, each anxious to secure credit and influence, and careless of the means by which that object was gained. Chastity soon ceased to be a virtue—it became prudery; female honor was bartered for the privilege of bestowing pensions, or for the éclat of station. The authority of the ministers was merely nominal; the wives and daughters of the nobles swayed the scepter, each one retaining it so long as her beauty, talents, and intrigues enabled her to command an ascendancy.
Hence originated the excessive luxury, the super-refinement, the loose morality of the higher circles of French society. Men of letters, wits, poets, flitted through the galleries of the Louvre, each one attracted thither by avarice, by pleasure, by ambition, or by all.

The servility of these mocking letters increased the corruption of the age. The wits and poets who thronged the halls of the palace lowered the moral tone of the court circles by their nauseating flatteries, by their unchaste songs, by their profane epigrams.

They soon made themselves of use to the ladies by chanting hymns to the beauty of some favorite, and by satirizing her rivals. They held their talents to be a marketable commodity, to be knocked down to the highest bidder. Their verses conferred taste and genius upon their patrons, though nature might have denied them common-sense.

This mixture of lewd women, atheistic bishops, servile wits, and scheming courtiers, formed what was deemed a brilliant and gallant court.

The courtiers were divided into two rival factions, each of which obeyed one or the other of two beautiful but abandoned women, the Duchess d'Estampes, mistress of Francis I, and the famous Diana of Poitiers, mistress of the king's eldest son Henry, the dauphin.

Atheism might be bred by such an atmosphere; bigotry might be made to grow in such a soil; persecution might thrive in such ground; but the austere precepts of the Reformation were too rare an exotic to be fostered there. The self-denial, the pure morality, the indifference to unlawful worldly pleasure, which characterized the "evangelicals," awoke no responsive chord in the breast of a court surrendered to dissolute levities. Nay, the courtiers soon came to hate their reproving Nathan. "We are weary," ported Diana of Poitiers, "of the declamation of the reformed preachers against the vices of the court and of the church."

And so the guilty court spun out its wild dance, unmindful, as it quaffed its brimming bowl, as it reeled and joked and laughed, of the earthquake which growled beneath its feet.

But the orgies at the capital did not stay the devastating tread of persecution. The inquisitors walked across France, from the English channel to the Pyrenees, hunting heretics and kindling autos da fé, until, to borrow the striking expression of a writer who has painted that epoch for the instruction of shuddering Christendom, "France scented burning bodies in every breeze."
Chapter XII

THE APOSTLES of the FAITH

Reference has been already made to several of the worthies who aided in the resurrection of the gospel in France—to Renée of Ferrara, to the beautiful Margaret of Navarre, to Lefèvre, to that Berquin who suffered in the Place de Gréve, and who, with his Testament in hand, had traversed the neighborhood of Abbeville, the banks of the Somme, the towns, manors, and fields of Artois and Picardy, filling them with love for the word of God.

But there were other apostles of the faith besides these.

A nobleman of the German city of Strasburg, Count Sigismund of Haute-Flamme, a friend and ally of queen Margaret, who called him her good cousin, had been touched by Luther's heroism and the preaching of Zell. His conscience once aroused, he endeavored to live according to the will of God. Sigismund was not one of those nobles, rather numerous then, who spoke in secret of the Savior, but before the world seemed not to know him. The reformers all bore loving testimony to his frankness and courage.

Although a dignitary of the church, and dean of a celebrated theological chapter, the count labored to spread the evangelical truth around him; and one day, while busied in revolving the best means of doing so, he conceived a grand idea.

Finding himself placed between Germany and France, and himself speaking fluently the languages of both, he resolved to undertake the task of leavening France with the precepts of Christ.

He instantly commenced his self-imposed labor. As soon as he received any new work from Luther, he had it translated into French and forwarded to Margaret.

He did more. Esteeming the queen of Navarre to be the door through which the principles of the Reformation were to enter France, he wrote Luther, urging him to pen a letter to Margaret, or to compose some pamphlet calculated to encourage her in her zealous labors.

Count Sigismund's labors with the priests and nobles who surrounded him were not crowned with success. Some few gentlemen indeed spoke brave words, but they were only lip deep. But the monks looked at him with genuine amazement. Their dreams were disturbed, their licentiousness was reproached, the dolce far niente of their lives was to be broken up. "Ah ha! The
Reformation then means that we must change our easy life, give up our naps, quit our cloisters, surrender our illicit amours;" 'twas thus they reasoned. The keen eye of Lambert of Avignon, one of the ablest of the reformers, detected this commotion in the monkish dove-cotes, and turning to the count, he said with a smile, "You will not succeed here; these folks are afraid of damaging their wallets, their kitchens, their stables, and their bellies."

Sigismund succeeded better with Margaret. Soon after the defeat at Pavia, he wrote her a sympathetic letter; and again, when her sisterly affection drove her to seek Francis, when he languished in his Spanish prison, Margaret was strengthened and comforted by her good cousin's kind words.

Pierre Toussaint, prebendary of Metz, Roussel, one of queen Margaret's favorite preachers, and Farel, were also active servants in the vineyard during these initial years. They all endured great sufferings for the sake of that gospel which they loved. Still, nothing could shake their faith. They continued to tune their voices into harmony with the celestial chorus.

On one occasion, when Toussaint chanced to pass through the diocese of the abbot of St. Antoine, that violent and merciless priest seized the young evangelist, and despite his candor, sweetness, and the broken health under which he rested, plunged his fragile victim into a frightful dungeon full of stagnant water and other filth. Toussaint could hardly stand erect in this hideous den. With his back against the wall, and his feet on the only spot which the water did not reach, stifled by the poisonous vapors emitted around him, the young preacher recalled the cheerful house of his uncle the dean of Metz, and the magnificent palace of the cardinal of Lorraine, where he had been so kindly received ere he became a heretic. What a contrast! His health declined, his mind sank, his tottering limbs could scarcely support him.

Meantime poor Toussaint's friends had acquainted Margaret with his condition, and the indignant queen hastened by post to Paris, threw herself at the feet of her brother, and finally rescued this lamb from the fangs of the wild beast.

When the young evangelist came out of this fearful den, he was thin, weak, and pale as a faded flower. He stood bewildered. No one offered to receive this heretic who had just cheated the scaffold. But at length he went boldly to Paris, sought Margaret, and found an asylum with her.

Toussaint found the young queen surrounded by distinguished personages, all eager to present their homage. "Side by side with nobles and ambassadors dressed in the most costly garments, and soldiers with their glittering arms, were cardinals robed in scarlet and ermine, bishops with their satin copes, ecclesiastics of every order with long gowns and tonsured heads." These, desirous of enlisting the influence of Margaret in their favor, spoke to her of the gospel and of reform. Toussaint, a stranger to the chicaneries of politics,
listened with profound astonishment to this strange court language. At the outset he was deceived, and took the religious prattle of this troop of flatterers for sound piety. It was not long, however, before his eyes were opened. When he saw the drift of their artful harangues, he burned to expose them.

Learning that Lefèvre and Roussel had arrived in Paris from Blois, Toussaint, full of respect for them, hastened to their apartments, and with impetuous eloquence urged them to assist him in unmasking the hypocrites, and in boldly preaching the whole gospel in the midst of the giddy court.

"Patience, Toussaint," replied the two scholars, both timid by nature, and whom the debilitating air of the court had perhaps still further weakened; "patience; don't spoil every thing; the time is not yet come." Then Toussaint, ardent, generous, upright, burst into tears. "Yes," he said, "be wise after your fashion; wait, put off, dissemble: you will acknowledge however at last that it is impossible to preach the gospel without bearing the cross. The banner of divine mercy is now raised; the gate of the kingdom of heaven stands wide open. God calls us. He does not mean us to receive his summons with supineness. We must hasten, lest the opportunity should escape us, and the door be closed." But the timid scholars could not be moved. Then he wrote Œcolampadius, "Roussel is weak; Lefèvre lacks courage; God strengthen and support them."

For himself, he was stifled at the court; the air was closer to him than in the den of the abbot of St. Antoine. Disgusted by the lewd revels of the capital, he resolved to quit it. "Farewell to the court," said he; "it is the most dangerous and seductive of harlots."

Then the young Metzer, putting behind his back certain "magnificent offers" which had been made to him if he would stay and connect himself with the mystical and timidly progressive wing of the Roman church, which Briconnét then represented, quitted the kingdom. But foreseeing that a terrible struggle was approaching, he left with a prayer that God would enable France to show herself worthy of the Reformation.

William Farel, another of those men upon whom God set the seal of his apostleship, was one whose simple, serious, earnest tones carry away the masses. "His voice of thunder made his hearers tremble. The strength of his convictions created faith in their souls; the fervor of his prayers raised them to heaven. When they listened to him, 'they felt,' as Calvin once said, 'not merely a few light pricks and stings, but were wounded to the heart, pierced with the truth; hypocrisy was dragged from those wonderful and more than tortuous hiding-places which lie deep in the heart of man.'
"He pulled down and built up with equal energy. Even his life, an apostleship full of self-sacrifice and danger and triumph, was as effectual as his sermons. He was not only a minister, he was a bishop. He was able to discern the young men best fitted to wield the weapons of the gospel, and to direct them in the great war of the age; for Farel never attacked a place, however difficult of access, which he did not take."

Farel's native place was Gap, a little village in Dauphiny. Desirous of preaching the gospel to his relatives there, on one occasion he took up his quarters in a corn-mill hard by the gates of the hamlet, where he explained a French Bible to the villagers who crowded about him.

Ere long he ventured to preach in the very heart of Gap; "desecrating," as the Capuchins phrased it, "a chapel dedicated to St. Colombe." "The magistrate forbade his preaching, and the parliament of Grenoble desired to have him burned;" so runs the record of the monks.

Farel replied by a formal refusal of obedience; upon which Benedict Olier, a zealous papist, and vice-bailiff, escorted by a posse comitatus, marched to St. Colombe. The doors were shut, and double-barred. The officers knocked. All were silent. They broke in. A large audience were assembled, but not a head was turned; all were drinking in greedily the eloquent words of the dauntless preacher. The officers went to the pulpit, seized Farel, and "with the crime in his hand," as the forcible expression of the Capuchins put it, referring to the Bible which he held, he was led through the crowd and imprisoned.

But the followers of the new doctrine were already to be found in every class—in the workman's garret, in the tradesman's shop, in the fortified chateau of the noble, and sometimes even in the bishop's palace. During the night the reformers rallied, and either by force or stratagem took the brave old man from prison, hurried him to the ramparts, let him down into the plain in a basket, and "accomplices " who awaited him sped with him to a place of safety.

Although the larger part of Farel's apostleship was spent in foreign countries, for he was an exile from his dear France, yet he exercised a very marked influence upon the formation of the Gallican church.

Under the distant inspiration of Luther's eloquence, under the zealous labors of Toussaint, Sigismond, Farel, and Margaret, supported by an active host of less distinguished representatives, the reform continued to spread, despite Tournon's exertions and the denunciations of the Sorbonne. But the dissenters were scattered, often ill-informed on vital points of faith, and lacked uniformity of effort and belief. Who shall organize the Reformation? Who shall mold this heterogeneous mass of dissent into a grand unit? This loose-jointed body of reform, whose plastic hand shall reshape it into strength and symmetry? Such were the questions which Farel, Æcolampadius, Sigismond,
and the other chiefs of Latin reform began to put to each other with anxious emphasis.

Then the brain of French Protestantism began its work: John Calvin appeared.

Chapter XIII

JOHN CALVIN

John Calvin was born on the 10th of July, 1509, at Noyon, in Picardy, which was also Lefèvre’s native province. He was emphatically a man of the people. His family was not one of marked importance. His grandfather was a cooper at Pont 1’Evêque; his father was secretary to a bishop, and in the days of his greatest prosperity, apprenticed his brother Antony Calvin to a bookbinder. Simple, frugal, poor, intelligent, such were John Calvin's immediate progenitors.

His father valued letters, and he determined that his son should be liberally educated. The boy was therefore sent in his fifteenth year to the college of La Marche, at Paris.

There, pale, diffident to a painful degree, but with a look of striking intelligence, the bashful and studious boy of Noyon speedily shot to the head of his class. It was at the university that the famous friendship between Calvin and Mathurin Cordier began. Cordier, in 1523, when Calvin came to town, was a professor at La Marche. One of those men of ancient mold, who prefer the public good to their own advancement, he had neglected a brilliant career which had opened its alluring arms to welcome him, and devoted himself to the instruction of children. The professor was instantly attracted towards his singular pupil. Calvin's purity, his quickness, his thoroughness, his genius captivated him, and he lavished his instructions upon the thoughtful boy with unstinted hand. He taught him Latin and Greek and Hebrew. He initiated him into the temple of medieval culture. He imparted to him a certain knowledge of antiquity and of ancient chivalry. Indeed he inspired his pupil with his own ardor, and walked with him, arm in arm, in the “true path” of science.

In after years, when both master and scholar had been driven from France, and had taken up their abode in that little city at the foot of the Swiss Alps, whose mouth was to speak great things, Calvin, then expanded into the most celebrated doctor in Europe, loved to recall these days of his student life, and publicly announcing his indebtedness to Cordier, he said, "Oh, Master Mathurin,
Oh man gifted with learning and great fear of God, when my father sent me to Paris, while still a child and possessing only a few rudiments of the Latin language, it was God’s will that I should have you for my teacher, in order that I might be directed in the true path and right mode of learning; and having first commenced the course of study under your guidance, I have advanced so far that I can now in some degree profit the church of God."

But in those days both Cordier and Calvin were strangers to the evangelical doctrine, and devoutly followed the papal ritual.

"Calvin," says one of his biographers and disciples, "was at first a strict observer of the practices of the church. He never missed a fast, a retreat, a mass, or a procession." "It is a long time since Sorbonne or Montaigne had so pious a seminarist," was the common expression.

Thus Calvin, like Luther, while in the papal church, belonged to its strictest sect. "The austere exercises of a devotee's life were the schoolmaster that brought these men to Christ."

His application surprised his tutors. Absorbed in his books, he often forgot the hours for his meals, and even for sleep. The people who resided in the neighborhood were accustomed to point out to each other as they returned home late at night, a tiny, solitary gleam, a window lit up till the starry tapers of the sky were quenched in the grey of the morning. There sat John Calvin, elaborating in his august reveries thoughts which a little later were to convulse the universe.

Calvin’s father, familiar with his son’s genius, had marked out for hire a brilliant ecclesiastical career: an abbot’s mitre, a bishop’s cope, the red hat and the scarlet gown of a cardinal glittered before his eyes. Therefore when he heard from time to time of young Calvin’s rapid advancement in grammar, in philosophy, in scholastic theology, he would smooth his beard and say, "Ah ha! We shall see brave things yet."

In 1527, two years after leaving home, he went back to Noyon at vacation time, and “although he had not yet taken orders, he delivered several sermons before the people.” At eighteen he had a parish.

Then it was that a new light, which had but little resemblance to the false radiance of scholasticism, began to shine around him. At that time there was a breath of the gospel in the murky air, and the reviving breeze reached the scholar within the walls of his college, the priest in the recesses of his convent; no one was protected from its influence. Calvin heard people talk about the Bible, Luther, Lefèvre, Melancthon, Farel, and of what was passing in Germany.
When the rays of the sun rise in the Alps, it is the highest peaks that catch them first. In the sunrise of the Reformation, the most eminent minds were first enlightened. In the colleges there were sharp and frequent altercations. Calvin was at first among the most inflexible opponents of the evangelical doctrine; but soon he was won to study. Thoroughness was his mania. With him, as with so many others, examination meant emancipation. And at length, after a terrible struggle, he experienced that “joy and peace in believing” which had solaced Luther’s torn soul in the Erfurth cloister. His conversion was hastened by witnessing several martyrdoms. He opened his Bible. Everywhere he found Christ. Instantly the scales fell from his eyes. "Oh Father," he cried, "His sacrifice has appeased thy wrath; his blood has washed away my impurities; his cross has borne my curse; his death has atoned for me. We had devised for ourselves many useless follies, but thou hast placed thy word before me like a torch, and thou hast touched my heart, in order that I may hold in abomination all other merits save those of Jesus."

Calvin then, at nineteen, broke with Rome, and quitting Paris repaired to Orleans, and later to Bourges, where he "wonderfully advanced the kingdom of God."

After a life of vicissitudes, extending from the year 1527 until 1535, frequently smitten by the bolts of excommunication, a fugitive at Angouleme, at Nevac, at Poitiers, yet preaching at Paris, and haunting the scenes of his greatest danger, Calvin repaired to Geneva en route to Germany, where, unexpectedly to himself, his journey was summarily arrested; while his name became ever after united with that of the brave Alpine city which, under his sway became the Rome of the Reformation.

And here, at the name of Geneva, it becomes not only interesting and instructive, but germain to this history, to sketch the more salient outlines of the gallant and romantic story of that immortal city, as magnificent in the beauty of its landscape, clasped to the snowy bosom of the Alps, bathing its feet in the waters of lake Leman, as in the grandeur of its moving history.

Geneva was at first simply a rural township, and as a part of Gaul it became an appendage of the Roman empire when the emperors leashed the European provinces to their car of conquest. In the fourth century, under Honorius, it became a city, receiving this title after Caracalla had extended the franchise of citizenship to all the Gauls.

From the earliest times, either before or after Charlemagne, Geneva possessed rights and liberties which guaranteed the citizens against the despotism of their feudal lords. The Genevese claimed to have been free so long that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary; and it is certain that the precise date of the birth of their freedom is shrouded in the mist of remote antiquity.
The Genevese soil was composed of three strata: the political lords, the counts of Geneva, who even so early as the eleventh century had extended their rule over an immense and magnificent territory; the bishops, who, gifted with superior intelligence, respected by the barbarians as the high-priests of Rome, and knowing how to acquire vast possessions by slow degrees, finally confiscated for a time the independence of the citizens without much ceremony, and united the quality of prince with that of bishop; and the burghers, not very numerous, but always intelligent, and resolute to maintain their parchment guarantees.

When the counts of Geneva had been hoodwinked by the cunning of the bishops into ceding the city to them, they had reserved the old palace, and part of the criminal jurisprudence, and continued to hold the secondary towns and the rural district of their countship.

But in process of time dissensions arose. The conflicting jurisdictions of the bishop-princes and the counts clashed.

Prelates who had already turned their crosiers into swords, their flocks into serfs, and their pastoral dwellings into fortified castles, hungered for more power. The battered walls of Geneva yet bear the marks of the fierce struggle which ensued, and which continued through the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.

In the middle of the thirteenth century, Pierre de Savoy, a soldier and a politician, made a herculean effort to recover the city of his ancestors. The conflict lasted long; but eventually he was obliged to surrender his claims. Disgusted with his failure, and exhausted by his unceasing activity, Pierre finally retired to his castle of Chillon, where every day he used to sail upon the beautiful lake, luxuriously enjoying the charms of nature lavished around; while the melodious voice of his minstrel, mingling with the rippling of the waters, celebrated the lofty deeds of this illustrious paladin.

In the fifteenth century the counts of Savoy, having added several other provinces to Genevois, and become dukes, more eagerly desired the acquisition of Geneva than ever. They changed their tactics. Sheathing the ineffectual sword, they resorted to wily diplomacy. The new campaign was opened with spirit, and pope Martin V was petitioned to confer upon the dukes of Savoy the full secular authority in Geneva.

But the citizens, who in the lapse of ages had engrossed the civil government of the city, became alarmed at the news of this maneuver; and knowing that "Rome ought not to lay its paw upon kingdoms," good papists as they then were, they determined to resist the pope himself, if necessary, in the defense of their liberties. Placing their hands upon the gospels, they exclaimed, "No alienation of the city or of its territory; this we swear."
The sovereign of Savoy, balked in his best scheme, withdrew his petition. But Martin V, while staying three months at Geneva, on his return in 1418 from the Council of Constance, ran a-muck with the ancient city. There was something in the pontiff which told him that liberty did not accord with the papal rule. He was alarmed at witnessing the franchises of the Genevese. "He feared those general councils that spoil every thing," says a manuscript chronicle in the Turin library; "he felt uneasy about those turbulent folk, imbued with the ideas of the Swiss, who were always whispering in the ears of the Genevese the license of popular government."

"The pope," says D'Aubigné, "resolved to remedy this, but not in the way the dukes of Savoy proposed. These princes desired to secure Geneva in order to increase their own power. Martin thought it better to confiscate it to his benefit. At the Council of Constance it had just been decreed that episcopal elections should take place according to the canonical laws, by the chapter, unless for some reasonable and manifest cause the pontiff should think fit to name a person more useful to the church. Martin thought that the necessity of curbing republicanism was a reasonable motive; and accordingly, as soon as he reached Turin, he translated the bishop of Geneva to the archiepiscopal see of the Tarentoise, and heedless alike of the anger of the Savoy dukes, and of the rights of the canons and the citizens, he nominated Jean de Rochetaillée, patriarch in partibus of Constantinople, bishop and prince of Geneva."

The Genevese, surprised and overawed, acquiesced in sullen discontent. Seventy odd years rolled away, and still the faithful citizens remembered their broken charters, and hugged the memory of their ancient franchises. At the commencement of the sixteenth century, driven to desperation by the tyranny of their bishop-prince, they determined to revolt, and turning towards Switzerland, whose... "Hills, rock-ribbed, and ancient as the sun," had always borne up a hardy race of freemen, they invited the powerful Helvetic confederacy to assist them in expelling the usurper.

In its earlier stages the contest was a political one, but ere long it assumed a religious phase. The Reformation was preached. Its spirit took invincible hold of German Switzerland. The towns of the Helvetic confederacy had often come into collision with the grasping dukes of Savoy. Cherishing republicanism as their palladium of safety, they also hated the bishop-prince of Geneva, who had despoiled their Genevese cousins of their birthright, besides planting an inimical state upon their borders. Switzerland therefore lent a willing ear to the Genevan ambassadors, who came to solicit the assistance of the confederation. And when, a little later, the Helvetic cities had the additional motive of wishing to clutch Geneva as a trophy won to the reformed faith which they professed, they threw themselves into the contest with redoubled
ardor. Precisely as the house of Savoy, backed by the pope, wished to extend its limits in a monarchical and Romanist sense, Switzerland desired to extend hers in a popular and Protestant sense.

The Genevese did not at once accept the Reformation. Numberless fierce quarrels followed its entrance within their walls. But gradually the citizens, remembering the tyranny under which they had groaned when the bishop-prince swayed the scepter of Geneva, recalling the mischief which pope Martin had worked them, and perceiving that the liberality of the reform contrasted strongly with the intolerant despotism of Latin orthodoxy, came over and ranged themselves under the Protestant banners, adjudging their franchises safer under the Reformation than under Rome.

William Farel of Gap had joined the Protestant missionaries when they undertook to extend their creed into the Romanic border lands, and by his boldness, eloquence, and unceasing energy, he gave brave help in proselyting Geneva. Instigated by him, the city council had publicly proclaimed that Geneva adhered to the Reformation; and so wonderful was the spell of his preaching, that priests were seen to throw off their vestments before the altar, and confess the Protestant creed.

Such was the posture of affairs when John Calvin entered Geneva in the year 1535. His intention was merely to visit Farel for a few days, and then seek in Germany an asylum where he might devote himself to tranquil meditation. Farel, however, perceiving his vast ability, was resolved not to permit him to depart; and when Calvin refused to remain in Geneva, he announced the wrath of Almighty God upon him should he shirk his duty, for heaven, he said, would make the quietness of study a curse to him.

Calvin afterwards said that it appeared to him as if he had seen the hand of God stretched forth from above to hold him back; he dared not resist it.

Calvin and Farel clasped hands, and immediately began to preach.

It seems that there were in Geneva certain persons who had adopted the reformed faith because they thought that it would bring them increased personal license. These latitudinarians were soon offended at the strict discipline which the two orators of the Reformation proclaimed. They intrigued so effectually that Farel and Calvin were exiled.

Calvin was far from caring too anxiously for his person. He had been obliged to endure opposition, combined with agony of conscience, which he declared were more bitter than death—the mere remembrance of which made him tremble. He began now again to wander and to learn; in particular he commenced a correspondence with the German reformers, with Melanethon,
with Bucer, with Capito, and formed a closer acquaintance with them at the Diet.

It soon appeared that he could not be dispensed with at Geneva. The independence of the city was menaced in two directions: one party, which was inclined to the Vatican, were disposed to reinaugurate the old regime; the other showed a spirit of compliance with foreign dictation which imperiled the freedom of the town.

Both these factions were subdued, after long and sanguinary domestic contests, and those remained triumphant who regarded the maintenance of the strict Protestant discipline as the salvation of the city.

Deeply penetrated with this conviction, they looked upon all they had suffered as a punishment for the expulsion of their preachers. It was resolved to recall them. Although Calvin was extremely reluctant to return, yet Farel's solemn adjurations impelled him to accede to the call; and while Farel departed for Neufchatel, whither he had engaged to go, the great French divine reentered Geneva as a conqueror in 1541.

The condition of his return, though not distinctly stated, was still tacitly understood to be the adoption of his system of ecclesiastical discipline.

Calvin instantly went to work. He planted education as the basis of his state. He new-modeled the civil code, and shaped it to strict republicanism, sealing his renovation with these words of Christ: "THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE." He next organized the Reformation. The Genevese reformers shaped their divinity on the model of his "Christian Institutes," which were written in 1536, and dedicated to Francis I, before the final return to Geneva. Ere long this work was scattered broadcast through Latin Europe. The Reformation lost its heterogeneous character. The conflicting sects were melted into unity, and France at last accepted the essential tenets of the despised Vaudois when she permitted the plastic hand of her great Genevan doctor to mold her into Protestantism.

The Abbé Anquétil, an old chronicler whose words at one time were in wide favor with the papists, considers the "Christian Institutes" to have been the chief support of the "heresy;" "for they systematized the Protestant doctrines, and enabled their assemblies to keep together even when their ministers were torn from them."

God, by giving in the sixteenth century a man who to the lively faith of Luther and the scriptural understanding of Zwingli joined an organizing faculty and a creative mind of rare genius, furnished the complete reformer. If Luther laid the foundation, if Zwingli and others built the walls, Calvin completed the temple of God.
Then Geneva became the school of the Latin and Anglo-Saxon, as Wittenberg was of the German and Slavonic Reformation.

As soon as Guy de Brés and many other fiery scholars returned from Geneva to the Low Countries, the momentous contest between the rights of the people and the revolutionary and bloody despotism of Philip II of Spain began; heroic struggles took place, and the creation of the republic of the United Netherlands was their glorious termination.

John Knox returned to his native Scotland from Geneva, where he studied several years; then popery, arbitrary power, and the exotic immorality of the French court, imported by queen Mary Stuart, made way on the north of the Tweed for the pure enthusiasm which bred Christian liberty and civilization.

Those Englishmen who sought an asylum in Geneva during the bitter persecutions of "Bloody Mary," imbibed there a love of the gospel and of civil liberty; and when they returned to Great Britain, these fountains gushed out beneath their footsteps.

Numberless disciples of Calvin carried with them every year into France the august principles of the Genevese school.

Even the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, who, quitting their inhospitable country in the reign of that royal pedant James I, planted on this continent their populous and mighty colonies, may in no improper sense claim Geneva as their mother. Calvin, looming through the centuries, may stretch his hand across the water from Mont Blanc, and placing it upon the head of the American Republic, murmur a proud benediction, and say, "You too are mine; I created you."

Chapter XIV

THE VALLEY of the SHADOW of DEATH

It will be remembered that the French king's first edict against heresy had been issued on the 9th of June, 1523. Nearly three years later, February 5, 1526, government issued another fiat. In those days all proclamations were made by a herald who traveled from city to city, trumpet in hand, and sounding his trumpet in the public squares to collect an audience, cried out his message in a loud voice.
On the morning of the 6th of February there was an unwonted stir in the streets of Paris. Crowds of excited people thronged the pavements, and with vehement gesticulation and voluble tongue harangued one another upon some question of exciting import. The great rush was towards the Louvre. There, at ten in the morning, a herald took his stand upon the palace steps, and after the customary flourish of the trumpet, cried, by order of Parliament, "All persons are forbidden to put up to sale, or translate from the Latin into French, the epistles of St, Paul, the Apocalypse, and other books. Henceforward no printer shall print any of the writings of Luther. No one shall speak of the ordinances of the church or of images otherwise than as holy church ordains. All books of the Holy Bible, translated into French; shall be given up by those who possess them, and carried within a week to the clerks of the court. All prelates, priests, and their curates, shall forbid their parishioners to have the least doubt of the Romish faith."

When the herald paused, the vast crowd began to disperse. The comments were various. "Heresy should be choked in blood," said some. "The Sorbonne fear Faust's type," said others. The majority turned away with the peculiar French shrug, and said quietly, "Patience; we shall see."

The prior of the Carthusians, the abbot of the Celestines, monks of all colors, "imps of antichrist," says an old chronicler, openly rejoiced in this brilliant triumph over heresy. "They gave help to the band of the Sorbonne," and cried, Amen, at the end of every sentence of the proclamation.

A little later the new edict was cried in Sens, Orleans, Meaux, and "in all the bailiwicks, seneschallies, provostries, viscounties, and estates of the realm." And now Cardinal Tournou's inquisitors, taking one edict in the right land and the other in the left, walked on their mission of destruction hedged about with the sanctity of public law.

France bled at every pore.

History teaches best by individual instances. Descriptions of collective cruelties lose their graphic power through the breadth of the delineation.

There was a young man about twenty-eight years of age, a licentiate of laws, William Joubert, who had been sent by his father, king's advocate at La Rochelle, to Paris to study the practice of the metropolitan courts. Notwithstanding the prohibition of the Parliament, young Joubert, who was of a thoughtful disposition, ventured to inquire into the validity of the papal faith. Conceiving doubts, he said in the presence of some friends, that "not Genevieve nor even Mary could save him, but the Son of God alone."
For these words the unhappy licentiate was thrown into prison under the proclamation. His frightened father hastened to Paris by post; his son, his hope, a heretic, and on the point of being burned!

He gave himself no rest. Never before had he so exerted himself to save a client. He went to the Sorbonne; he visited the court; he besieged the Parliament. "Ask what you please," said the miserable father; "I am ready to give any sum to save my boy's life."

Vainly did the tireless advocate struggle. On Saturday, February 17, 1526, the inquisitor came for young Joubert, helped him into the tumbril, and carried him to the front of Notre Dame: "Beg our Lady's pardon for your infidelity," he said. Joubert was silent. He drove on to the front of St. Genevieve's church: "Ask pardon of St. Genevieve." The Rocheller was firm in his new faith.

He was then taken to the Place Market, where the people, seeing his youth and handsome appearance, deeply commiserated his fate. "Do not pity him," said the inquisitorial guard; "he has spoken ill of our Lady and of the saints in paradise; he holds to the doctrine of Luther." The executioner then approached Joubert, pierced his tongue with a red-hot iron, strangled him, and then burned the body.

A young student who already held a living faith, though not yet in priest's orders, had boldly declared that there was no other Savior but Jesus Christ, and that the Virgin Mary had no more power than the other saints. This youthful cleric of Théronanne, in Picardy, had been imprisoned in 1525, the year preceding the last edict. Terrified by that punishment, he went on Christmas eve, with a lighted torch in his hand, and stripped to his shirt, and "asked pardon of God and of Mary" before the church of Notre Dame. In consideration of this "very great penitence," it was thought sufficient to confine him for seven years on bread and water in the prison of St. Martin-des-Champs!

Alone in his dungeon, the recusant scholar heard once more the voice of God in the depths of his heart; his conscience beat loud beneath the silent porch of his prison. He began to weep hot tears at the remembrance of his denial of the faith; "and forthwith," says the chronicler, "he returned to his folly." Whenever a monk entered his cell, the young cleric proclaimed the gospel to him. The monks were astonished; the convent was in a ferment. Merlin, the grand penitentiary, went to him, and advised and entreated and stormed and menaced, all without effect. Finally, by order of the court, he was taken into the Place de Grove, where poor Berquin suffered, and burned alive.

Such were the methods employed by the Roman commission to force the abhorrent doctrines of their church back into the unwilling hearts of those who rejected them. They made use of scourges to beat them, of cords to strangle them, and, of fires to roast them alive.
But the ultramontanists did not confine themselves to hawking at untitled prey. In the year 1533 they flew at a higher quarry. Margaret of Navarre, herself a queen, and sister to the king, was venomously assailed.

Margaret, sighing after the time when a pure and spiritual religion should displace the barren ceremonials of popery, had published, first at Alencon, in 1531, and then in Paris, in 1533, a poem, entitled, "The Mirror of a Sinful Soul, in which she discovers her Faults and Sins, and also the Grace and Blessings bestowed on her by Jesus Christ her Spouse."

The poem was mild, spiritual, and inoffensive; but it was written by a queen, and it made a great sensation. Many persons read it with interest, and admired Margaret's piety and genius.

But not so the Sorbonne. Beda, the fiery syndic, absolutely devoured the little book; he had never been so charmed with any reading, for at last he had proof that the king's sister was a heretic. A diabolical plot had been laid by the ultramontane party to ruin Margaret a little before, and her household were steeped to the lips in the plot. But there was no occasion now to invoke the "Scythian ingratitude" of the queen's dependents. "Understand me well," cried the exultant syndic, holding up the volume, "this is not a dumb proof, nor a half proof, but a literal, clear, complete proof."

The Sorbonne assembled. "Listen," said Beda. The attentive doctors fixed their eyes upon the syndic. Beda read:

"Jesus, true Fisher thou of souls,
My only Saviour, only Advocate."

"Point against the accused," said Beda. He continued:

"Pain or death no more I fear,
While Jesus Christ is with me here."

"Confirmation," growled the syndic. "Listen again," said Beda:

"Not hell's black depth, nor heaven's vast height,
Nor sin, with which I wage continual fight,
Me for a single day can move,
Oh, holy Father, from thy perfect love."

The doctors were scandalized. "No one," said them, "can promise himself anything certain as regards his own salvation unless he has learned it by special revelation from God."

"Let us proceed," said Beda, overflowing with delight:
"How beautiful is death,  
That brings to weary me the hour of rest.  
Oh, hear my cry, and hasten, Lord, to me,  
And put an end to all my misery."

"Deadly heresy," said Beda; "what insolence!" He made his report. "Of a truth," said his colleagues, "that is enough to bring anybody to the stake."
The Sorbonne instantly prohibited the *Mirror of a Sinful Soul*, and put it in the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*.
The faculty decided that the first thing to be done was to search every bookseller's shop in the city, and seize all the copies found. A priest named Leclery made the search. Accompanied by the university beadles, he went to every bookstore, seized Margaret's poem wherever the tradesmen had put it out of sight, and returned to the Sorbonne laden with the spoil.
Then the faculty deliberated upon the measures to be taken against the queen. Meantime insinuations and accusations against the king's sister were uttered from every pulpit. Margaret was even lampooned in a college comedy which Calvin reported.
But still the faculty hesitated. They knew that Francis loved his sister, and they dreaded punishment. The monks were everywhere exasperated. "Let us have less ceremony," cried one of them, the superior of the Grey Friars; "put the queen of Navarre into a sack, and throw her into the Seine."
Margaret supported these insults with admirable mildness. But when Francis heard of them, his rage knew no bounds. The constable Montmorenci, who had caballed against the queen of Navarre, was publicly snubbed. The insolent prior who had proposed to sew Margaret into a bag and throw her into the river was next dealt with. "Let him suffer the punishment which he desired to inflict upon the queen," said Francis. But Margaret interceded for the wretch, and his life was spared. Stripped of his ecclesiastical dignities, he was sent to the galleys for two years. The collegians who had satirized the queen were imprisoned, and the Sorbonne was severely rated; Beda was exiled, and the faculty were advised "not to mix themselves up in such dangerous matters, or to beware of the terrible anger of the king."
Thus auspiciously to Margaret and to the reform ended this tilt with the Sorbonne doctors.
But a terrible tragedy was about to be enacted, which compensated the faithful for the mortification of this defeat. The unhappy Vaudois appear once more upon the historic stage; now, as always before, agonized as martyrs.
Some of the Vaudois remained in France even after the cessation of the atrocious harries of De Montfort and St. Louis in the thirteenth century; and reference has been made to those of Cabrières and Merindole, who were protected by the noble fiat of Louis XII. After their transitory appearance in that reign, the Vaudois had disappeared from the excited history of the succeeding ages, and wrapped in the mountain fastnesses of the French Alps, they procured the means of subsistence by pastoral industry. Thus they lived in peace with man and serving their fathers' God until the Reformation began to
stir the world. Then Calvin, from his seat in Geneva, offered them his alliance. He was familiar with the hoary tenets of their ancient faith, and he endorsed them.

Then the tranquil rest of the Vaudois mountaineers was broken. Their confession of faith was reported at Paris. Eighteen of their principal teachers were cited to appear before the Parliament. But ere the summons could be obeyed, a decree of extermination was pronounced upon them without a hearing.

William du Bellay was then governor of Provence. This gentleman was appointed by Francis to execute the sanguinary edict. With a humanity rare in those cruel times, the governor determined to see the king, and if possible to turn him from his purpose. Francis, who had previously appointed Du Bellay his envoy to the conference of Smalcald, held him in high favor, and condescended to hear his representations.

"I have come, sire," said he, "to inform your majesty of the actual character of the Vaudois, which, in my official capacity, I have taken great pains to investigate. They do certainly differ from our communion in many respects; but they are a simple, irreproachable people, benevolent, temperate, humane, and of unshaken loyalty. Agriculture is their sole occupation; they have no legal contentions or party strife. Hospitality is one of their cardinal virtues; and they have no beggars among them. No one is tempted to steal, for his wants are freely supplied by asking."

"But they are heretics," responded Francis sternly.

"I acknowledge, sire," said the governor, "that they rarely enter our churches; and if they do, that they pray with their eyes fixed on the ground. They pay no homage to saints and images; they do not use holy water; they do not acknowledge the benefit to be derived from pilgrimages, nor do they say mass either for the living or the dead."

"And is it for such men as these," said the king, "that you ask clemency? Go, go, Du Bellay; for your sake they shall receive pardon, if within three months they present themselves before the archbishop of Aix, renounce their heresies, and become reconciled with the mother church. If they are still rebellious, they must expect the utmost severity. Meantime the edict stands unrepealed. Think you that we burn heretics in France only that they may be nourished in the Alps?"

The Vaudois cherished their patriarchal opinions too faithfully, they were embalmed in the tradition of too much suffering, to enable them to even to think of submitting to the king's conditions. They therefore awaited their doom in frozen despair.

But it happened that the Provencal Parliament had for its president an advocate of unrivalled legal skill, M. Chassanée, and his noble heart prompted him to use every wile known to his profession to defeat the decree; and he did indeed succeed in postponing the execution of the edict until after his death. But Chassanée was succeeded by a fierce bigot named d'Oppede, who had no scruples to overcome. That we may not be accused of overcoloring the woeful
catastrophe which followed, we extract the account from the unfriendly pages of a Romish chronicler, the abbé, Anquétil:

"In 1545, Francis I gave permission to employ the aid of arms against the Vaudois mountaineers. It was granted at the solicitation of the Baron d’Oppede, president of the Parliament of Aix, a violent and sanguinary man, who revived against those heretics assembled in the valleys of the Alps on the side of Provence a parliamentary decree given five years before."

"Every thing was horrible and cruel," says the historian De Thou, "in the sentence denounced against them; and every thing was still more horrible and cruel in its execution. Twenty-two villages were plundered and burned, with an inhumanity of which the history of the most barbarous people scarcely affords an example. The unfortunate inhabitants, surprised during the night, and pursued from rock to rock by the lurid light of the fires which consumed their dwellings, only avoided one ambush to fall into another. The piteous cries of old men, of women, and of children, far from softening the hearts of the soldiery, as mad with rage as their chiefs, only served to indicate the track of the fugitives and mark their hiding-places, to which the assassins carried their fury.

"Voluntary surrender did not exempt the men from slaughter or the women from excesses of brutality which human nature blushed to record. It was forbidden, under penalty of death, to afford them any refuge. At Cabrières, the principal town of the canton, seven hundred men were murdered in cold blood; and the women who had remained in their houses were shut up in a barn, which was filled with straw and then fired. Those who attempted to escape from the window were hacked back by swords or impaled on pikes. At the last, according to the tenor of the sentence, the houses were razed, the woods cut down, the fruit-trees plucked up by the roots, and this country, so fertile and so populous, became an uninhabited desolation."

Such is the ghastly picture of this massacre, as painted by the reluctant pens of two inimical historians, De Thou and the Abbé Anquétil. Maimbourg, in describing the scene, says that more than three thousand persons were slain, and that nine hundred houses were plundered and then burned. Thus with a quivering wail passed this last remnant of the ancient Vaudois from the inhospitable and persecuting shores of time, to join their martyred ancestors in eternity.

But the Vaudois had accomplished their mission. They had dropped the seed which sprang up and bore a hundred-fold. Severity, far from checking the progress of the Reformation, only inspired its professors with sublimer energy. They died, on the scaffold or amid the flames, with the steadfast devotion of martyrs. Hitherto the reformers had only ventured to assemble at night, and in the unknown byways and slums of France. Now they met openly in the light of day. They even erected a church in the heart of scoffing Paris, while the chief cities in the provinces hastened to imitate the example of the capital.
Thus was fulfilled the later saying of John Calvin, that “the kingdom of Christ is strengthened and established more by the blood of martyrs than by force of arms.”

The END of SECTION II

SECTION III
The Battles for the Faith

This section comprises chapters 15 through 24. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 15  French Politics  
Chapter 16  Mutation  
Chapter 17  The Conspiracy  
Chapter 18  Almost a Tragedy  
Chapter 19  The Lost Leader  
Chapter 20  The Appeal to Arms  
Chapter 21  Death's Coup D'Etat  
Chapter 22  The Hollow Truce  
Chapter 23  Recommencement of the War  
Chapter 24  Hoodwinked France

Chapter XV
FRENCH POLITICS
On the 31st of March, 1547, Francis I died. Vacillating in his temper, arbitrary in his rule, selfish in his policy, yet generous in his private relations, he was the Don Quixote of a vicious chivalry. By his death, one more link was broken which bound France to feudalism.

Francis was succeeded by his son Henry II, a prince who inherited many of the qualities, and who adopted the essential policy of the paladin king; but he did not sway an unvexed scepter. Schism, dangerous and ever growing, was within the temple; the court was fretted by hostile cabals; the Commons were turbulent; France bristled with rebellion; while from without, the pope had his clutch upon Henry's dominion, England fomented discord, and Spain, under Charles V, "Forging the prodigal gold of either Ind To armed thunderbolts," was a perpetual menace.

Let us glance for a moment at the politics of the court at this critical epoch, and form the acquaintance of some of the grand historic figures who were destined to sway France, and to mold her future—some by their wicked ambition, others by the healthful play of their noble aspirations.

The reign of Henry II was emphatically an embryo period. It contained the roots of "many and tall trees of mischief," which afterwards covered France with an accursed shade.

Initiation into the vile mysteries of the temple of court intrigue—this is essential.

Four rival factions formed the substratum of the state.

Anne de Montmorenci, constable of France, the minister and favorite of Henry II, headed one clique. Montmorenci was able in the cabinet, and had won wide fame in the wars of the age; but his character was stained by bigotry and fierce rancor.

The leader of a second party was Diana de Poitiers, duchess of Valentinois, the king's mistress, who, through her wit and beauty, possessed boundless influence with her royal paramour.

Catharine de Medici, a daughter of the illustrious Florentine house which had given two popes to Christendom, the consort of the impetuous king Henry II, led a third faction in this scramble for power. Catharine's character had barely shown itself during the lifetime of Francis I; but now she began to emerge from her former obscurity, and during the successive reigns of her three sons, she possessed supreme influence in the government. The wily queen surpassed Machiavelli himself in tortuous statescraft. By constantly adjusting and
readjusting the equilibrium of the contending factions, she prevented each from overwhelming the other; played one off against another; and by prolonging this contest, she extended the duration of her own power.

The fourth faction of the court was that of the princes of Lorraine, better known in history as the Guises. These were the greediest and most unscrupulous jackals of this courtly pack. The Guises were looked on as foreigners, and their power in France was a mushroom growth.

René de Lorraine, who fought with Charles the Bold of Burgundy, and who more than once brought the claims of his house upon Provence, Naples, and Jerusalem to remembrance, ordained in his last will that Antoine, his eldest son, should succeed him in Lorraine and Bar, and that the other, Claude, should inherit his possessions lying in France: these were estates scattered throughout Normandy, Picardy, Flanders, and the Isle of France, with the baronies of Joinville, Mayenne, Elboeuf, and the counties of Aumale and Guise, all destined a little later to give names to distinguished warriors and prelates.

Among the chivalric leaders of Francis I, this Claude, who styled himself "Guise," whose domain had been raised from a county into a dukedom, made a brilliant figure. His bravery and miraculous preservation at the battle of Marignano, the central part which he took in preserving the peace of the kingdom during the captivity of the king after the fatal rout at Pavia, the pains he took to ingratiate himself with the masses and to cement the foundations of his power, ere long made him a great name in the realm. To crown all, he made a fortunate marriage, wedding a princess of the royal blood, Antoinette de Bourbon. From this union sprang six sons, full of vital energy, three of whom devoted themselves to the church, and three to arms, all achieving fame in their respective spheres. These were Francis duke of Guise, sometimes called prince of Joinville, Charles archbishop of Rheims and cardinal of Lorraine, Claude duke d'Aumale, Louis cardinal of Guise, Francis grand prior, and René marquis d'Elboeuf.

Such was the formidable house of Guise, propped by its six stalwart pillars; and even in the reign of Francis I, their rise and prowess towards power had been so rapid and insidious, that the dying king bequeathed to Henry a legacy of distrust of their talents and ambition, which he thought—rightly, as the sequel proved—were of an order to endanger the peace of France.

Between these factions raged the utmost hate. Usually they were at open war; but when peace reigned, it was but a hollow truce—*mars gravior sub pace latet*, war bitterer for the disguise. A coalition had been formed between Diana de Poitiers and the constable of France; so that the chief of the Montmorencis and the courtesan duchess for a time swayed the scepter with untrammeled hands. The duchess disliked Cardinal Tournon, and one of Henry's first acts was to dismiss this personified inquisition from the public service. Montmorenci
favored this move, and seeing that his only strength lay in Diana's smiles, he exerted himself to the utmost to flatter the king's passion for her.

Whatever was done or left undone owed its origin to no zeal for the public welfare, but was simply a maneuver to deceive the king, whom all parties conspired to blind, and who throughout his reign was merely the empty shadow of an authority which was really vested in powers behind the throne.

Such was the political situation at the commencement of the year 1548.

The ambitious projects of the house of Lorraine were rendered doubly dangerous and difficult to foil by the masterly tactics of Francis duke of Guise, one of the most remarkable men of that age. As a soldier, he had distinguished himself by the capture of Calais from the English, who had usurped it in a preceding century, and by his defence of Metz against the Spaniards. He possessed in an eminent degree most of those external advantages which captivate the multitude—a commanding presence, dignity, affability, an ingratiating address, and a certain chivalry. These rendered him the admiration of the populace, and made him the delight and ornament of the court.

His aspiring schemes were of course powerfully supported by his influential brothers with their hosts of retainers, all as anxious as himself to share the patronage and emoluments of office.

In pursuance of her favorite policy of an adjusted equilibrium, Catherine de Medici coalesced with the Guises, whom she both hated and feared, against Montmorenci, who stood in the path of their ambition.

It was against this powerful confederacy that the constable had to struggle. Feeling his inability to resist it single-handed, he had already, as we have seen, called Diana de Poitiers to his side. He now resolved to attach the princes of the blood to his party. The next heirs to the throne after Francis and the other sons of king Henry, were Antony de Bourbon and the prince of Condé.

Antony de Bourbon, who had become king of Navarre by his marriage with Jane d'Albrét, the daughter of the good queen Margaret, was weak, indolent, vacillating, and too fond of ease to take any active part in the troubled and stirring scenes which were soon to convulse the kingdom. He was only roused from his habitual torpor by the hope of recovering that portion of his realm which had been seized and retained by Spain. As his success in this object depended entirely upon the armed assistance of France, he was easily drawn into the ranks of the ruling party by empty professions of friendship and hollow promises of material aid.

His brother, the prince of Condé, who was connected with Montmorenci by a marriage with his niece, was a man of more determined character; and though
not possessed of those high qualities which are requisite in a successful party leader, he compensated the political defect of ordinary talent by great moral courage and inflexibility of purpose.

With many others of the higher nobility, he had espoused the reformed creed; and though he was too frank and open to shine as a diplomatist in an age when fraud and mendacity were the prime merits of a negotiator, he yet brought vast strength to the ranks of Protestantism. His finances were scanty, but he was liberal to his followers; and when life was at stake or honor in peril, lie displayed a promptitude and magnanimity of bearing which commanded universal respect.

Condé was the intimate friend of the Chatillons, an ancient family which had once exercised sovereign authority over Nantua and Moulonét, two towns in the neighborhood of Geneva.

The marshal de Chatillon had married Louisa de Montmorenci, the constable's sister, by whom he had three sons, two of whom achieved an immortality of fame. The eldest of these, Odét, became bishop of Beauvais and Cardinal Chatillon. He was a keen observer of the world, mild in his address, polished in his manners, an adept in the intrigues of the day, and possessed of all those winning and conciliatory arts which disarm an enemy and fix a friend.

The second son was the famous Gaspard Chatillon de Coligny, admiral of France, one of the brightest and grandest names in history, doubly consecrated by a life of sublime fidelity to Christian duty, and by martyrdom.

The gallant Francis Chatillon d’Andelot was the youngest member of the family; he held the office of colonel-general of French infantry.

The two younger Chatillons, better known by their seignorial appellations of Coligny and D’Andelot, were early initiated into politics by their uncle of Montmorenci, who placed great reliance upon their counsel and discretion. The fine talents of this famous family, their influential connections, their high offices, rendered them most formidable to the vaulting house of Guise.

D’Andelot became very early an enthusiastic adherent of the Reformation. His open and generous nature made him scorn concealment, and he frequently startled the court by his liberal conversation. On one occasion Henry II, upon hearing that his colonel-general had been heard to utter heretical sentiments, sent for him, on the advice of his favorite, Charles, cardinal of Lorraine, and interrogated him upon his opinions.

"How is this, sirrah?" said the king menacingly; "have you too become moon-stricken, that you utter this vile trash of Calvin, and rant like a common heretic against our holy mother church?"
Although D'Andelot had been cautioned to use prudence in his answer, he scorned to equivocate, and he replied firmly, but respectfully, "Sire, in matters of religion I can use no disguise, nor could I deceive God should I attempt it. Dispose as you please of my life, property, and appointments; but my soul, independent of every other sovereign, is only subject to my Creator, from whom I received it, and whom alone I deem it my duty to obey in matters of conscience. In a word, sire, I would rather die than go to mass."

This calm speech roused the king to such fury, that he drew his rapier and menaced the intrepid disciple with instant death. But when his rage cooled, he stripped D'Andelot of his honors, and threw him into the prison of Mélun.

This punishment had no moral effect. It was well known that the court was tainted with Protestantism, and that many nobles were as heretical as D'Andelot, though few might have the Christian courage so openly to avow their faith. It seemed partial and ungenerous to incarcerate a gentleman who had shown so much honor and daring. So that this imprisonment increased the popularity of the persecuted doctrines of the Bible. The reformers, jubilant over the support of D'Andelot, and trusting that all the members of his powerful family would espouse his creed, fearlessly assembled at the Pré-aux-Cleves, situated in the modern Faubourg St. Germain, and at that time one of the most fashionable promenades in Paris. There they sang the Protestant psalms of Marat in the open air. It became the fashion to visit these reunions; and many an idle courtier, who had lounged down to ridicule the "fanatics," as they were called, returned with his curses turned into benedictions, and his mocking laughter choked in prayer. Antony de Bourbon, king of Navarre, and Jane d'Albret, were habitués of these gatherings; and while they animated the preachers by their presence, they did not deign to disguise their attachment to the new opinions.

Coligny was remarkable for his caution in taking a step, but when he reached a decision he was inflexible. No one possessed greater intrepidity or more perseverance. Difficulties, instead of daunting him, only spurred him to greater activity, and served only to excite his ardor to surmount them.

It was his brother D'Andelot who first persuaded him to inquire into the justice of the Protestant claims. Coligny paused long. He studied carefully. Meantime he used his utmost exertions to secure the liberation of his brother. With great difficulty he at length prevailed on D'Andelot to acknowledge that he had spoken to the king too roughly. This acknowledgment, backed by the influence of Montmorenci, obtained his dismissal from the Mélun dungeon.

Pope Paul IV was very angry when the news reached him that D'Andelot was again at liberty. He imperiously demanded that he should be burned for heresy. Easier said than done. D'Andelot's uncle was then the arbiter of France; his brother, the cardinal of Chatillon, was one of the grand inquisitors. he would
doubtless hesitate long before consigning so dear a relative to the flames; so the unhappy pontiff had to content himself for a while with less distinguished victims. The Guises shared in the sadness of the holy father on this account, and they set spies upon Montmorenci while his nephew was in prison, in the foolish hope of being able to find some ground on which to base an accusation against that persecuting Saul of favoring heretics.

Coligny, like Calvin, was of the strictest sect of the papists. In an age of almost universal license, no blot has ever been found upon his moral purity. He maintained several priests at Chatillon; he also established free schools for the education of youth. Upon joining the reformers he continued the same acts, simply substituting Protestant preachers for the former monks. Girt with his conscience and armed with his principles, he would have braved the universe. When a little later he did, after long pause, declare his adherence to the Reformation, there was no more vacillation, no more timidity, no more doubt; not D'Andelot himself was more open and inflexible.

"Coligny and D'Andelot," says their biographer Brantome, "were both endowed with such imperturbable equanimity and coolness, that it was quite impossible to put them in a passion, and their countenances never betrayed their secret thoughts and inward emotions."

So admirable in their mental structure and in their moral nature were these brothers, the first political leaders of Latin Protestantism; their brilliant genius, their constancy, their unwearied zeal, their unflagging faith, made them the idols of the French reformers.

Chapter XVI

MUTATION

In the field of persecution, Henry II walked in the footsteps of Francis I. He regarded the extirpation of heresy and the convention of costly and knight-errant tournaments as the double mission of his kingly career. "For the accomplishment of the one, he squandered the blood, the treasure, and the honor of France; in the pursuit of the other, he lost his life, dying "as the fool dieth."

That he might secure leisure for the gratification of his bias for pageants and autos da fé, a hollow truce of five years' duration was patched up between
France and Spain, of which Henry could not say, as Francis I did on the dismal day of Pavia, "All is lost, save honor," for in this case honor went first.

Just before the declaration of this truce, in 1556, Charles V abdicated, after one of the most stormy, eventful, and checkered reigns in history. The self-deposed emperor retired into the monastery of St. Just, in Estremadura, where he spent his hours in vainly attempting to make a hundred clocks tick together, precisely as he had endeavored to wind up his subjects' consciences, and compel them to keep the time of the Vatican.

During the war just ended with Spain, in which Henry had been the ally of Maurice of Saxony and Albert of Brandenburg, who led the armed Protestantism of Germany, the cardinal of Lorraine had advised the temporary cessation of the religious persecution in France, in order to present the semblance of consistency.

Now the fires were once more lighted. Henry, to add dignity and importance to the executions, went in person to several of them. On one of these occasions he recognized an old domestic dying in the flames; his follower recognized him, and called out faintly from within the fire, "Save me, my king!" and the monarch was seized with such horror that, turning on his heel, he instantly quitted the scene, to hide his agitation and remorse in the depths of the Louvre.

But the reformers were not to be deterred from following the dictates of conscience. It was in vain that funeral piles were kindled in every town in France. The danger of martyrdom, while it excited every generous feeling in the hearts of the devout, and fanned enthusiasm to a white heat, also became a preventive to desertion. It confirmed the wavering. Many who would have acknowledged themselves persuaded in a theological dispute, would avoid the disgrace of yielding through dread of so unsatisfactory a proselyter as the fire.

In May, 1557, an event occurred which showed that the reformers were numerous even in Paris itself. Five hundred of them one night were assembled to celebrate the Lord's supper in a house in the Rue St. Jacques, opposite the College Plessis. The opportunity for a tumult was too good to be lost. The populace, instigated by the monks, gathered about the house, but no attempt was made to interrupt the service. When the assembly was dismissed, however, the reformers were assailed not only with threats and abuse, but with stones and rapiers. The darkness of the night would have enabled most of them to have escaped, had not lanterns been placed in the windows of the adjacent dwellings to illuminate the street.

Many were murdered; some few who had arms cut their way through the mob; but the old men, the women, and the children were left to massacre. In the midst of the orgie, some soldiers charged and dispersed the rioters; and while
the guilty escaped, the innocent reformers, to the number of two hundred, were taken into custody.

Proceedings were immediately commenced against these, notwithstanding the fact that among them were many persons of distinguished family connections. The cardinal of Lorraine demanded that they should all be condemned to the fire; but the parliament had not so capacious a maw: they did not require a hecatomb of victims to glut their appetite; and after a long process, five of the Protestants were sentenced to the flames.

Fortunately for the others, Henry required some levies in Switzerland and Germany; the elector-palatine solicited the enlargement of these prisoners; and as it would have been inconvenient for the kind to lose the friendship of that prince, he reluctantly ordered them to be treated with moderation, to the infinite regret of the pontiff Paul IV, who loudly complained in the consistory.

While Henry was at war with Charles V, a decree, called the edict of Chateaubriand, was passed, which placed the reformers under the secular jurisdiction. But now the cardinal of Lorraine was desirous of devising some method of defeating that edict, which served as a shield to the evangelicals. Accordingly he advised the appointment of an inquisitor of the faith in France, who should leave the power to cite, interrogate, and punish suspected persons, and who should likewise possess, through a bureau of trained spies, mischievous and ubiquitous, the means of penetrating into the privacy of families, and of exercising an unsleeping surveillance over the whole kingdom, from the mountains to the sea.

The pontiff greedily seized on the idea, and appointed Matthew Oni, a Dominican monk, to that hateful office. The king and his council approved this investiture of a foreigner with absolute power within the borders of his kingdom; but the parliament, somewhat leavened with the progressive ideas, and not wholly infatuated, ventured to remonstrate. "Sire," said Sequier, one of the presidents of the parliaments, "we abhor the establishment of this tribunal of blood, where secret accusation takes the place of proof, where the accused is deprived of every means of defense, and where no judicial form is respected. Begin, sire, by procuring for the nation an edict which will not cover France with funeral piles, which will not be wetted either by the fears or the blood of your loyal subjects. At a distance, sire, from your presence, bowed down under the pressure of rural labor, or absorbed in the exercise of the arts or of trade, the people are ignorant of what is preparing against them; they do not suspect that it is proposed to separate them from your throne by the intervention of an irresponsible foreign tribunal, which shall wreak its unchallengeable will upon them, and deprive them of their natural guardian. It is for them and in their name that we now present our humble remonstrances, nay, our ardent supplications.
"As for you, sirs," continued the orator, turning towards the sycophantic crowd of counselors and ministers who surrounded the king, "you who so tranquilly hear me, and secure in the royal favor imagine that this affair does not concern you, learn that it is fit that you divest yourselves of that foolish notion. So long as you enjoy the king's friendship, you wisely make the most of your time—'tis your harvest; benefits and kindliness are showered upon you without stint, and it enters into the mind of no one to attack you. But the more you are elevated, the nearer you are to the thunderbolt; one must be a stranger to the history of courts who does not know the trivialities which often precipitate disgrace.

"Under the present régime, even should that misfortune befall you, you could now retire with that fortune which would in a measure console you for your fall. But dating from the registration of this edict, your condition would cease to be the same. Mark! You will have for successors men poor and hungry, who, not knowing how long they may remain in office, will burn with a desire to enrich themselves at once and by whatever means. They will find a wonderful facility in doing so; for, certain of obtaining your confiscation of the king, it will only be necessary to bribe an inquisitor and two witnesses. Then, though you may be saints, you will burn as heretics."

This argumentum ad hominem of the subtle parliamentary orator, produced a profound impression upon the council, and also on the king, who was so affected that he remitted the consideration of the question to another day.

Apropos of this edict, it was just before the wily cardinal of Lorraine conceived his notable scheme for the extirpation of heresy, that the society of the Jesuits, the pests of modern Europe, commenced their machinations, under the protection of this same prelate. So early as 1550, the cardinal procured from Henry II letters patent, by which they were permitted to build an establishment in Paris.

The order of the Jesuits owed its origin to the efforts of a fanatic Spaniard, Ignatius Loyola, who, "poor, obscure, without a patron, without recommendations, entered that city—where now two temples, rich with paintings and many colored marbles, commemorate his great services to his church; where his form stands sculptured in massive silver; where his bones, enshrined amid jewels, are placed beneath the altar—and by his activity and zeal launched his protean propaganda.

"With what vehemence, with what unscrupulous policy, with what forgetfulness of the dearest private ties, with what intense and stubborn devotion to a single end, with what laity and versatility in the choice of means, the Jesuits fought the battles of their church, is written on every page of the annals of Europe during several generations. In 'the order of Jesus' was concentrated the quintessence of the Romish spirit, and its history is the history of the papal reaction against Luther. The order possessed itself of all the strong-holds which
command the public mind—of the pulpit, of the press, of the confessional, of
the academies. It was into the ears of the Jesuit that the powerful, the noble,
the wretched, and the beautiful breaded the secret history of their lives. It was
at the feet of the Jesuit that the youth of the higher and middle and lower
classes were brought up, from the first rudiments to the courses of rhetoric
and philosophy."

Such was the order which, dominant in the south of Europe, now sued for
admission into France. At the first their welcome was not hearty.

When Henry's letters-patent were presented to the parliament for registry, the
procureur-general strongly opposed their reception, and the act of legalization
was suspended in consequence of his remonstrances. But in 1552, the Jesuits
obtained new letters-patent, which contained a peremptory order for their
registration. The procureur-general, however, persisted in his opposition, and
for two years more the question hung undecided. Finally, on the 3rd of August,
1551, the parliament decreed that, before the matter was definitely decided,
the letters of the king and the papal bulls which the Jesuits had obtained,
should be referred to the bishop of Paris and the dean of the Sorbonne Faculty
of Theology.

The bishop, whose name was Eustace de Bellay, did not hesitate to declare
"that the bulls of Paul III and of Julius III contained several articles which were
contrary to reason, and which could not be tolerated or received in the
Christian religion; that those in whose favor they were issued, by arrogating to
themselves the title of 'Company of Jesus,' which could only be applied with
propriety to the universal church, of which Christ was the head, appeared to
desire to constitute themselves that church; moreover, as the principal object
they proposed to themselves was the conversion of the Mohammedans, it would
be better to give them a house on the frontier of the Ottoman empire, than in
Paris, which was so distant from Constantinople."

The answer of the Sorbonne was not more favorable. Feeling persuaded of their
ability to cope singly with heresy, and

"...too fond to rule alone,"
able to
"Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,"

that body, by a unanimous vote, declared the new society "dangerous to the
holy faith, calculated to disturb the peace of the church, and more fitted to
destroy than to edify."

These two replies annihilated the hopes of the Jesuits during the reign of Henry
II; but they plotted in the dark, and bided their time.
Meantime the truce with Spain had been broken; both kingdoms had placed large armies in the field, and the constable, Montmorenci, after sacking the town of Sens, and pillaging Artois, came upon the Spaniards before St. Quintin, which place, the admiral Coligny, one of the ablest captains of the age, held for France.

St. Quintin had been vigorously besieged, and though it was but indifferently strong, the gallant admiral had kept it for his king, while Montmorenci was coming to succor him.

On the 10th of August, 1557, the constable reached St. Quintin, and attacking the enemy with Quixotic indiscretion, suffered a disastrous defeat, in which he was himself captured.

In consequence of Montmorenci's captivity, the cardinal of Lorraine became the administrator of the government, and the family of Guise employed their opportunity in securing the hand of the Dauphin for their niece Mary, queen of Scots, and in promoting their adherents to all the influential offices of the court, the capital, and the provinces.

But upon this occasion the Guises' lease of power was not of long duration. Philip II, tired of the French war, and familiar with Henry's friendship for Montmorenci, played upon these chords a tune of reconciliation with his "dear brother of France;" and after several ineffectual attempts, the treaty of Chateau Cambrisis was signed on the 3rd of April, 1559.

Montmorenci immediately resumed his ministerial functions, and the humiliated Guises were completely stripped of their snug stations and usurped honors. The cardinal of Lorraine, however, who had contrived to render himself necessary to the king, remained near his person, like an evil genius, ever prompting the impressionable monarch to wicked and arbitrary acts.

The cardinal's next act was atrocious. By the treaty of Chateau Cambrisis, it had been stipulated that Henry's daughter Elizabeth should marry the king of Spain. The city was now crowded with illustrious Spaniards who had come to witness the marriage ceremony, and to accompany the young queen to Madrid. Henry's penchant for magnificent follies and splendid fêtes led him to celebrate the occasion with unusual pomp, and to prepare the lists of endless tournaments.

The bias of several prominent members of the parliament towards heresy was well known; and the independent and liberal action of the legislature on several recent occasions, had disgusted the bigoted cardinal and provoked the king.
Lorraine determined to make use of the Spanish marriage to wreak his vengeance upon the obnoxious legislators.

One day he entered Henry's cabinet, and delivered this infamous harangue: "Sire, although it would serve for nothing more than to show the king of Spain that you are firm in the faith, and that you will not suffer any thing in your kingdom which will disparage your excellent title of most Christian king, still you ought to proceed about it boldly, and with great courage. You must gratify all these grandees of Spain, who have accompanied the duke of Alva for the solemnity and honor of their sovereign's marriage with your daughter, by ordering half a dozen councilors of the parliament to be burned in the public square as Lutheran heretics, which indeed they are. By so doing we shall preserve the bulk of the legislature; but if you do not take these measures, the whole court will be infected and contaminated with heresy, even to the clerks, attorneys, and tipstaves."

The cardinal then, with the craft of those Jesuits whom he befriended, persuaded the king to go to the legislative chamber as if to consult his counselors on the measures to be taken for the suppression of heresy, but really to observe the responses of the members of the parliament, and if possible to ascertain their secret sentiments, by submitting to their frank consideration and judgment some project which should draw from them an avowal of their own heresy.

Montmorenci, instead of dissuading Henry from such black treachery, approved it in open council. Vieilleville alone, who records the incident, raised his voice against it, as degrading to the royal dignity, affirming that "he was about to take upon himself the office of an inquisitor, and that the cardinal's proposal would entirely destroy the joyous feeling of the public."

But the cardinal's advice prevailed. Henry convoked the Parliament, and in a few well-disguised and gracious words, begged the advice of his counselors upon the best means for the pacification of the kingdom. The more wary judges confined their remarks to general and vague expressions, believing that the use of language was to disguise one's meaning, as one of their later countrymen, the famous Talleyrand, phrased it.

Some were less cautious, or more honest. "Let us begin," said Louis Faur, "by examining who the real author of our troubles is, lest the same answer should be made to us which Elijah made to Ahab, 'It is thou that troublest Israel,' " and a look at Cardinal Lorraine directed the application to him. The celebrated Anne Du Bourg, the son of an illustrious family in Auvergne, and nephew of the chancellor of France, next spoke. He surprised his hearers by the boldness of his speech, enlarging upon the cruelties heaped upon the reformers, and remarked with emphasis, "While men are conducted to the stake for the sole
crime of praying for their prince, a shameful license encourages and multiplies blasphemies, perjuries, debaucheries, and adulteries."

The courtiers trembled, for they considered this sentence as intended for the king and the duchess de Valentinois.

When Du Bourg resumed his seat, Henry rose in a great passion, and gave vent to a torrent of reproaches against the moderate party, and especially against those who, enamoured of the beauty of plain speech, had boldly avowed their sentiments.

On quitting the chamber, he made a sign to Count Montgomery, captain of his Scotch guard, who had surrounded the convent of the Augustines, where the Parliament was then sitting, with his men-at-arms. A fierce look directed towards Faur, Du Bourg, and three others, gave sufficient instructions for him. They were arrested in the midst of a parliamentary session, and immediately thrown into a dungeon—a high-handed violation of public law and official etiquette, the mere attempt at which, in the succeeding century, cost an English king his head.

Charges were instantly huddled up against the five counsellors, the trials were pushed on with indecent haste, and so hot was the anger of the king, that "he expressed a desire to see Du Bourg burned before his own eyes."

But before this brutal wish could be gratified, Henry's own life was abridged by violence; and singularly enough too, he was doomed to die by the blundering lance of that same Montgomery whom he had just employed in outraging the higher majesty of the Parliament, in the very sanctuary of justice.

At a tournament held in the Faubourg St. Antoine, on the 27th of June, 1559, the last of a succession of jousts which Henry meant should give éclat to his daughter's marriage, the king, after contending with and vanquishing several of his politic courtiers, elated by his success, challenged Count Montgomery to enter the lists with him. The count was reluctant to comply, but Henry would not accept his refusal. Finally Montgomery entered the arena; two fresh lances were given to the champions; the trumpets sounded the charge; the knights met, with a terrific crash, in mid-career; and when the dust rolled up, Henry was seen unhorsed, and with a portion of his captain's shattered lance protruding from his visor. The shiver pierced into his brain through the left eye; and after lingering through eleven days, he expired on the 10th of July, 1559, in the forty-first year of his age, and the twelfth of his reign.

If history has not scourged the character of this puppet king so severely as it has those of his monster brothers, Charles IX and Henry III, it is not because he was less deserving of obloquy, but because he was fortunate enough to cheat history by a death which struck him at the very moment when he had matured
a plan for the extermination of French Protestantism. Henry II was as weak, as deceitful, and as execrable as any scion of the Valois line. Informers were encouraged by the prospect of reward to denounce the innocent; a casual, an ambiguous phrase was a sufficient warrant for arrest; suspicion was equivalent to proof; whoever sheltered a heretic was held to be a participant in his crime; confidence between man and man was lost; members of the same family distrusted each other; the worst passions of human nature were let loose by a bribe, and France became an extended dungeon.

It was in the reign of Henry II that the sobriquet Huguenots began to be generally applied to the French reformers. Like the names "Puritan," "Methodist," and "Abolitionist," this was originally a term of reproach; but the Protestants of France, like those of England and America, were wise enough to seize an epithet hurled at them as a missile, and wear it proudly as a jewel. In a few years this designation completely superseded all others: "Protestant" and "evangelical" were swallowed up in it; and Huguenots became the honorable and universal synonym of politico-ecclesiastical reform.

Chapter XVII

THE CONSPIRACY

With the death of Henry II terminated a historic rivalry. Diana of Poitiers at length succumbed to the subtleties of Catharine de’ Medici, who not only drove the courtesan from the court in ignominy, and confiscated her immense estates, but who actually appropriated the fair Diana’s jewels.

The politics of the Louvre were once more revolutionized. Montmorenci, whom Catharine hated because he had coalesced with Henry’s mistress, and put her authority under the ban, and whom the Guises intrigued to displace because he had deposed them and himself swayed the scepter, was one morning politely advised by the boy king to quit Paris, and take the benefit of the air at his country-seat.

The Guises were reseated in power. The feeble hands of Francis II, who was but sixteen when he ascended the throne, on the 10th of July, 1559, and poor Mary Stuart, were not old or energetic enough to hold the reins of government. Their uncles of Guise and Lorraine were kind enough to perceive this, and to relieve their majesties of the cares and honors of the state.
To be sure the witty Parisians were so unkind as to frame epigrams, and to assert that this philanthropic action of the bashful and modest house of Guise, whose probity was thus slurred, really held the king in duress. But when did a generous action ever fail to be misconstrued?

The naughty Huguenots took this view of the case; and esteeming it to be their first duty as loyal subjects to emancipate their king, they immediately prepared to stereotype their opinion into action. The Huguenots caballed. The king's duress bred a conspiracy. But while the conspirators yet plotted in the dark with an immature programme, another *auto da fé* was kindled, which caused all France to growl ominously.

Anne du Bourg had remained in prison since the death of Henry II. The cardinal of Lorraine, securely entrenched in power, and emboldened by success, ordered that noble counselor’s trial proceed. Du Bourg, though deserted by the craven parliament which had permitted itself to be dragooned into submission, defended himself with the utmost vigor and spirit: he challenged one of his judges, president Minard, his bitter personal enemy; despite of which Minard took his seat on the judiciary bench, and presided at the trial.

Du Bourg could not resist the impulse to upbraid this French prototype of the English Jeffries; and he concluded a scathing philippic by prophesying that this base judge would soon be called to appear before a more awful bar, when he would wish to be as guiltless as his prisoner then was known to be.

These words were quickly and strangely verified. As Minard was returning home one evening from the court, he was assassinated. This occurred in the night of the 12th of December, 1559. On the morning of the 23rd, Du Bourg, despite the herculean efforts made by the Huguenots to save him, was led out to be executed.

The counselor’s firm demeanor on reaching the fatal plaza, excited the sympathetic admiration of the hardened mob which haunted the gallows. Measures were taken to prevent his addressing them; the executioner was ordered to gag him, should he attempt to speak.

At the foot of the gibbet a crucifix was held before his lips, but he refused to kiss it; after which he was immediately pulled up and strangled, amid shouts of *Jesu Maria* from the human tigers below.

His last words were a prayer: "Father, abandon me not; neither will I abandon thee."

"Thus," says a historian, "perished Anne Du Bourg, in his thirty-eighth year, a man of rare talents, and yet rarer integrity, loved, wept, and honored even by many of those who did not share his faith."
After hanging for some time, the body was cut down and burned, the ashes being scattered to the four winds.

As in the classic story of the Roman Gracchi, so the martyred counselor, mortally smitten, flung his dust towards heaven, calling the avenging God to witness; and from that dust sprang ere long the embattled ranks of D'Andelot and De Coligny, eager to defend their faith and liberty.

While this tragedy was being enacted, the conspiracy of Ambois ripened. History has recorded few undertakings of a similar character in which the design was more extensive, the motives more just, the plan more skilful, the means more adequate, and the failure more miserable.

The Jesuits, ever watchful to obtain a foothold in France, now that their protectors of the house of Guise were the arbiters of the kingdom, ventured to emerge from their holes, and, though denounced by the parliament, the bishop of the metropolis, and the Sorbonne, to sue for legal recognition. This, through the finesse of the cardinal of Lorraine, was at length accorded them, and the privy council distinctly declared that “the Jesuits claimed no privileges hostile to the episcopal supremacy, the authority of curates, colleges, or universities, or to the liberties of the Gallican church.”

The parliament, overawed by the execution of Du Bourg, and filled with servile counsellors, did not venture to baulk the cardinal for a third time; and after sprinkling rose-water, in the shape of explanatory articles, over the charter with dainty fingers, the Corps Legislatif and the bishops agreed to the act of incorporation, though an additional clause, which plainly indicated the distrust of the court itself, was appended ere the registration, which provided that “if, in the course of time, any thing should result prejudicial to the prerogative of the crown or the rights of the people, the constitution of the Jesuits might be reformed.”

The legal recognition of this hateful tribunal filled the reformers with alarm, for they justly suspected that these mysterious and ubiquitous priests, who spun their webs in the dark, who invented every thing, who denied every thing, who even seized blank paper and, “after the manner of spiders, sucked heresy from it,” would ally themselves with their patrons the princes of Lorraine, in a grand effort to annihilate the Huguenot idea.

The alarm of the reformers; the discontent of the nobility, excluded from all posts of trust, replaced in office by the upstart retainers of the house of Guise; Montmorency, the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, all disgusted by the haughty behavior of the cardinal of Lorraine—these circumstances seemed at once to warrant and to guarantee the success of an insurrection against the “hated foreigners” who, through their niece, ruled the king.
The discontented nobles and the Huguenot politicians at once formed a confederacy, the former to end the political usurpations of the Guises, the latter to protect their party against the repetition of those severities which were threatened by the ugly precedent of Du Bourg.

The conspirators held their first conversations at the castle of La Ferté, which was situated on the frontier of Picardy. The prince of Condé was unanimously elected chief; but he was not to be known as a participator in the plot until the decisive moment came. Condé accepted this position, annexing this reservation: "Providing nothing be done or attempted against God, the king, my brothers, or the state."

In the mean time a gentleman named La Renaudie, of a noble family of Perigord, a Huguenot, was selected to be the nominal head of the conspiracy. La Renaudie combined every quality requisite for the elaboration and direction of such a movement. Eloquent, energetic, persevering, intelligent, brave even to rashness, familiar, through a long residence at Geneva, with those multitudinous religionists who had been expatriated for their faith, no one could be better fitted to secure the cordial cooperation of the Huguenots.

On the 1st of January, 1560, the confederates assembled in a ruined chateau in the outskirts of Names—attracted thither by the cloak to their movements which the vast concourse of people who then crowded the city to witness the holiday fêtes would be—and here the final arrangements were made.

When night had fallen, and the conspirators had all gathered at the rendezvous, La Renaudie addressed them in a low but intensely earnest voice. In a few vivid sentences he painted the tyrannies of the house of Guise, dwelt with graphic rhetoric upon the injuries which they had entailed on France, affirmed his belief that the princes of Lorraine only waited for the death of the feeble and boyish king who might die at any moment under their skilful nursing, as the orator darkly hinted—to usurp the scepter of poor Francis II, and seat one of their own family upon the throne. "For my part," he continued, forgetting in his heat to observe that cautious monotone in which he had so far spoken, and rising in vehemence, "for my own part, I protest, I swear, I call God to witness, that I will never think or say or do any thing against the king, against the queen his mother, against the princes his brothers, against any of his blood; but that I will defend to my latest breath the authority of the throne, the majesty of the laws, and the liberty of France against the hateful tyranny of foreign usurpers."

"We swear it!" echoed the band, bathed in the swarthy light of the stars, with upraised hands and uncovered heads. The tyranny of the Guises had excited such a feeling that no intervening danger, not the dread of the block, nor the awful pangs of inquisitorial torture, could chill the ardor. All signed the oath, shook hands in unison, embraced each other weeping, and loaded with
imprecations any wretch who should be perfidious enough to betray the plot. Just before the separation, the fifteenth of the following March, and Blois, were fixed on as the time and place for the execution of their programme.

Ten minutes later and the old chateau of Nantes resumed its disturbed dreams; soon the conspirators were scattered to the four corners of France, each on his mission of mischief to tyrants.

The purpose of the confederates was to possess themselves of the royal person, to arrest the princes of Lorraine, and to vest the administration of the government in the prince of Condé. There was no intention to injure the king, but simply to release him from the duress of his uncles of Guise; and the distinct avowal of this principle won the confidence of all the loyal gentlemen in France.

Francis II was of a fragile and sickly constitution; and since, in the spring of 1560, he was a greater sufferer than usual, the court physicians prescribed a change of air and scene for the royal invalid. Accordingly the Guises transported him to the town of Blois, whose climate was mild and salubrious.

It was at Blois then, where the court was yet sojourning, that the mine was to be sprung upon the Guises.

For a time "all went merry as a marriage bell;" the confederates sailed over a placid and auspicious sea. Success seemed certain. The princes of Lorraine, charmed by the syren songs of prosperous wickedness, lay lapped in supine security, when suddenly the overconfidence of the chief conspirator withdrew the veil of secrecy, and every thing was revealed.

La Renaudie quitted the rendezvous at Nantes for Paris, where he was to station himself and direct the plot.

He lodged in the house of an old friend, Avanelles, a lawyer, who, suspecting mischief from the vast number of persons who called upon his comparatively uninfluential guest, mentioned his suspicions to La Renaudie. That gentleman very indiscreetly acknowledged the existence of the conspiracy.

The meddlesome and perfidious attorney professed to be well pleased with the plan and purpose of the intrigue, and after sucking its minutiae from his overconfiding friend, he hastened to the metropolitan residence of the Guises, and unfolded the whole plot to the cardinal's secretary, who instantly posted Avanelles off to Blois to apprize the court of the volcano upon which it trembled.
The messenger arrived travel-stained and weary, and his interview with Francis duke of Guise speedily interrupted the frivolous festivities with which his ambitious relatives amused the attention of the king.

Francis, unaware of the existence both of Avanelles and his news, was strolling in the meadows of Blois, while the agitated Guises interrogated the volunteer attorney. He found his principal solace and amusement in the company of his beautiful and at that time innocent young queen, Mary Stuart. Her harp often soothed the painful restlessness engendered by disease; and though flattered and worshipped and caressed wherever she appeared, though walking upon roses, she really seemed devoted to her royal husband.

The hair of the girlish queen was singularly beautiful, and curled in natural ringlets. It was then a custom to wear low skull-caps; these, as a matter of fashion, were considered regal; but Francis was so proud of his pet's head that Mary threw them off. The king delighted to hear the tones of her voice in singing, in speaking, in reading; and often, when sleep fled from his weary pillow, Mary would patiently lean over him, and lure the truant back by low, sweet chants, or by the touching music of her own dear Scottish ballads.

This was the queen who was, in later and more dismal years, arraigned for the murder of Darnley, her own husband.

She may have been guilty, for who can spell the riddle of corrupting circumstances? Early separated from her mother, trained at a licentious court by ambitious uncles, that firm, unyielding principle, that elevation of character which is developed and strengthened by judicious education, could hardly have been acquired. Instigated by hatred, beckoned on by passion, poor Mary may have erred most sadly in the melancholy hours of her later career; but now her generous and gentle nature still controlled her.

On the morning of Avanelles' advent, Francis and Mary, together as usual, were in the fields—pausing here on an eminence which commanded a wide prospect, there by the side of the magnificent Loire, and roiling away the hours in sweet converse. Francis, looking forward to a life of regal splendor, expressed an earnest desire for the time to come when, unfretted by his uncles, he might govern his own empire. Mary chatted of her native land, of the heath-covered mountains of Scotland, and many a quaint legend gathered from the superstitious gossip of her attendants.

Suddenly the duke of Guise joined them.

"A fair morrow," said he, "for the hopes of France. What says my royal cousin, what says his consort, to a hunting gallop to-day?"
A ready acquiescence was given; and returning to the castle of Blois, where Louis XI had been born, the court-yard was speedily filled with hounds and steeds, and ere long the merry party were flying over the country at great speed.

When the walls of Blois had been left far behind, Guise reigned up beside Francis, and informed him of the discovered plot, and told him that the hunting party was only a pretence for removing him from an unfortified town to the stronger protection of the Amboise donjon.

Francis was displeased that duplicity had been used, and turning towards his guardian he said pointedly, "It is so difficult now to distinguish friends from enemies, that perhaps it had been better for us to remain at Blois."

The duke replied that "he had acted from the truest motives of tenderness, fearing that any uncommon agitation might injure him in his present feeble and broken health."

Francis made no further objection to the journey, but contented himself with saying sadly, "What can be more injurious or painful than to see one's self an object of party hatred and contention?"

The princes of Lorraine were now in possession of the chief features of the plot to unseat them from the government. They also knew the names of a number of the actors in the émuete. Beyond this all was shadowy. Suspicion began where knowledge ended. Coligny and D'Andelot were supposed to be implicated; and though Brantome distinctly declares that the admiral had no part in the conspiracy, they were summoned to present themselves before the king at the earliest moment. Both hastened to comply with this requisition; and upon being introduced into the queen mother's chamber, Coligny spoke warmly against the bad administration of affairs, pleaded the cause of the Huguenots, and recommended that the penal statutes against them be expunged from the judicial code.

The chancellor, Olivier, and the moderates of the council, seconded this bold appeal, which was finally embodied in an edict, and published on the 12th of March, 1560. The edict appeared too late to strangle the conspiracy. The outbreak was to occur upon the sixteenth instant; the time had been changed from the fifteenth by the removal to Amboise.

Every thing now looked as black for success as before La Renaudie's admission to the recreant Avanelles the auspices had appeared bright.

Nevertheless Condé, no whit discouraged, went boldly to Amboise, and picking out a band of resolute men-at-arms from the body of his retainers, introduced them as his body-guard into the donjon walls.
But the Guises, aware of the plan of attack, took every precaution, filled the tower with their adherents, and posted the Chatillons and Condé in conspicuous places, and surrounded them with confidential persons who were pledged to prevent their joining the assailants.

Forewarned was forearmed; and when the Huguenots attacked Amboise, they were repulsed with great slaughter. La Renaudie rallied the fugitives, who returned gallantly to the charge; but their chief, surrounded by a party of his foes, after slaying a number of his assailants, was struck from his saddle dead by a bullet fired from a distance. The confederates then scattered in all directions. The pursuit was pressed with vindictive fierceness, and the body of La Renaudie was placed on a gibbet with the inscription, "Chief of the Rebels."

During the battle, the duke of Nemours recognized at the head of a Huguenot squadron a gentleman named Castelnau, for whom he entertained a warm friendship. He reined in his horse, and asked the Calvinist cavalier why he had taken arms against the king. "Our intention," was the reply, "is not to war against the king, but to expel the tyrant Guises from authority."

"If that be the case," said Nemours, "sheath your sword, and I promise you on my honor that you shall speak to the king, and I pledge myself for your safe return." Castelnau accepted these terms, and Nemours reduced his engagement to writing, and signed it; on which his late foeman followed him to Amboise.

Castelnau was seized upon his entrance into the town, put into irons, and despite Nemours' urgent remonstrances, he was sentenced to death, Guise insisting that Nemours had no authority to undertake to do what he had written and sworn to do.

On this proceeding Vieilleville makes this comment: "This caused Nemours great uneasiness and vexation on account of his signature; for had he only passed his word, he would have denied it, and given the lie to any man who should charge him with having plighted it, so valiant and generous was this nobleman." "A remarkable instance," observes Anquetil, "of the point of honor badly understood, which fears a crime less than the proof."

The Guises triumphed. They revoked the edict obtained by Coligny, arrested the prince of Condé, commanded that no quarter should be given the insurgents, and hung their prisoners on a gallows erected in the Amboise square. Those who escaped this death were condemned, without trial, to be tied hand and foot, and thrown into the Loire.

Many of the confederates were racked, and especially La Bique, La Renaudie's secretary, the object of the ministers being to secure some testimony which should implicate Condé, or at least justify his arrest. They failed on both points. Only one person was found who implicated the prince, and he spoke
only from report, while La Bique doggedly refused to give any specific information, affirming that La Renaudie kept his own secrets, and only entrusted him with general correspondence.

Condé, on his part, was indignant. He concluded a long speech to the king's council in these words: "If any man has the audacity to affirm that I have instigated a revolt against the sacred person of the king, I renounce the privilege of my rank, and am willing to attest my innocence by single combat."

Then occurred a notable instance of hypocritical *finesse*. The duke of Guise, the secret author of the arrest, rose, and unmindful of the evident application of Condé's words to himself, said with apparent heat, "And I will not suffer so great a prince to be accused of so black a crime, and entreat you to accept me as your second."

Thus ended the conspiracy of Amboise with a liberation—Guise being as convinced of the treachery of the prince, as Condé was sensible of the duplicity of the duke.

"The Prince of Condé was liberated," says an old contemporaneous historian, "in the hope that the apparent confidence thus placed in his loyalty might throw the king of Navarre, the Constable, D'Andelot, and the Vidame of Chartres off their guard, and thus enable the Guises to seize their persons; for they feared to put Condé to death, and leave so many of his friends alive to avenge him. Past examples had taught them that it is in vain to cut down the body of a tree, how high and lofty soever, if there be any quick roots left, which may shoot forth new sprouts.

Chapter XVIII

ALMOST A TRAGEDY

After their fierce suppression of the Amboise conspiracy, the Guises returned to Fontainebleau with the court in their pocket. Meantime France wailed under a grinding tyranny which could no longer be endured. Even the just choked émuete was not able with all its blood to stifle the agonized cry for relief. Something must be done; and it was determined to convene an assembly of the Notables, without reference to party or creed, for the investigation of the existing evils: all proved grievances were to be remedied—such was the burden of the Guises' syren song.
The Montmorenci's and the Chatillons attended; but fearful of being entrapped, they were accompanied by a long train of mailed cavaliers, the escort of the old constable alone numbering eight hundred men-at-arms.

The sky brightened for a moment. Chancellor Olivier, a statesman of moderate views, but weak and yielding, was so affected by the brutal policy of the princes of Lorraine, that just as the conspiracy of Amboise was definitively quelled, he died of grief at the holocaust of immolated victims. It is related of him, that when the cardinal of Lorraine called on him just before his decease, he turned his face to the wall, and refused to see him, saying, "I will look no more upon his face, for he is the accursed cardinal who is the cause of all the condemnations."

Olivier was succeeded in the chancellorship by Michael l'Hôpital, a lawyer of distinguished fame, whom Brantome calls a second Cato, who did his utmost to inaugurate a reign of peace, and whose memory France is bound to revere as the active, unwearied friend of tolerant politics.

The debates at Fontainebleau were long and animated. Coligny on his knees presented to Francis a petition from the Huguenots. The king handed it to his secretary L'Aubespine to read. He commenced: "A request of the people who address their prayers to God, according to the true rule of piety;" and when he had gotten thus far, he was interrupted by the clamors of the Guises' adherents. Francis commanded silence; and the secretary resumed reading the memorial, which contained a prayer that the prevalent persecutions for conscience' sake might cease; it showed also that those who were nicknamed heretics were quite ready to abide by the declarations of Scripture, asking only to be convicted of error from the Bible; that the pope was not a fit person to decide such matters, since his position as the leader of the hosts of error made him necessarily more partial than just; and the paper concluded by calling upon the king himself to arbitrate.

When L'Aubespine had finished, the cardinal took the floor, and opening the flood-gates of his wrathful bitterness, poured forth a torrent of vituperative epithets. "The docility, the meekness," he said, "of these perfect Christians, these new evangélicas, might be judged by the flood of libels leveled at himself; that, for his own part, having collected no less than twenty-two scandalous writings against his single self, he carefully preserved them as badges of honor." He added, that "though he pitied the ignorant, who were misled, extreme measures ought to be adopted against those who carried arms without the permission of the king."
Coligny, in his reply, said that "his voice was that of fifty thousand Huguenots."
"Well then," retorted the duke of Guise with bitter emphasis, "I will break their
heads with a hundred thousand papists whom I will lead against them."

This verbal tilt is said to have been the beginning of the mortal feud between
the duke of Guise and the admiral, who had heretofore been warm personal
friends—a hatred never appeased. Crimination and recrimination succeeded,
mutual defiances were haughtily exchanged, and amid great confusion the
conference was adjourned, and the convocation of the states-general was
decided upon, to whom all the political and religious points of controversy
were referred.

While this rude blast was rushing over France, and roaring in the antique
galleries of lordly palaces, the still small voice of the Word was making its way
into the homes of praying men. In private chambers, in the lecture-rooms and
refectories, students, and even masters of arts, were to be seen reading the
Latin Testament, Erasmus' Greek version, and even the Bible in French.
Animated groups were discussing the *rationale* of the Reformation. "When
Christ came on earth," said some, "he gave the word; and when he ascended up
into heaven, he gave the Holy Spirit. These are the two forces which created
the church, and these are the forces which must regenerate it." "No," replied
the partisans of Rome, "it was the teaching of the apostles at first, and it is the
teaching of the priests now." "The apostles," rejoined the Huguenots; "yes, 'tis
true, the apostles were, during their ministry, a living scripture; but their oral
teaching would infallibly have been altered by passing from mouth to mouth.

God willed, therefore, that these precious lessons should be preserved to us in
their writings, and thus become the ever undefiled source of truth and
salvation." "To set the Scriptures in the foremost place, as your pretended
reformers are doing," replied the monks and their satellites, "is to propagate
heresy." "And what are the reformers doing," queried their apologists, "but
what Christ did before them? The sayings of the prophets existed in the time of
Jesus only as scripture, and it was to this written word that Christ appealed
when he founded his kingdom. And now in like manner the teaching of the
apostles exists only as scripture; and imitating Christ, it is to this written word
that we in our turn appeal, in order to reestablish the kingdom of our Lord in
its primitive condition. The night is far spent; the day is at hand; all is in
motion—in the lofty ancestral chateaus of the nobility, in the classic aisles of
our universities, in the mansions of the rich, and in the lowly dwellings of the
poor. If we wish to scatter the darkness, must we light the shriveled wick of
some old lamp? Or shall we not rather open the doors and shutters, and admit
freely into the house the great light which God himself has hung in the
heavens?"

But while by these and kindred conversations the Huguenots were burying the
Romanists in their own nonsense, public events were marching towards a crisis.
Although the Bourbon princes had absented themselves from Fontainebleau, the Guises had strongly suspected that some of their emissaries were present, who were empowered to negotiate with the leaders of the court opposition, with Montmorenci, with the Chatillons, and the rest. From information received, they arrested a Gascon gentleman named La Saque; he was put to the torture, and the confession that Navarre and Condé were prepared to take the field as soon as the states-general were convened at Orleans, was wrung from his unwilling lips. "Dip the wrapper of this letter in water," faltered La Saque, enfeebled by the rack, and whose quivering sinews yet anguished him. The inquisitors hastened to comply with the direction, when lo, the whole blot lay disclosed. What had before seemed blank paper, teemed with ominous meaning. The handwriting of Dordois, the constable's secretary, became visible; a letter to the vidame of Chartres was revealed, and the Guises learned that, despite the failure of the Amboise intrigue, the hostile nobles still hoped to succeed in expelling them from France.

The Bourbons were soon apprized of the apprehension of La Saque, but they were at first uncertain whether he had made any disclosures, as his confession was kept a profound secret. But the imprisonment of the vidame of Chartres, one of their most faithful adherents, who was shut up in the Bastile and treated with great rigor, convinced them that their projects were known. They were soon specially summoned to Orleans by Francis. But traversing Gascony at the head of a considerable number of gentlemen, both Romanists and Huguenots, pledged to support them, they bade defiance to the king's mandate. However, repeated commands from the court, intimating that further disobedience would be deemed an act of overt rebellion and constructive treason, imperiling both their liberties and their lives, intimidated the feeble spirit of the king of Navarre, and he dismissed his little army, saying, "I must obey, but I will obtain your pardon of the king." "Go," said an old captain, "and ask pardon for yourself; our safety is in our good swords;" and the gentlemen who composed this nucleus force broke ranks indignantly, and separated for their homes.

In the month of October, the Bourbon princes set out for Orleans. Navarre, anxious not to make a misstep, made the greatest, faux pas. He walked straight into the net, and death touched both Condé and himself so closely, that its clammy fingers might have been felt.

The Guises were prepared for a crushing victory. They had persuaded the king, by perverting La Saque's confession, that the princes of the blood, and especially Condé, whom they most feared on account of his energy, boldness, and talents, had conspired against his life; and they urged him for his personal safety to arrest Condé as an example. To this advice the irritated monarch lent a willing ear. When Condé reached Orleans in the latter part of October, he ordered him into his presence, reproached him with his many supposed crimes,
and without deigning to hear any reply, commanded his immediate imprisonment.

The trial soon followed, before the chancellor and some commissioners chosen by the Parliament, now become a mere echo of the Guises. The prince refused to plead, protested against the competence of this mushroom tribunal, and demanded, as a prince of the blood, to be tried by the king in person and by the peers of the realm. This privilege, though perfectly legal and strictly in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Constitution, was refused, and Condé was sentenced to be beheaded on the tenth of the following December.

When Condé was informed of the decision, his tranquility was unruffled. A priest was sent to him to perform mass. "What want you, reverend sir?" queried the prince. "I come to prepare you for death," was the reply. "This is a work," said Condé reverently and solemnly, "that I can safely trust with my Master; it rests between God and myself. Leave me, good father; it is time for the work to begin."

The priest retired, shocked at this blasphemy.

Then a gentleman of the court, an emissary of the Guises, came to Condé's cell. The prince received him with the courtesy which distinguished him. Having expressed his deep sympathy, the courtier hinted that possibly affairs might yet be accommodated, and requested the prince to appoint him mediator.

"I ask but one Mediator," said Condé with an upward gesture, "and that one is interceding for me now at the throne of God. Return, my lord, to your employers, and tell them you have failed in your mission."

One more trial yet awaited him. His wife was conducted to his prison. When she entered, she threw herself into her husband's arms, unable to speak.

"Now this is kind," said Condé with rare tact. "I know your errand: it is to confirm, to support, to give new strength to your husband; to tell him that you will live to perform his duties and your own; to teach our children that their father, though dying an ignominious death, still bore a true and loyal heart. And now farewell. Let us not prolong this painful interview. Nothing can be done by your means or mine; it is hopeless. Let us not add disgrace to sorrow. All things are in the hands of God; he may yet save a life that has been sincerely devoted to his cause."

Again the princess would have spoken; but Condé said, "No more, sweet wife; write all you would say. Farewell." And the hero quitted the apartment for an inner room.
When Condé's sentence was made public, his powerful relatives importuned the king for his pardon; but they plead in vain. His wife, Eleanora de Roye, Montmorenci's niece, accompanied by her children, threw herself before Francis, and with a woman's devotion endeavored to beat through the icy coldness of the king. "Madame," said the monarch, "your husband has assailed the crown, and conspired against my life; he must pay the penalty." In despair the poor princess implored the intercession of the Guises. "It is our duty," they said, "to strike off the head of heresy and rebellion at one blow."

The complete destruction of the Huguenot party was to follow the execution of Condé, and every one was to be compelled to choose between death or the signature of the confession of faith drawn up in 1542 by the Sorbonne, in response to Calvin's "Institutes."

The king of Navarre, though himself but little better than a prisoner, was for once extraordinarily active, and he made efforts constant and tireless to save his brother, even humbling himself to the cardinal of Lorraine, by whom, however, he was rudely repulsed. The duke of Guise had conceived a scheme to murder Navarre, and had even secured the king's assent to it. It was arranged that Francis should summon Navarre to his presence, and that at a sign from him some bravos, whom Guise would station behind the arms, should pierce their victim to the heart.

Navarre was indeed summoned into the king's chamber; but having received word from some quarter that to go would be to commit suicide, the reluctant prince refused to obey the citation. At length, after being summoned three times, he yielded, saying to a confidential friend as he departed on the perilous visit, "Duty compels me to go; I will defend myself, if attacked, to the last gasp. If I fall, take my shirt, stained with my blood, carry it to my son, and may life abandon him sooner than the purpose to avenge his murdered father." Navarre went to the king, listened calmly to his reproofs, replied gently, and retired unharmed: Francis' courage failed him at the critical moment. "Oh the fool, the coward; what a contemptible monarch we have!" exclaimed the incensed duke of Guise as he saw Navarre quit the royal presence unsmitten.

Disappointed in their hope of assassinating the Navarrese sovereign, the princes of Lorraine pressed with increased vehemence for Condé's early execution. The fatal day approached. Francis, unwilling to witness the ghastly spectacle, had resolved upon a tour to Chambord, when suddenly he was taken alarmingly ill. The chancellor instantly sent for Ambrose Paré, the king's physician; and upon being informed that Francis was not likely to recover, the cunning lawyer had recourse to a stratagem. He was very desirous of postponing Condé's death, and had delayed signing the order for his execution for several days by one pretext or another, using the weapons of his profession. Now the Guises hastened to him and implored him to sign; alarmed by the king's health, they feared that Condé might yet cheat the executioner. L'Hôpital pretended to be seized with
a violent colic, which prevented him from examining the body of the decree, an essential preliminary to his signature; but when Francis' danger became imminent, the keen chancellor suddenly recovered from his pain, and hurrying off to the queen mother, advised her to take advantage of the posture of affairs by uniting herself closely with the princes of the blood, as the Guises had already despoiled her of power and influence. The Machiavellian Catherine agreed with L'Hôpital, and charged Coligny, who had been summoned with the other nobles to attend the assembly of the states-general, with the negotiation.

Thus stood affairs when, on the 5th of December, 1560, the thread which attached the shattered health of Francis to life, snapped, and the young king, then but seventeen, lay dead in the midst of a court which instantly gave itself up to the mockery of woe.

Chapter XIX

THE LOST LEADER

Charles IX, a fatal name, an infamous memory, succeeded in his eleventh year to the vacant throne of his dead brother. Now once more the politics of the court were completely revolutionized. The Guises had been entrenched by the influence of their niece, Mary Stuart, over Francis II. Of this support they were now of course deprived. Chaos reigned, not Charles; and the selfish struggles of the chiefs of the several factions, ambitious not for their country's honor, but for their own governmental advancement, held France a second-rate power for a quarter of a century, and made this period one of the most calamitous in its history.

Upon Charles' coronation, Catherine de' Medici assumed the position of arbiter almost without opposition. Almost the first act of the infant king, under the queen mother's direction, was to write the Parliament, on the 8th of December, 1560, a letter, in which, after announcing his brother's death, he informed that body "that, considering his youth and confiding in the virtue and wisdom of the queen mother, he had requested her to undertake the administration of affairs, with the wise counsel and assistance of the king of Navarre, and of the gentlemen of distinction in the late king's counsel."

This crafty move at once deposed the princes of Lorraine, but their real influence remained almost untouched, since they were the representatives of the reactionists of France, as the Bourbons were of the Huguenots.
Still, many changes occurred. The command of the army was taken from the duke of Guise, and confided to Antony of Bourbon, who was made lieutenant-general of the kingdom.

The prince of Condé was released from prison; and while as a matter of form he retired for a little to his government of Bearn, his innocence was openly proclaimed at court.

The nobles who had been placed under the ban by the haughty Guises in the days of their regime, were recalled with honor, and the constable Montmorenci resumed his ancient functions, and regained his former titles.

At the council board of the king the queen mother was now seated as regent, while upon either hand the princes of Bourbon, the princes of Lorraine, and Montmorenci were clustered.

Between all the members of this heterogeneous cabinet a rankling hatred still existed, which threatened at every session to inaugurate fresh convulsions. But Catharine, cozened by her favorite theory of an "adjusted equilibrium," foolishly hoped to be able to hold the scales evenly poised between these implacable enemies.

The first measures of the new administration were indeed judicious. All persons were released who had been imprisoned for heresy, and their property was restored, while a general amnesty was proclaimed.

While the reconstruction of the cabinet was being effected, the states-general continued their sittings at Orleans. L'Hôpital implored the assembly to adopt such measures as would insure domestic tranquility, burying, in devotion to the general good, the bitter feuds of the past reign, which had so nearly kindled a civil war. But this statesmanlike and noble appeal of the patriotic chancellor was not much heeded.

The nobles, taught wisdom by experience, insisted, as a sine qua non, upon the exile of the princes of Lorraine. Condé, Navarre, and Montmorenci declared that if Catharine did not concede this measure to the safety of the state, they would march to Paris, proclaim one of themselves regent in her place, and execute their purpose. But this scheme was rendered abortive by the action of the chancellor, who prevailed upon the king to command the constable to remain at court; a command which Montmorenci was too old and wily a courtier to disobey.

But a motion made about the same time by the king of Navarre in the states-general, had a more serious result. He proposed a searching examination into the financial system of the preceding reign, and that a return of all excessive gratifications in money or lands to the late court favorites be speedily ordered.
This motion instantly made a flutter in the dove-cote, and alienated a powerful friend. Everyone felt that it was a blow at the extortion of the Guises, but the blow struck beyond them. It affected the gratuities of Diana de Poitiers, the marshal Saint André, an old chum of Henry II, and the servile instrument of the duchess de Valentinois, who had batten upon the gains incident to his office of pimp, and of Montmorenci himself, since one of his sons had married a daughter of Diana, and he had shared largely in the public plunder. A community of interest made this horde of thieves, but yesterday deadly foes, fast friends today: all minor differences were buried in the unanimous desire to preserve ill-gotten wealth; and the consequence was, an infamous coalition. The Guises, Montmorenci, and Saint André united under the name of the Triumvirate. These abandoned nobles swore at the altar to forget their old quarrels; and in order to give a religious flavor to their avaricious league, they signed a treaty by which they pledged themselves to the extermination of heresy. It was a fitting collocation; a horde of titled plunderers, met to preserve their booty from the clutch of justice, and leagued to earn a good right to their stolen gold by filching the yet more costly jewel of life from their innocent countrymen whose creed taught them better things.

The Triumvirate had a powerful ally in the Spanish ambassador, who had a seat at the council, pretending that his master, Philip II, the most bigoted king in history, had taken France under his protection. And such was the wretched and disgraceful condition of France, torn by the internecine factions, that this insolent foreigner was tamely permitted to dictate its policy. This Spaniard was personally and politically attached to the Guises, who sacrificed the honor of France and the dignity of the crown to secure his protection.

The nation was now divided into two great parties, into which all the minor factions had melted the Triumvirate, supported by the holy see and by the Romanists; the Bourbon princes, at the head of the Huguenots, and backed by those who, indifferent about religious creeds, longed for the inauguration of political reform, and for the reinstatement of France in her natural position of a commanding power in Europe.

Between these parties stood the queen mother, muttering her shibboleth, and eternally grasping the shadow of power, but never its substance.

The Triumvirate and the Bourbons were about equally matched, and Catherine long hesitated which way to lean. Finally judging that it would be safest to favor the Huguenots for the moment, she permitted the eager chancellor to wring from the states-general a decree, published in July, 1561, and hence called the Edict of July, which relieved the Huguenots from the punishment of death without a judicial condemnation, but which still refused them their principal prayer, permission to assemble for public worship.
This edict was the pretext for a simulated reconciliation between Condé and Francis of Guise. They met at the palace, where the king desired that the duke should declare how affairs had been managed at Orleans. Guise accused the late king of having peremptorily ordered the imprisonment of Condo; on which the prince answered, looking earnestly at the duke, "Whoever put that affront upon me, I hold him to have been a scoundrel and a villain." "And I also," replied the hypocritical duke; "but it does not regard me in the least."

They then dined together, interchanged vows of friendship, and separated with mutual, but smothered curses,

"And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield."

such was the apparently placid, yet really uneasy and abnormal political situation—a heterogeneous cabinet, a double-faced edict, a hollow reconciliation—when a remarkable event occurred, the famous colloquy of Poissy was convoked.

The chancellor L'Hôpital, eager in the pursuit of his panacea for the existing evils, a grand conference upon religious differences, in which both Romanists and Huguenots should be represented, and in which theological rights should be definitively defined and regulated, persuaded Catherine de' Medici to assent to his project, and to command the debate.

The Roman publicists and orators were reluctant to accede to the conference; but stung by the jeers of the evangelicals, who hailed the project of a free colloquy with enthusiasm, they finally consented.

Accordingly, after great preparations, the oratorical representatives of the two ecclesiastical parties met, in the month of August, 1561, in the little village of Poissy, a short distance from St. Germaine, where the royal family then resided.

The leading Roman disputant was the cardinal of Lorraine, a prelate of fine, though sadly perverted intellect, of rare scholarship, and whose discourse, sustained by a never-failing memory, flowed from him intelligibly and gracefully. He was assisted by five other cardinals and by forty bishops.

The reformers were represented by Theodore Beza, a divine of singular genius, erudition, acumen, and eloquence, the friend and biographer of Calvin, who was supported by twelve celebrated doctors of the Reformation, among whom were Marloratus and Pierre Martyr.

On the ninth of September the session opened with great éclat. Never had a grander audience been convened, not even when Luther’s Demosthenian
eloquence sounded over Worms. The king himself attended the first sitting, accompanied by the queen mother, his elder brother Henry of Anjou, his sister Margaret de Valois, the Bourbon princes, the princes of Lorraine, the old constable, the ministers of state, the holder of the great seal, and the chief officers of the crown.

The debate was opened by L'Hôpital, in a conciliatory address, which breathed the spirit of a politician, not of a theologian; for, careless about matters of religious belief, he was anxious only to preserve a false peace, to tide over differences. He proposed a compromise, and urged the papists to relax upon some points, in order to win back the Calvinists. This conservative, Erasmian course was distasteful to both parties. It was thought, and rightly thought, that in radical differences radical methods should be employed.

When the chancellor finished his speech, Beza, the orator of the Huguenots, was called on to state his opinions. The questions at issue were two, the authority of the church of Rome and transubstantiation.

The Protestant orator stepped forward into the middle of the hall, knelt, and prayed God to enlighten his mind and inspire him with the luminous truth, and then commenced his address. He adduced numerous and irresistible arguments to disprove the assumption of Rome that she alone is the true church, made a profession of the reformed faith, expatiated upon the rigors, unchristian and abhorrent, which were exercised against the primitive theology, defended the different points which Rome disputed, and after an exhaustive discussion of the dogma of the real presence in the eucharist, concluded with the affirmation that Christ was as far from the sacramental elements as the highest heavens were from the earth.

Horrified by this bold declaration, the adherents of Latin orthodoxy broke out into vociferous clamors. The cardinal of Tournon suddenly started from his seat, and after asserting that he entirely disapproved of the colloquy, and had only sanctioned it in deference to the wish of Catharine de' Medici, exhorted the infant king not to be led astray by the subtle and impetuous eloquence of Beza, but to suspend his judgment until he had listened to the reply of the orthodox divines. Tournon further pointed out the impropriety of the young monarch's attendance upon the debates, as they involved questions above the capacity of his tender age: this hint was taken, for Charles did not afterwards appear.

The cardinal of Lorraine then rose to speak, and he delivered a harangue of great astuteness and rhetorical talent. When he concluded, the cardinals and bishops formed a circle around him, and declared that he had expounded the true faith, for which they were all ready to suffer martyrdom.
Beza demanded to reply, but since the hour was late, the conference was adjourned to the following day.

The debates continued through several days, and Beza astonished his opponents by his accurate learning, his acute reasoning, his evangelical fervor, and his animated, graphic eloquence. Still the good results of the colloquy were scarcely perceptible; the ecclesiastics in general were convinced that no reform could take place without stripping them of their vast wealth, of their usurped power, and of their impunity. And when the conference of Poissy was dissolved, the disputed points stood just as unsettled as when the debates commenced, while both sides claimed the victory. But while in some respects the colloquy resulted unsatisfactorily, in others it was not without effect. The papists felt that they had committed a blunder in consenting to it at all—it compromised a faith which had existed for so many ages; the bare discussion of these questions was an acknowledgment that Rome might err. "The government," says a violent Jesuit who wrote at a later day, "committed a grave error, or at least idleness, in permitting the conference of Poissy, instead of sending Beza and his troop to the then sitting council of Trent."

Besides this moral gain and recognition, several bishops were so affected by Beza's masterly arguments, that they devoted themselves to an inquiry after the truth. By the conversations which they had with Catherine de' Medici, they so far wrought a change in her sentiments, that she not only invited Beza, but actually insisted upon his remaining at the court. The divine complied; and protected by the queen mother, delivered a series of powerful sermons which greatly advanced the Reformation.

Catherine did more; she wrote an epistle to the pontiff: "Those of the reform," she said, "are neither Anabaptists nor libertines; they believe in the twelve articles of the apostles' creed; therefore many persons think that they ought not to be cut off from communion with the mother church. What danger could there be in taking away the images from the churches, and in retrenching some useless forms in the celebration of the sacraments? It would further be very beneficial to allow to all the communion in both kinds, and to permit divine service to be performed in the vulgar tongue."

Thus spoke Catharine de' Medici shortly after the conclusion of the colloquy of Poissy. She boldly recommended to the sovereign pontiff the adoption of a series of innovations which the most heated enthusiast, the most Utopian dreamer among the Huguenots would not have demanded. Yet this was the woman who, a little later, instigated the massacre of St. Bartholomew! Catharine is the Sphinx of history; and though many an Œdipus has assumed to solve the riddle, the wily tiger queen yet remains a mystery. Of course Beza's eloquence could not have touched her heart; she had none—only a muscle to circulate the blood. It is probable that Beza's flattering reception and retention
at court, and the papal letter, were both simply parts of some scheme for
preserving the balance of power in her own hands.

Be this as it may, Paul IV was alarmed, and he instantly instructed his legate at
Paris to spare no exertions for strengthening the papal party in France.

The most plausible plan for the achievement of this purpose seemed to be to
alienate the king of Navarre from the Huguenots. It was thought that if that
monarch could be won over to Rome, "heresy would be a clock without a
pendulum." The legate, seconded by a score of cunning satellites, commenced
the congenial work. Every wile which could affect the human mind and heart
was put in active operation. Temptation after temptation was thrown into his
way. The pope offered to dissolve his marriage with Jane d'Albrêt, on the
ground of her heresy; the Guises offered him the hand of their niece Mary
Stuart, with her prospective claims on the English throne; a marriage with the
king's sister Margaret de Valois was hinted at as quite possible; but to all of
these seductions Navarre was deaf. He even refused a promise of Sardinia, as
an indemnification for that portion of Navarre of which the Spanish king had
derived him.

Finding that Antony of Bourbon could not be bribed to desert his faith, the
Jesuits changed their tactics. Then this man, proof to all the proposals of
temporal advantage which had been made him, fell a victim to his own pride
and vanity.

Antony of Navarre was known throughout his whole life as a man amiable, but
weak and vacillating; who, although he adopted his opinions with vivacity, did
not hold them with firmness. And when with insidious and tireless zeal it was
insinuated that Condé was the actual chief of the Huguenot party, while he was
only his brother's second, his pride and vanity revolted. He hesitated; the king's
youth opened for him a long career of authority; and if he became a papist, his
power and influence in Europe would be so much enhanced, that he might
dictate to Philip II of Spain the restoration of his stolen kingdom. The Spanish
ambassador himself breathed this insinuation into his ear.

Quite overcome and dazzled blind to the infamy of the action by his brilliant
prospects, Navarre at length succumbed; the renegade king joined the
triumvirate, and this "lost leader," in the excess of his newly acquired zeal,
became one of the bitterest persecutors of his old companions. Similar
revulsions are the never-failing accompaniment of political and theological
treason.

Navarre soon proceeded to carry his new opinions into practice. He declared
that he considered the reformed preachers as charlatans, and expressed his
determination to remove his son—afterwards the famous Henry IV—from their
influence, and place him under Romanist governors. Jane d'Albrêt, who had
inherited her faith and Christian devotion from her mother Margaret of Navarre, the mother also of French reform, heard this avowal with dismay. After vain entreaties, she was compelled to yield; but passionately embracing her child, she exclaimed, "Oh, my son, if you renounce the religion of your mother, she will renounce and disinherit you. Deep to the faith in which you have hitherto been educated, and God will be your guide and support."

"My dear madame," said Catharine, who was present, "let me advise you to suppress this violence of emotion. I have always found it best to appear to yield. Assume a seeming conformity to your husband's will; even attend mass, and you will the more easily get the reins into your own hands."

To this characteristic advice Jane d'Albrét replied indignantly, "Rather than deny my faith by attending mass, if I had my son in one hand, and my kingdom in the other, I would throw them both into the sea."

Such was the difference between these two women and between their creeds.

But Jane d'Albrét was ere long relieved of her fears by her vain and vacillating husband's death.

Ere Navarre's defection startled France, the indefatigable chancellor, not discouraged by the failure of the colloquy of Poissy to apply a remedy to the ecclesiastical abases, contrived to convene another assembly of the states-general at St. Germaine.

"The object of your deliberations," said L'Hôpital in his opening address to the deputies, "is simple and clear. Is it advantageous, in the existing state of affairs, to tolerate or to forbid the meetings of the Calvinists for the exercise of their devotions? That is the single question you have to decide. To come to a right conclusion, you must keep out of view whatever relates to creed, doctrine, or religious discipline. Even let it be assumed that Calvinism is one continuous error of judgment, is that a reason to bar their assemblies, or to justify the proscription of those French subjects who have embraced it? Can a man not be a good citizen without being a good Romanist? Do not then waste your time, or entangle yourselves in fruitless controversy, in the vain attempt to decide which is the true religion. We are not here to establish a mode of faith, but a rule of government."

It was thus that the keen and cautious chancellor exhibited his anxiety to make all vexed points of theology subservient to the vital interests of political government. By dexterously narrowing down the discussion into this limited space, and extracting the sting of theological hate, the triumph of the Huguenots was rendered certain; for had the duke of Guise affirmed that none but Romanists could be good citizens, the prince of Condé would have resented it as a personal affront, and demanded satisfaction at the sword's point. The
papists were thus compelled to make concessions, or raise the standard of civil war, for which they were not yet fully prepared.

The assembly of St. Germaine therefore passed a decree, called the Edict of January, 1562, by which many of the disabilities of the Huguenots were removed. The reformers might meet unarmed without the walls of cities and towns, and the local magistrates were commanded to afford them protection; though prohibited from levying money to pay their preachers, they might receive any sum voluntarily contributed. In return for these concessions, the Huguenots were to restore all images and relics of saints which they had seized, and to pay tithe and other ecclesiastical dues, while their preachers were commanded to abstain from all violent invectives against the mass.

Some bloody scenes occurred in various sections after the promulgation of this edict; but as a whole the winter glided quietly away. The Huguenots were grateful and satisfied; the Romanists sullen and discontented. But both parties felt conscious of an approaching rupture, convinced that this temporary calm was only the harbinger of a fearful storm.

Chapter XX

THE APPEAL to ARMS

The Huguenots were surprised and grieved by the renegadism of the king of Navarre: the queen mother was alarmed; and to restore the equilibrium, she openly allied herself with the reform party.

Coligny, anxiously watchful for the interest of religion, was early apprized of the efforts being made to win over Antony of Bourbon; and when the illustrious deserter joined the Triumvirate, he was "sad, but not astonished;" he knew Navarre's character. He had suspected the motive of a mission to Spain in the early months of 1562, and employing persons to watch the emissary, he ordered them to arrest and search him on his return. Shortly after the messenger, in the garb of a pilgrim, endeavored to reenter France. He was seized and searched; nothing was found. Someone, however, observing that he threw away his staff, informed Coligny of the circumstance. The acute admiral ordered it to be brought to him; a countryman had picked it up and carried it to his cottage. On examination it was found that the staff was hollow, and that it contained a budget of letters from the king of Spain. Upon examining these letters, they were found to be directed to the king of Navarre, to the Triumvirate, to Catharine, and to others of the leading Roman chiefs,
expressing poignant grief at the concessions recently made to heresy, and exhorting them to take arms and crush the Huguenots by a single blow, to effect which Philip offered to furnish men and money.

Catharine was absolutely frightened; Coligny was calm and resolute. The queen mother allied herself more closely than ever with the admiral. The admiral, perceiving that the foes of his faith were about to kindle the flames of civil war, worked with Titanic energy to prepare his party for the ordeal of battle. He united with Condé, and securing the appointment of that prince to the chief command of the reformers, called upon him to make a public confession of the Protestant creed.

The gallant prince complied; and so great was the effect of his example, that many nobles did not scruple to do likewise. The number of persons who came to the Faubourgs to hear the Reformation preached in a little time numbered fifty thousand, very respectable congregation.

Navarre, witnessing Coligny's activity, and galled perhaps by the presence of his old companion in arms, urgently pressed Catharine to banish him from court. She would consent, however, on but one condition: that the duke of Guise, the cardinal of Lorraine, and the marshal St. André, the original triumvirs, should also quit the capital for their estates. Unexpectedly to Catherine, her terms were accepted; for the chiefs of the reaction, knowing that their interests might safely be entrusted to Montmorenci and the king of Navarre, who were to remain in Paris, were willing to go into temporary exile for the purpose of removing their dangerous rivals from the vicinity of St. Germaine.

But this compromise did not long stop up the mouth of Vesuvius with its cotton. The adherents of Guise at the capital wrote him that the queen mother was every day becoming more closely connected with the Huguenots, and urged him to hasten back to Paris. Guise obeyed the summons, leaving his estate of Joinville towards the close of February, 1562. His suite, already numerous when he quitted his chateau, was augmented as he advanced, until, when lie reached the little town of Vassy, he was at the head of a small army.

At Vassy a fatal event occurred. A Huguenot congregation attending divine worship in a barn, attracted the attention of the bigoted chieftain and his fanatical retinue. Filled with hate, and armed, they rushed upon the reformers, who endeavored to shut the doors against the assailants. A collision resulted; Guise himself was slightly wounded in the cheek by some chance missile, and his followers, infuriated at the sight of his blood, massacred the whole helpless congregation.

The news of this bloody foray spread with almost incredible rapidity; it reached the metropolis before its hero; and when Guise appeared, the civic mob of Paris hailed the "butcher of Vassy" with "frenzied shouts and tears of joy." A
sanguinary and cowardly slaughter of an unarmed assembly, convened for religious worship, was hailed as a great and heroic exploit.

In later days Guise protested that he had no hand in this wholesale assassination; but whether he intended it or not, it is enough that he did not prevent it. The deed was his; upon his head history heaps her malediction.

Nor was Vassy the only scene of violence. Cahors, Toulouse, Sens, Amiens, and Tours hastened to follow in Guise's bloody footsteps. At Tours a refinement of cruelty was displayed. Three hundred Huguenots were shut up without food for three days; then, tied together two by two, they were led to a slaughter-house and butchered like beasts.

At Sens also there was an exhibition of atrocious fanaticism; during three successive days the bell of the cathedral invited the citizens to murder the reformers. Even the vines which embellished their dwellings were plucked up by the roots. The bodies of the victims, floating down the Seine, appeared to speak trumpet-toned to their brothers in the faith for justice. The Huguenots did indeed bestir themselves to obtain redress. When some of the shocking incidents of the massacres were related to Navarre, the traitor cried with a sneer, "They were all factious heretics." "Sire," replied Beza, who chanced to be present, with indignant emphasis, "I speak on behalf of a religion which pardons injuries, instead of resenting them; but remember, it is an anvil which has blunted many hammers."

But while one party demanded justice, the other clamored fiercely for the extermination of the Huguenots, and Montluc addressed a memoir showing how easily it might be effected.

Meantime Condé, overpowered, quitted Paris with his preachers and armed followers. "Caesar has not only crossed the Rubicon," wrote he to D'Andelot and Coligny, "he has already seized Rome, and his banners will shortly be everywhere displayed."

Guise was aware that in a coup d'état audacity and energy were necessary. Catharine was sojourning at Meaux with her royal son. The princes of Lorraine sped thither, seized the regent and the king, and hastening back to Paris, received another ovation. Their captives were lodged in a building which had peen used as a prison for a century. The possession of the king's person was the grand object of their policy, and they succeeded, spite of the prayers and menaces of the queen mother.

Emboldened by their success, the triumvirs rejected all compromises, all overtures, and determined to strike a vigorous blow at once in the very commencement of their lawless campaign; they designed a revocation of the
tolerant edict of January, in the chief cities first, and then throughout the kingdom.

Meantime Paris was surrendered to a carnival of fanaticism; the cardinal of Lorraine commenced preaching in the style of his predecessors, St. Dominic and Torquemada; and Montmorenci displayed his zeal on the evening of the youthful monarch's return to the metropolis, by plundering the Huguenot chapels, destroying the books, and building bonfires with the reading-desks of the preachers. The fanatical violence with which he sought after and destroyed these desks, gained the hoary old bigot the soubriquet of *Capitaine Brulé-Bancs*.

While these events were occurring at the capital, Condé was not idle. He received, through a secret messenger, a letter from Catherine, in which she implored him to save the mother and the child, at the same time assuring him that all her hopes rested upon him; the liberty of the king, the prosperity of France, all was staked upon the pluck and loyalty of the Huguenots.

Condé at once published two manifestoes, which roused France as with the blast of a trumpet. The eloquent prince implored the Huguenots to arm and attack their common enemy, and he conjured all true Frenchmen, whatever their creed, to couch their lances for the liberation of their captive sovereign. The response was enthusiastic. Orleans was seized after a sanguinary battle, and there Condé set up his banner. This city became the Huguenot rendezvous.

The triumvirs, to destroy the effect of Condé's appeal, forced the irresponsible toy who at this awful moment played king, to sign and publish an official denial of the charges of the Bourbon prince, and an affirmation that both his mother and himself enjoyed perfect freedom; but the cheat was too transparent, and even the reluctant pen of an old contemporaneous historian, devoted to that side, was forced to pen these significant words: "It is most certain that the young king was seen by many to weep that day, being persuaded that the Romanist lords had restrained his personal liberty; and that the queen mother, being discontented that her wonted arts had not prevailed, and foreseeing the mischiefs of the opening war, seemed perplexed, and spoke no word to any one; of which Guise made light, saying publicly, 'The food is always good, whether it proceeds from love or force.'"

The enthusiasm of the Huguenots was at floodtide. They were very soon in possession of the principal cities of the provinces—Lyons, Bourges, Vienne, Rouen, and the rest. All the Orleanoise was subjected to them, and the whole of Normandy declared in their favor. Levies of men were everywhere made to swell their embattled ranks, and detachments flocked from every quarter, with the motto "God and liberty" emblazoned on their banners, to Condé's camp.
Brantome relates that a squadron of fifty Huguenot cavaliers set out from Metz for Orleans, and M. d'Espan, governor of Verdun, learning the circumstance, determined to cut them off on the march. When he came up with them, they had taken a position in an old windmill, where they defended themselves with stubborn valor, until night closed the combat. Before morning they made a sortie, surprised their weary assailants, and routed them. The cavaliers then recommenced their march, and after thirty different skirmishes, they reached Orleans with the loss of but three of their number, an incident which the quaint old chronicler justly thinks illustrative of remarkable pluck and zeal.

The leaders of the reformed host were Condé's nearest relatives: there were the three Chatillons, the cardinal, Coligny, and D'Andelot, the uncles of his consort; the Count Porcian, who was married to his niece; Francis de Rochefoucault, who was married to his sister-in-law, of whom it was said that he could bring an army into the field composed of his friends and vassals in Poitou alone. The viscount René de Rohan led the Bretons, Antony, count de Grammont, the Gascons; Montgomery—the count who had accidentally slain Henry II in the tournament of 1559—was present from Normandy, and Hangeist de Genlis from Picardy. There assembled at Orleans in a short time three thousand gentlemen, of whom Lanquét says, "If they were destroyed, the very seed of masculine virtue would have been exterminated in France."

The triumvirs received assistance not only from the reactionary home party, they drew upon Romanist Europe. The king of Spain, the pope, Cosmo, duke of Florence, all lent jubilant levies; and soon the Guises marched towards Orleans at the head of ten thousand men-at-arms, the vanguard of the larger host to come.

Between the hostile ranks of Condo and Guise the government of a boy and a woman disappeared.

Catherine made one last effort to regain her lost prestige. As usual, her weapons were hypocrisy and treason. Instigated by Guise, with whom she appears now to have allied herself, overawed perhaps by the threat that she would be deposed even from the nominal regency, unless she lent herself to the projects of the usurpers, the queen mother attempted to entrap Condé.

A personal conference was appointed between them at Thuri. Condé, unsuspicious of treachery, nearly fell into the snare. It was proposed that he and his friends should quit France for a time, while the triumvirs also retired from the court. "Offer these terms," said the wily queen in a seductive whisper; "they will certainly be refused; then you will gain the credit of having made a patriotic proposition, which will augment your strength."

The frank soldier for once attempted to play Machiavelli; he was unequal to the part. Condé assented. After some delay, the council replied, "Your terms
are accepted," but no allusion was made to the retirement of the triumvirs. Condé was thunderstruck; his diplomatic ruse had recoiled upon himself; Catherine had played him false. His troops were indignant; his nobles protested against the validity of the contract; the preachers inveighed against the regent's duplicity; and Condé, declaring that he had been deceived, retracted the agreement, and mounting his horse, bade defiance to his own and his country's foes.

This faux pas convinced the Huguenots that no reliance could be placed either on the friendship or the good faith of Catharine de' Medici.

Condé was anxious to strengthen his cause by alliances with the Protestant powers of Europe. In Germany, the proofs he advanced in justification of his action were regarded as satisfactory. The old landgrave, Philip of Hesse, gave Marshal Rollshausen orders to advance into France with some thousands of lanzknechts and arquebusiers.

The Huguenots also dispatched a mission to England to sue Elizabeth for an alliance. The stingy queen agreed to aid them on condition that Havre de Grace was delivered to her as a compensation for Calais, whose loss still rankled. This conceded, Elizabeth furnished one hundred thousand crowns, and garrisoned Havre de Grace, Dieppe, and Rouen, with six thousand English yeomen.

Towards the close of June, 1562, the contending armies opened the campaign. Condé and Coligny left Orleans to attack Paris and deliver the king; the triumvirs quitted the metropolis to besiege the Huguenots in Orleans. The two parties were about equal, each having ten thousand men.

To detail the various skirmishes which steeped the provinces in fraternal blood, to enumerate the villages plundered and razed, to record the deeds of cruelty committed by individual and remorseless leaders of roving bands attached to either army, would occupy volumes, and would farm a narrative of crime hideously diversified in its features, from which humanity would recoil. Both sides undoubtedly committed excesses. Where the Huguenots triumphed, they destroyed altars and broke images; where the papists were successful, Bibles were burned and heretics were racked.

The picture of France rent by demoniacs is the most melancholy and pathetic that ever employed the pencil of an artist. Not Angelo nor Raphael nor Rembrandt could have originated so woeful a canvas.

It is an unquestionable historic fact, that in this drama of death the papists were the most frenzied and remorseless actors. The testimony of the Abbé Anquétil will scarcely be impeached in the court of Rome. Let us see what this inimical witness has to say: "For the heretics there was no security, no asylum; the faith of treaties and the sanctity of oaths were alike set at naught."
Tortures, contrived with cruel care for delaying death and increasing the duration of pain, were inflicted upon persons who had surrendered upon capitulation. Husbands and fathers were poignarded in the arms of their wives and daughters, who were then violated in the sight of the dying loved ones. Women and children were treated with a brutality which defies description. Aged magistrates, the victims of an unbridled rage, were insulted after death by the populace, who dragged their yet palpitating entrails through the streets, and even ate their quivering flesh."

Beaumont, baron des Adrets, one of the Huguenot leaders, determined to meet cruelty with cruelty, forgetful of the mild tenets of the faith which he professed to serve. He killed and laid waste with a barbarity which made his own officers shudder; superstitious nurses frightened children by the simple repetition of his name: his vengeful acts drew forth an admonition from the admiral, and a severe reproof from Calvin.

Beaumont's rival was the ferocious Blaise de Montluc, who relates in his memoirs, with the utmost *sang froid*, the chilling cruelties which he practiced upon the heretics: "I procured," he says, "two executioners, who were called my lackeys, because they were so constantly with me in *active service.*"

Thus, while France wailed and heaven wept, the hideous dance of the loosened furies of death and hell went smoothly on.

---

**Chapter XXI**

**DEATH'S COUP D'ETAT**

Before a fanatical conception of religion, morality, which lies at the base of civilization and of human society, vanished. A kind of fatalism reigned. A species of resignation linked with enmity, of religion mingled with hatred—this was what took place in these sad years. It was like a bloody Scottish feud, in which those who held the same principles regarded themselves as members of one clan.

Both armies were in the field, and Guise especially was viciously active.

Navarre assailed and captured Bourges. Then pausing and looking towards Paris, he asked, Where next?
The Triumvirate hungered for Orleans, the rendezvous and the dépôt of Condé and the Chatillons. Catharine said No; she thought that if the citadel of Protestantism should fall, the already over-powerful league would shoot up to a still loftier pinnacle. "Let us rematch Rouen," said the wily queen; "these bulldog Englishmen have seized Normandy; we must shake it from their greedy maw."

The Parisians were cozened; besides, the Huguenot garrison of Rouen would suffer no merchandise to ascend the river from the sea. Inexorable Rouen stood guard upon the Atlantic. Trade was sulky; commerce was angered. "We will give two hundred thousand crowns to the king, if he will drive the Huguenots from Rouen," cried the Parisian merchants. Navarre marched into Normandy, and at the close of September, 1562, laid siege to Rouen.

Montgomery held the town, supported by two thousand English men-at-arms, twelve hundred choice infantry from Condé's army, four squadrons of horse, and one hundred gentlemen who had volunteered their services.

The attack was vigorous; the defense was obstinate. A breach was no sooner made, than the indefatigable Montgomery threw up behind it a new entrenchment. "This count is a necromancer; he juggles in war," said Navarre dispiritedly, as he returned one day from a foiled assault.

Mining and countermining succeeded. The Huguenot bombs fell within Navarre's lines with but slight effect; burying themselves in the soil softened by recent rains, they only made volcanoes of mud; the explosion was changed into a splash.

At length, on the 25th of October, Guise, who had joined the army before Rouen, led an assault, after a spirited harangue, the effect of which he heightened by a brilliant display of chivalric valor, Rouen was captured by this coup de main; Montgomery lead only time to leap into a galley which was in port. By the promise of liberty, he induced the galley slaves to row so well, that he got to sea despite some chains swung across the river a few leagues below the city by the besiegers, to prevent the English sending any assistance from the ocean. Shortly after, Montgomery safely touched the shores of Britain.

Rouen was pillaged through three days; many citizens were massacred; the reformed preachers especially were hunted down with vindictive cruelty; and Marloratus, who had been a central figure at the Poissy colloquy, was hung in front of the cathedral, amid the jeers of the brutal soldiery and the insults of Montmorenci and his son Montberan.

That which characterizes other Romanic races even at this day, the habit of repaying violent deeds with violent deeds, was then the general custom of
France. The Huguenots at Orleans, as a reprisal for the Rouen massacres, hung the Abbé Gastines, a violent Jesuit, and Sapin, one of the hostile presidents of the Parliament of Paris.

The capture of Rouen cost Navarre his life. Emulating the prowess of Guise, he descended into the trenches one day to view the town; while there, he was struck in the shoulder by a discharge of musketry. The surgeons at the outset laughed at the wound, and the king even desired to make a triumphal entry into the conquered city. Soon however symptoms of danger appeared. Navarre desired to be transported to the village of St. Maur, near Paris. He did not live to reach it, but died at Andelys on the 17th of November, 1562, in his forty-fourth year.

All writers who have sketched Antony of Bourbon's character, describe him as deficient in every princely quality except personal courage. He was ambitious without foresight, vain without capacity, and intriguing without diplomatic skill. He threw away that noble part which fortune destined for him. Denying his faith, he ceased to be the head of a powerful party, to sink into the despised tool of abler rogues.

"Antony of Bourbon, father of the firmest and most intrepid of men, was the weakest and least decided," says one of the most celebrated of French critics. "He was always so wavering in his religion, that it is doubted in which faith he died. He bore arms against the Huguenots whom he loved, and served Catharine de' Medici whom he detested, and the party of the Guises who oppressed him."

While these events were occurring in Normandy, the Huguenot leaders, Condé, Coligny, and D'Andelot, united their forces, and tempted by the absence of the main army of the Triumvirate before Rouen, marched towards Paris. The prince actually pitched his tents at Montrouge, from whence his troops pillaged the faubourgs on that side.

This movement hastened the return of the triumvirs from the ruins of Rouen, to effect the salvation of the imperiled capital.

Condé then determined to march into Normandy, and forming a junction with the English forces, secure Elizabeth's subsidy. On the 10th of December he broke camp, and commenced his march. Guise, who had meanwhile arrived in Paris, upon being apprized of the prince's intention, determined to pursue him, and force a battle.

Condé was overtaken near Drew, and finding it impossible to avoid an action, he prepared to fight.
Here, by the banks of the sparkling Eure, the first collision between the hostile armies in the open field occurred. The sight was a singular one. It seemed as if this mass of human beings had become a monster, and had but one mind. Each squadron undulated and swelled like the ring of a polype. They could be seen through the thick smoke, as it lifted brokenly here and there. It was a pell-mell of casques, cries, sabres; a furious bounding of horses, a blare of trumpets; a terrible and disciplined tumult; over all the cuirasses, like the scales of a hydra.

Condé charged first. His cavalry, composed of the elite of the Huguenot party, cut clean through the enemy's center, which was commanded by Montmorenci. Smitten by this resistless thunderbolt, the constable tumbled from his saddle. Rising again, he strove to redeem his position. In vain; Condé's cuirassiers would not be stayed, and Montmorenci was ere long himself made prisoner, while his son Montberan, who had so recently jeered at the martyrdom of Marloratus in the streets of Rouen, lay dead before his face.

The battle lasted seven hours, during which time wavering success perched with capricious whim upon both banners. At the moment when victory seemed finally to have declared for the Huguenots, Guise, who had held himself carefully in reserve, thundered down upon the conquerors, and wrested the hard-earned laurels from their grasp. By a singular reverse of fortune, Condé fell wounded, and was made a prisoner by D'Amville, Montmorenci's son.

The wearied and dispirited Huguenots' infantry were instantly panic-stricken. Guise pressed them fiercely, and their rout was complete.

Coligny, perceiving that safety lay in retreat, held his men well in hand, and shouting, "He who holds his troops together to the last carries off the fruit of the battle," he commenced to retire leisurely and calmly to a neighboring morass, where, entrenching his followers behind a pile of felled timber, he awaited Guise's attack with nonchalance. At the same time the admiral, divining that Orleans would be the next point assailed, directed D'Andelot to collect as many of the dispersed battalions as possible, and hasten with them to reinforce the menaced city.

Meantime Guise pressed on, and renewed the battle with great ardor. Coligny obstinately defended his position. In vain did the fiery duke hurl squadron after squadron upon his imperturbable lines. The marshal St. André at length fell; and Guise, glancing sadly at his terribly thinned ranks, desisted from the attack, and preparing to bivouac upon the battle-field, dispatched a courier to Paris to announce a victory.

The battle was a bloody one. Eight thousand dead strewed the plain.
The Huguenots were far from considering themselves defeated, though Guise remained master of Dreux, and Coligny, after the cessation of the duke's assaults, continued his retreat.

"Our infantry," wrote the admiral in a letter to Elizabeth of England, "has suffered a defeat without fighting; but our cavalry, which alone fought the battle, is undamaged, and wishes for nothing more ardently than to meet once more without delay the enemies of God and of this kingdom. These will deliberate whether to attack us, or to await an attack from our side."

Guise was wonderfully elated by his success, disputed as it was. The first account of the battle which reached Paris ascribed the victory to Condé. "Well then," said Catharine coolly, "we shall have to pray to God in French." And when she received the second report from Dreux, she was far from expressing joy at the event. The death of St. André and Montmorenci's captivity delivered Guise from all rivals; no one shared his triumphs. The duke wrote a letter, demanding the disposal of St. André's baton in so arrogant a tone, that young Charles himself was astonished.

Condé, in his captivity, was treated with politic kindness. Guise conducted him to his quarters; they supped together, and the prince accepted the offer of half the duke's bed. He was afterwards taken to court, where Catharine exerted herself to win him from the Huguenot party, a task which she did not esteem very formidable, since, removed from the counsels of the inflexible Coligny, she thought he might be easily biased.

Montmorenci was taken to Orleans, where his niece, the princess of Condé, used every persuasive measure which she could devise to reconcile her uncle and her husband; all however to no purpose. The sulky veteran only growled and swore.

Meanwhile Guise led his victorious squadrons to the Orleanoise, and laid close and resolute siege to the Huguenot citadel.

D'Andelot's defense of Orleans was as skilful as the duke's assault. While the fate of the city hung undecided, murder stepped between the combatants, and dictated a decision: Guise was assassinated.

In the dash of the evening the duke went to superintend the erection of some redoubts. While the party trotted pleasantly along, chatting and laughing, a shot was fired from behind a hedge, and three balls lodged in Guise's left shoulder. The shock made him stagger; but he only said, "This was to be expected; but I think it will be nothing." He was carried to his tent, when the surgeons, on examining the wound, pronounced the bullets to have been steeped in poison.
Upon his death-bed he expressed regret for many of the occurrences of his violent, ambitious, and warlike career; but this late repentance served but to inflict upon him sharper pangs of remorse. The massacre of Vassy tormented his conscience, which could neither be soothed by all the puns of the priests, nor quieted by the hymns of the Parisians.

On the 4th of March, 1563, eight days after the infliction of the fatal wound, this celebrated soldier heaved his last sigh.

This event stirred France profoundly. The animated attacks upon Orleans suddenly ceased. The famous Triumvirate crumbled to pieces. Navarre, St. André, and Guise were lost to Rome.

The duke's assassin was finally arrested and put to the torture. He was a madman named Paltrot. What was called a "confession" was wrung from his crazy lips, which implicated several of the Huguenot chiefs in a plot to butcher Guise. Bossuet accuses Coligny and Beza of having instigated the insane zealot to commit the crime; but the eloquent Frenchman, with all his subtlety, could not twist the circumstances of the case into giving color to the charge. All impartial chroniclers have acquitted these illustrious and unsotted Christians of any participation in so odious a deed. History dismissed the accusation to contempt.

Yet despite Coligny's published and reiterated denial at the time, Henry de Guise persisted in charging the admiral with his father's murder; and young as he was at the time, he swore against him an unrelenting hatred, which was only appeased by one of the bloodiest catastrophes in history.

With the dissolution of the Triumvirate there came a general pause. Death's coup de main startled France. The genius of civil war halted for a moment before the bier of Francis Guise.

Chapter XXII

THE HOLLOW TRUCE

By the death of Guise, Catharine de' Medici regained supreme power. Her first act was to intrigue for tranquility. Every insidious art was employed to cajole Condé into signing a treaty of peace. The Chatillons were absent in the field. Their inflexible spirit insured the continuance of the war until liberty was guaranteed, unless some disgraceful concession could be won from the prince.
The Huguenot sky never looked so bright. Hardly a cloud spotted the horizon. Two of the triumvirs were dead; the third was a prisoner. Everything was propitious for a liberal and righteous peace. The reformers congratulated one another, and said, "The wished-for day has come."

Suddenly these hopes were dashed; a courier arrived in Coligny's camp one morning, and flung this announcement into the admiral's face like a thunderbolt: "Peace is declared; Condé orders arms grounded." The messenger then circulated an edict which had just been ratified at Amboise. This was eagerly scanned by the surprised Huguenots. It contained a permission for the reformers to assemble for the exercise of their religion in those towns which were in their possession on the day the edict was signed; but the general permission to preach in the country places, contained in the preceding edict of January, 1562, was considerably curtailed. The lords high justiciaries could only convene their friends and neighbors on the demesnes of their seignories. The nobles were only allowed to hear their preachers in their own chateaux, and even that indulgence was withheld if they resided in a city or territory over which a Romanist governor exercised judicial power. The decree contained neither censure nor amnesty; but declaring that Condé and his friends were good and faithful subjects, buried the past in oblivion.

Such was the niggardly decree to which Condé, without consulting his friends, had irrevocably set his hand. The Huguenots were indignant. D'Andelot was chagrined. "Alas," said Coligny, "our prince has injured the Reformed church more by this stroke of his pen, than the Triumvirate could have done in ten years with all their armies."

Sadly and dejectedly the admiral dismissed his old companions in arms, paying them great attention, that he might, in time of need, calculate upon their speedy aid.

Catharine was displeased at this precaution; but when she complained of it to Condé, he silenced her by replying, "Nay, madame, this conduct of Coligny ought to be attributed solely to a grateful desire to acquit his obligations to the nobility; sure 'tis the least he could do for those who quitted home and friends to serve our cause."

The queen mother was doubly provoked at this unexpected speech; she had done her utmost to convince Condé that Coligny's influence was prejudicial to his own. She now perceived how cautious Condé was of taking the bait; indeed she feared the prince saw into her treacherous design; she therefore referred no more to the subject, but redoubled her blandishments.

One clause of the recent treaty bound the Huguenots to unite with the royal forces in expelling the English from Normandy.
Condé, conscious that nothing could justify him in admitting the hereditary foemen of France once more into the kingdom, and entrenching them within important strong-holds, proffered his services for their dislodgment.

The prince's offer was accepted, and ere long he returned to Paris from this expedition completely successful. France was no longer dismembered; no hostile foot profaned her soil.

Elizabeth of England was very indignant at the loss of Havre de Grace, which she hoped would have compensated her for Calais. "When the admiral again desires my assistance, I shall know how to act," said the maiden queen. "But when her anger subsided, she observed, "The king of France is happy in having such faithful subjects."

Condé's star was now at its zenith. As he had distinguished himself by his bravery in the field, so now he desired to shine through his versatility, by taking part in the knightly festivities of the court, in which it was then the fashion to represent the heroic fables of the Greeks. His wit and vivacity made him a great favorite. All restraint was removed by the recent death of his excellent wife Eleanora du Roye; and Condé, whose amorous disposition disposed him to fall an easy prey to the intrigues of the queen, frittered away his time and strength in dissolute and infamous orgies.

The condition of the Huguenots now became as bad as it had ever been. Encroachments upon the edict of Amboise were of constant occurrence. The Protestants would not submit without attempting to defend their rights. The consequence was, that the uneasy kingdom fretted under the abnormal pacification—a name without a substance. The Huguenots inundated France with apologies, complaints, and remonstrances—some addressed to the king, some to the queen, but most to Condé, who was generally held responsible for the strict fulfillment of the treaty, since he had signed it.

But Catharine had so artfully engrossed the forgetful prince in lewd amusements, he was so surrounded with every charm and variety of pleasure, that he had neither time to think nor heart to bestir himself on behalf of imperiled liberty of conscience.

The noblesse were ensnared in a similar manner. Catharine's maids of honor, young and beautiful, but abandoned girls, were the sirens employed to captivate the more worldly and impressionable of the Huguenot leaders. Treachery was the leading feature in the queen mother's policy; her aim being bad, she naturally was not scrupulous as to her means, and the morals of her licentious court would be exposed to but little scrutiny. Those of her pimps, men or women, who were most successful in their infamous work, received the highest honor. Thus it was that those twin devils, debauchery and perfidy, were the earliest and most intimate companions of Charles IX.
Thus was the Reformation compromised by its political chiefs. While the current ran in lowlier channels, it coursed unwaveringly to the sea. The alliance of the nobles lowered the religious *morale*. The fervor of Calvin, the eloquence of Beza never injured the cause they loved; the treason of Navarre, the licentious coxcombr of Condé, wasting precious hours lapped in the arms of Catharine's dancing wrens, melted, like a common fop, in baths and perfumes—these worked God's cause incalculable mischief.

It is a pity, some say, that the noblesse gathered under the Huguenot banner; why, query others, did Beza's pulpit stoop to preach politics?

Great moral movements necessarily and inevitably bubble over into politics. If politics invade the domain of morals, if diplomacy attempts to strangle religion, if iniquity enthrones itself in law, then it becomes the preacher's duty with one hand to appeal to the state for redress, and with the other to uncloak the cheat. This was what Luther did. This was what Calvin did. They desired to preach Christ. The state said, No. Then the reformers created a party in the state whose circumstances enabled them to obtain the required liberty to preach God's word.

In this sense, wherever statutes withhold permission to proclaim salvation, if men's thoughts influence their laws, it is the duty of the pulpit to preach politics. If it were possible to conceive of a community whose opinions had no effect upon their government, there Beza and Calvin and Luther would have no call to impeach bad laws and ungodly policies. But those worthies knew of no such community. The czar, at the head of a government whose constitution knows no check but poison and the dagger, yet pauses when he hears his subjects growl. The sultan dared to murder his janizaries only when the streets came to hate them as much as he did. Though sheltered by Roman despotism, Herod and the chief priests abstained from this and that because they "feared the people." Certainly then there can be no question that the *ratinale* of the reformers was right.

At all events, the pontiffs never scrupled to bring the pressure of public opinion to bear upon governmental action. In the early years of the rein of Charles IX, Pius IV directed the politics of the Vatican. This crafty pope perceived that the temporal authority of his see would be undermined if the Huguenots could enjoy religious liberty; his object therefore was to make them hateful to the French government.

To prevent the clergy from giving the Reformation countenance, he determined to punish those prelates who had either wholly adopted the new theology, or had at least tolerated it. He excommunicated the cardinal of Chatillon, St. Romain archbishop of Aix, Montluc bishop of Valence, Caraccioli of Troves, Barbancon of Pomiers, and Guillart of Chartres, all of whom were summoned to appear before him and account for their conduct.
Pope Pius' audacity saved these prelates from his wrath. He cited the queen of Navarre to give an account of her faith; and if within the space of six months she did not appear before him, he declared that she should be proscribed, convicted of heresy by default, and deprived of her kingdom, which should be given to the first occupant.

This insolent assault upon a crowned head and a near relative of the king of France, caused a strong remonstrance to be filed by the French ambassador at Rome; in consequence the bull was withdrawn, and affairs remained in status quo.

Upon the heels of the pope’s rescinded bull trudged a new edict; it was called a declaration, and was avowedly to explain the obscurities of that of Amboise, but in reality to curtail once more the rights of the Huguenots.

The month of December, 1563, was rendered remarkable by the conclusion of the Council of Trent, one of the most famous of the Roman synods. Long before the doctrines of Calvin had become popular in France, Germany, embracing Martin Luther's evangelical opinions, demanded the convocation of a general council to settle disputed points of orthodoxy. Finally Paul III, who then wore the tiara, yielded to the request, and in the year 1537 selected Mantua as the ecclesiastical rendezvous; but the sovereign duke of that city refused his consent, in consequence of which the assembly was transferred to Vicenza, and postponed to 1538. Various contingencies delayed the conference till 1542, when Paul convened the council at Trent.

From that date the sessions dragged their slow length along, amid constant and frivolous adjournments, through twenty-one tedious years, during which time the dogmatism, the bigotry, and the tergiversations of the council, wholly devoted to Rome—there was not a Lutheranist or Calvinist present—so disgusted the Protestants, that they refused to recognize its authority, or to be bound by its decrees.

Pius IV had renewed the sessions and pressed for a decision, because he was persuaded that unless some fixed principles were adopted, to which the floating creed of the Vatican could be anchored in case of need, the most sincere adherents of the holy see might be seduced into heresy by the arguments of those who claimed the right of interpreting the holy Scriptures for themselves.

The different discussions during the twenty-five sessions of the council, embraced the whole range of subjects which affected the purse, wealth, and supremacy of the court of Rome. The decrees were prefaced in this style: “The holy Æcumenic Council, legitimately assembled under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the apostolical legates presiding.” But as the various pontiffs had the council completely under their control, no latitude of discussion was
permitted, no breath of liberality stirred the mushy air. Instead of deliberating upon the spiritual interests of Christendom, for effecting an abolition of the superstitious and corruptions which were the grounds of Luther’s terrible attacks, it was only proposed that one or two of the more glaring abuses should be slightly modified, while additional authority was conferred in every point in which the councils and traditions of the church were at variance with the Scriptures. Thus what was professedly intended to reform the Roman communion, served only to confirm its errors.

How could this be otherwise, when the council was packed with the creatures of the pontiff, whose number he could increase at his pleasure, while the most learned and evangelical divines of Europe at large were never invited to shed over the discussions the light of their luminous counsel, when even those papists who ventured to differ with the legates upon trivialities were speedily gagged?

The last act of the council was to establish the absurd dogma of the pope's infallibility; and it was observed at the time that the "Holy Spirit," of which the decrees spoke, "was sent from Rome in a portmanteau."

So greatly did the ultramontane interest predominate in the decrees of the Council of Trent, that even the papists of France would not submit inconsiderately to their reception. A celebrated lawyer, Charles du Moulin, published a memoir, showing that the council was null and vicious, contrary to former decrees, and prejudicial alike to the prerogatives of the crown and to the liberties of the Gallican church. He was arrested for this while upon the steps of the Palace of Justice, and that circumstance nearly caused a tumult, for the whole legal profession felt indignant that an advocate who honored the law so highly should be treated like a malefactor for a legal writing. The clerks were incited to attempt a rescue. The conciergerie, however, being close at hand, the guard hustled their victim within its walls and shut the gate, thus by a prompt flight escaping the vengeance of their pursuers.

No sooner did this affair reach Coligny than he made the case his own, for he had encouraged De Moulin to publish the memoir; the event to the queen mother, and by a full representation of the facts and the probable result of the incarceration, soon obtained an order for the advocate's release.

As the king's minority had afforded the pretext for many of the attempts against the government, Catharine was desirous that he should be declared of age; that measure could not affect her influence over the boy, while it would protect her from the intrusion of meddlers. In 1563, Charles entered his fourteenth year, the age fixed by a law of Charles the Wise as marking the majority of the king.
After some maneuvering this point was gained, and the royal party then set out upon a tour of observation through France. As the brilliant retinue of the young monarch passed through the country, the populace crowded to salute the king with their acclamations. The court first tarried at Lorraine, where a number of fêtes were given in honor of the visit. But though Catharine's policy made her countenance these lavish revels, since "thereby she caught many gudgeons," the wily queen was very far from permitting herself to be engrossed by the follies she set afoot. Availing herself of this opportunity, she negotiated with the neighboring German princes, for the purpose of persuading them to restrain their subjects from arming to aid the Huguenots in case of another civil convulsion in France; her efforts, however, were not crowned with full success.

From Lorraine, Charles journeyed into the south of France. At Avignon the queen met a special legate from the pope, a Florentine, and Pius' confidant. While the besotted court was amused with pageants, this precious pair had an interview of long duration. Catharine is supposed upon this occasion to have opened her full budget of perfidies, for the nuncio was reported to have been "merveilleusement satisfait."

On the 10th of June, 1565, the court arrived at Bayonne. Here the king met his sister the queen of Spain, who had been dispatched by her husband Philip II as an unconscious instrument in a hideous plot. She was accompanied by a splendid suite led by Alvarez de Toledo, duke of Alva, celebrated for his atrocities in the Low Countries, an envoy quite equal, by his talents and his sanguinary, bigoted temper, to the infamous commission confided to him.

Here, at Bayonne, it was that while the French and Spanish courts endeavored to outvie each other's pageantry—for it was a peculiarity of Catharine de' Medici, that when she plotted most infamously she hid her intrigues behind a pageant—that Alva and the queen mother hatched the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

By a gallery which she had ordered to be constructed to connect her apartments with those of her daughter, she conversed every night with the duke of Alva. Here the monster duke and the serpent-like queen discussed the best means of extirpating French heresy; sitting there in the gloom, like two conspirators, they agreed upon the adoption of one of two plans: to expel the whole body of Huguenot preachers from the country, or else to assassinate at one stroke the four or six unhappy men who stood at the head of the party, and whose loss was supposed to be irreparable.

"Ten thousand frogs are not worth the head of one salmon," cried Alva when speaking of the contemplated massacre. The young prince of Bearn, afterwards Henry IV, who was with the royal party on this tour, and whose penetration was far beyond his years—he was then but twelve—treasured up this expression, which he accidentally overheard, and considered applicable to Condé and
Coligny. He repeated the words to his mother, Jane d'Albrét, who warned the prince and the admiral that sly mischief was afoot.

Revolving in her mind these "mortal accidents for the ruin of the state," Catherine concluded the royal progress; and in 1566 convened an assembly of the Notables at Moulins. Her chief object now was to lull all suspicion to sleep; and then, when the Huguenots were entrapped, to give them the coup de grace. If the Samson of reform could be won to recline in the lap of this Delilah, she felt competent to insure that when she pronounced the word, "Samson, the Philistines be upon thee," the undone Hercules should not have the strength to rise and avert his fate. We shall see how well Catherine succeeded.

The result of the conference at Moulins was the promulgation of an edict which settled many controverted points of jurisprudence, and which, in reference to religion, ordered that the former decrees should be solemnly confirmed.

Had there been any sincerity in the professions of Charles, or had honesty swayed the counsels of his authoritative advisers, the privileges and disabilities of the Huguenots would have been clearly and fundamentally fixed by this edict. But though there was a general ratification of prior decrees, all of which had been distorted by unfair constructions put upon essential clauses, yet it was so loosely worded as to leave all the main principles in confusion and incertitude. Indeed the court had no wish to establish any definitive settlement of the questions at issue; on the contrary, it was their intention to leave all the mooted points in such a fluctuating and doubtful state, as to render the constant interference of the royal council necessary; by these means it was hoped gradually to fritter away all the protective securities of religious liberty.

Through these perfidious negotiations the queen mother had great difficulty in restraining the belligerent bigotry of the young king, whose hatred of the Huguenots was only equaled by his dissimulation; for though yet a mere boy, he masked his real opinions with a wiliness and duplicity which deceived the oldest and craftiest courtiers. Every fresh demand of the Huguenots for the extension of their privileges, or for the protection of those already conceded, roused his choler.

One day he broke out in great anger against the admiral: "It is not long since," said he, "that you were satisfied with being merely tolerated by the orthodox; now you claim to be their equals; presently you will wish to be supreme." The habitual caution of Coligny kept him silent. Charles left him abruptly, rushed into the apartment of the chancellor, and exclaimed, "The duke of Alva was right; heads held so high are dangerous to a state; tact and skill are useless, for they may be parried by the same weapons. We can only keep our ascendancy by force."
Catharine also was heard to mutter darkly that "Ere long the ancient faith would have few enemies in France."

Below the deceitful calm which smiled above, these ominous words presaged St. Bartholomew.

Chapter XXIII

RECOMMENCEMENT of the WAR

The treaty of pacification gave no satisfaction to either party. As in all compromises upon vital questions, one side esteemed that too much had been conceded; the other thought that assured triumph had been bartered to obtain a hollow and treacherous edict. Gloomy and suspicious, all France rested upon arms; while the Huguenot chiefs, fearful of Catharine's poisoner or of the steel of her bravos, quitted the dangerous vicinage of Paris for a safer residence.

No sooner had the champions of the Reformation left the court, than the cardinal of Lorraine, plotting busy mischief, arrived at St. Germaine, and resumed his seat at the council board. Notwithstanding his apparent moderation and the vacillation of his ordinary conduct, this consummate intriguer was ever the same—unchangeable in his views, and, despite of all reconciliation, implacable. The effects of his presence were soon visible.

The king of Spain, determined to exterminate the Protestants of the Netherlands, designed, at the commencement of 1567, to march an army, under Alva, by the route of Savoy and the mountain chain of Lorraine skirting the French frontier, into the Low Countries.

The plotters at Paris eagerly seized this pretext to augment the army. Catherine expressed great alarm lest France should be invaded by the Spaniards. Avowedly to avert the menaced danger, six thousand Swiss were taken into the pay of the government, new captains were appointed to the civic militia of Paris, and the companies of the *hommes d'armes* were raised to their full complement.

At first the Huguenots took the bait. Condé, with Hotspur impetuosity, even tendered his services to guard the frontier. But ere long their suspicious were aroused. It was perceived that all stations of trust were bestowed exclusively upon Romanist officers, and that Alva, so far from meeting with any opposition,
received the warmest of welcomes and the heartiest, was supplied with abundant provisions, and trod through France amid an ovation.

The keen eye of the sleepless admiral instantly pierced into the depths of Catherine's perfidious policy. A secret council of the Huguenot chiefs was speedily convened at his residence, Chatillonsur-Loing. It was determined to foil stratagem by stratagem. French history teaches that that party which is master of the court can alone accomplish its designs; therefore, since it had been ascertained that Catherine had resolved to imprison Condé for life, put Coligny to death, distribute the Swiss to garrison Paris, Orleans, and Poitiers, and to revoke all edicts of tolerance and pacification, that the extermination of the reformers might proceed unfettered by statutes, the wary Huguenots determined to take the initiative—by a grand coup d'état, to elope with the court.

In the secrecy with which this plan was formed, and in the rapidity and precision of its execution, the learned men of the age could find nothing in history to be compared with it, without going back to the times of Mithridtites king of Pontus.

The court was sojourning at Monceaux, near Meaux, in an open residence, quite unsuspicous of danger. Catherine, steeped to the lips in treachery, was now caught napping; the biter was nearly bitten. At the critical moment however, the king was warned, and he returned to Paris under the escort of his Swiss, whose steady, disciplined valor beat back the headlong charges of Condé's cavaliers.

But though foiled, the Huguenots were not disheartened. Condé pressed forward, and encamped before the capital. His head-quarters were at St. Dennis, from whence his troops blockaded the city, destroyed the mills, mastered the river, and fortified all the surrounding castles which commanded the main roads.

Tedious and subtle negotiations ensued. The Huguenots demanded the general, distinct, and irrevocable guarantee of religious toleration, complete and public, as the essential basis of pacification. The court not only refused this concession, but speaking through the octogenarian lips of Montmorenci, declared that those indulgences which had been granted to the heretics were always intended to be temporary; that the king had now determined upon their revocation, since henceforth he would permit no lisp of any religion in France save that of Rome.

The decision was then left to the arbitrament of battle. The royal army, much the more numerous and the best equipped, sallied out, and led on by the old constable in person, charged Condé upon the plain of St. Dennis. A sanguinary battle ensued; Montmorenci himself, the scarred veteran of a hundred fights,
fell mortally wounded; and the Huguenots, borne back by stress of numbers, rested at a little distance from St. Dennis, with unbroken ranks and undiminished ardor. The field and the spoil remained to the royalists, but the honor of the day belonged to the vastly outnumbered Huguenots. The admiral commanded; and Marshal Tavannes, himself an accomplished soldier, said admiringly, "Faut confesser que l'Admiral de Coligny estoit Capittane."

Montmorenci was taken to Paris, where lie shortly died. "Those who speak without passion of the constable," says Davila, who knew the old soldier well and personally, "give him three principal attributes: that he was a good captain, a loving servant, but a bad friend; for in all his actions he was ever swayed by the single consideration of himself."

Brantome bears this quaint testimony to his piety: "He never failed in his devotions; for every morning he would repeat his paternosters, whether he was in the house or on horseback among his troops; which caused the saying, 'beware of the constable's paternosters;' for while he was repeating them and muttering the creed, as occasion presented he would cry, 'Go hang up such a one; tie this man to a tree; run that fellow through with your pikes this instant; shoot all those fellows before me; cut in pieces those vagabonds who wish to hold yon church against the king; burn me this village; and such sentences of justice or war he would utter without leaving off his paternosters until he had quite finished them, thinking that to defer them to another time would be to commit a great error, so conscientious was he."

At the solicitation of Condé, John Casimir of the palatinate, who was zealous for his creed, and always ready to battle for it, entered France at the head of seven thousand five hundred cavalry and some thousands of infantry, to assist the Huguenots; not, as he said, to resist the French king, but to protect his coreligionists against the enemies of their persons and their faith."

Condé and Casimir formed a junction shortly after the stricken field of St. Dennis, and directed their united march towards Paris, pausing on the way to capture Chartres.

The Huguenots had agreed to pay their German auxiliaries one hundred thousand crowns; the military chest contained but two thousand. What was to be done? Condé's army served without pay; they had suffered severely in the retreat from St. Dennis in the most rigorous season of the year; their provisions were scanty, and regiment after regiment walked barefooted. To all these privations they cheerfully submitted for conscience' sake. It was doubtful whether this impoverished and frozen host would exert themselves to discharge the claims of the Germans. The experiment was tried; it was successful: thirty thousand crowns were raised at once by voluntary contribution, and Casimir's followers were satisfied. History records no circumstance more extraordinary, or which more finely illustrates the influence of religious principle.
While the Huguenot army lay before Chartres, Catherine, alarmed by the formidable danger which menaced her government, had recourse once more to vicious diplomacy: she granted the reformers what they had demanded from the beginning, the complete restoration of original edict of pacification.

Both Condé and Coligny were dissatisfied. They wanted guarantees. But the gentry, fatigued by an arduous campaign, longed for their homes; they imagined that their object was accomplished; they hoped to "honor God and serve the king in peace." Very reluctantly the Huguenot chiefs disarmed. Trusting God, they yet "kept their powder dry."

After the ratification of peace, the German troopers left France. The Huguenots insisted that the Spanish and Swiss auxiliaries of the court should also depart. Spite of this protest, they were retained. This distinction between the foreign levies sufficiently announced the hollowness and insincerity of the recent negotiations. Presently events proved that the reenacted edict was only a concession wrung from the reluctant fear of the perfidious court—a concession made only to be broken.

Distrust and suspicion everywhere arose. Every possible discourtesy was shown to the admiral, to D'Andelot, and even to Condé, while the Huguenot masses were exposed to an infinite variety of petty vexatious. The papist pulpits resounded with invectives against the heretics, with seditious reflections on the recent peace, and with clamorous exhortations to break it. The clergy had become inoculated with the virus of Jesuitism; and digging up from its grave of three hundred years the infamous maxim of Innocent III, they openly proclaimed that "no faith should be kept with heretics," and that their massacre was just, pious, and conducive to salvation.

These inflammatory ravings provoked constant tumults, and occasioned frequent assassination. The ignorant and superstitious canaille ran frenzied and foaming through the streets, panting for murder. Huguenot writers affirm that under this "pacification," in the space of three months ten thousand of their persuasion perished by poison, by the dagger, and by the slow torture of imprisonment.

The astute policy of Catherine aided the frantic zeal of the priests and the Jesuits. Fearing lest any of her diabolical plans might reach the ears of Coligny or Condé, she new-modeled the cabinet. De l'Hôpital, whose virtue and equity had frequently thwarted the exterminating plans of the princes of Lorraine, was ordered to deliver up the seals, and he was banished to his estate. The effective powers of government were confided to a faithful few, and shrouded in mystery. Every possible precaution was taken to render the next blow struck at the Huguenots decisively fatal.
In pursuance of her scheme, the queen mother determined to seize Condé and the admiral. The prince was at his castle of Noyers, in Burgundy; Coligny at Chatillon-sur-Loing. "Their retreat," naively writes one of the admiral's biographers, "would have been extremely satisfactory to Catharine, if she had not seen that one half of the kingdom paid court to them. And indeed so great was the confluence at Chatillon and Noyers, that the Louvre was a desert in comparison. All the noblesse of the Huguenot party went in crowds to see them; and when ten gentlemen went out by one door, twenty passed in at another. This obliged the admiral especially to incur great expense; and if he had not been a careful man in every thing else, it would have ruined him. However, he was so much beloved that a thousand presents were constantly brought to him; and although he forbade his attendants accepting them, this did not prevent the same thing from occurring every day. The different reformed churches collected and sent a hundred thousand crowns to prevent the prince and himself from entirely bearing such a charge."

The queen mother sent an engineer to reconnoiter Noyers, to familiarize himself with Condé's habits, to learn the weak points of the castle, and to see whether it would be possible to get possession of it by a *coup de main*. The spy entered Noyers without difficulty under the guise of a poulterer. He was well received; but when he began to talk, it was suspected that he was not what he pretended to be. The prince ordered him to be watched; when lo, one night he was detected sounding the moat. Condé dissembled, and dismissed him pleasantly; but when he was gone, he wrote Coligny, acquainted him with the circumstance, and advised him to be upon his guard. The two chiefs then dispatched couriers to arouse their friends, and to request them to stand ready to grasp the sword at any moment.

In the mean time Coligny also had a visitor. Catherine sent Castelnau, an able diplomatist, to Chatillon-sur-Loing, to penetrate the admiral's designs; but the wary Huguenot was on his guard, and the hoodwinked politician reported that he found him busily engaged in his vineyards.

When Castelnau left him, Coligny posted off to Noyers to confer with the prince. Upon being apprized of this, Catherine ordered Marshal Tavannes, who commanded in Burgundy for the king, to seize them at all hazards. But though Tavannes was a bitter foe of the Reformation, he had a keen sense of military honor; and he knew besides, that if the scheme miscarried he would be sacrificed by the queen mother without a scruple, to allay the ensuing storm. He was too wary a courtier, however, to disobey openly so authoritative a mandate; so he set himself dexterously to save Condé and the admiral while yet appearing to perform his mission.

Approaching Noyers, he wrote Catherine, "The stag is at bay; the chase is prepared." After dispatching this laconic epistle, he sent two scouts to sound the depth of the water in front of the prince's strong-hold. They were
captured, as Tavannes intended they should be, and upon being interrogated, confessed the plot.

Condé and Coligny prepared for instant flight. They quitted Noyers with their families in August, 1568, and after enduring the severest hardships, traversing mountain paths hitherto untrodden, and crossing the Loire at a ford never before passed, reached, in September, the protecting wells of the friendly city of Rochelle.

Nor were these the only victims of intended perfidy who baffled the subtle arts of the outwitted petticoated Machiavelli. Odet, cardinal of Chatillon, in the disguise of a common sailor, reached England from a port in Normandy, where his negotiations with queen Elizabeth subsequently proved of eminent service to his party.

The queen of Navarre, whose arrest had been entrusted to Montluc, retired from Bearn at the critical moment, and accompanied by her son and daughter, sought safety at Rochelle. Thus St. Bartholomew was again postponed. Hostilities instantly recommenced.

The feeling at the court was very bitter. The edict of January, 1562, confirmed by the last peace, was again revoked; the exercise of any other form of worship than the Roman was prohibited, under penalty of death; and the nominal command of the royal army was given to the duke of Anjou, the second brother of the king, a youth of sixteen, with the title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom. But Marshal Tavannes commanded in reality.

A feeling of the utmost jealousy and hatred existed between Anjou and the Young king; and Charles let no opportunity slip of mortifying his brother. When Anjou was nominated to the chief command of the army, Charles protested vehemently, and on one occasion an angry altercation took place at the supper-table. "Cousin," said the duke, "if you strive to obtain what belongs to me, I will make you little in the same degree as you imagine to become great."

In this convulsion Rochelle became the Huguenot rendezvous, as Orleans had been in the preceding war. The extreme measures of the court rallied the whole Huguenot party to fight for their common safety; nor did they on this occasion require any stimulus from the exhortations of their preachers. Their chiefs levied troops in all the provinces in which they had personal interest. So great was the influence of these leaders, that James Crussal, lord of Acier, alone raised and equipped twenty-five thousand men in Languedoc and Dauphiny; a striking proof of the comparative weakness of the royal prerogative, and of the vast power still retained by the descendants of the ancient baronial aristocracy.
Marches and counter-marches, skirmishes and maneuvers innumerable succeeded.

At length the two main armies fronted each other on the banks of the Charente, near Jarnac, a small frontier town which divided Limousin from Angournois. The river separated the combatants, and had the Huguenots exercised common prudence, they might have avoided the calamities which soon befell them; but they neglected to keep a diligent watch through the night, and Tavannes passed the Charente unchallenged.

Condé's army was spread over a wide tract of country, while that of the marshal advanced in a compact phalanx. The prince, surprised and beaten before the battle commenced, attempted to retreat upon his main body commanded by the admiral. In vain; Tavannes held him in a vice. Condé then wheeled and charged the royal cavalry led by the duke of Anjou. At this critical moment his leg was broken by a kick from the horse of De la Rochefoucault, who was riding by his side. Undaunted by this accident, the gallant prince held his saddle, and encouraging his feeble escort, plunged like a hero into the thickest of the fight. Surrounded on all sides, he was soon dismounted; with one knee upon the earth, he still shook his sword in fierce defiance of his enemies. He was commanded to surrender by the royalist officers who recognized him; but ere he could do so, Montesquieu, a captain of Anjou's guards, came behind him and shot him through the head.

Such was the end of Louis de Bourbon, prince of Condé, a man of many noble and some great qualities, distinguished for his heroism, skill, and wit in an age when such a reputation necessitated corresponding ability. His licentiousness was the chief blemish upon his character. This exposed him to many snares, and impeded him in the rigid maintenance of his principles. Aside from this grievous fault, his character was free from spot; a sincere friend, an unwavering advocate for religious toleration, an ardent, unbending Huguenot in his intellectual convictions, if not always in his practical conduct, he was mourned by his friends with poignant sorrow, while his memory was respected even by his foes.

The defeat of the Huguenots was complete. Many of their best officers were captured, among the rest the brave and talented La Noué, whose graphic pen has left a stirring picture of his age. Upon this gallant soldier the cruel and remorseless duke of Montpensier pronounced summary sentence. "My friend," said he sneeringly, "your trial is finished; yours, and that of all your comrades: look to your conscience." Martigues, a captain in the royal army, who had been an old brother in arms of La Noué, obtained his pardon, and he was exchanged.

The Huguenot army was only saved from utter rout by the coolness and skill of Coligny. Collecting the remnant of the dispersed and shattered squadrons, the imperturbable admiral held them firmly together, and retreated with slow and
stubborn valor upon the neighboring village of Cognac. Pausing here only long enough to fortify the town, he left there a strong garrison, and then resumed his retreat, resting at St. Jean d’Angely, from whence he could advance to the assistance of Cognac, should it be besieged, while he was enabled also to open a road for the duke of Deux-Ponts, who was advancing to his assistance at the head of some German auxiliaries.

The conduct of the royalists after the battle of Jarnac was weak, vacillating, and impolitic. The dukes D’Aumale and Nemours, relatives of the cardinal of Lorraine, commanded an army fully equal in numbers to that of the duke of Deux-Ponts; still the Bavarian general marched steadily through the heart of France. The duke of Anjou did not push on to Cognac till Coligny had strongly fortified it; and then he no sooner reached it then he hastily retreated from its walls. The solution of these mysterious tactics is to be found in the memoirs of Tavannes, who attributed the whole of these faulty operations to the jealousies and intrigues of the court.

Meantime two inauspicious events occurred: the duke of Deux-Ponts fell a victim to the fever which then raged as a pestilence; but he did not die before delegating his authority to his lieutenant, Mansfeldt, to whom his troops swore allegiance.

The loss of the Bavarian general was immediately succeeded by another of more importance to the Huguenots. Coligny’s brother, D’Andelot, whom the admiral termed his right hand, was also stricken down by the remorseless fever. His death soon followed, and the first patrician apostle of religious liberty was lost to France. D’Andelot was a man of spotless integrity and singular hardihood of character; frank, open, generous, he was a universal favorite, while he lived his religion as well as thought it. “He was true and sincere,” says the Romanist Abbé Anquétil, “and of all the Calvinist chiefs, one of the most honestly persuaded of the truth of his faith. Naturally frank, candid, and generous, he attracted friendship, as his brother, more severe and reserved, conciliated esteem.”

Coligny deeply felt this bereavement; but carrying it to God, he subordinated private sorrow to his stern sense of public duty, and remained at his post.

Upon the death of Condé the leadership of the Huguenot army had devolved upon Coligny. But ere long dissatisfaction arose. There were many nobles in the ranks who were his equals in wealth and birth; these, while they readily conceded the admiral’s military superiority, considered themselves degraded by accepting him as their chief. The wise admiral accordingly wrote the queen of Navarre, who still tarried in Rochelle with her children, that the time had come when she should raise her son to the dignity which was his due.
This politic move exhibits at once Coligny's wisdom and his self-abnegation. He served God, not his own interests; he was anxious for union, not greedy for power. Nothing could more finely prove this than his appeal to Jane d'Albrét.

That illustrious woman, who inherited all her mother's fervid piety and brilliant genius, responded to the call in the same spirit. Hastening to Coligny's camp, her presence at once rallied the desponding spirits of the mutinous army, and animated them to fresh exertions. Her son Henry, prince of Bearn, and the eldest son of Louis of Bourbon, prince of Condé, who was a few years younger than her own boy, and destined also to achieve wide fame, accompanied her. Holding the two princes by the hand, she presented them to the Huguenots in these stirring words:

"My friends, we mourn the loss of a prince who, to his dying hour, sustained with equal fidelity and courage the faith which he had undertaken to defend; but our tears would be unworthy of him, unless, imitating his bright example, we too firmly resolved to sacrifice our lives rather than abandon God. The good cause has not perished with Condé; his unhappy fate ought not to fill with despair men who are devotedly attached to their religion. God watches over his own. He gave that prince companions well fitted to serve him while he lived; he leaves among us brave and experienced captains, able to repair the loss we have sustained in his death. Here I offer you my son the young prince of Bearn; I also confide to you Henry Condé, son of the captain whom we bewail. May it please heaven that they both show themselves worthy heirs of the valor of their ancestors, and may these tender pledges, committed to your guardianship, be the bond of your union, and the assurance of your future triumph."

As the beautiful queen, blooming with excitement, concluded, shouts of acclamation made the welkin ring; the timid were reanimated, the dissatisfied were reassured, and the boldest panted for action. The enthusiasm of the army was kindled to a still higher pitch when the prince of Bearn and young Condé, with warlike vehemence of gesture, swore to defend the reformed religion, and to persevere in the "good fight" until death or victory.

Henry of Navarre was immediately proclaimed generalissimo of the Huguenots: all dissatisfaction ceased; the scrupulous point of honor was satisfied, and Coligny became in fact what Henry was in name.

In the summer of 1569, active operations were resumed. The Huguenot army, forming a junction with the German auxiliaries, numbered twenty-five thousand; the royalists under Anjou were still stronger. Coligny met the young duke at La Roche 1’Abeille, and worsted him in a severe engagement; he then pressed on to besiege Poitiers. Here an epidemic broke out among the Germans, who had eaten immoderately of the autumnal fruits; whole regiments were incapacitated for service; the camp became a hospital, and the
admiral himself was prostrated. While the army thus lay hors du combat, Anjou, who had marched to the relief of Poitiers, suddenly retreated; and this afforded Coligny also a pretext to retire without compromising his honor.

If Coligny was adored by his own party, he was admired and esteemed by all the high-minded and generous cavaliers among the royalists. No one questioned the sincerity of his faith; all praised his invincible fortitude. Some of the royalist officers sent him word from Anjou's camp of their vast numerical superiority, and urged him to avoid an engagement. To these admonitions the admiral, whose military genius was of the Fabian order, lent a willing ear. But this skilful policy was rendered impossible by the rashness of the Hotspur spirits in his ranks, and by the open mutiny of the Germans.

On the 3rd of October, 1569, the two armies joined battle at Moncontour. The hospital army of the admiral, enfeebled and demoralized, was quickly routed. A pistol-ball shattered the lower jaw of Coligny, who still kept his saddle, and continued to display the courage of a soldier and the talent of a captain. But the fortune of the field could not be retrieved. Cannon, baggage, banners, all fell into Anjou's hands; and of an army of twenty-five thousand men, but six thousand reached St. Jean d'Angely on the retreat.

But the Huguenots were too numerous, too well organized, and too enthusiastic to be subdued by the loss of a stricken field.

Upon this occasion they were especially assisted to recover their feet by the bickerings and dissensions of the court. Tavannes, under whose skilful guidance Anjou had achieved his victories, was insulted out of the service by the cardinal of Lorraine. "Sir cardinal," said the indignant marshal when the inflated churchman ventured to dictate military tactics to him, "each to his trade; no man can be at once a good priest and a good soldier."

The victory of Moncontour obtained for Anjou the loudest praises of his party; but the glory he had acquired rankled in the envious heart of Charles IX. The king departed for the army, hoping that his presence, even after the battle, would transfer to his own brow the laurels which his brother had culled in the ghastly carnage of the battle's front.

The disunion in the royal camp enabled Coligny, indefatigable and ubiquitous, to recruit his forces, in order to try the success of a new campaign. Early in the spring of 1570, he descended from the mountains of Upper Languedoc, and marshaled his troops on the plains of Toulouse. Thence he spread his two wings, and carried pillage and desolation to the Loire. Arrived in Burgundy, he was opposed by Marshal Casse Gouner, at the head of thirteen thousand men. Though the admiral's army numbered but six thousand men-at-arms, he attached boldly and with such skill that he gained a complete victory at Arnay-le-Duc.
This defeat alarmed the court, but nothing was done. The rigor of the government was paralyzed by the intrigues of rival cliques. Catharine once more dissembled; the tragic comedy of a reconciliation was sought to be once more enacted.

The overtures of the government were received with joy by the Huguenots. Peace on the basis of toleration was their dream. Saddened by reverses, wearied by tedious campaigns, longing for their homes, the cavaliers of the Reformation required nothing but insured liberty of conscience to make them doff their armor with enthusiasm.

This was Catharine's program: All preceding edicts ratified; a general amnesty; the free exercise of the reformed religion; confiscated property restored; the Huguenots declared eligible to all offices of the state; the complete possession of four important cities, Rochelle, Montauban, Cognac, and La Charité, as guarantees: such were the terms demanded and conceded in order to renew pacification.

France hailed the peace with acclamations; but the curtain fell upon a dreary war, only to rise upon an atrocious massacre.

Chapter XXIV
HOODWINKED FRANCE

With the pacification of 1570 came a new régime. The court changed front. Foiled in the field, Catharine changed weapons. The crafty Florentine determined henceforth to use those perfidious and deadly arts which were so congenial, in which she was strongest, and which were in such fatal vogue in her native Italy. Every effort was made to lull France into a feeling of profound security.

The Huguenots especially were treated with profound and unprecedented respect. Did any one demand additional privileges? the concession was ready. Did a murmur of complaint wail through the court? Vengeance was swift. This very excess of graciousness was enough to excite suspicion, especially when it was well known that Catharine and treachery were synonymous terms; that she smiled, and, like Cassius, "murdered while she smiled." Strangely enough, it did not. The party seemed infatuated. Indeed all France, save the conspirators who sat darkly hatching their hideous plot, said, "Lo, the millennium is come," and fondly believed that the present tranquility would be permanent.
At the outset the Huguenots were wary. Upon the cessation of hostilities, the Bourbon princes, Jane d'Albrét, and the admiral fixed their residence at Rochelle, where the queen of Navarre held her court. It was the study of the government to allay the suspicions which this policy proved to exist, and to tempt the noblesse of the reformed party to the metropolis. Every artifice known to the queen mother's extensive repertoire was exercised. "As soon as the peace was signed," says Davila, "every secret spring which the king and queen held ready in their thoughts was put into action to draw into their nets the principal Huguenots, and to do by artifice that which had been so often vainly attempted by means of war."

Never had Catherine acted her part with more consummate skill. Not a wrinkle of venation marred her placid features. She even in appearance surrendered that authority for whose acquisition she had damned her soul; and perfectly aware that the reformers observed her closely, she made her son assume the direction of public affairs, convincing him that it was necessary to success that he should gain the confidence of the heretics, and particularly of Coligny.

On the 23rd of October, 1570, the year of the pacification, which Charles with paternal affectation styled "my peace," the king was married to Elizabeth of Austria, second daughter of the reigning house of Hapsburg. This princess possessed the esteem and confidence of her husband, but she exercised no influence over him, for her mild temper quailed before the assumption of the imperious Catharine.

To commemorate the nuptials, a giddy round of fêtes was given, and the nobility of all parties were invited, so that a superficial observer would have imagined that the words "Huguenot" and "Romanist" had been swept from the language and merged in that of Frenchmen.

Yet still the admiral and his coterie absented themselves; the queen of Navarre, with obstinate suspicion, continued to hold her modest court within the stout walls of devoted Rochelle.

A new scheme was hatched. With the ostensible view of conciliating conflicting interests, but with the real design of masking his perfidious and sanguinary plot, and to insure the presence of the chief victims, Charles endeavored to promote various alliances among the leading families of the kingdom, and proposed his youngest sister, the beautiful but frail Margaret of Valois, as the consort of young Henry prince of Bearn.

Now for the first time this prince, who in after years achieved an immortal fame, begins to make a central figure in the checkered and tragic history of his epoch. It is fitting therefore that the more salient features of his early life should be briefly recited.
Henry was born at Pau, in Bearn, on the 13th of December, 1553. He was the grandson of Henry d'Albrét, the brother-in-arms of Francis I; his grandmother was the beautiful, accomplished, and pious Margaret de Valois, the sister of the paladin king.

The young prince was reared in the castle of Courasse, in the mountains of Navarre. Here he was exercised like a Spartan boy; nourished on the coarsest diet, brown bread, beef, cheese; he was also sent to play with the children of the peasants, bareheaded and barefooted. Thus from his cradle he was hardy, independent, and self-reliant. This harsh apprenticeship, so unlike that of most princes, prepared him for heroic destinies.

While Henry d’Albrét lived, he personally superintended his grandson’s education, a task for which his fine scholarship well fitted him. Indeed Charles V considered him one of the most accomplished men of his age. Upon his death, Jane d’Albrét provided him with an excellent and learned tutor named La Gaucherie, who cultivated his illustrious pupil’s mind chiefly by conversational instruction. He had the wisdom to abandon that trifling course of study invented in an age comparatively barbarous, which was calculated rather to disgust than to enlighten. La Gaucherie, moreover, instilled into young Henry's mind principles of honor and of public virtue, which ever after, if we except his many and sad errors of gallantry, and these the Christian and moralist must condemn, guided his conduct.

When this able teacher died, Henry was confided to the tuition of Florent Chrétien, a Huguenot preacher of high merit. He readily entered into the views of the queen of Navarre, and trained the prince in the reformed faith with careful assiduity.

When the young mountaineer was first presented at the court of France, his blunt frankness caused much amusement; but his biting wit, grace of manner, and bonhomie speedily subdued all hearts.

"Will you be my son?" queried Henry II on one occasion as he stood chatting with the little prince. "No," was the frank reply, "he is my father," pointing to the king of Navarre. "Well," retorted the king, "will you be my son-in-law then?" "With all my heart," said Henry; and from this early date his marriage with the princess Margaret is said to have been decided upon.

At Bayonne the duke of Medina, looking at him earnestly, said, "This prince either will be or ought to be all emperor."

In the Memoirs de Nevers, some letters written in 1567, by the principal magistrates of Bordeaux, are found, which contain interesting particulars of young Henry’s manners and person at that time. "We have here with us," says one of them, “the prince of Bearn. It must be confessed that he is a charming
youth. At thirteen he has all the riper qualities of eighteen or nineteen. He is agreeable, polite, obliging, and behaves to everyone with an air so easy and engaging that wherever he is there is sure to be a crowd. He mixcs in conversation like a wise and prudent man, and speaks always to the purpose. When the court is the subject discussed, it is easy to see that he is au fait, for he never says more nor less than he ought. I shall all my life hate the new religion for having robbed us of so worthy a subject."

Another describes Henry's personal appearance: "His hair is inclined to a reddish tint, yet the ladies think him none the less agreeable on that account. His face is finely shaped, his nose neither too large nor too small, his eyes full of sweetness, his skin brown, but clear, and his whole countenance animated by a striking vivacity. With all these graces, if he is not well with the ladies, it must be strange."

Henry was early initiated into the science of war, in which he was destined to achieve so wide a celebrity. Even at the early age of fifteen, when his mother conducted him to Rochelle and presented him to the army, he criticized the military faults of Condo and Coligny, two of the greatest captains of the age. Such was the embryo king of Navarre—whose white plume at a later day led the headlong charge at Ivry—when, in his nineteenth year, he was invited to wed Margaret of Valois.

For many reasons, the proposal was extremely distasteful to Jane d'Albrét. She instinctively distrusted the tortuous politics of the court. Now, without putting a decided negative upon the plan, she yet withheld her positive sanction, for she had a dark foreboding of Catherine's sinister designs. This tacit opposition disconcerted the court. It was feared that the slightest breath of suspicion would detect the exterminating conspiracy ere it was ripe. The precautions were redoubled. Every device was adopted with renewed zeal to lull the Huguenots into false security. Any infringement of the recent treaty was severely punished. And Charles carried his duplicity to such a length, that he insulted the Guises into apparent exile, expressed a wish that young Condé should marry Mary of Cleves, marchioness de 1'Isle, who had been reared in Jane d'Albrét's court, and was an advantageous match; and to crown all, he brought about a marriage between Coligny, now a widower, and Jacqueline of Savoy, countess d'Entremont, a wealthy and noble Protestant lady who had become deeply interested in the admiral, giving them a nuptial present of a hundred thousand crowns, together with all the benefices enjoyed by Odet, cardinal of Chatillon, who had just died abroad.

These generous and successive acts of kingly comity produced the desired effect; only the most cautious and penetrating of the Huguenots still held out; but unfortunately among these were Coligny and the queen of Navarre. Charles perceived this, and in the summer of 1571 he made a tour into Touraine,
hoping that Jane and her suite would visit him on the route; nor was he disappointed; she came to his itinerant court, accompanied by the princes and escorted by the admiral.

When Coligny stood in the presence of his majesty, out of habitual respect the old soldier was about to fall upon one knee. Charles saw his intention, seized him by the arm, and prevented the intended obeisance, saying, "Nay, I hold you now, admiral, nor shall you for the future quit me when you please; I cannot spare so valuable a friend." Then, with great emphasis and much apparent genuineness of feeling, he added, "This is indeed the happiest day of my life." The queen mother, the duke of Anjou, and all the attendant nobles loaded Coligny with compliments and caresses, and especially the young duke of Alencon, youngest brother of the king, who, giving full play to the vivacity and frankness of boyhood, expressed his esteem for the admiral in extravagant terms. But he alone was sincere; he was not yet old enough to be steeped in dissimulation.

On this ill-fated visit it was definitely settled that Henry of Navarre should wed Margaret de Valois, and Jane d’Albrét and her suite consented to celebrate the nuptials in the spring of 1572 at Paris. The two courts then parted, with mutual professions of eternal amity.

Catharine returned to the metropolis with sardonic satisfaction. "The cautious fish have taken the bait," said she with a leer of triumphant malice.

On her part, the queen of Navarre reentered Rochelle sadly and thoughtfully. Reasons of state, anxiety to cement a lasting and righteous peace, had wrung from her a reluctant assent to the ill-omened marriage of her beloved boy; but not all the persuasions of apparent gain could satisfy her maternal instinct, nor quiet her apprehensions. She repeated incessantly, "This union is not, nor can it come to, good."

The political heavens now seemed serene; not a cloud specked the horizon. The awful lightnings which lurked behind this smiling sky yet hid their thunderbolts.

Completely cozened, the leaders of the Huguenots crowded to Paris, from which they had been so long debarred, anxious to share once more in the pleasures of the capital.

In the middle of May, 1572, the queen of Navarre, accompanied by a brilliant retinue, arrived at the Louvre. On the 9th of June she was a corpse. Suspicions of foul play were at once bruited through the streets. Her death was attributed to poison, which they say was given to her in a pair of gloves by a Florentine named Rend, the queen mother’s perfumer.
This melancholy event of course postponed the marriage of Henry, who now
assumed the title of king of Navarre.

Singularly enough, the fate of their great queen did not persuade the
Huguenots of the doom which awaited them. Dazzled blind by Catharine's
wiles, they lingered on at the court, nor made an effort to escape the
impending horrors.

Coligny indeed, profoundly grieved by the death of Jane d’Albrét, which
however he considered natural, retired to his estate of Chatillon-sur-Loing for a
few weeks; but it was not long ere he was once more an habitual visitor at the
Louvre.

The admiral’s conduct at this time bordered upon infatuation, and is all the
more remarkable on account of his natural caution and penetration.

While at his country residence, he was flooded with letters from his friends
urging him not to return to Paris, and presaging calamity. They did not indeed
base their appeals upon any specific facts; their admonitions were rather the
result of general inferences from current reports and peculiarities of conduct
observed at Paris.

But the admiral was deaf. One day one of the gentlemen attached to his suite
requested leave of absence. "On what account?" demanded Coligny. "Because
they caress you too much," was the reply, "and I would rather escape with the
fools than perish with the wise."

The chiefs of his party, relying upon the habitual wariness of Coligny, and
noting his calmness, shared his confidence, and partook of his doom.

The fact is, that the admiral was attacked on his weak side. His darling
project, a war against Spain for the assistance of the staggering Protestantism
of the Netherlands, was held out to him as certain to be adopted. Extended
conversations were held between the king and himself, in which he dilated
upon the advantages certain to accrue to France from such a war. The
profound and far-reaching mind of the great admiral formed plans of the
grandest character. Philip II was destitute of money; the French forces,
disciplined by innumerable internecine wars, were superior to the Spaniards in
military science; he had but to throw united France into the Low Countries,
and reinforce the kingdom by an alliance with England and Protestant
Germany, and then the Reformation might be cemented into an indestructible
unit, while Roman Europe would be lassoed into quiet imbecility.

Such, according to the best contemporaneous authorities, was the brilliant
programme of this statesmanlike Huguenot.
The French court listened with courteous attention to the admiral as he unfolded his plans, and map in hand, pointed out the salient features of the grand campaign. Catharine and the king appeared to enter with his own ardor into the scheme; and then, when Coligny quitted them, retired to the secret recesses of the palace, and spent half the night in arranging the details of the slowly ripening holocaust.

SECTION IV

Heroism and Tragedy

This section comprises chapters 25 through 36. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 25  The Massacre of St. Bartholomew
Chapter 26  The Triumph of Rochelle
Chapter 27  Vicissitudes
Chapter 28  The League
Chapter 29  The War of the Three Henries
Chapter 30  The Double Assassination
Chapter 31  The White Plume of Navarre
Chapter 32  The Edict of Nantes
Chapter 33  Richelieu
Chapter 34  The Dragonades
Chapter XXV

THE MASSACRE of ST. BARTHOLOMEW

The preachers in Geneva and the cardinals at Rome foresaw and predicted a catastrophe from the abnormal political situation at Paris. The radical antipathy between the rival parties who stood nudging each other’s elbows at the Louvre, with reconciliation painted on their faces, but hatred still unsubdued in their hearts, could not but forebode evil.

Yet, unmindful of the petulant murmurs of the king, oblivious of the old threats which had issued from Bayonne, the Huguenot leaders still lingered at the court, while one more act was played in the dreary comedy which ushered in the awful tragedy of St. Bartholomew. On the 18th of August, Prince Henry and Margaret de Valois were married.

The young duke of Guise had cherished the hope of marrying the king’s sister; he had long entertained a violent passion for her, while her affection for him was equally undisguised. But mutual affection was compelled to succumb to vicious state policy, and the wedding was consummated.

It had been agreed that the ceremonial of the marriage should not be wholly conformable to either creed: not to the Protestant, because the vows were to be received by a priest; the cardinal of Bourbon; not to the Romish, because those vows were to be received without the sacramental ceremonies of the Vatican. A great scaffold was erected in the court before the principal entrance of the cathedral of Notre Dame; and standing upon this typical structure, the inauspicious nuptials were celebrated. It was remarked by many that when the princess was asked if she were willing to take king Henry of Navarre to be her husband, she stood obstinately silent; she had said repeatedly that Guise alone should be her husband. But the king her brother, who stood just behind her, with his own hand rudely inclined her head, and this was taken for Margaret’s assent. This done, the bridegroom retired into a neighboring Huguenot chapel, while the reluctant bride passed into the cathedral with a bitter and broken heart to listen to the mockery of the mass.
In the evening the coldly indifferent husband and the sulky spouse attended the brilliant festival with which Charles crowned the dismal day.

From this time horrible events begin to jostle each other. Four days after the wedding, an attempt was made to assassinate the admiral as he was returning from one of his daily interviews with the king at the Louvre. He was fired at from a window screened by a certain Coligny was indebted for his life to an accidental movement made at the moment; but as it was, his left arm was broken, and the index finger of his right hand was shot off. With imperturbable sang froid the old soldier pointed out the house from whence the bullet sped; but ere his suite could break open the gate, the assassin had escaped.

This assault caused a profound commotion. The hostile mob of Paris, which had only borne the presence of the Huguenots with suppressed fury, now heaved in almost open insurrection. Navarre and Condé, supported by the whole Protestant party, presented a petition for justice and protection; and the king, who was playing at tennis when the news reached him, threw down the racket in a violent rage, muttered something about immature action, and exclaimed, "Must I be perpetually troubled by broils; shall I never have quiet?"

Active measures were then taken to allay suspicion, to quell the rising tumult, and to flatter the angered Huguenots into renewed stupefaction.

Coligny, who had been borne to his apartments by his attendants, weltering in his blood, was shortly visited by the king, the queen mother, Anjou, and many of the chief nobility. Every expression of condolence was uttered, signal vengeance upon the assassin was promised, the police were ordered to make domiciliary visits and arrest all suspected persons, and his majesty even carried his hypocrisy so far as openly to notify his high displeasure at the occurrence to all the public ambassadors.

This energetic action at once disarmed the suspicion and conciliated the respect of the Huguenot chiefs. Startled Paris resumed its tranquility, and that awful hush which precedes a storm succeeded.

Meantime, warned by this émuete of the danger which lurked in procrastination, perfectly well aware that every hour lost was an opportunity for misfortune, the conspirators worked with diabolical zeal to complete the preparations for the wholesale slaughter, and the time was definitively fixed—the 23rd of August, 1572, the eve of St. Bartholomew's day. A pistol was to be fired in front of the Louvre as the signal for the commencement of the butchery.

A few of the Huguenots were alarmed, and boldly proposed to quit Paris with the admiral. The Vidame of Chartres strongly advised this course. He even informed Coligny that the Guises, despite their ostensible disgrace at court,
had been twice seen in masks at the Louvre in secret conversation with Catharine and the king. "We have been shamefully ensnared," he added.

Coligny was averse to showing any suspicion. "If I do so," said he, "I must display either fear or distrust: my honor would be hurt by the one; the king, I hope, would be injured by the other. Besides, I should then be obliged to renew the civil war, and I would rather die than again see such ills."

The shrewd Vidame, however, was not to be persuaded, and accompanied by a number of equally wise friends, among whom were Rohan and Montgomery, he passed out of the fatal city.

Under pretence of protecting the admiral and his friends from any tumult which the Guises might stir among the populace, the whole Huguenot faction were lodged in one quarter of the city, and the chiefs were huddled together for the double purpose of preventing their escape and beeping them under easy surveillance. Perhaps too Charles called to mind the pithy maxim of Alaric: "Thick grass is easier mown than thin." Around this doomed quarter was drawn a cordon of the duke of Anjou's guards, professedly to protect the victims, but who shortly became their most zealous murderers. At the same time arms were profusely delivered to the canaille of the metropolis, previously crazed by the clamors of the Jesuits, and these were hidden in the slums of the capital. Finally, couriers were dispatched to all parts of France with orders to make the massacre general and exterminating.

France was commanded to commit suicide. The kingdom was to stagger and bleed beneath self-dealt and frenzied blows.

The awful eve arrived. At midnight the pistol shot was fired; the talismanic word was uttered. Charles cried, Havoc, and let slip the thunderbolt. The wild populace swayed through the streets, crying, "Blood, blood!" The protecting guard of the Huguenot quarter was suddenly transformed into a legion of demoniacs. "Bleed, bleed!" shouted Tavannes; "the physicians say that bleeding is as good in August as in May." The dukes of Guise and Montpensier rode through the streets, crying, "It is the will of the king; slay on to the last, and let not one escape." The count of Coconnas seized thirty prisoners, put them in prison, and put them to death with his own hand by slow and lingering tortures.

The butcher Pezon, who slaughtered men, women, and children as he did cattle, boasted of having in one day killed a hundred and twenty Huguenots. René, Catharine's perfumer, frequented all the gaols in which the evangelicals were immured, and amused himself by stabbing them with daggers. He decoyed a rich jeweler into his house, under pretext of saving him; but after plundering his person, René cut his victim's throat, and threw the body into the Seine. "This arm," said Cruce, a gold-wire drawer, taking off his coat and
exhibiting his naked arm, "on the day of St. Bartholomew, put to death four hundred heretics." At the first signal the duke of Guise sped for the residence of the admiral, pausing but to ring the great bell of the palace, which was only tolled on days of public rejoicing. He was accompanied by his two creatures, Petrucci, an Italian, and Bérne, a German bravo; a company of men-at-arms also followed. The bravos rushed into the chamber of the helpless admiral, who, awaked by the noise, had just arisen from his bed and now stood leaning against the wall of his apartment. "What means the tumult?" queried he of his attendants. "My lord," was the solemn reply, "God calls us to himself." The admiral then bade his suite to leave him. "I cannot escape; it is all over with me; I have long been prepared for death; but save yourselves, dear friends." Such were the collected and noble words of this martyr, whose spirit, armed by faith in God, no danger could quell. Coligny's attendants at once quitted him, while he composed himself in prayer.

Unmoved by the entrance of the assassins, he continued his supplications. Awed by the grandeur of the scene, the majestic figure of the calm and venerable old soldier engrossed in devotion, Petrucci instinctively paused. "Art thou Coligny?" demanded the bravo. "I am indeed," responded the admiral. "Young man, you should have respect unto my gray hairs: but work your will; you can abridge my life only by a few short days."

A moment later, and Gaspard de Coligny, the foremost subject in France, the most distinguished man in Christendom, lay dead.

Bérne plunged his sword into Coligny's body, and his companions then gave him multitudinous stabs with their stiletto. "Your enemy is dead," cried Petrucci from the window to the duke of Guise, who awaited the dénouement impatiently in the court below. "Very well," was the answer, borne up through the midnight gloom; "but M. d'Angouléme will not believe it until he sees the body at his feet." The next instant the corpse, flung from the window, fell with a thud at the feet of the princes; the yet warm blood even spurted out on the clothes and into the faces of the disbelievers. With brutal nonchalance Guise stooped and wiped Coligny's face, then ordered his satellites to hold a torch, that he might recognize his foe. When, through the lurid and flickering gloom, he detected that it was indeed the mighty admiral who lay before him, he spurned the body with his foot, and ordered the head to be cut off. This was sent to Catharine: what disposition she made of it is uncertain; Tavannes and Felibien affirm that it was dispatched to Rome; others say that Philip II of Spain received the ghastly present. The decapitated body was mangled and drawn through the streets during two or three days; the populace then threw it into the river, but afterwards drew it out and hung it by the heels to the gibbet of Montfaucon; a slow fire was then kindled beneath it, which disfigured it horribly.
The body swung from this gibbet when Charles went with his court to gloat over the abused remains of that man whom he had so recently termed "his father," and assured of his affectionate veneration. The odor emitted by the decomposing body was so dreadful, that the courtiers stopped their noses with their handkerchiefs. "Fie, fie!" cried Charles, borrowing the language of the classic brute Vitellius: "The carcass of an enemy always smells pleasantly."

Marshal Montmorenci, Coligny's cousin, had these insulted remains cut down one night, and secreted, for he feared to inter them at Chantilly, lest they should be molested. Subsequently, when the decrees against the admiral's memory were reversed, they were buried in the tomb of his ancestors at Chatillon-sur-Loing.

While Coligny's murder was being perpetrated, the drunken pavements of bewildered Paris were glutted in blood. The Huguenots, surprised and overmatched, could make no resistance. Escape was impossible; the city gates were shut and guarded; numerous lights, placed in the windows of the dwellings, deprived the reformers even of the normal protection of night; and patrols traversed the streets in all directions, butchering every one they met. From the streets, as the carnival grew wilder, the frenzied multitude swept into the houses. Neither age, sex, nor condition were spared. Priests, holding a crucifix in one hand and a sword in the other, preceded the murderers, encouraging them to butcher alike relatives and friends, and promising them absolution from all crimes and heavenly happiness as the reward of these "acts of devotion."

Even the Louvre became the scene of great carnage; the king's guards were drawn up in double line, and the Huguenots who lodged in the palace were summoned out one after another and killed with the halberds of the infuriated soldiers. Most of them died without complaining; others appealed to the public faith and the sacred promise of the king. "Great God," cried they, "be the defense of the oppressed. Just Judge, avenge this perfidy."

While these events were occurring in the courtyard, Charles, seated at a window of the Louvre, amused himself by shooting down all who came within range of his musket.

The monarch's ferocity was contagious; even the ladies of his court were seen descending into the square of the Louvre, then filled with the dead bodies of Huguenot gentlemen, many of whom had cheerfully passed with them some hours of the preceding day. It was by their siren-like qualities that some of the victims had been enticed to their death; they now became harpies, through the addition of cruelty to fanaticism and wantonness, and trampling common decency under foot, they jested and laughed as they recognized the murdered Huguenots, precisely as the king did from the window of the Louvre, and beneath the gibbet of Montfaucon.
Among those who fled within the precincts of the palace was a nobleman named Soubise, whose wife had recently instituted a suit of divorce against him. His mangled body underwent a careful examination from these brazen wantons, whose barbarous curiosity was worthy of such an abominable court.

When day dawned, Paris exhibited an appalling spectacle of slaughter: headless bodies were dangling from innumerable windows; gateways were blocked up by the dead and dying; the houses were battered, while the doors were smeared with gore; and the streets were filled with carcasses, which were drawn, bleeding and mutilated, across the bloody pavements to the choked and reddened Seine.

These atrocious scenes were continued through three days and nights, and the orgies only slackened from lack of victims.

Meantime the massacre spread throughout France; the reeling kingdom bled at every pore with mute heroism. The slaughter at Meaux, Angers, Bourges, Orleans, Lyons, Toulouse, Rouen, and in many of the smaller towns of the provinces, was horrible.

But the genius of humanity had not wholly fled from France. Claude de Savoy, count of Tende, saved the lives of all the Huguenots in Dauphiny. "This missive," said he when the king's letter ordering the massacre was handed to him, "must be a forgery, and I shall so treat it."

Eleoner de Chabat, count of Charny, who commanded in Burgundy, acted with similar heroism; there was but one Huguenot murdered at Dijon.

Heran de Montouvin, governor of Auvergne, positively refused to obey the mandate, unless it were supported by the personal presence of the king.

The Viscount d'Ortes, the governor of Bayonne, penned this immortal response to the royal order "Sire, I base communicated your majesty's mandate to our faithful inhabitants in this city, and to the men-at-arms in the garrison. I find here good citizens and brave soldiers, but not one executioner. On this point, therefore, you must not expect obedience from me."

But despite these luminous exceptions, from seventy to a hundred thousand victims were slaughtered, and the lives of two of the heroes who refused obedience to the bloody fiat of Charles IX—the Count de Tende and the Viscount d'Ortes—were abridged by the infernal skill of the royal poisoner.

Both the Romish and the Huguenot chroniclers of this tragedy have bequeathed to posterity many episodes of personal adventure, which are replete with thrilling interest. But after "supping full of horrors," the imagination wearies and palls. Details grow hideous. "The deep damnation of their taking off"
appalls those who peruse the history of the Huguenots; readers have no appetite for minutiae.

It was long a mooted question whether Condé and young Henry of Navarre should be saved or not. Upon this point the testimony is clear. "It was anxiously deliberated," says the archbishop of Paris, "whether the prince should be murdered with the others; the conspirators were for their death; nevertheless they escaped by a miracle." "The duke of Guise," remarks Davila, "Wished that, in killing the Huguenots, Henry of Navarre and the Prince de Condé should be included; but the queen mother and others had a horror of dipping their lands in royal blood." "Indubitably," says quaint old Brantome, "they were proscribed and down on the 'red list,' as they called it, because it was remarked that it was necessary to dig up the roots of the heretical faction, Navarre, Condé, the admiral, and other noted personages; but the young queen Margaret threw herself upon her knees before king Charles her brother, to beg her husband's life at Catharine's command. The king granted it to her after much urging, since she was his good sister."

Margaret, in the account she gave of the horrors of the night which ushered in the massacre, relates that "on retiring to rest, Henry's bed was surrounded by thirty or forty Huguenots, who talked all night of the accident to the admiral, and resolved the next morning to demand justice upon the Guises. No sleep was had; and before day the king of Navarre rose, with the intention of playing at tennis until king Charles was up."

Margaret then narrates that she fell asleep after the retirement of Henry and his suite, but that in less than an hour she was awakened by loud shouts in the palace corridors, and by a man striking with hands and feet against the door of her room, and crying "'Navarre, Navarre!' Thinking it might be her husband, she opened the door, when lo, a man besmeared with gore rushed in, and clapping her by the feet, conjured her to save him. This cavalier was quickly pursued by four soldiers, from whose greedy swords the young queen with difficulty saved her strange client. At length his life was spared to her prayers, and she was conducted to the chamber of her sister the duchess of Lorraine, where, at the very moment of her entrance, a gentleman was killed just at her side.

Margaret fainted: upon her recovery she inquired for her husband, and was told that both Henry and Condé were then in the presence of the king.

When the princes were summoned to the king, Catherine, in order to affright them into submission, ordered them to be conducted under the palace vaults, and to be made to pass through the royal guards drawn up in files on either side, and poised in menacing attitudes.

"Charles received them," says Sully, "with a fierce countenance and a valley of blasphemies. He avowed that the admiral and the other heretics had been
slaughtered by his mandate; affirmed that he would no longer be thwarted or questioned by his subjects; declared that all should revere him as the likeness of God, and be no longer the enemies of his mother’s images; and ended by calling on the princes to recant."

"Sire," replied Condé with noble candor, "I am accountable to God alone for my religion; my possessions, my life, these are in your majesty’s power; dispose of them as you please; but no menaces, nor even death, shall make me renounce the truth."

"And you, sir," said Charles with bitter emphasis, turning to prince Henry, "what say you?"

Henry expressed the same determination, though less frankly. "Well, sirs," said the king, "I give you three days in which to consider; then the mass, death, or the Bastille; take your choice."

Charles then gave way to sardonic glee. "Have I not played my part well?" asked he of Catherine de’ Medici. "He who cannot dissemble is not fit to reign," said Louis XI. "Have not I known how to dissemble?" queried Charles, quoting this precept; "have not I well learned the lesson and the Latin of my ancestor, king Louis XI?"

Thus the hideous fête of St. Bartholomew closed with a laugh and a sarcasm.

The slaughter was complete. The heads of the most distinguished Huguenot families in France were the victims of the holocaust. Coligny, Rochefoucault and his son Teligny, the admiral’s son-in-law Briquemont and his sons, Plauviant, Bemy, Clermont, Lavardin, Caumont de la Force, and many thousand more gallant gentlemen and Christian soldiers, formed the trophies of the fanatics. The zealous reformer of the University, La Rameé, hunted out in his hiding-place by one of his colleagues whose ignorance he had frequently exposed, was surrendered up to a gang of hired assassins.

Nor did fanaticism alone sharpen the sword and direct the dagger. Defendants in actions at law assassinated the plaintiffs, debtors slaughtered their creditors, jealous lovers butchered their rivals. It was a combination of religious frenzy, private vengeance, and public condemnation such as the world has never seen since the days of Sulla’s proscriptions.

When the ghastly saturnalia had continued through a week, Pibrac, the king’s advocate, waited upon his majesty to inquire whether he would be pleased to have the “joyous” event registered in Parliament, to perpetuate its memory. The lawyer also begged that the “revels” might be discontinued. To both these propositions Charles acceded, and orders were given by sound of trumpet forbidding further murder.
Shortly after proclamations were issued in which the king assumed the responsibility of the massacre, which he declared that he had ordered; affirming that Coligny and his associates had plotted regicide; branding the admiral's memory as infamous, confiscating his property, degrading his family to plebeian rank, ordering his body—and if that could not be found, his effigy—to be drawn on a hurdle, hung up at the Place de Grève, and then fixed on the gibbet of Montfaucon. Coligny's portraits and arms were commanded to be destroyed wherever they could be seized, by the public executioner; and his residence at Chatillon-sur-Loing was to be razed, and the trees cut down to within four feet of the earth. The decree concluded by declaring that in future the anniversary of St. Bartholomew should be celebrated by public processions and, *feux de joie*.

It was perhaps honestly believed that these spiteful and abortive insults would affect the posthumous fame of the illustrious admiral, thrice honored by the stigmatization of such a king.

In the conduct of Charles IX it is difficult to decide whether his atrocity or his dissimulation is most detestable. His own edicts, which closely followed one another, were ridiculously contradictory; and it is asserted by a Romish partisan that the day after the publication of the edict commanding tranquility, he dispatched courtiers of note to the larger provincial cities with verbal orders to continue the *fête* despite the proclamation.

These orders were quite unnecessary; the unslated rage of the fanaticized multitude was not to be suppressed by a parchment fiat. From time to time the "Paris matins," as the massacre was called—a name suggested by the "Sicilian vespers"—were renewed; the tocsin sounded everywhere, and the *sans-culottes* stormed the houses of the Huguenots with undiminished ardor, robbing, murdering, and ravishing with the talismanic cry, "The king desires and commands it."

The minds of men were filled with wild fantasies, which made them fear even themselves, and caused the very elements to appear fraught with terror. In after years, Henry IV used openly to relate, that during the seven nights which immediately succeeded the slaughter, flocks of ravens perched upon the eaves of the Louvre, and croaked loudly and lugubriously, always commencing as the palace clock tolled twelve.

Henry mentions another prodigy still more extraordinary: "For several days before the massacre commenced, I noticed, while playing at dice with the dukes of Alencon and Guise, that drops of blood clotted upon the table: twice I tried to wipe them off, when they reappeared; upon which, seized with horror, I quitted the game."
About eight days after the slaughter, Charles IX summoned his Huguenot brother-in-law to his bedside at midnight in great haste. Henry found him as he had sprung from his couch, filled with terror at a wild tumult of confused voices which resounded through the chamber. Henry himself imagined that he had heard these sounds; they appeared like distant shrieks and howlings, mingled with the indistinguishable raging of a furious multitude, with wails and groans and smothered curses, as on the day of the massacre. Messengers were dispatched into the city to ascertain whether any new tumult had broken out, but these returned with the assurance that Paris was quiet, and that the commotion was in the air. Henry could never recall this scene—the affrighted courtiers huddled in the middle of the room, the half-distracted king, and the agonized wail of the phantom voices—without a horror that made his hair stand on end.

Thus, for his share in the awful “pageant” of St. Bartholomew, the weak and too late affrighted king was tortured by the reproachful visions of his distempered imagination, compelled...

"To groan and sweat under a weary life,"

...while conscience gradually stung him into an untimely grave.

---

Chapter XXVI

THE TRIUMPH OF ROCHELLE

The massacre of St. Bartholomew created an unprecedented sensation throughout Christendom. Affrighted Europe, frozen with horror, stood on tiptoe gazing towards France, and asking with white lips, "What next?"

This was regarded as the signal for a general crusade against Protestantism.

Even the maiden queen of England was far from esteeming her insulated position to be a guarantee of safety. She was familiar with the tortuous morality of the Vatican. She had already experienced the character of Romish intrigues in the different maneuvers made to unseat her and install Mary queen of Scots in her throne. The pretended rupture between France and Spain, which had cozened the profound penetration of Coligny, vanished as soon as its object was accomplished. Elizabeth feared either an immediate attack from Philip II, or a general revolt of the papists in Great Britain.
Fénélon was then the French ambassador at the court of St. James. Upon being summoned into Elizabeth's presence to present the dispatches of his king, which represented this monstrous act of treason against his subjects as the offspring of necessity, Fénélon blushed at being a Frenchman. When he attended the hall of audience, he found the whole court arrayed in deep mourning; a gloomy silence was preserved; no friendly eye was turned towards him; every countenance was mournful and downcast. He approached the queen, who neither rose from her throne nor extended her hand, as was the courtesy of the times. Elizabeth read the documents with marked displeasure, and broke the stillness only to express her astonishment and indignation.

A cry of horror rang though Germany and the Low Countries. Many writings were published, all denouncing the massacre, which was justly characterized as a compound of trickery, perfidy, and atrocity, exceeding in turpitude all that had ever been perpetrated in the annals of tyranny.

The court of France was the more sensitive to these animadversions, as negotiations were then pending to secure the crown of Poland for the duke of Anjou. It was feared that the prejudices and antipathies of the neighboring Germans might frustrate these expectations. Accordingly a deputation was sent to the Protestant princes to disarm their resentment.

The pleas of justification were as various as they were absurd. Sometimes the whole transaction was defended by citing the odious maxim of Innocent III, more recently decreed by the Council of Constance and adopted by the Jesuits, that *no faith need be kept with heretics*. Some condemned in part, and extenuated in part; while others regretted the event, but denounced what they were pleased to term Coligny's regicidal intentions, borrowing the “buncombe” of their king. But these lame explanations, these limping apologies, were not able to stand on their own feet. Such absurdities produced but little effect in the outraged Netherlands and in angered Germany, where the assassins of the Huguenots were always held in undisguised abhorrence.

There were two courts which received the news from Paris with acclamations. At home diabolical joy was manifested. Cannon were fired, bonfires blazed, the city was illuminated as if to celebrate a glorious achievement, and a solemn mass was intoned, at which pope Gregory XIII personally officiated, with all the imposing ceremony of the papal church. The cardinal of Lorraine, who was resident minister of France at the Vatican, questioned the messenger like a person informed beforehand; and a medal was struck, bearing on one side the head of Gregory XIII, and on the other the exterminating angel smiting the Huguenots, with the legend, *Huguenotorum Strages, 1572.*

Thus Rome embalmed the massacre in barbarous Latin.
Yet despite his processions, his high masses celebrated in St. Peter's, and his honorary medals, it is said that the pontiff shed tears when he listened to the private recital of the excesses which smeared France with fraternal gore. "I cannot but weep," said Gregory, "when I think how many of the innocent must have suffered with the guilty." The abbé Anquétil cites these words, and observes, "A sentiment of compassion not incompatible with those public demonstrations which policy required." But it has been justly said that this is a dangerous morality which permits a jubilant exultation in public over a crime which is condemned in privacy, which distinguishes between the natural and the artificial man, and throws the mantle of hypocrisy over the spotless form of shrinking virtue.

It was at Madrid that the horrible crime was welcomed with the loudest plaudits. Philip II, the dark and gloomy bigot whose habitual demeanor was as frigid as the outside of a sepulchre, then showed for the first time that he could be sensible to joy. The somber gravity which had been proof against Alva's cruelty, which had given no outward sign of pleasure when the great naval victory of Lepanto crippled the Ottoman, now quite forsook him, and his black heart gloated over the streams of blood which had reddened the streets of Paris. He made magnificent presents to the courier who brought him the thrice-welcome news, wrote an autograph letter of congratulation to Charles IX., caroused with his courtiers, rejoiced in public, ordered Te Demn to be chanted, and summoned all the functionaries of the state to wait on him and tender their felicitations.

The admiral of Castile read the French dispatches at table, thinking to increase the festivity of the occasion. "Prythee, good admiral, were Coligny and his friends Christians?" queried the young duke den Infantado, who was seated among the guests. "Undoubtedly," replied the admiral. "Why then," rejoined the young prince, "since they were Christians, were they butchered like wild beasts?" "Gently, gently, my prince," said the admiral, "know you not that war in France means peace in Spain?"

But while agitated Europe was commenting thus variously upon the massacre of St. Bartholomew, France, plagued once again by those ills which Coligny so pathetically deprecated, was plunged in civil war. The pacificatory results which the court crazily imagined would ensue, failed to appear; it was divinely fired that the sowers of the wind should reap the whirlwind.

To slaughter the representatives of an idea even in hecatombs does not extinguish the principle, does not settle controverted points, does not weaken the right of private judgment. Moreover, the massacre of the Huguenots, extensive as it was, was very far from an extermination. Thousands survived the bloody deluge; and seeking asylums in the Netherlands, in the German duchies, and in England, they still had faith in God, and bided his good time.
Others, making no effort to quit France, fortified themselves in Montauban, in Nîmes, in Rochelle; and these three towns, forming themselves into a confederation, declared their union an independent republic—imperium in imperio.

"The court," says the abbé Crillon, "thought to have drowned Calvinism in the blood of its chief defenders; but that hydra soon regained its vigor." The Huguenots were indeed so far from being crushed, that they speedily put eighteen thousand well equipped and devoted men-at-arms in the field, and became masters of a hundred towns.

The court made strenuous exertions to throttle the infant confederation. Three armies were levied. One, under La Chastre, was employed to reduce Sancerre; D’Amville Montmorenci, with another, undertook to choke the émeute in Languedoc; while the third, commanded by Villars, the new admiral of France, was sent into Guyeure. Besides these, there were the forces under Strozzy and Montluc’s army.

It was determined that Rochelle, now, as always before, the Huguenot citadel, should be conquered at all hazards. After various intrigues to foist upon the Rochelloise a Romanist governor, all of which were foiled by the been inhabitants, the city was besieged by an immense army, officered by Strozzy and Bovin, accompanied by the duke of Anjou.

Rochelle had long been one of the first maritime cities in France. It was well known to the early English merchants under the name of the "White Town," as they called it, from its appearance when the sun shone and was reflected from its rocky coasts. It was also much frequented by the Netherlands. There were merchants among the Rochelloise who had each as many as ten ships at sea at one time.

Ever since the period of the English wars for the French succession, Rochelle had enjoyed extraordinary municipal franchises. It had by its own unaided power revolted from the English dominion; and for this heroism Charles V, in his customary manner, conferred upon the burghers valuable privileges; among others, that of independent jurisdiction in the city.

Rochelle exhibited Protestant sympathies at an early period. Habituated to civil liberty, intelligent and self-reliant, the citizens were excellently well prepared to accept the Reformation; and when a Genevese preacher arrived there in 1556, on his return from an unsuccessful missionary enterprise to Brazil, he found no difficulty in building up a prosperous church among the Rochelloise. With the rough and hardy population, habituated to the sea, a teacher like this, who had boldly performed his voyage across the ocean to serve God, was sure of a generous reception. In all the reactionary changes and alternations of party through the civil wars, the faithful Rochelloise clung to
the tenets of the Reformation, to Christ and their open Bibles, with unshaken firmness.

The town had a fine harbor, and was naturally well fortified, while nature had been carefully reinforced by art. The garrison now consisted of fifteen hundred regular troops and about two thousand of the burghers, who belonged to the train-bands of the city. These had been well disciplined in the frequent wars, and their ardor was at this time raised to fever heat by the enthusiasm of the women, who at once emulated and animated their husbands, fathers, and lovers.

The influence of the preachers was also very marked. Two among them, La Place and Denard, were remarkable for their ability, energy, and devotion. Their discourses marvelously strengthened the determination of the populace, whose humanity was appealed to by descriptions of the sufferings endured by their brothers in the faith; but they chiefly dwelt upon the paramount claims of religion to their utmost devotion. Denard was very eloquent; and he possessed such influence by his persuasive style, that he was called the pope of Rochelle.

Although the town was not completely invested before the close of January, 1573, there were several assaults in December, 1572; one especially was upon a mill near the counter-scarp. As it could not easily be fortified, it served as a barbican or post of observation in the daytime, and at night it was left under guard of a single sentinel. Strozzy, considering that the position would be valuable to the Rochelloise, advanced by moonlight to attack it. The solitary sentinel, with a hardihood rarely equalled, resolved to defend the mill, although two culverines were pointed against it. He briskly fired on the assailants; and in order to deceive them, he called out to an imaginary troop of followers, as if encouraging them or giving orders, while an officer hallooed from the nearest bastion that he would soon be reinforced. The contest was too unequal to allow time for the arrival of the promised assistance, and to avoid the consequences of an assault, the sentinel demanded quarter for himself and men. It was granted; when lo, he walked out alone. Strozzy was so enraged at his presumption in pretending to hold out, that he ordered his heroic prisoner to be hung for his insolence; but Biron interfered, and saved his life, at the same time condemning him to the galleys. Happily the courageous fellow managed to escape. His name has not been preserved, but Barbet says that he was a brazier of the isle of Rhé.

The conduct of the court in the prosecution of the war was enigmatical. La Noué, a fearless soldier, a skilful captain, and a zealous Huguenot, had been absent in Hainault, whither he had been sent by Coligny to collect such intelligence as might be useful in that Netherland campaign which was never to occur, at the time of the "Paris matins;" thus he had escaped the massacre. On his return to France, Charles received him with open arms. He gave La Noué the confiscated estate of his brother-in-law Teligny, and then entreated him to
use his influence with the Rochelloise, whose commander he had been in the preceding war, to induce them to accept terms of peace.

At first La Noué peremptorily refused; but after a long struggle he yielded to the importunities of the king, and influenced both by anxiety for peace and the hope of serving his party, he accepted the delicate commission. An adjacent village, and sent to the town announcing his errand and arrival.

The Rochelloise at once dispatched deputys to meet the distinguished soldier. Familiar with the character of the court, they feared that some treachery lurked beneath La Noué's overtures. "We have been invited," said they, "to confer with La Noué; but where is he? It is nothing that the gentleman to whom we speak resembles him in person, when in character he differs so widely from him." The soldier pointed proudly to his artificial arm, which had procured for him the sobriquet of Bras de fer, thus mutely to remind them of the limb which he had lost in their service. But the deputys persisted that they remembered with gratitude their valued friend, but that they did not now recognize him.

Finding it impossible to treat with them, La Noué asked permission to enter Rochelle. The citizens received him joyfully, but would not listen to his proposals for peace. They left him to choose one of three alternatives, a safe passage to England, a residence in their city as a private individual, or the governorship of Rochelle. After some hesitation, he accepted the command.

Strange to say, this step did not destroy the good opinion which Charles and the whole court party entertained of him; and it is a case almost unparalleled that, being commissioned by two contending parties, he preserved the confidence of both. In action, none more bravely joined in repelling the assailants; and at quiet intervals he never omitted to exhort the townspeople to listen to the king's offers—liberty of conscience, and full security for themselves. But the gallant Rochelloise were not satisfied with simple liberty to worship God for themselves: while their coreligionists went with shackled lips, they knew no peace. They insisted on treating for all the Huguenots, a demand to which the king would not accede.

After a time La Noué, dissatisfied with his equivocal position, requested and obtained permission to quit Rochelle for an honorable retirement.

The Rochelloise could not but regret the loss of their skilful chieftain, but they "bated no jot of heart or hope." The siege dragged through six bloody months, and still the Huguenot bastions remained impregnable. There was no order among the royalists, no unit, no combination of plans; jealousy and bickering poisoned their counsels;
"And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turned awry,
And lost the name of action."

Anjou was wounded; Aumale was killed in the trenches; many others of rank
also perished; an epidemic broke out in the camp, and fifty thousand men died
either by the sword or by disease.

Anjou began to weary of a siege in which his reputation was frittered away;
and as the negotiations for the crown of Poland wore an auspicious aspect, the
elated prince forgot his duty to France, and passed his time with his favorites
in planning schemes of pleasure and magnificence on his installation at
Warsaw.

The royal arms were as unsuccessful in other sections as before Rochelle; and
in July, 1573, the exhausted state of the court exchequer compelled the
cessation of hostilities.

On the 6th of July a treaty of peace was signed, which guaranteed to the
confederated cities, Rochelle, Montauban, and Nîmes, the free exercise of
their religion and their civic independence. Thus the self-sacrificing efforts of
the gallant Rochelloise to secure the enfranchisement, not only of themselves,
but of their brothers in Christ, were crowned, though God's favor, with success.

In November, 1573, the duke of Anjou quitted France for his new kingdom of
Poland, for that crown had at length been tendered him. His departure was
followed by the birth of a new conspiracy, which originated with the duke of
Alencon, the Montmorenci's, Biron, and Cossé, to which Navarre and Condé,
both of whom had finally succumbed to the king's threats, and apparently
united with the Roman church, also adhered. But a variety of circumstances
united to strangle this infant cabal in its cradle; and though its aim had been to
effect certain needed reforms in the state, without any consideration for
religion, it exploded in a laugh.

Charles IX, meanwhile, was every day drawing nearer to his grave. His last
hours were embittered by that remorse which agonizes the conscience of the
dying sinner. From the fatal eve of St. Bartholomew, he was observed to be
always gloomy and wretched; he would groan involuntarily when the horrors
which he had perpetrated were recalled. The king's physician, Ambrose Paré,
though an outspoken Huguenot, possessed a greater share of his confidence
than any other person; and to him he frequently unbosomed the tortures of his
soul. "Ambrose," said Charles, "I know not what has happened to me these two
or three past days; but I feel my mind and body to be terribly at enmity with
each other. Sleeping or waking, the murdered Huguenots seen: ever present to
my eyes, with ghastly faces and weltering in their blood. I wish the innocent
and the guiltless had been spared."
It is pleasing to record these expressions of repentance, says an eminent historian, for they show that humanity can never be wholly despoiled of her rights, and that outraged conscience will sting the most callous soul.

Henry of Navarre was present at the death of Charles IX. The expiring monarch called him to his side, and recommended his wife and infant daughter to his protection. At this solemn hour he appreciated this manly prince whom he had so bitterly outraged. He drew Henry to his pillow, and cautioned him to distrust __________; but he whispered the name so faintly, that none heard it but his kinsman into whose ear it went. Catharine, however, who stood near by, guessed his meaning, for she said, "My son, you should not speak thus." "Why not?" queried the king, "it is perfectly true."

On the 30th of May, 1574, Charles IX expired, bathed in a bloody sweat, which oozed from every pore. Standing beside this awful death-bed; the solemn words of the apostle may be discerned written across the livid lineaments of the atrocious king: "THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH."

Chapter XXVII

VICISSITUDES

Upon the death of Charles IX, Catherine de' Medici, grown old and hag-like, but as energetic and unscrupulous as in her prime, dispatched a courier to Poland to inform Anjou that the vacant throne of France awaited him; she then assumed the regency during the interregnum.

In these troubled times, the slightest change at court was the signal for a cabal; so important an event as the demise of a monarch was certain to precipitate a revolution. France soon heaved in insurrection, and even private gentlemen made forays upon the royal strong-holds in the southern provinces.

This outbreak had no special religious significance, but was rather one of those periodical upheavals which occur at stated intervals in countries where justice and law are recklessly overridden by selfish, licentious, and abandoned despots. France through all this dismal epoch was emancipated from judicial forms; a strong hand and an unsheathed sword—these were the synonyms of government. The arbiter of all disputes, public or private, was the dagger, the bullet, or the poisoner's bowl. To such a desperate strait had the Italian morality of Catherine de' Medici—the morality which looks upon all means as lawful by which power is obtained and preserved, which stands muttering the
favorite Jesuitical shibboleth of the Vatican, "The end sanctifies the means"—reduced unhappy France. Catherine's ancestor, Cosmo de' Medici, had maintained his authority at Florence by severity, guile, and vengeance; should she scruple to use the weapons of so consummate a politician?

She now used all three. Her severity and vengeance were shown by the execution of La Malle and Coconnas; by the arrest of Montgomery in Normandy, shortly followed by his beheadal, ostensibly for killing Henry II in the tournament of 1559, but really because he was one of the most indefatigable and uncompromising of the Huguenots; by the imprisonment of marshals Montmorenci and Cossé in the Bastile, and by the confinement of Alencon and Henry of Navarre in a grated chamber of the Louvre under careful surveillance.

Her guile was exhibited by the attempts which she made to wheedle those chiefs who wisely absented themselves from her dangerous vicinage, and especially by her efforts to cajole D'Amville Montmorenci, who, dissatisfied by the imprisonment of his brother the marshal, by the insult offered his family in the assassination of Coligny, and by the exile of his house from court, aided, sub rosa, the insurgents ill his government of Languedoc, while professing to quell the émuete.

Such was the political situation when Henry III returned to France.

Henry received intelligence of his brother's death within fourteen days after his arrival in Poland. The austere behavior of his new subjects made him regret, even in that brief period, the unchecked profligacy of Paris; and his companions, young libertines from twenty to twenty-five years of age, disgusted by the restraints of decency and virtue, longed to lap themselves once more in the licentious arms of Catharine's court beauties. In this desire the dandy king, who wore earrings, and perfumed his person so that he smelled like a walking Cologne-bottle, fully shared. Fearing lest the Poles might remonstrate against his departure, one dark tempestuous night he quitted his palace at Cracow by stealth, thus abandoning as a fugitive a crown which he had gained by bribery and intrigue, and in two days he reached the frontiers of the German empire.

A little later Henry joined Catharine at Lyons. On arriving at his capital, he found the seeds of civil war again sown; and amid the hireling shouts of gratulation which hailed his presence, he heard the ill-suppressed murmurs of seditious discontent.

But discord was Catharine's element; she reveled in it: "I prefer to fish in troubled waters," said she. She told Henry that it became the hero of Jarnac and Moncontour to crush sedition sword in hand; and the weak monarch succumbed to this subtle flattery, and adopted Catharine's pernicious counsel. Siege was at once laid to one of the insurgent towns—Livron.
At this juncture died the cardinal of Lorraine, whose infamous policy and vaulting ambition had bathed France in blood. He possessed great talents, which he devoted to the aggrandizement of his family, careless of the honor or advantage of his country. He was the center of a circle, and his relatives bounded its circumference; no thoughts of national utility ever, even transiently, entered into his conceptions of state policy. He made use of religion as the ladder of his ambition; he embroiled the various members of the royal family with each other, while he directed their concentrated fury against the best subjects in the kingdom. He was a priest without piety, a statesman without honor, a libertine by practice, a hypocrite by habit, avaricious, unfeeling, treacherous; concealing, under an engaging air of simulated candor, a black heart, malignant and revengeful.

Ere the court recovered from the sensation produced by the cardinal's death, the chiefs of the insurrection met at Millaud and bound themselves by oath to two distinct articles: the political malcontents covenanted never to lay down arms until the Huguenots were secured in the complete and free exercise of their religion; the Huguenots pledged themselves neither to sign a peace, nor to consent to a truce, till the liberation of the captive marshals Montmorenci and Cossé.

Meantime the feeble garrison of Livron defied the utmost exertions of the royal army, and Henry himself went to the camp, accompanied by the queen mother and the court, expecting that his presence would insure the speedy fall of the stubborn town. He was mistaken; when the besieged learned of his arrival before their walls, they crowded to the ramparts and hurled the bitterest insults into his ears. "Cowards," they cried, "assassins, what are you come for? Do you think to surprise us in our beds, and to murder us, as you did the admiral? Show yourselves, minions. Come, prove to your cost that you are unable to stand even against our women." Thus Henry was literally hooted from the walls of Livron; he lost his heroic laurels, and raising the siege in a great passion, retired ignominiously to Paris.

The court had scarcely settled itself in the Louvre; ere it was startled by the news that Alencon, the king's brother and heir apparent to the throne, had escaped his mother's surveillance and joined the insurgents. Alencon, whose only importance consisted in his position, for he was utterly destitute of talent and honesty, had been angered by the king's refusal to bestow upon him the lieutenant-generalship of the kingdom, which Henry withheld because he knew his brother's turbulent incompetence.

Still, Alencon was a prince of the blood, and his accession to the opposition gave them increased strength. The confederates had nominated Condé, who had quitted Paris some time before, and was now in Germany recruiting an army for the Huguenots, as their leader, in the absence of Navarre, still held at court; but with rare good sense, when Condé heard that Alencon had joined his
party, he conferred the nominal leadership upon that prince, satisfied with retaining its essence.

Soon the confederates had a large army in the field; Condé was rapidly advancing at the head of his German mercenaries; and Thoré Montmorenci, who commanded the advance guard of the main body, met the dukes of Guise and Mayence, brothers, and two of the ablest captains of the age, at the village of Dormans. The forces at once joined battle, and after a sanguinary contest, Thoré was routed. It was here that Guise obtained the wound in the face which gained for him the surname of *Le Balafré*.

Alencon was soon surrounded by a number of distinguished gentlemen, among whom were Turenne and La Noué. Ere long the party was still further reinforced by the arrival of Henry of Navarre, who escaped from Paris by a stratagem, to the chagrin of Catherine and the rage of Henry III. At Tours, Navarre renounced popery, protested against his abjuration of Calvinism, in 1572, as wrung from him in duress, and announced his determination to battle for his faith.

The Huguenots were jubilant, and they speedily put fifty thousand men-at-arms in the field.

Suddenly Alencon, true to his weak and perfidious nature, wavered, then went over to the court. Soured by the superior influence of Navarre and Condé in the confederate camp, he fell an easy victim to his mother's wiles.

Shortly after Alencon's defection, both parties wearied of the war, and a treaty of pacification was signed. The Huguenots again wrung from the reluctant court those concessions so often granted and so invariably infringed. But the terms now won were more favorable than any heretofore obtained: amnesty for the past; full liberty of conscience; the free exercise of religion, without exceptions of time or place; the power of erecting schools and colleges, of convening synods, of performing marriage, administering the sacraments according to the reformed creed; the eligibility of Huguenots to office; the liberation of all prisoners of state; a promise to establish a court of justice in each parliament, composed jointly and equally of Huguenots and Romanists: these were among the chief clauses of the treaty, a treaty which was characterized at the time as "not a pacification, but a surrender at discretion of the court."

Yet despite Brantome's epigram, the Huguenots committed a gross blunder in signing the pacification. With their experience of the hollowness and treachery of Catherine and the king, it seems strange that they should not have known that concessions so ample would never be executed. Catherine's well-known maxim was, "Divide and govern." When the wily queen was hard pressed, she
negotiated a peace, and then went deliberately to work to break its most solemn ratifications.

Concerning this treaty, Davila openly confesses that the court never intended to fulfill their engagements; that all they aimed at was the withdrawal of Alencon from the coalition, and the return of the mercenaries to Germany. And Sully, referring to the queen mother, says, "She offered more than we thought that we could demand; promises cost that artful princess nothing. Thus all things fell out as she wished; for in making this peace she had nothing in view but the disunion of her enemies."

Sully and Davila were right: the treaty of pacification was scarcely ratified before it was pronounced null and void; not one of its articles was ever executed. It produced an armistice, rather than a peace; both parties rested upon their arms. But the apparent "surrender of the court at discretion" was in fact another trophy won by the vicious statesmanship of Catharine de' Medici.

Chapter XXVIII

THE LEAGUE

The rose-water sprinkled upon the glowing embers of the late civil strife was so far from quenching the fire, that the flame threatened at every moment to blaze again with increased fury.

All parties were dissatisfied: the Huguenots, because they saw that they had bartered success for a worthless parcel of parchment promises, which the government had no intention of enforcing; the Romanists, because they thought that their creed had been compromised by even the empty assent to tolerant concessions, whether made in good faith or from hypocrisy; the people at large, because their taxes were vastly increased, while the court spent their substance in riot and debauchery.

But two years had elapsed since Henry's accession, yet he was clothed in dishonor. The Polish diet had expelled him from their throne with the most degrading marks of infamy; and he now lounged in the court of France, occupied in seductions, in inventing new forms of etiquette, and in weighty consultations with his tailor upon the cut of a coat or the tie of a cravat, while his government was crumpling into dust. He was hated by the reformers on account of his vices and his breaches of faith; he was despised by the Romanists for his foppish imbecility. Thus the substance of royalty had
departed from him, only the shadow remained. Openly bearded by the Huguenots, while the reactionists, led by the house of Guise, secretly conspired against his nominal authority, this miserable representative of the august Valois dynasty saw none but enemies abroad and rebels at home. His only friends, if that sacred name can be applied to such characters, were young libertines, the companions of his profligacies, whose extravagance and license put the seal to his unpopularity.

Not the slightest dependence was placed upon the unsteady royal popinjay. On behalf of his party, Condé wrote to prince Cassimir requesting him to remain near the frontier with his **lanzknechts**, as great apprehension was felt that the pacification would not be observed by the court.

On their part, the ultramontanists, incited by the gold of the Spanish king, and filled with the venom of religious hate, longed and watched and plotted for the dismal tocsin to ring in once more the "Paris matins." They petitioned the king to revoke the recent edict; they conjured him to exterminate the heretics.

Henry's will to comply with this congenial requisition was as good as that of the fiercest fanatic in his kingdom; nothing would have pleased him better than to figure as the hero of another St. Bartholomew. But he lacked stamina; when weighty obstacles were to be surmounted, his unstable and weak nature succumbed. Wary and dissembling as he was, he made use of an expression which showed the wish of his heart, immediately after signing the obnoxious treaty. The Huguenots of Rouen had just resumed the exercise of their worship, and the cardinal of Bourbon, accompanied by several counsellors, went to their rendezvous to prevent the service. He entered without difficulty, but when he mounted the pulpit and began to speak, the evangelicals quitted the building and left him to address empty benches. Some one told the king that the cardinal had dispersed the Huguenots of Rouen by a flourish of his cross and banner. "Is 't so?" cried Henry; "would to God they could be as easily driven from the other towns, were it even necessary to add the holy-water basin."

But the ultramontanists distrusted Henry's pluck, and they despised his lack of vigor. Therefore they determined to choose a fitter leader, and to league themselves together by an oath to extirpate heresy, and to exclude the Huguenots from participation in the government.

Such, in its inception, was the famous League; such was its abhorrent and fanatic object. Later, as we shall see, it assumed an additional phase.

There is a little cabinet in the castle of Joinville which has long been pointed out as the chamber in which the league was formed. There, in 1576, there were assembled Tassis and Moreo, two delegates of the king of Spain, the dukes of Guise and Mayenne, who also represented the cardinal of Guise and
the dukes D'Aumale and Elboeuf; and besides these, a delegate of the cardinal of Bourbon. A covenant was drawn up and signed, Henry duke of Guise was appointed chief of the association, and under the pretext of religion, a terrible, secret, and atrocious society was launched which, like the Jesuits who reinforced it, plotted in the dark, used all weapons of deceit and fraud and force, and ere long drenched Europe in blood.

As in antiquity Athens cannot be thought of without Sparta, Rome without Carthage, so in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries France can neither be comprehended nor understood without the counterpart of the Spanish monarchy.

What was it that Francis I and Charles V contended for in their time? The emperor sought to realize that universal supremacy which was connected in theory with his title; Francis maintained the idea of France. There was now no danger to be apprehended from the Capuchin emperor; but his son and successor, powerful in the possession of extensive territories and the gold of the Indies, renewed the claim to Spanish predominance, and stepped forth himself as the champion of the ancient faith against its assailants. In the adherents of the Vatican he met with warm supporters, by whose assent he assumed the position and authority of head of the reactionists generally throughout Europe.

The League then was largely his idea, and Guise became merely the lieutenant of Philip II when he assumed the nominal leadership.

The emissaries of the new society circulated the forms of the covenant with equal celerity and secrecy: at first no proselytes were made; only papists of known zeal and discretion signed the rolls and took the oath, for the association did not mean to strike a hasty blow; they intended rather to perfect their organization at leisure, and to await an auspicious moment for the manifestation of their prodigious power.

Thus the League lay coiled and torpid, like a huge serpent, ready to spring upon the victim when events should warm it into vicious life.

Meantime, towards the close of the year 1576, the states-general were convened at Blois. France was agitated; Henry had just learned by accident of the formation of the League; the Huguenots were clamorous for the enforcement of the edict of pacification; the papists were mutinous; chaos seemed come again. The king was alarmed. The League boldly demanded war; he felt himself too weak to resent their insolence; yet to yield was in effect an abdication. In an unhappy moment Henry determined himself to head the League, to become the chief of a faction, instead of the sovereign of a nation.
This maneuver disconcerted the confederates; but instantly recovering their equanimity, they dispatched the duke of Guise to visit the king, and enjoin him as a member of the holy union to annul the last edict and proclaim war. It was however desirable that, before the sword was unsheathed, Navarre, Condé, and D'Amville should be summoned to obey the king, in order that on their refusal to recant, the responsibility of the ensuing strife might appear to rest on their heads.

This was done. Navarre declared that "If God opened his eyes that he might see his error, not only would he immediately abjure it, but he would contribute his utmost efforts to abolish heresy altogether," a speech which has been well said to be characteristic of the epoch. Navarre was at the time in arms for liberty of conscience, and yet declared his readiness to become a persecutor if a change took place in his opinions, a remark which actually justified the leaguers in their course, and which cried Amen to the tortuous diplomacy of Catharine de' Medici.

The deputies to Condé and D'Amville received this answer: "We ask only for peace; let the promises given us be fulfilled, and all will be well; besides, we do not acknowledge your states-general, and we protest against every resolution there made to our prejudice."

Towards the close of March, 1577, the war recommenced; the campaign, however, was a tedious one; little was accomplished on either side; it was a war of skirmishes. The League, persuaded that their policy dictated patient preparation, and convinced that they were not yet fit to take the field, dissembled; and Henry, true to his weak nature, speedily tired of the contest when no longer hounded on by bolder rogues. The consequence was the conclusion of a new treaty at Bergerac, in September, 1577, which was immediately followed by the edict of Poictiers, confirming, in all essential respects, the tolerant enactments of the past.

Peace—if a society torn by feuds and cursed by incessant émuettes, can be said ever to enjoy that blessing—now reigned through three years.

In 1580, a wanton insult offered by king Henry to the queen of Navarre, by a brother to a sister, again kindled war. Henry, impelled by his love of mischief or by his dislike of Navarre, wrote that prince that Turenne was criminally intimate with Margaret.

Both Turenne and the queen were naturally indignant at this insult, with which Navarre acquainted them by showing the royal letter, and they spared no pains to precipitate another revolution.

This contest had no religious basis; yet such was the peculiarity of the times, that in any trouble the chiefs of either party could depend upon the support of
their partisans, who took it for granted that the object for which they battled was just.

After raging fiercely for some months, the "Lover's war," as it was called on account of its origin, was concluded by another pacification, and weary France again rested for a moment from internecine butchery.

But the kingdom had undergone so many and such violent convulsions, had become so habituated to martial strife, that a parchment treaty had no power to tranquilize it. The civil wars had created a distaste for the ordinary occupations of life; a large portion of the population, demoralized by the camp, hated whatever made for peace; the country swarmed with banditti; bravos, ready to assassinate or to plunder, awaited employment in the open market-place. Such was France under the imbecile scepter of Henry III; but while the papists, in the excess of their fanatic zeal, did not scruple to charge these crying evils to the prevalence of heresy, the Huguenots, with better philosophy, attributed them to the wickedness of France, abandoned to licentious despots and the whims of fanaticism; no text was more frequent upon their lips than this: "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."

Chapter XXIX

THE WAR OF THE THREE HENRY’S

In June, 1584, the duke of Alencon died at Chateau-Thierry, a castle on his apanage, and his demise opened a vast field to those intriguers who were fomenting civil war.

Instantly the torpid League sprang to its feet, full of Satanic energy, and prepared for action. In the reigning monarch the house of Valois became extinct. Henry had been married ten years, but he was childless; by the death of Alencon, Navarre of the line of Bourbon became next heir to the throne. This the Salic law decreed; this abstract right not the fiercest bigot questioned. But the Navarrese prince was a Huguenot; and the champions of the Vatican in France appealed through the League to the intolerant passions of the people, affirming that the accession of a Calvinist monarch would necessitate the overthrow of Latin orthodoxy.

The chiefs of the League were again convened at Guise’s castle of Joinville, and to this rendezvous Philip of Spain also sent his delegates. A pronunciamento
was agreed on, and shortly published. Proceeding from the fundamental principle that a heretic could not be king of France, this paper declared the League to be of one mind, that the scepter should not pass to the king of Navarre, but to his uncle the cardinal of Bourbon, a younger brother of that renegade Antony, who married Jane d'Albrét, and from whom these claims were derived. The cardinal, by his plenipotentiary, joined the union and adopted the shibboleth. Further, the League was announced to be intended to effect the extirpation of the Huguenots not only in France, but also in the Netherlands. The king of Spain promised for the first year a subsidy of one million scudi. The Freud princes, on their part, regarding themselves as already clothed in the royal purple, bound themselves to renounce the alliance with the Ottoman Porte; to give up the system of piracy carried on in the West Indian waters; to restore Cambray, wrung from Philip by the valor of the Protestants; and to assist Spain in the subjugation of the Netherlands.

Such, in its main features, was the extraordinary treaty concluded between the traitorous subjects of Henry III and the Spanish government, without the consent, nay, without the knowledge of the king of France.

When Henry learned of the mischief which was brewing, he was prodigiously startled. One of his favorites, Epernon, was hastily dispatched to Henry of Navarre, to offer him the undisputed succession, provided he would return to the court, renounce his creed, and reconcile himself to Rome.

The League, in its turn, was now startled. Matthieu, a Jesuit, who was nicknamed the *courier of the League*, was sent to Rome to procure the pontiff's dispensation for the action of the confederation, a move which looked to the murder of the king. But Gregory XIII steadily refused to sign any document, while his verbal answers were always expressed with non-committal craft.

In the mean time Epernon had been received by Henry of Navarre with courtesy. The Navarrese prince hesitated. By renouncing Calvinism he smoothed his path to the throne, but he distrusted the sincerity of the court: he feared to exchange his present independence for a gorgeous imprisonment; nay, more, should the Guises regain the ascendency, his assassination was certain. He was also much influenced by the recent conduct of his wife, who was separated from him, and who led a licentious life in Auvergne. He felt that he would be obliged to receive her back to secure the sincere friendship of the queen mother and the king, if any such quality as sincerity could be expected from Henry III, whose other name was duplicity, and from Catherine, whose synonym was treachery.

These considerations made him finally resolve neither to embrace Romanism nor to return to the court; but he offered to assist the king against the League, and declared himself open to conviction in religion.
Jest as Henry III received this answer, and stood deeply lamenting the failure of the negotiation, the leaguers, who had assembled at Gaillon, in the neighborhood of Rouen, published a manifesto declaring war without awaiting the king's assent, artfully blending together the interests of religion, the privileges of the nobles, and the oppressions of the poor, demanding the definitive revocation of all tolerant edicts, and dictating the expulsion of the Huguenots from France.

The emissaries of the League then seized every strong-hold which they could surprise; while Guise, at the head of an insignificant army, rendezvoused at Chalons, and anxiously awaited reinforcement.

The king published a counter-declaration, in which he appeared rather to justify his imbecile government than to condemn the rebellion. "Forgetting the arms which nature and necessity presented to him, he had recourse to pen and paper," says a satirical contemporary; "but so tamely that you would say he did not dare to name his enemy, and that he resembled a man who complains without saying who has beaten him."

The king's appeal produced no effect; not a sword was drawn.

Had Henry possessed either courage or energy, he might have easily dispersed Guise's nucleus force. Indeed Guise himself said to Nangis, when that gentleman asked him what he should do if the king assailed him, "Retire as quickly as possible to Germany, and await a more favorable opportunity."

But when fear chills the heart and paralyzes the arm of a sovereign, all is lost; the audacity of revolt increases with impunity. Could Henry have exhibited the conqueror of Jarnac, he would have insured tranquility. But anxious to appease the insurgents, not to quell them, he entreated the queen mother to meet Guise, assure him of his friendship, and accede to the terms of the League, rather than disturb the peace of France.

Lyons, Bourges, Orleans, Angers, had succumbed to his feeble army, and Guise, emboldened by success, met Catharine with an air of bravado, and with rare insolence actually dictated a peace to his king. A request, signed by himself and the cardinal of Bourbon, was presented, demanding an edict for the extirpation of heresy, the forcible expulsion of the Huguenots from the kingdom, a pledge from Henry to adhere to the League, and to renounce the protection of Geneva.

This "request" was at once adopted, and the royal imbecile signed the ignominious treaty at Nemours on the 7th of July, 1585. From this hour Henry III ceased to be de facto king of France; he was merely the nominal chief of a religious faction. He himself felt this, and he once said with a touch of pathos, "Tis true that I wear the crown, but Guise is the king of hearts." The king now
came to hate Guise with the peculiar virulence of a weak and treacherous nature, and he determined to avail himself of the first opportunity to avenge his humbled honor by the stiletto of a bravo. "This over-powerful subject," muttered he, "must be swept from my path."

The Huguenots received the intelligence of this fatal treaty with grief and consternation. The king of Navarre was astounded. Condé's troops had been largely disbanded; the party were unprepared for war; the fiercest harry yet organized, sanctioned by the king, was about to swoop upon them. So terrible was Navarre's agony, says the historian Matthieu, that "his mustachios became white in a night."

But unlike the king, his energy and fertility of resource were not to be paralyzed by danger, either menaced or present. With Titanic zeal he labored to save imperiled Christianity. Negotiations with Protestant powers abroad were opened; the home partisans of reform were summoned to assemble; Condé went into Germany to recruit his lanzknechts: Navarre published an appeal to Christendom, in which he complained of being stigmatized as a relapsed heretic, a persecutor of the church, a disturber of the state, false and malicious libels on his character invented to deprive him of the royal succession; declared that he had been compelled to appear to abjure his faith on the St. Bartholomew to save his life; that he was open to conviction, but that efforts had always been made to destroy rather than convert him: he repudiated the accusation of persecuting the papists, showing that many of that creed held high offices in his hereditary domains, and that others were constantly in attendance upon his person: he averred that he had never molested the persons nor touched the revenues of the Romish priests; offered to place all his fortresses in the king's hands if the Guises and their adherents would imitate his example; denounced the ambition of the house of Lorraine; and concluded by giving the lie to his enemies, and offering to decide the quarrel with the duke of Guise according to the chivalric habit of the times, by combat, either singly, or with two, ten, or twenty on a side.

This manifesto produced a profound sensation. Liberal Europe cried, Amen. His friends displayed increased devotion; the indifferent joined him, partly from admiration for his fortitude, partly because they were clear-sighted enough to perceive that he was the victim of a base and unprincipled faction, who, to compass their ambitions views, would hazard laying France prostrate at the feet of Spain.

Small detachments of cavaliers reached Navarre from time to time, the precursors of more formidable levies; and this prince, who was supposed by many to be preparing for flight, was soon strong enough to attack the overconfident League.
Thus Navarre was supported by his own indomitable heroism, by the enthusiasm of his party, by the prayers of the righteous, and by God's all-powerful hand.

The contest at once commenced. It was called, *The War of the Three Henry's*—Henry III at the head of the royalists, Henry of Guise at the head of the leaguers, and Henry of Navarre at the head of the Huguenots.

At this critical juncture pope Gregory XIII died. He had steadily refused to identify himself with the League, or to put the Bourbon princes out of the pale of the church: "I will leave the door open for their conversion," said he. He was succeeded by Felici Paretti, a fanatical friar of the Franciscan order, who assumed the tiara under the title of Sextus V. This pontiff had no scruples; he excommunicated Navarre and Condé, stigmatizing them as relapsed heretics; as such he declared them incapable of the royal succession; he deprived them of their estates, absolved their subjects and vassals from allegiance, and menaced with anathema all who should thenceforth serve them either in a civil or military capacity.

Unawed by this *brutum fulmen*, the Bourbon princes preserved their serenity, and even posted on the walls of the Vatican a protest against the anathema.

But this authoritative voice from the "holy of holies" at Rome consolidated the League, confirmed many doubting consciences, and gave Guise prestige. Even Catharine was awed into the cessation of her machinations. Croaking, "Divide and govern," she had ventured to negotiate with Navarre, and to give him covert aid; for she feared lest Guise might be too successful, and thereby destroy the political balance. Guise discovered this move, and shaking his finger menacingly, bade the withered old diplomat beware of approaching the abyss of excommunication; and the queen mother shrank back affrighted.

The League was jubilant; the sanction of the pontiff was the test of every Jesuit sermon. The fanatics declared that victory was sure to follow a banner blessed by the vicegerent of God; and the zealots already in imagination celebrated the extirpation of heresy.

Still, on the whole, the moral effect of this insolent interference was favorable to the Huguenots. The calmer and more reflecting members of the body politic deprecated the pope's presumption. They perceived that it struck at the civil franchises of the kingdom, and might be twisted into a precedent dangerous to the privileges of the Gallican church.

The pontiff's fiat did indeed detach numerous partisans from the Huguenot banner, but these were of the lowest and most ignorant class. As a compensation, many gentlemen of rank openly adhered to Navarre; while others who did not choose publicly to join him, stood neutral, or favored him in
The gauntlet he had flung down to Guise and which the chief of the League had not ventured to take up, his defiance of the pope, the severe misfortunes which he had incurred, all combined to make Navarre an object of interest, of admiration, of pity; they gained him the active sympathy of the good, the generous, and the heroic.

The Swiss cantons sent deputies to Henry to intercede for the Huguenots. The Germans, animated by the eloquence of the famous Theodore Beza, who had pleaded the cause of the Reformation before Charles II in happier years, armed in defense of their coreligionists, and enthusiasm gave to their movements the character of a Protestant crusade.

Henry of Navarre took the field: under such a leader, small bodies equaled armies. He marched from victory to victory. Fired by his spirit, his troops captured fortresses, subjugated provinces, and baffled the most subtle tactics of Mayenne.

On the 20th of October, 1587, the battle of Coutras was fought. The royalists, commanded by the duke of Joyeuse, were confident, well equipped, and ten thousand strong.

The Huguenot army was composed of four thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred cavalry; but the disparity of numbers was balanced by discipline. Joyeuse was a courtier; Navarre was a soldier. The duke's officers were dressed in richly ornamented costume, and their helmets were adorned by brilliant plumes; the Huguenots displayed naught but iron, and arms rusty with rain. It was the army of Darius against that of Alexander.

Navarre drew up his men-at-arms in the form of a crescent; Condé and the count of Poisson were on his right, Turenne was upon his left. "My friends," cried the king, "behold a prey much more considerable than any of your former booties; this is a bridegroom who has still the nuptial present in his pocket, and all the chief courtiers with him." Then turning to Condé and Soisson, he said, "All that I shall observe to you is, that you are of the house of Bourbon, and, please God, I will show you that I am your elder brother."

Just as Navarre concluded, one of his principal supporters, Duplessis-Mornay, stepped forward, and in a solemn manner reminded Henry of the great injury which he had done the reformed religion by his incontinence, and particularly by the recent and notorious seduction of a young lady of Rochelle. "Sire," said this reproving Nathan, "make public reparation for your misconduct, lest God send defeat as a judgment upon your so many sins."

Henry, influenced either by religious feeling, or considering that the ardor of his soldiers would be heightened by the freedom of their cause from so foul a stigma, consented publicly to avow his fault in the church of Pau, and also to
confess it on his first visit to Rochelle. He then knelt, together with the whole army, while prayer was offered to the God of battle.

This spectacle, instead of awakening respect in Joyeuse's mind, only conformed his vain confidence. "See," cried he, with a chuckle, "they kneel, they tremble; the day is ours." Laverdin, an old soldier, who was familiar with the habits of the Huguenots, replied, "Nay, my lord, you mistake. 'Tis their custom; they always pray when they mean either to conquer or die."

The battle was decided in half an hour. The courtiers were no match for the soldiers of Christ. The royalists routed; five thousand dead; five hundred prisoners; Joyeuse slain: such were the fruits of this brilliant victory.

The Bourbon princes performed prodigies of valor on that day, but Navarre eclipsed them all. He fought like the paladin of a fairy tale. A white plume fastened in his helmet made him conspicuous. When some of his friends, esteeming him menaced, threw themselves in front of him to shield his person, he cried, "Give me room, I beseech you; you stifle me: I would be seen."

Henry did not press his victory; indeed he is charged with having frittered it away. Quitting the army, which he left under the charge of Turenne, he repaired to Bearn and laid at the feet of the duchess de Guiche, of whom he was enamoured, the colors captured at Coutras. He dwarfed the heroic Henry of the battle-plain to the dandy carpet-knight of a courtesan's boudoir—a sad metamorphosis, shameful to the prince, and insulting to his God.

To say nothing of his duty as a professed Christian, he ought not, as an able captain, to have bartered success for a lady's smile; he ought not to have muddled the future by leaving it to the chapter of accidents, when, by energetic action, he might have anchored God's cause and his country's.

Chapter XXX

THE DOUBLE ASSASSINATION

Tedious negotiations, which had no effect, followed the battle of Coutras. In the meanwhile Guise was winning laurels at the head waters of the Loire. His name was on every papist's lips. Henry III, jealous of this renown, himself departed for the army; but he arrived only in time to see the hated Guise entwine the laurel about his brow; so that when the king returned to Paris,
armed cap-à-pie, with the port of a warrior, the witty citizens only lampooned his vanity and satirized his assumption of stolen honors.

But Guise was the popular idol. The metropolis especially resounded with pans in his praise. The "new David," the "second "Moses," the "modern Gideon," “the prop and pillar of holy church,” such were the titles showered upon him. Every café in Paris hymned his virtues.

This adulation turned Guise's head. Hurried away by the madness of ambition, he summoned his family to assemble at Nancy; and here the house of Lorraine matured a scheme for deposing the king, immuring him in a cloister, and crowning Henry of Guise.

This shows how little interest the princes of Lorraine really took in religion; they only used it as a vehicle in which to ride to empire. Their simple, sole object in every maneuver, from the very inception of these troubles in the reign of Francis I, through forty rears of internece strife, was the aggrandizement of their mushroom house. To that every thing was made to bend—the public weal, religious honor, the good faith of the state; the weightiest interests were transmuted into battle-doors.

The convocation at Nancy masked its real design, the usurpation of the throne by Guise; and committing to writing a series of insolent demands, forwarded them to the king. This precious document was not a petition; it was a command. Signed by the Guises, the cardinal of Bourbon, and other principal chiefs of the League, it imperiously demanded that the king should banish from his court all persons who were from any cause obnoxious to the "holy union;” that he should publish and enforce the decrees of the Council of Trent, place in the hands of the confederates such towns and fortresses as they might see fit, the crown paying the garrisons and all costs of fortification, and confiscate the Huguenot estates to defray the expenses of the war of extermination.

Henry III was quite broken by this daring insolence. As was usual with him when perplexed, he applied to the queen mother for assistance. Discord reigned in the privy council. One set of the king's minions favored the League; another urged the monarch to identify himself with Navarre, and strangle that presumptuous union, the pest of France. In accordance with the weak vacillation of his character, he took neither counsel, but contenting himself with half measures, which in stormy crises always disgust both parties, he sent the conspirators at Nancy word that lie would consider their petition.

Guise, emboldened by the king's timidity, now resolved to strike a decisive blow. His friends were ready; he was sure of the capital; the omens were auspicious; he determined to proceed to Paris, and seize Henry during the celebration of the carnival.
Despite the written and reiterated orders of his sovereign not to quit the camp, he entered Paris on the 9th of May, 1588, at high noon. Ere he had passed half through the city, he was recognized and thronged by the admiring mob. Thirty thousand people formed his retinue. "The shouts of the people," says an eyewitness, "sounded to the skies; nor did they ever cry, "VIVE LE ROY" as energetically as they now shouted, "VIVE GUISE." Some saluted him, some gave him thanks, some bowed to him, others kissed the hem of his garment. Those who could not get near him manifested their joy by gestures; some were seen who, adoring him as a saint, and touching him with their beads, either kissed them or pressed them against their eyes and foreheads. Even the women, thronging green leaves and blooming flowers from their windows, honored and blessed his coming.

Guise, with a smiling countenance and gracious air, showed himself affable to some in words, to some by courteously returning their salutations; others he requited with kind looks. Passing through the throng with his hat off, he omitted nothing that was calculated to win and rivet the affection and applause of the people.

Such was the reception awarded to the "king of Paris." Guise, intoxicated by this adulation, had the hardihood to visit the Louvre. Catherine was aghast. She received him pale, trembling, and dismayed. Henry's consternation may not be described. The impudent duke stood with easy nonchalance, enjoying the astonishment which his presence caused, and smiling as the shouts of the populace, who now crowded the court of the Louvre and the adjacent streets, came borne to his ears on the exultant wind.

Henry reproached Guise for his disobedience in visiting the capital, and the stern look which greeted him at length made the champion of the League and the idol of the Parisians turn pale. After a stormy interview, the duke feigned fatigue, and took his leave amid the acclamations of the multitude.

In the evening Guise fortified his house and stored it with ammunition. Equal vigilance was observed at the Louvre. The Swiss were under arms, and every man-at-arms whom Henry could press into service was put on guard.

The nest morning Guise again visited the Louvre; but fearful of treachery, he was accompanied by four hundred armed friends. Nothing was accomplished; and in the evening further consultations were held.

In the meantime every wile was employed to lash the excitable populace into a frenzy. The report was spread that a hundred and twenty of the chief leaguers were marked out for death. A counterfeit list was framed and circulated. Guise headed the victims. The people, incited by the priests, raged madly. Then commenced the famous \textit{barricades}. 
Paris, in the reign of Henry III, was not protected by the vigilant police of modern times. Now the constabulary force receives instructions from the crown minister; then it was wholly under the control of the municipal authorities. The city was then girt with walls, flanked by lofty towers; the gates were shut exactly at the fixed hour, and the sheriffs held the keys. The burgesses were formed into a militia, chose their own officers, and were frequently drilled. At the corners of the streets weighty chains were attached to rivets in the houses; these were stretched out at the least alarm, and thus all communication of one quarter of the city with another was impeded.

The people had banners, fixed places of meeting, rallying words; and no more than a drum-tap or the sound of a bell was required to collect a mass of soldiers under arms, imperfectly disciplined, but formidable from their number. Paris was divided into sixteen districts: in each of these a council was formed in the interest of the League; these appointed sixteen demagogue delegates, who made another council, called the "Council of Sixteen," which was so famous in the religious wars of France.

Now the SIXTEEN were in their element. The tocsin sounded; the streets were unpaved; the chains extended from corner to corner; the Swiss guard of the king, shut up in the square before the church of the INNOCENTS and isolated, were soon forced to surrender; and Guise saw himself master of Paris by an almost bloodless coup d'état.

While these scenes were being enacted in the streets of his turbulent and traitorous capital, Henry, palsied by fear, gave up all hope. He had been informed of the object of Guise's visit by one of the repentant conspirators, and he could not believe that his foe would let slip this opportunity: he stood disarmed and friendless; what could save him?

The craft of Catharine de' Medici extricated her inefficient son from Guise's net.

The queen mother had already visited Guise, when he had named such hard terms as amounted to the abdication of the king. Now, returning to the duke, she held him in protracted conversation, that he might have no opportunity to invest the Louvre, while the king prepared for instant flight.

Proceeding into the garden of the Tuilleries on pretense of taking a promenade, Henry repaired to the royal stables, equipped himself for his journey, and immediately set off on horseback, accompanied by a suite of fifteen or twenty gentlemen, for Chartres, where he arrived safely the next day, receiving every mark of affection and respect.

In the meanwhile Memville, one of Guise's attendants, having ascertained that Henry had quitted Paris, burst unceremoniously into the duke's cabinet,
interrupted the queen mother's empty harangue, which meant only time, and flung into his master's ears the announcement, "The king has fled from Paris." The duke started up in dismay, and said to Catharine, "Ah, madame, I am undone; while your majesty has been detaining me, the king has departed to plot my ruin." Catharine, versed in all the arts of dissimulation, replied, "I credit not this news," and took her leave.

Although bitterly disappointed that the grand prize had escaped him, Guise was not inactive, but took every precaution to secure the advantages which he had gained. He secured the Bastile, took St. Cloud, Vincennes, Lagry, and thus commanded the free navigation of the Seine and the Marne to the gates of Paris, and revolutionized the municipal administration, filling all offices with his satellites.

Notwithstanding these usurpations, Henry, from his retreat at Chartres, had the despicable weakness to open negotiations with the triumphant Parisian leaguers; and eventually a treaty was signed, which ratified demands very similar to those drawn up at Nancy.

In this edict a clause was inserted which guaranteed the convocation of the states-general at Blois on the 16th of October, 1588, to confirm the treaty. Victors thus far, the princes of Lorraine now used every effort to subsidize the members of the states-general; religious zeal, ambition, avarice, all were appealed to; they were again successful, and Guise was master of the assembly ere its opening session was held.

At the appointed time, the states-general were convened, and the pomp was unprecedented. The King, who, despite his reconciliation with the League, had resolutely refused to enter Paris since his ignominious flight, sojourning meantime at Rouen, made the inaugural address. Then business commenced; maneuver succeeded maneuver. Guise was confirmed as commander of the gend'armerie; a prior decree, declaring the cardinal of Bourbon first prince of the blood and next heir to the throne, was assented to; and Guise, blinded by success, moved that the decrees of the Council of Trent be registered, an act which would have barred the house of Bourbon from the crown. Even the lackey states paused here. They were not prepared to go to such a length. The clergy feared to jeopard the rights of the Gallican church; the nobles dreaded any extension of the papal power over their temporalities; the states secured a practical veto by postponement.

Guise, no whit discouraged, then moved that Navarre be declared incapable of the succession; this was voted with alacrity. In spite of Henry's intrigues, notwithstanding his manifest reluctance to accede to this fiat, against the protest of Navarre, who denounced the states-general as a packed and exclusive convention of his enemies, the king, finding that he could neither conquer the inflexible resolution of the League nor evade their demands,
finally assented to the general rote, and said that he would issue an edict giving it validity.

The political situation was still farther confused by the seizure of the marquisate of Saluzzo by the dupe of Vassy, an adherent of the League. This aggression torched the national pride, and the voice of patriotism was heard amid the din of religious discord. Henry charged that Guise had instigated the act; the duke asserted that the king himself incited it. Murmurs arose, and both Guisards and royalists bated each other with increased venom.

It was now, while affairs were thus tangled, while nothing was settled, save that the Huguenots were outlawed, declared incapable of holding office, and tabooed, that Henry, driven to desperation, definitively decided to assassinate his subtle and triumphant persecutor.

He had recourse to Marshal D'Aumont, a brave soldier, and to Nicolas D'Augenay, an able publicist: informing them of his purpose, he asked their opinion. "Strike," advised the cavalier in a monosyllable; but the lawyer, with the instinct of his profession, counseled the duke's imprisonment and trial before the regular tribunals for high treason.

The soldier's advice was the most congenial, and the king resolved to adopt it. It was some time ere he obtained a willing instrument of revenge. At length Loignac, a partisan of Epernon, and a bitter foe of Guise, undertook the work.

On the 22d of December, 1585, Henry sent word to Guise that, as he proposed going to Notre Dame de Clery to pass the festival of Christmas, he should hold his daily council early the next morning.

Loiguac then received his last instructions. Thirteen assassins were introduced into the council-chamber and hidden behind a tapestry: and Henry himself gave each of them a poniard, saying, "Guise is the greatest criminal in my kingdom; the laws, both human and divine, permit me to punish him. Not being able to do so by the ordinary tribunals, I authorize you by my royal prerogative to do so."

In the meantime the wretched victim received Henry's treacherous note, and unmindful of the manifold warnings which he had received to beware of the king, he at once repaired to the palace, where he arrived in the grey, bleak winter dawn. Once in the trap, every thing conspired to alarm the duke. The gates were clanged after him with ominous precaution; he passed through a long lane of soldiers stretching away to the court-yard; he met the archbishop of Lyons, a confidential friend, who said to him in presence of Larchant, one of the captains of the guard, alluding to the light dress he wore, "That coat is too light for this season and place. You should have put on one stiff with fur."

These words, pronounced in accents of suspicion, heightened Guise's alarm.
In one of the anterooms he nearly fainted; recovering, he proceeded to the fatal council-chamber. The door had been walled up. Ignorant of this, Guise was in the act of raising the tapestry which screened the apartment, when the bravos sprang upon him, and ere he could draw his sword, gave him countless stabs, and flung him to the floor quite dead.

The false door of the council-chamber was then thrown down, and Henry, followed by his suite, emerged into the anteroom where lay his late redoubted foe. The courtiers jested; and the king himself, in imitation of Guise's brutality to the dead body of Coligny, kicked the duke's remains.

Having gloated his eyes with this ghastly spectacle, Henry hastened to the queen mother, and cried exultingly, "Madame, the king of Paris is dead; I am now king of France."

"I fear," replied the astute Catharine, "that you will soon be king of nothing." But she exhorted him to wait at once upon the papal nuncio, and avert his displeasure, and to use diligence and resolution.

The murder of Guise caused a profound sensation. Never was man less fit to die. He had quitted the chamber of one of the titled harlots of the court, the marchioness of Noirmontier, with whom he had passed the night, on the very morning of his death. He was stained by vices and crimes whose name was legion, and was one of the chief butchers of St. Bartholomew—a fearful record with which to face his God.

Guise possessed many of the qualities of a political leader. He was sagacious, affable, prepossessing in his physique, and possessed the keen, penetrating talent of a Machiavelli. He united in his single person the diplomatic acumen of his equally unscrupulous uncle the cardinal of Lorraine, and the military genius of his father.

Henry III for once acted with vigor. He ordered the arrest and instant execution of the cardinal of Guise. Then the bodies of the unhappy princes were consumed in quicklime, and buried secretly. Mayence also was upon the red list, but he escaped from Lyons to Dijon, whence he repaired to Paris; but the archbishop of Lyons, the old cardinal of Bourbon, the prince de Joinville, and the duke of Elboeuf were seized. "Hencefurth," cried the aroused king, "I wish my subjects to know that I will be obeyed. I will punish the leaders of insurrection, and those who abet them. I will be king not merely in words, but in deeds; and it will be no difficult matter for me to wield the sword again as I did in my youth."

News of the tragedy at Blois reached Paris on the day succeeding the assassination of the duke of Guise. Popular indignation vented itself in the bitterest and fiercest execrations. Sermons were preached on the martyrdom
of the "king of Paris," and Henry was compared to Herod. Intelligence of the
death of the cardinal of Guise soon followed, and the outcries of fury grew
louder and deeper. The king was denounced as a favorer of heresy, as an
enemy to holy church, who had dyed his hands in the blood of an ecclesiastic.
Priest and layman panted for revenge. Councils of war were held in shops and
cloisters. The statues of the king were broken, the royal arms were defaced; he
was called simply, Henry of Valois. The Sorbonne declared that he had
forfeited the crown, and that his subjects not only might, but ought to cast off
their allegiance; and this resolution was forwarded to Rome for the sanction of
the pope.

In the midst of this excitement, Catharine de' Medici died. She breathed her
last on the 5th of January, 1589, in the seventieth year of her active and
intriguing life.

Catharine possessed a strong intellect, persuasive eloquence, and an invention
so ready that it never halted for an expedient. She believed with the Vatican,
that "the end justifies the means;" and in the pursuit of her purpose, she
availed herself without a scruple of the most abhorrent arts, and especially of
the licentiousness of her court. She was always accompanied by a bevy of fair
but frail beauties; and by her encouragement of vice, she raised it to an
unparalleled height of dissoluteness and infamy.

In the exercise of her cruelty and perfidy, she eventually became equally
detested by the papists and the Huguenots, both of whom she had often
betrayed. Fighting with such poisoned weapons, she could not fail to be
despised in each camp when she became known in each.

In her stony heart maternal affection had no sway. She encouraged her children
in habits of licentiousness, in order to make them subservient to her will. She is
even accused of murdering two of her sons when they stood in her path; and it
is not questioned that she employed the poisoner's bowl and the stiletto of the
bravo to abridge the lives of several rivals. The good she did France was
 imperceptible; the evil she inflicted, the curses she entailed, the atrocious
régime of deceit and perfidy and selfish despotism which she inaugurated, two
centuries later crazed France—drove it to blow its own brains out in the
revolution of 1793.

The death of the queen mother completed the king's embarrassment. He had
leaned upon her counsel; now that prop was gone. The whole country heaved
in insurrection. City was opposed to city, castle to castle. In vain did Henry
strive to appease the indignation of the League by proving the treason of the
duke of Guise. The correspondence with Spain and Savoy, the terms of the
alliance, the monies raised to arm the traitors against the throne, all went for
nothing. The country was in no mood to listen to evidence; the people were
the slaves of unbridled passion; they wanted not truth, but vengeance.
Nor was the monarch more successful in his efforts to placate the pope. When Sixtus V learned through the French ambassador of the death of the Guises, and the imprisonment of the cardinal of Bourbon and the archbishop of Lyons, his rage knew no bounds. "Your master," said he, "thinks to deceive me, and treats me as if I were no more than a poor monk; but he shall find that he deceives himself, not me; and that he has to deal with a pontiff who is ready to shed plenty of blood when the interest of his see requires it." "But, holy father," retorted the keen ambassador, "shall not the king my master be at liberty to kill the cardinal of Guise, his mortal enemy, after pope Pius IV has authorized the murder of cardinal Caraffe, who had been one of his friends?" Sixtus was too much enraged to reply to this home-thrust, so he dismissed the minister from his presence.

This rebuff at the Vatican isolated the king. He held a scepter which he could not wield. On one side of the Loire the exasperated League ruled, undisputed; on the other, the king of Navarre governed. Henry stood alone in the center of his kingdom, without money, without friends, without an army.

He attempted to negotiate with the League; but that confederacy, under the able management of Mayenne, who had been appointed head, had regained stability, and the offended brother of the murdered princes haughtily refused all overtures.

In despair, the wretched monarch recalled the dying advice of the queen mother. He turned to Navarre, and besought his forgiveness and assistance; when this was known, the papal legate and the Spanish ambassador quitted him, and proceeding to Paris, recognized the lords of the League as the legitimate government of France.

But the Huguenot sky was propitious. Navarre acceded to Henry's request for an armistice; and on the 30th of April, 1589, clasping hands at Plessisles-Tours, the two monarchs pledged themselves to bury the past, to unite for the future; and they entered Tours amid the acclamations of the soldiers and the inhabitants. Huguenots and royalists fraternized, and vowed to devote their consolidated strength to the subjugation of the League and the inauguration of a tolerant régime.

Deeply chagrined by this unexpected phase of affairs, Mayenne collected his squadrons and dashed towards Tours, hoping to surprise the kings in the midst of the reconciliatory fêtes. He nearly succeeded. Swooping upon Vendôme, he captured it, and then pressed into the suburbs of Tours. After a severe contest, Mayenne was forced back; and retreating across France slowly and sullenly, he passed through St. Cloud into the friendly and sheltering walls of Paris.

The jubilant royalists crossed the Loire close on Mayenne's heels. When they reached Poissy, they were joined by some foreign auxiliaries, ten thousand
Swiss and four thousand Germans, whom the king had enlisted under his banner. These, added to the detachments of Longueville, Montpensier, De Givry, and Navarre, swelled Henry's army to forty-two thousand fighting men.

The terror excited by this array reduced those towns which environed the capital to speedy submission. Consternation reigned in Paris. Mayenne could only muster eight thousand infantry and eighteen hundred cavalry. Despite his exertions, all the passages of the Seine were wrung from his control, and the approaches to the bridges fell into the hands of the king.

Paris was almost strangled by the besiegers, so closely did they clasp the throat of the rebellious capital. Henry in person begirt the Faubourg St. Honoré, and all that side of the Louvre which borders on the river. Navarre besieged the line from the Faubourg of St. Martin to that of St. Germain.

The fate of Mayenne seemed certain; when fanaticism extricated the League from the impending danger, and once more unsettled France.

Fanatical opinions exercise their power oftener over individuals than on great corporations. From the midst of the common fermentation there now arose a monk who resolved to perpetrate a fresh deed of horror. This was Jacques Clément, a Dominican whose passions were strong, whose principles were libertine, and whose frenzy was unequalled. He had recently been ordained a priest. To persons of his own age and to his friends, he was an object of ridicule. He was weak in body and simple of mind. Such are the natures on which fanaticism makes the most profound impression. Clément was persuaded that it was lawful to kill a tyrant, and he laid before his superiors the question whether it would be a mortal sin for a priest to assassinate a despot. He was told that it would be an irregularity, but no mortal sin. Meantime every art was employed to heat his brain and nerve his hand for the atrocious deed.

When the fanatic communicated his project to Mayenne and D'Aumale, they approved it. The demagogue Council of Sixteen applauded it. He was promised a cardinal's hat if he did the deed and escaped; if taken and executed, he was assured of canonization; and on the night that his resolution was confirmed, the duchess of Montpensier sacrificed all that a woman holds most dear to the young libertine regicide.

Thus doubly crazed by passion and by fanaticism, Clément provided himself with forged credentials to the king; then bidding his friends adieu, he passed outside the lines of the League, loosened his frock, and walked with rapid strides towards Henry's camp. After some delay, he spent the night within the king's lines. Clément succeeded in securing an audience. Henry approached him. Pretending to draw a paper from his sleeve, he drew instead a knife, which he plunged with deadly effect into the monarch's abdomen. "Wretch," cried the king, "what have I done, that you should assassinate me?" and as he
spoke, he drew the fatal blade from the wound, and struck it into the forehead of the miscreant friar. La Guesle, one of the attendant courtiers, ran him through. His body was hurled from the window, where it was hacked to pieces by the soldiers, burned, and the ashes thrown into the Seine.

Henry lingered eighteen hours, counseled forbearance, deplored the unhappy state in which he left France, exhorted the nobility to remain united, and declared Navarre to be his legitimate successor. Then turning to the anxious followers who crowded about his couch, he said, "Adieu, my friends; turn your tears into prayers, and pray for me." Shortly after this, in the thirty-eighth year of his age and the fifteenth of his reign, the last of the house of Valois died without a struggle, while repeating the miserere.

Henry's death was finer than his life. Imbecile, vacillating, vicious, even to name his vices would outrage decency. Never did monarch mount the throne under brighter auspices; never had a king more shamefully squandered his time in low debauchery, lost golden opportunities, and frittered away his reputation. His feebleness alienated the League; his treachery disgusted the Huguenots. His religion was hypocrisy, his prudence was craft, his liberality was licentious prodigality, his private life was a continuous round of enervating and roué pleasure. His death was received by the factions and by bigots with exultation, and France at large rashly attributed it to a stroke of divine justice.

Chapter XXXI

THE WHITE PLUME of NAVARRE

The monk who murdered Henry III because he was not Romanist enough, by his fatal blow enthroned a Huguenot.

When apprized of the assassination, ultramontane France ran mad with ferocious joy. The Dominicans of the capital chanted Te Deum. Portraits of Clément were exposed to the veneration of the populace. The statue of the murderer was placed in the cathedral, with the inscription, "St. James Clément, pray for us." Bonfires blazed; rockets shot up to kiss the heavens. The abandoned duchess of Montpensier, in whose arms the assassin had had his purpose confirmed, traversed the Paris streets with disheveled dress, crying, "Good news, my friends, good news! The tyrant is dead; we shall have no more of Henry Valois." Pope Sixtus V, in full consistory, pronounced a studied panegyric upon Clément, beginning his atrocious harangue with a quotation
from the Psalms: “This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvelous in our eyes.”
Then, with frightful blasphemy, this pastor of the faithful declared the
cowardly regicidal act comparable, for heroism, to the actions of Judith and
Eleazar, and for usefulness, to the incarnation and resurrection of the Savior.

But while the League was exulting, Navarre, aware that boldness is the mother
of opinion, and that from this springs power, from power victory, and thence
security, hastened to have himself proclaimed king of France under the title of
Henry Quatre; then, leaning with one hand upon the Swiss auxiliaries, and with
the other upon the united Huguenot and conservative parties, he calmly turned
to Europe and demanded recognition.

This, however, was not readily conceded. Most of the foreign states were
hostile to his claim; France itself was divided: the League, dominant in half of
the kingdom, cried Veto to the new monarch's accession; many of the royalist
cavaliers deserted Henry's standard at this critical moment; and the king, with
his army thinned by desertion to half its original size—forty-two thousand men—
raised the siege of Paris, divided his squadrons into three divisions, and retired
into Normandy.

Nor was the League a unit at this crisis. Dissension, bitter and open, ate out
the heart of action. Mayenne himself, chief of the "holy union," backed by the
formidable house of Guise, aspired to the throne. Mendoza, the Spanish
ambassador, opposed his election in favor of Philip II, who also had designs
upon the crown; and Sixtus V was urged to espouse the cause of the "most
Christian king." But the pope did not enter into the views of Spain with any
cordiality. He foresaw not if Philip, who was already too strong for the Vatican,
should become arbiter of France and master of the Netherlands, he could
reduce the pontiff to the position of mere head chaplain to the court of
Madrid. Accordingly Sixtus threw the weight of his influence into the scale
against Philip, whom he all the time cozened into imagining that he was
assisting. This tortuous policy finally effected the election of the old cardinal
of Bourbon, whom the Huguenots still held in duress, and who received the
empty honor of the ultramontane allegiance, under the sobriquet of Charles X.
In the absence of their nominal king, the Council of Sixteen ruled Paris, and
Mayenne controlled the Romanist provinces.

In the mean time Henry Quatre, by dint of his superior military genius, beat
down all opposition, and marched from victory to victory. He convened a
parliament at Tours, where his authority was acknowledged, and where justice
was administered in his name; he overran Normandy; he gained the celebrated
battle of Argens, in 1588, and subdued a multitude of rebellious towns.

After exhaustive but abortive diplomatic ruses, succeeded by much military
maneuvering, the army of the League, commanded by Mayenne, and the
Huguenots, led by Henry IV, met, in March, 1590 on the famous plain of Ivry.
Two writers who were with the king mention that, during a terrific thunderstorm which preceded the battle, two armies were descried in the heavens fighting furiously. "This," says Davila, "discouraged the royal army, who for the most part looked on the heavenly display as a presage of defeat, and coupled it with the unhappy rout at the fight of Dreux, fought on that very spot at the commencement of the civil wars."

At a time when the aurora borealis was but little known, this phantom fight in the clouds could not fail of producing consternation.

The force of the two armies was very unequal: the king had eight thousand infantry, and but two thousand cavalry. The League mustered twelve thousand men-at-arms and four thousand horsemen.

In the king's camp much time was given by both Romanists and Protestants to devotion. The churches of the neighboring hamlet of Nanancourt were crowded by gentlemen who went to mass; while the Huguenot ministers performed divine service with their adherents.

When all was prepared, Henry advanced to the head of his army, in complete armor, but bareheaded, and prayed aloud to the Almighty for his favor and protection. When he finished his supplication, a shout of "Vive le roy" ran through his lines. Henry then exhorted his followers to keep their ranks, and assured them that he was determined to conquer or die with them. "Gentlemen," cried he, with animated voice and sparkling eye, "if the standard fail you, keep my plume in your eyes; you will always find it in the path of honor and duty." So saying, he put on his helmet adorned with three white plumes; then perceiving that the wind blew in the faces of his soldiers, and that in consequence the smoke would blind them, he ordered a position to be taken more to the left. Mayenne, perceiving this maneuver, at once sounded a charge, and battle was joined.

The field was stubbornly and skillfully contested, and the victory long hung in doubt. At length Henry in person plunged with his reserve upon Mayenne's array headlong and resistless; for a space he was swallowed up in the dreadful mêlée: then came the clang of sabres, the fierce shouts of infuriated combatants, the agonized wail of the death-smitten; while above all sounded the hoarse roar of musketry and the sullen boom of cannon. The suspense was awful; but when the smoke rolled up, the army of the League was descried decimated, broken, dispersed, scattered in wild rout across the ghastly plain, shouting madly, "Sauve qui peut:" while over all loomed the white plume of Navarre, and echoed the frenzied cry of, "Victory, victory!"

"Gentlemen," said the exultant monarch, "you have served God well this day; receive his benediction and your king's."
In this famous battle six thousand leaguers perished, among whom were the count of Egmont, who commanded the Spaniards, and the duke of Brunswick, who led the Germans. Sixteen French and twenty Swiss colors, eight pieces of cannon, all the baggage and ammunition of Mayenne—these were the trophies which graced the triumph of the king.

Henry lost five hundred killed, and two hundred wounded.

Mayenne retreated with his battered battalions upon the dismayed capital, at the same time dispatching a courier to the duke of Parma, the Spanish governor of the Netherlands, whom he implored to hasten to the rescue of the imperiled League.

The victory of Ivry gave Henry IV a prestige which consolidated his party and insured his eventual success. Upon this occasion he did not fritter away his triumph by misspent hours at the feet of a courtesan, as he had his prior victory of Coutras; but pressing closely upon Mayenne, he environed the discomfited legions of the League, and laid close siege to his rebellious capital.

So skilfully did Henry invest Paris, that ere long gaunt famine stalked through its streets. The hunger of the isolated city was terrible and unprecedented. The Parisians not only ate human flesh, after consuming dogs, cats, leather, every thing masticable, but they actually ground the bones of human beings and mined this awful powder with chaff and bran, of which, at the papal nuncio's suggestion, they made bread.

Yet though Henry choked them with hunger, the leaguers, steeled by desperation and heated by the Jesuits, still held out. The king might have easily taken Paris by assault, but he was anxious to save it from the horrors of pillage; so he resolved to starve it into submission.

Meantime Alexander Farnese, duke of Parma, was apprized of the desperate condition of the League. This celebrated soldier and consummate tactician at once set out to relieve Mayenne and Nemours.

Farnese did indeed compel Henry to raise the siege of Paris, but avoiding a battle by a series of those cunning military maneuvers which had gained him his reputation, he contented himself with this, and soon retired into the Netherlands.

Mortified by Farnese's tactics, Henry attempted to take Paris by escalade. But the obstinate fortitude of the citizens, led by a regiment of fanatic monks grotesquely aimed above their frocks, foiled the assault, and the king retired balked and sulky from the city walls.
But while these scenes were being enacted, several other important events occurred. Charles X, the phantom monarch of the League, died at Fontenoy, after publicly acknowledging the right of his nephew to the throne. About the same time the prince de Joinville, now duke of Guise, who had been imprisoned by Henry III when he seized the cardinal of Bourbon, made his escape from duress, not without some suspicion of the connivance of Henry Quatre, who was accused of desiring to make use of the young duke to foment dissension in the ranks of the League.

These events were chiefly of consequence because they revived with increased earnestness the question of the succession, to which the demise of pope Sixtus V, in 1591, and the election, after a stormy conclave, of Gregory XIV, a creature of the Spanish king, gave added venom. There were several rival claimants of the French crown within the ranks of the League. Some favored Philip II; some were for Guise; others preferred the duke of Savoy. After a rancorous contest, during which Henry marched from one success to another almost unopposed, the settlement of the mooted claims and the election of a king was referred to the states-general.

This decision alarmed Henry. The formal nomination of a monarch by the states-general would greatly embarrass him, if it did not ultimately baulk him of the throne. His heroism had melted all Europe into admiration. Many of the inimical nobles did not scruple to declare that, were it not for his heresy, they would serve him and die for him. His Huguenot tenets seemed the only obstacle to the almost undisputed succession. God seemed to put before Henry these two alternatives: a throne bought with a denial of his truth; a divided scepter accompanied by loyalty to the heavenly King.

The struggle in Henry's soul was fearful. Ambition imperiously beckoned one way; religion sternly pointed the other.

At length ambition triumphed; Henry determined to recant. Many things combined to make the king desert his mother's God. He had no true faith in his soul. His Protestantism was not a saving grace in the heart; it was a cold intellectual conviction, nothing more. He was a Huguenot because Romanism was so ridiculous: "It is unreasonable," cried he, "this mummery of the Vatican." Devoted to pleasure, nay, to gallantry, what sympathy could this licentious monarch, who seduced young girls, debauched the wives of his highest subjects, and kept a dozen mistresses, have with the pure morality, the chastened piety, the holy ardor of the children of God?

Therefore, since Henry was always a Romanist in practice, since his Protestantism was of the head, not of the heart, his apostasy was not so difficult, the abyss across which he leaped was not so yawning as some have painted it.
Henry had long thought that unless he became reconciled to Rome, he would have to pass his life in warfare, "a monarch without a kingdom," in his phrase. He had not raised himself to the Christian height of daring to TRUST GOD. Like Simon Peter, he doubted. His favorite mistress, Gabrielle d'Estrés, constantly urged him to recant and pacify the country. When the alarmed Huguenots entreated him not to abandon them, he said, "Ventre St. Gris! Paris is well worth a mass."

On the 25th of July, 1593, Henry publicly abjured Protestantism at St. Denis, and envoys were instantly dispatched to Rome to obtain the papal absolution; but the reluctant pontiff would not publish a decree of admission into the bosom of Rome until two years later. In 1595 he was absolved from all censure, upon certain prescribed conditions, with all of which he complied.

This event broke the back of the League; Mayenne only held out to obtain better terms; ere long he succumbed. The nobles and the commons hastened to swear allegiance to the renegade monarch, and ere many months had passed, rebellious Paris itself opened its obstinate gates with a shout of welcome.

But if Henry's abjuration killed the League, it also wounded the Huguenots. From the day of his mock reconciliation with Rome, Henry treated his old friends, Turenne, Duplessis-Mornay, D'Aubigné, and the rest, with shabby neglect. Happily Condé was dead, poisoned some years before, so he could not be tabooed. The whole reform party was sad and apprehensive. "In taking the king's abjuration," wrote the wise and good Duplessis-Mornay to the duke of Bouillon, "it was proposed that he should swear to make war upon the Huguenots, which he refused to do. This is a great boldness to dare to make such a demand when he was barely on the threshold of their door." "I expect," wrote he farther on, alluding to the embassy to Rome, "that Henry will obtain absolution on condition of the revocation of his edict against the bull of excommunication; and for penance, he will be secretly enjoined to make war upon the Huguenots. The king of Spain will then remain to be satisfied: he can marry his daughter to our king, by which the two interests will be blended, and then the Philistines must be sacrificed as a dowry."

Such is the force of pernicious example, that within a few years after the farce at St. Denis, nearly every family of distinction in France had returned to Rome, like dogs to their vomit.

The loss of their protectors rendered the humbler Huguenots an easy prey to their Jesuitical foes, and the slender recompense which they obtained for their services to Henry Quatre was only an added spur to the oppressions of his successors.
The monarch now lapped himself in the caresses of his late opponents; upon them his favors were almost exclusively bestowed. But he did not feel strong enough to dispense with the support of his ancient comrades; so that when a Huguenot synod, convened at St. Maixent, sent deputies to petition Henry to inform them how their affairs were to be conducted, and to entreat him to convene a general assembly of the Protestant church, he answered suavely but equivocally that his conversion had not changed his affection for them, promising to take their petition into speedy consideration.

All France now seemed desirous of acquiescing honestly in the new régime, all save the Jesuits, those pests of modern Europe. These obstinately refused to recognize or obey the king, notwithstanding his recantation and absolution. Filled with hatred, they hissed and spat their venom at the throne. They did more; they openly counseled regicide. One of these wretches named Commolet preached a sermon, in which he enlarged upon the death of Eglon king of Moab; he applauded the assassination of Henry III, and described Clément as seated among the angels of heaven. Having thus applied the text, he exclaimed, "We too require an Ehud; we must have an Ehud; be he monk, soldier, or shepherd, does not matter; but we need an Ehud; and this blow is all we want to give us a halcyon sky."

Similar regicidal doctrines were proclaimed in Lyons and at Rouen, indeed wherever the Jesuits were influential. These madmen soon heated a fanatic, Pierre Barrière, an ignorant and superstitious waterman of Orleans, so that he resolved to attempt the assassination of the king. He asked the advice of the grand prior of the Carmelites at Lyons, who praised his courage and eulogized his piety. A Capuchin, of whom he made a confidant, told him decidedly that his enterprise was meritorious. Happily for Henry, the embryo assassin held a similar consultation with a Dominican named Serapin Bianchi, who was attached to the royalist party. He notified the king, through a gentleman of the royal retinue, of the impending danger; and eventually, after a variety of adventures, Barrière was seized. In his ample confession he implicated all the instigators of the horrid crime in contemplation, after which he was tortured to death.

The connection of the Jesuits with Barrière, together with their impolitic resistance to the pacification, increased the storm gathering above their heads. They had shown themselves so persistently and implacably the enemies of the king and of the state, that it was resolved to cite them before the courts of justice, as a preliminary to their total expulsion from France.

The University of Paris led the prosecution. A petition was presented to the Parliament, which narrated in detail all their crimes from their admission into the kingdom, and urged their banishment; "the Jesuits having been the tools of the Spanish faction all through the late troubles, aiming at the disseverment of
the state, conspiring against the life of the king, and violating all order, political and hierarchical."

The cause was pleaded at Paris in July, 1594. Antony Arnauld, one of the most famous advocates in the jurisprudential history of France, appeared for the prosecution.

Since, in our day, the Jesuits are as active, as ubiquitous, and as malicious as in the epoch of the League, it becomes of interest to know what the foremost lawyers of mediaeval France thought of these dangerous enemies of civilization and of God.

"Was it not among the Jesuits," exclaimed Arnauld, after a brilliant exordium, "that the ambassadors and secret agents of the Spanish king held their traitorous meetings? Was it not among them that Louchard, Ameline, Crucé-Crome, and other murderers, hatched their diabolical conspiracies? Was it not among them that, in 1590, it was resolved that nine tenths of the population of Paris should starve, rather than the city should be surrendered to its lawful king? Who was president of the Council of Sixteen, but the Jesuit Pigenot, the most ferocious tiger in the capital, who was so heart-broken at the bad success of the League, that he became insane through vexation?

"Was it not in the Jesuit colleges of Paris and Lyons, in the month of August, 1593, that the last resolution to assassinate the king was formed? Does not the deposition of Barriére, executed at Mélun, prove it? Was it not the Jesuit Vorade who assured the would-be murderer that he could not perform a more meritorious act, and to confirm him in his purpose, had him confessed and absolved by another Jesuit whose name is not known? Did not these impious and execrable assassins employ the most holy, the most solemn, the most awful mysteries of the Christian religion to confirm the wavering resolution of a fanatic to massacre the first king in Christendom?

"I confess that a righteous indignation transports me beyond the bounds of forensic calmness when I see that these traitors, murderers, confessors, and absolvers of regicide walk still among us, that they live in France and breathe its air. What do I say? Not only do they live among us, but they enter our palaces; they are countenanced, they are caressed, they form cabals, leagues, and alliances.

"The humiliation of these pests in the affair of Cardinal Borromeo is quite recent. Their order was extinguished, and they were expelled from Italy by pope Pius V. And yet the Jesuits, who have attempted to murder the king of France, and who daily preach regicide, are not banished from our country! Is the life of a cardinal, then, more precious than that of the eldest son of the church? If the tribunal before which I plead does not deliver us from these
monsters, they will perpetrate even more evil than they have yet accomplished.

"If the day of conservation is not less delightful than the day of birth, certainly the day on which the Jesuits shall be expelled from France will be no less memorable than that on which the University of Paris was founded; and as Charlemagne, after having delivered Italy from the Lombards, Germany from the Hungarians, passed twice into Spain, subdued the Saxons, and founded our university, which during eight hundred years has served as a refuge to men of letters banished from Italy, and persecuted in Greece, Egypt, and Africa, in the same manner Henry Quatre la Grand, having expelled the Spaniards by force of arms, and banished the Jesuits by your decree, will restore to our university, to the city, to France, the ancient splendor, the primitive glory."

Louis Dollé, advocate of the curates of Paris, followed Arnauld, and he spoke against the Jesuits with equal force and eloquence. He said that they were not members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, either as secular or regular priests; that they had only been received in France in the character of a collegiate society, and on the express condition that they should plot no mischief, nor undertake any thing to the prejudice of the bishops or curates; that, far from observing these conditions, they had meddled in politics, assumed to be the censors of the clergy, pretending to be universal pastors and guardians of the church; that by virtue of the privileges too prodigally granted them by the pope, they led not only exalted themselves above the curates, but even above the bishops, and had disturbed the whole hierarchical discipline. Dollé painted in the blackest colors the furious zeal displayed by the Jesuits during the siege of Paris. "Dare you deny," cried he, apostrophizing them, "dare you deny that when Henry III was at St. Cloud, in 1589, you went daily to the trenches distributing money to the soldiers, and exhorting them to persist in their rebellion? Have you not been compelled to acknowledge that a priest of your company was chief of the Sixteen, and presided at the meetings of those villains?"

The relentless advocate next dwelt upon the evils caused by the Jesuits through the system of confession. "It is not necessary," said he, "to cite examples; there is not a family in France which cannot adduce several. I shall content myself with noticing one quite recent, and of public notoriety. The Jesuits of Fribourg wished to persuade the small Romanist cantons to separate themselves from the small Protestant cantons, and break their union, which is the palladium of Switzerland; but finding the men too firm and wise, they imitated the serpent who tempted Eve. They cozened the women; urged them to refuse all conjugal privileges to their husbands till they had consented to dissolve the alliance. They obeyed these directions; and the men, having learned from them by whom they were seduced, punished the Jesuit seducers as they deserved."
The lawyer also denounced their infamous doctrines, that "to the pure all things are pure," and that "the end justifies the means;" he then concluded in these words:

"We have been told that the Jesuits wished to assassinate the king: not only have we evidence of the fact, but the traitor has confessed that he counseled the deed. Can we doubt after this what ought to be done to those who would cut all our throats if they had the opportunity? If you do not now banish them from the kingdom, you will positively establish them. Our first movements are full of vigor, but all efforts, national or individual, slacken with the lapse of time; of this we have too much proof, for during the thirty years that this question has been agitated, we have slumbered, and have not thought of the evil, till we have been made to feel its pressure. Behold, now is the appointed time. The Jesuits, who know our weak point, wish to protract your sentence by delaying the trial; thus they gain time, which in France gains every thing. Those for whom I speak know that their sacred calling prevents them from demanding vengeance upon the atrocities of this most pernicious society. But, gentlemen, as in ancient times the augurs of Rome were obliged to advise the senate concerning all prodigies that appeared, that the evils they presaged might be averted by expiations, so the plaintiffs, who have charge of things holy and sacred, as the augurs formerly had, apprize you now that there is an ominous prodigy in this city and in other towns of France; it is this, that men who call themselves religious, teach their blind pupils the lawfulness of murdering kings. Avert then the evils of this prodigy by timely and energetic action."

So intense was the feeling excited by these masterly pleas, that the Jesuits did not venture to respond, but availing themselves of legal technicalities, they artfully postponed the sentence, aware, as Dollé said, that in France to gain time is to gain everything.

Then they renewed their intrigues, and formed new plots to assassinate the king. A miscreant named Chatél, who had studied in a Jesuit college, was now selected as their instrument of vengeance.

On the 27th of December, 1594, as Henry was surrounded by a cordon of gentlemen who had called to congratulate him upon his auspicious prospects—he had just returned from Picardy, and stood booted and spurred—Chatél stole up stealthily behind him and aimed a blow at his throat. An accidental movement saved him, and the treacherous knife merely cut his lip. The foiled assassin endeavored to escape; but he was seized, and when interrogated, confessed that the Jesuits had incited him to attempt the murder.

The cry of indignation which reverberated over France brought down the slumbering avalanche. Proceedings against the Jesuits were hastily resumed in Parliament; and the same decree which condemned Chatél to a frightful death,
choked the Society of Jesus, and flung it, banished and dishonored, from the kingdom.

This consummation caused wide-spread gratulation; the Huguenots especially rejoiced. D'Aubigné hastened to Paris to felicitate the king. This brave soldier and unspotted Christian had expressed himself freely since Henry's abjuration; in the synodical conventions of the Protestants he had not hesitated to denounce the king's hypocrisy. Henry had in consequence been alienated from this old, tried friend, whose honest rebukes rankled. But he now received D'Aubigné kindly. On one occasion Chatél's attempt upon his life became the theme of conversation. "Ah, sire," said the frank soldier, "as you have as yet renounced God with your lips alone, they only have been pierced; whenever your heart renounces him also, that will receive the blow." This was at once a warning and a prophecy.

Chapter XXXII
THE EDICT of NANTES

France was now nominally at peace with itself, and Henry's only open enemies were the Spaniards upon the frontier of Flanders; yet the condition of the country was deplorable. Distress, the exhaustion consequent upon protracted civil war, the unsatiated ambition of many chieftains anxious to reestablish the feudal sovereignties of the middle ages, the uneasiness of the people at large, habituated to the restless vicissitudes of partisan warfare—these materially retarded returning prosperity, and sadly checked a healthy pacification.

Henry devoted the larger portion of his time to the amelioration of internal affairs; in many respects his statesmanship was wise and judicious, and every effort was made to obliterate the scars of war.

On the 30th of April, 1598, the Edict of Nantes was signed. From its provisions it appears to have been modeled upon the old edict of pacification ratified at Poitiers. Its essence was limited toleration. The Huguenots were permitted the most ample liberty of conscience, but they might not publicly exercise their religion except in certain specified parts of France. They were compelled to submit to the external police of the Romish churches, by
keeping festivals, by paying tithes; but as some compensation, they were declared eligible to office; their poor were admitted into the hospitals; while, for their protection, mixed chambers were to be established in all the parliaments.

Such, in its scope and purpose, was the famous Edict of Nantes. Upon several occasions the Huguenots had wrung more liberal terms from the mailed hands of the League and from the reluctant diplomacy of king Henry III. The only gain now was that the Edict of Nantes was honestly granted; the others had been mere make-shifts, intended to tide over a shallow spot—made to be broken.

Yet comparatively niggardly as were these concessions, the papists considered them super-liberal; many of the parliaments refused for some time to register the decree; while the fanatics protested so loudly that their voices echoed to the Vatican. Still Henry would not be balked; when the Romanists murmured, he stormed. "The edict must be registered," said he to a delegation appointed to wait on him and acquaint him with the reluctance of the parliament to ratify it; then he added in his pithy, picturesque style, "I hare climbed the walls, and can easily get over the barricades."

As usual, firmness triumphed; the edict was registered; indeed a year did not elapse between its signature by the king and its ratification by the provincial assemblies."

The complaisant king next turned to Spain, and opened negotiations with his ancient foe, Philip II, now grown old and worn. Both monarchs desired peace; and on the 2nd of May, 1598, the French plenipotentiaries signed an advantageous treaty at Vervin, which Henry a little later ratified at Paris.

"Thus," says Sully, Henry's Huguenot minister of state, with justifiable exultation, "in spite of so powerful a league, comprising the pope, the emperor, the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy, the great French feudatories, and all the ecclesiastics in Christendom, our king effected his designs, and crowned them with a glorious peace."

At this time measures were taken to annul Henry's marriage with the profligate Margaret, with whom he had not lived for many years. When the divorce was obtained, he felt considerable repugnance to contracting any new alliance. In a conversation with Sully, after enumerating the qualities which he considered
essential to a happy marriage, he said with a sigh, "But I fear no such person can be found." Subsequently, however, he yielded to reasons of state, and in 1600 he conferred his hand upon Mary de' Medici, one of the boldest, haughtiest, and most revengeful queens who ever bore the name of that unscrupulous and intriguing house.

The year 1594 witnessed the revocation of the decree which banished the Jesuits. Singularly enough, Henry himself was the most strenuous advocate of this policy, against the remonstrance of the Sorbonne, against the counsel of the politicians, against the urgent advice of the sagacious Sully. Whether the king wished to conciliate this horde of fanatics from dread of their ceaseless intrigues, or to convince Europe that he acted upon genuine and impartial principles of liberality, is simply matter of speculation. Whatever influenced his action, it is certain that the "Society of Jesus" never forgave Henry for decreeing their expulsion, that his generosity did not placate their vengeful animosity, and that the regicidal blow of Ravaillac, so shortly to be dealt, was echoed by a deep Amen from every Jesuit heart.

During the remainder of Henry's reign, the affairs of the Huguenots present no event of marked importance. Sheltered beneath the Edict of Nantes, they pursued the even tenor of their way, held their periodical synods, elected their deputies to the provincial parliaments, and were a recognized body of the state. Henry consulted the sympathies, and deferred to the wishes of the Romanist majority, and in this sadly grieved his ancient adherents; but his place in their affections was in some degree filled by his sister Catherine of Bourbon, whom Sully pronounces "noble and generous," who inherited Jane d'Albrét's zealous faith, who adhered to the primitive creed with enthusiastic devotion, and whose influence in obtaining the edict of toleration, by her tears, her entreaties, her prayers, was fully recognized by her coreligionists.

"To you, madame," wrote Duplessis-Mornay from the synod of Montauban, "we now look for our sole illustrious patronage. Continue firm, we entreat you, in the true faith; let not the persuasions of the king nor the arts of the Romanists prevail. Write to us, we beseech you; give us comfort and assurance."

Catherine at once answered this epistle, assuring the Huguenots of her unshaken fidelity. "All I see, all I feel, but the more confirms me in my convictions," she said. "You know well the pain my brother's abjuration has given me. But I have a strong hope
that, when this unsettled state of affairs has passed away, he may, through God's grace, repair the breach which, for the seeming good of his people, he has now suffered to be made in his conscience. Of me personally, believe no slanders. If reports say I go to mass, receive my denial in a word: I do not, either in act or thought. Nor does the king request it; he leaves me free in the exercise of my faith; depend on it, I will not go to mass till you are pope in very deed."

Catherine's influence over Henry was very great; and this, coupled with her lively faith and vigilant protection of all menaced privileges, was of incalculable advantage to the Huguenots, themselves exiled from familiar access to the throne. One of the clauses of the Edict of Nantes forbade the exercise of the reformed faith within the corporate limits of Paris; and even Sully, the chief minister of state, was obliged to repair to Allon, on the banks of the Seine, four leagues distant—the nearest spot where the primitive worship was held—when he listened to the Huguenot preachers.

But Catharine, who usually resided at Fontainebleau, when she visited the king at the Louvre, always had divine service performed in her chapel by her own chaplain, and to these precious reunions all members of the reformed church crowded, without distinction of rank, for Catherine recognized the essential democracy of Christianity. Once the cardinal of Goudé waited upon Henry at the head of a formal ecclesiastical delegation, to protest against this "strange desecration" of the palace. "Gentlemen," said the king angrily, "I think it more strange that such language should be held to me, in my own palace, and of my own sister. I am king, not you, sir cardinal. Adieu."

The snubbed delegates withdrew, nor did they venture to renew their complaints.

Several attempts were made at this time to reconcile the differences between the two hostile creeds. Discussions were held; one even took place before Catherine; but nothing was effected: Rome and Geneva could not embrace; their respective doctrines differed too radically to kiss each other.

In 1604, the death of Catherine of Bourbon occurred. She had been married to Charles, duke of Bar, who loved her with romantic devotion, and with whom, despite their opposite religious opinions, she enjoyed the utmost felicity. Bar made numberless kind efforts to detach her from her faith but in vain.
One of her last acts was to visit Angers, where she received communion with three thousand devoted Huguenots. When married, the nuptial benediction was pronounced by a Protestant minister; and constant to the last, she died, finding "joy and peace in believing." The fervent and uncompromising princess was buried at Vendôme, in the tomb of her ancestors, beside queen Margaret and Jane d'Albrêt, a noble trinity of illustrious and beneficent women.

Henry was deeply afflicted by this event. "All, all; mother and sister!" cried he with eregols1. How many painful reflections must have thronged upon him. They slept together in a common faith; he, the hope, the pride of both, had deserted their God. Bitter regret for a moment wrung his heart; and when, among the letters of condolence received from every crowned head in Europe, there came one from the pope, "expressing his holiness' fears for the salvation of the princess who had died out of the bosom of the church," he exclaimed with warmth, "I have not that bitter pang added to what I now feel; not a doubt with regard to my sweet sister's salvation exists in my mind."

To divert the king's mind, he was persuaded to visit different cities in various portions of the kingdom. Wherever he arrived, tedious addresses were delivered, of which he heartily tired. One of these municipal orators repeated very often the words, "Oh, very benign, very merciful, very great king." "Add too," cried Henry, "very weary." Another began his speech with, "Agesilaus, king of Lacedæmon—" "Ventre St. Gris," interrupted the monarch impatiently; " I have heard that people spoke often to this Agesilaus, but it was always when he had dined; I have not." To another, who had addressed him for some time, and who showed no signs of desisting, Henry said, "Pray, reserve the next to another time;" but the orator was not to be cheated of the full delivery of his florid prose, and he persisted in speaking. "Well," said the king, "I am going, and you must say the rest to Master William." This was the court fool; and the orator, not liking the audience, concluded his harangue.

With few interruptions the Huguenots now enjoyed unprecedented repose. At a synod held at Gap, in Dauphiny, D'Aubigné a was appointed historiographer to the reformed church, a position which his eloquence, learning, and piety enabled him to fill with great success, as his strangely vivid portraits of his epoch testify.
In 1609, it was reported that the Huguenots were secretly plotting an insurrection—that this was what their unwonted repose really meant. This device of the Jesuits to reinaugurate commotion—for in tranquility they stifled—cozened Henry for a moment. Duplessis-Mornay, the king's old Mentor of the day of Coutras, was the reported chief of the conspiracy. But after much crimination and recrimination, the report was proved to be a Jesuit bubble, and Duplessis retired to his chateau of La Forest, in Poitou. There, surrounded by true friends, amid the venerable groves of his ancestors, he carried his long and useful life far into the reign of Louis XIII. Duplessis-Mornay died in 1623, after having witnessed all that the world has to exhibit of vicissitude in human opinion.

The last years of Henry's momentous reign were spent partly in licentious intrigue, partly in extensive preparations for some grand expedition whose object is shrouded in mystery. Into the chapter of gallantry it is not necessary to go. To speculate upon Henry's design in the giant preparations which Sully mentions, but cannot explain, is equally futile. It is supposed that he had conceived a scheme for the consolidation of Europe into a Republique Chrétienne, which should promote the happiness of man, and insure perpetual peace. "Rumor, with her thousand tongues," bruited through Europe misty reports of the projected movement. The din of preparation resounded from Paris to the Pyrenees.

The execution of the scheme could necessitate the lengthened absence of the king from France. Mary de' Medici insisted upon the regency ad interim. In vain did Sully and even Henry himself combat this demand; the queen would not be put off; indeed she increased her request, and asked to be crowned, in order to give additional sacredness to her government and person. With much reluctance Henry made these concessions; on the 13th of May, 1610, nine years after her marriage, the grasping Florentine's coronation occurred. The king assisted at the pageant as a private spectator, and though fifty-six years of age, inspired general admiration by his grace of carriage and charm of manner. Throughout his life he possessed a remarkable power of captivation; on this occasion his frank, social, and yet dignified demeanor, caused Mary to turn towards her suite of Italian parasites, and say to Leonora Coucini, her chief confidante, in Tuscan, "Ah, if he were mine alone."

On the following day, the fatal 14th of May, the queen was to make her public, ceremonial entry into Paris. The capital was gay
with flags, with legendary banners, with *fleurs-de-lis*. Opening with a laugh, the day closed with a cry of horror.

Henry was early astir. His buoyancy at the coronation pageant had given way to icy gloom. He was haunted by terrible apprehensions. A premonition of disaster, vivid and awful, chilled his blood. The morning he spent in his own apartments. In the afternoon he rode out with several friends, gentlemen of his suite. The curtains of the king's carriage were drawn up, not only on account of the beauty and warmth of the weather, but to enable him to witness the joyous aspect of the city, dressed in its gala garb to welcome Mary de' Medici.

The streets through which they passed were narrow; in one of them two carts were met, one laden with wine, the other with hay; the greater number of attendants passed beyond the carts to give more room to the royal coach, which meantime halted; two footmen only were near, one occupied in clearing the road, one stooping to adjust some portion of his dress.

At this moment, while Henry's guards were thus scattered, an assassin, who afterwards proved to be a wretch called Ravaillac, stepping on one spoke of the stationary vehicle, leaned forward and struck Henry on the left breast with a dagger; it glanced on one of the ribs, and the king cried faintly, "I am wounded:" determined not to be battled, the resolute miscreant repeated the blow; this time it went to the monarch's heart; the blood rushed up impetuously, and in an instant he was suffocated; he had no time to speak another word.

The assassin was at once seized; and the gentlemen present, alighting from the blood-smeared carriage, caused the curtains to be closely drawn, and marched back to the Louvre benumbed with horror.

In order to avoid a tumult, the king's death was concealed; a cloak was thrown over the yet warm body, and a surgeon and restoratives were ordered.

The queen was in her closet when the news was broken to her; rushing out wild with terror, she cried, "Great God, the king is dead!" "Madame," responded the chancellor, who was present, "the kings of France never die. We must take care that our tears do not undo the state; we have need of remedies, not of grief."
"When I heard the fatal news," writes Bassompierre, afterwards
the famous marshal, "I ran to the king's closet, and saw him
extended on the bed. M. de Vie, counselor of state, was seated
upon the same couch, and had laid the cross of his order upon
Henry's mouth. Milan, his head physician, was sitting by the
bedside weeping bitterly, and a corps of surgeons stood near to
dress the gaping wound. The windows stood open, and once we
mistook the low sighing of the wind for his voice; but in a moment
the physician said, 'Ah, it is over; he is gone.' M. Le Grand, as soon
as he entered, knelt beside the bed, took the king's lifeless hands
and kissed them. As for me, I threw myself at his feet, which I
held, embracing again and again, and bathing them with my tears.
There he lay, still and motionless—he who, but a few short hours
before, was the life of every circle. It seemed as if all waited for
him to break the silence; not a sound was uttered. The children of
the king were brought into the chamber, but no one else was
suffered to approach. Every measure was taken to deceive the
people till the queen's regency was declared, lest there should be
a popular commotion. About nine in the evening a number of
nobles rode through the streets, and as they passed, cried, 'Make
way for the king.' It being dark, the people thought Henry was
among the horsemen, and shouted back, 'Vive le Roi!' It was only
in the quarter of the Louvre that the dismal truth was known.
Through the night the dreadful farce was continued; the king was
dressed and washed with the same ceremony as if he were alive:
one gave him a shirt; another held the serviette, or napkin, and a
third stood ready with his robe-de-chambre."

Thus fell Henry Quatre, and his frightfully sudden transition from
life to death is at once a lesson and an admonition. His story is
strikingly romantic. He spent more than half a century in active
collision with turbulent events, and in unremitting efforts to
direct and mold them to the advantage of his country. Sully has
pronounced his eulogy: "He was candid, sincere, grateful,
compassionate, generous, wise, penetrating, and loved his
subjects as a father." It is a glowing record. But if we pursue
Henry to the retreats of private life, witness his unbridled license,
the impure devotion of his truant heart to the frail Gabrielles and
Henriette d'Entragues of his seraglio, and recall his sad apostasy,
caused by mistaken state policy, and his ostentatious lip-service
to virtue and his heart-service to vice, no pleas of the
faithlessness of his wedded wife, of apparent statescraft, of the
profligacy of the age, of the pernicious examples of the Louvre,
can shield the hero kind from the censure of good men; no
sophistry can avert, no swelling pæans can drown the mournful
verdict of the sober muse of history"
"He knew the right, and yet the wrong pursued."

When Henry’s assassin was interrogated, it was found that his name was Francois Ravaillac, and that he was a native of Angoumais, of low birth, who had passed through his novitiate in a monastery, but had never taken the final vows. Filled with wild and superstitious notions, he had listened greedily to the laudations of Clément, and the virulent attacks upon the king daily uttered by the Jesuits drove him to frenzy—he determined to murder the king. He was put to the most frightful tortures, he suffered the most horrible death, yet he would implicate no accomplices in the murder of the monarch.

Still, "the deep damnation of his taking off" weighed heavily against the Jesuits, not from historic proof, for it could not be had, butt in a great degree from the prevalence of certain opinions which the society was well known to cherish and which not only led Ravaillac to commit the crime, but caused others to envy the wretched notoriety he thus acquired, and to avow their readiness to perpetrate a similar atrocity. At the time, public feeling was unequivocal against the Jesuits. Even the Romanist clergy, both regular and parochial, impugned them in their sermons; and these accusations found an echo in lay publications. In the courts of law, and at meetings in the market-place, the "Society of Jesus" was alike believed to have prompted the assassin.

Strange to say, in the investigation of the regicide, the effort was rather to suppress than to elicit the facts. France seemed afraid to know the truth.

"It would seem," remarks L'Etoile, the journalist of the age, "to hear the matter spoken of, that we are afraid of showing ourselves too exact and severe in inquiring into this crime, the most wicked and barbarous, and the most important to our state, of any perpetrated for a thousand years."

Sad as is the misfortune for a nation to produce such wretches as Clément and Ravaillac, it is a still more serious calamity to have a servile magistracy. Sequier was chief president of the Parliament: his reply to the queen's inquiry respecting his opinion of the question, proves the importance of the real criminals, yet the investigation was smothered. "If I am asked who were the demons who inspired this damnable murder," says Péréfixe, archbishop of Paris, "history answers that she knows nothing; even the judges who interrogated Ravaillac did not dare to open their mouths
upon the subject, and never spoke of him otherwise than by shrugging their shoulders."

CHAPTER XXXIII
RICHELIEU

The murdered king left three children by Mary de' Medici. The eldest succeeded to the throne in his ninth year, under the title of Louis XIII. The younger, the dukes of Orleans and Anjou, were infants. On the day following the assassination, the Parliament, browbeaten by the duke d'Epernon, confirmed the queen as regent. France, remembering the regency of Catherine de' Medici, beheld with grief and terror the scepter pass from the vigorous grasp of Henry Quatre ostensibly into the feeble hands of an infant, really into the grasping talons of an Italian interloper, who was herself ruled by foreign parasites.

While the public salons of the Louvre were covered with "the trappings and the suits of woe," the private apartments of the new-made regent resounded with songs of gladness and bursts of laughter. 'Twas here that the Florentine held her giddy court, smiling before the open grave of her murdered husband, gay amid her cordon of favorites who served luxurious viands and emptied sparkling goblets in her honor.

The government of Mary de' Medici was really the government of her confidants, Concini, who rose to be Marshal d'Ancre, and his wife Leonora Galigni. The pernicious art of this subtle pair cozened the queen into the adoption of their measures, while she believed them to be her own. Under their influence, the court was new-modeled. Epernon was slighted, Condé was snubbed, Sully was insulted out of office.

An inimical contemporary bears witness to the quiet deportment of the Huguenots at this crisis: "Instructed by experience, they then displayed great moderation, and made no pretensions to innovation; feigning to have no wish to undertake any unfriendly action, provided they were permitted to live under the untouched edicts."
Ere long, however, uneasiness was felt. The regent, not satisfied with remodeling the court and promoting her lackey favorites to the highest seats of honor at the council-board, and to the noblest titles of the state, revolutionized the politics of Henry Quatre. His idea was, Germany protected from the encroachments of Austria, the insidious advances of Spain sternly repulsed. Now efforts were made to placate Austria, and an alliance with Spain was eagerly sought. Despite the ominous growls of discontent provoked by this new policy of the queen regent’s mushroom council, it was pressed; and with so much success, that the boyish kin was soon married to Anne of Austria, the Spanish infanta.

The Huguenots read in these events melancholy auguries for their cause. Secret conferences were held; chiefs were chosen to maintain their menaced rights. The Jesuits, in their sermons, openly announced the object of the royal marriage to be the extermination of heresy. Threats soon passed into acts. Ancient and well-defined privileges were invaded and annulled. Slumbering animosities were rekindled.

The heads of the Huguenot party at this time were Rohan, Soubise, La Tremouille, and Bouillon. Condé and the count de Soisson had been educated as Romanists, but their turbulent ambition impelled them frequently to negotiate with the reformers. Duplessis-Mornay, broken by age, rested in honorable retirement. D’Aubigné was still an active agent of his coreligionists. “Rohan,” says the Jesuit d’Avrigny, “was a sincere Huguenot, and aimed at the good of his party. Sully was not very devout, but felt sore at his exclusion from public affairs. Bouillon was politic, using his religion to forward his interests.”

Bigotry and court cabal kept the country in feverish excitement. The crowd of reckless foreigners who surrounded the queen regent fomented discord; for they saw in it an opportunity to achieve wealth and fame. Their efforts were seconded by a horde of warlike nobles, whose idea of life was drawn swords and pointed cannon. Added to all, the Jesuits constantly inflamed their penitents against the toleration of heresy. Local émeutes were of frequent occurrence. These were sometimes terminated by mutual apologies, sometimes by negotiation.

On the 24th of April, 1617, the regency was ended, as it began, with a tragedy. The marshal D’Ancre was assassinated. This adventurer had in reality swayed the scepter under cover of the queen. His insolence and cruelty made him feared and hated. The young king especially disliked him; and it was at the
instigation of De Luines, Louis’ favorite, that the former obscure notary of Florence, and later gentleman-usher of the Louvre, who had clutched a marshal’s baton, was slain.

Now the king himself assumed to reign; but his rule, like his mother’s, was only nominal. De Luines succeeded d’Ancre; a satyr followed a satyr.

On the fall of her government, Mary de’ Medici was “permitted to retire to Blois,” the velvet phrase in which the court wrapped the iron reality, *imprisonment*.

Through these troubles at the court, the Huguenots did their utmost to remain quiet. Synods were frequently held, assemblies were often convoked, but their discussions were entirely devoted to questions of divinity and discipline. Ambitious nobles did their best to inveigle the reformers into adopting their quarrels and avenging their supposititious wrongs. Bouillon was active in his endeavors to enlist the party in his selfish schemes. Condé also, relying upon his historic name and the traditional affection of the Huguenots for his house, attempted to win them to support his tortuous conspiracies to aggrandize himself. But except in isolated instances, these insidious arts did not succeed; while their peaceful behavior and loyal tone gave the anxious court no pretext for persecution.

At length De Luines, supported by the ready clergy, determined to create war.

The principality of Bearn had been for many years preponderantly Protestant. It was there that Margaret de Valois had taught and prayed; it was there that her daughter, Jane d’Albrét, had lived and labored in God’s service; it was there that Catharine of Bourbon had garnered many souls as trophies; there Henry Quatre had been reared: it was the "holy of holies “ among French provinces.

Influenced by the reiterated clamors of the Romish clergy, one of whom did not scruple to declare that "Christians were worse treated in Bearn than in Mohammedan countries,” and that “the property of the church was applied to the support of its enemies,” Louis VIII determined not only to restore the Romish religion, but to crown that pious work by the annexation of the principality to France.
An arrêt was soon after given to this effect in open council; and since the resolute Huguenots, unwilling to surrender their ancient privileges without a struggle, declined to yield, the king assembled an army, and in 1620 marched to enforce his usurpation by the unsheathed sword.

The ill-armed and unorganized partisan bands of the Huguenots could not impede the triumphal advance of the king's mailed cohorts. In October, 1620, Louis entered Pau, and the Romish worship was at once celebrated in those cathedrals which for sixty years had echoed the purer praises of the primitive ritual.

The abolition of the provincial independence of Bearn was denounced by the whole Huguenot party as an infraction of the edict of Nantes. An assembly was convened at Rochelle. Here the excited delegates, regardless of the advice of their most judicious leaders, abjured all allegiance to the king, and published a decree dividing Protestant France into military and civil districts; on the model of the United Netherlands. The command of one circle was given to Soubise, the command of another to La Force, while a third was entrusted to the Duc de Rohan, the most enlightened, virtuous, and talented soldier of his age.

These bold proceedings instantly precipitated active hostilities. The royal army marched into Southern France, the old, familiar haunt of the twin demons of civil war and bigotry. Montpellier was entered. Montauban was besieged; but it was so skillfully defended that De Luines, now constable of France, quitted the obstinate walls with a malediction.

During this contest, the affairs of the Huguenots became so extensively diversified that it is scarcely possible to give a connected view of the events which occurred among the many divisions comprised in their loose-jointed confederation; for the interest is no longer arrested by one body, around whose history the episodes of its satellites can be successively unfolded; but events of equal importance claim and fix attention in opposite directions.

In some respects the struggle was a gallant one; but there was a prevailing readiness on the part of many of the Huguenot strongholds to surrender upon the king's approach, in strong contrast to their unvarying practice in the preceding civil wars. Indeed Rohan observes, "From Saumur to Montauban there was a general submission, with no resistance except at St. Jean d'Angely, which my brother Soubise defended as long as he could. And the peace
of Montpellier comprised no chiefs of provinces except my brother and myself, all the others having made treaties separately, and on advantageous terms.”

At length all parties tired of the war. Louis announced his intention to adhere strictly to the Edict of Nantes, and the divided and crippled Huguenots willingly laid clown their arms on this assurance. Amnesty was granted in October, 1622. The pacification was signed, and tranquility once more reigned in France.

Two years later a new régime was inaugurated. Richelieu entered the council of state. From the very outset his soaring intellect, sagacious diplomacy, and consummate tact gave him the leadership; and ere long, basing his authority upon these qualities, he governed France as absolutely as he could had he been born to the royal purple and inherited the crown.

To elevate the regal authority by destroying the festering remains of feudal caste; to raise the importance of France by humiliating the overbearing arrogance of Austria and Spain; to terminate all domestic differences by suppressing the few liberties still enjoyed by the Huguenots—this was the triple policy of the famous statesman; and he steadily pursued it through the many intrigues essential to success. Pretexts of every kind were unscrupulously employed to veil these designs. As circumstances required, he would vary the apparent program; but whatever hue the diplomatic chameleon reflected, the real purpose was unchanged and unchangeable.

Richelieu accomplished his first object by choking the émeutes of the turbulent nobility with an iron hand. He achieved the second by a system of crafty maneuvers at once protean and astounding. As a prince of the church of Rome, he naturally devoted himself to the third; yet reasons of state were his chief motive and guide. There was nothing of the fanatic in his constitution. Richelieu never persecuted merely from the love of it. Torquemada was not his model, nor was St. Dominic a congenial soul.

In 1626 England, like France, had a vizier: the duke of Buckingham, famous for his singular elevation and untimely end, swayed the councils of the British king without a rival. Recently Charles I had espoused a daughter of the house of Bourbon. Buckingham was dispatched to receive her. While tarrying in Paris, the foppish courtier became enamored of the queen of France: the daring libertine even had the audacity to declare his
passion; and undismayed by the frowns of the outraged wife of Louis XIII, on the conclusion of his mission, he returned to Paris to renew his advances. But his dream of illicit happiness was shortly dissipated by a peremptory command to quit the country.

Humiliated and enraged, Buckingham reentered England, anxious to wipe out this “insult” of his expulsion from France, by war. He negotiated with the duke of Savoy, Richelieu’s enemy. He fomented discord in the sister kingdom; and an envoy was dispatched to inveigle Rohan, who—since the death of Duplessis and the self exile of D’Aubigné domesticated at Geneva—had been the leader of the Huguenots, into arming against the incessant, though insidious encroachments of the court upon the tolerant decree of Henry Quatre.

Meantime a powerful armament was equipped, and in the summer of 1627 Buckingham in person appeared off Rochelle. After much hesitation, and through his instrumentality, the whole Huguenot party armed, really to support the projects of the duke of Buckingham, but as they thought, to wring from the greedy clutch of Richelieu the stolen and denied clauses of the Edict of Nantes.

This afforded the wily cardinal a desired opportunity; and acting with his accustomed energy, he speedily conjured an army into existence, at the head of which he in person pressed forward to besiege the Huguenot citadel.

Richelieu’s skill met and conquered all difficulties; and comprehending all the weak points in the political situation, as well as in the character of his adversaries, with the keen glance of genius, he prepared to assail both where they were most vulnerable.

He held out to the Rochelloise the prospect of renewed religious enfranchisement, and thus deceived the mayor and the city council, and secured a vacillation of purpose which gave him time—the desideratum. He dispatched the prince de Condé into Languedoc, to hold the reformers quiet by the mailed hand; and then, piecing out the lion’s skin with the fox’s, he sent Gallaud, an eloquent Huguenot whom he had secretly suborned, to persuade his coreligionists to remain in tranquility.

While these crafty measures were being set afoot, large garrisons were thrown into all menaced towns; quantities of ammunition were collected; provisions abounded in his camps; and fleets of boats were floated to convenient points, where they were
serviceable in the transportation of supplies in the attack and defense of cities.

In the meantime the Rochelloise acted precisely as Richelieu anticipated—began with a solemn fast, and instead of admitting their English allies at once, hesitated, disputed, and inquired.

The Huguenots of the south followed this pernicious example; but they were even more besotted. Some armed under the appeal of Rohan; some positively supported the court; but the great majority remained in hesitating inactivity, complaining of those who had taken arms before danger had grown into adversity.

Richelieu laid close siege to Rochelle. The defense was one of the most heroic on record. The operations dragged through fifteen months. At length famine began to gnaw; various attempts were made by Rohan and by the English to succor the succumbing city, but the cunning of the cardinal foiled these; and the assassination of Buckingham on the very eve of a new expedition, rang the death-knell to all hopes of aid. Then craving nature had her way; and in October, 1628, hitherto unconquerable Rochelle opened its maiden gates to the triumphant legions of Richelieu. So terrible had been the suffering endured during the siege, that the inhabitants were reduced from twenty-seven thousand to five thousand: ghastly proof of the heroism of their fight.

Richelieu completed the humiliation of this "city of refuge" by celebrating mass with great pomp on the festival of All Saints, which occurred shortly after its conquest, and by stripping it of its boasted franchises, a desecration over which the Rochelloise shed proud tears.

In other sections the Huguenots, led by the gallant De Rohan, achieved success; but when the sad news from Rochelle reached their scattered camps, quite disconcerted and heart-broken, they desired peace. Rohan convened a Huguenot assembly at Anduze in 1628. The deputies opened negotiations with Richelieu; and on the 27th of June, 1629, a treaty was concluded and signed at Alais, which guaranteed liberty of conscience and of worship on the essential basis of the often-infringed Edict of Nantes.

No sooner was the civil war terminated, than all France resounded with paean to Richelieu. The cardinal-duke was now firmly seated in his vizierate; but his time was largely occupied in foiling the intrigues of his foes. The court soon became the scene of rivalry and cabal; and Louis, one of the most inefficient and timid
of monarchs, was so harassed by the quarrels of his family, that he acquired a habit of leaning upon the iron arm of his great minister, whom he soon came to consider indispensable to his happiness and comfort and to the government of France.

Engrossed by these events, the court paid little attention to the despised Huguenots. Stripped already, by insidious assaults, of their political importance, the time was hastening on with giant strides when they were to be deprived of the rights of conscience. But now for a space they rested in quiet security. Protestantism was armed and triumphant on the Continent. All Europe knew the resolution of Gustavus Adolphus to make common cause with all reformers who suffered persecution. France was the secret ally of the great Scandinavian; a position into which Richelieu had drifted through his desire to humble the house of Austria. This made him cautious not to alienate the continental Protestants by the oppression of their brothers in France. Besides, the Puritan party in England was rising into influence; the entente cordiale between the Puritans and the Huguenots had never been disturbed; this too conspired to guard the French Protestants from unfriendly legislative action.

"The government," says Bernard, the Jesuitical biographer of Louis XIV, "was engrossed by the disputes between the king, his mother, and his brother, and by the exciting foreign events; so that, deeming this a favorable opportunity for an insurrection of the Huguenots, efforts were made to hold them tranquil by granting the most reasonable of their demands."

Emboldened by the liberal temper of the cardinal, the Huguenots held a synod at Charenton in September, 1631; and two ministers, Amivault and De Villars, were deputed to present a statement of their grievances to the king, then sojourning at Compiègne. The assembly petitioned for the reacknowledgment of the right of their clergy to preach in any Protestant temple, a recent governmental decision having forbidden them to abandon their individual charges. They also requested a cessation of proceedings instituted against some Languedocian ministers for inculcating the avowed doctrines of the Reformation, and the liberation of some of their friends chained in the galleys for their opinions.

From this modest list of their demands an idea may be formed of the condition of the Huguenots at this epoch.
Chapter XXXIV

THE DRAGONADES

From the pacification of 1629 until 1661, the general history of the Huguenots presents few important incidents. There were from time to time individual causes of complaint and isolated instances of hostility, for the spirit of the League was not extinct, and the more zealous partisans of Rome were only restrained from urging their favorite measures by the imperious genius of the celebrated cardinals who successively administered the government of France, and by the preoccupation of the court. Popular prejudice would frequently burst forth in an excess of animosity, under the garb of religion; and whenever, through some technicality, the protecting clauses of the Edict of Nantes could be invaded or infringed, the circumstance was considered as a victory over heresy.

In December, 1642, Richelieu died; and five months later, consistent even in death, the lackey monarch Louis XIII followed the famous statesman to the tomb; he could not even die till Richelieu showed him how. In the following year, Louis XIV, a boy of five, succeeded to the throne. From 1643 till 1651 the history of France is the history of the regency of Anne of Austria and the faction of the Fronde, when the "grand monarch" was merely the puppet of the queen mother and her minister; from Louis' majority until the death of Mazarin, in 1661, it is the history of that subtle and intriguing cardinal.

Not Richelieu himself had ruled France more absolutely than did Mazarin. Like his predecessor, he was a great secular statesman rather than an ardent churchman; as such he never permitted the interests of the Vatican to lure him from the path of national policy. He was enabled to maintain this position because France was now strong and consolidated. Spain had already commenced her descent into the tier of second-rate states; the peace of Westphalia had changed the tactics of several of the European cabinets; and the rise of the Commonwealth had altered the aspect of French diplomacy with England.

Mazarin prized Cromwell's alliance; he was aware of the jealous care with which the mighty Protector guarded the interests of menaced Protestantism. The duke of Savoy had ventured to
persecute the feeble remnant of the primitive Waldenses, who lived obscurely in the Lombard valleys, and all Europe saw Cromwell's powerful arm stretch across the Channel and across the Alps to snatch the Vaudois from the greedy maw of the Savoyard, while England's statesman-poet chanted pæans, and the fast-anchored island shouted glad Amen.

Mazarin had no disposition to provoke Cromwell's intervention in French affairs; he knew the chord of sympathy which united the Puritans and the Huguenots; this made him cautious of overtly assailing the privileges of the reformed church in France.

Besides, pretests were wanting. The Huguenot party, after the capture of Rochelle, definitively disbanded its political organization; Henri de Rohan was their last armed chieftain. Weary of war, and perhaps persuaded that it corresponded not with the peaceful tenets of their creed, they sought in seclusion the simple liberty of praising God. What the sword had been unable to effect, they thought that civilization and open Bibles would accomplish.

Of their loyalty and quietude at this epoch, hostile writers bear ready and ample witness. "I have no complaint to make of the little flock," said Mazarin; "if they graze on noxious herbs, at least they do not stray."

Through the émuetes of the Fronde, they furnished devoted soldiers to the menaced government. Mazarin recognized their important services; he never spoke of the pastors of Montauban without calling them his "good friends;" and Count d'Harcourt said to the deputies of that city, "the crown was tottering on the king's head, but you have steadied it."

Louis XIV expressed his gratitude more than once. In a declaration published in May, 1652, he said, "Forasmuch as our subjects of the pretended reformed religion have given us reiterated proofs of their affection and fidelity, with which we are well pleased, be it hereby known, that for these causes they be maintained and secured, and we do now maintain and secure them, in the full and entire enjoyment of the Edict of Nantes."

This is the monarch who soon after inflicted long, odious, and Satanic persecutions upon these faithful subjects who had "steadied the crown upon his brow."
In comparative repose the years of Mazarin's vizierate passed away. The Huguenots, industrious, intelligent, and docile, were the pattern subjects in the kingdom.

But in 1661 the death of the great cardinal occurred, and at once ebbing persecution began to rise towards its flood-tide.

Louis XIV assumed the direction of affairs. In the heyday of his youth, the royal libertine, trampling with equal readiness upon the laws of God and man, was comparatively careless in religious matters. This circumstance, together with the fierce dispute between the Jesuit and the Jansenist parties, which menaced Rome with another schism, restrained for a space the reactive tendency. But with the subjugation of Port Royal, the relapse occurred. At the outset the assault was insidious. Every five years the secular clergy held ecclesiastical assemblies, and these never adjourned without tearing away some new shred from the laws of toleration.

Money in immense sums was supplied from the exchequer of the state to suborne heresy. The king judged men in general by the conduct of those who breathed the atmosphere of his court. As he beheld continual sacrifices of honor and principle in the halls of the Louvre, souls bartered for gold or titles, he came to think that the Huguenots held out to obtain good terms; he thought that they could be seduced by rendering their interests subservient to their abjuration.

Among the nobles the eloquence of corruption made many proselytes; men of high birth were dazzled by the proffer of honors and rank. But to the lasting honor of the middle and lower classes, let it be recorded that they could not be bribed by such inducements to shut their Bibles and deny their God. The peaceable manufacturers, the tradesmen, the cunning artificers, continued steadfast in the faith.

Every device which wit could suggest to enforce proselytism was eagerly adopted; favors of every kind were lavished upon those whom fear or avarice had converted to Romanism; they were exempted from taxation, from guardianship, from local contributions; were excused the payment of their debts, delivered from the coercion of parental authority, and advanced in the several professions to which they devoted their talents.

Far different was the fate of those who clung to their persecuted creed for conscience’ sake. They were constantly made the
victims of new hardships and indignities; their colleges were closed; their youth barred out from every avenue of profit and honor; their churches were interdicted; their inheritances were wrested from them through technicalities; and their dead were not permitted to rest in their ancestral sepulchers.

The infinite hard fights which God's suffering children now waged with self-interest, with abounding temptation, satanically devised and spread about them, may not be recorded. But fast anchored, through all vicissitudes they clung to the heavenly throne; they refused to dwell in Sodom, and they would not tarry in Gomorrah.

The reformers now had implacable and tireless enemies in the men who swayed the councils of the state. In the foremost rank figured the Jesuits, created expressly to extirpate heresy, the born foes of the Huguenots, monks doubly formidable as the confessors of kings, and because their system of morality authorized the use of any means. Falsehood, trickery, injustice, traffic in consciences, brute force, spoliation, banishment, nay, even murder—all were good in their eyes, if they tended to accomplish their end.

Under the direction of the Jesuits, the government marched steadily from one tyranny to another. Ere long the judiciary system was tampered with. In rare instances the courts of law had given impartial decisions. By a legal trick this hope of justice was destroyed.

In despair, many of the Huguenots began to emigrate: England, Germany, the Hague, all stretched forth welcoming hands.

But soon the exodus was stopped; a decree, issued in 1669, forbade emigration. The Huguenots not only might not enjoy in France the equal protection of the laws, they could not hope to find an asylum abroad. Edict followed edict in rapid succession: a peculiar dress was prescribed for the Protestants; they were shut out from many species of employment other than political; and the penalties which awaited an unsuccessful effort to escape proceeded in an awful gradation from fine to imprisonment, and from the galleys to death.

Yet still the Huguenots persisted in their worship and clung to their creed. The king, now become the complete slave, in civil matters, of his mistress, Madame de Maintenon, herself a renegade Protestant, and the tool of the Jesuits in religion, dissatisfied with the slow progress made in the subornation of
heresy, determined to force conversion. "Booted missionaries" were dispatched into the Huguenot provinces to harry the reformers into adherence to Rome. The *dragonades* commenced.

The persecution which raged for several years subsequent to 1681, surpassed in cold-blooded malignity that of the sixteenth century; for the undisguised hostility of the last kings of the house of Valois, although barbarous, was frank; their object was avowed; the Huguenots themselves were militant, and the conflict was undisguised. But now all pretext had ceased; the Jesuits were crafty; insidious enactments rendered it almost impossible to avoid contravention; and liberty of worship was destroyed even while the Edict of Names remained the formal law, so powerless are naked statutes.

The Jesuit La Chaise was the king's confessor. Like Milton's Belial; this monk

"Seemed
For dignity composed and high exploit;
But all was false and hollow, though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels; for his thoughts were low,
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds Timorous and slothful."

La Chaise reminded Louis that the Roman year of jubilee occurred in 1676, and he urged the monarch to signalize his piety by extirpating heresy, since the days of pilgrimages were gone, and he could no longer acquire fame by heading a crusade, or by traveling on foot with staff and scrip to the Holy Land. "Sire," said he, "a new Christian hero is to arise; perhaps he may find another Tasso to immortalize his name;" and the royal voluptuary, bloated with license, gouty with excess, quitted the side of his mistress for a moment to beg his ghostly confessor to inform him how he might acquire the reputation of a Christian hero.

La Chaise, Louvois the king's minister, and Madame de Maintenon, a congenial trinity, united their efforts to exterminate the Huguenots.

A brutal soldiery were quartered on the "heretics;" devastation, pillage, torture—there was nothing that they recoiled at; indeed they gave such loose rein to their passions, that their frightful excesses would have shamed a horde of brigands.
Benoit has filled many pages of his *Histoire de d'Edit de Nantes* with hideous details of these atrocities. "The soldiers," he says, "tied crucifixes to the end of their carbines, and these they compelled the Huguenots to kiss; if any offered resistance, they thrust the crucifix in the face or stomach of the victim. Neither children nor persons of advanced age were spared; they fell on all without compassion: some were cudged to death; some were beaten to a jelly with the flat side of a sword; others were stabbed with the bayonet-crucifix fixed at the end of their carbines. These wretches inflicted similar cruelties on women. They whipped them; struck them with rattans across the face to disfigure them; dragged them by the hair of the head through mire and over stones. Sometimes, finding the laborers at their ploughs, the soldiers hurried them off to the Romish church, pricking them along like bullocks with their own goads to quicken their reluctant pace."

Behind the dragonaders were a legion of friars, Capuchins, Franciscans, Carmelites, an ignorant and restless soldiery, who worked on the fanaticism of the mob, and marched, whenever an opportunity occurred, to make an assault upon heresy.

Emigration, which had been interdicted by the edict of 1669, now began again on a still vaster scale, and thousands of families quitted France. The Protestant countries, England, Switzerland, Holland, and Denmark, offered them a shelter in official declarations. But the ordinances prohibiting emigration were reenacted with increased severity.

The law against emigration, and that against relapsed heretics, put a two-edged sword in the hands of the persecutors. The condition of the Huguenots was pitiable. In France they would not recognize them as anything but Romanists; on reaching the frontiers they were seized as heretics. Rulhières, the panegyrist of Louis XIV, says that the misfortunes of the Reformed were chiefly owing to the combined operation of these two laws, which formed the boast of Father La Chaise as masterpieces of genius.

Such were the means employed by Louis XIV to convert France to Latin orthodoxy. "Concerning this monarch," says Macauley, "the world seems at last to have formed a correct judgment. He was not a great general; he was not a great statesman; but he was in one sense a great king. Never was there so consummate a master of what James I called kingcraft—of all those arts which most advantageously display the merits of a prince, and most completely hide his defects. Though his internal administration
was bad; though the military triumphs which gave splendor to the early part of his reign were not achieved by himself; though his later years were crowded with defeats and humiliations; though he was so ignorant that he scarcely understood the Latin of his mass-book; though he fell under the control of a cunning Jesuit and of a still more cunning old woman, he succeeded in passing himself off upon the people as a being above humanity.

"Death and time have exposed the deception. The body of the 'grand monarch' has been measured more justly than it was measured by the courtiers who were afraid to look above his shoetie. His public character has been scrutinized by men free from the hopes and fears of Boileau and Moliére. In the grave, the most majestic of princes is only five feet eight. In history the hero and politician dwindles into a vain and feeble tyrant, the slave of priests and women, little in war, little in government, little in everything but the art of simulating greatness."

Chapter XXXV

REVOCATION of the EDICT of NANTES

Until the year 1685, the efforts of the "booted missionaries" were confined to one or two provinces; but now they were extended into other sections. Bearn was harried; Languedoc was bled; the Vivarias was changed into a Golgotha. The most sinister acts of the dark ages are white when set against the blackness of this modern infamy. France, to borrow the striking language of the Hebrew poet, was "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness."

Every engine which a satanic wit could invent was put in motion to cajole, to overawe, and to torture steadfast martyrs into a denial of their faith. Pellisson, the administrator of the corruption fund, regularly handed the king lists of six, eight, ten hundred converts, vouched for by fraudulent certificates; and his miracles were daily chronicled in the Gazette. He avoided publishing that the few proselytes he did make were exclusively from the dregs of the people; either knaves who periodically made a trade of their consciences, or starving beggars who took the money to get a piece of bread. Venial and licentious scribblers lauded the
triumph. The court at Versailles, dripping with wine, drunken with blasphemy, bloated with gluttony, and reveling in obscene dances, paused a moment in its frightful orgy, to cross itself and hiccough a viva. The king was astonished at the number of his "converts;" the prelates applauded; Bossuet harangued, and Boileau dogmatized; while the Jesuits stood by with a cunning leer. But reasonable people did not credit Pellisson's Munchausenisms. Even Madame de Maintenon wrote, "I think that all these conversions are not sincere; but at least the children will be Romanists."

The jubilant court was soon undeceived. Sixteen Huguenot deputies from Languedoc, Corennes, Vivarias, and Dauphiny assembled at Toulouse, and decided to recommence worship in all interdicted places simultaneously, without ostentation, but without secrecy; either with open doors, or on the ruins of their demolished temples. At the same time union, repentance, prayer, and faith, "mighty to the pulling down of strong-holds," were recommended.

In hundreds of thousands the Huguenots assembled. "The roses and the myrtles of devotion bloomed unchilled on the verge of the avalanche."

The king was enraged; the satyrs of the court sputtered vengeance; the Jesuits spat fresh venom. "It was believed," says the abbé Soulier, "that the Calvinists, being reduced to have few public exercises, would more willingly listen to the instructions which the prelates gave in their dioceses to draw them from error; and that the money which the king distributed to assist the new converts would induce the religionists to enter almost voluntarily into the bosom of the church: but as these measures had not all the effect which was anticipated, and as it appeared, on the contrary, that the Calvinists, far from listening to the missionaries, became more obstinate, his majesty deemed it necessary to take stronger measures to draw them from that lethargy into which their birth had unfortunately thrown them. The king's troops were employed to cooperate with the missionaries, that thus what had been effected in Poitiers, where forty thousand of the Huguenots had been subjugated, might be done in the other infected provinces."

As to the means employed, the testimony of another papist, Rulhière, may be cited: "Whatever can be imagined of military licentiousness was exercised against the Calvinists. It is attributed to Foucault, intendant of Bearn, that he improved upon the most
exquisite refinements of torture. Invention was employed to
discover torments which should be painful without being mortal,
and cause the unhappy victims to undergo the utmost which the
human body can sustain without expiring."

Thus tabooed in society, outlawed from trade, and battered and
racked by the dragoons, the Huguenots had nothing to do but die
or recant. The firmest suffered martyrdom; those whose spirit
was willing, but whose flesh was weak, pretended to abjure.

That which struck men in general more than anything else, was
the material injury inflicted by the dragonades. The spiritual
mischief of a forced participation in the sacrament weighed much
more heavily with men of reflection and piety. To open the mouth
of a heretic with the point of the bayonet, and thrust into it the
host—that consecrated host which the Roman church professes to
esteem it a most heinous offence to take unworthily—this offense
was prescribed by those very men who decided that it was a crime
of the most flagrant nature. The Spanish Inquisition had at least
sufficient sense of shame to prevent its prisoners from receiving
the communion and attending mass. There were a few noble
protestations against it in the age of Louis XIV, especially from
the abbey of port Royal and among the Jansenists; but the
majority the clergy, harried on by the Jesuits, forced their
unhappy converts to receive the host while their very paleness
and shuddering horror, as Basnage tells us, showed how their
whole heart revolted at the ceremony"

But the dragonaders did not care for sincerity; they looked only
for the éclât of an immense army of proselytes.

The king's council, which only regarded outward acts, was as
much astonished as delighted at the countless abjurations. "Sixty
thousand conversions have been made in the generality of
Bordeaux," wrote Louvois to his father the chancellor, early in
September, 1685; " twenty thousand have been won in
Montauban. The rapidity with which it all takes place is such, that
by the end of the month there will not be ten thousand of the
heretics alive where thirty days back there were a hundred and
fifty thousand."

The duke de Noailles announced to Louvois at the same time
multitudes of forced conversions at Nîmes, Uzés, Alais,
Villeneuvre. "The rack is a famous proselyter," said he with a jeer.
"The leading people of Nîmes," be continues, "made their
abjuration in the church on the day of my arrival. There was then
a chill; but things were put in a good train by quartering the military on the obstinate. The number of heretics in this province is about two hundred and forty thousand. I expect soon that I shall see all these hounds leashed to the car of Rome."

The hour was now considered ripe for the abolition of the nominal law of toleration. Frittered away as the statute had been until it was little more than the shadow of a law, it was still an accusing phantom in the statute book; and the government now undertook to lay this ghost: unfortunately the perturbed spirit of reform would not "down" at the king's bidding.

Louis XIV, overreached and persuaded by his confessor, his chancellor, his minister of war, and his mistress, ill-informed perhaps as to the real condition of the kingdom, rejoicing over fictitious conversions, and duped because he lived surrounded by flatterers, like an Asiatic sultan in the recesses of his palace—Louis XIV, to whom Louvois and La Chaise had promised that "not a drop of blood should be shed," having consulted Harlai and Bossuet, signed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes on the 18th of October, 1685, and enshrined his name for ever as a monument of execration. It was at this time that he added to his other mottoes that of Lex una sub uno. There was no need to write it in blood at Versailles; the hand of death had already engraved it on the frontlet of the monarchy. God left this king, broken by age, soured by disappointment, humiliated, his early glories turned to ashes on his shrieved lips, to occupy the throne for thirty disgraceful years after this unhappy event, to bear the load of the crime he had committed.

The preamble of the Act of Revocation contains a brazen falsehood; what then can be expected of the body of a paper which opens with a lie? "We behold now," says the king, "with just gratitude to God, that our cares have attained the end which we proposed; the greater and better part of our subjects of the pretended reformed religion have embraced the Roman faith, and the execution of the Edict of Nantes is therefore unnecessary."

This is an abstract of the act: All further exercise of the reformed worship in the kingdom illegal. The Huguenot pastors ordered to quit the realm within a fortnight; and meantime to perform no clerical function, on pain of being sent to the galleys. A promise to all ministers who should become converts, of a stipend greater by one third than that which they had hitherto enjoyed, with the reversion of a moiety to their widows. A dispensation from academical studies to those which wished to practice at the bar. Parents forbidden to instruct their children in the reformed
religion, and commanded to have them christened in the Romish churches, on pain of five hundred livres fine. All refugees ordered to return to France within four months, or forfeit their property. All religionists forbidden to emigrate, under penalty of the galleys if men, or seclusion for life if women. And all laws against relapsed heretics confirmed.

Such were the main enactments of this atrocious act. "It gave," says M. Felice, "a fatal blow to the traditional policy of France—to the policy of Henry IV, Richelieu, Mazarin, and even to than of Louis XIV himself. It was no longer possible to retain the natural allies of France in Protestant Europe, when Christendom resounded with the lamentations of the Huguenots. Protestantism rose en masse against the "grand monarch." Its chief was William of Orange, and the parliamentary resolution of 1688 was the response to the royal crime of 1685.

Meantime the act was put in force. "We have reached the end," said the old chancellor Letellier as he affixed the seal of state to the nascent edict, and chanted the Nunc dimittus of the holy Simeon with blasphemous triumph. Letellier, of whom the count de Grammont once said, on seeing him emerge from the king's closet, "I picture to myself a polecat who has just killed some fowls, and is licking his jaws, yet stained with their blood." Letellier was mistaken; for the sequel proved this: that it is easier to make martyrs than apostates, and that the power of conviction is stronger than material forces.

The Act of Revocation was carried out with special rigor against the pastors; even the letter of the edict was exceeded: that granted them a fortnight's delay; but Claude, the famous pastor of the Parisian Huguenots, whose learning and acumen had worsted the brilliant Bossuet, received orders to quit the capital within twenty-four hours after the signature of the paper; and this "seditious fellow," as Madame de Maintenon termed him, was accompanied by one of the king's footmen, who did not lose sight of him for a moment till he crossed the frontier. The other preachers of the larger towns were given two days in which to prepare for departure. Those living in the provinces had a little longer space; but in open defiance of all the rights of stature, they were all deprived of those of their children who were more than seven years old. Some were even forced to abandon infants at the breast, and others supported broken-hearted wives who accompanied them on the road to banishment.
Abjurations had been counted on; few were made. Nearly all those preachers who, in a moment of stupefaction and terror, had denied their faith, returned to it again, and accepted serenely the penalty of their relapse. Old men of ninety might be seen summoning up their remaining strength to set out on distant travel, and more than one perished ere he reached the asylum where he had hoped to rest his faltering steps and weary head.

So long as the Huguenots had any thing to lose, though but the shadow of their ancient liberties, the empty name of Henry Quatre's great edict, the majority confined themselves to presenting petitions and praying for a redress of grievances. They cherished a hope that the sanctity of law, justice, and humanity would be reawakened in the breast of their monarch; and so far did they carry their endurance, as to give rise to the proverbial expression, a Huguenot's patience. But when they lost all, absolutely all, they consulted only what was true to conscience and to their outraged faith; and by continuing to brave the most barbarous of edicts, in the face of exile, the galleys, and death, they wore out the ferocity of their tormentors.

Emigration now attained gigantic proportions. In spite of cunning preventive measures—in spite of constantly reiterated decrees, denouncing death upon all who should venture to pass the French frontier—in spite of cordons of soldiers stationed to dragoon back all refugees, the tide of emigration set resolutely, irresistibly towards Protestant Europe. England, Switzerland, Holland, Prussia, Denmark, and Sweden generously relieved their first necessities.

The depopulation of the kingdom was frightful. The best authorities estimate that France lost five hundred thousand of her best, most intelligent, moral, and industrious citizens. She lost besides sixty millions of francs in specie, and her most flourishing manufactures; while four hundred thousand lives paid the forfeit of the reign of terror.

This was what it cost to suppress the truth in France.

Thousands of emigrants perished of fatigue, cold, and hunger, besides those lost by shipwreck, and those shot by the soldiers while attempting to escape. Thousands more were taken, chained to assassins and other desperate criminals, then marched across the kingdom, that the sight of them might strike their coreligionists with terror; then they were condemned to row with the convict crews. The galleys at Marseilles were crowded with
these Christians; and among them were magistrates, officers, gentlemen, and octogenarians. The convents and the town of Constance at Aigue-Mortes were crowded with devoted women. But neither threats, barbarities, nor brutal and unheard-of punishments could conquer the patience, the firmness, the energy, the sublime faithfulness of these oppressed consciences.

Of the moral results of this wholesale and most infamous proscription it is needless to speak. They are palpable. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the avant courier of the Revolution of 1789. The religion of reason was the inevitable outgrowth of the religion of bestiality. Robespierre was the counterpart of Letellier. The act of 1685 exiled Christ and struck the people; the frenzy of 1789 was the return blow of the people ignorant of Christ: the Revolution was France smiting the tyranny which Louis XIV inaugurated; it was the explosion of ten centuries of wickedness, of bigotry, of oppression, of perfidy, in an awful crash. It was GOD raining his vengeance upon the Sodom of the monarchy and on the Gomorrah of the papacy.

Multitudes of writers bear ample witness to the economic ruin which the revocation caused. "Trade, says St. Simon, "was ruined; a quarter of the kingdom was perceptibly depopulated." "Whole villages were deserted," says Sismondi; "many of the larger towns lost half their denizens; hundreds of factories were closed; some branches of industry became altogether extinct; and vast districts absolutely ached for hands to cultivate them." "The Huguenots," remarks Lamartine, "repaid the generous hospitality of those peoples with whom they found a home, by contributing the riches of their cunning labor, by the example of their faith, by their lives of integrity; and while they thus enriched their adopted countries, France was impoverished." Lemontey says, "The French Protestants carried into England the secret of those valuable machines which have laid the foundations of her vast wealth, while the complaints of these proscribed exiles cemented an avenging league at Augsburg."

Thus it should seem that the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was economic suicide as well as religious death. That fatal act not only filled the salons of modern France with infidel philosophers, it also brought pecuniary ruin. France colonized her hands away from her mouth.

Only one other nation has been guilty of so barbarous an act. In the sixteenth century, Philip II expelled the Moors from his kingdom. Bankrupt and despicable, largely in consequence of that
edict, Spain stands today "wicked but in will, of means bereft," serving, like the drunken helot, to show how disgusting and ruinous mean vice is.

But the exile of the Huguenots, though it could not be more ruinous than the Spanish perfidy, touched a meaner depth. The Moors were pagans, and in one sense interlopers; the Huguenots were Christians and Frenchmen. When France drove them into exile, she banished her manufacturers, her traders, her artisans; and in consequence, industry languished for three generations. Indeed, France has never regained the vantage-ground which she lost, and which the wiser policy of Great Britain won, at that epoch. The cunning of England lassoed Lyons and Marseilles and Paris to the feet of London and Manchester and Liverpool, and she has ever since kept them there. Holland, in a material sense, gained more by this act than she had lost by the victorious invasions of Louis XIV; while the Huguenot colonies planted on the Cape of Good Hope, on the snowy steppes of the Cordilleras, and, beside the sounding Atlantic, gained the New World for God, and compensated for the mischief worked his cause by the iniquitous politics of the elder continent.

CHAPTER XXXVI
A RÉSUMÉ

It is estimated by authoritative historians that, despite the enormous exodus of the proscribed reformers after the suppression of Henry Quatre's edict, there still remained a million Huguenots in France, living under the ban and at the peril of the law. Meted and peeled, they clung to their faith with stubborn devotion. Their unwearyed appeals for justice reached Paris borne on every breeze. But steeled and unmoved, the king only drugged his shoulders, and muttered, "Persecute," while the servile magistracy echoed, "So stands the law."

But the conscience of a generous people may not always be fettered by cruel parchments. Live growths rive dead matter. Pulse-beats smite down the strongest tyrannies. Give it time, and a spear of grass will topple over the Pyramids. Gradually France, educated by the suffering of three centuries, grew broader than her statute-book. Iniquity was indeed enacted into law; bigotry was the incorporated, fundamental, avowed policy of the state. Yet the last years of the reign of Louis XIV were gilded by the dawn of a larger charity. Religion was milder when it breathed through Fénélon. Philosophy was gentler when it spoke through the lips of Pascal. Harsh statutes were construed into impotence when D'Aguessoau pronounced judgment. Letters were more
humane; the collectors of lewd anecdotes, the gatherers of the broken crumbs of history, recorders of the gossip of cafés and the whispers of the bath-stairs of the Louvre, no longer monopolized literature; and soon, through the tragedy of "ESTHER," Racine raised his voice against intolerance.
This was the insurrection of civilization. It was the human mind which, constantly persecuted, opposed, headed off, has disappeared only to appear again; and passing from one labor to another, has taken successively, from age to age, the figure of all the great reformers. It was the human mind which was called John Huss, and which did not die on the funeral-pile of Constance; which was named Luther, and shook Romanism to its center; which was called Calvin, and organized the Reformation; which, since history began, has transformed societies according to a law progressively acceptable to reason; which has been theocracy, aristocracy, monarchy, and which is to-day religious democracy; which has been Babylon, Tyre, Jerusalem, Athens, Rome; which has been by turns error, illusion, schism, protestation, truth; but which has always groped towards the Just, the Beautiful, the True, enlightening multitudes, ennobling life, raising more and more the head of the people towards the Right, and the head of the individual towards God.
The government of France might slaughter individuals, might annihilate Paris to the last pavement, and the kingdom to the last hamlet, still it would have done nothing. There world yet remain to be destroyed something always paramount, above the generations, between man and his Maker; something which has written the books, invented the arts, discovered the worlds, founded the civilizations; something which will always grasp, under the form of revolution, what is not yielded under the form of progress; something which is unseizable as the light, unapproachable as the sun, and which God calls the human mind.
But while the premonitory phases of a revolution were beginning to appear, the law stood long unchanged, pitiless. The war of the Camisards stained the seventeenth century; it was a frightful tragedy enacted by the Huguenot peasants of the Vivavais, frenzied by that "oppression" which, as Solomon says, "makes the wise man mad." After the employment of fiend-like cruelties, in which the demoniacal ingenuity of Indian torture was combined with the scientific inventions of semi-civilization, the Camisards were subjugated—the throats of a whole population were cut.
Thus passed away the age of Louis XIV; the penal code unsoftened, but public opinion liberalized.
The first years of the reign of Louis XV were barren of good fruit. Spasmodic acts of bigotry occurred, but the lawyers lingered more and more in the execution of the prescribed barbarities; and when a nation shudders at its laws, they are already half abolished. There were even instances of judgments pronounced by judges directly against the obnoxious statutes; they preferred to see their decisions reversed by appeal, rather than suffer the humiliation of having them confirmed—obeying justice in disobeying the law.
Disgusted by the mummeries of the Vatican, France began at this period to imbibe the poison of infidelity; but the scholars of the philosophical school did not bestow one good word upon the Huguenots. This was happy; the
benediction of infidel savans would not have been appropriate. Montesquieu did not mention these oppressed children of God's right hand; Rousseau, the child of Calvin's own city, attacked Romanism more than he defended the Protestant idea. Between this bastard philosophy and Christianity there was little in common, no point d'appui.

In 1744, a Huguenot synod was convened at Nîmes. Denied baptism, burial, and the marriage ceremony, deprived of a legal status, they determined to hold their services in the open air. "This," said one, "is better than the catacombs of the earliest Christians; since God gives us the field, let us praise him there." These meetings were called "Assemblées du desert." To avoid awakening the suspicion of the government, the Huguenots repaired unarmed to their forest rendezvous. There,

"In the darkling wood,

Amid the cool and silence they knelt down,

And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks

And supplications; for their simple hearts

Might not resist the sacred influences

Which, from the sully twilight of the place,

And from the gray old trunks, that high in heaven

Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound

Of the invisible breath, that swayed at once

All their green tops, stole over them, and bowed

Their spirits with the thought of boundless power

And inaccessible majesty."

And here, under the canopy of heaven, the sacraments were celebrated, the rites of sepulture were performed, and the union of affection was sanctified by religion. Yet the marriages of the desert, as they were called, were afterwards termed "concubinage," and the hereditary estates of the posterity of persons so united were forfeited.

But though a crushing yoke rested upon the backs of the Huguenots, each year brought some alleviation. Four generations of persecutors and of victims passed away. Le bien aimé, as the most indolent and sensual of kings was ironically nicknamed, was huddled into the tomb of Hugh Capét. Louis XVI commenced his inauspicious reign; and Marie Antoinette, beautiful as Burke described her, shared the fatal throne. Then, in 1787, the statute of toleration glittered on the horizon. It was the offspring of patience and persistence, of faith and prayer. The Huguenots wearied out the Inquisition.

The edict of toleration, clutched from the unwilling grip of the government by the impetuous statesmanship of the impending Revolution one hundred and two years after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, was narrow and niggardly in its main features; but it granted to the nonconformists four things: the right to live in France, and to practice a profession or carry on a trade without molestation on account of religion; permission to marry legally; an authorization to certify births before the judge of their place of residence; regulations as to the burial of those who could not be interred according to the Roman ritual.
So ran the text; but the practice was not so narrow as the precept. The Huguenots had gained a legal status, and although they were forbidden to assemble for public worship, yet no penalty enforced the prohibition. They had not been deterred from the exercise of their religion by the fiercest prohibitory legislation; should they now desist when there was no punishment? The heroic congregations of the wilderness held grateful jubilee; their forty years seemed well-nigh ended, and Canaan loomed up before their glistening eyes. "At length," cried Lafayette, himself one of the most strenuous advocates of every species of equality on either continent, great in the beneficence of goodness, "at length Protestants are permitted to become husbands and fathers."

But the frail breakwater of this decree was not of sufficient importance to arrest the surging tide which now began to gurgle round the throat of France. One by one the liberties of the kingdom had been entrapped and bound. Socialist manifestoes terminated in a Jesuitical policy. An immense intrigue was baptized with the name of government, Then intervened the Revolution. Into that yawning abyss tumbled everything—law, order, religion. The heads of Romanist and Protestant alike fell under the indiscriminating revolutionary hatchet. The frenzied insurgents propped up the corpse of martyred liberty upon its gory tomb; then hastening to the market-place, they crowned the goddess of a spurious reason with garlands of flowers. Thus the ecclesiasticism of the Vatican, which had been rampant in France for a thousand years, inciting every crime, lauding every infamy, gloating over every outrage upon human nature, "stealing the livery of heaven to serve the devil in"—this monstrosity called Romanism ended fitly in a scoff and a blasphemy.

'Tis a history full of blood and full of tears. "Never," says Lamartine, "did weaknesses more quickly engender faults; faults, crimes; crimes, punishment. That retributive justice which God has implanted in our very acts, as a conscience more sacred than the fatalism of the ancients, never manifested itself more unequivocally; never was the law of morality illustrated by more ample testimony, or avenged more mercilessly. Blood spilled like water not only shrieks in accents of terror and of pity, but gives a lesson and an example to mankind."

At length the phantom of this bastard liberty was laid; "Cà ira" and the "Marseillaise" lost their fierceness; the tamed insurrectionary choruses died out in a plaintive wail; the revolution sobbed itself to sleep in curses. The frightful days of 1793 passed into history; above the subsiding waves reappeared the turrets and towers of old institutions. Even before the overthrow of the Republic, the "Goddess of Reason" was deposed; and the dismal inscription, "Death is an eternal sleep," ceased to insult God and the human heart. Once awakened from their awful trance, men came to feel that "there would be no dignity in life, that it would not be worth the holding, if in death we wholly perish. All that lightens labor and sanctifies toil; all that renders man brave, good, rise, noble, patient, benevolent, just, humble, and at the same time great, worthy of intelligence, worthy of liberty, worthy of God, is to have
perpetually before him the vision of a better world darting its rays of celestial splendor through the dark shadows of this present life. No one shall unjustly or needlessly suffer in the hereafter. Death is restitution. By limiting man's end and aim to this terrestrial and material existence, we aggravate all his miseries by the terrible negation at its close. No; there is an ulterior life. In that, mercy reigns through Christ; hope is its beacon, and the 'perfect liberty of the sons of God' is its fruition. The law of the material world is gravitation; of the moral world, equity. At the end of all reappears God, 'Judge of the quick and the dead.'

When Napoleon usurped the government, one of his first acts was to reestablish religion. In 1795, a decree was issued authorizing the free exercise of religious worship. But anxious to win the benediction of the pope, Bonaparte leaned in his policy towards the Vatican, and Protestantism was shackled by mild conditions.

Under the restoration, Bonaparte's edict remained substantially unaltered. Charles X left the law untouched, and on his flight bequeathed it to Louis Philippe. When the government of the citizen king went down before an after-dinner speech and an epigram, when a cab carried the new royalty into exile, toleration did not follow it. Firm through the days of the second Republic, it likewise survived the coup d'état of Louis Bonaparte in 1852, and soon received the imprimatur of the Empire.

Napoleon, anxious, like his uncle, to reestablish the principle of authority, which in France is based on the ancient traditions of the papacy, has placated the Vatican by a succession of complaisant acts which have given Romanism the éclat of the national religion, and whose tendency is to suppress the growth of the dissenters. Napoleon perceives that the natural, inevitable gravitation of Protestantism is towards democracy. He remembers De Tocqueville's prophecy that all Europe is gradually marching to that goal. Hence the emperor, at the head of an abnormal government, cannot but look with suspicion upon the non-conformists.

Still, despite the open unfriendliness of the state and the sinister efforts of the Romanist party, the descendants of the Huguenots maintain their ground. The Revolution robbed the ultramontanists of great prestige by the confiscation of the immense church property; it also made the people suspicious of their ascendancy in the état civile. This gives the reformers a fulcrum upon which to rest their lever. They have several colleges, one at Montauban, one at Nîmes, one at Paris. The south of France, the ancient strong-hold of the Reformation, is yet the rendezvous of Protestantism. The Lutheran, the Wesleyan, the Calvinist denominations are militant; and they can afford to be patient, sure that, since their essential principles are in conformity with the fundamental tenets of the New Testament, the future is theirs, and that they will eventually subdue the conscience of the human race beneath their sway.

"Wrong," says Victor Hugo, "is but a hideous flash in the darkness; right is an eternal ray."

The object of the Huguenots was the demolition of idols, the purification of the sanctuary, the reinauguration of primitive Christianity; to bring man to God
through the divine Redeemer, the "one Mediator," by the abolition of an impious, mediatorial priest-caste, and the promulgation of the golden truth which Luther reaffirmed, and which Calvin echoed, "justification by faith" in Christ, the invocation of His sole intercession at the heavenly bar. Standing in the sunlight of the nineteenth century, the age of unfettered lips, of myriad churches, of open Bibles, whose great heart throbs with that love of God which is "perfect liberty," who shall say that the Huguenots have not grandly performed their work?

Let each of us reverently thank God for the light of their example; let us determine to be worthy of the past, and the apostles of a sublimer future.

The Life and Times of John Huss

By Ezra H. Gillett

Originally published in 1863

Scanned into website from AMS reprint published in 1978

Table of Contents ~ Volume I
Table of Contents ~ Volume II

Section I  Early Life and Labors

Section II  Resistance to the Truth

Section III  Betrayal and Arrest

Section IV  Huss Before the Council

Section V  Huss and Jerome Executed

Section VI  Aftermath of the Council

Section VII  The Hussite Wars

Section VIII  The Ongoing Reformation

The Life and Times of John Huss

By Ezra H. Gillett
Table of Contents

Volume I

Chapter I

Bohemia at the Close of the Fourteenth Century - Predecessors of Huss
1347-1394

Condition of Bohemia — National Feeling — The Introduction of the Usages of
the Roman Church — The Waldenses — Predecessors of Huss — Conrad
Waldhauser — Milicz of Kremsier — Matthias of Janow — Peter of Dresden —
Flourishing Condition of Bohemia — Thomas of Stitny — Death of Anne of
Luxembourg, Queen of England

Chapter II

Youth of Huss - University Life - Wickliffe
1373-1398

Birth and Education of Huss — his Parentage — Death of his Father — Studies at
Prachatitz — Goes to the University of Prague — Accompanied by his Mother —
his Poverty — State of the University — Founded by Charles IV — Modeled after
the University of Paris — Seasonably Founded — Thronged with Students — Its
Teachers — Favor Shown to Learning by the Emperor Charles IV — Progress of
Huss — his Acquaintance with Jacobel — Acquaintance with Jerome —
 Martyrology the Favorite Reading of Huss — Affected by the Vices of the Age —
Approves the Sentiments of Wickliffe on Christian Reform — Wickliffe —
Supported by the Duke of Lancaster — his Career — Occasion of his First Work —
It Expresses the Tone of his Life — The Mendicant Orders Attacked by Wickliffe —
his Translation of the Bible — his Writings — his Opinions — Their Puritanic
Cast — Their Prevalence and Spread — Vainly Condemned at London

Chapter III

Progress of the New Doctrines at Prague
1399-1407

Wickliffe’s Doctrines Disseminated at Prague — Character and Course of Jerome —
Wickliffe’s Books Circulated — They are Condemned by the University — Part
Taken by Huss — his Position and Influence — Hesitation in Receiving the
Doctrines of Wickliffe — Bethlehem Chapel Founded — Huss Appointed Preacher — The Two Englishmen — Their Pictured Sermon — Patriotic Feeling of the Bohemians in the University — Their Opposition to the Claims and Privileges of the Germans — Huss and Wickliffe — Luther’s Language in Regard to Huss — Corruption of the Church — General Testimony — Progress of Huss in Approving Wickliffe — Others Unite with Him — Temptation Resisted — The Miracle at Wilsnack — Huss Exposes It — The Papacy during the Fourteenth Century — Origin of the Schism — Archbishop Sbynco — He Adheres to Gregory XII

Chapter IV

The Council of Pisa
1407-1409


Chapter V

Huss and the Archbishop
1409-1411

Martial Operations of Sbynco — His Synod — Pater Arraigned — Bohemians on Wickliffe — Priest Abraham — Sbynco Satisfied — Wenzel’s Decision in Regard to
Chapter VI

Huss Excommunicated ~ The Compromise
1411

Case of Huss at Home — Cardinal Colonna — His Decision — Its Reception at Prague — Royal Embassy to the Pope, Praying that Huss May Be Released From Personal Appearance at Rome — Procurators of Huss — Their Treatment — Sentence of Excommunication — Published at Prague — Huss Justifies Himself in Preaching — Interdict — The King Interposes — A Commission — Compromise — Letter of Sbynco — Its Futility — Sbynco's Conference With Huss — Huss Preaches on the Subject — Disgrace of Sbynco — He Leaves Prague — His Letter to the King — His Death

Chapter VII

Huss and the Papal Policy
September, 1411 - January, 1412

Archbishop Albic — His Infamous Character — Crusade Against Ladislaus, a New Firebrand — New Position of Huss — Cannot Depend on Wenzel for Support — His Decision — Ladislaus and Alexander V — Succession of Balthasar Cossa to the Pontificate — His Education — His Infamous Life — Excommunicated by Gregory — Promotes the Council of Pisa in Revenge — Rules the Council — His Notorious Character — His Coronation — His Proceedings — General Acquiescence in the Decisions of the Council of Pisa — Death of the Emperor Robert — Plans of John XXIII — Seeks the Alliance with Sigismund — Crusade Proclaimed Against Ladislaus — Huss Opposes It — Condition of Ladislaus — His Attack on Rome — Crusade Published

Chapter VIII

Bull for the Crusade at Prague
January, 1412 - July, 1412
The Constancy of Huss Tried — His Procurators — His Petition for Release from
the Summons to Appear in Person at Home — the Crusade — Controversy with
John Stokes — Affairs at Prague — Disputation at the University—Dean of Passau
and Bulls of Indulgences — Decision of the Theological Faculty — Huss’ View of
the Crusade — Wenzel Tolerates the Proclamation — Preaching of Huss —
Meeting Before the Council — Admonition of the Archbishop — Notice of the
Proposed Dispute Affixed to the Doors of the Churches — The Discussion —
Jerome’s speech — Second Meeting of the University — Indulgences Derided: A
Practical Joke — Interruption in the Churches — The Offenders before the
Council — Huss Intercedes for Them — Reply — Popular Commotion — The
Execution — The Funeral — Depression of Huss — He Is Enjoined Silence — A
Trying Period — Anxieties of Huss — Change in the Views of the King — Reasons
of It — Sigismund’s Position — His Aspirations for the Imperial Crown — His
Election — Anecdote — His Character — His Aims — Wenzel’s Exclusion from the
Imperial Throne — Other Reasons for his Change of Policy

Chapter IX

Second Excommunication of Huss ~ He Withdraws from Prague
July, 1412 - May, 1413

Excommunication of Huss — How He Was to Be Dealt With —
Bethlehem Chapel to Be Torn Down — The Attempt Defeated — The
City Council Divided — The Interdict — Its Legitimate Effect —
Wenzel’s Decree Requiring Divine Service to Be Performed as Usual —
The Division in the University — Theological Faculty — The Eight
Doctors — Huss Still Preaches — Letter From England — Reply to Huss —
He Leaves Prague — His Appeal to Jesus Christ — Substance of his
Complaints — Martin V and the Council of Constance — Gerson on
Appeal from the Pope — Huss Preaches in the Cities and Villages in the
Open Air — His Vindication — An Interruption — Letter to the Cardinals
— Reasons for Leaving Prague — Busy with His Pen

Chapter X

Huss in Retirement
May, 1413 - September, 1414

Foreign Prejudice against Huss — Council of Rome — Incident of the
Owl — Complaints against the Archbishop — Futility of the Measures
Against Huss — His Work on the Church — Question in Regard to the
 Validity of the Excommunication of Huss — Jessenitz — The Royal
Court of France — Views of Gerson — Views of D’aiIly — Appeal to

Chapter XI

Sermons, Doctrines, and Letters of Huss
1404 - 1414

Gerson’s Letter — Sermons of Huss — A Lull of the Storm — Confidence of Huss — His Influence — His Activity During this Period — His Writing — Reply to the Eight Doctors — Other Writings of Huss — Their Evangelical Character — Authority of Scripture with Huss — The Secret of His Strength — Letters During his Absence from Prague — His Indecision about his Return — Letters of Sympathy from England — Period of Trial

Chapter XII

The Council
September, 1414 - November, 1414

Assembling of the Council of Constance — Selection of the Place — Its Situation — Its Present Condition — Memorials of the Council — The Summons of the Emperor and Pope Calling It — Death of Ladislaus — Reluctance of the Pope to Go to Constance — The Emperor Yields to the Demands of the Pope — The Pope on his Journey — The Princes — Sigismund and his Position in Regard to the Council — Huss at Prague —
Chapter XIII

Arrest and Imprisonment of Huss

November 3, 1414 - December 6, 1414

Chapter XIV

Anxieties of the Pope ~ The English and French Deputations
December 7, 1414 - December 18, 1414


Chapter XV

Proceedings of the Council ~ Huss Abandoned by the Emperor
December 25, 1414 - February 7, 1415

Refutation — Conflict of the Monarchical and Republican Principles in the Church

Chapter XVI

The Council up to the Time of the Flight of the Pope
January 8, 1415 - March 21, 1415


Chapter XVII

Supremacy of the Council — The Pope Suspended — Treatment of Huss — Arrest of Jerome
March 22, 1415 - May 24, 1415

Consternation at the Pope’s Flight — Steps Taken by the Emperor and Council — Duke of Austria — Gerson’s Discourse — The Pope’s Letters

Chapter XVIII

The Communion of the Cup ~ The Bohemians at Constance
May 14, 1415 – May 18, 1415

Communion of the Cup — Matthias of Janow — Origin of the Restoration of the Cup — Jacobel and Peter of Dresden — Theses Discussed Before the University — Prevailing Opinion in Favor of the Cup — Jacobel Defends It — Reply to Him — Broda’s Treatise — Jacobel’s Refutation — His Constant Reference to Scripture Authority — His Reprehension of Appeal to the Secular Arm — His Eloquent Conclusion — Huss Consulted — He Sustains Jacobel — The University Vindicated by Jacobel — Alarm at Constance — John the Iron, of Leitomischel — His Election as Bishop — An Enemy of Huss — The Bohemians Indignant — The Bishop’s Written Reply — Answer to This and "The Apology for the Council," by the Bohemians — The Safe- Conduct of the Emperor — Evidence of John De Chlum — Case of Huss — Falsehoods Circulated in Respect to his Course in Regard to the
Citation From Rome — Claim that his Safe-Conduct Should Regarded
and He Be Freely Heard

Chapter XIX

The Pope Deposed
May 19, 1415 - May 31, 1415

The Deposition of John XXIII a Necessity — The Emperor’s Resolve —
The Contumacy of the Pope Declared — Exception of Cardinal St. Mark
— Sitting of the Commission for Procuring Testimony — The Witnesses
— List of Accusations — Suppressed Articles — The Fifty-Four Others —
The Eleventh Session — Report Approved — The Result Communicated
to the Pope — His Reception of It — His Reply — Information Sent to
Him of his Proposed Deposition — His Affected Submission — His Letter
to the Emperor — Inconsistency of the Pope — Frederic Gives the Pope
Up — He Is Left Guarded at Ratolfcell — Abjectness of John XXIII in
Prison — Eleventh Session — Report from the Pope to the Council —
The Sentence of Deposition Read — Unanimously Assented To — The
Cardinal of Florence Put Down — The Sentence Carried into Execution
— Precautions in Regard to a New Election — The Pope Informed of his
Deposition by the Council

Chapter XX

Huss at Gottlieben ~ Prison Examination
May 31, 1415 - June 1, 1415

Condition of Huss at Gottlieben — His Remarks on the Deposition of
John XXIII — On the Profligacy of the Council — Views of Clemengis —
Of Niem — Huss Cites the Proceedings of his Enemies in his own
Justification — His Cheerful Courage — Strength of his Faith — His Love
of Truth — His Humility — New List of Accusations — Charged with the
Heresy of the Cup — Petition of Huss’ Friends — His Protestation —
Falsehood of the Charges — Demand That Huss Should Be Set Free or
Heard — Sigismund Engages to Secure for Huss a Public Audience—The
Answer of the Council — Advice of Chlum — Confidence of Huss — His
Main Anxiety — His Visions — Anxiety Of Chlum — Bitter Malice of
Paletz and Causis — John XXIII Removed to Gottlieben — False Honor
Done Him — Strange Juxtaposition by the Side of Huss — Contrast of
the Two Men — Lament of the Pope — Just Retribution — Removal of
the Pope — Huss on the Cup — The Friends of Huss Present their Document to the Council — False Report — Prison Examination — Anxiety of Huss’ Friends — His Constancy and Answer — Account of the Examination — What Was Meant by Submission — Explained By his Protestation — Gerson and D’aiIly — Their Agreement with Huss on Many Points — Their Nomination — Scholastic Antagonisms — Huss Less Trammled by Such Prejudices

Chapter XXI

First Audience of Huss Before the Council ~ Second Audience
June 1, 1415 - June 7, 1415


Chapter XXII

Third Audience of Huss before the Council ~ Articles of Accusation
June 8, 1415
Third Audience of Huss — Thirty-Nine Articles — How Drawn Up — Language in Regard to his Recanting — Charged with Writing Falsehoods to Bohemia — The Book "On the Church" — Predestination — No Outward Badge or Office Makes a Man a Member of the Church — The Reprobate Never a Member of the Church of Christ — Judas Never a True Disciple — The Church Composed of the Predestinate Alone — Peter Never the Head of the Church Catholic — The Pope Christ’s or Antichrist’s Vicar, According to his Life — Simonists and Wicked Priests Err as to the Sacraments — Papal Dignity an Imperial Gift — No One Without Revelation Can Say He Is Head of any Particular Church — No Pope, Unless Predestinated, the Head of any Church — The Pope’s Power Null if his Life Is Vile — His Holiness and his Revenues — The Cardinals no Successors of the Apostles Except by Holiness — Heretics not to Be Given Up to the Secular Arm — The Civil Authority — Should Constrain the Priesthood to Do Their Duty — Ecclesiastical Not Scriptural Obedience — Appeal to Christ Against Excommunication — Cardinal D’ailly — Evil Men Do Evil Deeds — Questions and Replies — the Priests Bound to Preach — Cardinal of Florence — Excommunication No Excuse for Silence — Ecclesiastical Censures Are of Antichrist — Interdict Not to Be Imposed

Chapter XXIII

Third Audience Continued
June 8, 1415

Seven Articles from the Treatise of Huss Against Paletz — A Pope or Prelate in Deadly Sin is ipso facto, No Pope or Prelate — Embarrassing Subject for The Council — The Grace of Predestination Unites the Church and Each of its Members to its Head — A Wicked Pope a Son of Perdition — A Wicked Pope or Prelate Is No Pastor, but a Thief and a Robber — Objections — The Pope Not "Most Holy" — A Pope Legitimately Elected, if of Evil Life, Enters Not by the Door — Paletz’s Remarks — Reply of Huss — The Condemnation of the Forty-Five Articles of Wickliffe Unjust — Six Articles From the Treatise Against Stanislaus — A Majority of Electoral Votes Cannot Make a Man Christ’s Vicar — A Reprobate Pope Is Not the Head of the Church — Christ Sufficient to Rule His Church — Remarks of Huss Upon It — Peter Was Not Universal Pastor — The Apostles Ruled the Church Without a Pope — Remark of an Englishman — How to Deal with Huss — Conclusions — Cardinal D’ailly Addresses Huss — Some Reluctant to Doom Huss to the

The Life and Times of John Huss
By Ezra H. Gillett

Table of Contents
Volume II
Chapter I

Huss in Prison - His Refusal to Recant - Farewell Letters
June 8, 1415 - July 1, 1415


Chapter II

Final Audience and Execution of Huss
July 1, 1415 - July 6, 1415

Persuasions to Induce Huss to Recant — Michael De Causis — the Emperor’s Absence from Constance — the Refusal of Huss to Abjure — Deputation from the Emperor — Advice of Chlum — Reply of Huss — The Deputation Fails of its Object — Fifteenth Session of the Council — Sermon of the Bishop of Lodi — the Sabbath Council’s Decree, Enjoining Silence — Sixty Articles of Wickliffe Condemned — Statement in Regard to Huss — Thirty Articles of his Condemned — He Attempts to Reply to Each — Is Silenced — Again Silenced — Entreats to Be Heard — Denies Some of the Charges — Charge of Claiming to Be the Fourth

Chapter III

Jacobel, Gerson, and Voladamir
May, 1415 - August, 1415


Chapter IV
The Council and the Bohemians - Jerome Recants
August 1, 1415 - September 23, 1415


Chapter V

Violence of the Times — Letters of the Bohemians — Zisca
September 23, 1415 - December 19, 1415


Chapter VI

New Charges against Jerome — Conference with Benedict — Vincent Ferrara
December 19, 1415 - February 16, 1416

More Lenient Feeling Towards Jerome — Nason’s Taunt — Resignation of the Commission in Jerome’s Case — A New One Appointed — Gerson on the Method
Chapter VII

Jerome before the Council
February 16, 1416 - May 26, 1416


Chapter VIII

Sentence and Execution of Jerome
May 26, 1416 - May 30, 1416

Disposition of the Council Toward Jerome — Efforts to Save Him — His Firmness — Trying Circumstances — Twenty-First Session of the Council — Efforts to Induce Jerome to Recant and Submit to the Council — The Conference — Jerome’s Eloquent Reply — The Bishop of Lodi’s Sermon — The Necessity of Severe Measures — The Guilt of Jerome in his Presumption and Defense of his
Chapter IX

Inefficiency and Tumults of the Council ~ Ill Success and Return of the Emperor
May 31, 1416 - January 27, 1417


Chapter X

Benedict Deposed ~ Progress of Reform ~ Martin V Elected
January 27, 1417 - November 21, 1418

Affairs of Benedict — Bishop of Cuenza — The English Nation — Dispute as to the Precedence of Reform or the Election of a Pope — Measures of Reform — Sermons of Maurice and Stephen of Prague — The Cardinals Aggrieved — Demand their Passports to Leave — Refused — Divisions in the Council — Prayer for Election — State of Bohemia — Wenzel a Cipher — He Banishes Nicolas De Hussinitz — Scenes of Anarchy and Violence — The University Favors the Communion of the Cup — Peter D’Umetzow — Wenzel Leaves Prague — Urged to
Chapter XI

Measures of the Pope and Council against the Bohemians
November 22, 1417 - April 15, 1418


Chapter XII

Futile Issue of the Council ~ Its Dissolution
January 1, 1418 - April 28, 1418

Eager to Return to Italy — Greek Church — The Emperor — Want of Money —
Disappointment — Language of Gerson — King of Poland — Voladimir his Protest
— Simony of Martin V — The Emperor’s Question — Anxiety of Members to Leave
— Humiliation of the Council — Liberaity of Martin V in Granting Indulgences —
The Emperor’s Dissatisfaction — The King of Poland Aggrieved — The French
Concordat — England — Spain — Italy — Martin V Leaves Constance

Chapter XIII

Violence of Parties in Bohemia ~ Sigismund’s Army before Prague
April 15, 1418 - January 9, 1420

Reception of the Decree of the Council in Bohemia — the Reply of the Hussites
— Its Propositions — Doctrines — The Celebrated Four Articles — Zisca — His
Tact and Energy — His Letters to Tausch — Popular Indignation — Communion of
the Cup on Tabor — Plan for Attacking Prague — Wenzel Absent from the City —
Attack on the New City — Acts of Violence — Release of Prisoners Demanded at
the Town House — Tumult — Assault — Germans Throw out the Windows —
New Magistrates Appointed — Continued Attack on the New City — Zisca
Withdraws to Pilsen — Danger of the Citizens — The Queen Seeks Aid of the
Emperor — Death of Wenzel — Its Circumstances — Projects of the Emperor —
Citizens Call on Zisca for Aid — Scenes of Violence — Conflicts at Prague — Fight
at the Bridge — Conflict Renewed the Next Day — Continued Skirmishes — A
Truce Effected — Movements Elsewhere — Negligent Observance of the Truce —
John Naakuasa Burned — Gurim Assaulted — The Succession to the Crown —
Convention Summoned by Sigismund at Beraun — His Promises — Presence of
the Bohemians at Beraun — Their Submission — Conditions Imposed by
Sigismund — His Letter to Prague — Compliance of the Hussites — Insults
Offered Them — Proceedings of Sigismund at Breslau — Hussites Divided into
Calixtines and Taborites — Policy and Views of Each — The Adamites — The
Fanaticism of the Taborites in Regard to the Advent of Christ — Its Effects —
Danger of Dissentions

Chapter XIV

Defeat and Retreat of the Emperor
January 9, 1420 - July 28, 1420
Chapter XV

Taborites and Calixtines

July 28, 1420 - August 5, 1420

Chapter XVI

The Campaigns of Zisca
August 5, 1420 - October 11, 1424


Chapter XVII

The Last Crusade — Defeat of the Imperialists
October 11, 1424 - January, 1432

The Council of Sienna — Its Persecuting Decree — The "Orphans" — Procopius Magnus — A New Invasion — Diet at Frankfort — The Four Armies — Defeat of the Imperialists — Variance Between the Calixtines and Taborites — Convention
Chapter XVIII

The Council of Basle — Calixtine Ascendency
1432-1487


Chapter XIX

The Taborites and Moravians
1460-1517

Chapter XX

Reformation in Germany - the Brethren
1517-1602


Chapter XXI

Protestantism in Bohemia, down to the Close of the Thirty Years’ War
1602-1650

Section I

Early Life and Labors of John Huss

This section comprises the first six chapters plus the Preface. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Preface
Chapter 1 Conditions in Bohemia
Chapter 2 Youth of Huss—Wycliffe
Chapter 3 Progress of the New Doctrines at Prague
Chapter 4 The Council of Pisa
Chapter 5 Huss and the Archbishop
Chapter 6 Huss Excommunicated
PREFACE

The task of gathering up and combining in a connected narrative the memorials which yet remain of the life and labors of John Huss, together with the results, nearer or more remote, which followed his efforts, has long challenged the attention of the historical student. The movement which he originated in Bohemia, though engrossing for the time the observation of Europe, and fraught with far-reaching consequences, has been overshadowed by the more imposing Reformation of the succeeding century, and Huss, although in many respects the peer of Luther or Calvin, has, through neglect alone, been denied the place to which he is justly entitled by their side.

This neglect has been due, in part, to the fact that the period in which he lived has been less explored by historians; in part, to the premature and violent suppression of the Bohemian Reformation, so that its earliest records were mostly left to hostile pens; and in part, also, to the fact that the various materials necessary to elucidate the subject are so difficult of access.

The task, so long deferred, I have ventured to undertake. When I commenced it, I was not aware of a single work, in the English language, which could afford me any material aid. But, since that period, the last volume of "Neander's Church History" has been translated and published in this country, and the work of Bonnechose—"Reformers before the Reformation"—has been brought to my notice. But neither of these presents such a view of the subject as the great body of intelligent readers demand. The former is fragmentary and disconnected in its arrangement; while the American edition of the latter is impaired in value by chronological errors, and the whole account of the life of Huss previous to the Council of Constance is dispatched in a few pages. On some important points the work is quite meager, while on others the author has fallen into errors, through a failure to consult some of the most important authorities.

I have felt that the Bohemian Reformation was justly entitled to a larger share of attention than it has yet received; and such leisure as professional duties would allow, during a course of several years, and rare opportunities of access to the necessary documents, have been employed in elucidating a period in modern history but little known, yet scarcely inferior, in interest and importance, to any that preceded or that have followed it, with the exception of the Great Reformation of the sixteenth century. The character, ability, and powerful influence of Huss, his earnestness of purpose, his lofty aims, the vigor of his pen, his heroic faith and martyr's death, as well as the magnitude and significance of the conflict in which he was the acknowledged leader, all combined to render him the central figure, around which the great events of
his time may be appropriately grouped; while his tragic end, and the consequences which followed it in Bohemia and elsewhere, open to our view those memorable scenes of conflict, where Hussite and Catholic, Bohemian and imperialist, Taborite and Calixtine, reformer and conservative, met in long, bitter, and deadly strife.

The incidents of the period thus presented to view, are many of them possessed of high dramatic interest. The conflicts of Huss at Prague, as the bold and fearless reprover of ecclesiastical corruption and papal indulgences; the champion of Wickliffe and the antagonist of the archbishop; his harsh treatment by the council, which first deposed the pope by whom he had been excommunicated; his heroic fidelity to his convictions; his manly defense, cruel imprisonment, and unjust execution, all conspire to excite our interest in the issue of a struggle where the death of the leader is the signal for thousands to rise up to avenge his fall. As the drama proceeds, nearly all the leading minds and powers of Europe are brought forward upon the stage. The expiring brands of crusading zeal are kindled anew for the auto de fé of a kingdom, and invading armies, like waves dashed to foam upon the rocks, are shattered and dispersed by the fierce fanatic valor of those Taborites, who are the lineal predecessors of the peaceful Moravians.

In the progress of the drama, our attention is arrested by the bearing and efforts of individual actors. We have before us the abominable profligacy and sacrilegious impiety of John XXIII, the impetuous spirit of the Cardinal of Cambray; the learning and ability of the great Chancellor of Paris University, John Gerson; the glowing invective and searching rebukes of Clemengis; the apostolic zeal of Vincent Ferrara; the iron will and pertinacity of Benedict XIII; the self-reliance of Zabarella; the almost fabulous eloquence of Jerome of Prague; the capricious humors of the drunken Wenzel; the unscrupulous or dissembling policy of Sigismund; the heroic fidelity of John de Chlum; the fearless investigation and utterance of Jacobel; the Cromwellian energy and strategic skill of the blind Zisca; and the prudent sagacity and unyielding firmness of the Great Procopius.

We see at last attained by arts and diplomacy, what the power of arms could not accomplish, the Taborites weakened by dissension, and the Calixtines won back by compromise to the "Catholic" church. But the current which seemed lost over the broad marsh of a century, was to feed new fountains, the streams of which were at length to be gathered up to form the church of the United Brethren—an important tributary to that great tide of our common Protestantism, which rolls on today with the force and volume of an Amazon.

The sources from which the materials of the present work have been drawn are many and various. First in importance and value is the compilation of Van der Hardt, designed to illustrate the history of the Council of Constance, and which comprises three large folio volumes of from 1,200 to 1,600 pages each. Here
are to be found, also, treatises of Gerson, D'Ailly, Clemengis, Ullerston, Jacobel, and others, the histories of Niem and De Vrie, various sermons and other documents of historical importance, beside a minute record of the proceedings of the council. Second only in importance to this, is the work, in two large folios, entitled "Johannis Hus, et Hieronomi Pragensis, Confessorum Christi, Historia et Monumenta."

In this we have the sermons, letters, commentaries, controversial and other treatises of Huss, beside narratives of his controversy at Prague and his trial at Constance. Quite full accounts of the arrest and trial of Jerome, and several works of Matthias of Janow, are also included in these volumes. The "History of the Hussites," by Cochleius, an inveterate and prejudiced opponent; the "History of Bohemia," by Æneas Sylvius, afterward raised to the popedom; and the "Diarium Belli Hussitici," by Laurence Bezezyna, a Calixtine, and Chancellor of New Prague, furnish some invaluable materials. Mansi's "History of the Councils" is a work of the highest authority, and has enabled me to verify many important points. Schmidt's "History of the Dutch," though by a Roman Catholic, is a work written in an impartial and liberal spirit, and its third and fourth volumes have been of material aid in throwing light on the condition and mutual relations of Bohemia and the German empire. The general church histories of Fleury, Godeau (Germ. Edit.), Schrockh, Gieseler, Neander, Natalis Alexander, and others, have been carefully consulted, and have been of service. Spittler's "History of the Cup," Monstrelet's "Chronicles," the works of Gerson in five folio volumes, the letters and treatises of Clemengis, Crevier's "History of the University of Paris," and L'Enfant's histories of the councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basle, have all yielded valuable materials in the composition of the work. Something has been gathered from the histories of the popes, by Cormenin and Bower, while Kohler's "Huss and Seine Zeit," Helfert's "Life of Huss," Becker's "Life of Huss," Richerius' "History of the Councils," Oudin's "Dictionary of English Writers," and Moreri's large work have been carefully consulted.

I have endeavored to write with historical impartiality, yet I have not wished to suppress my judgment of the facts presented, or of the career and proceedings of the principal characters that are passed in review. Nearly all the statements contained in the work rest upon the authority of Roman Catholic authors, and where the same facts are given by writers of opposite sympathies, the marginal references are to those who would be least suspected of partiality to the cause or doctrines of Huss.

The reader will find, in the fifteenth chapter of the second volume, some repetition of statements occurring elsewhere in the work. But as that chapter was designed to present a complete view of the Taborites and Calixtines, and necessarily took the form of a dissertation, I concluded not to strike out what seemed necessary to this end, even at the risk of repeating some statements that had preceded.
The task which I have endeavored to perform has been a labor of love. A field of investigation has been opened and explored, where it was a pleasure to linger. If, in the graveyard of History, the lettering on the tombstones of men whom the world should hold in grateful remembrance has been chiseled afresh, and shall be read with the veneration due to the memory of those whose career they record, I shall feel that my labors have not been in vain.

Harlem, New York City, April 8, 1861

E. H. GILLET

CHAPTER I

Bohemia at the Close of the Fourteenth Century
Predecessors of Huss

During the latter half of the fourteenth century (1350-1400), Bohemia occupied a place among the nations of Europe somewhat correspondent to her local position in the heart of the continent. Her capital was the residence of the German emperor. Her university at Prague, though recently founded, was the oldest and most flourishing—indeed, almost the only one—in Eastern Europe. Her churches, cloisters, and palaces were remarked by the stranger with surprise and admiration, while through her connection with the German empire, her influence was widely felt. Petrarch could scarce resist the earnest and pressing invitation of Charles IV, who besought him to exchange his loved Vaucluse for a residence—in external beauty fully equal to any which his own Italy could afford—on the banks of the Moldau.

But if Prague lost the honor of sheltering the Italian poet and scholar, she was yet destined to be the center of a movement which should agitate the entire Christian world. The cry of Reform which was to be heard in almost every country of Europe, demanding the removal of the papal schism, and a remedy for the evils of the church, was to find a memorable echo in her own university. In her bosom she was fondly to cherish one of her own sons, whose influence should be more enduring and extensive than that of Petrarch, and the fundamental principle of whose doctrines—the sole and supreme authority of the word of God—was to strike the key-note of the Great Reformation in the succeeding century. She was yet to witness, gathered on her surrounding hills and along her valleys, the mustered hosts of Christendom, whose defeat was to signalize the final struggle of crusading enthusiasm with the growing light and energy of the world’s free thought.
As the capital of an enterprising nation, the residence of the German emperor, and the home of reviving art and literary culture, Prague was the foremost city of Eastern Europe. Her situation was one of the most beautiful and magnificent in the world. Around her on every side spread a broad region vitalized by her influence, and subsidiary to her prosperity and growth. Already upon that soil once possessed by barbarian hordes—the camping-ground of hosts which imperial Rome had regarded with trembling anxiety—a land of wild forests and streams and mountains, to which the ancient Boii had bequeathed their name—there had sprung up those institutions of law, government, and religion, which secured for Bohemia a fair reputation as a civilized and Christian state.

Her very position was one which seemed designed by nature to favor self-development. Situated in the heart of the European continent—bounded on her four sides by as many ranges of lofty mountains, while the angles of this gigantic diagram of rock were directed to the four points of the compass—with a fertile soil and a genial climate—with rivers bursting forth on every side from her mountain barriers, and meeting like rays about her central capital, thence to find their way by the Elbe to Hamburg and to the fourscore towns of the Hanseatic league rapidly rising in political and commercial importance—Bohemia seemed fitted by her location and general features to become one of the foremost states of Europe. She was at once sheltered and accessible, guarded from invasion, yet connected directly with the German towns by means of the Elbe, the great artery of European commerce. Her resources were sufficient to encourage enterprise and self-reliance. She was accessible enough to all that was good, useful, and improving, and yet so far secluded by nature as to encourage the patriotic purpose of maintaining and cherishing her own proper character, customs, and institutions.

But all this would have failed to give Bohemia that important influence which she was destined to exert for at least the lifetime of a generation upon the condition, policy, and prosperity of Europe, if it had not been for other causes that at this juncture began to operate. The time had come when the force of free religious thought was to be manifested on a broader scale, and in a more conspicuous manner than ever before. During centuries past, the world had been losing faith in all but material forces. The German empire was built up and maintained by physical energy. Soldiers of fortune—mercenary chieftains—had become again and again the arbiters of national destiny. Faith in the papacy—no longer what it was antecedent to the "Babylonian Captivity"—had been sadly shaken. The appeal to the sword and to the right of the strongest had superseded every other. Even the popes had shown more faith in the temporal sword which they invoked, than in their own interdicts. Amid the clash of arms—the echoes of battle-fields like Poictiers and Cressy—other voices were drowned.

But the empire of ideas was now to be notably enlarged, if not inaugurated anew. Superficial observers might look with contempt on the utterances or
writings of obscure priests or preachers. They might hope to find the key of
destiny in the leaders of armies, in the hands of king or emperor. But it was
soon to be seen that, on the great chessboard of European history, monarchs
might be merely pawns, like Wenzel of Bohemia, or Charles VI of France; while
the real kings were the men of thought—pamphleteers, like Ullerston, Gerson,
and Clemenges, or reformers, like Wickliffe, Janow, Jacobel, and Huss.

It is true, indeed, that the great reform movement, of which Huss was the
leader, was, to human view, after a most desperate and prolonged struggle,
crushed out—not, however, without leaving behind it most important results.
But in its own day, it distinctly revealed the comparative impotence of mere
material forces, employed to exterminate an idea that had become rooted in a
nation’s heart. Army after army, numbering scores of thousands of fierce and
reckless men, was dashed to fragments in the attempt to subdue Bohemia to
the papal obedience. The attention of Europe—of emperors, kings, popes, and
councils—was riveted, for almost an entire generation, upon the progress and
prospects of the movement originated by Huss at Prague. The interest of
European history for this period centers mainly in the efforts that were made;
by the combined forces of Christendom, to restore the old basis of things
shaken and overthrown by the Hussite reform.

It is interesting and instructive to trace the origin of the forces from which this
sprang, or by the alliance of which it was furthered and sustained. Huss himself
did not call them into being. Some of them he found ready to his hand; of
others, his own sagacity enabled him to take advantage. The patriotic spirit of
the Bohemian people, their jealousy of foreign innovations, and the peculiar
advantages which they enjoyed for assuming an independent position in respect
to the usages and doctrines of the church, must all be taken into account, as
well as the paramount influence of the novel exhibition and enforcement of
scripture truth.

We find, indeed, at an earlier period than the one which we are about to
consider, the development of a strong feeling of nationality. This feeling, in
reality, had gained a remarkable development during the closing years of the
fourteenth century—the period immediately preceding the entrance of Huss
upon his public career. For the two preceding centuries it had been kept alive,
and had even acquired strength in opposition to foreign innovations. The
introduction of the usages of the Romish church, and the extended jurisdiction
of Roman law, had not been gained without a struggle. The popular literature,
meager as it was, was warmly cherished, and gave place but slowly to Latin
learning.

Still the policy of the rulers of the nation—especially of the last kings of the
Premysl house—favored innovation and immigration. The old jurisprudence was
modified by the forced introduction of canon law. Artisans and merchants from
abroad were encouraged to take up their residence within the kingdom.
Colonies of German settlers were welcomed in the cities and the towns. In some cases they acquired a predominant influence. The nobility gave their castles German names. In many municipalities the German element was in the ascendant. The city records of Prague were written in German. Judicial proceedings were in the German language. German preachers occupied the pulpits. German judges presided in the courts of justice, and the highest civil offices were filled by Germans. German manners and usages, German names and phrases, prevailed in social circles. The university was patronized by German students, who outnumbered the Bohemians in the proportion of five to one. The lucrative benefices of the church were filled by German priests and bishops; and for a time it seemed as if Bohemia was to become a German province.

Charles IV encouraged the introduction of the usages of the Romish church, as well as German immigration. But already the national spirit had begun to react upon the innovations by which it was threatened to be overwhelmed. The first concession made to it was the erection of the archbishopric of Prague—a measure which the emperor successfully commended to the pope, on the ground that the Slavic tongue, peculiar to the Bohemians and Moravians, was strange to their diocesan, the archbishop of Mayence, and his clergy. The second victory won by the national feeling was the enactment of a law that none should fill the office of a civil judge who could not understand and speak the Bohemian language.

Meanwhile, Bohemian literature had begun to revive. The scriptures were translated into Bohemian. The venerable Stitny—a patriot and scholar, to whom we shall again have occasion to refer—wrote numerous works in his native language, and labored in various ways to make the treasures of the Latin language accessible to his countrymen. "Before God," said he, "the Bohemian is just as good as the Latin." With much opposition, especially from the friends of "school-learning," he maintained his patriotic position, and endeared his name to every true Bohemian.

The struggle was at length transferred to the university. The Bohemian nation, outvoted by the other three, had seen the most honorable positions and offices held by strangers. Their first resistance to this usurpation of numbers, which denied them what they regarded as their rights, took place in 1384-5, under the rectorate of Konrad Soltow By the favor of the king and court, the archbishop and the native clergy, they gained their point. The foreign party appealed to the pope. The university was filled with confusion and discord. But the Bohemians won the victory, and at length (1399-1403) the "College of the Bohemian nation" was established, expressly for native Bohemians.

As we have already remarked, Huss commenced his university course at the very time when the struggle of patriotic feeling with foreign domination had been transferred to the scenes upon which he now entered. Bohemian by birth,
and with a soul alive to the most generous impulses, he showed himself from the first a zealous champion of the nation’s rights. From feeling and from principle, he put himself at the head of the popular movement, and his influence as a reformer was strengthened by his position as a patriot. In the latter character his countrymen have never ceased to cherish his memory. In their eyes, the faults of the heretic are lost in the virtues of the patriot. Many a locality is even yet almost sacred, in popular esteem, from association with his name and memory. In the royal library of the great college-building at Prague, a Hussite hymnbook, written and illustrated with singular splendor, is still carefully preserved. This book, which must have cost many thousand florins, was the joint production of a large proportion of the citizens. Each guild and corporation had a few hymns written, and pictures painted to accompany them, and in this work they were joined by several noble families, each family or guild placing its own pictured arms or crest before its own portion of the book. Most of the pictures represent events in Biblical history, or incidents in the life of Huss. Among the latter are scenes of his disputes with the priests, and of his martyrdom, while the ecclesiastics in their robes are looking coldly on, and angels hover over the victim to comfort him in his agony. Despite his heresy the name of Huss is now spoken with veneration and affection even by those who would still feel constrained to pronounce him a heretic.

The same influences which nurtured a national and patriotic spirit, tended to counteract the aggrandizing and grasping policy of the court of Rome. It was foreign, anti-national, and odious. The Bohemian noble was, moreover, proud-spirited and independent. His country itself lay sheltered in that deep basin which once held the waters of a primeval sea. On every side rose the mountain walls of its defense. It was indeed itself a fortress, and mythologic fancy might be excused if it ascribed the stupendous barriers and abutments that surrounded it to the hands of primeval Titans. The tide of foreign invasion broke as it dashed against the mountain fastness, and he who never had been conquered might cherish the pride that defied attack. A freedom of thought, less congenial to other lands, might find here a secure abode. By those rivers which spread like veins and arteries all over the land, and under the shadows of those forests and giant mountains which bounded the horizon, men felt but little awe, or respect for ecclesiastical censure or persecuting edicts. The jests of the rough knights—often too much tainted, doubtless, with the vices of their kings—showed little regard for the assumed authority or sanctity of the Papal See. In the general assessment by which the avarice of the Roman court spread its huge dragnet over Europe, Bohemia, like England, was sheltered by her isolated situation. And besides all this, her attachment to her old usages, long cherished by the patriotic feeling of her citizens, had made her exceedingly reluctant to conform to the Romish ritual. Former sympathies and associations had connected her with the East. By the Greek church she had first been Christianized, and, until near the middle of the fourteenth century, a strong attachment to the rites and usages derived from this source had very generally
The process by which the nation was brought to recognize the authority of the See of Rome was slow and difficult. The celibacy of the clergy, and the withholding of the cup in the eucharist, were regarded as innovations. They excited a strong, bitter, and prolonged resistance. The attempt which was at length made, in the reign of the emperor Charles IV, to enforce them by laws and penalties, secured indeed an outward conformity, but among the masses of the nation, the work of reducing the church to Roman usages and ceremonial, could, as a general thing, only excite indignation.

Some of the Waldenses, moreover, driven out from their Piedmontese valleys, had found a refuge within the fortress-like walls of the Bohemian mountains, and there, in quiet and security, spread their doctrines and influence. It was here that Peter Waldo, according to Maimbourg, the founder of that sect, was finally sheltered from the persecution which drove him first into Picardy, and then to Bohemia. Here, in a land where no papal police was as yet tolerated, he found, in all probability, a peaceful grave. Many of his disciples must have followed him. The inquisition drove them from their homes, and their only safety was in obscurity. Thirty-five of them perished in one fire at Bingen. At Strasbourg eighty were burned. The consequence was, that they were driven toward Bohemia. Reiner, in A.D. 1254, reckons the schools of the Leonists in the diocese of Passau at forty-one. Their influence in Bohemia must have been perceptibly felt, and their views were far enough from coinciding with the orthodoxy of Rome. They derided the clerical tonsure. They ridiculed those prevalent ecclesiastical promotions which filled the highest official stations of the church with successors to Simon Magus rather than the apostles. The vulgar tongue was as fitting for prayer, in their view, as the Latin, which they did not understand. Long before Laurentius Valla had exposed the spuriousness of the "false decretals," they had rejected them. They laughed at the legends of the saints. They reverenced "the traditions" of the church no more than Christ did the traditions of the Pharisees. They denied purgatory. They considered lights in churches needless. To them holy water was no better than any other, and the cross was but a piece of wood. But it was their veneration for, and their acquaintance with, the word of God, abundantly attested by their persecutors, that led them to dissent so emphatically from the Roman church. Of the purity of their lives, and the simple devotion which characterized their worship, their foes themselves leave us no room to doubt.

Nearly one hundred and forty years later, in 1391, we find, according to the testimony of a Roman inquisitor, that among their teachers were Hungarians and Bavarians, showing that on both sides of Bohemia the Waldensian doctrines had found a foothold. We cannot doubt that they were more generally held in the sheltered region that lay between Bavaria and Hungary. We shall see hereafter the immediate connection between the Waldenses and the doctrines which brought the wrath of the Council of Constance upon the university of Prague, and the kingdom of Bohemia.
The views which had thus found their way into Bohemia were never altogether rooted out. From time to time they were revived by men whose advocacy gave them an important influence upon the condition of the kingdom. There is no necessity, however, of attributing to a foreign source the origin of the reform movement in Bohemia. Whatever increment it may have received from foreign sources, it was undoubtedly in great part indigenous. The hereditary kingdom of the German emperor was really, at the close of the fourteenth century (1370–1400), in advance of the surrounding nations, in literary and industrial activity. The proof of this will be spread before us as we proceed. It was from the midst of this intellectual agitation and enterprise, that the religious movement sprang. It received an undesigned impulse from the enlarged views and even the aggrandizing policy of Charles IV. No one can trace his career of manifold activity—using every art to extend and consolidate the empire, discarding the sword and the warlike aims of his predecessors but regaining by treaty and stratagem more than they had lost, studiously avoiding all collision with the papacy yet adroitly grasping every advantage which its necessities afforded him—and not perceive that under his liberal patronage the cause of learning and of letters would necessarily enter upon a career of brighter prospects. This was in fact the case. With the exception of the universities of Paris and Oxford, the university of Prague held the highest rank in Europe. It was natural that the attention of its teachers and students should be drawn to the scandalous state of the church, and that the facts which excited the indignation of Wickliffe at Oxford, should not be unnoted at Prague.

It was almost contemporaneously with the founding of the university, that the first notable criticism on the degeneracy of Christendom, and the first indignant protest against its corruptions, were put forth in Bohemia. The character, influence, and labors of those who gave utterance to these views and feelings, have been overshadowed by the more distinguished efforts of their successors, while their continued and professed adherence to the authority and usages of the church has saved them from the notoriety which their condemnation or rejection as heretics would have conferred.

But among the precursors of Huss, who anticipated him in the utterance of views of scriptural reform, there are three men worthy of special notice. These were, the Austrian, Conrad Waldhauser, or Conrad Steikna, as he has been improperly called; John Milicz, of Kremsier in Moravia; and Matthias of Janow.

The first of these, whose death was almost contemporaneous with the birth of Huss, belonged to the order of St. Augustine, and exerted a powerful influence in Vienna, where he preached for a space of fifteen years (1345–1360). During this period occurred the jubilee proclaimed by Clement VI (1350). Among the pilgrims to Rome on this occasion was Conrad himself. He had full opportunity to witness the effect of the papal bull of indulgence, and the mischievous results which followed its publication. The crowd that was assembled at Rome was immense. "One would have thought," says Petrarch, who was present, "that
the plague (1347) which had almost unpeopled the world had not so much as thinned it." The concourse of pilgrims was prodigious. It was estimated by the Romans themselves at over a million, and the number present at the end was equal to that at the beginning of the year.

It was impossible for an impartial observer to remain blind to the mischiefs attendant upon the scenes of the jubilee. A plenary absolution of all sins for a pilgrimage to Rome, or the pious donation of the amount of expense which such a pilgrimage would incur, could not be proclaimed, as it was by the papal bull, without producing results which would invite the reprehension of serious and thoughtful minds. The eyes of Conrad were opened by his visit to the capital of Christendom. He returned to Austria a preacher of repentance. The influence of his sermons may be gathered from the charge which his enemies, at a later period, brought against him, of disturbing everywhere the public peace. He defended himself by referring to similar accusations brought against Christ himself.

But from the time of his visit to Rome he seems to have labored less at Vienna, and to have been engaged rather as an itinerant preacher. He taught "through all Austria," even to the city of Prague. Charles IV appreciated the labors and the eloquence of the man. He endeavored to secure him for Bohemia, and in 1360 he was called as parish priest to the city of Leitmeritz. But the field was too narrow for his zeal. It was circumscribed, moreover, by opposition, and a controversy into which he was led with the Dominicans and Franciscans. The result was that he determined to seek at Prague a broader and more inviting field.

For a year he preached in the church of St. Galli, but the edifice could not hold the throngs which pressed to hear him. Unwilling to have the word of God withheld from any who desired to hear it, and anxious to labor for the salvation of many, he went forth into the open market-place, and preached to immense audiences which there assembled. The spirit of his sermons may be gathered from his own words: "Not willing that the blood of souls should be required at my hands, I traced, as I was able, in the Holy Scripture, the future dangers impending over the souls of men." Upon the innovations that had been introduced into the church, and upon the monks, whom he regarded as the authors of them, he was especially severe. He exposed their vices, as well as their hypocrisy. He called them wolves in sheep's clothing. He showed from scripture that their peculiar dress and mode of life were unwarranted by the authority of the word of God, and could only have originated in monstrous fables; that their bodily mortifications were "vain and damnable"—without promise for the present life, or the hope of future recompense. Their notorious indolence and everlasting psalm-singing were frequent topics with him. The machinery of religion, which killed all true devotion, and measured its value, not by the feelings of the heart, but by bells and hourglasses, was denounced. He protested against the perpetual vows to a monastic life which were imposed
by parents upon their children. They only who were led by the Spirit of God, were the sons of God. Monasticism—against which he had nothing to say, when in itself considered—had become by its degeneracy a source of great mischief. One might as wisely embark in a leaky craft to cross the Danube, as repose in it for security. The monks themselves had become like the Pharisees of old; they had bound to men’s shoulders burdens too heavy to be borne, which they would not touch themselves with one of their fingers; they had insolently set themselves up as teachers of the people; they had usurped to themselves the rights and privileges of the pastors, yet, in fact, shut men out of the kingdom of heaven by refusing them the Bible in their own language; they had encouraged superstition, and aggravated the prevalent corruption by their vain questions and controversies, their useless school-quarrels and nonsense. To carry out their designs, they made godliness a matter of traffic, introducing themselves into houses, and leading simple women astray. In this unsparing style he upbraided the monks.

It was natural that they should turn just as hotly upon their opponent. They exhausted their resources and exerted all their influence to secure his overthrow. But their efforts were unsuccessful. The king, Charles IV, is said to have favored him. He was perhaps unwilling to see a man, whose learning and sincerity won his respect, prostrated by such foes, and the rather that Conrad gave no occasion for reprehension in his faith or life.

But he poured the torrent of his rebukes not only upon the monks, but upon the general corruption of his times. His influence upon the minds of some of the richest women was such that they gave away the proceeds of their most costly ornaments in charity to the poor.

Matthias of Janow characterizes both his predecessors, Conrad and Milicz, as men full of the spirit of Elijah. But Conrad was rather a John the Baptist. He was a powerful preacher of repentance. He spoke forth sharp warnings to flee from the wrath to come. No prevalent vice escaped his rebuke. Pride of dress, usury, lightness, and youthful vanities were rebuked, and a powerful impression was made. The usurer gave up his ill-gotten gains. The thoughtless and giddy became serious. Quite a number of Jews were drawn to listen to his sermons. A radical change was effected in the hearts of a large number of his hearers, while the purity of his own life exhibited an example of what he commended to them. In 1364 the hostility toward him came to a head. Twenty-nine articles were drawn up against him by the Dominicans and Franciscans, in concert; but when the day of trial came, no one dared to present them.

Conrad died while parish priest of the Teyn church, in the year 1369. The Jesuit Balbinus objects to his being considered a precursor of Huss. He confesses, however, that his writings against the monks betrayed a freedom of expression which might lead his readers to contemn their teachers and disobey their prelates. One of his treatises is entitled “Indictment of the Mendicants,”
and contains some severe charges against the bishops and the clergy. The Jesuit should have remembered that the unpardonable sin of Wickliffe was not venial in Conrad, unless Rome had two tribunals, one for England and another for Bohemia.

John Milicz was a native of Kremsier, in Moravia, and a contemporary of Conrad. He had studied theology and law at the university of Prague. By perusing the history of his native land, he had early perceived the superiority of the former and ancient constitution of the Greek church in Bohemia and Moravia. Although a foreigner, he was, by the archbishop of Prague, appointed archdeacon and preacher of the cathedral church. Other offices of distinction were conferred upon him. But the bestowal of these dignities did not lull him into indolence. It only roused his energies anew to the inculcation of wholesome though unacceptable truths. He preached often against the introduction of the practice of administering the sacrament only under one form, the use of an unknown tongue in the public worship, the celibacy and wealth of the clergy, the vows of the religious order, the false miracles and legends of the monks, and their self-invented sanctity. But his course was a disappointment to the hopes of the archbishop and the ecclesiastics. He saw that he was unacceptable to them, and resigned his office of archdeacon. This lucrative prebend he exchanged for the humble office of sacristan in the same church. It was in vain that several prelates urged him to accept, at their hands, the same dignity which he had previously held. He had always taught that a priest and monk should be poor. He was now completely so himself, and his whole worldly dependence was on the alms of his pious fellow-citizens.

To this condition he had not been brought without a severe inward struggle. He had to make a stern choice between popularity and promotion on one side, and poverty and reproach on the other. His acceptance as a preacher was such that he might almost command any position to which he might aspire. It had not indeed been so at the first. His natural and plain style of address had not been pleasing, especially to those who had been accustomed to that artistic inflation and bombast of the monk, which Milicz in his writings has criticized with caustic severity. But good sense at last carried the day. The tide turned in favor of the man whose sincerity of purpose and simplicity of speech stood in striking contrast with the conduct and manner of his opponents, for such the monks proved themselves to be. The people cherished toward him a strong affection. They would not suffer him to be silent, and sometimes he was constrained to preach three or four times the same day. Merchants and strangers from Germany visited Prague in large numbers, and to benefit them he learned the German language. Withdrawing for a while to Bishopteintz, in the circle of Pilsen, and engaging in a humble service as curate, he was not long content in retirement, and in a place where he seemed to himself to enjoy too much luxury, and soon returned to Prague.
Here his labors were abundant, and his self-denial was extreme. He preached twice every Sunday and holiday, and sometimes four or five times daily in different churches. His sermons were not unfrequently two or three hours long, and his only preparation—in many cases the only preparation possible—was prayer. His abstemiousness in eating and drinking was carried probably to an excess. He wore a rough hair shirt next to his skin; and, in his voluntary poverty, as well as in his writings, administered a severe rebuke to the mendicants who violated vows which he never had assumed.

His enthusiastic admirer and pupil, Matthias of Janow, said of him, "Having been a simple priest and secretary at the prince’s court, before his experience of the visitation of the Spirit of Christ, he grew so rich in wisdom and all utterance of doctrine, that it was a light matter to him to preach five times a day—once in Latin, once in German, and then again in the Bohemian tongue—and this publicly, with a mighty force and a powerful voice; and he constantly brought forth from his treasure things old and new."

His preaching bore fruit in a striking reformation. Prague was noted for its depravity of manners. It abounded in brothels. Milicz directed his energies, among other things, to the reform of licentious women. At first twenty were converted, and a dwelling was procured for them. By enlisting the aid of devout women, the work was extended. Several hundreds were recovered from the paths of vice. "Little Venice," as it was called, the "Five Points" of Prague, was so transformed that it was thereafter known as "Little Jerusalem." A Magdalene hospital was founded, and in the chapel annexed to it there was preaching every day. According to Janow, the very face of the city was transformed. "I confess," he says, "that I cannot enumerate even the tenth part of what my own eyes saw, my own ears heard, and my own hands handled, though I lived with him but a short time."

For six years Milicz continued to preach, unwearyed in his efforts. But he was not satisfied with himself. His humility made him feel that he was unfit to preach. Only by the urgent persuasion of his friends, who represented to him the bad effects which would result from abandoning his field, was he restrained from adopting a more rigid and secluded life as a monk. But even their persuasions could not long restrain the impulse which he felt, urging him to solitary meditation. To this impulse he yielded. In seclusion from the world, and in the silence of his own thoughts, he reflected upon the condition of the church throughout the world. He seemed to see Antichrist embodied before him, in the variety of errors and abuses which stalked abroad under a Christian name.

Suddenly he felt called upon to visit the pope, narrate to him his visions, and utter his admonitions. He went at the command, as he supposed, of the Holy Spirit. He would have the pope originate a spiritual crusade for the overthrow of Antichrist. A general council should be called. The bishops should devise
means for restoring discipline, and monks and secular priests should be exhorted to go forth as preachers.

Milicz went to Rome, when Urban, designing to return from Avignon (1367), was expected daily. For a month he gave himself up to fasting, prayer, and the reading of the scriptures. Still the pope did not arrive. Milicz could no longer restrain himself. He posted on the doors of St. Peter’s that on a certain day he would appear and address the multitude. It is said, moreover, that he added, "The Antichrist is come; he has his seat in the church." But the notification of the sermon alone was enough to excite suspicion. At the instigation of the mendicant monks, he was arrested by the inquisition, loaded with chains, given over to the Franciscans, and closely confined. But he endured all with uncomplaining meekness. Not a bitter word escaped his lips, and his persecutors were confounded by his patient submission.

After a prolonged imprisonment, he was asked what he had intended to preach. He replied by asking his examiners to give him back his Bible, pen, ink, and paper, and they should have his discourse in writing. The request was granted, and Milicz’s imprisonment was alleviated. Before a large assembly of prelates and learned men he delivered his discourse, and it made a profound impression. Still he was kept in prison, and there composed his celebrated work on Antichrist. "The author writes this," he says, "a prisoner, and in chains, troubled in spirit, longing for the freedom of Christ’s church, protesting that he has not kept back that which was in his heart, but has spoken it out to the church," &c.

On the arrival of Urban at Rome, Milicz was released, to the disappointment of the monks who had prophesied the fate of their old antagonist, but to the great joy of his friends at Prague, whom he hastened to rejoin.

With fresh zeal he now recommenced his labors. Not content with preaching himself, he wished to train others for the work. Often was he heard to say, "Would that all were prophets." He established, in fact, what might be regarded as a Theological Seminary—a school of the prophets. Two or three hundred young men were gathered around him, under the same roof, who submitted themselves to his instruction and training. He copied books for them to study, and engaged them also in the work of transcription. His aim was to multiply and extend the circulation of devotional and instructive books. No external badge, no common discipline, rule, or vow, nor uniformity of dress, distinguished his pupils. They formed a unique brotherhood, bound together by common sympathies and common aims. No effort was spared by Milicz to promote their usefulness. When trained, he sought to find them spheres of labor, with rare humility and fond affection, commending them as those who would surpass himself. Their exemplary, or perhaps we should say, puritanic conduct made them objects of reproach. They were nick-named "Miliczans," "Beghards," &c.
On the death of Conrad, Milicz succeeded to his office. Besides preaching daily, he drew up forms of prayer for public worship in the native language, which were extensively adopted. But his extraordinary course of activity, and reproof of sin, drew down upon him envy and persecution. The priests, whose disgraceful connections he rebuked, united against him. The archbishop, with great reluctance, was forced to call him to account for his street preaching. Twelve heads of accusation were drawn up against him, and sent to the pope (1314). Gregory XI, who then occupied the papal chair, wrote back to the archbishop, and the bishops of Breslau, Olmutz, and Leitomischel, expressing surprise at their negligence and that of the inquisitors, whereby this dangerous heretic had been permitted to spread his errors through Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Poland, and urged them promptly to arrest the evil, provided, however, that the charges made should be found true. A similar admonition was likewise sent to the emperor Charles IV.

In these circumstances, Milicz, doubtless taught by past experience, preferred to submit his case to the pope himself, and, having made his appeal, set out for Avignon. Of the manner in which he was received, we are not informed; and while his cause was yet depending, he died in that city.

The influence exerted by Milicz directly, and through his pupils, must have been powerful and extensive. The archbishop, for many years at least, reposed great confidence in him, and treated him with much kindness. In many important commissions he was employed both by the archbishop and the emperor. Indeed, for a time he was imperial secretary and chancellor.

The writings of Milicz were numerous, and all were written in the Latin language. Some of them still survive. Among them are his Fast sermons, Postilles, and especially his treatise on Antichrist, to which reference has been already made, and which is embodied in Janow's larger treatise on the same subject. To Milicz unquestionably belongs the credit of having first boldly put forth those views on the subject of Antichrist, which are so largely extended and elucidated by Matthias of Janow, and which were substantially adopted by Huss himself.

In the footsteps of Conrad and Milicz, although eventually taking a position in advance of theirs, followed Matthias of Janow. He was born at Prague, but was generally called the Parisian, from having spent six years at the university of Paris, and having there received his Doctor's degree. He was also called the Cracovian, from a temporary residence at Cracow. He was for a short time a pupil of Milicz, and perhaps through him became parish priest at Prague, and father confessor of the emperor Charles IV. For this post he was well fitted, both by talent and education. He had traveled much, and been a careful observer as well as close student. He had a large acquaintance with the relations and customs of different countries. No one in his day had a clearer
conception of the moral and religious condition of Christendom, and no one labored more diligently or zealously for its reform.

The most decisive and important influence that shaped his career was exerted by the life and writings of Milicz. This penetrated him, as he expresses it, with that holy fire which left him no rest. It was through "the light of God’s word" that the corruptions of the church were made manifest to him. "Once," says he, "my mind was encompassed by a thick wall; I thought of nothing but what delighted the eye and the ear, till it pleased the Lord Jesus to deliver me as a brand from the burning. And while I, worst slave to my passions, was resisting him in every way, he delivered me from the flames of Sodom, and brought me into the place of sorrow, of great adversities, and of much contempt. Then first I became poor and contrite, and searched with trembling the word of God."

In some respects Janow must be regarded as decidedly in advance of Conrad and Milicz. His familiarity with scripture is remarkable. His views of the necessity of reform are clear and comprehensive. He understands fully the difficulties with which it has to contend, and proposes to overcome them by sound and scriptural methods.

No one can peruse his writings without feeling that he has come in contact with a mind penetrated with the love of truth, and possessed of a clear insight into the spirit of the gospel. In an age when the worldly spirit was triumphant; when, with thousands of the priesthood, gain was godliness and promotion was success, he withstood the bribes which were extended to his selfishness and ambition. It was not without a bitter inward struggle that he finally was brought to the point of self-renunciation and self-denial. The record which he has left us of his experience is exceedingly vivid. It portrays the spiritual conflicts through which he was called to pass, in words which reveal the process by which he was prepared for his work.

"My feet," he says, "had almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped; and, unless a crucified Jesus had come to my rescue, my soul had sunk to hell. But he, my most faithful and loving Saviour, in whom is no guile, shoved to me their counsels; and I knew the face of the harlot, by which she allures all that stand at the corners of the streets and the entrances of the paths. Nevertheless, I prayed to God and the Father of Jesus Christ my Lord, holding up the Bible in my hands; and I cried out, with heart and voice, ‘O Lord and Father, who ordainest my life, leave me not to their thoughts and counsels, and let me not be taken in their net, lest I fall under that reproachful sin which shall sting my conscience, and drive out wisdom from my soul!’... I confess, before God and his Christ, that so alluring was this harlot, Antichrist, that she so well feigned herself the true spouse of Jesus Christ, or rather, Satan by his arts so tricked her out, that from my early years I was long in doubt what I should choose, or what keep: whether I should seek out and chase after
benefices, and thirstily grasp for honors, which to some extent I did, or rather, go forth without the camp, bearing the poverty and reproach of Christ: whether, with the many, I should live in quest of an easy and quiet life for the moment, or rather, cling to the faithful and holy truth of the gospel: whether to commend what almost all commend; lay my plans as many do; dispense with and gloss over the scriptures, as many of the great and learned and famous of this day do; or rather, manfully inculpate and accuse their unfruitful works of darkness, and so hold to the simple truth of the divine words, which plainly contravene the lives and morals of men of this age, and prove them false brethren: whether I should follow the spirit of wisdom with its suggestions, which I believe the divine Spirit of Jesus, or follow the sentiment of the great multitude, which, in their self-indulgence, without show of mercy or charity, while lovers of this world and full of carnal vanities, they claim to be safe. I confess that between these two courses I hung wavering in doubt; and unless our Lord Jesus be our keeper, none will escape the honeyed face and smile of this harlot—the tricks of Satan and the snares of Antichrist."

The man who had passed unscathed through such temptations, had been disciplined for future trials. He was one upon whom all the influences of gain and terror would be alike powerless.

His principal work is entitled, *De regulis veteris et Novi Testamenti*. Most of it still remains buried in manuscripts, the contents of which have been, in large extracts, set forth by P. Jordan, in his "Predecessors of Hussism in Bohemia." It seems to be composed of a collection of independent treatises, written on different occasions, and hence, as might be expected, abounds in repetitions. Its title indicates its scope. It rejects the authority of human traditions and popish decretals, and substitutes in their place the supreme authority of the divine word. It tries everything by this test. The conduct of the bishops and the priests is severely arraigned. The Antichrist has already come. He is neither Jew, pagan, Saracen, nor worldly tyrant, but the "man who opposes Christian truth and the Christian life by way of deception; he is, and will be, the most wicked Christian, falsely styling himself by that name, assuming the highest station in the church, and possessing the highest consideration, arrogating dominion over all ecclesiastics and laymen"; one who, by the working of Satan, assumes to himself power and wealth and honor, and makes the church, with its goods and sacraments, subservient to his own carnal ends.

The kingdoms of Christ and Antichrist are to be slowly and gradually evolved, side by side. But the spiritual annihilation of the latter (1340) had already commenced. It was to be accomplished by God, "by the breath of his mouth," the utterance of his elect priests and preachers, who were to go forth in the spirit of Elias and Enoch. In his predecessor, Milicz, Janow recognizes one in whom Elias had reappeared. The work begun was to go forward, like the operation of the leaven, or the growth of the mustard-seed.
To expose Antichrist is with Janow an important object. He points out the arrogance and the worldly sympathies and connections of the bishops, their greed of wealth, their vain attempt to serve two masters. But worse than this, because more directly fatal to the spiritual improvement of the people, was the neglect of the parochial clergy. A secularized hierarchy was Antichrist embodied.

The causes of this apostasy are laid open. One of these is the transfer of reverence from the Holy Scriptures to the decretals and Clementines. Human ordinances are placed above the commandments of God. Another is, that men choose to seek salvation in sensible and corporeal things, rather than in the Crucified alone. Those who confess Christ are censured and persecuted. The false prophets extol their own stately ceremonies, and anathematize for their nonobservance. Hereby the consciences of men are ensnared, and the devil acquires great power to involve men in guilt. But no multiplicity of human laws and ordinances can meet every contingency and relation. The Spirit of God alone can do this. Hence the multiplied laws of men are superfluous and inadequate. They should be called, not traditions, but superstitions. In view of this, Janow, with a Christian sagacity, assumes the tone of the prophet: "So have I gathered," he says, "from the Holy Scriptures; and I believe that all the above-named works of men, ordinances and ceremonies, will be utterly extirpated, cut up by the roots, and cease—and God alone will be exalted, and his word will abide forever; and the time is close at hand when these ordinances shall be abolished."

The substitute for all these is God's word, "the common rule for all." But positive law has been ineffectual to recover fallen men, and Christ has left to them the law of the Spirit. To its sound and simple beginnings the Christian church should be brought back. Monastic orders are not needed for the governing of the church. The unity of this is found in its union with Christ. The priest and the layman alike are one in him. The first has peculiar duties, but the same great privileges are accessible to both.

In connection with this point, we should also consider Janow's views in regard to the sacrament. He had laid down the principles from which the doctrine of the communion of the cup for the laity was a plain and direct inference. Yet for this he was not called in question. His views in regard to frequent communion are those which seem to have been most obnoxious. On this point he spoke with great earnestness and warmth; and it deserves to be noticed that he uniformly expresses himself as if he thought the laity were also entitled, not only to frequent communion, but communion in both kinds; and it scarcely admits of question that his treatises or letters on this subject were the germ of Calixtine doctrine as developed subsequently by Jacobel.

A large portion of Janow's writings was for a period ascribed to Huss. Of the separate treatises from his pen, of which his larger work was composed, we
have those on "Antichrist," on "The Kingdom, People, Life, and Manners of Antichrist," the "Abomination of Carnal Priests and Monks," "Abolishing Sects," "The Unity of the Church," and a few others less important.

The first, on Antichrist, is an "Anatomy of the Beast." It is indeed a literary curiosity, the product of a mind ingenious and somewhat fanciful, but penetrating, sagacious, scripturally enlightened, and glowing with a fire of holy indignation against the monstrous corruptions of the church. The names of Antichrist are presented in alphabetical order "Abomination of Desolation" "Babylon," "Bear of the Wood," &c. The various members of his mystical body are then described—the head, hair, brow, eyes, nose, neck, breast, loins, &c. Most important are the three false principles which are formed from the tail of Antichrist. The first is, that as soon as one is elected pope of Rome, he becomes head of the whole militant church, and supreme vicar of Christ on earth. This is pronounced a bare lie. The second is that what the pope determines in matters of faith is to be received as of equal authority with the gospel. This is likewise pronounced false, for we must believe him, who has so often erred in matters of faith, only when he is supported by the scriptures. The third—that the laws of the pope are to be obeyed before the gospel—is declared blasphemous, for it is blasphemy to believe the pope or any one else, or to accept his laws, in preference to Christ.

The treatise on "The Abomination of Carnal Priests and Monks" is in the same vein with that on Antichrist. It is peculiarly severe upon the mendicants. Wickliffe at Oxford, or Gerson at Paris, could not have been more unsparing in their reprehensions. The lukewarmness of the prelates; their avarice, wealth, and simony; the negligence of the priesthood in the execution of their duties; the unseemly strifes between the monks and the regular clergy; the sacrilegious sale of sacred things; the barter of masses, indulgences, &c.; the false worship offered to the bones of dead saints, while God's poor but devoted children are contemned and despised, are unsparingly exposed. The reign of hypocrisy had become universal. There were, indeed, not a few faithful still left; like the seven thousand in Israel, that had never bent the knee to Baal. But by the iniquity of the times they were proscribed or driven into solitude. No path was open for their promotion. Ambitious and worldly men, by disgraceful methods, attained places of power and influence in the church. Wickedness, if powerful and gilded with pomp, was flattered, while any mention or exhibition of the crucified Jesus in synodical assemblies was impatiently borne.

The various passages of scripture, both in the Old and New Testaments, in which the great apostasy of the church is foretold, or in which the iniquity of Antichrist is exhibited, are successively considered. Ezekiel's vision; Gog and Magog; he that sitteth in the temple of God; the locusts of Revelation; the beast with the seven heads and the ten horns; the woman seated upon the beast, with her cup of abomination in her hand, and her forehead branded
“Babylon the great, the mother of harlots,” are brought to view and shown to be exact descriptions of the prevailing apostasy. Even now, Janow declares that the pious are persecuted. They are reproached as Beghards and Turpins, Picards and wretches. Schisms, fraternities, and orders abound. The “religious” eat and drink, and are drunken on the sins of the people. Blasphemous indulgences are published, which one can scarce credit. Donations are extorted by threats of hell, and the poor are robbed by the avarice of the monks.

But Antichrist is to be destroyed. Christ will destroy him by the breath of his mouth and the brightness of his coming. He will raise up those who shall proclaim his word, and thus consume the lies and errors of the great deceiver.

Janow protests that he does not write, directing his words against any individual, but at the general apostasy. Nothing is said in bitterness or pride; and if read as written, none will be injured. He declares that he would not have dared to write, but for the resistless impulse of truth.

The other treatises are in a similar strain. They are bold and fearless in utterance, but abound in gospel simplicity and charity. Every point is enforced by scripture citations. At times, the treatise itself seems attenuated to a thread, upon which the admonitions, warnings, and truths of scripture are strung. Many passages soar to that height of moral rebuke, which reminds us of Christ scourging the money-changers from the sacred temple.

But Janow, although not prosecuted as a heretic, was regarded as an innovator. It was not long before his position began to attract attention. In 1381 he became a prebendary at Prague, and in 1389 he was arraigned before the synod of Prague, by whom his views were condemned. He is said to have been forced to a recantation, but his writings of a subsequent date clearly show that there had been no change in his views. For a time he was banished from the city, but through the favor of the emperor was soon permitted to return. He died in 1394, and in 1410 his writings were honored, with those of Wickliffe, in being committed to the flames.

A mere glance at the lives and doctrines of these three men will suffice to show that already at Prague a work had commenced which could not pause, even when they should be called away. Seed had been sown: truth had been scattered abroad. The new ideas which they had thrown out, and which they had so earnestly vindicated, were to prove in the sequel a powerful leaven. The eyes of men are naturally attracted to the array of physical forces, to fleets and armies, and the extending bounds of empire. But at that day, it is beyond question that the more important results were staked on the teachings of these three men, than on all the territorial aggrandizements of the German empire. It is a shallow philosophy that overlooks the position of the public teacher of new doctrines. Ideas are mightier than swords or bayonets.
In connection with the names of Conrad, Milicz, and Janow, there are others that are worthy of at least a passing notice. Some of them, less known by their writings, were scarcely less conspicuous in their own day in the cause of scriptural knowledge and reform. In one of his sermons, Huss mentions, to their honor, "Nicholas Biceps, the most acute logician; Adalbert, the flowing orator; Nicholas Litomischel, the most sagacious counselor; Stephen of Colin, the most devoted patriot; John Steikna, the noble preacher, whose voice was like the blast of a trumpet; and Peter Stupna, the sweetest singer and most glowing preacher." These belonged to the age then past, and he speaks of his audience as treading over their graves.

But besides these, the names of two laymen, who exerted an important influence upon the age, should not be passed unnoticed. Peter of Dresden was almost, if not quite, a Waldensian in sentiment, and to his influence over Jacobel is to be attributed, in large measure, the origin of that discussion in respect to the communion of the cup, which almost revolutionized Bohemia, and brought down upon it the energies of crusading Christendom. Peter had resided for a time at Prague. He went to Dresden and was there employed as a teacher. But his religious views rendered him obnoxious to persecution, and about the rear 1400 he returned to Prague. He was evidently a man of superior ability, and one who possessed great power over the minds of others. At Prague, among the thousands congregated at its university, he would have large opportunities for insinuating his peculiar doctrines. The very fact that he was instrumental in shaping the enlarged views of Jacobel, suffices to rescue his name and memory from oblivion.

Along with Conrad, Milicz, Janow, and Peter of Dresden, must be ranked a celebrated layman, Thomas Von Stitny, a Bohemian knight and a man of strong religious as well as patriotic feeling. "He was," says Helfert, "a Christian philosopher, in the full meaning of the word." His early years had been spent at Prague. At the university he proved himself a diligent student. The stores of knowledge which he here acquired he bore back with him to the retirement of his father’s castle. Here, exchanging the sword for the pen, he devoted himself to the education of his family and of his countrymen. Many was the book or treatise issued from his retreat, which found its way into the hands of the people, and was rapidly transcribed and widely circulated. In the agitating questions of the day, Stitny took a deep interest. He was probably on intimate terms with Milicz, and his writings reflect the views of that reformer. Like Milicz, he reproves the prevalent vices and errors, reprimands the monks for their neglect and contempt of the rules of their several orders, and urges the claims of Christian purity and devotion. Devoted to the study of the scripture, he had yet no thought of departing from the communion of the church, or of going further than the reform of its abuses. He loved his native land with all the affection of a patriot, and his writings, which indicate his zeal for reform, were written in the Bohemian tongue, and exerted an important influence.
If we consider, then, the connection of Bohemia with the Greek church—the seed sown by the Waldensian exiles—the sagacity, eloquence, and daring zeal of the men whom we have named as the predecessors of Huss; the influence which they, and others like them, exerted upon the mind and heart of the nation; the younger preachers and students of the university, who enjoyed their training, or aspired to tread in their steps; and if, in this same connection, we regard the condition of the papal government, already by protracted schism an object of scandal and contempt to all Christendom, and the reckless indifference to all religion shown by Wenzel, the Bohemian monarch—as devoted to the wine-cask as his father, Charles IV, had been to the pope—we shall see that the way was already prepared for the advent of a reformer such as Huss proved to be.

Other events, moreover, contributed to encourage whatever aspirations or desires might find place in Bohemia, looking toward a purer state of the church. The founding of the university of Prague, in 1360, had given an intellectual impulse to the nation, and thousands of her young men were eager to improve the privileges now brought, as it were, to their own doors. The kingdom enjoyed, moreover, an unexampled prosperity. Charles IV, with all his arts of craft, and sometimes of meanness, was an able and sagacious sovereign. Under his wise policy the industry of the country was encouraged, and its resources were developed. Great privileges were granted to the cities as well as to the aristocracy. A new code of laws was drawn up and published. The Moldau was rendered navigable as far as the Elbe. Mining and agriculture were encouraged. German artificers were introduced into the country. New Prague sprang up by the side of Old Prague. Breslau was in like manner improved. The noble bridge that spans the Moldau was constructed. The king’s passion for architecture was freely indulged, and his nobility aspired to imitate him. Magnificent churches and palaces were rising on every side, to attest the enterprise, wealth, and taste of the nation.

On June 7th, 1394, Anne of Luxembourg, wife of Richard II of England, and daughter of Charles IV, died. Her attendants returned to Bohemia; many of them, like their mistress, had imbibed the views of Wickliffe. They brought back with them from England to Prague, copies of his books. Oxford students, following the practice of the age, had visited the universities of the continent, and, among others, that of Prague. The new opinions found adherents. On all sides there were anxious curiosity, inquiry, discussion. University life had its privileges and freedoms. Upon these Rome had not yet ventured to lay her despotic hand. What was wanted was a man who should use these privileges to investigate and publish the truth of the new opinions—a man who was able to think, able to speak, and not too timid to stand by his convictions; and such a man was found in John Huss.
CHAPTER II
Youth of Huss—University Life
Wickliffe

John Huss, or John of Hussinitz, was born July 6th, 1373. He derived his name from his native village, in the southern part of Bohemia, in the circle of Prachin. This was in accordance with the custom of the age. There is no ground for the slander of an obscure writer, that Huss took the name of his village because he had no knowledge of his father. Among the most distinguished compeers of Huss, in his own and other lands, the greater number whom we shall be called to notice were men like himself, known by the name of the place where they were born or educated. This was the case with that remarkable triumvirate of the university of Paris, John de Gerson, Nicholaus de Clemengis, and Peter de Ailly. Among his own countrymen were James of Misa, or Jacobel, as he was called from his diminutive stature, John of Rokyzan, and numerous others, who, although like Huss of obscure birth, rose to eminence by their talent and diligence, and rescued the places of their birth from obscurity by the distinction which they themselves won.

According to Æneas Sylvius, who was afterwards raised to the papal chair, Huss might boast of an honest and worthy, although obscure parentage. His lot was one favored neither by fortune nor rank. His parents were poor peasants, kind and simple-hearted, who spared no pains to give their son a good education. There are few memorials left us of his childhood. But if we may judge of his training from the fruits it bore, it must have been characterized by affectionate anxiety and a severe purity of morals. We search in vain in any record, whether from friend or foe, for any trace of youthful vice or juvenile excess. Never was any character subjected to more severe or bitter scrutiny; but in the entire catalogue of accusations brought against him, not one is to be found affecting his character. We may reasonably suppose that in his own noble simplicity and unimpeached purity of life, were reflected the simple manners and the quiet virtues of his childhood’s home. That home must have been the abode of peace, gentleness, and love.

His parents, we are told, bestowed great care on his education. He was at first sent to a school in his native place. This was kept at a monastery, not far from the residence of his parents. His quiet manners and quick intelligence made him soon a favorite with the monks. They were pleased with the company of the boy, and, to the disquiet of his parents, often took him with them when they went abroad. Upon his father’s death, which occurred in his boyhood, he was left by his mother entirely to their charge. But such was her poverty that she could not provide him needful clothing. In this emergency, as also at a
later period, the nobleman of the place, Nicholas of Hussinitz, came forward to his aid.

When placed in the monastery, Huss devoted himself zealously to study. With boyish curiosity he gazed upon the huge piles of manuscript stored in the monastery, and in vain assayed to read them. They were in the Latin language, and this he had not mastered. The monks, from their own ignorance, could render him but feeble aid, but such instruction as they could afford was freely given. His many questions sorely puzzled them. "If the boy wants to know more," they said, "let him go to the Prachatitz collegium."

To this, a school of higher grade in the neighboring village of Prachatitz, he was accordingly sent. Here he made rapid advances, and won the praise of his teachers. His remarkable progress gave high promise of future distinction.

His course here was at length completed, and he returned home to his widowed mother. "What shall we now do, my son?" she asked. "I am going to Prague," was his reply. "Let us not be troubled on account of our poverty; God will care for us. The monks have promised that I shall certainly go."

Thus, at his own instance probably, it was determined that he should be sent to the university. His mother, impelled by maternal anxiety, accompanied him to the city. If the story of her journey is true, it affords a characteristic illustration of the simple manners of the age and country. She took with her, from her humble store, a goose (buss in Bohemian) and a cake as a present to the rector. Unfortunately the goose flew away while she was on her journey, and she could not recover it. The poor woman, associating perhaps the lost fowl with the fortunes of her son, received the accident as an ill omen. But if disturbed by superstitious fears, she had yet that simple piety which taught her to trust in God. She fell at once upon her knees, and recommended her son to the care and protection of divine providence. She then continued her journey, much troubled to think that she had only the cake left to present to the rector.

Of the means by which Huss was supported at the university we have no reliable information. To his own early history he rarely refers in his writings. It is said that on his arrival in Prague he secured a place in the house of one of the professors, where he was employed in service, and received in return food and clothing, and at the same time enjoyed access to a large and select library. The story is not improbable. John of Rokyzan, a few years younger than Huss, and afterwards archbishop of Prague, was, like him, of obscure parentage, and of extreme poverty. Yet as a charity student he received aid in the prosecution of his course, and by persevering exertion and obvious merit won admission to the "College of the Poor," of which Jacobel was professor. It would not be strange if the course of Huss was, in its early period, parallel to that of Rokyzan.
But if a charity student, and largely dependent on alms for support, the fortune of Huss was full as favored as that of thousands and tens of thousands gathered at the universities of Oxford, Paris, and Prague. Sometimes the pressure of want and hunger was so severe that talent was forced into the market, and genius sold its service for a piece of bread. The powerful Duke of Burgundy could descend to purchase the tribute of the venal learning and ability of Parisian scholars, to procure in them apologists for his crimes. But Huss, with abilities equal to any in the market, was never suspected of the guilt of any mercenary alliance. He had no powerful or wealthy friend whose patronage could warp his independence, or interfere with the freedom of his moral or intellectual development. If aided—as is not altogether improbably—by Nicholas of Hussinitz, it was with that generosity which studies to confer a favor without imposing an obligation.

The testimony borne to the character of Huss is uniformly favorable. His enemies themselves, who were ready to curse him as a heretic, speak of his manners and his morals almost in terms of eulogy. Æneas Sylvius describes him as "a powerful speaker, and distinguished for the reputation of a life of remarkable purity." The Jesuit Balbinus says of him, that he was accounted even 'more acute than eloquent; but his affability of manner, his life of austerity and self-denial, against which none could bring a charge, his features pale and melancholy, his body enfeebled, and his gentleness toward all, even of the humblest class, were more effective than any power of words." "Meanly born, but of no mean spirit," is the testimony of one of his opponents, and no doubt all would have responded to its truth.

With such abilities and tastes, the diligence of Huss soon secured for him eminence in literary attainment. His opportunities were diligently improved. An unprecedented spirit of enterprise and of intellectual activity characterized the period during which he was engaged in his academic pursuits. The university of Prague was now in its most flourishing state. It was founded in 1360 by the emperor Charles IV, a zealous friend of learning and of learned men. He was the son of John of Luxembourg, and grandson of the emperor Henry VII, and had ascended the throne in 1347. Had it not been for his blind, or perhaps we should rather say, politic submission to the popes, the events of the following reign might have illustrated his own. His energy and enterprise were directed into peaceful channels, and he preferred the arts of diplomacy and intrigue to martial prowess. To his exertions Prague was greatly indebted. The prosperity and improvement of the kingdom were studiously promoted. Private citizens, moved by imperial example, devoted their wealth to public uses; and noble architectural structures for public worship, and other objects, sprang up to attest their zeal. Some of these were endowed with imperial munificence. Æneas Sylvius declares that no other kingdom of Europe could boast as numerous and splendid temples as Bohemia. The rites and usages of the church were invested with new pomp, and no expense was spared to add to their attractions.
Even after the desolations of the Hussite war, enough remained to testify to the taste, the munificent liberality, and devotion of the emperor. But Prague was the special object of his favor. He surrounded a portion of it, the kleine seite, with imposing walls, crowned here and there with towers which, by their names, perpetuated the builder’s fame. He reared castles and temples of exceeding beauty. His course provoked the admiration and imitation of the citizens; and wealthy inhabitants of Prague expended their treasures in a like manner. The Bethlehem church, afterward famous as the one within whose spacious walls Huss addressed large assemblages of his fellow-citizens, was built at the expense of private individuals. Among the other labors of the emperor may be mentioned the stone bridge which he threw over the Moldau, uniting the two portions of the city. For that day it was a noble and imperial work. It was eighteen hundred feet in length, broad enough for three carriages to drive abreast, supported by sixteen arches, and adorned with twenty-eight statues of the saints. It still exists to attest the public spirit of the emperor to whom it owes its origin.

But the great work of Charles IV, and the one for which he deserves the highest praise, was his founding of the university of Prague. In undertaking it, he sought and received the sanction of the Roman pontiff, Innocent VI. The university of Paris furnished him a model. That institution, after the popes, had given law to Europe. In her schools the men had been trained who controlled the public opinion of the world, and became the teachers of kingdoms. She was, in fact, an imperium in imperio. Her word was respected and reverenced throughout Christendom. Even then, the hoar of centuries combined with her reputation for learning and piety to render her venerable. The emperor Charles IV might well aspire to rival the reputation attributed, whether justly or not, to his great predecessor and namesake, Charlemagne, by becoming, like him, the founder of a university. The times were ripe for the enterprise. The ravages of the crusades, and the impending terror of the Turkish arms, had conspired to scatter the treasures of the Eastern empire over the kingdoms of the West. Those treasures were the learning and the learned men which had hitherto been resident within the walls of the city of Constantine. The intercourse between the East and West was once more renewed.

Frequent embassies sought to promote the long-deferred union of the Greek and Roman churches. Prelates of the first were received into the latter with distinguished honor. A new spirit of inquiry and a new thirst for knowledge had been diffused abroad. Popular movements had taken place in almost every kingdom in Europe, which showed that society, even to its lower strata, was restless, and ready for a change.

The labors of the emperor were attended with remarkable success. Scarcely had the university been completed before it was thronged with students. It seemed to reach maturity at a single stride. The zealous patronage of the emperor was, no doubt, one of the most important elements of its success. The
most learned and skilful men, moreover, were sought out for instructors, and they were selected, without regard to land or language, for their fitness and ability.

Four nations were represented there—Bavaria, Saxony, Poland, and Bohemia—each of which had a vote in the affairs of the university. At an early period, over two thousand students belonged to it from the German nation alone. It was the practice of the emperor often to be present at the examinations and disputations. He came in his imperial robes, attended by his officers and nobles, sometimes remaining for three or four hours at a time. It is said that he would become frequently so absorbed in listening to the disputations, that, when reminded by his courtiers that it was meal-time, he would reply, "Go, get your supper—my food is here." Circumstances like these could not fail to invest the university with great splendor and importance in the eyes of the nation, and kindle the ambition of the students to excel, and thus merit the notice and favor of the emperor.

Although Charles IV died in November, 1378, the impulse of his influence still survived. The university continued to flourish. It must have been about the year 1389, and when Huss was sixteen years of age, that he was matriculated and became a member of that body. He pursued his studies with such application and success as to receive, in order, all the degrees of honor which the university could bestow, with the single exception of Doctor of Theology, of which we have no proof that it ever was conferred upon him. He received the degree of Bachelor in 1393, of Master of Arts in 1396; became priest and preacher of the Bethlehem church in 1400, dean of the Theological Faculty in 1401, and rector of the university in the following year. It was during his residence at the university as a student that his attention was first drawn to the subjects which afterwards so earnestly claimed his attention and his profound interest, for his convictions, moreover, in regard to which he was to lay down his life. He reached Prague in the same year in which Matthias of Janow died. It was in the year 1393 that he became intimate with a memorable man, James of Misa, or Jacobel (little James) as he was called, from his diminutive bodily stature. This man was a native of the Circle of Pilsen in Bohemia, and was at this time a teacher in the university. Though destitute of anything imposing in his personal appearance, his writings, and the influence he exerted upon the community and the nation, show him to have been a man of ability and energy. Like others of his countrymen before him, he had a strong leaning to the usages of the ancient Greek church. We shall see, in the course of this history, that he was a kindred spirit of Huss, and that their acquaintance of more than twenty years ripened into a friendship which led to the charge upon Huss of holding the peculiar views of his friend, though in this particular case the charge was false.

It was some years later (1398) that he became acquainted with Jerome of Prague, who, along with Jacobel, was accused of spreading the writings and
opinions of Wickliffe in the university. Here was another friendship which reflects honor upon both the men whom it united while living, and associated in their deaths. Besides these, there must have been at Prague not a few others—disciples of Milicz and of Janow—whose influence was exerted in the direction of scriptural reform, and in whom Huss found those whose spirit sympathized with his own.

But we need not seek in external sources the impulse which shaped his career. From his earliest years, Huss had manifested a deep interest in the lives of distinguished and holy men deservedly eminent in the history of the Christian church. Upright in his whole conduct, and blameless in his morals and his devotion to religious duties, even by the confession of his bitterest enemies, his zeal for acquaintance with the career and pursuits of those to whom he might look as models, amounted almost to a passion. His manner of life had always been plain, simple, and unostentatious. His tastes were pure and innocent. One might have read, in his pale and somewhat attenuated features, the earnestness of a meditative spirit. There was an air of gravity and reserve manifest in his countenance, which gave evidence of calm purpose and sedateness of thought. His demeanor toward all was friendly and unassuming. His ambition, if he had anything deserving an appellation of such equivocal meaning, was directed toward distinction in the paths of devotion and of Christian effort. He was poor, and yet scorned wealth. He loved truth, and cared little for the honors of men. But to write his name by the side of those who had adorned the history of the church by their exhibition of Christian virtues, was the high and lofty aim that possessed his soul. While a student, it was his delight to pore over the history of the martyrs, to trace the progress of their devotion, to contemplate their self-denials and their sufferings. Once, while reading the history of St. Laurentius, who was put to death by being roasted on a gridiron, he thrust his hand into the fire to test his own constancy and power of endurance, and see whether he would be able himself to endure the torture of a like martyrdom. A friend who was present interfered to prevent the full execution of his purpose.

In this incident we may perhaps discern, on the part of Huss, a morbid religious sensibility, a tendency to an ascetic fanaticism. But beyond question, his severe conscientiousness, his ardent feeling, and his quick susceptibilities especially fitted him to be impressed by the searching and powerful words of Milicz and of Janow. It is evident, from the record of their labors, that they had drawn to their side not a few who, amid the general apostasy of the church, were earnestly devoted to the purpose of a higher Christian life. At Prague, and especially in the university, Huss would come in contact with these. A common sympathy would bind him to them. Yet it was not without a severe inward struggle—as we learn from the record of his own experience—that he was brought to relinquish worldly ambitions, and commit himself to that course which was to bring upon him the reproach in which Milicz and Janow had shared.
But at a very early period his decision was taken, and he never faltered in his purpose. The circumstances in which he was placed, and the objects toward which his attention was necessarily directed, combined to add strength to his convictions and firmness to his resolve. He had of course, by his residence at the imperial capital and his connection at the university, large opportunities for information and observation. He was at one of the foci where the great interests of European Christendom converged. There especially he was brought to understand the real condition and the sad degeneracy of the church. There he heard, from teachers and students, not only from Bohemia and Germany, but in some instances from foreign countries, free expressions in regard to the evils of the times, and he could not fail to take a deep interest in the great questions that were agitating and dividing the Christian world. The great schism which had already endured for many years was the scandal of Christendom. The papacy had become an Augean stable, demanding for its cleansing a more than fabled Hercules. But the mischief was not merely one that was far remote. The church was enfeebled and diseased in all its members. In Bohemia, and within the walls of Prague, there was enough, and more than enough, to excite thoughtful minds to grave reflection. Huss saw on all sides an abounding and prevalent iniquity. He noted a degree of corruption in church and state that could not fail to excite at once grief and indignation. In the contrast between what he saw around him and a primitive Christianity, he seemed to behold the gospel travestied by the lives of those whose duty it was to expound it, but whose whole course was a libel upon Christianity itself. The money-changers had established themselves in the sacred temple. Bold bad men, intriguing aspirants, the profligate and the vicious, had usurped the province of pastors and the Sees of bishops. The scriptures gave place to the decretals, and secular passions were dominant in the most sacred spheres.

Huss was profoundly affected and afflicted by what he saw around him. In common with many others, he recognized the necessity of a thorough and radical reform. In the writings of Milicz and Janow, and in the fruits of their labors, he could not but have discerned signs of hope. There were, moreover, others conscientiously adhering to the old hierarchy, but demanding its renovation, whose voices must have reached him at Prague. But the words which seemed to his listening ear most earnest, hearty, and effective, came to him from beyond the British channel. In the Oxford professor, driven from his public post, but in his humble parish of Lutterworth scarcely escaping by a peaceful death the vengeance he had provoked, Huss recognized a man whose bold and daring views, extraordinary ability, and scriptural method of reform were powerfully to confirm the bent of his own mind. The influence of Wickliffe on the religious movement at Prague, and on the career of Huss, was most important. The death of the English queen in 1394, leaving her Bohemian attendants free to return to their own land, occurred before Huss had completed his university career; and through them, doubtless, the writings of Wickliffe were extensively published.
It is at this point that we are called to survey the connection of the Oxford professor with the student of Prague.

England had long maintained a jealous watchfulness against the usurpation of the See of Rome. From the time when the first Norman seized her scepter, she seemed more deeply conscious of her individuality and independence. No king was ever more unpopular than John Lackland, who mortgaged the kingdom to the pope. The rude barons, extorting *Magna Charta* from their monarch, were little inclined to surrender rights, if possible still more precious, to a foreign potentate. English patriotism prepared the way for Wickliffe. Men regarded him as the champion of the nation's rights. For once religious reform was supported by the spirit of the nobles, and for some years, Wickliffe's protector, the Duke of Lancaster, virtually swayed the scepter, and enabled him effectually to defy the priests and the monks, who were his most bitter opponents.

Wickliffe was born in 1324, in the small village of Wickliffe, in Yorkshire, of respectable and probably somewhat wealthy parents. He was educated at Merton college, Oxford. The title which he here won, in a college which produced Thomas Bradwardine, *the Profound Doctor*, Walter Burley, *the Perspicuous Doctor*, William Occam, *the Singular Doctor*, and others of eminence and merit, indicates his ability and success. Although a perfect master of the scholastic philosophy to which he applied himself, Wickliffe was honored with the appellation of *the Evangelical or Gospel Doctor*. His attention was early directed to the study and investigation of the Bible. In this respect his example had few precedents in the university. Fifty years before, Roger Bacon had said that scholastic studies were in higher repute than the knowledge of the scriptures. At first no exception seems to have been taken to Wickliffe's course. The language of his enemies attests his high standing. He is spoken of as a most eminent theological doctor, "accounted second to none in philosophy, and in scholastic attainments incomparable."

The first of his works which he made public, indicates his acquaintance, through the pages of the New Testament, with a Christianity compared with which what bore its name was a distorted and grotesque caricature. It is entitled "The Last Age of the Church," and seems to have been suggested by the general apprehension excited throughout Europe on account of the plague, and the strange phenomena by which it was accompanied. Fearful natural visitations and signs filled Christendom with alarm. When Wickliffe was in his fourteenth year, the great comet appeared. For several succeeding years the ravages of the locusts were fearfully destructive. An earthquake of unusual violence devastated Cyprus, Greece, Italy, and the valleys of the Alps as far as Basle. Mountains were swallowed up. In some places whole villages were overthrown. The air was thick, pestilential, stifling. Wine fermented in the casks. Fiery meteors appeared in the heavens. A gigantic pillar of flame was seen exactly over the papal palace of Avignon. A second earthquake nearly
destroyed Basle. At Avignon (1334) persons of every age and sex were said, in the heat and drought which prevailed, to have changed their skins like serpents. Scales fell from the face, the neck, the hands. The populace, seized with madness, scourged and lacerated their half-naked bodies as they ran howling through the streets.

But these self-inflictions were not to be compared with the excesses that the Flagellants were guilty of thirteen years later. The plague that now ravaged Europe threatened to exterminate its inhabitants. It touched a sound and healthy body as fire touches tinder, and from the first moment all hope was abandoned. The victim was suddenly covered with black spots like burns, and not unfrequently dropped down dead almost before he was aware of the attack. At Basle, fourteen thousand people were destroyed by it; at Strasbourg and Erfurt, sixteen thousand; while in Italy its progress and desolations have been immortalized by the pen of Boccacio. The consternation was universal. Men that never prayed before, prayed now. Some few gave themselves up to voluptuous and luxurious indulgence; but the great mass trembled, and thousands went so far as to join the ranks of the Flagellants. Never had there been such seriousness, such alarm. Vice shrunk back abashed into the shade. Crime seemed paralyzed in its stronghold.

All these things were familiar to Wickliffe. Some of them took place while he was yet a student at Oxford, and at Oxford he met students from the continent to whom the scenes themselves had been present, witnessed realities. He had not yet taken his second degree when the plague visited Europe. His own mind undoubtedly was deeply impressed; and while he wrote of "The Last Age of the Church," the impression had not passed from the minds of others. Indeed, it was not until August, 1348, that the destructive malady made its appearance at Dorchester in England. Its havoc was dreadful. It was regarded as the work of the destroying angel, premonitory to the final doom of the world. The gross and revolting corruptions of the church were, by men far less severe in their convictions than Wickliffe, accounted its procuring cause. Wickliffe seized the occasion to speak out words of solemn admonition and threatening. Worthless in its prophetic character, the treatise is valuable chiefly for the bold tone of utterance in which it denounces the prevalent sins of the age. It would be eagerly listened to, at least by many of his countrymen; as in the plague of 1666 even the Non-conformists were welcome to the pulpits of London, and thousands hung upon their words.

Never was a rebuke more plainly called for. The pictures left us of ecclesiastical vice and abuse are worthy of an original in Pandemonium. Petrarch, whose devotion sent him to Rome in the Jubilee of 1350, and carried him scrupulously through all the prescribed ritual of the pilgrims that he might attain the blessing, was shocked to observe the doings in the court of the pope. Avignon was to him "that Western Babylon, that he hated like Tartarus." He describes it as "a terrestrial hell, a residence of fiends and devils, a receptacle
of all that is wicked and abominable." “Why,” he asks, “should I speak of truth, where not only the houses, palaces, courts, churches, and the thrones of popes and cardinals, but the very earth and air appear to teem with lies? A future state, heaven, hell and judgment, are openly turned into ridicule as childish fables. … Whatever perfidy and treachery; whatever barbarity and pride; whatever immodesty and unbridled lust you have ever heard or read of; in a word, whatever impiety and immorality either now is or ever was scattered over all the world, you may find here amassed in one heap.” Rome was no better than Avignon, and the poison of the heart spread to the extremities of the ecclesiastical body.

What the state of England was can easily be gathered from the complaint of "Piers Plowman," and the pictures left us in Chaucer’s rhymes. Wickliffe saw Antichrist around him on all sides, and his words, however stinging, were too palpably true to be gainsayed. His career was largely shaped by the influences already noted, and he pursued it unflattering to the end. The mendicant monks, at first acceptable for their zeal and poverty, had now become the curse of Christendom. They were the militia of the pope—ecclesiastical robbers and banditti. At Paris and Prague, as well as Oxford, they had become a nuisance. But long before Gerson exposed them, they were arraigned by Wickliffe. His blows fell fast and heavy, and excited against him the envenomed rage of his foes. He succeeded, however, in greatly limiting their rapacity and turbulence. In the midst of this conflict, the pope revived his claim on England for tribute and homage. Edward III laid the claim before parliament. It was resolved that it should be resisted; and the pen of Wickliffe was summoned to the task of its refutation.

But Wickliffe’s great work was the translation of the Old and New Testaments—the first complete English version of the Bible. He employed his "poor priests" to multiply copies of it. These were widely circulated. The effect was wonderful. The germ of Protestantism was planted in English soil—two centuries later to spring up to a vigorous growth. No episcopal scrutiny, espionage, or authority could root it out. "The Evangelical Doctor" vindicated the justice of his title. It was in vain that the attempt was made to silence or condemn him. To the English councils, and to the summons of the pope at Avignon, he paid little regard. From the first he was shielded by persons high in power; to the last he replied without the least trepidation, in plainer language than papal courts were wont to hear. Notwithstanding all the measures of persecution taken against him, driving him first from the headship of Canterbury Hall, and afterwards from Oxford, he died quietly in his own parish of Lutterworth, at the age of sixty-one years (1384).

The writings of Wickliffe were numerous; and though some of them were obscured with scholastic subtleties, yet others, in which he sets forth his religious doctrines based on the sole authority of scripture, are sufficiently perspicuous. Of his numerous treatises, many are of a practical character,
adapted to the comprehension of the common people. Scattered among them are passages of exceeding beauty, and some in which we recognize the deep and fervent devotion of the author. It is his *Trialogos*, however, that has acquired most notoriety. It is in this work that he impugns the doctrine of transubstantiation, and presents what may be regarded as his theological system. This was the work which traversed Europe, and attracted most attention at Prague. It is a compendious review of the religious questions of the age, and embraces the sum and substance of Wickliffe’s religious opinions.

These opinions are nearly related to those held two centuries later, by the Puritans of the Elizabethan age. On the subject of justification by faith, his views are indistinct and ill-defined when compared with those of Luther. But the same is true of nearly all the reformers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. His predestinarian notions fall little, if at all, short of those of Calvin. The prevalence of pilgrimages and image worship led him to denounce these abuses of devotion with unsparing severity. Of excommunication and papal interdict he stood in no fear. He treated them only with deserved contempt. Whatever an ideal pope might be, the actual pope was Antichrist. It was enough that the church had one Supreme Head in heaven. To give it another on earth was to make it a monster. The order of the hierarchy was odious and unscriptural. Presbyters and bishops, on New Testament authority, he accounted equal in rank. The church invisible was the *simple*, and the church visible the *mixed*, body of Christ. The seven sacraments of the church were all admitted, though in a qualified sense, by Wickliffe. It is evident that his exposition of their significance would strip them of all that peculiar importance which was attributed to them by the prevalent superstitions of the age. The fasts of the church, which substituted fish for flesh, were food fastings. The cumbrous ceremonies which disfigured its services, he would have reduced to a simpler ritual. Church music had no charms for him, when it charmed the thoughts of men from the words sung to the manner of performance. Judicial astrology, which was strangely prevalent in his age, found in him an unsparing assailant. Some strange sentiments have been ascribed to him which are not to be found in his writings, but which, probably, were extorted from his scholastic propositions. One of his chief heresies, as charged upon him by his enemies, was the doctrine that "Dominion is founded in grace." Here, however, he seems to have merely followed the lead of the apostle Paul, when he said, “All things are yours”; for civil authority and jurisdiction found nowhere a more strenuous defender than Wickliffe. The fanaticism of the later Anabaptists had no place in his views or character. He did, indeed, maintain the supremacy of civil tribunals over the persons of ecclesiastics, as well as over the accumulated possessions of the church; but these views and theories were justified by the reformation, which, less than two centuries later, adopted them in England. Church endowments Wickliffe regarded as inconsistent with the purity and proper constitution of a spiritual body. He opposed the civil jurisdiction of ecclesiastics, and accounted tithes as the alms of the people, and not to be extorted against their free choice.
It is evident that most of Wickliffe’s views were drawn from scripture. They were enforced by his own peculiar and impressive energy of language. In the university of Oxford, as well as in various parts of England, they took deep root. The minds of men were in a state to yield them a careful attention. The singular visitations of providence by earthquakes and the plague, the incredible and enormous corruptions of the church, the overgrown pretensions and claims of the popes, the sympathy of the Duke of Lancaster and of others high in power with the new opinions, and their admiration of Wickliffe, conspired to secure for his words a favorable reception, and to give them a powerful effect. His writings had acquired a notoriety that would secure them, after his death, a candid and careful perusal on the distant banks of the Moldau. It was all in vain that the bishops, in the council of London, condemned them. The seed was sown—it was taking root, and no ecclesiastical police could root it out.

CHAPTER III

Progress of the New Doctrines at Prague

The spread of Wickliffe’s doctrines could not be confined to England. There were various channels by which they would be sure, ere long, to reach Bohemia. One of these has been already noted. The attendants of Anne of Luxembourg, queen of England, returning upon her death (1394) to their native land, would naturally spread abroad a knowledge of the new opinions. Huss himself says (reply to John Stokes, 1411) that for twenty years they had been known in Bohemia. Of course they must have been brought to Prague before the death of Wickliffe. Nor was this all. It was a common practice with the scholars of that age to visit the different universities of Europe, disseminating their own philosophical and theological views, and at the same time imbibing those of others. By their means every novelty in the moral or religious world was soon ventilated and spread abroad.

But among these knights-errant of literature, no one in that age exhibited a more adventurous and enterprising spirit than Jerome Faulfisch, or Jerome of Prague, as he is more commonly called. He was by several years the senior of Huss, full his equal in zeal for knowledge, far more impulsive in feeling, and remarkably enthusiastic in his devotion to whatever enterprise he undertook.

He had traveled through different lands, but made the longest stay in England. At Oxford he became acquainted with the writings of Wickliffe. The fame of the Evangelical Doctor was yet fresh within its halls, and his views were embraced or favored by a large number of the students. Jerome was struck with the ability with which they were presented, and was especially gratified
by the manly tone in which they rebuked the errors and vices of the age. He transcribed several of his books, or caused to be transcribed, and bore them back with him on his return to Bohemia (1397-8).

Jerome was not a man to conceal his sentiments or disguise his aims. He gave free expression to his opinions on the subjects discussed by the English reformer, and to his estimate of the man. He found himself at Prague surrounded by many inquiring minds, and the new views which he advanced could not fail to draw attention. But among the members of the university opinions were divided. Some were bitterly opposed to the positions taken by the "Evangelical Doctor," and few if any voices were raised decidedly in their favor.

At first—so we are assured by one historian—Huss himself shared deeply in the popular prejudice. Shortly after his return from Oxford, in 1398, Jerome is said to have shown Huss one of the books of Wickliffe which he had brought back with him. Huss regarded it as heretical, and spoke severely against it. He advised Jerome either to burn it or throw it into the Moldau, lest it should fall into the hands of persons eager for innovation. The story at least is not improbable. To the last, there were some of Wickliffe’s views which Huss never accepted, and at this early period he was probably acquainted with but a small portion of his writings.

But in the following years (previous to 1403) the books of Wickliffe seem to have been more extensively read and circulated at Prague. They begin at least to attract in a special manner the attention of the university. A large number of his articles had been already condemned by the London synod, and it did not become the masters of Prague to be less orthodox than the English clergy. A still larger number was selected from the books of the English reformer by John Hubner, who proposed their condemnation by the university.

To propose was to secure their sentence, especially after they had been interpolated, as is asserted, by Master Hubner. A blind prejudice existed against whatever bore the name of Wickliffe. It was enough that his views had been pronounced heretical by the English synod, and that his course had enraged the English clergy. To add a new impulse to the zeal of the German party in the university, Wickliffe’s philosophy—for he was a Realist—greatly contributed. The Germans were Nominalists, while the Bohemians inclined to side with Wickliffe.

A convocation of the university was summoned (May 28, 1403) to examine and pronounce upon the controverted doctrines. The theological faculty met also. A third and full assembly of the doctors, masters, bachelors, and all the students of the Bohemian portion of the university, was held at the church called Nigra Rosa. Huss himself is said to have been present. But few voices were lifted in favor of the obnoxious doctrines. Huss was not himself prepared to defend
them, for, by his own account, there were certain portions of them which he could not accept. He sought, however, to prevent any decisive action. But in spite of the opposition of himself and his friends, sentence against them was pronounced in the following words: "Know all men, that all the doctors and masters here assembled, with one consent, and with scarcely the show of objection, have rejected, refuted, and condemned the forty-five articles of Wickliffe, as in their sense heretical, erroneous, or scandalous." And they "charge all and each, subjects of this nation, that no one shall rashly presume to defend or teach, whether openly or secretly, any articles of such nature, and this under penalty of expulsion from the said nation."

Anyone, moreover, who had not attained to the degree of master, was forbidden to read the books of Wickliffe, especially those on the Eucharist, his Dialogue and Triologue, in which the aforesaid doctrines were more prominently and plainly brought forward.

Whatever the views of Huss may have been—and undoubtedly he accepted some of the condemned articles—at this time he made no strenuous show of opposition to the sentence. He was probably aware that it would have been utterly ineffectual. But the decision may have been, and probably was, the means of drawing his attention to a closer examination of the whole subject. He, at least, as a master of the university, was not prohibited from the perusal of Wickliffe’s books. He might be willing to wait and improve future opportunities for pursuing the course that he should deem wisest after more mature deliberation.

Meanwhile the career of Huss was opening with bright promise. His position was one of high influence, and was becoming stronger and more important every day. He was popular not only in the university, but in the pulpit. In 1401 he had been selected, for his zeal and eloquence as well as his purity of life and religious devotion, to occupy one of the most important posts in the whole kingdom. He was made Confessor of Queen Sophia of Bavaria, second wife of King Wenzel. She was a woman of strong mind and high character. Through her influence Huss was received with favor at court, and acquired powerful friends.

Through one of these, the founder of Bethlehem chapel, then resident at Prague and present at court, he was soon called to occupy a position of still more commanding influence. It was in the pulpit of that chapel that the great work of Huss’s life was to be achieved. We must trace the erection and endowment of this edifice to two causes—one, the enterprise excited by the example of the emperor in his architectural improvements, and the other to that zeal for more popular religious instruction which
had been enkindled by the labors of Conrad, Milicz, and Janow. To add to the architectural beauty of Prague by the erection of an elegant structure for public worship, and to afford facilities for the preaching of the word of God independent of the encumbrance of rites and ceremonies, were objects which combined to draw out the large liberality of the two men most concerned in the founding of the chapel.

It was built in the closing years of the fourteenth century. A rich merchant of Prague—Kreutz by name—gave the ground, and John of Mulheim founded the chapel. The intention of the latter is expressed in the deed of foundation. Anxious for the salvation of his own soul, and the spiritual refreshment of believers; and considering that, while in Prague there were many places suitable for purposes of divine worship, there was none specially provided simply for the preaching of the word of God, and that preachers in the Bohemian tongue especially were thus forced to go from place to place in private houses and secret conventicles, he determines to erect, on the ground granted by the merchant Kreutz, a chapel in honor of the Holy Innocents, to be known by the name of Bethlehem, with the simple intent that common people and Christian believers might there "be refreshed by the bread of holy preaching."

The erection of the building was commenced in the year 1391, but it was not completed till 1400. The first occupants of the pulpit were John Protiva, of Neudorf, and afterwards Stephen of Colin, both of them learned theologians and glowing patriots. But at the court of the king the founder of the chapel became acquainted with Huns, and a warm friendship sprang up between the nobleman and the youthful preacher. The result was, that the founder himself selected Huss to fill the pulpit of Bethlehem chapel (1402). Doubtless he discerned in him those characteristics and qualifications which fitted him to carry out the original design of the endowment. A wiser choice could not have been made. It justified the sagacity of the nobleman, whose friendship was warmly reciprocated by Huss. The latter speaks of him frequently in his letters, and makes mention of him in terms of kindness and respect.

Thus the chapel becomes identified with the life and career of Huss. There for full twelve years he occupied an independent position. The benefice, if such it must be called, was not the gift of prelatic favor, but left its possessor free from ecclesiastical restraint.

The recorded design of the founder of the chapel throws light upon the successful efforts of Milicz and Janow in bringing over others to their views. John of Mulheim was evidently one of a class at Prague who were zealous for the dissemination of scripture truth. Nor, unless he had been cognizant of a state of things which would warrant the measure, would he have made provision for the endowment of the chapel. He was confident that a preacher there would not lack for an audience, and he intended that the endowment
should be a perpetual foundation. So long as the yearly income of the endowment did not exceed a certain amount, it was to be given to the support of the preacher. In case of an excess, provision was to be made for the care of the chapel and the purchasing of such books as the preacher might need. When it had increased so as to suffice for the support of two preachers, another was to be chosen as a colleague of the first. In case there was still an excess, the balance should be devoted to the support of charity students at the university.

The preacher was, moreover, obligated to personal residence in the city. He was not to imitate those who sought their own and not the things of Christ, receiving the pay but not performing the labors; and he was to withdraw from his post of duty only in case of necessity, and with the permission of the archbishop or his vicar.

The election of the preacher, after the founder’s death, was to be vested in the three senior masters of the Caroline college, belonging to the Bohemian nation, who were to sit and advise with the mayor of the old city. The last was to select one of three whom the first should nominate as most capable of discharging the duties of the office. The three masters, together with the preacher, should direct in regard to the disposition of the fund for charity students, and the conduct of those by whom it should be received.

The king sanctioned the endowment; Archbishop John of Jenstein laid the corner-stone of the edifice; and the pope, some years later, confirmed the foundation. The mayor and city council released the ground without requiring the payment of the customary tag paid on the transfer of property from municipal to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and declared it free from all future city taxes and assessments.

Although the edifice was not completed till some years later, the first preacher, Protiva of Neudorf, commenced his labors as early as 1395. The merchant Kreutz, in the following year, appointed as altarist Matthias of Tucap, who probably remained at his post till 1403. But previous to this time Huss had commenced his labors as the preacher of the chapel. He was inducted by the vicar of the archbishop, March 14, 1402.

His appointment seems to have been received with general favor. The archbishop was his warm and steadfast friend. He cooperated with him in several measures of reform, and manifested such confidence as to invite information from him in regard to the abuses and corruptions of the church.

From the first Huss was popular among the citizens, and his personal qualities combined with his eloquence to secure their love and attachment. Bethlehem chapel, notwithstanding its spaciousness, was crowded by throngs eager to hear the youthful preacher expound the word of God. With honest zeal he set forth the divine commands, reprehending with just severity every departure from
them. The excesses and vices of every class were faithfully, perhaps often sternly, rebuked. The blameless life of the preacher gave double force to his words. Men were forced to respect him in his conscientious discharge of official duty. They saw in him, not the actor nor the mere orator, but the devoted minister of Christ, who practiced himself what he preached to others.

For several years he continued to fill the pulpit under no suspicion of heresy. Many, it is true, must have felt the severity of his admonitions—the indirect condemnation of their lives by the doctrines which he taught—and have been forced to regard him with secret hate. But, strong at court and in popular favor, it was only in whispers that dissatisfaction with him could be expressed.

Meanwhile he was himself taking enlarged views of the great question of reform. To this result he was brought in part, undoubtedly, by the perusal of Wickliffe’s writings. The more he perused them, the more accordant they appeared to be with his own views. Speaking on this point at a later period, he says, himself, "I am drawn to him (Wickliffe) by the reputation he enjoys with the good, not the bad priests at the university of Oxford, and generally with the people, although not with bad, covetous, pomp-loving, dissipated prelates and priests. I am attracted by his writings, in which he expends every effort to conduct all men back to the law of Christ, and especially the clergy, inviting them to let go pomp and dominion of the world, and live, with the apostles, according to the law of Christ. I am attracted by the love he has for the law of Christ, maintaining the truth, and holding that not one jot or tittle of it could fail."

We discern here the grounds upon which Huss sympathized with Wickliffe. His philosophical views were not matter that should afford charge for heresy, and throughout all his theological writings he conceded to scripture, and to scripture alone, the supreme authority. Huss felt, therefore, that he could not reject Wickliffe as a heretic, or condemn his fundamental position as heretical, without depriving himself of the very grounds upon which he rested his own views.

Wickliffe’s writings had been condemned in 1403. In the following year two learned Englishmen, James and Conrad of Canterbury, came to Prague, and became members of the university. From policy, it may be, or under fear produced by the sentence of condemnation, they spoke but little of Wickliffe, while they maintained some of his most objectionable doctrines in public theses before the university. Among the questions they discussed were these: whether the pope is possessed of more power than any ordinary priest; whether the bread which he blesses in the mass, has any more efficacy than when blessed by any other priest? They professed it as their purpose in these discussions only to settle more firmly their attachment to the faith. Yet silence was imposed upon them, and they were compelled to spread their views in secret. Even thus, many of the teachers of the university were found ranged
upon their side. The method which they were driven to adopt to maintain their views was one certainly more effective with the populace than public disputation. The name of their host was Luke Welensky. They gained his consent to their spreading a painting on the walls of a room in his house in the outskirts of Prague. That picture was, in fact, the contrast of a pure with a corrupt Christianity, and spoke its lessons to every eye. It could be comprehended at a glance. Men crowded to see it, and heard a sermon while they gazed in silence and made their own comments. On one side of the picture was Christ, in his humble entrance into Jerusalem, seated upon an ass, while the people and children surrounded him, casting olive leaves and branches in his way; and his disciples, with their feet bare, followed after. On the other side was pictured the procession of the pope; mounted on a large charger which was covered with ornaments of gold, silver, and precious stones, while soldiers with drums and trumpets, spears and halberds, were in attendance; and behind followed the cardinals, mounted on horses in golden trappings. It was a pictured sermon. Huss spoke of it approvingly from the pulpit as the true antithetical representation of Christ and Antichrist. However he might as yet be disposed publicly to treat the name of Wickliffe, he admired at least some portions of his doctrines, when unveiled and brought out to popular comprehension. With his mind in such a state, several years passed on. He was highly respected, and almost idolized by the patriot feeling of the nation. He felt that his position justly pointed him out as the champion of its rights, the reformer of its abuses.

An occasion for his activity, in both these respects, was not wanting. The German party of the university, by mere numbers, possessed an overpowering strength and influence, and, united as they were with the more strenuous of the Bohemian clergy in their opposition to Wickliffe, carried all before them. Huss felt indignant at what, with a patriot’s feelings, he could not but deem an usurpation. Each of the three foreign nations in the university possessed the same power with the Bohemian nation. He preferred that the university of Prague should be modeled more perfectly after the mother university at Paris, and that all the foreign nations, as in the latter institution, should have but one vote instead of three. He must have found a strong feeling in favor of the project, to warrant him in attempting to carry it out. But he did attempt it, and he finally succeeded. In this he was, no doubt, aided by his influence at court, the favor of the queen, and the anxiety of the Bohemian party to secure a larger share of the offices and honors of the university. To the progress of this struggle we shall again have occasion to refer.

During this period the views of Wickliffe continued steadily to gain new adherents. The public attention which had been drawn to them by their condemnation abroad as well as by the university, created a more extended curiosity and eagerness to peruse them, and many copies of his books were transcribed, and circulated from hand to hand. The labors of Milicz and Janow; the leavening influence of those in Prague, who, in large numbers, still
cherished their memory; the repeated occasions upon which a true was held up in contrast with a false Christianity, as in the sermons of Huss; and the picture of the two Englishmen, all contributed to the notoriety and spread of the obnoxious doctrines.

Huss himself lost all his horror at their heresy. A favorable change in his views of them was wrought by fuller acquaintance with them. His desire was simply to know the truth. No matter from what source it came, it was always acceptable. At a later period, in his treatise on the church, he says, "Often have I allowed myself to be set right, even by one of my own scholars, when I saw that the reasons were good; and I felt bound to thank him for the correction." This is not obstinacy, but the candor of a truth-loving spirit.

There is, it seems probable, a striking parallel between the manner in which the prejudices of Huss were overcome in favor of Wickliffe, and the manner in which those of Luther were overcome in favor of Huss. It was Luther who said of the works of Huss, "When I was studying at Erfurt, I found in a library of the convent a book entitled 'Sermons of John Huss.' I was seized with a curiosity to know what doctrines this heresiarch had taught. This reading filled me with incredible surprise. I could not comprehend why they should have burned so great a man, and one who explained scripture with so much discernment and wisdom. But inasmuch as the very name of Huss was such an abomination that I imagined that at the mention of it the heavens would fall and the sun be darkened, I shut the book with a sad heart. I consoled myself, however, by the thought that perhaps he wrote it before he fell into heresy; for, as yet, I knew nothing of the doings of the council of Constance." Similar to this may have been, and doubtless was, the experience of Huss with regard to Wickliffe.

But the growing corruption of the Romish hierarchy, the identification of the foreign party to which he was opposed with the opposition to Wickliffe, and his own clearer convictions on the subjects of which the English reformer had treated, prepared Huss for an unprejudiced judgment of his writings. He was well aware that those writings must stand or fall on their own merits. He knew that few of those who pronounced sentence on them had ever read or examined them, that far less than himself were they qualified to condemn or approve, and that such a sentence as that which the university had pronounced could have but little weight with men of sound sense and sober judgment.

Meanwhile daily events were, to the eye of Huss, a running commentary on the truths he found so boldly stated and so ably maintained in the books of Wickliffe. Christendom was scandalized at the audacious impiety of the popes. Men could hardly believe their own eyes when they saw the length and breadth, the height and depth, to which corruption had attained, in the very heart of the church. All the prominent historians of the age, of every clan and party, are unanimous in their condemnation of the prevalent and abounding iniquity. The very men by whose influence and decision Huss at last perished,
were those who exposed the evil with most unsparing severity. At this time they were speaking at once the language of his convictions and of their own. Anyone who listened merely to their words and regarded their common anxieties, would have imagined that they would have rushed as brothers into one another’s arms. Huss never used language more severely scathing and vindictive in regard to the corruptions of the Romish church than what remains to us from the pens of some of his most virulent opposers. The power of human expression is tasked to its utmost capacity to depict what Theodore Vrie calls the "arrogance and pomp, the tyranny and sacrilege, the pride and simony, of popes, cardinals, prelates, and bishops." Their iniquity is only paralleled by their ignorance and effrontery. The English Ullerston, the Italian Zabarella, and that remarkable triumvirate of the university of Paris—Gerson, D'Ailly, and Clemengis—men to whom attached no taint of heresy, seem to vie with each other in the effort to exhibit the wickedness of the times, and hold it up to indignant rebuke. There is in existence a small pamphlet from the pen of Clemengis, in which he lashes, with blows that must have stung like scorpions, the vices of the whole ecclesiastical order. He spares no class of the clergy, to use his own words, from “the golden head of the image to the toes of clay.” In a torrent of burning and indignant eloquence, he appeals to the facts of a corruption too notorious for denial, bids “the church look to the vision of the Apocalypse, there read the damnation of the great harlot that sitteth upon many waters, and then contemplate her own marked doings and the dire calamity that shall come upon her.” We shall see, as we progress, that this language in all its severity was well merited. Men spoke thus because they were forced to it, more in sorrow than in anger. They loved the church; and because they loved her, they could not bear to see her fondle in her bosom the viperous brood of iniquity.

Huss followed up the study of Wickliffe’s writings, and he could not but recognize in the Englishman a brother reformer. His earlier prejudices gave way to the convictions produced by a more careful examination. The more he read, the more fully he was led to approve and commend. Some of his fellow collegians detected him in the perusal of the works of the arch-heretic. In a reproachful way they remarked, that by a decree of the council his soul had been sent to hell. Huss replied, “I only wish that my soul, when it leaves this body, may reach the place where that of this excellent Briton now dwells.”

The minds of others were favorably impressed, as well as his own, by a perusal of the writings of Wickliffe. Stanislaus of Znoyma, a former teacher of Huss, spoke out boldly in their favor, in disregard of the sentence of the university. He did this publicly, and offered to maintain his position against any who were disposed to impugn it. From his chair in the university he praised Wickliffe; spoke of him as an "abused man," a profound theologian and philosopher; deprecated the detraction of those who would count him a heretic, declaring that from his writings “the most beautiful flowers might be gathered.”
Nor was he alone in this. Paletz—whom we shall meet again as the accuser of Huss, but now his companion and bosom friend—was equally outspoken. On a public occasion he had praised Wickliffe before the university, declaring that his argument was unanswerable, and throwing his book in full congregation, in the midst of the masters, exclaiming, "Let who will impugn a single word, I will defend it."

These men, along with Huss, embraced many of the views of Wickliffe and spoke in their defense. But persecution tried them and found them wanting. At the critical moment they abandoned their ground. But Huss uniformly and without wavering maintained his. He adopted the new views, not because they were Wickliffe’s, or because they were plausibly set forth, but because he found them accordant with the word of God: by this he had already learned to put all human opinions and teachings to the test. In reply to Paletz, he afterwards said—and his whole career is a fitting comment on the truth of his words—“Though Wickliffe, or an angel from heaven taught otherwise than the scripture teaches, I could not follow him. I disobey the perverse mandates of my superiors, because scripture teaches me to obey God rather than man.”

Yet he had attained to this position not without a severe struggle. His age was just the one for a supple, adroit, and able man to achieve success. It was an age of temporizers—an age when the necessary capital for business, whether in secular or ecclesiastical spheres, was, in the judgment of most, first of all an easy conscience. The man of real ability, whose convictions were in the market, might aspire to almost any eminence he chose.

Huss was not blind to this fact. He had before him inviting avenues of ambition. He saw the most tempting prizes almost within his grasp, and luring him to betray his own convictions. To forego them, to scorn them, and, moreover, to incur reproach or hatred or persecution for the cause of truth, to stand independent of the corrupt influences around him, and abide fast by his convictions, was no easy task. Yet this task he achieved, in a strength which he ascribed to a higher than any human source.

Up to this time no suspicion of heresy had attached to Huss. He had indeed more than once already offended against the slavish and superstitious notions of a corrupt hierarchy. In 1403, Sigismund, king of Hungary, who took during Wenzel’s imprisonment the title of Governor of Bohemia, and who afterwards became emperor, was at variance with the pope, Boniface II. The latter had sustained and encouraged Ladislaus, king of Naples, as a rival claimant of the throne. In revenge, Sigismund forbade the levying of money for Rome within the precincts of the kingdom. Huss, on this occasion, preached boldly against the indulgences granted by the pope. But then it was neither crime nor heresy. Sigismund approved it. His brother Wenzel had his grievances with the pope also. Boniface had consented to his deposition, and both the royal brothers
could not have disliked the severity of Huss, so fully warranted by the scandals of the popedom.

It must have been not long after this that he exposed to popular reprehension and derision a pretended miracle invented by clerical avarice. He went so far as to write a tract against it, and his course was approved by the archbishop. A priest at Wilsnack had declared that, in a conflagration which had taken place, he had found the host in the fire, unconsumed, and sprinkled with drops of blood, which he declared to be the blood of Jesus Christ. This was soon noised abroad. The story was spread that at a sight of the host miracles had been wrought. Throngs crowded to behold the wonderful object. The sick and maimed hoped to derive a benefit from their journey to Wilsnack. They came from every direction, even from as far as Prague Huss burned with indignation at the sacrilegious trick. He argued before the citizens that the whole thing was an imposture. The blood of Christ had been glorified with his body in the resurrection, and was quite inseparable from it. Hence none could adore it on the earth while it was not here. The wickedly avaricious priests would not hesitate to sprinkle their own blood on the host, to make fools believe it to be the blood of Christ. As to the objection that other relics of Christ—his crown of thorns, his robe, his cross—were preserved and seem to be stained with blood, he answers in a manner to show his incredulity: and as to the asserted preservation of the circumcised flesh of the Savior, he says, "Let us have the proof of it; but sooner will the last trumpet sound for judgment than that proof will appear." "As to such deceptions, I see nothing more strange in them than what is practiced here in Prague, of exhibiting the blood of Jesus Christ mingled with the milk of the Virgin Mary." As to the objection that the miracle might be wrought by God's omnipotence, he replies by drawing a distinction between what God can and what God will do. As to the miracles claimed to have been wrought, he denies them altogether, and asserts that a false priest would not hesitate to sustain his lying imposture with new lies. He then gives a list of false miracles, wrought by the pretended blood of Christ, which had been detected and exposed in Hungary, Germany, and elsewhere.

It may have been in consequence of Huss's decided action and prompt exposure of the imposture that a certain citizen of Prague, Peter Zicko, determined to visit Wilsnack. He had a shrunken hand; and taking with him a hand formed of silver, he communicated to the priests his intention of bestowing the latter on them, in case the former was restored to soundness. For three days he waited patiently to hear the result. At length it was thus announced by a priest to the assembled multitude: "Listen, my children, to a new miracle. A citizen of Prague has been healed, in virtue of Christ's blood, of a shrunken hand. In testimony of it he has presented this," holding up to them the hand of silver. Zicko, who, till that moment, had probably remained concealed, at once arose, and lifting up his hand, said in a loud tone of voice, "O you priest! why do you lie? Here is my withered hand just as it was before."
He returned to Prague and told his story. It confirmed the words of Huss. The archbishop Sbynco, afterwards the open enemy of the reformer, commanded and ordered, under penalty of excommunication, directing that proclamation should be made by every priest in Prague, that no one should visit Wilsnack. Several works beside that of Huss appeared on the subject. The doctors of Erfurt also refuted this idolatry.

The cry against Huss for heresy was of nearly the same date with the struggle between the Bohemian and other nations in the university, and was no doubt very closely connected with it. But for the time it was disregarded. Other matters of more importance absorbed the attention of the Christian world. The state of the papacy was such, that two popes possessed each a divided allegiance; while some nations, as France for a short period, were for withholding obedience from both. Huss held these views, and so accorded with many of the wisest and best men of Europe. He wished to have Bohemia withdraw herself from each party, and join with that portion of the cardinals who rejected both popes in the election of one whom all should recognize as the head of the church. But to understand his position, we must take a brief retrospect of the condition of the papacy for the previous century.

At the commencement of the fourteenth century the papal chair was occupied by a man who revived the spirit and pretensions of Gregory VII and Innocent III. Boniface VIII was a man whose unscrupulous character and great abilities were united with craft and arrogance, and "an ambition as boundless as his avarice." Interposing as mediator between the kings of France and England, he soon assumed the authority of a judge, and imposed conditions which aroused indignation. Philip the Fair soon had an opportunity to resent the wrong, although his course was dictated, probably, as much by the interests of his kingdom as by the spirit of revenge. Large sums of money were constantly levied in France, and under various pretences transmitted to Rome. The king, whose treasury stood in great need of funds, published an ordinance prohibiting the exportation of gold and silver, coined or uncoined, from the kingdom without his permission. Boniface retaliated by his famous constitution, in which he forbade secular princes, save by his approval, to enact any sum or sums of money from ecclesiastical revenues. A war of manifestoes followed, which was temporarily closed by a hollow truce. New causes of complaint arose. The pope threatened to absolve Philip’s subjects from their allegiance. The king, supported by the three estates of the kingdom and the advice of his barons, defied the threat. His excommunication followed. France was put under interdict, and the universities were deprived of their privileges. Philip retaliated by arresting the pope, who with his court was then at Anagni. One of those who seized him struck him with his gauntlet and drew blood. He was soon, however, rescued from the hands of the conspirator, but, overwhelmed with grief and shame at the violence offered him, he soon died delirious.
Benedict XI, who succeeded Boniface in 1303, was a man of milder temper, but his reign was short; and in the following year Clement V, a Frenchman, was chosen pope. He was crowned at Lyons, and as the creature of Philip took up his residence at Avignon. Thus commenced what the Italians called "the Babylonian captivity." For nearly seventy years the popes were the liegemen of the kings of France. One or two of them are deserving of honorable mention; but the names of John XXII, Clement VI, and Gregory XI are covered with deserved infamy. The first was for many years at open feud with the German emperor, and in common with the others endeavored to satiate his avarice by a simony too notorious to allow of concealment. They all amassed prodigious wealth by the abuse of Annates, and the reservation and disposal of benefices. These were the men who converted Avignon into that "western Babylon" which Petrarch hated "like Tartarus." In 1376 Gregory XI determined to return to Rome. The insurrections and disorders of that city, as well as of many parts of Italy, demanded his presence. But a short period sufficed to make him repent of his purpose. He resolved to return to France, but before he could execute his resolution he died (1378).

The cardinals assembled at Rome to elect a successor. Alarmed by the tumultuous cries of the mob, who were determined to have no Frenchman elected, their choice fell upon the archbishop of Bari, a Neapolitan, who assumed the title of Urban VI. The harshness and arrogance of Urban soon alienated from him the minds of his cardinals. Several of them, protesting that the former election had not been free, withdrew, and elected to the pontificate a Frenchman, who took the name of Clement VII, and established his court at Avignon.

Thus commenced the great schism of the Western church. Christendom was divided into two obediences, one acknowledging a pope at Rome, the other a pope at Avignon. For nearly forty years the church was thus presented as "a monster with two heads." The avarice, arrogance, and ambition of the pontificate were exposed to the scorn, and became the scandal of Europe. Boniface IX succeeded Urban VI at Rome in 1389, and Peter de Luna, known as Benedict XIII, was elected in 1394, in place of Clement VII at Avignon. Successive efforts were made to induce one or both to resign, and thus restore peace and unity to the church; but all proved futile. On the death of Boniface IX at Rome, Innocent VII was chosen his successor; and in 1406 he in his turn gave place to Gregory XII, whose pontificate continued to the assembling of the council at Constance. The great question that agitated Europe was, what measures should be adopted for giving peace and restoring unity to the church. At Oxford, at Paris, at Prague, men discussed the subject, and the majority seemed everywhere to incline to what was called "the way of cession." They would have both claimants to the tiara resign their pretensions, and a general council, summoned for the purpose, elect a new pontiff, in whose authority all might acquiesce. Each of the contending popes however had still his partisans, and wherever these were found the church was divided and convulsed.
Archbishop Sbynco followed the obedience of Gregory. Huss rejected both popes, and, with the theologians of the university of Paris, preferred the way of cession. This fact must be taken into account, in order fully to understand the relations of Huss and the archbishop. Until about the time of the council of Pisa (1408) they seem to have been on the most friendly terms, and to have cooperated to some extent in promoting measures of reform. A few years later we find them antagonists. Sbynco was a man who paid some slight regard to the external proprieties and purity of the church. Huss looked to the reviving of a new and better spirit within it. Sbynco adhered to Gregory. Huss favored the action of the council. Even the controversy of the different nations in the university was insufficient to throw the greater question of the peace and unity of Christendom into the shade.

CHAPTER IV

The Council of Pisa

The best minds of Europe were fully convinced that the time had at length arrived when more vigorous efforts should be made to put an end to that scandal of Christendom, the papal schism. It had already endured for thirty years, yet with no prospect that either of the rival pontiffs or conclaves would yield his claims.

Meanwhile violence and anarchy prevailed largely throughout Europe. Wenzel, the oldest son of the emperor Charles IV, though still the king of Bohemia, had been deposed from the imperial throne and deprived of his hereditary rights, and Robert had been elevated by the electors to the vacant dignity. Sigismund, the second son of the emperor, who, in the partition of the imperial domain, had secured Hungary for his portion, was pressed by the terror of Moslem invasion, while Ladislaus, king of Naples, contested as a rival his right to the Hungarian throne. Poland and the Teutonic knights stood in hostile attitude to one another, and a fierce and protracted conflict had spread desolation on all sides. The German princes were often at feud, involving the whole land in intestine commotions. France, under the authority of a weak and feeble monarch sometimes so deranged as to leave the throne virtually vacant, was torn by contending factions. The rival dukes of Burgundy and Orleans grasped at and alternately secured the preponderating influence, till the unscrupulous violence of the former (1407) removed his competitor by the stroke of the assassin.

Everywhere there were turbulence, crime, lawlessness, and impunity. Nor was this all. Profligacy and corruption pervaded the hierarchy. The sacred offices of
the church were bartered and sold. Priestly avarice and arrogance had assumed an unblushing front. Deeds of darkness, that disgraced the highest dignitaries of the church, were performed in the light of day, and shamelessly avowed; and the demand was almost universal that some limit should be set to these abuses.

Nearly all these mischiefs, political and ecclesiastical, were attributed to the schism of the church. Pontifical authority might have exercised a restraining and controlling influence, but the rival pontiffs fulminated against each other, and the corruption which made their courts the Augean stables of Christendom, destroyed all respect for the tiara.

Successive efforts were made to remedy the evil; but the kingdoms were divided in their allegiance. Some held with the French, and some with the Italian pope. At first there was hope that on the death of one, his cardinals would refuse to elect a successor, and join themselves to the conclave of the other. Yet this hope was disappointed. Benedict XIII continued the French succession.

But his own ambition overshot its mark. He was too arrogant in his claims, and France began to waver in her allegiance. The university discussed the problem of peace and union. By its advice deputations were sent to Benedict, urging him to cede. He temporized—played his part as hypocrite with adroit skill, but finally, forced to show his hand, broke out in bold defiance, and declared that he would never betray the sacred trust of the flock of Christ by resigning his pretensions. This provoked indignation. France was exasperated, and withdrew her allegiance. Benedict was not terrified even by this. He issued his bull of excommunication against all who had been concerned in the act. The bull was introduced into the French parliament, and torn and cut with knives as the soldiers passed it from hand to hand, while the messengers who brought it were arrested, clad in ignominious robes, and marched through the streets amid the hootings of the rabble. Nor was this all. Marshal Boncicaut was ordered to arrest the pope. With his armed bands he proceeded to Avignon; but the wily pontiff had received timely warning, and managed to escape his hands.

But Gregory, as well as Benedict, had been elected under the solemn pledge to use his influence to give peace to the church. If necessary, he was to cede his office. It was urged that the two contendents should meet together and effect some compromise by which a union of the church should be secured. Both professed extreme readiness to do this. Each proclaimed himself eager to meet the other. Indeed, when professions were so cheap, and pontifical veracity had not altogether lost credit, it could scarcely be otherwise. Probably Gregory was, if not more sincere, at least less perfidious. Previous to his election he had sworn, and at his suggestion all the cardinals had sworn, with a solemn oath, to do whatever was practicable to effect peace and union in the church.
In his sermon after his election, he had, to the great joy of his hearers, exhorted the cardinals to labor with him for this object. "To whatever place," said he, "it is possible that a union can be secured in, I am resolved to go. If destitute of galleys, I will embark in a skiff; and if the journey must be by land, and horses cannot be procured, I would sooner go staff in hand on foot, than fail to keep my word."

But the possession of power had begotten the love of it. The fingers that had grasped the scepter as flesh, had been turned to iron, and would not relax their rigid hold. Nor was Benedict behind Gregory either in protestations or lack of performance. But in maneuvering against his antagonist he gained the weather-gage. A place was appointed for the proposed conference, and Benedict was present at the time specified. Gregory was too late, and his cunning rival threw upon him the odium of the failure of a project which it was impossible should succeed. After this, neither would accede to the propositions of the other. One would not leave the sea-coast, and the other would not approach it. Gregory complained that he had no gallies; and Benedict would not venture into the heart of Italy, where he would be powerless and his person insecure. It was facetiously said of them, that one was a land-animal afraid of the sea, and the other a sea-animal afraid of the land.

Gregory's adherents began to mistrust him. His cardinals, and numerous ambassadors from different kingdoms and provinces, pressed him to active measures. But the old man was inflexible to all remonstrance. His oath was forgotten, or a construction, the reverse of the obvious one, was put upon it. Just at the critical moment, when it seemed that he must yield, he heard that his ally, Ladislaus of Naples, had made his triumphal entry into Rome. This was glad intelligence to the exiled pontiff, who, though an Italian pope, had been driven from its walls. He was inspired with fresh hopes. With Rome in his possession he felt that he might defy his rival. To increase the number of his partisans he created several new cardinals. The old ones vainly opposed his project. A Carmelite, who had withstood it in presence of the ambassadors, was thrown into prison, and would have perished but for the intercession of powerful friends. Gregory would allow no sermon to be preached before him that had not first been examined and approved. But such proceedings were suicidal. His old cardinals forsook him, some on one pretext, some on another. Some fled to Lucca, others to Naples. Only seven were left, and a majority of these of the new creation. The others vainly strove to bring him back to reason. Disappointed in the effort, they drew up an appeal from Gregory to a general council, and notified Christendom of the withdrawal of their allegiance.

The statement of the grounds of their appeal is instructive. They describe Gregory as an unscrupulous tyrant, in whose power they were always in fear of prison or of massacre. Some of them had been selected for assassination, and soldiers had been stationed in the papal palace to execute the deed. They
were not allowed to meet except by the pope’s express order. For these and other reasons they appealed "from the pope ill-informed to the pope better informed; from the pope to Jesus Christ, of whom he is vicar; from the pope to a general council, to whom it belongs to judge the sovereign pontiff; from the present pope to a future pope, who shall be authorized to redress what his predecessor has unwarrantably ordained."

Gregory answered the appeal, but he could not bring back his cardinals. He excommunicated them. He deprived them of their dignities and benefices. But his spiritual thunders had lost their terror. The cardinals responded with specific accusations, posted up on the church doors of Lucca. In these they exhausted the vocabulary of opprobrious epithets to describe "the monster." They summon him, as unworthy of his title, to appear before them at Lucca and hear his sentence of deposition.

Meanwhile it fared but little better with Benedict. He had been forced to leave Avignon. At Paris his adherents were in personal danger. D'Ailly hid himself. Clemengis fled to his obscure retreat at Langres. The edict of neutrality was published. No hall or square could contain the crowd. The violence of the people could scarce exceed that of the university. The regent of theology used language on one occasion against the pope so vulgar and outrageous as to be unfit to be repeated. Some were disgusted by it and left the assembly, but there was no mistaking the current of the national feeling. It was in deadly opposition to Benedict.

Notification of the withdrawal of obedience was sent under the king’s seal to different courts. The princes were exhorted to renounce allegiance both to Benedict and Gregory. Urged by the university, the king wrote to the cardinals of both popes exhorting them to unite and summon a general council. They did in fact unite. Four of Benedict's cardinals, who had followed him from Porto Venere to Perpignan, whither he had fled for security, left him and withdrew to Livorno. Here they were joined by the cardinals of Gregory, and both parties united to form one college.

They responded in approval to the letter of the king of France, and informed him that they were about to convocate a council. In this reply the popes are not spared, and the authors of the schism are represented as worse than the Jews and the pagan soldiers, who, though they crucified Christ, spared his seamless robe. The united college appointed the convocation of the council at Pisa for March 25, 1409. To this they invited the prelates and ambassadors of Christendom. The cardinals of each obedience summoned their chief to meet them there. Those of Gregory, however, refused to treat him any longer as pope. Their letter to him is full of bitter recriminations. They remind him of his oaths and perjuries, his violence and oppression. He had required them to violate their oaths, "as if in taking the keys of the kingdom of heaven he had acquired the authority to perjure himself and to give license to others to do
the same.” In justice to themselves and the church they withdraw from his society and his tabernacles, and close with warning him, under severe penalties, to be present for trial at the council.

Intelligence of the proposed council was received with very extensive and general approval. England and France were strongly in its favor. Germany inclined, though with less unanimity, in the same direction, for the emperor Robert was the partisan of Gregory, and was suspicious of a council convoked, in part, by his recusant and rebellious cardinals. Through the influence of that adroit and unscrupulous tactician, Balthasar Cossa, afterwards John XXIII, who had broken with Gregory, and as tyrant of Bologna defied his threats and interdict, Florence was led to decide in favor of the council. The university of Bologna took the same ground. The Venetians, though declining to declare against Gregory, sided with the council. Genoa and Milan were both subject to French influence, and could not be counted as doubtful. Even at Rome, though the cry still was vive Ladislaus, no one ventured to call Gregory, pope. His legate was driven from the city, and in spite of the residence of Gregory in Italy, the greater portion of the states was found ranged on the side of the council.

In Bohemia the proposed council excited a lively interest. Wenzel, deposed from the imperial throne, had never entirely abandoned the purpose to recover the lost dignity. He was, at this very time—when the message of the cardinals reached him, announcing the council, and inviting him to recognize it—engaged in forming an arrangement with Gregory by which the latter was no longer to sustain the cause of the emperor Robert, Wenzel’s rival. But the pope hesitated, and Wenzel readily exchanged allies. He forbade the archbishop of Prague and his clergy any longer to obey Gregory, and devoted his energies to secure his own recognition by the approaching council. On the 24th of November, 1408, he replied to the cardinals, approving of their measure, engaging to send a deputation which should be received and treated as that of a German emperor. The university of Prague was summoned to a decision, accordant with the royal policy.

Henning Von Baltenhagen, the then rector, called a general assembly of the four nations. The Bohemians manifested a ready and almost unanimous disposition to accede to the wishes of the king. The three other nations, however, were reluctant to withdraw allegiance from Gregory, and the archbishop Sbynco was on their side. The decision of the majority was adverse to the royal project.

The Bohemians in the university had long complained of the usurpations of the other nations. They objected that each of these, instead of all united, had the same vote with themselves, and that in this respect the university of Prague had departed from the Parisian model. The present occasion, therefore, seemed to them a favorable one for presenting to the king their request that
the Bohemians might possess in the university at Prague the same powers and privileges which the French nation possessed in the university of Paris. The earnestness of their desire was not a little increased by the fact that the opposition to reform and to the doctrines of Wickliffe proceeded for the most part from the foreign nations. The Bohemians, with Huss, Stanislaus of Znoyma, and Paletz at their head, inclined to welcome many of the views, and to defend some, at least, of the treatises of the English reformer. It was becoming more evident, every day, that the national feeling and the cause of church reform—or innovation as some called it—were becoming more closely allied.

The king was at Kuttenberg when the deputation from the university reached him. To the surprise of all, he received the representatives of the three nations with great favor, and assured them that he would not infringe upon their rights or privileges. The Bohemians, on the other hand, were harshly repulsed, and Huss especially was sharply reproached for the rumored heresy in which he, with his friend Jerome, had involved the orthodox reputation of Bohemia. The king bitterly complained of the trouble which the matter gave him, and declared that in case others to whom the duty more properly belonged did not attend to it, he would see if fire could not settle the matter.

The deputation returned to Prague. Huss, overwhelmed by the strange issue of a project of which he had entertained great hopes, was struck down by a severe sickness. Meanwhile, however, the king, ever fickle in purpose, had changed his views. One of his favorites, a man high in office and of large experience, took the side of the Bohemians, and won the king over to his opinions. The consequence was, that soon after (January 18, 1409) Wenzel issued a royal decree, granting the request which had vainly been presented to him at Kuttenberg. The consequences that followed this measure, and its effect upon the conditions and prospects of the university, will be noted hereafter.

On the 22nd of January, 1409, little more than a month after the decree respecting the rights of the Bohemians, the royal order was proclaimed throughout the kingdom that henceforth Gregory XII should be no longer recognized as pope, and that obedience to him was to be withdrawn. Bohemia thus saw itself ranged on the side of the cardinals, and of the friends of the approaching council. This policy was advocated by Huss, both on religious and national grounds. By Wenzel it was adopted from the merest self-interest. Although the archbishop opposed the measure, it met with general acceptance. The nobility and magistrates were empowered and directed to see that no subject of the kingdom received or acknowledged any document from Gregory, whether charitative or judicial. The prohibition extended to all classes—prelates, monks, abbots, and priests, as well as the nobility and common people.
The general sentiment of the nation favored this measure. Although the university had condemned it, the national assembly, composed of the most distinguished princes and nobility of the kingdom, and at which the bishops and prelates were present, endorsed it with great unanimity. The king wrote to this effect to the cardinal, and in the closing paragraph of his letter, after expressing his purpose to assist honestly at the council, informed the cardinal that his ambassadors must be received as those of the lawful emperor, that thus his just title might receive recognition.

It was easy to perceive that the condition thus insisted on would not be unacceptable. The cardinals desired for their project the imperial sanction. This, Robert, as the ally of Gregory, would of course refuse to grant. Nor had the council anything to fear from his resentment, through the favor now extended to the rival claimant to the imperial crown. Robert’s recent unfortunate expedition into Italy had already exposed his authority to contempt, while any opposition which he might make to the council would be neutralized by divisions which existed within the bounds of the empire, and over which he had but feeble control. Bohemia acceded to the project of the council, and Wenzel, as emperor *de jure*, extended to it the imperial sanction.

Still, there were powerful opposing influences which the convocation of the council had to encounter. In the various kingdoms, each of the popes had influential adherents. Though opposed to each other, they really cooperated as against the council. Benedict, especially, was far from idle. Indeed, he played his part with masterly skill. He had the art to secure and retain the confidence of men whose motives were above impeachment. Clemengis, who declined to serve him longer as secretary when he learned of the bull to be fulminated against France, still sided with him. Vincent of Ferrara—“the apostle of the West,” and the Whitefield of his age—vindicated him as lawful pope. This alone was worth a kingdom to Benedict. Vincent preached publicly against the proposed mode of cession, and Benedict made him—venerated by all Western Europe almost as another St. Paul—his confessor, and master of the sacred palace. Vincent’s brother, Boniface, second in influence only to himself in the region south of the Pyrenees, was of the same mind with him. With such allegiance as Benedict still retained, he therefore determined on his part to hold a general council of his own. It was summoned to meet at Perpignan, November 1st, 1408.

Gregory, though less shrewd and sagacious, saw plainly enough that he too must labor to keep up appearances. He summoned his council also. At first, he was at a loss for a place. Rome was closed against him. Venice was more than half-persuaded to yield allegiance to the council of Pisa. Florence and its allies, leagued with Louis of Anjou in his rivalship with Ladislaus for the Neapolitan crown, were swayed by French influence. Genoa, moreover, had adopted a neutral position. Ladislaus, ostensibly opposed to Gregory, but really playing into his hands, dared not offer him an Italian city, from fear lest the
council at Pisa should fulminate against him. Gregory at last settled on Friuli, in the Venetian territory, and, after tedious delays, his council met there, July 22nd, 1409.

As preparation was now made for the assembling of three councils, it became an object with each party to secure for itself as large and powerful a representation as possible. The field which most invited attention was Germany. But the contest here lay not between Gregory and Benedict, but between Gregory and the council of Pisa. The emperor Robert favored Gregory; but the diet which was called to hear the statements of the ambassadors of the cardinals, leaned toward neutrality and adhesion to the council.

There was good reason for this. Germany had bitterly felt the evils of the schism. When each diocese had, as well as the popedom, its rival claimants, the mischief was no longer limited to Rome or Avignon. It reached to distant cities and humble homes. To the city of Liege it was especially disastrous. Two bishops claimed the See, each sanctioned by the pope of his allegiance. John of Bavaria, grandson of the emperor Lewis, had been confirmed by Urban VI, whom the Liegeois had recognized as pope as early as 1389. But Louis refused to take the order of the priesthood, and the aggrieved citizens rose against him and drove him to Mæstricht. On this occasion they were led on by Henry de Pervies, but on the condition that his son should be elected bishop in place of John. But distrusting Gregory, to whom Lewis adhered, they applied to Benedict to confirm the new incumbent. A legate was sent accordingly, and Liege was thus brought under the allegiance of Benedict.

A war ensued between the city and the expelled bishop. But the last had a powerful ally in the Duke of Burgundy, his brother-in-law. Somewhat tardily his army arrived at Mæstricht, where the bishop still held out, though the siege was pressed by an army of 50,000 men. A battle ensued, and the carnage was terrible. The duke led his own forces, largely composed of the finest portion of the nobility of his estates. The rout of the Liegeois was perfect. Their leader and bishop—father and son—were found among the dead, the hand of one clasped in the hand of the other. It is even said that none escaped to carry back the news of the disaster to the unfortunate city, or warn it of its fate. Sixty persons were executed. The legate of Benedict and the officers of the bishop were thrown into the Meuse. John was restored to his bishopric, and the people could appreciate the value of his benedictions.

But Germany took the alarm. Each city felt that the evil might soon be brought to its own doors. If the popes were tyrants, it was better, perhaps, after all, to have but one. This feeling was manifest at the diet held near the close of 1408, at Frankfort-on-the-Main. It was numerously attended. Gregory and the cardinals, England, France, Poland, Bohemia, and other states were represented by their ambassadors. The emperor was almost alone in his adhesion to Gregory.
Thus the general sentiment of Christendom was settling down in favor of the council of Pisa. The popular conviction was confirmed by the futile hostility of Benedict. His council, summoned for November 1, 1408, was first to meet. There was but a meager attendance. French soldiers guarded the roads and the passes of the Pyrenees, and a large proportion of the members could reach Perpignan only under strange disguise. But of these, not a few were anxious for the union of the church, and when they discovered the obstinacy and real designs of Benedict, forsook him in disgust. Those who still lingered with him were not agreed. But the opinion in favor of a delegation to Pisa preponderated. The delegation was sent, but with limited powers of negotiation. It was arrested on its way, and with some difficulty reached its destination. But even here it was exposed to danger. So strong was the public odium against it, the cardinals dared not speak with their old associates. The latter were exposed to violence and insult, and in the assembly at which they presented themselves, the marshal told them that it would be impossible to protect them unless they remained in their seats till the crowd dispersed. Threats of burning them were freely thrown out. The Podesta, with some of the chief men of the city, had to accompany them to their lodgings to prevent their being stoned. They could accomplish nothing, and were forced clandestinely to leave the city. Such was the issue of Benedict’s attempt.

Meanwhile the council of Pisa had commenced its sessions. It was favored by the locality where it had been convoked. Pisa could be approached from every direction, by sea as well as by land. It was thus easy of access, and could be abundantly supplied with provisions with little difficulty. It stood in the midst of a large and fertile plain, watered by the Arno, on the banks of which it was built. A more eligible spot for the council could not have been selected. Pisa, moreover, was subject to Florence, by which it had been conquered during the previous year, and was thus secured alike against internal strifes and foreign foes. Ladislaus, the secret ally of Gregory, had been forced to retreat before the arms of Florence.

The number of members in attendance was large. France was well represented, and among her deputation stood prominent in position and ability the chancellor of the university, John Gerson. The English deputation had been addressed by him as they passed through Paris, and had imbibed the spirit kindled by the fiery logic of the great chancellor. Most historians reckon as present at the council, either in person or by deputies, twenty-two cardinals, four patriarchs, nearly two hundred bishops, nearly three hundred abbots, besides priors, generals of orders, deputies of universities, and chapters of metropolitan churches and cathedrals, more than three hundred doctors in theology and canon law, and the ambassadors of six kings and numerous princes.

On the appointed day (March 25, 1409) the council assembled in the body of the fine and spacious cathedral of Pisa—the most splendid structure of the kind
in Italy, with the exception of the cathedral at Milan. The scene was one of imposing pomp and grandeur. The prelates marched on toward the cathedral in procession, clothed in their official robes. They moved along the aisles, under the shadow of the massive pillars of oriental granite, to seats prepared for them before the altar. The sides of the nave were fitted up for the bishops and abbots, and the remaining space was occupied by the less distinguished members of the council.

The session was opened in the most solemn and imposing manner. Mass was celebrated by one of the cardinals after the pontifical form. The archbishop of Milan preached the sermon. He vividly depicted the evils under which Christendom mourned—the confusion and disorder of the church, the corruption of morals, the sufferings and oppressions endured by the good, and the power and triumph of the basest and vilest men. He urged upon the council the importance of their work, and the hopes inspired by their convocation. They were expected to give to the church "one sole, true, unquestioned pastor, so that no longer should men see with abhorrence two monstrous heads affixed to the mystic body of Christ." Both the contendents were considered heretical. It was significant of the action of the council.

It would be tedious to recite the ceremonies and proceedings of the successive sessions. The two contendents were cited, but did not appear. The citation was repeated, but with the same result; and the council proceeded to measures for the deposition of Benedict and Gregory.

These, however, had their secret adherents in the council, who obstructed its proceedings. They raised questions of order and privilege. They disputed the legitimacy of a council that had not been convoked by a pope. They scrupled the right of a pope to abdicate. They held that the relative merits of the two contendents were matters to be discussed.

But Gerson came forward in behalf of the council: with remorseless logic he drove his opponents from their strongest positions. He repeated the arguments of his favorite treatise, published before he left Paris, De Auferibilitate Papæ. He held that the unity of the church resides in Jesus Christ its spouse and head; that the church, by its assembled representatives in general council, may make all necessary provisions; that the mystic body of Christ, as well as any civil body, may provide itself a head; that, without inquiring into the origin of the schism, it may yet proceed to free the church from it; that, though some evils might follow decisive measures, yet that a part may be sacrificed to save the whole; that, disregarding the formalities of positive statute, the council may temper its rigor with equity, or even dispense with the law itself; and that, while all proper security should be assured to the contendents, yet, upon their non-appearance, the council might, notwithstanding, proceed to set them aside and elect a new pope.
These arguments prevailed with the council. The emperor Robert vainly strove to stay its proceedings. On the very day when action was to have been taken, his ambassadors appeared. They threw out questions and doubts respecting the authority and the legitimacy of the council. It had been convoked, they said, neither by pope nor emperor.

The old flame of controversy was enkindled anew. The people present were scandalized at the course taken by the ambassadors. Even the hostlers before the doors of the cathedral took part in the dispute. The council discussed their propositions, and prepared a reply; but before it was given in they had secretly left the city. They fully appreciated their own and their masters’ unpopularity. The sermon preached at the first congregation held after they had left, was from the text, "The hireling fleeth." Robert’s envoys, however, before leaving, nailed to the doors of the church his appeal to a general council, and his protest against the issuing of any decree against Gregory, whom he recognized as lawful pope.

Ladislaus in his turn was disposed to interrupt the council’s proceedings. He attacked Sienna, subject, like Pisa, to Florentine authority. But his defeat, which soon followed at Arezzo, relieved them of their fears.

The council proceeded with its work. Testimony was taken and recited, and the definitive sentence against the popes was pronounced on the fifth of June. The doors of the cathedral were thrown open, and the large edifice was crowded to its full capacity. The decision of the council was read; and Benedict and Gregory, for their persistence in schism, their notorious heresy, their perjured violation of solemn oaths, and their wickedness and enormous excesses, were deposed from the pontificate. The Roman See was declared vacant. All persons, of what Station soever, were absolved from allegiance to either of the contendents, and were forbidden to recognize their authority. All acts, bulls, excommunications, and processes of Benedict or Gregory, subsequent to the convocation of the council, were declared null and void. No member of the council was to leave the church till he had signed the sentence. It was a few days after this that the ambassadors of Benedict reached Pisa.

On the fifteenth of June the council proceeded to take measures for the election of a new pope. Towards evening twenty-three cardinals entered the conclave provided for their reception in the episcopal palace. Their session continued till the twenty-sixth of the month. According to the Monk of St. Denis, the conclave breathed nothing but disinterestedness, piety, and zeal for the church of God. But the more plain-spoken De Niem forces us to question somewhat the sincerity of their devotion. Each of the electors had promised, in case he should be elected, to remember the cardinals’ friends, and grant their demands. Another witness speaks of the incredible efforts and promises of the French to the Italian cardinals, to secure the election of one of their own nation.
A pope was at length elected. It was Peter Philargi, cardinal of Milan, who assumed the title of Alexander V. His elevation is ascribed to Balthasar Cossa, his successor, by whom he was governed and controlled.

The new pope was as unexceptionable a man probably as the conclave could have selected. He was reputed to be a man of rare knowledge and eloquence, of correct habits, and business talent. He was sixty-six years of age at the time of his election—a capital qualification in the eyes of Cossa.

His life had been one of active industry and successful effort. He had studied at Oxford and Paris. At the latter place he had received a doctor's degree, and had taught theology and sacred literature. He became bishop of Vicenza, and afterwards of Milan. Innocent VII raised him to the cardinalate. His testimony of himself is not to his disparagement. "I was," said he "a rich bishop, a poor cardinal, a mendicant pope."

On the seventh of July the ceremony of coronation took place. Alexander received the pontifical crown, standing on the steps of the cathedral, from the hands of Cardinal Saluces. The ordinary ceremonial was observed, and Alexander notified his election to all Europe. Just one month after the coronation came the closing session of the council. A few unimportant regulations were made, but the great subject of reform was referred to a more convenient season—a future council. The claim of Louis of Anjou, the rival of Ladislaus to the kingdom of Naples, was endorsed by the pope, and he was appointed grand-gonfalonier of the Romish church against the common enemy of both.

The council of Pisa was already drawing to its close, when that of Gregory assembled at Friuli (July 22, 1409). It simply denounced the action of that of Pisa, and decided, as might have been expected, in favor of the claims of Gregory. But the sentence of Gregory was already pronounced, and measures had been taken at Venice for his arrest. Aware of his danger, he resolved on flight, first, however, appointing legates in different kingdoms to strengthen his party. Among these was his faithful archbishop, Sbynco of Prague.

But the Boor old man, who, before he set out for Friuli, looked more like the dead than the living, found that he was not safe even in the midst of his council. He had made the patriarch of Aquileia his bitter enemy by attempting to deprive him of his benefice. The time for vengeance had now come. The prelate gathered soldiers to cut off his retreat. Venice was only too ready to seize him on her own territories. Under the show of remaining some time longer at Friuli, in order to lull suspicion, he hurriedly prepared the means of escape. At his request Ladislaus sent two galleys and fifty horsemen to his relief. But the question was, how to reach the port where the galleys lay. Gregory assumed the disguise of a merchant, and, traveling on horseback, followed by two attendants on foot, passed safely and unsuspected through the
guard of soldiers stationed by the patriarch to intercept him. In a little while his chamberlain followed, clothed in pontifical habits, with a considerable escort. The soldiers, naturally supposing that this must be the pope, seized him, his company, and baggage. Plundering the poor chamberlain, they drew him along with them several miles, bare-headed, and in most wretched plight. To their deep mortification, they learned, on reaching their place of rendezvous, from a domestic of the patriarch, that they had mistaken their man. They at once endeavored to correct their error, and started in full pursuit of Gregory. But they were too late. When they reached the port he had already found a skiff, and was on his way to the gallies. Enraged and disappointed, the soldiers vented their spite on the poor chamberlain. They stripped him of his rich dress, and left him only a poor doublet. Not yet content, they beat him with clubs. The blows revealed a secret. There was a ringing of metal. They stripped him and found concealed about his person five hundred florins of gold. This they seized, and divided among themselves. The next day one of them, in derision of Gregory, clothed himself in the pontifical robes of which they had despoiled the chamberlain, and walked through the streets dispensing his benedictions.

Gregory’s adherents, members of the council, lingered yet at Friuli. At length, in October, under the escort of five hundred German knights hired for the purpose, they effected their escape. Gregory had already got safe to Gaeta.

Thus the issue of both the other councils exposed them to contempt, while that of Pisa had succeeded in elevating to the pontificate a respectable man. Had he lived, all Christendom might, in the course of a few years, have been united in his allegiance. The intelligence of his election was favorably received in various countries, and, in spite of the partisans of the anti-popes, who were everywhere to be found as legates or beneficiaries, his authority was generally acknowledged. The intelligence of his election caused great joy at Paris. The university looked upon him almost as her son. The people cried Vive Alexander, our Pope! His legate was received with great honors. The princes of the blood went to meet him, and escorted him into Paris. Florence and Sienna sent deputies to express their recognition of his authority. Germany for the most part, though Robert still adhered to Gregory, favored the council. Bohemia, by a strongly preponderating sentiment, ranged itself on the side of Alexander, and the influence of Sbynco was seriously affected by his adherence to Gregory, and his position as legate.

Huss, although not an active participant, was a careful observer of what was taking place before the eyes of Christendom. He favored the council of Pisa, and shared with the French theologians their indignation at the craft, duplicity, and ambition of the anti-popes. The age was itself a school to teach contempt of papal authority, and yet Huss transferred his honest allegiance to Alexander V. This simple act shows that he was not moved by faction, and that he had as yet no thought of coming into conflict with Christendom.
Still, the result fell short of what had been expected. A new pope had been elected, but this was all. The two anti-popes had been set aside, but the mischief of the schism in great part still remained. Huss had an illustration of this at Prague in the position and character of the archbishop, manifesting a hostile attitude towards the council, the Bohemian nation generally, and the expressed will and authority of the king. Nor was this all. The ardent hopes of the friends of peace and reform, which had been excited by the convocation of the council, had been doomed to disappointment. If a new pope had been elected, it added another claimant to the papacy. The emperor still recognized Gregory, and Spain continued, to some extent, her allegiance to Benedict. The corruptions of the church had received little if any check. The language of some of the most faithful and able men of the age, in speaking of it, is characterized by great severity. Clemengis, a patriot, a scholar, and a Christian, once rector of the university of Paris, and afterwards Benedict’s private secretary, had now withdrawn into a retirement more congenial to his tastes, and in the quiet vale of Langres pursued his sacred studies. The Holy Scriptures were his daily companion. In these he found “the gold of wisdom, the silver of eloquence, the gems of virtue, lavishly poured forth from the fountain of supernal grace.” Here he learned, as he assures us, more in a few days than he had before in as many years from the heathen poets and orators which he had now thrown aside.

The views of such a man, at such a crisis, are worthy of our notice. He saw with a clearer eye than most, the deep-seated malady of Christendom, and had sense enough to perceive that no remedy could avail, short of a thorough and entire reform.

“The assembly of Pisa,” said he, “only deceived the church of God. It cried Peace, peace, when there was no peace. These carnal and avaricious men are so eager after their benefices, that, blinded by their passions, they have obstructed the reformation of the church, for which many are so anxious. Thus they first of all proceeded to a new election. When this was done, and they had obtained the promotions they asked, they cried Peace and Union! and so, after having dissolved the council, they returned with the peace they sought, that is to say, their own advancement.” Could Huss have uttered more unpalatable truth?

Boniface of Ferrara, brother of Vincent, “not his inferior in piety,” speaks of the council as “a profane, heretical, cursed, seditious, absurd, scandalous, diabolical assembly.” He charges its being summoned to violence and intrigue as well as the selfishness of the cardinals. He maintains, which is not improbable from the known character of Balthasar Cossa, that he had gained the doctors of Bologna by bribes, or overawed them by his authority, to approve the council.
The intelligence of the election was not everywhere received as it was in France. One of the cardinals was reported to have said to one of the ambassadors of the king of Arragon, the next day after the election, "Be assured, as long as the pope is elected from the Italians, we shall have one of their fancy." Several other cardinals, after the election, withdrew dissatisfied to their benefices, determined never to see Alexander V again, or be members of his council. At Genoa there was no sign of satisfaction given at the receipt of the news; not a bell was struck.

Many learned men in Italy, France, Germany, and elsewhere, refused to give in their adherence to the council. Some maintained, and with much show of reason, that it had increased the schism rather than removed it. There were now three claimants to the popedom instead of two. All were not of the mind of Cardinal Chalant, who deserted Benedict and joined the council in hope of his own election. When Boniface of Ferrara remonstrated with him on his course, his reply was that of the reckless and ambitious partisan. "What will come of this," asked Boniface, "but the election of a third pope who will be only an anti-pope?" "What difference if we only make one?" answered the cardinal. "Be he anti-pope, or even devil, he will then become pure."

Clemengis disputed the authority of the council. Bad men, he admits and assert, were there, but the Holy Spirit did not preside over it.

Theodore Vrie, a German monk, gives the history of the evils and corruptions of the age, in the form of a dialogue between Christ and his church. He makes the latter say: "Behold, I pray you, what union, or rather division! Yet it is an execrable schism. They have wished to elect only one supreme pastor, and have made three. I had two husbands; and they have given me a third."

The council had in fact opened an unlimited field for controversy. A large portion of Christendom regarded the pontificate as supreme jure divino, and above all subjection to any earthly tribunal. Gerson, and the French theologians generally, repudiated this view. With them the church itself was supreme, and its decisions, by its representatives in a general council, the law from which there could be no appeal. The very title of the treatise of the chancellor of the university, De Auferibalitate Papæ, was startling to all the partisans of papal infallibility. But Clemengis went further. Agreeing with Gerson in many points, he yet disputes the infallibility of councils, and especially that of Pisa. His argument on the subject is a masterpiece of skill and shrewdness, and evidently suggests, though in the form of dialogue, his real sentiments. We may fairly declare it unanswerable. One after another he hunts out every subterfuge of his opponent, and, under the show of the greatest docility, leaves the objector who presumes to teach him, a humble learner.
Peter D’Ailly, afterwards cardinal of Cambray, held positions not much discordant from those of Gerson, as was manifest at the council of Constance. Such disputes struck at the very root of papal authority. Yet they had spread over Christendom. Huss at Prague was but carrying out to their legitimate issue the principles of Gerson and Clemengis.

One of the first acts of the newly elected pope was a bull in favor of the mendicants. To say no worse of it, it was, in a political point of view, a gross blunder, which his successor found it necessary to correct. This order of monks had been established in the beginning of the thirteenth century. They had been favored by the popes, who bestowed upon them peculiar privileges and immunities. Freed from all secular and episcopal jurisdiction, privileged to demand alms wherever they roamed, these brethren of St. Dominic assumed the name of "preaching friars." They were authorized to preach everywhere, irrespective of the will or authority of the parish priest. They were privileged to hear confessions, read masses, and sell papal indulgences. Their influence soon became most extensive and efficient. They were justly called "the standing army of the pope." But their privileges and success awoke soon a jealousy against them on the part of the regular clergy. Spreading themselves all over Christendom, their early zeal and vows of poverty acquired for them a power that was considered dangerous in such irresponsible hands. Yet, in spite of a rising opposition, this hardy and devoted militia of the church did its work to perfection. Its numbers and efficiency increased. Fresh lifeblood seemed to be infused into a decaying system. Youthful activity succeeded to visible decrepitude. The mendicant was free to act wherever occasion offered. He intruded into the region of parochial duty. He seated himself in the chair of the confessional. He seized the honors of the university, or the crosier of the bishop. His influence was felt in each secular department. None understood better the secrets of diplomatic intrigue. None could avail himself more skillfully of every occasion, to serve at once himself and his master.

In the course of sixty years these holy beggars had increased to "extravagant swarms." Their early vows of poverty were forgotten. The barefooted brethren had become possessed of stately edifices and large domains. Their success was their corruption and disaster. Supported by the popes, they insulted the curates and bishops. Multitudes forsook their parish guests to follow the mendicants and confess to them.

The struggle continued. Sometimes their audacity forced the popes to revoke their privileges, soon however to be restored. Councils and synods differed, some approving and some condemning the order. The question of the mendicants agitated all Christendom. Even papal infallibility split upon this rock. The popes wavered in regard to the policy to be adopted. They dared not sustain them throughout, and would not dismiss them altogether. In England the contest was sharp and protracted. We have seen the course of Wickliffe, and the bitter hostility with which he was regarded by the mendicants. In this
contest, the better portion of the English nation sympathized with the reformer. To such an extent had the evil grown at one time, that the law records were “filled with warrants for the arrest of the sanctimonious vagrants.”

A similar disturbance had been created by them in other parts of Christendom. While Janow and Huss opposed them at Prague, they were not suffered to enjoy at Paris an undisputed triumph. In 1408, one of their number, John Gozel, boldly maintained, in the college of Navarre, their impudent and assuming claims. Among other positions, he held that the curates, as such, were inferior to the mendicants, and were unauthorized to preach, to confess, to grant extreme unction or burial, or even to receive tithes. Such was the presumption inspired by their powerful influence and wonderful success. But such bold avowals were too offensive to be passed over in silence. The theological faculty of the university were incensed. They summoned the offender before them, and forced him to retract his proposition and publicly disavow it.

Things were in this state when Alexander’s bull in favor of the mendicants arrived. It was addressed to all the prelates of Christendom, and contained a recapitulation of the bulls of previous popes in favor of the offending order. Either unwilling to credit the bull, or the more formally to express their dissent from its provisions, the university sent a deputation to Pisa to learn the facts in the case. They satisfied themselves that the bull was genuine, and examined it in the original. Observing that it professed to have been expedited “with the content and by the advice of the cardinals,” they visited them all individually to learn the facts. They all, without exception, denied any participation in the matter, and were perfectly agreed in condemning it as prejudicial to the rights of the regular clergy. The report of the deputation kindled in France a flame of indignation and remonstrance. The act of the pope was evidently one of partiality and favoritism toward the mendicants, of which order he had been himself a member. The rector of the university of Paris assembled the doctors and regents to deliberate on the course to be adopted. It was resolved that all the mendicant monks should be expelled. They were forbidden to preach till they had renounced the bull. Some complied with the requisition; others, emboldened by the authority of the pope, resolved to brave the indignation and sentence of the university. They ran raving through the streets, with copies of the bull authorizing their privileges in their hands, insulting the regular clergy, and maintaining that to them properly belonged the right to preach, hear confessions, and receive tithes from parishes. The king, at the urgency of the university, and to repress this license, published a prohibition against them.

Gerson, chancellor of the university, was directed to preach a sermon on the subject. He maintained that if any one proposed to break up the established order of the hierarchy, he was to be resisted as Lucifer and the wicked angels.
Coming to the question in hand, he asserted that the bull had been extorted from the pope by surprise, or been obtained through his inadvertence. The university had judged it to be intolerable, incompatible with the welfare of the church, and that it must be rescinded before the preaching friars could be restored to their privileges."

The priests were required in their sermons to justify the course of the university. In every city small treatises were drawn up and circulated, containing in the French language an explanation of the matter, in order to instruct the common people on the subject.

The effect of all these measures was to render the pope unpopular. The joy that had been excited by the news of his election quickly subsided. He had lost the strength of allegiance on the part of France, which could enable him to defy his competitors. There were now three popes in the field. The council had rather aggravated than healed the schism of the church.

At Prague, Alexander V, elected at Pisa, was, if not fully acknowledged, at least preferred. Wenzel, from spite at Gregory, would at least give precedence to the claims of one whom he regarded as Gregory's antagonist. The result that had thus been reached left Sbynco, the archbishop, in a false position. His adherence to Gregory, while Bohemia ranged itself, though by no means with enthusiasm, on the side of Alexander, was of no little service in strengthening the position of Huss.

CHAPTER V
Huss and the Archbishop

It is now time for us to return and note the progress of affairs at Prague. We have already seen the national feeling allying itself with the cause of reform. The condemnation of Wickliffe's articles by the university in 1403 was regarded as specially obnoxious, from the fact that it had been brought about by a majority composed of the vote of the foreign nations. It was looked upon by the Bohemians as a victory over themselves, and increased that dissatisfaction which issued in the petition addressed by the Bohemians to Wenzel. The tendencies of the two parties became continually more manifest. The patriotic feeling of the nation rejected the decision against Wickliffe's books, while the foreign influence was almost unanimously in its favor. Huss was the acknowledged leader of the former, and among his most powerful supporters were some who were afterwards his most virulent opponents. Undoubtedly the
party which adhered to him was composed largely of members to whom theological questions were of minor importance.

At this time the archbishop troubled himself but little with the affairs of the university, and was on good terms with Huss. His attention was directed more to his worldly than his spiritual possessions. His diocese was neglected, while he engaged, in the summer of 1404, in the siege of the fortress where the knight Nicholas Zul of Ostrodek had gathered his robber band. Zul was taken captive, given over to the civil authorities, and in his prison visited by Huss, whose words made such an impression upon his mind that he at least assumed the aspect of an humble penitent.

But no sooner had Sbynco subdued the fortress than his attention was directed to other martial operations. For the two succeeding years he was engaged, along with the provost of Choteschau, Sulek of Hradek, in an invasion of Moravia, and had no time or opportunity to note the progress of religious affairs at Prague.

At length, aroused by the express admonitions of the pope, he summoned in 1406 a synod of his diocese clergy, and in conjunction with them issued his decree that henceforth no one, under severe penalty, should hold, teach, or, for purposes of academic debate, argue in favor of Wickliffe’s doctrines. It was proposed to institute an investigation for the purpose of detecting any who might be the secret or open adherents of the English reformer.

But the measure proved futile. Either Sbynco was not prepared to break with Huss, who as queen’s confessor and preacher in Bethlehem chapel was an opponent to be feared, or he felt, as is more probable, little interest in the questions at issue, which he failed fully to comprehend. Huss distinctly rejected the views of Wickliffe on the subject of transubstantiation, and was less obnoxious in this respect probably than some of his associates.

The two years which followed were years of comparative quiet. But in the spring of 1408, Matthias of Knin, surnamed Pater, a master of arts in the university, was arraigned before the archiepiscopal court on the charge of John Elia, one of the Bohemian friends of Huss. He was accused of holding that the substance of the bread remains after the sacramental words have been pronounced. Pater was thrown into prison, and only secured his release by a solemn recantation. Scarcely, however, was he again at liberty, when, in presence of witnesses, he made affidavit that his recantation had been extorted by fear of prison and torture.

The matter excited a deep interest, especially among the Bohemians, who were now seen to be divided among themselves. A meeting was speedily called to consult in regard to the doctrines of Wickliffe. Clemens of Mnichowic, pastor at Wran and the then rector, presided. Among those present were Huss,
Jacobel, John Elia, Stanislaus, Andrew Broda, and Stephen Paletz. The assembly consisted of sixty-four masters and doctors, one hundred and fifty graduates, and one thousand students. The decision was, that under penalty of expulsion no member of the Bohemian nation should teach or defend any of Wickliffe’s articles. But the provision was added, that the prohibition referred to was only to the articles as understood in an heretical, erroneous, or scandalous sense. The issue of the matter was thus a compromise between the two wings of the national party. It enabled them yet a while longer to cooperate on patriotic grounds, and in opposition to the foreign influence.

It was not long after this before the explorations of John of Kbel, the vicar-general of the archbishop, detected another case of heresy. The criminal in this case was priest Abraham, pastor of the church of the Holy Ghost. One of the charges against him—probably not the only one—is quite significant. He asserted that laymen, as well as priests, might be allowed to preach the gospel. Huss took a deep interest in the case, and was present at the trial. He had a somewhat warm discussion with the vicar, but with no good result. Priest Abraham was given over to the inquisitor Jaroslow, bishop of Sarepta, by whom he was imprisoned and afterwards banished. Huss remonstrated on the matter with the archbishop. He pointed him to the indolent and worthless priests in the diocese whom he left unmolested, while he had banished as a heretic one who was exemplary in the discharge of every priestly duty.

But Sbynco felt that he had done enough. He wearied of the troublous business of dealing with heretics, and readily—at the request of Wenzel—certified that after diligent investigation no further heresy or error was to be found in the land.

Such was the state of things when the king, in the autumn of 1408, laid the subject of the withdrawal of obedience from Gregory before the university. The unanimity of the three foreign nations in opposing it, and of the national party in its favor, only added to the mutual alienation of feeling which had long existed; and when the king, under the influence of his favorite, granted the request of the Bohemians, and issued his decree giving the Bohemians an equal vote and control in the university with the three other nations, the long smoldering flames burst forth. Huss was still prostrate on his sickbed, when John Elia and Andrew Broda entered his chamber and announced the realization of his long-cherished hopes. He gave them his warmest thanks for the cheering intelligence, and charged them, in case he should not recover, to remain faithful to the popular cause.

The foreign party were taken by surprise. They had not imagined that the king would have ventured on so bold a step. In the security of their confidence they had made rash threats of what they would do in case of such an emergency. They had pledged one another, if the request of the Bohemians was granted and the decree was executed, to leave Prague in a body. Even when the
decision of the king had been made public, they could scarce believe that it would be carried out. They employed all the means in their power to divert Wenzel from his purpose, but in vain.

At length the critical hour arrived. The annual elections were to take place. A new rector and dean of the faculty of arts were to be chosen. The three nations were proceeding after the old order, when the Bohemians interposed. The confusion and discord were such that the old officers made it an apology for putting off the election. Henning Von Baltenhagen, the rector, and Albert Warretrappe, the dean, refused to yield up the insignia of their office.

This state of things could not continue. The indolent monarch might have disregarded his own decrees, but the favorite, Nicholas Von Lobkowic, at whose instance it had been issued, had still the ear of the king, and urged him to decisive measures. On the 9th of May, 1409, while the council of Pisa was yet in its early sessions, Nicholas appeared before the university, and in the name of the king required the dean and rector to give up the insignia of their office, and by royal authority appointed Zdenek Von Labaun as rector, and Simon Von Tisnow as dean.

The defeated party were exasperated beyond measure, and prepared at once to execute their threatened purpose. Some of them burned down the theological college, and in a few days five thousand German students, with their doctors, masters, and bachelors, true to their vows, but with sad hearts, had left the city. Most of these belonged to the Saxon nation. The Bavarians, during the long alienation of emperor Robert and Wenzel, had experienced a marked decrease of numbers, while of the Polish nation only a portion were of German sympathies, and the Slavic masters and students were for the most part inclined to retard the Bohemians as brethren. The voluntary exiles, who went forth from the university at Prague, found a home at Leipsic, and laid there the foundations of a new university.

It was not difficult to determine, now that the foreign nations had left, upon whom the choice of rector would fall. Preeminent among his countrymen, *facile princeps*, by the concession of all, unless of some disappointed rival—once his warmest friends, but soon to be his bitter enemies—John Huss was again called to fill the post of rector.

Such was the triumph of the reformer, at the critical moment when he was about to come in direct conflict with the archiepiscopal influence at Prague. Sbynco, opposed as legate of Gregory to the measures of the council of Pisa, found himself in an unenviable position. Although as yet he had not come to an open rupture with Huns, he had been made to feel the weight of his influence, and had grown restive under his censure and the reports of his sermons in Bethlehem chapel. The decisive conflict could not long be deferred.
But Sbynco still persisted—in spite of the council and its decisions—in adhering to the cause of Gregory XII. In this he was encouraged by hopes based on the uncertainty of the future and the fickleness of Wenzel. The character of the king—a curious compound of indolence and passion, willful caprice, and mischievous humor—went far to deprive him of all respect. No man had possessed better opportunities to know what he was than the archbishop, and this acquaintance with his general imbecility, and his indifference toward all but the gratification of his appetites, undoubtedly encouraged him for a while to persist in his course as the legate of Gregory in the kingdom of Bohemia.

Wenzel’s life had been marked by the most singular freaks of caprice, and the strangest vicissitudes of fortune. The oldest son of Charles IV, he had ascended the imperial throne (1378) at the early age of fifteen. At this period, though his character was but partially developed, he was regarded with respect and confidence. He gave promise of the highest virtues for the ornament and glory of his throne. But it was not long before the hopes of his early years were obscured by debaucheries and excess. He became strangely reckless of his authority, studious only of his ease or amusement, and utterly void of all self-respect. He had no trace of the ambition or enterprise of a great sovereign, and only disgraced the imperial title which he bore. In 1395 he sold the dukedom of Milan to the Visconti for 100,000 florins. Twenty-six cities, embracing nearly the whole of Lombardy, and extending to the Lagune, of Venice, were alienated from the empire by a stroke of the pen. It was but shortly after this that in a freak of fancy he resolved to visit the king of France, to consult with him on the union of the church. All attempts to dissuade him from his mad project were of no avail. In fact he proceeded to execute his purpose, and at Rheims followed up his course of imperial profligacy by the cession of Genoa to France. Not content with this, he excited the discontent and alarm of his subjects by recognizing Benedict at Avignon as lawful pope, and withdrawing his allegiance from Boniface IX, who then wore the tiara at Rome.

An act like this, worthy of the drunken frolic in which it originated, made the prelates of Germany tremble for the results that might follow the recklessness and incapacity of the emperor. The archbishop of Mayence was a zealous adherent of Boniface IX, and had no disposition to run the risk of losing his miter. At his instigation, the princes of the empire cited Wenzel to appear before their tribunal. On his refusal to comply, he was formally deposed. When counseled to bring about a reconciliation with Boniface IX, he treated the matter with supreme indifference. He shut himself up in complete inactivity at Prague, and appeared to feel the loss of his empire less than he would have felt the loss of his wine. The citizens of Nuremberg could not be satisfied with the absolution from allegiance extended by the electoral college to the whole empire, and besought a release from Wenzel himself. He freely granted it, accepting, instead of the 20,000 crowns offered him, a certain number of cartloads of his favorite wine. Even his own brother, Sigismund, pronounced
him unfit to rule, shut him up in prison (the Spinka), and at length incautiously entrusted him to the care of the Hapsburgs. By these he was set at liberty; and the Bohemians, preferring him with all his freaks and debaucheries to his brother Sigismund, acknowledged him as their sovereign, and restored him to his throne as king of Bohemia.

Still he felt, at least occasionally, a sense of his degradation, and was willing to attempt to regain the imperial crown when it did not cost too great effort. Boniface IX had consented to his deposition, and had covered it with his pontifical sanction. As the successor of Boniface, Gregory was by no means acceptable to Wenzel; and it was at least something to be still recognized as emperor by a general council which had deposed, along with Benedict, the successor of his old antagonist.

It was evident, therefore, that Huss had little to hope, and Sbynco little to fear, from the king. On the whole, however, he sided with Huss. The writhings of the aggrieved ecclesiastics rather amused him. It has been said of him that "he united in his character all the extravagance of Anthony, the infamous cowardice of Heliogabalus, and the bloody passions of Tiberius." This is a severe judgment, and should be qualified by the addition of another vice, which, in such connection, assumes the phase almost of a virtue—his constitutional indolence.

Huss could place but little reliance upon the support of Wenzel, yet it was something to be left unmolested. From his pulpit in Bethlehem chapel he wielded an influence which was more powerfully felt throughout Bohemia than that either of the archbishop or the king. Sbynco, indeed, was not a man of any remarkable ability. He was almost unlettered, utterly destitute of all claim to be ranked as a theologian, and, with no little natural shrewdness, a most contemptible opponent in argument when pitted against Huss. His strength was simply in the exalted position which he occupied, and the facility with which the party he represented could make him its instrument.

The action of the council must have been felt by him as a sore grievance. The opposition between him and Huss had already become quite fully developed, and on other questions than that of the papacy they were at issue. Two years before the council, the archbishop had directed the clergy to preach the doctrine of transubstantiation, impugned in Wickliffe’s writings, and threatened to punish as a heretic anyone who should refuse obedience. The doctrine itself was one to which Huss did not object, nay, it was one which he devoutly held; but the order which required it was in reality directed against the writings both of Wickliffe and his defenders. Huss was regarded as the foremost of these, and could not but feel that he was aimed at in the mandate of the archbishop, especially as at the same time the clergy united in complaints against him. By the action of the council, however, his position in regard to the papacy was approved, and that of Sbynco was condemned. There
was no reason, in any respect which he entertained for the archbishop, why he should longer be silent. Indeed, a necessity seemed laid upon him to speak out, and controvert the position taken by Sbynco as Gregory’s legate.

He did speak out, freely, boldly, and without respect of persons. He vindicated the course which the council had pursued. Opposition was overborne. The enemies of Huss had dexterously excited prejudice against him for the part which he had taken in vindicating the rights of Bohemians in the university, and which had led to the withdrawal of the Germans. The city had been deprived of their presence, and the merchants had lost their patronage. It was easy, in these circumstances, to spread abroad misrepresentations and calumnies against Huss. But he rose above them all, and still maintained his influence unimpaired in the pulpit of Bethlehem chapel.

This, indeed, was his throne. For seven years he had here wielded the scepter of his powerful eloquence. The whole city was moved by his words. For the greater part of this period no one had attempted to interfere with him. Only the Germans and a few of his own countrymen had cried out against his heresy in favoring Wickliffe. The schism of the papacy had utterly paralyzed pontifical influence in Bohemia, and while many of the clergy favored the cause of Gregory, the king rather inclined to the support of Benedict. Thus Huss was allowed the exercise of an almost unrestricted freedom, and now that the council of Pisa had virtually condemned Sbynco, his position was stronger than ever before.

At no period in these last centuries has the power of the pulpit been more strikingly exhibited than in the case of Huss and his Bethlehem chapel at Prague. Luther, a little more than a century later, found a most powerful ally in the press, which then for the first time began to be employed for popular effect. But Huss was dependent, for the most part, upon the pulpit alone. And here it was that he stood forth without a peer or a rival in the kingdom.

He occupied his post under a solemn sense of responsibility, not to popes and prelates, but to God alone. He was not burdened by the duty of saying masses, or by ceremonial observances of any kind. His attention was directed to the simple preaching of the word of God, and its application to the evils of the times. The extended commentaries on scripture which are found in his works, as well as his sermons which are still preserved, show what composed the staple of his pulpit utterances. He did not cease to testify publicly his respect for the memory of Wickliffe, though he disavowed him as authority, and declined to accept his opinions save so far as they were sustained by the word of God.

Huss was at least passively supported by the king. He had powerful friends both at the court and in the university, of which he was again rector. Among the nobility he numbered some staunch supporters. Jerome seems to have been a
favorite of the dissolute monarch, whom he sometimes accompanied on his forays and hunting parties. His influence was effectually exerted upon the side of the reformer, and he treated the plans and projects of the archbishop with undisguised contempt.

But the latter was not disposed quietly to acquiesce in the policy of the court. As the legate of Gregory, he had the presumption to impose silence upon all who questioned his claims as lawful pontiff, or who professed adherence to the council of Pisa. Spurning the royal mandate, he set himself, in the attitude of open and avowed opposition. He issued an ordinance forbidding all teachers of the university who had joined the party of the cardinals against the schismatic popes, and had thus abandoned the cause of Gregory, the discharge of all priestly duties within his diocese.

This ordinance was especially aimed at Huss. Its force would have been but slight and contemptible, but for the members of the clergy who hated him for his scathing rebukes of their vices and immoralities. These joined themselves to the archbishop, and made his opposition more serious.

But, strong in his convictions and the consciousness of his own integrity, Huss refused to obey the episcopal mandate. He was sincere in his advocacy of the council of Pisa, exhorting the nobility and common people to abandon the cause of Gregory. He referred to the subject from the pulpit, and the clergy who sustained the archbishop did not escape reprehension.

Sbynco carried his complaints to the king. But it was to no purpose. Wenzel had little sympathy with the archbishop. He was rather amused than otherwise to have Huss rebuke men whom he himself had no cause to love. "So long," he replied, "as Master Huss preached against us of the laity, you were very much pleased with it; your turn has come now, and you had better be content." An old Bohemian chronicler observes, to the same effect, that "While Huss rebuked the vices of the laity he was only praised. Men said the Spirit of God spoke through him. But just as soon as he attacked the pope and the higher and lower clergy, rebuking their pride, avarice, simony, and other vices, and claiming that they should not accumulate property, the entire priesthood rose up against him saying, He is an incarnate devil—a heretic."

The archbishop found himself powerless. He could accomplish nothing. Gregory, moreover, was not in circumstances to enforce the ordinances of his legate. His secret ally, Ladislaus of Naples, had just lost his grasp upon Rome. The general in command, Paolo Orsini, to whom with two thousand cuirassiers he had entrusted the city, was seduced by Florentine gold, and, passing into the pay of the republic, admitted the allies into the castle of St. Angelo.

This was a sore blow to Gregory. It admitted the Pisan pope, Alexander V, to the gates of the eternal city. This was enough to decide the policy of Sbynco,
who had no disposition to adhere to the fortunes of a sinking cause. He now withdrew his allegiance from Gregory, or at least initiated measures for reconciliation with Alexander V.

But before these measures could ripen to their results, and while they were yet inchoate, the power and authority of the archbishop had become almost annihilated at Prague. This did not tend to soothe his ruffled spirit. He was spurred on by those who wished to make him their instrument of revenge on Huss, and he was only too willing to render them his aid.

His bitterness against Huss was doubtless sharpened by events that soon followed. The latter did not disguise or conceal his high esteem of Wickliffe's writings. He manifested it by his actions as well as words. Not content with expressing his views from the pulpit, he determined that others should read this proscribed heretic for themselves. He translated several of his treatises into the Bohemian tongue. These he sent to some of the most distinguished nobles, by whom they were read and widely circulated. But not only did he provide for their diffusion in his native land. He sent some of them into Moravia and gave to the margrave of that land, who was Wenzel's uncle, a copy of Wickliffe's Trialogue, which he had translated—a work which was accounted, above all his others, most poisonous and heretical.

Huss himself, in the midst of his sermons, is said to have commended them to his bearers as containing most important truth, and fitted to produce a deep and lasting impression—adding, it is said, repeatedly, that he only wished for himself, after death, that he might go where that good and holy man had gone.

The report of all this produced in various quarters great alarm. Some of the teachers of the university remonstrated with Huss, and warned him to desist from what they considered his heretical course. The archbishop was at this time absent from Prague. He was residing at his archiepiscopal palace at Raudnitz. Andrew of Broda, master of arts and bachelor of theology, a former friend of Huss, and a zealous Bohemian, was among the first to separate from the reformer. He wrote to the archbishop of what was occurring at Prague, and besought him to provide against the growing evil. His letter shows that he had cause for apprehension from the spread of Wickliffe's views. "I think," so he proceeds, "that you should regard that terrible truth of God by Ezekiel, where he says, 'I will call my pastors to account for the flock that has been committed to their hand.' Let your fatherly reverence consider that your unsuspicious lambs are in danger of being seized. The shepherd rushes to meet the tiger when one of his flock is assaulted, and rescues him again. But consider that one soul is worth more than a thousand such flocks. Let us watch the more vigilantly against the poisonous arts and the snares of our great foe. This is our duty as pastors. We are to correct the erring, and bring them back, even by compulsion, into the way of truth. But to come to the matter in hand, I wish to inform your fatherly reverence that various books of that pestilent
Englishman, Wickliffe, are multiplied in your diocese; books full of damnable errors, and errors that have been already condemned. Of these works are his ‘Dialogue and Trialogue,’ his ‘Treatise on the Body of Christ,’ and many others, as I hear, by which, and their poisonous doctrines, the flock is greatly endangered. I beseech you, therefore, by the blood of Christ, by your salvation, for which I hope and pray, by the protection of Christ’s faithful ones, all of whom I would to God may be saved; yea, on my bended knee most earnestly do I beseech you to be on your guard, lest by the multiplication of these pestilent books your flock shall drink in that infidel poison which will destroy their souls. For neither pestilence, famine, or sword can inflict such evils as will spring from this perfidious depravity of heretical men."

The archbishop became alarmed. Scarce a year before, after a careful examination as he said, he had found Bohemia free from heresy. But Broda’s letter aroused him. He determined to meet the evil promptly. Scarcely had the reply reached Prague, when the summons went forth that all heretical writings should be brought to the archbishop. But now the definition of heresy had grown suddenly more broad. It included not only the writings of Wickliffe, but of Huss and Jerome, as well as their predecessors, Milicz and Janow. The books were brought. Huss himself came to the archbishop, bearing with him Wickliffe’s writings, in which he wished the errors pointed out. "Let him know the heresy and he would reject it." At a previous interview with the archbishop he had offered to disavow everything he had done which could be shown to be in opposition to Christian truth. He wished to be satisfied from reason and scripture. He could not yield till convinced by argument. But argument was not the archbishop’s forte. Nor were his learned assessors, who subsequently by the pope’s direction were to act conjointly with him, any more ready to discuss. Though four of them were teachers of theology, and two doctors of the canon law, they considered fire the most effective logic. It shows how widely the views of Wickliffe had spread, that more than two hundred carefully written and splendidly bound volumes were gathered to be committed to the flames.

But the work of the archbishop could not be executed without a remonstrance. His decree requiring the possessors of Wickliffe’s books to give them into his hands, had extended to include the members of the university. This was very generally regarded by the masters and students as an usurpation of their privileges. The university claimed to be independent of the archbishop, and to hold its rights immediately of the pope. The requirement which denied them the privilege of retaining Wickliffe’s writings was in fact an infringement upon the rights of the university.

Most of the masters and students, however, complied with the decree of the archbishop. Only five refused utterly to obey it. They laid their complaint before the pope, representing the decree as unwise, and an unwarranted usurpation of power. They sent their procurator, Marcus of Koniggratz, to
Bologna, and through his efforts the matter gave promise of a favorable issue. The university of Bologna pronounced in favor of the rights of the university of Prague, and the pope decided that Sbynco must appear before him to justify himself for the course which he had pursued. Till he had done this, his proceedings against Huss and his party were to be null and void.

Sbynco, on the other hand, was not idle. As legate of Gregory, he had enjoined silence on Huss and others who had refused to acknowledge Gregory as pope. But the condition of things was such that unless he could have the support of the pope elected by the council of Pisa, his case was desperate. Abandoning Gregory without a scruple, he now sent a deputation to Bologna to counteract the influence of the appeal of the students, and the representation of the friends of Huss. His deputation consisted of Jaroslaw the inquisitor and a canon of Prague. They set forth in glowing colors the dangerous spread of Wickliffe’s doctrines in Bohemia, and secured a revocation of the decision in favor of the students’ appeal. A papal bull was issued, condemning the articles of Wickliffe, forbidding preaching in private chapels, and authorizing the archbishop to appoint a commission of four masters in theology and two doctors of law, to prevent the spread of errors and enforce the measures adopted by the archbishop. The students and their procurator, under pain of excommunication, were to make solemn declaration of their subjecting themselves to the papal order, and of their accepting the judgment of the archbishop.

By the advice of the commission Sbynco summoned a synod of the clergy, before whom the results of their investigation were laid. It was numerously attended. Many doctors, masters, students, and others were present. Wickliffe’s books were condemned, and it was declared the safest course to burn them. The five recusant students were required to deliver up their books; no one was to venture to hold, teach, or defend an article of Wickliffe, under severe penalty, including the loss of his benefice and imprisonment by the civil power, and no more preaching was to be allowed, except in cathedral, cloister, and parish churches.

The archbishop, reconciled now to Pope Alexander and fortified by his authority, resolved to execute his purpose. The books were collected, and preparation was made to burn them. The archbishop might now act not only with the support of the synod of his own clergy, but under cover of the bull of the pope. His former demand for the books was renewed.

Meanwhile Alexander V, the author of the obnoxious bull, had died, and the friends of Wickliffe seized upon this as an argument for a stay of proceedings. It was argued that the authority of the bull expired with its author. Nor was this all. The university objected to the wholesale condemnation of Wickliffe’s books, some of which were purely philosophical. The prohibition to preach in Bethlehem chapel, which had been established by archiepiscopal, papal, and royal brief, was opposed to scripture, which taught that Christ preached in the
temple, on the mountain, on the sea, in the fields and streets, and bade his disciples go everywhere preaching the gospel.

These views were urged by Huss, Zdislaw of Wartenberg, and three of the five recusant students, who embodied them in a protest, and thus incurred the sentence of archiepiscopal excommunication.

The king was now appealed to, to prevent the burning of the books. The university, with a good degree of unanimity, declared itself opposed to the archbishop’s project (June 15, 1410). Wenzel promised that he would not allow it to be executed. He secured from the archbishop a pledge to defer any action in the matter until the arrival in Prague of Jost, margrave of Moravia.

In these circumstances, with the ban of the church impending over him, what course was Huss to take? The papal bull, proclaimed by the archbishop, and endorsing his own previous decree, absolutely forbade his preaching in Bethlehem chapel.

But Huss did not hesitate for a moment what course to take. He did not ask what is prudence, but what is duty. He opposed the prohibition on two grounds. First: it was in conflict with the original deed of endowment sanctioned by archiepiscopal, papal, and royal briefs, by which Bethlehem chapel had been expressly devoted to the preaching of the word of God. Secondly: it was in conflict with scripture, which taught that Jesus preached in the temple, in the streets and fields, on the sea and on the mountain, and had bidden his disciples to go everywhere preaching the gospel. Thus the effect of the prohibition would tend only to the injury of the church, and was not to be obeyed.

In arguing the case more fully, he says, "Where is there any authority of Holy Writ, or where are there any rational grounds for forbidding preaching in so public a place, fitted up for that very purpose, in the midst of the great city of Prague? Nothing else can be at the bottom of this but the jealousy of Antichrist." The pope himself had travestied the history of the apostles by his incongruous course. When he "heard at his court that Bohemia received the word of God, he did not send Peter and John to pray for the Bohemians, and to lay their hands on them, that in hearing the word of God they might receive the Holy Ghost; but he sent back some indisposed persons belonging to Bohemia, and commanded, in his bull, that the word of God should not be preached in private chapels."

But Huss felt that he had been called of God to preach, and he could not be silent. He maintained that one whose life is conformed to Christ’s law—who seeks the glory of God and the salvation of men, preaching not lies, not ribaldry, not fables, but the law of Christ and the doctrines of the holy fathers of the church, opposing heretics and false teachers—such a person never
arrogates to himself the call to preach without authority. Huss felt the full force of the words of Paul: "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." Subsequently he declared his purpose to continue to preach, in the following memorable and well-weighed words: "In order that I may not make myself guilty by my silence, forsaking the truth for a piece of bread, or through fear of man, I avow it to be my purpose to defend the truth which God has enabled me to know, and especially the truth of the Holy Scriptures, even to death; since I know that the truth stands, and is forever mighty, and abides eternally; and with her there is no respect of persons. And if the fear of death should terrify me, still I hope in my God, and in the assistance of the Holy Spirit, that the Lord himself will give me firmness. And if I have found favor in his sight, he will crown me with martyrdom. But what more glorious triumph is there than this? Inciting his faithful ones to this victory, our Lord says, ‘Fear not them that kill the body.’"

These were not words of vainglorious boasting, as the sequel shows. Huss had weighed carefully the question of duty. He had come to his decision in full view of the consequences which it might involve. Enthusiastic, indeed, in devotion to what he regarded as the cause of truth, he was yet calm and self-possessed, clear in his views, and firm in his purpose. The zeal of his earlier years has been chastened by fuller knowledge and larger experience; but the martyr-spirit still glowed within him. He could not submit to the prohibition that would exclude him from the pulpit of Bethlehem chapel. He resolved on an appeal, and did in fact appeal, previous to the burning of the books, from the pope ill-informed to the pope well-informed.

This appeal of Huss so thoroughly reviews the ground upon which he justified his course, that it deserves to be presented at length. It was made on the 25th of June, 1410, and represented the position of himself and his friends who joined with him in it. The act took place, in a formal and public manner, in Bethlehem chapel, before a notary public, and in the presence of seven witnesses, who represented all those members of the university and nobility who wished to be regarded as adhering to him in the matter. The grounds of the appeal were as follows: First: that the sentence of the archbishop, authorized by the pope, is opposed to the privileges of the university, sanctioning an act which tramples on them, inasmuch as the said university is exempt from all other jurisdiction save that of the pope alone, even from that of legates, deputies, and sub-deputies of the Roman See. Secondly: that the burning of the books was an act of disobedience to the order that the archbishop had received from Alexander V, not to attempt anything, either by himself or others, against these books and against the university, before the matter had been judged of at Rome, and to revoke whatever had been done to the prejudice of the privileges of the university, as far as possible. Thirdly: that instead of obeying this order, he had intrigued at the court of Rome against the university and against John Huss; he had published abroad that Huss was spreading errors at Prague in the kingdom of Bohemia, in the marquisate of Moravia, and in other provinces; and he had, moreover, surreptitiously
obtained a bull for the condemnation of these pretended errors. Fourthly: that we are not required to obey commands that are scandalous, contrary to common law, to the public welfare, and especially to the gospel; such as are the pretended commands of the pope, and the sentence of Sbynco passed in consequence of these supposed command, since it is well-known that in the whole kingdom of Bohemia and in Moravia there is neither heresy nor error, and it is a capital sin to interdict the preaching of the gospel. Fifthly: that there is no heresy in Bohemia is proved by the document published by the archbishop himself (July 17, 1408) in the assembled synod of that year. This document states that the archbishop, at the king’s order, had made, by his prelates and officials, a careful inquisition, and had found no heretic in his diocese. Sixthly: that though all this were otherwise, the sentences and proceedings of Sbynco were utterly null and void, because they took place after the death of Alexander V; and because, according to the common law, when he is dead who has commanded anything, his authority expires with him, except so far as it has been carried into effect during his life. Seventhly: that none can be so ignorant in Holy Scripture and canon law, as not to know that books of logic, philosophy, morality, mathematics, &c., such as most of Wickliffe’s are, are incapable of heresy, nor, consequently, can they be subject to ecclesiastical condemnation. Moses and Daniel were learned in the knowledge of the Egyptians and Chaldeans. The church ordained, when the necessity arose and the circumstances of the time required, that heretical books should be read, not to sustain their errors, but to refute them, and to draw out of them whatever good they contained. St. Paul had read, and quoted passages from heathen authors; moreover, it was necessary that students of the university should read the books of Aristotle, Averroes, and other unbelieving philosophers; and for the same reason that would justify the condemnation of Wickliffe’s works, the book of the "master of sentences" (Peter Lombard) and those of Origen, which contained many errors, must be burned. Yet Huss protests that he has no wish to maintain any error, wheresoever he may find it. Eighthly: that this condemnation of Wickliffe’s books, in short, is opposed to the honor of the kingdom of Bohemia, of Moravia, and other provinces, and especially of the university of Prague; since, on the fourteenth of June of the present year, it had decided solemnly, in full assembly of masters, doctors, licentiates, bachelors, and students, that it was opposed to the sentence of Sbynco in regard to the books of Wickliffe. Ninthly: that it belongs to the Apostolic See, and to no other, to explain and interpret its own orders; and that Sbynco was not authorized to interpret, as he had done, the pretended bull of the pope. Tenthly: that between the arrival of the bull, and the sentence pronounced by Sbynco, sufficient time had not elapsed to examine such a large number of books and writings on matters so important. Eleventhly: that the Bethlehem chapel was founded expressly for preaching the word of God in the vulgar tongue, for though there were churches enough in Prague for the worship of God, there was none but this for preaching. Twelfthly: that its establishment had been confirmed by the Apostolic See, by the king of Bohemia, and by a former archbishop of Prague.
Such was the appeal of Huss. It indicated that he had calmly and deliberately surveyed the ground upon which he stood, and was prepared to maintain it.

The appeal of Huss was made June 25th, 1410. Less than three weeks after (July 15), the archbishop, who grew impatient over the delay of the margrave of Moravia, and who wished to anticipate any opposition from the new pope, proceeded to execute sentence upon Wickliffe’s books. Bands of armed soldiers were stationed around the court of his palace to prevent any disturbance, and in his presence and that of several prelates and a large number of the clergy the fire was kindled, and about two hundred volumes, some of them in elegant and costly binding, were devoted to the flames. The bells tolled from all the towers of the city, as for a solemn funeral. An old chronicler remarks that it was meant to indicate the end of trouble, while by God’s providence it proved the beginning of sorrows. Three days later, Huss, Zdislaw of Wartenberg, and those of the recusant students and others who had signed the protest against the archbishop’s order and the papal bull, were solemnly excommunicated.

The deed was done. The books were burned. The ban of the church rested on those who had dared to object. Doubtless the archbishop felt that he had secured a triumph. He had executed the papal sentence, and proved himself an able instrument of the church party who had instigated him to the bold deed.

But it provoked more than it overawed. The king, the court, and a large proportion of the citizens of Prague were enraged and embittered by it. A cry of indignation ran throughout Bohemia. Some of the priests, but the nobility especially, protested against this vandal act. The queen wept, and Wenzel cursed aloud. Some acts of violence were committed by the enraged populace. The archbishop trembled in his fortified palace. His name was covered with disgrace by his insulting and bigoted course. Songs in derision of him were sung in the streets. So far was this carried, that the king found it necessary to prohibit it under severe penalties.

But his work was only half executed. Not all of Wickliffe’s books were burned. Some refused to give them up. They scorned the archbishop’s mandate, and required a more convincing logic than that of fagots and bonfires. Though the art of printing was not yet invented, so great, says Cochleius, was the zeal of the people against the clergy, and their anxiety for the writings of Wickliffe, inflamed as they were by the frequent harangues of the new dogmatists, that in a short time a large number of the forbidden books had been transcribed. This was a work of secrecy, for the act, if discovered, would have been treated as a crime.

Meanwhile the suppression of derisive songs by the king, forced the people to invent some new expression of their disgust with the proceedings of the archbishop and his clergy. Many of the people had acquired such a knowledge of the scriptures, which had been translated for them into the Bohemian
language, as to be able to refute and silence the priests in argument. We may perhaps trace some elements of the rapid success of the principles of reform to the fact that the Bible had already been given to the Bohemian nation in their own tongue. There still exists, in the imperial library of Vienna, an index of a translation of the Bible bearing date A.D. 1382. The author of it, Zadislaus Bathori, was a monk of the order of St. Paul. He withdrew to a cavern in the mountains, and, excluding every human being, labored for twenty years at his solitary task. Cochleius, an inveterate enemy of the Hussites, testifies to the thorough acquaintance of many of the common people with the doctrines of the Bible. "Furriers, shoemakers, tailors, and that class of mechanics, by their frequent attendance on sermons, and their zealous reading of the scriptures that had been translated for them into the vernacular tongue, were led to open discussion with the priests before the people. And not men only, but women also, reached such a measure of audacity and impudence as to venture to dispute in regard to the doctrines of the scripture, and maintain themselves against the priests. Some of them moreover composed books, one of which is thus characterized by a countryman. "Its Jezebel author, mad with rage in her threatenings against the servant of God, and from the Holy Scriptures extolling not the church of God but her own sect, thus deals out her lies: She says, that ‘in every class, especially among the ecclesiastics, not an individual can be found, with the exception of the Hussites, whose life is truly pure and spiritual, and who can preach the word of God by the Holy Spirit.’ And yet, this work was received and treated with the highest regard by the sect, of both sexes; and its author was looked upon as a woman of wonderful subtlety in the Holy Scriptures, and an able defender of Master Huss and his sectaries."

It was impossible that convictions which had taken so strong a hold upon their minds, and which the study of the Bible had confirmed, should easily be eradicated. It is no wonder that the argument of fire should exasperate them. They could see through the smoke of Wickliffe’s books nothing clearer than before, except the ignorance and malice of their persecutors. In such a state of mind they might easily be excited to deeds of violence or imprudence, which in their cooler moments they would condemn. The whole history of Huss shows that with such excesses he had no sympathy, however much some of his followers might think to find a warrant for their action in his words. We are rather surprised that in such a state of the community, and while the authority was in Wenzel’s feeble hands, such order should have been observed. It certainly shows that the influence of Huss’s doctrines restrained as well as impelled.

On the Sunday following the burning of the books, Huss referred in his sermon to the events of the preceding week. He condemned, unhesitatingly, the conduct of the archbishop—maintained that by his burning he had rooted no sin out of the hearts of men, but rather had destroyed many treatises and arguments that contained important truths and excellent morals; had given occasion for disorder, altercations, and hatreds among the people, as well as
acts of violence and crime; and had dishonored the king in the eyes of foreign nations by this foolish, senseless act. The course of the king in this emergency seems to have been characterized by a more than usual share of discretion. While he prohibited the derisive and insulting songs of the people against the archbishop, he yet complained of his conduct to the pope, John XXIII, and asked him to impose some check upon his license.

The rash haste of the archbishop brought with it another evil. The former possessors of the burnt books were dissatisfied at their loss, as well as the insulting course of the prelate. Their books were very costly, laboriously transcribed, and beautifully bound. They asked and obtained permission of the king to demand back of the archbishop an equivalent of their value. He rejected the demand. The king, willing to see justice done, authorized two of his nobles, with the old city council, to bring the claim before the abbots, deans, and other ecclesiastics, who had advised the prelate to burn the books. They also refused to entertain it, and violence followed. The people were indignant at the wrong insultingly done them, and would have redress. Three Carmelite monks, who had preached against Wickliffe, were seized and harshly treated. One of them was thrown into the river, and would have been drowned if a knight had not come to his help. In this act of violence Jerome was implicated. But Huss continued to preach. Indeed, he dared not be silent. And the power of his sermons over the throngs which pressed to hear him in Bethlehem chapel was incalculable. His words thrilled the hearts of his hearers, as he exclaimed, "Fire does not consume truth. It is always a mark of a little mind to vent anger on inanimate and uninjurious objects. The books which are burnt are a loss to the whole nation." Huss sent his appeal to Rome; and shortly after, Sbynco dispatched a deputation who were to instruct the Roman court as to the real state of affairs at Prague, vindicate the proceedings of the archbishop, and present charges against Huss.

The matter came, as was inevitable, before the university. The cause of Huss, as excommunicate, was identified with that of Wickliffe. The real question was, whether the works of the latter should have been burned as heretical. If not, Huss was unjustly excommunicate. But the university, by an immense majority, condemned the measure of the archbishop. Philosophical works, at least, were not to be accounted heretical. Every student was at liberty to read the works of the heathen Aristotle, much more of learned Christian men, who, like Origen, had erred on some points. Why, then, should the perusal of Wickliffe’s writings be prohibited, especially when the greater portion of them had not as yet been shown to be heretical?

For five successive days (July 27 - August 2, 1410) the disputation was continued before the assembled university. Several masters took up, each, one of the treatises of Wickliffe, and defended it. Huss took that on the Trinity; Jacobel that on the Decalogue; Simon of Tisnow that on the Proofs of
Propositions (De Probationibus Propositionum), Zdislaw of Wartenberg that on Universals (De Universalibus), and Procop of Pilsen that on Ideas (De Ideis).

At the same time, probably, and more fully at a later period, Huss defended those articles of Wickliffe in which he was himself personally interested. The first one selected for vindication was, "They who for excommunication by men only refuse to preach, are thereby excommunicate of God, and in the judgment will be found among the foes of Christ." Another was, "Any deacon or priest may preach the word of God without being dependent on bishop or pope."

While both parties were looking anxiously for the decision which was to be pronounced at Rome, the mutual exasperation at Prague was steadily increasing. The authority and the learning of the archbishop were alike contemned. The people in the streets called him the "A B C D" bishop. Meanwhile Huss from the pulpit gave his version of the matter. As he exposed the misrepresentations of the opposite party, who complained to the pope that the whole land was infected with heresy, and charged it to his account, the people cried out, as with one voice, "They lie, they lie."

With the sentence of excommunication hanging over him, Huss was more earnest and eloquent than ever before. He had no longer any disposition to curb the spirit which impelled him to expose the vices of the ecclesiastical orders. They had complained of him to the archbishop, and still pursued him with calumny and malice. He heeded not their slanders or opposition. "Mark," said he to his vast audience, "what is written in scripture of the Pharisees, 'All that they bid you do, that observe and do, but do ye not after their works.' The same language might apply to our ecclesiastics now, whose conduct exhibits little conformity to the law." "What these men find in the gospel of Christ to their taste, they willingly receive; but when they meet with anything requiring labor and self-denial, they pass it by. What Jesus said to Peter—'I will give to them the keys of the kingdom of heaven'—that they grasp at for the aggrandizement of their authority, but that other sentence addressed by Christ to Peter—'Follow me, and feed my sheep'—they eschew like poison. So, too, what Christ said to the disciples—'Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven'—they accept gladly and comfort themselves with it; but when he says, 'I Possess neither gold nor silver,' they decline it as offensive. If Christ says, 'Whoso heareth you, heareth me'—they use it as an argument for obedience to them, but they wrestle hard against what he again says—'Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you,'" etc.

The evils which Huss rebuked were too glaring to be denied. He held up to view the purity and holiness required by Christ, and in this mirror exposed the avarice, ambition, luxury, sensuality, and violence of the profligate ecclesiastics. He could not compromise with his convictions; and with a high consciousness of his solemn responsibility to God rather than men, he aimed to
discharge his whole duty. The lines that defined the two opposing parties were rapidly becoming more distinct.

CHAPTER VI
Huss Excommunicated~The Compromise

The appeal of Huss to John XXIII was referred by the latter to a commission of four cardinals, of whom Otho de Colonna was one. The commission were authorized to invite to conference with them the doctors and masters of the theological faculties of Bologna, Paris, and Oxford, who might be present in Rome, and to advise with them what course was to be pursued with respect to Wickliffe’s writings.

The majority of the conference were opposed to the project of the archbishop in burning the books, but before they had reached any definite conclusion the deputation from the archbishop arrived in the city. They represented the case to John XXIII in such a manner that he was induced to dissolve the commission, and give the whole matter over to the sole charge of the cardinal, Otho de Colonna.

The cardinal gave a ready ear to Sbynco’s representations. He sanctioned what he had done, urged him to the further prosecution of his measures, and directed him, if necessary, to call to his aid the secular arm. Huss was required within a certain specified time to appear and justify himself before the tribunal of the pope.

The intelligence of this decision reached Prague and produced much dissatisfaction. All classes, from the king to the peasant, including the nobility and the university, exclaimed against the injustice that required the personal appearance of Huss at Rome. It was only at the risk of his life that he could undertake the journey. Bands of Germans infested the roads, and, sympathizing with their exiled countrymen, they would have exulted in seizing Huss and putting him to death. Besides, the question was asked, Why cannot the matter be settled here in Prague?

Apprehension of the danger to be incurred induced the king, his queen, of whom Huss was confessor, the university of Prague, and a large number of the lords and barons of Bohemia and Moravia, to send an embassy to the pope to pray him to dispense with the personal appearance of Huss, to suffer him to preach in the privileged chapels, to prevent Bohemia from being defamed by false accusations of heresy, and to send legates, at the expense of the
kingdom, to examine the whole matter at Prague. Huss on his side sent three procurators to Bologna to defend his cause and urge the reasons that prevented his personal appearance.

These procurators—at the head of whom was John of Jesenitz, an able man and a warm friend of Huss—proceeded on their journey. They appeared before Cardinal Colonna at Rome, but he refused to listen to their exculpation of Huss. When the term fixed for his personal appearance had expired, the cardinal issued the decree of excommunication against him. It was based, not on an examination of the merits of the case, but on the imputed disobedience of Huss in refusing to appear. The request of the king, queen, nobles, and university that a legate might be sent to Prague, was treated with contempt.

The sentence of excommunication was published (March 15, 1411) in all the parish churches of Prague with the exception of two, that of St. Michael in the old city, of which Christiann of Prachatic was pastor, and that of St. Benedict. But the procurators of Huss were still prosecuting his cause at Rome, and he refused to desert his pulpit in Bethlehem chapel. Dissatisfied at the futility of the measures hitherto adopted, Sbynco laid the city of Prague under interdict, and closed the churches to all public worship.

Huss regarded this proceeding as the fruit of personal malice. He saw in it a maneuver of the archiepiscopal party—the monks and curates—to drive him from his pulpit and render him powerless. The success of Sbynco’s deputation at Rome he ascribed to the influence of the gifts with which he bribed the commission. We shall see, hereafter, that there was only too much ground for this charge.

Before the people, Huss justified himself boldly. Was it objected to him that he had been forbidden to preach? He replied, that it was better to obey God than men. Was he under the ban of the church? Then the pope was its head and the cardinals its members, but where were the bishops and priests and all the rest of Christendom? Was he charged with favoring Wickliffe? He did not believe him to have been a heretic, and of every man, as far as possible, we are to think good rather than evil. He held himself still as a dutiful son of the church, and felt no awe of an unrighteous excommunication.

In declining to obey the papal citation to appear personally at Rome, he felt that he was justified by sufficient reasons. These were afterwards presented more at length in his treatise on the church. Here he explains the origin of the troubles. “The priests of Christ,” he says, “preached against the vices of a corrupt clergy. Hence arose the schism, and hence that clergy sought to suppress such preaching.” “After the manner of the Pharisees, they trouble and excommunicate those who acknowledge Christ. It was because I preached Christ and the gospel, and exposed Antichrist, anxious that the clergy should live according to the law of Christ, that the prelates first, with the archbishop,
contrived to get a bull from Alexander V to prohibit preaching in the chapels before the people, from which bull I appealed; but I never was able to get a hearing. On good and reasonable grounds, I did not appear when I was cited." As to his apparent contempt of the citation, he asks, "What reason had I for obedience—a man summoned from a distance of 1200 miles! What reason that I, a man unknown to the pope, informed against by my enemies, should be so very solicitous, and put myself to extraordinary pains to pass through the midst of my enemies, and place myself before judges and witnesses who are my enemies; that I should use up the property of the poor to defray the enormous expenses, or if I could not meet the expenses, miserably perish from hunger and thirst? And what was to be gained by my appearance? One consequence certainly would be, neglect of the work which God gave me to do, for my own salvation and that of others. There I should be learning, not what to believe, but how to conduct a process, a thing not permitted to a servant of God. There I should be robbed by the consistory of cardinals; made lukewarm in holy living; be betrayed into impatience by oppression; and, if I had nothing to give, must be condemned, let my cause be ever so good; and what is still worse, I should be compelled to worship the pope on my bended knees." Moreover, the journey would not only be a long one, but it would necessarily place him on the road in circumstances in which he would be surrounded by his enemies, the Germans. Hence he declined to appear, and continued to preach.

This of course necessitated the imposition of the interdict upon the city. But matters were thus brought to a crisis. Either Huss must obey the citation, or the churches must be closed. The people would not endure the latter. They complained, and the king was forced to interfere. The archbishop himself had grown weary in what threatened to be a hopeless and interminable struggle. He manifested a disposition to compromise. The king appointed a commissioner, to whom the controversy on both sides should be referred, and to whose decision both parties should submit. It was composed on one side of the elector of Saxony, Prince Stibor of Stiboric, and Lacek of Krawar, as laymen; and of ecclesiastics, the patriarch of Antioch, Conrad, bishop of Olmutz, provost Sulek of Chotestchau, and others. On the other side, of adherents to the anti-episcopal party, were Simon of Tisnow, rector of the university, John Huss, Stephen Paletz, Marcus of Koniggratz, and others. After careful deliberation, the conclusions of the commission were reached on the 6th of June, 1411. It was decided that both parties should desist from all legal prosecutions or measures, and should recall their procurators from Rome, while the archbishop should withdraw the sentence of excommunication and remove the interdict. The university was to remain in the possession and exercise of all its rights and privileges, unprejudiced by the precedent of the burning of the books.

Another condition of the compromise which was thus effected was that Sbynco should write to John XXIII that the difficulty between him and Huss was composed, that no more errors prevailed in Bohemia, and that it were wisdom to revoke the sentence issued against Huss, and dispense with his personal
appearance at Rome. The letter was actually written, and no doubt forwarded. That it was virtually extorted from the archbishop, and that it did not express his real sentiments, must at least have been suspected by those to whom it was addressed.

The letter, whether willingly or unwillingly written, is worthy of notice. "Most holy father, Alexander V, of blessed memory, gave forth a bull which imported that in the kingdom of Bohemia at Prague, and in the marquisate of Moravia, heretical and schismatic doctrines were spread abroad, especially that damnable error in regard to the sacrament of the eucharist, with which many were infected; and that it was necessary to arrest the course of these novelties before they had infected the whole flock. To this end he ordained in the same bull that there should be an inquisition in regard to these errors, in order to their extirpation. But having executed this order conjointly with the professors of theology, the doctors of canon law, and my other vicars, I have found no heretical errors, either in the kingdom of Bohemia, or at Prague, or in the marquisate of Moravia. No person could be found whom we could convict of opinions deserving ecclesiastical punishment. Likewise, at the instance of Wenzel, king of the Romans and Bohemia, as well as of his council, we have been fully reconciled to John Huss and the other doctors and masters of the university; so that the troubles that we had together are thoroughly settled. Therefore desiring, most holy father, according to the duty of my pastoral office, to maintain the kingdom of Bohemia in its good reputation, I have recourse to the clemency of your holiness, praying you to take compassion on this kingdom, and remove from it and annul the excommunication and consequent censures that have been laid upon it, and to dispense with the appearance before you in person of the honorable master, John Huss, Bachelor of Theology."

This letter of the archbishop, we are told, was never received. It may have been intercepted on the way by banditti, or by the enemies of Huss, with the archbishop’s connivance. If it reached its destination, the circumstances in which it was written would deprive it of much of its weight. It would stand in opposition to Sbynco’s previous representations. Certainly it did not avail to stay the proceedings against Huss. The pope, out of complaisance perhaps to the royal intercession, appointed a new commission, to whom the case of Huss was referred. Among the members of it was Cardinal Zabarella, one of the most liberal of the whole college, and most favorably disposed to the cause of reform. But through some unknown influence, the cause was again transferred to Cardinal Brancas alone, who, in spite of all the remonstrances of the procurators of Huss, who sought a prompt decision, kept the whole affair in suspense for a period of a year and a half.

The archbishop had, in reality, capitulated to the friends of the reformer and the authority of the king. He had exhausted his resources of resistance as well as of offense. His spirit seemed fairly subdued by the unsuccessful issue of the
conflict, and he never again came into open collision with Huss. To the complaints of his clergy he was compelled to listen; but the most which he attempted for their relief was to administer to Huss a gentle reprimand. On one occasion he cited him to his palace to answer for certain obnoxious views which he had presented from the pulpit. Huss promptly responded to the summons. But he must have felt rather amused than otherwise at the result of the interview. The scholar, the powerful logician, and orator stood before the ignorant "A B C D" bishop. Huss was informed that he was charged with preaching false and dangerous doctrines from the pulpit. He had taught, so it was reported, that there was no necessity of burying the dead in consecrated grounds, and that they might just as well be interred in the fields or woods. "You are aware, my son," said the archbishop, "that St. Adelbert had great difficulty in dissuading the Bohemians from these profane burials; that often he was obliged to fulminate against them on the subject; and that, in answer to his prayer, God often chastised them with severity, till, in 1039, Bozelislaus, duke of Bohemia, engaged by oath that he and his posterity would hold the Christian faith inviolate, and have the dead interred in places consecrated to this purpose." Huss humbly replied, that if anything had escaped him, either through forgetfulness or error, opposed to the Christian faith, he would correct it of his own accord. The archbishop seemed satisfied. "God give you grace; go, and sin no more," was the answer with which he dismissed him.

Huss probably felt that the principal matter of remonstrance was in itself comparatively unimportant. Greater truths filled his mind. It was only as this was connected with other things that it demanded specific notice. He had no desire to offend the archbishop, and yet he could not belie his convictions. The next Sabbath he preached openly on the subject, indirectly at least referring to the mandate of the archbishop. "It is a strange thing, my dear Bohemians," said he, "that we are to be forbidden to teach manifest truth, and especially those that shine forth so brightly in England and elsewhere in many places. These burials especially, and these great bells, serve merely to fill the purses of miserly priests. What they call order, is nothing else but confusion. Believe me, they wish to enslave you by this disorderly order. But if you will have courage, you may easily break your chains, and give yourselves a freedom, the value of which cannot be told. Is it not a shameful thing and an enormous sin against God, opposed to all law and sense, to have burned books that are the depositaries of truth, and that were written only for your good?"

A report of the sermon reached the archbishop. He complained of it to the king; but no notice was taken of his complaint. A stronger and abler man than Sbynco might have felt the burden which he had to bear too heavy for prolonged endurance. His reconciliation to Huss did not conciliate favor to himself. He could not fail to perceive that instead of an object of fear he had become an object of contempt. He and the priests who adhered to him were hooted at by the populace, and found no sympathy in Prague. His name was coupled with whatever was ridiculous in the fancies of the people. The derisive
songs which were heard in the streets and the thoroughfares, which were aimed at the archbishop and his party, and which the king was forced by an express decree to suppress, showed the degree of contempt to which the party had fallen. The people assumed a defiant tone. They said, "Let the archbishop again bid us deliver up the books, and see whether we will obey him."

Sbynco appealed to the king for a hearing, but his request was declined. His patience was exhausted by this unexpected refusal. He could no longer make his residence in Prague tolerable. Despairing of help from Wenzel, he determined to apply to his royal brother, Sigismund of Hungary. With a troubled heart he left the city, and from Leitomischel wrote back to Wenzel his bitter complaint: "Five weeks long," he says, "I lingered with my attendants in the city, and exhausted all means to obtain a hearing of your grace, but to no purpose, even while my enemies had access as often as they desired. I would have spoken and explained my difficulties to your grace, as to my gracious Lord; but not only was this prevented, but in every way, and in more respects than one, was I publicly wronged. On this account I am forced to turn to Hungary, to beseech the brother of your grace that he will intercede with you on my behalf, and no longer allow my enemies to cast contempt upon my office."

In a pitiful tone the archbishop recounts his grievances. Erroneous teachers were left unmolested. Some without authority heard confessions, claiming for themselves the same power as the pope. A wicked priest, whom he had commanded to arrest, had been taken out of his hands. Persons summoned before his tribunal had refused to appear, and been sustained in their contumacy by favorites of the king. Shameful and calumnious letters against himself had been written and circulated, of which he had complained to no purpose. The priest of St. Nicholas had been shamefully imprisoned and robbed of his goods, although innocent of wrong. Many of the clergy were still deprived of their goods and salaries. The king had charged him to write to the pope, exculpating those who had disregarded the interdict—a thing which his conscience forbade. He had been hindered in the prosecution of ecclesiastical discipline. He had been defamed by gross falsehoods, and charged with the whole responsibility for the interdict. In vain had he sought to exculpate himself. The king had threatened to bring the clergy into subjection, and had rejected every application for relief. Such were the grievances of the archbishop.

The heart of Sbynco was broken. He had overrated his strength in attempting to deal with the reform movement at Prague. He had overtasked his powers; and we need not, as some have done, impute his death to poison. He died at Presburg, on his journey to the court of Sigismund, September 28, 1411. His body was brought back to Prague for burial.
Evidently Sbynco was not the man for the difficult post which he was called to fill. He had neither the learning of a theologian, nor the strong will and energy of an inquisitor. Of the strength of principle he had none. He adhered to Gregory till his struggle with Huss forced him, in self-defense, to abandon a sinking cause; and when he had taken the position of a judge, and imposed the interdict on Prague, he still regarded it in the light of a politic maneuver by which a foe was to be defeated, rather than as a punishment for wrong. A man of expedients, he was fitted by nature only to be a martyr to his own vacillation.

END OF SECTION I

Section II

Resistance to the Truth

This section comprises chapters 7 through 11. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

**Chapter 7**  Huss and the Papal Policy  
**Chapter 8**  The Bull for the Crusade at Prague  
**Chapter 9**  The Second Excommunication of Huss  
**Chapter 10**  Huss in Retirement  
**Chapter 11**  The Sermons, Doctrines, and Letters of Huss

CHAPTER VII

Huss and the Papal Policy
The death of Sbynco left the archbishopric of Prague vacant. The man who was selected as his successor was Albic of Unitzow, a Moravian by birth, who had been the king's physician, and who, after attaining some reputation as a medical author, had but recently aspired after ecclesiastical promotion. He was already at an advanced period of life, and was a man by no means either fitted or disposed for controversy. Indeed, the character of a new dignitary was such as to reduce his influence to a mere cipher.

The king, without waiting for orders from Rome, had elevated him to the vacant post. He wanted one to fill it who would give him no trouble; one who would not venture to come into collision with the royal policy. But in the selection which he made he overshot the mark. Albic was too contemptible to stand even as a nominis umbra. All the writers who mention him speak of him in the same terms. His ignorance of theology was gross in the extreme, and yet his avarice was more gross than his ignorance. He seemed to embody in himself all that was mean and sordid. His miserly spirit made him mistrustful, and rather than leave the keys of his cellar in the hands of a butler, he carried them about with him. The cooks whom Sbynco had left in the episcopal palace were somewhat too profuse in their expenditures. Fearful of becoming impoverished, he discharged them. A toothless old woman, who ate only vegetables and drank no wine, was found to preside over his kitchen. His greedy avarice made the sight of a loaded table obnoxious. He grudged the expense of it. The music he loved best was that made by the picking and crushing of bones, for in this there could be no waste. He had rather hear a cry, than the noise of the cattle feeding the whole night long.

And yet his house was like a tavern or market. He sold wine, meat, provisions, game, in fact the best he had, for the large price it could bring him, hoarding the money in his coffer, and leaving the poorest and most meager portion of his produce for his table and the few servants who could be induced to live with him. His stable and equipage were reduced to conformity with the style of his table.

Albic is said to have purchased his office of the king. The known character of Wenzel renders the report not improbable. Galeazzo of Milan bargained with him for a dukedom, and the citizens of Nuremberg purchased release from allegiance to him by a few hogsheads of his favorite wine. Certainly he would not be troubled with conscientious scruples in a less secular traffic, in which popes and prelates furnished him authoritative precedents. It is only the avarice of Albic that tends to redeem the character of Wenzel from the charge. But Albic was too contemptible to both parties to be of any account in the estimation of either. Nobody respected him. His enemies had nothing to fear from him if they simply left him to himself. His friends, if he ever had any, would be shamed and burdened by his alliance. The office of archbishop of
Prague, which ranked him as primate of the kingdom, prince of the empire, and legate of the See of Rome, was so inefficiently discharged, and so evidently and scandalously disgraced, that it became an absolute necessity to put it into more capable hands. The pope selected Conrad of Westphalia, dean of the Vissehrad, sub-chamberlain of the kingdom, and bishop of Olmutz in Moravia, to take the oversight of ecclesiastical affairs at Prague. It was not many months before Albic sold out his rights to Conrad, and relieved himself from the notoriety of a position that served merely as a pedestal for his infamy.

Meanwhile events had occurred which were to give a new aspect and a deeper interest to the struggle in which Huss was engaged. On September 9th, 1411, John XXIII published a bull of no little significance, which was to kindle anew the smoldering fires of controversy at Prague. The papal legate, who bore with him to the newly appointed primate the sacred pallium, was directed also to publish this bull upon his arrival. In this celebrated document, John XXIII poured out the vials of his bitterest wrath and vengeance upon his political and ecclesiastical foe, King Ladislaus of Naples, and ally of Gregory XII. The curse of the ban, in its most awful forms, was pronounced upon him. He was declared to be a heretic, a schismatic, a man guilty of high treason against the majesty of God. As such, a crusade is proclaimed for the destruction of his party, and full indulgence is granted to all who should take part in it. Those who bear arms personally are to be assured, on repentance and confession, of full forgiveness of their sins; and those who should contribute in money the amount which they, if actively engaged, would have expended themselves in the course of a month, are to share the same favor.

The papal legate was suspicious lest Huss should oppose the bull. He requested Albic to summon Huss before him, and, in the archbishop's presence, demanded whether he would obey the apostolical mandates. Huss did not hesitate for a reply. He declared himself perfectly ready to obey them. "Do you see," said the legate, turning to the archbishop, "the Master is quite ready to obey the apostolical mandates." "My lord," rejoined Huss, "understand me well; I said I am ready with all my heart to obey the apostolical mandates; but I call apostolical mandates the doctrines of the apostles of Christ; and so far as the papal mandates agree with these, so far will I obey them most willingly. But if I see anything in them at variance with these, I shall not obey, even though the stake were staring me in the face."

Other questions, it was clearly evident, were now, for a time at least, to be overshadowed by the more engrossing one excited by the publication of the papal bull. It was plain that Huss was not disposed to pass it over in silence. From his pulpit in Bethlehem chapel he would take his full share in a discussion that was to agitate the kingdom.
We are now, therefore, to consider Huss as occupying a new position, and one more arduous than any which he had ever occupied before. He was to come in direct conflict with the papal authority, and the issue was to be the refutation of pontifical logic and morality, the exposure of pontifical baseness and iniquity. Up to this time, notwithstanding his excommunication and the bitter opposition of the clerical party, he had been sustained in part by powerful external aid. He was strong not only in the affections of the people, but his cause had received at least the silent support of the king. So long as there were but two rivals to contend for the popedom, and Gregory, whose party Wenzel had to thank for his deposition from the imperial throne, was one of them, it was easy to divine that the course of Huss, so far at least as the king was concerned, was sufficiently safe. But the aspect of the ecclesiastical world was now changed. The contest was no longer with Sbynco. It was no longer with Gregory. It was with the pope who represented the council of Pisa, and who had been acknowledged by the king, the nation, and Huss himself. It was a contest in which, not the vices of the laity, the avarice or luxury of the inferior clergy, or the follies of an archbishop were to be arraigned, but the very authority of the acknowledged head of the church was to be disputed. The feebleness and vacillation of Sbynco had given place to the sagacity and vigor of Conrad, and for politic reasons of his own—as we shall soon see—the king was not disposed to extend Huss any special favor.

The archbishop and the king therefore were now ranged together, and Huss himself stood committed to the policy that had advised the assembling of the council of Pisa, and that recognized Alexander V and John XXIII as legitimate popes. In these circumstances, so different from any in which he had been previously placed, his courage was to be put more severely to the test. Should he speak, or keep silence; should he silently approve, or openly rebuke the iniquity of the pontiff himself? Should he venture to raise his single voice of protest against pontifical vice and impiety, when all, or nearly all his former powerful supporters were, by their fears or the necessity of their position, arrayed in the ranks of his adversaries? In the emergency that arose, Huss did not hesitate—did not tremble to speak his convictions. No ordinary courage would suffice for an emergency like this. The boldness and consistency of many who had hitherto stood by him were to be put to the test and found wanting. Those toward whom he had looked with deference—some who had hitherto been his bosom friends—were now to desert him. They could not be relied upon in the present crisis. Perhaps the one on whom he had placed the greatest reliance was his teacher at the university, Stanislaus of Znaim. For years he had been foremost in expressing his sympathy with Wickliffe. He had commended his writings. He had volunteered to defend them in public disputation. Indeed, the estimation in which the writings of the English reformer were held by Huss, had been ascribed to the influence and teaching of Stanislaus. At a mock mass got up by the Germans in contempt of the Bohemian party, the genealogy of Christ was thus travestied: "Peter of Znaim
begat Stanislaus of Znaim; Stanislaus begat Stephen Paletz; Paletz begat Huss," thus intimating the spread of Wickliffism from one to another.

But the time had come when these, his most trusted associates, were first to waver, and then desert him. Most men would have felt it a matter of prudence to fall back in their company. But Huss could not do it. He would not even keep silence. Boldly did he speak out. A crusade! What was it? Huss asked himself the question. And he gave the answer to it in Bethlehem chapel. He dared to say what he thought of a measure which travestied the fundamental principles of the gospel, and scandalized all Christian minds.

But to understand fully the circumstances of the crusade, and the position of Huss, we must trace the progress of events at the papal court, and note some of the prominent characters that now appear upon the stage.

While the intelligence of the election of Alexander V was spreading over Europe, and was received according to the various views and feelings of parties in the church, Ladislaus of Naples, the ally of Gregory and the enemy of Alexander, was not idle. The new pope was disquieted by his movements and intrigues. Before leaving Pisa he fulminated a bull against the Neapolitan monarch. It bore date November 1, 1409. In this document he inveighs with severity against "Ladislaus, son of Charles of Durazzo, who dared to call himself king of Sicily." "Nourished by the milk and fed by the substance of the Romish church, he was crowned by Boniface IX king of Naples and Sicily. Having abused his power to the prejudice of the church, he was excommunicated by Innocent VII, with whom, in the hope of his being converted from his evil ways, he was afterwards reconciled. But his usurpations still continued. In spite of his oath, and under pain of excommunication and deposition, he violated his promise not to lay hands on the patrimony of the church and the neighboring states. He had, moreover, rejected the council of Pisa, legitimately convoked: instead of returning to his duty, he had become the greatest enemy to the peace of the church, as well as a most dangerous favorer of heresy, by his adherence to Gregory; offering continued molestations to the papacy and the church, and traversing in every way the designs of the council." The bull then recounts his still more grievous occupation of Rome, and regions belonging to the patrimony of St. Peter. Under severe penalties he had forbidden his subjects to recognize Alexander as lawful pope, or render him any aid whatever. He had taken Gregory from the Venetian territory to conduct him to Rome, there to have him recognized. In view, therefore, of the grievous crimes of Ladislaus, his violation of his oath, his invasion of the territory of the church, and his conspiracy and intrigues against the council of Pisa, he is summoned on a fixed day to hear his sentence; by which he is deprived of his kingdom and of all other goods and rights.

The plague raged now at Pisa, and Alexander left it for Pistoia. Here he received the welcome news of the victory won by Louis of Anjou—on whom he
had bestowed the investiture of the kingdom—over his hated rival. The league which had been planned at the council to crush Ladislaus was taking effect. The armies of France were strengthened by the alliance of Florence and Sienna, as well as of Bologna, where Balthasar Cossa ruled with supreme authority. In Rome the allies had secret adherents. Paolo Orsini was at their head, and by his timely treachery Ladislaus was driven from Rome. Alexander received the grateful intelligence, and was exceedingly anxious to take immediate possession of the city. From this he was dissuaded by the cardinal, Balthasar Cossa, who urgently insisted that he should tarry with him at Bologna. Alexander reluctantly complied, for he owed his election at Pisa—so it was said—mainly to the artifice and intrigue of the subtle Cossa. At length, however, Alexander resolved to set out for Rome. This was not agreeable to the plans and policy of Balthasar Cossa, who had played the tyrant long enough at Bologna, and was ready to supersede Alexander by putting the tiara on his own head. Two things, at least, are evident: first, that Alexander did not visit Rome, but died at Bologna, at the politic moment for the election of Balthasar Cossa as his successor; and secondly, that the latter, at the council of Constance, was openly and publicly charged with having poisoned Alexander V to make way for his own election.

Balthasar Cossa, better known by his title of John XXIII, had been the ruling spirit of the conclave by which his predecessor had been elected. His own name had been mentioned for that high office, and it was undoubtedly, even then, the fixed object of his ambition. But with well-feigned humility he commended to the choice of the cardinals a man who, already advanced in years, was, in spite of his reputation for learning and piety, his pliant tool, and who would hold the popedom as his lieutenant—till he was ready to occupy it himself.

On the 14th day of May, 1410, the cardinal electors entered the conclave to choose a successor to Alexander V. The choice resulted, as might have been foreseen, in the elevation of Balthasar Cossa to the vacant office.

This man was the son of a Neapolitan noble, of high rank but of limited wealth. From his youth he was destined to the church, but his enterprising and adventurous spirit turned from it with disgust. The stirring scenes of a secular ambition were more to his taste. He thirsted for worldly power, pleasure, and distinction, and preferred the battlefield and the sword to the cloister and breviary. The occasion which he sought was not long in offering itself. In the wars that had arisen between Ladislaus of Naples and the rival claimant to that crown, Louis of Anjou, his active disposition found a sphere for its enterprise. With some of his brothers, who shared his tastes, he equipped a vessel of war, and became a rover of the sea. In these piratical excursions, in which friend and foe stood much the same chance, he indulged those tastes and habits which clung to him ever after, and made his name an object of awe and terror. He is said here to have acquired the habit of wakefulness by night and of
sleeping by day, which was confirmed by his nocturnal debaucheries, and which clung to him even after his election to the pontificate. At length, weary of this mode of life, or driven from it by the close of the war, he was forced to choose some new object of ambition. His attention was directed to his original destination. Ecclesiastical eminence offered a school for his aspiring efforts, and, with characteristic recklessness, he determined to pursue it. It made little difference to him whether he was a prince of the world, or a prince of the church. In fact, stripping off the ecclesiastical badges by which the latter was distinguished, one might be mistaken for the other, and in either sphere might be found equal means to gratify the passions. At the age of twenty-five he repaired to Bologna, under pretense of pursuing his studies at the university, but in facts with the design of making an academic degree his stepping-stone to ecclesiastical dignities.

But the reputation of scholarship he soon found to be too laborious an acquisition. His passions led him to the study of men rather than books. He was more fond of intrigues than the writings of the Fathers. As might be supposed, his literary progress was slow. Pontifical favor, he soon discovered, would open an easier path to promotion. He studiously gained the favor of Boniface IX, who rewarded his assiduous flattery and politic obsequiousness with the archdeaconate of Bologna.

The station was important not only for its large revenues, but as the rectorship of the university was connected with it. Still Balthasar's ambition was not satisfied. What he had tasted of pontifical favor gave him a keener relish for more. His appetite grew by what it fed on. The walls of Bologna furnished him too limited a sphere of effort, and he determined to visit Rome to see what his personal influence could effect with the pope. As he mounted his horse to go, some of his friends asked him whither he was going. "To the popedom," was the reply. Boniface made him one of his cubicularii, or waiters at his chamber-door. This admitted him on terms of intimacy to the pope. It was the very post which he would have preferred, for it made him largely a dispenser of pontifical favor. His recommendations were sought and amply remunerated. He urged the sale of indulgences to bring money into the pontifical treasury. He drove a thriving trade in simony, and enriched himself by his gains. He soon became apostolical proto-notary, and in 1402 was made cardinal. His abilities were acknowledged, and the next year he was selected by the pope as the fittest and ablest man to recover Bologna from the usurpations of John Galeazzo of Milan. Other reasons, not improbable, are assigned for the selection. His mistress was the wife of a Neapolitan, and Boniface wished to improve the occasion to send her back to her husband. The mission of Balthasar justified the pope's selection of him by its successful issue. Bologna was recovered to the popedom. But she found that she had only exchanged one tyrant for another, if possible, more severe. Balthasar was by no means inferior to Galeazzo in the greediness of his passions or the intolerance of his oppressions, and he was fully as able and politic a despot. The oppressed
citizens complained to Innocent VII, who had, meanwhile, succeeded Boniface. Balthasar discovered the applicants who accused his tyranny, and confiscated their property to his own use.

To Innocent VII succeeded Gregory XII. Balthasar was not regarded by the new pope with a friendly eye. The legate had prevented the pope’s nephew from taking possession of a benefice which Gregory had conferred upon him in Bologna. Excommunication and interdict followed. But the disobedient legate maintained his ground. He reigned supreme in Bologna, and defied the pope. He scorned the excommunication, and resolved to brave the interdict. He commanded that all the sacred rites should be performed as usual. None dared to disobey.

Gregory and Balthasar were now sworn enemies. The latter had nothing further to hope from the former, and was ready to take the first opportunity to repay his hate. The council of Pisa furnished the opportunity. But as parties seemed so evenly balanced that a slight weight might turn the scale, Balthasar determined to see what he could do with Gregory. The pope met his advances and rejected his overtures with scorn. The die was now cast, and the tyrant of Bologna was to be reckoned among the reformers of Christendom. His influence contributed no small share to the favor with which the council was regarded. He induced Florence to permit the council to be held at Pisa—a most favorable position—which contributed much to the large attendance upon the council, and the respect with which its decisions were regarded. He not only secured the place of the Florentines, to whom it was subject, but gained their approval of the project, as well as that of the university of Bologna. At the council he contributed largely to the final result—the deposition of Gregory and Benedict, and the election of Alexander V. The last was his friend, and the man of his own choice. Already near the grave, death would spare him long enough, as Balthasar might imagine, for himself to perfect his plans of succession. The result justified his expectations, although suspicions were awakened against him of having by foul means contributed to their fulfillment. In the council of Constance he was accused of having been of a wicked disposition from his youth—lewd, dissolute, a liar, disobedient to his father and mother, and addicted to almost every vice. Among all the various enormities with which he was charged, that of poisoning his predecessor to make room for himself was almost overlooked. Alexander V died on the fourth of May, 1410, after having held the pontificate less than a year. On the seventeenth of the same month Balthasar Cossa was elected, and took the title of John XXIII.

The character and past course of the new pope were so notorious that many apprehended what would follow. As described by his secretaries, the character of John XXIII was a monstrous compound of all the vices that can make a man detestable and odious. While his great talents are admitted, they serve merely as a magnificent frame to a picture of correspondently enormous depravity. Neim speaks of him as "a monster of avarice, ambition, cruelty, violence,
injustice, and the most horrid sensuality." A pirate in his youth, he was fitter for the trade of a bandit than the office of a pope. He made himself, in fact, Pontifex Maximus of the banditti of Christendom. "Many were scandalized at his election," says one who was present at his coronation.

This ceremony was observed in a style of ostentatious magnificence better befitting the lord of Bologna than the chief pastor of the church. Monstrelet describes it with all the enthusiasm that might be excited by the coronation of an emperor. The procession on the occasion was composed of twenty-four cardinals, two patriarchs, three archbishops, twenty-five abbots, beside an almost innumerable multitude of ecclesiastics. All were present in the chapel of Alexander V when his successor received the holy orders of priest. The miter of the pope was of vermilion, with a white border. The next day the pope celebrated mass, directed by one of the cardinals, who showed him the service—with which he was less acquainted than with the use of carnal weapons—while the marquis of Ferrara and the lord of Malatesta held the basin in which he washed his hands. The first of these had brought with him in his train fifty-four knights, clothed in vermilion and azure, and was accompanied by martial music. When the mass was celebrated, the pope was borne out of the church, and, on a platform that had been erected for the occasion, was crowned in presence of the immense assemblage. Seated in a chair covered with drapery of gold, the triple-crown was placed by the hands of the cardinals upon his head. When this ceremony was complete, he descended from the platform, was placed on a horse richly caparisoned, and, followed by all the dignitaries of the church, he marched in procession through the streets of the city. The Jews met him on the way as he approached their quarter, and presented him with a copy of the Old Testament. He took it, looked at it, and then threw it behind him, exclaiming, "Your law is good, but this of ours is better." Wherever the pope went, he had money scattered in the streets for the people to gather up. The Jews pressed near, but the two hundred men-at-arms that followed, armed with clubs, beat them, says Monstrelet, "in such a way as it was a pleasure to see." Music accompanied them on their march. They then returned to the papal palace, where each, in his order, received the pontifical benediction and a dispensation for four months.

The election of the pope is said to have been nearly unanimous. It is easy to account for this. John XXIII had dissuaded Alexander from returning to Rome, and upon his death at Bologna, where Balthasar was all-powerful, the latter knew that the election could be swayed in great measure by his will. An author of that age reports that when a dissension arose in the conclave as to the person who should be elected, they turned to him and requested him to say whom he would choose to have elected. "Give me the robe of St. Peter," was the reply, "and I will give it to him who ought to be pope." It was given him, and, throwing it over his own shoulders, he exclaimed, "I am pope." The cardinals found it wiser to dissemble their dissatisfaction than bring down upon themselves the power of a master.
Unquestionably the election was a forced one. Platina reports that soon after the death of Alexander, Balthasar gained over a large number of the cardinals by bribes, especially the poorer members of the college. He adds, that it was a current rumor that this election was the result of violent measures, and that Balthasar had stationed troops in the city and in the neighboring country, to ensure his election by force if it could be secured in no other way. His object was now attained—the object avowed by the archdeacon of Bologna when, mounting his horse to visit Boniface at Rome, he declared, "I am going to the popedom."

John XXIII did not neglect matters proper to secure and extend his allegiance. He wrote a circular letter, and dispatched it throughout Christendom, to notify all of his election. He renewed the sentence of the council of Pisa against the two rival claimants to the popedom, as well as their adherents, giving the last, however, six months’ grace in which to return to his own allegiance. He sent an embassage to Benedict, to sound his views on the subject of cession. But that inflexible rival would listen to no terms. He claimed that the church universal resided in the fortress of Peniscola, where he had shut himself up and maintained his court.

One of the first measures of John XXIII was to revoke the obnoxious bull of his predecessor in favor of the mendicants. The bull by which this was done bears date June 27th, 1410—scarcely more than one month from his accession to the pontificate. He knew how important it was at the commencement of his reign to make a favorable impression, especially in France, where the bull of his predecessor had effectually cooled the enthusiasm with which his election had been at first received. But the plans of the pope did not succeed. The university was dissatisfied at the moderate censure passed on the bull of his predecessor, and both were alike rejected.

At Rome the news of the election was received by the people with demonstrations of joy. They banished the enemies of the newly-elected pope, and defeated the invading army of Ladislaus. John XXIII might now return and resume his dominion in the eternal city. The first year of his pontificate was eminently auspicious. Notwithstanding local dissatisfactions, as in the university of Paris, he was recognized by the greater part of Europe. The allegiance of Benedict and Gregory, respectively, was very limited. It seemed that at last the schism was in a fair way to be extinguished. The dissatisfaction which existed in Germany was limited, for the most part, to the emperor Robert and his personal adherents. We have already seen that Bohemia had regarded with favor the council of Pisa. To this result the influence of Huss had largely contributed. Of this he in fact afterward reminded the pope and cardinals, in his letter of remonstrance addressed to them from his retreat at Hussinitz, while the city of Prague was laid under interdict on his account.
At this opportune moment, death removed the emperor Robert from the scene. He was a prince not altogether destitute of merit. He was the son of Rodolph, elector of the Palatinate. By the death of his father, he became elector in 1398, and in 1400, on the deposition of Wenzel, was elected to the imperial crown. The adherents of Wenzel at Aix-la-Chapelle would not admit him to the city, where the Roman emperors were usually crowned, and the ceremony took place at Cologne. His reign was eminently peaceable, and he was regarded as a lover of peace. The ill success of his invasion of Italy, at the commencement of his reign, may have had some influence in contributing to the result. His death occurred within a few days after the election of John XXIII to the popedom.

It was at this time, also, that a victory was obtained over the king of Naples by the armies of Rome. The intelligence of the victory was most agreeable to the pontiff, and helped to swell the tide of his prosperity. But, though once defeated, Ladislaus was still a formidable foe. John XXIII was too shrewd and experienced in policy not to guard against the recurring danger. He sought to strengthen the Italian league against Ladislaus, and draw into the alliance Louis of Anjou and Sigismund of Hungary, both of them rivals of the king of Naples. The former of these was already gained. It remained to secure the latter.

It was while these things were pending that the case of Huss was committed, as we have seen, to the Cardinal Otho de Colonna, who had cited Huss to appear at Bologna. The pope had now too many things on his hands to pay it special attention. Italy was a scene of anarchy and conflict. The Venetians were dissatisfied with the course of Sigismund, and traversed his designs. John Maria Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, a monster of cruelty, and one of the most terrible scourges under which an oppressed people ever groaned, had been cut off by a conspiracy, the conflicting elements of which coalesced long enough to strike down by the hand of violence a common foe, whose severity was more horrible than their rival ambitions. The party of the Guelphs siding with the pope, and of the Ghibelines inclining to the emperor, enough at least to give the appearance of principle to a faction whose object was power and plunder, added to the general confusion. Bands of marauders and armed banditti, mostly soldiers of fortune, ravaged the impoverished country without restraint, while Ladislaus from Naples menaced the states of the church with the terror of his arms. Italy was a caldron of civil tumult. The seething elements invited the necromantic skill of the depraved wretches who sought to control them. The resource of John XXIII was in the terrors of excommunication, which he had himself braved while governor of Bologna. He proclaimed a crusade against Ladislaus, and put his kingdom under interdict. Is this, asked Huss, an act worthy of the common pastor of all Christendom? Bishops are required every Sabbath to read the bull of excommunication against Ladislaus. Christians are summoned, in this personal quarrel between the pope and king, to march against the latter and dethrone him. For this they are promised the forgiveness of their sins, and eternal salvation. Is the shedding of blood then to procure the remission of sins? Is it Christianity, is it gospel, to incite Christians to war upon
Christians? Such was the language of Huss in Bethlehem chapel. Jerome powerfully supported him. For a time a large number of the teachers of the university urged the same views. But the interests of Wenzel allied him to the pope, and his hope to recover the imperial throne through pontifical influence would not allow him to resist the measures taken by John XXIII to promote the crusade. His decision silenced the opposition of the university. Few dared to speak what they thought, while king and pope were both against them. But Huss, if he felt the restraints of the magistrates in the discharge of his public duties, was busy with his pen. Indeed, the course of the pontiff himself would not allow him to rest. It was not enough that one crusade had been proclaimed. Another, more bitterly provoked, was soon to follow, as if to keep up the agitation.

In the commencement of hostilities between Ladislaus and the pope, the king of Naples had been simply excommunicated. In these circumstances the war had continued, with intervals of inaction, for many months. Ladislaus seemed to bear his sentence with great equanimity. With the lawlessness of a bandit and the faithlessness of a pagan, he was a fair match for the pontiff. But for the mischiefs of the war, it might not have been a bad spectacle to see the two men cope with one another. The excommunicated king, however, was a standing monument of the weakness and disgrace into which the papacy had fallen. He illustrated in his own person the degradation of its authority.

Two centuries earlier his case would have probably been a hopeless one. And, indeed, now the terrible scenes of the crusade against the Albigenses had hardly passed from the memory of men. At that time the word of a pope had changed the South of France from a garden to a desert. Raymond, Count of Toulouse, suffered the humiliation of a public flogging in the church of St. Giles. His whole province was given up to pillage. His subjects were murdered by the wholesale, in almost unresisting submission. The fanaticism and cruelty of such a crusade were terrible.

Ladislaus had not indeed the same grounds for fear as the prince of Toulouse. The papal schism had largely broken the spell of pontifical authority. But yet he much preferred a warfare in which army could be measured against army, steel against steel. The weapons of excommunication and crusade were of a kind he had no disposition to provoke, till he was able effectually to defy them. He was reduced to the necessity of a forced peace—a humiliating reconciliation which only covered the purpose of a bitter revenge, for the time deferred.

Watching his opportunity, he acquired a new ally. Genoa, impatient of the French yoke, revolted, expelled its garrison, restored the republic, and joined the Neapolitan party. The scale was now turned. The prince of Anjou, the ally of John XXIII, was defeated, and the pope was left exposed to a vengeance which he had bitterly provoked. Under pretense of subduing a rebellious subject, Ladislaus gathered a powerful army on the confines of his kingdom,
and placed himself at its head. He began his march, but suddenly turned aside and presented himself before the gates of Rome. His galleys had already entered the Tiber, and the pope, struck with consternation at the sudden and well-concerted attack, had scarcely time to escape from his capitol, when it passed into the hands of his foe. The Neapolitan army entered, and a frightful scene ensued. Rome was sacked. For several days she experienced all the horrors which mercenary bands of soldiers could inflict.

As soon as the pope could get his spiritual battery in order, he opened anew a terrible broadside in the shape of another "crusade" against Ladislaus. He summoned Christendom to his aid to crush the king of Naples, and ravage his dominions with fire and sword. Plenary indulgence was extended to all who should engage in the holy warfare. Those who should contribute money to assist the pope were assured of a full recompense in spiritual privileges. Some of the indulgences promised would vie in absurdity and blasphemy with any which, a century later, were offered by Tetzel.

To many, there was nothing surprising in all this. It was accordant with the usages of the papacy. But in the eyes of Huss it was a sin to be rebuked.

CHAPTER VIII

Bull for the Crusade at Prague

It was in such circumstances, a crusade proclaimed by the supreme pontiff against Ladislaus—the imperial throne vacant by the death of Robert; Wenzel anxious to recover, in part through the influence of the pope, his lost scepter—that the courage and constancy of Huss were put to the test. The policy of Wenzel forbade opposition to the papal measure. To risk the imperial crown by allowing too free criticism of the proclamation of the crusade, was, in his view, an act of folly. Huss could no longer depend upon the royal favor.

His cause was still in the hands of the papal commission. Some of his procurators had been arrested and thrown into prison. One of them, Jessenitz, had managed to escape. Another, a former teacher, and subsequently an opponent of Huss, Stanislaus of Znaim, had been suspected of heresy for his former defense of Wickliffe, and a tract which he had written on the subject, and was compelled to justify himself before he was released. The other procurator was Stephen Paletz. Both of them appear to have been thoroughly frightened by their imprisonment, and they were set at liberty only after a period of eighteen months, during which they were kept in duress, and then even only through the urgent remonstrances of the king and of the university.
It was soon after this (September 1, 1411) that Huss made a solemn declaration of his views and intentions, or perhaps it might be called a confession of his faith, and, in a tone of becoming humility, petitioned the Holy See to be released from the summons of personal presence at Rome, as well as from the consequences of the process against him. This declaration was read before a full meeting of the university. In it Huss maintained that not one jot or iota of the law of Christ could pass away—that Christ's holy church is founded on the rock; and he solemnly declared that it had never entered his mind to wish to do or teach any thing in opposition to the law of Christ or the holy Catholic church. He finally discredited himself from various errors which he said had been falsely imputed to him, and which no one was further from approving than himself.

This declaration and petition was on its way to Rome, when it was met by the proclamation of the crusade issued by the pope a few days later (September 9, 1411). It might have been supposed that at such a juncture, and anxiously desiring a favorable response to his petition, Huss would have been more than usually cautious or reserved. So far from this, in less than two weeks after the meeting of the university, we find Huss in a spirited controversy with the Englishman, John Stokes, in regard to the writings of Wickliffe. Stokes was not particularly successful in his part of the discussion, if we may judge from his proposal that the scene of debate should be transferred from Prague to Paris, Rome, or Oxford. The friends of Huss, on the other hand, held that if Stokes had anything to say or produce against Huss, he should bring his evidence or arguments against him in the place where he resided.

Intelligence of the crusade must have reached Prague about the last of September (1411). Huss at once freely and boldly discussed the papal iniquity. Paletz as yet adhered to him. He admitted that there were "palpable errors" in the papal bull. The minds of men were shocked at the summons from Rome to Christian nations to take the field against their brethren. In the choice between John XXIII and Ladislaus, good men would have found it hard to decide. It was difficult to say which was the more selfish, unprincipled, and abandoned. It is probable, however, that John XXIII would have won the palm of audacious wickedness, on the simple ground that Ladislaus wore only a crown, while he disgraced the tiara.

Early in 1412 it was manifest that the spirit of Huss was fully aroused. At one of the regular disputations of the university, Huss maintained that the great Antichrist, which according to the word of God was to come at the end of the world, was even now in possession of the highest dignity of Christendom, and exercised transcendent authority over all Christian people, clerical and lay, and that he is in fact no other than the pope of Rome. Hence Christians are not to obey him, but, as the chief enemy and grand opponent of Christ, they are rather to resist him. Huss subsequently published his argument.
In the month of May, the dean of Passau, the papal legate, reached Prague. He brought with him the papal bulls of indulgences. Neither the worthless Albic, who had received the pallium from Rome, nor the king, placed any obstructions in the way of the legate. Albic merely stipulated—and his very sordidness on this occasion appears almost as a redeeming feature in his character—that it should not be prescribed at the confessional what portion of his property each should give, but the matter should be left to the free will of the individual. The bulls were read from the pulpits in the various churches of Prague; the crusade and indulgence preachers gathered the people at beat of drum, in public places in the city, and three boxes were placed—one at the cathedral, another at the Tein church, and another at the Vissehrad—to receive the money that might be contributed by the faithful.

The theological faculty of the university could not entirely ignore what was taking place around them. They met and deliberated, but came to the sage and safe conclusion to obey the orders of the king and the directions of the archbishop, receiving the papal bull without committing themselves to any decision in regard to it—a matter to which they were not called. This was the view of Paletz, who at this juncture separated from Huss.

This tame and cowardly conclusion dissatisfied Huss. He felt for the honor of the law of God, for the cause of his native land, and the souls of his countrymen. His spirit within him glowed with the resolute purpose to unmask the false pretensions and iniquitous principles, not only of the crusade, but the bull of indulgences.

He regarded with indignation this unscrupulous act of the pope. He saw in it the prostitution of sacred interests to the interests of a personal ambition. He pronounced it an act of malignant and antichristian usurpation, and he felt called upon to meet it with a public rebuke.

Nor could it be objected to him that, as a foreign matter, it was one in which he had no interest. It was brought home to his own city and his own doors. The pope's bull, which he sent through Europe, required, as we have seen, every bishop on the same day to make proclamation of the excommunication against Ladislaus. It summoned, moreover, all Christians to march to his help, or assist him with levies and gold, in return for which he promised the plenary remission of sin, and eternal salvation. It was in consequence of this command that the boxes were placed at commodious places to receive contributions of money in behalf of the crusade. The preachers exhorted the people to liberality the more earnestly, that they did it under the eyes of the papal legate. Several of the university disapproved these measures till the king had extended them his sanction. This was not long wanting. The motives that led to it may easily be understood.
The acquiescence of the king gave a new strength to the papal party. Wavering minds were decided by it. But Huss and Jerome looked to the will of a higher monarch. The permission granted by the king, on their views and plans of action had no effect. In the lecture-room of the university, as well as in Bethlehem chapel, Huss denounced the papal measures. He maintained that it was an antichristian procedure to spur Christians on to war with Christians, and, with a view to shedding of blood, to sell indulgences for money. The course of Huss, as might have been expected, made him bitter enemies. The city was divided into opposite and hostile parties. The council of the king summoned before it the antagonist leaders—among them Huss and Stephen Paletz. Huss disputed before the council, and manfully maintained his views. His enemies could not deny the honesty of his convictions, or refute his arguments. But the council were not prepared for any decisive action. They dismissed the parties merely with the charge to treat one another kindly. The archbishop admonished Huss to obey the pope. He received for answer, that he would do this only so long as the commands of the pope were in accordance with the teachings of Christ and his apostles. Huss demanded to be met by other arguments than counsels to a blind obedience. With the feelings of a patriot and a Christian, he could not see his countrymen betrayed to death and the gospel trodden under foot without remonstrance. The blood of his friends and neighbors was required to be shed. The small revenue of an impoverished people was to be exhausted for the foreign interests of an individual.

In June, 1412, he affixed to the doors of several churches and cloisters the notice that on a certain day, June 7th, he would publicly dispute on the following question: "Whether it is according to the law of Christ, and a profitable thing, that Christian believers, with God’s glory, the salvation of soul, and the welfare of the kingdom in view, should give their support to the bull of the pope, proclaiming a crusade against Ladislaus, king of Naples." He likewise challenged all the teachers of the university, priests and monks, to meet him with their objections. The concourse to the discussion was immense. The common people crowded in to listen, in spite of the effort of the authorities of the university to exclude them under the pretext that they could not understand the matter. Huss began by asseverating that he had commenced his investigations simply with a view to the glory of God and the good of the church, impelled by his conscientious convictions. For his authority he should abide strictly by the teachings of Christ and his apostles. He then adduces the grounds on which an affirmative answer might be given to the question. "It seems," he says, "that we are to approve the bull of the pope because he is one of Christ’s vicars on earth, to whom he has said, ‘He that heareth you heareth me,’ because he has ‘the power of binding and loosing on earth’; because he has the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and is the supreme interpreter of the law of Christ; because such bulls have always been received, and the present is intended for the support of the church, to reduce whose authority is to hinder the salvation of souls," etc.
He then turns to the negative side of the question, and finds still more weighty the arguments for rejecting the bull. First of all, the putting of men to death which it requires, and the exhaustion of nations which it occasions, cannot well be reconciled with the love of Christ. As to the remission of sins promised, he admits the priest has power to absolve the true penitent, but by no means in the manner prescribed by the pope. He that is wise holds not merely that whoever confesses is absolved, but that he is absolved on condition of repentance, sinning no more, relying on God’s mercy and the purpose of future obedience to God’s commands. Of such a conversion of the sinner the priest has no means to judge but by a revelation; for none can attain forgiveness of sin but he who has attained from God, who alone can bestow pardon, the necessary grace. Huss holds, moreover, that neither the pope nor any of the clergy may bear arms and fight for the sake of riches or worldly dominion, for Christ forbade his disciples to do this; and such, moreover, was the view of the apostles and of the fathers of the church. “Tears and prayer are the arms of a bishop.” The passage, Luke 22:38, commonly cited to show that the church has two swords, a spiritual and a temporal, can import no more than this, that these swords belong to the whole church, which is composed of laity as well as clergy, and the latter of whom are to use only the spiritual, or the word of God. It is ignorance to believe that we must obey the pope in all things, especially in regard to a bull expedited from such selfish views. One should rather, after the example of Christ and his apostles, endure wrong patiently, than spur on Christians to exterminate one another. Does anyone say that these commands belong only to those that are perfect? Then the pope should be the most perfect among the clergy. After commenting on many monstrous passages of the bull, Huss replies to the grounds adduced for an affirmative answer. When, for example, the keys of heaven are promised to Peter, this means only a limited authority, while the loosing and binding must be performed of God, before, as spoken by men, it can have any validity. How could ignorant, licentious, and covetous priests, who, for a specified sum, receive indulgences from the commissary, really impart the same to the poor and the rich in proportion to this tax? How can Christians doubt that these robbers are thieves of Antichrist; and if such an one is the doorkeeper, how can he open the door to those that would enter into Christ? We can find nowhere in scripture that any holy man said to another, I have forgiven you your sins; I have absolved you: nor are they holy men who have granted absolution from punishment and guilt for so many years and days that we cannot even learn the time when indulgences sprung up. Among other remarks, he adds, that we are no more to fear unrighteous papal excommunication than the apostles were terrified by the ban of the synagogue. Nor does he leave anyone in doubt that he altogether rejects the doctrine of papal infallibility.

As Huss proceeded with his argument, some of the older doctors, Wolf, Goebel, and Leo, sought to convince him, by citations out of ecclesiastical and imperial law, that he was in the wrong. They prophesied disorder and murders as the result of his course. They advised him rather to go to Rome to dispute with the
pope in person, and objected to his ingratitude for setting himself in opposition to him whom he might thank for his office as priest. Dr. Leo inveighed against Huss as too young a man to handle such grave matters. At this the people began to murmur. Huss quieted them. But Jerome made a long speech in which he supported the reformer throughout, and closed with these words: "Whoever holds with us, let him follow us. Huss and myself will go to the council-house, and tell the council boldly to their face, that the papal bull and indulgence are iniquitous."

The speech of Jerome was energetic, and made a deep impression. The attendant knights and citizens interrupted him with their applause. "This man speaks truth. Right is on his side," was the cry from every quarter.

It would have needed but a word to procure an immediate attack by the multitude on the council-house, where the friends of indulgences were deliberating. But, through the influence of their leaders, the disposition which might so easily have resulted in violence was with some difficulty restrained.

A second meeting of the university was soon called, somewhat less numerously attended than the first. It was more peaceably conducted. Huss and Jerome were urged to consider the danger into which the city would be thrown by popular insurrection or commotion. Both promised to guard against giving any occasion for it, although Huss added, "Shall I then keep silence when I ought to speak? Will not the truth inculpate me—me who knew it, and out of fear abandoned it? Should my life be dearer to me than my duty?"

Such was the position taken by Huss. He could not violate conscience or abandon principle. Yet he was anxious to prevent any popular tumult. As the congregation dispersed, admiring crowds followed him to the door of his dwelling. As they left him there, they cried out, at parting, "Huss, abandon us not. Remain firm."

Firmness was indeed necessary. The king could not be relied upon in the emergency. Even yet, he dared not break entirely with the pope. The enemies of Huss were many and powerful, and bitterly exasperated. Some occasion for this was given perhaps by the imprudence of Jerome, urged on by his own impulsive nature. A few days after the disputatio in the university, one of the royal favorites, Wok Woksa of Waldstein, encouraged, as it seems, by Jerome and other masters, had got up a procession through the streets of the city designed to manifest the popular contempt for the papal bulls. Prostitutes, with certificates of indulgences hung around their necks, were made to head the procession, which moved, amid the shouts and cheers of the citizens, till it reached a pile of faggots heaped up beneath the gallows. Here, in contempt of the boxes designed to receive the money paid for indulgences, an iron box was placed, into which, while the indulgences thrown upon the lighted faggots
were consumed, were cast, as contribution, not gold or silver, but the most nauseous things, together with a satirical writing against indulgences.

The effect of this singular scene was scarcely such as Huss could have desired, but it perfectly suited the taste of Jerome, and doubtless of thousands of others. Still, it was not a little exasperating to the papal party. It tended to fan the flame which was already kindled to a fiercer heat.

Nor was this all. The very next day after the discussion had taken place, several of the young men most zealous in opposition to the papal bulls, determined that the ignorance and iniquity of the papal clergy should be exposed. There were multitudes among them who felt themselves capable of silencing the priests by arguments drawn from scripture. They resolved to visit the churches generally, and contradict every priest who should preach the indulgence.

On one of the following Sundays, the preachers in several of the churches were rudely interrupted by students and artisans. They were boldly called liars and deceivers. The pope was denominated Antichrist for having proclaimed a crusade against a Christian people. In the castle church, whilst the preacher assailed Huss with unmeasured abuse in the hope of restoring the doctrine of indulgences to its former reputation, a shoemaker from Poland, named Stasseck—or, as given by L'Enfant, Stanislaus Passec—came forward and gave the priest the lie. A great uproar at once ensued. The offended party prevailed on the warden of the castle to take the offender into custody, and deliver him over to the civil magistrates. Similar disturbances occurred the same clay at the Tein church, as well as at the convent of St. James. In the church, while the priest was commending the papal bull, he was interrupted by a student named Martin Krchidesco crying out, "Now it is plain that the pope is truly Antichrist, since he has proclaimed a crusade against Christians." In the convent, the vender of indulgences was expelled by another student named John Hudek. Both offenders were arrested, and, with the shoemaker, committed to the city prison.

From the known opinions of most of the member of the council, the worst was to be feared. There was no doubt that the prisoners would be punished with extreme severity. They were in fact sentenced to death as disturbers of the peace. Intelligence of this was at once communicated to Huss. He hastened from the college to the council-house. Having obtained admittance, accompanied by a large number of the professors and students, he earnestly entreated the magistrates not to punish the three inconsiderate youths with death. Their crime, he asserted, might be excused in some measure by their zeal for the gospel, and the great offence occasioned by indulgences, for if they deserved to be punished for the sake of the indulgences, he deserved it far more himself. But the council had been wrought upon by the priests, and were deaf to his entreaties. They objected to him that this was no concern of
his, and that he was mixing himself up in matters that did not belong to him. They suggested that it was his aim to set the city in an uproar, and that he had already injured it enough by the expulsion of the Germans. They said the question now was not in regard to indulgences, but concerning open violators of the public peace who had sought to produce bloodshed. Still they encouraged him to hope that favor would be shown them. They told him that as to the prisoners he and his friends might set their minds at ease. Their petitions would, either the following morning, or possibly the same day, be of some service to them.

The report of the danger that menaced the prisoners had already spread through the city. More than two thousand armed men were in a short time assembled around the council-house. They, were ready at a word to offer powerful and effectual aid for the release of the prisoners. But Huss was averse to violence. He only wished to save the lives of the three young men. Whether he understood the irony of the answer of the council or not, he suppressed the bitterness that he must have felt. He humbly thanked the senate for the promised favor, and, communicating it to the people, persuaded them to disperse. Scarcely was the danger passed, and Huss gone, than the scornful laugh was raised at his expense. The lords of the council declared him to be a deluded and credulous fool. Doubtless a bold bad man would have shown less scruple, and cut the knot by decisive measures. But Huss would not countenance violence, although he had been threatened with it himself.

He would by no means take the offenders out of the hands of justice. His own love of peace and order would not permit him to sanction their disturbance, and yet he could not willingly consent to a penalty so unjust as a capital infliction. He returned to his house in the cherished expectation that a just measure of penalty might satisfy all parties, and make a salutary impression.

But his hopes were doomed to disappointment. Scarcely had the crowd withdrawn and the streets been cleared, when the council, left unmolested, proceeded with its work. The executioner was admitted through a back door, and the prisoners were beheaded. But the foul deed could not long remain a secret. The blood of the murdered men flowed from the place where they were beheaded out into the open street, and told the story of their fate. In every part of the city old and young flew to arms. Grief and vengeance possessed all hearts. Nobility and students led on the people. The council-house fell into the hands of the assailants; but the principal object of their vengeance—the guilty judges—had fled.

The people’s thirst for vengeance now gave place to bitter expressions of their grief. They sought out the place where the young men were executed, broke open the vaults which concealed the bodies, and into which they had hurriedly been thrown, wrapped them in rich shrouds, and, placing them on a gilded bier, bore them in solemn procession to the Bethlehem church. An innumerable
train of mourners followed them, with waving banners and funeral hymns. They could not but regard the victims of this summary injustice somewhat in the light of martyrs.

Huss was deeply grieved at this melancholy issue of the affair. He felt the blow as a personal injury. Two of the victims were his own students. For eight days he was completely unmanned, and gave himself up to retirement and sorrow. Reviving at length from his depression, he preached a funeral sermon on the fate of the three youths. In this he declared that such a death had more than compensated for all that was sinful and earthly in them, and had exalted them to the rank of immortal martyr, for the sake of gospel truth. "Henceforth," said he, "no communion can exist between the adherents of Rome and the Bohemian Christians"; but he conjured the weeping people to beware of using violence toward the enemy, leaving God to deal with their wicked malice and remorseless cruelty.

Notwithstanding this touching and Christian appeal, the magistrates forbade the preacher, under pain of severe punishment, to make even any distant allusion in public to those who had recently been beheaded. But if Huss was ready to comply, the seed he had sown in the cause of truth had been watered by the blood of its victims, and its harvest was sure. The cause of reform could not die. The very rashness of the enemy had given it its martyrs.

But there were causes at work which were soon destined to operate in favor of Huss. Popular indignation at the extortions of Rome made itself manifest, and came to the knowledge of the king, while abroad the changed aspect of affairs destroyed in Wenzel the hope of recovering the empire, and indisposed him any longer to temporize with the pope. In order to understand the change which now took place in the royal policy, our attention must be directed to another quarter, from which new actors appear upon the troubled scene. Sigismund, second son of the emperor Charles IV, had received, in right of his wife Mary, daughter of Louis, king of Hungary, the throne of that kingdom. The position of Hungary made it the Thermopylae of Christendom, and destined it to receive the first shock of Moslem invasion. In the terrible battle of Nicopolis (1396), where the proudest nobility of Europe, gathering to the standard of the Hungarian monarch, sustained so terrible a defeat, his hopes seemed to be blasted. But when, six years after, the arms of the invader yielded to the prowess of Tamerlane, and Bajazet was forced, in his iron cage, to grace the triumphant progress of the Asiatic conqueror, the good fortune of Sigismund seemed to be restored. Yet the course of events had caused him to take a deep interest in the affairs of Italy. The ambition of Ladislaus was insatiable. He is said, not improbably, to have aspired to the imperial crown. With some show of justice he claimed the crown of Hungary, where his childhood had been spent, and where he had been favorably regarded by Louis, the previous monarch. The debaucheries and cruelty of Sigismund, who at this time seems to have been no unworthy relative of his royal brother, had disgusted and alienated his subjects.
His person was seized, and a general revolt spread through the kingdom. At this opportune moment, Ladislaus, previously instructed no doubt by his partisans, appeared with a fleet off the shores of Dalmatia. Zara and several other maritime cities acknowledged his authority. He even received at the former place the Hungarian crown. But in the meantime Sigismund had recovered his liberty. His fickle palatines renewed their allegiance, and Ladislaus, defeated in his attempt, withdrew, and sold to the grasping ambition of Venice his recent conquests in maritime Dalmatia. Sigismund could not regard with favor either the spoiler or his jackals. The necessity of his position made him the friend of the enemies of the king of Naples.

Meanwhile John XXIII had been placed by Ladislaus in difficult circumstances, and Sigismund and John XXIII alike complained of his violence. The interests of the king and pope were the same. On the accession of the latter to the pontificate, Sigismund sent him ambassadors, the burden of whose complaint was the usurpations of Venice. The pope, anxious to secure the favor of the king, answered him by the promise of his influence in his behalf.

But the occasion had already come when that influence was to be exerted in another direction than the one proposed, and with a large measure of success. By the death of Robert the imperial throne was vacant. To the pope it was of immense importance that it should be occupied by one who would sympathize with him in his opposition to the king of Naples. He wrote to the electors, urging them to make choice of Sigismund for emperor. He represented to them his fitness for the place at the present crisis. The enmity of Sigismund to Ladislaus was, however, his chief merit in the eyes of the pope.

The persuasions of the pope were not without effect. They were powerfully seconded, however, by other motives. After the deposition of Wenzel, Sigismund, as the second son of Charles IV, seemed to have the clearest right to the imperial crown. Notwithstanding his dissolute habits, he had given proof of capacity and energy. When Wenzel, in 1393, was making himself at once the laughing-stock and curse of the empire, Sigismund, conspiring with several others, had seized and imprisoned him. In spite of a rival claimant, he had grasped and retained the dominion of Hungary. He had distinguished himself in his conflicts with the Turks, and had aspired to draw around him the strength of Christendom for their defeat. France had sent him her gallant knights, and those of them who survived returned to declare the shame of their own rashness and defeat in not listening to the wiser counsels of the Hungarian monarch.

The result of the election was the elevation of Sigismund to the imperial throne. It is said that, when the electors were assembled, and Sigismund was asked, first of all, in quality of king of Hungary, to make his nomination, he named himself. "I know myself," said he, "others I do not; I do not know that they would be as capable as I am to govern the empire, especially in this
period of the schism of the church." The electors, admiring the frankness of the
king, or possibly overawed by his audacious impudence, unanimously gave him
their suffrages. This must however have been after the death of Jodicus, who
for ten months was a rival claimant of the imperial crown.

The character of Sigismund seemed to be a singular compound of that of his
father and that of his brother, Wenzel. He had the subtlety of the first, and the
license of the last, except that his shrine was that of Venus rather than of
Bacchus. Endowed with eloquence and energy, as well as possessed of a fine
personal appearance, he lacked the more important qualities necessary to a
perfect statesmanship. He was a man for the emergency, not for a settled and
consistent policy. He sought to ride the wave, rather than provide for the
voyage. He settled his disputes with Venice by the sale of Zara, thus imitating
the policy of his foe. He compromised his disputes in other quarters in order to
set himself at the task, toward which his ambition seems to have been more
directed even than to the imperial crown, of giving peace to the church. We
shall see in the sequel with what success.

The schism stood in fact in the way of the execution of the great design which
he had long cherished. So long as the church was divided by the dissensions
which prevailed, Christendom was endangered by the Turk. If the anti-popes
could be removed, and one be elected in their place who should be universally
recognized, the mighty torrent of Moslem invasion might be met and turned
back. Such a result would crown the name of Sigismund with imperishable
fame, and wipe out the shame of the defeat of Nicopolis. If we see the
emperor therefore turning against the pope, to whom in part he owed his
election, and who promised to be his firmest ally; if we see him using his
influence to dethrone him, and afterward shutting him up for years in prison,
we may be prepared to understand the policy to which such results were due.
It was this which led him to attempt the reconciliation of the knights of the
Teutonic Order, and the king of Poland, by whom the former in several battles
had been almost entirely prostrated in the year 1410. It was with a similar
purpose, as well as undoubtedly to win the glory of having restored peace to
the church, that a few months later he extorted from the reluctant pope the
summoning, in conjunction with himself, of the famous council of Constance.

But Sigismund’s election effectually excluded Wenzel from the imperial throne.
He saw himself at once and effectually bereft of his last hope of recovering the
Roman crown—the object for which he had intrigued with the council, and for
which he had put forth all the energy which his feeble, irresolute, and self-
indulgent nature allowed him to exert. It was no longer his interest to favor, in
any special manner, the pontiff who had conspired with his brother to rob him
of what he considered his hereditary right.

There were other causes, moreover, now contributing to a reaction in favor of
Huss. The king, who was always the creature of circumstance, had at first
accepted, or rather tolerated the papal bull. But he grew dissatisfied when he was told what streams of gold it was draining off to Rome—how the poor peasant who had no money sold his cow, till the popular genius of the country seized upon these facts and gave them expression in the street songs. He brought before him men who could testify to the truth of these things, and then dispatched them to Rome with a complaint against this traffic in indulgences. "Your dealers," says he to the pope, "where they are offered a span, take an ell; they promise heaven to all that will yield up their gold, and preach much else little likely to promote the salvation of the faithful. But while they deceive simple minds, they heap up great stores of wealth."

With all his faults, the king was not disposed to have his subjects abused by any but himself; and above all, he disliked to be troubled with petitions and complaints. The election of Sigismund removed the last chance for his recovery of the empire, and he had no longer any motive to treat the papal measures with any studied forbearance. In these circumstances, and with the influences of national feeling brought to bear strongly upon him, he abandoned the cause of the pope, or at least ceased to manifest any zeal in its behalf.

CHAPTER IX

Second Excommunication of Huss
He Withdraws from Prague

The time was at hand when Huss was specially to feel the need of the support of the king. There was no longer any hope of mercy at Rome for a man who had unscrupulously exposed the iniquity of the papacy and had sinned against its avarice. The issue of his case could not long remain doubtful. In July, 1412, John XXIII committed the matter into the hands of the cardinal, Peter de Angelis, who decided finally to confirm the excommunication of Huss. To this conclusion he had been brought in part by the representations of the priest of St. Adalbert, in New Prague, Michael of Deutschbrod, or, as he is better known, Michael de Causis. No fitter tool of malice and intrigue could be found. He had defrauded the king and fled his country, and his character was that of a knave and a profligate. We shall meet him again at the council of Constance.

The terrible bull of excommunication was launched against Huss in the summer of 1412. None might give him food or drink. None might buy of him, or sell to him. None might converse or hold intercourse with him. None might give him lodging, or allow him fire or water. Every city, village, or castle where he might reside was put under interdict. The sacraments could not be administered there. All religious worship was suspended there. If Huss
persevered in his obduracy, his curse of excommunication was to be published in every parish church on every Sunday and feast day, with solemn tolling of the bells and the casting of lighted torches to the earth. If he died excommunicate, he was to be denied church burial; or, if buried in consecrated ground, his body was to be dug up again from its grave.

Nor was this all. John XXIII gave significant expression of his bitter purpose to crush the reformer, in a bull proceeding directly from himself, in virtue of which the person of Huss was to be seized and brought before the archbishop of Prague or the bishop of Leitomischel, while the Bethlehem chapel was to be torn down and leveled to the ground, that it might no longer continue a den of heretics. No wonder that Paletz now broke entirely with Huss, and turned pale before such an array of spiritual terrors; that his course was such that Huss could say, "He turned and walked backward like a crab." A worldly prudence invited him to abandon what seemed a desperate cause.

The Germans of Prague, bitterly opposed to Huss, undertook the execution of that part of the bull which had respect to Bethlehem chapel. On one of the festivals of the church, they assembled, provided with arms, and under the lead of a certain Bohemian, Bernhart Chotek, marched toward the chapel, where they found Huss occupying the pulpit. But here their new-born zeal was suddenly cooled by the sight of the immense assembly, which, although unarmed, inspired a healthful respect.

In the city council, whither they turned back to report their failure, a bitter discussion ensued as to what should be done. The Germans, who were in the majority, held that there never would be peace till the chapel was pulled down; but they dared not take the initiative in the bold measure. The Bohemian members were too resolute in spirit, although in the minority, to allow their opponents the hope of a peaceful issue. The two parties were forced to content themselves with mutual reproaches. The church party called the chapel, in derision, "The Church of the Three Saints," while the friends of Huss invented a new street-song to express their contempt.

The ecclesiastical authorities adhering to John XXIII endeavored to enforce the interdict. The bull of excommunication against Huss had been published, as far as possible, in all the parish churches; but he still refused to leave the city, or abandon his pulpit. Nothing remained but to attempt to drive him forth by the most extreme terrors that spiritual tyranny ever devised.

It is true that this final weapon of pontifical vengeance was not what it had been centuries before. But even now it was not rashly to be braved. It was still formidable. Kings had bowed submissive before its terrors; and although the schism of the church and the views which Huss disseminated at Prague had, in many minds, deprived it of much of its authority, it was still not lightly to be contemned. We regard it now as the outrageous stretch of papal tyranny, a
monument of that intensely vindictive malice which, for the offense of an individual, doomed a whole city or kingdom to the bitterest infliction. Aided by the superstitions of men, it seemed to grasp at once the powers not only of the present life, but of the life to come. During an interdict, the churches were closed, the bells were silent, the dead were left unburied, and no rites but those of baptism and extreme unction could be performed. All the economy of social and civil life seemed struck with a palsy; the wheels of enterprise and labor stood still, waiting for the guilty to depart, or die. Some few of the clergy of Prague may have had boldness to imitate the conduct of him by whom it was imposed, when, seven years before, as tyrant of Bologna, he had defied the interdict of Gregory. The greater number, however, would be awed to obedience by the papal authority.

It was at this critical moment that Wenzel interposed. Huss, from a sense of duty, refused to abandon his post or yield to an unjust excommunication. In fact, it is doubtful whether his friends, in the circumstances, would have allowed him to depart. Heedless of the interdict themselves, they experienced but little inconvenience from it. It did not close Bethlehem chapel, or seal the lips of Huss. Indeed, the blow was more severely felt by the papal than the reform party. The priests of the former, it is true, were, for the most part, well content with a state of things that did not much molest their indolence, but the people complained.

Wenzel issued a decree enjoining upon the parish priests attendance upon their spiritual duties, in spite of the presence of Huss within the walls. Any neglect of this order should be visited by a forfeit of salary. The decree wrought wonders. It counter-worked the papal bull. The priests, many of them, returned to the discharge of their duties, although Huss still remained unmolested within the walls of the city.

Meanwhile, however, a division had sprung up in the university which threatened serious consequences. The students and masters were nearly unanimous in sustaining Huss, but the theological faculty had taken ground against him almost to a man. The faculty was composed of the doctors of theology, several of whom had been, but a year or two before, his most intimate friends or his firmest supporters. Among them were Stanislaus, Paletz, Andrew Broda, and John Elia. The time of danger had come. Stanislaus and Paletz had felt the claws of the lion. The others also had proved too timid to stand by their convictions in the hour of trial. Repeated conferences were held, but the division of sentiment was becoming more marked. Several discussions were held at Zebrak, at which Huss was present, but with no favorable issue. A controversy commenced, which is to be noted hereafter, and which continued for quite a period, between the eight doctors, or a portion of them, on one side, and Huss on the other. No Protestant reader at the present day will hesitate in his decision as to which side victory inclined.
Huss still kept his place in Bethlehem chapel, cheering the hearts and inspiring the zeal of his adherents. At this difficult and troubled moment (autumn of 1412), he received an encouraging letter from England. It was written by a Wickliffite named Richard, and spoke cheering words. Huss took it with him into the pulpit, and read it to his hearers. "See," said he, "our dearly beloved brother Richard has written you a letter full of cheer and encouragement." Huss replied to it "in the name of the church of Christ in Bohemia, and in the name of the church of Christ in England," assuring its author that the king, queen, lords, knights, and common people in the cities and throughout the land, were holding fast by the true doctrine.

It was not without some scruples that Huss had continued to remain at Prague. He felt that it was perhaps wiser for him, for a time at least, to withdraw from its walls. To some extent, no doubt, the interdict was still enforced, and Huss bore it ill that any should suffer on his account. The king at length allowed, if he did not advise him to leave. There was no doubt that the cause he loved would still have able advocates. It would at least be manifest, if he withdrew, that it was not bound up in the person of one man, and was not dependent on his presence. At any moment when it seemed advisable, it was in his power to return, while the correspondence of his friends would keep him informed of whatever might occur in his absence. He therefore, toward the close of 1412, left the city, and Master Hawlik supplied his place in Bethlehem chapel.

He was not willing to depart, however, without clearly defining his position. He did not go from any regard for usurped papal authority, or unjust excommunication. On leaving the city, he drew up his third and final appeal from the sentence of the pope. His former appeals had proved vain: John XXIII had excommunicated him. But there was another court left to which he might look, and one to which popes and emperors were amenable. "Almighty God, one essence in three persons, is the first and final refuge of all who are oppressed. He is the Lord, who keepeth truth forever, doing justice for those who suffer wrong, near to those who call upon him in truth, and condemning to destruction incorrigible transgressors. Our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, surrounded by high priests, scribes, and Pharisees, his judges and their partisans, and willing to ransom by a bloody and shameful death from eternal condemnation, his children chosen from the foundation of the world, has given his disciples a noble example for committing their cause to the judgment of that God who has all power and knowledge, and who doeth whatsoever he will. Imitating his holy and great example, I appeal to God, who sees me oppressed by this unjust sentence and by the pretended excommunication of high priests, scribes, Pharisees, and judges occupying Moses' seat. I follow likewise the example of Chrysostom, who appealed from two councils: of the blessed bishop, Andrew of Prague, and of Robert of Lincoln, who appealed with all humility and devotion to the sovereign and infinitely just Judge, who can neither be intimidated by any fear, nor corrupted by gifts, nor deceived by false testimony. I desire that all Christian believers, especially princes, barons,
gentlemen, vassals, and all the inhabitants of our Bohemian kingdom, should be informed, and moved to sympathy for the pretended excommunication launched against me by Peter, Cardinal Deacon of St. Ange, commissioned to do it by Pope John XXIII, at the instigation of my enemy, Michael de Causis, and with the approval of the canons of Prague. This cardinal, for nearly two years, has utterly refused audience to my advocates and procurators, though he ought not to have refused it to a Jew, a pagan, or a heretic. This same cardinal has been unwilling to accept my reasonable excuses that I alleged for a dispensation from appearing personally before him, nor has he made any account of the authentic testimony of the university of Prague. Whence it is evident that I have not incurred the guilt of contumacy, since it is not through scorn, but for valid reasons, that I did not appear at Rome when I was cited, as, first, because my enemies would lie in ambush for me on the road; then, because the dangers of others serve me for an example; again, because my procurators are engaged to submit to the trial by fire, against whomsoever at the court of Rome; and finally, because they have imprisoned my procurators, without any reason for it, so far as I am aware. So also, as it is established by all ancient laws as well as by the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments, and by canon law, that the judges are to visit the places where the crime has been committed, and there take evidence of the facts bearing on the accusation, of persons who are acquainted with the accused, and are neither his ill-wishers nor his enemies, men who are not impelled by malice, but by zeal for the law of God; and finally, as it is ordained by the same laws, that he who is cited or accused may appear in a safe place where he may be free to defend himself, and that the judge be not one of his enemies any more than the witnesses—it is plain that, all these conditions having been wanting, I am absolved before God from the guilt of contumacy, and discharged from this pretended and frivolous excommunication. I, John Huss, present this appeal to Jesus Christ, my Master, who knows, protects, and judges the righteous cause of every individual whomsoever."

This appeal of Huss speaks for itself. It shows us a man conscious of the wrong done him, calmly yet decidedly exposing it, and resting, in a faith which nothing could shake, on that final refuge of oppressed innocence—the justice of God. Some of his enemies objected to his appeal as unwarranted and impertinent. But no one can put himself in the circumstances of Huss, conscious of the honest integrity of his own heart, and not feel that it is the noble expression of a character and faith worthy of all honor.

Nor could it in that day be justly regarded as heresy to appeal from the pope. Urban VI was pronounced by the cardinals who elected him to be apostate, excommunicate, Antichrist, usurper, anathematized, the destroyer of Christianity. The cardinals of Gregory, but a few months before, had appealed from him to a general council. They called him a worthy co-laborer of his rival the anti-pope Benedict, his compeer in acts of violent outrage and iniquity.
against all Christendom. How different from the calm, unvindictive, but solemn appeal of Huss!

In the council of Constance, some years later, the declaration of the newly-elected pope, Martin V, that it was not permissible to appeal from the decision of a pope, was promptly met and sharply answered. John Gerson, ex-chancellor of the university of Paris, and a bitter enemy of Huss, could not suffer the declaration to pass in silence, or even seem to have the approval of the council. He asserts that others beside himself regarded the papal document in which it was inserted as tending to overthrow not only all the authority of the council of Pisa, but of that of Constance, and to render null all that they had done in deposing the intruding popes, or electing Martin V himself.

This declaration of the pope gave Gerson occasion for writing a treatise on the subject. He discusses the question, whether it is permissible to appeal from the judgment of the pope, and in what case. He opposes to the constitution of the pope the decree of the fifth session of the council, which makes the pope himself, as well as all others, in matters pertaining to faith, the extirpation of schism, and the reformation of the church in head and members, subject to the council. This decree Gerson supports on various grounds, some from scripture and some from reason. But the same reasons that exist for appealing from a pope to a general council equally fallible, might much better apply to an appeal from a pope or a general council to the unerring Judge, or at least to his revealed will. In the case of Huss there was no other resource. From the archbishop and the pope he appealed for the justice of his cause to the Judge of all.

But the expulsion of Huss from Prague only removed him to another sphere of action, where his influence was felt in the end as powerfully perhaps as in that city. He did not forget in his exile the principles he had avowed before the archbishop, and which had induced him to persist in preaching in Bethlehem chapel. They were equally powerful with him now. No place for him was too profane or sacred for holding forth the word of God. Throngs crowded to hear, and were curious to see, a man who had been excommunicated, yet who spoke with the earnestness and fervor of an apostle; who had been driven out of Prague by the interdict, yet whose holy and blameless life shamed his persecutors. His eloquence was as effective in the open fields as in Bethlehem chapel. Poor peasants and proud nobles gathered around him, in the forests and the highways, to hear his forcible expositions and applications of the word of God. The rector of the university of Prague left the lecture-room and the academic halls to talk to the ignorant multitudes scattered over the land. Some might think of him as of Paul, "Much learning hath made thee mad"; but it was a learning that the humblest could appreciate; a learning that consisted in a thorough acquaintance with the word of God and the duties which it enjoined. From city to city, and from village to village, Huss pursued his apostolic mission. His hearers came in crowds from their homes, fields, and workshops.
The impression made was in many cases deep and abiding. Years did not efface it. When Huss afterward was enclosed by prison walls in the city of Constance, there were thousands of his Bohemian countrymen, far distant from Prague, on whose hearts his memory was deeply engraven by the experience wrought within them through the words that were uttered now.

In his treatise on the church he has presented us with the vindication of his present course. "The command that forbids me to preach is opposed to the words and example both of Christ and his apostles. Christ preached to the people on the sea, in the desert, in the open field, in houses, in synagogues, in villages, in the streets; and the apostles preached everywhere, the Lord helping them. The command, moreover, is opposed to the interests of the church, in forbidding the word to have free course. It was for these reasons," says he, "that I appealed against the bull intended to silence me."

Removed from the immediate neighborhood of his most virulent and violent foes, the life of Huss was one of comparative quiet. Yet thrown, as he necessarily was, among such vast and incongruous multitudes, some among them acting as the spies of his persecutors, his words were not always received with unanimous applause. On one occasion, he was speaking in severe terms of the pope and cardinals, in the castle of a certain lord, when an old man, supposed to have been a priestly spy, assuming the appearance of great simplicity, asked him what those words popes and cardinals meant in the Bohemian language, and if he had ever seen one of them. "I never have seen them, and I have no wish to see them," said Huss. "But how comes it," asked the old man, "that you speak such bad things of people you have never seen or examined? For myself," said he, "I was a long time ago in Rome with my father; and I have seen the pope and some of the cardinals, and I found in them a remarkable piety." "Very well," replied Huss, "if they are so much to your taste, go back and spend the rest of your life with them." The old man shaking his head, answered, "My Master, I am too old to undertake so long a journey, but do you, who are yet a young man, go and tell them to their face what you have said so comfortably of them in their absence, and you will see what answer they will give you." The lord of the castle, who had Huss under his protection, took him away with him, and imposed silence on the intruder.

In the works of Huss are found several treatises and letters that were written during this period of his retreat. One of the latter is addressed to the cardinals. In this he sets forth to them, with much mildness and modesty, that the occasion of his misfortunes and reproach must be his apology for addressing them and John XXIII. "At the time," says he, "when obedience was withdrawn from Gregory, and men joined themselves to the college of cardinals in order to give peace to the church, I urged this union in my preaching before the nobility, the clergy, and the people, with energy and success. But Sbynco, archbishop of Prague, then an enemy of the sacred college of cardinals, caused a prohibition to be affixed to the doors of the churches, forbidding all the
doctors of the university, and me in particular, from performing any sacerdotal function, and alleging as the reason, that we had unadvisedly and wickedly abandoned Gregory. In consequence of this he was compelled, after the council of Pisa, to change his party and adhere to the decisions of the council." After having thus set forth facts which were incontestable, he prays the cardinals to remember the promise they had made, of according protection and favor to those who should unite with them; and engages to give reasons for his faith, even at the peril of fire, before the university, all the prelates, and those who had been his hearers. He sends to them, moreover, the favorable testimony that the university of Prague had borne of him.

His letter was one well adapted to secure him favorable hearing. But there was scarcely time for its perusal before affairs took a new shape, and Huss had nothing left to hope for from the pope or cardinals.

In some of his letters he states the reasons that had led to his withdrawal from Prague, and his retreat to his native village. "I feared," says he, "that my presence there would be the means of drawing down persecution on the faithful, and increasing the animosity and grievances of my persecutors." "My enemies reproach me," says he, "for having fled, but I have done so in imitation of Christ's example, and in obedience to his precept not to abandon the truth, for which I am ready to suffer death, God helping me, but from fear of being the occasion of the eternal damnation of the wicked and the affliction of the good." In his retreat he did not forget that example which taught him, not only when persecuted in one city to flee to another, but in all places to speak as he was able, "all the words of this life."

It was during this retreat of Huss from Prague, that his pen was most busy. Released from the duties which occupied him in the university, and from the distractions which disturbed his mind at Prague, he had leisure for a more careful investigation and exposition of his views. This leisure he improved by the use of his pen, and in all probability he thus effected as much or more than he would have done by remaining at Prague. In the after days of his persecution, the friends that clustered around him, that remonstrated in his behalf, that were ready to take up arms and risk their lives to defend his memory, were the country lords and knights, some of whom had, doubtless, become attached to him as their teacher at the university, while others had learned to love and revere the man, as they read in their feudal castles circulating copies of treatises from his pen.

The first portion of the period during which Huss was absent from Prague was spent chiefly at the castle Kozi-Hrádek, which belonged to the lords of Astie. Here his work on the church, with the controversial treatises in its defense against Stanislaus and Paletz, was written. Much of his subsequent correspondence dates from Kozi. It was from this place that he wrote numerous letters to his fast friend, Christiann of Prachatitz, rector of the university.
Subsequently the noble knight, Henry of Lazau, offered him his castle, the stronghold of Cracowec, as a place of refuge. From this, as a center, he went forth in various directions as an itinerant apostle, and tens of thousands improved the opportunity to hear the gospel from his lips.

CHAPTER X

Huss in Retirement

The popular movement at Prague in favor of reform had now begun to attract attention generally throughout Christendom. It was discussed at Paris and Oxford as well as Rome. Everywhere Huss was reputed a heretic. His enemies, and they were many, had industriously circulated the most exaggerated reports in regard to his proceedings. With most his cause was already prejudged. Undoubtedly it contributed greatly to this result that his views were everywhere identified with those of Wickliffe.

To this impression the decisions of the council of Rome, held in 1412, gave renewed strength. John XXIII was a shrewd tactician, and readily perceived the advantage which he might derive from convoking at Rome the general council which that of Pisa had declared should be held within three years. He might preside over it himself in the very capital of the Christian world, and gain the prestige over his rivals. Although its results disappointed his hopes, and a meager representation of the church attended its sessions, the popular odium attached to the doctrines of Wickliffe invited the sentence which condemned them and all who favored them as heretical. The sentence carried indeed the less weight with it, that so few of the higher dignitaries of the church gave their countenance to the council, while those who followed the allegiance of the rival pontiff found in its proceedings abundant matter for ridicule. During its session, according to Clemengis, an owl had made its appearance in the place of convocation, and, alighting on one of the rafters, could not be dislodged by sticks and stones thrown at it by the grave fathers of the council. Great was the consternation produced by its appearance, and the assembly broke up in strange confusion. It was said by some, who relished an incident so ridiculous, that the Holy Ghost had come to attend the sessions, only he had taken the form of an owl instead of a dove. Still the decisions of the council in regard to the doctrines of Wickliffe had given them new notoriety, and the time and occasion of their condemnation aided to cast the odium of their heresy upon the proceedings of Huss. The commotions at Prague were ascribed to his teachings. The violence and insults offered to the clergy were exaggerated by report, and D’Ailly, who attended the council, testifies that he heard of them on his return from Rome, from the lips of some of the
countrymen of Huss whom he fell in with on his journey. Foreign prejudice thus came to the aid of the party at Prague opposed to reform. John XXIII, moreover, wrote a letter to the king, in which, referring to the sentence of the council of Rome against Wickliffe, he urged the extermination from Bohemia of all who adhered to his doctrine.

But all these measures failed to secure their object. Huss had left Prague; but he seems, on several successive occasions, to have returned, whenever he judged that duty required or safety would permit His absence, however, only provoked and exasperated the popular feeling. His friends complained that the pope and the archbishop had forbidden the preaching of the word of God and the gospel of Christ, and, by the indulgences issued by the Roman court and sanctioned by the bishop’s consistory, sought their own selfish interests, and not those of Jesus Christ; that they took from Christ’s sheep the wool and the milk, but fed them neither with the word of God nor holy examples. They insisted, moreover, that the commands of the pope and his prelates were not to be obeyed unless they accorded with the doctrine and life of Christ and his apostles; that the laity ought to judge of the doings of the priesthood, for Peter was reprehended by Paul because he was to be blamed; and they laid down the rules by which, in any case, it might be determined whether the prelates were to be obeyed. As to papal jurisdiction, they treated it with scornful derision, pointing to the schismatic popes, each condemning the others, and condemned by them, yet unable to subject them to his obedience. In such circumstances, the processes of the papal court were powerless and nugatory. They could not be enforced at Prague. Nor did the absence of Huss help to restore quiet. It only provoked to a bolder reprehension of ecclesiastical corruption and injustice, and aggravated the popular hostility to the measures of Rome. Nor did the friends of Huss shrink from discussion with the ablest members of the opposite party. Cochleius complains that the latter were assaulted by shrewd and various questionings on the part of men who were prepared to judge of doctrine for themselves, and paid little heed to judicial (ecclesiastical) decisions.

Meanwhile Huss, in his retirement, was busy with his pen. His enemies had driven him from Prague, but they had only forced him into a new sphere of activity where his influence was to he, if possible, more widely, at least more permanently felt.

His treatise on the church is the most elaborate and systematic of his works, and it was written at this period. The germs of it had long existed in his mind, and had been presented in his sermons in Bethlehem chapel. But he now proceeded to develop them in a more concise and connected method. It is from this work mainly that his enemies drew the materials upon which to base their charges against him; and it was of this that cardinal D’Ailly remarked, at the council of Constance, that, through an endless multitude of arguments, it
attacked the papal authority, and the plenitude of the papal power, as much as the Koran did the Catholic faith.

Huss showed in this work the strong influence exerted over him by the writings of Augustine. He divides the human race into two classes, with reference to their final destiny, the elect and non-elect, or the saved and lost. The elect or predestinate, of all times, compose the one true Catholic church. Of this body Christ alone is the one and all-sufficient head. He is himself the rock, as he declared to Peter, on which he would build his church. The church is his mystic body, his bride, ransomed by his blood, that it might be blameless, without stain or wrinkle. The living who are predestinate, compose the church militant so long as they are here on earth. They strive against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Those in purgatory compose the sleeping church, and the saints in their eternal home in glory the church triumphant.

The visible church, or the church as to its eternal aspect, embraces two classes. There are those in it who are not of it, just as the human body may have its wens, excrescences, or parts superfluous. There are some who are truly predestinate, real believers, obedient to Christ. There are some who are thrust out of the visible church by the power of Antichrist, who are yet members of it. Others are nominally members, but yet are hypocrites; others still, neither in name nor reality, pertain to it.

The church, externally viewed, has in it good and bad, predestinate and reprobate, wheat and tares. Some are to be gathered to the heavenly country, others are to be burned with the fire unquenchable. The reprobate are symbolized by the foolish virgin, by the guests who refuse the invitation to the marriage, the barren tree, the worthless fishes.

Christ is the sole supreme head of the church, the true pontifex, high priest, and bishop of souls. The apostles did not call themselves the heads of the church, but servants of Christ and of the church. Even Gregory would not allow himself to be called universal bishop.

But after this came a change. Till the donation of Constantine, the bishop of Rome was but the peer of his brethren. Later emperors confirmed the donation, and the pope has since claimed to be the head of the church militant, and vicar of Christ on earth, so that, in a certain sense, the church on earth has three heads, Christ as God, Christ as incarnate, and his vicar for the time being.

But in truth the pope is no more a successor of Peter, than the cardinals are successors of the apostles. He is only to be considered Christ’s and Peter’s successor and vicar, when he resembles Peter in faith, humility, and love; and cardinals are successors of the apostles only when they emulate their virtues and devotion. But this same might be said of others who have never been popes.
or cardinals. St. Augustine was of more service to the church than many popes, and than all the cardinals from the beginning until now. Were not Jerome, Gregory, Ambrose, and men of that sort truer and better successors and vicars of the apostles, than the present pope with his cardinals, who, neither by a holy life, doctrine, or wisdom, enlighten the people. If, instead of fulfilling their calling, and having Christ’s example before them, they rather strive for worldly things, splendor and pomp, and excite avarice and envy in believers, then are they successors, not of Christ, of Peter, or of the apostles, but of Satan, Antichrist, Judas Iscariot.

It cannot therefore be said that the pope, as such, is the head of the church. The pope can know, in regard to himself, with absolute certainty, whether he can be saved, no more than any other man. In case he is not predestinate, he is not only not the head of the church, but not even a member of it. Peter, as Paul testifies, fell into error. Pope Leo was a heretic. All may see what pope Gregory XII is, condemned, together with his rival, at the council of Pisa.

The papedom is not essential to the well-being and edification of the church. If it is said, that for Christians spread over the whole earth there must be a pope, the must is only to be understood in the sense in which it is said in scripture, that "Offences must needs come; but woe to him by whom they come." In the early church there were but two grades of office, deacon and presbyter; all beside are of later and of human invention. But God can bring back his church to the old pattern, just as the apostles and true priests took oversight of the church in all matters essential to its well-being, before the office of pope was introduced. So it may be again; and it were possible that there should be no more a pope till the last day. God be praised, who sent his only begotten Son to be the head of the church militant, for he is able to preside over it, lead it, infuse into it energy and grace, even though there were no pope, or though a woman were seated in the papal chair.

As of the pope and cardinals, so of the prelates and clergy. Here, too, there is a clergy of Christ and a clergy of Antichrist. The former is built on Christ and his laws, labors constantly for the glory of God, and seeks simply to follow Christ. The latter, though wearing the robes of Christ’s clergy, rests upon privileges savoring of pride and avarice, finds itself obliged to defend human ordinances, strives after a proud, splendid equipage. Not the office makes the priest, but the priest the office. The place does not sanctify the man, but the man the place. Not every priest is a saint, but every saint is a priest. Faithful Christians keeping the commandments are the magnates of the church, but prelates who break them are least, and if reprobates, have no part in the kingdom of God. It is false to say that the laity are to depend on the prelates for what they believe. The divine mission of pope, bishop, priest, etc., is determined by the fact that he seeks not his own glory, but the glory of God; not his own advantage, but the edification and peace of the church. Hence, if
an inferior does not discern in his superior a becoming conduct, he is not bound to hold him in a state of present justification, or even among the predestinate.

And as to obedience, it is the voluntary act of a reasonable creature, by which he subjects himself to the decision of those above him. Hence each subject must prove the command of his superior, whether it is permissible and to be respected. For in case it tends to the injury of the church and of souls, he must not comply with, but oppose it. Every true Christian must, hence, when a command issues to him from the pope, deliberate whence it originates—whether it is an apostolic ordinance and a law of Christ, or mediate such, and he is then to regard and honor it; but if the opposite is the case, he must not honor, but rather firmly oppose it, and not by subjection incur guilt. Opposition in such a case is true obedience. *Devianti Papa rebellare, est Christo domino obedire.*

Nor is this all. "If thy brother sin against thee, rebuke him." If spiritual superiors err in life and conduct, the laity may chide them; and if it is ill-endured, and the question is asked, How come you to judge us? the laity may reply, How does it happen that you seek alms and tithes of us?

The power of the keys, that is, the power to receive the worthy, and reject the unworthy, belongs to God alone, who ordains salvation, or foreknows perdition. The priest has no power to release from guilt and eternal punishment; the pope even has not this power; then would he be sinless and infallible, but this belongs to God only. The priest has only the churchly office of declaring (ministerium denunciationis), not of binding or loosing, unless this is already done of God. And God is governed, not by the human sentence of loosing or binding, but the absolution must follow the grace of God and the sinner’s repentance. Intellectual knowledge is not essential to the soul’s salvation, but true contrition and confession of the heart.

Such in substance were the main positions taken by Huss, in this the most able and systematic of his writings. Cochleius confesses the remarkable ability displayed in its production. He saw, more clearly perhaps than Huss himself, the broad scope and the full bearing of the argument. It reduced the whole cumbrous mass of the dominant hierarchy to a heap of rubbish. It annihilated papal authority. It made the simple priest the peer of the pope. It dissipated at once the arrogant pretensions of the church of Rome. It made the faith that works by love, and not organic connection with the hierarchy, the condition of membership in the spiritual church of Christ. It stripped the priesthood of that superstitious terror with which they were invested, as the sole dispensers of salvation. It made the simple layman, if a true believer, a king and priest unto God. All human distinctions of rank and office were seen to shrink into insignificance before the ennobling relation which the humblest member of Christ might sustain to him as the great head of the church. Excommunication,
and all the fulminations of papal authority, if unjust, or in conflict with the law of Christ, became, *ipso facto*, null and void.

Here was a basis for the most sweeping reforms. Huss had reached a point where he could not logically pause. He was evidently unaware of the radical divergence of his own views from those of the dominant hierarchy. He was in spirit a Protestant—a Puritan—before these terms were known. And yet he held fast to certain so-called Catholic dogmas—confession, purgatory, transubstantiation, etc.—and really believed himself, rightfully, a member still of the church that had cast him out.

But the church party, with men like Paletz and Stanislaus at its head, were not blind to the logical consequences that followed from the fundamental principle of the argument of Huss, and against this, the sole and supreme authority of scripture, they directed their attacks. The treatise of Huss opened the field for controversy. It gave precision to the views of the party he represented, and exasperated their opponents. The dividing lines were more closely drawn, and the mutual repulsion and antagonism were aggravated. The treatise of Huss was attacked by the doctors, and he was prompt to repel the attack. Each new collision brought the combatants back to this old battleground. The real question at issue was between the authority of the pope and the authority of the scripture.

The treatise of Huss bore, in a very obvious manner, upon the important question now agitated in his absence at Prague—the validity of his excommunication. The friends of the papacy were strenuous in defending it, while those who adhered to Huss were equally zealous in its refutation. The former maintained that Huss, as excommunicate, had no longer the right or authority to preach, and they insisted and urged that he should be silenced. They asserted that he was not at liberty to disregard or contemn the papal sentence. It was enough that that sentence had been pronounced.

But it so happened that the excommunication of Huss was subsequently extended to embrace persons who had adopted his views, and who never had been brought to trial or heard in their own defense. A new phase was thus given to the question of the validity of the papal sentence, which those who impugned it were not slow to perceive. If excommunication was unjust in one instance, it might be in another. The pope was no longer infallible. His decisions might be called in question, and it mattered little what the merits of the case of Huss might be, if the author of his excommunication was shown to have committed a gross blunder as well as gross injustice. Jessenitz, a preacher at Prague, and one of the procurators of Huss at Rome, took up the matter, and argued the nullity of the sentence on principles which were evidently in advance of the age, and which, however consonant to justice, were utterly repudiated by the papal party. And yet, the most enlightened and able members of the Catholic church—some most bitterly prejudiced against Huss—
might be cited in defense of his view of excommunication. The royal court of France had but recently declared the excommunications of Benedict to be no longer binding, and, even at the ensuing council of Constance, the French ambassadors maintained that the fulminations, sentences, and censures pronounced against those who refused the payment of annates, were not to be feared, nor did those against whom they had been directed need to be absolved. Gerson himself had written but a few months previous, "We ought not to be compelled to obey those whose conduct is notoriously vile, and scandalizes the whole church. ... If we should withdraw ourselves from every brother who walketh disorderly, how much more from a perverse and unjust superior, by whose example the commonwealth is corrupted and the church disgraced." If Huss appealed moreover to a council, then from the treatise of D’Ailly "On the Difficulty of Reform," he might have drawn abundant materials, equally pertinent in defense of his cause. That able writer had maintained, just after the close of the Pisan council, that in authority, dignity, and official superintendence, a pope is subject to a general council representing the universal church. Their decisions were like the gospel of Christ. The pope could not change or disperse with them, for over them he had no jurisdiction. He held, moreover, that the pope as a man might sin, might err. And what else is he but human? "Man of men, clay of clay, a sinner, and peccable; two days before, the son of a poor rustic." He is not above the gospel—then his authority would be greater than Christ’s, and could not be derived from him as its source. Of the church Catholic, moreover, the pope is not the head, but Christ only. Surely, with such authorities upon his side, Huss might well venture the lists with any of his antagonists, for the church of that age could not boast two abler champions than Gerson and D’Ailly.

But to such authority Huss did not appeal. We find no trace in his writings to show that he was even acquainted with the writings of the Paris theologians. It was to the gospel—to scripture alone—that he looked for the warrant and sanction of his course. Here, indeed, was the strength of his cause. The plain common-sense of the citizens of Prague could not comprehend the force or conclusiveness of that logic which placed the decisions of men, or even the decretals of the popes, on a level with, much more above, the plain doctrine of the word of God. At every step in their arguments, the papal party were met by some troublesome citation from scripture, some plain and direct declaration, which could be met by no visionary theory or scholastic subtlety. So far had the simplicity of scriptural doctrine and worship prevailed, that ecclesiastical decisions and sacerdotal authority were utterly powerless, unless they could allege in their favor some indisputable evidence from the sacred writings.

It was indeed to be expected that in such a state of things occasional acts of violence should occur. The cupidity and impudence of those who favored the cause of indulgences, especially of those who trafficked in them, afforded a standing provocation to a populace not all of whom were capable of the same
self-restraint. Stephen of Dola, in his controversial writings, complains of those whom he describes as missionaries of Huss, and, curiously enough, recounts the results of their labors in the same language which Christ employed when he foretold the divisions that should arise from his teachings. The scriptural knowledge of the people and their increased intelligence, as well as jealousy of the clergy, led them to look with deep indignation upon those ecclesiastical impositions, the manifest and perhaps sole object of which was to rob them of their money. When Gerson could speak as he did on the subject of indulgences, and expose the futility of so many *Ave Marias* before an image, it is not surprising that men, who had studied the subject only in the light of the gospel, should resent the claims of the papal agents as an insult to reason itself. And with all this intelligent resistance to the usurpation of human cupidity, there was often joined much of that party zeal which must necessarily spring up where a community is arrayed in opposing sections. Huss expressly disowns and condemns the conduct of some of his followers, who resorted to the low and disgraceful measure of applying to their antagonists abusive epithets. Three years before, the conduct of Sbynco had been such that it was impossible to restrain that popular contempt for him and his course, which had found expression in derisive songs and ballads sung along the streets; and, notwithstanding the decree of the king and the influence of Huss to the contrary, ballads of a similar character, directed against the priests of the papal party, were still in common use. The monks, as they passed along the streets, were sometimes insulted and hooted at by the promiscuous crowds of men and boys, who regarded them with any other feelings than those of reverence or respect. That popular odium against them which in England had made the words of Wickliffe so effective, was equally strong at Prague, where they were scorned for their vices and hated for their impudence. "Go, lay off your cowls; thresh in the barns; get you wives; go to work farming"; such were the greetings which they received from the populace as they passed by.

On one occasion a friar was sitting with his relics in the church of the Carmelites, exhibiting his treasures and begging for money for the building of a church, when one of the disciples of Huss came up. In somewhat rude phrase he demanded of the mendicant, "What are you about here, friar?" "Seeking alms, while I exhibit my relics," was the reply. "You speak false," said the disciple of Huss, "if you call these the relics of saints. You keep here the bones of dead carcasses, and deceive Christians by your greedy begging." Suiting the action to the word, he kicked over the table on which the relics lay, and tumbled them to the earth. The friar caught the offender, put him under arrest, and had him called upon to answer the charge against him, when the prisoner’s friends learning what had taken place, assembled in large number, deeply indignant, and armed for the rescue. The residence of the friars, probably not without a good degree of resistance both by the arm and tongue, was sacked and ravaged, and the poor mendicants, after revilings and beatings, were left to mend their broken relics.
That similar scenes not unfrequently occurred, is most probable. Among the
charges brought against Jerome at the council of Constance, are some which
imply that his conduct in this respect had been far from unexceptionable. Some
of these are denied; but the evidence is strong, if not decisive, in regard to his
course on the reception of the papal bulls for the crusade. On another occasion
he is said to have thrown a priest into the Moldau, who, but for timely aid,
would have been drowned. But such violence was bitterly provoked. The
burning of the books by Sbynco, the execution of the three men for asserting
the falsehood of the indulgences, the excommunication of Huss, to say nothing
of the course pursued by his assailants, had excited a strong feeling against the
patrons of papal fraud and ecclesiastical corruption. We are only surprised that
the deep resentment felt was confined in its expression within such limits.

Among the antagonists of Huss were four men who had been numbered among
his most intimate friends. These were Stanislaus of Znoyma, his former
teacher, Stephen, prior of Dola, Stephen Paletz, and Andrew Broda, the two
latter once his fellow-students, sharers of his table and his bed. Broda deserted
him from the moment that he was excommunicated, but he still corresponded
with him by letter, in the hope of inducing him to return again, as he phrased
it, to the unity of the church. A man of kindly disposition, but of no remarkable
ability, and terrified at the very name of papal fulmination. Broda shrunk from
Huss as from the touch of leprosy, yet still addressed him in terms dictated by
the memories of former intercourse and affection. Stephen of Dola, however,
was less scrupulous. His first assault upon Huss was under cover of an attack
against the articles of Wickliffe. He calls the English reformer, "Thou son, not
of man, but the devil," and asks, "Why do you love vanity and seek after a lie?"
As he proceeds his vocabulary of abuse is enlarged, and he speaks of him as "a
tricky fox with deep holes," "a worse traitor than Judas." He arraigns Wickliffe
for maintaining that the decretals are apocryphal, and that the clergy who
waste time in their study are fools, while papal and episcopal indulgences are
warmly defended.

That Huss felt that the treatise was aimed at him is manifest from his letter to
the monks of Dola, where the author of the work had been prior, before his
removal to Olmutz. This letter is inserted by Stephen in his preface to his "Anti-
Hussus," in which he throws off the mask and comes out boldly against Huss
himself. In this letter Huss complains of Stephen for the slanders which he had
uttered against himself and others. He was unwilling to be so fully identified
with Wickliffe. "Though Wickliffe or an angel from heaven, taught otherwise
than scripture teaches, I would not follow him—my heart abhors the errors
ascribed to me." Such is his language. As to his disregard of excommunication,
he claims that he has not shown contempt for any just authority. "I disobey," he
says, "the de-ordination of my superiors, because scripture teaches me to obey
God rather than man. The apostles preached Jesus Christ when forbidden by
the chief priests." After giving his reasons for non-compliance with the papal
citation, he cautions his antagonist how he judges others.
But Stephen, in his reply, seems to pay small heed to such wise counsel. He begins his treatise by a play upon Huss’ name, bidding him beware lest he fly too high and scorch his wings. He charges him with having made his pulpit, in Bethlehem church, a chair not of preaching, but of prevarication. His temple was turned into an ensnaring den of Wickliffites, where he spoke against his fathers and brethren and the common pastor of the church, to the grave scandal of the people. A just sentence had, therefore, overtaken him. It was but right that, by the force of the interdict, he should be made a vagabond, driven from place to place to conceal himself. But the great crime of Huss, in the eyes of Stephen, was his contempt for ecclesiastical authority. The evils that had followed his teachings were frightful, in the view of his accuser. "So far has Huss prevailed," says Stephen, "that I have heard and understood that many of the laity say, ‘What so great need is there that we should confess to a mortal man, when with contrite heart we confess to the high Priest, God Almighty, alone?’"

To this treatise of the monk of Dola, Huss replied. The issue was such that the author found little encouragement to renew the attack in a direct planner. In his "Dialogus Volatilis," addressed to the bishop of Leitomischel, he takes occasion again to reprehend the course of Huss, complaining mainly of his disobedience and disregard of the sentence of excommunication.

It is not difficult, from the knowledge of the course of Paletz, and his former relations, and subsequent treatment of Huss, to divine some at least of the motives that incited him to assail a former friend and companion. Huss and Paletz were both men of marked ability, and, to a considerable extent, their aims had harmonized. But when Huss braved the fulminations of the papal court, Paletz, whose convictions on the subject in dispute were the same with those of his associate, shrank back with a craven fear. It was now that, jealousy of his rival’s influence gave a sting to the malice of his treachery. Stephen of Dola had dilated upon the large salary which Huss received, and Paletz, probably judging from after-disclosures at the council of Constance, shared the same feelings. Moreover, having committed himself to a cause which demanded first of all the sacrifice of conscience, the pride of Paletz forbade his withdrawal from a conflict which he had himself challenged. Henceforth with him it was war, without truce or compromise, till one or the other was forced to submission.

Meanwhile the enemies of Huss at Prague and in the university were not idle. Conrad, who had acted as administrator of the archiepiscopal office, and who now, in name as well as in reality, was archbishop of Prague, was a man of a different temper from his predecessor Sbynco. Less rash and hasty, he proceeded in his measures with a cautious deliberation. He sent to the university of Paris to procure an authentic copy of the counsel which they had given to his predecessor in regard to the steps to be taken for extirpating heresy from Bohemia. This counsel, notwithstanding the schism, and the
liberality of the Paris theologians, was after the most approved pattern of church orthodoxy. It directed that the doctors and masters of the university should be assembled by the archbishop along with his clergy at his palace, and that each should be required to declare, under oath, that he neither holds nor wishes to maintain any of the forty-five articles of Wickliffe; that in regard to relics, indulgences, and the ceremonies, customs, and censures of the church, he believes as the church believes of which the pope is the head, and the cardinals, the manifest successors of the apostles, are the body; that each should profess obedience to the Roman See; and that it should be announced to all the members of the university that no one should maintain any of the forty-five articles, under pain of anathema, or banishment from the kingdom. These measures were, moreover, to be published throughout the diocese, and anyone who transgressed should be proceeded against according to canonical sanctions. The derisive songs which were sung in the streets and taverns were to be suppressed, and Huss was not to be allowed to preach until he had obtained absolution from the court of Rome.

This counsel of the university of Paris was submitted by the archbishop to a synod, summoned to meet at Bomischbrod, but afterwards transferred to Prague. Huss, aware of the proposed measure, came with a "counsel" of his own, which he was prepared to lay before them. "For the honor of God, the salvation of the people, the good name of Bohemia and Moravia, as well as of Prague and the university, and for the restoration of peace and unity"—such was the object, according to Huss, to be promoted by the measures he proposed. These were, that the former edict of conciliation between the archbishop and the barons and Huss should be solemnly confirmed; that Bohemia should be allowed to retain its rights, liberties, and privileges, in the same manner with other kingdoms; that Huss, against whom Sbynco had brought no charge when he consented to the compromise, should be present to meet any charges whenever they were made, and that none should be allowed to make any which he was not prepared to substantiate, under pain of a sentence such as his charge against Huss implied; that public notice should be given that any who wished to accuse Huss should inscribe their names upon the archbishop’s chancellor’s book; that such as spread reports that were merely slanderous, should be punished; that the doctors of theology and of canon law should be required, if they knew of any heretic, to name him, and if they should say they knew of none, should be forbidden, under penalties, to circulate charges of heresy; that in case this was done, a deputation should be sent to the Roman court to vindicate the fair name and honor of the kingdom; and that for the present the interdict should not be enforced, notwithstanding the presence of Huss.

But Paletz and Stanislaus, in the name of other masters of the theological faculty, had their "counsel" to present. As the king and barons had directed an investigation of the causes of the troubles, they proposed to point them out. In their view, they were threefold, viz: the opposition made to the condemnation
of Wickliffe’s articles; the contempt shown the pope and cardinals, as well as their authority, by appeals to Holy Scripture as their judge, while the appellants interpret it as they please; and the general disregard of ecclesiastical authority, both that of prelates and of the Apostolic See, by inferiors. The doctors held that the clergy were not to judge of the validity or justice of the excommunication of Huss, and that consequently, accepting it, they must observe the interdict. Papal and prelatical authority was exalted above that of the scriptures. The doctors would have it enjoined, under severe penalties, that no one in Bohemia should hold or teach other than as the Romish church holds and teaches; and, in case any should offend by speaking in favor of Wickliffe’s articles, or resisting the ecclesiastical authority, he should be given over for judgment to the ecclesiastical courts, or, in case this did not avail, to the secular arm. The excommunication of Huss, without any discussion of its justice or injustice, was to be accounted valid in virtue of the authority of the Apostolic See.

The theological faculty also presented a separate “counsel.” It agreed mainly with that of Paletz and Stanislaus. It proposed, however, a meeting of all the doctors and masters of the university at the archbishop’s palace, where each should be required, under solemn oath, to declare that he accepted none of Wickliffe’s forty-five articles as true; that, as to the seven sacraments and all matters of faith, he believed in accordance with the Romish church, whose head is the pope and whose body is the college of cardinals; and that he recognized the duty of obedience to the Apostolic See and the prelates of the church. This oath was to be required of all, under penalty of excommunication and banishment. The archbishop also was to summon a synod, and by it enjoin that no error should be preached throughout the land. And as to Huss, he should be utterly forbidden to preach till he had received absolution from the pope; nor was he any longer to be allowed, by his secret presence in Prague, to put obstacles in the way of the observance of the divine offices.

With such diverse counsels before it, it was impossible for the convocation to effect a compromise. The position of Huss was utterly irreconcilable with that of the doctor, and the archbishop was at a loss what course to pursue. He had not the Quixotic zeal that would lead him to repeat the blunders of his predecessor, or tilt at the shadow of heresy at the risk of his position, as well as honor and peace. He sent, therefore, the various “counsels,” including that of Huss as well as those of the universities of Paris and Prague, to the martial bishop of Leitomischel—"John the Iron," as he was most appropriately called—asking his advice. The stern prelate—whom we again meet at the council of Constance—more fitted both by taste and experience to wield the sword than the crosier, was most ferociously orthodox. He was opposed to all compromise, and favored the execution, to the letter, of the “counsel” of the university of Paris. His advice was that the vice-chancellor should take careful supervision of the masters and students of the university, investigating and correcting their errors; that, as the controversies which found place among them were
ventilated among the people by the public preaching from the pulpit, care should be taken that Huss and his followers should be silenced—especially were they to be excluded from Bethlehem chapel; that the papal mandates on the subject should be enforced, and that heretical books, and those who owned or read them, should be anathematized. The bishop then attempts to refute the counsel of Huss, and closes by exhorting archbishop Conrad to a zealous prosecution of measures for extirpating heresy from Bohemia.

The synod had met February 6, 1413. The bishop’s letter dates four days later, February 10, so that his response must have been prompt at least. But there was yet another who was to take part in the discussion. This was Jacobel, or James of Misa, a friend of Huss. Whether his views were presented at the synod, or subsequently, as in the case of the bishop, is somewhat uncertain. It appears probable, however, that they were urged before the synod.

The object of the convocation was a compromise that should promote peace. "But," inquired Jacobel, "what sort of a peace is meant? Is it peace with the world, or peace with God? If the latter, it could be secured only by keeping the divine commandments. The very origin of the strife was in the unholy and violent resistance offered to those who wished to establish this peace. Without it, moreover, the peace of the world would be of no avail; but let it be first secured, and the other would follow of itself."

Whether in consequence of this discussion or not, Wenzel was led to issue a decree which seemed intended for the support of the ecclesiastical authorities, although he advised the doctors to refute error by arguments rather than by edicts. The decree, however, was publicly proclaimed in the council-house of the city. But it was evidently designed more to keep up appearances, than to throw any obstruction in the way of the friends of Huss. Indeed, viewed in this light, it was but a dam of straw thrown across the tide of popular feeling. It was impossible that the decree should be enforced. Nor was it long before a refutation of the positions taken by the doctors appeared. Two of the procurators of Huss, who had answered his citation at the Roman court, John of Jessenitz, and Frederic Epinge, the first a doctor, and the last a bachelor of canon law, had already come forward publicly in his defense, and this defense overthrew the main points on which the doctors based their conclusions. To this Huss refers the doctors. Jessenitz had shown that no prelate should excommunicate anyone, unless he knows that he is first excommunicate of God; and in several respects had argued the nullity of Huss’ sentence. But Huss himself went further. He reprehends those excommunications which are unjustly prelatic, or rather Pilatic, and maintains that the curse of the wicked is rather a benediction. The scriptural knowledge that had already become diffused among the people, enabled them to vindicate this view of the matter, and meet even the doctors with arguments not easy to be confuted. In vain were the decretals cited, or the authority of the church adduced. "Laity, butchers, shoemakers, tailors, and humble mechanics," says Stephen of Dola,
"rise up proudly, and contemn authority." Cochleius has preserved a brief summary of the arguments employed by the Hussite party to refute the doctor. As to the first cause of the troubles, they deny utterly the truth of the charge that the nation generally are heretical, and denominate the imputation of erroneous views in regard to the sacraments a mere slander. They hold, that not the pope and his cardinals, but that all priests and bishops are successors of the apostles. The head of the church is not the pope, but Christ. The body is not the cardinals, but all believers. Such is the testimony of scripture and of the fathers. They deny, moreover, the competent authority, on the part of bishops and archbishops, for condemning the articles of Wickliffe. These were substantially the views presented by Huss in his work on the church.

As to the second cause of discord urged by the doctors, Huss himself refers to the schismatic state of the church, divided under the allegiance of three several popes, and shows how futile the effort to obtain from them decisions of doubtful questions, in regard to which they could not agree, and especially if these should be found contrary to the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, from which the fathers themselves deduced their authority. Besides, he remarks how the doctors stultify themselves in citing scripture (Deuteronomy 17), to show that not Scripture, but the prelates are to decide doubtful questions. He appeals to scripture for the support of his position, yet they make the pope supreme. As to the place where the decision is to be solicited in accordance with the passage cited from Deuteronomy—why is it to be sought at Bologna, Perusia, or Avignon, where the pope resides, rather than at Jerusalem, Antioch, or Rome? The doctors, moreover, had asserted that the pope was in all things to be obeyed. This was putting a contempt upon the Holy Scriptures and the sacred canons; for some popes had been heretical, and one was a woman, and these not only should not be obeyed, but should not be communed with or favored—so at least the rubrics and canons taught. The true causes of the troubles in Bohemia are traced to the preaching of the gospel, with the reproofs and admonitions of which the clergy are enraged, on account of the exposure which is thus made of their simony and heretical practices.

As to the argument of the doctors that the excommunication of Huss was to be considered valid because the papal mandates to that effect had been issued and had been generally received, the same argument might be employed to show that because Adam and Eve complied with the temptations of the devil, and obeyed him, therefore their descendants should do the same; or that, inasmuch as our fathers were pagans, we should have remained pagan still. Besides, various reasons might be adduced to show that the sentence against Huss was null and void.

But the doctors were not content even yet to let the matter rest. To the arguments of Huss they make a lengthy and minute reply. They do not hesitate to maintain, in an almost unqualified manner, the most objectionable of their former doctrine, although upon some points they could not agree among
themselves. Huss shows, in his reply to them, how Paletz and Stanislaus could not accord on the subject of the headship of the church. Paletz, however, seems to have been supported by most of the other six doctors, and to have carried the day over the more enlightened and scriptural views of Stanislaus. A large part of the argument is taken up in showing that the headship of the church is in the pope, and in reducing the authority of scripture to a minimum, while that of the prelates and the pope and cardinals is exalted above all other authority on earth. They maintain that so long as it could not manifestly be known or shown that John XXIII was a heretic, his commands were to be obeyed. Could they have looked forward to the trial and deposition of that pontiff two years later, they would probably have modified or kept back that proposition.

These views were urged in behalf of others more obscure, by eight doctors, of whom Paletz, Stanislaus, and Andrew Broda are the most prominent. The names of the others were Peter de Ikoyma, John Elia, John Hildesis, Matthew the monk, and Herman the Eremit; beside whom, we find the names of George Bota and Simon Wenda mentioned. All of these no doubt sympathized together in the general opposition to the reform party, but as the reply of Huss is denominated "The Refutation of the Eight Theological Doctors," it is most probable that only eight of them appended their names to the document. Notwithstanding their united effort, Huss did not shrink from the encounter to which they had thus challenged him. In the most merciless manner he exposes the inconsistency of their positions, and quotes them—as his knowledge of their former views enabled him to do—against themselves. But it was scarcely needed that Huss should throw his pen into the scale, to determine how it should preponderate. The argument of the doctors had only exposed the weakness of a cause which their united ability could not even render plausible. Some of their statements were so evidently subversive of the whole doctrine of scriptural Christianity, that the only choice left was between the word of God and the decretals or constitutions of the popes. It was in vain that the doctors attempted to recommend the latter. Popular opinion spurned such counsel. The reasons given for this by Cochleius are, that the followers of Huss were loud in their demand for the reform of the clergy, "whose vices, as simony, concubinage, avarice, luxury, and worldly pride, they accused with bitterness in their frequent sermons and harangues to the people," and that for this the laity encouraged and sustained them. It is evident, therefore, that in the popular conviction there must have been a large basis of truth at the bottom of the charges.

It must now have become evident to the archbishop that to adopt the counsel which the university of Paris had extended to his predecessor was no longer practicable. The reform party had become too numerous and powerful to be thus summarily dealt with. There was a prospect that the conflict would be more bitterly renewed, and the king felt that it was time for him to interpose. The synod had accomplished nothing. No compromise could be effected by it.
The king therefore tried another expedient. He appointed a commission, consisting of the archbishop, the Vissehrad dean, Jacob, the provost of All-Saints, Zdenek of Labaun, and Christiann of Prachatitz, rector of the university, as well as a fast friend of Huss. The two parties were bound, under penalty of fine and banishment, to abide by the decision of this commission. For two days both parties were heard, but agreement was impossible. Four doctors entered their protest and withdrew from the conference. The king, exasperated at their course, banished them. Shortly after, the party suffered another defeat. The German element had hitherto predominated in the city council; but at this juncture, one of its members, for some cause, was executed. The king, by new appointments, gave the Bohemians the ascendency.

Nor was this all. The king followed up the matter by measures for reforming the clergy. He kept back the salary of unworthy priests, and thus practically adopted one of the principles for which Huss had contended, namely, that the secular power is authorized to resort to forcible measures, and the control of the temporalities of the church, for the reform of clerical corruption. This step of the king was decisive in securing the predominance of the reform party. It struck terror into the ranks of its opponents. The priests who had opposed Huss were less anxious to see the sentence against him executed than to retain their salaries. A thousand eyes were watching them; a thousand witnesses were ready to testify against them, whenever they rendered themselves obnoxious to the cause of reform. Rather than be harassed by frequent accusations and constant risk, some of them openly joined the party which they had opposed, and others, for the time at least, were constrained to moderation, if not to silence. The abandonment of the papal cause, in many cases no doubt, was a cover to past delinquencies, so that the very vices and excesses of the clergy were forced for the time being to strengthen the cause which had been hitherto an object of mortal hatred. It was no longer dangerous for Huss to visit Prague. His enemies did not dare to molest him, and he might safely challenge his accusers to present their charges.

During the period of these discussions, which continued from the time of the publication of the crusade to the spring of 1414, it is difficult to trace the course of Huss except from his writings. That he was during a portion of the time absent from Prague, is evident from his letters. That he frequently returned, or was present in Prague, in spite of the interdict, is attested not only by the royal decree which required the priests to perform the divine offices as usual, notwithstanding the presence of Huss, but from the writings of Paletz and of Broda. According to the latter, Huss boasted that he walked openly in the city and in the sight of all, and yet the interdict was disregarded. The only reply which Broda can make is that his presence was not always known, and that he was in fact seen by very few. It was therefore the ignorance of the clergy as to the presence of Huss—so he would represent—which led them to continue in the discharge of their duties.
Yet, if not in the city, he was at least not far distant. The demand which was made by his friends, that in case accusations were presented against him he should be allowed to be present and confront his accusers, would seem to imply this. But after the royal measures taken upon the subject of clerical reform, in the summer and autumn of the year 1413, most of the difficulties which drove him from the city would be removed. Opposition was for the most part silenced, and Huss was at liberty to return to Prague. In these circumstances, his enemies found themselves disappointed and defeated. Huss openly disregarded the papal sentence; while many questioned even whether any had ever been pronounced against him. The interdict was a mere nullity. Those who had sought to enforce it, cringed as suppliants of the royal favor and bounty. They were no longer the bold accusers, but trembled at the charges to which on every side they were exposed. There was now occasion for Huss in his turn to exult, if he had been so disposed. The humiliation of his enemies was in fact so ludicrous in some of its aspects, that he could not but refer to it. With Wickliffe, he had accounted tithes mere alms, or voluntary grants, and as such they might be withheld if the neglect or vice of the ecclesiastics furnished occasion. His enemies had virulently assailed a position so fatal to the security and integrity of their gains, nor did they spare its author in the venom of their malice. Now they came to the town hall to present their petitions for their tithes. "Ah!" said the lords, "you said before that tithes were not purely alms; but you assert now that they are, and so condemn yourselves." Huss noticed this absurd course of the clergy. "I wonder," says he, with stinging sarcasm, "I wonder that the doctors do not now teach in the town hall the putting into execution of that article on the withholding of temporalities from the delinquent clergy by the secular lords! Now, like the chief priests and Pharisees, they are silent; they no more assemble to condemn that article. Surely, what they feared has come upon them, and will come again. For they will lose their temporalities, but God grant that they may save their souls! The doctors said that if the articles were condemned, there would be peace and concord; but their prophecy has turned out the reverse. They were exultant in the condemnation, but now they mourn as they give up their salaries. They condemned the article that tithes were alms; now they beg that their salaries, which are alms, may not be taken away."

Resistance to Huss was no longer offered. Only Paletz and Broda still kept up the controversy by their letters, reproaching Huss mainly for his contumacy, and for what they denominated his slanders against the clergy.

For several months affairs remained quiet at Prague. The adherents of Huss were no longer molested, and the heat of controversy died away. The archbishop seemed to have given up all thought of any further proceedings against Huss. Meanwhile the cause of reform steadily advanced. Its adherents, in their study of the scriptures, were attaining views more and more evangelical. They were publicly known as the *evangelical* party. Huss no longer approved of the worship of a wooden cross. He condemned the adoration paid
to the pictures of the saints in the churches. On the subject of confession he appeals to Chrysostom as sustaining him in his teachings upon that subject. "I do not bid you present yourselves in public, or accuse yourselves before others; I only wish you to obey the prophet where he says, Lay your way open before the Lord, confess your sins to the true judge, declare your faults, not with the tongue, but the conscience, and then hope to obtain mercy."

The seed which Huss had sown was ripening to its harvest. Many had adopted his views, and with a zeal equal to his own, though not always as discreet, disseminated them abroad. Even while the measures for the reform of the clergy had not yet been adopted, the adherents of Huss had been active and diligent in their work. "You send your messenger," says Stephen of Dola, "everywhere, to nobles, soldiers, common people, women." The present period allowed them larger and freer scope for their labors They quoted scripture largely in defense of their course. The word of God, they maintained, should not be bound. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel." This was the commission which furnished them their warrant. "If persecuted in one city, flee ye into another," justified them in shunning dangers which they did not feel called to meet. Things done in secret they were ready "to proclaim upon the housetops," and if it was objected to them that they were violating ecclesiastical ordinances, they were ready with the reply, "It is better to obey God than man." Such was the method and justification of the missionaries which Huss sent out, according to Stephen. The evangelical party was manifestly in the ascendant. Bohemia might almost be considered as hopelessly lost to the church. Something must be done to check the spreading heresy. But there was no hope in the king; he could not be relied on, but was rather amused with the complaints of the clergy. There was no hope in the barons; they strongly sympathized with Huss. There was no hope in the archbishop; even now there may have been ground to suspect the orthodoxy of his intentions in regard to rooting out heretical views. The university was already lost to the church party. Help, if any was to be found, must come from abroad. There was a conviction becoming deeper and more general on every side, among the papal party, that Huss could only be managed, and his heresy restrained, by a general council. Might not one be convoked?

This was a question not only agitated in Bohemia, but all over Europe. There were many reasons which conspired to urge its convocation. The scandalous condition of Christendom, divided in allegiance to three rival pontiffs was a problem which, by general consent, demanded the assembled wisdom of the church for its solution. There was, moreover, on all sides a loud demand for ecclesiastical reform. How could measures which had this for their object be initiated, except by the action of a general council?

There were, indeed, other reasons for such a convocation, which rested upon the emperor’s mind with peculiar weight. His hereditary kingdom of Hungary was peculiarly exposed to Moslem invasion. Already he had experienced the
effects of the power, valor, and fanatical energy of his terrible neighbors. In the fearful battle of Nicopolis (1396) an army of 100,000 men, drawn from every part of Europe, and among whom were some of the highest nobility of France, had been routed in utter and almost annihilating defeat. Yet it had been their proud boast that if the sky should fall they would uphold it upon their lances. Few escaped from the field of battle, and for these, enormous ransoms were demanded. Sigismund himself experienced great difficulty and danger in attempting to return to Hungary, which he only reached after a twelve-month absence, and even then to find in Ladislaus of Naples a dangerous competitor for his crown. The danger to Europe was indeed menacing. The Eastern empire could only serve as a temporary barrier to the flashing vengeance of Ilderim, or the lightning, as Bajazet, the Turkish sultan, was called. It might well be that he would soon execute his exultant threat of marching to Rome, and feeding his horse with a bushel of oats upon the altar of St. Peter. But an attack of the gout accomplished what armies were weak to achieve. It stayed the day of Moslem vengeance, and granted Europe a brief reprieve. Meanwhile the weak emperor of the East made his way to the Western courts supplicating aid. None could be afforded; but help was to come from another source. A strange ally appeared, invited by the diplomacy of the Eastern empire and the negotiations of Christian monarchs. It was the victorious Tamerlane—the Napoleon of his age—whose ambition had already grasped the larger part of Asia, and could brook no rival empire. More than 1,000,000 men met on the battlefield of Angoura, in Natolia (July 26th, 1402), and Tamerlane was victorious. His victim, the sultan, is said to have dashed out his brains against the bars of the iron cage in which he was confined and exhibited by his conqueror.

But the danger had only been deferred. A few years passed, and the Turkish power again assumed a threatening aspect. Sigismund had peculiar reason to beware of its invasions. Yet how could he hope to meet the tide and roll it back, unless he could receive the united support of Christendom? But the prospects of such support, while the church was rent by schism and the nations were arrayed against one another, or rent by internal dissensions, was dark and dubious. The troubles and discords of Bohemia, moreover, required attention, and the emperor was not unmindful of the glory which he might secure as guardian of the church in defending her against foes within as well as without.

All these motives and considerations conspired to enforce the policy of convoking a council. The demand for it came from diverse and distant quarters. By the persuasions of the emperor—persuasions pointed with threats and terror—John XXIII reluctantly consented to join the emperor in taking measures for its convocation. It was to meet at Constance, an imperial city, on the third day of October, 1414. Huss was cited to appear before it and answer the charges to be brought against him. The emperor directed Wenzel to see that Huss was escorted thither properly attended.
The course of Huss had made him many enemies beyond the limits of Bohemia. The Germans were enraged at the part he had taken in vindicating the rights of the Bohemian nation in the university. His defense of Wickliffe was regarded as an adoption of all his objectionable views, though the inference was in fact unwarranted. England, France, and Germany were ready to lend their influence to silence the reformer.

John Gerson was at this time the chancellor of the university of Paris. He was probably the most powerful subject in France, the Duke of Burgundy excepted. Born of poor parents, he had raised himself by his genius and application to a position in which he exerted a greater sway over the mind of Christendom than any private man in Europe. We cannot but respect his ability, and acknowledge the general integrity of his course. The whole vigor and energy of his manhood were devoted to the interests of the church, and the removal of the papal schism. He was dismayed at the intelligence that reached him from Bohemia. Some of the German students who left Prague would doubtless visit the university of Paris, and report, with all necessary exaggeration, every story that could be devised or distorted to his prejudice. And yet Gerson’s bosom friend, Clemengis, had uttered truths and expostulations fully as fervid and stinging as any that fell from the lips of the Bohemian reformer. Could these two men have laid aside their opposite philosophies—for Gerson was a Nominalist, and Huss a Realist—and have become acquainted with one another, we can well imagine that all their antagonism would have been laid aside, and they have rushed with mutual admiration into each other’s arms.

But this result was not to take place. Opposite philosophical views embittered in Gerson’s mind the prejudice which he had already conceived against Huss. He regarded him only as a heretic, a dangerous champion of Wickliffe, to be punished with severity. A historian, opposed to Huss, has preserved us the letter which he wrote to the archbishop of Prague, during the absence of Huss in the year 1413. Assuming as unquestioned the heresy of Huss, he speaks of the methods of extirpating it. These he finds to have been in past times various “by miracles in the times of the apostles; by argumentative disputations of learned men afterward; and when these failed, by general councils, held under the favor of emperors. Last of all, when the evil became desperate, the arm of the secular power was invoked to cut off heresies, with those that favored them, and cast them into the fire, thus guarding against their word eating like a canker, to their own and others’ destruction.” He suggests to the archbishop
that his path of duty is plain. "If false teachers sowing heresy demand miracles, let them know that their object has been attained, and they are passed and gone. Our faith is not now a novel thing to be confirmed by them. These men may have not only Moses and the prophets, but the apostles and ancient doctors, as well as the holy councils. They have also modern doctors, gathered in the universities, especially that mother of them, the university of Paris, which has been free of heresy hitherto, and, with God's protection, shall be for ever. Having all these things, let them believe them. Otherwise they would not believe, though one rose from the dead. There will be no end to disputing with such men, who contend with persevering animosity, and lean on their own conceit. Moreover, by too much altercation truth suffers, the common people are scandalized, and charity is violated. Such perversity of obstinate men comes to this of the poet, Ἐγρεσcit Medendo. If, then, none of the previously mentioned remedies avails, it only remains that the axe of the secular arm be laid at the root of the barren and cursed tree. That arm you are to invoke by all methods; and you are required to do it by a regard for the salvation of those committed to your hand."

The university of Paris, doubtless at the instigation of Gerson, had already pronounced sentence upon some of the more obnoxious doctrines advocated by Huss. His enemies were busy abroad as well as at home, and the prospect of the approaching council would not slacken their diligence.

Yet an examination of the sermons of Huss, preached in the earlier years of his ministry, will show that at that time, when no suspicion of his orthodoxy existed, he had really held the same views which were subsequently charged as heretical. In them we find those ideas advanced which were the germ of his treatise on the church, and in the utterance of his rebukes he is fully as free and earnest as at any subsequent period. He had commenced his labors in Bethlehem chapel a year before Sbynco was elevated to the archbishopric of Prague. From his reputation for integrity and ability, as well as from his distinguished position, it was not strange that he should have been selected during successive years to preach the synodical sermon. On the first occasion upon which he discharged this duty—probably in 1404—he took occasion to rebuke the tyrannic exercise of ecclesiastical authority by which worldly-minded priests exulted over the poor, in the infliction of censures. He holds up to reprehension their drunkenness, luxury, and lascivious connection, and calls attention to their avarice, extortion, and ambition to secure plurality of benefices.

In his synodical sermon of the following year (1405), he distinctly teaches that Christ, and not Peter, is the rock on which the church is built; that the church of the predestinate is the mystic body of Christ; that every priest in mortal sin is an enemy of God; and that the extortions of the ecclesiastics are detestable. He rebukes the monks for their robbery, and the violation of their vows of poverty, and exposes the simony that trafficked in sacred things. In his
discourse in 1407, he is especially severe upon the corrupt and shameful life of
the clergy, their licentiousness, disobedience, quarrels, and greed of gain; and
he does not fail to strike a heavy blow at the gainful frauds practiced in the
sale of indulgences. He sees worldly prosperity, but spiritual misery on all
sides. "The church shines in its walls, but starves in its poor saints; it clothes its
stones with gold, but leaves its children naked." His picture of priestly luxury is
drawn in a masterly manner. Almost everything had become matter of traffic.
All the offices of the church were for sale. Pride, simony, and thirst for
promotion were almost universal. Yet he holds that none but he who "puts on
the Lord Jesus Christ" can put on any moral virtue, and declares the danger lest
he who is a pluralist in benefices shall be a pluralist in torments.

In 1410 (March 4), Huss preached before the university; and another sermon
bears date August 28th of the same year. In these he refers largely to current
events. He complains of those doctors who persecute the preachers of the
gospel by their slanders. "To silence them they invent lies, put forth
innuendoes, say that by their love of error they have driven out the foreign
nations from the university. They falsely accuse them of thinking ill of the body
of Christ, and of saying that the pope is of no account." It seems, therefore, by
this sermon, that he recognizes the authority of the popes, since he calls
Alexander V, and John XXIII who had just been elected his successor, vicars of
the apostles. He prays for the soul of one in case of his having committed any
venial sin, and for the sanctification of the other.

About the close of the same year he preached on the words of Luke 13:23
—"Compel them to come in." In this sermon are some things worthy of special
notice. He holds that the civil power extends to clergy as well as laity. Christ
subjected himself to the authority of human rulers. A prelate should be feared,
not like a lay prince, for corporeal inflictions, but for the spiritual terrors
which he threatens against the guilty. In this same sermon the course of the
king is commended in requiring the priests to preach and discharge their office
under penalty of losing their revenues. This shows that the interdict was
disregarded by the king, and that at this time he did not approve of the
measures of the pope.

In the following year Huss preached on All-Saints day on the words of John
11:21, where Martha says to Jesus, "Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother
had not died." In this sermon he treats on the different practices of
commemorating the lives of the saints, or the festivals dedicated to their
memory. Some of these he approves, and others he condemns. Those which he
approves are meditation on the misery of man subjected to death by sin, and
on the death of Christ on account of our sins. This meditation leads us, he says,
to enter into our own hearts, so that we may be converted and die happily. We
should pray, moreover, for the dead, and thus procure aid for the sleeping
church, that is, for souls in purgatory.
That which he reprehends in these solemnities is the pomp and show that accompany them, the false eulogies of the dead, and the profit which thereby accrues to the priests. On this subject he quotes a Latin verse:

*De morbo medicus quadet, de morte Sacerdos.*

"To what serves the multiplication of vigils in the houses of those who have died rich, except for vain praises? There is no great anxiety to chant the appointed psalms, either on the part of him who pays or the priest who is paid. He that pays only asks that numerous vigils be performed in honor of the dead; and he that is paid is only anxious to be done with them. To this end he hurries through his duty as fast as he can. To what end is this pompous gathering of the rich to the processions of the dead? Is it not laughable and quite ridiculous to see the priests comfortably seated on their cushioned chairs, while Christ wept over the tomb of Lazarus? What is the use of the ceaseless tolling of so many bells, but needlessly to lavish out money that might be better employed? And as to the feasts that are made after the burial, in what do they end, but gluttony, drunkenness, and vain conversations?"

Although it appears by this sermon that Huss still believed in purgatory, he did not regard the prayers of the living for the dead as any very effectual aid "because," says he, "the matter is not spoken of in the whole scripture, except in the second book of Maccabees, which is not reckoned by the Jews in the canon of the Old Testament. Neither the prophets, nor Jesus Christ, nor his apostles, nor the saints that followed them, ever taught explicitly that we should pray for the dead; but they have said that he that lived a holy life should be saved. For myself, I believe that this practice has been introduced first of all by the avarice of the priests, who take little trouble to exhort the people as the prophets, Christ, and his apostles did, to an holy life; but who take particular pains to persuade them to make rich offerings, in the hope of blessedness and a speedy deliverance from purgatory." He then accuses the priests of supporting this delusion by many falsehoods, and among others, by this: of attributing to St. Gregory, in his *Stella Clericorum*, the words, "Oh! what a marvelous gift of divine mercy, that a mass is never celebrated which does not result in these two things—the conversion of a sinner, and the deliverance of at least one soul from the pains of purgatory." He maintains, moreover, that the mass of a wicked priest is an abomination in the sight of God, and can be of no service either to the living or the dead.

The abuses of saint’s days, of which Huss complained in his sermons, were by no means exaggerated. The evil throughout Christendom had grown to an enormous magnitude. Almost at the same time that Huss was calling for a reform at Prague, Clemengis, studying the scriptures at Langres, had his attention forcibly drawn to the same subject. The ex-rector of the university of Paris is not one whit behind the ex-rector of the university of Prague in the severity of his rebuke. "From sunrise to midnight, they (they multitude) loiter,
swear, blaspheme, curse God and all the saints, shouting, disputing, quarrelling. With their clamor, tumult, and excess, they seem to rave like madmen. They strive to see who can drink the most, pledge one another in their cups, become drunk, and fall to violence and bloodshed. Passions are roused, threats uttered, injuries inflicted. The wretched criminals are brought before the courts, found guilty, and fined so heavily that the loss of one day cannot be made good by a month’s labor.

"What heathen, acquainted with the old sacrilegious ritual, would not suppose, if he could be present on these occasions, that they were rather the florals of Venus on the orgies of Bacchus, than the festival of a saint, especially when he saw such enormities practiced as was customary in their idolatrous rites? That festival is even accounted tame and uninteresting which is not spiced with a fight and bloodshed. Now need we be surprised that Mars should become the associate of Bacchus and Venus. Minds impelled by wine and lust are readily led into contention, as by the poets Venus is figured united to Mars by a subtle and indissoluble bond.

"Who does not see how much more honest and healthful it would be not to observe these festivals at all, than to observe them in this manner? Whose heart is so alien to all that is reasonable, so led astray by the perversity of error, as not to perceive that there is less evil on these festivals of the saints in ploughing, herding flocks, sowing, and other rustic occupations, than to, not celebrate, but profane them by such horrid and heathen rites? And yet if anyone pressed by extreme poverty should have been found to have done any work in his field or vineyard, he is at once summoned to answer for a violation of the day, and is harshly dealt with. But he who shall commit these grosser transgressions against the law and commandments of God, may go free of punishment, and even of accusation."

In regard to the vigils with which Huss finds fault, the language of Clemengis is no less severe. He declares the observance of them in many cases to be base and shameful. Some, in the very churches, spend the night in dances, and singing wanton song, playing at dice, and using impious and profane language; and in these things the priests joined, furnishing their flocks a fitting example.

Clemengis reprehends the rites of some of the festivals more recently introduced. The lessons that were read were almost all of them apocryphal; the formula of the service was itself deformed, utterly unfitted to excite devotional feeling, of trivial meaning, and uncouth expression; by the puerilities of rhythm ministering to a vain and barren curiosity. Such is the testimony of a man whose learning, character, and standing give his words the greatest weight. The language of Huss is temperate and calm by the side of that of the learned Frenchman, and his opportunities for observation in Bohemia, great as they were, did not surpass those of Clemengis in France. Surely, with such grievous corruptions obtruding themselves everywhere upon
the notice of Christendom, it was time that the voice of remonstrance was
loudly and effectually raised.

It thus appears that from the first Huss had adopted the principles which he
maintained to the end. His earliest sermons are as earnest and severe as those
which were preached at a later period. If he was a heretic in 1412, when the
bulls of the pope were published in Prague, he was equally so when he
preached his first sermon in Bethlehem chapel. Uniformly he had appealed to
scripture as the supreme authority for Christian doctrine.

It is thus seen that Huss had grounds of confidence in the consistency of his
course and the justice of his cause. He felt ready, therefore, to submit them to
the judgment of a body answering to his ideal of the convocated wisdom and
piety of the church. Imperfectly did he comprehend the effectiveness of those
powerful influences which were conspiring to crush him. So clear was he in his
own conviction, so sanguine in the belief that the simple statement of the
grounds of his faith would vindicate him from any charge of heresy, that he
only asked the privilege of a free audience before the general council which it
was proposed to convene. Upon this he insisted in his letter to Sigismund,
asking for a safe-conduct.

Nor was he without encouragement in the affection of his fellow-citizens. From
the time when, on the withdrawal of the Germans, he had been elevated to
the rectorship of the university, the sympathy of the nation had rallied to his
side. A large number of the educated men of the country had been brought
under his influence, as exerted both in the lecture-room and in the pulpit,
while the patriotic feeling, both of the nobility and of the common people, was
strongly enlisted in his support.

Indeed, for the four years from 1409 to 1413, there was not another man in the
kingdom whose influence was equal to his own. His character, ability, position,
and doctrines, and even the persecution which had driven him into temporary
exile, had conspired to elevate him in popular esteem, and to give publicity
and effect to his uttered sentiment.

This period, moreover, had been one characterized on his part by unwearied
effort and incessant industry. Most of his writings, now preserved in his
"Monumenta," were produced during these four years. Among these, the first in
importance, and among the earliest in date, is his work on the church, the
substance of which has already been given. This work—the extraordinary ability
of which is conceded by his opponents—gave occasion for repeated and
prolonged controversy, and some of the ablest efforts of Huss were produced in
defense of its positions. Stanislaus and Paletz had united to assail it. To them
he replied with overwhelming force. Both of them had, at the time of the
interdict, been excommunicated along with Huss. Terrified by the bull, they
had, in the most humiliating manner, abandoned their former ground. When
Huss was informed of Paletz’s desertion, he replied, "Paletz is my friend, and truth is my friend; but both being my friends, the truth I must honor in preference." Indeed, to appreciate the relative position of the two men, and the course which Paletz afterwards took as the persecutor of his friend, we need to know what Huss has stated in his writings as to the origin of the difficulty. He says, "On the publication of the bull of crusade and indulgences, he presented me with a paper, in his own hand-writing, stating the palpable errors of the bull. I keep this paper still in my hands, as evidence of what I say. It was on his consultation with another colleague, that he changed his course and went back." With such facts in hand, it was not difficult for Huss to place his old associate in a most unenviable light.

Still more important in some respects was the controversy of Huss, already mentioned, with "The Eight Doctors." From his treatise in connection with it, it appears that Paletz, stung by the cutting reply and scathing exposure administered by Huss, had urged upon a clerical assemblage at Zebrak, a more active prosecution of the process against the reputed heretic. Others shared his zeal, and Huss, for reasons more obvious in his age than in ours, offered to submit himself—as Savanarola afterwards did—to the ordeal by fire. But with the good sense that must have characterized his estimate of a barbarous and absurd custom, he insisted that to make the terms equal all his accusers should submit to the same ordeal. To this, however, they very naturally objected. They had not sufficient confidence, either in the justice of their cause, or the harmlessness of the flames, to warrant them in walking one after another into the midst of the blazing fagots. They proposed that one of the accusers should be selected, and that he and Huss together should undergo the ordeal. Huss insisted—we can scarcely believe without something of a grave waggery—on his own proposition. It was too much for his clerical opponents. They were affrighted, and declined the terms. But, not altogether to be defeated, the eight doctors assail Huss with the pen.

It was a most unfortunate measure. The eight combined are no match for Huss, single-handed and alone. His treatise is one of the ablest arguments in controversial divinity that was ever penned. Huss and the doctors remind us of Milton and Salmasius. For keenness of reply, vigor of retort, and caustic irony, the Bohemian and the Englishman might be accounted peers, and surely, in the old blind poet of England there could not have been a more devoted love of truth, a more ardent and fearless chivalry in its defense, or a greater readiness to risk all in a holy cause, than were to be found in Huss.

Other works of the reformer, worthy of more extended notice than can now be given them, are his treatises on "The Three Doubts," on "The Body of Christ," etc., and his "Commentaries" on different portions of scripture, as well as several smaller works, in which his views on important subjects are clearly defined.
Throughout these writings the sentiments and doctrines are for the most part such as would now be termed Evangelical. Occasionally he gives utterance to views which betray the lingering influence of tradition and authority. Transubstantiation he maintains in as firm a tone as Luther employed when he met Zwingli with the repeated citation, “This is my body.” He allows, though very cautiously, and with qualification, of prayers for the dead. He was as yet satisfied with the old observance of the eucharist in which bread only was administered. He allowed confession to a priest, and a qualified absolution, although he contended that none could forgive sins but God only.

But in the most explicit manner he maintains that the scriptures are the only supreme authority in matters of faith, and vindicates “The sufficiency of the law of Christ for the rule of the church.” False decretals, traditions, and priestly superstitions are thus swept away at a single stroke. Christ is the sole head of the church, and no bull or excommunication is to be regarded which conflicts with justice or with the cause of Christian truth. It is first of all to be tried by the word of God. In his reprobation of the sale of indulgences, and masses for the dead, he was most severe. While not as distinct as later reformers on the doctrine of justification by faith, he holds that “Christ is the basis of all merit of the members of the church,” and that works without faith are of no avail.

But in the exposition of the claims of the law of God in setting forth its condemnation of all sin and wickedness—the venality, avarice, ambition, extortion, sensuality, and vice of the ecclesiastical orders, and indeed of all classes—he expended his strength. His own life was above reproach, and his vehement rebukes did not lose their force by being made to recoil upon himself.

This was one great secret of his strength. In a corrupt and venal age he refused the bribes of ambition, and stood unawed by the terrors of power. He was known as one set for the defense of truth. The strength of his convictions contributed to make him strong.

And in his letters, written during his exile from Prague, we gather instructive views of his aims and character, as well as of the earnestness of his purpose. An active correspondence was kept up with his friends in the capital. Throughout this correspondence there breathes the spirit of a most ardent and glowing devotion, while the deep and apostolic anxiety with which he watched over the spiritual welfare and progress of his absent flock, is betrayed in almost every line. The reasons of his withdrawal from Prague are discussed. “‘The hireling fleeth.’ I have thought of that. But we must pray for guidance. We can do nothing better. Tell me whether my absence gives occasion for scandal. Are sacraments administered? Pray God to direct me what to do.”
Again, he writes to the friend who had succeeded to his place as rector: "Your letter consoles me, where you say that the righteous will not be overwhelmed with sadness, let what will happen, and all that will live godly must suffer persecution. What to me are riches, honors, or disgrace? My sins alone grieve me. What if the just man lose his life; it is only to find the true life. God will yet destroy Antichrist. Be prepared for the conflict. Woe is me if I do not expose the abomination of desolation by preaching, teaching, and writing." Again, in another letter, he says, "I count it all joy that I am called a heretic, and so am excommunicated as disobedient. With Peter and John, it is better to obey God than man. The word of God is to be preached." He cites the examples of ancient saints to confirm his own faith under his harsh experience.

But his enforced separation from his beloved flock bore heavily upon his spirits. His heart was still with them. He did not forget to admonish and encourage them in his absence. Personal consequences to himself alone would not have kept him from them. "I have withdrawn myself," he says, "that I may not prove to the wicked an occasion of everlasting damnation, and to the good, cause of oppression and trouble." Again he writes: "I say to you, my beloved, though I am not in prison, yet I would gladly, for Christ’s sake, die and be with him; and yet I would gladly, too, for your good, preach to you God’s word; but I am in a strait betwixt two, and know not which to choose. For I await God’s mercy, and I fear again lest something bad be done among you, so as to expose the faithful to persecution, and the unbelieving to eternal death."

He reminds his Bethlehem congregation of his many years of service among them, and its fruits, and says, "For this, as God is my witness, I have labored more than twelve years among you preaching the divine word; and in this, my greatest consolation was to observe your earnest diligence in hearing God’s word, and to witness the true and sincere repentance of many." He bids them beware of fickleness, and "have no regard for those persons walking a crooked path, who have turned about, and are now the most violent enemies of God, and our enemies." For himself, he asks their prayers, that God would give him good success in preaching his word. "In all the places where a need exists—in cities, in villages, in castles, in the fields, in the forests, wherever I can be of any use—pray for me that the word of God may not be kept back in me."

To the citizens of Prague he writes (Christmas of 1413), urging them to be constant in hearing the word of God. With scriptural admonitions he exhorts and encourages them, reminding them how Christ was treated. "I hear," he says, "of the plan in agitation for tearing down or invading the churches where the gospel is preached, Bethlehem chapel especially. I am confident that God will not suffer them to accomplish anything. They tried to catch the goose (Huss) in the net of citations and anathemas, and now they are having designs upon some of you. But, instead of a single swallow, the truth has sent forth many eagles, that fly high in the strength of Christ. Pray for me, that I may write and preach more abundantly against the wickedness of Antichrist. ... If I
came to Prague, my enemies would lie in wait for me, and would persecute you. But we will pray for them, that the elect among them may be saved."

In another letter, he says, "I am at a loss what to do; if I return to Prague, my presence might bring trouble. ... Do not be disturbed for my absence; I trust in God that all will yet turn out well. Let them sing their ribaldry, or crucify me with their blasphemies, or stone the church doors, if they will."

From these letters it is evident that some, during his absence, were urgent for his return to Prague. This, however, was at the time contrary to his own judgment. He desired to return, both on his own account and for the sake of his friends, but he did not deem it wise. He consoles them with encouragements drawn from the prophecies of Christ's second coming. "I fled," he says, "because Christ bids those that are persecuted in one city to flee into another. He did so himself. Some of your priests would be glad to have me back at Prague, to bring the interdict in force, only that they might be relieved of saying masses at the canonical hours. They however are stung by the gospel. I should be glad indeed to come back and see you, and preach the gospel."

To the citizens of a neighboring town, to which it appears the reform movement had extended, Huss writes an encouraging letter: "I have never seen you, but I have heard of your faith. I am unknown to you by face, but in Christ I would be faithful for your salvation."

Of the letters which he received during this period of his exile, but one has been preserved. It came from England, and it bore to Huss the expression of the sympathy and consolations of a Christian brother, "unknown by face, but not by faith and love, for space cannot separate those whom the love of Christ unites." How precious and cheering to him such sympathy and brotherhood from the land of Wickliffe! Bohemia had caught the echo of reform from England, and now Prague was prepared to respond in the person of one not unworthy to rank as Wickliffe's peer.

Yet the period from the first publication of the interdict until the final return of Huss to Prague, had been one, to him, of severe trial. His enemies were not disposed to leave him at peace. His anxieties in behalf of what he regarded as the sacred cause of truth, knew no intermission. His warfare with error and with abounding iniquity was vigorous and incessant. Yet if he had been willing to abandon his ground and belie his own convictions, he could almost have imposed his own terms. But he was not a man to be bought or sold. His conscience was made of sterner stuff.

From his own declarations, we know that his inward conflicts were severe. Yet, so far as we can judge from the course of his public career, he never wavered. Not for a single moment did he so far forget his position or duty, as to yield to guilty compromise. Amid the surging agitations around him he stands ever firm,
like the rock amid the billows. Power has no terrors, and honor has no bribes, that can sway him from the straightforward path of duty.

Such is the man who, in the calm confidence of his own innocence and of the justice of his cause, patiently awaits the assembling of a general council, to which he will carry his appeal.

END OF SECTION II

Section III

Huss' Betrayal and Arrest at the Council of Constance

This section comprises chapters 12 through 17. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 12  The Council
Chapter 13  Arrest and Imprisonment of Huss
Chapter 14  Anxieties of the Pope
Chapter 15  Huss Abandoned by the Emperor
Chapter 16  The Council up to the Flight of the Pope
Chapter 17  Supremacy of the Council and Arrest of Jerome

CHAPTER XII
The Council

The time had at length arrived for the assembling of the council of Constance. Never had any similar event occurred in the history of the church which excited a deeper or more general interest throughout the Christian world. The schism which had rent the church in pieces, and arrayed one portion against the other, the profligacy and reckless ambition of the rival popes, the wide and fearful corruption which had spread from the highest to the lowest dignitaries of the hierarchy, the alleged heresies of Huss and Petit, and the almost utter neglect into which ecclesiastical authority had fallen, combined to render the assembling of the council an event from which no ordinary results were anticipated. The emperor himself postponed regard for the interests of his kingdom to promote the convocation and the success of the council. It was in his view a greater glory to restore Christendom to the unity of a common head, than achieve victory or conquest on the field of battle. By his exertions the great obstacles to the convoking of a council had been met and removed, and at the appointed time throns from every portion of Christendom began to pour into the ancient city of Constance.

This city had been chosen by the emperor as the place for the assembling of the council. Reluctantly had the pope receded from his resolution not to allow its convocation where his power and authority would not be paramount. The position of Constance was central, and comparatively easy of access. It was within the circle of Swabia, and subject to the imperial authority. Neither of the popes could here hope to control, or restrain the freedom of, the adherents of the other.

The city of Constance is situated upon the borders of the lake to which it gives it name. At the time of the council, and in the most flourishing period of its history, it contained little short of fifty thousand inhabitants. The traveler now finds scarcely a tithe of its former population within its walls. Old and curious houses, still standing, meet his eye as he walks the streets, but many of them untenanted. On the shores of the lake, and but a few feet from the landing, he sees the Kaufhaus, or market, memorable still as the place where the sessions of the council were held. It was built A.D. 1338, and, at the time of the assembling of the council three quarters of a century later, offered the best accommodations for a large audience-chamber to be found within the city. As the traveler walks up the solid steps of the edifice, once so thronged but now comparatively deserted, he enters the second story—a wide, low room, supported by heavy wooden pillars, and with a rough plank floor, like that of a barn. More than four hundred years ago this room was occupied by an assembly such as Christendom had never seen convoked before. The chair of the emperor, and the one in which the pope for a short time presided over the
sessions of the council, together with other relics, form a museum of curiosities which are carefully preserved.

The summons to the council had been issued by the emperor, with the constrained assent of John XXIII, in October 1413. The cardinals more readily united in the summons, at least a portion of them. Full assurances of security for person and property were given to all who should attend. The emperor pledged himself not to interfere with the respect claimed for the pope, or to put hindrances in the way of his exercising his authority.

In December the pope issued his proclamation also, directing all prelates to be present in person at the council, and all princes who could not attend to send deputies, who should be authorized to act in their name. In the vast crowd that obeyed the summons, we find nearly all the men of the age who were eminent in learning, station, and authority. In some cases they were freely elected, as at Paris, by provincial or national councils, and a fixed rate was allowed for their expenses, that nothing might interfere with their presence and their regular attendance upon the sessions of the council.

The only one of the rival popes who personally appeared at Constance was John XXIII. The hostility of Ladislaus in Italy had contributed greatly to induce him to consent that the council should be summoned to meet in a city beyond the limits of his government; but at the last moment, when he was about to set out for Constance, he heard the welcome intelligence of Ladislaus’ death. This man, his bitter foe, had gathered an army for the siege of Bologna, when he was arrested by the hand of disease, and forced to withdraw, first to Rome and then to Naples, where he breathed his last. The pope’s former reluctance to leave Italy returned. He stood no longer in pressing need of Sigismund’s aid. In his anxiety to secure Rome again, he sent his general, Isolani, to seize and take possession of it. He would have been glad to have followed himself. It is amusing to see the efforts of the pope and emperor to elude and deceive one another. Sigismund was afraid that now, after all, the pope would not appear at Constance. Some of his friends warned him of the danger he incurred of going thither as pope and coming back a private man. But the counsel of the cardinals, more anxious for the union of the church, prevailed. John determined, before he set out, to secure of the emperor the most advantageous terms possible. Sigismund, on his part, dared not refuse the pope’s demands, lest his absence should defeat the design of the council. The emperor’s commissary at Constance was to accept, in the emperor’s name, the pope’s terms, and the magistrates and burgesses of Constance were exhorted and commanded to swear, on their part, to their faithful observance. No pretext was to be left the pope for non-appearance. The emperor knew the man with whom he had to deal, and, with a policy which matched the pope’s, conceded everything. John XXIII was to be received at Constance with all the honors due to the papal dignity; he should be recognized as true and sole pontiff; he should be at perfect freedom to come or go, and should exercise his
authority over his dependents and all that appertained to him, without restriction. The city was bound to see that justice was done him, and his safe-conducts were to be recognized and respected. Such were the terms sworn to and signed, by order of the emperor, before the pope would set out for the council.

At length, with many fears and forebodings, he commenced his journeys. On the first of October, 1414, he left Bologna. His equipage and attendance were splendid and imposing. Gold, silver, gems, and costly raiment added to the pomp and magnificence of a princely retinue of cardinals, nobles, and their attendants. At Merau he paused in his journey to confirm his alliance with Frederic, Duke of Austria, by which each was bound to support the other in his designs. On the twenty-eighth of October the pope reached Constance. Nine cardinals only, of the thirty-three who should have been present, were in his train. With these, however, and a large number of bishops and archbishops, and with the servants of his court, he made his entrance on horseback into the city. His reception was all that he could have claimed or expected. The clergy and magistrates met and escorted him with imposing pomp to the episcopal palace.

Already the streets were thronged with strangers from every part of Christendom, and more were on their way. There came thither to this celebrated council thirty cardinals, twenty archbishops, one hundred and fifty bishops, as many prelates, a multitude of abbots and doctors, and eighteen hundred priests. Among the sovereigns who attended in person, could be distinguished the Elector Palatine, the Electors of Mentz and of Saxony, and the Dukes of Austria, of Bavaria, and of Silesia. There were, besides, a vast number of margraves, counts, and barons, and a great crowd of noblemen and knights. At one time there might have been counted, as we are told, thirty thousand horses within the circuit of the city. Each prince, nobleman, and knight was attended by his train, and the number of persons present from abroad is estimated to have been not less than forty or fifty thousand. Among these were reckoned almost every trade and profession, and some whose profession was their disgrace, but whose instincts and tastes made them seek the welcome they found among the miscellaneous crowd.

The pope had already reached Constance, "the pit for catching foes," as he called it, while observing it on his approach from a neighboring hill. The emperor was more tardily to make his appearance. Among the feeble monarchs of that day, in Europe, he towered conspicuous. Active, enterprising, intrepid, inexhaustible in resources, he owed the imperial scepter mainly to his own exertions. Often unsuccessful, his reverses were never suffered to repress his spirit or damp his energies. All the varieties of his experience had conspired to make him a shrewd and able politician, while his devotion to the interests of the church had gained him an influence and reputation that veiled the selfishness of his aims.
At the period of the assembling of the council, Sigismund was in the full strength and vigor of a mature manhood, with a prestige and power that restrained, if they could not suppress, the dissatisfactions of enemies and rivals. He was forty-seven years of age, and to the respect which he claimed for the vigor and energy of his measures, must be added the impression of his personal appearance. His manners were noble and engaging. His look and walk bespoke the emperor. He could converse with facility in several languages, nor as the son of Charles IV was he wanting in that regard for literature which honored at once his father’s memory and his own tastes. "I can in a single day make a thousand noblemen, he used to say, "but in a thousand years I cannot make a single scholar." The fierce and often sanguinary impulse of his youth had been checked by his own discretion, as well as by the lessons of experience. The example of his brother served as a warning against the indulgence of his lusts; and though his impetuous temper, even on the throne, sometimes gained the mastery, it was only for the moment that the cooler dictates of reason and policy were forced to give way. His brother’s ruling passion was for wine and revelry, and it made him reckless of expenditure, but Sigismund, by his aspiration for the honor of restoring peace and union to the church, and in the pursuance of this design, was also liberal even to a degree of prodigality. With much that was grand and chivalrous in his nature, his life shows that he could, when necessary, adopt the arts of fraud and dissimulation to promote his purpose, and his memory will never lose the stain which his shameful breach of trust toward the Bohemian reformer has made indelible. With such station, talents, and reputation, the influence of Sigismund in the council was more controlling and decisive than that of any other member.

On the eleventh of October, while the pope was yet midway on his journey, John Huss left Prague for Constance. Before quitting the Bohemian capital, he took occasion to make a full declaration of his doctrinal views. Although his mind must at times have been filled by melancholy presentiments, his heart did not quail, nor did he neglect any legitimate means of vindicating his innocence. He openly declared his purpose to render at Constance, before the assembled representatives of the Christian world, a testimony of his faith. A few days before his departure, in a paper affixed to the gates of the palace, he announced that he was about to depart in order to justify himself before the council, "so that," said he, "if anyone suspects me of heresy, let him proceed thither and prove, in presence of the pope and the doctors, if I ever entertained or taught any false or mistaken doctrine. If any man can convict me of having inculcated any doctrine contrary to the Christian faith, I will consent to undergo all the penalty to which heretics are liable. But I trust that God will not grant the victory to unbelievers—to men who outrage the truth."

Huss next announced his readiness to render an account of his faith in presence of the archbishop of Prague and his clergy. He then boldly applied for a certificate of his orthodoxy from the very person who, in virtue of his office, should have been mint anxious to condemn him if he had believed him guilty—
the bishop of Nazareth, grand inquisitor of the diocese of Prague. The certificate was granted, though we can only surmise the influences which mint hate virtually extorted it. It seems most probable that the popular feeling enlisted on the side of the reformer constrained the inquisitor to sign a document which he would willingly have withheld. An authentic copy of it, as drawn up before a notary, was in substance as follows: "By these presents, we make known to all men that we have often held converse with the honorable Master John Huss, bachelor of theology of the celebrated university of Prague; that we have had several serious conferences with him relative to the Holy Scriptures, and other matters; and that we have always considered him to be a faithful and good Catholic, not finding in him up to this day any evil or error. We certify besides, that the said John Huss has declared that he was ready to render reason for his faith in presence of the archbishop and his clergy against anyone that might come forward to accuse him of error or heresy; but that no one presented himself to support the charge. In faith of which we have delivered to him this letter, sealed with our great seal, this 30th August, 1414."

Armed with this paper, Huss proceeded to the abbey of St. James, where the barons and the archbishop of Prague were assembled for public business. There he besought the prelate to declare openly, if he either accused or suspected him of heresy, and in case he did not, he conjured him to give a public testimony of the fact, which he might find of service in his journey to Constance. By another account, contained in a document subsequently drawn up by the nobles of Bohemia, it would appear that the question of the orthodoxy of Huss was put to the archbishop by the nobles themselves, and that his reply was, that he had never "known of any erroneous word on the part of Huss," and that this answer was given of his own free will, and under no constraint, though it was added by the archbishop, that he thought "that Huss should purge himself from the excommunication which he had incurred." It is undoubtedly true that such was the reply of the archbishop. Seven years after this he openly favored the Hussites.

A few days later, Huss asked permission to appear before a general assembly of the clergy of Prague, presided over by the archbishop. He offered to establish his innocence by scripture, by the holy canons of the church, and by the fathers; but his application was refused.

The motives which must have influenced the clergy in this matter are obvious. Undoubtedly they preferred to have Huss leave the city without such testimony as they would be constrained to give, and they hoped by means of the council to be permanently relieved of his presence. Some of them doubtless imagined that it would be much easier to deal with him in the distant city of Constance, where they could secretly magnify his errors, than in Prague, where his friends were at once so numerous and so powerful.
In the month of October, 1414, Huss bade adieu to his chapel at Bethlehem, where his voice was never more to be heard, and to his faithful friends and disciples, some of whom were to follow him in his path of self-denial, suffering, and martyrdom. He left behind him his faithful companion and bosom friend, Jerome, and the scene of parting was one of deep emotion on the part of each. "Dear master," said Jerome, "be firm; maintain intrepidly what thou hast written and preached against the pride, avarice, and other vices of the churchmen, with arguments drawn from the Holy Scriptures. Should this task become too severe for thee, should I learn that thou hast fallen into any peril, I shall fly at once to thy assistance."

The diet had demanded of the emperor a safe-conduct for Huss. This was readily granted him by Sigismund, in the usual form, and the document, dated "Spires, October 18," was forwarded to him, so as to meet him on the road, not, however, till he had passed the borders of Bohemia, where the safe-conduct of Wenzel which he had received would cease to have validity. By the king, two staunch and faithful knights, the Lords of Chlum and Duba, were appointed as companions and protectors of Huss. Several other noble barons joined the escort. John de Chlum was one of the most devoted adherents of the reformer, and his life offers a pure model of the most touching and devoted friendship. His name in the eyes of posterity is inseparably associated with that of Huss.

Previously to his departure the master would have addressed a farewell sermon to his beloved followers, but time, or probably his own tender and sympathetic spirit, would not allow of it. His written valediction shows that he was not unmindful of the danger which he incurred. "My brethren," said he, "do not suppose that I am provoking for myself unworthy treatment for any false doctrine. I am departing with a safe-conduct from the king to meet my many and mortal enemies. ... I confide altogether in the all-powerful God, in my Savior. I trust that he will listen to your ardent prayers that he will put his wisdom and prudence into my mouth, in order that I may resist them; and that he will accord me his Holy Spirit, to fortify me in his truth, so that I may face with courage, temptations, prison, and if necessary, a cruel death. Jesus Christ suffered for his well-beloved; and ought we then to be astonished that he has left us his example, in order that we may ourselves endure with patience all things for our own salvation? He is God, and we are his creatures; he is the Lord, and we are his servants; he is Mater of the world, and we are contemptible mortals; yet he suffered! Why then should we not suffer also, particularly when suffering is for us a purification? Therefore, beloved, if my death ought to contribute to his glory, pray that it may come quickly, and that he may enable me to support all my calamities with constancy. But if it be better that I return among you, let us pray to God that I may return without stain, that is, that I may not suppress one tittle of the truth of the gospel, in order to leave my brethren an excellent example to follow. Probably, therefore, you will never more behold my face at Prague; but should the will of
the all-powerful God deign to restore me to you, let us then advance with a firmer heart in the knowledge and the love of his law."

It is not strange that Huss should have felt oppressed by the presentiment that he would never return to the scene of his past labors. While thoroughly conscious of his own integrity and honesty of purpose—an integrity and honesty which his enemies could not deny—he was to some extent aware of the unscrupulous means which a bigoted malice stood ready to employ. He deemed his return to Prague, at the best, doubtful. He knew that some of his most bitter foes would be present at the council, and that their whole influence would he exerted to secure his condemnation. He knew that his former friend and associate, who had once been almost a brother, with whom he had studied, ate, and slept, but now his most violent persecutor, Stephen Paletz, and a former curé of a church in Old Prague, Michael De Causis, along with several others, his bitter antagonists, had preceded him to Constance, and were determined on his ruin. He knew that the German nation, as represented in the council, would not forget their old grudge of virtual expulsion, as they considered it, from the university. And when we add to this his knowledge of the general corruption of the clergy, whom he had offended by his rebukes, and their readiness to become instruments in a transaction which could be covered with the veil of pious and devout zeal, we see that Huss may have well commenced his journey with the presentiment of imprisonment, if not of martyrdom.

But his spirit did not quail before the danger. He met it with no presumptuous rashness, but with the calm constancy and courage of a Christian hero. There was, indeed, one hope that contributed much to cheer and sustain him, and that was, that he would be privileged freely and fully to state and explain his views before the council, and show their accordance with what he still deemed the standards of the church—the scriptures and the fathers. In this hope he was doomed to disappointment, yet his faith in God humbled him to such a decree in his own esteem, while it forbade all fear of man, that the thought of turning aside or shunning the ordeal to which he was summoned seems never to have entered his mind.

In a letter which he wrote to one of his disciples, Priest Martin, at his setting out for the council, he speaks of himself with the greatest humility, and we seem to read the reformer’s heart while he unbosoms himself to his friend. He accuses himself, as if they were grave offense, of faults which most would have deemed too trifling to be noticed, of having felt pleasure in wearing rich apparel, and of having wasted hours in frivolous occupations. His own severe and enlightened conscience made him his own accuser where others could not bring the first charge of guilt. He adds these affecting instructions:

"May the glory of God and the salvation of souls occupy thy mind, and not the possession of benefices and estates. Beware of adorning thy house more than
thy soul; and above all, give thy care to the spiritual edifice. Be pious and humble with the poor; and consume not thy substance in feasting. Shouldest thou not amend thy life, and refrain from superfluities, I fear thou will be severely chastised, as I am my self—I, who also made use of such things, led away by custom, and troubled by a spirit of pride. Thou knowest my doctrine, for thou hast received my instructions from thy childhood; it is useless therefore for me to write to thee any further. But I conjure thee by the mercy of our Lord, not to imitate me in any of the vanities into which thou hast seen me fall." He concludes by making some bequests, and disposing, as if by will, of several articles which belonged to him; and then, on the cover of the letter, he adds this prophetic phrase, "I conjure thee, my friend, not to break this seal until thou art fully certified of my death."

The spirit of the martyr glows brighter and more brightly in the farewell letters of Huss. We see him rising above all the influences of the fear or of the applause of men. His soul, always pure and upright, soars to a heavenly atmosphere of holy, elevated purpose. There is less of the impetuosity and the passion of former days, yet the torrent of zeal flows in a deeper, a calmer, but stronger current. We discern, if possible, less than ever of the partisan, or of the popular orator fed on the public acclamation. He shuns the parting scene of a public leave-taking, where he knew that the strong affection which was felt for him would burst forth in turbulent grief. He needed no assurance of the attachment of the people, or of the nobility to sustain him. A firmer support he found in the promises of the divine Word, and in solitary communings with his own heart and with God. Henceforward he is to be thrown almost alone among bitter and implacable enemies. Strange faces will meet his, and prejudice will misrepresent the man and pervert his words. He stands already in presence of a cruel fate. But his soul is unmoved, unshaken by human terrors. Conscious of his own integrity, he plants his feet on the Rock of Ages. Bereft in great measure of human resource, he looks up to heaven for aid. Grace confers upon the reformer now a calm majesty of soul, such as we failed to discern while we saw him controlling others by his eloquence, or imbuing their minds with the deep sincerity and earnestness of his own convictions. With no attendant pomp—without bravado, with no disgusting exhibition of self-confidence—but with the lowliness, meekness, patience, and courage of a martyr, Huss sets out for the city where few will be found of spirit kindred to his own.

The reformer's journey to Constance was quiet, orderly, and uninterrupted. His fame had preceded him, and all malice seemed lost in curiosity to see or hear the man of whom such stories lead been told. The simple earnestness of his speech, and the reasonableness of his views as he presented them, bespoke the favor of his auditors. The common people, and the humbler priests and curates, who had themselves suffered in some cases bitterly from the despotism and avarice of the higher ecclesiastics, would scarce find fault with a man who had really been fighting their battles, and was now suffering in their cause. There was, in fact, throughout the whole Christian world, a
conviction of the need of reformation, but a conviction most deeply rooted in the minds of those whose sympathies would lead them to adopt for their leader some Piers Ploughman—someone of themselves, whose honest and straightforward speech spared neither princely arrogance nor prelatical corruption. In Huss they saw one whom the persecuting rage of the priests had forced into notoriety, but who, in stigmatizing their hypocrisy, arrogance, and avarice, had really shown himself the friend of the poor, humble, and oppressed. Throughout his journey he experienced only respect and kindness. Even when he had crossed the Bohemian frontier, and entered the German territory where he expected to meet the malice instigated by the expelled students, he was happily disappointed. He was greeted with favor instead of scorn.

From Nuremberg, which he had reached on the twentieth day of October, he writes back to his friends, giving an account of his journey up to that time. In his own characteristic language the reformer says, "Be it known to you, beloved brethren, that I have not found it necessary to travel once in incognito, since the day of my departure, but have ridden freely, and without disguise. I have traveled on horseback, and with my features exposed to public view. On my drawing near Bernau, I found the curé and his vicars waiting for me; when I came up to them, he drank to my health in a cup of wine, and also, when we reached the inn, presented me with a large flagon of wine. He and his people gladly expressed their satisfaction with my opinions, and the good man called himself my old but unknown friend. I was afterwards joyfully received by all the Germans in Neustadt. As we traveled through Weiden, a very considerable crowd eyed us with the astonishment of admiration, and when we arrived at Sultzbach, we stopped at the house where the district session was that day held. The assembly being not yet dispersed, I thus addressed the consuls and notables of the town: "Behold, I am that John Huss of whom you have doubtless heard much evil. Here I am: ascertain the real state of the case by interrogating me yourselves." We conversed together for some time, and they approved of all I said. We next passed through Hersbruck, and spent the night in the town of Lauf, where the curé, a great jurist, and his vicars had come to see me, with whom I conversed, much to their satisfaction." Huss next proceeded to Nuremberg, the chief city of Franconia, where the independent spirit of the citizens, which has since been subdued in the lapse of centuries, then boldly defied the imperial fortress, and claimed the free exercise of municipal rights. Some merchants having ridden forward, and given notice that Huss was approaching the city, the people came thronging to the streets and public places looking eagerly for his coming. They gazed on the Bohemian escort as it passed by, anxiously inquiring which was John Huss. As soon as they discovered him, they surrounded and accompanied him to the inn, with many encouraging assurances that the council would not dare to injure him. During his repast, some priests were announced. He rose from the table to meet them, but finding that they wished for private conversation with him, Huss replied, "that he was unwilling to whisper his doctrines in the ears of only a
few individuals, but would rather proclaim them on the housetop." "I speak only in public, and they who wish to hear me have only to listen." By means of placards on the doors of the churches, these men, and all who felt disposed to come, were invited to a religious conference, on the afternoon of the following day. A large number assembled. Besides the townspeople, the magistrates of the city were present. The discussion continued till evening. Among others, a Carthusian doctor presented himself, and displayed much subtlety in argument. But the popular voice was on the side of the reformer. When in the evening Huss concluded the defense of his opinions, the mayor, councilors, magistrates, and people overwhelmed him with clamors of applause. "At last they said to me," writes Huss, "Master, all that we have just heard is Catholic; we have taught those things for many, many years, looking on them as true; and such we consider them still. Undoubtedly you will return from this council with honor." "Learn," says Huss, "that I have not hitherto met with a single enemy, but that in every place where I have stopped I have been excellently received. In fact, the bitterest enemies I have are certain obscure persons from Bohemia. What more shall I say to you? The Lords Wenceslaus Duba and John Chlum act piously and nobly toward me. They are the heralds and advocates of the truth, and with them, God giving his aid, all passes most suitably."

From hospitable Nuremberg Huss traveled to Swabia, on the extreme border of which Constance was situated. Here, too, the courteous kindness and respect with which he was welcomed far surpassed his expectations. At Biberach, some fifty miles from Constance, he disputed with several priests, and other learned men, on the subject of obedience to the pope. The popular satisfaction with the result was such, that he was borne in triumph through the street. Such a reception, by those who were personally strangers to Huss, shows how ready was the soil of the popular mind for the seeds of reforming truth.

On the third of November the Bohemians arrived at Constance.

From every direction crowds were thronging to the famous council. Multitudes had already arrived, and more were on their way. The buildings of the city were insufficient to accommodate the immense concourse. Booths and wooden buildings were erected outside the walls, and thousands of pilgrims were encamped in the adjoining country. The whole neighborhood presented a curious and novel scene. All classes of society—laity as well as clergy; representatives of every nation, with their peculiarities of costume and manner; the soldier in his armor; the prince followed by his escort; the prelate in his robes; the magistrate with his symbols of authority; servants hastening on errands; thousands providing for the food and entertainment of those who had gathered to the council—all contributed to make the city of Constance a miniature Christendom. To consult the various tastes of the immense crowd of strangers, there were shows and amusements of all kinds, dramatic entertainments and representations of every description, varied with the solemn or gaudy pomp of religious proceedings. Van der Hardt has preserved,
on the large folio pages of his "History of the Council," the pictured insignia of those who were in person, or by deputy, present during its sessions. Amid the infinite multiplicity and diversity of these coats of arms the mind is confused, and constrained to wonder at the scene within the walls of the Kaufhaus, where so many of them were blazoned or suspended about the walls. We have kings, popes, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, princes, dukes, marquises, counts, barons, nobles, knights, ambassadors, cardinals, abbots, masters, each with original or ancestral contributions to the heraldry of Europe, with devices that seem to have exhausted the symbolisms of nature and of art. What then must have been the spectacle which the city of Constance presented, when all these dignitaries were gathered within its walls, and each vied with the other in the pomp and magnificence of his attendance and display! Who that walked these crowded streets, or gazed upon the princely robes, the rich and costly attire sparkling with jewels and shining with gold, the waving plumes, the burnished armor, the embroidered standards, the splendid equipage, the lengthened cavalcade, which, as they swept by, seemed to realize some vision of oriental fancy, who would have imagined that amid such scenes of worldly pomp and pageantry were to be sought decisions and counsels, inspired by the Holy Ghost—sentiments accordant with the doctrines of the Galilean fishermen, or sympathy for the evangelical simplicity of the Bohemian reformer!

But let us not forget that, beneath all this gaudy ostentation of wealth and power, there was present another element, not worldly perhaps, though unconsciously controlled by worldly influences, which deserves a momentary notice. Among those who could claim membership in this most ecumenical of all the councils, were men whom we would have been glad to have found in better company, and whose ability, taste, learning, or devotion, however mistaken, suffices, and more than suffices, for their lack of coronets or heraldric device.

Literature and science were not unworthily represented. By the side of the dignitaries of the church and empire stood several of those whom the afterworld honors as the living lights of their age. There in the service, but not in serfdom, to the pope, might be seen Poggio Bracciolini of Florence, one of the most illustrious scholars of his day, his sentiments liberal and manly, and himself possessed with a zeal for literature which was rewarded by the discovery, in the old monasteries, of lost manuscripts of the ancient classics, the writings of Quintilian, Lucretius, Cicero, and others. There, too, was Thierry de Niém, secretary to several popes, and whom Providence seems to have placed near the source of so many iniquities that by his pen they might be consecrated to historic infamy. With these must be recorded also Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini, afterward Pope Pius II, whose fame, as the wearer of the triple-crown, has been long since lost in the greater merit of his pen. There was also, eminent among the members of the council, Francis Zabarella, Cardinal of Florence, a man whose learning, virtues, and moderation secured the respect of all the members of the council, and whose funeral, not long after this, was
attended in a most imposing manner by the emperor himself, as well as the
highest dignitaries of church and state. The feebleness of the Eastern empire
had no need to blush for its representative, when it sent in its behalf to
Constance the learned Manuel Chrysoloras, a man whose worth was testified by
the gratitude of his scholar Poggio, who erected a handsome monument to his
memory. By the side of the epitaph that declares his virtues, were verses
composed in his honor by Æneas Sylvius, and inscribed in letters of gold.

But among all who were members of the council of Constance, none occupied a
more important position, or exerted greater influence upon the decisions of the
body, than John Charlier Gerson, and Peter D’Ailly, Cardinal of Cambray,
honored with the appellation of "The Eagle of France." Gerson, for a long time,
might be regarded as the master-spirit of the council. As ambassador of Charles
VI, king of France, and chancellor of the church and university of Paris, his
position was one to give force and effect to his word, and it is not too much to
say that he was fully equal to his station. To a character above reproach, and a
zeal which rose superior to every obstacle and rejected every seducing
influence, he joined a degree of ability for thought, speech, and action which
made him facile princeps, the foremost man among the foremost men of the
council. More than perhaps any other member, he had a well and clearly-
devised scheme of his own, a philosophy of ecclesiasticism, which was the
product of years of careful and observing thought. Better, perhaps, than any
other member, he understood the attitude and relations of the figures on the
chessboard of Christendom, and knew the moves to be made to win the game
for the church.

For the most part, the Cardinal of Cambray, although raised by John XXIII to
the honors of the purple, occupied an independent position, and was found
generally by the side of Gerson. Revered by the latter as his former master,
teacher and pupil were now united in common views and common efforts. Both
had learned in the university of Paris some lessons in regard to the
circumstances and corruption of the church which were not yet lost upon them,
and both were men whose fearless integrity rose above the allurements of
greatness or the frowns of power.

The universities of Paris, Cologne, Vienna, Heidelberg, Prague, Orleans, Erfurt,
Avignon, Bologna, Cracow, and Oxford were represented at the council. Several
independent states and cities sent deputies or ambassadors.

Thus were assembled at Constance, in obedience to the summons of pope and
emperor, the component parts of a so-called Christian council, into whose
hands were given in trust the suffering interests of Christendom. In the sequel
we shall see the results accomplished, such as might be expected of a body of
men drawn together by the most diverse and discordant motives, each of them
for the most part impelled by an ambition of his own. The thoughtful observer
turns his eye away from all the pageantry and pomp that allure the senses, to
the humble dwelling of a poor widow, whom Huss compares to her of Sarepta, who received Elijah. In her house the Bohemian reformer found a welcome refuge, if not a secure asylum.

CHAPTER XIII

Arrest and Imprisonment of Huss

The next morning after the arrival of Huss at Constance, the two noblemen who had accompanied him, John of Chlum and Wenzel of Duba, visited the pope to notify him of the fact. They informed him that Huss had come, provided with a safe-conduct from the emperor, and begged to know, without reserve, whether he might remain in Constance free from the risk of violence. The pope's answer seemed frank and cordial. "Had he killed my own brother," said John XXIII, thanking the knights for this mark of deference, "not a hair of his head should be touched while he remained in the city."

No doubt the pope was sincere in his declaration. He did not wish to offend the Bohemian knights. It was his interest rather to secure their favor. It is impossible, from his known character, to suppose that he felt in the least concerned for the fate of Huss, so long as he could be left unmolested himself. The time had not yet come when it was his policy, by an affected zeal for orthodoxy, to avert from his own head the indignation his crimes merited, and concentrate it upon Huss.

During the first few weeks of his residence in Constance, Huss enjoyed a tolerable share of liberty. His sentence of excommunication was suspended, not from any regard for himself personally, but that the city might not be subject to interdict on his account. He was enjoined, however, not to be present at public mass, and to avoid giving any occasion for scandal. At his own lodgings he was left unmolested. Here he conversed with large numbers of persons who came to visit him, vindicating his innocence, and defending his doctrines by word and pen. Each day he celebrated mass in his chamber, in the presence of many who assembled from the neighborhood. The bishop of Constance is said to have sent his vicar to prohibit the continuance of the practice, and to represent to him that, as excommunicate, it was not permissible for him to discharge the sacred offices of priest. To this we are told that Huss replied in a somewhat defiant tone, declaring that he paid no heed to the excommunication. But the story rests on doubtful authority, and does not accord with the prudent and conciliatory tone which Huss assumed from his first arrival in the city.
His attention was especially directed towards making preparation for the public audience before the council, in the confidence of which he had set out for Constance. With this object in view he prepared two discourses, which he wished to deliver, and which have been preserved to us in his works. The first of these is substantially a confession of his faith. He declares his assent to the Apostolic creed, protesting that he has never intentionally advanced or defended anything opposed to any article of faith. The Holy Scriptures are, in his judgment, the true rule of doctrinal belief, and sufficient for salvation. He would not exclude recognition of the sentences of the doctors who have faithfully expounded scripture, and he professes his veneration for general and provincial councils, decretals, laws, canons, and constitutions, so far as they are conformed to the word of God. Faith is the foundation of all the virtues which are essential to the service of God. It must precede the confession of the lips and active obedience. Every man is of necessity a disciple of God or of the devil. The rudiments, the alphabet, of either school is faith or infidelity. He holds, moreover, as he had taught in Bethlehem chapel, that we are not to put faith in the virgin, the saints, the church, or the pope, but in God alone. The highest form of faith is that which is due to Holy Scripture as the primitive standard of truth. A Christian faith necessitates a life of obedience, and hence a person in mortal sin is only a Christian in name, and cannot recite the creed without lying.

On the subject of the church, he presents the same view which he had put forth in his treatise two years previous, but dwells more particularly on the doctrine of the “sleeping church.” He admits that souls in purgatory may be benefited by the intercession of the living, and prays Christ to forgive those who had said or insinuated that he denied the intercession of saints. He takes pains to express his regard for the Virgin Mary as our advocate, mediatrix, and in some sort, the cause of the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of Christ, and consequently of our salvation.

The second sermon of Huss is on the subject of the peace and union of the church. Here he often employs language taken from the writings of Jerome, Bernard, Gregory, and others. The tone of the discourse is less pungent and severe than that of many which were subsequently delivered in the presence of the council. But Huss was not to be allowed to preach. His Bohemian enemies had followed him to Constance, resolved upon his ruin. The principal ones among them were, of course, Stephen Paletz, Michael de Causis, and Andrew Broda, but besides, there were also Nason, Beuesch, Nicholas of Podwein, Nicholas, priest of the Vissehrad, John Stokes the Englishman, and some twelve others. Stanislaus was on the way to join them, when he was struck down by the pestilence and died at Neuhaus.

His enemies had no sooner reached the city, than they nailed placards in all public places, denouncing Huss as a heretic and as excommunicate. Spies were set upon his track, to note his conduct and report his words. His enemies had
the largest liberty to vaunt their malignant calumnies, while he was confined almost entirely to his lodgings. They approached the pope and cardinals, and employed all their arts to increase the prejudice against Huss. They bore it ill that the limited measure of freedom which he enjoyed should be extended to him, and they felt that the first step necessary to the success of their designs was to secure his arrest. His course in conversing with those who came to visit him gave them occasion for representing to the cardinals the danger of leaving him any longer at liberty.

The spirit of his persecutors was bitter and unrelenting, as well as unscrupulous. Paletz and Michael de Causis were the most active. As to the latter, he was a fit tool for a conspiracy deigned to injure and betray the innocent. He had formerly been curate of the parish church of St. Adelbert, in Prague. He had acquired, moreover, an unenviable character for unscrupulous and greedy avarice. Abandoning his clerical duties, he gave himself up to the pursuits of a fraudulent speculation. It was not long before he found his way to court, and became a boon companion of the reckless and drunken king. Abetting, like a true parasite, the schemes of Wenzel, he waited only the fitting moment to abuse and betray the confidence he had gained. Under pretense of advancing a certain royal project for mining, which promised to replenish the coffers of the king, he received for the purpose a large sum of money in advance, with which he absconded in the night. But with money at command, he knew where his crimes would be found venial. He offered his services to the papal court, and John XXIII could scarcely boast of a more subtle knave or a more serviceable tool. His special business now was one in which his heart, so far as he had any, was enlisted; it was to secure the condemnation of Huss. As a select member of the papal suite, he had the task assigned him of endeavoring to crush a man who had been once his neighbor, and toward whom, beyond question, while at the court of Wenzel, he had professed a warm friendship and respect.

Paletz, Broda, and Stokes, if not more respectable, were at least less infamous. But all of them had been engaged in controversy with Huss, and the bitterness of their zeal was aggravated by unpleasant memories. They had felt the blows of the reformer’s logic, and had not escaped from the conflict with the prestige of success. Paletz no doubt charged his banishment from Prague to the account of Huss.

Of the other conspirators we have less knowledge. But it throws some light upon their character that they could affiliate with such a villain as Michael de Causis. All, or nearly all of them, had their grievances to avenge. They had pursued Huss at Prague with such means as they could command, and now they had followed him to Constance resolved that he should not escape.

The measures which they adopted proved successful. The cardinals were persuaded to summon Huss before them. Indeed, in the circumstances, it
would have been difficult for them to refuse. They were pressed with complaints against Huss, and their attention was drawn to his writings by the studious efforts of his enemies. By the latter they were followed from place to place, visited in their dwellings, and besought to consent to active measures of prosecution. The articles of accusation against him—some of them utterly false—were drawn up with a malicious diligence, and the substance of them repeated wherever it was possible to excite prejudice.

Nor was this all. It was a sore grievance to the enemies of Huss that he should be allowed intercourse with those who thronged to visit him at his lodgings. Attempts were made to induce him to desist from the observance of religious services to which citizens were admitted. The limited privilege of access to the minds of other, which he had at first enjoyed, was to be denied him. He had already, at the instance of the bishop of Constance, consented to remain as private as possible, so as not to afford occasion of scandal. But, for still greater security, it was necessary to operate on the minds of the people and induce them to refrain from visiting him. This project the bishop of Lubeck undertook to execute, partly in person and partly by emissaries. The report was studiously disseminated that Huss, as an extraordinary magician, could read the thoughts of all who approached him within a certain distance, and that he was, in particular, an adept in discerning all that might pass in the minds of those who should attend his sermons, not infrequently making his discoveries publicly known. To such arts did his enemies resort to prevent his access to the minds of others. Even this was only preparatory to the more decisive measure of his arrest, upon which his enemies were resolved.

Meanwhile some progress had been made in the affairs of the council. It leas doubtless far from disagreeable to the pope to find himself at Constance so much more promptly than the emperor. It afforded him a favorable opportunity to shape the opening sessions of the council in his own favor. He wished to have it regarded as the continuation, or at least the authorized successor of that of Pisa, to the legitimacy and validity of which he appealed to sustain his own claims as the rightful and sole pontiff. The prolonged absence of the emperor relieved him of one obstacle to the accomplishment of his designs.

The first day of November, 1414, had been fixed for the opening of the council, by the appointment of the emperor and the bull of convocation. By the advice of the cardinals, the pope contented himself with celebrating mass, and adjourning the opening of the council to the third of the month. The announcement made by Zabarella in the pope’s name was skilfully worded. "Pope John XXIII resolved at Lodi to celebrate at Constance a general council in continuation of that of Pisa, and the opening session will take place on the third of November." The inference was plain. The legitimate tenure of his office by John XXIII, to the exclusion of his rival, was thus coolly assumed.
On the next day six additional cardinals arrived, and were received with great show and pomp. Twelve *Auditores Rotae*, or judges of the papal court, were appointed, and were conducted by escort to St. Stephen’s church, which had been fitted up for the purpose. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of each week were set apart by them to hear ecclesiastical causes.

The third of November arrived, but the opening session was deferred to the fifth. The pope was now ready to proceed. Fifteen cardinals, two patriarchs, twenty-three archbishops, and a large number of prelates were present. At the early hour of seven o’clock in the morning, a congregation was held, to complete all the necessary arrangements. When this was done, all the bells of the city were rung to announce the fact. The procession, swelled by all the clergy in the city, and accompanied by an immense crowd that pressed upon it, moved to the cathedral church. The religious rites usual at the opening of a council were observed, and a sermon was preached by a Benedictine doctor. The next session was appointed for the sixteenth of the month.

Before it arrived, the numbers of the council were largely increased. On the ninth, five cardinals and a large number of bishops and of the nobility arrived, and the pope received the welcome intelligence that his forces had recovered full possession of Rome. The following day was consequently appointed and observed as a day of thanksgiving for the favorable event. In the midst of its solemnities, the patriarch of Constantinople and the grand master of Rhodes entered the city.

Already busy hands were working the wires of ecclesiastical intrigue. Behind the scenes there were plotting and counter-plotting, bargain and sale, logrolling and bribery, the details of which no history could record. But amid a crowd of competitors, the pontifical schemer was *facile princeps*. If we may believe Thierry de Niem—and no man had better opportunities than himself for observation—the pope wove the net of his intrigue around the council, and, in his palace, the center of it, watched every thread, and eyed, by means of his partisans, every victim. He surrounded himself with the old associates and “hucksters” of his simony. His court was crowded with them. By their instrumentality, and that of bishops and prominent members of the council bought over to his interest by promised favors, or secured by those arts of which he was a consummate master, he acquired early intelligence of every project, and the means of thwarting it or converting it to his own interest. Every party had its traitors on whom he could rely, and no measure was discussed or agitated so secretly that he did not hear of it before he closed his eyes to slumber. The great majority of the Italians stood blindly committed in his favor.

From day to day congregations were held, at which the policy of the council, and the measures to be taken, were earnestly and sometimes angrily discussed. The great problem of the schism was the one upon the solution of which all
minds were intent. At the congregation held November 12th, the pope chanced to be absent. In the exercise of the freedom which his absence permitted, an important paper was read, which, after detailing the steps to be taken for the more full organization of the council, and the proper officers to be appointed, closed with declaring that the union of the church must precede measures for its reformation; that no effort should be spared to unite the church under John XXIII; that the voluntary cession of the contestants was desirable, but in case of their refusal, they were to be constrained and treated as enemies and destroyers of the church, in spite of the language of their flatterers, who claimed that a pope was under no obligation to obey the decrees of a general council.

The first part of this document contained a recognition of the authority of the council of Pisa, and was doubtless agreeable to John XXIII, but the latter part was less to his taste, and none ventured to present it to him. In the following congregation, November 15, it was not even noticed. But the pope must soon have had full information in regard to it, and, dissembling his dissatisfaction, must have found it necessary to parry a blow which, aimed ostensibly at others, might yet fall with crushing weight on his own head. He did attempt to parry it, and, as we shall see, the foil he used was the heresy of Huss.

Due provision having been made, the session of the sixteenth of the month was held. John XXIII presided. The cardinal Jordan de Usurnis celebrated mass, and the pontiff delivered a discourse from Zechariah 8:16—"Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates." It is easier to conceive than describe the feelings with which men like Nein must have listened to words in which the pope uttered his own sentence, and heightened, by the contrast of his eulogy on justice, the hue of his own crimes. He exhorted all to carefully consider and heartily communicate whatever could tend to the peace and purity of the church. There were some in the council who were prepared most ungraciously to accept his invitation.

The pope closed his discourse, and Zabarella, taking his stand near the pontiff, read in a loud voice the preamble of the bull of convocation, in which the favorite idea of the pope, claiming the council of Constance as successor to that of Pisa, was again presented. The reading of the bull itself was completed by an apostolic secretary, when the cardinal resumed, addressing the council in behalf of the pope, setting forth, in substance, that having issued his summons for the council, the pope had now, at the time appointed, come with his cardinals to Constance, fully resolved to employ all his means and influence to promote the peace and reformation of the church; and, in order to the prosecution of so holy a work, in which none should presume on his own wisdom, he ordains that, during the continuance of the council, solemn mass should be celebrated every Thursday in all the churches, cathedral and collegiate, secular and regular, of the city; and, to engage all devoutly to assist, he grants forty days’ indulgence to all who shall be present, and to
priests, with whom he includes all the higher clergy, who are exhorted to celebrate mass, a year’s indulgence. All Christians are exhorted to obtain from heaven, by prayer, fasting, alms, and other good works, a happy issue for the council. It was added, that as the principal object in view is the maintenance of the Catholic faith, according to the ancient councils, all who are versed in the writings that concern them, are bound, individually and collectively, to consider well what may contribute to this end, while attention is especially to be directed to errors that for some time past have been reported to have widely spread in certain portions of the world, and preeminently to those which were originated by Wickliffe.

To all, the pope assured the largest liberty in setting forth their views. For preserving the order of the council, he cited and commended the canon of the council of Toledo, which enjoined the duty of speaking discreetly and to the point; to abstain from. noise or tumult; not to laugh or jeer; not to contend, or conduct with passion or obstinacy, under pain of expulsion and excommunication for the space of three days. This canon, as we shall have occasion to see hereafter, would not have been a bad one to have observed. The reputation of the council would have been better for it.

The names of those nominated as officers of the council were also submitted and approved. Berthold de Ursinis was designated palatine and guard of the council, and to him the protection and security of the body were committed. Notaries, secretaries, and auditors were appointed, and the nominations were unanimously confirmed. The session closed with the announcement that the council would again meet on the seventeenth of the following month.

Up to this time John XXIII had met with few obstacles in the prosecution of his plans. His time had been carefully improved in strengthening his party, and increasing the number of his adherents. Upon the Italians he could count almost to a man, and the large number of them who were present assured him a powerful minority, if not even a majority in point of numbers. To the Bohemians he had shown himself friendly up to the last moment, but the announcement made in the last session, of the duty of the council to pay special heed to the heresies that had sprung from Wickliffe, foreshadowed the policy which the pope was forced to adopt by the circumstances in which he was placed.

For him, indeed, no subject could have been more welcome than the heresy charged on Huss. In the earnest prosecution of this, he might depend on the support of the large number who identified the views of the Bohemian reformer with those of Wickliffe. So secure did he feel in his own position, that he ventured, on the third day after the session (November 19th), to have the insignia of his rivals, Benedict and Gregory, which their ambassador who had just arrived had set up, torn down from over the doors of their lodgings. The act of violence was perpetrated in the darkness of night—no one could doubt by
whose instigation—but when complained of to the council, the opinions of members were so diverse that no action could be taken. It was for John XXIII a very opportune measure to divert attention from himself to the heresy of Huss. It gratified the enemies of the latter, and secured for the former that reputation of zeal for the purity of faith which was so necessary as a cloak to his enormities. His recommendations bore speedy fruit. The prosecutors of Huss were encouraged to a more bold and open assault upon him.

On the 28th of November a meeting of cardinals was held in the episcopal palace, to take the case of Huss into consideration. He was cited to present himself before them. Two bishops, accompanied by the mayor of the city, and a knight, bore the citation. They found Huss at his lodgings, where he was quietly dividing his time between study and familiar conversation with his friends. They informed him of their errand, stating that they had been sent by the pope and cardinals to request him, in accordance with his expressed desire to give account of his doctrines, to appear before them.

"I did not come here," calmly replied Huss, "with the intention of pleading my cause before the pope and the cardinals, and I never desired any such thing; but I wished to appear before the general council, in the presence of all, and there, openly and plainly, reply, on every point proposed to me, according as God shall inspire me for my defense. Yet I do not refuse to appear previously before the cardinals; and, if they act unfairly toward me, I shall put my trust in the Saviour Jesus Christ, and shall be more happy to die for his glory than live to deny the truth as taught in the Holy Scriptures."

The bearers of the citation conducted themselves toward Huss with gentleness and respect. They had, however, taken the precaution to station bands of soldiers in the neighborhood before presenting the citation, so that resistance, had it been offered, would have been vain. Huss, unsuspicous of the fact, complied readily with the summons. On the lower floor he was met by the mistress of the house, Fida by name, who took leave of him with tears. Struck with a presentiment of death, and deeply moved, he bestowed on her his blessing. He then mounted his horse, and, attended by his noble friend John de Chlum, followed the bishops to the episcopal palace.

The cardinals were already assembled, but it is doubtful whether John XXIII was present. It was but little more than a week since Cardinal D’Ailly had arrived, and he now, for the first time, met the much defamed Bohemian reformer. So far as severity of language in reprobation of ecclesiastical abuse was concerned, both were equally implicated. The former Bishop of Cambray, now a cardinal, had exhibited as little reverence for papal authority as Huss himself. The two men now stood face to face, and there is reason to believe that the first impression made upon the cardinal by the bearing and language of Huss was far from unfavorable.
Huss saluted the cardinals, and by them was addressed as follows: "Master John Huss, we have heard many things of you, which, if true, cannot be tolerated. Public fame accuses you of having disseminated in Bohemia errors of the gravest kind, and such as are manifestly opposed to the Catholic church. We have summoned you here before us, to learn the truth of the case." "Be assured, I beg of you, reverend fathers," replied Huss, "that I would much rather die than be convicted of any heresy, much more of many, and those of the gravest kind, as you express it. And to this end have I cheerfully come to this council, giving my word that if anyone can convince me of any error, I will unhesitatingly abjure it."

"It is well spoken," said the cardinals, as they closed their morning session, and withdrew, leaving Huss, with his friend Chlum, in custody. But they had given to his words a meaning which they were never intended to convey. Huss wished to be convinced by reason and scripture. He would not blindly bow to the authority of the pope, cardinals, or council.

During the interval between the morning and afternoon sessions, a monk of the order of Minorite friars approached to converse with Huss. His object was not at first suspected, but when his character and standing were afterwards known, it was suspected that he was a tool of the cardinals, and had been sent by them to entrap Huss while off his guard. In a friendly tone, and with an appearance of ingenuous inquiry, he accosted the prisoner; with insinuating art he assumed the appearance of a simple-minded and ignorant man, anxious to gain instruction. "I have heard," said he, "that many opinions have been attributed to you which are opposed to the Catholic faith, and these things have excited scruples in my mind. In the first place, they accuse you of believing that only bread remains in the sacrament of the alter, after consecration and the pronunciation of the sacramental words." Huss replied, promptly and directly, that the charge was false. "What!" said the monk, "is not that your belief?" "By no means," replied Huss. The monk was disposed to insist yet further, when Chlum, suspecting his purpose, interrupted him, and rebuked him for his impertinence. Excusing himself on the ground of his ignorance and his desire for information, the monk changed the subject. "What do you think," said he, "of the union of the human and divine nature in the person of Jesus Christ?" On this, Huss turned himself to Chlum, and said, in Bohemian, "This fellow, be sure, is not so ignorant as he pretends, for he has proposed to me a most difficult question." Then addressing the monk, he replied, "My brother, you say that you are simple-minded, but by your subtle question I perceive that you are double-minded, and that, under a plain appearance, you conceal a most shrewd and penetrating mind. But whatever you may be, know that this union is personal, inseparable, and entirely supernatural." On this the monk withdrew, thanking Huss for his good instructions. Huss afterward learned from one of the soldiers that this pretended monk was Didacus, one, of the most able theologians of Lombardy. He expressed his regret that he had not known it at the time, that he might have improved the opportunity for a more full and
extended conversation. "Would to God," said he, "that all my adversaries resembled him, and fortified by the succor of the scriptures, I should not fear one of them."

Huss and Chlum remained in custody until the reassembling of the cardinals at four o’clock in the afternoon. They met as before in the pope’s chamber. The question now before them was what should be done with Huss. His enemies, Paletz and Causis, were present, employing all their influence to secure his imprisonment. They urged and insisted that he should not be set at liberty. It is altogether probable that the eight articles of accusation which they had elaborately drawn up, were presented on this occasion. These were to the effect that Huss rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation; that a priest in mortal sin cannot administer the sacraments; that by the church is not to be understood the pope, clergy, or members of the hierarchy, and that its endowment by secular princes is unwise; that all priests are equal, and it is false that bishops alone have the right to consecrate and ordain; that the entire church has no power of the keys, when the whole clergy is in gross sin; and that Huss had contemned his excommunication, having read mass every day on his journey to Constance.

This document had been penned by Causis, and he did not fail, after presenting it, to add other aggravations of the guilt of Huss. He accused him of having been the author of the troubles in the university; of having been the only one there who held the errors of Wickliffe; of having inflamed the laity against the clergy; and of having gathered to himself a body of adherents who were heretical, and enemies of the Roman church. Hence he inferred that if Huss should escape the severity of the council, he would do more harm than any heretic had done since the days of Constantine; and he therefore supplicated the pope to appoint without delay a commission to examine him, and doctors who should make a careful review of his writing.

It is uncertain whether these accusations and the petition were presented on this occasion, or within a day or two subsequent. However this may be, the cardinals decided that Huss should be kept under arrest. As night approached, the provost of the pontifical palace informed John de Chlum that he was at liberty, but that Huss must remain in custody. The noble knight felt his sense of justice outraged by the announcement of a measure in his view so base and perfidious. Fired to indignation, he complained most bitterly that a worthy and upright man had been lured by false representations into an infamous snare. It was only adding outrage to injustice, when his persecutors, as they passed and repassed Huss, insultingly cried out, "Behold, we have possession of thee; and thou shalt not escape till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

Chlum hastened to the pope to inform him of what had taken place, and to remonstrate with him on the violation of his promise. He exhorted him not so unworthily to disregard his plighted faith. John XXIII declared that he had done
nothing against Huss, and, pointing to the cardinal. and bishops, exclaimed, "Why do you impute anything to me, when you well know that I am myself here in their power?"

There might have been some weight in this exculpation, if the pope had shown any disposition, then or subsequently, to befriend Huss. But it was too obvious that he was merely the creature of circumstance, and the slave of his own interest. Huss was personally to him an object of supreme indifference, but if he could divert the attention of the council from himself to the business of investigating heresy, he would gain an important object. So far, he saw no reason to interfere with the measures of the cardinals. He in fact acceded to the petition of the prosecutors, and appointed a commission of three—the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Bishop of Lubeck, and the Bishop of Tiefern—who were to hear the witnesses against Huss as well as in his defense, and report to the council.

Huss was given over to the charge of the Bishop of Constance, and remained eight days with the Canon of the cathedral. He was taken thence (December 6, 1414) to the prison of the Dominican monastery on the banks of the Rhine. His enemies could scarcely have selected a place of confinement more nauseous or unhealthy. The monastery was situated near the spot where the Rhine issues from the lake of Constance. Here he was thrown into an underground apartment, through which every sort of impurity was discharged into the lake. This place at least—more removed from the noise and excitement of the city—might be regarded as sufficiently secure. Huss was left in the custody of the friars.

The noxious stench and effluvia of the place were not long in producing their effect upon the health of the prisoner. In a few hours Huss was thrown into a violent fever, which threatened his life. The aggravated injustice of his arrest and imprisonment undoubtedly contributed to that mental excitement which would exasperate the disease. What must Huss, conscious of his innocence, have thought, in the solitude and suffering of his prison, of the Christianity, the justice, or humanity of men, who illustrated their orthodoxy by such harsh treatment and barbarous treachery as that to which he was now made a victim?

Meanwhile John de Chlum had not relaxed his efforts in the prisoner’s behalf. The pope had referred him to the cardinals as the authors of the arrest. He proceeded, therefore, successively to visit the four cardinals who represented respectively the German, English, French, and Italian nations. But they received his application with cold indifference. He urged in behalf of Huss the imperial safe-conduct; but the first told him that the safe-conduct derived its authority, in the first instance, from the council itself, who could accept or reject secular documents of a similar nature at their option. The second declared that no faith need be kept with heretics. Shame on the Englishman, whose native good sense told him, even in his bigotry, that he had hit upon the
only principle that could afford even a specious justification of the treatment
of Huss. The French and Italian cardinals, informed of Chlum’s visit, and aware
of his errand, closed their doors upon him, and paid him no attention.

Stung to deeper indignation by such unmanly and ungenerous treatment, Chlum
rushed out among the people who were gathered about the papal palace, out
of sympathy, as he supposed, for the prisoner. How great was his
disappointment! The enemies of Huss had subsidized the dregs of the mob in
their cause. The priests had dispersed their creatures in all directions to spread
the report that Huss had no safe-conduct, but was, in fact, an outlaw. The
rumors thus artfully spread, took effect. The rude populace were swayed by
the influence, and probably by the gold, of their superiors. With less reserve
than they, and with a kindred taste, they took delight in insulting defenseless
misery. From one to another the disgraceful falsehoods about Huss were
circulated. In vain did Chlum appeal to them for sympathy. Where he was not
met by a cold indifference, he was forced to submit to the taunts and threats
of the hostile multitude. "A madman and coward, like Huss," they said, "was
quite unworthy of such warm sympathy and friendship."

Already it was growing late. The streets were deserted, and the lights
extinguished. The faithful and noble knight, overpowered with grief and
fatigue, retired to rest. If his eyes closed that night to slumber, it must have
been to a slumber disturbed by sad and troubled dreams. But, whatever the
meditations of his restless hours, we may at least be sure that they were
worthy of an heroic friendship.

Undismayed even by the cold repulses and the abuse to which he had been
subjected, Chlum was still resolved to procure the release of Huss. He
bethought himself now, as a last resort, to appeal to the emperor himself,
whose authority had been trampled on by the violation of his safe-conduct.

In this purpose he may have been encouraged by the timely arrival in
Constance of his countryman, Henry de Latzembock, who, with himself and
Duba, had been appointed by Wenzel to look after the safety of Huss.
Latzembock had been for some time in the suite of the emperor, had
accompanied him to Aix-la-Chapelle, and had been present at his coronation at
that place on the eighth day of the month. After procuring the safe-conduct of
Huss at Spires, and forwarding it to Nuremberg, he continued near the
emperor, by whom he was treated with high consideration. After the ceremony
of coronation had taken place, he was dispatched with letters to the pope at
Constance announcing the fact. With these in hand, he arrived in the city on
the very day of the arrest of Huss. "With what emotions," exclaims a Roman
Catholic historian, "must he have seen, if not the chains, at least the
imprisonment of Huss!" Undoubtedly he would, in his surprise, share the
indignation of his compatriot Chlum, and it is not impossible that the purpose
of the latter to apply to the emperor was taken by the advice of Latzembock, or in conference with him.

The very next morning Chlum wrote to the emperor, asking for redress. He detailed the circumstances of the arrest and imprisonment, and entreated him to interfere that justice might be done. To leave no means untried which might contribute to his success, he wrote also a similar dispatch to Bohemia. From day to day, as he traversed the streets of the city, he did not fail to exhibit, as opportunity offered, the large sealed parchment which contained the imperial safe-conduct.

This document read as follows: "Sigismund, by the grace of God, King of the Romans, etc.: To all princes, ecclesiastical and lay, and all our other subjects, greeting. Of our full affection, we recommend to all in general, and to each individually, the honorable man, Master John Huss, bachelor in theology and master of arts, the bearer of these presents, going from Bohemia to the council of Constans, whom we have taken under our protection and safeguard, and under that of the empire, requesting, when he arrives among you, that you will receive him kindly and treat him favorably, furnishing him whatever shall be necessary to promote and secure his journey, whether by water or by land, without taking any thing from him or his, at his entrance or his departure, on any claim whatever; but let him freely and securely pass, sojourn, stop, and return; providing him, if necessary, with good passports, to the honor and respect of the imperial majesty. Given at Spires, October 18, 1414."

We can imagine something of the patriotic indignation with which Chlum must have exhibited the imperial seal attached to this important document. To blazon abroad more widely the injustice done to Huss he affixed to the doors of the cathedral and council-house a placard, signed with his own name, in which he stated that an act of unheard-of tyranny had been committed against Professor Huss, that the imperial safe-conduct had been contemned, and that the emperor and the empire would never submit to the insult that had thus been offered to their authority.

The letter of Chlum to the emperor was doubtless dispatched by him on the first or second day after the arrest of Huss. Latzembock was the bearer of it, doubtless, and with it he also bore another from the pope to the emperor, scarcely less significant. This last was in reply to one from the emperor to John XXIII, which bore date November 9th, the day after the coronation, and which was full of expressions of affection and filial submission. The pope, in his respose, did not fail to reciprocate all these terms of endearment. He congratulated the emperor on his coronation, and besought him to make all diligence to be present at the council, inasmuch as nothing important could be done in his absence.
Such was the character of this curious imperio-pontifical correspondence, which was but the prelude to a conflict of intrigue as embittered as if it had been waged in mortal strife. But the two men knew each other. John XXIII saw at a glance the respectful and deferential hypocrisy of the emperor, and was not to be outdone in an art in which he was himself an adept. He declared that the emperor’s sincere affection for himself and for the holy church afforded him great pleasure, so much so that he thanks the Almighty for it, and receives the glad intelligence of the fortunate commencement of his reign, as an omen of that future success which he will implore of the Lord, to the praise of the divine name, the peace of the church, the strengthening of the Roman empire, and the immortal glory of his imperial majesty. He expresses his zeal to patronize the emperor, “exalting and cherishing so worthy a son, and such an invincible athlete of the Christian faith.”

Such was the pope’s letter of December 1st, 1414. It was written two days after the arrest of Huss, yet never refers to it in a single line. Who would imagine, from such a correspondence, the clashing and conflicting interests of the two men? Who would imagine that every line was dictated by hypocrisy, and that the two correspondents were full of mutual distrust and hatred?

But the mask, so well worn at first, was now to be rudely torn off. The letters of the pope and of John de Chlum, borne probably by the same messenger, Latzembock, reached the emperor at the same moment. He was not slow to comment on the significance of each. If Latzembock was the bearer of both epistles, as he doubtless was, he would not fail to express his own sense of the outrage offered to the imperial authority by the arrest of Huss. Under the impulse of the moment, and moved at least by his own self-respect, if not his own unextinguished sense of justice or the generosity of his nature, Sigismund determined to rebuke the insult offered to his authority. The result, at least, was another letter in this singular correspondence, in a tone altogether different from that which had been hitherto employed. The pontiff and his court had presumed to contemn the imperial authority, and Sigismund was not as yet versed in that peculiar casuistry by which the doctors of the council afterward succeeded in reconciling him to the violation of his plighted faith. In very plain and unequivocal language he now gave vent to his indignation. He sent his ambassadors forward without delay to Constance, sharply insisting on the immediate release of Huss from his unjust imprisonment. Prompt measures were to be taken, and violence employed if necessary, to secure obedience to the imperial mandate.

Meanwhile Huss had been removed from his foul cell in the Dominican monastery to cleaner and more healthy apartments above-ground. Upon this removal the physicians, with at least professional humanity, had boldly insisted. It is said that the pope, fearful lest Huss should die in prison and the cause of orthodoxy lose the incense of a burning heretic, had directed his own
physician to attend the prisoner. However this may be, the health of Huss began immediately to improve.

The commission who had been appointed to hear his accusers and his own defense, did not delay their proceedings on account of the sickness of Huss. They visited him in prison, while yet enfeebled by disease, and presented him with the list of the charges that had been drawn up against him. Huss asked that an advocate might be appointed him to defend his cause, inasmuch as by sickness and imprisonment he was not able to do it himself. The request was denied. He was told that according to canon law, no one could be allowed to take the part or plead the cause of a man suspected of heresy. One of the later Roman Catholic historians of these events undertakes to vindicate the justice of this canon.

But this was not the only hardship of which Huss had to complain. The same authority which denied him an advocate, admitted all kinds of evidence against him as a heretic. His enemies—and there were not a few who were glad of such an opportunity to offer their volunteer testimony—were thus invited to become his accusers. In his letters Huss complains that every day some new accusation against him was devised, composed of items false and captious, so that he could scarcely find time to answer them. The vexations to which he was subjected by the members of the commission, the insults offered by Paletz and Causis as well as other ecclesiastics, and the artifices and intrigues that were employed to prevent his having a hearing before the council, were enough to drive him to despondency. But in spite of all, his trust in God and the justice of his cause remained unshaken, and the writings which issued from his prison cell attest his incessant activity.

Another commission was appointed by the pope, probably in accordance with the request of his prosecutors, to examine his writings. It consisted of the Cardinals D’Ailly, St. Mark, Brancas, and Florence, two generals of orders, and six doctors of theology. These were busy at their task, while the other commission was gathering up testimony from witnesses whom Huss had no opportunity to confront, and whose names even were studiously concealed.

It was after the commissioners had begun their work, that the mandate of the emperor requiring the immediate release of Huss reached Constance. The instructions of the ambassadors were sufficiently explicit. John XXIII, after his flight from Constance, urges, among other reasons in justification of his course, the peremptory command of the emperor for the release of Huss, directing that in case of resistance his prison doors should be broken down and he set at liberty. This the pope resented as an interference with his prerogative and the duty of the council. He maintains that Huss had been arrested by his authority, and that the emperor had interfered with the due course of justice in ordering the enlargement of the prisoner.
It is evident, therefore, that the imperial mandate was received, and that its import was understood. But it was not an easy thing to carry it into execution in the absence of the emperor. On this question—however they might differ on other points—the pope and the cardinals, as well as the leading members of the council, were fully agreed. Against their united opposition nothing could be done. Nor does it appear that the imperial ambassadors knew where Huss was confined. This at least is certain, that the command of the emperor was not obeyed. Instead of being released, Huss was more closely confined. His removal to the Dominican monastery preceded but by a few days the arrival of the ambassadors, and may have been effected in anticipation of it. But he was now beyond the reach of the imperial officers, and they were forced to await the coming of the emperor before any decisive steps could be taken.

There were, indeed, some powerful motives which forbade the obedience of the pontiff to the emperor’s command. It was his interest to have questions of heresy precede any investigation of the question of the schism. It was something gained, meanwhile, to accustom men to witness the exercise of his own authority, and the bold assumption of his prerogative. In this matter, moreover, he was confident of powerful support. The cardinals and all the enemies of Huss were ranged upon his side.

In such circumstances John XXIII seemed not unwilling that the papal and imperial authority should come into open conflict. He felt sure of a triumph. It was not a little gained, if, while the scepter trembled in his hand, and Christendom owned a divided allegiance, he might openly and with impunity venture to trample on the imperial mandate.

CHAPTER XIV

Anxieties of the Pope

The English and French Deputations

There were several important questions which at this juncture claimed the attention of the council, and, divided with the subject of heresy, the anxiety and attention of the pope. One of these concerned the membership of the council; another was the manner in which the votes should be taken; and still another was the plan to be adopted to promote the union of the church.

Upon the decision of either of these the fate of John XXIII, as pontiff, might depend. As to the first, he had reason for anxiety lest, by the admission of the lower clergy, a majority should he secured adverse to his interests. By means of the large number of obscure Italian bishops who had followed him to
Constance, he hoped to be able to carry his measures. Distrustful of the other nations, he could rely upon his faithful Italians, and he did not wish to have their votes lost in those of the multitude of inferior clergy, and of the more secular element furnished from Germany, France, and England.

As to the second question—the manner in which the votes should be taken—the jealousy of the three other nations was excited by the numerical majority of the Italians. If the latter, however, as well as each of the others, was entitled to but a single vote, and the decisions of the council were to be based upon a majority of the votes by nations, each nation being entitled by a majority to determine how its vote should be cast, the Italians, who represented the strength of the papal party, would be able to command in the council but one vote out of four. To prevent such a consummation, urged by the French and Germans, was a favorite project on the part of the pope.

These two questions had been discussed as early as the twelfth of November, and early in December the other was taken up. It was strenuously urged that the wisest course would be to induce the two anti-popes, Benedict and Gregory, by gentle means, if possible, to cede their claims. It was hoped that by the lenity of the council, which was ready to lighten their fall, and secure for them in case of their abdication a favorable reversion, they might be persuaded to adopt this course. Such lenity, it was argued, with a gross inconsistency when the treatment of Huss is considered, was more accordant with the genius of the church, which was bound as a kind mother to reclaim her erring children by mild and gentle means.

Nothing had been publicly said as yet, in this connection, which bore directly against John XXIII. This was the subject which Niem calls the "noli me tangere." But appended to the schedule for the direction of the council, which had been drawn up in the congregation of November 12th, were certain articles which contemplated the possible necessity of extending the plan so as to include the abdication of John XXIII. But as yet, in the absence of the English and French deputations, the advocates of the measure did not feel themselves strong enough to urge it publicly. Although studiously concealed from the pope, he must soon have learned of it through his spies and the tools of his intrigue, at least if they possessed the skill for which Niem gives them credit, and the apprehension thus excited in the pontiff may be readily conceived.

The arrival of the English and Scotch deputations on the seventh of December, and of the French deputation on the eighteenth of the same month, gave a new face to these important questions, and unquestionably exercised a very considerable influence upon the policy of the council and the measures of the pope. Both these deputations were strongly prejudiced against Huss, and both of them were equally adverse to the favorite projects of the pope. It was not therefore an unwise move on the part of John XXIII to take the lead in urging on the trial of Huss. He might thus hope to secure the support of the English
and French deputations, or at least divert the attention of the council from other matters more threatening to himself.

The views of the French delegation found in John Gerson their ablest representative. Previous to the council of Pisa, he had, on mature investigation, adopted the position which he still maintained. Politically a strenuous upholder of monarchical institutions, he was, strangely enough, an ecclesiastical democrat. In his celebrated treatise "De Auferibilitate Papæ," the very title of which was startling, he argues in defense of a republican church polity, and maintains that the church is independent of the pope, and for just reasons may depose him. The membership of a general council should, moreover, represent the church universal. It should embrace not only the higher prelates, but the lower clergy, and even the laity should be admitted, if, as in case of kings, princes, and rulers, they are disposed and able to contribute to the defense and welfare of the church. None, in fact, should be excluded, whose position, advantages, or influence could be of service to the general cause. All such were entitled to be heard, and should be admitted to membership.

Gerson may have been led in part to the adoption of these views by the circumstances of the times. He had no faith in the sincerity of either of the popes, or their respective conclaves. He knew that no reformation of the church was to be hoped for, if left to them and the higher prelates alone. A more popular voice must be heard, and a more popular feeling enlisted, to secure the result.

With these views, in the main, D'Ailly, the Cardinal of Cambray, fully concurred. His treaties that remain show that they were his, and deliberately adopted, long before the assembling of the council of Constance. In some respects, indeed, they nearly approached the positions taken on the subject by the reformers of the succeeding century. Gerson and D'Ailly both held opinions, which they strenuously and openly maintained, which were charged upon Huss as heresy. The latter was far more desponding than his friend in regard to the expected reformation. "If a new pope was to be elected"—such was his language five years previous to the assembling of the council—"whence would he come? The cardinals would claim the right of election, and would elevate one of their own number to the purple." What might be expected of such an election he gives us to understand, in comparing the conclave to the priests of Baal, who were all to be thrown to the lions; or to the family of Eli, who were all to be extirpated. "Even if a good pope was elected, the cardinals would not obey him." But at that time he was not a cardinal himself.

In regard to the inherent sanctity or infallibility of the pontiff, the views of D'Ailly were equally bold and original. Promotion to the papacy did not make a man holy. Peter was not impeccable. He charges the alienation of England and Hungary from the Romish church to the avarice of Pope Boniface, so that these
kingdoms were still virtually (*acephali*) without a head. He does not spare the simony of the Roman court. He declares against the multitude, who, by trading in sacred things, had forced their way into the sheepfold. They had not entered in by the door, but by another way, and were truly robbers. He declares, "that as there is joy in heaven when a sinner repents, so then there is joy in Rome when a prelate dies. His benefices are the carcass around which the eagles exult to gather. An angel from heaven would vainly present his claim to be set over a vacant monastery, unless he paid for it the specified sum; otherwise his petition would not even be listened to." The question, in regard to one who seeks promotion, is not, "Are you a fit man, but have you got money?" He then traces the origin of the system of the reservation of benefices to the avarice of the popes, and claims that measures should be taken to restrain this unwarranted usurpation of power.

It seems strange that one holding such views, and openly maintaining and defending them, should have been elevated to the cardinalate by a man against whom they bore so directly as they did against John XXIII. And yet D’Ailly was raised by him to a seat in the conclave (1411). This promotion was, beyond doubt, intended as a bribe to buy him over to the pope’s interest. But if such was its intent, it signally failed. The course of the Cardinal of Cambray was independent of papal influence. He carried with him to the council the same opinions which he had previously held. That he knew the pope’s character from the first, and that he despaired of any good from that source, is evident.

In the treatise already referred to, he declares that the sects which had sprung up in Bohemia and Moravia were directly chargeable to the simoniacal heresy and reprobate acts of the court of Rome. The scandals committed at Prague, and which had spread over the whole kingdom, had been committed out of contempt for John XXIII. He mentions one of the books of Huss which impugns the papal authority and its plenitude of power, as written on this very account.

In Gerson’s works we find at least equal plainness of speech. The university of Paris was an independent republic in the bosom of the church, and though torn by many internal divisions, possessed still a national character, and uttered its decree with magisterial authority. At that period of the papal schism it seemed to have stepped into the vacant chair of papal authority, and to have disputed like a hard master with the popes themselves. Its views in regard to the council were represented by Gerson. On the point now under discussion, as to who should be admitted to a voice in the action of the council, Gerson had said, "Let no believer who wished to be heard be denied the privilege, so far at least as he is fitted to teach, or wishes to be taught." This was the position taken by the Cardinal of Cambray before Gerson’s arrival at the council. In a paper carefully drawn up, he maintained that no uniform rule had prevailed in regard to the membership of general councils. This had been dependent in great measure on the object for which they were convoked. In the councils of Pisa
and of Rome, not only had doctors been allowed to vote, but even secular priests, their ambassadors and proxies. He argued that, if it was intended really to reform the clergy, it would be absurd to exclude the men most interested to secure such a result.

These views of D’Ailly were ably seconded by the Cardinal St. Mark. He demanded where the authority was to be found for excluding the inferior clergy from a voice in the council. He appealed to St. Paul, Jerome, and the Canoeists, to substantiate his position that all orders should be equally admitted to co-membership. "According to St. Paul," said he, "the bishop and the priest have the same character, the same dignity, and the pope himself is only the first among priests." The proxies of such as could not themselves be present, as well as royal ambassadors, should be admitted also.

These were the views which finally prevailed, ecclesiastical republicanism against papal monarchism and infallibility. The success of the opponents of the pope was due, undoubtedly, in great measure, to the fact that in maintaining their position they seemed to recognize the authority of the Pisan council, and thus, by implication, the legitimacy of the pope’s election.

In substantial agreement with the views of the French were those of the English deputation. If the university of Paris had condemned the articles of Huss, and had become embittered against the pope and papal iniquity, Oxford was not less outspoken in condemnation alike of whatever savored of Wickliffe, or sanctioned the extravagant corruption of the Roman court. It is not a little instructive to trace the causes which forced the anti-Wickliffe party in England into an attitude of indignant protest against pontifical corruption. Embittered against heresy, they had yet imbibed largely on some points, the very spirit of those whom they excommunicated and burned.

It was on the seventh day of December, 1414, that the English deputation reached the city of Constance. Among its members were the Bishops of Salisbury, Bath and Hereford, the Abbot of Westminster, the Prior of Worcester, and the Earl of Warwick, the last attended by a retinue of 600 mounted soldiers.

Cooped up in her island home, England had scarce any European reputation until the fierce forays of her monarchs had established the fame of her prowess on the battlefields of France. The names of Cressy and Poitiers, for little more than half a century, had, through Europe, become synonymous with English valor. The land of Thomas à Becket was the land of the Edwards also, and in less than twelve months from the opening of the council, the famous battle of Agincourt would give new weight to the vote of the English nation. Henry V, who had just put the crown upon his head, threw aide with his private estate the vices and follies of his youth, and evinced an unwonted regard fur the orthodoxy and welfare of the church. There had been in fact a strong reaction
going on since the death of Wickliffe, against the measures he had sought to promote.

The ecclesiastical authorities had become alarmed at the progress of reform. The Lollards, as the followers of Wickliffe were called, could no longer be despised. The usurping claims of the papacy to the homage and tribute of the kingdom, the intrusion and impudent assumptions of the mendicant orders, and the general corruption which prevailed in the church, had united the mass of the English laity on the side of reform. The high, proud spirit of the English barons would not brook the arrogance of a foreign priest. Little skilled in the orthodoxy of doctrines, their patriotism recognized only in Wickliffe the champion of the nation’s rights. On every side his doctrines spread. The minority of Richard II left the power and authority of the government in the hands of his uncle, the Duke of Lancaster, a close friend of the reformer. The arm of persecution was not yet strong enough to put any effectual check to the course of the arch-heretic. Arraigned before the ecclesiastical court, a message came from the royal presence commanding them to let Wickliffe alone. Meanwhile throughout many of the counties of England the disciples of Wickliffe were scattered, and they were far from idle. With a primitive zeal they proclaimed everywhere the doctrines of the reformer. The minds of men were not altogether unprepared for their message. "The Complaint of Piers Ploughman," a most severe and scorching exposure of the vices of the clergy and the evils of the times, had been already extensively circulated. No one can peruse it and fail to discover, in almost every line, the plain and sturdy commonsense characteristic of the English people. It is a bold and manly protest against the falsehoods and usurpations that were masked under a sacred name. The English nation also, with singular unanimity, were united in an indignant resistance to the papal claims. In one form or another these came repeatedly before parliament. Even the clergy shrank from a public maintenance of what all were constrained to regard as an insult to the free spirit of the nation. Thus the papal authority was at the lowest ebb. Men spoke freely of the abuses, the impieties, the sensuality, the simony of the papal court. It is true that, from time to time, the Lollards were harassed and imprisoned. But persecution had not yet assumed an organized form, and the active energy of the reformers was busy scattering on every side the seed of evangelical truth. So far had the anti-papal feeling spread, even at Oxford, that it was seriously debated whether the papal bull should even be received. An old historian, Knighton, assures us that two men could not be found together and one not a Lollard. The bishops could not remain a long time blind to the spread of Wickliffe’s doctrines. Those who favored the new opinions were cited to appear before the episcopal courts. Some indeed recanted, but others bravely stood the shock, and none were delivered over to the secular arm. Oppression for conscience’ sake could not as yet call to its aid the resource of persecuting statutes.
But with the accession of Henry IV to the throne (1401) a new policy was adopted, less favorable to the spread of the opinions of Wickliffe. Henry IV was an usurper, yet the motto of his policy was opposition to tyranny, by which many had suffered. Banished from the realm by Richard II, he had taken refuge in France, and there, with Thomas Arundel, the exiled archbishop who had opposed the arbitrary measures of the court, had laid his plans not only for the recovery of his paternal estates, but for the deposition of King Richard and his own assumption of the crown. In the archbishop he found a useful and efficient ally. Through him he secured the favor of the English clergy and their powerful aid. It has been computed that at this time more than half the landed property of the kingdom was in their hands. Such an alliance as theirs was not, therefore, to be despised. They had need of Henry IV, and he had need of them. The fruits of this alliance were soon seen. Scarcely had the new king mounted the throne, when the writ *de heretico comburendo* made its appearance. Nor was it suffered long to remain a dead letter. The ecclesiastical power could now fall back on the aid of the secular arm. William Sawtré was the first victim of this unhallowed compact. He was a parish priest of St. Omer’s, London, and bore the reputation of a good man and a faithful preacher. On the assembling of the first parliament of Henry IV, he demanded to be heard “for the commodity of the whole realm.” The sagacity of the bishops quickly detected the danger that might lurk under his free speech. He was arraigned before the episcopal court, tried, convicted, condemned, degraded, and given over to the secular arm. Other victims of priestly hate were not wanting. The fires of martyrdom were repeatedly kindled for those who refused to abjure or recant their imputed errors. The zealous orthodoxy of the English prelates was more and more inflamed against the opinions and the followers of Wickliffe. Commissioners were appointed to examine, and synods held to condemn, his doctrines. The circumstances and policy of the monarch were such that the ecclesiastics could force him to become their tool. They had raised him to the throne, and if he refused to serve their interests they might depose him.

Henry V pursued the policy of his father, Henry IV, and extended his approval to the measures of the persecuting clergy. Even Sir John Oldcastle, a powerful knight, and a favorite of the young monarch, was given up to their greedy malice, and cast into prison.

It was in such circumstances as these that the English deputation to the council of Constance was selected. It was sure to reflect the persecuting spirit of the church. The name of Wickliffe was odious to the English clergy, and whatever was associated with him or his opinions was already condemned by a partisan prejudice.

No one therefore could be deputed to the council who did not hold everything connected with Wickliffe in utter abomination. Of the deputation, Richard, Bishop of London, was a conspicuous member. He was one of the council before
whom Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, was summoned, and had taken an
active part upon his trial. Thomas Netter, of Walden in Essex, a Carmelite, and
afterward prior of his order, was another member of the deputation. He had
been present, and had participated in the sessions of the council of Pisa, and
on his return to England had engaged with such zeal in the controversy against
the opinions of Wickliffe, as to be designated the fittest representative of the
clergy at the council of Constance. By some he was looked upon as the most
eminent, and almost the only champion of the faith. Carried away with his
partisan fervor, he had not spared the reputation of the king himself, but
charged him, not altogether probably without reason, as lukewarm in his
purpose to punish heretics. The charge was publicly made, and Henry V dared
not resent it. The author of it was deservedly selected as one who would not
be moved by the extreme of compassion towards his victims charged with
heresy. The simple fact of his selection for the express purpose of inveighing
against the followers of Huss, shows plainly enough the spirit in which the
deputation was chosen. The enemies of Wickliffe, and consequently of Huss,
were triumphantly in the ascendant. Like a wild beast that has once tasted
blood, they were ravenous for new victims. Madly bent on the extermination of
whatever bore the taint of heresy, their presence in the council could only give
a new impulse to the persecuting spirit to which Huss was already so sorely
exposed.

And yet the spirit of the English nation was strongly roused against papal
usurpation. To a great extent the deputation to the council sympathized with
this spirit. Robert Hallam, Bishop of Sarum, who died at Constance, and whose
monument of English brass, sent over by his executors, is still to be seen in the
minster of that city, was president of the deputation. Richard Ullerston was his
bosom friend, and doubtless reflected his sentiments in a remarkable work
published some few years previous to the assembling of the council. Ullerston
was a native of Lancashire, and afterward theological professor at Oxford. He
pursued his studies under Richard Courtnay—chaplain as well as blood relative
of the Prince of Wales—a man who boldly dared to vindicate the rights of the
university against episcopal usurpation. Such was the general respect for
Ullerston’s character and ability, that his friend Hallam urgently pressed him to
draw up a plan of reform to be submitted to the council. Ullerston acceded to
the request. The work, entitled "Ullerston’s Petition for Church Reform," is
dedicated to Hallam, and was so highly prized by him that "it was scarcely out
of his hands during the sessions of the council." The work is divided into several
chapters, embracing the various subjects of reform. The first of these is "The
Papal Court," and in describing what a pope should be, every line seems a
satire upon the vices of John XXIII. In condemning the simony that prevailed in
the church, he does not hesitate to refer to the mystic Babylon of the
Apocalypse, "the great mother of fornication and abomination," attributing this
title on scriptural grounds to her wealth and pride. In endeavoring to establish
the authority of the evangelical standard, he maintains "that Christ did not set
Peter over the church to the intent that his gospel should lose its authority, or
that Peter should enact laws of greater authority, or that the gospel should be
less honored through any act of his successors." Yet so far from this being the
case, he declares that "if laws are now spoken of, they are understood to refer
to human enactments rather than the gospel. The last is reputed now in the
church as of no more binding force than a verse of Cato or a maxim of Seneca."
He condemns the practice of elevating unfit men to sacerdotal or prelatical
office, arraigns the vices and especially the libertinism of the clergy, while, "by
the abuse of dispensations, wickedness of all kinds is encouraged, and dares to
show itself with shameless and unblushing face." The system of appeals to the
court of Rome, so grateful to the papal avarice, but so odious to the English
nation, is arraigned and exposed. The avarice of the clergy, their extravagance
in dress, their luxury, their mixing themselves up with secular affairs, are
indignantly rebuked.

This little treatise of Ullerston, if it had been anonymous, might almost have
been mistaken for a sermon of Huss. It is written in the very spirit of
Clemengis' famous pamphlet "On the Corrupt State of the Church," every line
of which is like a scorpion lash against the iniquities of the times.

Contemporary with Ullerston was another Englishman of kindred spirit, scarcely
less bold or able in his exposure of papal usurpation and corruption. Doctor
Paul, a priest highly distinguished for his knowledge of the common law,
published, about ten years previous to the council of Constance, a work which
must have expressed the feelings and convictions of a great portion of the
English people. Although, like Ullerston, unsuspected of the least taint of
Wickliffe's heresy, he saw with a clear eye the gross abominations and
corruptions of the age. His work is entitled "A Golden Mirror held up to the
Court of Rome, the Prelates, and the entire Clergy." The plan of it is a dialogue
between the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. It is dedicated to the cardinals,
the heads of the clergy, and all the officers of the court of Rome. The writer
testifies his grief at the papal schism, and the countless errors which prevailed,
heapd up as it were upon his own unhappy age. The law had departed from
the priests, and through them had fallen into contempt. The court of Rome was
defomed and maimed by errors, from the sole of its foot to the crown of its
bead. If these assertions seems too bold for him to make, his excuse is, that
few dare to utter an open and public rebuke of the prevailing vice and
corruption.

The substance and scope of the work are much the same with those of
"Ullerston's Petition." "Alas!" says he, "that in these latter times the apostles
have left the word of God to serve tables. Each seeks his own and not the
things of Jesus Christ." He deplors the fact that "no election to an
ecclesiastical benefice, even though of the fittest person, and made by divine
inspiration, could become effective without money." This abuse he charges
upon the court of Rome, "where persons ignorant, scandalous for vice,
ambitious, cruel, and every way unfit, are promoted to be bishops. Benefices
are bestowed on scullions, pimps, hostlers, and even children. The signature of
the pope has its price. Dispensations and indulgences are sold for money, and
he is the greatest who is most cunning to deceive, and skilful in sacrilegious
traffic. The sum total of devotion is to gain the penny."

From these causes spring the innumerable evils that afflict the church. Those
who originate them do not so much guard as crush the church. Instead of
feeding the flock, they slay and devour it. The whole work of Doctor Paul is a
most energetic protest against papal corruption and usurpation. Huss himself
could scarcely have spoken with greater boldness, or have uttered a more
indignant rebuke of wickedness in high places.

The same spirit which is manifest in these treatises of Ullerston and Paul, was
shown by other eminent Englishmen, who could not be suspected of sympathy
with Wickliffe or Huss. Nutter, whose name has already been mentioned as a
member of the English deputation, was of this class. One of his associates at
the council was John Dorre, whose honest English sense found expression for
itself in a figure adapted to the diseased state of the church. His prescription
would, doubtless, have had a good temporary effect. His "recipe for the
stomach of St. Peter, and its complete reformation, given in the council of
Constance," is as follows: "Take twenty-four cardinals, a hundred archbishops
and prelates, an equal number from each nation, and as many creatures of the
court as you can secure; plunge them into the waters of the Rhine, and let
them remain submerged for the space of three days. This will be effective for
St. Peter's stomach, and will remove its entire corruption." No Protestant
doctor surely would have prescribed a harsher remedy.

There was another Englishman whose name should not be passed over in
silence. Walter Dysse was an eminent theologian, and a member of the
Carmelite order. He was for several years in the service of that master in the
art of simony, Boniface IX, and was employed by him in missions to different
parts of Europe. At one time we find him in Spain, preaching a crusade against
the infidels, and at another engaged in writing against Wickliffe. No man had a
better opportunity to observe the general corruption of the church, or the
morals of the papal court. Yet, with all the influences that might have sufficed
to seal his lips, brought to bear upon him, he dared to speak out in a tone of
earnest remonstrance. A poem composed by him on the evils of the age,
entitled "The Schism of the Church," is not unworthily appended to the works of
Clemengis. This poem consists of only two hundred and sixty lines, but the
picture they present shows that it was taken from the same real objects of
which his contemporaries have left us the daguerreotype. The author declares
himself "at a loss which pope to recognize." "The pastors of the church have
become harpies." "The pontiffs and prelates are devoted to their cups and
hoards. The church is sold and plundered by those who should cherish her. If
you wish to be rich, be wicked; do something that deserves the prison.
Ambition and luxury crush the minds of all, and bury them in vice. Sons of the
nobility are sent to France to be made doctors. The priest and people are alike. The blind leads the blind. Children learn vile arts sooner than their alphabet."

We have no evidence in regard to the presence of Dysse at the council. He may have been there, however, as a visitor, or even as a member.

We may thus see something of the views and feelings of the English deputation. Animated, many of them, by the fiercest hatred toward Wickliffe and Huss—in some cases selected for the post on account of the very virulence of their opposition to what they accounted heresy—they yet condemn without a dissenting voice the prevalent corruption of the church, denouncing it in terms scarcely, if at all, less severe than the reformers themselves. It is a singular spectacle. And yet, unless it is carefully studied, we shall fail to understand the policy which controlled the action of the council.

With the views thus presented and maintained by the English deputation, those of the French coincided to a great extent, and on whatever policy they might unite, they might be confident of success. The cardinals who had Huss in charge were too shrewd not to observe and take advantage of the circumstances so favorable to their views and interests. They could offset the current of popular opinion in the council against the imperial purpose, nor were they slow to make use of the vantage-ground thus afforded.

CHAPTER XV

Proceedings of the Council
Huss Abandoned by the Emperor

The English and French deputations had already reached Constance, when the near approach of the emperor was announced. He arrived at Uberlingen, some seven miles from Constance, on Christmas Eve. A message was at once forwarded to the pope, requesting him to celebrate mass in the cathedral church on the arrival of the imperial train. Crossing the lake, the emperor entered Constance at about four o’clock on the following morning. He was accompanied, among others, by his wife Barbara, daughter of the Count Cilley, his daughter Elizabeth, queen of Bosnia, Rodolph, elector of Saxony, and Anne of Wirtemburg.

The Empress Barbara, second wife, of Sigismund, was, according to Æneas Sylvius, a woman of infamous morals and abandoned character. While king of Hungary, Sigismund had been seized by some of his powerful subjects and cast
into prison. His marriage to Barbara was made one of the conditions of his liberation. This condition, with others less revolting, though scarcely less humiliating, was faithfully observed. The emperor’s fidelity to his forced engagements stands in singular contrast with his faithlessness toward Huss.

After a few hours’ repose, Sigismund repaired to the cathedral. The pope, prepared to celebrate the pontifical mass, was awaiting his arrival. The emperor assisted in the ceremonial, clothed in the habits of a deacon. The pope is said to have trembled as he listened to the reading of the passage, "There went out a decree from Augustus Caesar," etc., and saw before him the crowned successor to his imperial power. The throne of Sigismund, magnificently adorned, had been prepared on the pope’s right, while, still further on, was the seat provided for the empress. At the side of the emperor, his red cap surmounted by the imperial crown, stood, bearing the royal scepter, the Marquis of Brandenburg, while the Duke of Saxony, as grand marshal of the empire, held aloft a drawn sword. Between the emperor and the pope stood Count Cilley, the father-in-law of Sigismund, holding in his hand the golden apple or globe. When the ceremonies of the mass were completed, the pope presented the emperor a sword, charging him to use it with all his energies in defense of the church. Sigismund received it, with the solemn promise to be faithful to the charge. Little did the pope imagine that in the person of his ally and protector, Frederic, Duke of Austria, he would so soon feel its edge.

By the arrival of the emperor, the splendor and authority of the council seemed complete. Never before had the world witnessed the assemblage of an ecclesiastical body so imposing in its array of power, learning, and talent. The ablest minds of Europe, the highest dignitaries of the church, princes and kings, present in person or by deputy, took part in its proceedings. As to the religious or even moral character of the body, little need be said. It fairly reflected the condition of the Christendom of the day. Gerson left it, disappointed in all his hopes. Neim and De Vrie, as well as others, spectators of its proceedings, paint it in the darkest colors. The opinions of Clemengis in regard to it were not more flattering. It was evident that multitudes, if not the great majority of its members, were drawn to Constance by ambition, curiosity, or the hope of gain.

The wishes of the emperor were, to a great extent, the controlling influence of the assembly. With an earnest purpose, clear and definite aims, and a policy as yielding and pliant as the readiest attainment of his ends required, he succeeded to a wonderful degree in shaping its deliberations and decisions. It was one of his maxims, that a prince who knew not how to dissemble was not fit to reign. Thwarted, for the moment, in his plans, he was sufficiently politic to yield to the dominant influence long enough to become its master, and turn it in a direction to suit his designs. Religious, according to the notions of his age, he certainly was—carefully attentive to the ceremonials, however lax in
the moralities of a Christian profession. Of his sincere desire to put an end to the papal schism there can be no doubt. From the moment that he saw the imperial crown in prospect, he seemed to feel that he was divinely commissioned to restore peace and unity to the church. His unwearied efforts to this end scarcely allowed him needful repose. But his known and even avowed principles assure us that no rigid or scrupulous conscientiousness would be suffered to obstruct the execution of his purpose. Thrown into a nest of intrigue, he found himself at home among the very masters of the art. To the power and authority of his position, he added the skill, policy, and tact which gave him at last a decided supremacy over every rival.

The glory of restoring peace to the church and reforming it from its corruptions, was Sigismund’s idol. It was here that he exposed his weak side to the machinations of those who sought to circumvent him. Whatever purpose, subordinate to his main one, could be shown to interfere with it, was instantly sacrificed. The enemies of Huss were not slow to detect this avenue to the successful prosecution of their plans. Undoubtedly the emperor gave the reformer his safe-conduct in good faith, and was unaffectedly indignant at the slight put upon it. But what was the harm of its temporary violation, if thus a most powerful party in the council could be satisfied, and his own orthodoxy and permanent influence established? The ceremonies of Christmas-day were scarce completed, before both parties, the friends and the enemies of Huss, presented their case to the emperor. A knowledge of the parties, and the circumstances in which they were placed, would allow scarce a doubt as to the result. The friends of Huss were few and feeble. The complaints of John de Chlum were met with derision from the enemies of the reformer. Henry de Latzembock, though undoubtedly friendly to Huss, and enjoying the emperor’s favor, was a courtier, and evidently more intent on his own advancement than anxious for the welfare of Huss. It is enough to know that his courage failed him in the hour of trial. After the condemnation of Huss he was suspected of heresy, and chose to abjure the views of the reformer rather than incur the hazard of a suspicion of maintaining them, and thereby sacrificing his hopes of promotion. From him, therefore, no earnest or effectual interposition in favor of the prisoner could be expected. As to the third member of the escort appointed by the king of Bohemia, Wenzel de Duba, we hear little of him. Huss, indeed, speaks of him in high terms, but he lacked the boldness, if not the devotion of Chlum. The enemies of Huss, on the other hand, were many and powerful. After the steps taken against him by the pope and cardinals, none dared utter a word in his favor. Nor was this all. While he was restrained of his liberty, the malice of his enemies who had followed him from Prague was busy in spreading slanders to his prejudice.

Against such a tide of calumny and envenomed persecution it was vain to expect that the emperor would make a stand. He could not afford thus to risk the alienation of the council and the failure of his most cherished plans. Early on the morning of his arrival, information of it had reached John de Chlum.
Without delay he hastened to the imperial residence. On the preceding evening a memorial, drawn up in the name of nearly all the Bohemians in Constance, had been forwarded and presented to Sigismund in favor of Huss. Chlum hoped to receive a favorable answer to the memorial, but, on inquiring for the emperor, he was told that he was attending divine service. Hastening to the cathedral, the noble knight had presented to his view the scene already described. With feeling of dismay, but a smile of pity, he witnessed the celebration of high mass. He saw the emperor, his royal robes laid aside, arrayed in priestly vestments, and, with a taper in his hand, chanting the scripture of the day. It was enough to excite his apprehensions. The imperial and sacerdotal powers were allied together. Henceforth Chlum found it difficult to obtain a hearing. The subject of his remonstrance was evidently unwelcome. To the emperor the reproachful looks of the indignant knight were more dreadful than the bitterest words. The enemies of Huss were too strong to be withstood even by the imperial power. Sigismund sacrificed his own sense of justice, and respect for his crown and authority, to the dictates of expediency.

Chlum perceived this. Sadly did he write to John of Lomnitz, the lord-chamberlain of Brunn, "Nothing more is to be hoped for from the emperor, who firmly believes that heaven and the pardon of his sins can be obtained through the instrumentality of the priest alone; and the people declare that one who conducts himself so piously in this life will be canonized at his death. Truly, among such saints, our Huss must appear a very devil."

And yet Sigismund was evidently restless under the imputations and censures to which his conduct had given occasion. Remonstrances began to reach him from Bohemia, and he could not remain insensible to the just odium which he had incurred. Intelligence of the arrest and imprisonment of Huss had speedily been borne to Prague, and had excited surprise, grief, and indignation. The outrage offered to the imperial authority, and the injustice done to a man almost idolized by the nation, produced a sudden and violent outbreak of popular feeling. The Bohemian states assembled, and drew up an earnest address to Sigismund, in which they poured out their complaints in a tone of indignant grief. Several letters were successively addressed to him from Bohemia, and even Moravia, urgently supplicating him for redress.

In the first, three of the nobility, speaking in the name of the whole body, informed the emperor that in one of their assemblies they had demanded of Archbishop Conrad if it had ever come to his knowledge that Huss had taught any heresy, and that he had replied that he had never discovered a heretical word in his writings, and that he was not his accuser. This declaration they forwarded in a letter sealed with their own seal, and accompanied with the request that he would restore Huss to liberty, that he might be in a condition to confront his accusers.
A second letter was drawn up still more earnest in its tone. The writers wish respectfully to represent to the emperor, that John Huss had gone to the council of his own free-will, to refute the accusations brought against him and his native Bohemia; that he earnestly desired and urgently demanded to be heard in full council, to present clear evidence of the purity of his doctrine, declaring himself ready to retract any heresy of which he might be convinced; that although he had gone to Constance, provided, as was well known, with a safe-conduct, he had been arrested and confined in a horrible prison; that there is no one, great or small, who does not view with indignation as well as surprise the bold measure of the pope in imprisoning an innocent man, in violation of the public faith, and without alleging any reason for the act; that so dangerous an example might serve as a precedent for all to disregard the public faith, and expose good men to the designing malice of the wicked. They conclude with the petition that the emperor will promptly set Huss at liberty, that he may justify himself if innocent, or be punished if guilty. "God is our witness," say they, "that it would occasion us the bitterest grief that anything should happen to the dishonor of your majesty; above all, that the stain of so enormous an injustice should tarnish your reputation. It pertains to you, by your discretion and wisdom, to repair the mischief already done, and to hold the whole matter subject to your control." This letter was signed by ten of the nobility, in the name of all.

The feeling of the Bohemian nation generally is expressed, not only in those letters, but in the words addressed to the royal governor, Czenko, of Wartemburg, in the name of the states: "We, Bohemians, demand that he who in the presence of the bishop of the country was fully justified, and in whom not one iota of unsound doctrine was found, should be immediately enlarged from prison, and not surrendered to scorn and contempt through the false witness and calumny of his enemies, and without fair examination."

The subsequent and still more earnest intercessory letters of the Moravian states, openly spoke of the violation of the safe-conduct as being equally disgraceful and prejudicial, prophesied the great mischief that must arise from it, and warned the emperor in conclusion that falsehood does not finally gain the victory over truth.

Sigismund felt himself ill at ease under the imputations of those whom he numbered among the most powerful subjects of the empire, and whose respect he wished to retain. But his attempted vindication only the more clearly exposes the time-serving policy by which he was actuated. In a long letter addressed to the Bohemian states, he attempts to justify himself. He shrank from the reprobation to which public opinion, judging him by his own acts, would doom him. The following extract from his letter illustrates his character, as well as the difficult position in which he found himself placed: "Had Huss accompanied me to Constance, instead of being there in my absence, his affairs would not have taken so ill a turn. God is my witness—and I cannot
express myself on this subject with sufficient force—how much the misfortunes of Huss have affected me. All the Bohemians in Constance may have observed my displeasure on account of this act of violence. I should immediately have quitted the city, had I not been withheld from doing so by the threats of the fathers that they would in that case dismiss the council, and therefore I have determined to wash my hands of the whole affair, since, if I adhere to Huss the assembly will doubtless be broken up." In this passage of the emperor’s letter, his policy and shame are at once revealed. He was forced to choose between the defeat of his cherished plans and the sacrifice of Huss. He preferred the latter.

The statements of this letter, from which the extract is taken, were substantially repeated in 1417, after the death of Huss. It gives, therefore, the grounds on which Sigismund deliberately chose to rest his defense. In this vindication he says nothing of the casuistry by which the fathers of the council attempted to relieve his conscience. His own good sense told him that it could not but appear contemptible as well as execrable to the whole Bohemian nation. A contemporary historian, and an eye-witness of the proceedings of the council, says, "By long and tedious discourse they persuaded the emperor that by the authority of the decretals he was dispensed from keeping faith with a man suspected of heresy!" Naucherus, who wrote but a short time subsequent to the council, likewise speaks to the same effect: "Sigismund was persuaded that he could not be accused of having violated his promise, inasmuch as the council, which is above the emperor, not having given Huss its safe-conduct, the emperor had no authority to grant it except with the approval of the council, especially where matters of faith were concerned; and the emperor, as a good son of the church, acquiesced in this decision." That this was the case, might be inferred from the emperor’s own words. On the subsequent examination of Huss, Sigismund, addressing the reformer, said, "There were those who held that he had no right to give protection to a heretic, or one suspected of heresy." The council itself endorsed this principle by decrees evidently intended to exculpate the emperor, and to counteract the prejudicial reports which were current in regard to the safe-conduct which had been so shamefully violated.

Thus the feebleness or superstition of the emperor cooperated with the malice of the enemies of Huss to ensure his fate.

Whether Sigismund was blinded or not by the casuistry of the fathers, he was constrained to acquiesce in their conclusions. So strong was the prejudice against Huss, and so popular with the members of the council was the course taken in his arrest, that any attempt to rescue him on the part of the emperor would have required a devotion to the cause of truth and justice such as he did not possess. Huss was left unfriended in prison, while his enemies prosecuted their plans against him with all the bitterness of untiring malice.
On the third day after the emperor’s arrival at Constance (December 28, 1414), Cardinal D’Ailly breached before the assembled members of the council. His subject was, "The Duty of the Emperor, the Pope, and other members, in regard to the union and reformation of the church." In recounting the duties of the pope, who should be the sun of the church, he does not spare John XXIII. "He who lacks the qualifications specified, is only the shadow and image of a pope. If, for instance, a pope forces his way into the church by a criminal ambition; if his morals are disreputable and scandalous; if he governs negligently or tyrannically, he is not to be regarded as the sun of the church! Would to God that the Holy Trinity would dash down these three statues that are set up in the church. Many times have I said it, that as adorable as a trinity of persons is in God, so abominable is a trinity of popes." John XXIII could not mistake the scope of the cardinal’s discourse. To make the matter, if possible, more clear, the latter exposed the pernicious errors of those flatterers of the pope who maintain, to the prejudice of the authority of the council, that the pope is not bound to yield to its decisions, but may set up his own judgment in opposition to it. This opinion, he maintained, was founded merely upon some of the decretals, which were incorrectly understood, and on positive enactments opposed alike to the law of nature and the divine law, and which tended to the prejudice of the church.

As to the part of the emperor in connection with the council, the cardinal held that it was his duty not to preside or to give authoritative decisions in regard to the matters discussed, but to maintain, by the power which he possessed, the resolutions of that body, not entangling himself with questions as to its decrees, or presuming to confirm them, but restraining and subduing all who should resist them in a rebellious spirit.

That such should be the sphere of imperial action, accorded well with the designs of the persecutors of Huss. They sought the protection of the emperor, but had no disposition to allow of his interference with the supremacy of the council. Most evidently the discourse was devised expressly for the occasion, and the public announcement of its positions, which served as a program of the policy of the council, was intended to bear alike against John XXIII and against Huss.

The emperor was thus thrown into a hard dilemma. Between his own self-respect and authority, as well as his sense of justice, on the one hand, and the overpowering influence of the council on the other, his position already was most unenviable. As he walked through the streets of Constance, he might perhaps have read, still attached to the doors of the churches, the bold and indignant remonstrance of John de Chlum: "To each and all who shall see or hear these presents: I, John de Chlum, make known how Master John Huss, bachelor of theology, under the safe-conduct and protection of the most serene prince and lord, Sigismund, king of Hungary, etc., my most gracious sovereign, and under the protection, defense, and guardianship of the most
holy Roman empire; and having the letters patent of my said sovereign, the
king of the Romans, came to Constance to render to each one demanding it, a
reason of his faith in a public audience. This Master John Huss, in this imperial
city, under the safe-conduct of my said sovereign, king of the Romans, etc.,
has been, and is now, detained. And although the pope and his cardinals have
been strictly required, in the royal name, by ambassadors of my said sovereign,
etc., to release the said John Huss, so that he might be restored to me, they
have hitherto refused and still refuse to release him, to the contempt and
scandal of the safe-conduct of the king, and the security and protection of the
empire and his royal majesty. Wherefore I, the aforesaid John, proclaim that
the detention and restraint of the said Master John Huss is executed in utter
opposition to the will of my aforesaid sovereign, king of the Romans, since it is
in contempt of his safe-conduct and of the imperial protection, and that it was
executed on the occasion of the absence of my said sovereign from Constance;
for, had he been present, he would never have permitted it. But when he shall
arrive, each one should consider that he will be grievously affected at the
contempt offered to himself, the imperial protection, and his safe-conduct.
Given at Constance, this twenty-fourth of December, 1414." This document was
written both in Latin and in German, with the seal of the Bohemian knight
affixed. It was made public on the evening previous to the emperor’s arrival,
and the knowledge of it could not long have escaped him; yet his policy
forbade his present interference in behalf of Huss.

On the day following the delivery of the discourse by the cardinal of Cambray,
a general congregation was held, to listen to the account from the emperor of
the measures he had taken to secure. the cession of the anti-popes, or their
adhesion to the decisions of the council. The results of these measures belong
to the history of the following year. The emperor took occasion to declare his
anxiety for the peace and welfare of the church, and that his intended embassy
to the king of Spain to induce Benedict XIII to a cession of his pontificate had
been dictated by his anxiety. He demanded that several of the cardinals should
be deputed, with whom he might consult as to the steps which should be taken
to expedite the business of the council.

From time to time, during the general congregations, sermons were preached,
some of them of a remarkable character. The vices of the popes were not
spared. The general and fearful corruptions of the ecclesiastical orders were
denounced. In the boldest language the union and reformation of the church
were urged. Such was the force of the invective, and such the unsparing nature
of the denunciations uttered, that the language of Wickliffe, Huss, and Jerome
could scarcely exceed them. Whoever would see a picture to justify the
indignant exposures made by these reformers, needs only to review the records
of the council. It may seem strange that such freedom of speech should be
allowed in that city, where Huss, for the exercise of the same privilege, had
been thrust into a loathsome prison. But there was this difference in the two
cases, that the members of the council spoke by order of their superior, and to
promote the measures of a strong party with which they were identified, always professing their respect for the church itself, while the reformers relied only on the scriptures for their authority, and were not careful to hide their conviction that the church itself was well-nigh rotten to the core.

On the day following the imperial message to the general congregation, a sermon was preached by Matthew Roeder, theological professor of the college of Navarre, in the university of Paris. It was to this college that Gerson, Clemengis, and D’Ailly had belonged. The discourse of Roeder, who was the friend and colleague of two of them, bore with severity on the simony and ambition of the ecclesiastical order, and forcibly urged the union and reformation of the church. As the schism had already continued nearly forty years, the speaker compared the church to the paralytic in scripture that had been afflicted for thirty-eight years. The rival popes were children contending with one another in the womb of mother church, and by their acts of simony lacerating her with the fangs of vipers. It seems impossible for words to express a more fearful and corrupt state of things than that which he represents as then prevalent. The discourse closed with an eulogy on the emperor, who was now in the interests of the party opposed alike to John XXIII and to Huss.

The first day of the new year, 1415, was observed by the pope in the cathedral church with religious ceremonial. The large building was crowded by citizens and members of the council. The pontifical benediction was pronounced, and the wine flowed freely to gladden the occasion. John XXIII was not unmindful of his need of popular support, and while stung by the sermons preached before the council, and the secret measures looking toward his own deposition, did not neglect the effort necessary to counteract their impression.

At the close of the imposing ceremonial, the emperor convoked to a consultation the cardinals who had previously been deputed for this object. There were at this time within the walls of the city, or in its immediate neighborhood, nearly 100,000 persons. To provide for their subsistence, and to maintain peace and order among them, occasioned no small anxiety. After consulting upon measures for this purpose, the cardinals seized upon the occasion to remove the last obstacle that stood in the way of their prosecution of the case of Huss. They demanded of the emperor that he should consult for the freedom of the members of the council, nor suffer their proceedings against Huss to be restricted under the pretext of the safe-conduct which had been granted him. The answer of the emperor was as favorable as could be desired. He declared that the fathers should be free to act, not only in regard to the reformation of the church, but in respect to the case of Huss. He issued a decree to the effect that the council should be free in matters of faith, and might proceed against those who were evidently charged with heresy, in so far that after a public citation they should be judged according to their deserts. And as to threats or alarms, put forth in writing in different localities, that violence would be resorted to in favor of Huss, his royal majesty will see that
they are prohibited. By a singular incongruity, the privilege was appended of a safe-conduct to all who, of their own accord, should come to the council. This provision was intended to meet the case of the ambassadors of Gregory and Benedict, who had been condemned as heretical by the previous council of Pisa. The gross inconsistency of the treatment of Huss, with the privilege thus extended to the ambassadors of the anti-popes, plainly shows that the regard paid to a safe-conduct was a mere matter of expediency with the council. To counteract the influence of John XXIII, and to carry out their designs, they wished the ambassadors of the anti-popes to be present at the council, yet were unable to give any assurance, save evident self-interest, about what had already been violated in the case of Huss.

In spite of John XXIII and his partisans, the cardinal of Ragusa, one of the legates of Gregory, entered Constance, wearing the red cap, the symbol of his official dignity. The event itself foreshadowed the little regard that would be paid to the more grave claims of John XXIII when they should come in conflict with the policy of the council. It was on this occasion, and in answer to arguments based upon the legitimacy of the Pisan council, that the cardinal of Cambray (D’Ailly) maintained that though that council might be properly supposed to represent the church universal, yet it was not necessarily to be inferred that every believer must hold that it could not err, inasmuch as many previous councils, regarded as Ecumenical, are said to have erred. According to some doctors of great authority, a general council may err, not merely in matter of fact, but right, and what is more, in matter of faith. Because the whole church universal alone has this prerogative, that it cannot err in faith. As to the present council, called by John XXIII, being dependent for its authority on the legitimacy of his election, it was argued that it had been summoned at the instance of the king of the Romans, who must be regarded as the advocate of the church, and bound to act for it in a case of such urgent necessity. This position was sustained by precedents cited from the previous history of the church, while the reception of the ambassadors of Gregory and Benedict was defended by arguments drawn from reason and scripture. These views prevailed, and John XXIII saw himself subjected to a humiliating defeat.

The legates were received, and their propositions heard. Those of Benedict spoke only of the measures taken or to be taken, for the conference between their master, the king of Arragon, and the emperor. Benedict, master as he was of all the arts of intrigue, hoped thus to be able, with some show of reason, to defer, for a time at least, his cession of the pontificate.

The legates of Gregory seemed more pliant. Their master was ready to adopt "the way of cession" on certain conditions, the substance of which was, that neither of his rivals should be permitted to take undue advantage of his abdication. John XXIII was not to be permitted to preside in the council, nor have part in its deliberations.
Thus another blow was aimed at the pope. He was continually agitated by new anxieties. The proposal of the conference between Sigismund and Benedict was not at all to his taste. He declared it would be merely lost time to pursue the project, and that it was best that a council should be held at Pisa to confirm the decisions of the previous council. But such a measure, in order to which the pope desired a safe-conduct, mainly however with a view to embroil matters at the conference and prevent any conclusion, was rejected. His pretext for the demand was the promotion of the union of the church by personal conference with Benedict. But the council had not forgotten the game played, to the scandal of Christendom, by Gregory and Benedict some six years previous, and the character of John XXIII was not such as to inspire renewed confidence of a satisfactory result.

How to dispose of the claims of John XXIII was now the great question before the council. These claims stood in the way of every measure that had been, or that could be, proposed to promote the union of the church. The cession of Gregory was conditioned only on the abdication or deposition of John XXIII. This indirect attack upon him was not left unanswered. Of the "method of cession" the pope declared his approval so far as it concerned Benedict and Gregory, since to this they were bound by their oath and promise, given previous to the assembling of the council of Pisa. This in fact would be the proper measure for reuniting the church under one head. If by "cession" the authors of the plan meant something different, they should then explain it. As to allowing the partisans of Gregory admittance to the council, it would be an act of injustice to those who, having complied with the decisions of the council of Pisa, have continued in union with the church. As to the proposition that John XXIII should not preside or participate in the council, it is utterly rejected as unjust and disgraceful, inasmuch as he, as sole legitimate pope, had convoked the council, and was present in person to labor for the reformation of the church. As to freedom of consultation and action in the council, which the legates of Gregory also demanded, no prelate could be released from the engagement into which all enter, of obedience to the pope as their superior; and into any other, none had entered to his knowledge. In conclusion, there was already perfect liberty in the council, and nothing more could be demanded, so that if the partisans of Gregory wished to unite with the council without making any unreasonable conditions, they might do so, and be received with every manifestation of kindness.

The consequence of this opposition of John XXIII was twofold. The legates of Gregory wrote to him for more full and ample powers, while the attention of the council was more closely directed to measures for setting aside the claims of John XXIII. Secret consultations were held by prominent members. Congregations and conferences were held in his absence. Of their proceedings, however, he was himself well informed. His spies, whom he kept in pay, were everywhere busy. It was in vain that the members present at the consultations took a solemn oath of secrecy. John XXIII stood ready to absolve them from the
guilt of perjury when they revealed to him the measures discussed or adopted. To avoid suspicion, be directed them to visit him at his own palace under cover of darkness. At the hour of midnight, or even later, they were summoned to his presence, and from them he learned the proceedings of the previous day. Some of the offenders were detected, and summoned before the council. But however strong the evidence against them, they escaped with impunity. The difficulty of conviction, and the desire to avoid the scandal of their exposure, conspired to shield them, and they were allowed to withdraw from the counsel by its own consent, and thus escape the deserved penalty.

As yet, however, no one dared publicly to advocate the unqualified deposition of John XXIII. This was spoken of rather as possible than probable. Meanwhile he was assuming and exercising all the rights and prerogatives of a legitimate pontiff. He presided in the sessions of the council. He performed the pontifical duties, and celebrated pontifical mass on solemn occasions. At the request of the Swedes, he canonized a countrywoman of that nation known as St. Bridjet. Deserting her family, with her husband’s consent, she had instituted a religious order, giving out that its rule had been dictated by Jesus Christ himself. The order was called "Of the Holy Savior," and followed the regulations of St. Augustine. After numerous pilgrimages to places reputed holy, she had died at Rome nearly forty years previously, and had been canonized during the time of schism by Benedict IX. This fact rendered the authority of her canonization doubtful, and the ambassadors of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, with the deputation of their clergy, presented themselves before a crowded congregation, demanding that the name of Bridget be enrolled on the list of saints. The demand was based on her birth—she was of the royal blood—her piety, her pilgrimages, her revelations, and the miracles which she had performed during her life and after her death. Numerous doctors and licentiates from Sweden came forward to witness to the truth of the claim in her behalf. By solemn oath before the great altar, they confirmed the recital. The canonization was determined on, and Bridget was declared a saint. The ceremony was conducted by a Danish archbishop. After celebrating mass, he placed upon the altar a silver statue to represent the saint. Then raising it in view of the people, he pronounced the benediction, accompanied by an appropriate chant, and the ceremony closed with the Te Deum, the ringing of the bells, and strains of music. The prelates, in conclusion, regaled themselves at a sumptuous banquet.

The scene or show was, to some extent, a papal triumph. John XXIII seized eagerly upon any measures that could promote his interests, or give an imposing appearance to his claims. A slight delay might have robbed him of the privilege of this exercise of his prerogative. The haste with which the measure had been prosecuted had taken all by surprise, and had secured its success. Opposition had no time to take an organized shape. But the alarm was now given, and Gerson seized his pen. He took for the text of his treatise the passage, "Prove the Spirits whether they be of God." The claims of canonization
are in this work thoroughly sifted, and the evident bearing of Gerson’s argument was to throw suspicion on the pretensions of the new saint. He does not forget the passage, "Satan himself is sometimes transformed into an angel of light," and the reported visions of multitudes are treated with very little respect. But opposition to the canonization was vain. The advocate of the devil, as the individual appointed to assail the memory of the candidate is called, as usual, lost his case. The pope enjoyed what Alexander III, in 1170, declared an exclusive privilege of the papal chair. It was an external triumph, but it is questionable whether more was gained than lost by it to the pope.

But while thus in the exercise of the pontifical prerogative, and endeavoring thereby to substantiate his claims before the world, the intelligence reached John XXIII of the bold measure that had been proposed in the congregations. The letter of Gregory seemed to make the cession or deposition of John XXIII essential to the success of the only plan for the union of the church which appeared feasible. Respect for the pontiff who had presided at the sessions, and whose authority seemed identified with that of the council, had hitherto hedged him about with a security that shielded his name from public mention in connection with measures for his deposition. But the necessity of the case was breaking down that security. The result was promoted by his own vices, his intrigues, and his spies. One man was at length found to speak the word which, once spoken, would be taken up by a thousand echoes. A variety of measures had been proposed. Speech upon speech had been made in regard to the union of the church. The English and Polish deputations had presented their views. But hitherto everything was of a general character. There was nothing specific, or directly adapted to meet the difficulty of the case. It was at this moment that William Filastre, cardinal of St. Mark, came forward. He saw the fitness of the occasion of which none were willing or bold enough to avail themselves. The letter of Gregory had familiarized the minds of men to the idea of the deposition of John XXIII, and the cardinal resolved to give forth a practical plan for his deposition. He prepared a document, and placed it in the hands of the cardinal of Cambry. It soon came to the knowledge of the emperor. By his means it was transcribed and sent to the several congregations. Thus the very object which the pope had sought to prevent by his presidency in the congregations—the stifling of discussion in regard to himself by the influence of his presence—was reached, and by methods most dangerous to the pope himself.

The document was ably drawn up. It showed in every line the hand of a master. The cardinal first lays down the objects of the council. These are two: the first, the peace and union of the church; the second, reformation of the hierarchy. To attain the first, three ways are possible: reduction or forcible subjection of those that refuse to submit, judicial examination and decision of the claims of the contendents, or voluntary cession on the part of all. The two first are rejected for obvious reasons, as tending only to aggravate the difficulty; the last is chosen as the only feasible method to be pursued. The
necessities of the church demand that it should be attempted. The obligation of Gregory and Benedict to adopt it is assumed; in fact, permission to abdicate is accounted a favor. The question then arises, whether John XXIII is bound to adopt this method of settling the difficulty, and in case of his refusal, whether he can lawfully be compelled to do it by the council. As to the obligation of John XXIII, the cardinal holds that the good pastor should be ready to lay down his life for the sheep. The good of the flock should lead him unhesitatingly to adopt such measures as will promote it, even to his own abdication. To refuse to adopt such a course would he to show that he was not the true pastor. Thus John XXIII was placed in a most unpleasant dilemma. If the true pastor, he should voluntarily resign; if not the true pastor, he should be deposed. Nor should the council hesitate to take action on the pretext of a want of authority. On all those matters which concern the church universal, the council is superior to the pope. Let the case then be laid before John XXIII. Let him be directed to consider the lamentable condition of the church, the monstrosity of a body with so many heads, the danger of the schism becoming permanent; and let him be exhorted to a course which will redound to his immortal honor—to a self-sacrifice that will cover his own name with glory, while it fills Christendom with rejoicing.

Such in substance was the document drawn up by the Cardinal St. Mark. It was not long before it attained publicity. John XXIII was filled with surprise and rage. He was by no means inclined to spare the author, a member of the sacred college. But, on the other hand, the cardinal, secure of the emperor's favor, was not disposed to draw back. He went in person to the pope, and avowed the authorship of the document. He declared that his object had been the peace and welfare of the church.

The document of the cardinal had evidently produced a deep impression. Some were almost enraptured with it. Others, however, were enraged. It would not do to leave it unanswered. Some of John’s partisans attempted a reply. Their language is anything but complimentary to their opponents. Three papers were drawn up, the two first in the form of questions. By the necessary answers to these, they left the inference to be deduced which should set aside the reasonings of the cardinal: "Is John XXIII, a pope legitimately elected, to be placed on the same footing with those whom the council of Pisa condemned, and who are therefore to be accounted heretics? May not those who would persuade John XXIII to such an admission, be regarded as favorers of schism and heresy? Can a true and canonical pope, not charged or suspected of heresy, be forced to abdicate, or be limited in his jurisdiction? Are not those who condemn one not heretical for heresy, and maintain the justice of the condemnation, themselves to be accounted heretics?"

The second paper was much to the same purport. The third attempted to refute the arguments of the cardinal by pointing out the contempt which they offered to the council of Pisa, and the injustice they did to John XXIII. If he was
not lawful pope, that council was null and illegitimate. It had only increased
the schism, while the deposition of John XXIII would in all probability only give
a fourth head to the church. The proposed measure, moreover, would be
unjust to the one who was lawful pope; yet, if John were willing to cede, his
absent rivals would not submit, and hence the measure would be futile; all
justice would be violated by the attempt to enforce it. The true Christ was not
to deny his own authority because there were false Christs; and, as to the
obligation of the true pastor to lay down his life for the sheep, it was rather a
desertion of them to abdicate, and this was only the part of a hireling. In
conclusion, the attempt to depose John XXIII was sacrilegious. It laid violent
hands on the Lord’s anointed, while it attempted that by force which, if
forced, would be invalid and null of itself.

Such were the arguments adduced by the partisans of the pope. Falling back
upon the authority of the council of Pisa, their position seemed impregnable.
But even here they were not to remain unmolested. The cardinal of Cambray
now took up the discussion, and resolved to sustain the positions of the
Cardinal St. Mark. His refutation of the papal refutation shows, by the severity
of its language and its tone of confidence, the growing strength of the anti-
papal party. He commences by uttering his warning against those who come in
sheep’s clothing, but within are ravening wolves. “These are they in this sacred
council who, parasites of power more than lovers of justice, slander the
teachers of the truth, whom the apostle calls masters having itching ears.”
These men he charges with having prepared papers to hinder the action of the
council. In reply to them, he takes no issue on the authority of the Pisan
council. Granting this to be all that the papal party claim, its example in
adopting the method of cession commends itself to approval in the present
case. He denies that the attempt to persuade John XXIII to cede does place him
on a level with heretics, and the presumption of favoring heresy or schism must
rest rather on the adverse party. But the strength of his argument lies in the
authority which he gives to the church universal assembled in general council.
It is superior to the pope, and may depose him if the welfare of the church
requires it; and if the pope refuses to adopt its decision, he may be condemned
as a schismatic, and suspected of favoring heresy; and they who maintain this
view are not to be regarded as heretical, but rather the reverse. Moreover,
those who condemn the method of cession, calling it unreasonable, unlawful,
and unjust, in reality invalidate the foundation of the council of Pisa, and
scandalize those who follow its obedience. Finally, those who would make the
whole question one to be settled by violence of war, sin greatly against the
Holy Spirit, while wisdom directs that of two evils we should choose the least.

Others beside the cardinal of Cambray, though men of less note, joined in the
discussion, but their arguments were merely a variation in form of those which
he or the Cardinal St. Mark had already adduced.
Such was the spectacle presented by the council at the very commencement of its sessions. John XXIII, with his party, found themselves forced to contend, as it were, for their own existence. The monarchical and the democratic principles of the church had come in conflict. Popular opinion, modified by the gross and growing evils of the schism, gave to the latter a temporary advantage, immensely increased, however, by the odious vices of John XXIII. All the arts of this man only recoiled upon himself. The growing numbers of the council exceeded his power of control. His favors and promotions were too few to satisfy the ambition of the multitude, and men like the cardinals St. Mark and Cambray, strong in reputation and ability, as well as in the favor of the emperor, deprived the lost pontiff of the influence of even a united conclave. It might be foreseen already what must be the necessary result.

CHAPTER XVI

The Council, up to the Time of the Flight of The Pope

Meanwhile the question as to the constituency of the council had been decided adversely to John XXIII. The arguments of the cardinals St. Mark and Cambray proved satisfactory to the emperor, and to all who dreaded the numerical ascendency of the Italian, or rather papal party. To have conceded a seat in the council only to the bishops and the higher clergy would have excluded a vast number whose impartiality and opposition to the pope’s claims were well understood. It is noticeable that the argument by which the right of membership was demanded, for presbyters as well as bishops, took precisely the same view of the two orders which Huss had presented in his treatise on the church. "An ignorant king or prelate," exclaimed the Cardinal St. Mark, "is nothing but a crowned ass." From the writings of St. Paul, be argued that a bishop and a presbyter must have the same qualifications, inasmuch as the apostle, in describing the bishop, seems to include the presbyter, and passes directly from this to speak of deacons. "By what right, then," he asked, "do you admit one and repel the other, when the last is equally well, if not better, fitted to represent the church?"

Thus the unhappy pontiff was subjected to a new annoyance. A vast number were thus admitted to membership in the council over whom he could exert but a feeble influence, and whose views and policy were adverse to his own. Besides the doctors, of whom the number was very large, the ambassadors of kings and princes, of republics, cities, universities, and other communities, as well as the lower clergy, were admitted under conditions. The pope was chagrined at seeing the votes of his numerous Italian bishops offset by those of multitudes inferior only in ecclesiastical rank.
But even yet it was possible for him to command a powerful and influential minority. The hope however which this inspired was now destined to be defeated. At an early stage of the discussion it had been proposed that the votes should he taken by nations. The pope had strenuously resisted the project. He might ply his intrigues among individuals with some chance of success; but if the votes were to be taken by nations, his plans would encounter greater difficulties, while the whole Italian party would command but a single voice out of four.

The pope had on his side the prestige of ancient usage, but the council imagined that they had good and sufficient reason for acting without regard to precedent in a question of such moment. The pope had created as many as fifty new chamberlains, whose devotion to his interests was of course entire. The other nations would not consent to such a fatal preponderance of the Italian party, while the pope on his part was not disposed to yield. From day to day the question became more embarrassing. The whole issue of the council might hinge upon its decision.

In these circumstances the emperor interposed. Clearly perceiving the vital importance of the question, he decided against the pontiff. It was therefore resolved that the votes of the council should be taken by nations, and that as Spain was as yet unrepresented, England, which had hitherto been reckoned with Germany, should be allowed a vote by itself, thus making, with Germany, France, and Italy, the fourth nation in the constituency of the council.

The order of proceedings required each nation to have a certain number of deputies, men of learning and ability, composed both of ecclesiastics and seculars, with their procurators, or attorneys and notaries. These deputies had a president, whose term of office was one month. Each nation assembled by itself to discuss the matters that might be brought before it, and when any article had been agreed upon by one nation, it was submitted to the deliberation of the others; and if agreed on in a general congregation of the four nations, it was carried, signed, and sealed before the following session, when it received public and solemn approval. In these preliminary discussions, full liberty was allowed to all to propose, either orally or in writing, whatever they might deem essential to promote the welfare of the church.

Successively defeated in his plans for constituting the council, the pope was still pressed in the most urgent manner to unite with the contestants in adopting the “way of cession.” To this he was utterly disinclined. He regarded the demand as insulting and intolerable. But while meeting it in a tone of bold resistance, and even defiance, he was startled from his security by intelligence of a new measure which had been proposed. This was nothing less than a judicial investigation of his life and character. This was his vulnerable point. His private career had been notoriously scandalous. Nothing but the sanctity of his office could have so long shielded him from ignominious exposure. But the
steadily increasing hostility which his course provoked, now encouraged an attack upon his reputation and morals. A series of accusations was drawn up against him, evidently by someone familiar with his career of vice and crime. Niem suspects that the author was an Italian. The charges made were of the most scandalous and horrible kind. The life of the pontiff was described as a tissue of enormity and violence, which outraged all justice, and was the scandal of the church.

The articles were secretly submitted to leading members of the council from Germany and England. It was hoped that an investigation would be demanded, and of its result, if undertaken, no one could doubt. But prudence forbade the measure. It might overshoot its object, and disgrace the papacy as well as its occupant. It might tend to invalidate the promotions which the pontiff had made. Who could say how many of the members of the council would be compromised in the tenure of their titles by an investigation of papal simony? For the present it was deemed best to postpone the matter. Yet the time might come when it could be evoked as a necessary and effective weapon of attack.

Secretly as the whole thing had been managed, it soon reached the ears of the pontiff. His spies were busy, and treachery was sure of its reward. Great was his consternation when he found this new battery opened upon him. Conscious of the weakness of his position, he called together for consultation some of the cardinals and of those whom he had bound to him by favors, and asked their advice. He frankly admitted that some of the charges against him were true, while he maintained his innocence in regard to others. It was his own plan to forestall attack by going before the council, and acknowledging the truth of some of the accusations, falling back, however, on this as an impregnable position, that the pope can be judged and deposed for no fault save for heresy alone. The friends of John XXIII were at a loss, when consulted, what answer they should return. It was finally agreed that the wisest course would be for the pope himself to take the matter for some days into careful deliberation, and then “adopt such a course as he should deem wisest, in the fear of God.” But the enemies of the pontiff were not yet prepared to proceed to extremities. They did not wish to overthrow the See of Rome, but only its occupant. Thus the terror was suspended over his head, and for the present the policy of his foes spared him the crushing blow.

Yet the secret measure had not been without its effect. The knowledge of its having been discussed, the fact that a possibility remained that it might yet be evoked as a weapon of offense in case of necessity, rendered John XXIII much less disinclined to listen to the exhortations and overtures of the council. On the seventh of February (1415), the question of voting by nations had been decided. Meanwhile the charge against the pope had been drawn up. So early as the fourteenth of the previous month, Andrew Lascar, bishop of Posen, and ambassador of the king of Poland, who had just reached the council, addressed the pope in its name, urging him to give peace to the church. Although the
method of cession was not mentioned in his discourse in express terms, it was not obscurely hinted at, and the pope was significantly pointed to the example of Christ in laying down his life for the sheep, and urgently exhorted to prefer the glory of its imitation to the power of the keys. John XXIII must have uneasily listened to an address so guarded in expression but so direct in application. The method of cession was now publicly advocated, and on the fifteenth of February, the German, English, and French nations adopted it, and urged it with such force upon the Italian nation, that they were disposed to yield, and John XXIII. saw himself deserted by those on whom he had most relied. After such a defeat the utter refusal of any form of cession on his part would have been in the highest degree impolitic. It would but exasperate a feeling that could no longer be trifled with. His only hope now was to gain, if possible, some advantage by temporizing.

On the sixteenth of the month the conclusions arrived at in the general congregation of the nations on the preceding day were drawn up and presented to the pontiff. They were as follows: "The sad state of the church, with all the circumstances thereto pertaining, having been duly weighed, three nations, the German, French, and English, composing and representing the majority of this sacred council, have, in order to the restoration of the church, deemed the method of cession on the part of our lord the pope as well as the contendents, the better and more expedient, and that our lord should accept and adopt it, to thus carry out the designs of the council; and by his most serene highness our lord the king of the Romans, and this sacred council, he is besought to offer, adopt, and execute this mode of cession." The document was signed by the presidents of the nations and offered to the pope for his acceptance. Later in the day the council met, at the pope's summons, to receive his answer. It had been carefully drawn up, and was read before the assembly by the cardinal of Florence. It was to the following effect: "Our most holy lord the pope here present, though obligated to it by no vows, oaths, or promises, yet for the peace of Christendom, has proposed, and on deliberation resolved, to give peace to the church even by the way of cession; provided, however, that Peter de Luna and Angelus Corrario, condemned by the Pisan council of schism and heresy, and ejected from the pontificate, shall make a full and sufficient renunciation of the claims which they urge to the pontificate. This renunciation to take place in ways, circumstances, and time to be agreed upon between our lord or his deputies, and deputies from among you."

It was obvious that such a provisional abdication would remain a mere nullity. The conditions would never be fulfilled. The abdication itself, while it necessarily delayed the action of the council till it could take effect, was intended to secure the pope from being molested till such a time as occasion should be given for regaining what had been lost. The several nations, however, took it into consideration. They were unanimous in regarding it as too vague, doubtful, obscure, and unreliable, and as utterly insufficient to extirpate the schism, or effect a cession. The pope was therefore requested,
inasmuch as he showed a disposition to the way of cession—so it was observed with an artful irony—to express his purpose in plain and simple language that should tend to promote the desired union. In consequence of this request, which the pope did not dare refuse, another form of abdication was drawn up, but this proved even less satisfactory than the first. It gave stronger ground for the suspicion that he had no intention whatever to resign the pontificate. The conditions subjoined to it rendered it altogether unacceptable. In fact, its rejection must have been foreseen by John XXIII himself, and he could only have presented it in the hope either of gaining time, or dividing his opponents into adverse parties. It was objected to by the council on several grounds: as conditional on the cession of the contendents, as containing expressions in regard to them of an irritative character, as setting a limit of time beyond which it was to have no effect, and as proposing unprecedented measures against the contendents. Another form of abdication was drawn up, modeled after that which had already been presented by Gregory. It was privately presented by the emperor’s direction to the pope, but to this he would by no means give his assent.

It was in the interval that followed, that John XXIII laid his plans for his flight. He saw that the council had him already in their grasp. He resolved therefore to leave Constance, in the hope that by the confusion which his flight, as well as the measures he might take afterwards, would occasion, the council would be broken up. He sent therefore for Frederic, Duke of Austria, with whom he had entered previously into an alliance offensive and defensive in order to his security, and concerted the measures for executing his purpose. But even here he was surrounded by difficulties. A suspicion of his project had already spread abroad. It was even proposed by a portion of the English deputation that the person of the pope should be seized and kept in safe custody, but to this the French deputation would by no means consent. And yet John XXIII was little more than a prisoner in his own palace. He bitterly complains, in a paper published after his flight, from Constance, of the insults offered him before his own doors, and of which the emperor was cognizant. He asserts that he was watched by imperial spies, who intruded upon the privacy of his chamber, and even dared to enter his bedroom to see whether he had escaped.

But the growing unanimity and strength of his adversaries, whom he had vainly hoped to divide; the close watch kept upon his person; the well-known purpose of the emperor, who was resolved that the aims of the council should not be thwarted by papal artifice; all indicated that before he could hope to escape, he must disarm suspicion by still greater concessions than any he had yet made. With his accustomed duplicity, therefore, he made up his mind to yield a formal acquiescence to the demands of the council, in the hope of thus securing a temporary freedom from molestation, but with the secret resolution, at the earliest possible moment, of denouncing its invalidity as extorted by force.
It was proposed in the council to insert in the form of abdication, "I swear and vow," etc., in order to give it a more solemn and binding character. Upon this point there was a division of opinion, but it was at length carried by the influence of the Parisian ambassadors. On the first of March this new form of cession was presented to the pope in his own palace. The emperor himself and a large number of the different nations were present. In behalf of the council, the patriarch of Antioch presented it, humbly supplicating for it a gracious reception. Objectionable as this new form of abdication, armed with oaths, must have been to the pope, and difficult as he found it altogether to conceal his vexation, there was no alternative but to accept it. Having glanced over the form presented, he replied that it had ever been his intention to restore peace to the church, and that for this purpose he had come to Constance. He added, moreover, that he had already offered to cede his pontificate; that he had done it freely, of his own accord and without restraint, and that he never had been of any other mind. He then read aloud the form of abdication, which had been carefully drawn up by the council in order to cut off any opportunity of evading its conditions: "I, Pope John XXIII, for the welfare of all Christendom, profess, engage, and promise, swear and vow to God, the church, and this holy council, voluntarily and freely to give peace to the church itself, by the way of an unqualified cession of my pontificate; and that I will effectually perform and execute it in accordance with the deliberative decisions of the present council, if and when Peter de Luna, Benedict XIII, and Angelus Corrario, Gregory XII, so called, each by his obedience, shall in like manner cede their claims, either by themselves or their lawful attorneys; and that I will do this in case of their cession, decease, or any other circumstances in which my cession will give peace to the church of God, or lead to the extirpation of the present schism."

The demands of the council had now been met by the prompt and well-acted acquiescence of John XXIII. The emperor returned him thanks for the "good and holy oblation" which he had made. The cardinals first, and then other members of the council, followed the example. The pope requested, as if sympathizing with the joy of the occasion, that a session might be held on the following day, in which these proceedings should be publicly ratified.

But the reluctance which John XXIII had already shown to adopt the course urged upon him by the council had not been without its results. The Germans, who evidently had not looked for the prompt acceptance of the final formula of cession on the part of the pope, had drawn up a series of articles, on the subject of the relative authority of the pope and of the council, which admitted of an easy application. They set forth, "that in the matter of schism the council was the supreme judge; that to put an end to the schism there was no way more appropriate, legitimate, and effectual than that of cession; that, without regard to the abdication of Benedict and Gregory, and even in case they should refuse to abdicate, yet if their adherents would unite with the council on condition that John XXIII should consent to cede, the latter was
bound, under pain of mortal sin, to accept and execute the formula of cession presented to him on the part of the nations; that the council may require this of him even with menace, and, in case of his stubborn refusal, the aid of the secular power may be invoked against him in the name of the Catholic church." It is scarcely doubtful that these articles were drawn up with the approval, if not even at the suggestion, of the emperor. A knowledge of them, and a suspicion of the source from which they emanated, could scarcely have failed to satisfy the pontiff, if any doubt had yet remained, that he must surrender at discretion to the supremacy of the council.

John XXIII occupied his seat before the altar. Turning toward the council, he read the formula of cession presented to him in its name by the patriarch of Antioch, in a loud voice, and word for word. When he came to the expressions "I promise, engage, vow," etc., he knelt toward the altar. Then placing his hand to his heart, he added, "and these I promise to observe." After the reading of the formula, the emperor rose from his seat, thanked the pope in the name of the council, kneeled, and kissed his foot. The patriarch also followed the example, when the choir commenced singing the \textit{Te Deum Laudamus}. The procurator of the council, John de Scribanis, then besought of the proto-notaries of the pope, and the notaries and scribes appointed by the council for the purpose, one or more public documents for a permanent record of the transaction.

It was about this time that the place of Huss’ imprisonment was changed. He had been kept hitherto in the Dominican monastery. He was now transferred to that of the Franciscans. The latter was situated in the heart of the city, and was more convenient and accessible, as well as nearer to the papal palace. Of the motives of this transfer we can only judge, from the time and the occasion. The Franciscan monastery was undoubtedly more healthy, but the previous treatment of Huss assures us that this fact could have had but little weight with his enemies. The pope had now taken a new tack to reach the wished-for harbor, and sought undoubtedly to improve the favorable impression made by his acceptance of the demands of the council. It was his purpose to draw off attention from the papal question, and proceed with all expedition in the matter of heresy. It was probably with this object in view that he adopted a measure which contributed to the temporary alleviation of the hardships of Huss’ imprisonment, while it brought his case under the daily notice of the council.

It was within the walls of this Franciscan monastery that a general congregation was held on the fourth of March. The emperor; eight cardinals, three hundred prelates, the ambassadors of the kings and princes, including those of Benedict XIII, and the king of Arragon were present. With the latter, at the council’s request, a treaty was effected, the object of which was a conference between the emperor and the king of Arragon, who was to be accompanied by Benedict. The cession of the latter seemed now the only
obstacle to the peace of the church and the election of a new pope. It was determined that no measures should be taken on the part of the council, pending the proposed negotiation, which should tend to prejudice its success.

The good understanding and mutual regard of the pope and emperor, which had been occasioned by the recent acquiescence of the pope in the demands of the council, were not of long continuance. There was to be no peace for the helpless pontiff while he held any ecclesiastical power. The policy of the council and the conditions of Gregory’s abdication required that he should at once sink into a cipher. Nothing could be more repugnant to the purpose or feelings of the pontiff. His conditional abdication had still left him for the present in the exercise of his official authority, and he still claimed his right to continue to preside over the public sessions. But with this concession to his claims, the aims of the emperor as well as of the council interfered. If those claims were allowed, even for the present, the time would come when the difficulty of forcing him to resign them would be even greater than at first. His proposal to continue the sessions and proceed at once to the business of church reform and extirpation of heresy, was therefore rejected. The emperor wished nothing done in his absence for Constance, which should aggravate the difficulty of negotiation with Benedict.

But John XXIII, on the other hand, by no means relished the idea of surrendering his prerogative, or suspending the business of the council. Was the pontifical authority so feeble that it must find shelter under the imperial shadow? Was it not a mere loss of time and to no profit to spend months in such a negotiation as the one proposed? For himself he was willing to undertake any expedition, to visit any city in order to treat with Benedict, or such persons as he should appoint, in order to expedite the proposed arrangement. Some of the views of the pope he boldly avowed. But the council paid them little attention. They had no faith in the honesty of John XXIII. Conjointly with the emperor, they were mainly anxious to take advantage of the conditional cession which he had made. They therefore requested him to expedite, with the accustomed forms, the bull of his abdication. This proposition he treated as an outrageous insult, and abused the prelates who presented it, in such a manner that none were willing again to broach the subject in his presence. The council saw itself forced to have recourse to the imperial authority to vanquish his obstinacy. Sigismund at its request visited him. He found him in a more complaisant mood, and finally induced him to notify his proposed cession to all Christendom, by a bull bearing date the sixth of March, 1415. In this bull the arts of the pontiff are clearly displayed. He vaunts his love for the church, for whose sake he willingly renounces the possession of the popedom, waives his claims to the pontificate notwithstanding their justice is indisputable, and looks to heaven for the recompense of his self-denial. Nor does he fail to set off the reluctance of Gregory and Benedict to cede, in the most odious light possible.
After the pope had gone so far, it seemed difficult to frame new demands. But the principal object of the emperor and of the council was still unattained. Step by step they had steadily advanced toward their real object, a cession so far conditional only that the emperor, or attorneys appointed for the purpose, could make it absolute at their discretion. Such an instrument might be a powerful weapon to bring Benedict to terms, and it was important that it should be executed before the emperor set out on his journey. The French, English, and Germans were earnest and urgent in their advice to press the pope to execute it. In order to render it more authentic and irrevocable, it was desirable to engage the pope to appoint the emperor himself, with the prelates that should accompany him, or such persons as he should select, his procurators for this purpose. But the proposition was indignantly rejected. The Italians were so displeased with it, that they threatened, if it was urged, to leave the council. For the present, therefore, it was found necessary to defer it.

Closely as the position of John XXIII was invested, he did not altogether despair. He was still busy in his intrigues. The hope was yet cherished of making the emperor his partisan, or at least securing a larger measure of his favor. Three weeks before Easter he presented him with the golden rose, which he had that day solemnly consecrated according to pontifical usage. Sigismund received it, with large expressions of gratitude and regard. He wore it ostentatiously through the whole city, after which the pope regaled him, together with the secular and ecclesiastical princes, at a sumptuous banquet. But the emperor was not the dupe of papal artifice. He knew the man he had to deal with, and saw the necessity of resorting to measures of intimidation to secure his object. A public congregation was called, on the eleventh of March, in which it was proposed at once to give a pope to the church. The surprise of the papal partisans at this sudden and strange proposition may easily be conceived. It was virtually a declaration that the pontificate was vacant. A discussion arose in which the Archbishop of Mentz took an active part in favor of John XXIII. He declared that if any other were elected, he would refuse to recognize him. For a time the assembly was thrown into confusion, but at length, after the discussion had been continued for some days, it was determined that the nations were at liberty and authorized to take such measures as they should judge most appropriate toward the union of the church and the election of another pope.

The breach between the emperor and John XXIII now became greater than ever. The last resources of the latter seemed exhausted, and he finally resolved on flight. But his purpose was not one that admitted of easy execution. The report was general that orders had been given for the arrest, or at least the close watch, of all who issued from the gates of the city. Indisposed to run any dangerous risk, and in order to discover the truth or falsehood of the report, the pope directed the cardinal St. Angelo to go to the gates ostensibly to take a walk without the walls. He did so, and was in fact
arrested. No sooner was John XXIII made aware of this, than he summoned a congregation to meet in his palace, in which he addressed a bitter complaint to the princes and the magistrates of the city against this violation of the security and public liberty so solemnly promised to all visitants, and especially to himself. The magistrates threw the blame upon the emperor, and on his part the Archduke Frederic promised that the safe-conducts should be inviolably observed.

The emperor soon learned what had passed in the papal palace. He summoned the next day the three nations, English, French, and German, in order to take measures yet more decisive. The previous demand for the appointment of attorneys on the part of the pope was now renewed. It was resolved that he should be required to engage to grant no permission of absence from the council, nor withdraw himself; that he should not dissolve the council till the union of the church had been attained, nor consent to its transfer to any other place. In respect to the guards stationed in the different places, and of which the pope had complained, Sigismund apologized for it as having been done with the advice of some of the cardinals, who had observed that many secretly withdrew from the council, a course which, if permitted, would draw on its dissolution. The articles, as drawn up under the eye of the emperor, were presented to John XXIII by the patriarch of Antioch, whose service was rewarded by the pope with the charge of being a false brother, and a secret partisan of Benedict XIII.

On the next day the answer of the pope was given. He promised not to dissolve the council while the schism continued. As to transferring its sessions to another place, he was willing to leave it to the good judgment of the fathers of the council, at the same time giving it to be understood that he was ready to go to Nice, the place of the proposed negotiation between Sigismund and Benedict. As to power of attorney to cede for him, he utterly refused it on various grounds, among others, as implying a dishonorable submission which Benedict would never imitate. In conclusion, he promised to do all that should be judged necessary to promote the union of the church, under pain of being deserted by all his cardinals and prelates if he violated his pledge.

But the point which the pope was so reluctant to yield was not readily abandoned. An assembly of the several nations was held on the following day, in which the subject was again discussed. The French were now undecided, and asked more time for deliberation. The English proposed the pope’s arrest in the public assembly, and in presence of the emperor. John XXIII complains that but for the intervention of the French, they would have proceeded to this extremity. A sort of latent loyalty to the pontiff was aroused by the severity of the measures proposed against him. He was gaining sympathy as a persecuted man. The emperor saw that the moment was critical. He went at once, accompanied by the English, the Germans, and his council, to the monastery where the French were assembled, to confer with the Italian deputation. He
presented to the assembly a document, the tenor of which was to force the pope to appoint attorneys to execute his act of cession, and prevent him from leaving the city. But the French regarded the measure of the emperor as an attempt to overawe them, and insisted on their privilege of deliberating by themselves—a privilege which the other nations had enjoyed. Upon this the English and Germans withdrew while the imperial counsellors remained. The French demanded of the emperor that these also should leave, and that none but himself should be allowed to remain. This demand provoked Sigismund. In a tone indicative of his passion, he exclaimed, as he turned to leave the assembly, "Now is the time to discover who are well disposed toward the union of the church, and at the same time toward the empire." The cardinal of Cambray, who seems to have been satisfied with the conditional cession of the pope, and was indisposed to any further humiliation of the papal authority, regarded the words of the emperor as an implied threat, and withdrew deeply indignant. The four other cardinals, who with him composed the Italian deputation, considering their freedom of consultation prejudiced, sent to the emperor, who had not yet left the cloister, to know if they were free to act. He replied, that as for the French they might enjoy perfect liberty of deliberation, and added an apology for the words that had escaped him in a moment of excitement. But as to those who were not of the French nation, they should leave the assembly, under pain of imprisonment. This threat was aimed at the five cardinals who composed the Italian deputation. The French nation was left alone to its own deliberations, and the influence of Gerson and his associates secured a decision agreeable to the emperor. Three nations now united in their demand that the pope should appoint attorneys to execute his act of cession.

This result was a fatal blow to the last semblance of hope which John XXIII might have hitherto cherished. Notwithstanding the reluctance of the cardinals of St. Mark and Cambray, who had been the leaders of the anti-papal party, to proceed to this ulterior measure, it had yet been adopted by a majority of the nations. Flight from Constance was the only method which was left to John XXIII of escaping from the difficulties of his position. Upon this he was fully resolved. His friend Frederic, Duke of Austria, had reached the city but a few days before, and all were suspicious of the object he had in view. The emperor several times gave him warning not to aid the pope in his efforts to escape. On the evening of the twentieth of March, he went in person to confer with the pontiff. He most urgently dissuaded him from the idea of withdrawing. Though guards were stationed at the gates, along the walls, and by the shores of the lake, in order to arrest any that should attempt to leave the city, Sigismund could not yet feel entirely sure of his prisoner. He wished, if possible, to secure his promise not to make the attempt. John XXIII was too great a master of dissimulation not to be ready to give an answer with which the emperor was fain to be satisfied. He replied that he would by no means leave Constance until the dissolution of the council. The ambiguity of his
language left it afterwards to be inferred that he considered the council
dissolved by the very fact of his departure.

Scarce had the emperor left, when John XXIII gave way to his passion. Bitterly
did he utter his reproaches and complaints against Sigismund and his
adherents. He would now have left him of the golden rose nothing but the
thorn. Sigismund heard of the pope's language, but discreetly passed it by. It
may have been that there was some truth in the oft-repeated charge of John
XXIII that the emperor had demanded money of him to secure him in his office.
The probabilities are indeed against it, but the charge was boldly made out,
was not denied, and it was obvious to all that the fate of John XXIII was in the
hands of Sigismund.

John XXIII had complained, in his last interview with the emperor, that the air
of Constance did not agree with him. He found his health giving way under it.
Did he ever feel concern for the health of his destined victim, not like himself
the inmate of a palace, but shut up in a prison cell? The emperor, in reply,
expatiated to him upon the healthfulness and beauty of many places about the
city where he might walk or ride for his refreshment. He even offered to
accompany him, but undoubtedly the last companion whom the pope would
have selected would have been the emperor. John XXIII was not particularly
select in the terms by which he characterized his persecutor. He called him
drunkard, fool, barbarian, beggar, and names still more opprobrious.

It was on the following day, March 21, that the pope had made his
arrangements for flight. Frederic, Duke of Austria, though he stoutly denied all
complicity with him, and declared that he cared not a straw for him or his
money, had yet given him to understand what measures were to be taken. He
had himself, on this day, appointed a tournament without the walls of the city,
thus giving occasion for multitudes to pass the gates, among whom John XXIII
might escape unsuspected.

It was towards evening when the pope was prepared to make the hazardous
attempt. He was disguised as a groom or postilion. He rode a horse poorly
equipped, and was himself wrapped in a large cloak, with a crossbow on the
pommel of his saddle. He passed on undiscovered till he reached the banks of
the river, where a boat was ready to convey him to Schafhausen, which he
reached in safety. Frederic had been at once informed of the pope's flight, by
one of his servants, who had been appointed to observe it, and who came and
whispered the intelligence in the duke's ear. No one suspected the nature of
the message. The games were continued as if nothing had happened. In due
time the duke returned to Constance, and at length rejoined the pope at
Schafhausen, a city of his own allegiance.
CHAPTER XVII
Supremacy of the Council
The Pope Suspended
Treatment of Huss
Arrest of Jerome

The flight of John XXIII from Constance produced no little consternation in the city. Many expected the immediate dissolution of the council. The merchants, sensitive to the least popular excitement which threatened riot, closed their shops or packed up their goods, in order to be ready to depart. It was in this emergency that the prudence and decision of the emperor were manifested. Attended by the elector Palatine and most of the court nobility, he marched with the sound of trumpet in procession through the streets of the city, giving his royal word that personal security should be still enjoyed, that the council was not dissolved by the flight of the pope, and that he was ready to defend it to the last drop of his blood. At the same time a writing was nailed to the gates of the palace to which public attention was called. It was an able invective against the conduct of John XXIII. It exposed his bad faith, intrigues, and projects for breaking up the council, and closed with a plea for the continuance of the council and the judgment of the pope according to his deserts.

A congregation was soon held to determine what measures should be adopted in the emergency. It seemed essential to persuade John XXIII to return to Constance, or at least to appoint his attorneys to execute the act of cession. A deputation of six was appointed to confer with him, of whom three were cardinals, one of the latter, Cardinal St. Mark.

Measures were the same day taken, in an assembly of the princes of the empire, to prosecute the Duke of Austria for his complicity in the flight of the pope. The emperor urged the matter with great energy. The duke was accused of treason and disloyalty to the council, the church, and the empire, and was summoned to appear and answer for his conduct before the emperor and the council. Thus the pope was to be punished in the prostration of the only powerful friend on whom he could rely. Many of the duke’s cities at once withdrew their allegiance.

The deputation to the pope had not yet left Constance, when some of the ablest minds of the council, disdaining any longer to demean themselves by controversy or negotiation with him, proposed bolder and more decisive measures. The well-known views and unquestionable ability of Gerson marked him out as their leading advocate. The proposition now advanced was that a
general council was superior in authority to the pope, and might depose him. Gerson made it the subject of a public discourse, which the members of the deputation, although invited, declined to hear. The discourse was able and to the point. It was enforced, moreover, by papers drawn up by the representatives of the university of Paris. One of these, Benedict Gentian, a man of eminent ability, and a doctor of decrees, produced a separate document of similar purport, in which he declared John XXIII "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." "Who more than he," he indignantly asks, "has scandalized the church of God?" He then concisely argues his "perfect heresy" from the gross and aggravated crimes of which he is undoubtedly guilty.

Meanwhile the pope on his part was not idle. The next day after his arrival at Schafhausen, he wrote to the emperor, his "dearest son," informing him that "by the favor of Almighty God he was now in the enjoyment of a healthful and salubrious atmosphere." He exculpated the Duke of Austria from all complicity in his flight, and declared that "now in the enjoyment of health and liberty, he had no purpose to evade his promise."

The cool impudence of such ostentatious affection could certainly have contributed but little to calm the indignation or change the purpose of Sigismund. Scarcely, however, could he have perused this extraordinary letter, when another missive from Schafhausen reached Constance, and one more clearly indicative of the pope’s purpose. He cited all the officials and retainers of the pope’s court, under pain of excommunication and deprivation of all their offices, to meet him within six days at Schafhausen. It was plain that his object now was to break up the council. In obedience to his requisition, many left Constance. At the same time he put forth a skilful and specious apology for his flight, which he sent to the king of France and the Duke of Orleans. In this letter he sets forth the difficulties which interested persons had placed in the way of the council’s proceedings; complains of the unprecedented measure of dividing the council into nations, each having an equal vote; objects to the obstacles thrown in his way when he was anxious to attend to the trial of Huss; remarks upon the emperor’s intrigues, his control over the English and German nations; skillfully appeals to French prejudice in an account of Sigismund’s attempt to overawe the deliberations of the French deputation; grows indignant at the restraint imposed upon his own liberty, as well as the insults of the bishop of Sarum, in broaching the proposition which Gerson defended; and concludes with an account of his necessary flight, in which he contradicts the statements of his previous letter, addressed to the emperor, as to the complicity of the Duke of Austria. John XXIII could scarcely find fault with Benedict Gentian for calling him a great liar.

But the doctrine which the bishop of Sarum had ventured to state in the pope’s presence, and of which Gerson was the public and avowed champion—the superiority of the council to the pope—did not pass unquestioned. Many who
had hitherto acted with the majority, began to waver. Was it not evident that such a doctrine would allow the council to annul all that the pope had done, and what security had the cardinals that they should not be deposed as well as their master? The question was already secretly agitated, soon to be brought to a public discussion, whether the cardinals, at least those who were adherents of John XXIII, should be allowed to participate in the deliberations of the council. Already they had taken the alarm. The members of the deputation refused to attend the assembly where Gerson was to discourse. The emperor invited the cardinals to meet and confer with him. Apprehensive of some scheme against the pope in which they could not participate, they declined the invitation. The patriarch of Antioch, whom the pope did not regard with any peculiar confidence, and whom he had called a false friend, drew up an elaborate argument to the effect that the pope is not subject to a general council. It was an answer to Gerson’s discourse. Not without the dissent of some of his colleagues, especially the cardinal D’Ailly, he presented one copy to the emperor, and took good care to send another to the pope.

The deputation to Schafhausen set out on their journey on the afternoon of March 23rd. The distance they had to travel was four German or twenty-three English miles. They spent the next day in conference with the pope. One of their number, the archbishop of Rheims, returned on the 25th to Constance. He found the emperor and the principal members of the council assembled to deliberate. His report was far from satisfactory. John XXIII still professed his readiness to execute the act of cession, but made propositions in regard to the method of it which were quite inadmissible. From day to day the subject was discussed, sometimes giving rise to strange scenes of altercation and confusion. Many of the cardinals, among whom was D’Ailly, were unwilling as yet entirely to break with the pope. They professed their determination to adhere to him until they were satisfied of his purpose to refuse to appoint procurators, in which case they would abandon him and abide by the decision of the council. They insisted that no definite action should be taken previous to the return of the deputation. On one occasion, while they were pleading for delay, and urging the cause of the pope, a copy of the pope’s citation, addressed to his officials and requiring them to leave Constance, was brought into the assembly. It had just been nailed upon the gates of the cathedral church. Its announcement took all by surprise. Even three of the deputation who had just returned from Schafhausen were not prepared for it, though apprehensive that some such a step was intended. The members of the council were indignant at this attempt to dissolve it. It was in vain that the cardinals urged the good intentions of the pope, or the concessions which he had authorized them to make. No faith was reposed in his word. The call was loud and repeated for a public session: “No matter about these; let there be a session,” was the cry. It was in vain to resist the demand; the only concession that was granted was that instead of being held on the twenty-eighth, it was deferred to the thirtieth of the month.
Up to the noon of the last-mentioned day, encroaching upon the time of the session, and in desecration of the sacred hours of the Sabbath on which it was to be held, the altercations continued. Various questions provoked the passions of the disputant. Some, and especially the cardinals, contended that by the pope’s flight the council was ipso facto dissolved. "What they could not effect by reason," says Niem, "they attempted by their clamor." A question, equally vital, was next raised—the one which Gerson had made the subject of his discourse. Immense results depended on its decision. The cardinals were not blind to the nature of a measure in which they were personally so deeply interested. But public sentiment was against them. The imperial will and Gerson’s logic, not unaided by the duplicity of the pope, carried the day. The majority of the nations—the Italians as well as the cardinals dissenting—agreed to report for adoption, at the approaching session of the council, measures necessary to its continuance and the vindication of its authority. These were the supremacy of the council, in matters vital to the church, over every kind of estate and dignity, even the papal; the guilt and deserved punishment of the pope for attempting to set it aside; and a third article on the execrable flight of the pope, of which Gerson secured the insertion, but which was afterwards dropped at the instance of the cardinals. The question of adopting these renewed all the previous bitterness of feeling. Neither party was inclined to yield. The odium against the cardinals was increased by their obstinacy. Some had refused to attend the deliberations under pretexts too shallow to conceal their suspected purpose of treating the council as dissolved. Others could not go so far, even in their strong attachment to the council, as to betray the papal prerogative.

Such was the state of things when the fourth session of the council was held on the thirtieth of March. In the absence of the pope, cardinal Jordan de Ursinis was appointed to preside. The decrees were read by Zabarella, cardinal of Florence. The cardinals had taken the liberty to modify the form in which they had been received from the congregation of the nations. As published, they were, in substance, that the council, deriving its power as the representative of the universal church from Christ himself, was superior to all other authority or dignity, even that of the pope; that John XXIII might not recall his officials, or remove the sessions of the council from Constance, under penalty of ecclesiastical censure, or measures more severe; that no promotions or deprivations were allowable on his part to the prejudice of the council, or of those that adhered to it; that no new cardinals should be created, and that those officials of the papal court, who were present in Constance, should enjoy, as before, full and undisturbed liberty of deliberation and action. Besides these, before or after the session, several articles were presented to the cardinals, ostensibly looking to and providing for the execution of the act of cession on the part of John XXIII.

On the following day, when the nations were assembled, complaint was made of the strange omissions and changes in the decrees as read by Zabarella. On
their part the cardinals demanded fuller consideration on the omitted points, while the presidents of the nations, after conference with Zabarella, expressed their reprehension of the audacity of the cardinal. It was promptly resolved that the omitted parts should be at once restored, and the decrees be reproduced in their integrity.

Meanwhile the pope, who bad obtained information of the proposed measures of the council, through fear or policy, determined to leave Schafhausen. He deemed himself safer at a greater distance from Constance, or at least wished to have it so believed. It gave him opportunity to sting the emperor by the reproach implied in the statement afterward made, that he considered his freedom endangered at Schafhausen. He left the place at about the hour when the fourth session of the council was opened. None of his cardinals accompanied him except for a short distance from the city. He made them there witnesses to a written protest against the binding obligation of what he had sworn or promised at Constance, as extorted from him by force and threats. Thus his double game was now fully and finally exposed. In a storm of rain, and on horseback, with few attendants, he hurried on to Laufenberg, thus placing more than double the former distance between himself and the council. Many of the officers of his court returned to Constance. Benedict Gentian says they did not find a good kitchen at Schafhausen, and so came back. Some however remained, undecided what policy to adopt. No sooner were the pope's second flight and his protest known, then several of the cardinals and officers of the papal court, and numbers of the Italian clergy, stole away from the council, most of them, however, soon to retrace their steps, "not without shame."

This second flight of the pope gave the emperor and council the new advantage of showing how John XXIII had contradicted himself, in the reasons given for his flight, first from Constance and afterward from Schafhausen. It encouraged them to an act which was a virtual declaration of entire independence of the papal authority. A new seal was provided, with which to authenticate the documents of the council. For a device it had on one side the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul, and on the other the words "The seal of the most holy council of the city of Constance." The decision of the emperor, and the persevering energy of the anti-papal party, had now placed them in the ascendant. The cowardly flight of John XXIII, his inconstancy, notorious duplicity, and falsehood, had dispirited his partisans. War was declared against his powerful friend the Duke of Austria, and the emperor was making the necessary preparations for carrying it on.

Such was the condition of things when the fifth session of the council was opened, on Sunday, the sixth of April, 1415. The cardinal Jordan de Ursinis again presided. Eight cardinals were present. As it had been resolved to restore the parts of the decrees which had been omitted in the previous session, Cardinal Zabarella refused to read them. The bishop of Posnania was appointed
to fill his place. The decrees, as originally agreed upon, were read, and unanimously adopted. The most important of the previously omitted portions was the one which declared the authority of the council to reform the church in *its head and members*. The supremacy of the council over the papal dignity, which was thus embodied in the decree, was most offensive to the partisans of John XXIII. Four centuries have still left the principle a disputed one. The interest of the popes has ever placed them in the ranks of its bitter opponents.

In this session it was resolved to affirm and approve the sentence of the council of Rome in regard to the books and doctrine of Wickliffe. A commission was appointed to investigate, and report the steps which should be taken. It was, moreover, resolved to write letters in the name of the council to kings and princes, giving a statement of the flight of the pope, and vindicating the body from the charges which he had brought against it.

As it was evident that John XXIII had no disposition to return to Constance, the council besought the emperor to attempt to bring him back. Sigismund replied that he would do it, intimating at the same time that force might be necessary to take him out of the hands of the Duke of Austria. He then stated the steps which he had taken to reduce the duke to obedience—well pleased, undoubtedly, to have the approval of the council in an enterprise inspired as much by policy as concern for the church.

Meanwhile John XXIII had reached Laufenberg. From that place he issued a bull, in which he still kept up his well-feigned anxiety to restore the church to peace and unity. Nor can we be surprised at his expressing his apprehension of danger to his personal freedom when he knew that the troops of the emperor were already on their march to Schafhausen. Sigismund had, in fact, entered upon the execution of his purpose with resolute energy. He was determined to subdue the pride and power of the pope’s most powerful champion. On the seventh of April, a citation of the duke, in which he is put under the ban of the empire, and all his subjects are absolved from their oath of allegiance, was nailed upon the doors of all the churches of Constance. Letters were written to different cities of Swabia and the Swiss cantons, urging them to proceed against Frederic as an enemy of the church and empire, and a disturber of the council. It was in vain that the French ambassadors and many powerful nobles interceded in his behalf. Some, who had formerly been under great obligations to the duke, manifested their ingratitude by the readiness with which they abandoned a sinking cause. Forty thousand men, in several bodies, were precipitated upon the cities which owed allegiance to the duke. City after city was taken from him. The Swiss were forced, by terrible threats, to abandon their neutrality and take up arms. John XXIII did his best to encourage his poor bewildered ally. He looked with confidence yet to the dissolution of the council, imagining that his absence would reduce it to a nullity. In such a case it was probable that the power and influence of the emperor would cease to preponderate, and Frederic might be able to recover what he had lost. But he
soon saw himself reduced to the necessity of submission. John XXIII, on his part, deeming himself no longer safe at Laufenberg, fled to Freiburg, a place strongly fortified. On his arrival, he again sent to the council the terms on which he would execute his act of cession. But his demands were too extravagant for the council to allow. They saw themselves made the sport of the pope’s duplicity; so that his last letter only served to confirm and strengthen the opposition against him. The cardinals, moreover, were now more inclined than heretofore to abandon the pope. The proceedings of the council were continued in his absence with their former regularity, a commission being appointed to act in his place.

Meanwhile the question of the relative authority of the pope and council was agitated anew. The occasion of it was the proposed condemnation of Wickliffe’s writings. As we have already seen, a commission was appointed (April 7th) who were clothed with full authority to examine the doctrines of the English heretic, and report the form of process to be adopted for the condemnation proposed. This commission, consisting, among others, of Cardinals St. Mark and Cambray, to whom the cause of Huss was also committed, had made their report on or about the eighteenth of the month. By the advice of many eminent doctors who were consulted in the examination of Wickliffe’s works, it was agreed that forty-five articles extracted from them should be condemned. These articles, which were read in the session held on the fourth of May, and there pronounced heretical, cannot be regarded as a fair representation of the views of Wickliffe. Some of them are evidently garbled extracts from his writings, while a portion of the others are so distorted as to lose their original meaning. It is obvious, however, in comparing them with the opinions and doctrines of Huss, that the English reformer was by far the most thorough Protestant.

It was proposed also to condemn two hundred and sixty other articles drawn from Wickliffe’s writings, but the reading of them for this purpose was interrupted by the French, who complained that they had not had the opportunity to examine them. It appears, however, that the new list of articles, as well as the principal treatises of Wickliffe, were likewise condemned.

It was indeed a foregone conclusion that Wickliffe should be anathematized as a notorious and scandalous heretic; that his memory should be condemned; and that his body and bones, if they could be distinguished from others, should be disinterred and cast out from ecclesiastical burial. Such was the definitive sentence pronounced by the council in its eighth session, held on the fourth of May.

But in drawing up the form of the sentence, the question was raised whether Wickliffe’s condemnation should be pronounced in the name of the pope or the council. Most of the cardinals, and the entire party yet in sympathy with the
pope, were united in favor of the former. Thus the controversy in regard to a
principle fundamental to the constitution of the whole church was again
opened. By order of the council the previous conclusions of the cardinals in
regard to the supremacy of the church of Rome, as well as to their own
privileges, had been answered and refuted. The patriarch of Antioch, who had
gone with the council so far as to be called a false friend by John XXIII, now
came forward as the champion of the papal party. "Church power," he
maintained, "was given to the mystic body of the church, so as to pertain
especially to St. Peter; from him, as the head, it is diffused through the whole
body. But nowhere do we find that Peter ever gave a general council power
over the pope; consequently the pope is not subject to it. To him belongs
plenitude of power. Others are therefore subject to him, and not he to them.
Councils, moreover, receive their power from the pope. None but God is his
judge. A council cannot judge him without his authority." These positions are
sustained by a multitude of references to decisions of the popes, opinions of
eminent doctors, the canon law, decretals, etc. Such were the views concurred
in by a large majority of the cardinals, and favored by all the partisans of the
pope, embracing probably the majority of the Italian nation. The cardinal of
Cambray came forward to confute them. Manfully did he undertake the task,
well aware, however, that stronger than his logic was the will of the council,
resolved to enforce it. "To continue obstinately in schism," said he, "is a heresy,
and even an idolatry. In this case it is allowable that a pope should be judged.
Besides, is not the pope judged by a human being in the tribunal of his own
conscience? The council, moreover, represents the entire church, of which the
pope is but a part."

The contention on this matter grew warm and fierce. Only twelve members out
of forty, composing the commission of doctors, agreed with the cardinal of
Cambray. But, in spite of contradictions even to his face, he was resolved to
maintain his ground.

But the policy forced upon the council by the emergency was stronger than
arguments drawn from reason or precedent. The question, so earnestly
discussed then, has been variously determined since, according to the
preponderance of parties. It is still the touch-me-not of the Roman Catholic
church. But in spite of the overwhelming majority against him in the college of
cardinal, D’Ailly was triumphant in the council. Its members were irritated by
the frequent subterfuges and delays of the pontiff. They were more than
satisfied that he had no intention to cede his office. The only measure that
now remained for them was the assertion of the rights and the maintenance of
the authority of the council.

On the thirteenth of April the council had deliberated on the terms upon which
John XXIII had wished to negotiate. He demanded of the emperor a safe-
conduct, drawn up in such terms as he should dictate; that the council should
decree his freedom as well after as before his abdication; that the war against
his friend, the Duke of Austria, should cease; and that he himself should remain
cardinal and Italian legate, with thirty thousand florins yearly revenue, with
authority also over an Italian province. Such terms as these the council was by
no means disposed to grant. The emperor was resolved that the Duke of Austria
should be humbled, while few imagined that the pope would abide even by the
terms he had offered.

In the session held on the seventeenth of April, the council drew up a form by
which the pope was to confer a power-of-attorney to execute his cession. The
persons to whom this power was to be granted were named in an after decree,
and consisted of four from each of the four nations. A committee, consisting,
besides the cardinals of St. Mark and Florence, of eminent theologians and
bishops from the different nations, was appointed to present to the pope, for
his acceptance, the form which had been drawn up. They were instructed,
moreover, to demand that he should return from his flight, and select one of
the three cities, Ulm, Ravensburg, or Basle, as his place of residence, where
the council by its ambassadors might have access to him. Two days were
allowed him in which to make his choice. In case of his refusal to comply with
the demands of the council, it was resolved that he should be cited to appear
and answer to the accusations brought against him. This process, which looked
to his deposition, was to be stayed only until answer should be received. In
case of his compliance, however, no further steps would be taken.

Meanwhile the council were encouraged in their course by letters from the
university of Paris, the only power in Europe the authority and influence of
which rivaled that of the papacy. They were addressed, one to the council, one
to the emperor, and one to John XXIII, and fully endorsed the policy hitherto
pursued. The council on their part drew up letters to kings and princes, giving a
statement of the doings of the council and the difficulties with which it had to
contend, in which they endeavored to secure their allegiance and support. It
was in these circumstances that an event occurred which showed to what a
point the influence of the cardinals had declined, in consequence of their
extreme reluctance to proceed against John XXIII. In the sixth session, on the
seventeenth of April, a prelate, supposed to have been Benedict Gentian of the
university of Paris, rose and read a paper in which it was proposed that the
cardinals should be excluded from the deliberations of the council. It was
urged against them, that if their presence were allowed they would be judges
in their own cause; that in their election of John XXIII they had abused their
office, and scandalized the whole church; that on the pope’s flight from
Constance they had followed him, and rendered themselves justly objects of
suspicion to the council; that such as had returned, had maintained that the
council was dissolved by the flight of the pope, thus virtually arguing their own
exclusion; and finally, that while the adherents of John are fed by his gold,
their influence will defeat the reform of the church.
No action was taken by the council upon this startling proposition. But the very fact that it could be made with impunity, and without exciting a murmur except among those directly affected by it, is quite significant. On the other hand, the cardinals were indignant at what they considered the insult that had been offered them. They assembled to deliberate in regard to their own rights, and resolved at all hazards to vindicate their own and the papal authority. An “Apology and Vindication” was consequently drawn up, and presented, on the eighteenth of the month, in an assembly of the nations. It was publicly opposed by the cardinal of Cambray. But the answer to it was not given until the second of May. Previous to this, the cardinals had become more fully sensible of the slight which had been put upon them. Matters had been determined in the assembly of the nations of which they were allowed no knowledge until a short time before the public session, when there was no time to deliberate. They demanded, therefore, that inasmuch as the council was composed of the four nations, of which the English had but three prelates, the college of cardinals should be allowed an equal authority, and be permitted to deliberate and vote as a nation by themselves. Such a demand was little to the taste of the majority of the council. It was consequently refused. The cardinals might deliberate and vote with the nation of their birth, but were not allowed recognition as a distinct body.

Meanwhile the ambassadors to the pope had set out on their journey. It was on the nineteenth of the month that they received their final instructions, and a safe-conduct for John XXIII in case of his compliance with the demands of the council. But the pope was no longer at Freiburg. Haunted by his fears, and apprehensive of arrest by the imperial army in the neighborhood, he had fled to Breisach. It was his evident purpose to escape from the territories of the empire and seek refuge in France, or put himself under the protection of the Duke of Burgundy. The ambassadors of the council followed him in his flight. They reached Breisach on the twenty-third of April. On the following day they laid the demands of the council before him. They were informed that an answer would be given the next day. In the interval, however, the pope disguised himself and fled, leaving as an excuse to the embassy, that during the night he had received intelligence of danger which threatened him at Breisach. His first stopping-place was at Nienburg, a village two leagues distant. But here again his fears would allow him no rest. Nor was the ground of his apprehensions merely imaginary. The friend on whom he had hitherto relied, the Duke of Austria, was unable any longer to protect, and was in fact about to desert him. One city after another had withdrawn from him its allegiance. The imperial armies were closing around him. If the conflict was to be continued, he could only offer the resistance of despair. He had relied on the fidelity, or at least the neutrality of the Swiss; but the terrors of excommunication and the imperial ban had forced them to take up arms against their ally. Frederic saw the daily defection, and began to despond. John XXIII alone exhorted him to a manly resistance, and promised him whatever amount of money he might need. He endeavored to persuade him
that, at the report of the war, the council, deprived of its head, would be dissolved, and that those who had revolted would return to their allegiance.

But Frederic had another adviser in Louis of the Palatinate, whose sister he had married. Though armed on the side of the emperor, and ostensibly the enemy, Louis was really the friend of Frederic. He represented to the latter the desperate condition of his affairs, the readiness with which the chief cities would throw off their yoke and declare themselves free if the occasion was longer allowed; the folly of introducing foreign troops whose presence would only offend and alienate his own party; the fatal policy of allowing the emperor to stir up his subjects to rebellion, slaying the duke as it were with his own sword; the security to be attained by a reconciliation with the emperor, a thing by no means to be despaired of; and the wise policy of going at once to Constance and throwing himself upon the mercy of the emperor, aided and sustained as he would be by the intercession of powerful friends. These arguments and persuasions of Louis were enforced by the friends and servants of Frederic. He at length yielded to their force, thus leaving John XXIII, unprotected, to manage his own negotiations. He determined to secure his pardon at whatever cost. After having connived at, if not aided, the pope in his flight, and used him as his tool till he discovered that he was but a broken staff, he resolved to deliver him up to the emperor as a mark of his submission, and it was with this view that he returned to Constance. A Swiss historian declares that by Frederic’s intervention the pope was prevented from escaping to France. He wished to hold him as a pledge to secure his own pardon. Under the semblance of friendship he wrote to John XXIII a letter, the results of which, if not so intended, fully accorded with the interests of the council. He told him that he could no longer warrant his security at Nienburg, nor on his proposed route, inasmuch as the troops of the emperor were stationed to intercept him. The duke consequently volunteered the advice, equivalent to a command in the circumstances of the case, that the pope would best consult his safety by returning to Freiburg. No other course was left for John XXIII than to accept the advice, however unpalatable.

Meanwhile the embassy from the council, deserted at Breisach by the man with whom they had been sent to confer, and indisposed to follow up the fugitive in what they deemed a fruitless chase, had set out on their return to the council. They had already reached Freiburg, and were about to continue their journey, when they were agreeably surprised by information from Louis of Bavaria, who met them at that place, that if they would remain a short time longer, they might have the desired opportunity of meeting the pope, and executing their commission. In a few hours John XXIII arrived. He was extremely mortified at finding here the men to whom he had shown such antipathy at Breisach, and whom he dreaded almost equally with the imperial troops. They now repeated their demand of a power-of-attorney, and a choice of the proposed cities in which he might reside and treat with the council, declaring that in case of his refusal the council would proceed against him. The mortification of the pope
was extreme. There was no longer any possible method of evading the demand. An answer must be given. It was promised by John XXIII, and the ambassadors of the council were to receive it on the following day. The day came, but no answer. The ambassadors at once went to search for the pope. They found him yet in bed, where he received them, as Niem reports, in the most indecent manner. He still refused to grant them a power-of-attorney to execute his act of cession, but promised to send it to the council after them. He merely placed in their hands a list of the demands which he made for himself as the condition of compliance with the wishes of the council. Unable to obtain anything more satisfactory, the ambassadors returned to Constance. At an assembly of the nations, held on the twenty-ninth day of April, their report was made. The irritation against John XXIII was now extreme. All professed to see in the result of this embassy another illustration of the duplicity and obstinacy of the pope. It was resolved, therefore, that the process against him should be commenced, and that he should be cited before the council to answer to the accusations brought against him. Before the citation was issued, however, the papal grant of a power-of-attorney arrived. But it was loaded with conditions wholly inadmissible. The council voted it unsatisfactory, in spite of the remonstrance of the cardinals.

On the second of May, the seventh public session of the council was held. It was in this session that Jerome, whose arrest was not yet known at Constance, was cited for the second time. The citation of John XXIII was likewise issued, in which he was charged with the crimes of heresy, simony, corrupt administration of his office, favoring the present schism, and other grave offences, scandalous to the Catholic church. He was accused, moreover, of gross immoralities. His flight, his evasion of the demands of the council, and his opposition to the reformation of the church were not forgotten in the catalogue of his crimes; and he was summoned by a public edict, to be published in the usual manner, to appear within nine days before the council and submit to trial. His refusal to appear should not stay the process.

The second citation of Jerome, to which we have referred as issued at this session, was urged forward by that enemy of the Bohemian reformers, Michael de Causis. He personally attended to the publication of the citation, nailing it, during the hours of public worship, on the doors of St. Stephen’s church and the church of the Virgin Mary. His assistants in the work were two fellow-priests of Prague, George de Walschim and Paul de Horowitz. It was not without reason that Jerome complained, on his trial, that he was persecuted by individual envy and malice.

While these things were taking place, Frederic of Austria was industriously looking after his own interests. Abandoning the pope to his fate, he hastened to Constance. It was on the thirtieth of April that he reached the city; but nearly a week passed before he could find access to the emperor. On the fifth of May, Sigismund had assembled the Italian ambassadors and a great number
of the prelates of the four nations at a banquet, in the large hall of the Franciscan monastery. He was seated at the further end of the hall when the vanquished prince appeared at the threshold. Frederic advanced, conducted by Duke Louis of Bavaria and the elector of Brandenburg. As he approached the emperor, he bent his knee thrice to the ground. "What do you want?" said Sigismund. "Powerful king," replied Louis of Bavaria, "the Duke Frederic, my cousin, here present, implores your royal clemency. He is ready to bring back the pope; but he requires, for his honor, that no violence be offered the holy father." Frederic confirmed what was thus advanced, and at last moved the emperor, who tendered him his hand. The prince gave up all his domains in Alsace and the Tyrol to Sigismund, and swore fidelity to him as his lord suzerain. The emperor, whose pride was flattered by this scene of Frederic's submission, and who wished to make the most of it, turned to the personages there present, and said, "Gentlemen of the Italian nation, you are acquainted with the name and power of the dukes of Austria, yet observe how I tame them; and learn from this what a king of the Germans can do." Sigismund wished to make an impression that should overawe the partisans of the pope. To this end he sacrificed his true dignity to the bombast of power.

Frederic's submission had been preceded by that of John, archbishop of Mentz, who saw no further hope of success in his attempts to obstruct the proceedings of the council. He had been one of the pope's warmest partisans, but, like Frederic, had no disposition to invite his own ruin by clinging to a sinking cause. Thus John XXIII saw himself entirely deserted, save by the few partisans and cardinals whose voice was drowned in the loud murmurs of the council. During the nine days allowed for his appearance, the process against Wickliffe and his writings was pressed forward. Their condemnation, referred to already, took place at the eighth session of the council, held on the fourth of May. The citation of John XXIII had alarmed even the friends who had still followed him in his flight, and had hitherto adhered to his falling fortunes. Day by day some prelate or cardinal might be seen straggling back to Constance. Otho de Colonna, afterward elected pope in the place of John XXIII, was one of the last to desert him. The semblance of a court which had hitherto attended the fugitive pontiff now disappeared. Yet, hopeless as his case was, John XXIII still obstinately refused to submit to the council. The ninth session was held on the day fixed for his appearance. Prelates, appointed for the purpose, called at the doors of the church for John XXIII to appear; and, when no person came forward to answer the summons, three-and-twenty commissioners, amongst whom were Cardinals de Ursinis and St. Mark, were designated to hear the witnesses against the pope.

But the council were not disposed to be content with John's absence. His reluctance to appear was foreseen, and the citation was enforced by methods of a more effective kind. Soon after it was issued, the council sent the archbishops of Besancon and of Riga to use their influence with him, to persuade him to return, while the emperor reinforced their persuasions by
sending along with them three hundred men, with the Burgrave of Nuremberg at their head. If argument and persuasion could not avail, they were to employ force. On their arrival at Freiburg, their first precaution was to station guards at all the approaches of the city, from fear that the pope might escape their hands. The prelates exhausted their eloquence in urging John XXIII to Constance, but in vain. The pope received them in the most affable and cheerful manner, assuring them of his readiness to comply with their solicitations, meanwhile resolved to play out his last card of negotiation before giving up the game. Again he sent propositions to the council; but these were again refused. His letter, giving notice of his conferring the power-of-attorney on three cardinals, St. Mark, Cambray, and Florence, was read. But the cardinal of Cambray was absent. The cardinal St. Mark declared that he never had performed the office, and would not do it now; while the cardinal of Florence declared his wish to proceed according to the will of the council; but, as there was no reply, at length added that it was hard to be advocate against the whole world. In these circumstances, the whole thing was allowed silently to drop. The power-of-attorney was not read, or even produced.

The tenth session of the council was held on the fourteenth of May. The ceremony of the previous session, calling on the pope to answer to the citation, was repeated. He did not appear, and was declared guilty of contumacy. The commission for examining witnesses against him reported to the council that testimony had been heard sufficient to warrant his suspension. Ten witnesses had been examined. Their words had been reduced to writing, and their depositions were read. The allegations against the pope, as contained in the citation, were considered to be fully sustained, and his suspension from the pontifical office was pronounced. Among the charges against him was that of heresy. To this the cardinal St. Mark excepted, declaring that no witnesses had been heard upon that point. The council, aware of the maxim of the common law that a pope can be deposed only for heresy, and considering John XXIII guilty of this, at least by implication, were unwilling to allow the force of the cardinal’s objection, and the discussion of the matter was deferred to another occasion.

The controversy between the council and John XXIII had, for the time, absorbed the interest and anxiety of all parties. Meanwhile Huss had been removed from the Dominican monastery to that of the Franciscans only that John XXIII might more conveniently expedite his processes against him, and thus divert the attention of the council from his own affairs. At the time of the pope's flight, he was under the charge of officers of the papal court. These, when they learned that the pope had fled, deserted their post to follow their master. The keys of Huss' prison consequently fell into the hands of the emperor. The opportunity was one not to be lost. The reformer’s faithful friend, De Chlum, accompanied by other Bohemian nobles, immediately waited upon Sigismund in the hope of procuring his release. They pointed out to him the favorable occasion now afforded of delivering an innocent man from
indescribable suffering, while he vindicated his own honor and that of the empire from the contempt to which they had been subjected. Sigismund listened in embarrassed silence. He protested, not without a confusion excited by a sense of his own injustice, that the future destiny of the professor lay not in his hands, but in those of the four presidents of the several nations of the council. All that he himself would consent to was that the nobles should pay the invalid a short visit in the presence of witnesses. Conducted by the emperor’s attendants, the Bohemians proceeded to the Franciscan convent. There they found Huss, to outward view, a pitiable object. He lay stretched on a miserable couch, emaciated, and wasted almost to a skeleton. On the ground before him lay a small strip of paper. They picked it up, and though the writing upon it was scarce legible, it told the story of the neglect which would soon have saved the stake a victim. "If you still love me, entreat the emperor to allow his people to provide for me, or else enable me to find sustenance for myself." Such were the words they read.

Huss had formerly been scantily supplied from the pope's kitchen, but since his flight had been entirely overlooked. For three days the weak, enfeebled prisoner had been without food. Meekly and uncomplainingly did he endure what God had seen fit to suffer wicked men to inflict upon him. At the melancholy night, the bearded warriors were melted into tears, but their resentment was aroused. "With uplifted lands and eloquent eyes, they besought Heaven to give them, at some future period, an opportunity of avenging with their swords" such inhuman cruelty and injustice. Undoubtedly Sigismund might thank his own policy, in allowing such treatment of Huss, for the bitter wars that afterward ravaged his Bohemian dominions. The meeting of Huss and his friends, says the chronicle, was very melancholy, and the parting was still more sad; for all those brave men loved Huss as their father, and their hearts were full of gloomy foreboding. When the sufferer had received the last embrace of his countrymen, he sank back fainting on his chains. The next day he was given over by the emperor and the council to the rigid custody of the bishop of Constance. By the order of the latter he was conveyed by water to the castle of Gottlieben. Armed men accompanied the prisoner till they reached the spot on the banks of the Rhine, three miles distant from Constance. He was thrown into the tower, and treated with a severity which would have been harshness even to the greatest criminal. Irons were fastened to his feet, and during the day he might move the length of his chain, but at night he was chained by his arms to the wall. With such inhuman cruelty, enough to crush the boldest spirit, Huss was to be prepared to stand up alone against a host of enemies that thirsted for his blood. Undoubtedly there were men among them who would deliberately prefer to browbeat an invalid, or argue with one too weak to defend his own cause, than contend with the living, vigorous energy of thought and action that had electrified a whole kingdom.

It was but a few days after the removal of Huss to Gottlieben, on the fourth of April, that his friend and associate, Jerome of Prague, arrived at Constance.
The misfortunes and sufferings of Huss had become known in Bohemia. An intense sympathy was felt in his behalf. His cruel treatment, and the danger to which he was exposed, became the subjects of daily conversation. Men began to blame Jerome that he should have left his companion and brother in faith to contend alone and unsupported against a host of enemies. But their complaint was ill-founded, as the event showed. On his departure from Prague, and more especially after his imprisonment, Huss had exhorted his friend to preserve himself for better times. He was ready and willing himself to become a sacrifice, if one was demanded, but he could not consent to have the cause of truth deprived of so able and faithful a champion as Jerome. In the generous mind of the latter, however, the blame imputed to him, and to which he was so sensitive, outweighed every other anxiety. He immediately quitted Bohemia and hastened to Constance. His countrymen, to whom he presented himself, were terrified by his arrival. They knew too well the spirit that had been shown in the treatment of Huss to dare to trust it further. They at once pronounced his journey useless, since all hopes of his friend’s release from prison were at an end. But Jerome was resolved to see Huss if possible, and exert himself on his behalf. By some means he seems to have secured admittance to him; but when he saw his gloomy prison, the chains upon his limbs, and the harsh treatment to which he was subjected, his apprehensions of the vanity of any effort in his behalf enforced the persuasions of the Bohemian nobility, and he withdrew from Constance, where his own liberty was endangered, and where spies were on his track.

Yet he had already learned from other sources facts that excited all his fears. Since his arrival in the city, he had mingled, without being known, with the crowds of people about the streets, and had overheard disastrous intelligence. It was said that John Huss would not be admitted into the presence of the council; that he would be judged and condemned in secret; that he would leave his prison only to die. Jerome was struck with alarm, and thought that all was lost. A violent terror seized on him, and he took to flight as suddenly as he had come. It is even stated, so precipitate was his departure, that he left his sword at the inn where he had alighted. The news of his arrival had already spread abroad, and he was searched for in every direction. But it was soon ascertained that he had left the city.

By the aid and counsel of his friends, the Bohemian magnates, he withdrew to the neighboring free city of Uberlingen. Here deeming himself more secure, his calmer reflection led him to take those steps which his generous and impulsive nature had caused him to overlook on his departure from Prague. The precaution was indeed tardy, and one from which he could not expect any great result; yet the sanguine hope of contributing to aid Huss, the bitter fear that without such aid as he might render his doom would be sealed, and the shame of fleeing for his life only to bear back the sad message of hopeless effort to his friends at Prague, impelled him to do what he could in his friend’s behalf. He wrote to the emperor and the council, asking each to grant him an
open and unequivocal safe-conduct, provided with which he might appear at Constance and justify himself and Huss from all calumnious accusations brought against them. He grounded his claim on the fact of his having come to Constance of his own accord, without being summoned there like Huss. The answer he received was too ambiguous to allow him to repose any confidence in it. The emperor made the only reply that could reasonably have been expected from him after what had occurred. He refused a safe-conduct. Most probably it was his wish that Jerome would remain as far away from Constance as possible. The affair of Huss had already given him too much trouble, and Sigismund was anxious for the attainment of an object with which the trial of Jerome, or the confusion incident to his presence at Constance, might be expected to interfere.

The council replied to Jerome’s request in strange terms. They granted him what they chose to call a "safe-conduct," but what was, in reality, a document of quite another character, and which illustrates only too well the real object in view—the arrest and condemnation of Jerome himself. It was a very different document from that which Huss had received: "The sacred synod, forming a general council at Constance, assembled by the Holy Spirit, and representing the universal church militant, recommends Jerome of Prague, calling himself master of arts in several universities, to be well-conducted, even unto sobriety, and to do nothing beyond what is necessary for being well-conducted. ... As we have nothing more at heart than to catch the foxes which ravage the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, we summon you, by these presents, to appear before us as a suspected person, and violently accused of having rashly advanced several errors; and we order you to appear here within a fortnight from the date of this summons, to answer, as you have offered to do, in the first session that shall be held after your arrival. It is for this purpose that, in order to prevent any violence being offered you, we, by these presents, give you a full safe-conduct, as much as in us lies, excepting always the claims of the law, and that the orthodox faith does not in any way prevent it; certifying to you, besides, that whether you appear within the specified time or not, the council, by itself or its commissioners, will proceed against you as soon as the term shall have elapsed. Given at Constance, in public session, the 17th of April, 1415, under the seals of the presidents of the four nations." Another account informs us that the cardinals wrote under Jerome’s petition, "We grant you our protection to this place, but not back again." This was at least candid.

Dissatisfied with the answer which had been returned to his petition, Jerome determined to make one more effort. Our historian assures us that he returned to the council, and affixed his appeal for a safe-conduct in all the public places—on the city gates, the doors of the churches, the monasteries, and palaces of the cardinals. If he did, indeed, for a few hours return to Constance, it must have been by stealth; and his appeal, we may presume, was made public by
means of the Bohemian nobility. It was unquestionably the same in substance with that which he had previously presented.

The answer of the cardinals to the application of Jerome was somewhat delayed. As no answer arrived for several days, the Bohemian knights represented to him the uselessness of his attempt, and earnestly pressed his return home. Sad at heart, he commenced his journey back to Prague. He saw the uselessness of all his efforts in behalf of Huss, and was uneasy at the manner in which he apprehended his return would be interpreted. He was, however, bearer of a document in which seventy Bohemian nobles, present at Constance, gave testimony to his having come there; that he had done all in his power to render reasons for his faith; and that he had departed from Constance only because he could not remain there in safety.

Such disappointment and provocation as he had experienced at Constance had not increased his prudence. He proceeded on his way, declaiming everywhere openly, and without precaution or moderation, against the council. He was still the same man as ever, full of generous and noble impulses, but often impetuous and violent. Conscious of his integrity, and listening only to his own strong convictions, his words and acts were rarely regulated by a calculating or cautious prudence.

On the 24th of April, Jerome had reached Hirschau, a small village of the Black Forest, situated on the Rhine. It was here that the curé persuaded him to stay and dine in his house, where he had invited several others of the clergy. Common prudence would have led Jerome to decline the invitation. He accepted it, however, and took his seat at the table with men whose suspicions were soon excited by what they deemed the heretical language of the stranger. The course of conversation led, as might have been expected, to a discussion of the merits of the council then assembled at Constance. The mind of Jerome was at once carried back to the prison and the wrongs of Huss. His indignation mastered his discretion. He so far forgot himself as to call the council "a school of the devil, a synagogue of iniquity." Such terms could not fail to give deep offence. Some of the priests went at once and laid them before the officer in command of the town, by whose orders Jerome was arrested.

Hirschau was a city of the upper Palatinate, and it was not long before intelligence of what had occurred reached the palgrave then residing at Saltzbach. By his orders Jerome was cast into prison and bound with chains, while information of his arrest was sent to the council. The latter immediately besought the palgrave to send him bound to Constance. He promptly complied. Jerome was chained to a cart, his heavy irons clanking upon his limb, and conveyed to the city, which he reached on the 24th of May. Here Louis, Duke of Bavaria, brother of the count Palatine, waited the arrival of the victim. Surrounded by a multitude equally brutal with himself, he began to pull and drag Jerome by his chains. He led him about in this cruel and savage manner
through the whole city. At length he stopped at the convent of the Minor Friars, where the priests were assembled to receive him. Jerome was led in like a wild beast by his chain fastened to a manacle, in order to be examined. The letter of the palgrave informing the council of Jerome’s arrest, and his citation published after his withdrawal from Constance, were read to him. One of the bishops then addressed the prisoner, demanding of him why he had fled and not obeyed the citation to appear before the council. "I withdrew," replied Jerome, "because I had not obtained a safe-conduct either from you or the emperor, and besides, I was aware that I had here a great number of mortal enemies. I never received the summons of the council. Had I known of it, I swear to you that I should at once have returned, aye, if I had already reached my own country." In evidence of the refusal of a safe-conduct and of the danger of his appearing before the council, Jerome referred to the document presented to him by the Bohemian nobles, which had been taken from him at the time of his arrest, and which was now in the hands of the council.

The reply of Jerome produced much sensation. Great noise and confusion ensued. A multitude of persons accused Jerome, and volunteered to give evidence against him. He had visited all the universities of Europe, and the fame of his eloquence, if not the vanquishing force of his arguments, had excited the jealousy and envy of many who were here present. He had the rancor of the doctors and the petty passions of former antagonists arrayed against him. The illustrious Gerson did not neglect the occasion which his present position afforded him, to exult over a man whose pride of intellect was fully equal to his own.

After the tumult had somewhat subsided, the Parisian doctor addressed the prisoner. Gerson was not unaware of Jerome’s argumentative skill, for they had known each other at Paris. He therefore recurred at once to the old subject of dispute on Universals and Ideas. Gerson was a Nominalist, Jerome a Realist. "Jerome," said the former, "when you came to Paris, you fancied yourself with your eloquence to be an angel from heaven. You troubled the university, broaching in our schools many erroneous propositions with their corollaries, and especially in the matter of Universals and Ideas, beside many other things of a scandalous nature." "Master Gerson," replied Jerome, "I answer you, that what I proposed in the schools of Paris, and what I answered to the arguments of the masters, I proposed philosophically, and as a philosophical thinker and a master of that university. And if I proposed anything which I ought not to propose, let me be instructed in what respect it is erroneous, and I will be corrected and set right with all humility." At this point Jerome was interrupted by a doctor of the university of Cologne, who rose and said, "When you were at Cologne, you brought forward several erroneous arguments." "Will you mention, first of all, one error that I maintained?" asked Jerome. "None occurs to me at present, but they shall be objected to you hereafter," was the reply of the doctor, disconcerted by the unexpected question. A doctor from Heidelberg now became Jerome’s accuser. "When you were at Heidelberg," said he, "you
maintained grave errors with regard to the Trinity. You represented it there under the figure of a kind of shield, comparing the Trinity of persons in the divine nature to water, snow, ice, etc." "What I wrote and represented at Heidelberg," said Jerome, "I am ready to assert, write, and represent again. Let me know in what respect I have erred, and I will humbly recant the error." A murmur now arose in the assembly, several calling out, "Let him be burned, let him be burned." "If it be your pleasure that I should die," resumed Jerome, "in the name of God, be it so." The bishop of Saltzburg, the only one of the council who showed the least feeling of compassion, here interposed between the judges and the primer. "Not so," said he, "not so; for it is written ‘I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn and live.’" This single tone of mercy was drowned, however, in the redoubled noise and vociferations of the assembly. The clamor and tumult of the accusations brought against him were such that all orderly proceedings were at an end. Jerome was committed, bound, to the charge of officers of the city, and the assembly broke up. Towards evening, Peter Maldoniewitz, better known by the name of Peter the Notary, an attendant on John de Chlum, and a faithful friend of Huss and Jerome, roamed about in the neighborhood of the house where the latter had for the time been lodged. Drawing close to one of the windows, Peter called out to Jerome, who heard and recognized his voice. "Welcome, brother" was Jerome’s instant exclamation. Welcome, indeed, must one have been who came to cheer and encourage him in the gloomy prospect now before him. "Strengthen thy soul," continued Peter; "be mindful of that truth which thou hadst so often in thy mouth when thou went at liberty, and thy limbs were free from shackles. My friend, my master, do not fear even to face death for it." "Yes," said Jerome, "you know that I do not fear death. We have often spoken of it, but now must we see what it can do to us."

The soldiers interrupted this moving conversation between the friends, by repulsing Peter with violence and threats. He mournfully bade farewell to Jerome, and withdrew. His heart was filled with grief.

Scarcely had he gone, when another person came up, a servant of John de Chlum, named Vitus. Scarcely had he begun to speak with Jerome, when he was seized by the soldiers, and found no small difficulty in recovering his liberty.

The charge of Jerome was committed to John Wallendrod, archbishop of Riga. The selection of such a man for the office, although it fell to him probably as president of the German nation, was in keeping with the harsh treatment which Jerome had already received from the council. The archbishop removed him the same night from his temporary prison to the dungeon of a tower in the cemetery of St. Paul, where he ordered him to be heavily ironed. His chains were riveted to a lofty beam in such a way as to prevent his sitting down, whilst his arms were forced by fetters to cross on his neck behind, compelling him to incline his head forward and downward. Such is the description given by
old authors and by those who were spectators of his imprisonment, in their accounts of his life. For two days he was kept in this posture. His only food was bread and water. No one of his Bohemian friends knew or could ascertain where he was. At last Peter Maldoniewitz discovered his circumstances through one of the keepers of the prison. By his means Jerome was allowed the indulgence of better food.

Had the council resolved to establish against themselves the truth of the charge made by Jerome? Had they determined, by their treatment of their prisoner, to make it manifest that they were indeed "a school of the devil, a synagogue of iniquity?"

They were murdering their prisoner by inches. Nature could not long endure such aggravated and cruel inflictions. Jerome’s health soon gave way. His life was at length in imminent danger. He now demanded that a confessor should be allowed him, and his request was granted. Some of his irons were taken off. His health at length was restored, and for a whole year he was the tenant of a prison.

End of Section III
It was in this tenth session of the council (May 14th) that a new subject was presented for discussion. This was the use of the cup in the eucharist, a practice long discontinued by the church, but now revived at Prague. This practice, or communion in both kinds, as it was called, had prevailed in the Greek church from the earliest times; and the intimate relations which had subsisted between that church and the churches of Bohemia had not been without their influence in introducing it anew in the city of Prague. The Bohemians, moreover, had not all forgotten their traditions of a Slavonic Bible, and religious services celebrated in their national language. Even when the Latin practice had become prevalent under Charles IV, in the fourteenth century, and the communion in both kinds was no longer publicly allowed, there were still those who sought the enjoyment of their Christian liberty in the secrecy of private dwellings, and in the depths of forests.

As the Bible became more known and read, the minds of men were led to ponder over the original institution of the sacrament. The difference between the ancient original, and the modern corrupted practice, could not escape their notice. Discussion necessarily arose, and a doctrine so palpably appealing to the senses as the use of the cup could not fail to make a deep impression upon the minds of the multitude. The result was, that wherever the Bohemian reformation triumphed, there was a disposition favorable to arguments for the restoration of the cup.

We have already seen that the practice did not originate with Huss. We find no reference made to it in connection with his name, previous to his arrival at Constance. He may have considered it a matter of minor importance, or, without having made a careful examination of it, may have silently acquiesced in the prevalent opinions. Doubtless it would not have been wise to have made the claims of a mere outward rite the basis of an appeal which could be
enforced only by a living apprehension of the spiritual truths of the gospel. Huss was already a prisoner at Constance, when the doctrine of the cup began to be discussed at Prague. Two of his friends, both of them doctors, and numbered among his adherents, were the leaders of the new movement. As to Jacobel, the most noted of these, we scarcely need the testimony of one who was afterward a pope, that he was a man of the highest eminence for learning and integrity. He was a zealous defender of evangelical views, and an uncompromising enemy of ecclesiastical corruption. He sought the purity of the church, and carefully studied its original constitution. His views and feelings led him strongly to sympathize with Huss, and his study of the Bible opened his eyes more and more clearly to the prevalent errors of the times. After the departure of Huss for Constance, he seems to have succeeded, in great measure, to his position in the esteem and regard of the people. He was curate of the parish of St. Michael, in the city of Prague, and was also connected with the university. Scarcely had Huss left the city, when Jacobel, undeterred by fear of consequences, began to propose and defend the use of the cup. The subject, if we are to believe Æneas Sylvius, was first brought to his notice by Peter of Dresden. This man seems to have cultivated the acquaintance of Jacobel, as one of spirit kindred to his own. He seized a fitting occasion to speak to him on the subject of the use of the cup, and expressed his surprise that a man of his learning and devotion had not detected the error that had so long prevailed in the church. He pointed out the inconsistency between the present practice of the church and the original institution of the sacrament, quoting the language of Christ, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." The attention of Jacobel was at once arrested. He determined, therefore, to investigate the subject. He found the early traditions of the church and the authority of the fathers altogether on the side of the original form of the ordinance. His resolution was quickly formed, and he immediately took measures to secure the restoration of the cup in the eucharist. His influence was great among his own congregation, and his popularity might have secured the adoption by them of his own views without tedious discussion. He chose, however, to bring the subject in the first place before the university, and according to the customs of the day proposed theses upon the subject, which he was prepared to maintain and defend (March 25). Meanwhile one of his colleagues came over to his views, which he no longer hesitated to present to the people from the pulpit (March 29). It was not long before he ventured on the introduction of the cup, a measure which the mass of the people readily approved, and which was applauded highly by a great majority of the members of the university. It was from the clergy that the opposition with which he had to contend sprang. Jacobel was driven out from his own church, but the doors of the St. Martin’s church were opened to him, and he was here received with a hearty welcome. He continued, therefore, to publish and defend his views, in spite of all the obstacles thrown in his way.

The next step, therefore, against him was to attempt to write him down. The doctors were urged to attack him with the pen; but Jacobel did not fail to
answer them in a triumphant manner. The controversy soon attracted the attention of the nation. All Bohemia was interested in it. Conrad, the archbishop of Prague, attempted to smother the flame by excommunicating its author. But Jacobel was not thus to be silenced. He only preached with renewed energy in contempt of the sentence launched against him. Supported by the people, he continued his labors under the very eye of the archbishop. The clergy, driven to desperation, had but one resource left. They determined to apply at once to the authority of the council. It was a countryman of Huss, and one of his bitterest adversaries, John, bishop of Leitomischel, who was charged with the commission of denouncing the heresy of Jacobel.

The controversy that now arose was one that the council could not compose. First the pen, and then the sword, were called into requisition; but pen and sword both proved powerless to suppress the popular conviction in favor of a rite so clearly established by scriptural authority and ancient precedent as the use of the cup. In this controversy Jacobel proved himself a man of fearless spirit and superior ability. He maintained his theses, not only from scripture, but by copious references to the fathers, the scholastics, some of the popes, and the canon law. From all these he drew the conclusion that the administration of the sacrament to all Christians, under the form of bread and wine, is the word, the law, the truth, the ordinance, and the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, his apostles, and the primitive church—a practice never to be annulled or changed by any custom, however ancient, of the Roman church, nor by the constitution or decree of any pope or council.

The first reply to Jacobel was anonymous, and seems to have been written at Constance. Its tone indicates that matters had not yet proceeded to an open rupture. It is addressed to Jacobel personally, and in it he is styled brother, and eloquent preacher of the word of God. Jacobel is reproved for his disregard of ecclesiastical authority, and his innovation upon the sacred rites of the church. The applause which he met is incidentally referred to, and in a manner to show that the immense majority were ranged upon his side. His contempt for the archbishop’s excommunication is then noticed, and an attempt is made to refute his argument in his own defense—the argument drawn from that commission of Christ, “Go ye into all the world,” etc.

Other subjects, besides the one of the cup, are drawn into controversy. Jacobel is reproached for having taught that tithes are merely alms, that may be withdrawn by the secular power from an unworthy clergy. His conduct in preaching beyond his own limits, going from church to church throughout Bohemia, and thus spreading his views, is charged as highly reprehensible. He seems to have strongly insisted on reducing the clergy to the simplicity, if not poverty, of their early state, that, avoiding pomp, avarice, and luxury, they may more freely preach the word of God. His antagonist paradoxically maintains the present condition of the church to be superior to that of its primitive state, molded to a more ornate, devout, and honorable form, and
that the wealth and power of the clergy were necessary and useful to the restraint of popular vice and error. His argument against the communion of the laity, under the form of the cup, shows ingenuity, if not sophistry. The multitudes in the desert were fed with bread alone. Christ at Emmaus broke the bread, but nothing is said of the wine. Had he wished that all should commune under both forms, he would have invited his own mother, as well as the seventy disciples, to be present at the institution of the ordinance. The only argument that even seemed to bear directly upon the subject, was the practice under the Old Testament, enjoined by the law, that the priests should drink the wine and the honey presented in offerings, and to none but the Levites was this allowed.

It was not by such shallow reasonings and incongruous citations, as these that Jacobel was to be driven from a position so impregnably fortified as his own, by the plain language of scripture. His antagonist can meet him here only by the unsustained assertion, that the passage on which he relied was addressed solely to the apostles and their successors; and his interpretation of this passage, in reference to spiritual eating and drinking, places him in a position where consistency would require him to go yet further. A Quaker’s argument would have left him entirely indefensible in observing any outward form of the ordinance whatever. But, abandoning the ground of scripture, and almost altogether neglecting the argument from the writings of the fathers, he enlarges on the inconvenience that would result from allowing the cup to the laity. He maintains, that caution requires to avoid the incongruity and the great guilt that are in danger of being incurred, from spilling the blood of Christ upon the robes of the women, or suffering it to wet the beards of the men, or fall to the ground. He cites the decree of Pope Pius, that if a drop of the consecrated wine should by negligence be spilt upon the earth, or upon a cloak, the sin should be expiated by forty days of prayer and fasting, with abstinence from the mass for the same space of time. If the drop has fallen upon a stone, the stone is to be rasped, and the fragments deposited with the sacred relics. If it fell upon a cloak, the cloak was to be burned. If upon the sod, it was to be licked up with the tongue, and the sod laid away in the sacred repository. From all this Jacobel’s antagonist infers, that if a layman should spill a drop of the consecrated wine upon his beard or garment, he ought with his beard and garment to be burned up and thrust to the bottom of hell, unless he should repent. The reason given against the administration of the cup to the sick at a distance is the danger of the fall of man or beast.

If, then, the sick may commune under one form only, why not all, he asks. The danger of the wine turning to vinegar; the difficulty of many persons in drinking or even enduring the smell of wine; the great size of the vessels that would be necessary if all were to commune; the difficulty of raising the vessel in time of war, when thousands were to partake, are subjects successively noticed; and, to conclude all, it is maintained that the flesh of Christ
necessarily includes the blood, so that the laity and clergy do in reality receive
the same, that is, Christ, and one no less or more than the other.

The writer then proceeds to sustain his positions by the authority of the Roman
church—an authority necessarily binding upon the consciences of all. He cites
the language of St. Augustine, "I would not believe the gospel if the authority
of the Catholic church did not induce me thereto," and then maintains that as
the Catholic and Roman church has established the form of communion, the
question is thereby finally settled.

In this reply to Jacobel, we find by incidental allusions that he had allowed or
authorized other changes at Prague which were regarded in the light of
innovations, and as revolutionary if not heretical in their nature. He had taught
that the parishioner is not bound to confess to his parish priest, or receive the
communion at his hands only; but in case he is unworthy or vicious, another
may be applied to. He refused to recognize the authority of the pope as
superior to that of the parish priest in the matter of absolution, or even in
some other respects. Popular songs had been introduced, which were sung in
the streets, the markets, and the churches—some of them, we are given to
understand, far from complimentary to the character of the prelates, and
these Jacobel refused his influence to suppress. On these accounts also, his
antagonist reproves him, closing his treatise however, in language which shows
a high esteem for Jacobel as his brother, asking pardon for anything improper,
wrong, or displeasing which be may have uttered, and expressing his
willingness to be corrected in whatever fault be may have fallen.

This anonymous letter to Jacobel was soon followed by a treatise quite similar
in character from the pen of his townsmen, Andrew Broda, residing at the time
at Constance. The similarity is indeed so striking that we can have no
hesitation in ascribing both to the same source, though the latter treatise is
more harsh and severe.

Jacobel does not suffer Broda’s treatise to pass in silence. He commences his
reply by protesting, as he declares he had formerly done in the university when
the subject was brought before it, that in this most important matter, as in
every other, be had no intention to say, write, or maintain anything
presumptuously in opposition to the holy Catholic church of Jesus Christ, or
against the true Christian faith and the perfect law of God, and if anything of
this sort should escape him, through ignorance, inadvertence, or the
imperfection to which he confesses himself subject, be revokes and retracts it,
subjecting himself to the correction of those to whom it belongs to restore the
erring. He refers to the numerous treatises in which he had already defended
the use of the cup, and in which he had sustained himself by the authority of
scripture and of holy men, and then proceeds to refute the arguments of
Broda, seriatim. This he does in a manner most complete and triumphant. He
adverts to Broda’s false glosses of the authorities which he had cited, whether
from scripture or the fathers, exposing his gross perversions of their original
meaning, and detecting not only the weakness of his opponent’s arguments,
but the dishonest reasoning and sophistry by which the author himself could
scarcely have been deceived. Broda had objected to Jacobel that he refused to
receive the authority of eminent doctors, but the latter has manifestly the
advantage when he exposes his opponent as rejecting the authority of those
whose words he could not pervert. Broda, relying upon pontifical decrees and
decisions, had held that the pope, with cardinals, prelates, and bishops, could
not err. Jacobel boldly avowed an opposite belief. He triumphantly appealed to
their avarice and simony, as well as other vices, which plainly showed that they
entered not by the door into the sheepfold. Such a church as the one called the
Roman, made up of such materials, Jacobel boldly asserted, might err in life
and doctrine, calling evil good, and light darkness. He even cites papal
authority from the decretals to sustain him in his position. Broda had
demanded of Jacobel that he should with him give faith to the legends of the
church, but Jacobel, without absolutely rejecting them as false, everywhere
manifests his decided preference for the authority of scripture. His opponent
asks him when the church first began to depart from the purity of its early
practice, and for how long a time the use of the cup had prevailed in the
primitive church. "Why," answers Jacobel, "does the doctor put such a question
to me, when by reason of the malice with which he pursues me he would not
receive or believe the truth if I should utter it?" He then refers Broda to the
scriptures for an answer. "When the abomination of desolation was first to be
seen in the holy place; when iniquity began to abound, and the love of many to
wax cold throughout the whole church; when impious men, true to their
nature, began to pollute the sanctuary; when fraud and forgery found their way
into the church, then this sacrifice was taken away from the people, and the
cup was withheld."

Broda had called him a disciple of Antichrist, because he would not obey the
commands of those who occupied Moses’ seat. Jacobel replies that he had
never refused to receive their commands when accordant with the gospel, but
"to our scribes and Pharisees, commanding what is opposed to God’s law," he
had never allowed that obedience was due. In such a case their
excommunication was frivolous and vain. The seeming curse, humbly endured
by the innocent, would be changed to a blessing. Here he cites the example of
Chrysostom, who, though excommunicated and banished, was afterwards
recalled, against the will of his superiors, and who, while thus pretendedly
excommunicated, did not cease to preach to the people. "Why then," he asks,
"should not I imitate these holy men in preaching and ministering to the
people, notwithstanding my pretended excommunication?"

Broda had charged Jacobel with disturbing the peace of the church. To this
Jacobian replies, that to observe the law of the gospel to the saving of souls and
the glory of God, is not to sin against charity, while Christ himself, in saying "I
came not to bring peace, but a sword," showed that the peace of wicked men
ought to be disturbed. It was better, he maintained, that offenses should arise than that the truth should be betrayed.

The silence of Broda on the corruptions of the church, or the gentleness with which he treats them, is not paused over by Jacobel in silence. He maintains that his opponent is, on these grounds, in danger of being himself suspected of simony. As to confessing in cases by law reserved, Jacobel maintains that this had rarely been done, but, in cases of necessity, he could not refuse those who, like some of the priests themselves, had been pursued by hatred, because they had zealously congregated to hear the preaching of the word of God.

Throughout the whole argument of Jacobel we are struck by the reverence with which he bows to the simple authority of the scriptures. He indeed refers to the eminent names in the history of the church, whose views upon the matter in dispute manifestly coincided with his own. But he does not forget that even Peter and Paul were once at variance; and the name of Thomas Aquinas is no authority with one who openly points out his gross departure on other subjects from the plain doctrines of the gospel. Laudable practices there well might be, instituted for the church, to promote or facilitate the observance of evangelical truth, but never could these be suffered to preponderate over the authority of Christ's express commandments. Here was, in reality, the turning point of the whole controversy. Jacobel had assumed the true Protestant ground. Broda's position was utterly indefensible, unless the authority of the pope and of the Romish church was allowed to supersede the express commands of the author of Christianity himself.

Nor did the evident aim of Broda to bring in to the aid of his arguments the power of the secular arm escape the notice of Jacobel. He showed that the restraint which Broda spoke of, quoting from Augustine, was but another name for the adoption of violent measures on the part of the civil power to suppress hated opinions. Jacobel commits his cause to the Supreme Judge, who alone could not err, while he vindicates the language of St. Augustine from the sense in which it was employed.

The conclusion of Jacobel's defense displays a deep consciousness of the rectitude of his purpose, the danger which he incurred, and the unspeakable importance of that cause in which the individual was but a humble instrument of the divine glory.

"I am fully aware," he says, "that by what I have done I have laid myself open to the malicious assaults of many, who, stung by envy, will taunt where they cannot argue."

"I know that I am thrusting my hand into the fires of hatreds, but I here attest that, according to my ability in this matter of faith, I preach and defend the ministrations of the cup to the laity, and I exhort others to do the same to the
end that the kingdom of lust and of Antichrist may to some extent be purged, and the spirit of fervor and devotion, so long extinct among Christian nations, may be revived; and that some may be moved to that holy zeal of God for the edification and restoration of the house of God, that will cry out, ‘Do good in thy good pleasure, O Lord, to Zion, that the walls of Jerusalem may be built!’ I beseech each reader, therefore, to prove these or whatsoever other of my words, and hold them each even to the end, and I desire to be corrected by any such, if I have said anything at variance with the truth, or anything not accordant with the rule of charity.

"I therefore request all to whom this present writing shall come, piously and charitably to interpret and accept it for God’s sake. And whether I have lapsed in word, assertion, opinion, or superfluity of words, or possibly in too excessive and severe reprehension of the doctor, or in any words of a satirical turn employed for rebuke, so as to excite passion, or in my zeal, if perchance not according to knowledge, or by unfit expression of truths, for all these, I say, I ask pardon.

"And I subject myself to the correction of him who is Lord of all, and of his creature whom he would have deputed for this purpose.

"But if in these writings there be that which is fit and useful, for this be praise and glory to God forever and ever. Amen."

The discussion upon the subject was kept up between the advocates and the opponents of the utraque. The adherents of Huss were divided in opinion. The subject was one which the practical nature of his mind had never led him closely to investigate. The more palpable and gross corruptions of the church, which had a more direct and obvious bearing upon morals and religion, had absorbed his attention. But circumstances had now arisen in which it was no longer permitted him to remain silent. His opinion was requested. What it would be, could scarce have been to his friends a matter of doubt. The respect of Huss for the scriptures, as the sole and supreme authority for the truth of doctrine, was not inferior to that of Jacobel. He, too, would decide each question by the law of Christ as laid down in the written word. Throughout his trial, his appeal was constantly made to its divine authority, and all he asked was to be convicted of his error from the sacred page, or be absolved on the ground of conformity to its doctrines. The answer of Huss to the question proposed was an approval of Jacobel’s doctrine. He was not blind to the danger which he incurred by expressing this approval. Yet he shrunk not from that fidelity to his convictions which was so eminently characteristic of him. From his prison at Gottlieben his voice was heard; and those of his adherents who had withheld their approval from what they regarded as an innovation of Jacobel, no longer withstood it. The doctrine of the use of the cup prevailed by an overwhelming majority. The voice of the university was almost unanimously in its favor. The absence at Constance of the most virulent opponents of Huss
allowed it greater harmony and unanimity in its decisions. What support and
sympathy Jacobel received from this quarter may be judged from the manner
in which he speaks of it in his defense. "The members of our university," said
he, "do not strut about in a remarkable and sumptuous costume, in order to set
off their dignity the more. They are not of the class of whom our Lord speak, as
loving the first places at feasts and synagogues, in order to be saluted at public
places and to hear themselves called, Master! Is it not a disgrace to the church,
as St. Jerome says, to preach Jesus Christ, poor, crucified, in want of
everything, with bodies loaded with fat, with well-fed faces and vermilion lip?
If we are in the apostles’ places, it is not merely in order to preach their
doctrines, but to imitate their mode of life."

Intelligence of the state of things at Prague had reached Constance, and begun
to excite alarm. Broda’s interposition had proved of no avail. It had only given
occasion for a triumphant refutation, which made the adherents of the old
doctrine feel how untenable was their position. The teachings of Jacobel,
already possessed of a stronghold in the university, were spreading more widely
every day throughout Bohemia. It was at this period, when the approval of the
new doctrine on the part of Huss was strongly suspected but could not be
proved, that Broda found a powerful ally in a fellow-country man and a former
antagonist of Huss. John the Iron, as he was not inappropriately called, bishop
of Leitomischel, denounced the innovation of Jacobel before the council.
Personal hostility undoubtedly embittered him against Huss and Jacobel. His
election as bishop was opposed by Wenzel and a large body of the reformers,
as well as by Conrad, archbishop of Prague. The council of Constance,
however, decided in his favor; and the energies of the soldier, the general, and
the bishop, all which characters he had sustained, broke out in virulence
against the Bohemian reformers. Although without any authority as yet for the
assertion, he sought to implicate Huss in the recent transactions at Prague by
ascribing to him the origin of the innovations. To aggravate the odium against
the reformers, he represented the wine for the communion—the blood of
Christ, as he called it—as carried about in flasks all over the kingdom, and
exposed to innumerable hazards.

The denunciations of the bishop could not be passed over in silence. They
excited a deep feeling of indignation on the part of the Bohemians in
Constance, who regarded the charge as utterly unwarranted, and slanderous to
their nation. It did not escape their notice that its natural effect would be to
aggravate the difficulties of Huss’ position, and excite a stronger prejudice
against him in the minds of his judges. They were aware of the severity and
hardships to which he was subjected in his prison at Gottlieben. They knew
that the process against him was already commenced, and was urged forward
by the bitterest malice. It was therefore with affectionate solicitude for his
welfare, as well as indignation at his unjust treatment and apprehension
excited by the denunciation of the bishop, that, in the afterpart of the day
(May 14, 1415) on which the latter had made his charges, they insisted that
Huss should at once be set free, or at least that his imprisonment should be lightened, and a public audience be allowed him. They also manifested their dissatisfaction at the defamatory reports to which the bishop had given utterance to such a degree that he felt called upon to make some reply.

On the sixteenth of the month, two days later, the opportunity was given. The bishop presented a written answer. The substance of it is the expression of his zeal against the followers of Wickliffe and Huss. This, he declares, and no wish to defame the Bohemian nation, is the motive by which he is impelled. Of the abuses which he declares had prevailed in connection with the communion of the cup, all is narrowed down to one or two specifications, and these narrated to him on the authority of others, in all probability with gross exaggerations. At the worst, they could fairly be regarded only as exceptional cases, noticeable for their very singularity. But besides the reply of the bishop, an apology for the council, drawn up by its order, was also read. To its false statements, as well as the misrepresentations of the bishop, the Bohemians felt constrained to reply. The apology denied that Huss had received his safe-conduct until fifteen days after reaching Constance, and expressed astonishment that the Bohemians should speak of Huss as innocent when he had already been condemned and excommunicated by the pope on the ground of contumacy, became, his life endangered, Huss chose to appear at Rome only by his procurators! For this cause, and for venturing to “harangue” after his arrival at Constance, he was to be considered an arch-heretic, in utter violation of the principle that a man is to be accounted innocent until tried and found guilty. The Bohemians asked a delay of two days to prepare their answer. The request was granted, although the council refused to set Huss at liberty. This confirmed their apprehensions in his behalf, and the question in regard to the cup at once subsided, in their view, into one of secondary importance. They were wise enough, moreover, not to wish to entangle the main subject in new difficulties, and their reply turns, therefore, chiefly upon this alone. They declare first, in regard to the assertion that they had been ill-informed as to several matters which had been made grounds of complaint, that they wish to make a more full and clear statement of the case; not to retort the charge upon the members of the council, but to enable them to discern and judge the real state of things. The Bohemians first propose to correct the error of the council in saying that they had been ill-informed in regard to the safe-conduct, and that it had been secured for Huss by his friends and partisans fifteen days after his arrival in Constance. To this the Bohemian nobles answer specially John de Chlum, whom this point principally concerned—that on the very day of Huss’ arrest, the pope had asked, in the presence of a great number of his cardinals, whether Huss was provided with a safe-conduct from the emperor. To this Chlum had replied, “Most holy father, know that he has one.” And when the question was repeated, the same answer was given. No one, however, asked to have the safe-conduct exhibited. On each of the two following days, Chlum had complained to the pope that Huss was detained in violation of the safe-conduct, at the same time exhibiting it to the view of many persons. And, in
confirmation of his statement, he refers to the testimony of many lords, bishops, soldiers, officials, and eminent persons of the city of Constance, who themselves, on that occasion, saw the document and heard it read. John de Chlum, therefore, was prepared, under any penalty whatsoever, and against all denial from any source, to prove and manifest, in the clearest manner, the truth of his assertions. The Bohemian nobles, moreover, refer, in confirmation of their statement, to the many princes and nobles attendant upon Sigismund's court, who were present when and where the safe-conduct was given by the royal mandate. Hence the fathers of the council might perceive that not the Bohemian nobles had been ill-informed, but rather those persons who had carried to the fathers such false reports, and who really do injustice to Sigismund and his chancellors as well as the Bohemian nobility, as if the safe-conduct had been surreptitiously obtained. They therefore urge that the fathers of the council would no more give ear to such unfounded reports, undeserving of credit, but hear both sides, and let the truth be manifest.

They then proceed to consider the assertion that Huss was already condemned. The mockery of all the forms of justice, by which the court appointed for his trial had proceeded to sentence him unheard, is exposed to a just reprehension. The facts of the case are simply and clearly stated. As to the citation, the Bohemian nobles profess to know nothing except by common fame. But as to his non-appearance personally, they declare that it was solely owing to the danger which he thereby incurred. His procurators, who had appeared for him at Rome, had been shamefully treated. As to his excommunication, they knew from his own lips that he did not meet it in a spirit of contumacy, but endured it under appeal. The evidence in regard to this, which they are prepared to exhibit, is perfectly conclusive. As to Huss having preached in Constance after his arrival in the city, as his enemies had reported of him, the Bohemians answer—and especially John de Chlum, here present with Huss, and who resided with him from the time of his first arrival in Constance—that he never had preached, or, from the time of his arrival up to the day of his imprisonment, had even set foot beyond his own lodgings.

The fathers of the council had professed not to understand what the Bohemians meant by the toleration and courtesy shown to heretics condemned by the Pisan council. They were in doubt whether reference was had to the contending or schismatic popes, or to others, but asserted that even heretics, coming to the council on the business of union, were to be tolerated and respected. The Bohemians reply, that whichever was meant, all they ask is that Master John Huss may enjoy the same freedom which they enjoyed. Coming to the council as he did, of his own accord, and no way compelled, only to declare his faith, and in whatsoever respect he might be shown to have strayed from the word of God and the unity of the church, to be reconciled and restored; and that this was not only his motive, but that of his favorers and adherents, who composed, in fact, a majority of the Bohemian nation. He had desired also to purge the realm from the infamy attached to it by false reports.
The Bohemians close their reply by thanks to the council for their favorable answer to their principal request, that the matters concerning Huss should be expedited—a request in which the whole kingdom of Bohemia is united with them.

But the papal question was one which seemed to the council most important at the present juncture, and it was to this that their attention was now directed.

CHAPTER XIX

The Pope Deposed

The judicial deposition of a pope by the assembled representatives of Christendom stands upon the page of history as a recorded fact. Yet a large number of those assembled at Constance had regarded the proposal to sit in judgment upon John XXIII as something sacrilegious. To them he was the Lord’s anointed, and the theory of papal infallibility was exalted by them into a doctrine of faith. But the force of circumstances was too strong for any theory which would absolutely block the progress of the council. The interests of Christendom, or at least of the bishops and prelates, absolutely required that the scandal of schism should no longer be endured. It was a nuisance to be abated. It was a standing text for heresy. It was a grievance to the nations; and, what was more perhaps in the eyes of the emperor, so long as it continued, Europe had reason to tremble for fear of Moslem invasion.

It was on the sixteenth of May, at two o’clock in the afternoon, that the commission for procuring testimony against the pontiff, in order to his deposition, held their first session. They met in the episcopal palace, attended by the proper officers of their court. Nearly forty witnesses were summoned before them, and sworn to give true evidence. John XXIII was, moreover, cited to see and bear the testimony which should convict him of the crimes with which he stood charged. These crimes were recited in language shockingly plain. His profligate course in the alienation and plunder of ecclesiastical property, and his scandalous life and morals, stained with simony and almost every vice, were to be the subject of investigation. And yet even this statement of his crimes was too lenient. Truth, however, would not consent to anything less, and decency could tolerate no more.

But John XXIII had no disposition to hear or see the testimony to be produced against him. The commission for examining witnesses therefore proceeded in his absence. The testimony of thirty-seven persons was taken, some of them holding distinguished places in the church, and all of them men of note. Ten of
the number were bishops. One was the grand master of Rhodes, and several were officers of the apostolic chamber, and even secretaries of John XXIII.

The list of accusations was composed of sixty-six articles, all attested and proved. The conclusion of all was that John XXIII was stiff-necked, stubborn, a hardened and incorrigible sinner, and a favorer of schism, and as such, as well as on other accounts, was entirely unworthy to hold the office of the pontificate. The Vienna manuscript list of the articles closes with the just reflection, "What judgment must be formed of the cardinals who elected John XXIII, acquainted as they were with his simony and his infamy in other respects! After having sworn to elect the best man among them, what must they themselves have been, if they have judged that among them all there was none better than he who has been proved by so many witnesses to have been simoniastic, a traitor, a homicide, guilty of rape, arson, and incest, the debaucher of members of religious orders, and a man guilty of a sin more grievous still than these!" Who can deny the justness of the inference? What invectives of Huss could be so severe as a simple statement of the facts attested before the commission?

In fact, several of the articles in the list of impeachment were suppressed by the council. At least fourteen of the most odious and scandalous charges which had been reported as proved, in the assembly held on the twenty-fourth of May, were not produced in the public session subsequent. These suppressed articles were mostly specifications of fact, in regard to which witnesses could not be mistaken. They recited the reckless, undutiful, lying, and licentious conduct of this pontiff’s youth, precocious in almost every kind of depravity; his course as the principal minister and agent of simony for Boniface IX, by means of which he amassed the immense wealth that secured him a cardinalate; his proceedings as legate of Bologna, in subjecting that city and church to tyrannical extortions and violence, as well as unheard-of cruelties, massacring, torturing, and driving into exile many of its citizens; his actual sale of several parochial churches and many ecclesiastical benefices to lay persons, who took possession of them, and placed priests over them according to their own caprice; his conferring an important office upon a bastard son of the king of Cyprus, aged only five years, revoking the grant only on condition that the king should be reimbursed the amount of the purchase-money he had paid, that he should himself receive six thousand florins, and the son of the king an annual pension of two thousand, besides an office that brought in a revenue of ten thousand more; his poisoning his predecessor, Alexander V, as well as his physician, in order to open the way to his own election as pontiff; his acts of fornication, adultery, incest, and sins of the most abominable impurity, that cried to heaven for vengeance; his sale of unlawful dispensations for enormous sums; his bargaining away, alienating, and spending the revenues and tribute due to the Roman church; his sale of the sacred relics of John the Baptist, in the convent of St. Sylvester, for fifteen thousand ducats, and which he would have given up if he had not been miraculously detected, while those who
complained of the proceeding had been banished or imprisoned; and his maintaining. stubbornly, before reputable persons, that there was no future life or resurrection, and that the souls of men perish with their bodies, like brutes.

Such were, in substance—as decently expressed as possible—some of the suppressed articles. Of those not suppressed, and which were made the ground of his deposition, there were, in all, fifty-four; but of these it must suffice to give a few as specimens. In these his course is recited mainly from his elevation to the pontificate. It was maintained that "he is universally regarded as an oppressor of the poor, a perverter of justice, the supporter of iniquity, the defender of simonists, the bond of vice, the enemy of all virtue, the mirror of infamy as well as a slave of lasciviousness; that he pays no heed to the public consistories, is always plunged in sleep or in his pleasures, and that all who know him speak of him as a "devil incarnate"; that from the date of his pontificate he has been guilty of the most scandalous and reckless simony, disposing at his caprice of the property of the church, selling the same, benefice to several persons at once, and forbidding the courts to hear parties complaining, or to render them justice; that he had spurned the fraternal exhortations of the cardinals, and the remonstrances of others, urging him to desist from his course; that he had sent a layman, a merchant of Florence, into the dioceses of Cambray, Tournay, Liege, and Utrecht, empowered to collect tithes, and excommunicate such as refused to obey him, thus amassing prodigious sums of money; that after having exhausted the revenue of the patrimony of St. Peter, he had invented new impost, or increased those already established, in a most oppressive manner, and had finally given up the capital, in spite of his own promise, to plunder and pillage, filling city and country with robbery, murder, and sacrilege, leaving the women exposed to a brutal soldiery, and many persons of the court to assassination, plunder, the gallies, or perpetual imprisonment; that his criminal and hateful life had provoked universal complaint, yet when the emperor Sigismund had remonstrated with him and secured the promise of reform, he had violated that promise, falling back into all his former excesses. The list of charges then recites the duplicity and falsehood of which he had been guilty after his arrival at Constance, and the utter disregard which he had shown to his own engagements. On such grounds as these, evidently sufficient without including the suppressed articles, the council resolved to proceed with the steps necessary to the final sentence—the solemn deposition of John XXIII.

The eleventh session was opened in solemn form on the twenty-fifth of May. The Cardinal de Vivieres presided; and the emperor, with all the cardinals then in the city, the princes, envoys, and ambassadors; was present. The commission for hearing witnesses on the subjects of accusation against the pontiff were called upon for their report. It was read seriatim, each charge accompanied by a mention of the number and quality of the witnesses by whom it was proved. The report was approved by the council, and five cardinals were
named to notify the pope of what had been done by the council in its present session.

The cardinals departed at once for Ratolfcell, where the pope was residing. As he had already been suspended, and had laid aside the insignia of his dignity, their greeting was not as usual with the kissing of his feet, but only of his mouth and hands. Some authorities intimate that, but for the presence of other members of the council, the cardinals would have rendered him the usual homage. He received the proceedings of the council with every mark of profound submission. He saw himself in their hands, and knew all further resistance was hopeless and could but aggravate the conditions of his treatment. Undoubtedly he hoped, by an assumed contrition and acquiescence, to soften the resentments which his conduct had excited. To the communication of the cardinals he did not trust himself—whether from fear or prudence or exhaustion—to reply orally. He sent in to them a document drawn up by his own hand, and which the cardinals bore back with them to the council. In this reply he assumes the most penitent and submissive airs, showing himself still, in this most desperate condition of his affairs, the consummate actor that he was. He declares "his purpose to submit himself absolutely to the orders and decisions of the council;" expresses his readiness to cede his office, whether at Constance or any other place which the fathers shall be pleased to appoint; far from opposing the sentence which the council should pronounce against him, promises that he will ratify it by all means in his power, and in whatever form should be prescribed; but yet prays the council, "by the bowels of divine mercy, to spare his honor, his person and estates, as far as may be, without prejudice to the union of the church."

It was on the twenty-sixth of May that the cardinals, who had returned from Ratolfcell, reported to the council the success of their mission, and the favorable answer of the pontiff. A new commission was then appointed, consisting of two bishops and two abbots accompanied by notaries, to lay before him the articles and grounds of his deposition, in order that he might reply to them if he saw fit. They were also to inform him that the sentence of his deposition would be read on the day following, which he might be privileged to hear if he chose. But John XXIII had heard enough already. Manifesting toward the commission the same spirit of resignation as upon a former occasion, he declined even the reading of the articles of accusation which had been presented for reply, declaring that he did not need to see them, inasmuch as he held the council to be infallible, and would not recede from the act of submission which he had put into the hands of the cardinals. He only begged them to spare his honor and his fortune, and present the emperor with a letter which he had written him containing the same request.

This letter is valuable as another illustration of the character of its author. He wears the mask to the last, with the same easy and well assumed impudence. He calls the emperor, in his address, his dear son, assuming still the authority
of pope. After passing an eulogy upon his prudence and other virtues, especially the clemency and generosity with which he had pardoned the most grievous offences, he reminds him of their former friendship, and urges the claims upon the emperor which his devoted service and fidelity had imposed.

But Sigismund was not the dupe of this artful and tardy humiliation. It was the result of the extreme measures which had overtaken its author, and had been preceded by a course of conduct on his part which exposed it only to contempt. He had spread his accusations of the bad faith of the emperor all over Europe. He had employed all his resources to defeat the cherished purpose of Sigismund in giving peace to the church. Yet, with a kind of scrupulous honesty, the council resolved to pay him back a fair price for his submission. He was informed that, in consideration of it, the sentence of his deposition, which was to have taken place on the twenty-seventh of May would be deferred until the twenty-ninth, and that its severity would be somewhat relaxed. John XXIII received the announcement with the best possible grace, but his condition now was anything but enviable. He was a prisoner at Ratolfcell, under the charge of four guards appointed by the council, each of these a member of it and representing one of the four nations. Frederic, the duke of Austria, had been forced, as the price of his restoration to favor, to take the pontiff into custody and deliver him over to the council. Accompanied by members whose fidelity could be relied upon, and who were to see that the task was faithfully executed, he had arrested the pontiff, and brought him as far as Ratolfcell. Unwilling himself probably to appear in Constance with his prisoner, he sent word to the council that John XXIII refused to proceed further, and would only submit to the necessity of force. The council, therefore, averse to harsh measures which might possibly react against themselves, permitted him to remain at Ratolfcell. It was here that the deputations of the council had met him, and it was from this place, under the custody of his guards, that his letters of submission were dated. Their true value was probably accurately appreciated by the council, when, in consideration of them, they deferred for two days the sentence of his deposition.

In his imprisonment, John XXIII seems to have sunk into almost abject despair. Those were gloomy days to him in which he awaited the pronouncing of his sentence. He was carefully guarded by day and by night. His old servants, with the exception of his cook, were all removed, and new ones appointed. Eight members of the council, two from each nation, were appointed, by their presence and society, to relieve the tedium and solitude of his imprisonment, a humane regard which was not shown in the case of Huss; yet the trembling pontiff could have scarcely appreciated such consideration, as he gave up into their hands “the ring of the fisherman” and the insignia of his office.

On the twenty-ninth of May the twelfth session of the council was held. The emperor, with all the cardinals, princes, and ambassadors, was present. The passage of scripture read was one appropriately significant: “Now is the
judgment of this world, and the prince of this world is cast out." After the usual preparatory ceremonies, the late deputies to the pope made their report. They stated that the articles of his indictment had been presented to him, and he had been informed that if he had any opposition to offer he might be at liberty to do so; to which he made reply, that he had done much for the union and welfare of the church, even offering to cede his office. He readily acknowledged that he had basely abandoned the council, and now he would rather—saving the welfare of his soul—have died on the very day of his flight, than have done a thing so reprehensible. Against the sentence of the council he had nothing to offer in his own defense; but, according to the tenor of a writing which he had drawn up, and now placed in the hands of the cardinals deputed to visit him, desired and promised, standing in their presence, to conform himself to every ordinance, deliberation, and decision of the said holy council, ratifying every process issued by it against himself, and asserting that to the articles against him he had no other answer to make. The council he declared to be most holy, infallible, and a continuation of the Pisan, promising that neither at Bologna, nor at any other place where he might be present in person, would he speak a word against it. Let the sentence, he said, when pronounced, be presented to him, and he would receive it with head bared, and with all respect, and would, as far as lay in his power, ratify, confirm, approve, and acknowledge it. In fact, all that had been done by the council against him he did at once and from that moment ratify, approve, and confirm, promising never at any period to oppose it.

After this report was given in, Martin Porrée, bishop of Arras, arose and read the sentence of deposition. Three bishops and the patriarch of Antioch ascended the platform with him, and took their places by his side. The sentence of a deposed pope deserves to be given entire. It was as follows: "In the name of the holy and indivisible Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen. The most holy general council of Constance, in the Holy Spirit lawfully convened, invoking the name of Christ, and having the fear of God only before their eyes, having examined the articles drawn up and presented in this case against the lord pope, John XXIII, together with the evidence sustaining them, his voluntary submission, with the entire process of this cause, doth, after mature deliberation upon the same, pronounce, decree, and declare, by this definitive sentence, produced in writing, that the clandestine withdrawal of the aforesaid lord pope, John XXIII, from Constance, and from this sacred council—his departing by night, at a suspicious hour, in an unbecoming and disguised garb—was unlawful, and to the church of God and to the said council notoriously scandalous, tending to disturb and obstruct the peace and union of the church itself, an encouragement to its protracted schism, inconsistent with the vow, promise, and oath given by Pope John to God, the church, and this holy council; that Pope John himself is a notorious simonist, squandering the goods and disregarding the rights, not only of the Roman, but of other churches—a perverse administrator of the spiritualities as well as temporalities of the church by his shameful life and detestable
conduct, grossly scandalizing Christian people, both before and since his accession to the papacy, even down to the present time; that, after proper and kindly admonitions again and frequently repeated, he has pertinaciously persevered in his aforesaid wickedness, thereby rendering himself notoriously incorrigible; and that he, on account of the aforesaid and other crimes set forth in the process of the said cause against him, ought, as unworthy, useless, injurious, to be deprived and deposed from the papacy, and its entire administration, both spiritual and temporal; and the said holy council doth remove, deprive, and depose him, declaring all Christians, of what state, condition, or dignity soever, absolved from all obedience, fidelity, or oath of allegiance; forbidding all the faithful from receiving naming, adhering to, or obeying him, thus deposed, any longer as pope. The said holy council also makes good, from certain knowledge and plenitude of power, each and every defect in this preceding sentence; and condemns him by this same sentence to stay and remain in some good and fitting place, under the safe custody of the emperor Sigismund, the most devoted champion and defender of the Catholic church, as long as in the view of the said holy general council the welfare and the union of the church of God shall require. Other fitting penalties to be inflicted for the said crimes and enormities, according to canonical sanction, the said council reserves, to be declared and inflicted at its own good pleasure, as the rigor of justice or the measure of mercy shall require."

Such was the sentence that invaded the sanctuary of infallibility, and dragged down “the Lord’s anointed” from his throne. It was the deliberate and well-weighed act of representative Christendom, urged on by the most catholic emperor Sigismund, and sanctioned by the ablest, wisest, and best men whom the council could boast among its members. When the sentence had been read, the president of the council, Cardinal John, bishop of Ostia, arose and asked if anyone then present, great or small, rich or poor, had anything to say against the aforesaid definitive sentence, or against its being pronounced. If any such were present, he invited them to arise and declare their views in the name of the council, allowing them full liberty of expression: and in case no one arose, each was to be considered as consenting to the sentence. Not a voice was heard. If any still felt an attachment to the unfortunate pontiff, they were unwilling to testify it before the council in this hour of his desperate fortunes. John XXIII had not a John de Chlum to stand by him to the last, and, at the risk of all things earthly, vindicate his innocence. He, at least, fell unpitied and unwept. No prayers like those which commended the imprisoned Huss to the care of Heaven, were breathed forth with sighs and tears in his behalf. He fell as a criminal, Huss as a martyr.

After the momentary silence—more eloquent than words—which ratified the judgment of the council by a tacit but unanimous consent, the several presidents of the nations arose, and in their behalf responded their placet to the sentence that had been read. The presiding cardinal answered in behalf of the college of cardinals. The vote was taken thus by the whole council. At this
moment the cardinal of Florence arose. He was the youngest member of the college of cardinals, a man of great ability and daring. He had ventured on a previous occasion to set himself as the organ of the will of the college, against the whole council, omitting the reading of a portion of one of the decrees of that body—a portion exceedingly important as bearing upon the pope and cardinals—on his own authority. The council had resented the proceeding, and now, when Zabarella arose with a written document in his hand, and asked permission to read it, their former jealousies and suspicions were reawakened. He was greeted from every side by an almost unanimous shout "Non placet." He was thus forced to resume his seat, and silently acquiesce in what had been done. Doubtless his purpose was to present in some form a protest, but such was the state of feeling in the council that he was not allowed to proceed. Whatever it might have been, it could scarcely, from such a source, have had any influence to change the result.

It now only remained to carry the sentence into execution. So far as the council itself was concerned, there was no delay. The archbishop of Riga, the keeper of the seal and arms of John XXIII, presented them to the council. It was then demanded by Henry de Piro, the procurator of the council, that the seal should be broken and the armorial bearings effaced. This was done on the instant, with unanimous consent, by the hands of Arnold, the goldsmith of the pope. Five cardinals were at the same time appointed to notify John of his deposition. They were instructed to urge him to acquiesce in his sentence with a good grace, and to threaten him with more severe treatment if he offered any resistance. The council knew how to manage their prisoner. They could take the measure of his hopes and fears, but Huss, they were soon to find, was not a man of the same stamp.

Nothing more was done at this session except to take some precautionary measures in regard to the election of a new pope. The council resolved and decreed that no steps should be taken towards such an election without their advice and consent, or, in case they should be, they were to be accounted null and void. It was forbidden to recognize as pope any person who might be elected in such a case, under the severest penalties. All customs, statutes, or privileges interfering with this decision, were pronounced invalid. Thus the democratic principle in the council, under the lead of men like Gentian and Gerson, triumphed. The monarch of the church was deposed, and the oligarchy of the cardinals at the same time suspended from the exercise of their authority as electors of the ecclesiastical sovereign.

A decree also was passed forbidding the reélection of either of the three contendents for the papacy, and a commission appointed to summon and secure the attendance of the absent prelates. The last was a wise and necessary measure. The council was in danger of dissolution, and coercion was necessary to keep it together after the deposition of the pope, and in the
expected absence of the emperor on his journey to Spain, where he was to take steps for reducing Benedict, the most refractory of the popes.

John XXIII awaited in his prison at Ratolfcell the announcement of his sentence. On the thirty-first of May, the cardinals deputed to make it discharged their commission. They presented his sentence to him in writing, and asked whether it met with his approval, or whether he had anything to say against it. He took the, to him, dismal document from their hands, and read it in silence. He promised them a reply within the space of a few hours. Early in the afternoon he sent for them to receive his answer. It was the answer of one reduced to submit to the mast humiliating terms, yet true to his habitual hypocrisy, striving to gloss his answer with the fairest show of repentance and sincerity. "The tyrant of Bologna," "the poisoner of Alexander V," "the incarnate devil," gave his full confirmation to the sentence, acknowledged himself deposed from the papacy, and ratified his expressed purpose to submit to the council’s decisions, by a long and tedious document subscribed by his own hand. The most overbearing of tyrants had become the most abject of slaves.

CHAPTER XX

Huss at Gottlieben
Prison Examination

The case of John XXIII was now disposed of, and the council was ready to proceed with the trial of Huss. In his prison at Gottlieben the Bohemian reformer, conscious of his innocence, had somewhat impatiently awaited the hour when he might declare and vindicate his faith before the assembled council. For more than two months he had been removed from nearly all communication with his friends at Constance. He was closely confined, and his treatment was such as might have been expected from the harsh, stern character of the man to whom he was given in custody. During the day he was only allowed to move the length of the chain attached to his feet. By night, his arms were made fast to the wall. Well might his Bohemian friends earnestly remonstrate, and seek to have his trial expedited.

But even in his prison, Huss was a watchful observer of the remarkable events that were transpiring around him. He investigated and approved the doctrine of Jacobel in regard to the cup, and exhorted his friends to acquiesce in the seeming innovation, which only restored to its simple completeness a sacrament which had been mutilated during the corrupt ages of the church. He did not neglect, moreover, to make use of the sentence against John XXIII to confirm, in this hour of trial, the faith and devotion of his disciples at Prague.
The unveiled crimes of that wretch whose excommunications had been launched against him, were a more than sufficient justification for his own course and language. "Courage," says he, "you can now give an answer to those preachers who declare that the pope is God on earth; that he can sell the sacraments, as the Canonists assert; that he is the head and heart of the church by vivifying it spiritually; that he is the fountain from which all virtue and excellence issue; that he is the sun of the Holy Ghost, and sure asylum where all Christians ought to find refuge! Behold! already is this head severed as it were with the sword; already is this terrestrial God bound in chains; already are his sins unveiled, the gushing fountain is dried up, the heavenly sun is dimmed, the heart is torn out, that no one may again seek an asylum there."

Huss then adverts to the cruelty of his persecutors, as well as to the corruption of his judges. In a tone of indignant invective, he exclaims, "The council has condemned its chief—it's proper head—for having sold indulgences, bishopricks, in fact, everything; and yet among those who have condemned him are many bishops who are themselves guilty of the shameful traffic! ... O profligate men! why did you not first pull out the beam from your own eye... They have declared the seller to be accursed, and have condemned him, and yet themselves are the purchasers. They are the other party in the compact, and yet they remain unpunished."

This language of Huss is fully sustained, nay, is far exceeded in keenness and sting of invective, by men who were members of the council, or who carefully and anxiously observed it from a distance. Gerson himself, in his treatise written at a later period, handles the council if possible more severely. Clemengis describes those assembled, but "not truly in Christ's name," to seek the peace and unity of the church, as "carnal, for the most part bent on their pleasures, not to say their lusts." "These carnal sons of the church do not only have no care or apprehension of spiritual things, but they even persecute those who walk after the Spirit, as has been the case from the days of just Abel, and will be to the end of time. These are the men who fly together to the church merely to seize upon temporalities, who lead in the church a secular life; conspire, covet, plunder, rejoice in preeminence, not in profiting others; oppress and rob their subjects; glory in the honor of promotion; riot in pomp, pride, and luxury; who count gain godliness, sneer at such as wish to live holily, chastely, innocently, spiritually, calling them hypocrites... Of such men the church is full this day, and scarcely, in whole chapters or universities, can you find any others... Are men like these, the ones to exert themselves for a reformation of the church—men who would account such a reformation the greatest calamity to themselves?" Such was the language of one of the ablest and best men of his day. And yet even this scarcely equals in severity that of Niem, former secretary of John XXIII, and present as a personal attendant upon the sessions of the council. He speaks of the prelates as pastors that feed themselves and scatter the flock. He lays bare the rottenness of the church, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, from the plain tonsure of
the priest to the tiara of the pope. Well might Huss, supported by such testimony, and with a keener sense of spiritual parity and corruption than even these men possessed, declare, "Such are those spiritual princes, who declare themselves, forsooth, to be the true vicars and apostles of Christ, who give themselves the appellation of ‘holy church, and the most sacred and infallible council’; which, however, proved itself fallible enough when they adored John XXIII, and bent the knee before him, kissing his feet and calling him the ‘Most Holy,’ whereas, all the time they knew him to be a homicide, a man of most flagitious life, stained with simony, and a heretic, as their judgment declares... May God forgive them, for with such knowledge of the man, they named him pope! ... And now Christendom is without a head on earth—possesses Jesus Christ alone as chief to direct it, as the heart to give it life, as the fountain to water it with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, as the always sufficient refuge, to which I have recourse in my misfortunes, firmly believing that there I shall always find direction, assistance, and plenteous vivification, and that God will fill me with an ineffable joy in delivering me from my sins and from a wretched existence. Happy then are they who, in observing his law, perceive and detest the vain pomp, avarice, and hypocrisy of the Savior’s enemies, and patiently wait for the coming of the Sovereign Judge and his angels."

It is difficult for us to withhold our sympathies from this prisoner at Gottlieben, calm in conscious innocence, and firm in an integrity of purpose which all his misfortunes were insufficient to crush. There he is, within those cold, damp walls, a helpless victim in the hands of his foes, and his doom predetermined. Sharing now, as he had not at first, the well-grounded fears of his friends, his mind is fully made up to meet the worst. Not a word, implying doubt or fear, escapes his lips. Not a sentence of bravado drops from his pen. He is at peace with himself and God. Not even the harshness of his treatment provokes a single utterance inconsistent with his habitual gentleness and charity. He cherishes no resentments. Without a single trace of obstinacy—willing ever to listen to argument, inviting correction if he has erred—he is yet true to his convictions, resolved sooner to perish himself than sacrifice one iota of the truth. All his letters from this Patmos of his exile breathe a noble Christian spirit. Christ is his "sufficient refuge," to which he has recourse in his misfortunes. He cannot expose the iniquity of his persecutors, but, like his Master, he at the same time exclaims, "May God forgive them." If, in some of his previous acts and writings, violent or bitter expressions had been provoked by the zeal of his indignation, no trace of them is any longer to be found. Barely has even a martyr faith won more signal triumph than when, in the castle of Gottlieben, a patient endurance was crowned with grateful hope and even joy. "This declaration of our Savior," says he, "is to me a great source of consolation; ‘Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil for the Son of man’s sake. Rejoice ye in that day, for behold, your reward is great in heaven.’"
It would be difficult to find anywhere more clear and decisive evidences of a simple love of truth for its own sake than were exhibited by Huss. His was not the self-importance of a leader, or the pride of a champion. He possessed, indeed, a clear and strong intellect, a fearless spirit, a fervid and powerful eloquence, but his estimate of himself was always humble. His own life, in his esteem, was nothing by the side of that cause to which he was willing to devote it.

Such was the man who, the moment John XXIII was deposed, claimed the attention of the council. Scarcely was the sentence pronounced, when his case was brought before them. His bitter enemy, Michael De Causis, had not been idle. While Huss was in prison, new grounds of accusation against him were sought out. The former list, however it may have been modified, was now prefaced with the charge of heresy in the use of the cup. It was inferred that, inasmuch as the adherents of Huss at Prague had adopted this innovation, he was therefore its author. Many of the council may have supposed the inference just, and perfectly conclusive. Causis himself, however, must have known its falsehood. But the deign of the measure was manifest. It was intended to prejudice the council, and poison the minds of his judges against the prisoner. Undoubtedly it did have this effect, although its falseness was subsequently detected. The other articles, the character of which will soon be noticed, were drawn up with great care and skill, and betray the malice in which they originated.

The friends of Huss were aware of what was going on. They saw the skilful web of accusation which the cunning art of his enemies was weaving to entrap him. Nor on their part were they idle. Again and again they had remonstrated against the injustice of Huss’ imprisonment. On this day (May 31) they again appeared, still more solicitous in their petitions that Huss might be enlarged, and a hearing be granted him. The emperor was absent at the opening of the congregation, when their petition was read, and consequently did not hear it. The Bohemians, therefore, as the assembly broke up, gave a copy of it into his hands for his private inspection. It was the production of the Bohemian nobility present in Constance, and was signed by them in behalf of their countrymen. It was a candid and manly plea for the reformer. It sets forth, first, the fact that their former communications had been treated with neglect; that in vain they had requested the fathers of the council to consider the lame and impotent charges against Huss the productions of malice and envy on the part of his jealous rivals; that the reformer himself, in all his acts, scholastic and ecclesiastical, and especially in his preaching, had made, and was wont to make, protestations of his readiness to yield to the truth whenever convinced of it. It was hence fair to be inferred, in regard to his intentions, that he neither would nor did wish, in his books, treatises, instructions, and public preaching, to write, speak, or maintain anything which he clearly knew to be erroneous, scandalous, seditious, offensive to pious ears, or heretical, as the malice of his enemies had charged; but that his grand aim and purpose had
been, in all respects, to conform himself to the teaching of gospel truth, and
the holy doctors who had commented on the Sacred Scriptures. And if, in any
respect, he should be found in fault, or by others ill-understood, he wished
from these sources to be corrected, directed, informed, and enlightened, and
by no means to defend or sustain any article contrary to the most holy Roman
church and to Catholic faith.

"Wherefore," the Bohemian nobles proceed, "since, Right Reverend Fathers,
notwithstanding all this, his bitter foes, impelled by great hatred, extract
isolated and disconnected passages from his books, rejecting the qualifications
or the intent of them, or at least overlooking them, not adverting to the
distinctions proper to be observed, and then put together against him articles
which are false and framed artfully to this end, that, despite all charity, they
may depose him from his office and put him to death, in violation of the safe-
conduct openly granted him by the emperor to secure him against all these
intrusions of his enemies which produce in Bohemia these disquietudes and
contentions which the emperor so greatly desires to see composed; therefore
the said nobles and barons do petition that the preceding matters, and the
dishonor from them resulting to the said kingdom and its people being
considered, you would on your part interfere, and appoint method and process
by which the said Master John Huss may, by men enlightened and masters of
Holy Scripture, who are here present and shall be deputed for this purpose, be
carefully heard upon all the articles charged against him, so that his own
meaning and that of the doctors may be declared along with the distinctions
proper to be made, in which matters his accusers are inconsistent with
themselves. Thus, also, let the deposition of witnesses be heard, many of
whom are, and long have been, his most bitter enemies, whose wanton
instigation would lead to his condemnation, though held a captive and
unheard; since from such methods your majesty may be more clearly informed
in regard to the truth, while he is ever ready to submit himself to the decision
of the most holy council. For you have been informed, through the plausible
lies and tricks of his slanderers, that Master John Huss has obstinately persisted
for a long time in articles of a most dangerous character, which representation
you will then be able to understand clearly the falsehood of."

In proof of this the Bohemians adduce the public testimonial of the bishop of
Nazareth, inquisitor at Prague, which we have already seen. They then petition
the fathers of the council, that inasmuch as Huss had not been condemned or
even convicted, he might be released from the chains and fetters by which he
was grievously deprived of his freedom, and placed in the hands of bishops or
commissioners of the council specially deputed for the purpose, that he might
have opportunity to recover strength, and might more carefully be examined
by the said commissioners. And, for greater security, the barons and nobles
pledged themselves that Huss should not be allowed to escape from the hands
of the commissioners until the final issue of the affair.
The paper of the Bohemians was read and discussed by the fathers of the council. Yet, moderate and even humble as the request was, there was no disposition to grant it. But in Sigismund’s bosom there was found the policy of a ruler, if not the justice. Such a request from such a source was entitled to respect, and doubtless the emperor felt more than suspicious of the interested motives of the enemies of Huss. It was not without a strenuous effort on his part that the portion of the request which asked for a public audience of the reformer was granted. John de Chlum at once hastened to announce the welcome intelligence to the prisoner. “Today,” he writes, “the king, assembled with the deputies of all the nations, spoke of your case, and contended for a public audience. It was finally and definitely resolved that it should be allowed you. Your friends are also insisting on your removal to some more airy place, that you may be refreshed and restored to strength.”

The answer of the council, as read by the patriarch of Antioch, deserves to be given. It was, that as to the first point, the protestation of Huss, the future would show whether it was true and reliable. As to the assertion that the adversaries of Huss had improperly and wickedly cited isolated passages from his books, this was to be shown in the issue of the cause. If it was found that Huss had been unjustly accused, then his enemies would be overwhelmed with lasting disgrace. But in regard to sureties, the deputies of the council could not, with a safe conscience, receive them, even though a thousand were given in behalf of a man in whom, on no condition, faith was to be reposed; but to this they would attend, that on the fifth of the next month (June) Huss should be brought to Constance, that he should have full and free opportunity of speaking before the council itself, and that they would hear him affectionately and kindly. How well their promise was kept will be manifest in the sequel.

Meanwhile Huss patiently endured the martyrdom of his cruel imprisonment. Oppressed with chains, and his health giving way under the severity of his prison life, his purpose was still unshaken to witness, if occasion should demand it, a good confession. In the weakness of the flesh, the spirit triumphed. His noble friend Chlum did not forget to exhort him, “In God’s name, and for the sake of the truth, take good care not to desert the holy cause through any fear of losing this wretched life; for it is for your great benefit that God visits you by this trial.” But a mightier than man was his counselor. The greatness of the cause in which he was engaged filled his thoughts. He ardently anticipated his trial, in the hope of an opportunity to vindicate the claims of truth. Though at times disheartened by the malice of his enemies that threatened to crush him unheard, he seems yet to have cherished the hope that some, at least, would be found in the council to respond in approval of his views. In default of this, he could not believe that the assembled representatives of Christendom would unite in opposing the testimony of scripture, or rejecting it as the test and standard of doctrine. How sadly he was to be disappointed in all this, we shall soon have occasion to observe.
All the anxieties of Huss for his own person were lost in his deeper anxiety for
the interests of a pure and scriptural Christianity. His musings by day and even
his dreams by night constantly presented to his view that Savior whose
example, unworthy as he was, he gloried to imitate. It is not surprising that in
his prison he should have been visited by visions and dreams which one might
easily be led to regard as prophetic. One of these, that which concerned the
vain attempts of the priests to efface the paintings and inscriptions on the
walls of Bethlehem chapel, has been already referred to. There were others of
which he makes mention in his letters, but to which he declares, himself, that
he attached slight importance.

"Occupy your thoughts with your defense, rather than with visions," said John
de Chlum, in a gentle reproof, which attested his own good sense and his
anxiety for his friend. He deeply and sadly felt the danger which impended
over Huss, and could not bear the thought that such a life should be risked by
any neglect of preparation, or any over-confidence of the final result. Jerome
was already in prison, and of his deliverance there was little prospect. It was
too much that Huss also should be lost to future service, in the cause of which
he and Jerome were the ablest champions.

Huss did not altogether neglect preparation for his own defense, but how
oppressively discouraging were the circumstances in which it was to be made!
His imprisonment, his harsh treatment, his failing health, his severe pain in his
teeth, as well as other bodily ailments, which cost him so many sleepless
nights, his exclusion from the society of his friends, his ignorance of the various
methods of his enemies to prejudice his cause, his inability to divine what new
changes would be made in the articles of his accusation, or what new articles
might be framed, and the depressing conviction that his prosecutors, who had
free access to the minds of the members of the council, would spare no effort
to secure his condemnation; all conspired to dishearten him, and overwhelm
him with foreboding. From time to time his trial had been deferred, and even
in his prison Paletz and Causis, who accompanied the judicial committee
appointed to visit him, had insulted even his helplessness and misfortunes.
They were bent, moreover, on depriving him of the privilege of a public
audience. They knew the power of his eloquence, and they did not wish to
have the experiment of it tried upon the council. He had been denied an
advocate. They would also have him condemned unheard. But here they were
defeated by the more just, if not manly and honorable, policy of Sigismund.

By one of those strange series of events which characterize the processes of
this world, even as providential retributions, Huss was not to leave his prison at
Gottlieben until his great antagonist, John XXIII, now deposed from the papacy,
was immured in the same walls. The ex-pontiff had received, with every mark
of contrite submission, the announcement of his deposition. For this well-
played farce the Jesuit Maimbourg does not hesitate to enroll him among the
noblest martyrs of the church, and for his self-sacrificing spirit place him in
merit by the side of St. Peter himself. How much he deserves such eulogy, the hypocrisy, simony, and corruptions of his life might enable anyone unversed in Jesuit casuistry to judge. He merely cried "quarter" when the knife was at his throat. The threat of the council, that further obstinacy should be met with severer penalties, was hung in terrorem over his head. The report of his submission reached the council on the first day of June, and, in considerate appreciation of his ostentatious humility, the holy fathers determined on placing him in closer and safer custody. On the third day of June, therefore, he was removed by their order from Ratolfcell to Gottlieben, occupying a cell in the same prison where Huss was confined. It is doubtful whether the two men met. It is enough that they now found themselves in this strange juxtaposition. The last time that they had stood face to face, the proud, tyrannical, and hypocritical pontiff had seemed to occupy a position superior to any earthly tribunal. Soon his selfish policy marked Huss as a scapegoat for his own sin. Denied the luxury of exulting over his victim, he spread his complaint of the emperor over Europe, and howled forth his rage that the policy rather than the justice of Sigismund had snatched the victim from his tiger claws. Now the tiger himself was caged, and Huss might, if he had chosen, have enjoyed the disgrace of his foe. His own turn for exultation had come. But he chose rather to see in this event the demonstration of the futility of his own excommunication, a demonstration which was not to lose its effect upon the Bohemian nation.

Moralists might discover an important lesson in the contrast presented by these two men confined in the same fortress. One was the coward tyrant of Christendom, taking counsel of his fears, and adopting in regard to himself language, if true, as degrading as it was submissive. The other, weak and exposed as he was to the inveterate malice of his foes, had no terms to offer but those of submission to the supremacy of truth alone, a supremacy which his foes also must finally acknowledge. One had alienated all the friends he ever had. The other had not only bound his former friends closer to him by his steadfast integrity, but had won the hearts of his jailers to sympathy, compassion, and admiration. There, in one cell, might be seen the ex-pontiff, on whose head rested a weight of crime that could scarce have found its parallel in the lives of the Herods and the Neros, crushed by infamy as well as by chains, a whining supplicant, cringing to lick the hand that inflicted his blows, stripped of all his honors, and his name made the by-word of reproach. Here, in another, was the victim of bigoted and jealous malice, and yet, with an integrity and purity of character on which his bitterest enemies could not fix a stain, awaiting in the calm consciousness of his innocence the assaults of calumny, sustained by strength and grace imparted from above, turning his prison-cell into a Bethel, and, with faith in God exultant in every prospect, whether of acquittal or of death. One of these prisoners humbles himself before men; the other before God only. One represents Barabbas, the other, in his patient endurance of injustice, calumny, and scorn, reminds us of the example of his divine Master.
The ex-pontiff had few if any to commiserate his fate. The name of Huss will be respected and honored while truth has honors for her martyrs.

The spectacle of the dethroned tyrant of Christendom excited wonder, but not pity. A chronicle of the time introduces him uttering the lament:

"I who but late was seated on a throne,  
Must now in bitterness lament my fall;  
In my high place of power I ruled alone,  
My feet the kiss of homage had from all.  
Now to the lowest deep of shame I’m hurled,  
A victim to the penalty of crime,  
The laughing-stock and scandal of the world,  
Gazed at in scorn, the wonder of my time.  
Once every land its gold laid at my feet,  
Now wealth delights not, not a friend remains.  
From me, cast down so low from my high seat,  
Let those be warned whom glory false sustains."  

Neither of the prisoners was to remain at Gottlieben. Even within stone walls and carefully guarded, the ex-pontiff was in too immediate proximity to the council. He was soon detected in his old business of intrigue. There was some danger lest the party in his favor might be revived. At least it was not to be doubted that, inspired by his countenance, his partisans might be ready at the first opportunity to obstruct its further proceedings. He was accordingly committed by the emperor to the charge of the elector, and by him conveyed first to Heidelberg, and afterward to Manheim, to be kept in closer custody.

Before the removal of Huss to Constance, his friends sought the opportunity of obtaining his views in regard to the doctrine of the communion of the cup. On the very day (May 31), therefore, on which it was determined that a public trial should be granted him, the Bohemians requested him, through their common friend John de Chlum, to give a clear and full statement of his views on this disputed question, together with the reasons by which they were supported. "We have to ask," writes the Bohemian nobleman, "of you, most beloved, that you will give us in writing your deliberate and argumentative opinion on the subject of the communion of the cup, if such shall seem good to you, that it may be shown at the proper time to our friends. For on this subject the minds of the brethren have been somewhat divided, and many have been disturbed."

Huss at once complied with this request of the Bohemians. In his reply to Chlum, he says, "As to the sacrament of the cup, you have in writing what I wrote when in Constance, with the reasons that led me to adopt the views there presented. And I know not that I can say anything more in regard to this sacrament, except that it is sustained by the gospel and by Paul’s epistles, and
was observed in the primitive church. If it may be, seek at least permission to have it administered to those who ask for it in a devotional spirit."

The friends and the enemies of Huss now felt alike that the critical moment was at hand. On the first day of June, the former presented to the council a document which they had drawn up, showing that Huss had come to Constance, provided with a safe-conduct, in order to render reasons of his faith on every point upon which he should be called in question, and by no means with the intent obstinately to defend everything, but, if he should be better informed, resolved, in such case, to recant and change his views.

It was on this same day that the commission of the council visited Huss in his prison at Gottlieben. Notwithstanding the engagement of the council and the emperor that Huss should be heard, there were those who persisted in opposing the audience that had been promised him, and to further their plans, the calumnious report was spread abroad that a sedition was to burst forth upon his arrival. Nothing could be more improbable, although the idea may possibly have entered the heads of some of the more hot-headed partisans of the reformer. Paletz and Causis accompanied the commission. In the secret interrogatories that took place, all means were tried, even to insult and threats, to shake the constancy of Huss. His friends, who knew of what materials the deputation was composed, were not without disquietude in their apprehension of the result. But Huss, debilitated and weakened as he was by sickness and severe imprisonment, was not to be awed by terror any more than seduced by promises. It was the wish of his friends that he should refuse to answer any question put to him thus in private. They saw no security for him but in a prudent reserve, or even absolute silence. They knew the violence of his adversaries, and were fearful of its effect upon a frame already so enfeebled by a long and harsh imprisonment. But, worn and enfeebled as Huss was, the spirit within him that was to brave the fires of martyrdom, was still unsubdued. True to the calm constancy of his life, he did not suffer himself to be intimidated, nor to use, as he justly might have done, any severe language. In one of his letters he depicts the troublesome and annoying nature of the inquisition to which he was subjected, a harshness of proceeding which might well have provoked angry retort. "Let my friends," said he, "be under no alarm on the score of my answers. I firmly hope that what I have said under the roof will yet be preached upon the house-tops. Every one of the articles has been presented to me separately, and the question has been asked whether I persisted in desiring to defend it. My answer was, that I would not do so, but would await the decision of the council. God is my witness that no reply has seemed to me more suitable, since I had already given it under my own hand that I did not wish to maintain anything obstinately, but was willing to receive instruction of any one. Michael de Causis stood, by, with a paper in his hand, urging the patriarch to use force to make me reply to his questions. The bishops then came in and interrogated in their turn... God has permitted Causis and Paletz to rise up against me for my sins. The one examined and remarked
upon all my letters, and the other brought up conversations that had taken place between us many years back... The patriarch would insist upon it that I was exceedingly rich, and an archbishop even named the very sum I possess, namely, 70,000 florins... Oh! certainly my sufferings today were great! One of the bishops said to me ‘You have established a new law’; and another, ‘You have preached up all these articles.’ My answer simply was, ‘Why do you overwhelm me with outrage?’”

Berthold Wildungen, one of the deputation who visited Huss, has himself given an account of this interview, which, in the main, agrees with that of Huss, omitting, however, its most odious features. The number of articles submitted to Huss was thirty. His declining to defend them, and offering to submit to the correction of the council, was afterward used against him in the public audience. It is evident that he saw the futility of any private defense which he might offer, and preferred that the council, instead of the deputation, should be the judge of his views. Certainly no intention to submit his convictions, without argument or instruction of his error, could ever have entered his mind. He was not disposed to allow the council, any more than the pope, to usurp to themselves the authority of the word of God. He merely referred himself, as he felt in duty bound, to the decisions of the council, based, as he had the right to demand that they should be, upon the plain doctrine of the sacred Scriptures. His friends were disquieted at the report perversely spread abroad by his enemies, in regard to his submission. They feared that he had already offered some sort of retraction. But this was not the case. “I never promised,” he says, in a letter written a few days later, “to submit myself to the council except conditionally; and at several different audiences—as already previously in public—I have protested that, as to the demand that I should retract, I desired to submit myself to the instruction, direction, and justice of the council, whenever I could be made to see that I had written, taught, or maintained anything opposed to truth.” This protestation was repeatedly made by Huss, from the time when he left Prague for Constance up to the conclusion of his trial. As the articles were now read to him, he gave the sense in which they were held, sometimes denying the one presented to be the expression of his views, or pointing out the perversion to which another had been subjected. To prevent any misstatements or alterations, Huss reduced his replies to writing.

Among the most influential opponents of Huss were those members of the council who represented in its sessions the university of Paris and the royal court of France. Of these men, Gerson was the acknowledged leader. Cardinal D’Ailly, his former instructor, sympathized with him on most of the controverted questions of the day, and from their position, as well as the remark which the former of these men afterward made—namely, that had Huss been properly defended he would have escaped—it is to be presumed that their influence against the reformer was decisive of his fate. And yet, to the observer of passing events, not initiated into a full knowledge of the secret currents of influence combining with, or counterworking one another beneath
the surface, such violent hostility as those men manifested toward Huss is quite inexplicable. In many points they agreed with the Bohemian reformer. They had no more respect for the papal power, and would have paid no more regard to its excommunication, than Huss himself. Their exposures of the iniquity and corruption of the Roman court are as horrid and startling as any that were ever heard within the walls of Bethlehem chapel at Prague. It might have been supposed that these men, alike able, learned, and indignant at the gross corruptions of the church, sanctioned and exemplified in the lives of her own dignitaries, would have welcomed in Huss a brother reformer. But calumny had already poisoned their minds against him. Rivals and enemies had represented him to them as a heretic. His partial endorsement of the views of Wickliffe had in their eyes identified him with that hated Englishman. A strong party, resolved to glut their vengeance upon the latter, even at the price of robbing his grave and insulting his bones, thirsted for some living victim, and swept strong minds around them along in the tide of their own sympathies. To all this, however, must be added the fact, the weight of which at this day we are scarcely able to appreciate, that scholastic differences aggravated the animosity of the Paris deputation against Huss. The latter belonged to the school of the Realists, while the former were the avowed and leading champions of the school of the Nominalists. For full two centuries from the days of Roscelin and Abelard, France had been a battlefield for these contending parties. At times the result of the conflict seemed doubtful. Abelard, who was a Nominalist, with all his noted ability, fell before the unrelenting assaults of his powerful adversary, Bernard, and was branded as a heretic. But his views survived, and continued to spread until they had made the university of Paris their strongest fortress. In vain had popes and councils attempted to stay the tide of opinion. Abelard’s bones rested quietly in their grave, but over his helpless dust the battle was fought which more than avenged him. The Nominalists gained at last the supremacy, but the hard-fought battle had left behind it deep scars, and bleeding wounds that refused to be healed. Alienation and bitter hostility still were cherished in the minds of the opposing parties. They who triumphed—and Gerson among them—doubtless remembered the humiliation of past defeats, and it was no unimportant object in their esteem that a general council for the reformation of the church should lend its sanction to the views which they maintained. Several of them, therefore, reproved in Huss the Realist as much at least as the heterodox preacher. Scholastic feuds were carried into the theological arena, and even men whose general integrity we are bound to respect were blinded, in the heat and strife of party feelings, to the nature of their acts. In the person of Huss, Realism was virtually triumphant at Prague; and when he stood before his judges, their prejudices were already aroused, and his case was really prejudged.

In regard to Huss, we have no evidence that he reciprocated the strong antipathies or party feelings of his antagonists. His philosophy was never made prominent, while his course was shaped simply by his sense of duty and his
theological convictions. The cause of a pure Christianity excited in him a
deepen interest than the dialectics or disputations of the schools. His
philosophy did not obstruct—it may perhaps have promoted—the practical
bearing of his words. His soul was too full of the great truths of scripture to
have room left there for the play of passions which are roused by scholastic
partisanship.

It was in such circumstances as these that Huss appeared before the council—a
combination of opposing influences arrayed against him, from the conspiring
antagonism of which little was left him to hope. Prejudice had built up, as it
were, between him and the conscience of the council, an impenetrable wall of
granite, from which argument, appeal, and remonstrance alike recoiled. This
was manifest in the first steps of the process taken by the council against the
reformer.

CHAPTER XXI

First and Second Audience of Huss before the Council

It was on the fifth of June, 1415, that Huss was removed from the prison at
Gottlieben, where he had remained for more than two months, and brought to
Constance. But even here he was not permitted to meet his friend, Jerome.
The latter was confined in the tower of St. Paul's Cemetery, while the former
was placed in the monastery of the Franciscans, where he was to remain, for
the greater part of the time loaded with irons, till the hour of his martyrdom.
Well does the annalist add, as he notes the period of this the last imprisonment
of Huss, that "he was to take leave of his cell, not of his constancy; of his life,
but not of his faith."

The council, however, contemning even the forms of justice, did not wait for
his appearance before they proceeded to take measures that were meant to be
decisive of his fate. Several hours before his arrival at Constance, and not only
in his absence but in that of the emperor, the fathers of the council, with the
cardinals and bishops, assembled in public congregation. The place selected for
the assembly was the monastery of the Franciscans, in which Huss was to be
confined. Articles were produced and read, accompanied with the alleged
proofs, which were said to have been selected from his books and treatises.
The object of such a proceeding, so strangely at variance with the course which
they were virtually pledged to pursue, was sufficiently obvious. If the council's
condemnation of Huss' doctrines could not thus be secured, a full opportunity
at least was allowed his enemies to ply their arts of slanderous invective and
false crimination. But among those present at the council, there was one
indignant spectator of this grossly unjust proceeding. The good notary, Peter Maldoniewitz, the one who, two weeks before, on the arrest of Jerome, had discovered the secret prison in which he was confined, and offered him consolation, sympathy, and kindness, was present in his official character, and gathered, from what he heard, that the doctrines of Huss would speedily be condemned, perhaps before his arrival. He therefore hastened to inform his friends and countrymen, Chlum and Duba, of what the council proposed to do. On receiving this intelligence, these men promptly communicated it to the emperor. Sigismund shared to some extent the indignation of the Bohemian nobles. He dispatched, on the instant, the elector Louis of Bavaria and Frederic burgrave of Nuremberg to the assembled members, seriously enjoining upon them not to determine anything in the cause of Huss until they had heard him, and heard him, moreover, with calmness and impartiality. He directed them also to send him whatever erroneous articles they might detect, giving them to understand that he on his part would submit them to the judgment of good and learned men.

Such a message was far from acceptable to the council. They bore it ill, that having deposed a pope, their own supremacy should not be fully acknowledged by the emperor. With the first part of his command they were forced to acquiesce, and gave orders to have Huss brought before them, but on the second point they met the emperor’s demand by an absolute refusal. They declined to send him the erroneous articles. To this they were impelled as well probably by their fear of the result if the matter was to be left in his hands, as by their restiveness under his assumed control. Meanwhile Duba and Chlum, taught by experience to distrust the fair dealing of the council, handed to the princes whom the emperor had sent, the several volumes of the writings of Huss, from which the articles objected against him had been extracted. By a reference to these, the bad faith of his adversaries might the more readily be detected, or, if the extracts were correct, they might be verified.

Huss, now removed from Gottlieben, was brought in the course of the day for the first time before the council. The elector and the burgrave, having handed in the volumes of his writings, withdrew, and left Huss alone in the midst of his enemies. Exasperated as they were by the obstacles thrown in their way by the emperor, they were not in the best mood for hearing a man whose case they had already prejudged. The books of Huss were presented to him. He was asked if he acknowledged them as his. He replied that he did, promising at the same time to correct whatever error could be pointed out in them. “I will rectify,” said he, “any mistaken proposition which any man among you can point out, with the most hearty good-will.”

The reading of the articles charged as erroneous was then commenced. After one had been read, and Huss had shown a disposition to reply to it, the true spirit of the assembly broke forth. He had scarcely uttered the first word, when there arose throughout the whole assembly such clamor and disturbance that
the hearing of him was altogether out of the question. The scene was renewed as the council proceeded from article to article. If the notary Maldoniewitz is to be believed—and he was present at the scene, gazing upon it with anxious interest—the proceedings of the assembly were characterized rather by the ferocity of wild beasts than the grave deportment and thoughtful attention of Christian doctors, assembled to discuss and decide the gravest questions. At length, as the storm lulled somewhat, the voice of Huss was heard appealing to the Sacred Scriptures. This was too much for the patience of the council. "That is not the question," was the outcry which burst forth from every side. Some uttered accusations against the prisoner, while others laughed him to scorn. Any attempt which he could make to secure a hearing was perfectly futile. He ceased for a moment, and his enemies began to enjoy their triumph. "He is dumb," cried they, "it is evident that he has taught the heretical proposition contained in the article." "All," said Luther, in describing the scene in his own energetic language, "all worked themselves into rage like wild boars; the bristles of their back stood on end; they bent their brows and gnashed their teeth against John Huss."

But, in the midst of all the taunts and insults that were heaped upon him, Huss was not depressed or dismayed. "There were given to me," he says, "boldness and presence of mind." Two of the articles charged against him were stricken out. There was not evidence to sustain them. "The same fate," writes Huss, at the close of the day, "is augured for many of the others." One of those probably which were dropped was the one that concerned the doctrine of the cup. The council readily perceived that, whatever might be the views of Huss upon the subject, he was not the originator of the innovation at Prague, and if he was condemned for them, the sentence might strike further than they desired. Huss justly complained of the confusion and clamor of the occasion. Causis insisted that his books should be burned. Yet there were men more favorably inclined. Huss speaks well of the cardinal, Bishop of Ostia, who usually presided over the deliberations of the council. He was the son of a poor peasant of Brogni. A swineherd in his youth, he was never ashamed of his origin. By his merit he had risen to high station, and in his elevation preserved a sympathy for the poor and unfortunate. Huss speaks of him as father, and commends the kindness which he experienced at his hands. One of the Polish doctors also showed himself friendly. Even the Bishop of Leitomischel, who had denounced Jacobel, seemed somewhat softened in feeling toward Huss.

But his friends were few in number, and their voices were drowned in the clamors of this judicial mob. No order was preserved. The members of the council cried out against Huss, while they interrupted one another at the top of their voice. "I supposed," cried the prisoner, "that there had been more fairness, kindness, and order in the council." Upon this the Cardinal of Ostia addressed Huss: "When we saw you in the tower, you spoke in a more modest manner." "With good reason," replied Huss, "for there no one vociferated against me, and now all do." "They tried," says Huss, in speaking of the scene at
a later period, "to frighten me from my constancy in the truth of Christ; but they could not vanquish the strength of God in me. They would not deal with me on the ground of the authority of the Sacred Scriptures, as those noble lords, Duba and Chlum, prepared as they were to incur infamy for the truth of God while they stood firmly by my side, can testify." These men had been authorized by the emperor to be present with Huss on his trial. With what indignation must they have heard the reply to Huss when he asked to be instructed in what respects he had erred. "As you ask to be informed," said the presiding cardinal, "you must first recant your doctrine, according to the prescript of the fifty masters in Sacred Scripture."

As the clamor continued and increased, and the eyes of Huss, gazing over the assembly, met only enemies where he had hoped to find impartial judges, he was forced to express his surprise. "I anticipated," said he, "a different reception, and had imagined that I should obtain a hearing. I am unable to make myself audible over so great a noise; and I am silent because I am forced to it. I would willingly speak were I listened to." The more moderate members of the council were disgusted. The agitation and confusion were too great for calm deliberation. A fair audience of Huss was utterly impossible in the circumstances. Those who were anxious for the reputation of the council urged an adjournment, insisting that the case should be deferred to another occasion. Their views prevailed, and the council stood adjourned to the seventh of June.

The next day upon which the council met (June 7) was ushered in by a solar eclipse. The sun’s disc was almost wholly obscured, and the superstition of the age regarded it as a strange omen. It was not till the eclipse had wholly passed away, and at about one o’clock in the afternoon, that the council reassembled in the hall of the Franciscan monastery, where they had met before. Sigismund took good care to be present. The Bohemian noblemen had given him an account of what had taken place at the first audience, and conjured him to be present at the second sitting, to preserve order.

Huss was led into the assembly loaded with chains, and attended by a numerous body of soldiers. He was placed directly in front of the emperor, whose imperial word had been pledged for his security. The feelings of Sigismund on such an occasion were scarcely to be envied. He came now, undoubtedly, in the hope of saving the prisoner from condemnation, and restraining the excessive zeal of his prosecutors. He persuaded himself, in all probability, that his influence with the council, and with the prisoner also, would be decisive. But he had failed rightly to estimate the strength of religious conviction on the part of one, or of prejudice and venomous hostility on the part of the other. Little did he realize, while he exulted over the deposition of a pope, that in the hands of the council he was himself to become the blind instrument of his own infamy.
The two bitter enemies of Huss, Paletz and Causis, had neglected nothing which could contribute to secure his condemnation. The presence of the emperor only incited them to redouble their efforts. Apprehension of the shame of defeat, if their victim was suffered to escape them, aggravated the bitterness of their zeal. The audience opened with the reading of the articles of accusation. They were fitly presented, as they had been mainly drawn up by Causis. In the first of these he sought to identify the cause of Huss with that of Wickliffe, and thus overwhelm it in the same obloquy. "John Huss," said he, "has taught in the Bethlehem chapel, and in other places in the city of Prague, many errors among the people, some of them drawn from the books of Wickliffe, some of his own getting up, and he has diligently defended them, with extreme obstinacy. In the first place, he has taught that after the consecration and the pronunciation of the words in the Lord’s supper, the material bread still remains, and this is proved by the testimony of several witnesses." The names of four of them, Protiva, Pecklo, Benesius, and Broda, were specified.

To this charge Huss replied, with a solemn adjuration, that he had never taught such a doctrine. "Only this," he would confess, "that when the archbishop of Prague had wholly prohibited the use of that expression, bread, he could not approve this mandate of the archbishop, inasmuch as Christ in the sixth chapter of John had spoken of himself eleven times as the bread of angels that came down from heaven to give life to the world, but that he never had spoken of material bread."

Upon this Huss was addressed by the Cardinal of Cambray, who belonged to the school of the French theologians, and who like them was embittered against the Realism of Huss on philosophical grounds. Holding a paper in his hand, which he said he had received the day before, he addressed the prisoner: "John Huss, do you hold that universals are derived from particulars?" This was a test question of philosophy. Huss replied to it in the affirmative, strengthening himself with the remark, that thus St. Anselm and others had believed. "It follows, then," replied the cardinal, "that after the consecration, the material substance of the bread remains. And this point I thus prove: because after the consecration, while the bread is changed and substantiated into the body of Christ, as you now say, either the wonted substance of the material bread remains there, or it does not. If it remains, the charge is true; if not, then it follows that at the cessation of the particular the universal itself ceases."

By such reasoning this "hammer of heretics," as he was proud in his day to be called, attempted to smite down Huss, and force him either to renounce his philosophy, or admit that the material bread remained after consecration. His passions as a partisan had thrown him into the strange attitude of a champion of orthodoxy, contending as a philosophical polemic. The fate of Huss was made to hinge upon the syllogisms and the technicalities of the schools. It is scarcely possible to conceive the more than \textit{odium theologicum} which, at that
period, characterized the feelings mutually of the Nominalists and Realists. This bitterness had continued through centuries, the heirloom of successive generations. These contending sects carried their fury so far as to charge each other with the “sin against the Holy Ghost.” It is worthy of note that the Nominalists, in their subsequent letter to Louis, king of France, do not pretend to deny that Huss fell a victim to the resentment of their sect. Undoubtedly this article of accusation which Causis had drawn up, and of the falsehood of which he could scarcely have failed to be aware, had been introduced by a malignant ingenuity, and with the purpose to array against Huss the philosophical prejudices of the whole French deputation. It gave an opportunity to bring to bear upon him all the arts of their scholasticism, and the rigor of an inflexible and pitiless logic. It placed him directly in conflict with the ablest and most disciplined intellects of Europe, and left him at the mercy of all the sophistical snares with which they might endeavor to entrap him.

But Huss, believing as he did in the doctrine of transubstantiation, was prepared by his own belief with an unanswerable reply. In this case, he admitted that the universal ceases, inasmuch as transubstantiation is a miracle, the substance disappearing in this case, though remaining in every other.

Upon this an English doctor interposed. He wished to present a new edition of the cardinal’s argument, and prove, from what Huss admitted, that material bread remains after consecration, thus condemning him by inference—a course of all others most unmanly and odious. But Huss treated it as a puerility with which even the boys in school were familiar, and at once answered it. Another English doctor now proposed to prove that material bread remains after consecration, inasmuch as it is not annihilated. To this Huss replied that, although not annihilated, it yet ceased to be bread in particular, by its transubstantiation into the body of Christ.

Here another Englishman interrupted him, by saying, “In my view, Huss seems to speak in the same subtle way that Wickliffe did. For the latter granted all that the former does, but held also that material bread remains after consecration, in the sacrament of the altar. Moreover, that whole chapter, Firmater credimus, he perverted so as to confirm his erroneous opinion.” To this Huss replied, denying that he had spoken anything but with sincerity and from conviction. “Was then,” asked the Englishman, “was that body of Christ, which was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered, died, rose again, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father, wholly and truly present in the sacrament of the altar?” This was the vital question, at least in the view of every Englishman. Wickliffe’s denial of the doctrine of transubstantiation was the head and front, theoretically at least, of his offending. But Huss candidly and manfully disavowed the views which the English reformer held upon this point. Upon this the minds of some of the English members of the council became somewhat softened toward him. They had, with their characteristic common sense, little
sympathy with the subtle and scholastic distinctions of the French doctors. If Huss was to be proved guilty of rejecting the doctrine in question, they wished the proof to be such that a plain man could understand it. Probably few of them could fairly comprehend the technicalities of the Nominalist philosophy, or, if they did, some at least must have regarded it with aversion: "What use," exclaimed one, "of all this disputation about universals, which has nothing to do with faith? This man, as far as I can see, has correct views in regard to the sacrament of the altar."

All the English doctors did not share this opinion. The present charge was a vital one in their view, and the smoke of Huss’ funeral-pile would be far more grateful incense to their nostrils if he could be burned as a disciple of their old enemy, Wickliffe. Unwilling even yet to give up the point, Doctor John Stokes returned to the charge. "I saw," said he, "at Prague a certain treatise ascribed to this John Huss, in which it was distinctly stated that after consecration the material bread remains in the sacrament." "With all due respect," replied Huss, calmly conscious of his innocence of the charge brought against him, "With all due respect, this is not the case."

Unable by these methods to substantiate anything against the prisoner, on this charge at least, they returned to the various testimony which had been sworn against him. John Protiva, parish priest of St. Clement at Prague, added to his testimony that Huss had, when the authority of St. Gregory was adduced against him, spoken of that holy man as a jester or a wag. To this Huss replied, that in this matter injustice was done him. He had ever accounted Gregory a most holy doctor of the church.

Upon this the ardor of the prosecution somewhat abated. The course of his enemies was perhaps producing something of a recoil of feeling in favor of the prisoner. The false charge, and Cardinal D’Ailly’s absurd attempt to prove it upon Huss by inference, were enough upon reflection to excite sympathy among the more moderate members of the council.

At this moment, when the heat of the dispute had somewhat subsided, the cardinal of Florence came adroitly to the rescue of a bad cause. "You know," said he to Huss, "that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word must be established. But now, as you perceive, there are almost twenty men, of great credit and authority, some of whom heard you themselves, while others testify from common fame and the reports of persons who did hear you, whose testimony bears against you. All give such decisive evidence of the truth of what they testify, that we can not disbelieve them. How you can defend your cause against so many, and such eminent and reliable men, I can not see." The aim of the cardinal in this assumed tone of moderation was obvious. He wished to persuade Huss to an unconditional recantation, at once, probably, to dispose of the whole matter, and, out of regard for the emperor and the Bohemians, to save the prisoner’s life. But Huss was not to be thus entrapped into a violation
of his convictions. "I call," replied he, "I call God and my own conscience to witness, that I never have taught, or even thought of teaching, as these men have dared to testify in regard to what they never heard. And even though there were many more arrayed against me, I make more account of the witness of the Lord my God, and of my own conscience, than I do of the judgments of all my adversaries, which I regard as nothing."

It was a noble reply, worthy of the man and of the occasion. But the fathers of the council could not appreciate the spirit in which it was uttered. Undoubtedly the cardinal of Florence spoke the feelings of the more moderate portion of the council, when he rejoined, "We cannot decide according to your conscience, but we must of necessity be satisfied with the most clear and reliable testimony of these witnesses. Nor do they assert these things against you as you say, impelled by some grudge or malice, but fortify their testimony with the reasons alleged for it, savoring in no respect of malice, and in regard to which there is no room left for doubt. As to your saying that Master Stephen Paletz is suspected of sinister designs by you, and that he has craftily selected those articles from your books, which will hereafter be brought forward, you seem to me in this matter to do him injustice. In my opinion, he has proceeded in this matter in such good faith, that he has presented the objectionable matter in milder language than you employed in your books. I hear moreover, that other excellent men are likewise suspected by you, and you have asserted as much in regard to the chancellor of Paris (Gerson), than whom there is not another person in Christendom more eminent in merit."

The reply of Huss is not given, but the language of the cardinal was obviously as much addressed to the assembly as it was to the prisoner. "Should I live," says Huss, in one of his letters, "I will reply to the chancellor of Paris; if I die, God will answer for me at the day of judgment."

The result as to the first article seems to have been, that it was, however reluctantly, abandoned.

The article was next read in which Huss was charged with obstinately teaching and defending the erroneous articles of Wickliffe, in Bohemia. The malice in the drawing up of this charge is manifest at a glance. "I never have taught," said Huss the errors of Wickliffe or of any other man. If Wickliffe scattered abroad the seeds of error in England, let Englishmen themselves look after it."

In proof of this charge, however, it was adduced in evidence, that he had resisted the execution of the sentence against Wickliffe’s doctrines, which was first passed in the council at Rome, and afterward published at Prague by Archbishop Sbynco, upon the advice of several of the most learned doctors. "Because," replied Huss, "they were condemned in such terms as these, viz: that not one of them was accordant with Catholic faith or doctrine, but was either heretical, or erroneous, or scandalous," and besides, for conscience’
sake he could not consent to such a sweeping assertion, and especially in view of Wickliffe’s doctrine that Pope Sylvester and Constantine erred in endowing the church; and again, that a pope or priest, in mortal sin, could not consecrate or baptize. "This article," said Huss, "I have qualified, so as to say that such a one, because he is then in mortal sin, and is an unworthy minister of the sacraments of God, consecrates and baptizes unworthily."

Hereupon the accusers of Huss, with their witnesses, insisted that this article of Wickliffe was adopted and expressed by Huss in so many words, in his book against Paletz. "Verily," replied Huss, "I refuse not to die, if you will not find it there, qualified just as I have said."

The book was brought. Upon opening to the passage, they found it written precisely as Huss had stated. Again he added, that he had not dared to agree with those who condemned the doctrines of Wickliffe in a lump, on account of that article of his that tithes are purely alms.

Upon this point the cardinal of Florence chose to make a stand. The voluntary bestowal of tithes was a sore doctrine to the prelates. Huss was met by the following syllogism:

"Alms must be voluntarily given, without debt or obligation; tithes are not given voluntarily, but from debt and obligation; therefore they are not alms." Huss replied by denying the major proposition, sustaining himself by a reference to Christ’s word, in the twenty-fifth of Matthew, where the rich are obliged to give under pain of everlasting condemnation. Yet these gifts were alms so that alms are given with debt and obligation. Here he was interrupted by an English bishop. "If," said he, "all of us are under obligation to the performance of the six works of mercy there recited, it follows that the poor who have nothing to give must be condemned." To this Huss replied, that he had spoken specifically of the rich, and of those who possessed the means of charity, and had said that they were under obligation to bestow alms under penalty of condemnation. Proceeding then to speak of the minor proposition of the cardinal’s syllogism, by showing that tithes were at first freely given, and afterward were required by authority, he was cut short by the refusal of the council to hear more upon the point.

He then proceeded to state other reasons why he could not with a clear conscience give his consent to the wholesale condemnation of Wickliffe’s articles, asserting, moreover, that none should be condemned until the reasons of such condemnation, drawn from Holy Scripture, were first adduced. "And of this same opinion," said Huss, "were many others, both doctors and masters of the university of Prague. For when Sbynco, the archbishop, had commanded that all the books of Wickliffe, gathered up throughout the whole city of Prague, should be brought to him, I myself, on handing to him some of Wickliffe’s books, asked him to detect and note down any error that they might
contain, that I might publicly acknowledge it. But the archbishop, without
designating so much as one, cast all the books that were brought him, together
with mine, into the fire. And yet he had received no command to this effect.
By artful means he had unfairly obtained, through the bishop of Sarepta, a bull
from Alexander V, requiring that the books of Wickliffe, on the ground of their
many errors, not one of which was mentioned, should be withdrawn from
general circulation. Relying upon the authority of this bull, the archbishop
imagined that he could easily bring the king and nobles of Bohemia to give
their assent to the condemnation of Wickliffe. But in this matter he was
mistaken. Nevertheless he did not fail to call together certain theologians, to
whom he committed the business of examining the books of Wickliffe, and
judging them according to the canons. These theologians with one consent
condemned them to be burned. Upon the report of this proceeding, the
doctors, masters, and scholars of the university unanimously (those theologians
excepted who pronounced the condemnation) petitioned the king for a stay of
proceedings. The king granted the request, and sent a deputation to the
archbishop to inquire into the matter. To this deputation the archbishop
promised that he would not proceed further without the king’s decree. Upon
this, notwithstanding his fixed purpose to burn the books of Wickliffe on the
following day, the matter was passed over, and for the time deferred.

"Meanwhile Alexander V died. The archbishop, fearing lest the bull which he
had received of him would prove no longer serviceable, called his adherents
together, shut fast the gates of his court, and committed Wickliffe’s books to
the flames. To this act of injustice he added, moreover, one still more
outrageous. On the authority of Alexander’s bull, he published an edict
forbidding any man longer, under pain of excommunication, to preach in the
chapels. Upon this I appealed to the pope, and upon his death to John XXIII who
succeeded him, and after my case had been pending for nearly two years, and
my advocates were not admitted to a hearing in my defense, I appealed to
Christ the Sovereign Judge."

Here Huss paused. The question was put to him whether he had received
absolution from the Roman pontiff. He replied that he had not. He was then
asked whether it was lawful for him to appeal to Christ. "Truly," answered
Huss, "I do here affirm, in the presence of you all, that there is no appeal more
just or final than that which is made to Christ; for appeal in the legal sense is
nothing more than to implore the aid of a higher judge for relief from the
decision of an inferior. But what judge is there above Christ? Who can discern
more in accordance with the rules of justice and equity than he whom no
deceit can draw into error? and who can more promptly aid the wretched and
the wronged?"

With a devout and serious spirit Huss had uttered these words, the spirit in
which his whole defense was conducted, but their utterance brought down
upon him at once the jeers and mockery of the whole council.
Another article against Huss was then read. It was to the effect that, in order to confirm the allegiance of the simple and unlettered crowd among whom he preached, to the doctrines of Wickliffe, he had ventured to relate what occurred in England, when many monks and learned men had assembled in a certain church to dispute against Wickliffe. "They were unable," Huss was charged with saying, "to convict him of error, when suddenly the doors of the church were burst open by lightning, and the enemies of Wickliffe scarce escaped without harm." It was added, moreover, that he had said "that he wished his soul might be where Wickliffe's was." To this Huss answered, "that some twelve years before the theological works of Wickliffe had been introduced into Bohemia, and after the perusal of some of his philosophical writings, he had said that they afforded him great satisfaction, and that when he was convinced of the stainless life of Wickliffe, he had said that he hoped that Wickliffe was saved; yet, though he doubted that he might be condemned, he would that his soul might be where John Wickliffe was." The utterance of these words was another signal for the outburst of jeers and derision from the grave fathers of the council.

Another article was then read. Huss was charged in this with advising the people to resist, if necessary, the assaults of their enemies by force of arms, after the example of Moses, and that on the day following this advice, public handbills were widely circulated, to the purport that each should be armed effectually with the sword, and that brother should not spare brother or nearest kindred.

To this Huss replied, "that the whole of it was a false accusation of his enemies. But he had admonished the people, while preaching from the words of the apostle in regard to the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, that they should all arm themselves with these in the defense of gospel truth, and, to avoid all chance of calumny, he had carefully added, not with the material sword, but with that which is the word of God. But as to the public intimations, or the sword of Moses, there was no truth in it."

The next article changed—as supported by testimony—that many scandals had sprung up from the doctrine of Huss. At first he had sown discord between the ecclesiastical and political authorities, which resulted in the persecution and spoliation of the bishops and the clergy; and, moreover, he had, by the discord introduced into the university of Prague, effected its ruin.

The reply of Huss was a brief statement of facts:

"None of these things," said he, "has taken place by any fault of mine. The dissension between the ecclesiastical and political authorities was a prior occurrence. Pope Gregory XII promised, upon his election, that he would lay down the pontificate when the voice of the cardinals should demand it. He was elected on this condition. In opposition to Wenzel, king of Bohemia, also king
of the Romans, he bestowed the imperial title upon Robert, duke of Bavaria. A few years after this, when Gregory refused at the instance of the cardinals to lay down his office, they sent letters to the king of Bohemia, urging him, in common with them, to refuse obedience to Gregory. They encouraged him, moreover, to expect that by the authority of a new pontiff he might be able to recover the imperial dignity. Swayed by these motives, the king yielded to the urgency of the cardinals, and refused obedience to both Gregory and Benedict. In this matter the Archbishop Sbynco, along with the clergy, was opposed to the king; and many of the priesthood, on this account relinquishing the duties of their office, left the city. Among these was the archbishop himself, who first tore open the sepulchre of St. Wenceslaus, and, in opposition to the will of the king, burned the books of Wickliffe. As a consequence, the king readily allowed some of the goods of these persons, who had thus fled of their own accord, to be plundered.

This simple statement of unquestionable facts was a sufficient exculpation of Huss. But to defeat the favorable impression, an individual named Nason, a member of the council, rose and declared that "the clergy refused the performance of the divine offices, not because they were unwilling to swear obedience to the king, but because they were stripped of their property and their privileges."

The cardinal of Cambray volunteered his confirmation of what Nason had said. "It is proper that I should here state," he remarked, "what has just been recalled to my mind. In the same year in which these things took place, I was at a certain time just setting out upon my journey from Rome, when several Bohemian prelates met me. I asked them what news they brought from Bohemia. 'A most disgraceful transaction has happened there,' said they. 'The entire clergy have been stripped of their privileges, and shamefully treated.'" Huss still affirmed that the case was as he had stated it. To the other portion of the article, accusing him of the ruin of the university of Prague, he replied by maintaining that the German nation had not left from any fault of his. "The founder of the university, Charles IV, had granted to the Bohemians three votes, and to the German nation one; and when his son, the present king, restored this principle of its founder, the Germans were aggrieved, and of their own accord left the city, binding themselves by oaths and the severest penalties never to return. I admit, I confess, that I approved, from patriotic motives, this proceeding of the king, to obey which I was in duty bound. And that you need not imagine I misrepresent the facts of the case, here is Albert Warentrapp present, who was at that time dean of the faculty of arts, and who upon his departure from the city, took the same oath that was taken by the other Germans. He, if he is willing to state the truth, will easily clear me of this suspicion."

Warentrapp was about to speak, but the council was indisposed to hear him. Nason, however, was more readily listened to. "I am," said he, "sufficiently acquainted with this matter. At the time when these things took place, I was in the court of the king, where I saw the masters of the three nations, Germans, Bavarians, Saxons, and Silesians, with whom the Polish was reckoned, come as
supplicants to petition that the right of suffrage which they had exercised
might not be taken from them. The king promised that he would see to it that
their request should be granted. But John Huss, with Jerome and others,
persuaded the king otherwise, and this too, although at first he was much
provoked against them, had charged them with the disturbances that had taken
place, and had even threatened to let the flames solve the matter for them. Be
assured therefore, most reverend fathers, that the king of Bohemia never
really favored these men, whose audacity is such that they would not hesitate
to meet me with a base reception, though lately, to a high degree, enjoying
the royal confidence."

Paletz did not fail to seize upon an occasion so favorable to add the weight of
his testimony. "Yes," said he, "most reverend fathers, not only learned men of
other notions, but of Bohemia itself, have been driven out by John Huss and his
counsels, some of whom are yet in exile in Moravia." "How," asked Huss, "can
this be true, when I was not at Prague at the time when those men you speak
of left?" Their banishment had in fact occurred after he had withdrawn from
Prague.

But the council had now grown weary, and it was time to adjourn. Huss was
left to the charge of the archbishop of Riga, to whom Jerome also had been
committed. As they were leading him away, the cardinal of Cambray called him
back. "John Huss," said he, in the hearing of Sigismund, "when you were first
brought before us, I heard you say that unless you had chosen to come to
Constance of your own accord, neither the king nor the emperor could have
forced you to do so." The object of this remark was obvious. To prejudice the
emperor against Huss was to rob the prisoner of his last hope of justice. The
plan of the cardinal was as unmanly as it was unjust. Huss did not deny the
statement. "With all respect, most reverend father," said he, "I confess that I
used such language. For unless I had chosen to come, there are princes enough
in Bohemia, who regard me with the most kindly feelings, who could with the
greatest ease have kept me in some secret and safe place, to prevent my being
forced to come here, even against the will of the king and of the emperor."

At these words the countenance of the cardinal changed. "Observe," said he,
indignantly, "observe, I pray you, the presumption of this man." The remark
was not lost upon those to whom it was addressed. A murmur of passionate
comments arose. But the brave Chlum was not the man to leave Huss
undefended. "John Huss," said he, "has spoken the truth. I agree with what he
has said; for even I, humble as my power and position are in Bohemia, could
easily have defended him for a whole year, against the power of both these
kings. How much more could more powerful lords with their more strongly
fortified castles have done it!"

The cardinal was not prepared for this. "Let us pass these things over," said he.
"I urge and advise you to do what you promised when you were in the castle—
submit yourself to the sentence of the council. If you do this, you will best
consult your safety and standing."

The course which the cardinal advised was such, doubtless, as would tend to
propitiate the council. It was easy to perceive that such a solution of the
matter would afford great relief, even to men who thirsted for the blood of Huss, but felt some hesitation to commit a deed the consequences of which might be disastrous. Sigismund snatched at this solution. If the prisoner would but admit the virtual supremacy of the council in all matters of faith; if he would conciliate their offended dignity by submission, Sigismund would feel strong enough to rescue him from the hands of his foes. With this view he sought himself to enforce upon Huss the advice of the cardinal. To give it more force, or to satisfy his own conscience, he volunteered a refutation of some of the false reports that had been circulated in regard to the safe-conduct. "Although," said he, "there are those who say that you received letters of public faith from us, through your friends and patrons, only after you had been fifteen days under arrest, yet we can prove, by the testimony of many princes and persons of distinction, that you received these letters from us before you left Prague, by the hands of those lords, Wenceslaus de Duba and John De Chlum, to whose loyal care we committed you, that you might suffer no injustice, but that the privilege of speaking and answering before the council, in regard to your faith and doctrine, might be fully secured to you. And this, as you see, the most reverend lord cardinals and bishops have so allowed that we are much obliged to them, although there are some who say that we have no right to afford protection or countenance to one who is a heretic, or is even suspected of being such. Now, therefore, we give you the same advice as the lord cardinal, that you defend nothing with obstinacy; but in all those things adduced against you, on credible testimony, that you submit yourself to the authority of this most holy council, with a becoming obedience. If you pursue this course, we will see to it that for our own sake, and that of our brother and the whole kingdom of Bohemia, you be discharged by the council itself, with good grace, and fitting penance and satisfaction. Otherwise, the leaders of the council shall have what they determine in regard to you; for we surely will never countenance your errors and stubbornness. Yea, with our own hands we will make ready the fire for you, sooner than suffer you to persist in that stubbornness which you have hitherto shown. It is our advice that you choose to abide by the judgment of the council."

Huss replied briefly to this address of the emperor, by expressing his deep gratitude for the clemency which he had shown in regard to the safe-conduct. Here he was reminded that he had said nothing in regard to the charge of obstinacy. At the instance of Chlum, he then added, "I call God to witness, most indulgent emperor, that I never conceived the purpose of defending anything with extreme stubbornness, and that I came here of my own accord with this intent, that if any one could give me better instruction, I would unhesitatingly change my views." Upon this the soldiers led Huss forth to take him to his prison, and the assembly dispersed.

The language in which Sigismund addressed Huss decisively refutes the false allegations made in the council in regard to the safe-conduct. It was, however, a mistake of the emperor to suppose that Huss received the safe-conduct previously to his leaving Prague. It was expedited on the eighteenth of October, and on the third of November Huss reached Constance. The
document, as we have seen, met him on his way, at Nuremberg. The emperor supposed it had been received by him at Prague; and to all intents and purposes it was as valid as it would have been if he had received it there. The false pretense of the council was thus refuted.

In regard to the clemency which Sigismund asserted had been shown to Huss by the council, we readily perceive that here also he labored under a misapprehension. He had probably taken but little pains to inform himself of the treatment of the prisoner, and his views in regard to what an innocent man might claim of the council were evidently of the crudest kind. If calumny, hard usage, derision, and insult were clemency, then, as the “tender mercies of the wicked,” they were “cruel” indeed.

The letters of Huss enable us to follow him from the public scene of audience to the solitude of his cell. Nothing that had hitherto been said or done had in the least shaken the strength of his convictions. He could but wonder at the ignorance, the incapacity, and prejudice that had been manifested on the part of the council. “Oh! if a hearing were granted me,” so he wrote, “in which I could reply to such arguments as they might bring against the articles contained in my treatises, then do I believe that many of those who cry out would be compelled to be dumb. As God in heaven wills, so let it be.” Such was the firm and yet submissive spirit of the man, confident of the justice of his cause, but humbled in the dust before God. Again he writes, “Let all the Bohemian knights apply to the emperor and the council, and demand that, as the emperor and council had promised, he might in the next audience be briefly allowed to state what he had to retract, and at the same time give his explanations.” Thus, if held to their own words, the emperor and the council would be forced to yield this privilege. “I will then,” says Huss, “speak out the truth without reserve; for rather would I be consumed by the fagots, than kept so miserably concealed by them; for then all Christendom would learn what I finally said.” Over-confident, perhaps, of the result of such an appeal, and anxious above all for a fair opportunity to state his own case, Huss was willing to lay down his life as a sacrifice to the cause of truth. To Chlum, whom he called his most trusty patron, he wrote, “May God be your rewarder. I desire that you should not leave this council till you have seen the end.” “Oh!” says he, “much would I prefer that you should see me led to the stake, than that I should be kept so treacherously in the dark. I still have hopes that Almighty God, through the merits of the saints, may deliver me out of their hands.” Here we see his evident anticipations of a fatal result of the trial, enlivened, however, with some faint hopes of escape, and the truly martyr faith which lifted him far above all human terrors. He felt that he was deeply wronged by the course which the council pursued, restraining him of the liberty of a full and free defense, and prejudging his case on the testimony of his bitter and relentless foes.

He begged his friends to let him know the hour at which, on the next morning, he should be led forth to trial. We can readily imagine the prayerful and meditative preparation to which previous hours would be devoted, while he sought from heaven a spirit of devotion to the cause of truth, and strength to
sustain him in the hour of trial. He desired his friends, moreover, to pray for him, that if he must await death in the prison, he might endure with patience. He lamented that he had not been able to repay many of them for their services, and sent to request that they would be content, and excuse him on the ground of his want of ability. He knew not who was to repay those that had lent him money in Bohemia, unless it were the Master, Christ, on whose account they had lent it to him. Still he expresses the wish that some of the more wealthy would settle up his affairs and pay his poorer creditors. What a comment was this on that calumnious insult which had been offered him at Gottlieben, when an archbishop had named the value of his property as 70,000 florins, and the patriarch insisted that he was exceedingly rich! Base minds could not account for, or comprehend, the conduct of Huss without ascribing it to base motives.

What but the power of faith, what but the presence of his divine Master with him in his cell, could have sustained the spirit of the suffering Bohemian? He had no earthly resource upon which he might rely, or from which he could draw comfort and encouragement. The embittered malice of his adversaries had enlisted nearly the whole strength of the council upon their side. Skillfully had they appealed to old prejudices, and strongly had they bound together the conspiring elements of bigoted and partisan feeling. If there had been any whose secret sympathies were on the side of Huss, they were forced to conceal them. But if any, they were few in number. "They cry out, nearly all of them," said Huss, "like the Jews against our Master, Christ." Among the whole multitude of the clergy, he knew of but one friend, a Polish member, beside the one father who subsequently endeavored to effect a compromise between him and the council.

CHAPTER XXII

Third Audience of Huss before the Council

Articles of Accusation

The third audience of Huss was held in the Franciscan monastery on June 8th. The emperor was present, and along with Huss appeared his constant friends, Duba, Chlum, and Peter the Notary.

Upon the appearance of the prisoner, thirty-nine articles were read, which were ostensibly selected from his writings. To these were appended the answers which he had given them at his private examination in prison. Most of these articles—twenty-six out of the whole number—were said to have been extracted from his book *De Ecclesia*. Those passages which had been fairly selected, Huss acknowledged. The others had been drawn up by Paletz in such a manner that he disclaimed all responsibility for them.

In his prison Huss was charged with having said that in case he should, while at Constance, be obliged with his mouth to retract any of his doctrines, it would be no retraction of the heart, inasmuch as what he had preached was the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ. The reply of Huss was, that this article was a tissue of falsehood, but that he had indeed written to his friends at Prague, exhorting
them to pray to God in his behalf, and to remain steadfast in the doctrines of Jesus Christ, inasmuch as they could not but know that he had never taught the errors charged upon him by his enemies, nor must they be troubled if it should so happen that he should be crushed under the false testimony of his enemies. They reproached him again for having written to Bohemia that the pope and emperor had granted him an honorable reception, and had sent two bishops to engage him in their interests. "It is a manifest falsehood," said Huss, "for how could I have written to Bohemia that I had been well received of the pope and the emperor, when on my arrival at Constance I wrote back that it was not known where the emperor was, and when I had been three weeks in prison before he arrived? What great reason had I for writing back from my prison to Bohemia that I had been highly honored at Constance? It is plainly a sarcasm spread by my enemies, who think that I have been too highly honored by being imprisoned."

The following articles are those which had been first presented to Huss in his prison, and which were now exhibited against him in the council. The order and arrangement of them had been somewhat changed, some things having been added and some struck out. Huss had drawn up a copy of them, with his answers to each, previous to his appearance before the council.

"I, John Huss, unworthy minister of Jesus Christ, master of arts, and bachelor of divinity, do confess that I have written a certain small treatise bearing the title, "Of the Church," a copy of which was shown me, in the presence of notaries, by the three commissioners of the council; the patriarch of Constantinople, the bishop of Castile, and the bishop of Lebus, the which commissioners, in reproof of the said treatise, delivered unto me certain articles, saying that they were drawn out of the said treatise, and were written in the same. Of which articles, the first is:

1. ‘There is but one holy Catholic church, which embraces all the predestinate.’ This proposition I confess to be mine, and it is confirmed by the comment of St. Augustine upon the Gospel of John.

2. ‘St. Paul was never any member of the devil, although he did many things like those committed by the enemies of the church. And St. Peter in like manner fell into the horrible sin of perjury and denial of his Master, by the permission of God, that he might the more firmly and steadfastly rise again, and be confirmed!’ My answer is, this proposition is sufficiently proved in the book itself. For it is expedient that the predestinate should fall into such sins. Here it is plain that there are two ways of separating from the church. The first is not to perdition, as is the case with the elect. The other is to perdition, by which certain heretics are, by deadly sin, divided from the church. And yet, by the grace of God, they may return to the fold of our Lord Jesus Christ, as he says in John 10, ‘Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.’ The same thing is also proved by Augustine on John, and in his ninth diet on penitence.

3. ‘No part or member of the church is ever entirely separated from the body, because the grace of predestination which binds it thereto does not fail.’ My answer is, this proposition is found in the book in these words: ‘As the reprobate of the church go forth out of the same, yet were they never
members thereof, since no part of it may finally fall away, inasmuch as the grace of predestination which binds it thereto fails not.' This is proved by the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and the eighth chapter to the Romans. 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' And 'Nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ.' All which is more fully treated of in the book itself.

"4. 'The predestinate, although not now in a state of grace, according to strict justice, is yet ever a member of the holy Catholic church.' I answer, this is an error, if it is to be understood of everyone that is predestinate. For in the book at the beginning of the fifth chapter, speaking of the ways of belonging to the church, it stands written, 'There are some in the church only by an inadequate faith, and others according to predestination, as Christians predestinate, now in sin, but who shall return into a state of grace.'

"5. 'There is no place of dignity, nor any human election; nor any outward sign, that makes one a member of the holy Catholic church.' Answer. This proposition is thus expressed in the book. 'These sophistries will be detected by considering what it is to be in the church, and what it is to be a member or part of the church; and this membership is produced by predestination, which secures grace in the present and glory in the future world, and not by any place of dignity, any human election or outward sign. For the traitor Iscariot, notwithstanding his election by Christ, and the temporal gifts which were granted him for the office of an apostle, and notwithstanding his being reputed a true apostle of Christ by the people, yet never was a true disciple, but only a wolf in sheep's clothing, as Augustine asserts.'

"6. 'A reprobate man is never a member of holy mother church.' Answer. This passage is contained in the book of the church, and it is there sustained at length by the thirty-sixth Psalm, the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and by St. Bernard, who says that the church of Jesus Christ is his own body, more plainly than that which he delivered up to death. Moreover, in the fifth chapter of my book I have said, 'All will grant that the holy church is the Lord's threshing floor, in which, according to faith, the good and bad, the predestinate and the reprobate, the chaff and the wheat, are found, according to the exposition of St. Augustine.'

"7. 'Judas was never a true disciple of Jesus Christ.' Answer. I do confess it. It is proved by the fifth article above laid down, and by Augustine on penitence, dist. fourth, where he treats of that passage in the second chapter of John's first Epistle, 'They went out from us, for they were not of us.' 'He knew,' says he, 'from the beginning who they were that believed on him, and who should betray him, and said, 'Therefore I said to you before, no one cometh unto me, except it be given him of my Father; and after this many of his disciples left him.' These are called disciples in the language of the gospel, and yet they were not truly such, for they did not abide in his word, as he said, 'If ye shall abide in my word, then are ye my disciples.' Inasmuch as they did not persevere as true disciples of Jesus Christ, they are not, however they seem, truly sons of God. They are not such with him, who knows what they shall be, and discerns the evil from the good. Such is the language of St. Augustine. It is
equally plain that Judas could not be a true disciple of Christ while he continued in his avarice. For the Savior himself had said, when Judas was present, as I suppose, ‘Unless a man shall renounce all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.’ Inasmuch, therefore, as Judas did not renounce all, according to the intent of Christ, and so follow him, because he was a thief and a traitor (John 6:12), it is plain from the words of Christ that Judas was not a true but a false disciple. For which reason, Augustine (upon John), showing how the sheep hear Christ, says, ‘But what hearers, suppose we, are sheep? Judas heard, but he was a wolf; he followed the shepherd, but, disguised in sheep’s clothing, sought to betray the shepherd.’

8. ‘The body of the predestinate, whether in a state of grace or not, compose the holy church, which has neither spot nor wrinkle, but is pure and immaculate, and is called by Jesus Christ, his own.’ This article Huss acknowledged, and cited the words of his book in which they were contained. ‘The church, in the third place, is understood and taken for the whole body of the faithful, whether they be in a state of grace according to present righteousness or not. And this thus becomes an article of faith, concerning which Paul speaks in Ephesians 5, “Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it,” etc. What believer can doubt, let us ask, but that the church here signifies all the predestinate, of whom we must believe the Catholic church is composed—the spouse of Christ, finally to be presented holy and without spot. Whence that holy Catholic church is objectively an article of faith, in which we are bound firmly to believe, according to the symbol, ‘I believe the holy Catholic church,’ and of this church do Saints Augustine, Gregory, Jerome, and others speak.

9. ‘Peter never was, nor is he, the head of the holy Catholic church.’ Answer. This proposition is deduced from the words of my book as follows: ‘It is granted, indeed, that Peter, from the corner-stone of the church (a petra ecclesiae) which is Christ, had humility, poverty, firmness of faith, and consequent blessedness, not that by those words of scripture, “Upon this rock (Petram) I will build my church,” Christ means to build his whole church militant upon the person of Peter; for on the Rock, which is Christ, from which Peter received his strength of faith, Christ would build his own church, since Christ is the head and foundation of the whole church, not Peter.’

10. ‘If he who is called Christ’s vicar, follows Christ in his life, then is he his vicar; but if he walks in an opposite course, then is he Antichrist’s agent, contrary to Peter and to the Lord Jesus Christ, and the vicar of Judas Iscariot.’ Answer. The words of my book are, ‘If now he that is called Peter’s vicar walks in these aforesaid paths of purity and virtue, we believe that he is truly his, vicar, and chief pontiff of the church which he rules. But if he pursues opposite courses, then is he the agent of Antichrist, contrary to Peter and the Lord Jesus Christ.’ Hence Bernard, in his letter to Pope Eugenius, writes, ‘Thou delightest and walkest in great pride and arrogance, and art surrounded by all various splendor. What benefit do the sheep receive? If I durst say it, these are rather the pastures of devils than of sheep. This was not the practice of Peter, neither did Paul grow thus wanton. In these matters you have succeeded not Peter, but
Constantine.’ So speaks Bernard. Then follows in my book, ‘If in his morals he lives the reverse of Peter, and gloats on mammon, then is he the vicar of Judas Iscariot, who loved the wages of iniquity, selling his Lord and Master, Christ.’”

At the reading of this last clause, the bishops and doctors tossed their heads in proud derision, and exchanged looks with one another that expressed their feelings better than words.

"11. ‘All simonists, and priests of a dissolute life, do hold false opinions in regard to the seven sacraments, in regard to the keys and offices of the church, the censures, the rites and ceremonies, the worshipping of relics, indulgences, and the orders of the church.’ Answer. The words of my book are, ‘This abuse of power do they practice, who sell and buy and acquire, by simoniacl methods, the sacred orders of the church, making importunate exactions for the sacraments, living in avarice, lust, luxury, or whatsoever is shameful, and thus polluting the priesthood. For although in words they profess that they know God, yet in deeds they deny him, and consequently do not truly believe in God, and, as disobedient children, hold a false opinion of the sacraments of the church. And this is most evident, inasmuch as all such despise the name of God, according to that saying of Malachi, ‘Unto you, O priests, be it spoken, which do despise my name.’”

"12. ‘The papal dignity was derived from the Roman emperors.’ Answer. My words are, ‘The preeminence and endowment of the pope emanated from the imperial power. And this is proved by the ninety-sixth "distinction," for Constantine granted this privilege to the Roman pontiff, which was confirmed by other emperors, so that as Augustus was above other kings, so the Roman pontiff before other bishops should be called specially the father of the church, and this in regard to outward adornment and splendor and benefactions of the church. Notwithstanding which, the papal dignity has its source immediately in Christ in respect to the spiritual administration and rule of the church.’”

Here the reading was interrupted by the cardinal of Cambray. Turning to Huss, he said, "Yet in the time of Constantine the general council of Nice was held, in which the highest place was given to the bishop of Rome, although, for honor’s sake, ascribed to the emperor. Why, then, do not you, John Huss, say that the papal dignity was derived from the council instead of the emperor?” Huss replied, that he attributed the elevation of the popes to Constantine only so far as the donation of this emperor was concerned.

"13. ‘No one may reasonably affirm without revelation, either of himself or of any other, that he is the head of a particular church.’ Answer. I confess this to be in any book, where it immediately follows, ‘Although in a holy life he may hope and trust that he is a member of the holy Catholic church, the spouse of Christ; yet, according to the saying of the preacher, ‘No man knoweth whether he be worthy, and have deserved grace and favor, or hatred.’ And Luke 17, ‘When ye have done all ye can, say that ye are unprofitable servants.’”

"14. ‘It ought not to be believed that the pope, whatsoever he be, may be the head of any particular church, unless he be predestinated and ordained of God.’ Answer. I admit it. And thus it is proved otherwise, a Christian must needs believe and confess a falsehood when saying that such or such a one is
the chief of such a church, while the church may be deceived, as was the case in Agnes. The same thing also appears from St. Augustine.

"15. ‘The pope’s power is null and void, unless in life and morals he be conformed to Christ or to Peter.’ Answer. My words are, ‘That one who is thus a vicar is bound to discharge the part and fill the place of his superior, from whom he has received vicarious power; he should, therefore, be conformed in life and morals to him whose place he occupies. For, otherwise, the authority he claims is null and void, unless there be this conformity, and thus with it the authority of him who appoints.’"

And John Huss here added before the council in explanation, that he regarded the power of such a pope as did not reflect the life of Christ, frustrate and void, with regard to the merit and reward that should attend it, but not as respects the office itself. "But where," asked several, "is this gloss in your book?" "In my treatise against Stephen Paletz you will find it," replied Huss. Upon this the members of the council exchanged smiles of derision.

"16. ‘The pope is accounted most holy, not because he is the vicar of St. Peter, but because he has great revenues.’ Answer. In this my words have been perverted and mistaken; for thus I wrote, ‘He is not most holy because he is the vicar of Christ, or because he has large revenues, but if he be the follower of Jesus Christ in humility, gentleness, patience, labor, and above all, charity.’

"17. ‘The cardinals are not the manifest and true successors of the apostles of Jesus Christ, unless they live after the apostolic pattern, observing the commandments and counsels of Jesus Christ.’ Answer. It is so stated in my book, and the proof of it is this: ‘If they climb up any other way than by that first door, Jesus Christ, then are they thieves and robbers.’

Here the cardinal of Cambray interrupted the reading. "Behold," said he, "in respect to this and other articles already read, he has written things in his book more detestable than anything which the articles contain. Truly, John Huss, you have not observed discretion in your preaching and in your writings. Should you not have adapted your sermons to your audience? For what need or use was there of preaching to the people against the cardinals when none of them were present? It had been better to have told them their faults to their face than scandalously proclaim them to the laity." The cardinal did not presume to deny the truth of the article. His own writings as well as speeches had been as unsparing in regard to the whole Roman court as those of Huss. The whole charge was thus reduced by him virtually to one of imprudence. To this Huss replied, "Most reverend father, there were then present at my sermons priests and other learned men, and for their sake, and to bid them beware, my words were spoken." "You do an evil thing," said the cardinal, "for by this sort of sermons you tend to spread disturbance in the church."

"18. ‘No heretic after ecclesiastical censure should be given up to the secular arm, to be subjected to capital punishment.’ Answer. My words are, ‘There should be shame for their cruel proceedings, specially as Jesus Christ, Bishop of both the Old and New Testaments, would not judge the disobedient by civil judgment, or put them to death. This is plain from the twelfth chapter of Luke, from the second and eighth of John in regard to the woman taken in adultery,
and from Matthew 18, ‘If thy brother shall sin against thee,’ etc. So, therefore, I say that he who is a heretic ought first to be instructed kindly, justly, and humbly, from the Sacred Scriptures, and reasons drawn therefrom—the course pursued by Augustine and others who disputed with heretics. But if there are those who utterly refuse to desist from their errors after all suitable instruction has been given, then I say that they should be subjected to corporeal punishment."

Even this degree of toleration, short of what is now universally demanded, was too far in advance of the age to be allowed. The good sense of Huss, and the kindly and humane spirit in him which had been cherished by the study of Christian truth, would not allow him to approve any harsh methods of dealing with men charged with error. But this noble advance beyond the bigotry of his age was the occasion of a new charge of heresy. While Huss was stating his views, one of his books was taken up by his judges, who turned to a certain paragraph in which he inveighed against those who deliver over a heretic not yet convicted to the secular arm, saying, that "they are like the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, who said, as they delivered over Christ to Pilate, ‘It is not lawful for us to put any one to death,’ and yet, according to Christ himself, who said, ‘Therefore he who betrayed me to thee hath the greater sin,’ they were greater murderers than Pilate himself." The reading of this passage produced much commotion in the council. Indisputably true and just as the sentiment was, it seemed to be placing a bar between the bigots of the council and their destined victim. It was a picture of the very course which they intended to pursue, presented in an odious but true light. Turning to Huss, some asked, "Who are they that are like the Pharisees?" a question equivalent, doubtless, to that of the traitor asking at the last supper, Is it I? But Huss was at no loss for a reply; "All those," said he, "who give up to the civil sword any innocent man, as the scribes and Pharisees did Christ." "No, no!" cried they, "but you here speak of the doctors themselves." Upon this the bishop of Cambray repeated his stale attempt to work upon the prejudices of the council. "Surely," said he, "they who drew up the articles have proceeded with great gentleness, for his writings contain things more atrocious still." Such was the expressive comment of one of the most enlightened and able cardinals of the church, on a doctrine which at the present day no man, unless steeped in inquisitorial bigotry, ventures to dispute.

"19. ‘The nobles of the world should constrain the priests to the observance of the law of Christ.’ Answer. My words are, ‘Those of our party, in the fourth place, do insist and preach that the church militant is composed of parts, according as Christ has ordained, viz., of the priests of Christ who truly keep his law, and of the nobles of the world, who should constrain to the observance of Christ’s ordinances, and of the common people also, ministering to each of these parts according to the law of Christ.’

"20. ‘Ecclesiastical obedience is an obedience invented by the priests of the church, without any express authority of the Sacred Scriptures.’ Answer. I confess to these words as written in my book. ‘It is to be remarked that obedience is threefold—spiritual, civil, and ecclesiastical. The spiritual is that
which is due simply on the ground of the law of God, according to which the
apostles lived, and all Christians are bound to live. The civil is that which is
due to the laws of the state. The ecclesiastical is that which has been devised
by the priests of the church without the express authority of scripture. The
first kind of obedience wholly excludes from itself all evil, both on the part of
him who commands and him who obeys; according to Deuteronomy 24, "Thou
shalt do whatsoever the priests of the house of Levi shall teach you, according
as I have commanded them."

21. 'He that is excommunicated by the pope, yet who, declining the judgment
of the pope and general council, appeals to Christ, is preserved safe from the
harm of all excommunication.' Answer. This proposition I do not acknowledge,
but I did complain in my book of the many aggravated charges brought against
me and mine, and that I had been refused an audience in the papal court. For
when I had appealed from one pope to his successor, it was of no advantage to
me, and to appeal from the pope to the council would be too tedious an affair,
and attempting an uncertain security against the charge. For this reason I
finally appealed to Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. For he is so much the
more to be preferred to the pope in deciding causes, inasmuch as he cannot
err, nor deny justice to him who asks it righteously, nor, in accordance with his
own established law, can he condemn an innocent man."

Here the cardinal of Cambray addressed Huss: "Would you be above Paul, who
appealed to the emperor and not to Christ?" "And am I," replied Huss, "though I
were the first to do this thing, to be accounted a heretic? And yet Paul did not
appeal to the emperor of his own motion, but through the revealed will of
Christ who appeared to him and said, 'Be thou firm and constant, for thou must
needs go to Rome!'" Huss went on to repeat the substance of his views in
regard to appealing to Christ, but his statements were met by the open
derision of the council.

22. 'The deeds of an evil man are evil, of a virtuous man, virtuous.' Answer.
My words are, 'It is further to be remarked, that human actions are directly
divided into two classes, virtuous and vicious. This is evident inasmuch as, if a
man is virtuous and performs any act, the act is virtuous; and if be is vicious,
whatever he does is vicious. Because as vice, which is called crime, that is,
mortal sin, infects universally the acts of its subject, that is, man, so virtue
vivifies all the acts of the virtuous man, insomuch that, being in a state of
grace, he is said to be prayerful and deserving, even while he sleeps, as in
some way still working, as says Augustine, as well as Gregory and others. And
this is evident from Luke 6, "If thine eye," that is, thine intention, "is single,"
undeprayed by the blinding power of sin, "thy whole body," that is, the sum of
thy actions, "shall be full of light," or pleasing to God. "But if thine eye be evil,
thy whole body shall be full of darkness." And 2 Corinthians 10, "Do all things to
the glory of God." And 1 Corinthians, in the last chapter, "Let all your deeds be
done in charity." Whence the whole course of life, through charity, becomes
virtuous, and, without charity, becomes vicious. And this may be proved from
Deuteronomy 23, where God says to his people, that if they will keep his
commandments, they shall be blessed in the house and in the field, going out
and coming in, lying down and rising up. But if they will not keep them, they shall be cursed in all these things. The same thing is evident from Augustine upon the Psalm, where he infers that the good man glorifies God in whatever he does. And when Gregory says that the sleep of the saints is not without merit, how much more that action which proceeds from the purpose of the will, and which consequently is virtuous? On the other hand, in regard to him who is in a state of criminality, that holds good which took place under the law, whatever he shall touch shall be unclean. On this, moreover, that passage bears which was above cited from Malachi. Gregory the First, *in ques.*, says, "We therefore pollute the bread when we unworthily approach the altar, and we drink the pure blood while ourselves steeped in impurity." Augustine, upon Psalm 146, says, "If by the excess of voracity beyond the due bound of nature, you neglect to restrain yourself and choke yourself with drunkenness, however loudly your tongue may sound the praise of God's grace, you life blasphemes against him."

When this article had been read, the cardinal of Cambray rejoined, 'But scripture says that 'we all sin,' and again, 'If we shall say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'" "But," said Huss, "scripture there speaks of venial sins, which do not exclude necessarily virtuous habits, but are tolerated along with them." Here a certain master, an Englishman named William, interposed, "But these sins are not tolerated along with those habits by any principle morally good." Huss cited again the passage from Augustine on the 146th Psalm. "But what," cried they all at once, "has that to do with it?"

"23. 'A priest of Christ living according to his law, having a knowledge of scripture and a gift for edifying the people, ought to preach, notwithstanding any pretended excommunication. And again, if a pope or other prelate commands a priest in such circumstances not to preach, he ought not to obey the command.' Answer. My words are these: 'Notwithstanding any pretended excommunication, whether threatened or inflicted, a Christian should keep the commandments of Christ.' This is plain from the language of Peter and other apostles when they say, 'We ought to obey God rather than men.' From this it follows, that a priest of Christ who lives according to his law, having fitness by knowledge of scripture, etc., ought to preach notwithstanding any pretended excommunication. This is evident, inasmuch as (Acts 5) priests are commanded to preach the word of God. We, I say, have been commanded of God to preach and testify to the people. This is evident also from many other passages from the Sacred Scriptures, and from the holy fathers which were cited in my book. The second part of the article follows in my book in these words: 'From this it is plain, that for a priest to preach, and for the rich to give alms, are not matters of choice, but command. It is plain, moreover, that if a pope or other prelate should forbid a priest in such circumstances to preach, or a rich man to give alms, the subject of command should not obey.'"

Huss added, moreover, "In order that you may rightly understand me, a pretended excommunication, as I call it, is one that I regard as unjust and discordant to the rules to be observed, as well as opposed to the commands of
God. A priest fitted to preach successfully, should not on account of it cease to preach, or be in fear of damnation."
The members of the council then objected to him that he had called such an excommunication a benediction. "And in truth," replied Huss, "I say the same thing now, that excommunication, by which any one is unjustly excommunicate, is a benediction to him in the sight of God, according to that language of the prophet, 'I will curse your blessings,' and again, ‘They shall curse, but thou shalt bless.'"

Upon this the cardinal of Florence, who kept a notary at his side to minute down whatever he should direct, said to Huss, "Yet there are canons which show that even an unjust excommunication is to be dreaded." "It is true," said Huss, "for I remember that there are laid down eight causes why excommunication should be dreaded." "No more than that?" asked the cardinal. "It may well be that there are more," answered Huss, and here the discussion on this point rested.

"24. ‘Everyone who receives by special commandment the office of preacher, and thus enters upon the priesthood, should keep the charge committed to him, notwithstanding a pretended excommunication.’ Answer. My words are these: ‘From what has been said, therefore, it is plain that whoever, by special command, shall take the office of preacher, and enter upon the priesthood, should obey the charge given him, notwithstanding a pretended excommunication.’ And again, ‘With no Catholic should it be suffered to be brought into question, that a man sufficiently instructed is bound to advise the ignorant, to teach those that are in doubt, to correct the lawless, to avenge the injured, as well as discharge other works of mercy. Since, moreover, he who is sufficiently provided to minister alms for the body is bound to do it, much more does this hold true (Matthew 25) with respect to spiritual alms.’"

"25. ‘Ecclesiastical censures are such as are of Antichrist, which the clergy has devised to exalt itself and enslave the people; if the laity will not obey the clergy in their every wish, they multiply their avarice, protect malice, and prepare the way for Antichrist. But it is plain proof that these censures proceed from Antichrist, which in their processes are called fulminations, in which the clergy proceed especially against those who make bare the iniquity of Antichrist, usurping to themselves, to the highest degree, the ecclesiastical powers. These things are found in the last chapter of the book on the church.’ Answer. I deny the form of statement. Yet this subject is fully laid down in chapter 23."

During the examination, members of the council—some of them at least—were busy in searching out, not only the passages referred to, but others of a confirmatory character. Some bearing upon the last article were discovered, undoubtedly pointed out by the more bitter enemies of Huss, which were regarded as still more paradoxical and offensive than what had been cited. These also were read, thus bringing out against Huss passages which he had no opportunity to verify or examine. "Surely," exclaimed the cardinal of Cambray, as the passages were read, "these things are much more aggravated and scandalous than those recited in the articles."
26. ‘Interdict ought not to be imposed upon a people, inasmuch as Christ, the highest priest, neither on account of John the Baptist, nor for any injuries that were offered to himself, imposed an interdict.’ Answer. These are my words: ‘For I complain that for one priest’s sake an interdict is imposed, and thus all the good cease from praising God. But Christ, the highest priest, when that prophet, than whom a greater has not been born of women, was detained in prison, did not impose an interdict. Nor when Herod had beheaded him, nay when he himself was stripped, beaten, blasphemed by the soldiers, scribes, Pharisees, etc., not even then did he inflict his curse, but he prayed for them, just as he had taught his disciples to do in Matthew 5, and following out this doctrine, the first vicar of Christ said, 1 Peter 2, “In this are ye called, because Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps, who, when he was cursed, cursed not again.” And Paul (Romans 12), pursuing the same thought, says, “Bless them that hate you.”

Numerous were the passages which had been selected from the writings of Huss, which were arraigned as objectionable. But the attention of the council was now directed to the articles extracted from the treatise against Paletz.

CHAPTER XXIII
Third Audience Continued

From the treatise of Huss against Paletz seven articles were extracted, which were now exhibited (June 8), along with the others, against the prisoner. 1. "If pope, bishop, or prelate be in mortal sin, then is he no longer pope, bishop, or prelate." Answer. "This article I acknowledge, and refer you to Saints Augustine, Jerome, Chrysostom, Gregory, Cyprian, and Bernard, who further say that he who is in a state of mortal sin is not a true Christian, much less pope or bishop. Of whom it is said, Amos 8, ‘They have reigned, yet not by me; they became princes, and I knew them not.’ But yet we grant that a wicked pope, bishop, or priest is an unworthy minister of the sacrament, through whom God baptizes, consecrates, or otherwise works to the benefit of the church. And this point is more largely handled in the book, with reference to the authority of the holy doctors. Yea, he who is in mortal sin is not worthily king before God, as is plain from 1 Kings 15, where God, by Samuel, declares to Saul, ‘Because thou hast rejected my word, I will reject thee from being king.’" While this article was undergoing discussion, the emperor was standing in the recess of a window of the building, in conference with the Elector Palatine and the Burgrave of Nuremberg. Their conversation was in regard to Huss. The prejudices of the emperor had been already excited to an unusual degree, and he at length let fall the expression that there never was a more dangerous heretic. It was at this moment that Huss was speaking in regard to the unworthy king of Israel, and the occasion it afforded for confirming the prejudices of the emperor was one which the council was not willing to lose. He was therefore called, and Huss was bid to repeat what he had just said. He at once complied, making a slight correction. The emperor, to the disappointment of the enemies of Huss, quietly replied, “There is no man who
lives without sin." The Cardinal of Cambray, however, showed more excitement and passion. In an angry tone he cried out, "Was it not enough that, contemning the ecclesiastical state, you have tried to spread confusion through it by your writings and teachings? Now, it seems, you are attempting to cast down kings from their dignities." Paletz, moreover, felt himself called upon to maintain his own ground. He began to cite authorities by which he would prove that Saul was still king even when he had heard the words of Samuel, and that on this ground David had forbidden any one to slay him—not on account of his personal holiness, for he had none, but on account of his anointing as king. Huss commenced his reply by quoting Cyprian as saying that he could by no means claim the Christian name who did not resemble Christ in his conduct. "But," exclaimed Paletz, "see how he stultifies himself in saying what is nothing to the purpose. For even though anyone be not a true Christian, is he not therefore a true pope, bishop, or king, inasmuch as these are but the titles of offices, while Christian is a name implying moral worth? And so anyone may be a true pope, bishop, or king, even though he be not a true Christian." But here again Paletz found himself going too far. The old doctrine of the church, which warranted the crusades, and added one of its most precious jewels to the crown of papal prerogative, was that an infidel king had no authority from God to reign, and that he might justly be deposed. How then could one not a Christian retain his office? But Huss was as ready to meet Paletz with the tongue as with the pen. An illustration of the matter occurred to him which he promptly used. "If, then," said he, with admirable tact, and with a logic pertinent to the matter in hand, "If, then, John XXIII was true pope, why did you depose him from his office?" The question was one to embarrass the council, and the emperor came to its relief. "But the masters of the council," said he, "did of late agree on this very point, that he was true pope, but on account of his notorious wickedness, by which he scandalized the holy church of God and wasted its energies, he was deposed from his office." It would have been impolitic for Huss to argue with an emperor. And yet it would have been easy for him to have exposed the double edge of his argument, worthy of commendation in after days by Jesuit murderers of kings, as well as Puritan judges that passed sentence on an English monarch. John Gerson, at least, charged to secure from the council the condemnation of the regicide principles of John Petit, might well have listened uneasily to the imperial logic. But the authority of the speaker forbade all comment. 2. "The grace of predestination is the bond by which the body of the church and each of its members is indissolubly united to its head." Answer. "I confess to this, that it is my doctrine, and it is proved by the text from Romans 8, ‘Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?’ And John 10, ‘My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of my Father’s hand.’ This connection of the body of the church with Christ its Head is spiritual, not carnal. I understand by the church the body of the predestinate." No reply seems to have been offered to this article. The doctrine which it contained is one on which the church of Rome, and in all probability the
council, were divided. Any attempt at discussing it might have seriously affected the unanimity of the proceedings.

3. "If a pope is wicked, or, more, a reprobate, then, like the apostle Judas, he is a devil, a thief, and a son of perdition, not the head of the holy church militant, since he is not, in fact, a member of the militant church." Answer. "My words are as follows: ‘If a pope is wicked, and especially if he be a reprobate, then is he, as Judas was, a devil, a thief, and a son of perdition. How, then, is he the head of the holy church militant, when he is not even a member of the holy church militant? For if he be a member of the holy church, then would he be a member of Christ, and if a member of Christ, then would he cleave to Christ through the grace of predestination and present righteousness, and he would be of one spirit with God, as the apostle reasons (1 Corinthians 6), where he says, ‘Know ye not your bodies are the members of Christ?’”

4. "A pope or prelate who is wicked or reprobate is not truly a pastor, but a thief and robber." Answer. "The text of my book is as follows: ‘If he be wicked, then is he a hireling, of whom Christ says, ‘He is not the shepherd, neither are the sheep his; therefore, when he seeth the wolf coming, he fleeth, and leaveth the sheep.’ And so indeed every wicked and reprobate one does; such a wicked and reprobate pope or prelate, therefore, is not a shepherd, but is truly a thief and robber,’ as is more fully shown in the book.” Huss perceived the ease with which his enemies might pervert the meaning of his words, and thus renew against him the charge which had excited the anger of the Cardinal of Cambray. He therefore added the remark, “I limit all that I have said in regard to such persons to the question of their worthiness, and it is in this sense that they are not truly or properly popes or shepherds in the sight of God. But as it respects the mere office or standing among men, they are popes, pastors, priests.” Upon this, a monk who sat behind where Huss was standing, and who, clothed throughout in silk, could have little fancied the simplicity of the primitive pastors, arose to speak. "My masters," said he, "see to it that Huss does not deceive himself and you by such glosses as these. For perhaps they are not in his book. For I lately had a dispute with him on those articles, in which I said myself that a wicked pope is not true pope as respects worthiness, but as respects office he is. He is now therefore making use of those glosses which he has heard from me. He does not draw them out of his own book.” “But,” said Huss, turning round to address the monk in person, “did you not hear that so it was read out of my book? And this very matter is clearly illustrated in the case of John XXIII, who may be seen as he was, whether true pope or true thief and robber.” But the point was a sore one to the council. They were forced into a position which the friends of the Duke of Burgundy could accept more readily than Gerson might like. The cardinals and bishops, turning one to another, as if to give mutual assurance, said that John XXIII was true pope, and treated Huss with derision.

5. "The pope is not, nor ought to be called Most Holy, even as respects office, for on this ground a king also might be called most holy. Even torturers, lictors, and devils might, for the same reason, be called most holy." Answer. "My words
are different. I spoke thus: ‘The objector must needs say that if anyone is most holy father, then he most holily observes that paternity, and if he is most wicked father, then he keeps that paternity. Likewise, if he is most holy bishop, he is best bishop; and when he says that pope is the name of office, then it follows that that man, a pope wicked and reprobate, is a most holy man, and consequently, as respects that office, is best. And since anyone cannot be best, as it respects office, unless he discharge that office in the best manner, it follows that a wicked and reprobate pope does not discharge the duties of his office in the best manner. For he cannot discharge them so, unless he is morally good. Matthew 12, ‘How can ye speak good, when ye yourselves are evil?’ And then it is added afterward, ‘And if by reason of his office the pope is called most holy, why, by reason of his office, should not the king be called most holy, since, according to Augustine, the king represents the Deity of Christ, as the priest does his humanity. And why should not judges, yea, executioners, etc., not be called holy, when they hold the office of ministering to the church of Jesus Christ?’ These, with many things beside to the same purpose, are to be found in the book. And I do not know,” added Huss, “the ground on which I should call the pope most holy, when of Christ only it is said, ‘Thou alone art holy; thou art Lord alone, etc.’; with great reason would I call Him Most Holy.”

To the remarks of Huss on this point, no reply appears to have been made by any member of the council.

6. "If a pope lives in a manner opposed to Christ, even though lawfully and canonically elected as it respects human choice, yet has he climbed up some other way than by Christ.” Answer. “The language I used is this: ‘If the pope lives in a manner opposed to Christ, in pride, avarice, etc., how is it that he does not climb up into the sheepfold by some other way than the humble door, the Lord Jesus Christ? And granting, as you say, that he might ascend by lawful election, which I call election made first of all by God, he would not stand in his office by the authority of the common human ordinance, so as to climb up some other way. Now, Judas Iscariot was orderly and lawfully elected to the office of bishop, as Christ says in John 6, and yet he climbed up some other way into the sheepfold, and was a thief, a devil, and a son of perdition. Did he not ascend up some other way when the Savior said of him, “He who eateth my bread shall lift up his heel against me?” The same thing is proved by the letter of Bernard to pope Eugenius.’"

Paletz hitherto seems for the most part to have listened quietly. But his equanimity was now disturbed. The old spirit of controversy was awakened anew, and the disputant and the persecutor were one. "See," cried he, "see this madness and folly! For what can be more mad than to say Judas was elected by Christ, and yet climbed up some other way than by Christ?" “But yet,” replied Huss, “both are true. He was elected by Christ, and yet climbed up some other way, for he was a thief, a devil, and a son of perdition.” "But," asked Paletz, "cannot one be orderly and lawfully elected to the papacy or the episcopate, and afterward lead an unchristian life? In such a case he would not climb up some other way.” "I say," answered Huss, "that whoever enters upon the
episcopate, or like offices, through simony, not with the purpose of laboring in
the church of God, but of living in delicacy, pleasure, luxury, and pride, such a
one climbs up some other way, and, according to the gospel, is a thief and a
robber."

7. "The condemnation of the forty-five articles of Wickliffe is unreasonable and
unjust, and the ground alleged for it is fictitious, viz., that none of them is
catholic, but each of them is heretical, erroneous, or scandalous." Answer. "In
my book I wrote thus: ‘The forty-five articles of Wickliffe were condemned on
the ground that no one of them was catholic, but each of them either
heretical, or erroneous, or scandalous. O doctor! where is your proof? You feign
a cause for the condemnation which you do not prove,’ and more in the
treatise to the same effect."

Then said the Cardinal of Cambray, "John Huss, you said that you would not
defend any of Wickliffe’s errors; and now it is plain, from your books, that you
have publicly advocated his articles." "Most reverend father," replied Huss, "I
say the same thing now that I said before—that I will not defend the errors of
John Wickliffe, or of any other man. But inasmuch as it seemed to me to be
against conscience to consent to their unqualified condemnation without proof
against them from scripture, on this account I "was not willing to consent to
their condemnation; and because, moreover, the ground of it, which is of a
complex nature, cannot be verified of each of them in its several parts."

Six other articles charged against Huss were now adduced. They contained
selections from his treatise against Stanislaus. They were as follows:

1. "The fact that the electors, or a majority of them, give their consent viva
voce, according to the practiced usage, to the choice of any person, does not
legitimately elect him, or prove that he is on this account the plain and true
successor of Christ, or Peter’s vicar in the apostolic office, but only his more
abundant labors to the proper good of the church, while he has from God a
grace more eminent for this end." Answer. "In my book it is as follows: ‘It
stands in the power of unworthy electors to choose a woman to an
ecclesiastical office, as is plain from the case of Agnes, called pope Joan, who
occupied the papacy for two years and more. Yea, it is in their power to elect a
robber, thief, or devil, and consequently they may elect Antichrist! And it is in
their power to elect, through motives of love, avarice, or hatred, a person to
whom God cannot grant approval. And thus it is plain that, not from the simple
fact that the electors, or a majority of them, viva voce, give their assent to
any person, according to human usage, is this person, on such grounds,
legitimately elected, nor is he therefore the evident successor or vicar of the
apostle Peter, or of any one else in ecclesiastical office. Therefore they who in
a manner most accordant with scripture, yet without the direction of
revelation, proceed to the matter of election, pronounce in favor of him that is
elected only on probable grounds. Whence, whether the choice of the electors
be good or ill, it is the works of the elected which we must credit, for
according as anyone in a worthy manner promotes the welfare of the church,
he has the grace from God, the more abundantly bestowed to this very end.’"
2. "A reprobate pope is not the head of the holy church of God." Answer. "As I wrote in my book, ‘I should be glad to receive a satisfactory reason from the doctor, why that question is of an infidel nature, viz., if the pope is reprobate, how is he the head of the holy church? The truth cannot suffer by argument. Was it reasoning against the faith when Christ asked of the scribes and Pharisees, Matthew 12, ‘Ye generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak that which is good?’ And now, behold, I ask the scribes, if the pope is reprobate and of viper brood, how is he the head of the holy church? Let the scribes and Pharisees answer—those, namely, who exercised a controlling influence in the council at Prague. For it is more possible that a reprobate should speak that which is good, since he may be at present in a state favoring it, than be the head of the holy church of God. Moreover, the Savior, John 5, in arguing with the Jews, asked, “How can ye believe, who receive glory one of another, and seek not the glory which cometh from God only?” And I, in like manner, ask, How can a pope, if he be reprobate, be the head of the church of God, while he receives glory from the world, and seeks not the glory that comes from God only? For it is more possible that a reprobate pope should believe, than that he should be the head of the church of God when he receives glory from the world.’”

3. "There is not a particle of evidence to make it appear that there should be but one head in spiritual matters, ruling over the church, yet ever conversant with the church militant.” Answer. "I confess it. For what a consequence is this! The king of Bohemia is the head of the Bohemian realm, therefore the pope is the head of the whole church militant. For Christ in spiritual matters is the head, ruling the church militant, much more necessarily than the emperor must needs rule in temporal matters. Inasmuch as Christ, who sits at the right hand of the Father, must necessarily rule over the church militant as its supreme head, and there is no sign of evidence that there must be one head in spiritual matters ruling the church, who is ever to be conversant with the church militant, unless some infidel would heretically assert that the church militant should have here a permanently abiding city, nor seek one to come. And further, it is made plain in the book how illogical is the proof from analogy of a reprobate pope being the head of the church, to a reprobate king being the head of the Bohemian realm.”

4. "Christ would rule his church better by means of his true disciples scattered through the world, without such monstrous heads." Answer. "In the book it is as follows: ‘And though the doctors say that the body of the church is sometimes headless (acephalous), we nevertheless truly believe Jesus Christ to be head over all his church, unfailingly ruling it, infusing into it energy and sensibility even to the day of judgment. Nor can the doctor give a reason why the church in the time of Agnes, for two years and five months, was without a head, living, in respect to many of the members of Christ in a state of grace; but for the same reason it might also be without a head for a long course of years, since Christ, without these monstrous heads, might better rule his church by means of his true disciples scattered throughout the world.’"
Upon this there was a shout, "Now, behold, he is turning prophet!" Members of the council took occasion to sneer at the prisoner, and ridicule his words. Undisturbed by the interruption, Huss proceeded. "But I say that the church in the times of the apostles was infinitely better ruled than it is now. And where is the inconsistency, or indignity to Christ, in saying that he would rule the church better—without those monstrous heads that there were, but just now—through his own true disciples? And at present we have no such head at all, and yet Christ does not fail to rule his church."

The argument of Huss was irrefutable by those to whom it was addressed. It was, therefore, treated with, not argument, but derision.

5. "Peter was not universal pastor or shepherd of the sheep of Christ; much less is the pope of Rome." Answer. "Such was not the language which I employed. In my book it is as follows: 'It is plain, in the second place, from the words of Christ, that he did not define the whole world to Peter for his jurisdiction, nor so much as a single province, and in like manner neither to the other apostles. Some of them, nevertheless, preached the gospel through many regions, others in more limited districts, passing from place to place. This was the case with Paul, who labored more than they all, and who visited in person, and converted many provinces. Whence to each of the apostles, or his vicar, as much people or territory was committed as they converted or confirmed in the Christian faith. So much might suffice, and there was no restriction of jurisdiction save from their own insufficiency.'"

6. "The apostles and faithful priests of the Lord have ably ruled the church in all things necessary to salvation, before the office of the pope was introduced." "And so too might they possibly do still, even if there were no pope to the day of judgment," said Huss.

Here again the cry was, on the part of the council, "Lo, he is turning prophet!" But Huss calmly proceeded. "Yes, it is true," said he, "that the apostles ably ruled the church before the introduction of the papacy, and assuredly to better purpose than it is ruled now. And their faithful followers might do the same. And, behold, now we have no pope, and perhaps this state of things may yet continue a year, or even more."

This article disposed of, a certain Englishman, turning to Huss, addressed him thus: "John Huss," said he, mixing a personal taunt with a skillfully devised accusation, "you pride yourself upon these writings, claiming to be their author, but these views are those of John Wickliffe, rather than yours."

Thus closed the reading of the articles of accusation laid to the charge of Huss. A discussion now arose in the council in regard to the steps to be taken with the prisoner. At last the method of procedure to be pursued was resolved upon. Three positions were taken in regard to Huss. In the first place, he was to confess that he had erred; secondly, he was required to promise that he would never teach again the same doctrines; and thirdly, he should be required to recant the articles charged against him.

The Cardinal of Cambray now addressed Huss. "You have heard," said he, "of how many atrocious crimes you are accused. It is your duty now to consider what course you will take. Two proposals are submitted to you by the council,
one or the other of which you must accept. The first is, that you suppliantly
give in your submission to the judgment and sentence of the council, and
endure, without remonstrance, whatever shall be determined in regard to you
by the common voice. If you shall take this course, we shall, out of regard to
the honor of his most merciful majesty, the emperor here present, and his
brother, the king of Bohemia, as well as for your own sake and your salvation,
proceed toward you with all due kindness and humanity. But if you still purpose
to defend some of these articles which have been laid before us, and demand a
further audience, we will not deny you the privilege. But you should reflect
that here are so many men, and of such learning, and have such strong and
efficient arguments to urge against your articles, that I fear lest any further
wish to defend them could be carried out only at your great inconvenience and
danger. I say this to you by way of admonition, and not as a judge."
Undoubtedly the cardinal spoke the policy of the council when he advised Huss
to submit. There were some things in the prospect of burning such a man not
altogether agreeable. It might not tend to quiet the troubles of Bohemia. It
would be undoubtedly somewhat distasteful to the emperor. It would be more
for the glory of the council to have a man like Huss acknowledge, to his own
confusion, its orthodox supremacy and judicial infallibility. The show of
moderation in the cardinal’s advice to Huss must, however, have appeared in
the prisoner’s eyes as the bitterest irony. He could see, as well as the cardinal,
that his enemies in the council were in the immense majority, and that it was
useless to discuss further with men, "enlightened" as they were by the common
interest they had in suppressing a dangerous assailant. His own apprehensions
by this time must have taught him to prepare for submission to the council, or
for martyrdom.
When the cardinal had given his advice, others seized the occasion to urge Huss
to submission. Some of them, doubtless, were led to do this by a genuine
sympathy for the prisoner, and a conviction that, with all his errors, as they
viewed them, he was a man of honest intention and real ability. Many of the
English deputation undoubtedly thirsted for his blood, and the taste already
acquired by them in the execution of the writ *de heretico comburendo*, would
have been gratified by another sacrifice that should testify their abhorrence of
Wickliffe. But there were others who, in listening to Huss, must leave been
disarmed of their prejudices. Gerson had been one of the bitterest in his
invectives against him, but his voice was not heard again on his trial; he
listened and reflected on what he heard: and it is a just comment on the
change that must have been wrought in his feelings, that he afterward publicly
declared that if Huss had been properly defended he would not have been
condemned.
To these exhortations addressed to him, Huss was not indifferent. He had not
the false pride that would lead him to a stubborn persistence in any doctrine or
position which he could be convinced was false. In a submissive tone, and a
manner corresponding to his words, he said, "Most reverend fathers, I have
already said, repeatedly, that I came here freely, of my own choice, not to
defend anything with stubbornness, but if in any point whatsoever my views
were incorrect, to submit to be instructed with a cheerful readiness. I ask, therefore, that I may have further opportunity to declare my views, in behalf of which, unless I bring plain and sufficient proof, I will readily submit to your direction in all respects, as you require." Upon this, some member of the council shouted, at the top of his voice, "Notice the sophistry of his words. Direction, he says, not correction or decision." "Yes," replied Huss, "as you wish it, direction, correction, or decision; I protest before God that I spoke in all sincerity of mind."

"Well, then," said the Cardinal of Cambray, mistranslating—perhaps intentionally—the language of Huss, "since you subject yourself to the instruction and favor of the council, this is the decree approved, first, by sixty doctors, of whom some have left, though their place has been supplied by others, and then by the whole council, without an opposing voice: first, that you confess that you have erred in those articles which have been alleged against you; then that you promise, on oath, not to think or teach any of those errors for the future; and finally, that you publicly recant all those articles." Many members of the council beside the cardinal, urged Huss to pursue this course. It remained to be seen what effect these various persuasions would have upon his mind. "Again, I say," he replied, to the exhortations addressed him, "that I am ready to be instructed and set right by the council. But in the name of him who is the God of us all, I ask and beseech of you this one thing, that I may not be forced to that which, my conscience repugnant to it, I cannot do under peril of the loss of my soul—recant, by oath, all the articles charged against me. For I remember reading, in a book of Catholic authority, that to abjure is to renounce an error previously held. Since, then, many articles have been charged against me which it never entered my mind to hold or teach, how can I on oath renounce them? But in respect to those articles which are indeed mine, if anyone will instruct me to different conclusions, I will readily yield to your demand."

What unprejudiced judge could fail to see and approve the justice of the prisoner's request? With no show of stubbornness, with the humility of one who only sought to know the truth, he asks the least with which his conscience will allow him to be content. But the emperor's conscience was more elastic. Confident that, to save his life, a man might strain some points, he attempted to reason Huss out of his position; and the reasons of an emperor are equivalent to a command. A lion's paw may at first rest upon its victim with a velvet pressure, but it only hides his bloody claws.

"How is it," asked Sigismund, "that you cannot renounce these articles that are falsely charged against you, as you say? I should have no objection to renouncing all errors whatsoever. Neither does it thence directly follow that I have held any error." The reply of Huss indicated good sense and conscientiousness, as well as respect for the emperor. "Most merciful emperor," said he, "the word has a very different signification from that in which your majesty has used it."
"In that case," said the Cardinal Zabarella, of Florence, "a written form of abjuration shall be presented you, sufficiently mild and proper. You will then easily be able to consider whether you will adopt it or not."

Without allowing Huss opportunity to reply, the emperor repeated the terms which had been laid down by the Cardinal of Cambray. "You have heard," he said, "the two ways that have been presented to you for settling this matter: First, that you publicly renounce those errors of yours that have now been plainly condemned, and subscribe to the decision of the council; in which case you shall experience marks of favor. But if you persist in defending your opinions, the council will probably determine to proceed in your case according to the laws of heresy."

"Most merciful emperor," said Huss, "I refuse not my consent to anything whatsoever that the council shall decree concerning me. I only except this much, that I may not sin against God and my conscience, and say that I have professed and taught those errors which it never entered my mind to teach or profess. But I beseech of you, if it may be, that you will grant me the further privilege of declaring my views, that I may answer, so far as is proper, in respect to those points that have been objected against me, especially on the subject of ecclesiastical offices."

Upon this, several of the council began anew to urge upon him to submit. It was the same story over and over again. They wished no further discussion. "You are of age," said the emperor, somewhat provoked at the persistence of Huss in demanding to be heard further, "you can easily comprehend what I told you yesterday, and here again today. We are forced to believe testimony most worthy of our faith. For if scripture says, in the mouth of one or two witnesses every word shall be established, how much more by the testimony of so many men, and persons of such standing as those who have testified against you! If you are wise, therefore, you will accept the penance which the council shall impose, with a contrite heart, and renounce your evident errors, promising on oath that you will hereafter hold and teach the contrary. But if you will not, there are laws by which you will be judged by the council." To enforce the intimation of severity contained in the last clause of the emperor’s words, an aged Polish bishop added, "The laws in regard to heretics are plain enough in defining the penalty which must be inflicted."

Still Huss persisted in his former purpose. He could not recant conscientiously all the articles charged against him; for some he had never held. He wished to be heard further. This just request, which they were reluctant altogether to deny, irritated them, and they cried out that he was obstinate.

This exasperation of the feeling of the council permitted those who were implacable in their hostility, a further opportunity to exaggerate the dangerous character of Huss. A priest, in his silk cassock, and otherwise splendidly dressed, called out, "He should on no condition be allowed the privilege of recanting; for he wrote to his friends, that though his tongue might swear, he would still retain his mind unsworn. No credit is therefore to be allowed him."

To this calumny Huss calmly replied, in language such as he had used before, that he was not conscious to himself of holding any error. "But," said Paletz, "of
what use is this your protest, asserting that you will defend no error, and especially Wickliffe, and yet you do defend him?” And with these words Paletz adduced nine articles of Wickliffe in testimony, and publicly read them. "When I and Master Stanislaus," said he, "in the presence of Ernest, Duke of Austria, preached against these articles at Prague, Huss defended them, not only in his sermons, but in his published works, which, if you (turning to Huss) will not exhibit, we will." To this the emperor assented.

"I have no objection," said Huss, "to your presenting not these only, but also my other books."

To one who had regarded merely his own safety, the course which Huss chose to pursue would doubtless seem unwise. It was evident that the council had beard enough for their own satisfaction. They had now sat for several hours, and had grown weary of the discussion. But the devotion of Huss to his own conscientious views of truth forbade his acquiescence in the proposal of submission. His life was a matter of inferior importance, in his esteem, to the establishment and spread of correct views of the doctrines which he taught. He moreover felt, undoubtedly, that he might justly claim of the council, and of the emperor in virtue of his promise, a full and patient hearing. His trial for heresy was, in fact, a trial for his life, and he should at least have the privilege of a full defense.

But his request to be further heard, instead of being granted with a lenient and judicious kindness, was met by the effort to bring up against him, and overwhelm him with, new charges. Not content with what had been drawn up—with at least some show of system—by the commission of the council, individuals came forward, each presenting some separate charge.

Among these new articles was one in which Huss was charged with having slanderously interpreted some sentence of the pope. Huss denied having made, or even seen it, till it had been shown him in prison by the commission. "Who was the author of it, then?" he was asked. Huss answered that he did not know, although he had heard that Master Jessenitz was the author. "But what," they asked again, "are your views of the interpretation?" "How can I say," replied Huss, "when, as I told you, I never saw it except so far as I have heard of it from you?"

With such a cross-fire of questions they persevered for some time in their efforts to embarrass Huss. It was persecution of the most cruel and severe kind. He had now been subjected for several hours to the ordeal of examination. He had passed the previous night with scarcely a moment’s rest from pain in his teeth. His health had suffered from his long imprisonment, and here he was, surrounded by a whole assembly embittered against him, in which he could scarce discern a single friendly face. It is surprising that he should have so far been able to command his faculties as to reply at all to the ensnaring questions addressed to him. Still his enemies persevered in trying to overwhelm him with accusations.

Another article was read, in which it was stated, in regard to the three men that had been beheaded at Prague, that they had been led by the doctrines of Huss to treat the pontifical letters with contempt, and that by Huss, with
studied pomps and honors, they had been exalted and preferred in one of his public harangues to the rank of saints. Mason, a former courtier of Wenzel, of whom mention has been already made, arose and affirmed that the article was true, adding that he himself was present at the time when the king of Bohemia had given orders that these blasphemers should be punished. "The statements," said Huss, "are false, both that the king gave the command, and that I had them pompously borne to their burial, since, in fact, I was not present on the occasion. You are therefore at the same time doing injustice to the king and to myself." Paletz arose to refute this statement of Huss, although careful not to give it a direct denial. "It was forbidden," said he, "that anyone should speak against the pontifical bull. This was enjoined by the edict of the king. Those three men did speak against the pontifical bull. For this reason, by virtue of the royal edict, they were beheaded."

The views which Huss really held upon the subject, he did not—nor, had he wished, was he able to—disguise. They are found fully stated in his book, "De Ecclesia": "I suppose they had read the Prophet Daniel, where it is said, 'They that understand among the people shall instruct many, yet they shall fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days... and many shall cleave unto them with flatteries.' And afterward, "How is this fulfilled in the case of these three laymen, who, not consenting to, but contradicting the falsehoods of Antichrist, exposed their lives, and many did cleave to them by flatteries, who, frightened by the threats of Antichrist, turned and fled, and went away backward."

This passage could leave no doubt of the real views of Huss as to the papal bull, or the injustice of the execution of the three men. After its reading, there was silence for a short time, the members of the council exchanging looks of surprise. Paletz and Nason were among the first to speak, and prosecute the advantage they seemed to have gained. They stated that Huss, in his public address, had so inflamed the people against the magistracy, that a great multitude of the citizens openly opposed them, and went so far as to say that they, like the three that had been executed, were prepared to die for the truth, and this tumult had with difficulty been quieted by the gentleness of the king. Several Englishmen now presented a copy of a letter which they said had been forged at Prague, purporting to have come from the University of Oxford, and stated that this had been read to the people at the suggestion of Huss, in order to commend John Wickliffe to the citizens. The letter was read in the council by the Englishman, who then turned to Huss and asked him whether he had publicly rehearsed it to the people. Huss confessed that he had done it, inasmuch as it had been brought to Prague by two scholastics, under the seal of the university. "Who were these scholastics?" they asked. "That friend of mine," said Huss, pointing to Paletz, who, unfortunately for himself, had in the matter been intimately associated with Huss, "That friend of mine knows one of them as well as I do. With the other I have no acquaintance whatever."
"But where is he?" they asked again. "I have heard," said Huss, "that he died on his return to England." Paletz felt that silence on his part in regard to the other scholastic would be impolitic. "He was not an Englishman, but a Bohemian, and he brought with him a bit of Wickliffe's tombstone, which these persons, who follow his doctrines, worship as though it were some sacred relic. It is plain, therefore, with what design this whole thing was executed, and that the entire responsibility rests upon Huss."

Upon this, this Englishmen produced another letter, under the seal of the university, of a tenor directly opposite to that of the former; but this mode of proceeding, which brought forward no specific doctrine which Huss could explain, or in regard to which he could ask to be set right, could afford him little satisfaction. He was altogether too much exhausted, even had he been disposed, to defend himself. In regard to the contradictory letters of the University of Oxford, there can be but slight grounds for questioning them. Both probably were genuine, inconsistent as their contents were. There seems to be no doubt that, long after the death of Wickliffe, his views had a stronghold in the university. Archbishop Arundel affirms that Oxford was a vine that brought forth wild and sour grapes. Of these the fathers had eaten, and the children's teeth had been set on edge. In consequence of this, the whole province of Canterbury was represented as tainted with novel and damnable Lollardism, to the intolerable and notorious scandal of the university. We can see nothing, therefore, improbable in supposing that, in some period when the views of Wickliffe were more than usually popular, his friends may have seized the occasion to employ the seal of the university to attest their public acceptance. There is other collateral evidence to support this conclusion. But however this may be, Huss at least did not design to make any reply to the accusation, whether it was that he felt too exhausted, and wished to reserve what little strength still remained for a more important object, or that he scorned to notice an imputation so inconsistent with his principles, or so injurious to his character, or possibly so weak and unimportant in itself.

After the Englishmen had finished, there was a general pause. Huss would have been more than mortal if he had been still ready to proceed after all the fatigue and assaults to which he had been subjected, and even his accusers, numerous as they were, seemed to have exhausted all their ammunition of accusation. The council were evidently at a loss what to do. They were not quite ready to take the final step. They paused, hesitating, on the brink of a decision the results of which might be such as their forecast would not choose to fathom.

At this fitting moment Paletz arose, and solemnly protested, in the presence of God and his imperial majesty, and the most reverend fathers, cardinals, bishops, etc., that "in this accusation against John Huss he had not been moved by any hatred or malice toward him, but only to be faithful to the oath which he took with his doctoral degree, that he would be the unrelenting antagonist of every error to the prejudice of the holy Catholic church." As if to crown the suspicious solemnity of the act by the ludicrously horrid, his associate, the
wretched villain Michael de Causis, arose, and went through the same form of solemn protest. 
"But I," said Huss, conscious of his integrity, and undoubtedly indignant at the sacrilegious villainy of Michael de Causis, "But I commend all this matter to the Judge in heaven, who will judge the cause of both parties with impartial justice." Who does not feel that the prisoner occupied a far more enviable position than one at least of his accusers, whom we cannot, by any stretch of faith, acquit of perjury?
The Cardinal of Cambray, in a tone of affected moderation, addressed the council. "I cannot enough admire," said he, "the gentleness and humanity of Master Paletz, which he has shown in laying down the articles against John Huss; for, certainly, there are things in his books more atrocious, as we have heard." The cardinal might have understood what he called "gentleness" better, if he had but fully been acquainted with the facts of the former intimacy between Huss and Paletz. The last, undoubtedly, had sought merely to lay down such points as he could prove, and not be worsted in argument before the council by a former rival, with whose ability, in their past controversies, he had become fully acquainted. Paletz, probably, with all his animosity, merely sought the humiliation and not the life of Huss, and his general course and character were respectable by the side of his villain-associate. We can readily believe that his own partisan spirit had carried him away so far that he really believed himself sincere in his efforts.
The day was now drawing to a close. The council as well as the prisoner must by this time have been thoroughly exhausted. Further proceedings were deferred to the next day. The council adjourned, and Huss was given in charge of his keeper, the bishop of Riga, to be placed in prison and kept under guard. One at least of his friends followed him. It was the faithful John de Chlum, who knew well how severely he had been tried, and how much he needed the sympathy and strength of friendly counsel. Few were the words that he could seize the opportunity of addressing to the poor, exhausted prisoner; but they were words of cheer, and Huss welcomed the consolation they afforded, so genial after the tempests that had assailed him, so needed in this the hour of his loneliness and desertion.
As the assembly broke up, the emperor gathered the more prominent officers and members of the council around him, and addressed them on the subject of the trial. "You have heard the many and aggravated charges against John Huss, sustained not only by strong testimony, but, moreover, also by his own confession, each of which, in my judgment, is deserving of death by fire. In case, however, he shall comply with what is required of him, let him be forbidden to teach, or preach, or reside in Bohemia. For it is by no means clear that if he should be again allowed to preach, and especially in Bohemia, but that, trusting in the graciousness and favor of his followers there, he may return to his former views. And, moreover, he may also scatter new errors abroad among the common people, in which case the last error would be worse than the first. I think, moreover, that his condemned articles should be sent to my brother the king of Bohemia, to Poland, and to other regions where the
minds of men have become imbued with his doctrines, together with the edict that whoever shall continue to hold those views shall be punished by the combined power of the secular and spiritual arm. Thus this mischief may possibly be met, if the branches along with the root be torn up thoroughly. But let the bishops and other prelates who have labored in these regions to extirpate this heresy, be commended, by the unanimous suffrage of the council, to the kings and princes in whose allegiance they are. Finally, if any intimate friends of John Huss are found here at Constance, let them also be held in severe restraint, and especially his disciple Jerome." "But," said several, "it is our hope that when the master is punished, the disciple will show himself more pliable."

The emperor could no longer be regarded by Huss with hope or confidence. He had taken the side of his enemies. There was much brought out on the trial to alienate his feelings from the prisoner. Undoubtedly, moreover, the emperor saw that the demonstrations of public feeling in the council were such as warned him against placing himself in its way. Instead, therefore, of struggling against the current—a vain effort that would only prejudice the success of his own favorite schemes—he determined to put himself at its head, and at once lead and control it. From his words it is obvious that he did not contemplate, notwithstanding the violence of some members of the council, the fatal issue of these proceedings. He did not expect that Huss would be put to death, but only silenced. Undoubtedly he hoped that by leading the current of feeling it would be in his power to interpose at the right moment, and adjust the whole matter according to the dictates of his imperial wisdom. He was but feebly aware, even yet, how strong and resistless—slave of his policy as he was—were the chains of influence in which he was himself bound. He had allowed the council to be hounded on after their victim, and it passed his power to call them back.
This section comprises chapters 1 through 8 of Volume II. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

**Chapter 1**  Huss in Prison, His Refusal to Recant  
**Chapter 2**  Final Audience and Execution of Huss  
**Chapter 3**  Jacobel, Gerson, and Voladimir  
**Chapter 4**  The Council & the Bohemians, Jerome Recants  
**Chapter 5**  Violence of the Times, Zisca  
**Chapter 6**  New Charges Against Jerome, Conference with Benedict  
**Chapter 7**  Jerome Before the Council  
**Chapter 8**  Sentence and Execution of Jerome

---

**CHAPTER I**

**Huss in Prison**  
**His Refusal to Recant**  
**Farewell Letters**

What must have been the feelings of Huss as the guard escorted him back to his cell! For six months he had been kept a close prisoner. His health had given way under the hardships to which he had been subjected. Once his life had been in such danger that the council were like to lose their victim, and from policy rather than compassion he was removed to a more airy and comfortable cell, and the pope’s physician had been sent to attend him. With the interval of a slight recovery, he was again attacked with a new access of his severe distemper. "I have been," so he writes, "a second time dreadfully tormented with an affection of my bladder, which I never had before, and with severe vomiting and fever; my keepers feared I should die, and they have led me out of my prison." This was probably for a few moments to enjoy the fresh air. His keepers seem to have been moved to compassion by his sufferings, and some of them appear to have shown him no little kindness. After four months’ imprisonment at Constance, Huss was removed to Gottlieben. Here his situation was changed much for the worse. His prison was the tower. In the day-time he was chained, yet so as to be able to move about. At night, on his bed, he was chained by his hand to a post. His subsequent treatment was still more harsh. His keepers were changed after the flight of the pope—and not for the better. His friends were not allowed to see him. New attacks of his disease—violent head-aches, hemorrhage, colic—followed in consequence of this close and cruel confinement. For more than two months his sufferings were extreme.
It was not till the beginning of the month of June that he was removed from his prison at Gottlieben, and conveyed to Constance. Without the uninterrupted quiet of even a single day, his trial proceeded. He found himself compelled to meet it in infirm health, and in a most weak and exhausted condition. He had demanded of the judicial committee an advocate to manage his cause for him, but this, which he was at first encouraged to expect, was finally refused him, on the ground that no such privilege could be granted to a heretic. He was thus presumed guilty even before he was tried. Gerson did not hesitate afterwards to ascribe the condemnation of Huss to the injustice of this proceeding. "Had he been allowed an advocate, the council would never have been able to convict him of heresy." Huss was undoubtedly disappointed at the refusal of a request so just and reasonable. Yet he calmly submitted to the wrong. "Well, then," said he, "let the Lord Jesus be my advocate, who also will soon be my judge."

He was thus forced of necessity to depend upon himself alone for his defense. In chains, and in the endurance of the most severe sufferings, he was obliged to draw up his answers to the charges presented. And here he found, to his grief and indignation, that the most unfair advantages had been taken of him. Passages from intercepted letters, in part distorted, and conversations with theologians once his friends, but who had now deserted him, in which he had used familiar expressions in confidence, were recalled and employed to his prejudice. His letters to his friends at Prague, by a system of espionage as well as through their indiscretion, had fallen into the hands of his enemies, and been used against him. Paletz sometimes visited him in prison, and sought to overwhelm him by harsh language. "Sad greeting" Huss calls it, as well he might. He speaks of Paletz generally as his fiercest enemy, who did him the most injury. Still his Christian spirit, overcoming every revengeful thought, led him to pray, "May God Almighty forgive him." "Yet," says he, "never in my whole life did I receive from any man harsher words of comfort than from Paletz." In such circumstances as these Huss had to look around him for the means of making his defense. But he found himself totally in want of books. At first he had not even a Bible, and was obliged to ask his friends to procure him one. He says, indeed, that he had brought with him the Sentences of Lombard and a Bible, but he could not have taken them with him into his prison. Could the cruelty of his enemies have deprived him even of these? It must have been so.

All these things were enough to have driven any ordinary man to despair. To be denied an advocate; to have his few books withheld from him; to have numerous and skilful enemies taking every possible advantage of his helplessness, in framing charges of which he was long kept in ignorance; to know that the learning, talent, and sympathies of the whole council, spurred on by the bitterest malice, were arrayed against him, was enough to discourage the efforts and palsy the energies of any man whose help was not in a more than mortal arm. Enfeebled by disease, worn out with suffering and want of sleep, he had been called to appear before the council and enter upon his
defense. On every side he saw hostile faces and prejudiced judges. His conscientious scruples were met by derision, and his arguments were answered by ridicule. He was frequently interrupted or cut short in his replies. New articles were presented, which he had never seen or heard of until the moment when they were produced. His request for a further and fuller hearing was met by threats of the consequences should he persist in his demand of what had been promised. A form of retraction had been presented him, which he could not conscientiously adopt. His request to be instructed in what respects he had erred, that he might intelligently disavow his errors, was set aside. He saw before him, instead of an impartial jury, a band of men, through malice or prejudice, conspiring to effect his ruin. Well might he look around him as he left the council, disheartened and despondent. We can but follow him as he is led back to his prison, with the sympathies ever due to the innocent and the wronged. How slowly and sadly must the hours of a sleepless night have dragged along, bringing new burdens and anxieties, instead of repose to his exhausted frame! Now his mind reverts to the scenes of the previous day, and the tumultuous assembly, like a stormy sea of angry faces, is present before him. He recalls the years that are past, and stands again in his Bethlehem chapel, in the presence of those who had been awakened to a new life by his thrilling words. Forgetting the tragedy of which he is to be the victim, he is only anxious that the cause for which he has labored may still live on, nurtured to a more vigorous growth by the ashes of his funeral pile. The light of another day at last steals in upon the prisoner, restless on his bed, and brought back to self-consciousness by the clanking of his chain. He recalls, as his exhausted energies will permit him, the points on which he alternately hopes and despairs to be permitted to address the council. How fondly he lingers over the possibility that some at least in that assembly who shall hear his words, shall carry them away in memory, and thus in after days be enabled to repeat to others the lessons of his dying testimony. Fully convinced he is, that the truth he has preached shall still live. The God of truth will not suffer it finally to perish. A century or even centuries may pass over it, buried beneath martyr’s dust, but the time of its resurrection and triumph will come at last.

At his last appearance before the council, Huss had vainly been urged to accept the terms they had presented. But he could not conscientiously recant doctrines that he had never held, nor could be disavow those of the error of which he was not convinced. A milder form of abjuration had been promised him by Zabarella, the Cardinal of Florence. This, it was intimated, he might safely subscribe. To this course he was advised and urged by some of his friends, more anxious for his life than he was himself. This form was brought to Huss in his prison by the Cardinal of Ostia, the president of the council. It had been drawn up by their order, and the tenor of it was as follows:

"I, John Huss, etc., in addition to the protestations made by me, which I hereby renew, do protest, moreover, that although many things are imputed to me which I never entertained the thought of, I submit myself with humility to the
merciful orders and correction of the sacred council, touching all things that have been objected or imputed to me, or drawn from my books, or, in fine, proved by the deposition of witnesses—in order to abjure, revoke, and retract them, and to undergo the merciful penance imposed by the Council, and generally to do all that its goodness shall judge necessary for my salvation, recommending myself to its pity with entire submission.” In this formula of recantation there was manifest a greater leniency than was exhibited by the Bohemian enemies of Huss. Cardinal Zabarella, by whom it was probably drawn up, was evidently more inclined to moderation and mercy than many other members of the council. And although no one dared openly to advocate his cause, we have every reason to believe that among the few in the council who were kindly disposed to him, or at least sought to save his life, there were some of no little influence. The presiding cardinal, John de Viviers of Ostia, treated him with humanity and kindness. There were strong inducements, not only in the hope of saving his life, but in the entreaties and persuasions of his friends, to lead Huss to adopt the form of recantation that had been drawn up. But it was here, and in these very circumstances, that his character shone forth most brightly. He had no ambition to found a sect, or attain notoriety by putting forth new and strange dogmas. His constant appeal—and this was his real crime in the eyes of the council that had judged the pope, and allowed no other being, human or divine, to share its tribunal—was to the word of God. Nobly did he exhibit, and heroically did he adhere to that principle which was the stronghold, a century later, of the great German reformer.

Huss could not accept the form of recantation drawn up for him, grateful as he expressed himself for the kindness by which it had been modified, if not dictated. He felt that to adopt it would be a compromise of principle. Calmly and clearly he stated his reasons for rejecting it: ”My father,” said he, in reply to the cardinal, ”may the Almighty Father, most wise and holy, count you worthy the reward of eternal glory, through Jesus Christ. Most reverend father, I am truly grateful for your kind and fatherly favor. But I dare not submit, according to the tenor of this proposition made by me to the council. For in such a case I must needs condemn many truths, an act which (as I have heard from their own lips) they call scandalous. Besides, through such an abjuration I must perjure myself by the confession that I have held errors. By these things should I give scandal to the people of God, who heard from me in my preaching that with which this would be inconsistent. If therefore Eleazar, under the Old Testament, of whom we read in Maccabees, would not falsely confess that he had eaten meat by the law forbidden, lest he should sin against God, and leave an evil example to those that should come after him, how shall I, a priest of the New Testament, although unworthy, for fear of a punishment which will soon be passed, consent, by a grievous sin, to transgress the law of God—first, by departing from the truth, secondly, by committing perjury? In truth, it is better for me to die, than, by flying from a momentary pain, fall into the hands of God, and perhaps have fire and everlasting contempt for my portion. And, inasmuch as I have appealed to Jesus Christ, the most powerful and righteous
Judge, committing his own cause into his hands, I do therefore abide by his most holy decree and sentence, knowing that he will judge each man, not according to false testimony, nor according to fallible councils, but according to truth and individual desert."

Such an answer, from one whose words meant what they expressed, was worthy of, and could have proceeded only from a spirit lifted above the world, and made heroic by faith in God. Many, no doubt, of the friends of Huss regretted the decision which he had made. Under the pressure of the immediate danger of his life, they would at least have counseled him to temporize. One of these, a member of the council, whose kindness Huss had before experienced, sought to overcome by gentle persuasions the scruples which he felt in regard to recanting. "As to your first objection," said he, "let not this, my most loving and beloved brother, have weight with you, that you thus condemn the truth. For it is not we, but they, who condemn it—they who now are your and my superiors. Consider the saying, 'Lean not to thine own understanding.' There are many learned and conscientious men in the council. 'My son, hear the law of thy mother.' This much to your first objection.

"As to the second, in regard to perjury: This perjury, if it be perjury, would recoil not upon you, but upon those who require it. Your views on these subjects are not heresies unless you persist obstinately in maintaining them. Augustine, Origen, the Master of Sentences, and others have fallen into error, but they cheerfully forsook it. I have many times believed myself to be acquainted with matters in which I was ill-informed. When set right, I joyfully returned to correct views.

"I write, moreover, briefly, for I write to a man of understanding. You will not recede from the truth, but will approximate to the truth. You will not perjure yourself, but will better yourself. You will not give scandal, but you will edify. Eleazar was a noble Jew. Judas, with his seven sons and the eight martyrs, was nobler. St. Paul was let down from the wall secretly in a basket, that he might work out better things. May Jesus Christ, the judge of your appeal, grant you apostles, and these are they. Conflicts yet await you for the faith of Christ."

By others, also, Huss was urgently pressed to recant. Again and again, both in private and public, he was beset by the importunities of those who felt for him a strong attachment, or who, highly respecting his character and talents, wished to snatch him from the flames. The council, moreover, with all the eagerness of some of its members for the severest measures, could not be altogether blind to the wiser policy of forcing Huss to acknowledge publicly the supremacy and infallibility of their judgment. The question, in fact, was reduced to this: The council, or private judgment—which must yield? The council would allow no rival. They had deposed a pope, and the acknowledgment of their supremacy was with them a vital point. Huss could not blindly submit to place them in the seat of Christ—to enthrone them above
the word of God. This was his crime. In the eyes of the council it was an aggravated one, and it ensured his doom.

The prisoner remained steadfast in his purpose. His conscience forbade him to sacrifice the truth. To all the solicitations of friendship, to all the authoritative advice of members of the council, to public and private persuasions, he remained equally unmoved. "I would sooner," said he, "have a millstone bound about my neck, and be cast into the sea, than give occasion of scandal to my neighbor; and, having preached to others constancy and endurance, I will set them an example, looking for help to the grace of God." There was never in the prisoner a moment’s wavering. Among others that visited him was Paletz, his former friend. He evidently had not counted on the constancy of Huss. Resolved to humble him as a rival, he could scarce have sought his life. All the persuasions of Paletz were employed to shake the prisoner’s firmness. "Put yourself," said Huss, "in my place. What would you do if you were thoroughly assured that you had never held the errors which they wish you to retract?" "I confess," said Paletz, "it is hard," and for once the tears filled his eyes. The persecutor paid his victim the tribute of sympathy, wrung out by respect for truthful constancy, and perhaps the memory of former friendship. It is not impossible that remorse for his conduct, which was leading to a strangely fatal result, had something to do with his tears.

In one of his letters Huss gives the substance of the argument of one of the doctors who was urging him to a blind submission to the council. "Even though the council," said he, "should tell you that you have but one eye, and you have two, you would be bound to assent to their statement." "And I," replied Huss, "while God spares my reason, would never allow such a thing, though the whole world were agreed upon it, because I could not say it without wounding my conscience." No wonder the doctor was confused by the reply. The illustration he had selected was too ridiculous for ridicule. It only set the conscientiousness of Huss, as well as the absurdity of the demands made upon him, in a too obvious light.

Nothing now remained for Huss but to prepare himself and his friends for the fatal result which his own constancy rendered inevitable. Carefully and clearly does he lay down the principles upon which his conduct was based. He does not trifle with his fate. His words are calm and serious, as were befitting his circumstances. "Often," says he, "have the demands of the council upon me been urged. But, inasmuch as they imply that I recant, abjure, and submit to penance, in matters of truth which I must give up—requiring me to abjure, and perjure myself by confessing errors falsely imputed to me; demanding that I should give offense to many of God’s people to whom I have preached, for which I should deserve that a mill-stone should be tied about my neck, and I be cast into the midst of the sea; and because, if I should submit, in order to escape a temporary trouble and penalty, I should plunge myself into far greater, unless I should repent—for these reasons I cannot yield. And for my
consolation, I think of the seven martyrs of the Maccabees, who chose rather to
he cut in pieces than disobey God by eating flesh. I think, moreover, of
Eleazar, who would not even say that he had eaten flesh contrary to the law,
lest he should set an evil example to those that should come after him,
choosing rather to endure martyrdom. Wherefore, having these before my
eyes, as well as many holy men and women of the New Testament who gave
themselves up to martyrdom because they would not consent to sin; and,
moreover, having preached so many years on the duty of constancy and
endurance, I cannot but say of a course by which I must utter many falsehoods,
and commit perjury, giving offense to many of God’s children—far be it, far be
it from me! For my Master, Christ, shall be hereafter my reward, while even
now he gives me the aid of his presence."

Such were the reasons which Huss repeatedly and on different occasions urged
in defense of his course. They were neither fanciful nor fanatical, but such as
would be appreciated by his friends and followers at Prague. To these he wrote
from time to time as occasion offered, and his letters were publicly read in the
Bethlehem chapel, where his voice had once been so often heard. "My dear
brethren," so he writes back to Bohemia, "I have thought that it might be well
to admonish you how my books written in the Bohemian language have been
condemned in the council of Constance—though itself full of pride, avarice,
ambition, and almost every vice—as being heretical. They have hardly been
seen or read, or, if read, not understood. ... If ye had been present here at
Constance, ye would have seen this council, called holy, and therefore claimed
to be infallible, as though it could not err, to be shameful and scandalous; for
the very citizens of this country say, as I have heard, that this city will not
recover in thirty years from the sins and scandals of this council." He bids his
friends not to be frightened at the decision against his books. "They have
attempted to frighten me from the truth of Christ, but the strength of God in
me they have been unable to overcome. ... They would not venture to discuss
with me, though I professed my willingness to be instructed, on the authority
of the Sacred Scriptures. ... Not by these, but by terrors and threats have they
tried to overcome me. But the God of mercy, to whose word I bow, is with me,
and still will be, as I am confident, and in his grace will keep me even until
death."

In another letter Huss reminds his friends of the treatment of the books of
Jeremiah—full as harsh as that which his own had experienced, and yet they
were not suppressed. In later times the sacred writings were burned, as well as
the works of several of the fathers, but they could not be suppressed. He bids
them not to neglect his books, or give them to his enemies to be burned. As to
themselves, they need not be terrified. The forces of Antichrist would perhaps
leave them at peace. The council of Constance world scarcely come to Prague,
and some of his followers, he believed, would sooner die than give up his
books.
Even in the danger in which Huss found himself of his life, he did not fear to give free expression to the severe judgment he had formed of his judges. He speaks of their having condemned their head, while many of themselves were guilty of the same crimes. "Would to God," says he, "that in this council it had been said by divine authority, 'Let him that is without sin among you first pass sentence.' Undoubtedly they would have gone forth, one after the other. Why, then, have they heretofore bowed to him, kissed his feet, called him Most Holy, when they have known and seen that he was a heretic, a murderer, a reprobate wretch, as they have publicly charged him with being? Yea, why did the cardinals speak of him as holy, when they knew that he murdered his predecessor? Why did they allow him, while he was yet pope, to drive such a traffic as he did in holy things? They are his counselors for the very purpose of giving him the best advice, and if they failed to do it, are they not equally guilty? ... I think we may plainly see Antichrist revealed in the pope, and others present at the council."

Such were the views which Huss had held at Prague—now confirmed by his experience at Constance—and in the conviction of the truth of which he was willing to die. In full anticipation of the final result, he wrote, on the tenth of June, a letter to his friends in Prague, in which he gives them for the last time—as he feared—his counsel and encouragement. In this parting address, that might be almost dated from the martyr’s stake, he speaks with an apostolic earnestness and unction. He forgets no class, neither rich nor poor, male nor female, but adapts his words to the circumstances of each.

"I, Master John Huss in the hope that I am God’s servant, wish, on behalf of all the faithful of Bohemia who love God, that they may live and die in the grace of God, and at last be saved. Amen. Ye princes, high and low, I pray for and admonish you, that ye obey God, reverence his word, and live according to it. I beseech you to abide in the truth of God, which I have preached and written to you from his word and from the holy prophets. I beseech you, if any one among you has heard from me, by public speech or otherwise, or has read in my books, anything contrary to the truths of God, that you reject it, although I am not conscious of having written or taught any such error.

"I beseech, moreover, if any one has observed any levity in my speech or conduct, that he copy not my example, but intercede with God in my behalf that such levity may be forgiven me. I beseech you to love and hold in high esteem those priests who discharge well the duties of their office, especially those who labor in the word of God. But beware of the wicked, especially those Godless pastors that go about, as the Master says, in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye nobles, I beseech you, deal fairly with your subjects, and maintain just government. Ye burghers, I beseech you that ye each live in his estate in such a manner as to keep a clear conscience. Ye artisans, labor faithfully, and earn your bread in the fear of God. Ye servants, serve your masters in truth. Ye schoolmasters, instruct the youth to purity of
life, and teach them with diligence and fidelity. First of all, that they fear God, and keep him before their eyes. Then, that they study with all diligence, not for gain or the honor of the world, but for God’s glory, the good of men, and their own salvation. Students in the university, and all other pupils, I pray you be obedient to your masters in all that is honorable and praiseworthy, following their good example, and diligently studying, that by your means God’s glory may be promoted, and yourselves with others advance in all that is good.

"Finally, I pray you all gratefully to regard the excellent lords Wenzel de Duba, John de Chlum, Henry Plumlow, William Zagetz, and other nobles from Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland, and treat them with studious respect. For many a time have they set themselves against the whole council, and manfully defended the truth, exerting themselves to the utmost to save my life, especially Duba and Chlum, to whom you may give full credit in the entire account which they will render you of what has taken place. For they have been often by, when I have answered before the council, and they know who those Bohemians are who have treated me with severity and harshness, and how the whole council cried out against me when I merely answered the questions which they asked.

"I beseech you, moreover, to pray to God for the emperor, and for your king and queen, that the God of mercy may be with and among you forever.

"This letter have I written to you in prison and in chains, and this morning I have heard of the decision of the council that I must be burned. But I have full confidence in God that he will not forsake me, nor permit me to deny his truth, or with perjury confess as mine the errors falsely imputed to me by lying witnesses. But how gently God my Master deals with me, and supports me through surprising conflicts, ye shall learn when, amid the joys of the life to come, we shall, through the grace of Christ, behold one another again.

"Of my dear friend, Master Jerome, I hear nothing, except that he is kept close in prison, where, like me, he awaits death for the faith which he has manifested in Bohemia. But our bitterest enemies, the Bohemians who have ill-treated us, go from bad to worse. I beseech you, pray God in their behalf. But this one thing I do especially beseech of you, that ye cherish the Bethlehem church, and faithfully attend to it as long as God shall give you grace, that God’s word be preached therein; for of such a church is the devil the sworn enemy, and he raises up against it the priests and their tools, for he sees that by its means his kingdom is in danger of being broken up. But I hope in God that he will sustain the church in his good pleasure, and cause his word to be imparted there through others more largely than it has been by my poor efforts.
"I beseech you, love one another—swerve not from the truth. Meditate upon it—how the righteous may not be crushed. Given on Monday night before the day of St. Vitus, by a faithful messenger."

Such was the calm and manly tone of this letter of Huss, written under the impression that it would be his last! It manifests throughout a noble and Christian spirit. There is no railing at his enemies. There is no wild fanatic enthusiasm. There is no despondency. In a more than human strength he prepared himself to meet his fate.

But events of which Huss was not aware led to a postponing of the time of his execution. While the council had resolved that if he should refuse to recant he should be burned, and this fact had been communicated to him to awe and frighten him into submission, they had also secretly resolved, in the confident expectation that he would consent to the form of recantation, that, after having given this consent, he should for the remainder of his life be doomed to close imprisonment. The tenor of this proposed decree, giving hope of the issue which the council most desired, shows that among its members there were those who entertained no doubt of being able to persuade Huss to recant, and save his life. This proposed decree is worthy of being given entire, as it shows what the tender mercies of the council would have been even in case Huss had submitted. It is as follows:

"But, inasmuch as from some manifest signs it is conjectured that the said John Huss experiences contrition for his former sins, and, influenced by sound advice, is desirous of returning to the truth of the church of God, with a pure heart, and with faith unfeigned, therefore this holy council cheerfully allows him to present himself voluntarily, for the purpose of abjuring and revoking all heretical pravity and error, specially the errors of John Wickliffe, receiving him, upon confessing of his own accord, with the prodigal son, the sins he has committed and manifesting penitence, and absolving him, humbly seeking absolution from the sentence of excommunication which rests upon him. But, inasmuch as from the doctrines of the said John Huss, unsound, inconsistent with the faith, and full of error, innumerable scandals and seditions have sprung up in the church of God, and among the people, and through him grievous sins have been committed against God and the holy church in the matter of perverse doctrine, and contempt for the keys and censures of the church, to the imminent danger of the Catholic faith, therefore this present most holy council decrees and declares that the said John Huss, as a man scandalous, seditious, pernicious to the holy church of God, shall be deposed and degraded from the sacerdotal rank, or whatever rank in the church he may hold, committing, nevertheless, to the most reverend fathers in Christ, the archbishop of Milan, the bishops of Feltri, Asti, Alexandria, Bakora, to execute in a becoming manner, as the order of the law requires, the degradation of John Huss in the presence of this most holy council; and the council pronounces and decrees that John Huss, as a man dangerous to the Christian faith, for the
aforesaid reasons, shall be immured and imprisoned, and ought to be immured and imprisoned, and thus perpetually to remain, and shall be proceeded against in other respects according to canonical sanctions."

This sentence was to have been read in case Huss should consent to abjure, when his degradation from the priesthood was immediately to follow. The impression, thus shared by the council, that Huss would yet be induced to recant, was due in part undoubtedly to the hopes of the prisoner’s friends, rather than to any words or actions of his own. From first to last, the idea of escaping by a feigned retraction seems never to have entered his mind. On the morning of the tenth of June, such an announcement of the action of the council was made to him—with the intention, no doubt, to induce him to recant—as led him to believe that he was to be executed the following day. Under this impression he wrote his farewell letter to the Bohemians. But the next day came, and the next, and the execution of the sentence was still deferred. It is not surprising that in the mind of the prisoner there should have sprung up a faint hope that he might yet be delivered from the power of his enemies. In his letters, which he still continued to write to his friends in Prague during this interval, we see traces enough of this latent and feeble hope to show us that Huss did not regard death with the indifference of a stoic, or prolonged life with the repugnance of a misanthrope. He felt, in the sense in which Paul did, that it was Christ for him to live, but if truth demanded a victim, he was ready to be offered up. In the doubtful hope that he might yet be rescued, he writes: "Our Savior recalled Lazarus to life after he had lain in the grave four days, and had upon him the smell of corruption. He preserved Jonah three days in the belly of the fish, and sent him back to preach again; he called forth Daniel from the den of lion, to record the prophecies; kept the three young men in the furnace from the power of the flames, and liberated Susannah when already condemned to death. Therefore, easily might he deliver me too, poor mortal!—if it served to promote His own glory, the progress of believers, and my own best good—for this time, from prison and from death. For His hand is not shortened, who by his angel led Peter, while the chains of his hands fell off, from the dungeon, when already condemned to die at Jerusalem. But ever let the will of the Lord be done, which I desire may be fulfilled in me, to his glory and to my own purification from sin."

Huss did not fail to write again to his friends at Prague as soon as the opportunity was afforded. "God be with you," he says, "my most beloved in the Lord. I had strong reasons to believe that my previous letter to you would be my last, so near then was the prospect of the goal of death. But now, when I learn that I am spared, my joy is that I may write to you yet once again, and testify my gratitude. As it concern my death, God knows why I and my dear brother, Master Jerome, are not executed. He, as I hope, will die innocent and blameless, and he gives evidence that he will suffer and die more courageously than I, poor sinner! But God has kept us so long in prison, that we may think so much the more humbly on our past sins, and so much more deeply repent of
them; and he has given us time and space for the severe conflict which blots out great sins, and that our conversation may be so much the more abundant. Yea! he has given us time enough, in order that we might so much the more fully reflect upon the shameful ignominy and cruel death of our loved King, the Lord Christ, and be so much the more patient to suffer. Thus may you learn that eternal joys are not to be reached through the joys of this world, but the saints, through much tribulation and anguish, have pressed into the kingdom. For some of them were hewn asunder; some were spit upon; some sodden; some flayed alive, or buried alive, stoned, crucified, crushed between millstones, and dragged hither and thither until they died. Some were drowned, burned, hung, torn in pieces, and, before they died, shamefully and cruelly treated in prison. But who could undertake to recount all the forms of pain and martyrdom which were endured under the Old Testament, and have been repeated since, to the shame and disgrace of those who inflicted them—the ecclesiastics! Why should anyone then be surprised that now, with all their base deeds and the injuries they inflict, they remain unpunished? Indeed, I rejoice that they have been forced to read my books, in which their baseness is plainly set forth, and I know that they have read them far more diligently than they read the holy gospel, only that they may discover something with which they may be able to find fault."

The anxiety of the council, and especially of the emperor, to induce Huss to retract, led them to continue efforts of exhortation and persuasion. The emperor at least could not contemplate the prospect of the execution of Huss without apprehension as to the results that might follow. It would undoubtedly exasperate the whole Bohemian nation, and their execration would fall, not without reason, upon his own head. The cry of an indignant people, and perhaps the secret reproaches of his own conscience, arose before him and made him hesitate. He had gone too far with the council already to attempt to shield Huss from the sentence of death, unless some retraction on his part could be secured. The attempt to do it would only exasperate the council and lead it to counteract his schemes, or perhaps regard him as implicated in heresy. The abjuration of Huss alone could relieve the emperor from his perplexity; and to obtain it he spared neither prayers, persuasion, nor threats. From first to last, all these efforts were vain. "I have refused to abjure," so Huss writes to the University of Prague, "at least till the articles I hold are proved to be erroneous on the authority of Sacred Scripture." He disavowed any wish to cling to anything incorrect which could be found in his writings. "I exhort you," he says, "to hold in detestation whatever you shall find to be false in my articles."

The efforts of the emperor to induce Huss to abjure, only filled the prisoner with a sad and melancholy pity for his oppressor. He would not have exchanged places with him for the world. "Place not your confidence in princes of the earth," wrote he to his Bohemian friends. Sorely had he been deceived in his estimate of the character of Sigismund. He now acknowledged the more
correct apprehensions of his friends. "Truly did they say that Sigismund would himself deliver me up to my adversaries; he has done more—he has condemned me before them."

Thus by his firmness Huss forced the emperor to incur the disgrace of his own conduct, and, had he sought revenge for the violation of the imperial faith, he had it in denying him the power to rescue him from the funeral pile.

The most sanguine friends of Huss must by this time have become fully convinced that his doom was sealed. The firmness of his purpose was proof against all persuasions. His mind was fully made up to meet the result which appeared inevitable. His main anxiety now was to secure such an audience before the council as had been promised him by the emperor.

It only remained for him to take a final leave of his earthly friends and interests. In letters of touching pathos he utters his farewell to those to whom he was bound by a mutual attachment. He wrote to Hawlik, his successor in Bethlehem chapel, urging him not to oppose the doctrine of the cup. He exhorted Christiann of Prachatitz to diligence in pastoral duty, and requested him to greet, in his name, Jacobel and the friends of truth. He admonished the members of the university to mutual love and sobriety of conduct, stating to them also the reasons which forbade him to recant, while he prayed for his enemies that God would forgive them. He begged them to stand by Bethlehem chapel, and to appoint Gallus as his successor. To their love and confidence he recommended his faithful friend, Peter the Notary. To his benefactors he returns his hearty thanks, admonishing them to stand fast in their fidelity, and expressing his confidence that God would repay them for what they had done in his behalf. He expresses his apprehension that a severe persecution of the true servants of God in Bohemia would follow his death, unless God should make use of the civil power to prevent it.

To his friends generally, whom he does not venture to name lest the unavoidable omission of some should give offense, he extends his salutations, declaring it his unshaken purpose not to recant, yet protesting his desire to be instructed that he might disavow any article which could be shown to be false. He expresses his sense of obligation to the king and queen, the barons and nobles of Bohemia and Moravia, and especially to the Bohemians in Constance, for their friendly offices, and their efforts to secure his liberation. From his own experience, he admonishes his friends not to put their trust in an arm of flesh. To Chlum (June 29) he addresses cheering words of the future glory with Christ, of those who suffer for him now. Of his different friends, including Martin, Peter the Notary, Duba, the family of Liderius, and others, he takes leave, in tender and affecting words. He urges that care should be taken of his letters, and that they should be carried back to Bohemia, lest his friends should be implicated or brought into danger by means of them. The lines which he received from time to time from his friends, he immediately destroyed.
In the letter in which he narrates his sad interview with Paletz, he expresses his joyful assurance of the heavenly glory that shall crown his martyrdom, and his confidence in the strength which Christ alone can impart, praying for "a fearless spirit, a true faith, a firm hope, and perfect charity." He does not forget his nephews (sons of his brother), but directs that they should be placed in some secular calling, since he feared that if they were educated for the priesthood, they would not discharge its duties as they ought. He dissuades his friends generally from coming to him at Constance, for fear of the consequences; and the sight of Christiann, who had come in the vain hope of serving him, completely unmanned him, and melted him to tears. All the provision which he could make for the payment of his debts at Prague, was made, and in case it proved insufficient, he begged his creditors to forgive him for the sake of their common Master, Christ.

Disburdened of other care, Huss was now anxious only for a final hearing before the council. He begged that the emperor might be present, and that he might himself have a place assigned him near the imperial presence. He requested also that the noble knights, Chlum, Duba, and Latzembock, would take good care to be present, to witness to his words, and prevent any false reports in regard to his statements from going abroad.

In the prospect of the doom before him, Huss sought a confessor. Whom would he select? Scarcely could he wish for such a one as the council would appoint. He could value but lightly the absolution conferred by hands stained with simony and corruption. His conscience was void of offense, and at peace with God, and no superstitious reverence for the priesthood induced him to believe that his salvation was dependent on sacerdotal absolution. It was undoubtedly more with the desire of a full and free conference with his former friend, than from any other motive, that he sought the privilege of having a confessor granted him, and asked that Paletz might be appointed.

Nothing could more fully testify the humility and the forgiving spirit of Huss than this request. He felt that he had been wronged by those Bohemians who, before the council, had pursued him with unrelenting hostility. Among these Paletz had held the foremost rank, and he it was whom Huss, with a magnanimity unsurpassed, selected to hear his dying confession. Of him he had most to complain, and to him he had the most to forgive. "Alas!" said he, "the wounds which we receive from those persons in whom our soul has placed its hope, are the most cruel; for to the sufferings of the body are joined the pangs of betrayed friendship. In my case it is from Paletz that my most profound affliction proceeds." Again he says, "Paletz is my greatest adversary; it is to him that I wish to confess myself." This request of Huss was refused him, and in his place the bishops sent a monk, whom he speaks well of, and who, after having given him absolution, recommended to him to submit, but without absolutely commanding it.
Paletz, moreover, who had previously been applied to, had refused. He recoiled from the painful task which the humility and magnanimity of Huss had imposed. He was, however, vanquished by the nobleness and generosity of the prisoner’s conduct, and he determined to visit him in his cell.

When Huss saw him enter, he addressed him not in the language of reproach or passion, but in a mild and melancholy tone. "Paletz," said he, "I uttered some expressions before the council that were calculated to offend you. Pardon me." This was undoubtedly the confession which he most desired to make. And now he had made it, and Paletz was his confessor. His persecutor was deeply affected, and entreated Huss to abjure, undoubtedly with the deepest sincerity, for he never seems to have apprehended that his prosecution would cost him the life of one that was once his friend, and whom he could never have ceased really to respect. "I conjure you," said he, "do not look to the shame of retracting, but only to the good that must result from it." "Is not the opprobrium," replied Huss, "of the condemnation and the punishment greater in the eyes of the world than that of the abjuration?" "How, then," asked Huss, as if in gentle reproach for the imputation of such a motive, "How, then, can you suppose that it is a false shame which prevents me?" It was on this occasion, probably, that Huss asked the question before referred to, of Paletz, what he would do if the case were his own, and he were required to retract errors that he never held. With tears Paletz confessed that the case would be hard indeed. "Is it possible," rejoined Huss, "that you, who are now in this state before me, could have said in full council, when pointing to me, ‘that man does not believe in God?’" Paletz denied having said it. "You said so, however," repeated Huss, "and, in addition, you declared that since the birth of Jesus Christ there never was seen a more dangerous heretic. Ah! Paletz, Paletz, why have you wrought me so much evil?" Paletz replied by again exhorting him to submit, and then withdrew, weeping bitterly.

It is no wonder that, in the excited state of the prisoner’s mind, and in the solitude of his cell, his dreams should have partaken of the character of his waking thoughts, or that they should have assumed a prophetic aspect. He believed that in this manner he had received intimations of future events. "Know," he writes to his friends, "that I have had great conflicts in my dreams. I dreamed beforehand of the flight of the pope, and after relating it, Chlum said to me in my dream, ‘The pope will also return.’ Then I dreamt of the imprisonment of Jerome, though not literally according to the fact. All the different prisons to which I have been conveyed have been represented to me beforehand in my dreams. There have also appeared to me serpents, with heads also on their tails, but they have never been able to bite me. I do not write this because I believe myself a prophet, or wish to exalt myself, but to let you know that I have had great temptations, both of body and soul, and the greatest fear lest I might transgress the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ."
What must have been the strength of the consolation by which Huss was sustained amid all the gloomy scenes and trials of his tedious and cruel imprisonment, and especially with no prospect of relief except by death! In the noble letter which he wrote on the eve before the festival of St. John the Baptist, he displays the grounds of his comfort, peace, and confidence. "Much consoles me," he says, "that word of our Savior, ‘Blessed be ye when men shall hate you. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for, behold, great is your reward in heaven.’ A good consolation; nay, the best consolation; difficult, however, if not to understand, yet perfectly to fulfill, to rejoice amid those sufferings. This rule James observes, who says, ‘My beloved brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith, if it is good, worketh patience.’ Assuredly it is a hard thing to rejoice without perturbation, and in all these manifold temptations to find nothing but pure joy. Easy it is to say this, and to expound it, but hard to fulfill it in very deed. For even the most steadfast and patient warrior, who knew that he should rise on the third day, who, by his death, conquered his enemies, and redeemed his chosen from perdition, was, after the last supper, troubled in spirit, and said, ‘My soul is troubled even unto death’; as also the gospel relates, ‘that he began to tremble, and was troubled’; nay, in his conflict he had to be supported by an angel, and he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground; but he who was in such trouble said to his disciples, ‘Let not your heart be troubled, and fear not the cruelty of those that rage against you, because ye shall ever have me with you to enable you to overcome the cruelty of your tormentors.’ Hence his soldiers, looking to him as their king and leader, endured great conflicts, went through fire and water, and were delivered. And they received from the Lord the crown of which James speaks, 1:12. That crown will God bestow on me and you, as I confidently hope, ye zealous combatants for the truth, with all who truly and perseveringly love our Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered for us, leaving behind an example that we should follow in his steps. It was necessary that he should suffer, as he tells us himself; and we must suffer, that so the members may suffer with the head; for so he says, ‘Whoever would follow me, let him take up his cross and follow me.’ O most faithful Christ, draw us weak ones after thee, for we cannot follow thee if thou dost not draw us. Give us a strong mind, that it may be prepared and ready. And if the flesh is weak, succor us beforehand by thy grace, and accompany us, for without thee we can do nothing, and least of all, can we face a cruel death. Give us a ready and willing spirit, an undaunted heart, the right faith, a firm hope, and perfect love, that patiently and with joy we may for thy sake give up our life." Such was the letter of Huss—worthy of the noblest of the martyrs. Only in its subscription does it show any trace of the errors or peculiarities of the Romish church. It closes thus: "Written in chains, on the vigils of St. John, who because he rebuked wickedness was beheaded in prison: may he pray for us to the Lord Jesus Christ."

Huss had written what he supposed was his farewell letter to his countrymen. During the season of his reprieve—if such it may be called—he writes to various
friends. Some of these have already been referred to. But one of the last was addressed to Chlum, who seemed to him dearer than a brother. Many a time had his cheering words, or the warm grasp of his hand, or his genial sympathy, brought comfort to the lonely and neglected prisoner. Huss now expresses to this noble knight his joy at hearing that he meant to renounce the vanities and toilsome services of the world, and, retiring to his estates, devote himself wholly to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose service was perfect freedom. In like manner, he expresses his joy at learning that the knight Duba had resolved to retire from the world and marry. "It is even time for him," he writes, "to take a new course, for he has already made journeys enough through this kingdom and that, jousting in tournaments, wearing out his body, squandering his money, and doing injury to his soul. It only remains for him therefore to renounce all these things, and, remaining quietly at home with his wife, serve God, with his own domestics around him. Far better will it be, thus to serve God, without cares, without participation in the sins of the world, in good peace, and with a tranquil heart, than to be distracted with cares in the service of others, and that, too, at the imminent risk of his own salvation." To his friend Christiann, the rector of the university, he writes: "My friend and special benefactor, stand fast in the truth of Christ, and embrace the cause of the faithful. Fear not, because the Lord will shortly bestow his protection and increase the number of his faithful. Be gentle to the poor, as thou ever hast been. Chastity I hope thou hast preserved; covetousness thou hast avoided, and continue to avoid it; and for thy own sake, do not hold several benefices at once; ever retain thy own church, that the faithful may resort for help to thee as an affectionate father." Jacobel, moreover, with "all the friends of the truth," are saluted. The letter is subscribed, "written in prison, awaiting my execution at the stake." Last of all, Huss wrote his second farewell letter to his friends at Prague. He besought them that for his sake who would be already dead as to the body, they would do all that lay in their power to prevent the knight of Chlum from coming into any danger. "I entreat you," he writes, "that you will live by the word of God, that you obey God and his commandments, as I have taught you. Express to the king my thanks for all the kindnesses he has shown me. Greet in my name your families and your friends, each and all of whom I cannot enumerate. I pray to God for you: do you pray for me? To him shall we all come, since he gives us help."

This letter of Huss, so full of Christian kindliness of feeling, was written probably on the fourth day of July, in the immediate expectation of his martyrdom. In the addition which he made to it on the following day, was a sort of postscript to inform them of his approaching execution: "Already I am confident I shall suffer for the sake of the word of God." He begged his friends, for God’s sake, not to allow any cruelty whatever to be practiced against the servants and the saints of God. He makes the bequest of his fur cloak with a small sum of money, to the friendly notary, Peter; to others, small legacies, or some of his books; it was nearly, if not quite all, that he had to give. Instead of
being rich, as was charged in prison, he had to request his friends to discharge
for him a few small debts, that his creditors might not suffer.

One of the last requests that Huss had to make of his friends was addressed to
the faithful Chlum. He wished this brave man whom he loved so tenderly, to
remain with him to the last. "O thou, the kindest and most faithful friend," said
he, "may God grant thee a fitting recompense! I conjure thee to grant me still
this—not to depart until thou hast seen everything consummated. Would to God
that I could be at once led to the stake before thy face, rather than be torn
away in prison, as I am by perfidious maneuvers! I still have hope—I still have
confidence—that Almighty God will previously snatch me from their hands to
himself, through the merits of his saint. Salute all our friends for me, and let
them pray to the Lord that I may await my death with humility and without
murmuring."

It was in this spirit that Huss prepared himself for the final scene. Many were
the letters written and messages sent, which spoke in the calm and touching
elocution of a martyr, to the persons to whom they were addressed. His first
and last anxiety was, that they should be faithful to the truth—not of his own
teachings, for they might be in some respects erroneous—but of the word of
God. To some who might be called to follow him to the stake, he addressed
such exhortations as were enforced by his own example. "Fear not to die," said
he to priest Martin, one of his disciples, "if thou desirlest to live with Christ, for
he has himself said, 'Fear not them that kill the body, but cannot kill the
soul.'" And yet Huss gave his friend this rare counsel, as remarkable for
prudence as modesty: "Should they seek after thee on account of thy adhesion
to my doctrines, make them this reply: I believe that my master was a good
Christian; but, in regard to his writings and instructions, I have neither read all,
nor comprehended all."

In his adieus, Huss showed no respect of persons. He remembered the poor as
well as the rich. He speaks of the cordwainers in the same breath with the
doctors and the magistrates. Several of the families of his church in Prague are
mentioned in one of his letters as specially to be saluted. His words to them
"recommend them to be zealous for the love of Christ, to advance in humility
with wisdom, and not to indulge in comments of their own making, but to recur
to those of the saints."

Among the enemies of Huss none had shown a more inveterate and unrelenting
malice than Causis. Unlike Paletz, his heart was moved neither to sympathy
and compassion, nor to remorse. Several times the hardened wretch had gone
to the prison where Huss was confined, and exclaimed, exulting in the savage
cruelty of his nature over his destined victim, "By the grace of God, we shall
soon burn this heretic, whose condemnation has cost me much money." But
even this failed to excite in Huss any revengeful feelings. "I leave him to God,
and pray for this man most affectionately," was the language in which he spoke of the virulent persecutor.

A noble object does Huss thus present for our study and admiration. Sometimes depressed by the fears and weakness of the flesh, but never declining the crown of martyrdom; loving his own life in the hope of future usefulness, but far more anxious for the truth he had preached; surrounded by the extreme of human terrors, yet still exclaiming, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Kindly does he remember his friends while he forgives his enemies. His last hours and his last earthly counsels are given to the cause he loved, and to his friends—some perhaps soon to follow him in the thorny path of suffering for the cause of truth.

CHAPTER II

Final Audience and Execution of Huss

Up almost to the last moment, urgent persuasions were addressed to Huss to induce him to recant. In meeting his objections, a casuistry was adopted worthy the acuteness of the Jesuit doctors, Sanchez and Escobar. Many, whom Huss calls pedagogues, and a few of the fathers, almost overwhelmed him with their importunities. Among others, an Englishman attempted to influence him by the example of those who, in England, had abjured the opinions of Wickliffe. "By my conscience," said he, "if I were in your case I would abjure." Causis, however, pursued a different policy. He, in all probability, had no wish to have Huss escape the flames. By his means the prisoner's situation had been rendered more harsh and grievous. None of his friends were permitted to see him; the wives of his jailers, who were disposed to show him kindness, were henceforth denied the privilege. Sigismund, to whom he might have applied, and probably with success, for relief, had left Constance. Under the pretence of recreation, he had withdrawn to a village some miles distant, attended by numbers of his court. We can readily believe, without the hints of the annalist, that other than his avowed reasons had their influence. Among these, his own conduct suggests that he might not have wished to be too near the victim he had himself betrayed. From the twenty-third to the twenty-eighth of June, he remained at Ueberlingen, returning in season to hear the public refusal of Huss to retract.

An assembly was held on the first of July in the Franciscan monastery, and Huss was brought before it and publicly urged to abjure. He now presented a paper, drawn up by his own hand, in which he once more stated the grounds of his
refusal. "I, John Huss, in hope, a priest of Jesus Christ, fearing to sin against God and fearing to commit perjury, am not willing to abjure all and each of the articles which have been produced against me on false testimony. For, God being my witness, I have not preached, asserted, nor defended them as they have said that I have preached, defended, or asserted. Moreover, in regard to the extracted articles, if any of them implies anything false, I disavow and detest it. But through fear of sinning against the truth, and speaking against the views of holy men, I am unwilling to abjure any of them. And if it were possible for my voice now to reach the whole world—as every falsehood and every sin which I have committed will be brought to light in the day of judgment—I would most cheerfully recall everything false or erroneous which I ever spoke or thought of speaking, and I would do it before the world. These things I say and write freely, and of my own accord."

In this language we recognize, not the obstinate and bigoted partisan, not the terrified and yielding supplicant, but the sincere lover of truth, and the conscientious confessor. But such a position as Huss had taken did not pay that homage to the infallibility of the council which was considered essential. He was sent back to his prison. For four days the council were engaged in discussing other subjects. Gerson brought up the propositions of John Petit. Business in regard to the abdication of Pope Gregory was discussed.

On the fifth of July came a deputation from the emperor, once more to inquire if Huss would not recant. The deputation consisted of the cardinals of Cambray and Florence, the patriarch of Antioch, six bishops, and a doctor of laws. They were accompanied by the two brave knights, Chlum and Duba. They asked Huss whether he had determined to abjure the articles which he acknowledged as his, and which had been proved by witnesses; whether he was willing to asseverate that those which he did not acknowledge, but had been proved by witnesses, were not held by him, but that he chose rather to think with the church. He answered, that he still would abide by the decision which he had given in writing to the council, when he last appeared before them, on the first day of July. Upon this he was plied with new arguments and persuasions. It was represented to him that he ought not to cling to his own opinion, but rather yield to the opinion of the whole church, and bow to the authority of the many learned men who composed the council. But all their arguments were vain. The purpose of Huss still remained unshaken in the near prospect of death. It was a trying moment to his friends who had accompanied the deputation. What counsel should they give?

Knowing well the attachment to Huss of his noble friend, and the strong influence which his words would have upon his mind, the emperor had besought Chlum, along with his associate Duba, to accompany the deputation. He thought it probable that Huss might be induced to listen to their united representations, but for once he was mistaken. Had they attempted to persuade Huss to recant, they would probably have failed. But they did not.
Chlum was the first to address him. "Dear master," said he, "I am not a learned man, and I deem myself unable to aid you by my counsels; you must therefore yourself decide on the course which you are to adopt, and determine whether you are guilty or not of those crimes of which the council accuses you. If you are convinced of your error, have no hesitation—be not ashamed to yield. But if, in your conscience, you feel yourself to be innocent, beware, by calumniating yourself, of committing perjury in the sight of God, and of leaving the path of duty through any apprehension of death."

Such language—so different from the unqualified exhortations to recant which were addressed to him by the council, and of the sincerity and affection of which he could not doubt—almost overpowered the prisoner, and he replied with a flood of tears. "Indeed," said he, "as I have done before, so now I call the Almighty God to witness, that if I were aware of having taught or written anything contrary to the law or orthodox doctrine of the church, I would retract it with the utmost readiness; and even at the present time, I desire exceedingly to be better instructed in sacred learning. If therefore anyone will teach me a better doctrine than I have inculcated myself, let him do it. I am ready to hear him, and, abandoning my own, I will fervently embrace the other, and confess that I have erred."

"Do you, then," asked one of the bishops, "believe yourself to be wiser than the whole council?" "I conjure you," replied Huss, "in the name of Almighty God, to give me as my instructor in the divine word the least person in the council, and I will subscribe to what he says, and in such a manner as that the council will be satisfied."

"See," said the bishops, "how obstinately he perseveres in his errors!" It was enough. The deputation plainly perceived that further attempts to persuade Huss blindly to abjure, and pay the homage of sacrificing his conscience and reason to their idol—the council’s infallibility—would be utterly futile. Huss, who had been led forth from his prison to meet the deputation—little disposed, even for a single hour, to share its comforts—was ordered back under the care of his jailers, and the deputation returned to report to the emperor.

Nothing now remained but the promised audience and the final sentence. It was on the following day, July 6, that Huss appeared for the last time before the council, now in its fifteenth general session. There was a full attendance. The Cardinal de Viviers presided. The emperor himself was present, seated upon his throne, surrounded by the princes and the insignia of the empire. An immense crowd had assembled from all quarters, interested to behold the scene, or to receive the earliest intelligence of what was to transpire. The celebration of mass had already commenced when Huss arrived, but he was kept outside the door till the religious services, including the litanies, were over, under the pretence that the holy mysteries would be profaned by the presence of so great a heretic.
At length Huss was brought in. A high platform had been erected in the midst of the assembly, and on it was placed a box containing the sacred vestments of the priesthood, with which Huss was to be robed previous to his degradation. He was required to take his stand in front of the platform, on a footstool, by which he was so raised as to be visible to the whole council. Here he fell upon his knees, and remained for some time engaged in prayer in a low tone.

Meanwhile the Bishop of Lodi ascended the pulpit from which the decrees of the council were usually announced. He had been selected to deliver the sermon which was to whet the appetite of the council for the blood of a heretic. His text was taken from Romans 6:6—"That the body of sin might be destroyed." His object was to expose the evils of heresy and justify the measures necessary to its extirpation. He began his sermon by a quotation from Aristotle, following it up by a citation from Jerome, in order to enforce his persecuting and bigoted doctrine. After venting his indignation upon Arius and Sabellius, the speaker proceeds to discriminate the most dangerous kinds of sins. Among these he places schism in the first rank. To this he traces the aggravated iniquities and corruptions of the times—the discords and conflicts which desolated the nations—the vices and simony which deformed the church. "How many heresies," he exclaims, "have made their appearance! How many heretics remain unpunished! How many churches have been broken in and plundered! How many cities oppressed! How many religious rites fallen into neglect! How many discords among the clergy! How many slaughters among Christian people! Look, I pray you, at the church of God, the spouse of Christ, the mother of the faithful, how she is daily given up to contempt! Who now venerates the keys of the church? Who fears her censures? Who defends her privileges? Nay, rather, who does not offend against them? Who does not invade them? Who is there that does not dare to lay violent hands upon the patrimony of Jesus Christ? The property of the clergy, bought by sacred blood, and of the poor, as well as the food of pilgrims, is plundered and wasted." In the prevalent disorders the speaker seems to see the abomination of desolation brought into the sacred temple. Tyranny is destroying the bodies, and schism the souls of men. Those guilty of the first, may sin in ignorance; the last are without excuse. As the result, the speaker sees before him the church, like a boat upon the waves, endangered by pirates or thrown upon the rocks. Heresies have sprung up on all sides, and discord has entered among the flock of Peter and the fold of Christ. Many had toiled in vain to suppress these—kings, princes, and prelates: "Wherefore," exclaims the bishop, turning to the emperor, "most Christian king, this glorious triumph has awaited thee, this unfading crown is due to thee, and a victory ever to be celebrated is thine, in order that by thee the wounded church may be bound up, the inveterate schism removed, simony restrained, and heretics rooted out. Do you not see how great will be this lasting fame, how celebrated this glory? What could be more just, what more holy, what more fitting, what, in fine, more acceptable to God, than to extirpate this nefarious schism, restore the church to its former liberty, put an end to simony, and destroy and condemn errors and heresies
from among the flock of believers? Surely nothing could be better, holier, more desirable for the world, or acceptable to God.

"To execute this, so pious and holy a work, thou hast been elected by God, deputed in heaven, before chosen on earth. Heavenly principalities made thee emperor before the suffrage of the imperial electors was cast. And especially was this, in order that thou mightest destroy and condemn, by imperial ordinance, the heresies and errors which we have here before us, in our hands, already condemned. To the performance of so holy a work, God has conferred upon thee the wisdom of divine truth, the power of royal majesty, and the justice of right equity. As the Most High has said, Jeremiah 1, ‘Lo, I have put my words into thy mouth by imparting wisdom, and I have placed thee over the nations and kingdoms by conferring power, that thou mightest root up and destroy by executing justice.’ So mayest thou destroy heresy and error; and especially this obstinate heretic, by whose malign influence many regions have been infected with the pest of heresy, and by reason of whom many things have gone to ruin.

"This sacred labor, O glorious prince, is left to thee. On thee is it the more incumbent, to whom has been given the supremacy of justice. And as the result, from the mouth of babes and sucklings shall thy praises be long celebrated, as the destroyer of its enemies and the avenger of the Catholic faith. The which, that it may prosperously and happily become thy lot, may he who is blessed for ever more, Jesus Christ, grant. Amen."

Such was the discourse, delivered in full council, and upon the Sabbath—the session was held on that day—by which the minds of men were to be brought into a frame devout enough to give over an innocent man to the flames. It seems as if the black deed would not have been perfect in its horror, without this dark feature of Sabbath profanation.

Immediately after the sermon, the decree was read, by which the council enjoined silence. Its language betrays the self-sufficient and arrogant tone of authority which the council had assumed. "The holy council of Constance, lawfully assembled by the influence of the Holy Spirit, decrees and orders everyone, with whatever dignity he may be invested, whether imperial, royal, or episcopal, to abstain, during the present session, from all language, murmur, and noise which may disturb this assembly, convoked with the inspiration of God, and this under pain of incurring excommunication, and imprisonment of two months, and of being declared an abettor of heresy." The procurator of the council then demanded a vigorous prosecution of the process which they had in hand, insisting that there should be no pause or cessation in the proceedings till Huss was finally condemned and sentence pronounced.

The council now directed that sixty articles of Wickliffe, extracted from the two hundred and sixty which had been brought before them by the English
deputation, should be read. After sentence against these was pronounced, the council proceeded to the works of Huss. Thirty articles were presented, some of which had not before been publicly read, but most of which were in substance those upon which he had been interrogated in the presence of the council. Some with which he had first been charged were found to be but duplicates of others, or implied in them, and were consequently left out, reducing them to the number mentioned above. A statement was then made of the character and scope of the several articles, together with the testimony by which they were severally supported. Instead, however, of giving the names of the witnesses, only their office or ecclesiastical rank was stated. This was the course that had been pursued on the trial of John XXIII. In that case there could have been little or no objection to it, for the pope, when summoned to confront the witnesses against him, had declined the privilege, and had confessed to the justice of his sentence by a voluntary submission. But in the case of Huss, this course was one of manifest injustice. He was not permitted to confront his witnesses. In few instances could he even know who they were. His enemies were permitted to testify, without scrutiny or question, whatever they pleased.

In these circumstances, it was but natural that Huss should seek to meet each article, as it was read, by a final statement. This he wished and attempted to do, but the privilege was denied. As the first article was read, "that there is one Catholic church, which is composed of the body of believers predestined to salvation." Huss added in a distinct and clear voice, "Indeed, I have no doubt that there is one holy Catholic church, which is the congregation of all the elect, not only in this world, but in the world of spirits, embracing those who belong to the invisible body of Jesus Christ, of whom he is the head." To the succeeding articles Huss also attempted to reply, but was interrupted by the Bishop of Cambray, who ordered him to be silent, and when he answered, to reply to all at once. "But," said Huss, "you forbid me to answer to each, while it is out of my power to remember the whole list of accusations." As another article was read, Huss again attempted to reply. Upon this, the Cardinal of Florence arose and exclaimed, "You deafen us," a strange complaint after the previous scenes of uproar and confusion of which the council had had experience. The ushers of the council were ordered to seize him and force him to be silent. So gross a wrong Huss could have borne for himself, but he was unwilling that the immense crowd assembled upon the occasion should receive the articles of the council as a reliable statement of his real views. With a loud voice, and with his hands lifted to heaven, he exclaimed, "In the name of Almighty God, I beseech you, deign to afford me an equitable hearing, that I may clear myself at least before those who surround me, and remove from their minds the suspicion of errors. Grant me this favor, and then do with me what you will."

Here he was again interrupted and required to be silent. Finding that he was not to be permitted the privilege of speaking and vindicating himself from such
a multitude of accusations, he kneeled down, and raising his hands and eyes to heaven, commended his cause in prayer to God, the most righteous judge.

At length the old accusation which had before been abandoned, was brought forward. It was charged that Huss had written and taught, that in the consecration of the eucharist the material and substantial bread (the matter and substance of bread) remained. To this was added the article "that a priest in mortal sin cannot baptize," etc., with other articles of a similar tenor, or that had before been fully answered. When Huss wished to reply to these, the Cardinal of Florence again enjoined silence. But again Huss urgently entreated that he might be heard kindly, at least on account of those around him, whom he would not have misled by the imagination that he defended such errors as were now adduced. "For," said he, "I utterly deny that I ever believed or taught that after the consecration in the sacrament of the altar, the material bread remains. Moreover, I assert that baptism and consecration, and the administration of other sacred rites, performed by a priest guilty of mortal sin, is infamous and hateful in the sight of God. Whenever he is full of impurity, he is least of all a worthy minister of sacred and divine offices." To other accusations upon the list he replied briefly in much the same manner as he had done before in writing, either briefly refuting some, or candidly confessing others.

Huss was now accused of giving out that he was the fourth person—now added—of the Holy Trinity. This was established by the testimony of a single doctor, whose name was not mentioned. "Give me the name," said Huss, "of that doctor who testifies thus against me." But the bishop who read the accusation refused this request. He merely replied, "There is no need of it." Huss, mastering his indignation, solemnly declared, "God forbid that such an imagination as that I should call myself a fourth person of the Trinity should have been thought of by me, nor, by the love of Christ, has it ever entered my mind." He then repeated the article from the Athanasian creed upon the Trinity, declaring in it his firm and abiding belief. At length the words of his appeal to God, as supreme Judge, were read, and this solemn appeal was pronounced an impious error. To the council Huss had no reply to make in his defense. Mastering his emotions, he looked up to heaven, and said, in a tone that should have thrilled the assembly, "Most blessed Jesus, behold how this council holds as error, and reprobrates thine own deed and the law which thou didst prescribe, when thou thyself, overwhelmed by enemies, didst commend thy cause to thy Father, God, the most holy Judge, leaving us an example in our woe and weakness, that, with prayer for aid, we should suppliantly flee in our wrongs to the most righteous Judge." Here he paused a moment, and then added, " But I say confidently, that the surest and safest of all appeals is to the Master, Christ. For he it is whom no one can sway from the right by any bribes, nor deceive by false testimony, nor snare in any sophistry, since to each he gives back his own reward."
He was next charged with having treated the papal excommunication with contempt, still unwarrantably continuing in the exercise of his office, even to the celebration of mass. "I did not," said Huss, "despair the excommunication, but publicly in my sermons I appealed to him who is the Judge. And thus it was that I continued to discharge the sacred offices. Meanwhile, I thrice sent to the chief pontiff those who should act as my procurators, to give satisfaction in my behalf. For, for good and satisfactory reasons I could not appear in my own behalf, as has been stated. Yet I was never able to obtain a hearing. My representatives, moreover, were cruelly treated. Some were imprisoned, some were insultingly rejected, or subjected to torturing hardships. The records will readily certify you of this, in which my case, and the injustice done, are written out. For this reason I came hither freely to this council, relying upon the public faith of the emperor, who is here present, assuring me that I should be safe from all violence, so that I might attest my innocence, and give a reason of my faith to all who compose it."

As Huss spoke of the public faith—the safe-conduct which he had received—he fixed his eyes steadily upon the emperor. A deep blush at once mounted to the imperial brow. Sigismund felt the shame and meanness of which he had been guilty, and his own previous declarations before the council deprived him of any chance to vindicate his integrity or honor. This circumstance was not soon forgotten in Germany. To it, perhaps, the safety of Luther and the success of the German reformation a century later were in part due. When Charles V, at the celebrated diet of Worms, was pressed to consent to the seizure of Luther in contempt of his safe-conduct, his Spanish honor revolted at the proposal. "No!" said he, "I should not like to blush like Sigismund."

At length, when the several articles of accusation had been read, one of the judges of the court arose, and made a statement of the manner in which Huss had been repeatedly asked whether he would maintain or disavow them. In his prison at Gottlieben he had promised to submit himself to the decision of the council. He had afterward repeated this before the commission sent to him upon his removal to Constance. A third time he had made a similar declaration, and had given it in writing under his own hand. This, as already presented, was then read, and it was added, that on the day preceding (July 5), Huss had been once more asked by the prelates deputized to visit him by the council, whether he would abjure the articles which he acknowledged to be his, promising no longer to hold them, and no more to teach those which he did not acknowledge; but he chose still to abide by his previous declaration, unmoved from his purpose by all the means of persuasion which could be employed.

The Bishop of Concordia, Italian by birth, whose bald head and advanced years gave him a venerable aspect, had been selected to read the two sentences of the council, one condemning the books of Huss to be burned, and the other requiring his degradation from the priesthood, in order that he might be given over to the secular arm. Upon the requisition of Henry de Piro, the prosecutor
of the council, these sentences were then read. The first, against the books of Huss, was as follows: "This most holy general council of Constance, representing the Catholic church, etc., etc.: Because, as the truth itself testifies, an evil tree brings forth evil fruit, hence it is that John Wickliffe, a man of damnable memory, by his destructive doctrine—not like those holy fathers of old, who in Jesus Christ, through the gospel, begot believing children, but against the saving faith of Christ, like a root of poison—has begotten sons of perdition, whom he has left behind him as successors in the inheritance of his perverse doctrine, against whom this holy council of Constance is compelled to rise up as against bastard and illegitimate sons, and cut off their errors as noxious tares from the garden of the Lord, by watchful care, and the knife of ecclesiastical authority, lest, like a canker, they spread abroad to others' destruction; and since, moreover, in the sacred general council lately held at Rome, it was decreed that the doctrine of John Wickliffe, of damnable memory, ought to be condemned, and his books which contain this said doctrine should be burned as heretical, and this decree was carried into effect—therefore should this said decree be approved by the authority of this present sacred council. And yet, nevertheless, a certain John Huss, in this sacred council, here present in person, a disciple, not of Christ, but rather of the heresiarch John Wickliffe, after and against this condemnation and decree aforesaid, with venturous audacity, has dogmatized, asserted, and preached many of his errors and heresies, which have been long condemned by the most reverend fathers in Christ, their lordships the archbishops, the bishops of different kingdoms, and masters of theology in many universities, especially in his resisting, along with his confederates in the schools, and in his sermons in public, the scholastic condemnation of the articles themselves of Wickliffe several times pronounced in the University of Prague; and in favor of his doctrine he has declared, in the presence of a multitude of the clergy and the people, that John Wickliffe was a Catholic man, and an evangelical doctor. He has, moreover, published certain articles hereinafter written, and many others deserving of condemnation, asserting them to be Catholic, which articles are contained, as is notorious, in the books of this very John Huss. Wherefore, full and sufficient information being had in the premise., as well as careful deliberation on the part of the most reverend fathers, their lordships the cardinals of the holy Roman church, the patriarchs, the archbishops, the bishops, and other prelates, and doctors of scripture and of laws—composing a large assembly—this most holy council of Constance declares and decrees, that the articles hereinafter written, which have been found on collation, by many masters of the sacred page, to be contained in his books and treatises written by his own hand, and which, moreover, this same John Huss, in the presence of the fathers and prelates of this sacred council, has confessed to be contained in his books and treatises, are not Catholic, nor to be taught as such, but some of them are erroneous, some scandalous, others offensive to pious ears, many of them rash and seditious, and some notoriously heretical, and long since by the holy father and general councils reprobated and condemned, and to preach, teach, or in any way approve then, is prohibited. But since the
hereinafter written articles are expressly contained in his books or treatises, viz., in the book which he has entitled "De Ecclesia," and in his other works, therefore, the aforesaid book, and their doctrine, and each of his other treatises and work, edited by him in Latin, or in the vulgar Bohemian, or by him or others, one or more, translated into some foreign idiom, this most holy council reprobates and condemns, and doth decree and appoint that they shall be burned, solemnly and publicly, in the presence of the clergy and people, in the city of Constance, and elsewhere, adding, moreover, for the reason aforesaid, that his whole doctrine is and ought to be suspected as to faith, and should be avoided by all the faithful of Christ. And that this pernicious doctrine may be rooted out from the midst of the church, this holy synod orders, that, by the ordinaries of different localities, treatises and works of this nature, by means of ecclesiastical censure, and even, if need be, under penalty of favoring heresy, shall be carefully sought out, and, when found, shall be committed publicly to the flames. And if anyone be found to violate or despise this sentence and decree, this same holy synod ordains that such persons shall be proceeded against, as suspected of heresy, by the ordinaries of different localities, and the inquisitors of heretical pravity."

As this sentence was read, Huss replied, "Who are ye, that ye can justly condemn my writings? For I always desired that they should be corrected by a better application and understanding of Christian truth, and this is still my wish. And yet, hitherto ye have not presented any solid arguments against them, nor have ye convicted of error a single word of my writings. Why, then, have ye been impelled to destroy my books, whether rendered in the Bohemian, or other language—those, moreover, which doubtless ye have never seen? And if ye were to see them, your ignorance of the Bohemian language would prevent your understanding them." But after complaining of other injustice in the accusation, he knelt down, and with his eyes to heaven uttered fervent prayer.

The sentence against Huss himself was then read. "The things done and to be done in the cause of inquisition of, and concerning the heresy of, John Huss being considered, and a faithful and full report of the commission deputed to act in this case having been had, as well as of other masters in theology and doctors of law, in, of, and concerning the acts and words of witnesses worthy of credit, and in great number—which testimony has been openly and publicly read to John Huss himself before the fathers and prelates of this sacred council, by which testimony it is made most clearly manifest that this same John Huss has taught many things evil, scandalous, seditious, and dangerously heretical, and has preached the same through a long course of years, this most holy council of Constance—the name of Christ being invoked—having only God before their eyes, doth by this definitive sentence, in these writings, pronounce, decree, and declare, that the said John Huss was and is a true and manifest heretic, and that he has taught errors and heresies long time condemned by the church of God, and many things, moreover, scandalous,
offensive to pious ears, rash, and seditious; and that he has publicly preached
them, to the grievous offence of the divine majesty, the scandal of the
Catholic church, and the prejudice of the Catholic faith; that he has,
moreover, treated with contempt ecclesiastical censures and the keys of the
church, persisting obstinately in this spirit for many years, scandalizing
Christian believers by his extreme stubbornness, while neglecting ecclesiastical
rules; that he has interposed his appeal to the Lord Jesus Christ as supreme
Judge, in which appeal he has laid down many positions, false and unjust,
scandalous in regard to the Apostolic See itself, contemning ecclesiastical
censures and the keys; wherefore, for the aforesaid reasons as well as many
others, this holy synod pronounces John Huss to have been heretical, and
concludes that he ought to be judged and condemned as a heretic, and by
these presents doth condemn him, reproving his appeal as unjust, scandalous,
and derisive of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and himself as having seduced
Christian people from the faith, especially in the kingdom of Bohemia, by his
preaching and by his writings, and as having been not a true preacher of the
gospel of Christ according to the exposition of the holy doctors, but rather a
misleader of the people.

"But because, by those things which it has seen and heard, this holy synod
knows this same John Huss to be pertinacious, incorrigible, and, moreover, of
such a disposition as not to desire to return to the bosom of holy mother
church, nor abjure the heresies and errors which he has publicly defended and
preached, therefore this holy synod of Constance declares and decrees that the
same John Huss be deposed and degraded from the order of the priesthood, or
other dignity with which he is invested, giving in charge to the ever reverend
fathers in Christ, the archbishop of Milan, the bishops of Feltri, Asti,
Alexandria., Bangor, and Lavaur, the due execution, in the presence of this
most holy synod, of the said degradation, as the canonical rule of order
requires."

As the charges of the sentence were read, Huss interposed brief comments. It
was in vain that they forbade him to speak. His indignant sense of the wrong
done him would not permit him to be silent. When the accusation of obstinacy
was read, he promptly denied it. "This," said he, "I do utterly deny. I have ever
desired and I still desire to be better instructed from scripture, and I solemnly
declare that such is my zeal for the truth, that if by a single word I might
confound the errors of all heretics, there is no danger that I would not face in
order to do it." Who could doubt the sincerity and conscientiousness of the
speaker?

When the reading of the sentence was concluded, Huss again fell upon his
knees, and in earnest and distinct tones prayed for his enemies. "O Lord God,
through thy mercy I pray thee deign to pardon all my enemies, for thou
knowest that I have been unjustly accused by them, overcome by false
witnesses, oppressed by fictitious accusations, and unrighteously condemned.
For thy mercy’s sake, therefore, remit their sins.” The scene, in its circumstances, had a deep and solemn significance that might have reminded the judges of the prayer once offered on the cross of Calvary. But the history of persecution was to carry out the parallel of the tragedy in a still more striking manner. Scorn and derision were traced in the features of the members of the council, and were uttered in their sneers. They saw in Huss a victim, of whom they felt they might safely make an example.

The ceremony of degradation—the first step in the execution of the sentence—was now commenced. By the direction of the bishops he was clothed in priestly robes, and, as if he had been about to celebrate mass, the chalice was placed in his hand. As they put the white robe upon him, Huss could not forbear to say, “My Master, Jesus Christ, when he was sent away by Herod to Pilate, was clothed in a white robe.”

At length, being clad, the prelates admonished him to retract while he yet might, and abjure the errors with which he stood charged. But he replied aloud, as he stood upon the platform to which he had been raised—turning as he spoke toward the people, with tears in his eyes and his voice trembling with emotion, “Behold, these bishops persuade and exhort me to retract. But I fear to do it, lest hereafter I be charged with falsehood before God, in case I should confess myself to be guilty of errors of which I was never conscious, which I have never taught, and thus sin against my conscience and divine truth at once. Never have I asserted those articles, but they are unjustly imputed to me on false testimony, while I have written and taught the exact opposite. Above all, I fear lest the minds of so great a multitude as that to which I have preached so long, as well as of others who are faithful ministers of the divine word, should, through the offense thus given, be torn away from truth.”

Such language, while it might have moved some to pity and respect, only provoked the bishops. “See,” said they, and the murmur went round the assembly, “how perverse he is in his wickedness, and how tenacious of his heresy!”

The bishops now directed Huss to descend from the platform. They then began to strip him of the sacerdotal habit in which he had been clothed. They took from him first the chalice, accompanying the act with the words, “O thou accursed Judas, who, breaking away from the counsels of peace, hast consulted with the Jews! Behold! we take from thee this chalice, in which the blood of Jesus Christ for the redemption of the world is offered.” Unmoved by the united curse and outrage, Huss exclaimed, in a clear, loud voice, to be heard by all, “But I have all hope and confidence fixed in my God and Savior, that he will never take from me the cup of salvation, and I abide firm in my belief that, aided by his grace, I shall this day drink thereof in his kingdom.”
The bishops proceeded to strip him of the remaining symbols of the priestly office, accompanying the removal of each with a correspondent curse. "All these insults," said Huss, "I can endure, undisturbed and calm, for the name and truth of Jesus Christ."

When this work of removing the sacerdotal habits was accomplished, it still remained to efface the marks of the tonsure, and thus take away the last symbol of the priestly office. Here a singular and ludicrous controversy arose. In order to crop the hair, some were for using a razor, and some insisted that the shears were the proper instrument. Some would be satisfied if the tonsure were but disfigured; others would have the hair entirely removed.

The scene was one that Huss, even in his circumstances, felt to be ridiculous. "Ah!" said he, turning to the emperor where he sat upon his throne, edified doubtless by the pious heresy of some on the question under discussion, "Ah! these bishops cannot easily agree among themselves, even in regard to the method by which to insult me."

At last the shears-party was triumphant. His hair was cut in four directions, so as to leave bare the form of a cross. This was then washed, as if to remove the oil of his anointing by which he was consecrated to the priesthood. It was then declared that "This holy council of Constance doth now remove John Huss from the order of the priesthood and the offices of honor which he has discharged, thus declaring that the church of God disowns this man, and gives him up, no longer shielded by her protection, to the secular arm." As they were about to place upon his head the paper crown which he was to wear to the place of execution, and which in derision was covered with pictured fiends, they said, "We devote thy soul to the devils of hell." "But I," said Huss, lifting his eyes to heaven and reverently folding his hands, "I commend it to my most merciful Master, Jesus Christ." The crown was now set upon his head. It was a sort of pyramidal miter, rising to a considerable height. On each of its three sides the frightful figure of a demon was painted, while on each was written, so as to be visible to all and from every direction, the crime for which he was condemned—

Heresiarch. Huss looked at it and calmly said, "My Lord Jesus Christ, though innocent, deigned to bear to an infamous death, for wretched me, a far rougher and weightier crown of thorns."

The ceremony of the degradation of Huss was now complete. He was disowned by the church, and no longer as a priest was subject to its exclusive jurisdiction. Given over to the secular arm, it belonged to the emperor—such was the orthodox theory of persecution, to do with the prisoner as Pilate with Jesus, what the priests could not—to execute capital sentence. Sigismund committed Huss to the charge of Louis, the Elector Palatine, directing him to go and see that he was delivered into the hands of the proper officers. Huss was given over by the elector to the mayor of Constance, and by the latter was placed in the hands of those to whom it belonged to see the sentence
executed. They were commanded to burn him, with his clothes, and all indiscriminately that belonged to him, even to his knife and to his purse, from which they were not to take so much as a single penny.

He was led to the place of execution, walking between two officers of the Elector Palatine, and without being chained; two of the police of the city preceded and two followed him. The prince, with an escort of eight hundred armed men, and followed by an immense multitude, drawn by curiosity, interest, or anxiety, accompanied them to the place of execution.

The procession, instead of taking the direct route thither, moved first in a nearly opposite direction, in order to pass upon the way the episcopal palace, in front of which a pile of the prisoner’s writings had been heaped up for the flames. The fire was kindled and the books burned as the procession passed. They had been first condemned, and were first to be consumed. But to Huss the scene appeared simply ridiculous, as indeed it was. Nor did it need a prophet’s sagacity to discern that the course pursued was like to defeat its own object. It was altogether out of the power of the council to obtain and thus destroy all the writings of the reformer. They were too widely scattered and too deeply cherished, and this act of impotent vengeance would only make them the more prized—would attach to them a new importance, and excite a more eager curiosity for their perusal. The scene, even in the solemn circumstances in which Huss was placed, did not fail to draw from him a smile at the senile malice which it displayed.

As the procession passed on, they reached a bridge at which it was necessary to pause. It was not considered safe for the whole multitude to pass over it at once. The armed escort first proceeded, one by one, and then the crowd of citizens followed. Huss improved the occasion to say a few words to the throngs that pressed around to catch a sight of him. He told them, in the German language, that it was not for any heresy that he had been condemned, but through the injustice of his enemies; that they had not been able to convict him of any error, although he had challenged them to do it so often and so urgently. As he approached the place where he was to be burned, which was a meadow adjoining the garden on the north side of the city, outside the Gottlieben gate, the procession paused, that everything might be made ready for the execution. Here Huss kneeled down, and lifting his eyes toward heaven, prayed—using the language of some of the penitential psalms, especially the thirty-first and fiftieth. Repeatedly he used the petitions, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me," and "O God, into thy hands I commit my spirit." The crowd around him were surprised at such an exhibition of devotion in one whom they had been taught to regard as a heretic. "What this man may have done before," said they, "we know not, but now, certainly, we hear him speak and pray in a godly and devout manner."
Huss was then asked by some who stood by—probably in the hope that the fear of death might lead him to recant—if he would have a confessor. A priest nearby on horseback, clothed in a green gown drawn together with a sash of red silk, heard the question asked, and, more anxious for the execution than for a recantation which might even yet snatch the victim from the flames, declared that a confessor ought not to be allowed him because he was a heretic. Huss, however, replied that he would be glad to have one. Ulric Reichenthal—one of the historians of the council—as he himself relates, called for a priest then present to come and receive the prisoner’s confession. The name of this priest was Ulric Schorand, a man of repute for learning and integrity, and highly esteemed by the council. He asked Huss whether he was willing to renounce the errors for which he had been condemned to the punishment which he now saw awaiting him. If so, he was ready to confess him; but if not, he must be aware that a heretic, according to the canon law, could neither administer or receive the sacraments. Huss having heard the conditions on which he might be confessed, declined to accept them. He replied, that he did not deem it necessary for him to confess, inasmuch as he did not feel himself to be guilty of any mortal sin. He desired, however, the privilege of improving the occasion to address the people in the German language. But the brutal elector, true to the instincts of his cruel nature and in perfect consistency with his previous course, instead of allowing permission, gave orders that he should immediately be committed to the flames. Huss at once lifted up his voice in prayer. "O Lord Jesus, I would endure with humility, for thy gospel, this cruel death, and I beseech thee, pardon all my enemies." Such were some of the expressions of his prayer. While he was thus engaged in his devotions, with his eyes toward heaven, the paper miter, which had been placed upon his head in the council, fell off. As Huss turned to behold it, a smile played over his features. Perhaps he saw in the frail thing an emblem of that impotent malice which in vain attempted to affix calumny to his name. The soldiers, however, more inclined to sympathize with their harsh leader, replaced the miter upon his head, and, referring to the images painted upon it, declared he ought to be burned with the devils he had served.

Having asked and obtained permission to speak to his keepers, Huss thanked them for the kind treatment which he had received at their hands. "Ye have shown yourselves," said he, "not merely my keepers, but brethren most beloved. And be assured that I rest with firm faith upon my Savior, in whose name I am content calmly to endure this sort of death, that I this day may go to reign with him." These words were spoken in German. We have other testimony, also, to show that even among his jailers, Huss must already have seen the fruits of his fidelity. He now wished, with his dying breath, to seal the impression that had been made by his life.

He was now stripped of his garments and bound fast to a large stake, through which holes had been bored to secure the cords. Of these there were six or seven, which had been wet in order longer to resist the heat of the flames. One
was bound about his ankles, one below and another above the knees, while others were distributed over the upper part of his body as far as the armpits. His hands had previously been bound behind his back; and he was now made fast in this position. The stake was driven downward and made to stand erect in the earth, so as to support the victim while the flames consumed him. By some accident it had happened that Huss, as bound to the stake, stood facing the east. This was observed by some of the bystanders, and the order was given that he should be turned so as to face the west. As a heretic, he might not die with his eyes directed toward the Holy Land. The order was immediately obeyed. The neck of the prisoner was now bound to the stake by a black and sooty iron chain, which had been used by a poor man, its former owner, for suspending his kettle over the fire. Huss bent his head somewhat so as to obtain a sight of it, but instead of turning pale with affright, he beheld it with a cheerful smile. "The Lord Jesus Christ," said he, "my beloved Redeemer and Savior, was, for my sake, bound with a harsher and more cruel chain. Why, therefore, should wretched I blush, for his most holy name, to be bound with this sooty one?"

Two piles of fagots were placed about the feet of Huss, which had been stripped of their covering. Bundles of straw were placed erect around the stake, reaching as far upward as the neck of the victim. Everything was now ready for the kindling of the flames. Before the torch was applied, however, one more effort was made to induce Huss to recant. It was the wish of the emperor even yet, undoubtedly, to save if possible his honor with the prisoner’s life; and it was probably by his direction given beforehand, for he did not choose to witness the scene—that the marshal of the empire with the elector approached the funeral pile, and exhorted Huss yet to save his life by retracting and abjuring his doctrines. It was the last opportunity. Would Huss now hesitate? In a loud, clear voice, he replied, with a firmness which the immediate prospect of death could not shake, "I call God to witness, that I have never taught nor written those things which on false testimony they impute to me, but my declarations, teachings, writings, in fine, all my works, have been intended and shaped toward the object of rescuing dying men from the tyranny of sin. Wherefore I will this day gladly seal that truth which I have taught, written, and proclaimed—established by the divine law, and by holy teachers—by the pledge of my death."

On hearing this final decision of Huss—unshaken in his purpose to the last—the marshal and the elector left him. The executioners kindled the flames. Amid the smoke and blaze, Huss could be heard engaged in prayer. "O Christ, thou Son of the living God, have mercy on me." The prayer was repeated, and again he was heard uttering the words of the creed, when the wind, rising with the flames, kindled the pile to a fiercer heat, and he was suffocated by the smoke that prevented his saying more. Still was he observed for one or two minutes obviously engaged in devotion. He bowed his head, and his lips were seen to
move as if in utterance of prayer. At last all was silent. The charred carcass was motionless, and the spirit had fled.

As the fagots burned away, they left the body visible, still hanging to the stake by the iron chain. The executioners with poles pushed the fragments of the burning brands back around the stake, and heaped up new fuel about the half-consumed skeleton. They struck at the bones and limbs, to break them in pieces, that they might the sooner be consumed. His head rolled down. It was beaten into pieces with a club and thrown back into the flames. His heart, found among his intestines, was pierced by a sharp stick of wood, and roasted at a fire apart until it was reduced to ashes. One of the executioners was seen still having in his possession some of the garments of Huss. The elector, on observing it, commanded that these and all that belonged to Huss should be cast together into the flames, promising the executioner compensation for the loss. "The Bohemians," said he, "would keep and cherish such a thing as a sacred relic." When everything had been consumed, the ashes, and every fragment or memorial of the scene of martyrdom, were shoveled up and carted away, to be emptied into the Rhine.

Thus perished, upon his forty-second birthday, in the full vigor of his powers, and in the strength and promise of manhood, one of those men whom the world has been constrained to acknowledge well worthy of the martyr’s crown. Even his enemies could not but eulogize his noble bearing, and respect his manly and heroic spirit. "They went," said Æneas Sylvius, who afterward filled the papal chair, and who knew all the circumstances of the execution of Huss and Jerome, "They went to their punishment as to a feast. Not a word escaped them which gave indication of the least weakness. In the midst of the flames they sang hymns uninterruptedly to their last breath. No philosopher ever suffered death with such constancy as they endured the flames."

The question here rises—What were the real causes which led to the condemnation of Huss? He himself would never allow, even to the last, that he had departed from the orthodox standards of the church, the scriptures, and the fathers. In fact, with the exception of his late approval of the views of Jacobel in regard to the communion of the cup, there was scarce a doctrine which he held, upon which he could not have found many members of the council to agree with him. When questioned upon transubstantiation and the Trinity, he replied by a full and frank confession of the Catholic formula. In regard to confession, he did not reject it, though like many of his contemporaries whose orthodoxy passed unsuspected, he did not attach to it that supreme and superstitious importance which belonged to it in the eyes of many. On other points of belief, as intercession of the saints, the adoration of images, works, purgatory, and tradition, his replies before the council show that his views differed but slightly from those of the French theologians, and the more intelligent and liberal members of the Roman Catholic church. As to the doctrine of the absence of the spiritual character in bad priests—a doctrine
so long obscure in his mind, and which at first he seems to have adopted from Wickliffe—he finishes by giving it an orthodox explanation, declaring that in the ministry of an unworthy priest, God works worthily and effectually by unworthy hands. Even with regard to indulgences, he declares himself indisposed to withhold any prerogative which God may have given to the Roman pontiff, but merely denies that they were of any value when given for unworthy purposes. Many of the propositions attributed to him by the council he publicly disavowed, and others he explained in such a manner that they could not properly be regarded as heretical. Huss attacked, not so much the doctrines of the Romish church, as their abuse, and in this respect might have found sufficient precedent for his justification, had he sought it, among the writings of members of the council.

Nor can we ascribe the condemnation of Huss to the severe language which he used in regard to the corruption and degeneracy of the church. No language to be found in his writings can exceed, if even equal, in severity, that which was employed upon this subject by Gerson, Clemengis, and D’Ailly. Many a sermon was preached before the council, in which plain and terrible expositions of the prevalent depravity were presented, startling enough to fill the mind of every hearer with astonishment and horror. No one ever attempted to deny the truth of what Huss asserted on this subject. The Cardinal of Cambray merely complained that it was said inopportunely.

One prominent feature of the criminality of Huss may perhaps be found in some lines written in an old manuscript copy of his works. "As long as John Huss merely declaimed against the vices of the seculars, everyone said that he was inspired by the Spirit of God; but as soon as he proceeded against ecclesiastics, he became an object of odium, for he then really laid his finger upon the sore."

Huss traced, like Wickliffe, a large part of the excesses of the clergy to the riches which, by the violation of ecclesiastical order, they had been enabled to accumulate. He saw them becoming lords and princes, entangled in worldly business, and inspired by worldly ambitions. He believed that it was the right and duty of the secular power to secure the proper employment of the property of the church, and when it had been perverted from its uses, it might be taken away altogether. This doctrine was a heinous one in the eyes of the clergy. It gave a mortal blow to their worldly rank and temporal authority. Undoubtedly its avowal made Huss many enemies, and these of a most unrelenting and vindictive character.

Various parties in the council stood arrayed against Huss upon distinct grounds. The theologians of the University of Paris saw in him an adherent of the philosophy of the Realists, and the *odium philosophicum*, full as much as the *odium theologicum*, brought them as Nominalists into bitter conflict with him. The English deputation, indifferent, or perhaps hostile to the philosophical views of the Parisians, taking but little delight in the verbal quibbles with
which the dialectic skill of the Cardinal of Cambray, sought to entrap Huss into self-contradiction, regarded him yet as a disciple of Wickliffe, and when they heard him defending his memory, resolved to give him up as another victim to their hatred of their own countryman.

The deputation of the German nation, moreover, had come to Constance, many of them bitterly envenomed by prejudice against Huss. They regarded him—some of them, at least—almost in the light of a personal enemy. They charged him with being the principal agent in the measures which led to the virtual expulsion of the German nation from the University of Prague. Among those who are mentioned as especially eager to secure his conviction and condemnation, we find many who in all probability had studied in that university, and carried back with them from Bohemia the inveterate hostility and prejudice which had there been excited. The most pertinacious antagonist of Huss—according to the historian, the only one who could vanquish him in argument—was John Zachariæ, professor of theology, who represented the University of Erfurth in the council of Constance, and who is spoken of as a man of extensive learning and consummate ability. To him the same historian ascribes the prevailing influence which secured the sentence of Huss. However this may be, there can be no doubt that the German nation in the council, to which Huss should have looked for defenders, was envenomed against him by the reports that had gone forth from the University of Prague.

To bring the various interests, antipathies, and prejudices of the several parties to bear against the prisoner, there were only needed the skill and malice of men like Paletz and Causis. Paletz, a former companion and associate, soon a rival in influence, at length in a moment of terror yielding up his better convictions to secure his own safety, and virtually sold over to the enemies of the man whom he now pursued, not so much for the purpose of taking his life, as for the privilege of triumph over a prostrate foe; Michael de Causis, a villain from the start, and schooled by all the practiced arts of fraud to do the meanest things which the tool of other men’s malice needs to do, while he gratifies his own, these were the leaders in a plot of which bribery was an acknowledged element, and which combined and wove into its web of intrigue the basest passions, and the most unhallowed and even conflicting interests.

And yet it is probable that all those arts by which they poisoned the minds of the council, and all the false testimony which they heaped together in order to convict Huss, would have proved vain, but for that which was in reality, after all, the chief crime that rested upon his head. He would not admit the infallibility of the council. He had too much good sense, not to say piety, to allow the word of any man, or any body of men, to silence or overthrow the clear authority of the word of God. He had appealed from the pope to Christ, the supreme Judge, in vain, if any council was to sit in judgment on Christ himself, wrest his words from their true meaning, or replace them by human
decisions from any source. He demanded, and again and again did he repeat the demand, that he should be set right and instructed by the authority of the Sacred Scriptures. To these alone, and not to the dicta of any body of men, was he willing to submit. Here was the root of the difficulty. Huss was a Protestant before the name was known. He protested against superseding the plain word of Christ by any inventions or decisions of fallible men. This constituted his crime. To this position he remained steadfast to the last. Sigismund, like a second Nebuchadnezzar, required that Huss should bow down and worship the great image of synodical infallibility which he had set up in place of the pope. The council itself repeated the demand. Obedience and submission were the only terms on which his life would be spared. These conditions Huss rejected with disdain; and his doom was sealed. He went to the stake with a clear conscience, forcing the very flames which his enemies had kindled, to emblazon before the world in fiery letters his reverence for the word of God. Had his life been spared, we can readily believe that new light would have dawned upon him, and that Luther would have been preceded in his career by a man who combined some of the noblest qualities of the martyr spirit with a firmness and decision fully equal to his own.

The character of Huss is one that the most virulent calumny has scarce dared to touch. The purity of his life, the simplicity of his manners, his love of truth, his deep conscientiousness, his aversion to all assumption or display, his strong sympathy for the poor and ignorant, his chivalrous readiness to obey each prompting of duty, though it might carry him to the prison or the stake, are plainly legible in the whole story of his life. He has no false pride that forbids him to retract an error, or reject a truth. He only asks to be convinced, and he is willing to confess his mistake. We can see at times the impetuousness of his nature breaking out under the indignant sense of wrong or injustice. He utters his feelings in sharp and even burning words. Fearing not the face of man, he dares avow his doctrines before the world, and, if the occasion demands, can lash the vices of men in power with unsparing invective and reproof. And yet, so thoroughly is he master of himself, so perfectly has he schooled his passions to self-control, that rarely a word escapes his lips, or a step is taken, which he needs to recall. In all the prominent men of his age we look in vain for that combination of qualities by which he was eminently fitted for the task committed to his hand. He showed throughout his trial a presence of mind, and a power and quickness of apprehension, which are perfectly surprising, when we consider the hardships of his severe and protracted imprisonment—for the most part deprived of books—and the tumultuous scenes in the council, which at times made it more like a mob than a body of men assembled to deliberate and judge. In other reformers we can in almost every instance detect some weakness or excess that led them into blunders, and which we sadly regret. Luther might have been to defiant, Melanchthon too compliant. Jerome, the associate of Huss, was impetuous, perhaps to an extreme; but Huss himself pursued a course in which decision and moderation, his conscientiousness and docility, his loyalty to truth, and his respect for the rights and judgment of
others, are happily blended. We could scarcely wish him to have been other than he was. Even without the crown of martyrdom, we should have been constrained to pronounce him brave and true, the possessor of a manly, noble nature.

I have not thought it necessary to sum up at length the character of Huss, for its leading features are quite distinctly brought out in the course of the narrative. Frank, genial, and confiding, he scorned all disguise of his views or feelings. His motives are transparent and avowed, and he is never ashamed to confess them. The man stands forth before us, delineated in his own words and deeds.

That he valued and desired the love of all good men is obvious, but he seems never to have been carried away by the mere love of applause. Severely, and perhaps at times morbidly conscientious, his moral character is above the reach of calumny. The malice of his enemies could not detect in it a flaw or stain. In his familiar letters, he censures himself for faults which most would have scarcely esteemed foibles. He reproaches himself for playing chess, and for an attention to dress which was unbecoming. But his gentleness and charity, his purity and integrity, are above question. They were eloquently attested, as we shall see hereafter, by the document in which the university vindicated his memory from the charges of the council.

In his controversies he never descends to personal abuse. He expresses, in strong language, his disapproval of the course of some of his party in the use of reproachful epithets. Yet it is evident that he lacked neither the occasion nor ability, had he been so disposed, to cover his opponents with ridicule, and convert his success into a personal triumph. But this his loyalty to truth as well as the kindliness of his nature forbade.

His social affections were warm and tender. His letters in exile and from prison unfold his heart to us. We have, indeed, in Huss a man whose faculties were admirably balanced—true and devoted as a friend, powerful yet courteous as an antagonist, eloquent in the pulpit, faithful as a witness to the truth before the council, a hero in the prison, and a martyr at the stake.

CHAPTER III

Jacobel, Gerson, and Voladimir

During the period which intervened between the first appearance of Huss before the council and his final sentence, there were other subjects of
discussion, of grave importance, which claimed the attention of the members of that body. The Bishop of Litomischel, as we have already seen, entered his complaint against the innovation introduced by Jacobel at Prague. The matter had been given in charge to the theologians of the council, who were directed to examine and report. The result of their labors was a small treatise, in reproof of the innovation. This treatise was submitted to the council, and furnished the grounds upon which their subsequent decree (June 15th, 1415) was based. It pronounces the authority and long practice of the church a sufficient warrant for the withholding of the cup, and declares heretical any who should maintain the contrary opinion; and such persons, as heretical, are to be proceeded against, wherever they may be found, by the diocesans, their vicars, or the inquisitors of heretical pravity, even to the infliction upon them of severe penalties.

The conclusions of the doctors and the penal decree of the council were not calculated to set the question at rest. As to the first, by their admissions they stultified themselves. As to the latter, Jacobel was not a man to be intimidated by its terrors. The doctors had admitted—as they could not well deny—that as the sacrament was instituted by Christ, and observed by the early church, the communion of the cup had been allowed. Their argument for withholding it from the laity was based upon the practice and authority of the church. A custom long observed, had, they remarked, the force of law, and the church had the right to make or adopt such changes in the sacraments as she deemed fitting. On these grounds, which would allow age to sanctify error, and permit the institutions of Christ to be mutilated or abrogated by human caprice, they justified the practice of the church in the withholding of the cup.

But the plea in its favor, drawn from custom and precedent, was by no means a strong one. Scarce two centuries had passed since the cup had been first withheld. In England the practice seems first to have prevailed, and yet, from the writings of Anselm we infer that he knew nothing of it. The celebrated Thomas Aquinas is the first of any eminence who taught that the communion of both kinds was unnecessary, inasmuch as the body and blood of our Lord are found in each. Bonaventura goes further, and advises the withholding of the cup from the laity. These two men, whose names supplied the place of authority with the Dominicans and Franciscans respectively, first gave an impulse to the innovation. The mendicant monks, swarming all over Europe, carried the practice with them. By degrees the communion of the cup fell into disuse. In order that laymen might communicate in both kinds, a dispensation was at length required by the popes. This gainful prerogative, once secured, was not likely to be given up. It was a new jewel in the tiara of papal prerogative. The first ecclesiastical statute discoverable on the subject, dates from the year 1261. It was enacted at a general chapter of the Cistercian order, and is grounded on the pretence that evils arise from making the communion of the cup general. In the middle of the fourteenth century, yet less than fifty years before the birth of Huss, the denial of the cup to the laity
had become common. But in Bohemia, on the confines of the Greek church, the innovation made slower progress. Matthias, who died at Prague in 1389, and who is said to have maintained the same doctrine on the subject with Jacobel, must have seen and conversed with those to whom the cup had been allowed. Many of the citizens of Prague, who had as yet scarce passed middle life, must have remembered how Charles IV, and Bianca his wife, at their coronation in 1347, had been allowed to partake of the communion in both kinds. In Bohemia, therefore, at least, the arguments of the council, futile and inane as they were in themselves, would lose all their force. So far as the inhabitants of that kingdom were concerned, the communion of the cup had in its favor the practice of twelve centuries. One, or even two hundred years of innovation was a poor offset—even on the grounds upon which the council argued—against a precedent of such long and continuous standing. But Jacobel did not rest the weight of his arguments even upon this ground. He had already learned, like Huss, to go back to the original records of Christianity itself; and to the authority of these—sustained as it was by the unanimous voice of the Christian fathers—he was willing to leave the question. His controversy with Broda, already referred to, shows that he had informed himself in regard to the whole subject with care and diligence. He could scarcely have been taken by surprise at the announcement of the conclusions and the decree of the council. These were published on the fifteenth of June, and must leave been known at Prague before the death of Huss.

But at nearly the same time the report of the views which Huss entertained upon the subject must have been received. His words would carry especial weight with them, as the dying testimony of one whom tens of thousands revered and loved. In his case, it was to be presumed, there was no blinding motive of self-interest to lead him to a wrong conclusion. In the circumstances of the case, his authority would, with the mass of the citizens of Prague, more than counterbalance that of the council. The latter had exposed itself to contempt, not only by its treatment of Huss, which excited the deepest indignation, but by its notorious intrigues and corruptions, unblushingly proclaimed by members of its own body. Huss, on the other hand, had been almost canonized in the affections of his countrymen, by the injustice which the council had inflicted upon him. Contrary to their design, they had crowned their victim with a dignity and power with which their own could not compete. The preacher was to be elevated into the confessor, the hero into the martyr. Powerful as the words of Huss might be from his pulpit in Bethlehem chapel, they were more eloquent as traced by his manacled hand in the cell of his Gottlieben prison. The decree of the council stood little chance of securing favor or recognition when the views of Huss were once known.

Jacobel was encouraged and strengthened by the approval of his countryman at Constance. His own conviction had been deliberately formed, and, confident of the rectitude of his course, he did not quail before the storm. But although the decree of the council doomed him as a heretic to inquisitorial vengeance, it
failed to frighten him from the stand which he had made. He took it up, along with the conclusions on which it had been based, and hurled it back in the face of the council, riddled through and through by the arrows of scripture logic. He brought the array of the Christian fathers in unbroken phalanx against an innovation of less than three hundred years’ standing at the utmost. Nor did he fail to improve so fair an occasion of speaking some plain truths upon kindred topics.

The argument of Jacobel displays throughout an uncompromising love of truth, a thorough detestation of all hypocrisy and injustice, a devoted fidelity to the authority of scripture, as well as a most vigorous intellect and a glowing eloquence. As he takes up the conclusions of the doctors, adopting the first, and exposing the more fully thereby the fallacy and absurdity of the last, and then proceeds to attack the decree of the council, which, in its cruel severity, bore its condemnation on its face, all his powers and feelings are aroused, and his argument grows fierce and terrible as it clothes itself in the mantle of injured and insulted truth. His irony, contempt, sarcasm, and grave reproof, not unmingled with a sadder tone that breathes a dirge, like music over the bleeding wounds of persecuted truth, carry us along on the tide of argument, and we feel that resistance is vain. The man’s words come from the deepest fountains of feeling and conviction. His heart is a volcano, pouring forth a lava tide of fiery logic that scathes and burns all it touches. He does not fight as one that beateth the air. He feels that he is dealing with real antagonists.

Each paragraph is sharp and pointed as a dagger. Every sentence stings. "If we are Christ’s priests," he says, "I know not whom we should follow rather than Christ himself." "If Christ is the foundation—as we have heard from their own month in regard to this doctrine—not only the doctors of the council of Constance, but the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "Whoever loves the truth, let him dismiss these doctors, even though there were a legion of them, and hear him who is the Truth—Christ, that great Prophet, the well-beloved of the Father." "Into such senselessness do they fall, who, when anything obscure prevents them from discerning the truth, have recourse, not to the words of the prophets, the writings of the apostles, or the authority of the gospel—and so become masters of error because they never were disciples of the truth."

Jacobel takes occasion to show how the disciples of Christ, who truly followed in his steps, have been persecuted and charged with heresy. Abel was killed, Joseph sold as a slave, Isaiah sawn in sunder, Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, crucified. Paul, after the manner that men called heresy, worshipped the God of his fathers. "Such men the council takes on false testimony, convicts and condemns them of heresy, and then delivers them over to the secular arm to be punished. O Jesus Christ, the author of this truth! do they not, as far as in them is, make thee an heresiarch? They give up thee and thy holy primitive church to the secular arm, and still wish to be called
guiltless of murder, and charitable! As of old the Pharisees and the priests, so holy that they would not enter the praetorium, or the house of a Gentile, gave up the Innocent One to be crucified, while they said ‘It is not lawful for us to put any one to death,’ so now is their example copied by those, who first defame, then cite to trial, excommunicate and hastily arrest, and degrade, cursing body and soul as far as in them lies, and handing their victims over to the secular court. And as the Jews then said, ‘If thou lettest this man go, thou art not Caesar’s friend,’ so now these men say, ‘Powerful master, this man is under your jurisdiction; the church has no more to do with him, and so he must be restrained by the civil power.’ ... O King of kings and Lord of lords, tribulations are on every side, thou Eternal Father! For if, according to thine own command, I am to hear thy well-beloved Son, and listen to the gospel, as that well-beloved Son himself gave commandment, I shall be excommunicated, accounted a heretic, condemned, burned, or in some other way put to death by this Roman church, which savors not the nature or practice of the primitive one. But if I do not obey the gospel, eternal death and everlasting fire will be my portion when our Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with his angels, to take vengeance upon those that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. “What choice then shall I make? But I know that if I should please men, I should be no more the servant of Jesus Christ. ... Fear not those, therefore, who can only kill the body. Not a hair of your head shall perish without our Father; in patience possess ye your souls.

"Since, then, all power is given to Christ, in heaven and on earth, who would dare to bring him into subjection to his own rules, shaping His gospel law according to his own caprice—who, but the son of perdition, who is exalted above all that is called God?"

Jacobel does not spare the persecuting doctrines of the council embodied in their decree. “Ye know not what spirit ye are of. Christ came, not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them. Mahomet taught his followers to persecute and kill; Christ did not. ... By their fruits ye shall know them, yea, those who invoke the secular arm against such as practice gospel truth. ... Antichrist, as Thomas says, forces, by threats and torture, those whom he cannot otherwise subdue.” Jacobel seems to see fulfilled before his eyes the prophecies in regard to the last days. He quotes the language employed in previous centuries by those whom the church still honored, and shows how severely it bore against those who chose to obey, and force others to obey, men rather than God. Their final doom he holds up as a fearful warning.

The whole treatise is written in a bold, manly, and uncompromising spirit. It was the gauntlet of defiance thrown down at the feet of the council. From first to last, it breathes not a note of fear or submission. While perfectly decorous in language, it tears away the last thread of apology with which the council would veil its tyranny and iniquity. The occasion upon which it was written lent
it a new force. The whole Bohemian nation were indignant at the outrage offered to their countryman. Jacobel’s words gave expression to the convictions of thousands. They sank deep into the hearts of the people, and animated them to a nobly resistance of ecclesiastical tyranny.

The council, meanwhile, did not neglect the subject of the schism of the church. By deposition they had disposed of John XXIII, but Gregory and Benedict still maintained their rival claims to the pontificate. The former, however, worn out with years and care, was unequal to the task of long defying the authority of the council. At the opportune moment he had intimated his willingness, on certain conditions, to resign his office, and thus remove another obstacle to the union of the church. Negotiations upon the subject had been commenced, and the matter was so far matured that in the fourteenth session, two days before the death of Huss, the act of abdication was solemnly executed. Charles Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, was authorized by Gregory to act as plenipotentiary in his behalf. The two conditions of abdication which his master insisted upon were that the council should consent to be convoked anew by him so that he might regard it as legitimate, and that a cardinal of his obedience should preside over the council. The first of these conditions was admitted without much difficulty, the council readily perceiving that although its previous sessions would thus bear the imputation of being unauthorized, even Gregory himself would admit the justice of the process by which his rival, John XXIII, had been deposed. The other condition the council refused to grant, but compromised the matter by directing the emperor to preside while the abdication of Gregory took place.

The council forbade any steps to be taken for a new election without its permission. There might have been reason for apprehension lest the united cardinals, weary of the council’s delay, might assume their prerogative, and give the church a new head from among their own number. The usages, rights, and privileges, allowed in previous elections, were therefore suspended. The council reserved to itself the authority of regulating the time, place, and form of this election.

It was, moreover, decreed that the council should not be dissolved until such an election had taken place, and the emperor was invoked to maintain and defend its rights. To this request Sigismund acceded. He published an edict, threatening severe penalties against any who should conspire or attempt anything to the prejudice of the liberty of the assembly.

Upon his abdication Gregory was allowed by the grateful council to retain the dignity of cardinal, and to hold the highest rank in the college of which he was a member. His six cardinals were confirmed in their offices, and the two obediences were united.
The council terminated its fourteenth session by the reading of a decrees
summoning Benedict XIII, the last recusant pope, to keep his promise, and
abdicate the pontificate within ten days, under pain of being proceeded
against as schismatic, incorrigible, devoid of faith, and perjured. In case of
contumacy, the emperor was authorized to act in the matter according to his
discretion.

Another subject, which in the minds of some of the members of the council was
of scarcely less importance than the unity of the church, had already been
brought to the notice of the council. This was the affair of John Petit. We have
heretofore noticed the part which he took on the questions that arose out of
the murder of the Duke of Orleans by the Duke of Burgundy. The last—bold,
perfidious, and desperate in his daring—had awed the court of France by the
terror and power of his name. He boldly avowed the wicked deed by which he
removed an odious rival, and demanded and received from the weak king of
France, the brother of the murdered man, the pardon of his crime. But no
sooner did he return to his hereditary states than the scale turned against him.
His deed ceased to be regarded in the light of a patriotic act, and his enemies
represented it as being what it really was—a heinous, inexcusable, and
deliberate murder. The Duke of Burgundy needed the aid of logical casuistry to
justify what he had done in the eyes of those who did not fear the glitter of his
sword. He found it in the person of John Petit, a member of the university,
who, grateful for the patronage of the duke, by whom he had been educated
and supported, offered his benefactor the aid of an unscrupulous conscience, a
strong intellect, and the ability of a thorough master of scholastic arts.

This Franciscan friar was just the man for the occasion. A blind and violent
logician, scrupling not to reason against reason, and justify murder by scripture
and all the principles that should condemn it, he entered upon his task. Prompt
where all others hesitated, taking by storm what others would patiently
besiege, almost raving in his furious advocacy or invective, yet always master
of himself, and calculating with cool reason the effect of his very paradox, he
was the person to carry along with him, by the logical energy of his nature, the
mass of minds whose weakness or timidity demanded a leader. He preached
before the university a discourse as remarkable almost for its scholastic logic as
for its daring doctrine. In this curious but masterly production he hews his way
to his conclusion with a direct and straightforward energy, leaving each granite
step by which he mounts, visible and defiant to every eye. His enemies must
have admired the art and boldness of the man they denounced, and few there
were who could safely venture to encounter such a disputant.

But the thing must be done, and upon Gerson, as the ablest man in France, the
task was devolved. Nor did he shrink from it. Although, like Petit, he was a
debtor to the charities of the house of Burgundy, his mind and heart were both
arrayed on the aide of justice. He hated the logic that defended the crime, as
he detected and boldly denounced the deed itself. With a chivalrous devotion
to his cause, Gerson threw himself into the midst of the discussion. For a long

time he struggled in vain. The Duke of Burgundy carried the university with

him, and triumphed temporarily in the person of Petit. But his violence made

him odious. The relations of parties were in a state of constant change. At last,

in 1412, Gerson secured from the university the condemnation of seven articles

from Petit’s writings, in which he had maintained that a subject may justly put

a tyrant to death on his own responsibility, and even deserves to be

recompensed therefore. The king of France, in consequence of these

proceedings, directed the Bishop of Paris and the Inquisitor of the Faith to join

to themselves such a number of the doctors of the university as they should see

fit, and give judgment upon the disputed propositions. Thus originated the

celebrated assembly called the Council of the Faith. By this body thirty-seven

propositions, drawn from the writings of Petit, who had meanwhile deceased,

were condemned to be publicly burned. The sentence was duly executed, and

was inscribed, by the king’s order, in the register of each parliament of the

kingdom.

The Duke of Burgundy felt that this blow was aimed at him. In stamping the

argument of his apologist with infamy, the council had left him without an

apology for his crime, and he stood charged before the world with the murder

of his relative. He appealed to the Apostolic See. John XXIII was not indisposed

to listen favorably to the cause of a powerful ruler who hated his rival,

Benedict XIII, with a venomous malice equal to his own. Three cardinals,

appointed to examine into the affair, reported in favor of the Duke of

Burgundy. They quashed the sentence of the Bishop of Paris. The question was

thus brought to the notice of the world, and the issue joined in the face of

Christendom. It remained for each party to present his cause at the council of

Constance, and strive to secure its judgment in his favor.

The Duke of Burgundy had now, however, the manifest advantage. He merely

needed to have the council reject the appeal of the opposite party. Silence—a

passing over of the whole subject—was all that he demanded. Each party

nerved itself for the struggle, and each was strongly supported in the council.

Among the representatives of the Duke of Burgundy were Peter Cauchon, who

afterward sat in judgment on the celebrated Joan of Arc, and Martin Porree,
bishop of Arras, who had purchased his miter by the advocacy of the doctrines

of Petit. Among the bishops and doctors of the other party, representing

Charles VI, the king of France, stood forth illustrious above all others John

Gerson, a host in himself. Scarcely had he reached Constance before he took

measures to bring the question that had agitated France before the council. He

wished to have it committed to those members who were known as the

commission of the faith, and the reformatory college. It was the business of

this body to examine into all causes concerning faith, doctrine, and

reformation. They were, after investigation, to pronounce judgment, subject

to the definitive sentence of the council. To this step Martin Porree, as well as

the other representatives of the Duke of Burgundy, objected. They sought to
keep the cause of their patron entirely disconnected with questions that concerned the faith. "It was nothing more," they said, "than a simple question of morality, and religion had no connection with it." But the council on this point did not at first agree with them.

Foiled here, the Bishop of Arras, who showed himself an adroit tactician and an able advocate, studied the composition of the commission to whom the question was to be submitted. He found upon it, perhaps in part secured the appointment to it, of the three cardinals of John XXIII, who had already reported in favor of the Duke of Burgundy. But along with these, also, was found D'Ailly, cardinal of Cambray, whose views upon the question of Petit’s doctrines varied little, if any, from those of Gerson himself. From such a man, bold, able, and influential, a leading mind among any with whom he might come in contact, the Bishop of Arras had everything to fear. He resolved, if possible, that he should not be suffered to sit and act as judge. He entered before the council a solemn protest against his serving on the commission, at least in the cause at issue between the Duke of Burgundy and the king of France.

By this time Gerson must have begun to grow somewhat anxious as to the result. He found himself circumvented by management and intrigue. Although he had secured one object—to have the doctrines of Petit regarded as matters pertaining to the jurisdiction of the commission on faith—yet the commission itself was so composed that his confidence must have been not a little shaken in the result at which they would arrive.

Other events occurred that might well have increased the despondency of Gerson. The weak and vacillating monarch of France withdrew from him the authority previously granted, to act in his name in bringing the affair of Petit before the council. Gerson could hence act in his own name only, as a private member of the body. The Duke of Burgundy had agreed to adopt the same policy with the French monarch, and direct the Bishop of Arras and his colleague to proceed no longer on the authority of his name. But he did not keep his promise. It was not to have been expected that he would do so against his own interest. Guilty already of perfidy and murder, this violation of his word was but another grain thrown into the scale of his enormous crimes. Gerson had therefore to act in his own name against the avowed representatives of one of the most powerful princes of his time. Nor was the duke himself idle. Deeply anxious to secure from the council the silence that would be for him virtually a verdict of acquittal, he had approached near the confines of the city where the council was assembled. This confidence of security made his power more terrible. His pretense was, he wished to hear by night the bulling of the stags. But with his tent pitched in the great forest of Argilly, we can see the proof of the eager and anxious feelings with which he watched the proceedings of the council. The earliest intelligence was conveyed to him. We seem to see the princely criminal walking amid the twilight glooms
of the deep woods, visited by the specters of ancient crime, and hourly haunted by memories that drove him almost to desperation, in his efforts to circumvent the great chancellor. Nor did he labor in vain. The terror of his name was felt. The power of his intrigues and the skill of his agents were producing their impression. His lavished gold was an argument which Gerson could not refute.

Meanwhile new obstacles rose into view with more threatening front. England and France were on the brink of a war, in a few months to be made forever memorable, to the dishonor of France, by the terrible battle of Agincourt. On the sixteenth of April, 1415, Henry of England had announced to parliament his intention of making a descent upon France. On the twenty-ninth, he ordered all his barons to hold themselves in readiness. The English church shared in the feeling of the English nation, which demanded war. Henry’s claim to the crown of France found then to justify it who wore the robes of the ecclesiastical order. The Archbishop of Canterbury was directed to summon his vassals. In such circumstances it was obvious that the two enemies of France, the English monarch and the Duke of Burgundy, would be inclined to yield each other a mutual support. The last derived a new accession of strength from the virtual alliance of the former.

Intelligence of these things would reach Constance while the commission on the faith was holding its sessions, and discussing this very question. Its influence could not fail to be felt, not only on the English members of the body, but upon others inclined to the prudent measure of not offending a powerful ruler. Still, with all these things against him, Gerson did not despair. Undoubtedly he had hoped to humble the powerful duke. He had meant that in his person the council should manifest its power to rebuke sin even in high places, and make the criminal tremble. But in this hope he was doomed to disappointment. The council refused to implicate, in the matter brought before them, the powerful Duke of Burgundy, or any of his partisans. It did not even venture to pronounce the name of his apologist, John Petit. In the most general terms it condemned the principal proposition of the apology as erroneous in faith and subversive of civil order. This proposition was expressed in such a way, that the condemnation could scarcely have found an opponent. It was as follows: "That any tyrant may lawfully and ought meritoriously to be put to death, by any subject or vassal, whether by ambush, lure, or treachery, notwithstanding any oath or treaty, and without waiting for the sentence or authority of any judge." Such a principle one would scarce suppose admitted even of debate. In later years it became, however, a dangerous weapon in the very city where it was first forged by the bold scholastic skill of Petit. Its import has become forever memorable in connection with the dagger of Ravaillac, and the murder of the heroic Henry IV. Its condemnation was secured in the council in great measure by the urgency of the emperor, who denounced it in no measured terms. This condemnation, general as it was, cost Gerson the most strenuous efforts.
D’Ailly, who in this matter had been rejected as a judge, appeared by his side. These two men exhausted the stores of their eloquence in describing the necessary results of such a dangerous principle. They took up the several arguments urged by the advocates of the Duke of Burgundy, for leaving the matter at least in doubt, and not regarding it as a question of the faith, and demolished them one after another with a merciless logic. D’Ailly did not hesitate to declare that the doctrine of Petit merited condemnation infinitely more than the proposition of Wickliffe, which asserts that if princes fall into error, their subjects may reprehend and correct them.

The condemnation of Petit’s doctrine was pronounced while Huss was on his way to the scene of his martyrdom. To Gerson, the moment must have one of the deepest anxiety. The council had just sent Huss to the stake, and now, in a condemnation so general as to leave the real offenders unmolested, denounced a principle which would overthrow all the foundations of social and civil order. Something had been obtained, but far from what he had hoped. Was it all that he could expect? Gloomy thoughts must have filled his mind, as he reverted from the victim who had just been sentenced to the flames, to the character of those judges who had been tampered with by the agents and the bribes of the Duke of Burgundy. We may well believe that at such a moment bitter words may have escaped his lips; that in the soreness of disappointment, he gave utterance to statements which his convictions declared true, but which others might account rash. Did he begin to doubt whether after all it might not have been that in the case of Huss the council had committed a judicial murder? Did the image of the holy man, on bended knee before the assembled council, appealing to the sentence of the great Judge, haunt him with the presentiment that he too must answer at another bar to the charge of injured, of murdered innocence? We cannot tell. We only know that he boldly avowed that if Huss had been properly defended, he would never have been sentenced to the stake. We know that his deliberate opinion of the council, years afterward, was such that he could speak of it with a severity equal to that of Huss’ prison letters, and declare, “I would rather have Jews and pagans for judges in matters of faith, than the deputies of the council.”

It is but a little while after Huss has been burned as a heretic, that Gerson himself, one of his judges, is arraigned on charges, some of which were not altogether dissimilar. His enemies were resolved to bleak down his influence in the council, and no effort was spared to make him odious. It is true he triumphed in the conflict. His position, standing, and acknowledged abilities, carried him safe through the ordeal, but had his circumstances been only like those of Huss, who could have foreseen the result?

Another affair in which Gerson took a deep interest was that of the complaint of the king of Poland against the Teutonic knights. This order had arisen during the crusades, at the siege of Acre. Some German merchants from Bremen and Lubeck had witnessed the sufferings of the Christian army, and, under the
promptings of humanity and charity, had formed themselves into an organization to afford relief. They applied to the pope for the charter of all order, whose rule was to be similar in many respects to that of the Templars. The original object of the association was to defend the Christian religion against infidels, and to take care of the sick in the Holy Land. Driven out from Palestine, the order was first removed to Venice, and afterward was called in by the Poles to aid them against their infidel neighbors, the Prussians. They accepted the invitation, and with the arguments of sword and battle, at last succeeded, in the space of fifty-three years, in accomplishing the task.

Meanwhile the order increased in strength and numbers, and enlarged its territories in such a manner as to become a formidable power. At the commencement of the fifteenth century they had reached the highest point of their prosperity. Grown insolent with success, and utterly regardless of the object of their institution, they were ready at the first opportunity to arm against the king of Poland. If we are to believe the statements of the latter, presented in a letter to the Emperor Robert, in which he implores his aid, they dealt out an indiscriminate and impartial vengeance alike to Christian and infidel. Mutual recriminations were followed by frequent and bloody battles. The knights extended their ravages beyond the regions to which they could fairly lay claim, attacking the allies of Poland, already Christianized, without sparing the territory of those whom they should have regarded as their benefactors, the Polish nation itself. The knights were defeated in numerous battles, but soon contrived to recover from the loss. They complained that the king of Poland was become indifferent to the conversion of infidels, as was indeed the case if his zeal was to be measured by their violence and ambition. His humanity is attested by the tears he shed when battle was successively forced upon him. At last he had recourse to the council of Constance. His ambassadors were charged to bring the matter to its notice. It was committed for investigation to Cardinal Zabarella, assisted by two deputies from each of the nations composing the council. It was on the eleventh of May that the commission was appointed.

The question brought before them was, "Is it right, under the pretext of propagating religion, to invade foreign territory and wage war upon it?" It was a question in regard to which humanity and justice demanded to be heard. The old doctrine of the church had been, not merely in theory, but in practice, that as all the kingdoms of the world belonged to Christ, an infidel king had no right to reign, and might justly be deposed. The bloody record of the Albigenses had attested the faithful application of this principle, when Simon de Montfort had signalized his infamy by the slaughter of thousands, and turned the fertile fields of Southern France into an uninhabited desert. The career of the Teutonic knights could be justified on the strength of this principle alone. Strictly considered, it was the principle of the religious bigot everywhere. It built up the inquisition, and invented its tortures. It triumphed in the crusades, and was vindicated in the execution of Huss. But men of that day did not see it
in the whole extent of its application. Gerson could allow Huss to be sent to
the flames, but was nobly inconsistent with himself when the same principle
was to be applied on a more extended scale. His sympathies were strongly
enlisted on the side of the Polish king, and his ambassador, Paul Voladimir. The
latter, on the day previous to the burning of Huss (July 5), presented to the
German nation, by them to be considered and communicated to the other
nations, a treatise, entitled "A Demonstration," in which he undertook to prove
against the Teutonic knights, "that Christians are not permitted to employ
violent means for the conversion of infidels, nor under this pretext to plunder
them of their goods." After stating the excesses and ferocious cruelties of the
order which—invoked by Poland as a shield—had become a lash, and giving a
brief history of the peaceful progress of Christianity among those who were
now molested by them, he proceeds to show, in fifty-two consecutive
propositions, that such conduct, and the doctrine by which it is sustained, are
equally opposed to natural equity and the law of God. Some of his positions
would scarcely be allowed at the present day, but others are characterized by
sound sense and true humanity. Infidels, he maintains, if not of the fold of the
church, are yet of the fold of Christ; as he said, "I have other sheep not of this
fold." From this he infers that Christ’s successor should protect them and
defend them in their right, while they live as good citizens, instead of
maltreating them, or suffering them to be maltreated. Even he, though he may
send preachers among them whom he may sustain, must not constrain them by
force to embrace the gospel. They must be left to the freedom of their own
will, inasmuch as conversion is God’s work, and faith is not to be forced by
blows. He condemns the cruelty which had been too common in Europe in the
treatment of the Jews and other unbelievers, contending that Christian princes
ought not to plunder them, or expel them from their lands. He enforces the
teachings of natural reason in regard to the rights of individual, by the
command of the proverb not to trespass on a neighbor’s landmarks. Infidels
possess their authority as rulers from God, and by no guilt of their own.
Voladimir, while he inconsistently excepts heretics from the privileges allowed
to infidels, declares that they are not to be dealt harshly with, untried and
uncondemned. He maintains that even letters of the Roman pontiff, conferring
privileges upon any man or order, are to be interpreted in accordance with law
and the rights of individuals—a doctrine that would have spared the world the
sight of many a horror, now to be charged to the claims of papal infallibility.
He condemns the principle of doing evil that good may come. We are not to
injure our neighbor, and thus transgress the commandment in order to convert
him. The decision of the council of Toledo is referred to, as condemning the
use of violent and hard methods, and recommending only the arts of persuasion
and gentle means. Voladimir goes even beyond the spirit, not of his own, but,
we may even say, of the present age, in maintaining that the individual soldier
must be convinced of the justice of the cause in which he is engaged. If a
subject, and the matter is in doubt, it may be possible that his sovereign’s
command may be paramount. But no fear of temporal losses should induce him
to take part in a war which he knows to be unjustly waged. In these views, the
Polish ambassador unconsciously passes the limit of that servile rule which proscribes the right of private judgment. He is unconsciously arguing against the infallible authority, whether of pope or council. It shows moreover, the liberal spirit by which he was animated, that he dares to throw off the bigoted scruples of the age, and assert that a Christian prince might, in case of danger, justly seek the alliance of an infidel. He closes his treatise by picturing the horrid results that would follow the adoption of the principle of his adversaries. If all unbelievers were ipso facto disqualified from ruling; if they might be assaulted with force of arms to bring them to the adoption of the Christian faith, the door is opened to all manner of violence. The command, "Thou shalt not kill," stands in the way, and forbids all these forms of cruelty and injustice.

Erroneous as some of the positions of Voladimir were, the humane and sensible character of others shows the ability and Christian feeling of the man. As rector of the University of Cracow, and representative of the king of Poland, he honored the office and position which he occupied in the council. In many respects he and Gerson found themselves drawn together by strong sympathies.

And as if the more to unite them in feeling, they had much the same experience of the character of the council. It was for a long time in vain that Voladimir sought to obtain from the council some judgment in favor of his proposition. But he too had his Duke of Burgundy. The Teutonic order was powerful, and not lightly to be offended. Sigismund, earnest as he was for peace, was unwilling to do anything which should tend to alienate their sympathies from the great cause he had at heart—the union of Christendom against the Turk. And might not some of the principles of Voladimir’s demonstration rise up to protest even against his cherished project? In vain did Gerson lend all the weight of his influence to enforce the representations of his Polish brother. Weightier motives than those of simple justice, he must once more have felt, in the bitterness of his soul, controlled the action of the council.

But Voladimir had not only his Duke of Burgundy in the Teutonic order, but the order itself had its John Petit in the person of a Dominican monk, John Von Falkenberg. The latter became, at the instance of the order, their apologist against the king and kingdom of Poland, and he showed himself not unworthy in some respects of his Parisian prototype. The apology itself, as a whole, has perished, but fragments of it have been preserved, enough to show the venomous spirit that pervades it. It is directed to all kings, princes, prelates, and to Christendom generally, and the author promises eternal life to all that will league together to exterminate the Poles and Jagellon their king. He was accused of maintaining that the king was an idol, and his subjects idolaters; that both should be hated, as they deserved to be; that they were heretics and shameless dogs, turning back to their vomit by falling into heathenism; that to kill the Poles and their king is more meritorious than to slay pagans; that secular princes who shall do it at the risk of earthly dignity will merit eternal glory, while those who tolerate them or aid them will be damned; and that all
Poland, with Jagellon its king, is to be accounted criminal as committed to schism and heresy. This treatise, which the emperor met with in Paris a few months after the subject had been brought before the council, was subsequently condemned to be burned, as erroneous in faith and morals, seditious, cruel, scandalous, injurious, impious, offensive to pious ears, and heretical. But no sentence was passed upon it in public session. The order exerted their influence with Martin V, just then elected pope (1418), and he dared not offend so powerful a body. In vain did the French and Polish deputations, who felt that their cause was one and the same, urge the matter.

Neither Falkenberg’s book, nor Petit’s apology, odious as they both were, could be brought to share the fate to which the works of Huss had been doomed. Falkenberg himself was imprisoned, but to leave the matter there seemed to Gerson a mockery of all justice. His deliberate view of the matter, as he saw it in retrospect, is expressed in his works.

The course of the council, so he remarks, “gives the Bohemians just occasion to accuse it of a most criminal partiality, in treating with indifference a matter so vital to Christian morals and civil society, while other heresies less fatal are dealt with so harshly. It opens the gate to robbery, perjury, massacre, and assassination. It takes from bishops the power of repressing heretics, or correcting those who err within their diocese; for if they see that the council had no such authority, they will not dare to undertake its exercise. Secular princes will find themselves under the necessity of using temporal weapons against such as teach pestilent doctrine in their states. Thus the authority of the council is made cheap; its deeds are null and void; it becomes a laughingstock for infidels, schismatics, especially for Peter de Luna (Benedict XIII) and his adherents, who will not fail to exult at the result of a measure so exciting in expectations, so futile in its issue.”

It is more than possible that motives of a more personal and worldly nature than Gerson was aware of, found a place in his heart. His zeal was quickened, perhaps, by a sense of what he considered indignities offered to himself. He had boldly stemmed the tide of popular opinion, when the power of the Duke of Burgundy was at its height in Paris. His name had been mingled with the curses of the populace. His house had been sacked, and his life endangered by a lawless mob. He doubtless felt himself to have been a persecuted man. Nor had his treatment in the council been such as he might deem justly due to his position and his ability. He found, to his sorrow and disappointment, that human nature was much the same at Constance and at the French capital. The scenes of the council were such, that to take a part in them must at times have wounded his own self-respect. They were anything but models of decorum and order. Shouting, stamping, recrimination, and almost every form of confusion, were not infrequent. In Von Falkenberg, he found another John Petit, and the cause each defended was much the same. Nay, the former had even volunteered, incited, doubtless, by the bribes of the Duke of Burgundy, and to
secure his alliance, to become the avowed champion of Petit. In this character he assaulted D’Ailly and Gerson in no measured terms. His pamphlets teem with insults, full of abuse and contemptuous insolence. He speaks of Gerson as so unversed in logic that he should be sent to school to learn its rules. Not the glory of the University of Paris, but the disgrace of its ignorance, is manifest in the stupidity of its chancellor. No wonder, he says, if such a man as he, unacquainted with the rudiments of logic, occupied that post, the Bishop of Paris, with the doctors of his council of faith, should have blundered into the error of condemning the propositions of Petit.

It is not strange that Gerson’s zeal was inflamed by some sense of the personal outrage to which he was subjected. The consciousness of his own integrity perhaps needed this new spur to rouse him to the most strenuous effort. And that effort was put forth. The great man, with his noble heart and gigantic intellect, toiled on, hoping against hope, and trusting with the fondness of affection to the action of a council that was forever humbling his idolatrous respect for it by showing itself but a prostrate Dagon. Efforts that would have crushed others in weeks, were by him continued without intermission for years. It was with feelings that none can envy, that he at last withdrew from a scene that, at once, had witnessed his glory and humiliation. The dreams of early years were dashed to the earth. His enemy, the Duke of Burgundy, was triumphant. The council, which he had at first idolized, dared not touch the powerful criminal. The University of Paris was no longer his home. The murderer of the Duke of Orleans ruled there still, and the broken-hearted exile found the only repose—the only real peace he was again to enjoy on earth—in the humble monastery of a distant city. There, at Lyons, we see that intellect, which found not its peer in the assembled representatives of the Christian world, engaged in the instruction of little children, and teaching them—in a humility which had been taught by adversity—as they should pass the spot where his ashes would soon rest, to “pray for poor John Gerson!”

CHAPTER IV

The Council and the Bohemians

Jerome Recants

The execution of Huss, as the intelligence of it went abroad, was variously received. To some it afforded occasion for exultation; in the minds of others it excited only grief and indignation. The enemies of the reformer gained nothing by it. The council had only aggravated its own infamy by the cruel deed. Sigismund had forever alienated from himself the sympathies of the Bohemians, by the complacency with which he had tolerated the violation of his safe-
conduct. The instigators of the prosecution had covered their own memory with an odium which would follow them to their graves.

There were some, undoubtedly, who exulted in the fate of a man charged with heresy, one whose name had been so long coupled with that of Wickliffe, or who had been recognized by them only as a dangerous innovator. But there were not wanting those, even at Constance, who regarded the proceedings of the council, in the case of Huss, with indignation and abhorrence. The doctrines for which he was willing to die assumed a new importance. The persecuting bigotry of the council, in their method of dealing with him, the outrage committed, in his imprisonment, trial, and execution, upon all the forms of justice, combined, with the notorious corruption of the council itself, to tear from the eyes of men the veil of its false assumptions. Any public manifestations of the feelings which had thus been excited would have been hazardous in the extreme, and yet their expression could not be entirely suppressed. It would have been difficult to conceive anything more bitterly severe than the method which was taken to set forth the contempt which the council had invited upon itself. On the day after the execution of Huss, the following writing was found affixed to the doors of all the churches in the city. "The Holy Ghost, to the believers in Constance, greeting: Pay attention to your own business. As to us, being occupied elsewhere, we cannot remain any longer in the midst of you. Adieu."

None would dare to avow the authorship, and few perhaps would approve the spirit of this pasquinade. Yet many were dissatisfied and disgusted with the proceedings of the council. It was not many months after the death of Huss, that an Augustinian monk, of Mayence, preached before it a sermon, the severe rebukes of which were terrible truths or atrocious libels. "It is related," said he, "of Socrates, that he once laughed at seeing great robbers drag little ones to the gibbet; more reason would he have to laugh if he were here now at this council of Constance, where we see great rogues, that is, Simonists, suspend little ones." In truth, one only needs to note the measures of the council in connection with the sermons preached before it, to be convinced that, so far as morality and religion were concerned, the whole business of the assembly was a pompous farce. But for the blood and crime accumulated upon the hands of the actors, the council would have seemed but a theatre, on which, before the eyes of Europe and to the scandal Christendom, was played out, in the name of religion, a grand "comedy of errors." Scarce a sermon was preached, for months after the execution of Huss, which was not its virtual condemnation. The most frightful pictures of the prevalent immorality and corruption of the clergy were successively presented to view, and presented by men who were eye-witnesses of what they described, and looked the council in the face while they exhibited the memorials of its disgrace. A Carmelite doctor from Montpelier preached, a few weeks after the martyrdom of Huss, a discourse on the necessity of a reformation of the church. He demanded that most prompt and effectual measures should be adopted by the council to
correct the prevalent abuses—"the insatiable avarice, the indomitable ambition, the gross ignorance, the shameful indolence, and execrable impurity"—of the ecclesiastics. Still, a few weeks later, another preacher before the council expatiates on the same theme. After depicting the wretched condition of the church, he traces it to its causes—"in the avarice and cupidity of the ecclesiastics, their haughtiness and pride." "Who," he asks, "are those that most oppose reform? Secular princes? No! far from it. They are the ecclesiastics, who tear the robe of Christ in pieces, and whom we may compare to famished wolves, who come into the fold in sheep’s clothing, and who, under the habits of religion, conceal hearts impious and heinous with enormity."

Still later (October 25) the Bishop of Lodi, who had urged the council to severity against Huss at the session in which his sentence was pronounced, preached a funeral sermon on the death of Landolph Maramour, Cardinal de Bari. He says not a word of the dead, but takes for his subject of discourse the vices of the ecclesiastics, and the necessity of reform. The council might well blush at such reproof, if any sense of shame was left it. "Instead of being," says the bishop, "an example to the people, it is they (the people) perhaps, that will need to teach us how to live. Do we not see in the laity more gravity, decorum, exemplariness in morals and conduct, more respect and devotion in church, than in the ecclesiastics themselves? Are we to be surprised that secular princes despoil, persecute, and scorn us, making of us a public mockery? This is a just judgment of God, who will not allow this persecution to cease until we remove its cause by a change in our lives." He represents the clergy as so plunged into excess of luxury and brutal indulgence, that, in his opinion, Diogenes, seeking a man among them, would only find beasts and swine.

As if the subject was too large to be exhausted, we find an English preacher, the following week, proceeding in the same strain in a sermon before the council. With his English aversion to the mendicants, he empties out upon them the vials of his wrath, and then proceeds to administer his rebuke to the bishops and doctors, who neglect scripture, theology, and, morals, for the contentious and lucrative study of the canon law. He depicts the ignorant and sensual ecclesiastics, who leave their charges and churches, and go to the great cities to live in wantonness and splendor. He applies to them, on the part of the church, the language of scripture: "My husband is not at home; he has gone a long journey: he has taken with him a bag of silver, and will not return until the full moon. "That is," says the preacher, "until autumn, when he shall find the granaries and cellars full, and with his full purse may return to buy many rich benefices."

It would lyre tedious even to sketch the successive discourses, which turned almost uniformly upon this theme. Nothing could have justified them, nothing could have secured them a hearing in the council, but the notorious and
undeniable truth which they contained. The facts upon which they were based were too patent to be denied.

The deliberations of the council in its assemblies, moreover, were often characterized by a confusion approaching to mob violence. Repeatedly the attempt to read a statement or a protest would be clamored down. Crimination and recrimination were rife, and Gerson had reason for saying that he would sooner have Jews and pagans for his judge, than the deputies of the council. Thus all the language which Huss had used at Prague, in reference to the corruption of the church, was more than justified in the eyes of his countrymen. The council itself had exhibited the proof that the charges brought against it were true. It had refuted, beforehand, those who would have been its apologists. It had deposed the pontiff by whom Huss had been excommunicated. The mutual recriminations of its members had exceeded in severity the calmer and more moderate statements of Huss.

It was inevitable that, as the intelligence of the execution of their countryman reached the citizens of Prague, it should at once be coupled in their minds with the confessed character of a large portion of his judge. The known purity of Huss, the notorious corruption of the council, the constant appeal of one to the authority of scripture, the tyrannic demand of the other for a blind submission in which perjury was implied, presented contrasts too obvious to allow hesitation as to which party should receive their sympathies. The whole city was in commotion. Grief, indignation, and resentment pervaded the community. The exasperated multitude flocked, as by one common impulse, to the Bethlehem chapel. It was the place hallowed to them now by every memory of him whose words still seemed to echo along its walls. All classes alike felt the enthusiastic impulse to demand revenge. The dictates of prudence could scarce restrain them from an instantaneous rising. The torch of the executioner at Constance had set the nation on fire.

The ashes of Huss had been carefully gathered up and thrown into the Rhine. The council had rightly suspected that his disciples might seize upon them, if the occasion was offered, to bear them off as treasured relics. But the ingenuity of their malice went further. As a last insult to the memory of the martyr, a dead mule was buried on the spot where he was burned. "It was," says a Protestant author, "that the stench proceeding from the body might lead the people to imagine that it came from the heretic."

But all this was of no avail. The earth itself, about the funeral pile—in place of the martyr's ashes—was taken up, and carried into Bohemia. Huss was honored as the apostle and the martyr of the nation. The cruelty and faithlessness of the council were denounced in no measured term. Nor was it merely a blind and misjudging crowd that paid this homage. The barons and nobles of the kingdom met together, and, with hand on sword, swore to avenge what they regarded at once as an outrage upon innocence, and a national insult. The
University of Prague sympathized strongly in the popular feeling. The presence at Constance of those members of it who were hostile to Huss, relieved it of the opposition which might, perhaps, have sought to silence its voice, or stay or modify its decision. Prague was no place for them now. Their participation in the measures that led to the fatal deed, would have concentrated upon them the national vengeance. The doctors of the university indignantly appealed, and with a unanimity that awed all dissent—even if there was any—to the whole of Europe, against the sentence of the council, and the reproaches that had been directed against themselves. "In the midst of our innumerable and poignant subjects of grief," said they, "we consider it an imperious necessity to defend the insulted reputation of our university, hitherto always esteemed so pure, against the attacks of blasphemers. To all the other motives which induce us to adopt this course, is added the remembrance of the honor and the virtue of that man who is now lost to us forever. ... We desire to do this, that the great renown of one of our own children, John of Hussinitz, surnamed Huss, should not fade away, but shine forth more and mere in the eyes of the universe. ... We desire the more ardently that our words may be heard by all believers, because the of so great a man among us has produced so much good, before God and before man. ... For his life glided on before our eyes, from his very infancy, and was so holy and pure, that no man could show him to be guilty of a single fault. O man, truly pious, truly humble! Thou who wast conspicuous with the luster of such great virtue; who wast accustomed to despise riches, and to succor the poor, even to experiencing want thyself; whose place was by the bedside of the unfortunate; who invitedst, by thy tears, the most hardened hearts to repentance, and soothedst rebellious spirits by the inexhaustible mildness of the word! Thine it was to root out from every heart, and particularly from that of a clergy, rich, covetous, and haughty, their manifold vices, by applying to them the ancient remedy of the scriptures, which appeared as new doctrines in thy mouth; thou, in fine, following in the footsteps of the apostles, restoredst the morals of the primitive church, in the clergy and the people! ... Ah! beyond a doubt, nature had loaded this man with all her gifts, and the divine grace was so abundantly shed around him, that not only was he virtuous, but it may even be permitted to assert, that he was virtue itself! But why employ words when acts speak? A frightful death, inflicted by his enemies, and supported with such wonderful patience, proves that he placed his trust on a heavenly foundation. ... It is, in fact, a divine thing—it is the effect of a courage inspired by God alone, to endure so many outrages, so many tortures, and so much infamy for the divine truth, to receive all these insults, with a visage calm and serene, to shine forth by the greatest piety, in the face of tyrants, and thus to terminate an irreproachable lie by the must bitter death."

Language like this from the university of which Huss had once been rector, and whose members could claim with him an intimate acquaintanceship of years, is significant. Its testimony to his ability, purity, and worth is above impeachment.
The council seem to have imagined that, with the terrible example of Huss before him, his friend and associate, Jerome, could be more easily brought to retract. It was on the nineteenth of July, nearly two weeks after the execution of Huss, and two months after his own examination at the time of his capture, that he was again—after having been visited in his prison by the commission—brought before the council. These two months had been to him a period of suffering and hardship. The severity of his imprisonment had affected his health, and he fell dangerously ill. To his bodily sufferings was added, also, a more oppressive mental anxiety. The fate of Huss must have been felt as a terrible blow. We have scant record of the prison examination, or of his appearance before the council. A manuscript history states, that among the questions put him were those on the real presence, and on the Realist doctrine of universals. On these points his views agreed with those of Huss. After this public examination, Jerome was left to the sadness of his prison meditations. The council hoped that the execution of Huss would have a salutary and mollifying influence upon the mind of his disciple. They had, moreover, other matters of importance upon their hands, and could well afford their prisoner leisure for reflection. One victim at least sufficed for the present, and the issue of their policy in the case of Huss—it was soon to be found—was not such as to invite them to repeat the experiment. The argument of fire had inflamed rather than terrified those to whom it had been addressed. Jacobel persisted in his reform, which the council had pronounced an heretical innovation. The minds of the Bohemians were in no mood to relish further the logic of the stake, and the emperor also was now about to set out upon his expedition to Spain to confer with Peter de Luna (Benedict XIII) and the king of Aragon, by whom he was supported, so that the council might well feel it necessary to proceed with extreme caution.

With all the weight and authority of his influence, Sigismund had urged the condemnation of the propositions of John Petit, and had even gone so far as to say that he would not set out upon his journey until that condemnation was pronounced. Perhaps he felt that his own life was in danger from the Duke of Austria. One of the ostensible reasons of his leaving Constance during the few days preceding the final hearing of Huss, was his dissatisfaction with the council in the slackness with which they prosecuted the subject. He was reported to have said that he would not return to the city until steps had been taken toward the result which he desired. The council therefore saw fit to condemn a proposition represented as that of Petit, and in doing so—by this temporary and unwilling compromise of hostile parties—made the emperor its dupe. Sigismund seems to have regarded the measure, as Gerson wished to have it considered, the necessary initiative to further process against the defenders and promoters of Petit’s views, and, contenting himself as well as he could with the progress already made, commenced preparations for his journey.
The proposed conference was to have taken place before the emperor actually set out, but he wrote for, and obtained, the privilege of a month’s delay. Great anxiety was felt by the council in regard to the result of his enterprise. Another pope could not well be elected while Benedict XIII, with the adherence of Spain and Scotland, stood in the way. It was especially important that the king of Aragon should be withdrawn from his allegiance, and the presence and influence of the emperor, it was hoped, would most effectually promote this desired result. The greater portion of Spain—Aragon, Castile, and Navarre—the counties of Foix and Armagnac, and the kingdom of Scotland, still acknowledged the jurisdiction of Benedict. Everything that could possibly be done to withdraw these from his allegiance must be attempted. It was—so it seemed—the only course to be adopted. And yet by some it was fondly hoped that Benedict would consent to a voluntary abdication. They little understood the spirit of the man. In his feeble and attenuated frame glowed a spirit that aspired to rival a Gregory VII or an Innocent III. It was no Gregory XII with whom the council had now to deal. Benedict saw himself the sole claimant of the tiara. He evidently hoped, to the last, that such he might be suffered to remain. His old secretary, Clemengis, had written—of his own accord, according his statement, yet perhaps not without some urgency of Benedict—to the council, remonstrating with them against their decision that neither of the contestants for the tiara should be a candidate for their election. What might his influence be with his old friends, Gerson and D’Ailly? To what terms might not the council be brought by the untiring perseverance of Benedict? The last was at least resolved that his dignity should not be lost without a struggle. We shall see with what result he defied the council and the emperor.

In the sixteenth session, Sigismund announced, in a formal manner, his intended departure. The council named to accompany him, and to assist him with their counsels, fourteen deputies, of whom four were bishops, and ten doctors, selected from the several nations. The cardinals bore it ill that none of their number were appointed. But the council was too suspicious and distrustful of them to accept their nominations. The deputies were authorized to act as plenipotentiaries with the emperor for the transaction of everything that should be found necessary to secure the abdication of Benedict.

The seventeenth session (July 15) was devoted to measures preparatory to the emperor’s journey. After mass and sermon, Sigismund, laying off his imperial robes and crown, knelt with bared head before the altar, to receive the benediction of the council. With a cardinal upon either side of him, he awaited the close of prayers adapted to the occasion, when the presiding officer gave him the benediction, while the words were chanted, "Lord, preserve the king."

Among the decrees then read was one which the Jesuit, Maimbourg, does not regard as infallible. He considers it an arrogant assumption over the temporal power of kings and princes. But the council did not deem it unnecessary, and rumors of previous attempts on the emperor’s life, and his own sensitiveness to
Petit’s doctrine, effectually preserved him from any remonstrance. The decree was to the effect that "The sacred council threatens with excommunication, and with the deprivation ipso facto of their dignities, whether secular or ecclesiastical, whomsoever—whether king or prince, bishop or cardinal—who shall in any manner impede the journey of the emperor or his suite." These certainly, on the part of the council, were lofty pretensions. Had their object been other than the emperor’s security, they would scarcely have passed unquestioned. Sigismund’s anxiety for his own life led him to pawn the prerogative of exclusive secular dominion for the hope of security found in the council’s decree.

To add new importance to the emperor’s mission, a solemn mass and procession was decreed, every Sabbath during his absence, for the fortunate issue of his journey. A hundred days’ indulgence was granted to all who should assist at these devotions, as well as to the officiating priests. A forty days’ indulgence was extended to such as should substitute an Ave Maria, or Pater Noster, instead.

This had been changed from Nice, the city first designated, to Narbonne, as nearer to Perpignan, the residence of Benedict. But neither the king of Aragon nor Benedict was there. The first was dangerously ill, the last hesitated and delayed to come. At last he appeared, as if for armed conference, with soldiers and armed cavalry. But his real strength was in his own resolute and unbending will. The fire of ambition glowed like a volcano in the old man’s heart, and he met the emperor in no cringing or fawning manner. He was resolved to fall—if fall he must—a pope to the last. He had kept the first appointment of the conference for June, and when the emperor did not appear, had the insolent assurance to accuse him of contumacy, and issued a proclamation publishing the fact that he had not kept his appointment. When Sigismund reached Perpignan, Benedict was absent at Valenitia. To the emperor’s notification and request to meet him, he replied by demanding a safe-conduct which should be granted to him as supreme pontiff. The emperor escaped the dilemma which would force him to a fatal acknowledgment, by replying that on the territory of a foreign ruler it was not for him to grant a safe-conduct. Nor did he hesitate to say that he altogether ignored the claims of Benedict. He might come as cardinal, but could not be received or recognized as pope. Benedict scorned the offer as an insult. He replied by demanding, as the conditions of his renunciation of the papacy, the assembling of a council in the immediate neighborhood of his jurisdiction, in which his claims should be confirmed, after which he should remain perpetual legate a latere, with full temporal and spiritual power throughout his whole obedience—saving only the name of pope, which should be given up. The emperor refused the conditions, and summoned Benedict to appear at Perpignan. He came at last, but not to surrender his claims. The emperor was soon to find that he dealt with a wily foe.
The council made but slow progress during Sigismund’s absence. Some of its members were well content that this should be the case. Many showed a strong disposition to leave the city, either willing that the council should be broken up, or dissatisfied with the little progress made, and disgusted with its proceeding. Surely they might imagine that the Holy Ghost had taken his departure, if indeed he had ever been present. Never did any city present a more vivid picture of Vanity Fair than Constance had presented, up to the time of the emperor’s departure. It was Europe in miniature. It was the compendium of its splendor and its vice. It was the focus of ecclesiastical and princely intrigue. Each nation, each ruler, had diplomatists there to look after their interests. A very small fraction of the council had any concern to secure more than an individual and personal advantage. The knights and nobles had their sports and tourneys. Cardinals, bishops, and doctors tilted with the weapons of logic and sophistry, and, if more deeply in earnest, played a more hazardous game.

Acts of violence in the streets and neighborhoods of the city were not infrequent. It was difficult to control the immense multitude, made up of all classes and characters, and impelled by so many diverse and conflicting interests, with which the city was filled. Pillage and assassination were of frequent occurrence, not only without, but even within the walls. The princes did not hesitate to use their authority to the prejudice of the liberty of the council. Many were forced, by fear, to vote against their conscientious convictions. The council was under the necessity of passing a decree for the protection of its members, in coming to and going from it, in which they threatened with severest penalties all persons—emperor, pope, kings, princes, ecclesiastics, seculars—who should make any attempt on the life, person, or property of any connected with the body. The disposition to leave the city lead become so manifest, and threatened such dangerous consequences, that, in the session held previous to the emperor’s departure for Spain, the council appointed a commission to look after the absentees, and, under threat of the severest penalties, bring them back or keep them at their posts. Some, doubtless, were led to believe that the emperor’s departure would be the signal for a general dispersion. In fact, but little was expected of, and little accomplished by, the council in his absence. The time was mostly spent in fruitless and angry discussions.

Gerson preached a sermon before the council, at or about the time of the emperor’s departure, in which he endeavored to bring the action already taken by the council to bear upon the case of John Petit. Assuming “that a general council holds its authority immediately from Jesus Christ, and that every man, even the pope, is bound to obey such a council in all matters of faith, extirpation of schism, and reformation of the church, in head and members,” he proceeds to lay down the rules of procedure by which it should be guided. He maintains that, the authority of the council being supreme, it should shrink from the examination of no error, by whomsoever held or defended. "The
general council may, and should judge, in cases of heresy, all classes of person, however high in position, without fear, favor, or acceptance of person." "It must condemn all erroneous or heretical propositions, even though it finds itself thereby necessitated to proceed against such as assert them." Gerson then lays down other rules, certainly not above criticism, as that many propositions with their authors may be condemned, although, by the rules of grammar or logic, or by some gloss, they admit of being understood in a good sense; that propositions may and ought to be condemned, which cannot be disproved by scripture, without calling in the exposition of the doctors and the usage of the church. These positions were indeed implied in the action of the council, with respect to Wickliffe, Huss, and Jacobel, and it would have been difficult for anyone to deny it. Gerson adroitly makes use of this fact, to take away every excuse for not proceeding further, even to the condemnation of Petit’s propositions, and to proceed against the Duke of Burgundy himself. But the emperor had left the council. The weakness of the king of France was despised, and, notwithstanding the frequent letters of the emperor enjoining action in the condemnation of Petit’s propositions, little progress could be made. The Duke of Burgundy and his partisans were too powerful to be summarily dealt with.

It was a few days after Gerson’s sermon, when the council at last found leisure to give the Bohemians a tardy notice of what they had done with Huss. Twenty days had already elapsed since his execution. The popular feeling in Prague was in a state of intense excitement, and the letter of the council was only calculated to increase it. It was but attempting to quench the flame by covering it with new fuel, and it blazed the more fiercely. The letter is addressed to the bishop, the chapter, the suffragans, and the whole of the clergy of Prague. It begins with a protestation, on the part of the council, of the evils that had sprung up from schism and heresy, to the grievous affliction of the church, and of the profound grief and anxiety with which the council were constrained to regard them. It sets forth their estimate of the perverse doctrines of Wickliffe, to whom it concedes the first rank among pestiferous heretics, and states the sentence which had been passed in the condemnation of his doctrines, the burning of his books, and the exhumation of his bones. It then proceeds to show how his heresy had spread, infecting the mind of Huss, Jerome, and others, to the manifest injury of the church, and the destruction of the Catholic faith. Impelled by the earnest desire of restoring peace and delivering Bohemia from the desperate men who filled it with their pestilent doctrines, the council had yielded to the urgency of persons of the Bohemian nation, and carefully deliberated on the course to be pursued. The matter was not one of small moment. The evil was like to spread, not only among the ignorant, but the learned. The council, therefore, had proceeded to the examination of Huss and his writings, and employed all the means in their power to induce him to recant his false doctrines. The letter then states briefly the measures that had been taken, his examination, his public audience, the testimony against him, and the charity with which he had been treated. But all
efforts had proved vain. The benevolence of the council, which sought not the
death of the sinner, but rather that he should turn and live, was utterly
defeated. Huss was convicted of the most manifest and intolerable heresy,
and, after being condemned and degraded, had been given over to the secular
arm.

The letter then urges upon the Bohemian clergy the most strenuous efforts to
perfect the work thus begun. It gives Wenzel, the king, credit for a deep
anxiety to witness and aid such a desirable work. It praises the Bishop of
Leitomischel for his diligence in defense of the honor of the king and kingdom,
and the defense of the Catholic faith. It then beseeches them, "By the bowels
of Jesus Christ, to silence all those pestiferous men who teach or preach the
doctrine of Wickliffe and his zealot Huss, so that this most dangerous
corruption may be extirpated from the very extremities of the kingdom." If any
should offer opposition to this good work, they were hereby denounced
beforehand, and threatened with process, according to canonical sanctions, so
that their correction should serve as an example to others. The admonitions
and directions of the letter were enforced by the terrors of the greater
excommunication, the deprivation of benefices, and degradation from the
priesthood.

But all these threats were of no avail. An indignant and outraged people
treated them with contempt. Jacobel still preached without molestation. The
offended nobles and princes of Bohemia were strengthened in their regard for
the memory of Huss, and in their confidence of the soundness of his doctrines,
by the measures of the council, rendering itself continually more and more
odious. Even the king, steeped as he was in the brutality of a sensual nature,
showed some signs of resentment at the affront which had been offered him in
the violation of the liberty, and in the execution, without his assent, of one of
his own subjects. Daring thoughts and bold designs grew up in the minds of
many during the few weeks that followed the death of Huss. He was gone from
among them—and was no more present to repress and restrain the popular
tumult by his saintly presence and calm counsels. The multitude were impelled
by motives of a more worldly and personal character than he would have
allowed.

The importance attached to the communion in both kinds—an outward visible
symbol calculated to appeal to fanatic feeling—swelled the tide of indignation
and vengeance. This, undoubtedly, Huss would have sought to restrain. He
would never have allowed a mere rite to engross to itself the place of a
fundamental truth, however much he might admit or even urge its propriety.
The princes, knights, and nobles of the kingdom were many of them rude, bold
men, who little appreciated orthodoxy of doctrine, but who did not lack the
sensibility to wrong and outrage which urged them to resentment. They met at
once, and drew up a letter of protest and remonstrance addressed to the
council. We shall have occasion to notice it more fully hereafter.
The attention of the council was now directed, in a somewhat different spirit than heretofore, to the case of Jerome. No efforts or persuasions were spared to induce him to recant. He had already been twice examined, first at the time of his arrest, (May 24th, 1415), and again briefly on the nineteenth of July, when he had been brought before the council assembled in the church of St. Paul. For nearly two months more, he was left in prison. His third examination took place on the eleventh of September. Meanwhile, however, the most strenuous exertions had been put forth to induce him so far to submit that the council might be spared the necessity of inflicting capital sentence. We can well believe that in his circumstances they would not be without effect. He had for four months been pining in chains. The greatest harshness and severity had been shown in his treatment. He had been prostrated by sickness in his noisome dungeon, and his legs were already afflicted with incurable ulcers. Sufferings so protracted may have well depressed his spirit and exhausted his energy. In these circumstances, he was taken out of prison and brought before the council. Under terror of being burned, he was called upon to abjure his errors and subscribe to the justice of the execution of Huss.

Had one been asked beforehand in regard to the two men, Huss and Jerome, which was most like to meet the ordeal unmoved, his answer probably would have been Jerome. Nature seems to have endowed him with an eminently fearless spirit, a resolute energy, a noble generosity of soul, and a chivalrous oblivion of self, which his religious views had nurtured rather than repressed. He seemed born to be a hero. Had it been his destiny to have led armies to the field, he would have been found sharing every danger, nor shrinking from the hardships of the meanest soldier. In days like those of English ship-money, he would have been seen breasting the storm, the foremost man of all to expose himself for others, a Hampden or a Cromwell, to bid tyranny concentrate its bolts upon his head. But there was wanting in Jerome what was found in Huss—that truly Christian self-distrust, which would lead him in prayerful humility to throw himself into the arms of Omnipotence. Jerome was self-reliant. Under the impulse of conscious strength, he rushed too recklessly to the hazardous encounter. By sore trial he had to learn the lesson that taught him to be a better man, and a nobler because a Christian hero. The hardships of his imprisonment had unnerved him—had made the bold man fear and quail. The terrors of a cruel death awed him to a base submission. Human weakness prevailed. The promises and threatenings of the council shook his purpose. He signed a paper by which he declared his submission to the council, and approved the condemnation of the errors of Wickliffe and of Huss.

Yet it was at no slight sacrifice of feeling that this compliance was wrung from him. He gave as an excuse for his course, that he was not aware that the errors imputed to Huss had been truly held by him. We can scarcely admit the sincerity of such a defense. If anyone should have known what Huss taught, Jerome was the man. He must have heard him and read his books. As his intimate friend and associate, he must have frequently conferred with him, and
may almost have been said to have read his heart. But a prison was an irksome place, and death at the stake was no pleasing prospect, and in a weak hour the strong man fell. And yet there lingered so much of conscience and self-respect, that Jerome was forced to add conditions or explanations of his submission that could have been in nowise acceptable to the council. While he subscribed to the condemnation of the articles of Wickliffe and Huss, he added that he was not to be considered as thereby doing any prejudice to the holy truths which these men had taught and preached. Explaining himself afterward upon the subject, he said, of Huss particularly, that he still repeated that he did not mean to do anything tending to the prejudice of his person, and his excellent morals, any more than to the many truths which he had heard from his mouth. He confessed that he had been his intimate friend, and that he was disposed to defend him toward and against all, for the gentleness of his conversation and the holy truths which he had heard him explain to the people, but that now, on being better informed by reading his works themselves, he was unwilling to befriend his errors, though he had loved his person. *Esto quod sint amici et Plato et Socrates, sed magis amica veritas mihi est et esse debet.* Let Plato and Socrates be my friends, yet I love and ought to love truth more. Such was his attempt at justification, by which he essayed—and perhaps for the time successfully—to deceive himself. He added still other remarks. He declared, that in condemning the errors of Huss he did not thereby intend to make a recantation, because, although he had often heard and read the condemned articles, he never had held them to be articles of faith, and had never preferred his own judgment to the authority of the church.

The terms of this submission were too vague and ambiguous to satisfy the council. It was not the unequivocal condemnation of Huss which they demanded. They saw the necessity of using further influence to secure a more unqualified submission. The time between this present and the following session was employed to secure this object.

The nineteenth general session was to have been held on the twentieth of September, but was deferred until the twenty-third of the month—doubtless in order to bring Jerome to better terms. The greater part of it was taken up with the effort to induce him to retract unconditionally. The articles of Wickliffe and of Huss were again read, that he might publicly anathematize them. The Cardinal of Cambray announced the form of retraction drawn up by Jerome in his own hand-writing, conceived in the following terms.

"I, Jerome of Prague, master of arts, acknowledging the true Catholic church and Apostolic faith, do anathematize every heresy, especially that in regard to which I have hitherto been defamed, and which in past times was taught and held by John Wickliffe and John Huss, in their works, books, or sermons to the clergy and the people, on which account they were condemned with their dogmas and errors, as heretical, by this the said council of Constance, and their doctrine aforesaid was especially condemned in sentence passed by this
sacred council, upon certain express articles. I assent, moreover, to the holy Roman church, to the Apostolic See, and to this sacred council, and with heart and mouth profess, in and in respect to all matters, specially the keys, sacraments, orders, offices, and censures of the church; indulgences, relics of the saints, ecclesiastical liberty, rites, and whatever pertains to the Christian religion, as the Roman church itself, the Apostolic See, and this sacred council profess; and specially that of the aforesaid articles many are notoriously heretical, and long since reprobated by the holy fathers; some are blasphemous, others erroneous, others scandalous, some offensive to pious ears, and some of them rash and seditious. As such, the aforesaid articles were by this sacred council recently condemned, and Catholics were forbidden, each and all, under threat of anathema, venturing to preach, teach, or hold the said articles, or any of them.

"Moreover, I, the aforesaid Jerome, inasmuch as in some scholastic exercises—in order to enforce my views on the tenet of Universalia a parte rei, and to show that many qualities of the same species might be specified by one essence—described, in order to present an illustration obvious to the senses, a triangular figure which I called the shield of faith, therefore, to prevent any erroneous or scandalous understanding, which some might perhaps receive therefrom, I say, assert, and declare, that I did not draw the said figure, or name it the shield of faith, with any such intention of exalting the doctrine De Universalibus over its opposite, as if it was in such a sense the shield of faith, that, without it, faith or catholic truth could not be protected or defended, since I would by no means stubbornly adhere to it. But the reason of my calling that figure by such a name was, because, in the figure of the triangle describing the three different Persons (supposita) of the divine essence, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I regarded this article of the Trinity as the principal shield of faith, and the foundation of Catholic truth.

"Besides, that it may be plain to all what were the reasons for which I was reputed an adherent and an approver of the said John Huss, I make it known by these presents, that when on many occasions I heard him in his sermons and scholastic lectures, I believed him to be a good man, and not in any way proceeding contrary to the traditions of holy mother church, and the holy doctors. Yea, even when of late certain articles laid down by him, and condemned by this sacred council, were shown to me, I did not believe them to be his, at least in that form. And when, from certain eminent doctors and masters in the sacred page, I had heard it affirmed that they were his, I asked fuller information, and that the books might be shown me in which the said articles were reported to be contained. These being presented to me in his own hand-writing, which I know as well as I do my own, I found that the said articles were written, each and all, in that very form in which they had been condemned. Whence I have apprehended, and do now apprehend, that he and his doctrine, with those that follow it, were not undeservedly condemned by this sacred council as heretical and insane. And all these things aforesaid, I say
sincerely and absolutely, as now having been fully and sufficiently informed of the aforesaid sentences pronounced by this holy council against the doctrines of the said Wickliffe and Huss, and against their persons, to which sentences, I, as a devoted Catholic, in all and regarding all, consent and adhere.

"Also, I, the same aforesaid Jerome, who on another occasion voluntarily, freely, and of his own accord explaining and declaring my views before the most reverend fathers, etc., in this same place, made a threefold distinction, which as I afterward perceived by some was understood as if I meant to say that there was faith in the church triumphant, while nevertheless I believe that with them, there is beatific vision excluding doubtful knowledge, I do now say, assert, and declare, that it was never my intent to say that there was faith there as faith, but a knowledge which, implying all that faith could apprehend, exceeds it. And in general, whatever I there or before said, I refer and submit with all humility to the decision of this holy council of Constance.

"I moreover swear, both by the holy Trinity and by these most holy Gospels, that I will abide undoubtingly in the truth of the Catholic church; and I do pronounce all those that shall contravene this faith, with their dogmas, worthy of eternal anathema. And if I myself shall ever presume (far be it from me) to think or preach anything to the contrary, I will subject myself to the severity of the canons, and shall be found exposed to eternal punishment. This copy of my confession and profession, before this holy general council, I freely and voluntarily present, and the same and each of these have I subscribed with my own hand."

Such was the form of recantation which Jerome had been induced to subscribe. When his purpose to present it had been announced by the Cardinal of Cambray, Jerome came forward to read it before the council, prefacing it with a few remarks. Addressing himself to each and all the members of the council, whom he embraced in one "glorious assembly," he proceeded: "Since from the history of the Holy Bible it is evident, indeed and truly, that in the temple of God all may not present offerings of equal value, but each according to his ability, as some gold, some silver, some precious stones, etc., if I, with the meanest of the people, shall present in this temple of God, acceptably to God and to you, but skins of goat’s lair, I shall account that I have done enough; since the poor woman in the temple, giving from her poverty, according to the words of our Saviour, is said to have bestowed more than kings, who furnished cedar, onyx-stones, gold, and silver for the structure of the temple. Nor is this to be wondered at, since it is not things presented, but the spirit of the one that bestows them, that is to be taken into account. But by the temple of the Lord, I mean this present most holy general council. Nor as I imagine without reason, since the apostle Paul, writing to a particular church, says, The temple of the Lord is holy, which temple ye are. As to you, therefore, most eminent men, and those who resemble you, like the men of the days of Solomon, here present in this sacred temple of God, long time have you presented and offered
the gold of shining wisdom; and you that are less eminent, the silver of divine eloquence; and others still of a lower order, by your various virtues and efforts, the scarlet, purple, and hyacinth, for the larger vessels of the temple, for restoring the curtains and roof of the militant hierarchy. I, after you, so many, so great, so distinguished men, who in comparison with you am but nothing, having my head bowed down by almost every kind of faultiness—what shall I offer? Lest, however, placed in this holy temple in the presence of God and of you, I may appear entirely destitute, I may offer at least the skins of my beast-like deeds, and the goat’s hair of my unworthy conduct, with a free heart, beseeching you each and all with deep earnestness that I may not be wholly despised or condemned in this, nor be driven forth and ejected with obloquy from this temple of God, which ye are. For even these offerings of mine may be of service, in their own way and time, in the temple of God. Thus to show, with your approbation, that not only clusters of grapes, but leaves also, may contribute to render the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts not only spacious, but specious, I have prefaced this much like one who goes through steep and hidden ways, forewarning of their nature. After this entrance upon them follows this my offering, which I present voluntarily for the honor of God and of the holy faith."

Jerome then read the paper which he had drawn up, and which seemed to meet the demands of the council. They had forced him by the terror of the flames to an act of hypocrisy and of treason to his own convictions. How far at the time the sophistry of his own fears led him to believe his course to be justifiable, it is difficult to say. None could condemn it more heartily than he afterward did himself. For the present his declaration satisfied the council. He was led back to prison and treated less harshly.

CHAPTER V

Violence of the Times
Letters of the Bohemians
Zisca

In the same session in which Jerome abjured, a decree was read, which intimated the purpose of the council to follow up the task which it had begun, of extirpating heresy. The Patriarch of Constantinople and the Bishop of Senlis were appointed a commission to examine such as adhered to Huss, and inquire into their doctrines, as spread throughout Bohemia and Moravia. Other heresies, that might call for notice, were also to be referred to them. They were to hear, decide, and judge them, with all things thereto appertaining. No state, grade, rank, order, or condition was allowed exemption from their
jurisdiction. They were empowered to cite before them, in person, all who were subject to suspicion, and to proceed in their case to a definitive sentence. This commission was appointed over another to which the general subject of heresies had been committed. It was doubtless the intention of the council, by its appointment, not only to expedite business, but to place the matter in safe hands.

Many matters of local as well as general interest occupied, from time to time, the attention of the council. The subject of the papal abuse of *annates* had been strongly urged, especially by the German and some of the French nation, but the question what means should be provided for the support of the Roman court, if annates were dispensed with, furnished a problem for which a satisfactory solution was difficult. After long, tedious, and often angry discussions, the subject was for the time deferred.

The absence of Sigismund in Spain had furnished an occasion for the Turks to renew their inroads upon the provinces bordering on his kingdom of Hungary. Relieved of all apprehension by his distance from the scene, they extended their invasions so far that the council itself was not altogether free from anxiety upon its own account. Startling reports reached Constance of the terrible ravages by fire and sword which had been already committed. Sigismund’s territories were singled out for vengeance. His purpose to unite Christendom in a grand crusade against the Turk was no secret. The council felt that in his absence it became them to repay the generosity of his service by exerting themselves in his behalf. They wrote to the king of Poland, urging him to interfere to restore peace. They sent one of the bishops present at the council to engage the nobles of Hungary to remain faithful to their master. The influence of the king of Poland was at once exerted, and the negotiations for peace were like to be successful, when the violence of the Hungarians, in arresting the Polish ambassador as a spy, excited the resentment of the Turks, and hostilities were resumed. The Hungarian army was defeated, and many of its nobility were slain.

Meanwhile the council, anxious that the negotiations with Benedict XIII should be brought to a favorable conclusion, dispatched the Archbishop Wallenrod of Riga to aid the emperor with his counsel. His influence with Sigismund was well known. His energy and decision were not checked by any conscientious scruples, or enfeebled by any feelings of sympathy or humanity. The treatment of Huss, who had been committed to his charge, could attest the harsh, unscrupulous spirit of the man. The council feared lest the attention of the emperor, whose plans looked toward the securing of such a peace among the nations as to favor his project of a crusade, might be somewhat withdrawn from the matter of the union of the church, or be misled by the artifice of Benedict. But they had no good reason to distrust his perseverance or fidelity in the task in which he was engaged. He had already gained over the king of Aragon, who resolved to withdraw obedience from Benedict if he would not
abdicate his office. The latter too gave such signs of readiness to consider the proposals of the emperor, in his first conference with him, that some were deceived with the hope that he would accept the terms offered. He received the emperor with all respect, in a castle which bore his own name. In a conference of two or three hours, he seemed to give such evidence of good intentions, that the report of it at the council was welcomed with joy. He wept freely during the interview, but his tears had the virtue of the crocodile’s. The hypocrisy that belonged to the part he played called for tears, and they were shed as a matter of business. It was not long before their true value was discerned.

It was at about this time that the subject of the canonization of new saints by the church was brought, in a special manner, before the council. The king of Sweden had written to John XXIII soon after his arrival at Constance, urging him to grant the canonization of three of his subjects who had sustained a high reputation for sanctity. But John XXIII, however facile he might have shown himself in complying with the request, was too much absorbed in the conduct of his own affairs to pay much attention to others, and St. Bridget alone secured his favorable regard. He was soon placed in such circumstances that any further action on his part would have been strongly opposed, or at least sharply controverted. The ambassadors of the Swedish king, therefore, laid their letter before the council. A commission was appointed, to which the subject was referred. They were to examine into the claims of the pretended saints, the life they had led, and the miracles they had performed, and to consider generally whether it were not better to diminish the number of saints than to increase it. The members of the commission were selected from the cardinals, bishops, and doctors. Beside the cardinals of Cambray and Cologne, and the bishop of Lodi, Gerson was placed upon it. The subject which they were now to consider was one that for a long time had claimed the serious consideration of thoughtful minds. Wickliffe had denounced in the most severe terms that worship of the saints, which was derogatory to the honor of Christ as the one and only mediator. There are those, he says, that deem it right that all other intercessors should be discarded. The frequency of canonization he imputes to cupidity and ignorance of the true faith. It was obvious that the possession of a saint’s bones often ensured, to the body that held it, a large income. It was but a just inference that the frequent appeals to the court of Rome for canonization were connected with the profits that were to be the result. But, said Wickliffe, some would choose a king’s fool to intercede for them with his master, and these saints are but the buffoons—fools of the court of heaven. Moreover, in the multiplication of saints through the cupidity of men, there was great danger that mistakes would be made, and it might even come to pass that men would adore and serve the devil canonized as a saint.

But such views as these were not shared by Wickliffe alone. Henry de Hassia, or Langstein, as he was also called, a member of the University of Paris, and afterward a teacher at Vienna, had written on the subject in a manner that
secured the approbation of Gerson who had for a time known him—and perhaps been his pupil. Clemengis too, the Cicero of the university, and friend of Gerson, while exhausting the store of his wonderful eloquence in depicting the vices of the church, did not suffer the evils of frequent canonizations to escape his notice. He pronounces the advent of a new saint in the calendar a tremendous curse.

Gerson entered upon the subject with an earnestness which showed that he had not been an inattentive observer of the evils connected with it. In regard to the pretended saint and vision, he lays down the rule of investigation grounded on the principle, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The formula was: "Ask who, what, why, to whom, how, and whence." Under these several heads, he enters into a close and searching investigation of the claims put forth in behalf of pretended saints and their visions. These last might present a thousand truths, but if they contained a single falsehood, that would be fatal to them. If they came from the Spirit of God, and were intended for men, they would be intelligible, instead of obscure, as they often were. They would declare some truth which was constant with scripture, but not rendered unnecessary previously by Bible revelation. They would be concise, lest their prolixity should at length make them more burdensome than the law of the Old Testament. Gerson, moreover, represents visions as sometimes springing from injury or weakness of the brain. A person’s temperament might superinduce a tendency to visions, with which nothing but a mere human spirit had any concern.

Gerson expresses, in connection with the examples he cites, his conviction that the claims of pretended saints were to be closely scrutinized, and that prima facie there was strong reason for rejecting them. "The demon once presented himself," so Gerson relates, "transfigured as Christ, to one of the holy fathers. ‘I am Christ,’ said he, ‘personally visiting thee, because thou art worthy.’ But the holy father at once shut his eyes, covering them with both hands, and cried out, ‘I have no wish to see Christ here, it is enough to see him in glory.’ Upon this the demon immediately vanished.” Another of the fathers had a similar vision, but he kept his humility, and was kept by it. “But see,” said the holy man, “to whom you have been sent, for surely I am not such a one as is worthy to behold Christ here.” Another person was unwilling to enter the church, saying that it was enough for him that with his bodily eyes he had seen Christ; but by harsh discipline of chains, and fasting from flesh and wine, his swollen fanaticism was reduced, and he was cured.

Gerson declares that it was impossible to say what deception had grown out of this prevalent curiosity to know future and hidden things, or see and perform miracles. It had turned many away from the true religion. Superstition had spread abroad in Christendom, like the demand for signs and wonders of old in Judea, till men put more faith in the uncanonized, and in writings that were not even authentic, than they did in holy men and in the gospel. Few were able
to judge the claims put forth by those whom the people would regard as saints. Many were, consequently, deceived.

Gerson's sound sense placed him on this question by the side of Wickliffe and of Clemengis; more mild in tone, he was, in reality, scarcely less severe than they. Clemengis undoubtedly would have said, if the question in its present shape had been brought before him, that it might be worthwhile to make the council itself holy, before multiplying saints of a character almost as questionable as their own. In his deference for general councils and their decisions, he stands on the same ground with Huss himself. "It seems to me," he says, "rash to say that a general council cannot err or be deceived." In this case, however, partly through Gerson's influence, they took the right course. They declined to increase the number of the saints.

Among matters of less importance which now claimed attention, were those that respected the liberty of ecclesiastics, the privilege of prelates of the council to receive the fruit of their benefices, while absent at Constance, and rules for the better observance of the constitutions of the mendicant orders. These last had been for a long time the light infantry of the papal army. They had gone all over Christendom, at first welcomed for their poverty, their moral superiority to the ordinary clergy, and the earnestness of their preaching. But with their reputation they increased in wealth and power, till at last, in their corruption, they were very generally regarded as the nuisance of the church. The University of Paris had complained of their rapacity, vice, and violence, and Gerson was their bitter opponent. He had attacked them in his writings, almost with Wickliffe's severity. But they could not be suppressed, and it only remained for the council to make a feeble and ineffectual attempt to reform the order.

The attention of the council was moreover directed to acts of violence which had been committed against its members. Europe generally, as well as France, was torn by feuds and dissentions. The bishops and counts were at continual strife. Bernard Witt, a Benedictine monk, gives us, in his history of Westphalia, a picture of the anarchy which prevailed a few years previous, and which even still defied the power of the emperor to restrain it. "Here," he says, "you might hear the clashing of battle, there, the shrieks of fugitives and the complaints of the oppressed. Now, dwellings are torn down or burned, and again, villages ravaged, and the crops trampled to the earth. These things and others of a like character—the acts of insolent power, abusing the defenseless, are frequent." Nor could the church, or rather the papacy, be regarded as guiltless in the premises. Many of these evils sprang directly from the extortion or the perfidy of the pontiffs. Sometimes rival claimants for a benefice deluged in blood the diocese for which they contended. The history of the archbishops of Cologne for successive centuries might furnish a parallel to the enormities that rendered the history of the last days of the empire, founded by Constantine, illustrious in crime and carnage. Sometimes dissentions arose between the
clergy and the people. This was the case at Worms in 1406. For three years the clergy were expelled from the city. Although the Emperor Robert was on their side, they succeeded at last only by force of spiritual arms, against which the steel of their enemies was no sufficient defense. Henry of Lunenberg, only two years previous, had been taken captive by Count Bernard, who released him on his oath to pay as his ransom 100,000 florins. But he had only to go to Rome to receive absolution from his oath by the abuse of papal authority.

We have already seen the turbulent character of the Duke of Burgundy. France without an energetic king was torn by factions. The nobility were themselves sovereign in their own territories, and were continually at variance. There was no common authority to command respect. Nor within the bounds of the German empire was the state of things much better. On every side there were turbulence and lawless license. Frederic, Duke of Austria, though reconciled formally with the emperor, was still busy with his plots and schemes. With restless impatience he endured the restraint of a forced submission. At last he proceeded to the overt act of arresting the Bishop of Trent, and seizing upon the city as his own domain. The matter was brought by complaint before the council. They issued their monitory against the duke, commanding him to restore, within twenty days, what he had taken away, with damages for the evil done. They authorized the bishop to invoke against him, in case of refusal, the secular arm. The penalty of disobedience was most severe. The council, assuming a right which they had exercised in the decree concerning the emperor’s absence—authority over secular princes, threatened his disobedience with a deprivation of all the feoffs and privileges which he held from the church or the empire, stripping him of all authority, power, and title to reign, and his posterity after him to the second generation. The subjects of Frederic were to be released from their oaths of allegiance. He, with his accomplices who were to share his fate, was to be summoned before the council, and the ecclesiastics who should favor him were to be excommunicated.

The council probably would have scarcely dared to assume such an attitude toward any other prince than Frederic of Austria. The emperor hated him still, notwithstanding their formal reconciliation, anal gave some credit to the report of attempts made by the duke to take his life. The council were confident of being sustained by Sigismund in their course. Frederic was not the powerful Duke of Burgundy—a criminal whom they dared not touch. Despoiled of a large part of his possessions, and deprived of the favor of the emperor, he was just the object over which they might safely presume to domineer. Violent and reckless as he may have been, his conduct in this instance demanded more judicial formality, more investigation in regard to its justice or injustice, than was allowed by this summary sentence.

The facts of the case were these. George of Lichtenstein had been appointed Bishop of Trent, to the great dissatisfaction of its inhabitants. They had, as their leader, a nobleman by the name of Rodolph, who aspired to occupy the
post of the unacceptable official. This could only be secured by acts that bordered at least on violence, and tended to the expulsion of the bishop. But the latter found a friend and ally in Henry of Rottenberg, who marched upon Trent with his army and took summary vengeance upon the inhabitants. He seized and kept possession of the city, having first ravaged it with fire and sword, and put Rodolph to death. Frederic of Austria observed with anger and indignation this harsh and violent proceeding. It is not to be presumed that he was much moved by such a method of installing a bishop in his diocese, for on another occasion, if his own interests had demanded it, he would probably have been willing to have adopted it himself without a scruple.

But Trent was a friendly city bordering on his own domain. Undoubtedly, as he looked around upon his lost jewels—the territories that had been taken from him for his adherence to John XXIII—he felt an anxious desire for their recovery. But whatever motives may have influenced him, he marched to Trent, drove out the obnoxious bishop, and took the citizens under his protection. All this seems to have taken place after the emperor had set out for Spain. In the twentieth session of the council (November 6), the decree against the duke, already referred to, was read. His advocate, John Eling, protested against the decree as a nullity. For months after this, the matter made little if any progress. Frederic appeared at Constance. But he found little hope of justice in the action of the council. He seized the occasion that offered to escape secretly from the city back to his own dominions, which had been plundered in his absence. He left behind him a public placard, in which he complained of the injustice of the council, "who," he said, "had shut the mouth of his advocate." This was the thirtieth of March, 1416, after the matter had been depending for more than six months. The council, however, were indignant, not only at Frederic’s escape, but at his placard, which they considered libelous. They wrote to the emperor against him, and found Sigismund only too ready to put the turbulent duke under the ban of the empire. Frederic, moreover, found a dangerous rival in his brother Ernest, who had in his absence seized upon large portions of his estates. Yet notwithstanding all the influences and terrors that were arrayed against him, the duke maintained his ground. He defied alike the emperor and the council. He still kept the Bishop of Trent in durance, and deprived of his diocese. The effort to induce his subjects to renounce his allegiance was but partially successful, and the threatening decree of the council fell at his feet as a mere brutum fulmen.

The duke was, however, in the course he pursued, but a fair specimen of the petty princes and nobles of Europe. To restrain their violence, the council revived the memorable Carolina Constitutio, by Charles IV, on the subject of the liberty of ecclesiastics. It affixed the several penalties to the crime of trespassing on the right, person, or privileges of the clergy. They who transgressed it were to be accounted infamous, deprived of their honors, and no more to be admitted to the privileges or councils of their order. All this was
aggravated by the terrors of the imperial ban, and the canonical as well as divine judgments which were denounced upon the offender. Undoubtedly severe restraints and penalties were necessary to repress the prevalent violence, but when the clergy and prelates were often the chief offenders, their immunity only the more provoked indignant reprisals. The justice of the council should have taught them not to launch the terrors of the Caroline Constitution and their own anathema, till their project of reform had become so far effectual that the clergy could be regarded as deserving of such protection.

The work of reform, however, made but slow progress. At a congregation held on the nineteenth of December, John Nason, president at that time of the German nation in the council, gave utterance to his complaints on this subject. "The council," said he, "has been assembled for three principal objects, to put an end to the schism, to condemn heresies, and to reform the church in its head and members. John Huss has been already most justly condemned, and John XXIII has been deposed. But those same crimes are still every day committed which were the ground of his deposition, and especially the crime of simony. The German nation has hitherto redoubled its urgency for the condemnation of this and every other abuse, as well as for the exemplary punishment of those that are guilty. But, to the shame of the council, the most criminal indulgence and dissimulation have been practiced."

After this complaint and protestation, he besought the members to proceed without delay in the matter. Nor did he fail to call attention to a subject in which his own personal feelings were enlisted—the case of Jerome. He seemed dissatisfied with what had already been done, and put no faith in the recantation which Jerome had made. In this respect he was probably a fair representative of the feeling of the German nation. They were earnestly bent upon a reform of the church. They had complained repeatedly of the abuses which they wished to have corrected. In the discussion of the papal claim of annates they had been especially interested, but their defeat in regard to these matters was only a premonition of what they were still to expect. In regard to Jerome, their complaint was more successful. If there were those in the council who preferred to save him, and avoid again provoking the Bohemians, many of them were still more cautious of offending the German nation. It was less hazardous to give up an unfriended and powerless individual, whose cause, without a Duke of Burgundy or a Teutonic order to represent it, might be trampled upon, perhaps with impunity.

And yet they might well have hesitated, on mere principles of worldly prudence, to deal harshly with Jerome, for this same day another letter from Bohemia was laid before them. The bearer of it was a friend of Jerome, and yet he boldly ventured to present it to the council, although its contents could not but have been exceedingly offensive. It bore the seals of four hundred and fifty-two persons of the Bohemian nation. Some of these were barons and
nobles, and most of them persons of distinction. The language was plain, direct, and earnest. They blamed the council for the condemnation and punishment of Huss. They declared Huss to have been a holy and just man, whose equal for integrity and sanctity could not be found. The council had sinned and wrought evil in what they had done, and on this account the Bohemians declare that they will neither adhere to it, nor yield it obedience. This was indeed a bold step to take, but the council had provoked it. The popular feeling in Bohemia resented the injustice offered to their countryman, and it was felt that it would be treason to his memory to honor his murderers.

The state of feeling in Bohemia is still more clearly seen in another letter which at about the same time must have been laid before the council. The barons and magnates of the kingdom met to reply to the letter which the council had written them, informing them of the execution of Huss, and vindicating their own proceedings. The letter had been dispatched to Bohemia by the hands of the Bishop of Leitomischel. He was charged, moreover, with the task of endeavoring to extirpate the heresy of Huss from the kingdom. But he found that the work exceeded his powers. Although noble by birth and rank, and a man of great ability and iron will, rank, ability, eloquence, and energy were of no avail. He found few disposed even to listen to him. On all sides he was met with coldness or hostility. Scarcely did he dare to show himself in public. He professed fear of person as well as of property. Certainly his presence, as a member of the council, and charged to extirpate the heresy of Huss, was peculiarly obnoxious to the nation at large.

The first meeting of the magnates to reply to the letter of which he was the bearer, was held at Sternberg. A second meeting was held at Prague on the second of September, when the assembly united in a detailed statement of their grievances and complaints. Their letter was addressed "to the most reverend, the fathers, lords, lord cardinals, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, ambassadors, doctors and masters, and the whole council of Constance," and was signed by nearly sixty of the Bohemian and Moravian magnates, embracing the most important officers and nobility of the land. "Inasmuch," say they, "as each one, by natural and divine law, is commanded to do to others as he would have them do to himself, and is forbidden to do to another what he would not have done to himself, according to the words of our Savior, ‘All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets,’ yea, he who was a chosen vessel, cries out, ‘Love is the fulfilling of the law, and the whole law is fulfilled in one word, “Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself,”’ we, therefore, walking as near as we may to the aforesaid divine rule and direction, as God is our witness, express our affection as neighbors to him who was our dearest neighbor, the reverend master, John Huss, of blessed memory, bachelor of sacred theology, and preacher of the gospel, whom lately you—we know not by what spirit led—have condemned—neither confessing his crime, nor lawfully convicted, as was becoming, and no manifest errors or heresies being brought
against him, but at the accusation, instigation, and information, unfair, false, and urgent, of those who were his capital enemies and traitors, as well as those of our kingdom and of the march of Moravia—as an obstinate heretic, and have put him, thus condemned, to a cruel and most shameful death, to the perpetual infamy and disgrace of our most Christian kingdom of Bohemia, and the most renowned march of Moravia, as well as of us all. As we before transmitted in writing to Constance, to the most serene prince and lord, Sigismond, king of the Romans and of Hungary, heir of our king and master, which writing was read and published in your congregations, and—which we would be glad to disbelieve—thrown, to our contempt and dishonor, to the flames; so also now we have thought that our letters patent, by these presents, should be addressed to you in behalf of the said Master John Huss, publicly, by heart and mouth, professing and protesting that Master John Huss was certainly a man excellent, just, and Catholic, for many years spoken of as praiseworthy, in life, conduct, and reputation, in our kingdom. The gospel law, and the books of the prophets, both of the Old and New Testaments, according to the exposition of the holy doctors, and those approved by the church, did he teach and preach in a Catholic manner to us and our subjects; and many of the same things has he left to us in writing, uniformly detesting all errors and heresies, and faithfully admonishing all believers of Christ to detest the same, exhorting to peace and charity, as far as possible by words, writings, and works, so that we never heard, or could learn by diligent inquiry, that the aforesaid Master John Huss taught any heresy or error in his sermons, or preached or asserted the same; neither in any way, by word or deed, did he scandalize us or our subjects, but ever in Christ, living in piety and gentleness, did he exhort all to keep the gospel law, and the institutions of the holy fathers, for the edification of holy mother church, and the salvation of our neighbors; and this he did in word and deed with the utmost diligence. Yet all these premised—perpetrated to our confusion and that of our kingdom of Moravia—did not suffice for you, but that honorable master, Jerome of Prague, a man indisputably a flowing fountain of eloquence, master of the seven liberal arts, as well as an illustrious philosopher, him, not seen, heard, confessed, or convicted, but at the malicious information of those that were traitors to him and us, you have mercilessly arrested and thrown in prison, and perhaps even now you have put him, as you did Master John Huss, to a most cruel death.

“Besides, it has come, we regret to say, to our hearing, and from your letters we plainly gather, that certain slanderers, odious to God and men, and enemies and traitors of our kingdom and Moravia, before you and the council, have calumniated us most gravely and basely, asserting, though falsely and treacherously, that in the aforesaid regions diverse errors have sprung up, grievously and extensively affecting our hearts, and the hearts of many faithful inhabitants, so that unless the rule of correction is soon applied, the aforesaid regions, with their Christian believers, will be subjected to irrecoverable loss and ruin of souls. Such atrocious and prejudicial wrongs as these, which, notwithstanding our many demerits bring them upon us and our kingdom, etc.,
are yet falsely and lyingly imputed, how can we endure them? Since, by the
grace of God, while almost all other kingdoms of the world are often
vacillating, cherishing schism and antipopes, our most Christian realm of
Bohemia, and the most reputable march of Moravia, have, from the very time
when they received the Catholic faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, adhered most
firmly and unceasingly, without rebuke, to the holy Roman church. At what
exceeding charge and effort, and with how sacred regard and reverence, holy
mother church and her pastors have been regarded by the princes and their
followers, is manifest, beyond dispute, to the whole world. And you yourselves,
if you are willing to confess the truth, can testify to all these things. But in
order that, according to the apostolic doctrine, we may provide that which is
good, not only in the sight of God, but of men; and lest, through a negligence
of the most untarnished reputation of the aforesaid kingdom, etc., we be found
guilty of cruelty toward those who are our neighbors; therefore, having in
Christ Jesus our Lord a firm hope, a sincere conscience and purpose, and a sure
orthodox faith, we, by the tenor of these presents, to you and to all the
faithful in Christ, make known, and maintain, professing it publicly with heart
and mouth, that whatsoever man, of whatever state, eminence, dignity,
condition, grade, or religion he be, shall say or assert, that in the aforesaid
kingdom of Bohemia, etc., errors and heresies have sprung up, and infected us
and other Christian subjects of the aforesaid realm, every and each such
individual, the person only of our most serene prince, our Lord Sigismund, king
of the Romans and of Hungary excepted, whom we believe and hope to he
guiltless in the premises, each such individual directly lies in his teeth, as a
most wicked wretch aril traitor toward the aforesaid kingdoms, and is our most
perfidious and our only most injurious heretic, the child of all malice and
iniquity, as well as of the devil, who is a liar, and the father of the same.
Nevertheless, leaving these aforesaid wrongs to the Lord and his vengeance,
which will abundantly mete retribution to the proud, we shall prosecute them
further before the apostle to be elected, whom God will place as only and
unquestioned pastor of his holy church, to whom, God willing, we, as faithful
children, in all things lawful and honest, and consonant to reason and the
divine law, exhibiting due reverence and obedience, shall seek and demand in
regard to each and all the matters aforesaid, according to the law of our Lord
Jesus Christ, and the institutions of the holy fathers, that fitting remedy be
devised for the satisfaction of us and the aforesaid kingdom, etc. These things
aforesaid notwithstanding, we will defend and protect the law of our Lord
Jesus Christ, and his devoted, humble, and constant preachers, even to the
shedding of blood, all fear, and human statutes enacted to the contrary, being
cast beneath our feet. Given at Prague, September 2, A.D. 1415, in full council
of magnates, barons, lords, and nobles of the realm of Bohemia and the march
of Moravia, with the affix of our seals."

The council could not mistake the tone of this letter. It was bold, manly, and
even defiant. It breathed a deep and indignant sense of wrong. It expressed the
only too unanimous convictions of the nation. The violation of the imperial
safe-conduct was an act, the infamy and outrage of which were palpable to the most rude and unlettered. The common people and barons alike were already arraigning, and condemning it in no measured terms. And now the letter of the Bohemians, with the report of what was taking place at Prague, forced the council so far to pay homage to the sentiments of public morality as to make at least an attempt to vindicate the breach of public faith with which they themselves and the emperor stood charged. The council first discusses the validity of safe-conducts, given to heretics by secular princes. "The present synod declares that every safe-conduct granted by the emperor, by the kings and other secular princes, to heretics, or persons accused of heresy in the hope of bringing them back from their errors, must in no way serve to the prejudice of the Catholic faith or ecclesiastical jurisdiction, nor prevent these persons from being examined, judged, and punished according as justice shall require, in case these heretics shall refuse to revoke their errors; and this to be, although they shall have come to the place of judgment merely and only on the faith of the safe-conduct. And he who shall have promised them safety shall not in this case be under obligation to keep his promise, by whatever pledge he may he engaged, since he has done all that depended on him." This general principle, that faith is not to be kept with heretics, and which outraged the public sentiment even of that age, finds its specific application in the case which it was designed to cover—that of Huss. The decree stands recorded on the same page with the letter of the Bohemians, and was evidently intended to meet objections from that source. "The most holy council, etc. Inasmuch as some persons, ill-disposed or ill-informed, or perhaps assuming to be wiser than they should be, slander not only his royal majesty, but even the sacred council, as is reported, by their cursed tongues, in public and in private, saying or suggesting that the safe-conduct given by our most invincible prince and Lord Sigismund, king of the Romans and of Hungary, to the late John Huss, heresiarch of damnable memory, was unduly violated against justice and honor, while nevertheless the said John Huss, perversely assaulting the orthodox faith, has forfeited all safe-conduct and privilege, so that no faith or promise is, by natural, divine, or human law, to be kept with him, to the prejudice of the Catholic faith; therefore this said holy council declares, by the tenor of these presents, that the said most invincible prince, in respect to the late John Huss aforesaid, had done, according to the obligations of justice, what was permitted, and what became his royal majesty, commanding and requiring all and each of the faithful of Christ, of whatsoever dignity, grade, eminence, condition, state, or sex they may be, that none shall hereafter detract from, or speak against, the holy council, or his royal majesty, in regard to what was done in the case of the late John Huss aforesaid. And he who shall violate this command, is to be punished as a favorer of heretical pravity, and guilty, beyond pardon, of the crime Læsæ Majestatis."

It was indeed fitting, that deeds which would not bear the light, should be cloaked with apologies. Few criminals like to have their conduct canvassed, unless they furnish the commentary by the light of which it is to be judged.
The council at least found that their policy did not bear discussion well, and therefore employed all their art and skill to draw up a plausible defense. But their apology was only an endorsement of their crime. No slander of their enemies could be so damaging as their libel upon themselves, when, to excuse the infamy of a single act, they adopted the broad principle that faith was not to be kept with heretics. And yet this was the only resource left them. It was the only semblance of a moral rule which could be invented, on which to base and defend their extraordinary course. But the Bohemians were not duped by its sophistry. It required some deeper casuistry to satisfy them, or suppress their instincts and convictions of what was right and just. They never forgot the outrage on public faith of which their enemies had been guilty.

And yet up to this point they had no intention of breaking with the Romish church. With their letter to the council, they sent deputies who were to speak publicly in defense of their course. Anxious for the spread and success of the gospel as they had heard it from the lips of Huss, they resolved that all the churches throughout the kingdom should be provided with faithful pastors, who should preach the word of God without molestation; that if a priest was accused of any error, he should be cited before his bishop, in order, if he should be convinced of having taught any doctrine contrary to the word of God, that he might be punished and expelled; that if a bishop should chance to condemn and punish secretly, of his own individual impulse and through hatred of the gospel, any priest not convicted of error, no such bishop should be anymore allowed to cite a priest before him, but the matter should be referred to the judgment of the university, to be examined according to holy scripture; that priests of their dependence should be required to allow the excommunications of their bishops, and obey them when they were legitimate, but, on the contrary, resist them, when they were unjust or precipitate, and launched through hatred of the word of God, or any other cause which could not be lawfully known. And they declare that they are fully purposed to obey from the heart the lawful citations and excommunications of their bishops. The assembly then expresses its earnest prayer that it will please God speedily to bestow upon the church a good pope, in order that they may bring before him their lawful complaints, and they declare that they will obey him in all which he shall command conformable to the word of God.

Nothing more strikingly manifests the influence of the doctrines of Huss, or their prevalence throughout Bohemia, than the respect which is here, and throughout all their proceedings, testified by the assembly for the authority of the scriptures. They did not as yet perceive the fatal inconsistency between the claims of the council or the church, and the position which they had themselves assumed. They were simple enough to believe that if they were faithful to the spirit and precepts of the gospel, they were faithful subjects of the Romish church. The council, however, was more fully aware of the bearing and tendency of the principles avowed by the Bohemians. They saw that if scripture was allowed to be the test of truth and doctrine, the council itself
was but of secondary authority. Its claims were invalid. Its sentence was of but small account. Nor were they stupid enough to disregard the significance of the popular commotion at Prague. There was no one there on whose fidelity they could rely. The archbishop himself was powerless, and it is possible that he already leaned to the doctrines of Jacobel, which he subsequently embraced. The king was unreliable and inefficient at the best, while all the fragments of manliness left in him were but so much tinder for kindling his resentment against the council.

Among the nobles of his court, moreover, the one who had perhaps the strongest influence over him was John de Trocznow, his chamberlain. This was the man who afterward became so famous under the name Ziska, or one-eyed, for the bold hero had lost an eye in battle. Ziska proved to be one of the greatest and most successful generals of his age. He was born of a poor but noble family in the village whose name he bore. The memory of a sister, so it is narrated, who had been seduced and violated by an ecclesiastic, had kindled and fed his resentment against the whole monkish and priestly order. The treatment of Huns and Jerome had reawakened all his past indignation, and excited within him the deep but temporarily smothered purpose to avenge the outrage. He brooded gloomily over the national insult. His features bore the marks of his abstraction, engrossed in the one thought of avenging the wrong which he, as an individual, suffered in common with the nation. The king observed him, on one occasion, walking in the court of the royal palace, lost in revery. He called him, and asked what was the matter that occupied his thoughts so intensely. "The grievous affront," said he, "which the punishment of John Huss has offered to the Bohemian nation." "Neither you nor I," said Wenzel, "are in circumstances to avenge this affront, but if you can devise the means to do it, take courage, and avenge your compatriots." These words confirmed Ziska in his bold purpose. He at once began to devise measures to execute it. The permission of the king, who was but a cipher, gave him yet an immense advantage, by the mere authority it conferred. It relieved him from all apprehension, for the present at least, of any obstruction to his designs from the fickle and dissolute monarch. The magnates and nobles of the land would now venture to speak out, in the fearless tone they had used in their letter to the council. The doctors at Constance could judge by that tone, of the strength and unanimity of the national feeling.

CHAPTER VI

New Charges against Jerome
Conference with Benedict
Vincent Ferrara
In the council there were those who were decidedly in favor of treating Jerome with leniency. They doubtless, and wisely, imagined that it was the most prudent course to be satisfied with his retraction. More would thus be gained for the authority of the council than by sending him to the flames. There might, moreover, be danger in offering a new provocation to the Bohemians. But the enemies of Jerome were bent on burning him. They professed to have no faith in the retraction he had offered, and probably they were sincere. They knew that he had been "convinced against his will," if convinced at all, and they did not intend that he should thus escape. They therefore busied themselves in raking together new accusations. Causis and Paletz distinguished themselves by their zeal in the matter. They urged his enemies at Prague to draw up new accusations. Charges that before had not been thought of were now devised. His enemies insisted that he should be called to undergo a new trial. His judges, the cardinals of Cambray, Ursinis, Aquilea, and Florence, opposed the application. They represented—with prudence, if not some lingering of conscientious feeling—that such a course would be unjust, and that Jerome, having shown obedience to the council, must be set at liberty.

But this show of clemency only irritated the enemies of Jerome. Nason, the president of the German nation, whom we have seen urging the condemnation of the prisoner, is said to have replied to these representations with much asperity. "We are much surprised, most reverend fathers," said he, "that you are willing to intercede for this wicked heretic, who has done us so much mischief in Bohemia, and who might yet do you the same. I am quite apprehensive that you have received presents from these heretics, or from the king of Bohemia." Such language was extremely irritating. The cardinals regarded it as an insult. Unwilling to be driven by such invidious accusations or suspicions to further process against Jerome, they chose to throw up their office, and ask as a commission to be discharged. Their request was granted. The enemies of Jerome triumphed in securing the appointment of a new commission. At the head of it stood the Patriarch of Constantinople, who had shown the spirit of an unrelenting persecutor, in urging forward the sentence and execution of Huss. Gerson, moreover, joined the assailants of Jerome. On the twenty-ninth of October he had produced a treatise on the subject "Of Recanting and Protesting in Matters of Faith." Jerome’s name is not mentioned in it, but it is evident that it was aimed at him. Its whole scope is to show, that though a man may recant, he may do it in such a way, or it may be accompanied with such evidences, as to leave him still under suspicion of heresy. Gerson thus volunteered to become the casuist of the enemies of Jerome. He maintains that there are men with whom ignorance is crime, and among these he classes those whom he describes in drawing the picture of Jerome himself—men possessed of natural vivacity of mind, a shrewd judgment, the faculty of discernment, remarkable learning, extensive acquaintance with scripture, or with canon and civil law. Moreover, the question is asked, May not a man sin against his conscience by recanting? "The answer," says Gerson, "is plain. He must lay aside his conscience in the case
supposed, of his obstinacy." The treatise of Gerson is a fine piece of casuistry. He evidently disliked to boldly arraign the case of Jerome, but he weaves his web skillfully around it, and overlays it with suspicions. The tendency of his argument would be to encourage Jerome’s assailants. Gerson’s dislike of the man seems to have been even greater than that which he felt toward Huss. Undoubtedly he was conscientious in considering him a dangerous heretic. He was, perhaps, the only man in Europe who could fairly be considered Gerson’s rival in those very arts in which he excelled. As a disputant, he would have hesitated on no occasion to challenge the great chancellor himself. The two men were, moreover, opposed in their philosophical views, and Jerome had shown himself an able champion of the Realists. Could Gerson’s mind have been warped by these considerations? It is more than possible. The fervency of his feelings sometimes blinded his judgment. The noble bearing and matchless eloquence of Jerome won him friends in the council, but Gerson was not among them. The generosity of his heart was seared by prejudice, and in cherishing that prejudice he thought to do God service. But the most diligent efforts were made, by persons even less disinterested than Gerson, for Jerome’s condemnation. Intelligence of his retraction had reached Prague, and his enemies there became apprehensive lest, after all, he might escape. The monks especially, who had been stung by his insults and contempt, were resolved to spare no effort to secure the doom of their destined victim. New charges were drawn up against him and forwarded to the council, where the sincerity of his abjuration was already strongly suspected. The bearers of the new list of accusations were Carmelite friars from Prague. They demanded that Jerome should again be put upon his trial, and required to answer to the charges which they should present. In spite of the protest of Jerome against this new injustice, and the objections of the commission who had hitherto conducted his case, the monks, aided by Paletz and Causis, and especially by Gerson, finally succeeded in carrying their point. In this they were materially aided by the sympathies of the new commission, composed of members more of their own stamp.

On the twenty-ninth of January, 1416, the ambassadors who had accompanied the emperor to Spain returned to make their report to the council. The king of Aragon had died, but Ferdinand, his successor, had manifested a disposition to comply with the views and sustain the policy of the emperor. He resolved to withdraw obedience from Benedict, unless he would abdicate the pontificate. But the old man was not to be moved by any such terrors. He still refused to recede from his terms. He demanded the rejection of the council of Pisa, the dissolution of that of Constance, the convocation of another near his own obedience, his own confirmation as pope, and provision for his honorable maintenance on his resigning his dignity. He maintained, throughout all the conferences, that he was the true pope, and that though this might reasonably have been doubted before, it could be doubted no longer, since one of his rivals had resigned, and the other had been deposed. He maintained that it was not he who was guilty of keeping up the schism, but the council of Constance,
since, in order to end it, it was only necessary to recognize his claims; that to proceed to a new election would be only to renew the schism, since there would then be two popes; that he was resolved to maintain his right to his last breath, because he could not in conscience abandon the vessel which God had committed to his care; that as his age increased, he was the more bound to discharge his duty, and resist with all his might the storm raised against him; moreover, if for peace's sake another pope was needed, he alone could be elected, for he was the only one of the cardinals that had been promoted to that office before the schism by Gregory XI, and that consequently he, as the only one whose promotion was indisputable, was eligible to the office, even on the principles of his enemies themselves. It is said that for seven long hours the old man continued his harangue, without showing any fatigue either in his countenance or the tones of his voice, although he had almost reached his threescore years and ten.

The emperor saw that any attempt to conquer the resolution of Benedict was vain, while his conditions were utterly inadmissible. His show of compliance had been but part of the game which he was resolved to play out, and thus amuse the world with hopes never to be realized. The emperor, with the ambassadors of the council, withdrew in disgust. He was about to return to Germany. But the king of Aragon, with the ambassadors of Castile, Navarre, and Scotland, as well as others of Benedict's obedience, who had now come to a better knowledge of his character, sent to the emperor at Narrbonne, begging hint not to hasten his departure. They assured him that Benedict should yet cede, or be abandoned by his whole obedience.

Negotiations were consequently resumed. The ambassadors of the emperor returned to Perpignan. The kings and princes exerted themselves to the utmost to overcome the old man's obstinacy. They were met at every point, however, by the artifice and subtlety of Benedict. All their persuasions and arguments were lost upon him. Their threat of withdrawing their obedience produced no effect. At last matters reached such a crisis of exasperation and excitement, that there was danger of violence. Benedict seized his moment, and withdrew secretly from the city. He did this, says Niem, in concert with Ferdinand, with whom he had a secret understanding. This, however, was but a public rumor. Benedict withdrew to Callioure on the seacoast. But even here he was followed by deputies, who urged him to cede and acknowledge the council of Constance, which he might do by sending his attorneys to Perpignan, or by coming there in person. In case of his refusal, he was to be threatened with harsher measures. But even here, Benedict, who saw himself virtually a prisoner—for the deputies had taken pains to seize his galleys and prevent his escape—replied haughtily that he should still abide by the declarations which he had made at Perpignan, whence he had withdrawn only that he was restricted of his liberty, and that he should not give any more explicit answer till he had reached the place for which he had set out. Even this was not enough to show his defiant spirit. He ridiculed the pretended care of Ferdinand for the Catholic church. That was his
own business, he said, as legitimate pontiff. He moreover hurled his fulminations against all—cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, kings, and emperors—threatening them with the spiritual and temporal power, if they dared on this point to usurp any of his rights. Benedict’s cardinals also were summoned to Perpignan. At first they replied in the spirit of their master. On the second summons—with the exception of the cardinals connected with his own family—they all forsook him for the conference at Perpignan.

Benedict’s affairs were in a desperate condition. But the heroic old man did not despond. A tame submission he despised. He found means to escape from Callioure, and fled to Peniscola, some two hundred miles from his enemies, upon the seacoast. The place was a strong one, and it was said to have belonged to the house of Luna. Here Benedict could at least more safely defy his enemies. But they followed him even to Peniscola. A third and last deputation was sent him, requiring him to cede. But like those that preceded it, it proved futile. Benedict replied, that he could not recognize the council of Constance, inasmuch as it was held in a city subject to the emperor, who managed everything there just he chose, as was exemplified in the case of John XXIII, whose safe-conduct had been violated. He maintained that the emperor persisted in continuing the council in that city, only in order to elect a rope devoted to his own interests, that he might do as he pleased in Italy, and seize upon the possessions of the church. He declared, moreover, that he could not accept a council composed of the cardinals of John XXIII and Gregory XII, because this would be joining schismatics to his own Catholic subjects; and beside all, he did not deem that the place where the council was to be held should be left to the option of the emperor; that for these reasons he could not cede the pontificate without sinning against God and scandalizing the church, at least since his enemies were unwilling to accept the conditions on which he offered to cede. He added, also, that it did not belong to the council to choose a pope, but to the college of cardinals; that his reasons for withdrawal were not false, as had been pretended, and that the attempts that were made upon him every day were his sufficient justification. Moreover, he protested against all that should be done in regard to himself, on the ground of his being schismatic, as null and void. As to the reports that were circulated, that the king of Aragon was on the point of withdrawing from his obedience, and engaging others to unite themselves with him in aiding the emperor and council in proceeding against him, and deposing him from the pontificate, he besought them by the bowels of divine mercy not to afford occasion for such a scandal, which, so far from putting an end to the schism, would only cherish and extend it. He represented that the king of Aragon, especially, could not listen to such counsels without rebellion against himself, since of him he held his states, was his feudatory, and had given him the oath of fidelity. He added that even though these protestations should not reach the ears of those for whom they were intended, he should not fail to proceed against them in all requisite ways, as he was authorized and even bound by the interests of the church to do, and he referred them, for a commentary upon his word, to one of his bulls, given at
Marseilles in 1407. Yet, to show that he had ever at heart the union of the church, he declared that with this object he had already convoked a council for the month of February next ensuing, and he urgently besought the king of Aragon not to employ menace, as he was said to have done, to prevent the prelates from assembling. He said, finally, that, having learned that his enemies had published that he had advanced in his discourses or writings propositions contrary to the Catholic faith, he declared that if such were the case—though he did not believe it—he disavowed them, as having been always inviolably attached to the faith of the church, to whose judgment he referred himself for all that might be alleged against him.

Such obstinacy on the part of Benedict disgusted many of those who, up to this time, had still adhered to him, and they now determined to withdraw from him their obedience. By them propositions were sent to Narbonne, to the emperor and his council. These were, in substance: 1. That the three obediences assemble and compose a council without the permission of Benedict, and without being under the necessity of making any further requisition of him. 2. That they proceed against the said Benedict, and do all that they shall judge to be fitting for the union of the church. 3. That whatever process or anathema be designed against Benedict, it shall be sustained by all, or a greater part of, those who in the council were of the obedience of Benedict.

Upon this ensued a war of protests and manifestoes. The Archbishop of Tours took up the defense of the emperor and the council, in a document addressed to the Catholic church. He gave a brief history of the schism, the means employed to put an end to it, and the obstacles thrown in the way by the obstinacy and inconsistencies of Benedict. The archbishop closed by exhorting all Christendom to regard him as a common enemy. The ambassadors of the princes now entered into consultation with the emperor, and, in view of the obstinacy of Benedict, agreed, on the thirteenth of December, 1415, to twelve articles known as "The Capitulation of Narbonne." These articles were skillfully framed. They allowed the council of Constance to be called merely an assembly, and not a council, until those of the obedience of Benedict were united with it. Both parties were to write letters of summons to form a council at Constance, while those already there were to speak of themselves as "the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, etc., assembled at Constance." In general nothing was to be done or allowed to the prejudice of those who had hitherto been of the obedience of Benedict. The proceedings of the council of Pisa were to be regarded as null since in case of their validity the Spaniards would be convicted of having obeyed a deposed pope. All the decrees of Gregory against the obedience of Benedict were to be quashed. The cardinals of Benedict were to be received ad eundem in the council. The members of his court were to be provided for. Those who had hitherto adhered to him should see to it that in case of his death no successor was elected in his place. Safe-conducts were to be procured by the emperor for Benedict or his officials, if they wished to attend the council to prosecute the business of his cession.
With these articles, the archbishop presented to the council two other documents. One of these was an edict of the king of Aragon, by which he renounced the obedience of Benedict, and enjoined his subjects to follow his example. The other was a letter, stating that the kings of Castile and Navarre, with the counts De Foix and Armagnac, had resolved to pursue the same course. The result was hailed with the greatest joy. Public thanksgivings were ordered for the favorable issue of the negotiations, so soon as they were known at the council. They were published by the sound of trumpet through the whole city of Constance. A public procession was announced, which took place the next day (January 30, 1416) with imposing pomp.

One of the greatest blows to the cause of Benedict was the defection of Vincent of Ferrara, by universal consent the most eloquent preacher of his age. He belonged to the Dominican order, and was at this time its most distinguished ornament. He had been Benedict’s confessor, and master of the sacred palace. He was born at Valencia, A.D. 1350, and early distinguished himself for his extraordinary attainments. His days and nights were devoted with tireless assiduity to study. He read and re-read the fathers, but the Bible was his favorite book. In this we recognize the fountain from which he imbibed that zealous, humble, and devoted spirit, which he manifested in the midst of all the corruptions of his age. His eloquence and sanctity soon won for him the title of the Apostle of the West. His labors were wonderful. He traveled over Europe, mastering the language of each people, and addressing them with unwonted earnestness in their own vernacular. The discernment of Benedict led him to attach to himself and his court the most able and talented men. He induced Clemengis to become his secretary, and Vincent his confessor. One was the most eloquent writer and the other the most eloquent preacher of the age. Both long cherished an affectionate regard for Benedict, even after the vices of his court had driven them from Avignon for purer air. In fact, the most valuable testimony to the merit of Benedict is found in the continued adherence of two such men—both able, both incorruptible, both indignant protestants against the corruption of the church, and diligent students of the Sacred Scriptures. To Vincent, the common people ascribed the power of working miracles—a claim in his behalf which in them was natural, in view of his amazing gifts, his wondrous eloquence, and the multiplied conversions of which he was the instrument, but a claim which we have no evidence that he sanctioned himself.

The stories of his ability and success as a preacher border indeed on the miraculous, but are well attested. He was the itinerant apostle of Western Europe. Wherever he went his fame preceded him, and thronging thousands hung entranced upon his lips. "Men of every grade, order, and dignity," says Clemengis, "welcomed him as if he had been an angel of God." His knowledge of scripture, his lucid exposition and apposite adaptation of it, excited the admiration of this learned ex-rector of the University of Paris. The word of God, from his mouth, had such a burning, blazing power, that the coldest and
most frozen hearts were melted into penitence. The most obdurate were forced to cry out in the groans and anguish of conviction. His delivery, his gesture, the whole expression of his person, contributed to the effect. Sometimes he personated others, and made his sermons assume the form of dialogue. The farmer quitted his harvest field, the artisan forsook his workshop, to catch a sight or to hear the voice of the wonderful man. Nor did he speak only in the cities or villages. No church could have held the crowds that flocked to hear him. He took his stand in the broad plain, where thousands might be gathered to listen to his voice. They came from leagues around, and many of them came not in vain. They saw and heard, only to be convicted, converted, and reformed. They found in Vincent a John in the wilderness, a man severely simple and abstemious, whose life corresponded with his words, and who practiced what he preached. “He did not belong,” says Clemengis, “to the Pharisee class, who occupy Moses’ seat, who say and do not.” The gifts that were offered him he refused. True to his vow of poverty, his fare was simple and his raiment plain. He would not own a change of raiment, and only accepted the offer of a new garment when the old was worn out. Thus he went from province to province, and from kingdom to kingdom, leaving behind him in the results of his labor, and the reform effected, the seals of his ministry. One of the noblest testimonies to his true worth and integrity is the fact, that all the public applause that trumpeted his name over Europe left him still the same humble, devoted, incorruptible witness to the truth that he was when he first tremblingly ventured, at repeated solicitations, to ascend the pulpit. His ability and integrity are attested by the fact of his appointment as an arbitrator in various matters, but especially in one that concerned the inheritance of the Castilian crown.

The defection of such a man from the cause of Benedict gave it a mortal blow in the popular esteem. The last evasions of the obstinate old man had satisfied him that he was fully determined to persist to the last in his schism, and Vincent was no longer his dupe. He did all in his power to persuade Benedict to yield, but the eloquence that had swayed nations was powerless to change the purpose of his former master. From a devoted adherent, Vincent became a zealous opponent. It was he who preached on the occasion of the publication of the edict for withdrawing obedience, which he himself read from the pulpit.

Vincent’s course seems to have been conscientious throughout. In no instance do we discover him influenced by motives of selfish interest or personal advantage. His renunciation of the pope bears, therefore, those marks of sincere conviction which entitle it to our respect. We find the effort afterward made by Gerson to induce Vincent to come to Constance. Undoubtedly he would have found in him a congenial spirit and a well-wisher, if not a co-laborer in his projects of reform. But there is reason to believe that Vincent felt that Constance was no place for him, and that his powers would be wasted upon an assembly of whose real character he must by this tinge have been fully aware. Like Clemengis, he chose to keep space enough between himself and
the council. Was he suspicious lest they should be inclined to question his orthodoxy? They might have done so with almost as much reason as in the case of Huss. His sympathy with the Flagellants at least might have raised suspicion of heresy.

The Bohemian reformer and the apostle of the west were brothers in spirit, and we can scarce doubt that had they truly known each other, they would have bid and received a mutual good-speed in their noble work.

The emperor had accomplished all that was possible for him in Spain. The other princes, beside the king of Aragon, had given hopes of joining with him in renouncing Benedict’s allegiance. But there was opposition in their states, and some wavered. The emperor directed his course to Paris. The great battle of Agincourt had been fought but a few weeks previous (October 25, 1415), and English valor had won the day. It was a terrible blow to France. The right hand of her power was cut off; her army and a large number of her nobles and knights were slain, or taken captive. The emperor sought to restore peace to the warring nations. The common foe of Christendom was thundering at the gates of the empire, and the story of Turkish invasion and cruelty was ever ringing in Sigismund’s ear. He wished to unite the nations in a crusading warfare against the infidel. By his mediation he succeeded in procuring between England and France a truce of ten years.

But already the blow struck at Agincourt was producing its effect. The humiliation of the weak king of France was relatively the exaltation of the powerful Duke of Burgundy. Henry V of England had only fought the duke’s battles. The fruits of victory did not cross the English channel. The most obvious result was that the murderer of the Duke of Orleans was delivered from all danger on the side of France. It was all in vain that at this moment the French king wrote to the council to urge the condemnation of Petit’s propositions. It was in vain that the university reiterated its complaints. It was in vain that the emperor himself wrote once and again expressing his indignant abhorrence of principles that exposed his own life to the stroke of the assassin. The advocates of the Duke of Burgundy became more bold and earnest in their opposition. A majority of more than two thirds of the eighty-four doctors, who were directed to give in their written opinions on the subject, were against Gerson and France. These last appealed to the council in full session. The discussions were violent and protracted. The difficulties in the way of proceeding were continually aggravated. Day after day the nations assembled to discuss the subject, but no advance was made. Nothing could be concluded. The council declared expressly that no condemnation of the propositions should prejudice the person or honor of individuals.

The intelligence of the articles of "The Capitulation of Narbonne," meanwhile (February 4, 1415), reached Constance. The council assembled to hear them read, and to swear to their solemn observance. They did this, not as a council,
but as an assembly of cardinals, bishops, etc. Instead of the Cardinal de Viviers, the president of the council, the Archbishop of Tours was the moderator of the assembly. Sixteen cardinals, more than fifty bishops, more than twenty abbots, and more than one hundred ambassadors and deputies took oath to observe the articles of "the capitulation." Some, however, protested against portions of them, or against their being understood in a sense prejudicial to what they claimed as their right.

It was while these matters and those of John Petit were occupying the public attention of the council, that Theodoric of Munster (February 16, 1416) preached a sermon, in part with reference to Benedict XIII, but mainly bearing upon the vices of the clergy and the abuses of the church. It serves to show the feelings and opinions of at least a respectable minority of the council, and how strongly some of them must have sympathized in a portion of the views of the man whom they had sent to the stake. He took for his text the words, "Go ye also into my vineyard," and improved the occasion, naturally, to condemn the indolence of the ecclesiastics, and the abuses and disorders in which it resulted. By the vineyard he understands, first, the Holy Scriptures, which the bishops and priests are to cultivate by study; and, in the second place, the church, which is confided to their care. The negligence, idleness, and vicious life of the clergy are severely rebuked, and their conduct in leaving their flocks to indulge in luxury is sharply arraigned. "Yet," says the preacher, "it would be something tolerable if, in their dislike to labor in the vineyard, they would at least serve as scarecrows, to drive away the birds, but since they merely spread around them the stench of their vices, they can only be regarded as carrion, to attract ravenous beasts to trample and ravage the vineyard of the Lord. Such prelates deserve to be deposed, not only as useless servants, but as nuisances that make others breathe their pestilent corruption. ... It is a great error to believe, as some do, that a pope should be deposed only for heresy, if by this we are not to understand sins public, scandalous, and maintained with shamelessness and obstinacy." In these words he refers to the grounds on which Benedict might be proceeded against. He then goes on to condemn other faults of the ecclesiastics—their neglecting the study of Holy Scripture, to apply themselves to canon law and the decretals, for purposes of gain. Not that he would have the latter absolutely neglected, but the principal study of prelates and pastors should be the word of God, in order to preach, inasmuch as this is the original authority by which all positive law—which, moreover, is necessarily faulty and subject to change—must be tried. Enforcing his position by examples, he remarks, in language little respectful to the papacy, "That the convocation of the council and the deposition of one of the rival pontiffs would have been impossible, if it had been required to follow the new canon law which gives to the popes alone the right of assembling councils, and which lays down the principle that the pope cannot be judged except for heresy alone.” Again the preacher remarks, "Now we see positive laws, that is, the canon law, the decretals, and constitutions of the pope, exalted above the law of God and the commandments of Jesus Christ. This is the case even in this council, where
the prelates fear more to disregard the authority of the Clementines, than that of the decalogue. They take more pains to see that court rules are observed, than to prevent propositions being advanced opposed to faith and to gospel morals."

Such language was bold enough, and could scarcely have been acceptable to the majority of the council. But many of its positions had fully been illustrated in the proceedings that had taken place, especially in the case of Huss. The speaker’s reference to the scriptures as above all the authority of what he called positive law, fully coincided with the position taken by Huss upon his trial. It seems difficult to explain how such language could have been used, so much in the spirit of invective employed by the Bohemians, and so fully justifying what the council had branded as heresy. But it is evident that there were those at the council—and if united, forming a powerful minority—who were yet anxious and earnest on the subject of reform. It was impossible to silence them altogether, and it might have been a politic measure to allow them the satisfaction of having their views expressed. The statements which they presented were, moreover, so indisputably true, that the only answer they could receive was a silent acquiescence.

CHAPTER VII

Jerome Before the Council

The condition of things in Bohemia had now become such as to excite the well-founded alarm of the council. Their proceedings were boldly arraigned and their authority contemned. The Bishop of Leitomischel, bearing their commission, found himself unable to execute it. His person, and even his life, were considered as endangered in the attempt. The whole nation was in a ferment. At length, on the twentieth of February, 1416, the matter was brought before the council. It was decreed that the followers of Huss, in Bohemia and Moravia, should be cited to appear and answer such accusations as had been, or should be, brought against them.

The main ground of citation was the charge against the council, implied in the statement that Huss "had been unjustly executed, and in violation of all truth," in the assertion that "he was a good and holy man, of excellent and innocent life and pure in faith," and in ascribing his execution to "the envy of a luxurious and wanton clergy." The citation therefore extended to all those who had signed or affixed their seals to the letters addressed to the council. It comprehended the ablest and most learned men of Bohemia, as well as officers of the royal court.
"We are confident that all Christendom is fully aware, as well by previous councils as by the present one, that Satan has, in these last times especially, excited heretics or ministers of damnation against the whole ecclesiastical edifice; that these attempts have been to overthrow the Catholic faith, and the laws and usages given by the holy fathers, and till the present time inviolably observed by Catholics; and among these men are John Wickliffe and John Huss, heresiarchs, as plainly appears from their works and writings. These persons unwarrantedly assume to be doctors, and wishing to pass among the people for new law-givers and rabbis, have plunged into extravagant and damnable errors, in contempt of the holy doctrine and the traditions of the fathers, in such sort that the greater part of them are sectaries of Satan, who, wishing to rise above all that is worshipped in heaven, have been plunged to the bottom of hell, and cease not to draw men after them into the pit of their damnation. These men, wishing to raise themselves and their traditions above the hierarchy of the church militant, have associated many with them, even of the priestly order, who, after the manner of Theudas the Galilean, boasting to be new law-givers, have seduced multitudes. And what is more surprising is that the number of the followers of these heresiarchs goes on increasing continually, as we know, alas! too well, by the report of many, and by public rumor, especially in Bohemia and Moravia. There are among them even persons of rank, who are leagued together to maintain John Huss and his errors, and who, adding sin to sin, nor content with their malicious speeches and feigned devotion, write out slanderous documents, confirmed by their seals, in which they undertake the defense and eulogy of John Huss, though he has been burned by the just judgment of God and by our holy sentence. They venture also to declare that they are resolved to defend, even to the shedding of blood, these execrable heresies, and to maintain those who favor them. And, as if to make themselves a spectacle to the world by this monstrous error, they have been bold enough to write us letters full of their venom and poisoned lies. Touched, therefore, as a tender mother by the ruin of so many unfortunate ones, whose eyes have been fascinated by the devil, we have spared no pains to recover them from this diabolical obstinacy, and heal them of their frenzy, by writing to instruct them, sending them legates, and practicing in regard to them a simulation, flattery, and patience that has, perhaps, been pushed too far. But, alas! all these remedies have only served to their injury. They refuse all obedience, they will not listen to the salutary instructions of the church, and instead of profiting by the counsels of peace and truth that have been given them, they rise up against the Orthodox church, and strengthen themselves in iniquity. For these reasons we have resolved, by the aid of the Trinity, to oppose strenuously this damnable doctrine, and to proceed against these sectaries and followers of John Huss, through fear of incurring the indignation of the Most High by dissembling in regard to such great evils, after the example of the chief priest Eli, who, though in other respects a good man, drew down upon himself the divine vengeance for not having corrected the sins of his children, and sadly perished along with them. Therefore it is, that, wishing to proceed against them according to the royal way, after summary
information; and having learned, on the testimony of people worthy of faith, that Czenko de Wesele, alias Wartemberg, supreme burgrave of Prague, Lasckow de Crauvartz, captain of the marquisate, and others who signed the letter of which we have spoken, are publicly charged and suspected in regard to the faith; and inasmuch as they may not safely be sought at their own dwellings, we cite them peremptorily, by the present edict, which shall be publicly affixed to the doors of all the churches of Constance.

Leaving this citation to find its way to Bohemia, let us return once more to the affairs of Jerome of Prague. More than six months had passed away since his recantation, and nearly a year since his first arrest. The first term of his imprisonment had been one of severe hardship. His treatment afterward was more mild. There were those in the council who were ready to set him free, or at least unwilling to subject him to a new trial. But over these, the more moderate portion, embracing nearly if not quite all those who had served on the commission in his case, the opposing party prevailed. His enemies, led or spurred on by personal hostility, welcomed the announcement that new charges were to be presented against him. Many of them, from the first, had been suspicious of his sincerity in recanting. Doubtless the conduct of Jerome must have tended to confirm those suspicions. His was not a nature adroitly to play the hypocrite. It was too frank, too impulsive, too sensitive to self-disgrace, not sometimes to revolt at the thought of his belying his own convictions. During the last six months of his prison probation, he had time to reflect. Memory could not but be busy. Conscience must have sometimes reasserted her sway, and, from his own confession, we know that the prisoner must have experienced an intense wretchedness in reflecting upon his guilty weakness. To the misery of a life prolonged on such conditions, death was preferable. Jerome felt this. Remorse for the past was restoring him to himself, and when the hour of trial came again, as it now did, he was ready to meet it.

On the twenty-seventh day of April (1416), the council met, and the principal business before them was the case of Jerome. The processes for his trial had been issued more than two months previous (February 24). The Patriarch of Constantinople, and Nicholas Dinckelspuel, a theological doctor from Vienna, were directed, as a commission, to receive and examine testimony that should be adduced against him. These men visited Jerome, submitted to him the charges made, both the old and the new, and heard his answer. Their report was drawn up, and was now made to the council. It was read by John de Rocha, a theological doctor, a former friend and present defender of Petit, and in that matter one of Gerson’s antagonists. An old author of the “Life of Jerome” says that he was reluctant to recognize this new commission that had been appointed for his second trial. He certainly had the right to protest against its appointment over a previous commission, which had discharged its duty under the eyes and with the approval of the council. He refused at first to recognize the new commission, or reply to their questions. He demanded, as his right, a
public audience. Probably upon the assurance of this, he finally consented to defend himself in prison from the charges now presented.

The first head of accusation turned upon the connection of Jerome with Wickliffe. The answers of the former to the several points, as they were read were also given. They were brief and direct. He admitted that he had read the works of Wickliffe, that he was aware of their having been condemned, but to the charge of having taught the errors and heresies contained in his books, he replied, "For myself, this much I have to say in answer, that it is false that I taught errors and heresies out of his books. But this I confess, that when I was a youth, ardent in the cause of learning, I came to England, and hearing of the reputation of Wickliffe, that he was a shrewd and talented man, I transcribed, as I could obtain copies, his Dialogue and Triologue, and carried them with me over to Prague."

The articles charged went over the most prominent acts of Jerome’s life, bringing up as far as possible every instance in which he had shown a leaning toward, or a disposition to defend, the views of Wickliffe. They maintained that he had been banished from Bohemia for his violation of the edict in regard to Wickliffe’s books. He replied that he had not been banished, but that when, through the letters of the Archbishop of Prague, containing false statements, the king had been induced to deliver him up to the archbishop, he had by the latter been gently dealt with for some time, till the king sent one of his barons, and ordered him to lie released. Jerome was charged, at the discussion in regard to Wickliffe carried on in the university, with having maintained that Wickliffe was a Catholic, and that what was contained in his books was most true. "I answer," said Jerome, "that I said that John Wickliffe had composed and written many good things in his books, but I did not say that all things contained in the said books were and are most true, for I had not seen them all. But this I do say, what good things Wickliffe wrote, let them be to his credit and not mine, and what he wrote ill, let him be blamed for, and not me."

He was then charged with having gone to Vienna, and there, on being arrested on the suspicion of heresy, having taken an oath to abide his trial and submit to his sentence, but instead of doing this had fled away by stealth. "I was violently arrested," replied Jerome, "but nothing was done judicially in regard to me, for I was of another diocese, and they had no jurisdiction; neither did I escape by stealth or through contumacy, but I did not choose to wait for their violent measures, as I was not obliged or bound to do."

Reminded that on the term for his appearance to be tried having expired, he had incurred by their sentence presumptive guilt of heresy, be answered, that after his departure they could have written in regard to him according to their caprice. The said processes they continued, were published at Vienna, Cracow, Prague, and other places. "I am aware that they were published at Prague,"
said Jerome, "whether they were elsewhere or not, I do not know." He was then charged with contemning the keys of the church, in disregarding his sentence of excommunication for five years or more. He denied that he had contemned the authority of the church, adding that if he had ever been excommunicated, he had sought absolution. The Archbishop of Prague had prosecuted against him the process of Vienna, but without summoning him before him. As to his being incorrigible, he denied it. If he had been excommunicated, he even to this day was not aware of it, but whether lawfully excommunicate or not, he does not treat it with contempt, but asks to be absolved. Jerome was next accused of having slandered the pope, prelates, and lords; of having published these slanders abroad; of having, in the Bethlehem chapel while Huss was speaking, thrust his head out of the window and slandered the Archbishop Sbynco before the people; of having violently thrown the sacred relics, kept by a friar in the Carmelite monastery, to the ground; of having assailed the monastery with an armed crowd, and borne off a preacher who was speaking against Wickliffe, and kept him in durance for several days. Some of these charges Jerome denied. Other he explained. As to the last, he said, "I confess that in the case referred to, when I entered the monastery I found the monks contending with two citizens, whose servant they had thrown into prison. And when I spoke with them in a peaceable way, many of them, armed with swords, made a rush upon me. And although I had no means of defense at hand, I forcibly seized a sword from a certain layman who stood by, and protected myself as well as I was able. I then gave up two of the monks for trial, but one I kept with myself."

Other charges were added, some of them trivial, and many of them referring to facts evidently distorted to his prejudice. He was then accused of being a chief adherent of John Huss, approving of him, in his doctrine and in his heresies, justifying him, and seeking out defenders for him from Bohemia and Moravia. To this he replied that he loved John Huss as a good man, and one who had diligently performed his duties, not drawn off by unchastity, and of whom he had heard nothing heretical. Many things, moreover, had been imputed to him, for which he deserved no blame. As to his having been cited to the court of Rome to abjure the heresy of adhering to Huss, Jerome denies that any citation had reached him. As to his having excited seditions at Prague by appearing in the streets at different times with one and sometimes two hundred armed men in company, he denied it, except as he had joined, with a smaller number, the royal escort. Other articles of accusation betrayed their origin in feelings of personal spite or malice. He was charged, moreover, with having maintained, at different places, especially at Paris, Cologne, and Heidelberg, certain propositions, more of a philosophical than theological nature. Among them were the following: "In God, or the divine Essence, there is not only a trinity of person, but a quaternity and quinternity of things (rerum), such that each of these is not another and yet each is God; in created things there may be a trinity in a single essence, as memory, understanding, will, in the essence of the human soul; the soul of man is a perfect image of the trinity, with the
single exception that it is created, and has but a finite perfection; the
memory, the intelligence, or will of an angel is his essence, and yet not a
person; God the Father could not beget the Son by the absolute power of deity;
all things to come will take place by a conditioned necessity: the substance
of the bread is not, by virtue of consecration, changed into the body of Christ;
John Wickliffe was not a heretic, but a holy man; God cannot annihilate any
thing." These propositions Jerome was charged with having maintained. Even as
they stand, they fall far short of that speculative wantonness of disputation
which only a few years before had prevailed at the University of Paris.
Jerome’s reply to them was that these propositions, understood in the proper
sense, were true, though they were not presented in his style, yet, in regard to
some of them, what sounded as his language had been employed in order to
express them.

"These charges and their answers having been read, the council, by the
instigation of his enemies, and at the demand of its prosecuting officer,
determined that more should be added to the already extended catalogue.
After some other business had been transacted, these also were read. They
were much more extended than the first, and in fact substantially repeated
them, though in a more ample manner, with many additions. They go back in
their specifications so as to cover a space of more than twelve years. The mere
recital of them, aggravated as they were by the ingenious malice that drew
them up, was well calculated to prejudice the cause of the prisoner in the
minds of his judge. Yet they are valuable—even from the hostile source from
which we derive them—as giving something of a picture, however distorted, of
Jerome’s life.

The first and main point charged in the new indictment, was the dissemination
and defense of Wickliffe’s doctrines. It stated the methods which Jerome had
employed for this purpose—copying Wickliffe’s books; recommending them to
others; circulating them as he had opportunity, at Prague and elsewhere,
declaring that those students who had not read them had but attained the
mere bark of learning instead of discovering its roots; persuading them to
reject their ordinary and approved textbooks, to peruse those of Wickliffe;
defending the reputation of the man, and showing himself so zealous a favorer
and champion of him and his errors, that many persons, of both sexes, formerly
Catholics, had been drawn away from the faith, and fallen into heretical
pravity, becoming so blind and obstinate in their error, as to assert that their
false opinions were gospel truths, and to boast that in all respects they
followed the gospel and the doctrines of Christ. The indictment asserted, that
after the various condemnations pronounced upon the writings of Wickliffe at
Oxford, Rome, and Prague, Jerome, who could not be ignorant of the facts,
had still persisted in maintaining Wickliffe’s opinions, had defended them
publicly, had disputed and offered to dispute in their favor, and had dared, in
the lecture-room of Prague, and in the Bethlehem chapel, to speak of Wickliffe
as a most holy man, a preacher of the gospel, and a teacher of the true faith.
He had, moreover, proceeded to use violent means to silence opposition. Here the indictment recapitulated charges already mentioned. The opinions of Wickliffe on the eucharist, indulgences, etc., were then cited as endorsed by him. For the space of ten years, at different times, Jerome had maintained that in the sacrament of the altar the material bread remained after consecration, and that in this sacrament the bread is not transubstantiated into the body of Christ, and this he had induced many to believe, who still persevere in their error. He had maintained, that in the sacrament of the altar Christ is not truly present, and the argument used was this: Christ suffered on the cross, but the host never suffered, nor does suffer, therefore, Christ is not in the host, in the sacrament of the altar. Again: Mice cannot eat Christ, but mice can eat the consecrated host; therefore, the host in the sacrament of the altar is not Christ. Again: The host in the sacrament of the altar is not God, for a priest cannot consecrate his Creator, that is, God; but the priest consecrates the host, therefore, in the host of the altar, the Creator, God, is not.

Jerome was accused of maintaining, that no one could receive the heavenly crown who did not confess with heart and mouth the doctrines of Wickliffe; of promising, after this life, the triumphs of glory to those of all classes who should defend Wickliffe’s doctrines, and impugn the contrary; of writings, and procuring to be written, songs and doggerel verses, ridiculing the mass, which were learned and sung by the artisans, who said, that by these they also could make the body of Christ, so that the priests were subjected to seditions, wrongs, and insults. He moreover took the language of scripture, and versified it, so that it might be sung, as it was in the streets, leaving the impression, to the confusion of the ecclesiastics, that they (the singers) alone, and not the church of Rome or any of the clergy, understood the scriptures. After he had taught men these, he had said and preached that the laity who had learned them, and that too of both sexes, that is, men and women of the Wickliffite sect, and holding Wickliffe’s doctrine firmly and devotedly, might make the body of Christ, baptize, hear confessions, or bestow other sacraments of the church, provided they use fit words, and adapted to the consecrating or sacramental act, and that the sacraments performed by these are as efficacious and valid as if they were performed or bestowed by priests, according to the church form. He had taught, moreover, in various parts of Bohemia, but specially in the Bethlehem chapel, the heresy held by John Huss—we may add, by Clemengis, Gerson’s intimate friend, also—that the excommunication of the pope, or of any other bishop or minister of the church, is not to be feared or regarded, unless it is evident that it has been preceded by the divine excommunication; and he had taught, moreover, that the excommunication of the defenders of Wickliffe’s doctrine at Prague was to be accounted null, and to be disregarded, four God had never bestowed on the pope, nor any other servant of the church, any of his own attributes; and therefore, in spite of the interdict, the priests had been compelled, in many places and cities of the diocese of Prague, to celebrate and administer the divine offices. Jerome, moreover, was accused of maintaining that no authority
for granting indulgences resides in the pope or the bishops, and that no faith is to be extended to letters, apostolic or episcopal, which contain indulgences. Such indulgences were of no avail. Those that preached them had been obstructed by him in doing it, and been forced to desist. The indictment recounted the circumstances of the violent opposition with which he had met them. On one occasion, John of Altamuta, and Benesius of Optawich, had entered a manse belonging to a parish church in a village of the diocese of Prague, intending to publish in the said church indulgences granted by John XXIII. Jerome heard of it, and gathering a company of armed men around him, rushed into the house in a state of excited passion, and with fury in his looks. He addressed the priests in harsh and threatening language. "Out with you, you deceivers, with your lies! Your lord the pope is a false heretic and a usurer. He has no authority to grant indulgences." Jerome then threatened the priests, drove them first into the church and then forth from it, and followed them till he saw them outside the walls of the village. It was with difficulty, it was said, that they escaped. The indictment, set forth, moreover, that Jerome had said and asserted, in contempt of the keys and of the Apostolic See, that the papal bulls were not to be credited, nor any faith put in them, neither were the indulgences of the pope to be believed in, inasmuch as they were null and void; besides, it was out of the pope’s power to give and grant indulgences. When present himself at the preaching of them, he had hindered it; when absent, be had incited others to do it, and these men ran about through the city of Prague during sermon-time, entering the churches, disturbing those who preached indulgences, asserting that they were the deceivers and seducers of those among the people to whom they asserted that indulgences were of any avail. He had, moreover, taken the papal bull, the letters apostolic containing the indulgences, and, putting them into a chariot with prostitutes, to whose breasts he bound them, had them drawn through the city. As the chariot moved on, it was surrounded with men crying aloud and shouting, "These are the letters of a heretic and a Russian, which we are taking to be burned." And in the street, near the center of the city, he caused these bulls to be publicly burned.

Jerome, moreover, was accused of having held and taught, at Prague and elsewhere, that any educated or intelligent layman might, in any place, in a church or outside of it, without being licensed by pope, bishop, curate, or anyone else, preach the word of God. He had, moreover, himself, though a layman and unshorn, preached, and thus practiced what he preached, in different localities in Bohemia, as well as Moravia, on the ground that they who are called and sent of God seem to be sufficiently licensed. He had, moreover, said, asserted, and publicly preached that pictures of Christ, of his crucifixion, the Virgin and of canonized saints, are not to be painted and that it is heretical to worship them. An image of the crucifix he had insulted, and pelted with dung, and procured others to treat it in the same way, though many thronged to it in devotion. The relics of the saints he had declared were by no means to be worshipped or adored. He had said that the veil and robe of the Virgin, in
the cathedral church at Prague, though reverently venerated by the faithful, were of no more account, and to be held in no greater reverence, than the skin of the ass on which Christ rode. Sacred relics he had torn from the altar, cast to the earth, and trampled under foot. He had maintained that those who died in defense of the doctrine of Huss, which be claimed to be true and Catholic, were true and glorious martyrs of Christ. He had caused them to be borne in procession to the grave, while the attendants chanted, "These are they who gave up their bodies to punishment, according to the will of God." He had procured mass to be said for them as martyrs, in the Bethlehem chapel, and excited the multitude of that sect in such a way that for several days scores of them went again and again to the council-house of the city, saying that those who had been beheaded were true martyrs, and had died for the true faith of Christ, and that they themselves were ready to undergo a like death for the same faith.

The indictment then proceeds to specify other articles classed by themselves, and evidently of less weight or certainty, as that Jerome in Russia had, on one occasion, openly forsaken the communion of the Latin for that of the Greek church, publicly offering insult to the former; that he had attempted to seduce the Duke Withold, brother of the king of Poland, as well as others, to imitate his example; that when arraigned for his conduct before the Duke of Wilna, he had expressly declared that the aforesaid schismatics and Russians were good Christians. This he had done and repeated, in spite of the bishop’s admonition to the contrary. At Pleskov again, Jerome had pursued the same course, giving his public approval to the infidelity, schism, and heresy of the said Russians.

The indictment then set forth that Jerome was not to be believed on oath, whether now or in time to come he should be sworn. His promises and abjurations were feigned, one way expressed by his mouth, but otherwise conceived in his heart. They had been made through hypocrisy, not with the purpose of abandoning his errors, but to afford him a chance to escape and scatter them abroad anew. A similar evasive course Jerome had pursued at Paris, where Gerson and others had endeavored to force him to recant, at Heidelberg, at Cracow, and again at Vienna, whence, notwithstanding his oath to submit to trial, he had secretly fled. It was stated, that after his flight from the latter place he wrote to the official of the church of Passau the following letter: "Venerable father, master, and lord! know that I am now at Wyetow, sound and well, in the company of many friends, and ready to serve ever you and yours. Hold me excused, if you please, from the promise extorted from me in respect to you, as you will do if you duly consider the nature of it. Not that we would prejudice justice, to which with due precaution we are ever ready to submit. But to stand among so many hundred enemies, alone, is what, if you love me, you would never advise. For my enemies have ploughed upon my back, and made long the furrows of their iniquity. But my soul has escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler. The net has been broken, and we are at large. But I thank you, and ever shall thank you. Refer all my adversaries with
their witnesses to me at Prague, and I will there take issue with them. Or, if it
seem more fitting to them, let us each plead without witnesses in open court.
But you must know that I was in your church in Laa, and there visited the
master of the school and the notary of the city in memory of your kindness,
and if I am ever able, I will serve you and yours. Farewell. Written at Wyetow.
Yours ever, Jerome of Prague."

The same perfidy also, it was said, had been shown by Jerome in his coming to
Constance, ostensibly to vindicate the purity of his orthodox faith, yet only
with the intent to show himself off, and procure testimonials to strengthen his
sect at Prague, in the belief that he had come off triumphant, and that the
doctrine of Wickliffe was holy, just, and Catholic, and in no way to be
reprobad. And yet he had secretly fled from Constance, and after having
been brought back, and having, in his abjuration of the errors of Huss and
Wickliffe, also promised that he would write to the king and the queen of
Bohemia, the University of Prague, and others, that the condemnation of
Wickliffe and Huss with their doctrines was canonical and just, he had yet,
though often admonished, refused to fulfil his promise aforesaid. Saying one
thing while purposing another, he had hitherto deferred writing; and even
more than. this, he had openly declared that he would not write.

In the hope, moreover, that he had already satisfied the council, and had taken
measures to escape their hands and custody, he had given himself up to an
elated, rebellious, and reprobad mind, refusing to answer under oath to the
articles charged against him, and still refusing, in violation of his promise.
Instead of showing contrition, he maintains also that he has ever been a good
Christian, and free from all stain of error or heresy. Neither will he submit to
be in any manner reprobad. If this is attempted, or he is charged with any
guilt, he at once becomes angry. He even asserts that injustice has been done
him in the imprisonment in which he is now held, and demands damages
therefore. He says expressly, "I am an innocent man. Who will refund me
damages?" In his perverse obstinacy he still continues, notwithstanding all his
feigning in regard to his patient endurance of his imprisonment and his
professions of apparent compunction, always intending to defend the doctrine
of Wickliffe, as argued by Huss. This is plain, from his written statements, read
in this place of public session, where he said expressly, among other thing, "I
call God to witness, that I never have seen in his (Huss) conduct, or heard in
lectures and sermons by him, anything exceptional. Nay, I confess, that for his
gentle and correct life, and the sacred truths which he explained to the people
from the word of God, I was his intimate friend—for his person, and for truth's
sake, a defender of his honor in whatever place I might find myself." From this,
it is plain that he refused to write to the king and queen of Bohemia and the
University of Prague. The same also may be inferred from many other things
which evidence his extraordinary presumption, which was sufficient ground for
his condemnation. Nor did the adversaries of Jerome forget to bring against
him in the indictment the charge brought against Christ of old, that he did not
practice fasting. They represented him as fond of good living, and more luxurious in his diet in prison than when at large.

They then ask that, as Jerome is a layman, and has ever borne himself as such, wearing a lay dress and a long beard, and notoriously bearing himself as a layman in public session, he may be forced, under pain of torture, to answer to each of the articles credit or non credit, to the end that he might no more, through hypocrisy, contrive to escape or secure relaxation from the severity of his imprisonment, so that, like hardened Pharaoh, he might afford comfort to his followers in their errors. If, however, after the matters aforesaid shall have been credibly proved against him, and he shall persevere in his contumacy, then, as an obstinate and incorrigible heretic, let him be given over to the secular court, according to the rules of the sacred canons.

Such was in substance the long and tedious indictment against Jerome, which lead been drawn up by the ingenious and unrelenting malice of his enemies. It occupies more than twenty folio pages of Van der Hardt's compilation. The reading of it must have been enough for a single session. It was in some respects most artfully framed. It went over a large part of Jerome's life—followed him from Oxford to Paris, to Heidelberg, to Cracow, to Vienna, to Prague, and to Constance—gathering up whatever could be found which could be so distorted or misrepresented as to excite prejudice against him. Many of the charges of the indictment were unquestionably true. Others, the prosecution would not he held responsible to prove. Undoubtedly they had been exaggerated, and in some instances must have been based merely on rumor. The statements in regard to his communing with the Creek church in Russia, Jerome pronounced false. Other charges he could undoubtedly have explained, in a manner to suffice fur his perfect justification.

These charges were read on the twenty-seventh of April. On the ninth of May the judges of the commission made a report, by the mouth of the Patriarch of Constantinople, their president, in regard to the merits of the case and the forms of process to be adopted. This report was unanimously concurred in by the seven judges of the commission who were present. As Jerome was unchanged in his purpose of demanding a public audience, and refused to answer on oath before the commission which had been last appointed, a general congregation was assembled on the twenty-third of May, in order that he might be heard. He still refused to answer on oath in this assembly, unless they would first assure him full liberty of speech. This the council refused. The last portion of the indictment, containing the articles to which he had not answered, was now read, and Jerome replied to each, briefly, as the council required. This part of the indictment was drawn up in one hundred and one items, as the first part, already referred to, was in forty-five. As each article was read, the number of the witnesses by whom its truth was attested was also given. No names were mentioned, neither do we find the quality or office of
the persons recorded, as in the case of the trial of John XXIII. There was the same or even greater mockery of the claims of justice than in the case of Huss.

To some of the articles read Jerome made no reply. Either he admitted their truth, or felt that the brief answer which he would be allowed to make would fail to set forth the facts in their true light. As a general thing, the articles charging Jerome with violence were met by him with a prompt denial of their truth. As to the matter of the songs which he was said to have taught and procured to be sung at Prague, in derision of the priesthood, as also with regard to the burning of the pope’s bulls, he maintained that these charges were false. He admitted that he had studied the writings of Wickliffe, yet not without discriminating the good from the evil; that he had eulogized him as a philosopher and a learned man, not as a heretic; that he had placed his picture in his study just as he had the portraits of other eminent men, but had not placed a crown upon it as was charged. He claimed that he had not disputed in the Bohemian tongue on the sacrament of the altar; but admitted that he had spoken of John XXIII as a usurer; that he had said that an unjust excommunication was of no validity; that there might be such a thing as indulgences, lawfully granted, maintaining, however, that those which were bought and sold by the fiscal agents of the pope were mere extortion—they were not indulgences, but abuses of them; that, in regard to the privilege of every layman to preach the word of God, he had taken for his theme, on one occasion, the words, "As I do, so do ye also," and in this address he had introduced the remark that laymen and unordained clergy might preach.

Jerome had answered to scarcely more than half the articles, when the time of the sitting was consumed, and the assembly adjourned over two days, to the twenty-sixth of May. On this occasion, he was still pressed to clear himself by oath in regard to the articles charged. But he refused to do it. Such a demand, he said, seemed to him to be strange and unwarranted, but he would continue his answers as he had begun. Many of the articles first read turned upon the subject of relics, and the violence which he had shown them. These he declared generally to be either false or distortions of the truth. On many points we have no record of his answers. And yet, all the objectionable positions which he was said to have maintained at different universities were read to him. To many of them, doubtless, no reply was made; on others, his answers, if we had them, would in all probability throw light enough to show that they had been misunderstood or misrepresented by his enemies. At the same time it must be observed that the scholastic arts of the universities claimed, even in this age, large liberty of discussion, abused, sometimes with impunity, to the defense of monstrous propositions, by the side of which the most extravagant of Jerome’s appear tame and moderate.

The Patriarch of Constantinople, with the approval of his colleagues, then summed up the several charges against Jerome, taking notice also of his replies. He concluded that a fourfold conviction of heresy was proved against
him. But, he said, that since Jerome had repeatedly besought a public audience to be allowed him, his request had been generally acceded to, so that he might now be heard in public audience and expose whatever vain obloquy rested upon him.

He then turned to Jerome, and told him that if he had anything to say, he was at liberty to say it, since the present congregation had been called for his sake, and no other. If he wished to say, allege, or propose anything in defense of his innocence, he might do it; and, moreover, if he chose to revoke his error, the council, proceeding with gentleness and mercy, would receive him back to the bosom of holy mother church, since there had been in the church many heretics, who had recanted their error, reformed their lives, and received penance for the sins which they had committed. But in case he should decline to pursue this course, the council would then be under the necessity of proceeding against him according to the forms of law.

Jerome was prompt to improve the privilege he had so long and so anxiously desired. The hours of his tedious imprisonment had restored him to himself. Pale and worn as he was, he arose and boldly faced the assembly. All could see at a glance that he was master of himself, and, notwithstanding his long imprisonment and suffering, of all his wonderful powers. The memory of his shameful and cowardly recantation had filled him with remorse, but a remorse that stung him to the purpose of a noble disavowal of what he now accounted his disgrace. His whole appearance must have commanded respect. His bearing throughout betrayed neither timidity nor weakness. In the portrait of him, which has preserved his features for us, we read the restless energy and the daring promptitude of the man. Nature had stamped upon his face the chivalry of a heroic nature. No common soul spoke out in those large piercing eyes, and that bold high forehead, and those lips that seemed instinct with the eloquence they uttered. Men gazed upon him with admiration. He felt himself that he stood before the world, and was resolved, with death before him, to bear a noble testimony to the justice of his cause.

Jerome prefaced his defense with a prayer that God would deign to aid him, and inspire him to speak only such words as should be fitting and consistent with the well-being and safety of his soul. He then besought all those present, that they would pray God, the Blessed Virgin, and the whole heavenly host in his behalf, that they would so illuminate his mind and his understanding that he might speak nothing that could tend to the prejudice of his eternal welfare.

"I am aware," said he, "most learned men, that many excellent men have suffered things unworthy of their virtues, borne down by false witnesses, condemned by unjust judges." He proceeded to the statement of his own case, in which he wished to show that his own innocence had been subjected to a like hardship. Although certain judges had been deputed by the council, to whose examination he had submitted, and who had found in him nothing on
which to ground the charge of heresy, yet now, at the instance of his jealous enemies, new judges had been deputed in his case—those who now occupied the bench—an act which he had ever considered most abhorrent and repugnant to justice and his own rights. To the further examination of these judges he never had submitted himself, nor would he ever recognize them as his judges. He then passed in review many eminent and heroic men, who had been put to death, driven into banishment, or unjustly thrown into prison. "If I, myself," said Jerome, "should in like manner be condemned, I shall not be the first, nor do I believe that I shall be the last, to suffer. Still I have a firm hope in God my maker, that yet, when this life is past, they who condemn Jerome unjustly, shall see him take precedence of them, and summon them to judgment. And then shall they be bound to answer to God and to him, and give an account for the injustice with which he was treated at their hand." He then spoke of Socrates, unjustly condemned yet refusing the opportunity offered for his escape, unmoved alike by the fear of prison and death, although so terrible to mortal flesh. He then spoke of the captivity of Plato, the banishment of Anaxagoras, and the tortures of Zeno, as well as the unjust condemnation, the exile and shameful death of many distinguished heathen, referring to Boethius, Rutilius, Virgil, Seneca, and others. He then passed in review eminent men of the Hebrew nation—Moses, a deliverer and lawgiver of his people, yet by them wronged and slandered; Joseph, sold into bondage through the envy of his brethren; Isaiah, Daniel, and many of the prophets, reviled as impious or seditious, and wrongfully condemned. He referred to Susanna, sentenced on the false witness of two priests, though delivered by the wisdom of the prophet, and to the fate of many who, though most holy men, had perished by unrighteous judgment. He then came down to the New Testament record, spoke of John the Baptist; of Christ himself, condemned by false witnesses and false judges; of Stephen the protomartyr, who, in like manner, through false witnesses, was arraigned, imprisoned, and stoned. The apostles themselves were all condemned to death, not as good men, but as seditious, contemners of the gods, and doers of evil deeds. It. was no wonder, therefore, if he, by his jealous and lying enemies, should be condemned to the fire. "Yet," said he, "it is an odious thing that a priest should be condemned by a priest and yet this has been done. It is more odious to be condemned by a college of priests, yet this too has taken place. But the crowning point of iniquity is, when this is done by a council of priests, and yet we have seen even this come to pass." As Jerome uttered these words every eye was fixed upon him. His indignant eloquence thrilled and awed the assembly. Yet they did not venture to interrupt him. Jerome bearded the lion in his den. The wild beast quailed before the steady, searching gaze of conscious integrity and power.

After this eloquent and impressive introduction, Jerome proceeded to particulars. He said that no one had ever condemned him but his former friends, now alienated by hostility, and the Germans, who had gone forth from Prague. He gave a brief and concise statement of the origin of the university, its endowment by Charles IV for the especial benefit of the Bohemian people,
compelled to go abroad from a land rich in nature’s wealth, to reap in a foreign land the harvests of learning. In this university, the old jealousy between the Germans and the Greeks, who were represented by the Bohemians, their descendants, was revived. “The Germans formed the majority, and engrossed to themselves the offices of honor and profit, to the prejudice of the Bohemians, who were stripped of all. If a Bohemian graduate had not other resource, he must, in order to live, leave the university and go out into the towns and villages and support himself by teaching school. The whole government of the university, moreover, was in the hands of the Germans. They disposed of its benefices. They kept its seal. They had charge of its keys. They had three voices out of four in its suffrages, instead of being counted as a single nation. They could do as they pleased. The Bohemians were of no account. The same was the case in the city government of Prague. Of the eighteen members of the council, sixteen were Germans and two Bohemians. The whole kingdom was governed by Germans who held all the offices. The Bohemian laity were of no account. I perceived this, as did Master John Huss, whom I always held as a valiant, just, and holy man. We, therefore, in our anxiety to put a stop to these things, went to the present king of Bohemia to explain to him, in the presence of some of the nobility, how things were, and what ill effects might follow to the destruction of the Bohemian language.”

Jerome then stated the measures he had employed persuading Huss to add his influence with the people. At the mention of that name, all the tender memories of their former friendship were revived, and Jerome proceeded to speak of his former associate as a just, holy, upright, devout man, and one who had been found abiding inflexibly by the truth. With such aid as could be obtained, through Huss and the Bohemian noble, Jerome stated that he secured a complete revolution in the relation of the two nations, so that the Bohemians occupied the place previously filled by the Germans. Such, he represented, were some of the grounds of hostility that had incited his persecution.

Subsequently to this, Huss had inveighed against the clergy and the ecclesiastical orders. He had pointed out how the priests indulged in pomp and show and luxurious living, spending in feasts and ostentation the money which belonged to the poor. He had spoken of the benefices as designed by God, that the poor might be fed, churches built up and maintained, and that they should not be perverted to vile and unworthy ends. Upon this Jerome, proceeded to say, the clergy rose up against Huss and himself. They persecuted Huss through envy, and sent Michael de Deutschbrod (Causis), not a Bohemian, but a German, to the court. of Rome, to secure the citation of Huss before it. The result of all this was that John Huss was at last excommunicated by the judges deputed by that court. Yet Huss himself appealed from that excommunication, and still, by virtue of it, he was forbidden to preach. Things being in this state, Jerome stated that he had persuaded Huss that he ought to
go to the council at Constance, where he might fully set forth the real state of things, vindicate his innocence, and defend himself in reference to the penalties and pains unfairly imposed.

Jerome then stated the facts of Huss’ going to Constance, his imprisonment, and the charges of heresy brought against him. He said that on learning these things he himself fulfilled his promise made to Huss, and followed him to Constance. Thence, by the advice of men of power and influence, and from apprehension of imprisonment, he had fled the distance of a few miles to a village, where he remained for the space of five days, writing meanwhile to the emperor that great injustice was like to be done to Huss since he had come provided with a safe-conduct, and even a Jew or a Saracen ought to be free and unmolested in coming, staying, stating and pleading his case, and in departing, at his own pleasure, and according to the tenor of the safe-conduct granted to Huss. Many similar documents also he had sent to Constance, which were affixed to the doors of the churches and to the gates of the dwellings of the cardinals. Receiving no reply to these, he had departed from the place where he had tarried, and set out on his return toward Bohemia. On his way he was arrested, and sent, by the council’s direction, bound in chains to Constance. Here, on his arrival, he had been cast into prison.

All these circumstances Jerome dwelt upon, and then described the treatment which he had received at the hands of the council. He had been charged with heresy. A commission was appointed to direct the process against him. He had been over-persuaded, by certain great men, to refer himself to the council, and submit to the conditions it should impose. It was their hope and expectation that he would be kindly treated. In these circumstances, afraid in his human weakness of the fire, the heat of which was most cruel, and death by which was most fearful, he had yielded to these persuasions, and abjured, and had moreover written his abjuration to Bohemia. He had also given his assent to the condemnation of the books of John Huss and their doctrine. But in this, said he, "I did not express my true belief." This much he confessed he had done in violation of his conscience, since the doctrine of John Huss, like his life, was holy and just, and in this conviction he would abide, and to it he would firmly adhere. And to confirm this impression, he had recalled the letter written to Prague, in which he had recanted the doctrine and the opinion which he had of Huss.

He said, moreover, of the books of Wickliffe and of his doctrine, "that he never had met with the man whose writings were so excellent and profound." This opinion he would adhere to, and he had done wrong in speaking otherwise. For as to what he had done in his recantation of his views of Huss and of his doctrine, he had not done it with the intention of desisting from them, but, through cowardice and fear, he had suffered the dread of the fire to extort it.
But whatever Huss or Wickliffe may have said erroneous in regard to the sacrament of the altar, and against the doctors of the church, he rejects, and, in this respect, does not follow or hold their opinion. His own views are those held by Gregory, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and others, whose authority is admitted throughout the church. He also declared that he considered the conduct and practice of the popes and cardinals, their disposal of benefices, their luxurious indulgence and style of dress, to be unwarranted, and indefensible on the grounds of truth and reason, as well as opposed to scripture and the order of the church. And on this point he holds as Wickliffe and Huss hold, and he believes that he is correct in so believing.

These scattered fragments of a speech, the impression of which must have been extraordinary, and the spirit and ability of which filled even his enemies with admiration, furnish us with a mere outline of the plan and course of Jerome’s argument. He seems to have caught an inspiration in those prison hours, when the thought of what others had endured before him consoled his solitude, that lifted him as it were above himself. On some points be is careful to state his conformity to Catholic formularies, but on others he avows his obnoxious opinions with a firm and uncompromising boldness. His doctrine on the subject of the eucharist was not the one invented in the middle ages, for Berengar to tilt at, but the one held by the early fathers. There was no real ground of proceeding, however, against Jerome, except his endorsement of Huss and Wickliffe. The fact of his approval of these men he did not attempt to conceal. He frankly avowed it, and, as an act of simple justice to the injured men, vindicated their memory. But for this he might perhaps have yet been saved. He had strong friends. His ability had found admirers; men listened in astonishment and awe to his wonderful and impressive speech. But his enemies were unrelenting, and his friends were disappointed. Instead of submitting to the council, he had impeached its wisdom in the sentence of Huss. Instead of condemning the latter as a heretic, he had eulogized him as a martyr. Thus his fate was sealed. None could safely venture to be any longer his apologist. The council appointed the following Sabbath, May 30th, as the time for pronouncing definitive sentence against Jerome.

Thus passed from a transitory present into the permanent records of history, a scene that will be forever memorable while truth is revered, or the martyr-spirit honored. Jerome was an orator. Nature had made him such. All the various learning of the age had helped to furnish his mind and discipline his powers. Gerson was perhaps the only man in Europe who could have been considered fairly his intellectual rival. But he was more than an orator—more than a learned man. It was the love of truth that made him eloquent, and it made him a martyr also. His false recantation had humbled him, but only to restore him to himself. He rose from his fall a wiser, a stronger, and a better man. He came from his prison, as if from the mount of transfiguration. There he had held communion with the mighty spirits of the past. There he had girded himself, in a more than human strength, for the mortal conflict. He
remembered the example of Socrates, but he remembered also the example of
Stephen, and his words and bearing remind us of both. Yet the philosopher is
lost in the Christian martyr, and the man who does not gaze upon him with
admiration, has lost, if he ever had, the power and sensibility to appreciate the
noble and sublime in human action.

If anyone was fitted to form a just estimate of the man and the occasion, it
was one who witnessed it, and who has left us the record of the impression
which it made upon his own mind. This man was Poggio Bracciolini, who went
to Constance as the secretary of John XXIII. He was a scholar. His taste had
been formed on classic models. John of Ravenna taught him in the Latin
tongue. A knowledge of the Greek language, as well as of its orators, poets,
and philosophers, he had gained through the celebrated Emanuel Chrysoloras,
himself a native Greek. Above most of his Italian countrymen, Poggio was an
enthusiast in the cause of classical learning. To him we are indebted for the
discovery and preservation of the writings of Quintilian, Lucretius, and others.
He traveled over Europe, and even extended his journey to England, in search
of the lost treasures. His merits continued him in office as papal secretary
under seven popes. He was a close observer, careful and severe in his critical
judgment, and must be regarded a witness free from all suspicion of prejudice
in Jerome’s favor.

Yet his account of the scene of Jerome’s trial reminds us of Burke’s eulogy of
Sheridan’s eloquence. In spite of every bias against the prisoner, the papal
secretary was forced into an enthusiastic panegyric of him. Some portions of
his letter to Leonard Aretin, which have not already been incorporated into the
account of Jerome’s speech, are of special interest. His descriptions are those
of an eyewitness, and are truthful and vivid. “After having spent some time at
the bath, I wrote thence a letter to our friend Nicholaus, which I think you
must have read. A few days subsequent, and shortly after my return to
Constance, the case of Jerome, charged with heresy, was brought before the
council. I determined to pass the matter in review before you, as well for its
own importance, as especially for the eloquence and learning of the man. I
confess that I never saw one who approached so near, in pleading his own
cause—and that a capital one—to the eloquence of those ancient models which
we regard with such admiration. It was wonderful to see with what language,
what eloquence, what arguments, what countenance, what oratory, and with
what confidence he answered his prosecutors, and summed up in his own
defense. It is sad that so noble, so superior an intellect should have been led
off to heretical pursuits—if indeed the reports in regard to him are true. But it
is no business of mine to determine this, for I but acquiesce in the sentence of
those who are accounted more wise. Do not expect from me a documentary
history of the case. That would be tedious, and would require the labor of
days. I will only touch on some of the more prominent points, by which you
may understand the doctrine of the man.
"After having produced many articles against him to convict him of heresy, and corroborated them by witnesses, they allowed him to answer to each point urged against him. He was led into the midst of the assembly, and required to reply to each charge by itself. For a long time he refused to do so, declaring that he would plead his own cause before he replied to the malice of his enemies. After he had spoken and been heard in his own behalf, then he said he would speak to the accusations and invidious charges of his enemies. This condition the council refused to grant. Jerome replied in an indignant strain: ‘What injustice! You have kept me shut up for three hundred and forty days, chained, in different prisons, in the midst of filth and stench, and in want of everything. You have given ear to my enemies and slanderers, but will not listen to me for a single hour. I do not wonder that when your ears have been so long open to their persuasions, they should have led you to believe that I was a heretic, an enemy of the faith, and a persecutor of the clergy, and that no chance of defending myself should be allowed. You have by prejudice been led to account me a criminal, before you could know that I was one. But you are men—not gods, not immortal, but mortal men. You may err, be deceived, be misled. The lights of the world, the wisest of the earth, are said to be assembled here. It becomes you to see to it that nothing be done rashly, unadvisedly, or contrary to justice. I am a man, and my life is at stake. For myself I do not speak. Sooner or later I must die. But it seems an unworthy thing, that the wisdom of so many men should proceed against me in violation of equity, a course not so injurious for present results as for future precedent.

Much more did Jerome utter in the same noble strain. But the noise and murmurs of the assembly interrupted him in his speech. At length it was decided that he should answer first to the charges against him, when full liberty of speech, as he demanded, should be allowed. The articles of accusation were read to him, one by one, with the testimony by which they were sustained, and he was then asked what objections he had to offer to them. It was wonderful with what ability he replied, and what arguments he urged in his own defense. He adduced nothing that was not worthy of a good man, and if his real belief was what he professed, not only could no cause of death be found in him, but not even the lightest ground of accusation. He declared that all that was urged against him was false, made up by the envy of his enemies. Among other things, when the article was read charging him with being a slanderer of the Apostolic See, an opponent of the Roman pontiff, an enemy of the cardinals, a persecutor of the prelates and the clergy, and an enemy of the Christian religion, he rose, and in tones of pathos, with lifted hands, exclaimed, ‘Whither shall I now turn? Fathers, whose aid shall I implore? Whom shall I deprecate? Whom beseech? You? But these my persecutors have alienated your minds from me, in declaring that I am the enemy of all that are to judge me. For they imagined that, if the accusations which they have framed against me should seem light, you would condemn by your sentence one who is the common enemy and assailant of all, as they have falsely represented me to be. So that if you give ear to their words, I have no more hope of safety
left.’ Often his sarcasm was stinging. Often, even in his sad and perilous situation, he forced the council to laughter as he exposed the absurdity of the charges against him, or met them with ridicule and sarcasm.

"When asked what he thought of the sacrament, he replied, ‘First, bread in the consecration, and afterward the true body.’ ‘But,’ said one, ‘they say that you said, after consecration there remains bread.’ ‘Yes,’ replied he, ‘at the baker’s.’ A Franciscan monk inveighed against him; ‘Silence, you hypocrite,’ said Jerome. Another swore by his conscience. ‘It is the safest way,’ said Jerome, ‘to carry out your deception.’ One of his chief opponents he treated with derisive contempt. He spoke of him never except as ‘dog’ and ‘ass.’” Such was Jerome’s defense on his second day of audience (May 23). Poggio characterizes it as able and pathetic. As he appeared at the next audience (May 26), the remaining accusations, with the testimony, were read, at somewhat tedious length. When the reading was ended, Jerome arose. "Since," said he, "you have listened so attentively to my enemies, it is befitting that you should give ear to me with equal readiness." Many clamored against it, but the opportunity at last was given him to proceed.

Commencing with prayer to God for that spirit and that power of utterance which should tend to the advantage and salvation of his soul, he addressed the council in the language which we have already noted. His exposition of his own life and pursuits, says Poggio, was admirable. It showed him great and virtuous. The hearts of all were moved to pity. As he discussed the differences of men in matters of speculative opinion, he manifested a largeness of mind and apprehension which was worthy to be admired. "Of old, learned and holy men in matters of faith had differed in opinion, yet not to the prejudice of faith itself, but to the discovery of truth. Augustine and Jerome disagreed, nay opposed each other on some points, yet neither was on this account suspected of heresy."

Poggio pronounces Jerome to have been a man of most remarkable ability. "When interrupted, as he often was in his speech, by clamors, or persons carping at his language in a manner most. provoking, he left not one of them unscathed. All felt his vengeance, and were put either to shame or silence. If murmurs arose, he paused and protested against the disturbance. He would then resume his speech, again and again interrupted, yet begging and beseeching them still to allow him liberty of speech, whom they would never hear again. All the confusion did not break him down. He retained throughout his firmness and self-possession. How wonderful was his memory, that never failed him, though for three hundred and forty days thrust in the dungeon of a dark and filthy prison! Yet of this grievance, which he indignantly complained, he said ‘that, as a brave man it did not become him to moan about it that he was treated with such indignity, but he was surprised at the inhumanity which others had shown him. In this dark prison he had no chance to read, nor could he even see to do it.’ I say nothing of his anxiety of mind by which he was
harassed day after day, and which might well have destroyed his memory. Yet he adduced in his favor the authority of so many men of the highest wisdom and learning, so many doctors of the church whose words testified in his behalf, that you could not have expected more if the whole space of his imprisonment had been devoted in undisturbed leisure to the studies of wisdom. His voice was sweet, full, sonorous, impressive in its tones. His gesture was that of the orator, adapted, as occasion required, either to express indignation or to excite pity, which nevertheless he neither asked for, nor showed an anxiety to obtain. He stood before the assembly, so fearless and intrepid, not only scorning to live, but welcoming death, that you would have called him a second Cato. O man! worthy art thou to be forever remembered among men! I do not praise him in any respect in which he was opposed to the institution of the church. I admire his learning, his extensive knowledge, his eloquence, and his skill in argument. I only fear that all nature’s gifts have been bestowed to work his ruin."

CHAPTER VIII

Sentence and Execution of Jerome

Jerome was borne back from the council to his dungeon, there to await his final sentence. The severity of his imprisonment, which had been somewhat relaxed, was now increased. He was more strictly fettered than before. His hands, his arms, and his feet were loaded with irons.

The members of the council were variously disposed toward him. Some were gratified, undoubtedly, that a stop was now to be put to his bold and agitating career. Others exulted over him as a fallen fee, and triumphed in his doom as the victim of their personal malice. Nearly all despaired of rescuing him. Those who had listened to his speech, and heard its candid and manly avowals, said to each other, "He has pronounced his sentence." Still there were many that could not thus abandon him. Numerous members of the council, embracing the most learned of the body, interested themselves in his behalf. Poggio is said to have employed his influence to the same purpose. The Cardinal of Florence conversed with him, and endeavored to dissuade him from the resolution he had adopted. But all was in vain. Jerome saw no honorable way of escape from the fate to which he was doomed through his refusal to abjure. He was now at last resolved, living or dying, to remain true to his convictions. He scorned any more to dissemble, as he had done, and betrayed no longer any sign of weakness or hesitation. Death by fire was not so terrible as the disgrace and guilt of a feigned recantation—the only one which it was possible for him to make.
If, in the earlier period of his imprisonment, Jerome showed himself tremulous and timid, as compared with Huss, these closing hours of his trial display his character in a nobler light. His prison experience was aggravated by some hardships from which Huss was spared. The latter had his friends warm and true, who refused to desert him, and remained faithful to the end. In the enthusiasm of his gratitude, he writes of the generous countenance and sympathy afforded him by the Knight John de Chlum, and speaks of the consolation and strength which were thus ministered to him in his hours of weakness and despondency. The presence and counsel of those in whom he could confide lightened the load of his anxiety and anguish. They stood by him, and stood by him to the last. But when the deed was done, when Huss was executed, Constance was no longer the place for them. They departed, and Jerome was left alone. We hear no more of Chlum, Duba, or Peter the Notary. Jerome was kept a close prisoner; and, even had they remained, they would, probably, have been denied access to him in his prison-cell.

Who can enter into the anxieties and agony of the prisoner, wearing out his solitary hours in a close, foul, and gloomy cell, cheered by no friendly face or kindly word? And yet how noble, in such circumstances as these, was the self-recovery of Jerome! Uncounseled but by his conscience and his God, he rose from his fall, in the intrepidity and courage of a genuine martyr, blotting out, by an honest and hearty avowal of his error, the stain of what he thenceforth accounted his weakness and his disgrace.

The council met in its twenty-first session on Sunday, May 30th, 1416, to pronounce sentence upon the prisoner. There was no longer any doubt of the result—no chance, so far as any change in him was concerned, for averting his doom. A French writer, quoting from Theobald’s history of the Hussite war, gives a detailed account of the efforts employed to induce him to recant, same of which have a been already referred to. "I will abjure," replied Jerome to their urgent entreaties, "if you demonstrate to me from the Holy Scriptures that my doctrine is false."

"Can you be to such an extent your own enemy?" inquired the bishops.

"What!" replied he, "do you suppose that life is so precious to me, that I fear to yield it for the truth, or for Him who gave His for me? Are you not cardinals? are you not bishops? and can you be ignorant of what Christ has said: 'He that does not give up all that he hath for my sake, is not worthy of me?' ... Behind me, tempters!"

The Cardinal of Florence presented himself. He sent for Jerome, and said to him, "Jerome, you are a learned man, whom God has loaded with the choicest of gifts; do not employ them to your own ruin, but for the advantage of the church. The council has compassion on you, and, on account of your rare talents, would regret to behold you on your way to execution. You may aspire
to high honors, and be a powerful succor to the church of Jesus Christ, if you consent to be converted, like St. Peter or St. Paul. The church is not to such a point cruel, as to refuse a pardon if you become worthy of it. And I promise you every kind of favor, when it shall he found that neither obstinacy nor falsehood remains in you. Reflect whilst it is yet time; spare your own life, and open your heart to me."

Jerome replied, "The only favor that I demanded which I have always demanded is to he convinced by the Holy Scripture. This body, which has suffered such frightful torments in my chains, will also know how to support death, by fire, for Jesus Christ."

"Jerome," asked the cardinal, "do you suppose yourself to be wiser than all the council?"

"I am anxious to be instructed," rejoined Jerome, "and he who desires to be instructed, cannot be infatuated by ideas of his own wisdom."

"And in what manner do you desire to be instructed?"

"By the Holy Scriptures, which are our illuminating torch."

"What! is every thing to be judged by the Holy Scriptures? Who can perfectly comprehend them? And must not the fathers be at last appealed to, to interpret them?"

"What do I hear!" cried Jerome. "Shall the word of God be declared fallacious? And shall it not be listened to? Are the traditions of men more worthy of faith than the holy gospel of our Savior? Paul did not exhort the priests to listen to old men and traditions, but said ‘The Holy Scriptures will instruct you.’ O Sacred Scriptures, inspired by the Holy Ghost! already men esteem you less than what they themselves forge every day! I have lived long enough. Great God! receive my life; thou canst restore it to me."

"Heretic!" said the cardinal, regarding him with anger, "I repent having so long pleaded with you. I see that you are urged on by the devil."

As the twenty-first session opened, the report of Jerome’s firmness, as well as of his previous hearing in the prison conference, which had been noised abroad, drew multitudes together. His condemnation and execution made it to them, in anticipation, as it did to others afterward in retrospect, a memorable day. The emperor was still absent, but the Elector Palatine occupied his place as protector of the council. By his orders the troops were called out and placed under arms. The Bishop of Riga then had Jerome led into the cathedral, once more to be cited to retract, and, in case of refusal, to hear his sentence.
When he was formally called upon to retract, according to some historians, previous to other proceedings of the council in his case, he exclaimed, "Almighty God! and you who hear me, be witnesses! I swear that I believe all the articles of the Catholic faith, as the church believes and observes them, but I refuse to subscribe to the condemnation of those just and holy men whom you have unjustly condemned, because they have denounced the scandals of your life, and it is for this that I am about to perish."

Jerome then repeated aloud the Nicene creed, and the confession of Athanasius, and spoke for a considerable time with as much ability as eloquence. All were lost in admiration at his knowledge and his admirable language. Several drew near him, and presented him with a new form of retraction, exhorting him to allow himself to be prevailed upon, but he refused to listen to any exhortation on that point.

The Bishop of Lodi then ascended the pulpit; and chose for his text Mark 16:14. "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven, as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart." The sermon is curious in many respects. It betrays with a kiss—it stabs under the mask of charity. The logic of persecution whines and weeps, and recounts the evidence of its tenderness, as it strikes the victim. The introduction of the discourse is an attempt to show, that where milder measures fail more severe ones must be applied. "A hard knot cannot be split but by a heavy blow." "A virulent disease requires a more active remedy; a dangerous wound a more skilfully bound ligament. To bend the hard iron into shape, it must be subject to a hotter fire, and beat with a heavier hammer."

He then applied these principles to Jerome’s case, and turning to the prisoner addressed himself directly to him: "I knew that thou wert stubborn, that thy neck was iron, and thy brow brass. But be assured that a hard heart shall have evil at last, and he that loves danger shall perish in it.

"Consider, also, that though my reproof sounds harshly to the outward ear, yet a charitable delight in mercy dwells within it. And, as by word and speech I ought not to spare you, so do I purpose, with good will and with gentle charity, to rebuke your faults. ... Wherefore, think not that I wish to add afflictions to one already afflicted, or stir up the fire to a new heat by the sword. But that you may assuredly know with what charity you are to be reproved, with what love you are to be shielded, with what long-suffering and considerate kindness exorted to relinquish your folly, I have selected for my proposed theme the words of the text."

The speaker then proceeded to state what had been the guilt of Wickliffe and Huss. Jerome likewise had come under the same condemnation. His unbelief, which had led to heresy and perfidy, was bad, but the hardness of his heart was worse by far. "Those who defend their error without stubbornness or
obstinacy, and are still ready to be set right, are by no means to be reckoned
heretics. But they who, despising the decisions of the fathers, endeavor, with
all their might, to defend their perfidy, are more fit to die than to be
corrected. ... Error and unbelief are alike to be reproved, but stubbornness of
heart is to be condemned. ... Evils that might grow with time are at once to be
met. Due correction should instruct ignorance, and severe discipline control
obstinacy and hardness of heart. It is better, says Isidore, that one guilty one
be punished for the good of many, than that many be endangered by the
impunity of one. Wherefore, heretics are to be publicly extirpated, lest they
ruin others by their evil example, false doctrine, and contagious influence.
Unbelief, when it submits to correction, merits pardon, but stubbornness and
obstinacy are only to be dealt with by exterminating them. Let no one then be
presumptuously stubborn and contumacious in heart; let no one be confident in
his own vain fancy. He is too hasty who resolves to enter where he has seen
others fall, and be too reckless who is not struck with fear when others perish.
When a fault is defended, it is repeated, and he adds sin to sin who
shamelessly and obstinately defends his evil deeds. Hardness of heart is
therefore to be detested, especially that which is not healed by contrition,
controlled by devotion, or moved by prayers, which does not yield to
threatenings, and is confirmed by blows. Hence he is inexcusably criminal who
refuses to repent, and retains his pride.

"There are two things among human errors too hard to be tolerated—
presumption before truth is discovered, and a presumptuous defense of what is
false, afterward. No presumptuous man will confess his fault, because he does
not believe himself guilty. If he sees it, he will not suffer himself to be
convinced, or be regarded as delinquent. Most damnable, therefore, is a
presumptuous pride, and a proud presumption, which, in the absence of truth,
would arrogate to itself a fictitious justice, and ceases not to be proud of its
own knowledge." Applying these principles in the case of Jerome, the bishop
expresses his fear lest presumption should prove his ruin. Here was the hidden
precipice; here, in this, the labyrinth of his errors. "This obstinacy of yours has
procured your doom. Though you are a learned man, and have been a teacher,
you have been deceived, as I think, by your excessive presumption. Error has
led, step by step, to further error.

"I have purposed to smite you, Jerome, upon both cheeks, though ever with
that fitting charity which heals while it wounds, and soothes while it pierces.
Wherefore, turn not your face upon me like a flinty rock. But rather, according
to the gospel, when you are smitten on one cheek, turn the other also. I will
smite you, therefore, and would that I might heal. You ought to be softened in
spirit by the memory of the crimes you have committed, and in view of the
excessive benignity of your judges."

Premising that he does not throw another's filth in Jerome's face, but his own,
that he may see and repent his crimes, the speaker proceeds to set forth the
mischiefs done in Bohemia by Jerome and Huss. "Happy kingdom," he exclaims, "if this man had not been born! ... Of how great evils was the presumption of these two men the root! What violence, exiles, robberies, desolations, have sprung from it!"

Such, according to the bishop, was the blow on the one cheek. The other is, to say the least, hypocritically odious, though the tender mercies of the Bishop of Lodi were, beyond doubt, conscientiously cruel.

He proceeds to contrast the way in which a heretic deserved to be treated, with the gentleness used in Jerome's case. "Heretics ought to be carefully sought after, arrested, and committed to close prison. Articles of accusation should be received against them, and in their case, all sorts of persons, the infamous, usurers, the ribalds, or even public prostitutes, should be allowed to testify. Heretics, moreover, should be adjured and required under oath to declare the truth. On their refusal to do this, they are to be put to the torture, which should be severe and varied. None should be allowed admittance to them, except in extraordinary cases. They ought not to be allowed a public hearing. If they renounce their folly, they are to be mercifully pardoned; if they persist in it, they are to be condemned, and given over to the secular arm." Such was the theory, and such should be the practice, in dealing with heretics, according to the Bishop of Lodi, and no voice in the council was ever heard to contradict or even question this public announcement. The background of his picture, thus prepared, was certainly black enough to make even the dark forms he was to place upon it, seem light in comparison.

Addressing Jerome, he said, "You certainly have not been treated with such rigor as this, although in the worst repute for your heresies. In this respect you surpass Arius, Sabellius, Faustus, Nestorius, and all others, at least during their lifetime. The story of your heresy has spread through England, Bohemia, France, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Russia, Italy, and all Germany. You were arrested, as all like you should be, and brought to the council, and, through urgent necessity alone, shut up in prison. And in regard to this imprisonment, the most reverend my lord cardinals, De Ursinis, Aquileia, Cambray, and Florence, personally interested themselves to see if you could not be removed to some more commodious place. And if they had not been apprehensive of your flight—a thing you had often practiced—each of them would have been willing to receive you kindly to his house, and even to his table and his chamber.

"Against you none but respectable witnesses were admitted to testify—such as masters of theology, doctors, bachelors, curates, and other venerable men, in whom you could find no fault. The articles adduced against you were mostly proved to be true.
"You were not subjected to torture. Would that you had been! In this case, you might have been humbled and led to give up your errors. Pain would have opened your eyes, which your guilt had closed. Those, moreover, who chose to visit you, were allowed. Remember how kindly, how gently the most reverend lord cardinals, as well as many others, exhorted you, while they heartily pitied you also. A public audience has several times been granted to you, as you wished. Would that you had not been allowed it! I fear lest it have increased your daring presumption."

The bishop then enumerated six evils or mischiefs that had befallen, through the public audience allowed. "In the first place, you put it out of the power of those who kindly wished to apologize for you, to do so. It was their affection for you that made them speak of you as delirious, demented, foolish, or insane. Who, I ask, would say you were mad and delirious, unless he were delirious himself! What! of a man who could speak with such elegance, and plead with such precision! Those that excused you must now be silent. They can say no more. Your speech has closed their lips."

The bishop enumerated other things of an unfortunate nature, to be attributed to the same cause. In his speech Jerome had overlooked some of the numerous charges, directing his attention mainly to those which designated the real offenses. His silence in regard to others was interpreted as a confession of guilt. His attempt, moreover, to show that the witnesses against him had testified falsely, was interpreted to his prejudice. Again, he had insisted that the testimony against him was not necessarily conclusive, and had employed the word *demonstrative*. The bishop reproves him for imagining that the rules of mathematics could apply to evidence, or that there was no distinction between logic and rhetoric. "Who," asked the bishop, "could demonstrate more against you than you have yourself demonstrated? You alone are your own enemy. You alone are your own adversary. You alone are most inconsistent with, and opposed to yourself. All of us sympathize with you; you alone deal cruelly with yourself. All these regard you with kindly feeling, but you alone cherish malice against yourself."

A fifth evil of Jerome's public audience was the praise of Huss, whom he had previously anathematized on oath. The bishop did not pretend to deny the virtuous life of Huss, but he made his heresy an offset for the lack of other sins. Though chaste in life, his heresy was fornication. Though never intoxicated with wine, yet he was intoxicated with pride and contention.

But the crowning mischief of all to Jerome was that in his public audience he had condemned himself by his own testimony. "Would that you had been silent! What could have been so forcibly urged against you, as your own confession that you had spoken falsely, perjured yourself, and in your perjury relapsed into heresy? you recalled what you had solemnly sworn, and fell back in all error worse than the first. Wherefore, this sacred council, upon which all
authority upon earth has been conferred, will judge you according to your ways. ... In judgment or rebuke, the law has three objects which the judge should regard—the reformation of the one punished, the effect of the punishment on others, and their security from the evil removed. Having regard to these, this holy council purposes to proceed to give judgment. And would that you would renounce your folly, and break down the stubbornness of your heart! But you will be judged according to the rules of equity, and the sanctions of the sacred canons. And although you will not be converted, yet the council must judge in such a way as to convert the unbelieving to wisdom, that is, to prepare, through the holy knowledge of faith, a people perfect for God. Which may He grant who is the just Judge of living and dead, Jesus Christ, blessed forever."

With this prayer the bishop closed his discourse, and Jerome was permitted to speak previous to passing sentence. He took his stand in the midst of the assembly, upon a bench, by which he was so elevated as to be seen and heard by all. Addressing himself to the council, and specifying as he did so the several classes that composed it, he preceded the statement of his case by a reference to the sermon that had been so directly addressed to himself. In what spirit the bishop had sermonized, Jerome confessed he could not tell. For he had throughout perverted all that could possibly be perverted into a wrong sense, and one that he himself had never intended. He besought the council, by the blood of Christ by which all were redeemed, to allow him to repel the charge implied in the words of the sermon, that he scorned and spurned the clergy. He was confident, moreover, that in his discussions in the schools, and elsewhere, and in his various speeches and disputations, as a loyal citizen he had sought the good and prosperity of the Bohemian realm. Yet his enemies had perversely interpreted his course and conduct. The sermon he condemned as false, and, under the eye of God, a fiction."

He then entered directly upon his own case. He attributed his first recantation to the persuasions of the Cardinal of Florence, by whom he had been induced to write to that effect back to Bohemia. Judges had been appointed in his cause, with whom he was satisfied, but they had been changed for others, after which he would no longer answer under oath, when questioned as to his opinions, although he had no wish to conceal them. He said that all the charges last presented had not been read by the commission deputed for the purpose. He protested, however, that he did not say this through any stubbornness or obstinacy. He quoted the example of Paul, persecuted by the Jews, and said that for himself it was not strange if he too must suffer for Christian faith and doctrine. He professed his belief in one holy Catholic church. This he defined as composed of the whole multitude of those that should be saved. He recognized also the church triumphant, as well as the church militant upon earth. There was, moreover, the Catholic church, embracing all that professed the Christian faith. He recognized the authority, moreover, of prelates and rectors, enjoining the law of God upon men. He said that he held to the
articles of faith. He spoke approvingly of the mass, of the sacred offices, and of fasts, when all these were kept free from the rites and ceremonies with which they were sometimes connected. He said, moreover, that the extravagance of the clergy, their pomp and pride, should be put off. They were not to convert the patrimony of Christ, which was meant for the poor, into excessive parade, as houses, horses, rich garments, or into means to feed their lust.

He recalled also the letter which he had written to Prague, containing his recantation which he had made in public session. He said that he was unwilling to occasion the mischief he must, by consenting to the condemnation of John Huss. If he had ever said anything wickedly, it was when he recanted and spoke against his conscience. He had done it, he said, through fear of the fire and its torturing and cruel heat. This had induced him to write as he had done to Prague. Here, by the direction of the council, Jerome’s abjuration of the views was read, and his own subscription to it exhibited. Jerome confessed that it was his signature, but, the fear of the fire had extorted it. He had acted a false and foolish part in writing out his recantation, and for this act he was overwhelmed with bitter grief. Especially did he condemn himself for recanting the doctrine of Huss and Wickliffe, and consenting to the condemnation of the former, whom he believed to have been a just and holy man. In all this, he had done most wickedly.

Jerome repeated that he should die a Catholic, as he had lived. He defied the council to cite any point of his doctrine which was erroneous or heretical. His offense was his fidelity to the memory of his friend. "You wish to see me die," said he, "because I honor upright men who have stigmatized the pride and avarice of priests. Yet is that a sufficient cause to warrant my death? Why! before you found in me any evil whatever, you had resolved that I should die. Courage, therefore, and proceed! But believe me, that in dying I will leave you a sting in your hearts, and a gnawing worm in your consciences. I appeal to the sacred tribunal of Jesus Christ, and within a hundred years you shall answer there for your conduct to me."

The providence of God turned these words of Jerome almost into a prophecy. Their remarkable utterance is attested by their stamp upon a coin of the age. Jerome, however, in all probability, had no idea at the time of any reformer that was to succeed him in his task. He merely meant, as he had said on a previous speech of his trial, that Heaven’s unerring judgments would reverse the decisions of the council. Less than a hundred years would bring all his accusers and judges together at the bar of God.

The Patriarch of Constantinople now read Jerome’s sentence. It began by making a strange application of the words of Christ in regard to the unfruitful branch to be cast out and left to wither. It was based on the violation of his abjuration by Jerome, and his approval of Wickliffe and Huss. "He has turned
like a dog to his vomit," said the sentence, "and therefore the sacred council orders that he shall be torn from the vine as a barren and rotten branch." It declared him heretical, backsliding, and excommunicated. It condemned him as such, and cursed him. It finally abandoned him to the secular arm, in order to receive the just punishment due to so great a crime; and, although this punishment was capital, the council expressed its confident assurance that it was not too great.

Then it was, if some accounts are to be received, that the emperor’s chancellor, Caspar Schlick, advanced into the midst of the assembly, and protested in his master’s name against the condemnation of Jerome, threatening all the persons engaged in it with the anger of Sigismund. This tardy interposition was not attended to, and “the chancellor retired without gaining anything.”

Jerome was now given over into the hands of the civil magistrates. It was still an early hour of the morning, and on this Sabbath, while the crowds should have been gathering to the churches, the outraged victim of the council’s bigotry was on his way to pass through the gates of flame, as he believed, to the communion of the church triumphant in heaven. Before he left the council, a high paper crown, like the one which Huss in similar circumstances had worn, was brought in; upon it were pictures of demons surrounded by the flames. Jerome saw it, and throwing down his own hat on the floor, in the midst of the prelates, placed this on his head with his own hands, repeating the words which Huss had need before him on the like occasion, “Jesus Christ, who died for me, a sinner, wore a crown of thorns. I will cheerfully wear this for Him.” The soldiers then took charge of him, and led him away to execution.

As he turned to leave the cathedral, he chanted the creed in a firm voice, with eyes uplifted to heaven, and a face radiant with joy. On his way to the stake he chanted, first, the Litany, and then, as he passed outside the Gottlieben gate of the city, a hymn in honor of the Virgin. The last commenced with the words, "Blessed art thou among women." As he reached the place of execution—the same where Huss had been burned—he knelt down, with his face to the stake, and spent some time in prayer. The executioners raised him up while still engaged in his devotions, and stripped him of his garments. They then bound him to the stake, first about the loins with a linen bandage, after which other parts of the body were made fast with cords and chains. As they piled the wood around the stake, mingling bundles of straw to kindle the conflagration, Jerome sang the hymn, "Hail, Festal Day"—"Salve, feste dies." He then, in a loud voice that all might hear him, chanted the Nicene creed. When this was done, he turned and addressed the crowd in the German language: "Beloved youth, as I have now chanted, so, and not otherwise, do I believe. This is the symbol of my faith. Yet for this I die, because I would not assent to and approve the decision of the council, and hold and assert with them that John
Huss was holily and justly condemned by the council. For I knew him well, and I knew him as a true preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

He saw among his executioners a poor man, bringing a fagot to heap upon the pile. It did not excite him to anger. He smiled and said, "O holy simplicity! a thousand times more guilty is he who abuses thee."

When the fagots had been piled to a level with his head, his garments were thrown upon them, and fire was applied by a lighted torch. But the executioner who bore the torch approached from behind, unwilling to be seen. "Come forward boldly," said Jerome, "apply the fire before my face. Had I been afraid, I should not have been here." As the flames began to spread, he exclaimed aloud, "Into thy hand, O Lord, I commit my spirit." When the fire began to penetrate to his flesh, he prayed again, "O Lord God, Almighty Father, have compassion on me, and forgive my sins. Thou knowest that I have ever delighted in thy truth." His voice was now lost, for the smoke and flame had become suffocating, but though no words were heard, all could see by the motion of the lips that he was still engaged in prayer. The agony of his martyrdom was protracted; it was unusually long before life was extinct. Blisters of water of the size of an egg might be seen over his whole body. One might have gone," says a spectator, "from the St. Clement Church at Prague to the bridge over the Moldau, before he ceased to breathe."

At last, all that belonged to him—his bed, cap, clothing, shoes, and whatever he had had with him in prison—was brought and thrown upon the blazing pile, to be consumed with him. His ashes, like those of Huss, were carefully gathered up, borne away, and cast into the Rhine. The council were apprehensive lest some fragment or relic of their victim should find its way back to Prague, and be cherished as the memorial of a condemned heretic. The least particle that could be associated with the names of either of the sufferers was sought out and carefully burned, lest it should become an object of veneration. But all their precautions were vain. The soil which their dying feet had pressed—in lack of other objects—became the prized memorial, and was borne to Prague to be guarded with religious care. But more than the portraits even of the departed, was the image of themselves which these men had enstamped upon the minds and hearts of their countrymen. When the last surviving member of the council that sentenced them to execution should have been laid in his grave, the memory of these two Bohemian martyrs would still bloom fresh and green upon their natal soil.
Section II
The Aftermath of the Council of Constance

This section comprises chapters 9 through 12 of Volume II. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 9  Inefficiency and Tumults of the Council
Chapter 10  Benedict Deposed, Progress of Reform
Chapter 11  Measures of the Pope and Council Against the Bohemians
Chapter 12  Futility of the Council and its Dissolution

CHAPTER IX
Inefficiency and Tumults of the Council
Ill Success and Return of the Emperor

The execution of Jerome, amid the clashing schemes and conflicting interests which marked the progress of the council, was passed lightly by. A gallant ship had gone down upon a stormy sea, and the wild waves of passion rolled on as madly and fiercely as if there had been no human victim of their murderous play. No expression of regret or remorse bubbles up visibly to the surface, to speak, in the actors, any bitter memory of the deed. No doubt it was remembered—no doubt, in later years, minds like Gerson’s recurred to it sadly
—but the death of Jerome, at the time, produced scarcely a pause in the struggle of conflicting parties and interests.

On the next day after the execution (May 31), a decree of the council was issued, summoning its absent members to return, under penalty, in case of disobedience, of incurring the indignation of Almighty God, and St. Peter and St. Paul, his apostles. The council felt that it was now incumbent upon it to prosecute with energy the matter of the union of the church. This was manifest in the congregations held upon the following days. In spite of a letter of Sigismund, urging upon them the business of reform, the members showed themselves more inclined to remove the difficulties that stood in the way of the deposition of Benedict and the election of a new pope.

The case of the Bohemians, moreover, called for the notice of the council. The execution of Jerome was not calculated to soothe the feelings or repress the indignation of his countrymen. Their letter of remonstrance had reached the council at the close of the previous year. Their citation for their presumption and suspicion of heretical pravity in adhering to Huss had been demanded by the prosecuting officers of the council, in its name, on the twentieth of February, 1416. This citation was issued on the fifth of May, and was publicly affixed to the church doors and gates of Constance. A commission to attend to the process of trial—which was to be summary in the case of those cited—was appointed on the third of June. It was now, upon the non-appearance of the Bohemians summoned to answer before the council, that they were to be declared guilty of contumacy. The number of these is variously stated from four hundred and fifty to five hundred and fifty. They embraced, as we have already seen, some of the most powerful and distinguished members of the Bohemian nobility. To them the threats of the council were a mere brutum fulmen. They treated them with contempt. Secure in their distance from Constance and the consciousness of their own strength, they were driven into a more defiant attitude by the steps taken to awe them into submission. The execution of Jerome, following upon that of Huss, was in their eyes a new outrage, tending to destroy the last vestige of respect which they could ever have entertained for the body by whose order the deed was done.

A different course from theirs was the one pursued by one of their countrymen at Constance, the Knight De Latzembock. He had gradually risen till he stood high in the emperor’s favor. He it was who bore the news of the emperor’s coronation at Aix la Chapelle to Constance, on the opening of the council. Since that time he had been employed in high positions, and had had charge of important matters. But still, in spite of all this, the stain of heretical leprosy clung to him. It was not forgotten that he was one of those whom the Bohemian king had commissioned to escort Huss to Constance. Although he had since had but little to do with him, and showed in his character and life more of the courtier than the friend, he yet fell under suspicion. The council felt that it was at least dangerous that such a man should not be committed with
themselves to the guilt of their own deed. There was something ominous in his silence. It could not be tolerated. He must speak out. He must seem at least to endorse the condemnation of his countrymen, or he could not be trusted about the person of the emperor. He was cited—according to a historian hostile to Huss—and required to abjure the doctrine and approve the condemnation of Huss and Jerome. With this requisition he complied. Doubtless his conscience excused him for the crime under the plea of necessity, but the suspicion of his sincerity which was still entertained, while it commends his intellectual convictions, suggests the policy and pliability of the courtier. To this man, this new convert, letters were given by the council to be carried into Bohemia and delivered to his countrymen, but we hear no more of them, and it is doubtful whether he who would abjure his convictions for fear of the council, would be forward to thrust before the eyes of his own countrymen the provocation of his infamy not unattended by danger.

Never was the difference between preaching and practice better illustrated than in the history and proceeding; of the council. We have seen how loud had been the cry of remonstrance and the complaint of corruption. It was notorious that the most simoniacal arts had raised many of the prelates of the council to the position they occupied. The channels of promotion were not through merit, but money. Again and again this crying infamy of the church had been exposed. Except the deposition of John XXIII, no noticeable steps had been taken in the direction of reform. Two men had been put to death, upon whose characters there rested not a stain of corruption or impurity, and who were angels by the side of their judges. At last a victim was found—a poor insignificant copyist—of prelatical and pontifical simony. A scapegoat was wanted, and John Creith of Liege was the one selected. He had, unfortunately for himself, though to his great pecuniary advantage, been one of the minions of John XXIII. Acting as his secretary, he had employed his knowledge and skill to his own emolument, counterfeiting, to this end, apostolic letters and documents. He was accused of having sold thirty benefices, and of having reserved in his own hands others, which were incompatible in the hands of one man. Upon this victim, punishment, therefore, must alight. He, at least, will be made a signal example. But what is his sentence? Suspension from office! No wonder the preacher of two or three days later (June 7), should remark—when speaking on the text, “They were filled with the Holy Ghost”—that instead of the seven graces which were bestowed on the apostles at the day of Pentecost, he feared that the devil had had his Pentecost in the hearts of most of the clergy, and had inspired them with vices directly contrary to the graces of the apostles.

But little, however, was accomplished by the council after Jerome’s death, for several months. They were reluctant to enter upon any measures of reform. The emperor was absent, and private interests and party purposes acknowledged no supreme authority to overawe them. The council assumed the character for the most part of a great debating club, except as party policy mingled with the intrigues of the caucus. The affair of Petit was still warmly
controverted, yet little if any progress was made toward its settlement. The Cardinal of Cambray issued his treatise on ecclesiastical power, some portions of which contain sentiments in advance of his age, and strongly savoring of a protestant character. Yet this very treatise gave rise, by the doubts which he threw out in its concluding chapter, to some of the most agitating and angry controversies. Should the English, or the union of Spain with the council, be recognized still as a separate and independent nation composing it? It was a firebrand thrown in among a mass of inflammable materials, and the conflagration at once burst forth. The pride of England, fresh from the glorious field of Agincourt, resented the doubt as an insult. Yet the French could not look with complacency upon the exaltation of their great rival. The Spaniard, who had now arrived with a view to join the council, found their place preoccupied by the English, who had always heretofore been recognized as an integral portion of the German nation in the councils of the church. The controversy kindled to a flame. Fierce passions were indulged, and fierce words spoken. The Cardinal of Cambray was not allowed to touch upon the subject, as he had proposed, in a public discourse. He complained of this restriction upon his liberty. It was but a poor satisfaction to be informed that he must be careful how he appeared in the streets, for armed Englishmen sought his life. More than once the matter threatened to proceed to open violence, but by the intervention of the prince, and a mass of national protests against present privileges being allowed as precedents, passion was cooled and the danger deferred.

The council meanwhile had received new and large accessions to its numbers. England was more numerously represented. Among others came Robert Clifford, bishop of London, the two chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge, and twelve doctors, ostensibly to maintain the rights of the English nation.

The kingdoms of Portugal, Aragon, Castile, Navarre, and Scotland sent delegates to Constance, who were, most of them, successively received with similar formalities to those upon which the representatives of Gregory XII had insisted. Some of them were quite leisurely in making their appearance. Months passed, bringing from them to the council only letters and promises. Nothing could be done, meanwhile, that could be regarded as final and conclusive in regard to Benedict XIII. His trial and deposition, in order to be acknowledged legitimate, must be anticipated in by all the nations.

It was during this period, previous to taking further and more decisive measures against Benedict, that the council presented a most singular scene of turmoil and recrimination. Questions of national precedence and representation; the complaints of the cardinals that they were not notified previously of the subjects of discussion; the affair of John Petit still dragging its slow length along, vain and futile attempts to draw up plans on the subject of reform, which the emperor still urged upon the attention of the council, all conspired to render that body the scene of angry and bitter controversy. It was
during this period, also, that Gerson signalized himself, not only by his zeal in controverted matters, but by peculiar manifestations of what at the present day might be regarded as ultra orthodoxy. We have recently seen the doctrine of “The immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary” solemnly adopted by the Roman Catholic church as one of the integral elements of its creed. Gerson, on this subject, was in advance of his times. At Paris he had manfully contended in behalf of the doctrine, and had classed its principal opponent with Huss himself. But now his devotion went still further. He urged publicly upon the council the immaculate conception of St. Joseph, and, opposed as he was to the multiplication of saints’ days, went so far as to insist that to this rule of restriction St. Joseph should be excepted. But the council were not ready to endorse the suggestion. More than four hundred years more were destined to pass away, before the question in regard to the Virgin Mary could be put at rest. Another century may yet honor the logical consistency of Gerson, that ranks Mary and Joseph together as to their claim on this point.

It was near the close of the year (1416) that the council replied to a letter of Sigismund, informing him of the state of affairs at Constance. He had ever a horror for all that tended to civil commotion. His hostility to the doctrines of Petit was aggravated by what he saw in the anarchy and violence of France—results as he regarded them of his incendiary principles. His prejudice against Huss had been skillfully aggravated by the enemies of the reformer, when they imputed to his views and preaching similar tendencies. For this reason, he was urgent that the council should prosecute the Bohemian heresy to its extinction. But this was a task beyond their power. They wrote to the emperor now to implore his aid.

There was good reason for doing so. The council found themselves contemned by heretics. Their threats were despised; their authority was disregarded; their own conduct was arraigned, and the Bohemian nation boldly declared its purpose to persist in the course upon which it had entered. In these circumstances their only hope of help was in the emperor. He must enforce the authority of the council by his imperial power. The letter which the council wrote him is important for the picture which it gives of the state of things in Bohemia, as well as on other accounts. It commences with a statement of the daily complaints made to the council of evils that prevailed in Bohemia; the scandalous dangers and dangerous scandals, through errors, heresies, seditions, and persecutions, which had given disturbance to the clergy, and which were spread over a country inflamed by “more than material fire.” It speaks of the disciples of Wickliffe, Huss, and Jerome as the followers of Belial, and abounding in impiety and perfidy. The two former, condemned by the council, were represented as saints in the churches, were spoken of as such in sermons, were honored in the divine offices, and had masses celebrated for them as martyrs. Their followers sought to disseminate and perpetuate their errors, drawing off to themselves all classes of persons, learned and ignorant, and of both sexes. They are spoken of as treating lightly holy mother church, and
holding sentences and censures in contempt. The evil was rising to an alarming height. The intelligence of the council’s proceedings had only urged them to new and more detestable excesses.

The council then sets forth in a more specific form the evils of which they complain; members of the university, and other priests infected by them, continued to preach the errors of Wickliffe and Huss, which the council had condemned. They had been cherished, defended, and protected by certain barons and nobles of the kingdom, who, in letters to the council with their seals affixed, had avowed their acts. The communion of the cup was preached and practiced in the cities and villages, notwithstanding the decision of the council upon the subject, and the threatened penalty of eternal damnation. The clergy were ill treated and abused, and even the Jews enjoyed a greater liberty than was allowed to them. The interdict was still continued in many monasteries and churches, on account of the presence among them of that wretch, John Jessenitz, by which means many hundreds of masses are every day omitted. The metropolitan church had been long unoccupied, both on account of the interdict, and the robbery of its revenues, out of which three hundred ecclesiastics had formerly been sustained. The relics which had been deposited there, which the people had been accustomed to visit daily, had been plundered for years. Some of the barons were defaming the holy council, and preventing the clergy from complying with its commands. Such as had obeyed had been plundered and expelled from their posts.

The letter then sets forth the sad condition of the university, once foremost in rank among all of the German nation, now almost a deserted habitation, and driving from it those who are unwilling to be polluted by its errors. The nation, too, once submissive to its prelates, and religiously faithful to the divine worship, and to all things required by ecclesiastical obedience, is now disgraced throughout the world by perfidy and error.

Against these evils the council declares that it has done what it could. Convoked to exterminate heresy and reform the world, it has by the grace of God proceeded to the task assigned. One of the leaders of heresy it has given over by sentence to the secular court, the other remains in custody, while processes have been fulminated against their favorers and adherents. Yet, in the need of more ample resources of defense, the council invokes, and pressingly demands, through its venerable and eminent bishops, doctors, masters, and ambassadors, the arm of his imperial majesty. It calls upon him as the defender and advocate of the church, to destroy the perfidious, defend the holy church itself and its faithful members, no less than restrain the enemies of the Christian name. It incites him against the Bohemians as errorists and persecutors of the church of God, urging him to expel the seditious and drive out intruders. It then sets forth the character of Wenzel, king of Bohemia, in language which his brother Sigismund could appreciate. These excesses never disturbed him. He dissembles in everything. He lets everything take its course.
The evils which he should resist even to blood, and at the risk of his life, he tolerates in the heart of his kingdom, or even, as was more lamentably reported, cherishes and supports. "Proceed, therefore," the council say, "with all dispatch; all lingering is dangerous; all delay does mischief. Act for the salvation of all who are like to perish before the eyes of the council, before your own, and the eyes of all beholders. Act at once, while any hope of safety remains. If the disease continues, and the time to arrest it is neglected, there is fear that the evil will become irreparable. Faith and the church, spiritualities and temporalities, souls and bodies, are threatened with a like ruin. Act heartily, glorious in the triumph of virtue, noble worshipper of justice and merit, so as to reign for ever with the Savior of the world, of whom you are the type. Your exalted piety may aspire to such merit."

It was indeed time to call upon the emperor for aid. To calm the storm it had raised was beyond the power of the council. The letters of the Bohemian nobles already noticed, were not the only ones that reached them of the same tenor. Some less numerously signed, some written by individuals, attested the strength of the indignation excited by the provocations which had been offered. The absence of the emperor in Spain left them for a while to feel the bitterness of that contempt to which they were exposed by their own deeds, while unprotected by the imperial sword.

But the emperor’s method of quieting the insurrectionary spirit was by far the wisest. He sought to reform the clergy, and urged the subject with repeated importunity upon the attention of the council. Successive failures to secure any advance in this direction might have satisfied him that moral suasion is a poor and ineffectual motive to arrest a party like that with which he had to deal, in a course where their own interest is at stake. He employed, however, one of his ministers to draw up for the council a plan of reform, but all the reward of the servant for speaking out his master’s views, as he undoubtedly did, was to be called "a Hussite rather than a Christian." "There must first," said these grandees of the council, to put off the evil day and prevent their own exposure, "There must first be a pope to authorize the reform." There were those who urged Sigismund to take the matter into his own hand, to fix the yearly salary of the popes and bishops, reserving what remained of the treasures of the church to further his darling project of a crusade against the Turks. But from such a step as this even the emperor shrank. It would be committing the unpardonable sin with which Luther stood charged a century later, of "attacking the monks’ bellies."

The well-known views of the emperor contributed undoubtedly to secure for those who ventured to express them, freedom of speech in the council. The sermons preached abounded, as we have seen, with most unpalatable statements of the corruption of the clergy. These public discourses were the safety-valve by which the pent-up convictions of the necessity of reform were allowed harmlessly to escape. Yet sometimes the truth must have stung
deeply. Just before the emperor’s return, at the beginning of the year 1417, a sermon was preached before the council, which gives a fearful picture of the state of the clergy. Their vices are coolly and philosophically classed. The first of these classifications represents the ostentation and luxury of the clergy grasping at the goods of the poor and the revenues of the church, for selfish indulgence. “In our pride,” says the preacher, “we surpass the princes of the world; scorning the example and command of Jesus Christ, we would set up as kings; we march at the head of armies; we make ourselves terrible and inaccessible, especially to the poor.” Other crimes recounted were the ill-disposal of benefices, by bestowing them on the incapable and vile the mal-administration of the sacrament, extended to the notoriously impure, unjust, and excommunicate, neglect of scripture study and gospel preaching, unjust decisions by ecclesiastical judges, who make them a matter of traffic, and similar charges in abundance. The picture of ecclesiastical manners or morals is too foul for the modern page. Yet it was presented in all its fearful colors in full council, and no one called it a slander. Each one knew only too well that it was drawn to the life.

The time was now drawing near for Sigismund’s return to Constance. He had promised in one of his letters to the council to hasten his return, if in their judgment his presence should be deemed necessary. But it was a year and a half that his absence had been protracted. He left Constance on the twentieth of July, 1415, and entered its gates, upon his return, on the twenty-seventh of January, 1417. The success of his mission could not have been very flattering to his imperial pride. Benedict XIII had virtually defied him, and still assumed the full exercise of papal prerogative. His attempt to negotiate a peace between France and England would have been utterly futile, had not the policy of Henry V led him to adopt the purpose of leaving France to wear out its strength in intestine conflict. The Duke of Burgundy and the Constable d’Armagnac were sworn foes. Henry favored the duke, and even contracted with him a conditional alliance, while in a seeming compliance with the emperor’s persuasions he entered into a truce with France for the space of a few months.

Yet Sigismund must have solely felt that his influence would have been altogether in vain but for other causes, more effective than his personal influence. As the vessel that bore him across the channel approached the English coast, several English lords, headed by the Duke of Gloucester, stepped into the water, with their drawn swords in their hands, and stopped the boat. The emperor, surprised at such a reception, asked the reason of it. The duke replied that if he came to challenge any authority in England, he had orders to forbid his landing, but if he came only as a mediator of peace, he should be treated with all the respect due to his imperial dignity. Henry V had the spirit of an independent sovereign. The proceedings of the emperor in France, in his assumption of authority, were not to be repeated on the shores of England. Sigismund showed his regard for the spirit of the English monarch, when, after
months of useless negotiation to secure for France a short and worthless truce, he concluded himself, like the Duke of Burgundy, an alliance with Henry V.

The only result of his journey northward seems to have been the strengthening the hands of the ally of the Duke of Burgundy, and increasing the improbability that the doctrines of Petit would be condemned at the council. A slight which he offered to William of Bavaria, while in England, led that prince indignantly to withdraw from the English coast with all his ships. Sigismund was left a sort of state prisoner in London, unable, till he had signed the treaty with England, to reach the continent, and then only in English ships. On one occasion the mob rose against the emperor, and he was obliged to flee for refuge to Canterbury.

All this was humiliating enough. Undoubtedly English manliness, that spurned the perjury of Sigismund in giving up Huss to the flames, had something to do with the threatened violence. But there was still another dreg in his bitter cup. To defray the expenses of his journey he had sold the whole of Brandenburg, together with the electorate, to Frederic of Zollern for 300,000 ducats, and for a smaller sum created the Truchsesses of Waldburg governors of Swabia. Thus he had alienated instead of adding to his dominions, and in some respects his journey was a marked failure. He had indeed induced Spain to withdraw from Benedict, but the obstinate old pope was not to be cajoled or terrified even by an emperor. He still maintained his state, and fulminated his terrors in all the pride of his prerogative.

It was now time for the council to try their hand at a task which the emperor had left incomplete—the removal of Benedict as the lingering obstacle which obstructed the union of the church. At the twenty-third session, November 5, 1416, a commission was appointed to draw up charges and bear testimony against the "schismatic, heretical, and tyrant" pontiff. This commission proceeded to business, and were ready to report at the next session (November 28), when the citation of Benedict was decreed. He was summoned to appear at Constance within one hundred days from the present session, or within seventy days from the issuing of the citation. The citation was decreed by edict, through apprehension that the criminal could not be personally reached. But two monks were found bold enough to bear the summons to Peniscola, and into the presence of Benedict himself. These monks belonged to the Benedictine order, and their names were Lambert Stipiltz and Bernard Plancha. The recital which they gave of their mission, showed that the idea of its danger was scarcely exaggerated.

As they drew near to Peniscola, accompanied by two nobles and several notaries, they were met by a doctor dispatched by Benedict to request them to defer their entrance till the next day, under the pretext that they might be greeted then by a more honorable reception. With this request they refused to comply. "These devils," said they, "imagine they have gained everything if they can postpone the union a single hour." As they entered the town, a nephew of
Benedict, escorted by two hundred well-armed soldiers, came to meet them. Their reception had every appearance of a welcome, the value of which, however, they could well appreciate. They amused themselves at the fright which the presence of two unarmed monks had created in Benedict.

The next day they were admitted to an audience. Benedict had with him three cardinals, several bishops and other ecclesiastics, and about three hundred laymen. These monks then read the decree of citation, which Benedict heard with extreme impatience. When they came the passage which spoke of him as schismatic and heretical, he could contain himself no longer. "It is not true," he cried out at one time, and again, "They slander me." At length, in a more formal reply, he declared that the matter was one of great importance, and his answer should be given the next day, after deliberation with his cardinals. He improved the occasion, however, to go into a lengthened defense of his own course, more, probably, for the ears of his auditors, than the satisfaction or conviction of the monks. "The church," said he, "is not at Constance, but at Peniscola. Here," he exclaimed, striking his hand upon the chair he occupied, "Here is the Noah’s ark, the true church. These people of Constance call me schismatic and heretic, because I will not put the church into their hands; a thing I will take good care not to do. Already there would have been peace for six months but for them. On their heads rests the guilt of heresy and schism." The monks thought such an answer enough. They demanded a copy of it, which the pope was reluctant to grant. But leaving behind them a notary of the king to take charge of the document after it should be drawn up, they withdrew to Tortosa.

Serious as the business was, it is connected with some amusing incidents. It is said that as the monks approached, dressed in black, according to the statutes of their order, in order to cite Benedict, the latter said to those around him, "Let us hear the ravens of the council." But monkish repartee was equal to pontifical wit. "There is nothing surprising," said one of the monks boldly, "that ravens should come near a dead body!" One historian ludicrously represents the monks as dressed in black, the devil’s color, entering into hell to cite Beelzebub, the great devil, to come to judgment. Undoubtedly the sincerity was about equal on both sides. The monks themselves considered the whole affair, notwithstanding their indignation against Benedict, as a good joke.

The letter, in which they gave to the council an account of their expedition, is dated Tortosa, January 22, 1417. Five days later, on the 27th of the month, Sigismund returned to Constance.

The announcement of his approach was enthusiastically received. He was met several miles distant from Constance by an imposing procession of princes, nobles, and ecclesiastical dignitaries. He entered the city amid the discharge of cannon, the ringing of bells, and applauding shouts of welcome. The English saw with exultation that he proudly wore the decoration of the Order of the
The presence of the emperor infused new life and energy into the proceedings of the council. The more arduous matters, which in his absence had been deferred, almost of necessity, might now be disposed of. The first in order of these, if not the most important, was that which concerned the deposition of Benedict. His answer to the citation sent him by the hands of the two monks, was read (March 7, 1417), but only confirmed the impression that he was obstinately resolved not to cede. He had indeed sent the Bishop of Cuenza to Constance, ostensibly to make propositions which should be a basis of negotiation, but only, as his enemies asserted, to sow division in the council. His representative manifested a temper and spirit worthy of his master. An English ambassador disputed with him the question of precedence. The Bishop of Cuenza, preferring to use the most decisive arguments, seized his adversary, who was a small man, about the body, and taking him from his seat, carried him out of the church, and threw him into one of the vaults, which chanced to be open. Resuming his place, he quietly remarked to his colleague, Martin Fernandez of Cordova, "As a priest, I bury the English ambassador; as a man of the sword, and a cavalier by birth, do you perform what remains to be done."

But no arts or measures that Benedict could now take would enable him to evade the purpose of the council. He had been repeatedly cited, but did not appear. He had deigned no reply, and no one appeared for him. He refused steadfastly and consistently to recognize, in any manner, the authority of the council as more than that of a mere assembly. The charges against him, as finally drawn up, had been read as early as November 5, 1416. They were supported by multitudes of witnesses, most of them of high ecclesiastical or secular rank. Among these witnesses was the emperor himself, as well as some
of the bishops of Benedict. He was charged with obstinate perseverance in schism. His various obnoxious acts, regarded as fatally prejudicial to the peace of the church, were attested, and he was again cited to answer. This was the last citation. The period allowed was extended, at the instance of the Spanish nation, and in order that the proceedings of the council might not be open to the charge of harshness or precipitation. The blow was merely suspended.

Meanwhile the council itself was not secure from dangers within its own body. The incongruous elements of which it was composed, and the incongruous interests which it represented, made it repeatedly a scene of the wildest discord. More than once its warmest friends had reason to fear that its only achievement would be to render itself the Babel of Christendom. The English composed by themselves an entire nation in the council. Other nations were jealous of the influence which they were thus enabled to exert. The Spaniards, moreover, who had only of late joined the body, disputed with them the question of precedence. The French seemed to resent the increasing importance of a nation which had given them reason to remember their own lasting disgrace, as well as inferiority, at Agincourt. The dispute waxed warm. All order was at an end. The consultations of the council more than once were characterized by the violent clamors of a mob. The English indeed carried their point at last, conceding to the Spaniards on the question of precedence, a right which they were willing to surrender only for the occasion, and for the sake of peace.

But another matter soon gave occasion for the renewal of similar scenes. The emperor and the German and English nations were earnest in favor of ecclesiastical reform. With them this was the first and most important measure to be initiated. Germany, especially, complained of the simony of the clergy, and the abuses of pontifical and prelatical prerogative. Maurice of Prague preached a sermon at this period (May 9, 1417), in which he exposed the disorders of the clergy to unsparing rebuke. Huss could not have exceeded his former associate, and one of his late judges, in the freedom of invective. Maurice spoke of the prevailing opinion—which he declared, however, that he regarded as a heresy—that Huss had been put to death mainly because he had spoken so energetically upon this very point. His friend and associate, Stephen of Prague, a few days later, did not hesitate to add his testimony. He exposed in like manner "the horrible simony" of the clergy, which had filled the highest posts of the church with incapable and unworthy occupants. "Is it right," he asks, "that fools should rule, and the wise obey them; that the young should give order, and the old be their servitors; that the ignorant should have charge of what calls for the most discriminating management; that the learned should not dare to open their mouths; and that grooms should be preferred to doctors and to preachers of the word of God?" Nor did he hesitate to declare in his sermon, in language indirectly condemnatory of the council, that this matter of reform was more essential to promote the interests of the Christian faith, than
the union of the different obediences. The election of the pope he did not hesitate to pronounce a matter of secondary importance.

He could have said nothing more seriously in conflict with the cherished purposes and avowed policy of the cardinals, and of many prelates of the different nations. These contended that the election of a pope should precede all measures of reform. Their plea was, that in order to be valid these must have the sanction of the pope. The plea was specious, but self-interest was at the bottom of it. The emperor and the German nation were fully aware that the hope of a reform in the abuses of the church was only warranted while the pontificate was vacant. Let it be filled, and the pride of prerogative would deny the right of the council to proceed in the matter, or would restrain and control its action. The event justified this fear. For a while, the emperor, with the English and German nations, stood firm. The others were irritated. The French even complained that their rights of free deliberation were encroached upon by the emperor.

But none were more aggrieved than the college of cardinals. They went so far as to demand of the Elector of Brandenburg safe-conduct, that they might withdraw from the council. But the Elector of Brandenburg was not the man to confer such a favor. He shared himself with the German nation their convictions of the paramount and urgent necessity of reform. His long experience of public life had made him fully acquainted with the disorders of the ecclesiastical state. "The clergy," said he, "push themselves into secular matters; they use their revenues merely for their own selfish purposes. They are ever making new acquisitions, and already they have usurped a large part of the empire." Such language could serve only as a still greater provocation to the cardinals. But their passports could not be had. The elector not only refused their request, but told them plainly that the dissolution and transfer of the council belonged not to them, but to the emperor, as advocate and defender of the church.

Compelled to remain at Constance, the college of cardinals could speak of nothing, could think of nothing, but the election of a new pope. They had frequent consultations by themselves on the subject. They were apprehensive lest the prerogative of election should be wrested from their hands by the authority of the council. A contest which had arisen between the Castilians and Aragonese in regard to the representation of the Spanish nation, and the union of the former to the council, aided them in their projects. The Cardinal of Cambray, in a public discourse, urged that immediate steps should be taken for an election. He would not allow any measure of reform to take precedence of this. But, firm as the cardinals might be in their purpose, their opponents were not less decided. The contest grew more and more desperate. Fierce passions were excited. Harsh words were spoken. At a congregation held on the 16th of June, there seemed no possible alternative but the dissolution of the council. The position of the Castilians aggravated matters. They were secretly in favor
of Benedict, or apprehensive at least of the result, if another pope was not soon elected. They refused to unite with the council—though they held already been long at Constance—till some order should be taken on the subject. It was not without the greatest difficulty that their resolution was overcome, and the storm weathered for the present.

It was, however, soon seen to which side the scale must eventually incline. The Italian, Spanish, and French nations sided already with the cardinals. The English and German nations were in the minority, and only sustained their position by the aid of the emperor. Against Sigismund, therefore, the measures of the cardinals, and three nations, were now directed. "Had he," they asked, "any right to mix himself up in ecclesiastical matters?" While he favored them, the strength of the imperial arm was a welcome ally. Now that he opposed their measures, he must be rebuked and kept within his own sphere.

It was in these circumstances, and after vainly seeking a decree of the council prescribing the manner of a new election, that the cardinals adopted a line of policy which did much to promote their plans. They petitioned the emperor to appoint a season of public devotion, to obtain from Heaven an election favorable to the welfare of the church. Sigismund could scarcely refuse the request. He ordered their devotions to be publicly announced for a day of the following week. Why did he not order, first of all, prayers for reform? It was a sad mistake, as he found at last. Popular feeling was now changing in favor of the cardinals. Sigismund had virtually signed the death warrant of his most cherished purpose. The question of all questions, which Germany demanded should be met—which she redemanded in more imperative tones a century later, and before which cardinals and prelates turned pale and trembled—was put by for the time, and, to all practical purposes so far as this council was concerned, finally.

During all this time the case of the Bohemians, though overshadowed by matters of more pressing importance, had not been altogether overlooked. New commissioners to attend to their case were appointed to replace such as had not been able to serve. But there was no danger of their being overburdened with business. None appeared before them in answer to the citation of the council. Huss and Jerome had at Prague a greater power than ever. Living, they were but men. The council had rashly promoted them to that of martyrs. They had canonized them as unhesitatingly as John XXIII did the Swedish Bridget, and, although against their intentions, far more effectually in the esteem of the Bohemian nation. Respect for the memory of these martyrs, and indignation at the injustice that doomed them to the stake, blazed up out of the smoldering grief of their recent loss into flames of fierce defiance.

At this moment, when the national spirit was roused to desperation, when the passions of men were in a ferment, when the violence of antagonistic parties and opinions demanded a sharp eye and a strong arm to control them, Bohemia
found itself practically without a ruler. The drunken wretch who occupied the
throne was the laughing-stock of the world, and a disgrace to the nation over
whom he pretended to reign. None feared him as a king. None respected him as
a man. Nothing could show this better than the manner in which the question
of deposing him was discussed. Nicholas of Hussinitz, the friend and patron of
Huss, was the principal leader of the Hussite party. By his position as well as by
his ability—for he was one of the most powerful of the Bohemian barons—he
commanded great influence. But his course had excited the apprehensions of
the dissolute monarch. Wenzel suspected him of aspiring to the throne, and
banished him from Prague. He withdrew to his own district, where his authority
was great, and gathered around him a powerful army of near forty thousand
men. To these, animated with the enthusiasm of their new faith, and terrible
in the desperateness of their resolves to avenge their wrongs, or at least to
maintain what they regarded as their rights, he proposed the election of a new
king who should be of their own belief. Whether Nicholas himself aspired to the
post is not entirely clear, but his proposition was subsequently rejected on the
ground that they had now a king who answered their purpose well enough. The
priest Coranda, who was a popular and powerful speaker among the Hussites,
maintained before the armed assembly, that the specter of a king now
occupying the throne—though a mere mockery of royalty—was far better for
them than one who, in bearing their name, would only produce division in the
nation, or excite prejudice against their cause. Never would Wenzel be
anything but a tool, and when so ready at hand, why not use him

Into such contempt had the royal authority fallen. There was no government,
except the self-restraint of infuriated parties. The Hussites were stung to
vengeance by the mad and imbecile bigotry of the council, who had given back
wrong and outrage in answer to their demand for truth and justice. But if they
had asked for an egg and had received a scorpion, they were not like to forget
the gift or its sting, any more than the giver. The apologists of the council at
Prague represented to them the council itself, and thus volunteered to make
themselves objects of a vengeance not always restrained within the limits of
the law. The absence of a real executive power gave the country over into the
hands of the Hussites. Many of their leaders were men of strong passions, and
more impelled by party zeal than the spirit of him they reverenced as a martyr.
Some joined them more for their own selfish advancement than from notions of
sincere anxiety for the public cause.

In these circumstances, scenes of violence were almost a necessary result.
Deeds were committed, which the great majority could only view with ill-
dissembled regret. Some of the priests, who adhered to the council, and who
refused to regard the edict which allmved, or perhaps was construed to
require, the administration of the cup, were driven from their parishes.
Churches were pillaged. Monasteries were plundered and burned. The stern
spirit of John Knox might have smiled to see the rookeries torn down, but Huss
himself could never have approved the violence which the vengeance of the
council had provoked. And yet the war-cry was in his name. *Vive Wickliffe et Huss* was answered feebly by the party cry, *Vive le Pape*.

The withdrawal of Zisca and Nicholas de Hussinitz to their estate, was for Wenzel a fatal policy. Zisca was already the hero of many a hard-fought field. His name alone was a tower of strength. While Nicholas de Hussinitz was gathering his thousands on Mount Tabor—as a scriptural enthusiasm had named the height he had selected for his fortress—Zisca was not less successful in gathering around him bold and daring spirits kindred to his own. Resistance was completely overawed. The communion under both kinds became the common practice throughout Bohemia. The violent opposition of the clergy and the anathemas of the council were laughed to scorn.

The University of Prague, already almost to a man on the side of Huss, could hesitate no longer in its choice of parties. Like the universities of England in the time of Cromwell, it allowed itself to be swept along in the popular current. On the tenth of March (1417), it issued a public declaration in favor of the communion of the cup. John Cardinal, now rector, who had shown himself the secret friend of Huss at Constance, was employed to draw it up. The university first of all protests, that it does not presume to introduce any novelty of custom or doctrine in opposition to the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman church. Its only aim is to enlighten the faithful upon the subject of the eucharist. It then expresses its greater readiness to decide in favor of the communion under both kinds, as the council of Constance had itself already declared that Christ had so appointed in his institution of the ordinance of the Holy Supper, and for many centuries the church had practiced its observance.

The university then exhorts all the faithful to maintain with religious fidelity the institution of our Savior, notwithstanding opposing customs and constitutions, however venerable. Whether Christ entire was present in each kind, as the council maintained, the university does not decide. This is spoken of merely as a tradition which may or may not be true. And yet the language of the university is by no means harsh toward its opponents. It urges indulgence in behalf of such as through past observances, or ignorance and simplicity, had never adopted their own opinion in regard to the cup.

There is reason to believe that many took this occasion to change their position on the great question before the nation—some through policy doubtless, others through conviction. Peter of Umetzow, a theological professor, who had been one of the most determined opponents of Huss and his doctrines, in a full meeting of the university publicly avowed the change that had taken place in his views. He asked pardon of God and the king for having persecuted so holy a man and so orthodox a teacher as John Huss. He declared that, rejecting the decision of the council of Constance, he could hold no other view in regard to the use of the cup than the one which the university had approved.
Wenzel, at this period, had himself withdrawn from Prague. The absence of the principal Hussite nobles did not reassure him. Either they might return, or others might visit him with complaints that would sadly disturb his easy and drunken indolence. He had taken refuge in a fortress called Tossenicz, where he refused to see anyone. On one occasion, the Bohemian nobility, in large numbers, went to visit him, but he saw them coming, redoubled his guards, and refused them admittance. They consulted together, and resolved to send a deputation who might be more readily received. Two of their number, venerable with their gray hair and long beards, were sent to demand audience. Their request was granted, but they were directed to go to another fortress, where the king promised to meet them. He kept his word, and treated them to a magnificent entertainment. After the repast was finished, one of the nobility addressed the king: "Sire," said he, "the lords and all the nobility of the Bohemian nation most humbly ask to be informed why you do not, like the king your father, of blessed memory, and like previous kings of Bohemia, reside at Prague, the capital of your kingdom, to the welfare and peace of your subjects. They are surprised at the indifference shown by your majesty, while the kingdom is exposed to violence and desolated by plunderers. They therefore pray you to return to Prague, promising you all fidelity and affection."

The king, who knew how to use plain language, and who had no pride to be wounded by a frank confession, replied in this manner: "My dear William" — William of Rosenberg was the one who had addressed him—"you say that the grandees of Bohemia are surprised, that instead of remaining at Prague I keep myself here among these rocks; but you must know that I am afraid of Spinca. You must not think it strange that I keep away from you, when I could not be even safe, either in the monastery of Konigsaal, near Beraun, nor in the royal palace. I find myself much more comfortably situated here in Ziebrak, than I could be in the tower of Vienna."

The nobility at once pledged their honor to Wenzel for his security, if he would return. At last he yielded, and took up his residence once more in the royal palace. But a few days after, the magistrates of the city, accompanied by nobles and barons, visited him with the request that certain churches might be allowed them in which to worship after their own manner, and celebrate the Holy Supper according to Christ’s institution. The request was granted, and from this time the memory of Huss and Jerome was celebrated at each anniversary of the sixth of July.

We have some light on the progress of the reformation at Prague, in a sermon preached in the Bethlehem chapel at some time during this month, and, more than possibly, on this very day (July 6). It is introduced by no Ave Maria, as till then had been the uniform practice, adopted usually even by Huss. The preacher invokes only the aid of Jesus Christ. Scriptural simplicity and usage were evidently gaining ground in other things than the use of the cup. The
preacher fitly takes occasion to speak of the "blessedness of those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake." He dwells upon the character of Huss, confidently appealing to the assembly for the truth of what he uttered. He sets forth in language of eulogy—yet not extravagant—the holiness and purity of his life. "God gave him," he adds, "a tongue discreet to speak, or to be silent. Like a second Elias, his zeal was inflamed against Antichrist, and a simoniacal clergy. His life was spent in preaching or writing, hearing confessions, converting sinners, consoling the afflicted. He was chaste, grave, God-fearing, without avarice, envy, pride, or hypocrisy; listening with equal readiness to rich and poor, and giving counsel to one and aid to the other. After enduring protracted persecution in Bohemia, he was kept near six months in harsh imprisonment at Constance, where he suffered hunger, thirst, and innumerable vexations from his enemies, beside all the sickness and disease produced by his harsh treatment. At last, regardless of his replies, he was condemned, degraded from the priesthood, given over to the secular arm, on the testimony of his enemies and false extracts from his works. As his life ended so piously while he besought God for pardon, and prayed for his enemies, we are constrained to believe that his spirit, like that of Elias, mounted to heaven in a chariot of fire, to be received into the company of the angels."

The preacher passes hastily over Jerome, briefly reciting the main facts of his trial, imprisonment, and execution. He speaks, however, of five other martyrs to the same cause who had suffered death. Three of these were those who had been decapitated at Prague; two had been burned at Olmutz. He urges his hearers to imitate the patience and unworldliness of these men, and do it in hope to attain like them to a martyr’s crown.

It is easy to see in what light the Hussites regarded their fallen leaders. They did not bestow upon them the honors that Rome paid to her saints. They did not pray in their name. They cherished (pie credimus) the fond hope of their salvation.

We have seen that William of Rosenberg was spokesman for the Bohemian nobility in addressing the king at Ziebrak. He, with all his vassals, joined during this year the party of reform. If the method of conversion which he adopted was not unexceptionable, it was at least decisive. All the clergy belonging to his dependence were assembled in one of his cities, and summoned to the church. A deacon, John Biscupec (or the little bishop, as he was called, and whom we meet again at the council of Basle), mounted the pulpit from which it had been the custom to exhibit the sacred relies, and addressed the assembly. "The Lords of Rosenberg will and ordain," said he, "that all pastors in their jurisdiction adopt the communion of the cup, and teach and practice all that John Huss preached against the pope. Such as refuse to obey, will be driven from their churches after the space of six weeks." The announcement was listened to in silence, and silence was favorably construed. Invited to a great dinner, the priests were asked to explain their views. They demanded a month
to deliberate. The result was that from two priests only were their parishes taken and given to the Hussites. Undoubtedly numerous instances of a similar kind must have occurred, where the favorite arguments of the papal party were retorted upon themselves, and force was substituted for reason. Such a result was almost inevitable. The rights of the individual conscience were too little understood even by the Hussites. But, as if to show the vanity and fruitlessness of such methods of conversion, we find the Lord of Rosenberg himself, a few months later, returning to the imperio-papal party with as little scruple as he now abandoned it. Doubtless his vassal priests—with the exception of Biscupec—proved as pliant then as they were now. Yet the adherence to the Hussites at the present juncture, of such a man as the Lord of Rosenberg, was significant of the strong current of national feeling. Each day what the council accounted heresy was growing stronger in Bohemia.

Among the measures which the council found it necessary to adopt were some in its own defense. Europe, notwithstanding all that Sigismund had accomplished, was yet in a most lamentable condition of civil anarchy. Scenes of violence, revolution, revolt, and conflict were of daily occurrence. Cities were at war with their bishops or feudal lords. Princes seized the occasion to plunder one another of exposed provinces. Armed banditti, sometimes with strong fortresses as places of refuge, infested the traveled routes, and, reckless alike of law and justice, plundered the unarmed and defenseless. Members of the council, coming to Constance or returning to their homes, were arrested and imprisoned till ransom was exacted.

The emperor, with the princes and lords present at Constance, held frequent consultations with a view to restrain and correct the prevalent disorders. Much was indeed effected toward restoring the amicable relations of cities and provinces, but the council found itself constrained to exercise also its authority. Such as interfered with the liberty of its members, in coming or returning, were threatened with excommunication. Yet instances of violent arrest were repeatedly occurring, and had to be met as they arose.

But the enemies from whom the council had most to fear, were not the banditti, or the temporal lords. Its weakness was in itself in its own corruption. Its own acts had stripped it of its true defense, and exposed it to the shafts of opprobrium and ridicule. It had made itself a subject for satire, and satires were not wanting. The conduct of the council and the condition of the church were freely exposed in anonymous writings extensively circulated, and which the council chose to regard as libels. The evident disinclination of the majority of the body to engage in measures of reform provoked the indignation of many, who found at last that they had built their hopes upon the sand. This indignation found vent in writings which a decree of the council stamped as defamatory. One of these was torn up unread, at the time of the reading of the decree. We cannot fully determine what were its contents, but it is not improbable that it was a paper drawn up under the guise of a petition
addressed to the emperor in behalf of reform, and which has been preserved in the pages of Van der Hardt. Its irony is keen and bitter. Its exposure of the abuses and corruptions of the church is unsparing, yet fully warranted by the testimony of many, themselves members of the council.

"Most serene prince"—so it commences—"to secure the welfare of the commonwealth, each faithful and honest man should put forth his exertions;

"For I, Henry Move-About,
Bishop of no diocese,
Vagrant of vagrants,
Although least among the other servants of our congregation,
Deputed for this purpose, legate or special messenger,
Sent into the whole world, to observe all things,
Coming to visit the Portals of Saints Peter and Paul,

Saw there such things as it is indecent for a man to speak, and specially the truth of that—Dum caput ægrotat cætera membra dolent. For I saw there a crowd which no man could number, and, among the rest, the very head of holy mother church, diseased in all her members, even to the sole of the foot; for the whole head was sick."

The writer then ingeniously carries out this scriptural figure in its application. Various complicated diseases had seized upon the body and affected the brain. The fever of schism, the morbid appetite of simony, the threatened apoplexy from accumulating the life-blood of the church on an oppressed brain, the corruption of the entire body, represented by cardinals, patriarchs, prelates, etc., who were its internal organs, yet all diseased, are vividly and forcibly presented. The gross corruptions of the court of Rome are portrayed in such a manner as still further to carry out the figure. The abuses to be corrected are classified by their reference to the different parts of the body. The writer gives a sketch of what he observed at Rome—"the archbishops and bishops, disorderly in life, setting no good example, promoting the least worthy, making their relatives bishops, performing no spiritual duties canonically, walking as proud worldlings. O holy church, how wilt thou sink away in decline! I saw princes and laymen assuming the care of souls; religious persons deserting their regular life; the physicians themselves destroying and putting to death; Benedictines adhering to worldly things, lurking about at taverns, plays, illegal shows, in slovenly habit; professors of canon law unjustly holding a plurality of benefices, without charity, thanksgiving, or devotion."
After an extended picture of the prevalent corruption, the writer addresses the emperor. "Now then it belongs to thee to assemble Hippocrates, Avicenna, Galen, and the doctors of every healing art, that they may give energy to the exhausted, heal the sick, and prescribe effectual remedies. And direct them to make ointments to cure the head, pills that may serve to regulate the system, clysters that may be applied. Invincible king, summon with thy holy and sacred council now at Constance, the physicians themselves of the world, but only the just and holy lights of the sacred council, fearing God, and heal and cause to be healed the aforesaid sick one, not only through the whole head, but in hands and feet which are full of ulcers, and send the dogs to lick the sores."

"I came into the world to look after that which holy mother church long had lost; I found it not, but rather all kinds of iniquity." He then exhorts the emperor to contend against the evil, and merit thereby eternal praise. For himself the writer expresses his freedom from all apprehension as to being questioned, "Friend, how camest thou in thither?" although he confesses that he had not on the wedding garment.

Each passing day gave new force and appropriateness to the language of this strange petition. The hopes of speedy and prompt reform were fast dying out. The emperor’s purpose, in spite of all his authority and his influence over the council, was destined to defeat, while the latter thereby was aggravating its own infamy. It was policy therefore to shut the mouths and stop the pens of those who assumed to judge its infallibility. This was attempted, but if men wrote with more caution, they were not disposed to think the less boldly. The Hussites had really allies in the council itself, who spoke their sentiments with a force and precision which, in many respects, could not have been exceeded at Prague.

During the summer of this year, the attention of the council had been drawn to the sect of the Flagellants, or Brothers of the Cross. The French Abbé de Boileau, has attempted to trace their history. He ascribes their origin to Peter Damien, an Italian ecclesiastic of the eleventh century, but it is easy to see that the germ of the sect was planted in that principle so long at work in the church of the early centuries, which approved the self-imposed austerities and mortifications of the body, in order to promote the welfare of the soul. The views of the abbé are altogether too scriptural to accord fully with that monkish superstition in which the sect found full patronage for many of its excesses.

It was not, however, till about the year 1260, that the Flagellants began to attract much attention. Italy at that period presented a sad picture of commingled vice, crime, and superstition. It was there that the sect first sprang up, spreading from city to city, and province to province. The general belief that the end of the world was approaching, excited and sustained their enthusiasm. The apprehension of the approaching advent of the Savior, and of
the final judgment, took so strong a hold upon the minds of the community, that nobles and peasants, the aged and young, were affected by it. They formed themselves into processions, marching two by two through the streets, exposing their naked limbs and almost naked bodies to the blows of the lash which each bore with him, and employed to lacerate his own flesh. All were deeply affected by the general conviction that their sin must be expiated by self-inflicted torture. Their appearance was at once pitiable and affecting. With groans and tears and undissembled grief, they endured the suffering administered by their own hands, till the blood flowed in streams from their bodies.

Yet it was their spiritual condition, and not their bodily sufferings, which occupied their thoughts. They cried aloud to God for mercy, and prayed for his pardon and grace. It was not enough that these practices were followed by day. By night also, in the cold of winter as well as in summer’s heat, they continued their processions. Priests might often be seen at their head, bearing with them crosses and standards. They went from village to village, and from church to church, bowing down before the altars in deep humility. The excitement became general—almost universal. A great change was wrought in the aspect of society. Instruments of music and songs of gladness were no more heard. Penitential moans, and cries of grief and self-accusation, took their place. Nor was the change merely external. It affected the convictions and conduct of men. Enemies were reconciled. Usurers and extortioners restored what had been unjustly acquired. Criminals confessed their guilty deeds, and gave evidence of reform. Prisoners were enlarged, slaves were set at liberty, exiles were recalled. Deeds of charity and kindness were performed, while the fear of some near approaching and terrible judgment awed all spirits. Men were astonished at the strange phenomenon. Philosophers could not explain it. The pope had not authorized it. It had not been excited by the eloquence of popular orators. It had no acknowledged leader. Shut out from other countries, it was for a long time mostly confined to Italy, and after a short time its fanatical zeal appeared to be on the decline.

But the scenes of the pestilence, about the middle of the fourteenth century, seemed to kindle it anew. It crossed the Alps, and appeared in Germany with renewed vigor. Two hundred of the sect visited Spires, where their evident devotion secured them a welcome entertainment. At Strasbourg and Aix la Chapelle their appearance is recorded. But, with the progress of things, corruptions had begun to spread among them. They were joined by hypocrites and knaves, who would cloak their deeds under the mantle of the Flagellants. The most grievous charges were made against them. It was said that they accounted it no sin to lie, that they indulged in acts of grossest vice and crime. The tide now turned against them. Popes fulminated bulls, and the emperor published edicts denouncing the sect. They were driven out of Bohemia, Bavaria, and Poland, and the University of Paris urged, and not without effect, that they should not be tolerated in France. But in vain were they persecuted.
Their numbers continued to increase. The Inquisition was glutted with victims, and in the very year when the council of Constance was opened, many were burnt at Sangerhausen by the authority of the Inquisitor of the Faith.

Undoubtedly they had by this time become, many of them, confirmed fanatics. Their leader, a Conrad Smith, is said to have pretended to be the prophet Enoch, and to have been authorized by God to judge the world. He is reported to have annulled the sacraments, and to have put the self-inflicted flagellation of his followers in their place. Some of the reputed doctrines of the sect were far from complimentary to the church. They maintained that God had deposed the entire clergy, from pope to monk, for their corruption, as Christ of old drove the moneychangers from the temple; that since their own institution, churches, cemeteries, and places and objects reputed holy, were such no longer; the churches were but dens of robbers; holy water was poisonous because mingled with sparks of hell; and the offices of the priest, ministering death to themselves and others, were no more sacred than the howling of dogs. Baptism of blood had taken the place of baptism by water; confirmation was a cheat and a mockery; the real presence was a figment, the sacrament of the altar, a mummery of the priests; and confession to a priest, useless and vain. They rejected the doctrine of indulgences, the worship of the Virgin and the saints, fasts, and purgatory. Some of these doctrines, however, were replaced, according to the charges of their enemies, with others more excessively fanatical and extravagant.

These charges, however, evidently were applicable to but a small portion of the sect. But what to do with them was a question that puzzled the wisdom of the council. Severity had already been employed. The arm of the Inquisition had grown weary in its work. Kings and popes had attempted to crush them, but it was all in vain. The trampled seed sprang up under the feet that bruised its shell and pressed it to the earth. Gerson was now for trying more lenient measures. He urged this policy upon the council. They should pity these poor misguided men. Would he have said this, if the whole sect had been represented by its leader, chained fast, as Huss had been, in a Constance dungeon? It seems doubtful. But one thing may have turned the scale. The celebrated Vincent of Ferrara was reported to favor the sect of the Flagellants. We have no reason to believe that he ever joined them, but they at least claimed the sanction of his name. Vincent was a man not to be lightly dealt with. He wielded a power over the masses at that day, unrivalled by any other man in Europe. With all the peculiarities of his order, the Dominican, that still clung him, he was the great popular preacher of his age. He was the John the Baptist of the European wilderness. It would not do, even for the council, to deal harshly with such a man. It could not afford to alienate him. It would only condemn itself in arraigning him. Gerson endeavored to draw him to Constance. He and D’Ailly both wrote to him, urging him to come. They undoubtedly believed that if he were once with them they could bring him over to their views. But he declined their overture. What his reasons were we may
surmise. He deemed, undoubtedly, that his presence elsewhere would be more useful, and Constance evidently had no attraction for one whose life is a sort of oasis in the corruption of his age.

But would Vincent have been safe at Constance? If the question of the Flagellants had come before the council, and he, though not of their number, had defended their conduct in many things, as he had enjoyed a full opportunity of inspecting it, would he have left Constance as he entered it, with a reputation and character untarnished? For the sake of our poor weak nature, we may be thankful that he was spared a trial that might not have spared even him.

Gerson’s treatise on the sect is, on the whole, a most just and sensible examination of the case. He condemns the immodesty and cruelty which it occasioned, while he places penitence of spirit before God far above all self-imposed austerities. He urges upon those who belonged to it, submission to the council, and prescribes as a remedy for the mental hallucinations of the Flagellant, that they should be required to labor, instead of running from place to place.

This was for the most part sound and sensible advice, and the council seems to have acceded to its wisdom. But where was its consistency? If the Hussites were heretics, much more were the Flagellants. Why should Vincent of Ferrara be dealt with so gently, while Huss and Jerome are sent to the funeral pile? Let the assumed infallibility of the council answer.

The fate of Benedict XIII was at length decided. After all necessary formalities of process and citation, he was deposed by the council, in its thirty-seventh session, held July 26, 1417. The Cardinal of St. Mark read the sentence. It declared Benedict perjured, a scandal to the Catholic church, a favorer of schism, a disturber of the peace and union of the church, an obstinate and incorrigible schismatic, a heretic devoid of faith in a word, a man reprobate of God, and unworthy of every dignity, specially of the pontifical. Of such, the council degrades, deposes, and deprives him, and forbids anyone to recognize him as pope under the severest penalties.

Thus at last the council might consider the union of the church restored. After nearly three years of study and effort, the work seemed accomplished. But the deposition of Benedict, though uniting the church, more effectively than ever divided the council. The question as to whether measures for reform or the election of a new pontiff should be allowed precedence, acquired a new and pressing importance. The emperor persisted in his efforts for an immediate reform. The cardinals were equally determined in their purpose to postpone it. The month of August was spent in intrigues by each party to carry its point. The Italians sought to win over the Germans, but these still stood firm by the
emperor. Some of the Italian and French prelates also might be reckoned—although in the minority of their nations—the partisans of reform.

The sermons that were preached before the council became pleas in behalf of the one or the other party. Those that urged the importance of reform were startling in their exposures of corruption, and terrible in their invective. One preacher declared—no doubt truly—“that almost the entire clergy were under the dominion of the devil.” He represents the council as an assembly of Pharisees, who play the game of religion and the church, under the mask of devotion. "In the world, falsehood is king; among the clergy, avarice is law. In the prelates are found only malice, iniquity, negligence, ignorance, vanity, pride, avarice, simony, lust, pomp, hypocrisy. At the court of the pope there is no holiness. It is a diabolic court." Another preacher is scarcely less severe. He declares that the clergy spend their money on buffoons, dancing girls, dogs, and birds, rather than in charity to the poor. They frequent taverns and brothels, and go from their concubines and prostitutes, to mass without any scruple. It has passed, he says, into a proverb, that "the prelates have as many mistresses as domestics." The convents are not spared. "It is a shame," he says "to speak of what is done in them; more a shame to do it. In all these abominations, the court of Rome sets the example, even in the place where it is assembled for the reformation of manners." Other preachers spoke in the same strain.

But the partisans of a new election had their orators. The Cardinal of Cambray preached before the council. He did not attempt to controvert the statements that had already been made—he rather confirmed them—but urged that it was monstrous to think of reforming the body of the church while it was without a head.

The English nation remained as yet firmly attached to the emperor’s project of giving precedence to the matter of reform. The king of England wrote to his bishops, urging unanimity in the matter, for he had heard that some of the English members of the council were inclining to the side of the cardinals. Such persons were to be commanded in his name to desist from their course, and, in case of refusal, were to be sent back to England to answer for their conduct.

The cardinals, however, did not fail to urge their favorite project more and more strenuously. They presented a protest (August 4) against the course of their opponents. Nor was this enough; they endeavored to overwhelm them, or at least weaken their influence, by exciting against them suspicion of heresy. A paper was adroitly drawn up in the form of queries, suggesting the various ways in which they seemed to favor the opinions of Huss. The whole document betrays malice and impudence. The English and Germans had been the most forward in condemning, or securing the condemnation, of Huss. They could not justly be accused of complicity with his cause. But they felt, for all this, only the more deeply the pressing necessity of reform. They would have all the
arguments of men like Huss—drawn from the indisputable and gross corruption of the church—taken out of their mouths. This was the extent of their heresy, at least before the council. But the cardinals, and the three nations that held with them, became more bold and daring with each successive day. The former, on the ninth of September, renewed their protest, and now in stronger language.

Sigismund was present when its reading was commenced. It stung him to indignation. He rose at once, ere the reading was finished, and left the assembly. As he went out, accompanied by the Patriarch of Antioch, among others, someone cried out, "Let the heretics go!" This was reported to Sigismund, and did not tend to soothe his irritation. It was reported, probably on good grounds, that he meant to arrest some of the cardinals under pretence that they were engaged in consultations deleterious to the interests of the council. He forbade them the use of the cathedral church and the episcopal palace, in which they had been accustomed to meet. But such measures, failing to overawe, could only irritate. The Germans, meanwhile, were restive under the imputations of heresy which were cast upon them. They drew up their defense, in which they took occasion to argue anew the necessity of reform, and pointed out some of the gross abuses of which they complained.

The condition of the council was one exceedingly critical. It was divided into two great parties—on one side the English and Germans, headed by the emperor, on the other, the Italians, French, and Spaniards, led by the cardinals. What would have been the result had neither party yielded, it is difficult to say; we can scarcely doubt that it would have led to the dissolution of the council.

But at this critical period the emperor lost his *fidem Achaten*, as the historian calls him. On the fourth of September, Robert Hallam, Bishop of Salisbury, died. He had been from the outset a strenuous supporter of the emperor’s project. Previous to the council of Pisa, Richard Ullerston had written, at his instance, his celebrated work on the necessity and methods of reform. While the bishop lived, the English nation stood firm by the emperor. But now they could no longer be depended on. The solicitations and intrigues of the other party were working wonders. Even the German nation began to waver. The Archbishop of Riga, who cruelly and harshly had taken charge of the imprisonment of Huss, was won over by a bribe. He was promised, in place of his present dignity—which had become unacceptable, through the hostility of the Teutonic order which he had incurred—the diocese of Liege. Another leader of the German nation, John Abundi, Bishop of Coire, was won by the promise of being placed in the vacant See.

The result could no longer remain in doubt. The desertion from the emperor had commenced. Some of the Italian and French bishops, who had resisted hitherto the decisions of their nations, made haste to leave the sinking ship.
The question was now only one of time. The emperor could not long hold out. He at length capitulated, on the condition that the council should initiate the measures of reform, by a public decree, before the election should take place. Vain condition! Some of the cardinals even now did not hesitate to say that such a decree could not bind the future pope. Yet the condition was assented to. The cause of reform had made hitherto but slow progress. Difficulty after difficulty had blocked up its way. The council now, however, resolved that on certain points a reform should be perfected. Two months had passed away in party negotiation and intrigue, when at length another (the twenty-ninth) session was held (October 9). The measures which were declared to be settled by public decree related to the frequent and regular convocation of general councils, precautions against the renewal of schism, the profession of faith and duty to be made by the pope on his election, the translation of benefices, and exactions from vacant bishoprics. It is easy to see that all this implied but an external and insufficient reform, while the disease was too deep to be reached by any such appliance. It was equally in vain that it was determined, a few days later, to enlarge the project, and add new measures tending to the check of ecclesiastical abuses. They all had respect merely to that which belonged to the externals of the church, its dignities, offices, revenues. Germany vainly demanded reform now; a century later she would demand it in more emphatic tones. The very point on which nearly all the nations had insisted most strenuously, and in regard to which there seemed most hope of success, that of annates—the first year’s income when a benefice was vacant, and which was claimed for its support by the court of Rome—was the one about which great difficulties were now raised. The emperor and others would have the officers of the court of Rome provided with a fixed annual salary. Doubtful of so uncertain a provision, the cardinals could not relinquish the annates, and the whole question must of necessity be left to the future pope.

Who he would be, was now the question of most engrossing interest. On the thirtieth of October, the council decreed to proceed to his election. The cardinals had at first somewhat humbly dared to put forward their claims to the right of sole electors as their prerogative. Some of their opponents, in view of the manner in which they had previously exercised it, would have excluded them altogether from the conclave. A compromise was at length effected, by which six prelates or persons of distinction from each of the five nations should be joined to the college of cardinals, in order to form the body of the electors. The number of these, including the twenty-three cardinals, was therefore fifty-three. For each of these a chamber was provided in the Merchants’ Exchange, where the sessions of the conclave were to be held. Every precaution was taken to prevent any communication between them and others outside the building. Persons of high state and authority were to guard all the passages, and all were warned by sound of trumpet not to approach within a certain distance of the place where the conclave was in session. Even the food of the electors and their servants—for each was allowed two—was to some extent prescribed, and was passed into the building, not by the door, but by a
window, in order that none might have a pretext or opportunity to enter. Even after the food had been passed in, it was to be examined before it was sent to the electors, lest some letter or line should be enclosed in it by which some communication or information should be conveyed to them.

The electors entered the conclave November 2, 1417. For some time there seemed no prospect of their effecting a choice, as two-thirds of the votes must be given to the successful candidate. Each nation would undoubtedly have been glad to have had for pope one of its own countrymen. But the Germans were the first to yield their preference. The Archbishop of Riga, who seems to this time to have acquired the art of seizing upon and improving occasions that could favor his own interests, led the way. At length the other nations, so far consented to yield their claims, that the necessary vote was cast for Otho de Colonna, an Italian cardinal. He had been one of the cardinals of John XXIII and had borne a reputation as free from stain as it was perhaps possible for a member of a college with such a head. He was undoubtedly less able than many of the others. The cardinals of Cambrai and St. Mark were by far his superiors, but they had made themselves offensively conspicuous, and their compeer, Zabarella of Florence, had gone out a few days before from one of the assemblies—exhausted by the effort of a speech which he truly said at the time might be called his dying testimony—never to return. He died on the twenty-sixth of September, the most dangerous competitor—had he survived—for the pontifical dignity.

Otho de Colonna took the title of Martin V. Different estimates were formed of his character. But whatever he might have been before his election, he was, after it, but a wheel in the ecclesiastical machine, and was governed by laws that would have overruled his own will had he not chosen to submit. The news of his election spread at once through the city. Through a breach made in the walls of the building where the conclave was assembled, the fact had been first announced, and was received with loud acclamations. The people, gathered by thousands, could not restrain their enthusiasm as they shouted the name of the new pope. The emperor, regardless, as some say, of his dignity, hasted to prostrate himself before him, kissing his feet, and thanking the electors for the excellent choice they had made. The pope replied with a fraternal embrace, and with thanks to the emperor for his zeal for the peace of the church.

The enthroning of the newly elected pope presented a scene of imposing splendor. The emperor, princes and nobility, the clergy of all ranks, beside men of every civil office and station, formed the escort which accompanied him from the conclave to the cathedral. His ordination as deacon took place November 12, his consecration and coronation as pope, November 21. These were marked by scenes of scarcely less splendor and magnificence. As the procession on this last occasion moved through the streets of the city, it was met by the Jews, who assured the new pope of their obedience, and besought of him a confirmation of their privileges, while presenting him at the same
time a copy of the Old Testament. The pope paused a moment, received the volume—according to some—but handed it back with the remark, "You have the law, but do not understand it. Behold, old things have passed away, all has become new."

According to another account, the pope refused to receive the volume. Sigismund took it for a moment, however, remarking as he handed it back, "The laws of Moses are just and good—let no one reject them, but as to you, you keep none of them as you ought." Upon this the pope, turning toward them, said, "May Almighty God take away the veil from your eyes, and grant that you may behold the light of eternal life," then adding the apostolic benediction.

The power and intrigue of the cardinals had thus secured their triumph. With a pope to head them, they could do more than they had done already—they could safely defy the emperor. Each party now strove to gain the favor and patronage of the pope. The imperial power occupied but a secondary place. All measures of reform must be such as to be acceptable to the Court of Rome. It was as much as a defeat already of projects for which the best men of the age had toiled, and written, and plead. The work of reformation was in reality postponed. The heart of the emperor was sickened within him. The French urged him to promote their measures of reform. His reply was bitter: "You would have a pope first. You have one now. Go to him. It is his business, not mine."

CHAPTER XI

Measures of the Pope and Council against the Bohemians

While the council at Constance was rent into factions by intrigues to elect a pope, Bohemia, became more than ever a scene of civil discord. The Hussites were steadily increasing in numbers and in confidence. The course of the council, instead of regaining its lost adherents, alienated many who might otherwise have sustained it. Nothing was done to restore to that body the respect and confidence which had been destroyed by the execution of Huss and Jerome. The action of the university carried with it many who, until that time, had remained wavering and undecided. The clergy who adhered to the council became more thoroughly alarmed. They had exhausted all their energies in attempting to breast the storm, but their very efforts only recoiled upon themselves. They provoked and exasperated where conciliation would have been policy. Justifying, as they did, the execution of Huss, and invoking the interference of the secular power, they forfeited that respect and security which they might have claimed had they quietly attended to their own duties.
They by no means limited their demands to being left unmolested in their own persons and spheres of labor. The storm which they invoked upon the heads of others was thus brought down upon their own. Refusing toleration, it is not strange that the measure which they meted should have been measured to them again. They occupied the position, and were regarded in the light of allies to an invading army designed to oppress, crush, and extirpate the followers of Huss. They were not merely misguided men and teachers of error, but—in the circumstances of the kingdom—revolutionists in principle, and traitors in fact; and so the Hussites, on repeated occasions, felt constrained to deal with them. Stripped of a large part of their revenues, the edge of their orthodoxy was sharpened by the exasperation of their feelings. Some of their churches—we may presume already vacated by them, or perhaps closed by interdict—were given up by Wenzel to the services of the new worship. Amid the civil disorder, it was not surprising that men destitute of principle, and fond of fishing in troubled waters, should abound. Robbers and bandits gladly seized the occasion to commit deeds of violence, which could be charged to the persecuted zeal of the Hussites, but of which the latter were innocent.

The craven and timid monarch, who would sooner see both parties overthrown and his kingdom a desert than have his own indolence or gluttony disturbed, abandoned at this moment the duties of his post. Unwilling to commit himself fully to either party, and fearful on the one side of being accounted a heretic, and on the other of offending the partisans and followers of Huss, who were overwhelmingly in the ascendant, he withdrew from Prague, and left it the spoil and prey of conflicting parties, torn by faction, or private malice and violence, now loosened from restraint. We are only surprised that the party of reform should have exhibited so much self-control. The king, intent only upon his own ease and indulgence, had fled to his castle in the country, leaving his whole kingdom to the mercy of insurrection and anarchy. The presence and authority of the more powerful Bohemian nobles, sometimes perhaps encouraging revolution and violence, were generally the best security for peace and order. Each controlled his own vassals, and the overwhelming majority of this nobility on the side of the reformers, overawed all organized opposition.

The council had good reason for anxiety as to the effect of their own proceedings upon the Bohemian people. They saw themselves virtually defied. Their authority was contemned, and their spiritual claims were openly derided. Not one of the four hundred nobles whom they had summoned before them had shown regard enough for their commands or threatenings to appear before the commissioners appointed to sit in judgment upon their case. In the present state of affairs, it was vain to think of subduing them by violent measures. The forces necessary for such an attempt could not easily be got together. In these circumstances the council did what it should have done first and only—employed the weapons of reason and argument. Gerson was employed to draw up a treatise on the communion of the cup, in order to refute the positions and
opinions of the Bohemian heretics. His work is a strange mixture of sound sense and absurd assumption, of indisputable truth and unwarranted inference. He concedes nearly, if not quite, all upon which Jacobel based his argument—the plain command of scripture, the practice of the early church, and the authority of the Christian fathers. He admits the scriptures moreover to be the supreme authority, paramount to all else, whether traditions, or decrees of councils, or papal bulls, or canon law, and, in face of all this, places the authority of the church, and the dangers of desecrating the sacred symbols, over against the clear authority of the word of God. It was the doctrine of transubstantiation that blinded him. His work is a psychological curiosity. The intellectual giant of his age is caught in his own toils; he is the dupe of his own logic.

His treatise was a mere waste of ink and labor. It proved to be perfectly harmless and ineffectual in Bohemia. Jacobel could afford to leave it unanswered, or rather, he had answered it before it was written. Nor could the difficulty of the council have been much relieved, when, at its instance, Maurice of Prague took up the pen against the Calixtines—as the advocates of the communion of the cup now began to be called. His treatise was brought out towards the close of the year (1417).

But more forcible arguments were needed to convert to the views of the council those whose innate sense of justice had been so outraged by the execution of Huss. The emperor exerted himself to check the torrent of innovation that was sweeping over the land. Some of his letters have been preserved, but however they may attest the strength of his feelings, or the energy of his will, they do little credit either to his head or heart. One of them is addressed to the inhabitants of Launa, a city on the Eger, among whom the views of Huss had made such progress before he left Prague for Constance, that he addressed them words of counsel and exhortation. In this letter Sigismund speaks of the urgency with which his brother and some of the Bohemian nobles had prayed him to unite with the council, in order to put an end to the troubles introduced into the kingdom by pernicious innovations; he makes mention of his brother, whom he despised and at this very time was accusing of heresy, in terms of fraternal and affectionate regard—as though he had never robbed him of the imperial crown, or thrust him in prison—and declares the deep anxiety he feels that nothing may occur to the prejudice of him or his kingdom.

After this exordium, in which the hypocrite stands confessed beneath his too transparent mask, he proceeds to picture the state of the country, subject to the violence and rapine which had been reported to him. The council, he says, hard resolved to proceed against Wenzel as a favorer of heresy, and consequently of these disorders, but by his interposition had been dissuaded from their purpose. This state of things had continued now for the space of three years, but how much longer he should be able to hold back the bolts of vengeance which the council were ready to launch against his brother if he refused to change his course, it was impossible to say. He exhorts the
Bohemians to resist the innovating opinions, declaring that he who failed to prosecute their defenders, denying them all rest, was guilty of cherishing them. He directs them not only to abstain from what he calls the persecutions of the church and clergy, but diligently to promote the cause of faith, than which no object could be more precious or important. If these his counsels and commands are rejected, the council of Constance will proceed against them, and, if ecclesiastical censures are insufficient, will invoke the aid of the secular.

Why this letter should have been addressed to the citizens of Launa instead of Prague, is somewhat doubtful. Launa might be more easily overawed, or possibly the emperor might have apprehended that the magistrates of Prague would have returned a reply in a tone too bold and defiant.

But his correspondence, both with his brother and with the Bohemians, was of the most indiscreet and haughty kind. The Jesuit historian, Balbinus, who saw the emperor’s letters in the archives of Prague, was at first disposed to regard them as a forgery, devised by the disciples of Huss to cast odium on their reputed author. He could not believe that Sigismund would have written in such a style of bitter and exasperating severity. But the evidence of the manuscripts before him was so thoroughly confirmed by the after-writings and conduct of the emperor, as to leave no room for doubt. If the council had acted an unwise part, the letters of Sigismund betrayed equal folly. The tendency of the whole treatment of the Bohemian nation was to alienate them from all sympathy with the council, and force them to assume the attitude of open rebellion.

One of the emperor’s letters to Wenzel shows the policy employed to overawe the royal imbecile. Sigismund sets before him the hazard which he incurs of provoking the publication of a crusade against him, in which it would be necessary that the German emperor should march against his own brother. Sigismund well knew that the strength of Wenzel’s orthodoxy was to be measured by his terror of an invading army, and, to strengthen his faith, adopted this measure of playing upon his fears.

In another of Sigismund’s letters, written to the Bohemian nobles sometime during the year 1417, he attempts his own vindication, especially in regard to the fate of Huss. He candidly acknowledges that he was overpowered by the council. They threatened him with its dissolution, unless he would accede to their demands. The question was at once reduced this: should he, for the sake of one man’s life, defeat all the hopes of Christendom which centered in the fate and proceedings of the council? Sigismund reproves the Bohemians for presuming to take up the defense of a man whom the council had condemned, and threatens them with a crusade unless they shall desist from their purpose. At the result which must necessarily follow, he professes to shudder, as well he might. He beseeches them to consider the consequences of persisting in what
he denominates their leagues and conspiracies; urges them to abide—if one has anything against another—by the decision of his brother, the king of Bohemia; assures them that if his own intervention is necessary to the quieting of the disputes, it shall not be found wanting. He interposes in behalf of the clergy, intimating unwarrantably, so far as the action or authority of the council were concerned, that they would be guided by scripture, the profundity of which he confessed himself too uninstructed to investigate.

In this letter he is not wanting in expressions of affection and regard for the besotted Wenzel. At one time we see him employing terms of respect toward a brother whom he detested—for he is speaking of him to the Bohemians. Anon, he treats him with the contempt he deserves—for he is speaking where there is no need of disguise. He threatens him, as he had just threatened his subjects, with the terrors of a crusade. Truly he attempted to carry out his maxim in regard to dissimulation, a maxim which, translated into plain words, is that no man is fit to rule who cannot play the hypocrite. But the Bohemians were discovering very plainly already the difference between pretense and purpose, the mantle and the man. We shall soon see the emperor, conscious of detection, speaking with an irony in which the sneer was only too transparent.

At the close of the year 1417, safe-conducts had been sent into Bohemia to those who had been cited to appear and answer before the council. But the friends of Huss, warned by his fate, had no desire to involve the council in new perfidy on their account. We have no knowledge of so much as a single Bohemian accepting the safe-conduct sent him, or improving the opportunity which it afforded. Even when the new pontiff subsequently wrote (March, 1418) to the Bohemians, exhorting them to submission, and threatening them with the secular arm if they refused compliance, nothing was effected. That violent measures had not been already resorted to, he attributes, and probably with truth, to the interposition of the emperor, who had already too much on his hands to venture upon a rash conflict with the Bohemian nation. In February, 1418, when those who had been cited did not appear, the council passed a decree, consisting of twenty-four articles, setting forth authentically its demands. These were, in substance, that the king should swear to maintain inviolate the rights and prerogatives of the Roman and other churches, unrestricted by the impositions of the Hussites; that all who hath taught the doctrines of Huss and Wickliffe should abjure them, and approve the sentence of the council pronounced against these men and their writings; that such as refused, in contempt of the keys, to obey this command, should be condignly punished; that the priests and clergy who had been driven from their benefices should be restored, and left unmolested; that the relics and treasures that had been taken from the churches should be replaced; that the university should be reformed, and that the followers of Huss and Wickliffe should be excluded therefrom; that the principal heresiarchs, nine of whom are mentioned by name, should be compelled to appear before the council; that all who had communed under both kinds should abjure the heresy of Jacobel; that the
treatises of Wickliffe, Huss, and Jacobel should all of them be surrendered and burned; that the songs sung in derision of the council, and in praise of Huss and Jerome, should be suppressed under the severest penalties; that none should be allowed to preach unless by the authority of the ordinary; that the latter with other prelates should be allowed full liberty in the exercise of their office, and whosoever should interfere to prevent it should thereby incur sentence of excommunication; that all who should favor or promote any measure tending to the spread of the opinions of Huss or Wickliffe should be proceeded against, according to the canons; that every league or compact having this for its object should be dissolved; that the former rites of worship should be all restored, and that all who should be convicted of teaching the doctrines of Huss or Wickliffe, or maintaining the sanctity of these men, should be committed to the flames. The laity were required, under pain of being regarded as favorers of heresy, to aid in the execution of these injunctions.

Such a decree was directly calculated to defeat every purpose for which it was framed. It was the exhibition of senile malice and bare authority, and was conceived in the very spirit that had sent Huss and Jerome to the stake. Its violent tone awed less than it provoked. Its demands, moreover, were exorbitant. Many might have been disinclined to break altogether with the council, who would scorn compliance with terms like these. The circumstances of the case, indeed, rendered compliance impossible. A nation could not be bridled by a word. The convictions of years were not to be mastered by the sentence of a body of men, whose notoriety for intrigue and corruption, according to testimony above impeachment, had scandalized the world, and forfeited for themselves all respect.

Nearly at this same time (February 22, 1418) Martin V issued his bull against the followers and favorers of Wickliffe and Huss. It is addressed to all archbishops, bishops, and inquisitors throughout the world, and is a model from which bigoted intolerance and persecution might copy. It exhausts the odium of language in describing the character of the objects of its vengeance. They are “schismatic, seditious, impelled by Luciferian pride and wolfish rage, duped by devilish tricks, tied together by the tail, however scattered over the world, and thus leagued in favor of Wickliffe, Huss, and Jerome. These pestilent persons had obstinately sown their perverse dogmas, while at first the prelates and ecclesiastical authority had shown themselves to be only dumb dogs, unwilling to bark or to restrain, according to the canons, these deceitful and pestiferous heresiarchs.” The bull then proceeds to describe the widespread of the mischief, lamenting it in the most lugubrious tones. It recites what had been done by the council to check the growing heresy, and ordains that all archbishops, bishops, and ecclesiastical authorities shall hasten to the rescue. They were to try and adjudge as heretics all who should be found “to think or teach otherwise than as the holy Roman and Catholic church thinks or teaches”—all who held the doctrines or defended the character of Huss or Wickliffe—and they were to deliver such over to the secular arm. Such as
received or favored these persons were to be exemplarily and severely punished for their "enormous crime," that others might take warning. All kings, princes, lords, nobles, knights, cities, universities, etc., were to be admonished, and required to banish all such persons as bore this character for heresy from their territories, and all places subject to their dominion. They were not to suffer such persons to preach, dwell, possess property, engage in business, or have anything to do in common with the faithful, in any place subject to their control. If they died heretics, even though the church had not formally declared them such, they were to deny Christian burial. No masses should be said for them. Their property should be confiscated and withheld from those to whom it would otherwise descend, at least until competent ecclesiastical authority had pronounced sentence in the case. Such as were suspected of heresy were to purge themselves under oath. If they refused or neglected to do it, they were to "be struck with the sword of anathema," and after a year’s lapse condemned as heretic. All lay lords, magistrates, and judges, of what name or dignity soever, were required and commanded, as they prized the Christian name, to afford all necessary aid, whenever they should be called upon for it by the inquisitors or ecclesiastical authorities, for the arrest, restraint, or imprisonment of heretics, or their favorers. These last were to be carefully secured by "iron handcuffs and fetters," till their case had been carried through the ecclesiastical court, and anyone who should be negligent in guarding them while under his charge was to be condignly punished. The bull then requires the archbishops, bishops, commissaries, inquisitors, etc., diligently to search out, in all places subject to their jurisdiction, all that are guilty of heresy, or of showing it favor, to pronounce against them sentence of excommunication, suspension, or interdict, as the case may require. All who should refuse or neglect to obey this command, should be deposed and punished with other and mere severe penalties, according to the enormity of their crime.

But even this was not enough. To aid the slow wit of any less facile persecutor, he was furnished in the bull itself with a full list of the points on which those suspected of heresy were to be examined, and from which they were to purge themselves on oath. These points embraced the forty-five articles of Wickliffe, and the thirty charged against Huss which the council had condemned, beside thirty-nine others, extending to subjects not included in the former. Of these thirty-nine the first eleven pertained to the persons and works of Wickliffe, Huss, and Jerome. The person arraigned was asked whether he had known them, or had conversed with them, knowing them to be excommunicate; whether he had prayed for them, had spoken of them, or accounted them as holy; whether he approved their condemnation, and the acts and authority of the council; whether he possessed any of their works, or knew any that did possess them; and whether he condemned the articles of the heretics aforesaid, in the words of the council.
Of the other points of examination, some had reference to various sects that had arisen in that or the previous age; some represented a peculiar phase of the opinions of Wickliffe or Huss, and some had reference to ecclesiastical authority, the legitimate election of the pontiff, or the infallibility of the council. One had respect to the venial nature of perjury, a subject which the perjured violators of the safe-conduct of Huss had better have let alone. One had reference to the subject of lay preaching, another to the right of a priest to preach out of his own parish.

On these points the suspected heretic was to be examined under oath. He was to appear in person before the bishop or inquisitor, and give answer as he should be asked. No attorney or advocate was to be allowed him. The whole trial was to be conducted in the manner which the judge should deem most expedient. The sentence might extend to excommunication, suspension, or interdict; to deprivation of dignity or office; to fine and confiscation of property; to deposition from rank or professorships in universities; to imprisonment, and such corporeal inflictions as were allowable in the case of heretics. The judgment was to be summary and without appeal, and the delinquent, if it was found necessary, was to be given over to the secular arm. All these processes were made obligatory on the bishops and inquisitors, and their neglect would be accounted a crime.

Such was the document by which the new pontiff signalized his zeal against the Bohemian heresy. Every line and letter of it breathed the spirit that sent Huss to the stake. Nor was it meant to remain a dead letter. The news of Lord Cobham’s death in England followed, in Bohemia, with scarce a day’s interval, the announcement of the bull. That great and noble man, once the bosom friend of the king, had been hung in iron chains and roasted alive as a sacrifice to the bigoted zeal of the church. His death by fire showed that he died, not as a traitor to the state, but as the victim of ecclesiastical intolerance. Such an event was all that was necessary to fill to overflowing the odious cup which had been put to the lips of the Bohemians by the bull of Martin V. If the council had studied measures of exasperation instead of conciliation, they could not more wisely have calculated on the result. They were continually strengthening the party whom they sought to defeat.

The threat of a crusade, thrown out by the council, as well as the pope and emperor, and employed alike to overawe Wenzel and his subjects, however exasperating it might be, was by no means to be lightly treated. If sincere zealots for the papacy had become more rare than in a former age, their place in the ranks of invasion could be well supplied by the banditti and soldiers of fortune, who stood ready to engage in any feasible work of plunder, none the less prompt that a pontiff lent them the sanction of his authority, and covered their violence with his absolution.
Indeed, at this very juncture the pope published a crusade against the Moors, at the solicitation of the king of Portugal. John XXIII had employed similar measures against his enemy Ladislaus, king of Naples. Europe had not yet forgotten—was not likely soon to forget—the merciless cruelties of the crusade against the Albigenses. Ruthless havoc and indiscriminating massacre had changed the garden of Southern France into an uninhabited desert. The very name of crusade—notwithstanding the schism and decline of the papacy—was still terrible. But even the danger of its fulmination against the Bohemians did not shake their purpose or their steadfast adherence to their convictions. Its only effect was to aggravate their indignation—already glowing with scorn and defiance—against the council.

It was to no purpose that Martin V sent John Dominic, one of his cardinals, as legate into Bohemia. The legate could effect nothing. The bull that had preceded him had done its work. Dominic threw up his mission in despair, and returned to report his ill success. He wrote to Sigismund and the pope that the Bohemians could only be brought back and reduced by force of arms. Tongue and pen were no longer weapons with which to vanquish them. Instead of receding from their position, they had only assumed its responsibilities more boldly. The churches they demanded were granted them by the feeble monarch. It would not have been safe to refuse. His half threatening remark to Nicholas of Hussinitz—who spoke on this occasion in the name of his countrymen—that he was twisting a rope for his own neck, had only served to cause him to withdraw from Prague to his own estates, where he could strengthen himself and his party in all security. Zisca (April 15) soon after appeared before the king, at his summons addressed to the Hussite leaders to meet him unarmed, but he came with a body of men fully equipped for battle. "Here we are, all armed, sire," said he, "according to your order, to shed the last drop of our blood against your enemies, if we may but know who they are." Zisca's boldness secured his impunity. If the king had cherished hostile intentions, they were for the time abandoned. He did not care to confront such resolution and energy as the Hussite leader had shown.

But this course, pursued by the reform party—wise as it was in its very boldness—was induced in part, undoubtedly, by the manner in which Dominic had discharged his mission. Instead of gentle measures, which alone could have succeeded, he showed himself true to the spirit which had dictated the papal bull. At Slany, a few leagues from Prague, he entered one of the churches of the Hussites, and finding upon the altar a box, which probably contained the cups used by them in the celebration of the eucharist, he dashed it to the earth, and ordained that the former methods of worship should all be resumed. Not content with this, he is said, in conjunction with the Archbishop Conrad, to have burned a preacher and a layman at the same place. Nothing more was necessary to drive the Hussites to desperation. Such a premonition of the significance of the bull was not lost upon them. Zisca knew well how to take advantage of it. No personal violence was offered to the legate, but he was
everywhere greeted with doggerel songs, reproaches, invectives, ridicule, and insult. Threats were made against his life, unless he withdrew at once from the kingdom. It is more than possible that if he had not taken so plain a hint, they would have been executed. One thing, however, he had learned, that nothing short of the imperial power could bring the Bohemians back to their allegiance to the pope. It remained to be seen whether even this would suffice. Dominic himself returned from Bohemia to accompany the emperor into Hungary, where his efforts against the opinions of the reformers are said to have been more successful.

CHAPTER XII

Futile Issue of the Council
Its Dissolution

The council was now approaching the close of its proceedings. With the election of Martin V the interest in its continuance at once began to decline. The prospects of reform were more hopeless than ever, for it was soon seen that the election had only given a head to its enemies.

The new pontiff showed much alacrity in the announcement of his election. He wrote to the universities, and the different states and kingdoms, a circular letter, in which he attributes the choice that had been made to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The reception of his letter was not everywhere equally welcome. Pontifical nature had, for more than forty years, excited deep distrust throughout Christendom. Otho de Colonna as cardinal had been highly spoken of, but what would he be as Martin V? His family was a noble one. For centuries it had abounded in great men. Kings, pontiffs, and, as some said, even emperors had sprung from it. Its importance, if nothing more, was attested by the fact that Boniface VIII had excommunicated the whole family, even to the fourth generation. But Boniface VIII had secured his election as pontiff by "terrifying his predecessor at midnight, and threatening him with eternal damnation if he did not immediately resign." Beside, more than a century had passed away, and the curse of excommunication had well-nigh spent its force. Succeeding pontiffs, moreover, guided by a wisdom equally infallible with that of their predecessor, had cancelled the decree of his pious vengeance.

The Colonnas, moreover, had shown themselves men not lightly to be assailed. Martin V had grown old in the discharge of important ecclesiastical offices
connected with the papacy. He was one of the electors of Alexander V, and helped give him a successor in the person of the notorious John XXIII. When the latter fled from Constance, Otho de Colonna accompanied him. Some might have asked what light this fact threw upon his character. He was certainly a learned man—at least in canon law, which he had taught in his youth as a professor at Perusia. Platina praises him as prudent, gentle, temperate, just, and dexterous in the management of affairs. Whatever he may have been as cardinal, as pope he was the author of the bull against the Hussites, and disappointed the hopes of all that earnestly longed for reform. But the office was greater than the man. His position mastered him. He trod in the footsteps of his predecessors, because he did not fancy the thorns he must meet in diverging from the beaten path. "As cardinal," says Windeck, the emperor’s prime minister, "he was poor and modest, but as pope, Martin V was greedy of gain, and made himself very rich."

His election as cardinal ranged the greater part of Christendom on his side. Congratulations came in upon him from almost every direction. Some, however, were inclined to hesitate in the declaration of their allegiance. France resented the part which the emperor had taken in his election. Sigismund had leagued himself with England, and was regarded as an enemy. Should France accept as pope the creature of his choice? He had governed the council, and had not left it free to act. Martin V was but a tool of the emperor. The French parliament declined to recognize any one as pope till the deputation at the council had returned safe.

Other matters soon conspired to aggravate the difficulty. The king of Aragon had not entirely recovered from his leanings toward Benedict XIII. If he threw aside his old friend, he demanded some equivalent in return. Money was needed, and he cast a greedy eye on the property of the church. He, as well as his father, had been at considerable expense and trouble to bring about the measures which had ranged Aragon on the side of the council, and which had resulted in the election of Martin V. This was the ground of his claim. He had demanded the right to dispose of benefices in Sicily and Sardinia, independent of the pontiff, with a share of tithes on ecclesiastical property in Aragon belonging to the Roman See. Martin V thought the 18,000 florins which he could draw yearly from Sicily and Sardinia, too much to surrender for a good-will now no longer necessary, and he refused the terms, offering in their stead others, which the king of Aragon treated with scorn. The result was that Benedict XIII received thenceforth, first the secret, and then the open support of the king. Thus was he enabled to defy the bull of excommunication launched against him by Martin V, on his refusal to lay down the pontifical dignity.

But this was not all. Benedict was not content to act merely on the defensive. When he heard, at Peniscola, of the election of Martin V, he assembled the four cardinals and the few clerks he had with him, and calling his assembly a general council and the Catholic church, he solemnly excommunicated as
schismatics all who had shared in the election of Martin V, and all who should acknowledge or obey him. It was in vain that many of the Spanish bishops repaired to Peniscola, and entreated Benedict to yield, and not any longer oppose himself to all Christendom. It was in vain that some of his cardinals seconded the request. To all alike he made the same answer, that Christ had entrusted him, as his vicar on earth, with the care of his church, and he would never betray the trust, or yield the See of St. Peter to a usurper. At last, finding himself almost entirely deserted, he declared that if he must treat, it should be with Martin V alone.

"If Martin is so reasonable a man as you say," so answered Benedict to the ambassador who announced to him the new election, "I am quite willing to have a conference with him in regard to the means of giving peace to the church." This was all the submission that could be wrung out of the old hero, calmly defying the world from his fortress of Peniscola, and resolved to live and to die a pope. Even the council of Constance must leave the church to some extent divided by allegiance to two heads.

But it was when measures of reform, so long promised and so long delayed, were at last taken up by Martin V, that the dissatisfaction of the nations began to manifest itself in a marked manner. The grave complaints and urgent demands which issued in the appointment by the council of the reformatory college, could not be altogether ignored. The schemes of this latter body were laid before the pope, and he found that something must be done. But he showed himself equal to the emergency, the needed Fabius of corruption. Although he had sworn to the article of the reformatory college, by which he bound himself to suppress the most crying abuses of the court of Rome, one of his first acts as pope betrayed his real purpose to evade the obligation. The rules of the Roman chancery had been regarded, and to a great extent justly, as the source of simony and papal usurpations. It was necessary, therefore, that these should first of all be set right. The pope examined and corrected them. They were at length published, but only a skilful critic could have discovered any marked difference between these and those that had been issued by John XXIII. Scarce a single abuse was given up. Reservations, vacancies, dispensations, tithes, annates, indulgences—all was in fact retained.

Other abuses were complained of. The five nations demanded of the pope, a few days after his election, that he should fulfil his promise. He told them each to draw up a list of their grievances. He then proposed to treat with each nation by itself, and instead of a general reform, adopt the measure of concordats with each. There was wisdom in this. It was easier to deal with them singly. They were less formidable when thus divided. Beside, from one nation terms could be secured to which another would not consent. England had a terrible statute of præmunire, which Martin V would not choose to see thrown in his way as a barrier in dealing with the French or Germans.
Concordats were accordingly arranged. In these the pope managed with great prudence. He gave up only what it was impossible to retain, nor did he yield even this without seeking to secure in return some equivalent. On some points he was met with direct and persistent opposition. England, for eight years, would not receive his cardinal legate. The Archbishop Chichely would not consent to a step that infringed the prerogatives of his primacy, or contemned, as he maintained, the laws of England. France was strengthened in her aversion to the concordat offered her, by her jealousy of papal prerogative threatening to encroach on the liberties of the Gallican church, and by her hatred of England and the emperor.

But in truth the concordats were of small account. They met some of the complaints of the nations, but betrayed throughout an entire aversion to any real or thorough reform. One article limited the cardinals to twenty-four, but of what avail was this, except for the moment? Another was on the subject of the abuse of indulgences; and yet, in less than a single century, this was to be the exciting cause of a revolt that would rend the church in twain. Others still were directed to the subjects of dispensations, plurality of benefices, restrictions upon the monks, and matters of order and ecclesiastical regulation, attempting to remedy the more gross and crying evils, lopping off limbs indeed from the tree of corruption, mutilating its fair proportions, but in fact only pruning it for a more vigorous and luxuriant growth. It needed a Luther to lay the axe at the root of the tree, but no Luther was to be found at Constance after the death of Huss.

There were some regulations adopted by the council generally, with the sanction of the pope, beside the concordats, that were intended to answer the purpose of reform. But the whole movement was regarded by many members of the council as a mere feint to ward off the charge that might be made against that body of neglecting its appropriate work. The pope himself knew what he was about. He conceded just what he might safely yield, or what he could not safely retain. Provincial councils should be held every three years, to last eight or ten days. The pope should decide nothing important without the advice of his cardinals. He should not take the title of Most Holy, unless in his life and conduct he showed himself worthy of it. The cardinals were to be distinguished for their learning, morals, and experience, and none could be elected at an age short of thirty years. The officers of the chancellor’s court were to be of a fixed number, and the charges allowed them were specified. Reservations were to be abolished, dispensations to be granted only with the concurrence of a majority of the college of cardinals. The pope should no longer impede the course of justice. He should not protract suits, or annul them after sentence, unless for legitimate causes. He should not impose tenths unless authorized by a general council. Restrictions were imposed upon exemptions and translations. Simony was to be punished by deprivation in an ecclesiastic, and by excommunication in a layman.
Such were the measures for the reform of the papal court. In matters pertaining to episcopal jurisdiction, the council pronounced on the subject of benefices and the right of patronage, church property, matrimonial suit, dowries, the estates of widows and wards, heresies, schisms, legacies, donations, the conflict of civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The duty of provincial synods was declared. They were to maintain ecclesiastical liberty and union, nor were they to make war, except when commanded by the sovereign, or on the failure of ecclesiastical censures to attain their object.

The priesthood is next looked after. The bishops must exercise a sharp surveillance over it. If one lived with a concubine, he was to lose his benefice unless within a month he sent her away. The children of priests could not be admitted to orders, or allowed to hold a benefice, without a dispensation from Rome. Residence, on curates, was rendered imperative. They were always to wear the ecclesiastical habit. None was to serve in a pariah where he could not speak the language. The age, the revenues, and the mode of electing canons were prescribed. Unjust oaths, imposed as a condition of choice, were null. Bishops were allowed a similar release. On a bishop’s death, the canons were not allowed to despoil his house or property. The monks also were bound more strictly to regard their vows of obedience, charity, and poverty. The nuns were required to conform to certain rules prescribing age and conduct. If a man presented himself to be received into holy orders, he was strictly to be questioned whether his father or grandfather had not treated ecclesiastics with violence, in their persons or goods. Civil interference with ecclesiastical courts, was to be repelled, and punished by interdict. The consecration of chapels, the observance of festivals, the exposure of relics to public view, afforded matter of deliberation for the grave wisdom of the reforming college acting in concert with the pope. The last article can speak for itself. It mildly decrees, in regard to that much-abused people whom Martin V at his coronation had treated with insult, "that when a Jew is converted, and adheres to Christianity, he shall give up only half his property, whether landed or personal, in restitution of usury practiced on Christians, and shall charitably be allowed to retain the other half, for his own support and that of his family."

Such were in substance the acts of the reformatory college. The church had asked for bread—the council gave her a stone. She asked for an egg—the council gave her a scorpion. The decrees of reform read like a libel on the ecclesiastical order of the age. Could the hierarchy have become so corrupt, we ask, that these prohibitions of gross indecency and injustice could assume the name of an organized reform? There were some who regarded them in their true significance—as a plaster to cover up the sore which they could not heal. In fact, they deceived no one. The pope wished merely to save appearances. In regard to the article proposed by the reformatory college bearing upon the circumstances in which a pope might be deposed by the he avoided giving any answer. He would not allow of a decree which might trench on his own prerogative. What the council had done in declaring its supremacy over the
Papal See, he chose to ignore. There was a significance in the fact, that in the questions to be proposed to the Hussites, and enumerated in his bull, there was one on this very point.

Thus, nearly four years had passed away, and nothing of importance had been accomplished in regard to one of the chief objects for which the council had been convoked. The result was ridiculous—humiliating. The nations were dissatisfied. They were loud in their complaints. But Martin V, secure in his seat, met them all with philosophical equanimity. The council had served his purpose, and he wished now to get rid of it. Unless it was speedily dissolved, he feared its activity. It might do mischief. It was only too easy to see whitherward things were tending. The emperor was disappointed, disheartened, disgusted. He had been foiled and beaten at his own game of dissimulation. The pope could do all that he had done, and not blush.

The Spanish nation, especially, was indignant. They wished to carry back from Constance some equivalent for having thrown Benedict XIII overboard. How were they now better off than before, if there was to be no reform worthy of the name? In personal merit, Benedict XIII might claim to be at least equal to Martin V. Why should the former be given up, if the papal court was to continue what it was before?

The indignation of the Spaniards found vent in satire. "A mass against simony"—such was the singular name of the article in which their Scorn for papal corruption was expressed. A man dreams of going as a pilgrim to the Church of the Holy Cross at Rome. As he approaches it, he sees the house of a peasant, Simon by name, rising higher than the church itself; though the house was yet without a roof. While gazing with surprise at its height, a certain person meets him and says, "A truce to your surprise: take a seat here now, and write out a new mass, or a new office touching simony, for the house you see represents the estate of Simon Magus, who is ever at work to raise it above the church." The pilgrim obeys the direction, and seats himself to write.

"Introduction. We deplore, all of us in the Lord, the sad times in which we live. We groan over the horrible simony that prevails at present. For this, poor human wretches mourn and grieve, according to the saying, My heart utters forth one word, that is, Simony, a word hard to be heard. Gloria Patri.

"O God, who for the sins of men, and by the little care shown to distinguish the good and bad, hast permitted simony to make such great progress, insomuch that, where the more holiness should abound, there the more simony reigns, so that churches are taxed, benefices are reserved, elections are abolished, sacraments are sold and bought, we pray thee to purify the church from these pollutions, granting to those guilty of simony, converting grace, or, if they refuse to be converted, smiting them as Peter smote Simon Magus, or as Elisha smote Gehazi, those traffickers in sacred things. Per Dominum.
"(Scripture to be read—Revelation of St. John, chapter 17.)

" In those days came one of the seven angels and spake with me, saying, Come, and I will show thee the judgment of the beat whore that sitteth upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her prostitution. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-covered beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations, and the filthiness of her fornication.

"Grad. Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle; who shall dwell in thy holy mountain?

"Ver. He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, uncontaminated with simony, who does according to the righteousness of God. Hallelujah.

"He hath grown fat, he hath become gross, his heart is lifted up, and he hath forsaken the Lord his Maker, and hath given himself up to the iniquity of simony. Hallelujah.

"Seq. Matthew 10. Jesus said to his disciple, Go ye, and preach, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, recover the lepers, drive out demons, freely give as ye have freely received. Take neither gold nor silver in your purse.

"Offert. All seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ’s.

"Secret. O God, who of the abundance of thy mercy hast commanded to bestow the sacraments and the benefits of the church gratuitously, grant converting grace to those who buy and sell. And if they will not be converted, do to them according to their iniquity, that others better than they may take their bishopric. Per Domimum nostrum.

"Commun. If my children shall not play the master in benefices wickedly acquired, then shall I be without spot, and I shall be pure from the great sin of simony.

"Post Commun. O Lord, who hast freely bestowed thyself upon us, we pray thee that those who sell and those who buy these same gifts of thine, may ever receive the portion of Judas, who sold thee—thee who livest and reignest with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

"(This mass to be chanted immediately after the festival of the See of St. Peter.)"
When the mass had thus been written, the one who had dictated it said to the pilgrim, "In the name of the true spouse of the church of Jesus Christ, I command you promptly to inform King Alfonso what is therein written, that, he may present it to the pope, boldly and without delay, praying him, in the name of God, and as pastor and head of the church, that he himself pray, and cause others to pray, that this cursed sin of simony may be removed from the church. For I know that the smoke thereof hath risen up to heaven, and that divine Justice is so provoked, that if this pope does not provide some remedy, he may be assured that he shall soon be smitten by a great plague, so that he shall fall and be reduced to nothing. While, if he shall correct abuses, he shall reign upon the throne of the church, and triumph over his enemies. Yet, let him know that he has not been raised to the See of St. Peter through his own merit, but by God’s permission, to reform the church in all humility and fidelity, while exercising his power against such as refuse to obey its commands."

Nothing could more plainly manifest the deep discontent that prevailed, than the appearance of such a document in spite of the decree of the council against all defamatory and libelous compositions. Undoubtedly the dissatisfaction of the king of Aragon with Martin V was mainly due to the fact that the latter would not alienate in his favor the possessions of the church. But the utter neglect of the council, through the pope’s management, to initiate any thorough reform, gave, in the eyes of many, a pretext for his course. Nor did those who sided with him fail to impeach the character of the council as legitimate, on the ground that it was not properly convoked, and that the church was not properly represented.

Other nations had complaints to offer. But all were vain. They had to devour their grief in silence. The pope was master of the council, and they who had placed him over them, had to mourn—like the Israelites when a king had been granted at their request—the impolicy and folly of a course that had made them the slaves of another’s will.

In the little that had been now accomplished, more than three months had been spent, and the pope was eager to return to Italy, and recover from the grasp of his enemies the ravaged states of the church. It was in vain that Sigismund urged him to delay. Everything was expedited to secure the speedy dissolution of the council. Even an embassy from the Greek church, which reached Constance at the beginning of the year (1418), and which proposed the important subject of the union of the Greek and Latin churches, could not retard the arrangements of Martin V for closing the council. Something indeed was done to encourage the union, which the Greeks, pressed as they were by the Turks, manifested an unusual readiness to promote. Latin women—some of princely houses—were sent back as brides for Greek husbands, and perhaps this was the best argument for union which the council had to offer.
Meanwhile the emperor was busy with civil as well as ecclesiastical affairs. He was anxious to harmonize his distracted and turbulent provinces and princes. Frederic of Austria had been received back to the imperial favor. The Duke of Milan was constrained to acknowledge his feudal allegiance, and was urged on by the emperor to attack Genoa, thus endangering the peace of Italy, and especially the safety of Florence. But the perfidious wretch, Philippo Maria, stained with blood and crime, fought for the promotion of his own selfish interests, and Sigismund had too many matters on hand to impose upon him—had he been so disposed—any restraint. He was anxious above all to replenish his exhausted treasury. More complaisant to him than to the king of Aragon, Martin V allowed him, in consideration of what he had clone for the church, a share of the ecclesiastical revenues of Germany for the space of a year.

It was in vain that the several dioceses which were affected by this project uttered their complaints, in vain that they appealed to the bull of the pope, which they had regarded as protecting them from such an imposition. The logic of their skilful advocate, Dominic de Geminiano, might expose the papal inconsistency and injustice, but it was powerless against interest armed with imperial patronage, especially when the pope, by express reservation, had secured all pontifical revenues from being touched.

From the Duke of Austria, Sigismund wrung out 50,000 florins, as the condition of peace and a ransom for his states. He was ready enough to accept the money, and recover to his allegiance one of his rebellious subjects, of whom he had too many on his hands already. The Swiss had seized the occasion of the duke’s being put under the ban of the empire, to rob him of several of the cities which he had held of the empire. Sigismund now demanded them back. The Swiss refused compliance with the demand, and the emperor accepted in place of them what he most needed—money. The cities of Mayence, Spires, and Worms, anxious to secure privileges for themselves, found all negotiations vain without money. The emperor’s coffers were replenished—only again to be exhausted. Something of a satisfaction to him it must have been to be recognized as emperor—as he now was in solemn ceremony—by the newly elected pontiff. The golden rose was bestowed upon him, but the still unsettled state of the empire, the futile measures of reform in the council, the growing strength of the Hussites in Bohemia, all tended to provoke and irritate him. He was continually busy, ever anxious, going from and suddenly returning to Constance, none could tell why. The Turk threatened him in Hungary. He anxiously awaited intelligence from the ambassadors sent by the council to restore peace between France and England. He sympathized with Gerson in his disappointment that the writings of Petit and Falkenberg had never been condemned in full council, and when he saw Martin V about to leave the city of Constance, he must have reviewed with saddened heart the labors and anxieties of the last four years.
It was certainly a most significant fact that, in spite of Gerson’s eloquence and logic, the urgency of the French monarch, the deep feeling and anxious effort of the emperor, as well as the letters of the king of Poland and the arguments of his ambassadors, the pope and council could not be induced to touch the books of Petit and Falkenberg. Gerson was indignant. “Why,” he asked—and the council would have been at a loss for an answer—“Why condemn the writings of Huss and Wickliffe, and leave writings far more pernicious unsentenced? Well may the Bohemians accuse the council—and with justice—of a most criminal partiality, in judging with such severity heresies far less criminal than those of Petit and Falkenberg, which it treats with indifference. The authority of the council is made cheap; its acts become null and void; it is made a laughing-stock for schismatics, infidels, and especially Peter de Luna and such as favor him, when they see so little accomplished on the election of a pope from whom so much was expected.”

But the ambassadors of the king of Poland were resolved to make one more effort, full as much characterized by the spirit of humanity and justice, as that of which Gerson was the champion against Petit. Is brutal violence the proper instrument for converting infidels to Christianity? That was the question. Protesting against the violence and carnage of the Teutonic knights, the king of Poland, and Voladimir, his ambassador, plead the cause of reason and truth. Should their plea be heard? It was in advance of the age. It was a gleam of light from a brighter future. Should it be quenched in the darkness of papal bigotry? Should it yield to the prejudices against which it clashed? Let us see.

Otho de Colonna had signed, while yet cardinal, the condemnation of Falkenberg’s as well as Petit’s writings. He now wore the tiara, and presided over the council at this its forty-fifth and last session (April 22, 1418.) At the fitting moment the advocate of the Polish ambassadors arose, and presented to the council the book of Falkenberg. It had been condemned by the commission appointed to examine it, by the nations severally, by the college of cardinals, and all this with perfect unanimity. He therefore submitted humbly that it should also be condemned in full council, otherwise the ambassadors of Poland and Lithuania would protest against this denial of justice, and would appeal to a future council. The statement of the advocate was disputed. The patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch maintained that the book had not been unanimously condemned. Two notaries pronounced the assertion false. In the midst of the confusion consequent, Paul Voladimir arose and demanded audience. His advocate had omitted some things that should have been spoken. As he reached his hand, however, to take from the advocate the paper which he wished to read, the pope imposed silence, and declared by the mouth of one of his officers, that what had been passed in full council in matters of faith, he regarded as inviolably binding—but nothing more.

This declaration was meant to be final. But Voladimir was not thus to be put off. He went on with his reading. Again the pope silenced him, threatening
excommunication unless he should desist. He then presented his protest in the names of the king of Poland and the duke of Lithuania, solemnly appealed to the next general council, and demanded the certification of his protest and appeal. The language employed is bold and manly. The chief purpose for which the council was convoked—the extirpation of heresy—had been neglected. Desiring to obey God rather than man, he declares that if sentence is not pronounced against the book of Falkenberg, and justice done in the premises, he appeals to a future council.

All was in vain. Martin did not wish to provoke the vengeance or risk the allegiance of the Teutonic knights. Strangely enough, moreover, at the close of the council the Duke of Burgundy is his fast friend. Shall he be alienated by the condemnation of his advocate, Petit? Surely Martin V was, as Platina says, "a prudent man." But before the council’s close, he gave evidence of it. John of Bavaria, Bishop of Liege—the See by which the Archbishop of Riga had been bought over—was merely a worldly prince. He wished to resign his bishopric, and marry a fortune in the person of the widow of the Duke of Brabant, a near relative. For this, a dispensation from the pope was necessary. A thousand crowns bought the dispensation, and Martin V pocketed the fruits of his simony. What a fit commentary on the reforms he had initiated, as well as on his "prudence"! Such conduct confounded the emperor. He went to the pope, and met him with the blunt, but significant question, "Holy Father, why are we here at Constance?" "To reform the church," replied the pope. "One would not be apt to say so," rejoined the emperor, "when you allow cousins-german to marry. Pardon sins you may, perhaps, but not grant a permit for them." The emperor, however, could go no further. His own robes were far from being free of stain. He had already used the pope to perform a similar service for some friends of his own. Thus many seemed to see in Martin V a John XXIII redevivus. The man might die, but the system lived. The name of pope was but the new dial-plate to cover the same mechanism working out the same results.

Futile as the results of the council appeared, there was no hope of mending them, and most of the members were as ready as Martin V to depart. Some would haste away, in order to enjoy at leisure the fruits of their treason or intrigue; some to remedy the mischiefs occasioned by their absence; some, like Gerson, to weep in solitude over the disappointment of their fondest hopes. What must have been the reflections of sincere, enlightened, and earnest men, like Voladimir, as they retraced their steps from the council to their homes? The Polish ambassador saw the cause of sacred and Christian charity trampled under foot. The head of the church himself had silenced the voice of justice—had virtually condemned a just cause unheard. Nay, more, he had taken "prudent" precautions that it never should be heard. He had published a constitution, ad perpetuam rei memoriam, by which he declared that "It is not permissible for anyone to appeal from the sovereign judge (i.e., the supreme pontiff), who is vicar of Jesus Christ, on earth, neither to decline his judgment in matters of faith." Well might Gerson declare, and Voladimir feel, that "it
tended to overthrow the authority not only of the council of Pisa, but of Constance also, and to annul all that they had done, whether in electing a new pope, or deposing such as had intruded into the pontificate."

The council in fact lay at the mercy of a terrible contradiction that bereft it of all moral power. It had begun by asserting its supremacy, and deposing a pope. It ended by giving itself a master, and bending its neck to his yoke. It was far more independent when it assembled, than when the time of its dissolution approached. Cromwell, dismissing the Long Parliament with a "Get you gone," could have humbled them, not more than the council was humbled by the assumed authority of the pontiff. They had become his tools merely, and when he had done with them he flung them away. The terrible question had been started, Which is supreme, pope or council?—but the issue at Constance foreboded sadly, to thoughtful minds, that future when popes should rule, independent of councils, summoning, or leaving them unsummoned, at their pleasure. The tyranny of the monarchical principle was already, in fact, enthroned in the church, by the weakness of a council that had presumed to bind it in fetters of iron.

We follow the better minds of the council with a sad sympathy, as they withdraw to their homes or to their places of exile. They feel that they have acted a humiliating part in the great tragedy of the church. The catastrophe has thrown its dark shadow on all their future years, and on the future of Christendom. They have learned what they would have been happier, if not wiser, never to have known. They have fathomed around them depths of depravity that fill them with foreboding and despair. Bohemia had no such ally against the council as the council itself.

But before the final leaves-taking, the pope wished to manifest his generosity. He could do it easily, and, what was more, cheaply. If money was scarce, and piety a thing still more rare, the bank of Papal Indulgences could discount to meet any demand. In the latter part of March (1418), his bounty was signalized by an invitation addressed to the people, by heralds, to assemble at the episcopal palace to receive indulgences. A great multitude was soon collected, in the midst of whom the pope exercised a liberality that cost him nothing. The ceremonies of the occasion occupied most of the afternoon, and closed with a more substantial and expensive tribute to the emperor, princes, and cardinals, of a public dinner; at the close of which, the pontifical humility was manifested in washing the feet of his guests. Day after day the treasury of Indulgence was drawn upon, and the graciousness of the pontiff expressively signalized.

But all this was nothing to what took place on the dissolution of the council. As the pope declared its sessions closed, he "accorded, by the authority of God Almighty, the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, as well as by his own, full absolution to all the members of the council, for all their sins," and extended
his favors to the members of their families, on condition of their "fasting every Friday for the space of a year." To make the matter more easy, fasting might be dispensed with, in some cases, by the substitution of good works.

The emperor, by the mouth of his advocate, returned thanks to the several members of the council for what they had done, promising, on his part, an inviolable allegiance to the Roman church and the pope, and declaring that in whatever respects the council had come short, it had not been through his fault.

Such language plainly intimated the dissatisfaction of the emperor; nor did he stand alone in this feeling, as we have already seen. But the king of Poland felt most deeply aggrieved. He seems to have shown great zeal, as well as humanity, in seeking the conversion of the infidels bordering upon his states, and his efforts had been eminently successful. The violence and rapine of the Teutonic knights were most odious and reprehensible. The king of Poland now saw them shielded by the action of the pontiff, and himself left exposed to the shafts of Falkenberg's malice. He wrote to the pope a letter of complaint which seems to have been not without effect, although Falkenberg was still uncondemned. Some of the friends of the king of Poland counseled him, as the wisest and most effectual measure, to select some monk, as violent, virulent, and able as Falkenberg, and set him, with his pen, to maul and demolish his adversary. If such a one could have been found, the counsel might not have been unwise.

The French concordat, on its arrival at Paris, was anything but welcome. The parliament refused to receive it, and even drew up reasons against it, to be presented to the pope. Years passed before France would accept it. The nuncios, whom the pope sent to urge its approval, were driven to maintain the desperate position that a sentence of the pope was to be obeyed, even though it was unjust. Such a maxim roused the spirit of Gerson in his exile, and he met it with a bold and manly refutation.

The Germans felt that they had been cheated by the council. The dioceses, whose revenues had been given over to the emperor, were loud in their complaints. The Archbishop of England, in a spirit worthy of the nation, met the demands of the pope on the privileges of his primacy and the laws of England, in an attitude of defiance. Spain was already almost in open revolt against Martin, and ready to league with Benedict XIII. Bohemia was, for the present, hopelessly lost to the papacy, volcanic in its indignation and resentment at the proceedings of the council. Italy was too much absorbed in the wretched conflicts that tore her into parties and factions, to have any thought left except for her own misery. In the midst of all this widespread dissatisfaction, it is a most significant fact that the only hearty supporters of the pontiff were the Duke of Burgundy and the Teutonic knights—the patrons respectively of Petit and Falkenberg. Well might Gerson, in his sad and lonely
meditations over the doings and results of the council, lament that he had toiled and worn himself out to no purpose. The bright hopes he had cherished were but dreams. The ideal of his life, the image he had worshipped, had vanished. A Gorgon's head, that he dared not look upon, had taken its place. Where a temple should have been, he saw a Babel. Rome was not to be reformed. Reform would annihilate her. Her disease was past cure.

And now all were intent upon quitting the scene where so much of good and bad, of learning and power, of eloquence and intrigue, of integrity and corruption, had mingled and fermented together. The pope was in most haste to leave. The emperor begged him, with all earnestness, to stay a few months longer. He represented to him that many things yet remained to claim his attention. But these entreaties were vain. The pope wished to see Rome; he wished to snatch it from the grasp of its invaders. On the sixteenth of May (1418) he left Constance for Geneva. The procession that accompanied him was splendid and imposing. The "servant of servants" went forth as the prince of the kings of the earth. Ten horses, caparisoned in scarlet and led by hand, preceded. Four horsemen, with pikes, each surmounted by a cardinal's hat, followed them. Then came two priests, one bearing a cross of gold, another the sacrament. The cardinals, in their red caps, with priests, theologians, senators of the city, and canons, bearing wax tapers, made way for the pope, who followed, mounted on a white horse and dressed in pontifical habits. The tiara which he wore shone brilliant with precious stones, while four princes supported the dais above his head that shielded him from the sun. The emperor was on his right, and held the bridle of his horse. The electors and princes of the empire stood near to render their assistance. Then followed the clergy, the nobility, and the various orders, till the procession swelled in number to forty thousand men. In such state the pope passed the gate of the city. The emperor and princes accompanied him to Gottlieben, where he embarked upon the Rhine, to finish, by water, his journey to Geneva. The emperor himself did not long linger at Constance, and in a short time its former glory had departed.
This section comprises chapters 13 through 18 of Volume II. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

**Chapter 13**  Sigismund’s Army Before Prague  
**Chapter 14**  The Defeat and Retreat of the Emperor  
**Chapter 15**  Taborites and Calixtines  
**Chapter 16**  The Campaigns of Zisca  
**Chapter 17**  The Last Crusade, Defeat of the Imperialists  
**Chapter 18**  The Council of Basle, Calixtine Ascendancy

**CHAPTER XIII**

Violence of Parties in Bohemia  
Sigismund’s Army Before Prague

The dissolution of the council of Constance, and the effort necessary on the part of Sigismund to restore the peace of his empire, gave a short respite to the Bohemians, if respite that condition could he called, in which the exterminating and persecuting bull of Martin V was continually suspended over them. This fulmination was to them the parting word of the council, its farewell of bitter malediction. It showed plainly enough on what terms alone peace could be made. Unable to secure the persons of the Bohemian countrymen of Huss, whom they might subject to a similar treatment, the council translated the act of his execution into words, and, in the bull itself, dispatched into Germany a written *auto de fé*, a legible funeral pile, every line aglow with the spirit of the inquisitor.

But the logic of this document was a two-edged sword. It cut both ways. Jacobel’s treatises on the cup did not contain arguments half so effectual to strengthen the faith of his party, as were contained in the decrees of the council and the bull of the pope. No conclusion is more firmly held than that which is reached by a *reductio ad absurdum*. The papal fulmination might have
been headed by the creed of the Hussites, and followed by a Q. E. D., to signalize the fact that the truth of the theorem was demonstrated. At least this must have been so to many minds.

But the Bohemians did not choose to pass over in silence so extraordinary a document as this bull of a pope, elected for the purpose of evangelical reform. They answered it, and circulated the reply far and wide through the land. Although it does not appear to have been issued until some months after the publication of the bull, it may as well be given here, as showing the spirit in which the bull was received. It is entitled "A faithful and Christian exhortation of the Bohemians to kings and princes, to stir them up to the zeal of the gospel." It speaks of the industrious efforts that had been made in certain quarters to excite hostility and persecution against the Bohemians. "As well on your part as on ours, many men, both noble anduntitled, have foolishly lost their lives. Yet never hitherto have ye in any part understood our faith by our own confession; neither whether we be able to prove the same out of the scriptures or not, and yet in the meantime kings, princes, lords, and cities have sustained great damage. And hereof we do greatly marvel, that you do so much trust and believe the pope and his priests, which give you drink full of poison, and such comfort as no man can understand, in that they say they will give you forgiveness of sins, and grant grace and pardon to this end, that you should war upon us and destroy us, whereas their graces and pardons are none other than great lies, and a great seducing of the body and soul of all them that believe them, and put their trust in them. This we would prove to them, and convince them by the Holy Scripture; and we would suffer that whoever is desirous to hear, the same should hear it. For the pope and all his priests herein deal with you as the devil would have dealt with our Lord Jesus Christ. ...

"So the devil deceiveth the pope and all his priests with the riches of the world, and with worldly power; and they think they can give grace and pardon when they will; and they themselves shall never find favor before Almighty God, except they repent, and make amends for their great deceiving of Christendom. And how can they give to others that which they themselves have not? So did the devil, who was rich in promising and poor in giving. And like as the devil is not ashamed to tell a lie, so all they are not ashamed to speak that which shall never be found true, nor be proved by the Holy Scriptures; because, for no cause they stir up kings, princes, lords, and citizens to make war against us, not to the end that the Christian faith should thereby be defended, but because they fear their secret vices and heresies shall be disclosed and made manifest. For if they had a true cause, and a godly love to the Christian faith, they would then take the books of the Holy Scripture, and would come to us, and confute us with the weapons of God’s word; and that is our chief desire. For so did the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, who came to the pagans and the Jews, and brought them from their infidelity to the true faith of our Lord Jesus Christ; and this they did in the spirit of meekness. ... So ought they also to do, if they perceived that they were just and we unjust. ...
The truth ought not to be afraid of falsehood. ... Zerobabel declareth that the truth is of all things the most mighty, and overcometh all things. For Christ is the truth. John 14. ... Therefore, if the pope and his priests have the truth, let them overcome us by the word of God. But if they have lies, then they cannot long abide in their presumption.

"Wherefore we beseech and exhort all the imperial cities, all kings, princes, noblemen, rich and poor, for God's sake, and for his righteousness, that one of them write hereof to another, and that there may be some means devised by which we may commune with you, safely and friendly, at some such place as shall be fit for both you and us; and do you bring with you your bishops and teachers, and let them and our teachers fight together with the word of God, and let us hear them; and let not the one overcome the other by violence or false subtlety, but only by the word of God. And if your bishops and teachers have better proofs of their faith out of the Holy Scripture than we, and our faith he found untrue, we will receive penance and satisfaction according to the gospel. But if your bishops and teachers be overcome of ours by the Holy Scripture, then do ye repent and hearken to us, and hold with us. And if your bishops and teachers will cease from their spiritual pride, and repent and make satisfaction, then will we help you according to our power. ...

"And if ye will not determine to do any other thing than to fight against us, then will we take the Lord to our help, and his truth; and we will defend it to the death, and we will not be afraid for the excommunication or curse of the pope, or his cardinals, or of the bishops, because we know that the pope is not God, as he maketh himself, so that he may curse and excommunicate when he will, or bless when he will; who has now these many years cursed and excommunicated us, and yet, notwithstanding, God and his gracious blessing hath been our help." To the objection supposed to be made, that they could not do without priests and bishops to baptize, hear confessions, and minister the holy mysteries, as was charged upon them by their enemies, they reply, that "when wicked bishops and priests shall be banished, then place shall be made for good priests and bishops."

As to the charge that they did not believe in purgatory, the Virgin Mary, or the saints, they claim that they will prove by Holy Scripture how they ought to believe in regard to these things, better than the bishops or priests could tell them. As to obedience to the pope, they declare that they will render him obedience when he should be holy and just. In regard to their overthrow of public worship, "destroying monasteries, and banishing thence the wicked monks and nuns," as was charged upon them by their enemies, they reply, "Truly we did it, thinking once that they were holy, that they did the reverend service of God; but after that we well observed and considered their life and works, then we perceived that they were hypocrites, falsely aping humility, and wicked builders on high, and sellers of pardons and masses for the dead,
and such as devoured in themselves the sins of the people ... Forasmuch as their selling of their prayers anal masses for the dead for gifts is no better than hypocrisy and heresy, therefore if we do speak against them, and destroy their monasteries, we do not therein destroy the service of God, but rather the service of the devil, and the school of heretics. And if ye knew them as we know them, ye would as diligently destroy them as we do. For Christ our Lord did not ordain any such order. ... and he said, ‘Every plant which my Heavenly Father bath not planted, shall be rooted up.’”

In the close of their apology, the Bohemians bring forward several subjects to be considered. They are disposed in sixteen articles, intended mainly to expose the corruptions of the church, the avarice, extortion, lewdness, and hypocrisy of the clergy. Their articles are then stated, which they declare they will strive for and maintain unto the death. These are the prohibition of gross public sins, whether in laity or clergy; the inconsistency of large revenues and pomp with the simplicity of ministers of Jesus Christ; the freedom of the word of God to be read and preached in all places, "without any inhibition of either spiritual or earthly power"; and the communion of the body and blood of Christ as he ordained.

This apology of the Bohemians is signed by four of their leading captains, Procopius, Conrad, Samssmolich, and Smahors. It is honorable at once to their courage, their prudence, their Christian intelligence, and their regard for the supreme authority of the word of God. It undoubtedly expressed the general feeling and conviction of the nation.

To attempt to confute them by the logic of an armed invasion was but madness. Persecution would only exasperate. Nor were they wanting in men who dared, and who were competent, to place themselves at their head. Years before, Zisca had won high renown as a bold and able general. His promptitude and energy in dispelling the storm that threatened the Hussites when they had been summoned to appear unarmed before Wenzel, had secured the confidence and respect of the Bohemians. He was finally acknowledged their leader by an indisputable preeminence, and he was worthy of the post. His abilities, attested by subsequent campaigns, rank him as the greatest general of the age.

Never did any man unite in himself qualities more eminently fitting him to be at once the head of a party, and the leader of an army. His genius for planning a campaign or assault, was only equaled by his prompt energy in putting his plan in execution. He understood perfectly the art of rendering himself the master of the minds of the multitude. Bohemia was in arms for the communion of the cup. He holds up a sacramental cup before the army, and tells them to behold their standard. He has no troops but infantry. By an unexpected assault he surprises the army of the emperor, and carries off a thousand horses, thus at once providing himself with cavalry. He is without a fortified town to afford
security for his troops. He ascends a high mountain with his soldiers, and there
addresses them: "Do you want houses? Set up your tents here, and make your
camp your city." The thing is done, and Tabor is at once a fortress. From its
impregnable heights Zisca can defy his foe. Thither, moreover, he may always
securely retreat. Cromwell's Ironsides could not surpass Zisca's soldiers. The
latter also felt the inspiration of their leader's words—words derived from
scripture, and glowing with the enthusiasm which it inspired. To the
inhabitants of Tausch he writes: "May God grant, dear brethren, that
performing good works, like the true children of your heavenly Father, you may
remain steadfast in his fear; if he has visited you, let not affliction abate your
courage; think of those who labor for the faith, and who suffer on account of
the name of Jesus Christ. Imitate the old Bohemians, your ancestors, always
ready to defend the cause of God and their own. Let us constantly have before
our eyes the divine law, and the good of the common weal; let us be vigilant;
and let whoever knows how to handle a knife, or to throw a stone, or to
brandish a club, be ready to march. ... Let your preachers encourage your
people to war against Antichrist; let everyone, young and old, prepare for it.
When I shall arrive among you, let there be no want of bread, or beer, or
forage; lay up a store also of good works. Behold, the time is now come to arm
yourselves, not only against your outward enemies, but also against those that
you have within yourselves. Remember your first combat when you were few in
number against many, and without arms against those that were well-provided.
The hand of God is not shortened: courage, therefore, and be ready. Zisca of
the Cup."

This letter shown at once the spirit of Zisca, his skill in touching the chords of
popular feeling, and his watchfulness over the cause which he had taken in
hand. Cromwell, before the battle of Dunbar, charging his soldiers to "trust in
God and keep their powder dry," was manifesting the same exquisite
combination of religious enthusiasm and good sense that Zisca did, when he
urged the people in the came breath, to "let there be no want of bread, beer,
and forage," and to "lay up also a store of good works." The soldiers of Zisca
were trained by him as the great Englishman trained his Ironsides. The laity as
well as clergy preached for both. The camp was a church, the army a religious
assembly. Tabor was, in a new sense, the Mount of Transfiguration. From all
parts of Bohemia throngs came flocking thither, and there—as a kind of
national covenant—the communion of the cup as well as of bread was freely
administered.

The intelligence of what was taking place at Tabor spread over Bohemia. The
friends of Huss and of the cup were encouraged. The popular tide, directed by
such a man as Zisca, was certain to bear down all before it. His army was not
composed of mere soldiers of fortune. They were men of deep religious
convictions—some of them, indeed, driven well-nigh mad by persecution—
reckless of life in their indignant defiance of Martin's bull, which seemed to
combine in it the cruelty of the inquisition, the brutality of the dragoon, and
the malice of the fiend. Many, undoubtedly, like Zisca himself, could speak of their own private wrongs. The image of an outraged sister, or of a friend bound in chains to the stake about which the flames raged, rose up before them at the sight of a monk or priest, and led them to those acts of resentment and vengeance with which they were so heavily charged. "If ye knew them as we know them," said they in their apology for destroying the monasteries, "ye would as diligently destroy them as we do."

These institutions were undoubtedly excessively corrupt, and so far as their friends at the council and the approvers of the violence of the bull were concerned, there could be no ground for reproof. Even for us, who regret the violence, it is difficult to say how far circumstances justified it, or how far, as John Knox urged, it was necessary to destroy the rookeries in order to drive out the foul birds, the harpies, from their roosts. As favorers of the bull, they were public persecutors, and their urgent application for foreign intervention and invasion, justly led to their being regarded as traitors.

It was on the twenty-second of July (1419) that the grand communion of the multitude was held at Tabor. Undesignedly, the priests in many places had contributed to favor the plans of Zisca. They had refused the communion of the cup to the laity in their own neighborhoods, and had thus forced them, in order to enjoy a privilege which they most highly prized, to swell the ranks of the Hussite leader. They would, of course, in the state in which things then were, go armed, and thus, beyond his expectations, the multitude of his followers was swelled by thousands. It is not surprising, when we consider the feelings with which they were inflamed, and the confidence which their visible strength and numbers must have inspired, that a plan should have been adopted for seizing or assaulting the city of Prague. The multitude could not all remain long together. Many of them doubtless belonged in Prague itself, or its neighborhood, and a march upon the city might be made as they returned to their own homes. The elements of disaffection were abundant within the walls, and on the thirtieth of July they broke out into open violence.

The king himself had withdrawn from Prague to one of his castles, some miles distant; but already the fear of his brother, the terrors of a crusade, or the leveling principles of some of the reformers, who imagined that monarchy might be superseded by a republic, or the officers and soldiers who were left behind, showed themselves similarly disposed with their mater. Violent assaults were made, and individuals were seized and imprisoned. The citizens of Prague could not therefore feel themselves safe while the soldiers of the king possessed within the walls a fortified position like that of the castle or royal palace, from which they might at any moment be assaulted. The host of Zisca, by his training had now assumed the aspect of a regular army. He led them on to the attack of the new city—the part of Prague occupied by the party which was opposed to the reformers, and supported by the court. The inhabitants of the city joined in the
assault. Zisca seems however to have been content for the present merely to intimidate the papal party.

Some of his army—more intent on observing their religious rite, and improving the occasion for regaining the places of public worship, from which, in the absence of their advocate, Nicholas de Hussinitz, they had probably been again excluded by Wenzel’s orders—sought to enter St. Stephen’s church. They found it locked. Indignant at this exclusion, they assaulted it, and burst open the doors. The priest, who had ventured to resist them, became the object of their vengeance. They broke open his parsonage, and hung him from one of the windows.

After having enjoyed the freedom of the church and performed their favorite ceremonies, the party withdrew, and proceeded to the Carmelite monastery. Here they resolved to array themselves in proper order, and, forming themselves into a procession, march to the council-house of the new city, demanding that those of their friends who had been imprisoned should be released. The demand was presented. The council hesitated to grant it. Some were for holding out to the last. The people stood without, quietly awaiting an answer to their demand. At this moment, someone from one of the upper windows threw a stone, which struck the Hussite priest who bore the host. The people were enraged. Their patience was exhausted by delay, and they regarded the act as a signal for an assault. Resistance was vain. The indignant vengeance of the people, led on by Zisca, swept all before it. The council-house was taken by storm. Eleven of the Councilors escaped, but the seven others, all Germans, and, as such, hateful to the Bohemians, were thrown from the upper windows as they were seized, and impaled on the spears and lances of the multitude below. The prisoners were of course released.

It is a singular but instructive fact, that at this moment, when violence seemed to rule, when the attack of the royal garrison had been foiled, and when some of the council had been put to death, and others had fled, no thought of lawless license or ravage was allowed a place in the minds of the triumphing party. Their first care was to restore the forms of civil government. Proclamation was made, and, under pain of death or exile, all citizens were summoned to meet together at the council-house, to elect four magistrates, to whom the authority and seal of the city should be committed till the time for the next regular election of councilmen should substitute others in their place.

Meanwhile the assault upon the new city was continued. For five days, scenes of violence were constantly occurring. The court, it was now known, had taken an open stand against the Hussites. It was resolved that the leaders of the reform party should all be put to death. The attacks which had been made upon the Hussite processions by the officers and soldiers of the king, and which had aggravated difficulties, had evidently been by the king’s order, of at least his connivance. The people saw nothing before them but victory on the one
hand, and, on the other; persecution with a suppression of their worship. They therefore pursued the siege with ardor. But the queen with the royal party had retired to the castle in the upper city, and while they resisted the assault, dispatched, for the second time, messages to Sigismund for aid.

Zisca at this moment withdrew from the city. His biographer informs us that the excesses of the citizens, which he could not approve, was the reason of his departure. It is more probable that he foresaw the storm about to burst upon the city in response to the summons of Wenzel, and wished to be prepared for it. He withdrew to Pilsen, gathering his troops around him. The place was at the safe distance of fifty or sixty miles from Prague, and secured its defense from the direction of Nuremberg. Here Zisca quietly watched the progress of affairs, ready to suppress any attempt that might be made to carry into execution the designs of the enemy. He was sufficiently strong and secure to defy any probable assault.

Meanwhile the citizens of Prague bore with the greatest impatience the presence of the royal garrison within the walls. There it was, perched upon the lofty heights of the hill upon which the castle stood, ready at once to swoop down upon its victims. Though they had been forced to give over their assault upon it, the garrison was exposed to continued molestations. Efforts were made to secure a truce or a compromise, but the citizens would consent to none which did not allow them free liberty of worship. Thus negotiations were protracted. The castle was in fact in a state of siege, with little prospect of relief. But at this juncture, and while Sigismund, who had been appealed to for aid, was busily engaged in Hungary in protecting the rights of his hereditary states, a summons, more effectual than any that had been sent him hitherto, roused him to prompt and energetic action. This was the announcement of the death of his brother, the king of Bohemia. He died in a manner worthy of his life. Upon being informed of the commotion that had taken place at Prague on the thirtieth of July, he broke out in a torrent of passionate invective against its authors. Several of the courtiers who were present expressed their detestation of the enormities that had been perpetrated. One of his attendants, however, ventured to say that he had foreseen what was about to take place, probably intending to attribute it to Wenzel's withdrawal from Prague. Such freedom of language aroused the tiger in the heart of the irascible and passionate king. He sprang upon the bold attendant who had dared to speak words so un courteous to royal ears, and dashing him to the ground, was about to consummate his violence by plunging his dagger into the bosom of his prostrate victim. From this he was withheld by his attendants, and could scarcely be persuaded not to order the bold speaker at once to be executed. The excitement and frenzy which had thus been produced were too much for a frame already worn out by dissipation. He was struck with paralysis, and after lingering eighteen days, expired. He had marked the names of several Hussites whom he had doomed to death, but the blow that smote him rescued and delivered them.
The death of Wenzel (August 16, 1419) left the kingdom of Bohemia, in default of other heirs, to his brother Sigismund. The queen, Sophia, sought, on her husband’s death, not only to secure the aid of Sigismund, but to engage the citizens of Prague to conditions of peace, by which the emperor should be at once adopted as their king. But they refused to acknowledge him. His whole course had been such as to commend him only to the abhorrence of all who cherished the memory of Huss.

Meanwhile Sigismund himself was making preparations for taking possession of the kingdom, which he claimed to inherit from his brother. The citizens of Prague became alarmed. Their enemies still held the royal castle, as well as the Vissehrad, and anxiously awaited the emperor’s approach, to retaliate upon the citizens for the assaults they had endured. The only security of the latter was in a speedy reduction of the castle. They at once applied for aid to their allies. Zisca saw the importance of the enterprise. Accompanied by Coranda and Nicholas de Hussinitz, he hastened to the rescue. The new city, with the Vissehrad, was taken by the combined forces on November 4, 1419. The castle hardly escaped.

In order to understand fully the apprehension, on the part of the citizens of Prague, which led them to invite Zisca to their aid, we must recur to what had taken place since his first assault of the new city. The writer of the “Diary of the Hussite War” gives us a version of what transpired, which, though it differs in some respects from the statements of other historians, commends itself to our confidence by its superior credibility. The rage of the king on the announcement of what took place on the thirtieth of July was due, not so much to the scenes of violence which then transpired, as to the presumption of the citizens in electing their own magistrates, without waiting for his sanction. The fear that haunted him was that of being deposed from the throne. He watched with intense jealousy every movement which seemed to indicate the least disposition to put any other in his place. His threat, addressed to Nicholas de Hussinitz, grew out of this extreme sensitiveness to a dreaded danger. These fears were fully understood by the members of his court, some of whom favored the Hussite party. By their means a temporary peace was negotiated, the conditions of which were that the citizens should humbly submit themselves to the king, while he, on his part, and in maintenance of his authority, should acknowledge the four magistrates elected by the people, and give them his sanction. The Hussites, moreover, were to be allowed liberty of worship. On these conditions, peace was restored, and the commotion subsided. But it was only till the intelligence of Wenzel’s death excited new interest. On the next day scenes of violence again occurred.

The fury of the populace was directed chiefly against those churches in which the communion of the cup was not allowed. The organs and images were broken and destroyed. The clergy, apprehensive of danger, fled. As night drew on, the violence increased. The Carthusian monastery was attacked, and the
wine found there was freely drunk, until many were intoxicated. The monastery itself was plundered, and the monks within were borne off to the council-house, to be restrained of their liberty, and perhaps otherwise punished for having consented to the death of Huss, and opposed the communion of the cup. On the next day the Carthusian monastery was taken anew by assault, and burned, leaving only its walls standing. The tomb of Archbishop Albic, in the Church of the Holy Virgin, was broken open, and the images dashed in pieces. The commotion spread to the neighboring cities and villages. The monastery of the preaching friars at Piska was completely sacked. A great multitude, drawn from various parts of the kingdom, assembled on a mountain near Ladwy, and after listening to various exhortations to love God, and abide by the truth, and enjoying the communion of the cup, marched in procession to Prague, and were hospitably welcomed by the citizens. Torches were carried and drums beaten as they entered the gates, and the multitude took possession of the Ambrosian monastery, where they were supplied with food for several days by the inhabitants of the city. The presence of the multitude had doubtless been sought, and it contributed effectually to expedite a second truce between the two parties. Upon this, the strangers, who had also tried their skill at image breaking, withdrew from Prague.

For several weeks the city continued quiet. The queen, however, and certain barons of the kingdom, the principal of whom were Czenko de Wartenberg, the governor of the castle, William of Hazmburgk, and John Chudoba, availing themselves of the treasures which Wenzel left behind him, called in the aid of the German forces, and began to act upon the aggressive. The citizens of Prague, asking for freedom of worship only, were too well aware of the vengeance which had been provoked by the violence of some among them, nor did they fail to arm themselves against the enemy. The city was thus in a state of insurrection. Its inhabitants felt that, with Sigismund advancing against them, there could be no security while the castle held out.

In these circumstances Zisca was appealed to. The cause in many respects was a common one, and he hastened to comply with the summons. Probably but a small part of his forces accompanied him. The report was spread in Prague that his enemies were disputing with him access to the city. The great drums were beaten. Multitudes obeyed the signal. The forces were joined, and the assault commenced. At first the royal party had the advantage. They disputed the passage of the bridge, and were able to do it by the strong positions which they held in the royal castle, the archiepiscopal palace, and the house of the Duke of Saxony. They were armed, moreover, with mortars—though these did but little execution, whether from want of skill in their management, or from their imperfect structure. The passage to the Kleine-Seite (parvam partam), though hotly disputed, was at length secured by breaking open a gate adjoining the house of the Duke of Saxony, although numbers were slain on both sides. The royal party at once commenced their retreat to the castle. Horses, arms, and various spoils left behind them, were eagerly seized and appropriated.
The whole night long the uproar continued. The bells were rung as if in defiance, and in order to continue the alarm. At midnight the queen fled, accompanied by but a small number, among whom was the Baron Ulric de Rosenberg. There was great danger that the castle itself would be forced to yield. During the night, however, the invading party had largely withdrawn to their homes. The royalists improved the occasion, and sallying forth from the castle, seized upon the council-house of the Kleine-Seite, and bearing off the treasures and records, set the building itself on fire. The flames spread to the adjoining houses, which were rapidly consumed.

These events took place at an early hour in the morning (November 5, 1419). The attack of the citizens was not resumed till a late hour of the day. The strength of each party—one favored by position, and the other by numbers—was nearly equal. The royal party burned several houses and dwellings, some of them of great value, among them the School of St. Nicholas. They bore off moreover to the castle a number of prisoners. The citizens on their part plundered and sacked the archiepiscopal palace and other buildings. Thus each party seemed to aspire to exceed the other in vandalism. Those of the castle could command, from their high position, an extensive view, and, among other means of offense, sought to prevent the entrance of provisions within the walls of the city.

Thus the contest lingered on undecisive. For several days there were frequent skirmishes. The citizens were reinforced by four thousand Taborites, who cut their way through the enemy and succeeded in making good their entrance into Prague, where they were received with acclamation. The royalist party saw themselves again forced to offer terms of peace. This was effected by the promise that the Bohemians should he allowed the communion of the cup, and that the law of God and the truth of the gospel should be maintained throughout the kingdom. On the other hand, the citizens bound themselves to refrain from any further violence toward the churches, and any further breaking of images. The Vissehrad also was to be no further molested. This truce was doubtless unacceptable to Zisca, who, with the Taborites, withdrew at once from the city. Subsequent events made its impolicy manifest. It left their enemies a stronghold, from which they could at their pleasure commence to act upon the aggressive.

Meanwhile the enemies of the Taborites, who had opposed them on their march to Prague, had not been idle. They were encouraged and directed by the emperor. Led on by Peter von Sternberg, they had begun to act upon the offensive. They had assaulted those cities which had contributed men to aid the citizens of Prague. At Ausch they had taken a number of prisoners; but when, encouraged by success, they had ventured an attack upon the heights of Knin, they were completely routed. As Zisca, dissatisfied with the results at Prague, had now rejoined his army, the enemy were constrained to limit their operations to mere skirmishes of little importance.
The truce agreed upon was to continue from November 12, 1419 to April 21, 1420. It was destined, however, soon to be broken. The Hussites zealously improved it, while it lasted, in preachings, communions, and lamentations over the death of Huss. They were, however, subject to continual molestations. Wherever their enemies prevailed, they were forced to undergo the greatest vexations and sufferings. Such of them as had been taken captive, were treated with great harshness. Some were cruelly imprisoned, and left in their dungeons to endure hunger and thirst. Some were sold for money, or subjected to every species of abuse. A favorite mode of disposing of them was to throw them, sometimes alive, and sometimes after being beheaded, into deep wells or pits, a barbarity which was generally practiced in the night-time. It was estimated that those who were thus destroyed amounted to the number of sixteen hundred persons. But such inhuman cruelty was as impolitic as it was inhuman. It only tended to inflame the Hussites to indignation and vengeance. In some cases it forced them to desperation.

It was but a few days after the commencement of the truce, that a Hussite priest, John Naakuasa, engaged in visiting the sick, was taken on the highway near Glatow. He was sold for a large sum to the Germans of Bavaria, who had come to join Raczko in his assault upon that place. He was required by them to abjure the doctrine of the communion of the cup. This he refused to do. After insults and reproaches had been exhausted upon him in vain, he was bound to a tree for a stake. Cords were drawn through his hands first perforated by swords, and thus secured, he was burned, a martyr to his faith.

At about the same time, an assault was made upon a neighboring city, Gurim. The magistrates and several of the prominent citizens, among whom was John Chodk (or Chodek), a former officer of the king and several priests, all adherents of the communion of the cup, were seized and borne off as captives. They were subjected to the most bitter wrongs and insults. Blazing torches were thrown at them, and they were cast into prison, where the severity and harshness of their treatment were aggravated by their being bound with iron chains and fetters.

In the midst of these transactions, a question arose demanding a practical answer, and as to which the minds of the Bohemians were much divided. This was in regard to the succession of Sigismund to the vacant throne. His complicity in the death of Huss had alienated from him the good-will of a large part of the Bohemian nation. Some of the Hussites were altogether in favor of having no king. They preferred a republic. Among these Zisca must probably be reckoned, although his preferences appear to have been far less decided than those of many of his compatriots.

When the emperor’s proclamation was published, summoning the states to meet him at Beraun (December 25, 1419), and to acknowledge him as rightful sovereign, some were for compliance, while others were for treating the
proclamation and summons with contempt. The only promise which Sigismund had hitherto made, served only to excite distrust. It was an evident cover for duplicity. He declared that he would govern the kingdom as it had been governed under his father Charles IV. What did this mean? The Hussites had then no existence as a religious body. They could not well confide in a promise which simply ignored their existence. In spite, however, of all distrust, the citizens of Prague, were present by deputation at Beraun. The barons of the kingdom of Bohemia and the march of Moravia, as well as the magistrates of the royal cities and the officials of the kingdom generally, were present. The Queen Sophia, the legate of the pope, with many princes and magistrates, accompanied the emperor. The embassy from Prague reached Beraun on the twenty-seventh of December (1419). They entered the city with sound of trumpets, and in somewhat imposing array. The emperor, with the magnates of his court, and many of the clergy as well as laity, witnessed the entrance of the procession, and gazed with surprise at its numbers and array. It was hospitably received, in quarters set apart specially for its entertainment. Priests from Prague accompanied it, and performed their favorite rites of worship free from all molestation. The priests of the other party refused, however, to perform any of the sacred offices pertaining to their function, while the citizens of Prague remained within the walls. Beraun should suffer for permitting the entrance of the heretics. Such was the spirit in which the Hussites were still regarded.

On the third day the embassy presented itself before the emperor. On bended knees they saluted him in the name of their city, and accepted him as their hereditary king and master. Sigismund upbraided them with great severity, and imposed the conditions on which he was willing to receive them into favor. His feelings toward them were exceedingly embittered. The conduct of the clergy and legates of the papal party had increased his exasperation. The events that had taken place at Prague had aggravated his purpose of vengeance, and the disappointments which he had elsewhere experienced had only soured his spirit, till he was ready to sanction any measures, however atrocious, that might be necessary, in order to subdue his rebellious subjects. Several weeks before the meeting of this convention at Beraun, he had written to the magistrates at Prague a letter, in which, forgetful of the imperial dignity, he had indulged in a tone of sarcasm which was only calculated to irritate rather than conciliate revolt.

Addressing the magistrates, he says, in bitter irony, "Especially are we anxious that you should not give up your Wickliffite sanctity. Oh! what pleasure must it give a prince to have so large a number of such rulers and such subjects! He will establish his throne, and his glory will spread from the East to the West. Therefore, most dear and loyal, our heart is cheered to learn what is your prudence, wisdom, union! Indeed, you are a mirror for other lands, the light of the ignorant and such as wander in darkness, and the council of Constance is nothing but obscurity compared with your wisdom. Have you not illuminated by
the fame of your learning? You may pass for pope, or even king, since you are so wise." The emperor then reproaches them for the manner in which they had dealt with monasteries, convents, and parishes from which they had expelled the curates, because, as they said, they would not receive the law of God. Their treatment of the senators and judges; their iconoclastic propensities, which they indulged by breaking to pieces the images of the saints as useless idols; their disrespect for the relics of the saints, while they exalted Huss and Jerome to the rank of martyrs; their refusal to bow before the host; their neglect of the festivals of the saints; their readiness to hear preachers of both sexes, are the crimes which the emperor charges upon them. In view of these, he asks, "Who can suffice to chant your praises, if you are every day to make new progress in these holy innovations? Certainly the kings and princes of Christendom have admired, now do, and ever will admire, the extraordinary wisdom that has been infused into you, and of which the ancient fathers knew nothing. Thus, most beloved, if in time past we have written to you not to renounce the obedience of the Roman church, we have done it through ignorance, unaware of your exquisite discernment." He then ironically praises their conduct on the occasion of the death of Wenzel, when, armed with various weapons, they ran through the city, in cloisters, churches, and chapels, singing their fine funeral songs. "It only remains," he adds, "for us urgently to beseech you to associate us with your college, and employ all your means to fit us for the government of Bohemia. But do not go about to say, as in the gospel, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us,’ or, ‘This is the heir—let us kill him,’ for we wish to profit by your counsels, and to be governed by your lights."

Such a letter gave little assurance of favorable conditions for the citizens of Prague. Nothing but the emperor’s weakness forced him to temporize. Yet even under the pressure to which he was subjected by the state of his affairs, and notwithstanding the evident strength of the Hussite party, the conditions he imposed were sufficiently onerous. They were such as might most effectually promote any measures for completely subduing and suppressing the Hussite party. The citizens, as a pledge of their submission to his power and authority, were to remove all the chains from the streets of the city, as well as the statues which they had set up. They were to level and destroy all the entrenchments and fortifications which had been constructed since the death of Wenzel, for the siege or the storming of the castle. The monks and priests should no longer be molested in any respect, and the citizens should make all ready for the coming of the emperor himself.

Not content with this, Sigismund deposed from office all those magistrates who adhered to the communion of the cup, substituting in their place such as were distinguished for having opposed this innovation. Several forts and strong places were at the same time to be given into the hands of the emperor, who stationed in them faithful partisans. Some of these contained large treasures, which were afterward employed to sustain the imperial arms.
After little more than a week’s absence, the embassy of the citizens returned to Prague (January 4, 1420). Hard as the conditions imposed were, and although accompanied by the act that substituted enemies in place of magistrates of their own choice, there seemed to prevail a sincere disposition to submit to Sigismund’s authority. The chains and statues were taken down from the streets and deposited in the council-house. The fortifications erected against the castle were leveled, even amid the derision of the Germans of the garrison and the royal party. "Now," cried they, as they saw the work demolished by the hands of the builders, "Now these Wickliffite and Hussite heretics will be destroyed, and we shall have an end of them." At the same time many of the royal party, who had fled the city, returned. Priests, monks, canons, and common people, who had withdrawn upon the violence that took place on occasion of the death of Wenzel, boldly appeared. Proclamation was made throughout the city in the name of the king and magistrates, that all persons who had left the city might now freely and safely reoccupy their dwellings. It was forbidden, moreover, to offer insult to priests or monks, as had been the practice of men as well as boys, when any passed them along the street.

The enemies of the Hussites, however, showed no disposition to relax their persecuting spirit and zeal. On the ninth of January (1420) John Chodk, of Gurim, who had been taken prisoner some weeks before by the enemy, and who had hitherto been kept a close prisoner, was put to death. He admonished his murderers of the guilt which they were committing in the cruelties which they practiced upon Christian believers, warning them to repent of these and their other sins. He, with three others, who were priests of the Hussite party, was thrown into a deep well (ad foveam profundam seu Sachtam). On the same night many laymen were put to death in a similar manner.

But the emperor himself more than approved—he encouraged, by word and example, this persecuting and barbarous treatment of the Hussites. From the conference in Beraun, he lead withdrawn to Breslau. Here he had manifested such a disposition to proceed against the followers of Huss, as to destroy the last vestige of confidence in his character or promise. He could not have pursued a course more directly calculated to defeat his own projects. The Hussites were already divided in sentiment upon many points. Some of them up to this time had been in favor of Sigismund for king, while others were bitterly opposed to him, and preferred a republic, or at least another person for their monarch. Persecution, too, had had its usual effect. Many had become wild enthusiasts. Driven to desperation, they had compared themselves to the ancient Israelites, and, as God’s chosen people, dealt out threatenings and denunciations against their foes as impious Canaanites and heathen. Political and religious interests, variously combined, had served to widen the divisions that already existed in the views and sentiments of such as bore the common name of Huss. The three principal parties were the Catholics, the Utraquists or Calixtines, so called from their devotion to the communion of the chalice or
cup, and the Taborites. The first had lost much of their influence, or had become merged in the party of the Calixtines. These last were called the limping Hussites, by those who were more radical than themselves in their views of reform. And yet they were the most consistent and intelligent in their demands. They held to the communion of the cup, the free preaching of the word of God, the severe repression of public sins, as well of clergy as of laity, and the wrong of allowing to the priests landed property, or a share in the civil administration. The Calixtines were, in fact, the moderate or conservative party. They numbered among them the most influential men of Bohemia, and it was not long before they were joined by Archbishop Conrad himself.

The Taborites were so called, as composing mainly the army which founded the city of Tabor, of which they continued to retain possession. They were the soldiers of reform, and shared a deeper enthusiasm in the cause for which they bled, than their more peaceful brethren. They had lost, far more than their compatriots, all regard for the authority of popes, councils, or the church of Rome. They rejected altogether a hierarchy of priests, nor would they allow any mere outward symbol or external ceremonial as a spot upon the purity of scriptural worship. Many of them went beyond the views of Huss, Jerome, and Jacobel, whom they still reverenced, and rejected entirely the doctrine of transubstantiation. A great majority of the Taborites belonged to the lower classes, and some of them were excessively ignorant. Some doubtless, in rejecting priestly rule, gave themselves over to wholesale license. Contempt for the horrid vices and cupidity of the sacerdotal order would naturally smooth the way to violence and outrage, especially when that order became the aggressors. In this terrible reaction, the lower and more ignorant class would act a prominent part. Their leaders would almost insensibly be forced to conform to their tastes and yield to their prejudices. These were the men, some wild and raving in their vengeance, some more scriptural and even evangelical in their sentiments, who composed that terrible force that supplied Zisca with his armies, and made the name of Hussite terrible over all Europe.

Among the Taborites, and enjoying the liberty which they allowed, were mingled persons of other sects from which they must be carefully distinguished. The freedom which was vindicated in Bohemia, drew to it the free-thinkers and heretics of other lands. Some of these were possessed of a spirit, and adopted sentiments, utterly discordant with those of the Hussites. Among them were the Adamites, whose views of clothing much resembled those of the more fanatical of the early Quakers, who exposed themselves half naked to the public gaze. On other points they rendered themselves still more obnoxious. They carried the doctrine of modern free-love to a most licentious extreme. They do not seem at any time to have actually united themselves with the Taborites, nor do their views appear to have been adopted by the latter. Zisca considered them so criminal and dangerous, that he slew and exterminated them almost to a man.
The Taborites themselves were fanatical mainly in their forced interpretation of the prophecies. They made abundant use of the obscurities of the book of Revelation, yet, like some of the preachers of the council of Constance, applied them mainly to the harlotry of the Roman church. They held and preached the speedy coming of our Lord, to judge and to punish the world. The destruction of Sodom was a favorite figure, with them, of the approaching judgment of the nations. They went so far as to specify the cities of refuge—the Zoar of the purified church. These were five in number—Pilsen, Saatz, Launa, Slany, and Laatowia. The first of these they called the city of the Sun, and to it was conceded a preeminence above the others. The preachers of the Taborites scattered through Bohemia, propagated their peculiar views with great effect. Multitudes sold their possessions, no longer valuable to them, for a small sum, and hastened to take up their residence in the five cities of refuge. Letters were written and dispersed abroad, in which the doctrine of the coming of Christ was supported by the prophecies ill understood and falsely applied. Whole families would come, bringing the proceeds of their property with them, to swell the numbers of the Taborite hosts. Their money was freely devoted to promote the cause which they had espoused. Nothing could have been more favorable to the plans and measures of Zisca. The ranks of his army were kept full, and he was careful to train it to the most exact discipline. The enthusiasm of his soldiers, and their religious ardor, fitted them to follow the command of one whose genius as a General was combined with a devotion that made him, as a leader of armies, the Cromwell of his age.

There was obvious danger of a serious division among the Hussites, some favoring the Calixtines, some joining themselves to the Taborites. In fact, so strongly had the prejudices of men already taken root, that strong jealousies and rivalries had even now sprung up at Prague. The Calixtines prevailed in the old town, and the Taborites in the new, where their battles had been fought and their victories won. For twenty years there was a state of rivalry, sometimes approaching to open war, between the two parts of the city. It was owing to this fact undoubtedly in part, and the consequent jealousy produced by the presence of Zisca, that he was prevented from making a longer stay when he marched at different times to the relief of the city. The folly of Sigismund was manifest in adopting measures of severity which united, even temporarily, the discordant elements of opposition.

CHAPTER XIV

Defeat and Retreat of the Emperor

On the side of the Calixtines was ranged the larger portion of the Bohemian nobility. Among the Taborites, the common people almost exclusively were to be found. The former inclined to accept Sigismund as their king. The latter
preferred, if not a republic, at least some other monarch than the emperor. Had the two parties been left to themselves, the issue might have been somewhat doubtful. Bohemia might have shared the fate of England in the seventeenth century, for Zisca manifested a signal ability, and a tact for managing popular enthusiasm and religious impulses equal to that of the Lord Protector of England. But the folly of Sigismund only tended to band together the repugnant elements into one common rebellion. The proceedings of the royal party had already alarmed the citizens of Prague. They were so far excited by their fears, as once more to lay aside their party aversions in presence of a common foe. Zisca was, by conceded ability, if not by general consent, acknowledged as the champion of the nation, although there were some, not enough perhaps to be called a party, who were in favor of placing Nicholas de Hussinitz upon the throne.

Mutual animosities, however, were for the time suppressed by the cruel policy pursued by the imperialists. The pretext for this was found in the excesses of the Taborites. The latter were fierce and relentless in the vengeance which they meted out to priests and monks. Their violence at Prague was copied throughout Bohemia. In some places their devastations were terrible. In the course of a few months, several hundred monasteries were sacked and burned. In Prague alone, during the year 1419, forty are said to have been destroyed by the Hussites.

But the imperialists needed no example from which to copy. They reduced cruelty to an art, and practiced their barbarities on system. If anyone was found, priest or layman, young or old, male or female, who refused to abjure the doctrine of the cup, the fate of such a one was sealed. No pity was shown, and no entreaty could rescue them from the flames, drowning, or the pits. The mines of Cuttemberg were pestilent with the stench of victims. The convention at Beraun did not stay the rage of the imperialists, who seemed to regard it as merely binding their enemies, and giving them over to their hands in unresisting submission. Some of Sigismund’s letters fell into the hands of the Hussites, and betrayed his bitter purpose of vengeance. To Czenko of Wartemberg, governor of the royal castle, he wrote, "Exterminate the Horebites." At Breslau, the Hussites in a tumult had killed a magistrate. Sigismund took ample vengeance by putting twelve of them to death.

The passions of the Taborites were inflamed almost to madness by the studied cruelties and insults to which all those who adhered to the communion of the cup—whenever occasion offered—were subjected. In the early part of March, John Krasa, a merchant, or, according to others, a Calixtine priest of Prague, had visited Breslau whither Sigismund had withdrawn from the conference of Beraun on matters of business. In conversation, he happened to speak with disapproval of the burning of Huss, and in favor of the practice of the communion of the cup. For this crime he was seized and thrown into prison. On the following day, Nicolas of Bethlehem, who had been deputed from Prague to
the emperor to inform him that he would be recognized as king of Bohemia only when he had declared himself in favor of the Calixtine dogma, was also seized and cast into the same prison with Krasa. The indignation of Sigismund against Nicolas was extreme. He was condemned to be burned. Krasa cheered him in the prison, reminding him of the sufferings of the old martyrs, and of the everlasting joy that would follow their momentary pains. On the fourteenth of March, 1420, Nicolas was led out to die; but when the ropes were fastened to his feet by which a horse was to drag him to the place of execution, he was seized with a panic fear, and, yielding to the fair promises of the legate, who was then present, he renounced the doctrines of Huss. But Krasa, notwithstanding the fate of his companion, and the promises and terrors by which it was attempted to shake his own constancy, continued immovable. He refused all the terms of pardon offered him. He was then slowly dragged through the streets. The legate, who would have preferred his recantation to his execution, followed him, several times ordering the procession to halt, and exhorting Krasa to recant and save his life. But his steadfast reply was, "I am ready to die for the gospel of Jesus." He was already half dead when he reached the place of execution, where he was devoted to the flames. It was on the next day that the papal bull of excommunication and crusade against the Bohemians was published from the pulpits, and placarded on the walls of the churches.

Everywhere the most barbarous cruelties were practiced against the followers of Huss. A price was set upon the heads of the Taborites. For a priest, the sum paid was five guilders, for a layman, one. The most horrid butcheries were the result of this barbarous measure.

In May the burgomaster of Leitmeritz, Pichel by name, a cruel and deceitful wretch, seized in one night twenty-four respectable citizens, among whom was his own son-in-law, and threw them into a deep dungeon near St. Michael’s gate. When they were almost inanimate with cold and hunger, he took them out, with the assistance of some of the imperial officers, and, attended by a guard, pronounced upon them the sentence of death. They were then chained, borne in wagons to the banks of the Elbe, and thrown into the river. A great crowd, embracing the wives, children, and friends of the prisoners, witnessed the murderous spectacle, and could not restrain the utterance of their grief. The Burgomaster’s daughter—his only child—cast herself with clasped hands at his feet, interceding for the life of her husband. "Spare your tears," was the stern and merciless reply, "you know not what you desire. Can you not have a letter husband than he?" The father was inexorable, and the daughter, driven to desperation, exclaimed, "Father, you shall not give me in marriage again." Smiting her breast, and tearing her hair, she followed her husband with the rest. The victims, as they were cast into the river, protested their innocence, and, bidding their friends farewell, exhorted them to constancy and obedience to the word of God, rather than the commandments of men. They then prayed for their enemies, and commended their spirits to Heaven. With their hands
and feet bound together, they were conveyed in boats to the middle of the river and then cast into the stream. Lest any should escape, the banks were lined with executioners armed with pikes, who stood ready to stab and force back any that floated toward the shore. All perished. The burgomaster’s daughter, after a vain struggle to save her husband, perished with him. The next day both were found, clasped in one another’s arms, and buried in the same grave.

Such violence produced a powerful reaction. At Prague it was like a spark falling on tinder. The passions of the Calixtines as well as the Taborites were inflamed anew. A violent leader, John, a Premonstrant priest of the Monastery of St. Mary, formerly a monk of Zelew, put himself at the head of the popular movement. He harangued the citizens, taking for his text the barbarous cruelty of the imperialists. He pronounced Sigismund the red horse of Apocalyptic vision—the sworn enemy of the cup—the author of the terrible excommunication which had overtaken the great body of the nation. "Will he treat you better," he asked, "than he has those of Breslau?"

The excitement produced was intense. The populace swore never to receive Sigismund as their king. Circular letters were sent out to the several cities which the convention had agreed to give up to Sigismund, exhorting them never to admit him or his forces. He was pronounced an enemy of the Slavonian language, and responsible for the execution of Huss. He was charged with alienating portions of Bohemia for his own selfish interests, and with laboring for the excommunication and death of all the Hussite teachers.

In such circumstances, any further attempt to fulfil the terms of the convention was scarcely to be expected. Many of the Taborites of Prague, apprehensive of the result of the measure agreed upon at Beraun, had already left the city, and indignantly withdrawn to Tabor, or joined the forces under the command of John of Hussinitz. Wherever they went, they imparted to others their own indignation, and encouraged an open violation of the terms of the convention.

Zisca saw no prospect of peace for the kingdom if Sigismund was allowed the undisputed succession to the crown. With several Hussite knights, he foreswore obedience to a man who had allowed his safe-conduct to be violated with impunity in the case of Huss, and who already was appearing at the head of armies to subdue the kingdom, and trample upon its freedom of worship. This league, thus commenced, grew rapidly. Barons, knights, and cities joined it. They swore never to receive Sigismund as their king. With the increasing danger from abroad, the prospects of a fierce resistance from the union of the Hussites against the emperor brightened. His own cruelties, and the perfidy and violence of the royal party, were taking effect.
The Taborite preachers had been instrumental in filling the five "cities of refuge," but especially Pilsen, full to overflowing. It became therefore an object for the enemy to gain possession of it. Indeed, it had been pledged to the emperor by the terms agreed upon by the convention, but to defeat them in this purpose, Zisca threw himself with his forces into the place, and held it for a time, refusing all conditions of surrender. He declined all negotiation with an enemy whom he dared not trust. He had with him in the city several eminent barons of the kingdom, among them Brzenko de Sswihow and Walkun de Adlar. Of the party opposed to the communion of the cup, many were driven without the walls. Several monasteries and palaces adjoining the city were destroyed, at the instance of Wenzel de Coranda, one of the Hussite priests.

But Zisca was not suffered to remain unmolested. The royal party, led by Bohwslaus de Swamberg, made an assault with a view to recover the city. He was defeated in his attempt, and put to flight, though the loss was considerable upon both sides. But the anxiety of the queen and the royal party to regain the place, led them promptly to reinforce the army of the siege. Skirmishes between the hostile armies were frequent, and the captives on both sides were treated with great cruelty.

Unable to make much progress, the royal party proposed to negotiate for the evacuation of the city by the Hussites. The latter declined all terms with a party in whose pledges they could place no confidence. At length, urged by a deputation sent to them from Prague, who still wished to conciliate the emperor by surrendering this as one of the cities claimed, they consented to treat for an evacuation of the place. The conditions were that the city should enjoy the freedom of the communion of the cup, and that such as wished to leave the city might withdraw unmolested to Hradisch, with their wives and children. To these conditions the royal party obligated themselves, under severe penalties. But, like the members of the council of Constance in the case of Huss, they seem to have fully imbibed the doctrine that no faith is to be kept with heretics. Several of their generals with a large force of cavalry lay at Pisek, to whom information of the capitulation of the city was dispatched, with directions to attack the Hussites on their march to Hradisch or Tabor. The necessary march of twenty miles in order to reach the latter place, would naturally afford the enemy many opportunities for assaulting them by a sudden and unexpected attack.

The advice was not neglected. The royal party overtook the Hussites near Sudomertz, and a battle was there fought. The Taborites, destitute of cavalry, were in danger of being surrounded. They protected their flanks by drawing their baggagewagons in a circle around them, and thus were enabled for several hours to repel assault. The enemy, foiled in their purpose, at length withdrew from the field, bearing off thirty of the Taborites prisoners. The army of Zisca, leaving its wounded to the care of the villagers, resumed its march.
unmolested to Tabor, where they received a hearty welcome, with rejoicings over their escape. The battle of Sudomertz was fought on March 25, 1420.

While these events were occurring at Pilsen, affairs were assuming at Prague a more threatening aspect. The Hussites became alarmed at the denunciations and threats of the royal party. Pilsen had been surrendered at their suggestion, partly, doubtless, in order to fulfil their promise to the emperor, as well as that Zisca might be left free to march, when necessity should require it, to their rescue. The zeal of the Hussite preachers was enkindled as their fears were excited. John, the Premonstrant priest, distinguished himself by his fervid declamations. Though possessed of no great learning, his eloquence was most effective. He was at this time expounding the revelation of St. John, and took occasion to apply its predictions to the events of the day. He was especially severe upon the emperor—the great red dragon of the Apocalyptic vision. The fact that he had allowed his courtiers to wear as a badge upon their breasts a dragon of gold, made the application more striking. The ardor of the was aroused to a higher pitch than ever. In the cause which they had espoused, many of them were ready to risk at once property and life.

Other causes, however, beside the fervid eloquence of their preachers, contributed to animate the spirit of the Hussites, and rouse them from their desponding submission to Sigismund to an attitude of bold defiance. The emperor’s violence at Breslau in Silesia, whither he had withdrawn from Beraun, was a great political blunder as well as crime. The cruel treatment of Krasa furnished an inexhaustible theme for fervid declamation. The emperor had consented to his execution. The grounds of his condemnation were, “that he would not hold, believe, affirm, and approve the following articles: that the council of Constance was legitimately congregated in the Holy Spirit; that whatsoever the aforesaid council enacted, decreed, and defined, was just, holy, and to be held by all Christian believers, under pain of mortal sin; that in whatever it reprobated and condemned, it acted justly, holily, and well; that the aforesaid council, in condemning John Huss to a most cruel death, proceeded in accordance with justice and holiness; and that its condemnation of the communing of the people under both kinds was just.” These articles Krasa refused to approve, and his cruel death renewed and aggravated among the Hussites the bitter memories of Constance, and stimulated the thirst for vengeance.

This execution took place on the fifteenth of March, 1420. On the seventeenth, a crusade against the Bohemians who favored the communion of the cup was published by the papal legate. On his ill success in attempting to bring back Bohemia to the obedience of the pope, he had withdrawn to Hungary. Soured with disappointment and disgust, he declared that nothing but force would subdue the spirit of the rebel. His representations, undoubtedly enforced by Sigismund, had so much weight with Martin V, that the latter was induced to proclaim throughout Christendom (March 1, 1420) a crusade against the
heretics of Bohemia. They were to be proceeded against as "rebels against the
Roman church, and as heretics." The crusade was announced in the cathedral
of Breslau, at the preaching of the sermon, while the emperor was present;
and he exerted himself for the publication of the bull throughout the whole of
his dominions.

This Bull of the crusade is a most remarkable document for the age in which it
was published. It shows the same blind zeal and persecuting bigotry which
characterized similar measures of preceding centuries. A Christian instead of a
Mohammedan people were now, however, the objects of its vengeance—a
people whose great heresy was that they made the word God their supreme
authority, and contended for the institutions of the gospel in their primitive
simplicity and integrity.

The pope addresses the bull "To the venerable brethren, patriarchs,
archbishops, bishops; to his beloved children the administrators, abbots, priors,
and other officers of churches and of monasteries, as well as to all professing
the Christian religion, in what place soever, to whom these presents shall
come." After speaking of his duty and anxiety to recover the wandering sheep
of the fold of that Lord of all, whose vicar he is on earth, he declares his
purpose, "by the cooperating grace of God," to restrain, by due severity, the
minds of those who had cast off the divine fear. By the counsel of his venerable
brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, he had resolved, "by the
treasures of the mystic dispensation," to excite the soldiers and athletes of
Christ more fervently to pursue this object. He praises the celebrated faith of
his most dearly beloved son in Christ, the Emperor Sigismund, who, as it were
by a divine inspiration, strove with great effort, and at great cost, to restore
the church to its integrity. The zeal of his faith, the ardor of his devotion, the
gentleness of his compassion, had led him to seek the wider diffusion of the
Christian religion, in opposition to those reprobate men of profane malignity
and iniquity, the followers of Wickliffe and Huss, as well as others, the eyes of
whose understanding had been blinded; children of darkness, who by their
superstitious doctrines and crude dogmas would put the Catholic church under
restraint, overthrow the orthodox faith, and give over the flock, led astray by
error, to the bondage of hell. These men, their favorers, abettors, and
defenders, unless they give up their errors, and submit themselves to the
traditions of the holy fathers, were to be exterminated from among the
faithful, and the deadly virus of soul was to be eradicated even by the
destruction of tile body. So happy a consummation is earnestly besought by the
emperor, of the pope and of the Catholic church. Extolling the purpose of the
emperor with the most emphatic eulogy, with eyes directed to heaven in
prayer for his success, he exhorts "all kings, dukes, margraves, princes, barons,
counts, lords, captains, magistrates, and all officials; states, free cities,
universities, and villages, by the sprinkling of the blood of their most glorious
Redeemer, and in hope of the remission of their sins, to the extermination of
the followers of Wickliffe, Huss, and other heretics, with their favorers and
abettors; and to this end they should mightily exert themselves in whatever should be necessary to the prosecution of this work." He therefore charges and commands all ecclesiastical officers to whom the bull is directed, "to contribute all their power and influence to promote the purpose of the emperor, even to the raising and equipping of armies, if they are called upon to do it, in order to proceed against heretics and all who favor them." They were to act as valiant heralds, lifting their voices loud in all states, dioceses, and regions where it should be found fit. They were to select such persons as they should deem proper, to extend the proclamation to all Christian believers as they might chance to be met, and who could be led to volunteer in the crusade. These were to be allowed, by the apostolic authority, relaxation for a hundred days of imposed penance, in consideration of their enlistment. By the preaching of the word of the cross, and by setting forth the symbol publicly, by exhortations and fitting admonitions, they were to be urged to put forth all their efforts for the overthrow of the heretics. The ecclesiastics were themselves to bestow the cross freely upon those who volunteered, and were to fasten it to their shoulders with their own hands. To animate them to greater fervor, the pope himself, "by the mercy of Almighty God, and the authority of the holy apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, as well as by the power of binding and loosing bestowed by God upon himself, grants to those who shall enter upon the crusade, or to such even as should die upon the road, plenary pardon of their sins, if repented of and confessed, and, in the retribution of the just, eternal salvation. Such as could not go in person, but contributed to the cause by sending others, and equipping them according to their ability, should have full remission of their sins. Even such as had laid violent hands upon the clergy, or had been guilty of arson or sacrilege, might hope to fight their way to heaven by warring against the followers of Wickliffe and Huss."

The long dreaded blow was thus struck at last. All Christendom, with its generals and armies, was summoned to crush out the heresies of men whom the council chose to burn rather than refute. The affairs of the Bohemians presented indeed an ominous aspect. The imperial and papal powers leagued together, and summoned all bearing the Christian name to aid them in suppressing and exterminating a people, numbering at the most not more than three or four millions, who were at the same time beset by domestic foes, and who were far from unanimous among themselves in religious and political views. But the result disappointed all human expectations. The forces of the empire dashed and shattered themselves against the invincible resolution and desperate courage of a band of men sustained by religious enthusiasm, and conducted by able generals.

In fact, previous to the publication of the crusade, the tide had begun to set strongly in Bohemia against the pretensions of Sigismund. He had himself anticipated its fuller announcement, by an edict characterized by cruelty and
injustice. He sent written orders through the land to all barons, and to all the
magistrates, to the chief governor of the nation (Czenko), to the governors of
royal towns, the officers and judges, to drive out, persecute, and as far as
possible utterly exterminate the followers of Wickliffe and Huss, as well as the
adherents to the communion of the cup.

This was enough to satisfy any that had hitherto been hesitating and doubtful
in their allegiance, that Sigismund was the last man that should be allowed to
ascend the vacant throne. Zisca’s league against him grew rapidly. Zatec,
Slany, Launy, and other cities formed mutual alliance to resist him. Multitudes,
driven to desperation, banded themselves together for security, or aggression
in their own neighborhood.

It was in this way that the city of Ausch was taken. The governors had driven
out of it all the Hussite citizens. A band of men composed of these, with
Taborites and rustics from the villages, and led on by Zisca, lay hid in ambush
in the woods for several days and nights, till, aided by friends within the walls,
they seized upon an occasion when the city was given up to feasting and
drunkenness, and were enabled successfully to assault it (February 2, 1420).
Driving out their enemies, they took possession of the city, and were at once
rendered secure in retaining it by the crowd of their friends who rushed thither
as to a place of safety. It was shortly after this that the fortified town of
Hradisch, in the immediate vicinity of Tabor, fell into their hands, and was
delivered over into the charge of Procopius of Kamenitz, one of the ablest of
the Hussite generals. On the destruction of Ausch by fire shortly afterward, its
inhabitants transferred themselves with their wives and children to Hradisch of
Tabor, whither Zisca and his forces directed their steps on withdrawing from
Pilsen.

But at Prague the announcement of the crusade produced a most marked
effect. Men could not but tremble at the thought of what that terrible word
meant—with its signification written out in the havoc and carnage of past
centuries, when the innocent and guilty, Catholic and heretic, were swept
indiscriminately to one common doom. Indecision was allowable no longer.
Even the moderate and noncommittal must take their side, and choose the
party by which they would abide. The enemies of the Hussites were full of
exultation. "These heretical wretches," said they, "will now be burned at last,
or they, with their wives and children, will perish by the sword of the emperor.
Let us fly from among them, to the most secure places, lest we miserably
perish along with them."

This was a wise precaution. There was certainly danger of indiscriminate
massacre, when all alike were exposed to the blind fanaticism of a crusading
army at least judging by the precedent of the last crusade against the
Albigenses; and however consolatory to the blind actor in the tragedy it might
be to know that in slaying all "God would know his own," it did not present to
the one in danger of becoming a victim, any very soothing reflections. The enemies of the Hussites in Prague were able fully to appreciate such considerations as these, and fearful of losing life and property together, they took refuge with their families and effects in the castle and Vissehrad. Seven hundred of the wealthiest citizens of Old Prague, and as many more of the New city—a large number of them Germans, and cherishing a national hostility against the Bohemians—were received within the fortified district, on condition of obligating themselves, under oath, on the expiration of the truce (April 23), to render their assistance in subduing the city, and, on the destruction or extirpation of the adherents of the cup, to return to their dwellings.

The citizens, alarmed at the intelligence of the crusade, and the measures and vaunts of their enemies, were not idle. Incited by their preachers, and especially by John, the Premonstrant monk, of whom mention has been already made, they assembled at the council-house of the Old city in order to deliberate on what it was most expedient for them to do. The assembly was large, and their priests and magistrates were present. They bound themselves together, in a covenant or league of mutual defense, against all persons whomsoever should presume to impugn the communion of the cup. They swore to be faithful in defense of the truth, and the oath was administered to them by the magistrates who still remained in office.

Four captains were elected for the Old, and four for the New city, to whose charge the keys of the council-house and gates were entrusted, and to whom an authority was committed, limited only by their discretion, for promoting or devising measures of defense. Beside these, forty persons were appointed from the Old, and forty from the New city, who were to act as officers or leaders, upon any emergency that might arise. After drawing up in a public act the doings of their assembly, and depositing the written document in safe hands, the people withdrew peaceably to their dwellings. Calixtine and Taborite were ready to join hands in a league of mutual defense. The Old city and the New forgot temporarily their aversions, and united to resist a common foe.

The prospects of the Hussites were dark indeed. Sigismund had already gathered a large army, constantly recruited from all parts of the empire. It was said to amount from 140,000 to 150,000 men. He moved on somewhat slowly, allowing the different reinforcements to overtake him, and endeavoring to make sure of the fortified places which he passed. Ziaca was not unmindful of the threatening danger. He saw the necessity of having some secure place upon which he might fall back in case of reverse. None appeared more favorable for his project than Tabor itself. Its natural position was such as to render it almost impregnable to the foe. It was almost a peninsula in shape, bounded on one side by the river Luznice, and on the other by a tributary stream of deep and rapid current. The place itself was lofty and precipitous. It was girt about by steep and almost inaccessible rocks. The only passage to it was by a narrow neck of land, which a few valiant men could make a posse of Thermopylae.
Even this was defended by a deep fosse which Zisca caused to be dug, and by a triple wall, of such strength as to defy the assault of the most powerful engines. The walls were protected by numerous towers fitly located, and means of defense were devised by men who had rendered themselves already masters in the art of taking cities. Here Zisca directed his followers to build houses on the place where their tents stood, and at once the camp of the Taborites became a fortified city.

These precautions taken, Zisca listened to the urgent request of the citizens of Prague to aid them in the siege of the royal castle. Leaving Tabor itself to the hazard of an attack, he hastened to their aid. The Vissehrad was closely besieged, and subjected to great extremity. The garrison were reduced to the necessity of subsisting on the most loathsome food. Dogs, cats, and rats were ravenously devoured. At last the garrison agreed to surrender unless they were relieved by the emperor within fifteen days.

Meanwhile, the emperor was making his way to Prague. Czenko had sent him word of the danger to which the Vissehrad was exposed. He dispatched at once a force of cavalry, in order to raise the siege. Nor did he neglect other means for the relief of his friends at Prague. In order to draw off a portion of the besieging army, an attack upon Tabor was resolved upon. The Lord of Rosenberg, who had embraced the party of the Hussites, but who was now inspired by terror at the report of the invading army, was willing to make his peace with the emperor by turning his arms against his late allies. In proof of his sincerity, he prohibited, in his own district, the communion of the cup, and declared his readiness to assist the emperor in the prosecution of the war. To him, therefore, the attack upon Tabor was entrusted. The occasion was the most favorable, while so many of its inhabitants were absent at Prague. Accompanied by a powerful force, he advanced to the assault.

But intelligence of his movements was communicated to Zisca, who at once dispatched a force of three hundred and fifty cavalry, under Nicholas de Hussinitz, to the relief of Tabor. This force left Prague on the night of June 25 (1420). On the thirtieth of the month a severe and decisive battle was fought. The Taborites came down from the mountain, and made an attack upon the enemy on one side, while Nicholas de Hussinitz, of whose coming the Taborites had been made aware, assaulted them upon the other. The terror of the enemy was such that, after standing their ground for a short time, they turned and fled. Never was there a more signal rout. The imperial forces outnumbered those of the Taborites, it is said, twenty to one. They were pursued in their flight, and large numbers were slain or taken captive. An immense booty was left behind. Gold and silver goblets, ornaments and vestures of the most costly kind, warlike weapons and engines, provisions for the sustenance of the army, in great abundance and variety, rewarded the valor of the Taborites. Songs of thanksgiving to the God who had given them the victory, succeeded to the
clash of resounding arms, and the conquering host, laden with spoil, exulted, as they retraced their steps, over the enemies of their faith.

The result of this attack was sadly ominous of the fate of the whole campaign. The Lord of Rosenberg was stung with shame at his ignominious defeat. In his resentment he sought to wreak a weak and unmanly vengeance upon the adherents of the cup. He hunted them out wherever they could be found, took them captive, and, shutting them up in prison, vainly endeavored to force them to abjure the doctrine which he himself had once avowed. Several of his castles were filled with these unfortunate men. Most of them were subjected to the severest and harshest treatment for many months. Some of them were put to death. But the Hussites did not forget the traitor. They exacted a severe penalty for his treason and his cruelty, in the ravage of his estates.

Other victories were won by the Hussites. At Voticz, between Tabor and Prague, a battle was fought, in which an imperial army of four thousand cavalry was routed. The walled town of Hradisch had been taken by surprise. A band of rustics and colliers, led by three zealous Hussites, and accompanied by a priest who encouraged them, secured possession of it on the night of June 25. The enemies of the communion of the cup were driven out of the city, of which the Hussites maintained possession, forming themselves at the same time into a military organization, and choosing themselves leaders.

The fall of Hradisch was a sore blow to the imperial cause. Sigismund sent at once an army of ten thousand men to retake the place. These were composed of the élite of his army. But they did not choose to make any assault. They contented themselves with seeking to regain the city under false pretences of negotiations, but the Hussites were not to be duped by them, and they were forced to return without accomplishing their object.

But all eyes were now directed anxiously toward Prague. As the capital of the kingdom, its possession was of the greatest importance to each party. On the twelfth of June the news arrived that the emperor was on his march, accompanied with an overwhelming force of more than 100,000 men. The citizens of Prague pressed the siege of the Vissehrad, and endeavored to increase the number of their allies. Among these came Hinko Krussina, with his Horebites. These were the most fierce and cruel of all the Hussite forces. They breathed vengeance against all priests and monks, and seemed to find no satisfaction equal to that of torturing, mangling, insulting, and murdering them. Merciless as they were desperate, Prague needed them, with all their fanatic thirst of blood, to defend her against the hosts of the crusading army. They were received with congratulations and shouts of welcome. Krussina was made one of the chief commanders of the city.

The emperor had sent forward a body of eleven thousand men to the relief of his party in Prague. He stopped himself for a short time at Koniggratz, where
he had met a friendly reception, and sent an embassy to Prague, reminding the city of its promise of fealty, and requiring it to keep its word. He demanded that the citizens should give up their arms, and deposit them in the Vissehrad.

This message was delivered on the twenty-fourth of June, the emperor meanwhile resuming his march, and advancing toward Prague. His conduct was marked by a vindictive cruelty. Under pretense of retaliation, he drowned twenty-four Hussites in the Elbe. The monasteries fared little better in his hands than in those of Zisca. He plundered them to pay his troops. Some of them were immensely wealthy, and invited spoliation. The Hussites might rob them as enemies, but it was hard that they should experience the same fate from the hands of one who came as their avenger. Yet the pillage of churches and convents was the resource of both parties, and the immense wealth of the church furnished fuel for the fire that consumed it.

The number of monasteries destroyed by Zisca has been reckoned by historians at more than five hundred. None had manifested a more bigoted hostility to reform and to the communion of the cup, no class had become more corrupt, and none could be more properly regarded as implicated in compassing the death of Huss, by invective and false accusation, than the monks; and Zisca's memory treasured the affront that had been offered to his own sister—an affront to be expiated by blood alone. His vengeance was terrible. By flying marches he swept the country, and spread on every side the terror of his name. Convents and monasteries were sacked and burned, sometimes with all who resided within the walls. Krussina, with his Horebites, did not yield to Zisca in the promptitude and energy of a cruel vengeance. The Cistercian monastery of Graditz fell into their hands, and was utterly destroyed. The monastery of Cromau was possessed of such wealth and splendor as to be an object of attractive curiosity to travelers. They turned aside to behold it. The Taborites paid it a visit—curious also in their way to see what it contained—and only its ruins were left to invite the curiosity of the pilgrim. At Prague, the Cistercian monastery of the royal court was doomed to a similar fate. One of its inmates, James, a scholastic of wonderful eloquence, and former rector of the university, was spared by Zisca only at the earnest intercession of the senate. Truly it might be still said, as it had been months before, that "the cart drew the horse." Laws were silent in the midst of arms. Zisca was the dictator of Prague.

The emperor’s army in all recklessness and cruelty was fully equal to that of Zisca. It was only inferior in strong religious conviction, fanatic feeling, and desperate courage. It was a conglomerate of all the refuse of Christendom, though led by kings, margraves, dukes, barons, princes, and knights, and accompanied by archbishops, bishops, doctors, prelates, and a host of ecclesiastics. Some twenty years before, Cardinal D’Ailly had expressed his wish that the pope would proclaim a crusade as a means of drawing off the festering masses of corruption, and relieving the church by the Sangrado
prescription of letting of blood. His wish was now realized. With all the splendor of the empire, the scum of the nations accompanied and mainly composed the imperial armies. Almost every tribe and nation of Europe was represented in the motley host. Bohemians and Moravians in arms against their countrymen, Hungarians and Croatians, Dalmatians and Bulgarians, Wallachians and Servians, Slavonians and Thuringians, Bavarians and Austrians, met in the same host with inhabitants of England, France, Brabant, Westphalia, Holland, Switzerland, Aragon, Spain, Portugal, Poland, and Italy. The East and Vilest joined hands for the plunder and the vengeance of a crusade. There was a Babel of nations and of tongues. If the council of Constance could claim to be Æcumenical, much more might Sigismund’s army. Such was the host which had been marshaled to maintain the cause of the papacy, and put down a cause that vainly had challenged the council to confute it from scripture. How well it performed its task the sequel will show.

Bohemia presented, certainly, between the two contending parties, a strange picture of anarchy, rapine, cruelty, and sacrilege. Here we shall find the tombs of kings profaned, their dust no longer protected by coffins, the golden plates of which could pay the wages of a ruffian soldiery. There the fragments of marble altars, and pavements on which the knees of devout pilgrims had rested, are used to charge the catapults of the invading host. The carcasses of the slain putrefy and poison the air, or are flung piecemeal into besieged towns, till pestilence helps famine to do its work. Indiscriminate massacre involves the innocent and guilty, friend and foe, in one common doom. Retaliation and vengeance, sometimes, though rarely, conducted under legal fortes, supply each party with its hosts of martyrs. "Dreadful traditions have perpetuated the memory of so many frightful scenes: near Toplitz, it was said, might be seen a pear-tree, which blossomed every year, and never yielded fruit—a tree accursed from the streams of blood that had saturated its roots. At Commotau, near a church where thousands of victims perished, slaughtered by Zisca, it was asserted that the soil was formed of the remains of bones, and that at whatever depth search was made, nothing could be found but human teeth."

Sigismund himself acted as if he considered Bohemia a land doomed and accursed. The progress of his march was signalized by new atrocities, and deeds of reckless cruelty. He, as well as Zisca, would inspire terror. But in his case the project failed. There was alarm, but there was resentment and desperation also. The soldiers of Zisca were ready to be martyrs. The soldiers of Sigismund showed but a feeble faith, and a weak desire for that eternal glory awarded to those that fell, by the bull of the pope. The heterogeneous mass of plunderers and robbers lacked the spirit that animated the terrible soldiers who took the cup for a banner.

It was on the thirtieth of June that the emperor with the body of his army approached the neighborhood of Prague. He was fortunate in finding any part
of the city still retaining its allegiance. Czenko, by a double treason—or perhaps, and more probably, by stratagem—had preserved for him the castle of Wenzel. He had pretended to surrender it to the demands of the citizens who closely besieged it, and who offered him his choice to proclaim the freedom of the communion of the cup, or withdraw from the castle. He assumed to yield to the last demand, and, it was said, withdrew with a large treasure to his own chateau. He had however secretly informed the emperor of the step which he had taken, urging his speedy advance, and by his connivance or treachery the castle was still held; or, if it had been surrendered, was regained for the emperor. The first step therefore of the latter was, if possible, to raise the siege of the Vissehrad. A single day only remained for the term of its surrender to expire. The approach of the imperial army to its relief was announced by drums and trumpets and bells, while strains of martial music mingled with the hymns and songs of the clergy, as they accompanied the emperor in grand procession to the royal castle. The army itself encamped on the wide plain about Bruska and Owenecz, ready to commence the siege of the city. Its numbers, if not its strength, received continually new accessions, till the pride of superiority, and the taunts of bigotry, found vent in insults that would more wisely have been reserved for a vanquished foe.

From day to day the soldiers of the imperial army, front a height on the bank of the river overlooking the city, and over against the Monastery of the Holy Cross and the Church of St. Valentine, uttered their howls and barking, like dogs, accompanied by sneers, and taunting words, and cries of "Huss, Huss! Heretic, Heretic!" If a Bohemian fell into their hands, unless speedily rescued by parties of his friends who still maintained themselves in roving about the precincts of the imperial army, he was mercilessly burned, without regard to the fact of his favoring the doctrine of the communion of the cup. His nationality was accounted a sufficient crime. Skirmishes were of frequent occurrence. Small bands of Taborites, issuing from the city, would sometimes rout great numbers of the foe. With their favorite weapon, an iron flail, they threshed down the invaders, armed in all the pride and pomp of war. The enemy attempted to take or burn the machines by which the citizens hurled masses of stone upon those who approached the walls, but all their attempts were vain. They were repulsed with loss upon all occasions.

Sigismund soon perceived that in order to reduce the city, the only method which promised success was to starve it to surrender. For this purpose it was necessary for him to occupy some position which would command the Moldau, by which provisions were still brought into the city. He determined therefore to take possession with a strong force of the high steep hill Witkow, or Galgenberg (Gibbet-hill), as it is called. Zisca had either had some intimation of his purpose, or discerned the danger to which the city was evidently exposed. Sigismund in possession of Witkow would moreover be able to invest Prague upon three sides at once.
Anticipating his movements, the Hussite general promptly seized upon the height, and fortified it, by wooden entrenchments, a fosse, and walls of stone and earth. The extreme promptitude with which Zisca acted, prevented any measures of opposition from the imperial forces being taken till his entrenchments were nearly complete. An assault was made upon the city (July 13) in which the citizens, although they repulsed the enemy, suffered some loss. But on the next day (July 14) preparations were made for an attack upon the Galgenberg, which it was determined to carry by storm. The city, moreover, was to be assaulted at the same time from three different directions, mainly with the purpose of rendering any measure of sending aid from the city to Zisca impracticable. From the castle it was ordered that there should be a sortie against the palace of the Duke of Saxony, which the citizens had strongly fortified, and 16,000 men were detailed for this purpose. From the Vissehrad a like sortie was to be made against the New city, while from the plain on which the army lay encamped, a force was to march to the assault of the Old city.

While these arrangements were taking effect, eight thousand cavalry of Misnia, led by their margrave, and strengthened by a large force from the imperial army, marched to storm the Galgenberg. They ascended the hill at quick step and with sound of trumpets, and took possession of some of the advanced works. A defensive roofed tower was taken, which was abandoned by all but twenty-six men and three women, who emulated one another in the courage and energy with which for a time they repelled the assailants. They defended themselves with stones and pikes. One of the women, though herself destitute of defensive armor, encouraged her associates by refusing to fly, and exhorting them not to yield. "A Christian believer," she said, "ought not to give ground to Antichrist." She fell fighting at her post. Zisca himself was at one time in great danger. He had lost his footing and had fallen to the ground, when his friends with their flails rushed to his rescue, and saved him from being captured by the enemy.

The city itself was meanwhile full of alarm. All human help seemed vain, and the greatest apprehension was felt lest the combined assault should prove successful. At this moment a strange sight presented itself. The citizens gathered with the women and children in sad groups, and with tears and groans supplicated aid from Heaven. While fathers and brothers stood by the walls or marched to the terrible encounter, those who were left behind commended them to the God of armies. The voice of prayer mingled with the clash of arms, and at the critical moment a priest, filled with enthusiastic courage, and bearing with him the holy sacrament, rushed forth from the gates, followed by only fifty bowmen and a crowd of peasants armed with flails. The bells rang, and the shouts of the people echoed far beyond the walls, as the little band issued from the gate of the city to face thousands of the invading host. A sudden panic seized the imperialists, who probably imagined that the whole force of the city was marching out against them. Zisca and his soldiers were
inspired by this opportune aid. The enemy were driven back from the
entrenchments, and hurled headlong down the steep rocks. Horse and rider
perished alike by the fall, and in a single hour several hundred were slain,
beside many fatally wounded, or carried off as captives. The rout was
complete. The emperor, from a high point on the banks of the Moldau,
witnessed the defeat of his most cherished hopes. Overwhelmed with grief,
indignation, and shame, he withdrew from the field, and led the array back to
the camp.

The citizens regarded their success as a deliverance wrought out for them by
the hand of God. They knelt down upon the field of battle, and sang their Te
Deum with grateful joy. In long processions they marched through the streets
of the city, ascribing their success to the interposition of Heaven. It was not by
their own strength, but by the wonderful power of God (miraculose), that a
small band had won such a victory over a numerous host. Hymns and songs
filled the air with the music of triumph. Grief was turned into joy, and the
whole city echoed with exultant praise. The little children sang hymns which
were composed on the occasion, and which breathed the spirit of the song of
Moses over the defeat of the Egyptian host. The scene of the battle was made
memorable by the name of the great general whose skill and courage had
foiled the power and designs of the emperor. The hill, formerly known as
Galgenberg, or Witkow, was now known as Ziscaberg.

The results of the battle were made more manifest in the imperial camp than
in the rout of the army. National animosities were awakened among the
soldiers, composed in large part of Bohemians and Germans. Many things
conspired to aggravate these dissensions. The very name of Bohemia became a
term of reproach. If a Bohemian fell into the hands of the Germans, it made
little difference whether he was Hussite, Calixtine, or Catholic, so far as the
treatment which he received was concerned. The cruelties which were
perpetrated upon their countrymen aroused the indignation of those Bohemians
in whose bosoms a spark of nationality yet glowed. Deeds of atrocity were
committed, the recital of which could awaken only horror or a spirit of
vengeance—such vengeance as Zisca took, in ample measure.

On the sixth of July, a few days previous to the assault upon the city, while the
Duke of Austria with a large reinforcement for the imperial army was on his
march from Militcz to Prague, a band of sixty cavalry turned aside to the
neighboring village of Arnosstowitsch, and at the treacherous suggestion of
certain priests, seized upon the Calixtine preacher of the place, and his vicar,
and placing both upon one horse, brought them to the Duke at Bystizitsch,
presenting them as heretics to he punished for their stubborn pertinacity. The
preacher, whose name was Wenzel, was a man greatly respected and beloved.
He and his vicar had become known as decided Calixtines. The duke sent them
to the bishop of the place, that he might determine how they should be dealt
with. The bishop sent them back again to the duke—thus from Caiaphas to
Pilate, says the old historian. They were insulted and abused, and threatened with the flames unless they would recant. Calmly but firmly they resisted all the efforts made to induce them to yield. "It is the gospel," said Wenzel, "and the practice of the primitive church, and thus it is in your missal: blot out the scripture, and destroy this gospel." At this, one of the knights who stood by struck Wenzel with his iron glove. The blood flowed in streams from his face. At last, as night wore on, the soldiers, wearied in their insults, left them. The next morning they were led out to be burned. But the number of the victims was now increased by three old men, peasants of the neighborhood, and four children—one of seven, one of eight, and another of eleven years—who had been found guilty of the same crime of holding the doctrine of the cup. When all had been brought near to the funeral pile, they were urged, if they had any wish to live, to abjure. "Far be it from us," replied Wenzel, "far be it from us to yield to your persuasions; sooner would we undergo not one, but a hundred deaths, rather than deny so plain a doctrine of the gospel." Upon this the executioners lighted the fagots. The children, leaning upon Wenzel's bosom, sang aloud as the flames rose around them. One after another yielded up his life, and at last Wenzel himself expired.

At Budweis a similar scene was witnessed. Two Hussite preachers, after a harsh and tedious imprisonment, were burned, on their refusal to abjure the communion of the cup. Similar occurrences, which took place in various parts of the kingdom, could only aggravate the existing divisions, and excite anew the thirst for vengeance. Their frequency, and the odium which at the same time rested upon all that bore the Bohemian name, or whose national spirit resented the barbarous cruelties and unjust prejudice of the Germans, aroused the most excited passions in the camp of the imperial army. There was great danger that the mighty host would dissolve and melt away. It was evident that further assault upon the city would be for the present utterly futile.

It was at this moment, in itself critical, that another event came to fill to overflowing the cup of the emperor's disappointment and humiliation. On the nineteenth of July the tents of the imperial army caught fire and were utterly consumed. The loss in other respects was great. The high wind which prevailed prevented the success of all the efforts made to quench the conflagration. The fire was attributed, although there seems no valid ground for the charge, to the malice of a Hussite.

The Taborites, envenomed against the Germans, who slew all the Bohemians indiscriminately that fell into their hands, insisted that such of them as had been taken captive should be dealt with as they had dealt with others. National animosity strengthened, or at least combined with fanatic passions, to demand these victims. A rush was made upon the council-house where the prisoners were confined, and the demand was made that they should be given up to be burned. The authorities unwillingly yielded, for they had no power to resist. Sixteen prisoners were led forth without the walls, and all, with one exception,
were burned in sight of the Germans of the imperial army. The one who was spared was a monk, who promised that he would administer the communion to the people under both kinds.

The citizens of Prague, exulting in their present deliverance, were not unmindful of future danger, when the imperial army might be reinforced or equipped anew. They were ready to treat with the emperor on the basis of the four famous articles, which may be said to have composed their creed. They were the more ready to do it from the aversion which was generally felt toward the Taborites, and their peculiar opinions and practices. The followers of Zisca had little taste for hierarchical pomp. The simple letter of the gospel was their supreme authority. Traditions and ceremonies were with them like images and statues—only the rags of superstition, the flaunting robes of Rome’s harlotry. The splendor and magnificence of churches and monasteries they deemed to be libels upon the simplicity of the gospel. Scarcely had the imperial army fallen back from the walls of the city, when the priest Coranda, accompanied by a multitude of Taborites, many of them women, among whom were “the sisters of Pilsen,” rushed into the Church of St. Michael, and tore up the seats of the priests as well as the laity, asserting that their best use and true value was to strengthen the entrenchments and fortifications of Zisca on the Galgenberg. The issue showed, however, that his aim was more to rebuke the vanity of superstitious worship, as he would undoubtedly have phrased it, than use the plundered materials for the purpose which he avowed. Most of them were carried off and burned. Few at least ever reached the Galgenberg, although Zisca did not neglect to provide for the defense of a fortress that now bore his name—even though by some it was called “the mountain of the cup.”

The well-known disposition of the Taborites, which threatened ruin to some of the most splendid structures of the city, combined with the daily ravages of the enemy to urge the barons of the kingdom, most of whom were Calixtines, to propose negotiations for peace. The emperor showed himself not altogether disinclined to see what could be done by treaty, now that force had failed. He saw the sad divisions and dissensions of his army, which had now risen to such a pitch that there were continual broils between the Bohemian and the German soldiers, the latter charging the former with treason, and declaring that if they had been left alone to fight the battle, they would have won the victory. The German soldiers had, moreover, learned of their superiors at Constance the art of burning human beings, and their taste for it had become so strong that it was difficult to restrain its indulgence. The whole region about Prague was ravaged with a merciless ferocity. Villages and castles were sacked and burned. Women and children, with indiscriminate cruelty, were thrown into the flames.

In such a work of desolation and atrocious crime, the pride and ferocity found vent which had at first insulted the citizens, but now, leaving them unmolested, turned to wreak its vengeance upon the helpless and unoffending. The barons sighed for peace. The citizens of Prague were equally anxious to be
relieved of the presence of the imperialists and Taborites—the first, terrible enemies, the last, unwelcome guests. But these could not be dismissed till those had withdrawn.

The Bohemian barons, Calixtines and Catholics, held a conference to consider what measures could be taken in order to secure a cessation of hostilities. Those who represented Prague declined to enter into any compact, without the knowledge and consent of other cities with which they were in league. Anxious, however, for peace, they besought, for their own sake and for that of the kingdom, that with their teachers and priests they might obtain an audience of the king, at which they might in the four languages—Bohemian, Hungarian, German, and Latin—publicly declare the truth of their four articles, which were the ground of dispute, and might be allowed to sustain them clearly by scripture before the whole army, and thus vindicate the nation from the slanders which had covered it with infamy. If it was thought necessary, the doctors on the emperor’s side might answer, as they saw fit, whatever was presented. These terms seem at first to have proved acceptable, as a basis for initiating negotiation, to the Bohemian barons of the imperial party. A question was raised at this point in regard to an exchange of hostages pending the negotiation, in which the imperial party were allowed their own terms. But when the whole matter was submitted to Sigismund, he refused to approve the proposed measures. His disinclination to do so was doubtless strengthened by the bigoted refusal of the papal legate, Ferdinand of Lucca, to sanction any such step as the one which the citizens of Prague desired to have taken.

Foiled in their purpose therefore, the latter resolved to publish, in their defense, the four articles on which they mainly insisted, and with this end in view drew them up, and addressed them "to all Christian believers," prefacing them with the expression of their purpose to abide by them, living or dying, and to maintain them to the utmost of their power. The four articles as thus drawn up were (1) the full and unrestricted freedom of the preaching of the gospel throughout Bohemia, (2) the freedom of the communion of the cup, (3) the exclusion of the clergy from large temporal possessions or civil authority, and (4) the strict repression and punishment of gross public sins, whether in clergy or laity.

Embodied in the articles are the complaints which the Calixtine party, represented by the citizens, have to make of the more reprehensible abuses of the church, and of the more grievous corruptions of the clergy—their pride, sensuality, tyranny, the sale of indulgences, simony in the disposal of ecclesiastical benefices, etc. Each article is fortified with a mass of scriptural quotations, and under the one on the subject of the communion of the cup, figure the names of popes, councils, and fathers. We shall soon have occasion to notice these articles—the formal manifesto of the Calixtine party—more at length, and pause here only to remark, that any compromise which did not concede them freely, on the part of the emperor, was out of the question.
His whole course, from the outset, was one continuous blunder. The very measures adopted by him to regain his authority in Bohemia led to results the direct reverse of what he had intended and expected. He had forced those who had hitherto wavered, to a decision. The invading army must be welcomed, or resisted; and many, who would have preferred to have remained in the old communion, were under the necessity of doing so, if at all, at the expense of their patriotism, and in face of the manifest injustice and horrors of the crusade.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the more moderate portion of the nation, averse alike to the excesses of the Taborites and the atrocities of the imperialists, should incline to take sides with the Calixtines. We shall soon see Czenko, governor of the castle, as well as Archbishop Conrad himself, open and avowed advocates of the communion of the cup.

Sigismund’s present campaign, notwithstanding the mighty host which the publication of the crusade had ranged under his banner, had proved a total failure. The only object for which he still lingered at Prague, after all hope of conciliation had vanished, was his coronation. This took place at mid-day, July 28, in the castle of Wenzel. Few of the barons of the kingdom were present; and the knights whom he created upon the occasion only disgraced the ceremonial by which it was attempted to honor them. Most of them were unacquainted with war. Some had never shared in a battle. The coronation scene was a mockery. Those who should have been present were regarded as rebels, and Sigismund only assumed the crown to fly before the terror of their triumphant arms.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

CHAPTER XV

Taborites and Calixtines

The retreat of the imperial army from Prague withdrew that external pressure which had constrained the Calixtines and the Taborites, notwithstanding their mutual repugnance, and diversity of taste and opinion, to unite in league against a common foe. With the proposal for a truce, by the barons of the kingdom, one of the conditions of which, of course, was, that Sigismund should be acknowledged as king, Zisca had nothing to do. The Taborites almost unanimously preferred a republic, at least an elected king; the citizens of Prague, with the barons of the kingdom, were willing, and even anxious to receive Sigismund as their monarch, on the sole condition that their demands in regard to the four articles should be granted.

These diverse views of public policy, although held by some on the bare ground of their fitness and expediency, were yet, as a general thing, rooted in a
diversity of religious sentiment. The citizens of Old Prague, and the Bohemian barons, were mostly Calixtines, and they were confirmed in their conservatism by what they regarded as the insane fancies, the barbarous taste, and radical views of the Taborites. Although there was unquestionably great diversity, even among them, some leaning to the most radical reformers, and others scarcely differing, except on the single point of the cup, from the Roman Catholic church, yet as a body they stood, from the first, committed to the four articles already referred to, in which the peculiarities of their creed were substantially embodied. For a full century at least, these articles were uniformly and consistently maintained.

They were drawn up with great care and deliberation, and after full conference of the Calixtine nobles and citizens of Prague. They were introduced by the declaration, "Be it known to all Christian believers, that the faithful in the kingdom of Bohemia insist, and by the help of God, propose to insist, in life or death, as far as may be, in behalf of the following articles:

"1. That the word of God be preached orderly, without let or hindrance, throughout the kingdom of Bohemia, by the priests of the Lord, according the charge of Christ in the last of Mark, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,’ for, according to the apostle, ‘The word of the Lord is not bound,’ but is to be declared, so that ‘the word of the Lord shall run and be glorified.’ 2 Thessalonians 3. ‘And no one shall be prohibited from speaking with tongues in the church of God.’ 1 Corinthians 14.

"2. That the sacrament of the divine eucharist under each kind, viz., of bread and wine, be freely administered to all the faithful of Christ, not disqualified to receive it by reason of mortal sin, according to the sentence and institution of the Savior, who said, ‘Take, eat; this is my body,’ and ‘Drink ye all, from this; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many.’"

This article is sustained at length by large citations from the scriptures and the Christian fathers. The council of Carthage, the twenty-sixth canon, and the authorities of Gregory, Augustine, Jerome, Dionysius, Cyprian, Ambrose, Origen, Beda, Fulgentius, Remigius, Innocent, Paschiasius, Lyra, and Albertus Magnus, are adduced in support of this article.

"3. That the secular dominion which the clergy exercise, against the precept of Christ, over worldly goods and possession, to the prejudice of their office and the damage of civil rule, be taken away and withdrawn from them, and the clergy itself be brought back to the evangelical rule and the apostolic practice, as Christ lived with his disciples, according to the charge of the Savior, Matthew 10, saying, ‘Possess neither gold nor silver nor money in your purse.’ And Matthew 20, ‘The princes of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they who have authority over them are called benefactors; but it shall not be
so among you; but whoever is greatest among you, let him be your servant; and whoever is preeminent, let him be your minister.’ So also Mark 10."

Numerous other passages from scripture are cited to the same purport, beside the authority of Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, and Boniface, in his letter to Pope Eugenius.

"4. That all mortal sins, especially such as are public, and other disorders contrary to the law of God, in each estate soever, be prohibited and prevented, by those to whom it pertains. For not only those who do these things, but those who consent to them, are worthy of death, occasioning among the people fornications, revels, thefts, homicides, falsehoods, perjuries; vain, knavish, or superstitious arts; avaricious gains, usury, and the like. Among the clergy, moreover, are simoniacaal heresies, exactions of money for baptism, confirmation, confession, the sacrament of the eucharist, holy oil, marriage, wafers, prayers for the dead, festivals, preachings, burials, consecrations of churches, altars, and chapels, prebends, benefices, prelatic dignities, episcopal acts, sale of indulgences, beside many other heresies which arise from these and pollute the church of Christ.

"Moreover, there are impious and unjust practices, as unchastity of concubinage, and other fornications; anger, strife, contentions; frivolous citations, and vexations and spoliations of simple men, according to caprice; exactions of assessments, and innumerable deceptions of the simple by false promises. Each and all of these, every Christian believer and true son of mother church is bound to exterminate, in himself and others, even as he should hate and detest the devil himself, the order and estate of his calling being ever observed.

"And if anyone ascribe to us, beyond this our pious and holy intent, anything that is unchaste and scandalous, let him be held by Christian believers as a false and unjust witness, since we have this only in our hearts, with all our strength and according to our entire ability, to please the Lord Jesus Christ, and to follow and fulfil his law and precepts, and these four catholic articles, with all fidelity."

They then declare their purpose to stand firmly in defense of the truth of the gospel, and to oppose all that shall impugn it, with such means as they can command, withstanding them to the last as the most cruel tyrant and Antichrist. And if, by any that adhere to them, anything should be done of a scandalous nature, they protest that it is against their intention, and their earnest purpose to prevent it, and that they hold themselves ever ready to be better instructed from Holy Scripture.

Such were the articles of the Calixtines, deliberately adopted and firmly maintained. The author of them did not seem to perceive that their appeal to
scripture was inconsistent with their assumed conservative position, and with some practices which they still retained. They were still in bondage to the ancient usages of the church, and revolted from the greater liberty of their Taborite brethren.

But if the former were superior in education, refinement, and the general moderation of their views, the last were immensely superior in deep feeling, earnest conviction, and that desperate and fanatical courage which made them terrible on the battlefield. Without them, Prague lay at the mercy of the emperor. Zisca’s soldiers alone had earned the epithet of *invincible*. They could not be vanquished till the last man was slain. Nor were they altogether unconscious of their power, although under Zisca’s generalship they were not inclined to employ it to secure any undue advantage. As occasion demanded, or the pressure of external attack was applied, the Calixtines asked and received the aid of their terrible allies, the Taborites.

The distinction between them, however, was already marked, and was continually widening, as the sentiments and tastes of each became more fully developed. Each party naturally desired that its own views might prevail. On August 5, 1420, less than a week after the imperialists had withdrawn, the Taborites presented their articles to the city, with the alternative that if not accepted they would leave the city at once. The New city, where the Taborites were in the majority, accepted them without hesitation. The Old city demanded time for deliberation, and one of the masters of the university, an Englishman named Peter, discussed the articles, each in its order, in presence of the magistrates and the citizens, showing how far and in what sense they might be approved or rejected “with a safe conscience.” The articles thus discussed pertained rather to moral conduct and rules of life, than to points of faith. They condemn gross public sins among laity and clergy; require the severe repression and punishment of all forms of licentiousness, tavern-drinking, luxury and extravagance of dress, fraud, robbery, and usury. They demand that laws, which they describe as "Pagan and Teutonic," inconsistent with the law of God, shall be repealed, and all things be ordered and arranged according to the rules of divine justice; that the priests shall observe an apostolic simplicity, in keeping with the divine command; that the magistrates be held subject to the law of God, and that their enactments be registered in the council-house, where they may be read by all the people; that such enemies of *the truth of God* as had shown themselves faithless to God and man, should be banished from the city and no favor shown them; that *heretical monasteries* be broken up and destroyed, as well as unnecessary churches and altars, with their images, robes, gold and silver chalices, and every antichristian abomination savoring of idolatry or simony, all which are not from God our Heavenly Father.

In the defense of the truths expressed by these articles, the Taborites declare that they have already, in obedience to the divine will, risked property and
life, while many of their brethren had shed their blood to maintain them. They declare their own purpose, whether the articles shall be received or rejected, to stand by them to the last. But these articles were not accepted or approved by the magistrates and citizens of Old Prague, who were for the most part Calixtines. The last article, on the subject of destroying monasteries and unnecessary churches, which the Taborites would have called rookeries of superstition, was especially objectionable. Nor was the conduct of the Taborites such as to smooth the difficulties which lay in their way. On the next day after the articles had been presented, a portion of the Taborites made an assault on the St. Clement monastery, and a few days later, sacked and burned the cloisters of the Royal Court, thus reducing—as they had often done already—the theory of their articles to practice. They bore off with them fragments of the broken images and tables of the monasteries, and, forgetful of their wonted sobriety, made a large and free use of the wine found in the vaults of the cloisters. As evening approached, some of them projected an attack upon the Vissehrad, which still held out for Sigismund; but the tumultuous and disorderly assault was repulsed with great loss by the garrison.

The Taborites of New Prague wished still to retain their brethren within its walls. The only condition on which this wish could be realized was the acceptance by the Old city of the articles of the Taborites. But the magistrates opposed them. It was therefore resolved to call a meeting of the citizens, depose the present magistracy, and elect a new, who should be known to favor the Taborite articles. This project was executed on August 18. In spite of this measure, however, Zisca, with his followers, left the city a few days after. He did not, however, abandon his project for bringing Prague over to his views. As he left the city, his followers pledged themselves not to rest till they had routed or destroyed the enemies of the cup. His plan was to conquer the Calixtines by annihilating their allies throughout Bohemia. As it was, he saw clearly the impolicy of attempting at present to force upon the citizens the objectionable articles.

The articles themselves, not excepting the last, expressed the sincere convictions of the Taborites. While terrible on the battlefield, and signal in their vengeance, even their enemies are, to a remarkable degree, unanimous in testifying to their sobriety, and their exemplary freedom from the gross vices of the age. A Puritanic severity characterized their demeanor. The corruptions of the priesthood, as well as persecuting edicts, repelled them from the communion of the Roman church. With a stern and inexorable justice they repressed whatever they deemed inconsistent with the truth of the gospel. If Zisca took exemplary vengeance upon the Adamites, with their free-love doctrine and licentious practices, it was because, whatever their heresy, their teachings and proceedings struck at the root of all purity, and of social order and morals.
At first the views of the Taborites had coincided almost entirely with those of the Calixtines. They had no distinct name except as they held it in common with all who were known as Hussites. They were brought together in one community, as the Presbyterians of Scotland were under Charles II, that they might enjoy the privilege of worship without molestation. It was during the year 1419 that their assemblies were first held in the neighborhood of Bechin, not far from Tabor, some twenty leagues distant from Prague. The people gathered, reared their tents, and for several days engaged in religious services, enjoying also the communion of the cup. The vast multitudes, on some occasions, numbered more than forty thousand people. Everything was conducted with the utmost decorum. Some of the Taborite priests preached, some heard confessions, and others administered the communion under both kinds. Different groups were formed, which were severally addressed by speakers or preachers selected for the purpose. The men, the women, and the children formed each a body by themselves. These days, thus observed, were a sort of Pentecostal season, and from far and near came the multitudes who thronged to the sacred festivity. Peaceably they came, and peaceably they returned. Songs of praise and joy lightened the tedium of the journey, as the processions moved along their way. Nothing was allowed inconsistent with the objects of the assemblage.

No wantonness or levity, no dancing or drunkenness, was to be witnessed. Everything which could tend to disturb the seriousness, or interfere with the devotion proper to the occasion, was carefully repressed. Even the sportiveness of childhood was checked, and no sound of musical instruments was allowed to break in upon the quiet of the place and the solemnity of the worship. At the close of the religious exercises, each partook of a moderate repast which they had brought with them from their homes. All outward distinctions were neglected or forgotten. The rich and the poor sat down together, and priest and layman were undistinguished by garb. They addressed one another by the appellation of brother and sister, each sharing his portion with such as were more needy than himself. As in the apostolic and primitive church—says the Calixtine narrative—there was but one heart, one will. Nothing was thought of, nothing was transacted, save what pertained to the welfare of souls, or concerned the restoration of the church to its primitive model. Their humble repast was concluded by a solemn thanksgiving to God, and the exercises of the day closed with a procession of the vast multitude around Tabor—where the assemblies were usually held—in which all united in singing psalms of praise to God. They then bade one another farewell—strangers before, but brethren now—and each returned by the way he came, back to his own dwelling. They were even careful in this respect, that they might not unnecessarily trample down the harvest fields.

As these seasons continued to be observed, the multitudes who assembled increased. From the most distant parts of Bohemia—from Pisek, Wodnian, Necolicz, Heyman, Ausch, Janovicz, Ledlezan, Pilsen; from Prague itself, and
from many parts of Moravia—they came, some with horses, others on foot, pilgrims to that spot, precious above every other, because there they might enjoy, unmolested, their peculiar worship and the communion of the cup. Undoubtedly many were drawn thither by curiosity. Nor would it always be as easy as at first, to restrain and repress the tendencies to excess or unwarranted indulgence. Sharp things would naturally be spoken of a corrupt clergy, opposed to what these Taborites believed the authentic and authoritative command of Christ in the institution of the Supper. With all the general quietness of their demeanor, the Taborites had bitter enemies, and Wenzel himself, taught by experience how easy it was for him to pass from a throne to a prison, grew suspicious. He feared lest the report, industriously spread by their enemies, that such a multitude would soon choose their own king and their own archbishop, might be true. An effort was therefore made to suppress these assemblies. The barons forbade their vassals and subjects to visit Tabor, under penalty of death or confiscation of their goods.

But all these measures were vain. The current of popular religious feeling had acquired a force and fervor that defied resistance. Sooner than forego his privilege, the peasant chose to abandon his home altogether, and, disposing of his property, escape at once the oppression of priest and baron. Tabor attracted them, says the old annalist, as the magnet attracts iron. Thus the very attempt to repress the popular enthusiasm defeated its own object. The people were taught rebellion by unwise restrictions; and Tabor, from a camping ground of religious assemblies, became at once a populous city. The opportune death of Wenzel favored this movement. Zisca, with his rare combination of sagacity, enthusiastic devotion, and military genius, found the materials of an army already at hand. They needed only to be molded by that discipline of which he was so perfect a master, and inspired with confidence in their cause as the cause of truth, and in the indisputable ability of their leader, to become well-nigh invincible.

Tabor thus became the refuge and the fortress of the Hussites. But already many had advanced beyond the point that had been reached by him whom they still honored as a martyr. He had bequeathed to them, with his dying breath, and amid the fires of the stake, the invaluable principle of the sole authority of the word of God. With this as their starting-point, they went beyond him. Even Jacobel and the Calixtines generally were laggards in their views of reform. Not only a single sacrament, but all the institutions, doctrines, and rites of the church were to be subjected to a scripture test. Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory, they said, were but men. There was no need of consulting the sentences of the school, or giving heed to learned doctors, when all things essential to salvation were to be found in scripture.

On the basis of these principles, they maintained that no sayings or writings of learned men were to be held or believed as catholic by the faithful, unless they were contained explicitly in the canon of the Bible; that everyone who pursues
the study of the liberal arts or accepts degrees in them is vain and heathenish, and sins against the gospel of Christ; that no decrees of the holy fathers, no institutions of the ancients, no rites or traditions of human invention, were to be held, but all such were to be abolished and destroyed as works of Antichrist, since Christ and his apostles had nowhere enjoined them in the New Testament. On this ground they rejected chrism, the anointing with oil, and sprinkling with holy water; the exorcising, blessing, and hallowing of the chalice, church furniture, and robes; the observing of canonical hours; the dress, ceremonies, and order of the mass; the chanting of the priests, and the baptizing of children with exorcisms, holy water, and sponsors, instead of the simple rite by the application of pure water. For books of missals, or chants, gold and silver chalices, priestly vestments, etc., they felt equal aversion. All these things were to be destroyed or burned, and it was more proper for the laity to wear the priestly robes, or cut them up for their own apparel, than for the priests themselves to perform in them the divine offices. Auricular confession, the fast of Lent, vigils, festivals of saints, or other seasons of special devotion, except the Lord’s day, were treated with no more respect. A priest, tricked out in his robes with their useless ornaments, and celebrating mass in the customary manner, was but like the harlot of the Apocalypse, to be despised by the faithful. The sacrament of the eucharist should be celebrated in the manner practiced by Christ and his apostles, in the ordinary garb, without an altar, and in any place that might fitly serve. The bread was not itself to be lifted up for the adoration of the worshippers, but was to be administered in a plain and audible tone of voice. The clergy, moreover, were to be like the Levites of the Old Testament in regard to the possession of property; they were to be directly dependent on the contributions of the people. As to purgatory, and prayers for the dead, or works of piety in their behalf, all these were rejected as silly and inane superstition. Invocation of the saints was condemned as savoring either of heresy or idolatry. All images, or the likeness of anything as an object of worship, stood charged with savoring of idolatry, and all such, as idols, were to be destroyed and burned.

These articles were published in the year 1420, soon after the Taborites had withdrawn from Prague. They gave great scandal to the Calixtines, who appealed to the world for testimony to the moderation of their views. It is evident that from the time when the Taborites first commenced their assemblies during the previous year, there had been great progress made in breaking away from the ceremonies, institutions, and doctrine, of the Roman church. The explanation of this is to be found in the free and friendly conferences enjoyed at Tabor by men who interchanged their views on religious subjects, with the open Bible before them as their only supreme authority. Tabor was the one asylum for the persecuted in the kingdom, where perfect freedom of religious opinion was allowed. "You may think as you like here," wrote an orthodox Roman Catholic, on a visit to Tabor, to one of his friends.
Thus persecution abroad drove into a single community the men who were foremost in their views of reform, and most advanced in apprehending the true spirit of the gospel, and the simplicity of its ritual. With the scriptures acknowledged, on all sides, as the only supreme authority in matters of faith, it was no difficult or tedious work to adduce ample testimony of the superfluous ceremonies and false doctrines with which the purity of the gospel had been overlaid by a corrupt church.

With the views of the Taborites on religious subjects, some of a peculiar cast, in regard to social and political matters, were naturally allied. They were all anti-imperialists, and nearly all republicans, or at least in favor of an elective king. Their experience of a corrupt priesthood had produced in them an aversion to the learning of schools and colleges, whose degrees they treated with contempt as heathenish and antichristian innovations. Their study of the Apocalypse—a favorite book of the Bible, from its denunciations of the Great Apostasy—led them into many extravagances of belief and practice.

All however did not go to the same extreme with Martin Loqui, one of their preachers, who derived his name from his eminence as a speaker, and whose principal associates were John Oilezin, Marcold, Coranda, and a certain Wenzel of Prague. These men, with a large portion of the Taborites, held the doctrine of the speedy advent of Christ, and the approaching mission of "the seven last plagues," by which all Christ’s enemies should be destroyed. In this vengeance the faithful of Christ are to bear a part; all who shall hear the word of Christ, are to receive the warning to "flee to the mountains," where the Taborites were already assembled; and whoever neglects to do this, shall perish by the plagues. At this time, the Taborites should be the holy angels sent out to rescue the faithful and bring them to a place of safety, as Lot was rescued from Sodom; they should be the executioners of God’s justice upon the guilty nations, while only the five cities, which they named "places of refuge," should be spared. The riches of the Gentiles, or the property of Christ’s enemies, should be taken from them by the faithful, and destroyed or burned. In this consummation of all things, Christ will himself visibly descend to earth and assume the government of the world; and all who have not on the wedding garment, will be cast into outer darkness. All the kingdoms of the world will come to an end. There will be no more exaction, no more paying of tribute. Sin will be destroyed. There will be no more scandal, abomination, and falsehood; no more persecution or suffering, for all will be the elect children of God. The glory of this kingdom, thus restored, will be greater—before the resurrection of the dead—than that of the primitive church. The sun of human intelligence will no longer shine; none will need to teach another to know the Lord, for all shall be taught of God. The law of grace will then no longer have place; it will be done away. The use of churches will be dispensed with, for God himself will be the temple, and, like hope and faith, lost in sight and fruition, all outward structures will disappear. Then shall come the resurrection of the dead—the first resurrection, in which the dead in Christ shall be raised, among whom
John Huss shall appear; and thus for his elect’s sake God would hasten the final destiny of the world.

In this renovation of all things, man will be restored to the state of innocence enjoyed by Adam before his fall. There will no longer be pains attending childbirth, no such thing as original sin, no necessity for the waters of baptism, no more need of the sacrament of the eucharist, for men shall eat angels’ food, and never die.

These peculiar views were an excrescence upon the religious system of the Taborites, and were shortly modified very essentially by succeeding events. The prophecy in regard to the five cities of refuge was effectually defeated, and many of the peculiar teachings in regard to Christ’s advent were abandoned. They were all based upon an unwarranted interpretation of obscure texts; and when their novelty wore off, they were for the most part cast aside.

The Taborites however clung fondly to the notion that they were God’s peculiar people, and were specially designated by him for the reformation of the church and the defense of the faithful. This belief led them to interpose for the destruction of what they regarded as idolatry, superstition, and Antichrist. Their creed on these points was not a dead letter, and they went about their work with an energy and a courage which might challenge the reproach, but was too serious and earnest for the derision of their foes. They did not shrink—however it might scandalize their Calixtine brethren, or the so-called Catholic church—from carrying the theory of a creed which they embraced with all the fervor of their spirits, to a practical application. Wherever they went, they observed with all fidelity the simple rite of their worship. Their priests ministered the communion under both kinds, without the aid of rubric, missal, priest’s robe, or the Latin tongue. They spoke and prayed in their own vernacular. They were not careful to use a gold or silver chalice for the wine of the communion. An iron, earthen, or wooden cup answered their purpose full as well. If they declared the churches and altars, which had been desecrated by “the mammon of unrighteousness” and the simony of the priests, to be churches and altars “of the devil and of idols,” or spoke of monasteries as dens of robbers, sties where the swine of lazy and useless monks were fattened, they sometimes suited the action to the speech, sacked the church, shivered the altar, and burned the monastery. If some unfortunate monk attempted to remonstrate, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel,” was the prompt reply. “Christ never told men to serve him by shutting themselves up in indolence.” Such was the argument by which the Taborites answered all objections. Monasteries thus became the special objects of their vengeance. Hundreds of them were sacked and burned. Some of the nuns, whom the terror of the Taborites had effectually converted to the communion of the cup, married—to the horror and scandal of the Calixtines.
The Taborites treated many of the reputed holy things of the age with the most sacrilegious disrespect. Relics of the saints were ruthlessly flung out of the churches, like common earth. The holy oil was unceremoniously applied to a most profane use, unless it was emptied, like the chrism and holy water, upon the ground. The vessels that contained these liquids were broken, or polluted; for the Taborites held in contempt holy sprinklings and extreme unction. Their form of baptism was the application of water, with the simple formula of administration in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Auricular confession they dismissed with the brief logic of adopting the formal division of sins by the church, and declaring that if venial—by this probably meaning sins of the heart—it was enough to confess them to God; if mortal (public and gross), they should be confessed in presence of the brethren. As to purgatory, they maintained that by the discipline of probation God prepares such as will be saved, to enter upon their reward and their eternal immunity from sin with the close of their earthly existence. They who die in mortal sin go at once to their retribution of eternal justice in hell. Consequently prayer for the dead is vain and futile. The Taborites neither prayed to the saints, nor paid regard to their images and pictures in the churches. "What was Peter, or Paul, or any other of the saints?" they asked. "Were they not men, saved like us by the help of God alone, and in prayer to him, by the intercession of no saint, but of Christ only?" They resented the superstitious worship which the pictures and statues of the saints received. The sternness of the prophet on Carmel, while he mocked the worshippers of Baal, seemed to relax into a grim smile; and we can imagine with what cool derision the Taborite could look up, in the pretense of his gaping and credulous enemies, to the gouged eye or slit nose (*erutis oculis et nasis abscessis*) of some mangled image, crying out, in his so-called blasphemy, "If you are God or his saint, defend yourself, and we will believe you." (*Si Deus aut ejus santus es, tunc te defende, et credimus tibi.*) The place of his worship was to be disfigured by no image, desecrated by no sculpture. A handful of filth, or a thrust of his sword, or a blow of his terrible flail, relieved him from all the apprehension which a beautiful painting might excite as to his worshipping in a desecrated place. Monasteries were "dens of robbers," and wickedly founded against the law of Christ. The disciples were commanded to go forth into all the world, and not shut themselves up as hermits; hence the cloisters and monasteries were to be utterly overthrown and destroyed. The fasts of the Roman church were unhesitatingly rejected. Only such days were observed as the Taborite preachers directed. On these occasions no one ate or drank, from morning till night, or even till the following day.

As to naming churches after particular saints, the views of the Taborite would have fully accorded with the sentiments of the most rigid Puritan of the Commonwealth. Even Jerome and Augustine, whom Huss and Jacobel loved to quote as authority, did not pass unquestioned by the Taborites. By confirming or multiplying ecclesiastical rites, it was possible, they maintained, that these men had done the church more evil than good. To give churches their names,
or the names of others who were merely men, was an impious and accursed thing, and such churches, with the splendid dwellings of their pastors, ought to be burned and destroyed. The apostles never consecrated churches by such titles, or dwelt in such houses; they were content with alms, and went about all over the world, preaching the gospel, without tithes or endowed churches.

The leaders of the Taborites laid it down as a fundamental principle, that the law of Christ was sufficient for the government of his church. All that was necessary to salvation, he had declared in the New Testament. Human institutions and ceremonies were of no account. As Christ said to the scribes and Pharisees, "ye have nullified the law by your tradition," so also might modern scribes and Pharisees be addressed. Unless they desisted from their error, they might expect all the plagues of the Apocalypse to light upon them.

In consistency with these views, the Taborite priests endeavored to reduce the ordinances of worship to the simplicity of the primitive church. They rejected the use of sacerdotal vestments, declined observance of canonical hours, administered the divine rites, not from the altar, but from a simple table, in the open air, or in houses where they might be assembled. First of all, the priests knelt, with heads bowed toward the earth, while one repeated the Lord’s prayer. He that was selected to solemnize the sacrament then rose, uttered in a clear voice the words of consecration, and broke and administered the bread; afterward the wine, in a vessel of iron, clay, wood, or other material, as might happen to be convenient.

The Taborites evidently knew how to defend their doctrines by word; but their most effectual logic resided in their terrible flails, that threshed down all opposition that dared to lift its head. Councils and crusades and denunciations of all kinds were ineffectual to put them down. They relinquished none of their peculiar tenets, except those which they derived from the study of the Apocalypse. Time showed the futility of many of the interpretations which some of their preachers gave to the prophecies of this book. Others seem to have been generally abandoned, insomuch that the Roman Catholic historian, Natalis Alexander, in giving account of their doctrines, makes no mention of those which are said to have originated with Martin Loqui. The only tenets which he ascribes to them, beside those of which the Calixtine author of "The Diary of the Hussite War" makes mention, and which have been already given, are such as we might naturally suppose would be associated with them. He speaks of their denial of the supremacy of the Papal See, their doctrine of the parity of the clergy, their maintaining that whoever was guilty of mortal sin was, ipso facto, deprived of all secular and ecclesiastical authority, and was not to be obeyed. According to him, they held that prayer for the dead was an invention of the avarice of the priesthood; that there was no need of consecrated cemeteries, for it made no difference with what kind of earth human bodies were covered; and that the religious orders of the monks were a device of devils.
It is easy to perceive, that notwithstanding some fanatical views, and some opinions which were nurtured by the ignorance and prejudice of many among them, their sincere as well as avowed purpose was to restore the church, as near as possible, to its primitive model. Most of their doctrines were based clearly upon the authority of scripture; and we are only surprised to find them, within so short a period after the death of Huss, so far in advance of what Huss and Jerome, or even Jacobel, had taught. Many of them—not all, however—utterly rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation, which Huss and Jerome had avowed to the last, and which Jacobel had maintained in his peculiar sense, by distinguishing between Christ’s material and his spiritual body, the latter of which only was present in the sacrament of the altar. The doctrine of justification by faith alone, so distinctly apprehended and taught by Luther, does not appear to have attracted their special attention. Their circumstances and position ranged them on the negative side of most of the questions between them and the Roman church, and their principal work was more to tear down than construct, more to refute a false system than to build up a new theology. They had little leisure and little learning, or intellectual discipline, to apply themselves to the philosophy of their own belief, or study the order and harmony of doctrines which they derived from the simple word of scripture, and adopted with an unquestioning faith.

The doctrines of the Taborites proved especially disastrous to the monasteries. These were regarded as nuisances to be abated. Monks and nuns were dispersed, or forced to accept the communion of the cup. Refusal to comply was met with violence. This was the case even in Prague. The Monastery of the Holy Spirit was given up to the Germans for the preaching of the word of God. Those of St. Francis and St. James were stored with warlike machines and implements. The cups and furniture were sold for money. The sacred chrism and holy water were emptied on the earth.

Zisca carried out these principles, in letter and in spirit. As city after city came into the hands of the Taborites, the monasteries were devoted to destruction, and their inmates scattered. In the spirit of the ancient Israelites invading Canaan, the idolatrous rites of the Roman church were all to be suppressed.

This picture of the Taborites would be incomplete, without adding to it the features preserved to us by a letter of Æneas Sylvius to the Cardinal de Carvajal, in which he gives an account of the visit paid them by himself, in company with others, at a date some years after the siege of Prague. As ambassadors sent to treat with the Taborites, they demanded and received their hospitality. They were cheerfully welcomed by the Taborites, who went out to meet them, and they were entertained with cordiality and respect. "A most remarkable spectacle was now witnessed—an indiscriminate rabble, mostly composed of peasants, who wished however to appear genteel and refined. Although a cold rainstorm, such as frequently occurs in Bohemia, prevailed at the time, many had no other protection than a mere frock. Some
wore robes made of skins, some of their horsemen had no saddles, some had no bridle, and others were without stirrups. One was booted, another not. One had lost an eye, another a hand, so that, to borrow the language of Virgil, it was a shame to see *populataque tempora raptis auribus, et truncas inhonesto vulnere nares*. There was no order of proceeding, no reserve in speech, and we were received in a rough and peasant style. Yet presents were made us of fish, wine, and beer. Having entered the town, we took a view of it, and if I were not to call it a town or asylum for heretics, I should be at a loss for a name to give it. For whatever monsters of impiety and of blasphemies are unmasked among Christians, flock together here, and find security in a place where there are as many heresies as there are heads, and full liberty to believe what you like. On the outer gate of the city there are two shields suspended. On one of these is a picture of an angel holding a cup, which he represented as extending to the people as if to invite them to the communion of the cup. On the other there is a portrait of Zisca, who is represented as an old man and entirely blind. ... What more fitting for such a people, who have no understanding of divine things, no religion. No apprehension of what is just and right, than a blind leader! In this case that word of the Savior is fulfilled, ‘If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch.’ ... These people have no greater anxiety for anything than to hear a sermon. If anyone neglects this, and lies asleep at home, or busies himself with work or play during the time of sermon, he is beaten for it, and is compelled to obligate himself to hear the word of God. Their place of worship is built of wood, and is much like a barn; this they call their temple. Here they preach to the people; here they daily expound the law. They have here but one altar, neither consecrated, nor to be consecrated, and from this they exhibit the sacrament to the people. The priests neither wear crowns, nor shave their beards. The Taborites voluntarily provide by gifts for their support. They offer nothing upon the altar; they condemn tithes; of first fruits, they hold neither to the name nor to the thing itself. Yet they do not accord in one and the same belief. One thinks in one way, and another in another; each follows his own liking. Neither do they live by a single rule."

It is to be borne in mind that we have no account of the Taborites, except from persons who were either their avowed enemies, or were strongly prejudiced against them. They undoubtedly were guilty of many imprudent acts, many deeds of violence, many excesses utterly unwarrantable. Many elements of fanaticism were mingled with their creed. Many and strong prejudices, peculiar to the class of which they were mostly composed, possessed their minds; but when their circumstances are considered—the persecution that drove them from their dwellings, the crusade that forced them in self-defense to take the weapons of war into their hands, the contempt and cruelty with which they were treated, and the necessities of their outlawed condition—the severe measures which they dealt out to the monasteries, whose inmates they regarded as accomplices of the council that burned Huss, and the terrible examples of vengeance, provoked by their own sufferings and wrong, and by which they made themselves formidable to their foes, these excesses of a
ferocity fit only to foil and frighten a crusading army, and cease to wear that aspect of utter and ruthless malignity which they would otherwise bear. The creed of the Taborites was in the main scriptural, and we cannot but approve that wise policy by which they allowed all the diversities of opinion which prevailed among them, a full and perfect tolerance. Centuries passed away, and their representatives were seen spreading themselves over the world in the persons of the Moravian missionaries, to whose simple confidence in God, John Wesley acknowledged himself indebted for lessons of a faith wiser and stronger than his own.

On the battlefield the Taborites maintained their undisputed superiority and preeminence, even after the death of Zisca. They fought under the impulse of the most powerful motives which can inspire the soul. Each soldier was a hero. He was ready to be a martyr. His valor was not that of the soldier of fortune, inspired by earthly ambition and panting for an earthly prize. He was a champion of his faith, and his firm belief was, that in pouring out his blood, and laying down his life, he was rendering but a poor and unworthy tribute to that “truth of God,” in defense of which it was an honor to die.

The Calixtines formed—as they would wish to be regarded—the conservative reformers of the Bohemian nation. They remained steadfast in their regard for the memory of Huss, and in their attachment to the celebrated four articles which formed that portion of their creed in which they differed from the church of Rome. Once only they compromised matters with the Taborites, by declaring the wearing of priests’ vestments a matter of indifference, a non-essential. They wished to preserve the order and the institutions of the church intact, except so far as they would be modified by the admission of the four articles. They declared themselves opposed to all unnecessary innovations. They wished to commend themselves to the Christian world as faithful adherents to the Catholic faith. They took pains therefore to distinguish their cause and views from those of the Taborites, in as marked a manner as possible.

In a council held at Prague, in the year 1421, they drew up twenty-three articles, which they set forth in a document intended to serve as the exponent of their faith. In these they maintained transubstantiation, the necessity of the seven sacraments, the Catholic forms and rites of baptism with sponsors, chrism, the holy oil, and triple immersion in holy water, auricular confession, episcopal authority, the exclusive power of the keys by the priesthood, extreme unction, the invocation of the saints, purgatory and prayer for the dead, the propriety of the priestly robes, and the offices connected with the mass, the observance of fast-days and the festivals of the saints, the consecration and sanctity of churches, the necessity of sacred vessels and ornaments, as well as a peculiar and distinctive dress for priests, the observance of canonical hours, and obedience to episcopal authority. On all these points, the Calixtines, however inconsistent or neglectful of the
consequences flowing from their first article, as to the supreme authority of scripture, wished to abide by the rule and observance of the Roman church.

In reply to the twenty-three articles of the Calixtines, the Taborites drew up an equal number of an opposite tenor. But for a long time the two parties were so evenly balanced, that neither could claim a manifest preponderance. The great majority of the barons of the kingdom, with the citizens of Old Prague, were Calixtines, and Zisca himself, though the general of the Taborites, had evidently a strong leaning toward this party, at least on many points. The citizens of the New city, and the lower classes of the nation generally, composed the body of the Taborites. The danger of foreign invasion did not allow the two parties to risk their common security in fratricidal quarrels. It was evident, however, that only the power and wisdom of Zisca prevented an open division and hostility between them. If a compromise was ever to be affected with the so-called Catholic church, it could only be on a Calixtine basis.

CHAPTER XVI

The Campaigns of Zisca

Although the emperor had been forced to raise the siege of Prague, he did not abandon his designs against Bohemia. He determined to levy fresh armies, and make another attempt to recover the kingdom. His retreat from Prague was as desolating to the region through which he passed as his invading march lead been. With his hussars, he stopped for a while at Kuttenberg, and the valor and energies of his army were devoted to the work of ravage and plunder.

His retreat allowed the differences that existed between the Calixtines and Taborites to show themselves. The twelve articles of the latter, for which they demanded the approval and sanction of the city, and one of which threatened danger to the churches and monasteries, were at first rejected, and afterward approved only through a revolutionary movement that secured new magistrates, whom the Taborites nominated. In spite of this, however, they determined to leave the city. Their friends in New Prague strongly urged them to remain, but the Calixtines of Old Prague were more than willing to have them depart. Their radical views of reform, and their unyielding hostility to images, statues, pictures, the old church forms, and whatever savored in their opinion of superstition and Antichrist, diverged so far from the moderation of the Calixtines, who would be satisfied with securing the granting of their four articles, that Zisca acted only a prudent part in withdrawing his forces from Prague (August 22, 1420).
But his object in doing this was not merely to prevent a collision between the Taborites and Calixtines. He wished to keep his forces employed, and suppress through Bohemia any movements in favor of Sigismund. The monks and priests soon felt the weight of his vengeance. With sword in hand, he swore never to rest till the power of the papacy in Bohemia was utterly prostrate. The cities which resisted the freedom of the communion of the cup, but especially the monasteries, were marked for assault and pillage. Knizkan, about a league from Prague, was the first to feel his vengeance. The castle was taken, the church destroyed, and seven priests burned. Zisca then directed his steps to the Circle of Prachin. Desolation marked his course. The city of Pisek fell into his hands. He presented himself before the walls of Prachatitz. It stood charged with having treated the Hussites with harsh cruelty. Zisca for once was disposed to be lenient. It was at Prachatitz that he had spent his early years as a student. He wished to spare the city, if possible, as a tribute to the memory of the happy days and the friendships he had enjoyed there. He summoned it to open its gates to him, promising it favorable and lenient terms, but was met by a blunt refusal. Upon this he stormed the city (November 12, 1420). It was taken, and no mercy shown. Two hundred and thirty were left dead in the streets, and more than fourscore persons were burned. Even women and children were driven into exile. To the plea for mercy, Zisca’s stern reply was, “We must fulfil the law of the Lord Christ in your blood.”

Meanwhile Sigismund had gathered a new army, and advanced to resume the siege of Prague. During the past two months (September and October, 1420) he had amused the barons of the empire by frequent assemblies, which he summoned with the ostensible purpose of restoring peace and order throughout the kingdom. But all these efforts were futile. His own character would not allow his subjects to trust him. His complicity in the death of Huss could not easily be blotted from the memories of men who regarded the victim of his perfidy as a martyr for the truth.

By great exertions this second army had been brought together. The march of the emperor was expedited by intelligence of the danger which threatened the garrison of the Vissehrad. With his Moravian recruits, and all that he retained of his former army, he reached Prague before the Vissehrad fell into the hands of the besiegers. But a letter which he had written to the garrison, revealing his plans, fell into the hands of the Hussites and put them on their guard. The arrangements which he had made to raise the siege by an attack upon the city simultaneous with a sortie by the garrison, were frustrated. The latter remained quiet, whether they had lost hope of successful resistance, or did not understand the emperor’s signal. The next day they surrendered. Great was the rejoicing of the citizens, and great the mortification of Sigismund.

Yet he was not disposed to abandon his purposes without again trying the fortune of arms. He hazarded a battle, but it proved disastrous to his army. In the absence of Zisca, the citizens of Prague had called in Krussina, with his
Horebites, to their assistance. They had the reputation of being full as brave, and more merciless even than the Taborites. The emperor saw his forces beaten and flying like chaff before the terrible blows dealt by the flails of the undisciplined peasantry. "I want to come to blows," said he, "with those flail-bearers." "Sire," replied Plumlovisc, a Moravian nobleman, "I fear that we shall all perish; those iron flails are exceedingly formidable." "Oh! you Moravians," replied Sigismund, "I know you; you are afraid!" The Moravians were stung to desperation by the rash and unworthy taunt. Flinging themselves from their horses, they rushed—where the emperor did not choose to venture—upon the entrenchments of the Hussites. But their assault was futile. A sortie from the city rushed to the rescue of its brave defenders. The besiegers were forced to give way. They fled on all sides, and fell by thousands before the swords and flails of their pursuers. A great part of the Moravian nobility were left on the field of battle. The rout of the army was complete, and again Sigismund was constrained to retire from before the walls of Prague.

The patience and hopes of the Hussites, who had relied upon Sigismund’s disposition to conciliate and give peace to his kingdom, were alike exhausted. The Calixtines even, by the force of circumstances, found themselves brought to occupy the position, politically, of the Taborites. The pride of Sigismund, his haughty demeanor, and his intractable purpose to subdue Bohemia and dictate his own terms, had forced the great majority to the conviction that he was unfit to occupy the throne. It was finally determined to call a convention of the states of the kingdom, and elect a new king (December 30, 1420). An effort also was made to compromise the differences between the Calixtines and Taborites. This was a difficult matter. One main subject of controversy was whether the priests should wear their robes in celebrating mass, according to the old rites of the church. Some favored and some opposed it, and each party was strenuous. In some places even the Bohemian women had interfered to prevent the priests wearing the robes. The difference was at last compromised, on the suggestion of Jacobel that the wearing of the robes should be accounted a matter of indifference. It was easier to frame the decree than to carry it into effect. It however answered its purpose of effecting a present conciliation in the convention. In regard to the choice of a king there was some division. Nicholas de Hussinitz had aspired to be a candidate. His claims, however, were set aside, and he withdrew in angry disappointment from the city, swearing never again to enter it. At a short distance from Prague his horse fell. He was seriously injured, and was brought back to the city to die. His followers, on the loss of their leader, went over to Zisca.

The crown was offered to the king of Poland. But the embassy sent to announce the proceedings of the Bohemians was captured by the emperor and thrown into prison. The pope, moreover, interfered to prevent the king of Poland from listening to the proposal, or accepting the offered crown.
In this measure of the states Zisca had taken part. Leaving most of his troops behind, he accepted the invitation, extended to himself and other barons, to be present at the convention which was held at the council-house of Prague. On his entering the city he was received with great honors, and his views harmonized with those of the great majority of the assembly. The discords of the kingdom were now for a time hushed, and Sigismund found himself almost unanimously rejected by the nation.

Zisca again left Prague to pay visits to his "good friends," the monks. He marched in the direction of Pilsen. The rich cloisters of Choteschau and Kladrub were seized, and fortified instead of being destroyed. Zisca had resolved to make his conquest of permanent service to his cause. Whatever he could garrison and maintain as a Hussite fortress was seized and held for this purpose. In fact, this method of procedure was essential to the success of the plan which he had projected, of driving his enemies out of the kingdom. Sigismund’s third defeat was due to the wisdom of this policy.

One of the emperor’s generals was still maintaining his cause in Bohemia. Bohuslaus von Schwamberg held himself secure in the strong fortress of Kastikow. Zisca surprised him by a night march, and took the castle. Bohuslaus was imprisoned at the instance of the Taborites, who wished to have him treated harshly, but Zisca, feigning compliance, at length set him free.

Some of the soldiers who followed him, whether from this or other causes, or both combined, left him. They formed an army by themselves, and attempted to prosecute their plans under leaders of their own choice. But the imperial general, Flaschko, of Kuttenberg, fell upon and routed them. This partial success encouraged Sigismund, and he expedited measures in order again to invade the kingdom. He saw that Zisca was the great obstacle to his success. His spirit seemed to diffuse itself throughout Bohemia, and his name alone was a tower of strength. The occasion seemed favorable, since the Hussite general was weakened by the loss of a part of his army. But the emperor’s movements were too dilatory. Allies from Prague and Tabor flocked at once to Zisca’s standards. The enemy who had ventured to besiege Kladrub were suddenly confronted by the Taborite hosts. A panic terror seized them, and instead of a battle there was only a rout and pursuit. Sigismund fled first to Leitmeritz, then to Kuttenberg, and at last to Moravia.

His defeat and absence from the kingdom left room for divisions and jealousies to spring up anew. Pilsen, in some way, had merited Zisca’s displeasure. He marched against it, but the city shut its gates. Zisca besieged it for the space of seventeen days, but it still resisted. At length a truce was effected. The cities of Pilsen, Miess, Domatzlitz, and others entered into a league with Prague, on the basis of ratifying the four articles of the Calixtines. This truce was effected in the early part of 1421, and continued in force through the
year. Zisca was not idle, however. Commotau, Launy, and Slany fell into his bands. Other places were threatened, and some priests were burned.

The junction of the Calixtines and Taborites in their measures for rejecting Sigismund and electing a new king, seems to have tended to restrain the excesses of the Taborites. Strange views had been adopted by some of them, especially by those who followed Martin Loqui. Beside his extravagant interpretations of the Apocalypse, he seems to have taught other doctrines peculiarly offensive. He denied transubstantiation—although on this point many of the Taborites agreed with him. He taught that God was in man; that neither was He to be sought in heaven, nor the devil in hell; that all books, and forms of faith, and church ceremonies were needless and superfluous; that the marriage vow was not indissolubly binding. To these doctrines, of which we can only gather a general idea, he added others which he appears to have derived from the Adamites, or to have held in common with them. His followers, to whom he gave the promise of eternal life, became numerous. He was first banished from Tabor, but afterward pursued by Zisca, who heard of his proceedings at Beraun, where he was disseminating his views.

The Taborite general determined to put a stop to his course. Although a Calixtine himself, he had allowed a perfect toleration among his own soldiers; but when their doctrines were carried to licentiousness, or an excess which threatened dangerous results, he was prompt in putting a check upon them. At Beraun some of Loqui’s followers were burned, and some recanted. Loqui himself was also put to death according to some, by Zisca, according to others, by Archbishop Conrad. The probability is that Zisca, who was a Calixtine, banished the unfortunate and misguided man from Tabor, or possibly sent him to Conrad, that he might determine what should be done with him. It seems quite evident, at least, that he fell a victim to that jealousy which the Calixtines felt for their reputation.

It is fully evident, that although Zisca well understood how to manage the enthusiasm, not to say the fanaticism of his followers, his own good sense was not blinded by any fanatic views of his own. It was the policy of the general, full as much as any taste for religious symbolism, that led him to adopt the plan of having a priest bearing a cup in his hand, lead the army in its attacks. At the crude fancies of some of his followers, he only smiled, except when he could employ them as his allies in the camp or on the battlefield. He even delighted oftentimes in seeing the would-be prophets of the army exposed to division. On one occasion, wishing to encamp upon a certain field, the prophets forbade it, with the assurance that the next day fire from heaven would descend to consume the harvests that covered it, and endanger the safety of the army. The next day, however, proved rainy, and the prophets found themselves exposed to the derision of those whom they had attempted to overrule. It became a proverb in the camp, that the prophecies of the priests and their fulfillment came as near together as fire and water. However Zisca
and his soldiers might favor the pretended inspiration of some of their spiritual
guides, no dreams, or impressions, or inspired fancies were allowed to prevent
their assaults when they promised success, or induce the hazarding of a battle
when good sense or military sagacity forbade it.

The alliance of the Bohemian cities on the basis of the articles of Prague
continued to extend. New accessions were continually made to this—which
might now be called a national league. Chrudim, Mant, Politzka, Leitomischel,
Trautenau, and Konigshof joined it. Jaromirtz, which refused, was sacked, and
many of its inhabitants were drowned or burned. Twenty-three priests fell
victims to their obstinacy in resisting the liberty of the communion of the cup.
Leitmeritz still held out against the league. Zisca with his forces marched
against it, but the city refused to surrender to him. "Let them of Prague come,"
said they, "and we will yield the city up into their hands." Zisca chose to make
another assault, but it proved unsuccessful, and the citizens had the
satisfaction of capitulating to the army of Prague, which hastened to receive
their surrender, and witness their oaths to maintain inviolate the four articles.

Thus each day saw the hopes of Sigismund for recovering the crown, becoming
weaker and more desperate. The castle of Wenzel still held out for him in
Prague, but it was now resolved that this should be reduced. Zisca from
Leitmeritz marched to Prague, with this object in view. He built a fort over
against the city for the security of his own soldiers, and from this he directed
his attacks against the castle. It surrendered after a resistance of fourteen
days, and the last vestige of Sigismund’s authority vanished from the capital of
Bohemia. Czenko, the governor, had now thrown off all reserve, and boldly
united himself with the Calixtine barons, with whom he was already agreed in
religious sentiment.

At this opportune moment, and after unprecedented successes against the
enemy, the convention of the states met at Czaslau (July, 1421).
Representatives appeared in large numbers, not only from every part of
Bohemia, but also from Moravia. A regency was appointed, of twenty members,
taken from the different orders of the nation. Zisca appeared in it, in the first
rank of the nobles. It was resolved, with remarkable unanimity, that the four
articles of Prague should be universally received; that they should be
maintained and defended to the last extremity, to the risk of property and life.
Some wished that to these, two others should be added—one, to the effect that
Sigismund should be forever excluded from the throne; the other, that instead
of a king, a commission should be appointed to discharge his duties. To these
two, however, the Moravians objected. Much as they disliked Sigismund, they
wished to leave the future policy of the kingdom open, to be modified by
circumstances. They may, moreover, have been apprehensive—far more than
the Bohemians—of the vengeance of the emperor upon such a step being taken.
His ambassadors in fact appeared before the convention, and attempted by
threats to overawe the body, and induce them to accept Sigismund as king. But it was all in vain.

The barons, however, were not content with a mere rejection of the demand. They replied by drawing up an apology and vindication, containing fourteen articles, in which they stated their reasons for solemnly refusing to Sigismund all allegiance. They complain of the atrocious injuries, as well as slanderous calumnies of their enemies, the desolating and burning of their cities and villages, the inhuman and cruel massacres, not only of men, but of women and children, that had been perpetrated by a foreign foe, and the loss and damage which they had suffered from the invading army. They then arraign the conduct of Sigismund for his complicity in the death of Huss; for the various acts of injustice from the council which he had sanctioned; for the publication of the crusade, his levying armies against the kingdom, and studiously defaming it abroad, in order to swell the league against it; for his acts at Breslau in burning a Calixtine, and putting many eminent citizens to death; for the plunder and devastation committed by his army; for carrying off the crown of the kingdom, with its tables and the treasures for the poor; for giving away and alienating the march of Brandenburg, which belonged to Bohemia; for his slanders against the barons of the kingdom, calling them all traitors, and industriously circulating reports, far and near, prejudicial to the reputation of Bohemia, and tending to its irreparable injury; for his violation of the liberties and rights of the kingdom; and his unjust exactions, cruelly enforced, to the ruin and desolation of many cities.

On these grounds, they demand that reparation be made, and that the freedom of their four articles be granted there without reserve or limitation.

To these articles Sigismund attempted a reply, but it made only a feeble impression. It is amusing to observe how the historian, or rather the caricaturist, of the Hussites, Cochleius, attempts to vindicate Sigismund from the charges of the barons. He begins by assuming that the barony are all heretics; and, on the authority of Jerome, he defines the heretic, in the language of scripture, as one in whose mouth is no truth, whose heart is vain, whose throat is an open sepulchre, and whose tongue is full of deceit. He thence infers that the apology of the barons, as the production of heretics, is false and vain, and that Sigismund, whose faith and virtue have been so highly praised, could not have been guilty of the things laid to his charge. His carrying away the crown and the archives of the kingdom, however, is defended on the plea of its necessity.

The convention had not yet dispersed, when news arrived of an invasion on the borders of Silesia. The barons at once made arrangements to repel the enemy. Czenko and Krussina—a strange alliance of Horebite and Calixtine—marched against them. The Silesians were awed by the opposing force, and hastily retreated across the border.
Zisca, previous to this, had gone to Wodnian, near Prachin. Thence he marched to the siege of Raby. It was here that he met with the misfortune of the loss of his other eye. He had mounted a tree in order to inspect the entrenchments of the enemy, when an arrow from the walls pierced it. After he had fully ascertained his danger, he consented to be removed to Prague that he might have the aid of the physicians of that city, in the hope that its sight might possibly be restored. But his own imprudence and recklessness destroyed the last chance of any such favorable result. The old hero was incurably and hopelessly blind. Yet even now he could not forego his favorite employment. His friends sought to retain him at Prague. But he withstood all their entreaties. "Let me go," said he, "I have blood yet to shed." A message from his army reached him. It urgently pressed his return. The soldiers would march under no other general. This determined the matter, and Zisca hastened to rejoin his army.

It was time for him to do it. The emperor had made extensive though ill-advised preparations for another invasion of the kingdom. A large army from Germany was to enter Bohemia from the west, while he was at the same time to march against it from the east. But his own dilatoriness defeated his plan. The western army, soon after the time agreed upon—the day of St. Bartholomew, destined to become still more memorable in the annals of persecution—crossed the Bohemian frontier and commenced the siege of Sozium. But the resistance they met, together with their disappointment in hearing no tidings of the emperor, disconcerted and disheartened them, and leaving their work undone, they returned to Germany. Their immense force, estimated at 200,000 men, was dissolved and scattered.

The emperor at length appeared on the Bohemian frontier toward the close of the year (December 25, 1421). Great efforts had been made to gather an army capable of resisting him. It was agreed that its officers should be appointed by the city of Prague. But all would have been in vain probably, without the aid of Zisca. The mere presence of the blind old warrior was a terror to the foe. Sigismund with his powerful army was slow approaching Prague. Several places had already been taken. Zisca, meanwhile, had been busy in suppressing all movements throughout Bohemia in favor of the emperor. At Pilsen, however, he was met with an obstinate resistance, and was forced to raise the siege and retreat before the foe, who had reassembled and resumed the offensive upon receiving intelligence of the emperor’s invasion. Blind as he was, Zisca conducted a three days' retreat to Saatz in a most masterly manner. But already the emperor had collected his scattered forces, and was prepared to encircle, with his mighty host, the doomed city. Prague was alarmed, and summoned the blind old hero again to her aid. Zisca was received within her walls, almost with royal honors.
Gathering his forces, he marched first to Kuttenberg, and then to Czaslau. But the citizens of Kuttenberg were ill-pleased with the visit of the Taborites. The occasion was not a favorable one. The invading army strengthened at once their fears and their orthodoxy. They saw for the first time the ceremonial, or rather the want of ceremonial, of Taborite worship. Scarcely had the soldiers entered the city, when they hasted to improve their privilege of the freedom of communion. With all their dusty clothing upon them, just as they were when they dismounted from their horses, they made their appearance in the sacred assembly. It seemed to the Kuttenbergers almost a sacrilege thus to hurry from their horses to the altar; and when they had witnessed their communion with common bread, and the use of a tin or wooden cup for the wine, with the short prayer and simple words of consecration, they turned away in distrust. So strong was their aversion to such allies, so widely divergent was the practice of the Taborites in the communion from the old forms of the mass which the Kuttenbergers still retained, that scarcely had Zisca with his forces left the city, when they opened their gates to receive the army of the emperor.

Zisca strengthened the fortifications of Czaslau, and then returned to cope with the hostile army. Sigismund had already marched upon Humpoletz and Ludetz, when the antagonist forces approached each other, and the pickets of the two armies exchanged blows. At this critical moment the treason of the Kuttentergers gave Sigismund the advantage. Putting their city in his rear to protect it, he prepared to confront Zisca. The Hussite general saw himself forced to retreat. The citizens of Prague, uncertain of the issue, fearful of incurring the vengeance of Sigismund, and encouraged by the example of Kuttenberg, began to drop away from Zisca’s army. As the enemy approached, he fell back upon the hill Transkau; and here it was that the emperor felt that he had his sure grasp upon his destined victim. He carefully spread out the wings of his army to enclose the Taborites. Night settled down in darkness over the scene, and the morning threatened to dawn upon a beleaguered host, with no alternative but that of sure and hopeless defeat or unconditional surrender.

But the blind Zisca was not to be so easily caught. He waited, indeed, another day, retaining his position upon the hill, whence his enemies did not venture the attempt to dislodge him; but on the second night his plans were matured and ready for execution. Quietly marshalling all his army, he led them, nearly without loss, and with scarcely striking a blow, through the camp of the enemy. The emperor saw himself again defeated in his plans—completely outgeneraled by an antagonist whom he regarded as already within his toils.

Zisca marched first to Colin, thence to Gieziu and Turnau, recruiting his forces. Sigismund was not prepared to attack him before he had recovered himself sufficiently to be able to turn and face his pursuer. He encamped on the banks of the Nebonid, ready for battle. But Sigismund no longer thought of attacking him. He withdrew to Moravia, laying Kuttenberg—probably deeming its fidelity to him in this time of his reverse utterly unreliable—in ashes. Zisca followed
him in his retreat. He overtook him (January 9, 1422) at Deutschbrod, where a fierce battle was fought, which lasted for three hours. At length victory declared in favor of the Taborites. The enemy fled, but their retreat proved more disastrous than the battlefield. The crowd of fugitives was such that, in attempting to cross the bridge of the Sazanna, their progress was checked, and fifteen thousand cavalry, led by their general, Pipo of Florence, attempted to cross the river on the ice. But the weight of men and horses proved too much for its strength to support. It gave way beneath them, and nearly all were drowned. Sigismund continued his retreat to Iglau. He left behind him seven standards, five hundred baggage-wagons, and an immense booty, which Zisca distributed to his soldiers.

Blind though he was, the Taborite general could not content himself with merely acting on the defensive. The loss of sight forced him to employ the eyes of others, and from their observations he formed his plans of attack or defense. His memory of localities was wonderful. His frequent campaigns had made him familiar with almost every part of Bohemia. The whole region was spread out before his mind’s eye like a map, and his measures were taken with the utmost wisdom and precaution. In battle, he took his stand upon a baggage-wagon, near the standard, and, by the eyes of others, closely watched each stage of the conflict, and the necessities of his position. Nothing escaped him. He discerned as if by instinct, and by a military genius for which the age in which he lived could not furnish a parallel or a rival, the strong and the weak points of each army, and the measures by which they might be turned to his own advantage.

As a general, friends and enemies vie with one another in elevating him to the first rank. "Scarce any history of Hebrews, Greek, or Latins," says Cochleius, "brings before us any leader of armies of such capacity as Zisca was." An undisciplined peasantry were trained by him to withstand and repel the shock imperial cavalry. A restless energy in his iron frame defied fatigue, and scorned to rest, and into his troops he infused his own activity and daring. But prudent sagacity supplied the means of energy and courage, and new expedients were devised as necessity required, till his soldiers attained a perfect confidence in the almost magic skill and enterprise of their leader. Many of his most signal and successful battles were fought after he had become entirely blind; and never, till the breath left his body, did the terror of his name cease to make his foes tremble.

Returning from the pursuit of Sigismund, he found some of his partisans still active in Bohemia. The Bishop of Leitomischel, the bitter enemy of Huss and Jerome at Constance, and the persecutor of the Calixtines, now appears again upon the stage. He had been promoted to the bishopric of Olmutz, and on Conrad’s secession to the Calixtines he was elevated to the vacant archbishopric. Sigismund had not a more faithful and daring ally, nor the Bohemians a more bitter or dangerous foe. At the moment of the threatened
invasion, with a sword for his crosier and an armed band for his flock, he attempted to promote at once the cause of the emperor and his own by violent methods. He heal deservedly earned the epithet of "The Iron Bishop." From the altar where he celebrated mass, he would haste to the camp, mount on horseback, with his helmet on his head and his body cased in armor, and sink the churchman in the warrior, the bishop in the general. His rage against the Hussites was almost fiendish. He boasted of the number he had slain with his own hand. But the defeat of Sigismund was the prelude to his own. His army was cut to pieces in the neighborhood of Broda, and completely annihilated. Zisca, assuming the authority which his victories assured him, seated upon the ruins of the fortress, and under the captured standards, knighted the bravest of his soldiers, and distributed among them an immense booty.

Not content with thus prostrating the enemy in Bohemia, Zisca extended his arms into Moravia. He had already reached the borders of the Austrian territory, when he was summoned back to Prague. Leaving behind him his ablest general, Procopius Magnus, or Rasus as he was called, to prosecute the war, he returned with a portion of his army into Bohemia.

Events at Prague had assumed, suddenly, an ominous aspect. On the refusal of the king of Poland to accept the crown, it had been offered to Withold, Grand Duke of Lithuania. He also had declined to accept it, but had recommended to the Bohemian barons his near relative, Sigismund Corybut. Accompanying him to Prague, they had both sealed their Calixtine faith by partaking of the communion of the cup. But at this juncture, many of the nobility, disappointed, perhaps gladly, by the king of Poland’s declinature of the crown, had fallen back upon their old preference for Sigismund. Doubtless they imagined that successive defeats had made him wiser, while freedom from foreign invasion allowed the antagonistic elements of the Taborites and Calixtines again to show themselves.

At Prague the Calixtine party had recovered their supremacy, and had elected magistrates who favored their views. The old hostility against the Taborites was revived. They cited before them the bold Premonstrant monk, John, whom they accused of tyranny and sanguinary acts. The monk obeyed the summons. With nine of his companions he presented himself at the council-house. He was at once arrested, and the whole number were summarily tried and executed. It was attempted to keep the deed secret; but the blood of the victims flowing out into the street, told their friends of their sad fate. This was the signal for vengeance. Jacobel, whom we now find on the side of the Taborites, encouraged the multitude. He held up to their view the head of the monk, whom he called a martyr. In their rage, the Taborites assaulted and massacred the magistrates who had ordered the execution. The council-house was taken, and the library destroyed.
This event was the signal for hostilities to recommence. The presence of Corybut had no effect to repress passion or restore order. Although a Calixtine, there was a strong party opposed to him. When the coronation was to take place, it was found impossible to obtain the regalia. Some of these Sigismund had carried away with him. But for this, it is possible, as Cochleius suggests, that Sigismund would never have recovered his throne. At first Zisca favored the cause of Corybut. He urged the people generally to accept him as king. But the favorable moment had now passed. The nation was divided into fierce parties, embittered by prejudice and mutual aggressions. The old church party began again to raise its head, and these at one extreme, and the Taborites at the other, were irreconcilably opposed to Corybut. It was in vain that Zisca, here differing from the Taborites, espoused his cause.

The diet that was held at Prague toward the close of the year (November, 1421) to determine the question in regard to the election of a king, was much divided. Zisca urged harmony, and the exercise of a kindly and forbearing spirit. “Forgive one another,” said he, “that you may unite in saying ‘Our Father.’” On the other hand, he did not fail to reprove the violence of the Taborites. He exhorted them to “honor the elders, and deal justly, not with violence, so that God may be with us.” But his counsels and persuasions were vain. There was an utter lack of unanimity. Corybut, for the present at least, despaired of the election, and prepared to leave Prague.

It was not such words as those of Zisca that would heal the division. The vengeance of the Taborites for the murder of the Premonstrant monk had been signal, and had embittered their foes. They had unwittingly given the latter a great advantage. In their excitement the mob had proceeded to great lengths. They had plundered the library of the university, and destroyed the records of the council-house. They had sacked the houses of the councilors, and had even assaulted the dwellings of the Jews.

As if this provocation was not enough, the citizens of Prague were indignant and took offense at the tone in which Zisca had addressed them. They complained of it as too authoritative. They disliked him the more that, while on many points he differed from the Taborites, he was still their general, and lent to them the strength and sanction of his name. Against him therefore their animosity was now directed.

But Zisca was not a man to be trampled upon by those whom he had so often protected from invasion. Their insults could not be directed against him with impunity. He saw, moreover, that unless the present movement in favor of Sigismund was checked, Bohemia would be subjected to his control, and not only the Taborites, but the Calixtines would be given over to the counsels of such men as the Bishop of Leitomischel, who were living embodiments of the spirit of the crusade. Even Corybut, favoring the Calixtines as the stronger party, and the one from whom he had the most to expect, was, however
unwittingly, playing into the emperor’s hands. Zisca withdrew from Prague, brooding over his plans of vengeance, which he was not slow to execute against those barons whose counsels were betraying the freedom and the interests of their country. He attacked their partisans and ravaged their estates.

The Calixtines promptly armed to repel his assaults, and endeavored to crush him whom they now regarded as an open enemy. All their former jealousies were revived and embittered. He stood in the way of their coming to terms with Sigismund—terms which, however ignominious, they were willing to accept. Czenko of Wartemberg, former governor of the castle, gathered an army, largely composed of the nobility, and marched against Zisca. But the Taborite general was victorious, and the Calixtines were severely beaten. Distributing the booty among his soldiers, Zisca with only three days’ delay pushed on to Kozagedy, which he took by storm. Terror preceded him, and devastation marked his track. He mercilessly cut down all that opposed him, and laid castle and fortress, as well as all that offered resistance, in ashes.

But his incessant activity and unwearied energy were too much for his soldiers. When he ordered a night march upon Koniggratz, they began to complain. "Zisca," said they, "is blind, but we are not. We cannot fight like him in the dark." They threatened to halt upon their march, and the plans of their general against Koniggratz were in danger of being defeated. Zisca reasoned with them. He endeavored to overcome their reluctance to follow him. Himself a Calixtine in sentiment, though not in sympathy, his arguments were the more forcible. "It is for your sake," said he, "that I fight. It is no concern of mine, personally. I could make peace for myself if I chose. All is for your good."

Soothing their minds with these reasonings, he at once changed his course of remark, and surprised them by one of those strokes of policy which show the inexhaustible resources of his mind. "Come now," he added, "listen to counsel. In what neighborhood are we now?" "Between the hills Podmokly and Cziniswes," was the reply. Zisca, who in a moment apprehended the position of the army, was ready with an expedient to meet their objection of the darkness of the night, "Go with all dispatch," said he, "and light up the village of Miestecz, so that we may see our way." The command was obeyed, and the conflagration of that village lighted their march to the walls of Koniggratz. The city fell into Zisca’s hands, with scarce the show of resistance. A friendly party within aided the victors.

But the Calixtines of Prague felt the loss of the place too severely not to make strenuous efforts for its recovery. Borzek, a former governor of Prague, led out an army to attack Zisca and regain Koniggratz. The Taborite general did not decline the offered battle. He marched out to meet the foe, and a terrible conflict ensued. The Calixtines suffered a complete and annihilating defeat.
The course of events had wrought a change in Zisca's policy. Driven to desperation by the Calixtines, he now conformed to the Taborite ceremonial. The priests before him no longer said mass in their robes, according to the rites of the old church. He had been willing and even anxious before, that former differences between Calixtine and Taborite should be compromised by uniting upon Corybut as king. But this expedient failed to secure unanimity, and Corybut, in throwing himself into the arms of the Calixtines, had alienated himself more than ever from the Taborites. Zisca now treated him as an enemy. He had, in fact, introduced foreign troops, to the aid of the army of Prague, and stood ready to lead them against the Taborites. At this aspect of things Zisca felt the necessity of strengthening his army. Procopius, whom he had left behind him when summoned to meet the diet at Prague, and who had followed the enemy across the frontier, was probably recalled; at least he now rejoined Zisca with his forces (May, 1422).

Borzek, on his defeat, in which he was badly wounded, withdrew to his castle. Zisca returned to Koniggratz, and, destroying its fortifications that it might be defenseless in case it was seized by the enemy, marched to Czaslau. Here he strengthened himself, and put the place in a state of defense against the new army which was marching against him from Prague. One of his generals, Lupak, with the force under his command, was cut off by the enemy. Zisca upon this seems to have withdrawn from Czaslau, willing probably to have it stand a siege and delay the foe, while he hastened to Moravia, where the Archduke Albert, nephew of Sigismund, was recovering the cities which Procopius had taken. The archduke laid claim to Moravia as a gift from the emperor, and exerted all his energies to drive out the Hussites and subject it to his own dominion. He was engaged in beleaguering Suntenberg, when Procopius was dispatched to relieve it. At the news of the approach of Zisca's army (August 12, 1422), the archduke consulted his safety by a hasty retreat. He was not anxious even to face the terrible army of the blind old Taborite general.

Zisca, taking summary vengeance upon all parties that had shown any inclination to favor the archduke, followed him in his retreat. He advanced into Austria as far as Stokerau, on the Danube, and only four leagues from Vienna. The archduke, however, had escaped him, and lay upon the opposite bank. Zisca turned aside for the siege of Kremsen, when the army from Prague, which had followed on his track, came up with him. Procopius promptly marched to his relief; and the army of Prague, led by John—possibly the archbishop—was foiled. Zisca, secure for the present from the archduke, whom he left to be looked after by his general Procopius, returned to Bohemia.

Never had a harder task than the present one been confided even to his hands. The Calixtines and the imperialists were virtually in league together against him. The one within, and the other without the kingdom, attempted to crush him as the common enemy of both. But the spirit of the blind hero breathed defiance, and his genius and skill were equal to the emergency. With Procopius
left behind him to hold the foreign enemy in check, he now turned to suppress internal hostilities. At Ckalitz, in the neighborhood of Koniggratz, he fell in with a body of troops from Prague, which he cut to pieces and dispersed. Arnau, however, nine miles north of Koniggratz, repulsed his assault (January 6, 1423). The castle of Mlazowicz was less fortunate. It fell into his hands, and he signalized his vengeance by hewing its commander in pieces. For several months he continued his ravages by flying marches, increasing as much as possible the strength of his army. Klattau was taken by storm, but when Zisca reached Saatz, his whole force consisted of only 7,000 foot and 500 horse. Yet with this force he directed his marshal, John Bzdinka, to march in the direction of Czaslau and Prague. At Kostelez he fell in with the Calixtine army, under the command of Czenko. The Elbe now threatened to cut off all opportunity of retreat, and Czenko’s army was too strong to be safely withstood. The Taborites, however, discovered a ford by which they were enabled to cross the Elbe, and for three days the army of Czenko followed in close pursuit. Zisca was overtaken near Kuttenberg, and finding the ground favorable, no longer declined battle. Corybut, who now made common cause with the Calixtine army of Prague, arrived with a reinforcement, and Zisca, who had animated his soldiers by a speech, in which he pointed them to the ruins of Kuttenberg as an illustration of imperial mercy, saw the opportunity of gaining a decisive victory unexpectedly snatched from his grasp. Feigning an apprehension of defeat, he slowly retreated, till by his maneuvers he had drawn the enemy into a position in which he could safely engage.

Again victorious, Zisca now commenced his march directly for Prague, which he reached on September 11 (1423). He had now thrice defeated the most powerful armies which his enemies at Prague could marshal, and the intelligence of his approach filled them with consternation. They determined, however, to resist his attack, and closing the gates against him, forced him to the necessity of storming the city. But here his soldiers began to hesitate and murmur. They had too often fought to defend those walls which they were now to assault, not to shrink from an act, however necessary in their circumstances, which only the genius and the vengeance of Zisca could have conceived and dared. Though accustomed to blood, and hardened to all the atrocities of the battlefield, their hearts were affected, and complaints were heard when Zisca proceeded with his measures for storming the city.

But the blind old warrior could speak as well as fight, and could marshal and guide the passions of men with a skill equal to that with which he conducted armies. Standing on a cask, where he might be seen of those whom he no longer saw, he harangued his troops, and his powerful voice at once kindled all hearts by its familiar yet stirring tones. "Companions," said he, "why do you murmur? I am not your enemy, but your general. It is by me that you have gained so many victories—by me that you have won fame and wealth. And yet, for you I have lost my sight, I am condemned to ceaseless darkness. ... For all my labors, what is my reward? Nothing but a name! It is then for you that I
have acted, that I have conquered. It is not my own interest that arms me against this city. It is not the blood of a blind old man that it thirsts after, but it dreads your intrepid hearts and your invincible arms. When they shall have taken me in their nets, they will lay snares for you, from which you will scarcely escape. Let us therefore take Prague. Let us crush the sedition before Sigismund is informed of it. A few men, well united, will do more against the emperor than a vast multitude divided. Let no person therefore accuse me, for I act in your interest. Now make your choice. Will you have peace? Take care that it does not cover some ambush! Will you have war? Here I am!"

These words had the desired effect. There was no more murmuring. The Taborites invested the city, and suffered no one to issue forth from the gates. Everything was ready for the assault, but Zisca delayed his order to storm the city. Perhaps he had ever hoped, and still believed, that he would be spared the terrible necessity. If he had laid his plans to subdue the city by terror, he was not disappointed. The citizens had no wish to engage in conflict with the man who rarely lost a battle, never succumbed under defeat, never abandoned his purpose. They could not bear to imagine what results might follow the storming of the city, or the revival within it of the spirit of the Premonstrant monk, a spirit suppressed and almost stifled, but still ready to show itself, if occasion permitted, as fierce and as terrible as ever. They met to deliberate, and determined to send a deputation to Zisca to induce him to relent.

At the head of the deputation was John of Rokyzan, a Calixtine preacher of great credit and ability, subsequently archbishop, who from the obscurity and poverty of his birth had raised himself by his talents to a high position. His representations were effectual with Zisca, who in all probability was only too willing to listen to counsels which might at once spare his own honor and the execution of his terrible threat. To the entreaties of the deputation he lent a favorable ear, and the terms of the treaty of peace were at once settled. It was signed in the camp; and, as a monument of the alliance, and from regard for ancient customs, a pile of stones was raised upon the spot, as if to intimate that the party which should violate its provisions should perish beneath the stones that formed the rude altar. Zisca then made a public entry into Prague, where he was received with the greatest honors, and was allowed to exercise a paramount authority.

The emperor’s hopes, which he had based upon the divisions of the Bohemian nation, were baffled by the truce which restored to Zisca the control of the kingdom. He saw that arms and counsels were alike futile to regain it, while he had such a foe to watch and counterwork his designs. He sought therefore to win him over by the most liberal promises. "For himself," he said, "it was sufficient that he should merely be proclaimed king of Bohemia. To Zisca should be left the government of the kingdom." To all these honors Sigismund joined the promise to Zisca of immense wealth.
This was to the emperor a most humiliating posture of affairs. After all his efforts, supported by the bull of the pope and successive crusading armies, he saw himself reduced to the ignominy of offering to accept the aid and reward the valor of the man who, in defense of what had been branded as heresy, had demolished and annihilated all his armies. Æneas Sylvius grows indignant in narrating a proceeding which he condemns as a disgrace to the emperor and a stain upon his royal name. That a man whom all Christendom venerated, and of whom heathen nations stood in awe—the son of an emperor, and an emperor himself—in the vigor of his years, should be reduced to treat upon such terms with "a man hardly noble by birth, old, blind, heretical, sacrilegious, with audacity for any enormity"; that he should offer him the government of the kingdom, the command of its armies, and an immense yearly revenue, in order to secure his alliance and aid; all this was indeed, in the eyes of the Roman historian, as disgraceful as it was humiliating. If Huss had ever longed for revenge upon his murderers, if he had wished them an earthly retribution for their crime, he could not have imagined anything more bitter as a dreg in their cup, than that they should see their chosen champion, supported by the papal bull and immense armies, forced to bend the knee to a man who was regarded at once as a rebel and a heretic, and whose very blindness made the homage paid him more bitterly if not ludicrously humiliating.

But the terms proposed were never executed. We do not even know how they were regarded by Zisca. It is more than possible that he thought favorably of them. Specious pretexts were not wanting for their acceptance. He might have been king himself in all but name, and none better than he united a knowledge of the people with a capacity to govern them.

But at this culminating point of Zisca’s fortune, death overtook him. He lived to foil the purposes of Sigismund, and died at the moment when his death was in some respects another defeat to blast his hopes. Had he been longer spared to his country, it is reasonable to suppose that the nation would have been harmonized, if that were possible, and that under his government national prosperity and freedom of worship would have gone hand in hand. The plague, however, which was at the time ravaging Bohemia, numbered him among its victims. He died October 11, 1424, while engaged in the siege of a small town on the Moravian border. Perhaps, with a foresight of the hostility that might hunt out his bones and drag them like Wickliffe’s from their grave, he ordered his soldiers to abandon his body to the birds of prey, and to have his skin made into a drum, the mere sound of which would make their enemies tremble.

The command of Zisca was not, however, obeyed. His body was interred with honors in the cathedral church at Czaslau, and his iron mace was suspended near his tomb. Upon his monument was placed, according to Theobald, in his history of the Hussite wars, the following inscription: "Here lies John Zisca, inferior to no other general in military science, the rigorous punisher of the pride and avarice of the priesthood, and the zealous defender of his country."
What the blind Appius Claudius did for the Romans by his counsel, and Curius Camillius by his actions, I accomplished for the Bohemians. I never failed fortune, nor she me; and although blind, I always perceived what ought to be done. I have fought eleven times with standards displayed, and I have always conquered. I was unceasingly seen defending the cause of the unfortunate and the poor, against sensual and bloated priests, and therefore did God sustain me. If their hatred did not oppose it, I should be reckoned among the most illustrious; and yet, in spite of the pope, my bones repose in this holy place."

In the biography of Zisca published at Prague, another epitaph is given, more in keeping with the character of the man, and which may have been inscribed after the former was defaced. "Here rests John Zisca, the leader of oppressed freedom in the name and for the name of God." We are told, moreover, that not far from his tomb was engraved the inscription, "Huss, here repose John Zisca, thy avenger; and the emperor himself has quailed before him."

Zisca’s person was of middle stature, of a strong and muscular frame, especially in the shoulders and chest. His head was large, round, and closely shaven. His nose was aquiline, and his long moustaches added to the ferocity of a countenance that spoke out, in its bold and eagle eye, the penetration and the energy of the man. His complexion was dark and bilious, bespeaking his capacity for long and patient endurance; and his forehead presented that indenture, falling perpendicularly down it, which has been remarked in several famous warriors—and has in consequence been called the martial line.

His outward aspect was no unworthy index of the spirit within. In all that pertained to war or strategy, Zisca was the man of his age, and it is even doubtful whether the world has ever presented any leaders of armies who might not be honored by being accounted rivals of Zisca in ability. With a kingdom rent by dissensions, and the weaker and less powerful class only on his side, he had to repel successive assaults from armies immensely superior, and led by able generals. He had to stand—single-handed as it were—against the hosts of Christendom animated by the spirit of religious bigotry, and breathing exterminating vengeance against all that bore the name of Huss, or expressed sympathy for him. But he met the tide successfully; he stemmed it and turned it back. In the most desperate circumstances, he never quailed or wavered. Unforeseen and overwhelming difficulties only brought out the inexhaustible resources of his genius and sagacity, and he never offered to capitulate, but always waited to accept terms of surrender from the foe. He did not make his suit to Prague, but Prague made its suit to him. He did not solicit the emperor’s alliance; the emperor, however, solicited his. The tactics, equipage, and defenses of his army, as well as their unshrinking courage and resolute energy, betrayed the impress, and manifested at once the sagacity and the inspiring power of Zisca’s genius. His enemies might condemn him as a heretic. They might blacken his memory with charges of crimes that make us shudder,
but his ability as a general, and his unapproachable mastery in the art of conducting battles and managing armies, were never questioned.

What his real character was as a man, is somewhat more doubtful. His enemies have drawn his portrait; and no friendly hand, unless that which inscribed his epitaph, has rescued it from their caricature. It is evident that his soul glowed with the deepest resentment and indignation at the wrongs of Huss, and the injustice of the council that ordered his execution. He saw a whole nation virtually condemned unheard, and hemmed around by a league of Christendom, marshaled by a papal crusade to carry out the sentence. He felt himself called to be an avenger of the wronged, and he fulfilled his mission with an inexorable severity. No tears flowed from his blind eyes. Pity was in his view a weakness, of which he was rarely known to be guilty. His system of army discipline was inflexibly rigid, and it extended to all the acts and circumstances of a state of war. It was truly a military code, and every infraction was punished with death.

Zisca was undoubtedly ambitious, as he was cruel, but grosser vices were foreign to his character. He distributed the plunder to the army, never anxious to retain it himself. Every soldier was a brother, and that was the epithet which he employed in his familiar intercourse with his army. He was moreover a Bohemian in heart and soul. He loved his country. He resented her wrongs, and burned to avenge her insulted honor. With too sound a mind to be carried away by fanaticism, he knew how to employ the fanaticism of others; and yet, in his own way he was scrupulously devout and religious. In spite of all his cruelty and his ambition, we must account him a great and an honest man, sincere in his convictions as he was terrible in his vengeance.

CHAPTER XVII

The Last Crusade
Defeat Of The Imperialists

The success of the Taborites was largely due to the impolitic and cruel measures of the papal party. At the very time when Zisca was most closely pressed by the imperialists, he found a most effective, although involuntary, ally in an unexpected quarter. In its thirty-ninth session, the council of Constance had decreed that another council should be convoked, to prosecute still further the reform which it assumed to have initiated. It was to be convoked within the space of six years from the close of its own sessions.

The council thus decreed was convoked by a bull of Martin V, and its opening session was held at Pavia early in May, 1423. But the thin attendance, and the dread of the plague, which had commenced its ravages in the city, led to its
transfer to Sienna, whither the members were directed to repair by the first of
November of the same year. The first session was held upon the twenty-fifth,
and the council proceeded to fulminate the most severe decrees against the
followers of Wickliffe and Huss. Temporal princes were enjoined to drive them
out of their dominions; spiritual rewards were promised to such as should
inform against them, or give them over into the hands of the inquisitors. It was
ordained, moreover, that the decree granting indulgences should be read
yearly to the people, in an audible voice, on the first and fourth Sundays of
Lent, and on several of the festivals of the church. All intercourse with the
condemned heretics was forbidden. Such as furnished them with food, spices,
salt, or weapons of war, were to be subjected to severe penalties. Secular
princes were to spare no effort for their complete extermination.

No measure could have been more unwise than this of the council. It could not
fail to strengthen the prejudice, and exasperate anew the feelings of the
Bohemians against the papal party. Undoubtedly it strengthened the cause it
was meant to crush, and deferred for years the hope of compromise.

The death of Zisca left the Taborites without an acknowledged leader. Some of
them, to indicate their deep sense of the loss which they had sustained, called
themselves The Orphans. Zisca had been a father to them, and his death was
bewailed with an unaffected grief. Others were absorbed by the Horebites,
while others still chose to retain their old name.

Among the ablest generals who survived Zisca, were Procopius Magnus (or
Rasus, for he had originally been a monk) and Procopius Parvus, the former of
whom had been thoroughly trained in Zisca’s school, and had eminently
justified the confidence which the latter reposed in his ability. The course of
events soon elevated him to the position of virtual, if not acknowledged,
leader of the party. But the death of Zisca had been equivalent to a sore
defeat. It was impossible that some degree of disorganization should not follow
upon the loss of a leader of such preeminence. Civil disorders again prevailed.
Sigismund and Martin V were not inattentive observers of events, and with
renewed hope, determined to avail themselves of this favorable moment for
the execution of their long-cherished but oft-defeated designs. A renewal of
the crusade was preached at the instigation of the pope, and an army 100,000
imperialists was gathered under the invading banners. They marched to the
relief of the town of Ausch which had been besieged by the Hussites, but were
repulsed with a severe loss of from nine to twelve thousand men. The battle
was fought June 15, 1426, and the intelligence was speedily carried to
Nuremberg, where a diet had been assembled, and where another invasion of
Bohemia had been resolved upon, at the instigation of the papal legate,
Pontanus Orsini. But the terror caused by this defeat was such that all
measures for executing this resolve of the diet were at once stayed.
A year was suffered to pass before the electoral and other princes could unite on any further measures. A diet was then held at Frankfurt, at which it was unanimously resolved that four distinct armies should be assembled for the invasion of Bohemia. Every soldier was required to confess and hear mass once a week. Nothing was neglected to secure, by ritual devotion, the divine favor. The Cardinal of Winchester assumed the chief command. Acting under the special directions of the pope, and authorized to use at discretion the spiritual or the temporal sword, he urged forward the preparations for a decisive campaign. A numerous army was gathered, a portion of which proceeded to the siege of Miess, a small town on the western borders of Bohemia, in the circle of Pilsen.

Intelligence of the invasion soon reached the Taborites. All internal dissensions were immediately at an end. They marched with the utmost promptitude to the relief of the beleaguered city. Scarcely was the German army aware of their approach, when they appeared within sight of the walls. A panic terror seized the imperial host. Without waiting to meet a foe which their fears magnified, they broke and fled in confusion. Their terror was infectious. The next division of the imperial army was thrown into hopeless disorder, and the iron flails of the Horebites did fearful execution upon the broken ranks of the invaders. An immense booty, composed of almost every description of military stores, was the reward of Bohemian valor.

The princes of the empire had learned a lesson which was not soon forgotten. Several years passed before the attempts to subdue Bohemia were renewed. The removal, however, of external danger, again allowed scope for internal dissension. The Calixtines and Taborites were soon at variance. No one showed himself more anxious to conciliate the opposing parties, and restore peace to the kingdom, than Procopius Magnus. By his able generalship and terrible victories, he had acquired a fame second only to that of Zisca. But he was less ambitious of military distinction than anxious to secure civil peace and order. As occasion required, he appeared by turns the theologian, the negotiator, the general.

At the commencement of the year 1428, a convention was held at Beraun to see what could be done toward a general pacification of the nation. The Taborites, Orphans, and Calixtines from Prague were present. But there was no possibility of bringing the different parties to stand upon a common platform. Procopius and his Taborites contended that sacerdotal habits were not necessary to the proper solemnization of the eucharist, and that there was no need of elevating or adoring the host. The Calixtine view of the seven sacraments was rejected by those whom he represented, while differences were also developed in regard to the doctrines of free-will, justification, and predestination.
The convention broke up without accomplishing anything. Procopius, somewhat provoked at the course of the Calixtines, withdrew to Raudnitz, there to meet and welcome the Taborite Smirckzic, who had been imprisoned at Prague for sedition, but who had managed to escape. The Orphans of Kuttenberg planned and executed an invasion of Silesia, marking their way by ravaged villages and desolated monasteries. At Nissa they were arrested by an obstinate resistance; and, even when Procopius had marched to their relief, were forced to retreat with loss. This was only the earnest of a more serious defeat suffered by the Taborites and Orphans at Brünn, in Moravia.

The imperialists prudently declined to pursue their advantage. They did not wish to confront men who might be goaded to desperate courage by another assault. The Taborites were suffered to withdraw to Austria, and the Orphans to Bohemia. They first extended their ravages to Cornenburg and Vienna; but, apprehensive of an attack from Hungary, withdrew to Tabor. The fortified town of Bechin had meanwhile begun to act upon the offensive. Procopius took it, after a siege of four months, and garrisoned it with Taborites.

The Orphans, at the same time, prosecuted the siege of Lichtenberg. In want of food, they marched into Silesia, leaving but a small portion of their forces behind them. The besieged did not fail to improve the occasion to make a sortie. A partial success encouraged them in their hopes of a successful resistance, but in December (1428) they were forced to surrender.

Assisted by a junction with a portion of the Taborites, the Orphans now executed their plan of a new invasion of Silesia. Everything was put to fire or sword. Several of the nobility who offered resistance were slain. After a bloody conflict the Silesians were completely routed, and left to the Bohemians their wagons and baggage. The severity of the winter arrested the progress of the invaders, and they returned to Bohemia.

The emperor had been no inattentive spectator of what was taking place. While the different parties were vainly seeking a common basis of conciliation, he again proposed, by a deputation—which at Kuttenberg met the citizens of Prague, the Orphans, and the Taborites—that the Bohemians should accept him as king. He urged his rights to the kingdom, and seemed to be willing to make some concessions. But the Bohemians could not trust him. They replied that Sigismund, by the effusion of blood which he had occasioned, and by his complicity in the death of Huss and Jerome, as well as in the crusades to the dishonor of the nation, had forfeited all right to the kingdom, since his whole conduct showed that he had sworn its destruction.

Procopius, who was still at Bechin, invited the ambassadors to visit him at Tabor. It is more than possible that he hoped to obtain for himself the same conditions which had been offered by the emperor to Zisca, and thus close the war with honor to himself, and restore peace and security to a desolated land.
The ambassadors furnished him a safe-conduct, that he might visit Sigismund and confer with him in person. He did so, but the emperor spurned the terms which Procopius was disposed to offer; and the latter, irritated by such treatment, returned to Tabor “meditating vengeance.”

The motives of Sigismund it is not difficult to surmise. Events throughout Bohemia, and especially at Prague, showed that the division between the two parties of the Bohemians was bitter and irreconcilable. Early in the year (January 30, 1429) the citizens of Old and New Prague had come to an open rupture. Each party chose itself leaders, and the city was for the whole day a scene of desperate and deadly conflict. A truce for a few days was effected, which was subsequently extended till the twenty-fifth of July, when the states of the kingdom met at Prague, to effect, if possible, a general pacification. Procopius was present at the assembly. He proposed to receive Sigismund as king, provided that he, with his Hungarian subjects, would receive and follow the Holy Scripture, commune under both kinds, and grant such requests as they should see fit to make.

These terms were laid before the diet which soon met at Presburg. Procopius was at the head of the Bohemian deputation, which consisted of several nobles and Calixtines from Old Prague. For eight days the deliberations were continued, without attaining any satisfactory result. At length, after consulting with parties at Prague, it was determined to accept Sigismund as king. Deputies from the different orders were named, to go and inform Sigismund of the conclusion which had been reached. But the Orphans boldly opposed the measure. "A free people," they said, "needed no king." This was the signal for the recommencement of hostilities. At Prague, and throughout Bohemia, the civil strife was immediately renewed.

But the refusal of Sigismund to accept the terms offered by the Bohemians, had the effect of producing a conciliatory spirit between the opposing parties. Glorifying in his orthodoxy as the patron of the church, he rejected alike the articles of the Calixtines and the Taborites. It was now quite evident that the acceptance of Sigismund by the nation would be the signal for the commencement of a bitter persecution against all who refused to return to the communion of the Roman church. Under the direction and by the management of Procopius, a plan of conciliation between the opposing parties of Calixtines and Taborites was agreed upon. An enormous fine was the penalty of infringing it; and Procopius, the principal author of this compact, was elected generalissimo.

Conscious of the difficulties of his position, aware of the necessity of still inspiring his foes with terror, and sagacious enough to perceive that the best security for internal peace was the employment abroad of an army accustomed to action, Procopius resolved to seize the occasion for punishing the presumption of the Misnians, from whose attacks the Bohemians had often
suffered. "It is the moment to act," said he, "the hour of great things has arrived." The words were greeted with loud acclamation. Procopius led forth his army, crossed the Elbe, and fell on Misnia, Saxony, Brandenberg, Bavaria, and Austria. Dreadful ravages marked his progress. Churches and monasteries were destroyed. Many towns were reduced to ashes, and their defenders perished with them. Over the smoking ruins the conquerors shouted, "Behold the funeral obsequies of John Huss!"

Returning from this campaign, the Taborites distributed themselves into several bands in different places, adopting names according to their fancy. Some were known as Collectors, some as Small-Caps, some as Little Cousins, others as Wolf-bands. The winter was no sooner passed than they were ready (1430) again to unite for a new campaign. With 20,000 cavalry, 30,000 infantry, and 3,000 chariots, and with Procopius the Great and other able generals at their head, they again renewed their invasion of Misnia. Continuing their march to Dresden, they left behind them, desolated or reduced to ashes, Kolditz, Mogeln, Dablen, Godelberg, and more than a hundred towns and villages. The Elector of Brandenberg vainly attempted to arrest their progress. John of Pollentz met with no better success. Several of the neighboring princes, impelled by a common apprehension lest their own turn for invasion should at last come, prepared to offer a united resistance; but divisions of feeling and opinion paralyzed their energies, and the Bohemians were left almost unmolested. In the region of Grim, Colditz, and Altemburg, the invaders successively spread their ravages. At Leipsig the news of their approach produced great apprehension. Verden, Reichembac, Averbach, and Olsnisch were laid in ashes. Germany took the alarm, and began to rouse itself to a sense of the necessity of measures to resist the terrible invaders. City after city had been forced to purchase immunity by pecuniary bribes. The Bishop of Bamberg ransomed the place by the payment of 9,000 golden ducats. Nuremberg paid a still larger sum.

The policy of Martin V toward the Hussites was summed up in one word—a crusade. For twelve years this had been his uniform reply, when pressed for a solution of the Bohemian question. He exhorted the emperor and kings and princes to unite, and crush out forever the dangerous heresy. To the king of Poland he sent a master of the sacred palace, Andrew of Constantinople, as his ambassador to induce him to take active measures in concert with Sigismund. He represented, in a letter which the ambassador bore with him, that prudence as well as religion required the suppression of a people whose dogmas were fatal to all government, opposed to the authority of kings, and destructive of all human legislation. They favored, he said, many dangerous errors and superstitions, denied sovereigns their tribute, and held that all property was common and all men equal. The attempt to check and subdue them had been vain hitherto, and it seemed that providence had expressly reserved the work that the king of Poland might have this left him to crown his other conquests.
The pontiff, in a second letter, renewed his application (January 13, 1430), representing to the king that he could do "nothing more acceptable to God, more useful to the world, or glorious to himself, than to turn all his thoughts and all his strength to the extirpation of the perfidious heresy" of the Bohemians. Help, however, was not to come from this quarter. Domestic dissensions—even had the king of Poland been disposed—effectually prevented his compliance with the exhortation of the pope.

Sigismund, meanwhile, had been diligently pursuing his own measures. The untoward fortune of his campaigns against the Turk had materially affected the energy with which he had prosecuted his purpose to recover Bohemia to his allegiance. But the alarm excited by the Hussite invasions aided his project, and a diet was summoned to meet at Vienna, November 1, 1429, before which the matter was to be brought. The delay of Sigismund in reaching the place led to a transfer of the diet to Presburg. The subject which invited attention was the course which should be adopted to restore peace to the empire, so that its entire strength might be concentrated upon an invasion of Bohemia. After some deliberation, several of the princes urged a postponement of any decisive action until after another diet, in which the German states should be more fully represented, and which should be held at Nuremberg or Frankfort. Sigismund reluctantly acquiesced in the proposal to meet at Nuremberg. He spoke, in his indignation, of throwing down the imperial scepter, and relieving himself of the burdensome and vexatious duties of his position. "Hungary," he said, "is enough to furnish me with bread." But his threats availed nothing. The German princes were resolved to hold a diet on their own soil.

The object of the assembly was to find a solution for the standing problem of the Bohemian heresy. After many delays, enough were assembled to proceed to business. For eight months the deliberations were protracted, and at length nearly all the prelates and princes of the empire were brought together, either in person or by ambassadors. Martin V sent to the diet the Cardinal St. Angelo, Juliano Caesarini, who afterward presided at the council of Basle. By his influence the reluctance of the diet to act upon the offensive was overcome. It was finally resolved to make still another invasion of Bohemia. The papal legate came, provided for the emergency. He had brought with him a bull of Martin V ordaining a crusade, which was now opportunely to be published. It exhorted all believers to assume the cross, and set forth on this holy expedition. Indulgences were profusely promised to those who should engage in the enterprise, or contribute to its promotion. Those who should fast and pray for its success, should have a remission of penance for sixty days. From other vows interfering with enlistment in the holy war, a dispensation should be freely bestowed.

The greatest efforts were now put forth to secure a successful issue for this, the sixth invasion of Bohemia by the imperialists. The time fixed for the expedition was June 24, 1431. The princes and prelates exerted themselves to
assemble a powerful army. To John Hoffman—the old opponent of Huss
doubtless, but now Bishop of Misnia—the legate wrote a letter, in which he
exhorted him to unite in "the holy league." "Alas!" he exclaims, "the abominable
heresy of the Wickliffites and Hussites exceeds today in cruelty all the heresies
of preceding ages. It has inspired them to a fierce obstinacy, so that, like the
adder, they shut their ears to the voice and doctrine of the church their
mother, regardless of the methods which she may take to bring them back to
reason. Not content with their poisonous dogmas and their blasphemies, they
have despoiled all humanity and all piety, and have become like ferocious
beasts, to be satisfied only with the blood of Catholics."

He then dwells indignantly upon the violence, plunderings, and sacrilege of the
Hussites, vindicating the wisdom of the princes in arming for their
extermination. He closes with the solemn and formal command to proclaim, or
have proclaimed, without delay, in all cathedral and parish churches of his
diocese, the bull of "Apostolic Indulgences."

The bishop rendered a prompt obedience. Similar measures doubtless were
taken in most of the other dioceses of the empire. The emperor meanwhile, to
test the spirit of the Bohemians, advanced to Egra, and sent two of his nobles
forward to Prague, to propose terms upon which he should be received as king.
The Taborites and Calixtines were engaged in warm disputes. At the opportune
moment, the two nobles interposed their propositions. The citizens of Prague,
and Procopius and Kerski, the leaders of the Taborites, favored them as a basis
of negotiation. In spite of the opposition of the Orphans, a deputation of four,
one of whom was a Taborite priest, were sent to confer with the emperor.

More than two weeks were spent in useless conference, when the deputation
from Prague became satisfied that the only object of the emperor was to
amuse and deceive them till he was ready to strike a decisive blow.
Complaining of this to the emperor himself, they protested that henceforth
their enemies alone were responsible for the continuance of this terrible and
bloody conflict. For themselves, they were ready for peace, and the fault of
preventing it did not rest upon their heads.

The deputation returned to Prague. Their report produced great consternation
in the city. The magistrates took measures for publishing throughout Bohemia
the immanency of the threatened danger. The populace were bitter in their
maledictions and curses of the emperor. The most moderate and cautious were
satisfied that he had attempted to dupe and betray them, and that his
proposed negotiations for peace were only intended to mislead them into a
false confidence.

Prompt measures were immediately taken. The states of the kingdom were
informed of the danger of a new crusade, and the Taborites and Orphans were
recalled from foreign conquests to defend their native land. In execution of
their purpose at the close of the previous campaign, they had gone abroad spreading on every side the desolation of their ravages and the terror of their arms. Divided among themselves, and not rarely at open variance, this dread of a common foe was necessary to luring them again together. The old leagues and confederation were revived. Old feuds were forgotten. The barons of Bohemia and Moravia, the Calixtines of Prague, and the indomitable Taborites and Orphans, again united to repel the invader. In a few weeks 50,000 infantry, 7,000 cavalry, and 3,600 chariots were gathered for review at Chotischau, in the circle of Pilsen.

Meanwhile, with some unexpected delay, the crusading forces had been got together. They were estimated to number 130,000 men. But they were not ready to march until the month of August. The Elector of Brandenberg was appointed to the chief command. Amid scenes of the most imposing ceremonial, the sword was placed in his hand by the cardinal legate. The Count of Hohenlohe presented him with the imperial banner, and the highest hopes were entertained of the success of the campaign.

But before the invading army crossed the frontiers of Bohemia, the cardinal determined to see what could be accomplished by persuasion and argument. He addressed a letter to the Bohemians, overflowing with tenderness and anxiety for their spiritual welfare. He vaunted the tender mercies of the church, and protested that the aim of the invaders was kind and Christian, and that if the Bohemians would only submit and return to the unity of the church, they should be left entirely unharmed. In a tone of earnest entreaty, as if any act of violence or cruelty was most remote from his thought, he urged and besought them to give up their heresies, and accept the charity which the church was ready to bestow.

The eloquence of the letter in other circumstances might have been credited in part to sincerity and affectionate anxiety, but the author of it must himself have felt that its success—if it met any—would be due to the armed legions who stood ready to enforce its application. No doubt a large number of the Bohemians were prepared to meet it with a favorable response, but as a general thing, Calixtine as well as Taborite had learned only too thoroughly to distrust the professions of the enemy and the good faith of Sigismund. The reply that was made was one in which all parties could unite, and one which betrayed no trace of variance between the different elements of opposition. While laying down the four Calixtine articles as the only basis upon which any measures of negotiation or conciliation were possible, it proceeds in an unsparing manner to expose the policy hitherto pursued by the imperialists and the enemies of Bohemia. It was a document well calculated to kindle anew the patriotic zeal of the nation, and fire it to fierce indignation against the arts and arms of the invader. Its closing paragraphs glowed with an indomitable and defiant spirit worthy of Zisca himself. It declared that the Bohemians would maintain their rights to the end, and repel force by force, by whomsoever
offered. "Your trust," say the authors of the letter, addressing the party of the cardinal, "is in an arm of flesh; but our trust is in the God of armies."

This reply to the cardinal’s letter was in reality the manifesto of the Bohemians, and it was sent not only to the cardinal, but to the different states of the kingdom. This correspondence took place during the months of June and July (1431), while the imperialists were marshalling their army, and the different parties in Bohemia were uniting their forces for a desperate resistance.

The cardinal legate attended in person the march of the main body of the imperialists. He sought, by all the ecclesiastical resources at his command, to enkindle the fanatic zeal of the crusaders. The son-in-law of the emperor, Albert of Austria, was prepared to make a diversion in favor of the imperialists on the side of Moravia, while 80,000 infantry, 40,000 cavalry, and a formidable artillery approached the western frontiers of Bohemia. The Elector of Saxony invested Tashau, while another corps proceeded to Ratisbon. At the entrance of the Frauenberg forest, the imperialists halted. A council of war was held, and scouts sent out to make explorations. Procopius, not unmindful of his danger, took pains to deceive them, and lead them into the belief that the Hussites were divided. The imperialists were duped, and in the confidence of security entered the forest near Tausch. Of a sudden the report spread that the Hussites were united, and were rapidly advancing in order of battle. The Archduke of Bavaria, and all his troops, seized with a panic, broke up in the night and fled. Abandoning all their stores, they hurried back in the greatest disorder to Riesenburg. The Elector of Brandenberg, with the division under his command, betrayed the same terror. His soldiers tore up their standards and fled.

The cardinal legate alone showed more presence of mind. He rallied the fugitives again at Riesenburg, a few miles distant from Tausch, and his glowing words restored shame if not enthusiasm to the soldiery. But the approach of the Bohemians renewed the old terror. The army was dispirited and disorganized. They fled, and the flight was a complete rout. The Bohemians met no resistance. They had nothing to do but massacre the fugitives and seize the booty. The mass of the imperialists obstructed their own escape. Eight thousand wagons full of military stores, with all the heavy artillery, fell into the hands of Procopius and his Hussite soldiers. The strong chest of the imperial army was seized, and the cardinal himself barely escaped, with the loss of his hat, cross, sacerdotal robes, and the bull of the crusade. The last was long preserved at Tausch as a glorious trophy of the Hussite victory.

So disastrous a defeat effectually crushed the hopes that had hitherto been cherished of subjecting the Bohemians by force of arms. Even the cardinal Julian, who had instigated the crusade so effectually, now declared himself in favor of adopting more conciliatory measures. The time was approaching for
the assembling of the council summoned at Basle, and he wrote a letter to the Bohemians in the most gentle tone, inviting them to be present and discuss their grievances and present their demands, with the assurance that they should be allowed the fullest freedom. The council itself (which met December, 1431) renewed the invitation. It was accompanied by a safe-conduct, the substance of which declared that they should have entire liberty to remain at Basle, to act, decide, treat, and enter into arrangements with the council; that they should celebrate with perfect liberty, in their own houses, their peculiar forms of worship; that in public and in private, they should be allowed from scripture and the holy doctors to advance proof of their four articles, against which no preaching of the Catholics should be allowed while they remained within the city; that any attempt at the violation of their safe-conduct should be severely punished, and that on their return they should be accompanied by a safe escort to the Bohemian frontier. But even these conditions, favorable as they were, could not at once overcome their deep distrust. In fact, the source from which they came could not fail to excite suspicion. They who but just now breathed only a spirit of exterminating invasion—who had incited all Christendom to engage in a crusade to be marked by plunder and carnage—assume a tone too gentle to accord with their former threats.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Council of Basle
Calixtine Ascendency

Meanwhile, however, changes were taking place in the relative position of the parties hitherto combined against Bohemia—changes which enforced the policy of conciliation. Germany was loudly and urgently insisting upon her demand for ecclesiastical reform. The disappointment of her hopes at the council of Constance only made her more earnest that some measures should now be adopted, which should effectually check the corruption of the church. The cardinal legate, who had carefully surveyed the ground, and had received information which excited his alarm, felt that it would no longer answer to trifle with the demand. He boldly declared that unless something was done it would be to no purpose to eradicate the Bohemian heresy. Other heresies would spring up to supply its place, and introduce new divisions into the church. Unless there was a reformation in the clergy, the result was inevitable. The license and excesses of the German clergy—so he wrote to Pope Eugenius IV (Gabriel Condulmer, who had succeeded to the tiara on the death of Martin V, February 20, 1431)—“had irritated the laity beyond measure against the ecclesiastical order,” so that it was to be feared lest, imitating the example of the Hussites, the popular indignation should rise up and sweep away the entire hierarchy.
Nor was this all. The Bohemians would be so encouraged by the corrupt state of things in Germany, as to be inspired to greater audacity in their invectives and complaints. To shut their mouths, and to take away every excuse for their course, it was absolutely essential that the council should proceed with the task of reform. If a general council was not held, a provincial council was absolutely essential. The danger was imminent. The entire hierarchy was threatened with destruction.

Such were the views of the legate, boldly expressed. They were shared fully by most of those acquainted with the facts of the case. Sigismund himself felt that hostile measures for the invasion of Bohemia were no longer wise or practicable. With his ready dissimulation he assumed a supplicating attitude, and hypocritically assured the Bohemians in writing of his good-will and of his present inclination to come to terms, to which they made reply—indicative of their distrust—that his real intention was to draw them away from the truth. In these circumstances his only hope was in the conciliatory policy of the council.

This policy was strongly urged by the cardinal legate. He had seen enough to satisfy him that the hope of subjecting Bohemia by crusading zeal was vain and illusive. He had no wish to try again his previous experiment. Yet he was deeply in earnest to bring back the Bohemians to the unity of the church. By means of the council which was now to be convoked, he hoped that the object might be accomplished.

The spiritual and temporal lords generally took the same view of the case. They were strongly inclined to make concessions. But this did not suit the plans of the new pontiff. He was opposed to all negotiation or compromise. He was urgent for a renewal of the crusade, and scorned the humiliation of treating with heretics who assumed a defiant attitude. Perhaps his fear of the council, which he dreaded scarcely less than the Bohemian infection, had not a little to do with it.

He beheld with apprehension the convocation of a council in a city not only beyond his own jurisdiction, but where it would be subject to imperial influence. He dreaded the freedom of its utterance. He had reason to fear the bearing of its decisions upon himself. The precedent of the council of Constance filled him with alarm. The result was that, in spite of the emperor, the council of Basle was pronounced to be dissolved, and was convoked anew to meet at Bologna (November 11, 1431). The reasons adduced by the pope for this procedure, were that Basle was not a place sufficiently secure, in part, on account of the Hussites, and in part, on account of the internal conflicts of the German princes; and that it was too distant for the deputation from the Greek church, in case they wished to prosecute the business of their union with the church of Rome. For this purpose an Italian city would be far preferable.
This measure of the pope took the assembled bishops and theologians by surprise. Even the Cardinal Julian was dissatisfied with it, as at least impolitic. He replied to each of the reasons which the pope had adduced for the transfer of the council. The Greeks, he said, had been talking for three hundred years about union, but nothing had come of it; and as to the Hussites, or the civil discords and conflicts in Germany, no danger was to be apprehended. An uncertainty should not be surrendered for a certainty. The emperor and the princes regarded the council as the last resource for restoring peace to Bohemia; and, beside all, it was to be feared that if there were no speedy reform in the morals of the German clergy, the laity, who already had them in derision, would treat them no better then they had been treated by the Hussites.

In spite of the papal mandate, the council resolved unanimously to remain at Basle, and proceed to business. The condition of Bohemia first invited their attention, but the papal urgency for the crusade was rendered futile by the open controversy between Eugenius and the council. At Basle it was no longer the question whether Bohemia should be subdued by force of arms. The Archduke of Austria and the Duke of Burgundy, who would have been selected as leaders in case of a crusade, were at open variance. It would be no longer possible to combine in a single enterprise the forces of the empire. The invitation, moreover, given by the council to the Bohemians to be present at Basle, with the assurance that they should be indulgently heard, was a step which the pope represented as prejudicial to the authority of previous councils which had condemned them as heretical. He therefore renewed his decree removing the council to Bologna.

The old difficulty of the council of Constance was thus renewed. The pope and the council were at variance. It was in vain that Cardinal Julian attempted to dissuade Eugenius from the inflexibility of his purpose. "What," he asks, "will the heretics say who have been already invited to Basle? Will they not be more strenuous, and must not the church confess itself overcome, if it refuses to await the arrival of those whom it has invited? Will they not think they see the finger of God in it, that after so many armies have been routed, the church itself flees before them, making it plain that the heretics can be overcome neither by arms, nor by learning and conviction? What will the world say of the clergy? Will they not hold that its corruption must be perpetual, and that if so many councils have been held in vain, its reformation is hopeless? The whole world is waiting in expectation of some result. If this is again to be defeated, men will say that we are making a mock of God and man; and as the hope of reform vanishes, the laity will persecute us as the Hussites have done." In a similar strain the emperor himself addressed the pope. But all was in vain. Either the court of Rome had gone too far in its course of opposition to retreat with honor, or it was inspired by a deeper policy than that which it avowed. The council of Basle was an object of profound distrust. There was no relying upon it unless it was removed to some Italian city. The cry of reformation had
become exceedingly obnoxious, and the pope could not be dissuaded from his purpose to suppress it.

But on its side, the council was equally firm. It felt that the eyes of the world were directed toward the measures which it should adopt for restoring Bohemia to the unity of the church. It was said openly at Basle that the Roman court was opposed to all reform, and resolved to sacrifice the welfare of all Christendom to its own interest. The decrees of the fourth and fifth sessions of the council of Constance were confirmed, establishing the superiority of general councils to the authority of the pope. The decisions of Eugenius against the rights of the assembly were declared null, and it was decided that in case the Holy See should become vacant, the election should take place at Basle and nowhere else. The nomination of cardinals, pending the sessions of the council, was forbidden, and the pope himself was summoned to appear at Basle within the space of three months.

These decisions were regarded at Rome as a formal declaration of war against the papal authority. Nor were the measures of Eugenius more favorably interpreted at Basle. Each party prepared itself for the conflict, determined to maintain its superiority. The ground was disputed, step by step. Eugenius imagined that he had one decisive advantage. Sigismund had never yet received the imperial crown at the hands of the pope. He was now anxious for his coronation. Eugenius determined to make his own terms, and these were the submission or transfer of the council. Sigismund was in no condition to enforce his demand. For a year he lingered in Italy, and vainly summoned the German princes to his aid. None came. But even thus Sigismund held out. He would not betray the cause of the council. Eugenius at last receded so far as to consent that a general council summoned by him should be held at Basle. But this would not satisfy the council already assembled. What would be the fate of the sessions already held? They persevered in their cause in spite alike of the threats and intrigues of the pope. At length, in the eleventh session, they cited him again to appear at Basle, threatening him with suspension if he failed to comply, and in case of continued persistence in his refusal, with deposition. Again the pope yielded, but the capitulation was partial. He recalled his decree dissolving or transferring the council. The return of the emperor from Italy suspended further hostile proceedings, and the year (1432) closed with an apparent reconciliation of the two parties, whose mutual irritation and violent designs were cloaked by hypocritical professions.

The Bohemians at length were led to confide in the sincerity of the invitations that had been extended to them from Basle. Conscious of their own strength, they saw that the Roman church was no longer in a condition to prosecute hostile measures against them, and the obvious weakness produced by its threatened schism secured a confidence in its assurances which promises and safe-conducts alone never could have afforded. It was in the beginning of the next year (January 4, 1433) that the Bohemian deputation, numbering three
hundred, was chosen, from among the most noble in the land, and with
Procopius the Great, the colleague of Zisca, the hero of many battles, the
leader of many invasions, at its head. A curious spectacle was this—the
reception with public honors, by a council representing the orthodoxy of
Catholic Christendom, of a body of men who had stood forth for years, with
arms in hand, as the champions of the martyred Huss—the heretic of
Constance. They came in the consciousness of strength, with the hard-won
reputation of invincible, and in their bold, fearless, and haughty bearing,
presented a striking contrast to the entrance of Huss or Jerome upon the
scenes of their trial and martyrdom. They came with no tokens of inferiority or
marks of submission, but to treat on equal terms with a body which
represented the power and authority of the whole Catholic church.

The greatest curiosity prevailed to see these men who had rendered their
names terrible throughout the world, and against whose impetuous heroism
successive imperial armies had been dashed and shattered. Strange stories of
their valor had gone abroad. The very means employed by calumny to make
them odious and even horrid, had lifted them to fame. Procopius, with his
hawk nose and his dark and ominous-looking countenance, led the band. He
was attended by the shrewd and crafty Rokyzan, the head of the Bohemian
clergy, Nicolas Biscupek, "The Little Bishop," the leading preacher among the
Taborites, Ulric, the principal speaker among the Orphans, and Peter Payne,
the Englishman.

As the Bohemians approached the city, they were met by an immense crowd,
embracing a large number of the members of the council itself, who had
dispersed themselves without the walls in anticipation of their arrival. "The
public places and streets along their passage, were thronged with spectators.
Women, children, and even young girls filled the windows and occupied the
roofs of the houses. The lookers-on pointed out to each other these foreign
costumes, which had never before been seen there. They gazed with surprise
at the visages marked with scars, and those terrible eyes; and in beholding men
of stern appearance, they were the less astonished at the things which fame
related of them." But it was to Procopius himself that particular attention was
drawn. He, the hero of so many sieges and battles, the destroyer of so many
towns, who had subdued mighty armies, and was scarcely less terrible to his
own countrymen by his massacres and plunderings than to the enemy by his
victories, was the object of universal curiosity.

It had been only by pressing invitations, and strenuous efforts to overcome
their distrust, that the Bohemians had been drawn to Basle. The first letters
sent them had remained unanswered. No notice even was given the council
that they had been received. They had been first sent to Egra, and thence
transmitted to Prague. The deputies of the council, anxious for the success of
their mission, sent through the senate of Nuremberg to inquire of the citizens
of Egra how the invitation had been received at Prague. On learning that the
Calixtine party, which preponderated there, had been inclined to regard it with favor, they renewed their application in hope of finally succeeding in their object. A reply was returned, proposing a conference at Egra between the deputies of the council and the neighboring princes on one side, and the Hussites on the other, for the purpose of securing safe-conducts. The twenty-seventh day of April (1432) was appointed for the conference. But the Bohemians, on the ground that no assurance had been given for their safety, even at the conference, failed to appear. This difficulty was at last overcome; but the Bohemians, complaining of the injuries and wrongs they had suffered, and not unmindful of the violation of the safe-conduct of John Huss, demanded hostages for the fulfillment of the promises made by the deputies of the council. Nor would they accept any but those of princely or noble birth. At length the princes pledged themselves to see that the safe-conducts were faithfully observed. Even thus, however, the distrust of the Bohemians could not be overcome until they had sent two of their countrymen to Basle to be more fully certified of the honest intentions of the council. Upon their favorable report that the invitation was sincerely and truly given, the deputation of the Bohemian nation was elected.

The next day after their arrival at Basle, the Bohemian deputation appeared before the council. They were graciously received, and addressed by Cardinal Julian, who presided at its sessions. In behalf of the Bohemians, Rokyzan replied. His address, composed for the most part of select passages of scripture skillfully adapted to express the feelings and views of the Bohemians, and expressing a measured confidence in the council, closed with demanding that a day should be appointed on which they might be heard. The sixteenth day of January was appointed for opening the discussion, which was continued with few intervals for more than two months.

The Bohemians presented and defended their four Calixtine articles. "These articles," say they, "we present to you, that, apprehending the unusual desire felt for peace and security, you may consent to approve them in the form subscribed, so that they may be freely held, taught, and irrevocably observed in the kingdom of Bohemia and the march of Moravia, and such places as adhere to the views they hold."

In evidence of the sincerity of their desire for peace, the Bohemians say, "We are ready to be united, and to become one in the way in which all Christian believers are bound to be united, according to the law of God, and to adhere to and obey all legitimate ecclesiastical rulers in whatever they command accordant to the divine law. So that if council, pope, or prelate shall determine or command that to be done which is forbidden of God, or shall pass over, or command to pass over, what is written in the canon of the Bible—since the canons pronounce such things execrable and anathema—we shall be under no obligation to respect them or render them obedience. These conditions we offer, to be accepted and concluded mutually between you and us."
The Bohemians also insisted, that in case of the acceptance of their articles, the council should unitedly use its influence to produce concord in Bohemia and Moravia, silencing or restraining by its authority such as might be disposed to make disturbance, so that a safe and permanent peace might be the result.

The discussion of the articles was commenced by Rokyzan, who spoke for three days in defense of the first, on the communion of the cup. The second was argued by Nicholas de Peletz, who occupied two days; the third by Ulric, who occupied two more, and the fourth by Peter Payne, who spoke for three successive days. A perfect freedom of speech was allowed, and the council was compelled patiently to hear Wickliffe and Huss, who had been condemned as heretics at Constance, spoken of as evangelical doctors. In conclusion, the Bohemians thanked the council for the gracious hearing which had been allowed them.

John of Ragusa, a theological professor, afterward a cardinal, then demanded to be heard in reply on the subject of the first article. For eight successive days he disputed the positions taken by Rokyzan. Before he commenced, however, John, a Cistercian abbot, exhorted the Bohemians to submit to the decisions of the church as represented by the council. But a blind submission was not to their taste, and they indignantly rejected the offensive proposal. They preferred a full and free discussion. John of Ragusa then proceeded with his remarks, but the terms "heretic" and "heresies" were so frequent upon his lips, that the patience of Procopius was exhausted. He rose up and indignantly complained to the council against such injustice. "This our countryman," said he, "does us great wrong, so often calling us heretics." "As I am your countryman both by tongue and nation," replied the speaker, "I do the more desire to bring you back to the church." Some of the Bohemians were, however, so offended, that they left the council, and would not hear the remainder of his disputation. Ten days more were occupied by others in reply to the three remaining articles, till the Bohemians grew weary of the tedious and protracted discussion. Still they maintained their ground. Rokyzan defended his first positions for six successive days.

At last it was evident that the parties were brought no nearer together by prolonged disputations, and at the instance of the Duke of Bavaria, protector of the council, another plan was devised to reconcile matters. This was, that a certain number of the Bohemians and a certain number from the council should meet together, and in friendly conference decide upon terms of agreement. But here again they were met by an insuperable difficulty. Those of the council demanded that the Bohemians should first unite with the council, and then be bound by its decisions. But to this it was replied that there must first be a decision in regard to the four articles. All present union would be frivolous which resulted in a final disagreement. It was in vain that Cardinal Julian urged the Bohemians to acquiesce in the decisions of the council. They only replied that they came to Basle to propound their four articles, and that not in their
own name, but in the name of the whole kingdom of Bohemia. At length, as the Bohemians were preparing for their return home, it was resolved to send a deputation of the council with them, to see what could be effected at Prague.

The citizens of Prague, however, were no more inclined to sacrifice the integrity of their four articles than their ambassadors to the council had been. The eloquence of the deputation was wasted upon ears that had listened to the powerful arguments and representations of Rokyzan. The resolution of the Bohemians was inflexible, and the deputation could only carry back to Basle the four articles as the ultimatum. The council was reluctantly compelled so far to acquiesce as to send back word that if the Bohemians would accept, with the three articles, the union of the church, they should not be molested in regard to the fourth on the communion of the cup. To this, their reply—indicative of their wise and just caution—was that they could give no decisive answer until they had a clearer understanding of what was to be done on the subject of the communion of the cup.

The formulary of the council’s reply was drawn up with great art. It granted for a time permission to the Bohemian clergy to administer the communion in both kinds, enjoining however upon the communicants to believe that the body of Jesus Christ was not merely in the bread, and that his blood was not merely in the wine, but that his body entire was to be found in the sacrament under both kinds.

With these concessions many of the Calixtines were fain to acquiesce. The ambition of Rokyzan was flattered with the hope of obtaining the archbishopric of Prague, and multitudes, weary of civil war and intestine conflict, were ready to accept almost any conditions on which peace could be restored. In the city of Prague the party composed of these had the preponderance, and through their influence deputies were sent to the council. In the following year the definitive conditions of union, known in history as the Compactata, were signed by both parties.

But if these measures were intended to secure the peace of the kingdom, they failed in their design. The Taborites could scarcely have been satisfied, even with the full and entire concession of the four Calixtine articles. They had other demands and grievances which these did not meet. The proposed agreement became therefore the occasion of new disquiet. Civil war broke out in the kingdom more furiously than ever. The Catholics and the Calixtines, with a large portion of the nobility anxious for peace, formed one party, however incongruous in its elements, while the Taborites, Orphans, and Horebites, united under the two Procopii, formed the other. By the last, the concessions of the council were regarded as perfectly illusory, and for the most part no union was desired with the Catholic church. But their former violence and the memory of their terrible ravages stood in the way of their success. The nobility were anxious that their vassals and serfs should return to the cultivation of
their neglected domains, and that a stop should be put to the desolations of marauding bands.

The first open conflict occurred at Prague. The Calixtines of the Old town rose against the Taborites and Orphans who predominated in the New. A bloody battle was fought, and the Calixtines were victorious. Twenty thousand men were left on the field; and the lesser Procopius with the survivors joined his namesake, who was engaged in the siege of Pilsen.

Upon intelligence of the calamitous battle of Prague, the siege was raised, and the two Procopii, with all their forces, marched, in imitation of Zisca’s former policy, upon the capital. They were met four miles and a half from Prague by the opposing army under Rosemberg, Newhauss, and Koska. Procopius resolved not to engage unless at a manifest advantage. But the indiscretion of a part of his troops precipitated the conflict. Confusion ensued on the part of the Taborites, and the orders of Procopius were imperfectly understood. His chariots were captured, and the general of his cavalry fled from the field. Gathering his bravest men around him, Procopius threw himself into the thickest of the fight, and made a manful stand against the hostile squadrons. But he was at last overcome by numbers, and, amid the unceasing shower of darts by which he was overwhelmed, he fell pierced by an unknown hand, “tired of conquering, rather than vanquished.” Procopius the Less also fell in this terrible battle, and the prophecy of Sigismund was fulfilled, that “the Bohemians will only be conquered by themselves.”

The Taborites never recovered from this defeat. Internal peace was to a certain extent restored, but Bohemia was terrible no longer. The heroism of the nation was quenched in Taborite blood. While it lived, it resisted and defied pope, council, and emperor combined. It had met the successive hosts of crusading armies, and hurled them back routed from the Bohemian frontier. But the treacherous concessions of the council had shorn it of its unity, and Calixtine and Catholic banded together to crush what they regarded as a common foe. The last of the more prominent Taborites, Pardo Von Czorka, was hunted down like a wild beast, found under a rock, and hanged.

No obstacle stood any longer in the way of Sigismund’s recovery of his hereditary kingdom, except such feeble demands as the emasculated energy of the Calixtine party might choose to present. But even these demands, which Sigismund did not dare to refuse, show how strongly the doctrines of Huss and Jacobel had rooted themselves in the Bohemian mind. The Compactata between the council and the states of Bohemia were approved by the emperor, July 12, 1436, but still further concessions were demanded and secured in treating with him. The citizens of Tabor were allowed for five years full and entire liberty of conscience. The emperor promised not to recall the banished monks, to leave the present possessors of ecclesiastical property unmolested, and to confirm Rokyzan in the archbishopric of Prague. But these promises
were extorted by fear, and were soon violated. The necessity of the occasion forced his assent to what his inclinations disavowed. He put his own—a papal—interpretation upon the Compactata; restored the Roman worship in the kingdom; reopened the monasteries; recalled the monks; and, with a retribution just in providence, but iniquitous on his part, defeated the grasping ambition of Rokyzan by withholding from him the promised archbishopric unless he consented to abjure.

But the spirit of Huss was not yet extinct in Bohemia, and the rashness of Sigismund almost lost him his hard-won crown. The states of Bohemia presented their complaints and demands at the council of Basle, in 1438, and by their tenor was manifested the tenacity with which the nation still clung to the four articles. Among other things, they ask that the permission of the use of the cup shall not be temporary only, and that the "gospels, epistles, and creed may be sung and read in our vulgar tongue before the people, to move them to devotion." But the danger to Sigismund was not merely in the yet unsubdued spirit of the nation, which might be provoked too far, but it found a place within his own household. He had designed his rich inheritance for Albert, Archduke of Austria, his son-in-law; but his second wife, by culpable intrigues, countermined and frustrated his projects. She represented to the Bohemians the danger which threatened them in case the scepter should fall into the hands of an ardent Catholic like Albert of Austria, and she hoped to inflame the ambition of the king of Poland by the offer of her hand and the rich inheritance of the empire, upon the death of Sigismund, prospectively near.

The intelligence of the conspiracy reached Sigismund at Prague. There, dangerously ill, almost alone, and surrounded by a populace in which he could not confide, he saw and felt the impending danger. Calling around him his Hungarian nobility, objects like himself of popular odium, he spoke to them of his approaching death, and warned them for their own safety to flee with him from a city in which their lives would be no longer safe, the moment he expired. He procured the circulation of a report that he was going forth to meet his daughter whom he wished to embrace before he died, and then, "resuming all his dignity, he wreathed his brow with laurel leaves, as on solemn feast-days, invested himself with his imperial robes and insignia, and decorated still more with his long white hair which flowed freely over his shoulders, with his long majestic beard, and the nobility stamped on his pale visage, he had himself borne through the city, in an open litter, in the sight of all, followed by his faithful Hungarians. It is said that he shed tears in regarding this city where his ancestors had so gloriously reigned, and which he was beholding for the last time. The people, affected at this unexpected and imposing spectacle, forgot their vengeance, and saluted, with their adieus, their aged emperor." The illness and fatigue of the emperor allowed him to proceed no further than Znoima in Moravia. Here he had the empress arrested and imprisoned, and held a long and secret conference with his son-in-law, Albert of Austria. As his death drew near, he charged the Hungarian, Moravian, and Bohemian noblemen
around him to remain united and loyal to the archduke, whom he designated as
worthiest to succeed him, even if he was not his relative. Obtaining their
assent, he named deputies who should secure the recognition of Albert as his
successor to the throne. Among these was his able chancellor, Caspar Schlick,
who had so resented the sentence of the council of Constance against Jerome.
Almost immediately Sigismund expired (1437).

The death of Sigismund left Bohemia again a prey to faction and popular
turbulence. The accession of Albert of Austria to the Bohemian crown provoked
opposition at Prague, where Cassamir, a younger brother of the king of Poland,
was set up against him by those who still cherished the memory of Huss.
Scarcely had he grasped the scepter, when death snatched it from his hands
(1439), and under the minority of his infant son, the control of the kingdom
was a prize for the ambition of the nobility. In spiritual matters Rokyzan
regained his former supremacy, and in temporal affairs Ptaczeck and George de
Podiebrad were the real masters. The last was elected king on the death of
Ladislaus (1457), although for many years the supreme power had been vested
in his hands.

For fourteen years more George de Podiebrad governed Bohemia. His abilities
and energy secured respect, and restored peace to the kingdom. A Calixtine in
sentiment, policy forced him sometimes to violate his more humane
convictions, and he yielded to the pressure which impelled him to treat the
remnants of the Taborite party at times with great severity. He hoped to
appease the pope and the Calixtine party by making them a sacrifice to
religious bigotry. In this course he was abetted by the time-serving Rokyzan.
But it was not long before he discovered his error. The pope’s favor was not to
be secured even at such a price. In maintaining what he conceived the course
of justice—the concordat of Iglau—George drew down upon himself the anger of
the pontiff, Pius II, which manifested itself in the form of interdict. The
articles of Prague—the *Compactata*—were revoked, under the pretext that no
pope had signed there. The Catholics were incited to rise against the
Calixtines, and when Paul II succeeded to the tiara, the zeal of the Roman
court against the Bohemian heretics became still more violent.

Meanwhile the warlike Taborites had disappeared from the scene. They no
longer formed a national party. But the feeble remnants of that multitude that
had once followed the standards of Zisca and Procopius still clung to their
cherished faith, and, with the word of God as their only supreme authority, the
United Brethren appear as their lineal representatives. How from such an origin
should have sprung a people whose peaceful virtues and missionary zeal have
been acknowledged by the world, is a problem only to be solved by admitting,
that in the faith of the old Taborites, however they may have been guilty of
fanatical excesses, there was to he found that fundamental principle of
reverence for the authority of scripture alone, which they bequeathed as a
cherished legacy to thus who could apply and act upon it in more favorable circumstances and in more peaceful times.

Section IV

The Ongoing Reformation In Bohemia

This section comprises chapters 19 through 21 of Volume II. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 19 The Taborites and Moravians
Chapter 20 The Reformation in Germany, The Brethren
Chapter 21 Protestantism in Bohemia Down to the Thirty Years War

CHAPTER XIX

The Taborites and Moravians

The early history of the Moravian church abounds in scenes of deep and thrilling interest. For nearly three hundred years before John Wesley was the admiring witness of their calm faith amid ocean perils, they had exhibited to the world the most sublime illustrations of heroic constancy, under the
severest hardships and persecutions. There might seem but little congeniality between the warlike Taborites who followed the invincible Zisca to the field, and the humble, peaceful, and peace-loving brethren, whose gentle manners, honest industry, and simpleminded devotion made Hernhut the radiating center of missionary influences, that have extended from Greenland to the islands of tropic seas, from the Eastern to the Western continent; but in the faith of the former, who bowed with implicit submission to the sole authority of the word of God, we recognize that living germ of the church of the United Brethren, which more than two centuries of protracted persecution was unable to suppress. Through a tedious but far from fruitless discipline, they were brought to the exercise of those rare graces of the spiritual life which have commended them to the sympathy and respect of the Christian world. Like the Israelites of old, they had their Red Sea and desert to pass through; but the first was red with the blood of martyrs, and the last was bitter with the pains of plundered want and weary exile.

The attempts made through successive years, after the close of the council of Constance, to crush out the Bohemian heresy and subdue the followers of Huss, had proved futile. Milder measures, as we have already seen, were at last found necessary, and the council of Basle (1431) listened patiently, for fifty days, to discussions conducted by the Bohemians, on the one side, and the representatives of the Romish church on the other. Through the influence of the able but intriguing Rokyzan, a compromise was at last effected. The Bohemians were to retain the use of the cup, but in other respects were to conform to the rites and doctrines of the church, promising obedience to the Papal See. These articles—soon confirmed by the Emperor Sigismund at Iglau, and afterward known as the Compactata of Iglau—failed to satisfy the demands of the more zealous portion of the Hussites: but they were now in the minority; and when their opposition had been effectually crushed in a new appeal to arms (1434), they found themselves constrained either to acquiesce in the prevalent policy of the Utraquists, or enjoy their proscribed worship in solitudes or secret retreats.

But the compromise measures were scarcely more acceptable to the papal party than they had been to the Taborites. They had been carried by the influence of Rokyzan, who aspired to become Archbishop of Prague. The object of his ambition seemed just within his grasp. At the diet of 1435, he was elected to the post, and his election was confirmed by the emperor. But the papal party refused to acknowledge him, and he was denied investiture unless he would abandon the doctrine of the cup. Indignant at being thus foiled in his purpose, and having the object, whose pursuit must have cost him many a reproof of conscience, snatched from his grasp, Rokyzan threatened to break entirely with the Roman Catholic church. His hearers urged him on. In the diet of 1450 he succeeded in procuring the appointment of an embassy to Constantinople, to seek a union with the Greek church. The Patriarch Nicomedis promised to ordain the Bohemian bishops, but the Turkish conquest
(1453) defeated the execution of the design. Rokyzan became now more timid. Hitherto he had not hesitated to denounce the Compactata which he had been so largely instrumental in procuring. He publicly taught that the forms of religion should be established according to the law of Christ alone. He introduced hymns, in the vulgar tongue, into the churches and schools of Bohemia.

But at length he began to draw back. He was too hesitating to take a decided step, or countenance the measures of the Taborites. The Regent, George Podiebrad (1450), was moreover inclined to adopt a temporizing policy, and Rokyzan henceforth stood more aloof from the “Brethren.” His convictions were in their favor, but his ambition would not allow him to act upon them. When their assemblies were broken up, he replied to their complaints by advising them to maintain communion among themselves, and seek their mutual edification by the reading of the Bible and of good books. They had hoped for his sanction, but could not obtain it. Severe cruelties were inflicted upon them, through the influence of papal emissaries; and even Gregory—although a nephew of Rokyzan—was, as one of their number, cast into prison.

In 1451, Peter Maldoniewitz, the faithful notary of John de Chlum, and the friend of Huss at Constance, who had for many years been a Hussite preacher, engaged with others in zealous efforts to dissemiate the knowledge of the gospel throughout Bohemia. But their efforts were met by violent opposition. Persecution was more bitterly revived. Three deacons of the Hussites were compelled to sacrifice their lives for their creed. One of them, John, was burnt at Sobieslau; Wenzel was beheaded at Horzowitz, and the third, Vitus, not improbably the friend of Jerome at Constance, curate of Hulonuz, was killed with several of his hearers in the church itself, for having administered the communion under both forms.

But the zeal of their enemies went yet further. People of all ages and both sexes were made the victims of cruel intolerance. The pope sent to Bohemia bands of crusaders, warriors with the sign of the cross, who volunteered to attack the heretics, and who performed their task in the spirit of brigands. Many of them were students from Erfurth and Leipsig, in whom the ancient spirit of animosity against Prague had been revived. For years they ravaged Bohemia, encouraged by allies in the country itself. Many towns were plundered and burnt. The pursuits of agriculture were suspended, and hundreds perished of famine. To murder children was a mere amusement to the brutal invaders. But the popular vengeance, thus bitterly provoked, overtook them at last. Near Klattau 3,000 were left dead on the field of battle.

It was at this period that the first band of exiles left Bohemia (1453). Composed in part of Taborites, with Calixtine priests and even nobles among them, they retired in a numerous body to the neighborhood of Lititz not far from the Silesian mountains. Their avowed object was the enjoyment of the
freedom of a purer worship. The *Compactata* of Iglau were pronounced by them unsatisfactory. The superfluous ceremonies which had been retained hitherto by the Calixtines, were rejected by the exiles. None were admitted to their communion except upon an examination as to their personal piety. Gregory—already mentioned as the nephew of Rokyzan—a man of knightly rank, once a monk of Prague, joined them, and became afterward consenior of the church of the Brethren. In 1457, a band under Michael Bradazius, drew off to Kunewald, founding their church on what they considered gospel principles, and calling themselves "Brethren of the Rule of Christ." As others joined them, they took the name which they ever after retained, of the "United Brethren." Multitudes throughout Bohemia, who were not yet prepared to become exiles from their native land, found in them the organization toward which their own sympathies were peculiarly drawn.

Already the time had arrived that would put their principles to the test. Taught by the errors and experience of the Taborites, as well as by the lessons of the word of God, that carnal weapons belong not to the armor of the Christian soldier, they foreswore all appeal save to prayer, reason, and the word of God. Yet if anything might have provoked them to a departure from their principles, it was the treatment to which they were subjected, by Calixtines as well as Romanists. By both alike they were charged with being heretics and anarchists. They were summoned before the consistory of Prague, and were accused of schism, even by Rokyzan, though they claimed to have acted by his advice.

The regent (George Podiebrad), although inclined to lenient measures, dared not venture so far to disregard his oath "to root out heretics," as to interpose in their behalf. Outrage of almost every kind was heaped upon them. They were known by the hated name of Picards. Notwithstanding their "apologies," stringent laws were enacted against them. They were denied civil rights. In the cold of winter they were driven from city and village, and their goods were plundered. Their character was assailed with malicious slanders. They were accused of blasphemy, murder, and witchcraft. Some were apprehended and thrown into prison. The sick were forced to leave their homes, and perished in the fields. To perform worship without Catholic ceremonies was forbidden absolutely, under pain of death. The members of the church of the Brethren, in Bohemia and Moravia, were forbidden to assemble together. Some of their persecutors proposed imprisonment, and some recommended the punishment of death. The Bishop of Breslau opposed the last on the ground that martyrdom multiplied the numbers of the Brethren. He advised their expulsion, with the hope that, sooner than leave their native land, they would rejoin the Romish church.

Upon this many took refuge in the forests. They lived in pits and caves, and thus obtained the nickname of Pit-dwellers (*Grubenheimer*). In the daytime they dared not kindle a fire, lest the smoke should betray them. At night they studied the scriptures by the light of their blazing fagots. Lest the traces of
their footsteps should be detected in the snow, they trod all in the same line, the last of the party obliterating their tracks with the branch of a tree, to give their path the appearance of having been made by a peasant dragging his brushwood after him. Sometime, notwithstanding their precautions, they were arrested, and forced by cold, hunger, chains, and torture, to confess their revolutionary projects, or betray the names of their associates. If nothing could be extorted from them, they were cruelly maimed. Sometimes their hands and feet were cut off. Sometimes they were hung, or quartered, or buried alive. Many perished, and multitudes were reduced to the extreme of wretchedness.

The Brethren at Lititz did not fail to send encouraging counsels to those whom they had left behind. They were admonished that "such as would live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution." Gregory, the nephew of Rokyzan, who bore the message, was reported to be in a dying state in the prison where he had been cast. He was visited by his uncle, who was constrained, by the anguish of a guilty conscience, to exclaim as he saw him, "Nephew, I would that I were where you are now!" His language excited hope in the Brethren, that all good had not died out of the primate’s heart. They were encouraged to apply to him as the ecclesiastical head (summus theologus) of the kingdom, to urge forward the cause of evangelical reform, and relieve them from the accusation of schism. He answered them kindly, confessed his high estimate of their religious character, but told them that, in attempting to aid them he could accomplish nothing of any account, and should only injure himself.

The Brethren were disappointed. Rokyzan was a trimmer and time-server. In taking leave of him they could not suppress the expression of their mingled grief and disgust. "Thou art of the world and wilt perish with the world," said they. The language, however honest, truthful, or well meant, was at least impolitic. Rokyzan was provoked to renew the persecution against them. At his instance the diet of 1468 issued what have justly been called "the bloody decrees."

The hope of church reform by means of the ecclesiastical authorities was thus extinguished. The Brethren found that they must provide for their own government. Their number, increased by accessions from the ranks of the more conscientious Calixtines, had made this a necessity. To the New Testament they looked for their model of church order and discipline. If here they were in some respects at fault, it was from no intentional departure from their acknowledged standard, but because their peculiar circumstances modified the application of their principles. A high testimony to their conscientious fidelity in framing their form of church government is found in the language of Luther, who declared its greater accordance with scriptural simplicity than his own. First of all, they elected elders of their own number, by a majority of voices, and to the discretion of those who were thus elected, the rule of the churches was committed. At their summons the most eminent of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren were convoked, to form such regulations as the interest of
the churches required. General rules for the conducting of their worship, the observance of fast days, the doctrines and government of the church, were subjects of discussion, and these were definitely settled.

Their system of church order occasioned them some anxiety. A growing repugnance to the Romanizing tendencies of the Calixtines, from whom, moreover, they were repelled by persecution, forbade them to seek ordination at their hands. Even had they sought it, their application would doubtless have been rejected. The subject therefore was carefully considered in a synod held at Lhota in 1467. They resolved to choose their own teachers, from among themselves. It shows their discreet caution that first of all they elected twenty persons as candidates. These twenty were to elect nine of their number, to whom the definitive choice of three was to be committed.

At another synod the question arose whether presbyters might be ordained without a bishop. It was answered in the affirmative. Both orders, it was said, were originally equal. Still, to avoid all occasion for scandal, it was deemed best to secure episcopal ordination. The three who had been elected as preachers were therefore sent for this purpose to the Waldensian church—the only one which they could recognize as pure and scriptural. These, after their ordination, returned to the Brethren and ordained others, as the necessities of the church required.

The circumstances of the Brethren—persecuted by the Romanists, and disowned by the Calixtines, who were apprehensive a of the result if they should become in the least identified with them—led them to look abroad for sympathy. Might there not be, they asked, in other lands those whose views and doctrines accorded with their own? Only among the Waldenses could such be found. But even of them, it was said that they did not confess the whole truth. Persecution had made them shrink from a bold and fearless avowal of all their convictions. Notwithstanding this, it was resolved that communion with them should be proposed, while they should be admonished of what the Brethren regarded as errors. The admonition was kindly received. The proposal of communion was accepted. The common faith which they held was endeared to them the more by the common hardships which a persecuting spirit inflicted on both. The result was most disastrous to the Waldenses. The fact of their communion with the Brethren (Picards) was betrayed. Their leader, Bishop Stephen, along with several others, was burned. Some were scattered abroad in other lands. Some fled to the march of Brandenburg, and others joined the Brethren. This year (1480) was marked by quite an accession to the church of the exile, from this as well as other sources.

Meanwhile the Utraquists were not left unmolested. George Podiebrad, who from Regent had become king, was unwilling to favor the Brethren, or restrain their persecutors, lest the infamy of the hated "Picards" should attach to himself. Calixtine in sentiment, he held by the Compactata of Iglau. But this
came far short of the standard of papal orthodoxy. Pius II, who had long
pretended friendship for the king, at last won over to himself Matthias of
Hungary, and in separating him from George, threw off the mask. The articles
of Prague, allowing toleration to the Calixtines, were revoked, and George was
put under interdict.

Paul II (1465) was even more violent than his predecessor. In his zeal against
the Bohemian heretics, he dispatched a legate, Rudolf, Bishop of Lavant, to
Silesia, Saxony, and Bohemia, to preach up a crusade. The ambassadors of the
king were driven out of Rome with rods. A murderous war sprang up on the
frontiers of Bohemia between Catholics and Calixtines, each party branding its
prisoners with the cup or the cross. The invading hosts were manfully resisted,
but at this juncture (1471) the king died. Ladislaus of Poland, whom the
excommunicated monarch recommended on his deathbed as his successor,
adopted another policy. He persecuted the Calixtines in order to conciliate the
pope. A revolt took place. The exasperated citizens threw the Burgomaster out
of the window of the council-house, and beheaded some of the town
councilors. Their most furious attack, however, were directed against the
priests and monks. Tranquility was at last restored by the sons of the late king
and Ladislaus consenting to treat the Utraquists with less rigor.

The pope moreover found violent measures impolitic. He determined to try
what kindness could effect. He withdrew therefore the excommunication and
crusade, and, agreeably to the Compactata declared the Bohemians, the
Utraquists included, good sons of the church.

All this however was but a temporary expedient, demanded by the emergency.
The oppressive measures were only deferred to a time more favorable to their
execution. A short interval only elapsed before the administrators of the
Utraquistic consistory, and several other ministers, were arrested and
imprisoned. Some were put to the rack, or treated with such severity that they
did not long survive.

On the twenty-first of August, 1480, Michael Pollack, curate of St. Giles in Old
Prague, a man of irreproachable character and distinguished for his eloquence,
and three other curates, were seized, because they had called the pope
Antichrist, and conveyed to the royal castle (Karlstein), where Pollack perished
of hunger and hardship, and the others were scarcely released at the
intercession of the states. Other persons were banished, or, apprehensive of
danger, fled the city. Among the latter were Lucas of Prague—subsequently a
bishop of the Brethren—and his friend John Nix, a man of learning. The king
moreover prohibited the singing of certain Hussite hymns, and when the
prohibition was disregarded, the transgressors were committed to prison, and
some were put to death by torture.
The monks, who had become more bold and even extravagant in their rage, "condemned the Hussites to hell." It was in vain that the people murmured. The magistrates of Prague conspired with the nobility opposed to reform, to exterminate the Calixtines. Various royal edicts of a persecuting nature were issued, and the night of the twenty-fourth of September, 1483, was long remembered as one that threatened to become almost as memorable for wholesale massacre as the French St. Bartholomew's of the succeeding century.

The plot, however, was discovered. A great uproar took place among the people. Three public halls, and all the monasteries were plundered, and several monks and senators were killed. Ladislaus, at first indignant, refused to interfere when he learned how great had been the provocation offered to the Utraquists.

In the public diet of 1485, the king, who seems to have become disgusted with the harsh measures of the persecutors, ordered a treaty to be confirmed between the opposing parties. They were required to promise mutual toleration and friendship. But in spite of this, mutual hatred still continued. The Calixtines as well as the Brethren were for many years subjected to vexatious and harassing modes of persecution. Some of the more yielding among them joined the Catholic church. Others steadfastly adhered to their peculiar views, and refused to accept the ordination of the Romish bishops. Some of their preachers were sent to Armenia, with commendatory letters from the University of Prague (1499). As reports of the Bohemian heresy had already reached that country, they were closely examined. But their general agreement of doctrine with the Armenian church, especially in the use of the vulgar tongue in church service, secured their approval, and they were consequently ordained. Among them were Martin of Tabor and his deacon, who were afterwards burned by their persecutors at Raudnitz. At length, after the appearance of Luther, the Utraquists—many of them—preferred the ordination of the reformers of Wittenberg to that of the Catholics.

The Brethren, meanwhile, notwithstanding the harshness of their treatment, were increasing in numbers. To the false accusations brought against them before the king, they replied by presenting him a confession of their faith (1493), and a refutation of the crimes laid to their charge. No one can read their "Agreement," drawn up by the Brethren in the mountains of Richenau, and "given forth by the seniors," as their bishops were called, without an admiration of its kindly, Christian, and Evangelical spirit. "Before all other things," it proceeds to say, "we have agreed among ourselves, that we will preserve to ourselves the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ in purity, and confirm it in righteousness which is of God, abiding together in love, and putting our trust in the living God. This we are faithfully to manifest, in word and deed. One is to assist another faithfully in love, to lead a blameless life, and be exercised in humility, submission, meekness, continence, and patience, in order to prove
thereby that we have a true faith, real love, and sure hope, which is laid up for us. We have also agreed together that we will unanimously observe a willing and perfect obedience, even as the scriptures, given of God, enjoin upon us. One is to receive of another, instruction, warning, exhortation, and correction in the way of brotherly kindness, thereby to keep the covenant which we have made with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, in spirit. We have also unanimously agreed to strengthen one another in the truth which we confess, by the grace of the Lord, according to the measure which is given to each of us, and willing to do and undertake everything which shall be judged conducive to edification and improvement; but especially to observe Christian obedience, to acknowledge one another in want and poverty, to be humble and in subjection, to have the fear of God always before our eyes, to improve after exhortation or correction, and acknowledge our guilt before God and man. But if one be found not to abide in all these, and refuse to keep the covenant made with God, and likewise with faithful Christian brethren, we declare with sorrow that we cannot ensure such a one of his salvation; but the result may be, that we shall withdraw from him, and be under the necessity of excluding him from our communion in divine service. And if one be overtaken in a grievous sin, or in a decided heresy, for which he ought to be put away, we cannot readmit him, until he has entirely purged himself from it, and evidently amended his life. It has been moreover determined, that everyone is to abide faithfully in his calling, and in all things to keep a good conscience, according to the apostolic injunction. The priests and teachers in particular are to set a good example, and in word and deed so to behave toward others that punishment and reproof may be avoided."

Faithful to the principles and rules thus clearly announced, the lives of the Brethren extorted praise even from their persecutors. The constancy of their faith and the purity of their morals were exemplary. One wretch, who had been a main instrument of their persecution by the slanders to which he testified, refused longer to perjure himself, and confessed that he knew no ill of the Brethren. His testimony had been accounted so important, that he had been taken by the persecuting party from village to village, and city to city, that he might retail his calumnies in the audience of the people. Copies of his confession were sent where he could not be taken in person. In this manner it was sought to overwhelm the Brethren with odium. But the conscience of the wretch smote him for his perjury, and he was terrified by the apprehension of the mischief which he was bringing down, in the basest manner, upon the heads of the innocent.

This event tended much to the furtherance of their cause. Many were led, from curiosity or other motives, to frequent the meetings of the Brethren. Some began to do it privately and in disguise; but what they saw won their approval, and at last led them openly to join the calumniated and persecuted disciples. Among the accessions to their ranks were several of the nobility of Bohemia and Moravia, who, in various districts, erected for them churches and houses of
prayer. The king, moreover, was favorably impressed by a perusal of their confession and apologies, and mitigated the severity of his persecuting edicts. He even received with favor to his Bohemian kingdom a portion of the church of the Brethren who had been driven from Hungary, and for several years had dwelt in Moldavia.

A favorable influence upon the condition of the Brethren was also exerted by the political events of the time. Ladislaus, upon his accession to the throne of Bohemia (1471), had succeeded to the position and duties of George de Podiebrad, as the enemy of Matthias of Hungary. Eleven years later (1482) the common interests of Ladislaus and the emperor in opposing him, cemented between them an alliance which resulted in the defeat of Matthias near Bruck on the Leytra. But, the latter, regaining strength, laid siege to Vienna, whose inhabitants vainly employed help of the emperor. The city fell into the hands of Matthias (1485), but by the generous aid of Albert of Saxony, he was soon after defeated. In 1493, Maximilian succeeded his father Frederic on the imperial throne. A milder policy for a time prevailed. The daughter of Ladislaus was married to the Archduke Ferdinand, son of Maximilian, and Bohemia was thus again brought under the control of the house of Hapsburg. During most of this period the external dangers of Bohemia and the empire, whose interests were one, withdrew attention from the Taborites and Calixtines. These might be regarded as well-nigh subjected, while the Turk, thundering at the gates of Christendom, excited papal anxiety and more general apprehension.

Strange as it may seem, the Calixtines were now more disposed to persecute the Brethren, than were the party avowedly papal. Their aim was to retain the cup, and yet be allowed the name of Catholic. They wished to have their bishops consecrated at Rome. To recommend themselves, it seemed politic to appear as distinct as possible from the maligned and hated "Picards." Hence they were jealous of their reputation, and willingly adopted even persecuting measures to vindicate it from the reproach of common sympathy with the Brethren. One result of this course however, was, to drive the more honest and conscientious of the Calixtines over to the persecuted body. The closing period of the fifteenth century witnessed the slow but sure increase of the churches of the Brethren. Although far from being unmolested, they yet enjoyed comparative rest. At the commencement of the sixteenth century, their churches numbered two hundred in Bohemia and Moravia. Almost all their communities possessed each their own house of prayer. The scriptural simplicity of their rites and the purity of their doctrines were confirmed by their familiarity with the sacred writings. They procured the printing of two editions of the Bohemian Bible, the first at Venice, and the second at Nuremberg. But these were insufficient to supply the demand, and three presses were procured, and employed in Bohemia for the printing of Bibles alone. The version used was a translation of the Vulgate, and answered its purpose for a hundred years.
The short peace of the Brethren was soon disturbed by fresh troubles. Some of them had gone so far in the zealous defense of their non-resistance tenets, as to declare that a Christian could not with a good conscience hold civil office or bear arms. These propositions were represented to the king as of dangerous tendency, and in the diet of 1503, he was urged to extirpate them from the kingdom. Several of the states protested against these insinuations, asserted the innocence of the Brethren, and opposed the cruel measures which were contemplated. But when the friends of the Brethren had withdrawn from the assembly, their enemies prevailed upon the king to sign a persecuting decree.

Against this the Brethren entered their remonstrance. The king changed his mind, and sought to bring about a union between them and the Calixtines. With this view he directed that some of their principal preachers should visit Prague, and confer with the professors of the university and the Calixtine consistory. Though apprehensive of a plot against them, the Brethren complied with the command (December, 1503). But on the very day on which the conference was to have been opened, their most bitter enemy, the rector of the university, died. None of the rest dared to meet them in a public discussion. They were afraid of being confounded in argument in the presence of the citizens. The conference was deferred from day to day, till under various pretexts it was altogether abandoned.

From time to time, however, the work of persecution was revived. The views of the Brethren, as maintained in their apologies, were studiously misrepresented. Their non-resistance principles especially were so perverted by their enemies as to make them objects of odium and contempt. In 1508 this malice threatened to break out in a more violent manner. The Roman Catholic bishops succeeded by flattery in obtaining from Ladislaus several severe decrees against the Brethren. These were met by a presentation to the king of their confession. This, with their apologies, was all the resistance they could offer to the measures of their persecutors. Yet if anything could have justified a departure from their principles by the use of physical force, it was the decree of August 10, 1508. In this it was commanded that "all Picardines, without distinction of sex or age, should be punished with death." An anecdote in this connection illustrates the fearless spirit of the Brethren, notwithstanding their view of non-resistance. The chancellor, Albert, on his return from the diet where the decree had been ratified, paid a visit to the Baron of Coldicium, and reported to him what all had agreed upon. The baron turned to his servant Simon, one of the Brethren, and asked him how he liked it. "All have not agreed to it," was his reply. "Who are they," asked the chancellor, "who dare oppose all the states of the kingdom?" "There is in heaven," replied the servant, lifting up his hand, "One, who if he were not present at your counsels, you have taken counsel in vain."

The murderous character of the edict disgusted some of the principal nobility. Through their opposition its execution was deferred. But in 1510 it received the
second assent of the states, and to some extent was enforced. Many of the Brethren became its victims. Numerous were the cases of imprisonment. Some were mutilated, some burned, and some put to death by drowning. All varieties of torture were employed to subdue the constancy of the martyrs. So far did the power of persecution prevail, that divine service could only be performed in secret, save in the district of Baron Schwamberg.

Already, as we have seen, the Brethren had sought to discover in other lands Christian organizations to which they could extend their sympathy and communion. These they had found among the Waldenses alone. Their effort was now (1486) renewed. Previous to this they had made the matter a subject of deliberation. But in the synod of that year they gave evidence of their large views and liberal spirit. They declared that the Catholic church of God was not limited to any visible society of believers, but was to be found in any part of Christendom, wherever the holy Catholic faith, agreeable to the truth of God, prevailed. Again they sent forth brethren to Rome, Italy, France, and the Waldenses, to search out those whom they might recognize as their spiritual kindred. They longed to enjoy the assurance that somewhere in the world there were those whose doctrines and worship were mainly identical with their own; that in their isolation, they were not altogether separate from spiritual kindred who in other scenes and other lands were bearing testimony to a pure gospel.

Some whom they sent out on this novel errand of searching for Christian brethren, went to Greece, to Russia, to Scythia, to Egypt, to Constantinople, and to Thrace. Others visited France, Rome, and various parts of Italy. Their report is indeed striking and significant. They found, they said, sighing souls, but no organized church with which they could unite. Hence, at a synod at which the report was made (1489), it was resolved: "If God anywhere in the world should stir up righteous teachers and reformers of the church, they would make common cause with them." Such was the truly catholic spirit by which they were animated.

The fame of Erasmus had already reached Bohemia. The Brethren looked to him—a Biblical scholar—with some degree of hope. In 1511 they presented to him their confession of faith—the same which had been exhibited to Ladislaus in 1480. They asked him to point out its errors, or show them in what respects it could be improved. True to his nature, the timid scholar gave it his secret approval, but advised them to keep quiet. He excused himself from coming out openly in their favor, as it would only injure himself and do them no good. In some of his writings, however, he expressed himself favorably in regard to them.

The interval between this and the appearance of Luther as a reformer, was one of sore trial to the Brethren. They were rarely left unmolested in the enjoyment of religious worship. They grew weary of their state of isolation,
separated from the rest of the religious world. Their condition was, with many at least, that of seeming, if not actual, schism from the Christian body. Some proposed that they should reunite with the Calixtines, in the hope of peace and larger usefulness. The subject was brought before one of their synods. Here it was decided, that if in another church than their own a priest of pure doctrine and holy life was to be found, it was a subject for gratitude to God; but this was no sufficient reason for reunion or communion with a church which had been left because of its errors. The successor of the priest might be a man of a totally different character. Even though one might not enjoy the membership of a properly organized church, all might keep the unity of the spirit and of the body of Christ. Nor was it without danger for believers to forsake privileges accompanied by divine grace among themselves, to seek them among strangers. In case there should be found many priests of another church united together in the work of a faithful ministration of the word of God, and properly constituted, they were not to be despised; but the elders of the churches of the Brethren were to see whether, in some way, a union might not be effected with them. In case they were found to hold the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, they were to be obeyed and listened to as teachers. If in this respect they did not agree with the Brethren, they were not to be condemned, but treated with kindness, both that the purity of faith might be preserved, and themselves brought to the enjoyment of clearer light. "Finally," say they, "we recognize no multitude or assembly, however numerous, as the church catholic, that is, as containing the entire number of believers, so that outside of it are none of God’s elect; but wherever the sole catholic Christian faith is kept in truth, according to God’s word, in whatever part of Christendom, there is the holy catholic church, out of whose communion there is no hope of salvation."

CHAPTER XX

Reformation in Germany
The Brethren

For a whole century the Taborites and the United Brethren—as the followers of Huss—had borne their testimony against the apostasy and errors of the Roman Catholic church. Their enemies had persecuted them with calumny and violence. Pen and sword had been employed against them without scruple. The harshest measures had been adopted to shake their constancy. Beyond their own neighborhoods they were known by the odious name of Picards. In all Germany there was scarcely to be found an individual who had any proper acquaintance with their character or doctrines.

But their revolt against the dominant hierarchy was now to be justified in a most striking manner. They were to find whole nations unconsciously arraying
themselves upon their side. Germany, from the days of the council of Constance, had been indignantly demanding reform, but her cry had been smothered. Instead of meeting the demand, the hierarchy only became more hopelessly corrupt, until the evil was no longer to be borne. An earlier reformation might have been less radical, but ecclesiastical authority and interested opposition had resisted and turned back the current of popular feeling, until now, become resistless, it broke over all restraint. Luther came forward, the exponent of long suppressed convictions, the champion of a purer Christianity, the leader in the cause of reform; and the Brethren, who had long waited and watched for the appearance of one to whom they could extend the hand of fellowship, greeted him, ere yet his prejudices against them had given way, as a fellow laborer in their own great work.

Tardily, but surely, the career of Huss and the bold views he had put forth were vindicated from that very direction from which the bitterest hostility against him had proceeded. Germany had been taxed and plundered and abused, till her patience was exhausted. As the noble gave up his broad forests to the tramp of beasts, that he might himself enjoy the pleasures of the chase, so papal avarice seemed to hold Germany in reserve as the hunting ground of ecclesiastical extortion.

The Germans had been a patient people. They had borne the yoke of Rome long and well. They had complained and submitted, till it seemed their habit. The grossest impositions, the most absurd dogmas, and the coolest impudence of ecclesiastical assumption, had failed to produce revolt. Rome felt that she might venture further. There was yet “in the lowest deep” of her avarice, “a lower deep” of unscrupulous and unblushing audacity. Alexander VI, whose unnatural vices and monstrous crimes had so eclipsed those of John XXIII that the latter appeared almost as a saint by his side, had done all it was possible to do to make the Papal See odious to Christendom. His successor, Leo X, while patronizing ancient and modern art, surrounded himself with the splendors of the old Roman mythology, with heathen deities, and all the forms of polished licentiousness. The immense expense occasioned by the erection of St. Peter’s at Rome, drained Germany and even Europe of its wealth, and an avaricious ingenuity was set at work to invent new methods of extortion, or wring new tribute from exhausted provinces. Novel taxes were imposed. Forms of penance were multiplied. The periodical recurrence of the jubilee at Rome was reduced successively from one hundred, to fifty, thirty-three, and finally twenty-five years. Millions of money were poured into the papal treasury, but the cry was still heard, “Give, give.”

The system of indulgences was subjected to a new process of development. It was elaborately drawn out, and shaped by chancery rules. Absolution was made a matter of traffic. Bills of exchange on the court of heaven might be had on demand, for the premium in money. Scarce a sin could be imagined—scarce a crime ever known in the realm of the actual or ideal—but had its price. In
political intrigue and treachery, papal artifice won the palm over every competitor. The difference between the papal and secular courts seemed to be merely that the latter could not dissolve the obligation of their own oaths.

The depravity of the church was such that good men shuddered to think of it. Everywhere it was to be met. The heart was diseased, and the whole body suffered. When the pope was a devil incarnate, it is not strange that prelates and priests copied from the model. Hypocrites and idlers abounded. Nobles were elevated to bishoprics, and used the vast revenues of the church to revel in wanton luxury. The priests were proverbially ignorant, brutal, and drunken. But one in ten—by a concession of the popes—was required to study. The obligations of celibacy were unscrupulously eluded. The wealthy priests had poor vicars in their pay, who for the merest pittance discharged the drudgery of visitation, preaching, and clerical duty. The disorders of the monasteries and convents equaled those which had provoked in Bohemia the vengeance of Zisca. The wealthy abbots vied with the powerful secular lords.

As to the monks, John of Goch said at Mechlin, that "they did what the devil was ashamed to think." The abuses of the church in respect to relics were in some instances so ridiculous as to disarm indignation. Many a saint had several genuine bodies and innumerable limbs. A collection of the curiosities of ecclesiastical resources for revenue would have formed a rare museum for inspection. It would have had the chemise of the virgin, six feet long; the drum on which the march of the Jews was beaten as they crossed the Red Sea dry-shod; a piece of the head of Tobias’ fish; at least five hoofs of the ass on which Christ rode into Jerusalem, and numerous other treasures, well known alike in Germany and in England, and long before made familiar by Erasmus’ wit and by Chaucer’s rhymes.

To all these things are to be added the burlesque sermons, the Ass’ and Fools’ festivals,’ the buffooneries in the churches, and the sacrilegious traffic in indulgences, which finally exhausted even German patience, and placed the northern portion of the empire in an attitude of revolt against Rome.

In a way not unlike that by which Huss was led to take the position he did, Luther was trained for his work. The cause to which he devoted himself was the same—the vindication of a pure Christianity from corrupting innovations of past centuries. His fundamental position, moreover, was that that of Huss—the supreme authority of the word of God. As the tones of his clarion voice rang out over Germany, hosts of friends rallied to his side. In the printing press he found an ally which Huss never had. His sermons and invectives were printed and circulated—hawked abroad by colporteurs through the cities and villages of the laud. The pulpit of Wittenberg had a thousand sounding-boards—awoke a thousand echoes. Rome was boldly impeached, before the tribunal of the public opinion of Christendom, of high crimes and misdemeanors. Consternation was excited among the advocates of the old abuses. There was
alarm at the court of Rome. The eyes of Europe were directed toward the fearless monk who had dared to burn the papal bulls, and fling forth his challenge against the world.

We cannot be surprised, therefore, that, among a people holding such views as those of the Brethren, the appearance of Luther, as the German reformer, was heartily welcomed. Nowhere did his labors excite more hope and attention than in Bohemia. Many of the Utraquists or Calixtines, as well as of the Brethren, preferred the ordination of the reformers of Wittenberg to that of the Roman Catholic church. Two years after the publication of Luther’s celebrated theses (1519), his principles had found their way to Prague. Matthias the hermit, arriving there as a pilgrim, publicly preached the doctrines of the Reformation, in connection however with peculiar opinions of his own. Many were won over to his views, but were subjected in consequence to repeated imprisonments.

The celebrated Thomas Munzer followed Matthias (1521). The sympathies of the Brethren were already strongly enlisted on the side of Luther. In 1523 they sent two of their number to congratulate him, and render an account of their doctrine and discipline. So satisfactory did these appear, and so gratified was he upon a perusal of their writings, that he publicly declared that the prejudice which he had hitherto entertained against them was unfounded. Some questions of church order for a time interrupted the friendliness of their intercourse, but in 1532 Luther printed their confession at his own press, and testified to the futility of his own suspicions in regard to the Brethren, declaring that, notwithstanding diversities of discipline and ceremony, they must be acknowledged, with all true believers, to belong to the one fold of Christ. “Although I cannot accept,” he says, “the Brethren’s forms of expression, I will neither urge nor force them to adopt mine, so long as in fact there subsists a real unity between us.” In 1535 he wrote to Melanchthon on the subject: “While we are agreed in the main articles of Christian doctrine, let us accept one another in love, nor let the dissimilarity of usages and ceremonies separate our hearts.” Another deputation, in the following year (1536), again urged a stricter church order; but Luther excused himself from compliance, on the ground that things were not ripe for it, nor had he leisure to attend to it amid the many tasks imposed upon him by his opponents in controversy.

In 1540 still another deputation was sent to Wittenberg, with the same request. It was headed by John Augusta, senior or bishop of the Brethren, who in 1524 had studied at Wittenberg, and whom Luther highly esteemed. After his return to Bohemia—under a compulsory decree of the emperor, who wished to prevent the further spread of the Reformation in his dominions, and to this end commanded all his subjects under pain of severe penalties to leave Wittenberg—he still kept up a correspondence with the German reformer. Luther received his former pupil with the utmost kindness, and promised that so soon as sufficient quiet was restored he would act upon the subject. As Augusta took
leave, he extended to him, in the presence of the other professors, the right hand of fellowship, exclaiming, "Be ye the apostles of the Bohemians; I and mine will be the apostles of the Germans." "I admonish you in the Lord," so he wrote Augusta afterward, "that ye persevere with us to the end in the communion of the spirit and of doctrine."

At Prague, meanwhile, the different parties became more divergent and alienated from one another. In 1523, under the impulse and encouragement of the Lutheran reformation, the influence of which had powerfully extended to Bohemia, it was proposed in a meeting of the states to adopt articles looking to the promotion of the cause of reform. These articles were of a moderately Protestant character; but they were strenuously opposed by Gallus Zahera, curate of Tein church in Old Prague. Zahera had resided at Wittenberg, and had been reputed a friend of Luther. But his time-serving policy led him to abandon his former principles, and he became an intolerant Calixtine.

It was at this juncture that the pope, apprehensive of the spread of the reformation in Bohemia, sent his legate to Prague. The latter, upon his arrival, wrote to several persons of influence, among others to Zahera, insinuating with much flattery the idea of a union of the churches. The party of John Passack of Wrat, elected chief magistrate of the city, was now in the ascendant, and to this Zahera joined himself.

This new party, in the name of the consistory, extended a favorable reply to the legate. Articles were drawn up which looked toward a union of the Calixtines with the papal party, and the influence of the king and pope, of Passek and Zahera, was employed to enforce them. They were imposed upon the laity as well as the clergy, and whoever refused to subscribe to them was banished from the city. Six preachers, including Martin of the Bethlehem church, were driven from their posts. Sixty-five of the principal citizens shared the same fate. The Evangelicals were charged with conspiring to destroy their enemies. Three citizens were put to the rack to extort a confession. Others were scourged, others branded, and still others cast into prison. The progress of the cause of reform was checked by these measures of cruelty and violence.

For several years this harsh policy prevailed. Scenes of horrid barbarity were not infrequent. The hermit Matthias, the earliest preacher of Lutheran doctrines in Bohemia, whose unassuming manners and irreproachable life had secured him universal respect, was no longer suffered to speak, as he had been wont, in the streets and in the marketplaces. He had admonished Zahera for his apostasy and evil-doings, and had thus invited the vengeance of the persecutor. Invited to a conference, he was seized and cast into prison, and subsequently banished. The fate of Nicolas Wrzetenarz was still more cruel. He, with his aged housekeeper, who shared his faith, was condemned to the flames. Both met with a cheerful and heroic spirit their terrible fate.
time to time the funeral pile was lighted, but brighter than its flames glowed the faith of its victims.

Meanwhile the influence of the reformation had extended into the Austrian dominions. The doctrines of Luther were preached at Vienna by Paul von Spretten (Speratus), and were widely disseminated in the whole country around. In spite of violence, the new opinions made progress. Speratus was banished, and his successor, Tauler, was condemned to the stake. Hubmaier of Waldshut was also burnt. But fresh preachers, patronized by the nobility, arose to disseminate their views, and the emperor, engaged in a contest with the Turk, was constrained to leave them for the most part unmolested. In 1528 he found that almost the entire Austrian nobility had embraced Lutheranism. In 1532 the estates demanded religious liberty, and in 1541 they repeated their demand with new emphasis. For ten years, previous to 1538, not a single student in the University of Vienna had turned monk.

During this period Bohemia had fallen, by the death of Louis, to the Archduke Ferdinand, who, to distance his rivals and win the Calixtines, initiated a milder policy. There was good reason for it. Persecution might well by this time have grown weary in its task. The people became disgusted with such scenes of intolerance. Several who had been foremost in the cruel work, were overtaken by sudden and startling calamity, which was regarded in the light of divine vengeance for their crimes. One hung himself in his own house, and was secretly buried. Zahera was banished, and ended his life miserably in Franconia. The king, Ferdinand, on his accession to the throne, changed the city council, and the year 1530 was a season of jubilee to the exiles, who were allowed to return.

Better prospects now opened before the Brethren. As the reformation spread, they found new sympathizers, and a deeper interest was taken in their condition and doctrines. Their fame went abroad. At Strasbourg, Capito and Bucer heard of them. They wrote to inquire more carefully in regard to their views and usages. They even sent one of their number, Matthias Erythreus, to obtain fuller information. So satisfactory was the report, and so grateful to the feelings of Bucer, that at the assembly of the Strasbourg theologians he could not restrain himself from tears. "I believe," so he wrote to the Brethren, "that at this present time ye are the only ones among whom not only a pure doctrine, but a becoming, gentle, and useful church order prevails."

Calvin was present at the time at Strasbourg. He was deeply interested in the accounts which he received of the Brethren, and, in the church constitution which he afterward framed at Geneva, adopted several of their peculiar principles. Thus the influence of the Brethren reached both the leading reformers of the sixteenth century. Without becoming involved in any of their peculiar controversies, they had the sympathy, friendship, and respect of both, extending to each the hand of Christian fellowship.
From this period, their cause is identified with that of the Reformation generally. In the hopes and fears of the German protestants, they likewise shared. The merciless resolve of Charles V to crush out the reformers from every part of his dominions excited in their behalf the ardent sympathy, not only of the Brethren, but to a great extent of the Bohemian Calixtines.

At the time of the celebrated league of Smalcald, the authority of Ferdinand over his subjects was insufficient to enable him to procure levies from Bohemia to aid the imperial arms. The object of the war was to crush what the Brethren regarded as their own cause. Here they were sustained by a large portion even of the Calixtines. So strong were the feelings of repugnance and disgust at the demand of Ferdinand for auxiliary troops, that the states and free towns, one and all, excused themselves from compliance. On the ground of their common faith, as well as that of their ancient confederacy with the house of Saxony, they declined acceding to the demand.

This provocation was not forgotten by Ferdinand. When the triumph of the emperor’s arms had laid Germany at his feet, the crime of the Bohemians was recalled, and they were charged with rebellion. Ferdinand entered Bohemia with his victorious army, and seized the city of Prague (1547). The “bloody diet” was convened. Many of the nobles, barons, and citizens were thrown into prison. Some were scourged, others beheaded. Some were almost beggared by the heavy fines imposed; others were utterly despoiled of their estates. Prague was deprived of its arsenal and all its privileges. Many of the inhabitants were banished, and more went into voluntary exile.

But while the rage of the king was directed against the Calixtines generally, the Brethren were especially pointed at as the authors of rebellion. Every effort was made to draw down upon them the hatred of the king. The calumnies against them were poured into willing ears, and the churches of the Brethren were first ordered to be closed. All who professed their doctrines were then commanded to leave the country, unless they would connect themselves with the Roman Catholics or the Utraquists. Six weeks only were allowed them to make their choice. The test was a severe one, but the Brethren met it in the spirit of martyrdom. Dear as their native land was to them, those who were able to remove preferred exile to a violation of their conscientious convictions.

Some, however, were not allowed to escape unmolested. The senior of the Brethren, John Augusta, was thrice tortured to extort from him a confession of his guilt, and when these measures failed, was cast into prison, where he remained for sixteen years. Many other teachers were arrested, and subjected to similar treatment. There was no safety but in flight.

The exiles emigrated for the most part in three divisions. The first, gathered from parts about Leitomischel, Bidschow, and Chlumer, amounting to five
hundred souls, passed with above sixty wagons through the country of Glatz and upper Silesia. The second band, consisting of three hundred, proceeded by the way of lower Silesia. The third, like the second, from Brandeis and Turnau, took the same route. Some of their deliverances upon their journey were remarkable. Several bands of robbers attempted to plunder them of their scant treasures. Their course led them through Poland, at that time entirely papal; yet a kind Providence carried them safe to their common destination at Posen, not without a large experience of sympathy and kindness from those who were of the same faith with their royal persecutor.

At Posen they were courteously and hospitably entertained, but even here they were not allowed to rest. An order was received from the king for their expulsion. They were thus forced to proceed, and directed their steps to the confines of Prussia. To Duke Albert of Brandenburg they sent a deputation, asking leave to settle in his dominions. At Königsberg they were examined by the Lutheran theologians, and by them were acknowledged as brethren. Seven towns, among them Soldau and Guidzin, were assigned them for their residence. The bishop, Paul Spretten (Speratus), a former pupil of Luther, who was well acquainted with their ritual and doctrine, showed them many tokens of Christian kindness.

One by one, as they were able to make good their escape, their teachers followed them. George Israel, pastor of the church of Turnau, who afterward became the apostle of the Poles, refused to allow his friends to pay the penalty of his non-appearance before the magistrate. Thanking them for their kindness, he appeared at the castle of Prague and surrendered himself. "It is enough," said he, "to have been once redeemed fully by the blood of Christ, and there is no need of being bought again by the gold of man." He was thrown into prison, but in the course of a few weeks made good his escape and followed his fellow exiles to Prussia.

Such of the Brethren as remained in Bohemia were subjected to the most cruel hardships. The Baron of Schanow was put to the rack to extort a confession of his having opposed the king. In the midst of his tortures, with heroic indignation, he bit off his tongue. When asked the reason of his conduct, he wrote, "If I tell the truth according to my conscience, you will not believe me; and that I might not be induced by pain to declare what is false against myself and others, I have disabled myself from speaking at all."

The baron died of the tortures that had been inflicted. He was a distinguished victim, and counted worthy of a distinguished fate. The humbler classes of the Brethren were subjected to vexations scarcely less cruel. It was decreed at Prague, that no one of suspected faith should be admitted to the workshops of the mechanics, or should be allowed the rights of citizenship. The act was confirmed by the king, and almost every kind of outrage against the hated "Picards" was perpetrated with impunity. If anyone was unwilling to pay his
creditor, he only needed to accuse him of "Picardism," and all was settled by
the banishment of the creditor. One man, for having in his possession a book of
one of the reformers on the sacraments, was scourged in the market-place, and
then banished. Another was branded on the forehead. Another was thrown into
a dungeon and there murdered.

A chapter of thrilling interest would be afforded by the history of the
martyrdoms of this period. Never was the heroism of Christian faith more nobly
illustrated. The victims met their fate with a constancy and a cheerfulness that
showed the strength of their convictions and the fervor of their devotion.
"Thither, where our God is, must I look," said one, lifting her eyes to heaven, as
the image of the cross was presented to her at the stake. They counted it "a
grace given them to suffer for the law of God." "On my wedding day," said one,
"I did not feel so happy as I do now."

The churches of the Brethren were now closed, and their ministers were
persecuted wherever they could be met. Some found temporary rest and
security in Moravia; others hid themselves in the daytime, but crept forth from
their holes and hiding places by night to comfort and instruct their suffering
brethren.

The Calixtines, moreover, were not left unmolested. In 1538 the communion of
the cup was prohibited by Ferdinand, in an order issued by him at Vienna. He
did indeed at one time solicit the pope for a grant of the cup, but his object
was merely to procure peace and prevent any further defection from the
papacy.

In the years 1554-5, emissaries of the newly founded order of the Jesuits had
found their way to Prague. They had been sent for the purpose of
"manufacturing genuine Catholic priests." It was a timely movement on the part
of Rome. "There were so few orthodox priests in Bohemia," says Pessina, "that
had it not been for the Jesuits, the Catholic religion would have been
suppressed." At first they spoke in the mildest tone. They assumed the most
bland and winning manners. All that cunning, zeal, perseverance, and genius
could accomplish, they effected. They laid hold of the court. They
condescended to the masses. At the confessional, in the pulpit, in the
lecturer’s chair, their power was felt. Among them "were saints, equaling in
faith the martyrs of old; poets, overflowing with philanthropy; bold and
unflinching despots; smooth-tongued divines, versed in the art of lying." While
the popes negotiated, they acted. They discerned the problem to be solved,
and set themselves to the task with fearless energy and unscrupulous policy.
Nothing seemed to them too desperate that might enlarge the authority of the
Papal See.

With the arts of the Jesuits, the feebleness of the king, as he advanced in
years, contributed to produce a relaxation of the severity employed against the
Protestants. The council of Trent disappointed the hopes and refused the demands of Ferdinand, and his previous zeal for orthodoxy was sensibly diminished. The closing years of the sixteenth century were years of comparative security and repose to the Brethren. Some of them screened themselves under the name of the Utraquists, to whom an almost complete toleration was allowed.

In 1562 Maximilian II succeeded to the throne, and soon after was elected emperor. His policy was more lenient. The Brethren were allowed, for the most part, freedom from molestation. A dangerous attempt against their privileges met with a signal failure. In 1563 the Arch-chancellor of Bohemia repaired to Vienna, and by continued importunity prevailed on the emperor to sign a persecuting decree against them. But on his return, exultant in his success, he was arrested in the execution of his designs. He had scarcely left the gates of Vienna and reached the bridge over the Danube, when the part upon which he stood sank under him, and he himself, with his suit and baggage, was plunged into the stream. Some fishermen hastened to the rescue of the chancellor, who had been seized by his gold chain, and supported in the water by one of his young attendants; but he was too far gone to be restored. The casket which held the persecuting edict was swept down with the current, and never recovered.

In the following year brighter prospects opened before them. They obtained the liberty of opening their places of worship, and engaging in public religious services. These privileges were granted by the emperor himself. When measures for enforcing conformity were about to be put in execution, the Brethren applied to him asking his protection. Their application was favorably received, especially when the emperor had perused their confession of faith, and they were left for a period unmolested. The principle of religious toleration was becoming popular at court. Maximilian had been educated by one who was himself a pupil of Melanchthon. His physician was John Crato, One of the Brethren whom Maximilian made his confidant. Once as they were riding together, the emperor lamented the religious dissensions of the empire, and asked Crato which, of all the various sects, approached the nearest to apostolic simplicity. "The Brethren, known as Picards," replied Crato, "may bear away the palm." "I think so too," was the significant testimony of the emperor. His mind was evidently strongly inclined to the reformed opinions, although he wished to preserve the Roman hierarchy. His disposition accorded well with that of his contemporary, Henry IV of France. His education and his tastes confirmed him in his convictions of the impolicy of attempting to restrict human belief. To force conscience he conceived to be to assail heaven, as he once told the Bishop of Olmütz. On one occasion he wrote to Paul Eber, at Wittenberg, "that he wished the pure gospel everywhere preached, though the Roman hierarchy should be retained." Catholic writers censure him for a neglect of duty in restraining the spread of heresy. It was even rumored abroad that he was a follower of the Lutheran doctrine.
This charge was not altogether without reason. In 1565, Maximilian urged Pius IV to abrogate the rule requiring the celibacy of the clergy. He granted the free exercise of their religion to the Austrian nobility, and to the cities of Lintz, Steyer, Enns, Freistadt, Gmunden, and Vœoecklabruck. He tolerated the introduction of the Protestant worship into Austria (1568) by Chytræus von Rostock. He allowed the Bible to be translated for the use of the Slavonians in Carniola, Corinthia, and Styria; and protected, even in Vienna, the Protestants as well as the Jesuits. He even boxed the ear of his son—afterward Rudolph II—for having attacked a Protestant church at the instigation of the Jesuits.

In 1566 the Bohemian Brethren dedicated their hymn-book to him. In the preface they ventured to say, "that the right form of the primitive church had been altered, the true worship abandoned, the light of truth made dim, the word of God adulterated, and the sacraments rent asunder; that error, superstition, and abuse had been introduced, and that the true doctrine must be again established." The confession of the Brethren, moreover, was kindly received. It was eminently evangelical, and met the warm approval of the theologians of Wittenberg (1575). To the petition of toleration presented by the Brethren, Maximilian replied, with the assurance that neither during his reign, nor that of his son, should they be molested.

It was during the period of comparative quiet that followed, that the Brethren pursued the task of a new translation of the scriptures, from the original Hebrew and Greek, into the Bohemian language. It was published with annotations, under the title of the "Brethren’s Bible." An excellent copy of this now rare work is still preserved in the museum of Prague.

During this favorable period, the Bohemian Brethren found themselves in a somewhat peculiar position. They were not the only Protestants of the kingdom, and each party of the Lutherans and Reformed strove to draw them over to their side. Repeated efforts were made to secure a more formal union. In 1557 a synod was held at Sleza in Moravia, which was attended by more than two hundred ministers, as well as a large number of Polish noblemen. A principal object of the convocation was to consider the proposed union of the Brethren with the Reformed of Poland and Switzerland. But there were great difficulties in the way, and nothing could be effected. In 1560 the attempt was renewed, at a synod held at Buntzlau, in Bohemia, the place of their principal settlement. A correspondence was opened with the Reformed, and the most kindly feelings were mutually expressed. At the Synod of Xyans, in the same year, the matter was brought to an issue. The Brethren dropped the title of bishop for that of elder; both parties retained their confessions; and the strict discipline of the Brethren was adopted, with slight modifications.

With the Lutherans, the Brethren encountered greater difficulties. In Poland the matter was prosecuted with most success, although even in other lands the seed of truth, scattered by the Bohemian exiles, had taken root and had begun.
to bear fruit. In this kingdom, soon after the period of the most extensive emigration, already referred to (1551), forty churches of the Brethren had sprung up. Although strongly reluctant to yield one iota of their church order and discipline—now endeared to them by the experience of a century and a half—the sympathies of the Brethren were warmly extended to all that embraced evangelical views. The subject of a union was discussed at the synod of Posen in 1567. No compromise could be effected, and the subject was remitted in the following year to the judgment of the Wittenberg theologians. Their advice was of a liberal and tolerant character. The result was that at a second synod at Posen in 1570, both parties acknowledged the harmony between the Brethren's confession and that of Augsburg. Soon after, at the synod of Sendomir, the union of all the Protestants in Poland was accomplished (1578). The Consensus of Sendomir was the basis of compromise received and adopted, and for more than a century adhered to in Poland.

Each church retained its peculiar rites and usages, but obtained the benefits of a practical union and mutual aid. The scene that was witnessed on the publication of this agreement was deeply affecting. Many wept for joy, while the members of the synod, as they sang the Te Deum, gave each other the right hand of fellowship. Successive attempts were made to disturb this union of the different churches, but they all proved futile. In 1627, at the synod of Ostrog, a more entire union was effected between the Reformed and the Brethren, so that they were no longer distinctly known.

In Bohemia this period of calm was one of great external prosperity. Enlarged efforts were made to evangelize the land, and numerous synods were held. At one of these there were present, beside ministers, not less than seventeen of the most distinguished barons of Bohemia, and one hundred and forty-six nobles of inferior rank.

Meanwhile the Jesuits, although largely favored by the emperor, failed to stem the tide of religious and ecclesiastical reform. The number of the Calixtines as well as Brethren vastly increased. It contributed not a little to this result, that the priests of the papal party were not only few in number, but at once ignorant and infamous. Repeated complaints were made of their gluttony and drunkenness; in some cases, of their profanity and licentiousness. It were better, said some, to be altogether without curates than to have such. In evident contrast stood the scriptural simplicity of worship and doctrine, and the exemplary life, of the Brethren. A marked progress was manifest in the cause of evangelical reform.

With brief exceptions, the reign of Rudolph II was characterized by a tolerant spirit (1576-1612). In 1602, at the instigation of the Jesuits, the old edicts against the Picards were revived. The increasing number and prosperity of the Protestants began to excite apprehension lest Bohemia should soon be lost to the Papal See. "The principal Bohemian and Moravian nobility," says Pelzel,
"joined the Calvinists or Lutherans." At the urgent remonstrance of their enemies, the old severe measures were again resorted to. Their meetings were forbidden, their churches closed, and the Calvinists and Picards (Brethren) were ordered to leave the country. They were declared incapable of holding public office, or, if discharging such duty, they were deposed. Some of their schools and churches were either demolished or shut up. But the mind of the emperor was not without misgivings. When the news of the capture of Stuhlweissenberg, in Hungary, by the Turks, reached him, he is reported to have said, "Something of the kind struck my mind today, when I began to usurp the province of God, which is the province of conscience." The old decrees were again revoked. The Brethren for several years were left unmolested. The Bethlehem church, in which John Huss preached, was allowed to them as true followers of that faithful martyr, by the University of Prague. But they could not obtain possession of it. Three members out of twelve, however, were allowed them in the consistory of the university, and they were permitted to build themselves churches, and have advocates to maintain their rights. There were some, indeed, beside the papal party, who would have excluded them from toleration on the ground of their separation from the Calixtines, which might now be called—embracing as it did nearly two-thirds of the population—the national church; but the diet would not allow of their exclusion from the common privilege.

In their prosperity, however, they were subjected to a new danger. "With the freedom of religion," says Comenius, their historian and bishop, "there sprang up freedom of the flesh." They were more disposed to a laxity of principle and to worldly conformity. But this danger was to be but of brief duration.

CHAPTER XXI

Protestantism in Bohemia,
down to the Close of the Thirty Years’ War

The closing years of the sixteenth century were, to the Protestants of Bohemia, years at once of security and of danger. The lenient policy of their rulers had disarmed their fear, while the seed sown by Jesuit policy was springing up to its harvest. Ferdinand had need of the aid of his Protestant subjects to meet the expenses of the Turkish war. Maximilian II leaned from conviction toward the doctrines of the Brethren, and Rudolph II, though educated by the Jesuits, was not a promising pupil. A pedant rather than a king, he indulged his learned indolence in the arts of the laboratory rather than in the arts of statesmanship, and buried himself from the sight of his subjects in his museum of curiosities and antiques.
But while the Protestants were almost unmolested, and were rapidly increasing in numbers, their Jesuit antagonists were not idle. If the first had acquired the ascendancy in Austria, and to a large extent in Bohemia, the latter had seized upon the seats of learning, and presided over the education of those who were destined to wield the scepter. Maximilian had tolerated both. The rival elements of future strife had been developed side by side. The papacy, moreover, was regaining its lost vigor. The tiara no longer rested on the brow of John XXIII, or on that of an Alexander VI. Paul IV commenced the restoration. Pius IV, through the decisions of the council of Trent, reorganized if he did not regenerate the hierarchy. Pius V exchanged the milder policy that had prevailed, for the sword and fagot, sanctioning, by precept and example, the cruelties of Alva in the Spanish Netherlands. Gregory XIII conciliated favor as the representative of Jesuit learning, and Sixtus V displayed the pomp of the old and undivided church. Protestant strength encouraged Protestant division. Henry IV, to secure himself against Spain, had sought the alliance of the Protestants of the German empire, but this hasty union was dissolved by his death (1610), while it had given occasion for the formation of a counter-alliance, the "Catholic League" (July 11, 1609).

The meaning of this league was well understood at Prague, for at this juncture the Protestants had just succeeded in extorting from Rudolph important religious immunities. The persecution of 1602 was scarcely passed, when, at the instigation of the Jesuits, and through pontifical suggestion, it was proposed to renew it. The success of the Protestants, and the spread of their doctrines, had been such as to excite apprehension lest the Roman Catholic church should be utterly exterminated from the land.

In 1605 the alarm was sounded at Prague by the archbishop, at the instigation of the pope. The principal nobles of Bohemia had joined the Lutherans, the Calvinists, or the Brethren, and the clergy became apprehensive lest their flocks should dwindle quite away. The archbishop, the Jesuits, the Capuchins, and the Roman Catholic nobility clamorously demanded of Rudolph severe and persecuting measures. They would have only "Catholics" and Utraquists tolerated in the kingdom.

Their demand was granted. Rudolph forbade the meetings of the Protestants, and decreed the banishment of the Brethren and the Reformed. None but "Catholics" might hold office. Schools were demolished, and churches closed. The archbishop had been enjoined by the pope "to destroy and root out heretical errors," and the work was now begun. Deeds of harshness and violence followed. Protestant preachers were expelled or silenced. The observance of the commemoration days of Huss and Jerome was prohibited. Special tortures were devised against offenders. Some were thrown to the hounds to be worried. Others were deprived of their ears or tongues. Others were tortured in subterranean vaults by incessant showers of water. Property was confiscated. The wafer was thrust down the throats of the victims by
force. Printers were forbidden to print Protestant books; and burial in the graveyards was denied to those of the evangelical faith.

But this state of things could not long continue. Policy was forced to revoke what justice should have forbidden. The Bohemians refused to aid Rudolph in the Turkish war, and he was forced to conclude a disadvantageous peace. At this very juncture, Hungary, where the Protestants were decidedly in the ascendant, demanded and obtained freedom of religious worship.

The grant had been made by the Archduke Matthias, brother of Rudolph, who witnessed with indignation the inefficiency of the emperor, and the impolicy of his administration. At a conference with the princes of the empire he was charged to interfere, and remedy the evils that had followed perverse counsels. Austria and Moravia were ripe for revolt, and were won to his banners by the promise of religious freedom. At the head of an army he proceeded to Prague, and, sword in hand, dictated terms to his brother.

In this measure he was encouraged by the state of things at Prague. The patience of the Protestants was exhausted, and the principal nobles were prepared to welcome one who came as their deliverer. Already the evangelical states had ventured to present to the emperor their demands. At the instance of Wenzel Budowa—a man of devoted piety, who uniformly opened the meetings for deliberation with singing, prayer, and a religious address—fifteen articles were drawn up, setting forth the claims of the Protestants. They were intended to secure the freedom of Protestant worship, and check the intriguing designs of the Jesuits.

These articles were approved and adopted by two hundred lords and three hundred knights, as well as by deputies from the royal cities. The imperial counselor, Martinitz, objected to them, but he was threatened with being cast from the windows if he persisted. Rudolph was forced to grant and ratify the demands of the Protestants, in regard to most of the articles (1608). Some however were rejected.

In the diet of the following year, the Protestants again presented their demands, and their warlike preparations showed that they were in earnest. Rudolph’s advisers favored compliance. Even the archbishop took this ground. Although with great reluctance, Rudolph accepted the advice. "He indignanty cursed his fate, which so meanly and disgracefully exposed him to the arrogance of the faithless, and deprived him of the only right of heirship." But the immanency of the danger forbade hesitation. The aid of Matthias might be invoked, and Rudolph himself lose the kingdom. The articles of the Protestants were embodied in a "charter," by which their rights were secured, and the charter was signed by Rudolph, July 9, 1609.
As intelligence of the concession went abroad, it was received with transports of joy. Budowa announced the signature of the charter, adding that now the Protestants, equally with the Jews of Prague, might enjoy full liberty of worship. The fifteenth day of July was celebrated as a day of thanksgiving, and a sermon was preached upon the occasion in one of the old Hussite churches of Prague that had long remained unopened. Throughout Bohemia there was great rejoicing over the restoration of religious privileges. Churches that had long been closed were opened, and new ones were erected. At Prague the German Lutherans erected themselves houses of worship. Evangelical schools were established, and within twelve years after the granting of the charter, the Protestant churches of the kingdom were estimated at about five hundred.

But the success of the Protestants was a new occasion of danger. The Jesuits regarded them with a jealous eye. There was a stealthy encroachment upon their privileges, and step by step the University of Prague was wrested from the control of the Calixtines. Nor was this all. Assured of the support, if not directly invited by Rudolph, the Archduke Leopold of Austria, who was also Bishop of Passau, entered the kingdom with an army of plunderers, and directed his efforts to the suppression of Protestant worship and the restoration of "Catholic" ascendency. But though ferociously orthodox himself, his troops were more brigands than soldiers. His violence and injustice united the Bohemians to repel his assaults, and recover the stolen booty. The troops of Hungary, by direction of Matthias, hastened to Prague, and the invaders were forced to retreat.

Rudolph did not long retain the scepter. Dejected and humiliated, he died January 20, 1612. He was succeeded by Matthias, who had already wrested from him the government of Bohemia, Silesia, and Lusatia. The Bohemians rejoiced in his accession to the throne, confident from his past course that he would concede to them their religious freedom. But, secure in his possessions, he no longer found it necessary to court the friendship of the Protestants. His confessor, moreover, was a Jesuit, Melchior Clesel, not an unfair specimen of his order. He was cool, crafty, sagacious. Mildness of manner concealed firmness of purpose, and, by stealthy measures, he prepared the way for the suppression of Protestant privileges. By wrong and outrage the Protestants were provoked to insurrection and rebellion, that a pretext might be found for a repeal of their charters. They appealed to Matthias. They remonstrated against the wrongs done them. But access to their monarch was denied. The Jesuit kept his ear if not his conscience, and the petitioners only made themselves obnoxious by their troublesome complaints.

Wearied out and exasperated by persistent injustice, they urged their "defenders" to active measures in vindication of their rights. It was in vain that the latter counseled patience. They were themselves suspected of weakness and cowardice. Continued provocation forced the oppressed to violent reprisal, and the long sought pretext for retaliation was given.
It increased the strength of Protestant indignation, that Matthias, old and childless, wished to adopt as his successor his cousin Ferdinand, of Styria, a grandson like himself of Ferdinand I. He attempted to dictate to the states, in violation of their privilege of electing their own monarch. All the resources of hope and fear, flattery and threats, were employed to overcome opposition. Several of the nobility, who could not be overawed, withdrew dissatisfied. Count Thurn, Fels, and others openly opposed the project. They understood too well the character of Ferdinand. Many of his measures for the suppression of Protestant worship in his hereditary states were well known. He had proved himself an inexorable zealot for the popish faith. He tolerated the Jews, yet prohibited Lutheran worship by three successive edicts. Ruled by his Jesuit confessor, Bishop Stobeus, of Laybach, he had banished Protestant ministers, burned Protestant books, and endeavored to subdue his people to a perfect conformity to the Roman church.

In spite of opposition, Ferdinand was elected (1617), although the Protestants secured his approval of their charters. But the value of such security was trifling. The guarantee of their religious freedom was not worth the parchment upon which it was recorded. Ferdinand was a pupil of the Jesuits, and their ready tool. At the age of twelve years he had been placed under the care of the bigoted Duke of Bavaria, and his education was conducted by the Jesuit professors of Ingolstadt. From the first he was instructed to abhor the heresy of the Protestants. His bigotry was of the true Spanish type. At the age of seventeen he returned to his hereditary states to put his principles in practice. For some years policy restrained him from open violence; but after he had sought in person at Loretto, with edifying devotion, the favor of the Virgin, and had received at Rome the apostolic benediction at the feet of Clement VIII, he was ready for his task.

Craftily and vigorously be proceeded to execute his projects. Dealing with his Protestant cities in detail, he succeeded, to the astonishment of Germany, in the suppression of Protestant worship throughout his dominions. He had found it in the ascendant. In a few years almost every trace of it was obliterated. Banishment, stealthy encroachment, annoyance, and persecution had done their work.

This success was due to the aid and counsel afforded by the Jesuits. All his steps were guided by the members of that order. “He yielded himself,” says a Roman Catholic author, “to the guidance of the clergy, but chiefly of the Jesuits and other monks, even in political affairs. Hence originated his great intolerance and hatred against all who would not be Roman Catholics.” His gloomy reserve secured him the reputation of exemplary devotion.

His character excited the distrust of the Bohemians, and with good reason. On the death of Matthias (1618), his policy began to be developed. Now were seen the fruits of his Jesuit training. When Clesel, Matthias’ confessor, mildly
expressed the hope that Bohemia would be leniently treated, Ferdinand was offended, and exclaimed, "Better a desert than a country full of heretics." His people, he resolved, should be of the same faith with himself. He is said to have declared that "he would rather, with his wife and children, beg his bread, staff in hand, from door to door, than have a heretic in his service, or tolerate one in his dominions." His own Jesuit confessor, more intolerant than Clesel, advised the extermination of the Lutherans; and no advice could have been more grateful. There was but one person in the world whom Ferdinand could have envied, and that was his bigoted model, Philip II of Spain.

Ferdinand was crowned in the Cathedral of Prague, by the Archbishop Lohelias. Almost immediately he withdrew from Bohemia, leaving the government in the hands of his creature, Slawata, a renegade Protestant, and Martinitz, a supple tool of the Jesuits. A harsh policy of encroachment on Protestant privileges was adopted. In spite of the charter, a strict censorship was established. Jesuit works alone were unmutilated. The new churches which the Protestants were erecting at Braunau and Klostergrab were ordered to be demolished, and the remonstrances of the aggrieved parties were treated with contempt.

The Jesuits felt that their hour of triumph had come. They were open and loud in their exultation. When Ferdinand, soon after his "reception," departed to be proclaimed in Moravia, they erected in Olmütz a triumphal arch, and among other decorations, they placed upon it the Austrian coat of arms. On one side of this was the Bohemian lion, and on the other, the Moravian eagle, both chained to it. Underneath was a sleeping hare, with open eyes, and the superscription, "This is natural to me." Such was the ridicule hurled at the Protestant states, who had allowed themselves, with their eyes open, to be chained and bound; and their feebleness was thus portrayed. From the pulpits they were openly derided and menaced. Count Thurn was deposed from his office as governor of the castle and keeper of the regalia, and his place was supplied by the Jesuit tool, Martinitz. An attempt was made to wrest the university from the control of the Protestants. The patience of the latter was exhausted, and a call for a meeting of the states at Prague was issued simultaneously from the Protestant pulpits. But the imperial councilors resolved to prevent the meeting. Martinitz and Slawata, already extremely odious to the evangelicals, were commissioned by the sovereign to prevent their assembling in the Caroline chamber; to summon the ringleaders; and to threaten them with punishment, unless they would remain quiet. The states, moreover, were required to repair to the palace to hear the mandate of the emperor, now absent from Prague, read to them. They appeared, listened to the reading of the document, received copies at their own request, and promised to return the next morning with their reply.

They did so. On the eventful May 23, 1618, they met together, and proceeded to the palace where the four councilors (governors) awaited their appearance. Among their number were some of the most prominent of the Bohemian
nobility—Thurn, Fels, Schlick, Raupowa, Lobkowitz, Kapliztz, and others. They were not without arms. They had pistols in their girdles, while the people who followed them were provided with muskets and sabers. All the avenues to the castle were occupied; and the leaders passed to the green chamber, where they consulted on the answer which they should return to the royal commands.

Count Thurn was the leading speaker. Though not a Bohemian by birth, he had estates in the kingdom, and had risen to posts of honor from which he had recently been removed. A thirst for vengeance, a restless and aspiring ambition, a burning indignation against the insults and wrongs of the Protestants, not without the impulse of his own impetuous zeal, combined to make him a reckless and headstrong counselor in this emergency. But he had the confidence of the Utraquists, and his burning words and unscrupulous daring bore down all the opposition which might have been offered by more cool or prudent counsels. He depicted in eloquent invective the wrongs of the Protestants, and designated the obnoxious advisers, from whom they had proceeded and by whom they were sanctioned. While these stood in the way, religious liberty would never be established in Bohemia.

He declared Martinitz and Slawata to be the principal offenders. They were said to have driven their evangelical subjects to mass with dogs and scourges; to have wrenched their mouths open that the wafer might be thrust down their throats; to have denied them the rites of marriage, baptism, and burial. These men, said Thurn, must be put out of the way. They must be made a sacrifice. Some opposed the rash and hasty decision, but others approved it, and a rush was made for the hall in which the councilors were seated. Paul of Rziczaz was the spokesman in the name of the Utraquistic states. He charged Slawata and Martinitz with being disturbers of the peace, and with having sought to deprive the Utraquists of their charter.

Each of them was now asked whether he had had a hand in the imperial mandate. Some who were with them remonstrated against this tumultuous and disorderly proceeding. Fels replied that they had nothing to say against Sternberg or Lobkowitz, but that Slawata and Martinitz, who were now put upon their defense, had on every occasion opposed the Utraquists.

At this critical moment, when indecision threatened to be fatal, and the Protestants had gone too far to retreat, one of their number, Wenzel Raupowa, called out, “The best way is, straight out the window, after the old Bohemian fashion.” These were fatal words. Some stepped forward to lay hold of one of their victims, when Lobkowitz interfered to lead them out of the room. But Martinitz and Slawata asserted their innocence, and prayed that if they were guilty they might be judged according to the laws. The matter, however, had gone too far; reconciliation or procrastination was now out of the question. Martinitz was seized by several at once, who bore him to the window and threw him out. He fell sixty feet, into the moat, but the force of his fall was broken
by a heap of dung, which saved his life. Slawata was next seized and treated in
the same manner, and the tragedy was completed by throwing down the
secretary, Philip Fabricius Platter, who was also implicated, after the other
two.

Singularly enough, not one of the three was killed; not even a limb was broken.
Platter was the first that was able to rise. He went back to his house in the Old
town, and hastily proceeded to Vienna to acquaint the emperor with what had
happened. The servants of Martinitz and Slawata, although fired upon in the
attempt, ran to their aid, and succeeded by means of a ladder in bringing them
over into the adjoining house of the Chancellor Lobkowitz. The means to
restore them were diligently and successfully employed. Thurn came and
demanded them, but the prudent and bold Polyrena softened down his fury by
assuring them that they were both in a pitiable state.

Martinitz soon after made good his escape. Cutting off his beard, blackening his
face with gunpowder, and disguising himself so as to defy recognition, he got
safe to the White Hill, and subsequently to Munich. Slawata was unable to
follow him, and he was allowed a physician, though kept under close guard.
The three men, grateful for their wonderful escape, united in the present of a
golden diadem, set with precious stones, to the Lady of Loretto.

There was danger lest the violence at the castle should be imitated in the city.
The multitude in their exasperation commenced an attack upon the Catholics,
but Thorn, mounting his horse, hastened to the place of danger, and
deprecated all violent proceedings. The Braunau prisoners, however, were set
at liberty.

The states immediately wrote to the emperor, acquainting him with what they
had done. In two successive letters, termed their apologies, they detailed the
grievous persecutions they had suffered, and vindicated the course they had
pursued. They united together in a league of mutual defense, and took
measures for their own security. The governor of the castle and the three
councilors were compelled to swear allegiance to the officers whom the Union
saw fit to appoint. One of the bishops, and the abbots of Strahow and Braunau,
were banished. A severe decree was issued against the Jesuits; they were
forced to evacuate their colleges at Prague, Krumau, Neuhaus, and Glatz, and
within fourteen days to leave the country. None was to grant them shelter, or
intercede for them. Thus, says Pelzel, did the Protestants make enemies of
those "who had in their hands the hearts of the Romanist monarchs."

Unwisely enough, the Protestants had now furnished their foes with the long-
sought pretext for violent retaliation. But aware of their danger, they
determined to anticipate it by timely measures. They knew what they would
have to expect from Ferdinand if he should be suffered unmolested to take
possession of the kingdom, and they therefore solemnly deposed him, and
elected Frederic V Elector Palatine, a Calvinist in his religious sentiments, as king of Bohemia. Undoubtedly they had felt that in the troubles which surrounded Ferdinand, and with the support which they expected from England or its continental allies in behalf of the son-in-law of the English monarch, they could safely maintain their cause.

But they had committed a great error. The very weakness of Ferdinand proved his security. The Catholic league, while he was pressed by Protestant invasion even at the gates of his palace in Vienna, came forward to his help. His own casting vote as king of Bohemia, and consequently imperial elector, secured for him, on the death of Matthias (1620), in spite of the protest of the Bohemians, the imperial crown. Frederic of the Palatinate, moreover, proved himself utterly unfitted for the post which he was called to fill. His Calvinistic sympathies, and imprudent measures in stripping the churches of their ornaments, alienated his Lutheran subjects, and when the league began to act in earnest in support of Ferdinand, Bohemia was the first to feel the weight of its vengeance. Its king was merely an encumbrance. Without energy himself, he only inspired his subjects with disgust, and alienated the sympathy of the German Lutherans, while he was coldly abandoned by his own father-in-law, the king of England.

And now commenced that terrible episode of crime, violence, plunder, and invasion, known in the history of Europe as "The thirty years’ war." The real date of its commencement is from May 23, 1618, when the imperial councilors were thrown from the windows of the royal palace at Prague. But it was some months before the cloud of vengeance burst upon the devoted country. At length it came. The emperor, recovering from his depression and humiliation at Vienna, was now prepared to subdue Bohemia. His army marched direct to Prague. Unprepared for the attack, the army that defended the city, and which consisted of Hungarians, Moravians, and Bohemians, was defeated in the battle of the White Hill, October 29, 1620. The weak monarch, though a manful resistance might have yet been offered, abandoned his capital, and earned by his brief residence the reproachful title of "the summer king." Prague lay at the mercy of the victor; and what that mercy would be, his own character only too clearly foreshadowed.

The days of Protestant ascendancy and even toleration, in Bohemia, were now numbered. The concentrated vengeance of the papacy, the emperor, and the Jesuits was poured out on the devoted land. It would be entering upon another and an arduous task to trace the fortunes of the Protestant states of Europe during the thirty years’ war, and, happily, there is no need of it, for it has been already done by an able hand. The horrors of war, carnage, devastation, and violence, fiendish cruelties and reckless deeds, marked with aggravated enormities the progress of the fearful drama. Generals like Wallenstein, Tilly, Pappenheim, and the wonderful Gustavus Adolphus, appeared upon the scene, and excited alternate hope and fear as they led their victorious hosts from city
to city. Europe at last sank exhausted under its own efforts; and after a whole
generation had been made to feel that war is the natural condition of humanity
on the globe, the exhausted combatants, worn out by their own efforts rather
than by defeats sustained from their foes, laid down their arms. German
Protestantism was secured from its imminent peril, but Bohemia and Hungary,
in the general pacification, were abandoned to their fate. This result was the
more readily acquiesced in, that already Protestantism was well-nigh crushed
out from these devoted lands. They scarcely dared to lift a voice of protest, or
to make their claims heard in the ear of Europe, and the sympathies of
Lutheran Germany abandoned Bohemia to its fate.

Under Rudolph and Matthias the condition of the country was enviable,
compared with what it now became under the rule of the bigoted Ferdinand.
From time to time gleams of light stole in upon her through the broken clouds,
as the beleaguering hosts were forced to tremble before a foreign foe. But for
the most part her feeble opposition was crushed. It could only break out in ill-
timed and ill-managed insurrections. Bohemia had her full share of the ravages
and cruelties of this dark period. The imperial will found nothing to stay its
vengeance. The palace of the mysterious, Mephistophelian Wallenstein, who
could convolve armies at a word, and whose nature was constituted without the
element of mercy, rose proudly, with menacing aspect, by the Hradschin of
Prague. A savage soldiery dragooned the trembling fugitives, till they
abandoned in exile their native land. Every attempt at national resistance was
trampled down. The choicest spirits of Bohemia sighed in prisons, or wandered
in foreign lands. Twenty-seven of her ablest defenders, in the opening scene of
the fearful drama of retribution, perished on the scaffold.

Nor was this the worst. The banished Jesuits, expelled by the states for their
incendiary principles and obnoxious measures, were readmitted at the point of
the sword. Volumes could not fitly display the results of the fact stated in that
single sentence. With them came back all that Bohemia had most to dread.
Ferdinand was only their bigoted tool. What with them was policy, with him
was principle. It may easily be imagined what was the nature of the measures
to be taken, when at that very time the English Jesuit Campian—a fair
representative of the order, for the order was as near as possible a unit in
spirit and sentiment—was saying, “The Lutherans and Calvinists ought to be
killed with the sword; they ought to be banished and oppressed; they ought to
be burned with fire, sulphur, and pitch; drowned in water; impoverished,
hunted down, deprived of their estates, annihilated; in a word, they ought to
be rooted out, and persecuted to death by every imaginable kind of excessive
torture and pain.” No wonder the Protestants should say, that they would
rather have the devil for their master than Ferdinand with his Jesuitical
principles. In his bitter intolerance, the most remorseless cruelties were
covered with the sanction of churchly zeal.
The battle of the White Hill was followed by a train of most odious crime and gratuitous outrage on the part of the emperor. Neither rank nor age was regarded. Of the twenty-seven distinguished citizens of Bohemia who perished on the scaffold, twenty-four belonged to the nobility. Some of them had grown gray in the imperial service. Men they were, of lofty patriotism, of heroic spirit, and of Christian principle. The history of the martyrs scarce furnishes a more sublime illustration of a triumphant faith than that afforded by the scenes of their imprisonment and execution. They might have said, each, with the Duke of Argyle, "I could die as a Roman, but I choose rather to die as a Christian."

Some of the sufferers were members of the Brethren church. One of them was Wenzel Budowecz of Budowa. For talents, learning, sagacity, integrity, and Christian zeal he stood foremost among them all. He has been called the last Bohemian, as Brutus was called the last of the Romans. When urged in prison to seek the clemency of the emperor, his reply was, "I will rather die than see the ruin of my country." "See my Paradise," said he, pointing to the Bible in his hand. "It has never offered me such sweet heavenly food as now." When Count Schlick was offered a cup of wine, he declined it. "I will only look forward to a cup of heavenly joy," was his reply. "May God forgive my enemies," prayed the dying Harant, and then commended his spirit to Christ. "The flesh is ready to fail," said the venerable Rosacius, "but I am no longer afraid." "Tell your emperor," was the language of the fearless Procopius Dworshezky, "that I stand now before his unrighteous judgment, and remind him of God’s righteous tribunal." "Thanks be to God," exclaimed another, as the summons to leave his prison for the scaffold was announced, "worldly distress has ceased; I hasten to Christ." In such a spirit these noble men met their fate.

But this was by no means the last act of this terrible drama of vindictive tyranny. Seven hundred and twenty-eight of the nobility, who were induced by a promise of pardon to confess their participation in the rebellion, were deprived of their estate. Forty million dollars were collected by confiscation alone. Five hundred noble and thirty-six thousand citizen families emigrated. Bohemia lost the whole of her ancient privileges. The charter granted by Rudolph, in favor of toleration, was torn by the emperor’s own hands. All heretical works, especially those of the ancient Hussites, were sought for and devoted to the flames. Nor did the dead escape. Zisca’s monument was destroyed. Rokyzan’s remains were disinterred and burnt. Every visible memorial of the heroism of Bohemia was obliterated. No trace of religious liberty was left, to remind the citizen of privileges that his ancestors had once enjoyed. The emperor declared himself in conscience bound to exterminate all heretics.

It was a serious question what measures should be adopted for the purpose. The matter was agitated even in the conclave of Rome. Bloody executions would only sow the seed of new martyrs, and were deemed impolitic. Prompt
banishment was proposed. "No, not yet," was the reply of crafty malice, "at present they have too much to take with them. They would bear off too much money. The exile would too easily be borne. They must first be fleeced."

This was the plan adopted. A brief space intervened before the terrible work began. There was an oppressive sullenness as it were, like the lull that ushers in the tempest. Men lived in fearful expectation. At length the storm came in its fury, and swept all before it. Even the peasantry were imprisoned by the hundreds, and forced by starvation to recant. The Protestants were deprived of their churches. Some of them were shut up; some burned and destroyed. Pulpits and statues were torn down. The tombs were broken open. The altars or furniture were lashed and whipped, in the imbecile rage that attacked even inanimate objects. When the Jesuits recovered their church at Prague, they strewed the floor with gunpowder, and set fire to it to destroy the poison of heresy with smoke and flame. Hussite pastors, who failed to make good their escape, fell a prey to the savage soldiery. They were tortured to extort confessions of guilt, or the place where their money was stored. In one case they filled their victim's mouth with gunpowder and set fire to it, when his throat was burst asunder. Some were beaten, some left for dead, some plundered. These indeed were the acts of a licentious soldiery, but they were countenanced by imperial authority. Iniquity and violence were framed and legalized by statute. Imperial clemency was a commentary on what scripture declares of the tender mercies of the wicked. A fugitive nobleman was offered pardon if he would return to his country. His answer was significant. "What sort of pardon? A Bohemian one? Heads off! A Moravian one? Imprisonment for life! An Austrian one? Confiscation!" Ferdinand's confessor, Lamormain, superintended these horrors enacted at his master's command. What a terrible light is thrown upon his conduct by the title which he assumed in reference to the immense confiscations that took place—"God's clerk of the exchequer!"

All through the space of the thirty years' war persecution raged, till the materials on which to wreak its vengeance seemed to be exhausted. But the work of plunder and proscription still went on. Even the books of the Protestants were sought as eagerly as their persons. The friends of the Bible were forced to conceal it, sometimes in the space beneath the dog-kennels. A Bohemian book became synonymous with a rare work. Nothing was allowed to be printed unless by the approving signature of the officials of the Inquisition. Whatever Protestant works could be gathered were piled up under the gallows, and then destroyed by fire. The work of forced conversions was carried on with a high hand. The Jesuits threw off the mask of mildness, and called in to their aid Lichtenstein's dragoons. The peasants were driven to church at the point of the sword, and a licentious soldiery won the title of "Conversionists." Count Dohna boasted of his having been able to do more than Peter, who converted three thousand on the day of Pentecost. He had accomplished more without preaching a single sermon. One Jesuit father wrote "with a trembling hand, a little before his death, a summary of his conversions." "He had restored 33,140
to Christ and the church, with enviable success." Priests of the vilest character and most scandalous life were put in the place of the exiled pastors. The people were forced, by terrors of torture and death, to swear "that, without compulsion, they renounced the evangelical doctrine."

But even these measures were only partially effectual. The praying people could not be exterminated. They met in the hours of night, in the mountains and the forest, to enjoy their worship. Denied all civil rights, prohibited from marrying, from solemnizing the burial of the dead or the rite of baptism, many still clung to their cherished faith. Even when arrested and thrown into prison, the steadfastness of their purpose could not be shaken. Among the humbler victims was a clerk, whose dungeon was in so horrible a state that both his legs rotted off. Yet, supported by his faith, he still sung cheerful songs. Such cruelties often rose beyond the point of endurance. Several times the peasants rose in insurrection, but they were crushed lay the imperial power. The sighings of the suffering martyrs beneath the shadow of the Alps, found echo among the forests and mountains of Bohemia. Thousands indeed escaped, to swell the numbers of the Brethren’s churches beyond the borders. For a whole generation—from 1622 to 1652, during the whole period of the thirty years’ war—the work of expatriation continued, with only such abatement as the dearth of victims rendered necessary. Precious indeed amid their hardships were the promises so beautifully expressed in the Brethren’s hymn-book—songs composed in the midst of trial, and calculated to cheer the hearts of the poor exiles amid their depression.

To the prosperity of Bohemia these inroads of persecution were fatally disastrous. "As high," says the Romanist author, Pelzel, "as the Bohemians had risen in the arts and sciences, under Maximilian and Rudolph, just so low were they now sinking. I do not know a single example of a learned man, who distinguished himself in Bohemia by any marks of erudition, after the expulsion of the Protestants." Pessina, in his work on Prague cathedral, confesses that nothing worse or more melancholy could have happened to Bohemia. The last traces of her ancient liberty disappeared. The heel of the tyrant was on the nation’s heart, and crushed its throbbing energies to the dust. Protestantism in Bohemia was murdered by inches.

A large part of the exiles joined their brethren in foreign lands. "They sought," says an old author, "a place where the doctrines of the gospel and the scriptural use of the holy sacraments, are purely, clearly, distinctly taught and propagated, and they do not care so much for their personal and temporal interests as for their spiritual and everlasting welfare." As persecution relaxed from time to time, some of them returned to their native land. But they were rarely left unmolested. Many a time the gloom of despair shrouded the prospects of the Brethren’s churches, but with unswerving fidelity they clung to the faith of their fathers, until in more peaceful times they were allowed to
extend their labors and influence to a wider sphere, and to become the first missionary church of modern times.

§

We have traced from its origin to its close by a violent suppression, and a catastrophe of carnage and crime, one of the most remarkable religious movements of modern times. In connection with the revival of learning and the evils of the schism, as well as a growing religious consciousness which brought to light the corruptions of the church, an encouragement was given to the long suppressed demand for the revival of a purer type of Christianity, and at the opportune moment the men were raised up, in the providence of God, who were to give utterance to that demand. Conrad Waldhauser, John Milicz, and Matthias of Janow were the precursors of John Huss. They prepared the way for his labors, and more or less clearly apprehended the radical conflict which existed between the interests of a corrupt hierarchy and the claims of Christian truth.

Huss inherited their views, but he brought to their elucidation and application a bold and fearless spirit, a stern consciousness, a discriminating mind, and a rare self-command. With a purpose that never wavered, and an energy that never wearied—sometimes in the face of royal authority, and in spite of unjust excommunication—he pursued the line of duty marked out by his conscientious convictions, reprobating the iniquity of the times and the abuses of the hierarchy, and holding up before the world his ideal of the church of Christ. All human authority was made by him subordinate to the authority of the Great Master himself. Hence, constantly appealing to the scriptures in support of his views and in defense of his course, he led men to look beyond the decisions of councils or the bulls of popes, and to study for themselves the word of God. The impulse was thus given to a reform more radical than he had himself contemplated. Before he was aware, he had come into conflict with the whole hierarchical system, and stood forth single-handed, and almost alone, as the champion of truth against the errors by which it was overlaid and well-nigh suppressed.

In this conflict he fell—a victim overpowered by numerous and bitter foes. Men that stood by him at first forsook him at the critical moment, and joined the ranks of his assailants. The force of his convictions had brought him to recognize in Wickliffe a fellow-laborer in the same great cause, and the odium that rested on the name of the English reformer was inherited by himself. The council of Constance gladly surrendered him as a sacrifice to the prejudices by which it was itself environed and controlled.

His associate, Jerome of Prague, met the same fate. His chivalrous nature scorned to retract his conscientious convictions as to the character, the truth and integrity of one whom he had known and loved. And now was illustrated
the trite adage that “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.” Hundreds and thousands in their native land stood ready to receive the bequest of their falling mantle. A nation imbued with their spirit set the council at defiance, and boldly remonstrated against the iniquity of the deed which had canonized forever the memory of the martyrs.

Meanwhile an enlarged acquaintance with scripture had led to the restoration, in Bohemia, of the use of the cup in the eucharist. Considered as a mere rite, this innovation was a matter of small account. But it symbolized an element of independent thought, which appealed from popes and councils to scripture alone. It was of the nature of a practical and popular protest against errors which had crept into the church, under the sanction of ecclesiastical authority and antiquated usage. Its acceptance was an endorsement of the right of private judgment, and an impeachment of synodical and pontifical infallibility. It was a rent in the external unity of the church—an ominous crack, like that of the dome of St. Peter—which inspired terror by its portentous augury of what was yet to come.

All the resources of papal authority and of ecclesiastical interest were consequently marshaled to suppress the rite. But it was found that many of its adherents had already made it the first step to more radical innovations. Diverse tendencies had already begun to develop themselves among the followers of Huss, and the Taborites and Calixtines, as two radically diverse parties, appear upon the stage. In connection with the first, we find a puritanic severity of morals, a demand for evangelical simplicity of worship and purity of doctrine, a valor nurtured by religious principle, and sometimes allied with a wild fanaticism. In connection with the other, we note the timidity and the prudence of a cautious conservatism, a lingering respect for ancient usage, a jealousy of further innovations, and a disposition to watch and restrain what they regarded as the dangerous tendencies of their rivals.

But a common interest temporarily cements the alliance of these two opposite parties, and renders them, while they retain this attitude, invincible to all foreign invasion. Classed together, as alike heretical, they are threatened with the same fate, and papal fulminations and crusading armies are met by both with a bold defiance and stern resistance. One invasion after another is hurled back from the Bohemian frontier, like the waves dashed to foam upon the rocks.

But the very humiliation of the foe opened the way for the development of the conflicting tendencies which had been temporarily retrained. Internal division was the result of foreign triumph. Calixtine and Taborite were now ranged in open and avowed hostility. It was scarcely a question which must triumph in the conflict. The Taborite was indisputably superior in all the elements of uncompromising zeal, of fierce resolve, and of desperate if not fanatical courage, to his Calixtine rival. He thought more earnestly if not profoundly. He
felt more deeply. His wrongs had been greater, and his vengeance was more terrible. The strife that now arose was scarcely less bitter than that of the united Hussites against the imperialists. It ranged neighbor against neighbor, and brother against brother; but, steeled against compassion and sympathy, the Taborites swept down before them all resistance, and encamped before Prague, ready to visit upon it such retribution as it had challenged. To save it from its threatened fate, its defenders submitted to negotiate, and the result was the concession, in the main, of the demands of the Taborites and the establishment of their supremacy.

But the anarchy of the kingdom required that authority should be deputed to able hands, and that the monarch to be selected should be one whom all should be constrained to acknowledge. Sigismund, as the rightful heir, was preferred by many who differed from him in their religious views. The Compactata devised by the synod of Basle, opened the way for his recognition, but reproduced the old divisions between Calixtine and Taborite. The latter were defeated in the open rupture which followed, and Sigismund at last secured his hard-won crown.

From the Taborites, who now abandoned all further appeals to physical force in their own defense, sprang the church of the United Brethren. Through a century of persecution they still maintained their fidelity to an evangelical creed and the memory of Huss. The Calixtines, sometimes leaning toward Rome, and sometimes repelled by her bigotry, wavered in uncertainty as to their position, although still holding fast their four articles. At length the advent of Luther extended to both parties a new strength, and the current of the Bohemian reformation was swollen by the powerful tributary of German reform.

With intervals of persecution, Protestantism made steady progress in Bohemia for another century, till it had almost secured the complete ascendency. But its bold and violent measures provoked the vengeance of the "Catholic" league, and the bigoted Ferdinand, with unfaltering purpose, resolved to suppress it. The tide of the thirty years' war swept over northern and central Europe, covering its track with desolation and crime. Of all the states that suffered, Bohemia was the most signal victim. In the general pacification, she was abandoned by her German allies, and left to the tender mercies of her unscrupulous and bigoted monarch. His vengeance was terrible. He deliberately preferred a desert to a kingdom of "heretics," and his preference was well-nigh realized. Bohemian art, literature, and enterprise received a blow from which they have never recovered. Protestantism was almost utterly suppressed. Its ablest champions pined in exile, or in prison, or atoned for their patriotism and Protestantism on the scaffold. The nation that five centuries ago was among the foremost of Europe, dwindled into insignificance; and for more than two centuries Bohemia has ranked as little more than a province of the Austrian empire. Her old renown has been commemorated by the noble achievements of
Moravian missionaries, who trace their spiritual lineage to her great reformer; but her condition today is such as to render her a signal monument of the impolicy of persecution, and the incalculable mischiefs that have flowed from the violent suppression of religious freedom.

The day may not be far distant when upon her own soil the memories of her own glorious past shall be revived. Her hills and valleys have witnessed the heroism of men who stood forward as champions of scriptural authority, and the rights and privileges of religious freedom. Her plains have been moistened and fertilized with the blood of martyrs. Many a locality has been immortalized by the valor of her sons, and the names of Huss and Jerome, of Jacobel, Zisca, and Procopius, will never die out of her annals, whoever may guide the pen. A national partiality even now triumphs over ecclesiastical prejudice, and men who would contemn Huss as a heretic, honor him as a patriot.

William Farel was the man God chose to be the reformer of the French speaking cantons of Switzerland. A man of intense courage, boldness, and fearlessness, he was known as the Elijah of the Alps. Wherever the gospel needed a defense and error needed a rebuke, Farel would go and without
concern for life and limb would confront the enemies of the truth and comfort the saints in need of a shepherd. Like the Apostle Paul his life was frequently threatened, he was often beaten, sometimes left for dead, but never deterred from his divine calling to reach the word of God.

Farel was also the man that the Lord used to convict Calvin to forsake his preference for a quiet life of scholarly study and writing in defense of the Reformation. Convicted by Farel’s passionate appeals and threats of God’s displeasure if he failed to rise to the call of duty, Calvin agreed to stay in Geneva and lead the Reformation there. This began a lifelong association between these two men, so united in the truth, but so different in their makeup. In God’s providence Calvin was used of God to help Farel temper his fiery nature and be more gracious and patient, while Farel was a continuous inspiration to the more timid Calvin to courageously persevere in fighting the good fight of faith as he struggled to establish the Reformation in Geneva and in his own native France.

This is an inspiring account of the saga of a renowned servant of God that will profit all who read it, and give them an example of a life well lived in the service of and to the glory of God.

The book consists of 22 chapters which have been divided for ease of access into five sections, as listed below. Click on any of the listed sections to go there and read the respective chapters.

**Section 1** Early Life and Labors  
**Section 2** Difficulties and Dangers  
**Section 3** Reformer of the Swiss  
**Section 4** Farel in Geneva  
**Section 5** Final Labors and Death
Early Life and Labors of William Farel

This section comprises chapters 1 through 5. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 1    The Holy Cross
Chapter 2    Not Battles but Books
Chapter 3    A Strange Voice in Paris
Chapter 4    A Circle of Friends
Chapter 5    Meaux the Cradle of French Reform, A Busy Bishop

CHAPTER I

The Holy Cross
1489–1500

Among the Alps of Dauphiny is a mountain called the Bayard, near which the traveler passes on the road from Grenoble to Gap. At the foot of the Bayard, about a stone’s throw from the highway, may be seen the old village of the Farels, called by the people of the district, Fareau. It is a mere group of houses, half hidden by the trees, and it shows only the relics of what it was three centuries ago. On a broad terrace, above a hamlet, a cottage now stands on the spot where once stood an elegant mansion. In those days of war and marauding, it was, doubtless, fortified. In that ancient chateau dwelt a family', which had some claims to nobility, and yet their name is rescued from silence by the child who was born at Fareau in 1489, and named William de Farel. Rank, fortune and a heroic spirit might have made him more celebrated than his three brothers, Daniel, Walter and Claudius, even had he not become a reformer. Of them and of his one sister we have an occasional glimpse in these pages. We know not but that he was the youngest son. If so the last became the first.

The Farels may have had some knowledge of the Waldenses and their doctrines, but they had reason enough to know that it was a perilous thing to renounce the traditions of the Romish church, and accept the simple truths of the gospel. Certain Waldensian teachers had dared to cross over from Piedmont into Dauphiny, and tell men the glad tidings of a Savior, as their Lord had done among the hills of Judea. Their doctrines were taking root upon the western slopes of the Cottian Alps. Some of the people believed and longed for the Bible. Many, who had been, all their lives, deceived by the priests, became bold in faith, and stood up bravely against the superstitions of the Romish
Church. The new converts to the truth were likely to speak more openly than their teachers, for good news must be told to everybody who will hear. The goatherd could tell his neighbors how he had talked with the missionary at the hedge, the traveler how he had walked with him on the highway, the chamois hunter how he had met on the mountain path a man who told him of the true cross and of the good shepherd, and the young man, returning home from the town, could tell how he had heard a man, on the corner of the street, declare "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Too good news to be kept, it began to find its way to many an ear, into many a heart, and many a home, and it may have reached the village, and the very door of the Farels.

But the Romish priests and bishops took the alarm. They claimed the field, and if good seed was sown therein, they were the fowls of the air ready to gather it up. They were the thorns growing up to choke it. They saw that if the kind and harmless Waldenses gained ground, the priests must lose the people. If Jesus Christ should win the hearts of men by his free gospel, the pope world be forsaken, and popery renounced. They talked, they threatened, they laid their plans, and persecution arose.

"These Waldenses and their followers must be destroyed," said the priests.

"Will the pope send an army to crush them?" asked the bishops, and Innocent VIII, one of the most guilty of mortals, was pleased with the question.

"To arms!" responded the pontiff, "To arms! and trample these heretics under foot as venomous serpents."

The trumpet rang, the drum was beaten, and an army of more than eighteen thousand men entered the valleys of Dauphiny, and drove these poor disciples of Christ into the mountains, where they took refuge in caverns and in clefts of the rocks, as birds take shelter from the gathering storm. The misnamed Innocent died, and the vicious Borgia continued the cruel work. This bad pope seemed to be more fearful of these unarmed Christians than of the legions of the French King, Charles VIII, who was threatening to sweep Italy with war, and the persecution of a few quiet disciples seemed to please him more than the "gift of the New World lately made to him by Columbus. Not a valley, nor a wood, nor a rock, was left unexplored by the persecutors. The door of the Farels was not open to these hunted Christians, yet, while they were hiding from their merciless foes, a child of that house was lying in his cradle, or in boyish rashness clambering up the rocks of the Bayard, who would one day set the Swiss Alps aflame with that fire which the Savior kindled on earth. He should be greater than any of the nameless ones who had cast the good seed in the valleys of his native land, and been driven away before it grew to the full harvest, and should gain for himself the title of "the Valais Luther."
The soldiers, who were ready to bind the Lord’s hidden ones in their retreats, or burn them in the villages, had no cause to persecute the Farels, nor had the priests any reason to suspect them of the least departure from the Romish faith and customs. The father and the mother believed everything taught by their church, and brought up their children in its rites and devotions. William, whose nature it was to do nothing by halves, threw his whole soul into the follies of popery. He could cross himself, go to the confessional, respond at the mass, adore the wafer, count his beads, pray to the Virgin Mary, eat no meat on Friday, and tell the Saints’ days in a manner that must have delighted the parish priest. It was said of him as he grew up, that “he was more popish than the pope himself.

William was a bold boy, fond of daring exploits. Like the young David, at home among the wild hills of Bethlehem, he scarcely knew fear, and would not allow defeat where success was possible. He had the moral courage always to tell the truth. What he feared was a lie. If anyone could swim the Buzon when it was high with the torrent from the melting snows, or venture to the pass of the Glaize when the storm threw fearful risk in the path, he was likely to boast of such a daring feat. Men said that nature made him for a brave knight, or a cavalier, but the truth is, God made him for a bold, fearless, unflinching reformer. His temper needed to be curbed, his rashness to be subdued, and his lively imagination to be tamed. His parents had often to check his impetuous nature. If, however, he was bent upon having his own will, it was probably enough to tell him that if he had his own way, he should be kept at home the next saint’s day, or he should not be taken to see “the holy cross,” one of the seven wonders of Dauphiny.

“I can see crosses any day;” we fancy the lad saying, “there is one at almost every corner where two roads come together. Are they not all holy? I always bow to them and say the ‘Ave Maria.’”

“None is so holy as the one at Sainte Croix,” his parents would answer. “The cross in that place is made of the very wood on which Christ was crucified.”

“What is it there for?”

“It was put there by some of the saints or angels, so that good people can make pilgrimages to it, and get an indulgence for a month or two.”

“Then I am going to the holy cross when I am old enough. Why don’t you take me now?”

“You are not good enough yet, my son.”

“But if it will make me better, I ought to see it.”
The wish to visit the holy cross grew stronger in the mind of the child, and his father’s talk about it took the form of a promise. It was before him as an expected visit to Jerusalem was before the mind of a young Hebrew. When William was about eight years old, his parents resolved to take him on the pilgrimage. They went about nine miles to the town of Gap, and then twelve miles southward to Tallard, and then walked up the hill that rises above the roaring stream of the Durance, on which stood the cross.

When they reached the foot of the highly venerated cross, they fell down before it in adoration. They gazed intently on the sacred wood, believing that it once bore the sacred body of the dying Savior. They looked at the copper on it, which the priest said was taken from the basin in which Christ washed the feet of his disciples. The wondering pilgrims then turned their eager eyes to a little crucifix fastened to the larger cross.

"Why is the little cross there?" they asked by their silent gaze.

"When the devils send us hail and thunder," said the priest, "this crucifix moves about so violently, that it seems to get loose from the cross, as if desirous of running at the devil, and it continues throwing out sparks of fire against the storm; if it were not for this, nothing would be left on earth."

The credulous pilgrims, with their hair almost standing on end, were deeply moved by the account of these prodigies. No doubt, the father had often argued that the cross was only the sign of the crucified Lord, and that he did not worship the sign, but the Savior whom it represented. Even if the pilgrims intended to adore the Christ, they were not assisted in their devotions by the lying priest. They were not in a mood for even the better sort of Romish devotion.

"No one," continued the priest, "sees or knows aught of these things except myself and this man."

"What man?" thought the pilgrims, for they had been so engaged with the cross, and so startled by the prodigious stories, that they had not seen him. On turning their heads, they saw one of the strangest of mortals. William never forgot his appearance, for in old age he said that, "it was frightful to look at him. White scales covered his eyes, whether they were there in reality, or Satan only made them appear so." Those who did not credit these marvels called him "the priest’s wizard." The sight of him was enough to provoke, in the minds of the visitors, a doubt of what the priest had declared.

"Is it not all true?" the priest asked of the wizard, as if no one would dare to doubt the man with the scaly eyes.
"True, all true," said the wizard, "and there’s no blessing to those who do not believe it."

A new folly was introduced. If the bewildered pilgrims had not heard enough, they were now to see enough to cause them to suspect the morals of the priest. That they were not filled with disgust, only proves how they were steeped to the eyes in Romish superstitions. William remembered the scene to his last days, and in his book on "The true use of the cross," he thus wrote of it, so that men might know how deep the Romish priests were sunk in folly and crime. "There came up a young woman, intent on other devotion than that of the cross, carrying her infant wrapped in a cloth. Then the priest went up, took hold of the woman and child, and led them into the chapel. I may safely assert that never did dancer take a woman and lead her out more gallantly than these two did. But such was our blindness, that neither their looks nor their gestures, appeared otherwise than good and holy."

Immoral priests and blinded people! Such were the two elements in almost the entire Romish church of those days. There were some exceptions, but they were found among those who shook off the fetters of popery, and were laboring to reform the church. William Farel was to see some of the worst delusions and vices of Romanism, in order to prepare him for exposing them to the people whom he would point to the true cross of Jesus Christ. The family returned home, and this is the last we hear of their pilgrimages to Sainte Croix.

Crosses similar to the one thus visited are often seen in Romish countries. On a mountainside in Switzerland a tourist once stopped in the road, before a cross set up in a little "oratory," or place for prayer, which looked somewhat like the small shelter for a watchman on the railroad. It was built of stone, with the front open, and appeared quite ancient. An image of the so-called Virgin Mary was very conspicuous. A small crucifix was fastened to the larger cross, and although the rain was falling, it did not spin around nor throw out sparks of fire, as the priest declared of "the holy cross." Upon a board was an inscription, which is thus translated:

"Forty days’ indulgence will be given to anyone who will recite before this oratory one Pater Noster, one Ave Maria, and an act of contrition."

There was Romanism.

While standing there the attention of the traveler was arrested by the music of a little rill of the purest water, gliding down the mountain and directly crossing the path. There it was, free, full, clear as crystal, and right in the way of the pilgrim; a type of the waters of the river of life flowing unceasingly from the throne of God. There was a symbol of Protestantism, which ever sets forth the free grace of God in salvation.
CHAPTER II
Not Battles But Books
1500–1512

Young Farel was sincere, although superstitious. He believed in Romish miracles, and wished to see whatever pretended to be one. But he was not willing that ignorance should be the mother of his devotion. He thirsted for knowledge. And if the Bible had not been a forbidden book, he must have found the truth at an early age. He knew of no such book as the word of God. He asked permission to study.

"Study what?" we imagine his father saying.

"Whatever is taught in the best schools. I want to be something in the world."

"Be a soldier then. Put on the armor that hangs in the hall, take the rosary for your heart, and the sword in your hand, and enter the service of Gaston de Foix, or fight for the pope; he needs brave warriors now. Let the sword-hilt be your cross, and you may become a valorous knight before you are gray.

"I would rather be a scholar. Let me read of Caesar before I try to be like Caesar. Let knowledge be my armor and the pen be my sword. I want not battles, but books."

"Folly, my son! War leads to greatness. Whose name is now on every breeze that comes across the Alps? That of our neighbor, the Chevalier Bayard, the brave knight without fear and without reproach. All Dauphiny is talking of him, since his victory in the battle of the Taro. Like him be fearless and stainless, and you will come to the honors of knighthood."

"Such are not the honors I wish."

"Not an honor for one to say with the Chevalier Bayard, ‘My soul is God’s and my life is my country’s!’ Not an honor to guard a bridge against a legion of foes! and when he rebukes profane swearing, and is told it is only a little fault, hear him say, ‘Sir, that cannot be a trifling fault which is a great sin of the age.’ And when a family, in whose house he lodges, offers him a large sum of money for protecting it from the pillage of soldiers, he refuses it, because he defends it for goodness’ sake, and not for gold. Be noble then, and brave as Bayard. This is your best road to glory."

Thus the father opposed the taste for study which his son manifested, but the young man persisted in having a chance to indulge it. Nobler conflicts and
victories were before him than those of the famous Chevalier, and God had his
good hand upon him. He was to be clad with "the whole armor of God," and
wield "the sword of the Spirit." Long and earnestly did he plead with his father,
who felt it to be a great blow to all his hopes of seeing the young noble enter
upon a military career, but at last the old gentleman gave way, and began to
inquire for a competent teacher.

The learned school-master was not then abroad in the land. If priests were the
instructors, the education of the mind was likely to be at the expense of the
morals. Young Farel would have gained little from the schools of Dauphiny, had
there not been in him the strong spirit of self-help. In the text-books the wheat
and the tares grew together, and the teachers could scarcely point out the
difference between them, nor show the students what to gather into the
 garner, and what to burn in the fire. But he applied himself to his books as
zealously as ever Bayard pushed on into the battle. The difficulties only fired
him with ardor to overcome them, and having acquired the most of what his
native province could afford, he turned his eyes to the brighter lights of the
capital city.

The University of Paris had long been renowned in the Christian world. It was
described as "the mother of all learning, the true lamp of the church, which
never knew eclipse, that clear and polished mirror of the faith, dimmed by no
cloud, and spotted by no touch." Thus it appeared to the devout Romanist, and
thus to the young aspiring Dauphinese. To the Protestant eye of Milman, before
whose clear vision marched the centuries of Latin Christianity, it rose stately in
its superiority, and powerful in its independence. He says, "If Bologna might
boast her civil lawyers, Salerno her physicians, Paris might vie with these great
schools in their peculiar studies, and in herself concentrated the fame of all,
especially of the highest—theology. The University of Paris had its inviolable
 privileges, its own endowments, government, laws, magistrates, jurisdiction; it
was a state within a state, a city within a city, a church within a church. It
refused to admit within its walls the sergeants of the Mayor of Paris and the
apparitors of the Bishop of Paris; it opened its gates sullenly and reluctantly to
the king’s officers."

If it excelled in theology, how low must have been the standard of theological
attainments! The principal department of theology was called the Sorbonne.
The "true lamp of the church" must have been too dim for an eclipse to be
possible, when its doctors "looked upon the study of Greek and Hebrew as the
most deadly heresy." They had declared to the parliament that "Religion is
ruined if you permit the study of Greek and Hebrew." They must have agreed
with the monks, who asserted that "all heresies arose from those two
languages, and particularly from the Greek." And why this hatred to these two
languages? Because in them the Bible was written. If they were studied, the
Bible would be read, and the errors of their church exposed. One of them was
bold to say, "The New Testament is a book full of serpents and thorns. Greek is
a new and recently invented language, and we must be upon our guard against it. As for Hebrew, my dear brethren, it is certain that all who learn it immediately become Jews!"

But, in spite of the Sorbonne, there was in Paris a revival of learning, and the man who led the advance was a proof of the saying, "The last shall be first." Who had supposed that the young William Budœus, "giving the rein to his passions, fond of the chase, and living only for his hawks, his horses, and his hounds," would ever cherish in himself, and awaken in others, a thirst for a purer literature? Yet, there was a rein upon him, held in the unseen hand of God. "On a sudden, at the age of twenty-three, he stopped short, sold his hunting-train; and applied himself to study with the zeal he had formerly displayed in scouring the fields and forests with his dogs." It was his honor to be the chief cause of the revival under Francis the First. So devoted was he to his studies, that he seemed to have little memory for anything else. Even on the very day of his marriage he forgot what was expected of him. The hour for the wedding came, but he did not appear. A messenger was sent to tell him that the affair could not proceed unless he was sent, and he was found absorbed in writing his Commentaries. But he consented to drop his pen and be married to one who could sympathize with him in his pursuits, and aid his memory. His wife was of great assistance to him in his studies, and used to find out and mark the various passages suitable to his purpose. In a rare book, in the British museum, is another anecdote about his literary devotion. One day the servants came running to him, in a great fright, crying out, "Sir, sir, the house is on fire!"

"Why do you not tell your mistress of it?" replied Budœus, coolly. "You know I never trouble myself about the house." This man, no doubt, did much to call attention to Erasmus, who, toiling up from obscure orphanage, had given all his time to learning; spent his money, when he could get any, upon Greek authors; entered a convent, but soon left it in disgust; came to Paris and studied at the University, and was soon to bring out his edition of the Greek Testament. Budœus may have aided the influence of John Reuchlin, who had passed through the same university, and was preparing to do for the Old Testament what Erasmus was doing for the New. The art of printing came just in time for the publication of the Bible, a proof that God was managing the forces of truth for a great reformation. Whatever the Sorbonne might think, religion was not to be ruined by the study of the sacred languages. It was to be revived and raised from the dead by the voice of Christ, borne to the hearts of men by the word of God.

William Farel, leaving home for the capital city, was going upon a wide, wild sea of opinions; but he was to be guided to the true landing place, not by the university, as a public lighthouse, with its brightening lamp of literature, but by the private torch of a man, walking, in meditative mood, along the shore. This man was seeking for the pearl of great price, and, because of the deep
moral darkness, he held his trembling light so carefully, that it could not fail to
catch the watchful eye of the young student from the mountains of Dauphiny.

Among the learned men of the university was one of very small stature, mean
appearance, humble origin, and poor advantages in early life. His name was
James Lefèvre, and he was born about 1445 at Etaples, a village of Picardy, the
country of Calvin. His early education would have been rude and scanty, had he
not depended upon his genius rather than upon his masters. He struggled up
into knowledge, like one clambering a mountain to see the sun gilding the
peaks of an Alpine range, and hence his nobleness of soul drew admiration from
his friends, who cherished hopes of his greatness. He traveled abroad, even
into Asia and Africa, became a doctor of divinity, and in 1493 a professor of the
University of Paris, where Erasmus put him in the first rank of scholars. His
intellect, learning, and eloquence had a wonderful attraction for all who heard
him.

He soon saw work enough to be done, and earnestly assumed the task. He must
reform the evil practices of the Romish church, for he loved the church of his
birth too well to see it in error. He must attack "the barbarian then prevailing
in the University," and join in reviving the study of languages arid learned
antiquity. The classics must not crowd out the Bible. Philosophy must give way
to religion. Therefore he began at the only point where a reformation can
properly begin. He went to the heart of the Bible, so that it might go to the
heart of man.

No man was more captivating in his artless, earnest, and familiar ways of
teaching. Serious in the pulpit, he was genial with his students. "He loves me
exceedingly," wrote one of them to his friend Zwingli. "Full of candor and
kindness, he often sings, prays, disputes, and laughs at the follies of the world
with me." Thus he drew a great number of disciples, from almost every
country, to sit at his feet. They saw that he passed quite as much time in the
churches as in his study, and were likely to imitate his devotion. Because the
church was in error, he did not abandon it, for if the ship was in a storm and
the officers drunk, there was all the better reason for every sailor to be at the
post of duty and of danger. He regarded himself as a child in the church, rather
than a doctor over it, and because willing to search, he was certain to find the
truth which would save.

Lefèvre was a reformer before the reformation. He protested against error
before there was any system of Protestantism. Five years must yet pass before
Luther would nail his theses to the door of the old church in Wittenberg. Luther
had but just found the chained Bible in the convent of Erfurth, and had not
heard the good Staupitz say, "If thou wouldst be really converted, follow not
these mortifications and penances. Love him who first loved you. God is not
against thee, but thou art averse to God. Remember that Christ came hither
for the pardon of sins. Cast thyself into the arms of the Redeemer. Trust in
him, in the righteousness of his life, in the expiatory sacrifice of his death.” Could Lefèvre have heard such words, he would have found much sooner the treasure which he sought on the shores of truth.

In the year 1510, Luther was on his way to Rome, to witness its abominations, and William Farel was on the way to Paris to study in the University, and to find in Lefèvre a friend among strangers, a guide to the truth, and a father in Christ, for by the private light of this man, the young provincial was to make sure his landing upon the Eternal Rock of salvation.

On the walls of most Romish Churches are hung pictures of different scenes in the sufferings and death of our Lord. The worshippers begin at the first, and pass around to the last, kneeling before each one, and repeating the words of their penance or prayers. These kneeling-places are called stations on the way of the cross. To make the circuit is a pilgrimage.

William Farel had not come to Paris to stroll through the streets, nor to lock himself up in his room and pore night and day over his books. He was a close student, but he did not neglect his religious devotions. He took time for a regular attendance at church, and made it a matter of conscience to visit the stations along the way of the cross. What a privilege to the young villager to kneel before better pictures than he had seen at home, and confess to a more accomplished priest.

One day, when on his pious pilgrimage, he saw an aged man going the rounds, all absorbed in his devotions. He prostrated himself at the stations and lingered, repeating his prayers. He seemed the model of fervor and contrition, as the tears fell, the lips quivered, and the voice rose full and clear in the responses of the public service. There was much in his manner to charm the young stranger, and he could not forget the earnestness of the good old man, saying of him years afterward, “Never had I seen a chanter of the mass sing it with greater reverence.” This little, unpretending, aged man, of the tearful eye and kind face was the eloquent popular and beloved Lefèvre. To become acquainted with him was now the student’s most ardent wish, and without it he could not be happy.

How they met, we know not, but Farel “could not restrain joy when he found himself kindly received by this celebrated man.” It seemed as if he had gained his object in coming to capital. “From that time his greatest pleasure was to converse with the doctor of Etaples, to listen to him, to hear his admirable lessons, and to kneel with him devoutly before the same shrines. Often might the aged Lefèvre and his young disciple be seen adorning an image of the Virgin with flowers; and alone, far from all Paris, far from its scholars and its doctors, they murmured in concert the fervent prayers they offered to Mary.” The teacher, warring against certain errors, still held to some of the most absurd; and the student, who refused to take the sword, still clung to the rosary.
Farel was sincere. He thought that he was right. He was not hoping for a rich benefice, nor preparing to fleece some flock over which he might be placed, nor dreaming of the vicious life then led by so many of the priests. A soul like his was above loving popery for money, or for power, or for indulgence in sin. In his view the pope sat on a throne of God, and ruled in the place of Christ. To obey and worship him as Christ was a part of salvation. If anyone said aught that was ill of the "holy pontiff," he would "gnash his teeth like a furious wolf," was ready to call dawn the lightnings of heaven "to overwhelm the guilty wretch with utter ruin and confusion."

"What do you believe?" we presume to be asked of him by some student who has caught up certain sarcastic remarks of Erasmus about the follies of Romanism. "Do you really believe that a wafer is converted into the very body of Christ?"

"I believe," said Farel, "in the cross, in pilgrimages, images, vows, and relics. What the priest holds in his hands, puts into the box, and then shuts it up, eats, and, gives others to eat, is my only true God, and to me there is no other, either in heaven or upon earth."

Still he was not satisfied. His spirit hungered, his soul found no rest. Everything was going from bad to worse. The study of the profane authors brought him not one crumb of the bread from heaven; in the rites of the church there was not one drop of the water of life to quench his thirst. Lefèvre scarcely dared tell him the little truth that he was leaning upon, for he was not quite sure of it himself, and no lame man likes to give away his staff. The student went restless and wretched to several doctors of the age, but they only sent him away more wretched than before. He told them that he wanted to be a real Christian; and they gave him Aristotle as a guide! He read books, bowed to images, adored relies, invoked the saints, kept the fasts and festivals, carried his reverence for Mary to a superstitious extreme, and yet all proved worse than in vain. It was sending him to the brambles, under a delusion that from them he would gather grapes.

In his severe mental sufferings he learned one piece of good news. It was that the "holy father, the pope," was willing to allow the Old and New Testaments to be called the Holy Bible. Thanks to his holiness for this concession! If he had gone farther and said, with one of the English martyrs, "No writings are holy but the Bible," it would have settled an important question in the anxious minds of hundreds, who like young Farel, knew not which to believe, Christ or the pope. That question was: which shall we follow—the word of God or the word of the church? Farel thought that, since the pope acknowledged the great good book to be the Holy Bible, he might read it for himself. Surely the pope and the apostles meat agree in their teachings! But as he read the sacred page, he was amazed at seeing how they disagreed, and how different everything in Romanism was from the pure Christianity of the New Testament. Where was
the mass taught in the Bible? Where prayer to the saints? Where the adoration of relics? Where the worship of the Virgin Mary? Where confession to priests? Where the paying of money for a pardon? Where purgatory? Where salvation by an endless round of mere works? Certainly not in the Bible. It taught repentance instead of penances, faith in the Crucified rather than the adoration of the cross, prayer to Jesus and not to the saints, and love to God rather than the fear of the pope. In its light he could see that anyone might pray to God in the name of Christ; everyone might come to Jesus and find rest; and no one need to buy his pardon of a priest, nor an indulgence of the "holy father." He could see that penitents would be safer at Jesus' feet, and pilgrims better off at home. The thought must have risen in his mind that if priests could convert a wafer into the Deity, they could make anything a God, and if the elevation of the host be a crucifix, then Jesus must be always suffering for our sins.

The young Bible reader went far enough to see that the word of God did not agree with the word of the Church. He scarcely dared go further. He had severe pangs of mind, and struggled to know which to accept. His first effort was the very reverse of what young Luther was now doing, when making the Church give way to the teachings of the chained Bible. The monk of Erfurth thought, in his best hours, that Christ must stand, and the pope must fall, God must be believed, though the Church went to ruin. The Dauphinese student scarcely ventured to think, but first attempted to make the Bible give way to the teachings of popery. If he read any passages of Scripture that opposed the Romish practices, he hung his head, cast his eyes upon his breast, as if trying to get a kind look from his conscience. He blushed, as if ashamed to deny his Lord, and yet dared not believe the word of God. Fearing to keep face to face with the gospel writers, he turned his eyes from the holy book, saying, in deep mental anguish, "Alas! I do not well understand these things. I must give a different meaning to the Scriptures from that which they seem to have. I must keep to the interpretation of the Church, and, indeed, of the pope."

Thus he must warp and wrest the sacred words, in order to make them agree with his prejudices, and it was hard and painful work. One day a doctor of the Church happened to come in, and he found him reading the Bible. Instead of "a word in season to him that was weary," a sharp rebuke fell from the tongue of the learned. "No man," said he, "ought to read the Holy Scriptures before he has learnt philosophy and taken his degree in arts." It was filling the student's head with lead. It was giving a stone to him who asked for the bread of life. Farel believed him, although no such literary preparation was required of the disciples when, as fishermen, they entered the school of Christ, nor of any of the common people, who heard him gladly. His rule was one which holds good in all ages, and among all people, "Search the Scriptures." The Bible reader was in the depths of mental darkness, and, long after, he gave thanks for the great and wonderful work of God in raising him from such an abyss. He looked back, and said, "I was the most wretched of men, shutting my eyes, lest I should see."
It seems that he began to be afraid of the Bible, lest it should destroy his faith in the Church, and his love for its rites. As he left it unopened, his Romish fervor returned. He threw his whole soul into his mistaken devotions. He gained, among the people, a reputation for zeal. The keener-sighted Romanists cultivated him, as the shrewd priests in Zurich had sought to enlist young Zwingli in their interests, lest he should think too much, see too many gross evils, and have his mind turned toward a reform. They had learned from the boldness of Huss, Savonarola, Jerome of Prague, and the various "reformers before the Reformation," that such men must be managed in time, if they were prevented from making a noise in the world, and striking such blows at the papacy that its wounds could never be healed. It was wiser to use gentle arts, and persuade them into active service when young, than to allow them to mature their powers by reading and thinking, and then burn them in old age for "heresy."

"You grow thin by study—your mind is oppressed," they would say, "you need exercise; you should do something that will engage your heart in good works, and thus relieve your burdened intellect."

"My pilgrimages give my heart exercise," we hear Farel replying. "I try to do all the good works that will save the soul."

"True, they may save the soul; but you must not wear out your body. The Church wants a long life from you. Visit the poor. Give them charities. Urge them to the stations, the confessional, and the mass."

"Ah! I am not worthy thus to imitate Christ."

"But we have work for you to do. There are poor students here, who need help, and there are rich men to aid them. We can trust you. Let us put the money in your hands, that you may dispense it among the needy."

Farel assented, and many devout rich persons in Paris entrusted him with various sums, to be given to the poorer students. The work was faithfully performed by one who had the nicest scruples of conscience in all matters of honesty and charity.

"Cheer up your mind by reading the lives of the saints," we hear the eagle-eyed watchers saying to the still sad student.

"Were not the apostles the best of saints?" he replies. "Their teachings give me trouble."

"They are too exalted for you. You are not prepared to understand them. Take first those nearer to our own age."
"The fathers of the Church, then—but they would not agree with the Church of our day."

"Leave them until you have your degree of arts. Read not of those who wrote their doctrines, but of those who were poor, who made long pilgrimages, who fasted in deserts, who mortified themselves in caves, who had visions, who wrought miracles, and who left for us the merit of their good works and penances."

"Show me the books. Their works may give me more light than the words of those who taught what we must not now believe."

The books were furnished, and Farel read them until his imagination was inflamed by the legends of the saints. In his heart he admired the invented stories of their zeal, their coarse fare and rough berry garments, their bare-foot pilgrimages, their self-tortures, the visits paid them by angels and by the Virgin Mary, and their entire freedom from mortal sin. The most disgusting tales of their voluntary filthiness were beautiful romances of a willing humiliation. He mistook their low and idle lives for that of a high and almost heavenly existence, and began to think of living like them.

In the deep shades of a forest near Paris, was a monastery of Carthusian monks, useless on earth, but making the world serve them better than was suspected abroad, in its reverence for their supposed piety. Farel was attracted toward them. Perhaps he had heard of their brethren in the old convent of Chartreux (Cartusium), not far from his native place. There was something romantic in its history. Bruno of Cologne had become disgusted with the evils in the church in that old city, rather than with the world, and he sought to get out of both as nearly as possible. He coveted solitude. In the wild valley of the Chartreux, not far from Grenoble, he settled himself, about the year 1084, with twelve companions. They built a monastery for their worship, but did not live in it lest they should be too much together. They built separate cells by the side of it, and each one spent his time by himself in silence, study and labor enough to keep him alive. Their order increased in numbers and influence, and several branches were established in Europe, like the one in the woods near Paris. Their rules were most severe, if we may judge from those laid down for the monastery of Camaldula, built on one of the bleakest of the Apennines. Two words expressed them—solitude and silence. All else was but an exception to the rules. They met at worship, they ate silently together on certain festivals, and they met at times to inflict each other by speechless discipline. One daily meal of bread, or vegetables, and water, was often given up, so that they might enjoy the merit of a severer fast. Money they might not touch, and no comforts were allowed in their cells. Their silence was broken only when they prayed or chanted, and when they indulged in a little talk at eventide. The recluse among them took an awful vow of perpetual silence and seclusion. His voice might be heard in lonely prayer, and three days in the year
he could attend the mass of Easter week, but he must speak to no human being, save the priest, whom he called by the sound of his bell to hear his confession. Such monks might easily lose their senses, and thus imagine that they were rid of their sins.

These severe rules had a charm for young Farel, now carried away by reading the lives of the saints. He went to the forest, and was admitted to the group of gloomy cells. He looked on the inmates with reverence, and shared, for a little time, in their austerities. The benefit he received is strongly set forth in his own words, penned at a later day. "I was wholly employed, day and night, in serving the devil, after the fashion of that man of sin, the pope. I had my Pantheon in my heart, and such a troop of mediators, saviors, and gods, that I might well have passed for a papal register."

The darkness in his soul could not well grow deeper. He was sunk quite as low in Romanism as Luther when, but lately, he was on his knees creeping up Pilate’s staircase in order to gain the pope’s indulgence. But Luther seemed to hear a sound in his ears, as if an angel spoke to him, as he there remembered the words, "The just shall live by faith." He started up, ashamed of his folly, and fled with all haste from the scene. It was the power of a well-read and remembered Bible. But Farel was alarmed by no such memory of a great truth which opposed Romanism. How or when he left the Carthusians we know not, but his stay was not long. Perhaps he was attracted to Lefèvre, at whose voice the morning-star was soon to arise, and chase the heavy gloom from heart.

CHAPTER III

A Strange Voice in Paris

"My dear William," said Lefèvre one day when returning from the mass, as he grasped the hand of his young friend, "God will renew the world, and you will see it."

"Often have you said this to me, but I do not yet fully understand your words."

"Ah, one cannot tell what light is until it fills his eye, nor what life is until he feels it in his soul. God will soon give us both—new light by his holy truth, new life by his Holy Spirit. The word of God will take the place of the word of the church. We must give up the ‘Lives of the Saints,’ and read the words of the apostles."

"But are you not going on to publish those lives? I have been delighted with the two monthly numbers now issued."
“No, no; I began with zeal the laborious task of collecting and arranging them in the order of their names in the calendar. But I am weary of them. They disgust me. They are foolish legends at best, and many of them are the false tales of monks, who could write a life to order without any knowledge of the facts.”

“You astound me, father Lefèvre.”

“I wish to, if there be no other way to keep you from having anything more to do with these legends. They are puerile superstitions, and are no better than brimstone fit to kindle the fire of idolatry. They cause us to idolize the saints, and to treat our Lord with neglect. They are too paltry fables to keep us from the sublime word of God.”

“How came you to know this so suddenly?”

“By one of those beams of light, which come from heaven through the Holy Scriptures all at once, I was struck with the impiety of addressing prayers to the saints. Go, dear William, to the Bible.”

Lefèvre had taken a long and sure step. The Reformation began in France at the moment when he laid aside the wondrous tales of the monks, and put his hand on the word of God, fully resolved to interpret all other things by it. Not the Breviary, but the Bible should henceforth be his authority. He studied the epistles of Paul, and light beamed on his mind; life was breathed into his heart. By the press, and from the pulpit, he began to teach men, and “open unto them the Scriptures.” That favorite idea, “God will renew the world,” so often expressed to Farel, appears in his Commentary on Paul’s epistles. “God, in his great mercy, will soon revive the expiring spark in the hearts of men, so that faith and love, and a purer worship will return.”

Strange doctrines were then first heard publicly in Paris—strange because they had been lost for centuries, and yet inasmuch as they were boldly declared in the very bosom of the Sorbonne. The roof of the university had reason to cry out in astonishment, as it reechoed the words of Lefèvre. “It is God alone,” he declared, “who, by his grace, through faith, justifies unto everlasting life. There is a righteousness of works, there is a righteousness of grace; the one cometh from man, the other from God; one is earthly and passeth away, the other is heavenly and eternal; one is the shadow and the sign, the other the light and the truth; one makes sin known to us, that we may escape death, the other reveals grace, that we may obtain life.”

“What, then?” asked his hearers, as they listened to this teaching, so opposed to that of four centuries. “Has any one man ever been justified without works?”

“One! they are innumerable,” replied the zealous preacher, whose young disciples were aroused and eager for the truth. “How many people of disorderly
lives, who have ardently prayed for the grace of baptism, possessing faith in Christ alone, and who, if they died the moment after, have entered into the life of the blessed, and that without works!"

"If, therefore, we are not justified by works," said his listeners, "it is vain that we perform them."

"Certainly not! They are not in vain. If I hold a mirror to the sun, its image is reflected; the more I polish and clear it, the brighter is the reflection; but, if we allow it to become tarnished, the splendor of the sun is dimmed. It is the same with justification in those who lead an impure life."

Thus taught the Paris doctor, not altogether free from error, but so near the greatest truth which man can know, that the light was brilliant. And, while all wondered, many believed. From this time, there were two parties in the university, two people in the city, and there began to be two great divisions in Christendom—those who put works above faith, and those who put faith before works; one people exalting the Church of Rome as the infallible teacher and the sole dispenser of eternal life on earth, the other trusting to the word of God as the only unerring guide and adoring Christ as the only Savior of men.

Farel listened, as for life, to this teaching of justification by faith, and he saw, at once, in which great division to take his place. The doctrine that Jesus was the only Saviour, and one such Savior was enough, had a weighty charm for his heart, and a glorious power over his soul. "Every objection fell, every struggle ceased. No sooner had Lefèvre put forward this doctrine, than Farel embraced it with all the ardor of his nature. He had undergone labor and conflicts enough to be aware that he could not save himself." He forgot his admired saints; he lost all sympathy with the monks of the forest; he gave up all human merit; he believed in Jesus. To himself he seemed strange; it was the old Saul of Tarsus trying to make out who was the new Paul; the old Simon astonished at the new Peter. In later years he wrote, "Lefèvre extricated me from the false opinion of human merits, and taught me that everything came from grace, which I believed as soon as it was spoken." Thus, with trembling step, he took his place in the ranks of the men of faith.

The men of works were not slow to fall into line, and prepare for the contest. There were professors in the colleges and doctors of the Sorbonne ready to display their generalship; there were students ready to volunteer in defending human merit. Many, whose works were bad and disgraceful, urged, all the more zealously, their dependence in good works. They knew little of the great question, for they had passed through no struggles of soul for life, and, instead of caring for the Bible, they had been "engaged in learning their parts in comedies, in masquerading, and in mountebank farces," so much so that parliament had summoned their teachers and forbidden "those indulgent masters to permit such dramas to be represented in their houses." In these
plays the great were ridiculed, the princes caricatured, and the king attacked. The government felt obliged to interfere.

But the hand of parliament could only provoke the disorderly students. The voice of the preacher gave them a new and powerful diversion. From comedies their thoughts were turned to debates about faith and works. "Great was the uproar on the benches of the University," and every student must take sides with Lefèvre or with the Sorbonne. With the latter gathered not only the young men of careless minds and evil deeds, but also many whose lives were the least at fault. The more upright class took credit to themselves for their moralities, and not willing to let the doctrine of faith condemn their "good works," they urged that James, their apostle, was opposed to Paul, the apostle of Lefèvre. The gospel doctor was quicker than Luther to see how these two apostles perfectly agreed together, one looking at faith as the starting point, and the other at works as the evidence of salvation.

"Doth not St. James in his first chapter declare that every good and perfect gift cometh down from above?" asked Lefèvre with the gentle persuasion of a Paul, eager to carry his hearers with him by arguments. "Now who will deny that justification is the good and perfect gift? ... If we see a man moving, the respiration that we perceive is to us a sign of life. Thus works are necessary, but only as signs of a living faith, which is followed by justification. Do eye-salves or lotions give light to the eye? No! it is the influence of the sun. Well these lotions and these eye-salves are our works. The ray that the sun darts from above is justification itself."

Faith is the link that binds us to Christ, and yet it is more than a link, it is a life. Lefèvre did not dwell on this living link alone; he went farther and exhibited Jesus in whom he believed. Like Luther he could almost paint the true cross in his eloquence, and still he felt that no tongue could do justice to the vicarious death of Christ. It was unspeakable. "Ineffable exchange," he declared, "the innocent One is condemned, and the criminal acquitted; the Blessing is cursed, and he who was cursed is blessed; the Life dies, and the dead live; the Glory is covered with shame, and he who was deep in shame is covered with glory."

Then rising still higher toward that sovereign love which sent such a divine Redeemer to sinful men, and dwelling on the privilege of being loved before they loved God, and being chosen afore they chose Jesus, he exhorted his hearers to live as if their lives were hid with Christ. "Oh if men could but understand this privilege, how chastely, purely and holily would they live, and they would look upon all the glory of this world as disgrace in comparison with that inner glory which is hidden from the eyes of the flesh."

Was this too lofty a strain of eloquence for some of his hearers on whose corrupt minds a gross darkness lay? He would give them a word in season, for
the arrow of truth must prepare them for the balm of Gilead. He must not prophesy smooth things. Even the clergy of his day must be rebuked their revels, and the sins of the times he touched with unsparing fidelity. With an indignation against sin, tempered by love for the sinner, he exclaimed, "How scandalous it is to see a bishop asking persons to drink with him, gambling, rattling the dice, spending his time with hawks and dogs, and in hunting, hallooing after rooks and deer, and frequenting the worst of houses and haunts! ... Oh men deserving a severer punishment than Sardanapalus himself!"

Did not Farel remember the "holy cross," and wish the priest of Sainte Croix could hear such reproofs? The tales there told to him when a child now appeared as the baldest lies. He saw too the evidence of a general deception in the use of "holy relics." The "holy cross" near Tallard was said to be made of the very wood of the one on which Christ was crucified. In Paris he had been adoring another cross of which the same story was told. Yet the wood was of a different kind! For others still there were the same lying pretensions, and he now wondered how he had ever been so stupid as to believe that the real cross of Calvary had been preserved. He repented, with deep sorrow, of his blindness, credulity and superstitious reverence.

"When the corruptions of the Romish church," wrote Farel in after years, "are unveiled to the soul that has been drawn aside by them, its sense of their enormity is so overwhelming, that only the clear exhibition of the welcome doctrine of salvation by Christ can prevent a man from utter despair or losing his senses."

But it was only daylight with the young Dauphinese; not yet was it clear sunshine. Some clouds must be broken and scattered before his noon would come. He had closed the Bible, and he must open it again and from the very fountains drink the crystal waters of eternal life. He must hear, not only the voice of Lefèvre, but the voice of Jehovah.

Thus Lefèvre preached; thus Farel believed. But, at length, the admiration of the saints returned upon him like a Satanic spell. To pray to them seemed easier than to pray to Christ. They had no merit to give him; they must not be trusted in for salvation; Jesus only was the Savior on whom his faith must be fixed. He saw all that, but yet, might not the saints help bear his prayers to God? Christ alone must be trusted, but was Christ alone to be invoked? He was troubled, and he carried his question to Lefèvre.

"My dear son," said the spiritual father, "we cannot be sure that the saints hear any words we speak. We know they cannot hear different persons, in different places, at the same time. We are sure that Jesus, the Father, and the Holy Ghost, do hear us, and to this holy Trinity only we are at liberty to pray. We must hold to what is certain and abandon everything that doubtful."
"But the saints have such a feeling for us."

"Jesus has infinitely more. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows us altogether. No saint can have such a tender sympathy for us as Christ. He alone hath trodden the wine-press. He only is the Head of the Church. Let us not call ourselves after St. Paul or St. Peter, but, in test, let us be Christians. Let the servant pray only to the her. Our prayers must reach the willing ear of God, or they are useless. Then let them go up directly to him."

The soul of Farel was now shaken by conflict. Two views opened before him. In one he saw the vast array of saints, with the Church on earth; in the other, Jesus Christ, alone, with his teacher. Now, he inclined to the saints, now, to the Savior. It was his last error, and he must decide his last battle. He was almost carried over to those revered men and at whose feet thousands fell adoring. Had he also fallen there, he must have exalted Mary above her divine Son and Lord. But God struck the blow for him; the spell was broken, the enchantment gone. The saints were in a cloud, and Christ appeared in his glory, as deserving of all adoration. Never could he render him reverence enough. And why waste adoration upon the holiest saint in paradise? It was robbing the Lord of his right to all the tribute of the heart. Referring to this last conflict, when he forever renounced the word of the Church, he wrote, "Then popery was utterly overthrown. I began to detest it as devilish, and the holy word of God had the chief place in my heart."

"It was necessary," he again wrote, "that popery should fall, little by little, from my heart, for it did not tumble down at the first shock. ... O Lord, would that my soul had served thee with a living faith, as thy obedient servants have done! Would that it had prayed to thee and honored thee, as much as I have given my heart to the mass, and to serve that enchanted wafer, giving it all honor! I have known thee too late; too late have I loved thee!"

From the stormy sea, Farel had now reached the port, guided by the light of his aged friend; and no man who ever exchanged a wrecked and sinking ship for the solid, healthy land, could have been more delighted with the new appearance of all things around him. Days of languor and disgust at sea give the traveler a keen wish for the fruits of the land; and thus, Farel, long soul-sick, but now having a firm footing on the shore of heavenly truth, craved and enjoyed the bread of life in the gospel. The desire for holy truth gives to it an enduring newness, for love never permits its object to seem old. "Now," said he, "everything appears to me under a new aspect. The Bible has a new face, Scripture is cleared up, prophecy is opened, the apostles shed a strong light on my soul. A voice, till now unknown—the voice of Christ, my Shepherd, my Master, my Teacher—speaks to me with power. So great a change has come over me, that, instead of keeping the murderous heart of a ravening wolf, I have come back quietly, like a meek and harmless lamb, with my heart entirely withdrawn from the pope, and wholly given to Jesus Christ."
Drawn from the abyss of popery, he must now go deeply into the Bible, enriching himself with its treasures. With absorbing interest he began the study of Greek and Hebrew, without neglecting his other studies, on which he set a just value. In order to hide the word of God in his heart, he read it daily, and God gave him increasing light and life. Now he gave the Scriptures just the meaning which was apparent in them; what conflicted with them he cast away; what agreed with them he held fast. No longer did he "keep to the interpretation of the Church, and, indeed, of the pope." No more did he think that his "degree in arts" must precede those degrees which the apostle—not the pope—Peter laid down: "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity."

On the walls of many an old church in Europe, one sees a dial, whose only use consists in casting a shadow that will mark time of day. Any sort of light will give the hand a shadow. It may be that of a lamp or of the moon. But only one light give the right shadow. It must be sunshine, falling direct from the unclouded face of that glorious orb which rules the day. Thus it is with the Bible. We may read it in the light of its beautiful poetry and touching eloquence; in the light of science and theology; in the light of antiquity and history; in the light of commentaries and sermons; and, while the darkness is driven from the intellect, the soul may derive no spiritual benefit. No mark is there, telling its advance in the circle of Christian graces. Only one light can throw a saving impression of the Bible on the soul, and that is the light of the Holy Spirit. When he shines upon the gospel-page, he carries its power into the heart, and, instead of mere shadows, there are burning beams. The hand of God touches the soul, and, beneath every finger, a new grace is started, or an old one revived. These graces are the degrees of the Christian’s dial. From the time Farel had first read the Bible, trying in vain to make it agree with the teachings of the Church, the mark on his soul had gone backward ten degrees. But, now, under the shining of the Spirit, he understands the word; he feels its transforming power; he believes, he rejoices, he grows. He loves the truth, and that love is a mark of his being face to face with the Comforter, and with the Sun of Righteousness, which had risen upon his heart with healing in its wings.

From the study of Church history he derived great benefit, for, by its facts, he uprooted many an error that had grown deep in his mind. He found that, in the early centuries, the Christians prayed to God, and not to the saints. They confessed their sins to Christ, and not to a priest. They knew nothing of the mass, the consecrated wafer changed into the very body of the Lord, the stations of the way of the cross, the gazing on pictures, the worship of images, the adoration of relics, the pope and his cardinals, the sign of the cross, the rosary, the holy water, the holy unction, the prayers for the dead, the merit which saints leave for sinners, and the doctrine of purgatory. They were as
ignorant of all these essentials of popery, as the devotees of the pope were of the simple spiritual life of the early Christians. The ancient Church was a field, sown thick with the good seed of the kingdom, but an enemy had sown tares therein. That enemy was Romanism. Both had long grown together, until the tares had choked the wheat, or overlaid it; and now the harvest was come, and the tares must be cast away, and the wheat gathered into the store-house of the soul, so empty that men were perishing for want of that bread which came down from heaven. Thus, Farel discarded great bundles of error.

Still, Farel needed a church, where he might publicly worship God. Where could he go? Lefèvre could not make one for himself and his disciple. Not yet was there any organized Protestantism. The only hope, then, was to see Romanism reformed. Farel saw no other way but to attend the Romish churches, and there worship God in spirit, as Jesus did in the temple, where, in spite of his cleansing, there were all the errors of the Pharisees. But, what did he find there? Loud voices, long chantings, prayers in a dead language, smoke and formalities. There was the priest seen at the confessional; but, might Christ be there, unseen, and ready to forgive sins? There was the corrupt liturgy; but, might not a pure, unwritten litany go up from his heart, acceptably, to the Hearer of prayer? There was the outward form of godliness, without the power; but, might not he have the inward power, without the form? God was everywhere, and he, even there, would worship him in spirit and in truth. Jesus had said, "Lo, I am with you alway;" and, under cathedral roofs that threw back the smoke of papal censers to the cold stone floors, he would adore the Crucified, without the pretended help of a cross, or "the elevation of the host." Nor needed he the dove on the painted window to assure him that the Spirit, who came down at Pentecost, could enter the church, and fill his soul with something better than a "dim religions light," kindle the heavenly flame in his heart, and give him the tongue of fire.

The stations had lost their charm. The images had no attraction. The altars drew not his knees to the ground. The confessional brought no sigh from his heart, nor gave him a quivering lip. Standing one day in a crowd that was gazing on pictures, or bowing to crosses, he lifted his eyes to heaven, and said, "Thou, alone, art God! Thou, alone, art wise! Thou, alone, art good! Nothing must be taken away from thy holy law, and nothing added. For thou, alone, art the Lord, and thou, alone, wilt and must command."

To him now, priests, and pope, and teachers, were mere men. Lefèvre was only a man, loved and venerated still, but not standing as a mediator between him and Christ. The saints had been but men, many of them the best of the earth, yet fallen from the lofty height to which his imagination had raised them. The old Pantheon in his heart had crumbled to the dust. Christ was the one mediator, and God’s word the supreme law.
These grand results were attained by slower steps than our pages have moved onward, but freedom came to the soul of Farel about the date 1520, when he was full thirty years of age. Luther was then making a powerful impression in France, notwithstanding the decisions of the Sorbonne. Let Luther have the credit of being the great workman of the sixteenth century, and the chief reformer. But we take nothing from him when we give their due to the Paris doctor and his disciple. Farel was not guided by Luther or Zwingli; he and they were struggling for light and for life about the same time. Lefèvre was before them all, and hence Beza hails him as the man "who boldly began the revival of the pure religion of Jesus Christ, and as, in ancient times, the school of Isocrates sent forth the best orators, so from the lecture-room of the doctor of Staples issued many of the best men of the age and of the church."

Although there was still in this bold teacher a tinge of the Sorbonne, yet "he is the first catholic in the reform movement, and the last of reformers in the (Roman) Catholic movement." D’Aubigné says farther, "The Reformation was not, therefore, in France a foreign importation. It was born on French soil; it germinated in Paris; it put forth its first shoots in the University itself, that second authority in Romish Christendom. God planted the seeds of this work in the simple hearts of a Picard and a Dauphinese, before they had begun to bud in any other country on earth. If we look only at dates we must acknowledge that neither to Switzerland nor to Germany [Zwingli in the one and Luther in the other] belong the honor of having begun this work, although hitherto these countries alone have contended for it. This honor belongs to France."

The wonder is that in these three countries the light should break forth so nearly at the same time, when the watchmen saw not eye to eye, nor heard each other’s voice, nor laid any plans in concert. It proves that each one acted under an unseen power, who had planned the movement on an extended scale. With no communication one with the other, all struck their blows about the same time, "as in a battle all the divisions of an army begin to move about the same moment, although one has not told the other to march," for the chief commander has given the same order to each one of them. This is a proof that God chose the time, the places, and the men, and the great movement of the sixteenth century was the work of God.

When about thirty years of age, Farel could no longer have a good conscience and remain in the Romish church. He forsook her communion, with a feeling of abhorrence toward himself and of the errors in which he had so long been enthralled. Not far from this time he was recommended by Lefèvre and elected to a professorship in the celebrated college founded by Cardinal Lemoine, one of the four principal colleges of the theological faculty in Paris, equal in rank to the Sorbonne. He soon became the regent, an honor which had always been given to men of learning and eminence. He filled the office with great credit to all concerned, during the short time that a persecution was preparing, and his name was held in delightful remembrance by his colleagues and students.
CHAPTER IV

A Circle of Friends
1512–1520

When one maple puts forth its leaves in the early spring, we may know that the sap is in all the trees of its kind, and they will soon be in full leaf. The new life in Lefèvre and Farel was soon to be manifested by other souls of their class, whom we now introduce as opponents of many evils in popery, if all of them were not yet friends of the reformation. We may know more of Farel by the company he keeps and the stirring times in which he began his career.

James Allmain, in 1512, took a position of astonishing boldness, for one of the youngest doctors of the University. Thomas de Vio, who afterwards contended with Luther on two great moral battlefields, Augsburg and Leipsic, had published the doctrine that the pope was the absolute monarch of the church. If Julius II was his favorite specimen of a pope, there was need of strong argument to make thinking Frenchmen believe that dogma. This man was supposed to have taken the name "Julius" with an eye to the military fame of the first of the Caesars, and was soon involved in a war with France. This pretended "vicar of Christ," assumed to imitate the Blessed One by holding down his head when the multitudes applauded him, and once a year washing the feet of twelve beggars. But he was as unlike our Lord as darkness is unlike the day. He was high-tempered, profane, drunken and dissolute; cruel in war, weak in peace, and ambitious to extend the temporal power of the popedom. Yet, he sought to command respect by the long beard on a face of sixty, and by wearing a tiara of massive gold, covered with costly gems. Under such a fallible pope the dogma of papal infallibility was firmly established. Thus at the very time when Anti-Christ put forth most strongly his three claims of spiritual dominion, temporal power, and infallibility, Christ was coming again to the world.

The troops of the French king, in whose service was the Chevalier Bayard at the time, gained a victory over this papal Caesar. Louis XII, "the father of his people," was well prepared to doubt the dogma of Cardinal de Vio’s book when it was put in his hands. He laid it before the university. To refute it seemed a bold undertaking. Allmain, a man of profound genius and unwearied application, made the daring attempt. He read his essay before the faculty of theology, showed the falsity of the cardinal's assertions, and received the greatest applause. Such courage is contagious, and a fire was kindled in the hearts of many of the students. Before long, the brothers Arnaud and Gerard Roussel, two fellow countrymen of Lefèvre, with several others, gathered to the newly-raised standard.
A greater than these was admitted into this growing circle of generous minds—Count William of Montbrun, the son of Cardinal Briconnét. After the death of his wife, he had entered the Church, given his heart to study, taken orders, and was now the Bishop of Meaux. Twice he was sent on an embassy to Rome, and, on his return to Paris, he was astonished at what had taken place. He was expected to have much to say about the gay entertainments and festivals of "the holy city," but his thirst for the truth led him to more solemn and important matters. He renewed his former acquaintance with Lefèvre. He passed many precious hours with him, with Farel, the two Roussels, and their friends. Illustrious as a prelate, he was, nevertheless, humble-minded, and was willing to be taught by the humblest Christian, and especially by the Lord himself.

"I am in darkness," said he, "awaiting the Divine goodness, to which I am a stranger, because of my demerits."

"Get into your heart more of that good Bible, which I have already recommended to you," said Lefèvre. "It will give you light. It will lead you back to the pure Christianity of the early Church."

"I have read it. But my mind is dazzled by the brilliancy of the gospel. Free grace, free pardon, the free gift of eternal life and heaven offered freely to all who will simply believe in Christ—these amaze me. The eyes of all men are not able to receive the whole light of this great sun."

"We need a great sun to chase away the night that rests on the world. It is the glory of Christianity that it causes our eyelids to droop before its infinite mercy."

The gentle bishop read still more eagerly, and the simple and weighty truth of salvation by faith charmed his soul. He found Christ; he found God, in Christ, reconciling sinners to their Father. "Such is the sweetness of this divine food," said he, "that it makes the mind insatiable; the more we taste it, the more we long for it." Again, representing himself as a house, too narrow for Jesus to dwell in, he says, "But the dwelling enlarges according to our desire to entertain the good Guest. Faith is the quartermaster who alone can find room for him, or, more truly, who makes us dwell in him."

And, now, from the court of the king, comes a still greater personage, the Princess Margaret, the Esther of the palace. Let us notice her steps, as she walks softly in the dawn of that morning when God was renewing the world. The same "still small voice," which had been calling Lefèvre and his band out of the night into the day, has prompted her to seek the light. We must go back a little, in order to understand her position.
Louis XII had left some bright lines in his record. He had opposed the temporal power of the pope with a conquering army. He had resisted the papal pretensions to absolute rule in the Church, and probably was glad that Allmain had exposed their fallacy. He was no friend to the infallibility of such popes as Borgia and Julius the profane. All this must have been known among the princes. It is even said that he had a coin struck with the inscription *Perdam Babylonis nomen*—"I will destroy Babylon." He knew that the Babylon of his day was Romanism. In the year 1501 he had made a journey through Dauphiny. It was at the time when the Waldenses were exciting a needless alarm among the priests, and Farel was a child of twelve. Some of the nobles begged the king to rid their provinces of these teachers. He was curious to learn what evil they had done, and sent his confessor, Parvi, to visit the accused. The report brought back was so favorable that Louis said, "They are better Christians than we are." He commanded the goods taken from them to be restored, and the papers, which gave them authority to prosecute these "better Christians," to be cast into the Rhone.

Nor was this all. About the year 1510 Louis invited the French clergy to meet him in council at Tours. He seemed to anticipate a reform, and, had it taken place during his reign, the whole of France might have become Protestant. The council declared that he had the right to wage war upon the pope, and that all popes were under the authority of the general councils. From Tours came very much to talk about in the university—the city and the court—and a deep impression must have been made on the mind of young Farel, who had lately come to Paris. But what would the courtiers, the royal heir, and a certain young princess, think of all this conduct of the king?

If a wicked woman deserves to go unmentioned, then Louisa of Savoy should be treated with that silence which condemns. The less written of her profane character the purer our page. The shame is that she had great influence in the kingdom. The honor is that one of her two children, growing up in the court of Louis, was so unlike her as to merit a place in church history. No thanks to her for this, but to the truth of God. Her son was a prince of tall stature, striking features, and so strong a will that the king often said, "That great boy will spoil all." This was Francis, the cousin of Louis. "His beauty and address, his courage and love of pleasure, made him the first knight of his time. He aspired, however, at being something more; he desired to be a great and even a good king, provided everything would bend to his sovereign pleasure. Valor, a taste for letters, and a love of gallantry, are three terms that express the character of Francis and the spirit of the age." Learned men gathered around him, and the strange thing is, as shall see, that he did not join with the reformers, for a tender and gentle being at his side held over him a guardian power.

This gentle being was his sister, two years older than himself, and so queenly in her personal excellence that all her titles seem to add nothing to her greatness. To be Margaret of Valois, then duchess of Alençon, then queen of
Navarre, was little honor compared to that of being a fervent Christian, the protector of the Protestants, the patron of young Calvin, and the devoted friend of Lefèvre, who passed the seven last years of his life in the refuge of her home, and there died at the age of nearly a hundred years.

But she is young now, and she does not dream of these honors. Her cousin Louis spares no pains in her education; her mother’s example is warning enough against the temptations that beset a princess; her brother tenderly loves her, or rather sends back a tithe of the flood that pours upon him from her own heart, and all wonder that such a bad woman as Louisa could have so good a daughter as Margaret. What is it to be the most beautiful, intelligent, witty, amiable and influential princess of her time? What is it to be gifted with poetry, accomplished in literature, and exalted in station? What is it to be esteemed by scholars, visited by ambassadors, and consulted by her king? A happiness that thousands would covet and think worthy the risk of their souls. But she is intent upon something far better. To prevent evil and to do good is her ruling passion. And when the gospel comes it is hailed as good news from heaven, as bread to the hungry soul, and as her defense against the evils of a corrupt court. Certain ladies tell her of the new doctors; they lend her the new little books; they tell her of the ancient church and the word of God; she listens, reads and believes. She walks out to breathe the fresh air of the revival morning, and catches some glimpses of the Light of the world. She talks with Lefèvre, Farel and Roussel; she is struck with their pure morals; their piety and their earnestness, and she is entered on the list of friends to the new movement. The bishop of Meaux becomes her guide in the path of faith.

Francis was crowned in 1515, and there was some hope that he would go beyond Louis, his father-in-law, and extend his shield to those brave men who were using spiritual weapons against popery. He invited learned reformers into his kingdom, and heard them talk with delight. He founded professorships of Greek and Hebrew, to the great joy of Beza. He listened to his affectionate sister and was almost persuaded to be a Christian. But the court thought it would never do for the king to lend his hand in turning the world upside down. These reformers must be treated with contempt, and even persecution might teach them silence. Margaret’s new opinions were whispered to the courtiers; their surprise was great, their talk was loud, their ridicule was keen. "What! the sister of the king take part with these new people! It must not be!" It seemed for the moment that her doom had come. She was denounced to Francis I. He, as her brother, pretended to think the charge was untrue. Then her noble character silently rebuked her reprovers. They could not resist the charm of her good deeds. Everyone loved her, says Brantome; "She was very kind, mild, gracious, charitable, affable, a great almsgiver, despising nobody, and winning all hearts by her excellent qualities."

No preacher could have done what Margaret was doing among the better minds at the French court. Her life pleaded the cause of the gospel with that
eloquence which consists in actions more convincing than words. The new doctrine was gaining the nobles of France. If the king had followed his persuading sister, the nation might have opened its gates to Christ, and Margaret’s conversion saved it from those storms which afterwards drenched that beautiful land with the blood of the Huguenots.

Not that Margaret was a saint, far from it. In her writings were blots, in her character blemishes, and in her devotion appear tinges of Romanism. But, even a clouded star was a wonder in that court of darkness. If she wavered between her brother and her Savior, it was because she turned to the one in order to give him light, and to the other to receive life. We shall soon see how true were Beza’s words, when he said that God raised her up to overthrow, as far as possible, the cruel designs of Louisa, Anthony Duprat, the chancellor of France, and their associates, when they excited the king against the so-called heretics.

When wounded by the arrows of sin, and by the thorns of the court, she fled to her lonely retreat, and laid bare her sorrows to the eye of her crucified Lord. Her poetry then became prayer.

O Thou, my Priest, my Advocate, my King,
On whom depends my life—my everything,
O Lord, who first didst drain the bitter cup of woe,
And knowest its poison (if man e’er did know),
These thorns, how sharp, these wounds of sin, how deep!
Friend, Savior, King, oh! plead my cause, I pray,
Speak, help and save me, lest I fall away.

The tramp of the forest explorer calls the hungry lion from his lair, and so the march of these French reformers brought out the most cruel foes to track them along every new path of truth. They needed not to be ferreted out by spies, for these friends were not hiding away, as if ashamed of their doctrines. All was open and broadly proclaimed. They were well-known by the lamps which they held forth in the night of error. By their light we may see who were their bitterest foes.

Louisa, the mother of Margaret and the king, loved her iniquities so well, that she naturally hated the word of God, and all who set it above the traditions of the Romish Church. She was the more to be feared on account of her great influence over her son. But she had a favorite even worse than herself, whom she had put forward as chancellor of the kingdom, and he was now the cruel power behind the throne. This was Anthony Duprat, represented as "the most vicious of all bipeds." He had enriched himself at the expense of justice, and then taken "holy orders," so as to get his hands upon the richest livings, and increase his wealth at the expense of religion. Two such depraved characters might well seek to wash away their own lust and avarice in the blood of the "heretics." Devoted to the pope, and pleading for his absolute power over the
Church, they sharpened the sword and kindled the fire, and hoped to make short work of the reformers. This was the enmity of the state. Still more fearful was the enmity of the Church. The dignified Sorbonne joined hands with the profligate court. It furnished bigots of every grade, but our eyes fix on the leader of the gang. The same Picardy that sent forth Lefèvre to begin a reformation, also let slip Noel Beda to begin a persecution. He was "reputed to be the greatest brawler, and most factious spirit of his day." Always restless, he was a torment to all around him. He seemed born to fight, and, when he had no foes, he struck at his friends. He loudly declaimed against learning, and tried to make every new idea appear frightful. Many smiled while he blustered, but there were enough to listen, and, by making himself a terror to all who differed from him, he gained a wide sway among the colleges. He "created heretics before any existed," and had called for the burning of Merlin, the vicar-general of Paris. "But when the new doctors appeared, he bounded like a wild beast that suddenly perceives an easy prey within its reach." The cautious Erasmus wrote, "In one Beda there are three thousand monks." But where was the proper victim? The suspecting eye fell upon Lefèvre, for Beda had grown nervous over the renown of his fellow countryman. To increase his own chance for making a noise, he would gladly have put the aged doctor to silence. He either could not see, or could not lay hold of the strong points in the new doctrines, and he scented out the grievous heresy of "the three Magdalenes." For Lefèvre had asserted that Mary, the sister of Lazarus, Mary Magdalen, and the woman who anointed the feet of Jesus, were three different persons. This set Beda and his host in motion. The whole Church was aroused, and, as a specimen of her infallible judgment, she declared that these were but one person, an opinion which no priest would be likely now to affirm. Lefèvre was condemned by the Sorbonne, and prosecuted by the parliament as a heretic. But Francis, glad to strike a blow at the Sorbonne and to humble the monks, rescued him from their violent hands, and saved him from the scaffold. Perhaps the thanks are due to Margaret. Beda was enraged at seeing his victim snatched from his grasp, and he resolved, to take more caution with the next one, whom he was about to select from the nobility. At the court was a gentleman of Artois, about thirty years old, named Louis de Berquin. He was frank and open-hearted, pure in his life, tender toward the poor, warmly attached to his friends, and wished to have no enemies. He had fairly won the title of "the most learned of the nobles." He had a horror of everything called heresy by the church, and devoutly observed the fasts, festivals, confessions and masses. It created surprise to see so much devotion at court. There seemed to be nothing to incline such a man toward the new doctrines. But Beda disgusted his generous spirit. Not wishing to injure anyone, he could not bear to see others injured. As he did nothing by halves, he spoke freely, wheresoever he went, about the cruelty of this rough tool of the Sorbonne, and he attacked "in their very nests, those odious hornets who were then the terror of the world." Nor did he stop there, as if it were enough to oppose the
persecutors. He sought to learn what the persecuted had to say for themselves. He wished to know that Bible, which was "so dear to the men against whom Beda and his creatures were raging, and he scarcely began to read the book, before it won his heart."

Berquin lost no time in seeking admission to the circle of reformers, in which was the delightful company of Margaret, Lefèvre, Farel, Briçonnet, and the Roussells. Anyone who loved the word of God was now a brother, and all sat at the feet of the Master. Nor was the young noble yet satisfied. He wished France to know the truth. He showed all the zeal of Beda in the other direction. He began to use the pen in order to resist Beda's sword.

In 1520 the noise about Luther had reached France. His writings came soon after with the east wind. His victory over Eck gave joy and courage to the company of reformers. Many of the Sorbonne doctors found striking truths in the books of the monk of Wittenberg. They were watched by their colleagues, and if one of them uttered a reasonable sentiment, the loud cry arose, "He is worse than Luther." The more boisterous priests seemed to gain the day, and became the willing recruits of Beda and his satellites. The more silent doctors read and thought for themselves.

Berquin translated several of Luther's writings. This was too much; he was now one with the German monk who had dared to set himself against the pope. Death was too good for Luther; it was good enough for his translator, and Beda resolved to bring him to the scaffold. There was this argument—the University had condemned the German writings to be publicly burned. An appeal was sent to Francis, who was then pleasuring through the land. Margaret whispered in his ear. His eyes were opened. He saw that the "heretics" were simply men of learning. The grave deputies were sent back, crestfallen and in great wrath, with this reply from the king: "I will not have these people molested. To persecute those who teach us would prevent able scholars from coming into our country."

Among those who were thus shielded were many of Luther's disciples. They had crossed the Rhine in advance of his writings, and found a welcome among all the Bible readers, whose new doctrines were often called "the sentiments of men of genius." "In a short time," says a Jesuit author, "the university was filled with foreigners, who, because they knew a little Hebrew and Greek, acquired a reputation, insinuated themselves into the houses of persons of quality, and claimed an insolent liberty of interpreting the Bible."

And that the king should allow them to stay! This was an awful calamity to the church. But if Beda and his troop could not erect scaffolds or pile up the fagots, there was another sort of persecution which might be employed. They could annoy the reformers, vex them, slander them, cry out against them, and make the people believe that the church was in danger. They might hiss and hound them out of society, or provoke them to say and do things in self-defense, on which they could found such charges as would bring down the wrath of the king. Beda was bold to declare that he would wage war upon them to the bitter end; if the king consented, well, but if not, his majesty must make the best of it. The aged Lefèvre felt tormented by these ignorant zealots,
and began to look for some retreat where he might be free from the strife of tongues. Where should he find it? Where be out of the reach of the man in whom there were three thousand monks?

CHAPTER V
Meaux The Cradle of French Reform
A Busy Bishop
1520–1524

"Come to me, good father Lefèvre, and find rest from your troubles," we seem to read in a letter from Briçonnet, the Bishop of Meaux, who is now at home with his flock, in the beautiful country of the river Maine. "Our city will afford you an asylum."

"Shall such a man as I flee?" we think Lefèvre responds, in the spirit of Nehemiah.

"Come over and help us," urges the bishop, and the call to work proves stronger than the invitation to rest. Lefèvre goes and finds a busy bishop who needs help and counsel. Let us see what has been going on at Meaux.

After Briçonnet had opened his heart to the "good Guest," he returned to the diocese, and, with the zeal of a Christian, began the work of a faithful bishop. He visited every parish. He inquired into the doctrines and lives of the preachers, as one who had an account to render unto the great Master. He summoned witnesses who had a sad story on their lips.

"At collection time," they said, "the Franciscans of Meaux begin their rounds. A single preacher will visit four or five parishes in a day, always delivering the same sermon, not to feed the souls of his hearers, but to fill his mouth, his purse, and his convent. When their wallets are replenished, their end is gained, there are no more sermons, and the people see the priests no more in the churches until the next pay-day comes."

"These shepherds make it their only business to shear the sheep," declares the bishop, who pities the shorn flocks, and is indignant against the monks. "But where are these hirelings?"

"They get their money, and then go to Paris to spend it," reply the parishioners. "Alas! are they not traitors who thus desert the service of Jesus Christ?"

The bishop resolved upon a sifting process. He called all his clergy together in 1519, and took account of them. Many, who cared for little else than the charms of Paris, urged that they had employed curates to tend their flocks while they enjoyed the city. What then of these curates? Were they as bad as the priests who held the livings? One hundred and twenty-seven of them were examined, and only fourteen of them were approved by the bishop! The rest were weak, ignorant, worldly, and selfish.

The next year the bishop published a mandate, in which he declared "traitors and deserters all those pastors who, by abandoning their flocks, show plainly that what they love is the fleece," selected others, who were found to be qualified, and set them over the sheep, ransomed by the most holy blood of Jesus Christ. He now was convinced that, if he would have able ministers in his diocese, he must train them himself. He therefore resolved to establish a
theological school at Meaux, under the direction of pious and learned doctors. He must find good teachers, and, without meaning it, Beda was providing them.

Lefèvre had left Farel and the Bible-band at the capital, hunted everywhere by the secret detective police of the Sorbonne. Farel did not preach, for he was not yet ordained, but he talked with students and citizens, argued with professors and priests, and boldly proclaimed the cause of the reformation at the university and in the city. Some, however, fired by his example, openly preached the gospel. Martial Mazurier, president of St. Michael’s college, and eloquent in the pulpit, threw aside all reserve, and painted the disorders of the times in the darkest but the truest colors. It was almost impossible to resist the wisdom with which this earnest Stephen spake. Beda and his recruits were raised to the highest pitch of anger, and declared, "If we tolerate these innovators, they will invade the whole body, and all will be over with our teaching, our traditions, our places, and the respect felt towards us by France and the whole of Christendom."

All had, indeed, been over, long ago, with the respect which the Sorbonnists claimed. They had forfeited it by their bigotry and intolerance. They stood accused, before all true Christendom, of the great crime of persecuting the men who would have saved France from darkness and blood. On them was fixed the lasting dishonor of having refused the true light, because their deeds and doctrines were evil. They were blinding their own eyes, and were fighting against God. To them, these excellent men, of whom Paris was not worthy, might have said, as Paul and Barnabas declared to certain persecutors, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but, seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Never was there a more solemn hour to that capital city, in which was concentrated all France. Never were the destinies of that nation more delicately hinged on an event, small in the eyes of men, but great in the sight of God. That event was the persecution of those who held forth the word of life! Paris then decided her history for centuries; she sent Christianity into exile; she set up Romanism in her heart, and there it has remained, causing, in one age, a St. Bartholomew’s day of blood, and, in another, an infidel revolution of horror.

The bishop of Meaux learned how fierce was the enmity against Farel, the Roussels, Mazurier, and their co-laborers, and how all their zealous efforts were thwarted. He entreated them to come and join Lefèvre. They saw only a hopeless conflict before them if they remained, and thought it important to be united together in one solid and sacred phalanx for the triumph of the truth. They accepted the bishop’s invitation, and went to Meaux. They went into the neglected parishes to feed the flocks that had been fleeced by the priests and curates. They laid no tag upon the rich; they gave generously to the poor. The bishop was like that ancient "son of consolation," who laid his money at the apostle’s feet. "His fortune equaled is zeal; never did man devote his wealth to nobler uses, and ever did such noble devotedness promise, at first, to bear such glorious fruits." The new teachers gathered a goodly company around
them, and Meaux has the honor of being the first city in France in which grew up a protestant congregation. In this "cradle of the French reform" a Protestant church was established in 1546. Beza wrote of it, "the little flock of Meaux not only served as an example to all the churches of France, but has also begotten to the Lord several other churches, and that too of the greatest. What is more, it may boast of having offered martyrs to God as its first fruits, since the restoration of the gospel."
The voice of Lefèvre was heard crying aloud, "Kings, princes, people! all orations should think and aspire after Christ alone. Every priest should resemble that archangel whom John saw in the apocalypse, flying through the air, holding the everlasting gospel in his hand, and carrying it to every people, nation, tongue, and king. Come near ye pontiffs, come ye kings, come ye generous hearts. ... Nations, awake to the light of the gospel, and inhale the heavenly life. The word of God is all sufficient."
This all-sufficient word must be in all houses, in all hands, under all eyes, and become the book of the people. Lefèvre wished to see it read by every class and in every language. During the neat three years (1522–1525) he published the entire New Testament in French, and a version of the Psalms. In private and in families the Bible was read; conversations about its truths became more frequent and public, and the Holy Word proved itself to be from God by the light which it cast into the corrupt heart and the dark home.
Erasmus, by publishing the Greek Testament, reached chiefly the learned, and this was a result too great for time to estimate. Lefèvre, by publishing the French version, not only drew educated minds to the Bible, but he sent it into the abodes of the poor, the lowly, the illiterate and the toiling. The city of Meaux was largely inhabited by artisans and dealers in wool. The fullers and weavers, says an old chronicler, "took no other recreation, as they worked with their hands, than to talk with each other of the word of God, and to comfort themselves with the same. Sundays and holidays, especially, were devoted to the reading of Scripture, and inquiring into the good pleasure of the Lord." The bishop was delighted to see the good work thus going on, for piety was taking the place of superstition in his diocese. An old Romish annalist lays a heavy charge upon Lefèvre for using his great learning to "so cajole and circumvent Messire Guillaume Briçonnet with his plausible talk, that he caused him to turn aside grievously, so that it has been impossible, up to this day (1560), to free the city and diocese of Meaux from that pestilent doctrine, where it has so marvelously increased. The misleading of that good bishop was a great injury, as until then, he had been so devoted to God and to the Virgin Mary."
Not only into the factories, but into the fields, went the glad tidings, and thence still farther out into the world. Near to the city were rich crops, and at the harvest time, a crowd of laborers came from the surrounding regions. They reaped until they needed rest, and then while resting they talked with the town-people about other seed-times, other soils, and other harvests. When their work was ended, they went home with the gospel in their hearts. They told the wonderful news, and in one instance, the peasants of Landouzy carried back with them the gospel, and persevered until an evangelical church was
formed in their district, and it still stands, we believe, as one of the oldest protestant churches in France. Thus "in this diocese an image of the renovated church was seen to shine forth."

Nor was the king forgotten. The light must reach him. The court must be gained to Christianity, if possible. The bishop sent to Margaret (now the Duchess of Alençon) "the epistles of St. Paul translated and splendidly illuminated, most humbly treating her to present them to the king, which cannot but be the most pleasing from your hands." Thus, probably, the word of God was placed under the eyes of Francis I and his mother Louisa. If they opened it, they closed it without receiving any lesson for their hearts. Perhaps too much was hoped from the conversion of the king, should he avow himself the patron of Christianity.

"The gospel is already gaining the hearts of the great, and of the people," said Lefèvre one day, in the fervor of his heart, when certain of the Romanists were talking with him and Farel. "In a short time, spreading all over France, it will everywhere throw down the inventions of men."

On a sudden, a Franciscan monk, named Roma, started up to resist the animated doctor, whose eyes sparkled, and his worn-out voice grew musical with the promise of refreshing times. "Then, I and all the other religioners will preach a crusade," cried Roma. "We will raise the people; and, if the king permits the preaching of your gospel, we will expel him from his kingdom by his own subjects."

It might have been ill for the monk, but well for the truth, had the knightly king heard this last threat. He might have taught Roma a lesson on loyalty. No reformer was proposing to drive the monarch from his throne, if he did not favor the gospel. If such a threat was a crime, where were Beda and Duprat? If they were on the hunt for an offense, there was one, far greater than any committed by the reformers. The Franciscans applauded the words of Roma. They began to feel alarm; their craft was in danger; their livings were reduced; they could not shear the sheep, and their convents were in need of supplies. They went about, mourning and clamoring, as if their fall was a sign that the world was coming to an end. They tried to rouse the people against the new teachers. Then, with bolder face, they went to the bishop, and impudently declared to him, "Crush this heresy, or else the pestilence, which is already destroying the city of Meaux, will spread over the kingdom."

The bishop, at first, stood like an oak against the storm. He had a contempt for the selfish monks, who sought to lord it over him. He went into the pulpit and defended the aged Lefèvre, and called the monks Pharisees and hypocrites. It had been well for his name had he been slain at the very onset of this gathering battle, and buried as the first Protestant who fell in France. But his courage failed. He trembled, wavered, and became a frail reed in the wind. He was only a bishop, and the monks could crush him. He took alarm when he saw them posting off to the capital, to lay their complaints before the higher powers. They entered Paris; they were closeted with Beda and his gang; they were a joy to Duprat, and they easily gained the ear of parliament. They charged the bishop with the immense mischief done at Meaux. His palace was a
fountain of heresy, and it must be sealed. The Sorbonne and the parliament agreed in waging a war upon the reformers.

Poor Briçonnet! holding out a flag of truce at the very hour when a victory was at hand. He would not surrender everything, but he would yield enough to satisfy Rome. He would keep the gospel, but give up Luther’s writings. He would allow Mary to be invoked along with Christ. The compromise was made.

In 1523 he issued three mandates; the first enjoined prayers for the dead and the invocation of the saints; the second one forbade any one to buy, borrow, read, or carry about with him, any of Luther’s works, and ordered them to be torn in pieces, scattered to the winds, or burnt; the third asserted the doctrine of purgatory. But this was not enough. If he would save himself, he must sacrifice those who had trusted him, and whom he had sheltered. It was hinted that the gospel teachers must not be allowed to leave Meaux, for they would only carry their doctrines into other places. An end must be made of them. This was too horrible a work for the bishop, and it was thought best to entrust it to surer hands. He was asked to forbid their preaching in the parishes, and he did it. He also began to visit the churches, in company with Andrew Verjus, the first president of the parliament of Paris, so that this zealous dignitary might see and hear for himself. It was hard, but the bishop labored to “weed out the heresies that were there shooting up.” Verjus and his brother deputies returned to the capital, fully satisfied. Briçonnet had fallen. They said he had returned to the faith, and risen to his proper place in the Church.

The aim was now taken at the faithful Lefèvre. His writings were searched by Beda and his detective police. They pointed out intolerable heresies to the Sorbonne. “Does he dare to recommend all the faithful to read the Scriptures? Does he not tell therein that whoever loves not Christ’s word is not a Christian? and that the word of God is sufficient to lead to eternal life?” The Church must never endure this, for it puts all her interests in danger. Romanism cannot stand if the Bible be the book of the people.

The secret whisperings in the Sorbonne, the plots of their detectives, and the noise of the monks, were of little avail unless the king would give the order to crush the heresies and force men into the faith of the church. And what did Francis say to all this uproar? He appointed a commission to investigate the matter; Lefèvre appeared before it, justified himself, and came off from this attack with victory on his banners of truth. Yet flight was wisdom, and he soon after left Meaux for a time. It seems however that he returned and was secretly harbored by the bishop.

Farel could not hope for protection, since his host had turned against the invited guests. He left the city where there were still many firm adherents to the gospel, and where martyrs were soon to seal their testimony with blood. It seems that he went at first to Paris, and with unsparing words attacked the errors of Rome, until he put his life in jeopardy. Thence he probably went to Dauphiny, anxious to bear the good news to his native land. It has been supposed, however, that he spent several months at Metz, where the gospel standard was being lifted high, and to it were gathering some of the most worthy chieftains of the French reformation. Let us see them flocking to this
ancient city, the old Divodurum of Tacitus, built where the Seille adds its waters to the blue Moselle.

Before the bishop fell, and his chief guests departed, the Lord raised up a lowly disciple to be a pastor to the little flock at Meaux. John Leclerc heard his fellow wool-carders talk of the gospel, and hid the good word in his heart, for it must not be mentioned at home to his father, who was blindly led by the monks. His mother and his brother Peter joined with him on the side of the new preachers. He read the Bible and the “little books”; he grew strong under the teachings of Lefèvre and Farel, and became a ready expounder of the Scriptures. When the teachers were exiled, the Christians looked to him as their shepherd.

This wool-carder went from house to house comforting the disciples. His zeal outran his prudence, and he sought to give popery such a blow as only a Luther had strength to inflict. He wrote a proclamation against the pope, declaring that the Lord was about to destroy Anti-Christ by the breath of his mouth. He took the “placards” and boldly posted them on the gates of the cathedral. Hundreds gathered on the spot to read the strange words. Soon all were in confusion; the disciples were amazed; the priests were angry; the monks were outrageous, and they demanded that, at least, one example should be made to terrify the people. Who would be a better one than this wool-carrier? The king would not call him “one of his learned men,” and treat him with favor. Leclerc was cast into prison.

He was hurried through a trial, under the eyes of the fallen bishop. He was condemned to be whipped through the streets of the city on three days, and to wind up the cruelty, his forehead was to be branded with the mark of a heretic. No time was to be lost. The poor carrier was led through the city, with his hands bound and his shoulders bare, while the blows fell and the blood flowed. An immense crowd followed in the gory tracks of the victim; some yelled with rage against the heretic; others gave clear signs of their tender compassion. One woman lent him her eyes and her voice; the sufferer took courage; she was his mother.

At last, on the third day, when the scourings and marches were over, the fortieth stripe not being spared, the procession halted at the usual place of execution. The hangman prepared the fire, heated the iron, and branded the brow on which the name of Jesus was written. A loud shriek was heard, but it came not from the tormented disciple. It was that of the mother, who shouted, with a voice that made the persecutors tremble, “Glory to Jesus Christ, and to his witnesses!” Such boldness, at such a moment, was a crime worthy of severe punishment, but she had appalled both priests and soldiers. An unseen hand controlled their fury. She turned away, the crowd respectfully parted, the monks and town sergeants gazed unmoved, and she slowly walked to her humble dwelling. None dared to arrest her. Leclerc was then set at liberty, and passed some months at Rosay, about twenty miles from Meaux. He was recovering for a greater work in a new field.

The foes of truth were elated with their victory; the friends of the Crucified hid under the shadow of the Almighty. An old chronicler says, “The Cordeliers,
having recaptured the pulpits, propagated their lies and trumpery as usual." But the poor workmen would not go to hear them. They "began to meet in secret, after the manner of the sons of the prophets in the time of Ahab, and of the Christians of the primitive church; and as opportunity offered, they assembled at one time in a house, at another in some cave, sometimes also in a vineyard, or in a wood. There he, who was most versed in the Holy Scriptures, exhorted the rest; and this done, they all prayed together with great courage, supporting each other with the hope that the gospel would be revived in France, and that the tyranny of Anti-Christ would come to an end."

On other plains the light was breaking. At Metz there dwelt a man, described as "a marvelously learned clerk, of small stature, who had spent much time in travel, who spoke every language, and had studied every "science." This was Master Agrippa, now chief magistrate of the city. He had read Luther’s works, and loaned them to his friends. Many of the clergy, nobility, and citizens were gained over to the cause of truth. In 1522 someone had pasted, on the corner of the bishop’s palace, a placard, whose large letters extolled what Luther had done. The public attention was excited. Master Agrippa had enough to do in answering questions and preserving the peace.

Leclerc went to Metz in 1523, and there, like Paul at Corinth, he worked at his trade and persuaded the people. He talked with the laborers, and the "Lutheran business" was on every lip. The flames, partly smothered, now broke out afresh. Every opposition was useless; the people would inquire, discuss, and believe. Many of the more learned among them took the side of the Reformation, and the gospel began to be preached. Another helper came to the work of the Lord.

John Chatelain, an Augustine monk, had been brought to the truth at Antwerp. He came to Metz, says the chronicle, "a man declining in years, and of agreeable manners, a great preacher, and very eloquent, a wondrous comforter to the poorer sort, by which means he gained the good will of most of the people (not of all), especially of the majority of the priests and great rabbins, against whom the said friar, John, preached daily, setting forth their vices and their sins, saying that they abused the poor people, by which animosity was stirred up." And yet the truth from his eloquent tongue did not fall with such power as it did from "the lips of a poor artizan, who laid aide the comb, with which he carded his wool, to explain a French version of the gospel."

There dwelt in the city a devout woman of the middle class, named Toussaint, who often talked with her son, Peter, in a serious strain, while he was at play. She, like all the townspeople, expected something wonderful to occur in those times. One day the child was riding on a stick in his mother’s room, while she was conversing with her friends on the things of God. She said to them, in an earnest tone, "Anti-Christ will soon come, with great power, and destroy those who have been converted at the preaching of Elias." These words, often repeated, were fixed in the child’s memory for life.

Peter was no longer a child when the new preachers were declaring the gospel in Metz. His genius led his relatives to hope that he would one day fill an eminent place in the Church. An uncle was the dean, and Cardinal John of
Lofraine a warm friend. Peter, although but a youth, obtained a prebend, when the gospel came to his ear. He listened, and wondered if the preaching of Chatelain and Leclerc was that of Elias. Antichrist was arming against it in every quarter. He believed in the coming of the Lord, and prepared to enter his service. He saw the chevalier Esch, his uncle’s intimate friend, casting his lot with the reformers, who gave him a hearty welcome. Peter called him "the knight, our worthy master," adding, with noble candor, "if, however, we are permitted to have a master upon earth."

Cheering was the progress of the gospel in the city, when it Ilea suddenly arrested by the imprudent zeal of Leclerc. The affair of the placards at Meaux, had not cured him of rashness. He saw with grief the idolatries of the people. One of their great festivals was approaching. It was the habit of the people, on a certain day, to make a pilgrimage to a chapel, about three miles distant, where were images of the Virgin, and of the most celebrated saints of the country. They worshipped these images, in order to obtain the pardon of their sins.

The eve of the festival came; Leclerc’s pious soul was agitated. He seemed to hear a voice, saying, "Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images." As the night came, he left the city, and went to the chapel. There he sat a while, silent, before the statues. He wavered in his purpose, but he thought how, in a few hours, the whole city would be bowing down before blocks of wood and stone. He rose up, took down the images, brake them in pieces, and scattered the fragments before the altar. Then he returned to the city, just at daybreak, and, almost unnoticed, entered the gates.

All Metz has on the move; the bells were ringing; the brotherhoods were assembling; the procession was forming with an array of greater and lesser clergy in the lead. The multitudes recited prayers and sang praises to the saints whom they were going to adore. Crosses and banners were displayed, drums were beaten and sweeter music filled the air. After about an hour’s march they reached the end of the pilgrimage. The priests advanced, with their smoking censers, to render the early homage. But what a sight! the images they had come to worship were shattered and the fragments covered the ground. The monks recoiled with horror. They announced to the crowd what a sacrilege had been committed. Suddenly the chanting ceased, the instruments were silent, the banners were lowered, and an intense excitement prevailed. Their leaders inflamed the minds of the people, insisting that search be made for the criminal and his death demanded. One cry burst from every lip, "Death, death to the sacrilegious wretch." In haste and disorder they returned to the city.

All fixed upon Leclerc. Many times he had said that the images were idols. A few remembered that they had seen him at daybreak, coming from the direction of the chapel. He was seized. He confessed; he claimed that the deed was not a crime, and exhorted the people to worship God alone. To adore what a mere man could so easily destroy was absurd. But no argument could cool the rage of the crowd. In their fury they wished to drag him to instant death. When led before the judges, he declared boldly that Christ alone should be adored.
He was soon convicted, sentenced to be burnt alive, and taken to the place of execution. Here everything horrible in fire and heated irons was prepared for him. Wild yells rose from the monks and people, but he was firm, calm, unmoved. They began to torture him in ways too cruel for description. His body was being torn to pieces, but his mind was at rest. With a loud voice he recited the 115th Psalm, “Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands. ... They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.” The voice and the sight of such fortitude daunted the enemies and gave strength to the faithful. The people, so angry before, were now touched with compassion. But the priests saw him burnt by a slow fire, and thus turned the festival into an awful funeral. Leclerc was the first martyr among the French reformers. Not yet were the priests satisfied. They had tried to persuade Chatelain to renounce the gospel, but were obliged to say, “He is deaf as an adder, and will not hear the truth.” He was arrested, carried away, and shut up in the castle of Nommeny. The officers of the bishop degraded him; they stripped him of priestly garments; they scraped his fingers with a piece of glass, saying, “By this scraping we deprive thee of the power to sacrifice, consecrate, and bless, which thou receivest by the anointing of hands.” Then throwing over him a layman’s dress, they surrendered him to the secular power, and another martyr perished in the flames. But the fires of truth were not thus to be quenched with blood. Even the historians of the Gallican church, approving of this severity, admit that “Lutheranism spread not the less through the whole district of Metz.”

The dean was in trouble lest his nephew, Toussaint, should perish in the storm of persecution. He had not taken an active part against the first two French martyrs, but he dare not throw his shield over his brother’s son. Peter’s mother felt a still greater alarm. Not a moment must be lost. The liberty and life of everyone who had lent an ear to the glad tidings of free pardon were endangered. The taste of blood inflamed the rage for more, and other scaffolds and other fires would soon threaten the faithful. The only safety seemed to be in flight. Peter Toussaint, the knight Esch, and many others fled in haste and sought refuge in Basle.

Thus the north of France rejected the gospel, and the gospel gave way for a time. But the great “Captain of our Salvation” was only changing his forces to new fields. He, who retreated from Nazareth, appeared again in Capernaum, Samaria, and Jerusalem. The Reformation only changed its ground; we shall see it again in the southeast of France and in Switzerland. For, as in the days of the apostles, “They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.”
Difficulties and Dangers

This section comprises chapters 6 through 9. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 6  Farel a Wanderer
Chapter 7  A New Field
Chapter 8  Mourning and Madness
Chapter 9  Farel's Turning Point

CHAPTER VI

Farel A Wanderer
1523–1524

Home, unvisited for years, attracted Farel to its refuge, at the foot of the Alps, when he was driven from Meaux and shut out of Metz. Time, study, truth, and grace had greatly changed him since the day when his father wished him to be a knight, like the brave Bayard. He was something far better, a good soldier of Jesus Christ, enduring hardness. It was not simply home, with its old scenes and comforts, that was drawing him; he seemed to hear a voice, saying, "Return to thy house and thy kindred, and show what great things the Lord hath done for thee."

His brothers had reason to wonder that he was still alive. They feared to have him come. In their eyes he was an apostate, a heretic, a fanatic. Rumors of what had taken place at Paris and Meaux filled them with a certain degree of terror. But William got their ear and their heart as he told them of the new and admirable things in the gospel. He entreated them, with all his fiery zeal, to believe and embrace it. He won three, if not all of them, to the truth. They did not at first abandon the Church of their fathers; but, when persecution came, they had the courage to sacrifice friends, property, and country, for the sake of liberty in Christ.

Farel thus kindled a new fire on the hearth at home, but he was not content until he had declared the truth to his friends and relatives in the neighborhood.
There are some who assert that he was invited, by certain of the clergy, to preach in the churches; others declare that he did not yet assume to enter the pulpit. However this may be, he taught in such a way as to cause great agitation. The multitude and the priests wished to silence him. "What new and strange heresy is this?" they asked. "Must all the practices of piety be counted vain? He is neither monk nor priest; he has no business to preach." Of this, Farel was the better judge, and upon his labors came the blessing of heaven.

It was a time when several Frenchmen of that region were gained over to the gospel. Among them was a young gentleman from Dauphiny, the Chevalier Anemond de Chatelard. Even in his Romish piety he was a foe to relics, processions, and the dissipated clergy of his acquaintance. From Farel he received the truth, gave it a deep place in his heart, and soon was very zealous for it. He disliked forms in religion, and gladly would have seen all the ceremonies of the church abolished. "Never," he declared, "has my spirit found any rest in externals. The sum of Christianity is comprised in these words—John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost; ye must put on the new man."

Anemond could not be idle, for he had all the vivacity of a Frenchman. If a celebrated doctor was to be heard, he wished to be present. If a door was open to the gospel, he was waiting to enter it. His father was dead. His elder brother was harsh, haughty, and bigoted, and repelled him with disdain. His younger brother, Lawrence, with all his love, could but half understand him. Anemond, finding himself rejected by his own kindred, sought to be of service in another quarter. Only laymen had yet been converted in Dauphiny, and Farel, with his friends, had wished to see a priest at the head of the movement, which already gave some promise of shaking the Alps. God had his finger upon the man.

There lived at Grenoble a Franciscan priest, Peter Sebville by name, a preacher of great eloquence, a man of a good and honest heart. He sought infallibility in Romanism; it was not there, and yet it must be somewhere, if man had any religion on which he could depend. He took up the long-neglected book, and found it in the word of God. He resolved to preach the word "purely, clearly, holily." His eloquent voice was heard in the province. Farel was delighted, and Anemond felt at liberty to visit Luther and Zwingli. He willed his property to his brother Lawrence, who, probably thought the chevalier was going forth on as foolish an errand as that of many a knight in the olden time.

And perhaps Luther thought likewise when the young Frenchman first met him at Wittenberg. His plans were on the largest scale, and his hopes of seeing all France converted were the brightest, if Luther would only go himself and take the glorious prize. But the Saxon doctor could not enter the field across the Rhine. "Then write to the Duke Charles, of Savoy," earnestly said Anemond, who thought that Francis I might be reached through his uncle. "This prince feels a strong attraction toward piety and true religion, and loves to converse
with certain persons at his court about the Reformation. He is just the man to understand you, for his motto is this—Nothing is wanting to those who fear God, and this is yours also. His heart stands in need of God and his grace; all he wants is a powerful impulse. If he were won to the gospel, he would have an immense influence on Switzerland, Savoy, and France. Write to him, I beseech you."

"Assuredly," replied Luther, "a love for the gospel is a rare gift, and an inestimable jewel in a prince." Although Luther knew that the success of the gospel did not so greatly depend upon the favor of princes as his friend supposed, yet he wrote a most touching letter to the duke. We know not the result. Anemond, in his ardor, would have rejoiced to possess the power of rousing all France.

Farel hardly expected the German champion to come over the Rhine. He labored on until the civil and ecclesiastical powers of Gap combined against him. They thought him an agent of that sect which the Sorbonne denounced, Beda hunted, and Duprat was ready to burn. "Let us cast this firebrand of discord far from us," they exclaimed. He was summoned to appear, was harshly treated, and violently expelled from the city. But he was still a "voice crying in the wilderness." He knew the country of his youth, when his rashness had led him to explore the mountains, and now, if closely followed, he could hide in the forests, caves, and clefts of the rocks. He went about preaching in private houses, secluded hamlets and lonely fields, and found an asylum in the woods and on the brink of torrents. In this school God was training him for future labors and endurance. The poor heard the truth from his lips, and the solitary places were glad.

Letters came to him from Anemond, and he greatly desired to see the reformers of Germany and Switzerland. The valleys of his native land were narrow; perhaps he might find a broader, as well as a safer, field. France was offering him nothing but fire and sword; perhaps some other country would offer him a large harvest to reap. But how was he to get away? Foes hung upon every path, neither willing for him to teach the people nor to leave them to themselves. Following by-roads, hiding in the forests, now losing his way and now finding some other way, he evaded the pickets of the enemy and escaped. He reached Switzerland early in 1524, and found Anemond at Basle.

Farel was received at Basle as one of the most devoted champions of the gospel. There was honor in the hospitality extended to him. He was the guest of Œcolampadius, one of the most genial of the reformers. Scarcely any two men were more unlike in their natures. The host charmed his hearers by his mildness; the guest carried all before him by his impetuosity. It was Peter in the house of John, and that most remarkable friendship in the apostolic band was reproduced in the union between these two reformers.
Œcolampadius had been preaching in Basle as a pastor, but his words seemed to fall like gentle snowflakes upon a rock. He was discouraged and greatly depressed. He had said to Zwingli, "Alas, I speak in vain, and see not the least reason to hope. Perhaps among the Turks I might meet with greater success. But I lay the blame on myself alone." These sighs rose in Farel’s ear, and called forth his sympathy and his heroic words of good cheer. The bold man fired up the courage of the timid. An undying affection grew up in the heart of the host., and he must declare it. "Oh, my dear Farel, I hope that the Lord will make our friendship immortal, and if we cannot live together here below, our joy will only be the greater when we shall be united at Christ’s right hand in heaven."

There were many refugees in the city, who had escaped from the scaffolds of France. They formed a French church. Among them were Anemond of Dauphiny, Esch and Toussaint of Metz, Du Blet of Lyons, and others of lesser note. These all held Farel in high esteem, and he was not backward to maintain his reputation. His courage, learning, and piety soon won the hearts of all who could appreciate his influence. He was the rising man, and to him were the honors paid.

There was, however, one man who felt slighted. He was sensitive to neglect. He had not come to Basle to be overlooked. He had made a noise in the world. It had been the affair of his life to send a storm upon the schoolmen and the monks, and his scathing satires had made his name a dread to all who did not please him. His learning was acknowledged in all the great universities. As a pioneer, he had hoped to prepare the way for the reformers; but the wisest of the reformers had made the painful discovery that he was trying to castle himself on the half-way ground, between popery and protestantism, and shot the arrows of wit at both parties. His levity of mind was like that of his body—a puff of wind might bear him away. He could expose error, but he lacked the moral courage to stand up for the truth. Yet he had drawn the gaze of Christendom, for he was Erasmus, the prince of scholars. Thousands were ready to crouch at his feet and do him reverence, coveting one kind look, one brotherly word from this master of the age.

And yet Farel had not come near him, as a young noble, wishing to be made a knight by a blow of the sword, and the words, "Rise, sir," from his king. The young Dauphinese refused to go and pay homage to the old sage of Rotterdam, because he despised those men who are only by halves on the side of truth. The commentaries of Lefèvre had caused no little debate among the guests, at their simple entertainments, where it was well-known that Erasmus had said harsh things of the good doctor, who had excelled him in making the New Testament the book of the people. The lines were drawn, some taking sides with the commentator, and some with the severe critic. Farel was valorous for the old teacher, who had shown him the spiritual stations on the way of the true cross. He was ready to break a lance with the caviling Erasmus. What
greatly annoyed him was the treatment given to the lovers of the gospel. Erasmus had shut his door against them. Farel was not the man to go and beg for admission. The favor of the old sage was of little account to him. He would not fawn for his sarcastic smile. More than all, if Erasmus had given a pledge to the pope to write against Luther, he would have nothing to do with such a spy in the camp.

No doubt Farel said more than was proper, and the illustrious scholar was nettled at his independence. Princes, kings, doctors, bishops, popes, reformers, priests, and men of the world were ready to pay their tribute of admiration to the Rotterdam philosopher; even Luther had treated him with a certain forbearance; and now this young Frenchman, unknown to fame, and an exile, dared to brave his power and beard the lion in his den! Such insolent freedom was more annoying than the homage of the whole world was pleasant. Hence Erasmus took every occasion to vent his ill humor on Farel, and on all the French refugees in Basle, whose frankness and decision offended him. They had little respect to persons, and cared not for the man who "knew what was right, but had not the courage to avow it," however exalted his genius. We may wish them more gentleness, but, if we admire the vigor of the old prophets, we must credit them with a brave love for truth when they would not bow down before that which the world adores. It was evident that a face-to-face engagement was soon to take place between the bold Dauphinese and the learned Dutchman.

One day Farel was talking with several friends on the doctrines of Christianity, in the presence of Erasmus. The former had perhaps heard that, instead of being called Farellus, the name Fallicus had dropped often from the lips and pen of the satirist, thus giving to one of the frankest men of his day the epithet of a cheat and deceiver. The latter had heard that he had been called a Balaam, as if the presents of the pope had induced him to curse the people of God. If he had been heated before, he was now boiling with wrath to chastise the author of this reproach.

"Why do you call me Balaam?" inquired Erasmus, rudely interrupting the conversation.

"I have not given you that title," replied Farel, at first astonished by so abrupt a question.

"Then name the offender."

Farel declined, tried the virtue of mild words, explained his own position, but yet felt himself pressed.

"It was the merchant, Du Blet, of Lyons," said Farel.
"It may be he who made use of the word, but it was you who taught him." And then, ashamed that he had lost his temper, Erasmus quickly turned the conversation. "Why do you assert that we ought not to invoke the saints? Is it because it is not enjoined in Holy Scripture?"

"Yes."

"Well then, I call upon you to prove by Scripture that we ought to invoke the Holy Ghost."

Farel made this simple and true reply. "If he is God, we must invoke him."

Some accounts represent the discussion as going on through a long line of arguments, not because Erasmus doubted the divinity of the Holy Spirit, or the duty of praying to him, but solely for the sake of worrying the young reformer. But Erasmus wrote, "I dropped the conversation, for the night was coming on." He evidently confessed himself baffled.

From that day, whenever the name of Farel fell from his pen, he represented him as a hateful person, who ought to be shunned. He was clearing himself, in the eyes of the Romanists, from all suspicion of heresy, by employing the most bitter abuse of the reformer and his countrymen. He wrote to the pope’s secretary, "Some Frenchmen are still more out of their wits than even the Germans," and hinted that they were prompted by Satan to "have five expressions always in their mouths; the gospel, God’s word, faith, Christ, and the Holy Ghost." This was high authority in proof of the sound teaching of these "Frenchmen." The same charge might have been brought against the apostles John and Paul. Thus the sage’s abuse was the reformer’s praise. No wonder Farel declared that Erasmus was "the most dangerous enemy of the gospel," and yet his letters are full of moderation in regard to the satiric scholar. The gospel in its most fiery temper is milder than mere philosophy, a fact still illustrated by those who take shelter under the broad wing of the church while they hurl their reproaches against her men of truth and zeal.

In the meantime the forces were gathering for a contest in a larger field. Basle had its university and its senate. In both there were many friends, but more enemies of the gospel. The doctors opposed it to the utmost of their power. They sought to suppress it by public disputations. Œcolampadius was ready to take them at their word, and use their own weapons. He posted up four theses and invited all who took offense at his doctrines to refute them, or yield to the force of his arguments. He defended them, adopting the new plan of speaking in the German language, so that all the people might understand. The doctors did not appear, not even with their Latin essays, and the general respect for the gospel preacher increased. The people felt more interest in such discussions, and knew that the reformers were not afraid to expose their doctrines to the light.
Stephen Stoer, the priest of Liestal, had taken a wife, believing that the laws of the Bible were better than the decrees of Rome. The papists thought it a scandal to their pretended sanctity, and wished the senate to send this priestly husband into disgrace. But he was loved in his parish, and the people asked the senate to permit him to defend the step he had taken by an appeal to Scripture in a public debate. The doctors tried hard to prevent it, but a disputation, in the German language, was held in the University hall. Five theses were defended, but no deputies from the bishop, nor any of the professors came to hear or answer. All they had to say was to express their mortification at seeing the five theses approved by the majority of the preachers and even by the friars.

The doctors thought they had enough of debate, but Farel thought it his duty to give them a little more, and profess in Switzerland the doctrine set forth at Paris and Meaux, that "the word of God is all-sufficient." He asked permission of the University to maintain certain theses, as he said "the rather to be reproved, if I am in error, than to teach others." The University refused. Its leading professor was the intimate friend of Erasmus.

Farel then applied to the senate, submitting to it thirteen propositions, from which the following sentences are taken:

"Christ has given us a perfect rule of life, which we are not at liberty to alter, either by adding to it, or taking from it.

"No one should impiously regard the precepts of Christ simply as good advice, nor exalt the advice of his fellow men to a level with Christian precepts.

"We ought to pray most earnestly for what the Holy Spirit can impart to us. Christians must present their offerings to God alone."

The senate granted the request, and issued a public notice that a Christian man and brother, named William Farel, had drawn up certain articles in conformity with the gospel, and they had given him liberty to maintain them in Latin. The doctors saw that they could not arrest the discussion, for the University must yield to the senate. But their wits suggested another scheme. They asked the Vicar-general to interfere. He at once issued an order to all the priests, students, and others, forbidding them to attend the disputation, on pain of excommunication and banishment. Farel might declaim to the walls.

Not so, thought the senate, jealous of its supreme authority, they issued an edict making it a duty to give Farel an audience, and a crime to stay away. It ran, "the pastors, preachers, priests, students and other persons connected with the University shall attend the disputation, under penalty of being deprived of their benefices and the protection of the laws." The day came, and an audience with it. Farel spoke in Latin, and Æcolampadius translated it into
the language of the people, so that the French accent of the debater might not prevent the understanding of every word.

"It is my opinion," said Farel in beginning, "that every Christian cannot do better than make himself thoroughly acquainted with the truth, which Christ has declared himself to be." He did not attack, by name, any particular men or doctrines. His two leading ideas were a return to the word of God and to faith in Christ. The opposers were frequently invited to reply, but not one of them appeared. They contented themselves with boasting in private how much they could have done had they been there! The interpreter said, "These sophists act the braggart—but they do it in dark holes and corners."

One effect of the disputation was that the priests and members of the University sank in the estimation of the people, for they wished to suppress the truth and dared not defend their own doctrines. Another effect was that Farel rose in the esteem of all the reformers, as a champion in the good cause. They were delighted to see a Frenchman exhibit so much knowledge with his zeal, and piety in his courage. "He is strong enough," said they, "to destroy the whole Sorbonne single-handed." Conrad Pellican, a learned Franciscan monk, was confirmed in the faith, and became a valuable ally of the great Reformation.

Farel had learned a lesson concerning himself. He found that he needed more of the dove in his nature. His zeal had betrayed him into language which fell like hail where the soft and gentle rain would have been more effective. In the pleasant home of his friend, he was kindly admonished of this fault. They mutually agreed to cultivate meekness and a tenderness of speech. Yet his friend regarded his ardor as a virtue, for without it the world could not be moved nor the church roused from sleep. He wrote to Luther in a letter of introduction, afterwards, "There are certain men who would have his zeal against the enemies of the truth more moderate, but I cannot help seeing in this same zeal an admirable virtue, which, if seasonably excited, is no less needed than gentleness itself." This the impetuous Luther could appreciate, coming as it did from one of the gentlest of men.

Farel visited the land of Zwingli and Myconius, who welcomed him with a kindness never forgotten. On his return to Basle he found Erasmus and other enemies at work, stirring up the senate against him. As his freedom of speech was not on their side, they insisted that the people could not bear it, and disturbances would arise if he was not ordered away. In vain did his friends urge that this was an abuse of all custom and law, for their city took pride in being an asylum for the persecuted. Farel bade adieu to Basle. "It is thus we exercise hospitality," said his indignant host, "we true children of Sodom!"

With the chevalier Esch he set out for Germany, with letters for Luther and Capito, and he was commended, by his friend of the warm heart and home, as
"that William who has toiled much in the work of God." It does not appear that he went as far as Luther’s Wittenburg.

The opposers of the gospel in Basle became more arrogant than ever, and by public mandates or secret intrigues, endeavored to suppress the truth and crush its adherents. But Œcolampadius had caught something of Farel’s spirit, and he no more wished himself among the Turks. In a letter to the bishop he reproached them for being so noisy after refusing to appear in defense of their faith, and for claiming the exclusive right to teach a people who were not allowed to understand their doctrines. The flock would go where they were best fed, the priests were despised as cowards and hirelings who did not care for the sheep, and the reformers were counted as their best friends and pastors. Thus the gospel was working with power at Basle.

Chapter VII
A New Field
1524

In strange ways God can open new fields of labor. The young Duke Ulrich had lost his estates in Wurtemberg by the Swabian league, in 1519, and taken refuge in Montbeliard, an earldom in France, which still belonged to him. In his dark days he had met with the reformers in Switzerland, and found the cheering light of the gospel. The once violent and cruel prince now seemed to be a lamb, seeking the fold of Christ. The priests led him in barren pastures, and his eye was attracted to a little flock that, in some way, had been gathered at the chief town in his domain. They wanted a pastor, and the duke promised to aid and protect them in sustaining a man of their choice. They laid their case before Œcolampadius, and he saw that the hand of God was extended to lead back the chief of the exiles to France. He sent word to Farel to come to him from Strasburg.

Farel was bold enough to go to Basle, and wise enough not to expose himself to those who had lately driven him away. There were hidden paths and dark nights, of which he could take advantage, and he secretly entered the old city. He was safely concealed in the house of his former pilgrimage, and we seem to hear the mild voice of his friend rising into earnestness, and his own louder voice toned into greatness.

"I have sent for you," says the host, "to urge you to preach the gospel. You have refrained from entering fully into the service of the Church. It is now your duty, for there is in you all that may constitute you a minister of the Lord."
"I have considered my weakness," replies Farel, "and I have not dared to preach, waiting for the Lord to send more suitable persons. If I could have a clear call, I would not hesitate."

"You have a three-fold call. God, in his providence, has opened the way for your return to your country. All France calls you, for, behold, how little is Jesus Christ known to those who speak the French language! Will you not speak to them in words which they can understand? And the people of Montbeliard invite you among them, and the duke gives his assent."

"It does not seem lawful for me to resist; I must obey in God’s name. I accept the charge, but I am not yet ordained."

"Extraordinary times demand extraordinary measures. You must here, in this house, be set apart to the ministry."

The step was a bold one, and is not an example to be followed. Whether any of the preachers in Basle were invited to be present, we know not, but Oecolampadius ventured upon a private ordination. He solemnly set Farel apart to the ministry, calling upon the name of the Lord. Let the success of the minister be considered in evidence of the Lord’s approval.

"Now, go and feed the flock of God," said his friend, "and guard your own nature. The more you are inclined to violence, the more you should practice gentleness; temper your lion’s courage with the meekness of the dove." This needed counsel was received by Farel with all his heart.

In July 1524, he entered upon his labors at Montbeliard, and the first promise of success was astonishing. The seed was hardly sown when the harvest began to appear. The duke and his court were much in his favor. Most of the people were eager to hear the word of God; a few, who regarded themselves as of the higher class, were disposed to treat him with contempt, or dread his presence as a source of disturbances. There are always some who fear lest the world will be turned upside down by the gospel. Chevalier Esch was his companion, and, doubtless, was of service at the court of the duke. Farel had written to his gentle friend at Basle, with no little exultation, and now another chevalier proposes to join him.

Anemond, delighted with the good news, ran, with his usual vivacity, to Peter Toussaint, saying, hastily, "I shall set off, tomorrow, to visit Farel."

"Good! I am just finishing a letter to him. You must be the bearer."

"Gladly will I be so, and I am to take one also from Oecolampadius." At the time appointed the chevalier set out, and in a few days was at Montbeliard, where his face and the letters were appreciated.
Œcolampadius wrote, "It is easy to instill a few doctrines into the ears of our auditors, but to change their hearts is in the power of God alone." Toussaint wrote, "I am glad that the duke and court are on your side, but there is need of watchfulness, for you well know that the destroyer of our peace never slumbers. He employs every weapon to overcome his opponents, and the more so whenever any extraordinary attack is made upon his kingdom." These were but little drops of caution in cups overflowing with encouragement.

The advice was timely, for Farel was already attacked by the destroyer of peace. The city was in commotion. Many of the nobles were alarmed, and said, as they looked in contempt at the new preacher, "What does this sorry fellow want with us? Would that he had never come! He cannot stay here, for he will ruin us all, as well as himself." But the worst opposition came from the Romish clergy.

On a certain Sabbath Farel had just begun to preach, when the priests, sent there for the purpose, called him a liar and a heretic. In an instant the whole congregation was in an uproar. The people rose up and made the confusion still worse by crying out for silence. Word was sent to the castle; the duke hurried to the spot, and found that the disturbers were led on by the dean of the priory and the guardian of the Franciscan convent at Besançon. They and their pack had come over to cry down the gospel preacher. The duke reprimanded the dean, who took it in good part and retired from the scene. But not so, the guardian. He went to another church in the afternoon, gave the lie to Farel, abused his sermon, and did all he could to excite a tumult in the town. The duke arrested both Farel and the guardian, requiring the latter to prove that the sermon was heretical, or to retract what he had said about it. He chose to retract, and confessed publicly, from the pulpit, that Farel had spoken the truth, and that the opposition to him arose out of a bad temper. Farel was set at liberty. An official account of the affair was published, so that no false reports might be circulated.

Farel, whose very nature had fire enough, was now burning with zeal. He thought it his duty to unmask the priests who had been so active in all this riotous business, and with a vigor he applied the sword of the word. He had been preaching what their guardian admitted to be the truth, and now he exposed their errors.

"How fares it with Farel’s meekness?" inquired Œcolampadius of one who had come from Montbeliard, probably Anemond. The strongest testimony was borne to his faithfulness, energy, and success, although he had shown too much violence in attacking the priests for their errors concerning the mass. His gentle friend wrote him and reminded him of the resolutions which he had formed at Basle. He advised meekness and modesty. "Mankind must be led, not driven."
During the winter a friar, of the order of St. Anthony, came into the neighborhood and employed a monk to proclaim from the pulpit that he had some relics for sale. The monk gave the wares a hearty commendation. There was at Montbeliard a disciple of Luther, named John Gailing, who first preached the gospel in Wurtemberg, and was now the court preacher to the duke. He had, doubtless, rendered great assistance in the work going forward, and he knew that the sale of these relics was only a trick to divert the minds of the people from the gospel. Farel and Gailing appealed to the senate to put a stop to such imposture, representing in strong terms how this traffic had destroyed souls, robbed the poor of their savings, and God of his glory. But the senate had not courage to act in the case, and declared that such matters belonged solely to the duke. To the duke they went, asking him to send away the friar, unless he could prove from Scripture that it was right to sell relics. This gave the monk and friar a fine chance to defend themselves by that all-sufficient word, by which Farel would test everything, as well as to show that the relics were genuine. But the imposters dared not accept the challenge, and made no further noise.

A report of Farel’s labors and success came to the ears of the old sage, Erasmus, and mightily annoyed him. He hinted to some spy in the camp at Montbeliard that severe measures should be employed against the zealous preacher. He wrote at once to his Romish friends that an exiled Frenchman was making a great disturbance in those regions. Farel knew of all this, but had enough to engage his attention in spreading the truth far and near. He was, at Montbeliard, “like a general on a hill, whose piercing eye glances over the field of battle, cheering those who are actively engaged with the foe, rallying those ranks which are broken by an impetuous charge, and animating those who hang back through fear.” Behind him were Basle and Strasburg, as a base of operations, whence he drew his supplies of tracts and books.

The refugees at Basle were forming a Tract and Bible Society, and raising up colporteurs to scatter the truth through France. The presses then were constantly occupied in printing French books, and these were sent to Farel, who put them into the hands of book-hawkers, and these simple-hearted men passed through the country, calling at almost every door. Anemond was a true chevalier in this good work, which was moving forward with such strength that Erasmus was on the rage, and the Sorbonne in alarm. He sent to Farel all the useful books he could get, and one of his large plans was for Farel to use the pen, while he raised a fund and a force to work the presses, day and night, and thus flood all France with the truth. He was anxious to see the New Testament printed in French, and widely circulated in the provinces.

The Chevalier happened one day at the house of a friend, where his eye fell upon a new edition of Lefèvre’s French Testament. He was overjoyed. But how came the needed prize so near at hand? Vaugris, a merchant of Lyons, who had fled to Basle, had secured its publication in October 1524. The edition was
limited. "Lose no time in reprinting it," said the earnest Anemond, "for there will be a call for a great number."

At the urgent advice of his friends Farel wrote several small books, among which was "A summary of what a Christian ought to know, in order to trust God, and serve his neighbor." The last one passed through several large editions, and was widely circulated.

This same year Lyons was the center of a movement in which Farel took a deep interest, if not an active part. The merchants Du Blet and Vaugris had taken the lead in the reformation at this old city where four centuries before, Peter Waldo had preached, and by his sermons had shaken all France. Preachers were again needed, and the raging of nations was to bring them. Francis I was leading an army against Charles V of Spain, and passed through Lyons on the way to Pavia. Margaret the Duchess of Alençon came also leading the spiritual soldiers of the Lord, and they halted at this point, while the other hosts went on to Italy. She caused the gospel to be publicly preached at Lyons. Her preacher, Michael D'Arande, drew large crowds to hear him, and with courage he declared a pure gospel. Anthony Papillon, a friend of Erasmus, and "the first in France for the knowledge of the gospel," was present to support the efforts of the duchess. Nor were these labors confined to the city. Into all the region round about, the Christians went with the good word. There was at Lyons a monk named Maigret, who had been boldly declaring the new doctrine in Dauphiny, and had been driven out by the priests. One of Farel’s brothers had written to Chevalier Anemond, painting the state of things in the gloomiest colors, and asking for Farel and the knight to come to the help of their native land. Anemond thought of going, but the Lord sent more efficient workers. Maigret urged Papillon and Du Blet to repair thither, and they went.

We have not forgotten Sebville, whom we left preaching the word, "purely, clearly, holily" in Dauphiny. A violent storm had just broken out against him, and the monks, who were angry because Farel, Anemond, and Maigret had escaped their grasp, now called for Sebville’s arrest. The friends at Grenoble felt that they could not have him taken from them. They appealed to Margaret, and she had him rescued from the fury of his persecutors.

But the mouth of Sebville was closed for a time, for he must choose between silence and a scaffold. He wrote Anemond, "Silence is imposed upon me under pain of death." Many gave way; but Amadeus Galbert, a cousin of Anemond, gathered a faithful band around him, and clung to the truth. These Christians met Sebville secretly at their own houses, and if there was none to preach, there were many to talk of the good word. They crept away to some retired spot; they visited some brother by night; they prayed in secret to Christ, and though often alarmed were not arrested. The threat was that if they dared to speak the word in public their lot should be the stake.
Thus stood affairs when Papillon and Du Blet went to Grenoble. They may not have done much in Dauphiny, but they put Sebville upon anew mission. "If you cannot preach at Grenoble, you can at Lyons. The Lent is coming on, and there will be crowds in the city." He went, and met with a kind reception from Margaret. It was proposed that Michael, Maigret, and Sebville should lead on the gospel army. There was to be a gospel Lent in Lyons. The rumor of it went abroad far and near. Anemond wrote in joy to Farel, "Sebville is free, and will preach the Lent sermons." Maigret was already preaching "God manifest in the flesh." The priests raged, but the duchess protected him. At last, however, they seized the bold preacher, dragged him through the streets, and cast him into prison. Vaugris left for Basle, spreading the news on the way. One thought still cheered the reformers, "Maigret is taken, but Madame de Alençon is there: praised be God!"

The work of the spiritual army was greatly disturbed by the defeat of the royal army at Pavia, in February 1525. The king was taken prisoner and was on the way to Madrid. The duke of Alençon had proved a coward, and he came to Lyons to die of shame and grief. All France was full of mourning, and the Romanists began to declare that this great disaster was provoked by Heaven, because the new doctrines had been tolerated in the kingdom. The "heretics" must be expelled, "People and parliament, church and throne, joined hand in hand" to banish the gospel. The preachers at Lyons were dispersed. Soon after this Du Blet sank under persecution. Papillon died in such a way that it was reported, even among his enemies, that he had been poisoned. Sebville, probably, did not preach his Lent sermons. Michael D’Arande was threatened with death. Margaret thus saw her plans for the spread of the gospel at Lyons end in sad disappointment. The camp was broken up; the forces scattered, and the cause seemed to be lost.

Nor was this all. Another strong force was leaving the field where there had been such great success. Farel was pulling up his stakes at Montbeliard. The defeats at Pavia and Lyons could hardly have influenced him, for he removed before these sad tidings could have put him in fear. It has been hinted that Erasmus, whose anger still burned against him, may have done much to excite a persecution too bitter for him to endure. But another reason has been given by those who lament that Farel’s warlike zeal sometimes carried too far, and brought unnecessary opposition against him.

One day, about the time of the king’s defeat at Pavia, Farel was walking on the banks of a little river that runs through Montbeliard, beneath a lofty rock on which the citadel is built. It was the day of the feast of saint Anthony, and when he came to the bridge he met a procession which was crossing it, and headed by two priests bearing the pretended image of the saint. Farel suddenly found himself face to face with these superstitions, without seeking it. A violent struggle took place in his soul. His blood boiled at the sight of such a delusion practiced upon the people. Should he give way? Should he hide
himself? Should he gaze and be silent? He could not be a coward, and would not let his silence give consent to the imposture. He knew that he was exposing himself to the fate of Leclerc, yet he boldly advanced, grasped the image of the holy hermit from the arms of the priest, and tossed it over the bridge into the rivers—as bold a deed as that of the Chevalier Bayard when he stayed an army at the bridge of the Garigliano. Then turning to the awe-stricken crowd he exclaimed, "Poor idolaters, will ye never cease from your idolatry!"

The priests stood confused and motionless. With the loss of their saint, they lost their presence of mind. Their superstitious fear seemed to rivet them to the spot. But someone cried out, "the image is drowning!" The priests recovered from their stupor. The multitudes shouted in rage, and gazed at the image floating away. Farel let them gaze and rave, and taking advantage of their devout attention to the saint, he escaped their violence. For a time he hid himself among his friends.

The duke and his court soon left the city, and having no strong arm to defend him, Farel had an additional reason for leaving Montbeliard. In the spring he took a secret refuge at Basle. He always took an interest in the church he had left, as a minister will ever do in the flock where were gathered the first-fruits of his labors. We will meet Peter Toussaint in this field.

CHAPTER VIII

Mourning And Madness
1525–1526

Sad tidings came to Farel at Basle. His friend, the Chevalier Anemond, was sick at Schauffhausen, where the Rhine presents one of the finest waterfalls in Europe. The Chevalier had wandered from place to place, to recruit his failing health. He had hoped to preach the gospel, and still cherished plans, almost romantic, for urging forward the reformation. Farel sent him four gold crowns. A messenger came to tell him that his warm-hearted compatriot was dying. Before he could set out to visit him, a letter was received from Myconius, announcing the death of the young knight, "who was in himself an host," and who had made many sacrifices for the truth.

Farel applied to the senate of Basle once more to sanction his return, but without success. He went to Strasburg, and, for about fifteen months, was engaged in preaching to a small church of French exiles. If we cast an eye upon France, we can see a reason why this brave man kept beyond her borders.

There was a loud wail throughout France over the disasters of Pavia. The king was carried away to Spain; the national power was humbled; the bravest of
many an house had been slain, and ruin seemed at hand. The Romanists saw
that it was their hour. They made the most of their time. They declared that
heresy was in the land, it was the cause of all the troubles, and it must be
crushed. The blame was thus laid upon those who were most innocent. There
was a loud cry for blood.

Louisa was now the regent, the ruler, the Jezebel of the kingdom. She wrote to
the pope, and he gave orders for the introduction of the inquisition into
France. This delighted the cruel Duprat, who was made a cardinal, and who
was given an archbishopric, and, in the bargain, a rich abbey. The parliament
thought that the king had erred in tolerating the new doctrines, and the
members said to Louisa, "Heresy has raised its head among us, and the king, by
neglecting to bring the heretics to the scaffold, has drawn down the wrath of
Heaven upon the nation."

She wished to enlist the Sorbonne. They ordered Beda to return her an answer.
He advised that all "writings of heretics be prohibited by a royal proclamation;
and, if this means does not suffice, we must employ force against the persons
of these false doctrines; for those who resist the light must be subdued by
torture and by terror."

Everything was arranged for a vigorous campaign against the "heretics." Meaux
was chosen as the first point of attack. The bishop, Briçonnêt, had not yet
fallen so far as to return fully to popery. But, how should they manage him? It
might not be wise to burn him; those in sympathy with him would only cling the
more stoutly to his doctrines. But, if he could be induced to recant, the effect
would be better for the persecutors. There was an agent at hand to bring him
to terms.

The eloquent Mazurier, whom we left among the reformers at Meaux, had been
so zealous for the new faith that he had once broken to pieces an image of St.
Francis. He was sent to prison. He was in fear of the stake. He saw that he was
not with the popular party; Rome must conquer in France. He basely recanted,
and became a Jesuit.

This man visited Briçonnêt and endeavored to make the bishop fall as he
himself had done. The plot succeeded. The earliest supporter of the gospel in
France denied the glad tidings of grace, because he was artfully persuaded
that, if he did not, he would lose his influence over the court, the church, the
nation. He was deceived with the notion that Rome would permit him to be a
reformer still! He found, however, that he must labor to undo all that he had
done for the gospel. He restored the invocation of the saints, and put away
every sign of "Lutheranism," as the new doctrine was now called. Poor man! His
fall is, perhaps, the strangest of all that occurred in those times. He died in
1533; in his will he commended his soul to the Virgin Mary, and ordered twelve
hundred masses for its repose.
Such was the first triumph of the Sorbonne. It was one that went to the hearts of all his old friends, and caused them to trust less in men and more in God. But this must be speedily followed with another victory. It was not hard to decide upon the victims. It was the man who had led the bishop into the "heresy," and who had been so long harbored at Meaux. Beda’s eye had long been upon this man, who was once a doctor of the Sorbonne—Lefèvre. His accusation was soon drawn up, and the parliament condemned nine doctrines found in his commentaries, and placed his French Testament on the list of prohibited books. This was but the prelude, as Lefèvre well knew, and he recalled the words of his Lord, "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another." He quitted Meaux and went to Strasburg, under a borrowed name. The persecutors had missed their victim, but they consoled themselves by thinking that France was rid of the father of all heretics.

This was something for the Sorbonne, but still there were no tortures, and nothing to terrify the people. There was yet one man, who had vexed them more than the bishop or Lefèvre. This was Louis Berquin, a more decided man than either of his two masters. He had unmasked the monks, exposed the priests, and done much to enlighten the people. He was one of the noblest of the nobles of Artois. He went zealously among the cottages of his estate, and taught that there is salvation in Christ alone. He crossed into Picardy, and, in the fields and towns, declared the true way of life.

Every day some noble, priest, or peasant went to the Bishop of Amiens, and told him what was said or done by this Christian gentleman. The bishop called a council. Suddenly, he started for Paris, and had a word with the Sorbonne. Berquin was just the man they wanted. They went to his quarters in Paris, seized his writings, and, "after the manner of spiders," drew from them certain articles, out of which "to make poison, and bring about the death of a person who, with simplicity of mind was endeavoring to advance the doctrine of God."

Beda, probably, never read anything more eagerly in all his life. He had a remarkable talent for discovering in a book what would ruin its author, and he pored day and night over the seized volumes. He found enough to satisfy the inquisitors, who required but little, and Berquin’s death was decided upon by the Sorbonne and the parliament. An officer was sent to arrest him in the name of the law. The dwellers on his estate, who were devoted to him, would have risen up to defend him, but he restrained them. He was thrown into prison, "entering it with a firm countenance and an unbending head."

Some months after this, three monks entered his prison as his judges, and reproached him for having taught that salvation is not dependent upon priests, and that the gates of hell could not harm a believing soul. "Yes," answered he, "when the eternal Son of God receives a sinner who believes in his death, and makes him a child of God, the divine adoption cannot be forfeited." To these monks this joyful confidence was mere fanaticism. The strength of the prisoner
was admitted by the fact of an increasing force being brought against him. Two
or three priors, "monks of all colors, imp of Anti-Christ," says the chronicler,
gave help to the band of the Sorbonne, in order to destroy by numbers the
firmness of Berquin."

"Your books will be burnt," said the pope’s delegates.

"I cannot help that," thought the accused.

"You will make an apology, for only in this way can you escape. If you refuse
what is demanded, you will be led to the stake."

"I will not yield a single point," said the man of heroic faith.

"Then it is all over with you," exclaimed the whole party, more in exultation
than pity. Berquin remained in prison, calmly waiting for their threats to be
fulfilled. We shall hear of him again, through the kind interventions of the
duchess Margaret.

Thus one protestant leader had surrendered, another had left the field, and a
third was a prisoner.

Who next should receive a blow? The name may surprise us—Erasmus. To punish
him would throw the reformers into terror. If such a trimmer could not escape,
how could those who had gone the whole length of the new movement? True he
had courted the favor of the Romanists, but was he not still in the camp of the
reformers? He had written against Luther, but had he not stung the monks? One
of those solitary Carthusians in the woods near Paris had sent forth from his
retreat a hot shell filled with all manner of slanders against the "heretics." But
his name, Sutor (cobbler), even when polished into Le Couturier, raised a
laugh, and by his meddling with things which he did not understand, the old
proverb was suggested, "Let the cobbler stick to his last." Erasmus cared little
for such a missile as he had sent up in the air.

Beda came to the attack. He ordered Erasmus to lay down his caustic pen. The
old sage must not write that the blunders and calumnies in Beda’s book against
Lefèvre were so gross that "even smiths and cobblers could have pointed them
out." He must not say of the articles on which Berquin was condemned, "I find
nothing impious in them." He must not declare of the Sorbonne doctors and
tools, "they employ every device to excite the anger of the nation. They vomit
fire and flame against their adversaries, and heap upon them the most
scurrilous abuse. All means are good in their eyes; they pick out a few words
here and there, neglecting the text, that may explain the passage quoted; they
insert expressions of their own, and omit or add anything they please to
blacken the characters of those whom they suspect."
This scathing pen of the great scholar must be dropped. Beda grasped for it and thought he had it in his hand. He made a collection of all the calumnies that the monks had invented against the illustrious philosopher, translated them into French, and circulated his book through the court, the city, and the land, striving to rouse all France against him. This was the signal for a great army to march upon the works and character of a solitary man, who disdained to be counted with the reformers. Erasmus was assailed from every quarter. He was a greater heretic than Luther! He was an apostate and Berquin was his follower! Erasmus’ books should be used to burn Berquin!

Astonishment took hold of Erasmus. Was this the result of all his trimming, his half-way policy, his courting all parties, and even his hostility to Luther? Better be a thorough reformer. He would not lay down his pen. He would turn the point of it against the worst of all his foes, those in his rear, whom he had imagined to be friends. He fell upon the whole pack of those who were hounding him to death. He wrote to the Sorbonne, charging Beda and his fellows with a conspiracy, and with betraying the soldier who was fighting in their interest. He complained to the parliament, that Beda and Sutor were allowed to attack him from behind while, at the order of the emperor, the pope and the princes, he was leading on the charge against “these Lutherans.” He appealed to the captive king, touching upon a tender point, and warning him that his descendants would suffer from the Sorbonne, for its doctors "aspire to tyranny even over princes." This prophecy was to be fulfilled in the very next age, when the house of Valois was put under the ban of the priests. He invoked the protection of Charles V, saying, “Certain persons, who, under the pretence of religion, wish to establish their own gluttony and despotism, are raising a horrible outcry against me. I am fighting under your banners and those of Jesus Christ. May your wisdom and power restore peace to the Christian world.”

Thus was this prince of the pen drawn away from the war against the reformers, and enlisted against the persecutors. His appeals were heard by the king and emperor. The danger was averted, for those who had attacked this one man found that the great powers of the world were leagued on his side. The vultures thought their prey was in their talons, but now they must drop it and turn their eyes to another quarter. We shall see them again in Lorraine, the country of the Guises, who are rising into terrible power.

Where was the Duchess Margaret all this time? The nation knew that she was toiling for the deliverance of the captive king. He was a sick prisoner at Madrid. She made a heroic journey thither; found him a dying man, pale, worn, and helpless; was the agent of restoring him to life, and of securing his liberty early in 1526. The reformers knew where her heart was, and they had reason to bless God for her voice and her hand. She was in Spain when she heard of the fierce movement going on against “her brethren, the reformers.” She poured into her brother’s ear the most earnest entreaties for those who were in exile
or in prisons. Words were not enough; she must show her love by her works. The thought of poor starving exiles, who knew not where to lay their heads, haunted her imagination while in the splendid palaces of Spain. She sent four thousand pieces of gold to be distributed among the sufferers.

She was too noble, too generous, too patriotic, and was doing too much for the nation, to be attacked by those who had the scepter and the sword in order to wage war upon the best men in the kingdom. But there was one person on whom they might wreak vengeance—Margaret's secretary, Clement Marot. They threw him into prison, and he consoled himself by composing little poems. They did not dream that his poems would one day stir all France, when his version of the Psalms should be in the mouth of every Huguenot, and sung in the palace of the king.

Let us see how it fares with the two young gentlemen who fled from Metz after the burning of Leclerc. Peter Toussaint was often talked of in the mansion of the Cardinal of Lorraine. The many who met there with Peter's uncle, the dean, deplored the sad fate of the young prebendary, who had promised so fair. He had been led away by those heretics, Chatelain and Leclerc! "He is at Basle," they would say, with deep pity, "in the house of Oecolampadius, living with one of the leaders of this heresy!" The lamentable thing was that he could not see what an error he had committed, and what evils were shadowing his path.

They wrote to him as earnestly as if they thought him exposed to eternal death. These letters pained him, because he knew they were prompted by sincere but mistaken affection. One of his relatives, probably the dean, urged him to remove to Paris, to Metz, or to any other place in the world, where he would be far away from the reformers. This relative supposed that Peter felt exceedingly indebted to him, and would at once comply with his request, but, when he found his efforts useless, his love changed into violent hatred.

These men were so determined to win back the young Toussaint to the Romish Church, that they went to his mother, who was "under the power of the monks," and wrought upon her mind. The priests crowded around her, frightening and persuading her that her son had committed crimes that they could not mention without shuddering. She wrote a touching letter to her son, "full of weeping" (said he), in which she set forth her misery in heart-rending language. "O wretched mother! O unnatural son! cursed be the breast that cherished thee! . . ."

The unhappy Toussaint was almost distracted. What should he do? He could not return to France. To go to any of the German cities would only add to the sorrow of his relative. Oecolampadius advised a middle course. "Leave my house," said he. "Live with someone who is not attached to the reformation." He went, with a sad heart, and made his home with an ignorant and obscure
priest—one whose religion might have satisfied his relatives. It was a change that cost him much self-denial. He never saw his host, save at meals, and then they were constantly discussing matters of faith. As soon as the meal was over the debate was postponed until the next meeting, and Toussaint retired to his lonely room, where he carefully studied the word of God. "The Lord is my witness," said he, "that in this valley of tears I have but one desire—that of seeing Christ's kingdom extended."

One event greatly cheered his heart. He persuaded the Chevalier Esch to return to Metz and encourage the trembling converts in that city. They were in peril. The Chevalier obtained some books from Farel, who was still at Montbeliard, and, traversing the forests, reached Metz early in 1525. The priests knew why he came, and watched all his movements.

It seems that in June of 1525 Toussaint and Farel made a journey to Metz, intending to take a firm stand in that field. They requested a hearing before their lordships, The Thirteen; this being refused, they appealed to the highest civil authority. But it was discovered by them that the agents of Beda were on the ground. They had exposed themselves to a masked battery. Plans were already laid for seizing and casting them into prison. Seeing the danger they quickly left the city and traveled all night, lest they should be overtaken. It was a timely escape, for the heresy hunters were sweeping down upon Lorraine.

The Chevalier Esch had not been able to escape the eyes and suspicions of the priests in Metz. They discovered that he kept up a communication with the gospel Christians, and this was enough. They arrested him and threw him into a prison at Pont-a-Mousson, about five miles above Metz, on the banks of the Moselle. Others were seized in the neighboring parishes. Among them was the pastor, Schuch, of St. Hypolyte. A guard of brutal men brought him to trial, and the judge heaped abuse upon him. The pastor made no reply to these epithets, but, holding in his hands a Bible, all covered with notes, he meekly, and with great power, faced the inquisitors with the truth. They were amazed and enraged, and, tearing from him his Bible "like mad dogs," says the chronicler, "unable to bite his doctrine, they burned it in their convent." He was afterwards sent to the stake, where he continued to recite a passage until the smoke and flames stifled his voice.

The refugees could not receive letters from their friends, nor write to them, without exposing some hidden believer to danger. An intercepted letter might betray him. One man, however, dared to carry tidings from France to Basle, by sewing a letter, which bore no signature, in his doublet. He escaped the bands of detectives, and laid before the exiles the sad account of what was going on in the kingdom. At Paris, Meaux, Metz, Lyons, everywhere that any trace of the Christians could be found, there was persecution to the death. "It is frightful," Toussaint wrote to Farel, "to hear of the cruelties inflicted."
Yet these strong-hearted exiles and their persecuted friends kept up their courage. The gates of hell should not prevail against the true church of God. "In vain were all the parliament on the watch; in vain did the spies of the Sorbonne and of the monks creep into churches, colleges, and even private families, to catch up any word that might fall unwarily; in vain did the soldiers arrest on the highways everything that bore the stamp of the Reformation," for some would escape, and others confound their inquisitors with shame and defeat. These Frenchmen had faith in better days to come. But not from man had the refugees any hope. "Those who have begun the dance," said Toussaint, "will not stop on the road." They only trust that God would end their "Babylonish captivity."

The Chevalier Esch escaped from his prison and met his friend at Strasburg. This fact soon was known to Toussaint, who immediately wrote to Farel, saying, "For the honour of God, endeavor to prevail on the knight, our worthy master (if it becomes us to have any master on earth), to return to Metz as speedily as possible, for our brethren have great need of such a leader." Esch therefore went back, to expose himself to the wiles of his enemies.

It was not Toussaint’s disposition to send others to the battle and not join it himself. He was eager to engage in the cause, although Oecolampadius said, "I wish my dear lords of France would not be so hasty in returning to their own country, for the devil is spreading his snares on every side." But the young exile felt that a prison could not be much worse than the house of the ignorant and contentious priest with whom he lodged. He turned his eye toward Paris. There the youthful James Pavanne of Meaux and the aged hermit of Livry had been burned, and the fires were still smoking. There no one could name the reformation without risking his life. But was not this a reason why he should go? Thither, it appears from his letters, he went, and he entered the university. Instead of the rioting which held sway in the college while Farel was a student, he found an intense fanaticism for popery. He sought to form an acquaintance with some of the brethren who were secretly imitating Farel’s example, especially in the college of Lemoine where he and Lefèvre had taught. But this only exposed him to danger.

One day certain officers arrested him. A duke and an abbot, who are unknown now, had pointed him out to the agents of Beda as a heretic. He was cast into prison. While in chains he prayed to God, and dwelt on the names of his friends, Roussel and Lefèvre and Farel and Oecolampadius, that gentle father, said he, "whose work I am in the Lord." Death seemed hanging over him, and his mother, his uncle, the dean of Metz, and the cardinal of Lorraine, made him the most lavish offers if he would recant. But he could not thus be moved. "I despise them," said he, "I know they are a temptation of the devil. I would rather suffer hunger. I would rather be a slave in the house of the Lord than dwell with riches in the palaces of the wicked." Then boldly confessing his faith he exclaimed, "It is my glory to be called a heretic by those whose lives and
doctrines are opposed to Jesus Christ." He signed his letters to Farel, "Peter Toussaint, unworthy to be called a Christian."

The date of his release we cannot find. It seems that he soon after resolved to go to Metz, not to yield to his uncle and mother, but to assist the Chevalier Esch. On reaching Louvain he was betrayed, and arrested by his former friend, Theodore Chamond, the Abbot of St. Anthony. This abbot was well known as a cruel, violent, merciless man. He was not touched by the youth, the candor, nor the weak health of his victim. He threw him into a horrible dungeon, full of abominations, where the young evangelist could hardly stand. With his shoulders pressing against the wall, and his feet planted on the only spot which the water did not reach, and almost stifled by poisonous vapors, he called to mind the cheerful house of his uncle, the dean of Metz, and the gorgeous palace of the cardinal of Lorraine, where he had once been so kindly received while he believed in the pope. What a contrast now! And how cheaply might he buy it all back, and flourish again in he homes of the great! Only renounce his religion and all would be happy. But no! If he did not suspect that such a course would gain him only penances and humiliations at the hands of those who wanted to make a terrifying example of him, he knew that he would bring his soul into the deepest wretchedness. But where were the days, when, as a child, he learned from his mother to say, "Anti-Christ will soon come and destroy all who are not converted'? He thought that time had arrived. His imagination was excited. He saw himself dragged to punishment. He screamed aloud and was near dying of fright. All who saw him were interested in one so young, so feeble, and scarcely able to bear his weight on his feet.

The persecutor thought that if he could search Toussaint’s books and papers, he might find some excuse for burning him. One day the monks came to his vile pit, and led him out to see the abbot. "Write to your host at Basle," said the crafty Romanist, "and tell him that you want your books to amuse leisure, and beg him to send them to you." It flashed upon the mind of the young man, that the books were ordered for a far different purpose. He hesitated, and the abbot gave utterance to most terrible threats. The almost helpless hand penned the letter, and he was sent back to his pestilential den. There he must wait, without knowing that the duchess Margaret would appear as his deliverer.

CHAPTER IX

Farel's Turning Point
1525-1526

No exiles met on foreign shores with greater joy than did the aged Lefèvre and Farel, his disciple at Paris, his co-worker at Meaux, his dear son in the faith. The wrinkled hand of the one had first guided the steps of the other, and after
a separation, in which months were as years, they both poured out their hearts together. But the disciple was now really in advance of his master, for Lefèvre had not entirely separated himself from the Romish Church. He and his patron, the bishop of Meaux, had hoped to aid a reform in that church, and see it brought back to apostolic purity. The bishop had been subdued, the doctor expelled.

"Do you remember," said Farel, "what you once told me when we were both sunk in darkness, saying, ‘William, God will renew the world, and you will see it?’ Here is the beginning of what you foresaw."

"Yes," answered the pious old man. "God is renewing the world. My dear son, continue to preach boldly the gospel of Jesus Christ."

It delighted this man, who had first lifted his voice in Paris and found it would not be heard, to listen to the preaching at Strasburg. It was just what he had intended to teach! "He seemed to have been born a second time to the Christian life." The French refugees had formed a church, and Farel was the preacher, whom none heard with a more joyful heart than the former doctor of the Sorbonne. Such Christian society lessened the pain of exile.

An aged man, who had taken the name of Anthony Pilgrim, was often seen walking cautiously through the streets, as if he wished to be unknown. But he could not be hidden. In a short time the whole city knew that he was the illustrious Lefèvre, who was the translator of the Bible into the Gallic tongue, and the very children saluted the venerable Frenchman with respect. Gerard Roussel (Le-Roux) took the name of Tolnin, so fearful was he lest he should be found by the enemies who were upon his track. Master Cornelius Agrippa, who had loaned Luther’s works and started men to thinking in Metz, was there “taking his tone and tuning his voice” in harmony with the reformers.

The house of Capito was like an inn, where all were sure of a welcome. These refugees met with Zell, who, as priest of St. Lawrence, had been among the first to preach that “man is saved by grace.” A nobleman of this city, Count Sigismund, of Hohenlohe, was touched by the preaching of Zell and the heroism of Luther. He was not one of those nobles, so numerous then, who followed the Savior as a secret disciple. He made it his business to help Luther’s writings over the Rhine and forward them to the Duchess Margaret, who called him "her good cousin," and felt herself greatly benefited by his influence.

The dews of Christian love had often been shed upon Farel, in order to moderate his flaming zeal, and he had taken kindly the gentle advice. But he thought that, while he might be over-hasty, some of his friends in Basle were too slow in acting fully up to their knowledge. They tolerated too many Romish practices. It was very offensive to him that Pellican should still attend mass and wear the dress of a monk. He remonstrated, but one of his friends, who
had done the same thing to no purpose, only reminded him that it was a hard task to change a monk into a Christian. Farel requested Luther to use his influence with Pellican. The next year he had the pleasure of seeing his friend cast off the badge of popery and teach the word of God in Zurich.

To this zealous man was given the work of a peace-maker. A controversy had arisen in respect to the Lord’s Supper—some holding with Luther and some with Zwingli. It was likely to disturb the pleasant meetings of the preachers in Strasburg. They requested Farel to be an agent in reconciling the parties. He did much to bring Luther and Zwingli into a more friendly style of discussion, and, when their letters came, they were found to be quite nearly agreed on most of the points at issue. The friends at Strasburg resolved to fix upon the important meaning and benefit of the ordinance, and hold “to the main point—faith and love, or to the remembrance of Christ for the invigoration of our hope, since Christ must be internal and invisible, and not necessarily connected with what is external, be it a sign or anything else.”

The fellowship at Strasburg was bearing good fruit. Men raised up here and there, as they had been, and each struggling almost alone with the faith, needed such a school. Doctrine had been the great thing hitherto; discipline had been too much neglected. The energetic Farel, the learned Lefèvre, the spiritual Roussel, gifted with opposite natures, were now to act upon each other. Farel learned gentleness, Roussel gained courage; the one imparted the overplus of his peculiar traits to the other. The soft iron became steel; the steel had the rough wire taken from its edge. In other days these brethren remembered how they dwelt together in unity. “We carefully put out of sight all that might interrupt the harmony between brethren. The peace that we tasted, far from being without savor, like that of the world, was prepared with the sweet odor of God’s service.”

In the spring of 1526, a shout of joy was heard rolling through France from the Pyrenees to Calais. Strasburg heard it, and was behind no city in its gladness. The duchess Margaret had secured the release of the king. He was on the way to Paris. Louisa must resign her fearful power. Duprat must learn that he has a master. Beda may find that he has not the church of France in his hands.

None were more joyous than the friends of the gospel. Some of them determined to go and meet the king and petition him on behalf of the exiles and the prisoners. They felt sure that he would put himself at the head of a party which Charles V his detested rival and captor was persecuting. But he had a secret hatred of "the evangelicals," and, although Margaret uttered a cry in favor of the miserable, he kept the most cautious reserve. She had hoped to see the Count Sigismund come from Basle to Paris, and give his talents to the work of restoring the gospel in France. He was delaying for the king to send him an invitation.
One day Margaret took courage, and asked her brother to invite the Count; he was not ready. He knew Count Sigismund well, and thought his gospel principles exaggerated. Besides, if there was to be any change in France, he meant to make it alone. And what would the pope and the emperor say, if the count were in Paris, preaching at the court, in the churches, and in the open air perhaps? He did not fully tell his sister what he would do, but to her suggestions he replied, "Not yet," and she turned away bitterly disappointed.

Again she pleaded her cause. "I do not care for that man," said Francis, sharply. This was not true. He cared for him when he wanted him. When he needed three thousand soldiers, then it was "my very dear and beloved cousin of Hohenlohe," highly esteemed for "his loyalty and valor, his nearness of lineage, love and charity." But where the gospel was concerned it was quite a different affair. The usual "Not yet," was again heard. The Count Sigismund did not come to France.

Thus one of Margaret’s plans failed. But she had another. The king must call back the exiles, and open the prisons. Already had she entreated for one sufferer, saying to the king, "If you do not interfere, Berquin is a dead man." He did interpose, and wrote from Spain that he would make the first president answerable for Berquin’s life, if he dared to condemn him. The president halted, the monks hung their heads, and Beda and his pack "were nigh bursting with vexation." And now the returned king resolved to save Berquin from "the claws of Beda’s faction." He said to the parliament, only a few days after his return, "I will not suffer the person or the goods of this gentleman to be injured. I will inquire into the matter myself." The king sent his officers to take this Christian captive from his prison, and put him into a more commodious chamber. They were still to keep watch over him, but he should be well treated. He took courage, and set about forming plans for the triumph of the truth.

Good news for Strasburg, the king was inquiring into matters himself; he was making the prisoners more comfortable; he was listening to the importunate Margaret; he was despising the monks and vexing Beda, and now one step more, and the exiles would be permitted to return to France. One day the duchess urged him to put an end to the cruel exile of her friends. He granted it. The glad tidings went to Strasburg, and France was open to her refugees. Nay, not all of them. There was one exception, unaccountable to us, and mysterious in the providence of God. This we shall see to be the earnest William Farel.

What joy! the aged Lefèvre, the fervent Roussel, are recalled with honor. These are nearly the words of Erasmus, who did not regard the two men as "Lutherans," nor so far gone out of the old Romish church as Farel. The Strasburgers bade them farewell with tears, and they took the road to France, happy that they were going to the land of their birth, one to die there, and the
other to preach the new life. Others followed; all believed that the new times were come.

Lefèvre and Roussel hastened to their protectress. Margaret received them kindly, and lodged them in the castle of Angoulême, where she was born, on that smiling hill near "her softly flowing Charente." She had a project in her mind. It was to make Blois, which had been the favorite residence of the house of Valois, a refuge for the persecuted and a strong-hold of the gospel. The first of June, Roussel went to this city, built about a hundred miles southeast of Paris. Lefèvre joined him there on the last of the month. One was the eloquent court preacher; the other was the teacher of the king's third son and the keeper of the castle library. Chapelain, the physician of the duchess, and Cop, who was too near the truth to remain a doctor in the Sorbonne, were also there. All of them felt grateful to Francis I, and were contriving means to impart something of Christianity to the most Christian king," which was in truth very necessary both for him and the people.

The amiable Peter Toussaint was still in the horrid den into which the cruel abbot of St. Anthony had thrust him. His host of Basle had not sent the books which the treacherous priest had forced him to order; no doubt the man saw through the trick, and knew in whose hands the life of his young friend was placed. Margaret heard of him through such men as the merchant Vaugris, who had interceded in vain for his release. She went to the king, as persistent as ever, and gained her suit. In July 1526 the order came for his deliverance. The officers charged with this pleasing task went down into the gloomy dungeon and raised out of his stifling den, a young man, thin, weak, and pale as a faded flower. His eyes were pained by the light of day, and his mind seemed bewildered with joy. He was as much less than the Toussaint of former days as a merciless tormentor could make him.

At first he knew not where to go. Hoping for some pity, he applied to certain old acquaintances, but they were afraid to shelter a heretic who had barely escaped the stake. He had not Berquin's energy; his delicate sensitive nature needed a support, and in the free air and the wide world, he was almost as much alone as in a dungeon. "Ah," he exclaimed, "God our heavenly Father has delivered me, in a wonderful manner from the hands of the tyrants, but alas! what is to become of me? The world is mad, and it spurns the rising gospel of Jesus Christ!"

"The duchess of Alençon alone can protect you," said some timid and well-meaning friends. "There is no asylum for you but at her court. Make application to a princess, who welcomes with so much generosity all the friends of learning and of the gospel, and profit by your residence at her court to investigate closely the wind that blows in those elevated regions." Toussaint laid hold of such a hope. Timid as he was, he went to Paris, under an assumed name.
Margaret was not there, but was soon expected. He kept himself closely concealed. When she arrived he asked permission to see her alone; she received him with great kindness. What an exchange! Just from one of the lowest dungeons, and snatched as a lamb from the claws of a monster, but now in the palace of St. Germain, and in favor with the most elegant and brilliant personage who lent her grace to the court. What charmed him most was her piety.

"The most illustrious duchess of Alençon," he wrote to Oecolampadius, "has received me with as much kindness as if I had been a prince or the person who was dearest to her. I hope that the gospel will soon reign in France."

The duchess was touched with the faith of the young evangelist. She could share in his hopes and sympathize in his fears.

She invited him to come again the next day. He went, and he went yet again. They had long conversations.

"God by the light of his word," said he, "must illumine the world, and by the breath of his Spirit must transform all hearts."

"It is the only thing that I desire," she replied, believing in the final victory of truth. "It is not only myself that longs for this triumph. Even the king wishes for it. ... The king is coming to Paris to secure the progress of the gospel, if, at least, the war does not prevent him." Not the war, but the wickedness in high places, and the fear of the Romish powers, pope, Sorbonne, and all, were to prevent him. Toussaint learned that much of the piety displayed at the court was a mere pretense for the sake of gaining office. When with Margaret, the priests who were applicants for favors, were almost reformers; when with some scoffing noble they threw off the mask and were not even good Romanists.

"Alas!" wrote he, "they speak well of Jesus Christ with those who speak well of him, but with those who blaspheme, they blaspheme also." What could be expected of Francis I who lent his ear to such priests and courtiers? His sister saw only his best face.

Toussaint had another joy. Lefèvre and Roussel came to Paris. Young, impetuous, and full of respect for them, he hastened to tell them of his vexations, and wished them to unmask these hypocrites, and preach the gospel in this perverse court.

"Patience," said the two scholars, each rather temporizing in his disposition. "Patience; do not let us spoil anything; the time is not yet come."

Toussaint burst into tears. "I cannot restrain my tears," said he. Perhaps he wished that Farel was there. "Yes, be wise after your fashion; wait, put off, dissemble as much as you please; you will acknowledge, however, at last, that
it is impossible to preach the gospel without bearing the cross." These words, from an honest heart, reveal one of the dividing lines between the reformers of France. One party, clustering about the duchess, would not do anything to injure the old fallen church; the other would leave the Romish church and seek a new one—or, rather, return to that one which had existed long before Rome introduced her perversions. Toussaint had already cast his lot with the thorough reformers.

He said plainly to Margaret, "Lefèvre is wanting in courage; may God strengthen and support him." She did her utmost to keep the young evangelist at her court. She offered him great advantages, and advised him to be more moderate. She wished for men who would exhibit a Christian heart and life, but who would not break with the church. He repelled all these gracious advances. He was sick of the court air. Admiration gave way to disgust. "I despise these magnificent offers," said he. "I detest the court more than anyone has done. Farewell to it."

The cardinal of Lorraine appeared now as his friend. He advised Toussaint to be cautious, for, as a heretic, he was never secure of his life. But his courage rose with the perils of his situation. He requested Farel to address him without any concealment, since he was not ashamed of his own name, nor of his correspondence, nor afraid of the consequences of its being known. Since no one else had invited Farel to France, he did it, assuring him of protection among certain friends in Paris. But Farel wished an invitation from a higher authority.

Margaret begged him not to leave France, and commended Toussaint to one of her friends, Madame de Centraigues, a noble lady, who abounded in charity for the persecuted evangelists, and gave them a home in her chateau of Malesherbes, in the Orleans district. He, fearing that a terrible struggle was coming, besought his friends to pray that France would show herself worthy of the word of God. He also prayed that the Lord would send to this people a teacher to lead them in the true paths of life, and went to his new home, to wait there for more favorable days.

Who would be the reformer of France? Not Lefèvre, for he was old, timid, and wished not to separate from the Romish church. Not Roussel, for he dared not always go as far as his convictions prompted him. "Alas," he wrote to Farel, "there are many gospel truths, one half of which I am obliged to conceal." He was just the man for the duchess; he would advance the Christian life without touching the institutions of the church.

Would it be Berquin? We left him in a comfortable chamber of his prison, forming large plans for the conquests of the truth. Margaret had not dared to visit him, but she tried to send him a few words of good cheer. It was, perhaps,
for him that she wrote the "Complaints of the Prisoner," in which he thus addresses his Lord:

"But yet where'er my prison be,

Its gates can never keep out Thee,

For instant where I am, Thou art with me."

She did not rest here; she was unwearied in her petitions to the king. The Romish party knew that if Berquin was free, he would deal hard blows, which they could not resist, and they did all they could to prevent the bolt from being drawn. But Margaret had a hand on that prison bolt, and, at length, in November 1526, he left his guarded chamber to enter upon the plans he had formed for rescuing France from the hands of the pope. He was then thirty-five years of age, pure in his life, charming in his character, devoted to study, flaming with zeal, and indomitable in his energy. His enemies feared him; Beda said to himself that Berquin would be the Luther of France. But Berquin could not advance a great system of gospel-truth. He could preach duties, but could not raise up a fortress of doctrines into which the trembling might flee and be safe. His work was to resist Beda and the "three thousand monks" that were in him, and to die such a noble martyr that one of the executioners would say publicly, to the great vexation of the judges, "No better Christian has died for a hundred years than Berquin."

Was the reformer of France to be Farel? He was then her greatest light. Toussaint was waiting for him to appear, and let us see how it was that this most fervent, most eloquent, most intrepid and persevering of the French reformers before Calvin, came not back to his own country, but went to Switzerland, to set the western Alps on fire.

When the king recalled the other exiles, Farel was left behind. He saw his friends returning to their country, wondered why he must remain alone in exile, and, overwhelmed with sorrow, cried to God for resignation. He still remained at Strasburg, with one foot on the border, waiting for a call, but the order did not come. The king and his sister did not wish so bold a man in the land. They were afraid of him. The court had no taste for his style of preaching; they "wished for a softened and perfumed gospel in France."

There were Christians in the land who saw that the men at Margaret’s court would stop half-way in the work, and accomplish nothing permanent. In their view, France needed a man of artless nature, fearless spirit, powerful eloquence, and ability to give a new impulse to the work which Lefèvre had begun. They thought of Farel, but his coming seemed to depend upon the duchess. Roussel knew her fears. He knew that Farel would be a preacher and
not a courtier, and he would never agree with her policy. Still the noble and
devout Roussel felt that such a man was greatly needed, and he tried to open
the way for him to put forth his mighty labors in some of the provinces. "I will
obtain the means of providing for all your wants," he wrote on the twenty-
seventh of August, 1526, "until the Lord gives you an entrance, at last, among
us."
This, also, was Farel’s earnest desire. He was not then invited to Switzerland.
His country possessed his heart; day and night his yes were turned toward the
gates which were so strangely shut against him; he went up and knocked. None
came to open them. He was depressed and he exclaimed, "Oh! if the Lord
would but open a way for me to return and labor in France!" Suddenly there
was a prospect that his greatest wishes would be realized.
On the day of a grand reception at court, the two sons of Prince Robert de la
Marche came to pay their respects to the king’s sister. Margaret, ever intent on
winning souls, said to Roussel, her eyes indicating the persons meant, "Speak to
those two young princes; seize I pray, this opportunity of advancing the cause
of Jesus Christ."
"I will do so," replied the willing chaplain. He approached the young noblemen,
and began to converse about the gospel. They showed no astonishment, but
listened with a lively interest. Finding that they were not strangers to the good
word, he urged them to extend the truth among their subjects.
They gave their fullest assent to his words, but felt that they were too weak
for the task of making known the gospel. Roussel now thought he had found a
field for the pining exile, and he said to the young nobles, "I know of but one
man fitted for such a great work; he is William Farel. Christ has given him an
extraordinary talent for making known the riches of his glory. Invite him."
"We desire it still more than you," said the young princes. "Our father and we
will open our arms to him. He shall be to us as a son, a brother, and a father.
Let him fear nothing; he shall live with us; yes, in our own palace. All whom he
will meet there are the friends of Jesus Christ. We ourselves will be there to
receive him. Only bid him make haste; let him come before next Lent."
"I promise you that he shall," replied Roussel, and he began to think how he
should lay all this before Farel. Toussaint wrote and added his entreaties:
"Never has any news caused me more joy; hasten thither as fast as you can."
Thus was a plan laid for Farel to come into almost the center of France. So
confident were the young princes of his coming that they undertook to set up a
printing establishment in order that he might circulate the truth by means of
the press, not only in La Marche, but throughout the kingdom.
"Farel would have been the man fitted for this work," says D’Aubigné. "He was
one of those whose simple, serious, earnest tones carry away the masses. His
voice of thunder made his hearers tremble. The strength of his convictions
created faith in their souls; the fervor of his prayers raised them to heaven.
When they listened to him, ‘they felt,’ as Calvin says, ‘not merely a few light
stings, but they were wounded and pierced to the heart; and hypocrisy was
dragged from those wonderful and more than tortuous hiding places which lie
deep in the heart of man.’ He pulled down and built up with equal energy. He
was not only a minister of the word; he was a bishop also. He was able to
discern the young men who were fitted to wield the weapons of the gospel,
and to direct them in the great war of the age. Farel never attacked a place,
however difficult of access, which he did not take. Such was the man then
called into France, and who seemed destined to be her reformer." The letters
of Roussel and Toussaint were on the way, but already Farel had another
invitation before him. Let us see whence it came.
On the shield of an ancient Swiss city was the figure of a bear, and the wits
called its people the "bears of Berne." It was the center of a little republic,
whose freemen caught the spirit of the great awakening, and as early as 1518
held out attractions to literary men. Berne, whose soldiers had won renown,
must have its scholars as well as Basle and Zurich. The next year appeared
among them a young man of twenty-one, named Berthold Haller, who had been
a fellow student with Melancthon. Haller won the hearts of the people and
soon became the preacher of the cathedral. The gospel which Zwingli was
教学 came to the city, and Haller examined it, believed, and began to
declare it. But the "bears" were not lambs, willing to be led in the new pastures
of truth, without making enough resistance to discourage the meek and timid
shepherd. He wished to see Zwingli and talk to him as a son to a father. So,
taking with him his burden of trials, he paid a visit to Zurich. He was kindly
received by this "first of the reformers," whose gentleness imparted a charm to
his manners. Zwingli was pleased with this young man of about twenty-eight
years, tall, artless, candid and diffident, but who gave fair promise of being
the reformer of Berne.
"My soul is overwhelmed," said Haller one day; "I cannot support such unjust
treatment. I am determined to resign my pulpit and retire to Basle, to employ
myself entirely in Wittenbach’s society, with the study of sacred learning."
This desire for study was strong in the first reformers.
"Alas!" replied Zwingli, "and I too feel discouragement creep over me, when I
see myself unjustly assailed, but Christ awakens my conscience by the terrible
stimulus of his terrors and promises. He alarms me by saying, ‘Whosoever shall
be ashamed of me before men, of him shall I be ashamed before my Father.’
He restores me to tranquility by adding, ‘Whosoever shall confess me before
men, him also will I confess before my Father.’ Oh my dear Berthold, take
courage! Our names are written in imperishable characters in the annals of the
citizens on high. I am ready to die for Christ. Oh, that your fierce bears would
hear the gospel; then they would grow tame. But you must undertake this duty
with great gentleness, lest they should turn round furiously and rend you in
pieces."
Haller took courage, went home, labored gently, and then wrote to his friend,
"My soul has awakened from its slumber. I must preach the gospel. Jesus Christ
must be restored to this city, whence he has been exiled so long." "The timid
young preacher rushed," as Zwingli described it, "into the midst of the savage
bears, who, grinding their teeth, sought to devour him."
The cause gained strength as the years passed, and Haller declared, in
confident hope, "Unless God’s anger be turned against us, it is not possible for
the word of God to be banished from the city, for the Bernese are hungering after it." The Bernese had certain districts in Roman Switzerland, where the people spoke the French language, and a French missionary was needed. Farel was the man to carry the gospel into these new regions, and Haller gave him the most urgent invitation. What should Farel do? France was shut; no one opened its gates; not a word yet from thence inviting him to return. France had rejected him. Switzerland was open; a voice was calling him thither; it must be the voice of God, who took Paul away from the Asia in which he proposed to labour, and sent him over into Macedonia. He could not hesitate. He left Strasburg on foot in December, grieved as he cast an eye toward his native land that now disowned her son, but cheered as the prospects of success in new regions rose upon his vision. He was on the road when the messenger of Toussaint and Roussel arrived at Strasburg. It was too late. His friends sent the letters on to Berne, but even there they did not overtake him. In his zeal he had made haste to enter upon his new field. In a little Alpine village he had fully settled down, when he received the invitation of the lords of La Marche. Might he not even then return? Should he put aside the call of the lords of Berne, and the call of God’s providence, and obey the voice of the young princes? In his soul there was a fierce struggle. He was only a lowly schoolmaster in a little village of the Alps. In France he might be a reformer in a great field, using princes in pushing on the good work, perhaps enlisting the king, and making the throne, the court, the capital, a center of power on the side of the gospel. If this invitation had only reached him at Strasburg! But, no! It was too late. The hand of God had drawn him away for some purpose yet to be disclosed. He will remain at the humble desk in his little school, and have an experience which invites our further attention.

Thus France lost the reformer whom many Christians thought had been raised up for her deliverance. But God had wisely planned these events. Farel would have been a powerful evangelist, but he was too much a soldier and too little a scholar for that great nation. He was a general who could urge forward a movement against error, but not the guide who could lead men to the full system of truth contained in the Bible. A greater than Farel was about to appear, who would combine all the excellencies of his predecessors in the French reformation. He was then a student of seventeen, in the college of La Marche, at Paris, working his way, as Farel had done, into the clear light of the gospel. His was that great name—John Calvin. Farel knew him not, but it was yet to be the work of this Alpine schoolmaster to lay the foundation in Roman Switzerland, to open the gates of Geneva, and be the forerunner of Calvin, whose voice should shake the world and roll on through the centuries.

"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." What was true of Jeremiah and David was to be true of William Farel, who had passed the delicate turning point in his eventful life.
CHAPTER X

The Alpine Schoolmaster
1527–1528

On the banks of the "Great Water," a narrow stream that falls in thunder from the rugged glaciers of the Diablerets, lies the small town of Aigle (Ælen), about ten miles from Villeneuve, at the upper end of Lake Leman. A railroad now passes through it, and, from the cars, at this point, one may see the sublime Dent du Midi rising on the south, and the proud Dent de Morcles on the north, both crowned with snow, and between them, a quiet, smiling valley, whose picture will not soon fade from his memory. There the laurel blooms beside the most exquisite grapes, and, yet, hanging almost above them, are vast glaciers, near to which, in summer, the shepherds lead their flocks for pasture. If this be his first gate of entrance, the traveler begins to think that he is amid the grandeur of Switzerland.

To this small town, in December 1526, a man was making his way, on foot and in the rain. He wished to conceal his name, for he was one whom persecution had made an exile from France. He was of middle stature, with red beard, quick eyes, fearless face, and the step of a native mountaineer. If he met any
of the villagers, he was likely to give them the whole road, and speak kindly to
them in purer French than they employed, but, if he met a haughty priest, he
was ready to claim his full share of the path, and look back at him with
indignation after he had passed. The wonder is that he did not tear down some
of the crosses along the way, and dash in pieces the images that exacted
devotion from the superstitious traveler.

With him walked a single friend. Night closed around them, and the rain fell
heavy and cold. They lost their path, a very dangerous thing for Alpine
travelers on whom the snow might be falling before morning. Drenched and
chilled, they sat down almost in despair. "Ah!" said the chief one, "God, by
showing me my helplessness in these little things, has willed to teach me how
weak I am in the greatest, without Jesus Christ."

"It is no little thing to be lost," we imagine the other replying. "We shall perish
if we stay here."

"Let us perish then trying to find our way." Then rising, they bent forward on
their dark journey, feeling for stepping places among the rocks, plunging
through bogs, wading through the waters, crossing vineyards, fields, hills,
forests and valleys, and, at length, dripping with rain and covered with mud,
they reached the village of Aigle.

In this desolate night the exile received a new baptism. His natural energy was
somewhat softened. He was so subdued that he felt more timidity than he
needed, and anxious to be wise, he overstepped his mark. He assumed a new
name, hoping, as he afterwards said, "by pious frauds to circumvent the old
serpent that was hissing around him." He represented himself to be a
schoolmaster—Ursinus—and he waited for a door to be opened that he might
appear as a reformer.

He looked about upon the people, and saw ignorance and degradation as the
fruits of Romanism. The priests fleeced the flocks, add then left them to be
pastured by curates who played the hireling, and only confirmed the people in
their rudeness and turbulence. The best way to bring the priests into
watchfulness was to teach the villagers the gospel. Awaken thought among
them, and the jealous clergy would rush to the spot to smother it. He cared
not, however, how far they kept away from the field.

Ursinus gathered the children and began his work with no fixed salary. His
modest lessons were mingled with new and strange doctrines. His scholars
wondered when he told them of the good book and the great God who gave it,
the true cross and the Lord of glory who died upon it. They had something to
believe, to tell, to expand their minds and elevate their souls. The teacher was
encouraged; by feeding the Savior’s lambs, he would soon have sheep to feed.
When the day’s work was done, Master Ursinus left the schoolroom and the primers, and took refuge in his poorly furnished lodging place. It became a palace, for the Bible was the light thereof. He applied himself, with absorbing interest, to the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, and the few works of learned theologians that he had brought with him. The debate between Luther and Zwingli was still going on. He examined anew the entire ground on which they wrestled, and asked to which of these champions he should attach himself. The case was decided; he clung to the Zurich reformer.

Master Ursinus went a step farther in his work. He cautiously set about teaching the parents as well as the children. He showed them that purgatory was a mere invention, there was no such place. Then he exposed the delusion practiced in the invocation of the saints. "As for the pope, he is nothing," said he, "or almost nothing in these parts; and as for the priests, if they annoy the people with that nonsense, which Erasmus knows so well how to turn into ridicule, that is enough for them."

Thus he went on teaching in a quiet way for some months. A flock gathered around him, loving the good man, who did more for them than anyone had dreamed of doing before. If they were puzzled by the thought that one so great should come among them in their out-of-the-way corner, it was all explained by his simple goodness of heart. And he told them of Him who condescended from heaven to earth, from the throne to a manger, from the crown to the cross, and they understood and believed. He thought the looked-for moment had come, and he might tell them who he was, and what was his mission. "I am William Farel, minister of God," said he one day.

The villagers thought none the more nor any the less of him for that. It was to them like any other unheard-of name.

But the priests and magistrates were in amazement and terror. They had heard of William Farel. They now saw among them that very man whose name had already become so fearful. They dared not do anything but let him have his way. Nor did he consult with flesh and blood. He had quietly taken the tower; now he would take the town by a bold movement. He ascended the pulpit, and openly preached Jesus Christ to the astonished multitude. The work of Ursinus was over; Farel was himself again.

The council of Berne, in the month of March, commissioned Farel to explain the Holy Scriptures to the people of Aigle and its neighborhood, and to preach until the incumbent of the benefices, Nicolas Von Diesbach, should appoint a suitable minister, a thing that Nicolas was not likely to do. At the same time a fresh order was issued against the immorality of the clergy and laity, and measures were taken to punish offenders. This new order was galling to the priests, who had lived so long in the freest and loosest way that they could not bear to be restrained. They saw that Farel would have the law on his side, and
become bolder than before in attacking the general vices and superstitions. The rich and lazy incumbents, with the poor and ignorant curates, were the first to cry out. "If this man continues preaching," they said one to another, "it is all over with our benefices and our church."

The civil power also opposed this first preaching of the pure gospel in these regions. The bailiff of Aigle, and Jacques de Roverea, the governor of the four parishes, Aigle, Bex, Ollon, and the Ormond valleys, felt proud of their "brief authority." They would not support their Bernese lords, nor accept the minister they had sent. They took the side of the priests, and said, "The emperor is about to declare war against all innovators. A great army will shortly arrive from Spain, and assist the Arch-duke Ferdinand."

Farel stood firm, and fearlessly went on in his work, avoiding to excite opposition by imprudent vehemence, or by exposing too many of the errors of Romanism. He boldly declared the truth, having patience with the rude and ignorant people. This enraged the bailiff and the governor. They forbade "the heretic" to give any kind of instruction, whether as minister or schoolmaster. Thus they hoped to starve him out or send him away. But they did not know their man, nor their excellencies of Berne. Great was the displeasure of the Bernese lords when they learned what had been done. They sent a new decree, dated July third, and ordered it to be posted on the doors of all the churches in the four parishes. The people read that "all the officers of the state must allow the very learned William Farel to preach publicly the doctrines of the Lord."

This new proclamation was the signal for a revolt. On the twenty-fifth of July great crowds assembled at Aigle, at Bex, at Ollon, and in the Ormonds, crying out, "No more submission to Berne! Down with Farel!" From words they soon proceeded to riots. At Aigle they were headed by the fiery bailiff, and they tore down the edict, and prepared to fall upon the reformed people. Farel was soon summoned by his friends, who resolved to defend him. The firm countenances of the Christian converts checked the rioters, and they dispersed. Farel left the town for a few days, and, like a general who flanks an enemy, he entered upon a new movement.

The traveler, who comes from Geneva in a steamer to Lausanne, will expect to find the beautifully situated capital of Vaud repay him for his visit. He may be puzzled by its crooked streets and wearied with its three hills, but he will be interested in its history and its antiquities, especially in the cathedral, founded about the year one thousand. If Farel’s voice of thunder could have been heard therein, he would have started up a nest of as dissolute canons and priests as all Rome could furnish. Although they had a bishop over them, they were drunk at the inns, they gambled in public, they fought in the churches, they kept the vilest company, they were fathers without being husbands, and sent their children out to beg bread; they disguised themselves as soldiers, and came down from the cathedral hill at night, roamed the streets with swords in their
hands, and surprised, wounded, and sometimes even killed worthy citizens. Yet they were "ministers of the Virgin," whose image drew hosts of pilgrims to the great church. There was a power in that city which aimed to keep the whole country at the feet of the pope. Even the trumpet-voice of Farel could not have prevailed in the streets of Lausanne. He knew it, and did not propose thus to storm the stronghold.

A more quiet way showed itself. The bishop had a chaplain named Natalis Galeotto, a man of elevated rank and the most polished manners. He was fond of learning and of learned men, but yet very zealous about fasts and the rites of the church. Farel thought that if this man could be gained over to the gospel, Lausanne, "slumbering at the foot of its steeples," and amid the noise of its monks, would perhaps awaken, and all the country with it. True, he had denounced Farel's zeal against fasts and formalities, as absolutely immoral, but yet there was some hope that a man of his intelligence and character might be won to a purer faith.

Farel wrote to Natalis. He modestly introduced himself and gave some account of his former struggles, and the means by which he had found the true light. He urged the gospel upon the chaplain, and entreated him to use well his talents, to warn the wicked, to lose no time in publishing the praises of God, and to "preach Christ as our great pattern, both in speaking and acting." Then he referred to the evils which were best known, and which none could deny. "Alas! alas! religion is now little better than an empty mockery, since people who think only of their appetites are the kings of the church." But Natalis made no reply.

Again Farel wrote, urging upon him "that we should renounce everything for Christ's sake, even our dearest friends and relatives," if they were in the way. "No loss, trial, or affliction should be shunned on this account, and the Christian ought to go wherever the Lord calls him, though the whole world should rise up against him." Farel might properly give this advice; he was following it himself. Then, perhaps, referring to some late conduct of Natalis, he wrote, "Knock, cry out with all your might, redouble your attacks upon our Lord." But still Natalis kept silence. He would not come out of his entrenchments.

The third time Farel returned to the charge. He urged that "the manifestation of the love of God to men through Christ ought to excite every one to gratitude." He dwelt still longer upon the doctrines which he believed, and called upon Natalis to explain his own views with the same frankness, to agree with what he considered true, and point out what was erroneous. The chaplain ordered his secretary to break the silence.

The reply showed no signs of a friendly disposition, but was full of abuse. The writer asserted his own belief in all the Romish observances, and reproached
Farel for undervaluing them. To this the reformer made a calm reply. The correspondence came to an end. If it did not secure its object, it proved the union of gentleness and energy in a man too often supposed to have been made of only explosive materials. The depth of his piety was evinced by the sufferings he endured, and, if his requirements from others were strict, they were no stricter than his own example enforced. For a time Lausanne was shut against him.

After this skirmish with a priest, came a face-to-face conflict with a monk. A mendicant friar, who did not dare to oppose the reformer at Aigle, crept slyly into the village of Noville, built where the Rhone pours its waters into the Lake of Geneva. The friar went into the pulpit and made his attack upon Farel. He exclaimed, "It is the devil himself, who preaches by the mouth of this minister, and all those who listen to him will be damned." Having thus vented his feelings he felt courageous enough to go back to Aigle. He did not, however, propose to appear there against Farel, whose powerful eloquence terrified him. There was a greater attraction than a combat with the weapons of truth. With a meek and humble look he went to beg, in behalf of his convent, a few barrels of the most delicious wine in all Switzerland!

He had not walked very far into the town before he met the minister whom Berne was resolved to keep in the field. At this sight he trembled in every limb. There was no mob of priests now in the streets to drive away the man of fiery eyes and fearful voice. Farel advanced and in a friendly tone asked, "Did you preach against me at Noville, saying that the devil spoke through me?"

"I did," whispered the monk in Farel's ear, not wishing to attract public attention.

"Would the devil preach the gospel, and will those who listen to it be damned?"

"Certainly not."

"Then why have you publicly spoken against me in such terms? I request that you will point out and prove the errors which I am charged with preaching, for I would rather die than teach false doctrine to the poor people, whom Christ has redeemed by his blood. May the Lord never permit me to preach any doctrine that he does not approve."

"I have heard say that you are a heretic, and that you mislead the people by your doctrine," answered the priest, who would have been glad to turn away and look after the wine.

"That is not enough," replied Farel, "you must make good what you said in your sermon, for I am ready to stake my life in defense of my doctrine."
The monk now began to bluster, and said, angrily, "What have I preached against you? Who has heard it? I am not come hither to dispute with you, but to collect alms. You ought to know best whether you have preached sound or erroneous doctrine."

Farel then represented to him that the truth was of the utmost importance, and that he was in a place where he would be certain of meeting with justice. "If you have spoken the truth," said he, "I cannot injure you. If you are right you should defend your sermon. If you have misled the people you should lead them back to the true path."

"You are the false teacher; you mislead the people," said the friar, growing very uneasy and starting down street as if he would shake off his undesirable companion, and "turning now this way, now that, like a troubled conscience." A few citizens gathered to the spot, and Farel knew them.

"You see this fine father," said the reformer, pointing to the monk. "He has said from the pulpit that I preach nothing but lies, and that you will perish if you listen to me."

"Prove what I said," cried the friar in a passion, and still trying to move away. "Where are your witnesses?"

"The Omniscient One is my witness. Come, now prove your assertions."

Then the monk, blushing and stammering, began to speak of the offerings of the faithful (the precious wine of Yvorne, for instance, that he came to beg!) and he said that Farel had opposed them. The crowd increased. The reformer, who only sought for an opportunity to proclaim the true worship of God, exclaimed with his loud voice, "It is no man's business to ordain any other way of serving God than that which he has commanded. Let us worship God alone in spirit and in truth; the true offerings are a broken and a contrite heart."

The people looked intently upon the two actors in this scene, the monk with his wallet, and the reformer with his glistening eye. When the friar heard Farel say that there was a better worship than the holy Roman church prescribed, he turned pale and flush by turns, trembled and seemed quite out of his senses. At last, raising his hood and taking off his cap, he flung it on the ground and trampled it under foot, and cried out, "I wonder that the earth does not open and swallow us up!"

"Listen to him as he has listened to you," said one of the by-standers, as he took the monk by the sleeve.

The monk now ceased to stamp on his cap, and to "bawl like one out of his wits," and he seemed to himself already half dead with fright. Venting his
wrath against him who held his sleeve, he said, "Thou art excommunicated, and
dost thou lay hands on me." "What!" replied the villager, "are all
excommunicated who touch thy cowl? Hast thou a different God? or art thou
baptized into a different name? Art thou not to be spoken to?"

The friar was silent, although furious, and the little town was in an uproar.
Farel gave the poor wine-beggar some good advice, while he also took
advantage of the crowd to declare some of the most solemn truths of the
gospel. It was probably his first chance since the cry, "down with Farel," had
been raised in those streets and perhaps by those very people who now looked
on amazed and confused. At length a magistrate appeared, ordered the monk
and Farel to follow him, and he shut them up in prison, "one in one tower, and
one in another."

On the Saturday morning, Farel was brought to the castle, where the court was
assembled, with the monk already before them. He reminded his judges that
they were sitting in God’s stead, and that they should not have respect to
persons or rank. He was willing to be punished if he had preached anything
contrary to the word of God. He wished to obey the lawful authorities, but as
for this friar, "let him make good his charges, or if he cannot, let the people
hear the gospel." The violence of the monk was over. He was now ready to
make matters up as best he could. He fell on his knees in alarm.

"My lords;" said he, "I entreat forgiveness of you and of God. And Magister
Farel, (turning to him) what I preached against you was grounded on false
reports. I have found you to be a good man, and your doctrine good, and I am
prepared to take back my words."

"My friend and brother," said Farel with deep emotion, "do not ask forgiveness
of me, for I am a poor sinner like other men; I put my trust in Jesus. Before I
saw you I had forgiven you as well as others who have spoken against me and
the gospel. I have prayed to God both for them and for you."

One of the lords of Berne came up at this time, and the friar, imagining that he
was on the brink of martyrdom, began to wring his hands, and to turn now to
the Bernese councilor, and now to the court, and then to Farel, crying,
"Pardon, pardon."

"Ask pardon of our Savior," said the reformer, who begged that the monk might
not be punished any farther. The gospel was now defended, and that was all he
wished. He hoped that neither the monk, nor any of his brethren, would
henceforth say anything behind him which they could not prove before his
face.

"Come tomorrow and hear the minister’s sermon," said the Bernese lord to the
friar. "If he appears to you to preach the truth, you shall confess it openly


before all; if not, you will declare your opinion. Give us your hand in this promise."

The monk held out his hand and the judges retired. But he made the best of his Saturday, and was not to be found on the Sabbath. Farel wrote the account of the affair, closing thus: "Then the friar went away, and I have not seen him since, and no promises or oaths were able to make him stay."

This was much more than a private and personal strife. It was a contest between truth and error, between Romanism and the Reformation. The future success of the gospel seemed to hinge on the triumph of the monk or of the minister. The good cause won the day. French Switzerland was to have the word of God.

The preaching of Farel brought back the priests to the parishes, for their craft was in danger. And, as if they were not enough against one lonely reformer, certain Romish agents came to their aid from Savoy and Valais. They assembled the people, they discussed measures which were dangerous and revolutionary; but they took care not to meet Farel in debating ten theses, which a large council of reformers at Berne had appointed him to defend. He was fresh from this conference, held January 1528, where he had met several of the distinguished divines in Zurich, Basle, and Strasburg. He was ready for the priests, being armed with an ordinance which declared "that the return to the Scriptural faith and the free use of the Bible was a right that belonged to the people, and that the churches of the cantons should follow the example of Berne." But the agents of Rome were afraid of arguments. Their only hope was in outward resistance. Berne had no business to sanction the late innovations, and "the bears" would find the world at war against them! They would treat Farel only with slander, ridicule, threats, and violence; they would set at naught the decrees of those who sent him. The proclamations were torn down from the church doors. Troops of citizens paraded the streets. The drum was beaten to rouse the populace against the reformer. Sedition and riot everywhere prevailed.

Farel knew what was threatened, but he was fearless in duty. On the first Sabbath after his return, February 16, he went into the pulpit and began to preach, having, probably, a Bernese senator present to secure him a peaceful hearing. Riotous bands collected about the gates of the church, uttered savage yells, raised their hands in tumult, and compelled the minister to break off in his sermon. The papal party were carrying matters too far, and their noise should be heard across the mountains. They should hear again from Berne. The senate discussed the late events, and ordered that Farel should not be molested in his preaching. Envoys came and called a meeting of the four parishes. Bex declared for the reform. Aigle, less decidedly followed the example. Ollon left the case with the women; the peasants did not dare to maltreat Farel; they, however, excited their wives to rush upon him and beat
him with their fulling-clubs. The parish of the Ormonds felt calm and proud at
the foot of its glaciers and signalized itself by resistance. The senators were
patient with the ignorant people of these last two parishes, and gave them
more time to decide upon their course. But, meanwhile, they must hear the
word of God, and allow no one to speak from their pulpits against the late
orders. And Farel must superintend the preaching.

At Ollon there was no little disorder. While Farel was preaching, one Jajod fell
upon him, and roused others to join in the assault. The commission of senators
were surprised at this outrage. They ordered the governor to arrest the rioters
and to protect the preacher. The people must hear his side as well as that of
the priests, and thus be able to come to a fairer decision. Farel sent one of his
helpers into the field. But the inhabitants would not hear him.

Claude, one of Farel’s co-workers, went to the Ormonds. When preaching there
one day, with great animation, he was suddenly disturbed by the ringing of the
bells, “whose noise was such that one might have said all hell was pulling at
them.” At another time the shepherds rushed down the mountains like an
avalanche, and fell upon the church, crying furiously, “Let us only find these
sacrilegious wretches who tear down our altars, and we will hang them, we will
cut off their heads, we will throw their ashes into the
‘Great Water.” It is no wonder that the gospel made slow progress among
mountaineers, who seemed to take their angry spirit from the storm that
roared through their lofty valleys with a fury unknown to the people of the
plain.

At Bex and Aigle the good work met with more rapid success. The senate was
glad to know that some churches had given up the mass, removed or burned
the images and torn down the altars. The curates, still leading immoral lives,
were loath to yield to the order of the senate requiring them to give up their
offices to the reformed preachers. Farel was often interrupted at Aigle, and
once the pulpit was overturned. But the Bernese senators felt that they must
take care of a poor dying people who were too ignorant to banish the wolves
and receive the kind shepherds sent to the flocks. They must employ their
authority in securing a fair hearing for the gospel.

A new governor was appointed over the four parishes, Hans Rudolf Nageli, a
man favorable to the reformed doctrine. Deputies went with him, and by their
prudence and firmness great changes were quietly effected. The stormy
Ormondines were, at length, induced to forsake their ancient superstitions, and
let their altars be destroyed, their images be burned, their Romish paintings be
defaced, and their depraved curates be dismissed. The preachers were found
to be more attentive to the flocks than the priests, and the doctrines which
they had so fiercely opposed were seen to be the pure truths of that good word
which God had revealed for their salvation.
The Elijah of the Alps had received the call to return to France, but he was in his element, and would not be tempted nor even driven from the parishes of a poor and misguided people. Impetuous as the streams that broke down the mountainsides, he was still prudent as the shepherd who would have his flock to love him, and at the sound of his voice, follow him up to the glaciers. For months he stood alone, but the Bernese authorized him to secure helpers in his work. From Berne and Basle and France there came devoted fellow-laborers. Yet not all of them were blameless. One Christopher Ballista did him much evil. This man had been a monk at Paris, and had written to Zwingli; "I am but a Gaul, and a barbarian, but you will find me pure as snow, without any guile, of open heart, through whose windows all the world may see." And the world did see that the monk knew not himself. Zwingli sent him to Farel, who was calling loudly for laborers in Christ’s vineyard. The fine language of the Parisian at first charmed the people. But his words were the best things about him. He had been disgusted with popery, but not truly converted from it. He found the work too hard for one who was brought up to a soft, lazy, gluttonous life. Plain fare, rough journeys, Alpine storms, patient labors, and an ignorant rude people were not to his liking. The people began to distrust him, and then he became, as Farel wrote, "like a furious monster vomiting wagonloads of threats." Thus ended the toils of Ballista.

Often did Farel’s heart turn to his native land. To someone he thus wrote, with force and beauty: "Let us scatter the seed everywhere, and let civilized France, provoked to jealousy by this barbarous nation, embrace piety at last. Let there not be in Christ’s body either fingers, or hands, or feet, or eyes, or ears, or arms, existing separately and working each for itself, but let there be only one heart which nothing can divide. ... Alas! the pastures of the church are trodden under foot, and its waters are troubled! Let us set our minds to concord and peace. When the Lord shall have opened heaven, there will not be so many disputes about bread and water and allusion to the debates about the real presence in the Lord’s supper and on baptism. A fervent charity—that is the powerful battering ram with which we shall beat down those proud walls, those material elements, with which men would confine us."

During most of this time Farel had lived at his own charge. On one visit to Berne he received many presents, and the senate, no doubt, gave him a salary afterwards. Important movements were going on in the canton of Berne, but we cannot turn aside to see "this great sight." The language of that canton was German, and the history belongs to that of the German-Swiss reformers. The work there was not much affected by the influence of Farel the Frenchman.
The Romance of Preaching
1529–1530

The valleys now promised a cheering harvest for their Lord, and Farel turned his eyes to another quarter. He was supported by Berne. The cantons of Berne and Friburg held, in partnership, the parishes of Morat, Orbe, and Granson; they also had alliances with Lausanne, the capital of Vaud, and with the cantons of Neufchatel and Geneva. The Bernese senators saw that it was both their interest and their duty to have the gospel preached to as many of their allies and subjects as they could reach. They commissioned Farel to carry it among them, provided he could obtain the consent of the respective governments. This was granted him.

The visitor at Friburg may be shown the ancient trunk of a lime tree, which supports a legend. The story runs that, on the day of the battle at Morat in 1476, a young Friburger, who had fought bravely, ran home to tell the good news in the city, how Charles the Bold of Burgundy was defeated and disgraced by the loss of 15,000 men. The courier reached this spot, losing breath and blood, and falling down utterly exhausted. He could barely say, "Victory," and then he died. He carried a branch of lime in his hand, and this was planted on the spot where he expired. It grew into the old tree which now is propped up by pillars of stone. Farel was to wage a moral battle at Morat with Friburg against him, and, as bold as the once routed duke, he was to win a better victory than Charles lost. It was for him to bear the palm of victory, and to plant in this very town that little seed which should grow into the mightiest trees of righteousness.

One day he went to Morat and preached the truth at the foot of those towers which had been thrice attacked by some of the greatest armies of Europe. If we mistake not, the bishop of Lausanne had been at this place a few years before, and in his avarice, had attempted to impose a tax on the people at the celebration of the mass. This they had not forgotten. In a short time the new preacher gained the willing ears of a large class of people, and certain of the priests became obedient unto the faith. The reception of the reformed doctrines was to be decided, after a fair hearing, by the majority. The general vote was still in favor of the pope, and Farel quietly withdrew and went to Lausanne, where a considerable number of people had already abandoned popery.

The bishop and the clergy opposed the reformer and drove him from Lausanne. He soon reappeared bearing a letter from the lords of Berne to the authorities of the city. They read the bold words, "We send him to you to defend his own cause and ours. Allow him to preach the word of God, and beware that you touch not a hair of his head."
This was a shell thrown into the camp and might burst. The council was in great confusion. There was the bishop on the one side and Berne on the other. It was a very serious business. The Council of Twenty-four referred it to the Council of Sixty, but their honors excused themselves from touching it, and sent it up to the Council of Two Hundred (November 24, 1529). But they could do nothing. They gave it back to the Smaller Council. No one wished to have anything to do with it.

True, there was need of a reform. The citizens were complaining of the priests and canons and monks, saying "that their lives were one long train of excesses," but the faces of the reformers looked too austere. They seemed too strict and rigid for those who sought mere gentle decency rather than earnest devotion. The new preachers would carry the people over to the other extreme. Besides how dull would the city be if deprived of her bishop, his court, and the dignitaries about him! No more pilgrims to the image of Our Lady; no more great fairs for the sale of relics and indulgences; no more purchasers in the markets, nor boon companions in the taverns; no more suitors in the church courts, nor gay processions on her festivals; no more masses in the great cathedral which Pope Gregory X had consecrated two centuries and a half ago! It was painful to think of the change which the Reform would make. The city would become a desolate widow, beholding no more the noisy throng of her people, who were her wealth and her glory! "Better a disorder that enriches than a reform that impoverishes!" It would raise an uproar. It would turn everything upside down. It must not be permitted. Berne must not send her preachers there. Farel must depart, and he departed.

He returned to Morat. The word gained over the hearts of the people. Merry bands were upon the roads on festival days, who said to one another, laughingly, "Let us go to Morat and hear the preachers." Then slyly cautioning each other, they said, "Be careful not to fall into the hands of the heretics." They entered the church, smiling; they soon grew serious, glancing no more at each other, but riveting their eyes on the preacher, or dropping them to weep. Truth had her firm grasp upon them. They went home, some in deep silent thought, some in spirited talk about the doctrines they had heard, some to pray, and many to believe the glad tidings. The fire sparkled among the people, and spread in every direction. This was enough for Farel; he found a welcome for the truth. His eye was turned to another stronghold among the ridges of the Jura and on the borders of France.

At a short distance from Morat was one of the fortresses of popery, the earldom of Neufchatel, with its six or seven delightful valleys, and its chief town of the same name, built on a hill that slopes down to one of the most charming lakes of Switzerland. Its chateau had been the old home of princes, and now belonged to Joan, the widow of Louis of Orleans. She had inherited the earldom from her ancestors, and lost it when her husband aided the French
king (1512) in a war against the Swiss; but now (1529) she had just received it back as a present from the Swiss cantons.

The princess was now at Paris, in the suite of Francis I, "a woman of courtly style, vain, extravagant, always in debt, and thinking of Neufchatel only as a farm that should bring her in a large revenue," and devoted to the pope and popery. Twelve canons, with several priests and chaplains, made up a powerful clergy, having at their head the Provost Oliver, the brother of the princess. This main army was flanked by a strong array of auxiliaries. About half a league distant, on one side, was the abbey of Fontaine-Andre, regarded with great veneration. The monks, who founded it in the twelfth century, cleared the ground with their own hands, and became powerful lords in the world. On the other side was the abbey of the Benedictines of the Isle of St. John, whose abbot had lately been deposed by the Bernese, and, burning with vengeance, he had taken refuge in his priory at Corcelles, where a third entrenchment was thrown up.

To march right into such a stronghold, held by such an army, and having such reserve forces on each side, and demand its surrender, looked as foolish as the wildest dream of the old knight-errants of the Rhine. Even Farel would not thus attempt to take the fortress. The papists had done all they could to make it difficult of access. They dared not weaken their own cause by instructing the people; they hoped to strengthen it by amusing them. Pomp and shows took the place of sermons. "The church, built on a steep rock, was filled with altars and images of the saints; and religion, descending from this sanctuary, ran up and down the streets, and was travestied in dramas and mysteries, mingled with indulgences, miracles, and debaucheries." The higher clergy were rich, influential, and corrupt; the people untaught, rude, superstitious, and warlike; the princess was ready to crush any new movement, and the governor, George do Rive, was zealous for the ancient system of worship. It seemed that the place could be taken only by a wise strategy.

On a December day a frail boat left the southern bank of the lake, and carried a Frenchman of ordinary appearance, who steered for the Neufchatel shore. Quietly landing under the walls, he walked to one of the gates, near which had grown up the little village of Serrière. He inquired for Emer Beynon, the priest of the place, whom he had learned "had some liking for the gospel." Parson Emer received him with joy, for the visitor was no other than Farel, who had planned his campaign, and had entered upon it. But what could he do? Farel had been heard of and feared, and he was forbidden to preach in any church whatever in the earldom. The poor priest suggested that no injunction was laid upon the rocks nor the open air. Farel mounted on a stone, still pointed out, in the cemetery, and, turning his face away from the church, preached to the wondering people who came at his call. This rock was the corner-stone of protestantism in the canton of Neufchatel. The whole town became his church, and many came to hear him.
Very soon the rumors of this bold movement went in at the gates, and filled all the capital. A great commotion was seen in the streets. On one side the government, the priests, and the canons cried "Heresy!" On the other, "some inhabitants, to whom God had given a knowledge of the truth," flocked to the preacher's pulpit of stone. Already was there a small protestant force in Neufchatel. The soldiers, who had been with the Bernese army, had just returned, bringing back the liveliest enthusiasm for the reformed doctrines. They hailed with delight the man who had thus planted himself at the very gates of the city. These, and others, who longed for the glad tidings of salvation, could not repress their joyful hopes. "Come," said they to Farel, "and preach to us in the town."

They were almost disposed to carry the preacher in their arms. They assumed to be his bodyguard; they entered the gate of the castle; they passed the church and in front of the canon's houses; they descended to the narrow streets, inhabited by the citizens, and reached the market-cross. There Farel mounted a platform and addressed the crowd which gathered from all the neighborhood—"weavers, vinedressers, farmers, a worthy race, possessing more feeling than imagination." Grave was the preacher's countenance; weighty truths hung on his lips; his speech was energetic; his voice like the thunder; his eyes, his features, his gestures, all showed that he was a man of intrepidity. The citizens, accustomed to run about the streets after mountebanks, were touched by his powerful language.

The very first sermon won over many of the people. If they could have had their way, scarcely a finger would have been lifted against the messenger of glad tidings. If the people in the sixteenth century had been left to their own choice, the reformation would have gained all Europe. The same would be true now. But never and nowhere would the priests let them alone. At this first sermon of Farel, certain sly and crown-shaven monks glided among the hearers and began to excite them to do what they would never have thought of doing. Some of the ruder class were thus aroused to obey their masters and attempt violence. "Let us beat out his brains," cried some. "Throw him into the fountain," cried others. The fountain was near at hand (and is still shown), but the undaunted preacher was neither to be beaten nor drowned. None of these things moved him.

In vain had there been a decree that this "heretic, William Farel," should preach in no church in the Canton. He needed none. Every place was a church, every stone or bench or platform was a pulpit. He preached in the streets, at the gates, in the public squares, and the dwellings of the monks echoed his powerful voice. No matter if the snows and winds of December were forbidding the people to hear him; or if the cheerful fire-sides were tempting them to remain within doors, they would crowd about the man who cared for their souls. The canons made a vigorous defense, and the "shorn crowns" rushed out into the cold weather, shouting, crying down, rousing up, begging, threatening,
and making a furious ado, but it was all useless. No sooner did this Frenchman rise up in any place and in trumpet tones declare his message, than the monks found all their labor lost. All eyes were fixed on him; with open mouth and attentive ear the people hung upon his words, and forgot the winter’s cold, and the rage of the priests. And scarcely did he begin to speak when as he exclaims, “Oh! wonderful work of God! this multitude believed as if it had but one soul.”

Thus at the first assault the gospel carried the town. For several days the multitudes increased. They came from the neighboring districts; they invited him to their homes and villages; they scarcely knew how to leave him. It seemed to him that Jesus Christ was walking, almost visibly, through the streets, opening blinded eyes and softening hardened hearts. Wearied and yet stronger than ever, he bowed down in his humble lodging, and thanked God for his marvelous power, and then he sent a message to his colleagues at Aigle. “Unite with me in thanking the Father of mercies for so graciously enlightening those who were oppressed by the greatest tyranny. God is my witness, that I did not leave you, with whom I would gladly live and die, from a wish to escape bearing the cross. The glory of Christ and the love shown to his word by the disciples of this place, enable me to bear the greatest sufferings.”

But during all these days what were the strong forces of the pope, here gathered, attempting to do? Was the winter shutting them up in their comfortable quarters?

We must not follow the worst of them into their resorts of revelry, lust, and shame, nor ask for the fathers of those children which crept out of dens of infamy to be taken up and supported at the public expense. A plain blunt age made and preserved the record which now cannot bear the light. We have opened it far enough, unless we may turn from their baser crimes to their cruelties. In a house near the city were placed some poor lepers, who were barely able to keep soul and body together by the funds arising from the sale of certain offerings. The rich canons made their feasts more sumptuous by taking these proceeds, and thus they robbed these helpless sufferers of the bread of charity.

These canons had been at open war with the monks of the Abbey of Fontaine Andre. Encamped on their two hills, they claimed each other’s property, wrested away each other’s privileges, launched at one another the coarsest insults and criminal charges, and even came to blows. “Captor of silly women,” cried the canons to the abbot of Fontaine, and “he returned the compliment in the same coin.” These quarrels disturbed the whole country. Such was the boasted purity and unity in the Romish church, at that day, in the canton of Neufchatel.
On a sudden these quarrels ceased, the fighters shook hands. A strange event was taking place in the city. The word of God was there preached. The canons, from their lofty hill, could not look down on the crowds in the streets with contempt. They were startled, affrighted, and aroused to league together all their forces. The monks of Fontaine should be mustered into service. The report had reached the abbey. All there were astir. They would now be brothers to the canons. Hatred to the gospel united these parties. They joined their strength against the reformer.

"We must save religion," said they, who had so long been destroying it. They meant that they must save their livings, their tithes, their banquets, their scandals and their privileges. It would be folly for them to oppose a single doctrine preached in their streets. They must resort to insult. At Corcelles, these opposers went farther. A voice was one day heard proclaiming the gospel under the windows of the priory where the deposed abbot of Fontaine had taken refuge. The monks looked down upon a listening crowd; Farel was there. What an interruption of their peace! a public disturbance indeed! They rushed forth, not to call a magistrate in the legal way, but to fall upon the heretic. Among them was the prior Rodolph, increasing the tempest, and creating a real public disturbance. One writer affirms that he had a dagger in his hand. Farel escaped with difficulty.

This was not enough. The civil power must be brought against the reform. Popery has always taken this course. The state must assist her in persecuting the teachers of truth, in keeping back the Bible from the people, and in maintaining her power in the land. The canons, the abbot, and the prior, now the best of brothers, appealed to the governor, George de Rive. He was prompt in marshalling all the forces of church and state to put down the new movement. On every side Farel saw himself surrounded. He was called "to endure sufferings, greater than tongue can describe." Before long he was compelled to yield for a time. He again crossed the lake of Neufchatel; but, on looking back, he could see the gospel fires, kindled at so many points, burning in a flame of glory.

He went to Morat. The people urged him to stay and pass the Christmas with them, but the senate of Berne wished him to visit Aigle, and thither he pressed. He was not now the strange Master Ursinus. He was the good missionary, the first shepherd the people ever had, the lovely man who had led them to the bishop of their souls. It was a Christmas when Christ was honored in that village as never before. But soon a messenger came to bid him away.

Great events were passing at Morat. On the seventh of January, 1530, a second vote was taken there, and the majority were in favor of the reform. But the Romish minority, long urging that the majority should rule, were disposed to revolt. They began a course of insult and violence. One man was needed, and
the voters for the gospel cried for Farel. Berne heard the voice and sent for him.

A few days after this, Farel and the Bernese messenger were scaling the magnificent mountains above Vevay, and catching indescribable views of Lake Leman, with its waters of marvelous blue. They entered upon the estates of John, the knight of Gruyere, who was in the habit of saying, "We must burn this French Luther." The darkness came on them at St. Martin, where they took lodgings. The curate and two priests prepared to insult them in the morning. They said the messenger's badge was an infernal mark, and pointing to Farel, cried, "Heretic! devil!" They knew he was not the latter, or they would have been silent enough. The curate was as cautious as Shimei, and the knight stayed close in his castle. Farel passed on, leaving the revilers to take comfort from their impudence.

On reaching Morat, Farel brought to nothing the schemes of the popish minority, and gave strength to the growing cause. Not spending time and breath to defend himself, he hastened to preach in the adjoining districts. He filled all Mittellach with his doctrine. He crossed the little lake of Morat, and entered into the villages of the valley, lying between it and Lake Neufchatel. There, on the beautiful hills, he planted that heavenly vineyard, better than the earthly ones that covered them. The effort was fully successful. Friburg objected to the movement. Berne replied, "Let our ministers preach the gospel, and we will let your priests play their tricks. We desire to force no man. The majority should rule." Farel was raising up the majorities. The people began to find true liberty in that religion which is its source, its regulator and its defense. It was about this time that he wrote his powerful letter "To all lords, people, and pastors."

The reformer took all the margin that was on his commission. The Bernese senate reminded him that his special field was now Morat, and that he should remain where his instructions were so eagerly received, unless sent for by others who were willing to hear him. But he thought it his duty to sow, and God would take care of the harvest. He went into the northern part of the canton of Berne, awakening the people of the valleys and the villages.

One day in April, he entered the church at Tavannes, just as the priest was saying mass. Farel went into the pulpit. The astonished priest stopped. The minister preached until the people were so moved that it seemed as if an angel had come down from heaven. "The poor priest, who was chanting the mass, could not finish it." He fled from the altar. The people were so roused that they demolished the images on the spot, and pulled down the altars. They were putting down popery in a shorter time than the priest had spent in its most pretentious rite. The other ministers came to the work. The whole valley was soon disposed to adopt the reformation, in spite of the protests from the bishop of Basle. The parish afterwards was favored with a settled pastor.
On a cold day in 1529, some Bernese soldiers were trying to pass away their time, while they were defending the city of Geneva from the army of Savoy. With them were some young men from Neufchatel, and the talk often ran upon what a good work Haller and his friends were doing. The young Bernese were shivering and it was proposed to have a fire. Where could dry wood be got? Some of them knew, for every Romish church had its idols. They went to the Dominican church, and brought away armloads of the sacred trash, saying, "Idols of wood are of no use but to make a fire with in winter." The young men of Neufchatel returned home wiser than they left it, and it was their delight to recount in their jovial meetings the exploits of the campaign, and the way they kept warm at Geneva.

These young men were to cause an uproar in Neufchatel. They were waiting for Farel to return. He reappeared about the middle of the year 1530. Being master of the lower part of the city, he raised his eyes to the lofty cathedral and castle. The best plan, said he, is "to bring these proud priests down to us." His young friends hit upon a scheme that had cost more than one man his liberty. They went here and there through streets, one early morning, and posted up large placards bearing these words, "All those who say mass are robbers, murderers and seducers of the people." There was no lack of readers, talkers, clamorers and agitators. The noise grew louder. The town began to shake. The canons summoned the people, called together the clerks, and armed a large troop with clubs and swords. Then marching at their head, they descended into the city, tore down the placards, cited Farel before the court, as a slanderer, and demanded ten thousand crowns damages.

The two parties appeared in court, and this was all that Farel desired. "I confess the fact of the placards," said he, "but I am justified in what I have done. Where can be found more horrible murderers than these misleaders, who sell paradise, and thus nullify the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. I will prove my assertion by the gospel." He began to open his Bible.

"The common law of Neufchatel," the canons cried out, flashing with rage, "and not the gospel is in question here. Where are the witnesses?"

"Here are witnesses enough in this Holy Word." Farel was not to be cried down. He persisted in the testimony of the Scriptures against his accusers, and proved that the canons were really guilty of the charges on the placards. To make good such a proposition was to ruin popery. The court were perplexed; they had never heard a similar case. They resolved to lay it before the council of Besançon. Thence it went up to the emperor and to a general council. Perhaps it lost itself on the way to Rome. The bad cause gained nothing by making a disturbance. Farel took advantage of the lull in the storm.

He preached again in private houses and on public squares. These were still his temple. When his opposers wished to drive him back, he made a step in
advance. One day when the people were around him, they asked, "Why should
not the word of God be proclaimed in a church?" They hurried him along with
them, opened the doors of the Hospital chapel, set him in the pulpit, and a
large audience stood silent before him.

"As Christ was born in a manger at Bethlehem," said the preacher, in his first
sermon in a church of the city, "so this hospital, this abode of the sick and the
poor, is today become his birthplace in the town of Neufchatel." Then feeling
ill at ease amid the painted and carved figures that decorated the chapel, he
laid his hands on these idols and cast them down, breaking in pieces by the
fall.

The civil power was now invoked by the papists. They had a right to ask its
protection, but asking it they destroyed what they wished to save. The
governor prayed the Bernese senate to remove Farel and his companions. But
the friends of the reformer were not thus to be outdone. They also sent
depuities to Berne, who asked, "Did not our young men bear arms to assist you
in your reformation? Will you abandon us in ours?" The Bernese hesitated in
order to decide justly between the two parties.

A dying man was to turn the scale. One of the most illustrious citizens of the
Bernese republic was expiring amid the tears of his sons and his neighbors. All
Berne was full of mourning for him, and in fear of the plague of which he was a
victim. He was told of the two appeals from Neufchatel, and rallying his waning
strength, he said, "Go and beg the senate, in my name, to ask for a general
assembly of the people of Neufchatel for Sunday next. Let the vote be taken."
The message of the dying noble decided the Senate. Berne sent deputies to
Neufchatel, who arrived August 7, 1530. Farel thought that during the debates
he had time for a new conquest, and he went into Valangin, where we will
trace his steps in the next chapter.

The governor did all he could to support the priests and put down the people,
but soon found himself at his wit's end. He sent to the Princess Joan, "begging
her to cross the mountains to appease her people, who were in terrible trouble
because of the Lutheran religion." (It was not Lutheran, however.) The princess
was too much absorbed with the gayeties of the Parisian court to care for the
religion of the canton.

The lines were more and more clearly drawn between the canons and the
citizens. The townspeople asked the priests to give up the mass, but they
refused. Then the canons were urged, by a written petition, to discuss the
question with Farel. But there was the same refusal. "But, for goodness’ sake,
speak either for or against!" It was all of no use. They feared debate.

Sunday, October 23, was a day long to be remembered. Farel had returned,
and he was preaching in the hospital. He knew that the magistrates of the city
were inclined to act with the people against the priests, and that they had talked of giving up the cathedral to the reformers. "Will you not," said he in his sermon, "honor the gospel as much as the other party does the mass? If this superstitious act is performed in the high church, shall not the gospel be preached there also?" The hearers rose at the hint. "To the church!" they cried, "to the church!" They took Farel with them, and left the hospital. They climbed the steep street of the castle. They forced their way through the array of canons, and priests, and their followers, who did all they could to resist them. Nothing could check them. Insults and shouts were in vain; they pressed onward. They opened the gates of the "Church of Our Lady," devoted to Romanism for nearly four hundred years. They entered to engage in a new struggle. The canons were there to dispute the way into the pulpit. But it was useless. The crowd was not a band of rioters; they carried a moral force with them. The gospel had a right in the cathedral, and the magistrates had so declared. They had said "that it appeared to them a very good matter to take down the altars and have preaching there." It should be done. The citizens moved on against the canons, forming a close battalion, and, in the center, placing the reformer. At length Farel stood in the pulpit. The Reformation was victorious.

No shouts arose. All was calm and solemn in the church and at its gates. There was no wish to insult the papal party, and even the adversaries were silent. Farel delivered "one of the most effective sermons he had hitherto preached," and the people listened as for eternity. They were deeply moved; they were broken in heart; the most obstinate seemed to be converted; and from every part of the old church were heard cries—"We will follow the evangelical religion, both we and our children, and in it we will live and die."

The zeal of the multitude was beyond control. They wished to imitate the pious King Josiah, and deal one final blow to a false religion. They asked, "If we take away these idols from before our eyes, will it not aid us in taking them from our hearts? Once these idols be broken, how many souls, now hesitating, will decide for the truth! We must save them as by fire." The latter motive decided them, and then began a scene that filled the Romanists with horror, for, according to them, it must bring down upon the city the terrible judgments of God.

In his castle, adjoining the cathedral, was the governor, de Rive, and, with anxiety, he looked upon the people while they were furnishing him with abundant materials for a letter to the Princess Joan. "These daring fellows," wrote he, "seize mattocks, hatchets, and hammers, and thus march against the images of the saints." They march against the statues of certain ones who were not saints—those of the counts themselves—which the people take for idols and utterly demolish. They lay hold of the paintings, tear out the eyes in the pictures of the saints, and cut off their noses. The crucifix also is thrown down, for it has taken homage from our crucified Lord. One image yet remains, the
most venerated of all; it is "Our Lady of Mercy," presented by Mary of Savoy,
but it is not spared. "They have bored out the eyes of Our Lady of Mercy,"
writes the governor, "which the departed lady, your mother, had caused to be
made." The fragments of the broken images are carried out and thrown from
the top of the rock into the roaring torrent below.

All this was rude, and none can fully justify it, although it was not mere rioting
and excess. The people felt that the temple must be cleansed, popery must be
put down, the gospel must have its proper place, and God must be no longer
robbed of his glory by graven images. They had now gone far enough, but, in
the excitement they went still farther. They seized the patens, from which
they emptied the "holy wafers," and then cast them into the torrent. They
wished to show that they did not any longer believe that the wafers were the
real body of the Lord, and they distributed them one to another and ate them
as merely common food. At this sight the canons and chaplains could no longer
remain quiet. A cry of horror was heard. They rushed forth, leading their
infuriated party, and the dreaded struggle began in a battle of blows.

At the windows of the castle, all this time were certain dignified but wrathful
and helpless spectators, the provost Oliver, and two canons, the three being
members of the privy council, and other high dignitaries. They had been silent;
they dared not be otherwise. But now they showed themselves to restore peace
by ordering all "the supporters of the evangelical doctrine" to appear before
the governor. This was like "trying to chain the whirlwind." For why should the
reformed party stop? There was the authority of the magistrates on their side.
They haughtily replied, "Tell the governor that in the concerns of God and of
our souls he has no command over us."

The governor found that he was simply George de Rive, with no authority that
weighed a feather with the people. He must yield, and save some remnant of
the papal idolatry. Some images were not broken, and he had them hid away in
secret chambers. The citizens allowed him to do this, saying to him, "Save your
gods; preserve them under strong bars, lest perchance a robber should deprive
you of the objects of your adoration."

The tumult gradually ceased, and quiet was restored. As but a comparatively
small part of the citizens were actively engaged in these proceedings, the
governor still believed that the majority were in favor of the Romish faith. He
was anxious to have the matter tested by a vote of the parishioners. But the
reformed party insisted that this step should not be taken in the absence of the
Bernese deputies. They at length came, and heard both sides of the case. They
proposed that the vote should be taken, when the papal party who "always
took the other side," objected. Some of them rose in the council, and touching
the hilt of their swords, spoke of dying "martyrs for the holy Faith." The young
soldiers, who had been in the Genevese war, were quite as ready for that style
of arbitration as the Romanists. A little more and there would have been a
battle. At last it was agreed that the votes should be taken. The cathedral was opened, and there amid the ruins of pictures and altars, the majority decided for the Reformation, and gave the last blow to popery in that city.

The mass was expelled from the churches, although it was mournfully chanted every day in the castle. It became a storehouse for various spoils, removed from the cathedral when it was thoroughly cleansed, such as relics, ornaments of the altars, much machinery of Romish worship, and even the organ. Several of the canons embraced the Reformation. Others turned their eyes to some quiet corner where they might hide the disgraces of their defeat. When the November winds were raging among the mountains, a troupe of canons, priests, monks and singing-boys painfully climbed through the gorges of the Jura and took refuge in the Val de Travers, wondering if the voice of Farel should ever startle them again.

A little "miracle," such as popery often furnishes to the ignorant, occurred about this time. Two townsmen named Fauche and Sauge were going out to their vineyards. They passed by a little chapel in which the latter had set up a wooden image of St. John. The former said, "There is an image, and I shall kindle my fire with it tomorrow." So as Fauche returned he took it away and laid it down in front of his house. The next morning he put it into the fire. An awful explosion followed; the humble family were in dismay; it was a miracle caused by the anger of the saint at being burned; the priests were ready to vouch for it. The poor man made haste to return to the mass. His neighbor came to explain it, but it was in vain that Sauge protested on oath that it was only a joke. He had come at night, bored into the image (and the saint complained of no pain!), filled it with gunpowder, and closed the wound. It was a very earthly thing, but Fauche would not believe one word of such reasoning. He must flee the vengeance of the saints. He took his family and settled in France. From a faith in such tricks the reformers were delivering the people by leading them back to the real miracles of the Savior whose words, works, and death were their only hope.

What a renovating change since the day when the people carried Farel into the cathedral! If he had been the chief mover in the scenes of October third, the governor would surely have given him a full notice in his minute letter to the princess. Yet he did not name him as taking any part in the fearful movement. Nor did Farel appear in all the business of the votes. One might have said that he was not at Neufchatel. The governor knew not of him in his report. There was something greater than Farel, the word of God. It was at work, and to its Author be the praise for the wondrous change.

Farel was held in grateful remembrance by the council and the citizens, as the chief agent in introducing the gospel. They would gladly have retained him, but he was under engagements to the Bernese authorities. He made a second visit to the Val de Ruz.
For many years an inscription was visible on one of the pillars of the cathedral. It brought to mind the memorial day, as one read:

On October 23, 1530, Idolatry Was Overthrown And Removed From This Church By The Citizens.

CHAPTER XII

My Lords of Berne
1530–1531

There is an old castle, built on a rock, that overlooks the town of Valangin, about a league over the mountain from Neufchatel. Here lived the counts who exercised lordship over the Val de Ruz and four other valleys, which lay among the seven mountains of the Jura chain.

In this castle dwelt Wiliamette de Vergy, the widow of Count Claudius, and the dowager of Valangin. She was full of reverence for the pope, and of respect for the memory of her husband, at whose burial a hundred priests had chanted high mass. Then, too, many penitent young women were married, large alms were distributed, the curate of Locle was sent to Jerusalem, as a reward for his services, and the widow herself afterward made a pilgrimage for the repose of the soul of her departed lord. That she would be a bitter foe to the reformation might be well understood. It was the one thing she hated. Her zeal for popery prompted her to much fasting and solitude. Yet her long silences and gloomy devotions were sometimes followed by merry dances in her halls, when the wife of John, the knight of Gruyere, paid her a visit, and reported his threats against Farel with exquisite satisfaction. They never dreamed that this "French Luther" had his eye upon the Val de Ruz. Williamette and her priests, and her chamberlain, Bellegarde, who even excelled her in hating the reformation, had reason to tremble.

People from the Val de Ruz had come daily to Neufchatel, where they heard the doctrines of the reformers, and they carried back to their parishes certain good news, which were certain to spread far and wide. Still, they were not likely to neglect the great Romish festival on the fifteenth of August—that of "Our Lady of the Assumption." It was a day when the villages would swarm with people.

This was the very day that Farel selected to make a descent upon the valleys. He left Neufchatel after the affair of the placards, that the people might settle their own affairs with the Bernese deputies. With him went a young Dauphinese, a relative (as it appears), an ardent Christian, and a man of strong, decided character—Anthony Boyve. This family has since given several
pastors to the church at Neufchatel. The two missionaries climbed the mountains through the pine forest, and then descended into the valley. They were not disposed to linger about the castle, and, shunning Valangin, as it seems, they halted at the village of Boudevilliers, and proposed to preach there.

They met some persons who had heard the "great preaching" at the capital of the canton, and all of them went into the church. On all sides the people were thronging to it, to hear the praises of "Our Lady" celebrated. The priest was preparing to chant the mass, but Farel entered the pulpit and began his form of service. While the reformer was preaching Jesus Christ and his promises, the priest and his choir were chanting the missal. It was Christianity and Romanism in open competition and contrast. The awful moment came when the wafer was to be changed into the very body of the Lord; the sacred words fell from the priest's lips over the elements. The people felt the power of their old habits and their superstition, and they deserted the preacher and gathered toward the altar. The crowd was kneeling. Rome seemed triumphant.

Suddenly, a young man, who felt indignant at seeing the mass preferred to a sermon, rushed forth, through the choir and up to the altar, and snatched the host from the hands of the priest, and cried aloud, as he turned to the people, "This is not the God whom you should worship. He is above, in heaven, in the majesty of his Father, and not, as you believe, in the hands of a priest." This man was Anthony Boyve.

At first this daring act produced the desired effect. The mass and the chanting ceased; the crowd was silent and motionless in astonishment. Farel, who was still in the pulpit, took advantage of the calm, and preached Him "whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things." The people listened. But the priests and their party acted as if there was a sweeping fire in the town. They rushed into the towers and rang the alarm bell with all their might. These means drew a crowd of newcomers, not so devotional as the rest. Farel and Boyve would have been slain on the spot had they not retired. "God delivered them."

In the evening they set out for home by a narrow path that wound beneath the castle. They were stealing cautiously along, when suddenly, in a narrow pass, a shower of stones fell upon them, and about a score of priests, men, and women assailed them with clubs. The quaint old chronicler states "that the priests had not the gout either in their feet or arms; the ministers were so beaten that they nearly lost their lives." They were dragged, half dead, nearer to the castle, to afford some satisfaction to the countess. She came down the terrace and cried, "Drown them! drown them! throw them into the Seyon—these Lutheran dogs, who have despised the host." The priests were already dragging them towards the bridge. Never was Farel nearer death.
Just then, from behind the last rock that hides Valangin, "there appeared

certain good persons of the Val de Ruz, coming from Neufchatel." They asked

of the priests, probably intending to save Farel, "What are you doing?"

"Treating these heretics as they deserve. Putting them into the river."

"Put them, rather, in a place of safety, that they may answer for their

proceedings. Would you deprive yourselves of the only means of finding out

those who are poisoned by heresy? Make them confess who their friends are."

The priests caught the idea, and took the bruised missionaries into the chapel

of the castle. Passing by an image of the virgin they said to them, "Kneel down

before Our Lady."

"Ye ought to worship the only true God, and not a dumb lifeless image," said

Farel.

But they beat the blood out of him, and for six years the stains were visible on

the walls. They led them to the prison, and "let them down almost lifeless into

the dungeon of the castle of Valangin." The prisoners, like Paul and Silas in the

jail at Philippi, could "sing praises unto God." Bellegarde had now an

opportunity to display his zeal, and he was preparing for them a cruel end. But

some townsfolk of Neufchatel came and demanded them. The countess dared

not refuse, for Berne might show a strong hand. The senate requested her to

make an inquiry and detect the outlaws; she pretended to do so "to put a good

face on the matter." The canons of Valangin were ever after suspected of

laying the plot in the house of the countess, where they were daily guests at

her table. One account has it that, "Nevertheless the priest who beat Farel

most, never failed to eat daily at the lady’s table by way of recompense." This

was of little moment; the great thing was that the truth had been sown in the

Val de Ruz, and we shall soon see the reapers coming for the harvest.

This severe beating accounts for the gap in the previous chapter between

August and October, when we had nothing to record pertaining to Farel. He

was recovering from his wounds. It may have been that during this interval his

letter, to a young man about to enter the ministry, was penned. "Look for

labor, not for leisure. Truly a wide field lies open, but only for those who wish

to feed the flock rather than to live upon it. Much reproach is to be endured.

You must expect to meet with ingratitude in return for kindness, and evil for

good."

Farel had now passed through the great events of October 23; he had preached

in Neufchatel from a pulpit stripped of every ornament; he had visited the

surrounding villages, "working at a reformation night and day." He had seen his

friend Emer Beynon, who first set him up on the stone to preach in Serrière,

take a decided course. This good man said one day to his parishioners, from his
pulpit, "If I have been a good priest, I desire now to be, by God’s grace, a better pastor." These words should go everywhere. Farel recommended to him a career of labors, fatigues, and struggles in behalf of the gospel. Emer saw his parish imitate Neufchatel in giving a majority for the Reform.

There was much secret work going on among the Romanists at Neufchatel. Some persons were more zealous for popery after its downfall than they had been in the day of its power. The clergy glided into houses and said mass to a few friends darkly gathered around a temporary altar. The priest came noiselessly to baptize a child, breathed on it, made the sign of the cross on its forehead, and sprinkled it with water of Romish consecration. They hoped to build up in secret what had been overthrown openly. At length they agreed upon a counter-revolution.

A plot was laid for the vespers of Christmas. While the Christian songs were rising to heaven, the conspirators were to rush into the church, expel the heretics, overthrow the Protestant pulpit and tables, restore the images, and celebrate the mass in triumph. But the plot came to light, as such schemes of darkness generally draw into them persons who will betray themselves. Berne was notified of the plan. She sent her deputies, who arrived on the very eve of the festival. "You must see to this," said they to the governor. "If the reformed are attacked, we, their co-burghers, will protect them with all our power." The conspirators laid down their concealed weapons, and the Christian hymns were not disturbed. Thus ended the Neufchatel vespers.

Noble Berne! sending forth her missionaries, and not allowing a hair of their heads to be touched, if they could help it, and bringing the priests of many a village and city to the terms of the people. The bear on her shield was a terror to the Romanists. But she appeared to the friends of the gospel as a protecting shepherdess and a nurturing mother.

In the middle of winter Farel crossed the mountain and entered the church of Valangin, went into the pulpit, and began to preach just when the Countess Williamette was coming to hear the mass. She ordered his mouth to be shut, but through his lips passed a torrent of truth, carrying away the prejudices of his hearers. The aged dowager retired in haste, saying, "I do not think this is according to the old gospels; if there are any new ones that encourage it, I am quite amazed." What the priests did, this time, we do not know, but the people of Valangin were won to the truth. The affrighted lieutenant of the place ran to Berne and made complaint to the senate, but he gained nothing. Their excellencies said coolly, "Why should you disturb the water of the river? Let it flow freely on."

On the slopes of the Jura mountains Farel wandered, preaching in the hamlets and gaining new triumphs. Curates and abbots resisted him with violence. At one place he was dragged out of the pulpit and driven away by insults and
blows; at another he was wounded by a stone or a gunshot. At St. Blaise the people, hissed on by the priests, fell upon him, and he escaped from their hands "severely beaten, spitting blood, and scarcely to be recognized." He was put into a boat by some of his friends and conveyed to Morat, where his wounds detained him, more wearied and restless than if he had been engaged in his apostolic labors.

The report of this violence at St. Blaise reached the reformed people in Neufchatel. They felt their blood boil. They reasoned thus—if the priests and their allies bruise the body of Christ's servant (which is truly the temple of God), why should we spare their dead idols? They rushed to St. Blaise, entered the church, threw down the images, and broke up a vast amount of popish machinery. They went to the Abbey of Fontaine Andre, and greatly alarmed that blissful nest of quarrelsome monks by destroying their altars and images. Even granting that these were acts of an unchristian revenge, still it should be noted that these image breakers did not seek to return the wounds of Farel upon living men, but upon dead idols. Not against the priests but against popery, were their blows directed. There was no disposition to take vengeance upon a man, woman, or child, nor upon canon, monk, abbot or priest. Thus the Romanists struck at the preachers of the gospel; they persecuted even unto death. Protestants aimed at great errors and pitied the people, and proved that they were more nearly like God, who hates the sin, but spares the sinner.

One more glance at Valangin. It has generally been stated that Farel was there a third time during this period. But an old chronicler says it was "the minister of Neufchatel," and this title was never given to Farel. The minister in those days was Anthony Marcourt, a zealous Frenchman. On a great holiday he went to Valangin, and soon had a crowd about him in the streets, listening to his words. The canons were watching from their windows, and the countess and her chamberlain from their towers. They sought how to divert the people from the preacher. They dared not use brute force because of Berne. They proposed to insult the minister, and raise a tremendous laugh in the assembly. A canon and Madame’s coachman took two horses from the stables and performed a piece of vile trickery which decency will not allow us to describe. But instead of a laugh there was the most intense disgust and indignation. The schemers knew not with whom they were dealing. They overshot the mark. The infamous spectacle was scarcely over, when the multitude rushed into the church. They broke the ancient windows and the shields of the lords; they scattered the relics, tore the books, threw down the images, and turned over the altars. Then, sweeping forth like a whirlwind, they threatened the canons’ houses. The dwellings were destroyed, but the canons and their pack fled wildly into the woods, and found sorrow enough for trying to raise a laugh.

Williamette de Vergy and Bellegarde, trembling behind their battlements, repented too late of their monstrous expedient. They saw the last offensive house sacked; they knew not what would come next. But how awful! The
outraged people turn toward the castle, they ascend the hill, they draw near. Is the castle to be rifled or even demolished? Not at all, proud lady! “We come to demand justice for the outrage committed against religion and its minister,” respectfully say the delegated burghers standing at the gate. They are permitted to enter, and the affrighted countess hears their case, and orders the poor wretches, who had done her bidding, to be severely punished. Still she takes the first chance to send a messenger to Berne declaring that “great insults had been offered her”! Berne hears only one side of the case, orders the reformed party to pay the damages, but insists that they shall have the free exercise of their religion. The countess must submit. James Veluzat from France became the first reformed pastor of Valangin. In 1531 the entire principality of Neufchatel came under the power of Francis, son of the princess Joan. He proclaimed liberty of conscience and faith in the whole canton. The sermon on the rock at Serrière had been one means of securing these great results.

And now comes another reaper into the harvest. A young Dauphinese, named Christopher Libertet Fabri, had been studying medicine at Montpelier, where he first learned the disease of his own soul and found its remedy. He still intended to go to Paris and complete his studies. Being at Lyons, he met certain friends of the truth who told him of the wonderful events in Neufchatel and the neighboring villages. He was so interested in these reports that he changed his mind and his route; and now we find him at Morat, inquiring for the house where Farel is lodging.

Sore from the beating at St. Blaise, “shivering with cold, spitting blood,” and scarcely able to speak, Farel is lying at Morat. Tenderly has he been welcomed there, and carefully is he watched by the friends who tread softly about his room. A young man wishes to see him. As he is a Dauphinese, he may come. Modestly approaching the bed, he introduces himself as Christopher Fabri, and says, “I have forsaken everything—family, prospects and country—to fight at your side, master William. Here I am. Do with me as seems good to you.”

“I see that we have the same faith and the same Savior,” replies Farel, after being touched with the young man’s lively affection and intense devotion. He looks upon Fabri as “a son whom God has sent him,” and day after day talks with him. On his bed he is training a student for the ministry. He would like to keep him always at his side, but he must bid his “tenderest son” preach the more beloved Savior.

“Go, now, my dear son in the faith,” says Farel one day, “and preach the gospel at Neufchatel.” Has Farel ordained him in that sick room, as he himself had been at Basle?
“O my master,” answers Fabri in tears, “my sorrow is greater today than when I left father and mother, so delightful have been my conversations with you.” He learns his duty, obeys, goes to Neufchatel and urges forward the good work.

On the Roman highway, that led from Italy to Gaul, was the ancient city of Urba, built, it was said, in the same century with Rome. The story runs that the kings of the first French race once rested near this old city, and, charmed with the valley that sloped from the foot of the Jura to Lake Neufchatel, they exclaimed, “It is enough; we will stop here.” In place of Urba grew up the town of Orbe, which was now to talk of mightier personages than the old French kings, of whose wise choice they boasted, or “good Queen Bertha,” who dwelt at this old town when this part of Switzerland belonged to Little Burgundy. The country is full of legends about her spinning on horseback with a distaff fastened to a saddle, which is still shown at Payerne. She was a friend to all the poor, and “the nursing mother of the nation, which she guided and fed.” She had a zeal for building convents and castles, and some of the “towers of Bertha” still remain. She was anxious to impart to her people a love of industry by setting them a good example. One day she was spinning on her palfrey as she rode through some pastures near Orbe, when she saw a young girl spinning, like herself, while watching her flock of sheep. She rode up and gave her a beautiful present, along with much praise. The next day several noble, but idle ladies came before her with their distaffs, in hopes of a reward. But she knew their vain pretensions, and told them “The peasant girl came first, and, like Jacob, carried my blessing, leaving nothing for Esau.” People talk of “the good days when Queen Bertha spun, and when she told the peasants good stories from the Bible.”

In that town was a burgess, “cloth-dresser and tailor,” who, one day in 1511, wrote down the name of another son—Peter Viret. The father went on fulling the cloths and associating with the best-informed burgesses, and even with some of the nobles. Peter drew up, taking no delight in his father’s pursuits, nor aspiring after his official dignities. He wished for God, and took the path which the priests pointed out as the way to heaven. If alone or with his brothers, Anthony and John, he walked along the banks of the Orbe, or looked with emotion on the Jura, and caught glimpses of the Alps; then he lifted his eyes toward the Most High for help. He was ignorant, and must remain so as long as the blind were leading the blind. He resolved to be a priest. His father did not oppose, for it was counted an honor among the townspeople to have a priest among their children. He gained all that the schools of Orbe could offer him, and, when about twelve, he was sent to the University of Paris. It was the same year (1523), that John Calvin entered one of the same colleges. Did these two boys, who were yet to be most intimate at Geneva, meet there and begin their genial friendship? We know not. But they were alike in their love of study and their Romish style of piety. Years afterward Viret wrote of his early devotion to the church of Rome. “I cannot deny that I went pretty deep into that Babylon.”
It seems that on one of the last cautious visits which Farel made at Paris, he met the young Viret, whose modesty charmed him into an acquaintance. The young Swiss was thus led to search for the truth, and was pointed to the true path to heaven. "God took me out of error," said he, and then a decisive question was forced upon him. The time came for the tonsure, when the razor must do its part in making him a priest. He must make up his mind. He was not long about it. He refused, and was forthwith "set down as belonging to the Lutheran religion." He knew what to expect, for Beda was ferreting in all cases for heretics, and hastily quitting Paris he returned to his father’s house.

The priests of Orbe set their eyes upon him. They saw that he was lonely and depressed, and they suspected that he was in a struggle between Rome and Christ. They grew uneasy about him, and told him about the fathers of the church. His foot slipped; his head was bewildered; he almost fell back again, "deep into that Babylon." But he caught the divine Word, clung to it, and, renouncing what mere men declared, he said, "I will believe only Jesus Christ, my Savior." He felt that he was a prisoner just released from "the citadel of idolatry."

There were two prisoners for whom he felt the tenderest affection. "Since the Lord has brought me out," said he, "I cannot forget those who are still within." His father and mother were never out of his thoughts. Between business and popery they had no thought of Christ. He prayed for them and read to them a few chapters of the gospel. They were delighted with his humble, earnest life, and his faith took hold of their hearts. He was, at length, able to write, in later years, "I have much reason to give thanks to God, because it hath pleased him to make use of me to bring my father and mother to the knowledge of the Son of God. ... If he had made my ministry of no other use, I should have good cause to bless him for this." He is soon to hear a most powerful voice, to see all Orbe in motion, and to be in the pulpit, astonished at himself.

The story of the castle stairs was worthy of many a late hour by the firesides of Orbe. In 1475, the Swiss took the town by storm, but the castle was to be disputed inch by inch. The invaders broke in the doors, the garrison yielded step after step, fighting, in vain bravery, on every stair, and at every chamber door. Backward and upward the defenders were driven until they took refuge in the tower. Fire completed the awful work of death. It was reserved for the missionary champion to give the townsmen other stories for their long winter evenings, and by degrees to make his advance into this stronghold of popery, kindling the fire that would refine and purify their hearts.

A friar came to the town, about the time of Lent in 1531, and noisily offered for sale the pardons of the pope. One morning he was shouting the value of his wares, with his eye on the watch, for some visitor might put to him unpleasant questions. He soon noticed a little man with a face paled by illness, and with an eye that could look through such quackery, coming near to the stall. None
gave way, for none knew him. Pressing near, he raised his loud voice and asked, "Have you indulgences for a person who has killed his father and his mother?" The monk was confounded; the stranger boldly stepped on the curb of the public fountain, and began to preach of the water of life as earnestly as if he were in the pulpit. The astonished people left the friar and gathered around the new orator, who was telling them how to obtain the free pardon of God, and urging them to drink freely of the fountain of life. It began to be whispered who the preacher was—William Farel, who had risen from his couch at Morat, and hearing the friar’s drum, as Luther says, had come to Orbe as soon as he could venture to walk. By this first sermon, a tradesman named Christopher Hollard, and one Mark Romain, a schoolmaster, were persuaded to accept the gospel.

There was commotion enough in the town to put Farel in his element, but wisdom dictated his departure and he left. The friar, whose name was Michael Juliani, knew not what to do, until the Sisters of St. Clair entreated him, as their dear confessor, to preach against heresy. He was delighted. He boasted that he would lead the heretics back to the faith. "Not so easy a job as you think," said certain nobles, who knew the power of Berne. The man who had authority there over magistrates was the bailiff, the lord of Diesbach, a stout Bernese in his views. What would he say?

The friar did not care; he was bent upon preaching against the Reform, and he had so published. The bells rang, a crowd filled the church, and even some of the suspected ones came. Such an unusual audience turned the friar’s head. He thought he should have such a victory as his patron Michael the archangel had over Satan. He preached up Rome, and preached clown the Reformation, using the most verbose abuse and violence. Five or six friends of the gospel were there writing it all down upon little papers which they held on their knee. The sermon ended and the bailiff began. He and certain other nobles begged the friar to cease from his excessive abuse, and to preach simply the doctrines of the church. But he was flattered with the idea that certain devout folks were exceedingly pleased. In their eyes Father Michael’s tirades were genuine eloquence.

He was one day preaching upon "the poor in spirit," claiming that ignorance was the blessed sign of the children of God. "Sirs," said he, "the poor in spirit here referred to are the priests and friars. They have not much learning I confess, but they have what is better. They are mediators between man God; they are worshippers of the Virgin Mary, who is the treasure house of all graces. ... But who are these who say they are justified by faith? Who are they who throw down the crosses on our roads and in our chapels? Enemies of Christ. Who are they who renounce their vows in order to marry? In Infamous, abominable apostates before men and before God." This last fling would not apply to Farel, for he was in single life.
Suddenly a loud noise was heard in the church, and a man was standing up in full view repeating with a loud clear voice the words, "Thou liest." The declaimer stopped, and all looked at a middle-aged man who had a brother that had believed the truth, left the priesthood, married, and became a reformer at Friburg. This man was the same Christopher Hollard who had heard Farel at the public fountain, and had renounced popery. Though his protest was not the most refined, yet it came from an honest heart, which was roused, when he heard men like his brother denounced, and the word of God set at naught. His voice was soon drowned, for the men rushed from their places to fall upon him, but the women, who filled the nave, were before them. Christopher was so beset that a Romanist wrote, "If the people had been let alone, he would never have gone out of the said church, which would have been a great benefit to the poor catholics. An officer rescued him and threw him "into a dungeon to avoid a greater scandal."

The women were the champions of Romanism in Orbe, and formed their plot against the reform. But the mother of Christopher Hollard was not one of their number. She loved her son; she feared his foes. She said to herself, "The bailiff of Berne, Diesbach, is the only man who can save my son. I will go to his castle and implore his help." Mark Romain, the schoolmaster, went with her. The cool Bernese heard them. He was aroused, wrathful, and would show what was meant by the authority of My Lords of Berne. He came to Orbe and set officers upon the track of Michael Juliani. They searched the convents in vain. He was very quietly hidden in the house of "Frances Pugin, instructress of girls in all virtue and learning." Hearing that he was wanted, he put on a bold front, went straight to the bailiff, and saluted him with all deference. The lord of Diesbach did not feel softened by the friar's crafty courage, but, rising up, he took him by the hand, saying, "I arrest you in the name of My Lords of Berne." Then, leading him to the prison, he "drew Hollard out of his den, and put the said friar in his place." Such was Bernese authority when the truth needed her defense.

Mark Romain was as pleased "as if he had gained a thousand crowns; and, thinking he had achieved a masterpiece," was going quietly home. The mob were seeking their revenge, and, as their monk was in the castle prison, they talked of flinging the schoolmaster into the river. Just then, "seeing him come joyfully along," they called to him. He ran, looking on every side for an open door, and finally rushed into the church, where the women, who had wished to tear Hollard in pieces, were kneeling to Mary, "the queen of heaven." They rushed upon him; and a calm looker-on said of the affair, "I did not think the schoolmaster would ever get out alive." We read of those who "ceased not to beat Paul." Romain was now in his apprenticeship of perils, and he lived to become a minister of the gospel, for which he was suffering. Around the castle was another mob, enraged at seeing Hollard by the side of the bailiff, whom he was about to restore to his mother. They cried out, "Why have you arrested Friar Michael? why released Christopher?" The cool and indomitable bailiff gave
them that crushing answer—"By the order of My Lords of Berne," and, before
their "good father" could be liberated, they must get "My Lords'" consent.

A deputation was therefore sent to the Romish Friburg to gain its interference.
A committee was sent back. But Berne had a word to say. Certain Bernese
gentlemen were sent to Orbe along with the Friburgers. Passing through
Avenches they fell in with Farel. He had been a month among ruins older than
the Caesars, preaching to a people dead in popery. Farel joined the Bernese
and returned to Orbe, where there were no ruins, and where all were alive.
And while the mixed commission are doing what they can for Father Juliani and
for peace, he will preach the gospel.

The services of Palm Sunday were over, all from mass to vespers. Farel had
kept quiet indoors, but now left his inn "with presumptuous boldness." A crowd
soon filled the church, and he entered the pulpit "without asking leave."
Scarcely had he begun to preach when all sorts of sounds were raised, from
hisses to howlings, from the cry of "dog" to that of "devil." "It was a glorious
noise," says an admirer, "you really could not have heard it thunder." From
rudeness they proceeded to rioting. They pulled Farel out of the pulpit, and
would have beaten him, but that same dreaded bailiff strode in among them,
and, taking Farel by the arm, escorted him to his lodging. Thus things went on.
We give but a specimen of the rude tricks and violent efforts to prevent the
reformer from preaching. The Bernese allowed the friar his liberty, after
confessing his untrue assertions, provided he would preach nothing but the
word of God. He left soon after for other regions. An order came from Berne,
insisting that Farel should preach unmolested.

The women's league and plot against Farel prevented him from having an
audience. On the next Sunday nearly all the parish took a march out of the
town, and he went into the pulpit and preached to ten persons, among whom
were Peter Viret, Hollard, and Romain. He left the church when the procession
was returning. The clergy exulted and called him a coward, saying, openly,
"The minister who promised to refute Father Juliani cannot do it." "Indeed,"
said the staunch bailiff of Berne, "you have heard the monk, and now you
complain that you have not heard the minister. Very good! you shall hear him.
It is the will of My Lords of Berne that every father of a family shall attend his
sermon, under pain of their displeasure."

They dared not disobey, and the church was thronged. Farel rose in the pulpit,
with all his energies aroused by the sight of arch a congregation. He exposed
the errors of Father Juliani. Day after day he set forth the truth. "The penance
which God demands is a change of heart and life." "The pope's pardons take
away money; but they cannot take away sin." Of the confessional he said, "How
many souls have been cast into hell by it! how many virgins corrupted! how
many widows devoured! how many orphans ruined! how many princes poisoned!
how many countries wasted! ... O Heaven unveil these horrors! O Earth cry out! creatures of God weep; and do thou, O Lord, arise!

Still the audiences grew less, and the bailiff had the good sense not to notice the fact. But this contempt at Orbe had its compensation in the respect that came from the neighboring villages. Message after message came from the peasantry who urged the great preacher to visit them. He wrote to Zwingli, "Oh! how great is the harvest. No one can describe the ardor the people feel for the gospel, and the tears I shed when I see the small number of reapers." There was one young man among his hearers whom he loved with an affection only equal that which was returned. The ardent, fiery, fearless and almost rash Farel was heart to heart with the meek, timid, sensitive and always prudent Viret. In the gospel the Peters and Johns and Pauls are knitted in brotherhood by more than earthly ties. Thus it became with Farel, Viret, and Calvin.

It was told through the town, now quiet through awe of My Lords of Berne, that on May 6, 1531, a son of the good burgess, clothier and tailor, a child of the place, and a favorite of all, would preach his first sermon. Perhaps few were aware that Farel had persuaded, urged and almost forced him to assume so solemn a duty. He was accused of being rather heretical, but he was so inoffensive that nobody would believe it. The young people wished to see their former playmate in the pulpit. Older ones wanted to hear what the son of their honored burgess had to say. The day came and the church was filled, many having come from a distance. All were impatiently waiting, when at last they saw the young man of only twenty years, of small stature, pale, long and thin face, lively eyes, meek and winning expression, with his brows touched with the light of eternity. By his modesty, his eloquence, his wonderful power in handling the word of God, his persuasiveness in urging the duties of repentance and faith, his prudence in managing errors so as not to arouse bitter feelings and by his earnestness in setting forth Christ crucified for sinners, he kept the most worldly men hanging upon his lips. He was a prophet who had honor in his own country. That day was the greatest day, thus far, in his life. It placed him in the band of mighty reformers of errors and heralds of the truth.

A month had passed since Farel’s return, when all at once, a report filled Orbe with astonishment. It was said, and each reporter could hardly believe it, that Madame Elizabeth, wife of Lord Arnex, was converted. She had planned the women’s conspiracy against Farel, she had beaten him in the street, she had a hand in filling the church with boys (marmaille, brats) who laid down and pretended to be asleep until Farel began his sermon and then sprang up howling with all their lungs and leaving the preacher alone; she had suddenly become a convert to the awful heresy! They shook their heads and smiled, and felt chagrined. Nor was this all. Lord Arnex, who had pleaded for Father Juliani, given bail for him, and despised My Lords of Berne, was also converted. George Grivat, too, the best musician in the town, had gone from the choir into
the pulpit. Others of note—"chief women not a few"—were among the believers in the doctrines which Farel and Viret had preached.

These disciples wished to receive the Lord’s Supper. Farel was sent for and he hastened from Morat. At six in the morning of Whitsunday, he announced, to a large assembly in the church, that there would be the breaking of bread in remembrance of "the breaking of Christ’s body on the cross." Eight persons came forward, Lord Arnex and his wife, Hollard and his aged mother, Cordey and his wife, William Viret the burgess, George Grivat, afterwards pastor at Avenches. Peter Viret was doubtless absent from the town. A white cloth was laid over a bench (for they would not use Romish tables), and the sacred emblems were placed. After prayer, Farel asked, "Do you each forgive one another?"

"Yes," was the response of the little band, never before so deeply affected. Oh that Farel would forgive them!

The bread was broken and given by the hand of the minister, the wine was touched by the lips of the penitent, and the Lord crucified on Calvary was glorified in little Orbe. The only interruption was made by the priests coming in, near the close of the service, and chanting the mass as loud as they could.

But these disciples were to suffer. Hollard became too rash, and went to breaking idols with all his might. One day, when Faerl was preaching, he flew at an image of the Virgin and dashed it in pieces. The church began to be cleansed, and our Romish writer "was greatly astonished at the patience of the populace." It was through fear of My Lords of Berne. But the Friburgers almost gained the day. Taking certain priests out of prison, they put in their stead fifteen of the image breakers, and one of them was Lord Arnex. For three days they were kept on bread and water—the priests had enjoyed good "bed and board"—and then they were allowed to return home.

There may be failings in men who advocate a faultless cause, but we who may have too little zeal should be careful how we judge those who have too much. We are writing of times when the reformers had few preparatory schools for discipline, and the Romanists were not then trained into a crafty and smooth Jesuitism. Often must the whirlwind sweep through a town in advance of the "still small voice." If the preacher were sometimes rash, the papists were nearly always riotous. The one class proved what they had to declare by Scripture; the other persecuted without hearing the evidence. It is not hard to perceive which deserves the greater amount of charity.

CHAPTER XIII
"Be prudent; do not rashly expose yourself to danger, but take good care of yourself for the Lord’s future service." Thus wrote Zwingli to Farel when this suffering missionary was laboring to sound the gospel through all the country, from Berne to Basle.

"Take good care of yourself, also," was the reply, "for far greater danger threatens you than me." The warning was too late. Zwingli had fallen on the battlefield. But such words were just like Farel. He scarcely thought of himself. No reformer was more like St. Paul, in his zeal, his feebleness of body, his strength of spirit, his perils and his journeys. It is not possible for us to follow him into every town that he surprised, every pulpit where he was attacked, nor every little new church where he often brake bread with the glad disciples.

On the shore of Lake Neufchâtel, at the entrance of the town of Grandson, stood the large convent of the Gray Friars. Two men came to its door one day, rang the bell, and were shown into the parlor. The superior, Friar Guy Regis, met them and asked what they wanted. They told him they intended to see that the gospel was preached in the town, and, in passing the convent, they had said to each other that this was the place begin. They coolly begged him, "in the name of the lords of Berne," to grant them the use of the chapel. And if he wished to know who they were, there were their commissions, bearing the names of Farel and de Glautinis, the minister of Tavannes. The friar had heard of them, and he knew all that was still going on at Orbe, and, if he could help it, the like should never occur at Grandson. It was insolent to ask what they did; he was resolute enough to repay their bold impudence. "Heretic!" said he to Farel. "Son of a Jew!" cried a listening monk. This was not a very encouraging reception. They left, and some friends put them upon another track. "Go to the priory, on the hill."

Soon they were knocking at the door of the Benedictine convent, where several monks appeared. They had a hint of the arrival of the missionaries, and with their eyes they measured them from head to foot. Farel asked permission to preach, when a loud uproar arose in the cloister. One friar came forward with a pistol hid under his frock, and thought to put an end to the "heretic who was disturbing all the churches." The sacristan pointed his pistol at Farel with one band, and, seizing him with the other, tried to drag him into the prison. De Glautinis sprang forward, when the monk with the knife fell upon him. The friends of the preachers, waiting at the door and hearing the noise, rushed in and tore them from the stout arms of the monks. The gates were closed in scorn, and for two weeks remained shut, so great was the fear of these reformers. Farel went to Morat, but de Glautinis began to preach in the streets and private houses of the towns. Guy Regis led the whole array of the monks against him. Guy would not debate with him there; but if he would only go to
some far-off city, he would prove that his preaching was mere witchcraft. After such a valiant proposal, attended with roaring abuse from the monks, the troop made their retreat behind the convent walls, where they perhaps talked of the terrors of the most notable year in the history of Grandson. The castle had once been defended for ten days against the assaults and artillery of the Burgundian army. Famine came, and the garrison accepted the offered pardon and surrendered. Charles the Bold received them, and vented upon them the outrages of revenge. Two days afterward his crime returned upon his own head, and, being defeated by the Swiss, he was compelled to fly for his life across the mountains, with only five followers. His splendid baggage is still among the antiquities of Geneva. Perhaps these Benedictines imagined that they had resisted Farel, and that no spiritual famine would ever cause them to yield their fortress. They may have supposed that he had fled and resolved never to appear again in their streets.

The lords of Berne heard of the treatment given their ministers, and some of them came to Grandson. Wishing to give the people the liberty of hearing the gospel without hindrance, they ordered the convent churches to be thrown open, whatever might be the will of the Benedictines. They sent for Farel, who brought Viret with him. It was but six days after his first sermon and Viret was fully in the work. The three preachers gave the friars the privilege of hearing the truth every day. The priests excited the people; the reformers were in and out of prison; Farel was struck by an officer when questioning a friar; he and Watteville, a Bernese deputy, were met in the church by two monks armed with axes; Watteville had them arrested, and after the friar ended his sermon, Farel went forward and refuted it. These two monks, within two years after, renounced popery and preached the truth which they had once opposed.

One day the preachers were holding service in the church, when a troupe of women had the masculine boldness to rush in and put an end to the preaching. The congregation, at first, tried to resist them, but it was hard to employ force against the gentler sex, especially when their will was taking such a furious way to carry a point. Farel and his companions left the women in charge of affairs until the people should prefer a change. They went into the surrounding villages and raised up majorities for the Reformation. Grandson at length gave the right vote, and John Le Compte, a young man whom Farel had known in Meaux and invited into Switzerland, became its minister. If history be silent, charity inclines us to imagine that those women received him as their good pastor, and gave their zeal to a better cause.

What Switzerland needed was religious liberty, so that priests and preachers might have a proper freedom of speech, and the people the free choice of their mode of worship. Berne had labored for it, but papal Friburg wanted the liberty all on their own side. Little Orbe was to claim this one-sided freedom so madly that the rights of the preachers were to be declared equal to those of the priests. It was on this wise. On Christmas eve, 1531, a minister—it may
have been Viret—was in the church preaching upon the coming of the Savior into the world and into the hearts of men. Certain bigots peeped in and, seeing an attentive crowd, exclaimed, "The devil must have sent a good many there." The time for the midnight devotions of the Romanists had not come, but when the clock struck nine another crowd entered the gates to raise a riot. The gospel party quietly retired; the priest party set upon them in the streets, where houses were assaulted, blows given, blood shed and heads broken. The preachers were not at fault; they were simply using the church when the priests had left it empty. Viret, with ten of the reformed, went to Berne to plead for religious liberty.

A sort of council was there held the first days of January, consisting of two hundred and thirty ministers, and many laymen. They heard Friburg the champion of popery, and Berne the staunch advocate of Protestantism. "We desire," said the Bernese, "that everyone should have free choice to go to the preaching or to the mass."

"And we also," said the Friburgers.

"We desire that all should live in peace, and that neither priests nor preachers should call their adversaries heretics or murderers."

"And we also," said the Friburgers.

"We do not wish to hinder the priests and preachers from amicably discussing matters of faith."

"Quite right," said the Friburgers.

Thus articles for securing religious liberty were drawn, signed, and published. It is regretted that they were not faithfully kept, and that the Romanists, who thought discussion was folly, did not regard persecution as a crime.

We return to Farel. "Even were my father alive, I could not find time to write to him," was his frequent apology for silence. Yet he seized moments to address a noble letter to the suffering Christians of France, from whose numbers many young men were coming to labor in Switzerland. He now became interested in another body of sufferers on the slopes of the Italian Alps—the Waldenses.

For two or three years there were strange reports circulated among the infant churches which were forming between the Alps and the Jura. They heard of a wonderful people who had never been papists and had always been what they were struggling to be. These people had a simple faith, simple worship, simple form of government, and had been driven by Rome into the coldest recesses of Piedmont, and they were the most remarkable Christians ever known. But
while these reports were coming over the snow-crowned mountains, other reports met them on the way. The Waldenses had rumors among them of the mighty work of God in the lands of the Rhine and the Rhone. Their preachers must go and see what Luther and Farel and Zwingli and their increasing hosts were doing and believing. They went on foot, and visited Germany, France, England, and Switzerland, giving and receiving encouragement. They invited commissioners to their next Synod in Piedmont.

One day there came to Grandson two men, whose foreign look showed that they had come from a distance. It was in July 1532. They wished to speak with Farel. George of Calabria and Martin Gonin entered the room. They spoke of their people, their faith, their antiquity, and how they had not left Rome, for Rome had long ago left them. They had continued in the apostles’ word and doctrine. Probably they said what some of their brethren, seated in the friendly house of Æcolampadius, had said to him. "Some people ascribe our origin to a wealthy citizen of Lyons, Peter Waldo, who saw one of his friends fall dead at a feast. Moved at the sight, and troubled in conscience, he prayed to the Lord, sold his goods and began to preach, and sent others to proclaim the gospel everywhere. But we descend from more ancient times, when Constantine was introducing the world into the church, and our fathers set themselves apart, or even from the time of the apostles." Farel was delighted with the brethren, and with joy accepted their invitation to attend their synod.

No time was to be lost—Farel never had any to lose. He took with him Anthony Saunier, a Dauphinese, who knew popery by hard experience, having lain in prison at Paris fourteen years, for daring to believe what his Redeemer taught. Certain friends had fears for their safety. Everywhere there were persecutions, and in Savoy and Dauphiny the bishops had specially "ordered a raid to be made upon the heretics." In the last days of August they passed by the caverns of Pignerol, in which the Waldenses had once their retreats and their temples; they passed La Tour, where every rock was a memorial of persecutions and martyrdoms; they went on to Angroagna. There the synod was to meet, in the parish of Martin Gonin. The people were in the fields and in the roads, ready "to be a guard to the ministers of the good law."

"That one with the red beard and riding the white horse is Farel," said John Peyret of Angroagna, the escort, to the people who gazed along the way. "The other, on the black horse, is Saunier." There was a third, "a tall man and rather lame," a Waldensian, perhaps, who had joined them. Other "foreign Christians" were gathering in this remote valley.

On the twelfth of September the synod was opened "in the name of God." Farel was the leading man in favor of urging the Waldenses to renounce the papal errors that had slowly crept among them, or been forced upon them by the violence of the Romanists. The other party contended that they should compromise a little, in order to save their lives and their church. Farel gained
his point with most of them. They confessed their errors and signed a covenant of faith and love.

It greatly interested Farel and Saunier to examine the old manuscripts, preserved for centuries, among which was the Noble Lesson, saying,

The Scriptures speak, and we must believe.

Search the Scriptures from beginning to end.

And they looked at several manuscript copies of the Bible, which the Waldenses showed them with peculiar pride, saying, "These were copied correctly by hand so long ago as to be beyond memory, and are to be seen in several families." The visitors were moved as they turned over the leaves, "marveling at the heavenly favor accorded to so small a people."

Farel proposed to the synod that measures should be taken to have the Bible and other books translated, printed, and circulated among the Waldenses, and to establish schools in all their parishes. They agreed "joyfully and with good hearts to Farel's demand." The hour came to adjourn and separate. The pastors returned to their churches, the shepherds to their flocks, the lords to their castles, and never forgot, that people whose church has been "the burning bush of Christendom." Farel and Saunier shook hands with the villagers, who wept to see them go, mounted their horses and rode on, talking of teachers and translators, books and Bibles for the Waldenses. They were directing their way to an ancient city, where Caesar had built long walls against the Helvetii, and where popery had thrown up entrenchments against the reformation. We turn now to Geneva, which God is about to make renowned for a theology that has been called "the grandest form of the grandest faith in heaven or on earth." The truth of the motto on her shield was being proved—"After darkness I wait for light."

It was no sudden purpose, formed along the way, that led Farel to Geneva. It had long been in his mind, and before starting for Italy, he had resolved to stop there on his return. With that intent he had obtained from the Lords of Berne, certain letters of introduction to the leading Huguenots of Geneva. "I will go to them," said he, "I will speak to them, even if there is nobody that will hear me."

This plan of Farel is the beginning of the positive work of the Reformation in Geneva. But it was not the beginning of the movement against the papacy and the bishops. For years in that city, Rome had been opposed by a band of patriots who sought liberty in the state, but cared less for a new life in the church. Young Geneva had already been shaking old Rome. To understand the
difficult work before Farel, it is quite important to trace the rise of the patriots, and see how they came to be called Huguenots.

There came to Geneva in 1513 a brilliant young man, full of good humor, making himself easily a favorite with everybody, laughing at almost everything, with wit sparkling on his pen, and Virgil and Cicero at his tongue’s end. The priests admired him, the people loved him, and he was the hero of the hour. He could amuse his company, or in solitude prove himself one of the best French writers of his times. This agreeable scholar was Francis Bonivard, known in poetry as the prisoner of Chillon. "He was to play in Geneva by his liberalism, his information, and his cutting satires, a part not very unlike that played by Erasmus in the great Reformation." With him there were two subjects too serious for a jest; one was the revival of letters, and the other was the love of liberty. He was born at Seyssel, and was in high favor with Charles III, Duke of Savoy, the worst of foes to Geneva. "He was educated at Turin where he became the ringleader of the wild set at the university." This, in the duke’s eyes, qualified him for a work quite similar to that of Catiline when he sought to gain his treasonable plots by corrupting the youth of Rome. Charles was intent upon drawing Geneva into the snare, and annexing it to his dominions. The jovial Bonivard seemed to be just the man to prove "an excellent bait to entice the youth of the city into the nets of Savoy."

He soon met a genial companion. Philibert Berthelier, with three centuries of noble blood in his veins, was the leader of a rising party in the city. In April 1513, he had lamented the death of Charles de Seyssel, the bishop and prince of Geneva. This "right good person," ever mild and frank, was "for a wonder, a great champion of both ecclesiastical and secular liberty." He wished Geneva to remain with a free state and a free church. Duke Charles had sharply quarreled with him, saying, "I made you bishop, but I will unmake you, and you shall be the poorest priest in the diocese." The bishop had just returned from a pilgrimage, and he suddenly died. It was thought that the duke made sure his threat, and poisoned him for the crime of protecting the liberties of Geneva. When this report was on the wind there was intense excitement in the city. The gates were shut, cannon were dragged through the streets and placed on the walls, and sentries were posted everywhere. The citizens expected that the duke would seize the city, set his own bishop over them, and take the secular power in his own hands. They had good reasons for their suspicion. They gathered in groups on the streets, ready for any orator who might lift his voice.

Berthelier seized the opportunity to resist the pope and the duke, so that the one should not get the church, nor the other the state. "Let us resist the duke," said he and his associates. "Is there a people whose franchises are older than ours? We have always been free, and there is no memory of man to the contrary." "Come, you canons, choose a bishop! Elect a bishop who will defend our liberties." The man for them was at hand. They were too earthly themselves to ask for a candidate of a very heavenly spirit. Liberty, not religion, was the word on their lips. Aimé de Gingins, canon of St. Peter’s, was then a firm advocate of Genevan rights. He was the best boon companion in
the world, keeping open house and feasting joyously the friends of pleasure; fond of hearing his associates laugh and sing, and of rather free manners, after the custom of the church in those days. The people named him their bishop, and the canons confirmed the vote. The one thing now was to uphold their new bishop, and persuade the pope to sanction their choice. They sent men to Rome to obtain his confirmation. The pope, Leo X, had another affair to manage. His brother, Julian the Magnificent, needed a wife. The pope had an eye on the noble lady, Philiberta of Savoy, the sister of the duke Charles, and the aunt of Margaret, queen of Navarre. She was "a pure, simple-hearted young girl, of an elevated mind, a friend to the poor," and too good to be put up as the price of a bishopric. But so it was. With her, Charles would buy Geneva, and place over it a bishop from his own relatives.

He had a cousin, John, the son of an unmarried bishop, who was the grandson of the once married Amadeus, who was the last of the rival popes under the name of Felix V. John had no birth to boast, and was withal a puny, repulsive debauchee. "That is the man to be bishop of Geneva," thought the duke, "he is so much in my debt that he can refuse me nothing." John was ready for any bargain that would give him an office. Charles sent for him. "Cousin," said he, "I will raise you to a bishopric, if you will, in return, make over the temporal power to me." Thus John agreed to pay his debts, which the duke had "talked about pretty loudly" of late.

John went to Rome, and the pope received him with the greatest honor. "This disagreeable person had the chief place at banquet, theatre, and concert." The pope kept him talking of the charms of Philiberta. "Let the duke give us his sister," said the pope, "and we will give you Geneva. You will then hand over the temporal power to me!" Was there not need of a Reformation? The messengers of Geneva came to Rome, told of their choice of a bishop, but, alas! these Alpine shepherds had no beautiful princess to offer as the price of the favor they wished. "Begone," said Leo, "I know you not." The graceless John was the only one whom he would know as their bishop. The pope was thus paving the way for the overthrow of his power in Geneva, and for the Reformation.

"A fine election, indeed, his holiness has honored us with!" said Berthelier and his compatriots. "For our bishop, he gives us a dissipated clerk; for our guide, in the paths of virtue, a dissipated bastard; for the preserver of our ancient liberties, a scoundrel ready to sell them!"

It was expected that Bonivard would take the part of the duke, the pope, and also of the disgusting John. But he took sides with the patriots. He found Berthelier to be "one of those noble natures who count glory by placing themselves at the service of the weak. No man seemed better fitted to save Geneva. ... He affected no great airs, used no big words, was fond of pleasure and the noisy talk of his companions; but there was always observable in him a seriousness of thought, great energy, a strong will, and above all a supreme contempt of life." Yet policy led him to act at first a strange part with the new bishop.
John came to his diocese and met with no violent opposition. He must be wise in his crafty schemes, and court the leading patriots. He soon learned that there was one name on all lips; one citizen, ever cheerful, frank in heart, very popular, taking part with the young people in all their merry-making, winning them by his charming and lively manners, and gaining confidence by his willingness to render them any service in his power. "Good," said John, "here is a man I must have. If I gain him I will have nothing to fear. He must have the best charge I can bestow."

"Be cautious," whispered certain ones; "he conceals a rebellious, energetic, unyielding mind."

"Fear nothing," replied John, "he sings gayly and drinks with the young men of the town." Berthelier did this to kindle their souls at his fire. He was at last induced to accept of the castle of Peney. Bonivard said, "Peney is the apple which the serpent gave to Eve." But Berthelier had not sold himself. The people’s bishop, de Gingins, was given a large pension, and lived in the same house which afterwards became the home of John Calvin. Bonivard was now to secure the object for which he had come to Geneva.

His uncle, John Aimé Bonivard, was the prior of St. Victor, one of the city gates. It was a little state, and its prior a sovereign prince. The aged uncle was on his deathbed, and Francis, now one-and-twenty, sat by it. The old man grew seriously agitated. He thought of one great evil that he had done. In rashness he had once ordered four large culverins to be made at the expense of the church, in order to batter down the castle of an old friend and neighbor. None of his many other old sins gave him so fearful a pang as this. In anguish he turned to his nephew, saying, "Francis, you know those of cannon. ... They ought to be employed in God’s service. I desire that immediately after my death they may be cast into bells for the church." The old prior felt relieved and died, leaving to his nephew the principality, the convent, and the culverins.

On this very day Berthelier called to sympathize with his friend, and he heard the story of the four guns. "What! cast cannon into bells!" he exclaimed, "we will give you as much metal as you require to make a peal that shall ring loud enough to stun you, but the culverins ought to remain culverins."

"My uncle ordered them to be put to the service of the church."

"The church will be doubly served," retorted Berthelier. "There will be bells at St. Victor and artillery in the city." The point was gained. Berthelier laid the matter before the council, who voted all that was needed for the bells.

The duke heard of this affair, and he could not be prudent toward men whose minds would not bear provocation. He claimed the convent guns. So anxious was he to succeed in the game he was playing that he moved too rashly. His one thought was to possess Geneva. By grasping for it he was doomed to lose his principalities. The guns made a noise in the city. The council of fifty met to discuss the matter, and Berthelier was not alone in supporting the rights of the city.

A young man of twenty-five rose up and said, "In the name of the people I oppose the surrender of this artillery to his highness; the city cannot spare
them." This young citizen was Besançon Hugues, who felt that liberty was worth a war with the duke. Not yet had the sports, the music, the dances, the cup, and the card caused him to forget the freedom of his country. Others of the "children of Geneva" had not been made effeminate by these soft arts. They were ready to use the culverins; they would not give them up; and so the four guns remained in city. But from that hour Charles shot his wrath at Berthelier, Hugues, and Bonivard.

Not yet was Geneva fully given over to the duke. Perhaps these patriots hoped that they could manage the weak and unpopular John, and prevent the surrender of the temporal power. John was at Rome, urging his cousin’s demand. Philiberta was about to be married, and the pope was expected to ratify the bargain as soon as she should be paid over to his brother, Julian de Medici. He did it. His bull confirmed the wedding of Geneva to Savoy, which was the real marriage intended. Charles was delighted with his triumph. He had gained what his ancestors had sought for centuries. He imagined himself the hero of his race, and told everybody, "I am sovereign lord of Geneva in temporal matters. I obtained it from our holy father, the signing pope."

The news went to Geneva. The whole city was in commotion. When John came, the council begged him to maintain their ancient liberties. He looked at them, but was silent. They went back thinking that the last blow was struck in the old republic. The citizens met without exchanging a word; their pale faces and downcast looks told all. One cry, however, was heard: "Since justice is powerless we will resort to force, and if the duke is resolved to enter Geneva, he shall pass over our bodies."

The patriot party grew. It attracted the young men with whom Berthelier had laughed and sung, and they caught his fire. The bishop, John, began to obey his masters. He laid heavy fines on the people; he deprived men of their offices; he threw good citizens into prison for imaginary offenses; he carried off Claude Vandel, a distinguished lawyer of spotless character; he pardoned a robber; and he was bent upon robbing Geneva of all her rights. The leading patriots were aroused. They prepared for the worst, if war should be necessary. Threats alarmed the Savoyards, and one night they concluded to flee. Ordering their horses they rode out by a secret gate. Nor did they go alone. The gouty bishop went with them to Turin, and in great terror crouched at the feet of his master, Charles.

"Cousin," said the duke, "in your fold there are certain dogs that bark very loudly and defend your sheep very stoutly; you must get rid of them."

The bishop was open to such advice, and there, in the palace of Charles the Good, who was cruelest of all, was plotted the death of Geneva’s best citizens. Those citizens knew what to expect. On a day when several of them met, Berthelier said, "Have done with banquets and dances; we must organize young Geneva into a defensive league.

"Yes, let us march onwards," said Bonivard, "and God will give a good issue to our bold enterprise."

"Comrade, your hand," said Berthelier, reaching forth his own. Their hands were clasped. A cloud passed over Berthelier’s face, and he said, "But know
that for the liberty of Geneva you will lose your benefice, and I shall lose my
head." Bonivard could not forget this scene, and he wrote, "He told me that a
hundred times." It would prove too true.
Larger meetings were held. The bell was ringing for vespers when about fifty of
the patriots met around Berthelier. He told them of their history and bade
them consider their destiny. The great citizen fixed on them his noble look and
asked, "Do you wish to transmit to your children slavery instead of liberty?"
"No, no, but how can the liberties of the city be saved?" "How! By being united,
by forgetting our private quarrels, by opposing with one every violation of our
rights. ... If the bishop's officers lay hands on one of us, let all the rest defend
him. Who touches one, touches all."
"Yes, yes, one heart, one cause! Who touches one, touches all!"
"Good, let this motto be the name of our league, but let us be faithful to the
noble device."
"But what would we do," asked one among many who had their fears, "if the
duke and bishop should attack the city with a strong army?"
"Fear nothing," replied Berthelier, sharply; "we have good friends; I will go to
the Swiss, I will bring back forces, and then I will settle accounts with our
foes."
Thus ran the tide when the bishop returned, and took pleasure in making
arrests and in torturing poor Pècolat. Terrors increased in the city, the streets
were deserted, only a few laborers were seen in the fields. Many citizens fled.
The league of "Touch one, touch all," was almost dissolved, and that at the
very hour when its founder was in peril. Berthelier was threatened.
"The sword is over your head," said Bonivard, "Escape for your life."
"I know it," Berthelier answered, "yes, I know that I shall die, and I do not
grieve at it."
"Really, I never saw and never read of one who held life so cheap." Others
joined Bonivard in urging their chief to flee. They told him of the power of his
foes.
"God will miraculously take away their power," he replied.
"There happen to be here some envoys from Friburg. Depart with them. Out of
Geneva you will serve the city better than within it."
This consideration decided him. Early the neat morning he put on a Friburg
cloak, and when the troupe rode through the gate, the cautious guard did not
suspect that the great republican was with them. The spoiler put his hand on
the nest, but the bird was gone. The houses were searched for six days, but all
for nothing. The bishop was raving in his castle; Berthelier was calling the Swiss
to aid Geneva.
By the hearth of Councilor Marty in Friburg sat Berthelier, sorrowful, silent,
and motionless. A great idea was in his mind—"Geneva must be an ally of
Switzerland"—which then included only a small part of the country now called
by that name—"for that I would give my head." He began to talk with his host. "I
have come poor, exiled, persecuted, and a suppliant, not to save my life, but
to save Geneva, and to pray Friburg to receive the Genevans into citizenship."
"Take courage," said Marty, giving his hand. "Follow me into the abbeys where the guilds are assembled. If you gain them your cause is won."

We need not follow them to hear the eloquence of Berthelier. He gained his object. The Friburgers would go and see the misfortunes of Geneva with their own eyes. They went and talked answered with such men as Hugues and the Vandels. They hunted up bishop John, easing his gout in the country, and reasoned with him in a different style from that prevailing at Turin. They asked a safe-conduct for Berthelier so that he might return home. It was refused on the ground that he needed none! Nobody would harm him! "Very well," said the Friburgers, "we will collect together these grievances of the people and remedy them. We will come in such force as to take these Savoyards and then—then we will treat them as you have treated our friends." After this they rode home in great wrath.

The words of the Friburgers were repeated through the city. The league between them and the Genevans was spoken of as a mightier protection than that of the "Children of Geneva." A new German word was introduced, Eidgenossen, the oath-bound Leaguers. The duke’s party threw it in contempt at the patriots, and as it did not fit the Savoyard tongue, they put it into various shapes, Eidguenots, Eyguenots, Huguenots! Perhaps the name of Hugues helped to give it the latter form. It was a nickname, long since made sacred by the noble character of those who bore it. It passed into France and was probably first applied to all who opposed the Papacy. At Geneva it had originally a purely political meaning, and simply meant the friends of independence. It had no religious meaning until after the Reformation.

The duke’s party had no sooner started this epithet than the patriots, repaying them in their own coin, called out, "Hold your tongues, you Mamelukes. As the Mamelukes denied Christ to follow Mahomet, so you deny liberty for tyranny."

We might linger upon many a touching story of trials, banishments, tortures, and executions, but space forbids. The years rolled on, the times grew worse, and Geneva found no permanent relief. After a while Bonivard was arrested, robbed of his priory, and shut up for two years in a castle. An army of the duke was in the city. Berthelier, who had returned, had reason to expect death. Early one morning, Berthelier set out for his daily retreat, where he breathed the fresh air in a quiet meadow near the city. He was now (1519) about forty years of age, and so conscious of his danger that he was "always booted and ready to depart for the unknown shores of eternity." He had with him a little weasel of which he was very fond. It was sporting in his bosom as he walked on in contempt of his enemies. An officer, who knew of these morning walks, had placed some soldiers outside the walls, while he remained within to make certain the arrest. Just as the good citizen was about to pass the gates, the troop came forward. He thought not of going back to arouse the young men of the League; he turned not from the road, but went on caressing his little favorite, and "walked straight toward the armed men, as proudly as if he were going to take them," wrote Bonivard. Thus "one of the founders of modern liberty" was arrested, and was to suffer the vengeance of his tyrant foes. He was thrust into prison, where his little weasel still played in his bosom, and at
the least noise would stiffen its ears and look into the eyes of its master. He had holier means of lightening his cares; he quoted the Psalms, and, perhaps, cast all his burdens on the Lord. On the wall he wrote a sentence which some think refers to the Savior’s resurrection. His foes were trying to frighten him with threats of death when he wrote, "I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord." He became the martyr of liberty, but though dead, he yet spake of freedom for Geneva. "Three great movements were carried out in this city," says D’Aubigné. "The first was the conquest of independence; the second, the conquest of faith; the third, the renovation and organization of the church. Berthelier, Farel, and Calvin are the three heroes of these three epics."

This leader of the league left much work to be done. A new man came to bear his part in it. This was Baudichon de la Maison-Neuve, a man of noble family, exalted character, bold measures, welcome everywhere, and serving to clear the way for the reformation. But God was removing out of the world the bishop who was assuredly not fit to remain in power; and, unless there was deep repentance for his personal sins and shames, not fit to be taken away by death. John lay at Pignerol, dying of diseases which charity would leave untold. At his bedside stood Peter de la Baume, who was trying to console the bishop. The poor man had some remorse for his crimes. A crucifix was held before his eyes. His mind was upon the man whose death he had caused, and he imagined that he saw the features of Berthelier. With a wild look he asked, "Who has done that?" Blasphemy and insult were mingled with the foam that whitened his lips. At length his heart softened a little. Giving to Peter a last look, he said, "I wished to give the principality of Geneva to Savoy. To attain that object I have put many innocent persons to death. … If you obtain this bishopric, I entreat you not to tread my footsteps. Defend the franchises of the city." He said more, closing with the words, "In purgatory God will pardon me." He breathed his last, and Peter rose up from his prayer the bishop of Geneva.

Worse and worse trials came. The bishop kept none of his promises. The duke entered the city with Portuguese fashions and theatrical plays. The people were expected to attend dramas, dances, games, and sports in the open air, even in spite of the April rains. There were some good qualities about Peter the bishop, and he proved the scope of his imagination, or his power to insult with flattery, when he told the Genevans of "the great love and affection which John had felt, while alive, for them and for all his good subjects," and that he "had made as holy an end as ever prelate did!"

CHAPTER XIV
LAYMEN IN THE FIELD
1523–1532

The Huguenots were demanding that the Genevans should be free; others, mostly laymen, were coming with a little book in their hands, to say "The truth shall make you free indeed.” One class spoke in the name of humanity, the other in the name of Christianity. The two great forces were soon at work, but they did not work unitedly. Many of these political Huguenots were still Romanists. They were afraid of the Bible. Like many now in Europe, they
wished to throw off the temporal power of the pope, but yet let the pope have his spiritual power. The patriot Hugues hoped for a free, but not a protestant Geneva. It was the state, not the church, that he wished to see reformed. The same mind was in Bonivard, who, like Erasmus, dealt his satires upon all parties. If these Huguenots had all been athirst for the Bible, and if they had made that the cornerstone of their liberties, there would have been less battle and a speedier victory. Farel would have found the reformation already there when he entered the city. Calvin would have had far less trouble in fulfilling his mission.

Had these patriots all been protestants, Geneva might have received her form of doctrine and polity from Wittenberg. Luther was known there in 1520. A few Huguenots had rejoiced at his resistance to papal power. They wished to treat the bulls of the Vatican as Luther had done—burn them. His writings seem to have found their way into the city. Bonivard says in his chronicle, "Luther had already given instruction at this time to many in Geneva and elsewhere." The duke’s party heard the great monk’s name and took alarm. They thought it worthwhile to make a splendid parade, and march out of the city with the image of St. Peter, and cry down Luther and his doctrines. The Huguenots noticed the procession of canons, priests, monks, scholars and white clerks marching beyond the walls. "All the priests have gone out," said they, "let us shut the gates and prevent them from returning." Had they done so, it would have been nothing more than a rough joke. But they lacked the courage. The idea got wind; the startled priests and monks hurried back to their nests, and had only a good fright. There was a far better way to exclude these haters of Luther, had these Huguenots been willing to learn it. They were to have the opportunity. The Bible was coming.

The deeds of men outlast their names. We know not who were the humble missionaries that came to Geneva about the year 1524, but we know what they carried. It was Lefèvre’s French Testament. It was borne on the waves of that missionary movement, which was started at Basle, Montbeliard and Lyons. Not in vain did the Chevalier Anemond oversee the printing of these Testaments and religious books; not in vain did the merchants Vaugris and Du Blet send them into those regions which swell the Rhone with their streams. The bookhawkers came to Geneva, and some of the citizens "talked with them and bought their books."

One of the first to welcome these Bible-colporteurs was Baudichon, who read the Scriptures with astonishment, because he could find in them no Romanism, no images, no mass, no pope, no purgatory, but could find a new religion, a new authority, a new life, a new church; and all these new things were just what the Lord and his apostles taught. Robert Vandel also read with delight, for he thought that here was the power to make Geneva a republic, independent in religion and politics. Such men saw with disgust the snares laid by the duke’s party in the amusements which pretended to be in honor of Charles and the new bishop. Among other displays was a theatrical performance called "the finding of the cross." It was a lame attempt at a "mystery-play." It represented the Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena.
going to Jerusalem to find the cross, so that the precious relic might be of use to the church. Three crosses were dug up on the Calvary represented upon the stage. A miracle would decide the true one from those of the two thieves. A dead body (so feigned) was brought. Helena says,

To this corpse we will apply
These three crosses carefully,
And, if I be not mistaken,
At the touch it will awaken.

The three crosses are applied, and when the third one touches the corpse, it is restored to life! Wonderful miracle! The Mamelukes were delighted. Charles fancied such tricks were acting like a charm. "The flies are caught by the honey," said he, "yet a few more diversions and these proud Genevans will become our slaves."

The Huguenots resolved to have a play of their own, and gained permission to honor the duke and new bishop in their own way. A great fair was drawing the people to the city, and a crowd gathered to see the Huguenot play. A bishop or two and many priests came, but Charles knew the men too well; he feared a "snake in the grass" and did not appear. The play was Le Monde Malade, the Sick World, or really the Finding of the Bible. The World was very sick, growing worse and worse, a priest comes with his wares and masses, World wants the masses very short, priest shows him some, they don't suit, priest finds that neither short nor long masses will do, a wise man proposes a new remedy —"What is it, say?"

"A thing which no man dare gainsay,
The Bible!"

The World does not like that remedy, and proves himself a fool! Thus the play ends. The Genevans soon had more serious events to engage their minds. For two years there were banishments and martyrdoms, but the Testaments were not lost. The tyrants missed their mark by sending patriots as exiles to Berne and Basle, and other cities where the truth was preached. The Romanists were sending them to the school of the gospel.

These wanderers had woes enough, but this helped to bring about the Swiss alliance of 1526. Berne and Friburg joined hands with Geneva. The exiles returned, the duke’s party began to flee "like birds of night before the first beams of day." Laymen began to talk about the gospel, and to read and think for themselves. An honest Helvetian was coming to give them a lift.

Thomas ab Hofen, a wise and sedate man, had done a good at Berne. The alliance business brought several deputies to Geneva, and he came along with them, greatly to Zwingli’s joy. This Christian layman had no intention of reforming the city; his mission was diplomatic; but he was not one who could hide his genial light. He visited many citizens, attended the churches, met the people in their meetings, and concluded that there was much patriotism among
them, but very little Christianity. The great want in Geneva was religion. At his inn he wrote to Zwingli, "The number of those who confess the gospel must be increased." There were a few Christians in the city.

The deputy of Berne was not ashamed to be an ambassador of Christ. When he could take an hour from his official duties, he conversed with the people, telling them what was going on at Berne and Zurich. Around the hearth of some Huguenot, where burned the January fire, he talked of the good gospel, and kindled a love for the liberty there is in Christ. We imagine him often at the house of Baudichon whose wife became an earnest believer. But he had a chance to learn the former fatness of the priests by looking behind the screens. The priests honored him at first, as one in high office. Some of them heard him often speak of religion and imagined that he belonged to their coterie. They were afraid to have a layman talk of the gospel; it looked too much like apostolic and reformation days. They sought to gain his pity by innocently telling him of the fine times they had, when presents of bread, wine, oil, game, and tapers were plentiful in their houses. "But alas!" said they, with sad complaints, "the faithful bring us no more offerings, and people do not run so ardently after indulgences as they used to do." This was more pleasing news to Ab Hofen than they supposed. It might be a bad state of things for the priests, but it was good for the gospel.

The citizens became more and more attached to the genial visitor. They invited him to their homes, and their public assemblies, that he might speak of the noble things occurring at Zurich. He was cheered, and his old melancholy fits did not return so frequently. His eyes sparkled and he felt unwearied in well doing. "I will not cease proclaiming the gospel," he wrote to Zwingli, "all my strength shall be devoted to it."

But now he finds the darker side of his work. The Huguenots were mostly mere friends of liberty, and not of the gospel. They grew cold toward him when he spoke of certain reforms, and of that faith which saves. Those who were first to welcome him began to fall away, and scarcely saluted him in the street. The eyes of the priests flashed with jealousy and hatred as they went about warning the people against him, lest he should ruin the city. The men were made cautious, and the women especially frightened. "All my efforts are in vain," he wrote, "there are about seven hundred clergymen in Geneva who do their utmost to prevent the gospel from flourishing here. And yet a wide door is opened to the word of God. The priests do not preach, and as they are unable to do so, they are satisfied with saying mass in Latin. If any preachers were to come here, proclaiming Christ with boldness; the doctrine of the pope, I am sure, would be overthrown."

This simple-hearted, sensitive layman despaired of doing any good, and with a broken heart returned to Berne. He died not long after, "as a Christian ought to die." It was found after his departure, that his efforts had not been useless. Even Hugues, the leader of the Romish Huguenots, was benefited, and joined hands, for a time, with Baudichon, the leader of the gospel Huguenots. William la Mouille, the bishop's confidant, seems to have been led to the truth by the good layman of Berne.
The duke’s party—the “bishopers”—were in trouble. Peter la Baume had let the Huguenots elect their magistrates to govern the city so that he might get the temporal power in his hands. The canons must flee, and away they went, muttering, “No more canons, ere long no more bishop.” Their saying was to come true, not because the duke was now against the bishop, who claimed also to be the temporal prince, but because Peter played the fool, as the robber of a young girl. One day in 1527, a report got abroad which put the whole city in commotion. “A young girl of respectable family,” said the crowd, “has just been carried off by the bishop’s people; we saw them dragging her to the palace.” The palace gates were shut; the bishop was at dinner. The girl’s mother had rushed forth, followed the robbers up to the gates, which were shut in her face, and was now pacing about the building, crying in despair. The citizens crowded in front of the palace, and were not choice of their terms in deriding the bishop.

Peter did not like to be disturbed at dinner time. He was puzzled to know what to do, and thought the best thing was to be deaf. Wine did not calm him, for he heard a furious hammering at the gates. The servants told him that the magistrates had come; he left his chair, and went to the window. There he stood, “paler than death”; the people gazed, and were profoundly silent. The magistrates made him a respectful and earnest speech. He answered, “Certainly, gentlemen, you shall have the young woman. I only had her carried off for a harper, who asked me for her in return for his services.” So she was stolen to pay the wages of a musician! Guilty enough, but viler still. The gates were unbarred, the girl restored to her mother.

“No more bishop,” thought the people. He might go and join the exiled canons. “Ha, you bishopers! a fine religion is that of your bishop,” cried the Huguenots. On a certain night Peter took a boat, and then a horse, and made for Burgundy, where in summer he could walk “among his pinks and gilly-flowers,” and in winter have his “beautiful fur robes, lined with black satin,” and all the year round be able to say, “I am much better supplied with good wine here than we were Geneva.” Of which wine, one who often dined with him, says, “he had sometimes more than he could carry.”

The hireling fleeth,” said the people, “when he seeth the wolf coming.” The wolf was the duke of Savoy, who wished to devour both hireling and sheep. But Charles was to hear that the Genevans had removed the signs of his temporal power from among them. “No more bishop”—the next thing was “no more duke.” Eight years before he had set up the white cross of Savoy, carved in marble, in the heart of the pity. The Huguenots were grieved whenever they saw it. He had said, “I have placed my arms in the middle of the city as a mark of sovereignty. Let the people efface them if they dare!” One morning, five days after the bishop’s flight, the white cross was gone. “Who did it?” asked the gathering crowd. “It has fallen into the river,” but no one could see it in the clear waters. The parties began to quarrel. Bonivard at last said, “I know the culprit.” “Who? who is it?” “St. Peter, for, as the patron of Geneva, he is unwilling that any secular prince should have any ensign of authority in city.” This event produced a great impression, and as the authors were never known,
some thought it a miracle. Many said, "What the hand of God hath thrown down, let not hand man set up again!"

Other Bernese laymen came to Geneva to continue the work of Ab Hofen. It was the Lenten season, and they said in private families, "God speaks to us of the Redeemer, and not of Lent."

"Obey the Church," said the Friburgers, "or we will break off the alliance." The Genevans thought on the subject; many of them ate meat that spring, and felt none the worse for it, however much it put the alliance in danger.

The Bernese soldiers, who had kindled their fires with the images taken from the churches, had let fall little sparks of truth, which burned and blazed in the hearts of the citizens. The Huguenots made some new signs of uneasiness; they uttered their sarcasms upon the priests in public places; they walked up and down the aisles of the churches, and talked of the needed reform. In 1530 Hugues Vandel wrote for help, and sent one letter to Farel. "The majority in the city of Geneva," he said, "would like to be evangelical, but they want to be shown the way, and no one dare preach the gospel in the churches, for fear of Friburg." Farel knew how serious was this difficulty, for stout old Berne had long been opposed by Friburg. What could be done? After much thinking Vandel suddenly gained a bright idea, and wrote to Farel and Fabri about it. His plan was this: St. Victor was a little independent state near the walls of Geneva, and Bonivard might annex it to Berne; then a Bernese bailiff would be there and "a preacher who would be our great comfort." The Huguenots could then leave the mass and go out in crowds to hear Christ preached in the church of Bonivard. The plan failed. In fact the prior of St. Victor had scarcely the control of his own possessions. He could not collect his rents, and plots were on foot to betray him and the convent to the duke. He grew sad when reduced to four crowns a month, and that a gift from the council of Geneva. By annexing the priory to the hospital of the city he hoped to gain his revenues. The duke would not permit this, for he must have the priory, as it would give him a footing close to the gates which were shut against him. Charles resolved to get rid of him.

Bonivard was in trouble about his priory, his poverty, his enemies, but above all, his mother was seriously ill at the town of Seyssel in the duke’s territory. He must go and see her; the duke was glad to send him a passport. He did not see the trap; he visited his mother, and left her full of anguish for his fate. She was never to see him again. He started for Lausanne, but when on the Morat hills he was seized by ruffians and carried to the castle of Chillon, where he was to remain long years. The duke’s hand was apparent; the agent of his treachery was Bellegarde, who had slept with him the night before, and said in the morning, "I am afraid something may happen to you, I will send my servant with you." This servant led him into the ambush. Bellegarde had been the murderer of the patriot Levriere.

The brilliant existence of this Genevan Erasmus was thus suddenly ended. He was never himself again. When he came out of Chillon he was a far different man. The long caged bird had lost both voice and wing. He had not the gospel in which to rejoice like Luther in the Wartburg. He had cheated himself of
these heavenly consolations by trying to keep on neutral ground and be neither a Romanist nor a gospel Huguenot. His wit, his jests, and his criticisms upon everybody unfitted for the true benefits of the Reformation. And yet we cannot but sympathize with him, when sitting in his large armchair at St. Victor, he writes, "The Huguenot leagues are not sufficient; the gospel must advance in order that popery may recede."

Again there were Bernese soldiers in the city (October 1530), and they determined to have the word of God preached. They went to the cathedral and ordered the door to be opened. Some of them went into the towers and rang the bells. Their preacher went into the pulpit, read the Scriptures, and delivered a sermon. Many Genevese looked on and listened, but did not fully understand. It was a new mode of worship, but when they saw that simple prayer, singing, and the reading and explaining of God’s word were the essential parts of it, they liked it better than the Roman form. From that time the reformed service was repeated daily for weeks, and "no other bell, little or big, rang in Geneva." The priests said it was all German, and the people would not be the wiser for it. But copies of the Bible and tracts in French were in store. The preacher went about among the Genevans, talked with them, and, after shaking hands with them, left books in their houses whose truth would bring rest to their hearts. Some of them began to "prefer God’s pardon to the pardons of the pope."

Whispers of such movements came to the ear of Farel, during the years when he was being carried into cathedrals, or was making his own perilous way into forbidden pulpits, and was settling pastors over the flocks which had been won from popery. Geneva occupied his thoughts.

In the little boat that bore him so often across the Lake Neufchatel, in his visits to the Val de Ruz, on his bed at Morat, recovering from severe bruises and the loss of blood, on his journey to the Waldenses, and still more on his return, he felt that he must preach the gospel in Geneva also. It was not enough that the Huguenots should refuse to listen to the mass, and simply walk up and down the church while the priests were chanting it. They must have the gospel. To break from error is but half a reformation; the better half is the full acceptance of the truth.

"Alas!" said he, "there is no other law at Geneva than the law of arms." The law of God must be there. The patriots had only secured a lip-revolution. The preacher must declare regeneration as the only hope for true liberty. He wished to go at once. The very fact of the strong opposition there was an attraction to his bold and quite romantic nature. But Berne had claims upon him, and noble Berne had no authority to sending into Geneva. If he liked perils, he had enough in the districts where he was already beaten for the gospel’s sake. If he left those fields, Rome would regain her lost ground. He, therefore, looked about for some man who was fitted to bear the glad word to that city, of which the restless prior, Bonivard, had said, a few years before, "God only remained, but while Geneva slept, he kept watch for her."

We left the young Peter Toussaint at the mansion of the noble Madame Contraigues, waiting for some voice to call him into a bolder work than the
Duchess Margaret was willing to have done. He went afterward to Zurich, at the call of its reformers. Here seemed to be the needed man. Farel wrote to Zwingli, "Make haste to send him into the Lord’s vineyard, for you know how well fitted he is for this work. ... It is no small matter; see that you do not neglect it. Urge Toussaint to labor strenuously, so as to redeem, by his zeal, all the time he has lost." The great doctor did all that he could to persuade the young Frenchman, who at first was inclined to go. "Enter into the house of the Lord," said the adviser, "rend the hoods in pieces, and triumph over the shavelings. You will not have much trouble, for the word of God has already put them to flight." He did not literally mean that Toussaint should tear the friars to pieces, but the young man was afraid to see even their hoods shaking at him. He had wanted to see more courage shown at the Parisian court; he now lacked it himself when Genevan perils were before him. He shrank back and refused to take the mission with its cross.

Farel, who never shrank from any summons, was vexed. He could scarcely afterward forgive his young friend. He fell down and poured out his anguish before Heaven. "O Christ, draw up thine army according to thy good pleasure; pluck out all apathy from the hearts of those who are to give thee glory, and arouse them mightily from their slumber."

This apathy was, perhaps, charged partly upon the Bernese, who had not sent preachers to Geneva, as Farel thought was their duty. They took alarm at the threat of the Friburgers, who said, "If Geneva is reformed there is an end to the alliance." The alliance did come to wreck; a hurricane was blowing over Geneva, for the duke of Savoy was preparing to attack the city. The Bernese gave up the cause of the Huguenots. "Alas!" wrote Farel, "the Bernese show less zeal for the glory of Christ than the Friburgers for the decrees of the pope."

One patriot heart was broken when the alliance was ended. It was that of Besançon Hugues, the duke’s enemy, but the bishop’s friend. He resigned his office, saying to the senate, "I am growing old; I have many children; I wish to devote myself to my own affairs." He was only forty-five; but the late months had been as long years to him. His forty official missions, his dangers, his flights and exposures, his disappointments and reproaches were enough to bring gray hairs upon that head, which deserves some of our best laurels. It was God’s time for him to retire. He would be in the way of the gospel movement. He was not pleased to see that the Christian Huguenots were gaining new followers every day. It was time to give space to Baudichon. His Romanism must fade before the reformation. He retired, sighing lest all liberty was lost, and in less than a year he breathed his last. Faith might have taught him that God would defeat the threatening duke of Savoy, by bringing in a mighty alliance with Heaven.

An ambassador of the heavenly alliance was coming—a modest, learned, devout, and strong layman, who would help to prepare the way for Calvin and Farel. Farel had long known him—perhaps had seen him on the university benches, when Lefèvre was awakening debates among the students—and perhaps he had a hand in bringing him into Geneva. He was not a preacher, but merely a schoolmaster. We need to know more of him.
When Calvin was at college in Paris, he was often visited by fellow townsman and cousin, Peter Robert Olivetan. Calvin was then a devout Romanist, and it grieved him to find his affectionate cousin such a heretic. The grief was fully reciprocated. Robert did all he could to convert his younger relative.

"O my dear friend," said Robert, "study the Scriptures."

"I will have none of your doctrines," was the reply. "Their novelty offends me." They parted, little satisfied with each other. Calvin knelt before the images in the chapel, and prayed to the saints for his friend. The other shut himself up in his room and prayed to Christ. The prayer to Jesus was to prevail. One day Calvin saw light breaking through the darkness that for months had gathered before him. "If I have been mistaken," said he, "if Olivetan and my other friends are right, if they have found that peace which the doctrines of the priests refuse me!" He shed tears and cried unto God. Following Olivetan’s advice he studied the Scriptures—perhaps the Testament of Lefèvre. It is worthy of notice that the three great Picardins—Lefèvre, Olivetan, and Calvin, were to have a decided influence at Geneva. It is very touching to know that the older cousin helped to lead the younger into the truth, and then, without any plan but that of God, he went to a strange city to help prepare a place for him to declare it. It was strange, too, in human eyes, that Olivetan should be led to Geneva. He was not seeking it. He had been compelled to leave Paris, and Farel had fixed upon him as a teacher for those ancient Waldenses who were holding out their hands to the modern reformers.

In the city council of Geneva there was a wealthy, enlightened and influential man named Jean Chautemps. He needed a teacher for his sons. People spoke to him of a mild, genial man, who knew well the best society of Paris, and, "besides, a very learned man." This gentleman considered it very fortunate to have such a master for his children, and soon had in his house Robert Olivetan, who taught according to "the right mode" of Mathurin Cordier, the great preceptor of Calvin.

Was he thinking that his brilliant and powerful cousin might sometime come and preach in Geneva? Perhaps, and yet he said nothing in that direction. He set bravely to work in his modest way. He held forth a shining lamp. He sometimes went with Chautemps to the churches, and was moved with grief at the errors which he saw and heard. He would return home, and, sitting with his patron, refute the opinions of the priests, and explain the word of God. The councilor became a friend of the reformation, and, amid all the strifes, upheld the cause. His heart was warming, and his house preparing to receive "that great missionary, Farel," about whom there such wonderful reports in the land. The schoolmaster took a still wider range, and talked with the councilor’s friends, and to all whom he could approach. He endeavored to "point out with gentleness" to the priests the errors which they taught. Fear did not hinder him. He became so bold that Chautemps advised him to be more cautious, lest he should come to harm. Still he went on in his unassuming but courageous way. And now the Genevans began to come to him. In small circles they sat to hear the word. Then, from private houses, he was drawn out into the open air,
in front of the churches, there to touch the consciences and make the ears of his hearers tingle.
One day at a private assembly there came a few men and women, most of them known to the master of the house, and they sat down on the benches before the new teacher. Some of the intellectual men, of whom Geneva was proud, were present. After reproving their sins and their unbelief, and telling them of Christ, he said to them, "We cannot attain true holiness if the Holy Ghost, who is the reformer of hearts, be absent. By the Spirit of Jesus Christ the remains of sin in us diminish little by little. What a profound mystery! He, who was hung on the cross, who even ascended into heaven to finish everything, comes and dwells in us, and then accomplishes the perfect work of eternal redemption." Thus taught the schoolmaster, who was soon to rouse all Geneva.
The pope’s great jubilee was coming; the people were talking about it, and some told how it originated. A witty scholar thus relates the story: "On the eve of the new year, 1300, a report spread suddenly through Rome (no one knew whence it came) that a plenary indulgence would be granted to all who would go the next morning to St. Peter’s. A great crowd of Romans and foreigners hurried there, and in the midst of the multitude was an aged man, stooping and leaning on his staff, who wished also to take a part in the festival. He was a hundred and seven years old, people said. He was led to the pope, the proud and daring Boniface VIII. The old man told him how, a century before, an indulgence of a hundred years had been granted on account of the jubilee; he remembered it well, he said. Boniface, taking advantage of the declaration of this man, whose mind was weakened by age, declared that there should be a plenary indulgence every hundred years." As great gains were made out of the scheme, it was thought that it would pay well to have the jubilee more frequently, and it was appointed for every fifty years, then every thirty-three, and then every twenty-five. Such jubilees were held in our times in 1825 and in 1833.
The minds of the Genevans were soon in a great ferment. There was much talk and murmuring everywhere in the streets. "A fine tariff is the pope’s," the bolder ones said. "Do you want an indulgence for a false oath? Pay about 29 livres. One for murder? a man’s life is cheaper—only about 15 livres. It is all an invention of the devil."
"If the pope sells indulgences," said some who were beginning to have glimpses of the truth, "the gospel gives a free pardon. Since Rome advertises her pardons, let us advertise that of the Lord." They went to Olivetan, whom they had probably heard declare against these tricks to fill the treasuries of the pope. He probably was the real author of a "heavenly proclamation," which was to startle the citizens. Baudichon hurried to the printer, and had it struck off in large, bold letters. He and one Goulaz laid their plans, and while Geneva slept as the ninth of June was dawning, they were busy in the streets. Gentle taps of the hammer fastened on a pillar in front St. Peter’s church, right over the advertisement of the pope’s jubilee, a proclamation which the laziest priest
would have kept awake to prevent, if he had suspected what would be seen in morning.
The sun rises, the people awake, throw open their windows and doors, and see little groups standing here and there, staring at some new wonder. The groups become crowds. Houses are left empty, the streets are filled with readers, talkers, murmurers. Men and women, young and old, priests and friars gather in front of the placards, and read with amazement, these strange words:

- God Our Heavenly Father
- Promises
- A General Pardon Of All His Sins
- To Every One Who Feels Sincere Repentance
- And Possesses

A Lively Faith In The Death And Promises Of Jesus Christ.

“This surely cannot be a papal indulgence,” say certain Huguenots, “for money is not mentioned in it. Salvation given freely must certainly come from heaven.” “A defiance of the pope’s pardon,” cry the priests, in wrath that grows fiercer as they overhear the talk of the delighted readers. They insulted those whom they suspected had posted up “the general pardon of Jesus Christ.” They not only used their fists, but more deadly weapons. They made a great uproar, and tried to tear down the placards. But the patriotic party, now called Lutherans by the priests, would not allow this to be done. Two parties were soon organized—those who defended the placards, and those who wanted to pull them down. One leader from each were to have a small battle.

A certain canon, Wernly of Friburg, hearing the tumult, rushed out of his house, went toward the cathedral of St. Peter, and caught sight of the placard on the pillar. He flew at it, clenched it, and tore it down, uttering a coarse oath. There he stood, a burly active fanatic, who could handle a sword as skillfully as the censer, and give a blow as readily as a blessing.

A Genevese patriot saw what was done, and, walking up to the pillar, calmly put another paper in the place of the one torn down. All saw that he was Goulaz, a bold spirit who could brave those whom he despised. The Friburger lost all self-control, and forgetting the placard, he rushed upon the heretic, dealing him a lusty blow. Then he drew his sword (for the canons wore swords at that time), but Goulaz was ready to meet him with his own weapons. In the struggle, Wernly was wounded in the arm. Upon this there was a general tumult that increased and extended through the whole city. The magistrates were scarcely able to prevent a fierce battle in the streets.

The noise of this affair soon reached Friburg, where it was said that the placards were the result of the sermons of a certain schoolmaster, who had taught that the pardon of God was to be preferred before all the indulgences of the pope. This Romish city would not be satisfied until the council of Geneva forbade any more papers to be posted up without their permission, and ordered that “for the present the schoolmaster should cease to preach the gospel.” The priests went about visiting every family, and demanding the surrender of every New Testament.
"The priests want to rob us of the gospel of Jesus Christ," murmured the people, "and in its place give us what? Romish fables! Really it is quite enough to hear them at church." The councilors were urged to show themselves Christians. Often had Olivetan told them that there was no intention of introducing a new religion, but of returning to the old. This was easily understood. The friends of the Reformation in the council began to speak boldly for the word and the people's right to read it. It was ordered by the council that "in every parish and convent the gospel should be preached." This was the first official act in Geneva favorable to the Reformation. The great pardon of Jesus Christ began to be understood and embraced by numbers of people. The placards announcing it mark an important epoch in the history of Geneva. From the little town of Payerne where Anthony Saunier was pastor came to the Genevese one of the best letters ever penned. We quote one of the first and one of the last sentences. "We have heard that the glory of God is with you. ... Be the standard bearers upon earth of the colors of our Savior, so that by your means the holy gospel may be borne into many countries."

Farel in Geneva

This section comprises chapters 15 through 18. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 15  The Preachers at the Inn
Chapter 16  Froments Little Sermons
Chapter 17  Farel in His Element
Chapter 18  Calvin United With Farel
CHAPTER XV

The Preachers at the Inn

1532

On a fine October day two travelers, the one riding a white horse, and the other a black one, entered Geneva, stopped at the Tour Perce, dismounted, addressed the landlord, and took up their quarters under his roof. He would never forget them, for the little slender man with a red beard and sun-burnt face was William Farel, and the other was Anthony Saunier, now on their return from the visit to the Waldenses. One of their first thoughts was to inform Robert Olivetan of their arrival.

The schoolmaster hastened to meet them, supposing that the gospel in Geneva was to be the first and last topic of conversation. But Farel had another idea which must first be mentioned. He had fixed on this excellent Greek and Hebrew scholar to translate the Bible for the Waldenses.

"I cannot accept such a commission," said the modest teacher. "The work is difficult, and I am not qualified."

"Your excuses cannot be admitted. God gives you this call, and he has prepared you for the task."

"You could do this work much better yourself," still urged the accomplished scholar.

"God has not given me leisure," replied Farel, "He calls me to another work. He wills me to sow the pure seed of the word in his field and water it and make it flourish like the garden of Eden." The subject was changed to matters in the city.

Out of his pocket Farel took the letters given him at Berne for some of the chief Huguenots. They went and made several calls, talking as they went of the late affairs in the streets. The Huguenots opened the letters and found that a famous man was in town. They looked at him with gratitude to him, to Berne, and to God. Certainly he should preach, not simply because Berne requested them to hear him, but because they expected that this great preacher would bring the light of heaven into their hearts. Farel left them for the night, saying that he would be happy to see them at his inn.

'The great missionary had come! It was the best of news to the Huguenots. "Let us go and hear him," they said; "he is the man they call the scourge of the little priests." But there was wrath among the bigots, the friars, and the nuns. They knew what to expect. Jeanne de Jussie, a literary nun, wrote thus in venting
To a room in the Tour Perce many of the noted citizens and councilors went the next morning to be instructed. The landlord brought in some benches and stools, and Farel took his station near a little table. On it he placed a Bible, and he drew from it the faith that he preached. He set forth before this select audience, in which were the earliest champions of modern liberty, both Romanism and the reformation. They saw the former was all wrong; the latter they wished to embrace. They rose, thanked him and left the room, saying that it seemed right put the Bible in place of the teaching of the pope. The placards of the "great pardon" noted a first step; this preaching at the Tour Perce marked the second step toward the reformation in Geneva.

These men carried home what they had heard; they talked about it; there was a "great sensation in the city," and sister Jeanne de Jussie again journalized about "this wretched preacher, who was beginning to speak secretly at his quarters, in a room, seeking to infect the people with heresy." There was a second meeting, and still plainer preaching, "at which those who heard him took great pleasure." The priests were alarmed, and they set about alarming the women, who then were the main supporters of the papacy. The Genevan ladies begged their husbands and brothers to drive away the heretics. Some went with their husbands, angrily, to the inn, and desired the preachers to leave at once, if they did not wish to be turned out by force. But this was to Farel no storm at all; it was a mere zephyr, that he did not mind.

The council, or senate, was now in trouble. Its members were divided on the great question—what should be done with these preachers? To keep them would rouse the wrath of the priests and their party; to expel them would greatly offend the stout old Berne. All agreed that it was fair to hear them still farther, and Farel and Saunier were led to the town hall. As they entered the senate chamber, every eye was fixed on "that man with keen look and red beard, who was setting all the country in a blaze, from the Alps to the Jura." Before long one of the senators opened his battery upon Farel.

"It is you, then, that do nothing but disturb the world. It is your tongue that is trumpeting rebellion. You are a busybody, who have come here only to create discord. We order you to leave the city instantly." This was certainly intelligible enough, without the aid of the angry looks now turned upon Farel.

"I am not a deluder; I am not a trumpet of sedition," answered the reformer, in calm self-control. "I simply proclaim the truth. I am ready to prove out of God's word that my doctrine is true, and"—the voice grew tender with emotion—"not only to sacrifice my ease, but to shed the last drop of my blood for it."
The senators were touched at this noble simplicity. The Huguenots were moved to defend the accused. The tone and temper of all were softened by his moderation. But Farel could defend himself. "Most honored lords," said he, "are you not allies of Berne?" They grew solemn at the mention of that name. He placed the letters from that city before them, saying, "They bear witness to my innocence and doctrine, and beg you to hear me preach peacefully. ... If you condemn me unheard, you insult God, and also, as you see, my lords of Berne." The countenances of the senators changed, and they gently dismissed the preachers, simply begging them not to disturb the peace of the city by new doctrines.

Disturb such a peace as Geneva had known! It must have seemed absurd to their honors. The real disturbers were already in council under the wing of the church. At the house of the grand vicar, de Gingins, were gathered the clerical strength of the Romish party. That challenge of Farel, "I will prove by the word of God," was a terror to them. "If we discuss," said they, "all our office is at an end." They liked not the weapons. The priests had others. They carried arms under their gowns. It was proposed to use them. Sister Jeanne de Jussie knew of the plot. The council would entrap the preachers by asking for a disputation. "Having deliberated to kill Farel and his companion," says an old manuscript, "they found the best means of getting them to come would be to invite them to a debate." The conspirators agreed that Farel was never to go alive out of the vicar-general’s house, but, first of all, they must get him to enter it. The bishop’s secretary, Machard, was deputed to summon the preachers and the schoolmaster to retract or to explain before the council what they had preached at the inn.

The plot was whispered. The Huguenots in the town hall grew suspicious, and sent the two chief magistrates to go with the bishop’s secretary. These three Genevans went to the Tour Perce and met the three reformers. Machard invited them to retract the doctrines they had taught.

"We affirm these doctrines in the strongest way possible," said Farel, "and again offer to die if we cannot prove them by Scripture."

"In that case," said the secretary, "come before the Episcopal council, to discuss with the priests and maintain what you have declared."

"No harm shall be done to you," added the two magistrates. "We pledge our word to it." The preachers were delighted with this opportunity of announcing the gospel, and, with Olivetan, they set out, not expecting any danger.

Already was there a suspicious-looking group in front of the Tour Perce. While the upper house of the clergy was sitting at the vicar’s, the lower house had met in the streets. The armed curates and chaplains had watched the messengers going to the inn, and guessed what it meant. They gathered their
followers, particularly the women and the rabble. When the three Genevans with the three reformers passed, they fell in the train. "Look at the dogs," said they, with coarse jeers and threats. There was danger on every hand. In the council and in the streets men had sworn Farel's death. At the door of the vicar's house the three reformers had to wait some time, for the two magistrates went in to ask another pledge of the council that the ministers should be safe while they freely explained their doctrines. The pledge was given, and they entered and stood together before the imposing assembly, all in their sacerdotal robes. The official, de Veigy, was ordered to speak.

"William Farel," said he, "tell me who has sent you, for what reason you come here, and by what authority you speak." He knew of no authority but that of the Romish church.

"I am sent by God," replied Farel with simplicity, "and I am come to declare his word."

"Poor wretch," groaned the priests with a shrug of the shoulders.

"God has sent you, you say," resumed the official. "How is that? Can you show a clear sign, as Moses did before Pharaoh? If not, then show us the license of our most reverend prelate, the bishop of Geneva. Preacher never yet preached in his diocese without his leave." He paused; he scanned the decently-dressed reformer from head to foot; he feared to hear any answer from Farel, and did not intend that one should be given, and then broke forth again, "You do not wear the robes of a clergyman. You are dressed like a soldier or a brigand. How dare you preach? A decree of the holy church forbids laymen to preach. You are a deceiver and a bad man."

Thus ran the abuse. The clergy did not give Farel time to speak. It was not for that they had called him. They were glorying in the fact that they had within their grasp the terrible heretic, of whom they had been so long talking. It was hard for them to keep their hands off him. They sat, pale with anger, and clattered their feet on the floor. At last they must speak or burst, and they all spoke at once, pouring insult on the reformer. They rose, rushed upon him, and, pulling him this way and that, they cried out, "Come Farel, you wicked devil, what business have you to go up and down, disturbing all the world? Are you baptized? Where were you born? Where did you come from? Why do you come here? Are you the man that spread heresies at Aigle and Neufchatel, and threw the whole country into confusion?"

It was not meant that Farel should have any chance to answer these questions. The noise was so great that neither he, nor the vicar, nor the magistrates, could gain a hearing. A rattle was heard; the weapons were clattering beneath the priest's frocks. Farel remained still as he could amid all this uproar. At length the grand vicar secured order and silence. Farel seized the moment.
"My lords," said he, nobly lifting his head, "I am not a devil. I was baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and, if I journey to and fro, it is that I may preach Jesus Christ. ... I am compelled to teach him to all who will hear me. For this cause, and for no other, I am come into this city. Having been brought before you to give an account of my faith, I am ready to do so, not only at this moment, but as many times as you please to hear me peaceably. As for the disturbances in the land, I will answer as Elijah did to King Ahab, ‘I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father’s house.’ Yes, it is you and yours who trouble the world by your traditions, your inventions, and your dissolute lives."

"He blasphemes; what further need have we of witnesses," cried out one of the raging, gnashing priests. "He is guilty of death."

"To the Rhone, to the Rhone!" shouted others. "Kill him! It is better for this rascally Lutheran to die than to let him trouble all the people."

"Speak the word of God," said Farel at these perversions of Scripture, "and not those of Caiaphas."

"Strike! strike!" cried a Savoyard, as the furious priests shouted whatever was uppermost in their minds. They divided the three reformers among them, and each was abused, spit upon, and beaten; yet each was calm and patient, remembering, doubtless, the meekness of the Great Master under similar treatment. Certain of the better priests and the two magistrates were ashamed of such a scene, and tried to end it.

"It is not well done," said an abbot, "have we not pledged our word and honor to them?"

"You are wicked men," cried out William Hugues, a just magistrate, who was more than disgusted with the violent party. "We brought you these men on your promise that no harm should be done to them, and you want to beat them to death before our faces. I will go and ring the great bell and convene the general council."

The thought of a general assembly of the citizens alarmed the priests, for they might expel the authors of this disturbance and give every security for the reformers to remain. In few cities would the people side with the priests, and Neufchatel was a fearful example of the popular power. The abbot took advantage of this new lull, and asked Farel and his two friends to withdraw so that the council might deliberate. Farel left the room, shamefully insulted and bruised.

And what does the reverend sister Jeanne de Jussie say came next? About eighty of the lower order of priests had collected about the house, "all well
armed with clubs to defend the holy catholic faith, and prepared to die for it.” Strange mode of defending the faith! Not much danger of dying for it when there were eighty in arms against three defenseless strangers! "They wished to put that wretch and his accomplices to a better death." Sister Jeanne knew all about the scheme.

As Farel entered a long gallery he saw a gun leveled at him, and in an instant the priming flashed, but the load was not expelled. Some say it burst in the hands of the vicar’s servant who aimed it at Farel. "I am not to be shaken by a popgun," said he coldly. "Your toy does not alarm me." His friends said, "Verily, the God of mercy turned aside the blow that he might preserve Farel for more formidable struggles."

Again were the strangers summoned to the council room. The grand-vicar said, "William Farel, leave my presence and this house, and within six hours get you gone from the city with your two companions, under pain of the stake. And know that if this sentence is not more severe you must ascribe it to our kindness and to our respect for the lords of Berne."

"You condemn me unheard," said Farel. "I demand a certificate to show at Berne that I have done my duty."

"You shall not have one," was the reply. "Leave the room, all of you, without one word more." They got out of the council of the clergy, but how were they to get away from the city? The mob must be met. They went forth into a hurricane of enmity. On a sudden there was a stir in the crowd, a falling back and parting. An armed body of men rescued them from violence, to the great grief of Sister Jeanne, who wrote of the most of the mob, that "the worthy men were not satisfied" to see the heretics depart alive, and one rushed forward at Farel with a sword "to run him through." The magistrates seized the "worthy man," and many were chagrined because the blow failed. Amid hootings and hisses and groans and threats, the reformers reached the Tour Perce under guard. It grieved Farel that he must leave the generous men who had listened to him at the inn. But he intended to preach yet in Geneva.

Early the next morning a little boat lay waiting, and a few friendly citizens went to the Tour Perce to bring away the missionaries. The priest party were there to turn their matins into murder. Some staunch Huguenots came up, brought out the two strangers, and hurried to the lake. In the boat they were carried over to an unfrequented place near to Lausanne, and after a tender parting with their friends, who had thus far attended them, they made their way to Orbe. It required faith in God to hope that Geneva would ever become a stronghold of Protestantism.
At the village of Yvonand, on the southern shore of Lake Neufchatel, dwelt a young Dauphinese named Anthony Froment. He had been more disgusted with the excesses of Rome, probably, than charmed by the riches of the Bible, and had sought peace of soul in the Reformation. He had been with Farel, helping him through some of the most perilous scenes, and was now preaching to a little flock in Yvonand.

To this village came Farel, in October, with new plans in his mind for taking Geneva. He invited several ministers to meet him in council, among whom were Olivetan, Saunier, Froment, and Martin (probably), the Waldensian by whose parishioners he had been entertained in the "holy valley." Farel gave an account of his mission to Piedmont, and of the stormy reception he had received at Geneva. They all looked on him with wonder and gratitude to the Author of miracles. Froment could not keep his eyes off the fugitive missionary, and he pitied the Genevan patriots who seemed about to lose all they had ever gained.

"Go and try if you can find an entrance into Geneva to preach there," said Farel, fixing his keen eye on Froment. For a little the young Dauphinese was speechless with astonishment.

"Alas! father," said he, recovering himself, "how can I face the enemies from whom you are compelled to flee?"

"Begin as I began at Aigle," replied Farel, "where I was a schoolmaster at first and taught little children, so that even the priests gave me liberty to preach. True, they soon repented, and even now I seem to hear the curate exclaiming, ‘I would sooner have lost my right hand than introduced this man, for he will ruin all our business.’ But it was too late; the word of God had begun its work, and the mass and images fell."

A new schoolmaster in Geneva—an Ursinus! The plan began to appear wise and to win upon Froment. It would be an achievement to gain a position in the city that had driven out the prophets.

"You fear the men of Geneva," said Farel, who noticed that Froment was entertaining his plan. "But were you not with me when I planted the gospel at Bienne, and at Tavannes, and near that mountain (Pierre Pertuis) which Julius Caesar tunneled? Were you not with me when I went to Neufchatel and preached in the streets? Do you not remember that we very often received our rent, that is blows and abuse; once, especially, at Valangin, where my blood
remained for more than four years on the pavement of a little chapel, near which the women and priests bruised my bead against the walls, so that both of us were nearly killed?"

These remembrances were not very encouraging. Some of the council sided with Farel; others thought that a man of twenty-two was too young to face the fearful storm in Geneva. Froment was not decided. Another thought was struggling for the chief place in Farel’s mind.

Those Bibles and teachers for the Waldenses must be in readiness. Again and again did Farel talk to Olivetan about the proposed version, as they met with their friends, sat together in private, or walked under the noble oaks of Yvonand. After much pressing, the scholar consented to make the translation, and a great victory was gained for the poor Christians of the valleys. They should have a good version of the Scriptures. But a journey was necessary. "Cross the Alps," said Farel, in his commanding way, "go to the Waldensian valleys, and come to an understanding with the brethren about the translation. And you, Adam, Martin, and Guido, go with him and preach to them the doctrine that will correct all their errors."

These four men set out, and had reason to use every caution lest the Duke of Savoy and his officers should seize them. They traveled by night in the last days of October. A guide led them onward, and the second day they were at Vevay where they dined and spoke of the "Bread of heaven." Then they entered Farel’s old district, where his voice first proclaimed the gospel to the French Swiss. At Aigle they were welcomed, and the people gathered to hear them, happy to know that their former teacher, Ursinus, had become so great a man in the world, and happier still to hear afresh the good word of grace. Near to Bex brother Martin was attacked with severe pain. No house was open to receive him, and the walnut trees would not shelter him. What could his friends do? Someone told them of Ollen, where lived the minister Claude, preaching to a little flock that Farel had once gathered. They went, carrying the sick man, and reached the door, where Claude met them. The pastor was touched at the sight of a sick man and invited the strangers in. On a sudden the voice of a violent, pitiless, scolding woman was heard, "What’s this, a sick man? If you receive him into the house, I will leave it."

The travelers saw that Claude was unfortunate in having a Xantippe for a wife. Her voice rose higher and higher; he durst not say a word; she disappeared in a passion, and he was sorely vexed and ashamed. "We will not be the cause of a divorce," said prudent Adam, "we will go away." So away they went, poor Claude not daring to harbor them. All of them were soon sick with what Adam called cholera. At last they dragged themselves to a wretched cottage, where they got a little comfort for large pay. Rest and the mountain air somewhat repaired their broken health. Other anxieties came, which they bore with good humor. "Alas," said Adam, the purser, smiling, as he held up the wallet, "our
purse has been seized with such cruel pains that there is scarcely anything left of it."

They met one of the monks of St. Bernard, and spoke to him of the way of life. He listened and was convinced. Said he, "I will quit Anti-Christ."

Adam took a paper, wrote something, handed it to the monk, and said, "Here is a letter for Master Farel; go to him, and he will tell you what you have to do."

What became of the monk we know not, but the missionaries finally reached the Waldensian valleys, and began to teach and preach. Some of these Alpine shepherds went on foot a two days' journey to hear them. Poor as these Christians were, they handed over to Olivetan five hundred gold crowns, and urged him to hasten forward the work of giving them a new translation of the Bible. It was finished in 1535, and in the preface he says, "It is to Thee alone that I dedicate this precious treasure, in the name of a certain poor people, who, ever since they were enriched with it by the apostles and ambassadors of Christ, have still possessed and enjoyed the same."

In the room of an inn at Geneva was a young man, who had felt something far more chilling than the winds of the early November. He had met the piercing coldness of the people. He had tried to talk with one and another, but they were very short with the stranger, who imagined that he could not preach with the chance of an audience. He looked about for some acquaintance, whom he could draw aside and tell his plans, but all faces were strange. He went to some of the leading Huguenots. They looked at his mean appearance rather than listened to his words; they intimated that Geneva was an important and learned city, and the accomplished Roman clergy must be opposed by a fine gentleman of a minister, or a celebrated doctor; and the little man was politely bowed out of their houses. Those who seemed willing to hear the gospel stared at him with contemptuous eyes. "Alas!" said he, "I cannot tell what to do, except to return, for I find no open door to preach the word."

Yvonand would receive him again—for this was Anthony Froment. It cost the little flock there a struggle to give him up; they had wept at the parting with blessings and prayers.

He paid the landlord his bill, strapped his little bundle on his shoulders, and, without one word of adieu to the cold Huguenots, bent his steps toward the Swiss gate and stopped. An invisible hand seemed to arrest him. A voice cried up from his conscience. A force, greater than that of man, sent him back. He took his room at the inn, sat down with his head in his hands, and asked what God wanted with him. He remembered what Farel had done at Aigle. He rebuked himself for coming there as a preacher. He will now begin in humility as a schoolmaster.

He met with a man of lowly lot, and asked him where there was a place for a school. He was led to a large hall, near the Molard, in a house on which is still
seen the sign of the golden cross. With his eye he measured the room and 
rented it. He would have a school, if he could only get the scholars. He drew 
up a placard, in his best handwriting, and posted several copies in the public 
places. It read thus: "A young man, just arrived in this city, engages to teach 
reading and writing in French, in one month, to all who will come to him, 
young and old, men and women, even such as have never been to school; and if 
they cannot read and write within the said month, he asks nothing for his 
trouble. He will be found at Boytet's hall, near the Molard. Many diseases are 
also cured gratis."

The papers were read by the passers by, and some who had met him, said, "We 
have heard him speak; he talks well." To some his proposal was suspicious; 
others replied that it was benevolent, for "in any case he does not aim at our 
purses." But the priests and their followers were irritated, and exclaimed in 
their usual style, "He is a devil. He enchants all who go near him."

The school opened, and there was no lack of young learners. Froment taught 
with clearness and simplicity. Before dismissing the children he would open his 
Testament, read a few verses, explain them, and then ask if any at their homes 
were sick. If so he gave them a few harmless remedies. The children ran home 
and told everything. The mothers stopped in their work to listen, and the 
fathers, especially the Huguenots, made them tell it over again. Thus the 
children prattled about it, and the older ones were set wondering. Soon the 
city was quite engaged about "the schoolmaster who spoke French so well."

The teacher was doing more than he promised; there were Arithmetic, and 
good manners, a thing not to be despised in Geneva, and there were those 
readings and talks from the Bible. The grown people must go and hear. Certain 
one's played off their jokes, wives held back their husbands, priests vented 
their feelings in coarse abuse, but still Froment found the interest increasing. 
There were some peeping in and slyly listening to his words. The little sermon 
was what most came for, and they seemed to lack ears and mouths enough to 
gather it all. The boys glanced on the men whom they had brought in with a 
feeling of triumph, and the men came oftener and stayed longer. Many of the 
Huguenots began to see that true Christianity did not consist in mocking the 
priests and the mass, as they had so long been doing, but in knowing and loving 
the Savior. "Come," they began to say to their neighbors, "come to the Golden 
Cross, and hear him, for he preaches very differently from the priests, and 
charges nothing for his trouble." Men, women, and children began to see who 
could get first to the hall. The poor man who had been bluffed and bowed out 
of their houses, had risen to high esteem among the Huguenots, and to the 
honor of being ridiculed by the priests.

The motive which led some to the hall was not a love for the gospel, but a 
hatred of the priests, monks, and Mamelukes. Such Huguenots as Ami Perrin, 
Goulaz, and Adda, thought that the new doctrine "which fell from the skies,"
might overthrow the party that opposed the liberties of the city, and they ranged themselves on the benches of the hall and supported Froment with great zeal in the city. Rome was to fare even worse. Certain more liberal priests came to hear the schoolmaster, and declared the doctrines good for all to receive. But the monks went into houses, lingered with groups on the streets, and jeered at Froment’s appearance and his doctrines. "What can that little fool know, who is hardly twenty-two?" His admirers answered, "That fool can teach you to be wise."

From the days that Paul found "the chief women not a few," to be among the first to receive the word of Christ, it has often occurred that influential women have led the advance in confessing the true faith. It was so in Geneva. For three centuries the ancestors of Paula had been styled nobles, and she had honored John Levet with her personal merits in being an excellent wife. When the preaching of Farel reached her ear, she "became very zealous for the word." She now was anxious to win her sister-in-law, Claudine, the wife of the worthy Aime Levet, to the gospel. Claudine was "an honest, devoted. and wondrously superstitious woman," and more than once had shown combat when the new doctrines were broached. She lived across the Rhone.

"Come, now," said Paula one day when at her house, "and hear the schoolmaster. Those beautiful little sermons will give you delight."

"I have so great a horror of him," was the reply, "that for fear of being bewitched I will neither see nor hear him."

"He speaks like an angel."
"I look upon him as a devil."
"If you hear him you will be saved."
"And I think I shall be damned."

"Pray hear him once," and Paula in deep emotion still pleaded, "Pray hear him once, for love of me." Claudine at last consented to go. But she would thoroughly protect herself. She gathered fresh rosemary leaves, and fixed them about her temples; she hung relics, crosses, and rosaries round her neck, and saying, "I am going to see an enchanter," she went with Paula, thinking that she would even lead back her sister into the "mother church."

In mockery Claudine sat down before the magician, who held a book in his hand. Then, mounting on a round table to be the better heard, he opened the book, read a few words, and began to apply them. Dame Claudine, not caring the least for the assembly, and wishing to make known her religion, crossed herself several times, and repeated certain prayers. Froment still unfolded the rich treasures of the little book. She began to be astonished; she looked at the minister; she was not hearing an angel, but God was speaking from that small book. Not a more attentive listener was in the hall. She asked herself, "Can this
be true, seeing that the church knows nothing about it?" Her eyes fixed on the schoolmaster’s book. It was not a missal or a breviary. It seemed to her full of life. It was indeed the word of life.

The talk was ended, and all lingered and left. She sat still, looked at the teacher, and asked, "Is that all true? Is it proved by the gospel?"

"It is all true. It is the gospel," said he, in a pleasing voice. "Is not the mass mentioned in it?"

"Not that I can find."

"And is the book from which you preach a genuine New Testament?"

"It is, Madame." It was probably Lefèvre’s version.

"Then lend it to me," she earnestly requested. He did so, and she placed it carefully under her cloak among her beads and relics, and went home talking with Paula, who began to hope that the finger of God had touched her soul.

Dame Claudine was in earnest. She took her room, ordered that her family should not wait meals for her, nor knock at her door, and "she remained apart for three days and three nights, without eating or drinking, but with prayers, fastings, and supplications." The Testament lay open on her table before her, and she read it, kneeling and lifting her eyes to heaven for light. She had many severe struggles, but at last she heard her Lord say, through his word, "Daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee." She discovered that "the grace of God trickled slowly into her heart," but the least drop seemed a fountain never to be exhausted. Three days she thus spent, as Paul remained three days in prayer at Damascus.

And now she must see the man who had first led her into these rich treasures. She sent for him to come to her house over the bridge. He crossed the Rhone and was met in her home with no other language than the "tears that fell on the floor." When the tide of emotion had receded, she told him how God had opened for her the door of heaven, and so talked that the young preacher was greatly instructed. As Calvin says of Lydia, "From this tiny shoot an excellent church was to spring."

One day she shut herself up in that room, where she had heard the call of God, and resolved to extinguish all her former glory in dress and decoration. She took "all superfluous bravery, laid aside those ornaments and trappings which had served to show her off in a vain, glorious way," and packed them up for sale. These and her most beautiful robes were sold. The money she gave to the poor, particularly to the evangelists of France, who were now exiles in Geneva. All her life the refugees were most welcome to her house. "Verily," they said,
“she follows the example of Dorcas, and deserves to be kept in perpetual remembrance.” She did more; she spoke meekly and frankly of the precious truth wherever she went, and presented the New Testament, which Farel was sending, to many of the Genevan ladies. Her husband had been most bitter against Froment, but he began to be softened. She gently won him to the Lord. Little meetings were held in the house of the Levets, and when Froment was not present, she read and explained the Scriptures. The modest Guerin, a capmaker, was reading his Bible day and night, and soon he cast his lot with the laborers in the vineyard.

On New Year’s day the city was to pass another crisis. The council had forbidden Froment to preach, and this made the people the more anxious to hear him. The hall was soon filled, then the stairway, then the street, and others still coming. The young preacher came, and he could not press through the crowd. What should be done? One man shouted out, “To the Molard,” and the cry became general. This was a large square, near where the Rhone pours out of the lake. Thither they went, crying, “Preach to us the word of God.” Mounting upon a little market-stall, the preacher beckoned with his hand, and there was silence. "Pray to God with me," he said, and, kneeling, the tears ran down his cheeks, while his voice rose solemnly to heaven. By that prayer, so unlike anything the people had ever heard, thousands were convinced that he sought the salvation of their souls. The text was not fortunate, "Beware of false prophets," but the sermon was powerful, every point being proved by the Scriptures. Various attempts were made to disturb him, until, at length, an armed band forced their way toward the stand. After much confusion Froment was carried away by his friends, and with great difficulty was saved. The school must now be given up, and preaching abandoned.

We cannot linger upon his perils—how he was almost detected in the house of Jean Chautemps and must seek another refuge, how Perrin said to him, "The law allows me to keep an honest servant unmolested in my house and I engage you," how he worked at the loom and none dare touch him, and how he began to visit cautiously at their homes, those who believed. Once he was detected crossing the bridge, and was so near to death, that his friends barely got him into the house of Dame Claudine, who must see her windows broken by the mob. At night Froment was advised to leave, and he departed for Yvonand to rest a while from the contests that make this the heroic period of his life. His work had not been in vain. Among other patriots Baudichon de la Maison-Neuve became a most zealous protestant, and his house and that of the Levets were the chief resorts for the little band of Christians.

Sometimes these believers had a great treat. A minister would be passing through Geneva; he must stop and preach in a private room, and the good news went here and there among them. "What is his name?" they would ask.

"Peter Maneri."
"Where is he staying?"

"At Aime Levet’s by the bridge." And Claudine saw her rooms filled every evening while the minister stayed.

"We should have the Lord’s supper," these Christians began to say one to another. It was decided, and as no minister could be obtained, they urged Guerin to preside.

"Where shall it be celebrated?" was the next question.

"At Baudichon’s house," said one. "No," said the more prudent, "not anywhere in the city, for the priests and their spies will cause a new uproar."

"I have a little walled garden near the city gate," said Adda, "and there nobody can disturb us."

On an early morning in March, as it seems, these believers quietly took their seats on the rude benches, and the Lord’s table was spread in this garden, reminding them of the sacred gardens where their Savior had agonized, or had lain in the tomb. Just when Guerin sat down at the table, the sun rose and, blessing the scene with his first rays, made it more imposing than the distant Alps of glittering snow. Never was this holy ordinance observed in a simpler manner. From the trembling hands of a layman, who felt that he was daring to do a sacred act with almost impious touch, they received the bread and the wine, and remembered the Crucified, praying for those who were afraid to meet with them, pledging their faith and their love, hoping for the day when there should be a reformed church in the city with a pastor who would feed the flock, and praising God for what they had already heard from his messengers now banished, and read in his word now hidden in their homes and their hearts. Thus was celebrated their first communion in Geneva.

This was not to be the end. The priests went about saying of these quiet believers, "They make so much of Christ that they deprive themselves of the church." Guerin and Olivetan (now in the city) held that the Romanists "made so much of the church that they deprived themselves of Christ." Here was the dividing line between the two parties. The honest Guerin was charged with the crime of having administered the Lord’s supper in the garden, and he must leave the city. Hastily fleeing he went to Yvonand that he might be with Froment who had done so much to enlighten his mind.

The sad state of the true church led Olivetan to write of it, "I love thee; I have seen thee ill-treated, ill-dressed, torn, disheveled, chilled, bruised, beaten, and disfigured. I have seen thee in such a piteous case, that men would sooner take thee for a poor slave than the daughter of the Great King, and the beloved of his only Son. Listen! thy friend calls thee; he would teach thee thy rights and
give thee the watch-word, that thou mayest attain to perfect freedom." The little church at Geneva might have sat for this affecting picture. Yet these hidden ones "met every day in houses or gardens to pray to God, to sing psalms and Christian hymns, and to explain Holy Scripture."

CHAPTER XVII

Farel in his Element
1533-1535

All seemed lost in the storm that swept through Geneva in the year 1533. We can glance at only a few other of the sad effects. There was the banishment of Olivetan, for rising upon a bench and daring to say something after a friar had been bawling like a madman in decrying the Bible, exalting the pope, and abusing the people, who sought for true liberty and the new life. All that the mild translator said was, "Master, I desire to show you honestly from the Scripture where you have erred in your discourse." It was too much for those who dreaded fair discussion. He was pushed off the bench, saved from deadly blows by Chautemps, denied a hearing by the council, and expelled from the city. There was talk that these banishments were not enough. Farel had been driven away, but after him rose up Froment. He had been expelled, but Guerin appeared in his stead. He had been cast out, but then came Olivetan. This fourth leader had been banished, and now somebody else would suddenly take his place. The whole band must be expelled or treated with worse cruelties. There were secret plots formed in the house of the grand-vicar—an armed attack, a fight on the Molard, a plan to burn out the Huguenots, and a reign of terror.

There was the restoration of the bishop-prince, Peter la Baume, who, six years before, had carried off a young girl to his castle, and raised a tempest that bore him away into banishment. There were all his revenges upon the innocent, some of them being thrust into prison, and some put to flight. Chautemps escaped; but his wife, the delicate, accomplished, devoted and heroic Jaquema, must pay for it by suffering rough treatment in a narrow cell. Claudine saw her house again despoiled, and her husband fleeing for the mountains; and if he had not been overtaken, seized, and cast into a deep dungeon, she would have suffered in his stead. These are mere specimens of the persecution. There was almost everything to please the sister Jeanne de Jussie in making up her journal, and telling how the women met to "make war and kill the heretic wives, in order that the breed might be extirpated," and how, with their little hatchets and swords and caps full of stones, "there were full seven hundred children, from twelve to fifteen years old, firmly resolved to do good service along with their mothers." But what will she note down when Farel himself will be preaching to the nuns of St. Clair?
Yet, amid all this storm and uproar, there was a voice from My Lords of Berne. Messengers went and told them all about this madness for popery and this violence against their ministers. They were aroused, like a "bear robbed of her young." Papal Friburg should not drive out of the re-allied city the men whom protestant Berne sent there to preach the gospel. They "did not mince matters." They gave the Genevan council something to think about, and to put its members in a fearful dilemma. The council was called; there was something new; the looks of all were anxious; the premier, with an air of consternation, offered a letter from the Bernese senators: "We are surprised that in your city the faith in Jesus Christ, and those who seek it, are so greatly molested. ... You will not suffer the word of God to be freely proclaimed, and you banish those who preach it."

What should be done? "If we yield to what Berne demands, the priests will get up fresh disturbances." It will not do to put down the priests, for Friburg insisted on their presence and power. This course, then, seemed full of danger. But was the other any safer? "If we refuse," said they, very solemnly, "Berne will break off the alliance, and the reformed will revolt." This course was dangerous. And they knew not what to do. But they murmured and set the whole city in commotion, and caused a war in their very streets. The priests had their way, one of them blustering and boasting, "Here I am ready to enter the lists with these preachers. Let My Lords of Berne send as many as they like. I will undertake to confound them all."

He should have the chance. "My Lords" would send one who would be glad to meet all such debaters. They sent a deputation, and Farel along with it, but the noisy monk was gone. The stories about Farel and Viret were not of the sort to attract the superstitious. The priests said that they fed devils at their table in the shape of huge black cats, and that one hung from every beard on Farel's face, and that he had no white circle in his eyes. They declared that the preachers had brought war, pestilence, famine, and discord into the city. It seems that Farel did not preach during this brief visit.

The priest party sent for a doctor of the Sorbonne to preach the Christmas sermons. This was Guy Furbity, a man of great pomp and little discretion. He, being a Dominican, was expected to preach in the convent de Rive; but, in order to make the victory the more effective, he was led by an armed escort to the cathedral of St. Peter, some time before the Christmas week. There he declaimed about the soldiers dividing our Lord's garments, and the heretics dividing the church, calling the latter by all the worst of names. One writer states that Froment and Du Moulin were present, and, after hearing the sermon, they offered to prove its fallacy by the Holy Scriptures. This caused an outcry, "Away with them to the fire." Du Moulin was banished, and Froment was hidden in the house of a friend until he could escape.
Just before Christmas a deputation came from Berne, bringing Farel, Viret, and Froment, and insisting that they should be heard, and that the friar Furbity should be arrested for abusing their honors, their ministers, and good Christians generally. The friar went so far that the senate of Geneva put him under close guard. The grand-viceur ordered French Bibles to be destroyed, and forbade anyone to preach without his license. But the preachers taught in private houses and waited for Berne to open the public doors.

"You must arrest Furbity and bring him to trial for insulting us," said the Bernese, "and he must prove from Scripture what he has declared, or recant." The Genevese hesitated. It would offend Friburg. "If you prefer Friburg to us," replied Berne, "then choose her. But what about those large sums of money which you owe us for defending your city? What about the articles of alliance? Refuse our request, and we must have a settlement. We will remove the seal from the articles, and you will look no more to us for help." The senate of Geneva could afford to give up the alliance with papal Friburg, rather than that with Protestant Berne. They therefore let the Bernese summon Furbity to a discussion with Farel.

It was, no doubt, one of the gladdest days of Farel’s life, when he met this friar in an open debate. It was a delight not often afforded to the reformers. Furbity agreed to prove his points by Scripture. Many subjects were discussed through several days. The friar broke down in his undertaking, especially on the eating of no meat in Lent. "I cannot prove it from Scripture," said he, with fading pomp.

"This is keeping your promise admirably," said Farel, "that you would maintain from Scripture, before all the world, and to your latest breath, what you have been preaching."

The friar found himself mastered. He apologized to the Bernese commissioners, and hoped for the liberty of trying his eloquence in quarters where he might have less to do with the Bible. But Berne was in earnest and too severe, no doubt. He must recant, and that in the cathedral. Then he might leave the city. Pale and trembling he went into the pulpit, and instead of recanting his errors before the people, who were already convinced of them, he began to complain of injustice and persecution! The Bernese insisted on his recantation. He refused and thus was false to his own promises. The people became indignant. They wrongly set upon him and almost killed him. The Bernese interfered, and put him into prison. There he was visited by Farel, Viret, and Caroli. On seeing this last one, he almost fainted away, for Caroli had been his divinity tutor, and had left the Romish faith. For two hours they labored with him, but he persisted in his errors. He was kept for two years in prison, and finally released at the intercession of Francis I. We do not justify his punishment. By Farel’s triumph over him in the debates, a strong turn was given to the reformation.
During the next Lent a milder monk was preaching in one of the churches. He was enjoined by the senate to publish the pure gospel, and not allude to the adoration of the Virgin Mary, prayers to the saints, purgatory, and such like subjects. He promised to obey but did not keep his word. The Bernese deputies heard his sermons, and then asked that one of their ministers might preach, promising that he should not attack the mass, nor image worship, nor any peculiar tenet of popery. They said it was reported that their preachers kept in dark corners, met at an inn for worship, and dared not appear in the churches. But the Genevese senate feared to offend Friburg and the bishop, and the request was not granted. The people tried another plan that very day.

In a few hours the bell of the Franciscan church was ringing, and the people flocking thither almost carrying Farel. They set him up in the pulpit, and he preached without interruption. It was the first protestant sermon in a Genevan church. Everyone was astonished, and the grave question was, who of the citizens had rung the bell. "It was not by our consent," said the senate. "We had no hand in it," said the Bernese envoys, "it looks like a wonderful providence." The Friburgers declared that it must not be permitted again, or they would break off their alliance. The senators asked the Bernese to send away the preachers. "Not at all," said the Bernese, who begged Farel to bear in mind the critical state of the city, and be moderate in his attacks upon the errors of the priests. In April 1534, the Friburgers carried out their threat, tore the seal from their treaty, and left Geneva in the hands of Berne and the reformers.

It was a great victory for the Protestant cause, whose weapons were those of peace and good will to men. At Whitsuntide Farel administered the Lord’s supper to a large number of communicants. For a moment there was fear of a disturbance, for a priest entered the church in full dress, as if he intended to break up the services. All were breathless. He walked up to the table, threw off his robes, declared that he thus renounced popery, and wished to be received into the little band of disciples, and sat down with the communicants. The exiles began to return, and the prisoners to see hope of release. By degrees one church after another was opened to the preachers.

The Romanists began to make a new use of their old weapons. The bishop and the canons approved of a plan to surprise the city by night, expel the civil rulers, take the government in their own hands, and sweep out the new doctrines and the new church. The plot came to light, and the bishop came to grief. The pope next tried the "thunders of the Vatican," and Geneva, with her allies, was excommunicated from the church of Rome. This act raised up Huguenots in the streets and in the senate, and finally Geneva broke with the bishop-prince and with the pope.

Smaller plots were laid. A servant girl was engaged by certain priests to take off the ministers by mixing poison with their food. It happened that Farel ate nothing that day, Froment dined elsewhere, and only Viret partook of the
poisoned dish. He felt the effects of it immediately, and, although his life was saved, his health never recovered entirely from the shock. Not long after a still more atrocious attempt was made to poison the bread and wine at the Lord’s supper. These plots excited a sympathy for the reformed and a general hatred against the priests and their party.

The preachers now resided with the Franciscans and gained many of these monks over to the reformed faith. One of these was James Bernard, the brother of Farel’s host. They often talked of the Scriptures together, and the Franciscan agreed to defend the new doctrines before an assembly of his own brethren and those of St. Bernard. Thus, to Farel’s delight, a disputation was held for nearly four weeks, when all the main points between Romanists and Protestants were discussed. Caroli, of whom more anon, then showed that he was anything but a true reformer. The result was most happy. Many of the priests became obedient unto the faith, and the people were strengthened. Claudius Bernard, Farel’s host, demanded that the senate make a public acknowledgement of the reformation, and declare that popery was no longer the religion of Geneva. But the senators hesitated, lest there should be a renewal of disturbances.

One day Farel was invited to preach in the Magdalen church. He went, and, as he entered, the priest left the mass and hastily retired, leaving Farel the pulpit and the audience. The vicar complained. The senate ordered Farel to confine himself to the two churches already open to him and his brethren. A few days afterward Farel appeared in another church, and for this was brought before the senate. He listened respectfully to their rebukes, and then begged to be heard. He urged “that the reformation was the work of Divine Providence, and to delay its progress was to oppose God’s will; besides, almost the whole city had declared in its favor. Issue right commands if you wish the servants of God to render you willing obedience. Give God the glory, and aid the victory of truth over error, especially when you behold some of the most zealous defenders of popery converted to the true religion.” The senate did not withdraw their prohibition, and were reminded that “we must obey God rather than men.” There were some Gamaliel’s in that senate who would not allow any forcible measures.

Another day, August 8, 1535, the bell of the Franciscan church was ringing, and Farel was on the way thither, when he was met by a strong body of men. They obliged him to go to the cathedral, the very throne of Romanism in the city, on whose pillar had once been nailed the “great pardon.” There, in the pulpit of St. Peter’s, he declared what had not rung to its roof for centuries. He was himself again, with his loud voice and his torrent of eloquence. He could not endure the images and relics that were thickly seen in all corners. No doubt he said many severe things, which excited the people against these idolatries, and when they came again in the evening in great numbers, the work of image-breaking commenced in downright earnest. Vandel, Baudichon, and others led
the way, and they left mourning enough for the monks. The next day they visited other churches and made rough havoc of the images.

The senate, not knowing whereunto this would grow, joined with the council of Two Hundred, and they summoned Farel to appear before them. He went with several other ministers, Franciscans, and citizens. He addressed them with firmness and moderation at first, and then warming with Scripture and the greatness of his cause, he employed all his bold and masterly eloquence in defense of the faith. "We do not wish those priests, who cannot receive our doctrines, to be punished," said he, "but we pray for their conversion. We are here to preach, not to persecute. We are ready to seal the truth with our blood." He then prayed most fervently that God would give light to the members of the council, so that they might act wisely in behalf of the people who needed salvation. All was respectful, earnest, powerful, and convincing.

The councilors were touched, moved, and decided. They asked the Romish clergy to come forward and state their arguments. The monks confessed their ignorance, and those higher in rank simply hurled back their contempt for Farel and their defiance of the council. It was firmly resolved to abolish popery, and to establish protestantism. In the evening of the same day, August 10, the vicar was informed of the proceedings, and that his services were no longer desired. The mass was forbidden, even in private houses. The Bible was to have its place and its power. The bishop-prince removed to the little town of Gex, and the see was declared vacant. The monasteries were suppressed, and an opportunity was given for Sister Jeanne to hear that fearful preacher, William Farel, on whom she had expended so much of her wit and her wailing.

Whether Sister Jeanne heard Farel or not, we cannot tell, but he preached to the nuns of St. Claire, and showed that Mary and Elizabeth were not shut up in convents, but were excellent mothers at their homes. They had been thrown into horrors long before by certain women who told them, "If the heretics win the day they will certainly make you all marry, young and old, all to your perdition." And now they took to flight, furnishing Sister Jeanne a chance to employ her vivid pen in a more sorrowful way than usual. Some of them had not been outside the convent walls for many years, and they were frightened at the most harmless objects. They spent a day in getting to St. Julien, about four miles distant. "It was a pitiful thing," she writes, "to see this holy company in such a plight, so overcome with fatigue and grief that several swooned by the way. It was rainy weather, and all were obliged to walk through the muddy roads, except four poor old women who had taken their vows more than sixteen years before. Two of these who were past sixty-six, and had never seen anything of the world, fainted away repeatedly. They could not bear the wind; and when they saw the cattle in the fields, they took the cows for bears, and the sheep for ravening wolves. They who met them were so overcome with compassion that they could not speak a word. And though our mother, the vicaress, had supplied them all with good shoes to save their feet, they could
not walk in them. And so they walked from five in the morning, when they left Geneva, till near midnight, when they got to St. Julien, which is only a little league off." We should feel more pity for these nuns if they had been as simple and innocent as was generally supposed, and as they wished to be thought. It created no little surprise, after their departure, to find that there was a secret underground passage leading from their convent to the monastery of the Franciscans. From this it was suspected that they were not altogether dead to earthly vanities.

The citizens met on the twenty-first of May, 1535, and took an oath to support the Reformation. Geneva was rising into a Protestant state, quite theocratic in its government and powerful in its influence upon the world. Michelet, who is a moderate Roman Catholic, declares, "Europe was saved by Geneva." And who saved Geneva? So far as mere men are concerned, due credit must be given to Farel, the great missionary, and Calvin, the great theologian. Unto God they gave all the glory.

CHAPTER XVIII

Calvin United with Farel
1534–1538

Let us go back a little and see what has become of some of our French heroes, and trace the steps of others who are on the way to Geneva.

"Never tire in the middle of your journey," was the maxim of a young man who was entering the old city of Angoulême, where the Duchess Margaret was born. He walked along a street which in after years bore the name Rue de Genève, in honor of him. In this street was the mansion of Du Tillet, where he knocked and was admitted. There he had a young friend, Louis Du Tillet, to whose refuge he was invited, and he was now welcomed as John Calvin. A fierce persecution had driven Calvin from Paris, and in this retreat he found a happy home. In the large library he found books that he had never seen before, and prepared for writing the Institutes, the greatest work on theology that had ever appeared. In a vineyard nearby he took recreation, and to this day it is called La Calvine. In the village of Claix he drew the notice of the people, who asked the name of that short, thin, pale young man, and they called him "the little Greek," because he was giving some persons lessons in that language.

Not far distant was Nerac, the residence of Margaret, who was now the queen of Navarre. Calvin wished to see Lefèvre before the old man was taken away, and Roussel, whom he feared was not firm enough in the faith. He set out, and at Nerac inquired for the house of Lefèvre. Everybody knew the good old man, and perhaps his Testament was in many of their hands. "He is a little bit of a
man,” said they, “old as Herod, but lively as gunpowder.” This old man, with his white hair and broken appearance, had about him a living force, meekness, gentleness, moral grandeur, and heavenly brightness that charmed the young visitor. They talked, rejoiced, sympathized and wept together. Lefèvre was deeply moved when he saw that Calvin was bold enough to break away from the old church and enlist “under the banner of Jesus.” Gazing upon him, he said, “Young man, you will one day be a powerful instrument in the Lord’s hand. ... God will make use of you to restore the kingdom of heaven in France. Be on your guard, and let your ardor be always tempered with charity.” Thus they talked. The old man pressed the young man’s hand, and they parted, never to meet again on earth.

About three years after this Lefèvre died (1537) at Nerac, where Margaret took delight in treating him as a father. One day when near his end he burst into tears. The queen asked the reason. He replied, sorrowfully, that he could not help reproaching himself, because he had shrunk from the very cross which he had advised others to bear. While he had imparted to so many the gospel, and encouraged them in exposing their lives for its sake, it grieved him to think that he was dying in quiet, and that by flight he had deprived himself of the glory of a martyr’s name.

Gerard Roussel never broke with the Romish church, although, as bishop of Oleron, he still preached the new doctrines. A Roman Catholic wrote of him, “His life was without reproach. His kennel of greyhounds was a great crowd of poor people; his horses and his train were a flock of young children instructed in letters. He had much credit with the people, upon whom he stamped by degrees a hatred and contempt for the religion of their fathers.” The good man was a Protestant at heart, and he died in 1550.

Calvin left this region, gathered about him several missionaries, and they labored in the west of France, until the wrath of the priests knew no bounds. He gained no little fame as an “arch-heretic,” while his friends said, “Would to God that we had many Calvins.” But we find him and Du Tillet, with two horses and two servants, leaving France in 1534. They were robbed by one of the servants, who took their money, mounted one of the horses, and rode away as fast as he could. One horse was left, and the other servant came forward and offered them ten crowns that he had. This took them to Strasburg, where they rested and suddenly heard that a certain William Farel had made a tremendous uproar in France.

An old chronicler called 1534 the year of the placards. Certain men in Paris wished to strike a blow in behalf of rights which they dare not proclaim. They seemed oppressed into silence, and they wished to protest against errors and wrongs in a way that would arouse the public attention of all, from the king to the cottager. They sent Feret to Switzerland to learn how to do it. He consulted with Farel and his co-laborers. The scheme of the placards was
proposed. Farel undertook the task. He could not write without using "his trenchant style and thundering eloquence." He wrote it, and proved himself to be what Michelet calls him, "the Bayard of the battles of God." The paper was printed in two forms, one for posting up on the walls, and the other as little tracts to be dropped in the streets. The sheets were packed, and Feret departed with "the thunderbolt forged on Farel’s anvil." These were soon after distributed far and near, to be exposed in every city of the kingdom. It was long enough for a short sermon, and when it appeared men read a terrible protest against the errors of Romanism. Beda charged Margaret with it, but she felt that it was a protest against her and her temporizers. Next Beda accused the king, but he cleared his hands by allowing a furious persecution to sweep the land. There were martyrs, prisoners, and exiles by scores. One of the prisoners was a most eloquent preacher, named Courault, who spoke forth the gospel without reserve or disguise. He had so presented the truth to Louis Du Tillet, while he was in Paris, as to lead him out of Margaret’s party of temporizers into that of the Scripturists, soon to be headed by Calvin. Aged and infirm as he was when he was brought before the king, he would not yield, and, in spite of Margaret’s tears and entreaties, he was sent back to the convent. Did Margaret have a hand on the keys? Whether or not, he in some way escaped, and, though nearly blind, he took the road to Basle. We shall meet him again in Geneva.

Farel was represented at Paris by one of the martyrs, and it will not be a mere episode to tell the story of the converted friar, Le Croix. While a Dominican at his convent in Paris, he was startled in mind by the teaching of Cop and young Calvin. He longed for the gospel, dared not hear it in the capital, and resolved to go to a country where it was freely preached. The eyes of Duprat were on the watch, but he escaped and went to Neufchatel and Geneva, leaving his cowl in the convent and his monkish name in the air. He was thenceforth Alexander Canus. Heartily was he welcomed by Farel and Froment, who carefully taught him the glad tidings which they preached. He was converted—completely transformed. He must proclaim the Sun of Righteousness, point to the cross, preach the Kingdom. One thought absorbed all others, "O my Savior! thou hast given thy life for me; I desire to give mine for thee."

But he could not declare the truth in Geneva. The priests controlled the magistrates, and the magistrates wrote him a heretic and condemned him to death. They, however, lifted the sentence "for fear of the king of France," and he was simply turned out of the city. On the highway beyond the walls he stopped and preached to the people who followed him. All were charmed by his powerful eloquence. "Nobody could stop him," says Froment, "so strongly did his zeal impel him to win people to the Lord."

He went with Froment to Berne, and there asked himself and heaven where he should go and preach. To Switzerland? It had already able men. To France? Prisons and death awaited him there. But France needed preachers; he might,
perhaps, do something for the gospel. He crossed the border, and went into the region of Macon, where Margaret’s chaplain, Michael D’Aranda, had preached nearly ten years before. He raised his voice among the simple and warm-hearted people, who were exposed to the wildest fanaticism. Wandering along the streams he entered the cottages, talked unto the peasants and planted the truth on the plains of Bresse. Certain pious goldsmiths in Lyons heard rumors of his wonderful work. They probably remembered that a certain William Farel had filled Dauphiny with his doctrine ten years before, and that Peter Sebville was not allowed to preach the Lenten Sermons in their city. They were ready to run risks and to make sacrifices for their faith, and they sent for Alexander to visit them. He went and entered their shops, talked of the new doctrines, and found several "poor men of Lyons" rich in faith. The conversation was pleasant, but he was not satisfied. He must teach more openly. He preached from house to house, then drew the people into larger assemblies. The good word grew. Opposition sprang up like tares to choke its growth. He exclaimed, "Oh that Lyons were a free city like Geneva."

Those who wished to hear the truth became more thirsty every day. They went to him and listened to his messages; they dragged him to their homes; they gave him more work than he could do. He asked Farel to send him help, but none came. The persecution was thought to be so fierce at Lyons that nobody dared face it. He worked on alone, in by-streets or in upper rooms. The priests and their pack were always on the watch ready to seize him. But as soon as his sermon was ended, his friends surrounded him, carried him away and hid him in safe retreats. But he could not remain silent. Wistfully putting out his head and looking round the house to see that no spy was near, he sallied forth, went to the other end of the city, and there preached with all his energy. Scarcely was his sermon finished when he was again taken and hid in some new retreat where he could not be found. "The evangelist was everywhere and nowhere." When the priests were looking for him in the southern suburbs, he was preaching on the northern heights that overlook the city. Thus he was the invisible preacher, a mystery to the people, a marvel to the police.

He did still more; he visited the prisons. One day he heard that two men, well known in Geneva, had come to Lyons on business; the Genevan priests had informed against them as heretical Huguenots, and the bishop had thrown them into a dungeon. They were the energetic Baudichon de la Maison-Neuve and his friend Cologny. Alexander asked to see them; the gates opened; the strange preacher, who had baffled the police, was inside the Episcopal prison. He was in jeopardy every moment. Had any of the agents, who were searching for his track, recognized him, the gates would never have opened to him again, and his sudden disappearance would have been another of those mysteries which Rome has ever been skilful in preparing. He felt no fears. He spoke to the two Genevans "a word in season"; he went to other prisoners with the heavenly consolations, and left the cells, no man laying hands on him.
The priests found out what a chance they had missed, but it was too late. He was off, they knew not where. They were "near bursting with vexation," and lamented with one another, saying, "There is a Lutheran, who preaches and disturbs the people, collecting assemblies here and there in the city, whom we must catch, for he will spoil all the world, as everybody is running after him; and yet we cannot find him or know who he is." More diligently did they watch and search, but all was useless. Never had a preacher in such strange ways escaped so many snares. They began to say that the unknown man must be possessed of strange powers, by which he passed about invisible.

Easter came—the time when the reformers in Lyons were to boldly raise their banner. The goldsmiths were no longer content with secret meetings; they had made every preparation for a large assembly; the place was settled; they talked of little else, and notice was quietly given from house to house. The day brought the people, and the converted Dominican preached to a large audience. Whether in a church, or hall, or in the open air, the chronicle does not say. He moved and swayed his hearers, and "it might have been said that Christ rose again that Easter morn in Lyons, where he had been so long in the sepulchre." Spies were present; knowing glances were cast; the preacher was no longer invisible; the detectives saw him, heard him, studied his features, took note of his heresies, and hurried to report them to their superiors.

The gladness of many a heart found vent in many a humble dwelling. The cautious believers had a taste of the good word. They wanted a perpetual feast. They requested him to preach again on the morrow. He was ready, and he spoke to a larger audience than before. Eyes were fixed, ears attent, hearts open, and souls rejoicing. But the police were there, charged to seize the mysterious preacher. After a touching sermon his friends surrounded him to take him safely away. But the officers laid hands on him and took him to prison. He was tried and condemned to death. This cruel sentence caused many to mourn. They urged him to appeal. He did appeal, but the result was he was transferred to Paris. They remembered that Paul had once appealed to Caesar, and thus he won over a great nation at Rome. Why might not Alexander do the same at Paris? He was led away by a captain and his company, who knew not the nature of the preacher’s offense.

The captain was a worthy man. He rode beside Alexander, and they soon were in conversation. The officer asked him why he was arrested. The cause was told. The captain was astonished; he became still more interested in the story of the mysterious preacher; new truths entered his mind, and he wished himself like the pious prisoner. "The captain was converted," says Froment, "while taking him to Paris." Alexander did not stop at this. He spoke to the guards, one by one, and several of them were won over to the gospel. They halted for the night at an inn, and there he found means to address a few good words to the servants and the heads of the household. This was repeated at every stopping-place, and he was happier in receiving the attentions of the
villagers to the things he told them, than ever was prince in having suppers and ovations at the towns through which he passed. It was often whispered abroad that a strange captive was at the inn, and the people came to hear him. Now and then they brought the priest or the orator of the village to dispute with him, but he soon silenced them with arguments, and went on touching the hearts of his hearers. No mob could be raised, for a captain was in the crowd. Many left the inn, saying, "Really, we never saw a man answer his adversaries better by Holy Scripture." Thus Alexander, the captive, marched on as a conqueror, waited upon by increasing crowds. "Wonderful thing," remarks Froment, "he was more useful at the inns and on the road than he had ever been before."

The Easter of 1534 had passed in Paris a very happy one for Roussel and Courault, who were set at liberty; but a wretched one for Beda and his pack, who were thrust into prison in place of the preachers. All this was done by the king, in answer Margaret’s entreaties. All Paris had enough to talk about, along, with the rumors from Lyons concerning an invisible preacher, who kept the police in perplexity. But a change was suddenly given to the conversation. One day a man loaded with chains entered the capital. He was escorted by archers, who treated him with the greatest respect, even when leading him to the great prison. It was Alexander. The Dominicans remembered him as the friar, Le Croix, and they made the most noise. If Beda was taken from their party, they said, one should be taken from the other party to match him, and Francis I let matters take their course. Alexander was brought before the court. "Name your accomplices," said the judges. He had none to name. The order was declared, "Give him the boot."

The reader will remember William Budœus, the illustrious scholar. He was at the trial; he saw the awful tortures applied until a limb was crushed. He heard the groan and the prayer, "O God! there is neither pity nor mercy in these men! May I find both in thee!"

"Keep on," said the chief of torture.

"Is there no Gamaliel here to moderate these cruelties?" asked the victim, as he turned on Budœus a mild look of supplication. The scholar had been astonished at the patience of the sufferer.

"It is enough," said the man of weighty words. "He has been tortured too much; you ought to be satisfied."

The inhuman work ceased. The poor man was lifted up a cripple, and carried to his dungeon. Not long after, amid great display, the sentence was pronounced, "Alexander Canus, of Evreux, in Normandy, you are condemned to be burnt alive." A flash of joy lit up his face.
"Truly, he is more joyful than ever before," said the spectators. The priests then came forward. They feared lest Alexander should preach the gospel even at that very hour.

"If you utter a word," said they, "you will have your tongue cut out"—a practice that began about this time. They shaved his head and took off his clerical dress; meanwhile he was silent, only smiling at some of their absurdities. They brought the rough robe to put it on him.

"O God!" he exclaimed, "is there any greater honor than to receive this day the livery which thy Son received in the house of Herod?"

He was put into a mean dust-cart, and as it jolted on, he stood up, leaned toward the people, and "scattered the seed of the gospel with both hands." The hearers were moved, some with rage, some with pity; the Dominicans, in the cart with him, pulled his gown and in every way annoyed him, but he would not be checked.

"Either recant, or hold your tongue," said they.

"I will not renounce Jesus Christ," he replied, turning round to them with a withering look. "Depart from me, ye deceivers of the people."

The ruling passion for preaching was strong in death. Alexander saw some lords and ladies in the crowd, along with his friends, the monks, and common people, and he asked permission to speak a few words to them. A dignitary, unusually gracious, gave his consent. Then with a holy enthusiasm, Alexander confessed himself a believer in Christ. "Proceed," said he to the executioners. They bound him to the pile, but above the roar of the flames his voice of faith was heard, saying, "O Savior, receive my spirit. My Redeemer! O my Redeemer!" At last all was still. The people wept. The executioners said one to another, "What a strange criminal!"

"If this man is not saved, who will be?" whispered the monks, no doubt remembering their good brother friar, Le Croix.

"A great wrong has been done to that man," said many who were beating their breasts and starting home. "It is wonderful how these people suffer themselves to be burnt in defense of their faith."

Burnt in defense of the gospel! Truly this was the only real defense it had in France when but a few months before this monk had left the capital to be taught of William Farel, to preach and found a church in Lyons, to talk of the good tidings along every road and in all company, and to return a martyr, and leave the world a lesson from his short but glorious career.
But if the faith be defended by the death of one champion, it is to be fortified by the life of another. It was Calvin’s duty to escape, for the Lord had need of his active energies.

In the summer of 1536 a young preacher came to the house of Viret in Geneva, intending to stop there for only a night. He had been in Italy and was on the way to Basle where he had spent some time as an exile from France. Some one—Du Tillet or Caroli—discovered him, and went and brought Farel to see him. He was already in high repute as the author of the Institutes of the Christian Religion, and Farel met, for the first time, John Calvin, from the country of his noble friends, Lefèvre and Olivetan. Farel thought what Beza afterwards said, “God conducted him hither,” and was resolved to secure his services in that city. He at once presented the case to the guest of Viret.

"I cannot bind myself to any one church," says Calvin, "but I would endeavor to be useful to all. I have my plan for study before me, and I am not one of those who can afford to be always giving without receiving."

"Now," said Farel, with that manner and voice which filled thousands with awe, "I declare to you, in the name of the Almighty God—to you who only put forth your studies as a pretence—that if you will not help us to carry on this work of God, the curse of God will rest upon you, for you will be seeking your own honor rather than that of Christ."

The conscience of the young traveler was so touched that he never forgot it. Toward the close of his life he said, "As I was kept in Geneva, not properly by an express exhortation or request, but rather by the terrible threatenings of William Farel, which were as if God had seized me by his awful hand from heaven, so was I compelled, through the terror thus inspired, to give up the plan of my journey, but yet without pledging myself, for I was conscious of my timidity and weakness, to undertake any definite office." He is first noticed in the archives of Geneva as iste Gallus, "that Gaul," but in the spirit of modern appreciation Montesquieu says, "The Genevese ought to observe the day of his arrival in their city as a festival."

In the highest part of the city, where once stood a temple to Apollo, visitors still enter the old cathedral of St. Peter, dating back to the sixth century, and gaze on the same little pulpit in which Calvin preached his powerful sermons. We suppose that he there stood when his first sermon in Geneva created such an enthusiasm that the people could scarcely restrain their delight. They followed him to his lodgings, and he was obliged to promise that he would preach the next day, so that their friends might hear him. Farel was overjoyed, for if he were thus eclipsed, there would be all the more light in that dark city, which was waiting for it. Calvin, soon after his arrival, was elected preacher and professor of theology. He at first declined the former office, but was so
urged that he accepted it the next year. His first labors were almost gratuitous, but none the less cheerfully rendered.

With no little joy to Farel it was arranged to have a debate at Lausanne, where he had made several attempts to gain a footing for the truth. Viret had succeeded and gathered a small church. The priests agreed to the discussion. All the Romish clergy were urged to come. And some of them, who knew not so much of the Bible as even the ten commandments, attended. The elders of the church and the citizens were invited. The bishop protested, but the lords of Berne had a will of their own in such matters. On their way thither the Protestant ministers narrowly escaped the hands of some assassins, who had been planted on the road to murder them. Farel, who took the leading part, drew up ten propositions relating to the true faith, the true church, and the true ordinances of worship. Several days were spent in the discussions, and if the cathedral ever had more priests in it—for there were many—it certainly never before had so many Protestants. After one of Calvin’s arguments against transubstantiation, a Franciscan, named Tandi, arose before the whole assembly, confessed that he was overcome by the power of the truth, and declared that henceforth he would live according to the gospel of Christ. Viret spoke more than Calvin, and Farel more than all. In closing the debates he said, “We do not thirst for blood, like those who laid in wait to destroy us on our way hither. So far from seeking to punish them, we interceded on their behalf, and our only wish is that they may receive complete forgiveness.” The result was favorable to the Protestant cause. Several of the principal persons on the papal side went home convinced of their errors, and became advocates for the reformation. The Bernese divided the canton into seven districts, and appointed ministers in them all.

At Geneva Farel still pushed on his schemes. With the help of Calvin he drew up a brief confession of faith and certain rules of discipline. It was not easy to break up the old customs of the people, and many of Farel’s new measures were not to their taste. They were lively and fond of excitement, and had been used to an almost unbounded license. In clear weather they loved music and dancing in the open air. On rainy days they had their cups and cards at the wine shops. Among all, their holidays Sunday was quite as gay as any, when masquerades and other mummeries were their delight. But, as all this was connected with the baser forms of profligacy, Farel attempted to suppress these amusements. The silver tones of the convent bells, which had been baptized in order to give their sounds a power over bad weather, ghosts, and Satan, were to be heard no more. The bells were to be cast into cannon for the defense of the city, thus changing their carols into thunders of war. Gambling, swearing, slandering, dancing, the singing of idle songs in the streets, Sabbath-breaking, and absence from church without good reasons were forbidden. The people must be at home by nine o’clock in the evening. The senate passed these laws, and they were proclaimed with a trumpet.
To the confession of faith was added Calvin’s catechism, and it was ordered to be printed and read at St. Peter’s every Sunday, until the people should understand it. It was adopted, so that Calvin wrote, “We easily succeeded in obtaining that the citizens should be summoned by tens, and swear to adopt the confession, which was done with much satisfaction.” Those who would not adopt it lost their rights as citizens. On a solemn day, July 20, 1537, the people took the oath, for the third time, to support the reformation.

Murmurings began to be heard, then louder opposition, and a party grew up which held their meetings, and wore fresh flowers as a badge. The lines were drawn, and the contentions became bitter. What they complained of most was the determination of Farel not to use the stone fonts for baptism, nor unleavened bread in the Lord’s supper, nor to observe the festivals of Christmas, New Year, Annunciation, and Ascension. Berne was consulted and decided against Farel. The Genevan senate followed in the same decision, and the Bernese began to have more and noisier friends than ever before in that city. This party now made use of the awful name of My Lords of Berne, in order to threaten and insult the ministers whom Berne had such trouble in keeping in Geneva. Troops of them went about parading the streets by night, insulting the ministers at their homes, and threatening to throw them into the Rhone. Berne had preserved the stone fonts, the unleavened bread, and the four festivals, and they would hold fast to them, for they were not able to see the principle which Farel thought was involved in them. He regarded them as relics of popery, and feared these relics would lead back the people into the old reality. Calvin took his side, although he declared, “Little will be said about ceremonies before the judgment-seat of God.” Councils and synods failed to restore peace. A plot was suspected against the preachers.

The aged, blind, and eloquent Courault, whom the Queen Margaret had tenderly cherished as his sight was failing, and whom the placards at Paris had sent into exile, was now at Geneva. He preached with much fire against the decision of Berne, and handled Genevan politics in too rough a way to gain his point. He was forbidden to preach, but he again entered the pulpit. He was then cast into prison, and for some time his best friends could not procure his release.

A bold step was taken by Farel and Calvin. They refused to administer the Lord’s Supper with unleavened bread in a city that would not allow any proper church discipline. Easter Sunday was coming, and the Sacrament was expected on that day. The council urged them to administer it; they refused and were forbidden to enter the pulpit. They, however, went at the time and each preached twice, Calvin at St. Peter’s, and Farel at St. Gervais, without any communion. A great principle was now coming to light, that of not allowing the state to rule the church in matters of religion. But a great disturbance arose in the city. Some took the sword, but the reformers employed the weapons of
Scripture. No blood was shed, and what was gained by Farel and Calvin could not be seen for a few years. They first must suffer for their principles.

The next morning the senate met and passed sentence of banishment on Calvin and Farel. In three days they must leave the city. They were informed of the act, and said, "Let it be so; it is better to serve God than man." Courault was released and permitted to go with them. He went to Thonon where Christopher Fabri was preaching, and he was welcomed as a father in this excellent pastor’s house. Of the style of hospitality which he enjoyed, Calvin can tell us in a letter to Fabri, written after a journey through the cantons. He says, "I could never get your wife to treat us in a plain homely way. She repeatedly requested me to ask for whatever I chose as if it were my own. She entertained us too sumptuously. We felt just as much at home as if you had been there." The good hostess was surely none the less kind to the aged refugee. But he could not rest even there. He must preach the faith so long unknown to him while a monk, and he was afterwards settled at Orbe, where the zealous, blind, and lovely old man gained many friends, and in a few months they wept when they laid him in the grave.

The lords of Berne had not dreamed that they were causing such a result as this. A violent man named Peter Konzen, a Bernese minister residing at Geneva, had a prominent hand in the mischief, for he had misrepresented all parties. In a few weeks Farel and Calvin appeared before the senate of Berne. The Bernese wished to undo what had been done under excitement. After many discussions and several messages to the Genevese senate, they resolved to send back the ministers, along with Viret, whose milder methods might restore order. Two senators went with them, but the ministers lately exiled met with a cold refusal near the gates of Geneva. One of them thus describes it: "We were about a mile from the city when a messenger, in great haste, met us and stated that we were forbidden to enter. The (Bernese) messengers held us back or we should otherwise have tranquilly pursued our journey. But this saved our lives, for we afterwards learned that an ambush had been formed outside the city, and that close to the very gates, twenty gladiators, known banditti, were lying in wait for us."

The Bernese ambassadors and Viret went on and entered the city. They appeared before the Genevan senate. They asked that the exiles might be admitted, their apology heard, and their sentence expunged. They pleaded the very eminent services of Farel to whom his opposers were greatly indebted for their present liberty. They said that Calvin and Farel would now baptize at the fonts, use the unleavened bread, and allow the festivals to be prudently observed. Viret put forth all his eloquence, and the senators and citizens were moved. But it was all in vain. New charges were founded upon mere trifles and quibbles, and the senate, in a stormy assembly, renewed the decree of banishment.
Bound in heart as brothers, Farel and Calvin took their way toward the cities on the Rhine, where a Protestant could find refuge when no other place would receive him. "Wet with the rain and almost dead with weariness," they entered Basle. Bucer sent word to Calvin to come to Strasburg, but as Farel was not invited, he chose to remain with this Boanerges whom he loved with all tenderness. The gentle sunbeam was wedded to the lightning by the power of that grace which unites the most diverse natures. It is a proof that Farel was not all fury and self-will, when he drew so closely to him such gentle men as Lefèvre, Œcolampadius, Viret, and Calvin.

Final Labors and Death

This section comprises chapters 19 through 22. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

**Chapter 19**  Peace to the Storms  
**Chapter 20**  Farel's Neighborly Visits  
**Chapter 21**  Old Life with New Love  
**Chapter 22**  The Call to Glory

CHAPTER XIX
Here lived in Basle one of the best of men, named Symon Grynaeus, a school-fellow of Melancthon, who said that he had "a mildness of temper that was never put out, and an almost excessive bashfulness." Beza compared him "to the splendor of the sun, that overpowers the light of the stars." The papists of Spires knew his worth, for they thought it policy to attack him with such violence in 1529 that he barely escaped. He was invited to Basle to take the place of Erasmus as a professor. When Calvin was there in 1534 he met this good man and was captivated by his gentleness. They became most affectionate friends, and often shut themselves up in their room for study. To his house Calvin went as a very damp and chilly exile from Geneva, and there he found a cheerful fire, a sympathetic heart, and a home where he remained for many months.

In the house of Oporinus, the printer, Farel was lodged, waiting for Providence to open some new door to him. Toussaint wished him and Calvin to return to Lausanne, and there labor. But in a few weeks there came a very unexpected call. Two councilors and two ministers of Neuchatel came to see him. They said their people had heard of Farel’s sufferings, and their old attachment to him had revived in such strength that they must have him among them. They could not forget how he had preached on the stone in Serriere, in their streets, and in the cathedral on the hill. They had first heard from his lips the word of God, and, his weighty voice seemed yet ringing in their ears. They had prayed fervently for God to send them a chief minister, and all wanted Farel. Besides, Viret and Fabri were urgent in pressing the call upon him, and so, too, were the neighboring churches.

At first he hesitated, for the desire to be with Calvin and to engage in study was strong. Then the church at Neuchatel was sadly in want of discipline. He might have the late experience at Geneva all over again, and be exiled in less than a year. But duty began to impress his mind; conscience lifted her voice; his soul caught the old fire, and he was himself again, bold, fearless, ready to sacrifice himself, intensely anxious to preach, and possessing an "ambition for God’s glory without bounds." His mind was made up, and at once he set out for his parish.

Soon after his arrival mournful tidings followed him. His sister had followed him to Basle, and there she saw her son die of the plague. Calvin wrote thus, in a letter to "Farel, the faithful preacher at Neuchatel, my beloved brother. Your nephew, last Sabbath-day, fell sick here of the plague. His companion and the goldsmith, who bore witness to the gospel at Lyons, immediately sent to me. As I had taken something to cure my headache I could not visit him myself. ... Grynaeus visited him frequently. I did so as soon as my health allowed it. When our T. (Du Tailly) saw that I did not fear the danger he insisted on sharing it
with me. We spent a long time with him yesterday. When the signs of
approaching death were evident, I imparted spiritual rather than bodily
comfort. His mind seemed to wander, but he still had sufficient consciousness
to call me back to his chamber, and to entreat me earnestly to pray for him.
He had heard me speak much of the usefulness of prayer. Early this morning,
about four o’clock, he departed to the Lord."

There were many difficulties at Neufchatel. The ablest ministers had been sent
by the Bernese lords into other cantons, and some of the old priests were in
the churches, consuming the revenues and corrupting the people by their bad
example. The reigning prince also had laid his hand upon the revenues of most
of the churches, and it was a serious question how to support pastors in the
different parishes. The neglect of pastoral attentions to the sick, the poor, the
ignorant, and the young was disheartening. The governor had lately adopted
the reform, but he still disliked Farel. This was probably George de Rive, whom
we well remember.

There was also much to cheer his heart when he recalled the day that he first
crossed the lake in his little boat. Fabri had gone into the parish of Boudry and
given the papists a chance to repeat their tricks of ringing bells and shouting to
drown his voice while preaching, and then fall upon and nearly kill him after
the sermon was ended. But the parish finally had decided for the reformation.
The young minister proved that he not only admired Farel, but took him for his
model.

The shepherds and hunters of Locle often came to a little oratory, about which
there was a legend which was truer, in their view, than the gospel. St. Hubert
was once riding through these mountains on a hunt, when a bear met him and
killed his horse. But, nothing daunted, he mounted the bear and rode safely
home, to the amazement of everybody. Hubert was the hunter’s patron saint,
and a celebrated lover of the chase had built this oratory. The prayers offered
there were probably few, and certainly very superstitious. A greater hunter
was coming to Locle. John de Bely was on the way at the time of a fair, when
Madame Williamette of Valangin had him seized and brought into the castle.
She forced him to debate for two hours with her priest. "Put him in prison," she
exclaimed, but the good-natured priest interceded and he was released. Bely
found a friend in this worthy vicar, who took him by the arm, led him to the
parsonage, refreshed him with bread and wine, and sent him on rejoicing. The
people said that "the mountain bears were beginning to be tamed."

One day the people of Brenets, far up in the Jura mountains, resolved to take
the images out of their church, so that they might worship God in spirit and in
truth. They removed them and prepared to break them in pieces and throw
them into the river as had been done at Neufchatel. They looked up and saw
two fine oxen coming, driven by some villagers from a little town in France,
just over the border.
"We offer you these oxen," said the villagers, "in exchange for your pictures and images."

"Pray take them," said the people of Brenets. The idols were gathered up by one party, and the oxen driven away by the other, and an old chronicler says that "each thought they had made a fine exchange." In such ways the gospel was working in the canton of Neufchatel. "With the exception of one village, the evangelical faith was established throughout the whole principality, without the aid of the prince and the lords, and indeed in spite of them. A hand mightier than theirs was breaking the bonds, removing the obstacles, and emancipating souls. The Reformation triumphed, and after God, it was Farel's work." He had sown bountifully a few years before, and now he has returned to reap in the same fields. History dwells less upon the peaceful progress of his work than upon the disturbances raised by the foes of the truth.

There was one man who made himself such a thorn in the sides of Farel and his co-laborers that, on their account, he should be mentioned. This was Peter Caroli, whom Farel had known in Paris as a dissolute doctor of the Sorbonne. A few of the adjectives applied to him by historians, are these: vain, fickle, frivolous, insinuating, servile, quarrelsome, hypocritical, ambitious, dangerous, insufferable, seeking to push himself forward, and unworthy of notice had he not had the honor to excite trouble among the reformers.

In this shrewd and crafty man Beda had found his match after he assailed the priests. Had he been a thorough reformer he might have been burned, but he was too trifling a character to be worthy of death. It was said that two such men as Caroli would have wearied out the activity of Beda himself, but he was not content with provoking the Romanists. He left Paris in fear, and, for safety, took refuge with those who favored the gospel.

For a while he was with Lefèvre and Roussel; and Margaret, who gave him the parish of Alençon, could make nothing of him, for there he persecuted the Protestants. Changing again, he put on the face of a mild reformer, and was driven out of France. He wandered about for a time, and at length appeared in Geneva.

There he fawned on Farel and Viret, but would not subscribe to their confession of faith, lest he should not seem to be above these brethren. He sought to be the chief director in the protestant council, and gave all the annoyance possible when Anthony Saunier was chosen. At one time Farel detected him in pocketing a collection for the poor. There were rumors that he still led a very disorderly life. He professed to be very penitent and to reform. In 1536 he went to Neufchatel, preached there, and married into a respectable family. By dint of entreaty he got the Bernese to appoint him chief minister at Lausanne, where his age and doctor's degree gave him the precedence over the tried and meritorious Viret. His ambition rose, and he soon went to Berne,
asking to be appointed the overseer of the whole clergy of the district. The Bernese saw his pride, sharply rebuked him, and ordered him to pay deference to Viret. This mortified him exceedingly, and he began to meditate schemes of revenge against Viret and Farel.

After long endurance of his insults, slanders, and half-popish sermons, Viret brought him before the lords of Berne at Lausanne. Farel had shown the utmost solicitude for his welfare and hoped yet to see him a truly converted man, all to no purpose. Viret also had dealt gently with him although he suspected him of bad conduct.

He was found guilty by the council, and required to make a confession to those whom he had injured. But to avoid this he left the country in great haste and secrecy. He stopped at a little town on his way and there wrote an abusive letter against the ministers who had shown all the gentleness that they could. He wandered about, found Calvin at Strasburg, and reconciled himself to the evangelical party, and just when they hoped he might become a firm and consistent protestant, he went to a cardinal Tournon in France, forsook the reformation, embraced popery again, was recommended to the pope, and boasted that he had won a victory over the gospel preachers. The pope restored him to the Romish church, released him from his wife (whom he did not call by so tender and sacred a name), and Caroli became again a priest. He honored Farel by calling him the chief of all heretics.

To the great surprise of Farel it was reported that Caroli had appeared at Neufchatel. He had not found that a second return to his "mother church" had secured him the preferment which he wished. He desired to return to the church which he had so vilified at Rome, and was even willing that "the chief of all heretics" should receive him. Farel passed over all the slanders and abuse that had been flung at him, and believing that the power of God could yet convert even a Caroli, hastened to visit him. The great waverer showed some signs of repentance when Farel, Viret, and their friends met him. They plainly brought to his remembrance all the evil that he had done, and he begged their forgiveness, hoping that his past errors might be forever buried. They gave him the right hand of fellowship and promised to do what they could in his behalf. They were not agreed as to his restoration to the church and the university. Some thought that he was a worthless individual on whom all forbearance and kindness would be lost. Farel, who had most reason to be severe with him, was most anxious to see this wandering sheep brought back into the fold.

The senate of Berne had a matter to settle with him, for he had left the country despising their orders and slandering their honors to the pope. They cared nothing for the pope, but they had a high self-respect. They had him arrested and tried. Again Farel interposed as a peace-maker, but the senate condemned him and let him off with a fine and a lecture. There was a general distrust of him among the reformed churches, and he was advised by Farel to
go to Basle and there remain until he could gain the esteem and confidence of those whom he had offended. Those who charge the Genevan reformers with severity amounting to persecution may well study this case and learn how much they are mistaken.

Peter Toussaint was preaching at Montbeliiard, the first parish in which Farel had labored. To his surprise, Caroli came there to get an appointment from the Duke of Wurtemberg. Toussaint found that he was the same man that he had long been and dismissed him. At Valangin he went next, and the wonder is that he did not enter the service of Madame Williamette. Farel still aided him, insisting upon his thorough repentance. Then he went to Strasburg to see what he could do with Calvin, who asked advice of Farel, and was answered that Caroli should be helped in making a living, but not placed over a church until he gave evidence of his conversion. Thence he went to Metz where he wrote a "vaporing letter" to Calvin, asking for a parish. The reply was that neither he nor Farel had any churches at their command, and even if they had, he could not have it until he should prove himself worthy of the trust. When we meet him again he will have made another shift for bread, reputation, and power.

It is not strange that Farel was sick after these contacts with this ambitious waverer, but we should barely notice his illness did it not bring to light the esteem and friendship of Calvin, who felt that his life was almost bound up with that of his friend. After his recovery Calvin wrote to him, "While I reflect how much of the greatest importance may depend on the little man, it is not possible for me not to be, in a more than ordinary degree, anxious about your life. Wherefore from the time that the report of your illness was brought hither [Strasburg], I have not enjoyed one pleasant moment until I heard you had recovered. On that account, I experienced the like joy from hearing, by the messenger, good news of your health, as he enjoys who is delivered from a long continued sickness."

The life of Farel may appear much tamer while he passes several years as a minister in one place, than while he was imperiling his life by his journeys and his contests as a missionary. But it may have been equally useful. By his correspondence he still held a great influence over the whole region where his voice had been heard. In his charge he was greatly annoyed by the opposition to his discipline. It grieved him to give the bread, at a communion, to those who showed no evidence of conversion, and who thought that their high rank entitled them to share in all the privileges of the church and yet neglect the practice of their duties. He had put down the useless holidays, and to a good degree had broken up the dances and the idleness and the drunkenness of the people, but those who wished such pleasures and sins were restless and quite ready for a riot. They wanted Farel to leave them, and sought for some occasion to exhibit their feelings and their strength.
There was a lady of high rank in the town who had for several years lived on bad terms with her husband, a man of integrity, separated from him, set a bad example to her children, brought suspicion upon her own character, and given very general offense. Yet she claimed her place at the sacramental table. Farel tried to bring her back to her duty, by serious but gentle remonstrances. After several such attempts, with no success, he gave his opinion of such conduct publicly, but mentioned no names. At this she ceased to go to church. The congregation and senate would do nothing, and he at length declared that the authorities were shamefully negligent, and that such a pest ought not to be endured in the church as a member of it. The sermon was not politic; it arrayed against him all the young and old who had before felt stung by his rebukes. No efforts were spared to raise a general commotion. The whole town was divided in two parties, the one intent upon retaining their pastor, and the other upon dismissing him. His opponents at last gained a majority for his leaving within two months. The greater part of the senate and the better class of the people were on his side, but the governor and some others of rank so excited the common people that the vote against him was obtained.

It was a day of trouble to the minister. The first friend who came to console him was John Calvin, who was on the way to Geneva, and who turned aside to use his good offices for his brother. He pleaded with the people and thence went to Berne to engage their help in behalf of the preacher and the endangered church. All efforts seemed in vain until a mysterious Providence secured a reconciliation of the parties. The plague began to rage in the town. The courage of Farel rose with the dangers of his situation. He acted the part of a pastor who had never been disowned by any of the people. He visited the sick every day, relieved the poor, and sought to win his enemies by kindness. They could not but respect him for all this, and the bitterest opposers began to be the warmest friends. A day of humiliation and prayer was appointed. Everyone partook of the sacrament. The preachers warned the people and urged them to unity and peace. The example of their devoted but injured pastor softened their hearts, and they wished to retain him among them. Some weeks after this he was re-elected for life, and by degrees every trace of the disturbance was gone, and complete harmony was established.

Calvin spent some time with his friends, and we must now see how this exile came to be on the way to Geneva.

The faction which had expelled him and Farel enjoyed their triumph by trying to undo almost all that had been gained. The old manners were restored and carried to such an extreme as to create disgust. From liberty the people passed to licentiousness. Every social tie was broken; order gave way to discord, tumult, and deeds of violence. The reading of the Bible was totally forbidden to the women, and very much restricted among all others. The teachers were removed from the schools that Farel had established; the preachers were set aside for mere hirelings, and the fanatics seemed to rule the day. But a
reaction followed. The people saw that masquerades, balls, blasphemies, and indecencies must be checked. They began to wish for the return of the banished ministers. Many prayed for it. The subject of calling back Calvin was openly discussed; the senate held meetings; and, at last, on the first of May, 1541, the act of banishment was revoked. To show their sincerity, the people intimated that the amusements and dissipations, which the reformers had once tried to put down, should be abated.

But it was not so easy to persuade those whom they had expelled to return to Geneva. Farel was now settled, and Neufchatel refused to give him up. Calvin did not wish to go unless his vigorous friend could join him in the difficult work, and, besides, Strasburg was not willing to part with him, for he was now a pastor in that city. From all sides went letters urging Calvin to accept the call, but Farel and Viret had the chief influence in securing the end. With great reluctance he went. The troubles at Neufchatel detained him, as we have seen, on the way, and prevented Farel from attending him.

There was reason for Calvin to expect a hearty reception. James Bernard had written and told him how the weeping people had prayed, and how, the next day, the great council met and said with one voice, "Calvin, that righteous and learned man, it is he whom we would have as the minister of the Lord," and with much warmth Bernard continued, "Come, therefore, thou worthy father in Christ; thou art ours; God has given thee to us; all sigh for thee; thou wilt see how pleasant thine arrival will be to all." On the thirteenth of September, 1541, this promise was fulfilled. A herald met him; the gates were crowded, the city full of joy, and the senate soon entreated him never to leave Geneva.

We left the Chevalier Esch at Metz, and we cannot learn what became of him, except that persecution drove him to Strasburg. The agents of Beda had waged a merciless war upon the believers in that free and imperial city, but they had not entirely suppressed the desire which many of the people felt for the gospel. At length the times seemed to favor new efforts. Some of the Dominicans began to preach sounder doctrines and a purer life. In 1542 Casper de Huy was elected to fill the highest office of the city, that of sheriff (echevin), or mayor. He and his brother permitted the Protestants to meet in their private houses for worship, and also on their estates, where multitudes assembled to hear it. Nothing seemed wanting to the organization of a regular church but an efficient minister. One had been invited, but he lacked the courage to brave all the dangers of the post and even death itself. Proposals were made to Farel, who saw that quiet and prosperity were restored at Neufchatel, and he might leave it for a time. The new field had charms for one so bold and zealous, whose element was to reform, to hazard everything for the gospel, and to do the work of a pioneer. Several of his friends disapproved of the step, but he was urged to go by Calvin, who thought no one so well qualified as this experienced and dauntless missionary.
Early in December 1542, Farel went to Metz, and he was urged to preach on the next Sabbath. In the church-yard of the Dominicans a pulpit had been raised, and he mounted it to preach his first sermon in that city. The number of hearers was very great. During his sermon two of the monks came and ordered him to be silent. He gave no heed to their command. They called their friends and began to ring all the bells, but his voice of thunder rose above all the din. The next day more than three thousand persons came to hear him. That he should preach and baptize without any Romish ceremonies excited great attention among the people and high wrath among the friars. The pulpit was ordered to be pulled down, and various threats were made. The sheriff, de Huy, and his friends saw that in so large an assembly a little flame might become a vast fire, and they persuaded Farel to postpone his preaching until there was more assurance of the public safety.

The news of his arrival had reached the ears of the council, and Farel was summoned before that body.

"By whose orders are you here?" they asked.

"By the order of Jesus Christ, and at the request of some of his members."

"Name those who invited you," said they, glancing at one another, as if certain of them were held under suspicion. He refused to give any names. He then addressed them and withdrew, leaving them to consider what they should do with him. Soon after a man of his size and appearance was seen riding out of the gates. It was reported that Farel had been sent away by his friends, who were alarmed for his safety. He was, however, concealed among the Protestants.

The fearful plague fell upon the city. Many who felt that they must be abandoned by men and die in loneliness, without pastor or priest, found a plain, bold man urging his way to their couches. There he told them of Christ’s death, free pardon, and holy heaven; there he carried such consolation for the dying as they never had heard before, and even into houses that would otherwise have been shut against him, he found a welcome. Full scope was thus given to his fearless activity, and many recognized Farel, the preacher who had declared the good tidings in the church-yard. In the meantime he sent word to the neighboring cantons, which had united in the Protestant league of Smalcalde, to send deputies to Metz, and receive into their union the Protestants of that city. The senators would not allow the deputies to enter the gates, and they imposed a fine upon anyone who should visit Farel. They secured a mandate from the emperor forbidding him to preach, and declaring that all the citizens should remain Roman Catholics until the next general council. The emperor’s mandate was posted up in the streets and pulled down by the children.
In this state of affairs Farel retired to the neighboring town of Gorze, under the protection of Count William, of Furstenberg. At his court Walter Farel was engaged in an honorable service. Another brother, Claudius, came from Strasburg to visit the preacher. At Gorze he preached in the parish church and in the abbey chapel. A monk was one day descanting on the glories of Mary, when Farel called his statements in question. The women in the audience attacked him, and handled him so roughly that he came near losing his life. He was obliged to keep his room for several days, but, with this exception, he preached with growing success. At Easter many came from Metz to hear him and to celebrate the Lord’s supper.

This enraged the Romanists in Metz, and they formed a conspiracy against Farel and his hearers. The renegade Caroli seems to have been at the head of the plot. He persuaded the duke of Guise to send a body of soldiers to Gorze, and there fall upon the congregation. About three hundred persons had just celebrated the Lord’s supper on one Sabbath, when suddenly a trumpet was heard, and a troop of armed men fell upon this helpless and unsuspecting company. A son of the duke led the band, and it is said that Francis I sanctioned the plot. Some were slaughtered and others drowned; Farel was wounded, and with great difficulty he and Count William escaped into the castle. It was some time before the friends of the preacher knew what had become of him. The count had him and many other wounded sent on litters to Strasburg.

Caroli was now preparing for the great master stroke which, as he hoped, would bring him honor and office. Having failed to murder Farel, he attempted to crush him. The clergy and council of Metz so favored him that he had the insolence to send Farel a pompous and noisy challenge to a dispute. And, to gain the more glory, the dispute should not be held in Metz, but before the pope or the council of Trent, or in some of the great universities. It was to be held at the risk of each life—the one who should be defeated was to be put to death. In order to effect this, Caroli would become a prisoner at Metz, and Farel might place himself in the hands of the French king. Caroli sent this absurd challenge to the great powers in the Romish church, so that they might know what a champion was about to appear.

Farel replied, asking him who had commissioned him to hold such a debate, and suggesting that it would not be so expensive to have it in Metz as in some distant city. "If you have not sufficient influence to have a debate appointed in your own city, how can you secure one in a place where you are unknown?" The ridiculous proposal was thoroughly exposed. Farel employed his pen in replying to various slanders set on foot by Caroli. In one letter to him he says, "If I am rightly informed, you have publicly declared that I am the greatest heretic that the world has ever seen. Might it please the Lord that I could in truth say, you are the most faithful and pious servant of God that ever appeared! ... I beseech you to retrace your steps, and to employ the good gifts which God has
bestowed upon you for his glory. I am ready to hold a friendly conference with you at Metz, and endeavor to restore harmony among the people."

This man had circulated such reports about the Genevan ministers that they thought it wisest to have a public disputation with him, and thus assert, defend, and prove their doctrines. It might open the eyes of the people of Metz, and put the reformation there on a good footing. They cared very little for the aspersions of Caroli, and had no fears for their own personal characters, but they wished to see the truth established among its enemies. The Genevese sent Calvin to Strasburg for the purpose of securing the debate. He and Farel begged the senate to give them a safe-guard to Metz and a request to the senate there to grant them an audience. But it was all fruitless. Caroli was the last man who wished to meet them in a discussion. His pretensions brought him a fall; his haughty spirit was a token of his utter ruin. The papists must have laughed at his absurd challenge. He never came again in contact with the admirable men whom he had abused. He surrendered himself to his weaknesses, or rather his strong vices, and, at last, one might have seen, in a hospital at Rome, a poor, disappointed, wretched, and forsaken victim of excess, dying in disgrace. It was the last of Peter Caroli, who is a first-class specimen of several men with whom the reformers had to contend. He could never justly complain that Farel and his brethren had treated him with severity.

Farel had been absent from his parish about a year, when he returned to Neufchatel. His recent sufferings in the Lord’s service brought him new esteem from all who were able to appreciate his merits. But there were also fresh troubles. His colleague, Chaponneau, seemed disposed to act over again the part of Caroli. By degrees Farel won him to the right path. The church became more settled under a better organization. Elders and deacons were appointed, and there was a firm but kindly discipline. The children were carefully taught the Bible and the catechism, and the plan of a Sabbath school appears to have existed. The form of church government was Presbyterian, and its principles were derived, not from the Waldenses, but from the apostles.

CHAPTER XX

FAREL’S NEIGHBORLY VISITS

1549–1558

Not long after Farel’s return from Metz, he paid a visit to Geneva. His garments were a proof of the persecutions he had endured, as well as of his poverty, or his disregard of dress. The senate had given Calvin a new suit when he returned to the city, and now a similar one was voted to Farel. He seemed to suspect that it was meant to buy him off from speaking his mind, or he felt that he did
not deserve it; and when he appeared before that dignified body he admonished them to lead good lives, maintain justice, and revere the word of God. He respectfully declined the present. He also refused to accept their invitation to reside in Geneva. The suit was put in Calvin’s keeping. Some time after, Calvin wrote to Farel, "The suit is at my house, until someone be found to take it. Your refusing it was all very well, but you may now very properly accept of it." It seems that he laid aside his scruples, accepted the present, and allowed his personal appearance to be improved by dressing in the style of Geneva.

It was still a favorite plan of Calvin to have Farel in Geneva as a co-laborer, feeling that he would be most useful in that city which owed so much to his missionary efforts. In 1545, this proposal was again laid before him. Berne was willing, but he would not consent to go unless a minister could be found to take his place at Neufchatel. Toussaint was invited, but refused to leave Montbeliard. After the death of Chaponneau, who on his deathbed and in tears ordered all his writings against Calvin to be burned and bequeathed him a copy of Augustine’s works, there was some difficulty in choosing a colleague for Farel. Some wished Anthony Marcourt, but Christopher Fabri was chosen, and Farel was delighted to have this devoted and zealous young friend to take from his weary shoulders many of the heavy burdens.

In a few months Calvin and Viret made another effort to draw Farel into their nearer fellowship. A new professor of divinity was to be appointed at Lausanne, to share the labors with Viret. No one appeared more suitable. He was congenial with Viret; he was no mean scholar in the Bible languages; he was a good expositor of the Scriptures, and the system which he had introduced at Geneva was proof that he was an excellent theologian. Calvin noticed that as his years increased he became more gentle and cultivated in his manners. If anyone could fire the students with a love for preaching and for missionary toils, Farel was the man.

But the chief opponent to this arrangement was the senate of Berne. The senators admitted the very arduous and eminent labors of their great missionary, and rendered thanks to him for establishing the gospel in their districts and cantons; but they were not willing to have so bold and uncompromising a man in the seminary at Lausanne. They, too, were offended because Farel had not formed the church at Geneva on the model of that at Berne. Very likely, also, they were afraid that Calvin, Farel, and Viret would form a triumvirate of which they might be jealous, and Geneva might rise far superior to Berne as a powerful republic. Thus the new chair of theology was not filled by Farel. It was occupied a few years afterwards by Beza.

The old tutor of Calvin, Mathurin Cordier, was now headmaster of the school at Neufchatel. He was taken from that place to teach at Lausanne. The Bernese senate advised the senate of Neufchatel to pay attention to their schools, as a
wise means “for promoting the glory of God, and instructing the young in the Divine word and in propriety of conduct. Certain tyrants, who undertake to suppress and extirpate the gospel, know of no better way than the abolition of the Latin schools.”

Most heartily did Farel enter into these views. He saw that darkness would again overspread the church unless the young men were carefully educated in science and the Holy Scriptures. He sought out young men who might be qualified for the ministry, and urged the senate to educate them, if need be, at the public expense.

The persecutions in France put the lives of two of his brothers in danger—Walter and Daniel. They were already in prison. In company with Viret he went to Berne and Basle to gain their release. They were at length set at liberty. The next year these ministers made another visit in behalf of the Waldenses, many of whom were fleeing to Geneva and other Swiss cities for refuge from relentless persecutions.

Men were constantly coming into Farel’s parish who proved to be disturbers of the peace. This caused him great trouble and sorrow. His friends advised him to be patient in his spirit and moderate in his censures. One day he exclaimed, “I am already advanced in years, and have not vigor enough to urge those under my care who need a continual spur. In the church courts I am a novice, and stand alone. I am honored with the title of father, it is true; but my sons have little respect for my authority.” In writing to a neighboring minister, he said, “I conjure you to admonish me faithfully of what you see amiss, and remember me in your prayers. Thus you will profit me and the church, also, far more than by your commentaries, which proceed from an excessive attachment.” Those who caused most trouble were the sect called “Libertines,” who were free-thinkers, free-lovers, free-livers and mischief-makers in every possible way. They gave still greater trouble at Geneva, where some of the patriots were led into their absurdities.

Calvin was greatly annoyed by this sect, and his life was not free from danger. It was reported afar off quite frequently that he had been killed. The great council did not support him. In a letter to Viret he wrote, “wickedness hath now reached such a pitch here that I hardly hope the church can be upheld much longer, at least by my ministry.” And, again, “If I ever needed your assistance, it is now more than ever necessary.” To Farel he wrote, “I wish you could cheer me again by coming hither.” These friends came, and saw Calvin arraigned by his enemies before the senate of the republic. He was charged with having shown too little respect for the magistrates of the city in not letting them rule over the church. The worst sentence they could find in his letters was, “Our people, under pretence of Christ, want to rule without him.” They thought this was a deadly arrow shot at them. Farel pleaded for his friend, with all his warmth and powerful eloquence, on two or three occasions.
He said that the senate had not enough respect for the character and merits of Calvin, who had no equal in learning; that they should not be so nice about what he had said of them, as he freely reproved even the greatest men, such as Luther and Melancthon; and that they should not credit what a pack of useless men, who were the pillars at taverns, whispered about the man that was saving Geneva from Anti-Christ. The senators took the reproof most kindly and ceased to be reprovers. They thanked Farel by a vote for what he had said, and there the affair rested for a time.

So interwoven is the life of Farel with that of his more distinguished friend, that we are tempted to enlarge upon the biography of Calvin. In their letters, their visits, their requests for each other’s advice, and their books, there are proofs of their warmest and most firm friendship. Calvin submitted many of his manuscripts to Farel and Viret, and dedicated some of his volumes to them, that the world might know how sacred were the bands that bound them together and how harmonious they were in all their labors. On one occasion Farel was so cast down by the troubles of his friend that he could find no rest. He took up Calvin’s new work on the Council of Trent and was so cheered that he spent the whole night in reading it.

In 1553 Calvin made a visit to Neufchatel, for his friend Farel seemed to be lying at the point of death. The physician had said that there was little hope of his recovery. A celebrated French jurist, Charles Du Moulin, had just come, anxious for a personal acquaintance with so distinguished a champion of the reformation. It was an honor paid to him just when all human honors were fading to nothing. Farel made his will. It was mainly a setting forth of his gratitude to God, his faith, his doctrines, his confession, and his hope that his last words might confirm those who had received the truth from his lips. He bequeathed his little property to his brothers Walter and Claudius (to whom he had left his paternal inheritance when he left Dauphiny), and exhorted them to remain steadfast in the faith which they had before accepted through his agency. A fourth part of his books he left for the ministers in his district, and the rest to his brother Walter and to his nephew, Caspar Carmel, the minister who afterwards preached on the estates of a brother of the Admiral Coligny, and became pastor of the reformed church in Paris. A third part of what was left of money and furniture was to be given to the poor, thus retaining sufficient to pay all his debts. Calvin wrote his name as the first witness. Gladly would Farel have departed to his Lord, but the Master had another design. Calvin prayed for his sick brother, and the Lord restored him to health.

The world will be old before a certain class of men will cease to charge John Calvin with the burning of Servetus. The truth about this painful case will, probably, not be fully examined until the millennium; the misrepresentations have already had a long day and a wide circulation. We cannot fully enter into the subject in these pages. If Calvin has been blamed, Farel has been reproached for cherishing a more bitter spirit toward Servetus.
After a long course of heresies, blasphemies, and profanations; after years of disturbance which he caused among the churches, and after various attempts to correct his errors and reform the man, this Spaniard, Servetus, was arraigned before the council of Geneva. Calvin was not the instigator, nor the plaintiff, nor the judge. Servetus was not condemned for heresy, nor for his falsehoods, nor for his opposition to the Genevese ministers. It was for blasphemy, a crime punished by death under the law of Moses, and regarded as worthy of such rigor by almost all men in his own times. For many years after him the blasphemer was put to death. The blasphemies of Servetus are too awful to be written.

The Libertines and all the enemies of the truth and of the church took the part of Servetus, and this put Calvin in such a position that he seemed to be severe against him, when his motive was to defend the gospel, the church, and the honor of Jehovah. The accused was not at all in Calvin’s hands. This great reformer had never such absolute power in Geneva as his enemies represent, and he had almost the least power when Servetus was on trial. His influence just before this, was at so low an ebb that he was tempted to leave the city. The senate was against him; the ruling party was composed of his enemies, and among them were the Libertines, who rejoiced at the prospect of being able soon to overthrow him. They deprived the clergy of all share in the management of the state.

It is true that Calvin laid his complaints against Servetus before the senate, and, although its members were mostly utterly opposed to Calvin, they took up the charges and brought the man to trial. Dr. Henry, who has most thoroughly sifted the case, says, "Calvin had no intention to expose Servetus to capital punishment. He only wished to render him harmless, to make him recant his blasphemy, and so preserve Christianity from injury." And, further, "We find that it was his blasphemy, his rash jesting with holy things, the insult with which he had treated the majesty of God, that weighed heaviest upon (against) him. The judges passed over everything else." The law of that day punished blasphemy with the sword. The majority of the judges decided that Servetus should die by fire. So little had Calvin to do in this matter that he wrote, "What will become of the man I know not; as far as I can understand sentence will be pronounced tomorrow and executed the day after." He again wrote to Farel, "I think he will be condemned to die, but I wish that what is horrible in the punishment may be spared him." And, again, after the sentence had been fixed, he wrote, urging Farel to come to Geneva, and saying, "We have endeavored to change the mode of execution, but without avail." Farel was soon in the city, to learn what we have not space here to write. It was Calvin’s wish that this excellent man should attend the condemned to the place of execution, so that in his last hours he might have the ministries of truth and kindness from one whom he had not reviled.
Early on the morning of October 27, 1553, Farel went to the prison. He inspired confidence in Servetus, who could not have desired a better companion on the terrible journey to the Champel, where he must die. Farel was intent upon leading his soul to the true faith, and he began to remind him of his errors, and their only remedy in the love of God. He urged him to acknowledge Christ as the Eternal Son of God, a fact that Servetus had strongly and blasphemously denied. After this attempt was proved to be in vain, he told him that if he would die as a Christian he should forgive all men, and be reconciled to Calvin, whom he had grossly abused. Servetus consented. Calvin was sent for, and he came. One of the council asked Servetus why he wished Calvin to come. He replied, "To ask his forgiveness."

"I readily answered," wrote Calvin, "and it was strictly the truth that I had never sought to resent any personal affront received from him. I also tenderly reminded him that, sixteen years before, I had diligently sought, at the hourly peril of my life, to win him to the Lord; that it was not my fault that all pious people had not extended to him the hand of friendship, and that this would have been the case had he but shown some degree of judgment; that, although he had taken to flight, I had still continued to correspond peaceably with him; that, in a word, no duty of kindness had been neglected on my part, till, embittered by my free and candid warnings, he had resigned himself not merely to a feeling of anger, but to absolute wrath against me. Turning, however, from that which concerned myself, I prayed him to implore the forgiveness of God, whom he had so awfully blasphemed. ..." But Servetus answered nothing, and Calvin left him.

The council assembled and waited for the unhappy man to retract, but he renewed his assertions of innocence. Farel had a tender heart toward him, and implored the council to soften the punishment, but the members were so horrified at the wickedness of Servetus that they would not change the sentence.

A hill outside the city still bears the name of Champel, and thither Servetus was led, preceded by a throng of people. He saw the stake prepared for him, and he threw himself upon the earth, where he seemed to be praying in silence. Farel turned to the multitude, and, believing that Satan had such blasphemers in his power, he said, "You see what power Satan has when he once gets possession of us! This man is learned above most others, and, perhaps, believed that he was acting right, but now the devil hath him. Beware, lest this same thing happen to yourselves."

Farel still urged him to acknowledge his errors, to speak to the people and publicly retract his blasphemies; to pray to Jesus, not only as the Son of the Eternal God, but as the Eternal Son of God, and thus he might still touch the hearts of the council, and be spared the worst horrors which he dreaded. But it was all in vain. At Farel’s request he did at last ask the people to pray for him.
When Farel told him that if he had a wife or child, and desired to make his will, there was a notary present, he made no answer. During the terrible scene that followed he cried continually to God for mercy, but he would not address Christ as the Eternal Son of God. Among his last words were these, in which he still persevered in one of his doctrines, "Jesus, thou Son of the Eternal God, have mercy upon me." He would not say, "Thou Eternal Son of God."

We are very far from justifying these proceedings. But let it be remembered that in his day the Romanists were burning men for what they called heresy; that the law, public opinion, the Bernese senate, and most of the reformers of the Rhine countries were against Servetus because of his blasphemies; and that after a fair trial, he was sentenced, chiefly by the enemies of Calvin, to a far worse death than the Genevan ministers had expected. Farel returned home soon after the execution.

The enmity of the rising party in Geneva increased against Calvin. The council wished to compel him to administer the Sacrament to Berthelier, one of the senators who had been excommunicated. He would not yield. This was but a test in regard to many other matters between the state and the church. The design was to get some hold upon him and drive him from the city. Plots were laid against him during the trial of Servetus, whose punishment would have been the same had Calvin been expelled. He had made up his mind to leave the city unless some sudden change appeared in his favor.

Farel heard of this resolution and hastened to Geneva, in order to lift his powerful voice again in support of his friend. He did not think what a storm he was about to bring down upon his own head, or if he did, he was willing to sacrifice himself for the sake of Calvin and the church. He entered the pulpit and preached a powerful sermon to a multitude that had rushed to hear him. He was carried away by the spirit of his own mighty eloquence, and was too unsparing of his rebukes upon the Libertine faction. He probably held up their leader, Perrin, in the light of truth rather than of tenderness and made severe reflections upon the senate for opposing the church. He closed his sermon, entered the streets, and went home as abruptly as he had come.

The noise of the sermon rose loudly through the city. The opposers of the church declared that it was an insult to the state. They constrained the senate to give them a letter to the senate of Neufchatel, demanding that Farel should be sent back to be tried for an offense which they regarded as no less than capital. Calvin thought that Farel could defend himself, and advised him to come to Geneva, rather than wait for the senate of Neufchatel to take up the charge.

The old man, therefore, set out on foot, in the roughest of weather, and found Geneva in a great excitement over him. He had seen it so before, and was fearless. The senate sent word to Calvin that he should not allow Farel to
preach, for they knew his ruling passion and his power. He was in great peril. Berthelier tried to form the workmen in the mint into a gang that should go to the senate hall and raise a disturbance. Some think that from them arose the cry to fling the staunch old preacher into the Rhone, a cry that was not new to the ear of Farel. Others gave another version of the matter, and both may be true. The senators were making out the charge against him, when the hostile party in the hall cried out, "Throw him into the Rhone." But Farel had friends.

A young man boldly stepped forward and warned Perrin, the would-be Caesar of Geneva, to take care that the, "Father of the city" suffered no harm. Other young men came forward to the defense of their former teacher and spiritual father. Perhaps they had been eager lads in Froment’s school at the sign of the golden cross. They formed a guard about the fearless old man. Friends came in still greater numbers and among them Calvin, Viret, and other ministers, who felt that justice demanded a loud protest in behalf of the accused. The citizens left their homes and shops to defend their ministers, and the factious party began to understand that all the strength of the city was not on their side.

The Genevese preachers made their voices heard in the senate hall. They set forth the evil designs and plots against Farel. The accusers became alarmed and dared not proceed to violent measures. Farel was permitted to speak. He contended, in a long and animated speech, that his adversaries could not have heard his sermon, for they had altogether mistaken his meaning, and that nothing was farther from his thoughts than to insult a city toward which, as all men knew, he cherished the kindest feelings. They began to perceive that they had acted hastily, on mere rumors, and in a bad temper. The fiery eye, the loud voice, the persuasive address and the earnest self-defense of the old man, had a powerful effect upon the senators and the crowd which had pushed into the hall. Many who had been most active against him were moved and melted. The majority now declared that he had only acted as a faithful preacher in his reproofs and admonitions, and that he was a true servant of the gospel and their spiritual father. Upon this the senate ordered that everyone should give him his hand, and that a feast should be held in token of the general reconciliation. That Farel should be honored with a feast in Geneva must have even exceeded his surprise, and the warm grasp of his hand must have put the most unmusical heartstrings in good tune for harmony at the banquet. Perrin, the leading senator, was obliged to declare, with trembling, that Farel’s sermon was quite right, and that everyone must live by the word of God. The Libertines, who had raised all this tumult, plainly discovered that the mass of the people overpowered them, and Perrin humbled himself before Farel, declaring that he was under obligations to him as his former friend, and should ever regard him as his father and pastor. How sincere all these demonstrations were, and how the feast passed off, we are not able to state, but Farel was at last dismissed with a request that he would retain the Genevese in his affectionate remembrance and prayers. He returned home, cheered by the friendly termination of this noisy affair.
This, however, was not quite the last of it. An unworthy pastor, Peter of Cressier, took advantage of these events to abuse Farel as "a savage man, a perverter of the truth, and possessed of two devils." He had, we believe, never before been charged with having more than one. The slanders caused no slight trouble in Neufchatel. Farel brought the accuser to public trial, when he was convicted of slander, and ordered to beg pardon of the injured old pastor, the governor, and the citizens. Not often did Farel thus pursue false reports. He was inured to personal insults, and wisely left calumnies to refute themselves, or perish on their wearisome rounds.

Thousands of exiles were taking refuge in the countries whose streams fed the Rhine and the Rhone. The young king of England, Edward VI, died, and the "bloody Mary" reigned in his stead. Great numbers of them left the shores of England, among whom were John Fox, the author of the "Book of Martyrs," several bishops of renown, and John Knox, for whom Scotland was waiting, that his mighty voice might shake her castles and her mountains. From France and Piedmont also the persecuted were coming—poor, weary, shelterless, and cast upon the mercy of God and of the Protestants, who had mercy upon them. It is hard to resist the temptation of describing the welcome which they received in the villages and cities where Farel was spoken of as the father of the feeble churches that had been gathered through his missionary labors. He ever took the most tender interest in these exiles.

After taking up a collection in Neufchatel for the exiles of Locarne, he wrote to them, "O ye happy ones! to whom it is given to prefer the gospel to every temporal blessing. It is delightful to the friends of Christ to hear how fathers are willing to forsake their sons on account of the word of God; how sons love Christ more than parents, brothers, or tenderly beloved sisters, and young women cannot be restrained from choosing the gospel. What heart is so hard as not to be softened at the holy sight! It would be almost incredible if the stony and cruel-hearted persecutors, who thirst after such sacred blood, should not at last be brought to change their hatred into love and their violence into tenderness."

In Geneva the enemies of the truth were bold in their threats and their violence against Calvin. The senate opposed him, and the Libertines sought his life. For a time he could not walk the streets without being insulted. Once, on his return from the church, he was attacked on the bridge of the Rhone. He told them that the bridge was wide enough for them all, and when his coolness abashed the ruffians they turned upon a French exile, chased him into a shop and wounded him, crying out, "Death to the foreigners." By day and by night such assaults were occurring. But at length Calvin gained his point, not by arbitrary power, but by his preaching, his persuasions, his calmness and his trust in God. He declared to the senate, "I would rather die a hundred times than claim for myself an authority which belongs to the whole church—that is
the right to establish rules of discipline." And yet this is the man whom his opposers to this day hold up as "the pope of Geneva."

The spirit of Calvin prevailed at last, and the church of Geneva was permitted to guide her own affairs. And when the system of church government, introduced there by Farel and perfected by Calvin, was put into fair operation, its excellency was proved beyond any doubt. John Knox was so charmed with it that he wrote to his friend, John Locke, "I always wished in my heart, nor could I ever cease to wish that it might please God to bring me to this place, where I can say, without fear or shame, the best Christian school exists since the time of the apostles. I allow that Christ is truly preached in other places also; but in no other have I seen the reformation so well wrought out, both morally and religiously, as in Geneva." Let Farel, "to whom our people owe everything," as Calvin declared, have the honor due to him, while unto God be all the glory.

Most heartily did Farel render thanks to the Lord for the flourishing state of the church at Geneva, after passing through so many relapses and perils. In a letter he wrote, "I was lately in Geneva, and such was the pleasure I felt that I could scarcely tear myself away. Not that I wished to be the teacher of a church so large and so eager for the word, but only to hear and learn as the meanest of the people. Very different is my feeling from that of the man who said that he would rather be first in the mountains than second at Rome. I would rather be the last in Geneva than the first anywhere else. If the Lord and the love to the flock entrusted to my care did not forbid, nothing should keep me from ending my days with that people, to whom I have always been united in spirit." Nor were the Genevese forgetful of his labors, sufferings, and love for them. When, as an aged father, he visited them, they strove together for the favor of showing him hospitality, and the senate proposed that a special sum be given him in order to detain him in their city, so that it might never be said that Geneva had treated him with ingratitude. But he was not willing to retire upon such honors and such generosity.

Amid these stirring events Farel had an unexpected call from that very France out of which he had been barred in his younger days. Even Paris was now open to him. A reformed church had grown up in that city where the voices of Lefèvre and Farel had once been heard and hushed. A child had something to do with its organization. When the disciples were few, they met in the house of the Seigneur de la Ferrière "to offer their prayers in common and read the Holy Scriptures." This gentleman had a son that he wished to have baptized by a reformed minister. He made the proposal to the church in his house and begged them to choose a minister. They chose John de Launay, who organized the church in Paris, destined to be renowned for the number of its devoted pastors and its triumphant martyrs.

In 1557 this church asked for a new minister. Farel must have felt it hard to deny the call. The perils of the capital were inviting him. But Switzerland could
not spare him. Nor could Fabri leave Neufchatel. Caspar Carmel obtained the
dangerous honor, and he went to the city where his uncle (by marriage) had
first found that light which had been borne by him into Switzerland, and was
now to be carried back by his relative, whom he regarded as his own son in the
faith. Thus Farel was at last represented in the heart of France, an instance of
the power of a delayed but yet widely extended personal influence. The great
stream had run eastward and flooded the Swiss valleys with truth, but the
clouds rising from those valleys were carried back westward to drop refreshing
rain upon the spiritual desert that Farel had once been obliged to leave.

The church and the school of theology at Lausanne preferred the doctrines and
government of Geneva to all those of Berne. This greatly offended the Bernese
senate. The strife waged warm until finally Viret and the professors left the
city; more than a thousand people went with them to Geneva, where they
were most kindly received. Viret became one of the pastors there for two
years, when he was called into France. Beza became the colleague of Calvin,
and the rector of the new academy. Thus the losses of Lausanne were the gain
of Geneva. The noble Bonivard, some years after his release from the Chillon
prison, gave his whole fortune to aid the schools of Geneva.

CHAPTER XXI

Old Life with New Love
1558-1564

The Waldenses in "the holy valley," where Farel had once been so happily
entertained, were threatened with utter extermination. They sought aid from
their true and tried friends in Geneva and Neufchatel. Farel and Beza set out
upon a visit in their behalf. The journey would give them an opportunity to
plead the cause of the churches in which the French language was used, for
they were not yet fully recognized by the German churches. They afterwards
were called by the term, the Reformed Church. John Budœus, son of the
William Budœus whom we saw at Paris, reviving the ancient learning, also
traveled on this latter mission at a later day.

The assistance rendered to the Waldenses by the churches from Berne to Basle
was greater than Farel expected. The cantons united in sending an embassy to
the court of France, in order to stay the persecution. The king, Henry II, at
least made some fair promises, leaving his officers to break them as they
chose. Farel paid a visit to Montbeliard, and he was pained to find that his
friend Toussaint had lost much of his brotherly love. Certain men, who had
favored Servetus, had gained an influence over this excellent pastor, and his
heart had grown cold toward the Swiss ministers. Farel clung with a father’s
heart to the first-fruits of his pastoral toils in that city, and he could not do
less than persuade Toussaint to renounce the views which had poisoned his heart. He had counted on him once as a colleague, and still, probably, as a successor.

War brought Toussaint and his church into peril. He was obliged to escape to Switzerland where the Count of Montbeliard was also a refugee. Some years after he was restored to his parish, where he probably ended his labors with his life.

A new field soon was opened to Farel where his zeal might meet with some of the old romance of missionary labor. When Philip, the Roman bishop of Basle died, an appeal came to the Swiss ministers for someone to carry the gospel into that diocese. There were signs that it would meet with a favorable reception. But no one had the courage or the liberty to go. Farel had now the time and the spirit to undertake the work. He went to St. Leonard, collected the people, preached, and was gladly heard. He remained but a short time, and on his departure many hundreds gathered about him to bid him farewell.

Then taking with him Emer Beynon, who had helped him on the stone to preach his first sermon in the canton of Neufchatel, he went to Pruntrut, where all kindness was shown to the bearers of the good tidings. The mayor and town clerk supped with them at the inn. The next day they appeared before the council. The deep interest shown to Farel’s address made him as eloquent as in his best days. The councilors were pleased with the offer to have the gospel preached there, but preferred to wait a little for a more convenient season. Meanwhile the new bishop had a word to say, and sent for certain of the council. He inquired and learned the object of this visit, and summoned Farel and Beynon before him. The bishop set forth a councilor named Wandelin to express his sentiments.

"Farel, you came here formerly to sow your tares," said the bishop’s mouthpiece, "and, having been sent away by the late bishop, have refrained hitherto from repeating the attempt. We may reasonably be astonished at your daring to appear here again, but you are now advised, in a friendly way, to retire before any mischief befall you."

"I am here, by the authority of my Lord, to preach Christ, and him crucified," Farel replied, "and to call this sowing tares is a grievous sin against the Savior, and contrary to the Holy Scriptures. Besides, I have preached freely at places in this diocese, without ever being sent away, and I have taught doctrines which are the surest means of uniting people and princes, flocks and pastors, namely, obedience to Christ and to his word. If my doctrines can be proved to be false, I am ready to submit to any punishment."

"I approve of your principles," said Wandelin, perhaps speaking for himself rather than the bishop, "but I must be excused from putting them in practice.
Wherever you have preached you have abolished the mass, and Berne has not allowed it to be restored. It will be so here if you gain a foothold, which we will do our best to prevent."

Farel bade the council a respectful farewell, and, entering the streets, he saw multitudes, whom the news of his arrival had brought from all quarters to hear him. But he had now the moderation of old age, and he took a friendly leave of them, planning some other mode of taking the town.

The report of Farel’s visit reached the ears of the archbishop of Besançon, who forthwith sent a grand-vicar and a monk to Pruntrut, and they set themselves to work to counteract any impression that the preachers had made simply by their presence in the town. What impression, then, would their preaching make! Of course the grand-vicar was ready to dispute with the ministers against their “false, impious, and scandalous doctrines,” and he ordered a courier to be sent to him, if the heretics should dare to come again. He then took his way whence he came, no doubt thinking that he had inspired sufficient terror to make all things safe for a season.

The people of Neufchatel heard of this movement, and sent Soral, the pastor at Boudry, with letters to the council of Pruntrut. He reached there on St. George’s day, when the mayor and his deputy were absent. Some of the citizens were lounging about their doors, and courteously invited him to be their guest. He had not been long in the place when the parish priest came to him, and, with more rage than religion, accused him of sowing tares, and called him a deceiver, a teacher of error, and uttered very brave threats. A nobleman also reviled him, beat him with a club, and almost killed him.

Farel now felt that he was really invited to make a second attempt. Taking with him Beynon and Soral, he set out to hold the disputation proposed by the grand-vicar. On the way they were roughly assailed by some priests, and it was in vain that they called for the man who boasted of his readiness to meet them in debate. He had the prudence not to appear. Again they returned to their homes. These attempts created a great sensation through all Burgundy. The archbishop was unusually gracious to the people of Pruntrut. He granted them indulgences and released them from fasting. One would suppose that fasting would have been enjoined on them as a preventive of heresy. Still the people showed a partiality for Farel and the reformed doctrines. During Lent a special effort was made to confirm the people in the Romish faith by sending a doctor of the Sorbonne to exhaust his eloquence in reviling Farel, Calvin, and Viret as the most awful heretics.

Farel tried to bring this monk and doctor to trial. He went to Berne on a busy holiday, and stood shivering and gazed at by the citizens for an hour at the door of a senator, and at last was coolly received. The senate took steps to have the monk arraigned for slandering the preachers, but nothing further was
done. When Calvin was urged to push the matter, he replied to Farel, "It would be a strange thing were I to require justice against a monk at a distance, when I am daily reviled as a heretic before the gates of Geneva!"

"What a young man I still am," said Calvin, at the age of forty-four. Farel must have felt quite as young even at the age of sixty-nine, for he then filled all the country with surprise at one of his so-called indiscretions. Faith and love are constantly renewing old age. He, who had so long remained in single life, at last gave way to a tender sentiment. He had advised the preachers to marry, lest they should be exposed to the common charges brought against the priests, but none supposed that he would illustrate his precept by his own example. He had knitted no such ties, lest they should be broken by his violent death. But the old man thought that he now needed a gentle comforter, and the right one was well known to him.

Madame Torel, a widow, had fled with her daughter, Mary, a few years before, from Rouen, in order to escape persecution. She kept house for Farel in Neufchatel, where the daughter had ceased to be regarded as very young. His choice fell upon the daughter, and, after his hand was pledged, he wrote to Calvin, as the latter had done to him when he was about to be married to the worthy Idelette de Bures. "I am dumb with astonishment," wrote Calvin, and then proceeded to give him all needed advice. The affair became more public in the parish than Farel expected. It was very strange, the people thought, for they had looked forward to his funeral rather than to the festivities of a wedding. They had become so accustomed to look upon the venerable missionary, daring all the dangers of the field single-handed, that they quite forgot his bold, eccentric and romantic nature, nor did they fathom the depths of tenderness that lay in solemn silence within his heart. The banns were thrice published, and, committing his betrothed to the care of a French refugee, he set out upon a visit to the churches. His object was to bring the Lutherans in closer union with the reformed and to gain help for Pruntrut. He returned and was married the twentieth of December.

These solemn men had their wit as well as their wisdom; if not, we should fail to understand their lively and cheerful natures. Calvin wrote at once to the clergy and elders of Neufchatel, pleasantly asking them to pardon this little escapade in their aged pastor, on the score of thirty-six years of faithful service. A son was born to Farel, six years afterwards, but he did not long survive his father.

But these new ties could not keep Farel at home, and he left the fireside for the field. He was soon at Strasburg, engaging assistance for the Protestants of Metz, to whom he had given many anxious thoughts. His efforts promised to be successful in securing to them freedom of public worship. Then he was traveling again on behalf of the Waldenses. On his return he found letters from France, urging him to send back the exiled preachers to the hundreds of
churches that had lately abolished the mass, and were longing for faithful pastors. The whole of France seemed on the point of becoming Protestant. As a specimen of these letters we quote from one written by Beaulieu, then (1561) at Geneva.

"I cannot tell you how much grace God is bestowing upon our church (in France). There are men here from various places, as from Lyons, Nîmes, Gap, Orleans and Poitiers, anxious to obtain new laborers for these portions of the new harvest. From Tournon especially was the application made, and that in obedience to the urgent wish of the bishop. There are five hundred parishes in these parts which have discontinued the mass, but are still without ministers. The poor people are famishing, but there is no one to give them the bread of heaven. It is extraordinary how many hearers there are of Calvin’s lectures; I believe there are more than a thousand daily. Viret is laboring for Nîmes. I have heard men say that if from four to six thousand preachers were sent forth places would be found for them." The Admiral Coligny was appointed by Catharine of France to number these churches, and he reported two thousand one hundred and fifty. A glorious church was rising in France, to be almost drowned in the blood of the saints massacred on St. Bartholomew’s day.

A special invitation came to Farel from Gap, his native district. Fabri went to Vienne, and he set out with a brother preacher for Dauphiny. Often had he lamented that he must live an exile from his native land, and with what emotions did he now look onward to the home of his fathers, after an absence of forty years! His relatives were not the only attraction, although that had its power. His father was dead, and so also must have been his mother. His brothers had been won to the gospel—three of them were exiles for their religion; one other, John, was as bold an expounder of the truth as himself; and a nephew, Carmel, had been preaching in Paris, where a large reformed church was gathering. His brother-in-law, the noble Honorat Riquetti, has lately been found to be "one of the ancestors of Mirabeau," the talented and terrible Mirabeau of the French revolution, whose family name was Riquetti. D’Aubigné says, "There are certainly few names we might be more surprised at seeing brought together than those of Farel and Mirabeau, and yet between these two Frenchmen there were at least two points of contact—the power of their eloquence and the boldness of their reforms."

Farel arrived at Gap in November, and was received with joy and veneration, as the man whom God had honored in leading thousands from darkness to light. Multitudes thronged to hear his first sermon, so that the church could not hold them, and he was heard with profound and uninterrupted attention. The councilors had requested the bishop’s vicar to prevent any disturbance, and he kept his word. As Farel did not wish to be reproached for acting secretly, he went on the same Sunday to the vice-mayor, along with the king’s advocate and the chief senator. He was told that all such meetings were forbidden under pain of death, and was asked by whose authority he had come. He held up the
commission of his Lord, and said that since that edict had been published, such
meetings had been held at Lyons and other places, and that certain ministers
had preached before the king. The vice-mayor requested him to refrain from
preaching until the governor and the parliament of Grenoble had been duly
informed of his intentions. Farel exhorted him to listen to the gospel, which
must condemn those who opposed it, and would save all who embraced it. He
was honorably conducted back to his inn, and on that evening baptized a child.

The next evening all public meetings and the use of the churches were
forbidden to the reformed party. But one meeting was held on the following
morning. As Farel was coming out of church, a servant of the vice-mayor
handed him the order in trembling haste. In the afternoon the friends met for
prayer, and resolved to continue steadfast in the faith for which so many had
been martyrs. They demanded of the vice-mayor a written statement of his
proceedings, in order to make an appeal to the king and his cabinet.

From a dusty corner someone has lately drawn an old copy of the "annals of the
Capuchins" of Gap. These friars gave no little space to the visit of the aged
reformer, and their story is tinged with the color of their strong prejudices. It
runs, that Farel, already an old man, wishing to preach in his native province,
before God summoned him from the world, went and took up his quarters in a
corn-mill at the gates of his native town—they do not mean Fareau but Gap—
and then he "dogmatized" the peasants from a French Bible which he explained
"in his own fashion." Ere long he began to preach in the very heart of the town
in the chapel of St. Columba. The magistrate forbade his preaching, and the
parliament of Grenoble wished "to have him burnt." Farel refused to obey, and
upon this the vice-mayor, a zealous catholic, along with several policemen,
went to the chapel where Farel was preaching. The door was shut; they
knocked but nobody answered; they broke in and found a considerable throng;
no one turned his head; all were listening greedily to the preacher's words.
The officers went straight to the pulpit; Farel was seized, and with "the crime"
(the Bible) in his hands, he was led through the crowd and shut up in prison.
But the followers of the new doctrine were already to be found among every
class of people—in the workman’s garret, in the tradesman's shop, in the
noble’s castle, and sometimes even in the bishop's palace. During the night the
reformers, either by force or by stratagem, took the brave old man out of the
prison, carried him to the walls, and let him down, by a basket, into the fields.
"Accomplices" were waiting for him, and he escaped with their help.

By another version, however, we are told that the old preacher felt his youth
renewed, when he saw a harvest upon his native soil, all ripe for the reapers.
He made no personal attack upon the priests, who were more anxious to get
their tithes and tribute than to preach. He persuaded his hearers to give up
festivals, holidays, masses, indulgences, and the like. It grieved him to leave a
field where there were so many encouragements. He entreated Calvin to send
a preacher to take charge of the growing congregation, until he could find a
suitable minister or return himself; for he could not now remain, as duty called him to his own post. He met the friends of the good cause at Grenoble, where many still remembered Sebville, and he addressed them in the house of a merchant, leaving a deep impression. His companion, Pichou, remained behind to preach in that town.

Not long after his return home, Farel had cheering news from the much persecuted church at Gap, for the brethren kept their pledges of faithfulness. Fabri and Viret were laboring in that region with great success. The plague broke out fearfully at Lyons, and extended to other places, but they took advantage of it to let the gospel win its way by its consolations. They were allowed to visit the houses of Romanists and point the sick to the Savior. Fabri wrote, “Neither life, nor wife, nor children are so dear to me as my Lord Jesus and his church.”

While Farel was absent, Neufchatel was favored with a visit from the duchess of Longueville—whether the same Joanna who had so long been trifling at the court of Francis I, we cannot say, but it seems that she was the one, and that she was greatly changed. Her son was with her. The ministers counseled with her in settling several church questions. A synod was held, and the custom of letting the churches choose their pastors was confirmed. Much was done to promote better discipline and to found schools in destitute parishes. She corresponded with Calvin, and he praises her courage and steadfastness in the faith. In France her house had been a refuge for the persecuted.

She visited Landeron, a town in her canton. The papal party had only one vote in their majority over the reformed party. The duchess wished to have Protestant service performed the next morning after her arrival, by a preacher who attended her and the young duke. The people were assured that no allusion would be made to popery, nor anyone be compelled to attend, as the service was for her and her retinue. It was intimated that she, being the ruler of the land, had a right to the free exercise of her religion, especially as she gave her subjects the same liberty. But all this was in vain. The authorities were the first to take up arms, and, with covered heads, they rudely threatened to throw the preacher from the pulpit. She again urged that their sovereign should not be thus prevented from hearing the gospel, which they need not hear unless they chose, but her condescension availed nothing. The alarm bell was rung, the inhabitants armed themselves, surrounded the chapel, and compelled the duchess to put a stop to the preaching. Farel, on his return, was greatly annoyed by this outrage, but he thought the priests more to blame than the people.
John Calvin was dying near the age of fifty-five, and the dear old man of seventy-five was very anxious about him. Farel wrote thus to one of his friends, "I have not yet heard any certain report of the departure of our brother, Calvin, so dear and so necessary to us, but the current rumors and the state in which I left him afflict me greatly. Oh that I could be put in his place, and that he might be long spared to serve the churches of our Lord, who, blessed be his name, caused me to meet with him when I little expected it, and retained him, against his own purpose, at Geneva, to employ him there in his service, and ordered other things in a most wonderful manner, and, strange to say, by my instrumentality, for I pressed him to undertake affairs harder than death. And sometimes he besought me, in the name of God, to have pity on him, and to let him serve God ardently in the way in which he had always been employed. But, seeing that what I demanded was according to God’s will, he did violence to his own will, and has accomplished more and more rapidly than anyone else, and has even surpassed himself. How glorious a course he has run! God grant that we may run as he has, according to the grace given unto us!"

It seems Farel heard more definitely that his friend was still alive, and expressed his intention to visit him. Calvin knew what an effort this would cost the aged pastor, and thus wrote to him: "Farewell, my best and truest brother. Since it is the Lord’s will that you should survive me in this world, never forget our friendship, which, so far as it has been useful to the church of God, will bear fruit for us in heaven. Pray do not weary yourself by coming hither on my account. My breath is weak, and I expect that every moment will be the last. I am contented that I live and die in Christ, who is the reward of the people, both in life and in death. To you and the brethren, still once more, farewell."

This letter could not stay the feet of the good old man. He went to Geneva with the feeling, "Oh that I might die for him!" He wept, prayed, spent his last night and took his last leave of him, whom he ever regarded too great for him to call a son, and the next day returned home. Not many days after, Calvin had fallen asleep in Christ—May 27, 1564. It is not probable that Farel stood with the multitude who followed him to his burial, when the republic was laying in the grave one of its wisest counselors, the city one of its truest guardians, the church its chief pastor, the academy its highest teacher, and many of the people their faithful comforter. One may now stand in the very pulpit of St. Peter’s, from which his commanding voice was heard, but we seek in vain for any monument to his memory. There is a doubt about the very place where his body was laid, although later hands have set upon a small level grass-plot a little square stone, about a foot high, and having cut on its top the letters J. C. It was his wish to be buried without pomp, without a monument. His name is upon an enduring system of doctrine and polity in the Christian church, and
upon the civilization of the past centuries, which have recognized him as one of the great fathers of civil and religious liberty.

The close and undisturbed friendship of Calvin, Farel, and Viret has been the pleasing theme of all writers, who have sought to do justice to their excellence. The first two seemed unfitted by nature for such a holy brotherhood, for each was firm and stern in his opinions, strong in his will, bold in his temper, and mighty in his power to rule. The wonder is that they did not wish to rule over each other. But neither was jealous nor envious; neither wished to exalt himself, nor to prevent the other from having an influence for the good of the church and the glory of God. Both gave their thoughts, their time, and their energies to the work of that Master, in whose service they were brothers. An unlimited confidence bound them together. Calvin was the great thinker, Farel the great worker of the Reformed church. By nature Calvin was weak for battle, cautious and reserved, but conflict made him strong. Farel was bold enough from birth, always in advance, venturing where others would hardly dare to go, fearless of consequences, and often checking the first good movements by his very bravery, but often conquering by making himself a terror to his adversaries. Conflict subdued him, and while Calvin admired his inexpressible activity and courage, it pleased him to see his "best and truest brother" becoming more gentle and tender in his ways. It might be said of each of them, as of a celebrated crusader, "He was a lamb in his own affairs, but a lion in the cause of God."

Calvin dedicated his Commentary on the Epistle to Titus to Farel and Viret, in these touching words, "As the condition of my charge resembles that which St. Paul committed to Titus, it seemed to me that it was you, above all others, to whom I ought to dedicate this, my labor. It will, at least, afford those of our own times, and, perhaps, even those who come after us, some indication of our friendship and holy communion. There never have been, I think, two friends, who lived together in such friendship, in the common intercourse of the world, as we have in our ministry. I have exercised the office of a pastor here with you two, and with such entire freedom from any appearance of envy that you and I appeared but as one."

The subject is worthy of D’Aubigné’s enthusiasm, and when writing of the different work of the scholar and of the missionary, he says "Calvin was the great doctor of the sixteenth century, and Farel the great evangelist; the latter is one of the most remarkable figures in the Reformation." "Farel had the riches of nature, of art, and of grace. His life was a series of battles and victories. Every time he went forth, it was conquering and to conquer."

The scholar of the Swiss reform is now dead; the missionary must gird himself, old as he is, for another march and another triumph. His burning zeal must have vent, and he cannot rest at home. If he cannot go into the heart of that France whose invitation just missed him, when he first entered, among the
Alps, he will cross the border and try to see the glorious gospel established in
Metz before he dies. This city has given him the good chevalier Esch, and
Toussaint, who has reaped what he had sown at Montbeliard, besides giving
him many honorable scars to signalize his courage, and touch the hearts of
those among whom he has sought aid for its suffering protestants.

The ministers consented to his plan, and the senate of Neufchatel
commissioned one of their number to attend him, lest their very aged father
should fall into danger. There was extraordinary joy on his arrival in the city.
On that very day he preached with such energy and power that the church took
fresh courage. But it was too much for him; the light was cast at the expense
of the lamp. He sank down upon his couch after his return from the pulpit, and
with difficulty was carried back to Neufchatel. His room became his church,
and he was visited by people of all ranks. He exhorted them to obey the laws of
the state and of the church, and to hold fast their profession of faith. Like an
apostle he counseled them, like a brother he shared in their sympathies, and
like a father he comforted them. All were astonished at his love and zeal in
coming to them when so feeble, and at his patience and resignation. "See," said
they to one another, "this man is the very same that he has always been! We
never knew him depressed, even when our hearts were failing us for fear.
When we were ready to give up everything in despair, he was full of hope, and
he cheered us by his Christian heroism!"

He lingered a few weeks, proved to all, who came in tears to his bedside, the
power of the Lord to give life to the dying, and gently fell asleep in Christ. He
died, September 13, 1565, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, about fifteen
months after Calvin’s departure. He was buried in a church-yard of Neufchatel,
where he had seen most marvelous changes since the day that he had boldly
preached in the streets. The churches of the whole canton lamented his death.
The ministers felt that his merits should be known to posterity, and at once
proposed to collect materials for his biography.

Who should be his successor at Neufchatel? Viret was chosen, but he declined,
for he was engaged in France, probably then at Lyons. A school of theology was
rising in Navarre, where the influence of Margaret, the queen, had so favored
protestantism that it had been a refuge and a stronghold. Viret was called
thither and died two years before the massacre of St. Bartholomew’s day
crushed the glorious church in France and filled all Christendom with horror.

The next choice fell upon Christopher Fabri, long before sent into the field by
Farel from his couch at Morat. Farel had been so earnest for laborers in the
great harvest that he had sometimes put forward young and untried men, who
proved unworthy of the trust, but in this brother he was not disappointed. He
testified that, during the thirty-one years Fabri had assisted him at Morat,
Orbe, Grandson, Thun, and Geneva, and during the three different periods in
which they were colleagues at Neufchatel, no grievous misunderstanding had ever arisen between them.

He also was loved by Calvin, who had first heard of him in a strange way. When Calvin was at Basle, before he dreamed of ever living in Geneva, a total stranger one day called. He came to deliver a message from a medical student of Montpellier, who had lately entered the ministry, and had been reading a new book of Calvin’s, that was having a wide popularity. "Fabri has desired me to inform you," said the unknown, "that he does not entirely approve of certain passages in your book on the Immortality of the Soul." Brave message, certainly, furnishing a hope that, if the young Fabri should be on the right side, he might prove a courageous reformer. With touching humility Calvin afterwards replied, "Far from being offended at your opinion, I have been much delighted with your simplicity and candor. My temper is not so crabbed as to refuse to others the liberty I enjoy myself. You must know, then, that I have almost entirely re-written my book."

Few of the many young men, whom the illustrious missionary was the means of putting into the ministry, had so much of his independence as Fabri. As he had been free with Calvin’s book in his younger days, he probably had, in older years, been frank with Farel’s opinions. Once this caused a slight difference between the two pastors at Neufchatel. It was short after Farel’s severe illness in 1553, and after Fabri had taken to himself a new wife. What the misunderstanding was, we know not, but a letter of Calvin shows so much of the spirit of the two pastors and the writer, that we hope it will secure a fresh reading. Calvin writes thus to Farel about his colleague:

"As you are well aware that there are many things which we must endure, because it is not in our power to correct them, I need not spend many words in exhorting you to show yourself gentle and moderate in a contest which is evidently not embittered by personal hostility, if, indeed, that should be called a contest, in which your colleague differs from you, without any malevolent feeling or desire to breed disturbances. In what points I think him defective, as you yourself are my best authority on that subject, I shall for the moment forbear to mention; but one thing we know, that the man is pious and zealous in the discharge of his duty. Add to that, he loves you, is anxious to have your approbation, and both considers and respects you as a parent. Now, if he sometimes carries himself rather more forwardly than he ought, the chief cause seems to me to be this: he fancies that you are too rigid and morose, and so he aims at a certain popularity which may smooth down offenses. Thus the good man, while he is consulting your tranquility and guarding against ill will, which he believes neither of you can stand against, forgets the firmness and dignity which should belong to a minister of Christ; and, while he imposes on you the necessity of resisting him, he furnishes the gainsayers with arms to assail your common (mutual) ministry. I see how vexatious and provoking a proceeding this is, nor am I ignorant how much blame his fault deserves. But
your own prudence and love of fair dealing will suggest to you that you ought to number up the good qualities which counterbalance his defects. ... You bore with Chaponneau, not only a man of no mark, but one who seemed born for kindling strife. With how much greater reason, then, should you strive to foster peace with a man who both desires to faithfully serve the Lord along with you, and abhors all rancorous dissensions! If you bear in mind how few tolerably good ministers we have in the present day, you will be on your guard how you slight a man who is both honest and diligent, endowed, moreover, with other most estimable gifts. Let him only feel that you love him, and I answer for it, you will find him tolerably docile."

This balm healed the wound, and at death Farel could look back on the past and declare that no misunderstanding had ever arisen between them, so completely was this affair forgotten. In this Farel proved how worthy he was of the titles so often found in Calvin’s letters, such as "my sound-hearted brother," "my very honest friend," "my excellent and upright brother," "my guide and counselor."

The new pastor, Fabri, could join with the people of his charge in holding sacred the memory of their much-loved father, and in carrying forward their enterprises after the plans which he had adopted. Elisha was content to follow in the steps of the ascended Elijah. When the ministers met for deliberation, years afterwards, it was often said of certain measures proposed, "So it was in our Father Farel’s time," or, "So Father Farel would have ordered it."

The church at Neufchatel was very zealous for the doctrines which Farel had taught them, and they also insisted that they were more indebted to him than to the government. When the Helvetic confession appeared, and a French edition was published at Geneva, the ministers of Neufchatel were notified that their church, that planted by Farel, had been overlooked. They had not been asked to sign it. They translated the slight to mean that they were not considered sound in doctrine. Therefore they wrote to the clergy of Zurich, assuring them that they still held to the doctrines avowed by them in Farel’s time. And, if it was supposed that they could not adopt the confession with the consent of their government, they have this to say, "When our forefathers, by the grace of God, received the gospel, it was done without the consent and even the disapprobation of the government. For in religious matters we have so much liberty that no one can exercise any arbitrary power over us. If our departed friend, Farel, had done nothing without such consent, he would never have established the reformation among us." Not only does this show their respect for the devoted missionary, but also the religious liberty he had introduced among them by his example and his doctrines. He had broken the chains of mental bondage, and, with Calvin, had brought freedom of religious opinion and worship.
This Swiss Elijah was not simply a powerful preacher; he was a man mighty in prayer, and when he must face opposition he laid firmly hold of the promises of God. He felt that they were meant for him. In his letters and writings he often breaks forth into thanksgivings, prayers, and intercessions. His element was fellowship with God. At the "altars of Baal," he lifted up his commanding voice to heaven, and help came from on high. His fervent prayers carried away his hearers. When from the pulpit he earnestly implored the divine power, Christ came down and touched the hearts of the hearers; the Holy Dove came brooding upon the assembly and stilling the tumult of the people. When they were in rage against him, he could pray them into silence. In his preface to the Psalms, Calvin paid a hearty tribute to the eloquence of his friend, and to "those thunders of the word by which he had been enchained at Geneva." In a letter, cautioning him against the length of his sermons, he refers also to the fervency of prayer, and says, "You are mistaken if you expect from all an ardor equal to your own."

Having fulfilled those words of our Lord, "I am not come to send peace on earth but a sword," he placed over the sword in his family arms, the motto, "What would I, but that it were kindled?" Farel had wielded the sword of the Spirit, and brought down fire from heaven, and of all the reformers he was the one who most appeared in "the spirit and power of Elias."

The End

The Life of John Knox
Containing Illustrations of the History of
The Reformation In Scotland
By
Thomas M'Crie, D.D.
Presbyterian Board of Publication
1831

This subject of this book, John Knox, and the famed author, Thomas M'Crie need no introduction to any student of the Reformed faith.

Like Farel, Knox had a tumultuous and eventful life as a preacher of righteousness and as the Reformer of his native Scotland. Knox was a rough and ready instrument in the hands of divine providence. I was not a time for meek men and timid souls and Knox, the fiery iconoclast, was the perfect instrument to destroy popery in Scotland. His commitment to the faith, his standard of Sola Scriptura, his indomitable spirit, the strength of his convictions, and his confrontational spirit were the necessary traits to confront the superstition, blasphemy and idolatry of Rome and extirpate it in Scotland.

This work constitutes exciting and inspirational reading and may the reader be blessed, encouraged, and stirred in his zeal, to read of those whom God accomplished his purposes many years ago.

The work consists of a Preface, Table of Contents and nine chapters and for the purposes of presenting it on this website has been divided into three sections.

**Section I  Early Labors**
Birth, education, conversion, call to the ministry, and early labors in Scotland and England.

**Section II  Exile and Return**
Knox's Exile, his Labors in Dieppe, Geneva, and Frankfurt, and his return to Scotland to Advance the Reformation There.

**Section III  Reformation in Scotland**
Knox's Trials and Labors in the Ongoing Reformation in Scotland

...
Birth, education, conversion, call to the ministry, and early labors in Scotland and England.

This section consists of the Preface, table of Contents, and Chapters 1-3. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Preface
Table of Contents
Chapter 1
Chapter 2
Chapter 3

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The Reformation from Popery marks an epoch unquestionably the most important in the history of modern Europe. The effects of the change which it produced, in religion, in manners, in politics, and in literature, continue to be felt at the present day. Nothing, surely, can be more interesting than an investigation of the history of that period, and of those men who were the instruments, under Providence, of accomplishing a revolution which has proved so beneficial to mankind.
Though many able writers have employed their talents in tracing the causes and consequences of the Reformation, and though the leading facts respecting its progress in Scotland have been repeatedly stated, it occurred to me that the subject was by no means exhausted. I was confirmed in this opinion by a more minute examination of the ecclesiastical history of this country, which I began, for my own satisfaction, several years ago. While I was pleased at finding that there existed such ample materials for illustrating the history of the Scottish Reformation, I could not but regret that no one had undertaken to digest and exhibit the information on this subject which lay hid in manuscripts, and in books which are now little known or consulted. Not presuming, however, that I had the ability or the leisure requisite for executing a task of such difficulty and extent, I formed the design of drawing up memorials of our national Reformer, in which his personal history might be combined with illustrations of the progress of that great undertaking, in the advancement of which he acted so conspicuous a part.

A work of this kind seemed to be wanting. The name of Knox, indeed, often occurs in the general histories of the period, and some of our historians have drawn, with their usual ability, the leading traits of a character with which they could not fail to be struck; but it was foreign to their object to detail the events of his life, and it was not to be expected that they would bestow that minute and critical attention on his history, which is necessary to form a complete and accurate idea of his character. Memoirs of his life have been prefixed to editions of some of his works, and inserted in biographical collections and periodical publications; but in many instances their authors were destitute of proper information, and in others they were precluded, by the limits to which they were confined, from entering into those minute statements, which are so useful for illustrating individual character, and which render biography both pleasing and instructive. Nor can it escape observation that a number of writers have been guilty of great injustice to the memory of our Reformer, and from prejudice, from ignorance, or from inattention, have exhibited a distorted caricature, instead of a genuine portrait.

I was encouraged to prosecute my design, in consequence of my possessing a manuscript volume of Knox’s Letters, which throw considerable light upon his character and history. The advantages which I have derived from this volume will appear in the course of the work, where it is quoted under the general title of *MS. Letters*.

The other manuscripts which I have chiefly made use of are Calderwood’s large History of the Church of Scotland, Row’s History, and Wodrow’s Collections. Calderwood’s History, besides much valuable
information respecting the early period of the Reformation, contains a collection of letters written by Knox between 1559 and 1572, which, together with those in my possession, extended over twenty years of the most active period of his life. I have carefully consulted this history as far as it relates to the period of which I write. The copy which I most frequently quote belongs to the Church of Scotland. In the Advocates’ Library, besides a complete copy of that work, there is a folio volume of it, reaching to the end of the year 1572. It was written in 1634, and has a number of interlineations and marginal alterations, differing from the other copies, which, if not made by the author’s own hand, were most probably done under his eye. I have sometimes quoted this copy. The reader will easily discern when this is the case, as the references to it are made merely by the year under which the transaction is recorded, the volume not being paged.

Row, in composing the early part of his Historie of the Kirk, had the assistance of Memoirs written by! David Ferguson, his father-in-law, who was admitted minister of Dunfermline at the establishment of the Reformation. Copies of this History seem to have been taken before the author had put the finishing hand to it, which may account for the additional matter to be found in some of them. I have occasionally quoted the copy which belongs to the Divinity Library in Edinburgh, but more frequently a copy transcribed in 1726, which is more full than any other that I have had access to see.

The industrious Wodrow had amassed a valuable collection of manuscripts relating to the ecclesiastical history of Scotland, the greater part of which is now deposited in our public libraries. In the library of the University of Glasgow, there is a number of volumes in folio containing collections which he had made for illustrating the lives of the Scottish reformers and divines of the sixteenth century. These have supplied me with some interesting facts, and are quoted under the name of Wodrow MSS. in Bibl. Coll. Glas.

For the transactions of the General Assembly, I have consulted the Register commonly called the Book of the Universal Kirk. There are several copies of this manuscript in the country, but that which is followed in this work, and which is the oldest that I have examined, belongs to the Advocates’ Library.

I have endeavored to avail myself of the printed histories of the period, and of books published in the age of the Reformation, which often incidentally mention facts that are not recorded by historians. In the Advocates’ Library, which contains an invaluable treasure of information respecting Scottish affairs, I had an opportunity of examining the original
editions of most of the Reformer’s works. The rarest of all his tracts is the narrative of his Disputation with the Abbot of Crossraguel, which scarcely any writer since Knox’s time seems to have seen. After I had given up all hopes of procuring a sight of this curious tract, I was accidentally informed that a copy of it was in the library of Alexander Boswell, Esq. of Auchinleck, who very politely communicated it to me.

In pointing out the sources which I have consulted, I wish not to be understood as intimating that the reader may expect in the following work, much information which is absolutely new. He who engages in researches of this kind must lay his account with finding the result of his discoveries reduced within a small compass, and should be prepared to expect that many of his readers will pass over with a cursory eye, what he has procured with great, perhaps with unnecessary labor. The principal facts respecting the Reformation and the Reformer are already known. I flatter myself, however, that I have been able to place some of these facts in a new and more just light, and to bring forward others which have not hitherto been generally known.

The reader will find the authorities, upon which I have proceeded in the statement of facts, carefully marked; but my object was rather to be select than numerous in my references. When I had occasion to introduce facts which have been often repeated in histories, and are already established and unquestionable, I did not reckon it necessary to be so particular in producing the authorities.

After so many writers of biography have incurred the charge either of uninteresting generality, or of tedious prolixity, it would betray great arrogance were I to presume that I had approached the due medium. I have particularly felt the difficulty, in writing the life of a public character, of observing the line which divides biography from general history. Desirous of giving unity to the narrative, and at the same time anxious to convey information respecting the ecclesiastical and literary history of the period, I have separated a number of facts and illustrations of this description, and placed them in notes at the end of the Life. I am not without apprehensions that I may have exceeded in the number or length of these notes, and that some readers may think, that, in attempting to relieve one part of the work, I have overloaded another.

No apology will, I trust, be deemed necessary for the freedom with which I have expressed my sentiments on the public questions which naturally occurred in the course of the narrative. Some of these are at variance with opinions which are popular in the present age, but it does not follow from this that they are false, or that they should have been suppressed. I have not become the indiscriminate panegyrist of the Reformer, nor have
I concealed or thrown into shade his faults; but, on the other hand, the apprehension of incurring these charges has not deterred me from vindicating him wherever I considered his conduct to be justifiable, or from apologizing for him against uncandid and exaggerated censures. The attacks which have been made on his character from so many quarters, and the attempts to wound the Reformation through him, must be my excuse for having so often adopted the language of apology.

In the Appendix, I have inserted a number of Knox’s letters, and other papers relative to that period, none of which, as far as I know, have formerly been published. Several others, intended for insertion in the same place, have been kept back, as the work has swelled to a greater size than was expected. A very scarce Poem, written in commendation of the Reformer, and published in the year after his death, is reprinted in the Supplement.

The prefixed portrait of Knox is engraved from a painting in the possession of the Right Honorable Lord Torphichen, with the use of which his Lordship, in the most obliging manner, favored the publishers. There is every reason to think that it is a genuine likeness, as it strikingly agrees with the print of our Reformer, which Beza, who was personally acquainted with him, published in his Icones. There is a small brass medal, which has on one side a bust of Knox, and on the other the following inscription:

Joannes Knoxus Scotus Theologus Ecclesie Edimburgensis Pastor.
Obiit Edimburgi an. 1572. æt. 57.

It appears to have been executed at a period much later than the Reformer’s death. There is an error of ten years as to his age; and as Beza has fallen into the same mistake, it is not improbable that the inscription was copied from his Icones, and that the medal was struck on the Continent.

Edinburgh, November 14, 1811

§

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

In preparing this work for a second impression, I have endeavored carefully to correct mistakes which had escaped me in the first, both as to matter and language. I have introduced accounts of the principal public transactions of the period, which a desire of being concise induced me formerly to exclude, but which serve to throw light on the exertions of the Reformer, and ought to be known by those who read his Life. And I
have entered into a more full detail of several parts of his conduct than
was practicable within the limits of a single volume. Such additional
authorities, printed or manuscript, as I have had access to, since the
publication of the former edition, have been diligently consulted; and I
flatter myself that the alterations and additions which these have
enabled me to make, will be considered as improvements.

I have added to the Supplement a number of original Latin Poems on the
principal characters mentioned in the course of the work, which may not
be unacceptable to the learned reader.

Edinburgh, March 1, 1813

§

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIFTH EDITION

Besides the additional matter introduced into the Fourth Edition, the
present contains a variety of new facts and documents, the most
interesting of which will be found in the Note concerning Scottish
Martyrs. The portrait of the Regent Murray, engraved for this edition, is
taken from the original in Holyrood Palace.

Edinburgh, February 14, 1831

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Period First

Birth and Parentage of Knox — His Education — State of Literature in
Scotland — Introduction of Greek Language — Political and
Ecclesiastical Opinions of John Major — Their Probable Influence on
Knox and Buchanan — Knox Teaches Scholastic Philosophy at St.
Andrews — Is Admitted to Clerical Orders — Change in His Studies and
Sentiments — State of Religion in Scotland — Urgent Necessity of a
Reformation — Gratitude Due to the Reformers — Introduction of
Reformed Opinions into Scotland — Patrick Hamilton — Martyrs —
Exiles for Religion — Reformation Promoted by the Circulation of the
Scriptures — By Poetry — Embraced by Persons of Rank — its Critical
State at the Death of James V

Period Second
Knox Retires from St. Andrews and Joins Himself to the Reformed — Is Degraded from the Priesthood — Reformation Favored by Regent Arran — Scottish Parliament Authorize the Use of the Scriptures in the Vulgar Language — The Regent Abjures the Reformed Religion — Thomas Guillaume — George Wishart — Knox Enters the Family of Langniddrie as a Tutor — Cardinal Beatoun Assassinated — Knox Persecuted by Archbishop Hamilton — Averse to Go to England — Takes Refuge in the Castle of St. Andrews — His Sentiments Respecting the Assassination of Beatoun — Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount — Henry Balnaves of Halhill — John Rough — Knox’s Call to the Ministry — His Reluctance to Comply with It — Reflections on This — His First Sermon — His Disputation before a Convention of the Clergy — The Clergy Begin to Preach at St. Andrews — Success of Knox’s Labors — Castle Taken and Knox Confined in the French Galleys — His Health Injured — His Fortitude of Mind — Writes a Confession of Faith — Extract from His Dedication to a Treatise of Balnaves — His Humane Advice to His Fellow Prisoners — His Liberation

**Period Third**

Knox Arrives in England — State of the Reformation in that Kingdom — Knox Sent by the Privy Council to Preach at Berwick — His Great Exertions — Character of Bishop Tonstal — Knox Defends his Doctrine before Him — Is Removed to Newcastle — Made Chaplain to Edward VI — Consulted in the Revisal of the Liturgy and Articles — Makes Proposals of Marriage to Marjory Bowes — Receives Marks of Approbation from the Privy — Council Incurs the Displeasure of Earl of Northumberland — Is Honorably Acquitted by the Privy Council — Bad State of his Health — Preaches in London — Declines Accepting a Benefice — Refuses a Bishopric — His Objections to the Worship and Government of the Church of England — Private Sentiments of English Reformers Similar to His — Plan of Edward VI for Improving the Church of England — State of His Court — Boldness and Honesty of the Royal Chaplains — Knox’s Sermons at Court — His Distress at the Death of Edward — He Retires to the North of England on the Accession of Mary — Returns to the South — His Prayer for the Queen — Marries Marjory Bowes — Displeasure of Some of Her Relations at This — Roman Catholic Religion Restored by Parliament — Knox Continues to Preach — His Letters Are Intercepted — He Is Forced to Abscond — And Retires to Dieppe in France

**Period Fourth**

Knox’s Uneasy Reflections on his Flight — Letters to his Friends in England — His Eloquent Exhortation to Religious Constancy — He Visits

Period Fifth

Knox Arrives at Geneva — Happiness which He Enjoyed in that City — His Passionate Desire to Preach the Gospel in his Native Country — He Receives an Invitation from the Protestant Nobles in Scotland — Leaves Geneva — Receives Letters at Dieppe Dissuading Him from Prosecuting the Journey — Animated Letter to the Nobility — Persecution of the Protestants in France — Knox Preaches in Rochelle — And at Dieppe — Reasons which Induced Him not to Proceed to Scotland — He Writes to the Protestants of Scotland — Warns Them against the Anabaptists — Writes to the Nobility his Prudent Advice Respecting Resistance to the Government — He Returns to Geneva — Assists in an English Translation of the Bible — Publishes his Letter to the Queen Regent —
And his Appellation from the Sentence of the Clergy — And his First Blast of the Trumpet — Reasons which Led to the Publication against Female Government — Aylmer’s Answer to It — Knox Receives a Second Invitation from the Protestant Nobility of Scotland — Progress which the Reformation Had Made — Formation of Private Congregations — Resolutions of a General Meeting — Protestant Preachers Taken into the Families of the Nobility — Correspondence Between the Archbishop of St. Andrews and Earl of Argyle — Martyrdom of Walter Mill — Important Effects of This — Protestants Present a Petition to the Regent — Her Fair Promises to Them — Death of Queen Mary of England and Accession of Elizabeth — Knox Leaves Geneva for Scotland — Is Refused a Passage through England — Grounds of This Refusal — Knox’s Reflections on It — Reason for his Wishing to Visit England — He Writes to Cecil from Dieppe — Arrives in Scotland

**Period Sixth**

Critical Situation in which Knox Found Matters at his Arrival — Dissimulation of the Queen Regent — Differences Between Her and Archbishop Hamilton Accommodated — A Provincial Council of the Clergy — Reconciliation of the Two Archbishops — Remonstrance Presented by Some Members of the Popish Church — Canons of the Council — Treaty Between the Regent and Clergy for Suppressing the Reformation — Proclamation by the Queen against the Protestants — the Preachers Summoned to Stand Trial — Knox’s Letter to Mrs. Locke — Clergy Alarmed at His Arrival — He Is Outlawed — He Repairs to Dundee — Protestants of the North Resolve to Attend the Trial of their Preachers — Send Information of This to the Regent — Her Duplicity — Knox Preaches at Perth — Demolition of the Monasteries in that Town — Unjustly Imputed to Knox — Regent Threatens the Destruction of Perth — Protestants Resolve to Defend Themselves — A Treaty — Knox’s Interview with Argyle and Prior — Treaty Violated by the Regent — The Name of the Congregation Given to the Protestant Association — Lords of the Congregation Invite Knox to Preach at St. Andrews — Archbishop Opposes This by Arms — Intrepidity of Knox — He Preaches at St. Andrews — Magistrates and Inhabitants Agree to Demolish the Monasteries and Images and to Set up the Reformed Worship — Their Example Followed in other Parts of the Kingdom — Apology for the Destruction of the Monasteries — Lords of the Congregation Take Possession of Edinburgh — Knox Is Chosen Minister of that City — Willock Supplies his Place after the Capital Was Given up to the Regent — Archbishop Hamilton Preaches — Knox Undertakes a Tour of Preaching Through the Kingdom — His Family Arrive in Scotland — Christopher Goodman — Settlement of Protestant Ministers in Principal Towns — French Troops Come to the Assistance of the Regent — Knox
Period Seventh

Knox Resumes His Situation in Edinburgh — Urges the Settlement of Ecclesiastical Polity — Aversion to This on the Part of the Nobles — Knox Is Employed in Compiling the Book of Discipline — This Is Approved by General Assembly and Subscribed by Greater Part of Privy Council — Sketch of the Form and Order of the Reformed Church of Scotland — Attention to Education — Avarice of the Nobility — Influence of the Reformation on Literature — Introduction of Hebrew into Scotland — John Row — Return of Buchanan — Remarks on Mr. Hume’s Representation of the Rudeness of Scotland — Literary Hours in a Scottish Minister’s Family — Cultivation of the Vernacular Language — David Ferguson — First General Assembly — Knox Loses his Wife — Corresponds with Calvin — His Anxiety for the Safety of the Reformed Church — Queen Mary Arrives in Scotland — Her Education — Her Fixed Determination to Restore Popery — Alarm Excited by her Setting up of Mass — Behavior of Knox on this Occasion — Remarks on This — Sanguinary Spirit and Proceedings of Roman Catholics — Hostile Intentions of the Queen against Knox — First Interview Between Them — Knox’s Opinion of her Character — His Austerity and Vehemence Useful — He Vindicates the Right of Holding Ecclesiastical Assemblies — Inveighs against the Inadequate Provision Made for the Ministers of the Church — His Own Stipend — Attention of Town — Council to his Support and Accommodation — He Installs Two Superintendents — Is Employed in Reconciling the Nobility — The Queen Is Offended at One of
his Sermons — Second Interview between Them — His Great Labors in Edinburgh — He Obtains a Colleague — Incidents in the Life of John Craig — The Prior of St. Andrews Created Earl Murray and Made Prime Minister — Insurrection Under Huntly — Conduct of Knox on that Occasion — Quintin Kennedy — Dispute Between Him and Knox — Ninian Wingate — Excommunication of Paul Methven — Reflections on the Severity of the Protestant Discipline — Third Interview between Knox and the Queen — Artifice of Mary — She Prevails on the Parliament not to Ratify the Protestant Religion — Indignation of Knox at This — Breach Between Him and Earl of Murray — His Sermon at the Dissolution of Parliament — Fourth Interview between Him and the Queen — Apology for the Sternness of his Behavior — Slander against his Character — He Is Accused of High Treason — The Courtiers Endeavor to Intimidate Him into a Submission — His Trial and Defense — Indignation of the Queen at his Acquittal.

**Period Eighth**

The Courtiers Charge Knox with Usurping a Papal Power — The General Assembly Vindicate Him — He Marries a Daughter of Lord Ochiltree — Splenetic Reflections of the Papists on This Alliance — Dissensions between the Court and Preachers — Apology for the Liberty of the Pulpit — Debate Between Knox and Secretary Maitland — On Knox’s Form of Prayer for the Queen — And on His Doctrine Respecting Resistance to Civil Rulers — Craig’s Account of a Similar Dispute in Bologna — The Queen Marries Lord Darnley — Change in the Court — Reasons which Induced the Nobles who Opposed the Marriage to Take up Arms — Queen Amuses the Protestant Ministers — Knox Is Reconciled to Earl of Murray — Gives Offense to the King — Is Inhibited from Preaching — Town Council Remonstrate against This — He Resumes His Employment — Goodman Leaves St. Andrews — Petition for Knox’s Translation to that Town Refused by Assembly — He Is Employed to Write Different Treatises for the Church — Extract from the Treatise of Fasting — Measures Taken by the Queen for Restoring Popery — Assassination of Rizzio — Sudden Changes in the Court — Knox Retires to Kyle — Queen Refuses to Permit his Return to the Capital — He Resolves to Visit his Sons in England — Receives a Recommendation from the General Assembly — Carries a Letter to the English Bishops — Archbishop Hamilton Restored to his Ancient Jurisdiction — Spirited Letter of Knox on that Occasion — Alienation between Mary and her Husband — The King Murdered by Bothwell — The Queen’s Participation in the Murder — Her Marriage to Bothwell — Independent Behavior of John Craig — The Queen Resigns the Crown to her Son — Knox Returns to Edinburgh — Preaches at the Coronation of James VI — His Opinion Concerning the Punishment of Mary — The Earl of Murray Is Installed in the Regency —
Act of Parliament in Favor of the Protestant Church — State of the Church during the Regency of Murray — Knox Cherishes the Desire of Retiring from Public Life — The Regent Opposed by a Party Attached to Mary — Attempts Made on his Life — He Is Assassinated by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh — National Grief at This Event — Character of Murray — Knox Bewails his Loss — Fabricated Conference between Them — Thomas Maitland Insults over the Death of the Regent — Knox's Denunciation against Him — His Pathetic Sermon before the Regent’s Funeral — Is Struck with Apoplexy.

**Period Ninth**

Knox Recovers from the Apoplectic Stroke — Kircaldy of Grange Joins the Queen’s Party — Knox Involved in a Personal Quarrel with Him — Interposition of the Gentlemen of the West in His Favor — Anonymous Libels against Him — His Spirited Answers from the Pulpit — Queen’s Party Take Possession of the Capital — Danger to which Knox Is Exposed — He Is Prevailed on to Retire to St. Andrews — Civil War — Hostility of the Queen’s Faction against Knox — He Is Opposed by their Adherents at St. Andrews — John Hamilton — Archibald Hamilton — Execution of Archbishop Hamilton — The Regent Lennox Slain — Is Succeed by Earl of Mar — Invasion on the Jurisdiction of the Church — Tulchan Bishops — Not Approved of by the General Assembly — Knox’s Letter to the Assembly at Stirling — His Sentiments Respecting Episcopacy — He Refuses to Install Douglas as Archbishop of St. Andrews — Gradual Decay of his Health — Striking Description of His Appearance and Pulpit Eloquence — His Familiarity with the Students at the University — He Publishes an Answer to a Scots Jesuit — Ardently Desires his Dissolution — His Last Letter to the General Assembly — His Subscription to Ferguson’s Sermon — He Returns to Edinburgh — Requests a Smaller Place of Worship — Craig Removes from Edinburgh — Lawson Chosen as Successor to Knox — Knox’s Letter to Him — Bartholomew Massacre in France — Knox’s Denunciation against Charles IX — He Begins to Preach in the Tolbooth Church — His Last Sermon — His Sickness — Interview Between Him and his Session — His Message to Kircaldy — His Religious Advices, Meditations, and Comfort during his Last Illness — His Death — His Funeral — Opinions Entertained respecting Him by the Papists — By Foreign Reformers — By Scottish Protestants — By Divines of the Church of England — Origin and Cause of Prejudices against Him — His Character — Reflections on the Prophecies Ascribed to Him — Account of His Family — Sufferings of John Welch, His Son-in-Law, Interview between him and Louis XIII — Interview Between Mrs. Welch and James VI — Character of Knox’s Writings — Conclusion
CHAPTER ONE

From the year 1505, in which he was born,
to the year 1542, when he embraced the reformed religion

John Knox was born in the year one thousand five hundred and five. The place of his nativity has been disputed. That he was born at Gifford, a village in East Lothian, has long been the prevailing opinion; but some late writers, relying upon popular tradition, have fixed his birth-place at Haddington, the principal town of the county. The house in which he is said to have been born is still shown by the inhabitants, in one of the suburbs of the town called the Gifford-gate. This house, with some adjoining acres of land, continued to be possessed, until about fifty years ago, by a family of the name of Knox, who claimed affinity with the Reformer. I am inclined, however, to prefer the opinion of the oldest and most credible writers, that he was born in the village of Gifford.

His father was descended from an ancient and respectable family, who possessed the lands of Knock, Ranferly, and Craigends, in the shire of Renfrew. The descendants of this family have been accustomed to enumerate among the honors of their house, that it gave birth to the Scottish Reformer, a bishop of Raphoe, and a bishop of the Isles. At what particular period his paternal ancestors removed from their original seat, and settled in Lothian, I have not been able exactly to ascertain. His mother’s name was Sinclair.

In times of persecution or war, when there was a risk of his letters being intercepted, the Reformer was accustomed to subscribe, "John Sinclair." Under this signature at one of them, in the collection of letters in my possession, is the following note: "Yis was his mother’s surname, wlk he wrait in in time of trubill."

Obscurity of parentage can reflect no dishonor upon the man who has raised himself to distinction by his virtues and talents. But though our Reformer’s parents were neither great nor opulent, the assertion of some writers that they were in poor circumstances is contradicted by facts. They were able to give their son a liberal education, which, in that age, was far from being common. In his youth, he was put to the grammar school of Haddington; and, after he had acquired the principles of the Latin language, his father sent him, to the year 1521, to the University of Glasgow.
The state of learning in Scotland at that period, and the progress which it made in the subsequent part of the century, have not been examined with the attention which they deserve, and which has been bestowed on contemporaneous objects of inferior importance. There were unquestionably learned Scotsmen in the early part of the sixteenth century, but most of them owed their chief acquirements to the advantage of a foreign education. Those improvements which the revival of literature had introduced into the schools of Italy and France, were long in reaching the universities of Scotland, though originally formed upon their model; and, when they did arrive, they were regarded with a suspicious eye, and discountenanced by the clergy. The principal branches cultivated in our universities were the Aristotelian philosophy, scholastic theology, and canon law.

Even in the darkest ages, Scotland was never altogether destitute of schools for teaching the Latin language. It is probable that these were at first attached to monasteries, and it was long a common practice among the barons to board their children with the monks for their education. When the regular clergy had degenerated, and learning was no longer confined to them, grammar schools were erected in the principal towns, and taught by persons who had qualified themselves for this task in the best manner that the circumstances of the country admitted. The schools of Aberdeen, Perth, Stirling, Dumbarton, Killearn, and Haddington are particularly mentioned in writings about the beginning of the sixteenth century.

The two first of these acquired the greatest celebrity, owing to the skill of the masters who presided over them. In the year 1520, John Vaus was rector of the school of Aberdeen, and is commended by Hector Boece, the learned principal of the university, for his knowledge of the Latin tongue, and his success in the education of youth. At a period somewhat later, Andrew Simson acted as master of the school of Perth, where he taught Latin with applause. He had sometimes three hundred boys under his charge at once, including sons of the principal nobility and gentry, and from his school proceeded many of those who afterwards distinguished themselves both in Church and State.

These schools afforded the means of instruction in the Latin tongue, the knowledge of which, in some degree, was requisite for enabling the clergy to perform the religious service. But the Greek language, long after it had been enthusiastically studied on the Continent, and after it had become a fixed branch of education in the neighboring kingdom, continued to be almost unknown in Scotland. Individuals acquired the knowledge of it abroad, but the first attempts to teach it in this country were of a private nature, and exposed their authors to the suspicion of heresy. The town of Montrose is distinguished by being the first place, as far as I have been able to discover, in which Greek was taught in Scotland; and John Erskine of Dun is entitled to the honor of being regarded as the first of
his countrymen who patronized the study of that elegant and useful language. As early as the year 1534, this enlightened and public spirited baron, on returning from his travels, brought with him a Frenchman, skilled in the Greek tongue, whom he settled in Montrose; and, upon his removal, he liberally encouraged others to come from France and succeed to his place. From this private seminary many Greek scholars proceeded, and the knowledge of the language was gradually diffused over the kingdom. After this statement, I need scarcely add, that the Oriental tongues were at this time utterly unknown in Scotland. I shall afterwards have occasion to notice the introduction of the study of Hebrew.

Knox acquired the Greek language before he arrived at middle age; but we find him acknowledging, as late as the year 1550, that he was ignorant of Hebrew, a defect in his education which he exceedingly lamented, and which he afterwards got supplied during his exile on the Continent.

John Mair, better known by his Latin name, Major, was professor of philosophy and theology at Glasgow when Knox attended the university. The minds of young men and their future train of thinking often receive an important direction from the master under whom they are educated, especially if his reputation be high. Major was at that time deemed an oracle in the sciences which he taught; and as he was the preceptor of Knox, and of the celebrated scholar Buchanan, it may be proper to advert to some of his opinions. He had received the greater part of his education in France, and acted for some time as a professor in the University of Paris, where he acquired a more liberal habit of thinking and expressing himself on certain subjects than was yet to be met with in his native country and in other parts of Europe. He had imbibed the sentiments concerning ecclesiastical polity, maintained by John Gerson and Peter D’Ailly, who so ably defended the decrees of the Council of Constance and the liberties of the Gallican Church, against the advocates for the uncontrollable authority of the Sovereign Pontiff. He taught that a General Council was superior to the pope, and might judge, rebuke, restrain, and even depose him from his dignity; denied the temporal supremacy of the bishop of Rome, and his right to inaugurate or dethrone princes; maintained that ecclesiastical censures, and even papal excommunications, had no force, if pronounced on irrelevant or invalid grounds; he held that tithes were not of divine right, but merely of human appointment; censured the avarice, ambition, and secular pomp of the Court of Rome, and of the Episcopal order; was no warm friend of the regular clergy; and advised the reduction of monasteries and holydays.

His opinions respecting civil governments were analogous to those which he held as to ecclesiastical polity. He taught that the authority of kings and princes was originally derived from the people; that the former are
not superior to the latter, collectively considered; that if rulers become tyrannical, or employ their power for the destruction of their subjects, they may lawfully be controlled by them, and proving incorrigible may be deposed by the community as the superior power; and that tyrants may be judicially proceeded against, even to capital punishment. The affinity between these sentiments and the political principles afterwards avowed by Knox, and defended by the classic pen of Buchanan, is too striking to require illustration. Some of them, indeed, had been taught by at least one Scottish author, who flourished before the time of Major; but it is most probable that the oral instructions and writings of their master first suggested to them the sentiments which they so readily adopted, and which were afterwards confirmed by mature reflection, and more extensive reading; and that, consequently, the important changes which these contributed to accomplish, should be traced, in a certain measure, to this distinguished professor. Nor, in such circumstances, could his ecclesiastical opinions fail to have a proportionate share of influence on their habits of thinking with respect to religion and the Church.

But though, in these respects, the opinions of Major were more free and rational than those generally entertained at that time, it must be confessed that the portion of instruction which his scholars could derive from him was extremely small, if we allow his publications to be a fair specimen of his academical prelections. Many of the questions which he discusses are utterly useless and trifling; the rest are rendered disgusting by the most servile adherence to all the minutia of the scholastic mode of reasoning. The reader of his works must be content with painfully picking a grain of truth from the rubbish of many pages; nor will the drudgery be compensated by those discoveries of inventive genius and acute discrimination, for which the writings of Aquinas, and some others of that subtle school, may still deserve to be consulted. Major is entitled to praise for exposing to his countrymen several of the more glaring errors and abuses of his time, but his mind was deeply tinctured by superstition, and he defended some of the absurdest tenets of popery by the most ridiculous and puerile arguments. His talents were moderate; with the writings of the ancients he appears to have been acquainted only through the medium of the collectors of the middle ages, nor does he ever hazard an opinion, or pursue a speculation, beyond the limits which had been marked out by some approved doctor of the Church. Add to this that his style is, to an uncommon degree, harsh and forbidding: "exile, aridum, conscissum, ac minutum."

Knox and Buchanan soon became disgusted with such studies, and began to seek entertainment more gratifying to their ardent and inquisitive minds. Having set out in search of knowledge, they released themselves from the trammels and overleaped the boundaries prescribed to them by their timid conductor. Each following the native bent of his
genius and inclination, they separated in the prosecution of their studies. Buchanan, indulging in a more excursive range, explored the extensive fields of literature, and wandered in the flowery mead of poesy, while Knox, passing through the avenues of secular learning, devoted himself to the study of divine truth, and the labors of the sacred ministry. Both, however, kept uniformly in view the advancement of true religion and liberty, with the love of which they were equally smitten; and as, during their lives, they suffered a long and painful exile, and were exposed to many dangers, for adherence to this kindred cause, so their memories have not been divided in the profuse but honorable obloquy with which they have been aspersed by its enemies, and in the deserved and grateful recollections of its genuine friends.

But we must not suppose that Knox was able at once to divest himself of the prejudices of his education and of the times. Barren and repulsive as the scholastic studies appear to our minds, there was something in the intricate and subtle sophistry then in vogue calculated to fascinate the youthful and ingenious mind. It had a show of wisdom; it exercised, although it did not enrich, the understanding; it even gave play to the imagination, while it served to flatter the pride of the learned adept. Once involved in the mazy labyrinth, it was no easy task to break through it, and to escape into the open field of rational and free inquiry. Accordingly, Knox continued for some time captivated with these studies, and prosecuted them with great success. After he was created master of arts, he taught philosophy, most probably as a regent of one of the classes in the university. His class became celebrated, and he was considered as equaling, if not excelling, his master in the subtleties of the dialectic art. About the same time, although he had no interest but what was procured by his own merit, he was advanced to clerical orders, and was ordained a priest, before he reached the age fixed by the canons of the church. This must have taken place previous to the year 1530, at which time he had arrived at his twenty-fifth year, the canonical age for receiving ordination.

It was not long, however, till his studies received a new direction, which led to a complete revolution in his religious sentiments, and had an important influence on the whole of his future life. Not satisfied with the excerpts from ancient authors, which he found in the writings of the scholastic divines and canonists, he resolved to have recourse to the original works. In them he found a method of investigating and communicating truth to which he had hitherto been a stranger, and the simplicity of which recommended itself to his mind, in spite of the prejudices of education and the pride of superior attainments in his own favorite art. Among the fathers of the Christian Church, Jerome and Augustine attracted his particular attention. By the writings of the former, he was led to the Scriptures as the only pure fountain of divine truth, and instructed in the utility of studying them in the original
languages. In the works of the latter, he found religious sentiments very opposite to those taught in the Romish Church, who, while she retained his name as a saint in her calendar, had banished his doctrine, as heretical, from her pulpits. From this time, he renounced the study of scholastic theology, and although not yet completely emancipated from superstition, his mind was fitted for improving the means which Providence had prepared for leading him to a fuller and more comprehensive view of the system of evangelical religion. It was about the year 1535 when this favorable change commenced, but it does not appear that he professed himself a Protestant before the year 1542. As I am now to enter upon that period of Knox’s life at which he renounced the Roman Catholic communion and commenced Reformer, it may not be improper to take a survey of the state of religion in Scotland at that time. Without an adequate knowledge of this, it is impossible to form a just estimate of the necessity and importance of that Reformation in the advancement of which he labored with so great zeal, and nothing has contributed so much to give currency, among Protestants, to prejudices against his character, as ignorance, or a superficial consideration of the enormous and almost incredible abuses which then prevailed in the Church. This must be my apology for a digression which might otherwise be deemed superfluous or disproportionate.

The corruptions by which the Christian religion was universally disfigured, before the Reformation, had grown to a greater height in Scotland than in any other nation within the pale of Western Church. Superstition and religious imposture, in their grossest forms, gained an easy admission among a rude, ignorant people. By means of these, the clergy attained to an exorbitant degree of opulence and power, which were accompanied, as they always have been, with the corruption of their order, and of the whole system of religion.

The full half of the wealth of the nation belonged to the clergy, and the greater part of this was in the hands of a few individuals, who had the command of the whole body. Avarice, ambition, and the love of secular pomp reigned among the superior orders. Bishops and abbots rivaled the first nobility in magnificence, and preceded them in honors; they were Privy-Counselors, and Lords of Session, as well as of Parliament, and had long engrossed the principal offices of state. A vacant bishopric or abbacy called forth powerful competitors, who contended for it as for a principality or petty kingdom; it was obtained by similar arts, and not unfrequently taken possession of by the same weapons. Inferior benefices were openly put to sale or bestowed on the illiterate and unworthy minions of courtiers; on dice players, strolling bards, and the bastards of bishops. Plurality benefits were multiplied without bounds, and benefices, given in commendam, were kept vacant during the life of the commendator—nay, sometimes during several lives, so that extensive parishes were frequently deprived for a long course of years of all
religious service, if a deprivation it could be called—at a time when the
cure of souls was no longer regarded as attached to livings originally
endowed for that purpose. The bishops never, on any occasion,
condescended to preach; indeed, I scarcely recollect an instance of it
mentioned in history, from the erection of the regular Scottish
Episcopacy down to the era of the Reformation. The practice had even
gone into desuetude among all the secular clergy, and was wholly
devolved on the mendicant monks, who employed it for the most
mercenary purposes.
The lives of the clergy, exempted from secular jurisdiction, and corrupted
by wealth and idleness, were become a scandal to religion, and an
outrage on decency. While they professed chastity, and prohibited, under
the severest penalties, any of the ecclesiastical order from contracting
lawful wedlock, the bishops set an example of the most shameless
profligacy before the inferior clergy, avowedly kept their harlots, provided
their natural sons with benefices, and gave their daughters in marriage
to the sons of the nobility and principal gentry, many of whom were so
mean as to contaminate the blood of their families by such base alliances
for the sake of the rich dowries which they brought.
Through the blind devotion and munificence of princes and nobles,
monasteries, those nurseries of superstition and idleness, had greatly
multiplied in the nation; and though they had universally degenerated,
and were notoriously become the haunts of lewdness and debauchery, it
was deemed impious and sacrilegious to reduce their number, abridge
their privileges, or alienate their funds. The kingdom swarmed with
ignorant, idle, luxurious monks, who, like locusts, devoured the fruits of
the earth, and filled the air with pestilential infection; with friars white,
black, and gray; canons regular, and of St. Anthony; Carmelites,
Carthusians, Cordeliers, Dominicans, Franciscan Conventuals and
Observantines, Jacobins, Premonstratensians, monks of Tyrone, and of
Vallis Caulium, and Hospitallers, or Holy Knights of St. John of
Jerusalem; nuns of St. Austin, St. Clair, St. Scholastica, and St.
Catherine of Sienna, with canonesses of various clans.
The ignorance of the clergy respecting religion was as gross as the
dissoluteness of their morals. Even bishops were not ashamed to confess
that they were unacquainted with the canon of their faith, and had never
read any part of the sacred Scriptures, except what they met with in
their missals. Under such masters the people perished for lack of
knowledge. That book, which was able to make them wise unto salvation,
and intended to be equally accessible to "Jew and Greek, Barbarian and
Scythian, bond and free," was locked up from them, and the use of it in
their own tongue prohibited under the heaviest penalties. The religious
service was mumbled over in a dead language which many of the priests
did not understand, and some of them could scarcely read; and the
greatest care was taken to prevent even catechisms, composed and approved by the clergy, from coming into the hands of the laity.

Andrew Forman, bishop of Murray, and papal legate for Scotland, being obliged to say grace, at an entertainment which he gave to the pope and cardinals in Rome, blundered so in his latinity, that his holiness and their eminences lost their gravity, which so disconcerted the bishop, that he concluded the blessing by giving all the false carles to the devil, *in nomine patris, filii et sancti spiritus*, to which the company, not understanding his Scoto-Latin, said "Amen." "The holy bishop," says, Pitscottie, "was not a good scholar, and had not good Latin."

Scotland, from her local situation, had been less exposed to disturbance from the encroaching ambition, the vexatious exactions, and fulminating anathemas of the Vatican court, than the countries in the immediate vicinity of Rome. But from the same cause, it was more easy for the domestic clergy to keep up on the minds of the people that excessive veneration for the Holy See, which could not be long felt by those who had the opportunity of witnessing its vices and worldly politics. The burdens which attended a state of dependence upon a remote foreign jurisdiction were severely felt. Though the popes did not enjoy the power of presenting to the Scottish prelacies, they wanted not numerous pretexts for interfering with them. The most important causes of a civil nature, which the ecclesiastical courts had contrived to bring within their jurisdiction, were frequently carried to Rome. Large sums of money were annually exported out of the kingdom, for the confirmation of benefices, the conducting of appeals, and many other purposes, in exchange for which were received leaden bulls, woolen palls, wooden images, old bones, and similar articles of precious consecrated mummery.

It is shorth time sen ony benefice
Was sped in Rome, except great bishoprics,
But now, for ane unworthy vickarage,
A priest will rin to Rome in Pilgrimage.

Ane cavill quhilk was never at the schule
Will rin to Rome, and keep ane bischopis mule,
And syne come hame with mony a colorit crack,
With ane burden of benificis on his back.

Of the doctrine of Christianity almost nothing remained but the name. Instead of being directed to offer up their adorations to one God, the
people were taught to divide them among an innumerable company of inferior divinities. A plurality of mediators shared the honor of procuring the divine favor with "one Mediator between God and man," and more petitions were presented to the virgin Mary, and other saints, than to "Him whom the Father heareth always." The sacrifice of the mass was represented as procuring forgiveness of sins to the living and the dead, to the infinite disparagement of the sacrifice by which Jesus Christ expiated sin and procured everlasting redemption; and the consciences of men were withdrawn from faith in the merits of their Savior to a delusive reliance upon priestly absolutions, papal pardons, and voluntary penances. Instead of being instructed to demonstrate the sincerity of their faith and repentance by forsaking their sins, and to testify their love to God and man by practicing the duties of morality, and observing the ordinances of worship authorized by Scripture, they were taught that, if they regularly said their *aves* and *credos*, confessed themselves to a priest, punctually paid their tithes and church offerings, purchased a mass, went to the shrine of some celebrated saint, refrained from flesh on Fridays, or performed some other prescribed act of bodily mortification, their salvation was infallibly secured in due time; while those who were so rich and so pious as to build a chapel or an altar, and to endow it for the support of a priest, to perform masses, obits, and dirges, procured a relaxation of the pains of purgatory for themselves or their relations, in proportion to the extent of their liberality. It is difficult for us to conceive how empty, ridiculous, and wretched those harangues were which the monks delivered for sermons. Legendary tales concerning the founder of some religious order, his wonderful sanctity, the miracles which he performed, his combats with the devil, his watchings, fastings, flagellations; the virtues of holy water, chrism, crossing, and exorcism; the horrors of purgatory, and the numbers released from it by the intercession of some powerful saint; these, with low jests, table-talk, and fireside scandal, formed the favorite topics of the preachers, and were served up to the people instead of the pure, salutary, and sublime doctrines of the Bible.

The beds of the dying were besieged, and their last moments disturbed, by avaricious priests, who labored to extort bequests to themselves or to the Church. Not satisfied with exacting tithes from the living, a demand was made upon the dead; no sooner had the poor husbandman breathed his last, than the rapacious vicar came and carried off his corpse-present, which he repeated as often as death visited the family. Ecclesiastical censures were fulminated against those who were reluctant in making these payments, or who showed themselves disobedient to the clergy; and, for a little money, they were prostituted on the most trifling occasions. Divine service was neglected; and, except on festival days, the churches, in many parts of the country, were no longer
employed for sacred purposes, but served as sanctuaries for malefactors, places of traffic, or resorts for pastime.

Persecution, and the suppression of free inquiry were the only weapons by which its interested supporters were able to defend this system of corruption and imposture. Every avenue by which truth might enter was carefully guarded. Learning was branded as the parent of heresy. The most frightful pictures were drawn of those who had separated from the Romish Church, and held up before the eyes of the people, to deter them from imitating their example. If any person, who had attained a degree of illumination amidst the general darkness, began to hint dissatisfaction with the conduct of churchmen, and to propose the correction of abuses, he was immediately stigmatized as a heretic, and, if he did not secure his safety by flight, was immured in a dungeon, or committed to the flames. And when, at last, in spite of all their precautions, the light which was shining around did break in and spread through the nation, the clergy prepared to adopt the most desperate and bloody measures for its extinction.

From this imperfect sketch of the state of religion in this country, we may see how false the representation is which some persons would impose on us—as if popery were a system, erroneous, indeed, but purely speculative, superstitious but harmless, provided it had not been accidentally accompanied with intolerance and cruelty. The very reverse is the truth. It may be safely said that there is not one of its erroneous tenets, or of its superstitious practices, which was not either originally contrived, or afterwards accommodated, to advance and support some practical abuse; to aggrandize the ecclesiastical order, secure to them immunity from civil jurisdiction, sanctify their encroachments upon secular authorities, vindicate their usurpations upon the consciences of men, cherish implicit obedience to the decisions of the Church, and extinguish free inquiry and liberal science.

It was a system not more repugnant to the religion of the Bible, than incompatible with the legitimate rights of princes, and the independence, liberty, and prosperity of kingdoms; not more destructive to the souls of men, than to domestic and social happiness, and the principles of sound morality. Considerations from every quarter combined in calling aloud for a radical and complete reform. The exertions of every description of persons, of the man of letters, the patriot, the prince, as well as the Christian, each acting in his own sphere for his own interests, with the joint concurrence of all as in a common cause, were urgently required for extirpating abuses, of which all had reason to complain, and for effectuating a revolution, in the advantages of which all would participate. There was, however, no reasonable prospect of accomplishing this without exposing, in the first place, the falsehood of those notions which have been called speculative. It was principally by means of these that superstition had established its empire over the
minds of men; behind them the Romish ecclesiastics had entrenched themselves and defended their usurped prerogatives and possessions; and had any prince or legislature endeavored to deprive them of these, while the great body of the people remained unenlightened, it would soon have been found that the attempt was premature in itself, and replete with danger to those by whom it was made. To the revival of the primitive doctrines and institutions of Christianity, by the preaching and writings of the reformers, and to those controversies by which the popish errors were refuted from Scripture (for which many modern philosophers seem to have a thorough contempt), we are chiefly indebted for the overthrow of superstition, ignorance, and despotism; and in fact, all the blessings, political and religious, which we enjoy, may be traced to the Reformation from popery.

How grateful should we be to Divine Providence for this happy revolution! For those persons do but sport with their own imaginations, who flatter themselves that it must have taken place in the ordinary course of human affairs, and overlook the many convincing proofs of the superintending direction of superior wisdom in the whole combination of circumstances which contributed to bring about the Reformation in this country, as well as throughout Europe. How much are we indebted to those men, who, under God, were the instruments in effecting it; men who cheerfully hazarded their lives to achieve a design which involved the felicity of millions unborn; who boldly attacked the system of error and corruption, though fortified by popular credulity, by custom, and by laws, fenced with the most dreadful penalties; and who, having forced the stronghold of superstition, and penetrated the recesses of its temple, tore aside the veil that concealed the monstrous idol which the world had so long ignorantly worshipped, dissolved the spell by which the human mind was bound, and restored it to liberty! How criminal must those be, who, sitting at ease under the vines and fig trees—planted by the labors and watered with the blood of these patriots—discover their disesteem of the invaluable privileges which they inherit, or their ignorance of the expense at which they were purchased, by the most unworthy treatment of those to whom they owe them; misrepresent their actions; calumniate their motives; and load their memories with every species of abuse!

Patriots have toiled, and in their country’s cause
Bled nobly, and their deeds, as they deserve,
Receive proud recompense.
But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,
To those who, posted at the shrine of truth,
Have fallen in her defence.
Yet few remember them.
With their names
No bard embalms and sanctifies his song,
And history, so warm on meaner themes,
Is cold on this. She execrates, indeed,
The tyranny that doomed them to the fire,
But gives the glorious sufferers little praise.

The reformed doctrine had made considerable progress in Scotland before it was embraced by Knox. Patrick Hamilton, a youth of royal lineage, obtained the honor, not conferred upon many of his rank, of first announcing its glad tidings to his countrymen, and of sealing them with his blood. He was born in the year 1504, and being designed for the Church by his relations, the abbacy of Ferne was conferred upon him in his childhood, according to a ridiculous custom which prevailed at that period. But, as early as the year 1526, and previous to the breach of Henry VIII with the Romish see, a gleam of light was, by some unknown means, imparted to his mind, amidst the darkness which brooded around him. His recommendations of ancient literature, at the expense of the philosophy which was then taught in the schools, and the free language which he used in speaking of the corruptions of the Church had already drawn upon him the suspicions of the clergy, when he resolved to leave Scotland, and to improve his mind by traveling on the Continent. He set out with three attendants, and, attracted by the fame of Luther, repaired to Wittenberg. Luther and Melancthon were highly pleased with his zeal, and, after retaining him a short time with them, they recommended him to the university of Marburg. This university was newly erected by that enlightened prince, Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, who had placed at its head the learned and pious Francis Lambert of Avignon. Lambert, who had left his native country, and sacrificed a lucrative situation, from love to the reformed religion, conceived a strong attachment to the young Scotsman, who imbibed his instructions with extraordinary avidity. While he was daily advancing in acquaintance with the Scriptures, Hamilton was seized with an unconquerable desire of imparting to his countrymen the knowledge which he had acquired. In vain did Lambert represent to him the dangers to which he would be exposed; his determination was fixed, and taking along with him a single attendant, he left Marburg and returned to Scotland.

The clergy did not allow him long time to disseminate his opinions. Pretending to wish a free conference with him, they decoyed him to St. Andrews, where he was thrown into prison by Archbishop Beatoun, and committed to the flames on the last day of February, 1528, and in the twenty-fourth year of his age. On his trial he defended his opinions with firmness, yet with great modesty; and the mildness, patience, and fortitude which he displayed at the stake, equaled those of the first martyrs of Christianity. He expired with these words in his mouth: "How
long, O Lord, shall darkness cover this realm! How long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men! Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! "The murder of Hamilton," says a modern historian, "was afterwards avenged in the blood of the nephew and successor of his persecutor," and the flames in which he expired were, "in the course of one generation, to enlighten all Scotland, and to consume, with avenging fury, the Catholic superstition, the papal power, and the prelacy Itself."

The good effects which resulted from the martyrdom of Hamilton soon began to appear. Many of the learned, as well as of the common people, in St. Andrews, beheld with deep interest the cruel death of a person of rank, and could not refrain from admiring the heroism with which he endured it. This excited inquiry into the opinions for which he scattered, and the result of inquiry, in many cases, was a conviction of their truth. Gawin Logie, principal of St. Leonard’s College, was so successful in instilling them into the minds of the students under his care, that it became proverbial to say of anyone who was suspected of Lutheranism, that he "had drunk of St. Leonard’s well." Under the connivance of John Winram, the subprior, they also secretly spread among the novitiates of the abbey.

These sentiments were not long confined to St. Andrews, and everywhere persons were to be found who held that Patrick Hamilton had died a martyr. Alarmed at the progress of the new opinions, the clergy adopted the most rigorous measures for their extirpation. Strict inquisition was made after heretics; the flames of persecution were kindled in all quarters of the country; and, from 1530 to 1540, many innocent and excellent men suffered the most inhuman death. Henry Forrest, David Straiton, Norman Gourlay, Jerom Russel, Kennedy, Kyllor, Beveridge, Duncan Sympson, Robert Forrester, and Thomas Forrest were the names of those early martyrs, whose sufferings deserve a more conspicuous place than can be given to them in these pages. A few, whose constancy was overcome by the horrors of the stake, purchased their lives by abjuring their opinions. Numbers made their escape to England and the Continent, among whom were the following learned men—Gawin Logie, Alexander Seatoun, Alexander Aless, John Macbee, John Fife, John Macdowal, John Macbray, George Buchanan, James Harrison, and Robert Richardson. Few of these exiles afterwards returned to their native country. England, Denmark, Germany, France, and even Portugal offered an asylum to them, and foreign universities and schools enjoyed the benefit of those talents which their bigoted countrymen were incapable of appreciating. To maintain their authority, and to preserve those corruptions from which they derived their wealth, the clergy would willingly have driven into banishment all the learned men in the kingdom, and quenched forever the light of science in Scotland. Various causes contributed to prevent these measures from arresting the progress of the truth. Among these, the first place is unquestionably due
to the circulation of the Scriptures in the vulgar language. Against this the patrons of ignorance endeavored to guard with the utmost jealousy. But when the desire of knowledge has once been excited among a people, they easily contrive methods of eluding the vigilance of those who would prevent them from gratifying it. By means of merchants who traded from England and the Continent to the ports of Leith, Dundee, and Montrose, Tyndale’s translations of the Scriptures, with many Protestant books, were imported. These were consigned to persons of tried principles and prudence, who circulated them in private with great industry. One copy of the Bible, or of the New Testament, supplied several families. At the dead hour of night, when others were asleep, they assembled in a private house; the sacred volume was brought from its concealment, and while one read, the rest listened with mute attention. In this way the knowledge of the Scriptures was diffused, at a period when it does not appear that there was a single public teacher of the truth in Scotland.

Nor must we overlook another means which operated very extensively in alienating the public mind from the established religion. Those who have investigated the causes which led to the Reformation on the Continent, have ascribed a considerable influence to the writings of the poets and satirists of the age. Poetry has charms for persons of every description; and in return for the pleasure which it affords them, mankind have in all ages been disposed to allow a greater liberty to poets than to any other class of writers. Strange as it may appear, the poets who flourished before the Reformation used very great freedom with the Church, and there were not wanting many persons of exalted rank who encouraged them in this species of composition. The same individuals who were ready, at the call of pope and clergy, to undertake a crusade for extirpating heresy, entertained poets who inveighed against the abuses of the court of Rome, and lampooned the religious orders. One day they assisted at an *auto de fé*—in which heretics were committed to the flames for the preservation of the Catholic Church; next day they were present at the acting of a pantomime or a play, in which the ministers of that Church were held up to ridicule. Intoxicated with power, and lulled asleep by indolence, the clergy had either overlooked these attacks, or treated them with contempt; it was only from experience that they learned their injurious tendency, and before they made the discovery, the practice had become so common that it could no longer be restrained. This weapon was wielded with much success by the friends of the reformed doctrine in Scotland. Some of their number had acquired great celebrity among their countrymen as poets; and others, who could not lay claim to high poetical merit, possessed a talent for wit and humor. They employed themselves in writing satires, in which the ignorance, the negligence, and the immorality of the clergy were stigmatized, and the absurdities and superstitions of the popish religion exposed to ridicule. These poetical effusions were easily committed to memory, and were
circulated without the intervention of the press, which was at that time entirely under the control of the bishops. An attack still more bold was made upon the Church. Dramatic compositions, partly written in the same strain, were repeatedly acted in the presence of the royal family, the nobility, and vast assemblies of people, to the great mortification, and the still greater disadvantage, of the clergy. The bishops repeatedly procured the enactment of laws against the circulation of seditious rhymes and blasphemous ballads; but metrical epistles, moralities, and psalms of the Scottish language continued to be read with avidity, notwithstanding prohibitory statutes and legal prosecutions.

In the year 1540, the reformed doctrine could number among its converts, besides a multitude of the common people, many persons of rank and external respectability, among whom were William, Earl of Glencairn; his son Alexander, Lord Kilmours; William, Earl of Errol; William, Lord Ruthven; his daughter Lilias, wife of the Master of Drummond; John Stewart, son of Lord Methven; Sir James Sandilands; Sir David Lindsay; Campbell of Cesnock; Erskine of Dun; Melville of Raith; Balnaves of Halhill; Straiton of Laurieston, with William Johnston; and Robert Alexander, advocates. The early period at which they were enrolled as friends to the Reformation renders these names more worthy of consideration. It has often been alleged that the desire of sharing in the rich spoils of the Popish Church, together with the intrigues of the Court of England, engaged the Scottish nobles on the side of the Reformed religion. At a later period, there is reason to think that this allegation was not altogether groundless. But at the time of which we now speak, the prospect of overturning the Established Church was too distant and uncertain to induce persons, who had no higher motive than to gratify avarice, to take a step by which they exposed their lives and fortunes to the most imminent hazard; nor had the English monarch yet extended his influence in Scotland by those arts of political intrigue which he afterwards employed.

During the two last years of the reign of James V, the numbers of the reformed rapidly increased. Twice did the clergy attempt to cut them off by a desperate blow. They presented to the king a list containing the names of some hundreds, possessed of property and wealth, whom they denounced as heretics, and endeavored to procure his consent to their condemnation by flattering him with the immense riches which would accrue to him from the forfeiture of their estates. When this proposal was first made to him, James rejected it with strong words of displeasure, but so violent was the antipathy which he at last conceived against his nobility, and so much did he fall under the influence of the clergy, that it is highly probable he would have yielded to the solicitations of the latter, if the disgraceful issue of an expedition, which they had instigated him to undertake against the English, had not impaired his reason, and put an end to his unhappy life on the thirteenth of December, 1542.
CHAPTER TWO
From the year 1542, when he embraced the Reformed religion, to the year 1549, when he was released from the French galleys

While this fermentation of opinion was spreading through the nation, Knox, from the state of his mind, could not remain long unaffected. The reformed doctrines had been imbied by several persons of his acquaintance, and they were the topic of common conversation and dispute among the learned and inquisitive at the university. His change of views first discovered itself in his philosophical lectures, in which he began to forsake the scholastic path, and to recommend to his pupils a more rational and useful method of study. Even this innovation excited against him violent suspicions of heresy, which were confirmed when he proceeded to reprehend the corruptions that prevailed in the Church. He was then teaching at St. Andrews; but it was impossible for him to remain long in a town which was wholly under the power of Cardinal Beatoun, the chief supporter of the Romish Church, and a determined enemy to all reform. Accordingly, he left that place, and retired to the south of Scotland, where he avowed his belief of the Protestant doctrine. Provoked by his defection, and alarmed lest he should draw others after him, the clergy were anxious to rid themselves of such an adversary. Having passed sentence against him as a heretic, and degraded him from the priesthood, the cardinal employed assassins to waylay him, by whose hands he must have fallen, had not Providence placed him under the protection of Douglas of Langniddrie.

The change produced in the political state of the kingdom by the death of James V had great influence upon the Reformation. After a bold but unsuccessful attempt by Cardinal Beatoun to secure to himself the government during the minority of the infant queen, the Earl of Arran was peaceably established in the regency. Arran had formerly shown himself attached to the reformed doctrines, and he was now surrounded with counselors who were of the same principles. Henry VIII laid hold of this opportunity for accomplishing his favorite measure of uniting the two crowns, and eagerly pressed a marriage between his son Edward, and Mary, the young Queen of Scots. Notwithstanding the determined opposition of the whole body of the clergy, the Scottish Parliament agreed to the match; commissioners were sent into England to settle the terms; and the contract of marriage was drawn out, subscribed, and ratified by all the parties. But through the intrigues of the cardinal and queen-mother, the fickleness and timidity of the regent, and the violence of the English monarch, the treaty, after proceeding thus far, was broken off; and Arran not only renounced connection with England, but abjured the reformed religion publicly in the church of Stirling. The Scottish queen was soon after betrothed to the dauphin of France, and sent into that kingdom, a measure which, at a subsequent period, nearly accomplished
the ruin of the independence of Scotland, and the extirpation of the Protestant religion.
The Reformation had, however, made very considerable progress during the short time that it was patronized by the regent. In 1542, the Parliament passed an act declaring it lawful for all the subjects to read the Scriptures in the vulgar language. This act, which was proclaimed in spite of the protestations of the bishops, was a signal triumph of truth over error. Formerly, it was reckoned a crime to look on the sacred books; now, to read them was safe, and even the way to honor. The Bible was to be seen on every gentleman's table; the New Testament was almost in everyone's hands. Hitherto, the Reformation had been advanced by books imported from England, but now the errors of popery were attacked in publications which issued from the Scottish press. The reformed preachers, whom the regent had chosen as chaplains, disseminated their doctrines throughout the kingdom, and, under the sanction of his authority, made many converts from the Roman Catholic faith.

One of these preachers deserves particular notice here, as it was by means of his sermons that Knox first perceived the beauty of evangelical truth, and had deep impressions of religion made upon his heart. Thomas Guillaume, or Williams, was born at Athelstoneford, a village in East Lothian, and had entered into the order of Black Friars, or Dominican monks, among whom he rose to great eminence. But having embraced the sentiments of the reformers, he threw off the monkish habit. His learning and elocution recommended him to Arran and his Protestant counselors; and he was much esteemed by the people as a clear expositor of Scripture. When the regent began to waver in his attachment to the Reformation, Guillaume was dismissed from the court, and retired into England, after which I do not find him noticed in history. But the person to whom our Reformer was most indebted, was George Wishart, a brother of the laird of Pittarrow in Mearns. Being driven into banishment by the Bishop of Brechin, for teaching the Greek Testament in Montrose, he had resided for some years at the university of Cambridge. In the year 1544, he returned to his native country, in the company of the commissioners who had been sent to negotiate a treaty with Henry VIII of England. Seldom do we meet, in ecclesiastical history, with a character so amiable and interesting as that of George Wishart. Excelling all his countrymen at that period in learning, of the most persuasive eloquence, irreproachable in life, courteous and affable in manners, his fervent piety, zeal, and courage in the cause of truth were tempered with uncommon meekness, modesty, patience, prudence, and charity. In his tour of preaching through Scotland, he was usually accompanied by some of the principal gentry, and the people who flocked to hear him were ravished with his discourses. To this teacher Knox attached himself, and profited greatly by his sermons and private
instructions. During the last visit which Wishart paid to Lothian, Knox waited constantly on his person, and bore the sword, which was carried before him, from the time that an attempt was made to assassinate him in Dundee. Wishart was highly pleased with the zeal of his faithful attendant, and seems to have presaged his future usefulness, at the same time that he labored under a strong presentiment of his own approaching martyrdom. On the night on which he was apprehended by Bothwell at the instigation of the cardinal, he directed the sword to be taken from Knox, and, on the latter insisting for liberty to accompany him to Ormiston, the martyr dismissed him with this reply, "Nay, return to your bairnes (meaning his pupils), and God bless you; ane is sufficient for a sacrifice."

Having relinquished all thoughts of officiating in that Church which had invested him with clerical orders, Knox had entered as tutor into the family of Hugh Douglas of Langniddrie, a gentleman in East Lothian, who had embraced the reformed doctrines. John Cockburn of Ormiston, a neighboring gentleman of the same persuasion, also put his son under his tuition. These young men were instructed by him in the principles of religion, as well as in the learned languages. He managed their religious instruction in such a way as to allow the rest of the family, and the people of the neighborhood, to reap advantage from it. He catechized them publicly in a chapel at Langniddrie, in which he also read, at stated times, a chapter of the Bible, accompanied with explanatory remarks. The memory of this fact has been preserved by tradition, and the chapel, the ruins of which are still apparent, is popularly called John Knox’s Kirk.

It was not to be expected that he would be suffered long to continue this employment, under a government which was now entirely at the devotion of Cardinal Beatoun, who had gained a complete ascendant over the mind of the timid and irresolute regent. But, in the midst of his cruelties, and while he was planning still more desperate deeds, the cardinal was himself suddenly cut off. A conspiracy was formed against his life, and a small but determined band (some of whom seen to have been instigated by resentment for private injuries and the influence of the English court, others animated by a desire to revenge his cruelties and deliver their country from his oppression) seized upon the castle of St. Andrews, in which he resided, and put him to death on the twenty-ninth of May, 1546.

In his progress through the kingdom with the governor, he instigated him "to hang (at Perth) four honest men, for eating of a goose on Friday; and drowned a young woman, because she refused to pray to our lady in her birth."
Knox says that the woman, "having an soucking babe upon her briest, was drounit."

The death of Beatoun did not, however, free Knox from persecution. John Hamilton, an illegitimate brother of the regent, who was nominated to the vacant bishopric, sought his life with as great eagerness as his predecessor. He was obliged to conceal himself, and to remove from place to place, to provide for his safety. Wearied with this mode of living, and apprehensive that he would someday fall into the hands of his enemies, he came to the resolution of leaving Scotland.

England presented the readiest and must natural sanctuary to those who were persecuted by the Scottish prelates. But though they usually fled to that kingdom in the first instance, they did not find their situation comfortable, and the greater part, after a short residence there, proceeded to the Continent. Henry VIII, from motives which, to say the least, were highly suspicious, had renounced subjection to the Roman see, and compelled his subjects to follow his example. He invested himself with the ecclesiastical supremacy, within his own dominions, which he had wrested from the Bishop of Rome; and in the arrogant and violent exercise of that power, the English pope was scarcely exceeded by any of the pretended successors of St. Peter. Having signalized himself at a former period as a literary champion against Luther, he was anxious to demonstrate that his breach with the court of Rome had not alienated him from the Catholic faith, and he would suffer none to proceed a step beyond the narrow and capricious line of reform which he was pleased to prescribe. Hence, the motley system of religion which he established, and the contradictory measures by which it was supported. Statutes against the authority of the pope, and against the tenets of Luther, were enacted in the same parliament, and Papists and Protestants were alternately brought to the same stake. The Protestants in Scotland were universally dissatisfied with this bastard reformation, a circumstance which had contributed not a little to cool their zeal for the lately proposed alliance with England. Sir Ralph Sadler, his ambassador, found himself in a very awkward predicament on this account, for the Papists were offended because he had gone so far from Rome, the Protestants because he had gone no further. The latter disrelished, in particular, the restrictions which he had imposed upon the reading and interpretation of the Scriptures, and which he urged the regent to imitate in Scotland. And they had no desire for the king's book, of which Sadler was furnished with copies to distribute, and which lay as a drug upon his hands.

On these accounts Knox had no desire to go to England, where, although "the pope's name was suppressed, his laws and corruptions remained in full vigor." His determination was to visit Germany, and to prosecute his studies in some of the Protestant universities, until he should see a favorable change in the state of his native country. But the lairds of
Langniddrie and Ormiston, who were extremely reluctant to part with him, prevailed on him to relinquish his design, and to repair, along with their sons, to the castle of St. Andrews. The conspirators against Cardinal Beatoun kept possession of the castle after his death. The regent had assembled an army and laid siege to it, from a desire not so much to avenge the murder of the cardinal, at whose fall he secretly rejoiced, as to comply with the importunity of the clergy, and to release his eldest son, who had been retained by Beatoun as a pledge of his father’s fidelity, and had now fallen into the hands of the conspirators. But the besieged, having obtained assistance from England, baffled all his skill; and a treaty was at last concluded, by which they engaged to deliver up the castle to the regent, upon his procuring to them from Rome a pardon for the cardinal’s murder. The pardon was obtained, but the conspirators, alarmed, or affecting to be alarmed, at the contradictory terms in which it was expressed, refused to perform their stipulation, and the regent felt himself unable, without foreign aid, to enforce a compliance. In this interval, a number of persons who were harassed for their attachment to the reformed sentiments, repaired to the castle where they enjoyed the free exercise of their religion.

Writers, unfriendly to Knox, have endeavored to fix an accusation upon him respecting the assassination of Cardinal Beatoun. Some have ignorantly asserted, that he was one of the conspirators. Others, better informed, have argued that he made himself accessory to their crime, by taking shelter among them. With more plausibility, others have appealed to his writings, as a proof that he vindicated the deed of the conspirators as laudable, or at least innocent. I know that some of Knox’s vindicators have denied this charge, and maintain that he justified it only so far as it was the work of God, or a just retribution in Providence for the crimes of which the cardinal had been guilty, without approving the conduct of those who were the instruments of punishing him. The just judgment of Heaven is, I acknowledge, the chief thing to which he directs the attention of his readers; at the same time, I think no one who carefully reads what he has written on this subject, can doubt that he justified the action of the conspirators. The truth is, he held the opinion, that persons who, according to the law of God, and the just laws of society, have forfeited their lives by the commission of flagrant crimes, such as notorious murderers and tyrants, may warrantably be put to death by private individuals, provided all redress, in the ordinary course of justice, is rendered impossible, in consequence of the offenders having usurped the executive authority, or being systematically protected by oppressive rulers. This is an opinion of the same kind with that of tyrannicide, held by so many of the ancients, and defended by Buchanan, in his dialogue, De jure regni ayud Scotos. It is a principle, I confess, of very dangerous application, and extremely liable to be abused by factious, fanatical, and
desperate men, as a pretext for perpetrating the most nefarious deeds. It would be unjust, however, on this account, to confound it with the principle, which, by giving to individuals a liberty to revenge their own quarrels, legitimates assassination, a practice which was exceedingly common in that age. I may add that there have been instances of persons, not invested with public authority, taking the execution of punishment into their own hands, whom we may scruple to load with an aggravated charge of murder, although we cannot approve of their conduct.

Knox entered the castle of St. Andrews at the time of Easter, 1547, and conducted the education of his pupils after his accustomed manner. In the chapel within the castle, he read to them lectures upon the Scriptures, beginning at the place in the Gospel according to John, where he had left off at Langniddrie; and he catechized them publicly in the parish-church belonging to the city. Among the refugees in the castle who attended these exercises, and who had not been concerned in the conspiracy against Beatoun, there were three persons who deserve to be particularly noticed.

Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, Lyon King at Arms, had been a favorite at the court both of James IV, and of his son James V. He was esteemed one of the first poets of the age, and his writings had contributed greatly to the advancement of the Reformation. Notwithstanding the indelicacy which disfigures several of his poetical productions, the personal deportment of Lindsay was grave, his morals were correct, and his writings discover a strong desire to reform the manners of the age, as well as ample proofs of true poetical genius, extensive learning, and wit the most keen and penetrating. He had long lashed the vices of the clergy, and exposed the absurdities and superstitions of popery, in the most popular and poignant satires, being protected by James V, who retained a strong attachment to the companion of his early sports, and the poet who had often amused his leisure hours. After the death of that monarch, he entered zealously into the measures pursued by the Earl of Arran at the commencement of his government, and when the regent dismissed his reforming counselors, Sir David was left exposed to the vengeance of the clergy, who could never forgive the injuries which they had received from his pen.

Henry Balnaves of Halhill had raised himself, by his talents and probity, from an obscure situation to the highest honors of the state, and was justly regarded as one of the principal ornaments of the reformed cause in Scotland. Descended from poor parents in the town of Kirkaldy, he traveled, when only a boy, to the Continent, and hearing of a free school in Cologne, he gained admission to it, and received a liberal education, together with instruction in the principles of the Protestant religion. Returning to his native country, he applied himself to the study of law, and practiced for some time before the consistorial court of St. Andrews.
Notwithstanding the jealousy of the clergy, his reputation daily increased, and he at length obtained a seat in parliament and in the court of session. James V employed him in managing public affairs of great importance, and at the beginning of Arran’s regency he was made secretary of state. The active part which he at that time took in the measures for promoting the Reformation, rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to the administration which succeeded, and obliged him to seek shelter within the walls of the castle.

John Rough, having conceived a disgust at being deprived of some property to which he thought himself entitled, had left his parents and entered a monastery in Stirling when he was only seventeen years of age. During the time that the light of divine truth was spreading through the nation and penetrating even the recesses of cloisters, he had felt its influence and became a convert to the reformed sentiments. The reputation which he had gained as a preacher was such, that in the year 1543, the Earl of Arran procured a dispensation for his leaving the monastery and appointed him one of his chaplains. Upon the apostasy of Arran from the reformed religion, he retired first into Kyle, and afterwards into the castle of St. Andrews, where he was chosen preacher to the garrison.

These persons were so much pleased with Knox’s talents and his manner of teaching his pupils, that they urged him strongly to preach in public, and to become colleague to Rough. But he resisted all their solicitations, assigning as his reason that he did not consider himself as having a call to this employment and would not be guilty of intrusion. They did not, however, desist from their purpose, but having consulted with their brethren, came to a resolution without his knowledge that a call should be publicly given him, in the name of the whole, to become one of their ministers.

Accordingly, on a day fixed for the purpose, Rough preached a sermon on the election of ministers, in which he declared the power which a congregation, however small, had over any one in whom they perceived gifts suited to the office, and how dangerous it was for such a person to reject the call of those who desired instruction. Sermon being concluded, the preacher turned to Knox, who was present, and addressed him in these words: "Brother, you shall not be offended, although I speak unto you that which I have in charge, even from all those that are here present, which is this: In the name of God and of his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the name of all that presently call you by my mouth, I charge you that you refuse not this holy vocation, but, as you tender the glory of God, the increase of Christ’s kingdom, the edification of your brethren, and the comfort of me, whom you understand well enough to be oppressed by the multitude of labors, that you take the public office and charge of preaching, even as you look to avoid God’s heavy displeasure, and desire that he shall multiply his grace unto you." Then, addressing
himself to the congregation, he said, "Was not this your charge unto me? and do ye not approve this vocation?" They all answered, "It was, and we approve it." Overwhelmed by this unexpected and solemn charge, Knox, after an ineffectual attempt to address the audience, burst into tears, rushed out of the assembly, and shut himself up in his chamber. "His countenance and behavior, from that day till the day that he was compelled to present himself in the public place of preaching, did sufficiently declare the grief and trouble of his heart; for no man saw any sign of mirth from him, neither had he pleasure to accompany any man for many days together."

This proof of the sensibility of his temper, and the reluctance which he felt at undertaking a public office, may surprise those who have carelessly adopted the common notions respecting our Reformer’s character, but we shall meet with many examples of the same kind in the course of his life. The scene, too, will be extremely interesting to such as are impressed with the weight of the ministerial function, and will naturally awaken a train of feelings in the breasts of those who have been entrusted with the Gospel. It revives the memory of those early days of the Church, when persons did not rush forward to the altar, nor beg to "be put into one of the priest’s offices, to eat a piece of bread," when men of piety and talents, deeply affected with the awful responsibility of the office, and with their own insufficiency, were with great difficulty induced to take on them those orders which they had long desired, and for which they had labored to qualify themselves. What a contrast did this exhibit to the conduct of the herd, which at that time filled the stalls of the Popish Church! The behavior of Knox serves also to reprove those who become preachers of their own accord; and who, from vague and enthusiastic desires of doing good, or a fond conceit of their own gifts, trample upon good order, and thrust themselves into employment without any regular call.

We must not, however, imagine that his distress of mind, and the reluctance which he discovered to comply with the call which he had received, proceeded from consciousness of its invalidity, through the defect of certain external formalities which had been usual in the church, or which, in ordinary cases, may be observed with propriety in the installation of persons into sacred offices. These, as far as warranted by Scripture, or conducive to the preservation of order, he did not contemn, and his judgment respecting them may be learned from the early practice of the Scottish Reformed Church, in the organization of which he had so active a share. In common with all the original reformers, he rejected the order of episcopal ordination, as totally unauthorized by the laws of Christ, nor did he even regard the imposition of the hands of presbyters as a rite essential to the validity of orders, or of necessary observance in all circumstances of the Church. The Papists, indeed, did not fail to declaim on this topic, representing Knox, and other reformed ministers,
as destitute of all lawful vocation. In the same strain did many hierarchical writers of the English Church afterwards learn to talk, not scrupling, by their extravagant doctrine, of the absolute necessity of ordination by the hands of a bishop, who derived his powers by uninterrupted succession from the apostles, to invalidate and nullify the orders of all the reformed churches, except their own—a doctrine which has been revived in the present enlightened age, and unblushingly avowed and defended, with the greater part of its absurd, illiberal, and horrid consequences. The fathers of the English Reformation, however, were very far from entertaining such contracted and unchristian sentiments. When Knox afterwards went to England, they accepted his services without the smallest hesitation. They maintained a constant correspondence with the reformed divines on the Continent, and cheerfully owned them as brethren and fellow-laborers in the ministry. And they were not so ignorant of their principles, nor so forgetful of their character, as to prefer ordination by popish prelates to that which was conferred by protestant presbyters. I will not say that our Reformer utterly disregarded his early ordination in the Popish Church, although, if we may credit the testimony of his adversaries, this was his sentiment; but I have little doubt that he looked upon the charge which he received at St. Andrews as principally constituting his call to the ministry. His distress of mind, on the present occasion, proceeded from a higher source than the deficiency of some external formalities in his call. He had now very different thoughts as to the importance of the ministerial office, from what he had entertained when ceremoniously invested with orders. The care of immortal souls, of whom he must give an account to the Chief Bishop; the charge of declaring "the whole counsel of God, keeping nothing back," however ungrateful it might be to his hearers; the manner of life, afflictions, persecutions, imprisonment, exile, and violent death, to which the preachers of the Protestant doctrine were exposed; the hazard of his sinking under these hardships, and "making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience"—these, with similar considerations, rushed into his mind, and filled it with anxiety and fear. Satisfied, at length, that he had the call of God to engage in this work, he composed his mind to a reliance on Him who had engaged to make his "strength perfect in the weakness" of his servants, and resolved, with the apostle, "not to count his life dear, that he might finish with joy the ministry which he received of the Lord, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Often did he afterwards reflect with lively emotion upon this very interesting step of his life, and never, in the midst of his greatest sufferings, did he see reason to repent of the choice which he had so deliberately made. An occurrence which took place about this time contributed to fix his wavering resolution, and induced an earlier compliance with the call of the congregation than he might otherwise have been disposed to yield. Though sound in doctrine, Rough's literary acquirements were moderate.
Of this circumstance the patrons of the established religion in the university and abbey took advantage; and among others, Dean John Annand had long proved vexatious to him, by stating objections to the doctrine which he preached, and entangling him with sophisms, or garbled quotations from the fathers. Knox had assisted the preacher with his pen, and by his superior skill in logic and the writings of the fathers, had exposed Annand's fallacies, and confuted the popish errors. This polemic being one day, at a private disputation in the parish church, driven from all his usual defenses, fled, as his last refuge, to the infallible authority of the church, which, he alleged, had rendered all farther debate on these points unnecessary, in consequence of its having condemned the tenets of the Lutherans as heretical. To this Knox replied that, before they could submit to such a summary determination of the matters in controversy, it was requisite to ascertain the true Church by the marks given in Scripture, lest they should blindly receive, as their spiritual mother, "a harlot instead of the immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ." "For," continued he, "as for your Roman Church, as it is now corrupted, wherein stands the hope of your victory, I no more doubt that it is the synagogue of Satan, and the head thereof, called the pope, to be that man of sin of whom the apostle speaks, than I doubt that Jesus Christ suffered by the procurement of the visible church of Jerusalem. Yea, I offer myself, by word or writing, to prove the Roman Church this day farther degenerate from the purity which was in the days of the apostles, than were the Church of the Jews from the ordinances given by Moses, when they consented to the innocent death of Jesus Christ." This was a bold charge, but the minds of the people were prepared to listen to the proof. They exclaimed that, if this was true, they had been miserably deceived, and insisted that, as they could not all read his writings, he should ascend the pulpit, and give them an opportunity of hearing the probation of what he had so confidently affirmed. The request was reasonable, and the challenge was not to be retracted. The following Sabbath was accordingly fixed for making good his promise. On the day appointed, he appeared in the pulpit of the parish church, and gave out the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses of the seventh chapter of Daniel as his text. After an introduction, in which he explained the vision and showed that the four animals hieroglyphically represented four empires—the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman—out of the ruins of the last of which rose the empire described in his text, he proceeded to show that this was applicable to no power but the papal. He compared the parallel passages in the New Testament, and showed that the king mentioned in his text was the same elsewhere called the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, the Babylonian harlot; and that, in prophetic style, these expressions did not describe a single person, but a body or multitude of people under a wicked head, including a succession of persons occupying the same place. In support of his
assertion, that the papal power was antichristian, he described it under
the three heads of life, doctrine, and laws. He depicted the scandalous
lives of the popes from records published by Roman Catholic writers, and
contrasted their doctrine and laws with those of the New Testament,
particularly on the heads of justification, holydays, and abstinence from
meats and from marriage. He quoted from the canon law the
blasphemous titles and prerogatives ascribed to the pope, as an
additional proof that he was described in his text. In conclusion, he
signified that, if any of his hearers thought that he had misquoted or
misinterpreted the testimonies which he had produced from the
Scriptures, ecclesiastical history, or the writings of the fathers, he was
ready, upon their coming to him, in the presence of witnesses, to give
them satisfaction. Among the audience were his former preceptor, Major,
and the other members of the university, the sub-prior of the abbey, and
a great number of canons and friars of different orders.
This sermon, delivered with a considerable portion of that popular
eloquence for which Knox was afterwards so celebrated, made a great
noise, and excited much speculation among all classes. The preachers
who had preceded him, not even excepting Wishart, had contented
themselves with refuting some of the grosser errors of the established
religion; Knox struck at the root of popery, by boldly pronouncing the
pope to be antichrist, and the whole system erroneous and
antiscriptural. The report of this sermon, and of the effects produced by
it, having reached Hamilton, the bishop-elect of St. Andrews, he wrote to
Winram, who was vicar-general during the vacancy of the see, expressing
his surprise that such heretical and schismatical tenets were allowed to
be taught without opposition. Winram was at bottom friendly to the
reformed doctrine, but he durst not altogether disregard this admonition,
and, therefore, appointed a convention of the learned men of the abbey
and university to be held in St. Leonard’s Yards, to which he summoned
Knox and Rough.

"Sum said, utheris hued the branches of papistry, bot he
straiketh at the rute, to destroye the whole."

The two preachers appeared before that assembly. Nine articles, drawn
from their sermons, were exhibited, "the strangeness of which," the sub-
prior said, "had moved him to call for them to hear their answers." Knox
conducted the defense, for himself and his colleague, with much
acuteness and moderation. He expressed high satisfaction at appearing
before an auditory so honorable, modest, and grave. As he was not a
stranger to the report concerning the private sentiments of Winram, and
nothing was more abhorrent to his own mind than dissimulation, he,
before commencing his defence, obtested him to deal uprightly m a
matter of such magnitude. "The people," he said, "ought not to be
deceived or left in the dark; if his colleague and he had advanced anything unscriptural, he wished the sub-prior by all means to expose it; but, if, on the other hand, the doctrine taught by them was true, it was his duty to give it the sanction of his authority." Winram cautiously replied that he did not come there as a judge, and would neither approve nor condemn; he wished a conference, and, if Knox pleased, he would reason with him a little. Accordingly, he proceeded to state some objections to one of the propositions maintained by Knox, "that, in the worship of God, and especially in the administration of the sacraments, the rule prescribed in the Scriptures is to be observed, without addition or diminution; and that the Church has no right to devise religious ceremonies, and impose significations upon them." After maintaining the argument for a short time, the sub-prior devolved it on a gray friar, named Arbukgill, who took it up with great confidence, but was soon forced to yield with disgrace. He rashly engaged to prove the divine institution of ceremonies, and, being pushed by his antagonist from the Gospels and Acts to the Epistles, and from one epistle to another, he was driven at last to affirm "that the apostles had not received the Holy Ghost when they wrote the Epistles, but they afterwards received him, and ordained ceremonies." Knox smiled at the extravagant assertion. "Father!" exclaimed the sub-prior, "what say ye? God forbid that ye say that! for then farewell the ground of our faith." Alarmed and abashed, the friar attempted to correct his error, but in vain. He could not afterwards be brought to argument upon any of the articles, but resolved all into the authority of the Church. His opponent urging that the Church could have no authority to act in opposition to the express directions of Scripture, which enjoined an exact conformity to the divine laws respecting worship. "If so," said Arbukgill, "you will leave us no Church." "Yes," rejoined Knox, sarcastically, "in David I read of the church of malignants, Odi ecclesiam malignantium; this church you may have without the word, and fighting against it. Of this church if you will be, I cannot hinder you, but as for me I will be of no other church but that which has Jesus Christ for pastor, hears his voice, and will not hear the voice of a stranger." For purgatory, the friar had no better authority than that of Virgil in the sixth Æneid; and the pains of it, according to him, were—a bad wife.

_Solventur risu tabulae; to missus abibis._

Instructed by the issue of this convention, the Papists avoided for the future all disputation, which tended only to injure their cause. Had the castle of St. Andrews been to their power, they would soon have silenced these troublesome preachers, but as matters stood, more moderate and crafty measures were necessary. The plan adopted for counteracting the popular preaching of Knox and Rough was artfully laid. Orders were issued that all the learned men of the abbey and university should preach by turns every Sunday in the parish church. By this means the
reformed preachers were excluded on those days when the greatest
audiences attended, and it was expected that the diligence of the
established clergy would conciliate the affections of the people. To avoid
offense or occasion of speculation, they were also instructed not to touch
in their sermons upon any of the controverted points. Knox easily saw
through this artifice, but he contented himself with expressing a wish, in
the sermons which he still delivered on weekdays, that the clergy would
show themselves equally diligent in places where their labors were more
necessary. He, at the same time, expressed his satisfaction that Christ
was preached, and that nothing was spoken publicly against the truth; if
anything of this kind should be attempted, he requested the people to
suspend their judgment, until they should have an opportunity of
hearing him in reply.

His labors were so successful during the few months that he preached at
St. Andrews, that, besides the garrison in the castle, a great number of
the inhabitants of the town renounced popery and made profession of
the Protestant faith by participating of the Lord’s Supper. This was the
first time that the sacrament of the supper was dispensed after the
reformed mode in Scotland, if we except the administration of it by
Wishart in the same place, which was performed with great privacy
immediately before his martyrdom. Those who preceded Knox appear to
have contented themselves with preaching, and such as embraced their
doctrine had most probably continued to receive the sacraments from the
popish clergy, at least from such of them as were most friendly to the
reformation of the Church. The gratification which he felt in these first
fruits of his ministry, was considerably abated by instances of vicious
conduct in the persons under his charge, some of whom were guilty of
those acts of licentiousness which are too common among soldiery when
placed in similar circumstances. From the time that he was chosen to be
their preacher, he had openly rebuked these disorders; and when he
perceived that his admonitions failed in putting a stop to them, he did
not conceal his apprehensions of the unsuccessful issue of the enterprise
in which they were engaged.

In the end of June, 1547, a French fleet, with a considerable body of land
forces, under the command of Leo Strozzi, appeared before St. Andrews
to assist the governor in the reduction of the castle. It was invested both
by sea and land; and, being disappointed of the expected aid from
England, the besieged, after a brave and vigorous resistance, were under
the necessity of capitulating to the French commander on the last day of
July. The terms which they obtained were honorable; the lives of all in
the castle were to be spared; they were to be transported to France, and
if they did not choose to enter into the service of the French king, were to
be conveyed to any country which they might prefer, except Scotland.
John Rough had left them previous to the commencement of the siege
and retired to England. Knox, although he did not expect that the
garrison would be able to hold out, could not prevail upon himself to
desert his charge, and resolved to share with his brethren in the hazard
of the siege. He was conveyed along with them on board the fleet, which,
in a few days, set sail for France, arrived at Fecamp, and, going up the
Seine, anchored before Rouen. The capitulation was violated, and they
were all detained prisoners of war at the solicitation of the pope and
Scottish clergy. The principal gentlemen were incarcerated in Rouen,
Cherburg, Brest, and Mont St. Michel. Knox, with, a few others, was
confined on board the galleys; and in addition to the rigors of ordinary
captivity, was loaded with chains, and exposed to all the indignities with
which Papists were accustomed to treat those whom they regarded as
heretics.

Rough continued to preach in England until the death of
Edward VI when he retired to Borden in Friesland. There he
was obliged to support himself and his wife (whom he had
married in England) by knitting caps, stockings, &c. Having
come over to London in the course of his trade, he heard of a
congregation of Protestants which met secretly in that city,
to whom he joined himself, and was elected their pastor. A
few weeks after this, the conventicle was discovered by the
treachery of one of their own number, and Rough was
carried before Bishop Bonner, by whose orders he was
committed to the flames on the twenty-second of December,
1557.

From Rouen they sailed to Nantes, and lay upon the Loire during the
following winter. Solicitations, threatenings, and violence were all
employed to induce the prisoners to change their religion, or at least to
countenance the popish worship. But so great was their abhorrence of
that system, that not a single individual of the whole company, on land
or water, could be induced to symbolize in the smallest degree with
idolaters. While the prison-ships lay on the Loire, mass was frequently
said, and salve regina sung on board, or on the shore within their
hearing. On these occasions, they were brought out and threatened with
the torture, if they did not give the usual signs of reverence, but instead
of complying, they covered their heads as soon as the service began.
Knox has preserved in his history a humorous incident which took place
on one of these occasions, and although he has not said so, it is highly
probable that he himself was the person concerned in the affair. One day
a fine painted image of the Virgin was brought into one of the galleys,
and a Scotch prisoner was desired to give it the kiss of adoration. He
refused, saying that such idols were accursed, and he would not touch it.
"But you shall," replied one of the officers roughly, at the same time
forcing it towards his mouth. Upon this the prisoner seized the image,
and throwing it into the river, said, "Lat our Ladie now save hirself; sche is lycht enoughe, lat hir leirne to swyme." The officers with difficulty saved their goddess from the waves and the prisoners were relieved for the future from such troublesome importunities.

In summer 1548, as nearly as I can collect, the galleys in which they were confined returned to Scotland, and continued for a considerable time on the east coast, watching for English vessels. Knox’s health was now greatly impaired by the severity of his confinement, and he was seized with a fever, during which his life was despaired of by all in the ship. But even in this state his fortitude of mind remained unsubdued, and he comforted his fellow prisoners with hopes of release. To their anxious desponding inquiries (natural to men in their situation), "if he thought they would ever obtain their liberty," his uniform answer was, "God will deliver us to his glory, even in this life." While they lay on the coast between Dundee and St. Andrews, Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Balfour, who was confined in the same ship with him, pointed to the spires of St. Andrews, and asked him if he knew the place. "Yes," replied the sickly and emaciated captive, "I know it well, for I see the steeple of that place where God first opened my mouth in public to his glory; and I am fully persuaded, how weak soever I now appear, that I shall not depart this life, till that my tongue shall glorify his godly name in the same place." This striking reply Sir James repeated in the presence of a number of witnesses many years before Knox returned to Scotland, and when there was very little prospect of his words being verified.

We must not, however, think that he possessed this tranquility and elevation of mind during the whole period of his imprisonment. When first thrown into fetters, insulted by his enemies, and deprived of all prospect of release, he was not a stranger to the anguish of despondency, so pathetically described by the royal Psalmist of Israel. He felt that conflict in his spirit, with which all good men are acquainted, and which becomes peculiarly sharp when aggravated by corporal affliction; but having had recourse to prayer, the never-failing refuge of the oppressed, he was relieved from all his fears, and reposing upon the promise and the providence of the God whom he served, he attained to "the confidence and rejoicing of hope." Those who wish for a more particular account of the state of his mind at this time, will find it in the notes, extracted from a rare work which he composed on Prayer, and the chief materials of which were suggested by his own experience.

When free from fever, he relieved the tedious hours of captivity by committing to writing a confession of his faith, containing the substance of what he had taught at St. Andrews, with a particular account of the disputation which he had maintained in St. Leonard’s Yards. This he found means to convey to his religious acquaintances in Scotland, accompanied with an earnest exhortation to persevere in the faith which they had professed, whatever persecutions they might suffer for its sake.
To this confession I find him referring in the defense which he afterwards made before the Bishop of Durham. "Let no man think, that because I am in the realm of England, therefore so boldly I speak. No, God hath taken that suspicion from me. For the body lying in most painful bands, in the midst of cruel tyrants, his mercy and goodness provided that the hand should write and bear witness to the confession of the heart, more abundantly than ever yet the tongue spake."

Notwithstanding the rigor of their confinement, the prisoners who were separated found opportunities of occasionally corresponding with one another. Henry Balnaves of Halhill had composed, in his prison, a treatise on Justification, and the Works and Conversation of a Justified Man. This having been conveyed to Knox, probably after his return from the coast of Scotland, he was so much pleased with the work, that he divided it into chapters, and added some marginal notes, and a concise epitome of its contents; to the whole he prefixed a recommendatory dedication, intending that it should be published for the use of his brethren in Scotland, as soon as an opportunity offered. The reader will not, I am persuaded, be displeased to have some extracts from this dedication, which represent, more forcibly than any description of mine can do, the pious and heroic spirit which animated the Reformer, when "his feet lay in irons," and I shall quote more freely, as the book is rare.

It is thus inscribed: "John Knox, the bound servant of Jesus Christ, unto his best beloved brethren of the congregation of the castle of St. Andrews, and to all professors of Christ’s true evangel, desireth grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, with perpetual consolation of the Holy Spirit." After mentioning a number of instances in which the name of God had been magnified, and the interests of religion advanced, by the exile of those who were driven from their native countries by tyranny, as in the examples of Joseph, Moses, Daniel, and the primitive Christians, he goes on thus: "Which thing shall openly declare this godly work subsequent. The counsel of Satan in the persecutions of us, first, was to stop the wholesome wind of Christ’s evangel to blow upon the parts where we converse and dwell; and, secondly, so to oppress ourselves by corporal affliction and worldly calamities, that no place should we find to godly study. But by the great mercy and infinite goodness of God our Father, shall these his counsels be frustrate and vain. For, in despite of him and all his wicked members, shall yet that same word (O Lord, this I speak, confiding in thy holy promise) openly be proclaimed in that same country. And how that our merciful Father, amongst these tempestuous storms, by all men’s expectation, hath provided some rest for us, this present work shall testify, which was sent to me in Roane, lying in irons, and sore troubled by corporal infirmity, in a galley named Nostre Dame, by an honorable brother, Mr. Henry Balnaves of Halhill, for the present holden as prisoner (though unjustly) in the old palace of Roane. Which work after I had once and again read, to the great comfort and
consolation of my spirit, by counsel and advice of the foresaid noble and faithful man, author of the said work, I thought expedient it should be digested in chapters, &c. Which thing I have done as imbecility of ingine and incommmodity of place would permit; not so much to illustrate the work (which in the self is godly and perfect) as, together with the foresaid noble man and faithful brother, to give my confession of the article of justification therein contained. And I beseech you, beloved brethren, earnestly to consider, if we deny any thing presently (or yet conceal and hide) which any time before we professed in that article. And now we have not the castle of St. Andrews to be our defense, as some of our enemies falsely accused us, saying, if we wanted our walls, we would not speak so boldly. But blessed be that Lord whose infinite goodness and wisdom hath taken from us the occasion of that slander, and hath shown unto us, that the serpent hath power only to sting the heel, that is, to molest and trouble the flesh, but not to move the spirit from constant adhering to Christ Jesus, nor public professing of his true word. O blessed be thou, Eternal Father! which, by thy only mercy, hast preserved us to this day, and provided that the confession of our faith (which ever we desired all men to have known) should, by this treatise, come plainly to light. Continue, O Lord! and grant unto us that, as now with pen and ink, so shortly we may confess with voice and tongue the same before thy congregation; upon whom, look, O Lord God! with the eyes of thy mercy, and suffer no more darkness to prevail. I pray you, pardon me, beloved brethren, that on this manner I digress; vehemency of spirit (the Lord knoweth I lie not) compelleth me thereto.

The prisoners in Mont St. Michel consulted Knox as to the lawfulness of attempting to escape by breaking their prison, which was opposed by some of them, lest their escape should subject their brethren who remained in confinement to more severe treatment. He returned for answer, that such fears were not a sufficient reason for relinquishing the design, and that they might, with a safe conscience, effect their escape, provided it could be done "without the blood of any shed or spilt, but to shed any man’s blood for their freedom, he would never consent." The attempt was accordingly made by them, and successfully executed, "without harm done to the person of any, and without touching any thing that appertained to the king, the captain, or the house."

At length, after enduring a tedious and severe imprisonment of nineteen months, Knox obtained his liberty. This happened in the month of February 1549, according to the modern computation. By what means his liberation was procured I cannot certainly determine. One account says that the galley in which he was confined was taken in the Channel by the English. According to another account, he was liberated by order of the King of France, because it appeared, on examination, that he was not concerned in the murder of Cardinal Beaton, nor accessory to other crimes committed by those who held the castle of St. Andrews. In the
opinion of others, his liberty was purchased by his acquaintances, who
fondly cherished the hope that he was destined to accomplish some great
achievements, and were anxious, by their interposition in his behalf, to
be instrumental in promoting the designs of Providence. It is more
probable, however, that he owed his deliverance to the comparative
indifference with which he and his brethren were now regarded by the
French court, who, having procured the consent of the Parliament of
Scotland to the marriage of Queen Mary to the dauphin, and obtained
possession of her person, felt no longer any inclination to revenge the
quarrels of the Scottish clergy.

CHAPTER III

From the year 1549, when he was released from the French galleys,
to the year 1554, when he fled from England

Upon regaining his liberty, Knox immediately repaired to England. The
objections which he had formerly entertained against a residence in that
kingdom were now in a great measure removed. Henry VIII had died in
the year 1547, and Archbishop Cranmer, released from the severe
restraint under which he had been held by his tyrannical and capricious
master, now exerted himself with much zeal in advancing the
Reformation. In this he was cordially supported by those who governed
the kingdom during the minority of Edward VI. But the undertaking was
extensive and difficult, and, in carrying it on, he found a great deficiency
of ecclesiastical coadjutors. Although the most of the bishops had
externally complied with the alterations introduced by authority, they
remained attached to the old religion, and secretly thwarted, instead of
seconding, the measures of the primate. The inferior clergy were, in
general, as unable as they were unwilling to undertake the instruction of
the people, whose ignorance of religion was in many parts of the country
extreme, and whose superstitious habits had become quite inveterate.
This evil, which prevailed universally throughout the Popish Church,
instead of being corrected, was considerably aggravated by a ruinous
measure adopted at the commencement of the English Reformation.
When Henry suppressed the monasteries and seized their revenues, he
allowed pensions to the monks during life, but, to relieve the royal
treasury of this burden, small benefices in the gift of the crown were
afterwards substituted in the place of pensions. The example of the
monarch was imitated by the nobles who had procured monastic lands.
By this means a great part of the inferior livings were held by ignorant
and superstitious monks, who were a dead weight upon the English
Church, and a principal cause of the nation’s sudden relapse to Popery
at the subsequent accession of Queen Mary.
Cranmer had already adopted measures for remedying this alarming evil
with the concurrence of the protector and privy council; he had invited a
number of learned Protestants from Germany into England, and had
placed Peter Martyr, Martin Bucer, Paul Fagius, and Emanuel Tremellius as professors in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. This was a wise measure, which secured a future supply of useful preachers, trained up by these able masters, but the necessity was urgent and demanded immediate provision. For this purpose, instead of fixing a number of orthodox and popular preachers in particular charges, it was judged most expedient to employ them in itinerating through different parts of the kingdom, where the clergy were most illiterate or disaffected to the Reformation, and where the inhabitants were most addicted to superstition.

In these circumstances, our zealous countryman did not remain long unemployed. The reputation which he had gained by his preaching at St. Andrews and his late sufferings recommended him to the English council, and soon after his arrival in England he was sent down from London to preach in Berwick.

The council had every reason to be pleased with the choice which they had made of a northern preacher. He had long thirsted for the opportunity which he now enjoyed. His love for the truth, and his zeal against Popery, had been inflamed during his captivity, and he spared neither time nor labor in the instruction of those to whom he was sent. Regarding the worship of the Romish Church as idolatrous, and its doctrines as damnable, he attacked both with the utmost fervor, and exerted himself in drawing his hearers from the belief of the one, and from the observance of the other, with as much eagerness as if he had been saving their lives from a devouring flame or flood. Nor were his efforts fruitless. During the two years that he continued in Berwick, numbers were converted by his ministry from ignorance and the errors of Popery, and a visible reformation of manners was produced upon the soldiers of the garrison, who had formerly been noted for licentiousness and turbulence.

The popularity and success of a Protestant preacher were very galling to the clergy in that quarter, who were, almost to a man, bigoted Papists, and enjoyed the patronage of the bishop of the diocese. Tonstal, Bishop of Durham, like his friend Sir Thomas More, was one of those men of whom it is extremely difficult to give a correct idea, qualities of an opposite kind being mixed and blended in his character. Surpassing all his brethren in polite learning, he was the patron of bigotry and superstition. Displaying, in private life, that moderation and suavity of manners which liberal studies usually inspire, he was accessory to the public measures of a reign disgraced throughout by the most shocking barbarities. Claiming our praise for honesty by opposing in parliament innovations which his judgment condemned, he forfeited it by the most tame acquiescence and ample conformity, thereby maintaining his station amidst all the revolutions of religion during three successive reigns. He had paid little attention to the science immediately connected
with his profession, and most probably was indifferent to the controversies then agitated; but, living in an age in which it was necessary for every man to choose his side, he adhered to those opinions which had been long established, and which were friendly to the power and splendor of the ecclesiastical order. As if anxious to atone for his fault, in having been instrumental in producing a breach between England and the Roman see, he opposed in parliament all the subsequent changes. Opposition awakened his zeal; he became at last a strenuous advocate for the popish tenets, and wrote a book in defense of transubstantiation, of which, says Bishop Burnet, "the Latin style is better than the divinity."

The labors of one who exerted himself to overthrow what the bishop wished to support, could not fail to be very disagreeable to Tonstal. As Knox acted under the authority of the protector and council, he durst not inhibit him, but he was disposed to listen to the informations which were lodged against him by the clergy. Although the town of Berwick was Knox's principal station during the years 1549 and 1550, it is probable that he was appointed to preach occasionally in the adjacent country. Whether, in the course of his itinerancy, he had preached in Newcastle, or whether he was called up to it in consequence of complaints against the sermons which he had delivered at Berwick, it is difficult to ascertain. It is, however, certain, that a charge was exhibited against him before the bishop for teaching that the sacrifice of the mass was idolatrous, and that a day was appointed for him publicly to assign his reasons for this opinion.

Accordingly, on the fourth of April, 1550, a large assembly being convened in Newcastle, among whom were the members of the council, the Bishop of Durham, and the learned men of his cathedral, Knox delivered in their presence an ample defense of his doctrine. After an appropriate exordium, in which he stated to the audience the occasion and design of his appearance, and cautioned them against the powerful prejudices of education and custom in favor of erroneous opinions and corrupt practices in religion, he proceeded to establish the doctrine which he had taught. The manner in which he treated the subject was well adapted to his auditory, which was composed both of the learned and the illiterate. He proposed his arguments in the syllogistic form, according to the practice of the schools, but illustrated them with a plainness level to the meanest capacity among his hearers. The propositions on which he rested his defense are very descriptive of his characteristic boldness of thinking and acting. A more cautious and timid disputant would have satisfied himself with attacking the grosser notions which were generally entertained by the people on this subject, and exposing the glaring abuses of which the priests were guilty in the lucrative sale of masses. Knox scorned to occupy himself in demolishing these feeble and falling outworks, and proceeded directly to establish a
principle which overthrew the whole fabric of superstition. He engaged to
prove that the mass, "even in her most high degree," and when stripped
of the meretricious dress in which she now appeared, was an idol struck
from the inventive brain of superstition, which had supplanted the
sacrament of the supper, and engrossed the honor due to the person and
sacrifice of Jesus Christ. "Spare no arrows," was Knox's motto; the
authority of Scripture and the force of reasoning, grave reproof and
pointed irony were weapons which he alternately employed. In the course
of this defense, he did not restrain those sallies of raillery, which the
fooleries of the popish superstition irresistibly provoke, even from such
as are deeply impressed with its pernicious tendency. Before concluding
his discourse, he adverted to certain doctrines which he had heard in
that place on the preceding Sabbath, the falsehood of which he engaged
to demonstrate; but, in the first place, he said he would submit the notes
of the sermon, which he had taken down, to the preacher, that he might
correct them as he saw proper, for his object was not to misrepresent or
captiously entrap a speaker by catching at words unadvisedly uttered,
but to defend the truth and warn his hearers against errors destructive
to their souls. The defense, as drawn up by Knox himself, is now before
me in manuscript, and the reader who wishes a more particular account
of its contents, will find it in the notes.
This defense had the effect of extending Knox's fame through the north of
England, while it completely silenced the bishop and his learned
assistants. He continued to preach at Berwick during the remaining part
of this year, and in the following was removed to Newcastle, and placed
in a sphere of greater usefulness. In December, 1551, the privy council
conferred on him a mark of their approbation, by appointing him one of
King Edward's chaplains in ordinary. "It was appointed," says his
majesty, in a journal of important transactions which he wrote with his
own hand, "that I should have six chaplains ordinary, of which two ever
to be present, and four absent in preaching; one year, two in Wales, two
in Lancashire and Derby; next year, two in the marches of Scotland, and
two in Yorkshire; the third year, two in Norfolk and Essex, and two in
Kent and Sussex. These six to be Bill, Harle, Perne, Grindal, Bradford,
and..." The name of the sixth has been dashed out of the journal, but the
industrious Strype has shown that it was Knox. "These, it seems, were
the most zealous and readiest preachers, who were sent about as
itinerants, to supply the defects of the greatest part of the clergy, who
were generally very faulty." An annual salary of forty pounds was allotted
to each of the chaplains.

"October 2 (1552), a letter was directed to Messrs. Harley,
Bill, Horn, Grindal, Pern, and Knox, to consider certain
articles exhibited to the king's majesty, to be subscribed by
all such as shall be admitted to be preachers or ministers in
any part of the realm, and to make report of their opinions touching the same."

In the course of this year, Knox was consulted about the Book of Common Prayer, which was undergoing a revisal. On that occasion, it is probable that he was called up for a short time to London. Although the persons who had the chief direction of ecclesiastical affairs were not disposed, or did not deem it as yet expedient, to introduce that thorough reform which he judged necessary, in order to reduce the worship of the English Church to the Scripture model, his representations on this head were not altogether disregarded. He had influence to procure an important change in the communion office, completely excluding the notion of the corporal presence of Christ in the sacrament, and guarding against the adoration of the Elements, which was too much countenanced by the practice, still continued, of kneeling at their reception. In his Admonition to the Professors of the Truth in England, Knox speaks of these amendments with great satisfaction. "Also God gave boldness and knowledge to the court of parliament to take away the round clipped god, wherein standeth all the holiness of the Papists, and to command common bread to be used at the Lord’s table, and also to take away the most part of superstitions (kneeling at the Lord’s table excepted) which before profaned Christ’s true religion." These alterations gave great offense to the Papists. In a disputation with Latimer, after the accession of Queen Mary, the prolocutor, Dr. Weston, complained of our countryman’s influence in procuring them: "A runnagate Scot did take away the adoration or worshipping of Christ in the sacrament, by whose procurement that heresy was put into the last communion book; so much prevailed that one man’s authority at that time." In the following year, he was employed in revising the Articles of Religion, previous to their ratification by parliament.

During his residence at Berwick, he had formed an acquaintance with Marjory Bowes, a young lady who afterwards became his wife. Her father, Richard Bowes, was the youngest son of Sir Ralph Bowes of Streatlem; her mother was Elizabeth, the daughter and one of the co-heirs of Sir Roger Aske of Aske. Before he left Berwick, Knox had paid his addresses to this young lady, and met with a favorable reception. Her mother also was friendly to the match, but, owing to some reason, most probably the presumed aversion of her father, it was deemed prudent to delay solemnizing the union. But having come under a formal promise to her, he considered himself, from that time, as sacredly bound, and in his letters to Mrs. Bowes always addressed that lady by the name of mother. Without derogating from the praise justly due to those worthy men who were at this time employed in disseminating religious truth through England, I may say that our countryman was not behind the first of them in the unwearied assiduity with which he labored in the stations
assigned to him. From an early period his mind seems to have presaged that the golden opportunity now enjoyed would not be of long duration. He was eager to "redeem the time," and indefatigable both in his studies and in teaching. In addition to his ordinary services on Sabbath, he preached regularly on weekdays, frequently on every day of the week. Besides the portion of time which he allotted to study, he was often employed in conversing with persons who applied to him for advice on religious subjects. The council were not insensitive to the value of his services, and conferred on him several marks of their approbation. They wrote different letters to the governors and principal inhabitants of the places where he preached, recommending him to their notice and protection. They secured him in the regular payment of his salary until he should be provided with a benefice. And out of respect to him, they, in September 1552, granted a patent to his brother, William Knox, a merchant, giving him liberty, for a limited time, to trade to any port of England, in a vessel of a hundred tons burden.

William Knox afterwards became a preacher, and was minister of Cockpen, in Mid-Lothian, after the establishment of the Reformation in Scotland. No fewer than fourteen ministers of the Church of Scotland are numbered among his descendants.

But the things which recommended Knox to the council, drew upon him the hatred of a numerous and powerful party in the northern counties, who remained addicted to Popery. Irritated by his boldness and success in attacking their superstition, and sensible that it would be vain, and even dangerous, to prefer an accusation against him on that ground, they watched for an opportunity of catching at something in his discourses or behavior, which they might improve to his disadvantage. He had long observed, with great anxiety, the impatience with which the Papists submitted to the present government, and their eager desires for any change which might lead to the overthrow of the Protestant religion—desires which were expressed by them in the north, without that reserve which prudence dictated in places adjacent to the seat of authority. He had witnessed the joy with which they received the news of the protector’s fall, and was no stranger to the satisfaction with which they circulated prognostications as to the speedy demise of the king. In a sermon preached by him about Christmas 1552, he gave vent to his feelings on this subject; and, lamenting the obstinacy of the Papists, asserted, that such as were enemies to the gospel then preached in England, were secret traitors to the crown and commonwealth, thirsted for nothing more than his majesty’s death, and cared not who should reign over them, provided they got their idolatry again erected. The freedom of this speech was immediately laid hold of by his enemies and
transmitted, with many aggravations, to some great men about court, secretly in their interest, who, thereupon, accused him of high misdemeanors before the privy council. In taking this step, they were not a little encouraged by their knowledge of the sentiments of the Duke of Northumberland, who had lately come down to his charge as warden-general of the northern marches. This ambitious and unprincipled nobleman had affected much zeal for the reformed religion, that he might the more easily attain the highest preferment in the State, which he had recently secured by the ruin of the Duke of Somerset, the protector of the kingdom. Knox had offended him by publicly lamenting the fall of Somerset as dangerous to the Reformation, of which this nobleman had always shown himself a zealous friend, however blamable his conduct might have been in other respects. Nor could the freedom which the preacher used in reproving from the pulpit the vices of great as well as small, fail to be displeasing to a man of Northumberland's character. On these accounts, the duke was desirous to have Knox removed from that quarter, and had actually applied for this, by a letter to the council, previous to the occurrence just mentioned, alleging, as a pretext for this, that great numbers of Scotsmen resorted to him, as if any real danger was to be apprehended from this intercourse with a man of whose fidelity the existing government had so many strong pledges, and who uniformly employed all his influence to remove the prejudices of his countrymen against England. In consequence of the charge exhibited against him to the council, he was summoned to repair immediately to London, and answer for his conduct. The following extract of a letter, written by him to Miss Bowes, will show the state of his mind on receiving this citation. "Urgent necessity will not suffer that I testify my mind unto you. My Lord of Westmoreland has written unto me this Wednesday, at six of the clock at night, immediately thereafter to repair unto him, as I will answer at my peril. I could not obtain license to remain the time of the sermon upon the morrow. Blessed be God who does ratify and confirm the truth of his word from time to time, as our weakness shall require! Your adversary, sister, doth labor, that you should doubt whether this be the word of God or not. If there had never been testimonial of the undoubted truth thereof before these our ages, may not such things as we see daily come to pass prove the verity thereof? Doth it not affirm, that it shall be preached, and yet contemned and lightly regarded by many, that the true professors thereof shall be hated by father, mother, and others of the contrary religion, that the most faithful shall be persecuted? And cometh not all these things to pass in ourselves? Rejoice, sister, for the same word that foresheweth trouble, doth certify us of the glory consequent. As for myself, albeit the extremity should now apprehend me, it is not come unlooked for. But, alas! I fear that yet I be not ripe, nor able to glorify
Christ by my death, but what lacketh now, God shall perform in his own time. Be sure I will not forget you and your company, so long as mortal man may remember any earthly creature.

Upon reaching London, he found that his enemies had been uncommonly industrious in their endeavors to excite prejudices against him. But the council, after hearing his defense, were convinced of the malice of his accusers and gave him an honorable acquittal. He was employed to preach before the court, and his sermons gave great satisfaction to his majesty, who contracted a favor for him, and was anxious to have him promoted in the Church. The council resolved that he should preach in London and the southern counties during the following year, but they allowed him to return for a short time to Newcastle, either that he might settle his affairs in the north, or that a public testimony might be borne to his innocence in the place where it had been attacked. In a letter to his sister, dated Newcastle, 23d March 1553, we find him writing as follows: "Look farther of this matter in the other letter, written unto you at such time as many thought I should never write after to man. Heinous were the delations laid against me, and many are the lies that are made to the council. But God one day shall destroy all lying tongues, and shall deliver his servants from calamity. I look but one day or other to fall in their hands, for more and more rageth the members of the devil against me. This assault of Satan has been to his confusion, and to the glory of God. And therefore, sister, cease not to praise God, and to call for my comfort, for great is the multitude of enemies, whom every one the Lord shall confound. I intend not to depart from Newcastle before Easter."

His confinement in the French Galleys, together with his labors in England, had considerably impaired the vigor of his constitution and brought on the gravel. In the course of the year 1553, he endured several violent attacks of this acute disorder, accompanied with severe pain in his head and stomach. "My daily labors must now increase," says he, in the letter last quoted, "and therefore spare me as much as you may. My old malady troubles me sore, and nothing is more contrarious to my health than writing. Think not that I weary to visit you, but unless my pain shall cease, I will altogether become unprofitable. Work, O Lord, even as pleaseth thy infinite goodness, and relax the troubles, at thy own pleasure, of such as seeketh thy glory to shine. Amen!" In another letter to the same correspondent, he writes, "The pain of my head and stomach troubles me greatly. Daily I find my body decay, but the providence of my God shall not be frustrate. I am charged to be at Widdrington upon Sunday, where, I think, I shall also remain Monday. The Spirit of the Lord Jesus rest with you. Desire such faithful with whom ye communicate your mind, to pray that, at the pleasure of our good God, my dolour both of body and spirit may be relieved somewhat, for presently it is very bitter. Never found I the spirit, I praise my God, so
abundant, where God’s glory ought to be declared, and, therefore, I am sure there abides something that yet we see not." "Your messenger," says he, in another letter, "found me in bed, after a sore trouble and most dolorous night, and so dolour may complain to dolour when we two meet. But the infinite goodness of God, who never despiseth the petitions of a sore troubled heart, shall, at his good pleasure, put end to these pains that we presently suffer, and, in place thereof, shall crown us with glory and immortality for ever. But, dear sister, I am even of mind with faithful Job, yet more sore tormented, that my pain shall have no end in this life. The power of God may, against the purpose of my heart, alter such things as appear not to be altered, as he did unto Job; but dolour and pain, with sore anguish, cries the contrary. And this is more plain than ever I spake, to let you know ye have a fellow and companion in trouble. And thus rest in Christ, for the head of the serpent is already broken down, and he is stinging us upon the heel."

About the beginning of April, 1553, he returned to London. In the month of February preceding, Archbishop Cranmer had been directed by the council to present him to the vacant living of All-Hallows, in the city. This proposal, which originated in the personal favor of the young king, was very disagreeable to Northumberland, who exerted himself privately to hinder the appointment. But the interference of this nobleman was unnecessary, for Knox declined the living when it was offered to him, and, being questioned as to his reasons, readily acknowledged that he had not freedom in his mind to accept of a fixed charge in the present state of the English Church. His refusal, with the reasons which he had assigned for it, gave offense, and, on the fourteenth of April, he was called before the privy council. There were present the Archbishop of Canterbury, Goodrick Bishop of Ely and Lord Chancellor, the Earls of Bedford, Northampton, and Shrewsbury, the Lords Treasurer and Chamberlain, and the two Secretaries of State. They asked him why he had refused the benefice provided for him in London. He answered that he was fully satisfied that he could be more useful to the Church in another situation. Being interrogated, if it was his opinion that no person could lawfully serve in ecclesiastical ministrations according to the present laws of that realm; he frankly replied that there were many things in the English Church which needed reformation, and that unless they were reformed, ministers could not, in his opinion, discharge their office conscientiously in the sight of God, for no minister had authority, according to the existing laws, to prevent the unworthy from participating of the sacraments, which was "a chief point of his office." Being interrogated, if kneeling at the Lord’s table was not a matter of indifference, he replied that Christ’s action at the communion was most perfect, and in it no such posture was used, that it was most safe to follow his example, and that kneeling was an addition and invention of men. On this article, there was a smart dispute between him and some of
the members of the council. After long reasoning, he was told that they had not sent for him with any bad design, but were sorry to understand that he was of a judgment contrary to the common order. He said he was sorry that the common order was contrary to Christ’s institution. The council dismissed him with soft words, advising him to use all means for removing the dislike which he had conceived to some of the forms of their Church, and to reconcile his mind, if possible, to the idea of communicating according to the established rites. Scruples which had resisted the force of authority and argument, have often been found to yield to the more powerful influence of lucrative and honorable situations. But whether, with some, we shall consider Knox’s conduct on this occasion as indicating the poverty of his spirit, or shall regard it as a proof of true independence of mind, the prospect of elevation to the episcopal bench could not overcome the repugnance which he felt to a closer connection with the Church of England. Edward VI, with the concurrence of his privy council, offered him a bishopric. But he rejected it, and in the reasons which he gave for his refusal, declared the episcopal office to be destitute of divine authority in itself, and its exercise in the English Church to be inconsistent with the ecclesiastical canons. This is attested by Beza, a contemporary author. Knox himself, in one of his treatises, speaks of the "high promotions" offered him by Edward, and we shall find him, at a later period of his life, expressly asserting that he had refused a bishopric. Tonstal having been sequestered upon a charge of misprision of treason, the council came to a resolution, about this time, to divide his extensive diocese into two bishoprics, the seat of one of which was to be at Durham, and of the other at Newcastle. Ridley, Bishop of London, was to be translated to the former, and it is highly probable that Knox was intended for the latter. "He was offered a bishopric," says Brand, "probably the new founded one at Newcastle, which he refused—revera noluit episcopari."

It may be proper, in this place, to give a more particular account of Knox’s sentiments respecting the English Church. The reformation of religion, it is well known, was conducted on very different principles in England and in Scotland, both as to worship and ecclesiastical polity. In England, the papal supremacy was transferred to the prince; the hierarchy, being subjected to the civil power, was suffered to remain, and, the grosser superstitions having been removed, the principal forms of the ancient worship were retained, whereas, in Scotland, all of these were discarded as destitute of divine authority, unprofitable, burdensome, or savoring of Popery, and the worship and government of the Church were reduced to the primitive standard of scriptural simplicity. The influence of Knox in recommending this establishment to his countrymen is universally allowed, but, as he officiated for a considerable time in the Church of England, and on this account was supposed to have been pleased with its constitution, it has been usually
said that he afterwards contracted a dislike to it during his exile on the Continent, and having imbibed the sentiments of Calvin, brought them along with him to his native country, and organized the Scottish Church after the Genevan model. This statement is inaccurate. His objections to the English liturgy were increased and strengthened during his residence on the Continent, but they existed before that time. His judgment respecting ecclesiastical government and discipline was matured during that period, but his radical sentiments on these heads were formed long before he saw Calvin, or had any intercourse with the foreign reformers. At Geneva he saw a Church, which, upon the whole, corresponded with his idea of the divinely authorized pattern, but he did not indiscriminately approve, nor servilely imitate, either that or any other existing establishment.

As early as the year 1547, he taught, in his first sermons at St. Andrews, that no mortal man could be head of the Church; there mere no true bishops, but such as preached personally without a substitute; that in religion men were bound to regulate themselves by divine laws; and that the sacraments ought to be administered exactly according to the institution and example of Christ. We have seen that, in a solemn disputation in the same place, he maintained that the Church has no authority, on pretext of decorating divine service, to devise religious ceremonies, and impose upon them arbitrary significations. This position he also defended in the year 1550, at Newcastle, and on his subsequent appearance before the privy council at London. It was impossible that the English Church, in any of the shapes which it assumed, could stand the test of these principles. The ecclesiastical supremacy, the various orders and dependencies of the hierarchy, crossing in baptism, and kneeling in the eucharist, with other ceremonies—the theatrical dress, the inimical gestures, the vain repetitions used in religious service—were all condemned and repudiated by the cardinal principle to which he steadily adhered, that, in the Church of Christ, and especially in the acts of worship, everything ought to be arranged and conducted, not by the pleasure and appointment of men, but according to the dictates of inspired wisdom and authority.

He rejoiced that liberty and encouragement were given to preach the pure word of God throughout the extensive realm of England; that idolatry and gross superstition were suppressed; and that the rulers were disposed to support the Reformation, and even to carry it farther than had yet been done. Considering the character of the greater part of the clergy, the extreme paucity of useful preachers, and other hindrances to the introduction of the primitive order and discipline of the Church, he acquiesced in the authority exercised by a part of the bishops, under the direction of the privy council, and endeavored to strengthen their hands in the advancement of the common cause, by painful preaching in the stations which were assigned to him. But he could not be induced to
contradict or to conceal his fixed sentiments, and he cautiously avoided coming under engagements by which he must have assented to what, in his decided judgment, was either in its own nature unlawful, or injurious in its tendency to the interests of religion. Upon these principles, he never submitted to the unlimited use of the liturgy, during the time that he was in England, and refused to become a bishop or to accept a parochial charge. When he perceived that the progress of the Reformation was arrested by the influence of a popish faction, and the dictates of a temporizing policy; that abuses, which had formerly been acknowledged, began to be openly vindicated and stiffly maintained; above all, when he saw, after the accession of Elizabeth, that a retrograde course was taken, and a yoke of ceremonies, more grievous than that which the most sincere Protestants had formerly complained of, was imposed and enforced by arbitrary statutes, he judged it necessary to speak in a tone of more decided and severe reprehension. Among other things which he censured in the English ecclesiastical establishment, were the continuing to employ a great number of ignorant and insufficient priests, who had been accustomed to nothing but saying mass and singing the litany; the general substitution of the reading of homilies, the mumbling of prayers, or the chanting of matins and evensong, in the place of preaching; the formal celebration of the sacraments, unaccompanied with instruction to the people; the scandalous prevalence of pluralities; and the total want of ecclesiastical discipline. He was of opinion that the clergy ought not to be entangled and diverted from the duties of their office by holding civil places; that the bishops should lay aside their secular titles and dignities; that the bishoprics should be divided, so that in every city or large town there might be placed a godly and learned man, with others joined with him, for the management of ecclesiastical matters; and that schools for the education of youth should be universally erected through the nation. Nor did the principal persons who were active in effecting the English Reformation differ widely from Knox in these sentiments, although they might not have the same conviction of their importance, and of the expediency of reducing them to practice. We should mistake exceedingly, if we supposed that they were men of the same principles and temper with many who succeeded to their places, or that they were satisfied with the pitch to which they had carried the reformation of the English Church, and regarded it as a paragon and perfect pattern to other churches. They were strangers to those extravagant and illiberal notions which were afterwards adopted by the fond admirers of the hierarchy and liturgy. They would have laughed at the man who seriously asserted that the ecclesiastical ceremonies constituted any part of "the beauty of holiness," or that the imposition of the hands of a bishop was essential to the validity of ordination; and they would not have owned that person as a Protestant who would have ventured to insinuate, that where these
were wanting, there was no Christian ministry, no ordinances, no church, and perhaps, no salvation. Many things which their successors have applauded, they barely tolerated; and they would have been happy if the circumstances of their time would have permitted them to introduce alterations which have since been cried down as puritanical innovations. Strange as it may appear to some, I am not afraid of exceeding the truth when I say that if the English reformers, including the Protestant bishops, had been left to their own choice—if they had not been held back and retarded by a large mass of popishly affected clergy in the reign of Edward, and restrained by the supreme civil authority on the accession of Elizabeth—they would have brought the government and worship of the Church of England nearly to the pattern of other reformed churches. If the reader doubts this, he may consult the evidence produced in the notes.

Such, in particular, was the earnest wish of his majesty, Edward VI, a prince who, besides his other rare qualities, had an unfeigned reverence for the word of God and a disposition to comply with its precepts in preference to custom and established usages, and who showed himself uniformly inclined to give relief to his conscientious subjects, and sincerely bent on promoting the union of all the friends of the reformed religion at home and abroad. Of his intention on this head, there remain the most unquestionable and satisfactory documents. Had his life been spared, there is every reason to think that he would have accomplished the correction or removal of those evils in the English Church, which the most steady and enlightened Protestants have lamented. Had his sister Elizabeth been of the same spirit with him, and prosecuted the plan which he laid down, the consequences would have been most happy both for herself and for her people, for the government and for the Church. She would have united all the friends of the Reformation, who were the great support of her authority. She would have weakened the interest of the Roman Catholics, whom all her accommodating measures could not gain, nor prevent from repeatedly conspiring against her life and crown. She would have put an end to those dissensions among her Protestant subjects, which continued during the whole of her reign, which she bequeathed as a legacy to her successors, and which, being fomented and exasperated by the severities employed for their suppression, burst forth at length, to the temporary overthrow of the monarchy, as well as of the hierarchy, whose exorbitancies it had patronized, and whose corruptions it had sanctioned and maintained—dissensions which subsist to this day, which, though softened by the partial lenitive of a toleration, have gradually alienated from the communion of that Church, a large proportion of the people, and which, if a timely and suitable remedy be not applied, may ultimately undermine the foundations of the English establishment.
During the time that Knox was in London, he had full opportunity for observing the state of the court, and the observations which he made filled his mind with the most anxious forebodings. Of the piety and sincerity of the young king he entertained not the smallest doubt. Personal acquaintance heightened the idea which he had conceived of his character from report, and enabled him to add his testimony to the tribute of praise which all who knew that prince had so cheerfully paid to his uncommon virtues and endowments. But the principal courtiers, by whom he was at that time surrounded, were persons of a very different description, and gave proofs, too unequivocal to be mistaken, of indifference to all religion, and of a readiness to acquiesce, and even to assist, in the re-establishment of the ancient superstition, whenever a change of rulers should render this measure practicable and expedient. The health of Edward, which had long been declining, growing gradually worse, so that no hopes of his recovery remained, they were eager only about the aggrandizing of their families, and providing for the security of their places and fortunes.

The royal chaplains were men of a very different character from those who have usually occupied that place in the courts of princes. They were no time-serving, supple, smooth-tongued parasites; they were not afraid of forfeiting their pensions, or of alarming the consciences, and wounding the delicate ears, of their royal and noble auditors, by denouncing the vices which they committed, and the judgments of Heaven to which they exposed themselves. The freedom used by the venerable Latimer is well known from his printed sermons, which, for their homely honesty, artless simplicity, native humor, and genuine pictures of the manners of the age, continue still to be read with interest. Grindal, Lever, and Bradford, who were superior to Latimer in learning, evinced the same fidelity and courage. They censured the ambition, avarice, luxury, oppression, and irreligion which reigned in the court. As long as their sovereign was able to give personal attendance on the sermons, the preachers were treated with exterior decency and respect; but after he was confined to his chamber by a consumptive cough, the resentment of the courtiers vented itself openly in the most contumelious speeches and insolent behavior.

From what the reader has already seen of Knox's character, he may readily conceive that the sermons delivered by him at court were not less free and bold than those of his colleagues. We may form a judgment of them from the account which he has given of the last sermon preached by him before his majesty, in which he directed several piercing glances of reproof at the haughty premier and his crafty relation, the Marquis of Winchester, lord high treasurer, both of whom were among his hearers. His text was John 13:18, "He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me." It had been often seen, he said, that the most excellent and godly princes were surrounded with false and ungodly
officers and counselors. Having inquired into the reasons of this, and illustrated the fact from the Scripture examples of Ahithophel under King David, Shebna under Hezekiah, and Judas under Jesus Christ, he added, "What wonder is it, then, that a young and innocent king be deceived by crafty, covetous, wicked, and ungodly counselors? I am greatly afraid that Ahithophel be counselor, that Judas bear the purse, and that Shebna be scribe, comptroller, and treasurer."

On the sixth of July 1553, Edward VI departed this life, to the unspeakable grief of all the lovers of learning, virtue, and the Protestant religion, and a black cloud spread over England, which, after hovering a while, burst into a dreadful storm, that raged during five years with the most destructive fury. Knox was at this time in London. He received the afflicting tidings of his majesty's decease with becoming fortitude and resignation to the sovereign will of Heaven. The event did not meet him unprepared; he had long anticipated it, with its probable consequences; the prospect had produced the keenest anguish in his breast, and drawn tears from his eyes, and he had frequently introduced the subject into his public discourses and confidential conversations with his friends.

Writing to Mrs. Bowes, some time after this, he says, "How oft have you and I talked of these present days, till neither of us both could refrain tears, when no such appearance then was seen of man? How oft have I said unto you, that I looked daily for trouble, and that I wondered at it, that so long I should escape it! What moved me to refuse (and that with displeasure of all men, even of those that best loved me) those high promotions that were offered by him whom God hath taken from us for our offenses? Assuredly the foresight of trouble to come. How oft have I said unto you that the time would not be long that England would give me bread! Advise with the last letter that I wrote unto your brother-in-law, and consider what is therein contained."

He remained in London until the nineteenth of July, when Mary was proclaimed queen, only nine days after the same ceremony had been performed in that city for the amiable and unfortunate Lady Jane Grey. The thoughtless demonstrations of joy given by the inhabitants, at an event which threatened such danger to the religious faith which they still avowed, affected him so deeply that he could not refrain, in his sermons, from publicly testifying his displeasure at their conduct, and from warning them of the calamities which they had reason to dread.

Immediately after this, he appears to have withdrawn from London, and retired to the north of England, being justly apprehensive of the measures which might be pursued by the new government.

To induce the Protestants to submit peaceably to her authority, Mary amused them for some time with proclamations, in which she promised not to do violence to their consciences. Though aware of the bigotry of the queen, and the spirit of the religion to which she was devoted, the Protestant ministers reckoned it their duty to improve this respite. In the
month of August, Knox returned to the South, and resumed his labors. It seems to have been at this time that he composed the Confession and Prayer, commonly used by him in the congregations to which he preached, in which he prayed for Queen Mary by name, and for the suppression of such as meditated rebellion. While he itinerated through Buckinghamshire, he was attended by large audiences, which his popularity and the alarming crisis drew together, especially at Amersham, a borough formerly noted for the general reception of the doctrines of Wickliffe, the precursor of the Reformation in England, and from which the seed sown by his followers had never been altogether eradicated. Wherever he went, he earnestly exhorted the people to repentance, under the tokens of divine displeasure, and to a steady adherence to the faith which they had embraced. He continued to preach in Buckinghamshire and Kent during the harvest months, although the measures of government daily rendered his safety more precarious, and in the beginning of November, returned to London, where he resided chiefly with Mr. Locke and Mr. Hickman, two respectable merchants of his acquaintance.

While the measures of the new government threatened danger to all the Protestants in the kingdom, and our countryman was under daily apprehensions of imprisonment, he met with a severe trial of a private nature. I have already mentioned his engagements to Miss Bowes. At this time, it was judged proper by both parties to avow the connection, and to proceed to solemnize their union. This step was opposed by the young lady’s father, and his opposition was accompanied with circumstances which gave much distress to Mrs. Bowes and her daughter, as well as to Knox. His refusal seems to have proceeded from family pride, but there is reason to think it was also influenced by religious considerations; as, from different hints dropped in the correspondence about this affair, he appears to have been, if not inclined to Popery in his judgment, at least resolved to comply with the religion now favored by the court. On this subject I find Knox writing from London to Mrs. Bowes, in a letter dated 20th September, 1553: "My great labors, wherein I desire your daily prayers, will not suffer me to satisfy my mind touching all the process between your husband and you touching my matter with his daughter. I praise God heartily both for your boldness and constancy. But I beseech you, mother, trouble not yourself too much therewith. It becomes me now to jeopard my life for the comfort and deliverance of my own flesh, as that I will do by God’s grace, both fear and friendship of all earthly creature laid aside. I have written to your husband, the contents whereof I trust our brother Harry will declare to you and my wife. If I escape sickness and imprisonment, [you may] be sure to see me soon."

His wife and mother-in-law were anxious that he should settle in Berwick, or its neighborhood, where he might perhaps be allowed to reside peaceably, although in a more private way than formerly. To this
proposal he does not seem to have been averse, provided he could have seen any prospect of his being able to support himself. Since the accession of Queen Mary, the payment of the salary allotted him by government had been stopped. Indeed, he had not received any part of it for the last twelve months. His father-in-law was abundantly able to give him a sufficient establishment, but Knox’s spirit could not brook the thought of being dependent on one who had treated him with coldness and disdain. Induced by the importunity of Mrs. Bowes, he applied to her brother-in-law, Sir Robert Bowes, and attempted, by a candid explanation of all circumstances, to remove any umbrage which had been conceived against him by the family, and to procure an amicable settlement of the whole affair. The unfavorable issue of this interview was communicated by him in a letter to Mrs. Bowes, of which the following is an extract:

"Dear mother—So may and will I call you, not only for the tender affection I bear unto you in Christ, but also for the motherly kindness ye have shown unto me at all times since our first acquaintance—albeit such things as I have desired (if it had pleased God), and ye and others have long desired, are never like to come to pass, yet shall ye be sure that my love and care toward you shall never abate, so long as I can care for any earthly creature. Ye shall understand that this sixth of November, I spake with Sir Robert Bowes on the matter ye know, according to your request, whose disdainful, yea, despiteful words, have so pierced my heart, that my life is bitter unto me. I bear a good countenance with a sore troubled heart, while he that ought to consider matters with a deep judgment is become not only a despiser, but also a taunter of God’s messengers. God be merciful unto him. Among other his most unpleasing words, while that I was about to have declared my part in the whole matter, he said, ‘Away with your rhetorical reasons, for I will not be persuaded with them.’ God knows I did use no rhetoric or colored speech, but would have spoken the truth, and that in most simple manner. I am not a good orator in my own cause. But what he would not be content to hear of me, God shall declare to him one day to his displeasure, unless he repent. It is supposed that all the matter comes by you and me. I pray God that your conscience were quiet and at peace, and I regard not what country consume this my wicked carcass. And were it not that no man’s unthankfulness shall move me (God supporting my infirmity) to cease to do profit unto Christ’s congregation, those days should be few that England would give me bread. And I fear that, when all is done, I shall be driven to that end, for I cannot abide the disdainful hatred of those of whom not only I thought I might have craved kindness, but also to whom God hath been by me more liberal than they be thankful. But so must men declare themselves. Affection does trouble me at this present, yet I doubt not to overcome by Him, who will not leave
comfortless his afflicted to the end, whose omnipotent Spirit rest with you. Amen."

He refers to the same disagreeable affair in another letter written about the end of this year. After mentioning the bad state of his health, which had been greatly increased by distress of mind, he adds, "It will be after the twelfth day before I can be at Berwick, and almost I am determined not to come at all. Ye know the cause. God be more merciful unto some than they are equitable unto me in judgment. The testimony of my conscience absolves me, before His face who looks not upon the presence of man." These extracts show us the heart of the writer; they discover the sensibility of his temper, the keenness of his feelings, and his pride and independence of spirit struggling with a sense of duty, and affection to his relations.

About the end of November or the beginning of December, he retired from the South to Newcastle. The parliament had by this time repealed all the laws made in favor of the Reformation, and restored the Roman Catholic religion, but such as pleased were permitted to observe the Protestant worship until the twentieth of December. After that period they were thrown out of the protection of the law, and exposed to the pains decreed against heretics. Many of the bishops and ministers were already committed to prison; others had escaped beyond sea. Knox could not, however, prevail on himself either to flee the kingdom, or to desist from preaching. Three days after the period limited by the statute had elapsed, he says in one of his letters, "I may not answer your places of Scripture, nor yet write the exposition of the sixth Psalm, for every day of this week must I preach, if this wicked carcass will permit."

His enemies, who had been defeated in their attempts to ruin him under the former government, had now access to rulers sufficiently disposed to listen to their information. They were not dilatory in improving the opportunity. In the end of December, 1553, or beginning of January, 1554, his servant was seized as he carried letters from him to his wife and mother-in-law, and the letters were taken from him in the hopes of finding in them some matter of accusation against the writer. As they contained merely religious advices, and exhortations to constancy in the Protestant faith, which he was prepared to avow before any court to which he might be called, he was not alarmed at their interception. But being aware of the uneasiness which the report would give to his friends at Berwick, he set out immediately with the design of visiting them. Notwithstanding the secrecy with which he conducted this journey, the rumor of it quickly spread, and some of his wife's relations who had joined him, perceiving that he was in imminent danger, prevailed on him, greatly against his own inclination, to relinquish the design of proceeding to Berwick, and retire to a place of safety on the coast, from which he might escape by sea, provided the search for him was continued. From this retreat he wrote to his wife and her mother, acquainting them with
the reasons of his absconding and the small prospect which he had of being able at that time to see them. "His brethren," he said, "had, partly by admonition, partly by tears, compelled him to obey," somewhat contrary to his own mind, for "never could he die in a more honest quarrel," than by suffering as a witness for that truth of which God had made him a messenger. Notwithstanding this state of his mind, he promised, if Providence prepared the way, to "obey the voices of his brethren, and give place to the fury and rage of Satan for a time."

Having ascertained that his friends were not mistaken in the apprehensions which they felt for his safety, and that he could not hope to elude the pursuit of his enemies if he remained in England, he procured a vessel which landed him safely at Dieppe, a port of Normandy in France, on the twentieth of January, 1554.

Knox's exile, his labors in Dieppe, Geneva, and Frankfurt, and his return to Scotland to advance the Reformation there.

This section consists of Chapters 4-6. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 4
Chapter 5
Chapter 6

CHAPTER IV
From the year 1554, when he left England, to the year 1556, when he returned to Geneva, after visiting Scotland

Providence, having more important services in reserve for Knox, made use of the urgent importunities of his friends to hurry him away from those dangers to which, had he been left to the determination of his own mind, his zeal and fearlessness would have prompted him to expose himself. No sooner did he reach a foreign shore than he began to regret the course which he had been induced to take. When he thought upon his fellow preachers, whom he had left behind him immured in dungeons, and the people lately under his charge, now scattered abroad as sheep without a shepherd, he felt an indescribable pang, and an almost irresistible desire to return and share in the hazardous but honorable conflict. Although he had only complied with the divine direction, "when they persecute you in one city, flee ye unto another," and although in his own breast he stood acquitted of cowardice, yet he found it difficult to divest his conduct of the appearance of that weakness, and was afraid that it might operate as a discouragement to his brethren in England, and induce them to make sinful compliances with a view of saving their lives.

On this subject we find him unbosoming himself to Mrs. Bowes in his letters from Dieppe. "The desire that I have to hear of your continuance with Christ Jesus, in the day of this his battle (which shortly shall end to the confusion of his proud enemies), neither by tongue nor by pen can I express, beloved mother. Assuredly, it is such, that it vanquisheth and overcometh all remembrance and solicitude which the flesh useth to take for feeding and defense of herself. For, in every realm and nation, God will stir up some one or other to minister those things that appertain to this wretched life, and, if men will cease to do their office, yet will he send his ravens, so that in every place, perchance, I may find some fathers to my body. But, alas! where I shall find children to be begotten unto God by the word of life, that can I not presently consider; and therefore the spiritual life of such as some time boldly professed Christ (God knoweth), is to my heart more dear than all the glory, rides, and honor in earth; and the falling back of such men, as I hear daily to turn back to that idol again, is to me more dolorous than, I trust, the corporal death shall be, whenever it shall come at God’s appointment. Some will ask, Then why did I flee? Assuredly I cannot tell, but of one thing I am sure, the fear of death was not the chief cause of my fleeing. I trust that one cause hath been to let me see with my corporal eyes that all had not a true heart to Christ Jesus, that, in the day of rest and peace, bare a fair face. But my fleeing is no matter; by God’s grace I may come to battle before that all the conflict be ended. And haste the time, O Lord, at thy good pleasure, that once again my tongue may yet praise thy holy name before the congregation, if it were but in the very hour of death!"—"I would not bow my knee before that most abominable idol for all the torments that earthly tyrants can devise, God so assisting me, as his Holy Spirit presently moveth me to write unfeignedly. And albeit that I have, in the beginning of this battle, appeared to play the faint-hearted and feeble
soldier (the cause I remit to God), yet my prayer is that I may be restored to
the battle again. And blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I am
not left so bare without comfort, but my hope is to obtain such mercy, that, if
a short end be not made of all my miseries by final death (which to me were no
small advantage), that yet, by Him who never despised the sobs of the sore
afflicted, I shall be so encouraged to fight, that England and Scotland shall
both know that I am ready to suffer more than either poverty or exile for the
profession of that doctrine, and that heavenly religion, whereof it has pleased
his merciful providence to make me, among others, a simple soldier and
witness-bearer unto men. And therefore, mother, let no fear enter into your
heart, as that I, escaping the furious rage of these ravening wolves that, for
our unthankfulness, are lately loosed from their bands, do repent any thing of
my former fervency. No, mother; for a few sermons by me to be made within
England, my heart at this hour could be content to suffer more than nature
were able to sustain; as, by the grace of the most mighty and most merciful
God, who only is God of comfort and consolation through Christ Jesus, one day
shall be known."

In his present sequestered situation, Knox had full leisure to meditate upon the
surprising vicissitudes in his lot during the last seven years—his singular call to
the ministry and employment at St. Andrews—his subsequent imprisonment and
release—the sphere of usefulness in which he had been placed in England, with
the afflicting manner in which he was excluded from it, and driven to seek
refuge as an exile in that country to which he had formerly been carried as a
prisoner. This last event seemed in a special manner to summon him to a
solemn review of the manner in which he had discharged the sacred trust
committed to him, as "a steward of the mysteries of God." It will throw light on
his character, and may not be without use to such as occupy a public station in
the Church, to exhibit the result of his reflection on this subject.

He could not deny, without ingratitude to Him who had called him to be his
servant, that his qualifications for the ministry had been in no small degree
improved since he came to England; and he had the testimony of his own
conscience, in addition to that of his numerous auditors, that he had not
altogether neglected the gifts bestowed on him, but had exercised them with
some measure of fidelity and painfulness. At the same time he found reason for
self-accusation on different grounds. Having mentioned in one of his letters the
reiterated charge of Christ to Peter, "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs," he
exclaims, "Oh, alas! how small is the number of pastors that obeys this
commandment. But this matter will I not deplore, except that I, not speaking
of others, will accuse myself that do not, I confess, the uttermost of my power
in feeding the lambs and sheep of Christ. I satisfy, peradventure, many men in
the small labors I take, but I satisfy not myself. I have done somewhat, but not
according to my duty." In the discharge of private duties, he acknowledges that
shame, and the fear of incurring the scandal of the world, had sometimes
hindered him from visiting the female part of his charge, and administering to
them the instruction and comfort which they craved. In public ministrations, he
had been deficient in fervency and fidelity, in impartiality, and in diligence. He
could not charge himself with flattery, and his "rude plainness" had given
offense to some, but his conscience now accused him of not having been
sufficiently plain in admonishing offenders. His custom had been to describe
the vices of which his hearers were guilty in such colors that they might read
their own image; but, being "unwilling to provoke all men" against him, he had
restrained himself from particular application. Though his "eye had not been
much set on worldly promotion," he had sometimes been allured by affection
for friends and familiar acquaintances, to reside too long in some places, to the
neglect of others which had an equal, or perhaps stronger, claim on his labors.
Formerly, he thought he had not sinned, if he had not been idle; now he was
convinced that it was his duty to have considered how long he should remain in
one place, and how many hungry souls were starving elsewhere. Sometimes, at
the solicitation of friends, he had spared himself, and devoted to worldly
business, or to bodily recreation and exercise, the time which ought to have been
employed in the discharge of his official duties. "Besides these," says he,"I was assaulted, yea infected, with more gross sins, that is, my wicked nature
desired the favors, the estimation, and praise of men; against which, albeit
that sometimes the Spirit of God did move me to fight, and earnestly did stir
me (God knoweth I lie not) to sob and lament for these imperfections, yet
never ceased they to trouble me when any occasion was offered; and so privily
and craftily did they enter into my breast, that I could not perceive myself to
be wounded till vainglory had almost got the upper hand. O Lord! be merciful
to my great offence; and deal not with me according to my great iniquity, but
according to the multitude of thy mercies."

Such was the strict scrutiny which Knox made into his ministerial conduct. To
many the offenses of which he accused himself will appear slight and venial,
while others will perceive in them nothing worthy of blame; but they struck his
mind in a very different light, in the hour of adversity and solitary meditation.
If he, whose labors were so abundant as to appear to us excessive, had such
reason for self-condemnation, how few are there in the same station who may
not say, "I do remember my faults this day!"

He did not, however, abandon himself to melancholy and unavailing complaints. One of his first cares, after arriving at Dieppe, was to employ his pen in writing suitable advices to those whom he could no longer instruct by
preaching and conversation. With this view, he transmitted to England two
short treatises. The one was an exposition of the sixth Psalm, which, at the
request of Mrs. Bowes, he had begun to write in England, but had not found
leisure to finish. It is an excellent practical discourse upon that portion of
Scripture, and will be read with peculiar satisfaction by those who have been
trained to religion in the school of adversity. The other treatise was a large
letter, addressed to those in London and other parts of England, among whom
he had been employed as a preacher. The drift of it was to warn them against
abandoning the religion which they had embraced, or giving countenance to the idolatrous worship now erected among them. The reader of this letter cannot fail to be struck with its animated strain, when he reflects that it proceeded from a forlorn exile, in a strange country, without a single acquaintance, and ignorant where he would find a place of abode or the means of subsistence. As a specimen of elevated piety, and the most fervid eloquence, I cannot refrain from quoting the conclusion of the letter, in which he addresses their consciences, their hopes, their fears, and adjures them, by all that is sacred, and all that is dear to them, as men, as parents, and as Christians, not to start back from their good profession, and plunge themselves and their posterity into the gulf of ignorance and idolatry.

"Allace! sall we, efter so many graces that God has offerit in our day is, for pleasure, or for vane threatnying of thame whome our hart knaweth and our mouthes have confessit to be odious idolateris, altogidder without resistance turne back to our vomit and damnabill ydolatrie, to the perdition of us and our posteritie? O horribill to be hard! Sall Godis halie preceptis wirk no greater obedience in us? Sall nature no otherways molifie our hartis? Sall not fatherlie pitie overcum this cruelties? I speik to you, O natural fatheris! Behold your children with the eie of mercie, and considder the end of thair creatioun. Crueltie it were to saif your selves, and damn thame. But, O! more than crueltie, and madnes that cannot be expressit, gif [if], for the pleasure of a moment, ye depryve yourselves and your posteritie of that eternall joy that is ordanit for thame that continewis in confessioun of Christis name to the end. Gif natural lufe, fatherly affectioun, reverence of God, feir of torment, or yit hoip of lyfe, move you, than will ye ganestand that abominabill ydol; whilk, gif ye do not, then, allace! the sone [sun] is gone doun, and the lyht is quyte lost, the trumpet is ceissit, and ydolatrie is placeit in quietnes and rest. But gif God sall strenthin you (as unfainedlie I pray that his Majestie may), then is their but ane dark clude overspred the sone for ane moment, whilk schortlie shall vanische, sa that the beames efter salbe seven fauld mare bryht and amiable nor they were befoir. Your patience and constancie salbe a louder trompit to your posteritie than were the voces of the prophetis that instructit you; and so is not the trompit ceissit sa lung as any baldlie resistith ydolatrie. And, thairfoir, for the tender mercies of God, arme yourselves to stand with Christ in this his schorte battell.

"Let it be knawn to your posteritie that ye wer Christianis, and no ydolateris; that ye learnt Chryst in tyme of rest, and baldlie professit him in tyme of trubill. The preceptis, think ye, are scharpe and hard to be observit; and yet agane I affirme, that comparit with the plagis that call assuredlie fall upon obstinat ydolateris, they salbe fund easie and lycht. For avoyding ydolatrie ye may perchance be compellit to leave pour native contrie and realme, but obeyris of ydolatrie without end salbe compellit to burne in hell; for avoyding ydolatrie your substance salbe spoillit, but for obeying ydolatrie heavenly ryches sal be lost; for avoyding ydolatrie ye may fall into the handis of earthlie
On the last day of February, 1554, he set out from Dieppe, like the Hebrew patriarch of old, "not knowing whither he went," and "committing his way to God," traveled through France to Switzerland. A correspondence had been kept up between some of the English reformers and the most noted divines of the Helvetic Church. The latter had already heard with the sincerest grief, of the overthrow of the Reformation, and the dispersion of its friends, in England. On making himself known, Knox was cordially received by them, and treated with the most affectionate hospitality. He spent some time in Switzerland, visiting the particular churches, and conferring with the learned men of that country; and embraced the opportunity of submitting to them certain difficult questions, which were suggested by the present conjuncture of affairs in England, and about which his mind had been greatly occupied. Their views with respect to these coinciding with his own, he was confirmed in the judgment which he had already formed for himself.
In the beginning of May he returned to Dieppe, to receive information from England, a journey which he repeated at intervals as long as he remained on the Continent. The kind reception which he had met with, and the agreeable company which he enjoyed during his short residence in Switzerland, had helped to dissipate the cloud which hung upon his spirits when he landed in France, and to open his mind to more pleasing prospects as to the issue of the present afflicting events. This appears from a letter written by him at this time, and addressed "To his afflicted brethren." After discoursing of the situation of the disciples of Christ during the time that he lay in the grave, and of the sudden transition which they experienced, upon the reappearance of their Master, from the depth of sorrow to the summit of joy, he adds, "The remembrance thereof is unto my heart great matter of consolation. For yet my good hope is, that one day or other, Christ Jesus, that now is crucified in England, shall rise again, in despite of his enemies, and shall appear to his weak and sore troubled disciples (for yet some he hath in that wretched and miserable realm); to whom he shall say, "Peace be unto you; it is I, be not afraid."

His spirit was also refreshed at this time by the information that he received of the constancy with which his mother-in-law adhered to the Protestant faith. Her husband, it appears, took it for granted that she and the rest of the family had consciences equally accommodating with his own. It was not until she had evinced, in the most determined manner, her resolution to forsake friends and native country, rather than sacrifice her religion, that she was released from his importunities to comply with the Roman Catholic religion. Before he went to Switzerland, Knox had signified his intention, if his life was spared, of visiting his friends at Berwick. When he returned to Dieppe, he had not relinquished the thoughts of this enterprise. It is likely that his friends had, in their letters, dissuaded him from it; and, after cool consideration, he resolved to postpone an attempt, by which he must have risked his life without the prospect of doing any good.

Wherefore, setting out again from Dieppe, he repaired to Geneva. The celebrated Calvin was then in the zenith of his reputation and usefulness in that city, and having completed its ecclesiastical establishment, and surmounted the opposition raised by those who envied his authority, or disliked his system of doctrine and discipline, was securely seated in the affections of the citizens. His writings were already translated into most of the languages of Europe; and Geneva was thronged with strangers from England, France, Germany, Poland, Hungary, and even from Spain and Italy, who came to consult him about the advancement of the Reformation, or to find shelter from the persecutions to which they were exposed in their native countries. The name of Calvin was respected by none more than the Protestants of England; and, at the desire of Archbishop Cranmer, he had imparted to the Protector Somerset and to Edward VI his advice as to the best method of advancing the Reformation in that kingdom. Knox was affectionately received by him as a
refugee from England, and an intimate friendship was soon formed between them, which subsisted until the death of Calvin in 1564. They were nearly of the same age; and there was a striking similarity in their sentiments, and in the more prominent features of their character. The Genevan reformer was highly pleased with the piety and talents of Knox, who, in his turn, entertained a greater esteem and deference for Calvin than for any other of the reformers. As Geneva was an eligible situation for prosecuting study, and as he approved much of the religious order established in that city, he resolved to make it the ordinary place of his residence during the continuance of his exile.

But no prospect of personal safety or accommodation could banish from his mind the thoughts of his persecuted countrymen. In the month of July he undertook another journey to Dieppe, to inform himself accurately of their situation, and to learn if he could do anything for their comfort. The tidings he received on this occasion tore open those wounds which had begun to close. In Scotland everything was dark and discouraging. The severities used against the Protestants of England daily increased, and, what was still more afflicting to him, many of those who had embraced the truth under his ministry had been induced to return to the communion of the Popish Church. In the agony of his spirit, he wrote to them, setting before them the destruction to which they exposed their immortal souls by such cowardly desertion, and earnestly calling them to repentance. Under his present impressions, he repeated his former admonitions to his mother-in-law, and to his wife, over whose religious constancy he was tenderly jealous. "By pen will I write (because the bodies are put asunder to meet again at God's pleasure) that which, by mouth, and face to face, ye have heard, that if man or angel labor to bring you back from the confession that once you have given, let them in that behalf be accursed. If any trouble you above measure, whether they be magistrates or carnal friends, they shall bear their just condemnation, unless they speedily repent. But now, mother, comfort you my heart (God grant ye may) in this my great affliction and dolorous pilgrimage; continue stoutly to the end, and bow you never before that idol, and so will the rest of worldly troubles be unto me more tolerable. With my own heart I often commune, yea, and, as it were, comforting myself, I appear to triumph, that God shall never suffer you to fall in that rebuke. Sure I am that both ye would fear and eschame to commit that abomination in my presence, who am but a wretched man, subject to sin and misery like to yourself. But, O mother! though no earthly creature should be offended with you, yet fear ye the presence and offense of Him, who, present in all places, searcheth the very heart and reins, whose indignation, once kindled against the disobedient (and no sin more inflameth his wrath than idolatry doth), no creature in heaven nor in earth is able to appease."

He was in this state of mind when he composed the Admonition to England, which was published about the end of this year. Those who have censured him as indulging in an excessive vehemence of spirit and bitterness of language usually refer to this tract in support of their charge. It is true that he there
paints the persecuting Papists in the blackest colors, and holds them up as objects of human execration and divine vengeance. I do not now stop to inquire whether he was chargeable with transgressing the bounds of moderation prescribed by reason and religion, in the expression of his indignation and zeal, or whether the censures pronounced by his accusers, and the principles upon which they proceed, do not involve a condemnation of the temper and language of the most righteous men mentioned in Scripture, and even of our Savior himself. But, I may ask, is there no apology for his severity to be found in the character of the persons against whom he wrote, and in the state of his own feelings, lacerated, not by personal sufferings, but by sympathy with his suffering brethren, who were driven into prisons by their unnatural countrymen, "as sheep for the slaughter," to be brought forth and barbarously immolated to appease the Roman Moloch? Who could suppress indignation in speaking of the conduct of men, who, having raised themselves to honor and affluence by the warmest professions of friendship to the reformed religion under the preceding reign, now abetted the most violent measures against their former brethren and benefactors? What terms were too strong for stigmatizing the execrable system of persecution coolly projected by the dissembling, vindictive Gardiner, the brutal barbarity of the bloody Bonner, or the unrelenting, insatiable cruelty of Mary, who, having extinguished the feelings of humanity, and divested herself of the tenderness which characterizes her sex, continued to urge to fresh severities the willing instruments of her cruelty, after they were sated with blood, and to issue orders for the murder of her subjects, until her own husband, bigoted and unfeeling as he was, turned with disgust from the spectacle?

On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm;  
Passion is reason, transport temper here.

Oppression makes a wise man mad; but (to use the words of a modern orator, with a more just application) "the distemper is still the madness of the wise, which is better than the sobriety of fools. Their cry is the voice of sacred misery, exalted, not into wild raving, but into the sanctified frenzy of prophecy and inspiration."

Knox returned to Geneva, and applied himself to study with all the ardor of youth, although his age now bordered upon fifty. It seems to have been at this time that he made himself master of the Hebrew language, which he had no opportunity of acquiring in early life. It is natural to inquire by what funds he was supported during his exile. However much inclined his mother-in-law was to relieve his necessities, the disposition of her husband appears to have put it greatly out of her power. Any small sums which his friends had advanced to him, before his sudden departure from England, were exhausted, and he was at this time very much straitened for money. Being unwilling to burden strangers, he looked for assistance to the voluntary contributions of those among whom he had labored. In a letter to Mrs. Bowes, he says, "My own estate I cannot well declare; but God shall guide the footsteps of him that is wilsome, and will feed
him in trouble that never greatly solicited for the world. If any collection might be made among the faithful, it were no shame for me to receive that which Paul refused not in the time of his trouble. But all I remit to his Providence that ever careth for his own." I find that remittances were made to him by particular friends, both in England and Scotland, during his residence on the Continent. Meanwhile, the persecution growing hot in England, great numbers of Protestants had made their escape from that kingdom. Before the close of the year 1554, there were on the Continent several hundred Englishmen of good education, besides others of different ranks, who had preferred religion to country, and voluntarily encountered all the hardships of exile, that they might hold fast the profession of the Protestant faith. The foreign reformed churches exhibited, on this occasion, an amiable proof of the spirit of their religion, and amply recompensed the kindness which England had shown to strangers during the reign of Edward. They emulated one another in exertions to accommodate the unfortunate refugees who were dispersed among them, and endeavored, with the most affectionate solicitude, to supply their wants and alleviate their sufferings. The principal places in which the English exiles obtained settlements were Zurich, Basle, Geneva, Arrow, Embden, Wesel, Strasburg, Duysburg, and Frankfort. Frankfort on the Maine was a rich imperial city of Germany, which, at an early period, had embraced the Reformation, and befriended Protestant refugees from all countries, so far as this could be done without coming to an open breach with the emperor, by whom their conduct was watched with a jealous eye. There was already a church of French Protestants in that city. On the fourteenth of July 1554, the English who had come to Frankfort obtained from the magistrates the joint use of the place of worship allotted to the French, with liberty to perform religious service in their own language. This was granted upon the condition of their conforming, as nearly as possible, to the mode of worship used by the French Church, a prudent precaution, dictated by the political situation in which the city was placed. The offer was gratefully accepted by the English, who came to a unanimous agreement that they would omit the use of the surplice, the litany, the audible responses, and some other ceremonies prescribed by the English liturgy, which, "in those reformed churches, would seem more than strange," or which were "superstitious and superfluous." Having settled this point in the most harmonious manner, elected deacons and a temporary pastor, and agreed upon certain rules of discipline, they wrote a circular letter to their brethren who were scattered through different places, informing them of the agreeable settlement which they had obtained, and inviting them to participate in their accommodations at Frankfort, and unite with them in prayers for the afflicted Church of England. The exiles at Strasburg, in their reply to this letter, recommended to them certain persons as well qualified for filling the offices of superintendent and pastor, a recommendation not asked by the congregation at Frankfort, who did not think a superintendent necessary in their situation, and who intended to put themselves under the inspection of two or three pastors invested with
equal authority. They accordingly proceeded to make choice of three persons to this office. One of these was Knox, who received information of his election by a letter written in the name of the congregation, and subscribed by its principal members.

The deputation which waited on him with this invitation found him engaged in the prosecution of his studies at Geneva. From aversion to sacrifice the advantages which he enjoyed, or from the apprehension of difficulties that he might meet with at Frankfort, he would gladly have excused himself from accepting the invitation. But the deputies having employed the powerful intercession of Calvin, he was induced to comply, and repairing to Frankfort in the month of November, commenced his ministry with the universal consent and approbation of the Church. Previous to his arrival, however, the harmony which at first subsisted among that people had been disturbed. In reply to the letter addressed to them, the exiles at Zurich had signified that they would not come to Frankfort unless they obtained security that the Church there would "use the same order of service concerning religion, which was, in England, last set forth by King Edward," for they were fully determined "to admit and use no other." They alleged that, by varying from that service, they would give occasion to their adversaries to charge their religion with imperfection and mutability, and would condemn their brethren who were sealing it with their blood in England. To these representations the brethren at Frankfort replied that they had obtained the liberty of a place of worship, upon condition of their accommodating themselves as much as possible to the forms used by the French Church; that there were a number of things in the English service-book which would be offensive to the Protestants among whom they resided, and which had been occasion of scruple to conscientious persons at home; that, by the variations which they had introduced, they were very far from meaning to throw any reflection upon the regulations of their late sovereign and his council, who had themselves altered many things, and had resolved on still greater alterations, without thinking that they gave any handle to their popish adversaries; and still less did they mean to detract from the credit of the martyrs, who, they were persuaded, shed their blood in confirmation of more important things than mutable ceremonies of human appointment. This reply had the effect of lowering the tone of the exiles at Zurich, but it did not satisfy them; and instead of desisting from the controversy, and contenting themselves with remaining where they were, they instigated their brethren at Strasburg to urge the same request, and, by letters and messengers, fomented dissension in the congregation at Frankfort.

When Knox arrived, he found that the seeds of animosity had already sprung up among them. From what we already know of his sentiments respecting the English service-book, we may be sure that the eagerness manifested by those who wished to impose it was very displeasing to him. But so sensible was he of the pernicious and discreditable effects of division among brethren exiled for the same faith, that he resolved to act as a moderator between the two parties, and to avoid, as far as possible, everything which might have a tendency to widen or continue the breach. Accordingly, when the congregation
had agreed to adopt the order of the Genevan Church, and requested him to
proceed to administer the communion according to it, although he approved of
that form, he declined carrying it into practice, until their learned brethren in
other places were consulted. At the same time, he signified that he had not
freedom to dispense the sacraments agreeably to the English liturgy. If he
could not be allowed to perform this service in a manner more consonant to
Scripture, he requested that some other person might be employed in this part
of duty, in which case he would willingly confine himself to preaching; and if
neither of these could be granted, he besought them to release him altogether
from his charge. To this last request they would by no means consent.
Fearing that, if these differences were not speedily accommodated, they would
burst into a flame, Knox, and some other members of the congregation, drew
up a summary of the Book of Common Prayer, and, having translated it into
Latin, sent it to Calvin for his opinion and advice. In a reply, dated January 20,
1555, Calvin stated that he was grieved to hear of the unseemly contentions
which prevailed among them; that, although he had always recommended
moderation respecting external ceremonies, yet he could not but condemn
the obstinacy of those who would consent to no change of old customs; that, in
the liturgy of England, he had found many tolerable fooleries (*tolerabiles ineptias*),
practices which might be tolerated at the beginning of a reformation, but
ought to be removed as soon as possible; that, in his opinion, the present
condition of the English exiles warranted them to attempt this, and to agree
upon an order more conducive to edification; and that, for his part, he could
not understand what those persons meant who discovered such fondness for
popish dregs.
This letter, when read to the congregation, had a great effect in repressing the
keenness of such as had urged the unlimited use of the liturgy, and a
committee was appointed to draw up a form which might put an end to all
differences. When this committee met, Knox told them that he was convinced
it was necessary for one of the parties to relent before they could come to an
amicable settlement; and that he would therefore state what he judged most
proper to be done, and having exonerated himself, would allow them, without
opposition, to determine as they should answer to God and the Church. They
accordingly agreed upon a form of worship in which the English liturgy was
followed so far as their circumstances and the general ends of edification
permitted. This was to continue in force until the end of April next, and if any
dispute arose in the interval, it was to be referred to five of the most
celebrated foreign divines. The agreement was subscribed by all the members
of the congregation; thanks publicly returned to God for the restoration of
harmony; and the communion was received as a pledge of union, and of the
burial of all past offenses.
But this agreement was soon after violated, and the peace of that unhappy
congregation again broken, in the most wanton and inexcusable manner. On
the thirteenth of March, 1555, Dr. Cox, who had been preceptor to Edward VI,
came from England to Frankfort, with some others in his company. The first
day on which they attended public worship after their arrival, they broke
through the established order, by answering aloud after the minister in the time of divine service. Being admonished by some of the elders to refrain from that practice, they insolently replied, "that they would do as they had done in England, and they would have the face of an English Church." "The Lord grant it to have the face of Christ's Church," says Knox, in an account which he drew up of these transactions, "and therefore I would have had it agreeable, in outward rites and ceremonies, with Christian Churches reformed."

On the following Sabbath, one of their number having intruded himself into the pulpit without the consent of the pastors or the congregation, read the litany while Cox and his accomplices echoed the responses. This offensive behavior was aggravated by the consideration that some of them had, before leaving England, been guilty of compliances with Popery, for which they had not yet given satisfaction to their brethren.

Such an infraction of public order, as well as insult upon the whole body, could not be passed over in silence. It was Knox's turn to preach on the afternoon of the Sabbath when this occurred. In his ordinary course of lecturing through the book of Genesis, he had occasion to discourse of the manner in which offenses committed by professors of religion ought to be treated. Having mentioned that there were infirmities in their conduct over which a veil should be thrown, he proceeded to remark that offenses which openly dishonored God and disturbed the peace of the Church ought to be disclosed and publicly rebuked. He then reminded them of the contention which had existed in the congregation, and of the happy manner in which, after long and painful labor, it had been ended, to the joy of all, by the solemn agreement which had that day been so flagrantly violated. This, he said, it became not the proudest of them to have attempted. Nothing which was destitute of a divine warrant ought to be obtruded upon any Christian Church. In that book for which some entertained such an overweening fondness, he would undertake to prove publicly, that there were things imperfect, impure, and superstitious; and if any should go about to burden a free congregation with such things, he would not fail, as often as he occupied that place, provided his text afforded occasion, to oppose their design. As he had been forced to enter upon that subject, he would say farther, that, in his judgment, slackness in reforming religion, when time and opportunity were granted for this purpose, was one cause of the divine displeasure against England. He adverted also to the trouble which Bishop Hooper had suffered for refusing to comply with some of the ceremonies, to the want of discipline, and to the well-known fact, that three, four, or five benefices had been held by one man, to the depriving of the flock of Christ of their necessary food.

This free reprimand was highly resented by those against whom it was leveled, especially by such as had held pluralities in England, who insisted that the preacher should be called to account for slandering their mother church. A special meeting being held for the consideration of this affair, the friends of the liturgy, instead of prosecuting their complaints against Knox, began with requiring that Cox and his friends should be admitted to a vote in the discussion. This was resisted by the great majority, on the ground that these
persons had not yet subscribed the discipline of the Church, nor given satisfaction for their late disorderly conduct, and their sinful compliances in England. The behavior of our Reformer, on this occasion, was more remarkable for magnanimity than prudence. Although aware of the hostility of Cox’s adherents to himself, and that they sought admission chiefly to overpower him by numbers, he was so confident of the justice of his cause, and so anxious to remove prejudices, that he entreated and prevailed with the meeting to yield to their unreasonable request, and to admit them immediately to a vote. "I know," said he, "that your earnest desire to be received at this instant within the number of the congregation, is, that, by the multitude of your voices, ye may overthrow my cause. Howbeit, the matter is so evident, that ye shall not be able to do it. I fear not your judgment, and therefore do require that ye may be admitted." This disinterestedness was thrown away on the opposite party, for no sooner were they admitted, and had obtained a majority of voices, than Cox, usurping an authority with which he had never been invested, discharged Knox from preaching, and from all interference in the congregational affairs.

The great body of the congregation were indignant at these proceedings, and there was reason to fear that the mutual animosity would break out into a disgraceful tumult. To prevent this, some of the members made a representation of the case to the senate of Frankfort, who, after recommending in vain a private accommodation, issued an order that the congregation should conform exactly to the mode of service used by the French Church, as nothing but confusion had ensued since they departed from it; and threatened, if this was not complied with, to shut up their place of worship. To this peremptory injunction the Coxian faction pretended a cheerful submission, while they clandestinely concerted measures for obtaining its revocation, and enforcing their favorite liturgy upon a reclaiming congregation.

Perceiving the influence which our countryman had in the Church, and despairing to carry their plan into execution so long as he was among them, they determined, in the first place, to rid themselves of his presence. To accomplish this object, they had recourse to one of the basest and most unchristian acts ever employed to ruin an adversary. Two of them, in concurrence with others, went privately to the magistrates, and accused Knox of high treason against the Emperor of Germany, his son Philip, and Queen Mary of England; putting into their hands at the same time a copy of a book which he had lately published, and in which the passages containing the grounds of charge were marked. "O Lord God!" says Knox, when relating this step, "open their hearts to see their wickedness, and forgive them for thy manifold mercies. And I forgive them, O Lord, from the bottom of mine heart. But that thy message sent by my mouth may not be slandered, I am compelled to declare the cause of my departing, and to utter their follies, to their amendment, I trust, and the example of others, who, in the same banishment, can have so cruel hearts as to persecute their brethren." The book which the informers left with the magistrates was his Admonition to England; and the passage upon which they principally fixed, as substantiating the charge of
treason against the emperor, was the following, originally spoken to the inhabitants of Amersham in Buckinghamshire, on occasion of the rumor of marriage of Queen Mary with Philip, the son and heir of Charles V, a match which was at that time dreaded by many of the English Catholics. "O England, England! if thou obstinately wilt return into Egypt, that is, if thou contract marriage, confederacy, or league with such princes as do maintain and advance idolatry, such as the emperor, who is no less enemy to Christ than ever was Nero, if for the pleasure of such princes thou return to thy old abominations before used under Papistry, then assuredly, O England, thou shalt be plagued and brought to desolation by the means of those whose favor thou seekest!"

The other passages related to the cruelties of the English queen. Not to speak of the extravagance of the charge which they founded upon these passages, and of the unbrotherly spirit which they discovered, it was with little grace and consistency that the sticklers for the English forms availed themselves of the strong language which Knox had employed in the warmth of his zeal, in order to excite prejudices against him; and it would be no difficult task to extract from their writings declamations against their own queen, and against foreign princes, more intemperate than anything that ever proceeded from his pen. In consequence of this accusation, the magistrates sent for Whittingham, a respectable member of the English congregation, and interrogated him concerning Knox's character. He told them that he was "a learned, grave, and godly man." They then acquainted him with the serious accusation which had been lodged against him by some of his countrymen, and giving him the book, charged him, *sub poena pacis*, to bring them an exact Latin translation of the passages which were marked. This being done, they commanded Knox to desist from preaching until their pleasure should be known. To this command he peaceably submitted, "yet," says he in his narrative, "being desirous to hear others, I went to the church next day, not thinking that my company would have offended any. But as soon as my accusers saw me, they, with...and others, departed from the sermon, some of them protesting with great vehemence that they would not tarry where I was." The magistrates were extremely perplexed how to act in this delicate business. On the one hand, they were satisfied of the malice of Knox's accusers; on the other, they were afraid that information of the charge would be conveyed to the emperor's council, which then sat at Augsburg, and that they might be obliged to deliver up the accused to them, or to the Queen of England. In this dilemma, they desired Whittingham to advise his friend privately to retire of his own accord from Frankfort. At the same time, they did not dissemble their detestation of the unnatural conduct of the informers, who, having waited upon them to know the result of their deliberations, were dismissed from their presence with evident marks of displeasure.

On the 25th of March, Knox delivered a most consolatory discourse to about fifty members of the congregation, who assembled at his lodgings in the evening. Next day they accompanied him some miles on his journey from Frankfort, and, with heavy hearts and many tears, committed him to God, and took their leave.
No sooner was Knox gone than Cox, who had privately concerted the plan with Glauberg, a civilian, and nephew of the chief magistrate, procured an order from the senate for the unlimited use of the English liturgy, by means of the false representation that it was now universally acceptable to the congregation. The next step was the abrogation of the code of discipline, and then the appointment of a bishop, or superintendent, over the pastors. Having accomplished these important improvements, they could now boast that they had, "the face of an English church." Yes, they could now raise their heads above all the reformed churches which had the honor of entertaining them, and which, though they might have all the office-bearers and ordinances instituted by Christ, had neither bishop, nor litany, nor surplice! They could now lift up their faces in the presence of the Church of Rome herself, and cherish the hope that she would not altogether disown them! But let me not forget that the men of whom I write were at this time suffering exile for the Protestant religion, and that they really detested the body of Popery, though childishly and superstitiously attached to its attire, and gestures, and language. The sequel of the transactions in the English congregation at Frankfort does not properly belong to this memoir. I shall only add that after some ineffectual attempts to obtain satisfaction for the breach of the Church’s peace, and the injurious treatment of their minister, a considerable number of the members left the city. Some of them, among whom was Fox, the celebrated martyrologist, repaired to Basle. The greater part went to Geneva, where they obtained a place of worship, and lived in great harmony and love until the storm of persecution in England blew over at the death of Queen Mary; while those who remained at Frankfort, as if to expiate their offense against Knox, continued a prey to endless contention. Cox and his learned colleagues, having accomplished their favorite object, soon left them to compose the strife which they had excited, and provided themselves elsewhere with a less expensive situation for carrying on their studies.

I have been the more minute in the detail of these transactions, not only on account of the share which the subject of this memoir had in them, but because they throw light upon the controversy between the conformists and non-conformists, which runs through the succeeding period of the ecclesiastical history of England. "The troubles at Frankfort" present, in miniature, a striking picture of that contentious scene which was afterwards exhibited on a larger scale in the mother country. The issue of that affair augured ill as to the prospect of an amicable adjustment of the litigated points. It had been usual to urge conformity to the obnoxious ceremonies, from the respect due to the authority by which they were enjoined. But in this instance the civil authority, so far from enjoining, had rather discountenanced them. If they were urged with such intolerant importunity in a place where the laws and customs were repugnant to them, what was to be expected in England, where law and custom were on their side? The divines who received ecclesiastical preferment at the accession of Elizabeth, professed that they desired the removal of these grounds of strife, but could not obtain it from the queen, and I am disposed to give many of them credit for the sincerity of their profession. But as they
showed themselves so stiff and unyielding when the matter was wholly in their own power—as some of them were so eager in wreathing a yoke about the consciences of the brethren as to urge reluctant magistrates to rivet it—is it any wonder that their applications for relief were cold and ineffectual, when made to rulers who were disposed to make the yoke still more severe, and "to chastise with scorpions those whom they had chastised with whips?" I repeat it: when I consider the transactions at Frankfort, I am not surprised at the defeat of every subsequent attempt to advance the Reformation in England, or to procure relief to those who scrupled to yield conformity to some of the ecclesiastical laws. I know it is pleaded that the things complained of are matters of indifference, not prohibited in Scripture, not imposed as essential to religion or necessary to salvation, matters that can affect no well-informed conscience; and that such as refuse them, when enacted by authority, are influenced by unreasonable scrupulosity, conceited, pragmatical, opinionative. This has been the usual language of a ruling party, when imposing upon the consciences of the minority. But, not to urge here the danger of allowing to any class of rulers, civil or ecclesiastical, a power of enjoining indifferent things in religion; nor the undeniable fact that the burdensome system of ceremonial observances, by which religion was corrupted under the Papacy, was gradually introduced under these and similar pretexts; nor that the things in question, when complexly and formally considered, are not really matters of indifference; not to insist at present upon these topics, the answer to the above plea is short and decisive. These things appear matters of conscience and importance to the scruplers; you say they are matters of indifference. Why, then, violate the sacred peace of the Church, and perpetuate division; why silence, deprive, harass, and starve men of acknowledged learning and piety, and drive from communion a sober and devout people; why torture their consciences, and endanger their souls, by the imposition of things, which, in your judgment, are indifferent, not necessary, and unworthy to become objects of contention?

Upon retiring from Frankfort, Knox went directly to Geneva. He was cordially welcomed back by Calvin. As his advice had great weight in disposing Knox to comply with the invitation from Frankfort, he felt much hurt at the treatment which had obliged him to leave it. In reply to an apologetic epistle which he received from Dr. Cox, Calvin, although he prudently restrained himself from saying anything which might revive or increase the flame, could not conceal his opinion that Knox had been used in an unbrotherly and unchristian manner, and that it would have been better for his accuser to have remained at home, than to have come into a foreign country as a firebrand to inflame a peaceable society.

It appeared from the event that Providence had disengaged Knox from his late charge, to employ him on a more important service. From the time that he was carried prisoner into France, he had never lost sight of Scotland, nor relinquished the hope of again preaching in his native country. While he resided at Berwick and Newcastle, he had frequent opportunities of personal intercourse with his countrymen, and of learning the state of religion among
them. His unintermitted labors, during the five years which he spent in
England, by occupying his time and attention, lessened the regret which he felt
at seeing the object of his wishes apparently at as great a distance as ever.
Upon leaving that kingdom, his thoughts were anxiously turned to Scotland. He
found means to carry on an epistolary correspondence with some of his friends
at home; one great object of his journeys to Dieppe was to receive their
letters; and he had the satisfaction, soon after his retreat from Frankfort, to
obtain such information from them as encouraged him to execute his design of
paying a visit to his native country. To prepare the reader for the account of
this journey, it will be necessary to take a view of the principal events which
had occurred in that kingdom from the time that Knox was forced to leave it.
The surrender of the castle of St. Andrews seemed to have given an
irrecoverable blow to the reformed interest in Scotland. Among the prisoners
conveyed to France were some of the most zealous and able Protestants in the
kingdom, and the rest, seeing themselves at the mercy of their adversaries,
were dispirited and intimidated. The clergy triumphed in the victory which
they had obtained, and flattered themselves that they would now be able with
ease to stifle all opposition to their measures. The regent, being guided
entirely by his brother, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, was ready to employ all
the dower of the State in support of the Church, and for suppressing those who
refused to submit to her decisions. During the confusions produced by the
invasion of the kingdom under the Duke of Somerset, and by the disastrous
defeat of the Scots at Pinkie, in the year 1547, the regent found it his interest
not to irritate the Protestants; but no sooner was he freed from the alarm
created by these events than he began to treat them with severity. Aware that
it would be extremely invidious to prosecute the barons and gentry upon a
charge of heresy, and perhaps convinced that such measures in the time of his
predecessor had proved injurious to the hierarchy, the crafty primate
commenced his attack by bringing them to trial for crimes against the state.
Although they had conducted themselves in the most peaceable and loyal
manner during the late invasion, and many of them had died under the
standard of the regent, they were accused of being secretly favorable to the
English, and of holding correspondence with them. Cockburn of Ormiston and
Crichton of Brunston were banished and their estates forfeited. Sir John
Melville of Raith, a gentleman of distinguished probity and of untainted loyalty,
was accused of a traitorous connection with the enemy, and although the only
evidence adduced in support of the charge was a letter written by him to one
of his sons then in England, and although this letter contained nothing criminal,
yet was he unjustly condemned and beheaded. The signing of a treaty of peace
with England in 1550 was a signal for the clergy to proceed to acts of more
undisguised persecution. Adam Wallace, who had lived for some time as tutor
in the family of Ormiston, was apprehended, and being tried for heresy before
a convention of clergy and nobility, was committed to the flames on the
Castle-hill of Edinburgh. These prosecutions were not confined to persons in
holy orders. George Winchester of Kinglassie was summoned before the
archbishop and clergy at St. Andrews, and, having made his escape, was
condemned as a heretic, and his goods escheated. In the following year, the parliament renewed the laws in support of the Church, and added a new statute against the circulation of heretical ballads and tragedies. By these severe measures the clergy struck terror into the minds of the nation; but they were unable to conceal the glaring corruptions by which their own order was disgraced, and they could not remain strangers to the murmurs that these had excited throughout the whole kingdom. In the month of November 1549, a provincial council was held at Edinburgh "for the reformation of the Church, and the extirpation of heresy." This council acknowledged that "corruption and profane lewdness of life, as well as gross ignorance of arts and sciences, reigned among the clergy of almost every degree," and they enacted no fewer than fifty-eight canons for correcting these evils. They agreed to carry into execution the decree of the general council of Basle, which ordained that every clergyman who lived in concubinage should be deprived of the revenues of his benefice for three months, and that if, after due admonition, he did not dismiss his concubine, or if he took to himself another, he should be deprived of his benefices altogether. They exhorted the prelates and inferior clergy not to retain in their own houses their bastard children, nor suffer them to be promoted directly or indirectly to their own benefices, nor employ the patrimony of the Church for the purpose of marrying them to barons, or of erecting baronages for them. That the distinction between clergy and laity might be visibly preserved, they appointed the ordinaries to charge the priests under their care to desist from the practice of preserving their beards, which had begun to prevail, and to see that the canonical tonsure was duly observed. To remedy the neglect of public instruction, which was loudly complained of, they agreed to observe the act of the Council of Trent, which ordained that every bishop, "according to the grace given to him," should preach personally four times a year at least, unless lawfully hindered; and that such of them as were unfit for this duty, through want of practice, should endeavor to qualify themselves, and for that end should entertain in their houses learned divines capable of instructing them. The same injunctions were laid on rectors. They determined that a benefice should be set apart in each bishopric and monastery, for supporting a preacher who might supply the want of teaching within their bounds; that, where no such benefice was set apart, pensions should be allotted; and that, where neither of these was provided, the preacher should be entitled to demand from the rector forty shillings a year, provided he had preached four times in his parish within that period. The council made a number of other regulations, concerning the dress and diet of the clergy, the course of study in cathedral churches and monasteries, union of benefices, pluralities, ordinations, dispensations, and the method of process in consistorial courts. But, not trusting altogether to these remedies for the cure of heresy, they farther ordained that the bishop of each diocese, and the head of each monastery, should appoint "inquisitors of heretical pravity, men of piety, probity, learning, good fame, and great circumspection," who should make the most diligent search after heresies, foreign opinions, condemned
books, and particularly profane songs, intended to defame the clergy, or to
detract from the authority of the ecclesiastical constitutions.
Another provincial council, held in 1551 and 1552, besides ratifying the
preceding canons, adopted an additional expedient for correcting the
continued neglect of public instruction. After declaring that “the inferior
clergy, and the prelates for the most part, were still unqualified for instructing
the people in the catholic faith, and other things necessary to salvation, and
for reclaiming the erroneous,” they proceeded to approve of a catechism which
had been compiled in the Scottish language, ordered that it should be printed,
and that copies of it should be sent to all rectors, vicars, and curates, who
were enjoined to read a portion of it, instead of a sermon, to their
parishioners, on every Sunday and holiday, when no person qualified for
preaching was present. The rectors, vicars, and curates were enjoined to
practice daily in reading their catechism, lest, on ascending the pulpit, they
should stammer and blunder, and thereby expose themselves to the laughter of
the people. The archbishop was directed, after supplying the clergy with
copies, to keep the remainder beside him “in firm custody,” and the inferior
clergy were prohibited from indiscreetly communicating their copies to the
people, without the permission of their bishops, who might allow this privilege
to “certain honest, grave, trusty, and discreet laics, who appeared to desire it
for the sake of instruction, and not of gratifying curiosity.” If any of the hearers
testified a disposition to call into question any part of the catechism, the
clerical reader was prohibited, under the pain of deprivation, from entering
into dispute with them on the subject, and was instructed to delate them to
the inquisitors.
Many of the regulations enacted by these two councils were excellent, but the
execution of them was committed to the very persons who were interested in
support of the evils against which they were directed. Accordingly, the canons
of the Scottish clergy, like those of general councils called for the reformation
of the Church, instead of correcting, served only to proclaim the abuses which
prevailed. We know from the declarations of subsequent provincial councils, as
well as from the complaints of the people, that the licentiousness of the clergy
continued, and the catechism which they had sanctioned seems to have been
but little used. I have not found it mentioned by any writer of that age, Popish
or Protestant, and we know of its existence only from the canon of the
Assembly which authorized its use and from a few copies of it which have
descended to our time.
The council which met in 1551 boasts that, through the singular favor of the
government, and the vigilance of the prelates, heresy, which had formerly
spread through the kingdom, was now repressed and almost extinguished.
There were still, however, many Protestants in the nation; but they were
deprived of teachers, and they satisfied themselves with retaining their
sentiments, without exposing their lives to inevitable destruction by avowing
their creed or exciting the suspicions of the clergy by holding private
conventicles. In this state they remained from 1551 to 1554.
While the Reformation was in this languishing condition, it experienced a sudden revival in Scotland, from two causes which appeared at first view to threaten its utter extinction in Britain. These were the elevation of the queen dowager to the regency of Scotland, and the accession of Mary to the throne of England.

The queen dowager of Scotland, who possessed a great portion of that ambition by which her brothers, the princes of Lorrain, were fired, had long formed the design of wresting the regency from the hands of Arran. After a series of political intrigue, in which she discovered the most consummate and persevering address, she at last succeeded; and, on the tenth of April 1554, the regent resigned his office to her in the presence of parliament, and retired into private life, with the title of Duke of Chastelherault. The dowager had, at an early period, made her court to the Protestants, whom Arran had alienated from him by persecution; and, to induce them to favor her pretensions, she promised to screen them from the violence of the clergy. Having received their cordial support, and finding it necessary still to use them as a check upon the clergy, who, under the influence of the primate, favored the interest of her rival, the queen regent secretly countenanced them, and the Protestants were emboldened again to avow their sentiments.

In the meantime the queen of England was exerting all her power to crush the Reformation; and, had the court of Scotland acted in concert with her for this purpose, the Protestants must, according to all human probability, have been exterminated in Britain. But the English queen having married Philip, King of Spain, while the queen regent was indissolubly attached to France, the rival of Spain, a coldness was produced between these two princesses, which was soon after succeeded by an open breach. Among the Protestants who fled from the cruelty of Mary, some took refuge in Scotland, where they were suffered to remain undisturbed, and even to teach in prorate, through the connivance of the new regent, and in consequence of the security into which the clergy had been lulled by success. Traveling from place to place, they propagated instruction, and by their example and their exhortations fanned the latent zeal of those who had formerly received the knowledge of the truth.

William Harlow, whose zeal and acquaintance with the Scriptures compensated for the defects of his education, was the first preacher who, at this time, came to Scotland. Let those who do not know, or who wish to forget, that the religion which they profess was first preached by fishermen and tentmakers, labor to conceal the occupations of some of those men whom Providence raised up to spread the reformed gospel through their native country. Harlow had followed the trade of a tailor in Edinburgh; but having imbibed the Protestant doctrine, he retired to England, where he was admitted to deacon’s orders, and employed as a preacher during the reign of Edward VI. Upon his return to Scotland, he remained for some time in Ayrshire, and continued to preach in different parts of the country with great fervor and diligence, until the establishment of the Reformation, when he was admitted minister of St. Cuthberts, in the vicinity of Edinburgh.
Some time after him arrived John Willock. This reformer afterwards became the principal coadjutor of Knox, who never mentions him without expressions of affection and esteem. The cordiality which subsisted between them, the harmony of their sentiments, and the combination of the peculiar talents and qualities by which they were distinguished, conduced in no small degree to the advancement of the Reformation. Willock was not inferior to Knox in learning, and though he did not equal him in eloquence and intrepidity, surpassed him in affability, in moderation, and in address; qualities which enabled him sometimes to maintain his station, and to accomplish his purposes, when his colleague could not act with safety or with success. He was a native of Ayrshire, and had belonged to the order of Franciscan friars; but, having embraced the reformed opinions at an early period, he threw off the monastic habit, and fled to England. During the persecution for the Six Articles in 1541, he was thrown into the prison of the Fleet. He afterwards became chaplain to the Duke of Suffolk, the father of Lady Jane Grey, and upon the accession of Queen Mary, left England, and took up his residence at Embden. Having practiced there as a physician, he was introduced to Anne, Duchess of Friesland, who patronized the Reformation, and whose opinion of his talents and integrity induced her to send him to Scotland in the summer of 1555 with a commission to the queen regent, to make some arrangements respecting the trade carried on between the two countries. The public character with which he was invested gave Willock an opportunity of cultivating acquaintance with the leading Protestants, and while he resided in Edinburgh, they met with him in private, and listened to his religious instructions.

Knox received the news of this favorable change in the situation of his brethren with heartfelt satisfaction. He did not know what it was to fear danger, and was little accustomed to consult his own ease, when he had the prospect of being useful in advancing the interests of truth; but he acknowledges that, on the present occasion, he was at first averse to a journey into Scotland, notwithstanding some encouraging circumstances in the intelligence which he had received from that quarter. He had been so much tossed about of late, that he felt a peculiar relish in the learned leisure which he at present enjoyed, and which he was desirous to prolong. His anxiety to see his wife, after an absence of nearly two years, and the importunity with which his mother-in-law, in her letters, urged him to visit them, determined him at last to undertake the journey. Setting out from Geneva in the month of August 1555, he came to Dieppe, and sailing from that port, landed on the east coast, near the boundaries between Scotland and England, about the end of harvest. He repaired immediately to Berwick, where he had the satisfaction of finding his wife and her mother in comfortable circumstances, and enjoying the happiness of religious society with several individuals in that city, who, like themselves, had not "bowed the knee" to the established idolatry, nor consented to "receive the mark" of antichrist.

Having remained some time with them, he set out secretly to visit the Protestants in Edinburgh, intending, after a short stay, to return to Berwick. But he found employment which detained him beyond his expectation. He
lodged with James Syme, a respectable burgess of Edinburgh, in whose house
the friends of the Reformation assembled, to attend the instructions of Knox as
soon as they were informed of his arrival. Few of the inhabitants of the
metropolis had as yet embraced the reformed doctrines, but several persons
had repaired to it at this time, from other parts of the country, to meet with
Willock. Among these were John Erskine of Dun, whom we had formerly
occasion to mention as an early favorer of the new opinions, and a
distinguished patron of literature, and whose great respectability of character
and approved loyalty and patriotism had preserved him from the resentment of
the clergy and the jealousy of the government during successive periods of
persecution; and William Maitland of Lethington, a young gentleman of the
finest parts, improved by a superior education, but inclined to subtlety in
reasoning, accommodating in his religious sentiments, and extremely versatile
in his political conduct. Highly gratified with Knox’s discourses, which were
greatly superior to any which they had heard from popish or Protestant
preachers, they brought their acquaintances along with them to hear him, and
his audiences daily increased. Being confined to a private house, he was
obliged to preach to successive assemblies, and was unremittingly employed,
by night as well as by day, in communicating instruction to persons who
demanded it with extraordinary avidity. The following letter, written by him to
Mrs. Bowes, to excuse himself for not returning so soon as he had purposed,
will convey the best idea of his employment and feelings on this interesting
occasion.

"The wayis of man are not in his awn power. Albeit my journey toward
Scotland, belovit mother, was maist contrarious to my awn judgment, befoir I
did interpryse the same; yet this day I prais God for thame wha was the cause
externall of my resort to theis quarteris; that is, I prais God in yow and for
yow, whom he maid the instrument to draw me from the den of my awn eas
(you allane did draw me from the rest of quyet studie), to contemplat and
behald the fervent thirst of our brethrene, night and day sobbing and gronying
for the breide of life. Gif I had not sene it with my eis, in my awn country, I
culd not have beleveit it! I praisit God, when I was with you, perceaving that,
in the middis of Sodome, God had mo Lottis than one, and mo faithful
douchteris than tua. But the fervencie heir doith fer exceid all utheris that I
have seen. And thairfor ye sall patiently bear, altho’ I spend heir yet sum
dayis; for depart I cannot, unto sic tyme as God quenche thair thirst a littil.
Yea, mother, their fervencie doith sa ravische me, that I cannot but accus and
condemp my sleuthful coldnes. God grant thame thair hartis desire, and I pray
yow adverteis [me] of your estait, and of thingis that have occurit sense your
last wrytting. Comfort yourself in Godis promissis, and be assureit that God
steiris up mo friendis than we be war of. My commendation to all in your
company. I commit you to the protectioun of the Omnipotent. In great haist,
the 4. of November, 1555. From Scotland. Your sore, Johne Knox."

Having executed the commission, Willock returned to Embden, and he quitted
Scotland with the less regret, as he left behind him one who was so capable of
promoting the cause which he had at heart. When he first arrived in Scotland,
Knox found that the friends of the reformed doctrine continued, in general, to attend the popish worship, and even the celebration of mass, principally with the view of avoiding the scandal which they would otherwise incur. Highly disapproving of this practice, he labored, in his conversation and sermons, to convince them of the great impiety of that part of the popish service, and the criminality of countenancing it by their presence. Doubts being still entertained on the subject by some, a meeting of the Protestants in the city was held for the express purpose of discussing the question. Maitland defended the practice with all the ingenuity and learning for which he was distinguished, but his arguments were so satisfactorily answered by Knox, that he yielded the point as indefensible, and agreed, with the rest of his brethren, to abstain, for the future, from such temporizing conduct. Thus was a formal separation made from the Popish Church in Scotland, which may be justly regarded as an important step in the Reformation.

Erskine of Dun prevailed on Knox to accompany him to his family seat in the shire of Angus, where he continued a month, during which he preached every day. The principal persons in that neighborhood attended his sermons. After his return to the south of the Forth, he resided at Calder-house, in West Lothian, the seat of Sir James Sandilands, commonly called Lord St. John, because he was chief in Scotland of the religious order of military knights, who went by the name of Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John. This gentleman, who was now venerable for his gray hairs as well as for his valor, sagacity, and correct morals, had long been a sincere friend to the reformed cause, and had contributed to its preservation in that part of the country. In 1548, he had presented to the parsonage of Calder, John Spottiswood, afterwards the reformed superintendent of Lothian, who had imbibed the Protestant doctrines from Archbishop Cranmer in England, and who instilled them into the minds of his parishioners, and of the nobility and gentry that frequented the house of his patron. Among those who attended Knox’s sermons at Calder were three young noblemen, who made a great figure in the public transactions which followed—Archibald Lord Lorn, who, succeeding to the earldom of Argyle at the most critical period of the Reformation, promoted, with all the ardor of youthful zeal, that cause which his father had espoused in extreme old age; John Lord Erskine, afterwards Earl of Mar, who commanded the important fortress of Edinburgh Castle during the civil war which ensued between the queen regent and the Protestants, and died Regent of Scotland; and Lord James Stewart, an illegitimate son of James V who was subsequently created Earl of Murray, and was the first regent of the kingdom during the minority of James VI. Being designed for the Church, the last named nobleman had been in his youth made prior of St. Andrews—a title by which he is often mentioned in history—but, on arriving at manhood, he discovered no inclination to follow the clerical profession. He was at this time in the twenty-second year of his age; and although he had lived for the most part in retirement from the court, had already given proofs of those superior talents which he had soon a more favorable opportunity of displaying. Knox had formerly met with him in London, and his sagacity led him, even at that time, to form the highest expectations
from the talents and spirit of the youthful prior. The three noblemen were much gratified with Knox’s doctrine, and his exhortations made an impression upon their minds, which remained during the succeeding part of their lives.

On the back of a picture of our Reformer, which hangs in one of the rooms of Lord Torphichen’s house at Calder, is this inscription: "The Rev. John Knox. The first sacrament of the supper given in Scotland after the Reformation was dispensed in this hall."

In the beginning of the year 1556, he was conducted by Lockhart of Bar, and Campbell of Kineanacleugh, to Kyle, the ancient receptacle of the Scottish Lollards, where there were a number of adherents to the reformed doctrine. He preached in the houses of Bar, Kineanacleugh, Carnell, Ochiltree, and Gadgirth, and in the town of Ayr. In several of these places he also dispensed the sacrament of our Lord’s Supper. A little before Easter, he went to Finlayston, the baronial mansion of the noble family of Glencairn. William Earl of Glencarn, having been killed at the battle of Pinkie, had been succeeded by his son Alexander, whose superior learning and ability did not escape the discerning eye of Sir Ralph Sadler during his embassy in Scotland. He was an ardent and steady friend to the reformed religion, and had carefully instructed his family in its principles. In his house, besides preaching, Knox dispensed the sacrament of the supper, the earl himself, his countess, and two of their sons, with a number of their friends and acquaintance, participating of that sacred feast.

From Finlayston he returned to Calder-house, and soon after paid a second visit to Dun, during which he preached more openly than before. At this time the greater part of the gentlemen of Mearns made profession of the reformed religion by sitting down at the Lord’s table, and entered into a solemn and mutual bond, in which they renounced the Popish communion and engaged to maintain and promote the pure preaching of the gospel, as Providence should favor them with opportunities.

This seems to have been the first of those religious bonds or covenants by which the confederation of the Protestants in Scotland was so frequently ratified. Although they have been condemned as unwarranted in a religious point of view, and dangerous in a political, yet are they completely defensible upon the principles both of conscience and policy. A mutual agreement, compact, or covenant is virtually implied in the constitution of every society, civil or religious, and the dictates of natural law conspire with the declarations of revelation in sanctioning the warrantableness and propriety of explicit engagements about any lawful and important matter, and of ratifying these, if circumstances shall require it, by formal subscription and by a solemn appeal to the Searcher of hearts. By strengthening the motives to fidelity and constancy, and thus producing mutual confidence among those who are embarked in the same cause, they have proved eminently beneficial in the reformation of churches and nations and in securing the religious and political
privileges of men. The misapplication of them, when employed in a bad cause and for mischievous ends, can be no argument against their use in a legitimate way, and for laudable purposes. And the reasoning employed to prove that such covenants should not be entered into without the permission of rulers, would lead to the conclusion that subjects ought never to profess a religion to which their superiors are hostile, nor make any attempts to obtain the reform of abuses or the redress of grievances, without the consent and approbation of those who are interested in their support.

The dangers to which Knox and his friends had been accustomed taught them to conduct matters with such secrecy that he had preached for a considerable time, and in different quarters of the country, before the clergy knew that he was in the kingdom. Concealment was, however, impracticable after his audiences became numerous. His preaching at Ayr was reported to the court, and formed the topic of conversation in the presence of the queen regent. Someone in the company having affirmed that the preacher was an Englishman, "a prelate, not of the least pride, said, ‘Nay; no Englishman, but it is Knox, that knave.’" This was Beatoun, Archbishop of Glasgow. "It was my lord’s pleasure," says Knox, "so to baptize a poor man, the reason whereof, if it should be required, his rochet and mitre must stand for authority. What further liberty he used in defining things alike uncertain to him, to wit, of my learning and doctrine, at this present I omit. For what hath my life and conversation been, since it hath pleased God to call me from the puddle of papistry, let my very enemies speak; and what learning I have, they may prove when they please." Interest was at this time made by the bishops for his apprehension, but without success.

After his last journey to Angus, the friars flocked from all quarters to the bishops, and instigated them to adopt speedy and decisive measures for checking the alarming effects of his preaching. In consequence of this, he was summoned to appear before a convention of the clergy, in the Church of the Blackfriars at Edinburgh, on the fifteenth of May. This diet he resolved to keep, and with that view came to Edinburgh before the day appointed, accompanied by Erskine of Dun and several other gentlemen. The clergy had never dreamed of his attendance. Being apprised of his determination, and afraid to bring matters to extremity, while unassured of the regent’s decided support, they met beforehand, set aside the summons under pretence of some informality, and deserted the diet against him. On the day on which he should have appeared as a culprit, Knox preached in the Bishop of Dunkeld’s large lodging, to a far greater audience than had before attended him in Edinburgh. During the ten following days, he preached in the same place, forenoon and afternoon, none of the clergy making the smallest attempt to disturb him. It was in the midst of these labors that he wrote the following hasty lines to Mrs. Bowes.

"Belovit mother, with my maist hartlie commendation in the Lord Jesus, albeit I was fullie purposit to have visitit yow before this tyme, yet hath God laid impedimentis, whilk I cold not avoyd. They are suche as I dout not ar to his glorie, and to the comfort of many heir. The trumpet blew the ald sound thrie
dayis together, till privat houssis of indifferent largenes culd not conteane the voce of it. God, for Christ his Sonis sake, grant me to be myndful, that the sobbis of my hart hath not been in vane, nor neglectit in the presence of his Majestie. O! sweet war the death that suld follow sic fourtie dayis in Edinburgh, as heir I have had thrie. Rejose, mother; the tyme of our deliverance approacheth: for, as Sathan rageth, sa dois the grace of the Halie Spreit abound, and daylie geveth new testemonyis of the everlasting love ofoure merciful Father. I can wryt na mair to you at this present. The grace of the Lord Jesus rest with you. In haste—this Monunday—youre sone, John Knox.”

About this time, the Earl Marischal was induced to attend an evening exhortation delivered by Knox. He was so much pleased with the discourse, that he joined with Glencairn in urging the preacher to write a letter to the queen regent, which, they thought, might have the effect of inclining her to protect the reformed preachers, if not also to lend a favorable ear to their doctrine. With this request he was induced to comply.

As a specimen of the manner in which this letter was written, I shall give the following quotation, in the original language: “I dout not, that the rumouris, whilk haif cumin to your grace’s earis of me, haif bene such, that (yf all reportis wer trew) I wer unworthie to live in the earth. And wonder it is, that the votes of the multitude suld not so have inflamed your grace’s hart with just hatred of such a one as I am accuseit to be, that all acces to pitie suld have been schute up. I am traducit as ane heretick, accusit as a false teacher and seducer of the pepill, besides other opprobries, whilk (affirmit by men of warldlie honour and estimation) may easelie kendill the wrath of majestratis, whair innocencie is not knawin. But blissit be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Chryst, who, by the dew of his heavenly grace, hath so quenchit the fyre of displeasure as yit in your grace’s hart (whilk of lait dayis I have understood), that Sathan is frustrat of his interpryse and purpois. Whilk is to my heart no small comfort; not so muche (God is witness) for any benefit that I can resave in this miserable lyfe, by protectioun of any earthlie creature (for the cupe whilk it behoveth me to drink is apoyntit by the wisdome of him whois consallis ar not changeable), as that I am for that benefit whilk I am assurit your grace sall resave, yf that ye continew in like moderation and clemencie towards utheris that maist unjustlie ar and sall be accusit, as that your grace hath begun towardis me and my most desperate cause.” An orator (he continued) might justly require of her grace a motherly pity towards her subjects, the execution of justice upon murderers and oppressors, a heart free from avarice and partiality, a mind studious of the public welfare, with other virtues which heathen as well as inspired writers required of rulers. But, in his opinion, it was vain to crave reformation of manners when religion was so much corrupted. He could not propose, in the present letter, to lay open the sources, progress, and extent of those errors and corruptions which had overspread and inundated the Church, but, if her majesty would grant him opportunity and liberty of speech, he was ready to undertake this task. In the meantime, he could not refrain from calling her attention to this important subject, and pointing out to her the fallacy of some general prejudices, by which she was in danger of being
deluded. She ought to beware of thinking that the care of religion did not
belong to magistrates, but was devolved wholly on the clergy; that it was a
thing incredible that religion should be so universally depraved; or that true
religion was to be judged of by the majority of voices, by custom, by the laws
and determinations of men, or by anything but the infallible dictates of
inspired Scripture. He knew that innovations in religion were deemed
hazardous, but the urgent necessity and immense magnitude of the object
ought, in the present case, to swallow up the fear danger. He was aware that a
public reformation might be thought to exceed her authority as a regent; but
she could not be bound to maintain idolatry and manifest abuses, nor to suffer
the clergy to murder innocent men, merely because they worshipped God
according to his word.

Though Knox’s pen was not the most smooth nor delicate, and though he often
irritated by the plainness and severity of his language, the letter to the queen
regent is very far from being uncourtly or inelegant. It seems to have been
written with great care, and in point of style may be compared with any
composition of that period, for simplicity and forcible expression. Its strain was
well calculated for stimulating the inquiries, and confirming the resolutions, of
one who was impressed with a conviction of the reigning evils of the Church, or
who, though not resolved in judgment as to the matters in controversy, was
determined to preserve moderation between the contending parties.

Notwithstanding her imposing manners, the regent was not a person of this
derivation. The Earl of Glencairn delivered the letter into her hand; she
 glanced over it with a careless air, and gave it to the Archbishop of Glasgow,
saying, “Please you, my lord, to read a pasquil.” The report of this induced
Knox, after he retired from Scotland, to publish the letter, with additions. The
style of the additions is more spirited and sharp than that of the original letter,
but there is nothing even in them which is indecorous, or which will warrant
the charge which has been brought against him of being accustomed to treat
crowned heads with irreverence and disrespect. "As charitie," says he,
“persuadeth me to interpret thinges doubtfully spoken in the best sence, so my
dutie to God (who hath commanded me to flatter no prince in the earth)
compelleth me to say, that if no more ye esteme the admonition of God nor
the cardinalies do the scoffing of pasquilles; then he shall schortly send you
messagers, with whom ye shall not be able on that maner to jest. I did not
speak unto you, madame, by my former lettre, neither yet do I now, as
Pasquillus doth to the pope, in behalf of such as dare not utter their names;
but I come, in the name of Jesus Christ, affirming that the religion which ye
maintain is damnable idolatrie: the which I offre myselfe to prove by the most
evident testimonies of Goddis Scriptures. And, in this quarrelle, I present
myself againste all the Papistes within the realme, desireing none other armore
but Goddis holie word, and the libertie of my tonge."

While he was thus employed in Scotland, he received letters from the English
congregation at Geneva, stating that they had made choice of him as one of
their pastors, and urging him to come and take the inspection of them. He
judged it his duty to comply with this invitation and began immediately to
prepare for the journey. His wife and mother-in-law had by this time joined him at Edinburgh, and Mrs. Bowes, being now a widow, resolved to accompany Mrs. Knox and her husband to Geneva. Having sent them before him in a vessel to Dieppe, Knox again visited and took his leave of the brethren in the different places where he had preached. He was conducted, by his friend Campbell of Kineancleugh, to the Earl of Argyle, and preached for some days at his seat of Castle Campbell. That aged nobleman appears to have received durable impressions from the instructions of the Reformer. He resisted all the arts which the clergy afterwards employed to detach him from the Protestant interest, and on his deathbed laid a solemn charge upon his son to use his utmost influence for its preservation and advancement. Argyle, and Glenorchy, who was also a hearer of Knox, endeavored to detain him in Scotland, but without success. "If God so blessed their small beginnings," he said, "that they continued in godliness, whencesoever they pleased to command him, they should find him obedient. But once he must needs visit that little flock, which the wickedness of men had compelled him to leave." Accordingly, in the month of July 1556, he left Scotland, and having joined his family at Dieppe, proceeded along with them to Geneva.

No sooner did the clergy understand that he had quitted the kingdom, than they, in a dastardly manner, renewed the summons against him which they had deserted during his presence, and, upon his failing to appear, passed sentence against him, adjudging his body to the flames, and his soul to damnation. As his person was out of their reach, they caused his effigy to be ignominiously burned at the cross of Edinburgh. Against this sentence he drew up his Appellation, which he afterwards published, with a supplication and exhortation, directed to the nobility and commonalty of Scotland. It may not be improper here to subjoin the summary which he gave in this treatise of the doctrine taught by him during his late visit to Scotland, which the clergy pronounced so execrable, and deserving of such horrible punishment. He taught that there is no other name by which men can be saved but that of Jesus, and that reliance on the merits of others is vain and delusive; that the Savior having by his one sacrifice sanctified and reconciled to God those who should inherit the promised kingdom, all other sacrifices which men pretend to offer for sin are blasphemous; that all men ought to hate sin, which is so odious before God that no sacrifice but the death of his Son could satisfy for it; that they ought to magnify their heavenly Father, who did not spare him who is the substance of his glory, but gave him up to suffer the ignominious and cruel death of the cross for us; and that those who have been washed from their former sins are bound to lead a new life, fighting against the lusts of the flesh, and studying to glorify God by good works. In conformity with the certification of his Master, that he would deny and be ashamed of those who should deny and be ashamed of him and his words before a wicked generation; he further taught that it is incumbent on those who hope for life everlasting to make an open profession of the doctrine of Christ, and to avoid idolatry, superstition, vain religion, and, in one word, every way of worship which is destitute of authority from the word of God. This doctrine he did believe so conformable to
God’s holy Scriptures that he thought no creature could have been so impudent as to deny any point or article of it; yet had the false bishops and ungodly clergy condemned him as a heretic, and his doctrine as heretical, and pronounced against him the sentence of death, in testimony of which they had burnt his effigy, from which sentence he appealed to a lawful and general council, to be held agreeably to ancient laws and canons, humbly requesting the nobility and commons of Scotland to take him and others who were accused and persecuted under their protection, until such time as these controversies were decided, and to regard this his plain Appellation of no less effect than if it had been made with the accustomed solemnity and ceremonies.

The late visit of our Reformer was of vast consequence. By his labors on this occasion, he laid the foundations of that noble edifice which he was afterwards so instrumental in completing. The friends of the Protestant doctrine were separated from the corrupt communion to which, in a certain degree, they had hitherto adhered; their information in scriptural truth was greatly improved; and they were brought together in different parts of the nation, and prepared for being organized into a regular church, as soon as Providence should grant them external liberty, and furnish them with persons qualified for acting as overseers. Some may be apt to blame him for abandoning with too great precipitation the undertaking which he had so auspiciously begun. But, without pretending to ascertain the train of reflections which occurred to his mind, we may trace, in his determination, the wise arrangements of that Providence which watched over the infant Reformation and guided the steps of the Reformer. His absence was now no less conducive to the preservation of the cause, than his presence and personal labors had lately been to its advancement. Matters were not yet ripened for a general reformation in Scotland, and the clergy would never have suffered so zealous and able a champion of the new doctrines to live in the country. By retiring at this time, he not only preserved his own life, and reserved his labors to a more fit opportunity, but he also averted the storm of persecution from the heads of his brethren. Deprived of teachers, they became objects of less jealousy to their adversaries, while in their private meetings, they continued to confirm one another in the doctrine which they had received, and the seed lately sown had sufficient time to take root and spread.

Before he took his departure, Knox gave his brethren such directions as he judged most necessary and most useful to them in their present circumstances. Not satisfied with communicating these orally, he committed them to writing in a common letter, which he either left behind him or sent from Dieppe, to be circulated in the different quarters where he had preached. In this letter, he warmly recommends to everyone the frequent and careful perusal of the Scriptures. He inculcates the duty of attending to religious instruction and worship in each family. He exhorts the brethren to meet together once every week, if practicable, and gives them directions for conducting their assemblies in the manner best adapted for their mutual improvement while destitute of public teachers. They ought to begin with confession of sins and invocation of the divine blessing. A portion of the Scriptures should then be read, and they
would find it of great advantage to observe a regular course in their reading, and to join a chapter of the Old and of the New Testament together. After the reading of the Scriptures, if an exhortation, interpretation, or doubt occurred to any brother, he might speak, but he ought to do it with modesty, and a desire to edify or to be edified, carefully avoiding "multiplication of words, perplexed interpretation, and willfulness in reasoning." If, in the course of reading or conference, they met with any difficulties which they could not solve, he advised them to commit these to writing, before they separated, that they might submit them to the judgment of the learned, and he signified his own readiness to give them his advice, by letter, whenever it should be required. Their assemblies ought always to be closed, as well as opened, by prayer. There is every reason to conclude that these directions were punctually complied with; this letter may therefore be viewed as an important document regarding the state of the Protestant Church in Scotland previous to the establishment of the Reformation, and shall be inserted at large in the notes. Among his subsequent letters are answers to questions which his countrymen had transmitted to him for advice. The questions are such as might be supposed to arise in the minds of pious persons lately made acquainted with Scripture, puzzled with particular expressions, and at a loss how to apply some of its directions to their situation. They discover an inquisitive and conscientious disposition, and at the same time, illustrate the disadvantages under which ordinary Christians labor when deprived of the assistance of learned teachers. Our Reformer’s answers display an intimate acquaintance with Scripture, and dexterity in expounding it, with prudence in giving advice in cases of conscience, so as not to encourage a dangerous laxity on the one hand, or scrupulosiity and excessive rigidness on the other.

CHAPTER V

From the year 1556 when he returned to Geneva, after visiting Scotland, to May 1559, when he returned to Scotland for the last time.

Knox reached Geneva before the end of harvest, and took upon him the charge of the English congregation there, among whom he labored during the two following years. This short period was the most quiet of his life. In the bosom of his own family, he experienced that soothing care to which he had hitherto been a stranger, and which his frequent bodily ailments now required. Two sons were born to him in Geneva. The greatest affection to him, and cordiality among themselves, subsisted in the small flock under his charge. With his colleague, Christopher Goodman, he lived as a brother; and he was happy in the friendship of Calvin and the other pastors of Geneva. So much was he pleased with the purity of religion established in that city that he warmly recommended it to his religious acquaintances in England, as the best Christian asylum to which they could flee. "In my heart," says he, in a letter to his friend Mr. Locke, "I could have wished, yea, and cannot cease to wish, that it might please God to guide and conduct me to this place, where, I neither fear nor eshame to say, the most perfect school of
Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the apostles. In other places I confess Christ to be truly preached, but manners and religion to be to sincerely reformed, I have not yet seen in any other place beside." But neither the enjoyment of personal accommodations, nor the pleasures of literary society, nor the endearments of domestic happiness could subdue Knox’s ruling passion, or unfit his determination to revisit Scotland, as soon as an opportunity should offer, for advancing the Reformation among his countrymen. In a letter written to some of his friends in Edinburgh, March 16, 1557, he expresses himself in the following manner: "My own motion and daily prayer is, not only that I may visit you, but also that with joy I may end my battle among you. And assure yourself of this, that whenever a greater number among you shall call upon me than now hath bound me to serve them, by his grace it shall not be the fear of punishment, neither yet of the death temporal, that shall impede my coming to you." A certain heroic confidence, and assurance of ultimate success, have often been displayed by those whom Providence has raised up to achieve great revolutions in the world, by which they have been borne up under discouragements which would have overwhelmed men of ordinary spirits and emboldened to face dangers from which others would have shrunken appalled. Knox possessed no inconsiderable portion of that enthusiastic heroism which was so conspicuous in the German reformer. "Satan, I confess, rageth," says he, in a letter written at this time, "but potent is He that promiseth to be with us, in all such enterprises as we take in hand at his commandment, for the glory of his name, and for maintenance of his true religion. And therefore the less fear we any contrary power; yea, in the boldness of our God, we altogether contemn them, be they kings, emperors, men, angels, or devils. For they shall be never able to prevail against the simple truth of God which we openly profess; by the permission of God they may appear to prevail against our bodies, but our cause shall triumph in despite of Satan."

Soon after the above letter had been written, two citizens of Edinburgh, James Syme and James Barron, arrived at Geneva with a letter and credentials from the Earl of Glencairn, and Lords Lorn, Erskine, and James Stewart, informing him that the professors of the reformed doctrine remained steadfast; that its adversaries were daily losing credit in the nation; and that those who possessed the supreme authority, although they had not yet declared themselves friendly to it, continued to refrain from persecution; and inviting him, in their own name, and in that of their brethren, to return to Scotland, where he would find them all ready to receive him, and to spend their lives and fortunes in advancing the cause which they had espoused.

Knox, at the same time that he laid this letter before his congregation, craved the advice of Calvin and the other ministers of Geneva. They gave it as their opinion, "that he could not refuse the call without shewing
himself rebellious to God, and unmerciful to his country." His congregation agreed to sacrifice their particular interest to the greater good of the Church, and his own family silently acquiesced. Upon this, he returned an answer to the letter of the nobility, signifying that he meant to visit them with all reasonable expedition. The congregation chose as his successor William Whittingham, a learned Englishman, with whom he had been long united by the ties of friendship and congeniality of sentiment. Having settled his other affairs, he took an affectionate leave of his friends at Geneva, and went to Dieppe in the month of October. But on his arrival there, he received letters from Scotland, written in a very different strain from the former. By these he was informed that new consultations had been held among the Protestants in that country, that some of them began to repent of the invitation which they had given him to return, and that greater part seemed irresolute and faint-hearted.

This intelligence exceedingly disconcerted and embarrassed him. He instantly dispatched a letter to the nobility who had invited him, upbraiding them for their timidity and inconstancy. The information which he had just received, had, he said, confounded him, and pierced his heart with sorrow. After taking advice of the most learned and godly in Europe, to satisfy his own conscience and theirs as to the propriety of this enterprise, the abandonment of it must reflect disgrace either on him or them—it argued either that he had been marvelously forward and vain, or that they had betrayed great imprudence and want of judgment in the invitation which they had given. To some it might appear a small matter that he had left his poor family destitute of a head, and committed the care of his little but dearly-beloved flock to another; but, for his part, he could not name the sum that would induce him to go through that scene a second time, and to behold so many grave men weeping at his departure. What answer could he give to whose who inquired why he did not prosecute his journey? He could take God to witness, that the personal inconveniences to which he had been subjected, and the mortification which he felt at the disappointment, were not the chief causes of his grief. He was alarmed at the awful consequences which would ensue—at the bondage and misery, spiritual and temporal, which they would entail on themselves and their children, their subjects and their posterity, if they neglected the present opportunity of introducing the gospel into their native country. In his conscience, he could exempt none that bore the name of nobility in Scotland from blame in this affair. His words might perhaps appear sharp and indiscreet, but charity would construe them in the best sense, and wise men would consider that a true friend cannot flatter, especially in a matter which involves the salvation of the bodies and souls, not of a few persons, but of a whole realm. "What are the sobs, and what is the affliction, of my troubled heart, God shall one day declare. But this will I
add to my former rigor and severity, to wit, if any persuade you, for fear or dangers to follow, to faint in your former purpose, be he esteemed never so wise and friendly, let him be judged of you both foolish and your mortal enemy. I am not ignorant that fearful troubles shall ensue your enterprise, as in my former letters I did signify unto you. But, O! joyful and comfortable are those troubles and adversities which man sustaineth for accomplishment of God’s will revealed in his word. For how terrible soever they appear to the judgment of natural men, yet they are never able to devour nor utterly to consume the sufferers, for the invisible and invincible power of God sustaineth and preserveth, according to his promise, all such as with simplicity do obey him. No less cause have ye to enter in your former enterprise, than Moses had to go to the presence of Pharaoh; for your subjects, yea, your brethren are oppressed, their bodies and souls holden in bondage; and God speaketh to your consciences (unless ye be dead with the blind world), that ye ought to hazard your own lives, be it against kings or emperors, for their deliverance. For only for that cause are ye called princes of the people, and receive honor, tribute, and homage at God’s commandment, not by reason of your birth and progeny (as the most part of men falsely do suppose), but by reason of your office and duty, which is to vindicate and deliver your subjects and brethren from all violence and oppression, to the uttermost of your power.

Having sent off this letter, with others written in the same strain, to Erskine of Dun, Wishart of Pitterow, and some other gentlemen of his acquaintance, he cherished the hope that he would soon receive more favorable accounts from Scotland, and resolved in the meantime to remain in France. The reformed doctrine had been early introduced into that kingdom; it had been copiously watered with the blood of martyrs; and all the violence which had been employed by its enemies had not been able to extirpate it, or to prevent its spreading among all ranks. The Parisian Protestants were at present smarting under the effects of one of those massacres, which so often disgraced the Roman Catholic religion in that country, before as well as after the commencement of the civil wars. Not satisfied with assaulting them when peaceably assembled for worship in a private house and treating them with great barbarity, their adversaries, in imitation of their pagan predecessors, invented the most diabolical calumnies against them and circulated the report that they were guilty of abominable practices in their religious assemblies. The innocent sufferers had drawn up an apology, in which they vindicated themselves from the atrocious charge, and Knox, having got this translated into English, wrote a preface and additions to it, with the intention of publishing it for the use of his countrymen.

Having formed an acquaintance with many of the Protestants of France, and being able to speak their language, he occasionally preached to them in passing through the country. It seems to have been on this occasion
that he preached in the city of Rochelle, and having alluded to his native country in the course of his sermon, told his audience that he expected within a few years, to preach in the Church of St. Giles, in Edinburgh. It does not appear that there were any Protestants in Dieppe when Knox first visited it. But he had now the satisfaction of officiating in a reformed church, recently planted in that town. In the course of the year 1557, a traveling merchant from Geneva, named John Venable, had come to Dieppe, and by his conversation and the circulation of books, imparted the knowledge of the Protestant doctrine to some of the inhabitants. At his request, they were visited by Delajonché, pastor at Rouen, who applied to the ministers of Geneva to furnish them with a preacher. They sent André de Sequeran, sieur d’Amont, who, having removed in the course of a few months, was succeeded by Delaporte, one of the pastors of the Church of Rouen. Knox, having come to Dieppe at this time, was chosen colleague to Delaporte, and under their ministry the Reformation was embraced by some of the principal persons of the town, and amongst the rest by M. de Bagueville, a descendant of Charles Martel. A surprising change was soon observed on the morals of the inhabitants, which had formerly been very dissolute, and the church at Dieppe continued long in a flourishing condition.

Being disappointed in his expectation of letters from Scotland, Knox determined to relinquish his journey and return to Geneva. This resolution does not accord with the usual firmness of our Reformer, and is not sufficiently accounted for in the common histories. The Protestant nobles had not retracted their invitation; the discouraging letters which he had received were written by individuals without any authority from the rest, and if their zeal and courage had begun to flag, his presence was the more necessary to recruit them. From the letters which he wrote to his familiar acquaintance, I am enabled to state the motives by which he was actuated in making this retrograde step. He was perfectly aware that a violent struggle must precede the establishment of the reformation in his native country; he knew that his presence in Scotland would excite the rage of the clergy, who would make every effort to crush their adversaries, and to maintain the lucrative system of superstition; and he dreaded that civil discord and tumult and bloodshed would ensue. The prospect of these things rushed into his mind, and, regardless of public tranquility as some have pronounced him to be, staggered his resolution to prosecute an undertaking, which, in his judgment, was not only lawful, but laudable and necessary. "When," says he, "I heard such troubles as appeared in that realm, I began to dispute with myself as followeth: Shall Christ, the author of peace, concord, and quietness, be preached where war is proclaimed, sedition engendered, and tumults appear to rise? Shall not his evangel be accused as the cause of all this calamity which is like to follow? What comfort canst thou have to see the one half of the people rise up against the other, yea, to jeopard the one to
murder and destroy the her? But, above all, what joy shall it be to thy heart, to behold with thy eyes thy native country betrayed into the hands of strangers, which, to no man’s judgment, can be avoided; because, that those who ought to defend it, and the liberty thereof, are so blind, dull, and obstinate, that they will not see their own destruction." To "these and more deep cogitations," which continued to distract his mind for several months after he returned to Geneva, he principally imputed his abandonment of the journey to Scotland. At the same time, he was convinced that they were not sufficient to justify his desisting from an undertaking recommended by so many powerful considerations. "But, alas!" says he, "as the wounded man be never so expert in physic or surgery, cannot suddenly mitigate his own pain and dolour, no more can I the fear and grief of my heart, although I am not ignorant of what is to be done. It may also be that the doubts and cold writing of some brethren did augment my dolour, and somewhat discourage me that before was more nor feeble. But nothing do I so much accuse as myself." Whatever were the secondary causes of this, I cannot help again directing the reader’s attention to the wisdom of Providence, in throwing impediments in his way, by which his return to Scotland was protracted to a period, before which it might have been injurious, and at which it was calculated to be in the highest degree beneficial, to the great cause that he meant to promote.

In judging of Knox’s influence in advancing the Reformation, we must take into view not only his personal labors, but also the epistolary correspondence which he maintained with his countrymen. By this he instructed them in his absence, communicated his own advice and that of the learned among whom he resided upon every difficult case which occurred, and animated them to constancy and perseverance. During his residence at Dieppe, he transmitted to Scotland two long letters, which deserve particular notice. The one, dated on the first of December, is directed to the Protestants in general; the other, dated on the seventeenth of that month, is addressed to the nobility. In both of them he prudently avoids any reference to his late disappointment. In the first letter he strongly inculcates purity of morals, and warns all who professed the reformed religion against those irregularities of life which were employed to the disparagement of their cause by two classes of persons—by the Papists, who, although the same vices prevailed in a far higher degree among themselves, represented them as the native fruits of the reformed doctrine, and by a new sect, who were enemies to superstition, but who had deserted the reformed communion, and were become scarcely less hostile to it than the Papists. The principal design of this letter was to put his countrymen on their guard against the arts of this last class of persons, and to expose their leading errors. The persons to whom he referred went under the general name of Anabaptists, a sect which sprung up soon after the commencement of
the Reformation under Luther, and, breaking out into the greatest excesses, produced violent commotions in different parts of Germany. Being suppressed in the place of its birth, it spread through other countries, and secretly made converts by high pretensions to seriousness and Christian simplicity, the spirit of wild fanaticism, which at first characterized its disciples gradually subsiding after its first effervescence. Extravagancies of a similar kind have not unfrequently accompanied great revolutions; when the minds of men, released from the fetters of implicit obedience and dazzled by a sudden illumination, have been disposed to fly to the extreme of anarchy and turbulence. Nothing proved more vexatious to the original reformers than this. It was urged by the defenders of the old system as a popular argument against all change. The extravagant opinions and disorderly practices of the new sect, though disowned and opposed by all sober Protestants, were artfully imputed to them by their adversaries. And many, who had declared themselves friendly to reform, alarmed, or pretending to be alarmed, at this hideous specter, drew back, and sheltered themselves within the sacred pale of that Church, which, notwithstanding her notorious dissensions, errors, and corruption, both in head and members, continued to arrogate to herself exclusively the properties of unity, universality, and perpetual infallibility.

The radical error of this sect, according to the more improved system held by them at the time of which I write, was a fond conceit of a certain ideal spirituality and perfection, by which they considered the Christian Church to be essentially distinguished from the Jewish, which was, in their opinion, a mere carnal, secular society. Entertaining this notion, they were naturally led to abridge the rule of faith and manners, by confining themselves almost entirely to the New Testament, and to adopt their other opinions concerning the unlawfulness of infant baptism, of civil magistracy, national churches, oaths, and defensive war. But besides these tenets, the Anabaptists were, at this Period, generally infected with the Pelagian heresy, and united with the Papists in loading the doctrines which the reformers held respecting predestination and grace with the most odious charges.

Our Reformer had occasion to meet with some of these sectaries both in England and on the Continent, and had ascertained their extravagant and dangerous principles. In the year 1553, one of them came to his lodging in London, and, after requiring secrecy, gave him a book, written by one of the party, which he pressed him to read. It contained the following proposition: "God made not the world, nor the wicked creatures in it, but these were made by the devil, who is therefore called the god of this world." He immediately warned the man against such gross doctrine, and began to explain to him the sense in which the devil is called "the god of this world" in Scripture. "Tush for your written word!" replied the enthusiast, "we have as good and as sure a word and verity that teacheth
us this doctrine, as ye have for you and your opinion." Having apprised
that persons who had imbibed these opinions were creeping into
Scotland, Knox was afraid that they might odiously instill their poison
into the minds of some of his brethren. He refuted their opinion
respecting church communion by showing that they required a purity
which had never been found in the Church, either before or since the
completion of the canon of Scripture. In opposition to their Pelagian
tenets, he gave the following statement of his sentiments: "If there be any
thing which God did not predestinate or appoint, then lacked he wisdom
and free regimen; or, if any thing was ever done, or yet after shall be
done, in heaven or in earth, which he might not have impeded (if so had
been his godly pleasure), then he is not omnipotent; which three
properties, to wit, wisdom, free regimen, and power, denied to be in God,
I pray you what rests m his Godhead? The wisdom of our God we
acknowledge to be such, that it compelleth the very malice of Satan, and
the horrible iniquity of such as be drowned in sin, to serve to his glory,
and to the profit of his elect. His power we believe and confess to be
infinite, and such as no creature in heaven or earth is able to resist. And
his regimen we acknowledge to be so free that none of his creatures dare
present them in judgment, to reason or demand the question, why hast
thou done this or that? But the fountain of this their damnable error
(which is, that in God they can acknowledge no justice except that which
their foolish brain is able to comprehend), at more opportunity, God
willing, we shall entreat."
He assigns his reasons for warning them so particularly against the
seduction of these erroneous teachers. Under the cloak of mortification
and the color of a godly life, they "supplanted the dignity of Christ," and
"were become enemies to free justification by faith in his blood." The
malice of Papists was now visible to all the world; the hypocrisy of
mercenary teachers and ungodly professors would soon discover itself;
and seldom had open tyranny been able to suppress the true religion
when it had once been earnestly embraced by the body of any nation or
province. "But deceivable and false doctrine is a poison and venom,
which, once drunken and received, with great difficulty can afterwards be
purged." Accordingly, he charged them to "try the spirits" which came to
them, and to suffer no man to take the office of preacher upon him of his
own accord, and without trial, or to assemble the people in secret
meetings, else Satan would soon have his emissaries among them, who
would "destroy the plantation of our heavenly Father." His admonitions,
on this head, were not without effect, and the Protestants of Scotland,
instead of being distracted with those opinions, remained united in their
views, as to doctrine, worship, and discipline.
His letter to the Protestant lords breathes an ardent and elevated spirit.
Its object was to purify their minds from selfish and worldly principles—
to raise, sanctify, and christianize their views, by exhibiting and
recommending to them the examples of those great and good men whose
caracters were delineated, and whose deeds were recorded, in the
sacred annals. The glory of God, the advancement of the kingdom of
Jesus Christ, the salvation of themselves and their brethren, the
emancipation of their country from spiritual and political bondage—
these, and not their own honor and aggrandizement, or the revenging of
their petty private feuds, were the objects which they ought to keep
steadily and solely in view.

In this letter, he also communicates his advice on the delicate question of
resistance to supreme rulers. They had consulted him on this subject
and had submitted it to the judgment of the most learned men on the
Continent. Soon after they had agreed to the marriage of their young
queen to the dauphin of France, the Scots began to be jealous of the
designs of the French court against their liberties and independence.
Their jealousies increased after the regency was transferred to the queen
dowager, who was wholly devoted to the interest of France, and had
contrived, under different pretexts, to keep a body of French troops in
the kingdom. It was not difficult to excite to resistance the independent
and haughty barons of Scotland, accustomed to yield a very limited and
precarious science even to their native princes. They had lately given
proof of this by their refusal to co-operate in the war against England,
which they considered as undertaken merely for French interests. And,
encouraged by this circumstance, the Duke of Chastelherault had begun,
under the direction of his brother, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, to
intrigue for regaining the authority which he had reluctantly resigned.

Our Reformer displayed his moderation and the soundness of his
principles by the advice which he gave at this critical period. He did not
attempt to inflame the irascible minds of nobility by aggravating the mal-
administration of the queen regent; far less did he advise them to join
with the duke and others who were discontented with the government,
and to endeavor in this way to advance their cause. Instead of this, he
informed them that it was currently reported on the Continent that a
rebellion was intended in Scotland, and he solemnly charged all the
professors of the Protestant religion to avoid accession to it, and to
beware of countenancing those who sought to promote their private and
worldly ends by disturbing the government. "He did not mean," he said,
"to retract the principle which he had advanced in former letters, nor to
deny the lawfulness of inferior magistrates, and the body of a nation,
resisting the tyrannical measures of supreme rulers." He still held, that
there was "a great difference between lawful obedience, and a fearful
flattering of princes, or an unjust accomplishment of their desires, in
things which be required or devised for the destruction of a
commonwealth." The nobility were the hereditary guardians of the
national liberties, and there were limits beyond which obedience was not
due by subjects. But recourse ought not to be had to resistance, except
when matters were tyrannically driven to an extreme. And it was peculiarly incumbent on the Protestants of Scotland to be circumspect in all their proceedings, that they might give their adversaries no reason to allege that seditious and rebellious designs were concealed under the cloak of zeal for reforming religion. His advice and solemn charge to them therefore was, that they should continue to yield cheerful obedience to all the lawful commands of the regent, and endeavor, by humble and repeated requests, to procure her favor, and to prevail upon her, if not to promote their cause, at least to protect them from persecution. If she refused to take any steps for reforming religion, it was their duty to provide that the gospel should be preached, and the sacraments administered in purity to themselves and their brethren. If, while they were endeavoring peaceably to accomplish this, attempts should be made to crush them by violence, he did not think, considering the station which they occupied, that they were bound to look on and see their innocent brethren murdered. On the contrary, it was lawful for them, nay, it was their incumbent duty, to stand up in their defense. But even in this case they ought to protest their readiness to obey the regent in everything consistent with their fidelity to God, and to avoid all association with the ambitious, the factious, and the turbulent. This is a specimen of the correspondence which Knox maintained with the Protestant nobility, by which he enlightened their views, aroused their zeal, and restrained their impetuosity, at this important juncture. I shall afterwards have occasion to call the attention of the reader more particularly to his political principles.

Knox returned to Geneva in the beginning of the year 1558. During that year, he was engaged, along with several learned men of his congregation, in making a new translation of the Bible into English; which, from the place where it was composed and first printed, has obtained the name of the Geneva Bible. It was at this time also that he published his Letter to the Queen Regent, and his Appellation and Exhortation, both of which were transmitted to Scotland, and contributed not a little to the spread of the reformed opinions. I have already given an account of the first of these tracts, which was chiefly intended for removing the prejudices of Roman Catholics. The last was more immediately designed for instructing and animating the friends of the reformed religion. Addressing himself to the ability and estates of the kingdom, he shows that the care and reformation of religion belonged to them as civil rulers, and constituted one of the primary duties of their office. This was a dictate of nature as well as revelation, and he would not insist on it, lest he should seem to suppose them "lesse careful over God’s true religion, than were the ethnicks [heathen] over their idolatrie." inferior magistrates, within the sphere of their jurisdiction, the nobles and estates of a kingdom, as well as kings and princes, here bound to attend to this high duty. He then addresses himself to the commonalty of
Scotland, and points out their duty and interest, with regard to the important controversy in agitation. They were rational creatures, formed after the image of God; they had souls to be saved; they were accountable for their conduct; they were bound to judge of the truth of religion, and to make profession of it, as well as kings, nobles, or bishops. If idolatry was maintained, if the gospel was suppressed, if the blood of the innocent was shed, and if, in these circumstances, they kept silence, and did not exert themselves to prevent such evils, how could they vindicate their conduct?

But the most singular treatise published this year by Knox, and that which made the greatest noise, was, "The first Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women," in which he attacked, with great vehemence, the practice of admitting females to the government of nations. There is some reason to think that his mind was struck with the incongruity of this practice as early as Mary’s accession to the throne of England. This was probably one of the points on which he had conferred with the Swiss divines in 1554. That his sentiments respecting it were fixed in 1556, appears from an incidental reference to the subject in one of his familiar letters. Influenced, however, by deference to the opinion of others, he refrained for a considerable time from publishing them to the world. But, at last, provoked by the tyranny of the queen of England, and wearied out with her increasing cruelties, he applied the trumpet to his mouth, and uttered a terrible blast. "To promote a woman to bear rule, superiority, dominion, or empire, above any realm, nation, or city, is repugnant to nature, contumely to God, a thing most contrarious to his revealed will and approved ordinance, and, finally, it is a subversion of all equity and justice." Such is the first sentence and principal proposition of the work. The arguments by which he endeavors to establish it are that nature intended the female sex for subjection, not superiority, to the male, as appears from their infirmities, corporal and mental (excepting always such as God, "by singular privilege, and for certain causes, exempted from the common rank of women"); that the divine law, announced at the creation of the first pair, had expressly assigned to man the dominion over woman, and commanded her to be subject to him; that female government was not permitted among the Jews; that it is contrary to apostolical injunctions; and that it leads to the perversion of government, and other pernicious consequences.

Knox's theory on this subject was not novel. In support of his opinion, he could appeal to the constitutions of the free states of antiquity, and to the authority of their most celebrated legislators and philosophers. In the kingdom of France, females were, by an express law, excluded from succeeding to the crown. Edward VI some time before his death, had proposed to the privy council the adoption of this law in England, but the motion, not suiting the ambitious views of the Duke of Northumberland, was overruled. Though his opinion was sanctioned by such high
authority, Knox was by no means sanguine in his expectations as to the reception of this performance. He tells us in the preface that he laid his account not only with the indignation of those who were interested in the support of the reprobated practice, but also with the disapprobation of such gentle spirits among the learned as would be alarmed at the boldness of the attack. He did not doubt that he would be called "curious, despiteful, a sower of sedition, and one day perchance be attainted for treason," but in uttering a truth of which he was deeply convinced, he was determined to "cover his eyes, and shut his ears" from these dangers and obloquies. He was not mistaken in his anticipations. It exposed him to the resentment of two queens, during whose reign it was his lot live—the one his native princess, and the other exerting a sway Scotland scarcely inferior to that of any of its monarchs. Several of the English exiles approved of his opinion, and few of them would have been displeased at seeing it reduced to practice, at the time that the Blast was published. But Queen Mary dying soon after it appeared, and her sister Elizabeth succeeding her, they raised a great outcry against it. John Fox wrote a letter to the author in which he expostulated with him in a very friendly manner, as to the impropriety of the publication and the severity of its language. Knox, in his reply, did not excuse his "rude vehemencie and inconsidered affirmations, which may appear rather to procead from coler then of zeal and reason," but signified that he was still persuaded of the principal proposition which he had maintained.

His original intention was to blow his trumpet thrice, and to publish his name with the last blast, to prevent the odium from falling on any other person. But finding that it gave offense to many of his brethren, and being desirous to strengthen rather than invalidate the authority of Elizabeth, he relinquished his design of prosecuting the discussion. He retained his sentiments to the last, but abstained from any further declaration of them, and from replying to his opponents, although he was provoked by their censures and triumph, and sometimes hinted in his private letters that he would break silence if they did not study greater moderation.

In the course of the following year, an answer to the Blast appeared under the title of "An Harborowe for Faithful Subjects." Though anonymous, like the book to which it was a reply, it was soon declared to be the production of John Aylmer, one of the English refugees on the Continent, who had been archdeacon of Stowe, and tutor to Lady Jane Grey. It was not undertaken until the accession of Elizabeth, and was written, as Aylmer's biographer informs us, "upon a consultation holden among the exiles, the better to obtain the favor of the new queen, and to take off any jealousy she might conceive of them, and of the religion which they professed." Aylmer himself says, that if the author of the Blast "had not swerved from the particular question to the general," but had confined himself to the queen who filled the throne when he wrote,
"he could have said nothing too much, nor in such wise as to have offended any indifferent man," and he allows with Knox that Mary's government was "unnatural, unreasonable, unjust, and unlawful." From these and some other considerations, Knox was induced to express a suspicion that his opponent had accommodated his doctrine to the times, and courted the favor of the reigning princess by flattering her vanity and love of power. It is certain, that if Knox is entitled to the praise of boldness and disinterestedness, Aylmer carried away the palm for prudence; the latter was advanced to the bishopric of London, the former could not, without great difficulty, obtain leave to set his foot again upon English ground. Knox’s trumpet would never have sounded its alarm, had it not been for the tyranny of Mary, and there is reason to think that Aylmer would never have opened his "Harborowe for Faithful Subjects," but for the auspicious succession of Elizabeth. This, however, is independent of the merits of the question, which I do not feel inclined to examine minutely. The change which has taken place in the mode of administering government in modern times renders it of less practical importance than it was formerly, when so much depended upon the personal talents and activity of the reigning prince. It may be added that the evils incident to a female reign will be less felt under such a constitution as that of Britain than under a pure and absolute monarchy. This last consideration is urged by Aylmer, and here his reasoning is most satisfactory. The Blast bears the mark of hasty composition. The Harborowe has evidently been written with great care; it contains a good collection of historical facts bearing on the question, and though more distinguished for rhetorical exaggeration than logical precision, the reasoning is ingeniously conducted and occasionally livened by strokes of humor. It is, upon the whole, a curious as well as rare work.

After all, it is easier to vindicate the expediency of continuing the practice, where it has been established by law and wage, than to support the affirmative, when the question is propounded as a general thesis on government. It may fairly be questioned, if Aylmer had refuted the principal arguments of his opponent, and had Knox deemed it prudent to rejoin, he might have exposed the fallacy of his reasoning in different instances. In replying to the argument from the apostolical canon, the archdeacon is not a little puzzled. Distrusting his distinction between the greater office, "the ecclesiastical function," and the less, "extern policy," he argues that the apostle’s prohibition may be considered as temporary and peculiarly applicable to the women of his own time, and he insists that his clients shall not, in toto, be excluded from teaching and ruling in the Church any more than in the State. "Me thinke," says he, very seriously, "even in this poynte, we must use επιεικεία, a certain moderacion, not absolutely, and in every wise to debar them herein (as it shall please God) to serve Christ. Are there not, in England, women,
think you, that for their learninge and wisdom, could tell their
householde and neighbouris as good a tale as the best Sir Jhone there?"
Beyond all question. Who can doubt that the learned Lady Elizabeth,
who on a certain time interrupted the dean of her chapel and told him to
"stick to his text," was able to make as good a sermon as any of her
clergy? or, that she was better qualified for other parts of the duty, when
she composed a book of prayers for herself, while they were obliged to
use one made to their hands? In fact, the view which the archdeacon
gave of the text was necessary to vindicate the authority of his queen,
who was head, or supreme governor, of the Church, as well as of the
State. She who, by law, had supreme authority over all the reverend and
right reverend divines in the land, with power to superintend, suspend,
and control them in all their ecclesiastical functions, who, by her
injunctions, could direct the primate himself when to preach, and how to
preach, and who could license and silence ministers at her pleasure,
must have been bound very moderately indeed by the apostolical
prohibition, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over
the man, but to be in silence." Reason would also say, that she had an
equal right to assume the exercise of the office in her own person, if she
chose to avail herself of that right, and had she issued a congé d' élire,
accompanied with her royal recommendation to elect some learned sister
to a vacant see, the archdeacon at least would not have felt so
squeamish at complying with it, as the Italian university did at
conferring the degree of Doctor in Divinity upon the learned Helen
Lucrecia Piscopia Cornaca.
There are some things in the Harborowe which might have been
unpalatable to the queen, if the author had not sweetened them with
that personal flattery, which was as agreeable to Elizabeth as to others of
her sex and rank, and which he took care to administer in sufficient
quantities before concluding his work. The ladies will be ready to excuse
a slight slip of the pen in the good archdeacon, in consideration of the
handsome manner in which he has defended their right to rule, but they
will scarcely believe that the following description of the sex could
proceed from him. "Some women," says he, "be wiser, better learned,
discreater, constant, than a number of men," but others ("the most
part," according to his biographer) he describes as "fond, foolish, wanton,
fiibbergibs, tatlers, trifling, wavering, witles, without counsel, feable,
carles, rashe, proud, daintie, nise, tale-bearers, eves-droppers, rumor-
raisers, evil-tongued, worse-minded, and, in every wise, doltified with the
dregges of the devil's doungehill !!!" The rude author of the monstrous
Blast never spoke of the sex in terms half so disrespectful as these. One
would suppose that Aylmer had already renounced the character of
advocate of the fair sex and recanted his principles on that head, as he
did respecting the titles and revenues of bishops, which he inveighed
against before his return from exile, but afterwards accepted with little
scruple; and, when reminded of the language which he had formerly used, apologized for himself by saying, "When I was a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things. But it is time to return to the narrative.

Our Reformer’s letter to the Protestant lords in Scotland produced its intended effect in reanimating their drooping courage. At a consultative meeting, held at Edinburgh in December 1557, they unanimously resolved to adhere to one another, and exert themselves in advancing the Reformation. Having subscribed a solemn bond of mutual assistance, they renewed their invitation to Knox, and being afraid that he might hesitate on account of their former irresolution, they wrote to Calvin, to employ his influence to induce him to comply. Their letters did not reach Geneva until November 1558. By the same conveyance, Knox received letters of a later date, communicating the most agreeable intelligence respecting the progress which the reformed cause had made and the flourishing appearance which it continued to wear in Scotland.

Through the exertions of our Reformer, during his residence among them in the year 1556, and in pursuance of the instructions which he left behind him, the Protestants had formed themselves into congregations, which met in different parts of the country with greater or less privacy, according to the opportunities which they enjoyed. Having come to the resolution of withdrawing from the Popish worship, they provided for their religious instruction and mutual edification in the best manner that their circumstances would permit. As there were no ministers among them, they continued for some time to be deprived of the dispensation of the sacraments, but certain intelligent and pious men of their number were chosen to read to Scriptures, to exhort, and offer up prayers in their assemblies. Convinced of the necessity of order and discipline in their societies, and desirous to have them organized, as far as was in their power, agreeably to the institution of Christ, they next proceeded to choose elders for the inspection of their manners, to whom they promised subjection, and deacons for the collection and distribution of alms to the poor. Edinburgh was the first place in which this order was established, Dundee the first town in which a reformed Church was completely organized, provided with a regular minister, and favored with the dispensation of the sacraments.

During the war with England, which began in Autumn 1556, and continued through the following year, the Protestants enjoyed considerable liberty; and they improved it with great zeal and success. The clergy were not indifferent to the progress which the reformed opinions were daily making, and they prevailed with the regent to summon such as had presumed to preach without their authority, but she was obliged to abandon the process against them, in consequence of the arrival of certain gentlemen from the west country who demanded
their release in a tone which declared that they were resolved not to be refused.

At a meeting of the nobles and barons attached to the Reformation, held at Edinburgh in December 1557, two resolutions were adopted for regulating their conduct in the present delicate juncture. It was agreed, in the first place, that they should rest satisfied for the present with requiring that prayers, and the lessons of the Old and New Testament, should be read in English, according to the book of Common Prayer, in every parish, on Sundays and festival days, by the curates of the respective parishes, or, if they were unable or unwilling, by such persons within the bounds as were best qualified. And, secondly, that the reformed preachers should teach in private houses only, till the government should allow them to preach in public. The first resolution has been represented as an unwarrantable assumption of authority by this reforming assembly, and as implying that they had a right to dictate to the whole nation, by setting aside the established worship, and imposing a new form. This construction is, however, irreconcilable with the situation in which they were then placed, and with the moderate and submissive tone in which they continued to urge their claims at a subsequent period. It is rather to be viewed as expressing the opinion of that meeting respecting the degree of reformation which individuals of their body might introduce, in places to which their authority and influence extended. And, accordingly, it was reduced to practice in many parishes where Protestant barons resided and where the people were disposed to imitate their example.

In pursuance of the second resolution agreed on at the general meeting, the Earl of Argyle undertook the protection of John Douglas, a Carmelite friar, who had embraced the reformed sentiments, and the rest of the preachers were received into the houses of other barons, and employed to preach as their chaplains. This measure alarmed the clergy no less than the former practice of itinerant preaching had done. They saw that it would be vain to commence prosecutions against preachers who were entertained in the families of the principal men in the kingdom, and they resolved to exert all their influence to deprive them of such powerful patronage. Presuming upon the easy temper of the aged Earl of Argyle, and upon the friendship which had long subsisted between his family and the Hamiltons, the Archbishop of St. Andrews wrote a letter to that nobleman in a very insinuating strain, and at the same time sent a relation of his own, Sir David Hamilton, with instructions to represent the danger to which he exposed his noble house by countenancing Douglas, and to entreat him, in the most earnest manner, to withdraw his protection from such a pestilent heretic. Argyle’s reply was temperate and respectful, but at the same time firm and spirited; he not only vindicated the doctrine taught by his chaplain and refused to dismiss him, but made several shrewd and pointed remarks which the
archbishop could not fail to apply to himself. The bishop having written
that he felt himself bound "in honor and conscience" to inquire into the
heresies of which Douglas was accused, the earl replies, "He preiches
against idolatrie, I remit to your lordschip’s conscience gif it be heresie or
not; he preiches against adultrie and fornicatioun, I referre that to your
lordschip’s conscience; he preiches against hypocrisie, I referre that to
your lordschip’s conscience; he preiches against all manner of abuses
and corrumpioun of Christis sincere religioun, I referre that to your
lordschip’s conscience. My lord, I exhort yow, in Christis name, to wey all
thir affairis in your conscience, and consider if it be your dewtie also not
onlie to thole [endure] this, but in like maner to do the same. This is all,
my lord, that I varie in my age, and na uthar thing hot that I knew not
befoir these offences to be abhominable to God, and now, knawing his
will by manifestatioun of his word, abhorres thame." Referring to the
bishop’s offer to send him a learned and catholic teacher, the earl replies,
"God Almichtie send us mony of that sorte, that will preiche trewlie, and
nathing but ane catholic universall Christian fayth; and we Heiland rude
pepill hes mister [need] of thame. And if your lordschip wald get and
provyde me sic a man, I sould provyde him a corporal leving as to my
self, with grit thanks to your lordschip, for trewlie, I and many ma hes
grit mister of sic men. And becaus I am abill to sustain ma nor ane of
thame, I will requeist your lordschip earnestlie to provyde me sic a man
as ye wrait, for the harvest is grit, and thair are few labouraris."
Foiled in his attempts to prevail on the nobility to withdraw their
protection from the preachers, the archbishop determined to wreak his
vengeance upon such of them as were still within his power, and
proceeded to revive those cruel measures which had been suspended for
several years, by the political circumstances of the country rather than
by the clemency and moderation of the clergy. Walter Mill, parish priest
of Lunan in Angus, having been condemned as a heretic in the time of
Cardinal Beaton, had escaped from execution and continued to preach,
sometimes in private, and at other times openly, in different quarters of
the kingdom. Being lately discovered by one of the archbishop’s spies, he
was brought to trial at St. Andrews. He appeared before the court so
worn out with age and the hardships which he had endured, that it was
not expected he would be able to answer the questions which might be
put to him, but, to the surprise of all, he conducted his defense with
great spirit. Such was the compassion excited by his appearance and the
horror which was now felt at the punishment to which he was doomed,
that the clergy, after pronouncing him guilty, could not procure a secular
judge to pass sentence of death upon him, and the archbishop was at
last obliged to employ a worthless servant of his own to perform the
odious task. On the twenty-eighth of August 1558, Mill expired amidst
the flames, uttering these words: "As for me, I am fourscore and two
years old, and cannot live long by course of nature; but a hundred better
shall rise out of the ashes of my bones. I trust in God, I shall be the last that shall suffer death in Scotland for this cause!"

This barbarous and illegal execution produced effects of the greatest importance. It raised the horror of the nation to an incredible pitch; and as it was believed at that time that the regent was not accessory to the deed, their indignation was rested wholly against the clergy. Throwing aside all fear and disregarding those restraints which prudence, or respect for established order, had hitherto imposed on them, the people now assembled openly to join in the reformed worship, and avowed their determination to adhere to it at all hazards. Harlow, Douglas, Paul Methven, and some others were emboldened to speak through the regulations to which they had submitted, and began to preach and administer the sacraments, with greater publicity than formerly. In the month of October, they were joined by John Willock, who returned a second time from Embden.

Meanwhile, the Protestant barons, having assembled at Edinburgh in the month of July, had resolved to lay their complaints in a formal manner before the regent. They renewed the request which they had formerly made, that she would, by her authority and in concurrence with the parliament, restrain the violence of the clergy, correct the flagrant and insufferable abuses which prevailed in the Church, and grant to them and their brethren the party of religious instruction and worship, at least according to a restricted plan which they laid before her, and to which they were willing to submit, till their grievances should be deliberately examined and legally redressed. Their petition was presented to the regent in the palace of Holyroodhouse, by Sir James Sandilands of Calder, in the presence of a number of the nobility and bishops. Her reply was such as to persuade them that she was friendly to their proposals; she promised that she would take measures for carrying them legally into effect as soon as it was in her power, and assured them, that, in the mean time, they might depend on her protection.

It did not require many arguments to persuade Knox to comply with an invitation which was accompanied with such gratifying intelligence, and he began immediately to prepare for his journey to Scotland. The future settlement of the congregation under his charge occupied him for some time. Information being received of the death of Mary, Queen of England, and the accession of Elizabeth, the Protestant refugees hastened to return to their native country. The congregation at Geneva, having met to return thanks to God for this deliverance, agreed to send one of their number with letters to their brethren in different places of the Continent, and particularly in Frankfort, congratulating them on the late happy change, and requesting a confirmation of the mutual reconciliation which had already been effected, the burial of all past offenses, and a brotherly co-operation, in endeavoring to obtain such a settlement of religion in England as would be agreeable to all the sincere well-wishers
of the Reformation. A favorable return to their letters being obtained, they took leave of the hospitable city, and set out for their native country. By them Knox sent letters to some of his former acquaintances, who were now in the court of Elizabeth, requesting permission to travel through England on his way to Scotland.

In the month of January 1559, our Reformer took his leave of Geneva for the last time. In addition to former marks of respect, the republic, before his departure, conferred on him the freedom of the city. He left his wife and family behind him, until he should ascertain that they could live with safety in Scotland. Upon his arrival at Dieppe, in the middle of March, he received information that the English government had refused to grant him liberty to pass through their dominions. The request had appeared so reasonable to his own mind, considering the station which he had held in that country, and the object of his present journey, that he once thought of proceeding to London without waiting for a formal permission, yet it was with some difficulty that those who presented his letters escaped imprisonment.

This impolitic severity was occasioned by the informations of the exiles, who had not forgotten the old quarrel at Frankfort, and had accused of disloyalty and disaffection to the queen, not only Knox, but all those who had been under his charge at Geneva, whom they represented as proselytes to the opinion which he had published against female government. There was not an individual who could believe that Knox had a most distant eye to Elizabeth in publishing the obnoxious book, nor a person of judgment who could seriously think that her government was exposed to the slightest danger from his associates, who felt no less joy at her auspicious accession than their brethren. If he had been imprudent in that publication, if he had "swerved from the particular question to general," his error (to use the words of his respondent) "rose not of malice, but of zeal, and by looking more to the present cruelty, than to the inconveniences that after might follow," and it was the part of generosity and of good policy to overlook the fault. Instead of this, Elizabeth and her counselors took up the charge in a serious light, and the accused were treated with such harshness and disdain that they repented of leaving their late asylum to return to their native country. One cannot help feeling indignant at this weak revenge, when it is considered that Elizabeth had admitted to favor, and retained at court, persons who had endeavored to prevent her succession, and who had thirsted for her blood," and that those who, under the preceding reign, had advised and practiced the greatest severities against the Protestants, were now treated with the utmost lenity. Even the infamous Bonner was allowed to appear at court, and although the queen shuddered at the thought of a man who was polluted with so much blood kissing her hand, yet was he at this time going about London without the smallest molestation. In the first parliament of Elizabeth, one Dr. Storey made a
speech, in which he had the effrontery to justify the cruelties of Mary, to boast of his own activity in carrying her orders into execution, and to regret that measures still more violent and effectual had not been adopted for the utter extirpation of heresy. Nor does it appear that this speech was resented either by the house or by the queen.

De nobis, post hæc, tristis sententia fertur.
Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas.

The refusal of his request, and the harsh treatment of his flock, touched to the quick the irritable temper of our Reformer, and it was with some difficulty that he suppressed the desire which he felt rising in his breast, to prosecute a controversy which he had resolved to abandon. "My First Blast," says he, in a letter dated Dieppe, 6th April 1559, "hath blown from me all my friends in England. My conscience bears record that yet I seek the favor of my God, and so I am in the less fear. The Second Blast, I fear, shall sound somewhat more sharp, except that men be more moderate than I hear they are. England hath refused me, but because, before, it did refuse Christ Jesus, the less do I regard the loss of this familiarity. And yet have I been a secret and assured friend to thee, O England, in cases which thyself could not have remedied. But greater designs occupied his mind and engrossed his attention. It was not for the sake of personal safety, nor from the vanity of appearing at court, that he desired to pass through England. He felt the natural wish to visit his old acquaintances in that country and was anxious for an opportunity of once more addressing those to whom he had preached, especially at Newcastle and Berwick. But there was another object which he had still more at heart, and in which the welfare of both England Scotland was concerned.

Notwithstanding the flattering accounts which he had received of the favorable disposition of the queen regent towards the Protestants, and the directions which he sent them to cultivate this, he appears to have always entertained suspicions of the sincerity of her professions. Since he left Geneva, these suspicions had been confirmed, and the information which he had procured in traveling through France conspired with intelligence which he had lately received from Scotland, to convince him that the immediate suppression of the Reformation in his native country, and its consequent suppression in the neighboring kingdom, were intended. The plan projected by the gigantic ambition of the princes of Lorrain, brothers of the queen regent of Scotland, has been developed and described with great accuracy and ability by a celebrated modern historian. Suffice it to say here that their counsels had determined the French court to set up the claim of the young Queen of Scots to the crown of England; to attack Elizabeth, and wrest the scepter from her hands, under the pretext that she was a bastard and a heretic;
and to commence their operations suppressing the Reformation, and establishing the French presence in Scotland, as the best preparative to an attack upon the dominions of the English queen. In the course of his journeys through France, Knox had formed an acquaintance with certain persons about the court, and, by their means, had gained some knowledge of this plan. He was convinced that the Scottish reformers were able to resist the power which France might bring against them, and that it was no less the interest than the duty of the English court to afford them the most effectual support. But he was afraid that a selfish and narrow policy might prevent them from doing this until it was too late, and was therefore anxious to call their attention to the subject at an early period, and to put them in possession of the facts that had come to his knowledge. The assistance which Elizabeth granted to the Scottish Protestants in the year 1560 was dictated by the soundest policy. It baffled and defeated the designs of her enemies at the very outset; it gave her an influence over Scotland, which all her predecessors could not obtain by the terror of their arms nor the influence of their money, and it secured the stability of her government by extending and strengthening the Protestant interest, the principal pillar on which it rested. And it reflects not a little credit on our Reformer’s sagacity, that he had conceived this plan at so early a period, was the first person who proposed it, and persisted, in spite of great discouragements, to urge its adoption, until his endeavors were ultimately crowned with success.

He had an opportunity of receiving a confirmation of this intelligence during his voyage to Scotland. In the same ship in which he sailed, there was sent by the French court to the queen regent a staff of state, with a great seal, on which were engraved the arms of France, Scotland, and England. This was shown to him in great secrecy. The English court, after they were awakened from their lethargy and convinced of the hostile designs of France, applied to Knox for the information which they might have had from him six months before. Deeply impressed with these considerations, he resolved, although he had already been twice repulsed, to brook the mortification, and make another attempt to obtain an interview with some confidential agent of the English government. With this view, he, on the tenth of April, wrote a letter to secretary Cecil, with whom he had been personally acquainted during his residence in London. Adverting to the treatment of the exiles who had returned from Geneva, he exculpated them from all responsibility as to the offensive book which he had published and assured him that he had not consulted with any of them previous to its publication. As for himself, he did not mean to deny that he was the author, nor was he yet prepared to retract the leading sentiment which it
contained. But he was not on that account less friendly to the person
and government of Elizabeth, in whose exaltation he cordially rejoiced,
although he rested the defense of her authority upon grounds different
from the common. This was the third time that he had craved liberty to
pass through England. He had no desire to visit the court, nor to remain
long in the country; but he was anxious to communicate to him, or some
other trusty person, matters of great importance, which it was not
prudent to commit to writing, or entrust to an ordinary messenger. If his
request was refused, it would turn out to the disadvantage of England.
The situation in which he stood at this time with the court of England
was so well known that it was not without great difficulty that he could
find a messenger to carry his letter, and, after despairing of the success
of his application, or urged by intelligence received from Scotland, he
sailed from Dieppe on the twenty-second of April, and landed safely at
Leith on the second of May 1559.

CHAPTER VI

From May 1559, when he finally returned to Scotland,
to August 1560, when he was settled as a minister of Edinburgh,
at the establishment of the Reformation

On his arrival, Knox found matters in the most critical state in Scotland.
The queen regent had thrown off the mask which she had long worn, and
avowed her determination forcibly to suppress the Reformation. As long
as she stood in need of the assistance of the Protestants to support her
authority against the Hamiltons, and to procure the matrimonial crown
for her son-in-law, the dauphin of France, she courted their friendship,
listened to their plans of reform, professed her dissatisfaction with the
ecclesiastical order, and her desire of correcting its corruption and
tyranny as soon as a fit opportunity offered, and flattered them, if not
with the hopes of her joining their party, at least with the assurances
that she would shield them from the fury of the clergy. So completely
were they duped by her consummate address and dissimulation that
they complied with all her requests, restrained their preachers from
preaching in public, and desisted from presenting to the parliament a
petition which they had prepared, nor would they believe her to be
insincere, even after different parts of her conduct had afforded strong
grounds for suspicion. But, having accomplished the great objects which
she had in view, she at last adopted measures which completely
undeceived them, and discovered the gulf into which they were about to
be precipitated.

As this discovery of the regent’s duplicity produced consequences of the
greatest importance, as it completely alienated from her the minds of the
reformers and aroused that spirit of determined and united opposition to
her insidious policy and her violent measures, which ultimately led to the
establishment of the Reformation, and as the facts connected with it
have not been accurately or fully stated in our common histories, the
A mutual jealousy had long subsisted between the queen regent and that able but unprincipled prelate, Archbishop Hamilton, whose zeal for the Church was uniformly subordinated to personal ambition and the desire of aggrandizing his family. While he exerted the influence which his station gave him over the clergy to embarrass the administration of the regent, she employed the Protestants as a counterbalance to his power. But amidst the jarring excited by rival interests, both parties beheld the rapid progress of the reformed sentiments with equal concern, and intelligent persons early foresaw that their differences would finally be compromised, and a coalition formed between them to accomplish the ruin of the Protestants. It not appear that the primate ever entertained the slightest suspicion that the regent was friendly to the cause of the Reformers. Independently of her own sentiments, he was well acquainted with the influence which her brothers possessed over her, and with their devoted attachment to the Roman Catholic Church. Had he not had good reasons for presuming upon her connivance and secret approbation, his known prudence would not have allowed him to venture upon the invidious measure of putting Mill to death. As early as July 1558, she had held consultations with him on the course which should be adopted checking the Reformation. In consequence of this, steps taken to bring to trial certain individuals who had given offense to the clergy by expounding the Scriptures in private meetings and contemning the laws of the Church. And immediately after the meeting of parliament in November, at which the regent obtained, by the assistance of the Protestants, all the objects which she wished to carry, the primate received positive assurances of her support in his exertions for maintaining the authority of the Church. Accordingly, in the end of December, he summoned the reformed preachers to appear him before in St. Andrews, on the second of February following, to answer for their conduct in usurping the sacred office and disseminating heretical doctrines.

Upon this, a deputation of the Protestants waited on the regent and informed her that, after what had recently taken in the instance of Mill, they were determined to attend and see justice done to their preachers, and that, if the prosecution went forward, there would be a greater convocation at St. Andrews than had been seen at any trial in Scotland for a long period. Dreading the consequences of a concourse of people in a place adjacent to counties in which the Protestants were numerous, the queen wrote to the archbishop to prorogue the trial. She, at the same time, summoned a convention of the nobility, to be held at Edinburgh on the seventh of March, to advise upon the most proper measures for settling the religious differences which had so long agitated the nation.
And the primate, at her request, called a provincial council of the clergy to meet in the same place on the first of March. When our Savior was condemned to be crucified, it was observed, that, "on the same day, Pilate and Herod were made friends together, for before they were at enmity between themselves." The determination which was at this time formed to crush the Protestant interest in Scotland, seems to have brought about the reconciliation of more than the queen regent and the primate. A rivalship had long subsisted between those who occupied the two Scottish archbishoprics; the bishops of Glasgow insisting on the independence of their see, and boasting of the priority of its erection, while the bishops of St. Andrews claimed an authoritative primacy over all the clergy in the kingdom, as belonging to that see from the time of its foundation. Hamilton, in the mandate issued for assembling this council, had asserted his primacy in very formal terms, founding upon it, as well as upon the authority with which he was invested as papal legate, his right to convocate the clergy. Beatoun, Archbishop of Glasgow, seems to have resented this claim of superiority and declined for some time to countenance the council by his presence, or to cite his suffragans and the clergy of his diocese to attend. This dissension, which might have proved highly injurious to the Roman Church at this critical period, was got accommodated, and Beatoun, with the western clergy, at length joined the council.

In the meantime, the Protestants, having assembled at Edinburgh, appointed commissioners to lay their representations before the convention of the nobility, and the council of the clergy. The commissioners gave in to the latter certain preliminary articles of reformation, in which they craved, that the religious service should be performed in the vulgar tongue; that such as were unfit for the pastoral office should be removed from their benefices; that, in time coming, bishops should be admitted with the assent of the barons of the diocese, and parish priests with the assent of the parishioners; and that measures would be adopted for preventing immoral and ignorant persons from being employed in ecclesiastical functions. But there was another paper laid before the council, which, it is probable, gave more uneasiness than the representation of the Protestants. This was a remonstrance by certain persons attached to Roman Catholic faith, "craving redress of several grievances complained of in the ecclesiastical administration of Scotland." It consisted of thirteen articles, in which, among other points of reformation, they required that the exacting of corpse-presents and Easter offerings should be abolished; that, for the more effectual instruction of those who partake of the sacraments, "there should be an godlie and faithful declaration set forth in Inglis toung, to be first shewin to the pepil at all times," when any of the sacraments are administered; and that the common prayers and litanies should also be read in the vulgar language. At the same time, they desired that none should be
permitted to speak irreverently of the mass, make innovations upon the ceremonies of the Church, or administer divine ordinances without authority from the bishops.

The council were not disposed to agree to the proposals of the Protestant or the Popish reformers. After making certain partial regulations relating to some of the grievances complained of by the latter, and renewing the canons of former councils respecting the lives of the clergy and public instruction, they refused to allow any part of the public service to be performed in the vulgar language; they ratified, in the strongest terms, all the popish doctrines which were controverted by the Protestants; and they ordained that strict inquisition should be made after such as absented themselves from the celebration of mass,’ and that excommunication should be fulminated against those who administered or received the sacrament after the Protestant forms, and against parents and sponsors who had presented children for baptism to the reformed preachers, and did not bring them to the priests to be re-baptized. The council were emboldened to take these decisive steps in consequence of a secret treaty which they had concluded with the regent, and in which they had stipulated to raise a large sum of money to enable her to suppress the reformers. This arrangement could not be long concealed from the Protestant deputies, who, perceiving that they were mocked by the clergy, and abandoned by the court, broke off the fruitless negotiations in which they had been engaged, and left Edinburgh. They were no sooner gone than a proclamation was made at the market cross, by order of the regent, prohibiting any person from preaching or administering the sacraments without authority from the bishops, and commanding all the subjects to prepare to celebrate the ensuing feast of Easter, according to the rites of the Catholic Church. Understanding that her proclamation was disregarded, she determined on taking decisive steps to enforce obedience, by bringing the preachers to justice. Accordingly, Paul Methven, John Christison, William Harlaw, and John Willock were summoned to stand trial before the justiciary court at Stirling on the tenth of May, for usurping the ministerial office, for administering, without the consent of their ordinaries, the sacrament of the altar in a manner different from that of the Catholic Church, during three several days of the late feast of Easter, in the burghs and boundaries of Dundee, Montrose, and various other places in the sheriffdoms of Forfar and Kincardine, and for convening the subjects in these places, preaching to them, seducing them to their erroneous doctrines, and exciting seditions and tumults. As the preachers were resolved to make their appearance, George Lovell, burgess of Dundee, became surety for Methven, John Erskine of Dun for Christison, Patrick Murray of Tibbermuir for Harlaw, and Robert Campbell of Kinyeancleugh for Willock.
To prevent matters from coming to extremity, the Earl of Glencairn and Sir Hugh Campbell of London, sheriff of Ayr, waited on the queen and remonstrated against these proceedings, but she told them haughtily that, "in spite of them, all their preachers should be banished from Scotland." They reminded her of the promises she had repeatedly made to protect them, upon which she unblushingly replied that "it became not subjects to burden their princes with promises, farther than they pleased to keep them." Surprised, but not intimidated, at this language, Glencairn and London told her that if she violated the engagements which she had come under to her subjects, they would consider themselves as absolved from their allegiance to her. After they had remonstrated with her very openly, and pointed out the dangerous consequences that might result from adopting such a line of conduct, she began to speak a milder tone, and promised to suspend the trial of the preachers, and take the whole affair into serious consideration. But receiving intelligence soon after that peace was concluded between France and Spain, by a treaty in which these two powers had agreed to unite their endeavors for the extirpation of heresy, and being irritated by the introduction of the reformed worship into the town of Perth, she ordered the process against the preachers to go on, and summoned them peremptorily to stand their trial at Stirling on the appointed day.

The state of our Reformer’s mind, upon receiving this information, will appear from the following letter, hastily written by him on the day after he landed in Scotland.

"The perpetual comfort of the Holy Ghost for salutation. These few lines are to signify unto you, dear sister, that it hath pleased the merciful providence of my heavenly Father to conduct me to Edinburgh, where I arrived the 2d of May, uncertain as yet what God shall further work in this country, except that I see the battle shall be great. For Satan rageth even to the uttermost, and I am come, I praise my God, even in the brunt of the battle. For my fellow preachers have a day appointed to answer before the queen regent, the 10th of this instant, when I intend (if God impede not) also to be present; by life, by death, or else by both, to glorify His godly name, who thus mercifully hath heard my long cries. Assist me, sister, with your prayers, that now I shrink not, when the battle approacheth. Other things I have to communicate with you, but travail after travail doth so occupy me, that no time is granted me to write. Advertise my brother, Mr. Goodman, of my estate, as, in my other letter sent unto you from Dieppe, I willed you. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ rest with you. From Edinburgh, in haste, the 3d of May."

His arrival in Scotland was not long concealed from the clergy. On the morning after he landed at Leith, one came to the monastery of the Greyfriars, where the provincial council was still sitting, and informed them that John Knox was come from France, and had slept last night in Edinburgh. The clergy were panic-struck with the intelligence, and,
foreboding the ruin of all the plans which they had formed with so much care, they dismissed the council in great haste and confusion. A messenger was instantly dispatched by them with the information to the queen regent, who was at Glasgow, and within a few days Knox was proclaimed an outlaw and a rebel, in virtue of the sentence formerly pronounced against him by the clergy.

Although his own cause was prejudged, and he knew that he was liable to be apprehended as a condemned heretic, he did not hesitate a moment in resolving to present himself voluntarily at Stirling, to assist his brethren in their defense, and share their danger. Having remained only a single day at Edinburgh, he hurried to Dundee, where he found the principal Protestants in Angus and Mearns already assembled, and determined to attend their ministers to the place of trial, and avow their adherence to the doctrines for which they were accused. The providential arrival of such an able champion of the cause, at this crisis, must have been very encouraging to the assembly, and the liberty of accompanying them, which he requested, was readily granted.

Lest the unexpected approach of such a multitude, though unarmed, should alarm or offend the regent, the assembled Protestants agreed to stop at Perth, and sent Erskine of Dun before them to Stirling, to acquaint her with the peaceable object and manner of their coming. Apprehensive that their presence would disconcert her measures, the regent had again recourse to dissimulation. She persuaded Erskine to write to his brethren to desist from their intended journey, and authorized him to promise in her name, that she would put a stop to the trial. The Protestants testified their pacific intentions by a cheerful compliance with this request, and the greater part, confiding in the royal promise, returned to their homes. But when the day of trial came, the summons was called by the orders of the queen, the preachers were outlawed for not appearing, and all persons were prohibited, under the pain of rebellion, from harboring or assisting them. At the same time the gentlemen who had given security for their appearance, were fined.

Escaping from Stirling, Erskine brought to Perth the intelligence of this disgraceful transaction, which could not fail to incense the Protestants. It happened that, on the same day on which the news came, Knox, who remained at Perth, preached a sermon in which he exposed the idolatry of the mass and of image worship. The audience had quietly dismissed, and a few idle persons only loitered in the Church, when an imprudent priest, wishing to try the disposition of the people, or to show his contempt of the doctrine which had just been delivered, uncovered a rich altar-piece, decorated with images, and prepared to celebrate mass. A boy, having uttered some expressions of disapprobation, was struck by the priest. He retaliated by throwing a stone at the aggressor, which, falling on the altar, broke one of the images. This operated as a signal upon the people present, who had sympathized with the boy, and, in the
course of a few minutes, the altar, images, and the ornaments of the Church were torn down, and trampled under foot. The noise soon collected a mob, which, finding no employment in the Church, flew, by a sudden and irresistible impulse, upon the monasteries; and although the magistrates of the town and the preachers assembled as soon as they heard of the riot, yet neither the persuasions of the one, nor the authority of the other, could restrain the fury of the people, until houses of the grey and black friars, with the costly edifice of the Carthusian monks, were laid in ruins. None of the gentlemen or sober part of the congregation were concerned in the unpremeditated tumult; it was wholly confined to the lowest of the inhabitants, or, as Knox designs them, "the rascal multitude."

The demolition of the monasteries having been represented as its first fruits of our reformer’s labors on this occasion, it was necessary to give this minute account of the causes which produced that event. Whatever his sentiments were as to the destruction of the instruments and monuments of idolatry, he did not wish the work to be accomplished in an irregular manner; he was sensible that tumultuary proceedings, especially in present circumstances, were prejudicial to the cause of the reformers, and, instead of instigating, he exerted himself in putting a stop to the ravages of the mob. If this disorderly conduct must be traced to a remote cause we can impute it only to the wanton and dishonorable perfidy of the queen regent.

In fact, nothing could be more favorable to the designs of the regent than this riot. By her recent conduct, she had forfeited the confidence of the Protestants, and even exposed herself in the eyes of the sober and moderate of her own party. This occurrence afforded her an opportunity of turning the public indignation from herself, and directing it against the Protestants. She did not fail to improve it with her usual address. She magnified the accidental tumult into a dangerous and designed rebellion. Having called the nobility to Stirling, she, in her interviews with them, insisted upon such topics as were best calculated to persuade the parties into which they were divided. In conversing with the Catholics, she dwelt upon the sacrilegious overthrow of those venerable structures which their ancestors had dedicated to the service of God. To the Protestants who had not joined their brethren at Perth, she complained of the destruction of the Charter-house, which was a royal foundation, and, protesting that she had no intention of offering violence to their consciences, promised to protect them, provided they would assist her in punishing those who had been guilty of this violation of public order. Having inflamed the minds of both parties, she collected an army from the adjacent counties, and advanced to Perth, threatening to lay waste the town with fire and sword, and to inflict the most exemplary vengeance on all who had been instrumental in producing the riot.
The Protestants of the north were not insensible to their danger, and did all in their power to avert the storm which threatened them. They wrote to the queen regent, to the commander of the French troops, to the Popish nobles, and to those of their own persuasion; they solemnly disclaimed all rebellious intentions; they protested their readiness to yield due obedience to the government; they entreated all to refrain from offering violence to peaceable subjects, who sought only the liberty of their consciences, and the reformation of religion. But, finding all their endeavors fruitless, they resolved not to suffer themselves and their brethren to be massacred, and prepared for a defense of the town against an illegal and furious assault. And so prompt and vigorous were they in the measures which they adopted, that the regent, when she approached, deeming it imprudent to attack them, proposed overtures of accommodation, to which they readily acceded.

While the two armies lay before Perth, and negotiations were going on between them, our Reformer obtained an interview with the prior of St. Andrews and the young Earl of Argyle, who adhered to the regent. He reminded them of the solemn engagements which they had contracted, and charged them with violating these by abetting measures which tended to suppress the reformed religion, and enslave their native country. The noblemen replied that they had been induced, by the representations of the regent and the clergy, to believe that their brethren in intended to swerve from their former loyalty, and, although they were now convinced that this charge was unfounded, they were anxious to fulfil the promise which they had made to the queen, by bringing the present difference to an amicable termination; but, if she should violate the proposed treaty, they would withdraw their countenance from her, and openly take part with their brethren, to whom they considered themselves as bound by the most sacred ties. The regent was not long in affording them an opportunity of verifying their promise. No sooner had she taken possession of Perth, and perceived that the forces of the Protestants were disbanded, than she began to disregard the conditions to which she had agreed. Argyle and the prior remonstrated against the infractions of a treaty which they had concluded at her earnest request, but were answered in such an unsatisfactory manner that they deserted her court, and could never afterwards be persuaded to place any confidence in her promises.

From the time that the leading Protestants discovered the hostile intentions of the regent, they had used great industry to ascertain the numbers of their friends, to establish means of correspondence among them, and to have them united by the strictest bonds. For this purpose, copies of their religious covenant were committed to persons who procured subscriptions to it in the different districts where they resided. From the designation which they gave themselves in this covenant, or from the union which subsisted among them, they began at this time to
be distinguished by the name of The Congregation. The nobles who had joined the association were the Earls of Argyle, Glencairn, Monteith, and Rothes; Lords Ochiltree, Boyd, Ruthven, and the prior of St. Andrews. The Earl Marischal and Lord Erskine, with some others who were friendly to the reformed religion, still supported the regent, or remained neutral. A large proportion of the lesser barons belonged to the Congregation, particularly those of Mearns, Angus, Strathearn, Monteith, Fyfe, Cunningham, Kyle, Carrick, and Galloway.

In the beginning of June, the lords of the Congregation held a consultation on the measures which they should adopt for their own security, and for the advancement of the Reformation. They had repeatedly applied to the clergy to rectify the abuses which prevailed in the Church, and to release them from those unjust and oppressive laws by which their consciences had long been enslaved, but their petitions had been treated with neglect and disdain. "To abandon usurped power, to renounce lucrative error, are sacrifices which the virtue of individuals has, on some occasions, offered to truth; but from any society of men no such effort can be expected. The corruptions of a society, recommended by common utility, and justified by universal practice, are viewed by its members without shame or horror; and reformation never proceeds from themselves, but is always forced upon them by some foreign hand."

Convinced of this, the Protestant leaders had next addressed themselves to the regent, and requested her to employ her authority to bring about a reformation, which could not be much longer deferred without interrupting the peace of the kingdom. As long as they had any reason to think that she was disposed to listen to their petitions, they had waited with exemplary patience and restrained the ardor of such of their friends as were inclined, without farther delay, to use the right which nature and Christianity gave them; but the regent had disappointed their expectations, and from being a professed friend was become a declared enemy; they could no longer place the smallest dependence on her promises; and they were satisfied that she had formed a systematic plan for suppressing the Reformation and enforcing the existing ecclesiastical laws in all their rigor. It behooved them now either to submit to have their chains riveted, or by a bold and vigorous effort to shake them off altogether. They determined upon the latter. The scandalous lives of the established clergy, their total neglect of the religious instruction of the people, and the profanation of Christian worship by gross idolatry were the most glaring abuses. The lords of the Congregation resolved to take immediate steps for removing these by abolishing the Popish service and setting up the reformed worship in all those places to which their authority or influence extended, and in which the greater part of inhabitants were friendly to the design. This step is justified part by the feudal ideas respecting the jurisdiction of the nobility, which at that time prevailed in Scotland; the urgent and extreme necessity of the case,
however, forms its best vindication. A great part of the nation loudly
demanded such a reformation, and, had not regular measures been
adopted for its introduction, the popular indignation would have effected
the work in a more exceptionable way.
St. Andrews was the place fixed on for commencing these operations.
With this view, the Earl of Argyle and Lord Stewart, who was prior of the
abbey of St. Andrews, made an appointment with Knox to meet them on
a certain in that city. Traveling along the east coast of Fife, he preached
at Anstruther and Crail, and, on the ninth of June, joined them at St.
Andrews. The archbishop, apprised of his design to preach in his
cathedral, assembled an armed force and sent information to him that if
he appeared in the pulpit, he would give orders to the soldiers to fire
upon him. The noblemen, having met to consult what ought to be done,
agreed Knox should desist from preaching at that time, and strongly
urged upon him the reasons of their opinion. Their retinue was very
slender; they had not yet ascertained the disposition of the inhabitants of
the town; the queen regent lay at a small distance with an army; and his
appearance in the pulpit might lead to the sacrifice of his own life, and
the lives of those who were determined to defend him from violence.
There are occasions on which it is a proof of superior wisdom to
disregard the ordinary dictates of prudence, on which, to face danger is
to avoid it, to flee from it is to invite it. Had the reformers, after
announcing their intentions, suffered themselves be intimidated by the
bravading attitude and language of the archbishop, their cause would, at
the very outset, have received a blow from which it would not easily have
recovered. This was prevented by the firmness and intrepidity of Knox.
Fired with the recollection of the part which he had formerly acted on
that spot, and with the near prospect of realizing the sanguine hopes
which he had so long cherished in his breast, he resisted all the
importunities of his friends. He could take God to witness, he said, that
he never preached in contempt of any man, nor with the design of
hurting an earthly creature, but to delay to preach next day (unless
forcibly hindered) he could not in conscience agree. In that town, and in
that church, had God first raised him to the dignity of a preacher, and
from it he had been "reft" by French tyranny, at the instigation of the
Scots bishops. The length of his imprisonment, and the tortures which
he had endured, he would not at present recite, but one thing he could
not conceal, that in the hearing of many yet alive, he had expressed his
confident hope of again preaching in St. Andrews. Now, therefore, when
Providence, beyond all men's expectation, had brought him to that place,
he besought them not to hinder him. "As for the fear of danger that may
come to me," continued he, "let no man be solicitous; for my life is in the
custody of Him whose glory I seek. I desire the hand nor weapon of no
man to defend me. I only crave audience, which, if it be denied hereunto
me at this time, I must seek where I may have it."
This intrepid reply silenced all remonstrance, and next day, Knox appeared in the pulpit, and preached to a numerous assembly, including many of the clergy, without experiencing the slightest interruption. He discoursed on the subject of our Savior's ejecting the profane traffickers from the temple of Jerusalem, from which he took occasion to expose the enormous corruptions which had been introduced into the Church under the Papacy, and to point out what was incumbent upon Christians, in their different spheres, for removing them. On the three following days he preached in the same place, and such was the influence of his doctrine, that the provost, bailies, and inhabitants, harmoniously agreed to set up the reformed worship in the town; the Church was stripped of images and pictures, and the monasteries were pulled down. This happened on the fourteenth of June, 1559.

Understanding that the lords of St. Andrews were accompanied by a small retinue, the queen regent, who lay at Falkland, attempted to surprise them. But the Protestants in Angus, having received information of the critical situation of their brethren, came to their assistance with such celerity and in such numbers that they were able to face the royal army at Cupar-moor, and the regent, afraid to risk a battle, consented to a truce, by which she engaged to remove her French troops from Fife, and to send commissioners to St. Andrews for the purpose of settling all differences between her and the Congregation. The troops were removed, but no commissioners appeared, and the lords of the Congregation, being apprised that the queen intended to fortify the passage of the Forth at Stirling, and to cut off their communication with the Protestants in the south, proceeded to Perth, and, having expelled the garrison from that town, by a rapid march seized upon Stirling, and, advancing, took possession of the capital of the kingdom, the regent, as they approached, retiring with her forces to Dunbar.

The example of St. Andrews, in abolishing the Popish worship, was quickly followed in other parts of the kingdom, and, in the course of a few weeks, at Crail, at Cupar, at Lindores, at Stirling, at Linlithgow, at Edinburgh, and at Glasgow, the houses of the monks were overthrown, and all the instruments of idolatry destroyed.

These proceedings were celebrated in the singular lays, which were at that time circulated among the reformers.

His cardinalles hes cause to mourne,
His bishops are borne a backe;
His abbots gat an uncouth turne,
When shavellinges went to sacke
With burges wifes they led their lives,
And fare better than wee.
Hay trix, trim goe trix, under the greene-wod tree.
His Carmelites and Jacobinis,
His Dominikes had great adoe;
His Cordeliers and Augustines,
Sanct Francis’s ordour to;
The sillie friers, mony yeiris
With babbling bleirit our ee.
Hay trix, &c.

Had not your self begun the weiris,
Your stepillis had been standand yit;
It was the flattering of your friers
That ever gart sanct Francis flit;
Ye grew sa superstitious
In wickednesse,
It gart us grow malicious
Contrair your messe.

Scarcely anything in the progress of the Scottish Reformation has been more frequently or more loudly condemned than the demolition of those edifices upon which superstition had lavished the ornaments of the chisel and the pencil. To the Catholics, who anathematized all who were engaged in this work of inexpiable sacrilege, and represented it as involving the complete overthrow of religion, have succeeded another race of writers, who, although they do not in general make high pretensions to devotion, have not scrupled at times to borrow the language of their predecessors, and have bewailed the wreck of these precious monuments in as bitter strains as ever idolater did the loss of his gods. These are the warm admirers of Gothic architecture and other relics of ancient art, some of whom, if we may judge from their language, would welcome back the reign of superstition with all its ignorance and bigotry, if they could recover the objects of their adoration. Writers of this stamp depict the ravages and devastation which marked the progress of the Reformation, in colors as dark as ever were employed by the historian in describing the overthrow of ancient learning, by the irruption of the barbarous Huns and Vandals. Our Reformer cannot be mentioned by them but with symptoms of horror, and in terms of detestation, as a barbarian, a savage, and a ringleader of mobs, for overthrowing whatever was venerable in antiquity or sacred in religion. It is unnecessary to produce instances.

Expectes eadem a summo minimoque poeta.

To remind such persons of the divine mandate to destroy all monuments of idolatry in the land of Canaan would be altogether insufferable, and might provoke, from some of them, a profane attack upon the authority
from which it proceeded. To plead the example of the early Christians, in demolishing the temples and statues dedicated to pagan polytheism would only awaken the keen regrets that are felt for the irreparable loss. It would be still worse to refer to the apocalyptic predictions, which some have been so fanatical as to think were fulfilled in the miserable spoliation of that "great city," which, under all its revolutions, has so eminently proved the nurse of the arts, and given encouragement to painters, statuaries, and sculptors, to "harpers, and musicians, and pipers, and trumpeters, and craftsmen of whatsoever craft," who to this day have not forgotten their obligations to it, nor ceased to bewail its destruction. In any apology which I make for the reformers, I would alleviate instead of aggravating the distress which is felt for the loss of such valuable memorials of antiquity. It has been observed by high authority that there certain commodities which derive their principal value from their extreme rarity, and which, if found in great quantities, should cease to be sought after or prized. A nobleman of great literary reputation has, indeed, questioned the justness of this observation, so far as respects precious stones and metals. But I flatter myself that the noble author and the learned critic, however much they may differ as to public wealth, will agree that the observation is perfectly just, as applied to those commodities which constitute the wealth and engage the researches of the antiquary. With him rarity is always an essential requisite and primary emendation. His property, like that of the possessor of the famous Sybilline books, does not decrease in value by the reduction of its quantity, but after the greater part has been destroyed, becomes still more precious. If the matter be viewed in this light, antiquarians have no reason to complain of the ravages of reformers, who have left them such valuable remains, and placed them in that very state which awakens in their minds the most lively sentiments of the sublime and beautiful, by reducing them to ruins. But, to speak seriously, I would not be thought so great an enemy to any of the fine arts, as to rejoice at the wanton destruction of their models, ancient or modern, or to vindicate those who, from ignorance and fanatical rage, may have excited the mob to such violence. But I am satisfied that the charges brought against our reformers on this head are highly exaggerated, and in some instances altogether groundless. The demolition of the monasteries is, in fact, the only thing of which they can be fairly accused. Cathedral and parochial churches, and, in several places, the chapels attached to monasteries, were appropriated to the Protestant worship; and, in the orders issued for stripping them of images, idolatrous pictures, and superstitious furniture, particular directions were given to avoid whatever might injure the buildings, or deface any of their ordinary decorations. It is true that some churches suffered from popular violence during the ferment of the Reformation, and that others were dilapidated, in consequence of their most valuable
materials being sold to defray the expenses of the war in which the
Protestants were involved; but the former will not be matter of surprise to
those who have attended to the conduct of other nations in similar
circumstances, and the latter will be censured by such persons only as
are incapable of entering into the feelings of a people who were engaged
in a struggle for their lives, their liberties, and their religion. Of all the
charges thrown out against our reformers, the most ridiculous is that in
their zeal against Popery, they waged war against literature by destroying
the valuable books and records which had been deposited in the
monasteries. The state of learning among the monks at the era of the
Reformation was wretched, and their libraries poor; the only persons who
patronized or cultivated literature in Scotland were Protestants, and so
far from sweeping away any literary monuments which remained, the
reformers were disposed to search for them among the rubbish, and to
preserve them with the utmost care. In this respect we have no reason to
deprecate a comparison between our Reformation and that of England,
notwithstanding the flattering accounts which have been given of the
orderly and temperate manner in which the latter was conducted under
the superintending control of the supreme powers.

But even although the irregularities committed in the progress of that
work had been greater than have been represented, I must still reprobate
the spirit which disposes persons to dwell with unceasing lamentation
upon losses which, in the view of an enlightened and liberal mind, will
sink and disappear in the magnitude of the incalculable good which rose
from the wreck of the revolution. What! do we celebrate with public
rejoicings victories over the enemies of our country, in the gaining of
which the lives of thousands of our fellow-creatures have been
sacrificed? and shall solemn masses and sad dirges, accompanied with
direful excrections, be everlastingly sung, for the mangled members of
statues, torn pictures, and ruined towers? Shall those who, by a display
of the horrors of war, would persuade their countrymen to repent of a
contest which had been distinguished with uncommon feats of valor, and
crowned with the most brilliant success, be accused of a desire to tarnish
the national glory? Shall the topics on which they insist, however forcible
in themselves—the effusion of human blood, the sacking of cities, the
devastation of fertile provinces, the ruin of arts and manufactures, and
the intolerable burdens entailed even upon the victors themselves—be
represented as mere commonplace topics, employed as a cover to
disloyalty? And do not those who, at the distance of nearly three
centuries, continue to wail evils of a far inferior kind which attended the
Reformation, justly expose themselves to suspicion of indifference and
disaffection to a cause, in comparison with which all contests between
rival kingdoms and sovereigns dwindle into insignificance? I will go
further, and say that I look upon the destruction of these monuments as
a piece of good policy, which contributed materially to the overthrow of
the Roman Catholic religion and the prevention of its establishment. It was chiefly by the magnificence of its temples and the splendid apparatus of its worship that the Romish Church fascinated the senses and imaginations of the people. A more successful method of attacking it, therefore, could not be adopted than the demolition of what contributed much to uphold and extend its influence. There is more wisdom than many seem to perceive in the maxim which Knox is said to have inculcated "that the best way to keep the rooks from returning was to pull down their nests." In demolishing or rendering uninhabitable all those buildings which had served for the maintenance of the ancient superstition (except what were requisite for the Protestant worship), the reformers only acted upon the principles of a prudent general, who dismantles or razes the fortifications which he is unable to keep, which might afterwards be seized and employed against him by the enemy. Had they been allowed to remain in their former splendor, the popish clergy would not have ceased to indulge hopes, and to make efforts to be restored to them; occasions would have been taken to tamper with the credulous, to inflame the minds of the superstitious, and the reformers might soon have found reason to repent their ill-judged forbearance.

When we had quelled
The strength of Aztlan, we should have thrown down
Her altars, cast her idols to the fire.
The priests combined to save their craft,
And soon the rumour ran of evil signs
And tokens; in the temple had been heard
Wailings and loud lament; the eternal fire
Gave dismally a dim and doubtful flame;
And from the censer, which at morn should steam
Sweet odours to the sun, a fetid cloud
Black and portentous rose.

Our Reformer was along with the forces of the Congregation when they faced the army of the regent in Cupar-moor; he accompanied them on their expedition to Perth, and in the end of June arrived with them at Edinburgh. On the same day, he preached in St. Giles’s, and next day in the Abbey Church. On the seventh of July, the inhabitants of the metropolis met in the Tolbooth and made choice of him as their minister. With this choice, which was approved of by his brethren, he judged it his duty to comply, and immediately began his labors in the city. On their arrival at Edinburgh, the lords of the Congregation had sent deputies to Dunbar to assure the queen that they had no intention of throwing off their allegiance, and to induce her to yield to reasonable terms of accommodation. As a preliminary, she agreed to release their ministers from the sentence of outlawry, and allow them to preach to
those who chose to hear them. Meanwhile, she was busily employed in endeavors to disunite her opponents. Having spun out the negotiations which they had opened with her, until she understood that the greater part of their forces had left them, she advanced suddenly with her army to Edinburgh. The Protestants took up a position on the east side of Craingingate, and resolved to defend the capital, though against superior forces; but Leith having opened its gates to her, and Lord Erskine, who commanded the castle, threatening to fire upon them, they were forced to conclude a treaty by which they agreed to leave Edinburgh. They stipulated, however, that the inhabitants should be left at liberty to use that form of worship which was most acceptable to them. Knox would have remained with his congregation after the regent took possession of the city, but the nobles, knowing the value of his services, and the danger to which his life would be exposed, insisted on his accompanying them. Willock, who was less obnoxious to the hatred of the court and clergy, was therefore substituted in his place, and the prudence and firmness which this preacher displayed in that difficult situation proved that he was not unworthy of the choice which had fallen on him. The regent was extremely anxious to have the Roman Catholic service re-established in the Church at St. Giles, and employed the Earl of Huntly to persuade the citizens to declare in favor of the measure; but neither the authority of the queen, nor the entreaties which Huntly employed, both in private and at a public meeting called with that view, could prevail with them to swerve from their profession of the reformed religion, or to relinquish the right which was secured to them by the late treaty. Although the French soldiers who had come to the regent’s assistance kept the city in alarm, and disturbed the Protestant service, Willock maintained his place, and in the month of August he administered the sacrament of the supper after the reformed manner in St. Giles’s Church. The celebration of the Popish worship was confined to the royal chapel and the church of Holyroodhouse, during the time that the capital was in the possession of the royal forces.

In the month of August, a singular phenomenon was seen in Abbey church. The Archbishop of St. Andrews appeared in the pulpit, and preached. If his grace did not acquit him with great ability on the occasion, he at least behaved with becoming modesty. After discoursing for a short time, he requested the audience to excuse the defects of his sermon, as he had not been accustomed to the employment, and told them that he had provided a very skilful preacher to succeed him, upon which he concluded, and gave way to Friar Black.

On retiring from Edinburgh, Knox undertook a tour of preaching through the kingdom. The wide field which was before him, the interesting situation in which he was placed, the dangers by which he was surrounded, and the hopes which he cherished increased the ardor of his zeal, and stimulated him to extraordinary exertions both of body and
mind. Within less than two months, he traveled over a great part of Scotland. He visited Kelso, and Jedburgh, and Dumfries, and Ayr, and Stirling, and Perth, and Brechin, and Montrose, and Dundee, returned to St. Andrews. This itinerancy had great influence in diffusing the knowledge of the truth, and in strengthening Protestant interest. The attention of the nation was aroused; eyes were opened to the errors by which they had been deluded; and they panted for a continued and more copious supply of the word of life, which they had once been permitted to taste, and had felt so refreshing to their souls. I cannot better describe the emotions which this success excited in Knox’s breast, than by quoting from the familiar letters which he wrote at intervals snatched from his constant employment.

"Thus far hath God advanced the glory of his dear Son among us," says he, in a letter written from St. Andrews, on the twenty-third of June, "O! that my heart could be thankful for the superexcellent benefit of my God. The long thirst of my wretched heart is satisfied in abundance that is above my expectation, for now forty days and more hath my God used my tongue, in my native country, to the manifestation of his glory. Whatsoever now shall follow as touching my own carcass, his holy name be praised. The thirst of the poor people, as well as of the nobility here is wondrous great, which putteth me in comfort, that Christ Jesus shall triumph here in the North and extreme parts of the earth for a space." In another letter, dated the second of September, he says, "Time to me is so precious, that with great difficulty can I steal one hour in eight days, either to satisfy myself, or to gratify my friends. I have been in continual travel since the day of appointment; and, notwithstanding the fevers have vexed me, yet have I traveled through the most part of this realm, where (all praise to His Blessed Majesty!) men of all sorts and conditions embrace the truth. Enemies we have many, by reason of the Frenchmen who lately arrived, of whom our Papists hope golden hills. As we be not able to resist, we do nothing but go about Jericho, blowing with trumpets, as God giveth strength, hoping victory by his power alone." Soon after his arrival in Scotland, he wrote for his wife and family, whom he had left behind him at Geneva. On the thirteenth of June, Mrs. Knox and her mother were at Paris, and applied to Sir Nicholas Throkmorton, the English ambassador, for a safe-conduct to pass into England. Throkmorton, who by this time had penetrated the counsels of the French court, not only granted this request, but wrote a letter to Elizabeth, in which he urged the propriety of overlooking the offense which Knox had given by his publication against female government, and of conciliating him by the kind treatment of his wife; seeing he was in great credit with the lords of the Congregation, had been the principal instrument in producing the late change in Scotland, and was capable of doing essential service to her majesty. Accordingly, Mrs. Knox came into England, and, being conveyed to the borders by the direction of the
court, reached her husband in safety on the twentieth of September. Mrs. Bowes, after remaining a short time in her native country, followed her daughter into Scotland, where she remained until her death. The arrival of his family was the more gratifying to our reformer that they were accompanied by Christopher Goodman, his late colleague at Geneva. He had repeatedly written in the most pressing manner, for him to come to his assistance, and expressed much uneasiness at the delay of his arrival. Goodman became minister of Ayr, and was afterwards translated to St. Andrews. The settlement of Protestant ministers began to take place at an earlier period than is mentioned in our common histories. Previous to September 1559, eight towns were provided with pastors, and others remained unprovided owing to the scarcity of preachers.

In the meantime, it became daily more apparent that the lords of the Congregation would be unable, without foreign aid, to maintain the struggle in which they were involved. Had the contest been merely between them and the domestic party of the regent, they would soon have brought it to a successful termination, but they could not withstand the veteran troops which France had already sent to her assistance, and was preparing to send in still more formidable numbers. As far back as the middle of June, our Reformer had renewed his exertions for obtaining assistance from England and persuaded William Kircaldy of Grange, first to write, and afterwards to pay a visit, to Sir Henry Percy, who held a public situation on the English marches. Percy immediately transmitted his representations to London, and an answer was returned from Secretary Cecil, encouraging the correspondence.

Knox himself wrote to Cecil, requesting permission to visit England, and enclosed a letter to Queen Elizabeth, in which he attempted to apologize for his rude attack upon female government. When a man has been "overtaken in a fault," it is his glory to confess it; but those who have been so unfortunate as to incur the resentment of princes, must, if they expect to appease them, condescend to very ample and humiliating apologies. Luther involved himself more than once by attempting this task, and had not the luster of his talents protected him, his reputation must have suffered materially from his ill success. He was prevailed on to write submissive apologies to Leo X and Henry VIII for the freedom with which he had treated them in his writings, but, in both instances, his apologies were rejected with contempt, and he found himself under the necessity of retracting his retractations. Knox was in no danger of committing himself in this way. He was less violent in his temper than the German reformer, but he was also less flexible and accommodating. There was nothing at which he was more awkward than apologies, condescensions, and civilities; and on the present occasion he was placed in a very embarrassing predicament, as his judgment would not permit him to retract the sentiment which had given offense to the
English queen. In his letter to Elizabeth, he expresses deep distress at having incurred her displeasure, and warm attachment to her government, but the grounds on which he advises her to found her title to the crown, and indeed the whole strain in which the letter is written, are such as must have aggravated, instead of extenuating, his offense in the opinion of that high-minded princess. But, although his apology had been more ample and humble than it was, it is not probable that he would have succeeded better with Elizabeth than Luther did with her father. Christopher Goodman, after his return to England, was obliged, at two several periods, to subscribe a recantation of the opinion which he had given against the lawfulness of female government, nor could all his condescensions procure for him the favor of his sovereign. In fact, Elizabeth was all along extremely tender on the subject of her right to the throne; she never failed to resent every attack that was made upon this, from whatever quarter it came; and, although several historians have amused their readers with accounts of her ambition to be thought more beautiful and accomplished than the Queen of Scots, I am persuaded that she was always more jealous of Mary as a competitor for the crown, than as a rival in personal charms.

It does not, however, appear, that Elizabeth ever saw Knox's letter, and I have little doubt that it was suppressed by the sagacious secretary. Cecil was himself friendly to the measure of assisting the Scottish Congregation, and exerted all his influence to bring over the queen and her council to his opinion. Accordingly, Knox received a message, desiring him to meet Sir Henry Percy at Alnwick, on the second of August, upon business which required the utmost secrecy and dispatch; and himself came down to Stamford to hold an interview with him. The confusion produced by the advance of the regent's army upon Edinburgh retarded his journey, but no sooner was this settled, than Knox sailed from Pittenweem to Holy Island. Finding that Percy was recalled from the borders, he applied Sir James Croft, the Governor of Berwick. Croft, who was unapprised of the design on which he came, dissuaded him from proceeding farther into England, and undertook to dispatch his communications to London, and to procure a speedy return. Alexander Whitlaw of Greenrig, who had been banished from Scotland, having come to London on his way from France, was entrusted by the English court with their answer to the letters of the Congregation. Arriving at Berwick, he delivered the dispatches to Knox, who hastened with them to Stirling, where a meeting of the Protestant lords was to be held. He prudently returned by sea to Fife, for the queen regent had come to the knowledge of his journey to England, and Whitlaw, in traveling through East Lothian, being mistaken for Knox, was hotly pursued, and made his escape with great difficulty. The irresolution or the caution of Elizabeth's cabinet had led them to express themselves in such general and unsatisfactory terms that the lords of the Congregation, when the letters
were laid before them, were both disappointed and displeased, and it was with some difficulty that our Reformer obtained permission from them to write again to London in his own name. The representation which he gave of the urgency of the case, and the danger of farther hesitation or delay, produced a speedy reply, desiring them to send a confidential messenger to Berwick, who would receive a sum of money to assist them in prosecuting the war. About the same time, Sir Ralph Sadler was sent down to Berwick, to act as an accredited but secret agent, and the correspondence between the court of London and the lords of the Congregation continued afterwards to be carried on through him and Sir James Croft until the English auxiliary army entered Scotland.

If we reflect upon the connection which the religious and civil liberties of the nation had with the contest in which the Protestants were engaged, and upon our Reformer’s zeal in that cause, we shall not be greatly surprised to find him at this time acting in the character of a politician. Extraordinary cases cannot be measured by ordinary rules. In a great emergency, when all that is valuable and dear to a people is at stake, it becomes the duty of every individual to step forward and exert all his talents for the public good. Learning was at this time rare among the nobility, and though there were men of distinguished abilities among the Protestant leaders, few of them had been accustomed to transact public business. Accordingly, the management of the correspondence with England was for a time devolved chiefly on Knox and Balnaves. But our Reformer submitted to the task merely from a sense of duty and regard to the common cause, and when the younger Maitland acceded to their party, he expressed the greatest satisfaction at the prospect of being relieved from the burden.

It was not without reason that he longed for this deliverance. He now felt that it was as difficult to preserve integrity and Christian simplicity amidst the crooked wiles of political intrigue, as he had formerly found it to pursue truth through the perplexing mazes of scholastic sophistry. In performing a task foreign to his habits and repugnant to his disposition, he met with a good deal of vexation, and several unpleasant rubs. These were owing, partly to his own impetuosity, and partly to the grudge entertained against him by Elizabeth, but chiefly to the particular line of policy which the English cabinet had resolved to pursue. They were convinced of the danger of allowing the Scottish Protestants to be suppressed, but they wished to confine themselves to pecuniary aid, believing that such assistance the lords of the Congregation would be able expel the French and bring the contest to a successful issue, while, by the secrecy with which it could be conveyed, an open breach between France and England would be prevented. This plan, which originated in the personal disinclination of Elizabeth to the Scottish war rather than in the judgment of her wisest counsellors, protracted the contest, and gave occasion to some angry disputes between the English agents and those of
the Congregation. The former were continually urging the associated lords to attack the forces of the regent, before she received fresh succors from France, and blaming their slow operations; they complained of the want of secrecy in the correspondence with England, and even insinuated that the money, intended for the common cause, was partially applied to private purposes. The latter were irritated by this insinuation, and urged the necessity of military as well as pecuniary assistance.

In a letter to Sir James Croft, Knox represented the great importance of their being speedily assisted with troops, without which they would be in much hazard of miscarrying in an attack upon the fortifications of Leith. The court of England, he said, ought not to hesitate at offending France, of whose hostile intentions against them they had the most satisfactory evidence. But "if ye list to craft with thame," continued he, "the sending of a thousand or mo men to us can breake no league nor point of peace contracted betwixt you and France, for it is free for your subjects to serve in warr anie prince or nation for their wages, and if ye fear that such excuses will not prevail, ye may declare thame rebelles to your realme when ye shall be assured that thei be in our companye." No doubt such things have been often done, and such "political casuistry" (as Keith not improperly styles it) is not unknown at courts. But it must be confessed that the measure recommended by Knox (the morality of which must stand on the same grounds with the assistance which the English were at that time affording) was too glaring to be concealed by the excuses which he suggested. Croft laid hold of this opportunity to check the impetuosity of his correspondent, and wrote him that he wondered how he, "being a wise man," would require from them such aid as they could not give "without breach of treaty, and dishonour," and that "the world was not so blind but that it could soon espy" the "devices" by which he proposed "to colour their doings." Knox, in his reply, apologized for his "unreasonable request," but, at the same time reminded Croft of the common practice of courts in such matters, and the conduct of the French court towards the English in a recent instance. He was not ignorant, he said, of the inconveniences which might attend an open declaration in their favor, but feared that they would have cause to "repent the drift of time, when the remedy would not be so easy."

This is the only instance in which I have found our Reformer recommending dissimulation, which was very foreign to the openness of his natural temper, and the blunt and rigid honesty that marked his general conduct. His own opinion was that the English court ought from the first to have done what they found themselves obliged to do at last—avow their resolution to support the Congregation. Keith praises Croft's "just reprimand on Mr. Knox's double fac'd proposition," and Cecil says that his "audacite was well tamed." We must not, however, imagine, that these statesmen had any scruple of conscience, or nice feeling of honor on this point. For, on the very day on which Croft reprimanded Knox, he
wrote to Cecil that he thought the queen ought openly to take part with the Congregation. And in the same letter in which Cecil speaks of Knox’s audacity, he advises Croft to adopt in substance the wry measure which our Reformer had recommended, by sending five or six officers, who should "steal from thence with appearance of displeasure for lack of interteynment," and in a subsequent letter, he gives directions to send three or four, fit for being captains, who should give out that they left Berwick, "as men desyrous to be exercised in the warres, rather than to lye idely in that towne."

Notwithstanding the prejudice which existed in the English court against our Reformer, on account of his "audacity" in attacking female prerogative, they were too well acquainted with his integrity and influence to decline his services. Cecil kept up a correspondence with him, and in the directions sent from London for the management of the subsidy, it was expressly provided that he should be one of the council for examining the receipts and payments, to see that it was applied to "the common action," and not to any private use.

In the meantime, his zeal and activity, in the cause of the congregation, exposed him to the deadly resentment of the queen regent and the Papists. A reward was publicly offered to anyone who should apprehend or kill him, and not a few, actuated by hatred or avarice, lay in wait to seize his person. But this did not deter him from appearing in public, nor from traveling through the country in the discharge of his duty. His exertions at this period were incredibly great. By day he was employed in preaching, by night in writing letters on public business. He was the soul of the Congregation, was always found at the post of danger, and by his presence, his public discourses, and private advices, animated the whole body and defeated the schemes employed to corrupt or disunite them.

The Congregation had lately received a considerable increase of strength by the accession of the former regent, the Duke of Chastelherault. His eldest son, the Earl of Arran, who commanded the Scots guard in France, had embraced the principles of the Reformation. Understanding that the French court, which was entirely under the direction of the princes of Lorrain, intended to throw him into prison, he secretly retired to Geneva, from which he was conveyed to London by the assistance of Elizabeth’s ministers. In the month of August he came to his father at Hamilton. The representations of his son, joined with those of the English cabinet, and with his own jealousy of the designs of the queen regent, easily gained over the vacillating duke, who met with the lords of the Congregation, and subscribed their bond of confederation.

Our Reformer was now called to take a share in a very delicate and important measure. When they first had recourse to arms in their own defense, the lords of the Congregation had no intention of making any alteration in the government, or of assuming the exercise of the supreme authority. Even after they had adopted a more regular and permanent
system of resistance to the measures of the queen regent, they continued to recognize the station which she held, presented petitions to her, and listened respectfully to the proposals which she made for removing the grounds of variance. But finding that she was fully bent upon the execution of her plan for subverting the national liberties, and that her official situation gave her great advantages in carrying on this design, they began to deliberate upon the propriety of adopting a different line of conduct. Their sovereigns were minors, in a foreign country, and under the management of persons to whose influence the evils of which they complained were principally to be ascribed. The queen dowager held the regency by the authority of parliament; might she not be deprived of it by the same authority? In the present state of the country, it was impossible for a free regular parliament to meet, but the majority of the nation declared their dissatisfaction with her administration, and was it not competent for them to provide for the public safety, which was exposed to such imminent danger? These were the questions which formed the topic of frequent conversation at this time.

After much deliberation, a numerous assembly, consisting nobles, barons, and representatives of boroughs, met at Edinburgh, on the twenty-first of October 1559, to bring this important point to a solemn issue. To this assembly Knox and Willock were called, and the question being stated to them, they were required to deliver their opinions as to the lawfulness of the proposed measure. Willock, who then officiated as minister of Edinburgh, being first asked, declared it to be his judgment, founded on reason and Scripture, that the power of rulers was limited; that they might be deprived of it upon valid grounds; that the queen regent having, by fortifying Leith, and introducing foreign troops into the country, evinced a fixed determination to oppress and enslave the kingdom, might justly be divested of her authority, by the nobles and barons, as native counselors of the realm, whose petitions and remonstrance she had repeatedly rejected. Knox assented to the opinion delivered by his brother, and added that the assembly might, with safe consciences, act upon it, provided they attended to the three following things: First, that they did not suffer the conduct of the queen regent to alienate their affections from due allegiance to their sovereigns, Francis and Mary; second, that they were not actuated in the measure by private hatred or envy of the queen dowager, but by regard to the safety of the commonwealth; and, third, that any sentence which they might at this time pronounce, should not preclude her re-admission to office, if she afterwards discovered sorrow for her conduct and a disposition to submit to the advice of the estates of the nation. After this, the whole assembly, having severally delivered their opinions, did, by a solemn deed, suspend the queen dowager from her authority as regent of the kingdom, until the meeting of a free parliament; and, at the same time, elected a council for the management of public affairs during this interval. When the council
had occasion to treat of matters connected with religion, four of the ministers were appointed to assist in their deliberations. These were Knox, Willock, Goodman, and Alexander Gordon, Bishop of Galloway, who had embraced the Reformation.

It has been alleged by some writers that the question respecting the suspension of the queen regent was altogether incompetent for ministers of the gospel to determine, and that Knox and Willock, by the advice which they gave on this occasion, exposed themselves unnecessarily to odium. But it is not easy to see how they could have been excused in refusing to deliver their opinion, when required by those who had submitted to their ministry, upon a measure which involved a case of conscience, as well as a question of law and political right. The advice which was actually given and followed is a matter of greater consequence, than the quarter from which it came. As this rests upon principles very different from those which produced resistance to princes, and limitation on their authority, under feudal governments, and as our Reformer has been the object of much animadversion for inculcating these principles, I shall embrace the present opportunity to offer a few remarks on this interesting subject.

Among the various causes which affected the general state of society and government in Europe during the middle ages, the influence of religion cannot be overlooked. Debased by ignorance and fettered by superstition, the minds of men were prepared to acquiesce without examination in the claims of authority, and tamely to submit to every yoke. In whatever light we view Popery, the genius of that singular system of religion will be found to be adverse to liberty. The court of Rome, while it aimed directly at the establishment of a spiritual despotism in the hands of ecclesiastics, contributed to rivet the chains of political servitude upon the people. In return for the support which princes yielded to its arrogant claims, it was content to invest them with an absolute authority over the bodies of their subjects. By the priestly unction, performed at the coronation of kings in the name of the holy see, a sacred character was understood to be imparted, which raised them to a superiority over their nobility which they did not possess according to feudal ideas, rendered their persons inviolable, and their office divine. Although the sovereign pontiffs claimed, and on different occasions exercised, power of dethroning kings, and of absolving subjects from their allegiance; yet any attempt of this kind, when it proceeded from the people themselves, was denounced as a crime deserving severest punishment in this world, and damnation in the next. Hence sprung the doctrine of the divine right of kings to rule independently of their people, and of passive obedience and non-resistance to their will, under the sanction of which they were encouraged to sport with the lives and happiness of their subjects, to indulge in the most tyrannical and wanton acts of oppression without the dread of resistance, or of being called to account by any power on
earth. Even in countries where the people were understood to enjoy certain political privileges, transmitted from remote ages, or wrested from their princes on some favorable occasions, these principles were generally prevalent; and, availing himself of them, it was easy for an ambitious and powerful monarch to violate the rights of the people with impunity, and upon a constitution, the forms of which were friendly to popular liberty, to establish an administration completely arbitrary and despotic.

The contest between papal sovereignty and the authority of general councils, which was carried on during the fifteenth century, elicited some of the essential principles of liberty, which afterwards applied to political government. The revival of learning, by unfolding the principles of legislation and modes of government in the republics of ancient Greece and Rome, gradually led to more liberal notions on this subject. But these were confined to a few, and had no influence upon the general state of society. The spirit infused by philosophy and literature is too feeble and contracted to produce a radical reform of established abuses; and learned men, proud of their own superior illumination, and satisfied with the liberty of indulging their speculations, have generally been too indifferent or too timid to attempt the improvement of the multitude. It is to the religious spirit excited during the sixteenth century, which spread rapidly through Europe, and diffused itself among all classes of men, that we are chiefly indebted for the propagation of the genuine principles of rational liberty and the consequent amelioration of government. Civil and ecclesiastical tyranny were so closely combined that it was impossible for men to emancipate themselves from the latter without throwing off the former, and from arguments which established their religious rights, the transition was easy, and almost unavoidable, to disquisitions about their civil privileges. In those kingdoms in which the rulers threw off the Roman yoke and introduced the Reformation by their authority, the influence was more imperceptible and slow; and in some of them, as in England, the power taken from the ecclesiastical was thrown into the regal scale, which proved so far prejudicial to popular liberty. But where the Reformation was embraced by the great body of a nation, while the ruling powers continued to oppose it, the effect was visible and immediate. The interested and obstinate support which rulers gave to the old system of error and ecclesiastical tyranny, and their cruel persecution of all who favored the new opinions, drove their subjects to inquire into the just limits of authority and obedience. Their judgments once informed as to the rights to which they were entitled, and their consciences satisfied respecting the means which they might employ to acquire them, the immense importance of the immediate object in view, their emancipation from religious bondage, and the salvation of themselves and their posterity, impelled them to make the attempt with
an enthusiasm and perseverance which the mere love of civil liberty could not have inspired.

In effecting that memorable revolution, which terminated in favor of religious and political liberty in so many nations of Europe, the public teachers of the Protestant doctrine had a principal influence. By their instructions and exhortations, they roused the people to consider their rights and exert their power; they stimulated timid and wary politicians; they encouraged and animated princes, nobles, and confederated states, with their armies, against the most formidable opposition, and under the most overwhelming difficulties, until their exertions were ultimately crowned with success. These facts are now admitted, and this honor has at last, through the force of truth, been conceded to the religious leaders of the Protestant Reformation, by philosophical writers, who had too long branded them as ignorant and fanatical.

Our Reformer had caught a large portion of the spirit of civil liberty. We have already adverted to the circumstance in his education which directed his attention, at an early period, to some of its principles. His subsequent studies introduced him to an acquaintance with the maxims and modes of government in the free states of antiquity, and it is reasonable to suppose that his intercourse with the republics of Switzerland and Geneva had some influence on his political creed. Having formed his sentiments independently of the prejudices arising from established laws, long usage, and commonly received opinions, his zeal and intrepidity prompted him to avow and propagate them, when others, less sanguine and resolute, would have been restrained by fear, or by despair of success. Extensive observation had convinced him of the glaring perversion of government in the European kingdoms, but his principles led him to desire their reform, not their subversion. His admiration of the polity of republics, ancient or modern, was not so great or indiscriminate as to prevent him from separating the essential principles of equity and freedom which they contained from others which were incompatible with monarchy. He was perfectly sensible of a necessity of regular government to the maintenance of justice and order, and aware of the danger of setting men loose from its control. And he uniformly inculcated a conscientious obedience to the lawful commands of rulers, and respect to their persons as well as to their authority, even when they were charged with various mismanagements, so long as they did not break through all the restraints of law and justice, and cease to perform great and fundamental duties of their office.

But he held that rulers, supreme as well as subordinate, were invested with authority for the public good; that obedience was not due to them in anything contrary to the divine law, natural or revealed; that, in every free and well-constituted government, the of the land was superior to the will of the prince; that inferior magistrates and subjects might restrain the supreme magistrate from particular illegal acts, without throwing off
their allegiance, or being guilty of rebellion; that no class of men have an
original, inherent, and indefeasible right to rule over a people, indepen-
dently of their will and consent; that every nation is entitled to provide and
require that they shall be ruled by laws are agreeable to the divine law, and
calculated to promote its welfare; that there is a mutual compact, tacit and
implied, formal and explicit, between rulers and their subjects; and if the
former shall flagrantly violate this, employ that power for destruction of the
commonwealth which was committed to them for its preservation and benefit, or,
in one word, if they become habitual tyrants and notorious oppressors, that
the people are absolved from allegiance, and have a right to resist them, for-
mally to depose them from their place, and to elect others in their room.

The real power of the Scottish kings was, indeed, always limited, and
there are in our history, previous to the era of the Reformation, many
instances of resistance to their authority. But, though these were pleased
as precedents on this occasion, it must be confessed that we cannot
trace them to the principles of genuine liberty. They were the effects of
sudden resentment on account of some extraordinary act of mal-administra-
tion, or of the ambition of some powerful baron, or of the jealousy
with which the feudal aristocracy watched over the privileges of their
own order. The people who followed the standards of their chiefs had little
interest in the struggle and derived no benefit from the limitations which
were imposed upon the sovereign. But, at this time, more just and enlarged
sentiments were diffused through the nation, and the idea of a commonwealth,
including the mass of the people, as well as the privileged orders, began to be
entertained. Our Reformer, whose notions of hereditary right, whether in
kings or nobles, were not exalted, studied to repress the insolence and
oppression of the nobility. He reminded them of the original equality of
men, and the ends for which some were raised above others; and he taught
the people that they had rights to preserve, as well as duties to perform. With
respect to female government, he never moved any question among his
countrymen, nor attempted to gain proselytes to his opinion.

Such, in substance, were the political sentiments which were inculcated
by our Reformer, and which were more than once acted upon in Scotland
during his lifetime. That in an age when the principles of political liberty
were only beginning to be understood, such sentiments should have been
regarded with a suspicious eye by some of the learned who had not yet
thrown off common prejudices, and that they should have exposed those
who maintained them to a charge of treason from despotical rulers and
their numerous satellites, is far from being matter of wonder. But it
must excite both surprise and indignation to find writers in the present
enlightened age, and under the sunshine of British liberty (if our sun is
not fast going down), expressing their abhorrence of these principles, and
exhausting upon their authors all the invective and virulence of the
former anti-monarchomachi, and advocates of passive obedience. They are essentially the principles upon which the free constitution of Britain rests; and the most obnoxious of them were reduced to practice at the memorable era of the Revolution, when the necessity of employing them was not more urgent or unquestionable, than it was at the suspension of the Queen Regent of Scotland, and the subsequent deposition of her daughter.

I have said essentially; for I would not be understood as meaning to say that every proposition advanced by Knox on this subject is expressed in the most guarded and unexceptionable manner, or that all the cases in which he was led to vindicate forcible resistance to rulers, were such as rendered it necessary, and as may be pleaded as precedents in modern times. The political doctrines maintained at that period received a tincture from the spirit of the age, and were accommodated to a state of society and government comparatively rude and unsettled. The checks which have since been introduced into the constitution, and the influence which public opinion, expressed by the organ of a free press, has upon the conduct of rulers, are sufficient, in ordinary cases, to restrain dangerous encroachments, or to afford the means of correcting them in a peaceable way, and have thus happily superseded the necessity of having recourse to those desperate but decisive remedies which were formerly applied by an oppressed and indignant people. But if ever the time come when these principles shall be generally abjured or forgotten, the extinction of the boasted liberty of Britain will not be far off.

There are objections against our Reformer’s political principles which demand consideration, from the authority to which they appeal, and the influence which they may have on pious minds. "The doctrine of resistance to civil rulers," it is alleged, "is repugnant to the express directions of the New Testament, which repeatedly enjoin Christians to be subject to the powers that be, and denounce damnation against such as disobey or resist them on any pretext whatever. With the literal and strict import of these precepts the example of the primitive Christians agreed; for, even after they became very numerous, so as to be capable of opposing the government under which they lived, they never attempted to shake off the authority of the Roman emperors, or to employ force to protect themselves from the tyranny and persecutions to which they were exposed. Besides, granting that it is lawful for subjects to vindicate their civil rights and privileges by resisting arbitrary rulers, to have recourse to forcible measures for promoting Christianity is diametrically opposite to the genius of that religion which was propagated at first, and is still to be defended, not by arms and violence, but by teaching and suffering." These objections are more specious than solid. The directions and precepts on this subject, which are contained in the New Testament, must not be stretched beyond their evident scope and proper import.
They do not give greater power to magistrates than they formerly possessed, nor do they supersede any of the rights or privileges to which subjects were entitled by the common law of nature, or by the particular statutes of any country. The New Testament does not give directions to communities respecting the original formation or subsequent improvement of their civil constitutions, nor prescribe the course which ought to be pursued in certain extraordinary uses, when rulers abuse the power with which they are invested, and convert their legitimate authority into an engine of despotism and oppression. It supposes magistrates to be acting within the proper line of their office, and discharging its duties to the advantage of the society over which they are placed. And it teaches Christians that the liberty which Christ purchased, and to the enjoyment of which they are called by the gospel, does not exempt them from subjection and obedience to civil authority, which is a divine ordinance for the good of mankind; that they are bound to obey existing rulers, although they should be of a different religion from themselves; and that Christianity, so far from setting them free from obligations to this or any other relative duty, strengthens these obligations, and requires them to discharge their duties for conscience’ sake, with fidelity, cheerfulness, patience, long-suffering, and singleness of heart. Viewed in this light, nothing can be more reasonable in its own nature, or more honorable to the gospel, than the directions which it gives on this subject; and we must perceive a peculiar propriety in the frequency and earnestness with which they are urged, when we consider the danger in which the primitive Christians were of supposing that they were liberated from the ordinary restraints of the rest of mankind. But if we shall go beyond this, and assert that the Scriptures have prohibited resistance to rulers in every case, and that the great body of a nation consisting of Christians, in attempting to curb the fury of their rulers, or to deprive them of the power which they have grossly abused, are guilty of that crime against which the apostle denounces damnation, we represent the beneficent religion of Jesus as sanctioning despotism, and entailing all the evils of political bondage upon mankind; and we tread in the steps of those enemies to Christianity, who, under the color of paying a compliment to its pacific, submissive, tolerant, and self-denying maxims, have represented it as calculated to produce a passive, servile spirit, and to extinguish courage, patriotism, the love of civil liberty, the desire of self-preservation, and every kind of disposition to repel injuries, or to obtain the redress of the most intolerable grievances.

The example of the primitive Christians is not binding upon others any farther than it is conformable to the Scriptures; and the circumstances in which they were placed were totally different from those of the Protestants in Scotland, and in other countries, at the time of the Reformation. The fathers often indulge in oratorical exaggerations when speaking of the numbers of the Christians; nor is there any satisfactory
evidence that they ever approached near to a majority of the Roman empire, during the time that they were exposed to persecution. "If thou mayest be made free, use it rather," says the Apostle—a maxim which is applicable, by just analogy, to political as well as domestic freedom. The Christian religion natively tends to cherish and diffuse a spirit favorable to civil liberty, and this, in its turn, has the most happy influence upon Christianity, which never flourished extensively, and for a long period in any country where despotism prevailed. It must therefore be the duty of every Christian to exert himself for the acquisition and defense of this invaluable blessing. Christianity ought not to be propagated by force of arms, but the external liberty of professing it may be vindicated in that way both against foreign invaders and against domestic tyrants. If the free exercise of their religion, or their right to remove religious abuses, enter into the grounds of the struggle which a nation maintains against oppressive rulers, the cause becomes of vastly more importance, its justice is more unquestionable, and it is still more worthy, not only of their prayers and petitions, but of their blood and treasure, than if it had been maintained solely for the purpose of securing their fortunes, or of acquiring some mere worldly privilege. And to those whose minds are not warped by prejudice, and who do not labor under a confusion of ideas on the subject, it must surely appear paradoxical to assert that, while God has granted to subjects a right to take the sword of just defense for securing objects of temporary and inferior nature, he has prohibited them from using this remedy, and left them at the mercy of every lawless despot, with respect to a concern the most important of all, whether it be viewed as relating to his own honor, or to the welfare of mankind.

To those who judge of the propriety of any measure from the success with which it is accompanied, will be disposed to condemn the suspension of the queen regent. Soon after this step was taken, the affairs of the Congregation began to wear a gloomy aspect. The messenger whom they sent to Berwick to receive a remittance from the English court was intercepted on his return, and rifled of the treasure; their soldiers mutinied for want of pay; they were repulsed in a premature assault upon the fortifications of Leith, and worsted in a skirmish with the French troops; the secret emissaries of the regent were too successful among them; their numbers daily decreased; and the remainder, disunited, dispirited, and dismayed, came to the resolution of abandoning Edinburgh on the evening of the fifth of November, and retreated with precipitation and disgrace to Stirling. Amidst the universal dejection produced by these disasters, the spirit of Knox remained unsubdued. On the day after their arrival at Stirling, he mounted the pulpit, and delivered a discourse, which had a wonderful effect in rekindling the zeal and courage of the Congregation. Their faces (he said) were confounded, their enemies triumphed, their hearts had
quaked for fear, and still remained oppressed with sorrow and shame. Why had God thus dejected them? The situation of their affairs required plain language, and he would use it. In the present distressed state of their minds, they were in danger of attributing these misfortunes to a wrong cause, and of imagining that they had offended in taking the sword of self-defense into their hands, just as the tribes of Israel did, when twice discomfited in the war which they undertook, by divine direction, against their brethren the Benjamites. Having divided the Congregation into two classes, those who had been embarked in this cause from the beginning, and those who had lately acceded to it, he proceeded to point out what he considered as blamable in the conduct of each. The former (he said) had laid aside that humility and dependence upon Divine Providence which they had discovered when their number was small; and, since they were joined by the Hamiltons, had become elated, secure, and self-confident. "But wherein had my lord duke and his friends offended? I am uncertain if my lord's grace has unfeignedly repented of his assistance to these murderers, unjustly pursuing us. Yea, I am uncertain if he has repented of that innocent blood of Christ's blessed martyrs, which was shed in his default. But let it be that so he has done (as I hear that he has confessed his fault before the lords and brethren of the Congregation); yet I am assured that neither he, nor yet his friends, did feel before this time the anguish and grief of heart which we felt, when in their blind fury they pursued us. And therefore God hath justly permitted both them and us to fall in this fearful confusion at once—us, for that we put our trust and confidence in man, and them, because they should feel in their own hearts how bitter was the cup which they made others drink before them." After exhorting all to amendment of life, to prayers, and works of charity, he concluded with an animating address: "God," he said, "often suffered the wicked to triumph for a while, and exposed his chosen congregation to mockery, dangers, and apparent destruction, in order to abase their self-confidence, and induce them to look to himself for deliverance and victory. If they turned unfeignedly to the Eternal, he no more doubted that their present distress would be converted into joy, and followed by success, than he doubted that Israel was finally victorious over the Benjamites, after being twice repulsed with ignominy. The cause in which they were engaged would prevail in Scotland, in spite of all opposition. It was the eternal truth of the eternal God which they maintained; it might be oppressed for a time, but would ultimately triumph."

The audience, who had entered the church in deep despondency, left it with renovated courage. In the afternoon the council met, and, after prayer by the Reformer, unanimously agreed to dispatch William Maitland of Lethington to London, to supplicate more effectual assistance from Elizabeth. In the meantime, as they were unable to keep the field, it
was agreed that they should divide, and that the one half of the council
should remain at Glasgow and the other at St. Andrews. Knox was
appointed to attend the latter in the double capacity of preacher and
secretary. The French having in the beginning of the year 1560,
penetrated into Fife, he encouraged that band, which, under the Earl of
Arran and the Prior of St. Andrews, bravely resisted their progress, until
the appearance of the English fleet compelled the enemy to retreat with
precipitation.
The disaster which obliged the Protestant army to raise the siege of Leith,
and to evacuate Edinburgh, turned out eventually to the advantage of
their cause. It induced the English court to abandon the line of cautious
policy which they had hitherto pursued. Maitland’s embassy to London
was successful, and, on the twenty-seventh of February, 1560, Elizabeth
concluded a mutual treaty with the lords of the Congregation, by which
she engaged to send an army into Scotland, to assist them in expelling
the French forces. Being informed of this treaty, the queen regent
resolved to disperse the troops which were collected at Glasgow under
the Duke of Chastelherault, before the English army could arrive. On the
seventh of March, the French, amounting to two thousand foot and three
hundred horse, issued Leith, and proceeding by Linlithgow and
Kirkintulloch, suddenly appeared before Glasgow. Having reduced the
episcopal castle, they were preparing to advance to Hamilton, when they
received a message from the queen regent, informing them that the
English army had begun its march into Scotland, upon which they
relinquished their design, and returned to Leith, carrying along with
them a number of prisoners, and a considerable booty. In the beginning
of April, the English army joined the forces of the Congregation. The
French shut themselves up within the fortifications of Leith, which was
invested both by sea and land; and the queen regent, who had for some
time been in a declining state of health, was received by Lord Erskine
into the castle of Edinburgh where she died during the siege of Leith.
These proceedings were viewed with deep interest by the court of France.
Henry II, having died in July 1559, was succeeded by Francis II, the
husband of the young Queen of Scots, in consequence of which, the
administration of affairs fell entirely into the hands of the Duke of Guise
and the Cardinal of Lorrain. They employed every art of political intrigue
to prevent the Queen of England from giving assistance to the Scottish
Congregation, and to prevail on her to desert them after she had
undertaken their protection. Nor were they altogether unsuccessful in
their attempts. Elizabeth, partly from extreme caution and parsimony,
and partly from the influence of some of her counselors, was induced to
listen to their plausible proposals; she delayed the march of her army
into Scotland, and after the siege of Leith was commenced, suspended
the military operations, and engaged in premature negotiations for peace.
This last step justly alarmed the Congregation, and while they neglected
no means to persuade the English court to perform the stipulations of the late treaty, they prepared for the worst by renewing their covenant among themselves. Elizabeth at last listened to the advice of her ablest ministers and resolved to prosecute the war with vigor. No sooner did she evince this determination than the French court yielded to all her demands. The armament which they had lately fitted out at great expense for Scotland, had been dispersed by a storm; the Frith of Forth was blocked up by an English fleet; and a confederacy had been formed among a number of the nobility in France to remove the princes of Lorrain from the administration of public affairs, and to free the Protestants in that kingdom from the severe persecutions to which they had hitherto been exposed. Influenced by these circumstances, the French cabinet sent plenipotentiaries to Edinburgh, who concluded a treaty with England, by which the Scottish differences were also adjusted. By this treaty it was provided, that the French troops should immediately be removed from Scotland; that an amnesty should be granted to all who had been engaged in the late resistance to the queen regent; that the principal grievances of which they complained in the civil administration should be redressed; that a free parliament should be held to settle the other affairs of the kingdom; and that, during the absence of their sovereigns, the government should be administered by a council, to be chosen partly by Francis and Mary, and partly by the estates of the nation. The treaty was signed on the seventh of July. On the sixteenth, the French army embarked at Leith, and the English troops began their march into their own country; and on the nineteenth, the Congregation assembled in St. Giles's Church, to return solemn thanks to God for the restoration of peace, and the success which had crowned their exertions. In this manner terminated the civil war which attended the Scottish Reformation, after it had continued for twelve months, with less rancor and bloodshed than have distinguished any other contest of a similar kind.

During the continuance of the war, the Protestant preachers had been assiduous in disseminating knowledge through all parts of the kingdom, and their success was equal to their diligence. They had received a considerable accession to their number from the ranks of their opponents. While we venerate those men who enlisted under the banners of truth when friends were few, and who boldly took the field in her defense when the victory was yet dubious and distant, and while we cheerfully award to them the highest meed of honor, let us not load with heavy censure, or even deprive of all praise, such as, less enlightened, or less courageous, were tardy in appearing for the cause. He who "knew what is in man," has taught us not to reject such disciples, in the dawn of light, and in perilous times. Nicodemus, who at first "came to Jesus by night" and Joseph of Arimathea, who was his disciple, "but secretly for
fear of the Jews," afterwards avouched their faith in him, and obtained the honor of embalming and interring his body, when all his early followers had forsaken him and fled. Several of the Scottish clergy, who were favorable to Protestant doctrine, had contrived to retain their places in the Church by concealing their sentiments, or by securing the favor of some powerful patron. Of this class were John Winram, subprior of the abbey of St. Andrews, Adam Herriot, a friar of that abbey, John Spottiswood, parson of Calder; and John Carswell, rector of Kilmartine. In the gradual diffusion of knowledge through the nation, the minds of many who were attending the schools had been also enlightened, among whom were David Lindsay, Andrew Hay, Robert Montgomery, Patrick Adamson, and Robert and Archibald Hamilton. During the year 1559, these men came forward as auxiliaries to the first Protestant preachers, and so successful were they in instructing the people that the French would have found it extremely difficult to support the ancient superstition, though they had proved victorious in the military contest. On the other hand, the exertions of the Popish clergy had been feeble in the extreme. Too corrupt to think of reforming their manners, too illiterate to be capable of defending their errors, they placed their forlorn hope on the success of the French arms, and looked forward to the issue of the war as involving the establishment or the ruin of their religion. The Bishop of Amiens, who came to Scotland in the double capacity of ambassador from the French court and papal legate, was accompanied by three doctors of the Sorbonne, who gave out that they would confound the reformed ministers, and bring back the people whom they had misled to the bosom of the Church, by the force of argument and persuasion. Lesley boasts of the success which attended their exertions, but there is good reason for thinking that these foreign divines confined themselves to the easier task of instructing the Scottish clergy to perform the religious service with greater solemnity, and to purify the churches, in a canonical manner, from the pollution which they had contracted by the profane worship of heretics. One effort, however, was made by the Popish clergy to support their sinking cause, which, if it had succeeded, would have done more to retrieve their reputation than all the arguments of the Sorbonnists; and, as this was the last attempt of the kind that ever was made in Scotland, the reader may be gratified with the following account of it.

In the neighborhood of Musselburgh was a chapel dedicated to our Lady of Loretto, the sanctity of which was increased from its having been the favorite abode of the celebrated Thomas the Hermit. To this sacred place the inhabitants of Scotland, from time immemorial, had repaired in pilgrimage, to present their offerings to the Virgin, and to experience the efficacy of her prayers, and the healing virtue of the wonder-working Hermit of Lareit. In the course of the year 1559, public notice was given by the friars that they intended to put the truth of their religion to the
proof, by performing a miracle at this chapel upon a young man who had been born blind. On the day appointed, a vast concourse of spectators assembled from all parts of Lothian. The young man, accompanied with a solemn procession of monks, was conducted to a scaffold on the outside of the chapel, and was exhibited to the multitude. Many of them knew him to be the blind man they had often seen begging, and whose necessities they relieved; all looked on him, and pronounced him stone blind.

The friars then proceeded to their devotions with great fervency, invoking the assistance of the Virgin, at whose shrine they stood, and that of all the saints whom they honored; and after some time spent in prayers and religious ceremonies, the man opened his eyes, to the astonishment of the spectators. Having returned thanks to the friars and their saintly patrons for this wonderful cure, he was allowed to go down the scaffold to gratify the curiosity of the people, and to receive their alms.

It happened that there was among the crowd a gentleman of Fife, Robert Colville of Cleish, who, from his romantic bravery, was usually called Squire Meldrum, in allusion to a person of that name who had been celebrated by Sir David Lindsay. He was of Protestant principles, but his wife was a Roman Catholic, and, being pregnant at this time, had sent a servant with a present to the chapel of Loretto, to procure the assistance of the Virgin in her labor. The squire was too gallant to hurt his lady’s feelings by prohibiting the present being sent off, but he resolved to prevent the superstitious offering, and with that view had come to Musselburgh. He witnessed the miracle of curing the blind man with the distrust natural to a Protestant, and determined, if possible, to detect the imposition before he left the place. Wherefore, having sought out the young man from the crowd, he put a piece of money into his hand, and persuaded him to accompany him to his lodgings in Edinburgh. Taking him into a private room, and locking the door, he told him plainly that he was convinced he had engaged in a wicked conspiracy with the friars to impose on the credulity of the people, and at last drew from him the secret of the story. When a boy, he had been employed to tend the cattle belonging to the nuns of Sciennes in the vicinity of Edinburgh, and had attracted their attention by a peculiar faculty which he had of turning up the white of his eyes, and of keeping them in this position, so as to appear quite blind. Certain friars in the city, having come to the knowledge of this fact, conceived the design of making it subservient to their purposes, and having prevailed on the sisters of Sciennes to part with the poor boy, lodged him in one of their cells. By daily practice he became an adept in the art of counterfeiting blindness; and after he had remained so long in concealment as not to be recognized by his former acquaintance, he was sent forth to beg as a blind pauper, the friars having previously bound him, by a solemn vow, not to reveal the secret. To confirm his narrative, he “played his pavie” before the squire, by
"flypping up the lid of his eyes, and casting up the white," so as to appear as blind as he did on the scaffold at Loretto. The gentleman laid before him the iniquity of his conduct, and told him that he must next day repeat the whole story publicly at the cross of Edinburgh; and, as this would expose him to the vengeance of the friars, he engaged to become his protector, and to retain him as a servant in his house. The young man complied with his directions, and Cleish, with his drawn sword in his hand, having stood by him till he had finished his confession, placed him on the same horse with himself, and carried him off to Fife. The detection of this imposture was quickly published through the country, and covered the friars with confusion. My author does not say whether it cured Lady Cleish of her superstition, but I shall afterwards have occasion to notice its influence in opening the eyes of one who became a distinguished promoter of the Reformation.

The treaty which put an end to the civil war in Scotland made no particular settlement respecting the religious differences, but it was on that very account the more fatal to Popery. The Protestants were left in the possession of authority, and they were now by far the most powerful party in the nation, both as to rank and numbers. With the exception of those which had been occupied by the queen regent and her foreign auxiliaries, the Roman Catholic worship was almost universally deserted throughout the kingdom, and no provision was made in the treaty for its restoration. The firm hold which it once had on the opinions and affections of the people was completely loosened; it was supported by force alone, and the moment that the French troops embarked, that fabric which had stood for ages in Scotland fell to the ground. Its feeble and dismayed priests ceased of their own accord from the celebration of its rites, and the reformed service was peaceably set up, wherever ministers could be found to perform it. The parliament, when it entered upon the consideration of the state of religion, as one of the points undecided by the commissioners, which had been left to them, had little else to do but to sanction what the nation had previously done, by legally abolishing the Popish, and establishing the Protestant religion.

When the circumstances in which they were assembled, and the affairs on which they were called to deliberate, are taken into consideration, this must be regarded as the most important meeting of the estates of the kingdom that had ever been held Scotland. It engrossed the attention of the nation, and the eyes of Europe were fixed on its proceedings. The parliament met the tenth of July, but, agreeably to the terms of the treaty, it was prorogued, without entering on business, until the first of August. Although a great concourse of people resorted to Edinburgh on that occasion, yet no tumult or disturbance of public peace occurred. Many of the lords spiritual and temporal, who were attached to Popery, absented themselves; but the chief patrons of the old religion, as the Archbishop of St. Andrews, and the Bishops of Dumblane and Dunkeld,
countenanced the assembly by their presence, and were allowed to act with freedom as lords of parliament. There is one fact in its constitution and proceedings which strikingly illustrates the influence of the Reformation upon political liberty. In the reign of James I the lesser barons had been exempted from attendance on parliament, and permitted to elect representatives in their different shires. But a privilege which, in modern times, is so eagerly coveted, was then so little prized, that, except in a few instances, no representatives from the shires had appeared in parliament, and the lesser barons had almost forfeited their right by neglecting to exercise it. At this time, however, they assembled at Edinburgh, and agreed upon a petition to the parliament, claiming to be restored to their ancient privilege. The petition was granted, and, in consequence of this, about a hundred gentlemen took their seats.

The business of religion was introduced by a petition presented by a number of Protestants of different ranks, in which, after rehearsing their former endeavors to procure the removal of the corruptions which had affected the Church, they requested parliament to use the power which Providence had now put into their hands for effecting this great and urgent work. They craved three things in general—that the antichristian doctrine maintained in the Popish Church should be discarded; that means should be used to restore purity of worship, and primitive discipline; and that the ecclesiastical revenues, which had been engrossed by a corrupt and indolent hierarchy, should be applied to the support of a pious and active ministry, to the promotion of learning, and to the relief of the poor. They declared that they were ready to substantiate the justice of all their demands, and, in particular, to prove that those who arrogated to themselves the name of clergy were destitute of all right to be accounted ministers of religion; and that, from the tyranny which they had exercised and their vassalage to the court of Rome, they could not be safely tolerated, and far less entrusted with power, in a reformed commonwealth.

In answer to the first demand, the parliament required the reformed ministers to lay before them a summary of doctrine which they could prove to be consonant with the Scriptures, and which they desired to have established. The ministers were not unprepared for this task; and, in the course of four days, they presented a Confession of Faith, as the product of their joint labors, and an expression of their unanimous judgment. It agreed with the confessions which had been published by other reformed churches. Professing belief in the common articles of Christianity respecting the divine nature, the trinity, the creation of the world, the origin of evil, and the person of the Savior, which were retained by the Church of Rome, in opposition to the errors broached by ancient heretics, it condemned not only the idolatrous and superstitious tenets of that Church, but also its gross depravation of the doctrine of Scripture respecting the state of fallen man, and the method of his
recovery. It declared, that by "original sin was the image of God defacit in man, and he and his posteritie of nature become enemies to God, slaisis to Sathan, and seruandis of sin"; that "all our saluaution springs fra the eternall and immutabill decree of God, wha of meir grace electit us in Christ Jesus, his Sone, before the foundatione of the warld was laid"; that it behooves us "to apprehend Christ Jesus, with his justice and satisfactioun, wha is the end and accomplischemient of the law, by whome we are set at this libertie, that the curse and maledictioun of God fall not upon us"; that "as God the Father creatit us when we war not, and his Sone our Lord Jesus redemit us when we were enemies to him, sa alswa the Haly Gaist dois sanctifie and regenerat us, without alt respect of ony merite proceeding fra us, be it befoir, or be it efter our regeneration—to speik this ane thing yit in mair plaine wordis, as we willinglie spoyle ourselfis of all honour and gloir of our awin creatioun and redemtioun, sa do we alswa of our regeneratioun and sanctificatioun, for of our selfis we ar not sufficient to think ane gude thocht, bot he wha hes begun the work in us is onlie he that continewis us in the same, to the praise and glorie of his underservit grace"; and, in fine, it declared, that although good works proceed "not from our fre-wil, but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus," and although those that boast of the merit of their own works "boist themselfis of that whilk is nocht," yet "blasphemie it is to say, that Christ abydis in the hartis of sic as in whome thair is no spirite of sanctificatioun; and all wirkers of iniquitie have nouther trew faith, nouther ony portioun of the Spirite of the Lord Jesus, sa lang as obstinatlie they continew in thair wickitnes."

The Confession was read first before the lords of Articles, afterwards before the whole parliament. The Protestant ministers attended in the house to defend it, if attacked, and to give satisfaction to the members respecting any point which might appear dubious. Those who had objections to it formally required to state them. And the farther consideration was adjourned to a subsequent day, that none might pretend that an undue advantage had been taken of him, or that a matter of such importance had been concluded precipitately. On the seventeenth of August, the Parliament resumed the subject, and, previous to the vote, the Confession was again read, article by article. The Earl of Athole, and Lords Somerville and Borthwick, were the only persons of the temporal estate who voted in the negative, assigning this as their reason: "We will believe as our forefatheris beleivit." "The bischopis spak nothing." After the vote establishing the Confession of Faith, the Earl Marischal rose, and declared that the silence of the clergy had confirmed him in his belief of the Protestant doctrine, and he protested that if any of the ecclesiastical estate should afterwards oppose the doctrine which had just been received, they should be entitled to no credit; seeing, after full knowledge of it, and ample time for deliberation, they had allowed it to pass without the smallest opposition or
contradiction. On the twenty-fourth of August, the parliament abolished
the papal jurisdiction, prohibited, under certain penalties, the
celebration of mass, and rescinded all the laws formerly made in support
of the Roman Catholic Church and against the reformed faith.
Thus did the reformed religion advance in Scotland, from small
beginnings, and amidst great opposition, until it attained a
parliamentary establishment. Besides the influence of Heaven secretly
accompanying the labors of the preachers and confessors of the truth,
the serious and inquisitive reader will trace the wise arrangements of
Providence in that concatenation of events which contributed to its rise,
preservation, and increase, by overruling the caprice, the ambition, the
avarice, and the interested policy of princes and cabinets, many of whom
had nothing less in view than to favor that cause which they were so
instrumental in promoting.
The breach of Henry VIII of England with the Roman see awakened the
attention of the inhabitants of the northern part of the island to a
controversy which had formerly been carried on at too great a distance to
interest them, and led not a few to desire a reformation more improved
than the model which that monarch had held out to them. The
premature death of James V of Scotland saved the Protestants from
destruction. During the short period in which they received the
countenance of civil authority, at the commencement of Arran’s
administration, the seeds of the reformed doctrine were so widely spread,
and took such deep root, as to be able to resist the violent measures
which the regent, after his recantation, employed to extirpate them.
Those who were driven from the country by persecution found an asylum
in England under the decidedly Protestant government of Edward VI.
After his death, the alliance of England with Spain, and of Scotland with
France, the two great contending powers on the continent, prevented
that concert between the two courts which might have proved fatal to the
Protestant religion in Britain. While the cruelties of the English queen
drove Protestant preachers into Scotland, the political schemes of the
queen regent induced her to favor them and to connive at the
propagation of their opinions. At the critical moment when the latter had
accomplished her favorite designs and was preparing to crush the
Reformation, Elizabeth ascended the throne of England, and was
induced, by political no less than religious considerations, to support the
Scottish reformers. The French court was no less bent on suppressing
them, and, having lately concluded peace with Spain, was left at liberty
to direct its undivided attention to the accomplishment of that object;
but at this critical moment, those intestine dissensions, which continued
so long to desolate France, broke out and forced its ministers to accede
to that treaty which put an end to French influence and the papal
religion Scotland.
Knox's Trials and Labors in the Ongoing Reformation in Scotland

This section consists of Chapters 7-9. They are listed below. To go directly to any particular chapter click on the link to that chapter. Otherwise you can scroll down as you read chapter by chapter.

Chapter 7  
Chapter 8  
Chapter 9

CHAPTER VII

From August 1560, when Knox was settled as minister of Edinburgh, at the establishment of the reformation, to December 1563, when he was acquitted from a charge of treason

In appointing the Protestant ministers to particular stations, a measure which engaged the attention of the privy council immediately after the conclusion of the civil war, the temporary arrangements that had been formerly made were in general confirmed, and our Reformer resumed his charge as minister of Edinburgh. For several months he had officiated as minister of St. Andrews, but in the end of April 1560, he left that place and returned to the capital, where he preached during the siege of Leith and the negotiations which issued in a peace.

Although the parliament had abolished the papal jurisdiction and worship and ratified the Protestant doctrine as laid down in the Confession of Faith, the Reformed Church was not yet completely organized in Scotland. Hitherto the
Book of Common Order, used by the English Church at Geneva, had been generally followed as the rule of public worship and discipline. But this having been compiled for a single congregation, and for one that consisted chiefly of men of education, was found inadequate for the use of an extensive Church, composed of a multitude of confederate congregations. Our reformers were anxious to provide the means of religious instruction to the whole people in the kingdom, but they were very far from approving of the promiscuous admission of persons of all descriptions to the peculiar privileges of the Church of Christ. From the beginning, they were sensible of the great importance of ecclesiastical discipline, to the prosperity of religion, the maintenance of order, and the preservation of sound doctrine and morals. In the petition presented to parliament in August, the establishment of this was specially requested. And Knox, who had observed the great advantages which attended the observance of a strict discipline at Geneva, and the manifold evils which resulted from the want of it in England, insisted very particularly on this topic, in the discourses which he delivered from the book of Haggai during the sitting of parliament. The difficulties which the reformed ministers had to surmount before they could accomplish this important object began to present themselves at this early stage of their progress. When is considered that Calvin was subjected to a sentence of banishment from the senate of Geneva and exposed to a popular tumult before he could prevail on the citizens to submit to ecclesiastical discipline, we need not be surprised at the opposition which our reformers met with in their endeavors to introduce it into Scotland. Knox’s warm exhortations on this head were first disregarded; he had the mortification to find his plan of Church polity derided as a "devout imagination," by some the professors of the reformed doctrine, and the parliament dissolved without coming to any decision on this import point.

As the ministers, however, continued to urge the subject, and reasonableness of their demands could not be denied, the privy council, soon after the dissolution of the parliament, gave commission to Knox and four other ministers, who had formerly been employed along with him in composing the Confession, draw up a plan of ecclesiastical government. They immediately set about this task, with a diligence and care proportioned to their convictions of its importance. They "took not their example," says Row, "from any kirk in the world, no, not from Geneva; but drew their plan from the Sacred Scriptures." Having arranged the subject under different heads, they divided these among them, and, after they had finished their several parts, they met together and examined them with great attention, spending much time in reading and meditation on the subject and in earnest prayers for divine direction. When they had drawn up the whole in form, they laid it before the General Assembly, by whom it was approved, after they had caused some of its articles to be abridged. It was also submitted to the privy council, but, although many of the members highly approved of the plan, it was warmly opposed by others. This opposition did not arise from any difference of sentiment between them and the ministers respecting ecclesiastical government, but partly from aversion to
the strict discipline which it appointed to be exercised against vice, and partly
from reluctance to comply with its requisition for the appropriation of the
revenues of the Popish Church to the support of the new religious and literary
establishments. Though not formally ratified by the council, it was, however,
subscribed by the greater part of the members, and as the sources of prejudice
against it were well known, it was submitted to by the nation, and carried into
effect in most of its ecclesiastical regulations. It is known in history by the
name of the Book of Policy, or First Book of Discipline.

Considering the activity of Knox in constructing and recommending this
platform, and the importance of the subject in itself, it cannot be foreign to
our object to take a view of the form and order of the Protestant Church of
Scotland, as delineated in the Book of Discipline and in other authentic
documents of that period. The ordinary and permanent office-bearers of the
Church were of four kinds: the minister, or pastor, to whom the preaching of
the gospel and administration of the sacraments belonged; the doctor, or
teacher, whose province it was to interpret Scripture and confute errors
(including those who taught theology in schools and universities); the ruling
elder who assisted the minister in exercising ecclesiastical discipline and
government; and the deacon, who had the special oversight of the revenues of
the church and the poor. But, besides these, it was found necessary at this
time to employ some persons in extraordinary and temporary charges. As there
was not a sufficient number of ministers to supply the different parts of the
country that the people might not be left altogether destitute of public
worship and instruction, certain pious persons, who received a common
education, were appointed to read the Scriptures and the common prayers.
These were called readers. In large parishes, persons of this description were
also employed to relieve the ministers from a part of the public service. If they
advanced in knowledge, they were encouraged to add a plain exhortations to
the reading of the Scriptures. In this case they were called exhorters; but they
were examined and admitted before entering upon this employment.

The same cause gave rise to another temporary expedient. Instead of fixing all
the ministers in particular charges, it was judged proper, after supplying the
principal towns, to assign to the rest the superintendence of a large district,
over which they were appointed regularly to travel, for the purpose of
preaching, planting churches, and inspecting the conduct of ministers,
exhorters, and readers. These were called superintendents. The number
originally proposed was ten; but, owing to the scarcity of proper persons, or
rather to the want of necessary funds, there were never more than five
appointed. The deficiency was supplied by commissioners, or visitors,
appointed from time to time by the General Assembly.

None was allowed to preach, or to administer the sacraments, till he was
regularly called to this employment. Persons were invested with the pastoral
office in the way of being freely elected by the people, examined by the
ministers, and publicly admitted in the presence of the congregation. On the
day of admission, the minister who presided, after preaching a sermon suited
to the occasion, put a number of questions to the candidate, to satisfy the
Church as to his soundness in the faith, his willingness to undertake the charge,
the purity of his motives, and his resolution to discharge the duties of the
office with diligence and fidelity. Satisfactory answers having been given to
these questions, and the people having signified their adherence to their
former choice, the person was admitted and set apart by prayer, without the
imposition of hands; and the service was concluded with an exhortation, the
singing of a psalm, and the pronouncing of the blessing. Superintendents were
admitted in the same way as other ministers. The affairs of each congregation
were managed by the minister, elders, and deacons, who constituted the kirk-
session, which met regularly once a week, and oftener if business required.
There was a meeting, called the weekly exercise, or prophesying, held in every
considerable town, consisting of the ministers, exhorters, and learned men in
the vicinity, for expounding the Scriptures. This was afterwards converted into
the presbytery, or classical assembly. The superintendent met with the
ministers and delegated elders of his district twice a year in the provincial
synod, which took cognizance of ecclesiastical affairs within its bounds. And
the General Assembly, which was composed of ministers and elders
commissioned from the different parts of the kingdom, met twice, sometimes
thrice, in a year, and attended to the interests of the national Church.

Public worship was conducted according to the Book of Common Order, with a
few variations adapted to the state of Scotland. On Sabbath days, the people
assembled twice for public worship, and to promote the instruction of the
ignorant, catechising was substituted for preaching in the afternoon. In towns,
a sermon was regularly preached on one day of the week besides Sabbath, and
on almost every day the people had an opportunity of hearing public prayers
and the reading of the Scriptures. Baptism was never dispensed unless it was
accompanied with preaching or catechising. The Lord’s Supper was
administered four times a year in towns, and there were ordinarily two
"ministrations," one at an early hour of the morning, and another later in the
day. The sign of the cross in baptizing, and kneeling at the Lord’s table, were
condemned and laid aside, and anniversary holidays were wholly abolished. We
shall afterwards have occasion to advert to the discipline under which
offenders were brought.

The compilers of the First Book of Discipline paid particular attention to the
state of education. They required that a school should be erected in every
parish, for the instruction of the youth in the principles of religion, grammar,
and the Latin language. They proposed that a college should be erected in
every "notable town," in which logic and rhetoric should be taught, along with
the learned languages. They seem to have had it in their eye to revive the
system adopted by some of the ancient republics, in which the youth were
considered as the property the public rather than of their parents, by obliing
the nobility and gentry to educate their children, and by providing the public expense for the education of the children of the poor who discovered talents for learning. Their regulations for three national universities discover an enlightened regard to interests of literature, and may suggest hints which deserve attention in the present age. If these were not reduced practice, the blame cannot be imputed to the reformed ministers, but to the nobility and gentry, whose avarice defeated the execution of their plans.

To carry these important measures into effect, permanent funds were requisite, and for these it was natural to look to the patrimony of the Church. The hierarchy had been abolished, the Popish clergy excluded from all religious services by alterations which the Parliament had introduced, and, whatever provision it was proper to allot for the dismissed incumbents during life, it was unreasonable that they should continue to enjoy those emoluments which were attached to offices for which they had been found totally unfit. No successors could be appointed to them, and there was not any individual or class of men in the nation who could justly claim a title to rents of their benefices. The compilers of the Book of Discipline, therefore, proposed that the patrimony of the Church should be appropriated, in the first instance, to the support of new ecclesiastical establishment. Under this head they included the ministry, the schools, and the poor. For the ministers they required that such "honest provision" should be made as would give "neither occasion of solicitude, neither yet of insolencie and wantonnesse." In ordinary cases, they thought that forty bolls of meal, and twenty-six bolls of malt, with a reasonable sum of money to purchase other necessary articles of provision for his family, was an adequate stipend for a minister. To enable superintendents to defray the extraordinary expenses of traveling in the discharge of their duty, six chalders of bear, nine chalders of meal, three chalders of oats, and six hundred merks in money were thought necessary as an annual stipend. The salaries of professors were fixed from one to two hundred pounds, and the mode of supporting the poor was left undetermined, until means should be used to suppress "stubborne and idle beggars," and to ascertain the number of the really necessitous in each parish. The stipends of ministers were to be collected by the deacons from the tithes; but all illegal exactions were to be previously abolished, and measures taken to relieve the laborers of the ground from the oppressive manner in which the tithes had been gathered by the clergy, or by those to whom they had farmed them. The revenues of bishoprics, and of cathedral and collegiate churches, with the rents arising from the endowments of monasteries and other religious foundations, were to be divided and appropriated to the support of the universities or of the churches within their bounds.

Nothing could be more unpalatable than doctrine of this kind to a considerable number of the Protestant nobility and gentry. They had for some time fixed a covetous eye on the rich revenues of the Popish clergy. Some of them had seized upon church lands or retained the tithes in their own hands. Others had taken long leases of them from the clergy for small sums of money and were
anxious to have these private bargains legalized. Hence their aversion to have the Book of Discipline ratified, hence the poverty and the complaints of the ministers and the languishing state of the universities. The Swiss Reformer, by his eloquence and his firmness, enabled his countrymen to gain a conquest over their avarice, which was more honorable to them than any of their other victories, when he prevailed on them to appropriate the whole revenues of the Popish establishment to the support of the Protestant Church and seminaries of literature. But it was not so easy a matter to manage the turbulent and powerful barons of Scotland, as it was to sway the minds of the burgomasters of Zurich. When we consider, however, the extent of the establishments proposed by our reformers, including the support of the ministry, of parochial schools, of city colleges, and of national universities, we cannot regard the demand which they made on the funds voted to the Church as extravagant or unreasonable. They showed themselves disinterested by the moderate share which they asked for themselves, and the least that we can say of their plan is that it was worthy of a more enlightened and liberal age, in which it might have met with rulers more capable of appreciating its utility and better disposed to carry it into execution.

It is peculiarly pleasing to observe the restoration of religion and of letters going hand in hand in our native country. Everywhere, indeed, the Reformation had the most powerful influence, direct and remote, on the general promotion of literature. It aroused the human mind from the lethargy in which had slumbered for ages, released it from the fetters of implicit pith and blind obedience to human authority, and stimulated it to the exertion of its powers in the search of truth. It induced the learned to study with care the original languages in which the sacred books were written, and it diffused knowledge among the illiterate, by laying open the Scriptures, and calling on all to examine them for themselves. The unintelligible jargon which had long infested the schools began to be discarded. Controversies were now decided by appeals to Scripture and to common sense, and the disputes which were eagerly maintained led to the improvement of the art of reasoning, and to a more rational method of communicating knowledge. Superstition and credulity being undermined, the spirit of inquiry was soon directed to the discovery of the true laws of nature, as well as the genuine doctrines of revelation.

In the south of Europe, the revival of letters preceded the reformation of religion, and materially facilitated its progress. In the north, this order was reversed, and Scotland in particular must date the origin of her literary acquirements from the first introduction of the Protestant opinions. As the one gained ground, the other was brought forward. We have already seen that the Greek language began to be studied almost as soon as the light of Reformation dawned upon this country, and I have now to state, that the first school for teaching the Hebrew language in Scotland was opened immediately after the establishment of the Protestant Church. Hebrew was one of the branches of education appointed by the Book of Discipline to be taught in the reformed
seminaries, and Providence had furnished a person who was well qualified for that task which those who filled the chairs in our universities were totally unfit to undertake.

The person to whom I refer was John Row. After finishing his education at St. Andrews, and practicing for some time as an advocate before the consistorial court there, he left the country about the year 1550, with the view of prosecuting his studies to greater advantage on the Continent. Within a short time he received the degree of Doctor of Laws from two Italian universities. He did not, however, confine himself to one branch of study, but, improving the opportunity which he enjoyed, made himself master of the Greek and Hebrew Languages. His reputation as a lawyer being high, the Scottish clergy employed him as agent to manage some of their causes before the court of Rome. This introduced him to the friendship of Guido Ascanio Sforza, Cardinal of Sancta Flora, and to the acquaintance of two sovereign pontiffs, Julius III and Paul IV. Had he remained in Italy, it is highly probable that he would soon have attained to honorable preferment in the Church, but having lost his health, he determined in 1558 to return to his native country. The reigning pope had heard, with deep concern, of the progress which the new opinions were making in Scotland, and, as he had great confidence in Row’s talents, appointed him his nuncio, with instructions to use his utmost exertions to oppose them. When he came home, he endeavored for some time to discharge his commission, but despairing of success, and foreseeing the confusions in which the country was about to be involved, he resolved on returning to Italy. From this resolution he was diverted by the prior of St. Andrews, who admired his learning and conceived good hopes of his conversion from the candor which he displayed in the management of religious controversy. His constancy was soon after shaken by the discovery of the imposture which the clergy attempted to practice at Musselburgh, and, having held several conferences with Knox, he became a complete convert to the Protestant faith. Upon the establishment of the Reformation, he was admitted minister of Perth, and, at the recommendation of his brethren, began to give lessons in the Hebrew language to young men who were placed under his tuition.

The interests of literature in Scotland were not a little promoted at this time by the return of Buchanan to his native country. That accomplished scholar, since his flight in 1535, had visited the most celebrated seminaries on the Continent, greatly improved his stock of learning, and given ample proof of those talents which, in the opinion of posterity as well as of contemporaries, have placed him indisputably at the head of modern Latin poets. The reception which he obtained from countrymen evinced that they were not incapable of estimating his merits, and the satisfaction with which he spent the remainder of his life among them, after he had enjoyed the society of the most learned men in Europe, is a sufficient proof they had already made no inconsiderable advances in the acquisition of polite literature.
We are apt to form false and exaggerated notions of the rudeness of our ancestors. Scotland was, indeed, at that period, as she is still at the present day, behind many of the southern countries in the cultivation of some of the fine arts, and she was a stranger to that refinement of manners which has oftener been concealment to vice than an ornament to virtue. But that her inhabitants were “men unacquainted with the pleasures of conversation, ignorant of arts and civility, and corrupted beyond a usual rusticity by a dismal fanaticism, which rendered them incapable of all humanity or improvement,” is an assertion which argues either inexcusable ignorance or deplorable prejudice. Will this character apply to such men as Buchanan, Knox, Row, Willock, Balnaves, Erskine, Maitland, Glencairn, and James Stewart, not to name many others; men who excelled in their respective ranks and professions, who had received a liberal education, traveled into foreign countries, conversed with the best company, and, in addition to their acquaintance with ancient learning, could speak the most polite languages of modern Europe? Perhaps some of our literati, who entertain such a diminutive idea of the taste and learning of those times, might have been taken by surprise, had they been set down at a table of one of our Scottish reformers, surrounded by a circle of his children and pupils, where the conversation was all carried on in French, and the chapter of the Bible, at family worship, was read by the boys in French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. Perhaps they might have blushed, if the book had been put into their hands, and they had been required to perform a part of the exercises. Such, however, was the common practice in the house of John Row. Nor was the improvement of our native tongue neglected at that time. David Ferguson, minister of Dunfermline, was celebrated for his attention to this branch of composition. He had not enjoyed the advantage of a university education, but, possessing a good taste and lively fancy, was very successful in refining and enriching the Scottish language, by his discourses and writings.

The first meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was held at Edinburgh on the twentieth of December, 1560. It consisted of forty members, only six of whom were ministers. Knox was one of these, and he continued to sit in most of the meetings of that judicatory until the time of his death. Its deliberations were conducted at first with great simplicity and unanimity. It is a singular circumstance that there were seven different meetings of Assembly without a moderator or president. But as the number of members increased, and business became more complicated, a moderator was appointed to be chosen at every meeting, and he was invested with authority to maintain order. The first person who occupied that place was John Willock, superintendent of Glasgow and the West. Regulations were also enacted concerning the constituent members of the court, the causes which ought to come before them, and the mode of procedure.

In the close of this year, our Reformer suffered a heavy domestic loss by the death of his valuable wife, who, after sharing the hardships of exile along with
her husband, was removed from him just when he had obtained a comfortable settlement for his family. He was left with the charge of two young children, in addition to his other cares. His mother-in-law was still with him, but though he took pleasure in her religious conversation, the dejection of mind to which she was subject, and which all his efforts could never completely cure, rather increased than lightened his burden. His acute feelings were severely wounded by this stroke, but he endeavored to moderate his grief by the consolations which he administered to others, and by application to public duty. He had the satisfaction of receiving, on this occasion, a letter from his much respected friend Calvin, in which expressions of great esteem for his deceased partner were mingled with condolence for his loss.

I may take this opportunity of mentioning, that Knox, with the consent of his brethren, consulted the Genevan reformer in several difficult questions which occurred respecting the settlement of the Scottish Reformation, and that a number of letters passed between them on this subject.

Anxieties on a public account were felt by Knox along with domestic distress. The Reformation had hitherto advanced with a success equal to his most sanguine expectations, and, at this time, no opposition was publicly made to the new establishment. But matters were still in a very critical state. There were a party in the nation, by no means inconsiderable in numbers and power, who remained addicted to Popery; and, though they had given way to the torrent, they anxiously waited for an opportunity to embroil the country in another civil war, for restoration of the ancient religion. Queen Mary, and her husband, the King of France, had refused to ratify the late treaty and dismissed the deputy sent by the parliament, with of the highest displeasure at the innovations which they presumed to introduce. A new army was preparing in France for the invasion of Scotland against the spring; emissaries were sent, in the meantime, to encourage and unite the Roman Catholics, and it was doubtful if the Queen of England would subject herself to new expense and odium, by protecting them from a second attack.

The danger was not unperceived by our Reformer, who tired to impress the minds of his countrymen with its magnitude, and to excite them speedily to complete the settlement of religion throughout the kingdom, which, he was persuaded, would prove the principal bulwark against the assaults of their adversaries. His admonitions were now listened to with attention by many who had formerly treated them with indifference. The threatened storm, however, blew over, in consequence of the death of the French king, but this necessarily led to a measure which involved the Scottish Protestants in a new struggle, and exposed the Reformed Church to dangers less obvious and striking, but, on that account, not less to be dreaded than open violence and hostility. This was an invitation given by the Protestant nobility to their young queen, who, on the nineteenth of August, 1561, arrived in Scotland, and assumed the reins of government into her own hands.
The education which Mary had received in France, whatever embellishments it added to her beauty, was the very worst which can be conceived for fitting her to rule her native country in the present juncture. Of a temper naturally violent, the devotion which she had been accustomed to see paid to her personal charms, rendered her extremely impatient of contradiction. Habituated to the splendor and gallantry of the most luxurious and dissolute court in Europe, she could not submit to those restraints which the severer manners of her subjects imposed; and while they took offense at the freedom of her behavior, she could not conceal the antipathy and disgust which she felt at theirs. Full of high notions of royal prerogative, she regarded the late proceedings in Scotland as a course of rebellion against her legitimate authority. Nursed from her infancy in a blind attachment to the Roman Catholic faith, every means had been employed before she left France to strengthen this prejudice, and to inspire her with aversion to the religion which had been embraced by her people. She was taught that it would be the great glory of her reign to reduce her kingdom to the obedience of the Roman see, and to co-operate with the Popish princes on the Continent in extirpating heresy. If she forsook the religion in which she had been educated, she would forfeit their powerful friendship; if she persevered in it, she might depend upon their assistance to enable her to chastise her rebellious subjects, and to prosecute her claims to the English crown against a heretical usurper.

With these fixed prepossessions, Mary came into Scotland, and she adhered to them with singular pertinacity to the end of her life. To examine the subjects of controversy between the Papists and Protestants, with the view of ascertaining on which side the truth lay—to hear the reformed preachers, or permit them to lay before her the grounds of their faith, even in the presence of the clergy whom she had brought along with her; to do anything, in short, which might lead to a doubt in her mind respecting the religion in which she had been brought up—were compliances against which she had formed an unalterable determination. As the Protestants were in possession of power, it was necessary for her to temporize, but she resolved to withhold her ratification of the late proceedings, and to embrace the first favorable opportunity to overturn them, and re-establish the ancient system.

The reception which she met with on landing in Scotland was flattering, but an occurrence that took place soon after, damped the joy which had been expressed, and prognosticated future jealousies and confusion. The deputies sent to France with the invitation from the nobles, could not promise her more than the private exercise of her religion; but her uncles, by whom she was accompanied, wishing to take advantage of the spirit of loyalty which had been displayed since their arrival, insisted that she should cause the Roman Catholic rites to be performed with all publicity. Influenced by their opinion, and willing to give her subjects an early proof of her firm determination to adhere to the ancient faith, Mary directed preparations to be made for the celebration of a solemn mass in the chapel of Holyroodhouse, on the first Sabbath after her
arrival. Service had not been performed in Scotland since the conclusion of the
civil war, and was prohibited by an act of the parliament. So great was the
horror with which the Protestants viewed its restoration, and the alarm which
they felt at finding it countenanced by their queen, that the first rumor of the
design excited expressions of strong discontent, which would have burst into an
open tumult, had not some of the leading men among the Protestants
interfered and exerted their authority in repressing the zeal of the multitude.
From regard to public tranquility, and reluctance to offend the queen at her
first return to her native kingdom, Knox used his influence in a private
conversation to allay the fervor of the more zealous reformers, who were ready
to prevent the service by force. But he was not less alarmed at the precedent
than his brethren were, and, having exposed the evils of idolatry on the
following Sabbath, he concluded his sermon by saying that one mass was more
fearfull unto him than if ten thousand armed enemies were landed in ony parte
of the realme, of purpose to suppress the whole religioun."

At this day, we are apt to be struck with surprise at the conduct of our
ancestors, to treat their fears as visionary, or at least highly exaggerated, and
summarily to pronounce them guilty of the same intolerance of which they
complained in their adversaries. Persecution for conscience' sake is so odious,
and the least approach to it is so dangerous, that we deem it impossible to
express too great detestation of any measure which tends to countenance or
seems to encourage it. But let us be just as well as liberal. A little reflection
upon the circumstances in which our reforming fathers were placed may serve
to abate our astonishment, and to qualify our censures. They were actuated by
a strong abhorrence of Popish idolatry, a feeling which is fully justified by the
spirit and precepts of Christianity; and the prospect of the land being again
defiled by the revival of its impure rites produced on their minds a sensation,
with which, from our ignorance and lukewarmness, as much as our ideas of
religious liberty, we are incapable of sympathizing. But they were also
influenced by a proper regard to their own preservation, and the fears which
they entertained were not fanciful, nor the precautions which they adopted
unnecessary.

The warmest friends of toleration and liberty of conscience (some of whom will
not readily be charged with Protestant prejudices) have granted that
persecution of the most sanguinary kind was inseparable from the system and
spirit of Popery which was at that time dominant in Europe; and they cannot
deny the inference that the profession and propagation of it were, on this
account, justly subjected to penal restraints, as far, at least, as was requisite
to prevent it from obtaining the ascendency, and from re-acting the bloody
scenes which it had already exhibited. The Protestants of Scotland had these
scenes before their eyes, and fresh in their recollection; and infatuated and
criminal indeed would they have been, if, listening to the siren song of
toleration, by which their adversaries, with no less impudence than artifice,
now attempted to lull them asleep, they had suffered themselves to be thrown
off their guard, and neglected to provide against the most distant approaches of the danger by which they were threatened. Could they be ignorant of the perfidious, barbarous, and unrelenting cruelty with which Protestants were treated in every Roman Catholic kingdom? In France, where so many of their brethren had been put to death, under the influence of the house of Guise; in the Netherlands, where such multitudes had been tortured, beheaded, hanged, drowned, or buried alive; in England, where the flames of persecution were but lately extinguished; and in Spain and Italy, where they still continued to blaze? Could they have forgotten what had taken place in their own country, or the perils from which they had themselves so recently and so narrowly escaped? "God forbid!" exclaimed the lords of the privy council, in the presence of Queen Mary, at a time when they were not disposed to offend her, "God forbid! that the lives of the faithful stood in the power of the Papists; for just experience has taught us what cruelty is in their hearts."

Nor was this an event so incredible, or so unlikely to happen, as many seem to imagine. The rage for conquest on the Continent was now converted into a rage for proselytism; and steps had already been taken towards forming that league among the Popish princes, which had for its object the universal extermination of Protestants. The Scottish queen was passionately addicted to the intoxicating cup of which so many of "kings of the earth had drunk." There were numbers in the nation who were similarly disposed. The liberty taken by the queen would soon be demanded for all who declared themselves Catholics. Many of those who had hitherto ranged under Protestant standard were lukewarm in the cause; the others had already suffered a sensible abatement since the arrival of their sovereign; and it was to be feared, that the favors of the court and the blandishments of an artful and accomplished princess would make proselytes of some, and lull others into security, while designs were carried on pregnant with ruin to the religion and liberties of the nation. In one word, the public toleration of the Popish worship was only a step to its re-establishment, and this would be the signal for kindling afresh the fires of persecution. It was in this manner that some of the wisest men in the kingdom reasoned at that time; and, had it not been for the uncommon spirit which then existed among the reformers, there is every reason to think that their predictions would have been realized.

To those who accuse the Scottish Protestants of displaying spirit of intolerance by which the Roman Catholics were distinguished, I would recommend the following statement of a French author, who had formed a more just notion of these transactions than many of our own writers: "Mary," says he, "was brought up in France, accustomed to see Protestants burnt to death, and instructed in the maxims of her uncles, the Guises, who maintained that it was necessary to exterminate, without mercy, the pretended reformed. With these dispositions, she arrived in Scotland, which was wholly reformed, with the exception of a few lords. The kingdom received her, acknowledged her as their queen, and obeyed her in all things according to the laws of the country. I maintain, that,
in the state of men’s spirits at that time, if a Huguenot queen had come to take possession of a Roman Catholic kingdom, with the slender retinue with which Mary went to Scotland, the first thing they would have done would have been to arrest her; if she had persevered in her religion, they would have procured her degradation by the pope, thrown her into the Inquisition, and burnt her as a heretic. There is not an honest man who can deny this."

After all, it is surely unnecessary to apologize for the restrictions which our ancestors were desirous of imposing on Queen Mary, to those who approve of the present constitution of Britain, according to which every Papist is excluded from succeeding to the throne, and the reigning monarch, by setting up mass in his chapel, would virtually forfeit his crown. Is Popery more dangerous now than it was two hundred and fifty years ago?

Besides his fears for the common cause, Knox had, at this time, grounds of apprehension as to his personal safety. The queen was peculiarly incensed against him on account of the active part which he had taken in the late revolution; the Popish clergy who left the kingdom had represented him as the ringleader of her factious subjects, and she had publicly declared, before she left France, that she was determined he should be punished. His book against female government was most probably the ostensible charge on which he was to be prosecuted; and, accordingly, we find him making application, through the English resident at Edinburgh, to secure the favor of Elizabeth, reasonably suspecting that she might be induced to abet the proceedings against him on this ground. But whatever perils he apprehended, from the personal presence of the queen, either to the public or to himself, he used not the smallest influence to prevent her being invited home. On the contrary, he concurred with his brethren in this measure, and also in using means to defeat a scheme which the Duke of Chastelherault, under the direction of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, had formed to exclude her from the government. But when the Prior of St. Andrews was sent to France with the invitation, he urged that her desisting from the celebration of mass should be one of the conditions of her return; and when he found him and the rest of the council disposed to grant her this liberty within her own chapel, he predicted that "her liberty would be their thraldom."

In the beginning of September, only a few days after her arrival in Scotland, the queen sent for Knox to the palace, and held a long conversation with him, in the presence of her brother, the Prior of St. Andrews. Whether she did this of her own accord, or at the suggestion of some of her counselors, is uncertain, but she seems to have expected to awe him into submission by her authority, if not to confound him by her arguments. The bold freedom with which he replied to all her charges and vindicated his own conduct, convinced her that the one expectation was not more vain than the other; and the impression which she wished to make on him was left on her own mind.
She accused him of raising her subjects against her mother and herself; of writing a book against her just authority, which, she said, she would cause the most learned in Europe to refute; of being the cause of sedition and bloodshed, when he was in England; and of accomplishing his purposes by magical arts.

To these heavy charges Knox replied, that, if to teach the truth of God in sincerity, to rebuke idolatry, and exhort a people worship God according to his word, were to excite subjects to rise against their princes, then he stood convicted of that crime; for it had pleased God to employ him, among many others, to disclose unto that realm the vanity of the papistical religion, with the deceit, pride, and tyranny of the Roman antichrist. But if the true knowledge of God and his right worship were the most powerful inducements to subjects cordially to obey their princes (as they certainly were), then was he innocent. Her grace, he was persuaded, had at present as unfeigned obedience from the Protestants of Scotland, as ever her father, or any of her ancestors, had from those called bishops. With respect to what had been reported to her majesty concerning the fruits of his preaching in England, he was glad that his enemies laid nothing to his charge but what the world knew to be false. If they could prove, that, in any of the places where he had resided, there was either sedition or mutiny, he would confess himself to be a malefactor. But so far from this being the case, he was not ashamed to say, that in Berwick, where bloodshed had formerly been common among the military, God so blessed his weak labors, that there was as great quietness, during the time he resided in that town, as there was at present in Edinburgh. The slander of practicing magic (an art which he had always condemned), he could more easily bear, when he recollected that his master, Jesus Christ, had been defamed as one in league with Beelzebub. As to the book which seemed to have offended her majesty concerning the fruits of his preaching in England, he was glad that his enemies laid nothing to his charge but what the world knew to be false. If they could prove, that, in any of the places where he had resided, there was either sedition or mutiny, he would confess himself to be a malefactor. But so far from this being the case, he was not ashamed to say, that in Berwick, where bloodshed had formerly been common among the military, God so blessed his weak labors, that there was as great quietness, during the time he resided in that town, as there was at present in Edinburgh. The slander of practicing magic (an art which he had always condemned), he could more easily bear, when he recollected that his master, Jesus Christ, had been defamed as one in league with Beelzebub. As to the book which seemed to have offended her majesty so highly, he owned that he wrote it, and he was willing that all the learned should judge of it. He understood that an Englishman had written against it, but he had not read his work. If that author had sufficiently confuted his arguments, and established the contrary opinion, he would confess his error, but to that hour he continued to think himself able to maintain the propositions affirmed in that book against any ten in Europe.

"You think, then, I have no just authority?" said the queen. "Please your majesty," replied he, "learned men in all ages have had their judgments free, and most commonly disagreeing from the common judgment of the world; such also have they published both with pen and tongue; notwithstanding, they themselves have lived in the common society with others, and have borne patiently with the errors and imperfections which they could not amend. Plato, the philosopher, wrote his book on the commonwealth, in which he condemned many things that then were maintained in the world, and required many things to have been reformed; and yet, notwithstanding, he lived under such policies as then were universally received, without farther troubling of any state. Even so, madam, am I content to do, in uprightness of heart, and with a testimony of a good conscience." He added that his sentiments on that subject should be
confined to his own breast, and that, if she refrained from persecution, her authority would not be hurt, either by him or his book, "which was written most especially against that wicked Jesabel of England."

"But ye speak of women in general," said the queen. "Most true it is, madam; yet it appeareth to me that wisdom should persuade your grace never to raise trouble for that which to this day has not troubled your majesty, neither in person nor in authority, for of late years many things which before were held stable have been called in doubt; yea, they have been plainly impugned. But yet, madam, I am assured that neither Protestant nor Papist shall be able to prove that any such question was at any time moved, either in public or in secret. Now, madam, if I had intended to have troubled your estate, because ye are a woman, I would have chosen a time more convenient for that purpose than I can do now, when your presence is within the realm."

Changing the subject, she charged him with having taught people to receive a religion different from that which was allowed by their princes; and she asked if this was not contrary to the divine command that subjects should obey their rulers. He replied that true religion derived its origin and authority, not from princes, but from God; that princes were often most ignorant on this point; and that subjects were not bound to frame their religious sentiments and practice according to the arbitrary will of their rulers, else the Hebrews ought to have conformed to the religion of Pharaoh, Daniel and his associates to that of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, and the primitive Christians to that of the Roman emperors. "Yea," replied the queen, qualifying her assertion, "but none of these men raised the sword against their princes." "Yet you cannot deny," said he, "that they resisted; for those who obey not the command given them do in some sort resist." "But they resisted not with the sword," rejoined the queen, pressing home the argument. "God, madam, had not given unto them the power and the means." "Think you," said the queen, "that subjects, having the power, may resist their princes?" "If princes exceed their bounds, madam, no doubt they may be resisted, even by power. For no greater honor or greater obedience is to be to kings and princes than God has commanded to be given to father and mother. But the father may be struck with a frenzy, in which he would slay his children. Now, madam, if the children arise, join together, apprehend the father, take the sword from him, bind his hands, and keep him in prison, till the frenzy be over, think you, madam, that the children do any wrong? Even so, madam, is it with princes that would murder the children of God that are subject unto them. Their blind zeal is nothing but a mad frenzy; therefore, to take the sword them, to bind their hands, and to cast them into prison, till they be brought to a more sober mind, is no disobedience against princes, but just obedience, because it agreeth with the will of God."

Mary, who had hitherto maintained her courage in reasoning, was completely overpowerd by this bold answer; her countenance changed, and she remained in a silent stupor. Her brother spoke to her, and inquired the cause of her
uneasiness, but she made no reply. Recovering herself at length, she said,  
“Well then, I perceive that my subjects shall obey you and not me, and will do  
what they please and not what I command; and so must I be subject to them,  
and not they to me.” “God forbid!” replied the Reformer, “that ever I take upon  
me to command any to obey me, or to set subjects at liberty to do whatever  
pleases them. But my travail is, that both princes and subjects may obey God.  
And think not, madam, that wrong is done you when you are required to be  
subject unto God; for it is he who subjects people under princes, and causes  
obedience to be given unto them. He craves of kings that they be as foster-  
fathers to his Church, and commands queens to be nurses to his people. And  
this subjection, madam, unto God and his Church, is the greatest dignity that  
flesh can get upon the face of the earth; for it shall raise them to everlasting  
glory.”

“But you are not the Church that I will nourish,” said the queen, “I will defend  
the Church of Rome; for it is, I think, the true Church of God.” “Your will,  
madam, is no reason, neither doth your thought make the Roman harlot to be  
the true and immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ. Wonder not, madam, that I  
call Rome an harlot, for that Church is altogether polluted with all kinds of  
spiritual fornication, both in doctrine and manners.” He added that he was  
ready to prove that the Roman Church had declined farther from the purity of  
religion taught by the apostles, than the Jewish Church had degenerated from  
the ordinances which God gave them by Moses and Aaron, at the time when  
they denied and crucified the Son of God. “My conscience is not so,” said the  
queen. “Conscience, madam, requires knowledge, and I fear that right  
knowledge you have none.” “But I have both heard and read.” “So, madam, did  
the Jews, who crucified Christ Jesus, read the law and the prophets, and heard  
the same interpreted after their manner. Have you heard any teach but such as  
as the pope and cardinals have allowed? and you may be assured, that such will  
speak nothing to offend their own estate.”

“You interpret the Scriptures in one way,” said the queen evasively, “and they  
in another; whom shall I believe, and who shall be judge?” “You shall believe  
God, who plainly speaketh in his word,” replied the Reformer, “and farther than  
the word teacheth you, you shall believe neither the one nor the other. The  
word of God is plain in itself; and if there appear any obscurity in one place,  
the Holy Ghost, who is never contrary to himself, explains the same more  
clearly in other places, so that there can remain no doubt, but unto such as are  
obstinately ignorant.” As an example, he selected one of the articles in  
controversy between the Church of Rome and the Protestants, and was  
proceeding to show that the Popish doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass was  
destitute of all foundation in Scripture, but the queen, who was determined to  
avoid all discussion of the articles of her creed, interrupted him by saying that  
she was unable to contend with him in argument, but if she had those present  
whom she had heard, they would answer him. “Madam,” replied the Reformer,  
fervently, “would to God that the learnedest Papist in Europe, and he you
would best believe, were present with your grace to sustain the argument, and
that you would wait patiently to hear the matter reasoned to the end! For
then, I doubt not, madam, you would hear the vanity of the papistical religion,
and how little ground it hath in the word of God." "Well," said she, "you may
perchance get that sooner than you believe." "Assuredly, if ever I get that in my
life, I get it sooner than I believe; for the ignorant Papist cannot patiently
reason, and learned and crafty Papist will never come, in your audience,
madam, to have the ground of their religion searched out. When you shall let
me see the contrary, I shall grant myself to have been deceived in that point."

The hour of dinner afforded an occasion for breaking off this singular
conversation. At taking leave of her majesty the Reformer said, "I pray God,
madam, that you may be as blessed within the commonwealth of Scotland, as
ever Deborah was in the commonwealth of Israel."

I have been the more minute in the narrative of this curious conference,
because it affords the most satisfactory refutation of the charge that Knox
treated Mary with rudeness and disrespect. For the same reason I shall lay
before the reader a partial account of the subsequent interviews between
them, from which we shall perceive that, though the Reformer addressed her
with a plainness to which crowned heads are seldom accustomed, he never lost
sight of that respect which was due to the person of his sovereign, nor of that
decorum which became his own character.

The interview between the queen and the Reformer excited speculation, and
different conjectures were formed as to its probable consequences. The
Catholics, whose hopes now depended solely on the queen, were alarmed, lest
Knox’s rhetoric should have shaken her constancy. The Protestants cherished
the expectation that she would be induced to attend Protestant sermons, and
that her religious prejudices would gradually abate. Knox indulged no such
flattering expectations. He had made it his study, during the late conference,
to discover the real character of the queen; and when some of his confidential
friends asked his opinion of her, he told them that he was very much mistaken
if she was not proud, crafty, obstinately wedded to the Popish Church, and
averse to all means of instruction. Writing to Cecil, he says, "The queen
neither is, neither shal be of our opinion; and, in very deed, her whole
proceedings do declar that the cardinalle’s lessons are so deaplie printed in
her heart, that the substance and the qualitie are like to perishe together. I
wold be glad to be deceaved, but I fear I shal not. In communication with her, I
espyed such craft as I have not found in such aige. Since, hath the court been
dead to me and I to it."

He resolved, therefore, vigilantly to watch her proceedings and to give timely
warning of any danger which might result from them to the reformed interest;
and the more that he perceived the zeal of the Protestant nobles to cool, and
their jealousy to be laid asleep by the winning arts of the queen, the more
frequently and loudly did he sound the alarm. Vehement and harsh as his expressions often were—violent, seditious, and insufferable as his sermons and prayers have been pronounced to be—I have no hesitation in saying that, as the public peace was never disturbed by them, so they were useful to the public safety, and a principal means of warding off for a time those confusions in which the country was afterwards involved, and which brought on the ultimate ruin of the infatuated queen. His uncourtly and rough manner was not, indeed, calculated to gain upon her mind (nor is there any reason to think that an opposite manner would have had this effect), and his admonitions often irritated her; but they obliged her to act with greater reserve and moderation, and they operated, to an indescribable degree in arousing and keeping awake the zeal and the fears of the nation, which, at that period, were the two great safeguards of the Protestant religion in Scotland. We may form an idea of the effect produced by his pulpit orations, from the account of the English ambassador, who was one of his constant hearers. "Where your honour," says he, in a letter to Cecil, "exhorteth us to stoutness, I assure you the voice of one man is able, in an hour, to put more life in us than six hundred trumpets continually blustering in our ears."

The Reformer was not ignorant that some of his friends thought him too severe in his language, nor was he always disposed to vindicate the expressions which he employed. Still, however, he was persuaded that the times required the utmost plainness; and he was afraid that snares lurked under the smoothness which was recommended and practiced by courtiers. Cecil having given him an advice on this head in one of his letters, Knox replied, "Men deliting to swym betwix two waters have often compleaned upon my severitie. I fear that that which men terme lenitie and dulceness, do bring upon themselves and others more fearful destruction, than hath ensewed the vehemency of any preacher within this realme."

That abatement of zeal which he had dreaded from "the holy water of the court," soon began to appear among the Protestant leaders. The general assemblies of the Church were a great eyesore to the queen, who was very desirous to have them put down. At the first General Assembly held after her arrival, the courtiers, through her influence, absented themselves, and when challenged for this, began to dispute the propriety of such conventions without her majesty’s pleasure. On this point there was sharp reasoning between Knox and Maitland, who was now made secretary of state. "Take from us the liberty of assemblies, and take from us the gospel," said the Reformer. "If the liberty of the Church must depend upon her allowance or disallowance, we shall want not only assemblies, but also the preaching of the gospel." It was proposed that the Book of Discipline should be ratified by the queen, but this was keenly opposed by the secretary. "How many of those that subscribed that book will be subject to it?" said he scoffingly. "All the godly," it was answered. "Will the duke?" said he. "If he will not," replied Lord Ochiltree, "I wish that his name were scraped, not only out of that book, but also out of our number and
company; for to what end shall men subscribe, and never mean to keep word of that which they promise?" Maitland said, that many subscribed it, in fide parentum, implicitly. Knox replied that the scoff was as untrue as it was unbecoming; for the book was publicly read, and its different heads discussed, for a number of days, and no man was required to subscribe what he did not understand. "Stand content," said one of the courtiers; "that book will not be obtained." "And let God require the injury which the commonwealth shall sustain at the hands of those who hinder it," replied the Reformer.

He was still more indignant at their management in settling the provision for the ministers of the Church. Hitherto they had lived chiefly on the benevolence of their hearers, and many of them had scarcely the means of subsistence, but repeated complaints having obliged the privy council to take up the affair, they came at last to a determination that the ecclesiastical revenues should be divided into three parts, that two of these should be given to the ejected Popish clergy, and that the third part should be divided between the court and the Protestant ministry! The persons appointed to "modify the stipends" were disposed to gratify the queen, and her demands were readily answered, while the sums allotted to the ministers were as ill paid as they were paltry and inadequate. "Weall!" exclaimed Knox, when he heard of this disgraceful arrangement, "if the end of this ordour, pretendit to be takin for sustentatioun of the ministers, be happie, my judgment failes me. I sic twa pairtis freely gevin to the devill, and the third mon be devyded betwix God and the devill. Who wald have thocht, that when Joseph reulled in Egypt, his brethren sould have travellit for victualles, and have returned with emptie sackes unto thair families? O happie servands of the devill, and miserabill servants of Jesus Christ, if efter this lyf thair wer not hell and heavin!" At a conference held on this subject, Maitland complained of the ingratitude of the ministers, who did not acknowledge the queen's liberality to them. "Assuredly," replied Knox with a derisive smile, "such as receive any thing of the queen are unthankfull, if they acknowledge it not; but whether the ministers be of that rank or not, I greatly doubt. Has the queen better title to that which she usurps, be it in giving to others, or in taking to herself, than such as crucified Christ had to divide his garments among them? Let the Papists who have the two parts, some that have their thirds free, and some that have gotten abbacies and feu-lands, thank queen; the poor preachers will not yet flatter for feeding their bellies. To your dumb dogs, formerly ten thousand was enough; but to the servants of Christ, that painfully preach his evangell, a thousand pound! how can that be sustained?" "These words," he himself tells us, "were judged proud and intolerable, and engendered no small displeasure to the speaker."

Knox gave vent to his feelings on this subject the more freely as his complaints could not be imputed to personal motives; for his own stipend, though moderate, was liberal when compared with those of the most of his brethren. From the time of his last return to Scotland, until the conclusion of the war, he had been indebted to the liberality of individuals for support of his family.
After that period, he lodged in the house of David Forrest, a burgess of Edinburgh, from which he moved to the lodging which had belonged to Durie, abbot of Dunfermline. As soon as he began to preach statedly in the city, the town council assigned him an annual stipend of two hundred pounds, which he was entitled to receive quarterly, and they also paid his house rent and his board, during the time that he had resided with Forrest. Subsequent to the settlement made by the privy council, it would seem that he received, at least, a part of his income from the common fund allotted to the ministers of the Church; but the good town had still an opportunity of testifying their generosity, by supplying the deficiencies of the legal allowance. Indeed, the uniform attention of the town council to his external support and accommodation, was honorable to them, and deserves to be recorded to their commendation.

In the beginning of the year 1562, he went to Angus to preside in the election and admission of John Erskine of Dun as superintendent of Angus and Mearns. That respectable baron was one of those whom the first General Assembly declared "apt and able to minister," and having already contributed in different ways to the advancement of the Reformation, he now devoted himself to the service of the Church, in a laborious employment, at a time when she stood eminently in need of the assistance of all the learned and pious. Knox had formerly presided at the installation of John Spotswood as superintendent of Lothian.

The influence of our Reformer appears from his being employed on different occasions to act as umpire and mediator in disputes of a civil nature among the Protestants. He was frequently requested to intercede with the town council in behalf of such of the inhabitants as had subjected themselves to punishment by their disorderly conduct. Soon after his return to Scotland, he had composed a domestic variance between the Earl and Countess of Argyle. In the year 1561, he had been employed as arbitrator in a difference between Archibald, Earl of Angus, and his brothers. And he was now urged by the Earl of Bothwell to assist in removing a deadly feud which subsisted between him and the Earl of Arran. He was averse to interfere in this business, which had already baffled the authority of the privy council; but at the desire of friends, he yielded, and, after considerable pains, had the satisfaction of bringing the parties to an amicable interview, at which they mutually promised to bury their former differences. But all the fair hopes which he had formed from this reconciliation were speedily blasted. For, in the course of a few days, Arran came to him in great agitation, with the information that Bothwell had endeavored to engage him in a conspiracy, to seize upon the person of the queen, and to kill the Prior of St. Andrews, Maitland, and the rest of her counselors. Knox does not seem to have given much credit to this information; he even endeavored to prevent Arran from making it public; in this, however, he did not succeed, and both noblemen were imprisoned. It soon after became evident that Arran was lunatic, but the fears of the courtiers show that they did not altogether
disbelieve his accusation, and that they suspected that Bothwell had formed a
design, of which his future conduct proved him not incapable.

In the month of May, Knox had another interview with the queen, on the
following occasion. The family of Guise were making the most vigorous efforts
to regain that ascendency in the French councils of which they had been
deprived since the death of Francis II, and, as zeal for the Catholic religion was
the cloak under which they concealed their ambitious designs, they began by
stirring up persecution against the Protestants. The massacre of Vassy, in the
beginning of March, was a prelude to this, in which the Duke of Guise and
Cardinal of Lorrain , attacked, with an armed force, a congregation peaceably
assembled for worship, killed a number of them, and wounded and mutilated
others, not excepting women and children. Intelligence of the success which
attended the measures of her uncles was brought to Queen Mary, who
immediately after gave a splendid ball to her foreign servants, at which the
dancing was prolonged to a late hour.

Knox was advertised of the festivities in the palace, and had no doubt that they
were occasioned by the accounts which the queen had received from France.
He always felt a lively interest in the concerns of the French Protestants, with
many of whom he was intimately acquainted; and he entertained a very bad
opinion of the princes of Lorrain. In his sermon on the following Sabbath, after
discoursing of the dignity of magistrates and the obedience which was due to
them, he proceeded to lament the abuse which the greater part of rulers made
of their power, and introduced some severe strictures upon the vices to which
they were commonly addicted, their oppression, ignorance, hatred of virtue,
attachment to bad company and fondness for foolish pleasures. Glancing at the
amusements which were common in the palace, he said that princes were more
exercised he said that princes were more exercised in dancing and music than
in reading or hearing the word of God, and delighted more in fiddlers and
flatterers than in the company of wise and grave men, who were capable of
giving wholesome counsel. As to dancing, he said, that, although he did not
find it praised in Scripture, and profane writers had termed it a gesture more
becoming mad than sober men, yet he would not utterly condemn it, provided
those who practiced it did not neglect the duties of their station, and did not
dance, like the Philistines, from joy at the misfortunes of God’s people. If they
were guilty of such conduct, their mirth would soon be converted into sorrow.
Information of this discourse was quickly conveyed to the queen, with many
exaggerations, and the preacher was next day ordered to attend at the palace.
Being conveyed into the royal chamber, where the queen sat with her maids of
honor and principal counselors, he was accused of having spoken of her majesty
irreverently, and in a manner calculated to bring her under the contempt and
hatred of her subjects.

After the queen had made a long speech on that theme, he via allowed to state
his defense. He told her majesty that she had been treated as persons usually
were who refused to attend the preaching of the word of God; she had been deceived by the false reports of flatterers. For, if she had heard the calumniated discourse, he did not believe she could have been offended with anything that he had said. She would now, therefore, be pleased to hear him repeat, as exactly as he could, what he had preached yesterday. Mary was obliged for once to listen to a Protestant sermon. Having finished the recapitulation of his discourse, he said, "If any man, madam, will say that I spake more, let him presently accuse me; for I think I have not only touched the sum, but the very words as I spake them." Several of the company, who had heard the sermon, attested that he had given a fair and accurate account of it. After turning round to the informers, who were dumb, the queen told him, that his words, though sharp enough as related by himself, had been reported to her in a different way. She added that she knew that her uncles and he were of a different religion, and therefore did not blame him for having no good opinion of them; but if he heard anything about her conduct which displeased him, he ought to come to herself privately, and she would willingly listen to his admonitions. Knox easily saw through this proposal; and, from what he already knew of Mary’s character, was convinced that she had no inclination to receive his private instructions, but wished merely to induce him to refrain in his sermons from everything that might be displeasing to the court. He replied that he was willing to do anything for her majesty’s contentment, which was consistent with his office; if her grace chose to attend the public sermons, she would have an opportunity of knowing what pleased or displeased him in her and in others; or if she chose to appoint a time when she would hear the substance of the doctrine which he preached in public, he would most gladly wait upon her grace’s pleasure, time, and place; but to come and wait at her chamber-door, and then to have liberty only to whisper in her ear what people thought and said of her, that would neither his conscience nor his office permit him to do. "For," added he, in a strain which he sometimes used even on serious occasions, "albeit, at your grace’s commandment, I am heir now, yit can I not tell what uther men shall judge of me, that, at this time of day, am absent from my buke, and waitting upon the court." "Ye will not alwayes be at your buke," said the queen, pettishly, and turned her back. As he left the room "with a reasonable merry countenance," he overheard one of the Popish attendants saying, "He is not afraid!" "Why should the plesing face of a gentilwoman afray me?" said he, regarding them with a sarcastic scowl, "I have luiked in the faces of mony angry men, and yit have not bene affrayed above measour."

There was at that time but one place of worship in the city of Edinburgh. The number of inhabitants was, indeed, small, when compared with its present population; but they still must have formed a very large congregation. St. Giles’s church, the place then used for worship, was capacious; for we learn that, on some occasions, three thousand persons assembled in it to hear sermon. In this church, Knox had, since 1560, performed all the parts of ministerial duty, without any other assistant than John Cairns, who acted as
reader. He preached twice every Sabbath, and thrice on other days of the week. He met regularly once every week with his kirk-session for disciples and with the assembly of the neighborhood for the exercise on the Scriptures. He attended, besides, the meetings of the provincial Synod and General Assembly; and at almost every meeting of the latter, he received an appointment to visit and preach in some distant part of the country. These labors must have been oppressive to a constitution which was already impaired, especially as he did not indulge in extemporaneous effusions, but devoted a part of every day to study. His parish was sensible of this, and, in April 1562, the town council came to a unanimous resolution to solicit the minister of Canongate to undertake the half of the charge. The ensuing General Assembly approved of the council’s proposal, and appointed the translation to take place. It was not, however, accomplished before June 1563, owing, as it would seem, to the difficulty of obtaining an additional stipend.

The person who was appointed colleague to our Reformer John Craig. A short account of this distinguished minister cannot be altogether foreign to the history of one with whom he was so strictly associated, and it will present incidents which are curious in themselves, and illustrative of the singular manner in which many of the promoters of the Reformation were fitted by Providence for engaging in that great undertaking. He was born in 1512, and soon after lost his father in the Battle of Flodden, which proved fatal to so many families in Scotland. After finishing his education at the university of St. Andrews, he went to England, and became tutor to the family of Lord Dacres; but war having broken out between England Scotland, he returned to his native country and entered into the order of Dominican friars. The Scottish clergy were at that time eager in making inquisition for Lutherans; and owing to the circumstance of his having been in England, or to his having dropped some expressions respecting religion which were deemed too free, Craig fell under the suspicion of heresy and was thrown into prison. The accusation was found to be groundless, and he was set at liberty. But although still attached to the Roman Catholic religion, the ignorance and bigotry of the clergy gave him such a disgust at his native country, that he left it in 1537, and, after remaining a short time in England, went to France, and from that to Italy. At the recommendation of the celebrated Cardinal Pole, he was admitted among the Dominicans in the city of Bologna, and was soon raised to an honorable employment in that body. In the library of the Inquisition, which was attached to the monastery, he found a copy of Calvin’s Institutes. Being fond of books, he determined to read that work, and the consequence was that he became a thorough convert to the reformed opinions. In the warmth of his first impressions, he could not refrain from imparting his change of sentiments to his associates, and must soon have fallen a sacrifice to the vigilant guardians of the faith, had not the friendship of a father in the monastery saved him. The old man, who was a native of Scotland, represented the danger to which he exposed himself by avowing such tenets in that place, and advised him, if he was fixed in his views, to retire immediately to some Protestant country. With
this prudent advice he complied so far as to procure his discharge from the monastery.

At an early period of the Christian era, there were converts to the gospel "in Caesar’s household"; and in the sixteenth century, the light of reformation penetrated into Italy and even into the territories of the Roman pontiff. On leaving the monastery of Bologna, Craig entered as tutor into the family of a neighboring nobleman, who had embraced Protestant principles; but he had not resided long in it, when, along with his host, he was delated for heresy, seized by the familiars of the Inquisition, and carried to Rome. After being confined nine months in a noisome dungeon, he was brought to trial and condemned to be burnt, along with some others, on the twentieth of August, 1559. On the evening previous to the day appointed for their execution, the reigning pontiff, Paul IV died; and, according to an accustomed practice on such occasions, the prisons in Rome were all thrown open. While those who were confined for debt and other civil offenses were liberated, heretics, after being allowed to go without the walls of their prison, were conveyed back to their cells. A tumult, however, having been raised that night in the city, Craig and his companions effected their escape, and took refuge in a house at a small distance from Rome. They had not been long there when they were followed by a company of soldiers, sent to apprehend them. On entering the house, the captain looked Craig eagerly in the face, and taking him aside, asked if he recollected of once relieving a poor wounded soldier in the vicinity of Bologna. Craig was in too great confusion to remember the circumstance. "But I remember it," replied the captain, "and I am the man you relieved, and Providence has now put it in my power to return the kindness which you showed to a distressed stranger. You are at your liberty; your companions I must take along with me, but for your sake, shall show them every favor in my power." He then gave him what money he had upon him, with directions how to make his escape.

We are not yet done with the wonderful incidents in the life of Craig. "Another incident," says Archbishop Spotswood, "befell him, which I should scarcely relate, so incredible it seemeth, if to many of good place he himself had not often repeated it as a singular testimony of God’s care of him." In the course of his journey through Italy, while he avoided the public roads and took a circuitous route to escape from pursuit, the money which he had received from the grateful soldier failed him. Having laid himself down by the side of a wood to ruminate on his condition, he perceived a dog approaching him with a purse in its teeth. It occurred to him that it had been sent by some evil-disposed person who was concealed in the wood, and wished to pick a quarrel with him. He therefore endeavored to drive it away; but the animal continuing to fawn upon him, he at last took the purse, and found in it a sum of money which enabled him to prosecute his journey. Having reached Vienna, and announced himself as a Dominican, he was employed to preach before the Archduke of Austria, who afterwards wore the imperial crown, under the title of Maximilian
II. That discerning prince, who was not unfriendly to a religious reform, was so much pleased with the sermon that he was desirous of retaining Craig; but the new pope Pius IV, having heard of his reception at the Austrian capital, applied to have him sent back to Rome as a condemned heretic, upon which the archduke dismissed him with a safe-conduct. When he arrived in England, in 1560, and was informed of the establishment of the reformed religion in his country, he immediately repaired to Scotland, and was admitted to the ministry. Having in a great measure forgotten his native language during an absence of twenty-four years, he preached for a short time in Latin to some of the learned in Magdalene chapel. He was afterwards appointed minister of the parish of Canongate, where he had not officiated long, till he was elected colleague to Knox.

The queen still persevered in the line of policy which she had adopted at her first arrival in Scotland, and employed none but Protestant counselors. She entrusted the chief direction of public affairs to the Prior of St. Andrews, who, in 1562, was created Earl of Murray, and married a daughter of the earl marischal. The marriage ceremony was performed by Knox publicly before the congregation according to the custom at that time; and on that occasion the Reformer reminded the earl of the benefit which the Church had hitherto received from his services, and exhorted him to persevere in the same course, lest, if an unfavorable change was perceived, the blame should be imputed to his wife. The fact, however, was, that Knox was more afraid that Murray would be corrupted by his connection with the court, than by his matrimonial alliance.

Although the Protestants filled the cabinet, it was well known that they did not possess the affection and confidence of her majesty, and, in consequence of this, various plots were laid to displace and ruin them. During the autumn of 1562, the Roman Catholics in Scotland entertained great hopes of a change in their favor. After several unsuccessful attempts to cut off the principal courtiers, the Earl of Huntly openly took arms in the North to rescue the queen from their hands, while the Archbishop of St. Andrews endeavored to unite and rouse the Papists of the South. On this occasion, our Reformer acted with his usual zeal and foresight. Being appointed by the General Assembly as Commissioner to visit the churches of the West, he persuaded the gentlemen of that quarter to enter into a new bond of defense. Hastening into Nithsdale and Galloway, he, by his sermons and conversation, confirmed the Protestants in these places. He employed the master of Maxwell to write to the Earl of Bothwell, who had escaped from confinement, and meant, it was feared, to join Huntly. He himself wrote the Duke of Chastelherault, warning him not to listen to the solicitations of his brother, the archbishop, nor accede to a conspiracy which would infallibly prove the ruin of his house. By these means the southern parts of the kingdom were preserved in a state of peace, while the vigorous measures of Murray crushed the rebellion in the North. The queen expressed little satisfaction at the victory gained over Huntly, and there is
every reason to think, that, if not privy to his rising, she expected to turn it to the advancement of her projects. According to Archbishop Spotswood, she scrupled not to say at this time, that "she hoped, before a year was expired, to have the mass and Catholic profession restored through the whole kingdom."

While these hopes were indulged, the popish clergy thought it necessary to gain credit to their cause by appearing more in defense of their tenets than they had lately done. They began to preach publicly in different parts of the country and boasted that they were ready to dispute with the Protestant ministers.

The person who stepped forward as their champion was Quintin Kennedy, uncle to the Earl of Cassilis, and abbot of Crossraguel. Though his talents were not of a superior order, the abbot was certainly one of the most respectable of the Popish clergy in Scotland, not only in birth, but also in regularity and decorum of conduct. He seems to have spent the greater part of his life in the same neglect of professional duty which characterized his brethren; but he was roused from his inactivity by the zeal and success of the Protestant preachers, who, in the years 1556 and 1557, attacked the Popish faith, and inveighed against the idleness and corruption of the clergy. At an age when others retire from the field, he began to rub up his long neglected armor, and descended into the theological arena.

His first appearance as a polemical writer was in 1558, when he published a short system of Catholic tactics, under the title of *Ane Compendius Tractive*, showing "the nerrest and onlie way to establish the conscience of a Christian man," in all matters which were in debate concerning faith and religion. This way was no other than implicit faith in the decisions of the Church or clergy. When any point of religion was controverted, the Scripture might be cited as a witness, but the Church was the judge, whose determinations, in general councils canonically assembled, were to be humbly received and submitted to by all the faithful. It was but "a barbour saying," which the Protestants had commonly in their mouths, that every man ought to examine the Scriptures for himself. It was sufficient for those who did not occupy the place of teachers, that they had a general knowledge of the creed, the ten commandments, and the Lord's prayer, according to the sense in which these were explained by the Church. And "as to the sacramentis, and all other secretis of the Scripture," every Christian man ought to "stand to the judgment of his pastor, who did bear his burden in all matters doubtsome above his knowledge."

This was doubtless a very near way to stability of mind and a most compendious mode of deciding every controversy which might arise, without having recourse to examination, reasoning, or debate. But as the willful and stubborn reformers would not submit to this easy and short mode of decision, the abbot was reluctantly obliged to enter the lists of argument with them. Accordingly, in the beginning of 1559, he challenged Willock, who was preaching in his neighborhood, to a dispute on the sacrifice of the mass. The
challenge was accepted, the time and place of meeting were fixed; but the
dispute did not take place, as Kennedy refused to appear, unless his antagonist
would previously engage to submit to the interpretations of Scripture which
had been given by the ancient doctors of the Church. From this time he seems
to have made the mass the great subject of his study, and in 1561 wrote a book
in its defense, which was answered by George Hay.

On the thirtieth of August, 1562, the abbot read, in his chapel of Kirkoswald, a
number of articles respecting the mass, purgatory, praying to saints, the use of
images, and other points, which he said, he would defend against any who
should impugn them, and he promised to declare his mind more fully on the
following Sabbath. Knox, who was in the vicinity, came to Kirkoswald on that
day, with the design of hearing the abbot, and granting him the disputation
which he had courted. In the morning, he sent some gentlemen who
accompanied him to acquaint Kennedy with the reason of his coming, and to
desire him either to preach according to his promise, or to attend Knox’s
sermon, and afterwards to state his objections to the doctrine which might be
delivered. The abbot did not think it proper to appear, and Knox preached in
the chapel. When he came down from the pulpit, a letter from Kennedy was
put into his hand, which led to an epistolary correspondence between them,
fully as curious as the dispute which followed.

The abbot wrote to Knox that he was informed he had come to that quarter of
the country “to seik disputation,” which he so far from refusing, that he
"earnestlie and effectuouslie covated the samin," and with that view should
meet him next Sunday in any house in Maybole that he chose, provided not
more than twenty persons on each side were allowed to be present. The
reformer replied that he had come to that quarter for the purpose of preaching
the gospel, and not of disputing; That he was under a previous engagement to
be in Dumfries on the day mentioned by the abbot, but that he would return
with convenient speed, and fix a time for meeting him. To this the abbot sent
an answer, to which Knox merely returned a verbal message at the time; but
when he afterwards published the correspondence, affixed short notes to it by
way of reply. The abbot proposed that they should have “familear, formall,
gentill ressoning.” "With my whole hart I accept the condition,” replies the
Reformer; “for assuredlie, my lord (so I stile you by reason of blood, and not of
office), chiding and brawling I utterlie abhor.” To Knox’s declaration that he
had come to “preach Jesus Christ crucified to be the only Saviour of the world,”
the abbot answers, "Praise be to God, that was na newings in this countrie, or
ye war borne." "I greatlie dout," replies the Reformer, "if ever Christ Jesus was
truelie preached by a papistical prelat or monk." As an excuse for his not
preaching at Kirkoswald on the day he had promised, the abbot says that Knox
had come to the place convoyed by five or six score strangers. "I lay the night
before," says Knox, "in Mayboil, accompanied with fewer than twentie." The
abbot boasted that Willock, at a former period, and Hay, more lately, had
refused to dispute with him, until they consulted the council and their
brethren. "Maister George Hay offered unto your disputation, but ye fled the barrass." Knox wished the dispute to be conducted publicly in St. John's Church, Ayr; for says he, "I wonder with what conscience ye can require privat conference of those artikles that ye have publicklie proposed. Ye have infected the ears of the simple, ye have wounded the hartes of the godlie, and ye have spoken blasphemie in oppen audience. Let your owne conscience nowe be judge, if we be bound to answer you in the audience of twenty or forty, of whom the one half are alreadie persuaded in the treuth, and the other perchance so addicted to your error, that they will not be content that light be called light, and darknes, darknes." "Ye said ane lytill afore," answers the abbot, "ye did abhor all chiding and railing, but nature passis nurtor with yow." "I will neither interchange nature nor nurtor with yow, for all the proffets of Crosraguell." "Gif the victorie consist in calmour or crying out," says the abbot, objecting to a public meeting, "I wil quite you the cause but farder pley [without further plea], and yet, praise be to God, I may whisper in sic manner as I will be hard sufficientlie in the largest house in all Carrick." "The larger the house, the better for the auditor and me," replied the Reformer.

The Earl of Cassilis wrote to Knox, expressing his disapprobation of the proposed dispute, as unlikely to do any good, and calculated to endanger the public peace, to which the Reformer replied by signifying that his relation had given the challenge, which he was resolved not to decline, and that his lordship ought to encourage him to keep the appointment, from which no bad effects were to be dreaded. Upon this the abbot wrote a letter to Knox, charging him with having procured Cassilis's letter to bring him into disgrace, and to advance his own honor, and saying that he would have "rancountered" him the last time he was in that country, had it not been for the interposition of his nephew. "Ye sal be assured," adds he, "I sal keip day and place in Mayboill, according to my writing, an I haif my life, an my feit louse"; and in another letter to Knox and the bailies of Ayr, he says, "Keip your promes, and pretex na oukrie, by my lorde of Cassilis writing." "To neither of these," says Knox, "did I answer otherwise than by appointing the day, and promising to keap the same. For I can pacientlie suffer wantone men to speak wantonlie, considering that I had sufficiently answered my lord of Cassilis in that behalf."

The conditions of the combat were now speedily settled. They agreed to meet on the twenty-eighth of September, at eight o’clock in the morning, in the house of the provost of Maybole. Forty persons on each side were to be admitted as witnesses of the dispute, with "as many mo as the house might goodly hold, at the sight of my lord of Cassilis." And notaries, or scribes, were chosen on each side to record the papers which might be given in by the parties, and the arguments which they advanced in the course of reasoning, to prevent unnecessary repetition, or a false report of the proceedings. These conditions were formerly drawn out, and subscribed by the Abbot and the Reformer, on the day preceding the meeting.
When they met, "Johne Knox addressed him to make publict prayer, whereat the abbot was soire offended at the first, but whil said John wold in nowise be stayed, he and his gave audience, which being ended, the abbote said, ‘Be my faith, it is weill said’" The reasoning commenced by reading a paper presented by the abbot, in which, after rehearsing the occasion of his present appearance, and protesting, that his entering into dispute was not to be understood as implying that the points in question were disputable or dubious, being already determined by lawful general councils, he declared his readiness to defend the articles which he had exhibited, beginning with that concerning the sacrifice of the mass. To this paper Knox gave in a written answer in the course of the disputation; and, in the meantime, after stating his opinion respecting general councils, he proceeded to the article in dispute. It was requisite, he said, to state clearly and distinctly the subject in controversy, and he thought the mass contained the four following things: the name, the form and action, the opinion entertained of it, and the actor, the authority which he had to do what he pretended to do, all of which he was prepared to show were destitute of any foundation in Scripture. The abbot was aware of the difficulty of managing the point on such broad ground, and he had taken up ground of his own, which he thought he could maintain against his antagonist. "As to the masse that he will impung," said he, "or any mannes masse, yea, an it war the paipes awin masse, I will mantein na thing but Jesus Christes masse, conforme to my article, as it is written, and diffinition contened in my buik, whilk he hes tane on hand to impung."

Knox expressed his delight at hearing the abbot say that he would defend nothing but the mass of Christ, for if he adhered to this, they were "on the verray point of an Christiane agrement," as he was ready to allow whatever could be shown to been instituted by Christ. As to his lordship's book, he confessed he had not read it, and (without excusing his negligence) requested the definition to be read to him from it. The qualified his assertion by saying that he meant to defend no other mass, except that which in its "substance, institution, and effect," was appointed by Christ; and he defined the mass, in its substance and effect, to be the sacrifice and oblation of the Lord’s body and blood, given and offered by him in the last supper, and for the first confirmation of this, he rested upon oblation of bread and wine by Melchizedec. His argument was that the Scripture declared Christ to be a priest after the order of Melchizedec. Melchizedec offered bread and wine to God; therefore Christ offered or made oblation of his body and blood in the last supper, which was the only instance in which the priesthood of Christ and Melchizedec could agree.

Knox said that the ceremonies of the mass and the opinion entertained of it (as procuring remission of sins to the quick and the dead) were viewed as important parts of it, and, having a strong hold of the consciences of the people, ought to be taken into the argument, but as the abbot declared himself willing to defend these afterwards, he would proceed to the substance, and
proposed, in the first place, to fix the sense in which the word sacrifice or oblation was used in this question. There were sacrifices propitiatoriae for expiation, and eucharisticæ, for thanksgiving, in which last sense the mortification of the body, prayer, and almsgiving were called sacrifices in Scripture. He wished, therefore, to know whether the abbot understood the word in the first or second of these senses in this dispute. The abbot said that he would not at present inquire what his opponent meant by a sacrifice propitiatorium; but he held the sacrifice on the cross to be the only sacrifice of redemption, and that of the mass to be the sacrifice of commemoration of the death and passion of Christ. Knox replied that the chief head which he intended to impugn, seemed to be yielded by the abbot; and he, for his part, cheerfully granted that there was a commemoration of Christ’s death in the right use of the ordinance of the supper.

The abbot insisted that Knox should proceed to impugn the warrant which he had taken from Scripture for his article. "Protesting," said the reformer, "that this mekle is win, that the sacrifice of the messe being denied by me to be a sacrifice propitiatorie for the sins of the quick and the dead (according to the opinion thereof before conceive) hath no patron at the present, I am content to procede."

"I protest he hes win no thing of me as yit, and referres it to black and white contained in our writing."

"I have openlie denied the masse to be an sacrifice propitiatorie for the quick, &c. and the defence thereof is denied. And, therefore, I referre me unto the same judges that my lord hath clamed."

"Ye may denie what ye pleis; for all that ye denie I tak not presentlie to impugn, but whair I began there will I end, that is, to defend the messe conform to my artickle."

"Your lordship’s ground," said Knox, after some altercation, "is that Melchizedeck is the figure of Christe in that he did offer unto God bread and wine, and that it behoved Jesus Christ to offer, in his latter supper, his body and blude under the forms of bread and wine. I answer to your ground yet againe, that Melchizedeck offered neither bread nor wine unto God; and, therefore, it that ye would thereupon conclude hath no assurance of your ground." "Preve that," said the abbot. Knox replied that according to the rules of reasoning, he could not be bound to prove a negative, that it was incumbent on his opponent to bring forward some proof for his affirmation, concerning which, the text was altogether silent, and that until the abbot did this, it was sufficient for him simply to deny. But the abbot said, he "stuck to his text," and insisted that his antagonist should show for what purpose Melchizedec brought out the bread and the wine, if it was not to offer them to God. After protesting that the abbot’s position remained destitute of support, and that he was not
bound, in point of argument, to show what became of the bread and wine, or what use was made of them, Knox consented to state his opinion that they were intended by Melchizedec to refresh Abraham and his company. The abbot had now gained what he wished, and he had a number of objections ready to start against this view of the words, by which he was able at least to protract and involve the dispute. And thus ended the first day’s contest.

When the company convened on the following day, the abbot proceeded to impugn the view which his opponent had given. He urged, first, that Abraham and his company had a sufficiency of provision in the spoils which they had taken from the enemy in their late victory, and did not need Melchizedec’s bread and wine; and, secondly, that the text said that Melchizedec brought them forth, and it was improbable that one man, and he a king, should carry as much as would refresh three hundred and eighteen men. To these objections Knox made such replies as will occur to any person who thinks on the subject. And in this manner did the second day pass.

When they met on the third day, the abbot presented a paper, in which he stated another objection to Knox’s view of the text. After some more altercation on this subject, Knox desired his opponent to proceed, according to his promise, to establish argument upon which he had rested his cause. But the abbot, being indisposed, rose up, and put into Knox’s hand a book which he referred him for the proof. By this time the noblemen and gentlemen present were completely wearied out. For, besides the tedious and uninteresting mode in which the dispute had been managed, they could find entertainment neither for themselves nor for their retinue in Maybole; so that if any person had brought in bread and wine among them, it is presumable that they would not have debated long upon the purpose for which it was brought. Knox proposed that they should adjourn to Ayr and finish the dispute, which was refused by the abbot, who said he would come to Edinburgh for that purpose, provided he could obtain the queen’s permission. Upon this the company dismissed.

The dispute was never resumed, though Knox says that he applied to the privy council for liberty to the abbot to come to Edinburgh for this purpose. Kennedy died in August 1564. It has been said that he was canonized as a saint after his death, and Dempster makes him both a saint and a martyr. I have not seen his name in the Romish calendar, but I find (what is of as great consequence) that the grand argument upon which he insisted in his disputation with the Reformer has been canonized. For in the calendar, at “March 25,” it is written, “Melchezedec sacrifieit breid and wyne in figure of ye bodie and bloud of our Lord, whilk is offerit in ye messe.” Doubtless those who knew the very month and day on which this happened, must have been better acquainted with the design of Melchizedec than either Moses or Paul.

The abbot and his friends having circulated the report that he had the advantage in the disputation, Knox, in 1563, published the account of it from
the records of the notaries, to which he added a prologue and short marginal
notes. The prologue and his answer to the abbot’s first paper, especially the
latter, are pieces of good writing. I have been more minute in the narrative of
this dispute than its merits deserve, because no account of it has hitherto
appeared, the tract itself being so exceedingly rare as to have been seen by
but few for a long period.

Another priest who defended the Roman Catholic cause at this time was Ninian
Wingate. He had been schoolmaster of Linlithgow, from which situation he was
removed by Spotswood, superintendent of Lothian, on account of his devoted
attachment to popery. In the month of February 1562, he sent to Knox a
writing, consisting of eighty-three questions upon the principal topics of
dispute between the Papists and Protestants, which he had drawn up in the
name of the inferior clergy, and of the Catholic persuasion in Scotland. To
some of these, particularly the questions which related to the call of the
Protestant ministers, the Reformer returned an answer from the pulpit, and
Wingate addressed several letters to him, complaining that his answers were
not satisfactory. These letters, with addresses to the queen, nobility, bishops,
and magistrates of Edinburgh, Wingate committed to the press, but the
impression being seized in the printer’s house (according to Bishop Lesley), the
author made his escape, and went to the Continent. Knox intended to publish
an answer to Wingate’s questions, and to defend the validity of the Protestant
ministry, but it does not appear that he carried his design into execution.

In the beginning of 1563, Knox went to Jedburgh, by appointment of the
General Assembly, to investigate a scandal which had broken out against Paul
Methven, the minister of that place, who was suspected of adultery. Methven
was found guilty and excommunicated. Having fled to England, he sent a letter
to the General Assembly, professing his willingness to submit to the discipline
of the Church, but requesting that the account of his process should be deleted
from the records of the Church. The Assembly declared that he might return
with safety to his native country, and that he should be admitted to public
repentance, but refused to erase the process from their minutes. He
afterwards returned to Scotland, and a severe and humiliating penance was
prescribed to him. He was enjoined to appear at the church-door of Edinburgh,
when the second bell rang for public worship, clad in sackcloth, bareheaded
and barefooted, to stand there until the prayer and psalms were finished, when
he was to be brought into the church to hear sermon, during which he was to
be “placeit in the public spectakell above the peiple.” This appearance he was
to make on three several preaching days, and on the last of them, being a
Sabbath, he was, at the close of the sermon, to profess his sorrow before the
congregation, and to request their forgiveness, upon which he was again to be
“clad in his awin apparell,” and received into the communion of the Church.

He was to repeat this course at Dundee and at Jedburgh, where he had
officiated as minister. Methven went through a part of this humbling scene,
with professions of deep sorrow, but being overwhelmed with shame, and
despairing to regain his lost reputation, he stopped in the midst of it, and again
retired to England. Prudential considerations were not wanting to induce the
reformed Church of Scotland to stifle this affair, and to screen from public
ignominy a man who had acted a distinguished part in the late reformation of
religion. But they refused to listen to these, and by instituting a strict scrutiny
into the fact, and inflicting an exemplary punishment upon the criminal, they
"approved themselves to be clear in this matter," and effectually shut the
mouths of their Popish adversaries.

The mode of public repentance enjoined on this occasion was appointed to be
afterwards used in all cases of aggravated immorality. There was nothing in
which the Scottish reformers approached nearer to the primitive Church than in
the rigorous and impartial exercise of ecclesiastical discipline, the relaxation of
which, under the Papacy, they justly regarded as one great cause of the
universal corruption of religion. While they rejected many of the ceremonies
which were introduced into the worship of the Christian Church during the first
three centuries, they, from detestation of vice and a desire to restrain it, did
don not scruple to conform to a number of their penitential regulations. In some
instances they might carry their rigor against offenders to an extreme, but it
was a virtuous extreme compared with the dangerous laxity, or rather total
disuse of discipline, which has gradually crept into almost all the Churches
which retain the name of reformed; even as the scrupulous delicacy with which
our forefathers shunned the society of those who had transgressed the rules of
morality is to be preferred to modern manners, by which the vicious obtain
easy admission into the company of the virtuous.

Twas hard, perhaps, on here and there a waif,
Desirous to return, and not received,
But was an wholesome rigour in the main,
And taught the unblemished to preserve with care
That purity, whose loss was loss of all.
But now, yes, now,
We are become so candid and so fair,
So liberal in construction, and so rich
In Christian charity (good-natured age!),
That they are safe, sinners of either sex,
Transgress what laws they may.

In the month of May the queen sent for Knox to Lochleven. Popish priests,
presuming upon her avowed partiality to and her secret promises of protection,
had of late become bold; and, during the late Easter, masses had been openly
celebrated in different parts of the kingdom. Repeated proclamations had been
issued against this practice by the queen in council, but none of them were
carried into execution. The gentlemen of the west country, who were the most
zealous Protestants, perceiving that the laws were eluded, came to the
resolution of executing them, without making any application to the court, and apprehended some of the offenders by way of example. These decided proceedings, which were calculated to defeat the scheme of policy which she had formed, gave offense to her majesty; but finding that the signification of her displeasure had not the effect of stopping them, she wished to avail herself of the Reformer’s influence for accomplishing her purpose.

She dealt with him very earnestly for two hours before supper, to persuade the western gentlemen to desist from all interruption of the Catholic worship. He told her majesty that if she would exert her authority in executing the laws of the land, he could promise for the peaceable behavior of the Protestants, but if she thought to elude them, he feared there were some who would let the Papists understand that they should not offend with impunity. "Will ye allow that they shall take my sword in their hands?" said the queen. "The sword of justice is God’s," replied the Reformer with equal firmness, "and is given to princes and rulers for one end, which, if they transgress, sparing the wicked and oppressing the innocent, they who, in the fear of God, execute judgment where God has commanded, offend not God, although kings do it not." Having produced some examples from Scripture to show that criminals might be punished by persons who did not occupy the place of supreme rulers, he added that the gentlemen of the West were acting strictly according to law, for the act of parliament gave power to all judges within their bounds, to search for and punish those who should transgress its enactments. He concluded with inculcating a doctrine which has seldom been very pleasing to princes: "It shall be profitable to your majesty to consider what is the thing your grace’s subjects look to receive of your majesty, and what it is that ye ought to do unto them by mutual contract. They are bound to obey you, and that not but in God; ye are bound to keep laws to them. Ye crave of them service; they crave of you protection and defence against wicked doers. Now, madam, if you shall deny your duty unto them (which especially craves that ye punish malefactors), think ye to receive full obedience of them? I fear, madam, ye shall not." The queen broke off the conversation with evident marks of displeasure.

Having imparted the substance of what had passed between them to the Earl of Murray, Knox meant to return to Edinburgh next day without waiting for any further communications with the queen. But a message was delivered to him at an early hour in the morning, desiring him not to depart until he had again spoken with her majesty. He accordingly met her at a place in the neighborhood of Kinross, where she took the amusement of hawking. This interview was very different from that of the preceding evening. Waiving entirely the subject on which they had differed, she conversed with him upon a variety of topics, with the greatest familiarity and apparent confidence. Lord Ruthven (she said) had offered her a ring, but she could not love that nobleman. She knew that he used enchantment, yet he had been made a member of her privy council, and she blamed secretary Lethington for procuring his admission into that body. Knox excused himself from saying
anything of the secretary in his absence. "I understand," said she, introducing another subject of discourse, "that ye are appointed to go to Dumfries, for the election of a superintendent to be established in these countries." He answered in the affirmative. "But I understand the Bishop of Athens would be superintendent."

"He is one, madam, that is put in election."

"If you knew him as well as I do, you would not promote him to that office, nor yet to any other within your kirk."

Knox said that the bishop deceived many, if he did not fear God.

"Well, do as you will, but that man is a dangerous man."

Knox wished to take his leave of her majesty, she pressed him to stay. "I have one of the greatest matters that have touched me, since I came into this realm, to open to you, and I must have your help in it," said she, with an air of condescension and confidence as enchanting as if she had put a ring on his finger. She then entered into a long discourse with him concerning a domestic difference between the Earl and Countess of Argyle. Her ladyship, had not, she said, been so circumspect in everything as could have been wished, but still she was of opinion that his lordship had not treated her in an honest and godly manner. Knox said that he was not unacquainted with the disagreeable variance which had subsisted between that honorable couple, and, before her majesty’s arrival in this country, had effected a reconciliation between them. On that occasion, the countess had promised not to complain to any creature before acquainting him, and having never heard from her on that subject, he had concluded that there was nothing but concord between her and his lordship. "Well," said the queen, "it is worse than ye believe. But do this much for my sake, as once again to put them at unity, and if she behave not herself as she ought to do, she shall find no favor of me; but in any wise let not my lord know that I have requested you in this matter." Then introducing the subject of their reasoning on the preceding evening, she said, "I promise to do as ye required; I shall cause summon all offenders; and ye shall know that I shall minister justice." "I am assured," said he, "that ye shall please God, and enjoy rest and tranquility within your realm, which to your majesty is more profitable than all the pope’s power can be." Upon this he took his leave of the queen.

This interview exhibits one part of Mary’s character in a very striking light. It shows how far she was capable of dissembling, what artifice she could employ, and what condescensions she could make, when she was bent on accomplishing a favorite object. She had formerly attacked the Reformer on another quarter without success and was convinced it was vain to think of working on his fears; she now resolved to try if she could soothe his stern temper by flattering his
vanity, and disarm his jealousy by strong marks of confidence. There is reason to think that she partly succeeded in her design. For, though he was not very susceptible of flattery, and must have been struck with the sudden change in the queen’s views and behavior, there are few minds that can altogether resist the impression made by the condescending familiarity of persons of superior rank; and our feelings on such occasions chide as uncharitable the cold suspicions suggested by our judgment. In obedience to her majesty’s request, he wrote a letter to the Earl of Argyle, which was not very pleasing to that nobleman. From deference to the opinion which she had expressed, he inquired more narrowly into the conduct of the Bishop of Galloway, and finding some grounds of suspicion, postponed the election. And the report which he gave of the queen’s gracious answer operated in her favor on the public mind.

But if his zeal suffered a temporary intermission, it soon kindled with fresh ardor. On the nineteenth of May, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, and a number of the principal Papists, were arraigned, by the queen’s orders, before the Lord Justice General, for transgressing the laws; and, having come in her majesty’s will, were committed to ward. But this was merely a stroke of policy, to enable her the more easily to carry her measures in the parliament which met on the following day, and, accordingly, the prisoners were set at liberty as soon as it was dissolved.

This was the first parliament which had been held since the queen’s arrival in Scotland, and it was natural to expect that their first business would be to ratify the treaty of peace made in July 1560, and the establishment of the Protestant religion. If the acts of the former parliament were invalid, as the queen had repeatedly declared, the Protestants had no law on their side; they held their religion at the mercy of their sovereign, and might be required at her pleasure to submit to Popery, as the religion which still possessed the legal establishment. But so well had she laid her plans, such was the effect of her insinuating address, and, above all, so powerful was the temptation of self-interest on the minds of the Protestant leaders, that, by general consent, they passed from this demand, and lost the only favorable opportunity which presented itself, during the reign of Mary, for giving a legal security to the reformed religion, and thereby removing one principal source of national fears and jealousies. An act of oblivion, securing indemnity to those who had been engaged in the late civil war, was indeed passed, but the mode of its enactment virtually implied the invalidity of the treaty in which it had been originally embodied; and the Protestants, on their bended knees, supplicated, as a boon from their sovereign, what they had formerly won with their swords and repeatedly demanded as their right. The other acts made to please the more zealous reformers were expressed with such studied and glaring ambiguity, as to offer insult to their understandings.

Our Reformer was thunderstruck when first informed of the measures which were in agitation, and could scarcely believe that it was seriously intended to
carry them into execution. He immediately procured an interview with some of
the leading members of parliament, to whom he represented the danger
allowing that meeting to dissolve without obtaining the ratification of the acts
of the preceding parliament, or at least those acts which established the
Reformation. They alleged that the queen would never have agreed to call
them together, if they had insisted in these demands, but that there was a
prospect of her being soon married, and on that occasion they would obtain all
their wishes. In vain he reminded them that poets and painters had
represented *Occasion* with a bald hind-head; in vain he urged that the event to
which they looked forward would be accompanied with difficulties of its own,
which would require all their skill and circumspection. Their determination was
fixed. He now perceived the full extent of the queen’s simulation, and the
selfishness and servility of the Protestant leaders affected him deeply.

So hot was the altercation between him and the Earl of Murray on this subject
that an open rupture ensued. Knox had long looked upon that nobleman as one
of the most sincere and steady adherents of the reformed cause, and therefore
felt the greater disappointment at his conduct. Under his first irritation he
wrote a letter to Murray, in which, after reminding him of his condition when
they first became acquainted in London, and the honors to which he had been
raised by Providence, solemnly renounced friendship with him, as one who
prefer his own interest and the pleasure of his sister to the advancement of
religion, left him to the guidance of the new counselors whom he had chosen,
and exonerated him from all future concern in his affairs. This variance, which
continued nearly two years, was very gratifying to the queen and to others who
disliked their former familiarity, and who failed not (as Knox informs us) to
“cast oil into the flame, until God did quench it by the water of affliction.”

Before the dissolution of the parliament, the Reformer embraced an
opportunity of disburdening his mind in the presence of the greater part of the
members assembled in his church. After discoursing of the great mercy of God
shown to Scotland in marvelously delivering them from bondage of soul and
body, and of the deep ingratitude which he perceived in all ranks of persons,
he addressed himself particularly to the nobility. He praised God that he had
an opportunity of pouring out the sorrows of his heart in the presence of those
who could attest the truth of all that he said. He appealed to their
consciences, if he had not, in their greatest extremities, exhorted them to
depend upon God, and assured them of preservation and victory, provided they
preferred the divine glory to their own lives and secular interests. “I have been
with you in your most desperate temptations (continued he, in a strain of
impassioned eloquence); in your most extreme dangers I have been with you.
St. Johnston, Cupar-moor, and the Craggs of Edinburgh, are yet recent in my
heart; yea, that dark and dolorous night wherein all ye, my lords, with shame
and fear, left this town, is yet in my mind, and God forbid that ever I forget it!
What was, I say, my exhortation to you, and what has fallen in vain of all that
ever God promised unto you by my mouth, ye yourselves yet live to testify.
There is not one of you, against whom was death and destruction threatened, perished, and how many of your enemies has God plagued before your eyes! Shall this be the thankfulness that ye shall render unto your God, to betray his cause when you have it in your hands to establish it as you please?" He saw nothing (he said) but a cowardly desertion of Christ’s standard. Some had even the effrontery to say that they had neither law nor parliament for their religion. They had the authority of God for their religion, and its truth was independent of human laws; but it was also accepted within this realm in public parliament, and that parliament he would maintain to have been as lawful and as free as any parliament that had ever been held within the kingdom of Scotland.

In the conclusion of his discourse, he adverted to the reports her majesty’s marriage, and of the princes who courted her, and (desiring the audience to mark his words) he predicted the consequences which would ensue, if ever the nobility consented that their sovereign should marry a Papist.

Protestants, as well as Papists, were offended with the freedom this sermon, and some who had been most familiar with the preacher now shunned his company. Flatterers were not wanting to run to the queen, and inform her that John Knox had preached against her marriage. After surmounting all opposition to her measures, and managing so successfully the haughty and independent barons of her kingdom, Mary was incensed to think that there should yet be one man of obscure condition ventured to condemn her proceedings; and as she could not tame his stubbornness, she determined to punish his temerity. He was ordered instantly to appear before her. Lord Ochiltree, with several gentlemen, accompanied him to the palace, but the superintendent of Angus, Erskine of Dun, was with him into the royal presence.

Her majesty received him in a very different manner from what she had done at Lochleven. Never had prince been handled (she passionately exclaimed) as she was; she had borne with him in all his rigorous speeches against herself and her uncles; she had sought his favor by all means; she had offered him audience whenever he pleased to admonish her; "And yet," said she, "I cannot be quit of you. I vow to God I shall be once revenged!" On pronouncing these words with great violence, she burst into a flood of tears, which interrupted her speech. When the queen had composed herself, Knox proceeded calmly to make his defense. Her grace and he had (he said) at different times been engaged in controversy, and he never before had perceived her offended with him. When it should please God to deliver her from the bondage of error in which she had been trained up, through want of instruction in the truth, he trusted that her majesty would not find the liberty of his tongue offensive. Out of the pulpit, he believed, few had occasion to complain of him; but there he was not his own master, but was bound to obey Him who commanded him to speak plainly, and to flatter no flesh on the face of the earth.
"But what have you to do with my marriage?" demanded the queen. He was proceeding to state the extent of his commission as a preacher, and the reasons which led him to touch on that delicate subject, but she interrupted him by repeating her question, "What have you to do with my marriage? Or what are you in this commonwealth?" "A subject born within the same, madam," replied the Reformer, piqued by the last question, and by the contemptuous tone in which it was proposed, "and albeit I be neither earl, lord, nor baron in it, yet has God made me (how abject that ever I be in your eyes) a profitable member within the same. Yea, madam, to me it appertains no less to forwarn of such things as may hurt it, if I forsee them, than it doth to any of the nobility, for both my vocation and conscience require plainness of me. And, therefore, madam, to yourself I say that which I spake in public place. Whensover the nobility of this realm shall consent that ye be subject to an unfaithful husband, they do as much as in them lieth to renounce Christ, to banish his truth from them, to betray the freedom of this realm, and perchance shall in the end do small comfort to yourself." At these words, Mary began again to sob and weep with great bitterness. The superintendent, who was a man of mild and gentle spirit, tried to mitigate her grief and resentment; he praised her beauty and her accomplishments, and told her that there was not a prince in Europe who would not reckon himself happy in gaining her hand. During this scene, the severe and inflexible mind of the Reformer displayed itself. He continued silent and with unaltered countenance until the queen had given vent to her feelings. He then protested that he never took delight in the distress of any creature; it was with great difficulty that he could see his own boys weep when he corrected them for their faults, and far less could he rejoice in her majesty’s tears; but seeing he had given her no just reason of offense, and had only discharged his duty, he was constrained, though unwillingly, to sustain her tears, rather than hurt his conscience, and betray the commonwealth by his silence.

This apology inflamed the queen still more; she ordered him instantly to leave her presence, and to wait the signification of her pleasure in the adjoining room. There he stood as "one whom men had never seen," all his friends, Lord Ochiltree excepted, being afraid to show him the smallest countenance. In this situation he addressed himself to the court ladies, who sat in their richest dress in the chamber: "O fair ladies, how plesing war this lyfe of yours, if it sould ever abyde, and then, in the end, that ye might pas to hevin with all this gay gear! But fye upon that knave Death, that will come widder we will or not!" Having engaged them in conversation by a mixture of seriousness and raillery, he passed the time, till the superintendent came and informed him that he was allowed to go home until her majesty had taken farther advice. The queen insisted to have the judgment of the Lords of Articles, whether the words he had used in the pulpit were not actionable; but she was persuaded by her counselors to abandon the idea of a prosecution. "And so that storme quietit in appearance, bot nevir in the hart."
No expressions are sufficiently strong to describe the horror which many feel at
the monstrous inhumanity of Knox, in remaining unmoved, while "youth,
beauty, and royal dignity," were dissolved in tears before him. Enchanting,
surely, must the charms of the Queen of Scots have been, and iron-hearted the
Reformer, who could resist the impression of them, when they continue to this
day to exercise such a sway over the hearts of men, that even grave and
serious authors, not addicted to the language of gallantry and romance,
protest, that they cannot read of the tears which she shed on this occasion,
without feeling an irresistible inclination to weep along with her. There may be
some, however, who, knowing how much real misery there is in the world, are
not disposed to waste their feelings unnecessarily, and who are of opinion that
there was not much to commiserate in the condition of the queen, nor to
reprobate in the conduct of the Reformer. Considering that she had been so
fortunate in her measures, and had found the nobility so ready to gratify all her
wishes, the passion by which she suffered herself to be transported was
extravagant, and her tears must have been those of anger more than of grief.
On the other hand, when we consider that Knox was at this time deserted by
his friends, and stood almost alone in resisting the will of a princess, who
accomplished her measures chiefly by caresses and tears, we may be disposed
to form a more favorable idea of his conduct and motives. We behold not,
indeed, the enthusiastic lover, mingling his tears with those of his mistress,
and vowing to revenge her wrongs; nor the man of nice sensibility, who loses
every other consideration in the gratification of his feelings; but we behold,
what is more rare, the stern patriot—the rigid Reformer—who, in the discharge
of his duty, and in a public cause, can withstand the tide of tenderness as well
as the storm of passion. There have been times when such conduct was
regarded as the proof of a superior mind, and the man who, from such motives,
"hearkened not to the wife of his bosom, nor knew his own children," has been
the object, not of censure, but of admiration, in pagan as well as sacred story.

Fertur pudicæ conjugis osculum,
Parvosque natos, ut capitis minor,
Ab se removisse, et virilem
Torvus humi posuisse vultum.

While Knox lay under the displeasure of the court, and had lost the confidence
of his principal friends, his enemies judged it a favorable opportunity for
attacking him in (what had been universally allowed to be irreproachable) his
moral conduct. At the very time that he was engaged in scrutinizing the
scandal against Methven, and inflicting upon him the highest censure of the
Church, it was alleged that he was himself guilty of the same crime. Euphemia
Dundas, an inhabitant of Edinburgh, inveighing one day, in the presence of a
circle of her acquaintance, against the Protestant doctrine and ministers, said,
among other things, that John Knox had been a common whoremonger all his
life, and that, within a few days past, he "was apprehendit and tane furth of
ape killogie with ane common hure." This might have been passed over by Knox
and the Church, as an effusion of Popish spleen or female scandal; but the recent occurrence at Jedburgh, the situation in which the Reformer at present stood with the court, the public manner in which the charge had been brought, and the specification of a particular instance, seemed to them to justify and call for a legal investigation. Accordingly, the clerk of the General Assembly, on the eighteenth of June, gave in a formal representation and petition to the town council, praying that the woman might be brought before them and the matter examined; that, if the accusation was found true, the accused might be punished with every degree of merited rigor; and that, if false, the accuser might be dealt with according to the demerit of her offense. She was called, and, appearing before the council, flatly denied that she had ever used any such words, although Knox’s procurator afterwards produced respectable witnesses to prove that she had spoken them.

This convicted calumny, which never gained the smallest credit at the time, would not have deserved notice, had it not been revived after the Reformer’s death, by the Popish writers, who, having caught hold of the report, and dressed it out in all the horrid colors which malice or credulity could suggest, circulated it industriously, by their publications, through the Continent. Though I had not been able to trace their slanders to this source, the atrocity of the imputed crimes, the unspotted reputation which Knox uniformly maintained among all his contemporaries, the glaring self-contradictions of the accusers, and, above all, the notorious spirit of slander and defamation of which they have long stood convicted in the learned world, would have been grounds sufficient for rejecting such charges with detestation. Those who are acquainted with the writings of that period will not think that I speak too strongly; such as are ignorant of them may be satisfied by looking into the notes.

The queen flattered herself that she had at last caught the Reformer in an offense, which would infallibly subject him to punishment. During her residence at Stirling, in the month of August, the domestics whom she left behind her in Holyrood-house celebrated the Popish worship with greater publicity than been usual when she was present; and, at the time the sacrament of the supper was dispensed in Edinburgh, they revived certain superstitious practices which had been laid aside by the Roman Catholics, since the establishment of the Reformation. This boldness offended the Protestants, and some them went down to the palace to mark the inhabitants who repaired to the service. Perceiving numbers entering, they burst into the chapel, and presenting themselves at the altar, which was prepared for mass, asked the priest how he “durst be so malapert” as to proceed in that manner, when the queen was absent. Alarmed at this intrusion, the mistress of the household dispatched a messenger to the comptroller, who was attending sermon in St Giles’s Church, desiring him to come instantly to save her life and the palace. Having hurried down, accompanied with the magistrates and a guard, the comptroller found everything quiet, and no appearance of tumult except what
was occasioned by the retinue which he brought along with him. When the report of this affair was conveyed to the queen, she declared her determination not to return to Edinburgh until this riot was punished, and indicted two of the Protestants who had entered the chapel to stand trial “for forethought felony, hamesucken, and invasion of the palace.” Fearing an intention to proceed to extremities against these men, and that their condemnation would be a preparative to some hostile attempt against their religion, the Protestants in Edinburgh resolved that Knox, agreeably to a commission which he had received from the Church, should write a circular letter to the principal gentlemen of their persuasion, informing them of the circumstances, and requesting their presence on the day of trial. He wrote the letter according to their request. A copy of it having come into the hands of Sinclair, Bishop of Ross, and president of the Court of Session, who was a great personal enemy to Knox, he conveyed it immediately to the queen at Stirling. She communicated it to the privy council, who, to her great satisfaction, pronounced it treasonable; but to give the greater solemnity to the proceedings, it was resolved that an extraordinary meeting of the counselors, assisted by other noblemen, should be held at Edinburgh, in the end of December, to try the cause, and the Reformer was summoned to appear before this convention.

Previously to the day of trial, great influence was used in private to persuade him to acknowledge a fault, and to throw himself on the queen’s mercy. This he peremptorily refused to do. The master of Maxwell (afterwards Lord Herries), with whom he had long been intimate, threatened him with the loss of his friendship, and told him that he would repent, if he did not submit to the queen, for men would not bear with him as they had hitherto done. He replied, that he did not understand such language. He had never opposed her majesty except in the article of religion, and surely it was not meant that he should bow to her in that matter; if God stood by him (which he would do as long as he confided in him, and preferred his glory to his own life) he regarded little how men should behave towards him, nor did he know wherein they had borne with him, unless in hearing the word of God from his mouth, which, if they should reject, he would lament it, but the injury would be their own.

The Earl of Murray and Secretary Maitland sent for him to the clerk register’s house, and had a long conversation with him to the same purpose. They represented the pains which they had taken to mitigate the queen’s resentment and intimated that nothing could save him but a timely submission. His reply was similar to that which he had given to Maxwell, that never would he confess a fault when he was conscious of none, and had not learned to “cry treason at every thing which the multitude called treason, nor to fear what they feared.” The wily secretary, finding him determined to abide the consequences of a trial, endeavored to bring on a dispute on the subject, with the view of ascertaining the grounds on which he meant defend himself, but Knox, aware of his craft, declined the conversation, and told him it would be
foolish to entrust with his defense one who had already prejudged his cause, and pronounced him guilty.

On the day appointed for the trial, the public anxiety was raised to a high pitch, and the palace-yard and avenues were crowded with people who waited to learn the result. The Reformer was conducted to the chamber in which the lords were already assembled and engaged in consultation. When the queen had taken her seat, and perceived Knox standing uncovered at the foot of the table, she burst into a loud fit of laughter. "That man," said she, "made me weep, and shed never a tear himself; I will now see if I can make him weep." The secretary opened the proceedings with greater gravity, by stating, in a speech addressed to the Reformer, the reasons why the queen had convened him before her nobility. "Let him acknowledge his own handwriting," said the queen, "and then we shall judge of the contents of the letter." A copy of the circular letter being handed to him, he looked at the subscription and owned that it was his, adding, that though he had subscribed a number of blanks, he had such confidence in the fidelity of the scribe that he was ready to acknowledge the copy as well as the subscription. "You have done more than I would have done," said Maitland. "Charity is not suspicious," replied the Reformer. "Well, well," said the queen, "read your own letter, and then answer to such things as shall be demanded of you." "I will do the best I can," said he, and having read the letter with an audible voice, returned it to the queen's advocate, who was commanded to accuse him.

"Heard you ever, my lords, a more despiteful and treasonable letter?" said the queen looking round the table. "Mr. Knox, are you not sorry from your heart, and do you not repent that such a letter has passed your pen, and from you has come to the knowledge of others?" said Maitland.

"My lord secretary, before I repent, I must be taught my offense."

"Offense! if there were no more but the convocation of the queen's lieges, the offense cannot be denied."

"Remember yourself, my lord; there is a difference between a lawful convocation and an unlawful. If I have been guilty in this, I offended oft since I came last into Scotland, for what convocation of the brethren has ever been to this hour, unto which my pen served not?" "Then was then, and now is now," said the secretary, "we have no need of such convocations as sometimes we have had." "The time that has been is even now before my eyes," rejoined the Reformer, "for I see the poor flock in no less danger than it has been at any time before, except that the devil has got a vizor upon his face. Before, he came in with his own face, discovered by open tyranny, seeking the destruction of all that refused idolatry; and then, I think, you will confess the brethren lawfully assembled themselves for defence of their lives, and now the devil
comes under the cloak of justice, to do that which God would not suffer him to do by strength."

"What is this?" interrupted her majesty, who was offended that he should be allowed such liberty of speech, and thought that she could bring him more closely to the question than any of her counselors. "What is this? Methinks you trifle with him. Who gave him authority to make convocation of my lieges? Is not that treason?" "No, madam," replied Lord Ruthven, displeased at the keenness which the queen showed in the cause, "for he makes convocation of the people to hear prayers and sermon almost daily, and whatever your grace or others will think thereof, we think it no treason." "Hold your peace," said the queen, "and let him make answer for himself." "I began, madam," resumed Knox, "to reason with the secretary (whom I take to be a better dialectician than your grace) that all convocations are not unlawful, and now my Lord Ruthven has given the instance."

"I will say nothing against your religion, nor against your convening to your sermons, but what authority have you to convocate my subjects when you will, without my commandment?"

He answered that at his own will he had never convened four persons in Scotland, but at the orders of his brethren he had given many advertisements, and great multitudes had assembled in consequence of them; and if her grace complained that this had been done without her command, he begged leave to answer that the same objection might be made to all that had been done respecting the reformation of religion in this kingdom. He had never, he said, loved to stir up tumults—never been a preacher of rebellion; on the contrary, he had always taught the people to obey princes and magistrates in all their lawful commands. It he had been more active than the rest of his brethren in calling extraordinary assemblies of the Protestants, it was owing to a charge which he had received from the Church to do so, as often as he saw a necessity for such meetings, and especially when religion was exposed to danger; and he had repeatedly requested to be exonerated from this irksome and invidious charge, but could not obtain his wish. He must therefore be convicted by a just law, before he would profess sorrow for what he had done; he thought he had done no wrong.

"You shall not escape so," said the queen. "Is it not treason, my lords, to accuse a prince of cruelty? I think there be acts of Parliament against such whisperers." Several of their lordships said that there were such laws. "But wherein can I be accused of this?" asked Knox. "Read this part of your own letter," said the queen, who showed herself an acute prosecutor. She then ordered the following sentence to be read from his letter: "This fearful summons is directed against them [the two persons who were indicted], to make no doubt a preparative on a few, that a door may be opened to execute cruelty upon a greater multitude." "Lo!" exclaimed the queen exultingly, "what
say you to that?” The eyes of the assembly were fixed on the Reformer, and all were anxious to know what answer he would make to this charge.

"Is it lawful for me, madam, to answer for myself? or, shall I be condemned unheard?"

"Say what you can, for I think you have enough to do," said the queen.

"I will first then desire of your grace, madam, and of this most honorable audience whether your grace knows not, that the obstinate Papists are deadly enemies to all such as profess the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that they most earnestly desire the extermination of them, and of the true doctrine that is taught within this realm?"

Mary was silent, but the Lords, with one voice, exclaimed, "God forbid, that ever the lives of the faithful, or yet the staying of the doctrine, stood in the power of the Papists! for just experience has taught us what cruelty lies in their hearts."

"I must proceed, then," said the Reformer. "Seeing that I perceive that all will grant that it was a barbarous thing to destroy such a multitude as profess the gospel of Christ within this realm, which oftener than once or twice they have attempted to do by force—they, by God and by his providence being disappointed, have invented more crafty and dangerous practices, to wit, to make the prince a party under colour of law; and so what they could not do by open force, they shall perform by crafty deceit. For who thinks, my lords, that the insatiable cruelty of the Papists (within this realm I mean) shall end in the murdering of these two brethren, now unjustly summoned and more unjustly to be accused? And therefore, madam, cast up, when you list, the acts of your parliament, I have offended nothing against them; for I accuse not, in my letter, your grace, nor yet your nature, of cruelty. But I affirm yet again, that the pestilent Papists, who have inflamed your grace against those poor men at this present, are the sons of the devil, and therefore must obey the desires of their father, who has been a liar and manslayer from the beginning."

"You forget yourself! you are not now in the pulpit," said the chancellor.

"I am in a place where I am demanded of conscience to speak the truth, and therefore the truth I speak, impugn it whoso list." He added, again addressing the queen, that persons who appeared to be of honest, gentle, and meek natures had often been corrupted by wicked counsel, and that the Papists, who had her ear, were dangerous counselors, and such her mother had found them to be.

Mary, perceiving that nothing was to be gained by reasoning, began now to upbraid him with his harsh behavior to her at their last interview. He spake
"fair enough" at present before the lords, she said, but on that occasion he caused her to shed many salt tears, and said, "he set not by her weeping." This drew from him a vindication of his conduct, in the course of which he gave a narrative of that conference. After this, the secretary, having spoken with the queen, told Knox that he was at liberty to return home for that night. "I thank God and the queen's majesty," said he, and retired.

When Knox had withdrawn, the judgment of the nobility was taken respecting his conduct. All of them, with the exception of the immediate dependents of the court, gave it as their opinion that he had not been guilty of any breach of the laws. The secretary, who had assured the queen of his condemnation, was enraged at this decision. He brought her majesty, who had retired, again into the room, and proceeded to call the votes a second time. This attempt to overawe them incensed the nobility. "What!" said they, "shall the laird of Lethington have power to control us? or, shall the presence of a woman cause us to offend God, and to condemn an innocent man, against our consciences?" They then repeated the vote which they had already given, absolving him from all offense, and, at the same time, praising his modest appearance and the judicious manner in which he had conducted his defense.

Mary was unable to conceal the mortification and displeasure which she felt at this unexpected acquittal. When the Bishop of Ross, who had been the informer, gave his vote on the same side with the rest, she taunted him openly in the presence of the court. "Trouble not the child!" said she, "I pray you trouble him not! for he is newly wakened out of his sleep. Why should not the old fool follow the footsteps of those that have passed before him?" The bishop replied coldly that her majesty might easily know, that his vote was not influenced by partiality to the person accused. "That nicht was nyther dancing nor fiddeling in court, for madam was disappoynted of hir purpose, whilk was to have had Johne Knox in hir will, by vote of her nobility."

CHAPTER VIII

From December 1563, when he was acquitted from a charge of treason, to the year 1570, when he was struck with apoplexy

The indignation of the queen at the Reformer's escape from punishment did not soon abate; and the effects of it fell upon the courtiers who had voted for his exculpation, and upon those who had been unsuccessful in opposing it. The Earl of Murray was among the former, Maitland among the latter. In order to appease her wrath, they again attempted to persuade Knox to soothe her by some voluntary submission, and they engaged that, if he would only agree to go within the walls of the castle, he should be allowed to return immediately to his own house. To this he refused to yield, being convinced, that by such a
compliance, he would throw discredit on the judgment of the nobility who had acquitted him, and confess himself to have been a mover of sedition. Disappointed in their object, they endeavored to injure him by whispers and detraction; circulating that he had no authority from his brethren for what he had done; and that he arrogated a papal power over the Scottish Church, by issuing his letters at pleasure, and exacting an implicit obedience to them. These charges were very groundless and unjust; for there never was, perhaps, an individual who possessed as much influence, and at the same time was so careful to avoid all appearance of assuming superiority over his brethren, or of acting by his own private authority in matters of public and common concern.

At the meeting of the General Assembly, held in the close of this year, he declined taking any share in the deliberation, but after the public business had been disposed of, he requested liberty to speak on an affair which concerned himself. He stated what he had done in writing the late circular letter, the proceedings to which it had given rise, and the surmises which were still circulating to his prejudice; and he insisted that the Church should now examine his conduct in that matter, and particularly that they should declare whether or not they had given him a commission to advertise the brethren, when he foresaw any danger threatening their religion, or any difficult case which required their advice. The courtiers strenuously opposed the discussion of this question, but it was taken up, and the Assembly, by a great majority, found that he had been led with such a commission, and that, in the advertisement which he had lately given, he had not exceeded his powers.

Knox had remained a widower upwards of three years. In March 1564, he contracted a second marriage with Margaret Stewart, daughter of Lord Ochiltree, a nobleman of amiable dispositions, who had been long familiar with our Reformer, and had steadily adhered to him when he was deserted by his other friends. She continued to discharge the duties of a wife to him with the most pious and affectionate assiduity until the time of his death. The Popish writers, who envied the honors of the Scottish Reformer, have represented this marriage as proof of his great ambition, and, in the excess of their spleen, have ridiculously imputed to him the project of aiming to raise his progeny to the throne of Scotland, because the family of Ochiltree was of the blood royal! They are quite clear, too, that he gained the heart of the young lady by means of sorcery and the assistance of the devil! But it seems that, powerfully as he was seconded, he could not succeed in another attempt which he had previously made, for the same writers inform us that he paid his addresses to Lady Barbara Hamilton, eldest daughter of the Duke of Chastelherault, and widow of Lord Fleming, by whom he was repulsed. The account of the appearance that he made at the time of his marriage, which shall be inserted in the notes, the reader will receive according to the degree of its probability, and the credit he may think due to the authorities upon which it rests.
The country continued in a state of quietness during the year 1564, but the same jealousies still subsisted between the Court and the Church. Her majesty’s prejudices against the reformed religion were unabated, and she maintained a correspondence with its sworn enemies on the Continent, which could not altogether escape the vigilance of her Protestant subjects. The preachers, on their side, did not relax in their zealous warnings against Popery, and as to the dangers which they apprehended, while they complained of the beggary to which the greater part of their own number was reduced, and of the growing lukewarmness of the Protestant courtiers. The latter felt uneasy under these reproaches, and, in concert with the queen, were anxious to restrain the license of the pulpit. They began by addressing themselves privately to the more moderate and complying of the ministers, whom they gained over by their persuasions to a partial approbation of their measures, and having so far succeeded, they ventured to propose the matter in public and to request the sanction of the leading members of the General Assembly.

Without intending to vindicate the latitude which was taken by particular preachers at that time, it may be said, in general, that a systematic attempt to restrain the liberty of speech in the pulpit, farther than the correction of occasional excesses might require, would have been a measure fraught with danger to the Protestant interest. The reformed preachers were the most vigilant and incorrupt guardians of national liberty, an honorable distinction which their successors maintained during the remainder of that century. It is better to be awakened with rudeness, or even by a false alarm, than to be allowed to sleep on in the midst of dangers. Who would muzzle the mouth of the wakeful animal which guards the house against thieves, because the inmates are sometimes disturbed by his nocturnal vociferation? or substitute in his place a "dumb dog, that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber?"

Knox, the freedom and sharpness of whose censures the courtiers felt most deeply, was the person whom they chiefly wished to restrain, but it was no easy matter either to overawe him by authority, or by reasoning to procure his acquiescence to their proposals. In the month of June, a conference was held between the principal statesmen and ministers of the Church, when this subject was discussed; and in an elaborate debate with Maitland, Knox defended the leading points of his doctrine which had given offense to the court. This debate "admirably displays the talents and character of both the disputants—the acuteness of the former, embellished with learning, but prone to subtlety; the vigorous understanding of the latter, delighting in bold sentiments and superior to all fear."

Maitland opened the conference with a plausible speech. He set forth the benefits which they had enjoyed under her majesty’s government and dwelt on the liberty which she had granted them in religious matters; he urged the great importance of the ministers of the Church cultivating her friendship by every
good office in their power, and endeavoring to inspire the people with a favorable opinion of her person and administration, and pointed out the hurtful effects of their being observed to disagree in their form of prayer for her, and in their doctrine concerning the duty of subjects. Addressing himself particularly to Knox, he told him, with much politeness and address, that it was the earnest wish of the council that he should study greater caution when he had occasion to speak of her majesty from the pulpit, not that they were afraid of his saying anything very improper, but because the liberty which he used would be taken by persons less modest and prudent. Knox replied to the secretary’s speech. He drew a very different picture of the state of affairs since the queen came to the country, stated the grievances under which the Church labored, and added, that in these circumstances, the courtiers ought not to be surprised at the complaints of the ministers and the liberties which they took in rebuking sins which were openly committed and persisted in, notwithstanding all due admonition. At the same time, he professed his readiness to account for any part of his own conduct which had given offense, and to listen to the objections which might be urged against it.

Maitland specified the mode in which the Reformer usually prayed for her majesty, as one thing which gave offense to him and his colleagues. Prayers and tears, it has often been alleged, are the only arms which Christians ought to employ against injuries. But those who have deprived them of other weapons have usually envied them the use of these also; and if their prayers have been smoothed down to the temper of their adversaries, so as to become mere compliments to princes under color of an address to the Almighty, they have often been pronounced to be seditious and treasonable. Knox repeated his common form of prayer for the queen, and requested to be informed in what respects it was deserving of reprehension. "Ye pray for the queen’s majesty with a condition," replied Maitland, "saying, ‘Illuminate her heart, if thy good pleasure be.’ Where have ye example of such prayer?" "Wherever the examples are," rejoined Knox, "I am assured of the rule, ‘If we shall ask any thing according to his will, he will hear us,’ and Christ commanded us to pray, ‘Thy will be done.’" "But in so doing ye put a doubt in the people’s head of her conversion," said Maitland.

"Not I, my lord, but her own obstinate rebellion causes more than me to doubt of her conversion."

"Wherein rebels she against God?"

"In all the actions of her life, but in these two heads especially: that she will not hear the preaching of the blessed evangel of Jesus Christ, and that she maintains that idol the mass."

"She thinks not that rebellion, but good religion."
"So thought they who offered their children to Moloch, and yet the Spirit of God affirms that they offered them unto devils, and not unto God."

"But yet ye can produce the example of none that has so prayed before you," said the secretary, pressing his former objection. "Well, then," said Knox, "Peter said these words to Simon Magus: 'Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray to God, that, if it be possible, the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.' And think ye not, my lord secretary, that the same doubt may touch my heart as touching the queen’s conversion, that then touched the heart of the apostle?" "I would never hear you or any other call that in doubt," replied Maitland.

"But your will is no assurance to my conscience."

"Why say ye that she refuses admonitions?" said Maitland, "she will gladly hear any man."

"But what obedience ensues? or when shall she be seen to give her presence to the public preaching?"

"I think never, so long as she is thus entreated," replied the secretary. "And so long," rejoined the Reformer, "ye and all others must be content that I pray so as I may be assured to be heard of my God, either in making her comfortable to his Church, or, if he has appointed her to be a scourge to the same, that we may have patience, and she may be bridled."

"Well, then," said the secretary, "let us come to the second head. Where find ye that the Scripture calls any ‘the bond slaves of Satan’? or that the prophets spake so irreverently of kings and princes?" "If the sharpness of the term offend you," replied the Reformer, "I have not invented that phrase of speaking, but have learned it out of God’s Scriptures, for these words I find spoken unto Paul: ‘Behold, I send thee unto the Gentiles, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.’ Mark thir words, my lord, and stur not at the speaking of the Holy Ghost."

The secretary, who, during the greater part of the dispute, leaned on the Master of Maxwell’s breast, said that he was fatigued, and desired some other person to reason with Knox on the point which remained to be discussed, respecting the authority of magistrates and the duty of subjects. Chancellor Morton ordered George Hay to perform this part. Knox was aware that the object of the Court was, if possible, to divide the ministers, and that they would improve any appearance of diversity of opinion among them to the prejudice of the common cause. He therefore told Hay that he had no objections to reason with him, knowing him to be a man of learning and modesty; but he should be sorry to think that they opposed each other, like two scholars of Pythagoras, to show the quickness of their parts by supporting
either side of a question; and as he, for his own part, protested that he durst no more support a proposition which he knew to be untrue than he durst teach false doctrine in the pulpit, so he hoped that his brother would, on the present occasion, advance or maintain nothing but what he was persuaded of in his conscience. This caution had the desired effect, and Hay declared, before the whole assembly, that his judgment exactly coincided with Knox’s on the subject proposed for discussion. “Marry,” said the disappointed secretary, “Ye are the well worst of the two, for I remember our reasoning when the queen was at Carrick.”

Perceiving that none of the company was disposed to enter the lists with the Reformer, Maitland again returned to the charge and engaged to defend the uncontrollable authority of rulers. “Well,” said he, “I am somewhat better provided in this last head than I was in the other two. Mr. Knox, yesterday we heard your judgment upon the thirteenth to the Romans; we heard the mind of the apostle well opened; we heard the causes why God has established powers upon earth; we heard the necessity that mankind has of the same; and we heard the duty of magistrates sufficiently declared. But in two things I was offended, and I think some more of my lords that then were present. The one was, ye made difference betwixt the ordinance of God and the persons that are placed in authority, and ye affirmed that men might resist the persons and yet not offend God’s ordinance. The other was that subjects were not bound to obey their princes if they commanded unlawful things, but that they might resist their princes, and were not ever bound to suffer.” Knox said that the secretary had given a correct statement of his sentiments. “How will you prove your division and difference,” said Maitland, “and that the person placed in authority may be resisted, and God’s ordinance not transgressed, seeing that the apostle says, ‘He that resists the power, resists the ordinance of God?’”

Knox replied that the difference was evident from the words of the apostle, and that his affirmative was supported by approved examples. For the apostle asserts that the powers ordained of God are for the preservation of quiet and peaceable men and for the punishment of malefactors, whence it is plain that God’s ordinance is wholly intended for the preservation of mankind, the punishment of vice, and the maintenance of virtue; but the persons placed in authority are often corrupt, unjust, and oppressive. Having referred to the conduct of the people of Israel in rescuing Jonathan from the hands of Saul, which is recorded with approbation, and to the conduct of Doeg, in putting to death the priests at the command of that monarch, which is recorded with disapprobation in Scripture, he proceeded thus: “And now, my lord, in answer to the place of the apostle, I say, that ‘the power’ in that place is not to be understood of the unjust commandment of men, but of the just power wherewith God has armed his magistrates to punish sin and to maintain virtue. As if any man should enterprise to take from the hands of a lawful judge a murderer, an adulterer, or any other malefactor that by God’s law deserved the death, this same man resisted God’s ordinance, and procured to himself
vengeance and damnation, because that he stayeth God’s sword to strike. But so it is not, if that men, in the fear of God, oppose themselves to the fury and blind rage of princes, for so they resist not God, but the devil, who abuses the sword and authority of God."

"I understand sufficiently," said Maitland, "what you mean, and unto the one part I will not oppose myself, but I doubt of the other. For if the queen would command me to slay John Knox because she is offended at him, I would not obey her; but if she would command others to do it, or yet by a color of justice take his life from him, I cannot tell if I be bound to defend him against the queen, and against her officers."

"Under protestation," replied the Reformer, "that the auditory think not that I speak in favors of myself, I say, my lord, that if ye be persuaded of my innocence, and if God hath given you such power or credit as might deliver me, and yet ye suffer me to perish, that in so doing ye should be criminal, and guilty of my blood."

"Prove that, and win the plea," said Maitland.

"Well, my lord," answered Knox, "remember your promise, and I shall be short in my probation." He then produced the example of Jeremiah, who, when accused by the priests and false prophets, said to the princes, "Know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof."

"The cases are not like," said Maitland.

"And I would learn," said Knox, "wherein the dissimilitude stands."

"First," replied Maitland, "the king had not condemned him to death. And next, the false prophets, the priests, and the people accused him without a cause, and therefore they could not but be guilty of his blood."

"Neither of these fights with my argument," said Knox, "for, albeit neither the king was present, nor yet had condemned him, yet were the princes and councilors there sitting in judgment, who represented the king’s person and authority. And if ye think that they should all have been criminal only because they all accused him, the plain text witnesses to the contrary, for the princes defended him, and so, no doubt, did a great part of the people, and yet he boldly affirms that they should all be guilty of his blood, if that he should be put to death."

"Then will ye," said the secretary, "make subjects to control their princes and rulers?"
"And what harm," asked the Reformer, "should the commonwealth receive, if the corrupt affections of ignorant rulers were moderated and so bridled by the wisdom and discretion of godly subjects, that they should do wrong or violence to no man?"

The secretary, finding himself hard pushed, said that they had wandered from the argument; and he professed that if the queen should become a persecutor, he would be as ready as any within the realm to adopt the doctrine of the Reformer. "But our question," said he, "is whether that we may, and ought, to suppress the queen’s mass. Or, whether that her idolatry should be laid to our charge."

"Idolatry ought not only to be suppressed," said Knox, "but the idolater ought to die the death."

"I know," answered Maitland, "that the idolater ought to die the death; but by whom!"

"By the people," rejoined the Reformer, "for the commandment was made to Israel, as ye may read, ‘Hear, O Israel, saith the Lord, the statutes and commandments of the Lord thy God,’"

"But there is no commandment given to the people to punish their king if he be an idolater."

"I find no privilege granted unto kings," said Knox, "more than unto the people, to offend God’s majesty."

"I grant," said the secretary, "but yet the people may not be judge unto their king, to punish him albeit he be an idolater. The people may not execute God’s judgment, but must leave it unto himself, who will either punish it by death, by war, by imprisonment, or by some other kind of plagues."

"I know," replied Knox, "the last part of your reason to be true, but, for the first, I am assured ye have no other warrant except your own imagination, and the opinion of such as more fear to offend princes than God."

"Why say you so?" said Maitland. "I have the judgments of the most famous men within Europe, and of such as ye yourself will confess both godly and learned." Upon which he produced a bundle of papers and read extracts from the writings of the principal reformed divines against resistance to rulers, adding that he had bestowed more labor on the collection of these authorities than on the reading of commentaries for seven years. Knox replied that it was a pity he had given himself so much labor, for none of the extracts which he had read bore upon the question under discussion, some of them being directed against the Anabaptists, who denied that Christians should be subject to magistrates,
or that it was lawful for them to hold the office of magistracy, and the rest referring to the case of a small number of Christians scattered through heathen and infidel countries, which was the situation of the primitive church. In this last case, he said, he perfectly agreed with the writers whom Maitland had quoted, but when the majority of a nation were professors of the true religion, the case was very different. While the posterity of Abraham were few in number, and while they sojourned in different countries, they were merely required to avoid all participation in the idolatrous rites of the heathen, but as soon as they prospered into a kingdom and obtained possession of Canaan, they were strictly charged to suppress idolatry, and to destroy all its monuments and incentives. The same duty was now incumbent on the professors of the true religion in Scotland, whose release from bondage, temporal and spiritual, was no less wonderful than the redemption of the Israelites from Egypt. Formerly, when not more than ten persons in a country were enlightened, and when these were called to seal their testimony to the truth, by giving their bodies to the flames, it would have been foolishness to have demanded of the nobility the suppression of idolatry. But now, when knowledge had increased, and God had given such a signal victory to the truth that it had been publicly embraced by the realm, if they suffered the land to be again defiled, both they and their queen should drink of the cup of divine indignation. She, because, amidst the great light of the Gospel, she continued obstinately addicted to idolatry, and they, because they tolerated and even countenanced her in such conduct.

Maitland challenged his opponent to prove that the apostles and prophets ever taught that subjects might suppress the idolatry their rulers. Knox appealed to the conduct of the prophet Elisha in anointing Jehu and giving him a charge to punish the idolatry and bloodshed of the royal family of Ahab. "Jehu was a king before he put anything in execution," said the secretary.

"My lord, he was a mere subject, and no king, when the prophet’s servant came to him; yea, and albeit that his fellow captains, hearing of the message, blew the trumpet, and said ‘Jehu is king,’ yet I doubt not but Jezebel both thought and said he is a traitor, and so did many others in Israel and Samaria."

"Besides this," said Maitland, "the fact is extraordinary, and ought not to be imitated."

"It had the ground of God’s ordinary judgment, which commands the idolater to die the death," answered Knox.

"We are not to imitate extraordinary examples," rejoined Maitland, "unless we have like commandment and assurance."

Knox granted that this was true when the example was repugnant to the ordinary precept of the law, as in the case of the Israelites borrowing from the
Egyptians without repayment. But when example agreed with the law, he insisted that it was imitable, and of this kind was the instances to which he had appealed.

"But," said Maitland, "whatsoever they did was done at God's commandment."
"That fortifies my argument," retorted the Reformer, "for God, by his commandment, has approved that subjects punish their princes for idolatry and wickedness by them committed." "We have not the like commandment," said the secretary.

"That I deny, for the commandment that the idolater shall die the death is perpetual, as ye yourself have granted; ye doubted only who should be the executioner, and I have sufficiently proven that God has raised up the people, and by his prophet has anointed a king, to take vengeance upon the king and his posterity, which fact God since that time has never retracted."

"Ye have produced but one example," said Maitland.

"One sufficeth, but yet, God be praised, we lack not others, for the whole people conspired against Amaziah, king of Judah, after he had turned away from the Lord."

"I doubt whether they did well, or not," said Maitland.

"God gave sufficient approbation of their fact, for he blessed them with victory, peace, and prosperity, the space of fifty-two years after."

"But prosperity does not always prove that God approves the facts of men."

"Yes, when the facts of men agree with the law of God, and are rewarded according to his promise, I say that the prosperity succeeding the fact is a most infallible assurance that God has approved the fact. And now, my lord, I have but one example to produce, and then I will put an end to my reasoning because I weary longer to stand."

The lords desired him to take a chair, but he declined it, saying, "that melancholic reasons needed some mirth to be intermixed with them." After a short dispute on the resistance of the priests to Uzziah, the Reformer recapitulated the propositions which he thought had been established in the course of the debate. "Well," said Maitland, "I think ye shall not have many learned men of your opinion." Knox replied that the truth ceased not to be the truth because men misunderstood or opposed it, and yet he did not want the suffrages of learned men to his opinions. Upon which he presented a copy of the Apology of Magdeburgh, desiring the secretary to look at the names of the ministers who had approved of the defense of that city against the emperor, and subscribed the proposition that to resist a tyrant is not to resist the

The secretary now insisted that the questions which they had discussed should be put to the vote, and that the determination of the meeting should fix a rule for uniformity of doctrine among the ministers. Knox protested against this motion and reminded their lordships that the General Assembly had agreed to the present conference upon the express condition that nothing should be voted or decided at it. At last it was agreed that the opinions of those who were present should be taken, but that they should not be considered as decisive. Winram, superintendent of Fife, and Douglas, rector of the university of St. Andrews, were the principal persons among the ministers who agreed in sentiment with the courtiers. Knox’s colleague, in delivering his opinion, took occasion to give an account of a public dispute at which he had been present in Bologna, upon the question whether subjects have a right to control and reform their rulers when they have been guilty of violating their oaths of office. Thomas de Finola, rector of the University, and Vincentius de Placentia, persons celebrated for their learning, maintained the affirmative on this question, and their opinion was adopted after long discussion. "Ye tell us what was done in Bologna," exclaimed one of the courtiers, "we are in a kingdom, and they are but a commonwealth." "My lord," replied Craig, "my judgment is that every kingdom is a commonwealth, or at least should be, albeit that every commonwealth is not a kingdom, and therefore I think that in a kingdom no less diligence ought to be taken that laws be not violated than in a commonwealth, because the tyranny of princes who continually reign in a kingdom is more hurtful to the subjects than the misgovernment of those that from year to year are changed in free commonwealths." He added that the dispute to which he had referred was conducted on general principles, applicable equally to monarchies and republics, and that one of the conclusions adopted was that, although laws contrary to the law of God and to the true principles of government had been introduced through the negligence of the people or the tyranny of princes, yet the same people, or their posterity, had a right to demand that all things should be reformed according to the original institution of kings and commonwealths.

This speech of Craig alarmed the courtiers as to the issue of vote, and the clerk register took occasion to observe that, at a former conference, it had been agreed that Knox should write to Calvin to obtain his opinion on this question. Knox corrected this statement by saying that the secretary had undertaken to consult that reformer, but although repeatedly reminded of his promise, had never fulfilled it. Maitland acknowledged this, and said that upon mature deliberation he durst not, considering his station, ask advice respecting any controversy between the queen and her subjects, without her majesty’s consent. It was now proposed that Knox should write to Calvin, but he refused to be employed in the business. Before he returned to the kingdom, he said, he
had obtained judgment of the most eminent foreign divines on that question, and he could not renew his application to them, without exposing himself to the charge of forgetfulness or inconsistency. The proper course was for them to write, complaining that he had taught such doctrines as he had now defended, and requesting Calvin to communicate his judgment respecting them. This proposal was thought reasonable, but none would undertake task, and the conference broke up without any determinate resolution being adopted.

The reader must be struck with the difference between this dispute and that which Knox formerly maintained with the abbot of Crossraguel. Although long, it was kept up by the disputants with great spirit, nor did they take refuge under those ambiguities of speech or those sophistical forms of argument of which persons trained to wrangle in the schools were ever ready to avail themselves, to perplex an adversary or to conceal their own defeat. Few secretaries of state in modern times would, it is presumed, be able to acquit themselves so well as Maitland did on questions which were decided chiefly by an appeal to the Scriptures. But learned and acute as he was, Knox was fully a match for him, and, on the greater part of the topics introduced into the debate, evidently had the advantage according to the principles held and the concessions made by his opponent. For both parties maintained that idolatry ought to be punished by death, a sentiment which they were led to adopt in consequence of their holding the untenable opinion that Christian nations are bound to enact the same penalties against all breaches of the moral law, which were enjoined by the judicial laws of Moses. This being taken for granted, the dispute between them resolved itself entirely into a question respecting the prerogatives of princes and the rights and duties of subjects. It may be questioned, too, whether Knox’s reasoning from extraordinary examples, qualified as it was by him, is sufficiently guarded and correct, for the instances in which punishment was inflicted in an extraordinary way on criminals, although the punishment itself was merited and agreeable to law, cannot be pleaded as precedents in ordinary cases. But even when we cannot approve of his reasonings, we are compelled to admire the openness with which he avowed, and the boldness with which he defended, sentiments so opposite to those which were generally received in that age.

In the month of August, Knox went, by appointment of the General Assembly, as visitor of the churches, to Aberdeen and other parts of the North, where he remained six or seven weeks. At the subsequent meeting of Assembly, he received a similar appointment to Fife and Perthshire.

Our Reformer’s predictions at the last meeting of parliament were now fully realized. Another parliament was held in the year 1564, but nothing was done for securing the Protestant religion. The queen’s marriage had long engaged the anxious attention of her ministers and had been the subject of much negotiation with England and at foreign courts, but the various proposals which had been made with a view to it, and the political intrigues to which they gave
rise, were all thwarted by the sudden and strong passion which Mary conceived for Henry, Lord Darnley, the son of the Earl of Lennox. As this young nobleman, so far as he had discovered any religious sentiments, was inclined to Popery, the match could not be very agreeable to the great body of the nation, who had already testified the strongest jealousy at the queen’s attachment to that religion. It was therefore natural for the nobility, in the prospect of this event, to provide additional securities for the Protestant Church and to insist that the royal sanction, hitherto withheld, should now be granted to its legal establishment. Upon this condition, they promised their consent to the marriage. The queen agreed to summon a parliament to settle this important affair, but she found some pretext for proroguing its meeting, and, having gained a number of the nobility by favors and promises, she proceeded, in July 1565, not only to solemnize the nuptials, but to proclaim her husband king, without the consent of the estates of the kingdom.

The dissatisfaction produced by these precipitate and illegal steps was heightened by the conduct of Darnley. Naturally vain, rash, and vindictive, his unexpected prosperity rendered him insolent and overbearing; and it required all the prudence of the queen to preserve him from falling into contempt, even before their marriage. Although he could not have come to Scotland, and his father could not have been restored to his honors and possessions, considering the opposition made by the of Hamilton, without the concurrence and interest of the of Murray, yet he no sooner found himself seated in the affections of Mary, than he exerted his influence to deprive that nobleman of her favor, represented the honors which she had conferred on him as excessive, and leagued with those who were hostile to him and to the reformed religion. Lennox Athole and David Rizzio, a low-bred Italian, who had insinuated himself into the good graces of Mary, now ruled the court to the exclusion of the most able counselors. Murray had been urged in private to sign an approbation of the intended marriage, but refused to do it until the nobility were consulted. His refusal to gratify the queen by forwarding a match on which she was passionately bent, obliterated the memory of all his past services and drew upon him the furious resentment of Darnley. Having declined to attend a convention at Perth, from just apprehensions of personal danger, he was summoned to court by the queen. The summons was repeated three days after her marriage, and, because he refused to entrust his person, on her safe-conduct, to a court where the influence of his declared enemies prevailed, he was immediately proclaimed an outlaw. In the meantime, the persons who had discovered the greatest hostility to him were openly encouraged. Bothwell was invited to return; Lord George Gordon was set at liberty, and the earldom of Huntly restored to him; and the Earl of Sutherland was recalled from banishment. The lords who were dissatisfied with the late proceedings assembled at Stirling, and, after agreeing to request the protection of Elizabeth, retired to their houses; but the queen, taking the field with all the forces which she could collect, they were at last compelled to arm in their own defense. Even after they were driven to this extremity, they neglected no
means of conciliation. They professed their steadfast loyalty to the queen. They declared that their sole desire was that the reformed religion should be secured against the dangers to which it was exposed, and that the administration of public affairs should be put into the hands of those whom the nation could trust. And they offered to submit their own cause to be tried by the laws of their country. But the queen spurned all their offers of submission, refused to listen to any intercession in their favor, and, advancing against them with an army, obliged them to take refuge in England.

While her marriage with Darnley was in dependence, and she labored to surmount the opposition made to it by the nobility, Mary had condescended to court the Protestant ministers. Having sent for the superintendents of Lothian, Glasgow, and Fife (for Knox could not now be admitted to her presence), she amused them with fair words. She was not yet persuaded she of the truth of their religion, but was willing to hear conference and reasoning on the subject; she was also content to attend the public sermons of some of them, and, "above all others, she would gladly hear the superintendent of Angus, for he was a mild and sweet-natured man, with true honesty and uprightness, Sir John Erskine of Dun." She even went so far as to be present at a sermon preached by one of the ministers in Callender house, at the baptism of a child of Lord Livingston. But as soon as her marriage was accomplished, she told the commissioners of the Church, in very plain and determined language, "Her majesty neither will nor may leave the religion wherein she has been nourished and brought up." And there was no farther proposals of attending either sermon or conference.

The friendship between the Earl of Murray and the Reformer had been renewed in the beginning of 1565. Knox was placed in a very delicate predicament by the insurrection under Murray and the other lords who opposed the queen’s marriage. His father-in-law was one of their number. They professed security of the Protestant religion was the principal ground of their taking arms, and they came to Edinburgh to collect men to their standard. But whatever favor he might have them, he kept himself clear from any engagement. If he had taken part in this unsuccessful revolt, we need not doubt that that her majesty would have embraced the opportunity of punishing him for it, when his principal friends had fled the kingdom.

We find, in fact, that she immediately proceeded against him on a different but far more slender ground. The young king, who could be either Papist or Protestant, as it suited him, went sometimes to mass with the queen, and sometimes attended the reformed sermons. To silence the suspicions of his alienation from the Protestant religion, circulated by the insurgent lords, he on the nineteenth of August, made a solemn appearance in St. Giles’s Church, sitting on a throne which had been prepared for his reception. Knox preached that day and happened to prolong the service beyond his usual time. In one part of the sermon, he quoted these words of Scripture: "I will give children to
be their princes, and babes shall rule over them”; in another part of it, he mentioned that God punished Ahab because he did not correct his idolatrous wife Jezebel. Though no particular application was made by the preacher, the king applied these passages to himself and the queen, and, returning to the palace in great wrath, refused to taste dinner. The Papists who had accompanied him to church inflamed his resentment and that of the queen by their representations.

That very afternoon Knox was taken from bed and carried before the privy council. Some respectable inhabitants of the city, understanding his citation, accompanied him to the palace. He was told that he had offended the king and must desist from preaching as long as their majesties were in Edinburgh. He replied, that "he had spoken nothing but according to his text, and if the Church should command him to speak or abstain, he would obey, so far as the word of God would permit him." Spotswood says that he not only stood to what he had said in the pulpit, but added, "That as the king, for the queen’s pleasure, had gone to mass, and dishonored the Lord God, so should He in his justice make her the instrument of his overthrow." "This speech," continues the archbishop’s manuscript, "esteemed too bold at the time, came afterwards to be remembered, and was reckoned among other of his prophetical sayings, which certainly were marvelous. The queen, enraged at this answer, burst forth into tears."

The report of the inhibition laid upon the Reformer created great agitation in the city. His colleague, who was appointed supply his place during his suspension, threatened to desist entirely from preaching. The town council met and appointed a deputation to wait on their majesties and request the reversal of the sentence, and at a second meeting held on the same day, came to a unanimous resolution that they would "in no manner of way consent or grant that his mouth be closed," but that he should be desired, "at his pleasure, and as God should move his heart, to proceed forward to true doctrine as before, which doctrine they would approve and abide at to their life's end."

It does not appear that he continued any time suspended from preaching. For the king and queen left Edinburgh before next Sabbath, and the prohibition extended only to the time of their residence in the city. Upon their return, it is probable that they judged it advisable not to enforce an order which had already created much discontent and might alienate the minds of people still farther from the present administration. Accordingly, we find him exercising his ministry in Edinburgh with the same boldness as formerly. Complaints were made to the council of the manner in which he prayed for the exiled noblemen, but secretary Maitland, who had formerly found so much fault with his prayers, defended them on the present occasion, saying that he had heard them and they were such as nobody could blame.
Christopher Goodman had officiated, with much approbation, as minister of St. Andrews since the year 1560, but he was prevailed on, by the solicitations of his friends in England, to return about this time to his native country. The commissioners from St. Andrews were instructed to petition the General Assembly, which met in December this year, that Knox should be translated from Edinburgh to their city. They claimed a right to him, as he had commenced his ministry among them, and they might think that the dissensions in which he was involved with the court would induce him to prefer a more retired situation. But their petition was refused.

This Assembly imposed on him several important services. He was commissioned to visit the churches in the South of Scotland, and appointed to write "a comfortable letter" to encourage the ministers, exhorters, and readers throughout the kingdom to persevere in the discharge of their functions, which many of them were threatening to abandon on account of the non-payment of their stipends, and to excite the people among whom they labored to relieve their necessities. He had formerly received an appointment to draw up the Form of Excommunication and of Public Repentance. And he was now required to compose a Treatise of Fasting. The Assembly, having taken into consideration the troubles of the country, and the dangers which threatened the whole Protestant interest, had appointed a general fast to be kept through the kingdom. The form and order to be observed on that occasion they left to be drawn out by Knox and his colleague, and as nothing had been hitherto published expressly on this subject, they were authorized to explain the duty, as well as to state the reasons, which at that period called for this solemn exercise. This treatise does credit to the compilers, both as to matter and form. It is written in a perspicuous and nervous style. In the grounds assigned for fasting, the critical state of all reformed churches, the late decree of the council of Trent for the extirpation of the Protestant name, the combination of the Popish princes for carrying it into execution, and the persecutions suffered by their brethren in different countries, are all held forth as a warning to the Protestants of Scotland and urged as calls to repentance and prayer.

The following may serve as a specimen: "Supposing, we say, that wee had none of these foresaid causes to moove us, yet is there one which, if it moove us not to humiliation, wee show ourselves more than insensible. For now is Satan so enlarged against Jesus Christ, and so odious is the light of his gospel unto the Romaine antichrist, that to supresse it in one province, realme, or nation, he thinketh it nothing, unlesse that, in all Europe the godly, and such as abhorre the papisticall impietie, be therewith also utterlie destroyed, and so rased from the face of the earth, that no memory of them shal after remaine. If any thinks that suche crueltie cannot fall into the hearts of men, we send them to be resolved of those fathers of the last councel of Trent, who, in one of their sessions, have thus concluded: All Lutherans, Calvinists, and such as are of the new religion, shall utterly be rooted out. The beginning shall be in France, by conducting of the Catholike king, Philip of Spaine, and by some of the nobilitie
of France; which matter (they say) put in execution, the whole power of both, together with the pope’s armie, and force of the Duke of Savoy and Ferrar, shall assault Geneva, and shall not leave it till that they have put it to sacke, saving in it no living creature. And with the same mercie shall so many of France as have tasted of the new religion be served. From thence expedition shall be made against the Germanes, to reduce them to the obedience of the apostolike seate. And so shall they proceed to other realmes and nations, never ceasing till that all be rooted out that will not make homage to that Romane idoll.

"How fearefull a beginning this conclusion and determination had, France will remember moe ages than one. For how manie, above a hundredth thousand women, babes, virgines, matrones, and aged fathers suffered, some by sworde, some by water, some by fire, and other torments, the eerie enemies themselves are compelled to acknowledge. And albeit that God of his mercie in part disappoynted their cruell enterprises, yet let us not thinke that their will is changed, or their malice asswaged. No; let us be assured that they abide but opportunitie to finish the worke that cruellie against God, against his trueth and the true professours of the same, they have begunne the whisperings whereof are not secretee, neither yet the tokens obscure. For the traffike of that dragon now with the princes of the earth, his promises and flattering enticements, tende to none other ende but to inflame them against Jesus Christ, and against the true professours of his gospel. For who can thinke that the pope, cardinals, and horned bishops will offer the greatest portion of their rents for sustaining of a warre, whereof no commoditie should redound (as they suppose) to themselves?"

Having quoted that part of the decree of the council which relates to the assessment imposed on the clergy for carrying on this holy war, the compilers of the treatise add, "But let us hear their conclusion: France and Germanie (say they), being by these meanes so chastised, abased, and brought to the obedience of the holy Romane Church, the fathers doubt not but time shall provide both counsell and commoditie, that the rest of the realmes about may be reduced to one flocke, and one apostolike governour and pastour. But some shall say, they are yet far from the end of their purpose, and therefore wee neede not be so fearefull nor so troubled. We answere, the danger may be nearer than we beleive, yea, perchance a part of it hath bene nearer to our neckes than we have considered. But how so ever it be, seeing that God of his mercie hath brought foorth to light their cruell and bloodie counsell, in which we neede not to doubt but still they continue, it becummeth us not to be negligent or slouthful."

Strong as their apprehensions were, the danger was nearer to them than they imagined. The most zealous and powerful of the Protestant nobles being exiled, the queen determined to carry into execution the design of which she had never lost sight; and while she amused the nation with proclamations
against altering the received religion, and tantalized the ministers with offers of more adequate support, was preparing for the speedy restoration of the Roman Catholic worship. No means were left unattempted for gaining over the nobility to the ancient religion. The king openly professed himself a convert to it, and officiated in some of its most superstitious rites. The Earls of Lennox, Cassilis, and Caithness, with Lords Montgomery and Seton, followed his example. The friars were employed to preach at Holyroodhouse, and, to gain the favor of the people, endeavored to imitate the popular method of the Protestant preachers. In the beginning of February 1566, a messenger arrived from the Cardinal of Lorraine, with a copy of the Catholic league for extirpating the Protestants, and instructions to obtain the queen’s subscription to it, and to urge the propriety of adopting the most rigorous measures against the exiled noblemen. Mary scrupled not to set her hand to the league. Previous to this, it is said that she was inclined to yield to the intercessions made in behalf of the exiles; but if ever she felt such a disposition, it is certain that, from the arrival of this embassy, the door of mercy was shut. Murray and his associates were immediately summoned to appear before the parliament which was to meet on the twelfth of March. The lords of the Articles were chosen according to the queen’s pleasure; the Popish ecclesiastics were restored to their place in parliament; and the altars to be erected in St. Giles’s Church, for the celebration of the Roman Catholic worship, were already prepared.

But these measures, when ripe for execution, were blasted, in consequence of a secret engagement which the king had entered into with some of the Protestant nobles. The first effect produced by this engagement was the well known assassination of Rizzio, the unworthy favorite of the queen, who was the principal instigator of the measures against the Protestant religion and the banished lords, and had now incurred the jealousy of the king, as well as the contempt of the nobility and the hatred of the people. To have removed this minion from her majesty’s counsels and presence by legitimate means would have been meritorious, but the manner in which it was accomplished was equally inconsistent with law and humanity, and fixes a deep stigma on the characters of those who perpetrated the deed.

A complete change on the state of the court succeeded this event. The Popish counselors fled from the palace; the exiled lords returned out of England; and the parliament was prorogued, without accomplishing any of the objects for which it had been assembled. But Mary soon persuaded the weak and uxorious king to desert the noblemen whom he had made the instruments of his revenge, to retire with her to Dunbar, and to issue a proclamation, disowning his consent to the late attempt, by which he exposed himself to the contempt of the nation, without regaining her affection. Having collected an army, she returned to Edinburgh, threatening to inflict the most exemplary vengeance on all who had been accessory to the murder of her secretary and the indignity shown to her person. She found herself, however, unable to resume her former plans, and, while the conspirators against Rizzio were forced to flee to
England, the Earl of Murray and the other lords who had opposed her marriage were allowed to remain in the country and soon after pardoned.

When the queen returned to Edinburgh, Knox left it and retired to Kyle. There is no reason to think that he was privy to the conspiracy which proved fatal to Rizzio. But it is probable that he had expressed his satisfaction at an event which contributed to the safety of religion and the commonwealth, if not also his approbation of the object of the conspiracy. At any rate, he was sufficiently obnoxious to the queen on other grounds, and as her resentment, on the present occasion, was exceedingly inflamed, it was deemed prudent for him to withdraw.

Having at last "got quit" of one who had so long been troublesome to her, Mary was determined to prevent his return to the capital. The town council and inhabitants, who had formerly refused to acquiesce in his suspension from preaching for a short time, exerted themselves to obtain his restoration, and powerful intercession was made in his behalf by many of the nobility and gentry. But the queen was deaf to all entreaties. She was even unwilling that he should find a refuge within the kingdom, and wrote to a nobleman in the west country, with whom he resided, to banish him from his house. It does not appear that he returned to Edinburgh, or, at least, that he resumed his ministry in it, until the queen was deprived of the government.

Being banished from his flock, he judged this a favorable opportunity for paying a visit to England. Parental affection increased the desire which he had long felt to accomplish this journey. His two sons had been lately sent by him into that kingdom, to reside with some of their mother’s relations, and to obtain their education in the English seminaries. Having procured the safe-conduct of Elizabeth, he applied to the General Assembly, which met in December 1566, for their permission to remove. This was readily granted by them, upon condition of his returning against the time of their next meeting in June. The Assembly likewise gave him a most ample and honorable testimonial, in which they describe him as "a true and faithful minister, in doctrine pure and sincere, in life and conversation in our sight inculpable," and one who "has so fruitfully used that talent granted him by the Eternal, to the advancement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and edifying of them who heard his preaching, that of duty we must heartily praise His godly name, for that so great a benefit granted unto him for our utility and profit."

Knox was charged with a letter from the General Assembly to the bishops and ministers of England, interceding for lenity to such of their brethren as scrupled to use the sacerdotal dress enjoined by the laws. The controversy on that subject was at this time carried on with great heat among the English clergy. It is not improbable that the Assembly interfered in this business at the desire of Knox, to whom the composition of the letter was committed. He could not have forgotten the trouble which he had himself suffered on a similar
ground, and he had a high regard for many of the scruplers. This interposition did not procure them any relief. Though the superior clergy had been more zealous to obtain it than they were, Elizabeth was inflexible, and would listen neither to the supplications bishops nor to the advice of her counselors. Knox’s good opinion of the English queen does not seem to have been improved by this visit.

He performed one important piece of public service before undertaking this journey to England. On the twenty-third of December, the queen granted a commission, under the privy seal, to the Archbishop of St. Andrews, restoring him to his ancient jurisdiction, which had been abolished in 1560, by act of parliament. This step was taken, partly to prepare for the restoration of the Popish religion, and partly to facilitate another dark design which was soon after disclosed. The Protestants could not fail to be both alarmed and enraged at this daring measure. Moved by his own zeal no less than by the advice of his brethren, the Reformer addressed a circular letter to the principal Protestants in the kingdom, requesting their immediate advice on the measures most proper to be adopted on this occasion, and enclosing a copy of a proposed supplication to the queen. This letter discovers all the ardor of the writer’s spirit, called forth by such an alarming occurrence. After mentioning the late acts for the provision of the ministry, by which the queen attempted to blind them, he says, “How that any such assignation, or any promise made thereof, can stand in any stable assurance, when that Roman antichrist, by just laws once banished from this realm, shall be intrusted above us, we can no ways understand. Yea, farther, we cannot see what assurance can any within this realm, that hath professed the Lord Jesus, have of life, or inheritance, if the head of that odious beast be cured among us. As from the beginning we have neither spared substance nor life, so mind we not to faint unto the end, to maintain the same, so long as we can find the concurrence of brethren, of whom (as God forbid) if we be destitute, yet we are determined never to be subject to the Roman antichrist, neither yet to his usurped tyranny; but when we can do no farther to suppress that odious beast, we mind to seal it with our blood to our posterity, that the bright knowledge of Jesus Christ hath banished that Man of Sin, and his venomous doctrine, from our hearts and consciences. Let this our letter and request bear witness before God, before his Church, before the world, and before your own consciences.” The supplication of the General Assembly to the lords of the privy council, on the same subject, also bears marks of the Reformer’s pen.

During the time that Knox was in England, that tragedy, so well known in Scottish history, was acted, which led to a complete revolution in the government of the kingdom, and, contrary to the designs of the principal actors, threw the power wholly into the hands of the Protestants. Mary’s affection for her husband, which had cooled soon after their marriage, was, from the time of Rizzio’s assassination, converted into a fixed hatred, which she was at tittle pains to conceal. The birth of an heir to the crown produced
no reconciliation between the royal parents; the king was not allowed to be present at the baptism of his own son, and was treated with such marked disrespect, even by the servants, that he abandoned the court, and shut himself up in his father’s house. In proportion as the queen’s mind was alienated from her husband, the unprincipled Earl of Bothwell grew in her favor. He engrossed the whole management of public affairs, was loaded with honors, and treated by her majesty with every mark of personal regard and affection. In these circumstances, the neglected, unhappy king, decoyed to Edinburgh, lodged in a solitary dwelling at the extremity of the city, and murdered on the morning of the tenth of February, 1567, the house in which he lay being blown up gunpowder.

It would be unsuitable to the nature of the present work to enter into the controversy respecting the authors of this murder, which has been agitated with uncommon keenness from that day to the present time. The accusation of the Earl of Murray as a party to the deed is destitute of all proof and incredible. It was at first circulated with the evident design of turning away the public mind from the real perpetrators; it was insinuated, and afterwards directly brought forward, in the conferences at York and Westminster, as a retaliation upon him for the charge which he exhibited against the queen; and it is now kept up only by the most blind and bigoted of her fans. That Bothwell was the prime contriver and agent in the murder, cannot admit of a doubt with any impartial and judicious inquirer. And that Mary was privy to the design, and accessory to its execution by permission and approbation, there is, I think, all the evidence, moral and legal, which could reasonably be expected in a case of this kind. The whole of her behavior towards the king, from the time that she brought him from Glasgow till she left him on the fatal night; the remissness which she discovered in inquiring into the murder; the shameful manner in which she suffered the farce of Bothwell’s trial to be conducted; the glaring act (which struck the whole of Europe, and even her own friends, with horror) of taking to her bed, with indecent haste, the man who was stigmatized as the murderer of her husband; and the manner in which she refused to defend herself, and broke off the conference to which she had agreed, as soon as the charge to accession to the murder was brought against her; afford the strongest presumptions of her guilt; and, when taken in connection with the direct evidence arising from letters and depositions, would have been sufficient long ago to shut the mouths of any but the defend of Mary Queen of Scots.

Knox was absent from Edinburgh at the time of the queen’s marriage with Bothwell; but his colleague ably supported the honor of his place and order on that occasion, when the whole nobility of Scotland preserved a passive and disgraceful silence. Being required by both the parties to publish the banns, Craig reluctantly complied, after taking the advice of his session; but, at the same time, he protested from the pulpit, on three several days, and took heaven and earth to witness, that he abhorred and detested the intended
marriage as unlawful and scandalous, and solemnly charged the nobility to use their influence to prevent the queen from taking a step which would inevitably cover her with infamy and involve her in ruin. Being called before the council, and accused of having exceeded the bounds of his commission, he boldly replied that the bounds of his commission were the word of God, good laws, and natural reason, to all of which the proposed marriage was contrary. And Bothwell being present he charged him with the crime of adultery, the precipitancy with which the process of divorce had been carried through, and the suspicions entertained of collusion between him and his wife, of his having murdered the king and ravished the queen, all of which would be confirmed if they carried their purpose into execution.

The events which followed in rapid succession upon this infamous marriage—the confederation of the nobility for revenging the king’s death and preserving the person of the infant prince, the flight of Bothwell, the surrender and imprisonment of Mary, her resignation of the government, the coronation of her son, and the appointment of the Earl of Murray as regent during his minority, are all well known to the readers of Scottish history.

Knox seems to have returned to his charge at the time that the queen fled with Bothwell to Dunbar. He was present in the general Assembly which met at Edinburgh on the twenty-fifth of June, and was delegated by them to go to the west country, and endeavor to persuade the Hamiltons, and others who stood aloof from the confederated lords to join with them in settling the distracted affairs of the country, and to attend a general convention of the delegates of the churches, to be held on the twentieth of July following. In this negotiation he was unsuccessful. But the convention was held, and the nobles, barons, and commissioners of boroughs who were present subscribed a number of important articles with reference to religion and the state of the nation.

On the twenty-ninth of July, 1567, the Reformer preached the sermon the coronation of James VI in the parish church of Stirling. He objected to the ceremony of unction as a Jewish rite abused under the Papacy, but it was deemed inexpedient, on the present occasion, to depart from the accustomed ceremonial. It was therefore performed by the bishop of Orkney, the superintendents of Lothian and Angus assisting him to place the crown on the king’s head. After the coronation, Knox, along with some others, took instruments and craved extracts of the proceedings.

When the queen was confined by the lords in the castle of Lochleven, they had not resolved in what manner they should dispose of her person for the future. Some proposed that she should be allowed to leave the kingdom, some that she should be imprisoned during life, while others insisted that she ought to be capitally arraigned. Of this last opinion was Knox, with almost all the ministers, and the great body of the people. The chief ground upon which they insisted for this was not her maladministration in the government, or the mere safety
and peace of the commonwealth, which were the reasons upon which the parliament of England, in the following century, proceeded to the execution of her grandson. But they founded their opinion upon the personal crimes with which Mary was charged. Murder and adultery, they reasoned, were crimes to which the punishment of death was allotted by the law of God and of nations. From this penalty persons of no rank could plead exception. The ordinary forms of judicial procedure made no provision for the trial of a supreme magistrate, because the laws did not suppose that such enormous crimes could be committed by him, but extraordinary cases required extraordinary remedies, and new offenses gave birth to new laws. There are examples in Scripture of the capital punishment of princes, nor are precedents of it wanting to the history of Scotland.

Upon these grounds, Knox scrupled not publicly to maintain that the estates of the kingdom ought to bring Mary to a trial, and, if she was found guilty of the murder of her husband and an adulterous connection with Bothwell, that she ought to be put to death. Throkmorton, the English ambassador, held a conference with him, with the view of mitigating the rigor of this judgment; but though he acquiesced in the resolution adopted by the nobility to detain her in prison, he retained his own sentiments, and, after the civil war was kindled by her escape from confinement, repeatedly said that he considered the nation as suffering for their criminal lenity.

Though the Earl of Murray, after his return from banishment, had been pardoned and re-admitted to his place in the privy council, he did not regain the confidence of her majesty. Perceiving the ruinous tendency of the course on which she was bent, and despairing of being able to prevent it by his advice, he declined taking any active part in the management of public affairs, and appeared very seldom at court. Soon after the king was murdered, he obtained liberty to leave the kingdom, and retired to France, where he remained till recalled by a message from the confederated lords, after Mary had subscribed the instruments by which she resigned the crown, and appointed him regent during the minority of her son. Having arrived in Scotland, he was formally invested with the regency, on the twenty-second of August, 1567. No sooner was he confirmed in the government, than he exerted himself with great zeal and prudence to secure the peace of the kingdom, and settle the affairs of the Church. A parliament being summoned to meet in the middle of December, he, with the advice of the privy council, previously nominated certain barons, and commissioners of boroughs, to consult upon and digest such overtures as were proper to be laid before that assembly. With these he joined Knox and four other ministers to assist in matters which related to the Church. This committee met in the beginning of December, and sat until the opening of the parliament. The record of their proceedings, both as to civil and ecclesiastical affairs, has been preserved; and, as many of their propositions were not adopted by the parliament, it is valuable as a declaration of the sentiments of a number of the most able men in the kingdom.
On the fifteenth of December, Knox preached at the opening of parliament, and exhorted them to begin with the affairs of religion, in which case they would find better success in their other business. The parliament ratified all the acts which had been passed in 1560 in favor of the Protestant religion and against Popery. New statutes of a similar kind were added. It was provided that no prince should afterwards be admitted of authority in the kingdom, without taking an oath to maintain the Protestant religion, and that none but Protestants should be admitted to any office, with the exception of those that were hereditary or held for life. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction, exercised by the assemblies of the Church, was formally ratified, and commissioners appointed to define more exactly the causes which came within the sphere of their judgment. The thirds of benefices were appointed to be paid at first hand to collectors nominated by the Church, who, after paying the stipends of the ministers, were to account to the exchequer for the surplus. And the funds of provostries, prebendaries, and chaplainnries were appropriated to maintain bursars in colleges.

In the act ratifying the jurisdiction of the Church, Knox was appointed one of the commissioners for drawing out the particular points which pertained to ecclesiastical judgment, to be presented to next meeting of parliament. The General Assembly, which met about the same time, gave him a commission, along with some others, to act for them in this matter, and, in general, to consult with the regent and council on such ecclesiastical questions as might occur after their dissolution. He was pointed to assist the superintendent of Lothian in his visitation, and afterward to visit the churches in Kyle, Carrick, and Cunningham.

During the regency of Murray there were no jars between the Church and the Court, nor any of those unpleasant complaints which had been made at every meeting of the General Assembly before that period, and which were renewed under the succeeding regents. All the grievances of which they complained were not, indeed, redressed; and the provision made by law was still inadequate for the support of such an ecclesiastical establishment as the nation required, including the seminaries of education. But the regent not only received the addresses of the General Assemblies in a "manner very different from that to which they had been accustomed," but showed a disposition to grant their petitions whenever it was in his power. It was chiefly through his influence that the favorable arrangement concerning the thirds of benefices was made, and he endeavored, though unsuccessfully, to obtain the consent of parliament to the dissolution of the prelacies and the appropriation of their revenues to the common fund of the Church.

Our Reformer had now reached the point from which he could take a calm and deliberate view of the bustling scene through which he had passed, and of the arduous struggle which he had been so long engaged in, and had at length brought to a happy termination. Papal superstition and tyranny were
suppressed and abolished by law; the Protestant religion was established; the
supreme government of the nation was in the hands of one in whose wisdom
and integrity he had the greatest confidence; the Church was freed from many
of those grievances under which she had hitherto groaned, and enjoyed the
prospect of obtaining the redress of such as still remained. The work on which
his heart had been so ardently set for such a long period, and for the success of
which he had so often trembled, had prospered beyond his utmost expectation.
He now congratulated himself on the prospect of being released from all
burden of public affairs, and of spending the remainder of his days in religious
meditations, and in preparation for that event of whose near approach he was
daily admonished by the increasing infirmities of his body. He even secretly
cherished the wish of resigning his charge in Edinburgh, and of retiring to that
privacy from which he had been drawn at the commencement of the Scottish
Reformation. Speaking of the congregation of which he had been pastor at
Geneva, he says, on one of his confidential letters, “God comfort that dispersed
little flock, among whom I lived with quietness of conscience and contentment
of heart; and amongst whom I would be content to end my days, if so it might
stand with God’s good pleasure. For, seeing it hath pleased his majesty, above
all expectations, to prosper the work for the performing whereof I left that
company, I would even as gladly return to them, if they stood in need of my
labours, as ever I was to be delivered from the rage of mine enemies. I can give
you no reason that I should so desire, other than that my heart so thirsteth.”

But “the way of man is not in himself.” Providence had allotted him further
trials of a public nature; he was yet to see the security of the reformed religion
endangered, and the country involved in another civil war, even more
distressing than the former, inasmuch as the principal persons on both sides
were professed Protestants.

From the time that the queen was imprisoned, and the government transferred
to the young prince under the regency of Murray, a considerable number of the
nobility had withheld approbation of these proceedings. The Popish party were
decidedly attached to Mary, and inimical to a revolution, which crushed the
hopes which they had all along cherished of accomplishing the restoration of
the ancient religion. Others, though professed Protestants, were induced by
various motives to oppose the new government. Argyle was at this time
alienated from Murray by a family quarrel. The house of Hamilton followed that
line of narrow and interested policy which they had adopted on former
occasions of a similar kind. They were jealous lest the late settlement of the
crown should inflate the right of their chief, the Duke of Chastelherault, to the
succession and they were offended that the regent which they considered as
due to him, should have been conferred on Murray. No governor can gratify the
expectations of all, and some of those who were early friends of the regent or
had contributed to his advancement, thought that they were not sufficiently
rewarded. The very means which he found it necessary to employ to restore
tranquility and order to the kingdom, created him enemies. During the late
confusions, many parts of the country had fallen into a state of anarchy, and the northern counties and the borders presented nothing but scenes of rapine and bloodshed. It was impossible to repress these disorders without making severe examples of the most guilty, and the turbulent and licentious naturally sought the overthrow of a government by which they felt themselves overawed and restrained. But the abilities of the regent enabled him to overcome these difficulties, and he was daily receiving submissions from the most powerful of the opposite party, when, on the second of May, 1568, the queen escaped from her confinement in Lochleven. The discontented nobles immediately joined her standard, and, having mustered a large force, avowed their determination to restore her to the exercise of that authority which she had renounced by constraint. This formidable insurrection was defeated by the promptitude of the regent, and, in consequence of the battle of Langside, Mary was driven into England, and her party broken. Elizabeth having procured herself to be chosen umpire between the two parties, the conferences were protracted during so long a period, and the conduct of the English court was so equivocal and contradictory, that the friends of Mary were encouraged to renew their attempts to restore her by force of arms. But although the Duke of Chastelherault returned from France with a large sum of money contributed by the Popish princes, and came into Scotland in the character of lieutenant of the queen, the regent, by his vigilance and his vigorous measures, prevented any insurrection, and preserved the kingdom in obedience to the young king’s authority.

Despairing to accomplish their darling object during his life, the partisans of Mary resolved to cut off Murray by private means. During the year 1566, two persons were employed assassinate him, but the design was discovered and prevented. This did not hinder new machinations. Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, a nephew of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, undertook to perpetrate the deed. He was one of the prisoners taken at the battle of Langside, but, after being arraigned, condemned, and brought out to execution, he had his life given him by the regent, and was soon after set at liberty along with the other prisoners. It is said that he was actuated by revenge, on account of an injury which he had received by detaining one of his forfeited estates, or by the cruel manner in which his wife had been dispossessed of it. Whether this was really the case, or whether it was alleged to diminish the odium of his crime, and turn it away from his party, cannot perhaps be now certainly determined. But it does not appear that any part of the regent’s conduct towards him was such as to afford the slightest alleviation of a crime, in the commission of which he burst the ties of gratitude, as well as humanity and justice. On the other hand, there is ample proof that he was incited by the political party with which he was connected. Having formed his resolution, he deliberately followed the regent in his progress to Glasgow, Stirling, and Linlithgow; and, finding an opportunity in the last of these places, shot him through the body with a musket-ball. The wound proved mortal, and the regent died the same evening. While some of his friends, who stood round his bed, lamented the excessive lenity which he had
shown to his enemies, and particularly to his murderer, he replied, with a noble and Christian spirit, that nothing would ever make him repent of an act of clemency.

The consternation which is usually produced by the fall of a distinguished leader was absorbed in the deep distress which the tidings of the regent’s murder spread through the nation. The common people, who had experienced the beneficial effects of his short administration, to a degree altogether unprecedented in the country, felt as if each had lost a father, and loudly demanded vengeance upon the authors of the parricide. Many who had envied or hated him during his life were now forward to do justice to his virtues. Those who had not been able to conceal their satisfaction on the first intelligence of his death became ashamed of the indecent exultation which they had so imprudently expressed. The Hamiltons were anxious to clear themselves from the imputation of a crime which they saw to be universally detested. They dismissed the murderer, who was glad to escape from ignominy by condemning himself to perpetual banishment. The only one of his crimes for which the Archbishop of St. Andrews afterwards expressed contrition before his execution, was his accession to the murder of the regent. Nor were these feelings confined to Scotland; the sensation was general through England, and the expressions of grief and condolence from that country evinced the uncommon esteem in which he was held by all ranks.

The house in which Bothwellhaugh concealed himself, while he committed the murder, belonged to the Archbishop of St. Andrews, who acknowledged that he was privy and accessory to the deed. The horse on which the murderer escaped belonged to John Hamilton, Abbot of Arbroath, one of the duke’s sons. He rode immediately to Hamilton, where he was “received with great applause.”

It was the happiness of the regent, that, in his youth, he fell into the company of men, who cultivated his vigorous understanding, gave a proper direction to his activity, and instilled into his mind the principles of religion and virtue. His early adoption of the reformed sentiments, the steadiness with which he adhered to them, the uniform correctness of his morals, his integrity, sagacity, and enterprising but cool courage, soon placed him in the first rank among those who embarked in the struggle for the reformation of religion, and the maintenance of national liberties, and secured to him their cordial and unbounded confidence. The honors which Mary conferred on him were not too great for the services which he performed, and had she continued to act by his advice, those measures would have been avoided which brought on her ruin. He was repeatedly placed in a situation which would have tempted the ambition of persons possessed of far inferior abilities, yet he showed no disposition to grasp at the supreme authority. When he accepted the regency, it was in compliance with the decided and uncorrupted choice of the acting majority in the
kingdom, pointing him out as the person for occupying that high station; and his conduct, in one of the most delicate and embarrassing situations in which a governor was ever placed, showed that his countrymen were not mistaken in their choice. He united, in no ordinary degree, those qualities, which are rarely combined in the same individual, and which form the character of an accomplished prince. Excelling equally in the arts of war and peace, he reduced the country to obedience by his military skill and valor, and preserved it in state of tranquility and order by the wise and impartial administration of justice. Successful in all his warlike enterprises, he never once tarnished the laurels of victory by cruelty to the vanquished. He knew how to maintain the authority of the laws, and to bridle the licentious, by salutary severity, and at the same time to temper the rigor of justice by the interposition of mercy. He used to sit personally in the courts of judicature, and exerted himself to obtain for all the subjects an easy and expeditious decision of litigated causes. His hospitality, his unostentatious charity, his uncommon liberality to the learned, and the anxiety he showed to confer his favors in the manner least calculated to hurt their feelings, have been celebrated by one who had the best opportunities of becoming acquainted with these amiable traits of his character. Nor has the breath of calumny, which has attempted in many ways to blast his reputation, ever insinuated that he oppressed or burdened the public, during his regency, in order to enrich himself or his family. Add to all these qualities, his exemplary piety, the only source of genuine and exalted virtue. His family was so regulated as to resemble a church rather than a court. Not a profane or lewd word was to be heard from any of his domestics. A chapter of the Bible was always read at table after dinner and supper; and it was his custom on such occasions, to require his chaplain, or some learned man present, to give his opinion upon the passage, for his own instruction and that of his family. "A man truly good," says Archbishop Spotswood, "and worthy to be ranked among the best governors that this kingdom hath enjoyed, and, therefore, to this day honored with the title of The Good Regent."

This may perhaps be deemed by some readers an improper digression. But though it had been less connected with the subject of this work than it is, and though the familiarity and co-operation between the regent and the Reformer had been less intimate and cordial than they really were, I could not have denied myself the satisfaction of paying a small tribute to the memory of one of the greatest men of his age, who has been traduced and vilified in a most unjustifiable manner, and whose character has been drawn with unfavorable, and, in my opinion, with unfair colors, by the most moderate and impartial of our historians. All that I have attempted is to sketch the more prominent features of his character. That he was faultless, I am far from wishing to insinuate, but the principal charges which have been brought against him, I consider as either irrelevant, or unproved, or greatly exaggerated. That his exaltation to the highest dignity in the state which a subject could enjoy, produced no unfavorable change on his temper and behavior, is what none can be prepared to affirm; but I have not seen the contrary established. The confidence which he reposed in his friends was great, and he was inclined to
pay much deference to their advice; but that he became the dupe of worthless favorites, and fell by listening to their flattery, and refusing to hearken to wholesome advice, and not by the treachery of his friends and the malice of his enemies, are assertions which have been repeated upon the authority of a single witness, unsupported by facts, and capable of being disproved. The regent died on the evening of Saturday, the twenty-third of January, 1570, and the intelligence of his murder was conveyed early next morning to Edinburgh. It is impossible to describe the anguish which the Reformer felt on this occasion. The loss of a noble and endeared friend was the least evil which he had deplore. Of all the Scottish nobility, he placed the greatest confidence in Murray’s attachment to religion, and his conduct after his elevation to the regency had served to heighten the good opinion which he formerly entertained of him. He looked upon his death as the greatest calamity which could befall the nation, and as a forerunner of many evils. When the shock produced by the melancholy tidings had subsided, the first thought that rushed into his mind was that he had himself been the instrument of obtaining, from his clemency, a pardon to the man who had become his murderer, a thought which naturally produced a very different impression on him from what it did on the mind of the dying regent.

"Upon the 22 of Maii, the Sherife of Linlithgow, the Laird of Innerweek, James Hamilton of Bothwelhaugh, and six others, were put to an assyse, their hands bound; and pardoned at the request of Mr. Knox, whereof he sore repented; for Bothwelhaugh killed the regent shortlie after."

In his sermon that day, he introduced the melancholy subject, and, after saying that God in his great mercy raised up pious rulers and took them away in his displeasure, on account the sins of a nation, he thus poured out the sorrow of his heart: "O Lord, in what misery and confusion found he this realm! To what rest and quietness now by his labors, suddenly he brought the same, all estates, but especially the poor commons, can witness. Thy image, O Lord, did so clearly shine in that personage, that the devil, and the people to whom he is prince, could not abide it; and so to punish our sins and our ingratitude (who did not rightly esteem so precious a gift), thou hast permitted him to fall, to our great grief, in the hands of cruel and traitorous murderers. He is at rest, O Lord; we are left in extreme misery."

Only a few days before this, and after the plan of the murder was fully concerted, Gavin Hamilton, Abbot of Kilwinning, applied to Knox to intercede with the regent in behalf of some of his kinsmen, who were confined for practicing against the government. He signified his readiness to do all in his power for the relief of any of that family who were willing to own the authority of the king, but entreated the abbot not to abuse him by employing his services, if his relations intended to do any mischief to the regent, for "I protest," said he, "before God, who is the only witness now betwixt us, that if there be any thing attempted, by any of that surname, against the person of
that man, in that case I discharge myself to you and them for ever." After the assassination, the abbot sent to desire another interview, but Knox refused to see him and desired the messenger to say, "I have not now the regent to make suit unto for the Hamiltons."

At this time there was handed about a fabricated account of a pretended conference held by the late regent with Lord Lindsay, Wishart of Pittarrow, the tutor of Pitcur, James Macgill, and Knox, in which they were represented as advising him to set aside the young king and place the crown on his own head. To give it the greater air of credibility, the modes of expression peculiar to each of the persons were carefully imitated in the speeches put into their mouths. The evident design of circulating it at this time was to lessen the odium of the murder and the veneration of the people for the memory of Murray, but it was universally regarded as an impudent and gross forgery. The person who fabricated it was Thomas Maitland, a young man of talents, but corrupted by his brother the secretary, who had previously engaged himself to the queen’s party, and was suspected of having had a deep hand in the plot for assassinating the regent.

On the day on which the weekly conference was held in Edinburgh, the same person slipped into the pulpit a schedule containing words to this effect: "Take up now the man whom you accounted another God, and consider the end to which his ambition hath brought him." It was Knox’s turn to preach that day. On entering the pulpit he took up the paper, supposing it to be a note requesting the prayers of the congregation for a sick person, and having read it, laid it aside without any apparent emotion. But towards the conclusion of his sermon, after deploring the loss which the Church and commonwealth had recently sustained, and declaring the account of the conference which had been circulated, to be false and calumnious, he said that there were persons who rejoiced at the treasonable murder, scrupled not to make it the subject of their merriment; and particularly, there was one present who had thrown into the pulpit a paper exulting over an event which was the cause of grief to all good men: "That wicked man, whosoever he be, shall not go unpunished, and shall die where there shall be none to lament him." Maitland, after he went home, said to his sister, that the preacher was raving when he spake in such a manner of a person who was unknown to him; but she, suspecting her brother had written the line, reproved him, saying with tears that none of that man’s denunciations were wont to prove idle. Spotswood (who had his information personally from the mouth of that lady) says that Maitland died in Italy, "having no known person to attend him."

On Tuesday, the fourteenth of February, the regent’s corpse was brought from the palace of Holyroodhouse and interred in the south aisle of the collegiate Church of St. Giles. Before the funeral, Knox preached a sermon on these words: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." Three thousand persons dissolved in tears before him, while he described the virtues of the regent and bewailed his loss. Buchanan paid a tribute to the memory of his deceased patron by writing the inscription placed on his monument, with that expressive simplicity and brevity which are dictated by genuine grief. A convention of the
nobility was held after the funeral, at which it resolved to avenge his death, but different opinions were entertained as to the mode of doing this, and the commons complained loudly of the remissness with which the resolution was prosecuted. The General Assembly, at their first meeting, testified their detestation of the crime by ordering the assassin to be publicly excommunicated in all the chief towns of the kingdom, and by appointing the same process to be used against all who afterwards be convicted of accession to the murder.

During the sitting of the convention, Knox received a number of letters from his acquaintances in England, expressive of their high regard for the character of the regent and their sorrow at so grievous a loss. One of these was from Christopher Goodman, and another from John Willock, who either had not complied with the invitation of the General Assembly, or had again returned to England. The other letters were from Englishmen who had no immediate connection with Scotland. Dr. Laurence Humphrey urged Knox to write a memoir of the deceased. Had he done this, his intimate acquaintance with the regent would, no doubt, have enabled him to communicate many particulars of which we must now be content to remain ignorant, but though he had been disposed to undertake this task, the state of his health would have prevented its execution.

The grief which he indulged on account of this mournful event, and the confusions which followed it, preyed upon his spirits and injured his health. In the month of October, he had a stroke of apoplexy, which affected his speech to a considerable degree. On this occasion his enemies exulted and circulated the most exaggerated tales respecting his disorder. The report ran through Scotland and England that John Knox would never preach or speak more, that his face was turned into his neck, that he was become the most deformed creature ever seen, that he was actually dead—a most unequivocal proof of the high consideration in which he was held, which our Reformer received in common with other great men of his age.

In 1556, Calvin was suddenly seized in the pulpit with a fever, which confined him to his bed for a considerable time, and from which it was not thought he would recover. On hearing this, the Popish clergy of Noyon, his native city, met and rather prematurely gave public thanks to God for his death.

Luther, having received in 1545 a copy of an account of his own death, printed at Naples, had it reprinted with this note: "I, Martin Luther, attest that I received this frantic fable on this 21st of March, and am delighted beyond measure to understand that the devil and his spawn the pope and papists, hate me so heartily."
Those who flattered themselves that the reformer’s disorder was mortal were disappointed, for he was restored to the use of his speech, and was able, in the course of a few days, to resume preaching, at least on Sabbath days. He never recovered, however, from the debility which was produced by the apoplectic stroke.

The confusions which he had augured from the death of the good regent soon broke out, and again spread the flames of civil discord through the nation. The Earl of Lennox, who was the natural guardian of his grandson, was advanced to the regency; but he was deficient in the talents which were requisite for so difficult a station, and the knowledge of his weakness emboldened and increased the party which was attached to the queen. The Hamiltons openly raised her standard and were strengthened by the influence and abilities of Maitland. William Kircaldy of Grange, whom Murray had made governor of the castle of Edinburgh, after concealing his defection for some time under the flag of neutrality, declared himself on the same side, and became a principal agent in attempting to overturn that government which he had been so zealous in erecting. Maitland’s tergiversation surprised nobody, but the defection of Kircaldy was deeply felt by those with whom he had been so long associated. It proved a source of the keenest distress to Knox. The acquaintance which they had formed in the castle of St. Andrews grew into intimacy during their confinement in the French galleys, and Knox could never forget the services which Kircaldy performed during the subsequent struggle for reformation, and continued to the last to cherish the hope that he was at heart a friend to religion. Under the influence of these feelings, he spared no pains in endeavoring to prevent him from renouncing his fidelity to the king, and afterwards to reclaim him from his apostasy. But in both attempts he was unsuccessful.

In the end of the year 1570, he was personally involved in a disagreeable quarrel with Kircaldy. One of the soldiers belonging to the castle having been imprisoned by the magistrates on a charge of murder, the governor sent a party from the garrison, who broke open the tolbooth and carried off the prisoner. In sermon on the following Sabbath, Knox condemned this riot and violation of the house of justice. Had it been done by the
authority of a bloodthirsty man, or one who had no fear of God, he would not, he said, have been so much moved at it; but he was affected to think that one of whom all good men had formed so great expectations, should have fallen so far as to act such a part—one too, who, when formerly in prison, had refused to purchase his own liberty by the shedding of blood. An erroneous and exaggerated report of this censure being conveyed to the castle, the governor, in a great rage, made his complaint, first to Knox’s colleague, and afterwards formally to the kirk-session, that he had been calumniated as a murderer, and required that his character should be vindicated as publicly had been traduced. Knox, understanding that his words had been misrepresented, embraced the first opportunity of explaining and vindicating them from the pulpit. On a subsequent day, Kircaldy, who had absented himself from church nearly a whole year, came down to St. Giles’s accompanied with a number of the persons who had been active in the murder and riot. Regarding this as an attempt to overawe the authorities and set public opinion at defiance, the reformer dwelt particularly in his discourse upon the sinfulness of forgetting benefits received from God, and warned his hearers against confiding in the divine mercy while they were knowingly transgressing any of the commandments, or proudly defending their transgression.

Kircaldy was much incensed at this admonition, which he considered as leveled at him, and made use of very threatening language in speaking of the preacher. The report spread that the governor of the castle was become a sworn enemy to Knox and intended to kill him. Upon this, several noblemen and gentlemen of Kyle and Cunningham sent a letter to Kircaldy, in which, after reminding him of his former appearances for religion and mentioning the reports which had reached their ears, they warned him against doing anything to the hurt of that man, whom "God had made the first planter and chief waterer of his church among them," and protested that "his death and life were as dear to them as their own."

Knox was not to be deterred from doing what he considered to be his duty. He persisted in warning his hearers to avoid all participation with those who prevented the punishment of atrocious crimes by supporting the pretensions of the queen, and who exposed the reformed religion to the utmost hazard by opposing the king’s authority. When the General Assembly met in March 1571, anonymous libels were thrown into the house where they were sitting, and placards affixed to the church doors, accusing him of seditious railing against their sovereign the
queen, refusing to pray for her welfare and conversion, representing her as a reprobate whose repentance was hopeless, and uttering imprecations against her. One of the placards concluded with a threat that, if the Assembly did not restrain him by their authority from using such language, the complainers would themselves apply a remedy to the evil "with greater unquietness." The Assembly having, by public intimation, required the complainers to come forward and substantiate their charges, another anonymous writing appeared, promising that accusers should not be wanting against next Assembly, if the preacher continued his offensive speeches, and was "then law-byding, and not fugitive, according to his accustomed manner."

Several of his friends dealt with him to pass over these unauthenticated libels in silence, but he refused to comply with this advice considering that the credit of his ministry was implicated. Accordingly, he produced them in the pulpit, and returned a particular answer to the accusations which they contained. That he had charged the late queen with the crimes of which she had been notoriously guilty, he granted; that he had railed against her, he denied; nor would they be able to substantiate this charge against him, without at the same time proving Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other inspired writers, to have been railers. "From them he had learned plainly and boldly to call wickedness by its own terms—a fig, a fig, and a spade, a spade." He never called the queen reprobate nor said that her repentance was impossible, but he had affirmed that pride and repentance could not remain long together in one heart. He had prayed that God, for the comfort of his Church, would oppose his power to her pride, and confound her and her assistants in their impiety; this prayer, let them call it imprecation or execration as they pleased, had stricken, and would yet strike, whoever supported her. To the charge of not praying for the queen, he answered, "I am not bound to pray for her in this place, for sovereign to me she is not; and let them understand I am not a man of law that has my tongue to sell for silver or favour of the world." What title she now had, or ever had to the government, he would not dispute; the estates had deprived her of it, and it belonged to them to answer for this; as for him, he had hitherto lived in obedience to all lawful authority within the kingdom. To the threatening against his life, and the insinuation that he might not be "law-byding, but fugitive" against next Assembly, he replied that his life was in the custody of Him who had hitherto preserved him from many dangers, that he had reached an age at which he was not apt to flee far, nor could any yet accuse him of having left the people committed to his charge, except at their own command.
After these answers, his enemies fled, as their last resort, to an attack upon his Blast of the Trumpet, and accused him of inconsistency in writing against female government, and yet praying for Queen Elizabeth, and seeking her support against his native country. This accusation he also met in the pulpit, and refuted with great spirit. After vindicating his consistency, he concluded in the following manner: “One thing in the end I may not pretermit, that is, to give him a lie in his throat that either dare or will say that ever I sought support against my native country. What I have been to my country, albeit this unthankful age will not know, yet the ages to come will be compelled to bear witness to the truth. And thus I cease, requiring of all men that has to oppose any thing against me, that he will do it so plainly as I make myself and all my doings manifest to the world; for to me it seems a thing most unreasonable, that in my decrepit age, I shall be compelled to fight against shadows, and howlets that dare not abide the light.”

The conduct of our reformer at this period affords a striking display of the unextinguishable ardor of his mind. Previous to the breaking out of the late disturbances, he had given up attendance on church courts. He never went abroad except on Sabbath-day, to preach in the forenoon. He was so debilitated as to be unable to go to the pulpit without assistance. He had weaned his heart from the world and expressed his resolution to take no more part in public affairs. In answer to a letter of his esteemed friend, Sir William Douglas of Lochleven, who had informed him of an intended attempt on the castle of St. Andrews by Archbishop Hamilton, and requested his good offices for certain preachers, we find him, on the thirty-first of March, 1570, writing as follows: “How such troublers may be stayed in their enterprises, I commit to God, to whose counsels I commit you in that and all other causes worldly, for I have taken my good-night of it; and therefore bear with me, good sir, albeit I write not to the superintendent of Fife in the action that ye desire.” But whenever he saw the church and commonwealth seriously in danger, he forgot his infirmities and his resolutions, and entered into the cause with all the keenness of his more vigorous days. Whether the public proceedings of the nation or his own conduct were arraigned, whether the attacks upon them were open or clandestine, he stood prepared to repel them, and convinced the adversaries that they could not accomplish their designs without opposition, as long as he was able to move or speak.

His situation became very critical in April 1571, when Kircaldy received the Hamiltons, with their forces, into the castle. Their
inveteracy against him was so great that his friends were obliged to watch his house during the night. They proposed forming a guard for the protection of his person when he went abroad, but the governor of the castle forbade this, as implying a suspicion of his own intentions, and offered to send Melvil, one of his officers, to conduct him to and from the church. "He wold gif the woulf the wedder to keip," says Bannatyne. Induced by the importunity of the citizens, Kircaldy applied to the duke and his party for a protection to Knox; but they refused to pledge their word for his safety, because there "were many rascals and others among them who loved him not, that might do him harm without their knowledge." Intimations were often given him of threatenings against his life, and one evening a musket-ball was fired in at his window, and lodged in the roof of the apartment in which he was sitting. It happened that he sat at the time in a different part of the room from that which he had been accustomed to occupy, otherwise the ball, from the direction it took, must have struck him. Alarmed by this occurrence, a deputation of citizens, accompanied by his colleague, waited upon him and renewed a request which they had formerly made, that he would remove from Edinburgh to a place where his life would be in greater safety, until the queen's party should evacuate the town. But he refused to yield to them, apprehending that his enemies wished to intimidate him into flight, that they might carry on their designs more quietly, and then accuse him of cowardice. Being unable to persuade him by any other means, they had recourse at last to an argument which prevailed. They told him that if he was attacked, they were determined to risk their lives in his defense, and if blood was shed in the quarrel, which was highly probable, they would leave it on his head. Upon this he consented to remove from the city "sore against his will."

He left Edinburgh on the fifth of May, 1571, and crossing the Frith at Leith, traveled by short stages to St. Andrews, which he had chosen as the place of his retreat. His pulpit was filled by Alexander Gordon, Bishop of Galloway, who preached and prayed in a manner more acceptable to the queen's party than his predecessor, but little to the satisfaction of the people, who despised him on account of his weakness, and disliked him for supplanting their favorite pastor. A number of the most respectable inhabitants were driven from the capital by violence, while others were induced to quit it and retire to Leith, that they might not be understood as even practically submitting to the queen's authority. The Church of Edinburgh was for a time dissolved. The celebration of the Lord's Supper was suspended. And, whereas formerly scarce a day passed without public
exercise of religion, there was now, during a whole week, "neither preaching nor prayer; neither was there any sound of bell heard in all the town, except the ringing of the cannon."

The kingdom was now subjected to all the miseries of civil war and intestine faction. In almost every part of the country there were adherents to the king and to the queen, who exasperated each other by reciprocal reproaches and injuries. The regent fortified Leith, while the queen’s party kept possession of the castle and town of Edinburgh. As the two armies lay at a small distance from one another, and neither of them was sufficiently strong for undertaking to dispossess the other, they were daily engaged in petty skirmishes, and several acts of disgraceful retaliation, which rarely happen in the open field, were committed on both sides. The evidence which the queen’s friends gave of their personal antipathy to the reformer, clearly showed that his life would have been in imminent danger if he had remained among them. An inhabitant of Leith was assaulted and his body mutilated, because he was of the same name with him. A servant of John Craig, being met one day by a reconnoitering party, and asked who was his master, answered, in his trepidation, Mr. Knox, upon which he was seized, and, although he immediately corrected his mistake, they desired him to "hold at his first master," and dragged him to prison. Having fortified St. Giles’s steeple to overawe the inhabitants, the soldiers baptized one of the cannons by the name of Knox, which they were so fond of firing, that it burst, killed two of the party and wounded others. They circulated the most ridiculous tales respecting his conduct at St. Andrews. John Law, the letter-carrier of that city, being in the castle of Edinburgh, "the ladie Home and utheris wald neidis thraip in his face, that" John Knox "was banist the said toune, becaus that in the yarde he had reasit sum sanctis, amongis whome thair came up the devill with hornis, which when his servaunt Richard sawe, [he] ran woode, and so died."

Although he was now free from personal danger, Knox did not find St. Andrews that peaceful retreat which he had expected. The friends of Kircaldy and of Sir James Balfour resided in the neighborhood, and the Hamiltons had their relations and partisans both in the university and among the ministry. These were thorns in the reformer’s side, and made his situation very uneasy, as long as he resided among them. Having left Edinburgh because he could not be permitted to disburden his conscience by testifying against the designs of persons whom he regarded as conspirators against the legal government of the country, and favorers of a faction who intended nothing less than the overthrow of the
reformed religion, it was not to be expected that he would preserve silence on this subject at St. Andrews. Accordingly, in the discourses which he preached on the eleventh chapter of Daniel's prophecy, he frequently took occasion to advert to recent transactions, and to inveigh against the murder of the late king, and of the regent. This was very grating to the ears of the opposite faction, particularly to Robert and Archibald Hamilton, the former one of the ministers of the city, and the latter a professor in one of the colleges. Irritated by the censures which Knox pronounced against his kinsmen, Robert Hamilton attempted to injure his reputation by circulating in private that it did not become him to exclaim so loudly against murderers, for he had seen his subscription, along with that of the Earl of Murray, to a bond for assassinating Darnley at Perth. When this came to the reformer's ears, he immediately wrote a letter to Hamilton, desiring him to say whether he was the author of the slanderous report. Not receiving a satisfactory answer, he communicated the matter to Douglas, rector of the university, and Rutherford, provost of St. Salvator's College, requesting them to converse with their colleague on the subject and to inform him that if he did not give satisfaction for the slander which he had propagated, a complaint would be lodged against him before the Church. Upon this he came to Knox's room, and denied that he had ever given any ground for such a scandalous surmise.

Archibald Hamilton being complained of for withdrawing from Knox's sermons, and for accusing him of intolerable railing, endeavored to bring the matter under the cognizance of the masters of the university, among whom he possessed considerable influence. Knox did not scruple to give an account of his conduct before the professors for their satisfaction, but he judged it necessary to enter a protest that his appearance before them should not invalidate the liberty of the pulpit, nor the authority of the regular church courts, to which, and not to any university, the judgment of religious doctrine belonged. This incident accounts for the zeal with which he expresses himself on this subject in one of his letters to the General Assembly, in which he exhorts them, above all things, to preserve the Church from the bondage of the universities, and not to exempt them from ecclesiastical jurisdiction, or allow them to become judges of the doctrine taught from the pulpit.

The military operations during the civil war were chiefly distinguished by two enterprises which claim our notice from the influence which they had upon the affairs of the Church. The one was the taking of Dunbarton Castle, which was surprised, on the
second of April, 1571, by a small party of the regent’s forces, led by Captain Crawford of Jordanhill. Archbishop Hamilton, having fallen into the hands of the captors, was soon after condemned and ended his life on the gibbet. The execution of prisoners, although chargeable with crimes which merit death, is ordinarily avoided in civil contests, because it produces reprisals from the opposite party, but in every other respect the fate of Hamilton is not a subject of regret or of censure. Of all the queen’s adherents, his motives for supporting her cause appear to have been the most unworthy, and his talents and rank in the Church ought not to be pleaded in extenuation of the vices which stained his private character or the crimes of which he had been guilty. The death of Hamilton gave occasion to a change in the ecclesiastical government, of which I speak immediately.

An enterprise equally bold with Crawford’s but less successful was planned by Kircaldy. While the Regent Lennox was holding a parliament at Stirling, which was numerously attended, a party of soldiers suddenly entered the town early on the morning of September 3, 1571, seized the regent and the nobility who were along with him, and carried them away prisoners. The alarm having been given, the Earl of Mar sallied from the castle, and with the assistance of the townsmen, dispersed the assailants and rescued the noblemen. But this was not accomplished without the loss of the regent, who was slain by the orders of Lord Claud Hamilton, in revenge for the death of the Archbishop of St. Andrews. Lennox was succeeded in the regency by the Earl of Mar, a nobleman of great moderation, who, during the short time that he held that office, exerted himself to restore peace to the kingdom, and brought the negotiations for this purpose very near to a successful termination.

During these transactions the courtiers were devising a scheme for securing to themselves the principal part of the ecclesiastical revenues, which led to an alteration of the policy of the Church. We have repeatedly had occasion to notice the aversion of the nobility to the Book of Discipline, and the principal source from which the aversion sprung. While the Earl of Murray administered the government, he prevented any encroachments upon the rights of the Church; but the succeeding regents were either less friendly to them, or less able to check the avarice of the more powerful nobles. Several of the richest benefices having become vacant by the death or by the forfeiture of the Popish incumbents who had been permitted to retain them, it was necessary to determine in what manner they should be disposed of. The Church had uniformly required that their revenues should be divided and
applied to the support of the religious and literary establishments, but with this demand the courtiers were as much indisposed to comply as ever. At the same time, the secularization of them was deemed too bold a step; nor could laymen, with any shadow of consistency, or by a valid title, hold benefices which the law declared to be ecclesiastical. The expedient resolved on was that the bishoprics and other rich livings should be presented to certain ministers, who, previous to their admission, should make over the principal part of the revenues to such noblemen as had obtained the patronage of them from the court. This plan, which was concerted under the regency of Lennox, was carried into execution during that of Mar, chiefly by the influence of the Earl of Morton.

Morton, having obtained from the court a gift of the archbishopric of St. Andrews, vacant by the execution of Hamilton, entered into a private agreement respecting its revenues with John Douglas, rector of the university, whom he presented to that see. At the meeting of parliament in Stirling, August 1571, the commissioners of the General Assembly protested against this transaction; but through the interest of Morton, Douglas, though not yet elected, was admitted to a seat in parliament, and the new scheme for seizing on the ecclesiastical livings was confirmed, notwithstanding the warm remonstrances of the ministers of the Church, and the strenuous opposition of the more zealous and disinterested barons. Bishoprics and other great benefices were now openly conferred on noblemen, on persons totally unqualified for the ministry, and even on minors. Pluralities were multiplied, the ecclesiastical courts were hindered in the exercise of their jurisdiction, and the collectors of the Church were prohibited from gathering the thirds until some new regulation was adopted for supplying the necessities of the court.

These proceedings having created great dissatisfaction through the nation, the regent and council called an extraordinary assembly of superintendents and other ministers to meet at Leith in January 1572, to consult about an order which might prove more acceptable. Through the influence of the court, this convention consented that the titles of archbishop and other ecclesiastical dignitaries should be retained, that the bounds of the ancient dioceses should not be altered during the king’s minority, and that qualified persons from among the ministers should be advanced to these dignities. They, however, allotted no greater power to archbishops and bishops than to superintendents, with whom they were to be equally subject to the Assemblies of the Church. These regulations were submitted
to the ensuing General Assembly at St. Andrews, but as that meeting was thinly attended, it came to no determination among them. The Assembly held at Perth, in August 1572, resumed the subject, and came to the following resolution: the regulations contained certain titles, such as archbishop, dean, archdean, chancellor, and chapter, which savored of Popery, and were scandalous and offensive to their ears; and that whole Assembly, including the commissioners which had met at Leith, unanimously protested that they did not approve of these titles, that they submitted to the regulations merely as an interim arrangement, and that they would exert themselves to obtain a more perfect order from the regent and council. Such was the origin and nature of that species of Episcopacy which was introduced into the Reformed Church of Scotland the minority of James VI. It was disapproved of by ministers of the Church, and on the part of the courtiers and nobility, it does not appear to have proceeded from predilection to hierarchical government, but from the desire which they felt to obtain possession of the revenues of the Church. This was emphatically expressed by the name of tulchan bishops, which was commonly applied to those who were at that time admitted to the office.

Knox did not fail from the beginning to oppose these encroachments on the rights and property of the Church. Being unable to attend the General Assembly held at Stirling in August 1571, he addressed a letter to it, warning the members of the new contest which he foresaw they would have to maintain, and animating them to fidelity and courage. "And now, brethren," says he, "because the daily decay of natural strength threateneth my certain and sudden departing from the misery of this life, of love and conscience I exhort you, yea, in the fear of God, I charge and command you that ye take heed unto yourselves and to the flock over which God hath placed you pastors. Unfaithful and traitorous to the flock shall ye be before the Lord Jesus Christ, if, with your consent directly, ye suffer unworthy men to be thrust into the ministry of the Church under whatever pretence it shall be. Remember and judge before whom we must make our account, and resist that tyranny as ye would avoid hell-fire. This battle will be hard, but in the second point it will be harder; that is, that with the like uprightness and strength in God, ye gainstand the merciless devourers of the patrimony of the Church. If men will spoil, let them do it to their own peril and condemnation, but communicate ye not with their sins, of whatsoever estate they be, by consent nor by silence; but with public proclamation make this known unto the world, that ye are innocent of robbery, whereof ye will seek redress of God and man. God give you
wisdom and stout courage in so just a cause, and me an happy end." In a letter which he afterwards wrote to Wishart of Pittarrow, he also expresses himself in a strain of honest but keen indignation at the avarice of the nobility.

It has been insinuated that Knox gave his approbation to the resolutions of the convention at Leith to restore the episcopal office, and the articles sent by him to the General Assembly in August 1572 have been appealed to as a proof of this. But all that can be fairly deduced from these articles is that he desired the conditions and limitations agreed upon by that convention to be strictly observed in the election of bishops, in opposition to the granting of bishoprics to laymen, and to the simoniacal pactions which the ministers made with the nobles on receiving presentations. Provided one of the propositions made by him to the Assembly had been enforced, and the bishops had been bound to give an account of the whole of their rents, and either to support ministers in the particular places from which they derived these, or else to pay into the funds of the Church the sums requisite for this purpose, it is evident that the mercenary views both of patrons and presentees would have been defeated, and the Church would have gained her object, the use of the episcopal revenues. The prospect of this induced some honest ministers to agree to the proposed regulations at the convention held in Leith. But it required a greater portion of disinterested firmness than falls to most men, to act upon this principle, and the nobles were able to find, even at that period, a sufficient number of pliant, needy, or covetous ministers to be partners or the dupes of their avarice.

Though our reformer was of opinion that, in certain circumstances of the Church, a power might be delegated to some ministers to inspect the congregations within a particular district, and accordingly recommended the appointment of superintendents at the first establishment of the Reformation in Scotland, yet he did not allow of any class of office-bearers in the Church, under whatever name, who were superior either in office or in order to ministers or presbyters. His sentiments were not more favorable to diocesan Episcopacy in his latter, an they had been in his earlier days. Writing to a correspondent in England in the year 1568, he says, "I would most gladly pass through the course that God hath appointed to my labors, giving thanks to his holy name, for that it hath pleased his mercy to make me not a lord-bishop, but a painful preacher his blessed evangel." In his correspondence with Beza, he had informed him of the government established in the Scottish Church; and at this very time he received a letter
from that reformer, congratulating him that he had banished the order of bishops and admonishing him and his colleagues to beware of suffering it to re-enter under the deceitful pretext of preserving unity. He had an opportunity of publicly declaring his sentiments on this subject at the installation of Douglas as Archbishop of St. Andrews. Having preached as usual on Sabbath, February 13, 1572, the Earl of Morton, who was present, desired him to inaugurate Douglas, but he positively refused and pronounced an anathema against both the donor and the receiver of the bishopric. The Provost of St. Salvator’s College, having said that Knox’s conduct proceeded from disappointment because the bishopric had not been conferred on himself, he, on the following Sabbath, repelled this invidious charge. He had refused, he said, a greater bishopric in that of St. Andrews, which he might have had by the favor of greater men than Douglas had his; what he had spoken was for the exoneration of his conscience, that the Church of Scotland might not be subject to that order, especially after a very different one had been settled in the Book of Discipline, subscribed by the nobility and ratified by parliament. He lamented also that a burden should have been laid upon an old man, which twenty men of the greatest ability could not sustain. In the General Assembly held at St. Andrews in the following month, he not only entered a protest against the election of Douglas, but also "opponed himself directly to the making of bishops."

While he was engaged in these contests, his bodily strength was every day sensibly decaying. Yet he continued to preach, although unable to walk to the pulpit without assistance, and, when warmed with his subject, he forgot his weakness, and electrified the audience with his eloquence. James Melville, afterwards minister of Anstruther, was then a student at the College, and one of his constant hearers. The account which he has given of his appearance is exceedingly striking; and, as any translation would enfeeble it, I shall give it in his own words: "Of all the benefits that I had that year [1571], was the coming of that maist notable profet and apostle of our nation, Mr. Johne Knox, to St. Andrews, who, be the faction of the queen occupeing the castell and town of Edinburgh, was compellit to remove therefra, with a number of the best, and chusit to come to St. Andrews. I heard him teache there the prophecies of Daniel, that simmer and the wintar following. I had my pen and my little buike, and tuke away sic things as I could comprehend. In the opening up of his text, he was moderat the space of an half houre; but when he entered to application, he made me so to grew [thrill] and tremble, that I could not hald a pen to wryt. He was very weik. I saw him, every
day of his doctrine, go hulie and fear [slowly and warily], with a
furring of marticks about his neck, a staffe in the ane hand, and
gude, godlie Richart Ballenden, his servand, halden up the uther
oxter [armpit], from the abbey to the parish kirk, and, by the said
Richart, and another servand, lifted up to the pulpit whar he
behovit to lean at his first entrie; bot, ere he haid done with his
sermone, he was sa active and vigorous, that he was lyk to ding
the pulpit in blads [beat the pulpit in pieces], and flie out of it."

The persons with whom the reformer was most familiar at St.
Andrews, were the Professors of St. Leonard’s College, who often
visited him at his lodging in the abbey. This college was
distinguished by its warm attachment to the doctrines of the
Reformation, which it had embraced at a very early period, while
the two other colleges were disaffected to the authority of the
king, and several of their teachers suspected of leaning to Popery.
The reformer was accustomed to amuse himself by walking in St.
Leonard’s Yard, and to look with peculiar complacency on the
students, whom he regarded as the rising hope of the Church. He
would sometimes call them to him, and bless them, and exhort
them to be diligent in their studies, to attend to the instructions
of their teachers, and imitate the good example which they set
before them, to acquaint themselves with God, and with the
great work which he had lately performed in their native country,
and to cleave to the good cause. These familiar advices, from a
person so venerable, made a deep impression on the minds of the
young men. He even condescended to be present at a college
exercise performed by them at the marriage of one of their
regents, in which the siege and taking of Edinburgh Castle was
dramatically represented.

During his stay at St. Andrews, he published a vindication of the
reformed religion, in answer to a letter written by Tyrie, the
Scottish Jesuit. The argumentative part of the work was finished
by him in 1568, but he sent it abroad at this time, with
admonitions, as a farewell address to the world, and a dying
testimony to the truth which he had long taught and defended.
Along with it he published one of the religious letters which he
had formerly written to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Bowes; and, in an
advertisement prefixed to this, he informs us that she had lately
departed this life, and that he could not allow the opportunity to
slip of acquainting the public, by means of this letter, with the
intimate Christian friendship which had so long subsisted between
them.
The ardent desire which he felt to be released by death from the troubles of the present life, appears in all that he wrote about this time. "Weary of the world," and "thirsting to depart," are expressions frequently used by him. The dedication of the above-mentioned work is thus inscribed: "John Knox, the servant of Jesus Christ, now weary of the world, and daylie looking for the resolution of this my earthly tabernacle, to the faithful that God of his mercie shall appoint to fight after me." In the conclusion of it, he says, "Call for me, deir brethren, that God, in his mercy, will pleas to put end to my long and panefull battel. For now being unable to fight, as God sumtymes gave strength, I thirst an end befoir I be more troublesum to the faithfull. And yet, Lord, let my desire be moderate be thy Holy Spirit." In a prayer subjoined to the dedication, are these words: "To thee, O Lord, I commend my spirit. For I thirst to be resolved from this body of sin, and am assured that I shall rise agane in glorie; howsoever it be that the wicked for a tyme sall trode me and others, thy servandes under their feit. Be merciful, O Lord, unto the kirk within this realme; continue with it the light of thy evangell; augment the number of true preicheris. And let thy mercifull providence luke upon my desolate bedfellow, the fruit of hir bosome, and my two deir children, Nathanael and Eleazar. Now, Lord, put end to my miserie." The advertisement "to the faithful reader," dated at St. Andrews, 12th July, 1571, concludes in the following manner: "I hartly salute and take my good night of all the faithful of both realms, earnestly desiring the assistance of their prayers, that, without any notable slander to the evangell of Jesus Christ, I may end my battel; for, as the worlde is weary of me, so am I of it."

The General Assembly being appointed to meet at Perth on sixth of August, he took his leave of them in a letter, along with which he transmitted certain articles and questions which he recommended to their consideration. The Assembly returned him an answer, declaring their approbation of his propositions and their earnest desires for his preservation and comfort. The piece of public service which he performed at their request, was to examine and approve of a sermon which had been lately preached by David Ferguson, minister of Dunfermline. His subscription to this sermon, like everything which proceeded from his mouth or pen about this time, is uncommonly striking: "John Knox, with my dead hand, but glaid heart, praising God, of his mercy he levis such light to his kirk in this desolation."

From the rapid decline of his health, in the spring of 1572, there was every appearance of his ending his days at St. Andrew’s, but it pleased God that he should be restored once more to his flock
and allowed to die peaceably among them. In consequence of a cessation of arms, agreed to in the end of July, been the regent and the adherents of the queen, the city of Edinburgh was abandoned by the forces of the latter, and secured from the annoyance of the garrison in the castle. As soon as the banished citizens returned to their houses, they sent a deputation to St. Andrews, with a letter to Knox, expressive of their earnest desire "that once again his voice might be heard among them," and entreating him immediately to come to Edinburgh, if his health would at all permit; for, said they, "loath we are to disease or hurt your person any ways, but far loather to want you." After reading the letter and conversing with the commissioners, he expressed his willingness to return, but under the express condition that he should not be urged to preserve silence respecting the conduct of those who held the castle, "whose treasonable and tyrannical deeds he would cry out against, as long as he was able to speak." He therefore desired them to acquaint their constituents with this lest they should afterwards repent of his austerity, and be apprehensive of ill-treatment on his account. The commissioners assured him that they did not mean to put a bridle in his mouth, but wished him to discharge his duty as he had been accustomed to do. He repeated this intimation, after his arrival at Edinburgh, to the principal persons of his congregation, and received the same assurance from them, before he would resume preaching.

Previous to the cessation of arms, the banished citizens (who had taken their residence chiefly in Leith) entered into a solemn league, by which they engaged, "in the fear of God the Father, of his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holie Spirit, tayckand to witness his holie name," that they would, with their lives, lands, and goods, promote the gospel professed among them, maintain the authority of the king and regent, assist and concur with others against their enemies in the castle, defend one another if attacked, and submit any variances which might arise among themselves to brotherly arbitration or to the judgment of the town council.

On the seventeenth of August, to the great joy of the queen’s faction, whom he had overawed during his residence among them, the reformer left St. Andrews, along with his family. He was accompanied so far on his journey by the principal persons of his acquaintance in the town, who sorrowfully took their leave of
him, in the prospect of seeing his face no more. Being obliged by
his weakness to travel slowly, it was the twenty-third of the
month before he reached Leith, from which, after resting a day or
two, he came to Edinburgh. The inhabitants enjoyed the
satisfaction of seeing him again in his own pulpit, on the first
Sabbath after he arrived, but his voice was now so enfeebled that
he could not be heard by the half of the congregation. Nobody
was more sensible of this than himself. He therefore requested his
session to provide a smaller house, in which he could be heard, if
it were only by a hundred persons, for his voice, he said, was not
able, even in his best time, to extend over the multitude which
assembled in that large church, much less now when he was so
greatly debilitated. This request was readily complied with by the
session.
During his absence, a coolness had taken place between his
colleague and the parish, who found fault with him for
temporizing during the time that the queen’s party retained
possession of the city. In consequence of this, they had mutually
agreed to separate. After preaching two years in Montrose, Craig
removed to Aberdeen, where he acted as visitor of the churches
in Buchan and Mar, and was afterwards chosen minister to the
royal household, a situation which he held until his death in 1600,
at the advanced age of eighty-eight. Being deprived of both their
pastors, and having no prospect that Knox, although he should
return, would be capable of performing the public service among
them, the kirk-session of Edinburgh had instructed their delegates
to the General Assembly lately held at Perth, to petition that
court for liberty to choose from the ministry a colleague to the
reformer. The Assembly granted their request, and ordained any
minister (those of Perth and Dundee excepted) who might be
chosen by Knox, the superintendent of Lothian, and the church of
Edinburgh, to comply with their invitation, and remove to the
capital. When the commissioners came to St. Andrews, they found
the superintendent along with Knox, and having consulted with
them, it was agreed to nominate and recommend James Lawson,
sub-principal of the university of Aberdeen, a man eminent for his
piety, learning, and eloquence. Perceiving, on his return to
Edinburgh that he could not long be able to endure the fatigue of
preaching, and that he was already incapacitated for all other
ministerial duties, Knox was extremely solicitous to have this
speedily settled, lest the congregation should be left “as sheep
without a shepherd,” when he was called away. The session and
the superintendent having sent letters of invitation to Lawson,
the reformer wrote him at the same time, urging his speedy
compliance with their requests. This letter is very descriptive of
the state of his mind at this interesting period:
"All worldlie strent, yea ewin in thingis spirituall, decayes; yet sall never the work of God decay. Belovit brother, seeing that God of his mercie, far above my expectatione, has callit me ones againe to Edinburgh, and yet that I feill nature so deayed, and daylie to decay, that I luke not for a long continewance of my battell, I wald gladlie anes discharge my conscience into your bosome, and into the bosome of utheris, in whome I think the feare of God remanes. Gif I hath had the habilitie of bodie, I suld not have put you to the pane to the whilk I now requyre you, that is, anes to visite me, that we may conferre together on heavinlie thingis; for into earth there is no stability, except the kirk of Jesus Christ, ever fightand under the crosse, to whose myghtie protectione I hartlie commit you. Of Edinburgh, the vii of September, 1572. Jhone Knox.

"Haist, leist ye come too lait."

In the beginning of September, intelligence reached Edinburgh, that the Admiral of France, the brave, the generous, the pious Coligni, was murdered in the city of Paris, by the orders of Charles IX. Immediately on the back of this, tidings arrived of that most detestable and unparalleled scene of barbarity and treachery, the general massacre of the Protestants throughout that kingdom. Post after post brought fresh accounts of the most shocking and unheard-of cruelties. Hired cut-throats and fanatical cannibals marched from city to city, paraded the streets and entered into the houses of those that were marked out for destruction. No reverence was shown to the hoary head, no respect to rank or talents, no pity to tender age or sex. Infants, aged matrons, and women upon the point of their delivery were trodden under the feet of the assassins, or dragged with hooks into the rivers; others, after being thrown into prison, were instantly brought out and butchered in cold blood. Seventy thousand persons were murdered in one week. For several days, the streets of Paris literally ran with blood. The savage monarch, standing at the windows of the palace, with his courtiers, glutted his eyes with the inhuman spectacle, and amused himself with firing upon the miserable fugitives who sought shelter at his merciless gates.

The intelligence of this massacre (for which a solemn thanksgiving was offered up at Rome by order of the pope) produced the same horror and consternation in Scotland as in every other Protestant country. It inflicted a deep wound on the exhausted spirit of Knox. Besides the blow struck at the reformed body, he had to lament the loss of many individuals, eminent for piety, learning, and rank, whom he numbered among his acquaintance. Being conveyed to the pulpit, and summoning up the remainder of his strength, he thundered the vengeance of Heaven against “that
cruel murderer and false traitor, the King of France,” and desired Le Croc, the French ambassador, to tell his master that sentence was pronounced against him in Scotland, that the divine vengeance would never depart from him, nor from his house, if repentance did not ensue; but his name would remain an execration to posterity, and none proceeding from his loins would enjoy his kingdom in peace. The ambassador complained of the indignity offered to his master, and required the regent to silence the preacher, but this was refused, upon which he left Scotland. Lawson having received the letters of invitation, hastened to Edinburgh. He had the satisfaction to find that Knox was still able to receive him; and, having preached to the people, gave universal satisfaction. On the following Sabbath, the twenty-first of September, Knox began to preach in the Tolbooth Church, which was now fitted up for him. He chose for the subject of his discourses, the account of our Savior’s crucifixion, as recorded in the twenty-seventh chapter of the gospel according to Matthew, a theme with which he had often expressed a wish to close his ministry. On Sabbath, the ninth of November, he presided at the installation of Lawson as his colleague and successor. The sermon was preached by him in the Tolbooth Church, after which he removed, with the audience, to the large church, where he went through the accustomed form of admission, by proposing the questions to the minister and people, addressing an exhortation to both, and praying for the divine blessing upon their connection. On no former occasion did he give more satisfaction to those who were able to hear him. After declaring the respective duties of pastor and people, he protested, in the presence of Him to whom he expected soon to give an account, that he had walked among them with a good conscience, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in all sincerity, not studying to please men, nor to gratify his own affections; he praised God that he had been pleased to give them a pastor in his room, when he was now unable to teach; he fervently prayed that any gifts which had been conferred on himself might be augmented a thousand fold in his successor; and, in a most serious and impressive manner, he exhorted and charged the whole assembly to adhere steadfastly to the faith which they had professed. Having finished the service and pronounced blessing with a cheerful but exhausted voice, he descended from the pulpit, and leaning upon his staff and the arm of an attendant, crept down the street, which was lined with the audience, who, as if anxious to take the last sight of their beloved pastor, followed him until he entered his house, from which he never again came out alive.

On Tuesday following, the eleventh of November, he was seized with a severe cough, which greatly affected his breathing. When
his friends, anxious to prolong his life, proposed to call in the assistance of physicians, he readily acquiesced, saying that he would not neglect the ordinary means of health, although he was persuaded that death would soon put an end to all his sorrows. It had been his ordinary practice to read every day some chapters of the Old and New Testament, to which he added a certain number of the Psalms of David, the whole of which he perused regularly once a month. On Thursday the thirteenth, he sickened, and was obliged to desist from his course of reading, but he gave directions to his wife and his secretary, Richard Bannatyne, that one of them should every day read to him, with a distinct voice, the seventeenth chapter of the gospel according to John, the fifty-third of Isaiah, and a chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. This was punctually complied with during the whole time of his sickness, and scarcely an hour passed in which some part of Scripture was not read in his hearing. Besides the above passages, he, at different times, fixed on certain Psalms, and some of Calvin’s French sermons on the Ephesians. Thinking him at times to be asleep, when they were engaged in reading, they inquired if he heard them, to which he answered, "I hear (I praise God), and understand far better"—words which he uttered for the last time, within four hours of his death. The same day on which he sickened, he desired his wife to discharge the servants’ wages, and wishing next day to pay one of his men-servants himself, he gave him twenty shillings above his fee, saying, "Thou wilt never receive more from me in this life." To all of them he addressed suitable exhortations to walk in the fear of God, and as became Christians who had lived in his family. On Friday, the fourteenth, he rose from bed at an earlier hour than usual, and thinking that it was Sabbath, said that he meant to go to church, and preach on the resurrection of Christ, upon which had been meditating through the night. This was the subject on which he should have preached in his ordinary course. But he was so weak that he needed to be supported from his bedside by two men, and it was with great difficulty that he sit on a chair. Next day, at noon, John Durie, one of the ministers of Leith, and Archibald Steward, who were among his most intimate acquaintance, came into his room. Perceiving that he was very sick, they wished to take their leave, but he insisted that they remain, and having prevailed with them to stay for dinner, rose from bed and came to the table, which was the last time he ever sat at it. He ordered a hogshead of wine which in his cellar to be pierced for them; and, with a hilarity which he delighted to indulge among his friends, desired Steward to send for some of it as long as it lasted, for he would not tarry until it was all drunk.
On Sabbath, the sixteenth, he kept his bed, and mistaking it for the first day of the fast appointed on account of the French massacre, refused to take any dinner. Fairley of Braid, who was present, informed him that the fast did not commence until the following Sabbath, and sitting down, and dining before his bed, prevailed on him to take a little food. He was very anxious to meet once more with the session of the Church, to leave them his dying charge, and bid them a last farewell. In compliance with this wish, his colleague, the elders, anddeacons, with David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Leith, assembled in his room on Monday the seventeenth, when he addressed them in the following words, which made a deep and lasting impression on the minds of all: "The day approaches, and is now before the door, for which I have frequently and vehemently thirsted, when I shall be released from my great labours and innumerable sorrows, and shall be with Christ. And now, God is my witness whom I have served in the spirit in the gospel of his Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrine of the gospel of the Son of God, and have had it for my only object to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the faithful, to comfort the weak, the fearful, and the distressed, by the promises of grace, and to fight against the proud and rebellious by the divine threatenings. I know that many have frequently complained, and do still loudly complain, of my too great severity, but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered the severest judgments. I cannot deny that I felt the greatest abhorrence at the sins in which they indulged, but still I kept this one thing in view, that, if possible, I might gain them to the Lord. What influenced me to utter whatever the Lord put into my mouth, so boldly, and without respect of persons, was a reverential fear of my God, who called and of his grace appointed me to be a steward of divine mysteries, and a belief that he will demand an account of the manner in which I have discharged the trust committed to me, when I shall stand at last before his tribunal. I profess, therefore, before God, and before his holy angels, that I never made merchandise of the sacred word of God, never studied to please men, never indulged my own private passions or those of others, but faithfully distributed the talents intrusted to me for the edification of the church over which I watched. Whatever obloquy wicked men may cast on me respecting this point, I rejoice to the testimony of a good conscience. In the mean time, my dear brethren, do you persevere in the eternal truth of the gospel; wait diligently on the flock over which the Lord hath set you, and which he redeemed with the blood of his only begotten Son. And thou, my dearest brother Lawson, fight the good fight, and do the
work of the Lord joyfully and resolutely. The Lord from on high bless you, and the whole church of Edinburgh, against whom, as long as they persevere in the word of truth which they have heard of me, the gates of hell shall not prevail.” Having warned them against countenancing those who disowned the king’s authority, and made some observations on a complaint which Maitland had lodged against him before the session, he became so exhausted as to be obliged to desist from speaking. Those who were present were filled both with joy and grief by this affecting address. After reminding him of the warfare which he had endured, and the triumph which awaited him, and joining in prayer, they took their leave of him, drowned in tears.

When they were going out, he desired his colleague and Lindsay to remain behind. "There is one thing that greatly grieves me," said he to them. "You have been witnesses of the former courage and constancy of Grange in the cause of God; but now, alas! into what a gulf has he precipitated himself! I entreat you not to refuse the request which I now make to you. Go to the castle, and tell him, ‘John Knox remains the same man now when he is about to die, that ever he knew him when able in body, and wills him to consider what he was, and the estate in which he now stands, which is a great part of his trouble. Neither the craggy rock in which he miserably confides, nor the carnal prudence of that man [Maitland] whom he esteems a demi-god, nor the assistance of strangers, shall preserve him; but he shall be disgracefully dragged from his nest to punishment, and hung on a gallows before the face of the sun, unless he speedily amend his life, and flee to the mercy of God.’ That man’s soul is dear to me, and I would not have it perish if I could save it." The ministers undertook to execute this commission, and going up to the castle, they obtained an interview with the governor, and delivered their message. He at first exhibited symptoms of relenting, but having conferred apart with Maitland, he returned, and gave them a very unpleasant answer. This being reported to Knox, he was much grieved, and said that he had been earnest in prayer for that man, and still trusted that his soul would be saved, although his body should come to a miserable end.

After the castle surrendered, and Kircaldy was condemned to die, Lindsay attended him at his earnest desire, and received much satisfaction from conversation with him. When he was on the scaffold, he desired the minister to repeat Knox’s last words respecting him, and said that he hoped they would prove true.
After his interview with the session he became much worse; his difficulty of breathing increased, and he could not speak without great and obvious pain. Yet he continued still to receive persons of every rank, who came in great numbers to visit him, and suffered none to go away without advices, which he uttered with such variety and suitableness as astonished those who waited upon him. Lord Boyd, coming into his chamber, said, "I know, sir, that I have offended you in many things, and am now come to crave your pardon." The answer was not heard, as the attendants retired and left them alone; but his lordship returned next day in company with Drumenrig and Morton. The reformer’s private conversation with the latter was very particular, as afterwards related by the earl himself. He asked him if he was previously acquainted with the design to murder the late king. Morton having answered in the negative, he said, "Well, God has beautified you with many benefits, which he has not given to every man; as he has given you riches, wisdom, and friends, and now is to prefer you to the government of this realm. And, therefore, in the name of God, I charge you to use all these benefits aright, and better in time to come than ye have done in times bypast; first to God’s glory, to the furtherance of the evangell, the maintenance of the Church of God, and his ministry; next for the weal of the king and his realm and true subjects. If so ye shall do, God shall bless you and honour you, but if ye do it not, God shall spoil you of these benefits, and your end shall be ignominy and shame."

Morton afterwards acknowledged that he did know of the murder, but excused himself for concealing it. "The quene," he said, "was the doare tharoof," and as for the king, he was "sic a bairne, that there was nothing tauld him but he wad reveill it to hir agane."

The regent Mar died on the twenty-ninth of October preceding. The nobility at this time assembled at Edinburgh to choose his successor, and it was understood that Morton would be raised to that dignity.

On Thursday, the twentieth, Lord Lindsay, the Bishop of Caithness, and several gentlemen visited him. He exhorted them to continue in the truth which they had heard, for there was no other word of salvation, and besought them to have nothing to do with those in the castle. The Earl of Glencairn (who had often visited him) came in with Lord Ruthven. The latter, who called only once, said to him, "If there be any thing, sir, that I am able
to do for you, I pray you charge me." His reply was, "I care not for all the pleasure and friendship of the world."

A religious lady of his acquaintance desired him to praise God for what good he had done, and was beginning to speak in his commendation, when he interrupted her. "Tongue! tongue! lady; flesh of itself is over-proud, and needs no means to esteem itself." He put her in mind of what had been said to her long ago, "Lady, lady, the black one has never trampit on your fute," and exhorted her to lay aside pride and be clothed with humility. He then protested as to himself, as he had often done before, that he relied wholly on the free mercy of God, manifested to mankind through his dear Son Jesus Christ, whom alone he embraced for wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. The rest of the company having taken their leave of him, he said to Fairley of Braid, "Every one bids me good-night; but when will you do it? I have been greatly indebted unto you, for which I shall never be able to recompense you, but I commit you to one that is able to do it, to the eternal God."

On Friday the twenty-first, he desired Richard Bannatyne to order his coffin to be made. During that day he was much engaged in meditation and prayer. These words dropped from his lips at intervals: "Come, Lord Jesus. Sweet Jesus, into thy hand I commend my spirit. Be merciful, Lord, to thy Church, which thou hast redeemed. Give peace to this afflicted commonwealth. Raise up faithful pastors who will take the charge of thy Church. Grant us, Lord, the perfect hatred of sin, both by the evidences of thy wrath and mercy. In the midst of his meditations, he often addressed those who stood by in such sentences as these: "O serve the Lord in fear, and death shall not be terrible to you. Nay, blessed shall death be to those who have felt the power of the death of the only begotten Son of God."

On Sabbath the twenty-third (which was the first day of the national fast) during the afternoon sermon, after lying a considerable time quiet, he suddenly exclaimed, "If any be present, let them come and see the work of God." Thinking that his death was at hand, Bannatyne sent to the Church for Johnston of Elphingston. When he came to the bedside, Knox burst out in these rapturous expressions: "I have been these two last nights in meditation on the troubled state of the Church of God, the spouse of Jesus Christ, despised of the world, but precious in the sight of God. I have called to God for her, and have committed her to her head, Jesus Christ. I have fought against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things, and have prevailed. I have been in heaven, and have possession. I have tasted of the heavenly joys where presently I am." He then repeated the Lord's prayer and the
creed, interjecting devout aspirations between the articles of the latter.

After sermon, many came to visit him. Perceiving that he breathed with great difficulty, some of them asked if he felt much pain. He answered that he was willing to lie there for years, if God so pleased, and if he continued to shine upon his soul through Jesus Christ. He slept very little, but was employed almost incessantly either in meditation, in prayer, or in exhortation. "Live in Christ. Live in Christ, and then flesh need not fear death." "Lord, grant true pastors to thy Church, that purity of doctrine may be retained." "Restore peace again to this commonwealth, with godly rulers and magistrates." "Lord, make an end of my trouble." Then, stretching his hands towards heaven, he said, "Lord, I commend my spirit, soul, and body, and all, into thy hands. Thou knowest, Lord, my troubles; I do not murmur against thee." His pious ejaculations were so numerous that those who waited on him could recollect only a small portion of what he uttered, for seldom was he silent when they were not employed in reading or in prayer.

Monday, the twenty-fourth of November, was the last day that he spent on earth. That morning he could not be persuaded to lie in bed, but, though unable to stand alone, rose between nine and ten o’clock, and put on his stockings and doublet. Being conducted to a chair, he sat about half an hour, and then was put to bed again. In the progress of the day, it appeared evident that his end drew near. Besides his wife and Bannatyne, Campbell of Kinyeacleugh, Johnston of Elphingston, and Dr. Preston, three of his most intimate acquaintance, sat by turns at his bedside. Kinyeacleugh asked him if he had any pain. "It is no painful pain, but such a pain as shall soon, I trust, put end to the battle. I must leave the care of my wife and children to you," continued he, "to whom you must be a husband in my room." About three o’clock in the afternoon, one of his eyes failed, and his speech was considerably affected. He desired his wife to read the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. "Is not that a comfortable chapter?" said he, when it was finished. "O what sweet and salutary consolation the Lord has afforded me from that chapter!" A little after he said, "Now, for the last time, I commend my soul, spirit, and body (touching three of his fingers) into thy hand, O Lord." About five o’clock, he said to his wife, "Go, read where I cast my first anchor," upon which she read the seventeenth chapter of John’s Gospel, and afterwards a part of Calvin’s sermons on the Ephesians.

After this he appeared to fall into a slumber, interrupted by heavy moans, during which the attendants looked every moment for his dissolution. But at length he awaked, as if from sleep, and being
asked the cause of his sighing so deeply, replied, "I have formerly, during my frail life, sustained many contests, and many assaults of Satan, but at present he hath assailed me most fearfully, and put forth all his strength to devour, and make an end of me at once. Often before has he placed my sins before my eyes, often tempted me to despair, often endeavored to ensnare me by the allurements of the world, but these weapons were broken by the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, and the enemy failed. Now he has attacked me in another way; the cunning serpent has labored to persuade me that I have merited heaven and eternal blessedness by the faithful discharge of my ministry. But blessed be God, who has enabled me to beat down and quench this fiery dart, by suggesting to me such passages of Scripture as these: 'What hast thou that thou hast not received?' 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' ‘Not I, but the grace of God in me.’ Upon this, as one vanquished, he left me. Wherefore I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ, who has been pleased to give me the victory, and I am persuaded that the tempter shall not again attack me, but, within a short time, I shall, without any great pain of body or anguish of mind, exchange this mortal and miserable life for a blessed immortality through Jesus Christ."

He then lay quiet for some hours, except that now and then he desired them to wet his mouth with a little weak ale. At ten o'clock they read the evening prayer, which they had delayed beyond the usual hour, from an apprehension that he was asleep. After this exercise was concluded, Dr. Preston asked him if he had heard the prayers. "Would to God," said he, "that you and all men had heard them as I have heard them; I praise God for that heavenly sound." The doctor rose up, and Kinyeancleugh sat down before his bed. About eleven o'clock, he heaved a deep sigh, and said, "Now it is come." Bannatyne immediately drew near, and desired him to think upon those comfortable promises of our Savior Jesus Christ, which he had so often declared to others, and, perceiving that he was speechless, requested him to give them a sign that he heard them, and died in peace. Upon this he lifted up one of his hands, and, sighing twice, expired without a struggle.

He died in the sixty-seventh year of his age, not so much oppressed with years as worn out and exhausted by his extraordinary labors of body and anxieties of mind. Few men were ever exposed to more dangers or underwent greater hardships. From the time that he embraced the reformed religion till he breathed his last, seldom did he enjoy a respite from trouble, and he emerged from one scene of difficulty and danger, only to be involved in another still more distressing. Obliged to flee from St. Andrews to escape the fury of Cardinal Beatoun, he found a
retreat in East-Lothian, from which he was hunted by Archbishop
Hamilton. He lived for several years as an outlaw, in daily
apprehension of falling a prey to those who eagerly sought his
life. The few months during which he enjoyed protection in the
castle of St. Andrews were succeeded by a long and rigorous
captivity. After enjoying some repose England, he was again
driven into banishment, and for five years wandered as an exile
on the Continent. When he retuned to native country, it was to
engage in a struggle of the most perilous and arduous kind. After
the Reformation was established, and he was settled in the
capital, he was involved in a continual contest with the court.
When he was relieved from this warfare, and thought only of
ending his days in peace, he was again called into the field; and
although scarcely able to walk, was obliged to remove from his
flock, and to avoid the fury of his enemies by submitting to a new
banishment. He was repeatedly condemned for heresy, and
proclaimed an outlaw; thrice he was accused of high treason, and
on two of these occasions he appeared and underwent a trial. A
price was publicly set on his head; assassins were employed to kill
him; and his life was attempted both with the pistol and the
dagger. Yet he escaped all these perils, and finished his course in
peace and in honor. No wonder that he was weary of the world,
and anxious to depart; and with great propriety might it be said,
at his decease, that "he rested froth his labors."
On Wednesday, the twenty-sixth of November, he was interred in
the churchyard of St. Giles. His funeral was attended by the newly
elected regent, Morton, by all the nobility who were in the city,
and a great concourse of people. When his body was laid in the
grave, the regent emphatically pronounced his eulogium in these
words, "There lies he, who never feared the face of man."
The character of this extraordinary man has been drawn in
opposite colors, by different writers, and at different times. And
the changes which have taken place in the public opinion about
him, with the causes which have produced them, form a subject
neither uncurious, nor unworthy of attention.
The interest excited by the revolutions of Scotland, ecclesiastical
and political, in which he acted so conspicuous a part, caused his
name to be known throughout Europe, more extensively than
those of most of the reformers. When we reflect that the Roman
Catholics looked upon him as the principal instrument in
overthrowing their religious establishment in this country, we are
prepared to expect that writers of that persuasion would
represent his character in an unfavorable light; and that, in
addition to the common charges of heresy and apostasy, they
would describe him as a man of a restless, turbulent spirit, and of
rebellious principles. We will not even be greatly surprised though
we find them charging him with whoredom, because, being a priest, he entered into wedlock, once and a second time, and imputing his change of religion to a desire of releasing himself from the bonds by which the Popish clergy were professionally bound to chastity. But all this is nothing to the portraits which they have drawn of him, in which, to the violation of all credibility, he is unblushingly represented as a man, or rather a monster, of the most profligate character, who gloried in depravity, who avowedly indulged in the most vicious practices, and upon whom Providence fixed the most evident marks of reprobation at his death, which was accompanied with circumstances that excited the utmost horror of the beholders. This might astonish us, did we not know, from undoubted documents, that there were at that time a class of writers, who, by inventing or retailing such malignant calumnies, attempted to blast the fairest and most unblemished characters among those who appeared in opposition to the Church of Rome; and that, absurd and outrageous as the accusations were, they were greedily swallowed by the numerous slaves of prejudice and credulity. The memory of no one was loaded with a greater share of this obloquy than our reformer’s. But these accounts have long ago lost every degree of credit; they now remain only as a proof of the spirit of lies or of strong delusion, by which these writers were actuated, and of the deep and deadly hatred which they had conceived against the object of their calumny, on account of his strenuous and successful exertions in overthrowing the fabric of papal superstition and despotism.

Knox was known and esteemed by the principal persons long the reformed in France, Switzerland, and Germany. We have had occasion repeatedly to mention his friendship with the reformer of Geneva, Beza, the successor of Calvin, was also personally acquainted with him; the letters which he wrote to him abound with expressions of the warmest regard, and highest esteem; and, in his Images of Illustrious Men, he afterwards raised an affectionate tribute to our reformer’s memory. This was done, at a subsequent period, by the German biographer Melchior Adam, the Dutch Van Heiden, and the French La Roque. The late historian of the literature of Geneva (whose religious sentiments are very different from those of Calvin and Beza), although he is displeased with the philippics which Knox sometimes pronounced from the pulpit, says, that “he immortalized himself by his courage against Popery, and his firmness against the tyranny of Mary; and that though a violent, he was always an open and honourable, enemy to the Catholics.”

The affectionate veneration in which his memory continued to beheld in Scotland after his death, evinces that the influence
which he possessed among his countrymen during his life was not constrained, but founded on the high opinion which they entertained of his virtues and talents. Bannatyne has drawn his character in the most glowing colors, and, although allowances must be made for the enthusiasm with which a favorite servant wrote of a beloved and revered master, yet, as he lived long in the reformer's family, and was himself a man of respectability and learning, his testimony is by no means to be disregarded. In a speech which he delivered before the General Assembly in March 1571, when, in his master's name, he craved justice against the calumnies circulated by the queen's party, he said, "It has pleased God to make me a servant to that man John Knox, whom I serve, as God bears me witness, not so much in respect of my worldly commodity, as for that integrity and uprightness which I have ever known, and presently understand, to be in him, especially in the faithful administration of his office, in teaching of the word of God; and if I understood, or knew that he was a false teacher, a seducer, a raiser of schism, or one that makes division in the Church of God, as he is reported to be by the former accusations, I would not serve him for all the substance in Edinburgh." And, in his journal, after giving an account of Knox's death, he adds, "In this manner departed this man of God: the light of Scotland, the comfort of the Church within the same, the mirror of godliness, and pattern and example to all true ministers, in purity of life, soundness of doctrine, and boldness in reproving of wickedness; one that cared not the favour of men, how great soever they were. What dexterity in teaching, boldness in reproving, and hatred of wickedness was in him, my ignorant dulness is not able to declare, which if I should press [labor] to set out, it were as one who would light a candle to let men see the sun, seeing all his virtues are better known and notified to the world a thousand fold than I am able to express."

Principal Smeton's character of him, while it is less liable to the suspicion of partiality, is equally honorable and flattering. "I know not," says he, "if ever so much piety and genius were lodged in such a frail and weak body. Certain I am, that it will be difficult to find one in whom the gifts of the Holy Spirit shone so bright, to the comfort of the Church of Scotland. None spared himself less in enduring fatigues, bodily and mental; none was more intent on discharging the duties of the province assigned to him." And again, addressing his calumniator Hamilton, he says, "This illustrious, I say illustrious servant of God, John Knox, I shall clear from your feigned accusations and slanders by the testimony of a venerable assembly rather than by my own denial. This pious duty, this reward of a well-spent life, all its members most cheerfully discharge to their excellent instructor in Christ Jesus."
This testimony of gratitude they all owe to him, who, they know, ceased not to deserve well of all till he ceased to breathe. Released from a body exhausted in Christian warfare, and translated to a blessed rest, where he has obtained the sweet reward of his labours, he now triumphs with Christ. But beware, sycophant, of insulting him when dead; for he has left behind him as many defenders of his reputation as there are persons who were drawn by his faithful preaching, from the gulf of ignorance to the knowledge of the gospel."

The divines of the Church of England who were contemporary with Knox entertained a great respect for his character and ranked him along with the roost eminent of their own reformers. I have already produced the mark of esteem which Bishop Bale conferred on him, and the terms of approbation in which he was mentioned by Dr. Fulke, one of the most learned of the English divines in the sixteenth century. Aylmer, in a work written to confute one of his opinions, bears a voluntary testimony to his learning and integrity. And Ridley, who stickled more for the ceremonies of the Church than any of his brethren in the reign of Edward VI and who was displeased with the opposition which Knox made to the introduction of the English liturgy at Frankfort, expressed his high opinion of him as "a man of wit, much good learning, and earnest zeal." Whatever dissatisfaction they felt at his pointed reprehension of several parts of their ecclesiastical establishment, the English dignitaries, under Elizabeth, rejoiced at the success of his exertions, and without scruple expressed their approbation of many of his measures, which were afterwards severely censured by their successors. I need scarcely add, that his memory was in veneration by the English Puritans. Some of the chief men among them were personally acquainted with him during his residence in England and on the Continent, and others of them corresponded with him by letter. They highly esteemed his writings, sought for his manuscripts with avidity, and published them with testimonies of the warmest approbation.

Towards the close of the sixteenth century, there arose another race of prelates, of very different principles from the English reformers, who began to maintain the divine right of diocesan Episcopacy, with the intrinsic excellency of a ceremonious worship, and to adopt a new language respecting other reformed churches. Dr. Bancroft, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, was the first writer among them who spoke disrespectfully of Knox, after whom it became a fashionable practice among the hierarchical party. This was resented by the ministers of Scotland, who warmly vindicated the character of their reformer, at the expense of incurring the frowns and resentment of their sovereign. Though educated under the greatest scholar of the
age, and one who was a decided friend to popular liberty, James, in spite of the instructions of Buchanan, proved a pedant, and cowardice alone prevented him from becoming a tyrant. His early favorites flattered his vanity, fostered his love of arbitrary power, and inspired him with the strongest prejudice against the principles and conduct of those men who, during his early years, had been the instruments of preserving his life, and supporting his authority. To secure his succession to the English crown, he entered into a private correspondence with Bancroft, and concerted with him the scheme of introducing Episcopacy into the Church of Scotland. The Presbyterian ministers incurred his deep and lasting displeasure by their determined resistance to this design, and by united and firm opposition which they made to the illegal despotic measures of his government. He was particularly displeased at the testimony which they publicly bore to the characters of Knox, Buchanan, and the regent Murray, who "could not be defended," he said, "but by traitors, and seditious theologues." Andrew Melville told him that they were men who had set the crown on his head, and deserved better of him than to be so traduced. James complained that Knox had spoken disrespectfully of his mother, to which Patrick Galloway, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, replied, "If a king or a queen be a murderer, why should they not be called so?" Walter Balcanquhal, another minister of the city, having in one of his sermons rebuked those who disparaged reformer, the king sent for him, and in a passion protested that "either he should lose his crown, or Mr. Walter should recant his words." Balcanquhal "prayed God to preserve his crown, but said that if he had his right wits, the king should have his head, before he recanted any thing he spake." James carried his antipathies to the Presbyterian Church and reformers along with him to England, and he found it an easy matter to infuse them into the minds of his new subjects. Incensed at the freedom which Buchanan had used in his history of the transactions during the reign of Mary, he had, before leaving Scotland, procured the condemnation of that work by an act of parliament. And now he did not think it enough that he had got Camden’s history of that period manufactured to his mind, but employed agents to induce the French historian De Thou to adopt his representations; and because that great man scrupled to receive the royal testimony respecting events which happened before James was born, or when he was a child, in opposition to the most credible evidence, his majesty was pleased to complain that he had been treated disrespectfully. Charles I carried these prejudices even further than his father had done. During his reign, passive obedience, arminianism, and semi-popery formed the court religion; Calvinism and presbytery were held in the greatest
detestation, and proscribed both as political and religious heresies. In the reign of the second Charles, the court, the bench, the pulpit, the press, and the stage united in loading Presbyterians with every species of abuse, and in holding them forth as a gloomy, unsocial, turbulent, and fanatical race. And a large share of these contumelies uniformly fell on the head of Knox, who, it was alleged, had brought the obnoxious principles of the sect from Geneva and planted them in his native country, from which they had spread into England. The revolution was effected in England by a coalition of parties of very different principles, some of which were not of the most liberal kind. Though this event abated the force of the prejudices alluded to, it by no means removed them, and a considerable time after it took place, the great, the fashionable, and even the learned, among the English, regarded the Scots as only beginning to emerge from that inelegance and barbarism which had been produced by the peculiar sentiments of Knox and his followers. The great body of his countrymen, however, continued long to entertain a just sense of the many obligations which they were under to Knox. After the government of the Church of Scotland was conformed to the English model, the Scottish prelates still professed to look back to their national reformer with sentiments of gratitude and veneration, and Archbishop Spotswood describes him as "a man endued with rare gifts, and a chief instrument that God used for the work of those times." For a considerable time after the revolution, the Presbyterians of Scotland treated with deserved contempt the libels which English writers had published against him, and blushed not to avow their admiration of a man to whose labors they were indebted for an ecclesiastical establishment more scriptural and more liberal than that of which their neighbors could boast. The Union first produced a change in our national feelings on this subject. The short-lived jealousy of English predominance, felt by many of our countrymen on that occasion, was succeeded by a passion for conformity to our southern neighbors; and so fond did we become of their good opinion, and so eager to secure it, that we were disposed to sacrifice to their taste and their prejudices, sentiments which truth, as well as national honor, required us to retain and cherish. Our most popular writers are not exempt from this charge; and even in works professing to be executed by the united talents of our literati, the misrepresentations and gross blunders of which English writers had been guilty in their accounts of our Reformation, and the false and scandalous accusations which they had brought against our reformers, have been generally adopted and widely circulated, instead of meeting with the exposure and reprobation which they so justly merited.
The prejudices entertained against our reformer by the friends of absolute monarchy, were taken up, in all their force, subsequently to the Revolution, by the adherents of the Stuart family, whose religious notions, approximating very nearly to the popish, joined with their slavish principle respecting non-resistance to kings, led them to disapprove of almost every measure adopted at the time of the Reformation, and to condemn the whole as a series of disorder, sedition, and rebellion against lawful authority. The spirit by which the Jacobitish faction was actuated did not become extinct with the family which had so long been the object of their devotion; and while they transferred their allegiance to the house of Hanover, they retained principles which had incited them repeatedly to attempt its expulsion from the throne. The alarm produced by that revolution which of late has shaken the thrones of so many of the princes of Europe, has greatly increased this party; and with the view of preserving the present constitution of Britain, principles have been widely disseminated which if they had been generally received in the sixteenth century, would have perpetuated the reign of Popery and arbitrary power in Scotland. From persons of such principles, nothing favorable to our reformer can be expected. But the greatest torrent of abuse poured upon his character, has proceeded from those literary champions who have come forward to avenge the wrongs, and vindicate the innocence of the peerless and immaculate Mary, Queen of Scots! Having conjured up in their imagination the image of an ideal goddess, they have sacrificed to the object of their adoration all the characters, which, in that age, were most estimable for learning, patriotism, integrity, and religion. As if the quarrel which they had espoused exempted them from ordinary laws of controversial warfare, and conferred on them the absolute and indefeasible privilege of calumniating and defaming at pleasure, they have pronounced every person who spoke, wrote, or acted against that queen, to be a hypocrite or a villain. In the raving style of these writers, Knox was "a fanatical incendiary," "a holy savage," "the son of violence and barbarism," "the religious Sachem of religious Mohawks." I cannot do justice to the subject without adverting here to the influence of those transactions written by two distinguished individuals of our own country. The political prejudices and skeptical opinions of Mr. Hume are well known, and appear prominently in every part of his History of England. Regarding the various systems of religious belief and worship as distinguished from one another merely by different shades of falsehood and superstition, he has been led, by a strange but not inexplicable bias, almost uniformly to show the most marked partiality to the grosser and more corrupt forms of religion, has spoken with
greater contempt of the Protestants than of the Roman Catholics, and treated the Scottish with greater severity than the English reformers. Forgetting what was due to the character of a philosopher, which he was so ambitious to maintain in his other writings, he has acted as the partisan and advocate of a particular family, and, in vindicating some of the worst measures of the Stuarts, has done signal injustice to the memory of the most illustrious patriots of both kingdoms. Though convinced that the Queen of Scotland was guilty of the crimes laid to her charge, he has labored to screen her from the infamy to which a fair and unvarnished statement of facts must have exposed her character, by fixing the attention of his readers on an untrue and exaggerated representation of the rudeness of Knox and the other reformers by whom she was surrounded, and by absurdly imputing to their treatment of her the faults into which she was betrayed. No person who is acquainted with the writings of Dr. Robertson will accuse him of being actuated by such improper motives. But the warmest admirers of his History of Scotland cannot deny that he has been misled by the temptation of making Mary the heroine of his story, and of thus interesting his readers deeply in his narrative by blending the tender and romantic with the more dry and uninteresting detail of public transactions. By a studious exhibition of the personal charms and accomplishments of the queen, by representing her faults as arising from the unfortunate circumstances in which she was placed, by touching gently on the errors of her conduct, while he dwells on the cruelty and the dissimulation of her rival, and by describing her sufferings as exceeding the tragical distresses which fancy has feigned to excite sorrow and commiseration, he throws a veil over those vices which he could not deny, while the sympathy which his pathetic account of her death naturally awakens in the minds of his readers effaces the impressions of her guilt which his preceding narrative had produced. However amiable the feelings of the author might be, the tendency of such a representation is evident. The Dissertation on the murder of King Henry has, no doubt, convinced many of Mary’s accession to the perpetration of that deed, but the History of Scotland has done more to prepossess the public mind in favor of that princess than all the defenses of her most zealous and ingenious advocates, and consequently, to excite prejudice against her opponents, who, on the supposition of her guilt, acted a most meritorious part, and are entitled, in other respects, to the gratitude and veneration of posterity.

The increase of infidelity and indifference to religion in modern times, especially among the learned, has contributed, in no small degree, to swell the tide of prejudice against our reformer.
Whatever satisfaction persons of this description may express or feel at the reformation from Popery, as the means of emancipating the world from superstition and priestcraft, they naturally despise and dislike men who were inspired with the love of religion, and in whose plans of reform the acquisition of civil liberty, and the advancement of literature, held a subordinate place to the revival of primitive Christianity.

Nor can it escape observation that prejudices against the characters and proceedings of our reformers are now far more general than they formerly were among those who still profess to adhere to their doctrine and system of church government. Impressed with a high idea of the illumination of the present and entertaining a low estimate of the attainments of those which preceded it, imperfectly acquainted with the enormity and extent of the corrupt system of religion which existed in this country at the era of the Reformation, inattentive to the spirit and principles of the adversaries with whom our reformers were obliged to contend, and to the dangers and difficulties with which they had to struggle, they have too easily lent an ear to calumnies which have been circulated to their prejudice, and have condemned measures which will be found, on examination, to have been necessary to secure and to transmit the invaluable blessings which we now enjoy.

Having given this account of the opinions entertained respecting our reformer, I shall endeavor to sketch, with as much truth as I can, the leading features of his character. That he possessed strong natural talents is unquestionable. Inquisitive, ardent, acute; vigorous and bold in his conceptions; he entered into all the subtleties of the scholastic science then in vogue; yet, disgusted with its barren results, he sought out a new course of study, which gradually led to a complete revolution in his sentiments. In his early years he had not access to that finished education which many of his contemporaries obtained in foreign universities, and he was afterwards prevented, by his unsettled and active mode of life, from prosecuting his studies with leisure; but his abilities and application enabled him in a great measure to surmount these disadvantages, and he remained a stranger to none of the branches of learning which in that age were cultivated by persons of his profession. He united, in a high degree, the love of study, with a disposition to active employment. The truths which he discovered he felt an irresistible impulse to impart to others, for which he was qualified by a bold, fervid, and impetuous eloquence, singularly adapted to arrest the attention, and govern the passions, of a fierce and unpolished people.
From the time that he embraced the reformed doctrine, the desire of propagating it, and of delivering his countrymen from the delusions and thralldom of Popery, became his ruling passion, to which he was always ready to sacrifice his ease, his interest, his reputation, and his life. An ardent attachment to civil liberty held the next place in his breast to love of the reformed religion. That the zeal with which he labored to advance these objects was of the most disinterested kind, no candid person who has paid attention to his life can doubt for a moment, whatever opinion may be entertained of some of the means which he employed for that purpose. He thought only of advancing the glory of God, and promoting the welfare of his country. Intrepidity, independence, and elevation of mind, indefatigable activity, and constancy which no disappointments could shake, eminently qualified him for the hazardous and difficult post which he occupied. His integrity was above the suspicion of corruption, his firmness proof equally against the solicitations of friends and the threats of enemies. Though his impetuosity and courage led him frequently to expose himself to danger, we never find him neglecting to take prudent precautions for his safety. The confidence reposed in him by his countrymen shows the high opinion which they entertained of his sagacity as well as of his honesty. The measures taken for advancing the Reformation were either adopted at his suggestion or sanctioned by his advice, and we must pronounce them to have been as wisely planned as they were boldly executed. His ministerial functions were discharged with the greatest assiduity, fidelity, and fervor. No avocation or infirmity prevented him from appearing in the pulpit. Preaching was an employment in which he delighted, and for which he was qualified, by an extensive acquaintance with the Scriptures and by the happy art of applying them, in the most striking manner, to the existing circumstances of the Church and of his hearers. His powers of alarming the conscience and arousing the passions have been frequently celebrated, but he excelled also in unfolding the consolations of the gospel, and in calming the breasts of those who were agitated by a sense of guilt, or suffering under the ordinary afflictions of life. When he discoursed of the griefs and joys, the conflicts and triumphs, of genuine Christians, he described what he had himself known and experienced. The letters which he wrote to his familiar acquaintances breathe the most ardent piety. The religious meditations in which he spent his last sickness, were not confined to that period of his life; they had been his habitual employment from the time that he was brought to the knowledge of the truth, and his solace amidst all the hardships and perils through which he had passed.
With his brethren in the ministry he lived in the utmost cordiality. We never read of the slightest variance between him and any of his colleagues. While he was dreaded and hated by the licentious and profane, whose vices he never spared, the religious and sober part of his countrymen felt a veneration for him, which was founded on his unblemished reputation, as well his popular talents as a preacher. In private life, he was eyed and revered by his friends and domestics. He was subject to the illapses of melancholy and depression of spirits, arising partly from natural constitution, and partly from the maladies which had long preyed upon his health, which made him (to use his own expression) churlish, and less capable of pleasing and gratifying his friends than he was otherwise disposed to be. This he confessed, and requested them to excuse; but his friendship was sincere, affectionate, and steady. When free from this morose affection, he relished the pleasures of society, and, among his acquaintances, was accustomed to unbend his mind by indulging in innocent recreation and in the sallies of humor, to which he had a strong propensity, notwithstanding the graveness of his general deportment. In the course of his public life, the severer virtues of his character were more frequently called into exercise, but we have met with repeated instances of his acute sensibility, and the unaffected tenderness which occasionally breaks forth in his private letters shows that he was no stranger to any of the charities of human life, and that he could "rejoice with them that rejoiced, and weep with them that wept."

Most of his faults may be traced to his natural temperament and to the character of the age and country in which he lived. His passions were strong; he felt with the utmost keenness on every subject which interested him; and as he felt he expressed himself, without disguise and without affectation. The warmth of his zeal was apt to betray him into intemperate language; his inflexible adherence to his opinions inclined to obstinacy; and his independence of mind occasionally assumed the appearance of haughtiness and disdain. In one solitary instance, the anxiety which he felt for the preservation of the great cause in which he was so deeply interested, betrayed him into an advice which was not more inconsistent with the laws of strict morality, than it was contrary to the stern uprightness, and undisguised sincerity, which characterized the rest of his conduct. A stranger to complimentary or smooth language, little concerned about the manner in which his reproofs were received, provided they were merited, too much impressed with the evil of the offense to think of the rank or character of the offender, he often "uttered his admonitions with an acrimony and vehemence more apt to irritate than to reclaim." But he protested at a time when persons are
least in danger of deception, and in a manner which should banish every suspicion of the purity of his motives, that, in his sharpest rebukes, he was influenced by hatred of vice, not of the vicious; that his great aim was to reclaim the guilty, and that in using those means which were necessary for this end, he frequently did violence to his own feelings.

Those who have charged him with insensibility and inhumanity have fallen into a mistake very common with superficial thinkers, who, in judging of the character of persons who lived in a state of society very different from their own, have pronounced upon their moral qualities from the mere aspect of their exterior manners. He was austere, not unfeeling; stern, not savage; vehement, not vindictive. There is not an instance of his employing his influence to revenge any personal injury which he had received. Rigid as his maxims respecting the execution of justice were, there are numerous instances on record of his interceding for the pardon of criminals; and, unless when crimes were atrocious, or when the welfare of the state was in the most imminent danger, he never exhorted the executive government to the exercise of severity. The boldness and ardor of his mind, called forth by the peculiar circumstances of the times, led him to push his sentiments on some subjects to an extreme, and no consideration could induce him to retract an opinion of which he continued to be persuaded; but his behavior after his publication against female government proves that he satisfied himself with declaring his own views, without seeking to disturb the public peace by urging their adoption. His conduct at Frankfort evinced his moderation in religious differences among brethren of the same faith, and his disposition to make all reasonable allowances for those who could not go the same length with him in reformation, provided they abstained from imposing upon the consciences of others. The liberties which he took in censuring from the pulpit the actions of individuals of the highest rank and station, appear the more strange and intolerable to us, when contrasted with the reserve and timidity of modern times; but we should recollect that they were then common, and that they were not without their utility, in an age when the licentiousness and oppression of the great and powerful often set at defiance the ordinary restraints of law.

In contemplating such a character as that of Knox, it is not the man so much as the reformer, that ought to engage our attention. The talents which are suited to one age and station would be altogether unsuitable to another; and the wisdom displayed by Providence, in raising up persons endowed with qualities singularly adapted to the work which they have to perform for the benefit of mankind, demands our particular consideration. We must admire the austere and rough reformer, whose voice once
cried in the wilderness, who was clothed with camel’s hair, and
girt about the loins with a leathern girdle, who came neither
eating nor drinking, but, laying the axe to the root of every tree,
warned a generation of vipers to flee from the wrath to come,
saying even to the tyrant upon the throne, “It is not lawful for
thee.” And we must consider him as fitted for “serving the will of
God in his generation,” according to his rank and place, well as his
Divine Master, whose advent he announced, who “did not strive,
nor cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets, nor break
the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax.” To those who
complain that they are disappointed at not finding in our national
reformer, courteous manners, and a winning address, we may say,
in the language of our Lord to the Jews concerning the Baptist,
“What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken
with the wind? What went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft
raiment? Be they which are gorgeously appareled, and live
delicately, are in kings’ courts. But what went ye out for to see? A
prophet? I say unto you, and more than a prophet.” To the men of
this generation, as well as to the Jews of old, may be applied the
parable of the children sitting in the market-place, and calling
one to another, saying, “We have piped unto you, and ye have not
danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not wept.”
Disaffection to the work often lurks under cavils against the
instruments by which it is carried on, and had Knox been softer
and more yielding in his temper, he would have been pronounced
unfit for his office by the very persons who now censure his
harshness and severity. “But wisdom is justified of all her
children.” Before the Reformation, superstition, shielded by
ignorance, and armed with power, governed with gigantic sway.
Men of mild spirits, and of gentle manners, would have been as
unfit for taking the field against this enemy, as a dwarf or a child
for encountering a giant. What did Erasmus in the days of Luther?
What would Lowth have done in the days of Wickliffe, or Blair in
those of Knox? It has been justly observed concerning our
reformer that “those very qualities which now render his
character less amiable, fitted him to be the instrument of
Providence for advancing the Reformation among a fierce people,
and enabled him to face danger, and surmount opposition, from
which a person of a more gentle spirit would have been apt to
shrink back.” Viewing his character in this light, those who cannot
regard him as an amiable man, may, without hesitation,
pronounce him a great reformer.
The most disinterested of the nobility, who were embarked with
him in the same cause, sacrificed on some occasions the public
good to their private interests, and disappointed the hopes which
he had formed of them. The most upright of his associates in the
ministry relaxed their exertions, or suffered themselves at times to be drawn into measures that were unsuitable to their station and hurtful to the reformed religion. Goodman, after being adopted by the Church of Scotland, and ranked among her reformers, yielded so far to the love of country as to desert a people who were warmly attached to him, and return to the bosom of a less pure Church, which received him with coldness and distrust. Willock, after acquitting himself honorably from the commencement of the interesting conflict, withdrew before the victory was completely secured, and, wearied out with the successive troubles in which his native country was involved, sought a retreat for himself in England. Craig, being left without the assistance of his colleague, and placed between two conflicting parties, betrayed his fears by having recourse to temporizing measures. Douglas, in his old age, became the dupe of persons whose rapacity impoverished the Protestant Church. And each of the superintendents was, at one time or another, complained of for neglect or for partiality, in the discharge of his functions. But from the time that the standard of truth was first raised by him in his native country, till it dropped from his hands at death, Knox never shrunk from danger, never consulted his own ease or advantage, never entered into any compromise with the enemy, never was bribed or frightened into cowardly silence, but, keeping his eye singly and steadily fixed on the advancement of religion and of liberty, supported throughout the character of the reformer of Scotland.

Knox bore a striking resemblance to Luther in personal intrepidity and in popular eloquence. He approached nearest to Calvin in his religious sentiments, in the severity of his manners, and in a certain impressive air of melancholy which pervaded his character. And he resembled Zwingli in his ardent attachment to the principles of civil liberty, and in combining his exertions for the reformation of the Church with uniform endeavors to improve the political state of the people. Not that I would place our reformer on a level with this illustrious triumvirate. There is a splendor which surrounds the great German reformer, partly arising from the intrinsic heroism of his character, and partly reflected from the interesting situation in which his long and doubtful struggle with the court of Rome placed him in the eyes of Europe, which removes him at a distance from all who started in the same glorious career. The Genevese reformer surpassed Knox in the extent of his theological learning, and in the unrivalled solidity and clearness of his judgment. And the reformer of Switzerland, though inferior to him in masculine elocution, and in daring courage, excelled him in self-command, in prudence, and in that species of eloquence which steals into
the heart, convinces without irritating, and governs without assuming the tone of authority. But although "he attained not to the first three," I know not, among all the eminent men who appeared at that period, any name which is so well entitled to be placed next to theirs as that of Knox, whether we consider the talents with which he was endowed, or the important services which he performed.

There are perhaps few who have attended to the active and laborious exertions of our Reformer, who have not been insensibly led to form the opinion that he was of a robust constitution. This is, however, a mistake. He was of small stature, and of a weakly habit of body, a circumstance which serves to give us a higher idea of the vigor of his mind. His portrait seems to have been taken more than once during his life, and has been frequently engraved. It continues still to frown in the antechamber of Queen Mary, to whom he was often an ungracious visitor. We discern in it the traits of his characteristic intrepidity, austerity, and keen penetration. Nor can we overlook his beard, which, according to the custom of the times, he wore long, and reaching to his middle, a circumstance which I mention the rather because some writers have gravely assured us that it was the chief thing which procured him reverence among his countrymen. A Popish author has informed us that he was gratified with having his picture drawn, and has expressed much horror at this, seeing he had caused all the images of the saints to be broken.

One charge against him has not yet been noticed. He has been accused of setting up himself for a prophet, of presuming to intrude into the secret counsel of God, and of enthusiastically confounding the suggestions of his own imagination, and the effusions of his own spirit, with the dictates of inspiration, and immediate communications from Heaven. Let us examine this accusation a little. It is proper, in the first place, to hear his own statement of the grounds on which he proceeded in many of those warnings which have been denominated predictions. Having, in one of his treatises, denounced the judgments to which the inhabitants of England exposed themselves, by renouncing the gospel, and returning to idolatry, he gives the following explication of the warrant which he had for his threatenings: "Ye would know the groundis of my certitude. God grant that, hearing thame, ye may understand, and steadfastlie believe the same. My assurances are not the mervalles of Merlin, nor yit the dark sentences of prophane prophesies; but the plane treuth of Godis word, the invincibill justice of the everlasting God, and the ordinarie course of his punismentis and plagis frome the beginning, are my assurance and groundis. Godis word threatneth destructioun to all inobedient; his immutabill justice must
requyre the same; the ordinarie punishments and plaguis schaw exempillis. What man then can ceise to prophesie?" We find him expressing himself in a similar way, in his defense of the threatenings which he uttered against those who had been guilty of the murder of King Henry and the Regent Murray. He denies that he had spoken "as one that entered into the secret counsel of God," and insists that he had merely declared the judgment which was pronounced in the divine law against murderers, and which had often been exemplified in the vengeance which overtook them, even in this life. In so far then his threatenings, or predictions (for so he repeatedly calls them), do not stand in need of an apology. Though sometimes expressed in absolute or indefinite language, it is but fair and reasonable to understand them, like similar declarations in Scripture, as implying a tacit condition.

There are, however, several of his sayings which, perhaps, cannot be vindicated upon these principles, and which he himself seems to have rested upon different grounds. Of this kind are the assurances which he expressed, from the beginning of the Scottish troubles, that the cause of the Congregation would ultimately prevail; his confident hope of again preaching in his native country and at St. Andrews, avowed by him during his imprisonment on board the French galleys, and frequently repeated during his exile; with the intimations which he gave respecting the death of Thomas Maitland and Kircaldy of Grange. It cannot be denied that his contemporaries considered these as proceeding from a prophetic spirit, and have attested that they received an exact accomplishment. Without entering on a particular examination of these instances, or venturing to give a decisive opinion respecting any of them, I shall confine myself to a few general observations.

The most easy way of getting rid of this delicate subject is to dismiss it at once, and summarily to pronounce that all pretensions to extraordinary premonitions, since the completing of the canon of inspiration, are unwarranted, and that they ought, without examination, to be discarded, and treated as fanciful and visionary. Nor would this fix any peculiar imputation on the character or talents of our reformer, when it is considered that the most learned persons of that age were under the influence of a still greater weakness, and strongly addicted to the belief of judicial astrology. But I doubt much if this method of determining the question would be doing justice to the subject. 

Est vericulum, ne, aut neglectis his impia, fraude, aut susceptis anili superstitione, obligenaur. On the one hand, the disposition which mankind discover to pry into the secrets of futurity, has been always accompanied with much credulity and superstition,
and it cannot be denied that the age in which Knox lived was prone to credit the marvelous, especially as to the infliction of divine judgments on individuals. A judicious person who is aware of this will not be disposed to acknowledge as preternatural whatever was formerly regarded in this light, and will be on his guard against the illusions of imagination as to impressions which may be made on his own mind.

Nor would it be difficult to produce instances in which writers of a subsequent age, through mistake, or under the influence of prepossession, have given a prophetic meaning to words, which originally were not intended to convey any such idea. But, on the other hand, is there not a danger of running into skepticism, and of laying down general principles which may lead us obstinately to contest the truth of the best authenticated facts, if not also to limit the operations of Divine Providence? This is the extreme to which the present age inclines. That there are instances of persons having had presentiments as to events which afterwards did happen to themselves and others, there is, I think, the best reason to believe. Those who laugh at vulgar credulity, and exert their ingenuity in accounting for such phenomena on ordinary principles, have been exceedingly puzzled with some of these facts—a great deal more puzzled than they have confessed—and the solutions which they have given are, in some cases, as mysterious as anything included in the intervention of superior spirits, or in preternatural and divine intimations. The canon of our faith, as Christians, is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; we must not look to impressions or new revelations as the rule of our duty, but that God may, on particular occasions, forewarn persons of some things which shall happen, to testify his approbation of them, to encourage them to confide in him in circumstances of peculiar difficulty, or to serve other important purposes, is not, I think, inconsistent with the principles of either natural or revealed religion. If to believe this be enthusiasm, it is an enthusiasm into which some of the most enlightened and sober men, in modern as well as ancient times, have fallen. The reformers were men of singular piety; they were exposed to uncommon opposition, and had uncommon services to perform; they were endued with extraordinary gifts, and why may we not suppose that they were occasionally favored with extraordinary premonitions, with respect to certain events which concerned themselves, other individuals, or the Church in general? But whatever intimations of this kind they received, they never proposed them as a rule of action to themselves or others, nor rested the authority of their mission upon these, nor appealed to them as constituting any part of the evidence of those doctrines which they preached to the world.
Our Reformer left behind him a widow and five children. His two sons were born to him by his first wife, Marjory Bowes. We have already seen, that, about the year 1566, they went to England, where their mother’s relations resided. They received their education at St. John’s college, in the university of Cambridge, their names being enrolled in the matriculation book only eight days after the death of their father. Nathanael, the eldest of them, after obtaining the degrees of bachelor and master of arts, and being admitted fellow of the college, died in 1580. Eleazer, the youngest son, in addition to the honors attained by his brother, was created bachelor of divinity, ordained one of the preachers of the university, and admitted to the vicarage of Clacton-Magna. He died in 1591 and was buried in the chapel of St. John’s college. It appears that both sons died without issue, and the family of the Reformer became extinct in the male line. His other children were daughters by his second wife. The General Assembly testified their respect for his memory by assigning his stipend, for the year after his death, to his widow and three daughters, and this appears to have been continued for some time by the regent Morton, who, though charged with avarice during his administration, treated them with uniform attention and kindness. Margaret Stewart, his widow, was afterwards married to Sir Andrew Ker of Fadounside, a strenuous supporter of the Reformation. The names of his daughters were Martha, Margaret, and Elizabeth. The first was married to James Fleming, a minister of the Church of Scotland; the second, to Zachary, son of the celebrated Robert Pont; and the third to John Welch, minister of Ayr.

Mrs. Welch seems to have inherited no inconsiderable portion of her father’s spirit, and she had her share of similar hardships. Her husband was one of those patriotic ministers who resisted the arbitrary measures pursued by James VI for overturning the government and liberties of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Being determined to abolish the General Assembly, James had, for a considerable time, prevented the meetings of that court by successive prorogations. Perceiving the design of the court, a number of the delegates from synods resolved to keep the diet which had been appointed to be held at Aberdeen in July 1605. They merely constituted the Assembly, and appointed a day for its next meeting, and being charged by Laurieston, the king’s commissioner, to dissolve, immediately obeyed; but the commissioner, having ante-dated the charge, several of the leading members were thrown into prison. Welch and five of his brethren, when called before the privy council, declined that court, as incompetent to judge the offense of which they were accused, according to the laws of the kingdom, on which account
they were indicted to stand trial for treason at Linlithgow. Their trial was conducted in the most illegal and unjust manner. The king’s advocate told the jury that the only thing which came under their cognizance was the fact of the declinature, the judges having already found that it was treasonable, and threatened them with an "assize of error," if they did not proceed as he directed them. After the jury were empanelled, the justice-clerk went in and threatened them with his majesty’s displeasure, if they acquitted the prisoners. The greater part of the jurors being still reluctant, the chancellor went out and consulted with the other judges, who promised that no punishment should be inflicted on the prisoners, provided the jury brought in a verdict agreeable to the court. By such disgraceful methods, they were induced, at midnight, to find, by a majority of three, that the prisoners were guilty, upon which they were condemned to suffer the death of traitors.

Leaving her children at Ayr, Mrs. Welch attended her husband in prison, and was present at Linlithgow, with the wives of the other prisoners, on the day of trial. When informed of the sentence, these heroines, instead of lamenting their fate, praised God who had given their husbands courage to stand to the cause of their Master, adding, that, like him, they had been judged and condemned under the covert of night.

The sentence of death having been changed into banishment, she accompanied her husband to France, where they remained for sixteen years. Mr. Welch applied himself with such assiduity to the acquisition of the language of the country, that he was able, in the course of fourteen weeks, to preach in French, and was chosen minister to a Protestant congregation at Nerac, from which he was translated to St. Jean d’Angely, a fortified town in Lower Charente. War having broken out between Louis XIII and his Protestant subjects, St. Jean d’Angely was besieged by the king in person. On this occasion, Welch not only animated the inhabitants of the town to a vigorous resistance by his exhortations, but he appeared on the walls, and gave his assistance to the garrison.

The king was at last admitted into the town in consequence of a treaty, and being displeased that Welch preached during his residence in it, sent the Duke d’Espernon with a company of soldiers to take him from the pulpit. When the preacher saw the duke enter the church, he ordered his hearers to make room for the marshal of France, and desired him to sit down and hear the word of God. He spoke with such an air of authority that the duke involuntarily took a seat, and listened to the sermon with great gravity and attention. He then brought Welch to the king, who asked him how he durst preach there, since it was contrary to the laws of the kingdom for any of the pretended reformed to
officiate in places where the court resided. "Sir," replied Welch, "if your majesty knew what I preached, you would not only come and hear it yourself, but make all France hear it, for I preach not as those men you use to hear. First, I preach that you must be saved by the merits of Jesus Christ, and not your own, and I am sure your conscience tells you that your good works will never merit heaven. Next, I preach, that, as you are king of France, there is no man on earth above you, but these men whom you hear, subject you to the pope of Rome, which I will never do." Pleased with this reply, Louis said to him, "Hé bien, vous serez mon ministre" [Very well, you shall be my minister], and addressing him by the title of Father, assured him of his protection. And he was as good as his word, for St. Jean d’Angely, being reduced by the royal forces in 1621, the king gave directions to De Vitry, one of his generals, to take care of his minister, in consequence of which, Welch and his family were conveyed, at his majesty's expense, to Rochelle.

Having lost his health, and the physicians informing him that the only prospect which he had of recovering it was by returning to his native country, Mr. Welch ventured, in the year 1622, to come to London. But his own sovereign was incapable of treating him with that generosity which he had experienced from the French monarch, and, dreading the influence of a man who was far gone with a consumption, he absolutely refused to give him permission to return to Scotland. Mrs. Welch, by means of some of her mother’s relations at court, obtained access to James, and petitioned him to grant this liberty to her husband. The following singular conversation took place on that occasion. His majesty asked her who was her father. She replied, "John Knox." "Knox and Welch!" exclaimed he, "the devil never made such a match as that." "It’s right like sir," said she, "for we never speired [asked] his advice." He asked her how many children her father had left, and if they were lads or lasses. She said three, and they were all lasses. "God be thanked!" cried the king, lifting up both his hands, "for an they had been three lads, I had never bruiked [enjoyed] my three kingdoms in peace." She again urged her request that he would give her husband his native air. "Give him his native air!" replied the king, "give him the devil!" "Give that to your hungry courtiers," said she, offended at his profaneness. He told her at last that if she would persuade her husband to submit to the bishops, he would allow him to return to Scotland. Mrs. Welch, lifting up her apron, and holding it towards the king, replied, in the true spirit of her father, "Please your majesty, I’d rather kep [receive] his head there."

Welch was soon after released from the power of the despot and from his own sufferings. "This month of May 1622," says one of his
intimate friends, "we received intelligence of the death of that holy servant of God, Mr. Welch, one of the fathers and pillars of that church, and the light of his age, who died at London, an exile from his native country, on account of his opposition to the re-establishment of episcopal government, and his firm support of the presbyterian and synodical discipline, received and established among us, and that after eighteen years' banishment, a man full of the Holy Spirit, zeal, charity, and incredible diligence in the duties of his office." The death of his wife is recorded by the same pen. "This month of January 1625, died at Ayr, my cousin, Mrs. Welch, daughter of that great servant of God, the late John Knox, and wife of that holy man of God, Mr. Welch, above mentioned, a spouse and daughter worthy of such a husband, and such a father."

The account of our Reformer's publications has been partly anticipated in the course of the preceding narrative. Though his writings were of great utility, it was not by them, but by his personal exertions, that he chiefly advanced the Reformation, and transmitted his name to posterity. He did not view this as the field in which he was called to labor. "That I did not in writing communicate my judgment upon the Scriptures," says he, "I have ever thought myself to have most just reason. For, considering myself rather called of my God to instruct the ignorant, comfort the sorrowful, confirm the weak, and rebuke the proud, by tongue and lively voice, in these most corrupt days, than to compose books for the age to come (seeing that so much is written, and by men of most singular erudition, and yet so little well observed), I decreed to contain myself within the bounds of that vocation whereunto I found myself especially called." This resolution was most judiciously formed. His situation was very different from that of the first Protestant reformers. They found the whole world in ignorance of the doctrines of Christianity. Men were either destitute of books, or such as they possessed were calculated only to mislead. The oral instructions of a few individuals could extend but a small way; it was principally by means of their writings, which circulated with amazing rapidity, that they benefited mankind, and became not merely the instructors of the particular cities and countries where they resided and preached, but the reformers of Europe. By the time that Knox appeared on the field, their translations of Scripture, their judicious commentaries on its different books, and their able defenses of its doctrines, were laid open to the English reader. What was more immediately required of him was to use the peculiar talent in which he excelled, and, "by tongue and lively voice," to imprint the doctrines of the Bible upon the hearts of his countrymen. When he was deprived of an opportunity of doing this during his exile, there could not be a
more proper substitute than that which he adopted, by publishing familiar epistles, exhortations, and admonitions, in which he briefly reminded them of the truths which they had embraced, and warned them to flee from the abominations of Popery. These could be circulated and read with far more ease, and to a far greater extent, than large treatises.

Of the many sermons preached by him during his ministry, be published but one, which was extorted from him by peculiar circumstances. It affords a very favorable specimen of his talents, and shows that, if he had applied himself to writing, he was qualified for excelling in that department. He had a ready command of language, and expressed himself with great perspicuity, animation, and force. Though he despised the tinsel of rhetoric, he was acquainted with the principles of that art, and when he had leisure and inclination to polish his style, wrote with propriety, and even with elegance. Those who have read his Letter to the Queen Regent, his Answer to Tyne, or his papers in the account of the dispute with Kennedy, will be satisfied of this. During his residence in England, he acquired the habit of writing the language according to the manner of that country, and in all his publications which appeared during his lifetime, the English and not the Scottish orthography and mode of expression are used. In this respect, there is a very evident difference between them and the vernacular writings of Buchanan.

His practical treatises are among the least known, but most valuable, of his writings. In depth of religious feeling, and in power of utterance, they are superior to any works of the same kind which appeared in that age. The thoughts are often original, and always expressed in a style of originality, possessing great dignity and strength, without affectation or extravagance. The freedoms which have been used in the republication of such of his works as are best known, have contributed to injure his literary reputation. They were translated into the language commonly used in the middle of the seventeenth century, by which they were deprived of the antique costume which they formerly wore, and contracted an air of vulgarity which did not originally belong to them. Besides this, they have been reprinted with innumerable omissions, interpolations, and alterations, which frequently affect the sense, and always enfeeble the language. The two works which have been most read are the least accurate and polished, in point of style, of all his writings. His tract against female government was hastily published by him, under great irritation of mind at the increasing cruelty of Mary, Queen of England. His History of the Reformation was undertaken during the confusions of the civil war, and was afterwards continued by him at intervals snatched from numerous avocations.
The collection of historical materials is a work of labor and time; the digesting and arranging of them into a regular narrative require much leisure and undivided attention. The want of these sufficiently accounts for the confusion that is often observable in that work. But, notwithstanding this, and particular mistakes from which no work of the kind can be free, it still continues to be the principal source of information as to ecclesiastical proceedings in that period; and although great keenness has been shown in attacking its authenticity and accuracy, it has been confirmed, in all the leading facts, by an examination of those ancient documents which the industry of later times has brought to light. His defense of Predestination, the only theological treatise of any extent which was published by him, is rare, and has been seen by few. It is written with perspicuity, and discovers his controversial acuteness, with becoming caution, in handling that delicate question. A catalogue of his publications, as complete as I have been able to draw up, will be found in the notes.

I have thus attempted to give an account of our national Reformer, of the principal events of his life, his sentiments, writing, and exertions in the cause of religion and liberty. If what I have done shall contribute to set his character in a more just light than that in which it has been generally represented, and to correct the erroneous views of it which have long been prevalent; or if it shall tend to elucidate the ecclesiastical history of the eventful period in which he lived, and be the means of illustrating the superintendence of a wise and merciful Providence, in the accomplishment of a revolution of all others the most interesting and beneficial to this country, I shall not think any labor which I have bestowed on the subject to have been thrown away, or unrewarded.

The Reformation In England
Jean Henri Merle D'Aubigné was the prince of reformation historians. His *History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth century in Germany, Switzerland*, etc. is a classic. With powerful prose, with the passion of a true believer, and with great historical detail and precision, he sets forth the history of the Lutheran Reformation in five inimitable volumes. His *History of the Reformation in the Time of Calvin* although excellent has some defects. It consists of eight 500 page volumes for a total of 4000 pages, somewhat more than most people can manage. About 1500 pages of this introductory material relating the history of Geneva before Calvin's arrival. While it is important to understand the historical setting this is overkill. One volume of 500 pages would have been more than sufficient for the author's purpose. And the set ends with Calvin's return from his exile in Strasburg. So Calvin's most important work after his return to Geneva is not covered at all. D'Aubigne never wrote a work entitled *The History of the Reformation in England*. The work presented here is taken from chapters of the above mentioned works that deal with the reformation in England. It is excellent and presents with power and passion and great historical detail the events that caused England to break with Catholicism and led to a reformation of religion in that land. The introductory material in Volume 1, Book 1 is especially interesting as it deals with the planting of apostolic Christianity in Roman Britain, its later subversion by the forces of the papacy, and the beginnings of reformation in the work of Wycliffe and the Lollards. This is great history and the reader is encouraged to read and study those events that in God's providence were used to reestablish apostolic and Biblical Christianity among the English speaking peoples.
England Before the Reformation

CHAPTER 1
Christ Mightier than Druid Altars and Roman Swords
2nd to 6th Century


CHAPTER 2
Iona versus Rome
6th & 7th Centuries

Pope Gregory the Great — Desires to Reduce Britain — Policy of Gregory and Augustine — Arrival of the Mission — Appreciation — Britain Superior to Rome — Dionoth at Bangor — First and Second Romish Aggressions — Anguish of the Britons — Pride of Rome — Rome has Recourse to the Sword — Massacre — Saint Peter Scourges an Archbishop — Oswald — His Victory — Corman — Mission of Oswald and Aidan — Death of Oswald

CHAPTER 3
Rome “Converts” Britain
7th Century

CHAPTER FOUR

The Conflict with Papal Supremacy
7th to 11th Century

Clement — Struggle between a Scotsman and an Englishman — Word of God Only — Clement’s Success — His Condemnation — Virgil and the Antipodes — John Scotus and Philosophical Religion — Alfred and the Bible — Darkness and Popery — William the Conqueror — Wulfstan at Edward’s Tomb — Struggle between William and Hildebrand — The Pope Yields

CHAPTER 5

The Iron Age of Spiritual Slavery
11th to 13th Century

Anselm’s Firmness — Becket’s Austerity — The King Scourged — John becomes the Pope’s Vassal — Collision between Popery and Liberty — The Vassal King Ravages his Kingdom — Religion of the Senses and Superstition

CHAPTER 6

Grosseteste and Bradwardine
13th & 14th Centuries

Reaction — Grosseteste — Principles of Reform — Contest with the Pope — Sewal — Progress of the Nation — Opposition to the Papacy — Conversion of Bradwardine — Grace is Supreme — Edward III — Statutes of Provisors and Praelunire

CHAPTER 7
Light Streams from Lutterworth  
c. 1329-80

The Mendicant Friars — Their Disorders and Popular Indignation — Wycliffe — His Success — Speeches of the Peers against the Papal Tribute — Agreement of Bruges — Courtenay and Lancaster — Wycliffe before the Convocation — Altercation between Lancaster and Courtenay — Riot — Three Briefs against Wycliffe — Wycliffe at Lambeth — Mission of the Poor Priests — Their Preachings and Persecutions — Wycliffe and the Four Regents

CHAPTER 8

The Morning Star of the Reformation  
1380-84

The Bible — Wycliffe’s Translation — Effects of its Publication — Opposition of the Clergy — Wycliffe’s Fourth Phase — Transubstantiation — Excommunication — Wycliffe’s Firmness — Wat Tyler — The Synod — The Condemned Propositions — Wycliffe’s Petition — Wycliffe before the Primate at Oxford — Wycliffe Summoned to Rome — His Answer — The Triologue — His Death — And Character — His Teaching — His Ecclesiastical Views — A Prophecy

CHAPTER 9

The Lollard Burnings  
15th Century

The Wycliffites — Call for Reform — Richard II — The First Martyr — Lord Cobham — Appears before Henry V — Before the Archbishop — His Confession and Death — The Lollards

CHAPTER 10

The New Learning and the New Dynasty  
c. 1485-1512

CHAPTER 11

War, Marriage and Preaching
1513–15

The Pope Excites to War — Colet’s Sermon at St. Paul’s — The Flemish Campaign — Marriage of Louis XII and Princess Mary — Letter from Anne Boleyn — Marriage of Brandon and Mary — Oxford — Sir Thomas More at Court — Attack upon the Monasteries — Colet’s Household — He Preaches Reform — The Greeks and Trojans

CHAPTER 12

Wolsey’s Rise to Power
1507–18

Wolsey — His First Commission — His Complaisance and Dioceses — Cardinal, Chancellor, and Legate — Ostentation and Necromancy — His Spies and Enmity — Pretensions of the Clergy

CHAPTER 13

The Need for Reformation
1514–17

The Wolves — Richard Hunne — A Murder — Verdict of the Jury — Hunne Condemned and his Character Vindicated — The Gravesend Passage-Boat — A Festival Disturbed — Brown Tortured — Visit from his Wife — A Martyr — Character of Erasmus — 1516 and 1517 — Erasmus goes to Basle

BOOK TWO

The Revival of the Church

CHAPTER 1
The Origin of the English Reformation
1516-19


CHAPTER 2

The Greek Testament Awakens the Dead
1516-21


CHAPTER 3

Persecution and Intrigue
1518-20

Alarm of the Clergy — The Two Days — Thomas Man’s Preaching — True Real Presence — Persecutions at Coventry — Standish Preaches at St. Paul’s — His Petition to the King and Queen — His Arguments and Defeat — Wolsey’s Ambition — First Overtures — Henry and Francis Candidates for the Empire — Conference between Francis I and Sir T. Boleyn — The Tiara Promised to Wolsey — The Cardinal’s Intrigues with Charles and Francis

CHAPTER 4

A Storm at Sodbury Hall
1522-23
CHAPTER 5

The Onslaught on Luther
1517-21

Luther’s Works in England — Consultation of the Bishops — The Bull of Leo X Published in England — Luther’s Books Burnt — Letter of Henry VIII — He Undertakes to Write against Luther — Cry of Alarm — Tradition and Sacramentalism — Prudence of Sir T. More — The Book Presented to the Pope — Defender of the Faith — Exultation of the King

CHAPTER 6

Early Martyrs in Lincolnshire
1521-22

The Just Men of Lincolnshire — Their Assemblies and Teaching — Agnes and Morden — Itinerant Libraries — Polemical Conversations — Sarcasm — Royal Decree and Terror — Depositions and Condemnations — Four Martyrs — A Conclave — Charles Consoles Wolsey

CHAPTER 7

All England Closed to Tyndale
1523-24

Character of Tyndale — He Arrives in London — He preaches — The Cloth and the Ell — The Bishop of London Gives Audience to Tyndale — He is Dismissed — A Christian Merchant of London — Spirit of Love in the Reformation — Tyndale in Monmouth’s House — Fryth Helps him to Translate the New Testament — Importunities of the Bishop of Lincoln — Persecution in London — Tyndale’s Resolution — He Departs — His Indignation against the Prelates — His Hopes
CHAPTER 8
Bluff Hugh Latimer
1485-1524


CHAPTER 9
Wolsey’s Hopes and Fears
1523-25

Wolsey Seeks the Tiara — Clement VII is Elected — Wolsey’s Dissimulation — Charles Offers France to Henry — Pace’s Mission on this Subject — Wolsey Reforms the Monasteries — His Secret Alliances — Treaty between France and England — Taxation and Insurrection — False Charges against the Reformers — Latimer’s Defense — Tenterden Steeple

CHAPTER 10
An Exile’s Toil for a Nation’s Life
1524-26


CHAPTER 11
The Awakening in Cambridge
1524-25

Worms and Cambridge — St. Paul Resuscitated — Latimer’s Preaching — Never Man Spake like this Man — Joy and Vexation at Cambridge — Sermon by Prior Buckingham — Irony — Latimer’s Reply to Buckingham — The Students Threatened — Latimer Preaches before the Bishop — He is Forbidden to Preach — The most Zealous of Bishops — Barnes the Restorer of Letters — Bilney Undertakes to Convert Him — Barnes Offers his Pulpit to Latimer — Fryth’s Thirst for God — Christmas Eve, 1525 — Storm against Barnes — Ferment in the Colleges — Germany at Cambridge — Meetings at Oxford — General Expectation

BOOK THREE
The English New Testament and the Court of Rome

CHAPTER 1
The Year of Grace
1526


CHAPTER 2
Oxford’s Baptism of Suffering
1526-28
The Two Authorities — Commencement of the Search — Garret at Oxford — His Flight — His Return and Imprisonment — Escapes and Takes Refuge with Dalaber — Garret and Dalaber at Prayer — The Magnificat — Surprise among the Doctors — Clark’s Advice — Fraternal Love at Oxford — Alarm of Dalaber — His Arrest and Examination — He is Tortured — Garret and Twenty Fellows Imprisoned — The Cellar — Condemnation and Humiliation

CHAPTER 3
The Severities of Popery  
1526-28

Persecution at Cambridge — Barnes Arrested — A Grand Search — Barnes at Wolsey’s Palace — Interrogated by the Cardinal — Conversation between Wolsey and Barnes — Barnes Threatened with the Stake — His Fall and Public Penance — Richard Bayfield — His Faith and Imprisonment — Visits Cambridge — Joins Tyndale — The Confessors in the Cellar at Oxford — Four of Them Die — The Rest Liberated

CHAPTER 4
The Tempest against the Truth  
1526


CHAPTER 5
The Divorce Question Opens  
1526-27

Wolsey Desires to be Revenged — The Divorce Suggested — Henry’s Sentiments towards the Queen — Wolsey’s First Steps — Longland’s Proceedings — Refusal of Margaret of Valois — Objection of the Bishop of Tarbes — Henry’s Uneasiness — Catherine’s Alarm — Mission to Spain
CHAPTER 6

Anne Boleyn
1522-27

Anne Boleyn Appointed Maid of Honor to Catherine — Lord Percy Becomes Attached to Her — Wolsey Separates Them — Anne Enters Margaret’s Household — Siege of Rome — Cromwell — Wolsey’s Intercession for the Popedom — He Demands the Hand of Renée of France for Henry — Failure — Anne Reappears at Court — Repels the King’s Advances — Henry’s Letter — He Resolves to Accelerate the Divorce — Two Motives which Induce Anne to Refuse the Crown — Wolsey’s Opposition

CHAPTER 7

Bilney in Strength and Weakness
1527

Bilney’s Preaching — His Arrest — Arthur’s Preaching and Imprisonment — Bilney’s Examination — Contest between the Judge and the Prisoner — Bilney’s Weakness and Fall — His Terrors — Two Wants — Arrival of the Fourth Edition of the New Testament — Joy among the Believers

CHAPTER 8

The Campaign for Henry’s Divorce
1527

The Papacy Intercepts the Gospel — The King Consults Sir Thomas More — Ecclesiastical Conferences about the Divorce — The Universities — Clark — The Nun of Kent — Wolsey Decides to do the King’s Will — Mission to the Pope — Four Documents — Embarrassment of Charles V — Francis Philip at Madrid — Distress and Resolution of Charles — He Turns Away from the Reformation — Conference at the Castle of St. Angelo — Knight Arrives in Italy — His Flight — Treaty between the Pope and the Emperor — Escape of the Pope — Confusion of Henry VIII — Wolsey’s Orders — His Entreaties
CHAPTER 9
The Dilemma and Duplicity of Clement VII
1527-28


CHAPTER 10
Royal Threats Counter Papal Cunning
January to March, 1528

Disappointment in England — War declared against Charles V — Wolsey desires to get him Deposed by the Pope — A New Scheme — Embassy of Fox and Gardiner — Their Arrival at Orvieto — Their first Interview with Clement — The Pope reads a Treatise by Henry — Gardiner’s Threats and Clement’s Promise — The Modern Fabius — Fresh Interview and Menaces — The Pope has not the Key — Gardiner’s Proposition — Difficulties and Delays of the Cardinals — Gardiner’s Last Blows — Reverses of Charles V in Italy — The Pope’s Terror and Concession — The Commission Granted — Wolsey Demands the Engagement — A Loophole — The Pope’s Distress

CHAPTER 11
Wolsey’s Desperate Demands
April to July, 1528

Fox’s Report to Henry and Anne — Wolsey's Impression — He Demands the Decretal — One of the Cardinal’s Petty Maneuvers — He Sets his Conscience at Rest — Gardiner Fails at Rome — Wolsey’s New Perfidy — The King’s Anger against the Pope — Sir T. More predicts Religious Liberty — Erasmus Invited — Wolsey’s Last Flight — Energetic Efforts at Rome — Clement Grants All — Wolsey Triumphs — Union of Rome and England

BOOK FOUR
The Two Divorces

CHAPTER 1
“A Thousand Wolsey’s for One Anne Boleyn”
1528

Progress of the Reformation — The Two Divorces — Entreaties to Anne Boleyn — The Letters in the Vatican — Henry to Anne — Henry’s Second Letter — Third — Fourth — Wolsey’s Alarm — His Fruitless Proceedings — He Turns — The Sweating Sickness — Henry’s Fears — New Letters to Anne — Anne Falls Sick — Her Peace — Henry Writes to Her — Wolsey’s Terror — Campeggio Does not Arrive — All Dissemble at Court

CHAPTER 2
Scripture and the Spreading Revival
1527-29

Coverdale and Inspiration — He Undertakes to Translate the Scriptures — His Joy and Spiritual Songs — Tyball and the Laymen — Coverdale preaches at Bumpstead — Revival at Colchester — Incomplete Societies and the New Testament — Persecution — Monmouth Arrested and Released

CHAPTER 3
Campeggio Arrives in England
July to November, 1528

Political Changes — Fresh Instructions from the Pope to Campeggio — His Delays — He Unbosoms Himself to Francis — A Prediction — Arrival of Campeggio — Wolsey’s Uneasiness — Henry’s Satisfaction — The Cardinal’s Project — Campeggio’s Reception — First Interview with the Queen and with the King — Useless Efforts to Make Campeggio Part with the Decretal — The Nuncio’s Conscience — Public Opinion — Measures Taken by the King — His Speech to the Lords and Aldermen — Festivities — Wolsey Seeks French Support — Contrariety
CHAPTER 4

The Search for William Tyndale
1528-30

True Catholicity — Wolsey — Harman’s Matter — West Sent to Cologne — Labors of Tyndale and Fryth — Rincke at Frankfort — He Makes a Discovery — Tyndale at Marburg — West Returns to England — His Tortures in the Monastery

CHAPTER 5

The Pope Burns his Bull
November, 1528


CHAPTER 6

Wolsey between Scylla and Charybdis
1529

The Pope’s Illness — Wolsey’s Desire — Conference about the Members of the Conclave — Wolsey’s Instructions — The Pope Recovers — Speech of the English Envoys to the Pope — Clement Willing to Abandon England — The English Demand the Pope’s Denial of the Brief — Wolsey’s Alarm — Intrigues — Bryan’s Clear-Sightedness — Henry’s Threats — Wolsey’s New Efforts — He Calls for an Appeal to Rome and Retracts — Wolsey and Du Bellay at Richmond — The Ship of State

CHAPTER 7

More and Tyndale: A Theological Duel
1528-29
Discussion between the Evangelicals and the Catholics — Union of Learning and Life — The Laity — Tewkesbury — His Appearance before the Bishop’s Court — He is Tortured — Two Classes of Opponents — A Theological Duel — Scripture and the Church — Emancipation of the Mind — Mission to the Low Countries — Tyndale’s Embarrassment — Tunstall Wishes to Buy the Books — Packington’s Stratagem — Tyndale Departs for Antwerp — His Shipwreck — Arrival at Hamburg — Meets Coverdale

CHAPTER 8

A Queen’s Pleadings Convict a Court

1529

The Royal Session — Sitting of the 18th of June — The Queen’s Protest — Sitting of the 21st of June — Summons to the King and Queen — Catherine’s Speech — She Retires — Impression on the Audience — The King’s Declaration — Wolsey’s Protest — Quarrel between the Bishops — New Sitting — Apparition to the Maid of Kent — Wolsey Chafed by Henry — The Earl of Wiltshire at Wolsey’s — Private Conference between Catherine and the two Legates

CHAPTER 9

The Trial Ends in Farce

July, 1529

The Trial Resumed — Catherine Summoned — Twelve Articles — The Witnesses’ Evidence — Arthur and Catherine Really Married — Campeggio Opposes the Argument of Divine Right — Other Arguments — The Legates Required to Deliver Judgment — Their Tergiversations — Change in Men’s Minds — Final Session — General Expectation — Adjournment during Harvest — Campeggio Excuses this Impertinence — The King’s Indignation — Suffolk’s Violence — Wolsey’s Reply — He Is Ruined — General Accusations — The Cardinal Turns to an Episcopal Life

CHAPTER 10

“Tyndale” Received in a King’s Palace

1529

Anne Boleyn at Hever — She Reads the Obedience of a Christian Man — Is Recalled to Court — Miss Gainsford and George Zouch — Tyndale’s Book
CHAPTER 11

Wolsey Alone and Facing Ruin
Summer, 1529

Embarrassment of the Pope — The Triumphs of Charles Decide Him — He Traverses the Cause to Rome — Wolsey’s Dejection — Henry’s Wrath — His Fears — Wolsey Obtains Comfort — Arrival of the Two Legates at Grafton — Wolsey’s Reception by Henry — Wolsey and Norfolk at Dinner — Henry with Anne — Conference between the King and the Cardinal — Wolsey’s Joy and Grief — The Supper at Euston — Campeggio’s Farewell Audience — Wolsey’s Disgrace — Campeggio at Dover — He Is Accused by the Courtiers — Leaves England — Wolsey Foresees his own Fall and that of the Papacy

CHAPTER 12

To Introduce Thomas Cranmer
1489–1529

A Meeting at Waltham — Youth of Thomas Cranmer — His Early Education — Studies Scripture for Three Years — His Functions as Examiner — The Supper at Waltham — New View of the Divorce — Fox Communicates it to Henry — Cranmer’s Vexation — Conference with the King — Cranmer at the Boleyn’s

CHAPTER 13

The Dethronement of Cardinal Wolsey
October, 1529

Wolsey in the Court of Chancery — Accused by the Dukes — Refuses to Give up the Great Seal — His Despair — He Gives up the Seal — Order to Depart — His Inventory — Alarm — The Scene of Departure — Favorable Message from the King — Wolsey’s Joy — His Fool — Arrival at Esher
CHAPTER 14

New Leaders and a New Policy
October & November, 1529


CHAPTER 15

"They that will live godly in Christ Jesus..."
1529-31


CHAPTER 16

Wolsey Falls like Lucifer
1530

BOOK 1

England Before the Reformation
2nd to 6th Century

CHAPTER 1 Christ Mightier than Druid Altars and Roman Swords
CHAPTER 2 Iona versus Rome
CHAPTER 3 Rome "Converts" Britain
CHAPTER 4 The Conflict with Papal Supremacy
CHAPTER 5 The Iron Age of Spiritual Slavery
CHAPTER 6 Grosseteste and Bradwardine
CHAPTER 7 Light Streams from Lutterworth
CHAPTER 8 The Morning Star of the Reformation
CHAPTER 9 The Lollard Burnings
CHAPTER 10 The New Learning and the New Dynasty
CHAPTER 11 War, Marriage and Preaching
CHAPTER 12 Wolsey's Rise to Power
CHAPTER 13 The Need for Reformation
CHAPTER 1

Christ Mightier than Druid Altars and Roman Swords
2nd to 6th Century

Those heavenly powers which had lain dormant in the church since the first ages of Christianity, awoke from their slumber in the sixteenth century, and this awakening called the modern times into existence. The church was created anew, and from that regeneration flowed great developments of literature and science, of morality, liberty, and industry. None of these things would have existed without the Reformation. Whenever society enters upon a new era, it requires the baptism of faith. In the sixteenth century God gave to man this consecration from on high by leading him back from mere outward profession and the mechanism of works to an inward and lively faith.

This transformation was not effected without struggles—struggles which presented at first a remarkable unity. On the day of battle one and the same feeling animated every bosom; after the victory they became divided. Unity of faith indeed remained, but the difference of nationalities brought into the church a diversity of forms. Of this we are about to witness a striking example. The Reformation, which had begun its triumphal march in Germany, Switzerland, France, and several other parts of the continent, was destined to receive new strength by the conversion of a celebrated country, long known as the Isle of Saints. This island was to add its banner to the trophy of Protestantism, but that banner preserved its distinctive colors. When England became reformed, a puissant individualism joined its might to the great unity.

If we search for the characteristics of the British Reformation, we shall find that, beyond any other, they were social, national, and truly human. There is no people among whom the Reformation has produced to the same degree that morality and order, that liberty, public spirit, and activity, which are the very essence of a nation’s greatness. Just as the papacy has degraded the Spanish peninsula, the gospel has exalted the British islands. Hence the study upon which we are entering possesses an interest peculiar to itself.

In order that this study may be useful, it should have a character of universality. To confine the history of a people within the space of a few years, or even of a century, would deprive that history of both truth and life. We might indeed have traditions, chronicles, and legends, but there would be no history. History is a wonderful organization, no part of which can be retrenched. To understand the present, we must know the past. Society, like man himself, has its infancy, youth, maturity, and old age. Ancient or Pagan society, which had spent its infancy in the East in the midst of the non-hellenic races, had its youth in the animated epoch of the Greeks, its manhood in the
The stern period of Roman greatness, and its old age under the decline of the empire. Modern society has passed through analogous stages; at the time of the Reformation it attained that of the full-grown man.

We shall now proceed to trace the destinies of the church in England from the earliest times of Christianity. These long and distant preparations are one of the distinctive characteristics of its reformation. Before the sixteenth century, this church had passed through two great phases.

The first was that of its formation, when Britain came within the orbit of the worldwide Gospel preaching which commenced at Jerusalem in the days of the apostles. The second phase is the story of the church’s corruption and decline through its connection with Rome and the papacy. Then came the phase of the church’s regeneration known to history as the Reformation.

In the second century of the Christian era, vessels were frequently sailing to the savage shores of Britain from the ports of Asia Minor, Greece, Alexandria, or the Greek colonies in Gaul. Among the merchants busied in calculating the profits they could make upon the produce of the East with which their ships were laden, would occasionally be found a few pious men from the Roman province of Asia, conversing peacefully with one another about the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, and rejoicing at the prospect of saving by these glad tidings the pagans towards whom they were steering. It would appear that some British prisoners of war, having learnt to know Christ during their captivity, bore also to their fellow countrymen the knowledge of this Savior. It may be, too, that some Christian soldiers, the Corneliuses of those imperial armies whose advanced posts reached the southern parts of Scotland, desirous of more lasting conquests, may have read to the people whom they had subdued, the writings of Matthew, John, and Paul. It is of little consequence to know whether one of these first converts was, according to tradition, a prince named Lucius. It is probable that the tidings of the Son of man, crucified and raised again during the reign of the Emperor Tiberius, later spread through these islands more rapidly than the dominion of the emperors, and that before the end of the second century, Christ was worshipped by not a few beyond the wall of Hadrian. It was about A.D. 200 that Tertullian wrote thus: "Parts of Britain were inaccessible to the Romans but have yielded to Christ." In those mountains, forests, and western isles, which, for centuries past, the Druids had filled with their mysteries and their sacrifices, and on which the Roman eagles had never swooped, even there the Name of Christ was known and honored.

Towards the end of the third century came the savage Diocletian persecution, which may have caused some British Christians to flee into the remote and all but inaccessible lands of the North, where, doubtless, they strengthened the hands of the few disciples already located there. The names of three of the Diocletian martyrs have survived—Alban of Verulam (St. Albans), who was
executed in all probability on the hill where the abbey church of the same name now stands; Aaron, an otherwise unknown Christian; and Julius of Caerleon. We know nothing in detail about these honored disciples of the Lord. In 305, Constantius Chlorus succeeded Diocletian in the throne of the Caesars, and shortly the persecution ended. In the fourth century, representatives of the church in Britain attended Councils on the continent, and it is more than likely that British Christians accepted as truth the creed of Athanasius which combated the heresies of the period. It is clear that the Christian faith was firmly rooted in Roman Britain before the departure of the legions early in the fifth century, but information about Christian communities beyond the Roman frontiers is scanty in the extreme.

After the extraordinary manifestations of the Holy Ghost, which had produced and distinguished the apostolic age, the church had been left to the inward power of the Word and of the Comforter. But Christians did not generally comprehend the spiritual life to which they were called. God had been pleased to give them a divine religion; and this they gradually assimilated more and more to the religions of human origin. Instead of saying, in the spirit of the gospel, the Word of God first, and through it the doctrine and the life—the doctrine and the life, and through them the forms—they said, forms first, and salvation by these forms. They began to ascribe to bishops a power which belongs only to Holy Scripture. Instead of ministers of the Word, they desired to have priests; instead of an inward sacrifice, a sacrifice offered on the altar; and costly temples instead of a living church. They began to seek in men, in ceremonies, and in holy places, what they could find only in the Word and in the lively faith of the children of God. In this manner evangelical religion gradually gave place to Catholicism, and by gradual degeneration in after-years Catholicism gave birth to Popery.

This grievous transformation took place more particularly in the East, in Africa, and in Italy. Britain was at first comparatively exempt. At the very time that the savage Picts and Scots, rushing from their heathen homes, were devastating the country, spreading terror on all sides, and reducing the people to slavery, we discover here and there some humble Christian receiving salvation not by a clerical sacramentalism, but by the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart. At the end of the fourth century we meet with an illustrious example of such conversions.

At this period, in the Christian village of Bannavern, a little boy of tender heart, lively temperament, and indefatigable activity passed the earlier days of his life. He was born about the year A.D. 385, of a British family, and was named Succat. His father was Calpurnius, deacon of the church of Bannavern, a simple-hearted pious man. Doubtless his parents endeavored to instill into his heart the doctrines of Christianity; but Succat did not understand them. He was fond of pleasure, and delighted to be the leader of his youthful companions.
Then a terrible calamity befell him. One day as he was playing near the seashore with two of his sisters, some Irish pirates, commanded by O'Neal, carried them all three off to their boats, and sold them in Ireland to the petty chieftain of some pagan clan. Succat was sent into the fields to keep swine. It was while alone in these solitary pastures, without priest and without temple, that the young slave called to mind the Divine lessons which his pious parents had so often read to him. The faults which he had committed pressed heavily night and day upon his soul; he groaned in heart and wept. He turned repenting towards that meek Savior of whom his parents had so often spoken; he fell at His knees in that heathen land, and imagined he felt the arms of a father uplifting the prodigal son. Succat was then born from on high, but by an agent so spiritual and unseen that he knew not "whence it cometh or whither it goeth." The gospel was written with the finger of God on the tablets of his heart. "I was sixteen years old," said he, "and knew not the true God; but in that strange land the Lord opened my unbelieving eyes, and, although late, I called my sins to mind, and was converted with my whole heart to the Lord my God, who regarded my low estate, had pity on my youth and ignorance, and consoled me as a father consoles his children."

Such words as these from the lips of a swineherd in the green pastures of Ireland set clearly before us the Christianity which in the fourth and fifth centuries converted many souls in the British isles. In after-years, Rome established the dominion of the priest and salvation by forms, independently of the dispositions of the heart; but the primitive religion of these celebrated islands was that living Christianity whose substance is the grace of Jesus Christ, and whose power is the grace of the Holy Ghost. The herdsman from Bannavern was then undergoing those experiences which so many evangelical Christians in Britain have subsequently undergone. "The love of God increased more and more in me," said he, "with faith and the fear of His name. The Spirit urged me to such a degree that I poured forth as many as a hundred prayers in one day. And even during the night, in the forests and on the mountains where I kept my herd, the rain, and snow, and frost, and sufferings which I endured, excited me to seek after God. At that time, I felt not the indifference which now I feel; the Spirit fermented in my heart." Evangelical faith even then existed in the British islands in the person of this slave, and of some few Christians born again, like him, from on high.

Twice a captive and twice rescued, Succat, after returning to his family, felt an irresistible appeal in his heart. It was his duty to carry the gospel to those Irish pagans among whom he had found Jesus Christ. His parents and his friends endeavored in vain to detain him; the same ardent desire pursued him in his dreams. During the silent watches of the night he fancied he heard voices calling to him from the dark forests of Erin, "Come, holy child, and walk once more among us." He awoke in tears, his breast filled with the keenest emotion. He tore himself from the arms of his parents, and rushed forth—not as heretofore with his playfellows, when he would climb the summit of some lofty
Succat, afterwards known as Saint Patrick, and to which name, as to that of St. Peter and other servants of God, many superstitions have been attached, returned to Ireland, but without visiting Rome, as an historian of the twelfth century has asserted. Ever active, prompt, and ingenious, he collected the pagan tribes in the fields by beat of drum, and then narrated to them in their own tongue the history of the Son of God. Ere long his simple recitals exercised a divine power over their rude hearts, and many souls were converted, not by external sacraments or by the worship of images, but by the preaching of the Word of God. The son of a chieftain, whom Patrick calls Benignus, learned from him to proclaim the Gospel, and was destined to succeed him. The court bard, Dubrach Mac Valubair, no longer sang druidical hymns, but canticles addressed to Jesus Christ. Patrick was not entirely free from the errors of the time; perhaps he believed in pious miracles, but generally speaking we meet with nothing but the gospel in the earlier days of the British church.

Shortly before the evangelization of Patrick in Ireland, a Briton named Pelagius, having visited Italy, Africa, and Palestine, began to teach a strange doctrine. Desirous of making head against the moral indifference into which most of the Christians in those countries had fallen, and which would appear to have been in strong contrast with the British austerity, he denied the doctrine of original sin, extolled free will, and maintained that if man made use of all the powers of his nature, he would attain perfection. We do not find that he taught these opinions in his own country, but from the continent, where he disseminated them, they soon reached Britain. The British churches refused to receive this "perverse doctrine," their historian (Bede) tells us, "and to blaspheme the grace of Jesus Christ." They do not appear to have held the strict doctrine of Saint Augustine; they believed indeed that man has need of an inward change, and that this the divine power alone can effect; but they seem to have conceded something to our natural strength in the work of conversion, and Pelagius, with a good intention it would appear, went still further. However that may be, these churches, strangers to the controversy, were unacquainted with all its subtleties. Two Gaulish bishops, Germanus of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes, came to their aid, and appear to have silenced the heretics at St. Albans.

Shortly after this, events of great importance took place in Great Britain, and the light of faith disappeared in profound night. In 449, Hengist and Horsa, with their Saxon followers, being invited by the wretched inhabitants to aid them against the cruel ravages of the Picts and Scots, soon turned their swords against the people they had come to assist. Christianity was driven back with the Britons into the mountains of Wales and the wild moors of Cumberland and Cornwall. Many British families remained in the midst of the conquerors, but without exercising any religious influence over them. While the conquering
races settled at Paris, Ravenna, or Toledo, and gradually laid aside their paganism and savage manners, the barbarous customs of the Saxons prevailed unmoderated throughout the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and in every quarter temples to Thor rose above the churches in which Jesus Christ had been worshipped. Gaul and the South of Europe, which still exhibited to the eyes of the barbarians the last vestiges of Roman grandeur, alone had the power of inspiring some degree of respect in the formidable invaders, and of transforming their faith. From this period, the Greeks and Latins, and even the converted Goths, looked at this island with unutterable dread. The soil, said they, is covered with serpents; the air is thick with deadly exhalations; the souls of the departed are transported thither at midnight from the shores of Gaul. Ferrymen, sons of Erebus and Night, admit these invisible shades into their boats, and listen, with a shudder, to their mysterious whisperings. England, whence light was one day to be shed over the habitable globe, was then the trysting-place of the dead. And yet the Christianity of the British isles was not to be annihilated by these barbarian invasions; it possessed a strength which rendered it capable of energetic resistance.

In one of the churches formed by Succat’s preaching, there arose about two centuries after him a pious man named Columba, son of Feidlimyd, the son of Fergus. Valuing the cross of Christ more highly than the royal blood that flowed in his veins, he resolved to devote himself to the King of heaven. “I will go,” said he, "and preach the Word of God in Scotland," for the word of God and not an ecclesiastical hierarchism was then the converting agency. The grandson of Fergus communicated the zeal which animated him to the hearts of several fellow Christians. They repaired to the seashore, and cutting down the pliant branches of the osier, constructed a frail bark, which they covered with the skins of beasts. In this rude boat they embarked about the year 563, and after being driven to and fro on the ocean, the little missionary band reached the waters of the Hebrides. Columba landed near the barren rocks of Mull, to the south of the basaltic caverns of Staffa, and fixed his abode in a small island, afterwards known as Iona or Icolmkill, "the island of Columba’s cell." Some Christian Culdees, driven out by the dissensions of the Picts and Scots, had already found a refuge in the same retired spot. Here the missionaries erected a chapel, whose walls, it is said, still exist among the stately ruins of a later age. Some authors have placed Columba in the first rank after the apostles. True, we do not find in him the faith of a Paul or a John, but he lived as in the sight of God; he mortified the flesh, and slept on the ground with a stone for his pillow. Amid this solemn scenery, and among customs so rude, the form of the missionary, illumined by a light from heaven, shone with love, and manifested the joy and serenity of his heart. Although subject to the same passions as ourselves, he wrestled against his weakness, and would not have one moment lost for the glory of God. He prayed and read, he wrote and taught, he preached and redeemed the time. With indefatigable activity he went from house to house, and from kingdom to kingdom. Brude, the king of the Picts, was converted, as were also many of his people; precious
manuscripts were conveyed to Iona; a school of theology was founded there, in which the Word was studied, and many received through faith the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. Erelong a missionary spirit breathed over this ocean rock, so justly named “the light of the western world.”

The Judaical sacerdotalism which was beginning to extend in the Christian church found no support in Iona. They had forms, but not to them did they look for life. It was the Holy Ghost, Columba maintained, that made a servant of God. When the youth of Caledonia assembled around the elders on these savage shores, or in their humble chapel, these ministers of the Lord would say to them, “The Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith. Throw aside all merit of works, and look for salvation to the grace of God alone. Beware of a religion which consists of outward observances; it is better to keep your heart pure before God than to abstain from meats. One alone is your head, Jesus Christ. Bishops and presbyters are equal; they should be the husbands of one wife, and have their children in subjection.”

The sages of Iona knew nothing of transubstantiation or of the withdrawal of the cup in the Lord’s Supper, or of auricular confession, or of prayers to the dead, or tapers, or incense; they celebrated Easter on a different day from Rome; synodal assemblies regulated the affairs of the church, and the papal supremacy was unknown. The sun of the gospel shone upon these wild and distant shores. In after-years, it was the privilege of Great Britain to recover with a purer luster the same sun and the same gospel.

Iona, governed by a simple elder, had become a missionary college. It has been sometimes called a monastery, but the dwelling of the grandson of Fergus in no wise resembled the popish houses. When its youthful inmates desired to spread the knowledge of Jesus Christ, they thought not of going elsewhere in quest of episcopal ordination. Kneeling in the chapel of Icolmkill, they were set apart by the laying on of the hands of the elders; they were called bishops, but remained obedient to the elder or presbyter of Iona. They even consecrated other bishops; thus Finan laid hands upon Diuma, bishop of Middlesex. These British Christians attached great importance to the ministry, but not to one form in preference to another. Presbytery and episcopacy were with them, as with the primitive church, almost identical. The religious and moral element that belongs to Christianity still predominated; the sacerdotal element, which characterizes human religions, whether among the Brahmins or elsewhere, was beginning to show itself, but in Great Britain at least it held a very subordinate station. Christianity was still a religion and not a caste. They did not require of the servant of God, as a warrant of his capacity, a long list of names succeeding one another like the beads of a rosary; they entertained serious, noble, and holy ideas of the ministry; its authority proceeded wholly from Jesus Christ its head.
The missionary fire, which Columba had kindled in a solitary island, soon spread over Great Britain. Not in Iona alone, but at Bangor (County Down) and other places, the spirit of evangelization burst out. A fondness for traveling had already become a second nature in this people. Men of God, burning with zeal, resolved to carry the evangelical torch to the continent—to the vast wilderness sprinkled here and there with barbarous and heathen tribes. They did not set forth as antagonists of Rome, for at that epoch there was no place for such antagonism; but Iona and Bangor, less illustrious than Rome in the history of nations, possessed a more lively faith than the city of the Caesars; and that faith—unerring sign of the presence of Jesus Christ—gave those whom it inspired a right to evangelize the world, which Rome could not gainsay.

The missionary bishops of Britain accordingly set forth and traversed the Low Countries, Gaul, Switzerland, Germany, and even Italy. The free church of the Scots and Britons did more for the conversion of central Europe than the half-enslaved church of the Romans. These missionaries were not haughty and insolent like the priests of Italy, but supported themselves by the work of their hands. Columbanus (whom we must not confound with Columba), “feeling in his heart the burning of the fire which the Lord had kindled upon earth,” quitted Bangor about 590 with twelve other missionaries, and carried the gospel to the Burgundians, Franks, and Swiss. He continued to preach it amidst frequent persecutions, left his disciple Gall in Helvetia, and retired to Bobbio, where he died, honoring Christian Rome, but placing the church of Jerusalem above it—exhorting it to beware of corruption, and declaring that the power would remain with it so long only as it retained the true doctrine (recta ratio). Thus was Britain faithful in planting the standard of Christ in the heart of Europe. We might almost imagine this unknown people to be a new Israel, and Icolmkill and Bangor to have inherited the virtues of Zion.

Yet they should have done more; they should have preached—not only to the continental heathens, to those in the north of Scotland and the distant Ireland—but also to the still pagan Saxons of England. It is true that they made several attempts; but while the Britons considered their conquerors as the enemies of God and man, and shuddered while they pronounced their name, the Saxons refused to be converted by the voice of their slaves. By neglecting this field, the Britons left room for other workmen, and thus it was that England yielded to a foreign power, beneath whose heavy yoke it long groaned in vain.

---

CHAPTER 2

Iona versus Rome
6th & 7th Centuries
It is matter of fact that the spiritual life had waned in Italian Catholicism; and in proportion as the heavenly spirit had become weak, the lust of dominion had grown strong. The Roman metropolitans and their delegates soon became impatient to mould all Christendom to their peculiar forms.

About the end of the sixth century an eminent man filled the see of Rome. Gregory was born of senatorial family, and already on the high road to honor, when he suddenly renounced the world, and transformed the palace of his fathers into a monastery. But his ambition had only changed its object. In his view, the whole church should submit to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Rome. True, he rejected the title of universal bishop assumed by the patriarch of Constantinople, but if he desired not the name, he was not the less eager for the substance. On the borders of the West, in the island of Britain, was a Christian church independent of Rome; this must be conquered, and a favorable opportunity soon occurred.

Before his elevation to the primacy, and while he was as yet only the monk Gregory, he chanced one day to cross a market in Rome where certain foreign dealers were exposing their wares for sale. Among them he perceived some fair-haired youthful slaves, whose noble bearing attracted his attention. On drawing near them, he learned that the Anglo-Saxon nation to which they belonged had refused to receive the gospel from the Britons. When he afterwards became bishop of Rome, this crafty and energetic pontiff, “the last of the good and the first of the bad,” as he has been called, determined to convert these proud conquerors, and make use of them in subduing the British church to the papacy, as he had already made use of the Frankish monarchs to reduce the Gauls. Rome has often shown herself more eager to bring Christians rather than idolaters to the pope. Was it thus with Gregory? We must leave the question unanswered.

Æthelbert, king of Kent, having married a Christian princess of Frankish descent, the Roman bishop thought the conjuncture favorable for his design, and in 596 dispatched a mission under the direction of one of his friends named Augustine, the prior of St. Andrew’s monastery at Rome. At first the missionaries recoiled from the task appointed them, but Gregory was firm. Desirous of gaining the assistance of the Frankish kings, Theodoric and Theodebert, he affected to consider them as the lords paramount of England, and commended to them the conversion of their subjects. Nor was this all. He claimed also the support of the powerful Brunhilda, grandmother of these two kings, and equally notorious for her treachery, her irregularities, and her crimes; and did not scruple to extol the good works and godly fear of this sixth-century Jezebel. Under such auspices the Romish mission arrived in England. The pope had made a skilful choice of his delegate. Augustine possessed even to a greater extent than Gregory himself a mixture of ambition and devotedness, of superstition and piety, of cunning and zeal. He thought that faith and holiness were less essential to the church than authority and power,
and that its prerogative was not so much to save souls as to collect all the human race under the scepter of Rome. Gregory himself was distressed at Augustine’s spiritual pride and often exhorted him to humility.

Success of that kind which popery desires soon crowned the labors of its servants. The forty-one missionaries having landed in the isle of Thanet, in the summer of 597, the king of Kent consented to receive them, but in the open air, for fear of magic. They drew up in such a manner as to produce an effect on the rude islanders. The procession was opened by a monk bearing a huge cross on which the figure of Christ was represented; his colleagues followed chanting their Latin hymns, and thus they approached the oak appointed for the place of conference. They inspired sufficient confidence in Æthelbert to gain permission to celebrate their worship in an old ruinous chapel at Durovernum (Canterbury) where British Christians had in former times adored the Savior Christ. The king and thousands of his subjects received not long after, with certain forms, and certain Christian doctrines, the errors of the Roman pontiffs—as purgatory, for instance, which Gregory was advocating with the aid of the most absurd fables. Augustine reported the baptism of more than ten thousand pagans in one day. As yet Rome had only set her foot in Great Britain; she did not fail ere long to establish her kingdom there. We do not wish to undervalue the religious element now placed before the Anglo-Saxons, and we can readily believe that many of the missionaries sent from Italy desired to work a Christian work. We think, too, that the Middle Ages ought to be appreciated with more equitable sentiments than have always been found in the persons who have written on that period. Man’s conscience lived, spoke, and groaned during the long dominion of popery; and like a plant growing among thorns, it often succeeded in forcing a passage through the obstacles of traditionalism and hierarchy, to blossom in the quickening sun of God’s grace. The Christian element is even strongly marked in some of the most eminent men of the theocracy—in Anselm for instance. Yet, as it is our task to relate the history of the struggles which took place between primitive Christianity and Roman Catholicism, we cannot forbear pointing out the superiority of the former in a religious light, while we acknowledge the superiority of the latter in a political point of view. We believe (and we shall presently have a proof of it) that a visit to Iona would have taught the Anglo-Saxons much more than their frequent pilgrimages to the banks of the Tiber. Doubtless, as has been remarked, these pilgrims contemplated at Rome “the noble monuments of antiquity,” but there existed at that time in the British islands—and it has been too often overlooked—a Christianity which, if not perfectly pure, was at least better than that of popery. The British church, which at the beginning of the seventh century carried faith and civilization into Burgundy, the Vosges mountains, and Switzerland, might well have spread them both over Britain. The influence of the arts, whose civilizing influence we are far from depreciating, would have come later.
But so far was the Christianity of the Britons from converting the Saxon kingdoms, that it was, alas, the Romanism of those kingdoms which was destined to conquer Britain. These struggles between the Roman and British churches, which fill all the seventh century, are of the highest importance to the English church, for they establish clearly its primitive liberty. They possess also great interest for the other churches of the West, as showing in the most striking characters the usurping acts by which the papacy eventually reduced them beneath its yoke.

Augustine, appointed archbishop not only of the Saxons, but of the free Britons, was settled by papal ordinance at Canterbury although it was probably intended to transfer his seat to London at the first suitable opportunity. Being at the head of a hierarchy composed of twelve bishops, he soon attempted to bring all the Christians of Britain under the Roman jurisdiction. At that time there existed at Bangor Iscoed, in North Wales, about twenty-five miles south of Chester, a large Christian society amounting to nearly three thousand individuals, collected together to work with their own hands, to study, and to pray, and from whose bosom numerous missionaries had had from time to time gone forth. The president of this church was Dionoth, a faithful teacher, ready to serve all men in charity, yet firmly convinced that no one should have supremacy in the Lord’s vineyard. Although one of the most influential men in the British church, he was somewhat timid and hesitating; he would yield to a certain point for the love of peace, but would never flinch from his duty. He was another apostle John, full of mildness, and yet condemning the Diotrephes, who love to have preeminence among the brethren. Augustine thus addressed him: "Acknowledge the authority of the Bishop of Rome." These are the first words of the papacy to the ancient Christians of Britain. "We desire to love all men," meekly replied the venerable Briton, "and what we do for you, we will do for him also whom you call the pope. But he is not entitled to call himself the father of fathers, and the only submission we can render him is that which we owe to every Christian." This was not what Augustine asked.

He was not discouraged by this first check. Proud of the gallium which Rome had sent him, and relying on the swords of the Anglo-Saxons, he convoked in 601 a general assembly of British and Saxon bishops. The meeting took place in the open air, beneath a venerable oak, near Wigornia (Worcester or perhaps Hereford), and here occurred the second Romish aggression. Dionoth resisted with firmness the extravagant pretensions of Augustine, who again summoned him to recognize the authority of Rome. Another Briton protested against the presumption of the Romans, who ascribed to their consecration a virtue which they refused to that of Iona or of the Eastern churches. The Britons, exclaimed a third, "cannot submit either to the haughtiness of the Romans or the tyranny of the Saxons." To no purpose did the archbishop lavish his arguments, prayers, censures, and miracles even; the Britons were firm. Some of them who had eaten with the Saxons while they were as yet heathens, refused to do so now that they had submitted to the pope. The Scots were particularly inflexible, for
one of their number, by name Dagam, would not only take no food at the same table with the Romans, but not even under the same roof. Thus did Augustine fail a second time, and the independence of the British church appeared secure.

And yet the formidable power of the popes, aided by the sword of the conquerors alarmed the Britons. They imagined they saw a mysterious decree once more yoking the nations of the earth to the triumphal car of Rome, and many left Wigornia uneasy and sad at heart. How is it possible to save a cause, when even its defenders begin to despair? It was not long before they were summoned to a new council. "What is to be done?" they explained with sorrowful forebodings. Popery was not yet thoroughly known; it was hardly formed. The half-enlightened consciences of these believers were a prey to the most violent agitation. They asked themselves whether, in rejecting this new power, they might not be rejecting God himself. A pious Christian, who led a solitary life, had acquired a great reputation in the surrounding district. Some of the Britons visited him, and inquired whether they should resist Augustine or follow him.

"If he is a man of God, follow him," replied the hermit.

"And how shall we know that?"

"If he is meek and humble of heart, he bears Christ’s yoke; but if he is violent and proud, he is not of God."

"What sign shall we have of his humility?"

"If he rises from his seat when you enter the room."

Thus spoke the oracle of Britain; it would have been better to have consulted the Holy Scriptures.

But humility is not a virtue that flourishes among Romish pontiffs and legates; they love to remain seated while others court and worship them. The British bishops entered the council-hall, and the archbishop, desirous of indicating his superiority, proudly kept his seat. Astonished at this sight, the Britons would hear no more of the authority of Rome. For the third time they said No—they knew no other master but Christ. Augustine, who expected to see these bishops prostrate their churches at his feet, was surprised and indignant. He had reckoned on the immediate submission of Britain, and the pope had now to learn that his missionary had deceived him. Animated by that insolent spirit which is found too often in the ministers of the Romish church, Augustine exclaimed, "If you will not receive brethren who bring you peace, you shall receive enemies who will bring you war. If you will not unite with us in showing the Saxons the way of life, you shall receive from them the stroke of death."
Having thus spoken, the haughty archbishop withdrew, and occupied his last days in preparing the accomplishment of his ill-omened prophecy. Argument had failed—now for the sword!

Shortly after the death of Augustine, Æthelfrith, one of the Anglo-Saxon kings, and who was still a heathen, made war against Solomon, son of Cynan, King of Powys, the country between the Upper Severn and the Dee, and advanced towards Bangor Iscoed, the center of British Christianity. The magnitude of the danger seemed to recall the Britons to their pristine piety—not to men, but to the Lord Himself will they turn their thoughts. Twelve hundred and fifty servants of the living God, calling to mind what are the arms of Christian warfare, after preparing themselves by fasting, met together in a retired spot to send up their prayers to God. A British chief, named Brocmail, moved by tender compassion, stationed himself near them with a few soldiers, but the cruel Æthelfrith, observing from a distance this band of kneeling Christians, demanded, "Who are these people, and what are they doing?" On being informed, he added, "They are fighting then against us, although unarmed," and immediately he ordered his soldiers to fall upon the prostrate crowd. Almost all of them were slain. They prayed and they died. The Saxons forthwith proceeded to Bangor, the chief seat of Christian learning, and razed it to the ground. Romanism was triumphant in England. The news of these massacres filled the country with weeping and great mourning; but the priests of Romish consecration (and the venerable Bede, who narrates the massacre, shared their sentiments) beheld in this cruel slaughter the accomplishment of the prophecy of "the holy pontiff Augustine," and a national tradition among the Welsh for many ages pointed to him as the instigator of this cowardly butchery.

But while the Saxon sword appeared to have swept everything from before the papacy, the ground trembled under its feet and seemed about to swallow it up. The hierarchical rather than Christian conversions effected by the priests of Rome were so unreal that a vast number of the new converts suddenly returned to the worship of their idols. Eadbald, king of Kent, was himself among them. Such reversions to paganism are not infrequent in the history of the Romish missions. The bishops fled into Gaul; Mellitus of London and Justus of Rochester had already reached the continent in safety, and Laurentius, Augustine’s successor, was about to follow them. While lying in the church where he had desired to pass the night before leaving England, he groaned in spirit as he saw the work founded by Augustine perishing in his hands. He saved it, says Bede, by a miracle. The next morning he presented himself before the king with his clothes all disordered and his body covered with wounds. "Saint Peter," he said, "appeared to me during the night and scourged me severely because I was about to forsake his flock." The scourge was a means of moral persuasion which Peter had forgotten in his epistles. Did Laurentius cause these blows to be inflicted by others—or did he inflict them himself—or is the whole account an idle dream? We should prefer adopting the last hypothesis. The superstitious prince, excited at the news of this supernatural intervention, eagerly
acknowledged the authority of the pope, the vicar of an apostle who so mercilessly scourged those who had the misfortune to displease him. If the dominion of Rome had then disappeared from England, it is probable that the Britons, regaining their courage, and favored in other respects by the wants which would have been felt by the Saxons, would have recovered from their defeat, and would have imparted their free Christianity to their conquerors. Now, however, the Roman bishop seemed to remain master of England, and the faith of the Britons to be crushed forever. But it was not so. A young man, sprung from the energetic race of the Anglo-Saxon conquerors, was about to become the champion of truth and liberty, and to cause almost the whole island to be freed from the Roman yoke.

Oswald, King of Northumbria, son of the heathen and cruel AEthelfrith, had been compelled by family reverses to take refuge in Scotland, when very young, accompanied by his brother Oswiu and several other youthful chiefs. He acquired the language of the country, was instructed in the truths of Holy Writ, converted by the grace of God, and baptized into the Scottish church. He loved to sit at the feet of the elders of Iona and listen to their words. They showed him Jesus Christ going from place to place doing good, and he desired to do likewise; they told him that Christ was the only head of the church, and he promised never to acknowledge any other. Being a single-hearted, generous man, he was especially animated with tender compassion towards the poor, and would take off his own cloak to cover the nakedness of one of his brethren. Often, while mingling in the quiet assemblies of the Scottish Christians, he had desired to go as a missionary to the Anglo-Saxons. It was not long before he conceived the bold design of leading the people of Northumbria to the Savior, but being a prince as well as a Christian, he determined to begin by reconquering the throne of his fathers. There was in this young Englishman the love of a disciple and the courage of a hero. At the head of an army, small indeed, but strong by faith in Christ, he entered Northumbria, knelt with his troops in prayer on the field of battle, and gained a signal victory over Cadwallon, King of Gwynedd, A.D. 633.

To recover the kingdom of his ancestors was only a part of his task. Oswald desired to give his people the benefits of the true faith. The Christianity taught in 625 to King Edwin and the Northumbrians by preachers from York had disappeared amidst the ravages of pagan armies. Oswald requested a missionary from the Scots who had given him asylum, and they accordingly sent one of the brethren named Corman, a pious but uncultivated and austere man. He soon returned dispirited to Iona. "The people to whom you sent me," he told the elders of that island, "are so obstinate that we must renounce all idea of changing their manners." As Aidan, one of their number, listened to this report, he said to himself, "If Thy love had been preached to this people, oh, my Savior, many hearts would have been touched! ... I will go and make Thee known—Thee who breakest not the bruised reed!" Then, turning to the missionary with a look of mild reproach, he added "Brother, you have been too
severe towards hearers so dull of heart. You should have given them spiritual milk to drink until they were able to receive more solid food." All eyes were fixed on the man who spoke so wisely. "Aidan is worthy of the episcopate," exclaimed the brethren of Iona, and, like Timothy, he was consecrated by the laying on of the hands of the company of elders.

Oswald received Aidan as an angel from heaven and, as the missionary was ignorant of the Saxon language, the king accompanied him everywhere, standing by his side, and interpreting his gentle discourses. The people crowded joyfully around Oswald, Aidan, and other missionaries from Scotland and Ireland, listening eagerly to the Word of God. The king preached by his works still more than by his words. One day during Easter, as he was about to take his seat at table, he was informed that a crowd of his subjects, driven by hunger, had collected before his palace gates. Instantly he ordered the food prepared for himself to be carried out and distributed among them, and taking the silver vessels which stood before him, he broke them in pieces and commanded his servants to divide them among the poor. He also introduced the knowledge of the Savior to the people of Wessex, whither as overlord of all the English Kingdoms south of the Humber, he had gone to marry the king’s daughter. After a reign of nine years, he died at the head of his army while repelling an invasion of the idolatrous Mercians, headed by the cruel Penda (5th August, A.D. 642). As he fell he exclaimed, "Lord, have mercy on the souls of my people!" This youthful prince has left a name dear to the churches of Great Britain.

His death did not interrupt the labors of the missionaries. Their meekness and the recollection of Oswald endeared them to all. As soon as the villagers caught sight of one on the highroad, they would throng round him, begging him to teach them the Word of life. The faith which the terrible Æthelfrith thought he had washed away in the blood of the worshippers of God, was re-appearing in every direction; and Rome, which once already in the days of Honorius, in the first part of the fifth century, had been forced to leave Britain, might be perhaps a second time compelled to flee to its ships from before the face of a people who asserted their liberty.

CHAPTER 3

Rome "Converts" Britain
7th Century

Then uprose the papacy. If victory remained with the Britons, their church, becoming entirely free, might even in these early times head a strong
opposition against the papal dominion. If, on the contrary, the last champions of liberty were defeated, centuries of slavery awaited the Christian church. We shall have to witness the struggle that took place ere long in the very palace of the Northumbrian kings.

Oswald was succeeded in Bernicia (the northern section of Northumbria) by his brother Oswiu, a prince instructed in the free doctrine of the Britons, but whose religion was all external. His heart overflowed with ambition, and he shrank from no crime that might increase his power. The throne of Deira (the southern section of Northumbria) was filled by his relation, Oswine, an amiable king, much beloved by his people. Oswiu, conceiving a deadly jealousy towards him, marched against him at the head of an army, and Oswine, desirous of avoiding bloodshed, took shelter with a chief whom he had loaded with favors. But the latter offered to lead Oswiu’s soldiers to his hiding place, and at dead of night the fugitive king was basely assassinated, one only of his servants fighting in his defense. The gentle Aidan died of sorrow at his cruel fate. Such was the first exploit of that monarch who surrendered England to the papacy. Various circumstances tended to draw Oswiu nearer Rome. He looked upon the Christian religion as a means of combining the Christian princes against the heathen Penda, and such a religion, in which expediency predominated, was not very unlike popery. And further, Oswiu’s wife, Eanfled, was of the Romish communion. The private chaplain of this princess was a priest named Romanus, a man worthy of the name. He zealously maintained the rites of the Latin church, and accordingly the festival of Easter was celebrated at court twice in the year; for while the king, following the eastern rule, was joyfully commemorating the resurrection of our Lord, the queen, who adopted the Roman ritual, was keeping Palm Sunday with fasting and humiliation. Eanfled and Romanus would often converse together on the means of winning over Northumbria to the papacy. But the first step was to increase the number of its partisans, and the opportunity soon occurred.

A young Northumbrian, named Wilfrid, was one day admitted to an audience of the queen. He was a comely man, of extensive knowledge, keen wit, and enterprising character, of indefatigable activity, and insatiable ambition. In this interview he remarked to Eanfled, “The way which the Scots teach us is not perfect; I will go to Rome and learn in the very temples of the apostles.” She approved of his project, and with her assistance and directions he set out for Italy. Alas! he was destined at no very distant day to chain the whole British church to the Roman see. After a stay of three years at Lyons, where the bishop, delighted at his talents, would have desired to keep him, he arrived at Rome, and immediately became on the most friendly footing with archdeacon Boniface, the pope’s favorite councilor. He soon discovered that the priests of France and Italy possessed more power both in ecclesiastical and secular matters than the humble missionaries of Iona, and his thirst for honors was inflamed at the court of the pontiffs. If he should succeed in making England submit to the papacy, there was no dignity to which he might not aspire.
Henceforward this was his only thought, and he had hardly returned to Northumbria before Eanfled eagerly summoned him to court. A fanatical queen, from whom he might hope everything; a king with no religious convictions, and enslaved by political interests; a pious and zealous prince, Alfred, the king’s son, who was desirous of imitating his noble uncle Oswald and converting the pagans, but who had neither the discernment nor the piety of the illustrious disciple of Iona—such were the materials Wilfrid had to work upon. He saw clearly that if Rome had gained her first victory by the sword of Æthelfrith, she could only expect to gain a second by craft and management. He came to an understanding on the subject with the queen and Romanus, and having been placed about the person of the young prince, by adroit flattery he soon gained over Alfred’s mind. Then finding himself secure of two members of the royal family, he turned all his attention to Oswiu.

The elders of Iona could not shut their eyes to the dangers which threatened Northumbria. They had sent Finan to supply Aidan’s place, and this bishop, consecrated by the presbyters of Iona, had witnessed the progress of popery at the court—at first humble and inoffensive, and then increasing year by year in ambition and audacity. He had openly opposed the pontiff’s agents, and his frequent contests had confirmed him in the truth. He was dead, and the presbyters of the Western Isles, seeing more clearly than ever the wants of Northumbria, had sent thither bishop Colman, a simple-minded but stout-hearted man, one determined to oppose a front of adamant to the wiles of the seducers.

Yet Eanfled, Wilfrid, and Romanus were skillfully digging the mine that was to destroy the apostolic church of Britain. At first Wilfrid prepared his attack by adroit insinuations, and next declared himself openly in the king’s presence. If Oswiu withdrew into his domestic circle, he there found the bigoted Eanfled, who zealously continued the work of the Roman missionary. No opportunities were neglected; in the midst of the diversions of the court, at table, and even during the chase, discussions were perpetually raised on the controverted doctrines. Men’s minds became excited, the Romanists already assumed the air of conquerors, and the Britons often withdrew full of anxiety and fear. The king, placed between his wife and his faith, and wearied by these disputes, inclined first to one side, and then to the other, as if he would soon fall altogether.

The papacy had more powerful motives than ever for coveting Northumbria. Oswiu had not only usurped the throne of Deira, but after the death of the cruel Penda, who fell in battle near Leeds in 654, he had conquered his states with the exception of a portion governed by his son-in-law Peada, the son of Penda. But Peada himself having fallen in a conspiracy said to have been made by his wife, the daughter of Oswiu, the latter completed the conquest of Mercia, and thus united most of England under his scepter. Kent alone at that time acknowledged the jurisdiction of Rome; in every other province, free
ministers, protected by the kings of Northumbria, preached the gospel. This
wonderfully simplified the question. If Rome gained over Oswiu, she would gain
England; if she failed, she must sooner or later leave that island altogether.

This was not all. The blood of Oswine, the premature death of Aidan, and other
things besides, troubled the king’s breast. He desired to appease the Deity he
had offended and, not knowing that Christ is the door, as Holy Scripture tells
us, he sought among men for a doorkeeper who would open to him the kingdom
of heaven. He was far from being the last of those kings whom the necessity of
expiating their crimes impelled towards Romish practices. The crafty Wilfrid,
keeping alive both the hopes and fears of the prince, often spoke to him of
Rome, and of the grace to be found there. He thought that the fruit was ripe,
and that now he had only to shake the tree. “We must have a public
disputation, in which the question may be settled once for all,” said the queen
and her advisers, “but Rome must take her part in it with as much pomp as her
adversaries. Let us oppose bishop to bishop.” A Saxon bishop named Agilbert, a
friend of Wilfrid’s, who had won the affection of the young prince Alfred, was
invited by Eanfled to the conference and he duly arrived in Northumbria. Alas!
poor British church, the earthen vessel is about to be dashed against the vase
of iron. Britain must yield before the invading march of Rome.

On the coast of Yorkshire, at the farther extremity of a quiet bay, was situated
the monastery of Streanæshalch, or Whitby, of which Hilda, a descendant of
the Northumbrian royal line, was abbess. She, too, was desirous of seeing a
termination of the violent disputes which had agitated the church since
Wilfrid’s return. On the shores of the North Sea the struggle was to be decided
between Britain and Rome, between the East and the West, or, as they said
then, between Saint John and Saint Peter. It was not a mere question about
Easter, or certain rules of discipline, but of the great doctrine of the freedom
of the church under Jesus Christ, or its enslavement under the papacy. Rome,
ever domineering, desired for the second time to hold England in its grasp, not
by means of the sword, but by her dogmas. With her usual cunning she
concealed her enormous pretensions under secondary questions, and many
superficial thinkers were deceived by this maneuver.

The meeting took place in the monastery of Whitby. The king and his son
entered first; then, on the one side, Colman, with the bishops and elders of the
Britons; and, on the other, bishop Agilbert, Agatho, Wilfrid, Romanus, a deacon
named James, and several other priests of the Latin confession. Last of all
came Hilda with her attendants, among whom was an English bishop named
Cedda, one of the most active missionaries of the age. He had at first preached
the Gospel in the midland districts, whence he turned his footsteps towards the
Anglo-Saxons of the East and, after converting a great number of these pagans,
had returned to Finan, and, although an Englishman, had received Episcopal
consecration from a bishop, who had been himself ordained by the elders of
Iona. An indefatigable evangelist, he founded churches and appointed elders
and deacons wherever he went. By birth an Englishman, by ordination a Scotsman, everywhere treated with respect and consideration, he appeared to be set apart as mediator in this solemn conference. His intervention could not, however, retard the victory of Rome. Alas! the primitive evangelism had gradually given way to an ecclesiasticism, coarse and rude in one place, subtle and insinuating in another. Whenever the priests were called upon to justify certain doctrines or ceremonies, instead of referring solely to the Word of God as the fountain of all light, they maintained that thus St. James did at Jerusalem, St. Mark at Alexandria, St. John at Ephesus, or St. Peter at Rome. They gave the name of apostolical canons to rules which the apostles had never known. They went even further than this; at Rome and in the East, ecclesiasticism represented itself to be a law of God. Some marks of this error were already beginning to appear in the Christianity of the Britons.

King Oswiu was the first to speak: "As servants of one and the same God, we hope all to enjoy the same inheritance in heaven; why then should we not have the same rule of life here below? Let us inquire which is the true one, and follow it."

"Those who sent me hither as bishop," said Colman, "and who gave me the rule which I observe, are the beloved of God. Let us beware how we despise their teaching, for it is the teaching of Columba, of the blessed evangelist John, and of the churches over which that apostle presided."

"As for us," boldly rejoined Wilfrid, for to him as to the most skilful had bishop Agilbert entrusted the defense of their cause, "our custom is that of Rome, where the holy apostles Peter and Paul taught; we find it in Italy and Gaul, nay, it is spread over every nation. Shall the Picts and Britons, cast on these two islands on the very confines of the ocean, dare to contend against the whole world? However holy your Columba may have been, will you prefer him to the prince of the apostles, to whom Christ said, Thou art Peter, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven?"

Wilfrid spoke with animation, and his words being skilfully adapted to his audience, began to make them waver. He had artfully substituted Columba for the apostle John, from whom the British church claimed descent, and opposed to Saint Peter a plain elder of Iona. Oswiu, whose idol was power, could not hesitate between paltry bishops and that pope of Rome who commanded the whole world. Already imagining he saw Peter at the gates of paradise, with the keys in his hand, he exclaimed with emotion, "Is it true, Colman, that these words were addressed by our Lord to Saint Peter?"

"It is true."

"Can you prove that similar powers were given to your Columba?"
The bishop replied, "We cannot," but he might have told the king, "John, whose doctrine we follow, and indeed every disciple, has received in the same sense as St. Peter the power to remit sins, to bind and to loose on earth and in heaven."

But the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures was fading away in Iona, and the unsuspecting Colman had not observed Wilfrid’s stratagem in substituting Columba for Saint John. Upon this, Oswiu, delighted to yield to the continual solicitations of the queen and, above all, to find someone who would admit him into the kingdom of heaven, exclaimed, "Peter is the doorkeeper, I will obey him, lest when I appear at the gate there should be no one to open it to me." The spectators, carried away by this royal confession, hastened to give in their submission to the vicar of St. Peter.

Thus did Rome triumph at the Whitby conference. Oswiu forgot that the Lord had said, I am he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth. It was by ascribing to Peter the servant what belongs to Jesus Christ the master, that the papacy reduced Britain. Oswiu stretched out his hands, Rome riveted the chains, and the liberty which Oswald had given his church seemed at the last gasp.

Colman saw with grief and consternation Oswiu and his subjects bending their knees before the foreign priests. He did not, however, despair of the ultimate triumph of the truth. The apostolic faith could still find shelter in the old sanctuaries of the British church in Scotland and Ireland. Immovable in the doctrine he had received, and resolute to uphold Christian liberty, Colman withdrew with those who would not bend beneath the yoke of Rome, and returned to Scotland. Thirty Anglo-Saxons, and a great number of Britons, shook off the dust of their feet against the tents of the Romish priests. The hatred of popery became intensified among the remainder of the Britons. Determined to repel its erroneous dogmas and its illegitimate dominion, they maintained their communion with the Eastern Church, which was more ancient than that of Rome. They ascribed their misfortunes to a horrible conspiracy planned by the iniquitous ambition of the foreign monks, and the bards in their chants cursed the negligent ministers who defended not the flock of the Lord against the wolves of Rome. But vain were their lamentations!

The Romish priests, aided by the queen, lost no time. Wilfrid, whom Oswiu desired to reward for his triumph, was named bishop of Northumbria, and he immediately visited Gaul to receive episcopal consecration, at Compiègne, in due form. He soon returned and proceeded with singular activity to establish the Romish doctrine in all the churches. Bishop of a diocese extending from Edinburgh to Northampton, enriched with the goods which had belonged to divers monasteries, surrounded by a numerous train, served upon gold and silver plate, Wilfrid congratulated himself on having espoused the cause of the papacy; he offended everyone who approached him by his insolence, and
taught England how wide was the difference between the humble ministers of Iona and a Romish priest. At the same time Oswiu, coming to an understanding with the king of Kent, sent another priest named Wighard to Rome to learn the pope's intentions respecting the church in England, and to receive consecration as archbishop of Canterbury. There was no episcopal ordination in England worthy of a priest! In the meanwhile Oswiu, with all the zeal of a new convert, ceased not to repeat that "the Roman Church was the catholic and apostolic church," and thought night and day on the means of converting his subjects, hoping thus (says a pope) to redeem his own soul.

The arrival of this news at Rome created a great sensation. Vitalian, who then filled the papal chair, and was as insolent to his bishops as he was fawning and servile to the emperor, exclaimed with transport, "Who would not be overjoyed! a king converted to the true apostolic faith, a people that believes at last in Christ the Almighty God!" For many long years this people had believed in Christ, but they were now beginning to believe in the pope, and the pope will soon make them forget Jesus the Savior. Vitalian wrote to Oswiu, and sent him, not copies of the Holy Scriptures (which were already becoming scarce at Rome), but relics of the Saints Peter, John, Laurentius, Gregory, and Pancratius; and being in an especial manner desirous of rewarding Queen Eanfled, to whom with Wilfrid belonged the glory of this work, he offered her a cross, made, as he assured her, out of the chains of St. Peter and St. Paul. "Delay not," said the pope in conclusion, "to reduce all your island under Jesus Christ," or in other words, under the bishop of Rome.

The essential thing, however, was to send an archbishop from Rome to Britain, but Wighard was dead, and no one seemed willing to undertake so long a journey. There was not much zeal in the city of the pontiffs, and the pope was compelled to look out for a stranger. There happened at that time to be in Rome a man of great reputation for learning, who had come from the east, and adopted the rites and doctrines of the Latins in exchange for the knowledge he had brought them. He was pointed out to Vitalian as well qualified to be the metropolitan of England. Theodore, for such was his name, belonging by birth to the churches of Asia Minor, would be listened to by the Britons in preference to any other, when he solicited them to abandon their eastern customs. The Roman pontiff, however, fearful perhaps that he might yet entertain some leaven of his former Greek doctrines, gave him as companion, or rather as overseer, a zealous African monk named Hadrian.

Theodore began the great crusade against British Christianity, and endeavoring to show the sincerity of his conversion by his zeal, he traversed all England in company with Hadrian, everywhere imposing on the people the ecclesiastical supremacy of Rome. The superiority of character which distinguished Saint Peter, Theodore transformed into a superiority of office. For the jurisdiction of Christ and His Word, he substituted that of the bishop of Rome and of his decrees. He insisted on the necessity of ordination by bishops who, in an
unbroken chain, could trace back their authority to the apostles themselves. The British still maintained the validity of their consecration, but the number was small of those who understood that pretended successors of the apostles, who sometimes carry Satan in their hearts, are not true ministers of Christ. It was forgotten that the one thing needful for the church is the Word of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit, and that just as the apostles themselves had been members only by faith in Christ, so must their successors manifest the same faith and possess the same divine Comforter.

The grand defection now began; the best were sometimes the first to yield. When Theodore met Cedda, who had been consecrated by a bishop who had himself received ordination from the elders of Iona, he said to him, “You have not been regularly ordained.” Cedda, instead of standing up boldly for the truth, gave way in a carnal modesty, and replied, “I never thought myself worthy of the episcopate, and am ready to lay it down.” “No,” said Theodore, “you shall remain a bishop, but I will consecrate you anew according to the catholic ritual.” The British minister submitted. Rome triumphant felt herself strong enough to deny the imposition of hands of the elders of Iona, which she had hitherto recognized. The most steadfast believers took refuge in Scotland.

In this manner a church in some respects deficient, but still a church in which the spiritual element held the foremost place, was succeeded by another in which the clerical element predominated. This was soon apparent; questions of authority and precedence, hitherto unknown among the British Christians, were now of daily occurrence. Wilfrid, who had fixed his residence at York, thought that no one deserved better than he to be primate of all England, and Theodore on his part was irritated at the haughty tone assumed by this bishop. During the life of Oswiu, peace was maintained for Wilfrid was his favorite, but ere long that prince fell ill, and, terrified by the near approach of death, he vowed that if he recovered he would make a pilgrimage to Rome and there end his days. “If you will be my guide to the city of the apostles,” he said to Wilfrid, “I will give you a large sum of money.” But his vow was of no avail; Oswiu died in the spring of the year 670, and his youngest brother Ecgfrith was raised to the throne. The new monarch, who had often been offended by Wilfrid’s insolence, denounced this haughty prelate to the archbishop. Nothing could be more agreeable to Theodore. He assembled a council at Hertford in September, 672, before which the chief of his converts were first summoned and, presenting to them not the Holy Scripture but the canons of the Romish church, he received their solemn oaths; such was the religion then taught in England. But this was not all. “The diocese of our brother Wilfrid is so extensive,” said the primate, “that there is room in it for four bishops.” They were appointed accordingly. Wilfrid indignantly appealed from the primate and the king to the pope. “Who converted England, who, if not I? ... and it is thus I am rewarded!” Not allowing himself to be checked by the difficulties of the journey, he set out for Rome, attended by a few monks, and, Pope Agatho assembling a council (679), the Englishman presented his complaint, and the pontiff declared the
destitution to be illegal. Wilfrid immediately returned to England, and
haughtily presented the pope’s decree to the king. But Ecgfrith, who was not of
a disposition to tolerate these transalpine manners, far from restoring the see,
cast the prelate into prison, and did not release him until the end of the year,
and then only on condition that he would immediately quit Northumbria.

Wilfrid—for we must follow even to the end of his life that remarkable man,
who exercised so great an influence over the destinies of the English church—
was determined to be a bishop at any cost. The kingdom of Sussex was still
pagan; and the deposed prelate, whose indefatigable activity we cannot but
acknowledge, formed the resolution of winning a bishopric, as other men plan
the conquest of a kingdom. He arrived in Sussex during a period of famine, and
having brought with him a number of nets, he taught the people the art of
fishing, and thus gained their affections. Their king Æthelwalh was baptized,
his subjects followed his example, and Wilfrid was placed at the head of the
church.

In 685 King Ecgfrith died, and was succeeded by his brother Alfred, whom
Wilfrid had brought up, a prince fond of learning and religion, and ambitious to
serve his people. The ambitious Wilfrid now hastened to claim his see of York,
by acquiescing in the partition imposed by the Council of Hertford; it was
restored to him, and he forthwith began to plunder others to enrich himself. A
council begged him to submit to the decrees of the church of England; he
refused and, having lost the esteem of the king, his former pupil, he
undertook, notwithstanding his advanced years, a third journey to Rome.
Knowing how popes are won, he threw himself at the pontiff’s feet, exclaiming
that “the suppliant bishop Wilfrid, the humble slave of the servant of God,
implored the favor of our most blessed lord, the pope universal.” But Wilfrid
was not restored to his see and spent the short remainder of his life in the
midst of the riches his cupidity had so unworthily accumulated.

Yet he had accomplished the task of his life—all England was subservient to the
papacy. The names of Osuイ and of Wilfrid should be inscribed in letters of
mourning in the annals of Great Britain. Posterity has erred in permitting them
to sink into oblivion, for they were two of the most influential and energetic
men that ever flourished in England. Still this very forgetfulness is not wanting
in generosity. The grave in which the liberty of the church lay buried for nine
centuries is the only monument—a mournful one indeed—that should
perpetuate their memory.

But Scotland was still free and, to secure the definitive triumph of Rome, it
was necessary to invade that virgin soil, over which the standard of the faith
had floated for so many years.

Adamnan (known in Ireland as St. Eunan) was then at the head of the church of
Iona, the first elder of that religious house. He was virtuous and learned, but
weak and somewhat vain, and his religion had little spirituality. To gain him
was, in the eyes of Rome, to gain Scotland. A singular circumstance favored the
plans of those who desired to draw him into the papal communion. One day
during a violent tempest, a ship coming from the Holy Land, and on board of
which was a Gaulish bishop named Arculf, was wrecked in the neighborhood of
Iona. Arculf sought asylum among the pious inhabitants of that island. Adamnan
never grew tired of hearing the stranger’s descriptions of Bethlehem,
Jerusalem, and Golgotha, of the sun-burnt plains over which our Lord had
wandered, and the cleft stone which still lay before the door of the sepulchre.
The elder of Iona, who prided himself on his learning, noted down Arculf’s
conversation, and from it composed a description of the Holy Land. As soon
as his book was completed, the desire of making these wondrous things more
widely known, combined with a little vanity, and perhaps other motives, urged
him to visit the court of Northumbria, where he presented his work to the pious
King Alfred, who, being fond of learning and of the Christian traditions, caused
a number of copies of it to be made.

Nor was this all; the Romish clergy perceived the advantage they might derive
from this imprudent journey. They crowded round the elder; they showed him
all the pomp of their worship, and said to him, "Will you and your friends, who
live at the very extremity of the world, set yourselves in opposition to the
observances of the universal church?" The nobles of the court flattered the
author’s self-love, and invited him to their festivities, while the king loaded
him with presents. The free presbyter of Britain became a priest of Rome, and
Adamnan returned to Iona to betray his church to his new masters. But it was
all to no purpose; Iona would not give way. He then went to hide his shame in
Ireland, where having brought a few individuals to the Romish uniformity, he
took courage and revisited Scotland. But that country, still inflexible, repelled
him with indignation.

When Rome found herself unable to conquer by the priest, she had recourse to
the prince, and her eyes were turned to Naitam, king of the Picts. "How much
more glorious it would be for you," urged the Latin priests, "to belong to the
powerful church of the universal pontiff of Rome, than to a congregation
superintended by miserable elders! The Romish church is a monarchy, and
ought to be the church of every monarch. The Roman ceremonial accords with
the pomp of royalty, and its temples are palaces." The prince was convinced by
the last argument. He dispatched messengers to Abbot Ceolfrith of Wearmouth,
begging him to send him architects capable of building a church *after the
Roman pattern*—of stone and not of wood. Architects, majestic porches, lofty
columns, vaulted roofs, gilded altars, have often proved the most influential of
Rome’s missionaries. The builder’s art, though in its earliest and simplest days,
was more powerful than the Bible. Naitam, who, by submitting to the pope,
thought himself the equal of Clovis and Clotaire, kings of the Franks, assembled
the nobles of his court and the pastors of his church, and thus addressed them:
"I recommend all the clergy of my kingdom to receive the tonsure of Saint
Then without delay (as Bede informs us) this important revolution was accomplished by royal authority. He sent agents and letters into every province, and caused all the ministers and monks to receive the circular tonsure according to the Roman fashion. It was the mark that popery stamped, not on the forehead, but on the crown. A royal proclamation and a few clips of the scissors placed the Scots, like a flock of sheep, beneath the crook of the shepherd of the Tiber.

Iona still held out. The orders of the Pictish king, the example of his subjects, the sight of that Italian power which was devouring the earth, had shaken some few minds, but the Church still resisted the innovation. Iona was the last citadel of liberty in the western world, and popery was filled with anger at that miserable band which in its remote corner refused to bend before it. Human means appeared insufficient to conquer this rock; something more was needed, visions and miracles for example, and these Rome always finds when she wants them. One day towards the end of the seventh century, an English monk named Egbert, arriving from Ireland, appeared before the elders of Iona, who received him with their accustomed hospitality. He was a man in whom enthusiastic devotion was combined with great gentleness of heart, and he soon captured the minds of these simple believers. He spoke to them of an external unity, urging that a universality manifested under different forms was unsuited to the church of Christ. He advocated the special form of Rome and, for the truly catholic element which the Christians of Iona had thus far possessed, substituted a sectarian element. He attacked the traditions of the British church, and, lavishly distributing the rich presents confided to him by the lords of Ireland and of England, he soon had reason to acknowledge the truth of the saying of the wise man: A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it; whithersoever it turneth it prospereth.

Some pious souls, however, still held out in Iona. The enthusiast Egbert—for such he appears to have been, rather than an impostor—had recourse to other means. He represented himself to be a messenger from heaven; "The saints themselves," said he, "have commissioned me to convert Iona," and then he told the following history to the elders who stood round him. "About thirty years ago I entered the monastery of Rathmelfig in Ireland, when a terrible pestilence fell upon it, and of all the brethren the monk Eelhun and myself were left alone. Attacked by the plague, and fearing my last hour was come, I rose from my bed and crept into the chapel. There my whole body trembled at the recollection of my sins, and my face was bathed with tears. 'O God,' I exclaimed, 'suffer me not to die until I have redeemed my debt to thee by an abundance of good works.' I returned staggering to the infirmary, got into bed, and fell asleep. When I awoke, I saw Eelhun with his eyes fixed on mine. 'Brother Egbert,' said he, 'it has been revealed to me in a vision that thou shalt receive what thou hast asked.' On the following night Eelhun died and I recovered.
“Many years passed away; my repentance and my vigils did not satisfy me, and, wishing to pay my debt, I resolved to go with a company of monks and preach the blessings of the gospel to the heathens of Germany. But during the night a blessed saint from heaven appeared to one of the brethren and said, ‘Tell Egbert that he must go to the monasteries of Columba, for their ploughs do not plough straight, and he must put them into the right furrow.’ I forbade this brother to speak of his vision, and went on board a ship bound for Germany. We were waiting for a favorable wind, when, of a sudden, in the middle of the night, a frightful tempest burst upon the vessel, and drove us on the shoals. ‘For my sake this tempest is upon us,’ I exclaimed in terror, ‘God speaks to me as He did to Jonah,’ and I ran to take refuge in my cell. At last I determined to obey the command which the holy man had brought me. I left Ireland, and came among you, in order to pay my debt by converting you. And now,” continued Egbert, “make answer to the voice of heaven, and submit to Rome.”

A ship thrown on shore by a storm was a frequent occurrence on those coasts, and the dream of a monk, absorbed in the plans of his brother, was nothing very unnatural. But in those times of darkness, everything appeared miraculous; phantoms and apparitions had more weight than the Word of God. Instead of detecting the emptiness of these visions by the falseness of the religion they were brought to support, the elders of Iona listened seriously to Egbert’s narrative. The primitive faith planted on the rock of Icolmkill was now like a pine tree tossed by the winds—but one gust, and it would be uprooted and blown into the sea. Egbert, perceiving the elders to be shaken, redoubled his prayers, and even had recourse to threats. “All the west,” said he, “bends the knee to Rome; alone against all, what can you do?” The Scots still resisted; obscure and unknown, the last British Christians contended in behalf of expiring liberty. At length bewildered, they stumbled and fell. The scissors were brought; they received the Latin tonsure; they were the pope’s.

Thus fell Scotland. Yet there still remained some sparks of grace, and the mountains of Caledonia long concealed the hidden fire which after many ages burst forth with such power and might. Here and there a few independent spirits were to be found who testified against the tyranny of Rome. In the time of Bede they might be seen “halting in their paths” (to use the words of the Romish historian) refusing to join in the holidays of the pontifical adherents and pushing away the hands that were eager to shave their crowns. But the leaders of the state and of the church had laid down their arms. The contest was over, after lasting more than a century. British Christianity had in some degree prepared its own fall, by substituting too often the form for the faith. The foreign superstition took advantage of this weakness, and triumphed in these islands by means of royal decrees, church ornaments, monkish phantoms, and conventual apparitions. At the beginning of the eighth century, the British Church became the serf of Rome, but an internal struggle was commencing, which did not cease until the period of the Reformation.
CHAPTER 4

The Conflict with Papal Supremacy
7th to 11th Century

The independent Christians of Scotland, who subordinated the authority of man to that of God, were filled with sorrow as they beheld these backslidings, and it was this no doubt which induced many to leave their homes and fight in the very heart of Europe in behalf of that Christian liberty which had just expired among themselves.

At the commencement of the eighth century a great idea took possession of a pious doctor of the Scottish church named Clement. The work of God is the very essence of Christianity, thought he, and this work must be defended against all the encroachments of man. To human traditionalism he opposed the sole authority of the Word of God; to clerical materialism, a church which is the assembly of the saints; and to Pelagianism, the sovereignty of grace. He was a man of decided character and firm faith, but without fanaticism; his heart was open to the holiest emotions of our nature; he was a husband and a father. He quitted Scotland and traveled among the Franks, everywhere scattering the seeds of the faith. It happened unfortunately that a man of kindred energy, Winifrid or Boniface of Wessex (680-754), was planting the pontifical Christianity in the same regions. This great missionary, who possessed in an essential degree the faculty of organization, aimed at external unity above all things, and, when he had taken the oath of fidelity to Gregory II, he had received from that pope a collection of the Roman laws. Boniface, henceforth a docile disciple or rather a fanatical champion of Rome, supported on the one hand by the pontiff, and on the other by Charles Martel, ruler of the Franks, had preached to the people of Germany, among some undoubted Christian truths, the doctrine of tithes and of papal supremacy. The Englishman and the Scotsman, representatives of two great systems, were about to engage in deadly combat in the heart of Europe—in a combat whose consequences might be incalculable. Alarmed at the progress made by Clement’s evangelical doctrines, Boniface, archbishop of the German churches, undertook to oppose them. At first he confronted the Scotsman with the laws of the Roman church, but the latter denied the authority of these ecclesiastical canons, and refuted their contents. Boniface then put forward the decisions of various councils, but Clement replied that if the decisions of the councils were contrary to Holy Scripture, they had no authority over Christians. The archbishop, astonished at such audacity, next had recourse to the writings of the most illustrious fathers of the Latin church, quoting Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory, but the Scotsman told him that, instead of submitting to the word of men, he would obey the
Word of God alone. Boniface with indignation now introduced the Catholic church which, by its priests and bishops, all united to the pope, formed an invincible unity, but to his great surprise his opponent maintained that there only, where the Holy Spirit dwells, can be found the spouse of Jesus Christ. Vainly did the archbishop express his horror; Clement was not to be turned aside from his great idea, either by the clamors of the followers of Rome, or by the imprudent attacks made on the papacy by other Christian ministers.

Rome had, indeed, other adversaries. A Gallic bishop named Adalbert, with whom Boniface affected to associate Clement, one day saw the archbishop complacently exhibiting to the people some relics of St. Peter which he had brought from Rome, and being desirous of showing the ridiculous character of these Romish practices, he distributed among the bystanders his own hair and nails, praying them to pay these the same honors as Boniface claimed for the relics of the papacy. Clement smiled, like many others, at Adalbert’s singular argument, but it was not with such arms that he was wont to fight. Gifted with profound discernment, he had remarked that the authority of man substituted for the authority of God was the source of all the errors of Romanism. At the same time he maintained on predestination what the archbishop called “horrible doctrines, contrary to the Catholic faith.” Clement’s character inclines us to believe that he was favorable to the doctrine of predestination. A century later the pious Gottschalk was persecuted by one of Boniface’s successors for holding this very doctrine of Augustine’s. Thus then did a Scotsman, the representative of the ancient faith of his country, withstand almost unaided in the center of Europe the invasion of the Romans. But he was not long alone; the nobility especially, more enlightened than the common people, thronged around him. If Clement had succeeded, a Christian church would have been founded on the continent independent of the papacy.

Boniface was confounded. He wished to do in central Europe what his fellow countryman Wilfrid had done in England, and, at the very moment he fancied he was advancing from triumph to triumph, victory escaped from his hands. He turned against this new enemy and, applying to Charles Martel’s sons, Pepin and Carloman, he obtained their consent to the assembling of a council before which he summoned Clement to appear.

The bishops, counts, and other notabilities having met at Soissons on the 2nd March, 744, Boniface accused the Scotsman of despising the laws of Rome, the councils, and the fathers; attacked his marriage, which he called an adulterous union, and called in question some secondary points of doctrine. Clement was accordingly excommunicated by Boniface, at once his adversary, accuser, and judge, and thrown into prison, with the approbation of the pope and the king of the Franks.

The Scotsman’s cause was everywhere taken up; accusations were brought against the German primate, his persecuting spirit was severely condemned,
and his exertions for the triumph of the papacy were resisted. Carloman yielded to this unanimous movement. The prison doors were opened, and Clement had hardly crossed the threshold before he began to protest boldly against human authority in matters of faith—the Word of God is the only rule. Upon this Boniface applied to Rome for the heretic’s condemnation, and accompanied his request by a silver cup and a garment of delicate texture. The pope decided in synod that if Clement did not retract his errors, he should be delivered up to everlasting damnation, and then requested Boniface to send him to Rome under a sure guard. We here lose all traces of the Scotsman, but it is easy to conjecture what must have been his fate.

Clement was not the only Briton who became distinguished in this contest. Two fellow countrymen, Sampson and Virgil, who preached in central Europe, were in like manner persecuted by the Church of Rome. Virgil, one of the most learned men of his age, anticipating Galileo, and believing in the existence of the antipodes, dared maintain that there were other men and another world beneath our feet. He was denounced by Boniface for this heresy, and condemned by the pope, as were other Britons for the apostolical simplicity of their lives. In 813, certain Scotsmen who called themselves bishops, says a canon, having appeared before a council of the Roman church at Châlons, were rejected by the French prelates, because, like St. Paul, they worked with their own hands. Those enlightened and faithful men were superior to their time; Boniface and his ecclesiastical materialism were better fitted for an age in which clerical forms were regarded as the substance of religion!

Even Britain, although its light was not so pure, was not altogether plunged in darkness. The Anglo-Saxons imprinted on their church certain characteristics which distinguished it from that of Rome; several books of the Bible were translated into their tongue, and daring spirits on the one hand, with some pious souls on the other, labored in a direction hostile to popery.

At first we see the dawning of that philosophic rationalism, which gives out a certain degree of brightness, but which can neither conquer error nor still less establish truth. In the ninth century there was a learned scholar in Ireland who afterwards settled at the court of Charles the Bald. He was a strange mysterious man, of profound thought, and as much raised above the doctors of his age by the boldness of his ideas, as Charlemagne above the princes of his day by the force of his will. John Scot Erigena—that is, "born in the Isle of Saints" (Ireland)—was a meteor in the theological heavens. With a great philosophic genius he combined a cheerful jesting disposition. One day, while seated at table opposite to Charles the Bald, the latter archly inquired of him, "What is the distance between a Scot and a sot?" "The width of the table," was his ready answer, which drew a smile from the king. While the doctrine of Bede, Boniface, and even Alcuin was traditional, servile, and, in one word, Romanist, that of Scot was mystical, philosophic, free, and daring. He sought for the truth not in the Word or in the Church, but in himself—"The knowledge
of ourselves is the true source of religious wisdom. Every creature is a theophany, a manifestation of God; since revelation presupposes the existence of truth, it is this truth, which is above revelation, with which man must set himself in immediate relation, leaving him at liberty to show afterwards its harmony with Scripture and the other theophanies. We must first employ reason, and then authority. Authority proceeds from reason, and not reason from authority." Yet this bold thinker, when on his knees, could give way to aspirations full of piety. "O Lord Jesus," exclaimed he, "I ask no other happiness of Thee, but to understand, unmixed with deceitful theories, the word that Thou hast inspired by Thy Holy Spirit! Show Thyself to those who ask for Thee alone!" But while Scot rejected on the one hand certain traditional errors, and in particular the doctrine of transubstantiation which was creeping into the church, he was near falling, as regards God and the world, into other errors savoring of pantheism. The philosophic rationalism of this contemporary of Charles the Bald—the strange product of one of the obscurest periods of history (850)—was destined after the lapse of many centuries to be taught once more in Britain as a modern invention of the most enlightened age.

While Scot was thus plumbing the depths of philosophy, others were examining their Bibles; and if thick darkness had not spread over these first glimpses of the dawn, perhaps the Church of Britain might even then have begun to labor for the regeneration of Christendom. A youthful prince, thirsting for intellectual enjoyments, for domestic happiness, and for the Word of God, and who sought, by frequent prayer, for deliverance from the bondage of sin, had ascended the throne of Wessex in the year 871. Alfred, being convinced that Christianity alone could rightly mold a nation, assembled round him the most learned men from all parts of Europe, and was anxious that the English, like the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins, should possess the Holy Scripture in their own language. He is the real patron of the biblical work, which indeed constitutes one of his chief titles to fame. After having fought numerous campaigns and battles by land and sea, he died while translating the Psalms of David for his subjects.

After this gleam of light, thick darkness once more settled upon Britain. Nine Anglo-Saxon kings ended their days in monasteries; there was a seminary in Rome from which every year fresh scholars bore to England the new forms of popery; the celibacy of priests, that cement of the Romish hierarchy, was re-affirmed by a bull about the close of the tenth century; convents were multiplied, considerable possessions were bestowed on the Church, and the tax of Peter’s pence, laid at the pontiff’s feet, proclaimed the triumph of the papal system. But a reaction took place—England collected her forces for a war against the papacy, a war at one time secular and at another spiritual. William of Normandy, Edward III, Wycliffe, and the Reformation are the four ascending steps of protestantism in England.
William of Normandy, a proud, enterprising, and far-sighted prince, the illegitimate son of a peasant girl of Falaise and Robert the Devil, duke of Normandy, began a contest with the papacy which lasted until the Reformation. After defeating the Saxons at Hastings in A.D. 1066, he took possession of England under the benediction of the Roman pontiff. But the conquered country was destined to conquer its master. William, who had invaded England in the pope's name, had no sooner touched the soil of his new kingdom, than he learned to resist Rome, as if the ancient liberty of the British Church had revived in him. Being firmly resolved to allow no foreign prince or prelate to possess in his dominions a jurisdiction independent of his own, he made preparations for a conquest far more difficult than that of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom. The papacy itself furnished him with weapons. The Roman legates prevailed on the king to dispossess the English episcopacy in a mass, and this was exactly what he wished. To resist the papacy, William desired to be sure of the submission of the priests of England. Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, was removed, and Lanfranc of Pavia, who had been summoned from Bec in Normandy to fill his place, was commissioned by the Conqueror to bend the clergy to obedience. This prelate, who was regular in his life, abundant in almsgiving, a learned disputant, a prudent politician, and a skilful mediator, finding that he had to choose between his master King William and his friend the pontiff Hildebrand, gave the prince the preference. He refused to go to Rome, notwithstanding the threats of the pope, and applied himself resolutely to the work the king had entrusted to him. The Saxons sometimes resisted the Normans, as the Britons had resisted the Saxons, but the second struggle was less glorious than the first. A synod at which the king was present having met in the abbey of Westminster, William commanded Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, to give up his crosier to him. The old man rose and animatedly cried, "O king, from a better man than you I received it, and to him only will I return it." Unhappily this "better man" was not Jesus Christ. Then, approaching the tomb of Edward the Confessor, and addressing the deceased monarch, he continued, "O my master, it was you who compelled me to assume this office, but now behold a new king and a new primate who promulgate new laws. Not unto them, O master, but unto you, do I resign my crosier and the care of my flock." With these words Wulfstan laid his pastoral staff on Edward's tomb. On the sepulchre of the Confessor perished the liberty of the Anglo-Saxon hierarchy. The deprived Saxon bishops were consigned to fortresses or shut up in monasteries.

The Conqueror, being thus assured of the obedience of the bishops, put forward the supremacy of the sword in opposition to that of the pope. He nominated directly to all vacant ecclesiastical offices, filled his treasury with the riches of the churches, required that all priests should make oath to him, forbade them to excommunicate his officers without his consent, not even for incest, and declared that all synodal decisions must be countersigned by him. "I claim," said he to the archbishop one day, raising his arm towards heaven, "I claim to hold in this hand all the pastoral staffs in my kingdom." Lanfranc was
astonished at this daring speech, but prudently kept silent, for a time at least. Episcopacy connived at the royal pretensions.

Would Hildebrand (Gregory VII), the most inflexible of popes, bend before William? The king was earnest in his desire to enslave the Church to the State, the pope to enslave the State to the Church; the collision of these two mighty champions threatened to be terrible. But the haughtiest of pontiffs was seen to yield as soon as he felt the mail-clad hand of the Conqueror, and to shrink unresistingly before it. The pope filled all Christendom with confusion, that he might deprive princes of the right of investiture to ecclesiastical dignities; William would not permit him to interfere with that question in England, and Hildebrand submitted. The king went even farther; the pope, wishing to enslave the clergy, deprived the priests of their lawful wives; William got a decree passed by the council of Winchester in 1076 to the effect that the married priests living in castles and towns should not be compelled to put away their wives. This was too much; Hildebrand summoned Lanfranc to Rome, but William forbade him to go. "Never did king, not even a pagan," exclaimed Gregory, "attempt against the holy see what this man does not fear to carry out!" To console himself, he demanded payment of the Peter’s pence, and an oath of fidelity. William sent the money but refused the homage, and when Hildebrand saw the tribute which the king had paid, he said bitterly, "What value can I set on money which is contributed with so little honor!" William forbade his clergy to recognize a pope, or to publish a bull without the royal approbation, which did not prevent Hildebrand from styling him "the pearl of princes." "It is true," said he to his legate, "that the English king does not behave in certain matters so religiously as we could desire. ... Yet beware of exasperating him. ... We shall win him over to God and St. Peter more surely by mildness and reason than by strictness or severity." In this manner the pope acted like the archbishop—siluit; he was silent. It is for feeble governments that Rome reserves her energies.

The Norman kings, desirous of strengthening their work, constructed Gothic cathedrals in the room of wooden churches, in which they installed their soldier-bishops, as if they were strong fortresses. Instead of the moral power and the humble crook of the shepherd, they gave them secular power and a staff. The religious episcopate was succeeded by a political one. William Rufus went to even greater lengths than his father. Taking advantage of the schism which divided the papacy, he did without a pope for ten years, leaving abbeys, bishoprics, and even Canterbury vacant, and scandalously squandering their revenues. Cæsaropapism (which transforms a king into a pope) having thus attained its greatest excess, a sacerdotal reaction could not fail to take place.

CHAPTER 5
The Iron Age of Spiritual Slavery

11th to 13th Century

We are now entering upon a new phase of history. Romanism was on the point of triumphing by the exertions of learned men, energetic prelates, and princes in whom extreme imprudence was joined with extreme servility. This was the era of the dominion of popery, and we shall see it unscrupulously employing the despotism by which it is characterized.

A malady having occasioned some degree of remorse in William Rufus, he consented to fill up the vacancy in the archiepiscopal see. And now Anselm first appears in England. He was born in an Alpine valley, at the town of Aosta in Piedmont. Imbibing the instructions of his pious mother Ermenberga, and believing that God’s throne was placed on the summit of the gigantic mountains he saw rising around him, the child Anselm climbed them in his dreams and received the bread of heaven from the hands of the Lord.

Unhappily in after-years he recognized another throne in the church of Christ, and bowed his head before the chair of St. Peter. In 1078 he became Abbot of Bec in Normandy. This was the man whom William II summoned in 1093 to fill the primacy of Canterbury. Anselm, who was then sixty years old, refused at first; the character of Rufus terrified him. “The church of England,” said he, “is a plough that ought to be drawn by two oxen of equal strength. How can you yoke together an old and timid sheep like me and that wild bull?” At length he accepted, and, concealing a mind of great power under an appearance of humility, he had hardly arrived in England before he recognized Pope Urban II (against the Imperial anti-Pope Wibert whom the king supported), demanded the estates of his see which the treasury had seized upon, refused to pay the king the sums he demanded, contested the right of investiture against Henry I, forbade all ecclesiastics to take the feudal oath, and determined that the priests should forthwith put away their wives. Scholasticism, of which Anselm was one of the earlier representatives, freed the church from the yoke of royalty, but only to chain it to the papal chair. The fetters were about to be riveted by a still more energetic hand, and what this great theologian had begun, a great worldling was to carry on.

Scholasticism, a form of Mediaevalism, was a method of systematizing and expounding religious doctrines according to the rules of logic laid down by Aristotle.

At the hunting parties of Henry II a man attracted the attention of his sovereign by his air of frankness, agreeable manners, witty conversation, and exuberant vivacity. This was Thomas Becket, born in 1118 of middle-class Norman parents. Being both priest and soldier, he was appointed at the same time by the king prebend of Hastings and governor of the Tower. When nominated
chancellor of England in 1155, he showed himself no less expert than Wilfrid in misappropriating the wealth of the minors in his charge, and of the abbeys and bishoprics, and indulged in the most extravagant luxury. Henry, the first of the Plantagenets, a young inexperienced king of twenty-two, having noticed Becket’s zeal in upholding the prerogatives of the crown, in 1162 appointed him archbishop of Canterbury. "Now, sire," remarked the primate, with a smile, "when I shall have to choose between God’s favor and yours, remember it is yours that I shall sacrifice."

Becket, who, as keeper of the seals, had been the most magnificent of courtiers, affected as archbishop to be the most venerable of saints. He resigned the chancellorship, assumed the robe of a monk, wore sackcloth filled with vermin, lived on the plainest food, every day knelt down to wash the feet of the poor, paced the cloisters of his cathedral with tearful eyes, and spent hours in prayer before the altar. As champion of the priests, even in their crimes, he took under his protection one who to the crime of seduction had added the murder of his victim’s father.

The judges having represented to Henry that during the first eight years of his reign a hundred murders had been committed by ecclesiastics, the king in 1164 summoned a council at Clarendon, in which certain regulations or Constitutions were drawn up, with the object of preventing the encroachments of the hierarchy. Becket at first refused to sign them, but at length consented, and then withdrew into solitary retirement to mourn over his fault. Pope Alexander III released him from his oath of consent, and then began a fierce and long struggle between the king and the primate. Finally, four knights of the court, catching up a hasty expression of their master’s, barbarously murdered the archbishop at the foot of the altar in his own cathedral church in the afternoon of 27 December, 1170. The people looked upon Becket as a saint; immense crowds came to pray at his tomb, at which it was said that many miracles were worked. "Even from his grave," said Becket’s partisans, "he renders his testimony in behalf of the papacy."

Henry now passed from one extreme to the other. He entered Canterbury barefooted and prostrated himself before the martyr’s tomb; the bishops, priests, and monks, to the number of eighty, passed before him, each bearing a scourge, and struck three or five blows according to their rank on the naked shoulders of the king. In former ages, so the priestly fable ran, Saint Peter had scourged an archbishop of Canterbury; now Rome in sober reality scourges the back of royalty, and nothing can henceforward check her victorious career. A Plantagenet surrendered England to the pope, and the pope gave him authority to subdue Ireland.

Rome, who had set her foot on the neck of a king, was destined under one of the sons of Henry II to set it on the neck of England. King John being unwilling to acknowledge an archbishop of Canterbury illegally nominated by Pope Innocent III, the latter, more daring than Hildebrand, laid the kingdom under an interdict (1208). Many of the higher clergy fled from England to escape the king’s wrath. Five years later, as John still remained obdurate, the Pope moved Philip Augustus, King of France, to invade and rule England. John thereupon
decided to submit. On the 15th of May, 1213, he laid his crown at the papal legate’s feet, declared that he surrendered his kingdom of England to the pope, and made oath to him as to his lord paramount. Shortly a national protest boldly claimed the ancient liberties of the people. Forty-five mounted barons, armed in complete mail, and accompanied by some two thousand knights, besides a large number of men-at-arms and infantry, met at Brackley during the festival of Easter in 1215, and sent a deputation to the king. “Here,” they said, “is the charter which consecrates the liberties confirmed by Henry I, and which you also have solemnly sworn to observe.” “Why do they not demand my crown also?” said the king in a furious passion, and then with an oath, he added, “I will not grant them liberties which will make me a slave.” But the nation was firmer still in its resolve to avoid enslavement. The barons occupied London, and on the 15th of June, 1215, the king signed the famous Magna Carta at Runnymede. The political Protestantism of the thirteenth century would have done but little, however, for the greatness of the nation, without the religious protestantism of the sixteenth. This was the first time that the papacy came into collision with modern liberty. It shuddered in alarm, and the shock was violent. Innocent swore (as was his custom) and then declared the Great Charter null and void, forbade the king under pain of anathema to respect the liberties which he had confirmed, ascribed the conduct of the barons to the instigation of Satan, and ordered them to make apology to the king, and to send a deputation to Rome to learn from the mouth of the pope himself what should be the government of England. This was the way in which the papacy welcomed the first manifestations of liberty among the nations, and made known the model system under which it claimed to govern the whole world. The priests of England supported the anathemas pronounced by their chief. They indulged in a thousand jeers and sarcasms against John about the charter he had accepted: “This is the twenty-fifth king of England—not a king, not even a kingling, but the disgrace of kings—a king without a kingdom, the fifth wheel of a wagon, the last of kings, and the disgrace of his people! I would not give a straw for him. ... Fuisti rex, nunc fex (once a king, but now a clown).” John, unable to support his disgrace, groaned and gnashed his teeth and rolled his eyes, tore sticks from the hedges and gnawed them like a maniac, or dashed them into fragments on the ground. The barons, unmoved alike by the insolence of the pope and the despair of the king, replied that they would maintain the charter. Innocent excommunicated them. “Is it the pope’s business to regulate temporal matters?” asked they. “By what right do vile usurers and foul simoniacs domineer over our country and excommunicate the whole world?” The pope soon triumphed throughout England. His vassal John, having hired some bands of adventurers from the continent, traversed at their head the whole country from the Channel to the Forth. These mercenaries carried desolation in their track; they extorted money, made prisoners, burnt the barons’ castles, laid waste their parks, and dishonored their wives and daughters. The king would sleep in a house and the next morning set fire to it.
Blood-stained assassins scoured the country during the night, the sword in one hand and the torch in the other, marking their progress by murder and conflagration. Such was the enthronement of popery in England. At this sight, the barons, overcome by emotion, denounced both the king and the pope: "Alas! poor country!" they exclaimed. "Wretched England! ... And thou, O pope, a curse light upon thee!"

The curse was not long delayed. As the king was returning from some more than usually successful foray, and as the royal wagons were crossing the sands of the Wash, the tide rose and all sank in the abyss. This accident filled John with terror; it seemed to him that the earth was about to open and swallow him up. Stricken with dysentery which, finally, was aggravated by a surfeit of peaches and new cider, John reached Newark and died.

Such was the end of the pope’s vassal—of his armed missionary in Britain. Never had so vile a prince been the involuntary occasion to his people of such great benefits. From his reign England may date her enthusiasm for liberty and her dread of popery.

During this time a great transformation had been accomplished. Magnificent churches and the marvels of religious art, with ceremonies and a multitude of prayers and chantings dazzled the eyes, charmed the ears, and captivated the senses; but testified also to the absence of every strong moral and Christian disposition, and the predominance of worldliness in the church. At the same time, the adoration of images and relics, saints, angels, and Mary the mother of God, the worships of latria [to God], doulia [to saints], and hyperdoulia [to the Virgin Mary], at once indicated and kept up among the people that ignorance of truth and absence of grace which characterize popery. All these errors tended to bring about a reaction, and in fact the march of the Reformation may now be said to begin.

England had been brought low by the papacy; it rose up again by resisting Rome. Grosseteste, Bradwardine, and Edward III prepared the way for Wycliffe, and Wycliffe for the Reformation.

In the reign of Henry III, son of John, while the king was conniving at the usurpations of Rome, and the pope ridiculing the complaints of the barons, a pious and energetic man, of comprehensive understanding, was occupied in the study of the Holy Scriptures in their original languages, and bowing to their sovereign authority. Robert Grosseteste was born of poor parents at Stradbroke in Suffolk, and being raised to the see of Lincoln in 1235, when he was about sixty years of age, he boldly undertook to reform his diocese, one of the largest in England. Nor was this all. At the very time when the Roman pontiff, who had hitherto been content to be called the vicar of St. Peter, proclaimed himself the vicar of God, and was ordering the English bishops to find benefices for three hundred Romans, Grosseteste was declaring that "to follow a pope who
rebels against the will of Christ, is to separate from Christ and his body, and if ever the time should come when all men follow an erring pontiff, then will be the great apostasy. Then will true Christians refuse to obey, and Rome will be the cause of an unprecedented schism." Thus did he predict the Reformation. Disgusted at the avarice of the monks and priests, he visited Rome to demand a reform. "Brother," said Innocent IV to him with some irritation, "Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" The English bishop exclaimed with a sigh, "O money, money! how great is thy power—especially in this court of Rome!"

A year had scarcely elapsed before Innocent commanded the bishop to give a canonry in Lincoln cathedral to his infant nephew. Grosseteste replied, "After the sin of Lucifer there is none more opposed to the gospel than that which ruins souls by giving them a faithless minister. Bad pastors are the cause of unbelief, heresy, and disorder. Those who introduce them into the church are little better than antichrists, and their culpability is in proportion to their dignity. Although the chief of the angels should order me to commit such a sin, I would refuse. My obedience forbids me to obey, and therefore I rebel."

Such was the bishop's response to the papal requirement; his obedience to the Word of God forbade him to obey the pope. This was the principle of the Reformation. "Who is this old driveller that in his dotage dares to judge of my conduct?" exclaimed Innocent, whose wrath was appeased by the intervention of certain cardinals. Grosseteste on his dying bed—he died in 1253—professed still more clearly the principles of the reformers; he declared that a heresy was "an opinion conceived by carnal motives, contrary to Scripture, openly taught and obstinately defended," thus asserting the authority of Scripture instead of the authority of the church. He died in peace, and the public voice proclaimed him "a searcher of the Scriptures, an adversary of the pope, and despiser of the Romans." Innocent, desiring to take vengeance on his bones, meditated the exhumation of his body, when one night (says the Mediaeval chronicler, Matthew of Paris) the bishop appeared before him. Drawing near the pontiff's bed, he struck him with his crosier, and thus addressed him with terrible voice and threatening look: "Wretch! the Lord doth not permit thee to have any power over me. Woe be to thee!" The vision disappeared, and the pope, uttering a cry as if he had been struck by some sharp weapon, lay senseless on his couch. Never after did he pass a quiet night, and pursued by the phantoms of his troubled imagination, the year after Grosseteste's death he also expired while the palace re-echoed with his lamentable groans.

Grosseteste was not alone in his opposition to the pope. Sewal, archbishop of York, did the same, and "the more the pope cursed him, the more the people blessed him." "Moderate your tyranny," said the archbishop to the pontiff, "for the Lord said to Peter, Feed my sheep, and not shear them, flay them, or devour them." The pope smiled and let the bishop speak, because the king allowed the pope to act. The power of England, which was constantly increasing, was soon able to give more force to these protests. The nation was indeed growing in greatness. The madness of John, which had caused the English people to lose their continental possessions, had given them more unity and power. The Angevin kings, being compelled to renounce
entirely the country which had been their cradle, had at length made up their minds to look upon England as their home. The two races, so long hostile, melted one into the other. Free institutions were formed, the laws were studied, and colleges were founded. The language began to assume a regular form, and the ships of England were already formidable at sea. For more than a century the most brilliant victories attended the British armies. A king of France was brought captive to London; an English king was crowned at Paris. Even Spain and Italy felt the valor of these proud islanders. The English people took their station in the foremost rank. Now the character of a nation is never raised by halves. When the mighty ones of the earth were seen to fall before her, England could no longer crawl at the feet of an Italian priest.

At no period did her laws attack the papacy with so much energy. At the beginning of the fourteenth century an Englishman having brought to London one of the pope’s bulls—a bull of an entirely spiritual character, it was an excommunication—was prosecuted as a traitor to the crown, and would have been hanged, had not the sentence, at the chancellor’s intercession, been changed to perpetual banishment. The common law was the weapon the government then opposed to the papal bulls. Shortly afterwards, in 1307, King Edward ordered the sheriffs to resist the arrogant pretensions of the Romish agents. But it is to two great men in the fourteenth century, equally illustrious, the one in the state, and the other in the church, that England is indebted for the development of the protestant element in England.

In 1346, an English army, about 15,000 strong, met face to face at Crécy a French army of much greater size. Two individuals of very different characters were in the English host. One of them was King Edward III, a brave and ambitious prince, who, being resolved to recover for the royal authority all its power, and for England all her glory, had undertaken the conquest of France. The other was his chaplain Thomas Bradwardine, a native of Chichester, a man of so humble a character that his meekness was often taken for stupidity. And thus it was that on his receiving the pallium at Avignon from the hands of the pope on his elevation to the see of Canterbury, a jester mounted on an ass rode into the hall and petitioned the pontiff to make him primate instead of that imbecile priest.

Bradwardine was one of the most pious men of the age, and to his prayers his sovereign’s victories were ascribed. He was also one of the greatest geniuses of his time, and occupied the first rank among astronomers, philosophers, and mathematicians. The pride of science had at first alienated him from the doctrine of the cross. But one day while in the house of God and listening to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, these words struck his ear: *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.* His ungrateful heart, he tells us, at first rejected this humiliating doctrine with aversion. Yet the Word of God had laid its powerful hold upon him; he was converted to the truths he had despised, and immediately began to set forth the doctrines of eternal grace at Merton College, Oxford. He drank so deep at the fountain of Scripture that the traditions of men concerned him but little, and he was so absorbed in adoration in spirit and in truth, that he remarked
not outward superstitions. His lectures were eagerly listened to and circulated through all Europe. The grace of God was their very essence, as it was of the Reformation. With sorrow Bradwardine beheld Pelagianism everywhere substituting a mere religion of externals for inward Christianity, and on his knees he struggled for the salvation of the church. "As in the times of old four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal strove against a single prophet of God; so now, O Lord," he exclaimed, "the number of those who strive with Pelagius against thy free grace cannot be counted. They pretend not to receive grace freely, but to buy it. The will of men (they say) should precede, and thine should follow; theirs is the mistress, and thine the servant. ... Alas! nearly the whole world is walking in error in the steps of Pelagius. Arise, O Lord, and judge thy cause." And the Lord did arise, but not until after the death of this pious archbishop—in the days of Wycliffe, who matriculated at Oxford probably shortly after Bradwardine’s departure—and especially in the days of Luther and of Calvin. His contemporaries gave him the name of the profound doctor.

If Bradwardine walked truthfully in the path of faith, his illustrious patron Edward III advanced triumphantly in the field of policy. Pope Clement IV having decreed that the first two vacancies in the Anglican church should be conferred on two of his cardinals, "France is becoming English," said the courtiers to the king, "and by way of compensation, England is becoming Italian." Edward, desirous of guaranteeing the religious liberties of England, passed with the consent of parliament in 1350 the Statute of Provisors, which made void every ecclesiastical appointment contrary to the rights of the king, the chapters, or the patrons. Thus the privileges of the chapters and the liberty of the English Catholics, as well as the independence of the crown, were protected against the invasion of foreigners, and imprisonment or banishment for life was denounced upon all offenders against the law.

This bold step alarmed the pontiff. Accordingly, three years after, the king having nominated one of his secretaries to the see of Durham—a man without any of the qualities becoming a bishop—the pope readily confirmed the appointment. When someone expressed his astonishment at this, the pope made answer, "If the king of England had nominated an ass, I would have accepted him." Thus the pope withdrew his pretensions. "Empires have their term," observes the quaint Thomas Fuller in his Church History of Britain, at this place, "when once they have reached it, they halt, they go back, they fall." The term seemed to be drawing nearer every day. In the reign of Edward III, between 1343 and 1353, again in 1364, and finally under Richard II in 1393, those stringent laws were passed which interdicted all appeal to the court of Rome, all bulls from the Roman bishop, all excommunications, in a word, every act infringing on the rights of the crown; and declared that whoever should bring such documents into England, or receive, publish, or execute them, should be put out of the king’s protection, deprived of their property, arrested, and brought before the king in council to undergo their trial according to the terms of the act. Such was the Statute of Praemunire.

Great was the indignation of the Romans at the news of this law: "If the Statute of Mortmain put the pope into a sweat," says Fuller, "this of praemunire gave
him a fit of fever." One pope called it an "execrable statute," "a horrible crime." Such are the terms applied by the pontiffs to all that thwarts their ambitions.

Of the two wars carried on by Edward—the one against the King of France, and the other against popery—the latter was the more righteous and important. The benefits which this prince had hoped to derive from his brilliant victories at Crécy and Poitiers dwindled away almost entirely before his death, while his struggles with the papacy, founded as they were on truth, have exerted even to our own days an indisputable influence on the destinies of Great Britain. Yet the prayers and the conquests of Bradwardine, who proclaimed in that fallen age the doctrine of grace, produced effects still greater, not only for the salvation of many souls, but for the liberty, moral force, and greatness of England.

CHAPTER 7
Light Streams from Lutterworth

c. 1329–80

Thus in the first half of the fourteenth century, nearly two hundred years before the Reformation, England appeared weary of the yoke of Rome. Bradwardine died in 1349, but a greater than he was about to succeed him, and without attaining to the highest functions, to exhibit in his person the past and future tendencies of the church of Christ in Britain. The English Reformation did not begin with Henry VIII; the revival of the sixteenth century is but a link in the chain commencing with the apostles and reaching to us. The resistance of Edward III to the papacy without had not suppressed the papacy within. The mendicant friars, and particularly the Franciscans, those fanatical soldiers of the pope, were endeavoring by pious frauds to monopolize the wealth of the country. "Every year," said they, "Saint Francis descends from heaven to purgatory, and delivers the souls of all those who were buried in the dress of his order." These friars were said to kidnap children from their parents and shut them up in monasteries. They affected to be poor, and, with a wallet on their back, begged with a piteous air from both high and low; but at the same time they dwelt in palaces, heaped up treasures, dressed in costly garments and wasted their time in luxurious entertainments. The least of them looked upon themselves as lords, and those who wore the doctor’s cap considered themselves kings. While they diverted themselves, eating and drinking at their well-spread tables, they used to send ignorant, uneducated persons in their place to preach fables and legends to amuse and plunder the people. If any rich man talked of giving alms to the poor and not to the church, they exclaimed loudly against such impiety, and declared with threatening voice, "If you do so, we will leave the country, and return accompanied by a legion of glittering helmets." Public indignation was at its height. "The monks and priests of Rome," was the cry, "are eating us away like a cancer. God must deliver us or the people will perish. … Woe be to them! the cup of wrath will
run over. Men of holy church shall be despised as carrion, as dogs shall they be cast out in open places."

The arrogance of Rome made the cup run over. Pope Urban V, heedless of the laurels won by the conqueror at Crécy and Poitiers, summoned Edward III to recognize him as legitimate sovereign of England, and to pay as feudal tribute the annual sum of one thousand marks. In case of refusal the king was to appear before him at Rome. For thirty-three years the popes had never mentioned the tribute accorded by John to Innocent III, and which had always been paid very irregularly. The conqueror of the Valois was irritated by this insolence on the part of an Italian bishop, and called on God to avenge England. From Oxford came forth the avenger.

John Wycliffe, born about 1329 near Richmond, in Yorkshire, probably arrived in Oxford as a student shortly after the departure of the pious Bradwardine from Merton College. He quickly acquired a great reputation for learning and came to be known as "flos Oxonie" (the flower, or pride, of Oxford). In 1348, a terrible pestilence, which is said to have carried off half the human race, appeared in England after successively devastating Asia and the continent of Europe. This visitation of the Almighty sounded like the trumpet of the judgment day in the heart of Wycliffe. Alarmed at the thoughts of eternity, the young man—for he was then a mere youth—passed days and nights in his cell groaning and sighing, and calling upon God to show him the path he ought to follow. He found it in the Holy Scriptures, and resolved to make it known to others. He commenced with prudence, but being elected in 1360 Master of Balliol, and about 1365 Warden of Canterbury Hall (later incorporated in Christ Church) he began to set forth the doctrine of faith in a more energetic manner. His biblical and philosophical studies, his knowledge of theology, his penetrating mind, the purity of his manners, and his unbending courage, rendered him the object of general admiration. A profound teacher, like Bradwardine, and an eloquent preacher, he demonstrated to the learned during the course of the week what he intended to preach, and on Sunday he preached to the people what he had previously demonstrated. His disputations gave strength to his sermons, and his sermons shed light upon his disputations. He accused the clergy of having banished the Holy Scriptures, and required that the authority of the Word of God should be re-established in the church. Loud acclamations crowned these discussions, and the crowd of vulgar minds trembled with indignation when they heard these shouts of applause.

Wycliffe was in middle life when the papal arrogance stirred England to its depths. Being at once an able politician and a fervent Christian, he vigorously defended the rights of the crown against the Romish aggression, and by his arguments not only enlightened his fellow countrymen generally, but stirred up the zeal of several members of both Houses of Parliament.

The parliament assembled, and never perhaps had it been summoned on a question which excited to so high a degree the emotions of England, and indeed of Christendom. The debates in the House of Lords were especially remarkable; all the arguments of Wycliffe were reproduced. "Feudal tribute is due," said one, "only to him who can grant feudal protection in return. Now
how can the pope wage war to protect his fiefs?" "Is it as vassal of the crown or as feudal superior," asked another, "that the pope demands part of our property? Urban V will not accept the first of these titles. ... Well and good! but the English people will not acknowledge the second." "Why," said a third, "was this tribute originally granted? To pay the pope for absolving John. ... His demand, then, is mere simony, a kind of clerical swindling, which the lords spiritual and temporal should indignantly oppose." "No," said another speaker, "England belongs not to the pope. The pope is but a man, subject to sin, but Christ is the Lord of lords, and this kingdom is held directly and solely of Christ alone." Thus spoke the lords inspired by Wycliffe. Parliament decided unanimously that no prince had the right to alienate the sovereignty of the kingdom without the consent of the other two estates, and that if the pontiff should attempt to proceed against the king of England as his vassal, the nation should rise in a body to maintain the independence of the crown.

To no purpose did this generous resolution excite the wrath of the partisans of Rome; to no purpose did they assert that, by the canon law, the king ought to be deprived of his fief, and that England now belonged to the pope. "No," replied Wycliffe, "the canon law has no force when it is opposed to the Word of God." Edward III made Wycliffe one of his chaplains, and the papacy has ceased from that hour to lay claim—in explicit terms at least—to the sovereignty of England.

When the pope gave up his temporal, he was desirous, at the very least, of keeping up his ecclesiastical pretensions, and to procure the repeal of the statutes of Præmunire and Provisors. It was accordingly resolved to hold a conference at Bruges to treat of this question, and Wycliffe, who had been created doctor of divinity two years before, proceeded thither with the other commissioners in July 1374, although he only remained with them two or three months. The decision of the conference was that the king should bind himself to repeal the penalties denounced against the pontifical agents, and that the pope should confirm the king’s ecclesiastical presentations. But the nation was not pleased with this compromise. "The clerks sent from Rome," said the Commons, "are more dangerous for the kingdom than Jews or Saracens; every papal agent resident in England, and every Englishman living at the court of Rome, should be punished with death." Such was the language of the Good Parliament (1376). In the fourteenth century the English nation called a parliament good which did not yield to the papacy.

Wycliffe, immediately prior to his visit to Bruges, had been presented by the king to the rectory of Lutterworth, and from that time a practical activity was added to his academic influence. At Oxford he spoke as a master to the young theologians; in his parish he addressed the people as a preacher and as a pastor. "The Gospel," said he, "is the only source of religion. The Roman pontiff is a mere cutpurse, and, far from having the right to reprimand the whole world, he may be lawfully reproved by his inferiors, and even by laymen." The papacy grew alarmed. Courtenay, fourth son of the Earl of Devon, an imperious but grave priest, and full of zeal for what he believed to be the truth, had recently been appointed to the see of London. In parliament he had
resisted Wycliffe’s patron, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, third son of Edward III, and head of the house of that name. The bishop, observing that the doctrines of the reformer were spreading among the people, both high and low, charged him with heresy, and summoned him to appear before the convocation assembled in St. Paul’s Cathedral.

On the 19th of February, 1377, an immense crowd, heated with fanaticism, thronged the approaches to the church and filled its aisles, while the citizens favorable to the reform remained concealed in their houses. Wycliffe moved forward, preceded by Lord Percy, marshal of England, and supported by the Duke of Lancaster, who defended him from purely political motives. He was followed by four doctors of divinity, his counsel, and passed through the hostile multitude who looked upon Lancaster as the enemy of their liberties, and upon himself as the enemy of the church. "Let not the sight of these bishops make you shrink a hair’s-breadth in your profession of faith," said the prince to the doctor. "They are unlearned, and as for this concourse of people, fear nothing, we are here to defend you." When the reformer had crossed the threshold of the cathedral, the crowd within appeared like a solid wall, and, notwithstanding the efforts of the earl-marshals, Wycliffe and Lancaster could not advance. The people swayed to and fro, hands were raised in violence, and loud hootings re-echoed through the building. At length Percy made an opening in the dense multitude, and Wycliffe passed on.

The haughty Courtenay, who had been commissioned by the archbishop to preside over the assembly, watched these strange movements with anxiety, and beheld with displeasure the learned doctor accompanied by the two most powerful men in England. He said nothing to the Duke of Lancaster, who at that time administered the kingdom, but turning towards Percy observed sharply, "If I had known, my lord, that you claimed to be master in this church, I would have taken measures to prevent your entrance." Lancaster coldly rejoined, "He shall keep such mastery here, though you say nay."

Percy now turned to Wycliffe, who had remained standing, and said, "Sit down and rest yourself." At this Courtenay gave way to his anger, and exclaimed in a loud tone, "It is unreasonable that one, cited to appear before a bishop, should sit down during his answer. He must and shall stand." Lancaster, indignant that a learned doctor of England should be refused a favor to which his age alone entitled him (for he was approaching fifty years) made answer to the bishop, "My lord, you are very arrogant; take care... or I may bring down your pride, and not yours only, but that of all the prelacy in England." "Do your worst, sir," was Courtenay’s reply. The prince rejoined with some emotion, "You are insolent, my lord. You think, no doubt, you can trust on your family... but your relations will have trouble enough to protect themselves." To this the bishop nobly replied, "My confidence is not in my parents nor in any man, but only in God, in whom I trust, and by whose assistance I will be bold to speak the truth." Lancaster, who saw hypocrisy only in these words, turned to one of his attendants, and whispered in his ear, but so loud as to be heard by the bystanders, "I would rather pluck the bishop by the hair of his head out of the church, than take this at his hands." Every impartial reader must confess that
the prelate spoke with greater dignity than the prince. Lancaster had hardly uttered these imprudent words before the bishop’s partisans fell upon him and Percy, and even upon Wycliffe, who alone had remained calm. The two noblemen resisted, their friends and servants defended them, the uproar became extreme, and there was no hope of restoring tranquility. The two lords escaped with difficulty, taking Wycliffe with them, and the assembly broke up in great confusion.

On the following day the earl-marshall having called upon parliament to apprehend the disturbers of the public peace, the clerical party uniting with the enemies of Lancaster filled the streets with their clamor; and while the Duke and the Earl escaped by the Thames, the mob collected before Percy’s house, broke down the doors, searched every chamber, and thrust their swords into every dark corner. When they found that he had escaped, the rioters, imagining that he was concealed in Lancaster’s palace, rushed to the Savoy, at that time the most magnificent building in the kingdom. They killed a priest who endeavored to stay them, tore down the ducal arms, and hung them up reversed, in Cheapside, like those of a traitor. They would have gone still farther if the bishop had not very opportunely reminded them that they were in Lent. As for Wycliffe, he was dismissed with an injunction against preaching his doctrines.

But this decision of the priests was not ratified by the people of England. Public opinion declared in favor of Wycliffe. "If he is guilty," said they, "why is he not punished? If he is innocent, why is he ordered to be silent? If he is the weakest in power, he is the strongest in truth!" And so indeed he was, and never had he spoken with such energy. He openly attacked the pretended apostolical chair, and declared that the two antipopes who sat at Rome and Avignon—for this was the period when there were rival popes, each imprecating curses on the other—together made one antichrist. Being now in opposition to the pope, Wycliffe was soon to confess that Christ alone was king of the church, and that it is not possible for a man to be excommunicated, unless first and principally he be excommunicated by himself.

Rome could not close her ears. Wycliffe’s enemies sent thither nineteen propositions which they ascribed to him, and in the month of June 1377, just as Richard II, son of the Black Prince, a child ten years old, was ascending the throne, three letters from Gregory XI, addressed to the king, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the university of Oxford, denounced Wycliffe as a heretic, and called upon them to proceed against him as against a common thief. The archbishop issued the citation; the crown and the university were silent.

On the appointed day, Wycliffe, unaccompanied by either Lancaster or Percy, proceeded to the archiepiscopal chapel at Lambeth. "Men expected he should be devoured," says a historian, "being brought into the lion’s den." But the burgesses had taken the prince’s place. The assault of Rome had aroused the friends of liberty and truth in England. "The pope’s briefs," said they, "ought to have no effect in the realm without the king’s consent. Every man is master in his own house."
The archbishop had scarcely opened the sitting, when Sir Louis Clifford entered the chapel, and forbade the court, on the part of the widowed Princess of Wales (the mother of Richard II) to proceed against the reformer. The bishops were struck with a panic-fear; "they bent their heads," says a Roman Catholic historian, "like a reed before the wind." Wycliffe retired after handing in a protest. "In the first place," said he, "I resolve with my whole heart, and by the grace of God, to be a sincere Christian; and, while my life shall last, to profess and defend the law of Christ so far as I have power." Wycliffe's enemies attacked this protest, and one of them eagerly maintained that whatever the pope ordered should be looked upon as right. "What!" answered the reformer, "the pope may then exclude from the canon of the Scriptures any book that displeases him, and alter the Bible at pleasure?" Wycliffe thought that Rome, unsettling the grounds of infallibility, had transferred it from the Scriptures to the pope. He was desirous of restoring it to its true place, and re-establishing authority in the church on a truly divine foundation.

A great change was now taking place in the reformer. Busying himself less about the kingdom of England, he occupied himself more about the kingdom of Christ. In him the political phase was followed by the religious. To carry the glad tidings of the gospel into the remotest hamlets was now the great idea which possessed Wycliffe. "If begging friars," said he, "stroll over the country, preaching the legends of saints and the history of the Trojan war, we must do for God's glory what they do to fill their wallets, and form a vast itinerant evangelization to convert souls to Jesus Christ." Turning to the most pious of his disciples, he said to them, "Go and preach, it is the sublimest work; but imitate not the priests whom we see after the sermon sitting in the ale-houses, or at the gaming-table, or wasting their time in hunting. After your sermon is ended, do you visit the sick, the aged, the poor, the blind, and the lame, and succor them according to your ability." Such was the new practical theology which Wycliffe inaugurated—it was that of Christ Himself.

The "poor priests," as they were called, set off barefoot, a staff in their hands, clothed in a coarse robe, living on alms, and satisfied with the plainest food. They stopped in the fields near some village, in the churchyards, in the market-places of the towns, and sometimes in the churches themselves. The people, among whom they were favorites, thronged around them, as the men of Northumbria had done at Aidan's preaching. They spoke with a popular eloquence that entirely won over those who listened to them. Of these missionaries none was more beloved than John Aston, a Fellow of Merton College, Oxford. He might be seen wandering over the country in every direction, or seated at some cottage hearth, or alone in some retired crossway, preaching to an attentive crowd. Missions of this kind have constantly revived in England at the great epochs of the church.

The "poor priests" were not content with mere disputings against Rome; they preached the great mystery of godliness. "An angel could have made no propitiation for man," one day exclaimed their master Wycliffe, "for the nature which has sinned is not that of the angels. The mediator must needs be a man,
but every man being indebted to God for every thing that he is able to do, this man must needs have infinite merit, and be at the same time God."
The clergy became alarmed, and a law was passed commanding every king’s officer to commit the preachers and their followers to prison. In consequence of this, as soon as the humble missionary began to preach, the monks set themselves in motion. They watched him from the windows of their cells, at the street corners, or from behind a hedge, and then hastened off to procure assistance. But when the constables approached, a body of stout bold men stood forth, with arms in their hands, who surrounded the preacher, and zealously protected him against the attacks of the clergy. Carnal weapons were thus mingled with the preachings of the word of peace. The poor priests returned to their master; Wycliffe comforted them, advised them, and then they departed once more. Every day this evangelization reached some new spot, and the light was thus penetrating into every quarter of England, when the reformer was suddenly stopped in his work.

Wycliffe was at Oxford in the year 1379, busied in the discharge of his duties as professor of divinity, when he fell dangerously ill. His was not a strong constitution; and work, age, and above all persecution, had weakened him. Great was the joy in the monasteries, but for that joy to be complete, the heretic must recant. Every effort was made to bring this about in his last moments.

Representatives of the four religious orders, accompanied by four aldermen, hastened to the bedside of the dying man, hoping to frighten him by threatening him with the vengeance of Heaven. They found him calm and serene. "You have death on your lips," said they, "be touched by your faults, and retract in our presence all that you have said to our injury." Wycliffe remained silent, and the visitors flattered themselves with an easy victory. But the nearer the reformer approached eternity, the greater was his horror of their evil doctrine. The consolation he had found in Jesus Christ had given him fresh energy. He begged his servant to raise him on his couch. Then feeble and pale, and scarcely able to support himself, he turned towards the friars, who were waiting for his recantation and, opening his livid lips, and fixing on them a piercing look, he said with emphasis, "I shall not die but live, and again declare the evil deeds of the friars." We might almost picture to ourselves the spirit of Elijah threatening the priests of Baal. The visitors looked at one another with astonishment. They left the room in confusion, and the reformer recovered to put the finishing touch to the most important of his works against false religion and against the pope.

CHAPTER 8
The Morning Star of the Reformation
1380–84

Wycliffe’s ministry had followed a progressive course. At first he had attacked the papacy; next he preached the gospel to the poor; he could take one more
step and put the people in permanent possession of the Word of God. This was the third phase of his activity.

Scholasticism had banished the Scriptures into a mysterious obscurity. It is true that Bede had translated the Gospel of St John, that the learned men at Alfred’s court had translated the four evangelists, that Ælfric in the reign of Ethelred II had translated some books of the Old Testament, that an Anglo-Norman priest had paraphrased the Gospels and the Acts, that Richard Rolle, “the hermit of Hampole” (near Doncaster), and some pious clerks in the fourteenth century, had produced a version of the Psalms, the Gospels, and Epistles, but these rare volumes were hidden, like theological curiosities, in the libraries of a few monasteries. It was then a maxim that the reading of the Bible was injurious to the laity, and accordingly the priests forbade it, just as the Brahmins forbid the Shastras to the Hindus. Oral tradition alone preserved among the people the histories of the Holy Scriptures, mingled with legends of the saints. The time appeared ripe for the publication of a Bible. The increase of population, the attention the English were beginning to devote to their own language, the development which the system of representative government had received, the awakening of the human mind—all these circumstances favored the reformer’s design.

Wycliffe was ignorant indeed of Greek and Hebrew, but was it nothing to shake off the dust which for ages had covered the Latin Bible, and to translate it into English? He was a good Latin scholar, of sound understanding and great penetration, but above all he loved the Bible, he understood it, and desired to communicate this treasure to others. Let us imagine him in his quiet study; on his table is the Vulgate text, corrected after the best manuscripts, and lying open around him are the commentaries of the doctors of the church, especially those of St. Jerome and Nicholas of Lyra. Between ten and fifteen years he steadily prosecuted his task; learned men aided him with their advice, and one of them, Nicholas of Hereford, a Fellow of Queen’s College, Oxford, appears to have translated a few chapters for him. At last, some time between 1380 and 1384, it was completed. This was a great event in the religious history of England; outstripping the nations on the continent, she took her station in the foremost rank in the great work of disseminating the Scriptures.

As soon as the translation was finished, the labor of the copyists began, and the Bible was erelong widely circulated either wholly or in portions. The reception of the work surpassed all expectations. The Holy Scriptures exercised a reviving influence over men’s hearts; minds were enlightened; souls were converted; the voices of the “poor priests” had done little in comparison with this voice; something new had entered into the world. Citizens, soldiers, and the lower classes welcomed this new era with acclamations; the high-born curiously examined the unknown book; and even Anne of Bohemia, wife of Richard II, prompted perhaps by the popular interest, began to read the Gospels diligently. She did more than this; she made them known to Thomas Arundel, archbishop of York and chancellor, and afterwards a persecutor, but who now, struck by the sight of a foreign lady, of a queen, humbly devoting her leisure to the study of “such virtuous books,” commenced reading them himself,
and rebuked the prelates who neglected this holy pursuit. "You could not meet two persons on the highway," says a contemporary writer, "but one of them was Wycliffe’s disciple."

Yet all in England did not equally rejoice; the lower clergy opposed this enthusiasm with complaints and maledictions. "Master John Wycliffe, by translating the gospel into English," said the monks, "has rendered it more acceptable and more intelligible to laymen and even to women, than it has hitherto been to learned and intelligent clerks! ... The gospel pearl is everywhere cast out and trodden under foot of swine." New contests arose for the reformer. Wherever he bent his steps, he was violently attacked. "It is heresy," cried the monks, "to speak of Holy Scripture in English." "Since the church has approved of the four Gospels, she would have been just as able to reject them and admit others! The church sanctions and condemns what she pleases. ... Learn to believe in the church rather than in the gospel." These clamors did not alarm Wycliffe. "Many nations have had the Bible in their own language. The Bible is the faith of the church. Though the pope and all his clerks should disappear from the face of the earth," said he, "our faith would not fail, for it is founded on Jesus alone, our Master and our God." But Wycliffe did not stand alone; in the palace as in the cottage, and even in parliament, the rights of Holy Scripture found defenders. A motion having been made in the Upper House (1390) to seize all the copies of the Bible, the Duke of Lancaster exclaimed, "Are we then the very dregs of humanity, that we cannot possess the laws of our religion in our own tongue?"

Having given his fellow countrymen the Bible, Wycliffe began to reflect on its contents. This was a new step in his onward path. There comes a moment when the Christian, saved by a lively faith, feels the need of giving an account to himself of this faith, and this originates the science of theology. This is a natural movement; if the child, who at first possesses sensations and affections only, feels the want, as he grows up, of reflection and knowledge, why should it not be the same with the Christian? Politics, home missions, Holy Scripture, had engaged Wycliffe in succession; theology had its turn, and this was the fourth phase of his life.

It is clear that up to the year 1378 Wycliffe was a firm believer in the doctrine of transubstantiation, which stands at the very center of the Roman Catholic system, the belief that when at the mass, the "words of consecration" are pronounced by the "priest," the bread and wine are miraculously changed into the very body and blood of the Lord. It is equally clear, however—it might even be claimed that it is clearer still—that three years later Wycliffe denied this doctrine with tremendous energy. Indeed he was now asserting that there never had been a heresy more cunningly smuggled into the church than transubstantiation. The reasons for his complete change of front are clear; he denounced it as contrary to Scripture (both Gospels and Epistles), as unsupported by early church tradition, as plainly opposed to the testimony of the senses, and as based upon false reasoning. He proclaimed furthermore, with immense vigor, that the doctrine was essentially idolatrous, and productive of arrogant priestly claims without warrant in Scripture. In sum, the
doctrine of the mass was to Wycliffe in the closing years of his life a "blasphemous deceit," or, to use his exact language, "a veritable abomination of desolation in the holy place."

When Wycliffe’s enemies heard these propositions, they appeared horror-stricken, and yet in secret they were delighted at the prospect of destroying him. They met together, examined twelve theses he had published, and pronounced against him suspension from all teaching, imprisonment, and the greater excommunication. At the same time his friends became alarmed, their zeal cooled, and many of them forsook him. The Duke of Lancaster, in particular, could not follow him into this new sphere. That prince had no objection to an ecclesiastical opposition which might aid the political power, and for that purpose he had tried to enlist the reformer's talents and courage, but he feared a dogmatic opposition that might compromise him. The sky was heavy with clouds; Wycliffe was alone.

The storm soon burst upon him. One day, while he was seated in his doctoral chair in Oxford, and calmly explaining the nature of the Lord’s Supper, an officer entered the hall, and read the sentence of condemnation. It was the design of his enemies to humble the professor in the eyes of his disciples. Lancaster immediately became alarmed and, hastening to his old friend, begged him—ordered him even—to trouble himself no more about this matter. Attacked on every side, Wycliffe for a time remained silent. Shall he sacrifice the truth to save his reputation, his repose, perhaps his life? Shall expediency get the better of faith? Shall Lancaster prevail over Wycliffe? No; his courage was invincible. “Since the year of our Lord 1000,” said he, “all the doctors have been in error about the sacrament of the altar, except, perhaps, it may be Berengar of Tours. How canst thou, O priest, who art but a man, make thy Maker? What! the thing that groweth in the fields, that ear which thou pluckest today, shall be God tomorrow! ... As you cannot make the works which He made, how shall ye make Him who made the works? Woe to the adulterous generation that believeth the testimony of Innocent rather than of the Gospel.”

Wycliffe called upon his adversaries to refute the opinions they had condemned and, finding that they threatened him with a civil penalty (imprisonment), he appealed to the king.

The time was not favorable for such an appeal. A fatal circumstance increased Wycliffe’s danger. Wat Tyler and a dissolute priest named Ball, taking advantage of the ill will excited by the rapacity and brutality of the royal tax gatherers, had occupied London with a tremendous company of supporters. John Ball kept up the spirits of the insurgents, not by expositions of the gospel, like Wycliffe’s poor priests, but by fiery comments on the distich they had chosen for their device:

> When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?

There were many who felt no scruple in ascribing these disorders to the reformer, who was quite innocent of them; and Courtenay, bishop of London,
having been translated to the see of Canterbury, lost no time in convoking a synod to pronounce on this matter. They met in the middle of May, about two o’clock in the afternoon, and were proceeding to pronounce sentence on Wycliffe when a severe earthquake shook the city of London and so alarmed the members of the council that they unanimously demanded the adjournment of a decision which appeared so manifestly rebuked by God. But the archbishop skillfully turned this strange phenomenon to his own purposes: "Know you not," said he, "that the noxious vapors which catch fire in the bosom of the earth, and give rise to these phenomena which alarm you, lose all their force when they burst forth? Well, in like manner, by rejecting the wicked from our community, we shall put an end to the convulsions of the church." The bishops regained their courage, and one of the primate’s officers read ten propositions, said to be Wycliffe’s, but ascribing to him certain errors of which he was quite innocent. The following most excited the anger of the priests: "God must obey the devil. ... After Urban VI we must receive no one as pope, but live according to the manner of the Greeks." The ten propositions were condemned as heretical, and the archbishop enjoined all persons to shun, as they would a venomous serpent, all who should preach the aforesaid errors. "If we permit this heretic to appeal continually to the passions of the people," said the primate to the king, "our destruction is inevitable. We must silence these Lollards—these psalm-singers." The king gave authority "to confine in the prisons of the state any who should maintain the condemned propositions." Day by day the circle contracted around Wycliffe. Some of his chief supporters, the prudent Philip Repingdon, the learned Nicholas of Hereford, and even the eloquent John Aston, the firmest of the three, departed from him. The veteran champion of the truth which had once gathered a whole nation round it, had reached the days when “strong men shall bow themselves,” and now, when harassed by persecution, he found himself alone. But boldly he uplifted his hoary head and exclaimed, “The doctrine of the gospel shall never perish, and if the earth once quaked, it was because they condemned Jesus Christ.” He did not stop here. In proportion as his physical strength decreased, his moral strength increased. Instead of parrying the blows aimed at him, he resolved on dealing more terrible ones still. He knew that if the king and the nobility were for the priests, the lower house and the citizens were for liberty and truth. He therefore presented a bold petition to the Commons in the month of November 1382. "Since Jesus Christ shed his blood to free his church, I demand its freedom. I demand that every one may leave those gloomy walls (the monasteries) within which a tyrannical law prevails, and embrace a simple and peaceful life under the open vault of heaven. I demand that the poor inhabitants of our towns and villages be not constrained to furnish a worldly priest, often a vicious man and a heretic, with the means of satisfying his ostentation, his gluttony, and his licentiousness—of buying a showy horse, costly saddles, bridles with tinkling bells, rich garments, and soft furs, while they see their wives, children, and neighbors dying of hunger.” The House of Commons, recollecting that they had not given their consent to the persecuting statute drawn up by the clergy and approved by the king and the lords,
demanded its repeal. Was the Reformation about to begin by the will of the people?
Courtenay, indignant at this intervention of the Commons, and ever stimulated by a zeal for his church, which would have been better directed towards the Word of God, visited Oxford in November 1382, and having gathered round him a number of bishops, doctors, priests, students, and laymen, summoned Wycliffe before him. A generation ago the reformer had come up to the university; Oxford had become his home... and now it was turning against him! Weakened by labors, by trials, by that ardent soul which preyed upon his feeble body, he might have refused to appear. But Wycliffe, who never feared the face of man, came before them with a good conscience. We may conjecture that there were among the crowd some disciples who felt their hearts burn at the sight of their master, but no outward sign indicated their emotion. The solemn silence of a court of justice had succeeded the shouts of enthusiastic youths. Yet Wycliffe did not despair; he raised his venerable head and turned to Courtenay with that confident look which had in earlier days made his opponents shrink away. Growing wroth against the priests of Baal, he reproached them with disseminating error in order to sell their masses. Then he stopped, and uttered these simple and energetic words: "The truth shall prevail!" Having thus spoken, he prepared to leave the court; his enemies dared not say a word, and, like his divine master at Nazareth, he passed through the midst of them, and no man ventured to stop him. He then withdrew to his parish of Lutterworth.
He had not yet reached the harbor. He was living peacefully among his books and his parishioners, and the priests seemed inclined to leave him alone, when another blow was aimed at him. A papal brief summoned him to Rome, to appear before that tribunal which had so often shed the blood of its adversaries. His bodily infirmities convinced him that he could not obey this summons. But if Wycliffe refused to hear Urban, Urban could not choose but hear Wycliffe. The church was at that time divided between two chiefs. France, Scotland, Savoy, Lorraine, Castile, and Aragon acknowledged Clement VII; while Italy, England, Germany, Sweden, Poland, and Hungary acknowledged Urban VI. Wycliffe shall tell us who is the true head of the church universal. And while the two popes were excommunicating and abusing each other, and selling heaven and earth for their own gain, the reformer was confessing that incorruptible Word, which establishes real unity in the church. "I believe," said he, "that the gospel of Christ is the whole body of God’s law. I believe that Christ, who gave it to us, is very God and very man, and by this it passes all other laws. I believe that the bishop of Rome is bound more than all other men to submit to it, for greatness among Christ’s disciples did not consist in worldly dignity or honors, but in the exact following of Christ in his life and manners. No faithful man ought to follow the pope, but in such points as he hath followed Jesus Christ. The pope ought to leave unto the secular power all temporal dominion and rule, and thereunto effectually more and more exhort his whole clergy. ... If I could labor according to my desire in mine own person, I would surely present myself before the bishop of Rome, but the Lord hath
otherwise visited me to the contrary, and hath taught me rather to obey God than men."

Urban, who at that moment chanced to be very busied in his contest with Clement, did not think it prudent to begin another with Wycliffe and so let the matter rest there. From this time the doctor passed the remainder of his days in peace in the company of three personages, two of whom were his particular friends and the third his constant adversary; these were Aletheia, Phronesis, and Pseudes. Aletheia (truth) proposed questions, Pseudes (falsehood) urged objections, and Phronesis (understanding) laid down the sound doctrine. These three characters carried on a conversation (trialogue) in which great truths were boldly professed. The opposition between the pope and Christ—between the canons of Romanism and the Bible—was painted in striking colors. This is one of the primary truths which the church must never forget. "The church has fallen," said one of the interlocutors in the work in question, "because she has abandoned the gospel, and preferred the laws of the pope. Although there should be a hundred popes in the world at once, and all the friars living should be transformed into cardinals, we must withhold our confidence from them in the matter of faith except so far as their teachings are those of the Scriptures." These words were the last flicker of the torch. Wycliffe looked upon his end as near, and entertained no idea that it would come in peace. A dungeon on one of the seven hills, or a burning pile in London, was all he expected. "Why do you talk of seeking the crown of martyrdom afar?" asked he. "Preach the gospel of Christ to haughty prelates, and martyrdom will not fail you. What! I should live and be silent? ... never! Let the blow fall, I await its coming."

The stroke was spared him. The war between two wicked priests, Urban and Clement, left the disciples of our Lord in peace. And besides, was it worthwhile cutting short a life that was drawing to a close? Wycliffe, therefore, continued tranquilly to preach Jesus Christ, and on the 29th of December 1384, as he was in his church at Lutterworth, in the midst of his flock, he was suddenly stricken with paralysis. He was carried to his house by the affectionate friends around him, and, after lingering forty-eight hours, resigned his soul to God on the last day of the year.

Thus was removed from the church one of the boldest witnesses to the truth. The seriousness of his language, the holiness of his life, and the energy of his faith, had intimidated the popedom. Travelers relate that if a lion is met in the desert, it is sufficient to look steadily at him, and the beast turns away roaring from the eye of man. Wycliffe had fixed the eye of a Christian on the papacy, and the affrighted papacy had left him in peace. Hunted down unceasingly while living, he died in quiet, in life and death a faithful witness to the truth of the Word of God. A glorious end to a glorious life.

The Reformation of England had begun.

Wycliffe is the greatest of English reformers; he was in truth the first reformer of Christendom, and to him, under God, Britain is indebted for the honor of being the foremost in the attack upon the theocratic system of Gregory VII. The work of the Waldenses, excellent as it was, cannot be compared to his. If
Luther and Calvin are the fathers of the Reformation, Wycliffe is its grandfather. Wycliffe, like most great men, possessed qualities which are not generally found together. While his understanding was eminently speculative—his treatise entitled *De universalibus realibus* (on the Reality of Universal Ideas) made a sensation in philosophy—he possessed that practical and active mind which characterizes the Anglo-Saxon race. As a divine, he was at once scriptural and spiritual, soundly orthodox, and possessed of an inward and lively faith. With a boldness that impelled him to rush into the midst of danger, he combined a logical and consistent mind, which constantly led him forward in knowledge, and caused him to maintain with perseverance the truths he had once proclaimed. First of all, as a Christian, he had devoted his strength to the cause of the church; but he was at the same time a citizen, and the realm, his nation, and his king had also a great share in his unwearied activity. He was a man complete.

If the man is admirable, his teaching is no less so. Scripture, which is the rule of truth, should be (according to his views) the rule of Reformation, and we must reject every doctrine and every precept which does not rest on that foundation. He declared that to believe in the power of man in the work of regeneration is the great heresy of Rome, and from that error has come the ruin of the church. Conversion proceeds from the grace of God alone, and the system which ascribes it partly to man and partly to God is worse than Pelagianism. Christ is everything in Christianity; whosoever abandons that fountain which is ever ready to impart life, and turns to muddy and stagnant waters, is a madman. Faith is a gift of God; it puts aside all merit, and should banish all fear from the mind. The one thing needful in the Christian life and in the Lord’s Supper is not a vain formalism and superstitious rites, but communion with Christ according to the power of the spiritual life. Let Christians submit not to the word of a priest but to the Word of God. In the primitive church there were but two orders, the deacon and the presbyter; the presbyter and the bishop were one. The sublimest calling which man can attain on earth is that of preaching the Word of God. The true church is the assembly of the righteous for whom Christ shed his blood. So long as Christ is in heaven, in Him the church possesses the best pope. It is possible for a pope to be condemned at the last day because of his sins. Should men compel us to recognize as our head “a devil of hell?” Such were the essential points of Wycliffe’s doctrine. It was the echo of the doctrine of the apostles—the prelude to that of the reformers.

In many respects Wycliffe is the Luther of England, but the times of revival had not yet come, and the English reformer could not gain such striking victories over Rome as the German reformer. While Luther was surrounded by an ever-increasing number of scholars and princes who confessed the same faith as himself, Wycliffe shone almost alone in the firmament of the church. The boldness with which he substituted a living spirituality for a superstitious formalism, caused those to shrink back in affright who had gone with him against friars, priests, and popes. Erelong the Roman pontiff ordered him to be
thrown into prison, and the monks threatened his life, but God protected him, and he remained calm amidst the machinations of his adversaries. "Antichrist," said he, "can only kill the body." Having one foot in the grave already, he foretold that, from the very bosom of monkery, would some day proceed the regeneration of the church. "If the friars, whom God condescends to teach, shall be converted to the primitive religion of Christ," said he, "we shall see them abandoning their unbelief, returning freely, with or without the permission of Antichrist, to the primitive religion of the Lord, and building up the church, as did St. Paul."

Thus did Wycliffe’s piercing glance discover, at the distance of nearly a century and a half, the young monk Luther in the Augustine convent at Erfurt, converted by the Epistle to the Romans, and returning to the spirit of St. Paul and the religion of Jesus Christ. Time was hastening on to the fulfillment of this prophecy. "The morning star of the Reformation," for so has Wycliffe been called, had appeared above the horizon, and its beams were no more to be extinguished. In vain will thick clouds veil it at times; the distant hilltops of Central Europe will soon reflect its rays, and its piercing light, increasing in brightness, will pour over all the world, at the hour of the church’s renovation, floods of knowledge and of life.

CHAPTER 9
The Lollard Burnings
15th Century

Wycliffe’s death manifested the power of his teaching. The master being removed, his disciples set their hands to the plough, and England was almost won over to the reformer’s doctrines. The Wycliffites recognized a ministry independent of Rome, and deriving authority from the Word of God alone. "Every minister," said they, "can administer the sacraments and attend to the cure of souls as well as the pope." To the licentious wealth of the clergy they opposed a Christian poverty, and to the degenerate asceticism of the mendicant orders, a spiritual and free life. The townsfolk crowded around these humble preachers; the soldiers listened to them, armed with sword and buckler to defend them; the nobility took down the images from their baronial chapels, and even the royal family was partly won over to the Reformation. England was like a tree cut down to the ground, from whose roots fresh buds were shooting out on every side, erelong to cover all the earth beneath their shade.

This augmented the courage of Wycliffe’s disciples, and in many places the people took the initiative in the reform. The walls of St. Paul’s and other cathedrals were hung with placards aimed at the priests and friars and the abuses of which they were the defenders, and in 1395 the friends of the Gospel petitioned parliament for a general reform. "The essence of the worship which comes from Rome," said they, "consists in signs and ceremonies, and not in the effectual ministry of the Holy Ghost, and therefore it is not that which Christ has ordained. Temporal things are distinct from spiritual things; a king and a
bishop ought not to be one and the same person." And then, from not clearly understanding the principle of the separation of the functions which they proclaimed, they called upon parliament to "abolish celibacy, transubstantiation, prayers for the dead, offerings to images, auricular confession, war, the arts unnecessary to life, the practice of blessing oil, salt, wax, incense, stones, miters, and pilgrims’ staffs. All these pertain to necromancy and not to theology." Emboldened by the absence of the king in Ireland, they fixed their Twelve Conclusions on the gates of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. This became the signal for persecution.

As soon as Arundel, archbishop of York, and Braybrooke, bishop of London, had read these propositions, they hastily crossed St. George's Channel, and conjured the king to return to England. He did so. Richard, during childhood and youth, had been committed in succession to the charge of several guardians, and like children (says a historian) whose nurses have been often changed, he thrived none the better for it. He did good or evil, according to the influence of those around him, and, after the death of his pious wife, Anne of Bohemia, in 1394, he had no decided inclinations except for ostentation and licentiousness. The clergy were not mistaken in calculating on such a prince.

On his return to London he forbade the parliament to take the Wycliffite petition into consideration, and, having summoned before him the most distinguished of its supporters, such as Story, Clifford, Latimer, and Montacute, he threatened them with death if they continued to defend their abominable opinions. Thus was the work of the reformer about to be destroyed.

But Richard had hardly withdrawn his hand from the gospel, when God (says Foxe the annalist) withdrew his hand from him. His cousin, Henry Bolingbroke, son of the famous Duke of Lancaster, and who had been banished from England, suddenly sailed from the continent, landed in Yorkshire, gathered all the malcontents around him, and was acknowledged king. The unhappy Richard, after being formally deposed, was confined in Pontefract castle, where his earthly career was soon terminated.

The son of Wycliffe's old defender was now king with the title of Henry IV; a reform of the church seemed imminent, but the primate Arundel had foreseen the danger. This cunning priest and skillful politician had observed which way the wind blew, and deserted Richard in good time. Taking Lancaster by the hand, he put the crown on his head, saying to him, "To consolidate your throne, conciliate the clergy, and sacrifice the Lollards." "I will be the protector of the church," replied Henry IV, and from that hour the power of the priests was greater than the power of the nobility. Rome has ever been adroit in profiting by revolutions.

Henry ascended the throne in the late summer of 1399. In 1401 the famous Act for the burning of heretics, De Haeretico Comburendo, was passed by Parliament. The church claimed that the Act was in accord with a well-established principle, and to provide evidence that this was so, they hurried through the burning of a Lollard martyr in March 1401. The Act was passed some eight days later.
Protestantism’s proto-martyr was a pious priest named William Sawtre who had presumed to say, "Instead of adoring the cross on which Christ suffered, I adore Christ who suffered on it." He was dragged to St. Paul’s; his hair was shaved off; a layman’s cap was placed on his head; and the primate handed him over to the mercy of the earl-marshall of England. This mercy was shown him—he was burnt alive at Smithfield, the first of a “noble army” in England who loved not their lives unto the death.

Encouraged by this act of faith—this auto da fé—the clergy drew up the articles known as the "Constitutions of Arundel," which forbade the translation and reading of the Bible without the permission of the Ordinary (i.e., a bishop or similar high officer of the church) and styled the pope, “not a mere man, but a true God.” The Lollards’ tower, in the archiepiscopal palace of Lambeth, was soon filled with pretended heretics, many of whom carved on the walls of their dungeons the expression of their sorrow and their hopes: Jesus amor meus (Jesus is my love), wrote one of them. The words are still to be read in the tower.

To crush the lowly was not enough; the gospel must be driven from the more exalted stations. The priests who were sincere in their belief regarded those noblemen as misleaders, who set the Word of God above the laws of Rome, and accordingly they girded themselves for the work. A few miles from Rochester stood Cowling Castle, in the midst of the fertile pastures watered by the Medway,

The fair Medwaya that with wanton pride
Forms silver mazes with her crooked tide.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century it was inhabited by Sir John Oldcastle, who became by his marriage, Lord Cobham, a man in high favor with the king. The "poor priests" thronged to Cowling in quest of Wycliffe’s writings, of which Cobham had caused numerous copies to be made, and whence they were circulated through the dioceses of Canterbury, Rochester, London, and Hertford. Cobham attended their preaching and, if any enemies ventured to interrupt them, he threatened them with his sword. "I would sooner risk my life," said he, "than submit to such unjust decrees as dishonor the everlasting Testament." The king would not permit the clergy to lay hands on his favorite. But Henry V having succeeded his father in 1413, and passed from the houses of ill fame he had hitherto frequented to the foot of the altars and the head of the armies, the archbishop immediately denounced Cobham to him, and he was summoned to appear before the king. Sir John had understood Wycliffe’s doctrine, and experienced in his own person the might of the divine Word. "As touching the pope and his spirituality," he said to the king, "I owe them neither suit nor service, forasmuch as I know him by the Scriptures to be the great antichrist." Henry thrust aside Cobham’s hand as he presented his confession of faith: "I will not receive this paper; lay it before your judges." When he saw his profession refused, Cobham had recourse to the only arm which he knew of out of the gospel. The differences which we now settle by pamphlets were then
very commonly settled by the sword—"I offer in defense of my faith to fight for life or death with any man living, Christian or pagan, always excepting your majesty." Cobham was led to the Tower.

On the 23rd of September, 1413, he was taken before the ecclesiastical tribunal then sitting at St. Paul’s. "We must believe," said the primate to him, "what the holy church of Rome teaches, without demanding Christ’s authority." "Believe!" shouted the priests, "believe!" "I am willing to believe all that God desires," said Sir John, "but that the pope should have authority to teach what is contrary to Scripture—that I can never believe." He was led back to the Tower. The Word of God was to have its martyr.

On Monday, 25th September, a crowd of priests, canons, friars, clerks, and indulgence-sellers, thronged the large hall of the Dominican convent, and attacked Lord Cobham with abusive language. These insults, the importance of the moment for the Reformation of England, the catastrophe that must needs close the scene, all agitated his soul to its very depths. When the archbishop called upon him to confess his offense, he fell on his knees and, lifting up his hands to heaven, exclaimed, "I confess to Thee, O God! and acknowledge that in my frail youth I seriously offended Thee by my pride, anger, intemperance, and impurity; for these offences I implore Thy mercy!" Then standing up, his face still wet with tears, he said, "I ask not your absolution; it is God’s only that I need." The clergy did not despair, however, of reducing this high-spirited gentleman; they knew that spiritual strength is not always conjoined with bodily vigor, and they hoped to vanquish by priestly sophisms the man who dared challenge the papal champions to single combat. "Sir John," said the primate at last, "you have said some very strange things; we have spent much time in endeavors to convince you, but all to no effect. The day passeth away; you must either submit yourself to the ordinance of the most holy church or..."

"I will none otherwise believe than what I have told you. Do with me what you will." "Well then, we must needs do the law," the archbishop made answer. Arundel stood up; all the priests and people rose with him and uncovered their heads. Then holding the sentence of death in his hand, he read it with a loud clear voice. "It is well," said Sir John, "though you condemn my body, you can do no harm to my soul, by the grace of my eternal God." He was again led back to the Tower, and given forty days in which to recant. But one night before that period ended, Lord Cobham escaped, and took refuge in Wales. He was retaken in December 1417, carried to London, dragged on a hurdle to Saint Giles’s fields, and there suspended by chains over a slow fire, and cruelly burned to death. Thus died a Christian, illustrious after the fashion of his age—a champion of the Word of God. Shortly the London prisons were filled with Wycliffites, and it was decreed that they should be hanged on the king’s account, and burnt for God’s.

The intimidated Lollards were compelled to hide themselves in the humblest ranks of the people, and to hold their meetings in secret. The work of redemption was proceeding noiselessly among the elect of God. Of these Lollards, there were many who were doubtless true disciples of Jesus Christ, but in general they knew not, to the same extent as the evangelical Christians
of the sixteenth century, the quickening and justifying power of faith. They were plain, meek, and often timid folks, attracted by the Word of God, affected at the condemnation it pronounces against the errors of Rome, and desirous of living according to its commandments. God had assigned them a part—and an important part too—in the great transformation of Christianity. Their humble piety, their passive resistance, the shameful treatment which they bore with resignation, the penitent’s robes with which they were covered, the tapers they were compelled to hold at the church door—all these things betrayed the pride of the priests, and filled the most generous minds with doubts and vague desires. By a baptism of suffering, God was then preparing the way to a glorious reformation.

CHAPTER 10
The New Learning and the New Dynasty

This reformation was to be the result of two distinct forces—the revival of learning and the resurrection of the Word of God. The latter was the principal cause, but the former was necessary as a means. Without it the living waters of the gospel would probably have traversed the age, like summer streams which soon dry up, such as those which had burst forth here and there during the middle ages; it would not have become that majestic river, which, by its inundations, fertilized all the earth. It was necessary to discover and examine the original fountains, and for this end the study of Greek and Hebrew was indispensable. Lollardism and humanism (the study of the classics) were the two laboratories of the reform. Having seen the preparations of the one, we must now trace the commencement of the other; and as we have discovered the light in the lowly valleys, we shall discern it also on the lofty mountaintops. About the end of the fifteenth century, several young Englishmen chanced to be at Florence, attracted thither by the literary glory which environed the city of the Medici. Cosmo had collected together a great number of works of antiquity, and his palace was thronged with learned men. William Sellyng, a young English ecclesiastic, afterwards distinguished at Canterbury by his zeal in collecting valuable manuscripts; his fellow countrymen, William Grocyn, William Lilly, and William Latimer "more bashful than a maiden"; and, above all, Thomas Linacre, whom Erasmus ranked before all the scholars of Italy, used to meet in the delightful villa of the Medici with Politian, Chalcondyles, and other men of learning; and there, in the calm evenings of summer, under that glorious Tuscan sky, they dreamt romantic visions of the Platonic philosophy. When they returned to England, these learned men laid before the youth of Oxford the marvelous treasures of the Greek language. Some Italians even, attracted by the desire to enlighten the barbarians, and a little, it may be, by the brilliant offers made them, quitted their beloved country for the distant Britain. Cornelio Vitelli taught at Oxford, and Caius Amberino at Cambridge. Caxton imported the art of printing from Germany, and the nation
hailed with enthusiasm the brilliant dawn which was breaking at last in their cloudy sky.

While learning was reviving in England, a new dynasty succeeded to the throne, bringing with it that energy of character which of itself is able to effect great revolutions; the Tudors succeeded the Plantagenets. That inflexible intrepidity by which the reformers of Germany, Switzerland, France, and Scotland were distinguished, did not exist so generally in those of England; but it was found in the character of her kings, who often stretched it even to violence. It may be that to this preponderance of energy in its rulers, the church owes the preponderance of the state in its affairs.

Henry Tudor, the Louis XI of England, was a clever prince, of decided but suspicious character, avaricious and narrow-minded. Being descended from a Welsh family, he belonged to that ancient race of Celts, who had so long contended against the papacy. Henry extinguished faction at home, and taught foreign nations to respect his power. A good genius seemed to exercise a salutary influence over his court as well as over himself—this was his mother, the Countess of Richmond. From her chamber, where she consecrated the first five hours of the day to reading, meditation, and prayer, she moved to another part of the palace to dress the wounds of some of the lowest mendicants; thence she passed into the gay saloons, where she would converse with the scholars, whom she encouraged by her munificence. This noble lady’s passion for study, of which her son inherited but little, was not without its influence in her family. Arthur and Henry, the king’s sons, trembled in their father’s presence, but, captivated by the affection of their pious grandmother, they began to find a pleasure in the society of learned men. An important circumstance gave a new impulse to one of them.

Among the countess’s friends was William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, who had known Erasmus at Paris, and heard his cutting sarcasms upon the schoolmen and friars. He invited the illustrious Dutchman to England, and Erasmus, who was fearful of catching the plague, gladly accepted the invitation, and set out for what he believed to be the kingdom of darkness. But he had not been long in England before he discovered unexpected light.

Shortly after his arrival, happening to dine with the lord-mayor of London, Erasmus noticed on the other side of the table a young man of nineteen, slender, fresh-colored, with blue eyes, coarse hands, and the right shoulder somewhat higher than the other. His features indicated affability and gaiety, and pleasant jests were continually dropping from his lips. If he could not find a joke in English, he would in French, and even in Latin or Greek. A literary contest soon ensued between Erasmus and the English youth. The former, astonished at meeting with anyone that could hold his own against him, exclaimed, *Aut tu es Morus aut nullus!* (you are either More or nobody), and his companion, who had not learnt the stranger’s name, quickly replied, *Aut to es Erasmus aut diabolus!* (you are either the devil or Erasmus). More flung himself into the arms of Erasmus, and they became inseparable friends. More was continually joking, even with women, teasing the sprightly, and making fun of the dull, though without any tinge of ill nature in his jests. But under this
sportive exterior he concealed a deep understanding. He was at that time lecturing on Augustine’s City of God before a numerous audience composed of priests and aged men. The thought of eternity had seized him, and being ignorant of that internal discipline of the Holy Ghost, which is the only true discipline, he had recourse to the scourge every Friday. Thomas More is the ideal of the catholicism of this period. He had, like the Romish system, two poles—worldliness and asceticism, which, although contrary, often meet together. In fact, asceticism makes a sacrifice of self, only to preserve it, just as a traveler attacked by robbers will readily give up a portion of his treasures to save the rest. This was the case with More, if we rightly understand his character. He sacrificed the accessories of his fallen nature to save that same nature. He submitted to fasts and vigils, wore a shirt of hair-cloth, mortified his body by small chains next his skin—in a word, he immolated everything in order to preserve that self which a real regeneration alone can sacrifice.

From London Erasmus went to Oxford, where he met with John Colet, a friend of More’s, but older, and of very dissimilar character. Colet, the scion of an ancient family, was a very portly man, of imposing aspect, great fortune, and elegance of manners, to which Erasmus had not been accustomed. Order, cleanliness, and decorum prevailed in his person and in his house. He kept an excellent table, which was open to all the friends of learning, and at which the Dutchman, no great admirer of the colleges of Paris with their sour wine and stale eggs, was glad to take a seat. He there met also most of the classical scholars of England, especially Grocyn, Linacre, Thomas Wolsey, bursar of Magdalen College, Halsey, and some others. "I cannot tell you how I am delighted with your England," he wrote to Lord Mountjoy from Oxford. "With such men I could willingly live in the farthest coasts of Scythia."

But if Erasmus on the banks of the Thames found a Mæcenas in Lord Mountjoy, a Labeo and perhaps a Virgil in More, he nowhere found an Augustus. One day as he was expressing his regrets and his fears to More, the latter said, "Come, let us go to Eltham, perhaps we shall find there what you are looking for." They set out, More jesting all the way, inwardly resolving to expiate his gaiety by a severe scourging at night. On their arrival they were heartily welcomed by Lord and Lady Mountjoy, the governor and governess of the king’s children. As the two friends entered the hall, a pleasing and unexpected sight greeted Erasmus. The whole of the family were assembled, and they found themselves surrounded not only by some of the royal household, but by the domestics of Lord Mountjoy also. On the right stood the Princess Margaret, a girl of eleven years, whose great-grandson under the name of Stuart was to continue the Tudor line in England; on the left was Mary, a child four years of age; Edmund was in his nurse’s arms; and in the middle of the circle, between his two sisters, stood a boy, at that time only nine years old, whose handsome features, royal carriage, intelligent eye, and exquisite courtesy, had an extraordinary charm for Erasmus. That boy was Henry, Duke of York, the king’s second son, born on the 28th of June, 1491. More, advancing towards the young prince, presented to him some piece of his own writing; and from that hour Erasmus kept up a friendly intercourse with Henry, which in all probability
exercised a certain influence over the destinies of England. The scholar of Rotterdam was delighted to see the prince excel in all the manly sports of the day. He sat his horse with perfect grace and rare intrepidity, could hurl a javelin farther than any of his companions, and having an excellent taste for music, he was already a performer on several instruments. The king took care that he should receive a learned education—it may have been the case that he destined him to fill the see of Canterbury—and the illustrious Erasmus, noticing his aptitude for everything he undertook, did his best to cut and polish this English diamond that it might glitter with the greater brilliancy. "He will begin nothing that he will not finish," said the scholar. And it is but too true that this prince always attained his end, even if it were necessary to tread on the bleeding bodies of those he had loved. Flattered by the attentions of the young Henry, attracted by his winning grace, charmed by his wit, Erasmus on his return to the continent everywhere proclaimed that England at last had found its Octavius.

As for Henry VII he thought of everything but Virgil or Augustus. Avarice and ambition were his predominant tastes, which he gratified by the marriage of his eldest son Arthur in 1501. Burgundy, Artois, Provence, and Brittany having been recently united to France, the European powers felt the necessity of combining against that encroaching state. It was in consequence of this that Ferdinand of Aragon had given his daughter Joanna to Philip of Austria, and that Henry VII asked the hand of his daughter Catherine, then in her sixteenth year and the richest princess in Europe, for Arthur, prince of Wales, a youth about ten months younger. The catholic king attached one condition to the marriage of his daughter. Warwick, the last of the Plantagenets and a pretender to the crown, was confined in the Tower. Ferdinand, to secure the certainty that Catherine would really ascend the English throne, required that the unhappy prince should be put to death. Nor did this alone satisfy the king of Spain. Henry VII, who was not a cruel man, might conceal Warwick, and say that he was no more. Ferdinand demanded that the chancellor of Castile should be present at the execution. The blood of Warwick was shed; his head rolled duly on the scaffold; the Castilian chancellor verified and registered the murder, and on the 14th of November the marriage was solemnized at St. Paul’s. At midnight the prince and princess were conducted with great pomp to the bridal-chamber. These were ill-omened nuptials, fated to set the kings and nations of Christendom in battle against one another, and to serve as a pretext for the external and political discussions of the English Reformation. The marriage of Catherine the Catholic was a marriage of blood.

In the early part of 1502 Prince Arthur fell ill, and on the 2nd of April he died. The necessary time was taken to be sure that Catherine had no hope of becoming a mother, after which the friend of Erasmus, the youthful Henry, was declared heir to the crown, to the great joy of all the learned. This prince did not forsake his studies; he spoke and wrote in French, German, and Spanish with the facility of a native, and England hoped to behold one day the most learned of Christian kings upon the throne of Alfred the Great.
A very different question, however, filled the mind of the covetous Henry VII. Must he restore to Spain the one hundred thousand crowns which formed the half of Catherine’s dowry already paid, and forfeit his claims to the half as yet unpaid? Should this rich heiress be permitted to marry some rival of England? To prevent so great a misfortune the king conceived the project of uniting Henry to Arthur’s widow. The most serious objections were urged against it. "It is not only inconsistent with propriety," said Warham, the primate, "but the will of God himself is against it. It is declared in His law that if a man shall take his brother’s wife, it is an unclean thing (Leviticus 20:21); and in the Gospel, John Baptist says to Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife" (Mark 6:18). Fox, bishop of Winchester, suggested that a dispensation might be procured from the pope, and in December 1503 Julius II granted a bull declaring that for the sake of preserving union between the catholic princes he authorized Catherine’s marriage with the brother of her first husband, accedente forsan copula carnali. These four words, it is said, were inserted in the bull at the express desire of the princess. All these details will be of importance in the course of our history. The two parties were betrothed, but not married in consideration of the youth of the prince of Wales.

The second marriage projected by Henry VII was ushered in with auspices still less promising than the first. The king having fallen sick and lost his queen, looked upon these visitations as a divine judgment. The nation murmured, and demanded whether it was in the pope’s power to permit what God had forbidden. The young prince, being informed of his father’s scruples and of the people’s discontent, declared, on the eve of his fourteenth birthday (27th June, 1505) in the presence of the bishop of Winchester and several royal counsellors, that he protested against the engagement entered into during his minority, and that he would never make Catherine his wife.

His father’s death, which made him free, made him also recall this virtuous decision. In 1509, the hopes of the learned seemed about to be realized. On the 9th of May, a hearse decorated with regal pomp, bearing on a rich pall of cloth of gold the mortal remains of Henry VII, with his scepter and his crown, entered London from Richmond, followed by a long procession. The great officers of state, assembled round the coffin, broke their staves and cast them into the vault, and the heralds cried with a loud voice, "God send the noble King Henry VIII long life." Such a cry perhaps had never on any previous occasion been so joyfully repeated by the people. The young king gratified the wishes of the nation by ordering the arrest of Empson and Dudley, who were charged with extortion; and he conformed to the enlightened counsels of his grandmother, by choosing the most able ministers, and placing the archbishop of Canterbury as lord-chancellor at their head. Warham was a man of great capacity. The day was not too short for him to hear mass, receive ambassadors, consult with the king in the royal chamber, entertain as many as two hundred guests at his table, take his seat on the woolsack, and find time for his private devotions. The joy of the learned surpassed that of the people. The old king wanted none of their praises or congratulations, for fear he should have to pay for them, but now they could give free course to their enthusiasm. Mountjoy
pronounced the young king "divine"; the Venetian ambassador likened his bearing to Apollo's, and his noble chest to the torso of Mars; he was lauded both in Greek and Latin; he was hailed as the founder of a new era, and Henry seemed desirous of meriting these eulogiums. Far from permitting himself to be intoxicated by so much adulation, he said to Mountjoy, "Ah! how I should like to be a scholar!" "Sire," replied the courtier, "it is enough that you show your regard for those who possess the learning you desire for yourself." "How can I do otherwise," he replied with earnestness, "without them we hardly exist!" Mountjoy immediately communicated this to Erasmus.

Erasmus! Erasmus! the walls of Eltham, Oxford, and London resounded with the name. The king could not live without the learned, nor the learned without Erasmus. This scholar, who was an enthusiast for the young king, was not long in answering to the call. When Richard Pace, the king's secretary, and one of the most accomplished men of that age, met the learned Dutchman at Ferrara, the latter took from his pocket a little box which he always carried with him. "You do not know," he said, "what a treasure you have in England; I will just show you"; and he took from the box a letter of Henry's expressing in Latin of considerable purity the tenderest regard for his correspondent. Immediately after the coronation Mountjoy wrote to Erasmus, "Our Henry Octavus, or rather Octavius, is on the throne. Come and behold the new star. The heavens smile, the earth leaps for joy, and all is flowing with milk, nectar, and honey. Avarice has fled away, liberality has descended, scattering on every side with gracious hand her bounteous largesses. Our king desires not gold or precious stones, but virtue, glory, and immortality."

In such glowing terms was the young king described by a man who had seen him closely. Erasmus could resist no longer; he bade the pope farewell, and hastened to London, where he met with a hearty welcome from Henry. Knowledge and power embraced each other; England was about to have its Medici, and the friends of learning no longer doubted of the regeneration of Britain.

Julius II, who had permitted Erasmus to exchange the white frock of the monks for the black dress of the seculars, allowed him to depart without much regret. This pontiff had little taste for letters, but was fond of war, hunting, and the pleasures of the table. The English sent him a dish to his taste in exchange for the scholar. Sometime after Erasmus had left, as the pope was one day reposing from the fatigues of the chase, he heard voices near him singing a strange song. He asked with surprise what it meant. "It is some Englishmen," was the answer, and three foreigners entered the room, each bearing a closely covered jar, which the youngest presented on his knees. This was Thomas Cromwell, who appears here for the first time on the historic scene. He was the son of a blacksmith of Putney; but he possessed a mind so penetrating, a judgment so sound, a heart so bold, ability so consummate, such easy elocution, such an accurate memory, such great activity, and so able a pen, that the most brilliant career awaited him. At about eighteen years of age he left England, being desirous to see the world, and after a period in Italy he began life as a trader in the English factory at Antwerp. Shortly after this, two
fellow countrymen from Boston came to him in their embarrassment. "What do you want?" he asked them. "Our townsmen have sent us to the pope," they told him, "to get the renewal of the greater and lesser pardons, whose term is nearly run, and which are necessary for the repair of our harbor. But we do not know how to appear before him." Cromwell, prompt to undertake everything, and knowing a little Italian, replied, "I will go with you." Then slapping his forehead he muttered to himself, "What fish can I throw out as a bait to these greedy cormorants?" A friend informed him that the pope was very fond of dainties. Cromwell immediately ordered some exquisite jelly to be prepared, after the English fashion, and set out for Italy with his provisions and his two companions.

This was the man who appeared before Julius after his return from the chase. "Kings and princes alone eat of this preserve in England," said Cromwell to the pope. One cardinal, who was a greedier "cormorant" than his master, eagerly tasted the delicacy. "Try it," he exclaimed, and the pope, relishing this new confectionery, immediately signed the pardons, on condition however that the recipe for the jelly should be left with him. "And thus were the jelly-pardons obtained," says the annalist. It was Cromwell’s first exploit, and the man who began his busy career by presenting jars of confectionery to the pope was also the man destined to separate England from Rome.

The court of the pontiff was not the only one in Europe devoted to gaiety. Hunting parties were as common in London as at Rome. The young king and his companions were at that time absorbed in balls, banquets, and the other festivities inseparable from a new reign. He recollected however that he must give a queen to his people; Catherine of Aragon was still in England, and the council recommended her for his wife. He admired her piety without caring to imitate it; he was pleased with her love for literature, and even felt some inclination towards her. His advisers represented to him that "Catherine, daughter of the illustrious Isabella of Castile, was the image of her mother; that, like her, she possessed that wisdom and greatness of mind which win the respect of nations; and that if she carried to any of his rivals her marriage-portion and the Spanish alliance, the long-contested crown of England would soon fall from his head... "We have the pope’s dispensation—will you be more scrupulous than he is?" The archbishop of Canterbury opposed in vain; Henry gave way, and on the eleventh of June, about seven weeks after his father’s death, the nuptials were privately celebrated at Greenwich. On the twenty-third the king and queen went in state through the city, the bride wearing a white satin dress with her hair hanging down her back nearly to her feet. On the next day they were crowned at Westminster with great magnificence.

Then followed a series of expensive entertainments. The treasures which the nobility had long concealed from fear of the old king, were now brought out; the ladies glittered with gold and diamonds; and the king and queen, whom the people never grew tired of admiring, amused themselves like children with the splendor of their royal robes. Henry VIII was the forerunner of Louis XIV. Naturally inclined to pomp and pleasure, the idol of his people, a devoted admirer of female beauty, and the husband of almost as many wives as Louis
had adulterous mistresses, he made the court of England what the son of Anne of Austria made the court of France—one constant scene of amusements. He thought he could never get to the end of the riches amassed by his prudent father. His youth—for he was only eighteen—the gaiety of his disposition, the grace he displayed in all bodily exercises, the tales of chivalry in which he delighted, and which even the clergy recommended to their high-born hearers, the flattery of his courtiers—all these combined to set his young imagination in a ferment. Wherever he appeared, all were filled with admiration of his handsome countenance and graceful figure; such is the portrait bequeathed to us by the Jesuit, Nicholas Sander, his greatest enemy. "His brow was made to wear the crown, and his majestic port the kingly mantle," adds Noryson. Henry resolved to realize without delay the chivalrous combats and fabulous splendors of the heroes of the Round Table, as if to prepare himself for those more real struggles which he would one day have to maintain against the papacy. At the sound of the trumpet the youthful monarch would enter the lists, clad in costly armor, and wearing a plume that fell gracefully down to the saddle of his vigorous courser; "like an untamed bull," says a historian, "which breaks away from its yoke and rushes into the arena." On one occasion, at the celebration of the queen’s churching, Catherine with her ladies was seated in a tent of purple and gold, in the midst of an artificial forest, strewn with rocks and variegated with flowers. On a sudden a monk stepped forward, wearing a long brown robe, and kneeling before her, begged permission to run a course. It was granted, and rising up he threw aside his coarse frock, and appeared gorgeously armed for the tourney. He was Charles Brandon, afterwards Duke of Suffolk, one of the handsomest and strongest men in the kingdom, and the first after Henry in military exercises. He was followed by a number of others dressed in black velvet, with wide-brimmed hats on their heads, staffs in their hands, and scarves across their shoulders ornamented with cockle shells, like pilgrims from St. James of Compostella. These also threw off their disguise, and stood forth in complete armor. At their head was Sir Thomas Boleyn, whose daughter was destined to surpass in beauty, greatness, and misfortune, all the women of England. The tournament began. Henry, who has been compared to Amadis in boldness, to the lion-hearted Richard in courage, and to Edward III in courtesy, did not always escape danger in these chivalrous contests. One day the king had forgotten to lower his visor, and Brandon, his opponent, setting off at full gallop, the spectators noticed the oversight, and cried out in alarm. But nothing could stop their horses; the two cavaliers met. Suffolk’s lance was shivered against Henry, and the fragments struck him in the face. Everyone thought the king was dead, and some were running to arrest Brandon, when Henry, recovering from the blow which had fallen on his helmet, recommenced the combat, and ran six new courses amid the admiring cries of his subjects. This intrepid courage changed, as he grew older, into unsparing cruelty; and it was this young tiger, whose movements were then so graceful, that at no distant day tore with his blood-red fangs the mother of his children.

CHAPTER 11
A message from the pope stopped Henry in the midst of these amusements. In Scotland, Spain, France, and Italy, the young king had nothing but friends—a harmony which the papacy was intent on disturbing. One day, immediately after high mass had been celebrated, the archbishop of Canterbury, on behalf of Julius II, laid at his feet a golden rose, which had been blessed by the pope, anointed with holy oil, and perfumed with musk. It was accompanied by a letter saluting him as head of the Italian league. The warlike pontiff having reduced the Venetians, desired to humble France, and to employ Henry as the instrument of his vengeance. Henry, only a short time before, had renewed his alliance with Louis XII, but the pope was not to be baffled by such a trifle as that, and the young king soon began to dream of rivaling the glories of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. To no purpose did his wisest councilors represent to him that England, in the most favorable times, had never been able to hold her ground in France, and that the sea was the true field open to her conquests. Julius, knowing his vanity, had promised to deprive Louis of the title of Most Christian King, and confer it upon him. "His Holiness hopes that your Grace will utterly exterminate the king of France," wrote the king's agent. Henry saw nothing objectionable in this very unapostolic mission, and decided on substituting the terrible game of war for the gentler sports of peace.

After some unsuccessful attempts by his generals, Henry determined to invade France in person. He was in the midst of his preparations when the festival of Easter arrived. Dean Colet had been appointed to preach before Henry on Good Friday, and in the course of his sermon he showed more courage than could have been expected in a scholar, for a spark of the Christian spirit was glowing in his bosom. He chose for the subject of his discourse Christ's victory over death and the grave. "Whoever takes up arms from ambition," said he, "fights not under the standard of Christ, but of Satan. If you desire to contend against your enemies, follow Jesus Christ as your prince and captain, rather than Caesar or Alexander." His hearers looked at each other with astonishment; the friends of polite literature became alarmed; and the priests, who were getting uneasy at the uprising of the human mind, hoped to profit by this opportunity of inflicting a deadly blow on their antagonists. There were among them men whose opinions we must condemn, while we cannot forbear respecting the zeal for what they believed to be the truth; of this number were Bricot, Fitzjames, and above all Standish. Their zeal, however, went a little too far on this occasion; they even talked of burning the dean. After the sermon, Colet was informed that the king requested his attendance in the garden of the Franciscan monastery, and immediately the priests and monks crowded round the gate, hoping to see their adversary led forth as a criminal. "Let us be alone," said Henry, "put on your cap, Mr. Dean, and we will take a walk. Cheer up," he continued, "you have nothing to fear. You have spoken admirably of Christian charity, and have almost reconciled me to the king of France; yet, as the contest is not one of choice, but of necessity, I must beg of you in some
future sermon to explain this to my people. Unless you do so, I fear my soldiers may misunderstand your meaning." Colet was not a John Baptist, and, affected by the king's condescension, he gave the required explanation. The king was satisfied, and exclaimed, "Let every man have his doctor as he pleases; this man is my doctor, and I will drink his health!" Henry was then young; very different was the fashion with which in after-years he treated those who opposed him.

At heart the king cared little more about the victories of Alexander than of Jesus Christ. Having fitted out his army, he embarked at the end of June, 1513, accompanied by his almoner, Wolsey, who was rising into favor, and set out for the war as if for a tournament. Shortly after this, he went, all glittering with jewels, to meet the Emperor Maximilian, who received him in a plain doublet and cloak of black serge. After his victory at the battle of the Spurs, Henry, instead of pressing forward to the conquest of France, returned to the siege of Thérouanne, wasted his time in jousts and entertainments, conferred on Wolsey the bishopric of Tournai which he had just captured, and then returned to England, delighted at having made so pleasant an excursion.

Louis XII was a widower in his 53rd year, and bowed down by the infirmities of a premature old age; but being desirous of preventing, at any cost, the renewal of the war, he sought the hand of Henry's sister, the Princess Mary, then in her 18th year. Her affections were already fixed on Charles Brandon, and for him she would have sacrificed the splendor of a throne. But reasons of state opposed their union. "The princess," remarked Wolsey, "will soon return to England a widow with a royal dowry." This decided the question. The disconsolate Mary, who was an object of universal pity, embarked at Dover with a numerous train, and from Boulogne, where she was received by the duke of Angoulême, she was conducted to the king, who was elated at the idea of marrying the handsomest princess in Europe.

Among Mary's attendants was the youthful Anne Boleyn. Her father, Sir Thomas Boleyn, had been charged by Henry, conjointly with the bishop of Ely, with the diplomatic negotiations preliminary to this marriage. Anne had passed her childhood at Hever Castle, Kent, surrounded by all that could heat the imagination. Her maternal grandfather, the earl of Surrey, whose eldest son had married the sister of Henry VII's queen, had filled, as did his sons also, the most important offices of state. When summoned by her father to court, she wrote him the following letter in French, which appears to refer to her departure for France:

"Sir: I find by your letter that you wish me to appear at court in a manner becoming a respectable female, and likewise that the queen will condescend to enter into conversation with me; at this I rejoice, as I do to think that conversing with so sensible and elegant a princess will make me even more desirous of continuing to speak and to write good French; the more as it is by your earnest advice, which (I acquaint you by this present writing) I shall follow to the best of my ability. ... As to myself, rest assured
that I shall not ungratefully look upon this fatherly office as one that might be dispensed with, nor will it tend to diminish my affection, quest [wish], and deliberation to lead as holy a life as you may please to desire of me; indeed my love for you is founded on so firm a basis that it can never be impaired. I put an end to this my lucubration after having very humbly craved your good will and affection. Written at Hever, by

Your very humble and obedient daughter,
Anna de Boullan.”

Such were the feelings under which this young and interesting lady, so calumniated by papistical writers, appeared at court.
The marriage which took place by proxy in London, on the 18th of August, 1514, was formally proclaimed and celebrated at Abbeville on the 9th of October, and, after a sumptuous banquet, the king of France distributed his royal largesses among the English lords, who were charmed by his courtesy. But the morrow was a day of trial to the young queen. Louis XII had dismissed the numerous train which had accompanied her, and even Lady Guildford, to whom Henry had specially confided her. Three only were left, of whom the youthful Anne Boleyn was one. At this separation, Mary gave way to the keenest sorrow. To cheer her spirits, Louis proclaimed a grand tournament. Brandon hastened to France at its first announcement, and carried off all the prizes, while the king, languidly reclining on a couch, could with difficulty look upon the brilliant spectacle over which his queen presided, sick at heart yet radiant with youth and beauty. Mary was unable to conceal her emotion, and Louisa of Savoy, who was watching her, divined her secret. But Louis, if he experienced the tortures of jealousy, did not feel them long, for his death took place on the 1st of January, 1515.

Even before her husband’s funeral was over, Mary’s heart beat high with hope. The new French monarch, Francis I, impatient to see her wedded to some unimportant political personage, encouraged her love for Brandon. The latter, who had been commissioned by Henry to convey to her his letters of condolence, feared his master’s anger if he should dare aspire to the hand of the princess. But the widowed queen, who was resolved to brave everything, told her lover, “Either you marry me in four days or you see me no more.” The choice the king had made of his ambassador announced that he would not behave very harshly. The marriage was celebrated in the abbey of Clugny, and Henry pardoned them, but only on the payment of a heavy fine by both parties. While Mary returned to England, as Wolsey had predicted, Anne Boleyn remained in France. Her father, desiring his daughter to become an accomplished woman, entrusted her to the care of the virtuous Claude of France, the good queen, at whose court the daughters of the first families of the kingdom were trained. Margaret, duchess of Alençon, the sister of Francis, and afterwards queen of Navarre, often charmed the queen’s circle by her lively conversation. She soon became deeply attached to the young
Englishwoman, and on the death of Claude took her into her own family. Anne Boleyn was destined at no very remote period to be at the court of London a reflection of the graceful Margaret, and her relations with that princess were not without influence on the English Reformation.

And indeed the literary movement which had passed from Italy into France appeared at that time as if it would cross from France into Britain. Oxford exercises over England as great an influence as the metropolis; and it is almost always within its walls that a movement commences whether for good or evil. At this period of our history, enthusiastic youth hailed with joy the first beams of the new sun, and attacked with their sarcasms the idleness of the monks, the immorality of the clergy, and the superstition of the people. Disgusted with the priestcraft of the middle ages, and captivated by the writers of antiquity and the purity of the Gospel, Oxford boldly called for a reform which should burst the bonds of clerical domination and emancipate the human mind. Men of letters thought for a while that they had found in the most powerful man in England, Thomas Wolsey, the ally that would give them the victory. He possessed little taste for learning, but seeing the wind of public favor blow in that direction, he readily spread his sails before it. He got the reputation of a profound divine, by quoting a few words of Thomas Aquinas, and the fame of a Mæcenas and a Ptolemy by inviting the learned to his gorgeous entertainments. "O happy cardinal," exclaimed Erasmus, "who can surround his table with such torches!"

At that time the king felt the same ambition as his minister, and, having tasted in turn the pleasures of war and diplomacy, he now bent his mind to literature. He desired Wolsey to present Sir Thomas More to him. "What shall I do at court?" replied the latter. "I shall be as awkward as a man that never rode sitteth in a saddle." Happy in his family circle, where his father, mother, and children, gathering round the same table, formed a pleasing group, which the pencil of Holbein has transmitted to us, More had no desire to leave it. But Henry was not a man to put up with a refusal; he employed force almost to draw More from his retirement, and in a short time he could not live without the society of the man of letters. On calm and starlight nights they would walk together upon the leads at the top of the palace, discoursing on the motions of the heavenly bodies. If More did not appear at court, Henry would go to Chelsea and share the frugal dinner of the family with some of their simple neighbors. "Where," asked Erasmus, "where is the Athens, the Porch, or the Academy, that can be compared with the court of England? ... It is a seat of the muses rather than a palace. ... The golden age is reviving, and I congratulate the world."

But the friends of classical learning were not content with the cardinal’s banquets or the king's favors. They wanted victories, and their keenest darts were aimed at the cloisters, those strong fortresses of the hierarchy and of uncleanness. The abbot of St. Albans, having taken a married woman for his concubine, and placed her at the head of a nunnery, his monks had followed his example, and indulged in the most scandalous debauchery. Public indignation was so far aroused, that Wolsey himself—Wolsey, the father of
several illegitimate children, and who was suffering the penalty of his irregularities—was carried away by the spirit of the age, and demanded of the pope a general reform of manners. When they heard of this request, the priests and friars were loud in their outcries. "What are you about?" said they to Wolsey. "You are giving the victory to the enemies of the church, and your only reward will be the hatred of the whole world." As this was not the cardinal's game, he abandoned his project, and conceived one more easily executed. Wishing to deserve the name of "Ptolemy" conferred on him by Erasmus, he undertook to build two large colleges, one at Ipswich, his native town, the other at Oxford, and found it convenient to take the money necessary for their endowment, not from his own purse, but from the purses of the monks. He pointed out to the pope twenty-two monasteries in which (he said) vice and impiety had taken up their abode. The pope granted their secularization, and Wolsey having thus procured a revenue of £2,000 sterling, laid the foundations of his college, traced out various courts, and constructed spacious kitchens. He fell into disgrace before he had completed his work, which led Gualter to say with a sneer, "He began a college and built a cook's shop." But a great example had been set; the monasteries had been attacked, and the first breach made in them by a cardinal. Cromwell, Wolsey's secretary, took note how his master had set about his work, and in after-years profited by the lesson.

It was fortunate for learning that it had sincerer friends in London than Wolsey. Of these were Colet, dean of St. Paul's, whose house was the center of the literary movement which preceded the Reformation, and his friend and guest Erasmus. The latter was the hardy pioneer who opened the road of antiquity to modern Europe. One day he would entertain Colet's guests with the account of a new manuscript; on another, with a discussion on the forms of ancient literature; and at other times he would attack the schoolmen and monks, when Colet would take the same side. The only antagonist who dared measure his strength with him was Sir Thomas More, who, although a layman, stoutly defended the ordinances of the church.

But mere table-talk could not satisfy the dean; a numerous audience attended his sermons at St. Paul's. The spirituality of Christ's words, the authority which characterizes them, their admirable simplicity and mysterious depth had deeply charmed him. "I admire the writings of the apostles," he would say, "but I forget them almost, when I contemplate the wonderful majesty of Jesus Christ." Setting aside the texts prescribed by the church, he explained, like Zwingli, the Gospel of St. Matthew. Nor did he stop here. Taking advantage of the Convocation, he delivered a sermon on conformation and reformation, which was one of the numerous forerunners of the great reform of the sixteenth century. "We see strange and heretical ideas appear in our days, and no wonder," said he. "But you must know, there is no heresy more dangerous to the church than the vicious lives of its priests. A reformation is needed; and that reformation must begin with the bishops and be extended to the priests. The clergy once reformed, we shall proceed to the reformation of the people." Thus spoke Colet, while the citizens of London listened to him with rapture, and called him a new Saint Paul.
Such discourses could not be allowed to pass unpunished. Richard Fitzjames, bishop of London, was a superstitious obstinate old man of eighty, fond of money, excessively irritable, a poor theologian, and a slave to Duns Scotus, the subtle doctor. Calling to his aid two other bishops as zealous as himself for the preservation of abuses, namely, Bricot and Standish, he denounced the dean of St. Paul’s to Warham. The archbishop having inquired what he had done; "What has he done?" rejoined the bishop of London. "He teaches that we must not worship images; he translates the Lord’s Prayer into English; he pretends that the text *Feed my sheep*, does not include the temporal supplies the clergy draw from their flock. And besides all this," he continued with some embarrassment, "he has spoken against those who carry their manuscripts into the pulpit and read their sermons!" As this was the bishop’s practice, the primate could not refrain from smiling, and since Colet refused to justify himself, Warham did so for him.

From that time Colet labored with fresh zeal to scatter the darkness. He devoted the larger portion of his fortune to found the celebrated school of St. Paul, of which the learned William Lilly was the first master. Two parties, the Greeks and the Trojans, entered the lists, not to contend with sword and spear, as in the ancient epic, but with the tongue, the pen, and sometimes the fist. If the Trojans (the obscurants) were defeated in the public disputations, they had their revenge in the secret of the confessional. *Cave a Græcis ne fias hereticus* (beware of the Greeks, lest you should become a heretic) was the watchword of the priests—their daily lesson to the youths under their care. They looked on the school founded by Colet as the monstrous horse of the perjured Sinon, and announced that from its bosom would inevitably issue the destruction of the people. Colet and Erasmus replied to the monks by inflicting fresh blows. Linacre, a thorough literary enthusiast; Grocyn, a man of sarcastic humor but generous heart; and many others, reinforced the Grecian phalanx.

Henry himself used to take one of them with him during his journeys, and if any hostile Trojan ventured in his presence to attack the tongue of Plato and of Saint Paul, the young king would set his Hellenian on him. Not more numerous were the contests witnessed in times of yore on the classic banks of Xanthus and Simois.

---

**CHAPTER 12**

**Wolsey’s Rise to Power**

1507–18

Just as everything seemed tending to a reformation, a powerful priest rendered the way more difficult. One of the most striking personages of the age was then making his appearance on the stage of the world. It was the destiny of that man, in the reign of Henry VIII, to combine extreme ability with notorious immorality, and to be a new and striking example of the wholesome truth that immorality is more effectual to destroy a man than ability to save him. Wolsey was the last high-priest of Rome in England, and when his fall startled the nation, it was the signal of a still more striking fall—the fall of popery.
Thomas Wolsey, the son of a wealthy butcher and innkeeper of Ipswich, according to the common story, which is sanctioned by high authority, had attained under Henry VII the post of a royal chaplain, at the recommendation of Sir Richard Nanfan, deputy lieutenant of Calais and an old patron of his. But Wolsey was not at all desirous of passing his life in saying mass. As soon as he had discharged the regular duties of his office, instead of spending the rest of the day in idleness, as his colleagues did, he strove to win the good graces of the persons round the king.

Fox, bishop of Winchester, keeper of the privy-seal under Henry VII, uneasy at the growing powers of the Earl of Surrey, looked about for a man to counterbalance them. He thought he had found such a one in Wolsey. It was doubtless to oppose the Surreys, the grandfather and uncles of Anne Boleyn, that the son of the Ipswich butcher was drawn from his obscurity. Fox began to praise Wolsey in the king’s hearing, and at the same time he encouraged him to give himself to public affairs. The latter was not deaf to the call, and soon found an opportunity of winning his sovereign’s favor.

The king, having business of importance with the Emperor Maximilian, who was then in Flanders, sent for Wolsey, explained his wishes, and ordered him to prepare to set out. The chaplain determined to show Henry VII how capable he was of serving him. It was about noon when he took leave of the king at Richmond; by four o’clock he was in London, by seven at Gravesend. By traveling all night he reached Dover just as a boat carrying passengers was about to sail. After a passage of three hours he reached Calais, whence he traveled post, and the same evening appeared before Maximilian. Having obtained what he desired, he set off again by night, and on the next day but one reached Richmond, three days and some few hours after his departure. The king, catching sight of him just as he was going to mass, sharply inquired why he had not set out. “Sire, I am just returned,” answered Wolsey, placing the Emperor’s letters in his master’s hands. Henry was delighted, and Wolsey saw that his fortune was made. Shortly Henry VII died and his only surviving son ascended the throne.

The courtiers hoped at first that Wolsey, like an inexperienced pilot, would run his vessel on some hidden rock, but never did helmsman manage his ship with more skill. Although twenty years older than Henry VIII, the almoner (for such he had now been appointed) danced, and sang, and laughed with the prince’s companions, and amused his new master with tales of scandal and quotations from Thomas Aquinas; and while Henry’s councilors were entreating him to leave his pleasures and attend to business, Wolsey was continually reminding him that he ought to devote his youth to learning and amusement, and leave the toils of government to others. Wolsey was created bishop of Tournai during Henry’s campaign in Flanders, and on his return to England, was raised to the sees of Lincoln and of York. Three miters had been placed on his head in one year. He found at last the vein he so ardently sought for.

And yet he was not satisfied. The archbishop of Canterbury had insisted, as primate, that the cross of York should be lowered to his. Wolsey was not of a disposition to concede this, and, when he found that Warham was not content
with being his equal, he resolved to make him his inferior. He wrote to Paris and to Rome. Francis I, who desired to conciliate England, demanded the purple for Wolsey, and the archbishop of York received the title of Cardinal St. Cecilia beyond the Tiber. In November 1515, the red hat was brought by the envoy of the pope. "It would have been better to have given him a Tyburn tippet," said some indignant Englishmen, "these Romish hats never brought good into England"—a saying that has become proverbial.

This was not enough for Wolsey; he desired secular greatness above all things. Warham, tired of contending with so arrogant a rival, resigned the seals of the lord-chancellorship, and the king immediately transferred them to the cardinal. At length a bull appointed him legate a latere of the holy see, and placed under his jurisdiction all the colleges, monasteries, spiritual courts, and bishops (1518). Over the primate himself Wolsey now believed himself to have precedence. From that time, as lord-chancellor of England and papal legate, Wolsey administered almost everything in church and state. He filled his coffers with money procured both at home and from abroad, and yielded without restraint to his dominant vices, ostentation and pride. Whenever he appeared in public, two priests, the tallest and comeliest that could be found, carried before him two huge silver crosses, one to mark his dignity as archbishop, the other as papal legate. Chamberlains, gentlemen, pages, sergeants, chaplains, choristers, clerks, cupbearers, cooks, and other domestics, to the number of more than 500, among whom were nine or ten lords and the stateliest yeomen of the country, filled his palace. He generally wore a dress of scarlet velvet and silk, with hat and gloves of the same color. His shoes were embroidered with gold and silver, inlaid with pearls and precious stones. A kind of papacy was thus forming in England, for wherever pride flourishes there popery is developed.

One thing occupied Wolsey more than all the pomp with which he was surrounded—his desire to captivate the king. For this purpose, says Tyndale, he cast Henry's nativity, and procured an amulet which he wore constantly, in order to charm his master by its magic properties. Then having recourse to a still more effectual form of bewitchment, he selected from among the licentious companions of the young monarch those of the keenest discernment and most ambitious character; and after binding them to him by a solemn oath, he placed them at court to be as eyes and ears to him. Accordingly not a word was said in the presence of the monarch, particularly against Wolsey, of which he was not informed an hour afterwards. If the culprit was not in favor, he was expelled without mercy; in the contrary case, the minister sent him on some distant mission. The queen's ladies, the king's chaplains, and even their confessors, were the cardinal's spies. He pretended to omnipresence, as the pope to infallibility.

Wolsey was not devoid of certain showy virtues, for he was liberal to the poor even to affectation. As chancellor he was inexorable to every kind of irregularity, and strove particularly to make the rich and high-born bend beneath his power. Men of learning alone obtained from him some little attention, and hence Erasmus calls him "the Achates of a new Æneas." But the
nation was not to be carried away by the eulogies of a few scholars. Wolsey—a man of more than suspected morals, double-hearted, faithless to his promises, ostentatious to the last degree, and exceedingly arrogant—Wolsey soon became hated by the people of England.

The elevation of a prince of the Roman church could not be favorable to the Reformation. The priests, encouraged by it, determined to make a stand against the triple attack of the learned, the reformers, and the state, and they soon had an opportunity of trying their strength. Holy orders had become during the middle ages a warrant for every sort of crime. Parliament, desirous of correcting this abuse and checking the encroachments of the church, declared in the year 1513 that any ecclesiastic, accused of theft or murder, should be tried before the secular tribunals. Exceptions, however, were made in favor of bishops, priests, and deacons—that is, to say, nearly all the clergy. Notwithstanding this timid precaution, Richard Kidderminster, an insolent clerk, the abbot of Wynchcombe, began the battle by exclaiming in a sermon at St. Paul’s, "Touch not mine anointed, said the Lord." At the same time Wolsey, accompanied by a long train of priests and prelates, had an audience of the king, at which he said with hands upraised to heaven, "Sire, to try a clerk is a violation of God’s laws." This time, however, Henry did not give way. "By God’s will, we are king of England," he replied, "and the kings of England in times past had never any superior but God only. Therefore know you well that we will maintain the right of our crown." He saw distinctly that to put the clergy above the laws was to put them above the throne. The priests were defeated, but not disheartened; perseverance is a characteristic feature of every hierarchical order. Not walking by faith, they walk all the more by sight, and skillful combinations supply the place of the holy aspirations of the Christian. Humble disciples of the gospel were soon to experience this, for the clergy by a few isolated attacks were about to flesh their swords for the great struggles of the Reformation.

CHAPTER 13
The Need for Reformation
1514–17

It is occasionally necessary to soften down the somewhat exaggerated colors in which contemporary writers describe the Romish clergy, but there are certain appellations which history is bound to accept. The wolves, for so the priests were called, by attacking the Lords and Commons had attempted a work beyond their reach. They turned their wrath on others. There were many shepherds endeavoring to gather together the sheep of the Lord beside the peaceful waters; these must be frightened, and the sheep driven into the howling wilderness. "The wolves" determined to fall upon the Lollards. There lived in London a prosperous merchant-tailor of good reputation named Richard Hunne, one of those witnesses of the truth who, sincere though unenlightened, have been often found in the bosom of Catholicism. It was his practice to retire to his chamber and spend a portion of each day in the study
of the Bible. At the death of one of his children, the priest required of him an exorbitant mortuary fee, which Hunne refused to pay, and for which he was summoned before the legate’s court. He felt indignant that an Englishman should be cited before a foreign tribunal, and laid an information against the priest and his counsel under the act of præmunire. Such boldness—most extraordinary at that time—exasperated the clergy beyond all bounds. "If these proud citizens are allowed to have their way," exclaimed the clerics, "every layman will dare to resist a priest."

Exertions were accordingly made to snare the pretended rebel in the trap of heresy; he was thrown into the Lollards’ Tower at St. Paul’s, and an iron collar was fastened round his neck, attached to which was a chain so heavy that neither man nor beast (says Foxe) would have been able to bear it long. When taken before his judges, they could not convict him of heresy, and it was observed with astonishment "that he had his beads in prison with him." They would have set him at liberty, after inflicting on him perhaps some trifling penance, but then, what a bad example it would be, and who could stop the reformers, if it was so easy to resist the papacy? Unable to triumph by justice, certain fanatics resolved to triumph by crime.

At midnight on the 2nd of December—the day of his examination—three men stealthily ascended the stairs of the Lollards’ Tower; the bell-ringer went first carrying a torch; the jailer, Charles Joseph, followed; and last came the bishop’s chancellor, Dr. Horsey. Having entered the cell, they went up to the bed on which Hunne was lying and, finding that he was asleep, the chancellor said, "Lay hands on the thief." Charles Joseph and the bell-ringer fell upon the prisoner, who, awaking with a start, saw at a glance what this midnight visit meant. He resisted the assassins at first, but was soon overpowered and strangled. Charles Joseph then fixed the dead man’s belt round his neck, the bell-ringer helped to raise his lifeless body, and the chancellor slipped the other end of the belt through a ring fixed in the wall. They then placed his cap on his head, and hastily quitted the cell. Immediately after, the conscience-stricken Charles Joseph got on horseback and rode from the city; the bell-ringer left the cathedral and hid himself; the crime dispersed the criminals. The chancellor alone kept his ground, and he was at prayers when the news was brought him that the turnkey had found Hunne hanging. "He must have killed himself in despair," said the hypocrite. But everyone knew poor Hunne’s Christian feelings. "It is the priests who have murdered him," was the general cry in London, and an inquest was ordered to be held on his body.

On Tuesday, the 5th of December, Thomas Barnwell the city coroner, the two sheriffs, and twenty-four jurymen proceeded to the Lollards’ Tower. They remarked that the belt was so short that the head could not be got out of it, and that consequently it had never been placed in it voluntarily, and hence the jury concluded that the suspension was an afterthought of some other persons. Moreover they found that the ring was too high for the poor victim to reach it, that the body bore marks of violence, and that traces of blood were to be seen in the cell: "Wherefore all we find by God and all our consciences (runs the
verdict) that Richard Hunne was murdered. Also we acquit the said Richard Hunne of his own death."

It was but too true, and the criminals themselves confessed it. The miserable Charles Joseph having returned home on the evening of the 6th of December, said to his maidservant, "If you will swear to keep my secret, I will tell you all."

"Yes, master," she replied, "if it is neither felony nor treason." Joseph took a book, swore the girl on it, and then said to her, "I have killed Richard Hunne!"

"O master! how? he was called a worthy man." "I would lever [rather] than a hundred pounds it were not done," he made answer, "but what is done cannot be undone." He then rushed out of the house.

The clergy foresaw what a serious blow this unhappy affair would be to them, and to justify themselves they examined Hunne’s Bible (it was Wycliffe’s version) and, having read in the preface that "poor men and idiots [simple folks] have the truth of the holy Scriptures more than a thousand prelates and religious men and clerks of the school," and further, that "the pope ought to be called Antichrist," the bishop of London, assisted by the bishops of Durham and Lincoln, declared Hunne guilty of heresy, and on the 20th of December his dead body was burnt at Smithfield. "Hunne’s bones have been burnt, and therefore he was a heretic," said the priests, "he was a heretic, and therefore he committed suicide."

The triumph of the clergy was of short duration, for almost at the same time William Horsey, the bishop’s chancellor, Charles Joseph, and John Spalding the bell-ringer, were convicted of the murder. Strenuous ecclesiastical pressure led to the dropping of the charge against Horsey, but he only escaped justice by paying a fine of £600 and suffering exile from London. By royal letter, the confiscated property of Hunne was restored to his children. "If the clerical theocracy should gain the mastery of the state," was the general remark in London, "it would not only be a very great lie, but the most frightful tyranny!"

England has never gone back since that time, and a theocratic rule has always inspired the sound portion of the nation with a just and insurmountable antipathy. Such were the events taking place in England shortly before the Reformation. This was not all.

The clergy had not been fortunate in Hunne’s affair, but they were not for that reason unwilling to attempt a new one. In the spring of 1517—the year in which Luther posted up his theses—a priest, whose manners announced a man swollen with pride, happened to be on board the passage-boat from London to Gravesend with an intelligent and pious Christian of Ashford, by name John Browne. The passengers, as they floated down the stream, were amusing themselves by watching the banks glide away from them, when the priest, turning towards Browne, said to him insolently, "You are too near me, you are sitting on my clothes, get farther off. Do you know who I am?"

"No, sir," answered Browne.

"Well then, you must know that I am a priest."

"Indeed, sir; are you a parson, or vicar, or a lady’s chaplain?"

"No; I am a soul priest," he haughtily replied, "I sing mass to save souls."
"Do you, sir," replied Browne somewhat ironically, "that is well done; and can you tell me where you find the soul when you begin the mass?"
"I cannot," said the priest.
"And where you leave it when the mass is ended?"
"I do not know."
"What!" continued Browne with marks of astonishment, "you do not know where you find the soul or where you leave it... and yet you say that you save it!"
"Go thy ways," said the priest angrily, "thou art a heretic, and I will be even with thee."
Thenceforward the priest and his neighbor conversed no more together. At last they reached Gravesend and the boat anchored.
As soon as the priest had landed, he hastened to two of his friends, Walter and William More, and all three mounting their horses set off for Canterbury, and denounced Browne to the archbishop.
In the meantime John Browne had reached home. Three days later, his wife, Elizabeth, who had just left her chamber, went to church, dressed all in white, to return thanks to God for delivering her in the perils of childbirth. Her husband, assisted by her daughter Alice and the maid servant, were preparing for their friends the feast usual on such occasions, and they had all of them taken their seats at table, joy beaming on every face, when the street-door was abruptly opened, and Chilton, the constable, a cruel and savage man, accompanied by several of the archbishop’s servants, seized upon the worthy townsman. All sprang from their seats in alarm; Elizabeth and Alice uttered the most heartrending cries; but the primate’s officers, without showing any emotion, pulled Browne out of the house, and placed him on horseback, tying his feet under the animal’s belly. It is a serious matter to jest with a priest. The cavalcade rode off quickly, and Browne was thrown into prison, and there left forty days.
At the end of this time, the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of Rochester called before them the impudent fellow who doubted whether a priest’s mass could save souls, and required him to retract this "blasphemy." But Browne, if he did not believe in the mass, believed in the Gospel. "Christ was once offered," he said, "to take away the sins of many. It is by this sacrifice we are saved, and not by the repetitions of the priests." At this reply the archbishop made a sign to the executioners, one of whom took off the shoes and stockings of this pious Christian, while the other brought in a pan of burning coals, upon which they set the martyr’s feet. The English laws in truth forbade torture to be inflicted on any subject of the crown, but the clergy thought themselves above the laws. "Confess the efficacy of the mass," cried the two bishops to Browne. "If I deny my Lord upon earth," he replied, "He will deny me before His Father in heaven." The flesh was burnt off the soles of the feet even to the bones, and still John Browne remained unshaken. The bishops therefore ordered him to be given over to the secular arm that he might be burnt alive.
On the Saturday preceding the festival of Pentecost, in the year 1517, the martyr was led back to Ashford, where he arrived just as the day was drawing
to a close. A number of idle persons were collected in the street, and among
them was Browne’s maidservant, who ran off crying to the house, and told her
mistress, "I have seen him! ... He was bound, and they were taking him to
prison." Elizabeth hastened to her husband and found him sitting with his feet
in the stocks, his features changed by suffering, and expecting to be burnt
alive on the morrow. The poor woman sat down beside him, weeping most
bitterly, while he, being hindered by his chains, could not so much as bend
towards her. "I cannot set my feet to the ground," said he, "for bishops have
burnt them to the bones, but they could not burn my tongue and prevent my
confessing the Lord. ... O Elizabeth! ... continue to love Him for He is good,
and bring up our children in His fear."
On the following morning—it was Whitsunday—the brutal Chilton and his
assistants led Browne to the place of execution, and fastened him to the stake.
Elizabeth and Alice, with his other children and his friends, desirous of
receiving his last sigh, surrounded the pile, uttering cries of anguish. The
faggots were set on fire, while Browne, calm and collected, and full of
confidence in the blood of the Savior, clasped his hands, and repeated this
hymn, which Foxe has preserved:

O Lord, I yield me to thy grace,
Grant me mercy for my trespass,
Let never the fiend my soul chase.
Lord, I will bow, and thou shalt beat,
Let never my soul come in hell-heat.

The martyr was silent; the flames had consumed their victim. Then redoubled
cries of anguish rent the air. His wife and daughter seemed as if they would
lose their senses. The bystanders showed them the tenderest compassion, and
turned with a movement of indignation towards the executioners. The brutal
Chilton perceiving this, cried out, "Come along; let us toss the heretic’s
children into the flames, lest they should one day spring from their father’s
ashes." He rushed towards Alice, and was about to lay hold of her, when the
maiden shrank back screaming with horror. To the end of her life, she
recollected the fearful moment, and to her we are indebted for the
particulars. The fury of the monster was checked. Such were the scenes passing
in England shortly before the Reformation.
The priests were not yet satisfied, for the scholars still remained in England; if
they could not be burnt, they could at least be banished. They set to work
accordingly. Standish, bishop of St. Asaph, a sincere man, as it would seem,
but fanatical, was inveterate in his hatred of Erasmus, who had irritated him by
an idle sarcasm. When speaking of St. Asaph’s it was very common to
abbreviate it into St. As’s; and as Standish was a theologian of no great
learning, Erasmus, in his jesting way, would sometimes call him Episcopus a
Sancto Asino. As the bishop could not destroy Colet, the disciple, he flattered
himself that he should triumph over the master.
Erasmus knew Standish’s intentions. Should he commence in England that struggle with the papacy which Luther was about to begin in Germany? It was no longer possible to steer a middle course; he must either fight or leave. The Dutchman was faithful to his nature, we may even say, to his vocation; he left the country.

Erasmus was, in his time, the head of the great literary community. By means of his connections and his correspondence, which extended over all Europe, he established between those countries where learning was reviving, an interchange of ideas and manuscripts. The pioneer of antiquity, an eminent critic, a witty satirist, the advocate of correct taste, and a restorer of literature, one only glory was wanting—he had not the creative spirit, the heroic soul of a Luther. He calculated with no little skill, could detect the smile on the lips or the knitting of the brows; but he had not that self-abandonment, that enthusiasm for the truth, that firm confidence in God, without which nothing great can be done in the world, and least of all in the church. "Erasmus had much, but was little," said one of his biographers.

In the year 1517 a crisis had arrived; the period of the revival was over, that of the Reformation was beginning. The restoration of letters was succeeded by the regeneration of religion, the days of criticism and neutrality by those of courage and action. Erasmus was then only about fifty years old, but he had finished his career. From being first, he must now be second; the monk of Wittenberg dethroned him. He looked around himself in vain; placed in a new country, he had lost his road. A hero was needed to inaugurate the greatest movement of modern times; Erasmus was a mere man of letters. When attacked by Standish in 1516, the literary king determined to quit the court of England, and take refuge in a printing office. But before laying down his scepter at the foot of a Saxon monk, he signalized the end of his reign by the most brilliant of his publications. The epoch of 1516-17, memorable for the theses of Luther, was destined to be equally remarkable by a work which was to imprint on the new times their essential character. What distinguishes the Reformation from all anterior revivals is the union of learning with piety, and a faith more profound, more enlightened, and based on the Word of God. Christians were then emancipated from the tutelage of the schools and the popes, and their charter of enfranchisement was the Bible. The sixteenth century did more than its predecessors; it went straight to the fountain (the Holy Scriptures), cleared it of weeds and brambles, plumbed its depths, and caused its abundant streams to pour forth on all around. The Reformation age studied the Greek Testament, which the clerical age had almost forgotten—and this is its greatest glory. One of the first explorers of this divine source was Erasmus. When attacked by the hierarchy, the leader of the schools withdrew from the splendid halls of Henry VIII. It seemed to him that the new era which he had announced to the world was rudely interrupted; he could do nothing more by his conversation for the country of the Tudors. But he carried with him those precious leaves, the fruit of his labors—a book which would do more than he desired. He hastened to Basle, and took up his quarters in Johann Froben’s printing office, where he not only labored himself, but made others labor.
England was soon to receive the seed of the new life, and the Reformation was about to begin.

The End of Volume 1, Book One

BOOK 2

The Revival of the Church

CHAPTER 1 The Origin of the English Reformation
CHAPTER 2 The Greek Testament Awakens the Dead
CHAPTER 3 Persecution and Intrigue
CHAPTER 4 A Storm at Sodbury Hall
CHAPTER 5 The Onslaught on Luther
CHAPTER 6 Early Martyrs in Lincolnshire
CHAPTER 7 All England Closed to Tyndale
CHAPTER 8 Bluff Hugh Latimer
CHAPTER 9 Wolsey’s Hopes and Fears
CHAPTER 10 An Exile’s Toil for a Nation’s Life
CHAPTER 11 The Awakening in Cambridge

CHAPTER 1

The Origin of the English Reformation
1516–19
It was within the province of four powers in the sixteenth century to effect a reformation of the church; these were the papacy, the episcopate, the monarchy, and Holy Scripture. The Reformation in England was essentially the work of Scripture.

The only true reformation is that which emanates from the Word of God. The Holy Scriptures, by bearing witness to the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Son of God, create in man by the Holy Ghost a faith which justifies him. That faith which produces in him a new life, unites him to Christ, without his requiring a chain of bishops or a Roman mediator, who would separate him from the Savior instead of drawing him nearer. This reformation by the Word restores that spiritual Christianity which the outward and hierarchical religion destroys, and from the regeneration of individuals naturally results the regeneration of the church.

The Reformation of England, perhaps to a greater extent than that of the continent, was effected by the Word of God. This statement may appear paradoxical, but it is not the less true. Those great personages we meet with in Germany, Switzerland, and France—men like Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin—do not appear in England, but Holy Scripture is widely circulated. What brought light into the British isles subsequent to the year 1517, and on a more extended scale after the year 1526, was the Word—the invisible power of the invisible God. The religion of the Anglo-Saxon race—a race called more than any other to circulate the oracles of God throughout the world—is particularly distinguished by its biblical character.

The Reformation of England could not be papal. No reform can be expected from that which ought to be not only reformed but abolished, and besides, no monarch dethrones himself. We may even affirm that the popedom has always felt a peculiar affection for its conquests in Britain, and that they would have been the last it would have renounced. A Carthusian prior had declared in the middle of the fifteenth century, "A reform is neither in the will nor in the power of the popes."

The Reformation of England was not episcopal. Roman hierarchism will never be abolished by Roman bishops. An episcopal assembly may perhaps, as at Constance, depose three competing popes, but then it will be to save the papacy. And if the bishops could not abolish the papacy, still less could they reform themselves. The then-existing episcopal power being at enmity with the Word of God, and the slave of its own abuses, was incapable of renovating the church. On the contrary, it exerted all its influence to prevent such a renovation.
The Reformation in England was not royal. Samuel, David, and Josiah were able to do something for the raising up of the church, when God again turned His face towards it, but a king cannot rob his people of their religion, and still less can he give them one. It has often been repeated that “the English Reformation derives its origin from the monarch,” but the assertion is incorrect. The work of God, here as elsewhere, cannot be put in comparison with the work of the king, and if the latter was infinitely surpassed in importance, it was also preceded in time by many years. The monarch was still keeping up a vigorous resistance behind his entrenchments, when God had already decided the victory along the whole line of operations.

Shall we be told that a reform effected by any other principle than the established authorities, both in church and state, would have been a revolution? But has God, the lawful sovereign of the church, forbidden all revolution in a sinful world? A revolution is not a revolt. The fall of the first man was a great revolution; the restoration of man by Jesus Christ was a counter-revolution. The corruption occasioned by popery was allied to the fall; the reformation accomplished in the sixteenth century was connected therefore with the restoration. There will no doubt be other interventions of the Deity, which will be revolutions in the same direction as the Reformation. When God creates a new heaven and a new earth, will not that be one of the most glorious of revolutions? The Reformation by the Word alone gives truth, alone gives unity; but more than that, it alone bears the marks of true legitimacy; for the church belongs not unto men, even though they be priests. God alone is its lawful sovereign.

And yet the human elements which we have enumerated were not wholly foreign to the work that was accomplishing in England. Besides the Word of God, other principles were in operation, and although less radical and less primitive, they still retain the sympathy of eminent men of that nation.

And in the first place, the intervention of the king’s authority was necessary to a certain point. Since the supremacy of Rome had been established in England by several usages which had the force of law, the intervention of the temporal power was necessary to break the bonds which it had previously sanctioned. But it was requisite for the monarchy, while adopting a negative and political action, to leave the positive, doctrinal, and creative action to the Word of God.

Besides the Reformation in the name of the Scriptures, there was then in England another in the name of the king. The Word of God began, the kingly power followed, and ever since, these two forces have sometimes gone together against the authority of the Roman pontiffs—sometimes in opposition to each other, like those troops which march side by side in the same army, against the same enemy, and which have occasionally been seen, even on the field of battle, to turn their swords against each other.
Finally, the episcopate, which had begun by opposing the Reformation, was compelled to accept it in despite of its convictions. The majority of the bishops were opposed to it, but the better portion were found to incline, some to the side of outward reform, of which separation from the papacy was the very essence, and others to the side of internal reform, whose mainspring was union with Jesus Christ. At last, the episcopate took up its ground on its own account, and soon two great parties alone existed in England—the scriptural party and the clerical party.

These two parties have survived even to our days, and their colors are still distinguishable in the river of the church, like the muddy River Arve and the limpid Rhone after their confluence. The royal supremacy, from which many Christians, preferring the paths of independence, have withdrawn since the end of the 16th century, is recognized by both parties in the Establishment, with some few exceptions. But whilst the High Church is essentially hierarchical, the Low Church is essentially biblical. In the one, the Church is above and the Word below; in the other, the Church is below and the Word above. These two principles, evangelicalism and hierarchism, are found in the Christianity of the first centuries, but with a signal difference. Hierarchism then almost entirely effaced evangelicalism; in the age of Protestantism, on the contrary, evangelicalism continued to exist by the side of hierarchism, and it has remained de jure, if not always de facto, the only legitimate opinion of the church.

Thus there is in England a complication of influences and contests, which render the work more difficult to describe; but it is on that very account more worthy the attention of the philosopher and the Christian.

Great events had just occurred in Europe. Francis I had crossed the Alps, gained a signal victory at Marignano, and conquered the north of Italy. The affrighted Maximilian knew of none who could save him but Henry VIII. "I will adopt you; you shall be my successor in the Empire," he intimated to him in May 1516. "Your army shall invade France, and then we will march together to Rome, where the sovereign pontiff shall crown you king of the Romans." The king of France, anxious to effect a diversion, had formed a league with Denmark and Scotland, and had made preparations for invading England to place on the throne the "white rose"; at least he had offered the pretender Richard Pole, heir to the claims of the house of York, the services of 12,000 German mercenaries for that purpose. Henry now showed his prudence; he declined Maximilian’s offer, and turned his whole attention to the security of his kingdom. But while he refused to bear arms in France and Italy, a war of quite another kind broke out in England.

The great work of the 16th century was about to begin. A volume fresh from the presses of Basle had just crossed the Channel. Being transmitted to London, Oxford, and Cambridge, this book, the fruit of Erasmus’ vigils, soon found its
way wherever there were friends of learning. It was the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, published for the first time in Greek with a new Latin translation—an event more important for the world than would have been the landing of the Yorkist pretender in England, or the appearance of the chief of the Tudors in Italy. This book, in which God has deposited for man’s salvation the seeds of life, was about to effect alone, without patrons and without interpreters, the most astonishing revolution which had ever taken place in Britain.

When Erasmus published this work, at the dawn, so to say, of modern times, he did not see all its scope. Had he foreseen it, he would perhaps have recoiled in alarm. He saw indeed that there was a great work to be done, but he believed that all good men would unite to do it with common accord. "A spiritual temple must be raised in desolated Christendom," said he. "The mighty of this world will contribute towards it their marble, their ivory, and their gold; I who am poor and humble offer the foundation stone," and he laid down before the world his edition of the Greek Testament. Then glancing disdainfully at the traditions of men, he said, "It is not from human reservoirs, fetid with stagnant waters, that we should draw the doctrine of salvation, but from the pure and abundant streams that flow from the heart of God." And when some of his suspicious friends spoke to him of the difficulties of the times, he replied, "If the ship of the church is to be saved from being swallowed up by the tempest, there is only one anchor that can save it—it is the heavenly word, which, issuing from the bosom of the Father, lives, speaks, and works still in the gospel." These noble sentiments served as an introduction to those blessed pages which were to reform England. Erasmus, like Caiaphas, prophesied without being aware of it.

The New Testament in Greek and Latin had hardly appeared when it was received by all men of upright mind with unprecedented enthusiasm. Never had any book produced such a sensation. It was in every hand; men struggled to procure it, read it eagerly, and would even kiss it. The words it contained enlightened every heart. But a reaction soon took place. Traditional catholicism uttered a cry from the depths of its noisome pools (to use Erasmus’ figure). Franciscans and Dominicans, priests and bishops, not daring to attack the educated and well-born, went among the ignorant populace, and endeavored by their tales and clamors to stir up susceptible women and credulous men. "Here are horrible heresies," they exclaimed, "here are frightful antichrists! If this book be tolerated it will be the death of the papacy!"—"We must drive this man from the university," said one. "We must turn him out of the church," added another. "The public places re-echoed with their howlings," said Erasmus. The firebrands tossed by their furious hands were raising fires in every quarter; and the flames kindled in a few obscure monasteries threatened to spread over the whole country.
This irritation was not without a cause. The book, indeed, contained nothing but Latin and Greek, but this first step seemed to augur another—the translation of the Bible into the vulgar tongue. Erasmus loudly called for it. "Perhaps it may be necessary to conceal the secrets of kings," he remarked, "but we must publish the mysteries of Christ. The Holy Scriptures, translated into all languages, should be read not only by the Scottish and Irish, but even by Turks and Saracens. The husbandman should sing them as he holds the handle of his plough, the weaver repeat them as he plies his shuttle, and the wearied traveler, halting on his journey, refresh himself under some shady tree by these godly narratives." These words prefigured a golden age after the iron age of popery. A number of Christian families in Britain and on the continent were soon to realize these evangelical forebodings, and England after three centuries was to endeavor to carry them out for the benefit of all the nations on the face of the earth.

The priests saw the danger and, by a skillful maneuver, instead of finding fault with the Greek Testament, attacked the Latin translation and the translator. "He has corrected the Vulgate," they said, "and puts himself in the place of Saint Jerome. He sets aside a work authorized by the consent of ages and inspired by the Holy Ghost. What audacity!" And then, turning over the pages, they pointed out the most odious passages: "Look here! this book calls upon men to repent, instead of requiring them, as the Vulgate does, to do penance!" (Matthew 4:17). The priests thundered against him from their pulpits. "This man has committed the unpardonable sin," they asserted, "for he maintains that there is nothing in common between the Holy Ghost and the monks—that they are logs rather than men!" These simple remarks were received with a general laugh, but the priests, in no wise disconcerted, cried out all the louder, "He’s a heretic, an heresiarch, a forger! he’s a goose... what do I say? he’s a very antichrist!"

It was not sufficient for the papal janissaries to make war in the plain, they must carry it to the higher ground. Was not the king a friend of Erasmus? If he should declare himself a patron of the Greek and Latin Testament, what an awful calamity! ... After having agitated the cloisters, towns, and universities, they resolved to protest against it boldly, even in Henry’s presence. They thought, "If he is won, all is won." It happened one day that a certain theologian (whose name is unknown) having to preach in his turn before the king, he declaimed violently against the Greek language and its new interpreters. Pace, the king’s secretary, was present, and turning his eyes on Henry, observed him smiling good-humoredly. On leaving the church, everyone began to exclaim against the preacher. "Bring the priest to me," said the king, and then turning to Thomas More, he added, "You shall defend the Greek cause against him, and I will listen to the disputation." The literary tribunal was soon formed, but the sovereign’s order had taken away all the priest’s courage. He came forward trembling, fell on his knees, and with clasped hands exclaimed,
"I know not what spirit impelled me." "A spirit of madness," said the king, "and not the spirit of Jesus Christ." He then added, "Have you ever read Erasmus?"

"No, Sire."

"Away with you then, you are a blockhead."

"And yet," said the preacher in confusion, "I remember to have read something about Moria" (Erasmus’ treatise on Folly).

"A subject, your majesty, that ought to be very familiar to him," wickedly interrupted Pace.

The obscurant could say nothing in his justification. "I am not altogether opposed to the Greek," he added at last, "seeing that it is derived from the Hebrew." This was greeted with a general laugh, and the king impatiently ordered the monk to leave the room, and never appear before him again.

Erasmus was astonished at these discussions. He had imagined the season to be most favorable. "Everything looks peaceful," he had said to himself, "now is the time to launch my Greek Testament into the learned world." As well might the sun rise upon the earth, and no one see it! At that very hour God was raising up a monk at Wittenberg who would lift the trumpet to his lips, and proclaim the new day. "Wretch that I am!" exclaimed the timid scholar, beating his breast, "who could have foreseen this horrible tempest!"

Nothing was more important at the dawn of the Reformation than the publication of the Testament of Jesus Christ in the original language. Never had Erasmus worked so carefully. "If I told what sweat it cost me, no one would believe me." He had collated the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament then available to him, and was surrounded by all the commentaries and translations, by the writings of Origen, Cyprian, Ambrose, Basil, Chrysostom, Cyril, Jerome, and Augustine. Hic sum in campo meo! (Here I am in my field of action), he exclaimed as he sat in the midst of his books. He had investigated the texts according to the principles of sacred criticism. When a knowledge of Hebrew was necessary, he had consulted Capito and more particularly Æcolampadius. Nothing without Theseus, said he of the latter, making use of a Greek proverb. He had corrected the ambiguities, obscurities, hebraisms, and barbarisms of the Vulgate, and had caused a list to be printed of the errors in that version.

"We must restore the pure text of the Word of God," he had said, and when he heard the maledictions of the priests, he had exclaimed, "I call God to witness I thought I was doing a work acceptable to the Lord and necessary to the cause of Christ." Nor in this was he deceived.
At the head of his adversaries was Edward Lee, successively king’s almoner, archdeacon of Colchester, and archbishop of York. Lee, at that time but little known, was a man of talent and activity, but also vain and loquacious, and determined to make his way at any cost. Even when a schoolboy he looked down on all his companions. As child, youth, man, and in mature years, he was always the same, Erasmus tells us; that is to say, vain, envious, jealous, boastful, passionate, and revengeful. We must bear in mind, however, that when Erasmus describes the character of his opponents, he is far from being an impartial judge. In the bosom of Roman Catholicism, there have always existed well-meaning, though ill-informed men, who, not knowing the inward power of the Word of God, have thought that if its authority were substituted for that of the Romish church, the only foundation of truth and of Christian society would be shaken. Yet while we judge Lee less severely than Erasmus does, we cannot close our eyes to his faults. His memory was richly furnished, but his heart was a stranger to divine truth; he was a schoolman and not a believer. He wanted the people to obey the church and not trouble themselves about the Scriptures. He was the Doctor Eck of England, but with more of outward appearance and morality than Luther’s adversary. Yet he was by no means a rigid moralist. On one occasion, when preaching at the palace, he introduced ballads into his sermon, one of which began thus: "Pass time with good company." And the other: "I love unloved." We are indebted to Secretary Pace for this characteristic trait.

During Erasmus’ stay in England, Lee, observing his influence, had sought his friendship, and Erasmus, with his usual courtesy, had solicited his advice upon his work. But Lee, jealous of his great reputation, only waited for an opportunity to injure it, which he seized upon as soon as it occurred. The New Testament had not been long published, when Lee turned round abruptly, and from being Erasmus’ friend became his implacable adversary. "If we do not stop this leak," said he, when he heard of the New Testament, "it will sink the ship." Nothing terrifies the defenders of human traditions so much as the Word of God.

Lee immediately leagued himself with all those in England who abhorred the study of Scripture, says Erasmus. Although exceedingly conceited, he showed himself the most amiable of men, in order to accomplish his designs. He invited Englishmen to his house, welcomed strangers, and gained many recruits by the excellence of his dinners. While seated at table among his guests, he hinted perfidious charges against Erasmus, and his company left him (so Erasmus claims in his letters) "loaded with lies." "In this New Testament," said he, "there are three hundred dangerous, frightful passages... three hundred did I say? ... there are more than a thousand!" Not satisfied with using his tongue, Lee wrote scores of letters, and employed several secretaries. Was there any monastery in the odor of sanctity, he "forwarded to it instantly wine, choice viands, and other presents." To each one he assigned his part, and over all England they were rehearsing what Erasmus calls Lee’s tragedy. In this manner they were
preparing the catastrophe—a prison for Erasmus, the fire for the Holy Scriptures.

When all was arranged, Lee issued his manifesto. Although a poor Greek scholar, he drew up some *Annotations* on Erasmus’ book, which the latter called "mere abuse and blasphemy," but which the members of the league regarded as *oracles*. They passed them secretly from hand to hand, and these obscure sheets, by many indirect channels, found their way into every part of England, and met with numerous readers. There was to be no publication—such was the watchword; Lee was too much afraid. "Why did you not publish your work," asked Erasmus, with cutting irony. "Who knows whether the holy father, appointing you the Aristarchus of letters, might not have sent you a birch to keep the whole world in order!"

The *Annotations* having triumphed in the monasteries, the *conspiracy* took a new flight. In every place of public resort, at fairs and markets, at the dinner table and in the council-chamber, in shops, and taverns, and houses of ill fame, in churches and in the universities, in cottages and in palaces, the league prated against Erasmus and the Greek Testament. Carmelites, Dominicans, and Sophists invoked heaven and conjured hell. What need was there of Scripture? Had they not the apostolical succession of the clergy? No hostile landing in England could, in their eyes, be more fatal than that of the New Testament. The whole nation must rise to repel this impudent invasion. There is, perhaps, no country in Europe where the Reformation encountered so unexpected a storm.

---

**CHAPTER 2**

**The Greek Testament Awakens the Dead**

1516-1521

While this rude blast was rushing over England, and roaring in the long galleries of its monasteries, the still small voice of the Word was making its way into the peaceful homes of praying men and into the ancient halls of Oxford and Cambridge. In private chambers, in the lecture-rooms and refectories, students, and even masters of arts, were to be seen reading the Greek and Latin Testament. Animated groups were discussing the principles of the Reformation. When Christ came on earth (said some) He gave the Word, and when He ascended up into heaven He gave the Holy Spirit. These are the two forces which created the church, and these are the forces that must regenerate it. No, replied the partisans of Rome, it was the teaching of the apostles at first, and it is the teaching of the priests now. The apostles,
rejoined the friends of the Testament of Erasmus, yes, it is true; the apostles were during their ministry a living scripture, but their oral teaching would most certainly have been altered by passing from mouth to mouth. God willed, therefore, that these precious lessons should be preserved to us in their writings, and thus become the ever-undefiled source of truth and salvation. To set the Scriptures in the foremost place, as your pretended reformers are doing, replied the schoolmen of Oxford and Cambridge, is to propagate heresy! And what are the reformers doing, asked their defenders, but what Christ did before them? The sayings of the prophets existed in the time of Jesus only as Scripture, and it was to this written Word that our Lord appealed when He founded His kingdom. And now in like manner the teaching of the apostles exists only as Scripture, and it is to this written Word that we appeal in order to re-establish the kingdom of our Lord in its primitive condition. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; all is in motion—in the lofty halls of our colleges, in the mansions of the rich and noble, and in the lowly dwellings of the poor. If we want to scatter the darkness, must we light the shriveled wick of some old lamp? Ought we not rather to open the doors and shutters and admit freely into the house the great light which God has placed in the heavens?

There was in Trinity Hall, Cambridge, a young student of the canon law, of serious turn of mind and bashful disposition, and whose tender conscience strove, although ineffectually, to fulfil the commandments of God. Anxious about his salvation, Thomas Bilney applied to the priests, whom he looked upon as physicians of the soul. Kneeling before his confessor, with humble look and pale face, he told him all his sins, and even those of which he doubted. The priest prescribed at one time fasting, at another prolonged vigils, and then masses and indulgences which cost him dearly. Bilney went through all these practices with great devotion, but found no consolation in them. Being weak and slender, his body wasted away by degrees; his understanding grew weaker, his imagination faded, and his purse became empty. "Alas!" said he with anguish, "my last state is worse than the first." From time to time an idea crossed his mind: "May not the priests be seeking their own gain, and not the salvation of my soul?" But immediately rejecting the rash doubt, he fell back under the iron hand of the clergy.

One day Bilney heard his friends talking about a new book—it was the Greek Testament printed with a translation which was highly praised for its elegant Latinity. Attracted by the beauty of the style rather than by the divinity of the subject, he stretched out his hand, but just as he was going to take the volume, fear came upon him and he withdrew it hastily. In fact the confessors strictly prohibited Greek and Hebrew books, "the sources of all heresies," and Erasmus’ Testament was particularly forbidden. Yet Bilney regretted so great a sacrifice; was it not the Testament of Jesus Christ? Might not God have placed therein some word which perhaps might heal his soul? He stepped forward, and then again shrank back. ... At last he took courage. Urged, said he, by the hand of God, he walked out of the college, slipped into the house where the volume
was sold in secret, bought it with fear and trembling, and then hastened back
and shut himself up in his room.

He opened it—his eyes caught these words: *This is a faithful saying, and
worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save
sinners; of whom I am chief*. He laid down the book, and meditated on the
astonishing declaration. "What! St. Paul the chief of sinners, and yet St. Paul is
sure of being saved!" He read the verse again and again. "O assertion of St.
Paul, how sweet art thou to my soul!" he exclaimed. This declaration
continually haunted him, and in this manner God instructed him in the secret
of his heart. He could not tell what had happened to him; it seemed as if a
refreshing wind were blowing over his soul, or as if a rich treasure had been
placed in his hands. The Holy Spirit took what was Christ’s, and announced it to
him. "I also am like Paul," exclaimed he with emotion, "and more than Paul, the
greatest of sinners! ... But Christ saves sinners. At last I have heard of Jesus."

His doubts were ended—he was saved. Then took place in him a wonderful
transformation. An unknown joy pervaded him; his conscience, until then sore
with the wounds of sin, was healed; instead of despair he felt an inward peace
passing all understanding. "Jesus Christ," exclaimed he. "Yes, Jesus Christ
saves!" ... Such is the character of the Reformation; it is Jesus Christ who saves
and not the church. "I see it all," said Bilney, "my vigils, my fasts, my
pilgrimages, my purchase of masses and indulgences were destroying instead of
saving me. All these efforts were, as St. Augustine says, a hasty running out of
the right way."

Bilney never grew tired of reading his New Testament. He no longer lent an
attentive ear to the teaching of the schoolmen; he heard Jesus at Capernaum,
Peter in the temple, Paul on Mars' hill, and felt within himself that Christ
possesses the words of eternal life. A witness to Jesus Christ had just been born
by the same power which had transformed Paul, Apollos, and Timothy. The
Reformation in England was beginning. Bilney was united to the Son of God, not
by a remote succession, but by an immediate generation. Leaving to the
disciples of the pope the entangled chain of their imaginary succession, whose
links it is impossible to disengage, he found himself closely attached to Christ.
The word of the first century gave birth to the work of reformation in the
sixteenth. Protestantism does not descend from the gospel in the fiftieth
generation like the Romish church of the Council of Trent; it is the direct
legitimate son—the son of the Master.

God’s action was not limited to one spot. The first rays of the sun from on high
gilded with their fires at once the gothic colleges of Oxford and the ancient
schools of Cambridge.

Along the banks of the Severn extends a picturesque country, bounded by the
forest of Dean, and sprinkled with villages, steeples, and ancient castles. In the
sixteenth century it was particularly admired by priests and friars, and a familiar oath among them was, "As sure as God's in Glo'ster!" The papal birds of prey had swooped upon it. For the fifty years commencing in 1484, four Italian bishops, placed in succession over the diocese, had surrendered it to the pope, to the monks, and to immorality. Thieves in particular were the objects of the tenderest favors of the hierarchy. John de Giglis, collector of the apostolical chamber, had received from the sovereign pontiff authority to pardon murder and theft, on condition that the criminal shared his profits with the pontifical commissioners.

It was in this county of Gloucester, and probably between the years 1490 and 1494, William Tyndale was born. Whether his childhood was passed amid the "breezy beauties" of the Western Cotswolds or beside the "rushy-fringed banks" of the Lower Severn, it cannot certainly be said, but it is on record that "Tyndale was brought up from a child in the University of Oxford," a pointer to the child’s linguistic skill which was shortly dedicated to the service of the Word of God. In the university city he learnt grammar and philosophy in Magdalen Hall, adjoining the college of that name. He made rapid progress, particularly in languages, under the finest classical scholars in England—Grocyn, William Latimer, and Linacre—and took his degrees. A more excellent master than these doctors—the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture—was soon to teach him a science which it is not in the power of man to impart.

Oxford, where Erasmus had so many friends, was the city in which his New Testament met with the warmest welcome. The young Gloucestershire student, inwardly impelled towards the study of sacred literature, read the celebrated book which was then attracting the attention of Christendom. At first he regarded it only as a work of learning, or at most as a manual of piety, whose beauties were calculated to excite religious feelings, but ere long he found it to be something more. The more he read it, the more was he struck by the truth and energy of the Word. This strange book spoke to him of God, of Christ, and of regeneration, with a simplicity and authority which completely subdued him. William had found a master whom he had not sought at Oxford—this was God Himself. The pages he held in his hand were the divine revelation so long mislaid. Possessing a noble soul, a bold spirit, and indefatigable activity, he did not keep this treasure to himself. He uttered that cry, more suited to a Christian than to Archimedes: εὐ̂χα, I have found it! It was not long before several of the younger members of the university, attracted by the purity of his life and the charm of his conversation, gathered round him, and read with him the Greek and Latin gospels of Erasmus. "A certain well-informed young man," wrote Erasmus in a letter wherein he speaks of the publication of his New Testament, "began to lecture with success on Greek literature at Oxford." He was probably speaking of Tyndale.

The monks took the alarm. "A barbarian," continues Erasmus, "entered the pulpit and violently abused the Greek language." "These folk," said Tyndale,
"wished to extinguish the light which exposed their trickery, and they have been laying their plans these dozen years." This observation was made in 1531, and refers doubtless to the proceedings of 1517. Germany and England were beginning the struggle at nearly the same time, and Oxford perhaps before Wittenberg. Tyndale, bearing in mind the injunction, "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another," left Oxford and proceeded to Cambridge. It must needs be that souls whom God has brought to His knowledge should meet and enlighten one another; live coals, when separated, go out; when gathered together, they brighten up, so as even to purify silver and gold. The Romish hierarchy, not knowing what they did, were collecting the scattered brands of the Reformation.

Bilney had not been inactive at Cambridge. Not long had the "sublime lesson of Jesus Christ" filled him with joy, before he fell on his knees and exclaimed, "O Thou who art the truth, give me strength that I may teach it, and convert the ungodly by means of one who has been ungodly himself." After this prayer his eyes gleamed with new fire; he had assembled his friends and, opening Erasmus’ Testament, had placed his finger on the words that had reached his soul, and these words had touched many. The arrival of Tyndale gave him fresh courage, and the light burnt brighter in Cambridge.

John Fryth, a young man of eighteen, the son of an innkeeper of Westerham in Kent, was distinguished among the students of King’s College, by the promptitude of his understanding and the integrity of his life. He was as deeply read in mathematics as Tyndale in the classics, and Bilney in canon law. Although of an exact turn of mind, yet his soul was elevated, and he recognized in Holy Scripture a learning of a new kind. "These things are not demonstrated like a proposition of Euclid," he said, "mere study is sufficient to impress the theories of mathematics on our minds, but this science of God meets with a resistance in man that necessitates the intervention of a divine power. Christianity is a regeneration." "Through Tyndale’s instructions," says John Foxe, "he first received with his heart the seed of the Gospel and sincere godliness."

These three young scholars set to work with enthusiasm. They declared that neither priestly absolution nor any other religious rite could give remission of sins, that the assurance of pardon is obtained by faith alone, and that faith purifies the heart. Then they addressed to all men that saying of Christ’s at which the monks were so greatly offended: Repent and be converted!

Ideas so new produced a great clamor. A famous orator undertook one day at Cambridge to show that it was useless to preach conversion to the sinner. "Thou, who, for sixty years past," said he, "hast wallowed in thy lusts, like a sow in her mire, dost thou think that thou canst in one year take as many steps towards heaven, and that in thine age, as thou hast done towards hell?" Bilney left the church with indignation. "Is that preaching repentance in the name of
Jesus?" he asked. "Does not this priest tell us, 'Christ will not save thee'? Alas! for so many years that this deadly doctrine has been taught in Christendom, not one man has dared open his mouth against it!" Many of the Cambridge fellows were scandalized at Bilney's language—was not the preacher whose teaching he condemned duly ordained by the bishop? He replied, "What would be the use of being a hundred times consecrated, were it even by a thousand papal bulls, if the inward calling is wanting? To no purpose hath the bishop breathed on our heads if we have never felt the breath of the Holy Ghost in our hearts!" Thus, at the very beginning of the Reformation, England, rejecting the Romish superstitions, discerned with extreme nicety what constitutes the essence of consecration to the service of the Lord.

After pronouncing these noble words, Bilney, who longed for an outpouring of the Holy Ghost, shut himself up in his room, fell on his knees, and called upon God to come to the assistance of his church. Then rising up, he exclaimed, as if animated by a prophetic spirit, "A new time is beginning. The Christian assembly is about to be renewed. ... Someone is coming unto us, I see him, I hear him—it is Jesus Christ. ... He is the king, and it is He who will call the true ministers commissioned to evangelize His people."

Tyndale, full of the same hopes as Bilney, left Cambridge, probably at the close of 1521.

Thus the English Reformation began independently of those of Luther and Zwingli, deriving its origin from God alone. In every province of Christendom there was a simultaneous action of the divine Word. The principle of the Reformation at Oxford, Cambridge, and London was the Greek New Testament, published by Erasmus. England in course of time learnt to be proud of this origin of its Reformation.

---

CHAPTER 3

Persecution and Intrigue
1518–20

The divine work of revival caused great alarm throughout the Roman hierarchy. Content with the baptism they administered, they feared the baptism of the Holy Ghost perfected by faith in the Word of God. Some of the clergy, who were full of zeal, but of zeal without knowledge, prepared for the struggle, and the cries raised by the prelates were repeated by all the inferior orders.
The first blows did not fall on the members of the universities, but on those humble Christians, the relics of Wycliffe’s ministry, to whom the reform movement among the learned had imparted a new life. The awakening of the fourteenth century was about to be succeeded by that of the sixteenth, and the last gleams of the closing day were almost lost in the first rays of that which was commencing. The young scholars of Oxford and Cambridge aroused the attention of the agitated hierarchy, and attracted their eyes to the humble disciples of the Lord, who here and there still recalled the days of Wycliffe.

An artisan named Thomas Man sometimes called Doctor Man, from his knowledge of Holy Scripture, and his bold testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, had been imprisoned for his faith in the monastery of Osney, near Oxford (A.D. 1511). Tormented by the remembrance of a recantation which had been extorted from him, he had escaped from Oxford and fled into the eastern parts of England, where he had preached the Word, supplying his daily wants by the labor of his hands. This “champion of God” afterwards drew near the capital, and assisted by his wife, the new Priscilla of this new Aquila, he proclaimed the doctrine of Christ to the crowd collected around him in some “upper chamber” of London, or in some lonely meadow watered by the Thames, or under the aged oaks of Windsor Forest. He thought with Chrysostom of old, that “all priests are not saints, but all saints are priests.” “He that receiveth the Word of God,” said he, “receiveth God Himself; that is the true real presence. The vendors of masses are not the high-priests of this mystery, but the men whom God hath anointed with His Spirit to be kings and priests.” From six to seven hundred persons were converted by his preaching.

The monks who dared not as yet attack the universities, resolved to fall upon those preachers who made their temple on the banks of the Thames, or in some remote corner of the city. Man was seized, condemned, and burnt alive on the 29th of March, 1518, at Smithfield.

And this was not all. There lived at Coventry a little band of serious Christians—four shoemakers, a glover, a hosier, and a widow named Smith—who gave their children a pious education. The Franciscans were annoyed that laymen, and even a woman, should dare meddle with religious instruction. On Ash Wednesday (1519) Simon Mourton, the bishop’s summoner, apprehended them all—men, women, and children. On the following Friday, the parents were taken to the abbey of Mackstock, about six miles from Coventry, and the children to the Grey Friars’ convent. “Let us see what heresies you have been taught?” said Friar Stafford to the intimidated little ones. The poor children confessed they had been taught in English the Lord’s prayer, the apostles’ creed, and the ten commandments. On hearing this, Stafford told them angrily, “I forbid you, unless you wish to be burnt as your parents will be, to have anything to do with the Pater, the credo, or the ten commandments in English.”
Five weeks after this, the men were condemned to be burnt alive, but the judges had compassion on the widow, because of her young family (for she was their only support) and let her go. It was night; Mourton offered to see Dame Smith home; he took her arm, and they threaded the dark and narrow streets of Coventry. "Eh, eh!" said the summoner on a sudden, "what have we here?" He heard in fact the rattling of a scroll within her sleeve. "What have you got there?" he continued, putting his hand up her sleeve, from which he drew out a parchment. Approaching a window whence issued the faint rays of a lamp, he examined the mysterious scroll, and found it to contain the Lord’s prayer, certain articles of faith, and the ten commandments in English. "Oh, oh! sirrah!" said he, "come along. As good now as another time!" Then seizing the poor widow by the arm, he dragged her before the bishop. Sentence of death was immediately pronounced on her, and on the 4th of April, Dame Smith, Robert Hatchets, Archer, Hawkins, Thomas Bond, Wrigsham, and Landsdale, were burnt alive at Coventry in the Little Park, for the crime of teaching their children the Lord’s prayer, the apostles’ creed, and the commandments of God.

But what availed it to silence these obscure lips, so long as the Testament of Erasmus could speak? Lee’s conspiracy must be revived. Henry Standish, bishop of St. Asaph, was a narrow-minded man, rather fanatical, but probably sincere, of great courage, and not without some degree of piety. This prelate, being determined to preach a crusade against the New Testament, began at London, in St. Paul’s Cathedral, before the mayor and corporation. "Away with these new translations," he said, "or else the religion of Jesus Christ is threatened with utter ruin." But Standish was deficient in tact, and instead of confining himself to general statements, like most of his party, he endeavored to show how far Erasmus had corrupted the gospel, and continued thus: "Must I who for so many years have been a doctor of the Holy Scriptures, and who have always read in my Bible: In principio erat verbum—must I now be obliged to read: In principio erat sermo," for thus had Erasmus translated the opening words of St. John’s Gospel. "Let us restrain our laughter," whispered one to another, when they heard this puerile charge. "My lord," proceeded the bishop, turning to the mayor, "magistrates of the city, and citizens all, fly to the succor of religion!" Standish continued his pathetic appeals, but his oratory was all in vain; some stood unmoved, others shrugged their shoulders, and others grew impatient. The citizens of London seemed determined to support liberty and the Bible.

Seeing the failure of his attack in the city, Standish sighed and groaned and prayed, and repeated mass against the so much dreaded book. But he also made up his mind to do more. One day, during the rejoicings at court for the betrothal of the Princess Mary, then two years old, with a French prince who was an infant in arms, St. Asaph, eaten up with zeal, decided upon a bold step. Suddenly he made his way through the crowd, and threw himself at the feet of the king and queen. All were thunderstruck, and asked one another what the old bishop could mean. "Great king," said he, "your ancestors who have reigned
over this island, and yours, O great queen, who have governed Aragon, were always distinguished by their zeal for the church. Show yourselves worthy of your forefathers. Times full of danger are come upon us; a book has just appeared, and been published too, by Erasmus! It is such a book that, if you close not your kingdom against it, it is all over with the religion of Christ among us."

The bishop ceased, and a dead silence ensued. The devout Standish, fearing lest Henry’s well-known love of learning should cause his prayer to be rejected, raised his eyes and his hands toward heaven and, kneeling in the midst of the courtly assembly, exclaimed in a sorrowful tone, "O Christ! O Son of God! save Thy spouse! ... for no man cometh to her help."

Having thus spoken, the prelate, whose courage was worthy of a better cause, rose up and waited. Every one strove to guess at the king’s thoughts. Sir Thomas More was present, and he could not forsake his friend Erasmus. “What are the heresies this book is likely to engender?” he inquired. After the sublime came the ridiculous. With the forefinger of his right hand, touching successively the fingers of his left, Standish replied, "First, this book destroys the resurrection; secondly, it annuls the sacrament of marriage; thirdly, it abolishes the mass." Then uplifting his thumb and two fingers, he showed them to the assembly with a look of triumph. The bigoted Catherine shuddered as she saw these unusual signs of the three heresies of Erasmus, and Henry himself, an admirer of Aquinas, was embarrassed. It was a critical moment; the Greek Testament was on the point of being banished from England. “The proof, the proof?” exclaimed the friends of literature. “I will give it,” rejoined the impetuous Standish, and then once more touching his left thumb, "Firstly," he said... But he brought forward such foolish reasons that even the women and the unlearned were ashamed of them. The more he endeavored to justify his assertions, the more confused he became; he affirmed among other things that the Epistles of St. Paul were written in Hebrew.

"There is not a schoolboy that does not know that Paul’s epistles were written in Greek," said a doctor of divinity kneeling before the king. Henry, blushing for the bishop, turned the conversation, and Standish, ashamed at having made a Greek write to the Greeks in Hebrew, would have withdrawn unobserved. "The beetle must not attack the eagle," was whispered in his ear. Thus did the book of God remain in England the standard of a faithful band, who found in its pages the motto which the church of Rome had usurped: The truth is in me alone.

A more formidable adversary than Standish aspired to combat the Reformation, not only in England, but in all the West. One of those ambitious designs, which easily germinate in the human heart, developed itself in the soul of the chief minister of Henry VIII, and if this project succeeded, it promised to secure
forever the empire of the papacy on the banks of the Thames, and perhaps in
the whole of Christendom.

Wolsey, as chancellor and legate, governed both in state and in church, and
could, without an untruth, utter his famous *Ego et rex meus*. Having reached so
great a height, he desired to soar still higher. The favorite of Henry VIII, almost
his master, treated as a brother by the Emperor, by the king of France, and by
other crowned heads, invested occasionally with the title of Majesty, the
peculiar property of sovereigns, the cardinal, sincere in his faith in the
papedom, aspired to fill the throne of the pontiffs, and thus become *Deus in
terris*. He thought that if God permitted a Luther to appear in the world, it was
because He had a Wolsey to oppose to him.

It would be difficult to fix the precise moment when this immoderate desire
entered his mind; it was about the end of 1518 that it began to show itself. The
bishop of Ely, ambassador at the court of Francis I, being in conference with
that prince on the 18th of December in that year, said to him mysteriously, "The
cardinal has an idea in his mind... on which he can unbosom himself to
nobody... except it be to your majesty." Francis understood him.

An event occurred to facilitate the cardinal’s plans. If Wolsey desired to be the
first priest, Henry desired to be the first king. The imperial crown, vacant by
the death of Maximilian in 1519, was sought by two princes—by Charles of
Spain, a cold and calculating man, caring little about the pleasures and even
the pomp of power, but forming great designs, and knowing how to pursue
them with energy; and by Francis I of France, a man of less penetrating glance
and less indefatigable activity, but more daring and impetuous. At the same
time, Henry VIII, several years older than these continental kings, passionate,
capricious, and selfish, thought himself strong enough to contend with them
and secretly strove to win "the monarchy of all Christendom." Wolsey flattered
himself that, hidden under the cloak of his master’s ambition, he might satisfy
his own. If he procured the crown of the Caesars for Henry, he might easily
obtain the tiara of the popes for himself; if he failed, the least that could be
done to compensate England for the loss of the Empire, would be to give the
sovereignty of the church to her prime minister.

Henry first sounded the king of France. Sir Thomas Boleyn appeared one day
before Francis I just as the latter was returning from mass. The king, desirous
to anticipate a confidence that might be embarrassing, took the ambassador
aside to the window and whispered to him, "Some of the electors have offered
me the Empire; I hope your master will be favorable to me." Sir Thomas, in
confusion, made some vague reply, and the chivalrous king, following up his
idea, took the ambassador firmly by one hand and, laying the other on his
breast, exclaimed, "By my faith, if I become Emperor, in three years I shall be
in Constantinople, or I shall die on the road!" This was not what Henry wanted,
but, dissembling his wishes, he took care to inform Francis that he would
support his candidature. Upon hearing this, Francis raised his hat and exclaimed, "I desire to see the king of England; I will see him, I tell you, even if I go to London with only one page and one lackey."

Francis was well aware that if he threatened the king’s ambition, he must flatter the ministers, and, recollecting the hint given by the bishop of Ely, he said one day to Boleyn, "It seems to me that my brother of England and I could do, indeed ought to do... something for the cardinal. He was prepared by God for the good of Christendom... one of the greatest men in the church... and on the word of a king, if he consents, I will do it." A few minutes after he continued, "Write and tell the cardinal that if he aspires to be the head of the church and, if anything should happen to the reigning pope, I will promise him fourteen cardinals on my part. Let us only act in concert, your master and me, and I promise you, Mr. Ambassador, that neither pope nor emperor shall be created in Europe without our consent."

But Henry did not act in concert with the king of France. At Wolsey's instigation he supported three candidates at once; at Paris he was for Francis I, at Madrid for Charles V, and at Frankfort for himself. The kings of France and England failed, and on the 10th of August, Dr. Pace, Henry's envoy at Frankfort, having returned to England, desired to console the king by mentioning the sums of money which Charles had spent, totaling, so Pace reckoned, no less than 1,500,000 gold florins. Henry congratulated himself on not having obtained the crown at so dear a rate.

Charles had scarcely ascended the imperial throne, in despite of the king of France, when these two princes swore eternal hatred of each other, and each was anxious to win over Henry VIII. At one time, Charles, under the pretense of seeing his uncle and aunt, visited England; at another, Francis had an interview with the king in the neighborhood of Calais. Cardinal Wolsey shared in the flattering attentions of the two monarchs. "It is easy for the king of Spain, who has become the head of the Empire, to raise whomsoever he pleases to the supreme pontificate," said the young Emperor to him; and at these words the ambitious cardinal surrendered himself to Maximilian’s successor. But erelong Francis I flattered him in his turn, and Wolsey replied also to his advances. The king of France gave Henry tournaments and banquets of Asiatic luxury, and Wolsey, whose countenance yet bore the marks of the graceful smile with which he had taken leave of Charles, smiled also on Francis, and sang mass in his honor. He engaged the hand of the Princess Mary to the Dauphin of France and to Charles V, leaving the care of unraveling the matter to futurity. Then, proud of his skillful practices, he returned to London full of hope. By walking in falsehood he hoped to attain the tiara, and if it was yet too far above him, there were certain gospellers in England who might serve as a ladder to reach it. Murder might serve as the complement to fraud.
Whilst the ambitious prelate was thinking of nothing but his own glory and the means necessary to acquire the Roman pontificate, a great desire, but of a very different nature, was springing up in the heart of one of the humble "gospellers" of England. If Wolsey had his eyes fixed on the throne of the popedom in order to seat himself there, Tyndale thought of raising up the true throne of the church by re-establishing the legitimate sovereignty of the Word of God. The Greek Testament of Erasmus had been one step, and it now became necessary to place before the simple what the king of the schools had given to the learned. This idea, which pursued the young Oxford scholar everywhere, was to be the mighty mainspring of the English Reformation.

On a southwestern slope of the Cotswolds there stood a plain but large mansion, the manor-house of Little Sodbury, commanding an extensive view over the beautiful vale of the Severn where Tyndale was born. It was inhabited by a family of gentle birth; Sir John Walsh had shone in the tournaments of the court, and by this means conciliated the favor of his prince. He kept open table, and gentlemen, deans, abbots, archdeacons, doctors of divinity, and rectors, charmed by Sir John's cordial welcome and by his good table, were ever at his house. The former brother-at-arms of Henry VIII felt an interest in the questions then discussing throughout Christendom. Lady Walsh herself, a sensible and generous woman, lost not a word of the animated conversation of her guests, and discreetly tried to incline the balance to the side of truth.

Tyndale after leaving Oxford and Cambridge had returned to the home of his fathers. Sir John had requested him to educate his children, and he had accepted the trust. Then in the prime of life (he was about thirty) and well instructed in Scripture, Tyndale was full of desire to show forth the light which God had given him. Opportunities were not wanting. Seated at table with all the clerics welcomed by Sir John, Tyndale entered into conversation with them. They talked of the learned men of the day—of Erasmus much, and sometimes of Luther, who was beginning to astonish England. They discussed questions touching the Holy Scriptures, and sundry points of theology. Tyndale expressed his convictions with admirable clearness, supported them with great learning, and kept his ground against all with unbending courage. These animated conversations in the vale of the Severn are one of the essential features of the picture presented by the Reformation in this country. The historians of antiquity invented the speeches which they have put into the mouths of their heroes. In our times, history, without such inventions, should make us acquainted with the sentiments of the persons of whom it treats. It is
sufficient to read Tyndale’s works to form some idea of these conversations. It
is from his writings that the following discussion has been drawn.

In the dining room of the old hall a varied group was assembled round the
hospitable table. There were Sir John and Lady Walsh, a few gentlemen of the
neighborhood, with several abbots, deans, monks, and doctors, in their
respective costumes. Tyndale occupied the humblest place, and kept Erasmus’
New Testament within reach in order to prove what he advanced. Numerous
domestics were moving about engaged in waiting on the guests. At length, the
conversation, after wandering a little, took a more precise direction. The
priests grew impatient when they saw the terrible volume appear. "Your
Scriptures only serve to make heretics," they exclaimed.

"On the contrary," replied Tyndale, "the source of all heresies is pride; now the
Word of God strips man of everything, and leaves him as bare as Job."

"The Word of God! why even we don't understand it; how then can the
common people understand it?"

"You do not understand it," rejoined Tyndale, "because you look into it only for
foolish questions, as you would into our Lady's Matins or Merlin's Prophecies.
Now the Scriptures are a clue which we must follow, without turning aside,
until we arrive at Christ, for Christ is the end."

"And I tell you," shouted out a priest, "that the Scriptures are a Dædalian
labyrinth, rather than Ariadne’s clue—a conjuring book wherein everybody finds
what he wants."

"Alas!" replied Tyndale, "you read them without Jesus Christ; that is why they
are an obscure book to you, a thicket of thorns where you only escape from the
briers to be caught by the brambles."

"No!" exclaimed another clerk, heedless of contradicting his colleague, "nothing
is obscure to us; it is we who give the Scriptures, and we who explain them to
you."

"You would lose both your time and your trouble," said Tyndale, "do you know
who taught the eagles to spy out their prey? Well, that same God teaches His
hungry children to spy out their Father in His Word. Christ’s elect spy out their
Lord, and trace out the paths of His feet, and follow; yea, though He go upon
the plain and liquid water, which will receive no step, yet there they find out
His foot. His elect know Him, but the world knows Him not. And as for you, far
from having given us the Scriptures, it is you who have hidden them from us; it
is you who burn those who teach them, and, if you could, you would burn the
Scriptures themselves."
Tyndale was not satisfied with merely laying down the great principles of faith; he always sought after what he calls "the sweet marrow within," but to the divine unction he added no little humor, and unmercifully ridiculed the superstitions of his adversaries. "You set candles before images," he said to them, "and since you give them light, why don’t you give them food? Why don’t you make their bellies hollow, and put victuals and drink inside? To serve God by such mummeries is treating Him like a spoilt child, whom you pacify with a toy or with a horse made of a stick."

But Tyndale soon returned to more serious thoughts, and when his adversaries extolled the papacy as the power that would save the church in the tempest, he replied, "Let us only take on board our ship the anchor of faith in Christ’s blood; let us secure it by the cable of love, and when the storm bursts upon us, let us boldly cast the anchor into the sea; then you may be sure the ship will remain safe on the great waters." And, in fine, if his opponents rejected any doctrine of the truth, Tyndale (says the chronicler) opening his Testament would set his finger on the verse which refuted the Romish error, and exclaim, "Look and read."

The beginnings of the English Reformation are not to be found, as we have seen, in a material ecclesiasticism, which has been decorated with the name of English Catholicism; they are essentially spiritual. The Divine Word, the Creator of the new life in the individual, is also the Founder and Reformer of the church. The reformed churches, and particularly the reformed churches of Great Britain, are the fruit of the word of the Gospel.

The contemplation of God’s works refreshed Tyndale after the discussions he had to maintain at his patron’s table. He would often ramble to the top of Sodbury hill, where Queen Margaret of Anjou halted during the war of the Roses, and here too rested Edward IV, who pursued her, before the fatal battle of Tewkesbury, which caused this princess to fall into the hands of the Yorkists. But Tyndale meditated upon other battles, which were to restore liberty and truth to Christendom, battles not against flesh and blood but against the rulers of the darkness of the world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Behind the mansion stood a little church, overshadowed by two large yew trees, and dedicated to St. Adeline. On Sundays Tyndale used to preach there, Sir John and Lady Walsh, with the older children, occupying the manorial pew. This humble sanctuary was filled by their household and tenantry, listening attentively to the words of their teacher, which fell from his lips like the waters of Shiloah that go softly. Tyndale was very lively in conversation, but he explained the Scriptures with so much unction, says the chronicler, "that his hearers thought they heard St. John himself." If he resembled John in the mildness of his language, he resembled Paul in the strength of his doctrine. The pope, he said, "turneth the roots of the trees upward. He makes the goodness of God the branches and our goodness the roots. We must be first good, says
he, and move God to be good to us for our goodness’ sake; so must God’s
goodness spring out of our goodness. Nay verily, God’s goodness is the root of
all goodness, and our goodness, if we have any, springs out of His goodness." ... 
"As the husband marrieth the wife, before he can have any lawful children by
her, even so faith justifieth us to make us fruitful in good works. But neither
the one nor the other should remain barren. Faith is the holy candle wherewith
you must bless yourselves at the last hour; without it, you will go astray in the
valley of the shadow of death, though you had a thousand tapers about you, a
hundred tons of holy water, a shipfull of pardons, a cloth-sack full of friars’
coats, and all the ceremonies of the world, and all the good works, deservings,
and merits of all the men in the world, be they, or were they, never so holy.
God’s Word only lasteth for ever; and that which He hath sworn doth abide
when all other things perish."

The priests, irritated at such observations, determined to ruin Tyndale, and
some of them invited Sir John and his lady to an entertainment, at which he
was not present. During dinner, they so abused the young scholar and his New
Testament that his patrons retired greatly annoyed that their tutor should have
made so many enemies. They told him all they had heard, and Tyndale
successfully refuted his adversaries’ arguments. "What!" exclaimed Lady Walsh,
"there are some of these doctors worth one hundred, some two hundred, and
some three hundred pounds... and were it reason, think you, Master William,
that we should believe you before them?" Tyndale thought it wise to give her
no answer at the time, but as weeks passed by, she and her husband were alike
convinced that their children’s tutor was imparting to them nothing less than
the plain truth of the Gospel of God.

Before long, the manor-house and St. Adeline’s church became too narrow for
Tyndale’s zeal. He preached every Sunday, sometimes in a village, sometimes
in a town. The inhabitants of Bristol assembled to hear him in a large meadow,
called St. Austin’s Green. But no sooner had he preached in any place, then the
priests hastened thither, tore up what he had planted, called him a heretic,
and threatened to expel from the church everyone who dared listen to him.
When Tyndale returned he found the field laid waste by the enemy, and
looking sadly upon it, as the husbandman who sees his corn beaten down by the
hail, and his rich furrows turned into a barren waste, he exclaimed, "What is to
be done? While I am sowing in one place, the enemy ravages the field I have
just left. I cannot be everywhere. Oh! if Christians possessed the Holy
Scriptures in their own tongue, they could of themselves withstand these
sophists. Without the Bible it is impossible to establish the laity in the truth."

Then a great idea sprang up in Tyndale’s heart: "It was in the language of
Israel," said he, "that the Psalms were sung in the temple of Jehovah, and shall
not the gospel speak the language of England among us? ... Ought the church to
have less light at noonday than at the dawn? ... Christians must read the New
Testament in their mother tongue." Tyndale believed that this idea proceeded
from God. The new sun would lead to the discovery of a new world, and the infallible rule would make all human diversities give way to a divine unity. "One holdeth this doctor, another that," said Tyndale, "one followeth Duns Scotus, another St. Thomas Aquinas, another Bonaventure, Alexander of Hales, Raymond de Pennaforti, Nicholas de Lyra, Hugh de Sancto Victore, and so many others besides. ... Now, each of these authors contradicts the other. How then can we distinguish him who says right from him who says wrong? ... How? ... Verily, by God’s Word. Nay, say they, the Scripture is so hard that we could not understand it but by the help of the doctors. But that is to measure the measuring rod by the cloth. Here be twenty cloths of divers lengths and of divers breadths; how shall I be sure of the length of the meteyard by them? I suppose, rather, I must be first sure of the length of the meteyard, and thereby measure and judge of the cloths. If I must first believe the doctor, then is the doctor first true and the truth of the Scripture is dependent on his truth, and so the truth of God springs out of the truth of man. Thus Antichrist turns the roots of the trees upward." Tyndale hesitated no longer. While Wolsey sought to win the papal tiara, the humble tutor of Sodbury undertook to place the torch of heaven in the midst of his fellow countrymen. The translation of the Bible must be the chief work of his life.

The first triumph of the Word was a revolution in the manor-house. In proportion as Sir John and Lady Walsh acquired a taste for the gospel, they became disgusted with the priests. The clergy were not so often invited to Sodbury, nor did they meet with the same welcome. "Neither," says Foxe, "had they the cheer and countenance when they came, as before they had." They soon discontinued their visits, and thought of nothing but how they could drive Tyndale from the mansion and from the diocese.

Unwilling to compromise themselves in this warfare, they sent forward some of those light troops which the church has always at her disposal. Mendicant friars and poor curates, who could hardly understand their missal, and the most learned of whom made Albertus de secretis mulierum [Treatise On the Secrets of Wives by Albertus Magnus] their habitual study, fell upon Tyndale like a pack of hungry hounds. They trooped to the alehouses and, calling for a jug of beer, took their seats, one at one table, another at another. They invited the peasantry to drink with them and, entering into conversation with them, poured forth a thousand curses upon the daring reformer. "He’s a hypocrite," said one; "He’s a heretic," said another. The most skilful among them would mount upon a stool and, turning the tavern into a temple, deliver, for the first time in his life, an extemporaneous discourse. They reported words that Tyndale had never uttered, and actions that he had never committed. Rushing upon the poor tutor (he himself informs us) "like unclean swine that follow their carnal lusts," they tore his good name to very tatters, and shared the spoil among them, while the audience, excited by their calumnies and heated by the beer, departed overflowing with rage and hatred against the heretic of Sodbury.
After the friars came the dignitaries. The deans and abbots, Sir John’s former guests, accused Tyndale to the chancellor of the diocese, and the storm which had begun in the tavern burst forth in the episcopal palace.

The titular bishop of Worcester (an appanage of the Italian prelates) was Julio de Medici, a learned man, great politician, and crafty priest, who already governed the popedom without being pope, and who later, as Pope Clement VII, was appealed to in the question of the divorce of Henry VIII. Wolsey, who administered the diocese for his absent colleague, had appointed Dr. Thomas Parker chancellor, a man devoted to the Roman church. It was to him the churchmen made their complaint. A judicial inquiry had its difficulties; the king’s companion-at-arms was the employer and patron of the pretended heretic, and Sir Anthony Poyntz, Lady Walsh’s brother, was sheriff of the county. The chancellor was therefore content to convocate a general conference of the clergy. Tyndale obeyed the summons, but foreseeing what awaited him, he cried heartily to God, as he pursued his way up the banks of the Severn, “to give him strength to stand fast in the truth of His Word.”

When they were assembled, the abbots and deans, and other ecclesiastics of the diocese, with haughty heads and threatening looks, crowded round the humble but unbending Tyndale. When his turn arrived, he stood forward, and the chancellor administered him a severe reprimand, to which he made a calm reply. This so exasperated the chancellor, that, giving way to his passion, he treated Tyndale as if he had been a dog. “Where are your witnesses?” demanded the latter. “Let them come forward, and I will answer them.” Not one of them dared support the charge—they looked another way. The chancellor waited, one witness at least he must have, but he could not get that. Annoyed at this desertion of the priests, the representative of the Medici became more equitable, and let the accusation drop. Tyndale quietly returned to Sodbury, blessing God who had saved him from the cruel hands of his adversaries, and entertaining nothing but the tenderest charity towards them. “Take away my goods,” he said to them one day, “take away my good name! yet so long as Christ dwelleth in my heart, so long shall I love you not a whit the less.” Here indeed is the Saint John to whom Tyndale has been compared.

In this violent warfare, however, he could not fail to receive some heavy blows, and where could he find consolation? Fryth and Bilney were far from him. Tyndale recollected an aged doctor, formerly chancellor to a bishop, who lived near Sodbury and who had shown him great affection. He went to see him, and opened his heart to him. The old man looked at him for a while as if he hesitated to disclose some great mystery. “Do you not know,” said he, lowering his voice, “that the pope is very Antichrist whom the Scripture speaketh of? ... But beware what you say. ... That knowledge may cost you your life.” This doctrine of Antichrist, which Luther was at that moment enunciating so boldly, struck Tyndale. Strengthened by it, as was the Saxon
reformer, he felt fresh energy in his heart, and the aged doctor was to him what the aged friar had been to Luther.

When the priests saw that their plot had failed, they commissioned a celebrated divine to undertake his conversion. The reformer replied with his Greek Testament to the schoolman’s arguments. The theologian was speechless; at last he exclaimed, "Well then! it were better to be without God’s laws than the pope’s." Tyndale, who did not expect so plain and blasphemous a confession, made answer: "I defy the pope and all his laws!” and then, as if unable to keep his secret, he added, "If God spares my life, ere many years I will take care that a ploughboy shall know more of the Scriptures than you do."

All his thoughts were now directed to the means of carrying out his plans, and desirous of avoiding conversations that might compromise them, he thenceforth passed the greater portion of his time in the library. He prayed, he read, he began his translation of the Bible, and in all probability communicated portions of it to Sir John and Lady Walsh.

All his precautions were useless; the scholastic divine had betrayed him, and the priests had sworn to stop him in his translation of the Bible. One day he fell in with a troop of monks and curates who abused him in the grossest manner. "It’s the favor of the gentry of the county that makes you so proud," said they, "but notwithstanding your patrons, there will be a talk about you before long, and in a pretty fashion too! ... You shall not always live in a manor-house!" "Banish me to the obscurest corner of England," replied Tyndale, "provided you will permit me to teach children and preach the gospel, and give me ten pounds a year for my support. ... I shall be satisfied!" The priests left him, but with the intention of preparing him a very different fate.

Tyndale indulged in his pleasant dreams no longer. He saw that he was on the point of being arrested, condemned, and interrupted in his great work. He must seek a retreat where he could discharge in peace the task God had allotted him. "You cannot save me from the hands of the priests," said he to Sir John, "and God knows to what troubles you would expose yourself by keeping me in your family. Permit me to leave you." Having said this, he gathered up his papers, took his Testament, pressed the hands of his benefactors, kissed the children, and then descending the hill, bade farewell to the smiling banks of the Severn, and departed alone—alone with his faith. What shall he do? What will become of him? Where shall he go? He went forth like Abraham, one thing alone engrossing his mind—the Scriptures must be translated into the language of the people, and deposited as the oracles of God in the midst of his countrymen.
Whilst a plain minister was commencing the Reformation in a tranquil valley in the West of England, powerful reinforcements were landing on the shores of Kent. The writings and actions of Luther excited a lively sensation in Great Britain. His appearance before the Diet of Worms was a common subject of conversation. Ships from the harbors of the Low Countries brought his books to London, and the German printers had made answer to the nuncio Aleander, who was prohibiting the Lutheran works in the Empire: "Very well! we shall send them to England!" One might almost say that England was destined to be the asylum of truth. And in fact, the Theses of 1517, the Explanation of the Lord’s Prayer, the books against Emser, against the papacy of Rome, against the bull of Antichrist, the Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, the Appeal to the German nobility, and above all, the Babylonish Captivity of the Church—all crossed the sea, were translated, and circulated throughout the kingdom. The German and English nations, having a common origin, and being sufficiently alike at that time in character and civilization, the works intended for one might be read by the other with advantage. The monk in his cell, the country gentleman in his hall, the doctor in his college, the tradesman in his shop, and even the bishop in his palace, studied these extraordinary writings. The laity in particular, who had been prepared by Wycliffe and disgusted by the avarice and disorderly lives of the priests, read with enthusiasm the eloquent pages of the Saxon monk. They strengthened all hearts.

The papacy was not inactive in presence of all these efforts. The times of Gregory VII and of Innocent III, it is true, had passed, and weakness and irresolution had succeeded to the former energy and activity of the Roman pontificate. The spiritual power had resigned the dominion of Europe to the secular powers, and it was doubtful whether faith in the papacy could be found in the papacy itself. Yet a German (Dr. Eck) by the most indefatigable exertions had extorted a bull from the profane Leo X, and this bull had just reached England. The pope himself sent it to Henry, calling upon him to extirpate the Lutheran heresy. The king handed it to Wolsey, and the latter transmitted it to the bishops, who, after reading the heretic’s books, met together to discuss the matter. There was more Romish faith in London than in the Vatican. "This false friar," exclaimed Wolsey, "attacks submission to the clergy, that fountain of all virtues." The humanist prelates were the most annoyed; the road they had taken ended in an abyss, and they shrank back in alarm. Tunstall, the friend of Erasmus, afterwards bishop of London, and who had just returned from his embassy to Germany where Luther had been painted to him in the darkest colors, was particularly violent: "This monk is a Proteus."
... I mean an atheist. If you allow the heresies to grow up which he is scattering with both hands, they will choke the faith and the church will perish. Have we not enough of the Wycliffites—here are new legions of the same kind! ... Today Luther calls for the abolition of the mass; tomorrow he will ask for the abolition of Jesus Christ. He rejects everything, and puts nothing in its place. What? if barbarians plunder our frontiers, we punish them. ... and shall we bear with heretics who plunder our altars? ... No! by the mortal agony that Christ endured, I entreat you... What am I saying? the whole church conjures you to combat against this devouring dragon... to punish this hell-dog, to silence his sinister howlings, and to drive him shamefully back into his den." Thus spoke the eloquent Tunstall. Nor was Wolsey far behind him. The only attachment at all respectable in this man was that which he entertained for the church; it may perhaps be called respectable, for it was the only one that did not exclusively regard himself. On the 14th of May 1521, this English pope, in imitation of the Italian pope, issued his bull against Luther.

It was read (probably on the first Sunday in June) in all the churches during high mass, when the congregation was most numerous. A priest exclaimed, "For every book of Martin Luther’s found in your possession within fifteen days after this injunction, you will incur the greater excommunication." Then a public notary, holding the pope’s bull in his hand, with a description of Luther’s perverse opinions, proceeded towards the principal door of the church and fastened up the document. The people gathered round it; the most competent person read it aloud, while the rest listened. The following are some of the Lutheran “heresies” which, by the pope’s order, resounded in the porches of all the cathedral, conventual, collegiate, and parish churches of every county in England, and were the subjects of papal condemnation:

"11. Sins are not pardoned to any, unless, the priest remitting them, he believe they are remitted to him.

"13. If by reason of some impossibility, the contrite be not confessed, or the priest absolve him, not in earnest, but in jest; yet if he believe that he is absolved, he is most truly absolved.

"14. In the sacrament of penance and the remission of a fault, the pope or bishop doth not more than the lowest priest; yea, where there is not a priest, then any Christian will do; yea, if it were a woman or a child.

"26. The pope, the successor of Peter, is not Christ’s vicar.

"28. It is not at all in the hand of the church or the pope to decree articles of faith, no, nor to decree the laws of manners or of good works."
The cardinal-legate, accompanied by the nuncio, by the ambassador of Charles V, and by several bishops, proceeded in great pomp to St. Paul’s, where the bishop of Rochester preached, and Wolsey burnt Luther’s books. But they were hardly reduced to ashes, before sarcasms and jests were heard in every direction. "Fire is not a theological argument," said one. "The papists, who accuse Martin Luther of slaying and murdering Christians," added another, "are like the pickpocket, who began to cry stop thief, as soon as he saw himself in danger of being caught." "The bishop of Rochester," said a third, "concludes that because Luther has thrown the pope’s decretals into the fire, he would throw in the pope himself. ... We may hence deduce another syllogism, quite as sound: Rochester and his brethren have burnt the New Testament, an evident sign, verily, that they would have burnt Christ Himself also, if they had had Him!" These sayings were rapidly circulated from mouth to mouth. It was not enough that Luther’s writings were in England, they must needs be known, and the priests took upon themselves to advertise them. The Reformation was advancing, and Rome herself pushed behind the car.

The cardinal saw that something more was required than these paper autos da fé, and the activity he displayed may indicate what he would have done in Europe, if ever he had reached the pontifical chair. "The spirit of Satan left him no repose," says the papist Sanders. Some action out of the ordinary course is needful, thought Wolsey. Kings have hitherto been the enemies of the popes; a king shall now undertake their defense. Princes are not very anxious about learning; a prince shall publish a book! ... "Sire," said he to the king, to get Henry in the vein, "you ought to write to the princes of Germany on the subject of this heresy." He did so. Writing to the Archduke Palatine, he said, "This fire, which has been kindled by Luther, and fanned by the arts of the devil, is raging everywhere. If Luther does not repent, deliver him and his audacious treatises to the flames. I offer you my royal cooperation, and even, if necessary, my life." This was the first time Henry showed that cruel thirst, which was in after-days to be quenched in the blood of his wives and friends.

The king having taken the first step, it was not difficult for Wolsey to induce him to take another. To defend the honor of Thomas Aquinas, to stand forward as the champion of the church, and to obtain from the pope a title equivalent to that of Christianissimus, Most Christian King, were more than sufficient motives to induce Henry to break a lance with Luther. "I will combat with the pen this Cerberus, sprung from the depths of hell," said he, "and if he refuses to retract, the fire shall consume the heretic and his heresies together."

The king shut himself up in his library; all the scholastic tastes with which his youth had been imbued were revived; he worked as if he were archbishop of Canterbury, and not king of England; with the pope’s permission he read Luther’s writings; he ransacked Thomas Aquinas; forged, with infinite labor, the arrows with which he hoped to pierce the heretic; called several learned men to his aid; and at last published his book. His first words were a cry of alarm. "Beware of the track of this serpent," said he to his Christian readers, "walk on tiptoe; fear the thickets and caves in which he lies concealed, and whence he will dart his poison on you. If he licks you, be careful! the cunning
viper caresses only that he may bite!" After that Henry sounded a charge: "Be of good cheer! Filled with the same valor that you would display against Turks, Saracens, and other infidels, march now against this little friar—a fellow apparently weak, but more formidable through the spirit that animates him than all infidels, Saracens, and Turks put together." Thus did Henry VIII, the Peter the Hermit of the sixteenth century, preach a crusade against Luther, in order to save the papacy.

He had skillfully chosen the ground on which he gave battle—sacramentalism and tradition are in fact the two essential features of the papal religion, just as a lively faith and Holy Scripture are of the religion of the gospel. Henry did a service to the Reformation by pointing out the principles it would mainly have to combat, and by furnishing Luther with an opportunity of establishing the authority of the Bible, he made him take a most important step in the path of reform. "If a teaching is opposed to Scripture," said the Reformer, "whatever be its origin—traditions, custom, kings, Thomists, sophists, Satan, or even an angel from heaven—all from whom it proceeds must be accursed. Nothing can exist contrary to Scripture, and everything must exist for it."

Henry’s book having been finished by the aid of the bishop of Rochester, the king showed it to Sir Thomas More, who begged him to pronounce less decidedly in favor of the papal supremacy. "I will not change a word," replied the king, full of servile devotion to the popedom. "Besides, I have my reasons," and he whispered them in More’s ear.

Doctor Clarke, ambassador from England at the court of Rome, was commissioned to present the pope with a magnificently bound copy of the king’s work. "The glory of England," said he, "is to be in the foremost rank among the nations in obedience to the papacy." Happily Britain was erelong to know a glory of a very different kind. The ambassador added that his master, after having refuted Luther’s errors with the pen, was ready to combat his adherents with the sword. The pope, touched with this offer, gave him his foot, and then his cheek to kiss, and said to him: "I will do for your master’s book as much as the church has done for the works of St. Jerome and St. Augustine."

The enfeebled papacy had neither the power of intelligence nor even of fanaticism. It still maintained its pretensions and its pomp, but it resembled the corpses of the mighty ones of the earth that lie in state, clad in their most magnificent robes—splendor above, death and corruption below. The thunderbolts of a Hildebrand ceasing to produce their effect, Rome gratefully accepted the defense of laymen, such as Henry VIII and Sir Thomas More, without disdaining their judicial sentences and their scaffolds. "We must honor those noble champions," said the pope to his cardinals, "who show themselves prepared to cut off with the sword the rotten members of Jesus Christ. What title shall we give to the virtuous king of England?" Protector of the Roman church, suggested one; Apostolic King, said another; and finally, but not without some opposition, Henry VIII was proclaimed Defender of the Faith. At the same time the pope promised ten years’ indulgence to all readers of the king’s book. This was a lure after the fashion of the middle ages, and which
never failed in its effect. The clergy compared its author to the wisest of kings, and the book, of which many thousand copies were printed, filled the Christian world (Cochlæus tells us) with admiration and delight. Nothing could equal Henry’s joy. “His majesty,” said the vicar of Croydon, “would not exchange that name for all London and twenty miles round.” According to a tradition preserved by Thomas Fuller, the king’s fool, entering the room just as his master had received the title, asked him the cause of his transports. “The pope has just named me Defender of the Faith!” “Ho! ho! good Harry,” replied the fool, “let you and me defend one another; but... take my word for it... let the faith alone to defend itself.” In the midst of the general intoxication, the fool was the only sensible person. But Henry could listen to nothing. Seated on an elevated throne, with the cardinal at his right hand, he caused the pope’s letter to be read in public. The trumpets sounded; Wolsey said mass; the king and his court took their seats around a sumptuous table, and the heralds at arms proclaimed, *Henricus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ et Franciæ, Defensor Fidei et Dominus Hiberniæ!* [Henry, by the grace of God, King of England and France, Defender of the Faith, and Lord of Ireland]. Thus did it appear that the pope of Rome and the king of England were united firmly in their resolve to maintain the doctrine of the Romish church. Henry VIII had, as it were, thrown down the gauntlet. He aimed at warning all English followers of the German reformer that in his kingdom they might expect to encounter the utmost opposition of the law (which was little more than the expression of the royal will) and the use of that material sword in which the papacy so much delighted.

### CHAPTER 6

**Early Martyrs in Lincolnshire**

**1521–22**

Henry had now to justify the title conferred on him by the pope, Wolsey desired to gain the popedom, and both could satisfy their desires by hunting down heretics. Thus it was not long before persecution again broke out against the disciples of the Word of God. In the county of Lincoln on the shores of the North Sea, along the fertile banks of the Humber, Trent, and Witham, and on the slopes of the smiling hills, dwelt many peaceful Christians—laborers, artificers, and shepherds—who spent their days in toil, in keeping their flocks, in doing good, and in reading (says Foxe) "a few English books such as they could get in corners." The more the gospel light increased in England, the greater was the increase in the number of these children of peace. These “just men,” as they were called, were possessed of little human knowledge, but they thirsted for the knowledge of God. Thinking they were alone the true disciples of the Lord, they married only among themselves. They appeared occasionally at church, but instead of repeating their prayers like the rest, they sat, said their enemies, “mum like beasts,” and especially so when the elevation of the host took place. On Sundays and holidays, they assembled in each other’s houses, and sometimes passed a
whole night in reading a portion of Scripture. If there chanced to be few books among them, one of the brethren, who had learnt by heart the Epistle of St. James, the beginning of St. Luke’s Gospel, the Sermon on the Mount, or an Epistle of St. Paul's, would recite a few verses in a loud and calm voice; then all would piously converse about the holy truths of the faith, and exhort one another to put them in practice. But if any person joined their meetings who did not belong to their body, they would all keep silent. Speaking much among each other, they were speechless before those from without; fear of the priests and of the faggot made them dumb. There was no family rejoicing without the Scriptures. At the marriage of a daughter of the aged Durdant, one of their patriarchs, the wedding party met secretly in a barn, and read the whole of one of St. Paul’s epistles. Marriages are rarely celebrated with such pastimes as this!

Although they were dumb before enemies or suspected persons, these poor people did not keep silence in the presence of the humble; a glowing proselytism characterized them all. "Come to my house," said the pious Agnes Ashford to James Morden, "and I will teach you some verses of Scripture." Agnes was an educated woman; she could read; Morden came, and the poor woman’s chamber was transformed into a school of theology. Agnes began, "We be the salt of the earth," and then recited the following verses. "If it be putrefied and vanished away, it is nothing worth. A city set upon a hill may not be hid. Teen ye not a candle, and put it under a bushel but set it on a candlestick that it may give a light to all in the house. So shine your light before men, as they may see your works, and glorify the Father that is in heaven. No tittle nor letter of the law shall pass over till all things be done." Five times did Morden return to Agnes before he had well learned his lesson. "We are spread like salt over the various parts of the kingdom," said this Christian woman to the neophyte, "in order that we may check the progress of superstition by our doctrine and our life." "But," added she in alarm, "keep this secret in your heart, as a man would keep a thief in prison." Then again, Agnes taught him to say this lesson: "Blessed be the poor men in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. Blessed be mild men for they shall weld the earth." Twice he came to her to learn these words.

As books were rare, these pious Christians had established a kind of itinerant library, and one John Scrivener was continually engaged in carrying the precious volumes from one to another. But at times, as he was proceeding along the banks of the river or through the forest glades, he observed that he was followed. He would quicken his pace and run into some barn where the friendly peasants promptly hid him beneath the straw, or, like the spies of Israel, under the stalks of flax. The bloodhounds arrived, sought and found nothing, and more than once those who so generously harbored these evangelists cruelly expiated the crime of charity.

The disappointed officers had scarcely retired from the neighborhood when these friends of the Word of God came out of their hiding place, and profited by the moment of liberty to assemble the brethren. The persecutions they suffered irritated them against the priests. They worshipped God, read, and
sang with a low voice; but when the conversation became general, they gave free course to their indignation. "Would you know the use of the pope’s pardons?" said one of them, "they are to blind the eyes and empty the purse." "True pilgrimages," said the tailor Geoffrey of Uxbridge, "consist in visiting the poor, the weak and the sick—barefoot, if so it please you—for these are the little ones that are God’s true image." "Money spent in pilgrimages," added a third, "serves only to maintain thieves and harlots." The women were often the most animated in the controversy. "What need is there to go to the feet," said Agnes Ward, who disbelieved in saints, "when we may go to the head?" "The clergy of the good old times," said the wife of David Lewis, "used to lead the people as a hen leadeth her chickens, but now if our priests lead their flocks anywhere, it is to the devil assuredly."

Erelong there was a general panic throughout this district. The king’s confessor, John Longland, was bishop of Lincoln. This fanatic priest, Wolsey’s creature, took advantage of his position to petition Henry for a severe persecution; this was the ordinary use in England, France, and elsewhere, of the confessors of princes. It was unfortunate that among these pious disciples of the Word, men of a cynical turn were now and then met with, whose biting sarcasms went beyond all bounds. Wolsey and Longland knew how to employ these expressions in arousing the king’s anger. "As one of these fellows," they said, "was busy beating out his corn in his barn, a man chanced to pass by. ‘Good morrow, neighbor,’ said the latter, ‘you are hard at it!’ ‘Yes,’ replied the old heretic, thinking of transubstantiation, ‘I am thrashing the corn out of which the priests make God Almighty.’” Henry hesitated no longer.

On the 20th of October, 1521, nine days after the bull on the Defender of the Faith had been signed at Rome, the king, who was at Windsor, summoned his secretary, and dictated an order commanding all his subjects to assist the bishop of Lincoln against the heretics. "You disobey it at the peril of your lives," added he. The order was transmitted to Longland, and the bishop immediately issued his warrants, and his officers spread terror far and wide. When they beheld them, these peaceful but timid Christians were troubled. Isabella Bartlet, hearing them approach her cottage, cried out to her husband, "You are a lost man! and I am a dead woman!" This cry was re-echoed in many of the cottages of Lincolnshire. The bishop, on his judgment seat, skillfully played upon the fears of these poor unhappy beings to make them accuse one another. Alas! according to the ancient prophecy, "the brother delivered up the brother to death." Robert Bartlet deposed against his brother Richard and his own wife; Jane Bernard accused her own father, and Thomas Tredway his mother, who had taught him that he should not worship the images of saints. It was not until after the most cruel anguish that these poor creatures were driven to such frightful extremities, but the bishop and the threat of death terrified them; a small number alone remained firm. As regards heroism, Wycliffe’s Reformation brought but a feeble aid to the Reformation of the sixteenth century; still, if it did not furnish many heroes, it prepared the English people to love God’s Word above all things. Of these humble people, some were condemned to do penance in different monasteries; others to carry a faggot on their shoulders.
thrice round the market-place, and then to stand some time exposed to the jeers of the populace; others were fastened to a post while an official branded them on the cheek with a red-hot iron. They also had their martyrs. Wycliffe’s revival had never been without them. Four of these brethren were chosen to be put to death, and among them the pious evangelical colporteur John Scrivener. By burning him to ashes, the clergy desired to make sure that he would no longer circulate the Word of God, and by a horrible refinement of cruelty his children were compelled to set fire to the pile that was to consume their father, "the example of which cruelty," says Foxe, "as it is contrary both to God and nature, so it hath not been seen or heard of in the memory of the heathen." But it is easier to burn the limbs of Christians than to quench the Spirit of Heaven. These cruel fires could not destroy among the Lincolnshire peasantry that love of the Bible which in all ages has been England’s strength, far more than the wisdom of her senators or the bravery of her generals.

Having by these exploits gained indisputable claims to the papal tiara, Wolsey turned his efforts towards Rome. Leo X died on the first day of December, 1521. The cardinal sent Dr. Pace to Rome, instructing him to "represent to the cardinals that by choosing a partisan of Charles or Francis, they will incur the enmity of one or the other of these princes, and that if they elect some feeble Italian priest, the apostolical see must become the prey of the strongest. Luther’s revolt and the Emperor’s ambition endanger the papacy. There is only one means of preventing the threatening dangers. ... It is to choose me. ... Now go and exert yourself." The conclave opened at Rome on the 27th of December, and Wolsey was proposed, but the cardinals were not generally favorable to his election. "He is too young," said one. "Too firm," said another. "He will fix the seat of the papacy in England and not in Rome," urged many. He received insufficient votes; as few as seven, says one account, nineteen says another. "The cardinals," wrote the English ambassador, "snarled and quarreled with each other, and their bad faith and hatred increased every day." Finally, to enable the cardinals to reach a decision, their food supplies were drastically restricted, and then in despair they chose Adrian, who had been tutor to the Emperor, and the cry was raised: Papam habemus! (we have a pope).

During all this time Wolsey was in London, consumed by ambition, and counting the days and hours. At length a dispatch from Ghent, dated the 22nd of January, reached him with these words: "On the 9th of January, the cardinal of Tortosa was elected!" ... Wolsey was almost distracted. To gain Charles, he had sacrificed the alliance of Francis I; there was no stratagem that he had not employed, and yet Charles, in spite of his engagements, had procured the election of his tutor! ... The Emperor knew what must be the cardinal’s anger, and endeavored to appease it; "The new pope," he wrote, "is old and sickly; he cannot hold his office long. ... Beg the cardinal of York for my sake to take great care of his health."

Charles did more than this; he visited London in person, under pretense of his betrothal with Mary of England, and, on the 19th of June, 1522, in the treaty then drawn up, he consented to the insertion of an article by virtue of which Henry VIII and the mighty Emperor bound themselves, if either should infringe
the treaty, to appear before Wolsey and to submit to his decisions. The cardinal, gratified by such condescension, grew calm, and at the same time he was soothed with the most flattering hopes. "Charles’ imbecile preceptor," they told him, "has arrived at the Vatican, attended only by his female cook; you shall soon make your entrance there surrounded by all your grandeur." To be certain of his game, Wolsey made secret approaches to Francis I, and then waited for the death of the pope.

CHAPTER 7
All England Closed to Tyndale
1523–24

While the cardinal was intriguing to attain his selfish ends, Tyndale was humbly carrying out the great idea of giving the Scriptures of God to England. After bidding a sad farewell to the manor-house of Sodbury, the learned tutor had departed for London. This probably occurred during the summer of 1523. He had left the university; he had forsaken the house of his protector; his wandering career was about to commence, but a thick veil hid from him all its sorrows. Tyndale, a man simple in his habits, sober, daring, and generous, fearing neither fatigue nor danger, inflexible in his duty, anointed with the Spirit of God, overflowing with love for his brethren, emancipated from human traditions, the servant of God alone, and loving nought but Jesus Christ, imaginative, quick at repartee, and of touching eloquence, such a man might have shone in the foremost ranks; but he preferred a retired life in some poor corner, provided he could give his countrymen the Scriptures of God. Where could he find this calm retreat? Such was the question he doubtless put to himself as he was making his solitary way to London. The metropolitan see was then filled by Cuthbert Tunstall, who was more of a statesman and a scholar than of a churchman, "the first of Englishmen in Greek and Latin literature," said Erasmus. This eulogy pronounced by the learned Dutchman occurred to Tyndale’s memory. "It was the Greek Testament of Erasmus that led me to Christ," said he to himself, "why should not the house of Erasmus’ friend offer me a shelter that I may translate it?" ... At last he reached London, and, a stranger in that crowded city, he wandered along the streets, a prey by turns to hope and fear.

Being recommended by Sir John Walsh to Sir Harry Guildford, Controller of the Royal Household, and by him to several priests, Tyndale began to preach almost immediately, especially at St. Dunstan’s-in-the-West, and bore into the heart of the capital the truth which had been banished from the banks of the Severn. The Word of God was with him the basis of salvation, and the grace of God its essence. His inventive mind presented the truths he proclaimed in a striking manner. He said on one occasion, "It is the blood of Christ that opens the gates of heaven, and not thy works. I am wrong. ... Yes, if thou wilt have it so, by thy good works shalt thou be saved. Yet, understand me well, not by those which thou hast done, but by those which Christ has done for thee. Christ is in thee and thou in Him, knit together inseparably. Thou canst not be
damned, except Christ be damned with thee; neither can Christ be saved except thou be saved with Him." This lucid view of justification by faith places Tyndale among the reformers. He did not take his seat on a bishop’s throne, or wear a silken cope, but he mounted the scaffold, and was clothed with a garment of flames. In the service of a crucified Savior this latter distinction is higher than the former.

Yet the translation was his chief business; he spoke to his acquaintances about it, and some of them opposed his project. "The teachings of the doctors," said some of the city tradesmen, "can alone make us understand Scripture." To this Tyndale replied, "Whatsoever opinions every man findeth with his doctor, that is his gospel, and that only is true with him, and that holdeth he all his life long. And every man, to maintain his doctor withal, corrupteth the Scripture and fashioneth it after his own imagination, as a potter doth his clay. Of what text thou provest hell will another prove purgatory, and another limbo... and of what text the grey friar proveth our lady was without original sin, of the same will the black friar prove that she was conceived in original sin... and all this with false similitudes and likenesses, and with arguments and persuasions of man’s wisdom. ... Happy are they which search the testimonies of the Lord."

Desirous of carrying out his project, Tyndale aspired to become the bishop’s chaplain; his ambition was more modest than Wolsey’s. The hellenist possessed qualities which could not fail to please the most learned of Englishmen in Greek literature; Tunstall and Tyndale both liked and read the same authors. The ex-tutor determined to plead his cause through the elegant and harmonious disciple of Radicus and Gorgias; "Here is one of Isocrates’ orations that I have translated into Latin," said he to Sir Harry Guildford, "I should be pleased to become chaplain to his lordship the bishop of London; will you beg him to accept this trifle. Isocrates ought to be an excellent recommendation to a scholar; will you be good enough to add yours?" Guildford spoke to the bishop, placed the translation in his hands, and Tunstall replied with that benevolence which he showed to everyone. "Your business is in a fair way," said the controller to Tyndale, "write a letter to his lordship, and deliver it yourself."

Tyndale’s hopes now began to be raised. He wrote his letter in the best style, and then, commending himself to God, proceeded to the episcopal palace. He fortunately knew one of the bishop’s officers, William Heblithwayne, to whom he gave the letter. Heblithwayne carried it to his lordship, while Tyndale waited. His heart throbbed with anxiety—would he find at last the long-hoped-for asylum? The bishop’s answer might decide the whole course of his life. If the door were to be opened, if the translator of the Scriptures should be settled in the episcopal palace, why should not his London patron receive the truth like his patron at Sodbury? and, in that case, what a future for the church and for the kingdom! ... The Reformation was knocking at the door of the hierarchy of England, and the latter was about to utter its yea or its nay. After a few moments’ absence Heblithwayne returned: "I am going to conduct you to his lordship." Tyndale fancied himself that he had attained his wishes.
The bishop was too courteous to refuse an audience to a man who called upon him with the triple recommendation of Isocrates, of the controller, and of the king’s old companion-in-arms. He received Tyndale with cool politeness, as if he were a man whose acquaintance might compromise him. Tyndale having made known his wishes, the bishop hastened to reply, "Alas! my house is full; I have now more people than I can employ." Tyndale was discomfited by this answer. The bishop of London was a learned man, but wanting in courage and consistency; he gave his right hand to the friends of letters and of the gospel, and his left hand to the friends of the priests, and then endeavored to walk with both. But when he had to choose between the two parties, clerical interests prevailed. There was no lack of bishops, priests, and laymen about him, who intimidated him by their clamors. After taking a few steps forward, he suddenly recoiled. Still Tyndale ventured to hazard a word, but the prelate was cold as before. The humanists, who laughed at the ignorance of the monks, hesitated to touch an ecclesiastical system which lavished on them such rich sinecures. They accepted the new ideas in theory, but not in practice. They were very willing to discuss them at table, but not to proclaim them from the pulpit; and covering the Greek Testament with applause, they tore it in pieces when rendered into the vulgar tongue. "If you will look well about London," said Tunstall coldly to the poor priest, "you will not fail to meet with some suitable employment." This was all Tyndale could obtain. He departed from the bishop’s presence sad and desponding.

His expectations were disappointed. Driven from the banks of the Severn, without a home in the capital, what would become of the translation of the Scriptures? "Alas!" he said, "I was deceived... there is nothing to be looked for from the bishops... Christ was smitten on the cheek before the bishop, Paul was buffeted before the bishop... and a bishop has just turned me away." His dejection did not last long; there was an elastic principle in his soul. "I hunger for the Word of God," said he, "I will translate it, whatever they may say or do. God will not suffer me to perish. He never made a mouth but He made food for it, nor a body, but He made raiment also."

This trustfulness was not misplaced. It was the privilege of a layman to give what the bishop refused. Among Tyndale’s hearers at St. Dunstan’s was a wealthy cloth-merchant named Humphrey Monmouth, who had visited Jerusalem and Rome, and to whom (as well as to his companions) the pope had been so kind as to give certain Roman curiosities, such as indulgences, a culpâ et a pænâ. Ships laden with his manufactures every year quitted London for foreign countries. He had formerly attended Colet’s preaching at St. Paul’s, and from the year 1515 he had known the word of God. He was one of the gentlest and most obliging men in England; he kept open house for the friends of learning and of the Gospel, and his library contained the newest publications. In putting on Jesus Christ, Monmouth had particularly striven to put on His character; he helped generously with his purse both priests and men of letters; he gave forty pounds sterling to the chaplain of the bishop of London, the same to the king’s, to the provincial of the Augustines, and to others besides. Hugh Latimer, who sometimes dined with him, once related in
the pulpit an anecdote characteristic of the friends of the Reformation in England. Among the regular guests at Monmouth’s table was one of his poorest neighbors, a zealous Romanist, to whom his generous host often used to lend money. One day when the pious merchant was extolling Scripture and blaming popery, his neighbor turned pale, rose from the table, and left the room. “I will never set foot in his house again,” he said to his friends, “and I will never borrow another shilling of him.” He next went to the bishop and laid an information against his benefactor. Monmouth forgave him, and tried to bring him back, but the neighbor constantly turned out of his way. Once, however, they met in a street so narrow that he could not escape. “I will pass by without looking at him,” said the Romanist turning away his head. But Monmouth went straight to him, took him by the hand, and said affectionately, “Neighbor, what wrong have I done you?” and he continued to speak to him with so much love, that the poor man fell on his knees, burst into tears, and begged his forgiveness. Such was the spirit which, at the very outset, animated the work of the Reformation in England; it was acceptable to God, and found favor with the people.

Monmouth, being edified by Tyndale’s sermons, inquired into his means of living. “I have none,” replied he, “but I hope to enter into the bishop’s service.” This was before his visit to Tunstall. When Tyndale saw all his hopes frustrated, he went to Monmouth and told him everything. “Come and live with me,” said the wealthy merchant, “and there labor.” God did to Tyndale according to his faith. Simple, frugal, devoted to work, he studied night and day, and wishing to guard his mind against “being overcharged with surfeiting,” he refused the delicacies of his patron’s table, and would take nothing but sodden meat and small beer. It would even seem that he carried simplicity in dress almost too far. By his conversation and his works, he shed over the house of his patron the mild light of the Christian virtues, so that Monmouth’s love for him steadily increased.

Tyndale was advancing in his work when John Fryth, the mathematician of King’s College, Cambridge, arrived in London. It is probable that Tyndale, feeling the want of an associate, had invited him. United like Luther and Melanchthon, the two friends held many precious conversations together. “I will consecrate my life wholly to the church of Jesus Christ,” said Fryth. “To be a good man, you must give a great part of yourself to your parents, a greater part to your country; but the greatest part of all to the church of the Lord.” “The people should know the Word of God,” they unitedly said. “The interpretation of the gospel, without the intervention of councils or popes, is sufficient to create a saving faith in the heart.” They shut themselves up in the little room in Monmouth’s house, and translated chapter after chapter from the Greek into plain English. The bishop of London knew nothing of the work going on a few yards from him, and everything was succeeding to Tyndale’s wishes when it was interrupted by an unforeseen circumstance.

Bishop Longland, the persecutor of the Lincolnshire Christians, did not confine his activity within the limits of his diocese; he besieged the king, the cardinal, and the queen with his cruel importunities, using Wolsey’s influence with
Henry, and Henry’s with Wolsey. “His majesty,” he wrote to the cardinal, “shows in this holy dispute as much goodness as zeal... yet, be pleased to urge him to overthrow God’s enemies.” And then turning to the king, the confessor said, to spur him on, “The cardinal is about to fulminate the greater excommunication against all who possess Luther’s works or hold his opinions, and to make the booksellers sign a bond before the magistrates, not to sell heretical books.” “Wonderful!” replied Henry with a sneer, “they will fear the magisterial bond, I think, more than the clerical excommunication.” And yet the consequences of the “clerical” excommunication were to be very positive; whosoever persevered in his offense was to be pursued by the law ad ignem, even to the fire. At last the confessor applied to the queen: “We cannot be sure of restraining the press,” he said to her. “These wretched books come to us from Germany, France, and the Low Countries, and are even printed in the very midst of us. Madam, we must train and prepare skillful men, such as are able to discuss the controverted points, so that the laity, struck on the one hand by well developed arguments, and frightened by the fear of punishment on the other, may be kept in obedience.” In the bishop’s system, "fire" was to be the complement of Roman learning. The essential idea of Jesuitism is already visible in this conception of Henry VIII’s confessor. That system is the natural development of Romanism.

Tunstall, urged forward by Longland, and desirous of showing himself as holy a churchman as he had once been a skillful statesman and elegant scholar—Tunstall, the friend of Erasmus—began to persecute. Like Longland, he would have feared to shed blood, but there are measures which torture the mind and not the body, and which the most moderate men fear not to make use of. John Higgins, Henry Chambers, Thomas Eglestone, a priest named Edmund Spilman, and some other Christians in London, used to meet and read portions of the Bible in English; they even asserted publicly that “Luther had more learning in his little finger than all the doctors in England in their whole bodies.” The bishop ordered these rebels to be arrested; he flattered and alarmed them, threatening them with a cruel death (which he would hardly have inflicted on them) and by these skillful practices reduced them to silence.

Tyndale, who witnessed this persecution, feared lest the stake should interrupt his labor. If those who read a few fragments of Scripture were threatened with death, what would he not have to endure who was translating the whole? His friends entreated him to withdraw from the bishop’s pursuit. “Alas!” he exclaimed, “is there then no place where I can translate the Bible? ... It is not the bishop’s house alone that is closed against me, but all England.” He then made a great sacrifice. Since there is no place in his own country where he can translate the Word of God, he will go and seek one among the nations of the continent. It is true the people are unknown to him; he is without resources; perhaps persecution and even death await him there. ... It matters not! Some time must elapse before it is known what he is doing, and perhaps he will have been able to translate the Bible. He turned his eyes towards Germany. "God does not destine us to a quiet life here below," he said.
"If he calls us to peace on the part of Jesus Christ, he calls us to war on the part of the world."

There lay at that moment in the river Thames a vessel loading for Hamburg. Monmouth gave Tyndale ten pounds sterling for his voyage, and other friends contributed a like amount. He left the half of this sum in the hands of his benefactor to provide for his future wants, and prepared to quit London, where he had spent a year. Rejected by his fellow countrymen, persecuted by the clergy, and carrying with him only his New Testament and his ten pounds, he went on board the ship, shaking off the dust of his feet, according to his Master's precept, and that dust fell back on the priests of England. He was indignant (says the chronicler) against those coarse monks, covetous priests, and pompous prelates, who were waging an impious war against God. "What a trade is that of the priests!" he said in one of his later writings, "they want money for every thing: money for baptism, money for churchings, for weddings, for buryings, for images, brotherhoods, penances, soul-masses, bells, organs, chalices, copes, surplices, ewers, censers, and all manner of ornaments. Poor sheep! The parson shears, the vicar shaves, the parish priest polls, the friar scrapes, the indulgence seller pares... we lack but a butcher to pull off the skin. He will not leave you long. Why are the prelates dressed in red? To signify that they are ready every hour to suffer martyrdom for the testimony of God's Word. But what a false sign is this, when because of them no man dares once open his mouth to ask a question concerning God's Word; if he does so, they are ready to burn him. Scourge of states, devastators of kingdoms, the priests take away not only Holy Scripture, but also prosperity and peace; but of their councils is no layman; reigning over all, they obey nobody; and making all concur to their own greatness, they conspire against every kingdom."

No kingdom was to be more familiar than England with the conspiracies of the papacy of which Tyndale spoke, and yet none was to free itself more irrevocably from the power of Rome.

Yet Tyndale was leaving the shores of his native land, and as he turned his eyes towards the new countries, hope revived in his heart. He was going to be free, and he would use his liberty to deliver the Word of God, so long held captive. "The priests," he said one day, "when they had slain Christ, set poleaxes to keep him in his sepulchre, that he should not rise again; even so have our priests buried the testament of God, and all their study is to keep it down, that it rise not again. But the hour of the Lord is come, and nothing can hinder the Word of God, as nothing could hinder Jesus Christ of old from issuing from the tomb."

And so Tyndale left England and sailed for Germany. A poor man in material things, he was soon to send back to his countrymen, even from the banks of the Elbe, the book which was to lead many of them to become "rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which God has promised to them that love Him." With what greater boon can a man bless his native land? The lines which appear beneath Tyndale's portrait preserved in Hertford College, Oxford, aptly describe the reformer's courage and purpose:
Hac ut luce tuas dispergam Roma tenebras
Sponte ex terris ero sponte sacrificium.

(That light o'er all thy darkness, Rome,
In triumph might arise,
An exile freely I become,
Freely a sacrifice.)

CHAPTER 8

Bluff Hugh Latimer
1485–1524

This ship did not bear away all the hopes of England. A society of Christians had been formed at Cambridge, of which Bilney was the center. He now knew no other canon law than Scripture, and had found a new master, “the Holy Spirit of Christ,” says an historian. Although he was naturally timid, and often suffered from the exhaustion brought on by his fasts and vigils, there was in his language a life, liberty, and strength, strikingly in contrast with his sickly appearance. He desired to draw to the knowledge of God, all who came nigh him; and by degrees, the rays of the gospel sun, which was then rising in the firmament of Christendom, pierced the ancient windows of the colleges, and illuminated the solitary chambers of certain of the masters and fellows. Master Thomas Arthur, Master Thistle of Pembroke Hall, and Master Stafford were among the first to join Bilney. George Stafford, professor of divinity, was a man of deep learning and holy life, clear and precise in his teaching. He was admired by everyone in Cambridge, so that his conversion, like that of his friends, spread alarm among the partisans of the schoolmen. But a conversion still more striking than this was destined to give the English Reformation a champion more illustrious than either Stafford or Bilney.

There was in Cambridge, at that time, a priest notorious for his ardent fanaticism. In the processions, amidst the pomp, prayers, and chanting of the train, none could fail to notice a master of arts, about thirty years of age, who, with erect head, carried proudly the university cross. Hugh Latimer, for such was his name, combined a biting humor with an impetuous disposition and indefatigable zeal, and was very quick in ridiculing the faults of
his adversaries. There was more wit and raillery in his fanaticism than can often be found in such characters. He followed the friends of the Word of God into the colleges and houses where they used to meet, debated with them, and pressed them to abandon their faith. He was a second Saul, and was soon to resemble the apostle of the Gentiles in another respect.

He first saw light about the year 1485, at Thurcaston in the county of Leicester. Hugh’s father was an honest yeoman; and, accompanied by one of his six sisters, the little boy had often tended in the pastures the five score sheep belonging to the farm, or driven home to his mother the thirty cows it was her business to milk. In 1497, the Cornish rebels, under Lord Audley, having encamped at Blackheath, our farmer had donned his rusty armor, and, mounting his horse, responded to the summons of the crown. Hugh was present at his departure, and, as if he had wished to take his little part in the battle, he had buckled the straps of his father’s armor. Fifty-two years afterwards he recalled this circumstance to mind in a sermon preached before king Edward VI. His father’s house was always open to the neighbors, and no poor man ever turned away from the door without having received alms. The old man brought up his family in the love of men and in the fear of God and, having remarked with joy the precocious understanding of his son, he had him educated in the country schools, and then sent to Cambridge. This was in 1506, shortly after Luther entered the Augustine monastery of Erfurt. The son of the Leicestershire yeoman was lively, fond of pleasure, and of cheerful conversation, and mingled frequently in the amusements of his fellow students. One day, as they were dining together, one of the party exclaimed: *Nil melius quam lætari et facere bene!*—"There is nothing better than to be merry and to do well." “A vengeance on that bene!” replied a monk of impudent mien, "I wish it were beyond the sea; it mars all the rest. I like to be merry, and I like to do, but I love not to do well." Young Latimer was much surprised at the remark; "I understand it now," said he, "that will be a heavy bene to these monks when they have to render God an account of their lives."

Latimer, having become more serious, threw himself heart and soul into the practices of superstition, and a very bigoted old cousin undertook to instruct him in them. One day, when one of their relations lay dead, she said to him, "Now we must drive out the devil. Take this holy taper, my child, and pass it over the body, first longways and then athwart, so as always to make the sign of the cross."
But the scholar performing this exorcism very awkwardly, his aged cousin snatched the candle from his hand, exclaiming angrily, "It’s a great pity your father spends so much money on your studies; he will never make anything of you."

This prophecy was not fulfilled. While still an undergraduate he became Fellow of Clare Hall in 1510, and took his master’s degree in 1514. His classical studies being ended, he began to study divinity. Duns Scotus, Aquinas, and Hugo de Sancto Victore were his favorite authors. The practical side of things, however, engaged him more than the speculative, and he was more distinguished in Cambridge for his asceticism and enthusiasm than for his learning. He attached importance to the merest trifles. As the missal directs that water should be mingled with the sacramental wine, often while saying mass he would be troubled in his conscience for fear he had not put in sufficient water. This remorse never left him a moment’s tranquility during the service. In him, as in many others, attachment to puerile ordinances occupied in his heart the place of faith in the great truths. With him, the cause of the church was the cause of God, and he respected Thomas Becket at least as much as St. Paul. "I was then," said he, "as obstinate a papist as any in England." Luther said a similar thing of himself.

The fervent Latimer soon observed that everybody around him was not equally zealous with himself for the ceremonies of the church. He watched with surprise certain young members of the university who, forsaking the doctors of the School, met daily to read and search into the Holy Scriptures. People sneered at them in Cambridge; "It is only the sophists," was the cry, but raillery was not enough for Latimer. One day he entered the room where these sophists were assembled, and begged them to cease studying the Bible. All his entreaties were useless. Can we be astonished at it? said Latimer to himself. Don’t we see even the tutors setting an example to these stray sheep? There is Master Stafford, the most illustrious professor in English universities, devoting his time ad Biblia, like Luther at Wittenberg, and explaining the Scriptures according to the Hebrew and Greek texts! while the delighted students celebrate in bad verse the doctor, Qui Paulum explicuit rite et evangelium [who has explained to us the true sense of St. Paul and of the gospel]. That young people should occupy themselves with these new doctrines was conceivable, but that a doctor of divinity should do so—what a disgrace! Latimer therefore determined to attack Stafford. He insulted him; he entreated the youth of Cambridge to abandon the professor and his heretical teaching; he attended the hall in
which the doctor taught, made signs of impatience during the lesson, and caviled at it after leaving the school. He even preached in public against the learned doctor. But it seemed to him that Cambridge and England were struck blind; true, the clergy approved of Latimer’s proceedings—nay, praised them, and yet they did nothing. To console him, however, he was named cross-bearer to the university, and we have already seen him discharging this duty.

Latimer desired to show himself worthy of such an honor. He had left the students to attack Stafford; and he now left Stafford for a more illustrious adversary. But this attack led him to someone that was stronger than he. In 1524 on the occasion of receiving the degree of bachelor of theology he had to deliver a Latin discourse in the presence of the university; Latimer chose for his subject Philip Melanchthon and his doctrines. Had not this daring heretic presumed to say quite recently that the fathers of the church have altered the sense of Scripture? Had he not asserted that, like those rocks whose various colors are imparted to the polypus which clings to them, so the doctors of the church give each their own opinion in the passages they explain? And finally had he not discovered a new touchstone (it is thus he styles the Holy Scripture) by which we must test the sentences even of St. Thomas Aquinas?

Latimer’s discourse made a great impression. At last (said his hearers) England, nay Cambridge, will furnish a champion for the church that will confront the Wittenberg doctors, and save the vessel of our Lord. But very different was to be the result. There was among the hearers one man almost hidden through his small stature; it was Bilney. For some time he had been watching Latimer’s movements, and his zeal interested him, though it was a zeal without knowledge. Bilney’s energy was not great, but he possessed a delicate tact, a skillful discernment of character which enabled him to distinguish error, and to select the fittest method for combating it. Accordingly, a chronicler styles him “a trier out of Satan’s subtleties, called of God to detect the bad money that the enemy was circulating through the church.” Bilney easily detected Latimer’s sophisms, but at the same time loved his person, and conceived the design of winning him to the gospel. But how to manage it? The prejudiced Latimer would not even listen to the evangelical Bilney. The latter reflected, prayed, and at last planned a very candid and very strange plot, which led to one of the most astonishing conversions recorded in history.
He went to the college where Latimer resided. "For the love of God," he said to him, "be pleased to hear my confession." The heretic prayed to make confession to the catholic—what a singular fact! My discourse against Melanchthon has no doubt converted him, said Latimer to himself. Was he not once among the number of the most pious zealots? His pale face, his wasted frame, and his humble look are clear signs that he ought to belong to the ascetics of catholicism. If he turns back, all will turn back with him, and the reaction will be complete at Cambridge. The ardent Latimer eagerly yielded to Bilney's request, and the latter, kneeling before the cross-bearer, related to him with touching simplicity the anguish he had once felt in his soul, the efforts he had made to remove it, their unprofitableness so long as he determined to follow the precepts of the church and, lastly, the peace he had felt when he believed that Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He described to Latimer the spirit of adoption he had received, and the happiness he experienced in being able now to call God his Father. … Latimer, who expected to receive a confession, listened without mistrust. His heart was opened, and the voice of the pious Bilney penetrated it without obstacle. From time to time the confessor would have chased away the new thoughts which came crowding into his bosom, but the penitent continued. His language, at once so simple and so lively, entered like a two-edged sword. Bilney was not without assistance in his work. A new, a strange witness—the Holy Ghosts—was speaking in Latimer’s soul. He learned from God to know God; he received a new heart. At length grace prevailed; the penitent rose up, but Latimer remained seated, absorbed in thought. The strong cross-bearer contended in vain against the words of the feeble Bilney. Like Saul on the way to Damascus, he was conquered, and his conversion, like the apostle’s, was instantaneous. He stammered out a few words; Bilney drew near him with love, and God scattered the darkness which still obscured his mind. He saw Jesus Christ as the only Savior given to man; he contemplated and adored Him. "I learnt more by this confession," he said afterwards, "than in many years before. From that time forward I began to smell the word of God, and forsook the doctors of the schools and such fooleries." It was not the penitent but the confessor who received absolution. Latimer viewed with horror the obstinate war he had waged against God; he wept bitterly, but Bilney consoled him. "Brother," said he, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." These two young men, then locked in their solitary chamber at Cambridge, were one day to mount the scaffold for that divine Master whose spirit was teaching them. But one of
them before going to the stake was first to sit on an episcopal throne.

Latimer was changed. The energy of his character was tempered by a divine unction. Becoming a believer, he ceased to be superstitious. Instead of persecuting Jesus Christ, he became a zealous seeker after Him. Instead of caviling and railing, he showed himself meek and gentle; instead of frequenting company, he sought solitude, studying the Scriptures and advancing in true theology. He threw off the old man and put on the new. He waited upon Stafford, begged forgiveness for the insult he had offered him, and then regularly attended his lectures, being subjugated more by this doctor’s angelic conversation than by his learning. But it was Bilney’s society Latimer cultivated most. They conversed together daily, took frequent walks together into the country, and occasionally rested at a place long known as “the heretics’ hill.”

So striking a conversion gave fresh vigor to the evangelical movement. Hitherto Bilney and Latimer had been the most zealous champions of the two opposite causes, the one despised, the other honoured; the weak man had conquered the strong. This action of the Spirit of God was not thrown away upon Cambridge. Latimer’s conversion, as of old the miracles of the apostles, struck men’s minds; and was it not in truth a miracle? All the youth of the university ran to hear Bilney preach. He proclaimed “Jesus Christ as He who, having tasted death, has delivered His people from the penalty of sin.” While the doctors of the schools (even the most pious of them) laid most stress upon man’s part in the work of redemption, Bilney on the contrary emphasized the other term, namely, God’s part. This doctrine of grace, said his adversaries, annuls the sacraments, and contradicts baptismal regeneration. The selfishness which forms the essence of fallen humanity rejected the evangelical doctrine, and felt that to accept it was to be lost. “Many listened with the left ear,” to use an expression of Bilney’s, “like Malchus, having their right ear cut off,” and they filled the university with their complaints.

But Bilney did not allow himself to be stopped. The idea of eternity had seized on his mind, and perhaps he still retained some feeble relics of the exaggerations of asceticism. He condemned every kind of recreation, even when innocent. Music in the churches seemed to him a mockery of God, and when Thurlby, who was afterwards a bishop, and who as a scholar lived at Cambridge in the room below his, used to begin playing on the recorder, Bilney would fall on his knees and pour out his soul in
prayer; to him prayer was the sweetest melody. He prayed that the lively faith of the children of God might in all England be substituted for the vanity and pride of the priests. He believed, he prayed, he waited. His waiting was not to be in vain.

Latimer trod in his footsteps; the transformation of his soul was going on; and the more fanaticism he had shown for the sacerdotal system, which places salvation in the hands of the priest, the more zeal he now showed for the evangelical system, which places it in the hands of Christ. He saw that if the churches must needs have ministers, it is not because they require a human mediation, but from the necessity of a regular preaching of the Word and a steady direction of the flock; and accordingly he would have wished to call the servant of the Lord minister (ὑπηέτης or διάχονος του λόγου), and not priest (ἰεύς or sacerdos). In his view, it was not the imposition of hands by the bishop that gave grace, but grace which authorized the imposition of hands. He considered activity to be one of the essential features of the gospel ministry. "It is commonly seen," he said, "that fishers and hunters be very painful people both; they spare no labor to catch their game. ... Therefore our Savior chose fishers, because of these properties, that they should be painful and spare no labor; and then that they should be greedy to catch men, and to take them with the net of God’s Word, to turn the people from wickedness to God. Ye see by daily experience what pain fishers and hunters take—how the fisher watcheth the day and night at his net, and is ever ready to take all such fishes that he can get, and that come in his way. So likewise the hunter runneth hither and thither after his game—leapeth over hedges, and creepeth through rough bushes—and all this labor he esteemeth for nothing because he is so desirous to obtain his prey and catch his venison. So all our prelates, bishops, and curates, parsons, and vicars, should be as painful and greedy in casting their nets, that is to say, in preaching God’s Word, in shewing unto the people the way to everlasting life, in exhorting them to leave their sins and wickedness... such a charge they have. But the most of them set aside this fishing; they put away this net; they take other business in hand; they will rather be surveyors or receivers, or clerks in the kitchen, than to cast out this net; they have the living of fishers, but they fish not, they are otherways occupied." He regarded all confidence in human strength as a remnant of paganism. "Let us not do," he said, "as the haughty Ajax, who said to his father as he went to battle, ‘Without the help of God I am able to fight, and I will get the victory with mine own strength.’"
The Reformation had gained in Latimer a very different man from
Bilney. He had not so much discernment and prudence perhaps,
but he had more energy and eloquence. What Tyndale was to be
for England by his writings, Latimer was to be by his discourses.
The tenderness of his conscience, the warmth of his zeal, and the
vivacity of his understanding, were enlisted in the service of Jesus
Christ, and, if at times he was carried too far by the liveliness of
his wit, it only shows that the reformers were not saints, but
sanctified men. "He was one of the first," says a historian, "who,
in the days of King Henry VIII, set himself to preach the gospel in
the truth and simplicity of it." He preached in Latin to the clergy,
and in English to the people. He boldly placed the law with its
curses before his hearers, and then conjured them to flee to the
Savior of the world. The same zeal which he had employed in
saying mass, he now employed in preaching the true sacrifice of
Christ. He said one day, "If one man had committed all the sins
since Adam, you may be sure he should be punished with the
same horror of death, in such a sort as all men in the world should
have suffered. ... Such was the pain Christ endured. ... If our
Savior had committed all the sins of the world; all that I for my
part have done, all that you for your part have done, and that any
man else hath done; if He had done all this himself, His agony
that He suffered should have been no greater nor grievouer than
it was. ... Believe in Jesus Christ, and you shall overcome
death. ... But, alas!" said he at another time, "the devil, by the
help of that Italian bishop yonder, his chaplain, has labored by all
means that he might frustrate the death of Christ and the merits
of his passion."

Thus began in British Christendom the preaching of the Cross. The
Reformation was not the substitution of the catholicism of the
first ages for the popery of the middle ages; it was a revival of
the preaching of St. Paul, and thus it was that on hearing Latimer
everyone exclaimed with rapture, "Of a Saul, God has made him a
very Paul."

To the inward power of faith, the Cambridge evangelists added
the outward power of a godly life. Saul become Paul; the strong,
the ardent Latimer, had need of action; and Bilney, the weak and
humble Bilney, in delicate health, observing a severe diet, taking
ordinarily but one meal a day, and never sleeping more than four
hours, absorbed in prayer and in the study of the Word, displayed
at that time all the energy of charity. These two friends devoted
themselves not merely to the easy labors of Christian
beneficence, but caring little for that formal Christianity so often
met with among the comfortable classes, they explored the
gloomy cells of the madhouse to bear the sweet and subtle voice of the gospel to the infuriate maniacs. They visited the miserable lazar-houses outside the city, in which poor lepers and other diseased persons were dwelling; they carefully tended them, wrapped them in clean sheets, and wooed them to be converted to Christ. The gates of the jail at Cambridge were opened to them, and they announced to the poor prisoners that word which gives liberty. Some were converted by it. One such is mentioned by Latimer in his Fifth Sermon preached long afterwards before King Edward VI: "This woman, when she came to prison, was all on her beads, and nothing else, a popish woman, and savored not of Jesus Christ. In process (of time) she tasted that the Lord is gracious. She had such a savor, such a sweetness and feeling that she thought it long to the day of execution. She was with Christ already, as touching faith, longing to depart and to be with Him. The Word of God had so wrought in her."

Thus commenced the evangelical ministry of Hugh Latimer, afterwards Bishop of Worcester, one of the finest types of the Reformation in England! But he had many adversaries. In the front rank were the priests, who spared no endeavors to retain souls in bondage. "Beware," said Latimer to the new converts, "lest robbers overtake you, and plunge you into the pope’s prison of purgatory." After these came the sons and favorites of the aristocracy, worldly and frivolous students, who felt little disposition to listen to the gospel. "By yeomen’s sons the faith of Christ is and hath been chiefly maintained in the church," said Latimer. "Is this realm taught by rich men’s sons? No, no; read the chronicles; ye shall find sometime noblemen’s sons which have been unpreaching bishops and prelates, but ye shall find none of them learned men." He would have desired a mode of election which placed in the Christian pulpit, not the richest and most fashionable men, but the ablest and most pious. This important reform was reserved for other days. Lastly, the evangelists of Cambridge came into collision with the brutality of many, to use Latimer’s own expression. "What need have we of universities and schools?" said the members of this class. The Holy Ghost "will give us always what to say." "We must trust in the Holy Ghost," replied Latimer, "but not presume on the Holy Ghost. If you will not maintain schools and universities, you shall have a brutality. Preaching must not be allowed to decay, for surely, if preaching decay, ignorance and brutishness will enter again." In this manner the Reformation restored to Cambridge gravity and knowledge, along with truth and charity.
Yet Bilney and Latimer often turned their eyes towards Oxford, and wondered how the light would be able to penetrate there. Wolsey provided for that. A Cambridge master of arts, John Clark, a conscientious man of tender heart, great prudence, and unbounded devotion to his duty, had been enlightened by the Word of God. Wolsey, who since 1523 had been seeking everywhere for distinguished scholars to adorn his new college, invited Clark among the first. This doctor, desirous of bearing to Oxford the light which God had given Cambridge, immediately began to deliver a course of divinity lectures, to hold conferences, and to preach in his eloquent manner. He taught every day. Among the graduates and students who followed him was Anthony Dalaber, a young man of simple but profound feeling, who while listening to him had experienced in his heart the regenerating power of the gospel. Overflowing with the happiness which the knowledge of Jesus Christ imparted to him, he went to the Cardinal’s college, knocked at Clark’s door, and said, “Father, allow me never to quit you more!” The teacher, beholding the young disciple’s enthusiasm, loved him, but thought it his duty to try him. "Anthony," said he, "you know not what you ask. My teaching is now pleasant to you, but the time will come when God will lay the cross of persecution on you; you will be dragged before bishops; your name will be covered with shame in the world, and all who love you will be heartbroken on account of you. ... Then, my friend, you will regret that you ever knew me."

Anthony believing himself rejected, and unable to bear the idea of returning to the barren instructions of the priests, fell on his knees, and weeping bitterly, exclaimed, "For the tender mercy of God, turn me not away." Touched by his sorrow, Clark folded him in his arms, kissed him, and with flowing tears exclaimed, "The Lord Almighty give thee what thou askest! ... Take me for thy father, I take thee for my son in Christ." From that hour, Anthony, all joy, was like Timothy at the feet of Paul. He united a quick understanding with tender affections. When any of the students had not attended Clark’s conferences, the master commissioned his disciple to visit them weekly, to inquire into their doubts, and to impart to them his instructions. "This exercise did me much good," said Dalaber, "and I made great progress in the understanding of Scripture."

Thus the kingdom of God, which consists not in forms, but in the power of the Spirit, was set up in Cambridge and Oxford. The Lord Christ was building His church on Himself the Rock. His work was being set at nought of the foolish builders of the age, the worthlessness of whose hay, wood, and stubble was being daily
revealed. The truth which is mighty, and must prevail over every lie, gigantic though that lie may be, was becoming the theme of attraction. The yeoman and the scholar were alike being drawn to the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He had sent. The centers of learning, the palaces of the bishops, the seats of the mighty, were being compelled to hear the trumpet blasts of the divine Word. It was as though the hosts of the Lord were marching around the all-but-impregnable walls of Antichrist’s citadel, bearing in their van the ark of truth. Certainly the adversaries were many and strong, but the Lord mighty in battle was about to do, yea was already doing, great things. The Lord Omnipotent was with His Israel, and the shout of a King was among them. Clouds and darkness might be round about Him, but judgment and truth were the habitation of His throne. Evil had been arraigned and challenged in England as on the Continent of Europe. In the womb of the unknown morrow lay the church of the free.

CHAPTER 9

Wolsey’s Hopes and Fears
1523–25

Adrian VI died on the 14th of September, 1523, before the end of the second year of his pontificate. Wolsey thought himself pope. At length he would no longer be the favorite only, but the arbiter of the kings of the earth; and his genius, for which England was too narrow, would have Europe and the world for its stage. Already revolving gigantic projects in his mind, the future pope dreamt of the destruction of heresy in the West, and in the East the cessation of the Greek schism, and new crusades to replant the cross on the walls of Constantinople. There is nothing that Wolsey would not have dared undertake when once seated on the throne of catholicism, and the pontificates of Gregory VII and Innocent III would have been eclipsed by that of the Ipswich butcher’s son. The cardinal reminded Henry of his promise, and the very next day the king signed a letter addressed to the Emperor Charles V, the nephew of Catherine, Queen of England.

Believing himself sure of the Emperor, Wolsey turned all his exertions to the side of Rome. “The legate of England,” said Henry’s ambassadors to the cardinals, “is the very man for the present time. He is the only one thoroughly acquainted with the
interests and wants of Christendom, and strong enough to provide for them. He is all kindness, and will share his dignities and wealth among all the prelates who support him."

But Julio de Medici, the titular Bishop of Worcester, himself aspired to the papacy and, as eighteen cardinals were devoted to him, the election could not take place without his support. "Rather than yield," said he in the conclave, "I would die in this prison." A month passed away, and nothing was done. New intrigues were then resorted to; there were cabals for Wolsey, cabals for Medici. The cardinals were besieged:

 Into their midst, by many a secret path,
 Creeps sly intrigue.

At length, on the 18th of November, 1523, the people collected under their windows, shouting, "No foreign pope." After forty-nine days of debating, Julio was elected, and, according to his own expression, "bent his head beneath the yoke of apostolic servitude." He took the name of Clement VII.

Wolsey was exasperated. It was in vain that he presented himself before St. Peter’s chair at each vacancy; a more active or more fortunate rival always reached it before him. Master of England, and the most influential of European diplomatists, he saw men preferred to him who were his inferiors. This election was an event which favored the Reformation in England. Wolsey as pope would, humanly speaking, have tightened the cords which already bound England so closely to Rome, but Wolsey, rejected, could hardly fail to throw himself into tortuous paths which would perhaps contribute to the emancipation of the Church. He became more crafty than ever, declared to Henry that the new election was quite in conformity with his wishes, and hastened to congratulate the new pope. He wrote to Dr. Pace at Rome, "This election, I assure you, is as much to the king’s and my rejoicing, consolation, and gladness, as possibly may be devised or imagined. ... Ye shall show unto his holiness what joy, comfort, and gladness it is both to the king’s highness and me to perceive that once in our lives it hath pleased God of His great goodness to provide such a pastor unto His church, as his grace and I have long inwardly desired, who for his virtue, wisdom, and other high and notable qualities, we have always reputed the most able and worthy person to be called to that dignity." But the pope, divining his competitor’s vexation, sent the king a golden rose, and a ring to Wolsey. "I am sorry," he said as he drew it from his finger, "that I cannot present it to his Eminence in person." Clement moreover conferred on him the quality of legate for life—an office which
had hitherto been temporary only. Thus the popedom and England embraced each other, and nothing appeared more distant than that Christian revolution which was destined very shortly to emancipate Britain from the tutelage of the Vatican.

Wolsey’s disappointed ambition made him suspend the proceedings of the clergy at Cambridge. He had revenge in his heart, and cared not to persecute his fellow countrymen merely to please his rival; and besides, like several popes, he had a certain fondness for learning. To send a few Lollards to prison was a matter of no difficulty, but learned doctors... this required a closer examination. Hence he gave Rome a sign of independence. And yet it was not specially against the pope that he began to entertain sinister designs; Clement had been more fortunate than himself, but that was no reason why he should be angry with him. ... Charles V was the offender, and Wolsey swore a deadly hatred against him. Resolved to strike, he sought only the place where he could inflict the severest blow. To obtain his end, he resolved to dissemble his passion, and to distil drop by drop into Henry’s mind that mortal hatred against Charles, which gave fresh energy to his activity.

Charles discovered the indignation that lay hid under Wolsey’s apparent mildness, and, wishing to retain Henry’s alliance, he made more pressing advances to the king. Having deprived the minister of a tiara, he resolved to offer the king a crown; this was, indeed, a noble compensation! "You are king of France," the Emperor said, "and I undertake to win your kingdom for you. Only send an ambassador to Italy to negotiate the matter." Wolsey, who could hardly contain his vexation, was forced to comply, in appearance at least, with the Emperor’s views. The king, indeed, seemed to think of nothing but his arrival at St. Germain’s, and commissioned Pace to visit Italy for this important business. Wolsey hoped that he would be unable to execute his commission; it was impossible to cross the Alps, for the French troops blockaded every passage. But Pace, who was one of those adventurous characters whom nothing can stop, spurred on by the thought that the king himself had sent him, determined to cross the Col di Tenda. On the 27th of July, 1524, he entered the mountains, traversed precipitous passes, sometimes climbing them on all-fours, and often falling during the descent. In some places he could ride on horseback, "but in the most part thereof I durst not either turn my horse traverse [he wrote to the king] for all the worldly riches, nor in manner look on my left hand, for the steep slope and deepness to the valley." After this passage, which lasted six days, Pace arrived in Italy worn out by fatigue. "If the king of England will enter France immediately by way of Normandy," said the constable of Bourbon to him, "I will give him
leave to pluck out both my eyes if he is not master of Paris before All-Saints, and when Paris is taken, he will be master of the whole kingdom.” But Wolsey, to whom these remarks were transmitted by the ambassador, slighted them, delayed furnishing the subsidies, and required certain conditions which were calculated to thwart the project. Pace, who was ardent and ever imprudent, but plain and straightforward, forgot himself, and in a moment of vexation wrote to Wolsey, “To speak frankly, if you do not attend to these things, I shall impute to your grace the loss of the crown of France.” These words ruined Henry’s envoy in the cardinal’s mind. Was this man, who owed everything to him, trying to supplant him? … Pace in vain assured Wolsey that he should not take seriously what he had said, but the bolt had hit. Pace was associated with Charles in the cruel enmity of the minister, and he was one day to feel its terrible effects. It was not long before Wolsey was able to satisfy himself that the service Charles had desired to render the king of England was beyond the Emperor’s strength.

No sooner at ease on one side, then Wolsey found himself attacked on another. This man, the most powerful among the king’s favorites, felt at this time the first breath of disfavor blow over him. On the pontifical throne, he would no doubt have attempted a reform after the manner of Sixtus V; and wishing to rehearse on a smaller stage, and regenerate after his own fashion the catholic church in England, he submitted the monasteries to a strict inquisition, patronized the instruction of youth, and was the first to set a great example, by suppressing certain religious houses whose revenues he applied to his college in Oxford. Thomas Cromwell, his right-hand man, displayed much skill and industry in this business, and thus, under the orders of a cardinal of the Roman church, made his first campaign in a war of which he was in later days to hold the chief command. Wolsey and Cromwell, by their reforms, drew down the hatred of certain monks, priests, and noblemen, always the very humble servants of the clerical party. The latter accused the cardinal of not having estimated the monasteries at their just value, and of having, in certain cases, encroached on the royal jurisdiction. Henry, whom the loss of the crown of France had put in a bad humor, resolved, for the first time, not to spare his minister: “There are loud murmurs throughout this kingdom,” he said to him, “it is asserted that your new college at Oxford is only a convenient cloak to hide your malversations.” “God forbid,” replied the cardinal, “that this virtuous foundation at Oxford, undertaken for the good of my poor soul, should be raised ex rapinis! (out of plunderings). But, above all, God forbid that I should ever encroach upon your royal authority.” He then cunningly insinuated that by his will he left all
his property to the king. Henry was satisfied—he had a share in the business.

Events of very different importance drew the king’s attention to another quarter. The two armies, of the Empire and of France, were met for battle before Pavia, in the Plain of Lombardy. Wolsey, who openly gave his right hand to Charles V, and secretly his left to Francis, repeated to his master: "If the Emperor gains the victory, are you not his ally? and if Francis, am I not in secret communication with him?" "Thus," added the cardinal, "whatever happens, your Highness will have great cause to give thanks to Almighty God."

On the 24th of February, 1525, the battle of Pavia was fought. The army of Francis I was utterly routed. The king himself was taken prisoner to Madrid. "Of all things," he wrote to his mother, "nothing remains to me but honor and life." Charles V, who celebrated his twenty-fifth birthday on the day of the battle, was virtually Emperor of the West. England apart, he was supreme over all. Henry and Wolsey had in every sense been playing a double game. Professing friendship for Charles, and bound to support his cause by the Treaty of Windsor of August, 1522, they had at the same time been negotiating with Charles’ enemy, Francis I of France. The agent employed in the negotiations was Giovanni Giovacchino di Passano, known to the English court as John Joachim, who passed for a merchant of Bologna and lived in concealment at Blackfriars. In fact, he was a Genoese attached to the household of Louise, mother of the French king, and, after Pavia, regent of France until the release of her son from custody at Madrid. De Praet, the Imperial ambassador in London, had secret knowledge of Joachim’s presence in the city, and his master was not unaware that Henry and Wolsey were not to be trusted. He was indeed much too knowledgeable of the diplomatic situation to be deceived by them. When, after Pavia, Wolsey urged upon him a joint invasion of France, as a reward for which Henry was to become its king, Charles bluntly refused to consider the proposal, and for the rest of the year ignored English suggestions. Wisely so, for meanwhile Wolsey re-opened negotiations with Louise, accepted her secret present for himself of 100,000 crowns, and concluded a treaty of peace between the two countries. In March, 1526, Charles released his royal prisoner, after obtaining his assent to onerous treaty terms, at the same time requiring him to surrender to him his two sons as hostages for his future good faith. To Louise Wolsey expressed the hope that Francis would feel free to repudiate his solemn promises at the first convenient opportunity. Feeling certain that Charles had obstructed his accession to the popedom, Wolsey hoped to prove
to him by such actions that it was dangerous to thwart the ambitions of a Cardinal and Chancellor.

While diplomatic moves of great intricacy and delicacy thus occupied Wolsey’s attention, he met with difficulties in home affairs, particularly in matters of finance. Foreign policy, to be effective, must be backed by adequate expenditure on armed forces. In 1523 the Chancellor had himself visited the House of Commons to demand four shillings in the pound of every man’s land and goods. The Commons administered to him a humiliating rebuff, and voted a much smaller sum. In 1525, he demanded no less than one sixth of the movables and incomes of the laity, and more still from the clergy. “You desire to conquer France,” said Wolsey, “you are right. Give me then for that purpose the sixth part of your property; that is a trifle to gratify so noble an inclination.” England did not think so; this illegal demand aroused universal complaint. “We are English and not French, freemen and not slaves,” was the universal cry. Wolsey might tyrannize over the court, but not lay hands on the property of the king’s subjects.

The eastern counties rose in insurrection, four thousand men were under arms in a moment, and Henry was guarded in his own palace by only a few servants. It was necessary to break down the bridges to stop the insurgents. The courtiers complained to the king; the king threw the blame on the cardinal; the cardinal laid it on the clergy, some of whom had encouraged him to impose this tax by quoting to him the example of Joseph demanding of the Egyptians the fifth part of their goods, and the clergy in their turn ascribed the insurrection to the gospellers, who (said they) were stirring up a peasant war in England, as they had done in Germany. Reformation produces revolution; this is the favorite text of the followers of the pope. Violent hands must be laid upon the heretics. Non pluit Deus, duc ad christianos. [God sends no rain; lead us against the Christians.]

The charge of the priests was absurd, but the people are blind whenever the gospel is concerned, and occasionally the governors are blind also. Serious reasoning was not necessary to confute this invention. “Here, by the way, I will tell you a merry toy,” said Latimer one day in the pulpit. “Master More was once sent in commission into Kent to help to try out, if it might be, what was the cause of Goodwin Sands and the shelf that stopped up Sandwich haven. He calleth the country afore him, such as were thought to be men of experience, and among others came in an old man with a white head, and one that was thought to be little less than a hundred years old. So Master More called the old aged man unto him, and said, ‘Father, tell me if you can, what is the cause of this great arising of the sands and shelves hereabout,
that stop up Sandwich haven?" ‘Forsooth, Sir,’ quoth he, ‘I am an old man, for I am well-nigh an hundred, and I think that Tenterden steeple is the cause of the Goodwin Sands. For I am an old man, Sir, and I may remember the building of Tenterden steeple, and before that steeple was in building, there was no manner of flats or sands.’" After relating this anecdote, Latimer slyly added, "Even so, to my purpose, is preaching of God's Word the cause of rebellion, as Tenterden steeple was the cause Sandwich haven is decayed."

There was no persecution for the present, as there were other things to be done. Wolsey, still smarting at his failure to reach the pontifical throne, could only think of how he might repay Charles and obstruct his ambitions. But during this time Tyndale also was pursuing his aim, and the year 1525, memorable for the battle of Pavia, was destined to be no less so in the British Isles, for a still more important victory.

CHAPTER 10
An Exile’s Toil for a Nation’s Life
1524–26

The ship carrying Tyndale and his manuscripts cast anchor in the busy mercantile city of Hamburg, where the gospel had counted numerous friends. Encouraged by the presence of his brethren, the Oxford scholar had taken a quiet lodging in one of the narrow winding streets of that old city, and had immediately resumed his task. A secretary, whom he terms his "faithful companion," aided him in collating texts, but it was not long before this brother, whose name is unknown to us, thinking himself called to preach Christ in places where He had as yet never been proclaimed, left Tyndale. A former friar-observant of the Franciscan order at Greenwich, having abandoned the cloister, and being at this time without resources, offered his services to the translator. William Roye was one of those men (and they are always pretty numerous) whom impatience of the yoke alienates from Rome without their being attracted by the Spirit of God to Christ. Acute, insinuating, crafty, and yet of pleasing manners, he charmed all those who had mere casual relations with him. Tyndale, banished to the distant shores of the Elbe, surrounded by strange customs, and hearing only a foreign tongue, often thought of England, and was impatient that his country should enjoy the result of his labors; he accepted Roye’s aid. The Gospels of Matthew and Mark, translated at Hamburg, became, it would seem, the first fruits to England of his great task.

It is not possible from the evidence available to be completely certain about Tyndale’s changes of residence during the period
1524–25. In all probability he and his assistant moved from Hamburg to Wittenberg in the late spring of 1524, and remained there until the spring of 1525. That Tyndale came into direct contact with Luther at Wittenberg is tolerably certain. Could he be in the reformer’s own neighborhood and not desire to see him and speak with him? He did not need the Saxon Valiant-for-the-Truth, either to teach him the Gospel which he had already known at Oxford, or to instruct him in the translation of the Scriptures. But did not all evangelical foreigners flock to Luther’s city? The strong personality of the German reformer, his lectures, his table-talk, would doubtless be potent sources of encouragement to the fugitive Englishman. Above all he would be spurred on with his work of Bible translation. It may be the case that the two Gospels already translated into English were printed at Wittenberg. Hamburg itself seems to have had no resident printer at that time. During the period 1524–25 also, Tyndale must have worked with uncommon energy at his translation of the remainder of the New Testament. The work done, he probably moved with Roye to the Rhineland. There were at Cologne some celebrated printers well known in England, and among others, Peter Quentel and Arnold and Francis Byrckmann. Francis Byrckmann had warehouses in St. Paul’s churchyard in London—a circumstance that might facilitate the introduction and sale of the Testament printed on the banks of the Rhine. This providential circumstance probably decided Tyndale in favor of Cologne, and thither he repaired with Roye and his manuscripts. In the gloomy streets of the city of Agrippina, he contemplated its innumerable churches, and above all its ancient cathedral re-echoing to the voices of its canons, and was oppressed with sorrow as he beheld the priests and monks and mendicants and pilgrims who, from all parts of Europe, poured in to adore the pretended relics of the three wise men and of the eleven thousand virgins. And then Tyndale asked himself whether it was really in this superstitious city that the New Testament was to be printed in English. This was not all. The reform movement then at work in Germany had broken out at Cologne during the feast of Whitsuntide, and the archbishop had just forbidden all evangelical worship. Yet Tyndale persevered and, submitting to the most minute precautions so as not to compromise his work, he took an obscure lodging where he kept himself closely hidden. Soon however, trusting in God, he called on the printer, presented his manuscripts to him, and ordered three thousand copies. The printing went on. The work was to appear as a quarto, with prologue and marginal notes and references. One sheet followed another. Gradually the gospel unfolded its
mysteries in the English tongue, and Tyndale could not contain himself for very joy. He saw in his mind’s eye the triumphs of the Scriptures over all the kingdom, and exclaimed with transport, “Whether the king wills it or not, ere long all the people of England, enlightened by the New Testament, will obey the gospel.”

But on a sudden that sun whose earliest beams he had hailed with songs of joy was hidden by thick clouds. One day, just as the tenth sheet (making 80 quarto pages in all) had been thrown off, the printer hastened to Tyndale, and informed him that the senate of Cologne forbade him to continue the work. Everything was discovered then. No doubt Henry VIII, who had burnt Luther’s books, wished to burn the New Testament also, to destroy Tyndale’s manuscripts, and deliver him up to death. Who had betrayed him? He was lost in unavailing conjectures, and one thing only appeared certain; alas! his vessel, which was moving onwards in full sail, had struck upon a reef! The following is the explanation of this unexpected setback.

One of the most violent enemies of the Reformation—we mean John Cochlæus—had arrived in Cologne. The wave of popular agitation which had stirred this city during the Whitsuntide holidays, had previously swept over Frankfort during the festival of Easter, and the Romish clergy had been threatened with violence. Cochlæus, the dean of Notre-Dame, taking advantage of a moment when the gates of the city were open, had escaped a few minutes before the burghers entered his house to arrest him. On arriving at Cologne, where he hoped to live unknown under the shadow of the powerful elector, he had gone to lodge with George Lauer, a canon in the church of the Apostles.

By a singular destiny the two most opposite men, Tyndale and Cochlæus, were in hiding in the same city; they could not long remain there without coming into collision.

On the right bank of the Rhine, and opposite Cologne, stood the monastery of Deutz, one of whose abbots, Rupert, who lived in the twelfth century, had said, “To be ignorant of Scripture is to be ignorant of Jesus Christ. This is the scripture of nations! This book of God, which is not pompous in words and poor in meaning like Plato, ought to be set before every people, and to proclaim aloud to the whole world the salvation of all.” One day, when Cochlæus and his host were talking of Rupert, the canon informed the dean that the heretic Osiander of Nuremberg was in treaty with the abbot of Deutz about publishing the writings of this ancient doctor. Cochlæus guessed that Osiander was desirous of bringing forward the contemporary of Saint Bernard as a witness in defense of the Reformation. Hastening to the monastery, he alarmed the abbot: “Entrust to me the manuscripts of your
celebrated predecessor,” he said, “I will undertake to print them and prove that he was one of us.” The monks placed them in his hands, stipulating for an early publication, from which they expected no little renown. Cochlæus immediately went to Peter Quentel and Arnold Byrckmann to make the necessary arrangements. They were Tyndale’s printers.

There Cochlæus made a more important discovery than that of Rupert’s manuscripts. Byrckmann and Quentel having invited him one day to meet several of their colleagues at dinner, a printer, somewhat elevated by wine, declared in his cups (to borrow the words of Cochlæus), “Whether the king and the cardinal of York wish it or not, all England will soon be Lutheran.” Cochlæus listened and grew alarmed; he made inquiry and was informed that two Englishmen, learned men and skilled in the languages, were concealed at Cologne. But all his efforts to discover more proved unavailing.

There was no more repose for the dean of Frankfort; his imagination fermented, his mind became alarmed. “What,” said he, “shall England, that faithful servant of the popedom, be perverted like Germany? Shall the English, the most religious people of Christendom, and whose king once ennobled himself by writing against Luther, shall they be invaded by heresy? ... Shall the mighty cardinal-legate of York be compelled to flee from his palace, as I was from Frankfort?” Cochlæus continued his search; he paid frequent visits to the printers, spoke to them in a friendly tone, flattered them, invited them to visit him at the canon’s, but as yet he dared not hazard the important question; it was sufficient for the moment to have won the good graces of the depositaries of the secret. He soon took a new step; he was careful not to question them before one another, but he procured a private interview with one of them, and supplied him plentifully with Rhenish wine—he himself is our informant. Artful questions embarrassed the unwary printer, and at last the secret was disclosed. “The New Testament,” Cochlæus learnt, “is translated into English; three thousand copies are in the press; fourscore pages in quarto are ready; the expense is fully supplied by English merchants, who are secretly to convey the work when printed, and to disperse it widely through all England, before the king or the cardinal can discover or prohibit it. ... Thus will Britain be converted to the opinions of Luther.”

The surprise of Cochlæus equaled his alarm; he dissembled; he wished to learn, however, where the two Englishmen lay concealed; but all his exertions proved ineffectual, and he returned to his lodgings filled with emotion. The danger was very great. A stranger and an exile, what can he do to oppose this impious undertaking? Where shall he find a friend to England,
prepared to show his zeal in warding off the threatened blow? ... He was bewildered.

A flash of light suddenly dispelled the darkness. A person of some consequence at Cologne, Herman Rincke, a knight and an imperial councilor, had years before been sent on important business by the Emperor Maximilian to Henry VII, and from that time he had always shown a great attachment to England. Cochlæus determined to reveal the fatal secret to him; but, being still alarmed by the scenes at Frankfort, he was afraid to conspire openly against the Reformation. He had left an aged mother and a little niece at home, and was unwilling to do anything which might compromise them. He therefore crept stealthily towards Rincke's house (as he tells us himself), slipped in secretly, and unfolded the whole matter to him. Rincke could not believe that the New Testament in English was printing at Cologne; however, he sent a confidential person to make inquiries, who reported to him that Cochlæus' information was correct, and that he had found in the printing office a large supply of paper intended for the edition. The knight immediately proceeded to the senate, and spoke of Wolsey, of Henry VIII, and of the preservation of the Romish church in England; and that body which, under the influence of the archbishop, had long since forgotten the rights of liberty, forbade the printer to continue the work. Thus then there were to be no New Testaments for England! A practiced hand had warded off the blow aimed at Roman Catholicism; Tyndale would perhaps be thrown into prison, and Cochlæus enjoy a complete triumph.

Tyndale was at first confounded. Were so many months of toil lost, then, forever? His trial seemed beyond his strength. "They are ravening wolves," he exclaimed, "they preach to others, 'Steal not,' and yet they have robbed the soul of man of the bread of life, and fed her with the shales [husks] and cods of the hope in their merits and confidence in their good works." Yet Tyndale did not long remain cast down, for his faith was of that kind which removes mountains. Is it not the Word of God that is imperiled? Did God ever abandon those who trusted in Him? He must anticipate the senate of Cologne. Daring and prompt in all his movements, Tyndale bade Roye follow him, hastened to the printing office, collected the sheets, jumped into a boat, and rapidly ascended the river, carrying with him the hope of England. When Cochlæus and Rincke, accompanied by the officers of the senate, reached the printing office, they were surprised beyond measure. The apostate had secured the abominable papers! ... Their enemy had escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler. Where was he to be found now? He would no doubt go and place himself under the protection of some Lutheran prince, whither
Cochlæus would take good care not to pursue him; but there was one resource left. These English books can do no harm in Germany; they must be prevented from reaching London. He wrote to Henry VIII, to Wolsey, and to the bishop of Rochester. "Two Englishmen," said he to the king, "like the two eunuchs who desired to lay hands on Ahasuerus, are plotting wickedly against the peace of your kingdom, but I, like the faithful Mordecai, will lay open their designs to you. They wish to send the New Testament in English to your people. Give orders at every seaport to prevent the introduction of this most baneful merchandise."

Such was the name given by this zealous follower of the pope to the Word of God. An unexpected ally soon restored peace to the soul of Cochlæus. The celebrated Dr. Eck, a champion of popery far more formidable than he was, had arrived at Cologne on his way to London, and he undertook to arouse the anger of the bishops and of the king. The eyes of the greatest opponents of the Reformation seemed now to be fixed on England. Eck, who boasted of having gained the most signal triumphs over Luther, would easily get the better of the humble tutor and his English New Testament.

Unhappily for Cochlæus, he does not appear to have received the material reward which he expected his startling news to have called forth. His "superlative merit" was recognized in words, but, as he himself lamented, "he was left like Mordecai at the gate without any substantial recompense for his disclosure of a plot as dangerous as that against the life of Ahasuerus."

His presence in Cologne thus disclosed, Tyndale had once more to resume his journeyings, and, guarding his precious bales, he ascended the rapid waters of the Rhine as quickly, and doubtless as secretly, as he could.

He passed the ancient cities and the smiling villages scattered along the banks amidst scenes of picturesque beauty. The mountains, glens, and rocks, the dark forests, the ruined fortresses, the gothic churches, the boats that passed and repassed each other, the birds of prey that soared over his head, as if they bore a mission from Cochlæus—nothing could turn his eyes from the treasure he was carrying with him. At last, after a voyage of five or six days, and probably in October, 1525, he reached Worms, where Luther, four years before, had exclaimed, "Here I stand, I can do no other, so help me God!" These words of the German reformer, so well known to Tyndale, were the star that had guided him to Worms. He knew that the gospel was preached in that ancient city. "The citizens are subject to fits of Lutheranism," said Cochlæus. Tyndale arrived there, not as Luther did, surrounded by an immense crowd, but unknown, and imagining himself pursued by the myrmidons of Charles and of
Henry. As he landed from the boat, he cast an uneasy glance around him, and laid down his precious burden on the bank of the river.

He had had time to reflect on the dangers which threatened his work. As his enemies would have details of the edition, some few sheets of it having fallen into their hands, he took steps to mislead the inquisitors and began a new edition, striking out the prologue and the notes, and substituting the more portable octavo form for the original quarto. Peter Schæffer, the grandson of Faust, one of the inventors of printing, lent his presses for this important work. The two editions were quietly completed about the end of the year 1525 or early in 1526. Thus were the wicked deceived; they would have deprived the English people of the oracles of God, and two editions were now ready to enter England. "Give diligence," said Tyndale to his fellow countrymen, as he sent from Worms the Testament he had just translated, "unto the words of eternal life, by the which, if we repent and believe them, we are born anew, created afresh, and enjoy the fruits of the blood of Christ." About March, 1526, these books crossed the sea by way of Antwerp or Rotterdam. Tyndale was happy, but he knew that the unction of the Holy Ghost alone could enable the people of England to understand these sacred pages, and accordingly he followed them night and day with his prayers. "The scribes and Pharisees," said he, "had thrust up the sword of the Word of God in a scabbard or sheath of glosses, and therein had knit it fast, so that it could neither pierce nor cut. ... Now, O God, draw this sharp sword from the scabbard. Strike, wound, cut asunder the soul and the flesh, so that man being divided in two, and set at variance with himself, may be in peace with Thee to all eternity!"

CHAPTER 11
The Awakening in Cambridge
1524–25

While these works were accomplishing at Cologne and Worms, others were going on at Cambridge and Oxford. On the banks of the Rhine they were preparing the seed; in England they were drawing the furrows to receive it. The gospel produced a great agitation at Cambridge. Bilney, whom we may call the father of the English Reformation—since, being the first converted by the New Testament, he had brought to the knowledge of God the energetic Latimer, and so many other witnesses of the truth—Bilney did not at that time put himself forward, like many of those who had listened to him; his vocation was prayer. Timid before men, he was full of boldness before God, and day and
night called upon Him for souls. But while he was kneeling in his chamber, others were at work in the world. Among these, Stafford was particularly remarkable. "Paul is risen from the dead," said many as they heard him. And in fact Stafford explained with so much life the true meaning of the words of the apostle and of the four evangelists, that these holy men, whose faces had been so long hidden under the dense traditions of the schools, reappeared before the youth of the university such as the apostolic times had beheld them. But it was not only their persons (for that would have been a trifling matter), it was their doctrine which Stafford laid before his hearers. While the schoolmen of Cambridge were declaring to their pupils a reconciliation which was not yet worked out, and telling them that pardon must be purchased by the works prescribed by the church, Stafford taught that redemption was accomplished, that the satisfaction offered by Jesus Christ was perfect; and he added that popery having revived the kingdom of the law, God, by the Reformation, was now reviving the kingdom of grace. The Cambridge students, charmed by their master's teaching, greeted him with applause, and, indulging a little too far in their enthusiasm, said to one another as they left the lecture-room, "Which is the most indebted to the other? Stafford to Paul, who left him the holy epistles, or Paul to Stafford, who has resuscitated that apostle and his holy doctrines, which the middle ages have obscured?"

Above Bilney and Stafford rose Latimer, who, by the power of the Holy Ghost, transfused into other hearts the learned lessons of his master. Being informed of the work that Tyndale was preparing, he maintained from the Cambridge pulpits that the Bible ought to be read in the vulgar tongue. "The author of Holy Scripture," said he, "is the Mighty One, the Everlasting. … God Himself! … and this Scripture partakes of the might and eternity of its author. There is neither king nor emperor that is not bound to obey it. Let us beware of those bypaths of human tradition, filled of stones, brambles, and uprooted trees. Let us follow the straight road of the Word. It does not concern us what the Fathers have done, but what they should have done."

A numerous congregation crowded to Latimer's preaching, and his hearers hung listening to his lips. One in particular attracted attention. He was a Norfolk youth, sixteen years of age, whose features were lighted up with understanding and piety. This poor scholar had received with eagerness the truth announced by the former cross-bearer. He did not miss one of his sermons; with a sheet of paper on his knees, and a pencil in his hand, he took down part of the discourse, trusting the remainder to his memory. This was Thomas Becon, afterwards chaplain to Thomas Cranmer,
archbishop of Canterbury. "If I possess the knowledge of God," said he, "I owe it (under God) to Latimer."

Latimer had hearers of many sorts. By the side of those who gave way to their enthusiasm stood men "swelling, blown full, and puffed up like unto Æsop's frog, with envy and malice against him," said Becon; these were the partisans of traditional catholicism, whom curiosity had attracted, or whom their evangelical friends had dragged to the church. But as Latimer spoke, a marvelous transformation was worked in them; by degrees their angry features relaxed, their fierce looks grew softer, and, if these friends of the priests were asked, after their return home, what they thought of the heretic preacher, they replied, in the exaggeration of their surprise and rapture: *Nunquam sic locutus est homo, sicut hic homo!* (John 7:46).

When he hastened from the pulpit, Latimer hastened to practice what he had taught. He visited the narrow chambers of the poor scholars and the dark rooms of the working classes; "he watered with good deeds whatsoever he had before planted with godly words," said the student who collected his discourses. The disciples conversed together with joy and simplicity of heart; everywhere the breath of a new life was felt; as yet no external reforms had been effected, and yet the spiritual church of the gospel and of the Reformation was already there. And thus the recollection of these happy times was long commemorated in the adage:

> When Master Stafford read,  
> And Master Latimer preached,  
> Then was Cambridge blessed.

The priests could not remain inactive; they heard speak of grace and liberty, and would have nothing to do with either. If grace is tolerated, will it not take from the hands of the clergy the manipulation of salvation, indulgences, penance, and all the rubrics of the canon law? If liberty is conceded, will not the hierarchy, with all its degrees, pomp, violence, and scaffolds, be shaken? Rome desires no other liberty than that of free will, which, exalting the natural strength of fallen man, dries up as regards mankind the springs of divine life, withers Christianity, and changes that heavenly religion into a human moralism and legal observances.

The friends of popery, therefore, collected their forces to oppose the new religion. "Satan, who never sleeps," says the simple chronicler, "called up his familiar spirits, and sent them forth against the reformers." Meetings were held in the convents, but particularly in that belonging to the Greyfriars. They mustered all
their forces. *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*, said they. Latimer extols in his sermons the blessings of Scripture; we must deliver a sermon also to show its dangers. But where was the orator to be found who could cope with him? This was a very embarrassing question to the clerical party. Among the Dominicans there was a friar, adroit and skillful in little matters; it was the prior Bockenham. No one had shown more hatred against the evangelical Christians, and no one was in truth a greater stranger to the gospel. This was the man commissioned to set forth the dangers of the Word of God. He was by no means familiar with the New Testament; he opened it however, picked out a few passages here and there which seemed to favor his thesis, and then, arrayed in his costliest robes, with head erect and solemn step, already sure of victory, he went into the pulpit, combated the heretic, and with pompous voice stormed against the reading of the Bible; it was in his eyes the fountain of all heresies and misfortunes. "Scripture," he said, "is full of figurative language which the laity will be certain to misinterpret to their own ruin. If that heresy should prevail," he exclaimed, "there will be an end of everything useful among us. The ploughman, reading in the gospel that *no man having put his hand to the plough should look back*, would soon lay aside his labor. ... The baker, reading that *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*, will in future make us nothing but very insipid bread; and the simple man finding himself commanded *to pluck out the right eye and cast it from thee*, England, after a few years, will be a frightful spectacle; it will be little better than a nation of blind and one-eyed men, sadly begging their bread from door to door."

This discourse moved that part of the audience for which it was intended. "The heretic is silenced," said the monks and clerks, but sensible people smiled, and Latimer was delighted that they had given him such an adversary. Being of a lively disposition and inclined to irony, he resolved to lash the platitudes of the pompous friar. There are some absurdities, he thought, which can only be refuted by showing how foolish they are. Does not even the grave Tertullian speak of things which are only to be laughed at, for fear of giving them importance by a serious refutation? "Next Sunday I will reply to him," said Latimer.

The church was crowded when Bockenham with the hood of St. Francis on his shoulders and with a vain-glorious air, took his place solemnly in front of the preacher. Latimer began by recapitulating the least week of his adversary’s arguments; then taking them up one by one, he turned them over and over, and pointed out all their absurdity with so much wit that the poor prior was buried in his own nonsense. Then turning towards the listening crowd, he exclaimed with warmth, "This is how your
skillful guides abuse your understanding. They look upon you as children that must be forever kept in leading-strings. Now, the hour of your majority has arrived; boldly examine the Scriptures, and you will easily discover the absurdity of the teaching of your doctors. And then desirous, as Solomon has it, of answering a fool according to his folly, he added, "As for the comparisons drawn from the plough, the leaven, and the eye, of which the reverend prior has made so singular a use, is it necessary to justify these passages of Scripture? Must I tell you what plough, what leaven, what eye is here meant? Is not our Lord’s teaching distinguished by those expressions which, under a popular form, conceal a spiritual and profound meaning? Do not we know that in all languages and in all speeches, it is not on the image that we must fix our eyes, but on the thing which the image represents? ... For instance," he continued, and as he said these words he cast a piercing glance on the prior, "if we see a fox painted preaching in a friar’s hood, nobody imagines that a fox is meant, but that craft and hypocrisy are described, which are so often found disguised in that garb." At these words the prior, on whom the eyes of all the congregation were turned, rose and left the church hastily, and went off to hide his rage and confusion among his brethren. The monks and their creatures uttered loud cries against Latimer. It was unpardonable (they said) to have been thus wanting in respect to the cowl of St. Francis. But his friends replied, "Do we not whip children? and he who treats Scripture worse than a child, does he not deserve to be well flogged?"

The Romish party did not consider themselves beaten. The heads of colleges and the priests held frequent conferences. The professors were desired to watch carefully over their pupils, and to lead them back to the teaching of the church by flattery and by threats. "We are putting our lance in rest," they told the students, "if you become evangelicals, your advancement is at an end." But these open-hearted generous youths loved rather to be poor with Christ than rich with the priests. Stafford continued to teach, Latimer to preach, and Bilney to visit the poor; the doctrine of Christ ceased not to be spread abroad, and souls to be converted. It was difficult, if not impossible, to silence a preacher so popular with the ordinary people as Latimer. A plan to do so had been in contemplation a considerable time before the encounter with Bockenham just recorded. The aid of the bishops was sought. Dr. West, bishop of Ely, was ordinary of Cambridge; in response to an urgent request for his intervention, he ordered one of the doctors to inform him the next time Latimer was to preach, "But," added he, "do not say a word to anyone. I wish to come without being expected."
One day as Latimer was preaching in Latin ad clerum (to the clergy), the bishop suddenly entered the university church, attended by a number of priests. Latimer stopped, waiting respectfully until West and his train had taken their places. "A new audience," he adroitly remarked, "and moreover, an audience of such rank, calls for a new theme. Leaving, therefore, the subject I had proposed, I will take up one that relates to the episcopal charge, and will preach on these words: Christus existens Pontifex futurorum bonorum" (Hebrews 9:11). Then describing Jesus Christ, Latimer represented him as the "true and perfect pattern unto all other bishops." There was not a single virtue pointed out in the divine bishop that did not correspond with some defect in the Romish bishops. Latimer’s caustic wit had a free course at their expense, but there was so much gravity in his sallies, and so lively a Christianity in his descriptions, that every one must have felt them to be the cries of a Christian conscience rather than the sarcasms of an ill-natured disposition. Never had bishop been taught by one of his priests like this man. "Alas!" said many, "our bishops are not of that breed; they are descended from Annas and Caiaphas." West was not more at his ease than Bockenham had been formerly. He stifled his anger, however, and after the sermon, said to Latimer with a gracious accent: "You have excellent talents, and if you would do one thing I should be ready to kiss your feet." ... What humility in a bishop! ... "Preach in this same church," continued West, "against Martin Luther. That is the best way of checking heresy." Latimer understood the prelate’s meaning, and replied calmly, "If Luther preaches the Word of God, I cannot oppose him. If he teaches the contrary, I am ready to attack him. But, my Lord, by command of my Cardinal of York, we are prohibited from reading Luther’s works; therefore it were but a vain thing for me to attempt to refute them." "Well, well, Master Latimer," exclaimed the bishop, "I perceive that you smell somewhat of the pan. ... One day or another you will repent of this gear." West, having left Cambridge in great irritation against that rebellious clerk, hastened to convene his chapter and forbade Latimer to preach either in the university or in the diocese. "All that will live godly shall suffer persecution," Saint Paul had said; Latimer was now experiencing the truth of the saying. It was not enough that the name of heretic had been given him by the priests and their friends, and that the passers-by insulted him in the streets; ... the work of God was violently checked. "Behold then," he exclaimed with a bitter sigh, "the use of the episcopal office... to hinder the preaching of Jesus Christ!" Some few years later he sketched, with his usual caustic irony, the portrait of a certain bishop, of whom Luther also used frequently to speak; "Do
you know,” said Latimer, “who is the most diligentest bishop and prelate in all England? ... I see you listening and hearkening that I should name him. ... I will tell you. ... It is the devil. He is never out of his diocese; ye shall never find him out of the way; call for him when you will, he’s ever at home. He is ever at his plough. Ye shall never find him idle, I warrant you. Where the devil is resident, there away with books and up with candles; away with Bibles and up with beads; away with the light of the gospel and up with the light of candles, yea at noondays; down with Christ’s cross, up with purgatory pickpurse; away with clothing the naked, the poor, and impotent, up with decking of images and gay garnishing of stocks and stones; down with God’s traditions and His most holy Word. ... Oh! that our prelates would be as diligent to sow the corn of good doctrine as Satan is to sow cockle and darnel!” Truly may it be said, “There was never such a preacher in England as he is.”

The reformer was not satisfied with merely speaking—he acted. “Neither the menacing words of his adversaries nor their cruel imprisonments,” says one of his contemporaries, “could hinder him from proclaiming God’s truth.” Forbidden to preach in the churches, he went about from house to house. He longed for a pulpit, however, and this he obtained. A haughty prelate had in vain interdicted his preaching; Jesus Christ, who is above all bishops, is able, when one door is shut, to open another. Instead of one great preacher there were soon two at Cambridge. An Augustine monk named Robert Barnes, a native of the county of Norfolk, and a great scholar, had gone to Louvain to prosecute his studies. Here he received the degree of doctor of divinity and, having returned to Cambridge, was nominated prior of his monastery in 1523. It was his fortune to reconcile learning and the gospel in the university, but by leaning too much to learning he diminished the force of the Word of God. A great crowd collected every day in the Augustine lecture hall, to hear him discourse upon Terence and Plautus, and in particular upon Cicero. Many of those who were offended by the simple Christianity of Bilney and Latimer, were attracted by this reformer of another kind. Coleman, Coverdale, Field, Cambridge, Barley, and many other young men of the university, gathered round Barnes and proclaimed him “the restorer of letters.” But the classics were only a preparatory teaching. The masterpieces of antiquity having aided Barnes to clear the soil, he opened before his class the epistles of Saint Paul. He did not understand their divine depth, like Stafford; he was not, like him, anointed with the Holy Ghost; he differed from him on several of the apostle’s doctrines, on justification by faith, and on the new creature; but Barnes was an enlightened and liberal man, not
without some degree of piety, and desirous, like Stafford, of substituting the teaching of Scripture for the barren disputations of the schools. But they soon came into collision, and Cambridge long remembered that celebrated discussion in which Barnes and Stafford contended with so much renown, employing no other weapons than the Word of God, to the great astonishment of the blind doctors, and the great joy of the clear-sighted, says the chronicler.

Barnes was not as yet thoroughly enlightened, and the friends of the gospel were astonished that a man, a stranger to the truth, should deal such heavy blows against error. Bilney, whom we continually meet with when any secret work, a work of irresistible charity, is in hand—Bilney, who had converted Latimer—undertook to convert Barnes; and Stafford, Arthur, Thistel of Pembroke College, and Fook of Benet’s earnestly prayed God to grant his assistance. The experiment was difficult; Barnes had reached that juste milieu, that “golden mean” of the humanists, that intoxication of learning and glory, which render conversion more difficult. Besides, could a man like Bilney really dare to instruct the restorer of antiquity? But the humble bachelor of arts, so simple in appearance, knew, like David of old, a secret power by which the Goliath of the university might be vanquished. He passed days and nights in prayer, and then urged Barnes openly to manifest his convictions without fearing the reproaches of the world. After many conversations and prayers, Barnes was converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Still, the prior retained something undecided in his character, and only half relinquished that middle state with which he had begun. For instance, he appears to have always believed in the efficacy of sacerdotal consecration to transform the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. His eye was not single, and his mind was often agitated and driven to and fro by contrary thoughts; “Alas!” said this divided character one day, “I confess that my cogitations be innumerable.”

Barnes, having come to a knowledge of the truth, immediately displayed a zeal that was somewhat imprudent. Men of the least decided character, and even those who are destined to make a signal fall, are often those who begin their course with the greatest ardor. Barnes seemed prepared at this time to withstand all England. Being now united to Latimer by a tender Christian affection, he was indignant that the powerful voice of his friend should be lost to the church. “The bishop has forbidden you to preach,” he said to him, “but my monastery is not under episcopal jurisdiction. You can preach there.” Latimer went into the pulpit at the Augustine’s, and the church could not contain the crowd that flocked to it. At Cambridge, as at Wittenberg, the chapel of
the Augustine monks was used for the first struggles of the gospel. It was here that Latimer delivered some of his best sermons. A very different man from Latimer, and particularly from Barnes, was daily growing in influence among the English reformers; this was Fryth. No one was more humble than he, and on that very account no one was stronger. He was less brilliant than Barnes, but more solid. He might have penetrated into the highest departments of science, but he was drawn away by the deep mysteries of God’s Word; the call of conscience prevailed over that of the understanding. He did not devote the energy of his soul to difficult questions; he thirsted for God, for His truth, and for His love. Instead of propagating his particular opinions and forming divisions, he clung only to the faith which saves, and advanced the dominion of true unity. This is the mark of the great servants of God. Humble before the Lord, mild before men, and even in appearance somewhat timid, Fryth in the face of danger displayed an intrepid courage. “My learning is small,” he said, “but the little I have I am determined to give to Jesus Christ for the building of His temple.”

Latimer’s sermons, Barnes’ ardor, and Fryth’s firmness, excited fresh zeal at Cambridge. They knew what was going on in Germany and Switzerland; shall the English, ever in front, now remain in the rear? Shall not Latimer, Bilney, Stafford, Barnes, and Fryth do what the servants of God are doing in other places? A secret ferment announced an approaching crisis; everyone expected some change for better or for worse. The evangelicals, confident in the truth, and thinking themselves sure of victory, resolved to fall upon the enemy simultaneously on several points. The Sunday before Christmas, in the year 1525, was chosen for this great attack. While Latimer should address the crowds that continued to fill the Augustine chapel, and others were preaching in a variety of places, Barnes was to deliver a sermon in one of the churches in the town. But nothing compromises the gospel so much as a disposition turned towards outward things. God, who grants His blessing only to undivided hearts, permitted this general assault, of which Barnes was to be the hero, to be marked by a defeat. The prior, as he went into the pulpit, thought only of Wolsey. As the representative of the popedom in England, the cardinal was the great obstacle to the Reformation. Barnes preached from the epistle for the day: Rejoice in the Lord alway. But instead of announcing Christ and the joy of the Christian, he imprudently declaimed against the luxury, pride, and diversions of the churchmen, and everybody understood that he aimed at the cardinal. He described those magnificent palaces, that brilliant suite, those scarlet robes, and pearls, and gold, and precious stones, and all the prelate’s ostentation, so little in keeping (said
with the stable of Bethlehem. Two fellows of King’s College, Robert Ridley and Walter Preston, relations of Tunstall, bishop of London, who were intentionally among the congregation, noted down in their tablets the prior’s imprudent expressions. The sermon was scarcely over when the storm broke out. “These people are not satisfied with propagating monstrous heresies,” exclaimed their enemies, “but they must find fault with the powers that be. Today they attack the cardinal, tomorrow they will attack the king!” Ridley, Preston, and others accused Barnes to the vice-chancellor. All Cambridge was in commotion. What! Barnes the Augustine prior, the restorer of letters, accused as a Wycliffite! ... The gospel was threatened with a danger more formidable than a prison or a scaffold. The friends of the priests, knowing Barnes’ weakness, and even his vanity, hoped to obtain of him a disavowal that would cover the evangelical party with shame. "What!" said these dangerous counselors to him, "the noblest career was open to you, and would you close it? ... Do, pray, explain away your sermon." They alarmed, they flattered him; and the poor prior was near yielding to their solicitations. "Next Sunday you will read this declaration," they said to him. Barnes ran over the paper put into his hands and saw no great harm in it. However, he desired to show it to Bilney and Stafford. "Beware of such weakness," said these faithful men. Barnes then recalled his promise, and for a season the enemies of the gospel were silent.

Its friends worked with increased energy. The fall from which one of their companions had so narrowly escaped inspired them with fresh zeal. The more indecision and weakness Barnes had shown, the more did his brethren flee to God for courage and firmness. It was reported, moreover, that a powerful ally was coming across the sea, and that the Holy Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue, were at last to be given to the people. Whenever the Word was preached, there the congregation was largest. It was the seed-time of the church; all were busy in the fields to prepare the soil and trace the furrows. Seven colleges at least were in full ferment—Pembroke, St. John’s, Queens’, King’s, Caius, Benet’s, and Peterhouse. The gospel was preached at the Augustine’s, at St. Mary’s (the University church) and in other places, and when the bells rang to prayers, the streets were alive with students issuing from the colleges, and hastening to the sermon.

There was at Cambridge a house called the White Horse, so situated as to permit the most timid members of King’s, Queens’, and St. John’s Colleges to enter at the rear without being perceived. In every age Nicodemus has had his followers. Here those persons used to assemble who desired to read the Bible and the works of the German reformers. The priests, looking upon
Wittenberg as the focus of the Reformation, named this house Germany—the people will always have their bywords. At first the frequenters of the White Horse were called sophists; and now, whenever a group of “fellows” was seen walking in that direction, the cry was, “There are the Germans going to Germany.” “We are not Germans,” was the reply, “neither are we Romans.” The Greek New Testament had made them Christians. The gospel meetings had never been more fervent. Some attended them to communicate the new life they possessed, others to receive what God had given to the more advanced brethren. The Holy Spirit united them all, and thus, by the fellowship of the saints, were real churches created. To these young Christians the Word of God was the source of so much light, that they imagined themselves transported to that heavenly city of which the Scriptures speak, which had no need of the sun, for the glory of God did lighten it. "So oft as I was in the company of these brethren," said a youthful student of St. John’s, "methought I was quietly placed in the new glorious Jerusalem."

Similar things were taking place at Oxford. In 1524 and 1525, Wolsey had successively invited thither several Cambridge fellows, and although only seeking the most able, he found that he had taken some of the most pious. Besides John Clark, there were Richard Cox, John Fryer, Godfrey Harman, W. Betts, Henry Sumner, W. Baily, Michael Drumm, Th. Lawny, and, lastly, the excellent John Fryth. These Christians, associating with Clark, with his faithful Dalaber, and with other evangelicals of Oxford, held meetings, like their Cambridge brethren, at which God manifested His presence. The bishops made war upon the gospel, the king supported them with all his power, but the Word had gained the victory; there was no longer any doubt. The church was born again in England.

The great movement of the sixteenth century had begun more particularly among the younger doctors and students at Oxford and Cambridge. From them it was necessary that it should be extended to the people, and for that end the New Testament, hitherto read in Latin and in Greek, must be circulated in English. The voices of these youthful evangelists were heard, indeed, in London and in the provinces, but their exhortations would have been insufficient, if the mighty hand which directs all things had not made this Christian activity coincide with that holy work for which it had set Tyndale apart. While all was agitation in England, the waves of the ocean were bearing from the continent to the banks of the Thames those Scriptures of God, which, three centuries later, multiplied by thousands and by millions, and translated into an ever-increasing number of tongues, were to be wafted from the same banks to the ends of the world. If in the
fifteenth century, and even in the early years of the sixteenth, the English New Testament had been brought to London, it would only have fallen into the hands of a few Lollards. Now, in every place, in the parsonages, the universities, and the palaces, as well as in the cottages of the husbandmen and the shops of the tradesmen, there was an ardent desire to possess the Holy Scriptures. The *fiat lux* was about to be uttered over the chaos of the church, and light to be separated from darkness by the Word of God.

The End of Volume 1, Book Two

BOOK 3

The English New Testament and the Court of Rome

CHAPTER 1  The Year of Grace
CHAPTER 2  Oxford's Baptism of Suffering
CHAPTER 3  The Severities of Popery
CHAPTER 4  The Tempest against the Truth
CHAPTER 5  The Divorce Question Opens
CHAPTER 6  Anne Boleyn
CHAPTER 7  Bilney in Strength and Weakness
CHAPTER 8  The Campaign for Henry's Divorce
CHAPTER 9  The Dilemma and Duplicity of Clement VII
CHAPTER 10  Royal Threats Counter Papal Cunning
CHAPTER 11  Wolsey's Desperate Demands
The Church and the State are essentially distinct. They both receive their task from God, but that task is different in each. The task of the church is to lead men to God; the task of the state is to secure the earthly development of a people in conformity with its peculiar character. There are certain bounds, traced by the particular spirit of each nation, within which the state should confine itself; while the church, whose limits are co-extensive with the human race, has a universal character, which raises it above all national differences. These two distinctive features should be maintained. A state which aims at universality loses itself; a church whose mind and aim are sectarian falls away. Nevertheless, the church and the state, the two poles of social life, while they are in many respects opposed to each other, are far from excluding each other absolutely. The church has need of that justice, order, and liberty, which the state is bound to maintain, but the state has especial need of the church. If Jesus can do without kings to establish His kingdom, kings cannot do without Jesus, if they would have their kingdoms prosper. Justice, which is the fundamental principle of the state, is continually fettered in its progress by the internal power of sin, and as force can do nothing against this power, the state requires the gospel in order to overcome it. That country will always be the most prosperous where the church is the most evangelical. These two communities having thus need one of the other, we must be prepared, whenever a great religious manifestation takes place in the world, to witness the appearance on the scene not only of the little ones, but of the great ones also, of the state. We must not then be surprised to meet with Henry VIII, but let us endeavor to appreciate accurately the part he played.

If the Reformation, particularly in England, happened necessarily to be mixed up with the state, with the world even, it originated neither in the state nor in the world. There was much worldliness in the age of Henry VIII—passions, violence, festivities, a trial, a divorce—and some historians call that the history of the Reformation in England. We shall not pass by in silence these manifestations of the worldly life; opposed as they are to the Christian life, they are in history, and it is not our business to tear them out. But most assuredly they are not the Reformation. From a very different quarter proceeded the divine light which then rose upon the human race.

To say that Henry VIII was the reformer of his people is to betray ignorance of history. The kingly power in England by turns opposed and favored the reform
in the church; but it opposed before it favored, and much more than it favored. This great transformation was begun and extended by its own strength, by the Spirit from on high.

When the church has lost the life that is peculiar to it, it must again put itself in communication with its creative principle, that is, with the Word of God. Just as the buckets of a wheel employed in irrigating the meadows have no sooner discharged their reviving waters, than they dip again into the stream to be re-filled, so every generation, void of the Spirit of Christ, must return to the divine source for renewal. The primitive words which created the church have been preserved for us in the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles; and the humble reading of these divine writings will create in every age the communion of saints. God was the father of the Reformation, not Henry VIII. The visible world which then glittered with such brightness, those princes and sports, those noblemen, and trials and laws, far from effecting a reform, were calculated to stifle it. But the light and the warmth came from heaven, and the new creation was completed.

In the reign of Henry VIII a great number of citizens, priests, and noblemen possessed that degree of cultivation which favors the action of the holy books. It was sufficient for this divine seed to be scattered on the well-prepared soil for the work of germination to be accomplished.

A time not less important was also approaching—that in which the action of the popedom was to come to an end. The hour had not yet struck. God was first creating within by his Word a spiritual church, before he broke without by his dispensations the bonds which had so long fastened England to the power of Rome. It was His good pleasure first to give truth and life, and then liberty. It has been said that if the pope had consented to a reform of abuses and doctrines, on condition of his keeping his position, the religious revolution would not have been satisfied at that price and that, after demanding reform, the next demand would have been for liberty. The only reproach that can be made to this assertion is that it is superabundantly true. Liberty was an integral part of the Reformation, and one of the changes imperatively required was to withdraw religious authority from the pope, and acknowledge it as belonging to the Word of God. In the sixteenth century there was a great outpouring of the Christian life in France, Italy, and Spain; it is attested by martyrs without number, and history shows that to transform these three great nations, all that the gospel wanted was liberty. "If we had set to work two months later," said a grand inquisitor of Spain who had dyed himself in the blood of the saints, "it would have been too late; Spain would have been lost to the Roman church." We may therefore believe that if Italy, France, and Spain had had some generous king to check the myrmidons of the pope, those three countries, carried along by the renovating power of the gospel, would have entered upon an era of liberty and faith.
The struggles of England with the popedom began shortly after the dissemination of the English New Testament by Tyndale. The epoch at which we are arrived accordingly brings in one view before our eyes both the Testament of Jesus Christ and the court of Rome. We can thus study the men—the reformers and the Romanists—and the works they produce, and arrive at a just valuation of the two great principles which dispute the possession of authority in the church.

It was probably in the early spring of 1526 that the English New Testaments were crossing the sea; pious Hanseatic merchants had taken charge of the books. Captivated by the Holy Scriptures, they had taken them on board their ships, hidden them among their merchandise, and then made sail from Antwerp for London.

Thus those precious pages were approaching England, which were to become its light and the source of its greatness. The merchants, whose zeal unhappily cost them dear, were not without alarm. Had not Cochlæus caused orders to be sent to every port to prevent the entrance of the precious cargo they were bringing to England? They arrived and cast anchor; they lowered the boat to reach the shore; what were they likely to meet there? Tunstall’s agents, no doubt, and Wolsey’s, and Henry’s, ready to take away their New Testaments! They landed and soon again returned to the ship; boats passed to and fro, and the vessel was unloaded. No enemy appeared; and no one seemed to imagine that these ships contained so great a treasure.

Just at the time this invaluable cargo was ascending the river, an invisible hand had dispersed the preventive guard. Tunstall, bishop of London, had been sent as ambassador to Spain; Henry and Wolsey were occupied in political combinations with Scotland, France, and the Empire. God, if we may so speak, had sent his angel to remove or otherwise occupy the guards.

Seeing nothing that could stop them, the merchants, whose establishment was at the Steelyard in Thames Street, hastened to conceal their precious charge in their warehouses. But who will receive them? Who will undertake to distribute these Holy Scriptures in London, Oxford, Cambridge, and all England? It is a little matter that they have crossed the sea. The principal instrument God was about to use for their dissemination was a humble servant of Christ.

In Honey Lane, a narrow thoroughfare adjoining Cheapside, stood the old church of All Hallows, of which Dr. Robert Forman was rector. His curate was a plain man of lively imagination, delicate conscience, and timid disposition, but rendered bold by his faith, to which he was to become a martyr. Thomas Garret, for that was his name, having believed in the gospel, earnestly called his hearers to repentance; he urged upon them that works, however good they might be in appearance, were by no means capable of justifying the sinner, and that faith alone could save him. He maintained that every man had the
right to preach the Word of God, and called those bishops Pharisees who persecuted Christian men. Garret’s discourses, at once so quickening and so gentle, attracted great crowds; and to many of his hearers, the street in which he preached was rightly named Honey Lane, for there they found the *honey out of the rock*. But Garret was about to commit a fault still more heinous in the eyes of the priests than preaching faith. The Hanse merchants were seeking some sure place where they might store up the New Testaments and other books sent from Germany; the curate offered his house, stealthily transported the holy deposit thither, hid them in the most secret corners, and kept a faithful watch over this sacred library. He did not confine himself to this. Night and day he studied the holy books; he held gospel meetings, read the Word and explained its doctrines to the citizens of London. At last, not satisfied with being at once student, librarian, and preacher, he became a trader, and sold the New Testament to laymen, and even to priests and monks, so that the Holy Scriptures were dispersed over the whole realm. Others, of whom we know nothing, must have given him their powerful, but secret, assistance.

And thus the Word of God, presented by Erasmus to the learned in 1516, was given to the people by Tyndale in 1526. In the parsonages and in the monastic cells, but particularly in shops and cottages, a crowd of persons were studying the New Testament. The clearness of the Holy Scriptures struck each reader. None of the systematic or aphoristic forms of the school were to be found there; it was the language of human life which they discovered in those divine writings—here a conversation, there a discourse; here a narrative, and there a comparison; here a command, and there an argument; here a parable, and there a prayer. It was not all doctrine or all history, but these two elements mingled together made an admirable whole. Above all, the life of our Savior, so divine and so human, had an inexpressible charm which captivated the simple. One work of Jesus Christ explained another, and the great facts of the redemption, birth, death, and resurrection of the Son of God, and the sending of the Holy Ghost, followed and completed each other. The authority of Christ’s teaching, so strongly contrasting with the doubts of the schools, increased the clearness of His discourses to His readers, for the more certain a truth is, the more distinctly it strikes the mind. Academical explanations were not necessary to those noblemen, farmers, and citizens. It is to me, for me, and of me that this book speaks, said each one. It is I whom all these promises and teachings concern. This *fall* and this *restoration*... they are mine. That old *death* and this new *life*... I have passed through them. That *flesh* and that *spirit*... I know them. This *law* and this *grace*, this *faith*, these *works*, this *slavery*, this *glory*, this *Christ* and this *Belial*... all are familiar to me. It is my own history that I find in this book. Thus by the aid of the Holy Ghost each one had in his own experience a key to the mysteries of the Bible. To understand certain authors and certain philosophers, the intellectual life of the reader must be in harmony with theirs; so must there be an intimate affinity with the holy books to penetrate their mysteries. "The man that has not the Spirit of God," said Martin Luther, "does not understand one jot or tittle of the
Scripture.” Now that this condition was fulfilled, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Such at that period were the hermeneutics of England. Tyndale had set the example himself by explaining many of the words which might stop the reader. "The New Testament!” we may suppose some farmer saying, as he took up the book, "what Testament is that?” “Christ,” replied Tyndale in his prologue, "commanded His disciples before His death to publish over all the world His last will, which is to give all his goods unto all that repent and believe. He bequeaths them His righteousness to blot out their sins—His salvation to overcome their condemnation; and this is why that document is called the Testament of Jesus Christ."

"The law and the gospel," says a citizen of London, in his shop, "what is that?” "They are two keys," answered Tyndale. "The law is the key which shuts up all men under condemnation, and the gospel is the key which opens the door and lets them out. Or, if you like it, they are two salves. The law, sharp and biting, driveth out the disease and killeth it; while the gospel, soothing and soft, softens the wound and brings life.” Everyone understood and read, or rather devoured the inspired pages; and the hearts of the elect (to use Tyndale’s words), warmed by the love of Jesus Christ, began to melt like wax.

This transformation was observed to take place even in the most catholic families. William Roper, More’s son-in-law, having read the New Testament, received the truth. "I have no more need," said he, "of auricular confession, of vigils, or of the invocation of saints. The ears of God are always open to hear us. Faith alone is necessary to salvation. I believe... and I am saved. ... Nothing can deprive me of God’s favor."

The amiable and zealous young man desired to do more. "Father," said he one day to Sir Thomas, "procure for me from the king, who is very fond of you, a license to preach. God hath sent me to instruct the world." More was uneasy. Must this new doctrine, which he detested, spread even to his children? He exerted all his authority to destroy the work begun in Roper’s heart. "What," said he with a smile, "is it not sufficient that we that are your friends should know that you are a fool, but you would proclaim your folly to the world? Hold your tongue; I will debate with you no longer.” The young man’s imagination had been struck, but his heart had not been changed. The discussions having ceased, the father’s authority being restored, Roper became less fervent in his faith, and gradually he returned to popery, of which he was afterwards a zealous champion.

As for Thomas Garret, the humble curate of All Hallows having sold the New Testament to persons living in London and its neighborhood, and to many pious men who would carry it to the farthest parts of England, he formed the resolution to introduce it into the University of Oxford, that citadel of
traditional catholicism. It was there he had studied, and he felt towards that school the affection which a son bears to his mother; he set out with his books. Terror occasionally seized him, for he knew that the Word of God had many deadly enemies at Oxford, but his inexhaustible zeal overcame his timidity. In concert with Anthony Daler, he stealthily offered the mysterious book for sale; many students bought it, and Garret carefully entered their names in his account book. This was some time during 1526.

It was not only the New Testament and such doctrinal works as Luther’s *Bondage of the Will* which Garret and others were quietly selling that men were starting to read. Another sort of literature was also beginning to circulate, and before long it added its testimony to the truth even within the walls of the Royal Palace. One morning when Edmund Moddis, one of Henry’s valets-de-chambre, was in attendance on his master, the king, who was much attached to him, spoke to him of the new books come from beyond the sea. "If your Grace," said Moddis, "would promise to pardon me and certain individuals, I would present you a wonderful book which is dedicated to your Majesty."

"Who is the author?"

"A lawyer of Gray's Inn named Simon Fish, at present on the continent."

"What is he doing there?"

"About three years ago, Mr. Row, a fellow student of Gray's Inn, composed for a private theatre a drama against my lord the cardinal."

The king smiled; when his minister was attacked, his own yoke seemed lighter.

"As no one was willing to represent the character employed to give the cardinal his lesson," continued the valet, "Master Fish boldly accepted it. The piece produced a great effect, and my lord, being informed of this impertinence, sent the police one night to arrest Fish. But he managed to escape, crossed the sea, joined one Tyndale, the author of some of the books so much talked of; and, carried away by his friend’s example, he composed the book of which I was speaking to your Grace."

"What’s the name of it?"

"A Supplication for the Beggars."

"Where did you see it?"

"At two of your tradespeople’s, George Elyot and George Robinson; if your Grace desires it, they shall bring it you."
The king appointed the day and the hour.

The book was written for the king, and everybody read it but the king himself. At the appointed day Moddis appeared with Elyot and Robinson, who were not entirely without fear, as they might be accused of proselytism even in the royal palace.

The king received them in his private apartments. "What do you want?" he said to them. "Sir," replied one of the merchants, "we are come about an extraordinary book that is addressed to you."

"Can one of you read it to me?"

"Yes, if it so please your Grace," replied Elyot.

"You may repeat the contents from memory," rejoined the king... "but no, read it all; that will be better. I am ready."

Elyot began:

"A Supplication for the Beggars."

"To the king our sovereign lord,

"Most lamentably complaineth of their woeful misery, unto your Highness, your poor daily bedesmen [a pensioner bound to pray for a benefactor], the wretched hideous monsters, on whom scarcely, for horror, any eye dare look; the foul unhappy sort of lepers and other sore people, needy, impotent, blind, lame, and sick, that live only by alms; how that their number is daily sore increased, that all the alms of all the well-disposed people of this your realm are not half enough to sustain them, but that for very constraint they die for hunger.

"And this most pestilent mischief is come upon your said poor bedesmen, by the reason that there hath, in the time of your noble predecessors, craftily crept into this your realm, another sort, not of impotent, but of strong, puissant, and counterfeit, holy and idle beggars and vagabonds, who by all the craft and wiliness of Satan are now increased not only into a great number, but also into a kingdom."

Henry was very attentive; Elyot continued:

"These are not the shepherds, but the ravenous wolves going in shepherd’s clothing, devouring the flock: bishops, abbots, priors, deacons, archdeacons, suffragans, priests, monks, canons, friars, pardoners, and summoners. ... The goodliest lordships, manors, lands, and territories are theirs. Besides this, they
have the tenth part of all the corn, meadow, pasture, grass, wood, colts, calves, lambs, pigs, geese, and chickens. Over and besides, the tenth part of every servant’s wages, the tenth part of wool, milk, honey, wax, cheese, and butter. The poor wives must be accountable to them for every tenth egg, or else she getteth not her rights [i.e., absolution] at Easter. ... Finally what get they in a year? Summa totalis: £430,333, 6s. 8d. sterling, whereof not four hundred years past they had not a penny. ...

"What subjects shall be able to help their prince, that be after this fashion yearly polled? What good christian people can be able to succour us poor lepers, blind, sore, and lame, that be thus yearly oppressed? ... The ancient Romans had never been able to have put all the whole world under their obeisance, if they had had at home such an idle sort of cormorants."

No subject could have been found more likely to captivate the king’s attention. "And what doth all this greedy sort of sturdy, idle, holy thieves with their yearly exactions that they take of the people? Truly nothing, but translate all rule, power, lordship, authority, obedience, and dignity from your Grace unto them. Nothing, but that all your subjects should fall into disobedience and rebellion. ... Priests and doves make foul houses; and if you will ruin a state, set up in it the pope with his monks and clergy. ... Send these sturdy loobies abroad in the world to take them wives of their own, instead of meddling with other men’s wives, and to get their living with their labor in the sweat of their faces. ... Then shall your commons increase in riches; then shall matrimony be much better kept; then shall not your sword, power, crown, dignity, and obedience of your people be translated from you."

When Elyot had finished reading, the king was silent, sunk in thought. The true cause of the ruin of the state had been laid before him, but Henry’s mind was not ripe for these important truths. At last he said, with an uneasy manner, "If a man who desires to pull down an old wall, begins at the bottom, I fear the upper part may chance to fall on his head." Thus then, in the king’s eyes, Fish by attacking the priests was disturbing the foundations of religion and society. It was imperative that the mischievous book should be withstood.

Of the Roman Church in England at this period, Sir Thomas More was the literary champion. Already famous as the author of Utopia, he now produced The Supplications of the Souls in Purgatory. "Suppress," said they, "the pious stipends paid to the monks, and then Luther’s gospel will come in, Tyndale’s testament will be read, heresy will be preached, fasts will be neglected, the saints will be blasphemed, God will be offended, virtue will be mocked at, vice will run riot, and England will be peopled with beggars and thieves." The Souls in Purgatory then call the author of the Beggars’ Supplication "a goose, an ass, a mad dog." Thus did superstition degrade More’s noble genius. Notwithstanding the abuse of the souls in purgatory, the New Testament was daily read more and more in England.
CHAPTER 2

Oxford’s Baptism of Suffering
1526–28

We have already seen how Tyndale’s New Testament had entered England by surprise early in 1526, and how in parsonages and monastic cells, shops and private houses, its startling message was entering the souls of men. Great were the fears of the bishops. They saw in the circulation of the "heretical" book the greatest threat to their power which had appeared in a thousand years. The gospellers who presumed to emancipate man from the priests, and put him in absolute dependence on God, were thereby undermining the very foundations of the papal system. What must be done?

Wolsey, as the greatest of the church dignitaries, hastened to assemble the bishops, and these, particularly Warham of Canterbury and Tunstall of London, gave immediate and diligent attention to the problem. With Wolsey they believed that the authority of the pope and of the clergy was a dogma to which all others were subordinate. They saw in the reform an uprising of the human mind, a desire in men to think for themselves, and to judge freely the doctrines and institutions which the nations had hitherto received humbly from the hands of the priests. The new teachers justified their attempt at enfranchisement by substituting a new authority for the old. It was the New Testament that compromised the absolute power of Rome. It must be seized and destroyed, said the bishops. London, Oxford, and, above all, Cambridge, those three haunts of heresy, must be carefully searched. Definitive orders were issued in February 1528, and the work began immediately.

The first visit of the inquisitors was to Honey Lane, to the house of the curate of All Hallows. They did not find Garret; they sought after him at Monmouth’s, and throughout the city, but he could not be met with. "He is gone to Oxford to sell his detestable wares," the inquisitors were informed, and they set off after him immediately, determined to burn the evangelist and his books; "so burning hot," says an historian, "was the charity of these holy fathers."

Early in February, Garret was quietly selling his books at Oxford and carefully noting down his sales in his record, when two of his friends came to him exclaiming, "Fly! or else you will be taken before the cardinal, and thence... to the Tower." The poor curate was greatly agitated. "From whom did you learn that?" "From Master Cole, the clerk of the assembly, who is deep in the cardinal’s favor." Garret, who saw at once that the affair was serious, hastened to Anthony Dalaber, who held the stock of the Holy Scriptures at Oxford; others
followed him; the news had spread rapidly, and those who had bought the book were seized with alarm, for they knew by the history of the Lollards what the Romish clergy could do. They took counsel together. The brethren, "for so did we not only call one another, but were in deed one to another," says Dalaber, decided that Garret should change his name; that Dalaber should give him a letter for his brother, the rector of Stalbridge, in Dorsetshire, who was in want of a curate; and that, once in this parish, he should seek the first opportunity of crossing the sea. The rector was in truth a "rank papist," says Dalaber, "afterwards the most mortal enemy that ever I had, for the gospel’s sake," but that did not alter their resolution. They knew of no other resource. Anthony wrote to him hurriedly, and Garret immediately left Oxford without being observed.

Having provided for Garret’s safety, Dalaber next thought of his own. He carefully concealed in a secret recess of his chamber, at St. Alban’s Hall, Tyndale’s Testament, and the works of Luther, Æcolampadius, and others, on the Word of God. Then, disgusted with the scholastic sophisms which he heard in that college, he took with him the New Testament and the Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke, by Lambert of Avignon, the second edition of which had just been published at Strasburg, and went to Gloucester College, where he intended to study the civil law, not caring to have anything more to do with the church.

During this time, poor Garret was making his way into Dorsetshire. His conscience could not bear the idea of being, although for a short time only, the curate of a bigoted priest—of concealing his faith, his desires, and even his name. He felt more wretched, although at liberty, than he could have been in Wolsey’s prisons. It is better, he said within himself, to confess Christ before the judgment seat, than to seem to approve of the superstitious practices I detest. He went forward a little, then stopped, and then resumed his course. There was a fierce struggle between his fears and his conscience. At length, after a day and a half spent in doubt, his conscience prevailed; unable to endure any longer the anguish that he felt, he retraced his steps, returned to Oxford, which he entered on a Friday evening, and lay down calmly in his bed. It was barely past midnight when Wolsey’s agents, who had received information of his return, arrived, and dragged him from his bed, and delivered him up to Dr. Cottisford, the commissary of the university. The latter locked him up in one of his rooms, while London, warden of New College, and Higdon, dean of Frideswide, "two arch papists" (as the chronicler terms them) announced this important capture to the cardinal. They thought popery was saved, because a poor curate had been taken.

Dalaber, engaged in preparing his new room at Gloucester college, knew nothing of all this. On Saturday, at noon, having finished his arrangements, he double-locked his door, and began to read the Gospel according to St. Luke. All of a sudden he hears a knock. Dalaber made no reply; it is no doubt the
commissary’s officers. A louder knock was given, but he still remained silent. Immediately after, there was a third knock, as if the door would be beaten in. "Perhaps somebody needs me," thought Dalaber. He laid his book aside, opened the door, and to his great surprise saw Garret, who, with alarm in every feature, exclaimed, "I am a lost man! They have caught me!" Dalaber, who thought his friend was with his brother at Stalbridge, could not conceal his astonishment, and at the same time he cast an uneasy glance on a stranger who accompanied Garret. He was one of the college servants who had led the fugitive curate to Dalaber’s new room. As soon as this man had gone away, Garret told Anthony everything: "Observing that Dr. Cottisford and his household had gone to prayers, I put back the bolt of the lock with my finger... and here I am." "Alas! Master Garret," replied Dalaber, "the imprudence you committed in speaking to me before that young man has ruined us both!" At these words, Garret, whose fear of the priests had returned, now that his conscience was satisfied, exclaimed with a voice interrupted by sighs and tears "For mercy’s sake, help me! Save me!" Without waiting for an answer, he threw off his gown and hood, begged Anthony to give him a sleeved coat and, thus disguised, he said, "I will escape into Wales, and from there, if possible, to Germany."

Garret checked himself; there was something to be done before he left. The two friends fell on their knees and prayed together; they called upon God to lead His servant to a secure retreat. That done, they embraced each other, their faces bathed with tears, and unable to utter a word.

Silent on the threshold of his door, Dalaber followed both with eyes and ears his friend’s retreating footsteps. Having heard him reach the bottom of the stairs, he returned to his room, locked the door, took out his New Testament and, placing it before him, read on his knees the tenth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, breathing many a heavy sigh: ... Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake... but fear them not; the very hairs of your head are all numbered. This reading having revived his courage, Anthony, still on his knees, prayed fervently for the fugitive and for all his brethren: "O God, by Thy Holy Spirit endue with heavenly strength this tender and new-born little flock in Oxford. Christ’s heavy cross is about to be laid on the weak shoulders of Thy poor sheep. Grant that they may bear it with godly patience and unflinching zeal!"

Rising from his knees, Dalaber put away his book, folded up Garret’s hood and gown, placed them among his own clothes, locked his room door, and proceeded to the Cardinal’s College (now Christ Church) to tell Clark and the other brethren what had happened. They were in chapel; the evening service had begun; the dean and canons, in full costume, were chanting in the choir. Dalaber stopped at the door listening to the majestic sounds of the organ at which Taverner presided, and to the harmonious strains of the choristers. They were singing the Magnificat: My soul doth magnify the Lord. ... He hath holpen
his servant Israel. It seemed to Dalaber that they were singing Garret’s deliverance. But his voice could not join in their song of praise. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "all my singing and music is turned into sighing and musing."

As he listened, leaning against the entrance into the choir, Dr. Cottisford, the university commissary, arrived with hasty step, "bare headed, and as pale as ashes." He passed Anthony without noticing him, and going straight to the dean appeared to announce some important and unpleasant news. "I know well the cause of his sorrow," thought Dalaber as he watched every gesture. The commissary had scarcely finished his report when the dean arose, and both left the choir with undisguised confusion. They had only reached the middle of the anti-chapel when Dr. London came in, "puffing, blustering, and blowing, like a hungry and greedy lion seeking his prey." All three stopped, questioned one another, and deplored their misfortune. Their rapid and eager movements indicated the liveliest emotion; London above all could not restrain himself. He attacked the commissary, and blamed him for his negligence, so that at last Cottisford burst into tears. "Deeds, not tears," said the fanatical London, and forthwith they dispatched officers and spies along every road.

Anthony having left the chapel hurried to Clark’s to tell him of the escape of his friend. "We are walking in the midst of wolves and tigers," replied Clark, "prepare for persecution. Prudentia serpentina et simplicitas columbina (the wisdom of serpents and the harmlessness of doves) must be our motto. O God, give us the courage these evil times require." All in the little flock were delighted at Garret’s deliverance. Sumner and Betts, who had come in, ran off to tell it to the other brethren in the college, and Dalaber hastened to Corpus Christi. All these pious young men felt themselves to be soldiers in the same army, travelers in the same company, brothers in the same family. Fraternal love nowhere shone so brightly in the days of the Reformation as among the Christians of Great Britain. This is a feature worthy of notice.

Fitzjames, Udal, and Diet were met together in the rooms of the last-named, at Corpus Christi college, when Dalaber arrived. They ate their frugal meal with downcast eyes and broken voices, conversing of Oxford, of England, and of the perils hanging over them. Then rising from table they fell on their knees, called upon God for aid, and separated, Fitzjames taking Dalaber with him to St Alban’s Hall. They were afraid that the servant of Gloucester College had betrayed him.

The disciples of the gospel at Oxford passed the night in great anxiety. Garret’s flight, the rage of the priests, the dangers of the rising church, the roaring of a storm that filled the air and re-echoed through the long cloisters, all filled them with the liveliest apprehensions. The Lord’s day came. Dalaber, who was stirring at five in the morning, set out for his room in Gloucester College. Finding the gates shut, he walked up and down beneath the walls in the mud, for it had rained heavily. As he paced to and fro along the solitary street in the
obscure dawn, a thousand thoughts alarmed his mind. It was known, he said to himself, that he had assisted Garret’s flight; he would be arrested, and his friend’s escape would be revenged on him. He was weighed down by sorrow and alarm; he sighed heavily; he imagined he saw Wolsey’s commissioners demanding the names of his accomplices, and pretending to draw up a proscription list at his dictation; he recollected that on more than one occasion cruel priests had extorted from the Lollards the names of their brethren and, terrified at the possibility of such a crime, he exclaimed, “O God, I swear to thee that I will accuse no man. ... I will tell nothing but what is perfectly well known.”

At last, after an hour of anguish, he was able to enter the college. He hastened in, but when he tried to open his door, he found that the lock had been tampered with. The door gave way to a strong push, and what a sight met his eyes! his bedstead overturned, the blankets scattered on the floor, his clothes all confusion in his wardrobe, his study broken into and left open. He doubted not that Garret’s dress had betrayed him, and he was gazing at this sad spectacle in alarm, when a monk who occupied the adjoining rooms came and told him what had taken place: “The commissary and two proctors, armed with swords and bills, broke open your door in the middle of the night. They pierced your bed-straw through and through to make sure Garret was not hidden there; they carefully searched every nook and corner, but were not able to discover any traces of the fugitive.” At these words Dalaber breathed again... but the monk had not ended. “I have orders,” he added, “to send you to the prior.” Anthony Dunstan, the prior, was a fanatical and avaricious monk, and the confusion into which this message threw Dalaber was so great that he went just as he was, all bespattered with mud, to the rooms of his superior.

The prior, who was standing with his face towards the door, looked at Dalaber from head to foot as he came in. “Where did you pass the night?” he asked.

"At St. Alban’s Hall with Fitzjames."

The prior with a gesture of incredulity continued, "Was not Master Garret with you yesterday?"

"Yes."

"Where is he now?"

"I do not know."

During this examination, the prior had noticed a large double-gilt silver ring on Anthony’s finger, with the initials A.D. "Show me that," said the prior. Dalaber gave him the ring and the prior, believing it to be of solid gold, put it on his
own finger, adding with a cunning leer, "This ring is mine; it bears my name. A is for Anthony, and D for Dunstan."

"Would to God," thought Dalaber, "that I were as well delivered from his company, as I am sure of being delivered of my ring."

At this moment the chief beadle, with two or three of the commissary’s men, entered and conducted Dalaber to the chapel of Lincoln College, where three ill-omened figures were standing beside the altar; they were Cottisford, London, and Higdon. "Where is Garret?" asked London, and pointing to his disordered dress, he continued, "Your shoes and garments covered with mud prove that you have been out all night with him. If you do not say where you have taken him, you will be sent to the Tower." "Yes," added Higdon, "to Little-ease [one of the most horrible dungeons in the prison], and you will be put to the torture, do you hear?" Then the three doctors spent two hours attempting to shake the young man by flattering promises and frightful threats, but all was useless. The commissary then gave a sign, the officers stepped forward, and the judges ascended a narrow staircase leading to a large room situated above the commissary’s chamber. Here Dalaber was deprived of his purse and girdle, and his legs were placed in the stocks, so that his feet were almost as high as his head. When that was done, the three doctors devoutly went to mass.

Left alone in this frightful position, Dalaber recollected the warning Clark had given him two years before. He groaned heavily and cried to God, "O Father! grant that my suffering may be for Thy glory, and for the consolation of my brethren! Happen what may, I will never accuse one of them." After this noble protest, Anthony felt an increase of peace in his heart, but a new sorrow was reserved for him.

Garret, who had directed his course southwestwards, was caught at Bedminster, near Bristol. He was brought back, and thrown into the dungeon in which Dalaber had been placed after the torture. Their gloomy presentiments were to be more than fulfilled.

In fact Wolsey was deeply irritated at seeing the college (Christ Church), which he had intended should be "the most glorious in the world," made the haunt of heresy, and the young men, whom he had so carefully chosen, become distributors of the New Testament. By favoring literature, he had had in view the triumph of the clergy, and literature had on the contrary served to the triumph of the gospel. He issued his orders without delay, and the university was filled with terror. John Clark, John Fryth, Henry Sumner, William Betts, Richard Taverner, Richard Cox, Michael Drumm, Godfrey Harman, Thomas Lawney, Radley, and others besides of Cardinal College; Udal, Diet, and others of Corpus Christi; Eden and several of his friends of Magdalene; Goodman, William Bayley, Robert Ferrar, John Salisbury of Gloucester, Barnard, and St. Mary’s Colleges; were seized and thrown into prison. Wolsey had promised
them glory; he gave them a dungeon, hoping in this manner to save the power of the priests, and to repress that awakening of truth and liberty which was spreading from the continent to England.

Under Cardinal College there was a deep cellar sunk in the earth, in which the butler kept his salt fish. Into this hole these young men, the choice of England, were thrust. The dampness of this cave, the corrupted air they breathed, the horrible smell given out by the fish, seriously affected the prisoners, already weakened by study. Their hearts were bursting with groans, their faith was shaken, and the most mournful scenes followed one another in this foul dungeon. The wretched captives gazed on one another, wept, and prayed. This trial was destined to be a salutary one to them. "Alas!" said Fryth on a subsequent occasion, "I see that besides the Word of God, there is indeed a second purgatory... but it is not that invented by Rome; it is the cross of tribulation to which God has nailed us."

At last the prisoners were taken out one by one and brought before their judges; two only were released. The first was Betts, afterwards chaplain to Anne Boleyn; they had not been able to find any prohibited books in his room, and he pleaded his cause with great talent. The other was Taverner; he had hidden Clark’s books under his school-room floor, where they had been discovered, but his love for the arts saved him; "Pshaw! he is only a musician," said the cardinal.

All the rest were condemned. A great fire was kindled at the top of Carfax, in the center of Oxford, a long procession was marshaled, and these unfortunate men were led out, each bearing a faggot. When they came near the fire, they were compelled to throw into it the heretical books that had been found in their rooms, after which they were taken back to their noisome prison. There seemed to be a barbarous pleasure in treating these young and generous men so vilely. In other countries also, Rome was preparing to stifle in the flames the noblest geniuses of France, Spain, and Italy. Such was the reception letters and the gospel met with from popery in the sixteenth century. Every plant of God’s must be beaten by the wind, even at the risk of its being uprooted; if it receives only the gentle rays of the sun, there is reason to fear that it will dry up and wither before it produces fruit. *Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.* There was to arise one day a true church in England; persecution was but the prelude to its appearing.

But we must now turn to give attention to the lot of confessors of the faith in another university city.

CHAPTER 3
The Severities of Popery
1526-1528

Oxford and Cambridge, which alike shared the glories of the "new learning" in early Tudor days, and which were both deeply stirred by reformation teaching, were alike also in their experience of persecution. It was in 1526 that the party of reform in the city on the Cam received its baptism of suffering.

Early in February in that year, two of Wolsey’s agents, Dr. Capon, one of his chaplains, and Gibson, a sergeant-at-arms, notorious for his arrogance, left London for Cambridge. Submission was the password of popery. "Yes, submission," was responded from every part of Christendom by men of sincere piety and profound understanding, "submission to the legitimate authority against which Roman Catholicism has rebelled." According to their views, the traditionalism and Pelagianism of the Romish church had set up the supremacy of fallen reason in opposition to the divine supremacy of the Word and of grace. The external and apparent sacrifice of self which Roman Catholicism imposes—obedience to a confessor or to the pope, arbitrary penance, ascetic practices, and celibacy—only served to create, and so to strengthen and perpetuate, a delusion as to the egotistic preservation of a sinful personality. When the Reformation proclaimed liberty, so far as regarded ordinances of human invention, it was with the view of bringing man’s heart and life into subjection to their real Sovereign. The reign of God was commencing; that of the priests must needs come to an end. No man can serve two masters. Such were the important truths which gradually dawned upon the world, and which Wolsey and countless others thought it necessary to extinguish without delay.

On the day after their arrival in Cambridge, Capon and Gibson went to the convocation house, where several of the doctors were talking together. Their appearance caused some anxiety among the spectators, who looked upon the strangers with distrust. On a sudden Gibson moved forward, put his hand on Barnes, and arrested him in the presence of his friends. The latter were frightened, and this was what the sergeant wanted. "What!" said they, "the prior of the Augustines, the restorer of letters in Cambridge, arrested by a sergeant!" This was not all. Wolsey’s agents were to seize the books come from Germany, and their owners; Bilney, Latimer, Stafford, Arthur, and their friends, were all to be imprisoned, for they possessed the New Testament. Thirty members of the university were pointed out as suspected, and some miserable wretches, who had been bribed by the inquisitors, offered to show the place in every room where the prohibited books were hidden. But while the necessary preparations were making for this search, Bilney, Latimer, and their colleagues, being warned in time, got the books removed; they were taken away not only by the doors but by the windows, even by the roofs, and anxious inquiry was made for sure places in which they could be concealed.
This work was hardly ended, when the vice-chancellor of the university, the 
sergeant-at-arms, Wolsey’s chaplain, the proctors, and the informers began 
their rounds. They opened the first room, entered, searched, and found 
nothing. They passed on to the second, there was nothing. The sergeant was 
astonished and grew angry. On reaching the third room, he ran directly to the 
place that had been pointed out—still there was nothing. The same thing 
ocurred everywhere; never was inquisitor more mortified. He dared not lay 
hands on the persons of the evangelical doctors; his orders read that he was to 
seize the books and their owners. But as no books were found, there could be 
no prisoners. However, there was one man (the prior of the Augustines) against 
whom there were particular charges. The sergeant promised to compensate 
himself at Barnes’ expense for his useless labors.

The next day Gibson and Capon set out for London with Barnes. During this 
mournful journey, the prior, in great agitation, at one time determined to 
brave all England, and at another trembled like a leaf. At last their journey was 
ended; the chaplain left his prisoner at Parnell’s house, close by the stocks. 
Three students (Coverdale, Goodwin, and Field) had followed their master to 
cheer him with their tender affection.

On Thursday (8th February) the sergeant conducted Barnes to the cardinal’s 
palace at Westminster; the wretched prior, whose enthusiasm had given way to 
dejection, waited all day before he could be admitted. What a day! Will no one 
come to his assistance? Doctor Gardiner, Wolsey’s secretary, and Fox, his 
steward, both old friends of Barnes, passed through the gallery in the evening, 
and went up to the prisoner, who begged them to procure him an audience 
with the cardinal. These officers agreed to introduce the prior into the room 
where their master was sitting, and Barnes, as was customary, fell on his knees 
before him. "Is this the Doctor Barnes who is accused of heresy?" asked Wolsey, 
in a haughty tone, of Fox and Gardiner. They replied in the affirmative. The 
cardinal then turning to Barnes, who was still kneeling, said to him ironically, 
and not without reason, "What, master doctor, had you not sufficient scope in 
the Scriptures to teach the people; but my golden shoes, my poleaxes, my 
pillars, my golden cushions, my crosses, did so sore offend you, that you must 
make us a laughingstock, ridiculum caput, amongst the people? We were jollity 
that day laughed to scorn. Verily it was a sermon more fit to be preached on a 
stage than in a pulpit, for at the last you said I wore a pair of red gloves. ... 
Eh! what think you, master doctor?" Barnes, wishing to elude these 
embarrassing questions, answered vaguely, "I spoke nothing but the truth out of 
the Scriptures, according to my conscience and according to the old doctors." 
He then presented to the cardinal a statement of his teaching.

Wolsey received the papers with a smile; "Oh, ho!" said he, as he counted the 
six sheets, "I perceive you intend to stand to your articles and to show your 
learning." "By the grace of God," said Barnes. Wolsey then began to read them, 
and stopped at the sixth article, which ran thus: "I will never believe that one
man may, by the law of God, be bishop of two or three cities, yea, of a whole
country, for it is contrary to St. Paul, who saith, *I have left thee behind, to set
in every city a bishop.*" Barnes did not quote correctly, for the apostle says "to
ordain elders in every city." Wolsey was displeased at this thesis: "Ah! this
touches me," he said, "Do you think it wrong (seeing the ordinance of the
church) that one bishop should have so many cities underneath him?" "I know of
no ordinance of the church," Barnes replied, "as concerning this thing, but
Paul’s saying only."

Although this controversy interested the cardinal, the personal attack of which
he had to complain touched him more keenly. "Good," said Wolsey, and then
with a condescension hardly to be expected from so proud a man, he deigned
almost to justify himself. "You charge me with displaying a royal pomp; but do
you not understand that, being called to represent his Majesty, I must strive by
these means to strike terror into the wicked?" "It is not your pomp or your
poleaxes," Barnes courageously answered, "that will save the king’s person. ...
God will save him, who said, *Per me reges regnant.*" (By me kings reign.)
Barnes, instead of profiting by the cardinal’s kindness to present an humble
justification, as Dean Colet had formerly done to Henry VIII, dared preach him
a second sermon to his face. Wolsey felt the color mount to his cheeks. "Well,
gentlemen," said he, turning to Fox and Gardiner, "you hear him! Is this the
wise and learned man of whom you spoke to me?"

At these words both steward and secretary fell on their knees, saying, "We
desire your Grace to be good unto him, for he will be reformable." "Do you not
know," said Wolsey to Barnes, "that I am *Legatus de latere,* and that I am able
to dispense in all matters concerning religion within this realm, as much as the
pope may?" Barnes replied, "I know it to be so." "Will you then be ruled by us,
and we will do all things for your good, and for the good of the university." He
answered, "I thank your grace for your goodwill; I will stick to the Holy
Scripture, and to God’s book, according to the simple talent that God hath lent
me." "Well," replied Wolsey, "thou shalt have thy learning tried to the utmost,
and thou shalt have the law." Orders were then given that he should be taken
to the Tower, but Gardiner and Fox offered to become his sureties, and Wolsey
permitted him to pass the night at the house of a Master Parnell. He spent
most of the night in writing, and did not sleep. The next day he was taken into
the chapter house at Westminster and re-examined before Islip, abbot of
Westminster, and sundry bishops. His judges laid before him a long statement,
and said to him, "Promise to read this paper in public, without omitting or
adding a single word." It was then read to him. "I would die first," was his reply.
"Will you abjure or be burnt alive?" said his judges, "take your choice." The
alternative was dreadful. A prey to the deepest agony, Barnes shrank at the
thought of the stake; then, suddenly his courage revived, and he exclaimed, "I
would rather be burnt than abjure." Gardiner and Fox did all they could to
persuade him. "Listen to reason," said they craftily, "your articles are true; that
is not the question. We want to know whether by your death you will let error
triumph, or whether you would rather remain to defend the truth, when better
days may come."

They entreated him; they put forward the most plausible motives; from time to
time they uttered the terrible words, burnt alive! His blood froze in his veins;
he knew not what he said or did... they placed a paper before him; they put a
pen in his hand; his head was bewildered, he signed his name with a deep sigh.
This unhappy man was destined at a later period to be a faithful martyr of
Jesus Christ, but he had not yet learnt to "resist even unto blood." Barnes had
fallen.

On the following Sunday morning a solemn spectacle was preparing at St.
Paul’s. Before daybreak, all were astir in the prison of the unhappy prior; and
at eight o’clock, the knight-marshal with his tipstaves, and the warden of the
Fleet prison, with his billmen, conducted Barnes to St. Paul’s, along with four
of the Hanse merchants who had first brought to London the New Testament of
Jesus Christ in English. The fifth of these pious merchants held an immense
taper, five pounds in weight, in his hands. A persevering search had discovered
that it was these men to whom England was indebted for the so much dreaded
book; their warehouses were surrounded and their persons arrested. On the top
of St. Paul’s steps was a platform, and on the platform a throne, and on the
throne the cardinal, dressed in purple. On his head glittered the miter of which
Barnes had spoken so ill; around him were thirty-six bishops, abbots, priors,
and all his doctors, dressed in damask and satin; the cathedral held a vast
congregation. The bishop of Rochester having gone into a pulpit placed at the
top of the steps, Barnes and the merchants, each bearing a faggot, were
compelled to kneel and listen to a sermon intended to cure these poor
creatures of that taste for insurrection against popery which was beginning to
spread in every quarter. The sermon ended, Dr. Barnes was then required to
declare that he was more charitably handled than he deserved, and to ask
pardon for his heresies. All this done, the cardinal took his station under a
magnificent canopy, moved with his escort of bishops to the cathedral gate,
mounted his mule, and rode off. After this Barnes and his five companions
walked three times round a fire, lighted before the cross at the north gate of
the cathedral. The dejected prior, with downcast head, dragged himself along,
rather than walked. After the third turn, the prisoners threw their faggots into
the flames; some "heretical" books also were flung in; and the bishop of
Rochester having given absolution to the six penitents, they were led back to
prison to be kept there during the lord cardinal’s pleasure. Barnes could not
weep now; the thought of his relapse, and of the effects so guilty an example
might produce, had deprived him of all moral energy. In the month of August,
he was led out of prison and confined in the Augustine monastery.

Barnes was not the only man at Cambridge upon whom the blow had fallen.
Since the year 1520, a monk named Richard Bayfield had been an inmate of the
abbey of Bury St. Edmunds. His affability delighted every traveler. One day,
when engaged as chamberlain in receiving Barnes, who had come to visit Doctor Ruffam, his fellow student at Louvain, two men entered the monastery. They were pious persons, and of great consideration in London, where they carried on the occupation of brick-making, and had risen to be wardens of their guild. Their names were Maxwell and Stacy, men "well grafted in the doctrine of Christ," says the historian, who had led many to the Savior by their conversation and exemplary life. Being accustomed to travel once a year through the counties to visit their brethren, and extend a knowledge of the gospel, they used to lodge, according to the usages of the time, in the monasteries and abbeys. A conversation soon arose between Barnes, Stacy, and Maxwell, which struck the lay-brother. Barnes, who had observed his attention, gave him, as he was leaving the monastery, a New Testament in Latin, and the two brick-makers added a New Testament in English, with *The Wicked Mammon* and *The Obedience of a Christian Man*. The lay-brother ran and hid the books in his cell, and for two years read them constantly. At last he was discovered and reprimanded, but he boldly confessed his faith. Upon this the monks threw him into prison, set him in the stocks, put a gag in his mouth, and cruelly whipped him, to prevent his speaking of grace. The unhappy Bayfield remained nine months in this condition.

When Barnes repeated his visit to Bury at a later period, he did not find the amiable chamberlain at the gates of the abbey. Upon inquiry he learnt his condition, and immediately took steps to procure his deliverance. Dr. Ruffam came to his aid; "Give him to me," said Barnes, "I will take him to Cambridge." The prior of the Augustines was at that time held in high esteem; his request was granted, in the hope that he would lead back Bayfield to the doctrines of the church. But the very reverse took place; intercourse with the Cambridge brethren strengthened the young monk’s faith. On a sudden his happiness vanished. Barnes, his friend and benefactor, was carried to London, and the monks of Bury St. Edmunds, alarmed at the noise this affair created, summoned him to return to the abbey. But Bayfield, resolving to submit to their yoke no longer, went to London, and lay concealed with Maxwell and Stacy. One day, having left his hiding place, he was crossing Lombard Street, when he met a priest named Pierson and two other members of his order, with whom he entered into a conversation which greatly scandalized them. "You must depart forthwith," said Maxwell and Stacy to him on his return. Bayfield received a small sum of money from them, went on board a ship, and, as soon as he reached the continent, hastened to find Tyndale.

During this time, scenes of a very different nature from those which had taken place at Cambridge, but not less heartrending, were passing at Oxford. The storm of persecution was raging there with more violence than at Cambridge. Clark and the other confessors of the name of Christ were still confined in their underground prison. The air they breathed, the food they took (and they were given nothing but salt fish), the burning thirst this created, the thoughts by which they were agitated, all together combined to crush these noble-hearted
men. Their bodies wasted day by day; they wandered like specters up and down their gloomy cellar. Those animated discussions in which the deep questions then convulsing Christendom were so eloquently debated were at an end; they were like shadow meeting shadow. Their hollow eyes cast a vague and haggard glance on one another and, after gazing for a moment, they passed on without speaking. Clark, Sumner, Bayley, and Goodman, consumed by fever, feebly crawled along, leaning against their dungeon walls. The first, who was also the eldest, could not walk without the support of one of his fellow prisoners. Soon he was quite unable to move, and lay stretched upon the damp floor. The brethren gathered round him, sought to discover in his features whether death was not about to cut short the days of him who had brought many of them to the knowledge of Christ. They repeated to him slowly the words of Scripture, and then knelt down by his side and uttered a fervent prayer.

Clark, feeling his end draw near, asked for the communion.

The jailers conveyed his request to their master; the noise of the bolts was soon heard, and a turnkey, stepping into the midst of the disconsolate band, pronounced a cruel No! On hearing this, Clark looked towards heaven, and exclaimed with a father of the church, *Crede et manducasti* (believe and thou hast eaten). He was lost in thought; he contemplated the crucified Son of God; by faith he ate and drank the flesh and blood of Christ, and experienced in his inner life the strengthening action of the Redeemer. Men might refuse him the host, but Jesus had given him His body; and from that hour he felt strengthened by a living union with the King of heaven.

Not alone did Clark descend into the shadowy valley; Sumner, Bayley, and Goodman were sinking rapidly. Death, the gloomy inhabitant of this foul prison, had taken possession of these four friends. Their brethren addressed fresh solicitations to the cardinal, at that time closely occupied in negotiations with France, Rome, and Venice. He found means, however, to give a moment to the Oxford martyrs; and just as these Christians were praying over their four dying companions, the commissioner came and informed them, that "his lordship, of his great goodness, permitted the sick persons to be removed to their own chambers." Litters were brought, on which the dying men were placed and carried to their rooms; the doors were closed again upon those whose lives this frightful dungeon had not yet attacked.

It was the middle of August, 1528. The wretched men who had passed six months in the cellar were transported in vain to their chambers and their beds; several members of the university ineffectually tried by their cares and their tender charity to recall them to life. It was too late. The severities of popery had killed these noble witnesses. The approach of death soon betrayed itself; their blood grew cold, their limbs stiff, and their bedimmed eyes sought only
Jesus Christ, their everlasting hope. Clark, Sumner, and Bayley died in the same week. Goodman followed close upon them.

This unexpected catastrophe softened Wolsey. He was cruel only as far as his interest and the safety of the church required. He feared that the death of so many young men would raise public opinion against him, or that these catastrophes would damage his college; perhaps even some sentiment of humanity may have touched his heart. "Set the rest at liberty," he wrote to his agents, "but upon condition that they do not go above ten miles from Oxford."

The university beheld these young men issue from their living tomb pale, wasted, weak, and with faltering steps. At that time they were not men of mark; it was their youth that touched the spectators’ hearts; but in after-years they all occupied an important place in the church. They were Cox, who became Bishop of Ely, and tutor to Edward the Prince Royal; Drumm, who under Cranmer became one of the six preachers at Canterbury; Udal, afterwards master of Westminster and Eton schools; Salisbury, dean of Norwich, and then bishop of Sodor and Man, who in all his wealth and greatness often recalled his frightful prison at Oxford as a title to glory; Ferrar, afterwards Cranmer’s chaplain, bishop of St. David’s, and a martyr even unto death, after an interval of thirty years; Fryth, Tyndale’s friend, to whom this deliverance proved only a delay; and several others. When they came forth from their terrible dungeon, their friends ran up to them, supported their faltering steps, and embraced them amidst floods of tears. Fryth quitted the university not long after and went to Flanders. Thus was the tempest stayed which had so fearfully ravaged Oxford. But the calm was of no long duration; an unexpected circumstance became perilous to the cause of the Reformation.

CHAPTER 4

The Tempest Against the Truth

1526

In 1526, the peace of mind of Henry, king of England, was disturbed, not only by the circulation of unauthorized New Testaments from the continent, but by the reception of a communication from Martin Luther. The letter which, at the advice of Christian II, king of Denmark, this reformer had written to him in September 1525, had miscarried. The Wittenberg doctor hearing nothing of it, had boldly printed it, and sent a copy to the king. "I am informed," said Luther, "that your Majesty is beginning to favor the gospel, and to be disgusted with the perverse race that fights against it in your noble kingdom. ... It is true that, according to Scripture, the kings of the earth take counsel together against the Lord, and we cannot, consequently, expect to see them favorable
to the truth. How fervently do I wish that this miracle may be accomplished in
the person of your Majesty."

We may imagine Henry's wrath as he read this letter. "What!" said he, "does
this apostate monk dare print a letter addressed to us, without having even
sent it, or at least without knowing if we have ever received it? ... And as if
that were not enough, he insinuates that we are among his partisans. ... He
wins over also one or two wretches, born in our kingdom, and engages them to
translate the New Testament into English, adding thereto certain prefaces and
poisonous glosses." Thus spoke Henry. The idea that his name should be
associated with that of the Wittenberg monk called all the blood into his face.
He will reply right royally to such unblushing impudence. He summoned Wolsey
forthwith. "Here!" said he, pointing to a passage concerning the prelate, "here!
read what is said of you!" And then he read aloud, "'Illud monstrum et
publicum odium Dei et hominum, cardinalis Eboracensis, pestis illa regni tui.'
You see, my lord, you are a monster, an object of hatred both to God and man,
the plague of my kingdom!" The king had hitherto allowed the bishops to do as
they pleased, and observed a sort of neutrality. He now determined to lay it
aside and begin a crusade against the gospel of Jesus Christ, but he must first
answer this impertinent letter. He consulted Sir Thomas More, shut himself in
his chamber, and dictated to his secretary a reply to the reformer: "You are
ashamed of the book you have written against me," he said, "I would counsel
you to be ashamed of all that you have written. They are full of disgusting
errors and frantic heresies; and are supported by the most audacious obstinacy.
Your venomous pen mocks the church, insults the fathers, abuses the saints,
despises the apostles, dishonors the holy virgin, and blasphemes God, by
making him the author of evil. ... And after all that, you claim to be an author
whose like does not exist in the world!

"You offer to publish a book in my praise. ... I thank you! ... You will praise me
most by abusing me; you will dishonor me beyond measure if you praise me. I
say with Seneca, 'Let it be as disgraceful to you to be praised by the vile, as if
you were praised for vile deeds.'"

This letter, written by the king of the English to the king of the heretics, was
immediately circulated throughout England bound up with Luther's epistle.
Henry, by publishing it, put his subjects on their guard against the unfaithful
translations of the New Testament, which were besides about to be burnt
everywhere. "The grapes seem beautiful," he said, "but beware how you wet
your lips with the wine made from them, for the adversary hath mingled poison
with it."

Luther, agitated by this rude lesson, tried to excuse himself. "I said to myself,
There are twelve hours in the day. Who knows? perhaps I may find one
favorable hour to gain the King of England. I therefore laid my humble epistle
at his feet, but alas! the swine have torn it. I am willing to be silent... but as
regards my doctrine, I cannot impose silence on it. It must cry aloud; it must bite. If any king imagines he can make me retract my faith, he is a dreamer. So long as one drop of blood remains in my body, I shall say No. Emperors, kings, the devil, and even the whole universe, cannot frighten me when faith is concerned. I claim to be proud, very proud, exceedingly proud. If my doctrine had no other enemies than the king of England, Duke George, the pope and their allies, all these soap-bubbles... one little prayer would long ago have worsted them all. Where are Pilate, Herod, and Caiaphas now? Where are Nero, Domitian, and Maximilian? Where are Arius, Pelagius, and Manes? Where are they? ... Where all our scribes and all our tyrants will soon be. But Christ? Christ is the same always.

"For a thousand years the Holy Scriptures have not shone in the world with so much brightness as now. I wait in peace for my last hour; I have done what I could. O princes, my hands are clean from your blood; it will fall on your own heads."

Bowing before the supreme royalty of Jesus Christ, Luther spoke thus boldly to King Henry, who contested the rights of the Word of God.

A letter written against the reformer was not enough for the bishops. Profiting by the wound Luther had inflicted on Henry’s self-esteem, they urged him to put down this revolt of the human understanding, which threatened (as they averred) both the popedom and the monarchy. They commenced the persecution. Latimer was summoned before Wolsey, but his learning and presence of mind procured his dismissal. Bilney also, who had been ordered to London, received an injunction not to preach Luther’s doctrines. "I will not preach Luther’s doctrines, if there are any peculiar to him," he said, "but I can and I must preach the doctrine of Jesus Christ, although Luther should preach it too." And finally Garret, led into the presence of his judges, was seized with terror, and fell before the cruel threats of the bishop. When restored to liberty, he fled from place to place, endeavoring to hide his sorrow, and to escape from the despotism of the priests, awaiting the moment when he should give his life for Jesus Christ.

The adversaries of the Reformation were not yet satisfied. The New Testament continued to circulate, and depots were formed in several monasteries. Barnes, a prisoner in the Augustine monastery in London, had regained his courage, and loved his Bible more and more. One day about the end of September, as three or four friends were reading in his chamber, two simple peasants, John Tyball and Thomas Hilles, natives of Bumpstead in Essex, came in. "How did you come to a knowledge of the truth?" asked Barnes. They drew from their pockets some old volumes containing the Gospels, and a few of the Epistles in English. Barnes returned them with a smile. "They are nothing," he told them, "in comparison with the new edition of the New Testament," a copy of which the two peasants bought for three shillings and twopence. "Hide it carefully," said Barnes. When
when this came to the ears of the clergy, Barnes was removed to Northampton to be burnt at the stake, but he managed to escape; his friends reported that he was drowned, and while strict search was making for him during a whole week along the seacoast, he secretly went onboard a ship, and was carried to Germany. "The cardinal will catch him even now," said the bishop of London, "whatever amount of money it may cost him." When Barnes was told of this, he remarked, "I am a poor simple wretch, not worth the tenth penny they will give for me. Besides, if they burn me, what will they gain by it? ... The sun and the moon, fire and water, the stars and the elements, yea, and also stones shall defend this cause against them, rather than the truth should perish." Faith had returned to Barnes' feeble heart.

His escape added fuel to the wrath of the clergy. They proclaimed, throughout the length and breadth of England, that the English translations of the Holy Scriptures contained an infectious poison, and ordered a general search after the Word of God. On the 24th of October, 1526, the bishop of London enjoined on his archdeacons to seize all translations of the New Testament in English with or without glosses; and, a few days later, the archbishop of Canterbury issued a mandate against all the books which should contain "any particle of the New Testament." The primate remembered that a spark was sufficient to kindle a large fire.

On hearing of this order, William Roye, a sarcastic writer, published a violent satire, in which figured Judas (Standish), Pilate (Wolsey), and Caiaphas (Tunstall). The author exclaimed with energy:

    God, of his goodness, grudged not to die,
    Man to deliver from deadly damnation;
    Whose will is, that we should know perfectly
    What he here hath done for our salvation.
    O cruel Caiaphas! full of crafty conspiration,
    How durst thou give them false judgment
    To burn God's word—the Holy Testament.

The efforts of Caiaphas and his colleagues were indeed useless; the priests were undertaking a work beyond their strength. If by some terrible revolution all social forms should be destroyed in the world, the living church of the elect, a divine institution in the midst of human institutions, would still exist by the power of God, like a rock in the midst of the tempest, and would transmit to future generations the seeds of Christian life and civilization. It is the same with the Word, the creative principle of the church. It cannot perish here below. The priests of England had something to learn on this matter. While the agents of the clergy were carrying out the archiepiscopal mandate, and a merciless search was made everywhere for the New Testaments from Worms, a new edition was discovered, fresh from the press, of a smaller and more portable, and consequently more dangerous size. It was printed by
Christopher Eyndhoven of Antwerp, who had consigned it to his correspondents in London. The annoyance of the priests was extreme, and Hackett, the agent of Henry VIII in the Low Countries, immediately received orders to get this man punished. "We cannot deliver judgment without inquiry into the matter," said the lords of Antwerp, "we will therefore have the book translated into Flemish." "God forbid," said Hackett in alarm, "What! would you also on your side of the ocean translate this book into the language of the people?" "Well then," said one of the judges, less conscientious than his colleagues, "let the king of England send us a copy of each of the books he has burnt, and we will burn them likewise." Hackett wrote to Wolsey for them, and as soon as they arrived the court met again. Eyndhoven’s counsel called upon the prosecutor to point out the heresies contained in the volume. The margrave (an officer of the imperial government) shrank from the task, and said to Hackett, "I give up the business!" The charge against Eyndhoven was dismissed.

Thus did the Reformation awaken in Europe the slumbering spirit of law and liberty. By enfranchising thought from the yoke of popery, it prepared the way for other enfranchisements; and by restoring the authority of the Word of God, it brought back the reign of the law among nations, long the prey of turbulent passions and arbitrary power. Then, as at all times, religious society forestalled civil society, and gave it those two great principles of order and liberty, which popery compromises or annuls. It was not in vain that the magistrates of a Flemish city, enlightened by the first dawn of the Reformation, set so noble an example; the English, who were very numerous in the Hanse Towns, thus recovered that civil and religious liberty which is the time-honored right of England, and of which they were in after-years to give other nations the so much needed lessons.

"Well then," said Hackett, who was annoyed at their setting the law above his master’s will, "I will go and buy all these books, and send them to the cardinal, that he may burn them." With these words he left the court. But his anger evaporating, he set off for Malines to complain to the regent and her council of the Antwerp decision. "What!" said he, "you punish those who circulate false money, and you will not punish still more severely the man who coins it? in this case, he is the printer." "But that is just the point in dispute," they replied, "we are not sure the money is false." "How can it be otherwise," answered Henry’s agent, "since the bishops of England have declared it so?" The imperial government, which was not very favorably disposed towards England, ratified Eyndhoven’s acquittal, but permitted Hackett to burn all the copies of the New Testament he could seize. He hastened to profit by this concession, and began hunting after the Holy Scriptures, while the priests eagerly came to his assistance. In their view, as well as in that of their English colleagues, the supreme decision in matters of faith rested not with the Word of God but with the pope; and the best means of securing this privilege to the pontiff was to reduce the Bible to ashes.

Notwithstanding these trials, the year 1526 was a memorable one for England. The English New Testament had been circulated from the shores of the Channel to the borders of Scotland, and the Reformation had begun in that island by the
Word of God. The revival of the sixteenth century was in no country less than in England the outcome of a royal mandate. But God, who had disseminated the Scriptures over Britain, in defiance of the rulers of the nation, was about to make use of their passions to remove the difficulties which opposed the final triumph of His plans. We here enter upon a new phase in the history of the Reformation; and, having studied the work of God in the faith of the little ones, we proceed to contemplate the work of man in the intrigues of the great ones of the earth.

CHAPTER 5
The Divorce Question Opens
1526-1527

Wolsey, mortified at not being able to obtain the pontifical throne, to which he had so ardently aspired, and being especially irritated by the ill will of Charles V, meditated a plan which, entirely unsuspected by him, was to lead to the enfranchisement of England from the papal yoke. "They laugh at me, and thrust me into the second rank," he had exclaimed. "So be it! I will create such a confusion in the world as has not been seen for ages. ... I will do it, even should England be swallowed up in the tempest!" Desirous of exciting imperishable hatred between Henry VIII and Charles V, he had undertaken to break the marriage which Henry VII and Ferdinand the Catholic had planned to unite forever their families and their crowns. His hatred of Charles was not his only motive. Catherine had reproached him for his dissolute life, and he had sworn to be revenged. There can be no doubt about Wolsey's share in the matter. "The first terms of the divorce were put forward by me," he told the French ambassador. "I did it," he added, "to cause a lasting separation between the houses of England and Burgundy." The best informed writers of the sixteenth century, men of the most opposite parties, Pole, Polydore Virgil, Tyndale, Meteren, Pallavicini, Sanders, and Roper, More's son-in-law, all agree in pointing to Wolsey as the instigator of that divorce, which has become so famous. He desired to go still farther, and, after inducing the king to put away his queen, he hoped to prevail on the pope to depose the Emperor. It was not the king's passion for Anne Boleyn, as so many of the Romish fabulists have repeated, but the passion of a cardinal for the triple crown which gave the signal of England's emancipation. Offended pride is one of the most active principles of human nature. Wolsey's design was a strange one, and difficult of execution, but not impossible. Henry was living apparently on the best terms with Catherine; on more than one occasion Erasmus had spoken of the royal family of England as the pattern of the domestic virtues. But the most ardent of Henry's desires was not satisfied; he had no son; those whom the queen had borne him had died in their infancy, and Mary alone survived. The deaths of these little children, at all times so heart-rending, were particularly so in the palace of Greenwich. It appeared to Catherine that the shade of the last Plantagenet, immolated on her marriage altar, came forth to seize one after another the heirs she gave to
the throne of England, and to carry them away to his tomb. The queen shed tears almost unceasingly, and implored the divine mercy, while the king cursed his unhappy fate. The people seemed to share in the royal sorrow; and men of learning and piety (Longland was among their number) declared against the validity of the marriage. They said that "the papal dispensations had no force when in opposition to the law of God." Yet hitherto Henry had rejected every idea of a divorce.

The times had changed since 1509. The king appears genuinely to have loved Catherine; her reserve, mildness, and dignity had charmed him. Greedy of pleasure and applause, he was delighted to see his wife content to be the quiet witness of his joys and of his triumphs. But gradually the queen had grown older, her Spanish gravity had increased, her devout practices were multiplied, and her infirmities, become more frequent, had left the king no hope of having a son to succeed him on the throne. From that hour, even while continuing to praise her virtues, Henry grew cold towards her person, and his love by degrees changed into repugnance. And then he thought that the death of his children might be a sign of God’s anger. This idea had taken hold of him, and induced him to occupy apartments separate from the queen’s.

Wolsey judged the moment favorable for beginning the attack. It was in the latter months of 1526, when calling Longland, Bishop of Lincoln and the king’s confessor, to him, and concealing his principal motive, he said, "You know his majesty’s anguish. The stability of his crown and his everlasting salvation seem to be compromised alike. To whom can I unbosom myself, if not to you, who must know the inmost secrets of his soul?" The two bishops resolved to awaken Henry to the perils incurred by his union with Catherine, but Longland insisted that Wolsey should take the first steps.

The cardinal waited upon the king, and reminded him of his scruples before the betrothal; he exaggerated those entertained by the nation and, speaking with unusual warmth, he entreated the king to remain no longer in such danger; "The holiness of your life and the legitimacy of your succession are at stake." "My good father," said Henry, "you would do well to consider the weight of the stone that you have undertaken to move. The queen is a woman of such exemplary life that I have no motive for separating from her."

The cardinal did not consider himself beaten; three days later he appeared before the king accompanied by the bishop of Lincoln. "Most mighty prince," said the confessor, who felt bold enough to speak after the cardinal, "you cannot, like Herod, have your brother’s wife. I exhort and conjure you, as having the care of your soul, to submit the matter to competent judges." Henry consented, and perhaps not unwillingly.

It was not enough for Wolsey to separate Henry from the Emperor; he must, for greater security, unite him to Francis I. The King of England shall repudiate the aunt of Charles V, and then marry the sister of the French king. Proud of the success he had obtained in the first part of his plan, Wolsey entered upon the second. "There is a princess," he told the king, "whose birth, graces, and talents charm all Europe. Margaret of Valois, sister of King Francis, is superior to all of her sex, and no one is worthier of your alliance." Henry made answer
that it was a serious matter, requiring deliberate examination. Wolsey, however, placed in the king’s hands a portrait of Margaret, and it has been imagined that he even privily caused her sentiments to be sounded. Be that as it may, the sister of Francis I having learnt that she was pointed at as the future queen of England, rebelled at the idea of taking from an innocent woman a crown she had worn so nobly. "The French king’s sister knows too much of Christ to consent unto such wickedness," said Tyndale. Margaret of Valois replied, "Let me hear no more of a marriage that can be effected only at the expense of Catherine of Aragon’s happiness and life." Shortly after this, on the 24th of January, 1527, the sister of Francis I married Henry d’Albrét, king of Navarre.

Henry VIII, desirous of information with regard to his favorite’s suggestion, commissioned Fox, his almoner, Pace, dean of St. Paul’s, and Wakefield, professor of Hebrew at Oxford, to study the passages of Leviticus and Deuteronomy which related to marriage with a brother’s wife. Wakefield, who had no wish to commit himself, asked whether Henry was for or against the divorce. Pace replied to this servile hebraist that the king wanted nothing but the truth.

But who would take the first public step in an undertaking so hazardous? Everyone shrank back; the terrible Emperor alarmed them all. It was a French bishop that hazarded the step; bishops meet us at every turn in this affair of the divorce, with which bishops have so violently reproached the Reformation. Henry, desirous of excusing Wolsey, pretended afterwards that the objections of the French prelate had preceded those of Longland and the cardinal. In February 1527, Francis I had sent an embassy to London, at the head of which was Gabriel de Grammont, bishop of Tarbes, with the intention to procure the hand of Mary of England. Henry’s ministers having inquired whether the engagement of Francis with the queen dowager of Portugal did not oppose the commission with which the French bishop was charged, the latter answered, "I will ask you in turn what has been done to remove the impediments which opposed the marriage of which the Princess Mary is issue." They laid before the ambassador the dispensation of Julius II, which he returned, saying, that the bull was not sufficient, seeing that such a marriage was forbidden jure divino, and he added, “Have you English a different gospel from ours?”

The king, when he heard these words (as he informs us himself) was filled with fear and horror. Three of the most respected bishops of Christendom united to accuse him of incest! He began to speak of it to certain individuals: “The scruples of my conscience have been terribly increased (he said) since the bishop spoke of this matter before my council in exceedingly plain words.” There is no reason to believe that these terrible troubles of which the king speaks were a mere invention on his part. A disputed succession might again plunge England into civil war. Even if no pretenders should spring up, might they not see a rival house, a French prince for instance, wedded to Henry’s daughter, reigning over England? The king, in his anxiety, had recourse to his favorite author, Thomas Aquinas, and this angel of the schools declared his marriage unlawful. Henry next opened the Bible, and found this threat against
the man who took his brother’s wife: “He shall be childless!” The denunciation increased his trouble, for he had no heir. In the midst of this darkness a new perspective opened before him. His conscience might be unbound; his desire to have a younger wife might be gratified; he might have a son! … The king resolved to lay the matter before a commission of lawyers, and this commission soon wrote volumes.

During all this time, Catherine, suspecting no evil, was occupied in her devotions. Her heart, bruised by the death of her children and by the king’s coldness, sought consolation in prayer, both privately and in the royal chapel. She would rise at midnight and kneel down upon the cold stones, and never missed any of the canonical services. But one day (probably in May or June 1527) some officious person informed her of the rumors circulating in the city and at court. Bursting with anger and alarm, and all in tears, she hastened to the king, and addressed him with the bitterest complaints. Henry was content to calm her by vague assurances, but the unfeeling Wolsey, troubling himself still less than his master about Catherine’s emotion, called it, with a smile, “a short tragedy.”

The offended wife lost no time; it was necessary that the Emperor should be informed promptly, surely, and accurately of this unprecedented insult. A letter would be insufficient, even were it not intercepted. Catherine therefore determined to send her servant Francis Philip, a Spaniard, to her nephew; and to conceal the object of his journey, they proceeded, after the tragedy, to play a comedy in the Spanish style. “My mother is sick and desires to see me,” said Philip. Catherine begged the king to refuse her servant’s prayer, and Henry, divining the stratagem, resolved to employ trick against trick. “Philip’s request is very proper,” he made answer, and Catherine, from regard to her husband, consented to his departure. Henry meantime had given orders that, “notwithstanding any safe conduct, the said Philip should be arrested and detained at Calais, in such a manner, however, that no one should know whence the stoppage proceeded.”

It was to no purpose that the queen indulged in a culpable dissimulation; a poisoned arrow had pierced her heart, and her words, her manners, her complaints, her tears, the numerous messages she sent, now to one and now to another, betrayed the secret which the king wished still to conceal. Her friends blamed her for this publicity; men wondered what Charles would say when he heard of his aunt’s distress; they feared that peace would be broken; but Catherine, whose heart was “rent in twain,” was not to be moved by diplomatic considerations. Her sorrow did not check Henry; with the two motives which made him eager for a divorce—the scruples of his conscience and the desire of an heir—was now combined a third still more forcible. A woman was about to play an important part in the destinies of England.

CHAPTER 6
Anne Boleyn
1522-1527
About the year 1522, or possibly a little earlier, Anne Boleyn had returned from the court of France. It is probable that she was little more than fifteen years of age. Historians hold widely differing views about her charms, but when she appeared in the English court an unfriendly contemporary was compelled to own that she eclipsed her companions "by her excellent gesture and behavior." Her chief attractiveness appears to have been in her eyes, which are described as "black and beautiful and of great effect." Cranmer, some ten years later, found her appearance very impressive as she "sat in her hair" (it seems that on great occasions she appeared with her hair falling over her shoulders) upon a horse litter, richly appareled at her coronation.

Anne Boleyn brought to the English court the polished manners and deportment of the court of France. But more important, as later events were to show, she also brought home something of the influence which reached her through Margaret of Angoulême, the sister of the French king. This gracious woman became renowned for the support and protection she afforded to advocates and preachers of reformation doctrine and practice. It is probable that, before Anne left France, she had begun to read, without thoroughly understanding it, the holy book in which Margaret found consolation and repose, and to direct a few light and passing thoughts to that "mild Emmanuel" to whom the latter addressed such beautiful verses.

Among the young noblemen in the cardinal’s household was Lord Percy, eldest son of the Earl of Northumberland. While Wolsey was in conference with the king, Percy was accustomed to resort to the queen’s apartments, where he passed the time among her ladies. He soon felt a sincere passion for Anne, and the young maid of honor, who had been cold to the addresses of the gentlemen at the court of Francis, replied to the affections of the heir of Northumberland. The two young people already indulged in daydreams of a quiet, elegant, and happy life in their noble castles of the North, but such dreams were fated to be of short duration.

Wolsey hated the Norfolk’s, and consequently the Boleyn’s. It was to counterbalance their influence that he had been first introduced at court. He became angry, therefore, when he saw one of his household suing for the hand of the daughter and niece of his enemies. Besides, certain partisans of the clergy accused Anne of being friendly to the Reformation. One day, therefore, when Percy was in attendance upon the cardinal, the latter rudely addressed him: "I marvel at your folly, that you should attempt to contract yourself with that girl without your father’s or the king’s consent. I command you to break with her." Percy burst into tears, and besought the cardinal to plead his cause. "I charge you to resort no more into her company," was Wolsey’s cold reply, after which he rose up and left the room. Anne received an order at the same time to leave the court. Proud and bold, and ascribing her misfortune to Wolsey’s hatred, she exclaimed as she quitted the palace, "I will be revenged for this insult." But she had scarcely taken up her abode in the gothic halls of Hever Castle, when news still more distressing overwhelmed her. Percy was married to Lady Mary Talbot. She wept long and bitterly, and vowed against
the young nobleman who had deserted her a contempt equal to her hatred of the cardinal. Anne was reserved for a more illustrious, but more unhappy fate. While life at the court of Henry VIII was thus perturbed by these seemingly small and comparatively unimportant affairs, a strange report filled all England with surprise. It was reported that the imperialist soldiers of Charles V had taken Rome by assault, and that the pope was a prisoner in his own city. Shortly, the captive pope and cardinals wrote letters "filled with tears and groans." Full of zeal for the papacy, Wolsey ordered a public fast. "The Emperor will never release the pope, unless he be compelled," he told the king. "Sir, God has made you defender of the faith; save the church and its head!" "My lord," answered the king with a smile, "I assure you that this war between the Emperor and the pope is not for the faith, but for temporal possessions and dominions."

But Wolsey would not be discouraged, and, on the 3rd of July, he passed through the streets of London, riding a richly caparisoned mule, and resting his feet on gilt stirrups, while nine hundred gentlemen accompanied him on horseback. He was going to entreat Francis to aid his master in saving Clement VII. He had found no difficulty in prevailing upon Henry; Charles talked of carrying the pope to Spain, and of permanently establishing the apostolic see in that country. Now, how could they obtain the divorce from a Spanish pope?

During the procession, Wolsey seemed oppressed with grief, and even shed tears, but he soon raised his head and exclaimed, "My heart is inflamed, and I wish it may be said of the pope per secula sempiterna,

"Rediit Henrici octavi virtute serena."

Desirous of forming a close union between France and England for the accomplishment of his designs, he had cast his eyes on the princess Renée, daughter of Louis XII, and sister-in-law to Francis I, as a possible future wife of Henry VIII. A treaty of alliance between the two crowns was signed at Amiens on the 18th of August (1527), after which Francis, with his mother and the cardinal, proceeded to Compiègne, and there Wolsey, styling Charles the most obstinate defender of Lutheranism, promising "perpetual conjunction on the one hand [between France and England], and perpetual disjunction on the other" [between England and Germany], sought to discover whether the French saw advantages in a marriage between Renée and King Henry. Staffileo, dean of Rota, affirmed that the pope had been able to permit the marriage between Henry and Catherine only by an error of the keys of St. Peter. This avowal, so remarkable on the part of the dean of one of the first jurisdictions of Rome, induced Francis’ mother to listen favorably to the cardinal’s demand. But whether this proposal was displeasing to Renée, who was destined on a future day to profess the pure faith of the Gospel with greater earnestness than Margaret of Valois, or whether Francis was not over-anxious for a union that would have given Henry rights over the duchy of Brittany, she was promised to the son of the Duke of Ferrara. It was a check to the cardinal, but it was his ill fortune to receive one still more severe on his return to England.
The daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn (who had been created Viscount Rochford in 1525) was constantly at court, "where she flourished in great estimation and favor," says Cavendish, "having always a private indignation against the cardinal for breaking off the pre-contract made between Lord Percy and her." Her beauty, her graceful carriage, her black hair, oval face, and bright eyes, her sweet voice in singing, her skill and dignity in the dance, her desire to please which was not entirely devoid of coquetry, her sprightliness, the readiness of her repartees, and above all the amiability of her character, won every heart. Every day (it was reported) she invented a new style of dress, and set the fashion in England. But to all these qualities, she added modesty, and even imposed it on others by her example. The ladies of the court, who had hitherto adopted a different fashion (says her greatest enemy), covered the neck and bosom as she did; and the malicious, unable to appreciate Anne’s motives, ascribed this modesty on the young lady’s part to a desire to hide a secret deformity. Numerous admirers once more crowded round Anne Boleyn, and among others, one of the most illustrious noblemen and poets of England, Sir Thomas Wyatt, a follower of Wycliffe. He, however, was not the man destined to replace the son of the Percy’s.

Henry, absorbed in anxiety about his divorce from Catherine, had become low-spirited and melancholy. The laughter, songs, repartees, and beauty of Anne Boleyn struck and captivated him, and his eyes were soon fixed complacently on the young maid of honor. Catherine was more than forty years old, and it was hardly to be expected that so susceptible a man as Henry would have made, as Job says, a covenant with his eyes not to think upon a maid. Desirous of showing his admiration, he presented Anne, according to usage, with a costly jewel; she accepted and wore it, and continued to dance, laugh, and chatter as before, without attaching particular importance to the royal present. Henry’s attentions became more continuous, and he took advantage of a moment when he found Anne alone to declare his sentiments. With mingled emotion and alarm, the young lady fell trembling at the king’s feet, and exclaimed, bursting into tears, "I think, most noble and worthy king, your majesty speaks these words in mirth to prove me. ... I will rather lose my life than my virtue." Henry gracefully replied that he should at least continue to hope. But Anne, rising up, proudly made answer: "I understand not, most mighty king; how you should retain any such hope; your wife I cannot be, both in respect of mine own unworthiness, and also because you have a queen already. Your mistress I will not be." Anne kept her word. She continued to show the king, even after this interview, all the respect that was due to him, but on several occasions she proudly, violently even, repelled his advances. In this age of gallantry, we find her resisting for nearly six years all the seductions Henry scattered round her. Such an example is not often met with in the history of courts. The books she had read in Margaret’s palace gave her a secret strength. All looked upon her with respect, and even the queen treated her with politeness. Catherine showed, however, that she had remarked the king’s preference. One day, as she was playing at cards with her maid of honor, while Henry was in the room, Anne frequently holding the king, she said, "My
Lady Anne, you have good hap to stop ever at a king; but you are not like others, you will have all or none.” Anne blushed; from that moment Henry’s attentions acquired more importance; she resolved to withdraw from them, and quitted the court with Lady Rochford. The king, who was not accustomed to resistance, was extremely grieved; and having learnt that Anne would not return to the court either with or without her mother, sent a courier to Hever with a message and a letter for her. If we recollect the manners of the age of Henry VIII, and how far the men, in their relations with the gentler sex, were strangers to that reserve which society now imposes upon them, we cannot but be struck by the king’s respectful tone; He writes thus in French:

"As the time seems to me very long since I heard from you or concerning your health, the great love I have for you has constrained me to send this bearer to be better informed both of your health and pleasure; particularly, because since my last parting with you, I have been told that you have entirely changed the mind in which I left you, and that you neither mean to come to court with your mother nor any other way; which report, if true, I cannot enough marvel at, being persuaded in my own mind that I have never committed any offence against you; and it seems hard, in return for the great love I bear you, to be kept at a distance from the person and presence of the woman in the world that I value the most. And if you love me with as much affection as I hope you do, I am sure the distance of our two persons would be equally irksome to you, though this does not belong so much to the mistress as to the servant.

"Consider well, my mistress, how greatly your absence afflicts me. I hope it is not your will that it should be so; but if I heard for certain that you yourself desired it, I could but mourn my ill-fortune, and strive by degrees to abate of my great folly.

"And so for lack of time I make an end of this rude letter, beseeching you to give the bearer credence in all he will tell you from me. Written by the hand of your entire servant,

"H. R."

The word servant (serviteur) employed in this letter explains the sense in which Henry used the word mistress. In the language of chivalry, the latter term expressed a person to whom the lover had surrendered his heart. It would seem that Anne’s reply to this letter was the same she had made to the king from the very first, and Cardinal Pole mentions more than once her obstinate refusal of an adulterous love. At last Henry understood Anne’s virtue, but he was far from abating of his great folly, as he had promised. That
tyrannical selfishness, which the prince often displayed in his life, was shown particularly in his amours. Seeing that he could not attain his end by illegitimate means, he determined to break, as quickly as possible, the bonds which united him to the queen. Anne’s virtue was the third cause of Henry’s divorce.

His resolution being once taken, it must needs be carried out. Henry having succeeded in bringing Anne back to court, procured a private interview with her, offered her his crown, and, seizing her hand, took off one of her rings. But Anne, who would not be the king’s mistress, refused also to be his wife. The glory of a crown could not dazzle her, said Wyatt, and two motives in particular counterbalanced all the prospects of greatness which were set before her eyes. The first was her respect for the queen; “How could I injure a princess of such great virtue?” she exclaimed. The second was the fear that a union with “one that was her lord and her king,” would not give her that freedom of heart and that liberty which she would enjoy by marrying a man of the same rank with herself.

Yet the noblemen and ladies of Henry’s court whispered to one another that Anne would certainly become queen of England. Some were tormented by jealousy; others, her friends, were delighted at the prospect of a rapid advancement. Wolsey’s enemies in particular were charmed at the thought of ruining the favorite. It was at the very moment when all these emotions were so variously agitating the court that the cardinal, returning from his embassy to Francis, re-appeared in London, where an unexpected blow struck him. Wolsey was expressing his grief to Henry at having failed in obtaining either Margaret or Renée for him, when the king interrupted him: “Console yourself, I shall marry Anne Boleyn.” The cardinal remained speechless for a moment. What would become of him, if the king placed the crown of England on the head of the daughter and niece of his greatest enemies? What would become of the church, if a second Anne of Bohemia should ascend the throne? Wolsey threw himself at the feet of his master, and entreated him to renounce so fatal a project. It was then no doubt that he remained (as he afterwards said) an hour or two on his knees before the king in his privy chamber, but without prevailing on Henry to give up his design. Wolsey, persuaded that if he continued openly to oppose Henry’s will, he would forever lose his confidence, dissembled his vexation, waiting an opportunity to get rid of this unfortunate rival by some intrigue. He began by writing to the pope, informing him that a young lady, brought up by the queen of Navarre, and consequently tainted by the Lutheran heresy, had captivated the king’s heart, and from that hour Anne Boleyn became the object of the hatred and calumnies of Rome. But at the same time, to conceal his intentions, Wolsey received Henry at a series of splendid entertainments, at which Anne outshone all the ladies of the court.

CHAPTER 7
Bilney in Strength and Weakness
1527
While these passions were agitating Henry's palace, the most moving scenes produced by Christian faith were stirring the nation. Bilney, animated by that courage which God sometimes gives to the weakest men, seemed to have lost his natural timidity, and preached for a time with an energy quite apostolic. He taught that all men should first acknowledge their sins and condemn them, and then hunger and thirst after that righteousness which Jesus Christ gives. To this testimony borne to the truth, he added his testimony against error. "These five hundred years," he added, "there hath been no good pope... for they have neither preached nor lived well, nor conformably to their dignity; wherefore, unto this day, they have borne the keys of simony."

As soon as he descended from the pulpit, this pious scholar, with his friend, Thomas Arthur, visited the neighboring towns and villages. "The Jews and Saracens would long ago have become believers," he once said at Wilsdon, "had it not been for the idolatry of Christian men in offering candles, wax, and money to stocks and stones." One day when he visited Ipswich, where there was a Franciscan monastery, he exclaimed, "The cowl of St. Francis wrapped round a dead body hath no power to take away sins. ... Ecce agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi" (John 1:29). The monks, who were little versed in Scripture, had recourse to the Almanac to convict the Bible of error. "St. Paul did rightly affirm," said Friar John Brusierd, "that there is but one mediator of God and man, because as yet there was no saint canonized or put into the calendar."

"Let us ask of the Father in the name of the Son," rejoined Bilney, "and he will give unto us. He says not, whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in the name of St. Peter, St. Paul, or other saints, but in My name."

"You are always speaking of the Father and never of the saints," replied the friar, "you are like a man who has been looking so long upon the sun, that he can see nothing else." As he uttered these words, the monk seemed bursting with anger. "If I did not believe and know that God and all His saints would take everlasting vengeance upon you, I would surely with these nails of mine be your death." Twice in fact did two monks pull him out of his pulpit. He was arrested and taken to London.

Arthur, instead of fleeing, began to visit the flocks which his friend had converted. "Good people," said he, "if I should suffer persecution for the preaching of the gospel, there are seven thousand more that would preach it as I do now. Therefore, good people! good people!" (and he repeated these words several times in a sorrowful voice) "think not that if these tyrants and persecutors put a man to death, the preaching of the gospel therefore is to be forsaken. Every Christian man, yea every layman, is a priest. Let our adversaries preach by the authority of the cardinal, others by the authority of the university, others by the pope's; we will preach by the authority of God. It is not the man who brings the Word that saves the soul, but the Word which the man brings. Neither bishops nor popes have the right to forbid any man to preach the gospel, and if they kill him he is not a heretic but a martyr." The priests were horrified at such doctrines. In their opinion, there was no God out
of their church, no salvation out of their sacrifices. Arthur was thrown into the same prison as Bilney.

On the 27th of November, 1527, the cardinal and the archbishop of Canterbury, with a great number of bishops, divines, and lawyers, met in the chapter-house of Westminster, when Bilney and Arthur were brought before them. But the king’s prime minister thought it beneath his dignity to occupy his time with miserable heretics. Wolsey had hardly commenced the examination, when he rose, saying, “The affairs of the realm call me away; all such as are found guilty, you will compel them to abjure, and those who rebel you will deliver over to the secular power.” After a few questions proposed by the bishop of London, the two accused men were led back to prison.

Abjuration or death—that was Wolsey’s order. But the conduct of the trial was confided to Tunstall; Bilney conceived some hope. “Is it possible,” he said to himself, “that the bishop of London, the friend of Erasmus, will gratify the monks? ... I must tell him that it was the Greek Testament of his learned master that led me to the faith.” Upon which the humble evangelist, having obtained paper and ink, set about writing to the bishop from his gloomy prison those admirable letters which have been transmitted to posterity. Tunstall, who was not a cruel man, was deeply moved, and then a strange struggle took place—a judge wishing to save the prisoner, the prisoner desiring to give up his life. Tunstall, by acquitting Bilney, had no desire to compromise himself. “Submit to the church,” said the bishop, “for God speaks only through it.” But Bilney, who knew that God speaks in the Scriptures, remained inflexible. “Very well, then,” said Tunstall, taking up the prisoner’s eloquent letters, “in discharge of my conscience I shall lay these letters before the court.” He hoped, perhaps, that they would touch his colleagues, but he was deceived. He determined, therefore, to make a fresh attempt.

On the 4th of December, Bilney was brought again before the court. “Abjure your errors,” said Tunstall. Bilney refusing by a shake of the head, the bishop continued, “Retire into the next room and consider.” Bilney withdrew, and returning shortly after with joy beaming in his eyes, Tunstall thought he had gained the victory. “You will return to the church, then?” said he. ... Bilney answered calmly, “Let judgment be done in the Name of the Lord.” “Be quick,” continued the bishop, “this is the last moment, and you will be condemned.” “This is the day which the Lord hath made,” answered Bilney, “we will rejoice and be glad in it.” Then making the sign of the cross on his forehead and on his breast, he gave judgment: “Thomas Bilney, I pronounce thee convicted of heresy.” He was about to name the penalty... a last hope restrained him; he stopped: “For the rest of the sentence we take deliberation until tomorrow.” Thus was the struggle prolonged between two men, one of whom desired to walk to the stake, the other to bar the way as it were with his own body. “Will you return to the unity of the church?” asked Tunstall the next day. “I hope I was never separated from the church,” answered Bilney. “Go and consult with some of your friends,” said the bishop, who was resolved to save his life; “I
will give you till one o’clock in the afternoon.” In the afternoon Bilney made the same answer. "I will give you two nights’ respite to deliberate,” said the bishop; "on Saturday at nine o’clock in the forenoon, the court will expect a plain definitive answer.” Tunstall reckoned on the night with its dreams, its anguish, and its terrors, to bring about Bilney’s recantation.

This extraordinary struggle occupied many minds both in court and city. Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII watched with interest the various phases of this tragic history. What will happen? was the general question. Will he give way? Shall we see him live or die? One day and two nights still remained; everything was tried to shake the Cambridge doctor. His friends crowded to his prison; he was overwhelmed with arguments and examples; but an inward struggle, far more terrible than those without, agitated the pious Bilney. "Whoever will save his soul shall lose it," Christ had said. That selfish love of his soul, which is found even in the advanced Christian—that self, which, after his conversion had been not absorbed, but overruled by the Spirit of God—gradually recovered strength in his heart, in the presence of disgrace and death. His friends who wished to save him, not understanding that the fallen Bilney would be Bilney no longer, conjured him with tears to have pity on himself, and by these means his firmness was overcome. The bishop pressed him, and Bilney asked himself, "Can a young soldier like me know the rules of war better than an old soldier like Tunstall? Or can a poor silly sheep know his way to the fold better than the chief pastor of London?" His friends quit him neither night nor day, and, entangled by their fatal affection, he believed at last that he had found a compromise which would set his conscience at rest. "I will preserve my life," he said, "to dedicate it to the Lord." This delusion had scarcely laid hold of his mind before his views were confused, his faith was veiled, the Holy Ghost departed from him, God gave him over to his carnal thoughts, and, under the pretext of being useful to Jesus Christ for many years, Bilney disobeyed Him at the present moment. Being led before the bishops on the morning of Saturday, the 7th of December, at nine o’clock, he fell (Arthur had fallen before him), and whilst the false friends who had misled him hardly dared raise their eyes, the living church of Christ in England uttered a cry of anguish. "If ever you come in danger, in durance, in prison,” said Latimer, "for God’s quarrel, I would advise you, above all things, to abjure all your friends, all your friendships; leave not one unabjured. It is they that shall undo you, and not your enemies. It was his very friends that brought Bilney to it."

On the following day (Sunday, 8th December) Bilney was placed at the head of a procession, and the fallen disciple, bareheaded, with a faggot on his shoulders, stood in front of St. Paul’s cross, while a priest from the pulpit exhorted him to repentance, after which he was led back to prison.

What a solitude for the wretched man! At one time the cold darkness of his cell appeared to him as a burning fire; at another he fancied he heard accusing voices crying to him in the silence of the night. Death, the very enemy he had wished to avoid, fixed his icy glance upon him and filled him with fear. He strove to escape from the horrible specter, but in vain. Then the friends who had dragged him into this abyss, crowded round and endeavored to console
him; but if they gave utterance to any of Christ’s gentle promises, Bilney started back with affright and shrank to the farthest part of the dungeon, with a cry "as though a man had run him through the heart with a sword." Having denied the Word of God, he could no longer endure to hear it. The curse of the Apocalypse, Ye mountains, hide me from the wrath of the Lamb! was the only passage of Scripture in harmony with his soul. His mind wandered, the blood froze in his veins, he sank under his terrors; he lost all sense, and almost his life, and lay motionless in the arms of his astonished friends. "God," exclaimed those unhappy individuals who had caused his fall, "God, by a just judgment, delivers up to the tempests of their conscience all who deny his truth."

This was not the only sorrow of the church. As soon as Richard Bayfield, the late chamberlain of St. Edmunds’ Bury, had joined Tyndale and Fryth, he said to them, "I am at your disposal; you shall be my head and I will be your hand; I will sell your books and those of the German reformers in the Low Countries, France, and England." It was not long indeed before he returned to London. But Pierson, the priest whom he had formerly met in Lombard Street, found him again, and accused him to the bishop. The unhappy man was brought before Tunstall. "You are charged," said the prelate, "with having asserted that praise is due to God alone, and not to saints or creatures." Bayfield acknowledged the charge to be true. "You are accused of maintaining that every priest may preach the Word of God by the authority of the gospel without the license of the pope or cardinals." This also Bayfield acknowledged. A penance was imposed on him, and then he was sent back to his monastery with orders to show himself there on the 25th of April. But he crossed the sea once more, and hastened to join Tyndale.

The New Testaments, however, sold by him and others remained in England. At that time the bishops subscribed to suppress the Scriptures, as so many persons have since done to circulate them; and, accordingly, a great number of the copies brought over by Bayfield and his friends were bought up. A scarcity of food was ere long added to the scarcity of the Word of God, for as the cardinal was endeavoring to foment a war between Henry and the Emperor, the Flemish ships ceased to enter the English ports. It was in consequence of this that the lord mayor and aldermen of London hastened to express their apprehensions to Wolsey almost before he had recovered from the fatigues of his return from France. "Fear nothing," he told them, "the king of France assured me that if he had three bushels of wheat, England should have two of them." But none arrived, and the people were on the point of breaking out into violence, when a fleet of ships suddenly appeared off the mouth of the Thames. They were German and Flemish vessels laden with corn, in which the worthy people of the Low Countries had also concealed the New Testament. An Antwerp bookseller, named John Raimond (or Ruremond), from his birthplace, had printed a fourth edition more beautiful than the previous ones. It was enriched with references and engravings on wood, and each page bordered with red lines. Raimond himself had embarked on board one of the ships with five hundred copies of his New Testament. About Christmas 1527, the book of God was circulated in England along with the bread that nourishes the body. But certain priests and
monks, having discovered the Scriptures among the sacks of corn, carried several copies to the bishop of London, who threw Raimond into prison. The greater part, however, of the new edition escaped him. The New Testament was read everywhere, and even the court did not escape the contagion. Anne Boleyn, notwithstanding her smiling face, often withdrew to her rooms at Greenwich or at Hampton Court, to study the gospel. Frank, courageous, and proud, she did not conceal the pleasure she found in such reading; her boldness astonished the courtiers and exasperated the clergy. In the city things went still further; the New Testament was explained in frequent conventicles, particularly in the house of one Russell, and great was the joy among the faithful. "It is sufficient only to enter London," said the priests, "to become a heretic!" The Reformation was taking root among the people before it arrived at the upper classes.

CHAPTER 8
The Campaign for Henry's Divorce
1527

The sun of the Word of God, which daily grew brighter in the sky of the sixteenth century, was sufficient to scatter all the darkness in England, but popery, like an immense wall, intercepted its rays. Britain had hardly received the Scriptures in Greek and Latin, and then in English, before the priests began to make war upon them with indefatigable zeal. It was necessary that the wall should be thrown down in order that the sun might penetrate freely among the Anglo-Saxon people. And now events were ripening in England, destined to make a great breach in popery. The negotiations of Henry VIII with Clement VII play an important part in the Reformation. By showing up the Court of Rome, they destroyed the respect which the people felt for it; they took away that power and strength, as Scripture says, which the monarchy had given it; and the throne of the pope once fallen in England, Jesus Christ uplifted and strengthened His own.

Henry, ardently desiring an heir, and thinking that he had found the woman that would ensure his own and England’s happiness, conceived the design of severing the ties that united him to the queen, and with this view he consulted his most favorite counselors about the divorce. There was one in particular whose approval he coveted; this was Sir Thomas More. One day as Erasmus’ friend was walking with his master in the beautiful gallery at Hampton Court, giving him an account of a mission he had just executed on the continent, the king suddenly interrupted him: "My marriage with the queen," he said, "is contrary to the laws of God, of the church, and of nature." He then took up the Bible, and pointed out the passages in his favor. "I am not a theologian," said More, somewhat embarrassed, "your majesty should consult a council of doctors."

Accordingly, by Henry’s order, Warham assembled the most learned canonists at Hampton Court, but weeks passed away before they could agree. Most of them quoted in the king’s favor those passages in Leviticus (18:16, 20:21)
which forbid a man to take *his brother’s wife*. But Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and the other opponents of the divorce, replied that, according to Deuteronomy (25:5), when a woman is left a widow without children, her brother-in-law ought to take her to wife, to perpetuate his brother’s name in Israel. “This law concerned the Jews only,” replied the partisans of the divorce; they added that its object was “to maintain the inheritances distinct, and the genealogies intact, until the coming of Christ. The Judaical dispensation has passed away, but the law of Leviticus, which is a moral law, is binding upon all men in all ages.”

To free themselves from their embarrassment, the bishops demanded that the most eminent universities should be consulted, and commissioners were forthwith dispatched to Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, Orleans, Toulouse, Louvain, Padua, and Bologna, furnished with money to reward the foreign doctors for the time and trouble this question would cost them. This caused some little delay, and every means was now to be tried to divert the king from his purpose.

Wolsey, who was the first to suggest the idea of a divorce, was now thoroughly alarmed. It appeared to him that a nod from the daughter of the Boleyn’s would hurl him from the post he had so laboriously won, and this made him vent his ill humor on all about him, at one time threatening Warham, and at another persecuting Pace. But fearing to oppose Henry openly, he summoned from Paris, Clarke, bishop of Bath and Wells, at that time ambassador to the French court. The latter entered into his views, and after cautiously preparing the way, he ventured to say to the king, “The progress of the inquiry will be so slow, your majesty, that it will take more than seven years to bring it to an end!” “Since my patience has already held out for *eighteen* years,” the king replied coldly, “I am willing to wait *four* or *five* more.”

As the political party had failed, the clerical party set in motion a scheme of another kind. A young woman, Elizabeth Barton, known as the *holy maid of Kent*, had been subject from childhood to epileptic fits. The priest of her parish, named Masters, had persuaded her that she was inspired of God and, confederating with one Bocking, a monk of Canterbury, he turned the weakness of the prophetess to account. Elizabeth wandered over the country, passing from house to house, and from convent to convent; on a sudden her limbs would become rigid, her features distorted; violent convulsions shook her body, and strange unintelligible sounds fell from her lips, which the amazed bystanders received as revelations from the Virgin and the saints. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, Abel, the queen’s ecclesiastical agent, and even Sir Thomas More, were among the number of Elizabeth’s partisans. Rumors of the divorce having reached the maid’s ears, an angel commanded her to appear before the cardinal. As soon as she stood in his presence, the color fled from her cheeks, her limbs trembled and, falling into an ecstasy, she exclaimed, “Cardinal of York, God has placed three swords in your hand—the spiritual sword, to range the church under the authority of the pope; the civil sword, to govern the realm; and the sword of justice, to prevent the divorce of the
king. ... If you do not wield these three swords faithfully, God will lay it sore to your charge." After these words the prophetess withdrew. But other influences were then dividing Wolsey's breast—hatred, which induced him to oppose the divorce, and ambition, which foreboded his ruin in this opposition. At last ambition prevailed, and he resolved to make his objections forgotten by the energy of his zeal.

Henry hastened to profit by this change. "Declare the divorce yourself," said he to Wolsey, "has not the pope named you his vicar-general?" The cardinal was not anxious to raise himself so high. "If I were to decide the affair," said he, "the queen would appeal to the pope; we must therefore either apply to the holy father for special powers, or persuade the queen to retire to a nunnery. And if we fail in either of these expedients, we will obey the voice of conscience, even in despite of the pope." It was arranged to begin with the more regular attempt, and Gregory Da Casale, secretary Knight, and the prothonotary Gambara, were appointed to an extraordinary mission at the pontifical court. Casale was Wolsey's man, and Knight was Henry's. Wolsey told the envoys, "You will demand of the pope, firstly, a commission authorizing me to inquire into this matter; secondly, his promise to pronounce the nullity of Catherine’s marriage with Henry, if we should find that her marriage with Arthur was consummated; and thirdly, a dispensation permitting the king to marry again." In this manner Wolsey hoped to make sure of the divorce without damaging the papal authority. It was insinuated that false representations, with regard to the consummation of the first marriage, had been sent from England to Julius II, which had induced the pontiff to permit the second. The pope being deceived as to the fact, his infallibility was untouched. Wolsey desired some thing more; knowing that no confidence could be put in the good faith of the pontiff, he demanded a fourth instrument by which the pope should bind himself never to recall the other three; he only forgot to take precautions in case Clement should withdraw the fourth. "With these four snares, skillfully combined," said the cardinal, "I shall catch the hare; if he escapes from one, he will fall into the other." The courtiers anticipated a speedy termination of the affair. Was not the Emperor the declared enemy of the pontiff? Had not Henry, on the contrary, made himself protector of the Clementine league? Could Clement hesitate, when called upon, to choose between his jailer and his benefactor?

Indeed, Charles V, at this moment, was in a very embarrassing position. It is true, his guards were posted at the gates of the castle of St. Angelo, where Clement was a prisoner, and people in Rome said to one another with a smile, "Now indeed it is true, Papa non potest errare" (the pope cannot err). But it was not possible to keep the pope a prisoner in Rome, and then what was to be done with him? The viceroy of Naples proposed to Alercon, the governor of St. Angelo, to remove Clement to Gaeta, but the affrighted colonel exclaimed, "Heaven forbid that I should drag after me the very body of God!" Charles thought at one time of transporting the pontiff to Spain, but might not an enemy's fleet carry him off the road? The pope in prison was far more embarrassing to Charles than the pope at liberty.
It was at this critical time that Francis Philip, Queen Catherine’s servant, having escaped the snares laid by Henry VIII and Wolsey, arrived at Madrid, where he passed a whole day in conference with Charles V. This prince was at first astonished, shocked even, by the designs of the king of England. The curse of God seemed to hang over his house. Charles’ mother was a lunatic; his sister of Denmark expelled from her dominions; his sister of Hungary made a widow by the battle of Mohacz; the Turks were encroaching upon his territories; Lautrec was victorious in Italy, and the catholics, irritated by the pope’s captivity, detested his ambition. This was not enough. Henry VIII was striving to divorce his aunt, and the pope would naturally give his aid to this criminal design. Charles must choose between the pontiff and the king. The friendship of the king of England might aid him in breaking the league formed to expel him from Italy, and by sacrificing Catherine he would be sure to obtain his support; but placed between reasons of state and his aunt’s honor, the Emperor did not hesitate; he even renounced certain projects of reform that he had at heart. He suddenly decided for the pope, and from that very hour followed a new course.

Charles, who possessed great discernment, had understood his age; he had seen that concessions were called for by the movement of the human mind, and would have desired to carry out the change from the middle ages to modern times by a carefully managed transition. He had consequently demanded a council to reform the church and weaken the Romish dominion in Europe. But very different was the result. If Charles turned away from Henry, he was obliged to turn towards Clement, and after having compelled the head of the church to enter a prison, it was necessary to place him once more upon the throne. Charles V sacrificed the interests of Christian society to the interests of his own family. This divorce, which in England has been looked upon as the ruin of the popedom, was what saved it in continental Europe. But how could the Emperor win the heart of the pontiff, filled as it was with bitterness and anger? He selected for this difficult mission a friar of great ability, De Angelis, general of the Spanish Observance, and ordered him to proceed to the castle of St. Angelo under the pretext of negotiating the liberation of the holy father. The cordelier was conducted to the strongest part of the fortress, called the Rock, where Clement was lodged, and the two priests brought all their craft to bear on each other. The monk, assisted by the artful Moncade, adroitly mingled together the pope’s deliverance and Catherine’s marriage. He affirmed that the Emperor wished to open the gates of the pontiff’s prison, and had already given the order, and then he added immediately, "The Emperor is determined to maintain the rights of his aunt, and will never consent to the divorce." "If you are a good shepherd to me," wrote Charles to the pope with his own hand on the 22nd of November, 1527, "I will be a good sheep to you." Clement smiled as he read these words; he understood his position; the Emperor had need of the priest; Charles was at his captive’s feet; Clement was saved! The divorce was a rope fallen from the skies which could not fail to drag him out of the pit; he had only to cling to it quietly to re-ascend his throne. Accordingly from that hour Clement appeared
less eager to quit the castle than Charles to liberate him. "So long as the divorce is in suspense," thought the crafty De Medici, "I have two great friends, but as soon as I declare for one, I shall have a mortal enemy in the other." He promised the monk to come to no decision in the matter without informing the Emperor.

Meantime Knight, the envoy of the impatient monarch, having heard, as he crossed the Alps, that the pope was at liberty, hastened on to Parma, where he met Gambara. "He is not free yet," replied the prothonotary, "but the general of the Franciscans hopes to terminate his captivity in a few days. Continue your journey," he added. Knight could not do so without great danger. He was told at Foligno, sixty miles from the metropolis, that if he had not a safe-conduct he could not reach Rome without exposing his life. Knight halted. Just then a messenger from Henry brought him dispatches more pressing than ever; Knight started again with one servant and a guide. At Monte Rotondo he was nearly murdered by the inhabitants, but on the next day (25th November), protected by a violent storm of wind and rain, Henry’s envoy entered Rome at ten o’clock without being observed, and kept himself concealed.

It was impossible to speak with Clement, for the Emperor’s orders were positive. Knight, therefore, began to practice upon the cardinals; he gained over the Cardinal of Pisa, by whose means his dispatches were laid before the pontiff. Clement after reading them laid them down with a smile of satisfaction. "Good!" said he, "here is the other coming to me now!" But night had hardly closed in before the Cardinal of Pisa’s secretary hastened to Knight and told him, "Don Alercon is informed of your arrival, and the pope entreats you to depart immediately." This officer had scarcely left him, when the prothonotary Gambara arrived in great agitation: "His holiness presses you to leave; as soon as he is at liberty, he will attend to your master’s request." Two hours after this, two hundred Spanish soldiers arrived, surrounded the house in which Knight had concealed himself, and searched it from top to bottom, but to no purpose; the English agent had escaped.

Knight’s safety was not the true motive which induced Clement to urge his departure. The very day on which the pope received the message from the king of England, he signed a treaty with Charles V, restoring him, under certain conditions, to both his powers. At the same time the pontiff, for greater security, pressed the French general Lautrec to hasten his march to Rome in order to save him from the hands of the Emperor. Clement, a disciple of Machiavelli, thus gave the right hand to Charles and the left to Francis; and as he had not another for Henry, he made him the most positive promises. Each of the three princes could reckon on the pope’s friendship, and on the same grounds.

The 10th of December (1527) was the day on which Clement’s imprisonment would terminate, but he preferred to owe his freedom to intrigue rather than to the Emperor’s generosity. He therefore procured the dress of a tradesman, and, on the evening before the day fixed for his deliverance, his ward being already much relaxed, he escaped from the castle, and, accompanied only by Louis of Gonzago in his flight, he made his way to Orvieto.
The vacillations of Pope Clement VII (1523-34) are noteworthy. He was distressed by the long rivalry between the Houses of Hapsburg (Spain and the Empire) and Valois (France). At length he decided to side with Francis I of France, but that king’s crushing defeat at Pavia (1525) caused him to come to terms with Charles, only to depart from him again by joining a League of Freedom which aimed at asserting the independence of Italy from foreign powers. On the failure of this movement, Clement again submitted to Charles the Emperor, but a year later he absolved Francis from his oath to submit to Charles (entered into at Madrid after a long captivity), and helped to form the Holy League of Cognac, by which he, France, and the leading Italian states bound themselves to resist the ambitions of Charles. Then followed the Imperial invasion of Italy to break the League, and the sack of Rome (May 1527), which horrified the West. Clement remained Charles’ prisoner from June to December 1527. In 1528 Francis once more made war in Italy, but eventually Charles again proved victorious, and for several years Clement VII became dependent upon him. This dependence had important bearings on the English divorce question, for Clement would not nullify the marriage between Henry and Catherine while he was in the power of Charles, the nephew of Catherine. Hence Wolsey could make no real progress in his suit.

While Clement was experiencing all the joy of a man just escaped from prison, Henry was a prey to the most violent agitation. Having ceased to love Catherine, he persuaded himself that he was the victim of his father’s ambition, a martyr to duty, and the champion of conjugal sanctity. His very gait betrayed his vexation, and, even among the gay conversation of the court, deep sighs would escape from his bosom. He had frequent interviews with Wolsey. "I regard the safety of my soul above all things," he said, "but I am concerned also for the peace of my kingdom. For a long while an unceasing remorse has been gnawing at my conscience, and my thoughts dwell upon my marriage with unutterable sorrow. God, in His wrath, has taken away my sons, and if I persevere in this unlawful union, He will visit me with still more terrible chastisements. My only hope is in the holy father." Wolsey replied with a low bow: "Please your majesty, I am occupied with this business, as if it were my only means of winning heaven."

And indeed he redoubled his exertions. He wrote to Sir Gregory Da Casale on the 5th of December (1527), "You will procure an audience of the pope at any price. Disguise yourself, appear before him as the servant of some nobleman, or as a messenger from the duke of Ferrara. Scatter money plentifully; sacrifice everything, provided you procure a secret interview with his holiness; ten thousand ducats are at your disposal. You will explain to Clement the king’s scruples, and the necessity of providing for the continuance of his house and the peace of his kingdom. You will tell him that in order to restore him to
liberty, the king is ready to declare war against the Emperor, and thus show himself to all the world to be a true son of the church."

Wolsey saw clearly that it was essential to represent the divorce to Clement VII as a means likely to secure the safety of the popedom. The cardinal, therefore, wrote again to Da Casale on the 6th of December, "Night and day, I revolve in my mind the actual condition of the church, and seek the means best calculated to extricate the pope from the gulf into which he has fallen. While I was turning these thoughts over in my mind during a sleepless night... one way suddenly occurred to me. I said to myself, the king must be prevailed upon to undertake the defence of the holy father. This was no easy matter, for his majesty is strongly attached to the Emperor; however, I set about my task. I told the king that his holiness was ready to satisfy him; I staked my honour; I succeeded. ... To save the pope, my master will sacrifice his treasures, subjects, kingdom, and even his life. ... I therefore conjure his holiness to entertain our just demand."

Never before had such pressing entreaties been made to a pope by the government of England.

CHAPTER 9
The Dilemma and Duplicity of Clement VII
1527-1528

The envoys of the king of England appeared in the character of the saviors of Rome. This was doubtless no stratagem, and Wolsey probably regarded that thought as coming from heaven, which had visited him during the weary sleepless night. The zeal of his agents increased. The pope was hardly set at liberty, before Knight and Da Casale appeared at the foot of the precipitous rock on which Orvieto is built, and demanded to be introduced to Clement VII. Nothing could be more compromising to the pontiff than such a visit. How could he appear on good terms with England, when Rome and all his states were still in the hands of Catherine’s nephew? The pope’s mind was utterly bewildered by the demand of the two envoys. He recovered, however; to reject the powerful hand extended to him by England was not without its danger, and, as he knew well how to bring a difficult negotiation to a successful conclusion, Clement regained confidence in his skill, and gave orders to introduce Henry’s ambassadors.

Their discourse was not without eloquence. "Never was the church in a more critical position," said they. "The unmeasured ambition of the kings who claim to dispose of spiritual affairs at their own pleasure (this was aimed at Charles V) holds the apostolical bark suspended over an abyss. The only port open to it in the tempest is the favor of the august prince whom we represent, and who has always been the shield of the faith. But, alas! this monarch, the impregnable bulwark of your holiness, is himself the prey of tribulations almost equal to your own. His conscience torn by remorse, his crown without an heir, his kingdom without security, his people exposed once more to perpetual disorders. ... Nay, the whole Christian world given up to the most cruel
discord. ... Such are the consequences of a fatal union which God has marked with his displeasure. ... There are also," they added in a lower tone, "certain things of which his majesty cannot speak in his letter... certain incurable disorders under which the queen suffers, which will never permit the king to look upon her again as his wife. If your holiness puts an end to such wretchedness by annulling his unlawful marriage, you will attach his majesty by an indissoluble bond. Assistance, riches, armies, crown, and even life—the king our master is ready to employ all in the service of Rome. He stretches out his hand to you, most holy father... stretch out yours to him; by your union the church will be saved, and Europe will be saved with it."

Clement was cruelly embarrassed. His policy consisted in holding the balance between the two princes, and he was now called upon to decide in favor of one of them. He began to regret that he had ever received Henry’s ambassadors. "Consider my position," he said to them, "and entreat the king to wait until more favorable events leave me at liberty to act." "What!" replied Knight proudly, "has not your holiness promised to consider his majesty’s prayer? If you fail in your promise now, how can I persuade the king that you will keep it some future day?" Da Casale thought the time had come to strike a decisive blow. "What evils," he exclaimed, "what inevitable misfortunes your refusal will create! ... The Emperor thinks only of depriving the church of its power, and the king of England alone has sworn to maintain it." Then speaking lower, more slowly, and dwelling upon every word, he continued, "We fear that his majesty, reduced to such extremities... of the two evils will choose the least, and supported by the purity of his intentions, will do of his own authority... what he now so respectfully demands. ... What should we see then? ... I shudder at the thought. ... Let not your holiness indulge in a false security which will inevitably drag you into the abyss. ... Read all... remark all... divine all... take note of all. ... Most holy father, this is a question of life and death." And Da Casale’s tone said more than his words.

Clement understood that a positive refusal would expose him to lose England. Placed between Henry and Charles, as between the hammer and the anvil, he resolved to gain time. "Well then," he said to Knight and Da Casale, "I will do what you ask, but I am not familiar with the forms these dispensations require. ... I will consult the Cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor on the subject... and then will inform you."

Knight and Da Casale, wishing to anticipate Clement VII, hastened to Lorenzo Pucci, cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor, and intimated to him that their master would know how to be grateful. The cardinal assured the deputies of his affection for Henry VIII, and they, in the fulness of their gratitude, laid before him the four documents which they were anxious to get executed. But the cardinal had hardly looked at the first—the proposal that Wolsey should decide the matter of the divorce in England—when he exclaimed, "Impossible! ... a bull in such terms would cover with eternal disgrace not only his holiness and the king, but even the cardinal of York himself." The deputies were confounded, for Wolsey had ordered them to ask the pope for nothing but his signature. Recovering themselves, they rejoined, "All that we require is a
competent commission." On his part, the pope wrote Henry a letter, in which he managed to say nothing. Of the four required documents there were two on whose immediate dispatch Knight and Da Casale insisted; these were the commission to pronounce the divorce, and the dispensation to contract a second marriage. The dispensation without the commission was of no value; this the pope knew well—accordingly he resolved to give the dispensation only. It was as if Charles had granted Clement when in prison permission to visit his cardinals, but denied him liberty to leave the castle of St. Angelo. It is in such a manner as this that a religious system transformed into a political system has recourse, when it is without power, to stratagem. "The commission," said the artful Medici to Knight, "must be corrected according to the style of our court, but here is the dispensation." Knight took the document; it was addressed to Henry VIII and ran thus: "We accord to you, in case your marriage with Catherine shall be declared null, free liberty to take another wife, provided she have not been the wife of your brother. ...." The Englishman was duped by the Italian. "In my poor judgment," he said, "this document will be of use to us." After this Clement appeared to concern himself solely about Knight's health, and suddenly manifested the greatest interest for him. "It is proper that you should hasten your departure," said he, "for it is necessary that you should travel at your ease. Gambara will follow you post, and bring the commission." Knight thus mystified, took leave of the pope, who got rid of Da Casale and Gambara in a similar manner. He then began to breathe once more. There was no diplomacy in Europe which Rome, even in its greatest weakness, could not easily dupe. It had now become necessary to elude the commission. While the king's envoys were departing in good spirits, reckoning on the document that was to follow them, the general of the Spanish Observance reiterated to the pontiff in every tone, "Be careful to give no document authorizing the divorce, and, above all, do not permit this affair to be judged in Henry's realm." The cardinals drew up the document under the influence of De Angelis, and made it a masterpiece of insignificance. If good theology ennobles the heart, bad theology, so fertile in subtleties, imparts to the mind a skill by no means common; and hence the most celebrated diplomatists have often been churchmen. The act being thus drawn up, the pope dispatched three copies, to Knight, to Da Casale, and to Gambara. Knight was near Bologna when the courier overtook him. He was stupefied, and taking post-horses returned with all haste to Orvieto. Gambara proceeded through France to England with the useless dispensation which the pope had granted. Knight had thought to meet with more good faith at the court of the pope than with kings, and he had been outwitted. What would Wolsey and Henry say of his folly? His wounded self-esteem began to make him believe all that Tyndale and Luther said of the popedom. The former had just published the Obedience of a Christian Man, and the Parable of the Wicked Mammon, in which he represented Rome as one of the transformations of Antichrist. "Antichrist," said he in the latter treatise, "is not a man that should suddenly appear with wonders; he is a spiritual thing, who was in the Old Testament and also in the
time of Christ and the apostles, and is now and shall (I doubt not) endure till the world’s end. His nature is (when he is overcome with the Word of God) to go out of the play for a season, and to disguise himself, and then to come in again with a new name and new raiment. The Scribes and Pharisees in the gospel were very Antichrists; popes, cardinals, and bishops have gotten their new names, but the thing is all one. Even so now, when we have uttered [vanquished] him, he will change himself once more, and turn himself into an angel of light. Already the beast, seeing himself now to be sought for, roareth and seeketh new holes to hide himself in, and changeth himself into a thousand fashions with all manner of wiliness, falsehood, subtlety, and craft.” This idea, paradoxical at first, gradually made its way into men’s minds. The Romans, by their practices, familiarized the English to the somewhat coarse descriptions of the reformers. England was to have many such lessons, and thus by degrees learn to set Rome aside for the sake of her own glory and prosperity. Knight and Da Casale reached Orvieto about the same time. Clement replied with sighs, “Alas! I am the Emperor’s prisoner. The imperialists are every day pillaging towns and castles in our neighborhood. Wretch that I am! I have not a friend except the king your master, and he is far away... If I should do anything now to displease Charles, I am a lost man. To sign the commission would be to sign an eternal rupture with him.” But Knight and Da Casale pleaded so effectually with Cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor, and so pressed Clement, that the pontiff, without the knowledge of the Spaniard De Angelis, gave them a more satisfactory document, but not such as Wolsey required. “In giving you this commission,” said the pope, “I am giving away my liberty, and perhaps my life. I listen not to the voice of prudence, but to that of affection only. I confide in the generosity of the king of England; he is the master of my destiny.” He then began to weep, and seemed ready to faint. Knight, forgetting his vexation, promised Clement that the king would do everything to save him. “Ah!” said the pope, “there is one effectual means.” “What is that?” inquired Henry’s agents. “M. Lautrec, who says daily that he will come, but never does,” replied Clement, “has only to bring the French army promptly before the gates of Orvieto; then I could excuse myself by saying that he constrained me to sign the commission.” “Nothing is easier,” replied the envoys, “we will go and hasten his arrival.” Clement was not even now at ease. The safety of the Roman church troubled him not less than his own. Charles might discover the trick and make the popedom suffer for it. There was danger on all sides. If the English spoke of independence, did not the Emperor threaten a reform? The catholic princes, said the papal counselors, are capable, without perhaps a single exception, of supporting the cause of Luther to gratify a criminal ambition. The pope reflected, and, withdrawing his word, promised to give the commission when Lautrec was under the walls of Orvieto, but the English agents insisted on having it immediately. To conciliate all, it was agreed that the pope should give the required document at once, but as soon as the French army arrived, he should send another copy bearing the date of the day on which he saw Lautrec. “Beseech the king to keep secret the commission I give you,” said
Clement VII to Knight, "if he begins the process immediately he receives it, I am undone forever." The pope thus gave permission to act, on condition of not acting at all. Knight took leave on the first of January 1528; he promised all the pontiff desired, and then, as if fearing some fresh difficulty, he departed the same day. Da Casale, on his side, after having offered the Cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor a gift of 4,000 crowns, which he refused, repaired to Lautrec, to beg him to constrain the pope to sign a document which was already on its way to England.

But while the business seemed to be clearing at Rome, it was becoming more complicated in London. The king’s project got wind, and Catherine gave way to the liveliest sorrow. "I shall protest," said she, "against the commission given to the cardinal of York. Is he not the king’s subject, the vile flatterer of his pleasures?" Catherine did not resist alone; the people, who hated the cardinal, could not with pleasure see him invested with such authority. To obviate this inconvenience, Henry resolved to ask the pope for another cardinal, who should be empowered to terminate the affair in London with or without Wolsey.

The latter agreed to the measure; it is even possible that he was the first to suggest it, for he feared to bear alone the responsibility of so hateful an inquiry. Accordingly, on the 27th of December, he wrote to the king’s agents at Rome, "Procure the envoy of a legate, and particularly of an able, easy, manageable legate... desirous of meriting the king’s favour, Campeggio for instance. You will earnestly request the cardinal who may be selected, to travel with all diligence, and you will assure him that the king will behave liberally towards him."

Knight reached Asti in Savoy on the 10th of January, where he found letters with fresh orders. This was another check; at one time it is the pope who compels him to retrace his steps—at another it is the king. Henry’s unlucky valetudinarian secretary, a man very susceptible to fatigue, and already wearied and exhausted by ten painful journeys, was in a very bad humor. He determined to permit Gambara to carry the two documents to England; to commission Da Casale, who had not left the pope’s neighborhood, to solicit the dispatch of the legate; and as regarded himself, to go and wait for further orders at Turin: "If it be thought good unto the king’s highness that I do return unto Orvieto, I shall do as much as my poor carcass may endure."

When Da Casale reached Bologna, he pressed Lautrec to go and constrain the pontiff to sign the act which Gambara was already bearing to England. On receiving the new dispatches he returned in all haste to Orvieto, and the pope was very much alarmed when he heard of his arrival. He had feared to grant a simple paper, destined to remain secret; and now he is required to send a prince of the church! Will Henry never be satisfied? "The mission you desire would be full of dangers," he replied, "but we have discovered another means, alone calculated to finish this business. Mind you do not say that I pointed it out to you," added the pope in a mysterious tone, "but that it was suggested by Cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor and Simonetta." Da Casale was all attention.

"There is not a doctor in the world who can better decide on this matter, and
on its most private circumstances, than the king himself. If therefore he sincerely believes that Catherine had really become his brother’s wife, let him empower the cardinal of York to pronounce the divorce, and let him take another wife without any further ceremony; he can then afterwards demand the confirmation of the consistory. The affair being concluded in this way, I will take the rest upon myself." "But," said Da Casale, somewhat dissatisfied with this new intrigue, "I must fulfil my mission, and the king demands a legate."

"And whom shall I send," asked Clement. "Da Monte? he cannot move. De Cæsis? he is at Naples. Ara Cœli? he has the gout. Piccolomini? he is of the imperial party... Campeggio would be the best, but he is at Rome, where he supplies my place, and cannot leave without peril to the church." ... And then with some emotion he added, "I throw myself into his majesty's arms. The Emperor will never forgive what I am doing. If he hears of it he will summon me before his council; I shall have no rest until he has deprived me of my throne and my life."

Da Casale hastened to forward to London the result of the conference. Clement being unable to untie the knot, requested Henry to cut it. Will this prince hesitate to employ so easy a means, the pope (Clement declared it himself) being willing to ratify everything?

Here closes Henry’s first campaign in the territories of the popedom. We shall now see the results of so many efforts.

CHAPTER 10
Royal Threats Counter Papal Cunning
1528

Never was disappointment more complete than that felt a by Henry and Wolsey after the arrival of Gambara with the commission; the king was angry, the cardinal vexed. What Clement called the sacrifice of his life was in reality but a sheet of paper fit only to be thrown into the fire. "This commission is of no value," said Wolsey. "And even to put it into execution," added Henry, "we must wait until the imperialists have quitted Italy! The pope is putting us off to the Greek calends." "His holiness," observed the cardinal, "does not bind himself to pronounce the divorce; the queen will therefore appeal from our judgment."

"And even if the pope had bound himself," added the king, "it would be sufficient for the Emperor to smile upon him, to make him retract what he had promised." "It is all a cheat and a mockery," concluded both king and minister. What was to be done next? The only way to make Clement ours, thought Wolsey, is to get rid of Charles; it is time his pride was brought down.

Accordingly, on the 22nd of January, 1528, Clarencieux, being sent to France with instructions which had not been revealed to Henry VIII or to his Council, made a formal proclamation of hostilities against Charles. The king of France acted likewise. When Charles heard of this proceeding, he exclaimed, "I know the hand that has flung the torch of war into the midst of Europe. My crime is not having placed the cardinal of York on St. Peter’s throne."
A mere declaration of hostilities was not enough for Wolsey; the bishop of Bayonne, ambassador from France, seeing him one day somewhat excited, whispered in his ear, "In former times popes have deposed emperors for smaller offenses." The deposition of Charles would have delivered the king of France from a troublesome rival, but Du Bellay, fearing to take the initiative in so bold an enterprise, suggested the idea to the cardinal. Wolsey reflected; such a thought had never before occurred to him. Taking the ambassador aside to a window, he there swore **stoutly**, said Du Bellay, that he should be delighted to use all his influence to get Charles deposed by the pope. "No one is more likely than yourself," replied the bishop, "to induce Clement to do it." "I will use all my credit," rejoined Wolsey, and the two priests separated. This bright idea the cardinal never forgot. Charles had robbed him of the tiara; he would retaliate by depriving Charles of his crown. *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.* Staffileo, dean of the Rota, was then in London, and still burning with resentment against the author of the Sack of Rome, he favorably received the suggestions Wolsey made to him; and, finally, the envoy from John Zapolyai, king-elect of Hungary, supported the project. But the kings of France and England were not so easily induced to put the thrones of kings at the disposal of the priests. It appears, however, that the pope was sounded on the subject; and if the Emperor had been beaten in Italy, it is probable that the bull would have been fulminated against him. His sword preserved his crown, and the plot of the two bishops failed.

The king’s councilors began to seek for less heroic means. "We must prosecute the affair at *Rome*," said some. "No," said others, "in *England*. The pope is too much afraid of the Emperor to pronounce the divorce in person." "If the pope fears the Emperor more than the king of England," exclaimed the proud Tudor, "we shall find some other way to set him at ease." Thus, at the first contradiction, Henry placed his hand on his sword, and threatened to sever the ties which bound his kingdom to the throne of the Italian pontiff.

"I have hit it!" said Wolsey at length, "we must combine the two plans—judge the affair in London, and at the same time bind the pontiff at Rome." And then the able cardinal proposed the draft of a bull, by which the pope, delegating his authority to two legates, should declare that the acts of that delegation should have a perpetual effect, notwithstanding any contrary decrees that might subsequently emanate from his infallible authority. A new mission was decided upon for the accomplishment of this bold design.

Wolsey, annoyed by the weakness of Knight and his colleagues, desired men of another stamp. He therefore cast his eyes on his own secretary, Stephen Gardiner, an active man, intelligent, supple, and crafty, a learned canonist, desirous of the king’s favor, and, above all, a good Romanist, which at Rome was not without its advantage. Gardiner was in miniature the living image of his master, and hence the cardinal sometimes styled him *the half of himself*. Edward Fox, the chief almoner, was joined with him—a moderate, influential man, a particular friend of Henry’s, and a zealous advocate of the divorce. Fox was named first in the commission, but it was agreed that Gardiner should be the real head of the embassy. "Repeat without ceasing," Wolsey told them,
“that his majesty cannot do otherwise than separate from the queen. Attack each, one on his weak side. Declare to the pope that the king promises to defend him against the Emperor, and to the cardinals that their services will be nobly rewarded. If that does not suffice, let the energy of your words be such as to excite a wholesome fear in the pontiff.”

Fox and Gardiner, after a gracious reception at Paris (23rd February) by Francis I, arrived at Orvieto on the 21st of March, after many perils, and with their dress in such disorder on account of foul weather, that no one could have taken them for the ambassadors of Henry VIII. “What a city!” they exclaimed, as they passed through its streets, “what ruins, what misery! It is indeed truly called Orvieto (the aged city)!” The state of the town gave them no very grand idea of the state of the pependom, and they imagined that with a pontiff so poorly lodged, their negotiation could not be otherwise than easy. “I give you my house,” said Da Casale, to whom they went, “my room and my own bed”; and as they made some objections, he added, “It is not possible to lodge you elsewhere; I have even been forced to borrow what was necessary to receive you.” Da Casale pressing them to change their clothes, which were still dripping (they had just crossed a river on their mules) they replied that being obliged to travel post, they had not been able to bring a change of raiment. "Alas!" said Casale, “what is to be done? There are few persons in Orvieto who have more garments than one; even the shopkeepers have no cloth for sale; this town is quite a prison. People say the pope is at liberty here. A pretty liberty indeed! Want, impure air, wretched lodging, and a thousand other inconveniences keep the holy father closer than when he was in the Castle of St. Angelo. Accordingly, he told me the other day, it was better to be in captivity at Rome than at liberty here.”

Shortly, however, they managed to procure some new clothing, and being now in a condition to show themselves, Henry’s agents were admitted to an after-dinner audience on Monday the 25th of March (1528).

Da Casale conducted them to an old building in ruins. “This is where his holiness lives,” he said. They looked at one another with astonishment, and, crossing the rubbish lying about, passed through three chambers whose ceilings had fallen in, whose windows were curtainless, and in which thirty persons "riff-raff were standing against the bare walls for a garnishment.” This was the pope’s court.

At length the ambassadors reached the pontiff’s room, and placed Henry’s letters in his hands. “Your holiness,” said Gardiner, "when sending the king a dispensation, was pleased to add, that if this document were not sufficient, you would willingly give a better. It is that favor the king now desires." The pope with embarrassment strove to soften his refusal. "I am informed," he said, "that the king is led on in this affair by a secret inclination, and that the lady he loves is far from being worthy of him." Gardiner replied with firmness, "The king truly desires to marry again after the divorce, that he may have an heir to the crown, but the woman he proposes to take is animated by the noblest sentiments; the cardinal of York and all England do homage to her virtues." The pope appeared convinced. "Besides," continued Gardiner, "the king has written
a book on the motives of his divorce." "Good! come and read it to me tomorrow," rejoined Clement.

The next day the English envoys had hardly appeared, before Clement took Henry’s book, ran over it as he walked up and down the room, and then seating himself on a long bench covered with an old carpet, "not worth twenty pence," says an annalist, he read the book aloud. He counted the number of arguments, made objections as if Henry were present, and piled them one upon another without waiting for an answer. "The marriages forbidden in Leviticus," said he, in a short and quick tone of voice, "are permitted in Deuteronomy; now Deuteronomy coming after Leviticus, we are bound by the latter. The honor of Catherine and the Emperor is at stake, and the divorce would give rise to a terrible war." The pope continued speaking, and whenever the Englishmen attempted to reply, he bade them be silent, and kept on reading. "It is an excellent book," said he, however, in a courteous tone, when he had ended. "I shall keep it to read over again at my leisure." Gardiner then presenting a draft of the commission which Henry required, Clement made answer, "It is too late to look at it now; leave it with me." "But we are in haste," added Gardiner. "Yes, yes, I know it," said the pope. All his efforts tended to protract the business.

On the 28th of March, the ambassadors were conducted to the room in which the pope slept; the cardinals Sanctorum Qnatur and De Monte, as well as the councilor of the Rota, Simonetta, were then with him. Chairs were arranged in a semicircle. "Be seated," said Clement, who stood in the middle. "Master Gardiner, now tell me what you want." "There is no question between us but one of time," said Gardiner. "You promised to ratify the divorce, as soon as it was pronounced; and we require you to do before what you engage to do after. What is right on one day, must be right on another." Then, raising his voice, the Englishman added, "If his majesty perceives that no more respect is paid to him than to a common man, he will have recourse to a remedy which I will not name, but which will not fail in its effect."

The pope and his councilors looked at one another in silence; they had understood him. The imperious Gardiner, remarking the effect which he had produced, then added in an absolute tone, "We have our instructions, and are determined to keep to them." "I am ready to do everything compatible with my honor," exclaimed Clement, in alarm. "What your honor would not permit you to grant," said the proud ambassador, "the honor of the king, my master, would not permit him to ask." Gardiner’s language became more imperative every minute. "Well, then," said Clement, driven to extremity, "I will do what the king demands, and if the Emperor is angry, I cannot help it." The interview, which had commenced with a storm, finished with a gleam of sunshine. That bright gleam soon disappeared; Clement, who imagined he saw in Henry a Hannibal at war with Rome, wished to play the temporizer, the Fabius Cunctator (Fabius the Delayer.) "He gives twice who gives quickly," said Gardiner sharply, who observed this maneuver. "It is a question of law," replied the pope, "and as I am very ignorant in these matters, I must give the doctors of the canon law the necessary time to make it all clear." "By his delays Fabius
Maximus saved Rome,” rejoined Gardiner, “you will destroy it by yours.” “Alas!” exclaimed the pope, “if I say the king is right, I shall have to go back to prison.” “When truth is concerned,” said the ambassador, “of what consequence are the opinions of men?” Gardiner was speaking at his ease, but Clement found that the castle of St. Angelo was not without weight in the balance. “You may be sure that I shall do everything for the best,” replied the modern Fabius. With these words the conference terminated.

Such were the struggles of England with the popedom—struggles which were to end in a definitive rupture. Gardiner knew that he had a skillful adversary to deal with; too cunning to allow himself to be irritated, he coolly resolved to frighten the pontiff—that was in his instructions. On the Friday before Palm Sunday, he was ushered into the pope’s private room; there he found Clement attended by De Monte, Sanctorum Qnatuor, Simonetta, Staffileo, Paul, auditor of the Rota, and Gambara. “It is impossible,” said the cardinals, “to grant a decretal commission in which the pope pronounces de jure in favor of the divorce, with a promise of confirmation de facto.” Gardiner insisted, but no persuasion, “neither dulce nor poynante,” could move the pontiff. The envoy judged the moment had come to discharge his strongest battery. “O perverse race,” said he to the pontiff’s ministers, “instead of being harmless as doves, you are as full of dissimulation and malice as serpents, promising everything but performing nothing. England will be driven to believe that God has taken from you the key of knowledge, and that the laws of the popes, ambiguous to the popes themselves, are only fit to be cast into the fire. The king has hitherto restrained his people, impatient of the Romish yoke, but he will now give them the rein.” A long and gloomy silence followed. Then the Englishman, suddenly changing his tone, softly approached Clement, who had left his seat, and conjured him in a low voice to consider carefully what justice required of him. “Alas!” replied Clement, “I tell you again, I am ignorant in these matters. According to the maxims of the canon law the pope carries all laws in the tablets of his heart, but unfortunately God has never given me the key that opens them.” As he could not escape by silence, Clement retreated under cover of a jest, and heedlessly pronounced the condemnation of the popedom. If he had never received the famous key, there was no reason why other pontiffs should have possessed it. The next day he found another loophole, for when the ambassadors told him that the king would carry on the matter without him, he sighed, drew out his handkerchief and said, as he wiped his eyes, “Would to God that I were dead!” Clement employed tears as a political engine. “We shall not get the decretal commission” (that which pronounced the divorce), said Fox and Gardiner after this, “and it is not really necessary. Let us demand the general commission (authorizing the legates to pronounce it) and exact a promise that shall supply the place of the act which is denied us.” Clement, who was ready to make all the promises in the world, agreed to ratify the sentence of the legates without delay. Fox and Gardiner then presented to Simonetta a draft of the act required. The dean, after reading it, returned it to the envoys, saying, “It is very well, I think, except the end; show it Sanctorum Quatuor.” The next morning they carried the draft to that cardinal: “How long
has it been the rule for the patient to write the prescription? I always thought it was the physician’s business." "No one knows the disease so well as the patient," replied Gardiner, "and this disease may be of such a nature that the doctor cannot prescribe the remedy without taking the patient’s advice."

Sanctorum Quatuor read the prescription, and then returned it, saying, "It is not bad, with the exception of the beginning. Take the draft to De Monte and the other councilors." The latter liked neither beginning, middle, nor end. "We will send for you this evening," said De Monte.

Three or four days having elapsed, Henry’s envoys again waited on the pope, who showed them the draft prepared by his councilors. Gardiner remarking in it additions, retrenchments, and corrections, threw it disdainfully from him, and said coldly, "Your holiness is deceiving us; you have selected these men to be the instruments of your duplicity." Clement, in alarm, sent for Simonetta, and after a warm discussion, the envoys, more discontented than ever, quitted the pope at one in the morning.

The night brings wisdom. "I only desire two little words more in the commission," said Gardiner next day to Clement and Simonetta. The pope requested Simonetta to wait upon the cardinals immediately; the latter sent word that they were at dinner, and adjourned the business until the morrow. When Gardiner heard of this epicurean message, he thought the time had come for striking a decisive blow. A new tragedy began. "We are deceived," exclaimed he, "you are laughing at us. This is not the way to gain the favor of princes. Water mixed with wine spoils it; your corrections nullify our document. These ignorant and suspicious priests have spelled over our draft as if a scorpion was hidden under every word. You made us come to Italy," said he to Staffileo and Gambara, "like hawks which the fowler lures by holding out to them a piece of meat, and now that we are here, the bait has disappeared, and, instead of giving us what we sought, you pretend to lull us to sleep by the sweet voice of the sirens." Then, turning to Clement, the English envoy added, "Your holiness will have to answer for this." The pope sighed and wiped away his tears. "It was God’s pleasure," continued Gardiner, whose tone became more threatening every minute, "that we should see with our own eyes the disposition of the people here. It is time to have done. Henry is not an ordinary prince—bear in mind that you are insulting the defender of the faith. ... You are going to lose the favor of the only monarch who protects you, and the apostolical chair, already tottering, will fall into dust, and disappear entirely amidst the applause of all Christendom."

Gardiner paused. The pope was moved. The state of Italy seemed to confirm but too strongly the sinister predictions of the envoy of Henry VIII. The imperial troops, terrified and pursued by Lautrec, had abandoned Rome and retired on Naples. The French general was following up this wretched army of Charles V, decimated by pestilence and debauchery; Andrea Doria, at the head of his galleys, had destroyed the Spanish fleet; Gaeta and Naples only were left to the imperialists; and Lautrec, who was besieging the latter place, wrote to Henry on the 26th of August that all would soon be over. The timid Clement VII had attentively watched all these catastrophes. Accordingly, Gardiner had
hardly spoken of the danger which threatened the popedom, before he turned pale with affright, rose from his seat, stretched out his arms in terror, as if he had desired to repel some monster ready to devour him, and exclaimed, “Write, write! Insert whatever words you please.” As he said this, he paced up and down the room, raising his hands to heaven and sighing deeply, while Fox and Gardiner, standing motionless, looked on in silence. A tempestuous wind seemed to be stirring the depths of the abyss; the ambassadors waited until the storm was abated. At last Clement recovered himself, made a few trivial excuses, and dismissed Henry’s ministers. It was an hour past midnight. It was neither morality, nor religion, nor even the laws of the church which led Clement to refuse the divorce; ambition and fear were his only motives. He would have desired that Henry should first constrain the Emperor to restore him his territories. But the king of England, who felt himself unable to protect the pope against Charles, required, however, this unhappy pontiff to provoke the Emperor’s anger. Clement reaped the fruits of that fatal system which had transformed the church of Jesus Christ into a pitiful combination of policy and cunning.

On the next day, the tempest having thoroughly abated, Sanctorum Quatuor corrected the commission. It was signed, completed by a leaden seal attached to a piece of string, and then handed to Gardiner, who read it. The bull was addressed to Wolsey, and “authorized him, in case he should acknowledge the nullity of Henry’s marriage, to pronounce judicially the sentence of divorce, but without noise or display of judgment; for that purpose he might take any English bishop for his colleague.” “All that we can do, you can do,” said the pope. "We are very doubtful," said the importunate Gardiner after reading the bull, "whether this commission, without the clauses of confirmation and revocation, will satisfy his majesty, but we will do all in our power to get him to accept it." "Above all, do not speak of our altercations," said the pope. Gardiner, like a discreet diplomatist, did not scruple to note down every particular in cipher in the letters whence these details are procured. "Tell the king," continued the pontiff, "that this commission is on my part a declaration of war against the Emperor, and that I now place myself under his majesty’s protection." The chief-almoner of England departed for London with the precious document.

But one storm followed close upon another. Fox had not long quitted Orvieto when new letters arrived from Wolsey, demanding the fourth of the acts previously requested, namely, the engagement to ratify at Rome whatever the commissioners might decide in England. Gardiner was to set about it in season and out of season; the verbal promise of the pope counted for nothing; this document must be had, whether the pope was ill, dying, or dead. "Ego et Rex meus, his majesty and I command you," said Wolsey, "this divorce is of more consequence to us than twenty popedoms." The English envoy renewed his demand. "Since you refuse the decretal," he said, "there is the greater reason why you should not refuse the engagement." This application led to fresh discussion and fresh tears. Clement gave way once more, but the Italians, more crafty than Gardiner, reserved a loophole in the document through which the
pontiff might escape. The messenger Thaddeus carried it to London, and Gardiner left Orvieto for Rome to confer with Campeggio. Clement was a man of penetrating mind, and, although he knew as well as any how to deliver a clever speech, he was irresolute and timid, and accordingly the commission had not long been dispatched before he repented. Full of distress, he paced the ruined chambers of his old palace, and imagined he saw hanging over his head that terrible sword of Charles V, whose edge he had already felt. "Wretch that I am," said he, "cruel wolves surround me; they open their jaws to swallow me up. ... I see none but enemies around me. At their head is the Emperor. ... What will he do? Alas! I have yielded that fatal commission which the general of the Spanish Observance had enjoined me to refuse. Behind Charles come the Venetians, the Florentines, the duke of Ferrara. ... They have cast lots upon my vesture. ... Next comes the king of France, who promises nothing, but looks on with folded arms, or rather, what perfidy! calls upon me at this critical moment to deprive Charles V of his crown. ... And last, but not least, Henry VIII, the defender of the faith, indulges in frightful menaces against me. ... The Emperor desires to maintain the queen on the throne of England, the latter, to put her away. ... Would to God that Catherine were in her grave! But, alas! she lives... to be the apple of discord dividing the two greatest monarchies, and the inevitable cause of the ruin of the popedom. ... Wretched man that I am! how cruel is my perplexity, and around me I can see nothing but horrible confusion."

CHAPTER 11
Wolsey's Desperate Demands
1528

During this time Fox was making his way to England. On the 27th of April (1528) he reached Paris; on the 2nd of May he landed at Sandwich and hastened to Greenwich, where he arrived the next day at five in the evening, just as Wolsey had left for London. Fox's arrival was an event of great importance. "Let him go to Lady Anne's apartments," said the king, "and wait for me there." Fox told Anne Boleyn of his and Gardiner's exertions, and the success of their mission, at which she expressed her very great satisfaction. It is clear that she no longer resisted Henry's project for divorce. "Mistress Anne always called me Master Stephen," wrote Fox to Gardiner, "her thoughts were so full of you." The king appeared and Anne withdrew.

"Tell me as briefly as possible what you have done," said Henry. Fox placed in the king's hands the pope's insignificant letter, which he bade his almoner read; then that from Staffileo, which was put on one side; and lastly Gardiner's letter, which Henry took hastily and read himself. "The pope has promised us," said Fox, as he terminated his report, "to confirm the sentence of the divorce, as soon as it has been pronounced by the commissioners." "Excellent!" exclaimed Henry, and then he ordered Anne to be called in. "Repeat before this lady," he said to Fox, "what you have just told me." The almoner did so. "The pope is convinced of the justice of your cause," he said in conclusion, "and the
cardinal’s letter has convinced him that my lady is worthy of the throne of England.” “Make your report to Wolsey this very night,” said the king. It was ten o’clock when the chief almoner reached the cardinal’s palace; he had gone to bed, but immediate orders were given that Fox should be conducted to his room. Being a churchman, Wolsey could understand the pope’s artifices better than Henry; accordingly, as soon as he learnt that Fox had brought the commission only, he became alarmed at the task imposed upon him. “What a misfortune!” he exclaimed, “your commission is no better than Gambara’s. ... However, go and rest yourself; I will examine these papers tomorrow.” Fox withdrew in confusion. “It is not bad,” said Wolsey the next day, “but the whole business still falls on me alone! Never mind, I must wear a contented look, or else. ...” In the afternoon he summoned into his chamber Fox, Dr. Bell, and Viscount Rochford. “Master Gardiner has surpassed himself,” said the crafty supple cardinal, “What a man! what an inestimable treasure! what a jewel in our kingdom!” He did not mean a word he was saying. Wolsey was dissatisfied with everything—with the refusal of the *decretal*, and with the drawing up of the *commission*, as well as of the *engagement* (which arrived soon after in good condition, so far as the outside was concerned). But the king’s ill humor would infallibly recoil on Wolsey, so putting a good face on a bad matter, he ruminated in secret on the means of obtaining what had been refused him. “Write to Gardiner,” said he to Fox, “that everything makes me desire the pope’s *decretal*—the need of unburdening my conscience, of being able to reply to the calumniators who will attack my judgment, and the thought of the accidents to which the life of man is exposed. Let his holiness, then, pronounce the divorce himself; we engage on our part to keep his resolution secret. But order Master Stephen to employ every kind of persuasion that his *rhetoric* can imagine.” In case the pope should positively refuse the decretal, Wolsey required that at least Campeggio should share the responsibility of the divorce with him. This was not all; while reading the engagement, Wolsey discovered the loophole which had escaped Gardiner, and this is what he contrived: “The *engagement* which the pope has sent us,” he wrote to Gardiner, “is drawn up in such terms that he can retract it at pleasure; we must therefore find some good way to obtain another. You may do it under this pretence. You will appear before his holiness with a dejected air, and tell him that the courier, to whom the conveyance of the said engagement was entrusted, fell into the water with his dispatches, so that the rescripts were totally defaced and illegible; that I have not dared deliver it into the king’s hands, and unless his holiness will grant you a duplicate, some notable blame will be imputed unto you for not taking better care in its transmission. And further, you will continue: ‘I remember the expressions of the former document, and to save your holiness trouble, I will dictate them to your secretary.’ Then,” added Wolsey, “while the secretary is writing, you will find means to introduce, without its being perceived, as many *fat, pregnant*, and available words as possible, to bind the pope and enlarge my powers, the politic handling of which the king’s highness and I commit unto your good discretion.”
Such was the expedient invented by Wolsey. The papal secretary, imagining he was making a fresh copy of the original document (which was, by the way, in perfect condition) was at the dictation of the ambassador to draw up another of a different tenor. The “politic handling” of the cardinal-legate, which was not very unlike forgery, throws a disgraceful light on the policy of the sixteenth century.

Wolsey read this letter to the chief-almoner, and then, to set his conscience at rest, he added piously, “In an affair of such high importance, on which depends the glory or the ruin of the realm, my honor or my disgrace, the condemnation of my soul or my everlasting merit, I will listen solely to the voice of my conscience, and I shall act in such a manner as to be able to render an account to God without fear.”

Wolsey did more; it seems that the boldness of his declarations reassured him with regard to the baseness of his works. Being at Greenwich on the following Sunday, he said to the king in the presence of Fox, Bell, Wolman, and Tuke, “I am bound to your royal person more than any subject was ever bound to his prince. I am ready to sacrifice my goods, my blood, my life for you. ... But my obligations towards God are greater still. For that cause, rather than act against His will, I would endure the extremest evils. I would suffer your royal indignation, and, if necessary, deliver my body to the executioners that they might cut it in pieces.” What could be the spirit then impelling Wolsey? Was it blindness or impudence? He may have been sincere in the words he addressed to Henry; at the bottom of his heart he may have desired to set the pope above the king, and the church of Rome above the kingdom of England; and this desire may have appeared to him a sublime virtue, such as would hide a multitude of sins. What the public conscience would have called treason was heroism to the Romish priest. This zeal for the papacy is sometimes met with in conjunction with the most flagrant immorality. If Wolsey deceived the pope, it was to save popery in the realm of England. Fox, Bell, Wolman, and Tuke listened to him with astonishment. Henry, who thought he knew his man, received these holy declarations without alarm, and the cardinal having thus eased his conscience, proceeded boldly in his iniquities. It seems, however, that the inward reproaches which he silenced in public, had their revenge in secret. One of his officers, entering his private room shortly afterwards, presented a letter addressed to Campeggio for his signature. It ended thus: “I hope all things shall be done according to the will of God, the desire of the king, the quiet of the kingdom, and to our honor with a good conscience.” The cardinal having read the letter, dashed out the last four words. Conscience has a sting from which none can escape, not even a Wolsey.

However, Gardiner lost no time in Italy. When he met Campeggio (to whom Henry VIII had given a palace at Rome and a bishopric in England), he entreated him to go to London and pronounce the divorce. This prelate, who was to be empowered in 1530 with authority to crush Protestantism in Germany, seemed bound to undertake a mission that would save Romanism in Britain. But proud of his position at Rome, where he acted as the pope’s representative, he cared not for a charge that would undoubtedly draw upon him either Henry’s hatred
or the Emperor's anger. He begged to be excused. The pope spoke in a similar tone. When he was informed of this, the terrible Tudor, beginning to believe that Clement desired to entangle him, as the hunter entangles the lion in his toils, gave vent to his anger on Tuke, Fox, and Gardiner, but particularly on Wolsey. Nor were reasons wanting for this explosion. The cardinal, perceiving that his hatred against Charles had carried him too far, pretended that it was without his orders that Clarencieux, bribed by France, had combined with the French ambassador to declare war against the Emperor, and added that he would have the English king-at-arms put to death as he passed through Calais. This was an infallible means of preventing disagreeable revelations. But the herald, who had been forewarned, crossed by way of Boulogne, and, without the cardinal's knowledge, obtained an interview with Henry, before whom he placed the orders he had received from Wolsey in three consecutive letters. The king was astonished at his minister's impudence. With an oath he exclaimed, "The man in whom I had most confidence told me quite the contrary." He then summoned Wolsey before him, and reproached him severely for his falsehoods. The wretched man shook like a leaf. Henry appeared to pardon him, but the season of his favor had passed away. Henceforward he kept the cardinal as one of those instruments we make use of for a time, and then throw away when we have no further need of them.

The king's anger against the pope far exceeded that against Wolsey; he trembled from head to foot, rose from his seat, then sat down again, and vented his wrath in the most violent language. "What!" he exclaimed, "I shall exhaust my political combinations, empty my treasury, make war upon my friends, consume my forces... and for whom? ... for a heartless priest who, considering neither the exigencies of my honor, nor the peace of my conscience, nor the prosperity of my kingdom, nor the numerous benefits which I have lavished on him, refuses me a favor, which he ought, as the common father of the faithful, to grant even to an enemy. ... Hypocrite! ... You cover yourself with the cloak of friendship, you flatter us by crafty practices, but you give us only a bastard document, and you say like Pilate, 'It matters little to me if this king perishes, and all his kingdom with him; take him and judge him according to your law'! ... I understand you... you wish to entangle us in the briers, to catch us in a trap, to lure us into a pitfall. ... But we have discovered the snare; we shall escape from your ambuscade, and brave your power."

Such was the language then heard at the court of England, says John Strype, the historian. The monks and priests began to grow alarmed, while the more enlightened minds already saw in the distance the first gleams of religious liberty. One day, at a time when Henry was proving himself a zealous follower of the Romish doctrines, Sir Thomas More was sitting in the midst of his family, when his son-in-law, William Roper, now become a warm papist, exclaimed, "Happy kingdom of England, where no heretic dares show his face!" "That is true, son Roper," said More, "we seem to sit now upon the mountains, treading the heretics under our feet like ants; but I pray God that some of us do not live to see the day when we gladly would wish to be at league with them, to suffer
them to have their churches quietly to themselves, so that they would be content to let us have ours peaceably to ourselves." Roper angrily replied: "By my word, sir, that is very desperately spoken!" More, however, was in the right; genius is sometimes a great diviner. The Reformation was on the point of inaugurating religious liberty, and by that means placing civil liberty on an immovable foundation.

Henry himself grew wiser by degrees. He began to have doubts about the Roman hierarchy, and to ask himself whether a priest-king, embattled in all the political complications of Europe, could be the head of the church of Jesus Christ. Pious individuals in his kingdom recognized in Scripture and in conscience a law superior to the law of Rome, and refused to sacrifice at the command of the church their moral convictions, sanctioned by the revelation of God. The hierarchical system, which claims to absorb man in the papacy, had oppressed the consciences of Christians for centuries. When the Romish Church had required from such as Berengarius, John Huss, Savonarola, John Wesel, and Martin Luther the denial of their consciences enlightened by the Word, that is to say, by the voice of God, it had shown most clearly how great is the iniquity of its claim to substitute papal domination for the sovereignty of Almighty God. "If the Christian consents to this enormous demand of the hierarchy," said the most enlightened men, "if he renounces his own notions of good and evil in favor of the clergy; if he reserves not his right to obey God, who speaks to him in the Bible, rather than men, even if their agreement is universal; if Henry VIII, for instance, should silence his conscience, which condemns his union with his brother’s widow, to obey the clerical voice which approves of it; by that very act he renounces truth, duty, and even God Himself." But we must add that if the rights of conscience were beginning to be understood in England, it was not about such holy matters as these that the pope and Henry were contending. They were both intriguers—both dissatisfied, the one desirous of love, the other of power.

Be that as it may, a feeling of disgust for Rome then took root in the king’s heart, and nothing could afterwards eradicate it. He immediately made every exertion to attract Erasmus to London. Indeed, if Henry separated from the pope, his old friends, the humanists, must be his auxiliaries, and not the heretical doctors. But Erasmus, in a letter dated 1st June, alleged the weak state of his health, the robbers who infested the roads, the wars and rumors of wars then afloat. "Our destiny leads us," he said, "let us yield to it." It is a fortunate thing for England that Erasmus was not its reformer.

Wolsey noted this movement of his master’s, and resolved to make a strenuous effort to reconcile Clement and Henry; his own safety was at stake. He wrote to the pope, to Campeggio, to Da Casale, to all Italy. He declared that if he was ruined, the popedom would be ruined too, so far at least as England was concerned: "I would obtain the decretal bull with my own blood, if possible," he added. "Assure the holy father on my life that no mortal eye shall see it." Finally, he ordered the chief-almoner to write to Gardiner, "If Campeggio does not come, you shall never return to England"—an infallible means of stimulating the secretary’s zeal.
This was the last effort of Henry VIII. The duke of Bourbon and the Prince of Orange had not employed more zeal a year before in scaling the walls of Rome. Wolsey’s fire had inflamed his agents; they argued, entreated, stormed, and threatened. The alarmed cardinals and theologians, assembling at the pope’s call, discussed the matter, mixing political interests with the affairs of the church. At last they understood what Wolsey now communicated to them. “Henry is the most energetic defender of the faith,” they said. “It is only by acceding to his demand that we can preserve the kingdom of England to the popedom. The army of Charles is in full flight, and that of Francis triumphs.” The last of these arguments decided the question; the pope suddenly felt a great sympathy for Wolsey and for the English Church; the Emperor was beaten; therefore he was wrong. Clement granted everything.

First, Campeggio was desired to go to London. The pontiff knew that he might reckon on his intelligence and inflexible adhesion to the interests of the hierarchy; even the cardinal’s gout was of use, for it might help to innumerable delays. Next, on the 8th of June, the pope, then at Viterbo, gave a new commission, by which he conferred on Wolsey and Campeggio the power to declare null and void the marriage between Henry and Catherine, with liberty for the king and queen to form new matrimonial ties. A few days later he signed the famous decretal by which he himself annulléd the marriage between Henry and Catherine, but instead of entrusting it to Gardiner, he gave it to Campeggio, with orders not to let it go out of his hands. Clement was not sure of the course of events; if Charles should decidedly lose his power, the bull would be published in the face of Christendom; if he should recover it, the bull would be burnt. In fact, the flames did actually consume some time afterwards this decree which Clement had wetted with his tears as he put his name to it. Finally, on the 23rd of July, the pope signed a valid engagement, by which he declared beforehand that all retraction of these acts should be null and void.

Campeggio and Gardiner departed. Charles’ defeat was as complete at Rome as at Naples; the justice of his cause had vanished with his army. Nothing, therefore, was wanting to Henry’s desires. He had Campeggio, the commission, the decretal bull of divorce signed by the pope, and the engagement giving an irrevocable value to all these acts. Wolsey was conqueror—the conqueror of Clement! … He had often wished to mount the restive courser of the popedom and to guide it at his will, but each time the unruly steed had thrown him from the saddle. Now he was firm in his seat, and held the horse in hand. Thanks to Charles’ reverses, he was master at Rome. The popedom, whether it was pleased or not, must take the road he had chosen, and before which it had so long recoiled. The king’s joy was unbounded, and equaled only by Wolsey’s. The cardinal, in the fulness of his heart, wishing to show his gratitude to the officers of the Roman court, made them presents of carpets, horses, and vessels of gold. All near Henry felt the effects of his good humor. Anne smiled; the court indulged in amusements; the great affair was about to be accomplished. The union between England and the popedom appeared confirmed forever, and the victory which Rome seemed about to gain
in the British Isles might secure her triumph in the West. Vain omens! Far
different were the events in the womb of the future.

The End of Volume 1, Book Three

BOOK 4
The Two Divorces

CHAPTER 1 "A Thousand Wolsey’s for One Anne Boleyn"
CHAPTER 2 Scripture and the Spreading Revival
CHAPTER 3 Campeggio Arrives in England
CHAPTER 4 The Search for William Tyndale
CHAPTER 5 The Pope Burns his Bull
CHAPTER 6 Wolsey between Scylla and Charybdis
CHAPTER 7 More and Tyndale: A Theological Duel
CHAPTER 8 A Queen’s Pleadings Convict a Court
CHAPTER 9 The Trial Ends in Farce
CHAPTER 10 "Tyndale" Received in a King’s Palace
CHAPTER 11 Wolsey Alone and Facing Ruin
CHAPTER 12 To Introduce Thomas Cranmer
CHAPTER 13 The Dethronement of Cardinal Wolsey
CHAPTER 14 New Leaders and a New Policy
CHAPTER 15 "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus..."
CHAPTER 16 Wolsey Falls like Lucifer
CHAPTER 1
"A Thousand Wolsey’s for One Anne Boleyn"

While England seemed binding herself to the court of Rome, the general course of the church and of the world gave stronger presage every day of the approaching emancipation of Christendom. The respect which for so many centuries had hedged in the Roman pontiff was everywhere shaken; the Reform, already firmly established in several states of Germany and Switzerland, was extending in France, the Low Countries, and Hungary, and beginning in Sweden, Denmark, and Scotland. The South of Europe appeared indeed submissive to the Romish church, but Spain, at heart, cared little for the pontifical infallibility, and even Italy began to inquire whether the papal dominion was not an obstacle to her prosperity. England, notwithstanding appearances, was also going to throw off the yoke of the bishops of the Tiber, and many faithful voices might already be heard demanding that the Word of God should be acknowledged the supreme authority in the church.

The conquest of Christian Britain by the papacy occupied all the seventh century, as we have seen. The sixteenth was the counterpart of the seventh. The struggle which England then had to sustain, in order to free herself from the power that had enslaved her during nine hundred years, was full of sudden changes, like those of the times of Augustine and Oswiu. This struggle indeed took place in each of the countries where the church was reformed, but nowhere can it be traced in all its diverse phases so distinctly as in Great Britain. The positive work of the Reformation—that which consisted in recovering the truth and life so long lost—was nearly the same everywhere, but as regards the negative work—the struggle with the popedom—we might almost say that other nations committed to England the task by which they were all to profit. An unenlightened piety may perhaps look upon the relations of the court of London with the court of Rome, at the period of the Reformation, as void of interest to the faith, but history will not think the same. It has been too often forgotten that the main point in this contest was not the divorce (which was only the occasion) but the contest itself and its important consequences. The divorce of Henry Tudor and Catherine of Aragon is a secondary event, but the divorce of England and the popedom is a primary event, one of the great watersheds of history, a creative act (so to speak) which still exercises a profound influence over the destinies of mankind. And accordingly, everything connected with it is full of instruction for us. Already a great number of pious men had attached themselves to the authority of God, but the king and that part of the nation who were strangers to the evangelical faith, clung to Rome,
which Henry had so valiantly defended. The Word of God had spiritually separated England from the papacy; the "great matter" separated it materially. There is a close relationship between these two divorces, which gives extreme importance to the process between Henry and Catherine. When a great revolution is to be effected in the bosom of a people (we have the Reformation particularly in view), God instructs the minority by the Holy Scriptures, and the majority by the dispensations of the divine government. Facts undertake to push forward those whom the more spiritual voice of the Word leaves behind. England, profiting by this great teaching of facts, has thought it her duty ever since to avoid all contact with a power that had deceived her; she has thought that popery could not have the dominion over a people without infringing on its vitality, and that it was only by emancipating themselves from this priestly dictatorship that modern nations could advance safely in the paths of liberty, order, and greatness.

For more than a year, as Henry’s complaints testify, Anne hesitated to give Henry encouragement in his love-suit. She seems to have halted between two opinions. The despairing king saw that he must set other springs to work, and, taking Lord Rochford aside, he unfolded his plans to him. The ambitious father promised to do all in his power to influence his daughter. "The divorce is a settled thing," he said to her, "you have no control over it. The only question is, whether it shall be you or another who shall give an heir to the crown. Bear in mind that terrible revolutions threaten England, if the king has no son." Thus did everything combine to weaken Anne’s resolution. The voice of her father, the interests of her country, the king’s love, and doubtless some secret ambition, influenced her to grasp the proffered scepter. These thoughts haunted her in society, in solitude, and even in her dreams. At one time she imagined herself on the throne, distributing to the people her charities and the Word of God; at another, in some obscure exile, leading a useless life, in tears and ignominy. When, in the sports of her imagination, the crown of England appeared all glittering before her, she at first rejected it; but afterwards that regal ornament seemed so beautiful, and the power it conferred so enviable, that she repelled it less energetically. Anne still refused, however, to give the so ardently solicited assent.

Henry, troubled by her hesitation, wrote to her frequently, and usually in French. As the court of Rome makes use of these letters, which are kept in the Vatican, to abuse the Reformation, we think it our duty to quote them. The theft committed by a cardinal has preserved them for us, and we shall see that, far from supporting the calumnies that have been spread abroad, they tend, on the contrary, to refute them. We are far from approving their contents as a whole, but we cannot deny to the young lady, to whom they are addressed, the possession of noble and generous sentiments.

Henry, unable to support the anguish caused by Anne’s refusal, wrote to her, as it is generally supposed, in May 1528:
"By revolving in my mind the contents of your last letters, I have put myself into great agony, not knowing how to interpret them, whether to my disadvantage, as I understand some passages, or not, as I conclude from others. I beseech you earnestly to let me know your real mind as to the love between us two. It is needful for me to obtain this answer of you, having been for a whole year wounded with the dart of love, and not yet assured whether I shall succeed in finding a place in your heart and affection. This uncertainty has hindered me of late from declaring you my mistress, lest it should prove that you only entertain for me an ordinary affection. But if you please to do the duty of a true and loyal mistress, and to give up yourself, body and heart, to me... I promise you that not only the name shall be given to you, but also that I will take you for my mistress, casting off all others that are in competition with you, out of my thoughts, and affection, and serving you only. I beg you to give an entire answer to this my rude letter, that I may know on what and how far I may depend. But if it does not please you to answer me in writing, let me know some place where I may have it by word of mouth, and I will go thither with all my heart. No more for fear of tiring you. Written by the hand of him who would willingly remain yours,

"H. Rex."

Such were the affectionate, and, we may add (if we think of the time and the man) the respectful terms employed by Henry in writing to Anne Boleyn. The latter, without making any promises, betrayed some little affection for the king, and added to her reply an emblematical jewel, representing "a solitary damsel in a boat tossed by the tempest," wishing thus to make the prince understand the dangers to which his love exposed her. Henry was ravished and immediately replied:

"For a present so valuable, that nothing could be more (considering the whole of it), I return you my most hearty thanks, not only on account of the costly diamond, and the ship in which the solitary damsel is tossed about, but chiefly for the fine interpretation, and the too humble submission which your goodness hath made to me. Your favour I will always seek to preserve, and this is my firm intention and hope, according to the matter, aut illic aut nullibi [either here or nowhere].

"The demonstrations of your affections are such, the fine thoughts of your letter so cordially expressed, that they oblige me for ever to honour, love, and serve you sincerely. I beseech you to continue in the same firm and constant purpose, and assuring you that, on my part, I will not only make you a suitable return, but
outdo you, so great is the loyalty of the heart that desires to please you. I desire, also, that if, at any time before this, I have in any way offended you, that you would give me the same absolution that you ask, assuring you, that hereafter my heart shall be dedicated to you alone. … God can do it, if he pleases, to whom I pray once a day for that end, hoping that at length my prayers will be heard. I wish the time may be short, but I shall think it long till we see one another. Written by the hand of that secretary, who in heart, body, and will, is

"Your loyal and most faithful Servant,

H. T. Rex."

Nulle autre que ne cherche H. T.
[Henry seeks Anne Boleyn, no other]

Henry was a passionate lover, and history is not called upon to vindicate that cruel prince, but in the preceding letter we cannot discover the language of a seducer. It is impossible to imagine the king praying to God once a day for anything but a lawful union. These daily prayers seem to present the matter in a different light from that which Romanist writers have imagined. Henry thought himself more advanced than he really was. Anne then shrank back; embarrassed by the position she held at court, she begged for one less elevated. The king submitted, although very vexed at first:

"Nevertheless that it belongeth not to a gentleman," he wrote to her, "to put his mistress in the situation of a servant, yet, by following your wishes, I would willingly concede it, if by that means you are less uncomfortable in the place you shall choose than in that where you have been placed by me. I thank you most cordially that you are pleased still to bear me in your remembrance.

"H. T."

Anne, having retired in May to Hever Castle, her father’s residence, the king wrote to her as follows:

"My Mistress and my Friend,

"My heart and I surrender ourselves into your hands, and we supplicate to be commended to your good graces, and that by absence your affections may not be diminished to us. For that would be to augment our pain, which would be a great pity, which absence alone does sufficiently, and more than I could ever have
thought. This brings to my mind a fact in astronomy, which is, that the farther off is the sun, yet the more scorching is his heat. Thus is it with our love; absence has placed distance between us, nevertheless fervour increases, at least on my part. I hope the same from you, assuring you that in my case the anguish of absence is so great that it would be intolerable were it not for the firm hope I have of your indissoluble affection towards me. In order to remind you of it, and because I cannot in person be in your presence, I send you the thing which comes nearest that is possible, that is to say, my picture, ... set in bracelets, wishing myself in their place when it pleases you. This is from the hand of

"Your Servant and Friend,

"H. T. Rex."

Pressed by her father, her uncles, and by Henry, Anne’s firmness was shaken. That crown, rejected by Renée and by Margaret, dazzled the young Englishwoman; every day she found some new charm in it, and gradually familiarizing herself with her new future, she said at last, "If the king becomes free, I shall be willing to marry him." This was a great fault, but Henry was at the height of joy.

The courtiers watched with observant eyes these developments of the king’s affection, and were already preparing the homage which they proposed to lay at Anne Boleyn’s feet. But there was one man at court whom Henry’s resolution filled with sorrow—this was Wolsey. He had been the first to suggest to the king the idea of separating from Catherine, but if Anne is to succeed her, there must be no divorce. He had first alienated Catherine’s party; he was now going to irritate that of the Boleyn’s; accordingly he began to fear that, whatever might be the issue of this affair, it would cause his ruin. He took frequent walks in his park at Hampton Court, accompanied by the French ambassador, John du Bellay, the confidant of his sorrows; "I would willingly lose one of my fingers," he said, "if I could only have two hours’ conversation with the king of France." At another time, fancying all England was pursuing him, he said with alarm, "The king my master and all his subjects will cry murder against me; they will fall upon me more fiercely than on a Turk, and all Christendom will rise against me!" The next day Wolsey, to gain the French ambassador, gave him a long history of what he had done for France against the wishes of all England: "I need much dexterity in my affairs," he added, "and must use a terrible alchemy." But alchemy could not save him. Rarely has so much anguish been veiled beneath such grandeur. Du Bellay was moved with pity at the sight of the unhappy man’s sufferings. "When he gives way," he wrote to Montmorency, "it lasts a day together—he is continually sighing. You have never seen a man in such anguish of mind."

In truth Wolsey’s reason was tottering. That fatal idea of the divorce was the cause of all his woes, and to be able to recall it, he would have given, not a
Henry had started his car down the steep, and whoever attempted to stop it must needs be crushed beneath its wheels. However, the cardinal tried to obtain something. Francis I had intercepted a letter from Charles V in which the Emperor spoke of the divorce as likely to raise the English nation in revolt. Wolsey caused this letter to be read to the king, in the hope that it would excite his serious apprehensions, but Henry only frowned, and Du Bellay, to whom the monarch ascribed the report on these troubles foreboded by Charles, received a "gentle lash." This was the sole result of the maneuver.

Wolsey now resolved to broach this important subject in a straightforward manner. The step might prove his ruin, but if he succeeded he was saved and the popedom with him. Accordingly, one day (shortly before the sweating sickness broke out, says Du Bellay, probably in June 1528) Wolsey openly prayed the king to renounce his design; his own reputation, he told him, the prosperity of England, the peace of Europe, the safety of the church, all required it; besides the pope would never grant the divorce. While the cardinal was speaking, Henry's face grew black, and before he had concluded the king's anger broke out. "The king used terrible words," said Du Bellay. He would have given a thousand Wolsey's for one Anne Boleyn. "No other than God shall take her from me," was his most decided resolution.

Wolsey, now no longer doubting of his disgrace, began to take his measures accordingly. He commenced building in several places, in order to win the affections of the common people; he took great care of his bishoprics, in order that they might ensure him an easy retreat; he was affable to the courtiers, and thus covered the earth with flowers to deaden his fall. Then he would sigh as if he were disgusted with honors, and would celebrate the charms of solitude. He did more than this. Seeing plainly that the best way of recovering the king's favor would be to conciliate Anne Boleyn, he made her the most handsome presents, and assured her that all his efforts would now be directed to raise her to the throne of England. Anne believing these declarations, replied that she would help him in her turn, "as long as any breath was in her body." Even Henry had no doubt that the cardinal had profited by his lesson.

Thus were all parties restless and uneasy—Henry desiring to marry Lady Anne, the courtiers to get rid of Wolsey, and the latter to remain in power—when a serious event appeared to put everyone in harmony with his neighbor. About the middle of June, the terrible sweating sickness (sudor anglicus) broke out in England. The citizens of London, "thick as flies," said Du Bellay, suddenly feeling pains in the head and heart, rushed from the streets or shops to their chambers, began to sweat, and took to their beds. The disease made frightful and rapid progress, a burning heat preyed on their limbs; if they chanced to uncover themselves, the perspiration ceased, delirium came on, and in four hours the victim was dead and "stiff as a wall," says the French ambassador. Every family was in mourning. Sir Thomas More, kneeling by his daughter's bedside, burst into tears, and called upon God to save his beloved Margaret. Wolsey, who was at Hampton Court, suspecting nothing amiss, arrived in London as usual to preside in the Court of Chancery, but he ordered his horses
to be saddled again immediately and rode back. In four days, 2,000 persons
died in London.
The court was at first safe from the contagion, but on the fourth day one of
Anne Boleyn’s ladies was attacked; it was as if a thunderbolt had fallen on the
palace. The king removed with all haste, and stayed at a place twelve miles
off, for he was not prepared to die. He ordered Anne to return to her father,
invited the queen to join him, and took up his residence at Waltham. His real
conscience awoke only in the presence of death. Four of his attendants and a
friar, Anne’s confessor, as it would appear, falling ill, the king departed for
Hunsdon. He had been there two days only when Powis, Carew, Carton, and
others of his court, were carried off in two or three hours. Henry had met an
enemy whom he could not vanquish. He quitted the place attacked by the
disease; he removed to another quarter, and when the sickness laid hold of any
of his attendants in his new retreat, he again left that for a new asylum. Terror
froze his blood; he wandered about pursued by that terrible scythe whose
sweep might perhaps reach him; he cut off all communication, even with his
servants; shut himself up in a room at the top of an isolated tower; ate all
alone, and would see no one but his physician; he prayed, fasted, confessed,
became reconciled with the queen; took the sacrament every Sunday and feast
day; received his Maker, to use the words of a gentleman of his chamber; and
the queen and Wolsey did the same. Nor was that all; his councilor, Sir Brian
Tukey, was sick in Essex; but that mattered not; the king ordered him to come
to him, even in his litter; and on the 20th of June, Henry, after hearing three
masses (he had never done so much before in one day) said to Tuke, "I want
you to write my will." He was not the only one who took that precaution.
"There were a hundred thousand made," says Du Bellay.
During this time, Anne in her retirement at Hever was calm and collected; she
prayed much, particularly for the king and for Wolsey. But Henry, far less
submissive, was very anxious. "The uneasiness my doubts about your health
gave me," he wrote to her, "disturbed and frightened me exceedingly, but now,
since you have as yet felt nothing, I hope it is with you as it is with us. ... I beg
you, my entirely beloved, not to frighten yourself, or be too uneasy at our
absence, for wherever I am, I am yours. And yet we must sometimes submit to
our misfortunes, for whoever will struggle against fate, is generally but so
much the farther from gaining his end. Wherefore, comfort yourself and take
courage, and make this misfortune as easy to you as you can."
As he received no news, Henry’s uneasiness increased; he sent to Anne a
messenger and a letter: "To acquit myself of the duty of a true servant, I send
you this letter, beseeching you to apprise me of your welfare, which I pray may
continue as long as I desire mine own."
Henry’s fears were well founded; the malady became more severe; in four
hours eighteen persons died at the archbishop of Canterbury’s; Anne Boleyn
herself and her brother also caught the infection. The king was exceedingly
agitated; Anne alone appeared calm; the strength of her character raised her
above exaggerated fears; but her enemies ascribed her calmness to other
motives. "Her ambition is stronger than death," they said. "The king, queen,
and cardinal tremble for their lives, but she... she would die content if she
died a queen.” Henry once more changed his residence. All the gentlemen of
his privy-chamber were attacked with one exception; “he remained alone,
keeping himself apart,” says Du Bellay, and confessed every day. He wrote
again to Anne, sending her his physician, Dr. Butts: “The most displeasing news
that could occur came to me suddenly at night. On three accounts I must
lament it. One, to hear of the illness of my mistress, whom I esteem more than
all the world, and whose health I desire as I do my own. I would willingly bear
half of what you suffer to cure you. The second, from the fear that I shall have
to endure my wearisome absence much longer, which has hitherto given me all
the vexation that was possible; and when gloomy thoughts fill my mind, then I
pray God to remove far from me such troublesome and rebellious ideas. The
third, because my physician, in whom I have most confidence, is absent. Yet,
from the want of him, I send you my second, and hope that he will soon make
you well. I shall then love him more than ever. I beseech you to be guided by
his advice in your illness. By your doing this, I hope soon to see you again,
which will be to me a greater comfort than all the precious jewels in the
world.”
The pestilence soon broke out with more violence around Henry; he fled in
alarm to Hatfield, taking with him only the gentlemen of his chamber; he next
quitted this place for Tittenhanger, a house belonging to Wolsey, whence he
commanded “general processions” throughout the kingdom in order to avert this
scourge of God. At the same time he wrote to Wolsey, “As soon as any one falls
ill in the place where you are, fly to another, and go thus from place to place.”
The poor cardinal was still more alarmed than Henry. As soon as he felt the
slightest perspiration, he fancied himself a dead man. “I entreat your highness,”
he wrote trembling to the king on the 5th of July, “to show yourself full of pity
for my soul; these are perhaps the last words I shall address to you... the whole
world will see by my last testament that you have not bestowed your favour
upon an ungrateful man.” The king, perceiving that Wolsey’s mind was
affected, bade him “put apart fear and fantasies,” and wear a cheerful humor
in the midst of death.
At last the sickness began to diminish, and immediately the desire to see Anne
revived in Henry’s bosom. On the 18th of August she reappeared at court, and
all the king’s thoughts were now bent on the divorce.
But this business seemed to proceed in inverse ratio to his desires. There was
no news of Campeggio; was he lost in the Alps or at sea? Did his gout detain
him in some village, or was the announcement of his departure only a feint?
Anne Boleyn herself was uneasy, for she attached great importance to
Campeggio’s coming. If the church annulled the king’s marriage, Anne, seeing
the principal obstacle removed, thought she might accept Henry’s hand. She
therefore wrote to Wolsey, “I long to hear from you news of the legate, for I do
hope (an’ they come from you) they shall be very good.” The king added in a
postscript, “The not hearing of the legate’s arrival in France causeth us
somewhat to muse. Notwithstanding we trust by your diligence and vigilancy
(with the assistance of Almighty God) shortly to be eased out of that trouble.”
But still there was no news. While waiting for the long-desired ambassador, every one at the English court played his part as well as he could. Anne, whether from conscience, prudence, or modesty, refused the honors which the king would have showered upon her, and never approached Catherine but with marks of profound respect. Wolsey appeared to desire the divorce, while in reality he dreaded it, as fated to cause his ruin and that of the popedom. Henry strove to conceal the motives which impelled him to separate from the queen; to the bishops, he spoke of his conscience, to the nobility of an heir, and to all of the sad obligation which compelled him to put away so justly beloved a princess. In the meanwhile, he seemed to live on the best terms with her, from what Du Bellay says. But Catherine was the one who best dissembled her sentiments; she lived with the king as during their happiest days, treated Anne with every kindness, adopted an elegant costume, encouraged music and dancing in her apartments, often appeared in public, and seemed desirous of captivating by her gracious smiles the good will of England. This was a mournful comedy, destined to end in tragedy full of tears and agony.

CHAPTER 2
Scripture and the Spreading Revival
1527–29

While these scenes were acting in the royal palaces, far different discussions were going on among the people. After having dwelt for some time on the agitations of the court, we gladly return to the lowly disciples of the divine Word. The Reformation in England (and this is its characteristic) brings before us by turns the king upon his throne, and the laborious artisan in his humble cottage; and between these two extremes we meet with the doctor in his college, and the priest in his pulpit. Among the young men trained at Cambridge under Barnes’ instruction, and who had aided him at the time of his trial, was Miles Coverdale, afterwards bishop of Exeter, a man distinguished by his zeal for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Some time after the prior’s fall, on Easter Eve, 1527, Coverdale and Cromwell met at the house of Sir Thomas More, when Cromwell exhorted the Cambridge student to apply himself to the study of sacred learning. The lapse of his unhappy master had alarmed Coverdale, and he felt the necessity of withdrawing from that outward activity which had proved so fatal to Barnes. He therefore turned to the Scriptures, read them again and again, and perceived, like Tyndale, that the reformation of the church must be effected by the Word of God. The inspiration of that Word, the only foundation of its sovereign authority, had struck Coverdale. “Wherever the Scripture is known it reformeth all things, and setteth everything in order. And why? Because it is given by the inspiration of God.” This fundamental principle of the Reformation in England must, in every age, be that of the church. Coverdale found happiness in his studies. “Now,” he said, “I begin to taste of Holy Scriptures! Now, honor be to God! I am set to the most sweet smell of holy letters.” He did not stop there, but thought it his duty to attempt in
England the work which Tyndale was prosecuting in Germany. The Bible was so important in the eyes of these Christians, that two translations were undertaken simultaneously. "Why should other nations," said Coverdale, "be more plenteously provided for with the Scriptures in their mother tongue than we?" "Beware of translating the Bible!" exclaimed the partisans of the schoolmen, "your labor will only make divisions in the faith and in the people of God." "God has now given His church," replied Coverdale, "the gifts of translating and of printing; we must improve them." And if any friends spoke of Tyndale’s translation, he answered, "Do not you know that when many are shooting together, every one doth his best to be nighest the mark?" "But Scripture ought to exist in Latin only," objected the priests. "No," replied Coverdale again, "the Holy Ghost is as much the author of it in the Hebrew, Greek, French, Dutch, and English, as in Latin. ... The Word of God is of like worthiness and authority, in what language soever the Holy Ghost speaketh it." This does not mean that translations of Holy Scripture are inspired, but that the Word of God, faithfully translated, always possesses a divine authority. Coverdale determined therefore to translate the Bible, and, to procure the necessary books, he wrote to Cromwell, who, during his travels, had made a collection of these precious writings. "Nothing in the world I desire but books, as concerning my learning," he wrote, "like Jacob, you have drunk of the dew of heaven. ... I ask to drink of your waters." Cromwell did not refuse Coverdale his treasures. "Since the Holy Ghost has moved other men to bear the cost of this work," exclaimed the latter, "God gives me boldness to labor in the same." He commenced without delay, saying, "Whosoever believeth not the Scripture, believeth not Christ; and whoso refuseth it, refuseth God also." Such were the foundations of the reformed church in England.

Coverdale did not undertake to translate the Scriptures as a mere literary task; the Spirit which had moved him spoke to his heart, and tasting their life-giving promises, he expressed his happiness in pious songs:

Be glad now, all ye christen men,
   And let us rejoice unfaynedly.
The kyndnesse cannot be written with penne,
   That we have receaved of God’s mercy;
Whose love towarde us hath never ende:
He hath done for us as a frende;
   Now let us thanke him hartely.
These loyynge wordes he spake to me:
   I wyll delyver thy soule from payne;
I am desposed to do for thee,
   And to myne owne selfe thee to retayne.
Thou shalt be with me, for thou art myne;
And I with thee, for I am thyne;
   Soch is my love, I can not layne.
They wyll shed out my precyous bloude,
   And take away my lyfe also;
Which I wyll suffre all for thy good:
Beleve this sure, where ever thou go.
For I wyll yet ryse up agayne;
Thy synnes I beare, though it be payne,
To make thee safe and free from wo.

Coverdale did not remain long in the solitude he desired. The study of the Bible, which had attracted him to it, soon drew him out of it. A revival was going on in Essex; John Tyball, an inhabitant of Bumpstead, having learnt to find in Jesus Christ the true bread from heaven, did not stop there. One day as he was reading the first epistle to the Corinthians, these words: “eat of this bread,” and “drink of this cup,” repeated four times within a few verses, convinced him that there was no transubstantiation. “A priest has no power to create the body of the Lord,” said he, “Christ truly is present in the Eucharist, but He is there only for him that believeth, and by a spiritual presence and action only.” Tyball, disgusted with the Romish clergy and worship, and convinced that Christians are called to a universal priesthood, soon thought that men could do without a special ministry, and, without denying the offices mentioned in Scripture, as some Christians have done since, he attached no importance to them. “Priesthood is not necessary,” he said, “every layman may administer the sacraments as well as a priest.” The minister of Bumpstead, one Richard Foxe, and next a greyfriar of Colchester named Meadow, were successively converted by Tyball’s energetic preaching.

Coverdale, who was living not far from these parts, having heard speak of this religious revival, came to Bumpstead, and went into the pulpit on the 29th of March 1528, to proclaim the treasures contained in Scripture. Among his hearers was an Augustine monk, named Topley, who was supplying Foxe’s place during his absence. This monk, while staying at the parsonage, had found a copy of Wycliffe’s Wicket, which he read eagerly. His conscience was wounded by it, and all seemed to totter about him. He had gone to church full of doubt, and after divine service he waited upon the preacher, exclaiming, “O my sins, my sins!” “Confess yourself to God,” said Coverdale, “and not to a priest. God accepteth the confession which cometh from the heart, and blotteth out all your sins.” The monk believed in the forgiveness of God, and became a zealous evangelist for the surrounding country.

The divine Word had hardly lighted one torch, before that kindled another. At Colchester, in the same county, a worthy man named Pykas had received a copy of the Epistles of Saint Paul from his mother, with this advice: “My son, live according to these writings, and not according to the teaching of the clergy.” Some time after, Pykas having bought a New Testament, and “read it thoroughly many times,” a total change took place in him. “We must be baptized by the Holy Ghost,” he said, and these words passed like a breath of life over his simple-minded hearers. One day, Pykas having learnt that Bilney, the first of the Cambridge doctors who had known the power of God’s Word, was preaching at Ipswich, he proceeded thither, for he never refused to listen to a priest, when that priest proclaimed the truth. “O, what a sermon! how full of the Holy Ghost!” exclaimed Pykas.
From that period, meetings of the brothers in Christ (for this they were called) increased in number. They read the New Testament, and each imparted to the others what he had received for the instruction of all. One day when the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew had been read, Pykas, who was sometimes wrong in the spiritual interpretation of Scripture, remarked, "When the Lord declares that not one stone of the temple shall be left upon another, he speaks of those haughty priests who persecute those whom they call heretics, and who pretend to be the temple of God. God will destroy them all." After protesting against the priest, he protested against the host. "The real body of Jesus Christ is in the Word," he said, "God is in the Word, the Word is in God. God and the Word cannot be separated. Christ is the living Word that nourishes the soul." These humble preachers increased. Even women knew the Epistles and Gospels by heart; Marion Matthew, Dorothy Long, Catherine Swain, Alice Gardiner, and, above all, Gyrling’s wife, who had been in service with a priest lately burnt for heresy, took part in these gospel meetings. And it was not in cottages only that the glad tidings were then proclaimed; Bower Hall, the residence of the squires of Bumpstead, was open to Foxe, Topley, and Tyball, who often read the Holy Scriptures in the great hall of the mansion, in the presence of the master and all their household—a humble Reformation more real than that effected by Henry VIII.

There was, however, some diversity of opinion among these brethren. "All who have begun to believe," said Tyball, Pykas, and others, "ought to meet together to hear the Word and increase in faith. We pray in common... and that constitutes a church." Coverdale, Bilney, and Latimer willingly recognized these incomplete societies, in which the members met simply as disciples; they believed them necessary at a period when the church was forming. These societies (in the reformers’ views) proved that organization has not the priority in the Christian church, as Rome maintains, and that this priority belongs to the faith and the life. But this imperfect form they also regarded as provisional. To prevent numerous dangers, it was necessary that this society should be succeeded by another, the church of the New Testament, with its elders or bishops, and deacons. The Word, they thought, rendered a ministry of the Word necessary; and for its proper exercise not only piety was required, but a knowledge of the sacred languages, the gift of eloquence, its exercise and perfection. However, there was no division among these Christians upon primary matters.

For some time the bishop of London watched this movement with uneasiness. He caused Hacker to be arrested, who, for six years past, had gone from house to house reading the Bible in London and Essex; examined and threatened him, inquired carefully after the names of those who had shown him hospitality; and the poor man in alarm had given up about forty of his brethren. Sebastian Harris, priest of Kensington, Forman, rector of All Hallows, John and William Pykas, and many others, were summoned before the bishop. They were taken to prison; they were led before the judges; they were put in the stocks; they were tormented in a thousand ways. Their minds became confused; their
thoughts wandered; and many made the confessions required by their persecutors.
The adversaries of the gospel, proud of this success, now desired a more glorious victory. If they could not reach Tyndale, had they not in London the patron of his work, Monmouth, the most influential of the merchants, and a follower of the true faith? The clergy had made religion their business, and the Reformation was restoring it to the people. Nothing offended the priests so much as that laymen should claim the right to believe without their intervention, and even to propagate the faith. Sir Thomas More, one of the most amiable men of the sixteenth century, participated in their hatred. He wrote to Cochlæus, "Germany now daily bringeth forth monsters more deadly than what Africa was wont to do. But, alas! she is not alone. Numbers of Englishmen, who would not a few years ago even hear Luther’s name mentioned, are now publishing his praises! England is now like the sea, which swells and heaves before a great storm, without any wind stirring it." More felt particularly irritated, because the boldness of the gospellers had succeeded to the timidity of the Lollards. "The heretics," he said, "have put off hypocrisy, and put on impudence." He therefore resolved to set his hand to the work. On the 14th of May 1529, Monmouth was in his shop, when an usher came and summoned him to appear before Sir John Dauncies, one of the privy council. The pious merchant obeyed, striving to persuade himself that he was wanted on some matter of business, but in this he was deceived, as he soon found out. On arrival he was interrogated by Sir Thomas More, who, with Sir William Kingston, was Sir John’s colleague. "What letters and books have you lately received from abroad?" asked Sir Thomas More, with some severity. "None," replied Monmouth. "What aid have you given to any persons living on the continent?" "None, for these last three years. William Tyndale abode with me six months," he continued, "and his life was what a good priest’s ought to be. I gave him ten pounds at the period of his departure, but nothing since. Besides, he is not the only one I have helped; the bishop of London’s chaplain, for instance, has received of me more than £50." "What books have you in your possession?" The merchant named the New Testament and some other works. "All these books have lain more than two years on my table, and I never heard that either priests, friars, or laymen learnt any great errors from them." More tossed his head. "It is a hard matter," he used to say, "to put a dry stick in the fire without its burning, or to nourish a snake in our bosom and not be stung by it." "That is enough," he continued, "we shall go and search your house." Not a paper escaped their curiosity, but they found nothing to compromise Monmouth; he was however sent to the Tower. After some interval the merchant was again brought before his judges. "You are accused," said More, "of having bought Martin Luther’s tracts; of maintaining those who are translating the Scriptures into English; of subscribing to get the New Testament printed in English, with or without glosses; of having imported it into the kingdom; and, lastly, of having said that faith alone is sufficient to save a man."
Here was matter enough to burn several men. Monmouth, feeling convinced that Wolsey alone had power to deliver him, resolved to apply to him. "What will become of my poor workmen in London and in the country during my imprisonment?" he wrote to the cardinal. "They must have their money every week; who will give it them? ... Besides, I make considerable sales in foreign countries, which bring large returns to his majesty’s customs. If I remain in prison, this commerce is stopped, and of course all the proceeds for the exchequer." Wolsey, who was as much a statesman as a churchman, began to melt; on the eve of a struggle with the pope and the Emperor, he feared, besides, to make the people discontented. Monmouth was released from prison. As alderman, and then as sheriff of London, he was faithful until death, and ordered in his last will that thirty sermons should be preached by the most evangelical ministers in England, "to make known the holy word of Jesus Christ." "That is better," he thought, "than founding masses." The Reformation showed, in the sixteenth century, that great activity in commerce might be allied to great piety.

CHAPTER 3
Campeggio Arrives in England
July to November, 1528

While these persecutions were agitating the fields and the capital of England, all had changed in the ecclesiastical world, because all had changed in the political. The pope, pressed by Henry VIII and intimidated by the armies of Francis I, had granted the decretal and dispatched Campeggio. But, on a sudden, there was a new development; a change of events brought a change of counsels. Doria had gone over to the Emperor; his fleet had restored abundance to Naples; the army of Francis I, ravaged by famine and pestilence, had capitulated, and Charles V, triumphant in Italy, had said proudly to the pope, "We are determined to defend the queen of England against King Henry’s injustice."

Charles having recovered his superiority, the affrighted pope opened his eyes to the justice of Catherine’s cause. "Send four messengers after Campeggio," said he to his officers, "and let each take a different road; bid them travel with all speed and deliver our dispatches to him." They overtook the legate, who opened the pope’s letters. "In the first place," said Clement VII to him, "protract your journey. In the second place, when you reach England, use every endeavor to reconcile the king and queen. In the third place, if you do not succeed, persuade the queen to take the veil. And in the last place, if she refuses, do not pronounce any sentence favorable to the divorce without a new and express order from me. This is the essential: *Summum et maximum mandatum* [the chief and greatest commandment]. The ambassador of the sovereign pontiff had a mission to do nothing. This instruction is sometimes as effective as any.

Campeggio, the youngest of the cardinals, was the most intelligent and the slowest, and this slowness caused his selection by the pope. He understood his
master. If Wolsey was Henry’s spur to urge on Campeggio, the latter was Clement’s bridle to check Wolsey. One of the judges of the divorce was about to pull forwards, the other backwards; thus the business stood a chance of not advancing at all, which was just what the pope required. The legate, very eager to relax his speed, spent three months on his journey from Italy to England. He should have embarked for France on the 23rd of July; but the end of August was approaching, and no one knew in that country what had become of him. At length they learnt that he had reached Lyons on the 22nd of August. The English ambassador in France sent his horses, carriages, plate, and money, in order to hasten his progress; the legate complained of the gout, and Gardiner found the greatest difficulty in getting him to move. Henry wrote every day to Anne Boleyn, complaining of the slow progress of the nuncio. “He arrived in Paris last Sunday or Monday,” he says at the beginning of September, “Monday next we shall hear of his arrival in Calais, and then I shall obtain what I have so longed for, to God’s pleasure and both our comforts.” At the same time this impatient prince sent message after message to accelerate the legate’s rate of traveling.

Anne began to desire a future which surpassed all that her youthful imagination had conceived, and her agitated heart expanded to the breath of hope. She wrote to Wolsey:

“This shall be to give unto your Grace, as I am most bound, my humble thanks for the great pain and travail that your Grace doth take in studying, by your wisdom and great diligence, how to bring to pass honourably the greatest wealth [well-being] that is possible to come to any creature living, and in especial remembering how wretched and unworthy I am in comparison to his Highness. … Now, good my lord, your discretion may consider as yet how little it is in my power to recompense you but alonely [only] with my good will, the which I assure you, look what thing in this world I can imagine to do you pleasure in, you shall find me the gladdest woman in the world to do it.”

But the impatience of the king of England and of Anne seemed as if it would never be satisfied. Campeggio, on his way through Paris, told Francis I that the divorce would never take place, and that he should soon go to Spain to see Charles V. … This was significative. “The king of England ought to know,” said the indignant Francis to the duke of Suffolk, “that Campeggio is imperialist at heart, and that his mission in England will be a mere mockery.” In truth, the Spanish and Roman factions tried every maneuver to prevent a union they detested. Anne Boleyn, queen of England, signified not only Catherine humbled, but Charles offended; the clerical party weakened, perhaps destroyed; and the evangelical party probably strengthened. The Romish faction found accomplices even in Anne’s own family. Her brother
George's wife, a proud and passionate woman, and a rigid Roman catholic, had sworn an implacable hatred against her young sister. By this means wounds might be inflicted, even in the domestic sanctuary, which would not be the less deep because they were the work of her own kindred. One day we are told that Anne found in her chamber a book of pretended prophecies, in which was a picture representing a king, a queen shedding tears, and at their feet a young lady headless. Anne turned away her eyes with disgust. She desired, however, to know what this emblem signified, and officious friends brought to her one of those pretended wise men, so numerous at all times, who abuse the credulity of the ignorant by professing to interpret such mysteries. "This prophetic picture," he said, "represents the history of the king and his wife." Anne was not credulous, but she understood what her enemies meant to insinuate, and dismissed the mock interpreter without betraying any signs of fear; then turning to her favorite attendant, Anne Saville, "Come hither, Nan," said she, "look at this book of prophecies; this is the king, this is the queen wringing her hands and mourning, and this (putting her finger on the bleeding body) is myself, with my head cut off." The young lady answered with a shudder, "If I thought it were true, I would not myself have him were he an emperor." "Tut, Nan," replied Anne Boleyn with a smile, "I think the book a bauble, and am resolved to have him, that my issue may be royal, whatever may become of me." This story is based on good authority, and there were so many predictions of this kind afloat that it was very possible one of them might come true; people afterwards recollected only the prophecies confirmed by the events. But, be that as it may, this young lady, so severely chastised in after-days, found in her God an abundant consolation.

At length Campeggio embarked at Calais on the 29th of September, and unfortunately for him he had an excellent passage across the channel. A storm to drive him back to the French coast would have suited him admirably. But on the first of October he was at Canterbury, whence he announced his arrival to the king. At this news, Henry forgot all the delays which had so irritated him. "His majesty can never be sufficiently grateful to your holiness for so great a favour," wrote Wolsey to the pope, "but he will employ his riches, his kingdom, his life even, and deserve the name of Restorer of the Church as justly as he has gained that of Defender of the Faith." This zeal alarmed Campeggio, for the pope wrote to him that any proceeding which might irritate Charles would inevitably cause the ruin of the church. The nuncio became more dilatory than ever, and although he reached Canterbury on the first of October, he did not arrive at Dartford until the fifth, thus taking four days for a journey of about thirty miles.

Meanwhile preparations were making to receive him in London. Wolsey, feeling contempt for the poverty of the Roman cardinals, and very uneasy about the equipage with which his colleague was likely to make his entrance into the capital, sent a number of showy chests, rich carpets, litters hung with drapery, and harnessed mules. On the other hand Campeggio, whose secret mission was to keep in the background, and above all to do nothing, feared these banners, and trappings, and all the parade of a triumphal entry. Alleging therefore an
attack of gout in order to escape from the pomps his colleague had prepared for him, he quietly took a boat, and thus reached the palace of the bishop of Bath, where he was to lodge.

While the nuncio was thus proceeding unnoticed up the Thames, the equipages sent by Wolsey entered London through the midst of a gaping crowd, who looked on them with curiosity as if they had come from the banks of the Tiber. Some of the mules however took fright and ran away, the coffers fell off and burst open, when there was a general rush to see their contents, but to the surprise of all they were empty. This was an excellent jest for the citizens of London. "Fine outside, empty inside; a just emblem of the popedom, its embassy, and foolish pomps," they said, "a sham legate, a procession of masks, and the whole a farce!"

Campeggio was come at last, and now what he dreaded most was an audience. "I cannot move," he said, "or endure the motion of a litter." Never had an attack of gout been more seasonable. Wolsey, who paid him frequent visits, soon found him to be his equal in cunning. To no purpose did he treat him with every mark of respect, shaking his hand and making much of him; it was labor lost, the Roman nuncio would say nothing, and Wolsey began to despair. The king, on the contrary, was full of hope, and fancied he already had the act of divorce in his portfolio, because he had the nuncio in his kingdom.

The greatest effect of the nuncio’s arrival was the putting an end to Anne Boleyn’s indecision. She had several relapses; the trials which she foresaw, and the grief Catherine must necessarily feel, had agitated her imagination and disturbed her mind. But when she saw the church and her own enemies prepared to pronounce the king’s divorce, her doubts were removed, and she regarded as legitimate the position that was offered her. The king, who suffered from her scruples, was delighted at this change. "I desire to inform you," he wrote to her in English, "what joy it is to me to understand of your conformableness with reason, and of the suppressing of your inutile and vain thoughts and fantasies with the bridle of reason. I assure you all the greatness of this world could not counterpoise for my satisfaction the knowledge and certainty thereof... The unfeigned sickness of this well-willing legate doth somewhat retard his access to your person." It was therefore the determination of the pope’s arrival that made Anne Boleyn resolve to accept Henry’s hand; this is an important lesson for which we are indebted to the Vatican letters. We should be grateful to the papacy for having so carefully preserved them.

But the more Henry rejoiced, the more Wolsey despaired; he would have desired to penetrate into pope Clement’s thoughts, but could not succeed. Imagining that De Angelis, the general of the Spanish Observance, knew all the secrets of the pope and of the Emperor, he conceived the plan of kidnapping him. "If he goes to Spain by sea," said he to Du Bellay, "a good brigantine or two would do the business; and if by land, it will be easier still." Du Bellay failed not (as he informs us himself) "to tell him plainly that by such proceedings he would entirely forfeit the pope’s good will." "What matter?" replied Wolsey, "I have nothing to lose." As he said this, tears started to his eyes. At last he made
up his mind to remain ignorant of the pontiff’s designs, and wiped his eyes,
awaiting, not without fear, the interview between Henry and Campeggio.
On the 22nd of October, a month after his arrival, the nuncio, borne in a sedan
chair of red velvet, was carried to court. He was placed on the right of the
throne, and his secretary in his name delivered a high-sounding speech,
saluting Henry with the name of Savior of Rome, Liberator urbis. "His majesty,"
replied Fox in the king’s name, "has only performed the duties incumbent on a
Christian prince, and he hopes that the holy see will bear them in mind." "Well
attacked, well defended," said Du Bellay. For the moment, a few Latin
declamations got the papal nuncio out of his difficulties.
Campeggio did not deceive himself; if the divorce were refused, he foresaw the
reformation of England. Yet he hoped still, for he was assured that Catherine
would submit to the judgment of the church; and being fully persuaded that
the queen would refuse the holy father nothing, the nuncio began "his
approaches," as Du Bellay calls them. On the 22nd of October, and again on the
27th, the two cardinals waited on Catherine, and in flattering terms insinuated
that she might prevent the blow which threatened her by voluntary retirement
into a convent. And, then, to end all indecision in the queen’s mind,
Campeggio put on a severe look and exclaimed, "How is it, madam, explain the
mystery to us? From the moment the holy father appointed us to examine the
question of your divorce, you have been seen not only at court, but in public,
wearing the most magnificent ornaments, participating with an appearance of
gaiety and satisfaction at amusements and festivities which you had never
tolerated before. ... The church is in the most cruel embarrassment with
regard to you; the king, your husband, is in the greatest perplexity; the
princess, your daughter, is taken from you... and instead of shedding tears, you
give yourself up to vanity. Renounce the world, madam; enter a nunnery. Our
holy father himself requires this of you."
The agitated queen was almost fainting; stifling her emotion, however, she said
mildly but firmly, "Alas! my lords, is it now a question whether I am the king’s
lawful wife or not, when I have been married to him almost twenty years and
no objection raised before? ... Divers prelates and lords are yet alive who then
adjudged our marriage good and lawful, and now to say it is detestable! this is
a great marvel to me, especially when I consider what a wise prince the king’s
father was, and also the natural love and affection my father, King Ferdinand,
bare unto me. I think that neither of these illustrious princes would have made
me contract an illicit union." At these words, Catherine’s emotion compelled
her to stop; "If I weep, my lords," she continued almost immediately, "it is not
for myself, it is for a person dearer to me than my life. What! I should consent
to an act which deprives my daughter of a crown? No, I will not sacrifice my
child. I know what dangers threaten me. I am only a weak woman, a stranger,
without learning, advisers, or friends... and my enemies are skillful, learned in
the laws, and desirous to merit their master’s favor... and more than that,
even my judges are my enemies. Can I receive as such," she said as she looked
at Campeggio, "a man extorted from the pope by manifest lying? ... And as for
you," added she, turning haughtily to Wolsey, "having failed in attaining the
tiara, you have sworn to revenge yourself on my nephew the Emperor... and you have kept him true promise; for of all his wars and vexations, he may only thank you. One victim was not enough for you. Forging abominable suppositions, you desire to plunge his aunt into a frightful abyss. ... But my cause is just, and I trust it in the Lord’s hand.” After this bold language, the unhappy Catherine withdrew to her apartments. The imminence of the danger effected a salutary revolution in her; she laid aside her brilliant ornaments, assumed the sober garments in which she is usually represented, and passed days and nights in mourning and in tears.

Thus Campeggio saw his hopes deceived; he had thought to find a nun, and had met a queen and a mother. ... He now proceeded to set every imaginable spring at work; as Catherine would not renounce Henry, he must try and prevail upon Henry to renounce his idea of separating from the queen. The Roman legate therefore changed his batteries and turned them against the king.

Henry, always impatient, went one day unannounced to Campeggio’s lodging, accompanied by Wolsey only. "As we are without witnesses," he said, taking his seat familiarly between the two cardinals, "let us speak freely of our affairs. How shall you proceed?” But to his great astonishment and grief, the nuncio prayed him, with all imaginable delicacy, to renounce the divorce. At these words the fiery Tudor burst out, "Is this how the pope keeps his word? He sends me an ambassador to annul my marriage, but in reality to confirm it." He made a pause. Campeggio knew not what to say. Henry and Catherine being equally persuaded of the justice of their cause, the nuncio was in a dilemma. Wolsey himself suffered a martyrdom. The king’s anger grew fiercer; he had thought the legate would hasten to withdraw an imprudent expression, but Campeggio was dumb. "I see that you have chosen your part," said Henry to the nuncio, "mine, you may be sure, will soon be taken also. Let the pope only persevere in this way of acting, and the apostolical see, covered with perpetual infamy, will be visited with a frightful destruction." The lion had thrown off the lamb’s skin which he had momentarily assumed. Campeggio felt that he must appease the monarch. "Craft and delay" were his orders from Rome, and with that view the pope had provided him with the necessary arms. He hastened to produce the famous decretal which pronounced the divorce. "The holy father," he told the king, "ardently desires that this matter should be terminated by a happy reconciliation between you and the queen, but if that is impossible, you shall judge yourself whether or not his holiness can keep his promises." He then read the bull, and even showed it to Henry, without permitting it, however, to leave his hands. This exhibition produced the desired effect; Henry grew calm. "Now I am at ease again," he said, "this miraculous talisman revives all my courage. This decretal is the efficacious remedy that will restore peace to my oppressed conscience, and joy to my bruised heart. Write to his holiness, that this immense benefit binds me to him so closely, that he may expect from me more than his imagination can conceive."

And yet a few clouds gathered shortly after in the king’s mind.
Campeggio, having shown the bull, had hastened to lock it up again. Would he presume to keep it in his own hands? Henry and Wolsey will leave no means untried to get possession of it; that point gained, and victory is theirs.

Wolsey having returned to the nuncio, he asked him for the decretal with an air of candor as if it was the most natural thing in the world. He desired, he said, to show it to the king’s privy-councilors. "The pope," replied Campeggio, "has granted this bull, not to be used, but to be kept secret; he simply desired to show the king the good feeling by which he was animated." Wolsey having failed, Henry tried his skill. "Have the goodness to hand me the bull which you showed me," said he. The nuncio respectfully refused. "For a single moment," he said. Campeggio still refused. The haughty Tudor retired, stifling his anger. Then Wolsey made another attempt, and founded his demand on justice. "Like you, I am delegated by his holiness to decide this affair," he said, "and I wish to study the important document which is to regulate our proceedings." This was met by a new refusal. "What!" exclaimed the minister of Henry VIII, "am I not, like you, a cardinal? ... like you, a judge? your colleague?" It mattered not, the nuncio would not, by any means, let the decretal go. Clement was not deceived in the choice he had made of Campeggio; the ambassador was worthy of his master.

It was evident that the pope in granting the bull had been acting a part; this trick revolted the king. It was no longer anger that he felt, but disgust. Wolsey knew that Henry’s contempt was more to be feared than his wrath. He grew alarmed, and paid the nuncio another visit. "The general commission," he said, "is insufficient; the decretal commission alone can be of service, and you do not permit us to read a word of it. ... The king and I place the greatest confidence in the good intentions of his holiness, and yet we find our expectations frustrated. Where is that paternal affection with which we had flattered ourselves? What prince has ever been trifled with as the king of England is now? If this is the way in which the Defender of the Faith is rewarded, Christendom will know what those who serve Rome will have to expect from her, and every power will withdraw its support. Do not deceive yourselves; the foundation on which the holy see is placed is so very insecure that the least movement will suffice to precipitate it into everlasting ruin. What a sad futurity! ... what inexpressible torture! ... whether I wake or sleep, gloomy thoughts continually pursue me like a frightful nightmare." This time Wolsey spoke the truth.

But all his eloquence was useless; Campeggio refused to give up the so much desired bull. When sending him, Rome had told him, "Above all, do not succeed!" This means having failed, there remained for Wolsey one other way of effecting the divorce. "Well then," he said to Campeggio, "let us pronounce it ourselves." "Far be it from us," replied the nuncio, "the anger of the Emperor will be so great, that the peace of Europe will be broken for ever." "I know how to arrange all that," replied the English cardinal, "in political matters you may trust to me." The nuncio then took another tone, and, proudly wrapping himself up in his morality, he said, "I shall follow the voice of my conscience; if I see that the divorce is possible, I shall leap the ditch; if otherwise, I shall
not.” “Your conscience! that may be easily satisfied,” rejoined Wolsey. “Holy Scripture forbids a man to marry his brother’s widow; now no pope can grant what is forbidden by the law of God.” “The Lord preserve us from such a principle,” exclaimed the Roman prelate, “the power of the pope is unlimited.”

The nuncio had hardly put his conscience forward, before it stumbled; it bound him to Rome and not to heaven. But for that matter, neither public opinion nor Campeggio’s own friends had any great idea of his morality; they thought that to make him *leap the ditch*, it was only requisite to know the price at which he might be bought. The bishop of Bayonne wrote to Montmorency, “Put at the close of a letter which I can show Campeggio something *promissory*, that he shall have *benefices*. … That will cost you nothing, and may serve in this matter of the marriage, for I know that he is longing for something of the sort.”

“What is to be done then,” said Wolsey at last, astonished at meeting with a resistance to which he was unaccustomed. “I shall inform the pope of what I have seen and heard,” replied Campeggio, “and I shall wait for his instructions.” Henry was forced to consent to this new course, for the nuncio hinted that if it were opposed he would go in person to Rome to ask the pontiff’s orders, and he never would have returned. By this means several months were gained. During this time men’s minds were troubled. The prospect of a divorce between the king and queen had stirred the nation, and the majority, particularly among the women, declared against the king. “Whatever may be done,” the people said boldly, “whoever marries the Princess Mary will be king of England.” Wolsey’s spies informed him that Catherine and Charles V had many devoted partisans even at the court. He wished to make sure of this. “It is pretended,” he said one day in an indifferent tone, “that the Emperor has boasted that he will get the king driven from his realm, and that by his majesty’s own subjects. … What do you think of it, my lords?” “Tough against the spur,” says Du Bellay, the lords remained silent. At length, however, one of them more imprudent than the rest, exclaimed, “Such a boast will make the Emperor lose more than a hundred thousand Englishmen.” This was enough for Wolsey. To *lose* them, he thought, Charles must *have* them. If Catherine thought of levying war against her husband, following the example of former queens of England, she would have, then, a party ready to support her; this became dangerous.

The king and the cardinal immediately took their measures. More than 15,000 of Charles’ subjects were ordered to leave London; the arms of the citizens were seized, “in order that they might have no worse weapon than the tongue”; the Flemish councilors accorded to Catherine were dismissed after they had been heard by the king and Campeggio, “for they had no commission to speak to the other [Wolsey]”; and finally, they kept “a great and constant watch” upon the country. Men feared an invasion of England, and Henry was not of a humor to subject his kingdom to the pope.

This was not enough; the alarmed king thought it his duty to come to an explanation with his people; and having summoned the lords spiritual and temporal, the judges, the members of the privy-council, the mayor and aldermen of the city, and many of the gentry, to meet him at his palace of
Bridewell on the 13th of November, he said to them with a very condescending air, "You know, my lords and gentlemen, that for these twenty years past divine Providence has granted our country such prosperity as it has never known before. But in the midst of all the glory that surrounds me, the thought of my last hour often occurs to me, and I fear that if I should die without an heir, my death would cause more damage to my people than my life has done them good. God forbid that for want of a legitimate king England should be again plunged into the horrors of civil war!" Then calling to mind the illegalities invalidating his marriage with Catherine, the king continued, "These thoughts have filled my mind with anxiety, and are continually pricking my conscience. This is the only motive, and God is my witness, which has made me lay this matter before the pontiff. As touching the queen, she is a woman incomparable in gentleness, humility and buxomness as I these twenty years have had experiment of; so that if I were to marry again, if the marriage might be good, I would surely choose her above all other women. But if it be determined by judgment that our marriage was against God’s law, and surely void, then I shall not only sorrow in departing from so good a lady and loving companion, but much more lament and bewail my unfortunate chance, that I have so long lived in adultery, to God’s great displeasure, and have no true heir of my body to inherit this realm. ... Therefore I require of you all to pray with us that the very truth may be known, for the discharging of our conscience and the saving of our soul." These words, though wanting in sincerity, were well calculated to soothe men’s minds. Unfortunately, it appears that after this speech from the crown, the official copy of which has been preserved, Henry added a few words of his own. "If however," he said, according to Du Bellay, casting a threatening glance around him, "there should be any man whatsoever who speaks of his prince in other than becoming terms, I will show him that I am the master, and there is no head so high that I will not roll it from his shoulders." This was a speech in Henry’s style; but we cannot give unlimited credit to Du Bellay’s assertions, this diplomatist being very fond, like others of his class, of "seasoning" his dispatches. But whatever may be the fact as regards the postscript, the speech on the divorce produced an effect. From that time there were no more jests, not even on the part of the Boleyns’ enemies. Some supported the king, others were content to pity the queen in secret; the majority prepared to take advantage of a court revolution which every one foresaw. "The king so plainly gave them to understand his pleasure," says the French ambassador, "that they speak more soberly than they have done hitherto."

Henry, wishing to silence the clamors of the people and to allay the fears felt by the higher classes, gave several magnificent entertainments, at one time in London, at another at Greenwich, now at Hampton Court, and then at Richmond. The queen accompanied him, but Anne generally remained "in a very handsome lodging which Henry had furnished for her," says Du Bellay. The cardinal, following his master’s example, gave representations of French plays with great magnificence. All his hope was in France. "I desire nothing in England, neither in word nor in deed, which is not French," he said to the
bishop of Bayonne. At length Anne Boleyn had accepted the brilliant position she had at first refused, and every day her stately mansion (Suffolk House) was filled with a numerous court—"more than ever had crowded to the queen."

"Yes, yes," said Du Bellay, as he saw the crowd turning towards the rising sun, "they wish by these little things to accustom the people to endure her, that when great ones are attempted, they may not be found so strange."

In the midst of these festivities the grand business did not slumber. When the French ambassador solicited the subsidy intended for the ransom of the sons of Francis I, the cardinal required of him in exchange a paper proving that the marriage had never been valid. Du Bellay excused himself on the ground of his age and want of learning, but being given to understand that he could not have the subsidy without it, he wrote the memoir in a single day. The enraptured cardinal and king entreated him to speak with Campeggio. The ambassador consented, and succeeded beyond all expectation. The nuncio, fully aware that a bow too much bent will break, made Henry by turns become the sport of hope and fear. "Take care how you assert that the pope had not the right to grant a dispensation to the king," said he to the French bishop, "this would be denying his power, which is infinite. But," added he in a mysterious tone, "I will point out a road that will infallibly lead you to the mark. Show that the holy father has been deceived by false information. Push me hard on that," he continued, "so as to force me to declare that the dispensation was granted on erroneous grounds." Thus did the legate himself reveal the breach by which the fortress might be surprised. "Victory!" exclaimed Henry, as he entered Anne’s apartments all beaming with joy.

But this confidence on the part of Campeggio was only a new trick. "There is a great rumour at court," wrote Du Bellay soon after, "that the Emperor and the king of France are coming together, and leaving Henry alone, so that all will fall on his shoulders." Wolsey, finding that the intrigues of diplomacy had failed, thought it his duty to put fresh springs in motion, "and by all good and honest means to gain the pope’s favour." He saw, besides, to his great sorrow, the new catholicity then forming in the world, and uniting, by the closest bonds, the Christians of England to those of the continent. To strike down one of the leaders of this evangelical movement might incline the court of Rome in Henry’s favor. The cardinal undertook, therefore, to persecute Tyndale, and this resolution will now transport us to Germany.

CHAPTER 4
The Search for William Tyndale
1528–30

The residence of Tyndale and his friends in foreign countries, and the connections there formed with pious Christians testify to the fraternal spirit which the Reformation then restored to the church. It is in protestantism that true catholicity is to be found. The Romish church is not a catholic church. Separated from the churches of the east, which are the oldest in Christendom, and from the reformed churches, which are the purest, it is nothing but a sect,
and that a degenerate one. A church which should profess to believe in an episcopal unity, but which kept itself separate from the episcopacy of Rome and of the East, and from the evangelical churches, would be no longer a catholic church; it would be a sect more sectarian still than that of the Vatican, a fragment of a fragment. The church of the Saviour requires a truer, a diviner unity than that of priests, who condemn one another. It was the reformers, and particularly Tyndale, who proclaimed throughout Christendom the existence of a body of Christ, of which all the children of God are members. The disciples of the Reformation are the true Catholics. It was a catholicity of another sort that Wolsey desired to uphold. He did not reject certain reforms in the church, particularly such as brought him any profit, but, before all, he wished to preserve for the hierarchy their privileges and uniformity. The Romish Church in England was then personified in him, and if he fell, its ruin would be near. His political talents and multiplied relations with the continent, caused him to discern more clearly than others the dangers which threatened the pependom. The publication of the Scriptures of God in English appeared to some a cloud without importance, which would soon disappear from the horizon, but to the foreseeing glance of Wolsey, it betokened a mighty tempest. Besides, he loved not the fraternal relations then forming between the evangelical Christians of Great Britain and of other nations. Annoyed by this spiritual catholicity, he resolved to procure the arrest of Tyndale, who was its principal organ. Already had Hackett, Henry's envoy to the Low Countries, caused the imprisonment of Harman, an Antwerp merchant, one of the principal supporters of the English reformer. But Hackett had in vain asked Wolsey for such documents as would convict him of treason (for the crime of loving the Bible was not sufficient to procure Harman's condemnation in Brabant); the envoy had remained without letters from England, and the last term fixed by the law having expired, Harman and his wife were liberated after seven months' imprisonment. And yet Wolsey had not been inactive. The cardinal hoped to find elsewhere the cooperation which Margaret of Austria refused. It was Tyndale that he wanted, and everything seemed to indicate that he was then hidden at Cologne or in its neighborhood. Wolsey, recollecting senator Rincke and the services he had already performed, determined to send to him one John West, a friar of the Franciscan house at Greenwich. West, a somewhat narrow-minded but energetic man, was very desirous of distinguishing himself, and he had already gained some notoriety in England among the adversaries of the Reformation. Flattered by his mission, this vain monk immediately set off for Antwerp, accompanied by another friar, in order to seize Tyndale, and even Roye, once his colleague at Greenwich, and against whom he had there ineffectually contended in argument. While these men were conspiring his ruin, Tyndale composed several works, got them printed and sent to England, and prayed God night and day to enlighten his fellow countrymen. "Why do you give yourself so much trouble?" said some of his friends. "They will burn your books as they have burnt the Gospel." "They
will only do what I expect,” replied he, “if they burn me also.” Already he beheld his own burning pile in the distance, but it was a sight which only served to increase his zeal. Hidden, like Luther at the Wartburg, not however in a castle, but in a humble lodging, Tyndale, like the Saxon reformer, spent his days and nights translating the Bible. But not having an elector of Saxony to protect him, he was forced to change his residence from time to time. Before the close of 1528, Fryth, who had escaped from the prisons of Oxford, rejoined Tyndale, and the sweets of friendship softened the bitterness of their exile. Tyndale having finished the New Testament, and begun the translation of the Old, the learned Fryth was of great use to him. The more they studied the Word of God, the more they admired it. During 1529 they were busily occupied in seeing through the press the translation of the five Books of Moses on which Tyndale had been engaged since the completion of his work on the New Testament. Early in 1530 this first installment of the Old Testament was in circulation. Addressing his fellow countrymen in his Prologue to the Book of Genesis, Tyndale said, "As thou readest, think that every syllable pertaineth to thine own self, and suck out the pith of the Scripture." Then denying that visible signs naturally impart grace, as the schoolmen had pretended, Tyndale maintained that the sacraments are effectual only when the Holy Ghost sheds his influence upon them. "The ceremonies of the law," he wrote in his Prologue to Leviticus, "stood the Israelites in the same stead as the sacraments do us. We are saved not by the power of the sacrifice or the deed itself, but by virtue of faith in the promise, whereof the sacrifice or ceremony was a token or sign. The Holy Ghost is no dumb God, no God that goeth a mumming. Wherever the Word is proclaimed, this inward witness worketh. If baptism preach me the washing in Christ’s blood, so doth the Holy Ghost accompany it; and that deed of preaching through faith doth put away my sins. The ark of Noah saved them in the water through faith."

The man who dared address England in language so contrary to the teaching of the middle ages must be imprisoned. John West, who had been sent with this object, arrived at Antwerp; Hackett procured for him as interpreter a friar of English descent, made him assume a secular dress, and gave him "three pounds" on the cardinal’s account; the less attention the embassy attracted, the more likely it would be to succeed. But great was West’s vexation, on reaching Cologne, to learn that Rincke was at Frankfort. But that mattered not; the Greenwich monk could search for Tyndale at Cologne, and desire Rincke to do the same at Frankfort; thus there would be two searches instead of one. West procured a "swift" messenger (he too was a monk) and gave him the letter Wolsey had addressed to Rincke.

It was fair-time at Frankfort, and the city was filled with merchants and their wares. As soon as Rincke had finished reading Wolsey’s letter, he hastened to the burgomasters, and required them to confiscate the English translations of the Scriptures, and, above all, to seize “the heretic who was troubling England as Luther troubled Germany.” "Tyndale and his friends have not appeared in our fairs since the month of March 1528," replied the magistrates, "and we know not whether they are dead or alive."
Rincke was not discouraged. John Schott of Strasburg, who was said to have printed Tyndale’s books, and who cared less about the works he published than the money he drew from them, happened to be at Frankfort. "Where is Tyndale?" Rincke asked him. "I do not know," replied the printer, but he confessed that he had printed a thousand volumes at the request of Tyndale and Roye. "Bring them to me," continued the senator of Cologne, "if a fair price is paid me, I will give them up to you." Rincke paid all that was demanded. Wolsey would now be gratified, for the New Testament annoyed him almost as much as the divorce; this book, so dangerous in his eyes, seemed on the point of raising a conflagration which would infallibly consume the edifice of Roman traditionism. Rincke, who participated in his patron’s fear, impatiently opened the volumes made over to him, but there was a sad mistake; they were not the New Testament, not even a work of Tyndale’s, but one written by William Roye, a changeable and violent man, whom the reformer had employed for some time at Hamburg, and who had followed him to Cologne, but with whom he had soon become disgusted. "I bade him farewell for our two lives," said Tyndale, "and a day longer." Roye, on quitting the reformer, had gone to Strasburg, where he boasted of his relations with him, and had got a satire in that city printed against Wolsey and the monastic orders, entitled The Burial of the Mass; this was the book delivered to Rincke. The monk’s sarcastic spirit had exceeded the legitimate bounds of controversy, and the senator accordingly dared not send the volumes to England. He did not however discontinue his inquiries, but searched every place where he thought he could discover the New Testament, and, having seized all the suspected volumes, set off for Cologne.

Yet he was not satisfied. He wanted Tyndale, and went about asking everyone if they knew where to find him. But the reformer, whom he was seeking in so many places, and especially at Frankfort and Cologne, chanced to be residing at about equal distances from these two towns, so that Rincke, while traveling from one to the other, might have met him face to face, as Ahab’s messenger met Elijah. Tyndale was at Marburg, whither he had been drawn by several motives. Prince Philip the Magnanimous, of Hesse-Cassel, was the great protector of the evangelical doctrines. The university had attracted attention in the Reform by the paradoxes of Lambert of Avignon. Here a young Scotsman named Hamilton, afterwards illustrious as a martyr, had studied shortly before, and here too the celebrated printer, John Luft, had his presses. In this city Tyndale and Fryth had taken up their abode, in September 1528, and, hidden on the quiet banks of the Lahn, were translating the Old Testament. If Rincke had searched this place he could not have failed to discover them. But either he thought not of it, or was afraid of the terrible landgrave. The direct road by the Rhine was that which he followed, and Tyndale escaped.

When he arrived at Cologne, Rincke had an immediate interview with West. Their investigations having failed, they must have recourse to more vigorous measures. The senator, therefore, sent the monk back to England, accompanied by his son Hermann, charging them to tell Wolsey: "To seize Tyndale we require fuller powers, ratified by the Emperor. The traitors who
conspire against the life of the king of England are not tolerated in the Empire, much less Tyndale and all those who conspire against Christendom. He must be put to death; nothing but some striking example can check the Lutheran heresy.” “And as to ourselves,” they were told to add, “by the favour of God there may possibly be an opportunity for his royal highness and your grace to recompense us.” Rincke had not forgotten the subsidy of ten thousand pounds which he had received from Henry VII for the Turkish war, when he had gone to London as Maximilian’s envoy.

West returned to England sorely vexed that he had failed in his mission. What would they say at court and in his monastery? A fresh humiliation was in reserve for him. Roye, whom West had gone to look for on the banks of the Rhine, had paid a visit to his mother on the banks of the Thames, and to crown all, the new doctrines had penetrated into his own house. The warden, Father Robinson, had embraced them, and night and day the Greenwich monks read that New Testament which West had gone to Cologne to burn. The Antwerp friar, who had accompanied him on his journey, was the only person to whom he could confide his sorrows, but the Franciscans sent him back again to the continent, and then amused themselves at poor West’s expense. If he desired to tell of his adventures on the banks of the Rhine, he was laughed at; if he boasted of the names of Wolsey and Henry VIII, they jeered at him still more. He desired to speak to Roye’s mother, hoping to gain some useful information from her; this the monks prevented. “It is in my commission,” he said. They ridiculed him more and more. Robinson, perceiving that the commission made West assume unbecoming airs of independence, requested Wolsey to withdraw it; and West, fancying he was about to be thrown into prison, exclaimed in alarm, “I am weary of my life!” and conjured a friend whom he had at court to procure him before Christmas an obedience under his lordship’s hand and seal, enabling him to leave the monastery; “What you pay him for it,” he added, “I shall see you be reimbursed.” Thus did West expiate the fanatical zeal which had urged him to pursue the translator of the oracles of God. What became of him, we know not; he is never heard of more.

At that time Wolsey had other matters to engage him than this “obedience.” While West’s complaints were going to London, those of the king were traveling to Rome. The great business in the cardinal’s eyes was to maintain harmony between Henry and the church. There was no more thought about investigations in Germany, and for a time Tyndale was saved.

CHAPTER 5
The Pope Burns his Bull
November, 1528

The king and a part of his people still adhered to the popedom, and so long as these bonds were not broken, the Word of God could not have free course. But to induce England to renounce Rome, there must indeed be powerful motives—and these were not wanting.
Wolsey had never given such pressing orders to any of Henry’s ambassadors. "The king," he wrote to Da Casale on the first of November, 1528, "commits this business to your prudence, dexterity, and fidelity; and I conjure you to employ all the powers of your genius, and even to surpass them. Be very sure that you have done nothing and can do nothing that will be more agreeable to the king, more desirable by me, and more useful and glorious for you and your family." Da Casale possessed a tenacity which justified the cardinal’s confidence, and an active excitable mind; trembling at the thought of seeing Rome lose England, he immediately requested an audience of Clement VII. "What!" said he to the pope, "just as it was proposed to go on with the divorce, your nuncio endeavors to dissuade the king! ... There is no hope that Catherine of Aragon will ever give an heir to the crown. Holy father, there must be an end of this. Order Campeggio to place the decretal in his majesty’s hands." "What say you?" exclaimed the pope. "I would gladly lose one of my fingers to recover it again, and you ask me to make it public... it would be my ruin." Da Casale insisted. "We have a duty to perform," he said, "we remind you at this last hour of the perils threatening the relations which unite Rome and England. The crisis is at hand. We knock at your door, we cry, we urge, we entreat, we lay before you the present and future dangers which threaten the papacy. ... The world shall know that the king at least has fulfilled the duty of a devoted son of the church. If your holiness desires to keep England in St. Peter’s fold, I repeat... now is the time... now is the time." At these words, Da Casale, unable to restrain his emotion, fell down at the pope’s feet, and begged him to save the church in Great Britain. The pope was moved. "Rise," said he, with marks of unwonted grief, "I grant you all that is in my power; I am willing to confirm the judgment which the legates may think it their duty to pass; but I acquit myself of all responsibility as to the untold evils which this matter may bring with it. ... If the king, after having defended the faith and the church, desires to ruin both, on him alone will rest the responsibility of so great a disaster." Clement granted nothing. Da Casale withdrew disheartened, and feeling convinced that the pontiff was about to treat with Charles V. Wolsey desired to save the popedom, but the popedom resisted. Clement VII was about to lose that island which Gregory the Great had won with such difficulty. The pope was in the most cruel position. The English envoy had hardly left the palace before the Emperor’s ambassador entered, breathing threats. The unhappy pontiff escaped the assaults of Henry only to be exposed to those of Charles; he was thrown backwards and forwards like a ball. "I shall assemble a general council," said the Emperor through his ambassador, "and if you are found to have infringed the canons of the church in any point, you shall be proceeded against with every rigor. Do not forget," added his agent in a low tone, "that your birth is illegitimate, and consequently excludes you from the pontificate." The timid Clement, imagining that he saw the tiara falling from his head, swore to refuse Henry everything. "Alas!" he said to one of his dearest confidants, "I repent in dust and ashes that I ever granted this decretal bull. If the king of England so earnestly desires it to be given him, certainly it cannot be merely to know its contents. He is but too familiar with them. It is only to
tie my hands in this matter of the divorce; I would rather die a thousand
deaths.” Clement, to calm his agitation, sent one of his ablest gentlemen of the
bed-chamber, Francis Campana, apparently to feed the king with fresh
promises, but in reality to cut the only thread on which Henry’s hopes still
hung. “We embrace your majesty,” wrote the pope in the letter given to
Campana, “with the paternal love your numerous merits deserve.” Now
Campana was sent to England to burn clandestinely the famous decretal;
Clement concealed his blows by an embrace. Rome had granted many divorces
not so well founded as that of Henry VIII, but a very different matter from a
divorce was in question here; the pope, desirous of upraising in Italy his
shattered power, was about to sacrifice the Tudor, and to prepare the triumph
of the Reformation. Rome was separating herself from England.
All Clement’s fear was that Campana would arrive too late to burn the bull; he
was soon reassured; a dead calm prevented the great matter from advancing.
Campeggio, who took care to be in no hurry about his mission, gave himself up,
like a skillful diplomatist, to his worldly tastes; and when he could not, due
respect being had to the state of his legs, indulge in the chase, of which he was
very fond, he passed his time in gambling, to which he was much addicted.
Respectable historians assert that he indulged in still more illicit pleasures. But
this could not last for ever, and the nuncio sought some new means of delay,
which offered itself in the most unexpected manner. One day an officer of the
queen presented to the Roman legate a brief of Julius II, bearing the same date
as the bull of dispensation, signed too, like that, by the secretary Sigismond,
and in which the pope expressed himself in such a manner that Henry’s
objections fell of themselves. “The Emperor,” said Catherine’s messenger, “has
discovered this brief among the papers of Puebla, the Spanish ambassador in
England, at the time of the marriage.” “It is impossible to go on,” said
Campeggio to Wolsey, “all your reasoning is now cut from under you. We must
wait for fresh instructions.” This was the cardinal’s conclusion at every new
incident, and the journey from London to the Vatican being very long (without
reckoning the Roman dilatoriness) the expedient was infallible.
Thus there existed two acts of the same pope, signed on the same day—the one
secret, the other public, in contradiction to each other. Henry determined to
send a new mission to Rome. Anne proposed for this embassy one of the most
accomplished gentlemen of the court, her cousin, Sir Francis Bryan. With him
was joined an Italian, Peter Vannes, Henry’s Latin secretary. “You will search
all the registers of the time of Julius II,” said Wolsey to them, “you will study
the handwriting of secretary Sigismond, and you will attentively examine the
ring of the fisherman used by that pontiff. Moreover you will inform the pope
that it is proposed to set a certain greyfriar, named De Angelis, in his place, to
whom Charles would give the spiritual authority, reserving the temporal for
himself. You will manage so that Clement takes alarm at the project, and you
will then offer him a presidy (guard) of 2,000 men to protect him. You will ask
whether, in case the queen should desire to embrace a religious life, on
condition of the king’s doing the same, and Henry should yield to this wish, he
could have the assurance that the pope would afterwards release him from his
vows. And, finally, you will inquire whether, in case the queen should refuse to enter a convent, the pope would permit the king to have two wives, as we see in the Old Testament." This idea, which brought so much reproach on the landgrave of Hesse, was not a new one; the honor of it belongs to a cardinal and legate of Rome, whatever Bossuet may say. "Lastly," continued Wolsey, "as the pope is of a timid disposition, you will not fail to season your remonstrances with threats. You, Peter, will take him aside and tell him that, as an Italian, having more at heart than anyone the glory of the holy see, it is your duty to warn him that, if he persists, the king, his realm, and many other princes, will for ever separate from the papacy."

It was not on the mind of the pope alone that it was necessary to act; the rumor that the Emperor and the king of France were treating together disturbed Henry. Wolsey had vainly tried to sound Du Bellay; these two priests tried craft against craft. Besides, the Frenchman was not always seasonably informed by his court, letters taking ten days to come from Paris to London. Henry resolved to have a conference with the ambassador. He began by speaking to him of his matter, says Du Bellay, "and I promise you," he added, "that he needs no advocate, he understands the whole business so well." Henry next touched upon the wrongs of Francis I, "recalling so many things that the envoy knew not what to say." "I pray you, Master Ambassador," said Henry in conclusion, "to beg the king, my brother, to give up a little of his amusements during a year only for the prompt dispatch of his affairs. Warn those whom it concerns." Having given this spur to the king of France, Henry turned his thoughts towards Rome.

In truth, the fatal brief from Spain tormented him day and night, and the cardinal tortured his mind to find proofs of its non-authenticity; if he could do so, he would acquit the papacy of the charge of duplicity, and accuse the Emperor of forgery. At last he thought he had succeeded. "In the first place," he said to the king, "the brief has the same date as the bull. Now, if the errors in the latter had been found out on the day it was drawn up, it would have been more natural to make another than to append a brief pointing out the errors. What! the same pope, the same day, at the petition of the same persons, give out two rescripts for one effect, one of which contradicts the other! Either the bull was good, and then, why the brief? Or the bull was bad, and then, why deceive princes by a worthless bull? Certain names are found in the brief incorrectly spelt, and these are faults which the pontifical secretary, whose accuracy is so well known, could not have committed. Lastly, no one in England ever heard mention of this brief, and yet it is here that it ought to be found." Henry charged Knight, his principal secretary, to join the other envoys with all speed, in order to prove to the pope the supposititious character of the document.

This important paper revived the irritation felt in England against Charles V, and it was resolved to come to extremities. Everyone discontented with Austria took refuge in London, particularly the Hungarians. The ambassador from Hungary proposed to Wolsey to adjudge the imperial crown of Germany to the elector of Saxony or the landgrave of Hesse, the two chiefs of Protestantism.
Wolsey exclaimed in alarm, "It will be an inconvenience to Christendom, they are so Lutheran." But the Hungarian ambassador so satisfied him that in the end he did not find the matter quite so inconvenient. These schemes were prospering in London, when suddenly a new metamorphosis took place under the eyes of Du Bellay. The king, the cardinal, and the ministers appeared in strange consternation. Vincent da Casale had just arrived from Rome with a letter from his cousin the prothonotary, informing Henry that the pope, seeing the triumph of Charles V, the indecision of Francis I, the isolation of the king of England, and the distress of his cardinal, had flung himself into the arms of the Emperor. At Rome they went so far as to jest about Wolsey, and to say that since he could not be St. Peter they would make him St. Paul. While they were ridiculing Wolsey at Rome, at St. Germain’s they were joking about Henry. "I will make him get rid of the notions he has in his head," said Francis, and the Fleming’s who were again sent out of the country said as they left London, "that this year they would carry on the war so vigorously, that it would be really a night worth seeing."

Besides these public griefs, Wolsey had his private ones. Anne Boleyn, who had already begun to use her influence on behalf of the despotic cardinal’s victims, gave herself no rest until Cheyney, a courtier disgraced by Wolsey, had been restored to the king’s favor. Anne even gave utterance to several biting sarcasms against the cardinal, and the duke of Norfolk and his party began "to speak big," says Du Bellay. At the moment when the pope, scared by Charles V, was separating from England, Wolsey himself was tottering. Who shall uphold the papacy? ... After Wolsey, nobody! Rome was on the point of losing the power which for nine centuries she had exercised in the bosom of this illustrious nation. The cardinal’s anguish cannot be described; unceasingly pursued by gloomy images, he saw Anne on the throne causing the triumph of the Reformation—this nightmare was stifling him. "His grace, the legate, is in great trouble," wrote the bishop of Bayonne. "However… he is more cunning than they are."

To still the tempest Wolsey had only one resource left—this was to render Clement favorable to his master’s designs. The crafty Campana, who had burnt the decretal, conjured him not to believe all the reports transmitted to him concerning Rome. "To satisfy the king," said he to the cardinal, "the holy father will, if necessary, descend from the pontifical throne." Wolsey therefore resolved to send to Rome a more energetic agent than Vannes, Bryan, or Knight, and cast his eyes on Gardiner. His courage began to revive, when an unexpected event fanned once more his loftiest hopes.

---

CHAPTER 6
Wolsey Between Scylla and Charybdis
1529

On the 11th of January 1529, just as the pope was performing mass, he was attacked by a sudden illness; he was taken to his room apparently in a dying state. When this news reached London, the cardinal resolved to hasten to
abandon England, where the soil trembled under his feet, and to climb boldly to the throne of the pontiffs. Bryan and Vannes, then at Florence, hurried on to Rome through roads infested with robbers. At Orvieto they were informed the pope was better; at Viterbo, no one knew whether he was alive or dead; at Ronciglione, they were assured that he had expired; and, finally, when they reached the metropolis of the popedom, they learnt that Clement could not survive, and that the imperialists, supported by the Colonnas, were striving to have a pope devoted to Charles V.

But great as might be the agitation at Rome, it was greater still at Whitehall. If God caused Clement to descend from the pontifical throne, it could only be, thought Wolsey, to make him mount it. "It is expedient to have such a pope as may save the realm," said he to Gardiner. "And although it cannot but be incommodious to me in this mine old age to be the common father, yet, when all things be well pondered, the qualities of all the cardinals well considered, I am the only one, without boasting, that can and will remedy the king’s secret matter. And were it not for the re-integration of the state of the church, and especially to relieve the king and his realm from their calamities, all the riches and honor of the world should not cause me to accept the said dignity. Nevertheless I conform myself to the necessities of the times, and am content to apply all my wit and study, and to set forth all means and ways for the attaining of the said dignity. ... Wherefore, Master Stephen, that this matter may succeed, I pray you to apply all your ingenuity—spare neither money nor labor. I give you the amplest powers, without restriction or limitation."

Gardiner departed to win for his master the coveted tiara.

Henry VIII and Wolsey, who could hardly restrain their impatience, soon heard of the pontiff’s death from different quarters. "The Emperor has taken away Clement’s life," said Wolsey, blinded by hatred. "Charles," rejoined the king, "will endeavor to obtain by force or fraud a pope according to his desires." "Yes, to make him his chaplain," replied Wolsey, "and to put an end by degrees both to pope and popedom." "We must fly to the defense of the church," resumed Henry, "and with that view, my lord, make up your mind to be pope." "That alone," answered the cardinal, "can bring your majesty’s weighty matter to a happy termination, and by saving you, save the church..." ("and myself also," he thought in his heart). "Let us see, let us count the voters."

Henry and his minister then wrote down on a strip of parchment the names of all the cardinals, marking with the letter $A$ those who were on the side of the kings of England and France, and with the letter $B$ all who favored the Emperor. "There was no $C$," says a chronicler sarcastically, "to signify any on Christ’s side." The letter $N$ designated the neutrals. "The cardinals present," said Wolsey, "will not exceed thirty-nine, and we must have two-thirds, that is, twenty-six. Now, there are twenty upon whom we can reckon; we must therefore, at any price, gain six of the neutrals."

Wolsey, deeply sensible of the importance of an election that would decide whether England was to be reformed or not, carefully drew up the instructions, which Henry signed, and which history must register. "We desire and ordain," the ambassadors were informed in them, "that you secure the election of the
cardinal of York, not forgetting that next to the salvation of his own soul, there is nothing the king desires more earnestly.

"To gain over the neutral cardinals you will employ two methods in particular. The first is, the cardinals being present, and having God and the Holy Ghost before them, you shall remind them that the cardinal of York alone can save Christendom.

"The second is, because human fragility suffereth not all things to be pondered and weighed in a just balance, it appertaineth in matter of so high importance, to the comfort and relief of all Christendom, to succour the infirmity that may chance... not for corruption, you will understand... but rather to help the lacks and defaults of human nature. And, therefore, it shall be expedient that you promise spiritual offices, dignities, rewards of money, or other things which shall seem meet to the purpose.

"Then shall you, with good dexterity, combine and knit those favourable to us in a perfect fastness and indissoluble knot. And that they may be the better animated to finish the election to the king’s desire, you shall offer them a guard of 2,000 or 3,000 men from the kings of England and France, from the viscount of Turin, and the republic of Venice.

"If, notwithstanding all your exertions, the election should fail, then the cardinals of the king shall repair to some sure place, and there proceed to such an election as may be to God’s pleasure.

"And to win more friends for the king, you shall promise, on the one hand, to the Cardinal de Medici and his party our special favour; and the Florentines, on the other hand, you shall put in comfort of the exclusion of the said family De Medici.

"Likewise you shall put the cardinals in perfect hope of recovering the patrimony of the church; and you shall contain the Venetians in good trust of a reasonable way to be taken for Cervia and Ravenna [which formed part of the patrimony to their contentment]."

Such were the means by which the cardinal hoped to win the papal throne. To the right he said yes, to the left he said no. What would it matter that these perfidies were one day discovered, provided it were after the election? Christendom might be very certain that the choice of the future pontiff would be the work of the Holy Ghost. Alexander VI had been a poisoner; Julius II had given way to ambition, anger, and vice; the liberal Leo X had passed his life in worldly pursuits; the unhappy Clement VII had lived on stratagems and lies; Wolsey would be their worthy successor:

"All the seven deadly sins have worn the triple crown."

Wolsey found his excuse in the thought that if he succeeded, the divorce was secured, and England enslaved for ever to the court of Rome.

Success at first appeared probable. Many cardinals spoke openly in favor of the English prelate; one of them asked for a detailed account of his life, in order to present it as a model to the church; another worshipped him (so he said) as a divinity. ... Among the gods and popes adored at Rome there were some no better than he. But ere long alarming news reached England. What grief! the pope was getting better. "Conceal your instructions," wrote the cardinal.
Wolsey not having obtained the tiara, it was necessary at least to gain the divorce. "God declares," said the English ambassadors to the pope, "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Therefore, the king, taking God alone for his guide, requests of you, in the first place, an engagement to pronounce the divorce in the space of three months, and in the second the avocation to Rome." "The promise first, and only after that the avocation," Wolsey had said, "for I fear that if the pope begins with the avocation, he will never pronounce the divorce." "Besides," added the envoys, "the king’s second marriage admits of no refusal, whatever bulls or briefs there may be. The only issue of this matter is the divorce; the divorce in one way or another must be procured."

Wolsey had instructed his envoys to pronounce these words with a certain air of familiarity, and at the same time with a gravity calculated to produce an effect. His expectations were deceived; Clement was colder than ever. He had determined to abandon England in order that he might secure the States of the Church, of which Charles was then master, thus sacrificing the spiritual to the temporal. "The pope will not do the least thing for your majesty," wrote Bryan to the king, "your matter may well be in his *Pater noster*, but it certainly is not in his *Credo*." "Increase in importunity," answered the king, "the cardinal of Verona should remain about the pope’s person and counterbalance the influence of De Angelis and the archbishop of Capua. I would rather lose my two crowns than be beaten by these two friars."

Thus was the struggle about to become keener than ever, when Clement’s relapse once more threw doubt on everything. He was always between life and death, and this perpetual alternation agitated the king and the impatient cardinal in every way. The latter considered that the pope had need of merits to enter the kingdom of heaven. "Procure an interview with the pope," he wrote to the envoys, "even though he be in the very agony of death, and represent to him that nothing will be more likely to save his soul than the bill of divorce." Henry’s commissioners were not admitted; but towards the end of March, the deputies appearing in a body, the pope promised to examine the letter from Spain. Vannes began to fear this document; he represented that those who had fabricated it would have been able to give it an appearance of authenticity. "Rather declare immediately that this brief is not a brief," said he to the pope, "the king of England, who is your holiness’s son, is not so like the rest of the world. We cannot put the same shoe on every foot." This rather vulgar argument did not touch Clement. "If to content your master in this business," said he, "I cannot employ my head, at least I will my finger." "Be pleased to explain yourself," replied Vannes, who found the finger a very little matter. "I mean," resumed the pontiff, "that I shall employ every means, provided they are *honorable*." Vannes withdrew disheartened.

He immediately conferred with his colleagues, and all together, alarmed at the idea of Henry’s anger, returned to the pontiff; they thrust aside the lackeys, who endeavored to stop them, and made their way into his bed-chamber. Clement opposed them with that resistance of inertia by which the popedom has gained its greatest victories; *siluit*, he remained silent. Of what
consequence to the pontiff were Tudor, his island, and his church, when Charles of Austria was threatening him with his armies? Clement, less proud than Hildebrand, submitted willingly to the Emperor’s power, provided the Emperor would protect him. "I had rather," he said, "be Caesar’s servant, not only in a temple, but in a stable if necessary, than be exposed to the insults of rebels and vagabonds." At the same time he wrote to Campeggio, "Do not irritate the king, but spin out this matter as much as possible; the Spanish brief gives us the means."

In fact, Charles V had twice shown Lee, Henry’s ambassador, the original document, and Wolsey, after this report, began to believe that it was not Charles who had forged the brief, but that Pope Julius II had really given two contradictory documents on the same day. Accordingly the cardinal now feared to see this letter in the pontiff’s hands. "Do all you can to dissuade the pope from seeking the original in Spain,” wrote he to one of his ambassadors, “it may exasperate the Emperor." We know how cautious the cardinal was towards Charles. Intrigue attained its highest point at this epoch, and Englishmen and Romans encountered craft with craft. "In such ticklish negotiations," says Burnet (who had had some little experience in diplomacy), "ministers must say and unsay as they are instructed, which goes of course as a part of their business.” Henry’s envoys to the pope intercepted the letters sent from Rome and had Campeggio’s seized. On his part the pope indulged in flattering smiles and perfidious equivocations. Bryan wrote to Henry VIII, "Always your grace hath done for him in deeds, and he hath recompensed you with fair words and fair writings, of which both I think your grace shall lack none; but as for the deeds, I never believe to see them, and especially at this time.” Bryan had comprehended the court of Rome better perhaps than many politicians. Finally, Clement himself, wishing to prepare the king for the blow he was about to inflict, wrote to him, "We have been able to find nothing that would satisfy your ambassadors."

Henry thought he knew what this message meant; that he had found nothing, and would find nothing, and accordingly this prince, who, if we may believe Wolsey, had hitherto shown incredible patience and gentleness, gave way to all his violence. "Very well then,” said he, ”my lords and I well know how to withdraw ourselves from the authority of the Roman see.” Wolsey turned pale, and conjured his master not to rush into that fearful abyss; Campeggio, too, endeavored to revive the king’s hopes. But it was all of no use. Henry recalled his ambassadors.

Henry, it is true, had not yet reached the age when violent characters become inflexible from the habit they have encouraged of yielding to their passions. But the cardinal, who knew his master, knew also that his inflexibility did not depend upon the number of his years; he thought Rome’s power in England was lost, and placed between Henry and Clement, he exclaimed, "How shall I avoid Scylla, and not fall into Charybdis?" He begged the king to make one last effort by sending Dr. Bennet to the pope with orders to support the avocation to Rome, and he gave him a letter in which he displayed all the resources of his eloquence. "How can it be imagined," he wrote, “that the persuasions of sense
urge the king to break a union in which the ardent years of his youth were passed with such purity? ... The matter is very different. I am on the spot; I know the state of men’s minds. ... Pray, believe me. ... The divorce is the secondary question; the primary one is the fidelity of this realm to the papal see. The nobility, gentry, and citizens all exclaim with indignation, ‘Must our fortunes, and even our lives, depend upon the nod of a foreigner? We must abolish, or at the very least diminish, the authority of the Roman pontiff.’ ... Most holy father, we cannot mention such things without a shudder.” ... This new attempt was also unavailing. The pope demanded of Henry how he could doubt his good will, seeing that the king of England had done so much for the apostolic see. This appeared a cruel irony to Tudor; the king requested a favor of the pope, and the pope replied by calling to mind those which the papacy had received from his hands. “Is this the way,” men asked in England, “in which Rome pays her debts?” Wolsey had not reached the end of his misfortunes. Gardiner and Bryan had just returned to London; they declared that to demand an avocation to Rome was to lose their cause. Accordingly Wolsey, who turned to every wind, ordered Da Casale, in case Clement should pronounce the avocation, to appeal from the pope, the false head of the church, to the true vicar of Jesus Christ. This was almost in Luther’s style. Who was this true vicar? Probably a pope nominated by the influence of England.

But this proceeding did not assure the cardinal—he was losing his judgment. A short time before this, Du Bellay, who had just returned from Paris, whither he had gone to retain France on the side of England, had been invited to Richmond by Wolsey. As the two prelates were walking in the park, on that hill whence the eye ranges over the fertile and undulating fields through which the winding Thames pours its tranquil waters, the unhappy cardinal observed to the bishop, “My trouble is the greatest that ever was! ... I have excited and carried on this matter of the divorce, to dissolve the union between the two houses of Spain and England, by sowing misunderstanding between them, as if I had no part in it. You know it was in the interest of France; I therefore entreat the king your master and her majesty to do everything that may forward the divorce. I shall esteem such a favor more than if they made me pope, but if they refuse me, my ruin is inevitable.” And then giving way to despair, he exclaimed, “Alas! would that I were going to be buried tomorrow!” The wretched man was drinking the bitter cup his perfidies had prepared for him. All seemed to conspire against Henry, and Bennet was recalled shortly after. It was said at court and in the city, “Since the pope sacrifices us to the Emperor, let us sacrifice the pope.” Clement VII, intimidated by the threats of Charles V, and tottering upon his throne, madly repelled with his foot the bark of England. Europe was all attention, and began to think that the proud vessel of Albion, cutting the cable that bound her to the pontiffs, would boldly spread her canvas to the winds, and ever after sail the sea alone, wafted onwards by the breeze that comes from heaven.

The influence of Rome over Europe is in great measure political. It loses a kingdom by a royal quarrel, and might in this same way lose ten.
CHAPTER 7
More and Tyndale: A Theological Duel
1528–29

Other circumstances from day to day rendered the emancipation of the church more necessary. If behind these political debates there had not been found a Christian people, resolved never to temporize with error, it is probable that England, after a few years of independence, would have fallen back into the bosom of Rome. The affair of the divorce was not the only one agitating men’s minds; the religious controversies, which for some years filled the continent, were always more animated at Oxford and Cambridge. The Evangelicals and the Catholics (not very catholic indeed) warmly discussed the great questions which the progress of events brought before the world. The former maintained that the primitive church of the apostles and the actual church of the papacy were not identical; the latter affirmed, on the contrary, the identity of popery and apostolic Christianity. Other Romish doctors in later times, finding this position somewhat embarrassing, have asserted that Catholicism existed only in the germ in the apostolic church, and had subsequently developed itself. But a thousand abuses, a thousand errors may creep into a church under cover of this theory. A plant springs from the seed and grows up in accordance with immutable laws; whilst a doctrine cannot be transformed in the mind of man without falling under the influence of sin. It is true that the disciples of popery have supposed a constant action of the Divine Spirit in the Catholic church, which excludes every influence of error. To stamp on the development of the church the character of truth, they have stamped on the church itself the character of infallibility; quod erat demonstrandum. Their reasoning is a mere begging of the question. To know whether the Romish development is identical with the gospel, we must examine it by Scripture.

It was not university men alone who occupied themselves with Christian truth. The separation which has been remarked in other times between the opinions of the people and of the learned, did not now exist. What the doctors taught, the citizens practiced; Oxford and London embraced each other. The theologians knew that learning has need of life, and the citizens believed that life has need of that learning which derives the doctrine from the wells of the Scriptures of God. It was the harmony between these two elements, the one theological, the other practical, which constituted the strength of the English reformation.

The evangelical life in the capital alarmed the clergy more than the evangelical doctrine in the colleges. Since Monmouth had escaped, they must strike another. Among the London merchants was John Tewkesbury, one of the oldest friends of the Scriptures in England. As early as 1512 he had become possessor of a manuscript copy of the Bible, and had attentively studied it; when Tyndale’s New Testament appeared, he read it with avidity; and, finally, The Wicked Mammon had completed the work of his conversion. Being a man of heart and understanding, clever in all he undertook, a ready and fluent
speaker, and liking to get to the bottom of everything, Tewkesbury, like Monmouth, became very influential in the city, and one of the most learned in Scripture of any of the evangelicals. These generous Christians, being determined to consecrate to God the good things they had received from him, were the first among that long series of laymen who were destined to be more useful to the truth than many ministers and bishops. They found time to interest themselves about the most trifling details of the kingdom of God, and in the history of the Reformation in Britain their names should be inscribed beside those of Latimer and Tyndale.

The activity of these laymen could not escape the cardinal’s notice. Clement VII was abandoning England; it was necessary for the English bishops, by crushing the heretics, to show that they would not abandon the popedom. We can understand the zeal of these prelates and, without excusing their persecutions, we are disposed to extenuate their crime. The bishops determined to ruin Tewkesbury. One day in April 1529, as he was busy among his pelttries, the officers entered his warehouse, arrested him, and led him away to the bishop of London’s chapel, where, besides the ordinary (Tunstall) the bishops of Ely, St. Asaph, Bath, and Lincoln, with the abbot of Westminster, were on the bench. The composition of this tribunal indicated the importance of his case. The emancipation of the laity, thought these judges, is perhaps a more dangerous heresy than justification by faith.

“John Tewkesbury,” said the bishop of London, “I exhort you to trust less to your own wit and learning, and more unto the doctrine of the holy mother the church.” Tewkesbury made answer that in his judgment he held no other doctrine than that of the church of Christ. Tunstall then broached the principal charge, that of having read the *Wicked Mammon*, and after quoting several passages, he exclaimed, “Renounce these errors.” “I find no fault in the book,” replied Tewkesbury. “It has enlightened my conscience and consoled my heart. But it is not my gospel. I have studied the Holy Scriptures these seventeen years and, as a man sees the spots of his face in a glass, so by reading them I have learnt the faults of my soul. If there is a disagreement between you and the New Testament, put yourselves in harmony with it, rather than desire to put that in accord with you.” The bishops were surprised that a leather seller should speak so well, and quote Scripture so happily that they were unable to resist him. Annoyed at being catechized by a layman, the bishops of Bath, St. Asaph, and Lincoln thought they could conquer him more easily by the rack than by their arguments. He was taken to the Tower, where they ordered him to be put to the torture. His limbs were crushed, which was contrary to the laws of England, and the violence of the rack tore from him a cry of agony to which the priests replied by a shout of exultation. The inflexible merchant had promised at last to renounce Tyndale’s *Wicked Mammon*. Tewkesbury left the Tower “almost a cripple,” and returned to his house to lament the fatal word which the question had extorted from him, and to prepare in the silence of faith to confess in the burning pile the precious name of Christ Jesus.

We must, however, acknowledge that the “question” was not Rome’s only argument. The gospel had two classes of opponents in the sixteenth century, as
in the first ages of the church. Some attacked it with the torture, others with their writings. Sir Thomas More, a few years later, was to have recourse to the first of these arguments, but for the moment he took up his pen. He had first studied the writings of the Fathers of the church and of the Reformers, but rather as an advocate than as a theologian; and then, armed at all points, he rushed into the arena of polemics, and in his attacks dealt those "technical convictions and that malevolent subtlety," says one of his greatest admirers, "from which the honestest men of his profession are not free." Jests and sarcasms had fallen from his pen in his discussion with Tyndale, as in his controversy with Luther. In 1528 there appeared A Dialogue of Sir Thomas More, Knt., touching the pestilent Sect of Luther and Tyndale, by the one begun in Saxony, and by the other laboured to be brought into England. Tyndale soon became informed of More's publication, and a remarkable combat ensued between these two representatives of the two doctrines that were destined to divide Christendom—Tyndale the champion of Scripture, and More the champion of the church. More having called his book a dialogue, Tyndale adopted this form in his reply, and the two combatants valiantly crossed their swords, though wide seas lay between them. This theological duel is not without importance in the history of the Reformation. The struggles of diplomacy, of sacerdotalism, and of royalty were not enough; there must be struggles of doctrine. Rome had set the hierarchy above the faith; the Reformation was to restore faith to its place above the hierarchy.

More: Christ said not, the Holy Ghost shall write, but shall teach. WHATSOEVER the church says, it is the word of God, though it be not in Scripture.

Tyndale: It is not the custom of Scripture to say the Holy Ghost writeth but inspireth the writer... and it is manifest that... love compelled the apostles to leave nothing unwritten that should be necessarily required, and that, if it were left out, should hurt the soul. ... These are written, says St. John, that ye may believe and through belief have life. (1 John 2:1; Romans 15:4; Matthew 22:29).

More: The apostles have taught by mouth many things they did not write, because they should not come into the hands of the heathen for mocking. Tyndale: I pray you what thing more to be mocked by the heathen could they teach than the resurrection; and that Christ was God and man, and died between two thieves? And yet all these things the apostles wrote. And again, purgatory, penance, and satisfaction for sin, and praying to saints, are marvelous agreeable unto the superstition of the heathen people, so that they needed not to abstain from writing of them for fear lest the heathen should have mocked them.

More: We must not examine the teaching of the church by Scripture, but understand Scripture by means of what the church says.

Tyndale: What! Does the air give light to the sun, or the sun to the air? Is the church before the gospel, or the gospel before the church? Is not the father older than the son? God begat us with his own will, with the word of truth, says St. James (1:18). If he who begetteth is before him who is begotten, the
word is before the church, or, to speak more correctly, before the congregation.

More: Why do you say congregation and not church?
Tyndale: Because by that word church, you understand nothing but a multitude of shaven, shorn, and oiled, which we now call the spirituality or clergy, while the word of right is common unto all the congregation of them that believe in Christ.

More: The church is the pope and his sect or followers.
Tyndale: The pope teacheth us to trust in holy works for salvation, as penance, saints’ merits, and friars’ coats. Now, he that hath no faith to be saved through Christ, is not of Christ’s church.

More: The Romish church from which the Lutherans came out, was before them, and therefore is the right one.
Tyndale: In like manner you may say, the church of the Pharisees, whence Christ and His apostles came out, was before them, and was therefore the right church, and consequently Christ and his disciples are heretics.

More: No; the apostles came out from the church of the Pharisees because they found not Christ there, but your priests in Germany and elsewhere, have come out of our church, because they wanted wives.
Tyndale: Wrong... these priests were at first attached to what you call heresies, and then they took wives; but yours were first attached to the holy doctrine of the pope, and then they took harlots.

More: Luther’s books be open, if ye will not believe us.
Tyndale: Nay, ye have shut them up, and have even burnt them. ...

More: I marvel that you deny purgatory, Sir William, except it be a plain point with you to go straight to hell.
Tyndale: I know no other purging but faith in the cross of Christ; while you, for a groat or a sixpence, buy some secret pills [indulgences] which you take to purge yourselves of your sins.

More: Faith, then, is your purgatory, you say; there is no need, therefore, of works—a most immoral doctrine!
Tyndale: It is faith alone that saves us, but not a bare faith. When a horse beareth a saddle and a man thereon, we may well say that the horse only and alone beareth the saddle, but we do not mean the saddle empty, and no man thereon.

In this manner did the catholic and the evangelical carry on the discussion. According to Tyndale, what constitutes the true church is the work of the Holy Ghost within; according to More, the constitution of the papacy without. The spiritual character of the gospel is thus put in opposition to the formalist character of the Roman church. The Reformation restored to our belief the solid foundation of the Word of God; for the sand it substituted the rock. In the discussion to which we have just been listening, the advantage remained not with the catholic. Erasmus, a friend of More, embarrassed by the course the latter was taking, wrote to Tunstall, "I cannot heartily congratulate More." Henry interrupted the celebrated knight in these contests to send him to Cambray, where a peace was negotiating between France and the Empire.
Wolsey would have been pleased to go himself, but his enemies suggested to the king, "that it was only that he might not expedite the matter of the divorce." Henry, therefore, dispatched More, Knight, and Tunstall, but Wolsey had created so many delays that they did not arrive until after the conclusion of the Ladies’ Peace (August, 1529). The king’s vexation was extreme. Du Bellay had in vain helped him to spend a good preparatory July to make him swallow the dose. Henry was angry with Wolsey, Wolsey threw the blame on the ambassador, and the ambassador defended himself, he tells us, "with tooth and nail."

By way of compensation, the English envoys concluded with the Emperor a treaty prohibiting on both sides the printing and sale of "any Lutheran books." Some of them could have wished for a good persecution, for a few burning piles, it may be. A singular opportunity occurred. In the spring of 1529, Tyndale and Fryth had left Marburg for Antwerp, and were thus in the vicinity of the English envoys. What West had been unable to effect, it was thought the two most intelligent men in Britain could not fail to accomplish. "Tyndale must be captured," said More and Tunstall. "You do not know what sort of a country you are in," replied Hackett. "Will you believe that on the 7th of April, Harman arrested me at Antwerp for damages caused by his imprisonment? ‘If you can lay anything to my charge as a private individual,’ I said to the officer, ‘I am ready to answer for myself, but if you arrest me as ambassador, I know no judge but the Emperor.’ Upon which the procurator had the audacity to reply, that I was arrested as ambassador; and the lords of Antwerp only set me at liberty on condition that I should appear again at the first summons. These merchants are so proud of their franchises, that they would resist even Charles himself." This anecdote was not at all calculated to encourage More, and not caring about a pursuit, which promised to be of little use, he returned to England. But the bishop of London, who was left behind, persisted in the project, and repaired to Antwerp to put it in execution.

Tyndale was at that time greatly embarrassed; considerable debts, incurred with his printers, compelled him to suspend his labors. Nor was this all; the prelate who had spurned him so harshly in London, had just arrived in the very city where he lay concealed... What would become of him? ... A merchant, named Augustin Packington, a clever man, but somewhat inclined to dissimulation, happening to be at Antwerp on business, hastened to pay his respects to the bishop. The latter observed, in the course of conversation, "I should like to get hold of the books with which England is poisoned." "I can perhaps serve you in that matter," replied the merchant. "I know the Fleming’s, who have bought Tyndale’s books, so that if your lordship will be pleased to pay for them, I will make sure of them all." "Oh, oh!" thought the bishop, "Now, as the proverb says, I shall have God by the toe." "Gentle Master Packington," he added in a flattering tone, "I will pay for them whatsoever they cost you. I intend to burn them at St. Paul’s cross." The bishop, having his hand already on Tyndale’s Testaments, fancied himself on the point of seizing Tyndale himself. Packington, being one of those men who love to conciliate all parties, ran off to Tyndale, with whom he was intimate, and said, "William, I know you are a
poor man, and have a heap of New Testaments and books by you, for which you
have beggared yourself; and I have now found a merchant who will buy them
all, and with ready money too." "Who is the merchant?" said Tyndale. "The
bishop of London." "Tunstall? ... If he buys my books, it can only be to burn
them." "No doubt," answered Packington, "but what will he gain by it? The
whole world will cry out against the priest who burns God’s Word, and the eyes
of many will be opened. Come, make up your mind, William; the bishop shall
have the books, you the money, and I the thanks." ... Tyndale resisted the
proposal; Packington became more pressing. "The question comes to this," he
said, "shall the bishop pay for the books or shall he not? for, make up your
mind... he will have them." "I consent," said the Reformer at last, "I shall pay
my debts, and bring out a new and more correct edition of the Testament." The
bargain was made.
Ere long the danger thickened around Tyndale. Placards, posted at Antwerp
and throughout the province, announced that the Emperor, in conformity with
the treaty of Cambray, was about to proceed against the reformers and their
writings. Not an officer of justice appeared in the street but Tyndale’s friends
trembled for his liberty. Under such circumstances, how could he print his
translations? It appears probable that he made up his mind about the end of
August to go to Hamburg, and took his passage in a vessel loading for that port.
Embarking with his books, his manuscripts, and the rest of his money, he glided
down the Scheldt, and soon found himself afloat on the German ocean.
But one danger followed close upon another. He had scarcely passed the mouth
of the Meuse when a tempest burst upon him, and his ship, like that of old
which bore St. Paul, was almost swallowed up by the waves. "Satan, envying
the happy course and success of the gospel," says a chronicler, "set to his might
how to hinder the blessed labors of this man." The seamen toiled, Tyndale
prayed, all hope was lost. The reformer alone was full of courage, not doubting
that God would preserve him for the accomplishment of his work. All the
exertions of the crew proved useless; the vessel was dashed on the coast, and
the passengers escaped with their lives. Tyndale gazed with sorrow upon that
ocean which had swallowed up his beloved books and precious manuscripts,
and deprived him of his resources. What labors, what perils! banishment,
poverty, thirst, insults, watchings, persecution, imprisonment, the stake! ... Like Paul, he was in perils by his own countrymen, in perils among strange
people, in perils in the city, in perils in the sea. Recovering his spirits,
however, he went on board another ship, entered the Elbe, and at last reached
Hamburg.
Great joy was in store for him in that city. Coverdale, Foxe informs us, was
waiting there to confer with him, and to help him in his labors. It has been
supposed that Coverdale went to Hamburg to invite Tyndale, in Cromwell’s
name, to return to England, but it is merely a conjecture, lacking confirmation.
As early as 1527, Coverdale had made known to Cromwell his desire to
translate the Scriptures. It was natural that, meeting with difficulties in this
undertaking, he should desire to converse with Tyndale. The two friends lodged
with a pious woman named Margaret van Emmersen, and spent some time
together in the autumn of 1529, undisturbed by the sweating sickness which was making such cruel havoc all around them. Coverdale returned to England shortly after; the two reformers had, no doubt, discovered that it was better for each of them to translate the Scriptures separately. Before Coverdale’s return, Tunstall had gone back to London, exulting at carrying with him the books he had bought so dearly. But when he reached the capital, he thought he had better defer the meditated auto da fé until some striking event should give it increased importance. And besides, just at that moment, very different matters were engaging public attention on the banks of the Thames, and the liveliest emotions agitated every mind.

CHAPTER 8
A Queen’s Pleadings Convict a Court
1529

Affairs had changed in England during the absence of Tunstall and More, and even before their departure, events of a certain importance had occurred. Henry, finding there was nothing more to hope from Rome, had turned to Wolsey and Campeggio. The Roman nuncio had succeeded in deceiving the king. "Campeggio is very different from what he is reported," said Henry to his friends, "he is not for the Emperor, as I was told; I have said somewhat to him which has changed his mind." No doubt he had made some brilliant promise. Henry therefore, imagining himself sure of his two legates, desired them to proceed with the matter of the divorce without delay. There was no time to lose, for the king was informed that the pope was on the point of recalling the commission given to the two cardinals; and, as early as the 19th of March, Salviati, the pope’s uncle and secretary of state, wrote to Campeggio about it. Henry’s process, once in the court of the pontifical chancery, it would have been long before it got out again. Accordingly, on the 31st of May, the king, by a warrant under the great seal, gave the legates leave to execute their commission, "without any regard to his own person, and having the fear of God only before their eyes." The legates themselves had suggested this formula to the king.

On the same day the commission was opened, but to begin the process was not to end it. Every letter which the nuncio received forbade him to do so in the most positive manner. "Advance slowly and never finish," were Clement’s instructions. The trial was to be a farce, played by a pope and two cardinals. The ecclesiastical court met in the Great Hall of the Blackfriars, commonly called the "parliament chamber." The two legates having successively taken the commission in their hands, devoutly declared that they were resolved to execute it (they should have said, to elude it), made the required oaths, and ordered a peremptory citation of the king and queen to appear on the 18th of June at nine in the morning. Campeggio was eager to proceed slowly; the session was adjourned for three weeks. The citation caused a great stir among the people. "What!" said they, "a king and a queen constrained to appear, in
their own realm, before their own subjects." The papacy set an example which was to be strictly followed in after-years both in England and in France. On the 18th of June, Catherine appeared before the commission in the parliament chamber and, stepping forward with dignity, said with a firm voice, "I protest against the legates as incompetent judges, and appeal to the pope." This proceeding of the queen, her pride and firmness, troubled her enemies, and in their vexation they grew exasperated against her. "Instead of praying God to bring this matter to a good conclusion," they said, "she endeavors to turn away the people's affections from the king. Instead of showing Henry the love of a youthful wife, she keeps away from him night and day. There is even cause to fear," they added, "that she is in concert with certain individuals who have formed the horrible design of killing the king and the cardinal." But persons of generous heart, seeing only a queen, a wife, and a mother, attacked in her dearest affections, showed themselves full of sympathy for her.

On the 21st of June, the day to which the court adjourned, the two legates entered the parliament chamber with all the pomp belonging to their station, and took their seats on a raised platform. Near them sat the bishops of Bath and Lincoln, the abbot of Westminster, and Doctor Taylor, master of the Rolls, whom they had added to their commission. Below them were the secretaries, among whom the skilful Stephen Gardiner held the chief rank. On the right beneath a canopy of cloth of gold sat the king surrounded by his officers; and on the left, a little lower, and under a similar canopy, was the queen, attended by her ladies. The archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops were seated between the legates and Henry VIII, and on both sides of the throne were stationed the counselors of the king and queen—Fisher, bishop of Rochester, Standish of St. Asaph, West of Ely and Doctor Ridley. The people, when they saw this procession pass before them, were far from being dazzled by the pomp. "Less show and more virtue," they said, "would better become such judges."

The pontifical commission having been read, the legates declared that they would judge without fear or favor, and would admit of neither recusation nor appeal. Then the usher cried, "Henry, king of England, come into court." The king, cited in his own capital to accept as judges two priests, his subjects, repressed the throbbing of his proud heart, and replied, in the hope that this strange trial would have a favorable issue, "Here I am." The usher continued, "Catherine, queen of England, come into court." The queen handed the cardinals a paper in which she protested against the legality of the court, as the judges were the subjects of her opponent, and appealed to Rome. The cardinals declared they could not admit this paper, and consequently Catherine was again called into court. After the king and Wolsey had in turn briefly spoken, the queen devoutly crossed herself, made the circuit of the court to where the king sat, bending with dignity as she passed in front of the legates, and fell on her knees before her husband. Every eye was turned upon her. Then speaking in English, but with a Spanish accent, which by recalling the distance she was from her native home, pleaded eloquently for her, Catherine said with tears in her eyes, and in a tone at once dignified and impassioned:
"Sir: I beseech you, for all the love that hath been between us, and for the love of God, let me have justice and right; take some pity on me, for I am a poor woman and a stranger, born out of your dominions. I have here no assured friend, much less impartial counsel, and I flee to you as to the head of justice within this realm. Alas! Sir, wherein have I offended you, or what occasion given you of displeasure, that you should wish to put me from you? I take God and all the world to witness, that I have been to you a true, humble, and obedient wife, ever conformable to your will and pleasure. Never have I said or done aught contrary thereto, being always well pleased and content with all things wherein you had delight; neither did I ever grudge in word or countenance, or show a visage or spark of discontent. I loved all those whom you loved, only for your sake. This twenty years I have been your true wife, and by me ye have had divers children, although it hath pleased God to call them out of this world, which yet hath been no default in me."

The judges, and even the most servile of the courtiers, were touched when they heard these simple and eloquent words, and the queen’s sorrow moved them almost to tears. Catherine continued:

"Sir: When ye married me at the first, I take God to be my judge I was a true maid, and whether it be true or not, I put it to your conscience. ... If there be any just cause that ye can allege against me, I am contented to depart from your kingdom, albeit to my great shame and dishonor; and if there be none, then let me remain in my former estate until death. Who united us? The king, your father, who was called the second Solomon; and my father, Ferdinand, who was esteemed one of the wisest princes that, for many years before, had reigned in Spain. It is not, therefore, to be doubted that the marriage between you and me is good and lawful. Who are my judges? Is not one the man that has put sorrow between you and me? ... a judge whom I refuse and abhor! Who are the counselors assigned me? Are they not officers of the crown, who have made oath to you in your own council? ... Sir, I conjure you not to call me before a court so formed. Yet, if you refuse me this favor... your will be done... I shall be silent, I shall repress the emotions of my soul and remit my just cause to the hands of God."

Thus spoke Catherine through her tears; humbly bending, she seemed to embrace Henry’s knees. She rose and made a low obeisance to the king. It was expected that she would return to her seat, but, leaning on the arm of Master Griffiths, her receiver-general, she moved towards the door. The king, observing this, ordered her to be recalled, and the usher following her, thrice cried aloud, "Catherine, queen of England, come into court." "Madam," said Griffiths, "you are called back." "I hear it well enough," replied the queen, "but go you on, for this is no court wherein I can have justice; let us proceed."

Catherine returned to the palace, and never again appeared before the court either by proxy or in person. She had gained her cause in the minds of many. The dignity of her person, the quaint simplicity of her speech, the propriety with which, relying upon her innocence, she had spoken of the most delicate subjects, and the tears which betrayed her emotion, had created a deep impression. But "the sting in her
speech," as a historian says, was her appeal to the king’s conscience, and to the judgment of Almighty God, on the capital point in the cause. "How could a person so modest, so sober in her language," said many, "dare utter such a falsehood? Besides, the king did not contradict her."

Henry was greatly embarrassed; Catherine’s words had moved him. Catherine’s defense, one of the most touching in history, had gained over the accuser himself. He therefore felt constrained to render this testimony to the accused: "Since the queen has withdrawn, I will, in her absence, declare to you all present, that she has been to me as true and obedient a wife as I could desire. She has all the virtues and good qualities that belong to a woman. She is as noble in character as in birth."

But Wolsey was the most embarrassed of all. When the queen had said, without naming him, that one of her judges was the cause of all her misfortunes, looks of indignation were turned upon him. He was unwilling to remain under the weight of this accusation. As soon as the king had finished speaking, he said, "Sir, I humbly beg your majesty to declare before this audience, whether I was the first or chief mover in this business, for I am greatly suspected of all men herein." Wolsey had formerly boasted to Du Bellay "that the first project of the divorce was set on foot by himself, to create a perpetual separation between the houses of England and Spain," but now it suited him to affirm the contrary. The king, who needed his services, took care not to contradict him. "My lord cardinal," he said, "I can well excuse you herein. Marry, so far from being a mover, ye have been rather against me in attempting thereof. It was the bishop of Tarbes, the French ambassador, who begot the first scruples in my conscience by his doubts on the legitimacy of the princess Mary." This was not correct. The bishop of Tarbes was not in England before the year 1527, and we have proof that the king was meditating a divorce in 1526. "From that hour," he continued, "I was much troubled, and thought myself in danger of God’s heavy displeasure, who, wishing to punish my incestuous marriage, had taken away all the sons my wife had borne me. I laid my grief before you, my lord of Lincoln, then being my ghostly father; and by your advice I asked counsel of the rest of the bishops, and you all informed me under your seals, that you shared in my scruples." "That is the truth," said the archbishop of Canterbury. "No, Sir, not so, under correction," quoth the bishop of Rochester, "you have not my hand and seal." "No?" exclaimed the king, showing him a paper which he held in his hand, "is not this your hand and seal?" "No, forsooth," he answered. Henry’s surprise increased, and turning with a frown to the archbishop of Canterbury, he asked him, "What say you to that?" "Sir, it is his hand and seal," replied Warham. "It is not," rejoined Rochester, "I told you I would never consent to any such act." "You say the truth," responded the archbishop, "but you were fully resolved at the last, that I should subscribe your name and put your seal." "All which is untrue," added Rochester, in a passion. The bishop was not very respectful to his primate. "Well, well," said the king, wishing to end the dispute, "we will not stand in argument with you; for you are but one man." The court adjourned. The day had been better for Catherine than for the prelates.
In proportion as the first sitting had been pathetic, so the discussions in the second between the lawyers and bishops were calculated to revolt a delicate mind. The advocates of the two parties vigorously debated pro and con respecting the consummation of Arthur’s marriage with Catherine. "It is a very difficult question," said one of the counsel, "none can know the truth." "But I know it," replied the bishop of Rochester. "What do you mean?" asked Wolsey. "My lord," he answered, "he was the very Truth who said, What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder; that is enough for me." "So everybody thinks," rejoined Wolsey, "but whether it was God who united Henry of England and Catherine of Aragon, hoc restat probandum (that remains to be proved). The king’s council decides that the marriage is unlawful, and consequently it was not God who joined them together." The two bishops then exchanged a few words less edifying than those of the preceding day. Several of the hearers expressed a sentiment of disgust. "It is a disgrace to the court," said Doctor Ridley with no little indignation, "that you dare discuss questions which fill every right-minded man with horror." This sharp reprimand put an end to the debate.

The agitations of the court spread to the religious houses; priests, monks, and nuns were everywhere in commotion. It was not long before astonishing revelations began to circulate through the cloisters. There was no talk then of an old portrait of the Virgin that winked its eyes, but other miracles were invented. "An angel," it was rumored, "has appeared to Elizabeth Barton, the maid of Kent, as he did formerly to Adam, to the patriarchs, and to Jesus Christ." At the epochs of the creation and of the redemption, and in the times which lead from one to the other, miracles are natural; God then appeared, and His coming without any signs of power would be as surprising as the rising of the sun unattended by its rays of light. But the Roman Church does not stop there; it claims in every age, for its saints, the privilege of miraculous powers, and the miracles are multiplied in proportion to the ignorance of the people. And accordingly the angel said to the epileptic maid of Kent, "Go to the unfaithful king of England, and tell him there are three things he desires, which I forbid now and forever. The first is the power of the pope, the second the new doctrine, the third Anne Boleyn. If he takes her for his wife, God will visit him." The vision-seeing maid delivered the message to the king, whom nothing could now stop.

On the contrary, he began to find out that Wolsey proceeded too slowly, and the idea sometimes crossed his mind that he was betrayed by this minister. One fine summer’s morning, Henry, as soon as he rose, summoned the cardinal to him at Bridewell. Wolsey hastened thither, and remained closeted with the king from eleven till twelve. The latter gave way to all the fury of his passion and the violence of his despotism. "We must finish this matter promptly," he said, "we must positively." Wolsey retired very uneasy, and returned by the Thames to Westminster. The sun darted his bright rays on the water. The bishop of Carlisle, who sat by the cardinal’s side, as he wiped his forehead: "A very warm day, my lord." "Yes," replied the unhappy Wolsey, "if you had been chafed for an hour as I have been, you would say it was a hot day." When he
reached his palace, the cardinal lay down on his bed to seek repose; he was not quiet long.
Catherine had grown in Henry’s eyes, as well as in those of the nation. The king shrank from a judgment; he even began to doubt of his success. He wished that the queen would consent to a separation. This idea occurred to his mind after Wolsey’s departure, and the cardinal had hardly closed his eyes before the Earl of Wiltshire (Anne Boleyn’s father) was announced to him with a message from the king. “It is his majesty’s pleasure,” said Wiltshire, “that you represent to the queen the shame that will accrue to her from a judicial condemnation, and persuade her to confide in his wisdom.” Wolsey, commissioned to execute a task he knew to be impossible, exclaimed, “Why do you put such fancies in the king’s head?” and then he spoke so reproachfully that Wiltshire, with tears in his eyes, fell on his knees beside the cardinal’s bed. Boleyn, desirous of seeing his daughter queen of England, feared perhaps that he had taken a wrong course. “It is well,” said the cardinal, recollecting that the message came from Henry VIII, “I am ready to do everything to please his majesty.” He rose, went to Bath-Place to fetch Campeggio, and together they waited on the queen. The two legates found Catherine quietly at work with her maids of honor. Wolsey addressed the queen in Latin, “Nay, my lord,” she said, “speak to me in English; I wish all the world could hear you.” “We desire, madam, to communicate to you alone our counsel and opinion.” “My lord,” said the queen, “you are come to speak of things beyond my capacity,” and then, with noble simplicity, showing a skein of white thread hanging about her neck, she continued, “These are my occupations and all that I am capable of. I am a poor woman, without friends in this foreign country and lacking wit to answer persons of wisdom as ye be; and yet, my lords, to please you, let us go to my withdrawing room.”
At these words the queen rose, and Wolsey gave her his hand. Catherine earnestly maintained her rights as a woman and a queen. “We who were in the outer chamber,” says Cavendish, “from time to time could hear the queen speaking very loud, but could not understand what she said.” Catherine, instead of justifying herself, boldly accused her judge. “I know, Sir Cardinal,” she said with noble candor, “I know who has given the king the advice he is following—it is you. I have not ministered to your pride; I have blamed your conduct; I have complained of your tyranny, and my nephew the Emperor has not made you pope. … Hence all my misfortunes. To revenge yourself you have kindled a war in Europe and have stirred up against me this most wicked matter. God will be my judge… and yours!” Wolsey would have replied, but Catherine haughtily refused to hear him, and, while treating Campeggio with great civility, declared that she would not acknowledge either of them as her judge. The cardinals withdrew, Wolsey full of vexation and Campeggio beaming with joy, for the business was getting more complicated. Every hope of accommodation was lost; nothing remained now but to proceed judicially.

CHAPTER 9
The Trial Ends in Farce
July, 1529

The trial was resumed. The bishop of Bath and Wells waited upon the queen at Greenwich and peremptorily summoned her to appear in the parliament chamber. On the day appointed Catherine limited herself to sending an appeal to the pope. She was declared contumacious, and the legates proceeded with the cause.

Twelve articles were prepared, which were to serve for the examination of the witnesses and the summary of which was that the marriage of Henry with Catherine, being forbidden both by the law of God and of the church, was null and void.

The hearing of the witnesses began, and Dr. Taylor, archdeacon of Buckingham, conducted the examination. The duke of Norfolk, high-treasurer of England, the duke of Suffolk, Maurice St. John, gentleman-carver to Prince Arthur, the viscount Fitzwalter and Anthony Willoughby, his cupbearers, testified to their being present on the morrow of the wedding at the breakfast of the prince, then in sound health, and reported the conversation that took place. The old duchess of Norfolk, the earl of Shrewsbury and the marquis of Dorset, confirmed these declarations, which proved that Arthur and Catherine were really married. It was also called to mind that, at the time of Arthur’s death, Henry was not permitted to take the title of Prince of Wales, because Catherine hoped to give an heir to the crown of England.

"If Arthur and Catherine were really married," said the king’s counselors after these extraordinary depositions, "the marriage of this princess with Henry, Arthur’s brother, was forbidden by the divine law, by an express command of God contained in Leviticus, and no dispensation could permit what God had forbidden." Campeggio would never concede this argument, which limited the right of the popes; it was necessary therefore to abandon the divine right (which was in reality to lose the cause) and to seek in the bull of Julius II and in his famous brief for flaws that would invalidate them both; and this the king’s counsel did, although they did not conceal the weakness of their position. "The motive alleged in the dispensation," they said, "is the necessity of preserving a cordial relation between Spain and England; now, there was nothing that threatened their harmony. Moreover, it is said in this document that the pope grants it at the prayer of Henry, Prince of Wales. Now as this prince was only thirteen years old, he was not of age to make such a request. As for the brief, it is found neither in England nor in Rome; we cannot therefore admit its authenticity." It was not difficult for Catherine’s friends to invalidate these objections. "Besides," they added, "a union that has lasted twenty years sufficiently establishes its own lawfulness. And will you declare the Princess Mary illegitimate, to the great injury of this realm?"

The king’s advocates then changed their course. Was not the Roman legate provided with a decretal pronouncing the divorce, in case it should be proved that Arthur’s marriage had been really consummated? Now, this fact had been proved by the depositions. "This is the moment for delivering judgment," said
Henry and his counselors to Campeggio. "Publish the pope’s decretal." But the pope feared the sword of Charles V, then hanging over his head; and accordingly, whenever the king advanced one step, the Romish prelate took several in an opposite direction. "I will deliver judgment in five days," said he, and when the five days were expired, he bound himself to deliver it in six. "Restore peace to my troubled conscience," exclaimed Henry. The legate replied in courtly phrase; he had gained a few days’ delay, and that was all he desired.

Such conduct on the part of the Roman legate produced an unfavorable effect in England, and a change took place in the public mind. The first movement had been for Catherine; the second was for Henry. Clement’s endless delays and Campeggio’s stratagems exasperated the nation. The king’s argument was simple and popular: "The pope cannot dispense with the laws of God"; while the queen, by appealing to the authority of the Roman pontiff, displeased both high and low. "No precedent," said the lawyers, "can justify the king’s marriage with his brother’s widow."

There were, however, some evangelical Christians who thought Henry was “troubled” more by his passions than by his conscience; and they asked how it happened that a prince, who represented himself to be so disturbed by the possible transgression of a law of doubtful interpretation, could desire, after twenty years, to violate the indisputable law which forbade the divorce? ... On the 21st of July, the day fixed ad concludendum, the cause was adjourned until the Friday following, and no one doubted that the matter would then be terminated.

All prepared for this important day. The king ordered the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk to be present at the sitting of the court; and, being himself impatient to hear the so much coveted judgment, he stole into a gallery of the parliament chamber facing the judges.

The legates of the holy see having taken their seats, the attorney-general signified to them “that everything necessary for the information of their conscience having been judicially laid before them, that day had been fixed for the conclusion of the trial.” There was a pause; everyone feeling the importance of this judgment, waited for it with impatience. "Either the papacy pronounces my divorce from Catherine," the king had said, "or I shall divorce myself from the papacy." That was the way Henry put the question. All eyes, and particularly the king’s, were turned on the judges; Campeggio could not retreat; he must now say yes or no. For some time he was silent. He knew for certain that the queen’s appeal had been admitted by Clement VII, and that the latter had concluded an alliance with the Emperor. It was no longer in his power to grant the king’s request. Clearly foreseeing that a no would perhaps forfeit the power of Rome in England, while a yes might put an end to the plans of religious emancipation which alarmed him so much, he could not make up his mind to say either yes or no.

At last the nuncio rose slowly from his chair, and all the assembly listened with emotion to the oracular decision which for so many years the powerful king of England had sought from the Roman pontiff. "The general vacation of the
harvest and vintage,” he said, “being observed every year by the court of Rome, dating from tomorrow the 24th of July, the beginning of the dog-days, we adjourn, to some future period, the conclusion of these pleadings.” The auditors were thunderstruck. “What! because the malaria renders the air of Rome dangerous at the end of July, and compels the Romans to close their courts, must a trial be broken off on the banks of the Thames, when its conclusion is looked for so impatiently?” The people hoped for a judicial sentence, and they were answered with a jest; it was thus Rome made sport of Christendom. Campeggio, to disarm Henry’s wrath, gave utterance to some noble sentiments, but his whole line of conduct raises legitimate doubts as to his sincerity. “The queen,” he said, “denies the competency of the court; I must therefore make my report to the pope, who is the source of life and honor, and wait his sovereign orders. I have not come so far to please any man, be he king or subject. I am an old man, feeble and sickly, and fear none but the Supreme Judge, before whom I must soon appear. I therefore adjourn this court until the 1st of October.” It was evident that this adjournment was only a formality intended to signify the definitive rejection of Henry’s demand. The king, who from his place of concealment had heard Campeggio’s speech, could scarcely control his indignation. He wanted a regular judgment; he clung to forms; he desired that his cause should pass successfully through all the windings of ecclesiastical procedure, and yet here it is wrecked upon the vacations of the Romish court. Henry was silent, however, either from prudence, or because surprise deprived him of the power of speech, and he hastily left the gallery. Norfolk, Suffolk, and the other courtiers did not follow him. The king and his ministers, the peers and the people, and even the clergy, were almost unanimous, and yet the pope pronounced his veto. He humbled the Defender of the Faith to flatter the author of the sack of Rome. This was too much. The impetuous Suffolk started from his seat, struck his hand violently on the table in front of him, cast a threatening look upon the judges and exclaimed, “By the mass, the old saying is confirmed today, that no cardinal has ever brought good to England.” “Sir, of all men in this realm,” replied Wolsey, “you have the least cause to disparage cardinals, for if I, poor cardinal, had not been, you would not have a head on your shoulders.” It would seem that Wolsey pacified Henry at the time of the duke’s marriage with the Princess Mary. "I cannot pronounce sentence," continued Wolsey, "without knowing the good pleasure of his holiness." The two dukes and the other noblemen left the hall in anger and hastened to the palace. The legates, remaining with the officers, looked at each other for a few moments. At last, Campeggio, who alone had remained calm during this scene of violence, arose, and the audience dispersed. Henry did not allow himself to be crushed by this blow. Rome, by her strange proceedings, aroused in him that suspicious and despotic spirit of which he gave such tragic proofs in after-years. The papacy was making sport of him. Clement and Wolsey tossed his divorce from one to the other like a ball which, now at Rome and now at London, seemed fated to remain perpetually in the air. The king thought he had been long enough the plaything of his holiness and
of the crafty cardinal; his patience was exhausted, and he resolved to show his adversaries that Henry VIII was more than a match for these bishops. We shall find him seizing this favorable opportunity and giving an unexpected solution to the matter.

Wolsey sorrowfully hung his head; by taking part with the nuncio and the pope, he had signed the warrant of his own destruction. So long as Henry had a single ray of hope, he thought proper still to dissemble with Clement VII, but he might vent all his anger on Wolsey. From the period of the Roman Vacations the cardinal was ruined in his master’s mind. Wolsey’s enemies, seeing his favor decline, hastened to attack him. Suffolk and Norfolk in particular, impatient to get rid of an insolent priest who had so long chafed their pride, told Henry that Wolsey had been continually playing false; they went over all his negotiations month by month and day by day, and drew the most overwhelming conclusions from them. Sir William Kingston and Lord Manners laid before the king one of the cardinal’s letters which Sir Francis Bryan had obtained from the papal archives. In it the cardinal desired Clement to spin out the divorce question, and finally to oppose it, seeing (he added) that if Henry was separated from Catherine, a friend to the reformers would become queen of England. This letter clearly expressed Wolsey’s inmost thoughts—Rome at any price... and perish England and Henry rather than the popedom! We can imagine the king’s anger.

Anne Boleyn’s friends were not working alone. There was not a person at court whom Wolsey’s haughtiness and tyranny had not offended; no one in the king’s council in whom his continual intrigues had not raised serious suspicions. He had, they said, betrayed in France the cause of England; kept up in time of peace and war secret intelligence with Madam, mother of Francis I; received great presents from her; oppressed the nation, and trodden under foot the laws of the kingdom. The people called him Frenchman and traitor, and all England seemed to vie in throwing burning brands at the superb edifice which the pride of this prelate had so laboriously erected.

Wolsey was too clear-sighted not to discern the signs of his approaching fall. "Both the rising and the setting sun (for thus a historian calls Anne Boleyn and Catherine of Aragon) frowned upon him," and the sky, growing darker around him, gave token of the storm that was to overwhelm him. If the cause failed, Wolsey incurred the vengeance of the king; if it succeeded, he would be delivered up to the vengeance of the Boleyn’s, without speaking of Catherine’s, the Emperor’s, and the pope’s. Happy Campeggio! thought the cardinal, he has nothing to fear. If Henry’s favor is withdrawn from him, Charles and Clement will make him compensation. But Wolsey lost everything when he lost the king’s good graces. Detested by his fellow citizens, despised and hated by all Europe, he saw to whatever side he turned nothing but the just reward of his avarice and falseness. He strove in vain, as on other occasions, to lean on the ambassador of France; Du Bellay was solicited on the other side. "I am exposed here to such a heavy and continual fire that I am half dead," exclaimed the French Ambassador, and the cardinal met with an unusual reserve in his former confidant.
Yet the crisis approached. Like a skillful but affrighted pilot, Wolsey cast his eyes around him to discover a port in which he could take refuge. He could find none but his see of York. He therefore began once more to complain of the fatigues of power, of the weariness of the diplomatic career, and to extol the sweetness of an episcopal life. On a sudden he felt a great interest about the flock of whom he had never thought before. Those around him shook their heads, well knowing that such a retreat would be to Wolsey the bitterest of disgraces. One single idea supported him; if he fell, it would be because he had clung more to the pope than to the king; he would be the martyr of his faith. What a faith! What a martyr!

CHAPTER 10
"Tyndale" Received in a King’s Palace
1529

While these things were taking place, Anne was living at Hever Castle in retirement and sadness. Scruples from time to time still alarmed her conscience. It is true, the king represented to her unceasingly that his salvation and the safety of his people demanded the dissolution of a union condemned by the divine law, and that what he solicited several popes had granted. Had not Alexander VI annulled, after ten years, the marriage of Ladislaus and Beatrice of Naples? Had not Louis XII, the father of his people, been divorced from Joan of France? Nothing was more common, he said, than to see the divorce of a prince authorized by a pope; the security of the state must be provided for before everything else. Carried away by these arguments and dazzled by the splendor of a throne, Anne Boleyn consented to usurp at Henry’s side the rank belonging to another. Yet, if she was imprudent and ambitious, she was feeling and generous, and the misfortunes of a queen whom she respected soon made her reject with terror the idea of taking her place. The fertile pastures of Kent and the gothic halls of Hever Castle were by turns the witnesses of the mental conflicts this young lady experienced. The fear she entertained of seeing the queen again, and the idea that the two cardinals, her enemies, were plotting her ruin, made her adopt the resolution of not returning to court, and she shut herself up in her solitary chamber.

Anne had neither the deep piety of a Bilney, nor the somewhat vague and mystic spirituality observable in Margaret of Valois; it was not feeling which prevailed in her religion, it was knowledge, and a horror of superstition and pharisaism. Her mind required light and activity, and at that time she sought in reading the consolations so necessary to her position. One day she opened one of the books prohibited in England, which a friend of the Reformation had given her, The Obedience of a Christian Man. Its author was William Tyndale, that invisible man whom Wolsey’s agents were hunting for in Brabant and Germany, and this was a recommendation to Anne. “If thou believe the promises,” she read, “then God’s truth justifieth thee; that is, forgiveth thy sins and sealeth thee with His Holy Spirit. If thou have true faith, so seest thou the exceeding and infinite love and mercy which God hath shown thee freely in Christ; then
must thou needs love again, and love cannot but compel thee to work. If, when tyrants oppose thee, thou hast power to confess, then art thou sure that thou art safe. If thou be fallen from the way of truth, come thereto again and thou art safe. Yea, Christ shall save thee, and the angels of heaven shall rejoice at thy coming." These words did not change Anne’s heart, but she marked with her nail, as was her custom, other passages which struck her more, and which she desired to point out to the king if, as she hoped, she was ever to meet him again. She believed that the truth was there, and took a lively interest in those whom Wolsey, Henry, and the pope were at that time persecuting.

Anne was soon dragged from these pious lessons, and launched into the midst of a world full of dangers. Henry, convinced that he had nothing to expect henceforward from Campeggio, neglected those proprieties which he had hitherto observed, and immediately after the adjournment required Anne Boleyn to return to court; he restored her to the place she had formerly occupied, and even surrounded her with increased splendor. Everyone saw that Anne, in the king’s mind, was queen of England; and a powerful party was formed around her, which proposed to accomplish the definitive ruin of the cardinal.

After her return to court, Anne read much less frequently The Obedience of a Christian Man and the Testament of Jesus Christ. Henry’s homage, her friends’ intrigues, and the whirl of festivities, bade fair to stifle the thoughts which solitude had aroused in her heart. One day, having left Tyndale’s book in a window, Miss Gainsford, a fair young gentlewoman attached to her person, took it up and read it. A gentleman of handsome mien, cheerful temper, and extreme mildness, named George Zouch, also belonging to Anne’s household, and betrothed to Miss Gainsford, profiting by the liberty his position gave him, indulged sometimes in "love tricks." On one occasion when George desired to have a little talk with her, he was annoyed to find her absorbed by a book of whose contents he knew nothing, and taking advantage of a moment when the young lady had turned away her head, he laughingly snatched it from her. Miss Gainsford ran after Zouch to recover her book, but just at that moment she heard her mistress calling her, and she left George, threatening him with her finger.

As she did not return immediately, George withdrew to his room, and opened the volume; it was the Obedience of a Christian Man. He glanced over a few lines, then a few pages, and at last read the book through more than once. He seemed to hear the voice of God. "I feel the Spirit of God," he said, "speaking in my heart as he has spoken in the heart of him who wrote the book." The words which had only made a temporary impression on the preoccupied mind of Anne Boleyn, penetrated to the heart of her equerry and converted him. Miss Gainsford, fearing that Anne would ask for her book, entreated George to restore it to her, but he positively refused, and even the young lady’s tears failed to make him give up a volume in which he had found the life of his soul. Becoming more serious, he no longer jested as before, and when Miss Gainsford peremptorily demanded the book, he was, says the chronicler, "ready to weep himself."
Zouch, finding in this volume an edification which empty forms and ceremonies could not give, used to carry it with him to the king’s chapel. Dr Sampson, the dean, generally officiated; and while the choir chanted the service, George would be absorbed in his book, where he read, “If when thou seest the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, thou believest in this promise of Christ: This is my body that is broken for you, and if thou have this promise fast in thine heart, thou art saved and justified thereby; thou eatest his body and drinkest his blood. If not, so helpeth it thee not, though thou hearest a thousand masses in a day; no more than it should help thee in a dead thirst to behold a bush at a tavern door, if thou knowest not thereby that there was wine within to be sold.” The young man dwelt upon these words; by faith he ate the body and drank the blood of the Son of God. This was what was passing in the palaces of Henry VIII; there were saints in the household of Caesar.

Wolsey, desirous of removing from the court everything that might favor the Reformation, had recommended extreme vigilance to Dr. Sampson so as to prevent the circulation of the innovating books. Accordingly, one day when George was in the chapel absorbed in his book, the dean, who, even while officiating, had not lost sight of the young man, called him to him after the service and, rudely taking the book from his hands, demanded, “What is your name, and in whose service are you?” Zouch having replied, the dean withdrew with a very angry look, and carried his prey to the cardinal.

When Miss Gainsford heard of this mishap, her grief was extreme; she trembled at the thought that the Obedience of a Christian Man was in Wolsey’s hands. Not long after this, Anne having asked for her book, the young lady fell on her knees, confessed all, and begged to be forgiven. Anne uttered not a word of reproach; her quick mind saw immediately the advantage she might derive from this affair. “Well,” said she, “it shall be the dearest book to them that ever the dean or cardinal took away.”

“The noble lady,” as the chronicler styles her, immediately demanded an interview of the king, and on reaching his presence she fell at his feet, and begged his assistance. “What is the matter, Anne,” said the astonished monarch. She told him what had happened, and Henry promised that the book should not remain in Wolsey’s hands.

Anne had scarcely quitted the royal apartments when the cardinal arrived with the famous volume, with the intention of complaining to Henry of certain passages which he knew could not fail to irritate him, and of taking advantage of it even to attack Anne, if the king should be offended. Henry’s icy reception closed his mouth; the king confined himself to taking the book, and bowing out the cardinal. This was precisely what Anne had hoped for. She begged the king to read the book, which he promised to do.

And Henry accordingly shut himself up in his chamber, and read the Obedience of a Christian Man. There were few works better calculated to enlighten him, and none, after the Bible, that had more influence upon the Reformation in England. Tyndale treated of obedience, “the essential principle,” as he terms it, “of every political or religious community.” He declaimed against the unlawful
power of the popes, who usurped the lawful authority of Christ and of His Word. He professed political doctrines too favorable doubtless to absolute power, but calculated to show that the reformers were not, as had been asserted, instigators of rebellion. Henry read as follows:

"The king is in the room of God in this world. He that resisteth the king, resisteth God; he that judgeth the king, judgeth God. He is the minister of God to defend thee from a thousand inconveniences; though he be the greatest tyrant in the world, yet is he unto thee a great benefit of God; for it is better to pay the tenth than to lose all, and to suffer wrong of one man than of every man. It is better to have a tyrant as king than a shadow... for a tyrant, though he do wrong unto the good, yet he punisheth the evil, and makes all men obey, neither suffers any man to exact taxes but himself. A king that is soft as silk is much more grievous unto the realm than a right tyrant. Read the chronicles and thou shalt find it ever so."

These are indeed strange doctrines for rebels to hold, thought the king; and he read further:

"Let kings, if they had lever [rather] be Christians in deed than so to be called, give themselves altogether to the wealth [well-being] of their realms after the ensample of Jesus Christ, remembering that the people are God’s and not theirs, yea, are Christ’s inheritance, bought with His blood. The most despised person in his realm (if he is a Christian) is equal with him in the kingdom of God and of Christ. Let the king put off all pride, and become a brother to the poorest of his subjects."

We may surmise that these words were less satisfactory to the king. He kept on reading:

"The Emperor and kings are nothing now-a-days, but even hangmen unto the pope and bishops, to kill whomsoever they condemn, as Pilate was unto the scribes and pharisees and high bishops to hang Christ."

This seemed to Henry rather strong language.

"The pope hath received no other authority of Christ than to preach God’s Word. Now, this Word should rule only, and not bishops’ decrees or the pope’s pleasure. In præsentia majoris cessat potestas minoris, in the presence of the greater, the less hath no power. The pope, against all the doctrine of Christ, which saith, My kingdom is not of this world, hath usurped the right of the Emperor. Kings must make account of their doings only to God. No person may be exempt from this ordinance of God; neither can the profession of monks and friars, or anything that the popes or bishops can lay for themselves, except them from the sword of the Emperor or king, if they break the laws. For it is written (Romans 13), ‘Let every soul submit himself unto the authority of the higher powers.’"

"What excellent reading!" exclaimed Henry, when he had finished, "this is truly a book for all kings to read, and for me particularly."

Captivated by Tyndale’s work, the king began to converse with Anne about the church and the pope; and she who had seen Margaret of Valois unassumingly endeavor to instruct Francis I, strove in like manner to enlighten Henry VIII. She did not possess the influence over him she desired; this unhappy prince
was, to the very end of his life, opposed to the evangelical reformation; protestants and Catholics have been equally mistaken when they have regarded him as being favorable to it. "In a short time," says the annalist quoted by Strype at the end of his narrative, "the king, by the help of this virtuous lady, had his eyes opened to the truth. He learned to seek after that truth, to advance God’s religion and glory, to detest the pope’s doctrine, his lies, his pomp, and pride, and to deliver his subjects from the Egyptian darkness and Babylonian bonds that the pope had brought him and his subjects under. Despising the rebellions of his subjects and the rage of so many mighty potentates abroad, he set forward a religious reformation, which, beginning with the triple-crowned head, came down to all the members of the hierarchy." History has rarely delivered a more erroneous judgment. Henry’s eyes were never opened to the truth, and it was not he who made the Reformation. It was accomplished first of all by Scripture, and then by the ministry of simple and faithful men baptized of the Holy Ghost.

Yet Tyndale’s book and the conduct of the legates had given rise in the king’s mind to new thoughts which he sought time to mature. He desired also to conceal his anger from Wolsey and Campeggio, and dissipate his spleen, says the historian Collyer; he therefore gave orders to remove the court to the palace of Woodstock. The magnificent park attached to this royal residence, in which was the celebrated bower constructed (it is said) by Henry II to conceal the fair Rosamond, offered all the charms of the promenade, the chase, and solitude. From here he could easily travel to Langley, Grafton, and other country seats. It was not long before the entertainments, horse races, and other rural sports began. The world with its pleasures and its grandeur, were at the bottom the idols of Anne Boleyn’s heart; but yet she felt a certain attraction for the new doctrine, which was confounded in her mind with the great cause of all knowledge, perhaps even with her own. More enlightened than the generality of women, she was distinguished by the superiority of her understanding not only over her own sex, but even over many of the gentlemen of the court. While Catherine, a member of the third order of St. Francis, indulged in trifling practices, the more intelligent, if not more pious Anne, cared but little for amulets which the friars had blessed, for apparitions, or visions of angels. Woodstock furnished her with an opportunity of curing Henry VIII of the superstitious ideas natural to him. There was a place in the forest said to be haunted by evil spirits; not a priest or a courtier dared approach it. A tradition ran that if a king ventured to cross the boundary, he would fall dead. Anne resolved to take Henry there. Accordingly, one morning she led the way in the direction of the place where these mysterious powers manifested their presence (as it was said) by strange apparitions; they entered the wood; they arrived at the so much dreaded spot; all hesitated; but Anne’s calmness reassured her companions; they advanced; they found... nothing but trees and turf, and, laughing at their former terrors, they explored every corner of this mysterious resort of the evil spirits. Anne returned to the palace, congratulating herself on the triumph Henry had gained over his imaginary fears.
CHAPTER 11
Wolsey Alone and Facing Ruin
Summer, 1529

While the court was thus taking its pleasure at Woodstock, Wolsey remained in London, a prey to the acutest anguish. "This calling of the case to Rome," wrote he to Gregory Da Casale, "will not only completely alienate the king and his realm from the apostolic see, but will ruin me utterly." This message had hardly reached the pope, before the imperial ambassadors handed to him the queen’s protest, and added in a very significant tone, "If your holiness does not call this cause before you, the Emperor, who is determined to bring it to an end, will have recourse to other arguments." The same perplexity always agitated Clement: Which of the two must be sacrificed, Henry or Charles? Anthony de Leyva, who commanded the imperial forces, having routed the French army, the pope no longer doubted that Charles was the elect of Heaven. It was not Europe alone which acknowledged this prince's authority; a new world had just laid its power and its gold at his feet. The formidable priest-king of the Aztecs had been unable to withstand Cortez; could the priest-king of Rome withstand Charles V? Cortez had returned from Mexico, bringing with him Mexican chiefs in all their barbarous splendor, with thousands of pesos, with gold and silver and emeralds of extraordinary size, with magnificent tissues and birds of brilliant plumage. He had accompanied Charles, who was then going to Italy, to the place of embarkation, and had sent to Clement VII costly gifts of the precious metals, valuable jewels, and a troop of Mexican dancers, buffoons, and jugglers, who charmed the pope and the cardinal above all things. Clement, even while refusing Henry’s prayer, had not as yet granted the Emperor’s. He thought he could now resist no longer the star of a monarch victorious over two worlds, and hastened to enter into negotiations with him. Sudden terrors still assailed him from time to time: My refusal (he said to himself) may perhaps cause me to lose England. But Charles, holding him in his powerful grasp, compelled him to submit. Henry’s antecedents were rather encouraging to the pontiff. How could he imagine that a prince, who alone of all the monarchs of Europe had once contended against the great German reformer, would now separate from the popedom? On the 6th of July, Clement declared to the English envoys that he avoked to Rome the cause between Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. In other words, this was refusing the divorce. "There are twenty-three points in this case," said the courtiers, "and the debate on the first has lasted a year; before the end of the trial, the king will be not only past marrying but past living."

When he learned that the fatal blow had been struck, Dr. William Bennett, one of Henry’s envoys, in a tone of sadness exclaimed, "Alas! most holy father, by this act the Church in England will be utterly destroyed; the king declared it to me with tears in his eyes." "Why is it my fortune to live in such evil days?" replied the pope, who, in his turn, began to weep, "but I am encircled by the
Emperor’s forces, and, if I were to please the king, I should draw a fearful ruin upon myself and upon the church. ... God will be my judge."

On the 15th of July, Da Casale sent the fatal news to the English minister. The king was cited before the pope and, in case of refusal, condemned to a fine of 10,000 ducats. On the 18th of July, peace was proclaimed at Rome between the pontiff and the Emperor, and on the next day (these dates are important) Clement, wishing still to make one more attempt to ward off the blow with which the papacy was threatened, wrote to Cardinal Wolsey, "My dear son, how can I describe to you my affliction? Show in this matter the prudence which so distinguishes you, and preserve the king in those kindly feelings which he has ever manifested towards me." A useless attempt! Far from saving the papacy, Wolsey was to be wrecked along with it.

Wolsey was thunderstruck. At the very time he was assuring Henry of the attachment of Clement and Francis, both were deserting him. The "politic handling" failed, which the cardinal had thought so skillful, and which had been so tortuous. Henry now had none but enemies on the continent of Europe, and the Reformation was daily spreading over his kingdom. Wolsey’s anguish cannot be described. His power, his pomp, his palaces were all threatened; who could tell whether he would even preserve his liberty and his life. A just reward for so much duplicity.

But the king’s wrath was to be greater than even the minister’s alarm. His terrified servants wondered how they should announce the pontiff’s decision. Gardiner, who, after his return from Rome, had been named secretary of state, went down to Langley, Northamptonshire, on the 3rd of August to communicate it to him. What news for the proud Tudor! The decision on the divorce was forbidden in England; the cause avoked to Rome, there to be buried and unjustly lost; Francis I treating with the Emperor; Charles and Clement on the point of exchanging at Bologna the most striking signs of their unchangeable alliance; the services rendered by the king to the popedom repaid with the blackest ingratitude; his hope of giving an heir to the crown disgracefully frustrated; and last, but not least, Henry VIII, the proudest monarch of Christendom, summoned to Rome to appear before an ecclesiastical tribunal... it was too much for Henry. His wrath, a moment restrained, burst forth like a clap of thunder, and all trembled around him. "Do they presume," he exclaimed, "to try my cause elsewhere than in my own dominions? I, the king of England, summoned before an Italian tribunal! ... Yes. ... I will go to Rome, but it shall be with such a mighty army that the pope, and his priests, and all Italy shall be struck with terror. I forbid the letters of citation to be executed," he continued, "I forbid the commission to consider its functions at an end." Henry would have desired to tear off Campeggio’s purple robes, and throw this prince of the Roman church into prison, in order to frighten Clement; but the very magnitude of the insult compelled him to restrain himself. He feared above all things to appear humbled in the eyes of England, and he hoped, by showing moderation, to hide the affront he had received. "Let everything be done," he told Gardiner, "to conceal from my subjects these letters of citation, which are so hurtful to my glory. Write to Wolsey that I have the greatest confidence in
his dexterity, and that he ought, by good handling, to win over Campeggio and the queen’s counselors, and, above all, prevail upon them at any price not to serve these citatory letters on me." But Henry had hardly given his instructions when the insult of which he had been the object recurred to his imagination; the thought of Clement haunted him night and day, and he swore to exact a striking vengeance from the pontiff. Rome desires to have no more to do with England. ... England in her turn will cast off Rome. Henry will sacrifice Wolsey, Clement, and the church; nothing shall stop his fury. The crafty pontiff has concealed his game, the king shall beat him openly; and from age to age the popedom shall shed tears over the imprudent folly of a Medici.

Thus after insupportable delays which had fatigued the nation, a thunderbolt fell upon England. Court, clergy, and people, from whom it was impossible to conceal these great events, were deeply stirred, and the whole kingdom was in commotion. Wolsey, still hoping to ward off the ruin impending over both himself and the papacy, immediately put in play all that dexterity which Henry had spoken of; he so far prevailed that the letters citatorial were not served on the king, but only the brief addressed to Wolsey by Clement VII. The cardinal, gratified by this trivial success, and desirous of profiting by it to raise his credit, resolved to accompany Campeggio, who was going down to Grafton to take leave of the king. When the coming of the two legates was heard of at court, the agitation was very great. The dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk regarded this proceeding as the last effort of their enemy and entreated Henry not to receive him. "The king will receive him," said some. "The king will not receive him," answered others. At length, one Sunday morning, it was announced that the prelates were at the gates of the mansion. Wolsey looked round with an anxious eye for the great officers who were accustomed to introduce him. They appeared, and desired Campeggio to follow them. When the legate had been taken to his apartments, Wolsey waited his turn, but great was his consternation on being informed that there was no chamber appointed for him in the palace. Sir Henry Norris, groom of the stole, offered Wolsey the use of his own room, and the cardinal followed him, almost sinking beneath the humiliation he had undergone. He made ready to appear before the king and, summoning up his courage, proceeded to the presence-chamber.

The lords of the council were standing in a row according to their rank; Wolsey, taking off his hat, passed along saluting each of them with affected civility. A great number of courtiers arrived, impatient to see how Henry would receive his old favorite, and most of them were already exulting in the striking disgrace of which they hoped to be witnesses. At last the king was announced. Henry stood under the cloth of state, and Wolsey advanced and knelt before him. Deep silence prevailed throughout the chamber. ... To the surprise of all, Henry stooped down and raised him up with both hands. ... Then, with a pleasing smile, he took Wolsey to the window, desired him to put on his hat, and talked familiarly with him. "Then," says Cavendish, the cardinal’s gentleman usher, "it would have made you smile to behold the countenances of those who had laid wagers that the king would not speak with him."
But this was the last ray of evening which then lighted up the darkening fortunes of Wolsey; the star of his favor was about to set for ever. ... The silence continued, for everyone desired to catch a few words of the conversation. The king seemed to be accusing Wolsey, and Wolsey to be justifying himself. On a sudden Henry pulled a letter out of his bosom and, showing it to the cardinal, said in a loud voice, "How can that be? Is not this your hand?" It was no doubt the letter which Bryan had intercepted. Wolsey replied in an undertone, and seemed to have appeased his master. The dinner hour having arrived, the king left the room telling Wolsey that he would not fail to see him again; the courtiers were eager to make their profoundest reverences to the cardinal, but he haughtily traversed the chamber, and the dukes hastened to carry to Anne Boleyn the news of this astonishing reception. Wolsey, Campeggio, and the lords of the council sat down to dinner. The cardinal, well aware that the terrible letter would be his utter ruin, and that Henry’s good graces had no other object than to prepare his fall, began to hint at his retirement. "Truly," said he with a devout air, "the king would do well to send his bishops and chaplains home to their cures and benefices." The company looked at one another with astonishment. "Yea, marry," said the duke of Norfolk somewhat rudely, "and so it were meet for you to do also." "I should be very well contented therewith," answered Wolsey, "if it were the king’s pleasure to license me with leave to go to my cure at Winchester." "Nay, to your benefice at York, where your greatest honor and charge is," replied Norfolk, who was not willing that Wolsey should be living so near Henry. "Even as it shall please the king," added Wolsey, and changed the subject of conversation.

Henry had caused himself to be announced to Anne Boleyn, who (says Cavendish) "kept state at Grafton more like a queen than a simple maid." Professing extreme sensibility, and an ardent imagination, Anne, who felt the slightest insult with all the sensibility of her woman’s heart, was very dissatisfied with the king after the report of the dukes. Accordingly, heedless of the presence of the attendants, she said to him, "Sir, is it not a marvelous thing to see into what great danger the cardinal hath brought you with all your subjects?"

"How so, sweetheart?" asked Henry.

Anne continued, "Are you ignorant of the hatred his exactions have drawn upon you? There is not a man in your whole realm of England worth one hundred pounds, but he hath made you his debtor." Anne here alluded to the loan the king had raised among his subjects.

"Well, well," said Henry, who was not pleased with these remarks, "I know that matter better than you."

"If my lord of Norfolk, my lord of Suffolk, my uncle, or my father had done much less than the cardinal hath done," continued Anne, "they would have lost their heads ere this."

"Then I perceive," said Henry, "you are none of his friends."
"No, sir, I have no cause, nor any that love you," she replied. The dinner was ended; the king, without appearing at all touched, proceeded to the presence-chamber where Wolsey expected him.

After a long conversation, carried on in a low tone, the king took Wolsey by the hand and led him into his private chamber. The courtiers awaited impatiently the termination of an interview which might decide the fate of England; they walked up and down the gallery, often passing before the door of the chamber, in the hope of catching from Wolsey’s looks, when he opened it, the result of this secret conference; but one quarter of an hour followed another, these became hours, and still the cardinal did not appear. Henry, having resolved that this conversation should be the last, was no doubt collecting from his minister all the information necessary to him. But the courtiers imagined he was returning into his master’s favor; Norfolk, Suffolk, Wiltshire, and the other enemies of the prime minister began to grow alarmed, and hastened off to Anne Boleyn, who was their last hope.

It was night when the king and Wolsey quitted the royal chamber; the former appeared gracious, the latter satisfied; it was always Henry’s custom to smile on those he intended to sacrifice. "I shall see you in the morning," he said to the cardinal with a friendly air. Wolsey made a low bow, and, turning round to the courtiers, saw the king’s smile reflected on their faces. Wiltshire, Tuke, and even Suffolk, were full of civility. "Well," thought he, "the motion of such weathercocks as these shows me from what quarter the wind of favor is blowing."

But a moment after the wind began to change. Men with torches waited for the cardinal at the gates of the palace to conduct him to the place where he would have to pass the night. Thus he was not to sleep beneath the same roof as Henry. He was to lie at Euston, one of Empson’s houses, about three miles off. Wolsey, repressing his vexation, mounted his horse and, after an hour’s riding along very bad roads, he reached the lodging assigned him.

He had sat down to supper, to which some of his most intimate friends had been invited, when suddenly Gardiner was announced. Gardiner owed everything to the cardinal, and yet he had not appeared before him since his return from Rome. He comes no doubt to play the hypocrite and the spy, thought Wolsey. But as soon as the secretary entered, Wolsey rose, made him a graceful compliment, and prayed him to take a seat. "Master Secretary," he asked, "where have you been since your return from Rome?"

"I have been following the court from place to place."

"You have been hunting, then? Have you any dogs?" asked the cardinal, who knew very well what Gardiner had been doing in the king’s chamber.

"A few," replied Gardiner.

Wolsey thought that even the secretary was a bloodhound on his track. And yet after supper he took Gardiner aside, and conversed with him until midnight. He thought it prudent to neglect nothing that might clear up his position; and Wolsey sounded Gardiner, just as he himself had been sounded by Henry not long before.
The same night at Grafton the king gave Campeggio a farewell audience, and treated him very kindly, "by giving him presents and other matters," says Du Bellay. Henry then returned to Anne Boleyn. The dukes had pointed out to her the importance of the present moment; she therefore asked and obtained of Henry, without any great difficulty, his promise never to speak to his minister again. The insults of the papacy had exasperated the king of England, and, as he could not punish Clement, he took his revenge on the cardinal.

The next morning, Wolsey, impatient to have the interview which Henry had promised, rode back early to Grafton. But as he came near, he met a numerous train of servants and packhorses; and shortly afterwards Henry, with Anne Boleyn and many lords and ladies of the court, came riding up. "What does all this mean?" thought the cardinal in dismay. "My lord," said the king, as he drew near, "I cannot stay with you now. You will return to London with cardinal Campeggio." Then striking the spurs into his horse, Henry galloped off with a friendly salutation. After him came Anne Boleyn, who rode past Wolsey with head erect, and casting on him a proud look. The court proceeded to Hartwell Park, where Anne had determined to keep the king all day. Wolsey was confounded. There was no room for doubt; his disgrace was certain. His head swam, he remained immovable for an instant, and then recovered himself; but the blow he had received had not been unobserved by the courtiers, and the cardinal’s fall became the general topic of conversation.

After dinner, the legates departed, and on the second day reached Moor Park, a mansion built by Archbishop Neville, one of Wolsey’s predecessors, who for high treason had been first imprisoned at Calais, and afterwards at Ham. These recollections were by no means agreeable to Wolsey. The next morning the two cardinals separated; Campeggio proceeded to Dover and Wolsey to London. Campeggio was impatient to get out of England, and great was his annoyance, on reaching Dover, to find that the wind was contrary. But a still greater vexation was in reserve. He had hardly lain down to rest himself, before his door was opened, and a band of sergeants entered the room. The cardinal, who knew what scenes of this kind meant in Italy, thought he was a dead man, and fell trembling at his chaplain’s feet begging for absolution. Meantime the officers opened his luggage, broke into his chests, scattered his property about the floor, and even shook out his clothes.

Henry’s tranquility had not been of long duration. "Campeggio is the bearer of letters from Wolsey to Rome," whispered some of the courtiers, "who knows but they contain treasonable matter?" "There is, too, among his papers the famous decretal pronouncing the divorce," said one, "if we had but that document it would finish the business." Another affirmed that Campeggio "had large treasure with him of my lord’s (Wolsey’s) to be conveyed in great tuns to Rome," whither it was surmised the cardinal of York would escape to enjoy the fruits of his treason. "It is certain," added a third, "that Campeggio, assisted by Wolsey, has been able to procure your majesty’s correspondence with Anne Boleyn, and is carrying it away with him." Henry, therefore, sent a messenger after the nuncio, with orders that his baggage should be thoroughly searched.
Nothing was found, neither letters, nor bull, nor treasures. The bull had been destroyed; the treasures Wolsey had never thought of entrusting to his colleague; and the letters of Anne and Henry, Campeggio had sent on before by his son Rodolph, and the pope was stretching out his hands to receive them, proud, like his successors, of the robbery committed by two of his legates. Campeggio being reassured, and seeing that he was neither to be killed nor robbed, made a great noise at this act of violence, and at the insulting remarks which had given rise to it. "I will not leave England," he caused Henry to be informed, "until I have received satisfaction." "My lord forgets that he is legate no longer," replied the king, "since the pope has withdrawn his powers; he forgets, besides, that, as bishop of Salisbury, he is my subject; as for the remarks against him and the cardinal of York, it is a liberty the people of England are accustomed to take, and which I cannot put down." Campeggio, anxious to reach France, was satisfied with these reasons, and soon forgot all his sorrows at the sumptuous table of cardinal Duprat.

Wolsey was not so fortunate. He had seen Campeggio go away, and remained like a wrecked seaman thrown on a desert isle, who has seen depart the only friends capable of giving him any help. His necromancy had forewarned him that this would be a fatal year. The angel of the maid of Kent had said, "Go to the cardinal and announce his fall, because he has not done what you have commanded him to do." Other voices besides hers made themselves heard; the hatred of the nation, the contempt of Europe, and, above all, Henry’s anger, told him that his hour was come. It was true the pope said that he would do all in his power to save him, but Clement’s good offices would only accelerate his ruin. Du Bellay, whom the people believed to be the cardinal’s accomplice, bore witness to the change that had taken place in men’s minds. While passing on foot through the streets of the capital, followed by two valets, "his ears were so filled with coarse jests as he went along," he said, "that he knew not which way to turn." "The cardinal is utterly undone," he wrote, "and I see not how he can escape." The idea occurred to Wolsey, from time to time, to pronounce the divorce himself, but it was too late. He was even told that his life was in danger. Fortune, blind and bald, her foot on the wheel, fled rapidly from him, nor was it in his power to stop her. And this was not all; after him (he thought) there was no one who could uphold the church of the pontiffs in England. The ship of Rome was sailing on a stormy sea among rocks and shoals; Wolsey at the helm looked in vain for a port of refuge; the vessel leaked on every side; it was rapidly sinking, and the cardinal uttered a cry of distress. Alas! he had desired to save Rome, but Rome would not have it so.

CHAPTER 12
To Introduce Thomas Cranmer
1489–1529

As Wolsey’s star was disappearing in the midst of stormy clouds, another was rising in the sky, to point out the way to save Britain. Men, like stars, appear on the horizon at the command of God.
On his return from Woodstock to Greenwich, Henry stopped, full of anxiety, at Waltham in Essex. His attendants were lodged in the houses of the neighborhood. Fox, the almoner, and Secretary Gardiner, were quartered on a gentleman named Cressy, at Waltham Abbey. When supper was announced, Gardiner and Fox were surprised to see an old friend enter the room. It was Thomas Cranmer, a Cambridge doctor of divinity. "What! is it you?" they said, "and how came you here?" "Our host’s wife is my relation," replied Cranmer, "and as the epidemic is raging at Cambridge, I brought home my friend’s sons, who are under my care." As this new personage is destined to play an important part in the history of the Reformation, it may be worth our while to interrupt our narrative, and give a particular account of him.

Cranmer was descended from an ancient family, which came into England, as is generally believed, with the Conqueror. He was born at Aslacton in Nottinghamshire on the 2nd July, 1489, six years after Luther. His early education had been very much neglected; his tutor, an ignorant and severe priest, had taught him little else than patiently to endure severe chastisement—a knowledge destined to be very useful to him in after-life. His father was an honest country gentleman, who cared for little besides hunting, racing, and military sports. At this school, the son learnt to ride, to handle the bow and the sword, to fish, and to hawk; and he never entirely neglected these exercises, which he thought essential to his health. Thomas Cranmer was fond of walking, of the charms of nature, and of solitary meditations; and a hill, near his father’s mansion, used often to be shown where he was wont to sit, gazing on the fertile country at his feet, fixing his eyes on the distant spires, listening with melancholy pleasure to the chime of the bells, and indulging in sweet contemplations. About 1504, he was sent to Cambridge, where "barbarism still prevailed," says a historian. His plain, noble, and modest air conciliated the affections of many, and, in 1510 or 1511, he was elected fellow of Jesus College. Possessing a tender heart, he became attached, at the age of twenty-three, to a young person of good birth (says Foxe) or of inferior rank, as other writers assert. Cranmer was unwilling to imitate the disorderly lives of his fellow students, and, although marriage would necessarily close the career of honors, he married the young lady, known as “Black Joan,” resigned his fellowship (in conformity with the regulations) and took a modest lodging at the Dolphin Inn. He then began to study earnestly the most remarkable writings of the times, polishing, it has been said, his old asperity on the productions of Erasmus, of Lefèvre of Etaples, and other great authors; every day his crude understanding received new brilliancy. He then began to lecture in Buckingham (afterwards Magdalene) College, and thus provided for his wants. His lessons excited the admiration of enlightened men, and the anger of obscure ones, who disdainfully called him (because of the inn at which he lodged) the hostler. "This name became him well," said Fuller, "for in his lessons he roughly rubbed the backs of the friars, and famously curried the hides of the lazy priests." His wife dying a year after his marriage, Cranmer was re-elected fellow of his old college, and the first writing of Luther’s having appeared, he said, "I must know on which side the truth lies. There is only one
infallible source, the Scriptures; in them I will seek for God’s truth.” And for three years he constantly studied the holy books, without commentary, without human theology, and hence he gained the name of the Scripturist. At last his eyes were opened; he saw the mysterious bond which unites all biblical revelations, and understood the completeness of God’s design. Then, without forsaking the Scriptures, he studied all kinds of authors. He was a slow reader, but a close observer; he never opened a book without having a pen in his hand. He did not take up with any particular party or age; but, possessing a free and philosophic mind, he weighed all opinions in the balance of his judgment, taking the Bible for his standard.

Honors soon came upon him; he was made successively doctor of divinity, professor, university preacher, and examiner. He used to say to the candidates for the ministry, “Christ sendeth his hearers to the Scriptures, and not to the church.” “But,” replied the monks, “they are so difficult.” “Explain the obscure passages by those which are clear,” rejoined the professor, “Scripture by Scripture. Seek, pray, and he who has the key of David will open them to you.” The monks, affrighted at this task, withdrew bursting with anger, and ere long Cranmer’s name was a name of dread in every monastery. Some, however, submitted to the labor, and one of them, Doctor Barrett, blessed God that the examiner had turned him back, “for,” said he, “I found the knowledge of God in the holy book he compelled me to study.” Cranmer toiled at the same work as Latimer, Stafford, and Bilney. Fox and Gardiner having renewed acquaintance with their old friend at Waltham Abbey, they sat down to table, and both the almoner and the secretary asked the doctor what he thought of the divorce. It was the usual topic of conversation, and not long before, Cranmer had been named member of a commission appointed to give their opinion on this affair. “You are not in the right path,” said Cranmer to his friends, “you should not cling to the decisions of the church. There is a surer and a shorter way which alone can give peace to the king’s conscience.” “What is that?” they both asked. “The true question is this,” replied Cranmer, “What says the Word of God? If God has declared a marriage of this nature bad, the pope cannot make it good. Discontinue these interminable Roman negotiations. When God has spoken, man must obey.” “But how shall we know what God has said?” “Consult the universities; they will discern it more surely than Rome.”

This was a new view. The idea of consulting the universities had been acted upon before, but then their own opinions only had been demanded; now, the question was simply to know what God says in His Word. “The Word of God is above the church,” was the principle laid down by Cranmer, and in that principle consisted the whole of the Reformation. The conversation at the supper table of Waltham was destined to be one of those secret springs which an invisible Hand sets in motion for the accomplishment of His great designs. The Cambridge doctor, suddenly transported from his study to the foot of the throne, was on the point of becoming one of the principal instruments of Divine wisdom.
The day after this conversation, Fox and Gardiner arrived at Greenwich, and the king summoned them into his presence the same evening. "Well, gentlemen," he said to them, "our holidays are over; what shall we do now? If we still have recourse to Rome, God knows when we shall see the end of this matter." "It will not be necessary to take so long a journey," said Fox; "we know a shorter and surer way." "What is it?" asked the king eagerly. "Doctor Cranmer, whom we met yesterday at Waltham, thinks that the Bible should be the sole judge in your cause." Gardiner, vexed at his colleague's frankness, desired to claim all the honor of this luminous idea for himself, but Henry did not listen to him. "Where is Doctor Cranmer?" said he, much affected. "Send, and fetch him immediately. Mother of God! (this was his customary oath) this man has the right sow by the ear. If this had only been suggested to me two years ago, what expense and trouble I should have been spared."

Cranmer had gone into Nottinghamshire; a messenger followed and brought him back. "Why have you entangled me in this affair?" he said to Fox and Gardiner. "Pray make my excuses to the king." Gardiner, who wished for nothing better, promised to do all he could, but it was of no use. "I will have no excuses," said Henry. The wily courtier was obliged to make up his mind to introduce the ingenuous and upright man, to whom that station, which he himself had so coveted, was one day to belong. Cranmer and Gardiner went down to Greenwich, both alike dissatisfied.

Cranmer was then forty years of age, with pleasing features, and mild and winning eyes, in which the candor of his soul seemed to be reflected. Sensible to the pains as well as to the pleasures of the heart, he was destined to be more exposed than other men to anxieties and falls; a peaceful life in some remote parsonage would have been more to his taste than the court of Henry VIII. Blessed with a generous mind, unhappily he did not possess the firmness necessary in a public man; a little stone sufficed to make him stumble. His excellent understanding showed him the better way, but his great timidity made him fear the more dangerous. He was rather too fond of relying upon the power of men, and made them unhappy concessions with too great facility. If the king had questioned him, he would never have dared advise so bold a course as that he had pointed out; the advice had slipped from him at table during the intimacy of familiar conversation. Yet he was sincere, and after doing everything to escape from the consequences of his frankness, he was ready to maintain the opinion he had given.

Henry, perceiving Cranmer's timidity, graciously approached him. "What is your name?" said the king, endeavoring to put him at his ease. "Did you not meet my secretary and my almoner at Waltham?" And then he added: "Did you not speak to them of my great affair?" repeating the words ascribed to Cranmer. The latter could not retreat: "Sir, it is true, I did say so." "I see," replied the king with animation, "that you have found the breach through which we must storm the fortress. Now, sir doctor, I beg you, and as you are my subject I command you, to lay aside every other occupation, and to bring my cause to a conclusion in conformity with the ideas you have put forth. All that I desire to know is, whether my marriage is contrary to the laws of God or not. Employ all your skill
in investigating the subject, and thus bring comfort to my conscience as well as to the queen’s.”

Cranmer was confounded; he recoiled from the idea of deciding an affair on which depended, it might be, the destinies of the nation, and sighed after the lonely fields of Aslacton. But grasped by the vigorous hand of Henry, he was compelled to advance. “Sir,” said he, “pray entrust this matter to doctors more learned than I am.” “I am very willing,” answered the king, “but I desire that you will also give me your opinion in writing.” And then summoning the earl of Wiltshire to his presence, he said to him, “My lord, you will receive Doctor Cranmer into your house at Durham Place, and let him have all necessary quiet to compose a report for which I have asked him.” After this precise command, which admitted of no refusal, Henry withdrew.

In this manner was Cranmer introduced by the king to Anne Boleyn’s father, and not, as some Romanist authors have asserted, by Sir Thomas Boleyn to the king. Wiltshire conducted Cranmer to Durham House (now the Adelphi in the Strand) and the pious doctor on whom Henry had imposed these quarters, soon contracted a close friendship with Anne and her father, and took advantage of it to teach them the value of the Divine Word, as the pearl of great price. Henry, while profiting by the skill of a Wolsey and a Gardiner, paid little regard to the men; but he respected Cranmer, even when opposed to him in opinion, and until his death placed the learned doctor above all his courtiers and all his clerks. The pious man often succeeds better, even with the great ones of this world, than the ambitious and the intriguing.

CHAPTER 13

The Dethronement of Cardinal Wolsey
October, 1529

While Cranmer was rising notwithstanding his humility, Wolsey was falling in despite of his stratagems. The cardinal still governed the kingdom, gave instructions to ambassadors, negotiated with princes, and filled his sumptuous palaces with his haughtiness. The king could not make up his mind to turn him off; the force of habit, the need he had of him, the recollection of the services Henry had received from him, pleaded in his favor. Wolsey without the seals appeared almost as inconceivable as the king without his crown. Yet the fall of one of the most powerful favorites recorded in history was inevitably approaching, and we must now describe it.

On the 9th of October, after the Michaelmas vacation, Wolsey, desirous of showing a bold face, went and opened the high court of chancery with his accustomed pomp; but he noticed, with uneasiness, that none of the king’s servants walked before him, as they had been accustomed to do. He presided on the bench with an inexpressible depression of spirits, and the various members of the court sat before him with an absent air; there was something gloomy and solemn in this sitting, as if all were taking part in a funeral; it was destined indeed to be the last act of the cardinal’s power. Some days before (Foxe says on the 1st of October) the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, with other
lords of the privy-council, had gone down to Windsor, and denounced to the
king Wolsey’s unconstitutional relations with the pope, his usurpations, “his
robberies, and the discords sown by his means between Christian princes.” Such
motives would not have sufficed, but Henry had stronger. Wolsey had not kept
any of his promises in the matter of the divorce; it would even appear that he
had advised the pope to excommunicate the king, and thus raise his people
against him. This enormity was not at that time known by the prince; it is even
probable that it did not take place until later. But Henry knew enough, and he
gave his attorney-general, Sir Christopher Hales, orders to prosecute Wolsey.
Whilst the heart-broken cardinal was displaying his authority for the last time
in the court of chancery, the attorney-general was accusing him in the King’s
Bench for having obtained papal bulls conferring on him a jurisdiction which
encroached on the royal power; and calling for the application of the penalties
of præmunire. The two dukes received orders to demand the seals from
Wolsey; and the latter, informed of what had taken place, did not quit his
palace on the 10th, expecting every moment the arrival of the messengers of
the king’s anger; but no one appeared.
The next day the two dukes arrived. "It is the king’s good pleasure," said they
to the cardinal, who remained seated in his armchair, “that you give up the
broad seal to us and retire to Esher” (a country-seat near Hampton Court).
Wolsey, whose presence of mind never failed him, demanded to see the
commission under which they were acting. "We have our orders from his
majesty’s mouth," said they. "That may be sufficient for you," replied the
cardinal, “but not for me. The great seal of England was delivered to me by the
hands of my sovereign; I may not deliver it at the simple word of any lord,
unless you can show me your commission." Suffolk broke out into a passion, but
Wolsey remained calm, and the two dukes returned to Windsor. This was the
cardinal’s last triumph.
The rumor of his disgrace created an immense sensation at court, in the city,
and among the foreign ambassadors. Du Bellay hastened to York Place
(Whitehall) to contemplate this great ruin and console his unhappy friend. He
found Wolsey, with dejected countenance and lusterless eyes, "shrunk to half
his wonted size," wrote the ambassador to Montmorency, “the greatest example
of fortune which was ever beheld.” Wolsey desired "to set forth his case" to
him, but his thoughts were confused, his language broken, "for heart and
tongue both failed him entirely"; he burst into tears. The ambassador regarded
him with compassion. “Alas!” thought he, "his enemies cannot but feel pity for
him." At last the unhappy cardinal recovered his speech, but only to give way
to despair. "I desire no more authority," he exclaimed, "nor the pope’s legation,
nor the broad seal of England. ... I am ready to give up everything, even to my
shirt. ... I can live in a hermitage, provided the king does not hold me in
disgrace." The ambassador "did all he could to comfort him," when Wolsey,
catching at the plank thrown out to him, exclaimed, "Would that the king of
France and Madame might pray the king to moderate his anger against me. But
above all," he added in alarm, "take care the king never knows that I have
solicited this of you." Du Bellay wrote indeed to France that the king and
Madame alone could "withdraw their affectionate servant from the gates of hell," and Wolsey being informed of these dispatches, his hopes recovered a little. But this bright gleam did not last long. On Sunday, the 17th of October, Norfolk and Suffolk reappeared at Whitehall, accompanied by Fitzwilliam, Taylor, and Gardiner, Wolsey's former dependant. It was six in the evening; they found the cardinal in an upper chamber, near the great gallery, and presented the king's orders to him. Having read them he said, "I am happy to obey his majesty's commands"; then having ordered the great seal to be brought him, he took it out of the white leather case in which he kept it, and handed it to the dukes, who placed it in a box, covered with crimson velvet, and ornamented with the arms of England, ordered Gardiner to seal it up with red wax, and gave it to Taylor to convey to the king. Wolsey was thunderstruck; he was to drink the bitter cup even to the dregs; he was ordered to leave his palace forthwith, taking with him neither clothes, linen, nor plate; the dukes had feared that he would convey away his treasures. Wolsey comprehended the greatness of his misery; he found strength however to say, "Since it is the king's good pleasure to take my house and all it contains, I am content to retire to Esher." The dukes left him. Wolsey remained alone. This astonishing man, who had risen from a butcher's shop to the summit of earthly greatness; who, for a word that displeased him, sent his master's most faithful servants (Pace for instance) to the Tower; and who had governed England as if he had been its monarch, and even more, for he had governed without a parliament, was driven out, and thrown, as it were, upon a dunghill. A sudden hope flashed like lightning through his mind; perhaps the magnificence of the spoils would appease Henry. Was not Esau pacified by Jacob's present? Wolsey summoned his officers. "Set tables in the great gallery," he said to them, "and place on them all I have entrusted to your care, in order to render me an account." These orders were executed immediately. The tables were covered with an immense quantity of rich stuffs, silks and velvets of all colors, costly furs, rich copes and other ecclesiastical vestures; the walls were hung with cloth of gold and silver, and webs of a valuable stuff named baudykin, from the looms of Damascus, and with tapestry, representing scriptural subjects or stories from the old romances of chivalry. The gilt chamber and the council chamber, adjoining the gallery, were both filled with plate, in which the gold and silver were set with pearls and precious stones; these articles of luxury were so abundant that basketfuls of costly plate which had fallen out of fashion were stowed away under the tables. On every table was an exact list of the treasures with which it was loaded, for the most perfect order and regularity prevailed in the cardinal's household. Wolsey cast a glance of hope upon this wealth, and ordered his officers to deliver the whole to his majesty. He then prepared to leave his magnificent palace. That moment of itself so sad, was made sadder still by an act of affectionate indiscretion. "Ah, my lord," said his treasurer, Sir William Gascoigne, moved even to tears, "your grace will be sent to the Tower." This was too much for Wolsey—to go and join his victims! ... He grew angry, and exclaimed, "Is this the best comfort you can
give your master in adversity? I would have you and all such blasphemous reporters know that it is untrue."

It was necessary to depart; he put round his neck a chain of gold, from which hung a pretended relic of the true cross; this was all he took. "Would to God," he exclaimed, as he placed it on, "that I had never had any other." This he said alluding to the legate's cross which used to be carried before him with so much pomp. He descended the back stairs, followed by his servants, some silent and dejected, others weeping bitterly, and proceeded to the river's brink, where a barge awaited him. But, alas! it was not alone. The Thames was covered with innumerable boats full of men and women. The inhabitants of London, expecting to see the cardinal led to the Tower, desired to be present at his humiliation, and prepared to accompany him. Cries of joy hailing his fall were heard from every side, nor were the cruelest sarcasms wanting. "The butcher's dog will bite no more," said some, "look how he hangs his head." In truth, the unhappy man, distressed by a sight so new to him, lowered those eyes which were once so proud, but now were filled with bitter tears. This man, who had made all England tremble, was then like a withered leaf carried along the stream. All his servants were moved; even his fool, William Patch, sobbed like the rest. "O, wavering and newfangled multitude!" exclaimed Cavendish, his gentleman usher. The hopes of the citizens were disappointed; the barge, instead of descending the river, proceeded upwards in the direction of Hampton Court; gradually the shouts died away, and the flotilla dispersed. The silence of the river permitted Wolsey to indulge in less bitter thoughts, but it seemed as if invisible furies were pursuing him now that the people had left him. He left his barge at Putney and, mounting his mule, though with difficulty, proceeded slowly with downcast looks. Shortly after, upon lifting his eyes, he saw a horseman riding rapidly down the hill towards them. "Whom do you think it can be?" he asked of his attendants. "My lord," replied one of them, "I think it is Sir Henry Norris." A flash of joy passed through Wolsey's heart. Was it not Norris, who, of all the king's officers, had shown him the most respect during his visit to Grafton? Norris came up with them, saluted him respectfully, and said, "The king bids me declare that he still entertains the same kindly feelings towards you, and sends you this ring as a token of his confidence." Wolsey received it with a trembling hand; it was that which the king was in the habit of sending on important occasions. The cardinal immediately alighted from his mule and, kneeling down in the road, raised his hands to heaven with an indescribable expression of happiness. The fallen man would have pulled off his velvet under-cap, but unable to undo the strings, he broke them, and threw it on the ground. He remained on his knees bareheaded praying fervently amidst profound silence. God's forgiveness had never caused Wolsey so much pleasure as Henry's. Having finished his prayer, the cardinal put on his cap, and remounted his mule. "Gentle Norris," said he to the king's messenger, "if I were lord of a kingdom, the half of it would scarcely be enough to reward you for your happy tidings, but I have nothing left except the clothes on my back." Then taking off his gold chain, "Take this," he said, "it contains a piece of the true cross. In my
happier days I would not have parted with it for a thousand pounds." The cardinal and Norris separated; but Wolsey soon stopped, and the whole troop halted on the heath. The thought troubled him greatly that he had nothing to send to the king; he called Norris back, and looking round saw mounted on a sorry horse poor William Patch, who had lost all his gaiety since his master’s misfortune. "Present this poor jester to the king from me," said Wolsey to Norris, "his buffooneries are a pleasure fit for a prince; he is worth a thousand pounds."

At last they reached Esher. What a residence compared with Whitehall! ... It was little more than four bare walls. The most urgent necessaries were procured from the neighboring houses, but Wolsey could not adapt himself to this cruel contrast. Besides, he knew Henry VIII; he knew that he might send Norris one day with a gold ring, and the executioner the next with a rope. Gloomy and dejected, he remained seated in his lonely apartments. On a sudden he would rise from his seat, walk hurriedly up and down, speak aloud to himself and then, falling back in his chair, he would weep like a child. This man who formerly had shaken kingdoms, had been brought into desolation as in a moment, and was now atoning for his perfidies in humiliation and terror—a striking example of God’s judgment.

CHAPTER 14
New Leaders and a New Policy
October & November, 1529

During all this time everybody was in commotion at court. Norfolk and Suffolk, at the head of the council, had informed the Star Chamber of the cardinal’s disgrace. Henry knew not how to supply his place. Some suggested the archbishop of Canterbury; the king would not hear of him. "Wolsey," says a French writer, "had disgusted the king and all England with those subjects of two masters who, almost always, sold one to the other. They preferred a lay minister." "I verily believe the priests will never more obtain it," wrote Du Bellay. The name of Sir Thomas More was pronounced. He was a layman, and that quality, which a few years before would, perhaps, have excluded him, was now a recommendation. A breath of Protestantism wafted to the summit of honors one of its greatest enemies. Henry thought that More, placed between the pope and his sovereign, would decide in favor of the interests of the throne, and of the independence of England. His choice was made. More knew that the cardinal had been thrown aside because he was not a sufficiently docile instrument in the matter of the divorce. The work required of him was contrary to his convictions, but the honor conferred on him was almost unprecedented—seldom indeed had the seals been entrusted to a mere knight. He followed the path of ambition and not of duty; he showed, however, in after-days that his ambition was of no common sort. It is even probable that, foreseeing the dangers which threatened to destroy the papal power in England, More wished to make an effort to save it. Norfolk installed the new chancellor in the Star Chamber.
"His majesty," said the duke, "has not cast his eyes upon the nobility of the blood, but on the worth of the person. He desires to show by this choice that there are among the laity and gentlemen of England, men worthy to fill the highest offices in the kingdom, to which, until this hour, bishops and noblemen alone think they have a right." The Reformation which restored religion to the general body of the church, took away at the same time political power from the clergy. The priests had deprived the people of Christian activity, and the governments of power; the gospel restored to both what the priests had usurped. This result could not but be favorable to the interests of religion; the less cause kings and their subjects have to fear the intrusion of clerical power into the affairs of the world, the more will they yield themselves to the vivifying influence of faith.

More lost no time; never had lord-chancellor displayed such activity. He rapidly cleared off the cases which were in arrear, and, having been installed on the 26th of October, he called on Wolsey’s cause on the 28th or 29th. "The crown of England," said the attorney-general, "has never acknowledged any superior but God. Now, the said Thomas Wolsey, legate a latere, has obtained from the pope certain bulls, by virtue of which he has exercised since the 28th of August, 1523, an authority derogatory to his majesty’s power, and to the rights of his courts of justice. The crown of England cannot be put under the pope, and we therefore accuse the said legate of having incurred the penalties of præmunire."

There can be no doubt that Henry had other reasons for Wolsey’s disgrace than those pointed out by the attorney-general, but England had convictions of a higher nature than her sovereign’s. Wolsey was regarded as the pope’s accomplice, and this was the cause of the great severity of the public officer and of the people. The cardinal is generally excused by alleging that both king and parliament had ratified the unconstitutional authority with which Rome had invested him, but had not the powers conferred on him by the pope produced unjustifiable results in a constitutional monarchy? Wolsey, as papal legate, had governed England without a parliament; and, as if the nation had gone back to the reign of John, he had substituted de facto, if not in theory, the monstrous system of the famous bull Unam Sanctam for the institution of Magna Charta. The king, and even the lords and commons, had connived in vain at these illegalities; the rights of the constitution of England remained not the less inviolable, and the best of the people had protested against their infringement. And hence it was that Wolsey, conscious of his crime, "put himself wholly to the mercy and grace of the king," and his counsel declared his ignorance of the statutes he was said to have infringed. We cannot here allege, as some have done, the prostration of Wolsey’s moral powers; he could, even after his fall, reply with energy to Henry VIII. When, for instance, the king sent to demand for the crown his palace of Whitehall, which belonged to the see of York, the cardinal answered, "Show his majesty from me that I must desire him to call to his most gracious remembrance that there is both a heaven and a hell," and when other charges besides those of complicity with the papal aggression were brought against him, he defended himself courageously, as will
be afterwards seen. If therefore the cardinal did not attempt to justify himself
for infringing the rights of the crown, it was because his conscience bade him
be silent. He had committed one of the gravest faults of which a statesman can
be guilty. Those who have sought to excuse him have not sufficiently borne in
mind that, since the Great Charter, opposition to Romish aggression has always
characterized the constitution and government of England. Wolsey perfectly
recollected this, and this explanation is more honorable to him than that which
ascribes his silence to weakness or to cunning.

The cardinal was pronounced guilty, and the court passed judgment that by the
statute of *præmunire* his property was forfeited, and that he might be taken
before the king in council. England, by sacrificing a churchman who had placed
himself above kings, gave a memorable example of her inflexible opposition to
the encroachments of the papacy. Wolsey was confounded, and his troubled
imagination conjured up nothing but perils on every side.

While More was lending himself to the condemnation of his predecessor, whose
friend he had been, another layman of still humbler origin was preparing to
defend the cardinal, and by that very act to become the appointed instrument
to throw down the monasteries in England, and to shatter the secular bonds
which united this country to the Roman pontiff.

On the 1st of November, two days after Wolsey's condemnation, Thomas
Cromwell, one of his officers, with a prayer book in his hand, was leaning
gainst the window in the great hall, apparently absorbed in his devotions.
"Good morrow," said Cavendish as he passed him, on his way to the cardinal for
his usual morning duties. The person thus addressed raised his head, and the
gentleman-usher, seeing that his eyes were filled with tears, asked him,
"Master Cromwell, is my lord in any danger?" "I think not," replied Cromwell,
"but it is hard to lose in a moment the labor of a life." In his master's fall
Cromwell foreboded his own. Cavendish endeavored to console him. "God
willing, this is my resolution," replied Wolsey's ambitious solicitor, "I intend
this afternoon, as soon as my lord has dined, to ride to London, and so go to
court, where I will either make or mar before I come back again." At this
moment Cavendish was summoned, and he entered the cardinal's chamber.
Cromwell, devoured by ambition, had clung to Wolsey's robe in order to attain
power. He had served under the cardinal for about nine years, and had
conducted most of his legal business. But Wolsey had fallen, and the solicitor,
dragged along with him, strove to reach by other means the object of his
desires. Cromwell was one of those earnest and vigorous men whom God
prepares for critical times. Blessed with a solid judgment and intrepid
firmness, he possessed a quality rare in every age, and particularly under Henry
VIII—fidelity in misfortune. The ability by which he was distinguished was not at
all times without reproach; success seems to have been his first thought.

After dinner Cromwell followed Wolsey into his private room: "My lord, permit
me to go to London, I will endeavor to save you." A gleam passed over the
cardinal's saddened features. "Leave the room," he said to his attendants. He
then had a long private conversation with Cromwell, at the end of which the
latter mounted his horse and set out for the capital. He did not hide from
himself that it would be difficult to procure access to the king, for certain ecclesiastics, jealous of Wolsey, had spoken against his solicitor at the time of the secularization of the monasteries, and Henry could not endure him. But Cromwell knew that fortune favors the bold, and, carried away by his ambitious dreams, he galloped on, saying to himself, "One foot in the stirrup, and my fortune is made!"

It appears to have been through the good offices of Sir Christopher Hales, master of the rolls, that the name of Cromwell was commended to the king. Probably Henry was, at the outset, strongly prejudiced against him. Was he not Wolsey’s chief assistant?! But other considerations prevailed, and ere long an interview given by the king to Cromwell convinced him that the secretary-lawyer was a man after his own heart.

"Sir," said Cromwell to his majesty, "the pope refuses your divorce. ... But why do you ask his consent? Every Englishman is master in his own house, and why should not you be so in England? Ought a foreign prelate to share your power with you? It is true, the bishops make oath to your majesty, but they make another to the pope immediately after, which absolves them from the former. Sir, you are but half a king, and we are but half your subjects. This kingdom is a two-headed monster. Will you bear with such an anomaly any longer? What! are you not living in an age when Frederick the Wise and other German princes have thrown off the yoke of Rome? Do likewise; become once more a king; govern your kingdom in concert with your lords and commons. Henceforward let Englishmen alone have anything to say in England; let not your subjects’ money be cast any more into the yawning gulf of the Tiber; instead of imposing new taxes on the nation, convert to the general good those treasures which have hitherto only served to fatten proud priests and lazy friars. Now is the moment for action. Rely upon your parliament; proclaim yourself the head of the church in England. Then shall you see an increase of glory to your name, and of prosperity to your people."

Never before had such language been addressed to a king of England. It was not only on account of the divorce that it was necessary to break with Rome; it was, in Cromwell’s view, on account of the independence, glory, and prosperity of the monarchy. These considerations appeared more important to Henry than those which had hitherto been laid before him; none of the kings of England had been so well placed as he was to understand them. When a Tudor had succeeded to the Saxon, Norman, and Plantagenet kings, a man of the free race of the Celts had taken on the throne of England the place of princes submissive to the Roman pontiffs. The ancient British church, independent of the papacy, was about to rise again with this new dynasty, and the Celtic race, after eleven centuries of humiliation, to recover its ancient heritage. Undoubtedly, Henry had no recollections of this kind; but he worked in conformity with the peculiar character of his race, without being aware of the instinct which compelled him to act. He felt that a sovereign who submits to the pope becomes, like King John, his vassal; and now, after having been the second in his realm, he desired to be the first.
The king reflected on what Cromwell had said. Astonished and surprised, he sought to understand the new position which his bold adviser had made for him. "Your proposal pleases me much," he said, "but can you prove what you assert?" "Certainly," replied this able politician, "I have with me a copy of the oath the bishops make to the Roman pontiff." With these words he drew a paper from his pocket, and placed the oath before the king's eyes. Henry, jealous of his authority even to despotism, was filled with indignation, and felt the necessity of bringing down that foreign authority which dared dispute the power with him, even in his own kingdom. He drew off his ring and gave it to Cromwell, declaring that he took him into his service, and soon after made him a member of his privy-council. England, we may say, was now virtually emancipated from the papacy.

Cromwell had laid the first foundations of his greatness. He had observed the path his master had followed, and which had led to his ruin—complicity with the pope; and he hoped to succeed by following the contrary course, namely, by opposing the papacy. He had the king's support, but he wanted more. Possessing a clear and easy style of eloquence, he saw what influence a seat in the great council of the nation would give him. It was somewhat late, for the session began on the next day (3rd November), but to Cromwell nothing was impossible. The son of his friend, Sir Thomas Rush, had been returned to parliament; but the young member vacated his seat, and Cromwell was elected in his place.

Parliament had not met for seven years, the kingdom having been governed by a prince of the Roman church. The reformation of the church, whose regenerating influence began to be felt already, was about to restore to the nation those ancient liberties of which a cardinal had robbed it; and Henry, being on the point of taking very important resolutions, felt the necessity of drawing nearer to his people. Everything betokened that a good feeling would prevail between the parliament and the crown, and that "the priests would have a terrible fright."

While Henry was preparing to attack the Roman church in the papal supremacy, the commons were getting ready to war against the numerous abuses with which it had covered England. "Some even thought," says Tyndale, "that this assembly would reform the church, and that the golden age would come again." But it was not from acts of parliament that the Reformation was destined to proceed, but solely from the Word of God. And yet the commons, without touching upon doctrine, were going to do their duty manfully in things within their province, and the parliament of 1529 may be regarded as the first Protestant parliament of England. "The bishops require excessive fines for the probates of wills," said Tyndale's old friend, Sir Henry Guildford. "As testatorary executor to Sir William Compton, I had to pay a thousand marks sterling." "The spiritual men," said another member, "would rather see the poor orphans die of hunger than give them even the lean cow, the only thing their father left them." "Priests," said another, "have farms, tanneries, and warehouses all over the country. In short, the clerks take everything from their flocks, and not only give them nothing, but even deny them the Word of God."
The clergy were in utter consternation. The power of the nation seemed to awaken in this parliament for the sole purpose of attacking the power of the priest. It was important to ward off these blows. The convocation of the province of Canterbury, assembling at Westminster on the 5th of November, thought it their duty, in self-defense, to reform the most crying abuses. It was therefore decreed, on the 12th of November, that the priests should no longer keep shops or taverns, play at dice or other forbidden games, pass the night in suspected places, be present at disreputable shows, go about with sporting dogs, or with hawks, falcons, or other birds of prey on their fist; or, finally, hold suspicious intercourse with women. Penalties were denounced against these various disorders; they were doubled in case of adultery; and still further increased in the case of more abominable impurities. Such were the laws rendered necessary by the manners of the clergy.

These measures did not satisfy the commons. Three bills were introduced having reference to the fees on the probate of wills, mortuaries, pluralities, non-residence, and the exercise of secular professions. "The destruction of the church is aimed at," exclaimed Bishop Fisher, when these bills were carried to the lords, "and if the church falls, the glory of the kingdom will perish. Lutheranism is making great progress amongst us, and the savage cry that has already echoed in Bohemia, *Down with the church,* is now uttered by the commons. ... How does that come about? Solely from want of faith. My lords, save your country! save the church!" Sir Thomas Audley, the speaker of the commons, with a deputation of thirty members, immediately went to Whitehall. "Sir," they said to the king, "we are accused of being without faith, and of being almost as bad as the Turks. We demand an apology for such offensive language." Fisher pretended that he only meant to speak of the Bohemians; and the commons, by no means satisfied, zealously went on with their reforms.

These the king was resolved to concede, but he determined to take advantage of them to present a bill making over to him all the money borrowed of his subjects. John Petit, one of the members for the city, boldly opposed this demand. "I do not know other persons’ affairs," he said, "and I cannot give what does not belong to me. But as regards myself personally, I give without reserve all that I have lent the king." The royal bill passed, and the satisfied Henry gave his consent to the bills of the commons. Every dispensation coming from Rome, which might be contrary to the statutes, was strictly forbidden. The bishops exclaimed that the commons were becoming schismatical; disturbances were excited by certain priests; but the clerical agitators were punished, and the people, when they heard of it, were delighted beyond measure.

CHAPTER 15
"They that Will Live Godly in Christ Jesus..."
1529–31

The moment when Henry aimed his first blows at Rome was also that in which he began to shed the blood of the disciples of the gospel. Although ready to
throw off the authority of the pope, he would not recognize the authority of Christ; obedience to the Scriptures is, however, the very soul of the Reformation.

The king’s contest with Rome had filled the friends of Scripture with hope. The artisans and tradesmen, particularly those who lived near the sea, were almost wholly won over to the gospel. "The king is one of us," they used to boast, "he wishes his subjects to read the New Testament. Our faith, which is the true one, will circulate through the kingdom, and by Michaelmas next those who believe as we do will be more numerous than those of a contrary opinion. We are ready, if needs be, to die in the struggle." This was indeed to be the fate of many.

Language such as this aroused the clergy. "The last hour has come," said John Stokesley, who had been raised to the see of London after Tunstall’s translation to Durham, "if we would not have Luther’s heresy pervade the whole of England, we must hasten to throw it in the sea." Henry was fully disposed to do so, but, as he was not on very good terms with the clergy, a man was wanted to serve as mediator between him and the bishops. He was soon found.

Sir Thomas More’s noble understanding was then passing from ascetic practices to fanaticism, and the humanist turning into an inquisitor. In his opinion, the burning of heretics was just and necessary. He has even been reproached with binding evangelical Christians to a tree in his garden, which he called "the tree of truth," and with having flogged them with his own hand. More has declared that he never gave "stripes nor stroke, nor so much as a fillip on the forehead," to any of his religious adversaries; and we willingly credit his denial. All must be pleased to think that if the author of the *Utopia* was a severe judge, the hand which held one of the most famous pens of the sixteenth century never discharged the duties of an executioner.

The bishops led the attack. "We must clear the Lord’s field of the thorns which choke it," said the archbishop of Canterbury to Convocation on the 29th of November, 1529, immediately after which the bishop of Bath read to his colleagues the list of books that he desired to have condemned. There were a number of works by Tyndale, Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Œcolampadius, Pomeranus, Brentius, Bucer, Jonas, Francis Lambert, Fryth, and Fish. The Bible in particular was set down. "It is impossible to translate the Scripture into English," said one of the prelates. "It is not lawful for the laity to read it in their mother tongue," said another. "If you tolerate the Bible," added a third, "you will make us all heretics." "By circulating the Scriptures," exclaimed several, "you will raise up the nation against the king." Sir Thomas More laid the bishops’ petition before the king, and, some time after, Henry gave orders by proclamation, that "no one should preach, or write any book, or keep any school without his bishop’s license; that no one should keep any heretical book in his house; that the bishops should detain the offenders in prison at their discretion, and then proceed to the punishment of the guilty; and, finally, that the chancellor, the justices of the peace, and other magistrates, should aid
and assist the bishops." Such was the cruel proclamation of Henry VIII, "the father of the English Reformation."
The clergy were not yet satisfied. The blind and octogenarian bishop of Norwich, being more ardent than the youngest of his priests, recommenced his complaints. "My diocese is accumbered with such as read the Bible," said he to the archbishop of Canterbury, "and there is not a clerk from Cambridge but savoureth of the frying pan. If this continues any time, they will undo us all. We must have greater authority to punish them than we have."

Consequently, on the 24th of May, 1530, More, Warham, Tunstall, and Gardiner having been admitted into St. Edward's chamber at Westminster to make a report to the king concerning heresy, they proposed forbidding, in the most positive manner, the New Testament and certain other books in which the following doctrines were taught: "That Christ has shed his blood for our iniquities, as a sacrifice to the Father. Faith only doth justify us. Faith without good works is no little or weak faith, it is no faith. Laboring in good works to come to heaven, thou dost shame Christ's blood."

Whilst nearly everyone in the audience chamber supported the prayer of the petition, there were three or four doctors who kept silence. At last one of them—it was Latimer—opposed the proposition. Bilney's friend was more decided than ever to listen to no other voice than God's. "Christ's sheep hear no man's voice but Christ's," he answered Dr. Redman, who had called upon him to submit to the church, "trouble me no more from the talking with the Lord my God." The church, in Latimer's opinion, presumed to set up its own voice in the place of Christ's, and the Reformation did the contrary; this was his abridgment of the controversy. Being called upon to preach during Christmas-tide, he had censured his hearers because they celebrated that festival by playing at cards, like mere worldlings, and then proceeded to lay before their eyes Christ's cards, that is to say, his laws. Being placed on the Cambridge commission to examine into the question of the king's marriage, he had won the esteem of Henry's deputy, Doctor Butts, the court physician, who had presented him to his master, by whose orders he preached at Windsor.

Henry felt disposed at first to yield something to Latimer. "Many of my subjects," said he to the prelates assembled in St. Edward's hall, "think that it is my duty to cause the Scriptures to be translated and given to the people."

The discussion immediately began between the two parties, and Latimer concluded by asking "that the Bible should be permitted to circulate freely in English." "But the most part overcame the better," he tells us. Henry declared that the teaching of the priests was sufficient for the people, and was content to add, "that he would give the Bible to his subjects when they renounced the arrogant pretension of interpreting it according to their own fancies." "Shun these books," cried the priests from the pulpit, "detest them, keep them not in your hands, deliver them up to your superiors. Or, if you do not, your prince, who has received from God the sword of justice, will use it to punish you."

Rome had every reason to be satisfied with Henry VIII. Tunstall, who still kept under lock and key the Testaments purchased at Antwerp through Packington's assistance, had them carried to St. Paul's churchyard, where they were
publicly burnt. The spectators retired shaking the head, and saying, "The teaching of the priests and of the Scriptures must be in contradiction to each other, since the priests destroy them." Latimer did more, "You have promised us the Word of God," he wrote courageously to the king, "perform your promise now rather than tomorrow! God will have the faith defended, not by man or man’s power, but by His Word only, by the which He hath evermore defended it, and that by a way far above man’s power or reason, as all the stories of the Bible make mention. ... The day is at hand when you shall give an account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed with your sword." Latimer well knew that by such language he hazarded his life, but that he was ready to sacrifice, as he tells us himself.

Persecution soon came. Just as the sun appeared to be rising on the Reformation, the storm burst forth. "There was not a stone the bishops left unremoved," says the chronicler, "any corner unsearched, for the diligent execution of the king’s proclamation, whereupon ensued a grievous persecution and slaughter of the faithful."

Thomas Hitton, a poor and pious minister of Kent, used to go frequently to Antwerp to purchase New Testaments. As he was returning from one of these expeditions, in 1529, Fisher, bishop of Rochester caused him to be arrested at Gravesend, and put him to the most cruel tortures, to make him deny his faith. But the martyr repeated with holy enthusiasm, "Salvation cometh by faith and not by works, and Christ giveth it to whomsoever He willeth." On the 20th of February 1530, in Maidstone, he was tied to the stake and there burnt to death.

Scarcely were Hitton’s sufferings ended for bringing the Scriptures into England, when a vessel laden with New Testaments arrived at Colchester. The indefatigable Richard Bayfield, who accompanied these books, sold them in London, went back to the continent, and returned to England in November, but this time the Scriptures fell into the hands of Sir Thomas More. Bayfield, undismayed, again visited the Low Countries, and soon reappeared, bringing with him the New Testament and the works of almost all the Reformers. "How cometh it that there are so many New Testaments from abroad?" asked Tunstall of Packington, "you promised me that you would buy them all." "They have printed more since," replied the wily merchant, "and it will never be better so long as they have letters and stamps [type and dies]. My lord, you had better buy the stamps too, and so you shall be sure."

Instead of the stamps, the priests sought after Bayfield. The bishop of London could not endure this godly man. Having one day asked Bainham (who afterwards suffered martyrdom) whether he knew a single individual who, since the days of the apostles, had lived according to the true faith in Jesus Christ, the latter answered, "Yes, I know Bayfield." Being tracked from place to place, he fled from the house of his pious hostess, and hid himself at the binder’s, where he was discovered, and thrown into the Lollards’ tower. As he entered the prison, Bayfield noticed a priest named Patmore, pale, weakened by suffering, and ready to sink under the ill treatment of his jailers. Patmore, won over by Bayfield’s piety, soon opened his heart to him. When
rector of Much Hadham, in Hertfordshire, he had found the truth in Wycliffe’s writings. “They have burnt his bones,” he said, “but from his ashes have burst forth a well-spring of life.” Delighting in good works, he used to fill his granaries with wheat, and, when the markets were high, he would send his corn to them in such abundance as to bring down the prices. “It is contrary to the law of God to burn heretics,” he said, and, growing bolder, he added, “I care no more for the pope’s curse than for a bundle of hay.”

His curate, Simon Smith, unwilling to imitate the disorderly lives of the priests, and finding Joan Bennore, the rector’s servant, to be a discreet and pious person, desired to marry her. “God,” said Patmore, “has declared marriage lawful for all men, and accordingly it is permitted to the priests in foreign parts.” The rector alluded to Wittenberg, where he had visited Luther. After his marriage, Smith and his wife quitted England for a season, and Patmore accompanied them as far as London.

The news of this marriage of a priest—a fact without precedent in England—made Stokesley throw Patmore into the Lollards’ tower, and although he was ill, neither fire, light, nor any other comfort was granted him. The bishop and his vicar-general visited him alone in his prison, and endeavored by their threats to make him deny his faith.

It was during these circumstances that Bayfield was thrust into the tower. By his Christian words he revived Patmore’s languishing faith, and the latter complained to the king that the bishop of London prevented his feeding the flock which God had committed to his charge. Stokesley, comprehending whence Patmore derived his new courage, removed Bayfield from the Lollards’ tower and shut him up in the coal-house, where he was fastened upright to the wall by the neck, middle and legs. The unfortunate gospeller passed his time in continual darkness, never lying down, never seated, but nailed as it were to the wall, and never hearing the sound of human voice. We shall see him hereafter issuing from this horrible prison to die on the scaffold. As for Patmore he remained in prison three years before he was released.

Patmore was not the only one in his family who suffered persecution; he had in London a brother named Thomas, a friend of John Tyndale, the younger brother of the celebrated reformer. Thomas had said that the truth of Scripture was at last reappearing in the world, after being hidden for many ages; and John Tyndale had sent five marks to his brother William, and received letters from him. Moreover, the two friends (who were both tradesmen) had distributed a great number of Testaments and other works. But their faith was not deeply rooted, and it was more out of sympathy for their brothers that they had believed; accordingly, Stokesley so completely entangled them that they confessed their “crime.” More, acting through the Star Chamber, delighted at the opportunity which offered to cover the name of Tyndale with shame, was not satisfied with condemning the two friends to pay a fine of £100 each; he invented a new disgrace. He fastened to their dress some of the New Testaments which they had circulated, placed the two penitents on horseback with their faces towards the tail, and thus paraded them through the streets of London, exposed to the jeers and laughter of the
populace. In this, More succeeded better than in his refutation of the reformer’s writings.
From that time the persecution became more violent. Husbandmen, artists, tradespeople, and even noblemen, felt the cruel fangs of the clergy and of Sir Thomas More. They sent to jail a pious musician, Robert Lambe, who used to wander from town to town, singing to his harp a hymn in commendation of Martin Luther. A painter, named Edward Freese, a young man of ready wit, having been engaged to paint some hangings in a house in Colchester, wrote on the borders certain sentences of the Scripture. For this he was seized and taken to the bishop of London’s palace at Fulham, and there imprisoned, where his chief nourishment was bread made mostly out of sawdust. His poor wife, who was pregnant, went down to Fulham to see her husband, but the bishop’s porter had orders to admit no one, and the brute gave her so violent a kick, as to kill her unborn infant, and cause the mother’s death not long after. The unhappy Freese was removed to the Lollards’ tower, where he was put into chains, his hands only being left free. With these he took a piece of coal, and wrote some pious sentences on the wall; upon this he was manacled, but his wrists were so severely pinched that the flesh grew up higher than the irons. His intellect became disturbed; his hair in wild disorder soon covered his face, through which his eyes glared fierce and haggard. The want of proper food, bad treatment, his wife’s death, and his lengthened imprisonment, entirely undermined his reason. When brought to St. Paul’s, he was kept three days without food; and when he appeared before the consistory, the poor prisoner, silent and scarce able to stand, looked around and gazed upon the spectators, “like a wild man.” The examination was begun, but to every question put to him Freese made the same answer: “My Lord is a good man.” They could get nothing from him but this affecting reply. Alas! the light shone no more upon his understanding, but the love of Jesus was still in his heart. He did not fully recover his reason to his dying day. His brother, Valentine Freese, and his wife, gave their lives at one stake in York, for the testimony of Jesus Christ.
Terror began to spread far and wide. The most active evangelists had been compelled to flee to a foreign land; some of the most godly were in prison; and among those in high station there were many, and perhaps Latimer was one, who seemed willing to shelter themselves under an exaggerated moderation. But just as the persecution in London had succeeded in silencing the most timid, other voices more courageous were raised in the provinces. The city of Exeter was at that time in great agitation; placards had been discovered on the gates of the cathedral containing some of the principles of “the new doctrine.” While the mayor and his officers were seeking after the author of these “blasphemies,” the bishop and all his doctors, “as hot as coals,” says the chronicler, “and enkindled as though they had been stung with a sort of wasps,” were preaching in the most fiery style. On the following Sunday, during the sermon, two men who had been the busiest of all the city in searching for the author of the bills, were struck by the appearance of a person seated near them. “Surely, this fellow is the heretic,” they said. But their neighbor’s
devotion, for he did not take his eyes off his book, quite put them out; they did not perceive that he was reading the New Testament in Latin.

This man, Thomas Bennet, was indeed the offender. Being converted at Cambridge by the preaching of Bilney, whose friend he was, he had gone to Torrington in Devonshire for fear of the persecution, and thence to Exeter, and, after marrying to avoid unchastity (as he says), he became schoolmaster. Quiet, humble, courteous to everybody, and somewhat timid, Bennet had lived six years in that city without his faith being discovered. At last, his conscience being awakened, he resolved to fasten by night to the cathedral gates certain evangelical placards. "Everybody will read the writing," he thought, "and nobody will know the writer." He did as he had proposed.

Not long after the Sunday on which he had been so nearly discovered, the priests prepared a great pageant, and made ready to pronounce against the unknown heretic the great curse "with book, bell, and candle." The cathedral was crowded, and Bennet himself was among the spectators. In the middle stood a great cross on which lighted tapers were placed, and around it were gathered all the Franciscans and Dominicans of Exeter. One of the priests having delivered a sermon on the words, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel, the bishop drew near the cross and pronounced the curse against the offender. He took one of the tapers and said, "Let the soul of the unknown heretic, if he be dead already, be quenched this night in the pains of hell-fire, as this candle is now quenched and put out," and with that he put out the candle. Then, taking off a second, he continued, "and let us pray to God, if he be yet alive, that his eyes be put out, and that all the senses of his body may fail him, as now the light of this candle is gone," extinguishing the second candle. After this, one of the priests went up to the cross to take it away. It fell, however, and the noise it made in falling, re-echoing along the roof, so frightened the spectators that they uttered a shriek of terror, and held up their hands to heaven, as if to pray that the divine curse might not fall on them. Bennet, a witness of this comedy, could not forbear smiling. "What are you laughing at?" asked his neighbors, "here is the heretic, here is the heretic, hold him fast." This created great confusion among the crowd, some shouting, some clapping their hands, others running to and fro, but, owing to the tumult, Bennet succeeded in making his escape.

The excommunication did but increase his desire to attack the Romish superstitions; and accordingly, before five o’clock the next morning (it was in the month of October 1530) his servant boy fastened up again by his orders on the cathedral gates some placards similar to those which had been torn down. It chanced that a citizen going to early mass saw the boy and, running up to him, caught hold of him and pulled down the papers; and then, dragging the boy with one hand and with the placards in the other, he went to the mayor of the city. Bennet’s servant was recognized; his master was immediately arrested, and put in the stocks, and in strong irons, “with as much favour as a dog would find,” says Foxe.

Exeter seemed determined to make itself the champion of sacerdotalism in England. For a whole week, not only the bishop, but all the priests and friars of
the city, visited Bennet night and day. But they tried in vain to prove to him that the Roman church was the true one. "God has given me grace to be of a better church," he said. "Do you not know that ours is built upon St. Peter?" "The church that is built upon a man," he replied, "is the devil's church and not God's." His cell was continually thronged with visitors; and, in default of arguments, the most ignorant of the friars called the prisoner a heretic, and spat upon him. At length they brought to him a learned doctor of theology, who, they supposed, would infallibly convert him. "Our ways are God's ways," said the doctor gravely. But he soon discovered that theologians can do nothing against the Word of the Lord. "He only is my way," replied Bennet, "who saith, I am the way, the truth, and the life. In His way will I walk; His truth will I embrace; His everlasting life will I seek."

He was condemned to be burnt; and More having transmitted the order de comburendo with the utmost speed, the priests placed Bennet in the hands of the sheriff on the 15th of January, 1531, by whom he was conducted to the Livery-dole, a field outside the city, where the stake was prepared. When Bennet arrived at the place of execution, he briefly exhorted the people, but with such unction, that the sheriff's clerk, as he heard him, exclaimed, "Truly this is a servant of God." Two persons, however, seemed unmoved; they were Thomas Carew and John Barnehouse, both holding the station of gentlemen. Going up to the martyr, they exclaimed in a threatening voice, "Say, Precor sanctam Mariam et omnes sanctos Dei" (pray to holy Mary and all the saints of God). "I know no other advocate but Jesus Christ," replied Bennet. Barnehouse was so enraged at these words, that he took a furze-bush upon a pike and, setting it on fire, thrust it into the martyr's face, exclaiming, "Accursed heretic, pray to our Lady, or I will make you do it." "Alas!" replied Bennet patiently, "trouble me not," and then holding up his hands, he prayed, "Father, forgive them!" The executioners immediately set fire to the wood, and the most fanatical of the spectators, both men and women, seized with an indescribable fury, tore up stakes and bushes, and whatever they could lay their hands on, and flung them all into the flames to increase their violence. Bennet, lifting up his eyes to heaven, exclaimed, "Lord, receive my spirit." Thus died, in the sixteenth century, the disciples of the Reformation sacrificed by Henry VIII.

The priests, thanks to the king's sword, began to count on victory; yet schoolmasters, musicians, tradesmen, and even ecclesiastics, were not enough for them. They wanted nobler victims, and these were to be looked for in London. More himself, accompanied by the lieutenant of the Tower, searched many of the suspected houses. Few citizens were more esteemed in London than John Petit, the same who, in the house of commons, had so nobly resisted the king's demand about the loan. Petit was learned in history and in Latin literature; he spoke with eloquence and for twenty years had worthily represented the city. Whenever any important affair was debated in parliament, the king, feeling uneasy, was in the habit of inquiring which side he took. This political independence, very rare in Henry's parliaments, gave umbrage to the king and his ministers. Petit, the friend of Bilney, Fryth, and
Tyndale, had been one of the first in England to taste the sweetness of God’s Word, and had immediately manifested that beautiful characteristic by which the gospel faith makes itself known, namely, charity. He abounded in almsgiving, supported a great number of poor preachers of the gospel in his own country and beyond the seas; and whenever he noted down these generous aids in his books, he wrote merely the words: "Lent unto Christ." He, moreover, forbade his testamentary executors to call in these debts.

Petit was tranquilly enjoying the sweets of domestic life in his modest home in the society of his wife and two daughters, Blanche and Audrey, when he received an unexpected visit. One day, as he was praying in his chamber, a loud knock was heard at the street door. His wife opened it, but seeing Lord-chancellor More, she returned hurriedly to her husband, and told him that the lord-chancellor wanted him. More, who followed her, entered the chamber, and with inquisitive eye ran over the shelves of the library, but could find nothing suspicious. Presently he made as if he would retire, and Petit accompanied him. The chancellor stopped at the door and said to him, "You assert that you have none of these new books?" "You have seen my library," replied Petit. "I am informed, however," replied More, "that you not only read them, but pay for the printing." And then he added in a severe tone, "Follow the lieutenant." In spite of the tears of his wife and daughters, this independent member of parliament was conducted to the Tower and shut up in a damp dungeon where he had nothing but straw to lie upon. His wife went thither each day in vain, asking, with tears, permission to see him, or at least to send him a bed. The jailers refused her everything, and it was only when Petit fell dangerously ill that the latter favor was granted him. This took place in 1530; sentence was passed in 1531; we shall see Petit again in his prison. He left it, indeed, but only to sink under the cruel treatment he had there experienced.

Thus were the witnesses to the truth struck down by the priests, by Sir Thomas More, and by Henry VIII. A new victim was to be the cause of many tears. A meek and humble man, one dear to all the friends of the gospel, and whom we may regard as the spiritual father of the Reformation in England, was on the point of mounting the burning pile raised by his persecutors. Some time prior to Petit’s appearance before his judges, which took place in 1531, an unusual noise was heard in the cell above him; it was Thomas Bilney whom they were conducting to the Tower. We left him at the end of 1528, after his fall. Bilney had returned to Cambridge tormented by remorse; his friends in vain crowded round him by night and by day; they could not console him, and even the Scriptures seemed to utter no voice but that of condemnation. Fear made him tremble constantly, and he could scarcely eat or drink. At length a heavenly and unexpected light dawned in the heart of the fallen disciple; a witness whom he had vexed—the Holy Spirit—spoke once more in his heart. Bilney fell at the foot of the cross, shedding floods of tears, and there he found peace.

But the more God comforted him, the greater seemed his crime. One only thought possessed him, that of giving his life for the truth. He had shrunk from before the burning pile; its flames must now consume him. Neither the
weakness of his body, which his long anguish had much increased, nor the cruelty of his enemies, nor his natural timidity, nothing could stop him; he strove for the martyr’s crown. At ten o’clock one night, when every person in Trinity Hall was retiring to rest, Bilney called his friends round him, reminded them of his fall, and added, “You shall see me no more. ... Do not stay me; my decision is formed, and I shall carry it out. My face is set to go to Jerusalem.” Bilney repeated the words used by the evangelist, when he describes Jesus going up to the city where He was to be put to death. Having shaken hands with his brethren, this venerable man, the foremost of the evangelists of England in order of time, left Cambridge under cover of the night, and proceeded to Norfolk, to confirm in the faith those who had believed, and to invite the ignorant multitude to the Savior. We shall not follow him in this last and solemn ministry; these facts and others of the same kind belong to a later date. Before the year 1531 closed in, Bilney, Bainham, Bayfield, Tewkesbury, and many others, struck by Henry’s sword, sealed by their blood the testimony rendered by them to the perfect grace of Christ.

CHAPTER 16
Wolsey Falls like Lucifer
1530

While many pious Christians were languishing in the prisons of England, the great antagonist of the Reformation was disappearing from the stage of this world. We must return to Wolsey, who was still detained at Esher. The cardinal, fallen from the summit of honors, was seized with those panic-terrors usually felt after their disgrace by those who have made a whole nation tremble, and he fancied an assassin lay hid behind every door. “This very night,” he wrote to Cromwell on one occasion, “I was as one that should have died. If I might, I would not fail to come on foot to you, rather than this my speaking with you shall be put over and delayed. If the displeasure of my Lady Anne be somewhat assuaged, as I pray God the same may be, then I pray you exert all possible means of attaining her favour.” In consequence of this, Cromwell hastened down to Esher two or three days after taking his seat in parliament, and Wolsey, all trembling, recounted his fears to him. “Norfolk, Suffolk, and Lady Anne perhaps, desire my death. Did not Thomas Becket, an archbishop like me, stain the altar with his blood?” ... Cromwell reassured him, and, moved by the old man’s fears, asked and obtained of Henry an order of protection. Wolsey’s enemies most certainly desired his death; but it was from the justice of the three estates, and not by the assassin’s dagger, that they sought it. The House of Peers authorized Sir Thomas More, the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, and fourteen other lords, to prepare a bill of attainder against the cardinal-legate. They forgot nothing—that haughty formula, Ego et rex meus, I and my king, which Wolsey had often employed; his infringement of the laws of the kingdom; his monopolizing the church revenues; the crying injustice of which he had been guilty, as, for instance, in the case of Sir John Stanley, who was
sent to prison until he gave up a lease to the son of a woman who had borne
the cardinal two children; many families ruined to satisfy his avarice; treaties
concluded with foreign powers without the king’s order; his exactions, which
had impoverished England; and the foul diseases and infectious breath with
which he had polluted his majesty’s presence. These were some of the forty-
four grievances presented by the peers to the king, and which Henry sent down
to the lower house for their consideration.
It was at first thought that nobody in the commons would undertake Wolsey’s
defense, and it was generally expected that he would be given up to the
vengeance of the law (as the bill of attainder prayed) or, in other words, to the
axe of the executioner. But one man stood up and prepared, though alone, to
defend the cardinal—this was Cromwell. The members asked of each other who
the unknown man was; he soon made himself known. His knowledge of facts,
his familiarity with the laws, the force of his eloquence, and the moderation of
his language, surprised the house. Wolsey’s adversaries had hardly aimed a
blow before the defender had already parried it. If any charge was brought
forward to which he could not reply, he proposed an adjournment until the
next day, departed for Esher at the end of the sitting, conferred with Wolsey,
returned during the night, and next morning reappeared in the commons with
fresh arms. Cromwell carried the house with him; the attainder failed, and
Wolsey’s defender took his station among the statesmen of England. This
victory, one of the greatest triumphs of parliamentary eloquence at that
period, satisfied both the ambition and the gratitude of Cromwell. He was now
firmly fixed in the king’s favor, esteemed by the commons, and admired by the
people—circumstances which furnished him with the means of bringing to a
favorable conclusion the emancipation of the church of England.
The ministry, composed of Wolsey’s enemies, was annoyed at the decision of
the lower house, and appointed a commission to examine into the matter.
When the cardinal was informed of this, he fell into new terrors. He lost all
appetite and desire of sleep, and a fever attacked him at Christmas. “The
cardinal will be dead in four days,” said his physician to Henry, “if he receives
no comfort shortly from you and Lady Anne.” “I would not lose him for twenty
thousand pounds,” exclaimed the king. He desired to preserve Wolsey in case
his old minister’s consummate ability should become necessary, which was by
no means unlikely. Henry gave the doctor his portrait in a ring, and Anne, at
the king’s desire, added the tablet of gold that hung at her girdle. The
delighted cardinal placed the presents on his bed, and, as he gazed on them,
he felt his strength return. He was removed from his miserable dwelling at
Esher to the royal palace at Richmond, and before long he was able to go into
the park, where every night he read his breviary.
Ambition and hope returned with life. If the king desired to destroy the papal
power in England, could not the proud cardinal preserve it? Might not Thomas
Wolsey do under Henry VIII what Thomas Becket had done under Henry II? His
see of York, the ignorance of the priests, the superstition of the people, the
discontent of the great—all would be of service to him; and indeed, six years
later, 40,000 men were under arms in a moment in Yorkshire to defend the
cause of Rome. Wolsey, strong in England by the support of the nation (such at least was his opinion), aided without by the pope and the continental powers, might give the law to Henry and crush the Reformation.

The king having permitted him to go to York, which he had never yet visited although he had been Archbishop of York since 1514, Wolsey prayed for an increase to his archiepiscopal revenues, which amounted, however, to four thousand pounds sterling. Henry granted him a thousand marks, and the cardinal, shortly before Easter, 1530, departed with a train of 160 persons. He thought it was the beginning of his triumph.

Wolsey took up his abode at Cawood Castle, Yorkshire, one of his archiepiscopal residences, and strove to win the affections of the people. This prelate, once "the haughtiest of men," says George Cavendish, the man who knew him and served him best, became quite a pattern of affability. He kept an open table, distributed bounteous alms at his gate, said mass in the village churches, went and dined with the neighboring gentry, gave splendid entertainments, and wrote to several princes imploring their help. It is even asserted by Edward Hall, a chronicler who was a contemporary of Wolsey, that he requested the pope to excommunicate Henry VIII. All being thus prepared, he thought he might make his solemn entry into York, preparatory to his enthronement, which was fixed for Monday the 7th of November.

Every movement of his was known at court; every action was canvassed, and its importance exaggerated. "We thought we had brought him down," some said, "and here he is rising up again." Henry himself was alarmed. "The cardinal, by his detestable intrigues," he said, "is conspiring against my crown, and plotting both at home and abroad." Wolsey’s destruction was resolved upon.

The morning after All Saints’ day (Friday, 4th November, 1530), the earl of Northumberland, attended by a numerous escort, arrived at Cawood, where the cardinal was still residing. He was the same Percy whose affection for Anne Boleyn had been thwarted by Wolsey, and there may have been design in Henry’s choice. The cardinal eagerly moved forward to meet this unexpected guest, and, impatient to know the object of his mission, took him into his bedchamber, under the pretence of changing his traveling dress. They both remained some time standing at a window without uttering a word; the earl looked confused and agitated, whilst Wolsey endeavored to repress his emotion. But at last, with a strong effort, Northumberland laid his hand upon the arm of his former master, and with a low voice said, "My lord, I arrest you for high treason." The cardinal remained speechless, as if stunned. He was kept a prisoner in his room.

It is doubtful whether Wolsey was guilty of the crime with which he was charged. We may believe that he entertained the idea of someday bringing about the triumph of the popedom in England, even should it cause Henry’s ruin, but perhaps this was all. But an idea is not a conspiracy, although it may rapidly expand into one.

More than three thousand persons (attracted, not by hatred, like the Londoners, when Wolsey departed from Whitehall, but by enthusiasm) collected the next day before the castle to salute the cardinal. "God save your
grace!” they shouted on every side, and a numerous crowd escorted him at night; some carried torches in their hands, and all made the air re-echo with their cries. The unhappy prelate was conducted to Sheffield Park, the residence of the earl of Shrewsbury. Some days after his arrival, the faithful Cavendish ran to him, exclaiming, "Good news, my lord! Sir William Kingston and twenty-four of the guard are come to escort you to his majesty."

“Kingston!” exclaimed the cardinal, turning pale, "Kingston!” and then, slapping his hand on his thigh, he heaved a deep sigh. This news had crushed his mind. One day, a fortune teller, whom he consulted, had told him, "You shall have your end at Kingston," and from that time the cardinal had carefully avoided the town of Kingston-on-Thames. But now he thought he understood the prophecy. ... Kingston, constable of the Tower, was about to cause his death. They left Sheffield Park, but fright had given Wolsey his death blow. Several times he was near falling from his mule, and on the third day, when they reached Leicester Abbey, he said as he entered, "Father abbot, I am come hither to leave my bones among you," and immediately took to his bed. This was on Saturday, the 26th of November.

On Monday morning, tormented by gloomy forebodings, Wolsey asked what was the time of day. "Past eight o'clock," replied Cavendish. "That cannot be," said the cardinal, "eight o'clock. ... No! for by eight o'clock you shall lose your master." At six on Tuesday, Kingston having come to inquire about his health, Wolsey said to him, "I shall not live long." "Be of good cheer," rejoined the governor of the Tower. "Alas, Master Kingston," exclaimed the cardinal, "if I had served God as diligently as I have served the king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs!” and then he added with downcast head, "This is my just reward." What a judgment upon his own life! On the very threshold of eternity (for he had but a few minutes to live) the cardinal summoned up all his hatred against the Reformation, and made a last effort. The persecution was too slow to please him. "Master Kingston," he said, "attend to my last request; tell the king that I conjure him in God’s name to destroy this new pernicious sect of Lutherans." And then, with astonishing presence of mind in this his last hour, Wolsey described the misfortunes which the Hussites had, in his opinion, brought upon Bohemia; and then, coming to England, he recalled the times of Wycliffe and Sir John Oldcastle. He grew animated; his dying eyes yet shot forth fiery glances. He trembled lest Henry VIII, unfaithful to the pope, should hold out his hand to the reformers. "Master Kingston," said he, in conclusion, "the king should know that if he tolerates heresy, God will take away his power, and we shall then have mischief upon mischief... barrenness, scarcity, and disorder to the utter destruction of this realm."

Wolsey was exhausted by the effort. After a momentary silence, he resumed with a dying voice, "Master Kingston, farewell! My time draweth on fast. Forget not what I have said and charged you withal; for when I am dead ye shall peradventure remember my words better." It was with difficulty he uttered these words; his tongue began to falter, his eyes became fixed, his sight failed him; he breathed his last. At the same minute the clock struck eight, and the
attendants standing round his bed looked at each other in affright. It was the 29th of November, 1530. Thus died the man once so much feared. Power had been his idol; to obtain it in the state, he had sacrificed the liberties of England; and to win it or to preserve it in the church, he had fought against the Reformation. If he encouraged the nobility in the luxuries and pleasures of life, it was only to render them more supple and more servile; if he supported learning, it was only that he might have a clergy fitted to keep the laity in their leading-strings. Ambitious, intriguing, and impure of life, he had been as zealous for the sacerdotal prerogative as the austere Becket; and by a singular contrast, a shirt of hair was found on the body of this voluptuous man. The aim of his life had been to raise the papal power higher than it had ever been before, at the very moment when the Reformation was attempting to bring it down, and to take his seat on the pontifical throne with more than the authority of a Hildebrand. Wolsey, as pope, would have been the man of his age, and in the political world he would have done for the Roman primacy what the celebrated Loyola did for it soon after by his fanaticism. Obliged to renounce this idea, worthy only of the middle ages, he had desired at least to save the popedom in his own country, but here again he had failed. The pilot who had stood in England at the helm of the Romish church was thrown overboard, and the ship, left to itself, was about to founder. And yet, even in death, he did not lose his courage. The last throbs of his heart had called for victims; the last words from his failing lips, the last message to his master, his last testament had been... Persecution! This testament was to be only too faithfully executed. The epoch of the fall and death of Cardinal Wolsey, which is the point at which we halt, was not only important because it ended the life of a man who had presided over the destinies of England, and had endeavored to grasp the scepter of the world, but it is of especial consequence because then three movements were accomplished, from which the great transformation of the sixteenth century was to proceed. Each of these movements has its characteristic result.

The first is represented by Cromwell. The supremacy of the pope in England was about to be wrested from him, as it was in all the reformed churches. But a step further was taken in England. That supremacy was transferred to the person of the king. Wolsey had exercised as vicar-general a power till then unknown. Unable to become pope at the Vatican, he had made himself a pope at Whitehall. Henry had permitted his minister to raise this hierarchical throne by the side of his own. But he had soon discovered that there ought not to be two thrones in England, or at least not two kings. He had dethroned Wolsey; and, resolutely seating himself in his place, he was about to assume at Whitehall that tiara which the ambitious prelate had prepared for himself. Some persons, when they saw this, exclaimed that if the papal supremacy were abolished, that of the Word of God ought alone to be substituted. And, indeed, the true Reformation is not to be found in this first movement. The second, which was essential to the renewal of the church, was represented by Cranmer, and consisted particularly in re-establishing the authority of holy
Scripture. Wolsey did not fall alone, nor did Cranmer rise alone; each of these two men carried with him the system he represented. The fabric of Roman traditions fell with the first; the foundations of the holy Scriptures were laid by the second; and yet, while we render all justice to the sincerity of the Cambridge doctor, we must not be blind to his weaknesses, his subserviency, and even a certain degree of negligence, which, by allowing parasitical plants to shoot up here and there, permitted them to spread over the living rock of God’s Word. Not in this movement, then, was found the Reformation with all its energy and all its purity.

The third movement was represented by the martyrs. When the church takes a new life, it is fertilized by the blood of its confessors; and being continually exposed to corruption, it has constant need to be purified by suffering. Not in the palaces of Henry VIII, nor even in the councils where the question of throwing off the papal supremacy was discussed, must we look for the true children of the Reformation; we must go to the Tower of London, to the Lollards’ towers of St. Paul’s and of Lambeth, to the other prisons of England, to the bishops’ cellars, to the fetters, the stocks, the rack, and the stake. The godly men who invoked the sole intercession of Christ Jesus, the only Head of His people, who wandered up and down, deprived of everything, gagged, scowled at, scourged, and tortured, and who, in the midst of all their tribulations, preserved their Christian patience, and turned, like their Master, the eyes of their faith towards Jerusalem—these were the disciples of the Reformation in England. The purest church is the church under the cross. The father of this church in England was not Henry VIII. When the king cast into prison or gave to the flames men like Hitton, Bennet, Patmore, Petit, Bayfield, Bilney, and many others, he was not "the father of the Reformation of England," as some have so falsely asserted; he was its executioner. The church of England was foredoomed to be in its renovation a church of martyrs, and the true father of this church is our Father which is in heaven.

The End of Volume 1, Book Four

Table of Contents
for

The Reformation In

England

Volume Two

Book One

England Begins to Cast off the Papacy

CHAPTER 1

The Nation and its Parties

Autumn, 1529


CHAPTER 2

Parliament and its Grievances

November, 1529
Impulse given to Political Liberty by the Reformation — Grievances put Forward by the House of Commons — Exactions, Benefices, Holy Days, Imprisonments — The House of Commons Defend the Evangelicals — Question of the Bishops — Their Answer — Their Proceedings in the Matter of Reform

CHAPTER 3

Early Reforms
End of 1529

Abuses Pointed Out and Corrected — The Clergy Reform in Self-Defense — Fisher Accuses the Commons who Complain to the King — Subterfuge of the Bishops — Rudeness of the Commons — Suppression of Pluralities and Non-Residence — These Reforms Insufficient — Joy of the People — Sorrow of the Clergy

CHAPTER 4

Anne Boleyn’s Father Meets the Emperor and the Pope
Winter, 1530


CHAPTER 5

Oxford and Cambridge Debate the Divorce
Winter, 1530

Parties at Cambridge — A Noisy Assembly — Murmurs against the Evangelicals — A Meeting Declares for the King — Honor Paid to Scripture — The King’s Severe Letter to Oxford — Opposition of the Younger Members of the University — The King’s Anger — Another Royal Mission to Oxford — The University Decides for the Divorce — Evangelical Courage of Chaplain Latimer — The King and the Chancellor of Cambridge
CHAPTER 6
Henry Appeals to Foreign Opinion
January to September, 1530

The Sorbonne Deliberates on the Divorce — The French Universities Sanction the Divorce — The Italian Universities Do Likewise — Opinion of Luther — Cranmer at Rome — The English Nobles Write to the Pope — The Pope Proposes that the King Should Have Two Wives — Henry’s Proclamation against Papal Bulls

CHAPTER 7
Latimer at Court
January to September, 1530

Latimer tempted by the Court, Fortified by Study — Christian Individuality — Latimer Desires to Convert the King — Desires for the Church, Poverty, the Cross, and the Bible — He Prays the King to Save his own Soul — Latimer’s Preaching — No Intermingling of the Two Powers — Latimer’s Boldness in the Cause of Morality — Priests Denounce Him to the King — Noble Character of the Reformers

CHAPTER 8
The King Seeks Tyndale
January to May, 1531

The Ivy and the Tree, or the Practice of Popery — Vaughan Looks for the Invisible Tyndale — Vaughan visited by a Stranger — Interview between Vaughan and Tyndale in a Field — Tyndale Mistrusts the Clergy — The King’s Indignation — Tyndale is Touched by the Royal Compassion — The King Wishes to Gain Fryth — Faith First, and then the Church — Henry Threatens the Evangelicals with War

CHAPTER 9
The King of England—"Head of the Church"
January to March, 1531
Supremacy of the Pope Injurious to the State — All the Clergy Declared Guilty — Challenged to Recognize the Royal Supremacy — Anguish of the Clergy — They Negotiate and Submit — Discussions in the Convocation of York — Danger of the Royal Supremacy

CHAPTER 10

The King Puts Catherine away
March to June, 1531

The Divorce Question Agitates the Country — A Case of Poisoning — Reginald Pole — Pole’s Discontent — The King’s Favors — Pole’s Frankness and Henry’s Anger — Bids Henry Submit to the Pope — Queen Catherine Leaves the Palace

CHAPTER 11

"Not Sparing the Flock"
September, 1531 to 1532

Stokesley Proposes that the Inferior Clergy Shall Pay — Riot among the Priests — The Bishop’s Speech — A Battle — To Conciliate the Clergy, Henry Allows Them to Persecute the Protestants

CHAPTER 12

The Martyrs
1531

The Repentant Bilney Preaches in the Fields — His Enemies and his Friends — Bilney Put into Prison, where He Meets Petit — Disputation and Trial — Bilney Condemned to Die — The Parting Visit of his Friends — He is Led out to Punishment — His Last Words — His Death — Imprisonment and Martyrdom of Bayfield — Tewkesbury Bound to the Tree of Truth — His Death — Numerous Martyrs

CHAPTER 13
The King Despoils the Pope and Clergy
March to May, 1532

Character of Thomas Cromwell — Supplications against the Ordinaries — The Clergy Bend before the King — Two Contradictory Oaths — Priestly Rumors — Sir Thomas More Resigns — Act of Annates — The Two Evils of a Regal Reform

CHAPTER 14

Liberty of Inquiry and Preaching
1532

The Perils of a Prosperous Nation — Lambert and Free Inquiry — Luther’s Principles — Images or the Word of God — Freedom of Preaching — St. Paul Burnt by the Bishop — Latimer Disgusted with the Court — More Thieves than Shepherds — A Don Quixote of Catholicism — Latimer Summoned before the Primate — His Firmness — Attempt to Entrap Him — His Refusal to Recant — Excommunicated — Expedient of the Bishops — Latimer saved by his Conformity with Luther

CHAPTER 15

Henry VIII Attacks Romanists and Protestants
1532

The Franciscans Preach against the King — Henry Likened to Ahab — Disturbance in the Chapel — Christian Meetings in London — Bainham persecuted by More — Summoned to Abjure — The Fatal Kiss — Bainham’s Anguish — The Tragedy of Conscience — Bainham visited in his Dungeon — The Bed of Roses — The Persecutor’s Suicide — Effect of the Martyrdoms — The True Church of God

CHAPTER 16

The New Primate of All England
February, 1532 to March, 1533

Who shall be Warham’s Successor? — Cranmer at Nuremberg — Osiander’s Household — His Error — Cranmer Marries — Is Recalled to London — Refuses to Return — Follows the Emperor to Italy — Date of Henry’s Marriage with Anne
CHAPTER 17

Queen Catherine Descends from the Throne, and Anne Boleyn Ascends it
November, 1532 to July, 1533

Clement Suggests that Henry Should Have Two Wives — His Perilous Journey to Bologna — His Exertions for the Divorce — King’s Marriage with Anne Becomes Known — France and England Separate — A Threatening Brief — The Pope Perplexed — Parliament Emancipates England — Cranmer’s Letter to the King — Modification Demanded by the King — Henry Expresses Himself Clearly — Meeting of the Ecclesiastical Court — Catherine’s Firmness — Her Marriage Anulled — Queen Anne Presented to the People — Her Progress through the City — Feelings of the New Queen — Catherine and Anne — Threats of the Pope and the King

CHAPTER 18

Fryth in the Tower
August, 1532 to May, 1533


CHAPTER 19

A Reformer Chooses rather to Lose his Life than Save it
May to July, 1533

Fryth Summoned before a Royal Commission — Tyndale’s Letter to Fryth — Cranmer Attempts to Save Him — Lord Fitzwilliam, Governor of the Tower — Fryth removed to Lambeth — Attempt at Conciliation — Fryth Remains firm — A Prophecy Concerning the Lord’s Supper — The Gentleman and the Porter Desire
to Save Fryth — Their Plan — Fryth Will Not Be Saved — Fryth before the Episcopal Court — Interrogated on the Real Presence — Cranmer Cannot Save Him — Fryth’s Condemnation and Execution — Influence of his Writings

CHAPTER 20

The Isolation of England
1533

Sensation Caused by Anne’s Marriage — Henry’s Isolation — The Protestants Reject Him — Birth of Elizabeth — A new Star — English Envoys at Marseilles — Bonner and Gardiner — Prepare for a Declaration of War — The Pope’s Emotion — Henry Appeals to a General Council — The Pope’s Anger — Francis I and Clement understand One Another — The Pope’s Answer — Bonner’s Rudeness — Henry’s Proclamation against the Pope — The Dividing Point

CHAPTER 21

Parliament Abolishes Papal Usurpations in England
January To March, 1534

Henry Desires to Separate Christendom from Rome — A Buffet to the Pope — The People, Not the King, Want the Reformation — The Pope Tries to Gain Henry — Cranmer Presses Forward — The Commons against Papal Authority — Abolition of Romish Exactions — Parliament Declares for the Faith of the Scriptures — Henry Condemned at Rome — The Pope’s Disquietude — A Great Dispensation

BOOK TWO

England Breaks with Rome

CHAPTER 1
A Conspiracy against the Reformation
March & April, 1534


CHAPTER 2
The Church Becomes a Department of State
Christmas, 1533 to June, 1534

The King’s Proceedings against Catherine — The Monks and the Priests Renounce the Pope — Preparations of Charles V against Henry — Henry Prepares to Resist him — The Two Chiefs of the Anti-Roman Party — The Orator of the Reformation — The King Abolishes the Authority of the Pope — The Sheriffs Ordered to See the Proclamation Carried Out — The Church, a Department of the State — Authority in the Church — Form which the Church Might Have Assumed — Various Systems

CHAPTER 3
Tyndale and his Enemies
1534 to August 1535

Tyndale Translates the Old Testament at Antwerp — His Charity and Zeal — Joye Pretends to Correct his Version — Tyndale’s Noble Protest — Anne Protects the Friends of the Gospel — Her Message in Harman’s Favor — Discontent of the King — Plot against Tyndale — Snares Laid for him — Stratagem — Attempt at Bribery — Recourse to the Imperial Government — Tyndale’s House Surrounded — The Traitor — Tyndale’s Arrest — His Imprisonment in the Castle of Vilvorde — The Life of the Reformers: Apologies for the Reformation

CHAPTER 4
Henry VIII as King — Pontiff
1534-1535

Opposition of Certain Priests — Mental Restrictions — Fanatical Monks and Timid Monks — Agitation of Sir Thomas More — More and Fisher Refuse to Take the Oath — They are Taken to the Tower — The Carthusians Required to Swear — Paul III desires to Bring Back England — Henry Rejects the Papacy — Severe Laws Concerning his Primacy — The King Not the Head of the Church

CHAPTER 5

Henry Destroys his Opponents
1534-1535

Frankness and Misery of Sir Thomas More — Confusion in England — Character of Cranmer — Cranmer’s Work — The Bible to be Translated into English — Cranmer’s Joy — Failure of the Translation by the Bishops — Popish and Seditious Preachers — The King Orders the Carthusians to Reject the Pope — The Carthusians Resolve to Die — Threats of Revolt — Incompatibility of Popery and Liberty — The Carthusians are Condemned — Execution of the Three Priors — Henry Strikes on All Sides

CHAPTER 6

Two Notable Executions
May to September, 1535

Fisher raised to the Cardinalate at Rome, condemned to Death at London — Piety of his Last Moments — His Christian Death — More before the Court of King’s Bench — He is Sentenced to Death — Taken Back to the Tower — Meeting with his Daughter — General Emotion — More’s Mortifications — Morning of 6th July — His Last Words — His Death — Sensation Produced by these Two Executions — Effects on the Continent — Fanatical Bull against Henry VIII — Henry Justifies Himself at Rome — His Excuses Not Valid

CHAPTER 7

The Dissolution of the Smaller Monasteries
September, 1535 to 1536

CHAPTER 8

Henry Negotiates with German Lutherans
1534-1535

Henry VIII Makes Advances to Melanchthon — The Reformer Rejects Them — Luther and the Elector Incline to Henry — The Errors of Intolerance — A New English Embassy to Germany — The Alliance is Signed — Cranmer Saves Mary — Conference with Catherine — Catherine’s Firmness, Asceticism, and Illness — Preparations of Charles V against England — Catherine’s Will, her Farewell, and Death — Anne Boleyn’s Feelings on Hearing of her Death — England and Germany Seek to Unite — Theological Discussion at Wittenberg — Will Luther Concede Anything? — A Master and Slaves at the Court of England

CHAPTER 9

The Accusation of the Queen
1535 to May, 1536

Error Concerning the Beginning of the Reformation — Anne Boleyn’s Virtues and Good Works — Her Relations with Cranmer and Latimer — With Tyndale and Parker — Parker’s Christian Character — Anne Boleyn’s Character — The Truth about Queen Anne — Her Enemies — Henry Attracted by Jane Seymour — Queen Anne’s Manners — Her Anguish — Her Stillborn Son — Her Sadness and Anxiety — Anne’s Zeal for the Reformation — Discontent of the Ultramontanists — Anne’s Dangers Increase — Her Anxiety for her Daughter — The Four Articles of the Indictment — Character of Henry VIII — Commission of Enquiry — Brereton and
CHAPTER 10

The Execution of Anne Boleyn

May, 1536

The Judge Acknowledges Anne’s Innocence — Her Enemies and her Renunciation of the World — Dignity of her Answer — Anne’s Letter to the King — Its Effect upon Henry — Northumberland’s Declaration — The Jury — Condemnation of Norris — The Queen and her Brother before the Peers — Anne’s Dignity — Effect Produced in the City — Sentence of Death — Anne’s Farewell Address to the Peers — Lord Rocheford condemned — The Four Gentlemen Beheaded — Henry Annuls his Marriage with Anne — Joy and Hope of the Pope — Anne’s Self-Reprieve — Asks Pardon of Princess Mary — Anne’s Communion — Miracles of the Priests — Anne’s Last Message to Henry — Preparations upon the Tower Green — A Noble Pardon — Emotion Caused by that Christian Act — Death of Anne — Her Memory — The Royal Hunting Party — Henry Marries Jane Seymour — Effect of Anne’s Death on the Continent — What Share had Rome in it?

CHAPTER 11

Catholicism versus Protestantism

Summer, 1536

Position of the Two Parties — The Pope Desires to Unite with England — Two Men in Henry VIII — Pole Determines to write to the King — Priests are Fathers, Kings are Sons — Henry Rules like the Turk — Pole Has Orders to Curse Henry — Sentiments of the King — Mary Pays Dear for her Reconciliation with the King — Ratification of Parliament — Order to Renounce the Pope — Language of the Worldlings and the Christians — Convocation of the Clergy — Latimer’s Reforming Sermon — Necessity of the Reformation — The Lay Element Reappears — The Clergy Denounce Sixty-Seven Mala Dogmata — The Prolocutor’s Charge before the Bishops — The Two Armies Front to Front — A Scotsman in the Convocation — What Cranmer Thought Essential — Fox Extols the Reformation — The Word of God the Source of Life — Alesius Is Excluded — Necessity of a Convocation
CHAPTER 12

Henry Enforces "Catholicism minus the Pope"
Autumn, 1536

Henry Plays the Part of a Pope — Dogmas of the New Head of the Church — Articles about Religion — Baptism, Presence, Penance, Images, Prayers to Saints, Ceremonies, Purgatory — Different Opinions — The Articles Accepted — Cranmer’s Precautions to Prevent Mischief — Cromwell Vicegerent — Coverdale’s Bible — Evangelical Reaction — Various Testimonies — Persecutions — The Foundations of Faith

CHAPTER 13

The Pilgrimage of Grace
October, 1536

Agitation in the Northern Counties — Ferment throughout the Country — Revolt in Lincolnshire — Twenty Thousand Insurgents — The King’s Threats — The Pilgrimage of Grace — Sermon of Latimer — Aske’s Address — The Nobility — The Earl of Northumberland — Henry’s Alarm — Panic in London — Brutality of the Rebels — The Lancaster Herald before the Rebel Chiefs — The Insurgent Army Marches on London — The Royal Proclamation — Propositions of the Rebels — They Disperse — Subsequent Revolts and Repressions

CHAPTER 14

The Martyrdom of Tyndale
1535 to October, 1536

Tyndale’s Characteristic — Imprisonment at Vilvorde — His Labors — Rogers Comes to his Help — Tyndale’s Legacy — The Bible About to Appear — A Light that Shines before Men — Intercession with the King on Behalf of Tyndale — Activity of Poyntz to save him — Poyntz Attacked by Philips — Tyndale’s Firmness — All Things Combine against Tyndale — His Great Offense — Tyndale’s Words — Tyndale Degraded — Led to Punishment — He Dies Praying for the King — Petition for the Circulation of the Whole Bible — The King Consents — Consequences of the Act — How the Bible was Received — Inward Power of Scripture
BOOK THREE
Reformation, Reaction, Relief

CHAPTER 1
Three Parties Divide England
1536-1540

Birth of Edward VI — Death of the Queen — A New Wife Sought by the King — Relations of Henry VIII with the Swiss — English Students in Switzerland — A Letter to Calvin — Works of Swiss Theologians — The King’s Opinions on these Works — Reginald Pole — Made Cardinal — Legate beyond the Alps — Anger of Henry VIII — Pole in France and Belgium — Failure of his Mission — His Return to Rome — German Divines in England — Protracted Discussions — Ill Will of Some of the Bishops — Fruitless Attempts at Conciliation — Departure of the German Doctors — Melanchthon’s Letter to Henry VIII

CHAPTER 2
An “Appeal to Caesar” and its Outcome
1538

Gardiner — His Return to England — Instigation to Persecution — Sampson, Bishop of Chichester — A Conspiracy against the Reformation — A Return to Old Usages — The Minister John Lambert — His Treatise on the Lord’s Supper — His Appeal to the King — Appearance before the King — Examination — His Confession of Evangelical Doctrine — His Resolute Declaration on the Sacrament — Cranmer’s Answer — The King’s Anger — Lambert Condemned to Be Burnt — His Execution — Flatteries Addressed to the King

CHAPTER 3
The "Whip of Six Strings"
1538-1540

Negotiations for the King’s Marriage — Their Failure — Printing of the Bible at Paris — The Printing Stopped — Completion of the Work in London — Divisions — Attempted Compromise — Its Failure — The King’s Fears — The Six Articles — Cranmer’s Opposition — Latimer’s Resignation of his See — The King’s Advances to Cranmer, Cromwell, and Norfolk — Cranmer’s Time-Serving — Five Hundred Sent to Prison — Feeling in Germany — The Articles Condemned at Wittenberg and Geneva — Melanchthon’s Letter to the King of England — The King Appeased — Puerile Games

CHAPTER 4
A Bitter Cup for Henry VIII
1539-1540

Anne of Cleves — Praises Uttered of Her — Her Simple Character — Her Arrival in England — The King’s Disappointment — His Desire to Get Rid of Her — His Fear to Break Off the Engagement — The Marriage Celebrated at Greenwich — Henry’s Complaint to Charles V — Ill Will of Charles — The King’s Distrust — Preaching of the Gospel Ordered by Cromwell — Gardiner’s Sermon — Barnes’s Sermon — His Boldness — His Imprisonment — Numerous Editions of the Bible

CHAPTER 5
The Disgrace and Death of Thomas Cromwell
1540

Cromwell Threatened — Loaded with Honors by the King — The King’s Intention — The King’s Letter to Cromwell — Arrest of Cromwell — Foolish Charges — The Real Motive of the Blow — Cromwell Abandoned by All his Friends — Defended by Cranmer Alone — Cranmer’s Letter to the King — The Bill of Attainder — Heresy — The Accuser — No Trial — The Examination — The Bill Carried in Both Houses — Condemnation — Cromwell’s Letter to the King — The King’s Hesitation — Catherine Howard — The Queen Sent Away — Cromwell on the Scaffold — His Profession of Faith — His Confession and Prayer — His Death — His Character

CHAPTER 6
The Divorce of Anne of Cleves
1540

Singular Impartiality — A Procession of Martyrs, Three Evangelists, Three Papists — Preparations for Divorce of the Queen — A Shameful Comedy — The King’s Hypocrisy — Convocation of the Clergy — The Marriage Declared Void — The Divorce Accepted by Anne of Cleves

CHAPTER 7

Catherine Howard, the Fifth Queen
1540

Marriage of the King with Catherine Howard — His Return to Catholicism — Royal Infallibility — Catholic Reaction — Bonner, Bishop of London — A Young Martyr — The Prisons Filled — The King Praised by Francis I — Martyrdom of a Reader of the Bible — Conspiracy against Cranmer — The Archbishop’s Firmness — Charges against Him — Cranmer before the Privy-Council — The King’s Ring — Cranmer’s Enemies Confounded — The King’s Love for the Queen — Terrible Revelations — Guilt of the Queen — Cranmer’s Visit to her — Frenzy of the Queen — Cranmer’s Emotion — Condemnations and Executions — The Queen Executed — Her Guilt undoubted — Convocation of the Clergy — A Sharp Blow Struck at Convocation by Cranmer — Remarkable Progress of the Reformation

CHAPTER 8

Cranmer Pursues his Task
1542

Richard Hilles, a London Merchant — His Studies and Readings — Cranmer’s Cautious Promotion of the Reformation — Amendment in Doctrine — Catherine Parr — Her Character — Another Plot against Cranmer — His Forgiveness of his Enemies — Several Martyrs — Marbeck’s English Concordance — Henry’s Complaints against France — His Alliance with Charles V — War with France — Sympathies of the Italians — Persecutors Punished

CHAPTER 9

The Last Martyrs of Henry’s Reign
1545
Session of Parliament — The King’s Speech — The Rod and the Royal
Schoolmaster — Anne Askew — Her Trial — Examinations — Her Release — Again
Imprisoned — Her Steadfastness — Her Discretion — In Prison — Condemned to
be Burnt — A Royal Proclamation — Anne Askew Tortured by the Lord
Chancellor — Led to Execution — Death of the Martyrs — Approaching Triumph
of their Doctrines

CHAPTER 10

Death Casts its Shadow over Catherine Parr
1546

The Queen’s Piety — Her Rash Zeal — Conversations with the King — The King
Offended — Conspiracy of the Catholic Leaders — The King’s Distrust — A
Prosecution Ordered — The Bill of Indictment — The Queen Unsuspecting — The
Indictment in her Hands — Her Distress — Her Interview with the King — Her
Declaration — Rescue — Astonishment of her Enemies — Her Forgiveness of
Them

CHAPTER 11

The Last Days of Henry VIII
1546 to January, 1547

Disgrace of Gardiner — Two Parties at the Court — The Howard’s and the
Seymour’s — Ambition of the Howard’s — Proceedings against Norfolk and
Surrey — The King’s Impatience — Searches — A Divided House — Execution of
Surrey — Humble Appeal of Norfolk — Inflexibility of the King — Last Hours of
the King — His Death — His Will — Henry VIII to Be condemned as a Man, a King,
and a Christian

The End of Volume Two
Volume 2  Book 1

England Begins to Cast off the Papacy

CHAPTER 1  The Nation and its Parties  
CHAPTER 2  Parliament and its Grievances  
CHAPTER 3  Early Reforms  
CHAPTER 4  Anne Boleyn’s Father Meets the Emperor and the Pope  
CHAPTER 5  Oxford and Cambridge Debate the Divorce  
CHAPTER 6  Henry Appeals to Foreign Opinion  
CHAPTER 7  Latimer at Court  
CHAPTER 8  The King Seeks Tyndale  
CHAPTER 9  The King of England—"Head of the Church"  
CHAPTER 10  The King Puts Catherine Away  
CHAPTER 11  "Not Sparing the Flock"  
CHAPTER 12  The Martyrs  
CHAPTER 13  The King Despoils the Pope and Clergy  
CHAPTER 14  Liberty of Inquiry and Preaching  
CHAPTER 15  Henry VIII Attacks Romanists and Protestants  
CHAPTER 16  The New Primate of All England  
CHAPTER 17  Anne Boleyn Ascends the Throne  
CHAPTER 18  Fryth in the Tower  
CHAPTER 19  A Reformer Chooses Rather to Lose His Life than Save it  
CHAPTER 20  The Isolation of England  
CHAPTER 21  Parliament Abolishes Papal Usurpations in England
CHAPTER 1

The Nation and its Parties

Autumn, 1529

England, during the period of which we are about to treat, began to separate from the pope and to reform her Church. The fall of Wolsey divides the old times from the new.

The level of the laity was gradually rising. A certain amount of instruction was given to the children of the poor; the universities were frequented by the upper classes, and the king was probably the most learned prince in Christendom. At the same time the clerical level was falling. The clergy had been weakened and corrupted by its triumphs, and the English, awakening with the age and opening their eyes at last, were disgusted with the pride, ignorance, and disorders of the priests.

While France, flattered by Rome calling her its eldest daughter, desired even when reforming her doctrine to preserve union with the papacy, the Anglo-Saxon race, jealous of their liberties, desired to form a Church at once national and independent, yet remaining faithful to the doctrines of Catholicism. Henry VIII is the personification of that tendency, which did not disappear with him, and of which it would not be difficult to discover traces even in later days.

Other elements calculated to produce a better reformation existed at that time in England. The Holy Scriptures, translated, studied, circulated, and preached since the fourteenth century by Wycliffe and his disciples, became in the sixteenth century, by the publication of Erasmus’ Testament and the translations of Tyndale and Coverdale, the powerful instrument of a real evangelical revival, and created the scriptural reformation.

These early developments did not proceed from Calvin; he was too young at that time; but Tyndale, Fryth, Latimer, and the other evangelists of the reign of Henry VIII, taught by the same Word as the reformer of Geneva, were his brethren and his precursors. Somewhat later, his books and his letters to Edward VI, to the regent, to the primate, to Sir William Cecil and others, exercised an indisputable influence over the reformation of England. We find in those letters proofs of the esteem which the most intelligent persons of the kingdom felt for that simple and strong man, whom even non-protestant voices in France have declared to be "the greatest Christian of his age."
A religious reformation may be of two kinds—internal or evangelical, external or legal. The evangelical reformation began at Oxford and Cambridge almost at the same time as in Germany. The legal reformation was making a beginning at Westminster and Whitehall. Students, priests, and laymen, moved by inspiration from on high, had inaugurated the first; Henry VIII and his parliament were about to inaugurate the second, with hands occasionally somewhat rough. England began with the spiritual reformation, but the other had its motives too. Those who are charmed by the reformation of Germany sometimes affect contempt for that of England. "A king impelled by his passions was its author," they say. We have placed the scriptural part of this great transformation in the first rank; but we confess that for it to lay hold upon the people in the sixteenth century, it was necessary, as the prophet declared, that kings should be its nursing-fathers, and queens its nursing-mothers. If diverse reforms were necessary, if by the side of German cordiality, Swiss simplicity, and other characteristics, God willed to found a protestantism possessing a strong hand and an outstretched arm; if a nation was to exist which with great freedom and power should carry the Gospel to the ends of the world, special tools were required to form that robust organization, and the leaders of the people—the commons, lords, and king—were each to play their part. France had nothing like this—both princes and parliaments opposed the reform; and thence partly arises the difference between those two great nations, for France had in Calvin a mightier reformer than any of those whom England possessed. But let us not forget that we are speaking of the sixteenth century. Since then the work has advanced; important changes have been wrought in Christendom; political society is growing daily more distinct from religious society, and more independent; and we willingly say with Pascal, "Glorious is the state of the Church when it is supported by God alone!"

Two opposing elements—the reforming liberalism of the people, and the almost absolute power of the king—combined in England to accomplish the legal reformation. In that singular island these two rival forces were often seen acting together; the liberalism of the nation gaining certain victories, the despotism of the prince gaining others; king and people agreeing to make mutual concessions. In the midst of these compromises, the little evangelical flock, which had no voice in such matters, religiously preserved the treasure entrusted to it—the Word of God, truth, liberty, and Christian virtue. From all these elements sprang the Church of England. A strange Church some call it. Strange indeed, for there is none which corresponds so imperfectly in theory with the ideal of the Church, and, perhaps, none whose members work out with more power and grandeur the ends for which Christ has formed His kingdom.

Scarcely had Henry VIII refused to go to Rome to plead his cause, when he issued writs for a new parliament (25th September, 1529). Wolsey's unpopularity had hitherto prevented its meeting; now the force of circumstances constrained the king to summon it. When he was on the eve of
separating from the pope, he felt the necessity of leaning on the people. Liberty is always the gainer where a country performs an act of independence with regard to Rome. It was natural that in England, possessing as it did from of old time a body of elected representatives, the king should seek the nation’s cooperation in the work of reform, and certainly the house of commons gained power and prestige during this period. At the same time, the whole kingdom being astir, the different parties became more distinct.

The papal party was alarmed. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, already very uneasy, became disturbed at seeing laymen called upon to give their advice on religious matters. Men’s minds were in a ferment in the bishop’s palace, the rural parsonage, and the monk’s cell. The partisans of Rome met and consulted about what was to be done, and retired from their conferences foreseeing and imagining nothing but defeat. Du Bellay, at that time bishop of Bayonne, and afterwards of Paris, envoy from the King of France, and eyewitness of all this agitation, wrote to Montmorency (Grand-master of France), "I fancy that in this parliament the priests will have a terrible fright." Ambitious ecclesiastics were beginning to understand that the clerical character, hitherto so favorable to their advancement in a political career, would now be an obstacle to them. "Alas!" exclaimed one of them, "we must off with our frocks."

Such of the clergy, however, as determined to remain faithful to Rome gradually roused themselves. A prelate put himself at their head. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, was learned, intelligent, bold, and slightly fanatical; but his convictions were sincere, and he was determined to sacrifice everything for the maintenance of Roman Catholicism in England. Though discontented with the path upon which his august pupil King Henry had entered, he did not despair of the future, and candidly applied to the papacy our Savior’s words: *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

A recent act of the king’s increased Fisher’s hopes; Sir Thomas More had been appointed chancellor. The Bishop of Rochester regretted indeed that the king had not given that office to an ecclesiastic, as was customary; but he thought to himself that a layman wholly devoted to the Church, as the new chancellor was, might possibly in those strange times be more useful to it than a priest. With Fisher in the Church, and More in the State (for Sir Thomas, in spite of his gentle *Utopia*, was more papistical and more violent than Wolsey), had the papacy anything to fear? The whole Romish party rallied round these two men, and with them prepared to fight against the Reformation.

Opposed to this hierarchical party was the political party, in whose eyes the king’s will was the supreme rule. The dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, president and vice-president of the Council, Sir William Fitzwilliam, Comptroller of the Household, and those who agreed with them, were opposed to the ecclesiastical domination, not from the love of true religion, but because they believed the prerogatives of the State were endangered by the ambition of the
priests, or else because, seeking honor and power for themselves, they were impatient at always encountering insatiable clerics on their path.

Between these two parties a third appeared, on whom the bishops and nobles looked with disdain, but with whom the victory was to rest at last. In the towns and villages of England, and especially in London, were to be found many lowly men, animated with a new life—poor artisans, weavers, cobbler, painters, shopkeepers—who believed in the Word of God and had received moral liberty from it. During the day they toiled at their respective occupations; but at night they stole along some narrow lane, slipped into a court, and ascended to some upper room in which other persons had already assembled. There they read the Scriptures and prayed. At times even during the day, they might be seen carrying to well-disposed citizens certain books strictly prohibited by the late cardinal. Organized under the name of “The Society of Christian Brethren,” they had a central committee in London and missionaries everywhere, who distributed the Holy Scriptures and explained their lessons in simple language. Several priests, both in the city and country, belonged to their society.

This Christian brotherhood exercised a powerful influence over the people, and was beginning to substitute the spiritual and life-giving principles of the Gospel for the legal and theocratic ideas of popery. These pious men required a moral regeneration in their hearers, and entreated them to enter, through faith in the Savior, into an intimate relation with God, without having recourse to the mediation of the clergy; and many of those who listened to them, enraptured at hearing of truth, grace, morality, liberty, and of the Word of God, took the teachings to heart. Thus began a new era. It has been asserted that the Reformation entered England by a back door. Not so; it was the true door these missionaries opened, having even prior to the rupture with Rome preached the doctrine of Christ. Idly do men speak of Henry’s passions, the intrigues of his courtiers, the parade of his ambassadors, the skill of his ministers, the complaisance of the clergy, and the vacillations of parliament; we too shall speak of these things; but above them all there was something else, something better—the thirst exhibited in this island for the Word of God, and the internal transformation accomplished in the convictions of a great number of its inhabitants. This it was that worked such a powerful revolution in English society.

In the interval between the issuing of the writs and the meeting of parliament, the most antagonistic opinions came out. Conversation everywhere turned on present and future events, and there was a general feeling that the country was on the eve of great changes. The members of parliament who arrived in London gathered round the same table to discuss the questions of the day. The great lords gave sumptuous banquets, at which the guests talked about the abuses of the Church, of the approaching session of parliament, and of what might result from it. One would mention some striking instance of the avarice of the priests; another slyly called to mind the strange privilege which
permitted them to commit with impunity certain sins which they punished severely in others. "There are, even in London, houses of ill fame for the use of priests, monks, and canons." "And," added others, "they would force us to take such men as these for our guides to heaven." Du Bellay, the French ambassador, a man of letters, who, although a bishop, had attached Rabelais to his person in the capacity of secretary, was frequently invited to parties given by the great lords. He lent an attentive ear, and was astonished at the witty and often very biting remarks uttered by the guests against the disorders of the priests. One day a voice exclaimed, "Since Wolsey has fallen, we must forthwith regulate the condition of the Church and of its ministers. We will seize their property." Du Bellay on his return home did not fail to communicate these things to Montmorency. "I have no need," he says, "to write this strange language in cipher, for the noble lords utter it at open table. I think they will do something to be talked about."

The leading members of the commons held more serious meetings with one another. They said they had spoken enough, and that now they must act. They specified the abuses they would claim to have redressed, and prepared petitions for reform to be presented to the king.

Before long the movement descended from the sphere of the nobility to that of the people—a sphere always important, and particularly when a social revolution is in progress. Petty tradesmen and artisans spoke more energetically than the lords. They did more than speak. The apparitor of the Bishop of London, having entered the shop of a mercer in the ward of St. Bride and left a summons on the counter calling upon him to pay a certain clerical tax, the indignant tradesman took up his yard-measure, whereupon the officer drew his sword, and then, either from fear or an evil conscience, ran away. The mercer followed him, assaulted him in the street, and broke his head. The London shopkeepers did not yet quite understand the representative system; they used their staves when they should have waited for the speeches of the members of parliament.

The king tolerated this agitation because it forwarded his purposes. There were advisers who insinuated that it was dangerous to give free course to the passions of the people; and that the English, combining great physical strength with a decided character, might go too far in the way of reform, if their prince gave them the rein. But Henry VIII, possessing an energetic will, thought it would be easy for him to check the popular ebullition whenever he pleased. When Jupiter frowned, all Olympus trembled.

CHAPTER 2
Parliament and its Grievances
November, 1529

On the morning of the 3rd of November, Henry went in his barge to the palace of Bridewell; and, having put on the magnificent robes employed on great ceremonies, and followed by the lords of his train, he proceeded to the Blackfriars church, in which the members of the new parliament had assembled. After hearing the mass of the Holy Ghost, king, lords, and commons met in parliament, when, as soon as the king had taken his seat on the throne, the new chancellor, sir Thomas More, explained the reason of their being summoned. Thomas Audley, chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, was appointed Speaker of the lower house.

Generally speaking, parliament confined itself to passing the resolutions of the government. The Great Charter had, indeed, been long in existence, but until now it had been little more than a dead letter. The Reformation gave it life. "Christ brings us out of bondage into liberty by means of the Gospel," said Calvin. This emancipation, which was essentially spiritual, soon extended to other spheres, and gave an impulse to liberty throughout all Christendom. Even in England such an impulse was needed. Under the Plantagenets and the Tudors the constitutional machine existed, but it worked only as it was directed by the strong hand of the master. Without the Reformation, England might have slumbered long.

The impulse given by religious truth to the latent liberties of the people was felt for the first time in the parliament of 1529. The representatives shared the lively feelings of their constituents, and took their seats with the firm resolve to introduce the necessary reforms in the affairs of both Church and State. Indeed, on the very first day several members pointed out the abuses of the clerical domination, and proposed to lay the desires of the people before the king.

The Commons might of their own accord have applied to the task, and by proposing rash changes have given the Reform a character of violence that might have worked confusion in the State, but they preferred petitioning the king to take the necessary measures to carry out the wishes of the nation; and accordingly a petition respectfully worded, but in clear and strong language, was agreed to. The Reformation began in England, as in Switzerland and in Germany, with personal conversions. The individual was reformed first, but it was necessary for the people to reform afterwards, and the measures requisite to success could not be taken in the sixteenth century without the participation of the governing powers. Freely therefore and nobly a whole nation was about to express to their ruler their grievances and wishes.
On one of the first days of the session, the Speaker and certain members who had been ordered to accompany him proceeded to the palace. "Your Highness," they began, "of late, much discord, variance, and debate hath arisen and more and more daily is likely to increase and ensue amongst your subjects, to the great inquietation, vexation, and breach of your peace, of which the chief causes followingly do ensue."

This opening could not fail to excite the king’s attention, and the Speaker of the House of Commons began boldly to unroll the long list of the grievances of England. "First, the prelates of your most excellent realm, and the clergy of the same, have in their convocations made many and divers laws without your most royal assent, and without the assent of any of your lay subjects.

"And also many of your said subjects, and specially those that be of the poorest sort, be daily called before the said spiritual ordinaries or their commissaries, on the accusement of light and indiscreet persons, and be excommunicated and put to excessive and impostable charges.

"The prelates suffer the priests to exact divers sums of money for the sacraments, and sometimes deny the same without the money be first paid.

"Also the said spiritual ordinaries do daily confer and give sundry benefices unto certain young folks, calling them their nephews or kinsfolk, being in their minority and within age, not apt nor able to serve the cure of any such benefice... whereby the said ordinaries accumulate to themselves large sums of money, and the poor silly souls of your people perish without doctrine or any good teaching.

"Also a great number of holydays be kept throughout this your realm, upon the which many great, abominable, and execrable vices, idle and wanton sports, be used, which holydays might by your Majesty be made fewer in number.

"And also the said spiritual ordinaries commit divers of your subjects to ward, before they know either the cause of their imprisonment or the name of their accuser."

Thus far the Commons had confined themselves to questions that had been discussed more than once; they feared to touch upon the subject of heresy before the Defender of the [Roman] Faith. But there were evangelical men among their number who had been eyewitnesses of the sufferings of the reformed. At the peril, therefore, of offending the king, the Speaker boldly took up the defense of the pretended heretics.

"If heresy be ordinarily laid unto the charge of the person accused, the said ordinaries put to them such subtle interrogatories concerning the high mysteries of our faith, as are able quickly to trap a simple unlearned layman."
And if any heresy be so confessed in word, yet never committed in thought or deed, they put the said person to make his purgation. And if the party so accused deny the accusation, witnesses of little truth or credence are brought forth for the same, and deliver the party so accused to secular hands."

The Speaker was not satisfied with merely pointing out the disease: "We most humbly beseech your Grace, in whom the only remedy resteth, of your goodness to consent, so that besides the fervent love your Highness shall thereby engender in the hearts of all your Commons towards your Grace, ye shall do the most princely feat, and show the most charitable precedent that ever did sovereign lord upon his subjects."

The king listened to the petition with his characteristic dignity, and also with a certain kindliness. He recognized the just demands in the petition of the Commons, and saw how far they would support the religious independence to which he aspired. Still, unwilling to take the part of heresy, he selected only the most crying abuses, and desired his faithful Commons to take their correction upon themselves. He then sent the petition to the bishops, requiring them to answer the charges brought against them, and added that henceforward his consent would be necessary to give the force of law to the acts of Convocation.

This royal communication was a thunderbolt to the prelates. What! the bishops, the successors of the apostles, accused by the representatives of the nation, and requested by the king to justify themselves like criminals! ... Had the Commons of England forgotten what a priest was? These proud ecclesiastics thought only of the indelible virtues which, in their view, ordination had conferred upon them, and shut their eyes to the vices of their fallible human nature. We can understand their emotion, their embarrassment, and their anger. The Reformation which had made the tour of the Continent was at the gates of England; the king was knocking at their doors. What was to be done? They could not tell. They assembled and read the petition again and again. The Archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops of London, Lincoln, St. Asaph, and Rochester carped at it and replied to it. They would willingly have thrown it into the fire—the best of answers in their opinion—but the king was waiting, and the Archbishop of Canterbury was commissioned to enlighten him.

Warham did not belong to the most fanatical party; he was a prudent man, and the wish for reform had hardly taken shape in England when, being uneasy and timid, he had hastened to give a certain satisfaction to his flock by reforming abuses which he had sanctioned for thirty years. But he was a priest, a Romish priest; he represented an inflexible hierarchy. Strengthened by the clamors of his colleagues, he resolved to utter the famous non possumus, less powerful, however, in England than in Rome.
"Sire," he said, "your Majesty’s Commons reproach us with uncharitable behavior. ... On the contrary, we love them with hearty affection, and have only exercised the spiritual jurisdiction of the Church upon persons infected with the pestilent poison of heresy. To have peace with such had been against the Gospel of our Savior Christ, wherein he saith, *I came not to send peace, but a sword.*

"Your Grace’s Commons complain that the clergy daily do make laws repugnant to the statutes of your realm. We take our authority from the Scriptures of God, and shall always diligently apply to conform our statutes thereto; and we pray that your Highness will, with the assent of your people, temper your Grace’s laws accordingly, whereby shall ensue a most sure and hearty conjunction and agreement.

"They accuse us of committing to prison before conviction such as be suspected of heresy. ... Truth it is that certain apostates, friars, monks, lewd priests, bankrupt merchants, vagabonds, and idle fellows of corrupt intent have embraced the abominable opinions lately sprung up in Germany; and by them some have been seduced in simplicity and ignorance. Against these, if judgment has been exercised according to the laws of the Church, we be without blame.

"They complain that two witnesses be admitted, be they never so defamed, to vex and trouble your subjects to the peril of their lives, shames, costs, and expenses. ... To this we reply, the judge must esteem the quality of the witness, but in heresy no exception is necessary to be considered, if their tale be likely. This is the universal law of Christendom, and hath universally done good.

"They say that we give benefices to our nephews and kinsfolk, being in young age or infants, and that we take the profit of such benefices for the time of the minority of our said kinsfolk. If it be done to our own use and profit, it is not well; but if it be bestowed to the bringing up and use of the same parties, or applied to the maintenance of God’s service, we do not see but that it may be allowed."

As for the irregular lives of the priests, the prelates remarked that they were condemned by the laws of the Church, and consequently there was nothing to be said on that point.

Lastly, the bishops seized the opportunity of taking the offensive: "We entreat your Grace to repress heresy. This we beg of you, lowly upon our knees, so entirely as we can."

Such was the brief of Roman Catholicism in England. Its defense would have sufficed to condemn it.
The answer of the bishops was criticized in the royal residence, in the House of Commons, at the meetings of the burgesses, in the streets of the capital, and in the provinces, everywhere exciting a lively indignation. "What!" said they, "the bishops accuse the most pious and active Christians of England—men like Bilney, Fryth, Tyndale, and Latimer—of that idleness and irregularity of which their monks and priests are continually showing us examples. To no purpose have the Commons indisputably proved their grievances, if the bishops reply to notorious facts by putting forward their scholastic system. We condemn their practice, and they take shelter behind their theories, as if the reproach laid against them was not precisely that their lives are in opposition to their laws. ‘The fault is not in the Church,’ they say. But it is its ministers that we accuse."

The indignant parliament boldly took up the axe, attacked the tree, and cut off the withered and rotten branches. One bill followed another, irritating the clergy, but filling the people with joy. When the legacy dues were under discussion, one of the members drew a touching picture of the avarice and cruelty of the priests. "They have no compassion," he said, "the children of the dead should all die of hunger and go begging, rather than they would of charity give to them the silly cow which the dead man owed, if he had only one." There was a movement of indignation in the house, and they forbade the clergy to take any mortuary fees when the effects were small.

"And that is not all," said another, "the clergy monopolize large tracts of land, and the poor are compelled to pay an extravagant price for whatever they buy. They are everything in the world but preachers of God’s Word and shepherds of souls. They buy and sell wool, cloth, and other merchandise; they keep tanneries and breweries. ... How can they attend to their spiritual duties in the midst of such occupations?" The clergy were consequently prohibited from holding large estates or carrying on the business of merchant, tanner, brewer, etc. At the same time, plurality of benefices (some ignorant priests holding as many as ten or twelve) was forbidden, and residence was enforced. The Commons further enacted that anyone seeking a dispensation for non-residence (even were the application made to the pope himself) should be liable to a heavy fine.
The clergy saw at last that they must reform. They forbade priests from keeping shops and taverns, playing at dice or other games of chance, passing through towns and villages with hawks and hounds, being present at unbecoming entertainments, and spending the night in suspected houses. Convocation proceeded to enact severe penalties against these disorders, doubling them for adultery, and tripling them for incest. The laity asked how it was that the Church had waited so long before coming to this resolution, and whether these scandals had become criminal only because the Commons condemned them?

But the bishops who reformed the lower clergy did not intend to resign their own privileges. One day when a bill relating to wills was laid before the upper house, the Archbishop of Canterbury and all the other prelates frowned, murmured, and looked uneasily around them. They exclaimed that the Commons were heretics and schismatics, and almost called them infidels and atheists. In all places, good men required that morality should again be united with religion, and that piety should not be made to consist merely in certain ceremonies, but in the awakening of the conscience, a lively faith, and holy conduct. The bishops, not discerning that God’s work was then being accomplished in the world, determined to maintain the ancient order of things at all risks.

Their efforts had some chance of success, for the House of Lords was essentially conservative. The Bishop of Rochester, a sincere but narrow-minded man, presuming on the respect inspired by his age and character, boldly came forward as the defender of the Church. "My lords," he said, "these bills have no other object than the destruction of the Church, and if the Church goes down, all the glory of the kingdom will fall with it. Remember what happened to the Bohemians. Like them, our Commons cry out, ‘Down with the Church!’ Whence cometh that cry? Simply from lack of faith. ... My lords, save the country, save the Church."

This speech made the Commons very indignant; some members thought the bishop denied that they were Christians. They sent thirty of their leading men to the king. "Sire," said the Speaker, "it is an attainit upon the honor of your Majesty to calumniate before the upper house those whom your subjects have elected. They are accused of lack of faith, that is to say, they are no better than Turks, Saracens, and heathens. Be pleased to call before you the bishop who has insulted your Commons."

The king made a gracious reply, and immediately sent one of his officers to invite the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Rochester, and six other prelates to appear before him. They came, quite uneasy as to what the prince might have to say to them. They knew that, like all the Plantagenets, Henry VIII would not suffer his clergy to resist him. Immediately the king informed them of the complaint made by the Commons; their hearts sank and they lost
courage. They thought only how to escape the prince’s anger, and the most
evered among them, Fisher, asserted that when speaking about "lack of
faith," he had not thought of the Commons of England, but of the Bohemians
only. The other prelates confirmed this inadmissible interpretation. This was a
graver fault than the fault itself, and the unbecoming evasion was a defeat to
the clerical party from which they never recovered. The king allowed the
excuse, but he afterwards made the bishops feel the little esteem he
entertained for them. As for the House of Commons, it loudly expressed the
disdain aroused in them by the bishop’s subterfuge.

One chance of safety still remained to them. Mixed committees of the two
houses examined the resolutions of the Commons. The peers, especially the
ecclesiastical peers, opposed the reform by appealing to usage. "Usage!"
ironically observed a Gray’s Inn lawyer, “the usage hath ever been of thieves to
rob on Shooter’s Hill, ergo it is lawful and ought to be kept up!” This remark
sorely irritated the prelates: “What! our acts are compared to robberies!” But
the lawyer, addressing the Archbishop of Canterbury, seriously endeavored to
prove to him that the exactions of the clergy in the matter of probates and
mortuaries were open robbery. The temporal lords gradually adopted the
opinions of the Commons.

In the midst of these debates, the king did not lose sight of his own interests.
Six years before, he had raised a loan among his subjects; he thought
parliament ought to relieve him of this debt. This demand was opposed by the
members most devoted to the principle of the Reformation; John Petit, in
particular, the friend of Bilney and Tyndale, said in parliament, "I give the king
all I lent him, but I cannot give him what others have lent him." Henry was not
however discouraged, and finally obtained the act required.

The king soon showed that he was pleased with the Commons. Two bills met
with a stern opposition from the Lords; they were those abolishing pluralism
and non-residence. These two customs were so convenient and advantageous
that the clergy determined not to give them up. Henry, seeing that the two
houses would never agree, resolved to cut the difficulty. At his desire eight
members from each met one afternoon in the Star Chamber. There was an
animated discussion; but the lay lords, who were in the conference, taking part
with the Commons, the bishops were forced to yield. The two bills passed the
Lords the next day, and received the king’s assent. After this triumph the king
adjourned parliament in the middle of December.

The different reforms that had been carried through were important, but they
were not the Reformation. Many abuses were corrected, but the doctrines
remained unaltered; the power of the clergy was restricted, but the authority
of Christ was not increased; the dry branches of the tree had been lopped off,
but a scion calculated to bear good fruit had not been grafted on the wild
stock. Had matters stopped here, England might perhaps have obtained a
Church with morals less repulsive, but not with a holy doctrine and a new life. But the Reformation was not contented with more decorous forms; it required a second creation.

At the same time, parliament had taken a great stride towards the revolution that was to transform the Church. A new power had taken its place in the world; the laity had triumphed over the clergy. No doubt there were upright catholics who gave their assent to the laws passed in 1529, but these laws were nevertheless a product of the Reformation. This it was that had inspired the laity with that new energy, parliament with that bold action, and given the liberties of the nation that impulse which they had lacked hitherto. The joy was great throughout the kingdom; and while the king removed to Greenwich to keep Christmas there "with great plenty of viands, and disguisings and interludes," the members of the Commons were welcomed in the towns and villages with great rejoicing. In the people’s eyes their representatives were like soldiers who had just gained a brilliant victory. The clergy, alone in all England, were downcast and exasperated. On returning to their residences, the bishops could not conceal their anguish at the danger to the Church. The priests, who had been the first victims offered up on the altar of reform, bent their heads. But if the clergy foresaw days of mourning, the laity hailed with joy the glorious era of the liberties of the people, and of the greatness of England. The friends of the Reformation went further still; they believed that the Gospel would work a complete change in the world, and talked, as Tyndale informs us, "as though the golden age would come again."

CHAPTER 4

Anne Boleyn’s Father Meets the Emperor and the Pope
Winter, 1530

Before such glorious hopes could be realized, it was necessary to emancipate Great Britain from the yoke of Romish supremacy. This was the end to which all generous minds aspired, but would the king assist them?

Henry VIII united strength of body with strength of will; both were marked on his manly form. Lively, active, eager, vehement, impatient, and voluptuous—whatever he was, he was with his whole soul. He was at first all heart for the Church of Rome; he went barefoot on pilgrimages, wrote against Luther, and flattered the pope. But before long he grew tired of Rome without desiring the Reformation; profoundly selfish, he cared for himself alone. If the papal domination offended him, evangelical liberty annoyed him. He meant to remain master in his own house, the only master, and master of all. Even
without the divorce, Henry would possibly have separated from Rome. Rather than endure any contradiction, he put to death friends and enemies, bishops and missionaries, ministers of state and favorites—even his wives. Such was the prince whom the Reformation found king of England.

History would be unjust, however, were it to maintain that passion alone urged him to action. The question of the succession to the throne had for a century filled the country with confusion and blood. This Henry could not forget. Would the struggles of the Two Roses be renewed after his death, occasioning perhaps the destruction of an ancient monarchy? If Mary, a princess of delicate health, should die, Scotland, France, the party of the White Rose, the Duke of Suffolk, whose wife was Henry’s sister, might drag the kingdom into endless wars. And even if Mary’s days were prolonged, her title to the crown might be disputed, no female sovereign having as yet sat upon the throne. Another train of ideas also occupied the king’s mind. He enquired sincerely whether his marriage with the widow of his brother was lawful. Even before its consummation, as we have seen, he had felt doubts about it. But even his defenders, if there are any, must acknowledge that one circumstance contributed at this time to give unusual force to these scruples—his love for Anne Boleyn.

Catholic writers imagine that this guilty motive was the only one; it is a mistake, for the two former indisputably occupied Henry’s mind. As for parliament and people, the king’s love for Anne Boleyn affected them very little; it was the reason of state which made them regard the divorce as just and necessary.

A congress was at that time sitting at Bologna with great pomp. On the 5th of November, 1530, Charles V, having arrived from Spain, had entered the city, attended by a magnificent suite, and followed by 20,000 soldiers. He was covered with gold, and shone with grace and majesty. The pope waited for him in front of the church of San Petronio, seated on a throne and wearing the triple crown. The Emperor, master of Italy, which his soldiers had reduced to the last desolation, fell prostrate before the pontiff, but lately his prisoner. The union of these two monarchs, both enemies of Henry VIII, seemed destined to ruin the King of England and thwart his great affair.

And yet not long before, an ambassador from Charles V had been received at Whitehall—it was Master Eustace Chapuys. He came to solicit aid against the Turks. Henry caught at the chance; he imagined the moment to be favorable, and that he ought to dispatch an embassy to the head of the Empire and the head of the Church. He sent for the Earl of Wiltshire, Anne Boleyn’s father; Edward Lee, afterwards archbishop of York; John Stokesley, afterwards bishop of London, and some others. He told them that the Emperor desired his alliance, and commissioned them to proceed to Italy and explain to Charles V the serious motives that induced him to separate from Catherine. "If he persists in his opposition to the divorce," continued Henry, "threaten him, but in covert
terms. If the threats prove useless, tell him plainly that, in accord with my friends, I will do all I can to restore peace to my troubled conscience." He added with more calmness, "I am resolved to fear God rather than man, and to place full reliance on comfort from the Savior." Was Henry sincere when he spoke thus? No one can doubt of his sensuality, his scholastic Catholicism, and his cruel violence—must we also believe in his hypocrisy? He was no doubt under a delusion, and deceived himself on the state of his soul.

An important member was added to the deputation. One day when the king was occupied with this affair, Thomas Cranmer appeared at the door of his room with a manuscript in his hand. Cranmer had a fine understanding, a warm heart, a character perhaps too weak, but extensive learning. Captivated by the Holy Scriptures, he desired to seek for truth nowhere else. He had suggested a new point of view to Henry VIII. "The essential thing," he said, "is to know what the Word of God teaches on the matter in question." "Show me that," exclaimed the king. Cranmer brought him his treatise, in which he proved that the Word of God is above all human jurisdiction, and that it forbids marriage with a brother’s widow. Henry took the work in his hand, read it again and again, and praised its excellence. A bright idea occurred to him. "Are you strong enough to maintain before the bishop of Rome the propositions laid down in this treatise?" said the king. Cranmer was timid, but convinced and devoted. "Yes," he made answer, "with God’s grace, and if your Majesty commands it." "Marry, then!" exclaimed Henry with delight, "I will send you." Cranmer departed with the others in January 1530.

While Henry's ambassadors were journeying slowly, Charles V, more exasperated than ever against the divorce, endeavored to gain the pope. Clement VII, who was a clever man, and possessed a certain kindly humor, but was at heart cunning, false, and cowardly, amused the puissant Emperor with words. When he learned that the King of England was sending an embassy to him, he gave way to the keenest sorrow. What was he to do? Which way could he turn? To irritate the Emperor was dangerous; to separate England from Rome would be to endure a great loss. Caught between Charles V and Henry VIII, he groaned aloud; he paced up and down his chamber gesticulating, then suddenly stopping, sank into a chair and burst into tears. Nothing succeeded with him; it was, he thought, as if he had been bewitched. What need was there for the King of England to send him an embassy? Had not Clement told Henry through the Bishop of Tarbes, "I am content the marriage should take place, provided it be without my authorization." It was of no use; the pope asked him to do without the papacy, and the king would only act with it. He was more popish than the pope.

To add to his misfortunes, Charles began to press the pontiff more seriously, and yielding to his importunities, Clement drew up a brief on the 7th of March, in which he commanded Henry "to receive Catherine with love, and to treat her in all things with the affection of a husband." But the brief was scarcely written
when the arrival of the English embassy was announced. The pope in alarm immediately put the document back into his portfolio, promising himself that it would be long before he published it.

As soon as the English envoys had taken up their quarters at Bologna, the ambassadors of France called to pay their respects. De Gramont, bishop of Tarbes, was overflowing with politeness, especially to the Earl of Wiltshire. "I have shown much honour to M. de Rochford," he wrote to his master on the 28th of March. "I went out to meet him. I have visited him often at his lodging. I have fêted him, and offered him my solicitations and services, telling him that such were your orders." Not thus did Clement VII act; the arrival of the Earl of Wiltshire and his colleagues was a cause of alarm to him. Yet he must make up his mind to receive them; he appointed the day and the hour for the audience.

Henry VIII desired that his representatives should appear with great pomp, and accordingly the ambassador and his colleagues went to great expense with that intent. Wiltshire entered first into the audience hall; being father of Anne Boleyn, he had been appointed by the king as the man in all England most interested in the success of his plans. But Henry had calculated badly; the personal interest which the earl felt in the divorce made him odious both to Charles and Clement. The pope, wearing his pontifical robes, was seated on the throne, surrounded by his cardinals. The ambassadors approached, made the customary salutations, and stood before him. The pontiff, wishing to show his kindly feelings towards the envoys of the "Defender of the Faith," put out his slipper according to custom, presenting it graciously to the kisses of the proud Englishmen. The revolt was about to begin. The earl, remaining motionless, refused to kiss his holiness's slipper. But that was not all; a fine spaniel, with long silky hair, which Wiltshire had brought from England, had followed him to the episcopal palace. When the bishop of Rome put out his foot, the dog did what other dogs would have done under similar circumstances; he flew at the foot, and caught the pope by the great toe. Clement hastily drew it back. The sublime borders on the ridiculous; the ambassadors, bursting with laughter, raised their arms and hid their faces behind their long rich sleeves. "That dog was a Protestant," said a reverend father. "Whatever he was," said an Englishman, "he taught us that a pope's foot was more meet to be bitten by dogs than kissed by Christian men." The pope, recovering from his emotion, prepared to listen, and the earl, regaining his seriousness, explained to the pontiff that as Holy Scripture forbade a man to marry his brother's wife, Henry VIII required him to annul as unlawful his union with Catherine of Aragon. As Clement did not seem convinced, the ambassador skilfully insinuated that the king might possibly declare himself independent of Rome, and place the English Church under the direction of a patriarch. "The example," added the ambassador, "will not fail to be imitated by other kingdoms of Christendom."

The agitated pope promised not to remove the suit to Rome, provided the king would give up the idea of reforming England. Then, putting on a most gracious
air, he proposed to introduce the ambassador to Charles V. This was giving Wiltshire the chance of receiving a harsh rebuff. The earl saw it, but his duty obliging him to confer with the Emperor, he accepted the offer.

The father of Anne Boleyn proceeded to an audience with the nephew of Catherine of Aragon. Representatives of two women whose rival causes agitated Europe, these two men could not meet without a collision. True, the earl flattered himself that as it was Charles’ interest to detach Henry from Francis I—that phlegmatic and politic prince would certainly not sacrifice the gravest interests of his reign for a matter of sentiment—but he was deceived. The Emperor received him with a calm and reserved air, but unaccompanied by any kindly demonstration. The ambassador skillfully began by speaking of the Turkish war, then ingeniously passing to the condition of the kingdom of England, he pointed out the reasons of state which rendered the divorce necessary. Here Charles stopped him short: “Sir Count, you are not to be trusted in this matter; you are a party to it; let your colleagues speak.” The earl replied with respectful coldness, “Sire, I do not speak here as a father, but as my master’s servant, and I am commissioned to inform you that his conscience condemns a union contrary to the law of God.” He then offered Charles the immediate restitution of Catherine’s dowry. The Emperor coldly replied that he would support his aunt in her rights, and then abruptly turning his back on the ambassador, refused to hear him any longer.

Thus did Charles, who had been all his life a crafty politician, place in this matter the cause of justice above the interests of his ambition. Perhaps he might lose an important ally; it mattered not; before everything he would protect a woman unworthily treated. On this occasion we feel more sympathy for Charles than for Henry. The indignant Emperor hastily quitted Bologna on the 22nd or 24th of February.

The earl hastened to his friend M. de Gramont, and, relating how he had been treated, proposed that the kings of France and England should unite in the closest bonds. He added that Henry could not accept Clement as his judge, since he had himself declared that he was ignorant of the law of God. “England,” he said, “will be quiet for three or four months. Sitting in the ballroom, she will watch the dancers, and will form her resolution according as they dance well or ill.” A rule of policy that has often been followed.

Gramont was prepared to make common cause with Henry against the Emperor, but, like his master, he could not make up his mind to do without the pope. He strove to induce Clement to join the two kings and abandon Charles, or else—he insinuated in his turn—England would separate from the Romish Church. This was to incur the risk of losing Western Europe, and accordingly the pope answered with much concern, “I will do what you ask.” There was, however, a reserve, namely, that the steps taken overtly by the pope would absolutely decide nothing.
Clement once more received the ambassador of Henry VIII. The earl carried with him the book wherein Cranmer proved that the pope cannot dispense anyone from obeying the law of God, and presented it to the pope. The latter took it and glanced over it, his looks showing that a prison could not have been more disagreeable to him than this impertinent volume. The Earl of Wiltshire soon discovered that there was nothing for him to do in Italy. Charles V, usually so reserved, had made the bitterest remarks before his departure. His chancellor, with an air of triumph, enumerated to the English ambassador all the divines of Italy and France who were opposed to the king’s wishes. The pope seemed to be a puppet which the Emperor moved as he liked, and the cardinals had but one idea, that of exalting the Romish power. Wearied and disgusted, the earl departed for France and England with the greater portion of his colleagues.

Cranmer was left behind. Having been sent to show Clement that Holy Scripture is above all Roman pontiffs, and speaks in a language quite opposed to that of the popes, he had asked more than once for an audience at which to discharge his mission. The wily pontiff had replied that he would hear him at Rome, believing he was thus putting him off until the Greek calends. But Clement was deceived—the English doctor, determining to do his duty, refused to depart for London with the rest of the embassy and repaired to the metropolis of Catholicism.

CHAPTER 5

Oxford and Cambridge Debate the Divorce
Winter, 1530

At the same time that Henry sent ambassadors to Italy to obtain the pope’s consent, he invited all the universities of Christendom to declare that the question of divorce was of divine right, and that the pope had nothing to say about it. It was his opinion that the universal voice of the Church ought to decide, and not the voice of one man.

First he attempted to canvass Cambridge, and as he wanted a skillful man for that purpose, he applied to Wolsey’s old servant, Stephen Gardiner, an intelligent, active, wily churchman and a good catholic. One thing alone was superior to his catholicism—his desire to win the king’s favor. He aspired to rise like the cardinal to the summit of greatness. Henry named the chief almoner, Edward Fox, as his colleague.
Arriving at Cambridge one Saturday about noon in the latter half of February, the royal commissioners held a conference in the evening with the vice-chancellor (Dr. Buckmaster), Dr. Edmunds, and other influential men who had resolved to go with the court. But these doctors, members of the political party, soon found themselves checked by an embarrassing support on which they had not calculated—it was that of the friends of the Gospel. They had been convinced by the writing which Cranmer had published on the divorce. Gardiner and the members of the conference, hearing of the assistance which the evangelicals desired to give them, were annoyed at first. On the other hand, the champions of the court of Rome, alarmed at the alliance of the two parties who were opposed to them, began that very night to visit college after college, leaving no stone unturned that the peril might be averted. Gardiner, uneasy at their zeal, wrote to Henry VIII, "As we assembled they assembled; as we made friends they made friends." Dr. Watson, Dr. Tomson, and other papal supporters at one time shouted very loudly, at another spoke in whispers. They said that Anne Boleyn was a heretic, that her marriage with Henry would hand England over to Luther; and they related to those whom they desired to gain—wrote Gardiner to the king—"many fables, too tedious to repeat to your Grace." These "fables" would not only have bored Henry, but greatly irritated him.

The vice-chancellor, flattering himself that he had a majority, notwithstanding these clamors, called a meeting of the doctors, bachelors of divinity, and masters of arts, for Sunday afternoon. About two hundred persons assembled, and the three parties were distinctly marked out. The most numerous and the most excited were those who held for the pope against the king. The evangelicals were in a minority, but were quite as decided as their adversaries, and much calmer. The politicians, uneasy at seeing the friends of Latimer and Cranmer disposed to vote with them, would have, however, to accept of their support, if they wished to gain the victory. They resolved to seize the opportunity offered them. "Most learned senators," said the vice-chancellor, "I have called you together because the great love which the king bears you engages me to consult your wisdom." Thereupon Gardiner and Fox handed in the letter which Henry had given them, and the vice-chancellor read it to the meeting. In it the king set forth his hopes of seeing the doctors unanimous to do what was agreeable to him. The deliberations commenced, and the question of a rupture with Rome soon began to appear distinctly beneath the question of the divorce. Edmunds spoke for the king, Tomson for the pope. There was an interchange of antagonistic opinions, and a disorder of ideas among many; the speakers grew warm; one voice drowned another, and the confusion became extreme.

The vice-chancellor, desirous of putting an end to the clamor, proposed referring the matter to a committee, whose decision should be regarded as that of the whole university, which was agreed to. Then seeing more clearly that the royal cause could not succeed without the help of the evangelical party, he proposed some of its leaders—Doctors Salcot, Reps, Crome, Shaxton,
and Latimer—as members of the committee. On hearing these names, there was an explosion of murmurs in the meeting. Salcot, abbot of St. Benet’s, was particularly offensive to the doctors of the Romish party. "We protest," they said, "against the presence in the committee of those who have approved of Cranmer’s book, and thus declared their opinion already." "When any matter is talked of all over the kingdom," answered Gardiner, "there is not a sensible man who does not tell his friends what he thinks about it." The whole afternoon was spent in lively altercation. The vice-chancellor, wishing to bring it to an end, said, "Gentlemen, it is getting late, and I invite everyone to take his seat, and declare his mind by a secret vote." It was useless; no one took his seat; the confusion, reproaches, and declamations continued. At dark, the vice-chancellor adjourned the meeting until the next day. The doctors separated in great excitement, but with different feelings. While the politicians saw nothing else to discuss but the question of the king’s marriage, the evangelicals and the papists considered that the real question was this: which shall rule in England—the Reformation or Popery?

The next day, the names of the members of the proposed committee having been put to the vote, the meeting was found to be divided into two equal parties. In order to obtain a majority, Gardiner undertook to get some of his adversaries out of the way. Going up and down the Senate house, he began to whisper in the ears of some of the less decided, and inspiring them either with hope or fear, he prevailed upon several to leave the meeting.

The grace was then put to the vote a third time and passed. Gardiner triumphed. Returning to his room, he sent the list to the king. Sixteen of the committee, indicated by the letter A, were favorable to his Majesty. "As for the twelve others," he wrote, "we hope to win most of them by good means." The committee met and considered the royal demand. They carefully examined the passages of Holy Scripture, the explanations of translators, and gave their opinion. Then followed the public discussion. Gardiner was not without fear; as there might be skillful assailants and awkward defenders, he looked out for men qualified to defend the royal cause worthily. It was a remarkable circumstance that, passing over the traditional doctors, he added to the defense of which he and Fox were the leaders, two evangelical doctors—Salcot, abbot of St. Benet’s, and Reps. He reserved to his colleague and himself the political part of the question, but notwithstanding all his catholicism, he desired that the scriptural reasons should be placed foremost. The discussion was conducted with great thoroughness, and the victory remained with the king’s champions.

On the 9th of March, the doctors, professors, and masters having met after vespers in the priory hall, the vice-chancellor said, "It has appeared to us as most certain, most in accord with Holy Scriptures, and most conformable to the opinions of commentators, that it is contrary to divine and natural law for a man to marry the widow of his brother dying childless." Thus the Scriptures
were really, if not explicitly, declared by the university of Cambridge to be the supreme and only rule of Christians, and the contrary decisions of Rome were held to be not binding. The Word of God was avenged of the long contempt it had endured, and after having been long put below the pope’s word, was now restored to its lawful place. In this matter Cambridge was right.

It was necessary to try Oxford next. Here the opposition was stronger, and the popish party looked forward to a victory. Longland, bishop of Lincoln and chancellor of the university, was commissioned by Henry to undertake the matter, Doctor Bell, and afterwards Edward Fox, the chief almoner, being joined with him. The king, uneasy at the results of the negotiation, and wishing for a favorable decision at any cost, gave Longland a letter for the university, through every word of which an undisguised despotism was visible. "We will and command you," he said, "that ye, not leaning to willful and sinister opinions of your own several minds, considering that we be your sovereign liege lord, and totally giving your affections to the true overtures of divine learning in this behalf, do show and declare your true and just learning in the said cause. ... And we, for your so doing, shall be to you and to our university there so good and gracious a lord for the same, as ye shall perceive it well done in your well fortune to come. And in case you do not uprightly handle yourselves herein, we shall so quickly and sharply look to your unnatural misdemeanor herein, that it shall not be to your quietness and ease hereafter. Accommodate yourselves to the mere truth, assuring you that those who do shall be esteemed and set forth, and the contrary neglected and little set by. ... We doubt not that your resolution shall be our high contention and pleasure."

This royal missive caused a great commotion in the university. Some slavishly bent their heads, for the king spoke rod in hand. Others declared themselves convinced by the political reasons, and said that Henry must have an heir whose right to the throne could not be disputed. And, lastly, some were convinced that Holy Scripture was favorable to the royal cause. All men of age and learning, as well as all who had either capacity or ambition, declared in favor of the divorce. Nevertheless a formidable opposition soon showed itself. The younger members of the Senate were enthusiastic for Catherine, the Church, and the pope. Their theological education was imperfect; they could not go to the bottom of the question, but they judged by the heart. To see a Catholic lady oppressed, to see Rome despised, inflamed their anger; and if the elder members maintained that their view was the more reasonable, the younger ones believed theirs to be the more noble. Unhappily, when the choice lies between the useful and the generous, the useful commonly triumphs. Still, the young doctors were not prepared to yield. They said—and they were not wrong—that religion and morality ought not to be sacrificed to reasons of state, or to the passions of princes. And seeing the specter of Reform hidden behind that of the divorce, they regarded themselves as called upon to save the Church. "Alas!" said the royal delegates, the Bishop of Lincoln and Dr. Bell,
" alas! we are in continual perplexity, and we cannot foresee with any certainty what will be the issue of this business."

They agreed with the heads of houses that, in order to prepare the university, three public disputations should be solemnly held in the divinity schools. By this means they hoped to gain time. "Such disputations," they said, "are a very honorable means of amusing the multitude until we are sure of the consent of the majority." The discussions took place, and the younger masters, arranging each day what was to be done or said, gave utterance to all the warmth of their feelings.

When the news of these animated discussions reached Henry, his displeasure broke out, and those immediately around him fanned his indignation. "A great part of the youth of our university," said the king, "with contentious and factious manners, daily combine together." ... The courtiers, instead of moderating, excited his anger. Every day, they told him, these young men, regardless of their duty towards their sovereign, and not conforming to the opinions of the most virtuous and learned men of the university, meet together to deliberate and oppose his Majesty’s views. "Has it ever been seen," exclaimed the king, "that such a number of right small learning should stay their seniors in so weighty a cause?" Henry, in exasperation, wrote to the heads of the houses, "It is not good to stir a hornet’s nest." This threat excited the younger party still more; if the term "hornet" amused some, it irritated others. In hot weather, the hornet (the king) chases the weaker insects, but the noise he makes in flying forewarns them, and the little ones escape him. Henry could not hide his vexation; he feared lest the little flies should prove stronger than the big hornet. He was uneasy in his castle of Windsor, and the insolent opposition of Oxford pursued him wherever he turned his steps—on the terrace, in the wide park, and even in the royal chapel. "What!" he exclaimed, "shall this university dare show itself more unkind and willful than all other universities, abroad or at home?" Cambridge had recognized the king’s right, and Oxford refused. Wishing to end the matter, Henry summoned High-Almoner Fox to Windsor, and ordered him to repeat at Oxford the victory he had gained at Cambridge. He then dictated to his secretary a letter to the recalcitrants: "We cannot a little marvel that you, neither having respect to our estate, being your prince and sovereign lord, nor yet remembering such benefits as we have always showed unto you, have hitherto refused the accomplishment of our desire. Permit no longer the private suffrages of light and willful heads to prevail over the learned. By your diligence redeem the errors and delays past.

"Given under our signet, at our castle of Windsor."

Fox was entrusted with this letter.
The Lord High-Almoner and the Bishop of Lincoln immediately called together the younger masters of the university, and declared that a longer resistance might lead to their ruin. But the youth of Oxford were not to be overawed by threats of violence. Lincoln had hardly finished, when several masters of arts protested loudly; some even spoke "very wickedly." Not permitting himself to be checked by such rebellion, the bishop ordered the poll to be taken; twenty-seven voted for the king, and twenty-two against. The royal commissioners were not yet satisfied; they assembled all the faculties, and invited the members to give their opinion in turn. This intimidated many, and only eight or ten had courage enough to declare their opposition frankly. The bishop, encouraged by such a result, ordered that the final vote should be taken by ballot. Secrecy emboldened many of those who had not dared to speak, and while thirty-one voted in favor of the divorce, twenty-five opposed it. That was of little consequence, as the two prelates had the majority. They immediately drew up the statute in the name of the university, and sent it to the king, after which the bishop, proud of his success, celebrated a solemn mass of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost had not, however, been much attended to in the business. Some had obeyed the prince, others the pope; and if we desire to find those who obeyed Christ, we must look for them elsewhere.

The university of Cambridge was the first to send in its submission to Henry. The Sunday before Easter (1530), Vice-Chancellor Buckmaster arrived at Windsor in the forenoon. The court was at chapel, where Latimer, recently appointed one of the king's chaplains, was preaching. The vice-chancellor came in during the service and heard part of the sermon. Latimer was a very different man from Henry's servile courtiers. He did not fear even to attack such of his colleagues as did not do their duty: "That is no godly preacher that will hold his peace, and not strike you with his sword that you smoke again... Chaplains will not do their duties, but rather flatter. But what shall follow? They shall have God's curse upon their heads for their labor. The minister must reprove without fearing any man, even if he be threatened with death." Latimer was particularly bold in all that concerned the errors of Rome, which Henry VIII desired to maintain in the English Church. "Wicked persons," he said, "men, who despise God, call out, 'We are christened, therefore we are saved.' Make no mistake, to be christened and not obey God's commandments is to be worse than the Turks! Regeneration cometh from the Word of God; it is by hearing and believing this Word that we are born again."

Thus spoke one of the fathers of the English Reformation; such is the real doctrine of the Church of England; the contrary doctrine is a mere relic of popery.

As the congregation were leaving the chapel, the vice-chancellor spoke to the secretary (Cromwell) and the provost, and told them the occasion of his visit. The king sent a message that he would receive the deputation after evening service. Desirous of giving a certain distinction to the decision of the
universities, Henry ordered all the court to assemble in the audience chamber. The vice-chancellor presented the letter to the king, who was much pleased with it. "Thanks, Mr. Vice-Chancellor," he said, "I very much approve the way in which you have managed this matter. I shall give your university tokens of my satisfaction. ... You heard Mr. Latimer’s sermon," he added, which he greatly praised and then withdrew. The Duke of Norfolk, going up to the vice-chancellor, told him that the king desired to see him the following day.

The next day, Dr. Buckmaster, faithful to the appointment, waited all the morning; but the king had changed his mind, and sent orders to the deputy from Cambridge that he might depart as soon as he pleased. The message had scarcely been delivered before the king entered the gallery. An idea which quite engrossed his mind urged him on—he wanted to speak with the doctor about the principle put forward by Cranmer. Henry detained Buckmaster from one o’clock until six, repeating in every possible form, "Can the pope grant a dispensation when the law of God has spoken?" He even displayed much ill humor before the vice-chancellor, because this point had not been decided at Cambridge. At last he quitted the gallery; and, to counterbalance the sharpness of his reproaches, he spoke very graciously to the doctor, who hurried away as fast as he could.

CHAPTER 6

Henry Appeals to Foreign Opinion
January to September, 1530

The king did not limit himself to asking the opinions of England; he appealed to the universal teaching of the Church, represented, according to his views, by the universities and not by the pope. The element of individual conviction, so strongly marked in Tyndale, Fryth, and Latimer, was wanting in the official reformation that proceeded from the prince. To know what Scripture said, Henry was about to send delegates to Paris, Bologna, Padua, and Wittenberg; he would have sent even to the East, if such a journey had been easy. That false Catholicism which looked for the interpretation of the Bible to churches and declining schools where traditionalism, ritualism, and hierarchism were magnified, was a counterfeit popery. Happily the supreme voice of the Word of God surmounted this fatal tendency in England.

Henry VIII, full of confidence in the friendship of the King of France, applied first to the university of Paris; but Dr. Pedro Garray, a Spanish priest, as ignorant as he was fanatical (according to the English agents), eagerly took up
the cause of Catherine of Aragon. Aided by the impetuous Beda, he obtained an opinion adverse to Henry’s wishes.

When he heard of it, the alarmed prince summoned Du Bellay, the French ambassador, to the palace, gave him for Francis I a famous diamond *fleur-de-lis* valued at £10,000 sterling, also the acknowledgments for 100,000 livres which Francis owed Henry for war expenses, and added a gift of 400,000 crowns for the ransom of the king’s sons. Unable to resist such strong arguments, Francis charged Du Bellay to represent to the faculty of Paris "the great scruples of Henry’s conscience," whereupon the Sorbonne deliberated, and several doctors exclaimed that it would be an attaint upon the pope’s honor to suppose him capable of refusing consolation to the wounded conscience of a Christian. During these debates, the secretary took the names, received the votes, and entered them on the minutes. A fiery papist, observing that the majority would be against the Roman opinion, jumped up, sprang upon the secretary, snatched the list from his hands, and tore it up. All started from their seats, and "there was great disorder and tumult." They all spoke together, each trying to assert his own opinion, but as no one could make himself heard amid the general clamor, the doctors hurried out of the room in a great rage. "Beda acted like one possessed," wrote Du Bellay. Meanwhile the ambassadors of the King of England were walking up and down an adjoining gallery, waiting for the division. Attracted by the shouts, they ran forward, and seeing the strange spectacle presented by the theologians, and "hearing the language they used to one another," they retired in great irritation. Du Bellay, who had at heart the alliance of the two countries, conjured Francis I to put an end to such "impertinences." The president of the parlement of Paris consequently ordered Beda to appear before him, and told him that it was not for a person of his sort to meddle with the affairs of princes, and that if he did not cease his opposition, he would be punished in a way he would not soon forget. The Sorbonne profited by the lesson given to the most influential of its members, and on the 2nd of July declared in favor of the divorce by a large majority. The universities of Orleans, Angers, and Bourges had already done so, and that of Toulouse did the same shortly after. Henry VIII had France and England with him.

This was not enough; he must have Italy also. He filled that peninsula with his agents, who had orders to obtain from the bishops and universities the declaration refused by the pope. A rich and powerful despot is never in want of devoted men to carry out his designs.

The university of Bologna, in the states of the Church, was, after Paris, the most important in the Catholic world. A monk was in great repute there at this time. Noble by birth and an eloquent preacher, Battista Pallavicini was one of those independent thinkers often met with in Italy. The English agents applied to him; he declared that he and his colleagues were ready to prove the unlawfulness of Henry’s marriage, and when Stokesley spoke of remuneration,
they replied, "No, no! what we have received freely, we give freely." Henry’s agents could not contain themselves for joy—the university of the pope declares against the pope! Those among them who had an inkling for the Reformation were especially delighted. On the 10th June, the eloquent monk appeared before the ambassadors with the judgment of the faculty, which surpassed all they had imagined. Henry’s marriage was declared "horrible, execrable, detestable, abominable for a Christian and even for an infidel, forbidden by divine and human law under pain of the severest punishment. ... The holy father, who can do almost everything," innocently continued the university, "has not the right to permit such a union." The universities of Padua and Ferrara hastened to add their votes to those of Bologna, and declared the marriage with a brother’s widow to be "null, detestable, profane, and abominable." Henry was conqueror all along the line. He had with him that universal consent which, according to certain illustrious doctors, is the very essence of Catholicism. Crooke, one of Henry’s agents, and a distinguished Greek scholar, who discharged his mission with indefatigable ardor, exclaimed that "the just cause of the king was approved by all the doctors of Italy."

In the midst of this harmony of catholicity, there was one exception of which no one had dreamt. That divorce which, according to the frivolous language of a certain party, was the cause of the Reformation in England, found opponents among the fathers and the children of the Reformation. Henry’s envoys were staggered. "My fidelity bindeth me to advertise your Highness," wrote Crooke to the king, "that all Lutherans be utterly against your Highness in this cause, and have letted [hindered] as much with their wretched poor malice, without reason or authority, as they could and might, as well here as in Padua and Ferrara, where be no small companies of them." The Swiss and German reformers having been summoned to give an opinion on this point, Luther, Æcolampadius, Zwingli, Bucer, Grynaeus, and even Calvin, all expressed the same opinion. "Certainly," said Luther, "the king has sinned by marrying his brother’s wife; that sin belongs to the past; let repentance, therefore, blot it out, as it must blot out all our past sins. But the marriage must not be dissolved; such a great sin, which is future, must not be permitted. There are thousands of marriages in the world in which sin has a part, and yet we may not dissolve them. A man shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This law is superior to the other, and overrules the lesser one." The collective opinion of the Lutheran doctors was in conformity with the just and Christian sentiments of Luther. Thus (we repeat) the event which, according to Catholic writers, was the cause of the religious transformation of England, was approved by the Romanists and condemned by the evangelicals. Besides, the latter knew very well that a Reformation must proceed, not from a divorce or a marriage, not from diplomatic negotiations or university statutes, but from the power of the Word of God and the free conviction of Christians.

While these matters were going on, Cranmer was at Rome, asking the pope for that discussion which the pontiff had promised him at their conference in
Bologna. Clement VII had never intended to grant it—he had thought that, once at Rome, it would be easy to elude his promise; it was that which occupied his attention just now. Among the means which popes have sometimes employed in their difficulties with kings, one of the most common was to gain the agents of those princes. It was the first employed by Clement; he nominated Cranmer Grand Penitentiary for all the states of the King of England, some even say for all the Catholic world. It was little more than a title, and "was only to stay his stomach for that time, in hope of a more plentiful feast hereafter, if he had been pleased to take his repast on any popish preferment." But Cranmer was influenced by purer motives, and, without refusing the title the pope gave him—since, having the task of winning him to the king’s side, he would thus have compromised his mission—he made no account of it, and showed all the more zeal for the accomplishment of his charge.

The embassy had not succeeded, and they were getting uneasy about it in England. Some of the pope’s best friends could not understand his blindness. The two archbishops, the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, the marquises of Dorset and Exeter, thirteen earls, four bishops, twenty-five barons, twenty-two abbots, and eleven members of the Lower House determined to send an address to Clement VII. "Most blessed father," they began, "the king, who is our head and the life of us all, has ever stood by the see of Rome amidst the attacks of your many and powerful enemies, and yet he alone is to reap no benefit from his labors. ... Meanwhile we perceive a flood of miseries impending over the commonwealth. If your Holiness, who ought to be our father, have determined to leave us as orphans, we shall seek our remedy elsewhere. ... He that is sick will by any means be rid of his distemper; and there is hope in the exchange of miseries, when, if we cannot obtain what is good, we may obtain a lesser evil. ... We beseech your Holiness to consider with yourself; you profess that on earth you are Christ’s vicar. Endeavor then to show yourself so to be by pronouncing your sentence to the glory and praise of God." Clement gained time; he remained two months and a half without answering, thinking about the matter, turning it over and over in his mind. The great difficulty was to harmonize the will of Henry VIII, who desired another wife, and that of Charles V, who insisted that he ought to keep the old one. ... There was only one mode of satisfying both these princes at once, and that was by the king’s having the two wives together. Wolsey had already entertained this idea. More than two years before, the pope had hinted as much to Da Casale. "Let him take another wife," he had said, speaking of Henry. Clement now recurred to it, and having sent privately for Da Casale, he said to him, "This is what we have hit upon—we permit his Majesty to have two wives." The infallible pontiff proposed bigamy to a king. Da Casale was still more astonished than he had been at the time of Clement’s first communication. "Holy father," he said to the pope, "I doubt whether such a mode will satisfy his Majesty, for he desires above all things to have the burden removed from his conscience."
This guilty proposal led to nothing; the king, sure of the lords and of the people, advanced rapidly in the path of independence. The day after that on which the pope authorized him to take two wives, Henry issued a bold proclamation, pronouncing against all who should ask for or bring in a papal bull contrary to the royal prerogative “imprisonment and further punishment of their bodies according to his Majesty’s good pleasure.” Clement, becoming alarmed, replied to the address, ”We desire as much as you do that the king should have male children; but, alas! we are not God to give him sons.”

Men were beginning to stifle under these maneuvers and tergiversations of the papacy; they called for air, and some went so far as to say that if air was not given them, they must snap their fetters and break open the doors.

CHAPTER 7

Latimer at Court
January to September, 1530

Henry, seeing that he could not obtain what he asked from the pope, drew nearer the evangelical party in his kingdom. In the ranks of the Reformation he found intelligent, pious, bold, and eloquent men, who possessed the confidence of a portion of the people. Why should not the prince try to conciliate them? They protest against the authority of the pope—good! He will relieve them from it, but on one condition, however—that if they reject the papal jurisdiction they recognize his own.

The first of the evangelical leaders whom Henry tried to gain was Latimer. He had placed him, as we have seen, on the list of his chaplains. “Beware of contradicting the king,” said a courtier to him one day, mistrusting his frankness. ”Speak as he speaks, and instead of presuming to lead him, strive to follow him.” ”Away with your counsel!” replied Latimer, ”shall I say as he says? Say what your conscience bids you. … Still, I know that prudence is necessary. The drop of rain maketh a hole in the stone, not by violence, but by oft falling. Likewise a prince must be won by a little and a little.”

This conversation was not useless to the chaplain, who set to work seriously amid all the tumult of the court. He studied the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers, and frankly proclaimed the truth from the pulpit. But he had no private conversation with the king, who filled him with a certain fear. The thought that he did not speak to Henry about the state of his soul troubled him. One day, in the month of November, the chaplain was in his room, and in the volume of St. Augustine which lay before him he read these words: ”He who
for fear of any power hides the truth, provokes the wrath of God to come upon him, for he fears men more than God." At another time, while studying St. Chrysostom, these words struck him: "He is not only a traitor to the truth who openly for truth teaches a lie; but he also who does not pronounce and show the truth that he knoweth." These two sentences sank deeply into his heart. "They made me sore afraid," he continued, "troubled and vexed me grievously in my conscience." He resolved to declare what God had taught him in Scripture. His frankness might cost him his life (lives were lost easily in Henry’s time); it mattered not. "I had rather suffer extreme punishment," he said, "than be a traitor unto the truth."

Latimer reflected that the ecclesiastical law, which for ages had been the very essence of religion, must give way to evangelical faith—that the form must yield to the life. The members of the Church (calling themselves regenerate by baptism) used to attend catechism, be confirmed, join in worship, and take part in the communion without any real individual transformation; and then finally rest all together in the churchyard. But the Church, in Latimer’s opinion, ought to begin with the conversion of its members. Lively stones are needed to build up the temple of God. Christian individualism, which Rome opposed from her theocratic point of view, was about to be revived in Christian society.

The noble Latimer formed the resolution to make the king understand that all real reformation must begin at home. This was no trifling matter. Henry, who was a man of varied information and lively understanding, but also imperious, passionate, fiery, and obstinate, knew no other rule than the promptings of his strong nature; and although quite prepared to separate from the pope, he detested all innovations in doctrine. Latimer did not allow himself to be stopped by such obstacles, and resolved to attack this difficult position openly.

"Your Grace," he wrote to Henry, "I must show forth such things as I have learned in Scripture, or else deny Jesus Christ. The which denying ought more to be dreaded than the loss of all temporal goods, honour, promotion, fame, prison, slander, hurts, banishment, and all manner of torments and cruelties, yea, and death itself, be it never so shameful and painful. ... There is as great distance between you and me as between God and man; for you are here to me and to all your subjects in God’s stead; and so I should quake to speak to your Grace. But as you are a mortal man having in you the corrupt nature of Adam, so you have no less need of the merits of Christ’s passion for your salvation than I and others of your subjects have."

Latimer feared to see a Church founded under Henry’s patronage, which would seek after riches, power, and pomp; and he was not mistaken. "Our Saviour’s life was very poor. In how vile and abject a place was the mother of Jesus Christ brought to bed! And according to this beginning was the process and end of His life in this world. ... But this He did to show us that his followers and
vicars should not regard the treasures of this world. ... Your Grace may see what means and craft the clergy imagine to break and withstand the acts which were made in the last parliament against their superfluities."

Latimer desired to make the king understand who were the true Christians. "Our Saviour showed his disciples," continued he, "that they should be brought before kings. Wherefore take this for a sure conclusion, that where the Word of God is truly preached, there is persecution as well of the hearers as of the teachers; and where quietness and rest in worldly pleasure, there is not the truth."

Latimer next proceeded to declare what would give real riches to England. "Your Grace promised by your last proclamation that we should have the Scripture in English. Let not the wickedness of worldly men divert you from your godly purpose and promise. There are prelates who, under pretence of insurrection and heresy, hinder the Gospel of Christ from having free course. ... They would send a thousand men to hell ere they send one to God."

Latimer had reserved for the last the appeal he had determined to make to his master's conscience: "I pray to God that your Grace may do what God commandeth, and not what seemeth good in your own sight; that you may be found one of the members of His Church, and a faithful minister of His gifts, and not," he added, showing contempt for a title of which Henry was very proud, "and not a defender of His faith; for He will not have it defended by man's power, but by His Word only.

"Wherefore, gracious king, remember yourself. Have pity on your soul, and think that the day is even at hand when you shall give account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed with your sword. In the which day that your Grace may stand steadfastly, and not be ashamed, but be clear and ready in your reckoning, and to have (as they say) your quietus est sealed with the blood of our Saviour Christ, which only serveth at that day, is my daily prayer to Him that suffered death for our sins, which also prayeth to His Father for grace for us continually."

Thus wrote the bold chaplain. Such a letter from Latimer to Henry VIII deserves to be pointed out. The king does not appear to have been offended at it; he was an absolute prince, but there was occasionally some generosity in his character. He therefore continued to extend his kindness to Latimer, but did not answer his appeal.

Latimer preached frequently before the court and in the city. Many noble lords and old families still clung to the prejudices of the middle ages; but some had a certain liking for the Reformation, and listened to the chaplain's preaching, which was so superior to ordinary sermons. His art of oratory was summed up in one precept: "Christ is the preacher of all preachers." "Christ," he exclaimed,
“took upon Him our sins, not the work of sin—not to do it, not to commit it—but to purge it, to bear the stipend [wages] of it, and that way He was the greatest sinner of the world. ... It is much like as if I owed another man £20,000, and must pay it out of hand, or else go to the dungeon of Ludgate; and when I am going to prison, one of my friends should come and ask, ‘Whither goeth this man? I will answer for him; I will pay all for him.’ Such a part played our Saviour Christ with us.”

Preaching before a king, he declared that the authority of Holy Scripture was above all the powers of the earth. "God," he said, "is great, eternal, almighty, everlasting; and the Scripture, because of Him, is also great, eternal, most mighty, and holy. ... There is no king, emperor, magistrate, or ruler, but is bound to give credence unto God’s holy Word.” He was cautious not to put "the two swords" into the same hand. "In this world God hath two swords," he said, "the temporal sword resteth in the hands of kings, whereunto all subjects—as well the clergy as the laity—be subject. The spiritual sword is in the hands of the ministers and preachers of God’s Word to correct and reprove. Make not a mingle-mangle of them. To God give thy soul, thy faith... to the king, tribute and reverence. Therefore let the preacher amend with the spiritual sword, fearing no man, though death should ensue." Such language astonished the court. "Were you at the sermon today?” said one of his hearers to a zealous courtier one day. "Yes,” replied the latter. "And how did you like the new chaplain?” "Oh, even as I liked him always—a seditious fellow.”

Latimer did not permit himself to be intimidated. Firm in doctrine, he was at the same time eminently practical. He was a moralist, and this may explain how he was able to remain any time at court. Men of the world, who soon grow impatient when you preach to them of the cross, repentance, and change of heart, cannot help approving of those who insist on certain rules of conduct. King Henry found it convenient to keep a great number of horses in abbeys founded for the support of the poor. One day when Latimer was preaching before him, he said, "A prince ought not to prefer his horses above poor men. Abbeys were ordained for the comfort of the poor, and not for kings’ horses to be kept in them.”

There was a dead silence in the congregation—no one dared turn his eyes towards Henry—and many showed symptoms of anger. The chaplain had hardly left the pulpit, when a gentleman of the court, the lord-chamberlain apparently, went up to him and asked, "What hast thou to do with the king’s horses? They are the maintenances and part of a king’s honor, and also of his realm; wherefore, in speaking against them, ye are against the king’s honor." "To take away the right of the poor,” answered Latimer, "is against the honor of the king. ... God is the grand-master of the king’s house, and will take account of everyone that beareth rule therein."
Thus the Reformation undertook to re-establish the rule of conscience even in the courts of princes. Latimer knowing, like Calvin, that "the ears of the princes of this world are accustomed to be pampered and flattered," armed himself with invincible courage.

The murmurs grew louder. While the old chaplains let things take their course, the other wanted to restore morality among Christians. The Reformer was alive to the accusations brought against him, for his was not a heart of steel. Reproaches and calumnies appeared to him sometimes like those impetuous winds which force the husbandman to fly hurriedly for shelter to some covered place. "O Lord!" he exclaimed on one occasion, "these people pinch me; nay, they have a full bite at me." He would have desired to flee away to the wilderness, but he called to mind what had been done to his Master. "I comfort myself," he said, "that Christ Himself was noted to be a stirrer up of the people against the emperor and was content to be called seditious."

The priests, delighted that Latimer censured the king, resolved to take advantage of it to ruin him. One day, when there was a grand reception, and the king was surrounded by his councilors and courtiers, a monk slipped into the midst of the crowd, and, falling on his knees before the monarch, said, "Sire, your new chaplain preaches sedition." Henry turned to Latimer: "What say you to that, sir?" The chaplain bent his knee before the prince, and, turning to his accusers, said to them, "Would you have me preach nothing concerning a king in the king's sermon? Have you any commission to appoint me what I shall preach?" His friends trembled lest he should be arrested. "Your Grace," he continued, "I put myself in your hands—appoint other doctors to preach in my place before your Majesty. There are many more worthy of the room than I am. If it be your Grace's pleasure, I could be content to be their servant, and bear their books after them. But if your Grace allow me for a preacher, I would desire you give me leave to discharge my conscience. Permit me to frame my teaching for my audience."

Henry, who always liked Latimer, took his part, and the chaplain retired with a low bow. When he left the audience, his friends, who had watched this scene with the keenest emotion, surrounded him, saying, with tears in their eyes, "We were convinced that you would sleep tonight in the Tower." "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord," he answered calmly.

The evangelical Reformers of England nobly maintained their independence in the presence of a catholic and despotic king. Firmly convinced, free, strong men, they yielded neither to the seductions of the court nor to those of Rome. We shall see still more striking examples of their resolution, bequeathed by them to their successors.
CHAPTER 8

The King Seeks Tyndale
January to May, 1531

Henry VIII, finding that he wanted men like Latimer to resist the pope, sought to win over others of the same stamp. He found one, whose lofty range he understood immediately. Thomas Cromwell had laid before him a book then very eagerly read all over England, namely, the *Practice of Prelates*. It was found in the houses not only of the citizens of London, but of the farmers of Essex, Suffolk, and other counties. The king read it quite as eagerly as his subjects. Nothing interested him like the history of the slow but formidable progress of the priesthood and prelacy. One parable in particular struck him, in which the oak represented royalty, and the ivy the papacy. "First, the ivy springeth out of the earth, and then awhile creepeth along by the ground till it find a great tree. There it joineth itself beneath allow unto the body of the tree, and creepeth up a little and a little, fair and softly. And at the beginning, while it is yet thin and small, that the burden is not perceived, it seemeth glorious to garnish the tree in the winter, and to bear off the tempests of the weather. But in the mean season it thrusteth roots into the bark of the tree to hold fast withal; and ceaseth not to climb up till it be at the top and above all. And then it sendeth its branches along by the branches of the tree, and overgreweth all, and waxeth great, heavy, and thick; and sucketh the moisture so sore out of the tree and his branches, that it choaketh and stifleth them. And then the foul stinking ivy waxeth mighty in the stump of the tree, and becometh a seat and a nest for all unclean birds and for blind owls, which hawk in the dark and dare not come at the light. Even so the Bishop of Rome, now called pope, at the beginning crept along upon the earth. ... He crept up and fastened his roots in the heart of the emperor, and by subtilty climbed above he emperor, and subdued him, and made him stoop unto his feet and kiss them another while. Yea, when he had put the crown on the emperor’s head, he smote it off with his feet again, saying that he had might to make emperors and to put them down again."

Henry would willingly have clapped his hand on his sword to demand satisfaction of the pope for this outrage. The book was by Tyndale. Laying it down, the king reflected on what he had just read, and thought to himself that the author had some striking ideas "on the accursed power of the pope," and that he was besides gifted with talent and zeal, and might render excellent service towards abolishing the papacy in England.

Tyndale, from the time of his conversion at Oxford, set Christ above everything; he boldly threw off the yoke of human traditions, and would take no other guide but Scripture only. Full of imagination and eloquence, active
and ready to endure fatigue, he exposed himself to every danger in the fulfillment of his mission. Henry ordered Stephen Vaughan, one of his agents, then at Antwerp, to try to find the Reformer in Brabant, Flanders, on the banks of the Rhine, in Holland... wherever he might chance to be; to offer him a safe-conduct under the sign-manual; to prevail on him to return to England, and to add the most gracious promises in behalf of his Majesty.

To gain over Tyndale seemed even more important than to have gained Latimer. Vaughan immediately undertook to seek him in Antwerp, where he was said to be, but could not find him. "He is at Marburg," said one; "at Frankfort," said another; "at Hamburg," declared a third. Tyndale was invisible now as before. To make more certain, Vaughan determined to write three letters directed to those three places, conjuring him to return to England. "I have great hopes," said the English agent to his friends, "of having done something that will please his Majesty." Tyndale, the most scriptural of English reformers, the most inflexible in his faith, laboring at the Reformation with the cordial approbation of the monarch, would truly have been something extraordinary.

Scarcely had the three letters been dispatched when Vaughan heard of the ignominious chastisement inflicted by Sir Thomas More on Tyndale’s brother. Was it by such indignities that Henry expected to attract the Reformer? Vaughan, much annoyed, wrote to the king (26th January, 1531) that this event would make Tyndale think they wanted to entrap him, and he gave up looking for him.

Three months later (17th April), as Vaughan was busy copying one of Tyndale’s manuscripts in order to send it to Henry (it was his answer to the Dialogue of Sir Thomas More), a man knocked at his door. "Someone, who calls himself a friend of yours, desires very much to speak with you," said the stranger, "and begs you to follow me." "Who is this friend? Where is he?" asked Vaughan. "I do not know him," replied the messenger, "but come along, and you will see for yourself." Vaughan doubted whether it was prudent to follow this person to a strange place. He made up his mind, however, to accompany him. The agent of Henry VIII and the messenger threaded the streets of Antwerp, went out of the city, and at last reached a lonely field, by the side of which the Scheldt flowed sluggishly through the level country. As he advanced, Vaughan saw a man of noble bearing awaiting him. "Do you not recognize me?" he asked Vaughan. "I cannot call to mind your features," answered the latter. "My name is Tyndale," said the stranger. "Tyndale!" exclaimed Vaughan with delight. "Tyndale! what a happy meeting!"

Tyndale, who had heard of Henry’s new plans, had no confidence either in the prince or in his pretended Reformation. The king’s endless negotiations with the pope, his worldliness, his amours, his persecution of evangelical Christians, and especially the ignominious punishment inflicted on John Tyndale—all these
matters disgusted him. However, having been informed of the nature of Vaughan’s mission, he desired to turn it to advantage by addressing a few warnings to the prince. "I have written certain books," he said, "to warn his Majesty of the subtle demeanor of the clergy of his realm towards his person, in which doing I showed the heart of a true subject, to the intent that his Grace might prepare remedies against their subtle dreams. An exile from my native country, I suffer hunger, thirst, cold, absence of friends, everywhere encompassed with great danger; in innumerable hard and sharp fightings, I do not feel their asperity, by reason that I hope with my labors to do honor to God, true service to my prince, and pleasure to his commons."

"Cheer up," said Vaughan, "your exile, poverty, fightings, all are at an end; you can return to England." ... "What matters it," said Tyndale, "if my exile finishes, so long as the Bible is banished? Has the king forgotten that God has commanded His Word to be spread throughout the world? If it continues to be forbidden to his subjects, very death were more pleasant to me than life."

Vaughan did not consider himself worsted. The messenger, who remained at a distance and could hear nothing, was astonished at seeing the two men in that solitary field conversing together so long, and with so much animation. "Tell me what guarantees you desire," said Vaughan, "the king will grant them you." "Of course the king would give me a safe-conduct," answered Tyndale, "but the clergy would persuade him that promises made to heretics are not binding."

Night was coming on, Henry’s agent might have had Tyndale followed and seized. The idea occurred to Vaughan, but he rejected it. Tyndale began, however, to feel himself ill at ease. "Farewell," he said, "you shall see me again before long, or hear news of me." He then departed, walking away from Antwerp. Vaughan, who re-entered the city, was surprised to see Tyndale make for the open country. He supposed it to be a stratagem, and once more doubted whether he ought not to have seized the Reformer to please his master. "I might have failed of my purpose," he said; besides it was now too late, for Tyndale had disappeared.

As soon as Vaughan reached home he hastened to send to London an account of this singular conference. Cromwell immediately proceeded to court and laid before the king the envoy’s letter and the Reformer’s book. "Good!" said Henry, "as soon as I have leisure I will read them both." He did so, and was exasperated against Tyndale, who refused his invitation, mistrusted his word, and even dared to give him advice. In his passion the king in all probability tore off the latter part of Vaughan’s letter, flung it in the fire, and entirely gave up his idea of bringing the Reformer into England to make use of him against the pope, fearing that such a torch would set the whole kingdom in a blaze. He thought only how he could seize him and punish him for his arrogance.

He sent for Cromwell; before him on the table lay the treatise by Tyndale, which Vaughan had copied and sent. "These pages," said Henry to his minister,
while pointing to the manuscript, "these pages are the work of a visionary; they are full of lies, sedition, and calumny. Vaughan shows too much affection for Tyndale. Let him beware of inviting him to come into the kingdom. He is a perverse and hardened character who cannot be changed. I am too happy that he is out of England."

Cromwell retired in vexation. He wrote to Vaughan, but the king found the letter too weak, and Cromwell had to correct it, to make it harmonize with the wrath of the prince.

An ambitious man, he bent before the obstinate will of his master, but the loss of Tyndale seemed irreparable. Accordingly, while informing Vaughan of the king’s anger, he added that if wholesome reflection should bring Tyndale to reason, the king was "so inclined to mercy, pity, and compassion," that he would doubtless see him with pleasure. Vaughan, whose heart Tyndale had gained, began to hunt after him again, and had a second interview with him. He gave him Cromwell’s letter to read, and when the Reformer came to the words we have just quoted about Henry’s compassion, his eyes filled with tears. "What gracious words!" he exclaimed. "Yes," said Vaughan, "they have such sweetness, that they would break the hardest heart in the world."

Tyndale, deeply moved, tried to find some mode of fulfilling his duty towards God and towards the king. "If his Majesty," he said, "would condescend to permit only a bare text of the Scriptures to circulate among the people, as they do in the states of the Emperor and in other Christian countries, I would bind myself never to write again; I would throw myself at his feet, offering my body as a sacrifice, ready to submit if necessary to torture and to death."

But a gulf lay between the monarch and the Reformer. Henry VIII saw the seeds of heresy in the Scriptures, and Tyndale rejected every reformation which they wished to carry out by proscribing the Bible. "Heresy springeth not from the Scriptures," he said, "no more than darkness from the sun." Tyndale disappeared again, and the name of his hiding place is unknown.

The King of England was not discouraged by the check he had received. He wanted men possessed of talent and zeal, men resolved to attack the pope. Cambridge had given England a teacher who might be placed beside, and perhaps even above, Latimer and Tyndale; this was John Fryth. He thirsted for the truth; he sought God, and was determined to give himself wholly to Jesus Christ. One day Cromwell said to the king, "What a pity it is, your Highness, that a man so distinguished as Fryth in letters and sciences, should be among the sectarian!" Like Tyndale, he had quitted England. Cromwell, with Henry’s consent, wrote to Vaughan, "His Majesty strongly desires the reconciliation of Fryth, who (he firmly believes) is not so far advanced as Tyndale in the evil way. Always full of mercy, the king is ready to receive him to favour; try to attract him charitably, politically." Vaughan immediately began his inquiries; it was May 1531, but the first news he received was that Fryth, a minister of the
Gospel, was just married in Holland. "This marriage," he wrote to the king, "may by chance hinder my persuasion." This was not all; Fryth was boldly printing, at Amsterdam, Tyndale’s answer to Sir Thomas More. Henry was forced to give him up, as he had given up his friend. He succeeded with none but Latimer, and even the chaplain told him many harsh truths. There was a decided incompatibility between the spiritual reform and the political reform; the work of God refused to ally itself with the work of the throne. The Christian faith and the visible Church are two distinct things. Some (and among them the Reformers) require Christianity—a living Christianity; others (and it was the case of Henry and his prelates) look for the Church and its hierarchy, and care little whether a living faith be found there or not. This is a capital error. Real religion must exist first, and then this religion must produce a true religious society. Tyndale, Fryth, and their friends desired to begin with religion; Henry and his followers with an ecclesiastical society, hostile to faith. The king and the reformers could not, therefore, come to an understanding. Henry, profoundly hurt by the boldness of those evangelical men, swore that as they would not have peace they should have war... war to the knife.

CHAPTER 9

The King of England—"Head of the Church"
January to March, 1530

Henry VIII desired to introduce great changes into the ecclesiastical corporation of his kingdom. His royal power had much to bear from the power of the clergy. It was the same in all Catholic monarchies, but England had more to complain of than others. Of the three estates, Clergy, Nobility, and Commons, the first was the most powerful. The nobility had been weakened by the civil wars; the commons had long been without authority and energy; the prelates thus occupied the first rank, so that in 1529 an archbishop and cardinal (Wolsey) was the most powerful man in England, not even the king excepted. Henry had felt the yoke, and wished to free himself, not only from the domination of the pope, but also from the influence of the higher clergy. If he had only intended to be avenged of the pontiff, it would have been enough to allow the Reformation to act; when a mighty wind blows from heaven, it sweeps away all the contrivances of men. But Henry was deficient neither in prudence nor calculation. He feared lest a diversity of doctrine should engender disturbances in his kingdom. He wished to free himself from the pope and the prelates, without throwing himself into the arms of Tyndale or of Latimer.
Kings and people had observed that the domination of the Papacy, and its authority over the clergy, were an insurmountable obstacle to the autonomy of the State. As far back as 1268, St. Louis had declared that France owed allegiance to God alone, and other princes had followed his example. Henry VIII determined to do more—to break the chains which bound the clergy to the Romish throne, and fasten them to the crown. The power of England, delivered from the papacy, which had been its cankerworm, would then be developed with freedom and energy, and would place the country in the foremost rank among nations. The renovating spirit of the age was favorable to Henry’s plans; without delay he must put into execution the bold plan which Cromwell had unrolled before his eyes in Whitehall Park. Henry concentrated upon having himself recognized as head of the Church.

This important revolution could not be accomplished by a simple act of royal authority, in England particularly, where constitutional principles already possessed an incontestable influence. It was necessary to prevail upon the clergy to cross the Rubicon by emancipating themselves from Rome. But how to bring it about? This was the subject of the meditations of the sagacious Cromwell, who, gradually rising in the king’s confidence to the place formerly held by Wolsey, made a different use of it. Urged by ambition, possessing an energetic character, a sound judgment, unshaken firmness, no obstacle could arrest his activity. He sought how he could give the king the spiritual scepter, and this was the plan on which he fixed. The kings of England had been known occasionally to revive old laws fallen into desuetude, and visit with heavy penalties those who had violated them. Cromwell represented to the king that the statutes made punishable any man who should recognize a dignity established by the pope in the English Church; that Wolsey, by exercising the functions of papal legate, had encroached upon the rights of the Crown and been condemned, which was but justice; while the members of the clergy—who had recognized the unlawful jurisdiction of the pretended legate—had thereby become as guilty as he had been. "The statute of Praemunire," he said, "condemns them as well as their chief." Henry, who listened attentively, found that the expedient of his Secretary of State was in conformity with the letter of the law, and that it put all the clergy in his power. He did not hesitate to give full power to his ministers. Under such a state of things there was not one innocent person in England; the two houses of parliament, the privy council, all the nation must be brought to the bar. Henry, full of "condescension," was pleased to confine himself to the clergy.

The convocation of the province of Canterbury having met on the 7th of January, 1531, Cromwell entered the hall and quietly took his seat among the bishops; then rising, he informed them that their property and benefices were to be confiscated for the good of his Majesty, because they had submitted to the unconstitutional power of the cardinal. What terrible news! It was a thunderbolt to those selfish prelates; they were amazed. At length some of them plucked up a little courage. "The king himself had sanctioned the
authority of the cardinal-legate,” they said. “We merely obeyed his supreme will. Our resistance to his Majesty’s proclamations would infallibly have ruined us.” “That is of no consequence,” was the reply, “there was the law; you should obey the constitution of the country even at the peril of your lives.” The terrified bishops laid at the foot of the throne a magnificent sum by which they hoped to redeem their offenses and their benefices. But that was not what Henry desired; he pretended to set little store by their money. The threat of confiscation must constrain them to pay a ransom of still greater value. “My lords,” said Cromwell, “in a petition that some of you presented to the pope not long ago, you called the king your soul and your head. Come, then, expressly recognize the supremacy of the king over the Church, and his Majesty, of his great goodness, will grant you your pardon.” What a demand! The distracted clergy assembled, and a deliberation of extreme importance began. “The words in the address to the pope,” said some, “were a mere form, and had not the meaning ascribed to them.” “The king being unable to untie the Gordian knot at Rome,” said others, alluding to the divorce, “intends to cut it with his sword.” “The secular power,” exclaimed the most zealous, “has no voice in ecclesiastical matters. To recognize the king as head of the Church would be to overthrow the catholic faith. ... The head of the Church is the pope.” The debate lasted three days, and as Henry’s ministers pointed to the theocratic government of Israel, a priest exclaimed, “We oppose the New Testament to the Old; according to the gospel, Christ is head of the Church.” When this was told the king, he said, “Very well, I consent. If you declare me head of the Church you may add under God.” In this way the papal claims here compromised all the more. “We will expose ourselves to everything,” they said, “rather than dethrone the Roman pontiff.”

The bishops of Lincoln and Exeter were deputed to beseech the king to withdraw his demand; they could not so much as obtain an audience. Henry had made up his mind—the priests must yield. The only means of their obtaining pardon (they were told) was by their renouncing the papal supremacy. The bishops made a fresh attempt to satisfy both the requirements of the king and those of their own conscience. “Shrink before the clergy and they are lions,” the courtiers said, “withstand them and they are sheep.” “Your fate is in your own hands. If you refuse the king’s demand, the disgrace of Wolsey may show you what you may expect.” Archbishop Warham, president of the convocation, a prudent man, far advanced in years and near his end, tried to hit upon some compromise. The great movements which agitated the Church all over Europe disturbed him. He had in times past complained to the king of Wolsey’s usurpations, and was not far from recognizing the royal supremacy. He proposed to insert a simple clause in the act conferring the required jurisdiction on the king, namely, *Quantum per legem Christi licet* (so far as the law of Christ permits). “You have played me a shrewd turn,” exclaimed the King. “I thought to have made fools of those prelates, and now you have so ordered the business that they are likely to make a fool of me. Go to them again, and let me have the business passed without any guantums or
So far as the law of Christ permits! Such a reserve would make one believe that my authority was disputable."

Henry’s ministers ventured on this occasion to resist him; they showed him that this clause would prevent an immediate rupture with Rome, and it might be repealed hereafter. He yielded at last, and the archbishop submitted the clause with the amendment to convocation. It was a solemn moment for England. The bishops were convinced that the king was asking them to do what was wrong, the end of which would be a rupture with Rome. In the time of Hildebrand the prelates would have answered "No," and found a sympathetic support in the laity. But things had changed; the people were weary of the long domination of the priests. The primate, desirous of ending the matter, said to his colleagues, "Do you recognize the king as sole protector of the Church and clergy of England, and, so far as is allowed by the law of Christ, also as your supreme head?" All remained speechless. "Will you let me know your opinions?" resumed the archbishop. There was a dead silence. "Whoever is silent seems to consent," said the primate. "Then we are all silent," answered one of the members. Were these words inspired by courage or by cowardice? Were they an assent or a protest? We cannot say. In this matter we cannot side either with the king or with the priests. The heart of man easily takes the part of those who are oppressed, but here the oppressed were also oppressors. Convocation next gave its support to the opinion of the universities respecting the divorce, and thus Henry gained his first victory.

For breach of præmunire the Convocation of Canterbury was permitted by the king to purchase his pardon by rendering to the royal exchequer a hundred thousand pounds sterling, an enormous sum for those times. This was in February, 1531. Later in the year the Convocation of York followed suit with a payment of a little less than nineteen thousand pounds. Thus at one stroke the clergy of England were deprived of both riches and honor.

Animated discussion took place in the northern Convocation. "If you proclaim the king supreme head," said bishop Tunstall, "it can only be in temporal matters." "Indeed!" retorted Henry’s minister, "is an act of convocation necessary to determine that the king reigns?" "If spiritual things are meant," answered the bishop, "I withdraw from convocation that I may not withdraw from the Church."

"My lords," said Henry, "no one disputes your right to preach and administer the sacraments. Did not Paul submit to Caesar’s tribunal, and our Savior himself to Pilate’s?" Henry’s ecclesiastical theories prevailed also at York. A great revolution was effected in England, and fresh compromises were to consolidate it.

The king, having obtained what he desired, condescended in his great mercy to pardon the clergy for their unpardonable offense of having recognized Wolsey.
as papal legate. At the request of the Commons this amnesty was extended to all England. The nation, which at first saw nothing in this affair but an act enfranchising themselves from the usurped power of the popes, showed their gratitude to Henry, but there was a reverse to the medal. If the pope was despoiled, the king was invested. Was not the function ascribed to him contrary to the Gospel? Would not this act impress upon the Anglican Reformation a territorial and aristocratic character, which would introduce into the Reformed Church the world with all its splendor and wealth? If the royal preeminence endows the Anglican Church with the pomps of worship, of classical studies, of high dignities, will it not also carry along with it luxury, sinecures, and worldliness among the prelates? Shall we not see the royal authority pronounce on questions of dogma, and declare the most sacred doctrines indifferent? A little later an attempt was made to limit the power of the king in religious matters. "We give not to our princes the ministry of God’s Word or the sacraments," says the thirty-seventh Article of Religion.

CHAPTER 10

The King Puts Catherine Away
March to June 1531

The king, having obtained so important a concession from the clergy, turned to his parliament to ask a service of another kind—one in his eyes still more urgent.

On the 30th of March, 1531, the session being about to terminate, Sir Thomas More, the chancellor, went to the House of Commons, and submitted to them the decision of the various universities on the king’s marriage and the power of the pope. The Commons looked at the affair essentially from a political point of view; they did not understand that because the king had lived twenty years with the queen, he ought not to be separated from her. The documents placed before their eyes "made them detest the marriage" of Henry and Catherine. The chancellor desired the members to report in their respective counties and towns that the king had not asked for this divorce of his own will or pleasure, but "only for the discharge of his conscience and surety of the succession of his crown." "Enlighten the people," he said, "and preserve peace in the nation with the sentiments of loyalty due to the monarch."

The king hastened to use the powers which universities, clergy, and parliament had placed in his hands. Immediately after the prorogation, certain lords went down to Greenwich and laid before the queen the decisions which condemned her marriage, and urged her to accept the arbitration of four bishops and four
lay peers. Catherine replied sadly but firmly, "I pray you, tell the king I say I
am his lawful wife, and in that point I will abide until the court of Rome
determine to the contrary."

The divorce which, notwithstanding Catherine’s refusal, was approaching,
caused great agitation among the people, and the members of parliament had
some trouble to preserve order, as Sir Thomas More had desired them. Priests
proclaimed from their pulpits the downfall of the Church and the coming of
Antichrist; the mendicant friars scattered discontent in every house which they
entered, the most fanatical of them not fearing to insinuate that the wrath of
God would soon hurl the impious prince from his throne. In towns and villages,
in castles and alehouses, men talked of nothing but the divorce and the
primacy claimed by the king. Women standing at their doors, men gathering
round the blacksmith’s forge, spoke more or less disrespectfully of parliament,
the bishops, the dangers of the Romish Church, and the prospects of the
Reformation. If a few friends met at night around the hearth, they told strange
tales to one another. The king, queen, pope, devil, saints, Cromwell, and the
higher clergy formed the subject of their conversation. The gypsies at that
time strolling through the country added to the confusion. Sometimes they
would appear in the midst of these animated discussions, and prophesy
lamentable events, at times calling up the dead to make them speak of the
future. The terrible calamities they predicted froze their hearers with affright,
and their sinister prophecies were the cause of disorders and even of crimes.
Accordingly an act was passed pronouncing the penalty of banishment against
them.

An unfortunate event tended still more to strike men’s imaginations. It was
reported that the bishop of Rochester, that prelate so terrible to the reformers
and so good to the poor, had narrowly escaped being poisoned by his cook.
Seventeen persons were taken ill after eating porridge at the episcopal palace;
one of the bishop’s gentlemen died, as well as a poor woman to whom the
remains of the food had been given. It was maliciously remarked that the
bishop was the only one who frankly opposed the divorce and the royal
supremacy. Calumny even aimed at the throne. When Henry heard of this, he
resolved to make short work of all such nonsense; he ordered the offense to be
deeded as high treason, and the wretched cook was taken to Smithfield, there
to be boiled to death. This was a variation of the penalty pronounced upon the
evangelicals. Such was the cruel justice of the sixteenth century.

While the universities, parliament, convocation, and the nation appeared to
support Henry VIII, one voice was raised against the divorce. It was that of a
young man, brought up by the king, and that voice moved him deeply. There
still remained in England some scions of the house of York, and among them a
nephew of that unhappy Warwick whom Henry VII had cruelly put to death.
Warwick’s sister, Margaret, had been married to Sir Richard Pole, a knight of
Buckinghamshire. In 1505 she was left a widow with two daughters and three
sons; the youngest, Reginald, became a favorite with Henry VIII, who destined him for the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. "Your kindnesses are such," said Pole to him, "that a king could grant no more, even to a son." But Reginald, to whom his mother had told the story of the execution of the unhappy Warwick, had contracted an invincible hatred against the Tudors. Accordingly, in despite of certain evangelical tendencies, Pole seeing Henry separating from the pope, resolved to throw himself into the arms of the pontiff. Reginald, invested with the Roman purple, rose to be president of the council and primate of all England under Queen Mary. Elegant in his manners, with a fine intellect, and sincere in his religious convictions, he was selfish, irritable, and ambitious; desires of elevation and revenge led a noble nature astray. If the branch of which he was the representative was ever to recover the crown, it could only be by the help of the Roman pontiffs; henceforward their cause was his. Loaded with benefits by Henry VIII, he was incessantly pursued by the recollection of the rights of Rome and of the White Rose, and he went so far as to insult before all Europe the prince who had been his first friend.

At this time Pole was living at a house in the country which Henry had given him. One day he received at this charming retreat a communication from the duke of Norfolk. "The king destines you for the highest honors of the English Church," wrote this nobleman, "and offers you at once the important sees of York and Winchester, left vacant by the death of Cardinal Wolsey." At the same time the duke asked Pole's opinion about the divorce. Reginald's brothers, and particularly the eldest, Lord Montague, entreated him to answer as all the catholic world had answered, and not irritate a prince whose anger would ruin them all. The blood of Warwick and the king's revolt against Rome induced Pole to reject with horror all the honors which Henry offered, and yet that prince was his benefactor. He fancied he had discovered a middle course which would permit him to satisfy alike his conscience and his king.

He went to Whitehall, where Henry received him like a friend. Pole hesitated in distress; he wished to let the king know his thoughts, but the words would not come to his lips. At last, encouraged by the prince's affability, he summoned up his resolution, and in a voice trembling with emotion, said, "You must not separate from the queen." Henry had expected something different. Was it thus that his kindnesses were to be repaid? His eyes flashed with anger, and he laid his hand on his sword. Pole humbled himself, "If I possess any knowledge, to whom do I owe it, unless to your Majesty? In listening to me, you are listening to your own pupil." The king recovered himself, and said, "I will consider your opinion, and send you my answer." Pole withdrew. "He put me in such a passion," said the king to one of his gentlemen, "that I nearly struck him. ... But there is something in the man that wins my heart."

Montague and Reginald's other brother again conjured him to accept the high position which the king reserved for him, but his soul revolted at being subordinate to a Tudor. He therefore wrote a memoir, which he presented to
Henry, and in which he entreated him implicitly to submit the divorce question to the court of Rome. "How could I speak against your marriage with the queen?" he said. "Should I not accuse your Majesty of having lived for more than twenty years in an unlawful union? By the divorce, you will array all the powers against you—the pope, the Emperor; and as for the French... we can never find in our hearts to trust them. You are at this moment on the verge of an abyss. ... One step more, and all is over. There is only one way of safety left your Grace, and that is submission to the pope."

Henry was moved. The boldness with which this young nobleman dared accuse him irritated his pride; still his friendship prevailed, and he forgave it. Pole received the permission he had asked to leave England, and to continue to draw his revenues as Dean of Exeter.

Reginald Pole was, as it were, the last link that united the royal pair. Thus far the king had continued to show the queen every respect; their mutual affection seemed the same, only they occupied separate rooms. Henry now decided to take an important step. On the 14th of July, 1531, a new deputation entered the queen’s apartment at Windsor, one of whom informed her that as her marriage with Prince Arthur had been duly consummated she could not be the wife of her husband’s brother. Then after reproaching her with having, contrary to the laws of England and the dignity of the crown, cited his Majesty before the pope’s tribunal, he desired her to choose for her residence either the castle of Oking or of Estamsteed, or the monastery of Bisham. Catherine remained calm, and replied, "Wheresoever I retire, nothing can deprive me of the title which belongs to me. I shall always be his Majesty’s wife." She left Windsor the same day, and removed to the More in Hertfordshire, a splendid mansion which Wolsey had surrounded with beautiful gardens; then to Estamsteed, and finally to Ampthill in Bedfordshire. The king never saw her again, but all the papists and discontented rallied round her. She entered into correspondence with the sovereigns of Europe, and became the center of a party opposed to the emancipation of England.

CHAPTER 11

"Not Sparing the Flock"

September, 1531 to 1532

As Henry, by breaking with Catherine, had broken with the pope, he felt the necessity of uniting more closely with his clergy. Wishing to proceed to the establishment of his new dignity, he required bishops, and particularly dexterous bishops. He therefore made Edward Lee archbishop of York, and
Stephen Gardiner bishop of Winchester; and these two men, devoted to scholastic doctrines, ambitious and servile, were commissioned to inaugurate the new ecclesiastical monarchy of the king of England. Although the pope had hastened to send off their bulls, they declared they held their dignity “immediately and only” of the king, and began without delay to organize a strange league. If the king needed the bishops against the pope, the bishops needed the king against the reformers. It was not long before this alliance received its baptism of blood.

But before proceeding so far, the prelates deliberated about the means of raising the £119,000 they had bound themselves to pay the king. Each wished to make his own share as small as possible, and throw the largest part of the burden upon his colleagues. The bishops determined to place it in great measure on the shoulders of the parochial clergy.

Stokesley, bishop of London, began the battle. An able, greedy, violent man, and jealous of his prerogatives, he called a meeting of six or eight priests on whom he believed he could depend, in order to draw up with their assistance such resolutions as he could afterwards impose more easily upon their brethren. These picked ecclesiastics were desired to meet on the 1st of September, 1531, in the chapter-house of St. Paul’s.

The bishop’s plan had got wind, and excited general indignation in the city. Was it just that the victims should pay the fine? Some of the laity, delighted at seeing the clergy quarrelling, sought to fan the flame instead of extinguishing it.

When the 1st of September arrived, the bishop entered the chapter-house with his officers, where the conference with the priests was to be held. Presently an unusual noise was heard round St. Paul’s; not only the six or eight priests, but six hundred, accompanied by a great number of citizens and common people, made their appearance. The crowd swayed to and fro before the cathedral gates, shouting and clamoring to be admitted into the chapter-house on the same footing as the select few. What was to be done? The prelate’s councilors advised him to add a few of the less violent priests to those he had already chosen. Stokesley adopted their advice, hoping that the gates and bolts would be strong enough to keep out the rest. Accordingly he drew up a list of new members, and one of his officers, going out to the angry crowd, read the names of those whom the bishop had selected. The latter came forward, not without trouble; but at the same time the excluded priests made a vigorous attempt to enter. There was a fierce struggle of men pushing and shouting, but the bishop’s officials having passed in quickly, those who had been nominated hurriedly closed the doors. So far the victory seemed to rest with the bishop, and he was about to speak, when the uproar became deafening. The priests outside, exasperated because their financial matters were to be settled without them, protested that they ought to hold their own purse-strings. Laying
hands on whatever they could find, and aided by the laity, they began to batter the door of the chapter-house. They succeeded; the door gave way, and all, priests and citizens, rushed in together. The bishop’s officials tried in vain to stop them; they were roughly pushed aside. Their gowns were torn, their faces streamed with perspiration, their features were disfigured, and some even were wounded. The furious priests entered the room at last, storming and shouting. It was more like a pack of hounds rushing on a stag than the reverend clergy of the metropolis of England appearing before their bishop. The prelate, who had tact, showed no anger, but sought rather to calm the rioters. "My brethren," he said, "I marvel not a little why ye be so heady. Ye know not what shall be said to you, therefore I pray you hear me patiently. Ye all know that we be men frail of condition, and by our lack of wisdom have misdemeaned ourselves towards the king and fallen in a praemunire, by reason whereof all our lands, goods, and chattels were to him forfeit, and our bodies ready to be imprisoned. Yet his Grace of his great clemency is pleased to pardon us, and to accept of a little instead of the whole of our benefices, to be paid in five years. I exhort you to bear your parts towards payment of this sum granted."

This was just what the priests did not want. They thought it strange to be asked for money for an offense they had not committed. "My lord," answered one, "we have never offended against the praemunire, we have never meddled with cardinal’s faculties. Let the bishops and abbots pay; they committed the offense, and they have good places." "My lord," added another, "twenty nobles a year is but a bare living for a priest, and yet it is all we have. Everything is now so dear that poverty compels us to say ‘No.’ Having no need of the king’s pardon, we have no desire to pay." These words were drowned in applause. "No," exclaimed the crowd, which was getting noisy again, "we will pay nothing." The bishop’s officers grew angry and came to high words; the priests returned abuse for abuse; and the citizens, delighted to see their "masters" quarrelling, fanned the strife. From words they soon came to blows. The episcopal ushers, who tried to restore order, were "buffeted and stricken," and even the bishop’s life was in danger. At last the meeting broke up in great confusion. Stokesley hastened to complain to the chancellor, Sir Thomas More, who, being a great friend of the prelate’s, sent fifteen priests and five laymen to prison. They deserved it, no doubt; but the bishops, who, to spare their superfluity, robbed poor curates of their necessaries, were more guilty still.

Such was the unity that existed between the bishops and the priests of England at the very time the Reformation was appearing at the doors. The prelates understood the danger to which they were exposed through that evangelical doctrine, the source of light and life. They knew that all their ecclesiastical pretensions would crumble away before the breath of the divine Word. Accordingly, not content with robbing of their little substance the poor pastors to whom they should have been as fathers, they determined to deprive those whom they called heretics, not only of their money, but of their liberty and life. Would Henry permit this?
The king did not wish to withdraw England from the papal jurisdiction without the assent of the clergy. If he did so of his own authority, the priests would rise against him and compare him to Luther. There were at that time three great parties in Christendom—the evangelical, the catholic, and the popish. Henry purposed to overthrow popery, but without going so far as evangelicalism; he desired to remain in catholicism. One means occurred of satisfying the clergy. Although they were fanatical partisans of the Church, they had sacrificed the pope; they now imagined that, by sacrificing a few heretics, they would atone for their cowardly submission. In a later age Louis XIV did the same to make up for errors of another kind. The provincial synod of Canterbury met and addressed the king: “Your Highness one time defended the Church with your pen, when you were only a member of it; now that you are its supreme head, your Majesty should crush its enemies, and so shall your merits exceed all praise.”

In order to prove that he was not another Luther, Henry VIII consented to hand over the disciples of that heretic to the priests; and gave them authority to imprison and burn them, provided they would aid the king to resume the power usurped by the pope. The bishops immediately began to hunt down the friends of the Gospel.

A will had given rise to much talk in the county of Gloucester. William Tracy, a gentleman of irreproachable conduct and “full of good works, equally generous to the clergy and the laity,” had died praying God to save his soul through the merits of Jesus Christ, but leaving no money to the priests for masses. The primate of England had his bones dug up and burnt. But this was not enough; they must also burn the living.

The “testament and last will” of William Tracy is worthy of notice as showing how far Reformed doctrine had penetrated into England by the year 1530. Tracy belonged to Toddington, eight miles south of Evesham, and was at one time High Sheriff of his county. His will ran as follows: “First and before all other things, I commit myself to God and to His mercy, believing, without any doubt or mistrust, that by His grace, and the merits of Jesus Christ, and by the virtue of His passion and of His resurrection, I have and shall have remission of all my sins, and resurrection of body and soul, according as it is written, I believe that my Redeemer liveth, and that in the last day I shall rise out of the earth, and in my flesh shall see my Saviour: this my hope is laid up in my bosom. And touching the wealth of my soul, the faith that I have taken and rehearsed is sufficient (as I suppose) without any other man’s works or merits. My ground of belief is, that there is but one God and one Mediator between God and man, which is Jesus Christ; so that I accept none in heaven or in earth to be mediator between me and God, but only Jesus Christ:
and therefore will I bestow no part of my goods for that intent that any man should say or do to help my soul: for therein I trust only to the promises of Christ: ‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.’ As touching the burying of my body, it availeth me not whatsoever be done thereto; for... the funeral pomps are rather the solace of them that live, than the wealth and comfort of them that are dead. And touching the distribution of my temporal goods, my purpose is, by the grace of God, to bestow them to be accepted as the fruits of faith; so that I do not suppose that my merit shall be by the good bestowing of them, but my merit is the faith of Jesus Christ only, by whom such works are good... and ever we should consider that true saying, that a good work maketh not a good man but a good man maketh a good work; for faith maketh a man both good and righteous; for a righteous man liveth by faith, and whatsoever springeth not of faith is sin. Witness mine own hand the tenth of October in the twenty-second year of the reign of King Henry the Eighth."

It was for such a clear testimony as this that the dead body of this worthy successor of Wycliffe was exhumed and burnt nearly two years after his death. The will was likewise condemned under the common seal of the University of Oxford on the 28th of January, 1531.

CHAPTER 12

The Martyrs

1531

The first blows were aimed at the court chaplain. The bishops, finding it dangerous to have such a man near the king, would have liked (Latimer tells us) to place him on burning coals. But Henry loved him, the blow failed, and the priests had to turn to those who were not so well favored at court.

Thomas Bilney, whose conversion had begun the Reformation in England, had been compelled to do penance at St. Paul’s Cross, but from that time he became the prey of the direst terror. His backsliding had manifested the weakness of his faith. Bilney possessed a sincere and lively piety, but a judgment less sound than many of his friends. He had not got rid of certain scruples
which in Luther and Calvin had yielded to the supreme authority of God's Word. In his opinion none but priests consecrated by bishops had the power to bind and loose. This mixture of truth and error had caused his fall. Such sincere but imperfectly enlightened persons are always to be met with—persons who, agitated by the scruples of their conscience, waver between Rome and the Word of God.

At last faith gained the upper hand in Bilney. Leaving his Cambridge friends, he had gone into the Eastern counties to meet his martyrdom. One day, arriving at a hermitage in the vicinity of Norwich, where a pious woman dwelt, his words converted her to Christ. He then began to preach "openly in the fields" to great crowds. His voice was heard in all the county; weeping over his former fall, he said, "That doctrine which I once abjured is the truth. Let my example be a lesson to all who hear me."

Before long he turned his steps in the direction of London, and, stopping at Ipswich, was not content to preach the Gospel only, but violently attacked the errors of Rome before an astonished audience. Some friars had crept among his hearers, and Bilney perceiving them called out, "The Lamb of God taketh away the sins of the world. If the bishop of Rome dares say that the hood of St. Francis saves, he blasphemes the blood of the Savior." John Huggen, one of the friars, immediately made a note of the words. Bilney continued, "To invoke the saints and not Christ, is to put the head under the feet and the feet above the head." Richard Seman took down these words. "Men will come after me," continued Bilney, "who will teach the same faith and manner of living that I do, the true gospel of our Savior, and will disentangle you from the errors in which deceivers have bound you so long." Friar Julles hastened to write down the bold prediction.

Latimer, surrounded by the favors of the king and the luxury of the great, watched his friend from afar. He called to mind their walks in the fields round Cambridge, their serious conversation as they climbed the hill, afterwards called after them "the heretics' hill," and the visits they had paid together to the poor and to the prisoners. Latimer had seen Bilney very recently at Cambridge in fear and anguish, and had tried in vain to restore him to peace. "He now rejoiced that God had endued him with such strength of faith, that he was ready to be burnt for Christ's sake."

Bilney, drawing still nearer to London, arrived at Greenwich about the middle of July. He procured some New Testaments, and hiding them carefully under his clothes, called upon a humble
Christian named Lawrence Staples. Taking them "out of his sleeves," he desired Staples to distribute them among his friends. Then, as if impelled by a thirst for martyrdom, and saying that "he would go up to Jerusalem," he turned again toward Norwich, whose bishop Richard Nix, a blind octogenarian, was in the front rank of the persecutors. Arriving at the solitary place where the pious "anachoress" lived, he left one of the precious volumes with her. This visit cost Bilney his life. The poor solitary read the New Testament, and lent it to the people who came to see her. The bishop, hearing of it, informed Sir Thomas More, who had Bilney arrested, brought to London, and shut up in the Tower.

Bilney began to breathe again; a load was taken off him; he was about to suffer the penalty his fall deserved. In the room next to his was John Petit, a member of parliament of some eloquence, who had distributed his books and his alms in England and beyond the seas. Philips, the under-gaoler of the Tower, who was a good man, told the two prisoners that only a wooden partition separated them, which was a source of great joy to both. He would often remove a panel, and permit them to converse and take their frugal meals together.

This happiness did not last long. Bilney’s trial was to take place at Norwich, where he had been captured; the aged bishop Nix wanted to make an example in his diocese. A crowd of monks and friars—Augustins, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Carmelites—visited the prison of the evangelist to convert him. Dr. Call, provincial of the Franciscans, having consented that the prisoner should make use of Scripture, was shaken in his faith; but, on the other hand, Stokes, an Augustin and a determined papist, repeated to Bilney, "If you die in your opinions, you will be lost."

The trial commenced, and the witnesses gave their evidence. "He said," deposed William Cade, "that the Jews and Saracens would have been converted long since, if the idolatry of the Christians had not disgusted them with Christianity." "I heard him say," added Richard Neale, "‘Down with your gods of gold, silver, and stone.’" "He stated," resumed Cade, "that the priests take away the offerings from the saints and hang them about their women’s necks; and then, if the offerings do not prove fine enough, they are put upon the images again."

Everyone foresaw the end of this piteous trial. One of Bilney’s friends endeavored to save him. Latimer took the matter into the pulpit, and conjured the judges to decide according to justice. Although Bilney’s name was not uttered, they all knew who was
meant. The bishop of London went and complained to the king that his chaplain had the audacity to defend the heretic against the bishop and his judges. Said Latimer later, "It might have become a preacher to say as I said, though Bilney had never been born." The chaplain escaped once more, thanks to the favor he enjoyed with Henry.

Bilney was condemned, and after being degraded by the priests, was handed over to the two sheriffs of Norwich, one of whom, having great respect for his virtues, begged pardon for discharging his duty. The prudent bishop wrote to the chancellor, asking for an order to burn the heretic. "Burn him first," rudely answered More, "and then ask me for a bill of indemnity."

A few of Bilney’s friends went to Norwich to bid him farewell; among them was Matthew Parker, later archbishop of Canterbury. It was in the evening, and Bilney was taking his last meal. On the table stood some frugal fare (ale brew), and on his countenance beamed the joy that filled his soul. "I am surprised," said one of his friends, "that you can eat so cheerfully." "I only follow the example of the husbandmen of the country," answered Bilney, "who having a ruinous house to dwell in, yet bestow cost so long as they may hold it up, and so do I now with this ruinous house of my body." With these words he rose from the table, and sat down near his friends, one of whom said to him, "Tomorrow the fire will make you feel its devouring fierceness, but the comfort of God’s Holy Spirit will cool it for your everlasting refreshing." Bilney, appearing to reflect upon what had been said, stretched out his hand towards the lamp that was burning on the table and placed his finger in the flame. "What are you doing?" they exclaimed. "Nothing," he replied, "I am only trying my flesh; tomorrow God’s rods shall burn my whole body in the fire." And still keeping his finger in the flame, as if he were making a curious experiment, he continued, "I feel that fire by God’s ordinance is naturally hot; but yet I am persuaded, by God’s Holy Word and the experience of the martyrs, that when the flames consume me, I shall not feel them. Howsoever this stubble of my body shall be wasted by it, a pain for the time is followed by joy unspeakable." He then withdrew his finger, the first joint of which was burnt. He added, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned." These words remained imprinted on the hearts of some who heard them, until the day of their death, says a chronicler.

In Bilney’s Bible, which is preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, this passage (Isaiah 43:1-3) is marked in the margin with a pen.
The book also contains many annotations in Bilney’s own hand.

Beyond the city gate—that known as the Bishop’s gate—was a low valley, called the Lollards’ Pit; it was surrounded by rising ground, forming a sort of amphitheatre. On Saturday, the 19th of August, a body of javelin-men came to fetch Bilney, who met them at the prison gate. One of his friends approaching and exhorting him to be firm, Bilney replied, “When the sailor goes on board his ship and launches out into the stormy sea, he is tossed to and fro by the waves, but the hope of reaching a peaceful haven makes him bear the danger. My voyage is beginning, but whatever storms I shall feel, my ship will soon reach the port.” Bilney passed through the streets of Norwich in the midst of a dense crowd; his demeanor was grave, his features calm. His head had been shaved, and he wore a layman’s gown. Dr. Warner, one of his friends, accompanied him; another distributed liberal alms all along the route. The procession descended into the Lollards’ Pit, while the spectators covered the surrounding slopes. On arriving at the place of punishment, Bilney fell on his knees and prayed, and then rising up, warmly embraced the stake and kissed it. Turning his eyes towards heaven, he next repeated the Apostles’ Creed, and when he confessed the incarnation and crucifixion of the Savior his emotion was such that even the spectators were moved. Recovering himself, he took off his gown, and ascended the pile, reciting the hundred and forty-third psalm. Thrice he repeated the second verse: “Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.” And then he added, “I stretch forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsteth after thee.” Turning towards the officers, he said, “Are you ready?” “Yes,” was their reply. Bilney placed himself against the post, and held up the chain which bound him to it. His friend Warner, with eyes filled with tears, took a last farewell. Bilney smiled kindly at him and said: “Doctor, pasce gregem tuum (feed your flock), that when the Lord cometh He may find you so doing.” Several monks who had given evidence against him, perceiving the emotion of the spectators, began to tremble, and whispered to the martyr, “These people will believe that we are the cause of your death, and will withhold their alms.” Upon which, Bilney said to them, “Good folks, be not angry against these men for my sake, as though they be the authors of my death; it is not they.” He knew that his death proceeded from the will of God. The torch was applied to the pile; the fire smoldered for a few minutes, and then suddenly burning up fiercely, the martyr was heard to utter the name of Jesus several times, and sometimes the word “Credo” (“I believe”). A strong
wind which blew the flames on one side prolonged his agony; thrice they seemed to retire from him, and thrice they returned, until at length, the whole pile being kindled, he expired. A strange revolution took place in men’s minds after this death; they praised Bilney, and even his persecutors acknowledged his virtues. The bishop of Norwich was heard to exclaim, "I fear I have burnt Abel and let Cain go." Latimer was inconsolable; twenty years later he still lamented his friend, and one day, preaching before Edward VI, he called to mind that Bilney was always doing good, even to his enemies, and styled him "that blessed martyr of God."

One martyrdom was not sufficient for the enemies of the Reformation. Stokesley, Lee, Gardiner, and other prelates and priests, feeling themselves guilty towards Rome, which they had sacrificed to their personal ambition, desired to expiate their faults by sacrificing the reformers. Seeing at their feet a fatal gulf, dug between them and the Roman pontiff by their faithlessness, they desired to fill it up with corpses. The persecution continued.

There was at that time a pious evangelist in the dungeons of the bishop of London. He was fastened upright to the wall, with chains round his neck, waist, and legs. Usually the most guilty prisoners were permitted to sit down, and even to lie on the floor; but for this man there was no rest. It was Richard Bayfield, accused of bringing from the continent a number of New Testaments translated by Tyndale. When one of his gaolers told him of Bilney’s martyrdom, he exclaimed, "And I too, and hundreds of men with me, will die for the faith he has confessed." He was brought shortly afterwards before the episcopal court.

"With what intent," asked Bishop Stokesley, "did you bring into the country the errors of Luther, Œcolampadius the great heretic, and others of that damnable sect?" "To make the Gospel known," answered Bayfield, "and to glorify God before the people." Accordingly, the bishop, having condemned and then degraded him, summoned the lord mayor and sheriffs of London, "by the bowels of Jesus Christ" (he had the presumption to say), to do to Bayfield "according to the laudable custom of the famous realm of England." "O ye priests," said the gospeller, as if inspired by the Spirit of God, "is it not enough that your lives are wicked, but you must prevent the life according to the gospel from spreading among the people?" The bishop took up his crosier and struck Bayfield so violently on the chest that he fell backwards and fainted. He revived by degrees, and said, on regaining his consciousness, "I thank God that I am delivered from the wicked church of Antichrist, and am going to be a member of the true Church which reigns triumphant in heaven." He mounted the pile;
the flames, touching him only on one side, consumed his left arm. With his right hand Bayfield separated it from his body, and the arm fell. After enduring the flames for three quarters of an hour, he ceased to pray, because he had ceased to live.

John Tewkesbury, one of the most respected merchants in London, whom the bishops had put twice to the rack already, and whose limbs they had broken, felt his courage revived by the martyrdom of his friend. Christ Alone, he said habitually—these two words were all his theology. He was arrested, taken to the house of Sir Thomas More at Chelsea, shut up in the porter’s lodge, his hands, feet, and head being held in the stocks; but they could not obtain from him the recantation they desired. The officers took him into the chancellor’s garden, and bound him so tightly to the tree of truth, as the renowned scholar called it, that the blood started out of his eyes; after which they scourged him. Tewkesbury remained firm.

On the 16th of December, the bishop of London went to Chelsea and held a court at the house of Sir Thomas More. “Thou art a heretic,” said Stokesley, “a backslider; thou hast incurred the great excommunication. We shall deliver thee up to the secular power.” He was burnt alive at Smithfield on the 20th of December, 1531.

Such were at this period the cruel utopias of the bishops and of the witty Sir Thomas More. Other evangelical Christians were thrown into prison. In vain did one of them exclaim, “The more they persecute this sect, the more will it increase.” That opinion did not check the persecution. “It is impossible,” says Foxe (doubtless with some exaggeration), “to name all who were persecuted before the time of Queen Anne Boleyn. As well try to count the grains of sand on the seashore!”

Thus did the real Reformation show by the blood of its martyrs that it had nothing to do with the policy, the tyranny, the intrigues, and the divorce of Henry VIII. If these men of God had not been burnt by that prince, it might possibly have been imagined that he was the author of the transformation of England; but the blood of the reformers cried to heaven that he was its executioner.

---

CHAPTER 13
The King Despoils the Pope and Clergy
March to May, 1532

Henry, having permitted the bishops to execute their task of persecution, proceeded to carry out his own—that of making the papacy disgorge. Unhappily for the clergy, the king could not attack the pope and leave them unscathed. The duel between
Henry and Clement was about to become more violent, and in the space of three months (March, April, and May, 1532) the Romish Church, stripped of important prerogatives, would learn that, after so many ages of wealth and honor, the hour of its humiliation in England had come at last.

Henry was determined, above all things, not to permit his cause to be tried at Rome. What would be thought if he yielded? "Could the pope," wrote Henry to his envoys, "constrain kings to leave the charge God had entrusted to them, in order to humble themselves before him? That would be to tread under foot the glory of our person and the privileges of our kingdom. If the pope persists, take your leave of the pontiff and return to us immediately." "The pope," added Norfolk, "would do well to reflect if he intend the continuance of good obedience of England to the see apostolic."

Catherine on her part did not remain inactive; she wrote a pathetic letter to the pope, informing him that her husband had banished her from the palace. Clement, in the depths of his perplexity, behaved, however, very properly; he called upon the king (25th January) to take back the queen, and to dismiss Anne Boleyn from court. Henry spiritedly rejected the pontiff’s demand. "Never was prince treated by a pope as your Holiness has treated me," he said, "not painted reason, but the truth alone, must be our guide." The king prepared to begin the emancipation of England.

Thomas Cromwell is the representative of the political reform achieved by that prince. He was one of those powerful natures which God creates to work important things. His prompt and sure judgment taught him what it would be possible to do under a Tudor king, and his intrepid energy put him in a position to accomplish it. He had an instinctive horror of superstitions and abuses, tracked them to their remotest corner, and threw them down with a vigorous arm. Every obstacle was shattered under the wheels of his car. He even defended the evangelicals against their persecutors, without committing himself, however, and encouraged the reading of Holy Scripture; but the royal supremacy, of which he was the staunch advocate, if not (as some claim) the originator, was his idol.

The events of 1532, involving as they did the royal supremacy, the impact upon the political and ecclesiastical scene of the new secretary Cromwell, the vigorous work of the Commons, and the position and authority of Convocation in a world of change, were of primary importance for both Church and State. In the outcome the constitutional independence of the Church in England was terminated.
The struggles of the Parliamentary session of 1532 commenced with a petition of the Commons against Church courts originally presented in 1529. At that time the matter had been allowed to fall into the background, but under Cromwell’s energetic direction it was now revived and focused on one special issue—the freedom of the Church to legislate for itself. This freedom was no longer acceptable to the king. By the secretary’s skillful strategy, the Commons were moved to present to Henry their “Supplications against the Ordinaries,” a document stressing their orthodoxy, reciting their complaints against the Church courts, and urging the desirability of taking from the Church its powers of independent legislation. This was precisely what Henry desired. He presented the Supplication to Convocation and required it to produce its observations. To Gardiner, now Bishop of Winchester, fell the distasteful task of drawing up the reply. Its principal feature was a compromise proposal that while Convocation should continue to legislate for the Church, the laws it made should not become operative without royal sanction. This proved unacceptable to the king, and Cromwell and he craftily suggested that the Commons would doubtless like to adopt the same attitude as the crown. Their willingness to do so led the king to press his demands, and in a short time an overawed Convocation accepted them in their completeness.

Henry’s final argument proved more potent than all others. Cromwell drew his master’s attention to the oaths which the bishops took at their consecration, both to the king and to the pope. Henry first read the oath to the pope. “I swear,” said the bishop, “to defend the papacy of Rome, the regality of St. Peter, against all men. If I know of any plot against the pope, I will resist it with all my might, and will give him warning. Heretics, schismatics, and rebels to our holy father I shall resist and persecute with all my power.” On the other hand, the bishops took an oath to the king at the same time, wherein they renounced every clause or grant which, coming from the pope, might be in any way detrimental to his Majesty. In one breath they must obey the pope and disobey him.

Such contradictions could not last; the king wanted the English to be not with Rome but with England. Accordingly he sent for the Speaker of the Commons, and said to him, “On examining the matter closely, I find that the bishops, instead of being wholly my subjects, are only so by halves. They swear an oath to the pope quite contrary to that they swear to the crown; so that they are the pope’s subjects rather than mine. I refer the matter to your care.” Parliament was prorogued three days later on account of the plague, but the king did not allow the matter to rest.
The prelates felt that all their defenses against the throne had been completely broken down. They knew well that it was their union with powerful pontiffs, always ready to defend them against kings, which had given them so much strength in the middle ages, and that now they must yield. They therefore lowered their flag before the authority which they had themselves set up. Convocation did, indeed, make a last effort. It represented that “the authority of bishops proceeds immediately from God, and from no power of any secular prince, as your Highness hath shown in your own book most excellently written against Martin Luther.” But the king was firm, and made the prelates yield at last. As for Gardiner, he lost the king’s favor, and any hopes he had of succeeding to the see of Canterbury when the aged Warham died were shattered.

The 15th of May was fateful for the church. On that day Convocation made its surrender in a document known as the Submission of the Clergy. As in 1531, the clergy had, with reservations, acknowledged Henry as their supreme head, so now they accepted him, without reservations, as their supreme legislator. The days of papal power in England were numbered. Thus a great revolution was accomplished—the spiritual power was taken away from the arrogant priests who had so long usurped the rights of the members of the Church. It was only justice, but it ought to have been placed in better hands than those of Henry VIII.

The 16th of May witnessed another notable event. To the last, the English priests had hoped in Sir Thomas More. That disciple of Erasmus had acted like his master. After assailing the Romish superstitions with biting jests, he had turned round, and seeing the Reformation attack them with weapons still more powerful, he had fought against the evangelicals with fire and scourge. For two years he had filled the office of lord-chancellor with unequalled activity and integrity. Convocation having offered him four thousand pounds sterling "for the pains he had taken in God’s quarrel," he answered, "I will receive no recompense save from God alone," and when the priests urged him to accept the money, he said, "I would sooner throw it into the Thames." He did not persecute from any mercenary motives, but the more he advanced, the more bigoted and fanatical he became. Every Sunday he put on a surplice and sang mass at Chelsea. The duke of Norfolk surprised him one day in this equipment. "What do I see?" he exclaimed. "My lord-chancellor acting the parish clerk... you dishonor your office and your king." "Not so," answered Sir Thomas seriously, "for I am honoring his Master and ours." The great question of the bishop’s oath warned him that he could not serve both the king and the pope. His mind was soon made
up. In the afternoon of the 16th of May he went to Whitehall gardens, where the king awaited him, and in the presence of the duke of Norfolk resigned the seals. On his return home, he cheerfully told his wife and daughters of his resignation, but they were much disturbed by it. As for Sir Thomas, delighted at being freed from his charge, he indulged more than ever in his flagellations, without renouncing his witty sayings—Erasmus and Loyola combined in one.

Henry gave the seals to Sir Thomas Audley, a man well disposed towards the Gospel—this was preparing the emancipation of England. Yet the Reformation was still exposed to great danger. Henry struck another blow against the papacy in 1532. It was being prepared while the struggle between the crown and the clergy was causing deep and bitter searchings of heart. Annates were the payments made by the bishops to the pope when they entered into possession of their sees. A Bill was introduced into Parliament—it became the famous First Act of Annates—which proposed to abolish these payments. Lest the pope should retaliate by refusing consecration to bishops-elect, the Bill further proposed arrangements for their consecration at the hands of their fellow bishops, apart from his authority. Actually the Bill was intended as a weapon to cause the pope to yield to Henry’s wishes, for one of the clauses suspended its operation until the king was pleased to issue confirmatory letters patent. The Bill therefore had the nature of a Damocles’ sword suspended over the tiara-crowned head of the pope.

Clearly the work of reformation was gathering momentum. Henry VIII wished to abolish popery and set Catholicism in its place—maintain the doctrine of Rome, but substitute the authority of the king for that of the pontiff. He was wrong in keeping the catholic doctrine; he was wrong in establishing the jurisdiction of the prince in the Church. Evangelical Christians had to contend against these two evils in England, and to establish the supreme and exclusive sovereignty of the Word of God. Can we blame them if they have not entirely succeeded? To attain their object they willingly have poured out their blood.

CHAPTER 14
Liberty of Inquiry and Preaching
1532

There are writers who seriously ascribe the Reformation in England to the divorce of Henry VIII, and thus silently pass over the Word of God and the labors of the evangelical men who really founded English protestant Christianity, some of whom loved not their lives unto the death. As well forget that light proceeds from
the sun. But for the faith of such men as Bilney, Latimer, and Tyndale, the Church of England, with its king, ministers of state, parliament, bishops, cathedrals, liturgy, hierarchy, and ceremonies, would have been a gallant bark, well supplied with masts, sails, and rigging, and manned by able sailors, but acted on by no breath from heaven. The Church would have stood still. It is in the humble members of the kingdom of God that its real strength lies. "Those whom the Lord has exalted to high estate," says Calvin, "most often fall back little by little, or are ruined at one blow." England, with its wealth and grandeur, needed a counterpoise—the living faith of the poor in spirit. If a people attain a high degree of material prosperity; if they conquer by their energy the powers of nature; if they compel industry to lavish its stores on them; if they cover the seas with their ships, the more distant countries with their colonies and marts, and fill their warehouses and their dwellings with the produce of the whole earth, then great dangers encompass them. Material things threaten to extinguish the sacred fire in their bosoms; and unless the Holy Ghost raises up a salutary opposition against such snares, that people, instead of acting a moralizing and civilizing part, may turn out nothing better than a huge noisy machine, fitted only to satisfy vulgar appetites. For a nation to do justice to a high and glorious calling, it must have within itself the life of faith, holiness of conscience, and the hope of incorruptible riches. At this time there were men in England in whose hearts God had kindled a holy flame, and who were to become the most important instruments of its moral transformation. About the end of 1531, a young minister, John Nicholson, surnamed Lambert, was on board one of the ships that traded between London and Antwerp. He was chaplain to the merchants in the English House at the latter place, well versed in the writings of Luther and other reformers, intimate with Tyndale, and had preached the Gospel with power. Being accused of heresy by a certain Barlow, he was seized, put in irons, and sent to London. Alone in the ship, he retraced in his memory the principal events of his life—how he had studied in the university of Cambridge and had been converted by Bilney's ministry; how, mingling with the crowd round St. Paul's Cross, he had heard the bishop of Rochester preach against the New Testament; and how, terrified by the impiety of the priests, and burning with desire to gain the knowledge of God, he had crossed the sea to the Netherlands. When he reached England, he was taken to Lambeth, where he underwent a preliminary examination. He was then taken to Otford, near Sevenoaks, Kent, where Archbishop Warham had a fine palace, and was brought before the archbishop and called upon to reply to forty-five different articles.
Lambert, during his residence on the Continent, had become thoroughly imbued with the principles of the Reformation. He believed that it was only by entire freedom of inquiry that men could be convinced of the truth. But he had not wandered without a compass over the vast ocean of human opinions; he had taken the Bible in his hand, believing firmly that every doctrine found therein is true, and everything that contradicts it is false. On the one hand he saw the papal system which opposes religious freedom, freedom of the press, and even freedom of reading; on the other hand protestantism, which declares that every man ought to be free to examine Scripture and submit to its teachings. The archbishop, attended by his officers, having taken his seat in the palace chapel, Lambert was brought in, and the examination began.

"Have you read Luther’s books?" asked the prelate.
"Yes," replied Lambert, "and I thank God that ever I did so, for by them hath God shown me, and a vast multitude of others also, such light as the darkness cannot abide." Then testifying to the freedom of inquiry, he added, "Luther desires above all things that his writings and the writings of all his adversaries might be translated into all languages, to the intent that all people might see and know what is said on each side, whereby they might better judge what is the truth. And this is done not only by hundreds and thousands, but by whole cities and countries, both high and low. But (he continued) in England our prelates are so drowned in voluptuous living that they have no leisure to study God’s Scripture; they abhor it, no less than they abhor death, giving no other reason than the tyrannical saying of Sardanapalus: *Sic volo, sic jubeo: sit pro ratione voluntas*, So I will, so do I command, and let my will for reason stand. Moreover they curse as black as pitch men who keep and read the books written by Luther."

Lambert, wishing to make these matters intelligible to the people, said, "When you desire to buy cloth, you will not be satisfied with seeing one merchant’s wares, but go from the first to the second, from the second to the third, to find who has the best cloth. Will you be more remiss about your soul’s health? … When you go a journey, not knowing perfectly the way, you will inquire of one man after another; so ought we likewise to seek about entering the kingdom of heaven. Chrysostom himself in his commentary on Matthew, teaches you this. … Read the works not only of Luther, but also of all others, be they ever so ill or good. No good law forbids it, but only constitutions pharisaical."

Warham, who was as much opposed then to the liberty of the press as the popes are now, could see nothing but a boundless chaos in this freedom of inquiry. "Images are sufficient," he said,
"to keep Christ and His saints in our remembrance." But Lambert exclaimed, "What have we to do with senseless stones or wood carved by the hand of man? That Word which came from the breast of Christ Himself showeth us perfectly His blessed will." Warham having questioned Lambert as to the number of his followers, he answered, "A great multitude through all regions and realms of Christendom think in like wise as I have showed. I ween the multitude mounteth nigh unto the one half of Christendom." Lambert was taken back to prison, but More having resigned the seals, and Warham dying, this herald of liberty and truth saw his chains fall off. One day, however, he was to die by fire, and, forgetting all controversy, to exclaim in the midst of the flames, "None but Jesus Christ."

There was a minister of the Word in London who exasperated the friends of Rome more than all the rest; this man was Latimer. The court of Henry VIII, which was worldly, magnificent, fond of pleasures, intrigue, the elegances of dress, furniture, banquets, and refinement of language and manners, was not a favorable field for the Gospel. "It is very difficult," said a reformer, "that costly trappings, solemn banquets, the excesses of pride, a flood of pleasure and debauchery should not bring many evils in their train." Thus the priests and courtiers could not endure Latimer’s sermons. If Lambert was for freedom of inquiry, the king’s chaplain was for freedom of preaching; his zeal sometimes touched upon imprudence, and his biting wit, and extreme frankness did not spare his superiors. One day, some honest merchants, who hungered and thirsted for the Word of God, begged him to come and preach in one of the city churches. Thrice he refused, but yielded to their prayers at last. The death of Bilney and of the other martyrs had wounded him deeply. He knew that wild beasts, when they have once tasted blood, thirst for more, and feared that these murders, these butcheries, would only make his adversaries fiercer. He determined to lash the persecuting prelates with his sarcasms. Having entered the pulpit, he preached from these words in the epistle of the day: Ye are not under the law, but under grace. "What!" he exclaimed, "St. Paul teaches Christians that they are not under the law. ... What does he mean? ... No more law! St. Paul invites Christians to break the law. ... Quick! inform against St. Paul, seize him and take him before my lord bishop of London! ... The good apostle must be condemned to bear a faggot at St. Paul’s Cross. What a goodly sight to see St. Paul with a faggot on his back, before my lord of London, bishop of the same, sitting under the cross! Nay, verily, I dare say, my lord should sooner have burned him!"

This ironical language was to cost Latimer dear. To no purpose had he spoken in one of those churches which, being
dependencies of a monastery, were not under episcopal jurisdiction; everybody about him condemned him and embittered his life. The courtiers talked of his sermons, shrugged their shoulders, pointed their fingers at him when he approached them, and turned their backs on him. The favor of the king, who had perhaps smiled at that burst of pulpit oratory, had some trouble to protect him. The court became more intolerable to him every day, and Latimer, withdrawing to his room, gave vent to many a heavy sigh. "What tortures I endure!" he said, "in what a world I live! Hatred ever at work; factions fighting one against the other; folly and vanity leading the dance; dissimulation, irreligion, debauchery, all the vices stalking abroad in open day. ... It is too much. If I were able to do something... but I have neither the talent nor the industry required to fight against these monsters. ... I am weary of the court."

On the 14th of January, 1531, Latimer was presented to the living of West Kington, fourteen miles from Bristol. Wishing to uphold the liberty of the Christian Church, and seeing that it existed no longer in London, he resolved to seek it elsewhere. "I am leaving," he said to one of his friends, "I shall go and live in my parish."

"What is that you say?" exclaimed the other, "Cromwell, who is at the pinnacle of honors, and has profound designs, intends to do great things for you. ... If you leave the court, you will be forgotten, and your rivals will rise to your place." "The only fortune I desire," said Latimer, "is to be useful." He departed, turning his back on the episcopal crosier to which his friend had alluded.

Latimer began to preach with zeal in Wiltshire, and not only in his own parish, but in the parishes around him. His diligence was so great, his preaching so mighty, says Foxe, that his hearers must either believe the doctrine he preached or rise against it.

"Whosoever entereth not into the fold by the door, which is Christ, be he priest, bishop, or pope, is a robber," said he. "In the Church there are more thieves than shepherds, and more goats than sheep." His hearers were astounded. One of them (Dr. William Sherwood) said to him, "What a sermon, or rather what a satire! If we believe you, all the hemp in England would not be enough to hang those thieves of bishops, priests, and curates. ... It is all exaggeration, no doubt, but such exaggeration is rash, audacious, and impious." The priests looked about for some valiant champion of Rome, ready to fight with him the quarrel of the Church.

One day there rode into the village an old doctor of strange aspect; he wore no shirt, but was covered with a long gown that reached down to the horse’s heels, "all bedirted like a slobber," says a chronicler. He took no care for the things of the body,
order that people should believe he was the more given up to the contemplation of the interests of the soul. He dismounted gravely from his horse, proclaimed his intention of fasting, and began a series of long prayers. This person, by name Hubbardin, the Don Quixote of Roman Catholicism, went wandering all over the kingdom, extolling the pope at the expense of kings and even of Jesus Christ, and declaiming against Luther, Zwingli, Tyndale, and Latimer.

On a feast day Hubbardin put on a clerical gown rather cleaner than the one he generally wore, and went into the pulpit, where he undertook to prove that the new doctrine came from the devil—which he demonstrated by stories, fables, dreams, and amusing dialogues. He danced and hopped and leaped about, and gesticulated, as if he were a stage player, and his sermon a sort of interlude. His hearers were surprised and diverted; Latimer was disgusted. "You lie," he said, "when you call the faith of Scripture a new doctrine, unless you mean to say that it makes new creatures of those who receive it."

Hubbardin being unable to shut the mouth of the eloquent chaplain with his mountebank tricks, the bishops and nobility of the neighborhood resolved to denounce Latimer. A messenger handed him a writ, summoning him to appear personally before the bishop of London to answer touching certain excesses and crimes committed by him. Putting down the paper which contained this threatening message, Latimer began to reflect. His position was critical. He was at that time suffering from the stone, with pains in the head and bowels. It was in the dead of winter, and moreover he was alone at West Kington, with no friend to advise him. Being of a generous and daring temperament, he rushed hastily into the heat of the combat, but was easily dejected. "Jesu mercy! what a world is this," he exclaimed, "that I shall be put to so great labor and pains above my power for preaching of a poor simple sermon! But we must needs suffer, and so enter into the kingdom of Christ."

The terrible summons lay on the table. Latimer took it up and read it. He was no longer the brilliant court chaplain who charmed fashionable congregations by his eloquence; he was a poor country minister, forsaken by all. He was sorrowful. "I am surprised," he said, "that my lord of London, who has so large a diocese in which he ought to preach the Word in season and out of season, should have leisure enough to come and trouble me in my little parish... wretched me, who am quite a stranger to him." He appealed to Richard Hiley, chancellor of the Salisbury diocese; but Bishop Stokesley did not intend to let him go, and being as able as he was violent, he prayed the archbishop, as primate of all England, to summon Latimer before his court, and to
commission himself (the bishop of London) to examine him. The chaplain’s friends were terrified, and entreated him to leave England, but he began his journey to London.

On the 29th of January, 1532, a court composed of bishops and doctors of the canon law assembled, under the presidency of Primate Warham, in St. Paul’s Cathedral. Latimer having appeared, the bishop of London presented him a paper, and ordered him to sign it. The reformer took the paper and read it through. There were sixteen articles on belief in purgatory, the invocation of saints, the merit of pilgrimages, and lastly on the power of the keys which (said the document) belonged to the bishops of Rome, "even should their lives be wicked," and other such topics. Latimer returned the paper to Stokesley, saying, "I cannot sign it." Three times in one week he had to appear before his judges, and each time the same scene was repeated; both sides were inflexible. The priests then changed their tactics; they began to tease and embarrass Latimer with innumerable questions. As soon as one had finished, another began with sophistry and plausibility, and interminable subterfuges. Latimer tried to make his adversaries keep within the circle from which they were straying, but they would not hear him.

One day, as Latimer entered the hall, he noticed a change in the arrangement of the furniture. There was a chimney, in which there had been a fire before; on this day there was no fire, and the fireplace was invisible. Some tapestry hung down over it, and the table round which the judges sat was in the middle of the room. The accused was seated between the table and the chimney. "Master Latimer," said an aged bishop, whom he believed to be one of his friends, "pray speak a little louder; I am hard of hearing, as you know." Latimer, surprised at this remark, pricked up his ears, and fancied he heard in the fireplace the noise of a pen upon paper; in his own vivid words, "I heard a pen walking in the chimney, behind the cloth." "Ho ho!" thought he, "they have hidden someone behind there to take down my answers." He replied cautiously to captious questions, much to the embarrassment of the judges.

Latimer was disgusted, not only with the tricks of his enemies, but still more with their "troublesome unquietness," because by keeping him in London they obliged him to neglect his duties, and especially because they made it a crime to preach the truth. The archbishop, wishing to gain him over by marks of esteem and affection, invited him to come and see him, but Latimer declined, being unwilling at any price to renounce the freedom of the pulpit. The reformers of the sixteenth century did not contend that all doctrines should be preached from the same pulpit, but that evangelical truth should be freely preached everywhere. "I
have desired and still desire,” wrote Latimer to the archbishop, "that our people should learn the difference between the doctrines which God has taught and those which proceed only from ourselves. Go, said Jesus, and teach all things. ... What things? ... all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and not whatsoever you think fit to preach. Let us all then make an effort to preach with one voice the things of God. I have sought not my gain, but Christ’s gain; not my glory, but God’s glory. And so long as I have a breath of life remaining, I will continue to do so." Thus spoke the bold preacher. It is by such unshakable fidelity that great revolutions are accomplished.

As Latimer was deaf to all their persuasion, there was nothing to be done but to threaten the stake. The charge was transferred to the Convocation of Canterbury, and on the 11th of March, 1532, he was summoned to appear before that body at Westminster. The fifteen articles were set before him. "Master Latimer," said the archbishop, "the synod calls upon you to sign these articles." "I refuse," he answered. All the bishops pressed him earnestly. "I refuse absolutely," he answered a second time. Warham, the friend of learning, could not make up his mind to condemn one of the finest geniuses of England. "Have pity on yourself," he said. "A third and last time we entreat you to sign these articles." Although Latimer knew that a negative would probably consign him to the stake, he still answered, "I refuse absolutely." The patience of Convocation was now exhausted. "Heretic! obstinate heretic!" exclaimed the bishops. "We have heard it from his own mouth. Let him be excommunicated." The sentence of excommunication was pronounced, and Latimer was taken to the Lollards’ Tower.

[The fifteen articles] included the following:

1. that there is a purgatory to purge the souls of the dead,
2. that the souls in purgatory are holpen by the masses, prayers, and alms of the living,
3. that the saints in heaven pray for us as mediators,
4. that the invocation of saints is profitable,
6. that pilgrimages and oblations to the relics and sepulchres of saints are meritorious,

9. that fasting, prayer, and other good works merit favour at God’s hands,

11. that Lent and other fasts should be observed,

14. that the crucifix and other images of saints should be kept in churches as memorials, and to the honour and worship of Jesus Christ and His saints,

15. that it is laudable to deck those images and to burn candles before them.

Great was the agitation both in city and court. The creatures of the priests were already singing in the streets songs with a burden like this:

Wherefore it were pity thou shouldst die for cold.

"Ah!" said Latimer in the Tower, "if they had asked me to confess that I have been too prompt to use sarcasm, I should have been ready to do so, for sin is a heavy load. O God! unto Thee I cry; wash me in the blood of Jesus Christ." He looked for death, knowing well that few left that tower except for the scaffold.

"What is to be done?" said Warham and the bishops. Many of them would have handed the prisoner over to the magistrate to do what was customary, but the rule of the papacy was coming to an end in England, and Latimer was the king’s chaplain. One dexterous prelate suggested a means of reconciling everything. "We must obtain something from him, be it ever so little, and then report everywhere that he has recanted."

Some priests went to see the prisoner.

"Will you not yield anything?" they asked.

"I have been too violent," said Latimer, "and I humble myself accordingly."

"But will you not recognize the merit of works?"

"No!"

"Prayers to the saints?"

"No!"

"Purgatory?"

"No!"
“The power of the keys given to the pope?”
“No! I tell you.”

A bright idea occurred to one of the priests. Luther taught that it was not only permitted, but praiseworthy, to have the crucifix and the images of the saints, provided that it was merely to remind us of them and not to invoke them. He had added that the Reformation ought not to abolish fast days, but to strive to make them realities. Latimer declared that he was of the same opinion. The deputation hastened to carry this news to the bishops. The more fanatical of them could not make up their minds to be satisfied with so little. What! no purgatory, no virtue in the mass, no prayers to saints, no power of the keys, no meritorious works! It was a signal defeat, but the bishops knew that the king would not suffer the condemnation of his chaplain. Doubtless, Cromwell, too, worked hard to achieve a compromise. Convocation decided, after a long discussion, that if Master Latimer would sign the two articles, eleven and fourteen, he should be absolved from the sentence of excommunication. In fact, on the 10th of April, the Church withdrew the condemnation it had already pronounced.

The original documents that bear on these matters are incomplete, and in at least one instance "tantalizingly mutilated." According to the records of Convocation (lost for this period, but reconstructed from a variety of sources), Latimer, having first assented to the two articles, shortly, of his own accord, assented to the remainder.

Even so, difficulties persisted. On the 15th of April he was again examined by Convocation, and, probably on the strongly-expressed advice of Cromwell, he appealed from Convocation to the king. It seems likely that the king received Latimer in audience, and gave him the counsel which proved too strong for his wearied conscience to resist. He must submit himself unreservedly to his fellow clergy. Their doctrine must be his doctrine, their practices his practices. Latimer yielded to the royal mandate. At great cost to his comfort, though it was comfort he sought, he obtained his freedom. "This," says his biographer, "is the darkest page in Latimer’s history." It must have been with a vastly troubled breast that the would-be reformer hastened back to his remote rural parish.
CHAPTER 15

Henry VIII Attacks Romanists and Protestants
1532

The vital principle of the Reformation of Henry VIII was its opposition both to Rome and the Gospel. He did not hesitate, like many, between these two doctrines; he punished alike, by exile or by fire, the disciples of the Vatican and those of Holy Scripture.

Desiring to show that the resolution he had taken to separate from Catherine was immutable, the king had lodged Anne Boleyn in the palace at Greenwich, even when the queen was still there, and had given her a reception room and a royal state. The crowd of courtiers, abandoning the setting star, turned towards that which was appearing above the horizon. Henry respected Anne’s person, and was eager that all the world should know that if she was not actually queen, she would be so one day. There was a want of delicacy and principle in the king’s conduct, at which the catholic party were much irritated, and not without a cause.

The monks of St. Francis who officiated in the royal chapel at Greenwich took every opportunity of asserting their attachment to Catherine and to the pope. Anne vainly tried to gain them over by her charms; if she succeeded with a few, she failed with the greater number. Their superior, Father Forest, Catherine’s confessor, warmly defended the rights of that unhappy princess. Preaching at St. Paul’s Cross, he delivered a sermon in which Henry was violently attacked, although he was not named. Those who had heard it made a great noise about it, and Forest was summoned to the court. "What will be done to him?" people asked, but instead of sending him to prison, as many expected, the king received him well, spoke with him for half an hour, and "sent him a great piece of beef from his own table."

On returning to his convent, Forest described with triumph this flattering reception, but the king did
One of them, by name Peto, until then unknown, but afterwards of great repute in the catholic world as cardinal legate from the pope in England, thinking that Forest had not said enough, determined to go further. Anne Boleyn’s elevation filled him with anger; he longed to speak out, and as the king and all the court would be present in the chapel on the 1st of May, he chose for his text the words of the prophet Elijah to King Ahab: *The dogs shall lick thy blood*. He drew a portrait of Ahab, described his malice and wickedness, and although he did not name Henry VIII, certain passages made the hearers feel uncomfortable. At the peroration, turning towards the king, he said, “Now hear, O king, what I have to say unto thee, as of old time Micaiah spoke to Ahab. This new marriage is unlawful. There are other preachers who, to become rich abbots or mighty bishops, betray thy soul, thy honor, and thy posterity. Take heed lest thou, being seduced like Ahab, find Ahab’s punishment... who had his blood licked up by the dogs.”

The court was astounded, but the king, whose features were unmoved during this apostrophe, waited until the end of the service, left the chapel as if nothing had happened, and allowed Peto to depart for Canterbury. But Henry could not permit such invectives to pass unnoticed. A clergyman named Kirwan was commissioned to preach in the same chapel on the following Sunday. The congregation was still more numerous than before, and more curious also. Some monks of the order of Observants, friends of Peto, got into the rood-loft, determined to defend him. The doctor began his sermon. After establishing the lawfulness of Henry’s intended marriage, he came to the sermon of the preceding Sunday and the insults of the preacher. “I speak to thee, Peto,” he exclaimed, “who makest thyself Micaiah; we look for thee, but thou art not to be found, having fled for fear and shame.” There was a noise in the rood-loft, and one of the Observants named Elstow rose and called out, “You know that
Father Peto is gone to Canterbury to a provincial council, but I am here to answer you. And to this combat I challenge thee, Kirwan, prophet of lies, who for thy own vainglory art betraying thy king into endless perdition."

The chapel was instantly one scene of confusion; nothing could be heard. Then the king rose; his princely stature, his royal air, his majestic manners overawed the crowd. All were silent, and the agitated congregation left the chapel respectfully. Peto and his friend were summoned before the council. "You deserve to be sewn in a sack and thrown into the Thames," said one. "We fear nothing," answered Elstow, "the way to heaven is as short by water as by land."

Henry, having thus made war on the partisans of the pope, turned to those of the Reformation. Like a child, he see-sawed to and fro, first on one side, then on the other; but his sport was a more terrible one, for every time he touched the ground the blood spurted forth.

At that time there were many Christians in England to whom the Roman worship brought no edification. Having procured Tyndale’s translation of the Word of God, they felt that they possessed it not only for themselves but for others. They sought one another’s company, and met together to read the Bible and receive spiritual graces from God. Several Christian assemblies of this kind had been formed in London, in garrets, in warehouses, schools, and shops, and one of them was held in a warehouse in Bow Lane. Among its frequenters was the son of a Gloucestershire knight, James Bainham by name, a man well read in the classics, and a distinguished lawyer, respected by all for his piety and works of charity. To give advice freely to widows and orphans, to see justice done to the oppressed, to aid poor students, protect pious persons, and visit the prisons were his daily occupations. "He was an earnest reader of Scripture, and mightily addicted to prayer."
His marriage brought him under suspicion, for his wife was the widow of Simon Fish whose book previously mentioned had aroused a great storm of catholic opposition. He was asked where his books were to be found but would not divulge. When his wife denied that they were in his house, she was sent to the Fleet prison, and their goods were confiscated. When he entered the meeting, everyone could see that his countenance expressed a calm joy; but for a month past his Bow Lane friends noticed him to be agitated and cast down, and heard him sighing heavily. The cause was this. Some time before (in 1531), when he was engaged about his business in the Middle Temple, this "model of lawyers" had been arrested by order of More, who was still chancellor, and taken like a criminal to the house of the celebrated humanist at Chelsea. Sir Thomas, quite distressed at seeing a man so distinguished leave the Church of Rome, had employed all his eloquence to bring him back; but finding his efforts useless, he had ordered Bainham to be taken into his garden and tied to "the tree of truth." There the chancellor whipped him, or caused him to be whipped; we adopt the latter version, which is more probable. Bainham having refused to give the names of the gentlemen of the Temple tainted with heresy, he was taken to the Tower. "Put him on the rack," cried the learned chancellor, now become a fanatical persecutor. The order was obeyed in his presence. The arms and legs of the unfortunate protestant were fastened to the instrument and pulled in opposite directions; his limbs were dislocated, and he went lame out of the torture chamber.

Sir Thomas had broken his victim’s limbs, but not his courage; and accordingly when Bainham was summoned before the bishop of London, he went to the palace rejoicing to have to confess his Master once more. "Do you believe in purgatory?" said Stokesley to him sternly. Bainham answered, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." "Do you believe that we ought to call upon the saints to pray for us?" He again answered, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the righteous."
A man who answered only by texts from Scripture was embarrassing. More and Stokesley made the most alluring promises, and no means were spared to bend him. Before long they resorted to more serious representation. "The arms of the Church your mother are still open to you," they said, "but if you continue stubborn, they will close against you for ever. It is now or never!" For a whole month the bishop and the chancellor persevered in their entreaties; Bainham replied, "My faith is that of the holy Church." Hearing these words, Foxford, the bishop's secretary, took out a paper. "Here is the abjuration," he said, "read it over." Bainham began, "I voluntarily, as a true penitent returned from my heresy, utterly abjure..." At these words he stopped, and glancing over what followed, he continued, "No, these articles are not heretical, and I cannot retract them." Other springs were now set in motion to shake Bainham. The prayers of his friends, the threats of his enemies, especially the thought of his wife, whom he loved, and who would be left alone in destitution, exposed to the anger of the world—these things troubled his soul. He lost sight of the narrow path he ought to follow, and five days later he read his abjuration with a faint voice. But he had hardly got to the end before he burst into tears, and said, struggling with his emotion, "I reserve the doctrines." He consented to remain in the Roman Church, still preserving his evangelical faith. But this was not what the bishop and his officers meant. "Kiss that book," they said to him threateningly. Bainham, like one stunned, kissed the book; that was the sign; the abjuration was looked upon as completed. He was condemned to pay a fine of twenty pounds sterling, and to do penance at St. Paul's Cross. After that he was set at liberty, on the 17th of February.

Bainham returned to the midst of his brethren; they looked sorrowfully at him, but did not reproach him with his fault. That was quite unnecessary. The worm of remorse was preying on him; he abhorred the fatal kiss by which he had sealed his fall; his conscience was never quiet; he could neither eat nor sleep, and trembled at the thought of death. At one time he would hide his anguish and stifle it within his breast; at another his grief would break forth,
and he would try to relieve his pain by groans of sorrow. The thought of appearing before the tribunal of God made him faint. The restoration of conscience to all its rights was the foremost work of the Reformation. Luther, Calvin, and an endless number of lesser reformers had reached the haven of safety through the midst of such tempests. "A tragedy was being acted in all protestant souls," says a writer who does not belong to the Reformation—the eternal tragedy of conscience.

Bainham felt that the only means of recovering peace was to accuse himself openly before God and man. Taking Tyndale’s New Testament in his hand, which was at once his joy and his strength, he went to St. Austin’s church, sat down quietly in the midst of the congregation, and then at a certain moment stood up and said, "I have denied the truth." ... He could not continue for his tears. On recovering, he said, "If I were not to return again to the doctrine I have abjured, this Word of Scripture would condemn me both body and soul at the day of judgment." And he lifted up the New Testament before all the congregation. "O my friends," he continued, "rather die than sin as I have done. The fires of hell have consumed me, and I would not feel them again for all the gold and glory of the world." He wrote in a similar strain to the bishop.

Then his enemies seized him again and shut him up in the bishop’s coal-house, where, after putting him in the stocks, with his legs in irons, they left him for almost fourteen days. He was afterwards taken to the Tower, where he was scourged every day for a fortnight, and at last condemned as a relapsed heretic.

On the eve of the execution, four distinguished men, one of whom was Latimer, were dining together in London. It was commonly reported that Bainham was to be put to death for saying that Thomas Becket was a traitor. "Is it worth a man’s while to sacrifice his life for such a trifle?" said the four friends. "Let us go to Newgate and save him if possible." They were taken along several gloomy passages, and found themselves at last in the presence of a man
sitting on a little straw, holding a book in one hand and a candle in the other. He was reading; it was Bainham. Latimer drew near him. "Take care," he said, "that no vainglory make you sacrifice your life for motives which are not worth the cost." "I am condemned," answered Bainham, "for trusting in Scripture and rejecting purgatory, masses, and meritorious works. ... I acknowledge that for such truths a man must be ready to die." Bainham was ready, and yet he burst into tears. "Why do you weep?" asked Latimer. "I have a wife," answered the prisoner, "the best that man ever had. A widow, destitute of everything and without a supporter, everybody will point at her and say, 'That is the heretic's wife.'" Latimer and his friends tried to console him, and then they departed from the gloomy dungeon.

The next day (30th April, 1532) Bainham was taken to the scaffold. Soldiers on horseback surrounded the pile. Master Pave, the city clerk, directed the execution. Bainham, after a prayer, rose up, embraced the stake, and was fastened to it with a chain. "Good people," he said to the persons who stood round him, "I die for having said it is lawful for every man and woman to have God’s book. I die for having said that the true key of heaven is not that of the bishop of Rome, but the preaching of the Gospel. I die for having said that there is no other purgatory than the cross of Christ, with its consequent persecutions and afflictions." "Thou liest, thou heretic," exclaimed Pave, "thou hast denied the blessed sacrament of the altar." "I do not deny the sacrament of Christ’s body," resumed Bainham, "but I do deny your transubstantiation and your idolatry to a piece of bread." "Light the fire," shouted Pave. The executioners set fire to a train of gunpowder, and as the flame approached him, Bainham lifted up his eyes towards heaven, and said to the city clerk, "God forgive thee! and show thee more mercy than thou showst to me! the Lord forgive Sir Thomas More... pray for me, all good people!" The arms and legs of the martyr were soon consumed, and thinking only how to glorify his Savior, he exclaimed, "Behold! you look for miracles, you may see one here; for in this fire I feel no more pain than if I
were on a bed of down, but it is to me as sweet as a bed of roses." The primitive Church hardly had a more glorious martyr.

Pave had Bainham’s image continually before his eyes, and his last prayer rang day and night in his heart. In the garret of his house, far removed from noise, he had fitted up a kind of oratory, where he had placed a crucifix, before which he used to pray and shed bitter tears. He abhorred himself; half mad, he suffered indescribable sorrow, and struggled under great anguish. The dying Bainham had said to him, "May God show thee more mercy than thou hast shown to me!" But Pave could not believe in mercy; he saw no other remedy for his despair than death. About a year after Bainham’s martyrdom, he sent his domestics and clerks on different errands, keeping only one servant-maid in the house. As soon as his wife had gone to church, he went out himself, bought a rope, and hiding it carefully under his gown, went up into the garret. He stopped before the crucifix, and began to groan and weep. The servant ran upstairs. "Take this rusty sword," he said, "clean it well, and do not disturb me." She had scarcely left the room when he fastened the rope to a beam and hanged himself.

The maid, hearing no sound, again grew alarmed, went up to the garret, and seeing her master hanging, was struck with terror. She ran crying to the church to fetch her mistress home; but it was too late: the wretched man could not be recalled to life.

If the deaths of the martyrs plunged the wicked into the depths of despair, it often gave life to earnest souls. The crowd which had surrounded the scaffold of these men of God dispersed in profound emotion. Some returned to their fields, others to their shops or workrooms; but the pale faces of the martyrs followed them, their words sounded in their souls, their virtues softened many hearts most averse to the Gospel. "Oh! that I were with Bainham!" exclaimed one. These people continued for some time to frequent the Romish churches, but ere long their consciences cried aloud to them, "It is Christ
alone who saves us,” and they forsook the rites in which they could find no consolation. They courted solitude; they procured the writings of Wycliffe and of Tyndale, and especially the New Testament, which they read in secret, and if anyone came near, hid them hastily under a bed, at the bottom of a chest, in the hollow of a tree, or even under stones, until the enemy had retired and they could take the books up again. Then they whispered about them to their neighbors, and often had the joy of meeting with men who thought as they did. A surprising change was taking place. While the priests were loudly chanting in the cathedrals the praises of the saints, of the Virgin, and of the Corpus Domini, the people were whispering together about the Savior meek and lowly in heart. All over England was heard a still, small voice such as Elijah heard, and on hearing it wrapped his face in his mantle and stood silent and motionless, because the Lord was there. Great changes were about to take place.

It is not without a reason that we describe in some detail in this history the lives and deaths of these evangelical men. We desire to show that the Church in England, as in all the world, is not a mere ecclesiastical hierarchy, in which prelates exercise dominion over the inheritance of the Lord, nor a confused assemblage of men whose spirit imagines about religion all kinds of doctrines contrary to the revelation from heaven, and whose profession of faith comprehends all the opinions that are found in the nation, from catholic scholasticism to pantheistic materialism. The Church of God, raised above the human systems of the superstitious and the incredulous alike, is the assembly of those who by a living faith are partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and of the new life of which the Holy Ghost is the creator—of those in whom selfishness is vanquished, and who give themselves up to the Savior to achieve with their brethren the conquest of the world. Such is the true Church of God—very different, it will be seen, from all those invented by man.
A man who for more than thirty years had had an important voice in the management of the ecclesiastical affairs of the kingdom now disappeared from the scene to give place to the most influential of the reformers of England. Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, a learned canonist, a skillful politician, a dexterous courtier, and the friend of letters, had made it his special work to exalt the sacerdotal prerogative, and to that end had had recourse to the surest means, by fighting against the idleness, ignorance, and corruption of the priests. He had even hoped for a reform of the clergy, provided it emanated from episcopal authority. But when he saw another reformation accomplished in the name of God’s Word, without priests and against the priests, he turned round and began to persecute the reformers and to strengthen the papal authority. Alarmed at the proceedings of the Commons, he sent for three notaries, on the 24th of February, 1532, and protested in their presence against every act of parliament derogatory to the authority of the Roman pontiff. On the 22nd of August of the same year, just at the very height of the crisis, “the second pope,” as he was sometimes called, was removed from his see by death, and the people anxiously wondered who would be appointed to his vacant place.

The choice was important, for the nomination might be the symbol of what the Church of England was to be. Would he be a prelate devoted to the pope, like Fisher; or a catholic favorable to the divorce, like Gardiner; or a moderate evangelical attached to the king, like Cranmer; or a decided reformer, like Latimer? At this moment, when a new era was beginning for Christendom, it was of consequence to know whom England would take for her guide; whether she would march at the head of civil and religious progress, like Germany; or bring up the rear, like Spain and Italy. The king did not favor either extreme, and hesitated between the two other candidates. All things considered, he had no confidence in such bishops as Longland of Lincoln, and Gardiner of Winchester, who might promise and not fulfil. He wanted somebody less political than the one, and less fanatical than the other—a man separated from the pope on principle, and not merely for convenience.

Cranmer, after passing a few months at Rome, had returned to England. Then departing again for Germany on a mission from the king, he had arrived at Nuremberg, probably in the autumn of 1531. He examined with interest that ancient city, its beautiful churches, its monumental fountains, its old and picturesque castle; but there was something that attracted him more than all these things. Being present at the celebration of the sacrament, he noticed that while the priest was muttering the gospel in Latin at the altar, the deacon went up into the pulpit and read it aloud in German. He saw that, although there was still some appearance of catholicism in Nuremberg, in reality the Gospel reigned there. One man’s name often came up in the conversations he had with the principal persons in the city. They spoke to him of Andreas
Osiander as of a man of great eloquence. Cranmer followed the crowd which poured into the church of St. Lawrence, and was struck with the minister’s talents and piety. He sought his acquaintance, and the two doctors had many a conversation together, either in Cranmer’s house or in Osiander’s study; and the German divine, being gained over to the cause of Henry VIII, published shortly after a book on unlawful marriages.

Cranmer, who had an affectionate heart, loved to join the simple meals, the pious devotions, and the friendly conversations at Osiander’s house; he was soon almost like a member of the family. But although his intimacy with the Nuremberg pastor grew stronger every day, he did not adopt all his opinions. When Osiander told him that he must substitute the authority of Holy Scripture for that of Rome, Cranmer gave his full assent; but the Englishman perceived that the German entertained views different from Luther’s on the justification of the sinner. "What justifies us," said Osiander, "is not the imputation of the merits of Christ by faith, but the inward communication of His righteousness."

"On the contrary," said Cranmer, "Christ has paid the price of our redemption by the sacrifice of His body and the fulfilling of the law; and if we heartily believe in this work which He has perfected, we are justified. The justified man must be sanctified, and must work good works, but it is not the works that justify him." The conversation of the two friends turned also upon the Lord’s Supper. Whatever may have been Cranmer’s doctrine before, he soon came (like Calvin) to place the real presence of Christ not in the wafer which the priest holds between his fingers, but in the heart of the believer.

In June 1532 protestant and Roman Catholic delegates arrived at Nuremberg to arrange the religious peace. The celibacy of the clergy immediately became one of the points discussed. It appeared to the chiefs of the papacy impossible to concede that article. "Rather abolish the mass entirely," exclaimed the archbishop of Mayence, "than permit the marriage of priests." "They must come to that at last," said Luther, "God is overthrowing the mighty from their seat." Cranmer was of his opinion. "It is better," he said, "for a minister to have his own wife, than to have other men’s wives, like the priests." "What services may not a pious wife do for the pastor her husband," added Osiander, "among the poor, the women, and the children?"

Cranmer had lost his wife at Cambridge, and his heart yearned for affection. Osiander’s family presented him a touching picture of domestic happiness. One of its members was a certain Margaret, a niece of Osiander’s wife. Cranmer, charmed with her piety and candor, and hoping to find in her the virtuous woman who is a crown to her husband, asked her hand and married her, not heeding the unlawful command of those who “forbid to marry.”

Still Cranmer did not forget his mission. The king of England was desirous of forming an alliance with the German Protestants, and his agent made overtures to the electoral prince of Saxony. "First of all," answered the pious John Frederick, "the king must be in harmony with us as to the articles of faith." The alliance failed, but, at the same moment, affairs took an unexpected turn. The Emperor Charles V, who was marching against Solyman the Magnificent, the greatest of all the Ottoman sultans, desired the help of the King of England,
and Granvella, his minister, had some talk with Cranmer on the subject. The latter was procuring carriages, horses, boats, tents, and other things necessary for his journey, with the intention of rejoining the Emperor at Linz, when a courier suddenly brought him orders to return to London. It was very vexatious. Just as he was on the point of concluding an alliance with the nephew of Queen Catherine, in which the matter of the divorce would consequently be arranged, Henry’s envoy had to give up everything. He wondered anxiously what could be the motive of this sudden and extraordinary recall; the letters of his friends explained it.

Warham was dead, and the king thought of Cranmer to succeed him as archbishop of Canterbury and primate of all England. The reformer was greatly moved. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "no man has ever desired a bishopric less than myself. If I accept it, I must resign the delights of study and the calm sweetness of an obscure condition." Knowing Henry’s domineering character and his peculiar religious principles, Cranmer thought that with him the reformation of England was impossible. He saw himself exposed to disputes without end—there would be no more peace for the most peaceable of men. A brilliant career, an exalted position—he was terrified. "My conscience," he said, "rebels against this call. Wretch that I am! I see nothing but troubles, and conflicts, and insurmountable dangers in my path."

Upon mature reflection, Cranmer thought he might get out of his difficulty by gaining time, hoping that the king, who did not like delays, would doubtless give the see to another. He sent an answer that important affairs prevented his return to England. Solyman had retreated before the Emperor; the latter had determined to pass through Italy to Spain, and had appointed a meeting with the pope at Piacenza or Genoa. Henry’s ambassador thought it his duty to neutralize the fatal consequences of this interview; and Charles having left Vienna on the 4th of October, Cranmer followed him two days later. The exalted dignity that awaited him oppressed him like the nightmare. On his road he found neither inhabitants nor food, and hay was his only bed. Sometimes he crossed battlefields covered with the carcasses of Turks and Christians. A comet appeared in the east foreboding some tragic event. Many declared they had seen a flaming sword in the heavens. "These strange signs," he wrote to Henry, "announce some great mutation." Cranmer and his colleagues could not gain the pope to their side. Several months passed away, during which men’s minds became so excited, that the cardinals forgot all decorum. "Alas!" says a catholic historian, "all the time this affair continued, they went to the consistory as if they were going to a play." Charles V prevailed at last.

A report having circulated in Italy that the king was about to place Cranmer at the head of the English Church, the imperial court treated him with unusual consideration. Charles V, his ministers, and the foreign ambassadors said openly that such a man richly deserved to hold a high place in the favor and government of the king his master. In November, the Emperor gave Cranmer his farewell audience, and the latter returned to England not long after. But he did so reluctantly enough, knowing what awaited him and prolonging to seven weeks a journey which could easily have been accomplished in three. Not
wishing to act in opposition to general usage and clerical opinion, he thought it more prudent to leave his wife for a time with Osiander. He sent for her somewhat later, but she was never presented at court. It was not necessary, and it might only have embarrassed the pious German lady.

As soon as Cranmer reached London, he waited upon the king, being quite engrossed in thinking of what was about to take place between his sovereign and himself. Henry went straight to the point; he told him that he had nominated him archbishop of Canterbury. Cranmer objected, but the king would take no refusal. In vain did the divine urge his reasons; the monarch was firm. It was no slight matter to contend with Henry VIII. Cranmer was alarmed at the effect produced by his resistance. "Your Highness," he said, "I most humbly implore your Grace's pardon."

When he left the king, he hurried off to his friends, particularly to Cromwell. The burden which Henry was laying upon him seemed more insupportable than ever. Knowing how difficult it is to resist a prince of despotic character, he foresaw conflicts and perhaps compromises, which would embitter his life, and he could not make up his mind to sacrifice his happiness to the imperious will of the monarch. "Take care," said his friends, "it is as dangerous to refuse a favor from so absolute a prince as to insult him." But Cranmer's conscience was concerned in his refusal. "I feel something within me," he said, "which rebels against the supremacy of the pope, and all the superstitions to which I should have to submit as primate of England. No, I will not be a bishop!" He might sacrifice his repose and his happiness, expose himself to painful struggles, but to recognize the pope and submit to his jurisdiction was an insurmountable obstacle. His friends shook their heads. "Your *nolo episcopari*," they said, "will not hold against our master's *volo to episcopum esse*. ["I am unwilling to be made a bishop." "I desire you to be a bishop."] And after all, what is it? Permitting the king to place you at the summit of honors and power. ... You refuse all that men desire." "I would sooner forfeit my life," answered Cranmer, "than do anything against my conscience to gratify my ambition."

Henry, vexed at all these delays, again summoned Cranmer to the palace, and bade him speak without fear. "If I accept this office," replied that sincere man, "I must receive it from the hands of the pope, and this my conscience will not permit me to do. ... Neither the pope nor any other foreign prince has authority in this realm." Such a reason as this had great weight with Henry. He was silent for a little while, as if reflecting, and then said to Cranmer, "Can you prove what you have just said?" "Certainly I can," answered the doctor, "Holy Scripture and the Fathers support the supreme authority of kings in their kingdoms, and thus prove the claims of the pope to be a miserable usurpation." Such a statement bound Henry to take another step in his reforms. As he had not yet thought of establishing bishops and archbishops without the pope, he sent for some learned lawyers, and asked them how he could confer the episcopal dignity on Cranmer without wounding the conscience of the future primate. The lawyers proposed that, as Cranmer refused to submit to the Roman primacy, someone should be sent to Rome to do in his stead all that the law required. "Let another do it, if he likes," said Cranmer, "but *super animam*
suam, at the risk of his soul. As for me, I declare I will not acknowledge the authority of the pope any further than it agrees with the Word of God, and that I reserve the right of speaking against him and of attacking his errors."

The lawyers found bad precedents to justify a bad measure. "Archbishop Warham," they said, "while preserving the advantages he derived from the state, protested against everything the state did prejudicial to Rome. If the deceased archbishop preserved the rights of the papacy, why should not the new one preserve those of the kingdom? ... Besides (they added) the pope knows very well that when they make oath to him, every bishop does so *salvo ordine meo*, without prejudice to the rights of his order."

It having been conceded that in the act of consecration "the rights of the Word of God" should be reserved, Cranmer consented to become primate of England. Henry VIII, who was less advanced in practice than in theory, all the same demanded of Clement VII the bulls necessary for the inauguration of the new archbishop. The pontiff, only too happy still to have something to say to England, hastened to dispatch them, addressing them directly to Cranmer himself. But the latter, who would accept nothing from the pope, sent them to the king, declaring that he would not receive his appointment from Rome. By accepting the call that was addressed to him, Cranmer meant to break with the order of the Middle Ages, and re-establish, so far as was in his power, that of the Gospel. But he would not conceal his intentions; all must be done in the light of day. On the 30th of March, 1533, he summoned to the chapter-house of Westminster Watkins, the king's prothonotary, with other dignitaries of the Church and State. On entering, he took up a paper, and read aloud and distinctly, "I, Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, protest openly, publicly, and expressly, that I will not bind myself by oath to anything contrary to the law of God, the rights of the king of England, and the laws of the realm; and that I will not be bound in aught that concerns liberty of speech, the government of the Church of England, and the reformation of all things that may seem to be necessary to be reformed therein. If my representative with the pope has taken in my name an oath contrary to my duty, I declare that he has done so without my knowledge, and that the said oath shall be null. I desire this protest to be repeated at each period of the present ceremony." Then turning to the prothonotary: "I beg you to prepare as many copies as may be necessary of this my protest."

Cranmer left the chapter-house and entered the abbey, where the clergy and a numerous crowd awaited him. He was not satisfied with once declaring his independence of the papacy; he desired to do it several times. The greater the antiquity of the Romish power in Britain, the more he felt the necessity of proclaiming the supremacy of the divine Word. Having put on his sacerdotal robes, Cranmer stood at the top of the steps of the high altar, and said, turning towards the assembly, "I declare that I take the oath required of me only under the reserve contained in the protest I have made this day in the chapter-house." Then bending his knees before the altar, he read it a second time in presence of the bishops, priests, and people; after which the bishops of Lincoln, Exeter, and St. Asaph consecrated him to the episcopate.
The archbishop, standing before the altar, prepared to receive the pallium, but first he had a duty to fulfill—if he sacrificed his repose, he did not intend to sacrifice his convictions. For the third time he took up the protest, and again read it before the immense crowd that filled the cathedral. The accustomed order of the ceremony having been twice interrupted by an extraordinary declaration, all were at liberty to praise or blame the action of the prelate as they pleased. Cranmer, having thus thrice published his reserves, read at last the oath which the archbishops of Canterbury were accustomed to make to St. Peter and to the holy apostolic Church of Rome, with the usual protest: salvo meo ordine (without prejudice to my order).

Cranmer’s triple protest was an act of Christian decision. Some time afterwards he said, "I made that protest in good faith; I always loved simplicity and hated falseness." But it was wrong of him to use after it the formula ordinarily employed in consecrations. Doubtless it was nothing more than a form—a form that was imposed by the king—and Cranmer protested against all the bad it might contain; still "it is necessary to walk consistently in all things," as Calvin says, and we here meet with one of those weaknesses which sometimes appear in the life of the pious reformer of England. He ought at no price to have made oath to the pope; that oath was a stain which in some measure tinged the whole of his episcopate. Yet if we were to condemn him severely, we should be forgetting that striking truth—in many things we offend all. Cranmer was the first in the breach, and he has claims to the consideration of those who are comfortably established in a position gained by him with so much suffering. The energy with which he thrice proclaimed his independence deserves our admiration. Nevertheless all weakness is a fault, and when that fault is committed in high station it may lead to fatal consequences. The sanctity of the oath taken by churchmen was compromised by Cranmer’s act, and we have seen in later times other divines secretly communing with Romish doctrines while appearing to reject popery. There have sometimes been disguised papists in the Protestant Church of England.

After the ceremony, the new archbishop returned to his palace at Lambeth. From that hour, this patron of letters, a scholar himself, a truly pious man, a distinguished preacher, and of indefatigable industry, never ceased to labor for the good of the Church. He was able to introduce Christian faith into many hearts, and sometimes to defend it against the king’s ill humor. He constantly endeavored to spread around him moderation, charity, truth, piety, and peace. When Cranmer became primate of all England, on the 30th of March, 1533, in St. Stephen’s, Westminster, the papal order was interred, and it might be foreseen that the apostolic order would be revived. England preserved episcopacy, but she rejected that Roman superstition which makes bishops the sole successors of the apostles and maintains (as at the Council of Trent) that they are invested with an indelible character and a spiritual power which no other minister possesses. "Most assuredly," said Cranmer, "at the beginning of the religion of Christ, bishops and presbyters (priests) were not two things, but one only." He declared that a bishop was not necessary to make a pastor, that not only presbyters possessed this right, but "the people also by their election."
"Before there were Christian princes, it was the people," he said, "who generally elected the bishops and priests." Cranmer was not the only man who professed these principles, which make of the episcopalian and the Presbyterian constitution two varieties, having many things in common. The most venerable fathers of the Anglican Church—Pilkington, Coverdale, Whitgift, Fulke, Tyndale, Jewel, Bradford, Becon, and others—have acknowledged the identity of bishops and presbyters. By the Reformation, England belongs not to the papistical system of episcopacy, but to the evangelical system. A public act which would bring back that Church to her holy origin, would be a source of great prosperity to her.

The great reformers of England did not separate from Rome only, but also from the semi-catholicism that was intended to be substituted for it. To them, the spirit and the life were in the ministry of the Word of God, and not in rites and ceremonies. By their noble example they have called all men of God to follow them.

CHAPTER 17
Catherine Descends from the Throne and Anne Boleyn Ascends It
November, 1532 to July, 1533

Cranmer was on the archiepiscopal throne; if Anne Boleyn were now to take her seat on the royal throne by the side of Henry, it was the pope’s opinion that everything would be lost. Clement recurred once more to his favorite suggestion of bigamy, already advised by him in 1528 and 1530. True, this suggestion could not be acceptable either to Henry or to Charles V, but that made it all the better in the eyes of the pontiff; he would then have the appearance of assenting to the king's plans without running the least risk of seeing them realized. "Rather than do what his Majesty asks," he said to one of the English envoys, "I would prefer granting him the necessary dispensation to have two wives; that would be a smaller scandal."

The tenacity with which the pope advised Henry again and again to commit the crime of bigamy has not prevented the most illustrious advocates of Catholicism from exclaiming that "to have two wives at once is a mystery of iniquity, of which there is no example in Christendom." A singular assertion after a cardinal and then a pope had on several occasions advised what they call "a mystery of iniquity." Again, for the third time, the king refused a remedy that was worse than the disease.

The pope wished at any price to prevent Rome from losing England; and turning to the other side, he resolved to try to gain over Charles V and prevail upon him not to oppose the divorce. In order to succeed, Clement determined to undertake a journey to Bologna in the worst season of the year. He started on the 18th of November with six cardinals and a certain number of attendants, and took twenty days to reach that city by way of Perugia. Most of his officers had done everything to dissuade him from this painful expedition, but in vain. The rain fell in torrents; the rivers were swollen and unfordable; the roads muddy and broken up; the mules sank of fatigue one after another; the
couriers who preceded him solicited the pope to travel on foot; and at last his Holiness’ favorite mule broke its leg. It mattered not; he must oppose the Reformation of England. But the discomforts of the journey increased; the pope often arrived at inns where there was no bed, and had to sleep among the straw. At last he reached Bologna on the 7th of December, but in such a plight that, notwithstanding his love for ceremonies, he entered the city furtively. Another disappointment awaited him. The cardinal of Ancona died, the most influential member of the Sacred College, and on whom Clement relied to gain over the Emperor, who greatly respected him. But this did not cool the pontiff’s zeal. "I am thoroughly decided to please the kings in this great matter," he said to Henry’s envoys, and added, "To have universal concord between all the princes of Christendom, I would give a joint of my hand." In fact Clement set to work and went so far as to tell Charles that, according to the theologians, the pope had no right to grant a dispensation for a marriage between brother and sister, but the Emperor was immovable. The pope then proposed a truce of three or four years between Henry, Francis, and Charles, during which he would convocate a general council, to whom he would remit the whole affair. Francis informed Henry that all this was nothing but a trick. The king, convinced that the pope was trifling with him, no longer hesitated to follow the course which the interests of his people and his own happiness seemed to point out. He determined that Anne Boleyn should be his wife and queen of England also. It was now that the marriage took place. Cranmer states in a letter written on the 17th of June, 1533 that he did not perform the ceremony, that he did not hear of it until a fortnight after, and that it was celebrated privately "much about Saint Paul’s day last" (25th January, 1533). Whatever may have been the exact date of the marriage, it became the universal topic of conversation in the early months of 1533; people did not speak of it publicly, but in private, some attacking and others defending it. If the members of the Romish party circulated ridiculous stories and outrageous calumnies against Anne, the members of the national party replied that the purity of her life, her moderation, her chastity, her mildness, her discretion, her noble and exalted parentage, her pleasing manners, and (they added somewhat later) her fitness to give a successor to the crown of England, made her worthy of the royal favor. Men are apt to go too far in reproaches as well as in eulogies.

This important step on the part of Henry VIII was accompanied with an explosion of murmurs against Clement VII. "The pope," he said, "wanders from the path of the Redeemer, who was obedient in this world to princes. What! must a prince submit to the arrogance of a human being whom God has put under him? Must a king humble himself before that man above whom he stands by the will of God? No! that would be a perversion of the order God has established." This is what Henry represented to Francis through Lord Rochford; but the words did not touch the King of France, for the Emperor was just then making several concessions to him, and the evangelicals of Paris were annoying him. From that hour the cordial feeling between the two monarchs gradually decreased. England turned her eyes more and more towards the Gospel, and
France towards Rome. Just at the time when Anne Boleyn was about to reign in the palaces of Whitehall and Windsor, Catherine de Medici was entering those of St. Germain and Fontainebleau. The contrast between the two nations became ever more distinct and striking; England was advancing towards liberty, and France towards the dragonnades.

The divorce between Rome and Whitehall soon became manifest. A brief of Clement VII posted in February on the doors of all the churches in Flanders, in the states of the king’s enemy, and as near to England as possible, attracted a great number of readers. “What shall we do?” said the pontiff to Henry. “Shall we neglect thy soul’s safety? … We exhort thee, our son, under pain of excommunication, to restore Queen Catherine to the royal honors which are due to her, to cohabit with her, and to cease to associate publicly with Anne, and that within a month from the day on which this brief shall be presented to thee. Otherwise, when the said term shall have elapsed, we pronounce thee and the said Anne to be ipso facto excommunicate, and command all men to shun and avoid your presence.” It would appear that this document, demanded by the imperialists, had been posted throughout Flanders without the pope’s knowledge.

A copy was immediately forwarded to the king by his agents. He was surprised and agitated, but believed at last that it was forged by his enemies. How could he imagine that the pope, just at the very time he was showing the king especial marks of his affection, would (even conditionally) have anathematized and isolated him in the midst of his people? Henry sent a copy of the document to Benet, his agent at Rome, and desired him to ascertain carefully whether it did really proceed from the pope or not.

Benet presented the document to Clement as a paper forwarded to him by his friend in Flanders. The latter was “ashamed and in great perplexity,” wrote the envoy. He then read it again more attentively, stopped at certain passages, and seemed as if he were choking. Having come to the end, he expressed his surprise, and pretended that the copy differed from the original. “There is one mistake in particular which almost chokes the pope every time it is mentioned,” wrote Benet to Cromwell. This mistake was the inclusion of Queen Anne Boleyn in the censure, without giving her previous warning, which (they said) was contrary to all the commandments of God. Accordingly Dr. Benet received orders to bring up this mistake frequently in his audiences with the pope, and he did not fail to do so. At this moment, in which he was about to lose England, the pope was more uneasy at having committed an error of form with regard to Anne Boleyn, than with having struck the monarch of a powerful kingdom with an interdict. There is, besides, no doubt that he dictated the unhappy phrase himself.

Benet and his friends took advantage of the pope’s vexation, and even increased it; they communicated the brief to the dignitaries of the Church in Clement’s household, and the latter acknowledged that the document must be offensive to his Majesty of England, and that “the pope was much to blame.” Benet transmitted the pontiff’s errata to the king, but it was too late; the blow
had taken effect. The indignant Henry was about to proceed ostentatiously to
the very acts which Rome threatened with her thunders.
Whilst the pope was hesitating, England firmly pursued her emancipation.
Parliament met on the 4th of February, and the boldest language was uttered.
"The people of England, in accord with their king," said eloquent speakers,
have the right to decide supremely on all things both temporal and spiritual,
and certainly the English possess intelligence enough for that. And yet, in spite
of the prohibitions issued by so many of our princes, we see bulls arriving every
moment from Rome to regulate wills, marriages, divorces, everything in short.
We propose that henceforward these matters be decided solely before the
national tribunals." The law passed. It was Cromwell’s legislative masterpiece.
Appeals, instead of being made to Rome, were to be made in the first instance
to the bishop, then to the archbishop, and, if the king was interested in the
cause, to the Upper Chamber of the ecclesiastical Convocation.
The king took immediate advantage of this law to inquire of Convocation
whether the pope could authorize a man to marry his brother’s widow. Out of
sixty-six present, and one hundred and ninety-seven who voted by proxy, there
were only nineteen in the Upper House who voted against the king. The
opposition was stronger in the Lower House; but even this agreed with the
other house in declaring that Pope Julius II had exceeded his authority in giving
Henry a dispensation, and that the marriage was consequently null from the
very first.
Nothing remained now but to proceed to the divorce. On the 11th of April, two
days before Easter, Cranmer, as archbishop, wrote a letter to the king, in
which he set forth that, desiring to fill the office of archbishop of Canterbury,
"according to the laws of God and Holy Church, for the relief of the grievances
and infirmities of the people, God’s subjects and yours in spiritual causes," he
prayed his Majesty’s favor for that office. Cranmer did not decline the royal
intervention, but he avoided confounding spiritual with temporal affairs.
Henry, who was doubtless waiting impatiently for this letter, was alarmed as
he read the words, “according to the laws of God and Holy Church.” God and
the Church. ... Well! but what of the king and the royal supremacy? The
primate seemed to assert the right of acting proprio motu, and, while asking
the king’s favor, to be doing a simple act of courtesy. ... Did the Church of
England claim to take the pontiff’s place and station, and leave the king
aside? ... That was not what Henry meant. Tired of the pretensions of the pope
of Rome, would he suffer a pope on a small scale at his side? He intended to be
master in his own kingdom—master of everything. The letter must be modified,
and this Henry intimated to Cranmer.
That day, or the next after the one on which this letter had been written,
there was a great festival at the court in honor of Anne Boleyn. "Queen Anne
that evening went in state to her apartments openly as queen," says Hall. It
was probably during this festival that the king, taking the prelate aside,
desired him to suppress the unwelcome passage. The idea suggested by an
eminent historian, that Cranmer sent both the letters together to Henry, that
he might choose which he would prefer, seems to me inadmissible. Cranmer, as
it would appear, submitted, waiting for better days. On returning to Lambeth, he recopied his letter, omitting the words which had been pointed out. Not content with asking the king’s favor, he desired his license, his authorization to proceed. (Actually, appropriate resolutions of Convocation had already virtually decided the issues, and Cranmer knew that he could take action with the Church supporting him.) He dated his second letter the same day, and sent it to his master, who was satisfied with it.

This alone did not satisfy Henry; in his reply to the archbishop, he marked still more strongly his intention not to have in England a primate independent of the crown: “Ye therefore duly recognizing that it becometh you not, being our subject, to enterprise any part of your said office without our license obtained so to do. ... In consideration of these things, albeit we being your king and sovereign, do recognize no superior upon earth but only God; yet because ye be under us, by God’s calling and ours, the most principal minister of our spiritual jurisdiction, we will not refuse your humble request.”

This language was clear. Henry VIII did not, however, claim the arbitrary authority to which the pope pretended human and divine laws were to be the supreme rule in England, but he, the king, was to be their chief interpreter. Cranmer must understand that. “To these laws we, as a Christian king,” wrote Henry, “have always heretofore submitted, and shall ever most obediently submit ourselves.” The ecclesiastical system which Henry VIII established in England in 1533 was not a free Church in a free State, and there is no reason to be surprised at it.

Cranmer having received the royal license, now prepared the measure for disposing of the problem which, for six years, had kept England and the continent in suspense. Taking the bishops of Lincoln and Winchester and some lawyers with him, he proceeded quietly, and without ostentation, to the priory of Dunstable, five miles from Ampthill in Bedfordshire, where Queen Catherine was staying. He wished to avoid the notoriety of a trial held in London.

The ecclesiastical court being duly formed, Henry and Catherine were summoned to appear before it on the 10th of May. The king was present by attorney, but the queen replied, "My cause is before the pope; I accept no other judge." A fresh summons was immediately made out for the 12th of May, and as the queen appeared neither in person nor by any of her servants, she was pronounced contumacious, and the trial went forward. The king was informed every night of each day’s proceedings, and he was often in great anxiety. Some unexpected event, an appeal from Catherine, the sudden intervention of the pope or of the Emperor, might stop everything. His courtiers were on the watch for news. Anne said nothing, but her heart beat quick, and the ambitious Cromwell, whose fortunes depended on the success of the matter, was sometimes in great alarm. Cranmer rested on the declarations of Scripture, and showed much equity and uprightness during the trial. “I have willingly injured no human being,” he said. But he knew the queen had numerous partisans; they would conjure her, perhaps, to appear before her judges; there would then be a great stir, and the voice of the people would be heard. The archbishop could hardly restrain his emotion as he thought of this.
He must indeed expect an inflexible resistance on the part of the queen; but in the midst of all the agitation around her, she alone remained calm and resolute. Her hand had grasped the pope’s robe, and nothing could make her let it go. “I am the king's lawful wife,” she repeated, “I am queen of England. My daughter is the king’s child; I place her in her father’s hands.”

On Wednesday, the 23rd of May, the primate, attended by all the archiepiscopal court, proceeded to the church of St. Peter’s priory at Dunstable, in order to deliver the final judgment of divorce. A few persons attracted by curiosity were present; but, although Dunstable was near Ampthill, all of Catherine’s household kept themselves respectfully aloof from an act which was to deal their mistress such a grievous blow. The primate, after reciting the decisions of the several universities, provincial councils, and other premises, continued, “Therefore we, Thomas, archbishop, primate, and legate, having first called upon the name of Christ, and having God altogether before our eyes, do pronounce and declare that the marriage between our sovereign lord King Henry and the most serene Lady Catherine, widow of his brother, having been contracted contrary to the law of God, is null and void; and therefore we sentence that it is not lawful for the said most illustrious Prince Henry and the said most serene Lady Catherine to remain in the said pretended marriage.”

The announcement, drawn up very carefully by two notaries, was immediately sent to the king.

The divorce was pronounced, and Henry was free. Many persons gave way to feelings of alarm; they thought that all Europe would combine against England. “The pope will excommunicate the English,” said some, “and then the Emperor will destroy them.” But, on the other hand, the majority of the nation desired to have done with a subject which had been agitating their minds during the last seven years. England, getting out of a labyrinth from which she had never expected to find an issue, began to breathe again.

Catherine’s marriage was declared to be null; it only remained now to recognize Anne Boleyn’s. On the 28th of May, an archiepiscopal court held at Lambeth, in the primate’s palace, officially declared that Henry and Anne had been lawfully wedded, and the king had now no thought but how to seal his union by the pomp of a coronation. It would certainly have been preferable had the new queen taken her seat quietly on the throne, but slanderous reports made it necessary for the king to present his wife to the people in all the splendor of royalty.

At three o’clock in the afternoon of Thursday before Whitsuntide, a magnificent procession started from Greenwich. Fifty barges, adorned with rich banners, conveyed the representatives of the different city companies, and the metropolis joyfully hailed a union that promised to inaugurate a future of light and faith—it was almost a religious festival. On the banner of the Fishmongers was the inscription, All worship belongs to God alone; on that of the Haberdashers, My trust is in God only; on that of the Grocers, God gives grace; and on that of the Goldsmiths, To God alone be all the glory. The city of London thus asserted, in the presence of the immense crowd, the principles of the Reformation. The lord mayor’s barge immediately preceded the galley, all
hung with cloth of gold, in which Anne was seated. Near it floated another gay barge, on which a little mountain was contrived, planted with red and white roses, in the midst of which sat a number of young maidens singing to the accompaniment of sweet music. A hundred richly ornamented barques, carrying the nobility of England, brought up the magnificent procession, and a countless number of boats and skiffs covered the river. The moment Anne set her foot on shore at the Tower, a thousand trumpets sounded notes of triumph, and all the guns of the fortress fired such a peal as had seldom been heard before.

Henry, who liked the sound of cannon, met Anne at the gate and kissed her, and the new queen entered in triumph that vast fortress from which, three years later, she was to issue, by order of the same prince, to mount, an innocent victim, the cruel scaffold. She smiled courteously on all around; and yet, seized with a sudden emotion, she sometimes trembled, as if, instead of the joyous flowers on which she trod with light and graceful foot, she saw a deep gulf yawning beneath her.

The king and queen passed the whole of the next day (Friday) at the Tower. On Saturday Anne left it for Westminster. The streets were gay with banners, and the houses were hung with velvet and cloth of gold. All the Orders of the State and Church, the ambassadors of France and Venice, and the officers of the court opened the procession. The queen was carried in a magnificent litter covered with white cloth shot with gold, her head, which she had modestly inclined, being encircled with a wreath of precious stones. The people who crowded the streets were full of enthusiasm, and seemed to triumph more than she did herself.

The next day, Whit-Sunday, she proceeded for the coronation to the ancient abbey of Westminster, where the bishops and the court had been summoned to meet her. She took her seat in a rich chair, whence she presently descended to the high altar and knelt down. After the prescribed prayers, she rose, and the archbishop placed the crown of St. Edward upon her head. She then took the sacrament and retired; the Earl of Wiltshire, her father, trembling with emotion, took her right hand... he was at the pinnacle of happiness, and yet he was uneasy. Alas! a caprice of the man who had raised his daughter to the throne might be sufficient to hurl her from it! Anne herself, in the midst of all these pomps, greater than any ever seen before at the coronation of an English queen, could not entirely forget the princess whose place she had now taken. Might not she be rejected in her turn? ... In such a thought there was enough to make her shudder.

Anne did not find in her marriage with Henry the happiness she had dreamt, and a cloud was often seen passing across those features once so radiant. The idol to which this young woman had sacrificed everything—the splendor of a throne—did not satisfy her longings for happiness; she looked within herself, and found once more, as queen, that attraction towards the doctrine of the Gospel which she had felt in the society of Margaret of Valois, and which, amid her ambitious pursuits, had been almost extinguished in her heart. She discovered that for those who have everything, as well as for those who have
nothing, there is only one single good—God Himself. She did not probably give herself up entirely to Him, for her best impressions were often fugitive, but there are occasional indications that she took advantage of her power to assist those who she knew were devoted to the Gospel. Foxe intimates that the pardon granted to John Lambert, who was still in prison was in part the result of "the coming of Queen Anne." That faithful confessor of Jesus Christ settled in London, where he began to teach children Latin and Greek, without however neglecting the defense of truth.

The king, who had informed Catherine through Lord Mountjoy of the archiepiscopal sentence, officially communicated his divorce and marriage to the various crowned heads of Europe, and particularly to the king of France, the Emperor, and the pope. The pope on the 11th of July annulled the sentence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, declared the king’s marriage with Anne Boleyn unlawful, and threatened to excommunicate both, unless they separated before the end of September. Henry angrily commanded his theologians to demonstrate that the bull was a nullity, recalled his ambassador, the Duke of Norfolk, and said that the moment was come for all monarchs and all Christian people to withdraw from under the yoke of the bishop of Rome. "The pope and his cardinals," he wrote to Francis I, "pretend to have princes, who are free persons, at their beck and commandment. Sire, you and I and all the princes of Christendom must unite for the preservation of our rights, liberties, and privileges; we must alienate the greatest part of Christendom from the see of Rome."

But Henry had scholastic prejudices which made him fall into the strangest contradictions. While he was employing his diplomacy to isolate the pope, he still prayed him to declare the nullity of his marriage with Catherine. It is not at the court of this prince that we must look for the real Reformation—we must go in search of it elsewhere.

CHAPTER 18
Fryth in the Tower
August, 1532 to May, 1533

One of the leading scholars of England was about to seal the testimony of his faith with his blood. John Fryth had been one of the most brilliant stars of the university of Cambridge. "It would hardly be possible to find his equal in learning," said many. Accordingly Wolsey had invited him to his college at Oxford, and Henry VIII had desired to place him among the number of his theologians. But the mysteries of the Word of God had more attraction for Fryth than mere scholastic renown; the claims of conscience prevailed in him over those of the intellect, and, neglecting his own glory, he sought only to be useful to mankind. A sincere, decided, and yet moderate Christian, preaching the Gospel with great purity and love, this man of thirty seemed destined to become one of the most influential reformers of England. Nothing could have prevented his playing the foremost part, if he had had Luther’s enthusiastic energy or Calvin’s indomitable will. There were less strong, but perhaps more
amiable features in his character; he taught with gentleness those who were opposed to the truth, and while many, as Foxe says, "take the bellows in hand to blow the fire, but few there are that will seek to quench it," Fryth sought after peace. Controversies between Protestants distressed him. "The opinions for which men go to war," he said, "do not deserve those great tragedies of which they make us spectators. Let there be no longer any question among us of Zwinglians or Lutherans, for neither Zwingli nor Luther died for us, and we must be one in Christ Jesus." This servant of Christ, meek and lowly of heart like his Master, never disputed even with papists, unless obliged to do so. A true Catholicism which embraced all Christians was Fryth’s distinctive feature as a reformer. He was not one of those who imagine that a national Church ought to think only of its own nation, but of those who believe that if a Church is the depositary of the truth, she is so for all the earth, and that a religion is not good, if it has no longing to extend itself to all the races of mankind. There were some strongly marked national elements in the English Reformation—the activity of the king and the parliament—but there was also a universal element—a lively faith in the Savior of the world. No one in the sixteenth century represented this truly catholic element better than Fryth. "I understand the Church of God in a wide sense," he said. "It contains all those whom we regard as members of Christ. It is a net thrown into the sea." This principle, sown at that time as a seed in the English Reformation, was one day to cover the world with missionaries.

Fryth, having declined the brilliant offers the king had made to him through Cromwell and Vaughan, joined Tyndale in translating and publishing the Holy Scriptures in English. While laboring thus for England, an irresistible desire came over him to circulate the Gospel there in person. He therefore quitted the Low Countries, returned to London, and directed his course to Reading, where the prior had been his friend. Exile had not used him well, and he entered that town miserably clothed, and more like a beggar than one whom Henry VIII had desired to place near himself. This was in August 1532.

His writings had preceded him. Having received, when in the Netherlands, three works composed in defense of purgatory by three distinguished men—Rastell, Sir Thomas More’s brother-in-law, More himself, and Fisher, bishop of Rochester—Fryth had replied to them: "A purgatory! there is not one only, there are two. The first is the Word of God, the second is the cross of Christ; I do not mean the cross of wood, but the cross of tribulation. But the lives of the papists are so wicked that they have invented a third."

Sir Thomas, exasperated by Fryth’s reply, said with that humorous tone he often affected, "I propose to answer the good young father Fryth, whose wisdom is such that three old men like my brother Rastell, the bishop of Rochester, and myself are mere babies when confronted with father Fryth alone." The exile having returned to England, More had now the opportunity of avenging himself more effectually than by his jokes.

At Reading, Fryth’s strange air and his look as of a foreigner arriving from a distant country attracted attention, and he was taken up for a vagabond. "Who are you?" asked the magistrate. Fryth, suspecting that he was in the hands of
enemies of the Gospel, refused to give his name, which increased the suspicion, and he was set in the stocks. As they gave him but little to eat, with the intent of forcing him to tell his name, his hunger soon became insupportable. Knowing the name of the master of the grammar school, he asked to speak with him. Leonard Coxe had scarcely entered the prison, when the pretended vagabond all in rags addressed him in correct Latin, and began to deplore his miserable captivity. Never had words more noble been uttered in a dungeon so vile. The schoolmaster, astonished at so much eloquence, compassionately drew near the unhappy man and inquired how it came to pass that such a learned scholar was in such profound wretchedness. Presently he sat down, and the two men began to talk in Greek about the universities and languages. Coxe could not make it out; it was no longer simple pity that he felt, but love, which turned to admiration when he heard the prisoner recite with the purest accent those noble lines of the *Iliad* which were so applicable to his own case:

Sing, O Muse,

The vengeance deep and deadly, whence to Greece
Un-numbered ills arose, which many a soul
Of mighty warriors to the viewless shades
Untimely sent.

Filled with respect, Coxe hurried off to the mayor, complained bitterly of the wrong done to so remarkable a man, and obtained his liberation. Homer saved the life of a reformer. Fryth departed for London and hastened to join the worshippers who were accustomed to meet in Bow Lane. He conversed with them and exclaimed, "Oh! what consolation to see such a great number of believers walking in the way of the Lord!" These Christians asked him to expound the Scriptures to them, and, delighted with his exhortations, they exclaimed in their turn, "If the rule of St. Paul were followed, this man would certainly make a better bishop than many of those who wear the miter." Instead of the crosier he was to bear the cross. One of those who listened was in great doubt relative to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and one day, after Fryth had been setting Christ before them as the food of the Christian soul through faith, this person followed him and said, "Our prelates think differently; they believe that the bread transformed by consecration becomes the flesh, blood, and bones of Christ, that even the wicked eat this flesh with their teeth, and that we must adore the host. ... What you have just said refutes their errors, but I fear that I cannot remember it. Pray commit it to writing." Fryth, who did not like discussions, was alarmed at the request, and answered, "I do not care to touch that terrible tragedy," for so he called the dispute about the supper. The man having repeated his request, and promised that he would not communicate the paper to anybody, Fryth wrote an explanation of the doctrine of the Sacrament and gave it to this
London Christian, saying, "We must eat and drink the body and blood of Christ, not with the teeth, but with the hearing and through faith." The brother took the treatise, and, hurrying home with it, read it carefully. In a short time everyone at the Bow Lane meeting spoke about this writing. One man, a false brother, named William Holt, listened attentively to what was said, and thought he had found an opportunity of destroying Fryth. Assuming a hypocritical look, he spoke in a pious strain to the individual who had the manuscript, as if he had desired to enlighten his faith, and finally asked him for it. Having obtained it, he hastened to make a copy, which he carried to Sir Thomas More, who was still chancellor.

Fryth soon perceived that he had tried in vain to remain unknown; he called with so much power those who thirsted for righteousness to come to Christ for the waters of life, that friends and enemies were struck with his eloquence. Observing that his name began to be talked of in various places, he quitted the capital and traveled unnoticed through several counties, where he found some little Christian congregations whom he tried to strengthen in the faith.

Tyndale, who remained on the continent, having heard of Fryth's labors, began to feel great anxiety about him. He knew but too well the cruel disposition of the bishops and of More. "I will make the serpent come out of his dark den," Sir Thomas had said, speaking of Tyndale, "as Hercules forced Cerberus, the watchdog of hell, to come out to the light of day. ... I will not leave Tyndale the darkest corner in which to hide his head." In Tyndale's eyes Fryth was the great hope of the Church in England; he trembled lest the redoubtable Hercules should seize him. "Dearly beloved brother Jacob," he wrote, calling him Jacob to mislead his enemies, "be cold, sober, wise, and circumspect, and keep you low by the ground, avoiding high questions that pass the common capacity. But expound the law truly, and open the veil of Moses to condemn all flesh and prove all men sinners. Then set abroach the mercy of our Lord Jesus, and let the wounded consciences drink of him. ... All doctrine that casteth a mist on these two to shadow and hide them, resist with all your power. ... Beloved in my heart, there liveth not one in whom I have so great hope and trust, and in whom my heart rejoiceth, not so much for your learning and what other gifts else you may have, as because you walk in those things that the conscience may feel, and not in the imagination of the brain. Cleave fast to the rock of the help of God, and if aught be required of you contrary to the glory of God and His Christ, then stand fast and commit yourself to God. He is our God and His is the glory. I hope our redemption is nigh."

Tyndale's fears were but too well founded. Sir Thomas More held Fryth's new treatise in his hand; he read it and gave way by turns to anger and sarcasm. "Whetting his wits, calling his spirits together, and sharpening his pen," to use the words of the chronicler, he answered Fryth, and described his doctrine under the image of a cancer. This did not satisfy him. Although he had returned the seals to the king in May, he continued to hold office until the end of the year. He ordered search to be made for Fryth, and set all his bloodhounds on the track. If the reformer was discovered he was lost; when Sir Thomas More had once caught his man, nothing could save him—nothing but a merry jest,
perhaps. For instance, one day when he was examining a gospeller named Silver, "You know," he said with a smile, "that silver must be tried in the fire." "Yes," retorted the accused instantly, "but not quicksilver." More, delighted with the repartee, set the poor wretch at liberty. But Fryth was no jester; he could not hope, therefore, to find favor with the ex-chancellor of England. Sir Thomas hunted the reformer by sea and by land, promising a great reward to anyone who should deliver him up. There was no county where More did not look for him, no sheriff or justice of the peace to whom he did not apply, no harbor where he did not post some officer to catch him. But the answer from every quarter was, "He is not here." Indeed, Fryth, having been informed of the great exertions of his enemy, was fleeing from place to place, often changing his dress, and finding a safe retreat nowhere. Determining to leave England and return to Tyndale, he went to Milton Shone in Essex with the intention of embarking. A ship was ready to sail, and, quitting his hiding place, he went down to the shore with all precaution. But he had been betrayed. More's agents, who were on the watch, seized him as he was stepping on board, and carried him to the Tower. This occurred in October 1532.

Sir Thomas More was uneasy and soured. He beheld a new power lifting its head in England and all Christendom, and he felt that in despite of his wit and his influence he was unable to check it. That man so amiable, that writer of a style so pure and elegant, did not so much dread the anger of the king; what exasperated him was to see the Scriptures circulating more widely every day, and a continually increasing number of his fellow citizens converted to the evangelical faith. These new men, who seemed to have more piety than himself—he an old follower of the old papacy!—irritated him sorely. He claimed to have alone—he and his friends—the privilege of being Christians. The zeal of the partisans of the Reformation, the sacrifice they made of their repose, their money, and their lives, confounded him. "These diabolical people," he said, "print their books at great expense, notwithstanding the great danger; not looking for any gain, they give them away to everybody, and even scatter them abroad by night. They fear no labor, no journey, no expense, no pain, no danger, no blows, no injury. They take a malicious pleasure in seeking the destruction of others, and these disciples of the devil think only how they may cast the souls of the simple into hell-fire." In such a strain as this did the elegant utopist give vent to his anger—the man who had dreamt all his life of the plan of an imaginary world for the perfect happiness of everyone. At last he had caught one of the chief of these disciples of Satan, and hoped to put him to death by fire.

The news soon spread through London that Fryth was in the Tower, and several priests and bishops immediately went thither to try to bring him back to the pope. Their great argument was that More had confuted his treatise on the Lord's Supper. Fryth asked to see the confutation, but it was refused him. One day the Bishop of Winchester, having called upon the prisoner, showed it to Fryth, and, holding it up, asserted that the book quite shut his mouth—Fryth put out his hand, but the bishop hastily withdrew the volume. More himself was ashamed of the apology, and did all he could to prevent its circulation. Fryth
could only obtain a written copy, but he resolved to answer it immediately. There was no one with whom he could confer, not a book he could consult, and the chains with which he was loaded scarcely allowed him to sit and write. But reading in his dungeon by the light of a small candle the insults of More, and finding himself charged with having collected all the poison that could be found in the writings of Wycliffe, Luther, Æcolampadius, Tyndale, and Zwingli, this humble servant of God exclaimed, "No! Luther and his doctrine are not the mark I aim at, but the Scriptures of God." "He shall pay for his heresy with the best blood in his body," said his enemies, and the pious disciple replied, "As the sheep bound by the hand of the butcher with timid look beseeches that his blood may soon be shed, even so do I pray my judges that my blood may be shed tomorrow, if by my death the king's eyes should be opened."

Before he died, Fryth desired to save, if it were God’s will, one of his adversaries. There was one of them who had no obstinacy, no malice—it was John Rastell, More’s brother-in-law. Being unable to speak to him or to any of the enemies of the Reformation, he formed the design of writing in prison a treatise which should be called the Bulwark. But strict orders had recently arrived that he should have neither pen, ink, nor paper. However, some evangelical Christians of London, who succeeded in getting access to him, secretly furnished him with the means of writing, and Fryth began. He wrote... but at every moment he listened for fear the lieutenant of the Tower or the warders should come upon him suddenly and find the pen in his hand. Often a bright thought would occur to him, but some sudden alarm drove it out of his mind, and he could not recall it. He took courage, however; he had been accused of asserting that good works were of no service; he proceeded to explain with much eloquence all their utility, and every time he repeated, "Is that nothing? Is that still nothing? Truly, Rastell," he added, "if you only regard that as useful which justifies us, the sun is not useful, because it justifieth not."

As he was finishing these words he heard the keys rattling at the door, and, being alarmed, immediately threw paper, ink, and pen into a hiding place. However, he was able to complete the treatise and send it to Rastell. More’s brother-in-law read it; his heart was touched, his understanding enlightened, his prejudices cleared away; and from that hour this choice spirit was gained over to the Gospel of Christ. God had given him new eyes and new ears. A pure joy filled the prisoner’s heart. "Rastell now looks upon his natural reason as foolishness," he said. "Rastell, become a child, drinks the wisdom that cometh from on high."

The conversion of Sir Thomas More’s brother-in-law made a great sensation, and the visits to Fryth’s cell became every day more numerous. Although separated from his wife and from Tyndale, whom he had been forced to leave in the Low Countries, he had never had so many friends, brothers, mothers, and fathers; he wept for very joy. He took his pen and paper from their hiding place, and, always indefatigable, began to write first the Looking-glass of Self-knowledge, and next a Letter to the Faithful Followers of the Gospel of Christ. "Imitators of the Lord," he said to them, "mark yourselves with the sign of the
cross, not as the superstitious crowd does, in order to worship it, but as a testimony that you are ready to bear that cross as soon as God shall please to send it. Fear not when you have it, for you will also have a hundred fathers instead of one, a hundred mothers instead of one, a hundred mansions already in this life (for I have made the trial), and after this life, joy everlasting."

At the beginning of 1533, Anne Boleyn having been married to the King of England, Fryth saw his chains fall off; he was allowed to have all he asked for, and even permitted to leave the Tower at night on parole. He took advantage of this liberty to visit the friends of the Gospel, and consult with them about what was to be done. One evening in particular, after leaving the Tower, Fryth went to Petit’s house, anxious to embrace once more that great friend of the Reformation, that firm member of parliament, who had been thrown into prison as we have seen, and at last set free. Petit, weakened by his long confinement, was near his end; the persecution agitated and pained him, and it would appear that his emotion sometimes ended in delirium. As he was groaning over the captivity of the young and noble reformer, Fryth appeared. Petit was confused, his mind wandered. Is it Fryth or his ghost? He was like the believers, when Rhoda came to tell them that Peter was at the gate waiting to see them. But gradually recovering himself, Petit said, "You here! How have you escaped the vigilance of the warders?" "God Himself," answered Fryth, "gave me this liberty by touching their hearts." The two friends then conversed about the true Reformation of England, which in their eyes had nothing to do with the diplomatic proceedings of the king. In their opinion it was not a matter of loading the external Church with new frippery, but "to increase that elect, sanctified, and invisible congregation, elect before the foundation of the world." Fryth did not conceal from Petit the conviction he felt that he would be called upon to die for the Gospel. The night was spent in such Christian conversation, and the day began to dawn before the prisoner hastened to return to the Tower.

The evangelist’s friends did not think as he did. Anne Boleyn’s accession seemed as if it ought to open the doors of Fryth’s prison, and in imagination they saw him at liberty, and laboring either on the continent or at home at that real reformation which is accomplished by the Scriptures of God. But it was not to be so. Most of the evangelical men raised up by God in England during the reign of Henry VIII found, not the influence which they should have exercised, but death. Yet their blood has weighed in the divine balance; it has sanctified the Reformation of England, and been a spiritual seed for future ages. If the Church in England has witnessed the development of a powerful evangelical life in its bosom, it must not forget the cause, but understand, with Tertullian, that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.

CHAPTER 19
A Reformer Chooses Rather to Lose His Life Than Save It
May to July, 1533
The enemy was on the watch; the second period of Fryth’s captivity, that which was to terminate in martyrdom, was beginning. Henry’s bishops, who, while casting off the pope to please the king, had remained devoted to scholastic doctrines, feared lest the reformer should escape them; they therefore undertook to solicit Henry to put him to death. Fryth had on his side the queen, Cromwell, and Cranmer. This did not discourage them, and they represented to the king that although the man was shut up in the Tower of London, he did not cease to write and act in defense of heresy. It was the season of Lent, and Fryth’s enemies came to an understanding with Dr. Curwin, the king’s chaplain, who was to preach before the court. He had no sooner got into the pulpit than he began to declaim against those who denied the material presence of Christ in the host. Having struck his hearers with horror, he continued, “It is not surprising that this abominable heresy makes such great progress among us. A man now in the Tower of London has the audacity to defend it, and no one thinks of punishing him.”

When the service was over, the brilliant congregation left the chapel, and each as he went out asked what was the man’s name. “Fryth” was the reply, and loud were the exclamations on hearing it. The blow took effect, the scholastic prejudices of the king were revived, and he sent for Cromwell and Cranmer. “I am very much surprised,” he said, “that John Fryth has been kept so long in the Tower without examination. I desire his trial to take place without delay; and if he does not retract, let him suffer the penalty he deserves.” He then nominated six of the chief spiritual and temporal peers of England to examine him: they were the Archbishop of Canterbury, the bishops of London and Winchester, the lord chancellor, the Duke of Suffolk, and the Earl of Wiltshire. This demonstrated the importance which Henry attached to the affair. Until now, all the martyrs had fallen beneath the blows either of the bishops or of More; but in this case it was the king himself who stretched out his strong hand against the servant of God.

Henry’s order plunged Cranmer into the cruellest anxiety. On the one hand, Fryth was in his eyes a disciple of the Gospel; but on the other, he attacked a doctrine which the archbishop then held to be Christian, for, like Luther and Osiander, he still believed in consubstantiation. “Alas!” he wrote to Archdeacon Hawkins, “he professes the doctrine of Æcolampadius.” He resolved, however, to do everything in his power to save Fryth.

The best friends of the young reformer saw that a pile was being raised to consume the most faithful Christian in England. “Dearly beloved,” wrote Tyndale from Antwerp, “fear not men that threat, nor trust men that speak fair. Your cause is Christ’s Gospel, a light that must be fed with the blood of faith. The lamp must be trimmed daily, that the light go not out.” There was no lack of examples to confirm these words. “Two have suffered in Antwerp unto the great glory of the Gospel; four at Ryselles in Flanders. At Rouen in France they persecute, and at Paris are five doctors taken for the Gospel. See, you are not alone—follow the example of all your other dear brethren, who choose to suffer in hope of a better resurrection. Bear the image of Christ in your mortal body, and keep your conscience pure and undefiled. ... Una salus victis,
nullam sperare salutem: the only safety of the conquered is to hope for no safety. If you may write, tell us how it goes with you." In this letter from a martyr to a martyr there was one sentence honorable to a Christian woman: "Your wife is well content with the will of God, and would not for her sake have the glory of God hindered."

If friends were thinking of Fryth on the banks of the Scheldt, they were equally anxious about him on the banks of the Thames. Worthy citizens of London asked what was the use of England’s quitting the pope to cling to Christ, if she burnt the servants of Christ? The little Church had recourse to prayer. Archbishop Cranmer wished to save Fryth; he loved the man and admired his piety. If the accused appeared before the commission appointed by the king, he was lost; some means must be devised without delay to rescue him from an inevitable death. The archbishop declared that, before proceeding to trial, he wished to have a conference with the prisoner, and to endeavor to convince him, which was very natural. But at the same time the primate appeared to fear that if the conference took place in London the people would disturb the public peace, as in the time of Wycliffe. He settled therefore that it should be held at Croydon, where he had a palace. The primate’s fear seems rather strange. A riot on account of Fryth, at a time when king, commons, and people were in harmony, appeared hardly probable. Cranmer had another motive. Among the persons composing his household was a gentleman of benevolent character, and with a leaning towards the Gospel, who was distressed at the cruelty of the bishops, and looked upon it as a lawful and Christian act to rob them, if possible, of their victims. Giving him one of the porters of Lambeth Palace as a companion, Cranmer committed Fryth to his care to bring him to Croydon. They were to take the prisoner a journey of four or five hours on foot through fields and woods, without any constables or soldiers. A strange walk and a strange escort!

Lord Fitzwilliam, first Earl of Southampton and governor of the Tower, at the time lay sick in his house at Westminster, suffering such severe pain as to force loud groans from him. On the 10th of June, at the desire of my lord of Canterbury, the archbishop’s gentleman, and the Lambeth porter, Gallois, surnamed Perlebeane, were introduced into the nobleman’s bedchamber, where they found him lying upon his bed in extreme agony. Fitzwilliam, a man of the world, was greatly enraged against the evangelicals, who were the cause, in his opinion, of all the difficulties of England. The gentleman respectfully presented to him the primate’s letter and the king’s ring. "What do you want?" he asked sharply, without opening the letter. "His Grace desires your lordship to deliver Master Fryth to us." The impatient Southampton flew into a passion at the name, and cursed Fryth and all the heretics. He thought it strange that a gentleman and a porter should have to convey a prisoner of such importance to the episcopal court—were there no soldiers in the Tower? Had Fitzwilliam any suspicion, or did he regret to see the reformer leave the walls within which he had been kept so long? We cannot tell, but he must obey, for they brought him the king’s signet. Accordingly, taking his own ring hastily from his finger, "Fryth," he said, "Fryth. ... Here, show this to the lieutenant of
the Tower, and take away your heretic quickly. I am but too happy to get rid of him."

A few hours later Fryth, the gentleman, and Perlebeane entered a boat moored near the Tower, and were rowed speedily to the archbishop’s palace at Lambeth. At first the three persons preserved a strict silence, only interrupted from time to time by the deep sighs of the gentleman. Being charged to begin by trying to induce Fryth to make some compromise, he broke the silence at last. "Master Fryth," he said, "if you are not prudent you are lost. What a pity! You that are so learned in Latin and Greek and in the Holy Scriptures, the ancient doctors, and all kinds of knowledge, you will perish, and all your admirable gifts will perish with you, with little profit to the world, and less comfort to your wife and children, your kinsfolk and friends." ... The gentleman was silent a minute, and then began again, "Your position is dangerous, Master Fryth, but not desperate; you have many friends who will do all they can in your favor. On your part do something for them, make some concession, and you will be safe. Your opinion on the merely spiritual presence of the body and blood of the Savior is premature; it is too soon for us in England—wait until a better time comes!"

Fryth did not say a word; no sound was heard but the plash of the water and the noise of the oars. The gentleman thought he had shaken the young doctor, and after a moment’s silence he resumed, "My lord Cromwell and my lord of Canterbury feel great affection for you; they know that if you are young in years you are old in knowledge, and may become a most profitable citizen of this realm. ... If you will be somewhat advised by their counsel, they will never permit you to be harmed, but if you stand stiff to your opinion, it is not possible to save your life, for as you have good friends so have you mortal enemies."

The gentleman stopped and looked at the prisoner. It was by such language that Bilney had been seduced, but Fryth kept himself in the presence of God, ready to lose his life that he might save it. He thanked the gentleman for his kindness, and said that his conscience would not permit him to recede, out of respect to man, from the true doctrine of the Lord’s Supper. "If I am questioned on that point, I must answer according to my conscience, though I should lose twenty lives if I had so many. I can support it by a great number of passages from the Holy Scriptures and the ancient doctors, and if I am fairly tried I shall have nothing to fear." "Indeed!" quoth the gentleman, "if you be fairly tried, you would be safe, but that is what I very much doubt. Our master Christ was not fairly tried, nor would He be, as I think, if He were now present again in the world. How then should you be, when your opinions are so little understood and are so odious?"

"I know," answered Fryth, "that the doctrine which I hold is very hard meat to be digested just now, but listen to me." As he spoke, he took the gentleman by the hand. "If you live twenty years more, you will see this whole realm of my opinion concerning this sacrament of the altar—all, except a certain class of men. My death, you say, would be sorrowful to my friends, but it will be only for a short time. But, all things considered, my death will be better unto me
and all mine than life in continual bondage. God knoweth what He hath to do
with His poor servant, whose cause I now defend. He will help me, and no man
shall prevail on me to step backwards."
The boat reached Lambeth. The travelers landed, entered the archbishop’s
palace, and, after taking some refreshment, started on foot for Croydon, ten
miles south of London.
The three travelers proceeded over the hills and through the plains of Surrey;
here and there flocks of sheep were grazing in the scanty pastures, and to the
east stretched vast woods. The gentleman walked mournfully by the side of
Fryth. It was useless to ask him again to retract, but another idea engrossed
Cranmer’s officer—that of letting Fryth escape. The country was then thinly
inhabited; the woods which covered it on the east and the chalky hills might
serve as a hiding place for the fugitive. The difficulty was to persuade
Perlebeane. The gentleman slackened his pace, called to the porter, and they
walked by themselves behind the prisoner. When they were so far off that he
could not hear their conversation, the gentleman said, "You have heard this
man, I am sure, and noted his talk since he came from the Tower." "I never
heard so constant a man," Perlebeane answered, "nor so eloquent a person."
"You have heard nothing," resumed the gentleman, "in respect both of his
knowledge and his eloquence. If you could hear him at the university or in the
pulpit, you would admire him still more. England has never had such a one of
his age with so much learning. And yet our bishops treat him as if he were a
very dolt or an idiot. ... They abhor him as the devil himself, and want to get
rid of him by any means."
"Surely," said the porter, "if there were nothing else in him but the
consideration of his person both comely and amiable, his disposition so gentle,
meek, and humble, it were pity he should be cast away."
"Cast away," interrupted the gentleman, "he will certainly be cast away if we
once bring him to Croydon." And lowering his voice, he continued, "Surely
before God I speak it, if thou, Perlebeane, wert of my mind, we should never
bring him thither."
"What do you mean?" asked the astonished porter. Then, after a moment’s
silence, he added, "I know that you have a great deal more responsibility in this
matter than I have, and therefore if you can honestly save this man, I will yield
to your proposal with all my heart." The gentleman breathed again.
Cranmer had desired that all possible efforts should be made to change Fryth’s
sentiments, and these failing, he wished to save him in another way. It was his
desire that the reformer should go on foot to Croydon, that he should be
accompanied by two only of his servants, selected from those best disposed
towards the new doctrine. The primate’s gentleman would never have dared
take upon himself, except by his master’s desire, the responsibility of
conniving at the escape of a prisoner who was to be tried by the first
personages of the realm, appointed by the king himself. Happy at having
gained the porter to his enterprise, he began to discuss with him the ways and
means. He knew the country well, and his plan was arranged.
“You see yonder hill before us,” he said to Perlebeane, “it is Brixton Causeway, two miles from London. There are great woods on both sides. When we come to the top we will permit Fryth to escape into the woods on the left hand, whence he may easily get into Kent, where he was born, and where he has many friends. We will linger an hour or two on the road, after his flight, to give him time to reach a place of safety, and when night approaches we will go to Streatham, which is a mile and a half off, and make an outcry in the town that our prisoner has escaped into the woods on the right hand towards Wandsworth, that we followed him for more than a mile, and at length lost him because we were not many enough. At the same time we will take with us as many people as we can, to search for him in that direction; if necessary, we will be all night about it, and before we can send the news to Croydon of what has happened, Fryth will be in safety, and the bishops will be disappointed.”

The gentleman, we see, was not very scrupulous about the means of rescuing a victim from the Roman priests. Perlebeane thought as he did. “Your plan pleases me,” he answered, “now go and tell the prisoner, for we are already at the foot of the hill.”

The delighted gentleman hurried forward. "Master Fryth," he said, "let us talk together a little. I cannot hide from you that the task I have undertaken, to bring you to Croydon, as a sheep to the slaughter, grieves me exceedingly, and there is no danger I would not brave to deliver you out of the lion’s mouth. Yonder good fellow and I have devised a plan whereby you may escape—listen to me." The gentleman having described his plan, Fryth smiled amiably and said, "This then is the result of your long consultation together. You have wasted your time. If you were both to leave me here and go to Croydon, declaring to the bishops you had lost me, I should follow after as fast as I could, and bring them news that I had found and brought Fryth again."

The gentleman had not expected such an answer. A prisoner refuse his liberty! ... "You are mad," he said, "do you think your reasoning will convert the bishops? At Milton Shone you tried to escape beyond the sea, and now you refuse to save yourself!" "The two cases are different," answered Fryth, "then I was at liberty, and according to the advice of St. Paul I would fain have enjoyed my liberty for the continuance of my studies. But now the higher power, as it were by Almighty God’s permission, has seized me, and my conscience binds me to defend the doctrine for which I am persecuted, if I would not incur our Lord’s condemnation. If I should now run away, I should run from my God; if I should fly, I should fly from the testimony I am bound to bear to his Holy Word, and I should deserve a thousand hells. I most heartily thank you both for your good will towards me, but I beseech you to bring me where I was appointed to be brought, for else I will go thither all alone."

Those who desired to save Fryth had not counted upon so much integrity. Such were, however, the martyrs of protestantism. The archbishop’s two servants continued their journey along with their strange prisoner. Fryth had a calm eye and cheerful look, and the rest of the journey was accomplished in pious and agreeable conversation. When they reached Croydon, he was delivered to the officers of the episcopal court, and passed the night in the porter’s lodge.
The next morning he appeared before the bishops and peers appointed to examine him. Cranmer and Lord Chancellor Audley desired his acquittal, but some of the other judges were men without pity. The examination began.

"Do you believe," they said, "that the sacrament of the altar is or is not the real body of Christ?" Fryth answered simply and firmly, "I believe that the bread is the body of Christ in that it is broken, and thus teaches us that the body of Christ was to be broken and delivered unto death to redeem us from our iniquities. I believe the bread is the body of Christ in that it is distributed, and thus teaches us that the body of Christ and the fruits of His passion are distributed unto all faithful people. I believe that the bread is the body of Christ so far as it is received, and thus it teaches us that even as the outward man receiveth the sacrament with his teeth and mouth, so doth the inward man truly receive through faith the body of Christ and the fruits of his passion."

The judges were not satisfied: they wanted a formal and complete retraction.

"Do you not think," asked one of them, "that the natural body of Christ, his flesh, blood, and bones, are contained under the sacrament and are there present without any figure of speech?" "No," he answered, "I do not think so," adding with much humility and charity, "notwithstanding I would not have that any should count my saying to be an article of faith. For even as I say, that you ought not to make any necessary article of the faith of your part; so I say again, that we make no necessary article of the faith of our part, but leave it indifferent for all men to judge therein, as God shall open their hearts, and no side to condemn or despise the other, but to nourish in all things brotherly love, and to bear one another's infirmities."

The commissioners then undertook to convince Fryth of the truth of transubstantiation, but he quoted Scripture, St. Augustine and Chrysostom, and eloquently defended the doctrine of the spiritual eating. The court rose. Cranmer had been moved, although he was still under the influence of Luther’s teaching. "The man spoke admirably," he said to Dr. Heath as they went out, "and yet in my opinion he is wrong." Not many years later he devoted one of the most important of his writings to an explanation of the doctrine now professed by the young reformer; it may be that Fryth’s words had begun to shake him.

Full of love for him, Cranmer desired to save him. Four times during the course of the examination he sent for Fryth and conversed with him privately, always asserting the Lutheran opinion. Fryth offered to maintain his doctrine in a public discussion against anyone who was willing to attack it, but nobody accepted his challenge. Cranmer, distressed at seeing all his efforts useless, found there was nothing more for him to do; the cause was transferred to the ordinary, the Bishop of London, and on the 17th of June the prisoner was once more committed to the Tower. The bishop selected as his assessors for the trial, Longland, bishop of Lincoln, and Gardiner, bishop of Winchester; there were no severer judges to be found on the episcopal bench. At Cambridge, Fryth had been the most distinguished pupil of the clever and ambitious Gardiner; but this, instead of exciting the compassion of that hard man, did but
increase his anger. "Fryth and his friends," he said, "are villains, blasphemers, and limbs of the devil."

On the 20th of June, Fryth was taken to St. Paul’s before the three bishops, and though of a humble disposition and almost timid character, he answered boldly. A clerk took down all his replies, and Fryth, snatching up the pen, wrote, "I Fryth think thus. Thus have I spoken, written, defended, affirmed, and published in my writings." The bishops having asked him if he would retract his errors, Fryth replied, "Let justice have its course and the sentence be pronounced." Stokesley did not keep him waiting long. "Not willing that thou, Fryth, who art wicked," he said, "shouldest become more wicked, and infect the Lord’s flock with thy heresies, we declare thee excommunicate and cast out from the Church, and leave thee unto the secular powers, most earnestly requiring them in the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ that thy execution and punishment be not too extreme, nor yet the gentleness too much mitigated."

Fryth was taken to Newgate and shut up in a dark cell, where he was bound with chains on the hands and feet as heavy as he could bear, and round his neck was a collar of iron, which fastened him to a post, so that he could neither stand upright nor sit down. Truly the "gentleness" was not "too much mitigated." His charity never failed him. "I am going to die," he said, "but I condemn neither those who follow Luther nor those who follow Æcolampadius, since both reject transubstantiation." A tailor’s apprentice, twenty-four years of age, Andrew Hewet by name, was placed in his cell. Fryth asked him for what crime he was sent to prison. "The bishops," he replied, "asked me what I thought of the sacrament, and I answered, ‘I think as Fryth does.’ Then one of them smiled, and the Bishop of London said, ‘Why Fryth is a heretic, and already condemned to be burnt, and if you do not retract your opinion you shall be burnt with him.’ ‘Very well,’ I answered, ‘I am content.’ So they sent me here to be burnt along with you."

On the 4th of July, they were both taken to Smithfield; the executioners fastened them to the post, back to back; the torch was applied, the flame rose in the air, and Fryth, stretching out his hands, embraced it as if it were a dear friend whom he would welcome. The spectators were touched, and showed marks of lively sympathy. "Of a truth," said an evangelical Christian in after days, "he was one of those prophets whom God, having pity on this realm of England, raised up to call us to repentance." His enemies were there. Dr. Cooke, a fanatic priest, observing some persons praying, called out, "Do not pray for such folks, any more than you would for a dog." At this moment a sweet light shone on Fryth’s face, and he was heard beseeching the Lord to pardon his enemies. Hewet died first, and Fryth thanked God that the sufferings of his young brother were over. Committing his soul into the Lord’s hands, he expired. "Truly," exclaimed many, "great are the victories Christ gains in His saints."

So many souls were enlightened by Fryth’s writings, that this reformer contributed powerfully to the reformation in England. "One day, an Englishman," says Thomas Becon, prebendary of Canterbury and chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer, "having taken leave of his mother and friends, traveled
into Derbyshire, and from thence to the Peak, a marvelous barren country,” and where there was then "neither learning nor yet no spark of godliness."

Coming into a little village named Alsop in the Dale, he chanced upon a certain gentleman also named Alsop, lord of that village, a man not only ancient in years, but also ripe in the knowledge of Christ’s doctrine. After they had taken "a sufficient repast," the gentleman showed his guest certain books which he called his jewels and principal treasures; these were the New Testament and some books of Fryth’s. In these godly treatises this ancient gentleman occupied himself among his rocks and mountains, both diligently and virtuously. "He did not only love the Gospel," adds Cranmer’s chaplain, "he lived it also.

Fryth’s writings were not destined to be read always with the same avidity; the truth they contain is, however, good for all times. The books of the apostles and of the reformers which that gentleman of Alsop read in the sixteenth century are better calculated to bring joy and peace to the soul than the light works read with such avidity in the modern world.

CHAPTER 20
The Isolation of England
1533

When Fryth was consigned to the flames, Anne Boleyn had been seated a month on the throne of England. The salvoes of artillery which had saluted the new queen had re-echoed all over Europe. There could be no more doubt—the Earl of Wiltshire’s daughter, radiant with grace and beauty, wore the Tudor crown; everyone, especially the imperial family, must bear the consequences of the act. One day Sir John Hacket, English envoy at Brussels, arrived at court just as Mary of Hungary, regent of the Low Countries, was about to mount her horse. "Have you any news from England?" she asked him in French. "None," he replied.

Mary gave him a look of surprise, and added, "Then I have, and not over good, methinks." She then told him of the king’s marriage, and Hacket rejoined with an unembarrassed air, "Madam, I know not if it has taken place, but everybody who considers it coolly and without family prejudice will agree that it is a lawful and a conscientious marriage."

Mary, who was niece of the unhappy Catherine, replied, "Mr. Ambassador, God knows I wish all may go well, but I do not know how the Emperor and the king my brother will take it, for it touches them as well as me."

"I think I may be certain," returned Sir John, "that they will take it in good part."

"That I do not know, Mr. Ambassador," said the regent, who doubted it much, and then, mounting her horse, she rode out for the chase.

Charles V was exasperated; he immediately pressed the pope to intervene, and on the 12th of May Clement cited the king to appear at Rome. The pontiff was greatly embarrassed; having a particular liking for Benet, Henry’s agent, he took him aside, and said to him privately, "It is an affair of such importance
that there has been none like it for many years. I fear to kindle a fire that neither pope nor Emperor will be able to quench." And then he added unaffectedly, "Besides, I cannot pronounce the king’s excommunication before the Emperor has an army ready to constrain him." Henry, being told of this aside, made answer: "Having the justice of our cause for us, with the entire consent of our nobility, commons, and subjects, we do not care for what the pope may do." Accordingly, he appealed from the pope to a general council. The pope was now more embarrassed than ever. "I cannot stand still and do nothing," he said. On the 12th of July he revoked all the English proceedings and excommunicated the king, but suspended the effects of his sentence until the end of September. "I hope," said Henry contemptuously, "that before then the pope will understand his folly."

He reckoned on Francis I to help him to understand it, but that prince was about to receive the pope’s niece into his family. The King of England, who had already against him the Netherlands, the Empire, Rome, and Spain, saw France also slipping from him. He was isolated in Europe, and that became a serious matter. Agitated and indignant, he came to an extraordinary resolution, namely, to turn to the disciples and friends of that very Luther whom he had formerly so disdainfully treated.

Stephen Vaughan and Christopher Mann were dispatched, the former to Saxony, the other to Bavaria. Vaughan reached Weimar on the 1st of September, where he had to wait five days for the Elector of Saxony, who was away hunting. On the 5th of September he had an audience of the prince, and spoke to him first in French and then in Latin. Seeing that the elector, who spoke neither French, English, nor Latin, answered him only with nods, he begged the chancellor to be his interpreter. A written answer was sent to Vaughan at seven in the evening—the Elector of Saxony turned his back on the powerful King of England. He was unworthy, he said, to have at his court ambassadors from his royal Majesty, and besides, the Emperor, who was his only master, might be displeased. Vaughan’s annoyance was extreme. "Strange rudeness!" he exclaimed. "A more uncourteous refusal has never been made to such a gracious proposition. And to my greater misfortune, it is the first mission of this kind with which I have ever been entrusted." He left Weimar, determined not to deliver his credentials either to the Landgrave of Hesse or to the Duke of Lauenberg, whom he was instructed to visit; he did not wish to run the chance of receiving fresh affronts.

A strange lot was that of the King of England! The pope excommunicating him, and the heretics desiring to have nothing to do with him! No more allies, no more friends! Be it so—if the nation and the monarch are agreed, what is there to fear? Besides, at the very moment this affront was offered him, his joy was at its height; the hope of soon possessing that heir, for whom he had longed so many years, quite transported him. He ordered an official letter to be prepared announcing the birth of a prince, "to the great joy of the king," it ran, "and of all his loving subjects." Only the date of the letter was left blank.

On the 7th of September, two days after the Elector’s refusal, Anne, then residing in the palace at Greenwich, gave birth to a fine well-formed child,
reminding the gossips of the features of both parents; but alas! it was a girl. Henry, agitated by two strong affections, love for Anne and desire for a son, had been kept in great anxiety during the time of labor. When he was told that the child was a girl, the love he bore for the mother prevailed, and though disappointed in his fondest wishes, he received the babe with joy. But the famous letter announcing the birth of a prince... what must be done with it now? Henry ordered the queen’s secretary to add an s to the word prince, and dispatched the circular without making any change in the expression of his satisfaction. The christening was celebrated with great pomp; two hundred torches were carried before the princess, a fit emblem of the light which her reign would shed abroad. The child was named Elizabeth, and Henry declared her his successor in case he should have no male offspring. In London the excitement was great; Te Deums, bells, and music filled the air. The adepts of judicial astrology declared that the stars announced a glorious future. A bright star was indeed rising over England; and the English people, throwing off the yoke of Rome, were about to start on a career of freedom, morality, and greatness. Elizabeth was not destined to shine by the amiability which distinguished her mother, and the restrictions she placed upon liberty tend rather to remind us of her father. Yet while on the continent kings were trampling under foot the independence of their subjects, the English people, under Anne Boleyn’s daughter, were to develop themselves, to flourish in letters and in arts, to extend navigation and commerce, to reform abuses, to exercise their liberties, to watch energetically over the public good, and to set up the torch of the Gospel of Christ.

The King of France, very adverse to England’s becoming independent of Rome, at last prevailed upon Henry to send two English agents (Gardiner and Bryan) to Marseilles. “You will keep your eyes open,” said Henry VIII to them, “and lend an attentive ear, but you will keep your mouths shut.” The English envoys, being invited to a conference with Pope Clement and Francis I, and solicited by those great personages to speak, declared that they had no powers. “Why then were you sent?” exclaimed the king, unable to conceal his vexation. The ambassadors only answered with a smile. Francis, who meant to uphold the authority of the pope in France, was unwilling that England should be free. Accordingly he took the ambassadors aside, and prayed them to enter immediately on business with the pontiff. “We are not here for his Holiness,” dryly answered Gardiner, “or to negotiate anything with him, but only to do what the King of England commands us.” The tricks of the papacy had ruined it in the minds of the English people. Francis I, displeased at Gardiner’s silence and irritated by his stiffness, intimated to the King of England that he would be pleased to see “better instruments” sent. Henry did send another instrument to Marseilles, but he took care to choose one sharper still.

Edmund Bonner, late chaplain to Wolsey, and future bishop of London, was a clever, active man, but ambitious, coarse and rude, wanting in delicacy and consideration towards those with whom he had to deal, violent, and, as he showed himself later to the protestants, a cruel persecutor. For some time he had got into Cromwell’s good graces, and as the wind was against popery,
Bonner was against the pope. Henry gave him his appeal to a general council, and charged him to present it to Clement VII; it was the “bill of divorcement” between the pope and England. Bonner, proud of being the bearer of so important a message, arrived at Marseilles, firmly resolved to give Henry a proof of his zeal. If Luther had burnt the pope’s bull at Wittenberg, Bonner would do as much; but while Luther had acted as a free man, Bonner was only a slave, pushing to fanaticism his submission to the orders of his despotical master.

Gardiner was astounded when he heard of Bonner’s arrival. What a humiliation for him! He hung his head, “making a plaicemouth with his lip” (says Foxe), and then lifted up his eyes and hands, as if cursing the day and hour when Bonner appeared. Never were two men more discordant to one another. Gardiner could not believe the news. A scheme contrived without him! A bishop to see one of his inferiors charged with a mission more important than his own! Bonner having paid him a visit, Gardiner affected great coldness, and brought forward every reason calculated to dissuade him from executing his commission. “But I have a letter from the king,” answered Bonner, “sealed with his seal, and dated from Windsor—here it is.” And he took from his satchel the letter in which Henry VIII intimated that he had appealed from the sentence of the pope recently delivered against him. “Good,” answered Gardiner, and taking the letter he read, “Our good pleasure is that if you deem it good and serviceable (Gardiner dwelt upon those two words) you will give the pope notice of the said appeal, according to the forms required by law; if not, you will acquaint us with your opinion in that respect.” “That is clear,” said Gardiner, “you should advise the king to abstain, for that notice just now will be neither good nor serviceable.” “And I say that it is both,” rejoined Bonner.

One circumstance brought the two Englishmen into harmony, at least for a time. Catherine de Medici, the pope’s niece, had been married to the son of Francis I, and Clement made four French prelates cardinals. But not one Englishman, not even Gardiner! That changed the question; there could be no more doubt. Francis is sacrificing Henry to the pope, and the pope insults England. Gardiner himself desired Bonner to give the pontiff notice of the appeal, and the English envoy, fearing refusal if he asked for an audience of Clement, determined to overleap the usual formalities, and take the place by assault.

On the 7th of November, Bonner, accompanied by Penniston, a gentleman who had brought him the king’s last orders, went early to the pontifical palace, preparing to let fall from the folds of his mantle war between England and the papacy. As he was not expected, the pontifical officers stopped him at the door, but the Englishman forced his way in, and entered a hall through which the pope must pass on his way to the consistory.

Ere long the pontiff appeared, wearing his stole, and walking between the cardinals of Lorraine and Medicis, his train following behind. His eyes, which were of remarkable quickness, immediately fell upon the distant Bonner, and as he advanced he did not take them off the stranger, as if astonished and uneasy at seeing him. At length he stopped in the middle of the hall, and
Bonner, approaching the datary, said to him, "Be pleased to inform his Holiness that I desire to speak to him." The officer refusing, the intrepid Bonner made as if he would go towards the pope. Clement, wishing to know the meaning of these indiscreet proceedings, bade the cardinals stand aside, took off the stole, and going to a window recess, called Bonner to him. The latter, without any formality, informed the pope that the King of England appealed from his decision to a general council, and that he (Bonner), his Majesty's envoy, was prepared to hand him the authentic documents of the said appeal, taking them (as he spoke) from his portfolio. Clement, who expected nothing like this, was greatly surprised. "It was a terrible breakfast for him," says a contemporary document. Not knowing what to answer, he shrugged his shoulders, "after the Italian fashion," and at last, recovering himself a little, he told Bonner that he was going to the consistory, and desired him to return in the afternoon. Then beckoning the cardinals, he left the hall.

Henry's envoy was punctual to the appointment, but had to wait for an hour and a half, his Holiness being engaged in giving audience. At length he and Penniston were conducted to the pope's chamber. Clement fixed his eyes on the latter, and Bonner having introduced him, the pope remarked with a mistrustful air, "It is well, but I also must have some members of my council," and he ordered Simonetta, Capisuchi, and the datary to be sent for. While awaiting their arrival, Clement leaned at the window, and appeared absorbed in thought. At last, unable to contain himself any longer, he exclaimed, "I am greatly surprised that his Majesty should behave as he does towards me." The intrepid Bonner replied, "His Majesty is not less surprised that your Holiness, who has received so many services from him, repays him with ingratitude." Clement started, but restrained himself on seeing the datary enter, and ordered that officer to read the appeal which Bonner had just delivered to him. The datary began, "Considering that we have endured from the pope many wrongs and injuries (gravaminibus et injuriis). ... Clasping his hands and nodding dissent, Clement exclaimed ironically, "O questo è molto vero!" meaning to say that it was false, remarks Bonner. The datary continued, "Considering that his most holy Lordship strikes us with his spiritual sword, and wishes to separate us from the unity of the Church, we, desiring to protect with a lawful shield the kingdom which God has given us, appeal by these presents, for ourselves and for all our subjects, to a holy universal council." At these words, the pope burst into a transport of passion, and the datary stopped. Clement's gestures and broken words uttered with vehemence, showed the horror he entertained of a council. ... A council would set itself above the pope, a council might perhaps say that the Germans and the King of England were right.

The pope gave way to convulsive movements, folding and unfolding his handkerchief, which was always a sign of great anger in him. At last, as if to hide his passion, he said, "Continue, I am listening." When the datary had ended, the pope said coldly to his officers, "It is well written!"

Then turning to Bonner, he asked, "Have you anything more to say to me?"

Bonner was not in the humor to show the least consideration. A man of the
North, he took a pleasure in displaying his roughness and inflexibility in the elegant, crafty, and corrupt society of Rome. He boldly repeated the protest, and delivered the king’s "provocation" to the pope, who broke out into fresh lamentations. "Ha!" he exclaimed vehemently, "his Majesty affects much respect for the Church, but does not show the least to me." ... Just at this moment, one of his officers announced the King of France. Francis could not have arrived at a more seasonable moment. Clement rose and went to the door to meet him. The king respectfully took off his hat, and holding it in his hand made a low bow, after which he enquired what his Holiness was doing. "These English gentlemen," said the pontiff, "are here to notify me of certain provocations and appeals... and for other matters," he added, displaying much ill humor. Francis sat down near the table at which the pope was seated, and turning their backs to Henry’s envoy, who had retired into an adjoining room, they began a conversation in a low tone, which Bonner, notwithstanding all his efforts, could not hear.

That conversation possibly decided the separation between England and France. The king showed that he was offended at a course of proceeding which he characterized as unbecoming, and Clement learned, to his immense satisfaction, that the English had not spoken to Francis about the council. "If you will leave me and the Emperor free to act against England," he said to the king, "I will ensure you possession of the duchy of Milan." Bonner, who had not lost sight of the two speakers, remarked that at this moment the king and the pope "laughed merrily together," and appeared to be the best friends in the world.

The king having withdrawn, Bonner again approached the pope, and the datary finished the reading. The Englishman had not been softened by the mysterious conversation and laughter of Clement and Francis; he was as rough and abrupt as the Frenchman had been smooth and amiable. It was long since the papacy had suffered such insults openly, and even the German Reformation had not put it to such torture. The Cardinal de Medici, chief of the malcontents, who had come in, listened to Bonner, with head bent down and eyes fixed upon the floor; he was humiliated and indignant. "This is a matter of great importance," said Clement, "I will consult the consistory and let you know my answer."

In the afternoon of Monday, 10th of November, Bonner returned to the palace to learn the pope’s pleasure, but there was a grand reception that day. The lords and ladies of the court of Francis I were presented to Clement, who did nothing for two hours but bless chaplets, bless the spectators, and put out his foot for the nobles and dames to kiss.

At last Bonner was introduced. "Domine doctor, quid vultis?" (Sir doctor, what do you want?), said the pope. "I desire the answer which your Holiness promised me." Clement, who had had time to recover himself, replied, "A constitution of Pope Pius, my predecessor, condemns all appeals to a general council. I therefore reject his Majesty’s appeal as unlawful." The pope had pronounced these words with calmness and dignity, but an incident occurred to put him out of temper. Bonner, hurt at the little respect paid to his sovereign, bluntly informed the pope that the archbishop of Canterbury—that Cranmer—
desired also to appeal to a council. This was going too far; Clement, restraining himself no longer, rose, and approaching Henry’s envoy, said to him, “If you do not leave the room instantly, I will have you thrown into a caldron of molten lead.” “Truly,” remarked Bonner, “if the pope is a shepherd, he is, as the king my master says, a violent and cruel shepherd.” And not caring to take a leaden bath, he departed for Lyons. Such is the story told by the historian Burnet. Clement was delighted not only at the departure, but still more at the conduct of Bonner; the insolence of the English envoy helped him wonderfully, and accordingly he made a great noise about it, complaining to everybody, and particularly to Francis. “I am wearied, vexed, disgusted with all this,” said that prince to his courtiers. “What I do with great difficulty in a week for my good brother (Henry VIII), his own ministers undo in an hour.” Clement endeavored in secret interviews to increase this discontent, and he succeeded. The mysterious understanding was apparent to everyone, and Vannes, the English agent, who never lost sight either of the pope or the king, informed Cromwell of the close union of their minds.

When Henry VIII learned that the King of France was slipping from him, he was both irritated and alarmed. Abandoned by that prince, he saw the pope launching an interdict against his kingdom, the Emperor invading England, and the people in insurrection. He had no repose by night or day; his anger against the pope continued to increase. Wishing to prevent at least the revolts which the partisans of the papacy might excite among his subjects, he dictated a strange proclamation to his secretary: "Let no Englishman forget the most noble and loving prince of this realm," he said, "who is most wrongfully judged by the great idol and most cruel enemy to Christ’s religion, which calleth himself Pope. Princes have two ways to attain right—the general council and the sword. Now the king, having appealed from the unlawful sentence of the Bishop of Rome to a general council lawfully congregated, the said usurper hath rejected the appeal, and is thus outlawed. By holy Scripture, there is no more jurisdiction granted to the Bishop of Rome than to any other bishop. Henceforth honour him not as an idol, who is but a man usurping God’s power and authority, and a man neither in life, learning, nor conversation like Christ’s minister or disciple."

Henry having given vent to his irritation, bethought himself, and judged it more prudent not to publish the proclamation. But to the subjects of Henry it was becoming increasingly clear that between the English throne and the papacy there was a great gulf fixed, and there seemed good reason to think that it would yet grow wider and deeper.

CHAPTER 21
Parliament Abolishes Papal Usurpations in England
January to March, 1534

While the papacy was intriguing with France and the Empire, England was energetically working at the utter abolition of the Roman authority. "One loud cry must be raised in England against the papacy," said Cromwell to the
council. "It is time that the question was laid before the people. Bishops, parsons, curates, priors, abbots, and preachers of the religious orders should all declare from their pulpits that the Bishop of Rome, styled the Pope, is subordinate, like the rest of the bishops, to a general council, and that he has no more rights in this kingdom than any other foreign bishop."

It was necessary to pursue the same course abroad. Henry resolved to send ambassadors to Poland, Hungary, Saxony, Bavaria, Pomerania, Prussia, Hesse, and other German states, to inform them that he was touched with the zeal they had shown in defense of the Word of God and the extirpation of ancient errors, and to acquaint all men that he was himself "utterly determined to reduce the pope’s power to the just and lawful bounds of his mediocrity."

He did not stop here. Keenly desiring to withdraw France from under the influence of Rome, he instructed his ambassadors to tell Francis I in his name and in the name of the people, "We shall shortly be able to give unto the pope such a buffet as he never had before." This was quite in Henry’s style. "Things are going at such a rate here," wrote the Duke of Norfolk to Montmorency, "that the pope will soon lose the obedience of England; and other nations, perceiving the great fruits, advantage, and profit that will result from it, will also separate from Rome."

All this was serious—there was some chance that Norfolk’s prophecy would be fulfilled. The pontiff could think of nothing else, and began to believe that the idea of a council was not so unreasonable after all, since the place and time of meeting and mode of proceeding would lead to endless discussions, and if the meeting ever took place, he would thus be relieved of a responsibility which became more oppressive to him every day. He therefore bade Henry VIII be informed that he agreed to call a general council. But events had not stood still; the position was not the same. "It is no longer necessary," the king answered coldly. In his opinion, the Church of England was sufficient of herself, and could do without the Church of Rome.

The King of France, in the interests of the pope, immediately resumed his part of mediator. Du Bellay, his ambassador at Rome, made indefatigable efforts to inspire the consistory with an opinion favorable to Henry VIII. According to that diplomatist, the King of England was ready to re-establish friendly relations with Clement VII, and it was parliament alone that desired to break with the papacy forever; it was the people who wished for reform, it was the king who opposed it. "Make your choice," he exclaimed with eloquence. "All that the king desires is peace with Rome; all that the commonalty demands is war. With whom will you go—with your enemies or with your friend?" Du Bellay’s assertions, though strange, were based upon a truth that cannot be denied. It was the best of the people who wanted Protestantism in England, and not the king.

The court of Rome felt that the last hour had come, and determined to dispatch to London the papers necessary to reconcile Henry. It was believed on the continent that the King of England was going to gain his cause at last, and people ascribed it to the ascendency of French policy at Rome since the marriage of Catherine de Medici with Henry of Orleans. But the more the
French triumphed, the more indignant became the Imperialists. To no purpose did the pope say to them, "You do not understand the state of affairs; the thing is done. ... The King of England is married to Anne Boleyn. If I annulled the marriage, who would undertake to execute my sentence?" "Who?" exclaimed the ambassadors of Charles V, "who? ... The Emperor." The weak pontiff knew not which way to turn; he had but one hope left—if Henry VIII were to re-establish Roman Catholicism in his kingdom, a fact so important would silence Charles V.

This fact was not to be feared; a movement had begun in the minds of the people of England which it was no longer possible to stop. While many pious souls received the Word of God in their hearts, the king and the most enlightened part of the nation were agreed to put an end to the intolerable usurpations of the Roman pontiff. "We have looked in the Holy Scriptures for the rights of the papacy," said the members of the Commons house of parliament, "but instead of finding therein the institution of popes, we have found that of kings—and, according to God’s commandments, the priests ought to be subject to them as much as the laity." "We have reflected upon the wants of the realm," said the royal council, "and have come to the conclusion that the nation ought to form one body, that one body can have but one head, and that head must be the king." The parliament which met in January 1534 was to give the death blow to the supremacy of the pope.

This blow came strictly neither from Henry nor from Cranmer, but from Thomas Cromwell. Without possessing Cranmer’s lively faith, Cromwell desired that the preachers should open the Word of God and preach it "with pure sincereness" before the people, and he afterwards procured for every Englishman the right to read it. Being preeminently a statesman of sure judgment and energetic action, he was in advance of his generation, and it was his fate, like those generals who march boldly at the head of the army, to procure victory to the cause for which he fought; but, persecuted by the traitors concealed among his soldiers, to be sacrificed by the prince he had served, and to meet a tragical death before the hour of his triumph.

The Commons, wishing to put an end to the persecutions practiced by the clergy against the evangelical Christians, summoned—it was a thing unprecedented—the Lord-bishop of London to appear at their bar to answer the complaint made against him by Thomas Philips, one of the disciples of the Reformation. The latter had been lying in prison three years under a charge of heresy. The parliament, unwilling that a bishop should be able at his own fancy to transform one of his Majesty’s subjects into a heretic, brought in a bill for the repression of doctrines condemned by the Church. They declared that, the authority of the Bishop of Rome being opposed to Holy Scripture and the laws of the realm, the words and acts that were contrary to the decisions of the pontiff could not be regarded as heresies. Then turning to the particular case which had given rise to the grievance, parliament declared Philips innocent and discharged him from prison.

After having thus upheld the cause of religious liberty, the Commons proceeded to the definitive abolition of the privileges which the bishops of Rome
successively usurped to the great detriment of both Church and people. They restored to England the rights of which Rome had despoiled her. They prohibited all appeals to the pope, of what kind soever they might be, and substituted for them an appeal to the king in chancery. They voted that the election of bishops did not concern the court of Rome, but belonged to the chief ecclesiastical body in the diocese, to the chapter... at least in appearance; for it really appertained to the crown, the king designating the person whom the chapter was to elect. This strange constitution was abolished under Edward VI, when the nomination of the bishops was conferred purely and simply on the king. If this was not better, it was at least more sincere; but the singular congé d’élire was restored under Elizabeth.

At the same time, new and loud complaints of the Romish exactions were heard in parliament. "For centuries the Roman bishops have been deceiving us," said the eloquent speakers, "making us believe that they have the power of dispensing with everything, even with God’s commandments. We send to Rome the treasures of England, and Rome sends us back in return... a piece of paper. The monster which has fattened on the substance of our people bears a hundred different names. They call it reliefs, dues, pensions, provisions, procurations, delegation, rescript, appeal, abolition, rehabilitation, relaxation of canonical penalties, licenses, Peter’s pence, and many other names besides. And after having thus caught our money by all sorts of tricks, the Romans laugh at us in their sleeves." Parliament forbade all Englishmen, even the king himself, to apply to Rome for any dispensation or delegation whatsoever, and ordered them, in case of need, to have recourse to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Then, immediately putting these principles into practice, they declared the king’s marriage with Catherine to be null, for "no man has power to dispense with God’s laws," and ratified the marriage between Henry and Anne, proclaiming their children heirs to the crown. At the same time, wishing England to become entirely English, they deprived two Italians, Campeggio and Ghinucci, of the sees of Salisbury and Worcester, which they held.

It was during the month of March 1534—an important date for England—that the main branches of the tree of popery were thus lopped off one after another. The trunk indeed remained, although stripped; but yet a few months, and that too was to strew the earth with its fall. Still the Commons showed a certain degree of consideration. When Clement had threatened the king with excommunication, he had given him three months’ grace; England, desiring to return his politeness, informed the pope that he might receive some compensation. At the same time she made an important declaration. "We do not separate from the Christian Church," said the Commons, "but merely from the usurped authority of the Pope of Rome; and we preserve the catholic faith, as it is set forth in the Holy Scriptures." All these reforms were effected with great unanimity, at least in appearance. The bishops, even the most scholastic, such as Stokesley of London, Tunstall of Durham, Gardiner of Winchester, and Rowland Lee of Coventry, declared the Roman papacy to be of human invention, and that the pope was, in regard to them, only a bishop, a brother, as his predecessors had been to the bishops of antiquity. Every Sunday during
the session of parliament a prelate preached at St. Paul’s Cross "that the pope was not the head of the Church," and all the people said Amen.

Meanwhile, Du Bellay, the French ambassador at Rome, was waiting for the act by which the King of England was to bind himself once more to the pope—an act which Francis I still gave him reason to expect. Every morning he fancied it would arrive, and every evening his expectations were disappointed. He called upon the English envoys, and afterwards at the Roman chancery, to hear if there was any news, but everywhere the answer was the same—nothing. The term fixed by Clement VII having elapsed, he summoned the consistory for Monday, the 23rd of March. Du Bellay attended it, still hoping to prevent anything being done that might separate England from the papacy. The cardinals represented to him that, as the submission of Henry VIII had not arrived, nothing remained but for the pope to fulminate the sentence. "Do you not know," exclaimed Du Bellay in alarm, "that the courier charged with that prince’s dispatches has seas to cross, and the winds may be contrary? The king of England waited your decision for six years, and cannot you wait six days?"

"Delay is quite useless," said a cardinal of the imperial faction, "we know what is taking place in England. Instead of thinking of reparation, the king is widening the schism every day. He goes so far as to permit the representation of dramas at his court, in which the holy conclave, and some of your most illustrious selves in particular, are held up to ridicule." The last blow, although a heavy one, was unnecessary. The priests could no longer contain their vexation; the rebellious prince must be punished. Nineteen out of twenty-two cardinals voted against Henry VIII; the remaining three only asked for further enquiry. Clement could not conceal his surprise and annoyance. To no purpose did he demand another meeting, in conformity with the custom which requires two, and even three, consultations; overwhelmed by an imposing and unexpected majority, he gave way.

Simonetta then handed him the sentence, which the unhappy pope took and read with the voice of a criminal rather than of a judge. "Having invoked the name of Christ, and sitting on the throne of justice, we decree that the marriage between Catherine of Aragon and Henry king of England was and is valid and canonical, that the said king Henry is bound to cohabit with the said queen, to pay her royal honors, and that he must be constrained to discharge these duties." After pronouncing these words, the pontiff, alarmed at the bold act he had just performed, turned to the envoys of Charles V and said to them, "I have done my duty; it is now for the Emperor to do his, and to carry the sentence into execution." "The Emperor will not hold back," answered the ambassadors, but the thing was not so easily done as said.

Thus the great affair was ended; the king of England was condemned. It was dark when the pope quitted the consistory; the news so long expected spread immediately through the city; the Emperor’s partisans, transported with joy, lit bonfires in all the open places, and cannons fired repeated salvoes. Bands of Ghibelines paraded the streets, shouting, Imperio e Espagna (the Empire and Spain). The whole city was in commotion. The pope’s disquietude was still further increased by these demonstrations. "He is tormented," wrote Du Bellay
to his master. Clement spent the whole night in conversation with his theologians. "What must be done? England is lost to us. How can I avert the king’s anger?" Clement VII never recovered from this blow; the thought that under his pontificate Rome lost England made him shudder. The slightest mention of it renewed his anguish, and sorrow soon brought him to the tomb. Yet he did not know all. The evil with which Rome was threatened was greater than he had imagined. If in this matter there had been nothing more than the decision of a prince discontented with the court of Rome, a contrary decision of one of his successors might again place England under the dominion of the pontiffs; and these would be sure to spare no pains to recover the good graces of the English kings. But in despite of Henry VIII, a pure doctrine, similar to that of the apostolic times, was spreading over the different parts of the nation, a doctrine which was not only to wrest England from the pope, but to establish in that island a true Christianity—a vast evangelical propaganda which should ultimately plant the standard of God's Word even at the ends of the world. The empire of Christendom was thus to be taken from a church led astray by pride, and which bade mankind unite with it that they might be saved, and to be given to those who taught that, according to the divine declarations, none could be saved except by uniting with Jesus Christ.

The End of Volume 2, Book One

Volume 2  Book 2

England Breaks with Rome

CHAPTER 1  A Conspiracy Against the Reformation
CHAPTER 2  The Church Becomes a Department of State
CHAPTER 3  Tyndale and His Enemies
CHAPTER 1
A Conspiracy against the Reformation
March and April, 1534

The parliament of 1534 had greatly advanced the cause of the Reformation. The voices of the most enlightened men of England had been heard in it with still greater power than in 1529; and accordingly a historian, referring to the meeting of 1534, speaks of it as “that great session.” These enlightened men, however, formed but a small minority, and among them were many who, from a want of independence, never voted on the side of liberty but when the king authorized them. The epoch was a critical one for the nation. It might as easily fall back to the pope as advance towards the Gospel. Hesitating between the Middle Ages and modern times, it had to choose either life or death. Would it make a vigorous effort and reach those bracing heights, like travelers scaling the rugged sides of the Alps? England appeared too weak for so daring a flight. The mass of the people seemed chained by time-worn prejudices to the errors and practices of Rome. The king no doubt had political views which raised him above his age; but, a slave to his passions, and the docile disciple of the old ways, he detested a real Reformation and real liberty. The clergy were superstitious, selfish, and excitable; and the advisers of the crown knew no other rule than the will of their master. By none of these powers, therefore, could a transformation be accomplished. The safety of England came from that sovereign hand, that mysterious power, which was already stirring the western world. The nation began to feel its energetic impulse. A strange breeze seemed to be filling the sails and driving the bark of the state towards the harbor, notwithstanding the numerous shoals that lay around it.
The thought which at that time mainly engrossed the minds of the most intelligent men of England—men like Cranmer, Cromwell, and their friends—was the necessity of throwing off the papal authority. They believed that it was necessary to root out the foreign and unwholesome weed, which had spread over the soil of Britain, and tear it up so thoroughly that it could never grow again. Parliament had declared that all the powers exercised by the bishop of Rome in England must cease and be transferred to the crown; and that no one, not even the king, should apply to Rome for any dispensation whatsoever. A prelate had preached every Sunday at St. Paul’s Cross that the pope was not the head of the Church. On the other hand, the pontiff, who was reckoning on Henry’s promised explanations and satisfactory propositions, seeing that the messenger whom he expected from London did not arrive, had solemnly condemned that prince on the 23rd of March, 1534. But immediately startled at his own boldness, Clement asked himself with agony how he could repair this wrong and appease the king. He saw it was impossible, and in the bitterness of his heart exclaimed, "Alas! England is lost to us!"

Two days after the famous consistory in which Henry’s condemnation had been pronounced, an English courier entered Rome, still in a state of agitation and trouble, and went straight to the papal palace. "What is his business?" people said, "and what can give him such boldness?" The Englishman was bringing to the ministers of the Vatican the long-expected act by which the King of England declared himself prepared to enter into an arrangement with the pope, provided the cardinals of the imperial faction were excluded. The messenger at the same time announced that Sir Edward Carne and William Revett, two envoys from Henry VIII, would soon arrive to conclude the business. Cardinal Farnese, who erelong succeeded Clement under the title of Paul III, and the more moderate prelates of the sacred college waited upon the pope at once and begged him to summon the consistory without delay. It was just what Clement desired, but the imperialists, more furious than ever, insisted on the confirmation of the sentence condemning Henry, and spared no means to ensure success. Monks went about repeating certain stories which their English brethren sent them, and which they furthermore exaggerated. They asserted that the English people were about to rise in a body against the king and throw themselves at the feet of the holy father. The pope ratified the sentence, and the consistory, taking one more step, urged the Emperor to carry it out.

It has been said that a delay of two days was the cause of the Reformation of England. That is a mistake. The Reformation came from the Holy Scriptures, from God, from His mighty grace, and not from princes, their passions, or delays. Even had the pontifical court at last conceded to Henry the divorce he asked for, that prince would probably not have renounced the rights he had acquired, and which made him sole and true monarch of England. Had he done so, it is doubtful whether he was strong enough to check the Reformation. The people were in motion, Christian truth had reappeared among them: neither
pontifical agitations nor concessions could stop the rapid current that was
carrying them to the pure and living waters of the Gospel.

However, Sir Edward Carne and William Revett, Henry’s envoys, arrived in Italy
full of hope, and pledged themselves (as they wrote to the king) to reconcile
England and the papacy “in conformity to his Highness’ purpose.” Having learnt
on reaching Bologna that Du Bellay, the bishop of Paris, who was instructed to
support them, was in that city, they hurried to him to learn the exact state of
affairs. The bishop was one of those enlightened catholics who believed that
the extreme papal party was exposing the papacy to great danger, and who
would have prevented schism in the Church by giving some satisfaction to
Germany and England. Hence the envoys from Henry VIII found the prelate
dejected and embarrassed. “All is over,” he told them. “The pope has
pronounced sentence against his Majesty.” Carne and Revett were
thunderstruck; the burden was too heavy for them. “All our hopes have
vanished in a moment,” they said. Du Bellay assured them that he had spared
no pains likely to prevent so precipitate and imprudent an act on the part of a
pope. “But the imperialists,” he said, “moved heaven and earth, and
constrained Clement VII to deliver a sentence in opposition to his own
convictions.” The ambassador of Francis I added that there was still one gleam
of hope. “Raincé, secretary to the French embassy at Rome, with an oath,
wished himself at perdition,” said Du Bellay rather coarsely, “if our holy father
does not patch up all that has been damaged.” The Englishmen desired to go to
the pope forthwith, in order to prevent the execution of the sentence. “Do
nothing of the kind,” said the French bishop. “Do not go to Rome on any pretext
whatsoever.”

Perhaps Du Bellay wanted first to know what his master thought of the matter.
Carne, undecided what to do, dispatched a messenger to Henry VIII to ask for
orders; and then, ten days later, wishing to do something, he appealed from
the bishop of Rome ill-informed to the bishop of Rome better-informed.

When the King of England received his ambassador’s message, he could hardly
restrain his anger. At the very moment when he had made a concession which
appeared to him the height of condescension, Rome treated him with contempt
and sacrificed him to Charles V. Even the nation was aroused. The pope, it was
said, commissions a foreign prince to execute his decrees; soldiers, newly
raised in Germany, and brimful of insults and threats, are preparing to land in
England. National pride arrayed the people on the king’s side. Henry no longer
hesitated; his offended honor demanded reparation—a complete rupture alone
could satisfy it. Many writers supported him. “The pope,” said Dr. Sampson,
dean of the Chapel Royal, “has no more power in England than the Archbishop
of Canterbury in Rome. It was only by tacit consent that the pope crept into
the kingdom, but we intend to drive him out now by express consent.” The two
houses of parliament were almost unanimously of that opinion. The privy
council proposed to call upon the lord mayor to see that anti-Romish doctrines
were taught in every house in London. Lastly, the people showed their
opposition after their fashion, indulging in games and masquerades, in which a
cardinal at one time, the pope at another, were represented. To call a man a
“papist” or “a priest of the pope” was one of the greatest insults. Even the
clergy declared against Rome. On the 31st of March the lower house of
convocation discussed whether the Roman pontiff had in England, according to
Scripture, a higher jurisdiction than any other foreign bishop. Thirty-three
voted in the negative, only four in the affirmative. The king immediately
forwarded the same question to all the ecclesiastical corporations of the
kingdom. The friends of the Gospel were filled with joy. The pope had made a
great mistake when, imitating the style of ancient Rome, he had hurled the
bolts of the Vatican, as Jupiter had in days of old launched the thunders of the
Capitol. A great revolution seemed to be working itself out, unopposed in this
island, so long the slave of the Roman pontiffs. There was just at this time
nothing to be feared from without; Charles V was overwhelmed with business,
the King of Scotland was on better terms with his uncle of England, and Francis
I was preparing for a friendly interview with Henry VIII. And yet the danger had
never been greater, but the mine was discovered in March 1534, before the
match could be applied to it.

A dangerous political and clerical conspiracy had been for some time silently
organizing in the monasteries. It was possible, no doubt, to find here and there
in the cloisters monks who were learned, pious, and loyal; but the greater
number were ignorant and fanatical, and terribly alarmed at the dangers which
threatened their order. Their arrogance, grossness, and loose manners irritated
the most enlightened part of the nation; their wealth, endowments, and luxury
aroused the envy of the nobility. A religious and social transformation was
taking place at this memorable epoch, and the monks foresaw that they would
be the first victims of the revolution. Accordingly they were resolved to fight to
the uttermost for their altars and homes. But who was to take the first step in
the perilous enterprise—who to give the signal?

As in the days of the Maid of Orleans, it was a young woman who grasped the
trumpet and sounded the charge. But if the first was a heroine, the other was
an ecstatic—nay, a fanatic.

There lived in the village of Aldington in Kent a young woman of singular
appearance. Although of an age which is usually distinguished by a fresh and
clear complexion, her face was sallow and her eyes haggard. All of a sudden
she would be seized with a trembling of the whole body; she lost the use of her
limbs and of her understanding, uttered strange and incoherent phrases, and
fell at last stiff and lifeless to the ground. She was, moreover, exemplary in her
conduct. The people declared her state to be miraculous, and Richard Masters,
the rector of the parish, a cunning and grasping priest, noticing these epileptic
attacks, resolved to take advantage of them to acquire money and reputation.
He suggested to the poor sufferer that the extraordinary words she uttered
proceeded from the inspiration of Heaven, and declared that she would be
guilty if she kept secret this wonderful work of God. An official of Canterbury,
Dr. Edward Bocking, joined the priest with the intention of turning the girl’s
disease to the profit of the Romish party. They represented to Elizabeth Barton
—such was the name of the Kentish maiden—that the cause of religion was
exposed to great danger in England, that it was intended to turn out the monks
and priests; but that God, whose hand defends His Church by the humblest
instruments, had raised her up in these inauspicious days to uphold that holy
ark, which king, ministers, and parliament desired to throw down. Such
language pleased the girl; on the faith of the priests, she regarded her attacks
as divine transports; a feeling of pride carne over her; she accepted the part
assigned her. On a sudden her imagination kindled; she announced that she had
held communications with saints and angels, even with Satan himself. Was this
sheer imposture or enthusiasm? There was, perhaps, a little of both; but, in her
eyes, the end justified the means. When speaking, she affected strange turns,
unintelligible figures, poetical language, and clothed her visions in rude
rhymes, which made the educated smile, but helped to circulate her oracles
among the people. Erelong she set herself unscrupulously above the truth, and,
inspired by a feverish energy, did not fear to excite the people to bloodshed.

There was somewhere out in the fields, in one part of the parish, a wretched
old chapel that had been long deserted, and where a coarse image of the Virgin
still remained. Masters determined to make it the scene of a lucrative
pilgrimage. He suggested the notion to Elizabeth Barton, and erelong she gave
out that the Virgin would cure her of her disorder in that holy consecrated
edifice. She was carried thither with a certain pomp, and placed devoutly
before the image. Then a crisis came upon her. Her tongue hung out of her
mouth, her eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and a hoarse sepulchral
voice was heard speaking of the terrors of hell; and then, by a singular
transformation, a sweet and insinuating voice described the joys of paradise.
At last the ecstasy ended, Elizabeth came to herself, declared that she was
perfectly cured, and announced that God had ordered her to become a nun and
to take Dr. Bocking as her confessor. The prophecy of the Kentish maiden
touching her own disease being thus verified, her reputation increased.

Elizabeth Barton’s accomplices imagined that the new prophetess required a
wider stage than the fields of Aldington, and hoped that, once established in
the ecclesiastical metropolis of England, she would see her followers increase
throughout the kingdom. Immediately after her cure, the ventriloquist entered
the convent of St. Sepulchre at Canterbury, to which Dr. Bocking belonged.
Once in this primatial city, her oracles and her miracles were multiplied.
Sometimes in the middle of the night, the door of her cell opened miraculously
—it was a call from God, inviting her to the chapel to converse with Him.
Sometimes a letter in golden characters was brought to her by an angel from
heaven. The monks kept a record of these wonders, these oracles; and,
selecting some of them, Masters laid the miraculous collection, this bible of the
fanatics, before Archbishop Warham. The prelate, who appeared to believe in the nun’s inspiration, presented the document to the king, who handed it to Sir Thomas More, and ordered the words of the Kentish maiden to be carefully taken down and communicated to him. In this Henry VIII showed probably more curiosity and distrust than credulity.

Elizabeth and her advisers were deceived, and thought they might enter into a new phase, in which they hoped to reap the reward of their imposture. The Aldington girl passed from a purely religious to a political mission. This is what her advisers were aiming at. All, and especially Dr. Bocking, who contemplated restoring the authority of the papacy—even were it necessary to their end to take the king’s life—began to denounce in her presence Henry’s tolerance of heresy and the new marriage he desired to contract. Elizabeth eagerly joined this factious opposition. "If Henry marries Anne Boleyn," she told Bishop Fisher, "in seven months’ time there will be no king in England." The circle of her influence at once grew wider. The Romish party united with her. Abell, Queen Catherine’s agent, entered into the conspiracy; twice Elizabeth Barton appeared before the pope’s legates; Fisher supported her, and Sir Thomas More, one of the most cultivated men of his day, though at first little impressed in her favor, admitted afterwards the truth of some of her foolish and guilty revelations. One thing was yet wanting, and that was very essential in the eyes of the supporters of the movement—Elizabeth must appear before Henry VIII as Elijah appeared before Ahab; they expected great results from such an interview. At length they obtained permission, and the Kentish maiden prepared herself for it by exercises which over-excited her. When brought into the presence of the prince, she was at first silent and motionless, but in a moment her eyes brightened and seemed to flash fire; her mouth was drawn aside and stretched, while from her trembling lips there fell a string of incoherent phrases. "Satan is tormenting me for the sins of my people," she exclaimed, "but our blessed Lady shall deliver me by her mighty hand. ... O times! O manners! ... Abominable heresies, impious innovations! ... King of England, beware that you touch not the power of the holy Father. ... Root out the new doctrines. ... Burn all over your kingdom the New Testament in the vulgar tongue. Henry, forsake Anne Boleyn and take back your wife Catherine. ... If you neglect these things, you shall not be king longer than a month, and in God’s eyes you will not be so even for an hour. You shall die the death of a villain, and Mary, the daughter of Catherine, shall wear your crown."

This noisy scene produced no effect on the king. Henry, though prompt to punish, would not reply to Elizabeth’s nonsense, and was content to shrug his shoulders. But the fanatical young woman was not discouraged—if the king could not be converted, the people must be roused. She repeated her threats in the convents, castles, and villages of Kent, the theatre of her frequent excursions. She varied them according to circumstances. The king must fall, but at one time she announced it would be by the hands of his subjects; at another, of the priests; and at a third, by the judgment of God. One point
alone was unchanged in her utterances—Henry Tudor must perish. Erelong, like a prophetess lifted above the ordinary ministers of God, she reprimanded even the sovereign pontiff himself. She thought him too timid, and, taking him to task, declared that if he did not bring Henry’s plans to naught, "the great stroke of God which then hung over his head" would inevitably fall upon him.

This boldness added to the number of her partisans. Monks, nuns, and priests, knights, gentlemen, and scholars, were carried away by her. Young folks especially and men of no culture eagerly embraced this mad cause. There were also men of distinction who did not fear to become her defenders. Bishop Fisher was gained over; he believed himself certain of the young woman’s piety. Being a man of melancholy temperament and mystic tendency, a lover of the marvelous, he thought that the soul of Elizabeth might well have a supernatural intercourse with the Infinite Being. He said in the House of Lords, "How could I anticipate deceit in a nun, to whose holiness so many priests bore witness?" The Roman Catholics triumphed. A prophetess had risen up in England, like Deborah in Israel.

One eminent and large-hearted catholic, Sir Thomas More, had however some doubts, and the monks who were Elizabeth’s advisers set every engine at work to win him over. During the Christmas of 1532, Father Risby, a Franciscan of Canterbury, arrived at Chelsea to pass the night there. After supper, he said, "What a holy woman this nun of Kent is! It is wonderful to see all that God is doing through her." "I thank God for it," answered More coldly. "By her mediation she saved the cardinal’s soul," added the monk. The conversation went no farther. Some time later a fresh attempt was made; Father Rich, a Franciscan of Richmond, came and told More the story of the letter written in letters of gold and brought by an angel. "Well, father," said the chancellor, "I believe the nun of Kent to be a virtuous woman, and that God is working great things by her, but stories like that you have told me are not part of our Credo, and before repeating them, one should be very sure about them." However, as the clergy generally countenanced Elizabeth, More could not bear the idea of forming a sect apart, and went to see the prophetess at Sion monastery. She told him a silly story of the devil turned into a bird. More was satisfied to give her a double ducat and commend himself to her prayers. The chancellor, like other noble intellects among the catholics, was prepared to admit certain superstitions, but he would have had the nun keep in her religious sphere; he feared to see her touch upon politics. "Do not speak of the affairs of princes," he said to her. "The relations which the late Duke of Buckingham had with a holy monk were in great part the cause of his death." More had been Chancellor of England, and perhaps feared the duke’s fate.

Elizabeth Barton did not profit by this lesson. She again declared that, according to the revelations from God, no one should deprive the Princess Mary of the rights she derived through her birth, and predicted her early accession. Father Goold immediately carried the news to Catherine. The nun and her
advisers, who chided the pope only through their zeal for the papacy, had communications with the nuncio; they thought it necessary for him to join the conspiracy. They agreed upon the course to be adopted; at a given time, monks were to mingle with the people and excite a seditious movement. Elizabeth and her accomplices called together such as were to be the instruments of their criminal design. "God has chosen you," said the nun to them, "to restore the power of the Roman pontiff in England." The monks prepared for this meritorious work by devout practices; they wore sackcloth next to their skin; they fastened iron chains round their bodies, fasted, watched, and made long prayers. They were seriously intent on disturbing the social order and banishing the Word of God.

The violent Henry VIII—easy-tempered for once in his life—persisted in his indifference. The seven months named by the prophetess had gone by, and the dagger with which she had threatened him had not touched him. He was in good health, had the approbation of parliament, saw the nation prosper under his government, and possessed the wife he had so passionately desired. Everything appeared to succeed with him, which disconcerted the fanatics. To encourage them Elizabeth said: "Do not be deceived. Henry is no longer really king, and his subjects are already released from every obligation towards him. But he is like King John, who, though rejected by God, seemed still to be a king in the eyes of the world."

The conspirators intrigued more than ever; not content with Catherine’s alliance, they opened a communication with Margaret Plantagenet, Countess of Salisbury, niece of Edward IV, and with her children, the representatives of the party of the White Rose. Hitherto this lady had refrained from politics, but, her son Reginald Pole having united with the pope and quarreled with Henry VIII, they prevailed upon her to carry over to the Princess Mary, whose household she directed, the forces of the party of which she was the head.

The conspirators believed themselves sure of victory, but at the very moment when they imagined themselves on the point of restoring the papacy in England, their whole scheme suddenly fell to the ground. The country was in danger; the state must interfere. Cranmer and Cromwell were the first to discover the approaching storm. Canterbury, the primate’s archiepiscopal city, was the center of the criminal practices of the Kentish woman. One day the prioress of St. Sepulchre received the following note from Cranmer: "Come to my palace next Friday; bring your nun with you. Do not fail." The two women duly came; Elizabeth’s head was so turned that she saw in everything that happened the opportunity of a new triumph. This time she was deceived. The prelate questioned her; she obstinately maintained the truth of her revelations, but did not convince the archbishop, who had her taken to Cromwell, by whom she was sent to the Tower with five other nuns of her party. At first Elizabeth proudly stuck to her character of prophetess; but imprisonment, the searching questions of the judges, and the grief she felt on
seeing her falsehoods discovered, made her give way at last. The unhappy creature, a blind tool of the priests, was not entirely wanting in proper feeling. She began to understand her offense and to repent of it; she confessed everything. "I never had a vision in all my life," she declared, "whatever I said was of my own imagination; I invented it to please the people about me and to attract the homage of the world." The disorder which had weakened her head had much to do with her aberrations. Masters, Bocking, Goold, Deering, and others more guilty than she appeared before the Star Chamber. Elizabeth’s confession rendered their denials impossible, and they acknowledged having attempted to get up an insurrection with a view of re-establishing the papacy. They were condemned to make a public disavowal of their impostures, and the following Sunday at St. Paul’s was appointed for that purpose. The bishop of Bangor preached; the nun and her accomplices, who were exposed on a platform in front of him, confessed their crimes before the people, and were then led back to the Tower.

Personages far more illustrious than these were involved. Besides an epileptic woman and a few monks, the names of Fisher and of More were in the indictment. Cromwell urged both the bishop and the statesman to petition the king for pardon, assuring them they would obtain it. "Good Master Cromwell," exclaimed Sir Thomas More, who was much excited and ashamed of his credulity, "my poor heart is pierced at the idea that his Majesty should think me guilty. I confess that I did believe the nun to be inspired, but I put away far from me every thought of treason. For the future, neither monk nor nun shall have power to make me faithless to my God and my king." Cranmer, Cromwell, and the chancellor prevailed on Henry VIII to strike More’s name out of the bill. The illustrious scholar escaped the capital punishment with which he was threatened. His daughter, Margaret Roper, came in a transport of joy to tell him the news. "In faith, Meg," said More with a smile, "quod differtur non aufertur" (what is postponed is not dropped).

The case of the bishop of Rochester was more serious; he had been in close communication with all those knaves, and the honest but proud and superstitious churchman would not acknowledge any fault. Cromwell, who desired to save the old man, conjured him to give up all idea of defending himself, but Fisher obstinately wrote to the House of Lords that he had seen no deception in the nun. The name of the king’s old tutor was left, therefore, in the bill of attainder, but he was charged with misprision, i.e., failure of duty in respect to the crime of another, and not with treason. In the outcome he was condemned to the loss of his goods and to imprisonment at the king’s pleasure, penalties from which he escaped by the payment to the king of a fine of £300.

The bill was introduced into the House of Lords on the 21st of February, and received the royal assent on the 21st of March. The prisoners charged with treason were brought together in the Star Chamber to hear their sentence. Their friends had still some hope, but the Bull which the pope had issued
against Henry VIII on the 23rd of March, endangering the order of succession, made indulgence difficult. The king and his ministers felt it their duty to anticipate, by a severe example, the rebellion which the partisans of the pontiff were fomenting in the kingdom. Sentence of death was pronounced upon all the criminals.

During this time the unfortunate Elizabeth Barton saw all the evils she had caused rise up before her eyes; she was grieved and agitated, she was angry with herself and trembled at the idea of the temporal and eternal penalties she had deserved. Death was about to end this drama of fanaticism. On the 20th of April the false prophetess was carried to Tyburn with her accomplices, in the midst of a great crowd of people. On reaching the scaffold, she said, "I am the cause not only of my own death, which I have richly deserved, but of the death of all those who are going to suffer with me. Alas! I was a poor wretch without learning, but the praises of the priests about me turned my brain, and I thought I might say anything that came into my head. Now I cry to God and implore the king's pardon." These were her last words. She fell—she and her accomplices—under the stroke of the law.

These were the means to which fervent disciples of Rome had recourse to combat the Reformation in England. Such weapons recoil against those who employ them. The blindest partisans of the Church of the popes continued to look upon this woman as a prophetess, and her name was in great favor during the reign of Mary. But the most enlightened Roman Catholics are now careful not to defend the imposture. The fanatical episode was not without its use; it made the people understand what these pretended visions and false miracles were, through which the religious orders had acquired so much influence, and so far contributed to the suppression of the monasteries within whose walls such a miserable deception had been concocted.

CHAPTER 2

The Church Becomes a Department of State
Christmas, 1533 to June, 1534

The maid of Kent having been executed, her partisans rallied round another woman, who represented the Romish system in its highest features, as Elizabeth Barton had represented it in its more vulgar phase. After the nun came the queen.

Catherine had always claimed the honors due to the Queen of England, and her attendants yielded them to her. "We made oath to her as queen," they said,
"and the king cannot discharge our consciences." Whenever Lord Mountjoy, royal commissioner to the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, called her "princess," she raised her head haughtily and said to him, "You shall answer for this before God." "Ah!" exclaimed Mountjoy, fretted by the vexations of his office, "I would a thousand times rather serve the king in the most dangerous cause!" Mary having also received an injunction to drop her title of princess, made answer, "I shall believe no such order, unless I see his Majesty's signature." The most notable partisans of Roman Catholicism, and even the ambassador of Charles V, paid the queen frequent visits. Henry became uneasy, and shortly before Christmas 1533 he took measures to remove her from her friends. Catherine opposed everything. Suffolk wrote to the king, "I have never seen such an obstinate woman." But there was a man quite as obstinate, and that was Henry.

His most cherished desires had not been satisfied—he had no son. Should he chance to die, he would leave two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, the former supported by the partisans of the old times, the latter by those of the new. Civil war would probably decide to whom the crown should belong. It was necessary to prevent such a misfortune. The Lords and Commons, therefore, petitioned the king, no doubt at his instigation, that his marriage with Lady Catherine should be declared null, and her child illegitimate; that his marriage with Queen Anne should be recognized as valid, and the children issuing from it alone entitled to succeed. All classes of people immediately took the statutory oath; even the monks bowed their heads. They said, "Bound to render to our king Henry VIII, and to him alone after Jesus Christ, fidelity and worship, we promise inviolable obedience to our said lord as well as to our most serene Queen Anne, his wife, and to their children; and we profess perpetual respect for the holy and chaste marriage which they have legitimately contracted." This forced testimony, borne to Anne by the monastic orders, is one of the numerous monuments of the despotism of Henry VIII and of the moral weakness of the monks.

But in this oath of allegiance the king had meditated a more important object—to banish the papacy from England. The monks bound themselves not only to recognize the prescribed order of succession, but further to substitute the primacy of the king for that of the pope. "We affirm," they said, "that King Henry is the head of the Anglican Church, that the Roman bishop, falsely styled pope and sovereign pontiff, has no more authority than any other bishop; and we promise to preach Christ simply and openly according to the rule of Scripture and of the orthodox and catholic doctors." A sign, a word from the State was sufficient to make the papal army pass from the camp of Rome to the camp of the king.

The "famous question," that of the Romish jurisdiction, was also put before the two universities. On the 2nd of May, 1534, Cambridge declared that "all its doctors, having carefully examined the Holy Scriptures, had not discovered the
primacy of the pope in them." The clergy of the province of York, led by the archbishop, Edward Lee, a churchman full of talent, activity, and vanity, stoutly resisted at first, but eventually the prelate wrote to the king on the 2nd of June that "according to the unanimous opinion of his clergy, the pope in conformity with the Holy Scriptures had no more authority in England than any other foreign ecclesiastic." Henry, not content with the proclamations of his council and the declarations of parliament, required for his separation from Rome the suffrage of the Church; and the Church, probably more from weakness than conviction, gave it. However, without reckoning the members of the clergy who, like the primate, wanted no pope, there were many bishops who, at heart, were not sorry to be liberated from the perpetual encroachments of the Roman court.

A rumor from the continent suddenly alarmed the king among all his easy triumphs; a more formidable enemy than monks and bishops was rising against him. It was reported that the Emperor was not only recruiting soldiers in Flanders, but was preparing considerable numbers from Bohemia, Germany, Italy, and Spain for the invasion of England. Francis I could not permit this kingdom, so close to his own, to be occupied by the armies of Charles V, his constant enemy; he determined therefore to have an interview with Henry, and to that intent sent over the Seigneur De la Guiche, his chamberlain and counselor. Henry replied that it would be difficult to leave England just at a time when pope and Emperor spoke of invading him; the more so as he must leave his "most dearly beloved queen" (Anne Boleyn) and his young daughter, the Princess Elizabeth; as well as another daughter and her mother, the aunt of Charles V, whose partisans were conspiring against him. "Ask my good brother the king," said Henry to De la Guiche, "to collect a fleet of ships, galleys, and barks to prevent the Emperor’s landing. And in case that prince should invade either France or England, let us agree that the one who is not called upon to defend his own kingdom shall march into Charles’ territories." However, Henry consented to go as far as Calais.

There was another invasion which, in Henry’s eyes, was much more to be dreaded. That king—a greater king perhaps than is ordinarily supposed—maintained that no prince, whether his name was Charles or Clement, had any business to meddle with his kingdom. The act of the 23rd of March, by which the pope had condemned him, had terminated his long endurance; Clement VII had declared war against him and Henry VIII accepted it. A man, though he be ordinarily the slave of his passions, has sometimes impulses which belong to great characters. Henry determined to finish with the pope as the pope had finished with him. He will declare himself master in his own island; dauntlessly he will brave Rome and the imperial power ready to assail him. Erelong the fire which consumed him appeared to kindle his subjects. The political party, at the head of which were Suffolk and Gardiner, was ready to give up the papacy, even while maintaining the dogmas of catholicism. The evangelical party
desired to go farther, and drive the catholic doctrines out of England. These two hostile sections united their forces against the common enemy.

At the head of the evangelicalists, who were eventually to prevail under the son of Henry VIII, were two men of great intelligence, destined to be powerful instruments in the enfranchisement of England. Cranmer, the ecclesiastical leader of the party, gave way too easily to the royal pressure; but, being a moderate theologian, a conscientious Christian, a skillful administrator, and indefatigable worker, he carefully studied the Scriptures, the Fathers, and even the Schoolmen; he took note of their sayings and, strengthened by their opinions, continued the work of the Reformation with calmness and perseverance. Beside him stood Cromwell, the lay leader of protestant feeling. Gifted in certain respects with a generous character, he loved to benefit those who had helped him in adversity; but too attentive to his own interests, he profited by the Reformation to increase his riches and honors. Inferior to Cranmer in moral qualities, he had a surer and a wider glance than the primate; he saw clearly the end for which he must strive and the means necessary to be employed, and combined much activity with his talents. These leaders were strongly supported. A certain number of ministers and lay members of the Church desired an evangelical reform in England. Latimer, a popular orator, was the tribune commissioned to scatter through the nation the principles whose triumph Cranmer and Cromwell sought. He preached throughout the whole extent of the province of Canterbury; but if his bold language enlightened the well-disposed, it irritated the priests and monks. His great reputation led to his being invited to preach before the king and queen. Cranmer, fearing his incisive language and sarcastic tone, begged him to say nothing in the pulpit that would indicate any soreness about his late disgrace. "In your sermon let not any sparkle or suspicion of grudge appear to remain in you. If you feel authorized by the Word of God to attack any sin or superstition, let not the reproof be given without affection." Latimer preached, and Anne Boleyn was so charmed by his evangelical simplicity, Christian eloquence, and apostolic zeal, that shortly she used her influence with the king to have the preacher elevated to the see of Worcester. Latimer takes his place by the side of Cranmer among the reformers of the English Church.

The evangelical and the political parties being thus agreed to support the prince, Henry determined to strike the decisive blow. On the 9th of June, 1534, about three months after he had been condemned at Rome, he signed at Westminster the proclamation "for the abolishing of the usurped power of the pope." The king declared, "That having been acknowledged next after God, supreme head of the Church of England, he abolished the authority of the bishop of Rome throughout his realm, and commanded all bishops to preach and have preached, every Sunday and holy day, the true and sincere Word of the Lord; to teach that the jurisdiction of the Church belongs to him alone, and to blot out of all canons, liturgies, and other works the name of the bishop of Rome and his pompous titles, so that his name and memory be never more
remembered in the kingdom of England, except to his contumely and reproach. By so doing you will advance the honor of God Almighty, manifest the imperial majesty of your sovereign lord, and procure for the people unity, tranquility, and prosperity."

Would these orders be executed? If there remained in any university, monastery, parish, or even in any wretched presbytery, a breviary in which the name of the pope was written; if on the altar of any poor country church a missal was found with these four letters unerased—it was a crime. If every weed be not plucked up, thought the king’s counselors, the garden will soon be entirely overrun. The obstinacy of the clergy, their stratagem, their pious frauds, were a mystery to nobody. Henry was persuaded, and his counselors still more so, that the bishops would make no opposition; they resolved therefore to direct the sheriffs to see that the king’s orders were strictly carried out. "We command you," said that prince, "under pain of our high indignation, to put aside all human respect, to place God’s glory solely before you, and, at the risk of exposing yourselves to the greatest perils, to make and order diligent search to be made. Inform yourselves whether in every part of your county the bishop executes our commands without veil or dissimulation. And in case you should observe that he neglects some portion, or carries out our orders coldly, or presents this measure in a bad light, we command you strictly to inform us and our council with all haste.

"If you hesitate or falter in the commission we give you, rest assured that being a prince who loves justice, we will punish you with such severity that all our subjects will take care for the future not to disobey our commands."

Everybody could see that Henry was in earnest, and, immediately after this energetic proclamation, those who were backward hastened to make their submission. The dean and chapter of St. Paul’s made their protest against the pope on the 20th of June. On the 27th the University of Oxford, in an act where they described the king as "that most wise Solomon," declared unanimously that it was contrary to the Word of God to acknowledge any superiority whatsoever in the bishop of Rome. A great number of churches and monasteries set their seals to similar declarations.

Such was the first pastoral of the prince who claimed now to govern the Church. He seemed desirous of making it a mere department of the State. Henry allowed the bishops to remain, but he employed the functionaries of police and justice to overlook their episcopate, and that office was imposed upon them in such terms that they must necessarily look sharp after the transgressors. First and foremost the king wanted his own way in his family, in the State, and in the Church. The latter was to him as a ship which he had just captured; the captain was driven out, but for fear lest he should return, he threw overboard all who he thought might betray him. With haughty head and naked sword Henry VIII entered the new realm which he had conquered. He
was far from resembling Him whom the prophets had announced: *Behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek and lowly.*

The power in the Church having been taken from the pope, to whom should it have been committed?

Scripture calls the totality of Christian people a holy nation, a royal priesthood; words which show that, after God, the authority belongs to them. And, in fact, the first act of the Church, the election of an apostle in the place of Judas, was performed by the brethren assembled in one place. When it became necessary to appoint deacons, the twelve apostles once more summoned "the multitude of the disciples." And later still, the evangelists, the delegates of the flocks, were selected by the voice of the churches.

It is a principle of reason, that authority, where a corporate body is concerned, resides in the totality of its members. This principle of reason is also that of the Word of God.

When the Church became more numerous it was called upon to delegate (at least partially) a power that it could no longer exercise wholly of itself. In the apostolic age the Christians, called to form this delegation, adopted the forms with which they were familiar. After the pattern of the council of elders, which existed in the Jewish synagogues, and of the assembly of decurions, which exercised municipal functions in the cities of the pagans, the Christian Church had in every town a council, composed of men of irreproachable life, vigilant, prudent, apt to teach, but distinct from those who were called doctors, evangelists, or ministers of the Word. Still the Christians never entertained the idea of giving themselves a universal chief, after the image of the emperor. Jesus Christ and His Word were amply sufficient. It was not until many centuries later that this anti-Christian institution appeared in history.

The authority, which in England had been taken away from the pope, should return in accordance with scriptural principles to the members of the Church; and if, following the example of the primitive Christians, they had adopted the forms existing in their own country in the sixteenth century, they would have placed as directors of the Church—Christ remaining their sole king—one or two houses or assemblies, authorized to provide for the ecclesiastical administration, the maintenance of a pure faith, and the spiritual prosperity of that vast body. These assemblies would have been composed, as in the primitive times, of a majority of Christian laymen, with the addition of ministers; and both would have been elected by believers whose faith was in conformity with that of the Church.

But was there at that time in England a sufficient number of enlightened Christians to become members of these assemblies, and even to hold the elections which were to appoint them? It is doubtful. They were not to be
found even in Germany. "I have nobody to put in them," said Luther, "but if the thing becomes feasible, I shall not be wanting in my duty."

This form of government not being possible in England then, according to the Reformer’s expression, two other forms offered themselves. If the first were adopted, the authority would be remitted to the clergy; but that would have been to perpetuate the doctrines and rites of popery and to lead back infallibly to the domination of Rome. The most dangerous government for the Church is the government of priests; they commonly rob it of liberty, spontaneousness, evangelical faith, and life.

There remained no alternative then but to confide the supreme authority in the Church to the State, and this is what was generally done in the sixteenth century. But men of the greatest experience in these matters have agreed that the government of the religious society by the civil power can only be a temporary expedient, and have universally proclaimed the great principle "that the essence of all society is to be governed by itself" (Grotius). To deny this axiom would be utterly contrary not only to liberty, but, further still, contrary to justice.

We must not forget, when we speak of the relations between Church and State, that there are three different systems—the government of the Church by the State; the union of the Church, governing itself, with the State; and their complete separation. There is no reason for pronouncing here upon the relative value of the two last systems.

CHAPTER 3

Tyndale and his Enemies
1534 to August, 1535

Two persons were at this time specially dreaded by the Roman party; one was at the summit of the grandeurs of the world, the other at the summit of the grandeurs of faith—the Queen and Tyndale. The hour of trial was approaching for both of them.

There existed another reformation than that of which the sheriffs were to be the agents; there were other reformers than Henry VIII. One man, desirous of reviving the Church of England, had made the translation of the Holy Scriptures the work of his life. Tyndale had been forced to leave his country, but he had left it only to prepare a seed which, borne on the wings of the wind, was to change the wildernesses of his native land into a fruitful garden.
The retired tutor from the vale of the Severn was living in 1534 as near as possible to England—at Antwerp, whence ships departed frequently for British harbors. The English merchants, of whom there were many in that city, welcomed him with fraternal cordiality. Among them was a friend of the Gospel, Thomas Poyntz, a member of the grocers’ company and distantly related to Lady Walsh of Little Sodbury. This warm-hearted Christian had received Tyndale into his house, and the latter was unremittingly occupied in translating the Old Testament, when an English ship brought the news of the martyrdom of Fryth, his faithful colleague. Tyndale shed many tears, and could not make up his mind to continue his work alone. But the reflection that Fryth had glorified Jesus Christ in his prison aroused him; he felt it his duty to glorify God in his exile. The loss of his friend made his Savior still more precious to him, and in Jesus he found comfort for his mind. "I have lost my brother," he said, "but in Christ, all Christians and even all the angels are father and mother, sister and brother, and God Himself takes care of me. O Christ, my Redeemer and my shield! Thy blood, Thy death, all that Thou art and all that Thou hast done—Thou Thyself art mine!"

Tyndale, strengthened by faith, redoubled his zeal in his Master’s service. While pursuing his study of the Scriptures with intense eagerness, he combined with learning the charity that maintains good works. The English merchants of Antwerp having made him an annual allowance, he consecrated it to the poor; but he was not content with mere giving. Besides Sunday he reserved two days in the week, which he called his “days of recreation.” On Monday he visited the most out-of-the-way streets of Antwerp, hunting in garrets for the poor English refugees who had been driven from their country on account of the Gospel; he taught them to bear Christ’s burden, and carefully tended their sick. On Saturday, he went about the city, seeking out the poor in “every hole and corner.” Should he happen to meet some hardworking parents burdened with children, or some aged or infirm man, he hastened to share his substance with the poor creatures. “We ought to be for our neighbor,” he said, “what Christ has been for us.” This is what Tyndale called his “pastime.” On Sunday morning he met with the merchants in a room prepared for evangelical worship, and read and explained the Scriptures with so much sweetness and unction and in such a practical spirit that the congregation (it was said) fancied they were listening to John the Evangelist. During the remainder of the week the laborious scholar gave himself entirely to his translation. He was not one of those who remain idle in the hope that grace may abound. "If we are justified by faith," he said, "it is in order that we may do Christian works.”

There came good news from London to console him for the death of Fryth. In every direction people were asking for the New Testament; several Flemish printers began to reprint it, saying, "If Tyndale should print 2,000 copies, and we as many, they would be few enough for all England." Four new editions of the sacred book issued from the Antwerp presses in 1534.
There was at that time living in the city a man little fitted to be Tyndale’s associate. George Joye, a fellow of Cambridge, was one of those active but superficial persons, with little learning and less judgment, who are never afraid to launch out into works beyond their powers. Joye, who had left England in 1527, noticing the consideration which Tyndale’s labors brought to their author, and being also desirous of acquiring glory for himself, began, though he knew neither Hebrew nor Greek, to correct Tyndale’s New Testament according to the Vulgate and his own imagination. One day when Tyndale had refused to adopt one of his extravagant corrections, Joye was touched to the quick. "I am not afraid to cope with him in this matter," he said, "for all his high learning in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin." Tyndale knew more than these. "He is master of seven languages," said Busche, Reuchlin’s disciple, "Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, French, and so thoroughly that, whichever he is speaking, one might believe it to be his mother tongue."

In the month of August, Joye’s translation appeared at Antwerp; he had advertised it as "clearer and more faithful." Tyndale glanced over the leaves of the work that had been so praised by its author, and was vexed to find himself so unskillfully "corrected." He pointed out some of Joye’s errors, and made this touching and solemn declaration: "Moreover, I take God, which alone seeth the heart, to record to my conscience, beseeching Him that my part be not in the blood of Christ, if I wrote of all that I have written, throughout all my books, aught of an evil purpose, of envy or malice to any man, or to stir up any false doctrine or opinion in the Church of Christ, or to be author of any sect, or to draw disciples after me. ... Also, my part be not in Christ, if mine heart be not to follow and live according as I teach, and also, if mine heart weep not night and day for mine own sin, and other men’s. ... As concerning all I have translated, or otherwise written, I beseech all men to read it for that purpose I wrote it, even to bring them to the knowledge of the Scripture. And as far as the Scripture approveth it, so far to allow it; and if in any place the Word of God disallow it, then to refuse it, as I do before our Saviour Christ and His congregation."

While Joye was waging this petty war against Tyndale, every ship that came from London to Antwerp brought the cheering news that the great conflict seemed to be dying out in England, and that the king and those around him were drawing towards protestantism. A change had been worked in Anne’s mind analogous to that which had been wrought in her position. She had been ambitious and worldly, but, from the moment she ascended the throne, her character had expanded; she had become queen, she wished to be the mother of her people, especially of those who trod in the paths of Holy Scripture. In the first transports of his affection, Henry had desired to share all the honors of sovereignty with her, and she had taken this high position more seriously than Henry had intended. When he saw her whom he had placed by his side imagine that she had any power, the selfish and jealous monarch knit his brows; this was the beginning of the storm that drove Anne Boleyn from the
throne to the scaffold. She ventured to order Cromwell to indemnify the merchants who had suffered loss for having introduced the New Testament into England. "If a day passes," people said, "without her having an opportunity of doing a service to a friend of the Gospel, she is accustomed to say with Titus, ‘I have lost a day.’” Harman, a merchant of Antwerp and a man of courage, who had helped Tyndale to publish the Gospel in English, had been kept seven months in prison by Wolsey and Hacket. Although set at liberty, he was still deprived of his privileges and compelled to suspend business. He came over to England, but instead of applying either to the lord chancellor or to Cromwell for the restoration of his rights, he went straight to the Queen. Anne, who was then at Greenwich Palace, was touched by his piety and sufferings, and, probably without taking counsel of the king, she dictated the following message to the chief minister, which we think worth quoting in full.

Anne the Queen. Trusty and right well-beloved, we greet you well. And whereas we be credibly informed that the bearer hereof, Richard Harman, merchant and citizen of Antwerp in Brabant, was in the time of the late lord cardinal put and expelled from his freedom and fellowship of and in the English house there, for nothing else, as he affirmeth like a good Christian man, but only for that, that he did, both with his goods and policy to his great hurt and hindrance in this world, help to the setting forth of the New Testament in English. We therefore desire and instantly pray you, that with all speed and favour convenient, you will cause this good and honest merchant, being my Lord’s true, faithful, and loving subject, to be restored to his pristine freedom, liberty, and fellowship aforesaid. And the sooner at this our request: and at your good pleasure to hear him in such things as he hath to make further relation unto you in this behalf.

Given under our signet at my Lord’s manor of Greenwich, the xiv day of May.

To our trusty and right well-beloved Thomas Cromwell, principal secretary to his Majesty, the king my lord.

This intervention of the queen in favor of a persecuted evangelical was much talked about. Some ascribed her conduct to the interests of her own cause, others to humanity; most of the friends of the Reformation regarded it as a proof that Anne was gained over to their convictions, and Tyndale manifested his gratitude to the queen by presenting her with a handsome copy of his New Testament.

What gave such joy to Tyndale annoyed the king greatly. Such a private order as this coming from the queen singularly displeased a monarch whose will it was that no business should be discussed except in his council. There was also
in this order, at least in Henry’s eyes, a still greater evil. The evangelical reformation, which Henry had so stoutly combated and which he detested to the last, was making great progress in England. On the 4th of July, 1533, Fryth, the friend of Harman and Tyndale, was burnt at Smithfield, as being one of its followers, and ten months later, on the 14th of May, 1534 Harman, the friend of Tyndale and Fryth, had been declared "a good Christian" by the queen. Anne dared profess herself the friend of those whom the king hated. Did she design to make a revolution—to oppose the opinions of her lord the king? That letter did not remain without effect: it was reported that the friends of the Word of God, taking advantage of these favorable dispositions, were printing at Antwerp six separate editions of the New Testament, and were introducing them into England.

It was not only the king who was irritated—the anger of the Romish party was greater still; but as they dared not strike the queen, they looked about for another victim. Neither Bishop Fisher, Sir Thomas More, nor Henry VIII appear to have had any part in this new crime. Gardiner, now bishop of Winchester, gave a force to the episcopal body of which it had long been deprived, and several prelates, “incensed and inflamed in their minds,” says Foxe, called to remembrance that the best means of drying up the waters of a river is to cut off its springs. It was from Tyndale that all those writings proceeded—those Gospels which, in their opinion, were leading England astray. The moment seemed favorable for getting rid of him; he was actually in the territory of Charles V, that great enemy of the Reformation. Gardiner and his allies, the chief of whom was probably Stokesley, bishop of London, determined to send into the Low Countries two persons with instructions to keep an eye upon the reformer, to take him unawares, and have him put to death. For this purpose they selected a very clever monk of Stratford-le-Bow Abbey and a zealous young papist, who had the look of a gentleman, and who (they hoped) would soon gain Tyndale’s heart by his amiability.

It was about the end of the year 1534, while the reformer was still living at Antwerp in the house of Thomas Poyntz, when one day, dining with another merchant, he observed among the guests a tall young man of good appearance whom he did not know. "He is a fellow countryman," said the master of the house, "Mr. Harry Philips, a person of very agreeable manners." Tyndale drew near the stranger and was charmed with his conversation. After dinner, just as they were about to separate, he observed another person near Philips, whose countenance from being less open pleaded little in his favor. It was "Gabriel, his servant," he was told. Tyndale invited Philips to come and see him; the young layman accepted the invitation, and the candid reformer was so taken with him that he could not pass a day without him—inviting him at one time to dinner, at another to supper. At length Philips became so necessary to him that he prevailed upon him, with Poyntz’s consent, to come and live in the same house with him. For some time they had lost sight of Gabriel, and on Tyndale’s asking what had become of him, he was informed that he had gone to Louvain, the center of Roman clericalism in Belgium. When Tyndale and Philips were once lodged beneath the same roof, their intimacy increased; Tyndale kept no
secrets from his fellow countryman. The latter spent hours in the library of the
hellenist, who showed him his books and manuscripts, and conversed with him
about his past and future labors, and the means that he possessed for
circulating the New Testament throughout England. The translator of the Bible,
all candor and simplicity, supposing no evil, thinking nothing but good of his
neighbor, unbosomed himself to him like a child.

Philips, less of a gentleman than he appeared, was the son of a tax collector in
Dorsetshire and had disgraced himself by robbing his father of money. In 1534,
he was living in London and seeking employment. The pretended domestic, a
disguised monk, was a crafty and vicious churchman, who had been brought
from Stratford-le-Bow and given to the so-called gentleman, apparently as a
servant, but really as his counselor and master. Neither Wolsey, More, nor
Hacket had succeeded in getting hold of Tyndale, but Gardiner and Stokesley,
men of innate malice and indirect measures, familiar with all holes and
corners, all circumstances and persons, knew how to go to work without noise,
to watch their prey in silence, and fall upon it at the very moment when they
were least expected. Two things were required in order to catch Tyndale—a
bait to attract him, and a bird of prey to seize him. Philips was the bait, and
the monk Gabriel Donne the bird of prey. The noble-hearted Poyntz, a man of
greater experience than the reformer, had been for some time watching with
inquisitive eye the new guest introduced into his house. It was of no use for
Philips to try to be agreeable; there was something in him which displeased the
worthy merchant. "Master Tyndale," he said one day to the reformer, "when did
you make that person’s acquaintance?" "Oh! he is a very worthy fellow," replied
Tyndale, "well-educated and a thorough gentleman." Poyntz said no more.
Meanwhile the monk had returned from Louvain, where he had gone to consult
with some of the most fanatical papal leaders. If he and his companion could
gain Mr. Poyntz, it would be easy to lay hold of Tyndale. They thought it would
be sufficient to show the merchant that they had money, imagining that every
man was to be bought. One day Philips said to Poyntz, "I am a stranger here,
and should feel much obliged if you would show me Antwerp." They went out
together. Philips thought the moment had come to let Poyntz know that he was
well supplied with gold, and even had some to give to others. "I want to make
several purchases," he said, "and you would greatly oblige me by directing me. I
want the best goods. I have plenty of money," he added. He then took a step
farther, and sounded his man to try whether he would aid him in his designs. As
Poyntz did not seem to understand him, Philips went no farther.
As stratagem did not succeed, it was necessary to resort to force. Philips, by
Gabriel’s advice, set out for Brussels in order to prepare the blow that was to
strike Tyndale. The Emperor and his ministers had never been so irritated
against England and the Reformation. The troops of Charles V were in
readiness, and people expected to hear every moment that war had broken out
between the Emperor and the king. On arriving at Brussels, the young
Englishman appeared at court and waited on the government; he declared that
he was a Roman Catholic disgusted with the religious reforms in England and
devoted to the cause of Catherine. He explained to the ministers of Charles V
that they had in the Low Countries the man who was poisoning the kingdom, and that, if they put Tyndale to death, they would save the papacy in England. The Emperor’s ministers, delighted to see Englishmen making common cause with them against Henry VIII, conceded to him all that he asked. Philips, sparing no expense to attain his end, returned to Antwerp, accompanied by the imperial prosecutor and other officers of the Emperor.

It was important to arrest Tyndale without having recourse to the city authorities, and even without their knowledge. Had not the Hanseatic judges the strange audacity to declare, in Harman’s case, that they could not condemn a man without positive proof? The monk, who probably had not gone to Brussels, undertook to reconnoiter the ground. One day, when Poyntz was sitting at his door, Gabriel went up to him and said, "Is Master Tyndale at home? My master desires to call upon him." They entered into conversation. Everything seemed to favor the monk’s designs; he learned that in three or four days Poyntz would be going to Bergen-op-Zoom, where he would remain about six weeks. It was just what Gabriel wanted, for he dreaded the piercing eye of the English merchant.

Shortly after this, Philips arrived in Antwerp with the prosecutor and his officers. The former went immediately to Poyntz’s house, where he found only the wife at home. "Does Master Tyndale dine at home today?" he said. "I have a great desire to dine with him. Have you anything good to give us?" "What we can get in the market," she replied laconically.

The new Judas hurried to meet the officers, and agreed with them upon the course to be adopted. When the dinner-hour drew near, he said, "Come along, I will deliver him to you." The imperial prosecutor and his followers, with Philips and the monk, proceeded towards Poyntz’s house, carefully noting everything and taking the necessary measures not to attract observation. The entrance to the house was by a long narrow passage. Philips placed some of the agents a little way down the street; others, near the entrance of the alley. "I shall come out with Tyndale," he told the agents, "and the man I point out with my finger is the one you will seize." With these words Philips entered the house; it was about noon.

The creature was exceedingly fond of money—he had received a great deal from the priests in England for the payment of his mission—but he thought it would be only right to plunder his victim before giving him up to death. Finding Tyndale, at home, he said to him after a few compliments, "I must tell you my misfortune. This morning I lost my purse between here and Mechlin, and I am penniless. Could you lend me some money?" Tyndale, simple and inexperienced in the tricks of the world, went to fetch the required sum, and lent him forty shillings. The delighted Philips put the money carefully in his pocket, and then thought only of betraying his kind-hearted friend. "Well, Master Tyndale," he said, "we are going to dine together." "No," replied Tyndale, "I am going to dine out today; come along with me, I will answer for it that you will be welcome." Philips joyfully consented; promptitude of execution was one element of success in his business. The two friends prepared to start. The alley by which they had to go out was (as we have said) so narrow that two persons could not
walk abreast. Tyndale, wishing to do the honors to Philips, desired him to go first. "I will never consent," replied the latter, pretending to be very polite. "I know the respect due to you—it is for you to lead the way." Thus Tyndale, who was of moderate height, went first, while Philips, who was very tall, came behind him. He had placed two agents at the entrance, who were sitting at each side of the alley. Hearing footsteps they looked up and saw the innocent Tyndale approaching them without suspicion, and over his shoulders the head of Philips. He was a lamb led to slaughter by the man who was about to sell him. The officers of justice, frequently so hard-hearted, experienced a feeling of compassion at the sight. But the traitor, raising himself behind the reformer, who was about to enter the street, placed his forefinger over Tyndale’s head, according to the signal which had been agreed upon, and gave the men a significant look, as if to say to them, "This is he!" The men at once laid hands upon Tyndale, who, in his holy simplicity, did not at first understand what they intended doing. He soon found out, for they ordered him to move on, the officers following him, and he was thus taken before the imperial prosecutor. The latter, who was at dinner, invited Tyndale to sit down with him. Then ordering his servants to watch him carefully, the magistrate set off for Poyntz’s house. He seized the papers, books, and all that had belonged to the reformer, and returning home, placed him with the booty in a carriage, and departed. The night came on, and after a drive of about three hours they arrived in front of the strong castle of Vilvorde, built in 1374 by duke Wenceslaus, situated two leagues north of Brussels, on the banks of the Senne, surrounded on all sides by water and flanked by seven towers. One of the three drawbridges was lowered, and Tyndale was delivered into the hands of the governor, who put him into a safe place. The reformer of England was not to leave Vilvorde as Luther left the Wartburg.

The object of his mission once attained, Philips, fearing the indignation of the English merchants, escaped to Louvain. Sitting in taverns or at the tables of monks, professors, and prelates, sometimes even at the court of Brussels, he would boast of his exploit, and, desiring to win the favor of the imperialists, would call Henry VIII a tyrant and a robber of the State. Shortly Poyntz returned from Bergen-op-Zoom, and he and his fellow merchants, deeply offended by the loss of their friend and by the prosecutor’s encroachment upon their rights and privileges, addressed a letter to Mary of Hungary, at that time Queen Regent of the Netherlands, urging her to agree to the speedy release of Tyndale, but their protest proved unavailing. Her officials objected strongly to the release of a man who had, in their opinion, done such great harm to the papal cause in England.

Tyndale, deprived of all hope, sought consolation in God. "Oh! what a happy thing it is to suffer for righteousness’ sake," he said. "If I am afflicted on earth with Christ, I have joy in the hope that I shall be glorified with Him in heaven. Trials are a most wholesome medicine, and I will endure them with patience. My enemies destine me for the stake, but I am as innocent as a new-born child of the crimes of which they accuse me. My God will not forsake me. O Christ, Thy blood saves me, as if it had been mine own that was shed upon the cross."
God, as great as He is, is mine with all that He hath." And again, "There is none other way into the kingdom of life than through persecution and suffering of pain and of very death, after the example of Christ."

Tyndale in his prison at Vilvorde was happier than Philips at court. If we carefully study the history of the reformers, we recognize at once that they were not simply masters of a pure doctrine, but also men of lofty soul, Christians of great morality and exalted spirituality. We cannot say as much of their adversaries—what a contrast here between the traitor and his victim! The calumnies and insults of the enemies of protestantism will deceive nobody. If it is sufficient to read the Bible with a sincere heart in order to believe it—it is sufficient also to know the lives of the reformers in order to honor them.

CHAPTER 4

Henry VIII as King-Pontiff

1534 & 1535

While the Roman papacy was triumphing in the Low Countries, a lay papacy was being established in England. Henry VIII gave his orders like a sovereign bishop, *summus episcopus*, and the majority of the priests obeyed him. They believed that such an extraordinary state of things would be but of short duration, and thought that it was not worth the trouble of dying in battle against what would perish of itself. They muttered with their lips what the king ordered them, and waited for the coming deliverance.

Every preacher was bound to preach once at least against the usurpations of the papacy, to explain on that occasion the engagements made by the pope with the king of England, the duplicity shown by Clement, and the obligation by which the monarch was bound to thwart so much falsehood and trickery. The ministers of the Church were ordered to proclaim the Word of Christ purely, but to say nothing about the adoration of saints, the marriage of priests, justification by works and other doctrines rejected by the reformers, which the king intended to preserve. The secular clergy generally obeyed. There were however numerous exceptions, particularly in the north of England, and the execution of Henry’s orders gave rise to scenes more or less riotous. Due credit must be given to those who ventured to resist a formidable power in obedience to conscientious principles. There were here and there a few signs of opposition. On the 24th of August, 1534, Father Ricot, when preaching at Sion Monastery, called the king, according to his orders, "the head of the Church," but added immediately after that he who had given the order was alone responsible before God, and that he "ought to take steps for the discharge of his conscience." The other monks went farther still; as soon as they heard Henry's new title proclaimed, there was a movement among them. Father Lache, who, far from resembling his name (meaning "lax"), was inflexible even to impudence, got up; eight other monks rose with him and left the chapel "contrary to the rule of their religion" and to the great scandal of all the audience. These nine, boldly quitting the church one after another, were the living protest of the monks of England. They wanted to maintain the
dominion of the pope in the Church, and in the State also. The king-pope would have none of these freaks of independence. Dr. Bedyll, a fellow of New College, Oxford, who had received Cromwell’s order to inspect this monastery, proposed to send the nine monks to prison, “to the terrible example of their adherents.”

The priests, finding that they must act with prudence, avoided a repetition of such outbreaks and began secretly to school their penitents in the confessional, bidding them employ mental reservations, in order to conciliate everything. They set the example themselves. "I have abjured the pope in the outward man, but not in the inward man," said one of them to some of his parishioners. The confessor at Sion Monastery had proclaimed the king’s new title and even preached upon it; yet when one of his penitents showed much uneasiness because he had heard Latimer say that the pope himself could not pardon sin, "Do not be afraid," said the confessor, "the pope is assuredly the head of the Church. True, king and parliament have turned him out of office here in England, but that will not last long. The world will change again, you will see, and that too before long." "But we have made oath to the king as head of the Church," said some persons to a priest. "What matters!" replied he. "An oath that is not very strictly made may be broken the same way."

These mental reservations, however, made many ecclesiastics and laymen to feel uneasy. They longed for deliverance; they were on the lookout; they turned their eyes successively towards Ireland, which had risen for the pope, and towards the Low Countries, whence they hoped an imperial fleet would sail for the subjugation of England. Men grew excited. In the monasteries there were fanatical and visionary monks who, maddened by the abuses of power under which they suffered, and fired by persecution, dreamt of nothing but reaction and vengeance, and expressed their cruel wishes in daring language. One of them named Maitland, belonging to the Dominican order in London, exclaimed presumptuously, as if he were a prophet, "Soon I shall behold a scaffold erected. ... On that scaffold will pass in turn the heads of all those who profess the new doctrine, and Cranmer will be one of them. .... The king will die a violent and shameful death, and the queen will be burnt." Being addicted to the black art, Maitland pretended to read the future by the help of Satanic beings. All were not so bold; there were the timid and fearful. Several monks of Sion House, despairing of the papacy, were making preparations to escape and hide themselves in some wilderness or foreign cloister. "If we succeed," they said, "we shall be heard of no more, and nobody will know where we are." This being told to Bedyll, Cromwell’s agent, he was content to say, "Let them go; the loss will not be great." Roman Catholicism was, however, to find more honorable champions.

Two men, a bishop and a layman, celebrated throughout Christendom, John Fisher and Sir Thomas More, were about to present an opposition to the king which probably he had not expected. Since More had fathomed the king’s intentions, and resigned the office of chancellor, he often passed whole nights without sleep, shuddering at the future which threatened him, and watering his bed with tears. He feared that he was not firm enough to brave death. "O
God!" he exclaimed during his agitated vigils, "come and help me. I am so weak I could not endure a fillip" (i.e., even a trifling blow). His children wept, his wife stormed against her husband’s enemies, and he himself employed a singular mode of preparing his family for the fate that awaited him. One day, when they were all at table, a sergeant entered the room and summoned him to appear before the king’s commissioners. "Be of good cheer," said More, "the time is not yet come. I paid this man in order to prepare you for the calamity that hangs over you." It was not long delayed.

Shortly after the condemnation of Elizabeth Barton the nun, Sir Thomas More, Fisher, and many other influential men were summoned to the archbishop’s palace to take the oath prescribed in the Act of Succession. More confessed, received the sacrament, and, forbidding his wife and children to accompany him, as was their custom, to the boat which was to carry him to Lambeth, he proceeded in great emotion towards the place where his future would be decided. His startled family watched him depart. The ex-chancellor, taking his seat in the boat along with his son-in-law William Roper, endeavored to restrain his tears and struggled but without success against his sorrow. At length his face became more serene, and, turning to Roper, he whispered in his ear, "I thank our Lord, my son; the field is won." On his arrival at Lambeth Palace, where Bishop Fisher (of Rochester) and a great number of ecclesiastics were assembled, More, who was the only layman, was introduced first. The chancellor read the form to him; it stated in the preamble that the troubles of England, the oceans of blood that had been shed in it, and many other afflictions, originated in the usurped power of the popes; that the king was the head of the Anglican Church, and that the bishop of Rome possessed no authority out of his own diocese. "I cannot subscribe that form," said More, "without exposing my soul to everlasting damnation. I am ready to give my adhesion to the Act of Succession which is a political act—but without the preamble." "You are the first man who has refused," said the chancellor. "Think upon it." A great number of bishops, doctors, and priests who were successively introduced took the required oath. But More remained firm, and so did Bishop Fisher.

Cranmer, who earnestly desired to save these two conscientious men, asked Cromwell to accept the oath they proposed, and the latter consulted the king upon it. "They must give way," exclaimed Henry, "or I will make an example of them that shall frighten others." As the king was inexorable, they were attainted by act of parliament for refusing to take the required oath, and sent to the Tower.

The family of Sir Thomas More was plunged in affliction. His daughter Margaret, having obtained permission to see him, hurried to the Tower, penetrated to his cell, and, incapable of speaking, fell weeping into his arms. "Daughter," said More, restraining himself with an effort, "let us kneel down." He repeated the seven penitential Psalms, and then, rising up, said, "Dear Meg, those who have put me here think they have done me a high displeasure, but God treats me as He treats His best friends." Margaret, who thought of nothing but to save her father, exclaimed, "Take the oath! Death is hanging over your head." 
will happen to me but what pleases God," replied Sir Thomas More. His
daughter left the Tower, overwhelmed with grief. His wife, who also went to
see him, Chancellor Audley, the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, Cromwell, and
other of the king’s counselors were not more successful than Margaret. Bishop
Fisher met similar solicitations with a similar refusal.
As the king’s government did not wish to hurry on the trial of these illustrious
men, they turned from the chiefs to the followers. The Carthusians of London
were in great odor of sanctity; they never spoke except at certain times, ate
no meat, and affirmed that God had visited them in visions and miracles. Their
house was not free from disorders, but many of the monks took their vocation
seriously. When the royal commissioners visited them to tender the oath of
succession, Prior Haughton, a man of small stature but agreeable appearance
and noble carriage, appeared before them. The commissioners required him to
acknowledge Henry’s second marriage to be lawful; Haughton at first sought a
loophole, and answered that the king might be divorced and married without
him or his monks having anything to say to it. "It is the king’s command,"
answered the commissioners, "that you and your brethren acknowledge by oath
the lawfulness of his union. Call the monks together." The Carthusians
appeared, and all refused to take the oath. The prior and proctor were
consequently sent to the Tower. The Bishop of London used all his influence to
make them change their opinions, and succeeded in persuading them that they
might take the oath, by making several reservations. They therefore returned
to the Charter-House and prevailed upon their brethren to do as they had done.
Immediately all was confusion in the monastery. Several monks in deep distress
could not tell which course to follow; others, more decided, exclaimed that
they would not yield at any price. "They are minded to offer themselves in
sacrifice to the great idol of Rome," wrote Bedyll to Cromwell. At last, when
the soldiers appeared to take the rebels to the Tower, the terrified monks lost
heart, and took the oath to the new marriage of Henry VIII "so far as it was
lawful." The bitter cup was removed, but not for long.
Whilst England was separating from Rome, Clement VII was dying of vexation.
The hatred felt by the Romans towards him was only equaled by the joy they
experienced at the election of his successor. Alexander Farnese, the choice of
the French party, was a man of the world, desirous of putting down the
protestants, recovering England, reforming the Church, and above all enriching
his own family. When Da Casale, Henry’s envoy, presented his homage, "There
is nothing in the world," said Paul III to him, "that I have more at heart than to
satisfy your master." It was too late.
Clement’s behavior had produced an evil influence on the character of the
Tudor king. The services rendered by this prince to the papacy had been
overlooked, his long patience had not been rewarded; he fancied himself
despised and deceived. His pride was irritated, his temper grew fiercer; his
violence, for some time restrained, broke out, and, unable to reach the pope,
he revenged himself on the papacy. Until now, he had scarcely been worse
than most of the sovereigns of Christendom; from this moment, when he
proclaimed himself head of the Church, he became harsh, and cared for
nothing but gratifying his evil inclinations, his despotic humors, his bloodthirsty cruelty. As a prince, he had at times shown a few amiable qualities; as a pope, he was nothing but a tyrant.

Henry VIII, observing the agitation his pretensions caused in England, and wishing to strengthen his new authority, had caused several bills concerning the Church to be brought into the parliament, which met on the 3rd of November, 1534, and continued in session until the 18th of December. The ministers who had drafted them, far from being protesters, were zealous partisans of scholastic orthodoxy. They included the cunning Gardiner, a furious Catholic; the duke of Norfolk, who assisted in the king's movements against Rome only to prevent him from falling into the arms of the reformers; and the politic Cromwell, who, despite his zeal against the pope, declared at his death, possibly giving a particular meaning to the words, that he died in the catholic faith.

The first act passed by parliament was the ratification of the king's new title, already officially recognized by the clergy. Henry's ministers knew how to make the law strict and rigorous. "It is enacted," so ran the act, "that our lord the king be acknowledged sole and supreme head on earth of the Church of England; that he shall possess not only the honors, jurisdictions, and profits attached to that dignity, but also full authority to put down all heresies and enormities, whatever be the customs and the laws that may be opposed to it."

Parliament also enacted that "whoever should do anything tending to deprive the king or his heirs of any of their titles, or should call him heretic, schismatic, usurper, &c., should be guilty of high treason."

Thus Henry VIII united the two swords in his hand, and virtually became a pope in his own dominions. Whether a pope claims to be king, or a king claims to be pope, it comes to nearly the same thing. At the time when the Reformation was emancipating the long-enslaved Church, a new master was given it, and what a master! The consciences of Christians revolted against this order of things. One day—it was some time later—Cranmer was asked, "Who is the supreme head of the Church of England?" "Christ," was the reply, "as He is of the universal Church."

"But did you not recognize the king as supreme head of the Church?"
"We recognized him as head of all the people of England," answered Cranmer, "of churchmen as well as of laymen."

"What! not of the Church?"
"No! Supreme head of the Church never had any other meaning than what I tell you."

This is explicit. If the title given to Henry only signified that he was king of the clergy as well as of the laity, and that the former were under the jurisdiction of the royal courts as well as the latter, in all matters of common law, there can be nothing fairer. But how was it that Cranmer did not find as much courage in Henry's lifetime to speak according to his conscience, as when examined in 1555 by Brokes, the papal sub-delegate? An interpretative document drawn up by the government at almost the same time as the act of parliament, corroborates however the explanation made by Cranmer; it said,
"The title of supreme head of the Church gives the king no new authority; it does not signify that he can assume any spiritual power." This document declares that the words reform, abuses, and heresies indicate the authority which the king possesses to suppress the powers which the bishop of Rome or other bishops have usurped in his realm. "We heartily detest," said William Fulke, Master of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, "the notion that the king can do what he likes in matters of religion." Even Elizabeth refused the title of head of the Church. Probably these are facts which are not generally known.

CHAPTER 5
Henry Destroys his Opponents
1534–1535

In England it was reserved for Catholics as well as for evangelicals to give the world, amid great misery, remarkable examples of Christian virtues. Latimer and others preached the truth courageously; martyrs like Bilney, Tewkesbury, and Fryth had laid down their lives for the Gospel. Now in the other party, laymen, monks, and priests, with unquestionably a less enlightened piety, were about to furnish proofs of their sincerity. There were Roman martyrs also. Two armies were in presence; many fell on both sides; but there was a sensible difference between this spiritual war and the wars of nations. Those who bit the dust did not fall under the weapons of a hostile army; there was a third power, the king-pope, who took his station between the two lines, and dealt his blows, now to the right, now to the left. Leaders of the pontifical army were to be smitten in the struggle in which so many evangelicals had already fallen.

Sir Thomas More, while in prison, strove to banish afflicting thoughts by writing a history of Christ’s passion. One day when he came to these words of the Gospel, Then came they and laid hands on Jesus, and took him, the door opened, and Sir William Kingston, the constable of the Tower, accompanied by Sir Richard Rich, the solicitor-general, appeared. "Sir Thomas," said Rich, "if an act of parliament ordered all Englishmen to acknowledge me as their king, would you acknowledge me?" "Yes, sir." "And if an act of parliament ordered all Englishmen to recognize me as pope?" "Parliament has no authority to do it," answered More. Sir Thomas held that an act of parliament was sufficient to dethrone a king of England; it is to a great-grandson of More that we are indebted for this opinion, which a grand-nephew of Cromwell put into practice a hundred years later. Was Henry VIII exasperated because More disposed so freely of his crown? It is possible, but be that as it may, the harshness of his imprisonment was increased. Suffering preceded martyrdom. The illustrious scholar was forced to pick up little scraps of paper on which to write a few scattered thoughts with a coal. This was not the worst. "I have neither shirt nor sute," he wrote to the chief secretary of state, "nor yet other clothes that are necessary for me to wear, but that be ragged and rent too shamefully. Notwithstanding, I might easily suffer that if that would keep my body warm. And now in my age my stomach may not away but with a few kind of meats;
which, if I want, I decay forthwith, and fall into crases and diseases of my body, and cannot keep myself in health. ... I beseech you be a good master unto me in my necessity, and let me have such things as are necessary for me in mine age. Restore me to my liberty out of this cold and painful imprisonment. Let me have some priest to hear my confession against this holy time, and some books to say my devotions more effectually. The Lord send you a merry Christmas.

"At the Tower, 23rd December."

It is a relief to hope that this scandalous neglect proceeded from heedlessness and not from cruelty. His requests were granted.

While these sad scenes were enacted in the Tower, there was great confusion in all England, where the most opposite parties were in commotion. When the traditional yoke was broken, every man raised up his own banner. The friends of More and Fisher wished to restore the papacy of the Roman bishop; Henry VIII, Cromwell, and the court thought how to establish the supremacy of the king; Cranmer and a few men of the same stamp endeavored to steer between these quicksands, and aspired to introduce the reign of Holy Scripture under the banner of royalty. This contest between forces so different, complicated too by the passions of the sovereign, was a terrible drama destined to wind up not in a single catastrophe, but in many. Illustrious victims, taken indiscriminately from all parties, were to fall beneath the oft-repeated blows and be buried in one common grave.

The prudent Cranmer lived in painful anxiety. Surrounded by enemies who watched every step, he feared to destroy the cause of truth by undertaking reforms as extensive as those on the Continent. The natural timidity of his character, the compromises he thought it his duty to make with regard to the hierarchy, his fear of Henry VIII, his moderation, gentleness, and plasticity of character and in some respects of principle, prevented his applying to the work with the decision of a Luther, a Calvin, or a Knox. Tyndale, if he had possessed the influence that was his due, would have accomplished a reform similar to that of those great leaders. To have had him for a reformer would, in Wycliffe’s native land, have been the source of great prosperity, but such a thing was impossible; his country gave him, not a professor’s chair, but exile. Cranmer moved forward slowly; he modified an evangelical movement by a clerical concession. When he had taken a step forward, he stopped suddenly, and apparently drew back, not from cowardice, but because his extreme prudence so urged him. The boldness of a Farel or a Knox is in our opinion far more noble, and yet this extreme moderation saved Cranmer and English protestantism with him. Near a throne like that of Henry’s, it was only a man of extreme caution who could have retained his position in the see of Canterbury. Cranmer knew that if he came into collision with the Tudor’s scepter, he would find it a sword. God gives to every people and to every epoch the man necessary to it. Cranmer was this man for England, at the time of her separation from the papacy. Notwithstanding his compromises, he never abandoned the great principles of the Reformation; notwithstanding his concessions, he took advantage of every opportunity to encourage those who
shared his faith to march towards a better future. The primate of England held a torch in his hand which had not the brilliancy of that borne by Luther and Calvin, but the tempest that blew upon it for fifteen or twenty years could not extinguish it. Sometimes he was seized with terror; as he heard the lion roar, he bent his head, kept in the background, and concealed the truth in his bosom; but again he rose and again held out to the Church the light he had saved from the fury of the tyrant. He was a reed and not an oak—a reed that bent too easily—but through this very weakness he was able to do what an oak with all its strength would never have accomplished. The truth triumphed. At this time Cranmer thought himself in a position to take a step—the most important step of all; he undertook to give the Bible to the laity. When the convocation of clergy and parliament had assembled, he made a proposition that the Holy Scriptures should be translated into English by certain honorable and learned men, and be circulated among the people. To present Holy Scripture as the supreme rule instead of the pope was the bold act that decided the evangelical reformation. Stokesley, Gardiner, and the other bishops of the catholic party cried out against such a monstrous design. "The teaching of the Church is sufficient," they said, "we must prohibit Tyndale's Testament and the heretical books which come to us from beyond the sea." The archbishop saw that he could only carry his point by giving up something; he consented to a compromise. Convocation resolved on the 19th of December, 1534, to lay Cranmer's proposal before the king, but with the addition that the Scriptures translated into the vulgar tongue should only be circulated among the king's subjects in proportion to their knowledge, and that all who possessed suspected books should be bound to give them up to the royal commissioners; others might have called this resolution a defeat—Cranmer looked upon it as a victory. The Scriptures would no longer be admitted stealthily into the kingdom, like contraband goods; they would appear in broad daylight with the royal sanction. This was something. Henry granted the petition of Convocation, but hastened to profit by it. His great fixed idea was to destroy the Roman papacy in England, not because of its errors, but because he felt that it robbed princes of the affection and often of the obedience of their subjects. "If I grant my bishops what they ask for," he said, "in my turn I ask them to make oath never to permit any jurisdiction to be restored to the Roman bishop in my kingdom; never to call him pope, universal bishop, or most holy lord, but only bishop of Rome, colleague and brother, according to the ancient custom of the oldest bishops." All the prelates were eager to obey the king; but the archbishop of York, secretly devoted to the Roman Church, added, to acquit his conscience, "that he took the oath in order to preserve the unity of the faith and of the Catholic Church." Cranmer was filled with joy by the victory he had won. "If we possess the Holy Scriptures," he said, "we have at hand a remedy for every disease. Beset as we are with tribulations and temptations, where can we find arms to overcome them? In Scripture. It is the balm that will heal our wounds, and will be a more precious jewel in our houses than either gold or silver." He therefore turned his mind at once to the realization of the plan he had so much at heart. Taking for
groundwork an existing translation (doubtless that by Tyndale) he divided the New Testament into ten portions, had each transcribed separately, and transmitted them to the most learned of the bishops, praying that they might be returned to him with their remarks. He even thought it his duty not to omit such decided catholics as Stokesley and Gardiner.

The day appointed for the return and examination of these various portions having arrived (June 1535) Cranmer set to work, and found that the Acts of the Apostles were wanting; they had fallen to the lot of the bishop of London. When the primate’s secretary went to ask for the manuscript, Stokesley replied in a very bad humor, "I do not understand my lord of Canterbury. By giving the people the Holy Scriptures, he will plunge them into heresy. I certainly will not give an hour to such a task. Here, take the book back to my lord." When the secretary delivered his message, Thomas Lawney, one of Cranmer’s friends, said with a smile, "My lord of London will not take the trouble to examine the Scriptures, persuaded that there is nothing for him in the Testament of Jesus Christ." Many of the portions returned by the other bishops were pitiable. The Archbishop saw that he must find colleagues better disposed.

Cranmer had soon to discharge another function. As popery and rebellion were openly preached in the dioceses of Winchester and London, the metropolitan announced his intention to visit them. The two bishops cried out vehemently, and Gardiner hurried to the king. "Your Grace," he said, "here is a new pope!" All who had anything to fear began to reproach the primate with aspiring to honors and dominion. "God forgive me," he said with simplicity, "if there is any title in the world I care for more than the paring of an apple. Neither paper, parchment, lead, nor wax, but the very Christian conversation of the people, are the letters and seals of our office." The king supported Cranmer, knowing that certain of the clergy preached submission to the pope. The visitation took place. Even in London priests were found who had taken the oath prescribed by Henry VIII, and who yet "made a god of the Roman pontiff, setting his power and his laws above those of our Lord." "I command you," said the king, "to lay hold of all who circulate those pernicious doctrines."

Francis I watched these severities from afar. He feared they would render an alliance between France and England impossible. He therefore sent Bryon, high-admiral of France, to London, to reconcile the king with the pope, to strengthen the bonds that united the two countries, and at the same time, he prevailed upon Paul III to withdraw the decree of Clement VII against Henry VIII. But success did not crown his efforts; the king of England had no great confidence in the sincerity of the pope or of the French king. He was well pleased to be no longer confronted by a foreign authority in his own dominions, and thought that his people would never give up the Reformation. Instead of being reconciled with the Roman pontiff, he found it more convenient to imitate the pope, and to break out against those subjects who refused to recognize him, the king, as head of the Church.

He first attacked the Carthusians, the most respectable of the religious orders in England, and whom he considered as the most dangerous. Where there was
the most goodness, there was also the most strength, and that strength gave umbrage to the despotic Tudor king.

Monastic life, abominable in its abuses, was, even in principle, contrary to the Gospel. But we must confess that there was a certain harmony between the wants of society in the Middle Ages and monastic establishments. Many and various motives drove into the cloisters the men that filled them, and if some were condemnable, there were others whose value deserves to be appreciated. It was these earnest monks who, even while defending the royalty of the pope, rejected most energetically the papacy of the king; this was enough to draw down upon them the royal vengeance. One day a messenger from the court brought to the Charter-House of London an order to reject the Roman authority. The monks, summoned by their prior, remained silent when they heard the message, and their features alone betrayed the trouble of their minds. "My heart is full of sorrow," said Prior Haughton. "What are we to do? If we resist the king, our house will be shut up, and you young men will be cast into the midst of the world, so that after commencing here in the spirit you will end there in the flesh. But, on the other hand, how can we obey? Alas! I am helpless to save those whom God has entrusted to my care!" At these words the Carthusians "fell all a-weeping," and then, taking courage from the presence of danger, they said, "We will perish together in our integrity, and heaven and earth shall cry out against the injustice that oppresses us." "Would to God it might be so," exclaimed the Superior, "but this is what they will do. They will put me to death—me and the oldest of us—and they will turn the younger ones into the world, which will teach them its wicked works. I am ready to give up my life to save you, but if one death does not satisfy the king, then let us all die!" "Yes, we will all die," answered the brethren. "And now let us make preparation by a general confession," said the prior, "so that the Lord may find us ready."

Next morning the chapel doors opened and all the monks marched in. Their serious looks, their pale countenances, their fixed eyes seemed to betoken men who were awaiting their last moments. The prior went into the pulpit and read the sixtieth Psalm: "O God, thou hast cast us off." On coming to the end, he said, "My brethren, we must die in charity. Let us pardon one another." At these words Haughton came down from the pulpit, and knelt in succession before every brother, saying, "O my brother, I beg your forgiveness of all my offenses!" The other monks, each in his turn, made this last confession.

Two days afterwards they celebrated the mass of the Holy Ghost. Immediately after the elevation, the monks fancied they heard "a small hissing wind." Their hearts were filled with a tender affection; they believed that the Holy Ghost was descending upon them, and the prior, touched by this surprising grace, burst into tears. Enthusiasm mingled extraordinary fantasies with their pious emotions.

The king had evidently not much to fear in this quarter. His crown was threatened by more formidable enemies. In various parts, especially in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, there were daring partisans of the papacy to be found who endeavored to stir up the people to revolt, and thousands of
Englishmen in the North were ready to help them by force of arms. At the same time Ireland wished to transport her soldiers across St. George’s Channel and hurl the king from his throne. The decision with which Fisher, Sir Thomas More, and the Carthusians resisted Henry had not immediate insurrection for its object, but it encouraged the multitude to revolt. The government, thinking, therefore, that it was time to strike, sent the Carthusians an absolute order to acknowledge the royal supremacy.

At this time there was in reality no liberty on one side or the other. Rome, by not granting it, was consistent with herself, but not so the protestantism that denies it. The Reformation, acknowledging no other sovereign Lord and Teacher than God, must of necessity leave the conscience to the Supreme Master, man having nothing to do with it. But the Roman Church, acknowledging a man as its head, and honoring the pope as the representative of God on earth, claims authority over the soul. Men may say in vain that they are in harmony with God and His Word—that is not the question. The great business is to be in accord with the pope. That old man, throned in the Vatican on the traditions of the Church and the bulls of his predecessors, is their judge; they are bound to follow exactly his line, without wavering either to the right or the left. If they reject an article, a jot of a papal constitution, they must be cast away. Such a system, the enemy of every liberty, even of the most legitimate, rose in the sixteenth century like a high wall to separate Rome and the new generation. It threatened to destroy in the future that power which had triumphed in the past.

After the festival of Easter 1535, the heads of two other Carthusian houses—Robert Laurence, prior of Belleval, and Augustine Webster, prior of Axholm—arrived in London in obedience to an order they had received, and, in company with Prior Haughton, waited upon Cromwell. As they refused to acknowledge the royal supremacy, they were sent to the Tower. A week later, they consented to take the oath, adding, "So far as God’s law permits." "No restrictions," answered Cromwell. On the 29th of April they were placed on their trial, when they said, "We will never believe anything contrary to the law of God and the teaching of our holy mother Church." At first the jury expressed some interest in their behalf, but Haughton uselessly embittered his position. "You can only produce in favor of your opinion," he said, "the parliament of one single kingdom; for mine, I can produce all Christendom." The jury found the three prisoners guilty of high treason. Thence the government proceeded to more eminent victims.

Fisher and More, confined in the same prison, were now treated with more consideration. It was said, however, that these illustrious captives were endeavoring, even in the Tower, to excite the people to revolt. The king and Cromwell could hardly have believed it, but they imagined that if these two leading men gave way, their example would carry the recalcitrants with them; they were therefore exposed to a new examination. But they proved as obstinate as their adversaries, and perhaps more skillful. "I have no more to do with the titles to be given to popes and princes," said Sir Thomas, "my thoughts are with God alone."
The court hoped to intimidate these eminent personages by the execution of the three priors, which took place on the 4th May, 1535. Margaret hurried to her father’s side. Before long the procession passed under his window, and the affectionate young woman used every means to draw Sir Thomas away from the sight, but he would not avert his eyes. When all was over, he turned to his daughter. "Meg," he said, "you saw those saintly fathers; they went as cheerfully to death as if they were bridegrooms going to be married."

The prisoners walked calmly along; they wore their clerical robes, the ceremony of degradation not having been performed, no doubt to show that a papal consecration could not protect offenders. Haughton, prior of the London Charter-House, mounted the ladder first. "I pray all who hear me," he said, "to bear witness for me in the terrible day of judgment, that it is not out of obstinate malice or rebellion that I disobey the king, but only for the fear of God." The rope was now placed round his neck. "Holy Jesus!" he exclaimed, "have mercy on me," and he gave up the ghost. The other priors then stepped forward. "God has manifested great grace to us," they said, "by calling us to die in defense of the catholic faith. No, the king is not head of the Church in England." A few minutes later and these monks, dressed in the robes of their order, were swinging in the air. This was one of the crimes committed when the unlawful tiara of the pontiffs was placed unlawfully on the head of a king of England. Other Carthusians were put to death somewhat later.

Meanwhile Henry VIII desired to preserve a balance between papists and heretics. The Roman tribunals struck one side only, but this strange prince gloried in striking both sides at once. An opportunity of doing so occurred. Some anabaptists from the Low Countries were convicted on the 25th of May; two of them were taken to Smithfield and twelve others sent to different cities, where they suffered the punishment by fire. All of them went to death with cheerful hearts.

The turn of the illustrious captives was at hand.

CHAPTER 6
Two Notable Executions
May to September, 1535

Not long after the death of the Carthusians, Cromwell paid More a visit. Henry VIII loved his former chancellor, and desired to save his life. "I am your friend," said Cromwell, "and the king is a good and gracious lord towards you." He then once again invited More to accept the act of parliament which proclaimed the king’s supremacy; and the same steps were taken with Fisher. Both refused what was asked. From that moment the execution of the sentence could not be long delayed. More felt this, and, as soon as the Secretary of State had left him, he took a piece of coal and wrote some verses upon the wall, expressive of the peace of his soul. Henry and his minister seemed however to hesitate. It had not troubled them much to punish a few papists and obscure anabaptists; but to put to death an ex-chancellor of the realm and an old tutor of the king—both personages so
illustrious and so esteemed throughout Christendom—was another thing. Several weeks passed away. It was an act of the pope that hastened the death of these two men. On the 20th of May, Paul III created a certain number of cardinals—John Du Bellay, Contarini, Caracciolo, and lastly, Fisher, bishop of Rochester. The news of this creation burst upon Rome and London like a clap of thunder. Da Casale, Henry’s agent at the papal court, exclaimed that it was offering his master the greatest affront possible; the matter was the talk of the whole city. “Your Holiness has never committed a more serious mistake than this,” said De Casale to the pope. Paul tried to justify himself. As England desired to become reconciled with the Vatican, he said, it seemed to him that he could not do better than nominate an English cardinal. When Fisher heard the news, he said piously, "If the cardinal’s hat were at my feet, I would not stoop to pick it up." But Henry did not take the matter so calmly; he considered the pope’s proceedings as an insolent challenge. Confer the highest honors on a man convicted of treason—is it not encouraging subjects to revolt? Henry seemed to have thought that it would be unnecessary to take away the life of an old man whose end could not be far off; but the pope exasperated him. Since they place Fisher among the cardinals in Rome, in England he shall be counted the dead. Pope Paul may, as long as he likes, send him the hat; but when the hat arrives, there shall be no head on which to place it.

On the 14th of June, 1535, Thomas Bedyll and other officers of justice proceeded to the Tower. The Bishop would give no answer to the demand that he should recognize the king as head of the Church. Sir Thomas More, when questioned in his turn, replied, "My only study is to meditate on Christ’s passion." "Do you acknowledge the king as supreme head of the Church?" asked Bedyll. "The royal supremacy is established by law." "That law is a two-edged sword," returned the ex-chancellor. "If I accept it, it kills my soul; if I reject it, it kills my body."

Three days later the bishop was condemned to be beheaded. When the order for his execution arrived, the prisoner was asleep; they respected his slumber. At five o’clock the next morning, 22nd of June, 1535, Kingston, entering his cell, aroused him and told him that it was the king’s good pleasure he should be executed that morning. "I most humbly thank his Majesty," said the old man, "that he is pleased to relieve me from all the affairs of this world. Grant me only an hour or two more, for I slept very badly last night." Then turning towards the wall, he fell asleep again. Between seven and eight o’clock he called his servant, took off the hair shirt which he wore next his skin to mortify the flesh, and gave it to the man. "Let no one see it," he said. "And now bring me my best clothes." "My lord," said the astonished servant, "does not your lordship know that in two hours you will take them off never to put them on again?" "Exactly so," answered Fisher, "this is my wedding day, and I ought to dress as if for a holiday."

At nine o’clock the lieutenant appeared. The old man—he was about seventy-six years old—took up his New Testament, made the sign of the cross, and left the cell. He was tall, being six feet high, but his body was bent with age, and his weakness so great that he could hardly get down the stairs. He was placed
in an armchair. When the porters stopped near the gate of the Tower to know if the sheriffs were ready, Fisher stood up, and, leaning against the wall, opened his Testament, and, lifting his eyes to heaven, said, "O Lord! I open it for the last time. Grant that I may find some word of comfort to the end that I may glorify Thee in my last hour." The first words he saw were these: And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Fisher closed the book and said, "That will do. Here is learning enough to last me to my life’s end."

The funeral procession was set in motion. Clouds hid the face of the sun; the day was gloomy; the streets through which they passed seemed dull and in harmony with men’s hearts. A large body of armed men surrounded the pious old man, who kept repeating in a low tone the words of his Testament: Hæc est autem vita æterna, ut cognoscant te solum verum Deum et quern misisti Jesum Christum (John 17:3). They reached Smithfield. "We will help you to ascend," said his bearers at the foot of the scaffold. "No, Sirs," he replied, and then added in a cheerful tone, "Come, feet! do your duty, you have not far to go." Just as he mounted the scaffold, the sun burst out and shone upon his face. "They looked unto him and were lightened," he cried, "and their faces were not ashamed." It was ten o’clock. The noble bearing and piety of the aged bishop inspired all around him with respect. The executioner knelt before him and begged his forgiveness. "With all my heart," he made answer. Having laid aside his robe and furled gown, he turned to the people, and said with gravity and joy, "Christians, I give my life for my faith in the holy catholic Church of Christ. I do not fear death. Assist me, however, with your prayers, so that when the axe falls I may remain firm. God save the king and the kingdom!" The brightness of his face at this moment struck the spectators. He fell on his knees and said, "Eternal God, my hope is in Thy deliverance." The executioner approached and bound his eyes. The bishop raised his hands, uttered a cry towards heaven, and laid his head on the block. The doomsman seized his heavy axe, and cut off the head at one blow. It was exposed for a time by Henry’s orders on London Bridge and then thrown into the river; but soldiers carried the body to Barking churchyard, where they dug a lowly grave for it with their halberds. Later, it was removed to St. Peter’s ad vincula in the Tower, where it lies beside that of Sir Thomas More. Doubts have been thrown upon the details of this death; we believe them to be authentic, and it is a pleasure by reporting them to place a crown on the tomb of a Roman Catholic bishop whose end was that of a pious man.

It was now the turn of Sir Thomas More. On the 1st of July, 1535, he was summoned before a special commission and a packed jury. The former Chancellor of England quitted his prison in a frieze cloak, which had grown foul in the dungeon, and proceeded on foot through the most frequented streets of London on his road to Westminster. His thin pale face; his white hair, the effect not of time but of sorrow and imprisonment; the staff on which he leaned, for he walked with difficulty, made a deep impression on the people. When he arrived at the bar of the tribunal, and looked around him, though weakened by suffering, with a countenance full of mildness, all the spectators
were moved. The indictment was long and involved; he was accused of high treason. Sir Thomas, endeavoring to keep on his feet, said, "My Lords, the charges brought against me are so numerous, that I fear, considering my great weakness, I shall be unable to remember them all." He stopped; his body trembled and he was near falling. A chair was brought him, and after taking his seat, he continued, "I have never uttered a single word in opposition to the statute which proclaims the king head of the Church." "If we cannot produce your words," said the king’s attorney, "we can produce your silence." "No one can be condemned for his silence," nobly answered More. "Qui tacet consentire videtur (silence gives consent) according to the lawyers."

Nothing could save him; the jury returned a verdict of guilty. "Now that all is over," said the prisoner, "I will speak. Yes, the oath of supremacy is illegal. The Great Charter laid down that the Church of England is free, so that its rights and liberties might be equally preserved." "The Church must be free," said the lawyers, "it is not therefore the slave of the pope." "Yes, free," retorted More, "it is not therefore the slave of the king." The chancellor then pronounced sentence, condemning him to be hanged and quartered. Henry spared his illustrious subject and old friend from this degrading treatment, and instead ordered that he should be beheaded. "God save all my friends from his Majesty’s favor," said Sir Thomas, "and spare my children from similar indulgences. ... I hope, my lords," said the ex-chancellor, turning meekly towards his judges, "that though you have condemned me on earth, we may all meet hereafter in heaven."

Sir William Kingston approached, armed guards surrounded the condemned man, and the sad procession moved forward. One of the Tower wardens marched in front, bearing an axe with the edge turned towards More; it was a token to the people of the prisoner’s fate. As soon as he crossed the threshold of the court, his son, who was waiting for him, fell at his feet distracted and in tears. "Your blessing, father," he exclaimed, "your blessing!" More raised him up, kissed him tenderly, and blessed him. His daughter Margaret was not there; she had fainted immediately on hearing of her father’s condemnation. He was taken back to prison in a boat, perhaps to withdraw this innocent and illustrious man, treated like a criminal, from the eyes of the citizens of London. When they got near the Tower, the governor, who had until then kept his emotion under, turned to More and bade him farewell, the tears running down his cheeks. "My dear Kingston," said the noble prisoner, "do not weep; we shall meet again in heaven." "Yes!" said the lieutenant of the Tower, adding, "you are consoling me, when I ought to console you." An immense crowd covered the wharf at which the boat was to land. Among this crowd, so eager for the mournful spectacle, was a young woman, trembling with emotion and silently waiting for the procession; it was Margaret. At length she heard the steps of the approaching guards, and saw her father appear. She could not move, her strength failed her; she fell on her knees just where she had stood. Her father, who recognized her at a distance, giving way to the keenest emotions, lifted up his hands and blessed her. This was not enough for Margaret. The blessing had caused a strong emotion in her, and had restored
life to her soul. Regardless of her sex, her age, and the surrounding crowd, that
feeble woman, to whom at this supreme moment filial piety gave the strength
of many men, says a contemporary, rushed towards her father, and bursting
through the officers and halberdiers by whom he was surrounded, fell on his
neck and embraced him, exclaiming, "Father, father!" She could say no more;
grief stopped her voice; she could only weep, and her tears fell on her father’s
bosom. The soldiers halted in emotion; Sir Thomas, the prey at once of the
tenderest love and inexpressible grief, felt as if a sword had pierced his heart.
Recovering himself, however, he blessed his child, and said to her in a voice
whose emotion he strove to conceal, "Daughter, I am innocent; but remember
that however hard the blow with which I am struck, it comes from God. Submit
thy will to the good pleasure of the Lord."
The captain of the escort, wishing to put an end to a scene that might agitate
the people, bade two soldiers take Margaret away; but she clung to her father
with arms that were like bars of iron, and it was with difficulty that she could
be removed. She had been hardly set on the ground a few steps off, when she
sprang up again, and thrusting those who had separated her from him she so
loved, she broke through the crowd once more, fell upon his neck, and kissed
him several times with a convulsive effort. In her, filial love had all the
vehemence of passion. More, whom the sentence of death had not been able to
move, lost all energy, and the tears poured down his cheeks. The crowd
watched this touching scene with deep excitement, and "they were very few in
all the troop who could refrain from weeping; no, not the guards themselves."
Even the soldiers wept, and refused to tear the daughter again from her
father’s arms. Two or three, however, of the less agitated stepped forward and
carried Margaret away. The women of her household, who had accompanied
her, immediately surrounded her and bore her away from a sight of such
inexpressible sadness. The prisoner entered the Tower.
Sir Thomas spent six more days and nights in prison. We hear certainly of his
pious words, but the petty practices of an ascetic seemed to engross him. His
macerations were increased; he walked up and down his cell, wearing only a
winding-sheet, as if he were already a corpse waiting to be buried. He often
scourged himself for a long time together, and with extraordinary violence. Yet
at the same time he indulged in Christian meditations. "I am afflicted," he
wrote to one of his friends, "shut up in a dungeon; but God in His mercy will
soon deliver me from this world of tribulation. Walls will no longer separate us,
and we shall have holy conversations together, which no gaoler will interrupt."
On the 5th of July, desiring to bid his daughter a last farewell, More took a
piece of charcoal (he had nothing else) and wrote to her, "Tomorrow is St.
Thomas’s day, and my saint’s day; accordingly, I desire extremely that it may
be the day of my departure. My child, I never loved you so dearly as when last
you kissed me. I like when daughterly love has no leisure to look unto worldly
courtesy. ... Farewell my dearly beloved daughter; pray for me. I pray for you
all, to the end that we may meet in heaven."
Thus one of the closest and holiest affections, that of a father for his daughter,
and of a daughter for her father, softened the last moments of this
distinguished man. Sir Thomas sent Margaret his hair shirt and scourge, which he desired to conceal from the eyes of the indifferent. What an inheritance! That night he slept quietly, and the next morning early (6th July, 1535) a fortnight after the death of Bishop Fisher, Sir Thomas Pope, one of his familiar friends, came to inform him that he must hold himself in readiness. "I thank the king," said More, "for shutting me up in this prison, whereby he has put me in a condition to make suitable preparation for death. The only favor I beg of him is, that my daughter may be present at my burial." Pope left the cell in tears. Then the prisoner put on a fine silk robe which his wealthy friend Bonvisi, the merchant of Lucca, had given him. "Leave that dress here," said Kingston, "for the man to whom it falls by custom is only a gaoler." "I cannot look upon that man as a gaoler," answered More, "who opens the gates of heaven for me." At nine o'clock the procession quitted the Tower. More was calm, his face pale, his beard long and curly; he carried a crucifix in his hand, and his eyes were often turned towards heaven. A numerous and sympathetic crowd watched him pass along—a man one time so honored, privy-councilor, speaker of the House of Commons, president of the House of Lords—whom armed men were now leading to the scaffold. Just as he was passing in front of a house of mean appearance, a poor woman standing at the door, went up to him and offered him a cup of wine to strengthen him. "Thank you," he said gently, "thank you, Christ drank vinegar only." On arriving at the place of execution, "Give me your hand to help me up," he said to Kingston, adding, "As for my coming down, you may let me shift for myself." He mounted the scaffold. Sir Thomas Pope, at the king's request, had begged him to make no speech, fearing the effect this illustrious man might produce upon the people. More desired however to say a few words, but the sheriff stopped him. "I die," he was content to say, "in the faith of the catholic Church, and a faithful servant of God and the king." He then knelt down and repeated the fifty-first Psalm:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." When he rose up, the executioner begged his forgiveness. "Why do you talk of forgiveness?" replied More, "you are doing me the greatest kindness I ever received from man." He desired the man not to be afraid to do his office, and remarked that his neck was very short. With his own hands he fastened a bandage over his eyes, and then laid his head on the block. The executioner, holding the axe, was preparing to strike, when More stopped him, and, putting his beard carefully on one side, said, "This at least has not committed treason." Such words, almost jesting, no doubt startle us at such a moment, but strong men have often been observed to manifest the calmness of their souls in such a manner. More probably feared that his long beard would embarrass the executioner, and deaden the blow. At length that head fell through which so many noble thoughts had passed; that keen clear eye was closed; those eloquent lips were the lips of a corpse. The head was exposed on London Bridge, and Margaret discharged the painful duty her father had bequeathed her, by piously burying his body.
Thus, at the cost of his life, this eminent man protested against the aberrations of a cruel prince, who usurped the title given by the Bible to Jesus Christ alone. The many evangelical martyrs who had been sacrificed in different countries and who were yet to be sacrificed, showed in general, to a greater extent than Fisher and More, an ardent love for the Savior, a lively hope of eternal life; but none showed greater calmness than they. These two good men wanted discernment as to what constitutes the pure Gospel; their piety bound them too much, as we have said, to monastic practices; they had (and More especially) in the days of their power persecuted the disciples of the Lord, and though they rejected the usurpations of the king, had acted as fanatical defenders of those of the pope. But at a time when there were so many cringing bishops and servile nobles—when almost everyone bent the head timidly before the mad popery of Henry VIII, these two firmly held up theirs. More and Fisher were companions in misfortune with Bilney and Fryth; the same royal hand struck them all. Our sympathies are for the victims, our aversion for the executioner.

The death of these two celebrated men caused an immense sensation. In England, the people and even the nobility were struck with astonishment. Could it be true, men asked, that Thomas More, whom Henry had known since he was nine years old, with whom he used to hold friendly conversations by night on the terrace of his country-house, at whose table he used to love to sit down familiarly, whom he had chosen, although a layman and a knight only, to succeed the powerful Wolsey—could it be true that by the king’s orders he had perished by the axe? Could it be true that Fisher had met with the same fate—that venerable old man of almost fourscore years, who had been his preceptor, the trusty friend of his grandmother, and to whose teaching he owed the progress he had made in learning? Men began to see that resistance to a Tudor meant the scaffold. Everyone trembled, and even those who had not known the two victims could not restrain their tears.

The horror which these executions caused among the enlightened men of the continent was displayed with more liberty and energy. "I am dead," exclaimed Erasmus, "since More is dead; for, as Pythagoras says, we had but one soul between us." "O England! O dearly beloved country," said Reginald Pole, "he was not only Margaret’s father, but thine also!" "This year is fatal to our order," said Melanchthon the reformer, "I hear that More has been killed and others also. You know how such things wring my heart." "We banish such criminals," said Francis I sharply to the English ambassador, "but we do not put them to death." "If I had two such lights in my kingdom," said Charles V, "I would sooner give two of my strongest cities than suffer them to be extinguished." At Rome in particular the anger was extreme. They were still flattering themselves that Henry VIII would return to his old sympathies, but now there was no more hope! The king had put to death a prince of the Church, and as he had sworn, the cardinal’s hat could find no head to wear it. A consistory was immediately summoned; the French Cardinal de Tournon’s touching letter was read, and all who heard it were moved even to tears. The embarrassed and speechless
agents of England knew not what to do, and as they reported, there was everything to be feared.
Perhaps nobody was so much confounded as the pontiff himself. Paul III was circumspect, prudent, deliberative, and temporizing; but when he thought the moment arrived, when he believed further maneuvering was not required, he no longer hesitated, but struck forcibly. It is known that he had two young relations whom, in his blind tenderness, he had created cardinals, notwithstanding their youth and the Emperor’s representations. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "I feel as mortally injured as if my two nephews had been killed before my eyes." His most devoted partisans, and above all a cardinal of his creation put to death! There was a violent movement in his heart; he worked himself into a fury; he desired to strike the prince whose cruel deeds had wounded him so deeply. His anger burst out in a thunderclap. On the 30th of August he sanctioned a bull worthy of Gregory VII, which the more zealous partisans of the papacy would like to remove from the papal records. "Let King Henry repent of his crimes," said the pontiff, "we give him ninety days and his accomplices sixty to appear at Rome. In case of default, we strike him with the sword of anathema, of malediction, and of eternal damnation; we take away his kingdom from him; we declare that his body shall be deprived of ecclesiastical burial; we launch an interdict against his States; we release his subjects from their oath of fidelity; we call upon all dukes, marquises and earls to expel him and his accomplices from England; we unbind all Christian princes from their oaths towards him, command them to march against him and constrain him to return to the obedience due to the Holy Apostolic See, giving them all his goods for their reward, and he and his to be their slaves."
Anger had the same effect upon the pontiff as inebriety; he had lost the use of his reason, and allowed himself to be carried away to threats and excesses of which he would have been ashamed, had he been sober. Accordingly the drunkenness was hardly over before the unfortunate Paul hastened to hide his bull, and carefully laid aside his thunderbolts in the arsenal, free to bring them out later.
Henry VIII, more calm than the pope, having heard of his discontent, feared to push him to extremities, and Cromwell, a month after the date of the bull, instructed Da Casale to justify the king to the Vatican. "Fisher and More," he was to say, "had on all points of the internal policy of England come to conclusions diametrically opposed to the quiet and prosperity of the kingdom. They had held secret conversations with certain men notorious for their audacity, and had poured into the hearts of these wretches the poison which they had first prepared in their own. Could we permit their crime, spreading wider and wider, to give a death-blow to the State? Fisher and More alone opposed laws which had been accepted by the general consent of the people, and were necessary to the prosperity of the kingdom. Our mildest of sovereigns could not longer tolerate an offense so atrocious."
Even these excuses accuse and condemn Henry. Neither More nor Fisher had entered into a plot against the State; their resistance had been purely religious; they were free to act according to their consciences. It might have
been necessary to take some prudential measures in an age as yet little fitted for liberty, but nothing could excuse the scaffold, erected by the king’s orders, for men who were regarded with universal respect.

CHAPTER 7
The Dissolution of the Smaller Monasteries
September, 1535 to 1536

The death of the late tutor and friend of the prince was to be followed by a measure less cruel but far more general. The pope who treated kings so rudely should not be surprised if kings treated the monks severely. Henry knew—had indeed been a close witness—of their lazy and often irregular lives. One day, when he was hunting in the forest of Windsor, he lost his way, perhaps intentionally, and about the dinner hour knocked at the gate of Reading Abbey. As he represented himself to be one of his Majesty’s guards, the abbot said, "You will dine with me"; and the king sat down to a table covered with abundant and delicate dishes. After examining everything carefully, "I will stick to this sir-loin," said he, pointing to a piece of beef of which he ate heartily. The abbot looked on with admiration. "I would give a hundred pounds," he exclaimed, "to eat with as much appetite as you; but alas! my weak and squeazie (qualmish) stomach can hardly digest the wing of a chicken." "I know how to bring back your appetite," thought the king. A few days later some soldiers appeared at the abbey, took away the abbot, and shut him up in the Tower, where he was put upon bread and water. "What have I done," he kept asking, "to incur his Majesty’s displeasure to such a degree?" After a few weeks, Henry went to the state prison, and, concealing himself in an ante-room whence he could see the abbot, ordered a sirloin of beef to be set before him. The famished monk in his turn fell upon the joint, and (according to tradition) ate it all. The king now showed himself. "Sir abbot," he said, "I have cured you of your qualms; now pay me my wages. It is a hundred pounds, you know." The abbot paid and returned to Reading, but Henry never after forgot the monks’ kitchen.

The state of the monasteries was an occasion of scandal; all religious life had largely died out in most of those establishments. The monks lived, generally, in idleness, gluttony, and licentiousness, and what should have been houses of saints had become in many cases mere sties of lazy gormandizers and impure sensualists. "The only law they recognize," said Luther, speaking of these cloisters, "is that of the seven deadly sins." History encounters here a twofold danger; one is that of keeping back what is essential, the scandalous facts that justified the suppression of monasteries; the other is that of saying things that cannot be named. We must strive to steer between these two quicksands. All classes of society had become disgusted with the monasteries; the common people would say to the monks, "We labor painfully, while you lead easy and comfortable lives." The nobility regarded them with looks of envy and irony which threatened their wealth. The lawyers considered them as parasitical plants which drew away from others the nutriment they required. These things
made the religious orders cry out with alarm, "If we no longer have the pope to protect us, it is all over with us and our monasteries." And they set to work to prevent Henry from separating from the pope; they circulated anonymous stories, seditious songs, trivial lampoons, frightful prophecies and biting satires against the king, Anne Boleyn, and the friends of the Reformation. They held mysterious interviews with the discontented, and took advantage of the confessional to alarm the weak-minded. "The supremacy of the pope," they said, "is a fundamental article of the faith; none who reject it can be saved." People began to fear a general revolt.

When Luther was informed that Henry VIII had abolished the authority of the pope in his kingdom, but had suffered the religious orders to remain, he smiled at the blunder. "The king of England," he said, "weakens the body of the papacy but at the same time strengthens the soul." That could not endure for long. Cromwell had now attained high honors and was to mount higher still. He thought with Luther that the pope and the monks could not exist or fall one without the other. After the abolition of the rule of the Roman pontiff, it became necessary to abolish the monasteries. It was he who had prevailed on the king to take the place of head of the Church, and now he wished him to be so really. "Sire," he said to Henry, "cleanse the Lord's field from all the weeds that stifle the good corn, and scatter everywhere the seeds of virtue. In 1525, 1528, 1531, and 1534 the popes themselves lent you their help in the suppression of monasteries; now you no longer require their aid. Do not hesitate, Sire—the most fanatical enemies of your supreme authority are to be found in the religious houses. There is buried the wealth necessary to the prosperity of the nation. The revenues of the religious orders are far greater than those of all the nobility of England. The cloister schools have fallen into decay, and the wants of the age require better ones. To suppress the pope and to keep the monks is like deposing the general and delivering the fortresses of the country up to his army. Sire, imitate the example of the protestants and suppress the monasteries."

Such language alarmed the friends of the papacy, who stoutly opposed a scheme which they believed to be sacrilegious. "These foundations were consecrated to Almighty God," they told the king, "respect therefore those retreats where pious souls live in contemplation." "Contemplation!" said Sir Henry Colt, smiling, "tomorrow, Sire, I undertake to produce proofs of the kind of contemplation in which these monks indulge." Whereupon, says a historian, Colt, knowing that a certain number of the monks of Waltham Abbey had a fondness for the conversation of ladies, and used to pass the night with the nuns of Chesham Convent, went to a narrow path through which the monks would have to pass on their return, and stretched across it one of the stout nets used in stag hunting. Towards daybreak, as the monks, lantern in hand, were making their way through the wood, they suddenly heard a loud noise behind them—it was caused by men whom Colt had stationed for the purpose—and instantly blowing out their lights they were hurrying away, when they fell into the toils prepared for them. The next morning, he presented them to the king, who laughed heartily at their piteous looks. "I have often seen better
game," he said, "but never fatter. Certainly," he added, "I can make a better use of the money which the monks waste in their debaucheries. The coast of England requires to be fortified, my fleet and army to be increased, and harbors to be built for the commerce which is extending every day. All that is well worth the trouble of suppressing houses of impurity."
The protectors of the religious orders were not discouraged, and maintained that it was not necessary to shut all the monasteries, because of a few guilty houses.

Dr. Layton, a former officer of Wolsey, proposed a middle course: "Let the king order a general visitation of monasteries," he said, "and in this way he will learn whether he ought to secularize them or not. Perhaps the mere fear of this inspection will incline the monks to yield to his Majesty’s desires." Henry charged Cromwell with the execution of this measure, and for that purpose he at once used him as his vicar-general, conferring on him all the ecclesiastical authority which belonged to the king. "You will visit all the churches," he said, "even the metropolitan, whether the see be vacant or not; all the monasteries both of men and women; and you will correct and punish whoever may be found guilty." Henry gave to his vicar precedence over all the peers, and decided that the layman should preside over the assembly of the clergy instead of the primate; overlook the administration not only of the bishops but also of the archbishops; confirm or annul the election of prelates, deprive or suspend them, and assemble synods. This was at the beginning of September 1535. The influence of the laity thus re-entered the Church, but not through the proper door. They came forward in the name of the king and his proclamations, whilst they ought to have appeared in the name of Christ and of His Word. The king informed the primate, and through him all the bishops and archdeacons, that as the general visitation was about to commence, they should no longer exercise their jurisdiction. The astonished prelates made representations, but they were unavailing: they and their sees were to be inspected by laymen. The monks began to tremble. Faith in the religious houses no longer existed—not even in the houses themselves. Confidence in monastic practices, relics, and pilgrimages had grown weaker; the timbers of the monasteries were worm-eaten, their walls were just ready to fall, and the edifice of the Middle Ages, tottering on its foundations, was unable to withstand the hearty blows dealt against it. When an antiquary explores some ancient sepulchre, he often comes upon a skeleton, apparently well preserved, but crumbling into dust at the slightest touch of the finger; in like manner the puissant hand of the sixteenth century had only to touch most of these monastic institutions to reduce them to powder. The real dissolver of the religious orders was neither Henry VIII nor Cromwell; it was the devouring worm which, for years and centuries, they had carried in their bosom.

The vicar-general appointed his commissioners and then assembled them as a commander-in-chief calls his generals together. In the front rank was Dr. Richard Layton, his old comrade in Wolsey’s household, a skillful man who knew the ground well and did not forget his own interests. After him came Dr. John London, Warden of New College, a man of unparalleled activity, but
without character and a weather cock, turning to every wind. With him was Sir Richard Cromwell, nephew of the vicar-general, an upright man, though desirous of making his way through his uncle’s influence. He was the ancestor of another Cromwell, far more celebrated than Henry VIII’s vice-gerent. Other two were Dr. Thomas Legh and Dr. John Rice, the most daring of the colleagues of the king’s ministers, besides other individuals of well-known ability. The vice-gerent handed to them the instructions for their guidance, the questions they were to put to the monks, and the injunctions they were to impose on the abbots and priors, after which they separated on their mission.

The Universities, which sadly needed a reform, were not overlooked by Henry and his representative. Since the time when Garret, the priest of a London parish, circulated the New Testament at Oxford, the sacred volume had been banished from that city, as well as the *Beggars’ Supplication* and other evangelical writings. Slumber had followed the awakening. The members of the university, especially certain ecclesiastics who, forsaking their parishes, had come and settled at Oxford, “to enjoy the delights of Capua,” passed their lives in idleness and sensuality. The royal Commissioners aroused them from this torpor. They dethroned Duns Scotus, “the subtle doctor,” who had reigned there for three hundred years, and the leaves of his books were scattered to the winds. Scholasticism fell; new lectures were established; philosophical teaching, the natural sciences, Latin, Greek, and divinity were extended and developed. The students were forbidden to haunt taverns, and the priests who had come to Oxford to enjoy life were sent back to their parishes.

The visitation of the monasteries began with those of Canterbury, the primatial church of England. In October 1535, shortly after Michaelmas, Dr. Layton, the Visitor, entered the cathedral, and Archbishop Cranmer went up into the pulpit. He had seen Rome; he had an intimate conviction that that city exerted a mischievous influence over all Christendom; he desired, as primate, to take advantage of this important opportunity to break publicly with her. “No,” he said, “the bishop of Rome is not God’s vicar. In vain you will tell me that the See of Rome is called *Sancta Sedes*, and its bishop entitled *Sanctissimus Papa*; the pope’s holiness is but a holiness in name. Vain-glory, worldly pomp, unchaste living and vices innumerable prevail in Rome. I have seen it with my own eyes. The pope claims by his ceremonies to forgive men their sins—it is a serious error. One work only blots them out, namely, the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. So long as the See of Rome endures, there will be no remedy for the evils which overwhelm us. These many years I have daily prayed unto God that I might see the power of Rome destroyed.” Language so frank necessarily displeased the adherents of the pope, and accordingly, when Cranmer alluded to his energetic daily prayer, the Superior of the Dominicans, trembling with excitement, exclaimed: “What a want of charity!”

He was not the only person struck with indignation and fear. As soon as the sermon was over, the Dominicans assembled to prevent the archbishop from carrying out his intentions. “We must support the papacy,” they said, “but do it prudently.” The prior was selected, as being the most eloquent of the brothers, to reply to Cranmer. Going into the pulpit, he said, “The Church of Christ has
never erred. The laws which it makes are equal in authority to the laws of God Himself. I do not know a single bishop of Rome who can be reproached with vice." Evidently the prior, however eloquent he might be, was not learned in the history of the Church.

The visitation of the Canterbury monasteries began. The immorality of most of these houses was manifested by scandalous scenes, and gave rise to questions which we are forced to suppress. The abominable vices that prevailed in them are mentioned by St. Paul in his description of the pagan corruptions (Romans 1). The Commissioners having taken their seats in one of the halls of the Augustine monastery, all the monks came before them, some embarrassed, others bold, but most of them careless. Strange questions were then put to men who declared themselves consecrated to a devout and contemplative life. "Are there any among you," asked the Commissioners, "who, disguising themselves, leave the convent and go vagabondizing about? Do you observe the vow of chastity, and has anyone been convicted of incontinence? Do women enter the monastery, or live in it habitually?" We omit the questions that followed. The result was scandalous; eight of the brothers were convicted of abominable vices. The black sheep having been set apart for punishment, Layton called the other monks together, and said to them, "True religion does not consist in shaving the head, silence, fasting, and other observances; but in uprightness of soul, purity of life, sincere faith in Christ, brotherly love, and the worship of God in spirit and in truth. Do not rest content with ceremonies, but rise to sublimer things, and be converted from all these outward practices to inward and deep considerations."

One visitation still more distressing followed this. The Carthusian monastery at Canterbury, four monks of which had died piously, contained several rotten members. Some of them used to put on lay dresses, and leave the convent during the night. There was one house for monks and another for nuns, and the blacksmith of the monastery confessed that a monk had asked him to file away a bar of the window which separated the two cloisters. It was the duty of the monks to confess the nuns; but by one of those refinements of corruption which mark the lowest degree of vice, the sin and absolution often followed close upon each other. Some nuns begged the Visitors not to permit certain monks to enter their house again.

The visitation being continued through Kent, the Visitors came on the 22nd of October to Langdon Abbey, near Dover. William Dyck, abbot of the monastery of the Holy Virgin, possessed a very bad reputation. Layton, who was determined to surprise him, ordered his attendants to surround the abbey in such a manner that no one could leave it. He then went to the abbot’s house, which looked upon the fields, and was full of doors and windows by which anyone could escape. Layton began to knock loudly, but no one answered. Observing an axe, he took it up, dashed in the door with it, and entered. He found a woman with the monk, and the visitors discovered in a chest the men’s clothes which she put on when she wished to pass for one of the younger brethren. She escaped, but one of Cromwell’s servants caught her and took her before the mayor at Dover, where she was placed in the cage. As for the holy
father abbot, says Layton, he was put in prison. A few of the monks signed an act by which they declared that their house being threatened with utter ruin, temporal and spiritual, the king alone could find a remedy, and they consequently surrendered it to his Majesty. The abbot of Fountains had ruined his abbey by publicly keeping six women. One night he took away the golden crosses and jewels belonging to the monastery, and sold them to a jeweler for a small sum. At Mayden-Bradley, Layton found another father prior, one Richard, who had five women, six sons, and a daughter pensioned on the property of the monastery; his sons, tall, stout young men, lived with him and waited on him. Seeing that the Roman Church prohibited the clergy from obeying the commandment of Scripture, which says, *A bishop must be the husband of one wife*, these wretched men took five or six. The impositions of the monks to extort money injured them in public opinion far more than their debauchery. Layton found in St. Anthony’s house at Bristol a tunic of our Lord, a petticoat of the Virgin, a part of the Last Supper, and a fragment of the stone upon which Jesus was born at Bethlehem. All these brought in money. Every religious and moral sentiment is disgusted at hearing of the disorders and frauds of the monks, and yet the truth of history requires that they should be made known. Here is one of the means—of the blasphemous means—they employed to deceive the people. At Hales in Gloucestershire, the monks pretended that they had some of Christ’s blood preserved in a bottle. The man whose deadly sins God had not yet pardoned could not see it, they said; while the absolved sinner saw it instantaneously. Thousands of penitents crowded thither from all parts. If a rich man confessed to the priest and laid his gift on the altar, he was conducted into the mysterious chapel, where the precious vessel stood in a magnificent case. The penitent knelt down and looked, but saw nothing. “Your sin is not yet forgiven,” said the priest. Then came another confession, another offering, another introduction into the sanctuary; but the unfortunate man opened his eyes in vain, he could see nothing until his contribution satisfied the monks. The Commissioners, having sent for the vessel, found it to be “a crystal very thick on one side and very transparent on the other.” “You see, my lords,” said a candid monk, “when a rich penitent appears, we turn the vessel on the thick side; that, you know, opens his heart and his purse.” The transparent side did not appear until he had placed a large donation on the altar. No discovery produced a greater sensation in England than that of the practices employed at Boxley in Kent. It possessed a famous crucifix, the image on which, carved in wood, gave an affirmative nod with the head if the offering was accepted, winked the eyes, and bent the body. If the offering was too small, the indignant figure turned away its head and made a sign of disapproval. One of the Commissioners took down the crucifix from the wall, and discovered the pipes which carried the wires that the priestly conjuror was wont to pull. Having put the machine in motion, he said, “You see what little account the monks have made of us and our forefathers.” The monks trembled with shame and alarm, while the spectators, says the record, roared with
laughter, like Ajax. The king sent for the machine, and had it worked in the presence of the court. The figure rolled its eyes, opened its mouth, turned up its nose, let its head fall, and bent its back. "Upon my word," said the king, "I do not know whether I ought not to weep rather than laugh, on seeing how the poor people of England have been fooled for so many centuries."

These vile tricks were the least of the sins of the monks. In several monasteries the Visitors found implements for coining base money. In others they discovered traces of the horrible cruelties practiced by the monks of one faction against those of another. Descending into the gloomy dungeons, they perceived, by the help of their torches, the bones of a great number of wretched people, some of whom had died of hunger and others had been crucified. But debauchery was the most frequent offense. Those pretended priests of a God who has said, Be ye holy, for I the Lord am holy, covered themselves with the hypocritical mantle of their priesthood, and indulged in infamous impurities. They discovered one monk, who, turning auricular confession to an abominable purpose, had carried adultery into two or three hundred families. The list was exhibited, and some of the Commissioners, to their great astonishment, says a contemporary writer, found the names of their own wives upon it.

There were sometimes riots, sieges, and battles. The royal Commissioners arrived at Norton Abbey in Cheshire, the abbots of which were notorious for having carried on a scandalous traffic with the monastic plate. On the last day of their visit, the abbot sent out his monks to muster his supporters, and collected a band of two or three hundred men, who surrounded the monastery to prevent the Commissioners from carrying anything away. The latter took refuge in a tower, which they barricaded. It was two hours past midnight; the abbot had ordered an ox to be killed to feed his rabble, seated round the fires in front of the monastery, and even in the courtyard. On a sudden Sir Piers Dulton, a justice of the peace, arrived, and fell with his posse upon the monks and their defenders. The besiegers were struck with terror, and ran off as fast as they could, hiding themselves among the fish ponds and in the outhouses. The abbot and three canons, the instigators of the riot, were imprisoned in Halton Castle.

Be it said that the king’s Commissioners met with houses of another character. When George Gifford was visiting the monasteries of Lincolnshire, he came to a lonely district, abounding in water but very poor, where the abbey of Woolstrop was situated. The inhabitants of the neighborhood, notwithstanding their destitution, praised the charity of the recluses. Entering the house, Gifford found an honest prior and some pious monks, who copied books, made their own clothes, and practiced the arts of embroidering, carving, painting, and engraving. The Visitor petitioned the king for the preservation of this monastery.

The Commissioners had particular instructions for the women’s convents. "Is your house perfectly closed?" they asked the abbess and the nuns. "Can a man get into it? Are you in the habit of writing love letters?" At Lichfield the nuns declared that there was no disorder in the convent, but one good old woman.
told everything, and when Layton reproached the prioress for her falsehood, she replied, "Our religion compels us to it. At our admission we swore never to reveal the secret sins that were committed among us." There were some houses in which nearly all the nuns trampled under foot the most sacred duties of their sex, and were without mercy for the unhappy fruits of their disorders. Such were frequently in those times the monastic orders of the West. The eloquent apologists who eulogize their virtues without distinction, and the exaggerating critics who pronounce the same sentence of condemnation against all are both mistaken. We have rendered homage to the monks who were upright; we may blame those who were guilty. The scandals, let us say, did not proceed from the founders of these orders. Sentiments, opposed beyond a doubt to the principles of the Gospel, although they were well-intentioned, had presided over the formation of the monasteries. The hermits Paul, Anthony, and others of the third and fourth centuries gave themselves up to an anti-evangelical asceticism, but still they struggled courageously against temptation. However, one must be very ignorant not to see that corruption must eventually issue from monastic institutions. Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up, is the language of the Gospel.

We do not exaggerate. The monasteries were sometimes an asylum in which men and women, whose hearts had been wrecked in the tempests of life, sought a repose which the world did not offer. They were mistaken; they ought to have lived with God, but in the midst of society. And yet there is a pleasure in believing that behind those walls, which hid so much corruption, there were some elect souls who loved God. Such were found at Catesby, at Godstow, near Oxford, and in other places. The Visitors asked for the preservation of these houses.

If the visitation of the religious houses was a bitter draught to many of the inmates, it was a cup of joy to the greater number. Many monks and nuns had been put into them during their infancy, and were detained in them against their will. No one ought to be forced, according to Cromwell’s principles. When the visitation took place, the Visitors announced to every monk under twenty-four years of age, and to every nun under twenty-one, that they might go free. Almost all to whom the doors were thus opened hastened to profit by it. A secular dress was given them, with some money, and they departed with pleasure. But great was the sorrow among many whose age exceeded the limit. Falling on their knees, they entreated the Commissioners to obtain a similar favour for them. "The life we lead here," they said, "is contrary to our conscience."

The Commissioners returned to London, and made their report to the Council. They were distressed and disgusted. "We have discovered," they said, "not seven, but more than seven hundred thousand deadly sins. ... These abominable monks are the ravenous wolves whose coming Christ has announced, and who under sheep’s clothing devour the flock. Here are the confessions of the monks and nuns, subscribed with their own hands. This book may well be called The Book of God’s Judgment. The monasteries are so full of
iniquity that they ought to fall down under such a weight. If there be here and there any innocent cloister, they are so few in number that they cannot save the others. Our hearts melt and all our limbs tremble at the thought of the abominations we have witnessed. O Lord! what wilt Thou answer to the five cities which Thou didst consume by fire, when they remind Thee of the iniquities of those monks, with whom Thou hast so long borne? The eloquence of Ptolemy, the memory of Pliny, and the pen of St. Augustine would not be able to give us the detestable history of these abominations." The Council began to deliberate, and many of the members called for the secularization of a part of the monasteries. The partisans of the religious orders took up their defense, and acknowledged that there was room for reform. "But," they added, "will you deprive of all asylum the pious souls who desire to quit the world, and lead a devout life to the glory of their Maker?" They tried even to invalidate in some points the testimony of the Visitors, but the latter declared that, far from having recorded lightly those scandalous facts, they had excluded many. Men of influence supported the Commissioners’ conclusions; a few members of the Council were inclined to indulgence; even Cromwell seemed disposed to attempt the reform of whatever was susceptible of improvement; but many believed that all amendment was impossible. "We must, above all things, diminish the wealth of the clergy," said Dr. Cox, "for so long as they do not imitate the poverty of Christ, the people will not follow their teaching. I have no doubt," he added, with a touch of irony, "that the bishops, priests, and monks will readily free themselves from the heavy burden of wealth of every kind, which renders the fulfillment of their spiritual duties impossible." Other reasons were alleged. "The income of the monasteries," said one of the privy-councilors, "amounts to 500,000 ducats, while that of all the nobility of England is only 380,000. This disproportion is intolerable, and must be put an end to. For the welfare of his subjects and of the Church, the King should increase the number of bishoprics, parishes, and hospitals. He must augment the forces of the State, and prepare to resist the Emperor, whose fleets and armies threaten us. Shall we ask the people for taxes, who have already so much trouble to get a living, while the monks continue to consume their wealth in laziness and debauchery? It would be monstrous injustice. The treasures which the religious houses derive from the nation ought no longer to be useless to the nation."

In February 1536, this serious matter was laid before Parliament. It was Thomas Cromwell whose heavy hand struck these receptacles of impurity, and whom men called "the hammer of the monks," who proposed this great reform. He laid on the table of the Commons that famous Black Book, in which were inscribed the misdeeds of the religious orders, and desired that it should be read to the House. The book is no longer in existence; it was destroyed in the reign of Queen Mary by those who had an interest in its suppression. But it was then opened before the Parliament of England. There had never before been such a reading in any assembly. The facts were clearly recorded; the most detestable enormities were not veiled; the horrible confessions of the monks, signed with their own hands, were exhibited to the members of the Commons. The recital produced an extraordinary effect. Men had had no idea of such
abominable scandals. The House was horror-stricken, and "Down with them, down with them!" was shouted on every side.

The debate commenced. Personally, the members were generally interested in the preservation of the monasteries; most of them had some connection with one cloister or another; priors and other heads had relations and friends in Parliament. Nevertheless the condemnation was general, and men spoke of those monkish sanctuaries as, in former times, men had spoken of the priests of Jezebel: "Let us pull down their houses, and overturn their altars." There were, however, some objections. Twenty-eight abbots, heads of the great monasteries, were entitled to sit as barons in the Upper House; these were respected. Besides, the great monasteries were less disorderly than the small ones. Cromwell restricted himself for the moment to the suppression of 372 cloisters, in each of which the annual income was less than £200. The abbots, flattered by the exception made in their favor, were silent, and even the bishops hardly cared to defend institutions which had long been withdrawn from their authority. "These monasteries," said Cromwell, "being the dishonor of religion, and all the attempts, repeated through more than two centuries, having shown that their reformation is impossible, the King, as supreme head of the Church under God, proposes to the Lords and Commons, and these agree, that the possessions of the said houses shall cease to be wasted for the maintenance of sin, and shall be converted to better uses."

There was immediately a great commotion throughout England. Some rejoiced, while others wept; superstition became active, and weak minds believed everything that was told them. "The Virgin," they were assured, "had appeared to certain monks, and ordered them to serve her as they had hitherto done." "What! no more religious houses," exclaimed others, through their tears. "On the contrary," said Latimer, "look at that man and woman living together piously, tranquilly, in the fear of God, keeping His Word and active in the duties of their calling—they form a religious house, one that is truly acceptable to God. Pure religion consists not in wearing a hood, but in visiting the fatherless and the widows, and keeping ourselves unspotted from the world. What has hitherto been called a religious life was an unreligious life; yea, rather an hypocrisy." "And yet," said the devout, "the monks had more holiness than those who live in the world." To this Latimer replied, "When St. Anthony lived in the desert on bread and water, and thought himself the most holy of men, he asked God who should be his companion in heaven, if it were possible for him to have one. 'Go to Alexandria,' said the Lord, 'in such a street and house you will find him.' Anthony left the desert, sought the house, and found a poor cobbler in his shop mending old shoes. The saint took up his abode with him, that he might learn by what mortifications the cobbler had made himself worthy of such great celestial honor. Every morning the poor man knelt down in prayer with his wife, and then went to work. When the dinner-hour arrived, he sat down at a table on which were bread and cheese; he gave thanks, ate his meal with joy, brought up his children in the fear of God, and faithfully discharged all his duties. At this sight, St. Anthony looked inwards, became
contrite of heart, and put away his pride. Such is the new sort of religious houses," added Latimer, "that we desire to have now."
And yet, strange to say, Latimer, now bishop of Worcester, was almost the only person among the Evangelicals who raised his voice in favor of the religious bodies. He feared that if the property of the monasteries passed into the greedy hands of Henry’s courtiers, the tenants, accustomed to the mild treatment of the abbots, would be oppressed by the lay landlords, desirous of realizing the fruits of their estate unto the very last drop. Hence he was anxious that a few monasteries should be preserved as houses of study, prayer, hospitality, charity, and preaching. Cranmer, who had more discernment and a more practical spirit, had no hope of the monks. "Satan," he said, "lives in the monasteries; he is satisfied and at his ease, like a gentleman in his inn, and the monks and nuns are his very humble servants." The primate, however, took little if any part in this great measure. His episcopal jurisdiction was suspended while the business was in hand, and he could do no other than acquiesce in the work of the Vicar-General.
The Bill for the suppression of the monasteries was introduced into the House of Commons on the 11th of March, 1536. The confiscated wealth of the monasteries was taken by the Crown. The possessions hitherto employed by a few to gratify their carnal appetites seemed destined to contribute to the prosperity of the whole nation.
Unhappily, the shameless cupidity of the monks was replaced by a cupidity of a different nature. Petitions poured in to Cromwell from every quarter. The saying of Scripture was fulfilled, Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Thomas Cobham, brother of Lord Cobham, represented that the Grey Friars’ house at Canterbury was in a convenient position for him, that it was the city where he was born, and where all his friends lived. He consequently asked that it should be given him, and Cranmer, whose niece he had married, supported the prayer. "My good Lord," said Lord-Chancellor Audley, "my only salary is that of the chancellorship; give me a few good houses; I will give you my friendship during my life, and twenty pounds sterling for your trouble." "My specially dear Lord," said Sir Thomas Eliot, "I have been the king’s ambassador at Rome; my services deserve some recompense. Pray his Majesty to grant me some of the suppressed monastic lands. I will give your lordship the income of the first year."
History has to record evils of another nature. Some of the finest libraries in England were destroyed, and works of great value sold for a trifle. Friends of learning on the continent bought many of them, and carried away whole shiploads. One man changed his religion for the sake of a piece of abbey land. Some persons had imagined that the suppression of the monasteries would lead to the abolition of taxes and subsidies, but it was not so, and the nation found itself burdened with a new need to make provision for the poor, in addition to the ordinary taxes. There were, however, more worthy cases than those of the king and his courtiers. "Most dread, mighty, and noble prince," wrote the lord-mayor of London to the king, "give orders that the three city hospitals shall henceforward subserve not the pleasures of those canons, priests, and monks,
whose dirty and disgusting bodies encumber our streets, but be used for the comfort of the sick and blind, the aged and crippled."

The Act of Parliament suppressing the poorer religious houses was immediately carried out. The earl of Sussex, Sir John St. Clair, Anthony Fitzherbert, Richard Cromwell, and several other Commissioners, traveled through England and made known to the religious communities the statutory dissolution. The voice of truth was heard from a small number of monasteries. "Assuredly," said the Lincolnshire Franciscans, "the perfection of Christian life does not consist in wearing a gray frock, in disguising ourselves in strange fashion, in bending the body and nodding the head, and in wearing a girdle full of knots. The true Christian life has been divinely manifested to us in Christ, and for that reason we submit with one consent to the king's orders." The monks of the house of St. Andrew at Northampton acknowledged to the Commissioners that they had taken the habit of the order to live in comfortable idleness and not by virtuous labor, and had indulged in continual drunkenness, and in carnal and voluptuous appetites. "We have covered the gospel of Christ with shame," they said. "Now, seeing the gulf of everlasting fire gaping to swallow us up and impelled by the stings of our conscience, we humble ourselves with lowly repentance, and pray for pardon, giving up ourselves and our monastery to our sovereign king and lord."

But they did not all use the same language. There was a ceaseless movement in the cloisters; bursts of sorrow and fear, of anger and despair. What! No more monasteries! No more religious pomps! No more gossip! No more refectory! Those halls, wherein their predecessors had paced for centuries, those chapels in which they had worshipped kneeling on the pavement, were to be converted to vulgar uses. A few monasteries endeavored to bribe Cromwell. "If you save our house," said the abbot of Peterborough, "I will reward the king and you well." But Cromwell had conceived a great national measure, and wished to carry it out. Neither the eloquence of the monks, their prayers, their promises, nor their money could move him.

Some of the abbots set themselves in open revolt against the king, but were forced to submit at last. The old halls, the long galleries, the narrow cells of the religious houses became emptier from day to day. The monks received a pension in proportion to their age. Those who desired to continue in the religious life were sent to the large monasteries. Many were dismissed with a few shillings for their journey and a new gown. "As for you," said the Commissioners to the young monks under twenty-five, "you must earn a living by the work of your hands." The same rule was applied to the nuns.

There was great suffering at this period. The inhabitants of the cloisters were strangers in the world; England was to them an unknown land. Monks and nuns might be seen wandering from door to door, seeking an asylum for the night. Many, who were young then, grew old in beggary. Their sin had been great, and so was their chastisement. Some of the monks fell into a gloomy melancholy, even into frightful despair; the remembrance of their faults pursued them; God's judgment terrified them; the sight of their miseries infuriated them. "I am like Esau," said one of them, "I shall be eternally damned." And he strangled
himself with his collar. Another stabbed himself with a penknife. Some compassionate people having deprived him of the power of injuring himself, he exclaimed with rage, "If I cannot die in this manner, I shall easily find another," and taking a piece of paper, he wrote on it, "The king oppresses his people like a tyrant." This he placed in one of the church books, where it was found by a parishioner, who in great alarm called out to the persons around him. The monk, full of hope that he would be brought to trial, drew near and said, "It was I who did it; here I am; let them put me to death."

Erelong those gloomy clouds, which seemed to announce a day of storms, appeared to break. There were tempests afterwards, but, speaking generally, England found in this energetic act one of the sources of her greatness, instead of the misfortunes with which she was threatened. At the moment when greedy eyes began to covet the revenues of Cambridge and Oxford, a recollection of the pleasant days of his youth was awakened in Henry’s mind. "I will not permit the wolves around me," he said, "to fall upon the universities." Indeed, the wealth of a few monasteries was employed in the foundation of new schools, and particularly of Trinity College, Cambridge, and these institutions helped to spread throughout England the lights of the Renaissance and of the Reformation. An eloquent voice was heard from those antique halls, saying, "O most invincible prince, great is the work that you have begun. Christ had laid the foundation; the apostles raised the building. But alas! barren weeds had overrun it; the papal tyranny had bowed all heads beneath its yoke. Now, you have rejected the pope; you have banished the race of monks. What more can we ask for? We pray that those houses of cenobites, where an ignorant swarm of drones was wont to buzz, should behold in their academic halls a generous youth, eager to be taught, and learned men to teach them. Let the light which has been restored to us spread its rays far and wide and kindle other torches, so that the darkness may be put to flight by the dawn of a new day."

It was not learning alone that gained by the suppression of the monasteries. Monastic wealth, hitherto useless, helped to strengthen England’s defenses and to build up her navy. At the same time, by the Reformation the moral force of the nation gained even more than the material force. The abolition of the papacy restored to the people that national unity which Rome had taken away, and England, freed from subjection to a foreign power, could oppose her enemies with a sword of might and a front of iron.

Political economy, rural economy, all that concerns the collection and distribution of wealth, then took a start that nothing has been able to check. The estates, taken from the easy-going monks, produced riches. The king and the nobility, desirous of deriving the greatest gain possible from the domains that had fallen to them, endeavored to improve agriculture. Many men, until that time useless, electrified by the movement of minds, sought the means of existence. The Reformation, from which the nation expected only purity of doctrine, helped to increase the general prosperity, industry, commerce, and navigation. The poor remembered that God had commanded man to eat his bread, not in the shade of the monasteries, but in the sweat of his brow. To this epoch we must ascribe the origin of those mercantile enterprises, of those
long and distant voyages which were to be one day the strength of Great Britain. Henry VIII was truly the father of Elizabeth.

Moral, social, and political development was no less a gainer by the order that was established. At the first moment, no doubt, England presented the appearance of a vast chaos, but from that chaos there sprang a new world. Forces which had hitherto been buried in obscure cells were employed for the good of society. The men who had been dwelling carelessly within or without the cloister walls, and had expended all their activity in listlessly giving or listlessly receiving alms, were violently shaken by the blows from the *Malleus monachorum* (the hammer of the monks); they aroused themselves, and made exertions which turned to the public good. Their children, and especially their grandchildren, became useful citizens. The third estate appeared. The population of the cloisters was transformed into an active and intelligent middle class. The very wealth acquired, it is true greedily, by the nobility, secured them an independence, which enabled them to oppose a salutary counterpoise to the pretensions of the crown. The Upper House, where the ecclesiastical element had predominated, became essentially a lay house by the absence of the abbots and priors. A new life animated antique institutions that had remained almost useless. It was not, in truth, until later that England, having become decidedly evangelical and constitutional, emerged in greatness from the ruins of feudalism and popery, but an important step was taken under Henry VIII. That great transformation extended its influence even beyond the shores of Britain. The blow aimed at the system of the Middle Ages re-echoed throughout Europe, and everywhere shook the artificial scaffolding. Spain and Italy alone remained almost motionless in the midst of their ancient darkness. The suppression of the monasteries, begun in 1535, was brought to a conclusion in 1539 by a second Act of Parliament.

A voice was heard from these ruined houses exclaiming, "Praise and thanksgiving to God! For other foundation can no man lay than Jesus Christ. Whoever believes that Jesus Christ is the pacifier who turneth away from our heads the strokes of God’s wrath, lays the true foundation; and on that firm base he shall raise a better building than that which had the monks for its pillars!" This prophecy of Sir William Overbury did not fail of accomplishment.

**CHAPTER 8**  
Henry Negotiates with German Lutherans  
1534–1535

Henry VIII having thrown down the chief pillar of the papacy in England—the monks—felt the necessity of strengthening the work he had begun by alliances with the continental protestants. He did not turn to the Swiss or the French Reformers: their small political importance, as well as the decided character of their Reform, alienated him from them. "What inconsiderate men they are," said Calvin, "who exalt the king of England. To ascribe sovereign authority to the prince in everything, to call him supreme head of the Church under Christ, is blasphemy."
Henry hoped more from Germany than from Switzerland. As early as 1534 three senators of Lubeck had presented to him the Lutheran Confession of Augsburg of 1530, and proposed an alliance against the Roman pontiff. Anne Boleyn pressed the king to unite with the protestants, and in the spring of 1535 Henry’s chaplain, Dr. Anthony Barnes, was sent to Wittenberg, where he endeavored to induce the Reformers to claim his master’s protection. Melanchthon, who was more inclined than Luther to have recourse to princes, did not reject the advances of Henry VIII. "Sire," he wrote in March 1535, "this is now the golden age for Britain. In times of old, when the armies of the Goths had stifled letters in Europe, your island restored them to the universe. I entreat you in the name of Jesus Christ to plead for us before kings." The illustrious doctor dedicated to this prince the new edition of his Common-Places, and commissioned Alexander Alesius, a Scot, to present it with the hope that he should see England become the salvation of many nations, and even of the whole Church of Christ. Alesius, who had taken refuge in Saxony, was happy to return to that island from which the fanaticism of the Scottish clergy had compelled him to flee. He was presented to the uncle of his king, and Henry, delighted with the Scot, said to him, "I name you my scholar," and directed Cranmer to send Melanchthon two hundred florins. They were accompanied by a letter for the illustrious professor, in which the king signed himself: Your friend Henry.

But it was not long before the hopes of a union between Germany and England seemed to vanish. Scarcely had Melanchthon vaunted in his dedication to Henry VIII the moderation of the king—a moderation worthy (he had said) of a wise prince—when he heard of the execution of Fisher and More. He shrank back with terror. "More," he exclaimed, "has been put to death, and others with him." The cruelties of the king tortured the gentle Philip. The idea that a man of letters like More should fall by the hands of the executioner scandalized him. He began to fear for his own life. "I am myself," he said, "in great peril." Henry did not suspect the horror which his crime would excite on the continent, and had just read with delight a passage of Melanchthon in which the latter compared him to Ptolemy Philadelphus! He therefore said to Barnes, "Go and bring him back with you." Barnes returned to Wittenberg in September and delivered his message. But the doctor of Germany had never received so alarming an invitation before. He imagined it to be a treacherous scheme. "The mere thought of the journey," he said, "overwhelms me with distress." Barnes tried to encourage him. "The king will give you a magnificent escort," he said, "and even hostages, if you desire it." Melanchthon, who had More’s bleeding head continually before him, was immovable. Luther also regarded Barnes with an unfavorable eye, and called him the dark Englishman.

The envoy was more fortunate with the Elector of Saxony. John Frederick, hearing that the king of England was desirous of forming an alliance with the princes of Germany, replied that he would communicate this important demand to them. He then entertained Barnes at a sumptuous breakfast, made him handsome presents, and wrote to Henry VIII that the desire manifested by
him to reform religious doctrine augmented his love for him, "for," he added, "it belongs to kings to propagate Christ’s gospel far and wide."

Luther also, but from other motives than those of the elector, did not look so closely as Melanchthon; the suppression of the monasteries prepossessed him in favor of his ancient adversary. The penalties with which the Carthusians and others had been visited did not alarm him. Vergerio, the papal legate, who was at Wittenberg at the beginning of November, invited Luther to breakfast with him. "I know," he said, "that King Henry kills cardinals and bishops, but..." and biting his lips, he made a significant movement with his hand, as if he wished to cut off the king’s head. When relating this anecdote to Melanchthon, who was then at Jena, Luther added, "Would to God that we possessed several kings of England to put to death those bishops, cardinals, legates, and popes who are nothing but robbers, traitors, and devils!" Luther was less tender than he is represented when contrasted with Calvin. Those hasty words expressed really the thoughts of all parties. The spiritual leaven of the gospel had to work for a century or more upon the hard material of which the heart of man is made, before the errors of Romish teachings, a thousand years old, were banished. No doubt there was an immediate mitigation produced by the Reformation; but if anyone had told the men of the sixteenth century that it was wrong to put men to death for acts of impiety, they would have been as astonished, and perhaps more so, than our judges, if they were abused because, in conformity with the law, they visited murder with capital punishment. It is strange, however, that it required so many centuries to understand those glorious words of our Savior: The Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them (Luke 9:56).

The condition which the German protestants placed on their union with Henry VIII rendered the alliance difficult. "We only ask one thing," said the Reformers to Barnes, "that the doctrine which is in conformity with Scripture be restored to the whole world"; but Henry still observed the catholic doctrine. He was told, however, that the Lutherans and Francis I, thanks to Melanchthon’s mediation, were probably coming to an agreement, and that a general council would be summoned. What treatment could he expect from such an assembly, he who had so grievously offended the papacy! Desirous of preventing a council at any price, the King determined in September, 1535, to send a more important embassy to the Lutherans, in order to persuade them to renounce the idea of coming to terms with the pope, and rather to form an alliance with England.

Consequently, Edward Fox, bishop of Hereford, a proud and insolent courtier, and Nicholas Heath, archdeacon of Stafford, an amiable and enlightened man, with some others, started for Germany and joined Barnes, who had preceded them. On the 24th of December they were admitted into the presence of the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse, and other protestant deputies and princes. "The king our master," they said, "has abolished the power of the Roman bishop throughout his dominions, and rejected his pretended pardons and his old wives’ stories. Accordingly, the pope, in a transport of fury, has summoned all the kings of the earth to take arms against him. But neither pope
nor papists alarm our prince. He offers you his person, his wealth, and his scepter to combat the Roman power. Let us unite against it, and the Spirit of God will bind our confederation together." The princes replied to this eloquent harangue, "that if the king engaged to propagate the pure doctrine of the faith as it had been confessed at the diet of Augsburg; if he engaged, like them, never to concede to the Roman bishop any jurisdiction in his States, they would name him Defender and Protector of their confederation." They added that they would send a deputation, including one man of excellent learning (meaning Melanchthon), to confer with the king upon the changes to be made in the Church. The Englishmen could not conceal their joy, but the theologian had lost all confidence in Henry VIII. "The death of More distresses me; I will have nothing to do with the business." On the 25th of December, 1535, the German princes at Schmalkald presented Fox with detailed propositions for a league with England. Henry VIII consulted Bishop Gardiner, at that time his ambassador in France, and then declined the terms, Gardiner having advised that the outcome of a league would be the establishment of protestantism in England.

Meanwhile, at home, Henry’s relations with the most decided partisans of the papacy were far from improving. His daughter Mary, whose temper was melancholy and irritable, observed no bounds as regards her father’s friends or acts, and refused to submit to his orders. "I bid her renounce the title of princess," said Henry in a passion. "If I consented not to be regarded as such," she answered, "I should go against my conscience and incur God’s displeasure." Henry, no friend of half-measures, talked of putting his daughter to death, and thus frightening the rebels. That wretched prince had a remarkable tendency for killing those who were nearest to him. We may see a father correct his child with a stripe; but with this man, a blow from his hand was fatal. There was already some talk of sending the princess to the Tower, when the evangelical Cranmer ventured to intercede in behalf of the catholic Mary. He reminded Henry that he was her father, and that if he took away her life, he would incur universal reprobation. The king gave way to these representations, predicting to the archbishop that this intervention would some day cost him dear. In fact, when Mary became queen she put to death the man who had saved her life. Henry was content to order his daughter to be separated from her mother. On the other hand, the terrified Catherine endeavored to mollify the princess. "Obey the king in all things," she wrote from Buckden, where she was living, "except in those which would destroy your soul. Speak little; trouble yourself about nothing, play on the spinet or lute." This unhappy woman, who had found so much bitterness in the conjugal estate, added, "Above all, do not desire a husband, nor even think of it, I beg you in the name of Christ’s passion. Your loving mother, Catherine the Queen."

But the mother was not less decided than the daughter in maintaining her rights, and would not renounce her title of queen, notwithstanding Henry’s orders. A commission composed of the Duke of Suffolk, Lord Sussex, and others arrived at Buckden to try to induce her to do so, and all the household of the princess was called together. The intrepid daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella
said with a firm voice, "I am the queen, the king’s true wife." Being informed that it was intended to remove her to Somersham and separate her from some of her best friends, she answered, "I will not go unless you bind me with ropes." And to prevent this she took to her bed and refused to dress, saying she was ill. The king sent two catholic prelates, the archbishop of York and the bishop of Durham, hoping to soften her. "Madam," said the archbishop, "your marriage being invalid..." "It is a lawful marriage," she exclaimed with passionate vehemence. "Until death I shall be his Majesty’s wife."

"Members of your own council," continued the archbishop, "acknowledge that your marriage with Prince Arthur was actually consummated."

"It is all false!" she exclaimed in a loud tone.

"The divorce was consequently pronounced..."

"By whom?" she asked.

"By my lord of Canterbury."

"And who is he?" returned the queen. "A shadow! The pope has declared in my favor, and he is Christ’s vicar."

"The king will treat you like a dear sister," said bishop Tunstall.

"Nothing in the world," answered Catherine, "neither the loss of my possessions nor the prospect of death, will make me give up my rights."

In October, 1535, Catherine was still at Buckden. That noble but fanatical woman increased her austerity, indulged in the harshest practices of an ascetic life, prayed frequently bare-kneed on the floor, while at the same time a deadly sorrow was undermining her health. At last consumption declared itself, and as it was judged that her condition required a change of air, she was removed to Kimbolton castle, some eight miles to the west. She longed for the society of her daughter, which would no doubt have alleviated her sufferings, but she asked in vain with tears to see her. Mary also entreated the king to let her visit her mother; he was inflexible.

Henry’s harshness towards the aunt of Charles V excited the wrath of that monarch to the highest degree. He was then returning victorious from his expedition against the corsair Barbarossa, whom he had driven out of Tunis, and determined to delay no longer in carrying out the mission he had received from the pope. To that end it was necessary to obtain, if not the cooperation, at least the neutrality, of Francis I. That was not easy. The king of France had always courted the alliance of England; he had signed a treaty with Henry against the Emperor and against the pope, and had just sought an alliance with the Lutheran princes. But the Emperor knew that the acquisition of Italy, or at least of Lombardy, was the favorite idea of Francis I. Charles was equally desirous of it, but he was so impatient to re-establish Catherine of Aragon on the throne, and bring England again under the dominion of the pope, that he determined to sacrifice Italy, if only in appearance. Sforza, duke of Milan, having just died without children, the Emperor offered Francis I the duchy of Milan for his second son, the duke of Orleans, if he would not oppose his designs against England. The king of France eagerly accepted the proposal, and wishing to give a proof of his zeal, he even proposed that the pope should summon all the princes of Christendom to force the king of England to submit
to the See of Rome. The love he had for Milan went so far as to make him propose a crusade against his natural ally, Henry VIII. The matter was becoming serious; rarely had a greater danger threatened England, when an important event suddenly removed it. At the very time when Charles V, aided by Francis I, desired to rouse Europe in order to re-place his aunt on the throne, she died. About the end of December, 1535, Catherine became seriously ill, and felt that God was bringing her great sorrows to an end. The king, wishing to keep up appearances, sent to enquire after her. The queen, firm to the last in her principles, sent for her lawyers and dictated her will to them. "I am ready," she said, "to yield up my soul unto God. ... I supplicate that five hundred masses be said for my soul; and that some personage go in pilgrimage for me to Our Lady of Walsingham. I bequeath my gowns to the convent, and the furs of the same I give to my daughter." Then Catherine thought of the king; to her he was always her husband, and despite his injustice, she would not address him but with respect. Feeling that the end was not far off, she dictated the following letter, at once so simple and so noble:

"My most dear Lord, King, and Husband,

"The hour of my death now approaching, I cannot choose but, out of the love I bear you, advise you of your soul’s health. You have cast me into many calamities and yourself into many troubles, but I forgive you all, and pray God to do likewise. I commend unto you Mary our daughter, beseeching you to be a good father to her. Lastly, I make this vow, that mine eyes desire you above all things."

The queen, therefore, sought to bid farewell to him who had wrought her so much evil. Henry was moved, and even shed tears, but did not comply with the queen’s wish; his conscience reproached him with his faults. On the 7th of January Catherine received the last sacraments, and at two o’clock she expired.

Anne felt at the bottom of her heart the rights of this princess. She had yielded to her imagination, and to the absolute will of the king; her marriage had given her some moments of happiness, but her soul was often troubled. She thought to herself that the proud Spanish woman was the one to whom Henry had given his faith, and doubted whether the crown did not belong to the daughter of Isabella. Catherine’s death removed her anxieties. "Now," she said, "now I am indeed a queen." The tears of the people accompanied to the tomb that unhappy and (to say truth) superstitious woman, but she was an affectionate mother, a high-spirited wife, and a queen of indomitable pride. This decease was destined to effect great changes in Europe. The Emperor, who was forming a holy alliance to restore his aunt to the throne, and who, to succeed, had gone so far as to sacrifice the northern part of Italy, having nothing more to do with Catherine, sheathed his sword and kept Milan. Francis
I, vexed at seeing the prey slip from him which he had so eagerly coveted, and fancied already in his hands, went into a furious passion, and prepared for a war to the death. The Emperor and the king of France, instead of marching together against Henry, began each of them to court him, desiring to have him for an ally in the fierce struggle that was about to begin. At the same time Catherine’s death facilitated, as we have said, the alliance of the king with the protestants of Germany, who had maintained the validity of his marriage with the princess of Aragon. One of their chief grievances against Henry VIII had thus disappeared. Both sides now thought they could take a step forward and strive to come to an understanding theologically. The points on which they differed were important. "The king of England," they said at Wittenberg, "wishes to be pope in the place of the pope, and maintains most of the errors of the old popery, such as monasteries, indulgences, the mass, prayers for the dead, and other Romish fables."

The discussion began at Wittenberg. The champions in the theological tournament were Bishop Fox and Archdeacon Heath on one side, Melanchthon and Luther on the other. Heath, one of the young doctors whom Queen Anne had maintained at Cambridge University, charmed Melanchthon exceedingly. "He excels in urbanity and sound doctrine," said the latter. Fox, on the other hand, who was the king’s man, showed, in Philip’s opinion, no taste either for philosophy or for agreeable and graceful conversation. The doctrine of the mass was the principal point of the discussion. They could not come to an understanding. Luther, who thought it would be only a three days’ matter, seeing the time slip away, said to the Elector, "I have done more in four weeks than these Englishmen in twelve years. If they continue reforming in that style, England will never be inside or out." This definition of the English Reformation amused the Germans. They did not discuss, they disputed; it became a regular quarrel. "I am disgusted with these debates," said Luther to vice-chancellor Burkhard, "they make me sick." Even the gentle Melanchthon exclaimed, "All the world seems to me to be burning with hatred and anger."

Accordingly the theological discussions were broken off, and the ambassadors of Henry VIII were admitted on the 12th of March into the presence of the Elector. "England is tranquil now," said the bishop of Hereford, "the death of a woman has forever terminated all wrangling. At this moment the creed of Jesus Christ alone is the concern of his Majesty. The king therefore prays you to make an alliance between you and him possible, by modifying a few points of your Confession." Whereupon the vice-chancellor of Saxony addressed Luther: "What can we concede to the king of England?" "Nothing," answered the reformer. "If we had been willing to concede anything, we might just as well have come to terms with the pope." After this very positive declaration, Luther softened down a little. He knew well, as Calvin has said, "that some men are weaker than others, and if we do not treat them very mildly, they lose their courage and turn away from religion, and that Christians who are more advanced in doctrine are bound to comfort the infirmities of the ignorant." The Saxon reformer, retracing his steps a little, wrote to the vice-chancellor, "It is true that England cannot embrace the whole truth all at once." He thought it
possible in certain cases to adopt other expressions, and tolerate some
diversity of usages. "But," he said, always firm in the faith, "the great doctrines
can neither be given up nor modified. Whether to make an alliance or not with
the king is for my most gracious lord to decide; it is a secular matter. Only it is
dangerous to unite outwardly, when the hearts are not in harmony." The
protestant States, assembled on the 24th of April, 1536, at Frankfort on the
Main, required Henry VIII to receive the faith confessed at Augsburg, and in
that case expressed themselves ready to acknowledge him as protector of the
 evangelical alliance. The Elector, who was much displeased with certain
English ceremonies, added, "Let your Majesty thoroughly reform the pontifical
idolomania in England." It was agreed that Melanchthon, Sturm, Bucer, and
Dracon should go to London to complete this great work of union. England and
 evangelical Germany were about to join hands.
This proposed alliance of the king with the Lutherans deeply chafed the
catholics of the kingdom, already so seriously offended by the suppression of
the monasteries and the punishment of the two men to whom Henry (they said)
was most indebted. While the Roman party was filled with anger, the political
party was surprised by the bold step the prince had taken. But the blow which
had struck two great victims had taught them that they must submit to the will
of the monarch or perish. The scaffolds of Fisher and More had read them a
great lesson of docility, and molded all those around Henry to that servile spirit
which leaves in the palace of a king nothing but a master and slaves.
They were about to see an illustrious instance in the trial of Anne Boleyn.

CHAPTER 9

The Accusation of the Queen
1535 to May, 1536

If feeble minds did not shrink from bending beneath the royal despotism, men
of fanatical mold cherished vengeance in their hearts. Great wounds had been
inflicted on the papacy, and they burned to strike some signal blow against the
cause of Reform. That also, they said, must have its victim. For all these
monasteries sacrificed, one person must be immolated, one only, but taken
from the most illustrious station. The king having, on the one side, struck his
tutor and his friend, must now, to maintain the balance, strike his wife on the
other. A tragedy was about to begin which would terminate in a frightful
catastrophe. Anne Boleyn had not been brought up, as some have said, "in the
worst school in Europe," but in one of the best—in the household of the pious
Margaret of Angoulême, who was the enlightened protectress not only of the
learned, but of all friends of the Gospel. Anne certainly seems to have had
strong leanings towards the Reformation and the Reformers. And accordingly
she was in the eyes of the papal partisans the principal cause of the change
that had been wrought in the king’s mind, and by him throughout the kingdom.
The Reformation, as we have seen, began in England about 1517 with the
reading of the Holy Scriptures in the universities; but the most accredited
Roman doctors have preferred to assign it another origin, and, speaking of
Cranmer’s connection with Anne Boleyn, thirteen years later, have said, “Such
is the beginning of the Reformation in England.” In this assertion there is an
error both of chronology and history.
Since her coronation, the queen had been in almost daily communication with
the archbishop of Canterbury, and habitually—even her enemies affirmed it–
the interests of the evangelical cause were treated of. At one time Anne
prayed Cranmer to come to the assistance of the persecuted Protestants. At
another, full of the necessity of sending reapers into the harvest, she
interested herself about such young persons as were poor, but whose pure
morals and clear intellect seemed to qualify them for the practice of virtue and
the study of letters; these she assisted with great generosity. The queen did
not encourage these students heedlessly; she required testimonials certifying
as to the purity of their morals and the capacity of their intellect. If she was
satisfied, she placed them at Oxford or Cambridge, and required them to
spread around them, even while studying, the New Testament and the writings
of the reformers. Many of the queen’s pensioners did great service to the
Church and State in after-years. With these queenly qualities Anne combined
more domestic ones. Cranmer saw her, like good Queen Claude, gathering
round her a number of young ladies distinguished by their birth and their
virtues, and working with them at tapestry of admirable perfection for the
palace of Hampton Court, or at garments for the indigent. She established in
certain poor parishes warehouses, filled with such things as the needy wanted.
"Her eye of charity, her hand of bounty," says a biographer, "passed through the
whole land." "She is said in three quarters of a year," adds Lord Herbert of
Cherbury, the celebrated seventeenth-century philosopher and historian, "to
have bestowed fourteen or fifteen thousand pounds in this way," that is, in
alms. And this distinguished writer, ambassador of England at the court of Louis
XIII, and known in France by the exertions he made in behalf of the
protestants, adds, "She had besides established a stock for poor artificers in the
realm." Such were the works of Queen Anne. Cranmer, who had great
discernment of men and things, being touched by the regard which the queen
had for those who professed the Gospel, and seeing all that she did for the
Reformation and the consolation of the wretched, declared that next to the
king, Anne was of all creatures living "the one to whom he was most bound."
Cranmer was not the only person among the evangelicals with whom Anne
Boleyn maintained relations. From the first day she had seen Latimer, the
Christian simplicity and apostolic manners of the reformer had touched her.
When she heard him preach, she was delighted. The enthusiasm for that bold
Christian preacher was universal. "It is as impossible," said his hearers, "for us
to receive into our minds all the treasures of eloquence and knowledge which
fall from his lips, as it would be for a little river to contain the waters of the
ocean in its bed." From the period (1535)
when Latimer preached the Lent
Sermons before the king, he was one of the most regular instruments of the
queen’s active charity.
A still more decided reformer had a high esteem for Anne Boleyn—this was
Tyndale. No one, in his opinion, had declared with so much decision as the
queen in favor of the New Testament and its circulation in English, and mention has already been made of the specially bound copy of his translation of the New Testament which he sent to England for the queen’s acceptance in 1534. This remarkable volume, now preserved in the library of the British Museum, is a monument of the veneration of the prisoner of Vilvorde for Anne Boleyn. A manuscript manual of devotion for the use of this princess has also been preserved—she used to present copies of it to her maids of honor. We see in it the value she attached to the Holy Scriptures; “Give us, O Father of mercies,” we read, “the greatest of all gifts Thou hast ever conferred on man—the knowledge of Thy holy will, and the glad tidings of our salvation. Roman tyranny has long hidden it from us under Latin letters; but now it is promulgated, published, and freely circulated.”

Anne, having in 1535 lost Dr. Betts, one of her chaplains, looked out for a man devoted to the Gospel to take his place, for she loved to be surrounded by the most pious persons in England. She cast her eyes upon Matthew Parker, a native of Norwich, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and a man who for two years had been preaching the truth with fervor. Parker loved retirement and obscurity; accordingly, when he received shortly after Palm Sunday two letters summoning him to court “because the queen wished to see him,” he was amazed and confounded. At first he wanted to refuse so brilliant a call; but Latimer wrote to him, “Show yourself to the world; hide yourself no longer; work good while it is day, the night comes when no man can work. We know what you can do; let not your will be less than your power.”

Parker went to London, and in a short time his knowledge, piety, and prudence gained the entire esteem of the queen. That modest, intelligent, active man was just the person Anne wanted, and she took pleasure thenceforward in bestowing on him marks of her consideration. Parker was from this time one of those employed by Anne to distribute her benevolence. He had hardly arrived at court, when he presented to the queen one William Bill, a very young and very poor man, but by no means wanting in talent. Anne, rich in discernment, placed him in the number of students whom she was preparing for the ministry; he afterwards became dean of Westminster.

Parker, who began his career with Anne, was to finish it with Elizabeth. When he was deprived of all his offices by Queen Mary in 1554, he exclaimed, “Now that I am stripped of everything, I live in God’s presence, and am full of joy in my conscience. In this charming leisure I find greater pleasures than those supplied by the busy and perilous life I led at the court.” Forced to hide himself, often to flee by night, to escape the pursuit of his persecutors, the peace which he enjoyed was never troubled. He looked upon trials as the privilege of the child of God. All of a sudden a strange and unexpected calamity befell him. The daughter of Anne Boleyn, having ascended the throne, desired to have her mother’s chaplain for archbishop of Canterbury and primate of all England. “I kneel before your Majesty,” he said to Queen Elizabeth, “and pray you not to burden me with an office which requires a man of much more talent, knowledge, virtue, and experience than I possess.” A second letter from Nicholas Bacon, lord keeper of the great seal, repeated the
summons. Then the unhappy Parker exclaimed in the depth of his sorrow, “Alas! alas! Lord God! for what times hast Thou preserved me! I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. O Lord! strengthen me by Thy mighty Spirit!” Parker was at the head of the Church of England for sixteen years, and dignified the elevated seat on which he had been constrained to sit. Such were the men whom Anne Boleyn gathered round her.

We should be mistaken, however, if we represented the young queen as a bigot, living like Catherine in the practices of a rigid austerity. It appears even doubtful whether she knew by experience that inner, spiritual, and living Christianity which was found in Latimer, Tyndale, Cranmer, and Parker. She was a virtuous wife, a good protestant, attached to the Bible, opposed to the pope, fond of good works, esteeming men of God more than courtiers; but she had not renounced the world and its pomps. A woman of the world, upright, religious, loving to do good, a class of which there is always a large number, she was unacquainted with the pious aspirations of a soul that lives in communion with God. Her position as queen and wife of Henry VIII may have hindered her from advancing in the path of a Christian life. She thought it possible to love God without renouncing the enjoyments of the age, and looked upon worldly things as an innocent recreation. Desiring to keep her husband’s heart, she endeavored to please him by cheerful conversation, by organizing pleasure parties of which she was the life, and by receiving all his courtiers gracefully. Placed on slippery ground and watched by prejudiced eyes, she may occasionally have let fall some imprudent expression. Her sprightliness and gaiety, her amiable freedom were in strong contrast with the graver and stiffer formalities of the English ladies. Latimer, who saw her closely, sometimes admonished her respectfully, when he was alone with her, and the grateful Anne would exclaim unaffectedly, “You do me so much good! Pray never pass over a single fault.”

It is not from the writings of the pamphleteers that we must learn to know Anne Boleyn. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, opposite parties, in their extreme excitement, have painted her at one time in colors too dark, at another in colors too flattering. We must in this matter especially listen to men whose testimony is sanctioned by universal respect. There are not many princesses in history who have enjoyed, like Anne, the esteem of the most elevated minds—of Cranmer and Latimer, of Tyndale and Parker, and other Christians less illustrious, perhaps, but not less respectable. In the eyes of the papal partisans, however, she had committed an unpardonable crime—she had separated England from the papacy—and accordingly their savage hatred has known no bounds, and they have never ceased to blacken her memory with their vile calumnies. Of all the misdeeds that history can commit, the greatest consists in representing the innocent as if they were guilty. Many writers have forged and still forge base imputations against the reformers Luther, Calvin, and others. Anne Boleyn has had her full share of slander in this huge conspiracy of falsehood.
The grandeur with which Anne was surrounded had opened her heart to the tenderest sympathies. To be the joy of her husband and the delight of her relations, to protect the friends of the Gospel and to be loved by England—these were for some time the dreams of her young imagination. But ere long, the crown of St. Edward pressed heavily on her brow. The members of her own family became her enemies. Her uncle, the proud duke of Norfolk, the chief along with Gardiner of the papal party, was animated by a secret hatred against the young woman who was the support of the evangelical party. Her father, the earl of Wiltshire, imagining he saw that the king was not flattered at being his son-in-law, had quitted London, regretting a union which his ambition had so much desired. Lady Rochford, wife of Anne’s brother, a woman of despicable character, whose former perfidies the queen had pardoned, and whom she had attached to the court, repaid this generous magnanimity by secretly plotting the ruin of a sister-in-law whose elevation had filled her with jealousy. At length, one of those who ate her bread and received favors from her was about to show her ingratitude to the unfortunate queen.

Among her ladies of honor was Jane Seymour, who united all the attractions of youth and beauty, and whose disposition held a certain mean between the severe gravity of Queen Catherine and the fascinating sprightliness of Queen Anne. Constancy in affection was not a feature of Henry’s character; his heart was easily inflamed; his eye rested on the youthful Jane, and no sooner had he become sensible of her graces then the charms of Anne Boleyn, which had formerly captivated him, became unendurable. The genial gaiety of the queen fatigued him; the accomplishments which are ordinarily the means of pleasing gave him umbrage; the zeal she manifested for Protestantism alienated him. Anne’s enemies, especially the duke of Norfolk and Lady Rochford, observed this, and resolved to take advantage of it to ruin the woman who overshadowed them.

One circumstance, innocent enough of itself, favored the designs of the queen’s enemies. Anne, who had been brought up in France, among a people distinguished for their inexhaustible stores of gaiety, easy conversation, witty and ingenious sallies, ironical phrases, and amiable hearts, had brought something of all this to London. Frank and prepossessing, she loved society; and her ordinary manners seemed too easy among a nation which, with deep affections, possesses much gravity and external coldness. Anne had found a certain freedom of speech in the court of France—it does not appear that she imitated it—but in a moment of gaiety she might have let slip some keen railleries, some imprudent words, and thus furnished her enemies with weapons. She had some difficulty in conforming with the strict etiquette of the court of England, and had not been trained to the circumspection so necessary with a husband like Henry VIII.

Anne was not understood. Her gaiety did not degenerate into frivolity; she did not possess that love of pleasure which, carried to excess, engenders corruption of manners; we have named the truly pious men whom she loved to gather round her. But it was quite enough for some persons that Anne was agreeable, like the ladies of St. Germains and Fontainebleau, to suspect her of
being a flirt, like many of them. Moreover, she had married above her station. Having lived at court as the equal of the young nobles belonging to it, she was not always able, after she ascended the throne, to keep herself on the footing of a queen. From that time her enemies interpreted unfavorably the innocent amiability with which she received them. The mistrustful Henry VIII began to indulge in suspicions, and Lady Rochford endeavored to feed that prince’s jealousy by crafty and perfidious insinuations. Anne soon noticed the king’s inclination for Jane Seymour; a thousand trifles, apparently indifferent, had struck her. She often watched the maid of honor; her pride was offended, and jealousy tortured her heart night and day. She endeavored to win back the king’s love; but Henry, who perceived her suspicions, grew more angry with her every hour. The queen was not far from her confinement; and it was at the very moment when she hoped to give Henry the heir he had longed for during so many years, that the king withdrew from her his conjugal affection. Her heart was wrung, and, foreseeing a mournful future, she wondered whether a blow similar to that which had struck Catherine might not soon be aimed at her. Jane Seymour did not reject the king’s advances. Historians of the most opposite parties relate that, one day, towards the end of January 1536, the queen, unexpectedly entering a room in the palace, found the king paying his court to the young maid of honor in too marked a manner. They may possibly exaggerate, but there is no doubt that Henry gave cause for very serious complaints on the part of his wife. It was as if a sword had pierced the heart of the unfortunate Anne Boleyn; she could not bear up against so cruel a blow, and prematurely gave birth to a dead son. God had at length granted Henry that long-desired heir, but the grief of the mother had cost the child’s life. What an affliction for her! For some time her recovery was despaired of. When the king entered her room, she burst into tears. That selfish prince, soured at the thought that she had borne him a dead son, cruelly upbraided her misfortune, instead of consoling her. It was too much; the grief-stricken mother could not restrain herself. "You have no one to blame but yourself," she exclaimed. Henry, still more angry, answered her harshly and left the apartment. These details are preserved by a well-informed writer of the time of Elizabeth. To present Henry under so unfavorable a light, if it were untrue, could hardly have been an agreeable mode of paying court, as some have insinuated, to a queen who took more after her father than her mother. Anne now foresaw the misfortunes awaiting her; she recovered indeed after this storm, and exerted herself by taking part once more in social gatherings and fetes; but she was melancholy and uneasy, like a foundering ship, which reappears on the waves of the sea after the storm, and still keeps afloat for a time, only to be swallowed up at last. All her attempts to regain her husband’s affections were useless, and frightful dreams disturbed her during the slumbers of the night. This agony lasted three months. The wind had changed; everybody noticed it, and it was, to certain heartless courtiers, like the signal given to an impatient pack of hounds. They set themselves to hunt down the prey, which they felt they could rend without danger. The extreme catholics regained their courage. They had feared that,
owing to Anne’s intervention, the cause of Rome was lost in England, and their alarm was not unreasonable. Cranmer, realizing that he possessed the good will of the queen, never ceased pushing forward the Reformation. When someone spoke in the House of Lords about a General Council in Italy, he exclaimed, “It is the Word of God alone that we must listen to in religious controversies.” At the same time, in concert with Anne, he circulated all over England a new Prayer book, the Primer, intended to counter the dangerous books of the priests. The people used it. A pious and spiritual reader of that book exclaimed one day, after meditating upon it, “O bountiful Jesu! O sweet Saviour! despise not him whom Thou hast ransomed at the price of such a treasure—with Thy blood! I look with confidence to the throne of mercy.” Religion was becoming personal with Anne Boleyn.

The queen and the archbishop had not stopped there; they had attempted, so far as Henry would permit, to place true shepherds over the flocks, instead of merchants who traded with their wool. The bishopric of Worcester, which had been taken from Jerome de Ghinucci, was given (as we have seen) to Latimer, so that the valley of the Severn, which four Italian bishops had plundered for fifty years, possessed at last a pastor who “planted there the plenteousness of all spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ.” Shaxton, one of Anne’s chaplains, who at this time professed a great attachment to Holy Scripture, had been appointed bishop of Salisbury, in place of the famous Cardinal Campeggio. Hilderly, formerly a Dominican prior—who had at one time defended the immaculate conception of the Virgin, but had afterwards acknowledged and worshipped Jesus Christ as the only Mediator—had been nominated to the see of Rochester, in place of the unfortunate Bishop Fisher. Finally, George Brown, ex-provincial of the Augustines in England—an upright man, a friend of the poor, and who, caught by the truth, had exclaimed from the pulpit, “Go to Christ and not to the saints!”—had been elected archbishop of Dublin, and thus became the first evangelical prelate of Ireland, a difficult post, which he occupied at the peril of his life. Other prelates, like Fox, bishop of Hereford, although not true Protestants, proved themselves to be anti-Papists.

The members of the papal party saw the influence of the queen in all these nominations. Who resisted the proposal that the English Church should be represented at the General Council? Who endeavored to make the king advance in the direction of the Reformation? Who threw England into the arms of the princes of Germany? The queen, none but the queen. She felt unhappy, it was said, when she saw a day pass without having obtained some favor for the Reformation. Men knew that the pope was ready to forgive everything, and even to unite with Henry against Charles V, if the king would submit to the conditions laid down in the bull—that is to say, if he would put away Anne Boleyn.

The condition required by the pontiff was not an impossible one, for Henry liked to change his wives; he had six. Marriage was not to him a oneness of life. At the end of 1535, Anne had been his wife for three years; it was a long time for him, and he began to turn his eyes upon others. Jane Seymour’s youth eclipsed the queen’s. Unfortunate Boleyn! Sorrow had gradually diminished her
freshness. Jane had natural allies, who might help her to ascend the throne. Her two brothers, Edward and Thomas—the elder more moderate, the younger more arrogant—each possessing great ambition and remarkable capacity, thought that a Seymour was as worthy as a Boleyn to wear the English crown. The first blow did not however proceed from them, but from a member of the queen’s family—from her sister-in-law. There is no room for indifference between near relations; they love or, if they do not love, they hate. Lady Rochford, so closely allied to the queen, felt continually piqued at her. Jealousy had engendered a deep dislike in her heart, and this dislike was destined to lead her on to contrive the death of the detested object. Rendered desperate by the happiness and especially by the greatness of Anne Boleyn, it became her ruling passion to destroy them. One obstacle, however, rose up before her. Lord Rochford, her husband and Anne’s brother, would not enter into her perfidious schemes. That depraved woman, who afterwards suffered capital punishment for conniving at crime, determined to ruin her sister-in-law and her husband together. It was arranged that three of the courtiers should give Henry the first hints. “Thus began,” says an author of that day, “a comedy which was changed into a sorrowful tragedy.” Nothing was omitted that tended to the success of one of the most infamous court intrigues recorded in history. Anne became cognizant almost at the same time of her sister-in-law’s hatred of her and of her husband’s love for Jane Seymour. From that moment she foreboded an early death, and her most anxious thoughts were for her daughter. She wondered what would become of the child, and desirous of having her brought up in the knowledge of the Gospel, she sent for the pious, simple-minded Parker, told him of her apprehensions and her wishes, and commended Elizabeth to him with all a mother’s love. Anne’s words sank so deep into his heart that he never forgot them; and twenty-three years later, when that child, who had become queen, raised him to the primacy, he declared to Lord Burghley that if he were not under such great obligations to her mother, he would never have consented to serve the daughter in such an elevated station. After consigning the youthful Elizabeth to the care of a man of God, the unhappy queen was more at ease. Meantime the plot was forming in silence, and two or three circumstances, such as occur in the most innocent life, were the pretext for Anne’s destruction. One day, when she was with the king at Winchester, she sent for one of the court musicians, named Mark Smeaton, “to play on the virginals.” This was the first count in the indictment. Norris, a gentleman of the king’s chamber, was engaged to Margaret, one of Anne’s maids of honor, and consequently was often in the queen’s apartments. Slanderous tongues affirmed that he went more for the sake of his sovereign than for his betrothed. The queen hearing of it, and desiring to stop the scandal, determined to bind Norris to marry Margaret. “Why do you not go on with your marriage?” she asked him. “I desire to wait a little longer,” answered the gentleman. Anne, with the intent of making him understand that there were serious reasons for not putting it off any longer, added, “It is said at court that you are waiting for a dead man’s shoes, and that if any misfortune befell the king, you would look to have me for your wife.” “God forbid!” exclaimed
Norris, in alarm, "if I had such an idea, it would be my destruction." "Mind what you are about," resumed the queen, with severity. Norris, in great emotion, went immediately to Anne Boleyn’s almoner. "The queen is a virtuous woman," he said, "I am willing to affirm it upon oath." This was the second count in the indictment.

Sir Francis Weston, a bold frivolous man, was (although married) very attentive to a young lady of the court, a relative of the queen. "Sir Francis," said Anne, who was distressed at his behavior, "you love Mistress Skelton, and neglect your wife." "Madam," answered the audacious courtier, "there is one person in your house whom I love better than both." "And who is that?" said the queen. "Yourself," answered Weston. Offended by such insolence, Anne ordered him, with scorn and displeasure, to leave her presence. This was the third count of the indictment.

Lord Rochford, a man of noble and chivalrous character, indignant at the calumnies which were beginning to circulate against his sister, endeavored to avert the storm. One day, when she kept her bed, he entered her room to speak to her; and, the maids of honor being present, he leaned towards the queen, to say something on this matter which was not fit for the ears of strangers to the family. The infamous Lady Rochford made use of this innocent circumstance to accuse her husband and sister-in-law of an abominable crime. Such are the four charges that were to cost Anne Boleyn her life. Futile observations, malicious remarks to which persons are exposed in the world, and especially at court, reached the ears of the king, and inspired him with jealousy, reproaches, angry words, and coldness. There was no more happiness for Anne.

There was enough in these stories to induce Henry VIII to reject his second wife, and take a third. This prince—and it was the case generally with the Tudors—had a temper at once decided and changeable, a heart susceptible and distrustful, an energetic character, and passions eager to be satisfied at any price. Very mistrustful, he did not easily get the better of his suspicions, and when any person had vexed him, he was not appeased until he had got rid of him. Common sense generally appreciates at their true worth such stories as those we have reported, but the characters now on the stage were more rancorous than those usually to be found in the world. "A tempest," says Lord Herbert of Cherbury on this subject, "though it scarce stir low and shallow waters, when it meets a sea, both vexeth it, and makes it toss all that comes thereon."

Henry, happy to have found the pretext which his new passion made him long for, investigated nothing; he appeared to believe everything he was told. He swore to prove Anne’s guilt to others by the greatness of his revenge. Of his six wives, he got rid of two by divorce, and two by the scaffold; only two escaped his criminal humor. This time he was unwilling to proceed by divorce; the tediousness of Catherine’s affair had wearied him. He preferred a more expeditious mode—the axe.

On the 25th of April the king appointed a commission to enquire into Anne’s conduct, and placed on it the duke of Norfolk, a maternal uncle but (as we
have said) an implacable enemy of the unfortunate queen; the duke of Suffolk, who, as Henry’s brother-in-law, served him in his least desires; the earl of Oxford, a skillful courtier; William Paulet, comptroller of the royal household, whose motto was, “To be a willow and not an oak”; Audley, the most honest of all, but still his master’s humble servant; Lord Delawarr, and several other lords and gentlemen, to the number of twenty-six. It has been said, by Burnet and others, that the king named Anne’s father, the earl of Wiltshire, one of the judges. It would, no doubt, have been the most striking trait of cruelty, of which Henry gave so many proofs; but we must in justice declare that the wretched prince did not perpetrate such a monstrosity. Burnet, after the most searching investigations, retracted his error. On Thursday, the 27th of April, the king, understanding the necessity of a Parliament to repeal the laws made in favor of Anne and her children, issued writs for its assembling. He was resolved to hurry on the business—equally impatient to hear no more of his wife, and to possess her who was the object of his desires. Anne, who was ignorant of what was going on, had gradually recovered a little serenity, but it was not so with those around her. The court was agitated and uneasy. The names of the commissioners were canvassed, and people wondered where the terrible blows of the king would fall. Would the storm burst on Sir Thomas Wyatt, who wrote verses in Anne’s honor? or on Lord Northumberland, whom the queen had loved before Henry cast his eyes upon her? The king did not intend to go so high. The indecision did not last long. At two o’clock on the 27th of April—the very day when the writs for the new Parliament were issued—William Brereton, one of the gentlemen of the king’s household pointed out by the queen’s enemies, was arrested and taken to the Tower. Two days later, on the 29th of April, Anne was crossing the presence-chamber, where a miserable creature happened to be present at that moment. It was Mark Smeaton, the court musician—a vain, cowardly, corrupt man, who had felt hurt because, since the day when he had played before the queen at Winchester, that princess had never even looked at him. He was standing, in a dejected attitude, leaning against a window. It is possible that, having heard of the disgrace that threatened the queen, he hoped, by showing his sorrow, to obtain from her some mark of interest. Be that as it may, his unusual presence in that room, the posture he had assumed, the appearance of sorrow which he had put on, were evidently intended to attract her attention. The trick succeeded. Anne noticed him as she passed by. “Why are you sad?” she asked. “It is no matter, madam.” The queen fancied that Smeaton was grieved because she had never spoken to him. “You may not look to have me speak to you,” she added, “as if you were a nobleman, because you are an inferior person.” “No, madam,” replied the musician, “I need no words; a look sufficeth me.” He did not receive the look he asked for, and his wounded vanity urged him from that moment to ruin the princess, by whom he had the insolence to wish to be remarked. Smeaton’s words were reported to the king, and next day (April 30) the musician was arrested, examined at Stepney, and sent to the Tower.
A magnificent festival was preparing at Greenwich, to celebrate the first day of May in the usual manner. This was the strange moment which Henry had chosen for unveiling his plans. In certain minds there appears to be a mysterious connection between festivities and bloodshed; another prince (Nero) had shown it in old times, and some years later Charles IX was to celebrate the marriage of his sister Margaret by the massacres of St. Bartholomew. Henry VIII gave to two of the victims he was about to immolate the foremost places in the brilliant tournament he had prepared. Lord Rochford, the queen’s brother, was the principal challenger, and Henry Norris was chief of the defenders. Sir Francis Weston was also to take part in these jousts. Henry showed himself very gracious to them, and hid with smiles their approaching destruction. The king having taken his place, and the queen, in a magnificent costume, being seated by his side, Rochford and Norris passed before him, lowering their spears. The jousting began immediately after. The circumstances of the court gave a gloomy solemnity to the festival. The king, who was watching with fixed eyes the struggles of his courtiers, started up all of a sudden, with every appearance of anger, and hastily quitted the balcony. What had happened? The historian Sanders, notorious as being a most malicious and fabulous writer, mentions that the queen had dropped her handkerchief into the lists, and that Norris took it up and wiped his face with it. Lord Herbert, Burnet, and others affirm that there is nothing to corroborate the story, which, were it true, might be very innocent. However, the festivities were interrupted by the king’s departure. The confusion was universal, and the alarmed queen withdrew, eager to know the cause of the strange procedure. Thus ended the rejoicings of the First of May.

Henry, who had gone back to the palace, hearing of the queen’s return, refused to see her, ordered her to keep her room, mounted his horse, and, accompanied by six gentlemen, galloped back to London. Slackening his pace for a time, he took Norris aside, and, telling him the occasion of his anger, promised to pardon him if he would confess. Norris answered, with firmness and respect, “Sire, if you were to cut me open and take out my heart, I could only tell you what I know.” On reaching Whitehall, Henry said to his ministers, “Tomorrow morning you will take Rochford, Norris, and Weston to the Tower; you will then proceed to Greenwich, arrest the queen, and put her in prison. Finally, you will write to Cranmer and bid him go immediately to Lambeth, and there await my orders.” The victims were seized, and the high-priest summoned for the sacrifice.

The night was full of anguish to Anne Boleyn, and the next day, when she was surrounded by her ladies, their consternation increased her terror. It seemed to her impossible that a word from her would not convince her husband of her innocence. “I will positively see the king,” she exclaimed. She ordered her barge to be prepared, but, just as she was about to set out, another barge arrived from London, bringing Cromwell, Audley, and the terrible Kingston, lieutenant of the Tower. That ominous presence was a death warrant; on seeing him the queen screamed aloud.
They did not, however, remove her at once; the council, on which sat her most violent adversaries, assembled in the palace, and Anne was summoned to appear before it. The duke of Norfolk, the president, informed her coldly of what she was accused, and named her pretended accomplices. At these words, the queen, struck with astonishment and sorrow, fell on her knees and cried out, "O Lord, if I am guilty, may I never be forgiven!" Then, recovering a little from her emotion, she replied to the calumnious charges brought against her, to which Norfolk answered carelessly and contumaciously, as if he were still speaking to the little girl whom he had seen born, "Tut, tut, tut," and shook his head disdainfully. "I desire to see the king," said Anne. "Impossible," answered the duke, "that is not included in our commission." "I have been very cruelly treated," said Anne Boleyn, later, when speaking of this horrible conversation with her uncle. "It is his Majesty's good pleasure that we conduct you to the Tower," added Norfolk. "I am ready to obey," said the queen, and all went in the same barge. When they reached the Tower, Anne landed. The governor was there to receive her. Norfolk and the other members of the council committed her into his charge and departed. It was five in the afternoon.

Then the gates of the fortress opened; and at this moment, when she was crossing the threshold under the charge of heinous crimes, Anne remembered how, three years before, she had entered it in triumph for the ceremony of her coronation, in the midst of the general acclamations of the people. Struck by the fearful contrast, she fell on her knees, "as a ball" and exclaimed, "O Lord, help me, as I am guiltless of that whereof I am accused!" The governor raised her up, and they entered. She expected to be put into close confinement. "Mr. Kingston," she said, "do I go into a dungeon?" "No, madam," answered the governor, "you will be in your own lodging, where you lay at your coronation." "It is too good for me," she exclaimed. She entered, however, and on reaching those royal chambers, which occasioned such different recollections, she knelt again and burst into tears. The violence of her grief presently brought on convulsive movements, and her tears were succeeded by hysterical laughter. Gradually she came to herself, and tried to collect her thoughts. Feeling the need of strengthening herself by the evidences of the Lord's love, she said to Kingston, "Entreat his Majesty to let me have the sacrament." Then, in the consciousness of innocence, she added, "Sir, I am as clear from the company of man as I am of you. I am the king's true wedded wife."

She was not absorbed in her own misfortunes; she was moved by the sufferings of the others, and uneasy about her brother. "Can you tell me where Lord Rochford is?" she asked. Kingston replied that he had seen him at Whitehall. She was not tranquilized by this evasive answer. "Oh, where is my sweet brother?" she exclaimed. There was no reply. "Mr. Kingston," resumed Anne, after a few moments, "do you know why I am here?" "No, madam," "I hear say that I am to be accused of criminal familiarities." (Norfolk had told her so in the barge.) "I can say no more than 'Nay!'" Suddenly tearing one of her garments, she exclaimed, as if distracted, "If they were to open my body, I should still say 'No.'" After this her mind wandered. She thought of her stepmother, and the love she felt for the countess of Wiltshire made her feel
more than anything else the bitterness of her situation; she imagined the proud lady was before her, and cried, with unutterable agony, "O my mother, my mother, thou wilt die for sorrow!" Then her gloomy thoughts were turned to other objects. She remembered that, while in the barge, the duke of Norfolk had named Norris and Smeaton as her accusers, which was partly false. The miserable musician was not grieved at being wrongfully accused of a crime likely to make him notorious, but Norris had stoutly rejected the idea that the queen could be guilty. "O Norris, hast thou accused me!" she ejaculated, "and thou too, Smeaton!" After a few moments’ silence, Anne fixed her eyes on the governor. "Mr. Kingston," she asked, "shall I die without justice?" "Madam," answered the governor, "the meanest subject of the king has that." At these words the queen again laughed hysterically. "Justice—justice!" she exclaimed, with disdainful incredulity. She counted less upon justice than the humblest of her subjects. Gradually the tempest calmed down, and the silence of the night brought relief to her sorrow.

The same day (May 2nd) the news spread through London that the queen was arrested. Cranmer, who had received the royal intimation to go to his palace at Lambeth, and wait there until further orders, had arrived, and was thunderstruck on hearing what had happened. "What! the queen in prison! the queen an adulteress!" ... A struggle took place in his bosom. He was indebted to the queen for much; he had always found her irreproachable—the refuge of the unhappy, the upholder of the truth. He had loved her like a daughter, respected her as his sovereign. That she was innocent, he had no doubt; but how to account for the behavior of the king? The unhappy prelate was distracted by the most painful thoughts. This truly pious man showed excessive indulgence towards Henry VIII, and bent easily beneath his powerful hand; but his path was clearly traced—to maintain unhesitatingly the innocence of her whom he had always honored. And yet he was to be an example of the fascination exerted by a despot over such characters—of the cowardice of which a good man may be guilty through human respect. Doubtless there are extenuating circumstances in his case. It was not only the queen’s fate that made the prelate uneasy, but also the future of the Reformation. If love for Anne had helped to make Henry incline to the side of the Reformation, the hatred which he now felt against his unhappy wife might easily drive him in the other direction. Cranmer desired to prevent this at any price, and accordingly thought himself obliged to use extreme caution. But these circumstances are really no extenuation. No motive in the world can excuse a man from not frankly defending his friends when they are falsely accused—from not vindicating an innocent woman when she is declared to be guilty. Cranmer wrote to the king, "I cannot without your Majesty’s command appear in your presence; but I can at least desire most humbly, as is my duty, that your great wisdom and God’s help may remove the deep sorrow of your heart. "I cannot deny that your Majesty has great cause to be overwhelmed with sorrow. In fact, whether the things of which men speak be true or not, your honour, Sire, according to the false appreciation of the world, has suffered;
and I do not remember that Almighty God has ever before put your Majesty’s firmness to so severe a test.

"Sire, I am in such a perplexity that I am clean amazed; for I never had a better opinion in woman than I had in her, which maketh me think that she cannot be culpable."

This was tolerably bold, and accordingly Cranmer hastened to tone down his boldness. "And yet, Sire," he added, "would you have gone so far, if you had not been sure of her crime? ... Your Grace best knoweth that, next unto your Grace, I was most bound unto her of all creatures living. Wherefore I must humbly beseech your Grace to suffer me in that which both God’s law, nature, and her kindness bindeth me unto, that I may (with your Grace’s favour) wish and pray for her. And from what condition your Grace, of your only mere goodness, took her, and set the crown upon her head, I repute him not your Grace’s faithful servant and subject, nor true to the realm, that would not desire the offence to be without mercy punished, to the example of all others. And as I loved her not a little, for the love I judged her to bear towards God and His Gospel; so, if she be proved guilty, there is not one that loveth God and His Gospel that will ever favor her... for then there never was creature in our time that so much slandered the Gospel.

"However," he added, appearing to recover his courage, "forget not that God has shown His goodness to your Grace in many ways, and has never offended you; whilst your Grace, I am sure, acknowledgeth that you have offended Him. Extend, therefore, to the Gospel the precious favour you have always shown it, and which proceedeth not from your love for the queen your wife, but from your zeal for the truth.

"From Lambeth, 3rd of May, 1536."

When Cranmer addressed these soothing words to the king, it was doubtless on the supposition (on which he gives no opinion) that Anne was guilty. But, even admitting this hypothesis, is it not carrying flattery of the terrible autocrat very far, to compare him with Job as the prelate does, for in another part of this letter he says, "By accepting all adversity, without despair and without murmuring, your Grace will give opportunity to God to multiply His blessings, as He did to His faithful servant Job, to whom, after his great calamity, and to reward his patience, He restored the double of what he had possessed." As regards the king, Cranmer had found for himself a false conscience, which led him into deceitful ways; his letter, although he still tries to defend Anne, cannot be justified.

He was about to dispatch the letter, when he received a message from the lord-chancellor, desiring him to go to the Star-Chamber. The archbishop hastened across the Thames, and found at the appointed place not only Audley, but the Lords Oxford and Sussex, and the lord-chamberlain. These noblemen laid before him the charges brought against Anne Boleyn, adding that they could be proved, though they did not themselves produce any proof. On his return to Lambeth, Cranmer added a postscript to his letter, in which he expressed his extreme sorrow at the report that had just been made to him.
The morning of the same day (May 3rd) was a sad one in the Tower. By a refinement of cruelty, the king had ordered two of the queen's enemies—Lady Boleyn and Mistress Cosyns—to be always near her; to which end they slept in her room, while Kingston and his wife slept outside against her chamber door. What could be the object of these strange precautions? We can only see one. Every word that fell from Anne, even in her convulsions or in her dreams, would be perfidiously caught up, and reported to the king's agents with malicious interpretations. Anne, pardoning the former conduct of these ladies, and wholly engrossed with her father's sorrow, thought she might ask for news about him from the persons who had been given her for companions; but the two women, who never spoke to her without rudeness, refused to give her any information. "The king knew what he was doing," said Anne to Kingston, "when he put these two women about me. I could have desired to have two ladies of my chamber, persons whom I love; but his Majesty has had the cruelty to give me those whom I could never endure."

The punishment continued. Lady Boleyn, hoping to detect some confusion in her niece's face, told her that her brother, Lord Rochford, was also in the Tower. Anne, who had somewhat recovered her strength, answered calmly, "I am glad to learn that he is so near me." "Madam," added Kingston, "Weston and Brereton are also under my charge." The queen remained calm.

She purposed, however, to vindicate herself, and her first thought turned towards two of the most pious men in England; "Oh, if God permitted me," she said, "to have my bishops (meaning Cranmer and Latimer), they would plead to the king for me." She then remained silent for a few minutes. A sweet reflection passed through her mind and consoled her. Since she had undertaken the defense of the persecuted evangelicals, gratitude would doubtless impel them to pray for her. "I think," she said, "that the greater part of England is praying for me."

Anne had asked for her almoner, and, as some hours had elapsed without his arrival, gloomy images once more arose to sadden her mind. "To be a queen," she said, "and to be treated so cruelly—treated as queen never was before!"

Then, as if a ray of sunshine had scattered the clouds, she exclaimed, "No, I shall not die—no, I will not die! ... The king has put me in prison only to prove me." The terrible struggle was too great for the young woman; distressed in her feelings beyond the bounds of endurance, she almost lost her senses. Then, attacked by a fresh hysterical paroxysm, the unfortunate lady burst into laughter. On coming to herself after a while, she cried, "I will have justice... justice... justice!" Kingston, who was present, bowed and said, "Assuredly, madam." "If any man accuses me," she continued, "I can only say 'No.' They can bring no witness against me." Then she had, all at once, an extraordinary attack; she fell down in delirium, and with eyes starting, as if she were looking into the future, and could foresee the chastisement with which God would punish the infamous wickedness of which she was the victim, she exclaimed, "If I am put to death, there will be great judgments upon England for seven years... And I... I shall be in heaven... for I have done many good deeds during my life."
CHAPTER 10
The Execution of Anne Boleyn
May, 1536

Everything was preparing for the unjust judgment which was to have so cruel a termination. Justice is bound to watch that the laws are observed, and to punish the guilty; but if law is to be just law, the judges must listen fairly to the accused, diligently discharge all the duties to which their office calls them, and not permit themselves to be influenced either by the presents or the solicitations, the threats or the favors, or the rank (even should it be royal) of the prosecutor. Their decisions should be inspired only by such motives as they can give an account of to the Supreme Judge; their sentences must be arrived at through attentive consideration and serious reflection. For them there are no other guides than impartiality, conscience, and law. But the queen was not to appear before such judges; those who were about to dispose of her life set themselves in opposition to these imperious conditions. Henry's agents redoubled their exertions to obtain, either from the ladies of the court or from the accused men, some deposition against Anne; but it was in vain. Even the women whom her elevation had eclipsed could allege nothing against her. Henry Norris, William Brereton, and Sir Francis Weston were carefully interrogated, one after the other; the examiners tried to make them confess to adultery, but they stoutly denied it, whereupon the king's agents, who were determined to get at something, began a fresh enquiry, and cross-examined the prisoners. It is believed that the gentlemen of the court were exempted from torture, but that the rack was applied to Mark Smeaton, who was thus made to confess all they wanted. It is more probable that the vile musician, a man of weak head and extreme vanity, being offended that his sovereign had not condescended even to look at him, yielded to the vengeance of irritated self-esteem. The queen had not been willing to give him the honor of a look—he boasted of adultery. The three gentlemen persevered in their declaration touching the queen's innocence; Lord Rochford did the same. The disheartened prosecutor wrote to the Lord-Treasurer, "This is to inform you that no one, except Mark, will confess anything against her; wherefore I imagine, if there be no other evidence, the business will be injurious to the king's honour." The lawyers knew the value to be given to the musician's words. If the verdict was left to the equitable interpretation of the law—if the king did not bring his sovereign influence to bear upon the decisions of the judges, there could be no doubt as to the issue of the hateful trial.

But every passion was at work to paralyze the power of right. Vainly the queen's innocence shone forth on every side—the conspiracy formed against her grew stronger every day. To the wickedness of Lady Rochford, the jealousies of an intriguing camarilla, the hatred of the papal party, the unbridled ambition aroused in certain families by the prospects of the despot's couch soon to be empty though stained with blood, and to the instability of weak men was added the strong will of Henry VIII, as determined to get rid of
Anne by death as he had been to separate from Catherine by divorce. The queen understood that she must die; and, wishing to be prepared, she sought to wean herself from that life which had so many attractions for her. She felt that the pleasures she had so much enjoyed were vain; the knowledge that she had endeavored to acquire, superficial; the virtue to which she had aspired, imperfect; and the active life she had desired, without decisive results. The vanity of all created things, once proclaimed by one who also had occupied a throne, struck her heart. Everything being taken from her, she renounced

Le vain espoir de ce muable monde.  
[The vain hope of this changeable world]

Anne, giving up everything, turned towards a better life, and sought to strengthen herself in God.

Such were her affecting dispositions when the duke of Norfolk, accompanied by other noblemen, came in the king’s name to set before her the charges brought against her, to summon her to speak the truth, and to assure her that, if she confessed her fault, the king might pardon her. Anne replied with the dignity of a queen still upon the throne, and with the calmness of a Christian at the gates of eternity. She threw back with noble indignation the vile accusations of which the royal commissioners were the channel.

"You call upon me to speak the truth," she said to Norfolk. "Well then, the king shall know it," and she dismissed the lords. It was beneath her to plead her cause before these malicious courtiers, but she would tell her husband the truth. Left alone, she sat down to write that celebrated letter, a noble monument of the elevation of her soul; a letter full of the tenderest complaints and the sharpest protests, in which her innocence shines forth, and which combines at once so much nature and eloquence that in the opinion of the most competent judges it deserves to be handed down to posterity. It ran as follows:

"Your Grace’s displeasure and my imprisonment are things so strange unto me, that what to write, or what to excuse, I am altogether ignorant. Whereas you sent to me (willing me to confess a truth and so obtain your favour), by such a one whom you know to be my ancient professed enemy; I no sooner received this message by him [probably the Duke of Suffolk], than I rightly conceived your meaning; and if, as you say, confessing a truth indeed may procure my safety, I shall with all willingness and duty perform your command.

"But let not your Grace ever imagine that your poor wife will ever be brought to acknowledge a fault, where not so much as a thought thereof ever proceeded. And, to speak truth, never a prince had wife more loyal in all duty and in all true affection, than you have ever found in Anne Boleyn—with which name and place I could willingly have contented myself, if God and your Grace’s pleasure had so pleased. Neither did I at any time so far forget myself in my exaltation or received queenship, but that I always looked for such alteration as I now find; for the ground of my preferment being on no surer foundation than your Grace’s fancy, the least alteration was fit and sufficient (I knew) to draw that fancy to some other subject."
"You have chosen me from a low estate to be your queen and companion, far beyond my desert or desire. If then you found me worthy of such honour, good your Grace, let not any light fancy or bad counsel of my enemies withdraw your princely favour from me; neither let that stain—that unworthy stain—of a disloyal heart towards your good Grace ever cast so foul a blot on me and on the infant princess, your daughter.

"Try me, good king, but let me have a lawful trial, and let not my sworn enemies sit as my accusers and as my judges; yea, let me receive an open trial, for my truth shall fear no open shames. Then shall you see either mine innocence cleared, your suspicions and conscience satisfied, the ignominy and slander of the world stopped—or my guilt openly declared; so that whatever God and you may determine of, your Grace may be freed from an open censure, and mine offence being so lawfully proved, your Grace may be at liberty, both before God and man, not only to execute worthy punishment on me, as an unfaithful wife, but to follow your affection already settled on that party, for whose sake I am now as I am; whose name I could, some good while since, have pointed unto, your Grace being not ignorant of my suspicion therein. But if you have already determined of me, and that not only my death but an infamous slander must bring you the joying of your desired happiness, then I desire of God that He will pardon your great sin herein, and likewise my enemies, the instruments thereof; and that He will not call you to a strict account for your unprincely and cruel usage of me at His general judgment seat, where both you and myself must shortly appear; and in whose just judgment, I doubt not (whatsoever the world may think of me), mine innocency shall be openly known and sufficiently cleared.

"My last and only request shall be, that myself may only bear the burden of your Grace's displeasure, and that it may not touch the innocent souls of those poor gentlemen, who, as I understand, are likewise in strait imprisonment for my sake. If ever I have found favour in your sight—if ever the name of Anne Boleyn have been pleasing in your ears—then let me obtain this request; and so I will leave to trouble your Grace any further; with mine earnest prayer to the Trinity to have your Grace in His good keeping, and to direct you in all your actions.

"From my doleful prison in the Tower, the 6th of May.
"Anne Boleyn."

We see Anne thoroughly in this letter, one of the most touching that was ever written. Injured in her honor, she speaks without fear, as one on the threshold of eternity. If there were no other proofs of her innocence, this document alone would suffice to gain her cause in the eyes of an impartial and intelligent posterity.

This noble letter aroused a tempest in the king’s heart. The firm innocence stamped on it; the mention of Henry’s tastes, and especially of his inclination for Jane Seymour; Anne’s declaration that she had anticipated her husband’s infidelity; the solemn appeal to the day of judgment; and the thought of the
injury which such noble language would do to his reputation—all combined to
fill that haughty prince with vexation, hatred, and wrath. The letter gives the
real solution of the enigma. A guilty caprice had inclined Henry to Anne Boleyn;
another caprice inclined him now to Jane Seymour. This explanation is so
patent that no one need look for another.
Henry determined to inflict a great humiliation upon this daring woman. He
would strip her of the name of wife, and pretend that she had only been his
concubine. As his marriage with Catherine of Aragon had been declared null
because of her union with his brother Arthur, Henry imagined that his marriage
with Anne Boleyn might be annulled because of an attachment once
entertained for her by Percy, afterwards duke of Northumberland. When that
nobleman was summoned before Cromwell, he thought that he also was to be
thrown into the Tower as the queen’s lover, but the summons had reference to
quite a different matter. “There was a pre-contract of marriage between you
and Anne Boleyn?” asked the king’s vicar-general. “None at all,” he answered,
and in order that his declaration might be recorded, he wrote it down and sent
it to Cromwell. In it he said, “Referring to the oath I made in this matter before
the archbishops of Canterbury and York, and before the Blessed Body of our
Saviour, which I received in the presence of the duke of Norfolk and others of
his Majesty’s counsellors, I acknowledge to have eaten the Holy Sacrament to
my condemnation, if there was any contract or promise of marriage between
the queen and me. This 13th of May, in the twenty-eighth year of his majesty
King Henry VIII.” This declaration was clear, but the barbarous monarch did not
relinquish his idea.
A special commission had been appointed, on the 24th of April, “to judge of
certain offenses committed at London, Hampton Court, and Greenwich.” They
desired to give to this trial the appearance at least of justice; and as the
alleged offenses were committed in the counties of Middlesex and Kent, the
indictment was laid before the grand juries of both counties. On the 10th of May
they found a true bill. The writers favorable to Henry VIII in this business—and
they are few—have acknowledged that these “hideous charges” (to use the
words of one of them) were but fables invented at pleasure, and which
“overstepped all ordinary bounds of credulity.” Various explanations have been
given of the conduct of these juries; the most natural appears to be that they
accommodated themselves, according to the servile manner of the times, to
the king’s despotic will, which was always to be feared, but more especially in
matters that concerned his own person.
The acts that followed were as prompt as they were cruel. Two days later (on
May 12th) Norris, Weston, Brereton, and the musician were taken to
Westminster, and brought before a commission composed of the dukes of
Norfolk and Suffolk, Henry’s two intimates, and other lords; it is even said that
the earl of Wiltshire was present. The three gentlemen repelled the charge
with unshakable firmness. “I would endure a thousand deaths,” said Norris,
“sooner than betray the innocent. I declare, upon my honor, that the queen is
innocent, and am ready to support my testimony in arms against all the world.”
When this language of Henry VIII’s favorite was reported to that prince, he
cried out, "Hang him up, then—hang him up!" The wretched musician alone confessed a crime which would give him a place in history. He did not reap the reward promised to his infamy. Perhaps it was imagined that his death would guarantee his silence, and that his punishment would corroborate his defamations. The three gentlemen were condemned to be beheaded, and the musician to be hanged.

Three days later (on May 15th) the queen and her brother were taken before their peers in the great hall of the Tower, to which the Lord Mayor and a few aldermen and citizens alone were admitted. The duke of Norfolk had received orders to assemble a certain number of peers to form a court; they were twenty-six in all, and most of them enemies of Anne and of the Reformation. The earl of Wiltshire, Anne’s father, was not of the number, as Sanders pretends. The duke of Norfolk, the personal enemy of the unfortunate queen, that uncle who hated her as much as he should have loved her, had been appointed to select the judges and to preside over the trial—a circumstance indicative of the spirit in which it was to be conducted. Norfolk took his seat, having the lord-chancellor on his right and the duke of Suffolk on his left, and in front of him sat as deputy earl-marshal the earl of Surrey, Norfolk’s son, an upright man, but a proud and warm supporter of Romanism. The queen was announced; she was received in deep silence. Before her went the governor of the Tower, behind her came Lady Kingston and Lady Boleyn. Anne advanced with dignity, adorned with the ensigns of royalty, and, after gracefully saluting the court, took her seat in the chair accorded either to her weakness or her rank. She had no defender; but the modesty of her countenance, the dignity of her manner, the peace of her conscience, which found expression in the serenity of her look, touched even her enemies. She appeared before the tribunal of men, thinking only of the tribunal of God; and, relying upon her innocence, she did not fear those whom but yesterday she had ruled as a queen. One might have said from the calmness and nobility of her deportment, so assured and so majestic, that she was come, not to be tried as a criminal, but to receive the honors due to sovereigns. She was as firm, says a contemporary, as an oak that fears neither the hail nor the furious blasts of the wind.

The court ordered the indictment to be read; it charged the queen with adultery, incest, and conspiracy against the king’s person. Anne held up her hand and pleaded "not guilty," and then refuted and tore to tatters, calmly yet forcibly, the accusations brought against her. Having an “excellent quick wit,” and being a ready speaker, she did not utter a word that did not strike home, though full of moderation; but the tone of her voice, the calmness of her features, and the dignity of her countenance pleaded more eloquently than her words. It was impossible to look at her or to hear her, and not declare her innocent, says an eyewitness. Accordingly there was a report in the Tower, and even in the city, that the queen had cleared herself by a most wise and noble speech and that she would be acquitted.

While Anne was speaking, the duke of Northumberland, who had once loved her and whom Henry had cruelly enrolled among the number of her judges,
betrayed by his uneasy movements the agitation of his bosom. Unable to endure the frightful torment any longer, he rose, pretending indisposition, and hastily left the hall before the fatal verdict was pronounced. The king waited impatiently for the moment when he could introduce Jane Seymour into Anne Boleyn’s empty apartments. Unanimity of votes was not necessary among the “lords triers.” In England, during the sixteenth century, there was pride in the people, but servility (with few exceptions) among the great. The axe that had severed the head of the venerable bishop of Rochester and of the ex-chancellor More had taught a fearful lesson to all who might be disposed to resist the despotic desires of the prince. The court feared to confront the queen with the musician, the only witness against her, and declared her guilty without other formality. The incomprehensible facility with which the nobility were then accustomed to submit to the inflexible will of the monarch could leave no room for doubt as to the catastrophe by which this tragedy would be terminated. The duke of Norfolk, as lord high-steward, pronounced sentence: that the queen should be taken back to the Tower, and there on the green should be burned or beheaded, according to his Majesty’s good pleasure. The court, desirous of leaving a little space for Henry’s compassion, left the mode of death to him; he might do the queen the favor of being only decapitated. Anne heard this infamous doom with calmness. No change was observed in her features; the consciousness of innocence upheld her heart. Clasping her hands and raising her eyes to heaven, she cried out, “O Father, O Creator! Thou who art the way, the truth, and the life, knowest that I have not deserved this death!” Then, turning to her cruel uncle and the other lords, she said, “My lords, I do not say that my opinion ought to be preferred to your judgment; but if you have reasons to justify it, they must be other than those which have been produced in court, for I am wholly innocent of all the matters of which I have been accused, so that I cannot call upon God to pardon me. I have always been faithful to the king my lord; but perhaps I have not always shown to him such a perfect humility and reverence as his graciousness and courtesy deserved, and the honor he hath done me required. I confess that I have often had jealous fancies against him which I had not wisdom or strength enough to repress. But God knows that I have not otherwise trespassed against him. Do not think I say this in the hope of prolonging my life, for He who saveth from death has taught me how to die, and will strengthen my faith. Think not, however, that I am so bewildered in mind that I do not care to vindicate my innocence. I knew that it would avail me little to defend it at the last moment, if I had not maintained it all my life long, as much as ever queen did. Still the last words of my mouth shall justify my honor. As for my brother and the other gentlemen who are unjustly condemned, I would willingly die to save them; but as that is not the king’s pleasure, I shall accompany them in death. And then afterwards I shall live in eternal peace and joy without end, where I will pray to God for the king—and for you, my lords.” The wisdom and eloquence of this speech, aided by the queen’s beauty and the touching expression of her voice, moved even her enemies. But Norfolk,
determined upon carrying out his hateful task, ordered her to lay aside her royal insignia. She did so, and commending herself to all their prayers, returned to her prison.

Lord Rochford’s trial had preceded that of his sister the queen. He was calm and firm, and answered every question point by point, with much clearness and decision. But it was useless for him to affirm the queen’s innocence—useless to declare that he had always respected her as a sister, as an "honored lady"; he was condemned to be beheaded and quartered.

The court broke up, and while the courtiers, who had just sealed with the blood of an innocent queen their servile submission to the most formidable of despots, were returning to their amusements and base flatteries, the Lord Mayor turned to a friend and said to him, "I can only observe one thing in this trial—the fixed resolution to get rid of the queen at any price." And that is the verdict of posterity.

The wretches who had entered into this iniquitous plot were eager to have it ended. On the 17th of May the gentlemen who were to be executed were brought together into a hall of the Tower. They embraced, commended each other to God, and prepared to depart. The constable of the Tower, fearing that they would speak upon the scaffold, reminded them that the honor due to the king would not permit them to doubt the justice of their sentence. When they reached the place of punishment, Lord Rochford, no longer able to keep silence, turned towards the spectators and said, "My friends, I am going to die, as such is his Majesty’s pleasure. I do not complain of my death, for I have committed many sins during my life, but I have never injured the king. May God grant him a long and happy life!" Then, according to the chronicler, he presented his head "to the sharp axe which severed it at a blow." Norris, Weston, and Brereton were beheaded after him.

The king, before putting his wife to death, desired to perform an act not less cruel; he was determined to annul his marriage with Anne, notwithstanding Northumberland’s denials. Did he wish to avoid the reproach of causing his wife to perish by the hands of the executioner? or, in a fit of anger, did he desire to strike the queen on all sides at once? We cannot tell. Be that as it may, the king in his wrath did not see that he was contradicting himself; that if there was no marriage between him and Anne, there could be no adultery, and that the sentence, based on this crime, was ex facto null. Cranmer, the most unfortunate, but perhaps not the least guilty of all the lords who lent themselves servilely to the despotic wishes of the prince—Cranmer believed (as it appears) that the position of the queen would thus become better; that her life would be saved, if she could no longer be regarded as having been Henry’s wife. This excuses, although only slightly, his great weakness. He told the unhappy lady that he was commissioned to find the means of declaring null and void the ties which united her to the king. Anne, stunned by the sentence pronounced upon her, was also of opinion that it was an expedient invented by some relics of Henry’s regard, to rescue her from the bitterness of death. Her heart opened to hope, and imagining that she would only be sent into banishment, she formed a plan of returning to the continent. "I will go to
Antwerp," she said at dinner, with an almost happy look. She knew that she would meet with Protestants in that city, who would receive her with joy. But vain hope! In the very letter wherein the governor of the Tower reports this ingenuous remark of the queen, he asks for the king’s orders as to the construction of the scaffold. Henry desired personally to order the arrangement of those planks which he was about to stain with innocent blood. About nine o’clock in the forenoon of the 17th of May, the lord-chancellor, the duke of Suffolk, the earl of Essex (Cromwell), the earl of Sussex, with several doctors and archdeacons, entered the chapel of Lambeth. The archbishop having taken his seat, and the objections made against the marriage of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn having been read, the proctors of the king and of the queen admitted them, and the primate declared the marriage to be null and void.

On the very day of Anne Boleyn’s divorce, Da Casale, the English envoy at Rome, having heard of the queen’s imprisonment, hurried to the pontifical palace to inform Paul III of the good news. "I have never ceased praying to heaven for this favor," said the pope with delight, "and I have always hoped for it. Now his Majesty may accomplish an admirable work for the good of Christendom. Let the king become reconciled with Rome, and he will obtain from the king of France all that he can wish for. Let us be friends. I will send him a nuncio for that purpose. When the news of Cardinal Fisher’s death reached Rome," he continued, recollecting that terrible bull, "it is true I found myself driven to a measure somewhat severe... but I never intended to follow up my words by deeds." Thus, according to the pope and his adherents, the imprisonment of Anne Boleyn was to reconcile England and Rome. This fact points to one of the causes which made Norfolk and other catholics enter into the conspiracy against her.

On the same day also (17th of May), towards evening, the queen learned that the sentence would assuredly be carried out. Although it was declared that she had never been the king’s wife, the doom pronounced upon her for adultery must nevertheless be accomplished. This is what Henry VIII called administering justice.

Anne desired to take the Lord’s Supper, and asked to be left alone. About two hours after midnight the chaplain arrived; but, before partaking of the holy rite, there was one thing she wished to do. One fault weighed heavily on her heart. She felt that she had sinned against queen Catherine by consenting to marry the king. Her conscience reproached her with having injured the princess Mary. It filled her with the deepest sorrow, and she was eager, before she died, to make reparation to the daughter of the woman whose place she had taken. Anne would have liked to see Mary, to fall a queen at her feet, and implore her pardon, but alas! she could not; she was only to leave the prison for the scaffold. Resolved, however, to confess her fault, she did so in a striking manner which showed all the sincerity of her repentance and her firm determination to humble herself before Catherine’s daughter. She begged Lady Kingston, the wife of the constable of the Tower, who had little regard for her, to take her seat in the chair of state. When the latter objected, Anne
compelled her, and kneeling before her, she said, all the while crying bitterly, "I charge you—as you would answer before God—to go in my name to the princess Mary, to fall down before her as I do now before you, and ask her forgiveness for all the wrongs I have done her. Until that is done," she added, "my conscience will have no rest." At the moment when she was about to appear before the throne of God, she wished to make reparation for a fault that weighed heavily upon her heart. "In fact," she said, "I wish to do what a Christian ought." This touching incident leads us to hope that if, during life, Anne was simply an honest Protestant, trusting too much to her own works, the trial had borne fruit and had made her a true Christian. But of this she was to give a still more striking proof.

As she rose from her knees, Anne felt more calm and prepared to receive the sacrament. Before taking it, she once more declared her innocence of the crime imputed to her. The governor was present, and he did not fail to inform Cromwell of this declaration, made as it were in the presence of God. Anne had found in Christ's death new strength to endure her own; she sighed after the moment that would put an end to her sorrows. Contrary to her expectation, she was told that the execution was put off until the afternoon. "Mr. Kingston," she said, "I hear that I am not to die this afternoon, and I am very sorry for it; for I thought by this time to be dead and past my pain."

"Madam," replied the governor, "you will feel no pain, the blow will be so sharp and swift." "Yes," resumed Anne, "I have heard say that the headsman is very clever," and then she added, "and I have but a little neck," putting her hand about it and smiling. Kingston left the room.

Meanwhile the devout adherents of the Roman primacy were full of exultation, and allowed the hopes to appear which Anne's death raised in their bosoms. "Sire," they told the king, "the tapers placed round the tomb of queen Catherine suddenly burst into flame of their own accord." They concluded, from this prodigy, that Roman Catholicism was once more about to shed its light on England.

The hour appointed for Anne's death now drew near. Protesting her innocence to the last, she determined to send to Henry a final message. It was carried to him by a member of his privy-chamber. Thus she addressed him: "Commend me to his Majesty, and tell him that he has ever been constant in his career of advancing me. From a private gentlewoman he made me a marchioness, from a marchioness a queen; and now that he has no higher degree of honour left, he gives my innocence the crown of martyrdom." The gentleman went and reported this noble farewell to his master. Even the gaoler bore testimony to the peace and joy which filled Anne Boleyn's heart at this solemn moment. "I have seen men and also women executed," wrote Kingston to Cromwell, "and they have been in great sorrow, but to my knowledge this lady has much joy and pleasure in death."

Everything was arranged so that the murder should be perpetrated without publicity and without disturbance. Kingston received orders to turn all strangers out of the Tower, and readily obeyed. About eleven in the forenoon of the 19th of May, the dukes of Suffolk and Richmond, the lord-chancellor,
Cromwell, the lord mayor with the sheriffs and aldermen, entered the Tower, and took their stations on the green, where the instrument of punishment had been erected. The executioner, whom Henry had summoned from Calais, was there with his sword and his attendants. A cannon, mounted on the walls, was to announce both to king and people that all was over. A little before noon Anne appeared, dressed in a robe of black damask, and attended by four of her maids of honor. She walked up to the block on which she was to lay her head. Her step was firm, her looks calm; all indicated the most complete resignation. "Never had she looked so beautiful before," says a French contemporary, then in London. Her eyes expressed a meek submission; a pleasing smile accompanied the look she turned on the spectators of this tragic scene. But just when the executioners had made the last preparations, her emotion was so keen that she nearly fainted. Gradually she recovered her strength, and her faith in the Savior filled her with courage and hope.

It is important to know what, in this last and solemn moment, were her sentiments towards the king. She had desired that Mary should be asked to forgive her wrongs; it was her duty, if she died a Christian, also to pardon Henry's faults. She must obey her Savior, who said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you." She had pardoned everything; but it was her duty to declare it before she died, and if she was humble, she would do so without affectation. Addressing those who had been her subjects and were then standing round her, she said, "Good Christian people, I am not come here to justify myself; I leave my justification entirely to Christ, in whom I put my trust. I will accuse no man, nor speak anything of that whereof I am accused, as I know full well that aught that I could say in my defense doth not appertain unto you, and that I could draw no hope of life from the same. I come here only to die, according as I have been condemned. I commend my judges to the Lord's mercy. I pray God (and I beg you to do the same) to save the king and send him long to reign over you, for a gentler or more merciful prince there never was. To me he was ever a good, gentle, and sovereign lord. And thus I take my leave of the world and of you, and I heartily desire you all to pray for me. O Lord, have mercy upon me! To God I commit my soul!"

Such are the simple words in which Anne gave utterance to the feelings of peace with which her heart was filled towards her husband, at the moment when he was robbing her of life. Had she said that she forgave him, she would have called up the memory of the king's crime, and would thus have appeared to claim the merit of her generous pardon. She did nothing of the sort. During one part of their wedded life, Henry had been a "good lord" to her. She desired to recall the good only, and buried the evil in oblivion. She did so without any thought of self, for she knew that before the gracious words could reach the king's ears, the sword would have already fallen upon her, and it would be impossible for Henry to arrest the fatal blow.

This Christian discourse could not fail to make a deep impression on all who heard her. As they looked at the unfortunate queen, they felt the tenderest compassion and the sharpest pain. The firmer her heart became, the weaker grew the spectators of the tragedy. Ere long they were unable to check the
tears which the sufferer had the strength to restrain. One of the ladies of the royal victim approached her to cover her eyes; but Anne refused, saying that she was not afraid of death, and gave her as a memorial of that hour a little manuscript prayer book that she had brought with her.
The queen then removed her white collar and took off her hood, that the action of the sword might not be impeded; this head-dress formed a queue and hung down behind. Then falling on her knees, she remained a few moments silent and motionless, praying inwardly. On rising up, she approached the fatal block, and laid her head on it. "O Christ, into thy hands I commit my soul!" she exclaimed. The headsman, disturbed by the mild expression of her face, hesitated a few seconds, but his courage returned. Anne cried out again, "O Jesus, receive my soul!" At this instant the sword of the executioner flashed in the air and her head fell. A cry escaped from the lips of the spectators, "as if they had received the blow upon their own necks." This is honorable to Anne’s enemies, so that we may well believe the evidence. But immediately another sound was heard; the gunner, placed as a signal-man on the wall, had watched the different phases of the scene, holding a lighted match in his hand; scarcely had the head fallen, when he fired the gun, and the report, which was heard at a distance, bore to Henry the news of the crime which gave him Jane Seymour. The ladies of queen Anne, though almost lifeless with terror, would not permit the noble remains of the mistress whom they had loved so much to be touched by rude hands; they gathered round the body, wrapped it in a white sheet, and carried it (almost fainting as they were) to an old elm chest, which had been brought out of the arsenal and had been used for storing arrows. This rough box was the last home assigned to her who had inhabited costly palaces; not so much as a coffin had been provided for her. The ladies placed in it Anne’s head and body; "the eyes and lips were observed to move," says a document, as if her mouth was repeating the last words it had uttered. She was immediately buried in the Tower chapel.
Thus died Anne Boleyn. If the violent passions of a prince and the meanness of his courtiers brought her to an untimely death, hatred and credulity have killed her a second time. But an infamous calumny, forged by dishonest individuals, ought to be sternly rejected by all sensible men. Not in vain did Anne, at the hour of death, place her cause in the hands of God, and we willingly believe that all enlightened men, without prejudice or partiality, among Roman Catholics as among others, turn with disgust from the vile falsehoods of malicious courtiers and the deceitful fables of the papist Sanders and his followers.
On the morning of this day, Henry VIII had dressed himself in white, as for a festival, and ordered a hunting party. There was a great stir round the palace; huntsmen hurrying to and fro, dogs baying, horns sounding, nobles arriving. The troop was formed and they all set off for Epping Forest, where the sport began. At noon the hunters met to repose themselves under an oak which still bears the name of the King’s Oak. Henry had taken his seat beneath it, surrounded by his suite and the dogs; he listened and seemed to be agitated. Suddenly a cannon shot resounded through the forest—it was the concerted signal—the
queen’s head had fallen. "Ha, ha!" exclaimed the king, rising, "the deed is done! uncouple the hounds and away." Horns and trumpets were sounded, and dogs and horses were soon in pursuit. The wretched prince, led away by his passions, forgot that there is a God to whom he would have to render an account not only of the execution in the Tower, but of the chase in the forest; and by these cruel acts, which should have shocked the hearts even of his courtiers, he branded himself with his own hands as a great criminal. The king and his court returned to the palace before nightfall.

At last Henry was free. He had desired Jane Seymour, and everything had been invented—adultery, incest—to break the bonds that united him to the queen. The proofs of Anne’s crimes failing, the ferocious acts of the king were to supply their place. Could those who witnessed the cruelty of the husband venture to doubt the guilt of the wife? Henry had become inhuman that he might not appear faithless. Now that the object was obtained, it only remained to profit by his crime. His impatience to gratify his passions made him flout all propriety. The mournful death of his queen, the Christian words that she had uttered, kissing as it were the cruel hand that struck her—nothing softened his heart. On the 19th of May, the day of Anne’s execution, Cranmer issued a special license to enable the king to marry again. On the 20th, Henry and Jane Seymour were betrothed, and ten days later they were married privately at York Place. It would have been difficult to say in a more striking manner, "This is why Anne Boleyn is no more!" When we see side by side the bloodstained block on which Anne had received her death blow, and the brilliant altar before which Henry and Jane were united, we can understand the story. The prince, at once voluptuous and cruel, liked to combine the most contrary objects in the same picture—crime and festivities, marriage and death, sensuality and hatred. He showed himself the most magnificent and most civilized monarch of Europe, but also the rival of those barbarous kings of savage hordes who take delight in cutting off the heads of those who have been their favorites and even the objects of their most passionate love. We must employ different standards in judging of the same person, when we regard him as a private and as a public individual. The Tudor prince, so guilty as a husband, father, and friend, did much good as a ruler for England. Louis XIV, as well as Henry VIII, had some of the characteristics of a great king, and his moral life was certainly not better than that of his prototype in England. He had as many, and even more mistresses than the predecessor of the Stuarts had wives; but the only advantage which the French monarch had over the English one is that he knew how to get rid of them without cutting off their heads. The death of Anne Boleyn caused a great sensation in Europe, as that of Fisher and More had done before it. Her innocence, which Henry (it is said) acknowledged on his deathbed, was denied by some and maintained by others, but all men of principle expressed a feeling of horror when they heard of her punishment. The Protestant princes and divines of Germany had not a doubt that this cruel act was the pledge of reconciliation offered to the pope by Henry VIII, and renounced the alliance they were on the point of concluding with England. "At last I am free from that journey," said Melanchthon, whom
Anne Boleyn’s death, added to that of Sir Thomas More, had rendered even less desirous of approaching the prince who had struck them. "The queen," he continued, "accused, rather than convicted, of adultery, has suffered the penalty of death, and that catastrophe has wrought great changes in our plans."

Somewhat later the Protestants ascribed Anne’s death especially to the pope. "That blow came from Rome," they cried, "in Rome all these tricks and plots are contrived." In this I suspect there is a mistake. The plots of the Roman court against Elizabeth have caused it to be accused of similar designs against the mother of the great Protestant queen. The friends of that court in England were probably no strangers to the crime, but the great criminal was Henry.

CHAPTER 11
Catholicism versus Protestantism
Summer, 1536

After queen Anne’s death the two parties were agitated in opposite directions. The friends of the Reformation wished to show that the disgrace of that princess did not carry with it the disgrace of the cause they had at heart, and consequently believed that they ought to accelerate the Reform movement. The friends of Rome and its doctrines imagining, on their part, that the queen’s death had put their affairs in good train, thought they had but to redouble their activity to gain a complete victory. The latter seemed indeed to have some reasons for encouragement. If Catherine’s death four months earlier reconciled Henry VIII and the Emperor just when the latter was threatening England with invasion, the death of Anne Boleyn appeared as if it would reconcile the king with Paul III, who was ready to issue his terrible bull. Henry’s wives played a great part in his private history, but they had also a certain importance in his relations with the powers of Europe, especially with the pope. The court of Rome was very desirous of reviving the ancient friendship which had united it to England. These desires increased rapidly.

On the 20th of May, when the news of the queen’s prosecution arrived in Rome, both pope and cardinals were transported with joy. The frightful calumnies of which Anne was the victim served the cause of the papacy too well not to be accepted as truths, and all felt persuaded that, if she fell from the throne, the acts done at London against the Italian primacy would fall with her. When Henry’s agent, Da Casale, informed the pope that the queen had been sent to prison, Paul exclaimed with delight, "I always thought, when I saw Henry endowed with so many virtues, that heaven would not forsake him. If he is willing to unite with me," he added, "I shall have authority enough to enjoin the Emperor and the king of France to make peace with him; and the king of England, reconciled with the Church, will command the powers of Europe." At the same time Paul III confessed that he had made a mistake in raising Fisher to the cardinalate, and wound up this pontifical effusion in the kindest of terms. Da Casale, much delighted on his part, asked whether he was to repeat these matters to the king. "Tell him," answered the pope, "that his Majesty may,
without hesitation, expect everything from me.” Da Casale, therefore, made his report to London, and intimated that, if Henry made the least sign of reconciliation, the pope would immediately send him a nuncio. Thus Paul left not a stone unturned to win over the king of England. He extolled his virtues, promised him the foremost place in Europe, flattered his vanity as an author, and did not fear—he the infallible one—to acknowledge that he had made a mistake. Everybody at the court of Rome felt convinced that England was about to return to the bosom of the Church; Cardinal Campeggio even sent his brother to London to resume possession of the bishopric of Salisbury, of which he had been deprived in 1534. Up to the end of June, the pope and the cardinals became kinder and more respectful to the English, and entertained the most flattering expectations regarding the return of England.

Would these expectations be realized? Henry VIII was not one man, but two; his domestic passions and his public acts formed two departments entirely distinct. Guided as an individual by passion, he was, as a king, sometimes led by just views. He believed that neither pope nor foreign monarch had a right to exercise the smallest jurisdiction in England. He was therefore resolved—and this saved England—to maintain the rupture with Rome. One circumstance might have taught him that in all respects it was the best thing he could do. Rome has two modes of bringing back princes under her yoke—flattery and abuse. The pope had adopted the first; a person, at that time without influence, Reginald Pole, an Englishman, and also a relative and protégé of Henry, undertook the second. In 1535 he was in the north of Italy. Burning with love for the papacy and hatred for the king, his benefactor, he wrote a defense of the unity of the Church, addressed to Henry VIII, and overflowing with violence. The wise and pious Contarini, to whom he showed it, begged him to soften a tone that might cause much harm. As Pole refused, Contarini entreated him at least to submit his manuscript to the pope; but the young Englishman, fearing that Paul would require him to suppress the untoward publication, declined to accede to his friend’s request. His object was, not to convert the king, but to stir up the English against their lawful prince, and induce them to fall prostrate again before the Roman pontiff. The treatise, finished in the winter of 1535-36, before Anne’s trial, reached London the first week in June. Tunstall, now bishop of Durham, and Pole’s friend, read the book, which contained a few truths mixed up with great errors, and then communicated it to the king. Never did haughty monarch receive so rude a lesson.

"Shall I write to you, O prince," said the young Englishman, "or shall I not? Observing in you the certain symptoms of the most dangerous malady, and assured as I am that I possess the remedies suitable to cure you, how can I refrain from pronouncing the word which alone can preserve your life? I love you, sire, as son never loved his father, and God perhaps will make my voice to be like that of His own Son, whose voice even the dead hear. O prince, you are dealing the most deadly blow against the Church that it can possibly receive; you rob it of the chief whom it possesses upon earth. Why should a king, who is the supreme head of the State, occupy a similar place in the Church? If we may
trust the arguments of your doctors, we must conclude that Nero was the head of the Church. We should laugh, if the laughter were not to be followed by tears. There is as great a distance between the ecclesiastical and the civil power, as there is between heaven and earth. There are three estates in human society: first, the people; then the king, who is the son of the people; and lastly, the priest, who being the spouse of the people is consequently the father of the king. But you, in imitation of the pride of Lucifer, set yourself above the vicar of Jesus Christ. ... "What! you have rent the Church, as it was never before rent in that island, you have plundered and cruelly tormented it, and you claim, in virtue of such merits, to be called its supreme head. There are two Churches; if you are at the head of one, it is not the Church of Christ; if you are, it is like Satan, who is the prince of the world, which he oppresses under his tyranny. ... You reign, but after the fashion of the Turks. A simple nod of your head has more power than ancient laws and rights. Sword in hand you decide religious controversies. Is not that thoroughly Turkish and barbarian? ... "O England! if you have not forgotten your ancient liberty, what indignation ought to possess you, when you see your king plunder, condemn, murder, squander all your wealth, and leave you nothing but tears. Beware, for if you let your grievances be heard, you will be afflicted with still deeper wounds. O my country! it is in your power to change your great sorrow into greater joy. Neither Nero nor Domitian, nor—I dare affirm—Luther himself, if he had been king of England, would have wished to avenge himself by putting to death such men as Fisher and Sir Thomas More! ... "What king has ever given more numerous signs of respect to the supreme pontiff than that Francis I who spoke of you, O Henry, in words received with applause by the whole Christian world: ‘your friend even to the altar’ (i.e. to the last extremity)? The Emperor Charles has just subdued the pirates, but is there any pirate that is worse than you? Have you not plundered the wealth of the Church, thrown the bodies of the saints into prison, and reduced men’s souls to slavery? If I heard that the Emperor with all his fleet was sailing for Constantinople, I would fall at his feet, and say—were it even in the straits of the Hellespont—‘O Emperor, what are you thinking of? Do you not see that a much greater danger than the Turks threatens the Christian republic? Change your route. What would be the use of expelling the Turks from Europe, when new Turks are hatched among us?’ Certainly the English for slighter causes have forced their kings to put off their crowns." After the apostrophe addressed to Charles V, Reginald Pole returns to Henry VIII, and imagining himself to be the prophet Elijah before king Ahab, he says with great boldness, "O king, the Lord hath commanded me to curse you, but if you will patiently listen to me, he will return you good for evil. Why delay to confess your sin? Do not say that you have done everything according to the rules of Holy Scripture. Does not the Church, which gives it authority, know what is to be received and what rejected? You have forsaken the fountain of wisdom. Return to the Church, O prince! and all that you have lost you shall regain with more splendour and glory."
"But if anyone hears the sound of the trumpet and does not heed it, the sword is drawn from the scabbard, the guilty is smitten, and his blood is upon his own head."

We have hardly given the flower of this long tirade, written in the style of the 16th century, which, divided into four books, fills one hundred and ninety-two folio pages. It reached England at the moment of the condemnation of the innocent Anne, which Pole unconsciously protested against as unjust, more unjust even than the sentences of Fisher and More. Henry did not at first read his "pupil's" philippic through. He saw enough, however, to regard it as an insult, a divorce which Italy had sent him. He ordered Pole to return to England, but the latter remembered too well the fate of Fisher and Sir Thomas More to run the risk. Bishop Tunstall, one of the enemies of the Reformation, wrote, however, to Pole, that as Christ was the head of the Church, to separate it from the pope was not to separate from its head. This refutation was short but complete.

The king was resolved to maintain his independence of the pope. Some have ascribed this determination to Pole's treatise, and others to the influence of Jane Seymour. Both these circumstances may have had some weight in Henry's mind, but the great cause, we repeat, is that he would not suffer any master but himself in England. Gardiner replied to Pole in a treatise which he entitled On True Obedience, to which Bonner wrote the preface.

Paul III was not the only one who descried the signal of triumph in Anne's death; the princess Mary believed that she would now become heiress—presumptive to the crown. Lady Kingston having discharged Anne Boleyn's Christian commission, Catherine's daughter, but slightly affected by this touching conduct, took advantage of it for her own interest, and charged that lady with a letter addressed to Cromwell, in which she begged him to intercede for her with the king, so that the rank which belonged to her should be restored. Henry consented to receive his daughter into favor, but not without conditions. "Madam," said Norfolk, who had been sent to her by the king, "here are the articles which require your signature."

The daughter of the proud Catherine of Aragon was to acknowledge four points—the supremacy of the king, the imposture of the pope, the incest of her own mother, and her own illegitimacy. She refused, but as Norfolk was not to be shaken, she signed the two first articles, then laying down the pen, she exclaimed, "As for my own shame and my mother's—never!" Cromwell threatened her, called her obstinate and unnatural, and told her that her father would abandon her; the unhappy princess signed everything. She was restored to favor, and given the means to maintain a household suitable to her rank; but she was deceived in thinking that the misfortune of her little half-sister Elizabeth would replace her on the steps of the throne.

Parliament met on the 8th of June, when the chancellor announced to them that the king, notwithstanding his mishaps in matrimony, had yielded to the humble solicitations of the nobility, and formed a new union. The two houses ratified the accomplished facts. No man desired to stir the ashes from which sparks might issue and kindle a great conflagration. At no price would they
compromise the most exalted persons in the kingdom, and especially the king. All the allegations, even the most absurd, were admitted; Parliament wanted to have done with the matter. It even went further; the king was thanked for the most excellent goodness which had induced him to marry a lady whose brilliant youth, remarkable beauty, and purity of blood were the sure pledges of the happy issue which a marriage with her could not fail to produce; and his most respectful subjects, determined to bury the faults of their prince under flowers, compared him for beauty to Absalom, for strength to Samson, and for wisdom to Solomon. Parliament added that as the daughters of Catherine and Anne were both illegitimate, the succession had devolved upon the children of Jane Seymour. As, however, it was possible that she might not have any issue, parliament granted Henry the privilege of naming his successor in his will—an enormous prerogative, conferred upon the most capricious of monarchs. Those who refused to take the oath required by the statute were to be declared guilty of high treason.

Parliament, having thus arranged the king’s business, set about the business of the country. "My lords," said ministers on the 4th of July to the upper house, "the bishop of Rome, whom some persons call pope, wishing to have the means of satisfying his love of luxury and tyranny, has obscured the Word of God, excluded Jesus Christ from the soul, banished princes from their kingdoms, monopolized the mind, body, and goods of all Christians, and, in particular, extorted great sums of money from England by his worthless superstitions."

Parliament decided that the penalties of præmunire should be inflicted on everybody who recognized the authority of the Roman pontiff, and that every student, ecclesiastic, and civil functionary should be bound to renounce the pope in an oath made in the name of God and all his saints.

This bill was the cause of great joy in England; the protestant spirit was stirred; there was a great outburst of sarcasms, and one could see that the citizens of the capital naturally were not friends to the papacy. Man is inclined to laugh at what he has respected when he finds that he has been deceived, and then readily classes among human follies what he had once taken for the wisdom of heaven. A contest of epigrams was begun in London, similar to that which had so often taken place at Rome between Pasquin and Marforio; perhaps, however, the jokes were occasionally a little heavy.

"Do you see the stole round the priest’s neck?" said one wit, "it is nothing else but the bishop of Rome’s rope."

"Matins, masses, and evensong are nothing but a roaring, howling, whistling, murmuring, tomming, and juggling."

"It is as lawful to christen a child in a tub of water at home or in a ditch by the way, as in a font-stone in the church."

Gradually this jesting spirit made its way to the lower classes of society. "Holy water is very useful," said one who haunted the London taverns, "for as it is already salted, you have only to put an onion in it to make sauce for a gibbet of mutton."

"What is that you say?" replied some blacksmith, "it is a very good medicine for a horse with a galled back."
But while frivolity and a desire to show one’s wit, however coarse it might be, gave birth to silly jests merely provocative of laughter, the love of truth inspired the evangelical Christians with serious words which irritated the priests more than the raillery of the jesters. “The Church,” they said, “is not the clergy; the Church is the congregation of good men only. All ceremonies accustomed in the Church and not clearly expressed in Scripture ought to be done away. When the sinner is converted, all the sins over which he sheds tears are remitted freely by the Father who is in heaven.”

Along with the words of the profane and of the pious came the words of the priests. A convocation of the clergy was summoned to meet at St. Paul’s on the 9th of June. The bishops came and took their places, and anyone might count the votes which Rome and the Reformation had on the episcopal bench. For the latter there were Archbishop Cranmer; Goodrich, bishop of Ely; Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury; Fox, bishop of Hereford; Latimer, bishop of Worcester; Hilsey, bishop of Rochester; Barlow, bishop of St. David’s; Warton, bishop of St. Asaph; and Sampson, bishop of Chichester—nine votes in all. For Rome there were Lee, archbishop of York; Stokesley, bishop of London; Tunstall, bishop of Durham; Longland, bishop of Lincoln; Vesey, bishop of Exeter; Clerk, bishop of Bath; Lee, bishop of Lichfield; Salcot, bishop of Bangor; and Rugge, bishop of Norwich—nine against nine. If Gardiner had not been in France there would have been a majority against the Reformation. A numerous company of priors and mitered abbots, members of the upper house, seemed to assure victory to the partisans of tradition. The clergy, who assembled under their respective banners, were divided not by shades but by glaring colors, and people asked, as they looked on this chequered group, which of the colors would carry the day. Cranmer had taken precautions that they should not leave the church without being enlightened on that point.

The bishop of London having sung the mass of the Holy Ghost, Latimer, who had been selected by the primate to edify the assembly, went up into the pulpit. Being a man of bold and independent character, and penetrating, practical mind which would discover and point out every subterfuge, he wanted a Reform more complete even than Cranmer desired. He took for his text the parable of the unjust steward (St. Luke 16:1-8). "Brethren," he said, "ye have come here today to hear of great and weighty matters. Ye look, I am assured, to hear of me such things as shall be meet for this assembly." Then, having introduced his subject Latimer continued, "A faithful steward coineth no new money, but taketh it ready coined of the good man of the house. Now, what numbers of our bishops, abbots, prelates, and curates, despising the money of the Lord as copper and not current, teach that now redemption purchased by money, and devised by men is of efficacy, and not redemption purchased by Christ."

The whole of Latimer’s sermon was in this strain. He did not stop here; in the afternoon he preached again. "You know the proverb," he said, "‘An evil crow, an evil egg.’ The devil has begotten the world, and the world in its turn has many children. There is my Lady Pride, Dame Gluttony, Mistress Avarice, Lady Lechery, Dame Subtlety, and others, that now hard and scant ye may find any
corner, any kind of life, where many of his children be not. In court, in cowls, in cloisters, yea, where shall ye not find them? Howbeit, they that be secular are not children of the world, nor they children of light that are called spiritual and of the clergy. No, no; as ye find among the laity many children of light, so among the clergy ye shall find many children of the world. They do execrate and detest the world (though indeed the world is their father) in words and outward signs; but in heart and works they coll [hang around the neck] and kiss him. They ever say one thing and think another, and live every day as if all their life were a shroving time (a carnival). I see many such among the bishops, abbots, priors, archdeacons, deans, and others of that sort, who are met together in this convocation, to take into consideration all that concerns the glory of Christ and the wealth of the people of England. But it is to be feared lest, as light hath many of her children here, so the world hath sent some of his whelps hither, amongst the which I know there can be no concord nor unity, albeit they be in one place, in one congregation. What have you been doing these seven years and more? Show us what the English have gained by your long and great assemblies. Have they become even a hair’s breadth better? In God’s name, what have you done? So great fathers, so many, so long a season, so oft assembled together, what have you done? Two things: the one that you have burnt a dead man [William Tracy in 1532]; the other, that ye went about to burn one being alive [referring to himself]. Ye have oft sat in consultation, but what have ye done? Ye have had many things in deliberation, but what one is put forth whereby either Christ is more glorified, or else Christ’s people made more holy? I appeal to your own conscience."

Here Latimer began, as Luther had done in his Appeal to the German Nobility, to pass in review the abuses and errors of the clergy—the Court of Arches, the episcopal consistories, saints’ days, images, vows, pilgrimages, certain vigils which he called “bacchanalia,” marriage, baptism, the mass, and relics. After this severe catalogue, the bishop exclaimed, "If there be nothing to be amended or redressed, my lords, be ye of good cheer, be merry; and at the least, because we have nothing else to do, let us reason the matter how we may be richer. Let us fall to some pleasant communication; afterwards let us go home, even as good as we came hither, that is, right-begotten children of the world, and utterly worldlings. ... If there be nothing to be changed in our fashions, let us say as the evil servant said, ‘It will be long ere my master come.’ This is pleasant. Let us beat our fellows; let us eat and drink with drunkards. Surely, as oft as we do not take away the abuse of things, so oft we beat our fellows. As oft as we give not the people their true food, so oft we beat our fellows. As oft as we let them die in superstition, so oft we beat them. To be short, as oft as we blind lead them blind, so oft we beat and grievously beat our fellows. When we welter in pleasures and idleness, then we eat and drink with drunkards. But God will come, God will come. He will not tarry long away. He will come upon such a day as we nothing look for Him and at such hour as we know not. He will come and cut us in pieces. He will reward us as He doth the hypocrites. He will set us where wailing shall be, my brethren, where gnashing of teeth shall be, my brethren. And let here be the
end of our tragedy, if ye will. These be the delicate dishes prepared for the world’s beloved children. These be the wafers and junkets provided for worldly prelates—wailing and gnashing of teeth.

"If you will not die eternally, live not worldly. Preach truly the Word of God. Feed ye tenderly the flock of Christ. Love the light. Walk in the light, and so be the children of light while you are in the world, that you may shine in the world to come bright as the sun, with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen."

An action full of simplicity and warmth had accompanied the firm and courageous words of the Reformer. The reverend members of convocation had found their man, and his sermon appeared to them more bitter than wormwood. They dared not, however, show their anger, for behind Latimer was Cranmer, and they feared lest they should find the king behind Cranmer. Ere long the clergy received another mortification which they dared not complain of. A rumor got abroad that Cromwell would be the representative of Henry VIII in the assembly. "What!" they cried out, "a layman, a man who has never taken a degree in any university!" But what was the astonishment of the prelates, when they saw not Cromwell enter, but Dr. William Petre, the proctor of the vicar-general, whom the primate seated by his side—a delegate of a delegate! On the 21st of June, Cromwell himself came down, and took his seat above all the prelates. The lay element took, with a bold step, a position from which it had been so long banished.

It was to be expected that the champions of the middle ages would not submit to such affronts, and particularly to such a terrible fire as Latimer’s, without unmasking their batteries in return, and striving to dismantle those of the enemy. They saw that they could not maintain the supremacy of the pope and attack that of the king; but they knew that Henry adhered to transubstantiation and other superstitious doctrines of the dark ages, and accordingly they determined to attack by this breach, not only Latimer, but all the supporters of the Reformation. Roman Catholicism did not intend to perish without a struggle; it resolved—in order that it might hold its ground in England—to make a vigorous onslaught. The lower house having chosen for its prolocutor one Richard Gwent, archdeacon of Bishop Stokesley and a zealous upholder of Romish doctrine, the cabal set to work, and the words of Wycliffe, of the Lollards, of the Reformers, and even of the jesting citizens having been carefully recorded, Gwent proposed that the lower house should lay before the upper house sixty-seven evil doctrines (mala dogmata). Nothing was forgotten, not even the horse with the galled back. To no purpose were they reminded that what was blamable in this catalogue were only "the indiscreet expressions of illiterate persons," and that the rudeness of their imagination alone had caused them to utter these pointed sarcasms. In vain were they reminded that, even in horse races, the riders to be sure of reaching their goal pass beyond it. The enumeration of the mala dogmata was carried, without omitting a single article.

On the 23rd of June, the prolocutor appeared with his long list before the upper house of convocation. "There are certain errors," he said, "which cause
disturbance in the kingdom," and then he read the sixty-seven *mala dogmata*. "They affirm," he continued, "that no doctrine must be believed unless it be proved by Holy Scripture; that Christ, having shed His blood, has fully redeemed us, so that now we have only to say, ‘O God, I entreat Thy Majesty to blot out my iniquity.’ They say that the sacrifice of the mass is nothing but a piece of bread; that auricular confession was invented by the priests to learn the secrets of the heart, and to put money in their purse; that purgatory is a cheat; that what is usually called the Church is merely the old synagogue, and that the true Church is the assembly of the just; that prayer is just as effectual in the open air as in a temple; that priests may marry. And these heresies are not only preached, but are printed in books stamped *cum privilegio* (with privilege) and the ignorant imagine that those words indicate the king's approbation."

The two armies stood face to face, and the scholastic party had no sooner read their lengthy manifesto than the combat began. "Oh, what tugging was here betwixt these opposite sides," says honest Fuller. They separated without coming to any decision. Men began to discuss which side they should take. "Neither one nor the other," said those who fancied themselves the cleverest. "When two stout and sturdy travelers meet together and both desire the way, yet neither is willing to fight for it, in their passage they so shove and shoulder one another, that they divide the way between them, and yet neither gets the same. So these two opposite parties in the convocation were fain at last in a drawn battle to part the prize between them, neither of them being conquering or conquered." Thus the Church, *the pillar of truth*, was required to admit both black and white—to say Yes and No. "A medley religion," exclaims Fuller, "an expedient, to salve (if not the consciences) at least the credits of both sides."

Cranmer and Cromwell determined to use the opportunity to make the balance incline to the evangelical side. They went down to convocation. While passing along the street Cromwell noticed a stranger—one Alesius, a Scotsman, who had been compelled to seek refuge in Germany for having professed the pure Gospel, and there had formed a close intimacy with Melanchthon. Cranmer, as well as Cromwell, desirous of having such an evangelical man in England—one who was in perfect harmony with the Protestants of Germany, and whose native tongue was English—had invited him over to London. Melanchthon had given him a letter for the king, along with which he sent a copy of his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. Henry was so charmed with the Scotsman, that he gave him the title of "King's Scholar." Alesius was living at the archbishop's palace in Lambeth. Cromwell, observing him so seasonably, called him and invited him to accompany them to Westminster. He thought that a man of such power might be useful to him, and it is even possible that the meeting had been prearranged. Together the Englishman and the Scotsman entered the chamber in which the bishops were sitting round a table, with a number of priests standing behind them. When the vicar-general and Alesius, who was unknown to most of them, appeared, they all rose and bowed to the king's representative. Cromwell returned the salutation, and, after seating the
exile in the highest place, opposite the two archbishops, he addressed them as follows: "His Majesty will not rest until, in harmony with convocation and parliament, he has put an end to the controversies which have taken place, not only in this kingdom but in every country. Discuss these questions, therefore, with charity, without brawling or scolding, and decide all things by the Word of God. Establish the divine and perfect truth as it is found in Scripture." Cromwell wanted the submission of all to the divine revelation; the traditional party answered him by putting forward human doctrines and human authorities. Stokesley, bishop of London, endeavored to prove, by certain glosses and passages, that there were seven sacraments; the archbishop of York and others supported him by their sophistry and their shouts. "Such disputes about words, and such cries," said Cranmer, "are unbecoming serious men. Let us seek Christ's glory, the peace of the Church, and the means by which sins are forgiven. Let us enquire how we may bring consolation to uneasy souls, how we may give the assurance of God's love to consciences troubled by the remembrance of their sins. Let us acknowledge that it is not the outward use of the sacraments that justifies a man, and that our justification proceeds solely from faith in the Savior." The prelate spoke admirably and in accordance with Scripture; it was necessary to back up this noble confession. Cromwell, who kept his Scotsman in reserve, now introduced him to the clergy, as the "king's scholar," and asked him what he thought of the discussion. Alesius, speaking in the assembly of bishops, showed that there were only two sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that no ceremony ought to be put in the same rank with them. The bishop of London chafed with anger in his seat. Shall a mere Scotsman, driven from his country and entertained by German Protestants, presume to teach the prelates of England? He shouted out indignantly, "All that is false!" Alesius declared himself ready to prove what he had said out of Scripture and the old fathers. Then Fox, bishop of Hereford, who had just returned from Wittenberg, whither he had been sent by the king, and where he had been enlightened by conversing with Luther and Melanchthon, rose up and uttered these noble sentiments: "Christ hath so lightened the world at this time," he said, "that the light of the Gospel hath put to flight all misty darkness; and the world will no longer endure to be led astray by all that fantastic rubbish with which the priests formerly filled their imaginations and their sermons." This was pointed at Bishop Stokesley and his friends. "It is vain to resist the Lord; His hand drives away the clouds. The laity know the Holy Scriptures now better than many of us. The Germans have made the text of the Bible so easy, by the Hebrew and Greek tongue, that even women and children wonder at the blindness and falsehood that hath been hitherto. Consider that you make not yourselves to be laughed to scorn of all the world. If you resist the voice of God, you will give cause for belief that there is not one spark of learning or godliness in you. All things consist not in painted eloquence and strength of authority. For truth is of so great power, strength, and efficacy, that it can neither be defended with words nor be overcome with any strength; but after she hath hidden herself long, at length she pusheth up her head and appeareth." Such was the eloquent
and Christian language with which even bishops endeavored to bring about the triumph of that English Reformation which some have been pleased to represent as "the product of an amorous caprice."

Moved by such Christian remarks, Alesius exclaimed, "Yes, it is the Word of God that bringeth life; the Word of God is the very substance and body of the Sacrament. It makes us certain and sure of the will of God to save our souls; the outward ceremony is but a token of that lively inflammation which we receive through faith in the Word and promise of the Lord." At these words the bishop of London could not contain himself. "The Word of God," he cried, "Yes, granted! But you are far deceived if you think there is no other Word of God but that which every souter (shoemaker) and cobbler may read in his mother tongue." Stokesley believed in another Word of God besides the Bible; he thought, as the council of Trent did a little later, "That we must receive with similar respect and equal piety the Holy Scriptures and Tradition." As it was noon, Cromwell broke up the meeting.

The debate had been sharp. The sacerdotal, sacramental, ritualist party had been beaten; the evangelicals desired to secure their victory.

Alesius, after his return to Lambeth, began to compose a treatise; Stokesley, on the other hand, prepared to get up a conspiracy against Alesius. Next day the bishops, who arrived first at Westminster, entered into conversation about the last sitting, and were very indignant that a stranger, a Scotsman, should have been allowed to sit and speak among them. Stokesley called upon Cranmer to resist such an irregularity. The archbishop, who was always rather weak, consented, and Cromwell entering shortly after with his protégé, an archdeacon went up to the latter and told him that his presence was disagreeable to the bishops. "It is better to give way," said Cromwell to Alesius, "I do not want to expose you to the hatred of the prelates. When once they take a dislike to a man, they never rest until they have got him out of the way. They have already put to death many Christians for whom the king felt great esteem." Alesius withdrew and the debate opened. "Are there seven sacraments or only two," was the question. It was impossible to come to an understanding.

Convocation, an old clerical body, in which were assembled the most resolute partisans of the abuses, superstitions, and doctrines of the Middle Ages, was the real stronghold of Rome in England. To undertake to introduce the light and life of the Gospel into it was a rash and impracticable enterprise. The divine Head of the Church Himself has declared that "no man putteth new cloth to an old garment, neither do men put new wine into old bottles." There was but one thing to be done—suppress the assembly and form a new one, composed of members and ministers of the Church, who acknowledge no other foundation, no other rule, than the Word of God. "New wine must be put into new bottles." Such a step as this would have helped powerfully to reform the Church of England really and completely. But it was not taken.

CHAPTER 12
Henry Enforces "Catholicism minus the Pope"
Autumn, 1536

After Anne Boleyn’s death, the men of the Reformation had taken the initiative, and Cranmer, Cromwell, Latimer, and Alesius seemed on the point of winning the prize of the contest. The intervention of a greater personage was about to affect the situation profoundly.

Anne’s disgrace and the wedding with Jane Seymour had occupied the king with far other matters than theology. Cranmer had the field free to advance the Reformation. This was not what Henry intended, and as soon as he noticed it, he roused himself, as if from slumber, and hastened to put things in order. Though rejecting the authority of the pope, he remained faithful to his doctrines. He proceeded to act in his character as head of the Church, and resolved to fulminate a bull, as the pontiffs had done. Reginald Pole, in the book which he had addressed to him, observed that in matters touching the pope, we must not regard either his character or his life, but only his authority; and that the lapses of a pope in morals detract nothing from his infallibility in faith. Henry understood this distinction very clearly, and showed himself a pope in every way. He did not believe that there was any incompatibility between the right he claimed of taking a new wife whenever he pleased, by means of divorce or the scaffold, and that of declaring the oracles of God on contrition, justification, and ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies. The rupture of the negotiations with the obstinate German Protestants gave him more liberty, and even caused him a little vexation. His chagrin was not unmingled with anger, and he was not grieved to show them what they stood to lose by not accepting him. In this respect Henry was like a woman who, annoyed at being rejected by the man she prefers, gives her hand to his rival in bravado. He returned, therefore, to his theological labors. The doctors of the scholastic party spared him the pains of drawing up for himself the required articles, but he revised them and was elated at the importance of his work.

"We have in our own person taken great pain, study, labors, and travails," he said, "over certain articles which will establish concord in our Church."

Cromwell, always submissive to his master and well knowing the cost of resistance, laid this royal labor before the upper house of convocation. In religious matters Henry had never done anything so important. The doctrine of the authority of the prince over the dogmas of the Church now became a fact. The king’s dogmatic paper, entitled Articles about religion set out by the Convocation, and published by the King’s authority, bears a strong resemblance to the Exposition and the Type of Faith, published in the seventh century, during the monothelite controversy, by the emperors of Constantinople—Heraclius and Constans II. That prince, who in a political sense gave England a new impulse, sought his models as an ecclesiastical ruler in the Lower Empire. Everybody was eager to know what doctrines the new head of the Church was going to proclaim. The partisans of Rome were doubtless quite as much surprised as the Reformers, but their astonishment was that of joy; the surprise of the evangelicals was that of fear. The vicar-general read the
royal oracles aloud. “All the words contained in the whole canon of the Bible,” he said, "and in the three creeds—the Apostles’, the Nicene, and the Athanasian—according to the interpretation which the holy approved doctors in the Church do defend, shall be received and observed as the infallible words of God, so that whosoever rejects them is not a member of Christ but a member of the devil, and eternally damned.”

That was the Romish doctrine, and Bossuet, in his examination of the royal document, appears much satisfied with the article.

"The sacrament of baptism should be administered to infants, in order that they may receive the Holy Ghost and be purified of sin by its secret virtue and operation. If a man falls after baptism the sacrament of penance is necessary to his salvation; he must go to confession, ask absolution at the priest’s hands, and look upon the words uttered by the confessor as the voice of God speaking out of heaven."

"That is the whole substance of the catholic doctrine," the partisans of Rome might urge.

"Under the form of the bread and the wine are verily, substantially, and really contained the body and very blood of the Savior which was born of the Virgin."

That indicates most precisely the real presence of the body," say the Romish doctors.

"The merits of the Savior’s passion are the only and worthy causes of our justification; but, before giving it to us, God requires of us inward contrition, perfect faith, hope, and charity, and all the other spiritual motions which must necessarily concur in the remission of our sins."

The council of Trent declared the same doctrine not long after.

"Images ought to be preserved in the churches. Only let those who kneel before them and adore them know that such honor is not paid to the images, but to God."

"To use such language," Roman Catholics have said, "is to approve of image worship to the extreme."

"It is praiseworthy," continued Cromwell, "to address prayers to our Blessed Lady, to St. John the Baptist, to each of the apostles, or to any other saint, in order that they may pray for us and with us; but without believing there is more mercy in them than in Christ."

"If the king looks upon this as a kind of Reformation," said a Romish doctor, "he is only making game of the word, for no catholic addresses the saints except to have their prayers."

"As for the ceremonies, such as sprinkling with holy water, distributing the consecrated bread, prostration before the cross and kissing it, exorcisms, etc., these rites and others equally praiseworthy ought to be maintained as putting us in remembrance of spiritual things."

"That is precisely our idea," said the partisans of Romish tradition.

"Finally, as to purgatory, the people shall be taught that Christians ought to pray for the souls of the dead, and give alms, in order that others may pray for them, so that their souls may be relieved of some part of their pain."
"All that we teach is here approved of," said the great opponent of Protestantism.

Such was the religion which the prince whom some writers call the father of the Reformation desired to establish in England. If England became Protestant, it was certainly in spite of Henry VIII.

A long debate ensued in convocation and elsewhere. The decided evangelicals could see nothing in these articles but an abandonment of Scripture, a "political daubing," in which the object was only to please certain persons and to attain certain ends. The men of the moderate party said, on the other hand, "Ought we not to rejoice that the Scriptures and ancient creeds are re-established as rules of faith, without considering the pope?" But above these opposite opinions rose the terrible voice of the king: *Sic volo, sic jubeo*: Such is my pleasure, such are my orders. If the primate and his friends resisted, they would be set aside and the Reformation lost.

It does not appear that Cranmer had any share in drawing up these articles, but he signed them. It has been said, to excuse him, that neither he, nor many of his colleagues, had at that time a distinct knowledge of such matters, and that they intended to make amendments in the articles; but these allegations are insufficient. Two facts alone explain the concessions of this pious man—the king's despotic will and the archbishop's characteristic weakness. He always bent his head, but, we must also acknowledge, it was in order to raise it again. Archbishop Lee, sixteen bishops, forty abbots or priors, and fifty archdeacons or proctors signed after Cromwell and the primate. The articles passed through convocation, because—like Anne's condemnation—*it was the king's will*.

Nothing can better explain the concessions of Cranmer, Cromwell, and others in the case of Anne Boleyn, than their support of these articles, which were precisely the opposite of the Scriptural doctrine whose triumph they had at heart. In both cases they had yielded slavishly to those magic words: *Le roi le veut*: the king wills it. Those four words were sufficient; that man was *loyal* who sacrificed his own will to the will of the sovereign. It was only by degrees that the free principles of Protestantism were to penetrate among the people, and give England liberty along with order. Still, that excuse is not sufficient; Cranmer would have left a more glorious name if he had suffered martyrdom under Henry VIII, and not waited for the reign of Mary.

When the king's articles were known, discontent broke out in the opposite parties. "Be silent, you contentious preachers and you factious schoolmen," said the politicians, "you would sooner disturb the peace of the world, than relinquish or retract one particle!" The articles were sent all over England, with orders that everyone should conform to them or incur the wrath of the king and the Church.

Cranmer did not look upon the game as lost. To bend before the blast, and then rise up again and guide the Reform to a good end, was his system. He first strove to prevent the evil by suggesting measures calculated to remedy it. Convocation resolved that a petition should be addressed to the king, praying him to permit his lay subjects to read the Bible in *English*, and to order a new translation of it to be made; moreover, a great number of feast days were
abolished as favoring “sloth, idleness, thieves, excesses, vagabonds, and riots”; and finally, on the last day of the session (20th of July), convocation declared—to show clearly that there was no question of returning to popery—that there was nothing more pernicious than a general council; and that, consequently, they must decline to attend that which the pope intended to hold in the city of Mantua. Thereupon parliament and convocation were dissolved, and the king did without them for three years.

Henry VIII was satisfied with his minister. Cromwell was created Lord Privy-Seat, the 2nd of July, 1536, baron, and a few days later vicegerent in ecclesiastical matters (in rebus ecclesiasticis). Wishing to tone down what savored too much of the schools in the king’s articles, he circulated among all the priests some instructions which were passably evangelical. "I enjoin you," he said, "to make your parishioners understand that they do rather apply themselves to the keeping of God’s commandments and fulfilling of His works of charity, and providing for their families, than if they went about to pilgrimages. Advise parents and masters to teach their children and their servants the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, and the Ten Commandments, in their mother tongue." He even undertook to reform the clergy. "Deans, parsons, vicars, curates, and priests," he said, "are forbidden to haunt taverns, to drink or brawl after dinner or supper, to play at cards day or night. If they have any leisure, they should read the Scriptures, or occupy themselves with some honest exercise."

But Cranmer and Cromwell went further than this. They wished to circulate the Holy Scriptures. Tyndale’s version was, in Cromwell’s opinion, too far compromised to be officially circulated; he had, therefore, patronized another translation. Coverdale, who was born in 1488, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, had undertaken (as we have seen) to translate the Bible, and had applied to Cromwell to procure him the necessary books. Tyndale was more independent, a man of firmer and bolder character than Coverdale. He did not seek the aid of men, and finished his work (so to say) alone with God. Coverdale, pious no doubt like his rival, felt the need of being supported, and said, in his letter to Cromwell, that he implored his help, "prostrate on the knees of his heart." Coverdale knew Greek and Hebrew. He began his task about 1530; on the 4th of October, 1535, the book appeared, probably at Zurich, under the title: Biblia, the Bible, that is to say, the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; and reached England in the early part of 1536. At the beginning of the volume was a dedication to Henry VIII, which ended by imploring the divine blessing on the king and on his “dearest just wife, and most virtuous princess, queen Anne." Cromwell was to present this translation to the king, and circulate it throughout the country; but this dearest wife, this most virtuous princess had just been accused by Henry, dragged before the tribunals, and beheaded. It was impossible to distribute a single copy of this version without arousing the monarch’s anger. Those who desired that the ship which had come so far should not be wrecked in the harbor had recourse to several expedients. The decapitated queen’s name was Anne, that of the queen-regnant was Jeanne; there was a resemblance between them. Some copies corrected with a pen
have instead of *queen Anne, queen Jane*; in others the name of the queen is simply scratched out. These expedients were not sufficient; a new title-page was printed and dated 1536, the current year.

It seems probable that the king gave his verbal approval to the new translation, but that he showed no appreciation of its merits and no enthusiasm for its circulation. Nevertheless, the Reformation, taught by pious ministers, was spreading in vain. "Not long ago," they said, "the Lollards were put to death for reading the Gospel in English, and now we are ordered to teach it in that language. We are robbed of our privileges, and our labors are increased."

The king had proclaimed and laid down his Ten Articles to little purpose; faith gave pious ministers and Christians a courage which the great ones of the earth did not possess. John Gale, pastor of Thwaite, in Suffolk, a quick, decided, but rather imprudent man, attacked the royal articles from his pulpit. But he did not stop there. His church was ornamented with images of the Virgin and Saints, before which the devout used to set up tapers. "Austin," said he one day to a parishioner, "follow me"; and the two men, with great exertions, took away the iron rods on which the worshippers used to set their tapers, and turned the images to the wall. "Listen," said Dr. Barret to his parishioners, "the lifting up of the host betokens simply that the Father has sent his Son to suffer death for man, and the lifting up of the chalice that the Son has shed his blood for our salvation." "Christ," said the prior of Dorchester, "does not dwell in churches of stone, but in heaven above and in the hearts of men on earth." The minister of Hothfield declared that "Our Lady is not the queen of heaven, and has no more power than another woman." "Pull him out of the pulpit," said the exasperated bailiff to the vicar. "I dare not," answered the latter. In fact, the congregation were delighted at hearing their minister say of Jesus, as Peter did, *Neither is there salvation in any other*, and that very day more than a hundred embraced their pastor’s doctrines. Jerome, vicar of Stepney, endeavored to plant the pure truth of Christ in the conscience, and root out all vain traditions, dreams, and fantasies. Being invited to preach at St. Paul’s Cross, on the fourth Sunday in Lent, he said, "There are two sorts of people among you—the free, who are freely justified without the penance of the law and without meritorious works, and the slaves, who are still under the yoke of the law." Even a bishop, Barlow of St. David’s, said in a stately cathedral, "If two or three cobblers or weavers, elect of God, meet together in the name of the Lord, they form a true Church of God."

Proceedings were commenced against those who had thus braved the king’s articles. Jerome appeared before Henry VIII at Westminster. The poor fellow, intimidated by the royal majesty, tremblingly acknowledged that the sacraments were necessary for salvation, but he was burned five years after in the cause of the Gospel. Gale and others were accused of heresy and treason before the criminal court. The books were not spared. There were some, indeed, that went beyond all bounds. One, entitled *The little garden of the souls*, contained a passage in which the beheading of John the Baptist and of Anne Boleyn were ascribed to the same motive—the reproach of a criminal love uttered against two princes, one by Anne, and the other by John. Henry
compared to Herod! Anne Boleyn to Saint John the Baptist! Tunstall denounced this audacious publication to Cromwell. The crown-officers were to see that the doctrines of the pope were taught everywhere; but, without the pope and his authority, this system has no solid foundation. The Holy Scriptures, to which evangelical Christians appeal, is a firm foundation. The authority of the pope—a vicious principle—at least puts those who admit it in a position to know what they believe. But catholicism with Romish doctrine and without the pope has no ground to stand on. Non-Roman catholicism has but a treacherous support. Another system had already, in the sixteenth century, set up reason as the supreme rule; but it presents a thousand different opinions, and no absolute truth. There is but one real foundation: Thy Word is truth, says Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is Lord.

CHAPTER 13
The Pilgrimage of Grace
October, 1536

The bastard system of a catholicism without a pope, put forward by the king, did not enjoy great favor, and the evangelical Reform gained fresh adherents every day. The more consistent popish system endeavored to stand against it. There were still many partisans of Rome in the aristocracy and among the populations of the North. A mighty effort was about to be made to expel both Cranmer’s Protestantism and the king’s catholicism, and restore the papacy to its privileges. A great revolution is rarely accomplished without the friends of the old order of things combining to resist it. Many members of the House of Lords saw with alarm the House of Commons gaining an influence which it had never possessed before, and taking the initiative in reforms which were not (as they thought) within its sphere. Trained in the hatred of heresy, those noble lords were indignant at seeing heretics invested with the episcopal dignity, and a layman, Cromwell, presuming to direct the convocation of the clergy. Some of them formed a league, and Lord Darcy, who was at their head, had a conference on the subject with the ambassador of Charles V. That prince assured him that he would be supported. The English partisans of the pope, aided by the imperialists, would be amply sufficient, they thought, to re-establish the authority of the Roman pontiff.

There was great agitation especially among the inhabitants of the towns and villages of the North. Those of the counties of York and Lincoln, too remote from London to feel its influence, besides being ignorant and superstitious, were submissive to the priests as to the very representatives of God. The names of the Reformers Luther, Melanchthon, Æcolampadius, and Tyndale were known by the priests, who taught their flocks to detest them. Everything they saw exasperated them. If they went a journey, the monasteries which were their ordinary hostelries existed no longer. If they worked in the fields, they saw approaching them some ragged monk, with tangled hair and beard, with haggard eye, without bread to support him, or roof to shelter him, to
whom hatred still gave strength to complain and to curse. These unhappy wretches went roaming up and down the country, knocking at every door; the peasants received them like saints, seated them at their table, and starved themselves for their nourishment. "See," said the monks, showing their rags to the people about them, "see to what a condition the members of Jesus Christ are reduced! A schismatic and heretical prince has expelled us from the houses of the Lord. But the Holy Father has excommunicated and dethroned him; no one should henceforth obey him." Such words produced their effect.

In the autumn of 1536, the ferment increased among the inhabitants of the rural districts who had no longer their field labors to divert them. They assembled in great numbers round the monasteries to see what the king meant to do with them. They looked on at a distance, and with angry eyes watched the commissioners who at times behaved violently, indulged in exactions, or threw down, one after another, the stones of the building which had been held for so long in reverence. Another day they saw the agent of some lord settle in the monastery with his wife, children, and servants; they heard those profane lay-folks laugh and chatter as they entered the sacred doors, whose thresholds had until now been trodden only by the sandals of the silent monks. A report spread abroad that the monasteries still surviving were also about to be suppressed. Dr. Makerel, formerly prior of Barlings, disguised as a laborer, and a monk (some writers say a shoemaker) named Nicholas Melton, who received the name of "Captain Cobbler," endeavored to inflame men's minds and drive them to revolt. Everywhere the people listened to the agitators, and ere long the superior clergy appeared in the line of battle. "Neither the king's Highness nor any temporal man," they said, "may be supreme head of the Church. The Pope of Rome is Christ's vicar, and must alone be acknowledged as supreme head of Christendom."

On Monday, 2nd of October, 1536, the ecclesiastical commission was to visit the parish of Louth in Lincolnshire, and the clergy of the district were ordered to be present. Only a few days before, a neighboring monastery had been suppressed and two of Cromwell's agents placed in it to see to the closing. The evening before the inspection (it was a Sunday) a number of the townspeople brought out a large silver cross which belonged to the parish, and shouting out, "Follow the cross! All follow the cross! God knows if we can do so for long," marched in procession through the town, with Melton leading the way. Some went to the church, took possession of the consecrated jewels, and remained under arms all night to guard them for fear the royal commissioners should carry them off. On Monday morning one of the commissioners, who had no suspicions, quietly rode into the town, followed by a single servant. All of a sudden the alarm bell was rung, and a crowd of armed men filled the streets. The terrified commissioner ran into the church, hoping to find it an inviolable asylum; but the mob laid hold of him, dragged him out into the market-place, and pointing a sword at his breast, said to him, "Swear fidelity to the commons or you are a dead man." All the town took an oath to be faithful "to God, the King, and the commons, for the wealth of Holy Church." On Tuesday morning the alarm bell was rung again; the cobbler and a tailor named Big Jack
marched out, followed by a crowd of men, some on foot and some on horseback. Whole parishes, headed by their priests, joined them and marched with the rest. The monks prayed aloud for the pope, and cried out that if the gentry did not join them they should all be hanged; but gentlemen and even sheriffs united with the tumultuous troops. Twenty thousand men of Lincolnshire were in arms. England, like Germany, had its peasants’ revolt; but while Luther was opposed to it, the archbishop of York, with many abbots and priests, encouraged it in England.

The insurgents did not delay proclaiming their grievances. They declared that if the monasteries were restored, men of mean birth dismissed from the Council, and heretic bishops deprived, they would acknowledge the king as head of the Church. The movement was instigated by the monks more than by the pope. Great disorders were committed.

The court was plunged into consternation by this revolt. The king, who had no standing army, felt his weakness, and his anger knew no bounds. "What!" he said to the traitors (for such was the name he gave them) "what! do you, the rude commons of one shire, and that one of the most brute and beastly (stupid) of the whole realm, presume to find fault with your king? Return to your homes, surrender to our lieutenants a hundred of your leaders, and prepare to submit to such condign punishment as we shall think you worthy of; otherwise you will expose yourselves, your wives and children, your lands and goods, not only to the indignation of God, but to utter destruction by force and violence of the sword."

Such threats as these only served to increase the commotion. "Christianity is going to be abolished," said the priests, "you will soon find yourselves under the sword of Turks! But whoever sheds his blood with us shall inherit eternal glory." The people crowded to them from all quarters. Lord Shrewsbury, sent by the king against the rebellion, being unable to collect more than 3,000 men, and having to contend against ten times as many, had halted at Nottingham. London already imagined the rebels were at its gates, and mighty exertions were made. Sir John Russell and the duke of Suffolk were sent forward with forces hurriedly equipped.

The insurgents were numerically strong, but with no efficient leader or store of provisions. Two opinions arose among them; the gentlemen and farmers cried, "Home, home!" The priests and the people shouted, "To arms!" The party of the friends of order continued increasing, and at last prevailed. The duke of Suffolk entered Lincoln on October 17, and the rebels dispersed.

A still greater danger threatened the established order of things. The men of the North were more extreme than those of Lincoln. On October 8 there was a riot at Beverley, in Yorkshire. A Westminster lawyer, Robert Aske, who had passed his vacation in field-sports, was returning to London, when he was stopped by the rebels and proclaimed their leader. On October 15 he marched to York and replaced the monks in possession of their monasteries. Lord Darcy, an old soldier of Ferdinand of Spain and Louis XII and a warm papal partisan, quitted his castle of Pontefract to join the insurrection. The priests stirred up the people, and ere long, the army, which amounted to at least 30,000 men,
formed a long procession, “the Pilgrimage of Grace,” which marched through the county of York. Each parish paraded under a captain, priests carrying the church cross in front by way of flag. A large banner, which floated in the midst of this multitude, represented on one side Christ with the five wounds on a cross, and on the other a plough, a chalice, a pix, and a hunting-horn. Every pilgrim wore embroidered on his sleeve the five wounds of Christ with the name of Jesus in the midst. The insurgents had a thousand bows and as many bills, besides other arms, but hardly one poor copy of the Testament of Christ. "Ah!" said Latimer, preaching in Lincolnshire, "I will tell you what is the true Christian man’s pilgrimage. There are, the Savior tells us, eight days’ journeys." Then he described the eight beatitudes in the most evangelical manner—the poor in spirit, those who mourn, those who are meek, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the rest.

Aske’s pilgrimage was of another sort. Addressing the people of those parts, he said to them, “Lords, knights, masters, and friends, evil-disposed persons have filled the king’s mind with new inventions; the holy body of the Church has been despoiled. We have therefore undertaken this pilgrimage for the reformation of what is amiss and the punishment of heretics. If you will not come with us we will fight and die against you.” Bonfires were lighted on all the hills to call the people to arms. Wherever these new crusaders appeared the monks were replaced in their monasteries and the peasants constrained to join the pilgrimage, under pain of seeing their houses pulled down, their goods seized, and their bodies handed over to the mercy of the captains.

There was this notable difference between the revolt in Germany and that in the North of England. In Germany, a few nobles only joined the people and were compelled to do so. In England, almost all the nobility of the North rallied to it of their own accord. The earls of Westmorland, Rutland, and Huntingdon, Lords Latimer, Lumley, Scrope, Conyers, and the representatives of several other great families followed the example of old Lord Darcy. One single nobleman, Percy, earl of Northumberland, remained faithful to the king. He had been ill since the unjust sentence which had struck the loyal wife of Henry VIII—a sentence in which he had refused to join—and was now at his castle lying on a bed of pain which was soon to be the bed of death. The rebels surrounded his dwelling and summoned him to join the insurrection. He might now have avenged the crime committed by Henry VIII against Anne Boleyn, but he refused. Savage voices shouted out, "Cut off his head, and make Sir Thomas Percy earl in his stead." But the noble and courageous man said calmly to those around him, "I can die but once; let them kill me, and so put an end to my sorrows."

The king, more alarmed at this revolt than at the former one, asked with terror whether his people desired to force him to re-place his neck under the detested yoke of the pope. In this crisis he displayed great activity. Being at Windsor, he wrote letter after letter to Cromwell. "I will sell all my plate," he said. "Go to the Tower, take as much plate as you may want, and coin it into money." Henry displayed no less intelligence than decision. He named as commander of his little army a devoted servant, who was also the chief of the
papal party at the court—the duke of Norfolk. Once already, for the condemnation of the protestant Anne Boleyn, Henry had selected this chief of the Romish party. This clever policy succeeded equally well for the king in both affairs.

London, Windsor, and all the south of England were in great commotion. People imagined that the papacy, borne on the lusty arms of the northern men, was about to return in triumph into the capital, that perhaps the Catholic king of the Scots, Henry's nephew, would enter with it and place England once more under the papal scepter. The friends of the Gospel were deeply agitated. "That great captain the devil," said Latimer in the London pulpits, "has all sorts of ordnance to shoot at Christian men. These men of the North, who wear the cross and the wounds before and behind, are marching against Him who bare the cross and suffered those wounds. They have risen (they say) to support the king, and they are fighting against him. They come forward in the name of the Church, and fight against the Church, which is the congregation of faithful men. Let us fight with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

The rebels, far from being calmed, showed—part of them at least—that they were animated by the vilest sentiments. A body of insurgents had invested the castle of Skipton, the only place in the county of York which still held for the king. The wife and daughters of Lord Clifford, and other ladies who inhabited it, happened to be at an abbey not far off, just when the castle was beleaguered. The insurgents caused Lord Clifford to be informed that if he did not surrender, his wife and daughters would be brought next day to the foot of the walls and be given up to the camp-followers. In the middle of the night, Christopher Aske, brother of Robert, who had remained faithful, crept through the camp of the besiegers, and by unfrequented roads succeeded in bringing into the castle all those ladies, whom he thus saved from the most infamous outrages.

Robert Aske, Lord Darcy, the archbishop of York, and several other leaders had their headquarters at Pontefract castle, where Lancaster Herald, dispatched by the king, presented himself on the 21st of October. After passing through many troops of armed men—"very cruel fellows," he says—he was at last introduced to the great captain. Seeing Lord Darcy and the archbishop before him—persons more important than the Westminster lawyer—the Herald began to address them. Aske was offended, and rising from his seat told him haughtily that he was the person to be addressed. The messenger discharged his mission. He represented to the leaders of the rebellion that they were but a handful before the great power of his Majesty, and that the king had done nothing in regard to religion but what the clergy of York and Canterbury had acknowledged to be in conformity with the Word of God. When the speech was ended, Aske, as if he did not care for the Herald’s words, said rudely to him, "Show me your proclamation." "He behaved," wrote the envoy, "as though he had been some great prince, with great rigor and like a tyrant." "Herald," said Aske, "this proclamation shall neither be read at the market-cross nor elsewhere amongst my people. We want the redress of our grievances, and we will die fighting to obtain them." The Herald asked what were their grievances. "My followers and
I, replied the chief, "will walk in pilgrimage to London, to his Majesty, to expel from the council all the vile blood in it, and set up all the noble blood again, and also to obtain the full restitution of Christ’s Church." "Will you give me that in writing?" said the Herald. Aske gave him the oath which the rebels took, and at the same time putting his hand on the paper, he said with a loud voice, "This is my act; I will die in its defense, and all my followers will die with me." The Herald, intimidated by the authoritative tone of the chief, bent his knee before the rebel captain, for which he was brought to trial and executed in the following year. "Give him a guard of forty men, and see him out of town," said Aske.

Forthwith 30,000 well-armed men, of whom 12,000 were mounted, set out under the orders of Aske, Lord Darcy, and other noblemen of the country. Norfolk had only a small force, which he could not trust; accordingly the rebels were convinced that when they appeared, the king’s soldiers and perhaps the duke himself would join them. The rebel army arrived on the banks of the Don, on the other side of which (at Doncaster) the king’s forces were stationed. Those ardent men, who were six against one, inflamed by monks who were impatient to return to their nests, proposed to pass the Don, overthrow Norfolk, enter London, dictate to the king the execution of all the partisans of the Reformation, and restore the papal power in England. The rising of the water, increased by heavy rains, did not permit them to cross the river. Every hour’s delay was a gain to the royal cause; the insurgents, having brought no provisions with them, were forced to disband to go in search of them elsewhere. Norfolk took advantage of this to circulate an address among the rebels. "Unhappy men!" it said, "what folly hath led you to make this most shameful rebellion against our most righteous king, who hath kept you in peace against all your enemies? Fye, for shame! How can you do this to one who loves you more than all his subjects? If you do not return, every man to his house, we will show you the hardest courtesy that ever was shown to men, that have loved you so well as we have done. But if you go to your homes, you shall have us most humble suitors to his Highness for you." This proclamation was signed by Lords Norfolk, Shrewsbury, Exeter, Rutland, and Huntingdon, all catholics, and the greatest names in England.

The insurgents thus found themselves in the most difficult position. They must attack the supporters of their own cause. If the lords who had signed the proclamation were slain, England would lose her best councilors, and her greatest generals, and the Church would be deprived of the most zealous catholics. The strength of England would be sacrificed and the country opened to her enemies. Old Lord Darcy was for attacking; young Robert Aske for negotiation. On the 27th of October, commissioners from both parties met on the bridge leading to Doncaster. The rebel commissioners consented to lay down their arms, provided the heresies of Luther, Wycliffe, Huss, Melanchthon,Œcolampadius, and the works of Tyndale were destroyed and nullified; that the supremacy was restored to the see of Rome; that the suppressed abbeys were re-established; that heretical bishops and lords were punished by fire or otherwise; and that a parliament was held promptly at Nottingham or York.
There could no longer be any doubt that the object of the insurrection was to crush the Reformation. The names of most of the reformers were mentioned in the articles, and fire or sword were to do justice to the most illustrious of their adherents. The same evening they handed in a letter addressed To the King's Royal Highness. From Doncaster, this Saturday, at eleven of the clock at night. Haste, post, haste, haste, haste! The rebels themselves were in such haste that they waited no longer. The next day (28th of October) the king's lieutenant announced at one in the afternoon that the insurgents had dispersed and were returning to their homes. Two of the rebel leaders were to carry the stipulated conditions to the king, and Norfolk was to accompany them. That zealous catholic was not perhaps without a hope that the petition would induce Henry to become reconciled to the pope. He was greatly deceived. It was clear that the king was rapidly gaining the upper hand. Norfolk caused the rebels to believe that their demands would be met. In the outcome, however, this was not the case. The king benefited by delay. He was able to build up his forces in the North, and early in December, in consequence of threats and promises, the rebel army finally broke up. The one formidable insurrection of Henry’s reign was over. Thus God had scattered the forces of those who had stood up against Wycliffe, Huss, and Luther. The kingdom resumed its usual tranquility. A little later the men of the North, excited by the intrigues of the pope and Reginald Pole, now a cardinal, again took up arms, but they were defeated; seventy of them were hanged on the walls of Carlisle, and Lords Darcy and Hussey, with sundry barons, abbots, priors, and a great number of priests, were executed in different places. The scheming archbishop of York alone escaped, it is not known how. The cottages, parsonages, and castles of the North were filled with anguish and terror. Henry, who cut off the heads of his most intimate friends and of his queen, did not think of sparing rebels. It was a terrible lesson, but not very effectual. The priests did not lose their courage; they still kept asking for the re-establishment of the pope, the death of the Lutherans, and the annihilation of the Reform. An event which occurred at this time seemed likely to favor their desires. A great blow was about to be dealt against the Reformation. But the ways of God are not as our ways, and from what seems destined to compromise His cause, He often makes His triumph proceed.

Chapter 14
The Martyrdom of Tyndale
1535 to October 1536

Most of the reformers, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, and others, have acquired that name by their preachings, their writings, their struggles, and their actions. It is not so with the principal reformer of England; all his activity was centered in the Holy Scriptures. Tyndale was less prominent than the other instruments of God who were awakened to upraise the Church. We might say that, knowing the weakness of man, he had retired and hidden himself to allow the Word from Heaven to act by itself. He had studied it, translated it, and
sent it over the sea; it must now do its own work. Is it not written, *The field is the world, and the seed is the Word?* But there is another characteristic, or rather another fact, which distinguishes him from them, and this we have to describe.

While Pole and the papistical party, the new adversaries of Henry VIII, were agitating on the continent, Tyndale, the man whom the king had pursued so long without being able to catch, was in prison at Vilvorde, near Brussels. In vain was he girt around with the thick walls of that huge fortress. Tyndale was free. "There is the captivity and bondage," he could say, "whence Christ delivered us, redeemed and loosed us. His blood, His death, His patience in suffering rebukes and wrongs, His prayers and fastings, His meekness and fulfilling of the uttermost point of the law... broke the bonds of Satan, wherein we were so strait bound." Thus Tyndale was as truly free at Vilvorde, as Paul had been at Rome.

For some years before his arrest, Tyndale had been laboring hard to produce a translation of the Old Testament worthy to take its place beside his English New Testament of 1525, and in the task he had realized his need of a skilled and sympathetic assistant. At that time there lived at Antwerp, as chaplain to the English merchants in that city, a young man from the county of Warwick, named John Rogers, who had been educated at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and was a little more than thirty years old. Rogers was learned, but submissive to the Romish traditions. Tyndale having made his acquaintance, asked him to help in translating the Holy Scriptures, and Rogers caught joyfully at the opportunity of employing his Greek and Hebrew. Close and constant contact with the Word of God gradually effected in him that great transformation, that total renewal of the man which is the object of redemption. "I have found the true light in the Gospel," he said one day to Tyndale, "I now see the filthiness of Rome, and I cast from my shoulders the heavy yoke it has imposed upon me." From that hour Tyndale received from Rogers the help which he had formerly received from John Fryth, that pious martyr, whose example Rogers was to follow by enduring the punishment of fire—the first to do so under Mary. The Holy Scriptures have been written in English with the blood of martyrs—if we may so speak—the blood of Fryth, Tyndale, and Rogers; it is a crown of glory for that translation.

It is highly probable that Tyndale, before his imprisonment, had completed his Old Testament translation as far as the end of the Books of Chronicles. The manuscript was left by him in the capable hands of Rogers, who pressed on so diligently with the work of printing, that a few months before Tyndale was burned, an English version of the entire Bible was in circulation in his native land. Rogers did not himself undertake the translation of the remainder of the Old Testament but made use of the version which Myles Coverdale had already published.

Doubtless, Tyndale took pleasure in his gloomy dungeon in following with his mind’s eye the divine Scripture from city to city and from cottage to cottage; his imagination pictured to him the struggles it would have to go through, and also its victories. "The Word of God," he said, "never was without persecution—
no more than the sun can be without his light. By what right doth the pope forbid God to speak in the English tongue? Why should not the sermons of the apostles, preached no doubt in the mother tongue of those who heard them, be now written in the mother tongue of those who read them?" Tyndale did not think of proving the divinity of the Bible by learned dissertations. "Scripture derives its authority from Him who sent it," he said. "Would you know the reason why men believe in Scripture? It is Scripture. It is itself the instrument which outwardly leads men to believe, whilst inwardly, the Spirit of God Himself, speaking through Scripture, gives faith to His children." We do not know for certain in what city Rogers printed the great English folio Bible, but it was probably Antwerp. Extraordinary precautions were required to prevent the persecutors from entering the house where men had the boldness to print the Word of God, and from breaking the printing presses. Tyndale had the great comfort of knowing that the whole Bible was going to be published, and that prophets, apostles, and Christ Himself would speak by it after his death. This man, so active, so learned, and so truly great, whose works circulated far and wide with so much power, had at the same time within him a pure and beneficent light—the love of God and of man—which shed its mild rays on all around him. The depth of his faith, the charm of his conversation, the uprightness of his conduct touched those who came near him. The gaoler liked to bring him his food, in order to talk with him, and his daughter often accompanied him and listened eagerly to the words of the pious Englishman. Tyndale spoke of Jesus Christ; it seemed to him that the riches of the divine Spirit were about to transform Christendom, that the children of God were about to be manifested, and that the Lord was about to gather together his elect. "Summer is nigh," he was wont to say, "for the trees blossom." In truth, young shoots and even old trees, long barren, flourished within the very walls of the castle. The gaoler, his daughter, and other members of their house were converted to the Gospel by Tyndale’s life and doctrine. However dark the machinations of his enemies, they could not obscure the divine light kindled in his heart, and which shone before men. There was an invincible power in this Christian man. Full of hope in the final victory of Jesus Christ, he courageously trampled under foot tribulations, trials, and death itself. He believed in the victory of the Word. "I am bound like a malefactor," he said, "but the Word of God is not bound." The bitterness of his last days was changed into great peace and divine sweetness.

His friends did not forget him. Among the English merchants at Antwerp was one whose affection had often reminded him that “friendship is the assemblage of every virtue,” as a wise man of antiquity styles it. Thomas Poyntz, one of whose ancestors had come over from Normandy with William the Conqueror, had perhaps known the reformer in the house of Lady Walsh, who also belonged to this ancient family. For nearly a year the merchant had entertained the translator of the Scriptures beneath his roof, and a mutual and unlimited confidence was established between them. When Poyntz saw his friend in prison, he resolved to do everything possible to save him. Poyntz’s elder brother, John, who had retired to his estate at North Ockenden, in Essex, had
accompanied the king in 1520 to the Field of Cloth of Gold, and although no longer at court, he still enjoyed the favor of Henry VIII. Thomas determined to write to John. "Brother," he said, "William Tyndale is in prison, and likely to suffer death, unless the king should extend his gracious help to him. He has lain in my house three quarters of a year, and I know that the king has never a truer-hearted subject. When the pope gave his Majesty the title of Defender of the Faith, he prophesied like Caiaphas. The papists thought our prince should be a great maintainer of their abominations, but God has entered his Grace into the right battle. The king should know that the death of this man will be one of the highest pleasures to the enemies of the Gospel. If it might please his Majesty to send for this man, it might, by the means thereof, be opened to the court and council of this country (Brabant) that they would be at another point with the bishop of Rome within a short space."

The letter is dated the 25th of August, and was forwarded by John Poyntz to the vicar-general on the 21st of September. Meanwhile, however, having received information from other sources, Cromwell had, with the king’s approval, already taken action, for by the 4th of September he had prepared letters to be sent to two leading members of the Council of Brabant. On the 10th of September, 1535, a messenger arrived in Antwerp with two letters from the vicar-general—one for the marquis of Bergen-op-Zoom, and the other for Carondolet, archbishop of Palermo and president of the council of Brabant. Alas! the marquis had started two days before for Germany, whither he was conducting the princess of Denmark. Thomas Poyntz mounted his horse, and caught up the escort about fifteen miles from Maestricht. The marquis hurriedly glanced over Cromwell’s dispatch. "I have no leisure to write," he said, "the princess is making ready to depart." "I will follow you to the next baiting-place," answered Tyndale’s indefatigable friend. "Be it so," replied Bergen-op-Zoom.

On arriving at Maestricht, the marquis wrote to the Company of Merchant Adventurers, to Cromwell, and to his friend the archbishop, president of the council of Brabant, and gave the three letters to Poyntz. The latter presented the letters of Cromwell and of the marquis to the president, but the archbishop and the council of Brabant were opposed to Tyndale. Poyntz immediately started for London, and laid the answer of the council before Cromwell, entreating him to insist that Tyndale should be immediately set at liberty, for the danger was great. The answer was delayed a month. Poyntz handed it to the Emperor’s Council at Brussels, and every day this true and generous friend went to the office to learn the result. "Your request will be granted," said one of the clerks on the fourth day. Poyntz was transported with joy. Tyndale was saved.

The traitor Philips, however, who had delivered Tyndale to his enemies, was then at Louvain. He had run away from Antwerp, knowing that the English merchants were angry with him, and had sold his books with the intent of escaping to Paris. But the Louvain priests, who still needed him, reassured him, and remaining in that stronghold of Romanism, he began to translate into Latin such passages in Tyndale’s writings as he thought best calculated to offend the
catholics. He was thus occupied when the news of Tyndale’s approaching
deliverance filled him and his friends with alarm. What was to be done? He
thought the only means of preventing the liberation of the prisoner was to shut
up the liberator himself. Philips went straight to the procurator-general. “That
man, Poyntz,” he said, “is as much a heretic as Tyndale.” Two sergeants-of-arms
were sent to keep watch over Poyntz at his house, and for six days in
succession he was examined upon a hundred different articles. At the beginning
of February 1536, he learned that he was about to be sent to prison, and
knowing what would follow, he formed a prompt resolution. One night, when
the sergeants-of-arms were asleep, he escaped and left the city early, just as
the gates were opened. Horsemen were sent in search of him; but as Poyntz
knew the country well, he escaped them, got on board a ship, and arrived safe
and sound at his brother’s house at North Ockenden.

When Tyndale heard of this escape, he knew what it indicated; but he was not
overwhelmed, and almost at the foot of the scaffold, he bravely fought many a
tough battle. The Louvain doctors undertook to make him abjure his faith, and
represented to him that he was condemned by the Church. “The authority of
Jesus Christ,” answered Tyndale, “is independent of the authority of the
Church.” They called upon him to make submission to the successor of the
Apostle Peter. “Holy Scripture,” he said, “is the first of the Apostles, and the
ruler in the kingdom of Christ.” The Romish doctors ineffectually attacked him
in his prison; he showed them that they were entangled in vain traditions and
miserable superstitions, and overthrew all their pretenses.

A most interesting memento of Tyndale’s confinement at Vilvorde, and the only
surviving document in the reformer’s own hand, has come to light in the
archives of the Council of Brabant. It is a letter, written in Latin, which
Tyndale addressed in all probability to the governor of the prison, and is
worthy of being quoted in full:

“I believe, right worshipful, that you are not ignorant of what has
been determined concerning me (by the Council of Brabant);
therefore I entreat your lordship and that by the Lord Jesus, that
if I am to remain here (in Vilvorde) during the winter, you will
request the Commissary to be kind enough to send me from my
goods which he has in his possession, a warmer cap, for I suffer
extremely from cold in the head, being afflicted with a perpetual
catarrh, which is considerably increased in this cell. A warmer
coat also, for that which I have is very thin: also a piece of cloth
to patch my leggings; my overcoat is worn out; my shirts are also
worn out. He has a woollen shirt of mine, if he will be kind
enough to send it. I have also with him leggings of thicker cloth
for putting on above; he has also warmer night caps. I wish also
his permission to have a lamp in the evening, for it is wearisome
to sit alone in the dark. But above all I entreat and beseech your
clemency to be urgent with the Commissary that he may kindly
permit me to have my Hebrew Bible, Hebrew Grammar, and
Hebrew Dictionary, that I may spend my time with that study. And in return, may you obtain your dearest wish, provided always it be consistent with the salvation of your soul. But if, before the close of the winter, a different decision be reached concerning me, I shall be patient, abiding the will of God to the glory of the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit, I pray, may ever direct your heart. Amen.

"W. Tyndale."

What reception this letter met with we do not know, but the noble dignity which marks its style is a tribute to the continued power of the word of the truth of the Gospel in the life and witness of the illustrious prisoner. In season and out of season he bore faithful testimony to the word of divine grace, until "death God’s endless mercies sealed, and made the sacrifice complete."

During this time Poyntz was working with all his might in England to ward off the blow by which his friend was about to be struck. John assisted Thomas, but all was useless. The king cared very little for these evangelicals. His religion consisted in rejecting the Roman pontiff and making himself pope; as for those reformers, let them be burnt in Brabant, it will save him the trouble. All hope was not, however, lost. They had confidence in the vicegerent, the hammer of the monks. On the 13th of April Stephen Vaughan wrote to Cromwell from Antwerp, "If you will send me a letter for the privy-council, I can still save Tyndale from the fire; only make haste, for if you are slack about it, it will be too late." But there were cases in which Cromwell could do nothing without the king, and Henry was deaf. He had special motives at that time for sacrificing Tyndale; the discontent which broke out in the North of England made him desirous of conciliating the Low Countries. Charles V also, who was vigorously attacked by Francis I, prayed his very good brother (Henry VIII) to unite with him for the public good of Christendom. Queen Mary, regent of the Netherlands, wrote from Brussels to her uncle, entreating him to yield to this prayer, and the king was quite ready to abandon Tyndale to such powerful allies. Mary, a woman of upright heart but feeble character, easily yielded to outward impressions, and had at that time bad counselors about her. "Those animals (the monks) are all powerful at the Court of Brussels," said Erasmus. "Mary is only a puppet placed there by our nation; Montigny is the plaything of the Franciscans; the cardinal-archbishop of Liège is a domineering person, and full of violence; and as for the archbishop of Palermo, he is a mere giver of words and nothing else."

Among such personages, and under their influence, the court was formed, and the trial of the English reformer began. Tyndale refused to be represented by counsel. "I will answer my accusers myself," he said. The doctrine for which he was tried was this: "The man who throws off the worldly existence which he has lived far from God, and receives by a living faith the complete remission of his sins, which the death of Christ has purchased for him, is introduced by a glorious adoption into the very family of God." This was certainly a crime for
which a reformer could joyfully suffer. In August 1536, Tyndale appeared before the ecclesiastical court. "You are charged," said his judges, "with having infringed the imperial decree which forbids anyone to teach that faith alone justifies." The accusation was not without truth. A new edition of Tyndale’s *Wicked Mammon* had just appeared in London under the title *Treatise of Justification by Faith only*. Every man could read in it the crime with which he was charged.

Tyndale had his reasons when he declared he would defend himself. It was not his own cause that he undertook to defend, but the cause of the Bible; a Brabant lawyer would have supported it very poorly. It was in his heart to proclaim solemnly, before he died, that while all human religions make salvation proceed from the works of man, the divine religion makes it proceed from a work of God. "A man, whom the sense of his sins has confounded," said Tyndale, "loses all confidence and joy. The first thing to be done to save him is, therefore, to lighten him of the heavy burden under which his conscience is bowed down. He must believe in the perfect work of Christ which reconciles him completely with God; then he has peace, and Christ imparts to him, by His Spirit, a holy regeneration." "Yes," he exclaimed, "we believe and are at peace in our consciences, because that God who cannot lie, hath promised to forgive us for Christ’s sake. ... As a child, when his father threateneth him for his fault, hath never rest till he hear the word of mercy and forgiveness of his father’s mouth again; but as soon as he heareth his father say, ‘Go thy way, do me no more so; I forgive thee this fault!’ then is his heart at rest; then runneth he to no man to make intercession for him; neither, though there come any false merchant, saying, ‘What wilt thou give me and I will obtain pardon of thy father for thee?’ will he suffer himself to be beguiled. No, he will not buy of a wily fox what his father hath given him freely."

Tyndale had spoken to the consciences of his hearers, and some of them were beginning to believe that his cause was the cause of the Gospel. "Truly," exclaimed the procurator-general, as did formerly the centurion near the cross, "truly this was a good, learned, and pious man." But the priests would not allow so costly a prey to be snatched from them. Tyndale was declared guilty of erroneous, captious, rash, ill-sounding, dangerous, scandalous, and heretical propositions, and was condemned to be solemnly degraded and then handed over to the secular power. They were eager to make him go through the ceremonial, even all the mummeries, used on such occasions; it was too good a case to allow of any curtailment. The reformer was dressed in his sacerdotal robes, the sacred vessels were placed in his hands, and he was taken before the bishop. The latter, having been informed of the crime of the accused man, stripped him of the ornaments of his order, and after a barber had shaved the whole of his head, the bishop declared him deprived of the crown of the priesthood, and expelled, like an undutiful child, from the inheritance of the Lord.

One day would have been sufficient to cut off from this world the man who was its ornament, and those who walked in the darkness of fanaticism waited impatiently for the fatal hour; but the secular power hesitated for a while, and
the reformer stayed nearly two months longer in prison, always full of faith, peace, and joy. "Well," said those who came near him in the castle of Vilvorde, "if that man is not a good Christian, we do not know of one upon earth."

Religious courage was personified in Tyndale. He had never suffered himself to be stopped by any difficulty, privation, or suffering; he had resolutely followed the call he had received, which was to give England the Word of God. Nothing had terrified him, nothing had dispirited him; with admirable perseverance he had continued his work, and now he was going to give his life for it. Firm in his convictions, he had never sacrificed the least truth to prudence or to fear; firm in his hope, he had never doubted that the labor of his life would bear fruit, for that labor had the promises of God. A pious and intrepid man, he is one of the noblest examples of Christian heroism.

The faint hope which some of Tyndale’s friends had entertained, on seeing the delay of “justice,” was soon destroyed. The imperial government prepared at last to complete the wishes of the priests. Friday, the 6th of October, 1536, was the day that terminated the miserable but glorious life of the reformer. The gates of the prison rolled back, a procession crossed the foss and the bridge under which slept the waters of the Senne, passed the outer walls, and halted without the fortifications. Before leaving the castle, Tyndale, a grateful friend, had entrusted the gaoler with a letter intended for Poyntz; the gaoler took it himself to Antwerp not long after, but it has not come down to us. On arriving at the scene of punishment, the reformer found a numerous crowd assembled. The government had wished to show the people the punishment of a heretic, but they only witnessed the triumph of a martyr. Tyndale was calm. "I call God to record," he could say, "that I have never altered, against the voice of my conscience, one syllable of His Word. Nor would do this day, if all the pleasures, honors, and riches of the earth might be given me." The joy of hope filled his heart; yet one painful idea took possession of him. Dying far from his country, abandoned by his king, he felt saddened at the thought of that prince, who had already persecuted so many of God’s servants, and who remained obstinately rebellious against that divine light which everywhere shone around him. Tyndale would not have that soul perish through carelessness. His charity buried all the faults of the monarch; he prayed that those sins might be blotted out from before the face of God; he would have saved Henry VIII at any cost. While the executioner was fastening him to the post, the reformer exclaimed in a loud and suppliant voice, "Lord, open the king of England’s eyes!" They were his last words. Instantly afterwards he was strangléd, and flames consumed the martyr’s body. His last cry was wafted to the British isles, and repeated in every assembly of Christians. A great death had crowned a great life. "Such," says the old chronicler, John Foxe, "such is the story of that true servant and martyr of God, William Tyndale, who, for his notable pains and travails, may well be called the Apostle of England in this our later age."

His fellow countrymen profited by the work of his life. After the arrival in England of the first copies of Tyndale’s New Testament early in 1526, edition followed rapidly upon edition. It was like a mighty river continually bearing new waters to the sea. Did the reformer’s death dry them up suddenly? No. A
greater work still was to be accomplished; the entire Bible (Matthew’s Bible) was already circulating privately. The king had refused his consent to the circulation of Coverdale’s Bible; would he not do the same with this, and with greater reason? A powerful protector alone could secure the free circulation of Scripture. Richard Grafton, the printer, went to London to ask permission openly to sell the precious volume, and with the intention of applying to Cranmer.

Would Cranmer protect it? The king and Cromwell had declared against Tyndale, and the primate had looked on; that was too much his custom. His essentially prudent mind, the conviction he felt that he could do no good to the Church unless he kept the place he occupied, and perhaps his love of life inclined him to yield to his master’s despotic will. So long as Henry VIII was on the throne of England, Cranmer was (humanly speaking) the only possible reformer. A John the Baptist, a Knox would have been dashed to pieces at the first shock. The scepter was then an axe; to save the head, it was necessary to bend it. The primate, therefore, bent his head frequently. He hid himself during the royal anger, but when the storm had passed he appeared again. The primate was the victim of an error. He had said that the king ought to command the Church, and every time the tyrant’s order was heard, he appeared to believe that God Himself enjoined him to obey. Cranmer was the image of his Church which, under the weight of its greatness and with many weaknesses hidden beneath its robes, has notwithstanding always had within it a mighty principle of truth and life.

Grafton, the printer, had an audience of the archbishop at Forde, in Kent; he presented the martyr’s Bible, and asked him to procure its free circulation. The archbishop took the book, examined it, and was delighted with it. Fidelity, clearness, strength, simplicity, unction—all were combined in this admirable translation. Cranmer had much eagerness in proposing what he thought useful. He sent the volume to Cromwell, begging him to present it to his Majesty and obtain permission for it to be sold, ”until such time that we (the bishops),” he added, ”shall put forth a better translation—which, I think, will not be till a day after doomsday.”

Henry ran over the book; Tyndale’s name was not in it, and the dedication to his Majesty was very well written. The king regarding (and not without reason) Holy Scripture as the most powerful engine to destroy the papal system, and believing that this translation would help him to emancipate England from the Romish domination, came to an unexpected resolution; he authorized the sale and the reading of the Bible throughout the kingdom. The book carried the words at the foot of its title page, ”Set forth with the Kinges most gracious lycence.” All Englishmen might safely buy and read it. Inconsistent and whimsical prince! At one and the same time he published and imposed all over his realm the doctrines of Romanism, and circulated without obstacle the Divine Word that overthrew them! We may well say that the blood of a martyr, precious in the eyes of the Supreme King, opened the gates of England to the Holy Scriptures. Cromwell having informed the archbishop of the royal decision, the latter exclaimed, ”What you have just done gives me more
pleasure than if you had given me a thousand pounds. I doubt not but that hereby such fruit of good knowledge shall ensue, that it shall well appear hereafter, what high and acceptable service you have done unto God and the king, which shall so much redound to your honor that (besides God’s reward) you shall obtain perpetual memory for the same."
For centuries the English people had been waiting for such a permission, even from before the time of Wycliffe, and accordingly the Bible circulated rapidly. The impetuosity with which the living waters rushed forth, carrying with them everything they met in their course, was like the sudden opening of a huge floodgate. This great event, more important than divorces, treaties, and wars, was the conquest of England by the Reformation. "It was a wonderful thing to see," says an old historian. Whoever possessed the means bought the book and read it or had it read to him by others. Aged persons learned their letters in order to study the Holy Scriptures of God. In many places there were meetings for reading; poor people clubbed their savings together and purchased a Bible, and then in some remote corner of the church, they modestly formed a circle, and read the Holy Book between them. A crowd of men, women, and young folks, disgusted with the barren pomp of the altars, and with the worship of dumb images, would gather round them to taste the precious promises of the Gospel. God Himself spoke under the arched roofs of those old chapels or time-worn cathedrals, where for generations nothing had been heard but masses and litanies. The people wished, instead of the noisy chants of the priests, to hear the voice of Jesus Christ, of Paul and of John, of Peter and of James. The Christianity of the apostles reappeared in the Church.
But with it came persecution, according to the words of the Master: The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child. A father, exasperated because his son, a mere boy, had taken part in these holy readings, caught him by the hair, and put a cord round his neck to hang him. In all the towns and villages of Tyndale’s country the holy pages were opened, and the delighted readers found therein those treasures of peace and joy which the martyr had known. Many cried out with him, "We know that this Word is from God, as we know that fire burns; not because anyone has told us, but because a Divine fire consumes our hearts. O the brightness of the face of Moses! O the splendor of the glory of Jesus Christ, which no veil conceals! O the inward power of the Divine word, which compels us, with so much sweetness, to love and to do! O the temple of God within us, in which the Son of God dwells!" Tyndale had desired to set the world on fire by his Master’s Word, and that fire was kindled. The general dissemination of the Holy Scriptures forms an important epoch in the Reformation of England. It is like one of those pillars which separate one territory from another.

The End of Volume 2, Book Two
Chapter 1  Three Parties Divide England
Chapter 2  An "Appeal to Caesar" and its Outcome
Chapter 3  The "Whip of Six Strings"
Chapter 4  A Bitter Cup for Henry VIII
Chapter 5  The Disgrace and Death of Thomas Cromwell
Chapter 6  The Divorce of Anne of Cleves
Chapter 7  Catherine Howard, the Fifth Queen
Chapter 8  Cranmer Pursues his Task
Chapter 9  The Last Martyrs of Henry’s Reign
Chapter 10  Death Casts its Shadow over Catherine Parr
Chapter 11  The Last Days of Henry VIII

CHAPTER 1

Three Parties Divide England
1536–1540

There were in 1536 three distinct parties in England, the papists, the evangelicals, and the Anglican Catholics who were halting between the two extremes. It was a question which of the three would gain the upper hand.
The Reformation in England was born of the power of the Word of God, and did not encounter there such obstacles as were raised against it in France by a powerful clergy and by princes hostile to evangelical faith and morality. The English prelates, weakened by various circumstances, were unable to withstand an energetic attack, and the sovereign was "the mad Henry," as Luther had called him. His whims opened the doors to religious freedom, of which the Reformation was to take advantage. Thus England, which had remained in a state of rudeness and ignorance much longer than France, was early enlightened by the Reformation; and the nation awakened by the Gospel gave birth in the sixteenth century to such masterminds as France, though more highly civilized, failed to produce so early. Shakespeare was born in 1564, one month before the death of Calvin. The Reformation placed England a century ahead of the rest of Europe. The final triumph, however, of the Reformation was not reached without many conflicts; and the two adversaries more than once engaged hand to hand, before one overthrew the other.

About the middle of October 1537 an event occurred which was of great importance for the triumph of the Gospel. There was at that time great rejoicing in the palace of the Tudors and in all England, for Queen Jane (Seymour), on October 12, presented to Henry VIII the son which he had so much desired. Letters written beforehand, in the name of the Queen, announced it in every place, and congratulations arrived from all quarters. This birth was called "the most joyful news which for many years had been announced in England." Bishop Latimer wrote, "Here is no less joying and rejoicing in these parts for the birth of our prince, whom we hungered so long, than there was, I trow, among the neighbors at the birth of St. John Baptist" (Luke 1:58). A prince born to reign! exclaimed the politicians. "God grant him long life and abundant honors!" they wrote from the Continent. "Our prince," Cromwell sent word to the ambassadors of England, "our Lord be thanked, is in good health, and sucketh like a child of his puissance, which you my lord William can declare." It was all the more important to declare this, because the very contrary was asserted. It was even reported by some that the child was dead. As Henry feared that some attempt might be made on his son's life, he forbade that anyone should approach the cradle without an order signed by his own hand. Everything brought into the child's room was to be perfumed, and measures of precaution against poison were taken. The infant was named Edward; Archbishop Cranmer baptized him, and was one of his godfathers. A fortnight after his birth Sir Edward Seymour, his uncle by the mother's side, was created Earl of Hertford. It was alleged that a spell had been thrown upon the king to prevent his having a male child; and behold, he had now an heir in spite of the spell. His dynasty was strengthened. Henry VIII became more powerful at home, more respected abroad.

This great rejoicing was followed by a great mourning. The queen developed puerperal fever and died twelve days after the birth of her son. "Divine Providence," wrote Henry to his fellow monarch of France, "has mingled my joy
with the bitterness of the death of her who brought me this happiness."
Certainly Henry lamented her untimely death with all sincerity.

With the birth of the young prince the hopes of the partisans of the Catholic Mary disappeared, and the friends of the Reformation rejoiced at the thought that the young prince was godson of the archbishop. Many circumstances contributed to their encouragement. They witnessed the formation of unlooked-for ties between the evangicals of England and those of Switzerland; and the pure Gospel as professed by the latter began to exercise a real influence over England. Edward, during his very short reign, was to fulfil the best hopes to which his birth had given rise, and the triumph to which his reign seemed destined was already visibly in preparation.

Simon Grynaeus, the friend of Erasmus and Melanchthon, and professor at the university of Basel, had as early as 1531 held intercourse with Henry VIII and Cranmer. Afterwards Cranmer and Henry Bullinger, successor of Zwingli at Zurich, had also become acquainted with each other; and, as early as 1536, some young Englishmen of good family had betaken themselves to Zurich, that they might drink at the full fountain of Christian knowledge and life which sprang forth there. Some of them lived in the house of Pellican, others with Bullinger himself. These young men were John Butler, who had a rich patrimony in England, a sagacious man and a Christian who persevered in prayer; Nicholas Partridge, from Kent, a man of active and devoted character; Bartholomew Traheron, who had already (1527 and 1528) declared at Oxford for the Reformation, and had been persecuted by Doctor London; Nicholas Eliot, who had studied law in England, and who afterwards held some government office; and others besides. Bullinger was strongly attached to these young Englishmen. He directed their studies, and, in addition to his public teaching, he explained to them in his own house the prophet Isaiah.

There was much talk at Zurich at this time about a young French theologian, Calvin by name, who was settled at Geneva, and had published a profound and eloquent exposition of Christian doctrines. The young Englishmen eagerly longed to make his acquaintance. Butler, Partridge, Eliot, and Traheron set out for Geneva in November 1537, bearing letters of introduction from Bullinger to the reformer. The latter received them in the most kindly manner. It was more than common courtesy, they wrote to Bullinger. They were delighted with his appearance and with his conversation, at once so simple and so fruitful. They felt a charm which drew them to his presence again and again. The master taught well, and the disciples listened well. The four Englishmen, being called elsewhere, took their departure deeply saddened by the painful separation. A letter written by Butler and Traheron shortly afterwards is the first communication addressed by England to the reformer of Geneva. It runs as follows: "We wish you the true joy in Christ. May as much happiness be appointed to us from henceforth as our going away from you has occasioned us sorrow! For although our absence, as we hope, will not be of very long
continuance, yet we cannot but grieve at being deprived even for a few hours of so much suavity of disposition and delightful conversation. And this also distresses us in no small measure, lest there should be any persons who may regard us as resembling flies, which swarm everywhere in the summer, but disappear on the approach of winter. You may be assured that, if we had been able to assist you in any way, no pleasure should have called us away from you, nor should any peril have withdrawn us. This distress, indeed, which the disordered tempers of certain individuals have brought upon you, is far beyond our power to alleviate. But you have one, Christ Jesus, who can easily dispel by the beams of his consolation whatever cloud may arise upon your mind. He will restore to you a joyful tranquility; he will scatter and put to flight your enemies; he will make you gloriously to triumph over your conquered adversaries; and we will entreat him, as earnestly as we can, to do this as speedily as possible. We have written these few lines at present, most amiable and learned Master Calvin, that you may receive a memorial of our regard towards you. Salute in our names that individual of a truly heroic spirit and singular learning and godliness, Master Farel. Salute, too, our sincere friends Master Olivetan and your brother Fontaine. Our countrymen send abundant salutations. Farewell, very dear friend."

England at this time did justice to the Genevan reformer.

Much admiration was likewise felt for Bullinger. "We confess ourselves to be entirely yours," wrote to him the four Englishmen, "as long as we can be our own." The works of the Zurich doctor were much read in England, and diffused there the spirit of the gospel. Nicholas Eliot wrote to him, "And how great weight all persons attribute to your commentaries, how greedily they embrace and admire them (to pass over numberless other arguments), the booksellers are most ample witnesses whom by the sale of your writings alone... you see suddenly become as rich as Crœsus. May God, therefore, give you the disposition to publish all your writings as speedily as possible, whereby you will not only fill the coffers of the booksellers, but will gain over very many souls to Christ, and adorn his church with most precious jewels."

At the news that the king of England had separated from the pope, the Swiss theologians were filled with hope, and they vied with each other in speeding his progress towards the truth. Bullinger composed two works in Latin which he dedicated to Henry VIII, the first of them on *The Authority, the Certitude, the Stability, and the Absolute Perfection of Holy Scripture*, the second on *The Institution and the Function of Bishops*. He forwarded copies of these works to Partridge and Eliot for presentation to the king, to Cranmer, and to Cromwell. The two young Englishmen went first to the archbishop and delivered to him the volumes intended for the king and for himself. The archbishop consented to present the book to the prince, but not till after he had read it himself, and on condition that Eliot and Partridge should be present, that they might answer any questions asked by the king. Then going to Cromwell, they gave him the
copy intended for him; and the vicegerent, more prompt than the archbishop, showed it the same day to Henry VIII, to whom Cranmer then hastened to present his own copy. The king expressed a wish that the work should be translated into English. "Your books are wonderfully well received," wrote Eliot to Bullinger, "not only by our king, but equally so by the lord Cromwell, who is keeper of the king’s privy seal and vicar-general of the church of England."

Other Continental divines who held the same views as the Swiss likewise dedicated some theological writings both to the king and to Cranmer. Wolfgang Capito, who was at the time at Strasburg, dedicated to Henry VIII a book in which he treated, among other subjects, of the mass (Responsorum de Missa, &c.). The king, as usual, handed it to two persons belonging to the two opposing parties, in order to get their opinions. He then examined their verdict, and announced his own. Cranmer wrote to Capito that the king "could by no means digest" his piece on the mass, although at the same time he approved some of the other pieces. Martin Bucer, a colleague of Capito, having written a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, dedicated it to Cranmer, and wrote to him as follows: "It is not enough to have shaken off the yoke of the pope, and to be unwilling to take upon us the yoke of Christ; but if God be for us who can be against us? And Christianity is a warfare."

While the Swiss and the Strasburgers were seeking to enlighten England, the Roman party on the Continent and the Catholic party in England itself were striving to keep her in darkness. The pope, in sorrow and in anger, saw England lost to Rome. Nevertheless the Catholic rising in the northern counties in October, 1536, allowed him still to cherish hope. The king of France and the Emperor, both near neighbors of England, could if necessary strike with the sword. The pope must therefore stir up to action not only the English Catholics, but also the courts of Paris and Brussels. Whom should he select for the mission? Reginald Pole, an Englishman, a zealous Roman Catholic, and a kinsman of Henry VIII, seemed to be the man made for the occasion. It was he who had lately written these words: "There was never a greater matter entreated, of more importance to the wealth of the realm and the whole church than this (the re-establishment of papal authority). And this same that you go about to take away, the authority of one head in the church, was a more principal and groundle cause of the loss of the Orient, to be in infidels’ hands, and all true religion degenerate, than ever was the Turk’s sword, as most wisest men have judged. For if they had agreed all with the Occidental Church, they had never come to that misery; and like misery, if God have not mercy on us to return to the church, is most to be feared in our realm. ... Your sweet liberty you have got, since you were delivered from the obedience papal, speaketh for itself. Whereof the rest of the realm hath such part that you be without envy of other countries, that no nation wisheth the same to have such liberty granted them." This last assertion was doubtful.
Pole was at this time at Padua, where he had studied, and where he was resident by permission of the king. He avoided going to Rome lest he should offend Henry. But he received one day an invitation from Paul III, who summoned him to the Vatican to take part in a consultation about the general council. To comply with this summons would be to cross the Rubicon; it would make Henry VIII his irreconcilable enemy, and would expose to great danger not only himself but all his family. Pole therefore hesitated. The advice, however, of the pious Contarini, the command of the pope, and his own enthusiasm for the cause, brought him to a decision. On his arrival at Rome he gave himself up entirely; and when Christmas was drawing near, on December 20, 1536, the pope created him cardinal, together with del Monte, afterwards Julius III; Caraffa, afterwards Paul IV; Sadoleto, Borgia, Cajetan, and four others. These proceedings were very seriously criticized in England. For the vainglory of a red hat, said Tunstall and Stokesley, Pole is, in fact, an instrument of the pope to set forth his malice, to depose the king from his kingdom, and to stir his subjects against him. There, was, however, something more in his case than a cardinal's hat; there was, we must acknowledge, a faith, doubtless fanatical but sincere, in the papacy. Not long afterwards the pope nominated him the new cardinal legate beyond the Alps, the object of this measure being to excite men's minds. He was to induce the king of France and the Emperor to enter into the views of the Roman court, to inflame the Catholics of England, and, if he should be unable to go there himself, to take up his residence in the Netherlands, and thence conspire for the overthrow of Protestantism in England.

At the beginning of Lent 1537, Pole, attended by a numerous suite, set out from Rome. The pope, who was not thoroughly sure of his new legate, had appointed as his adviser the bishop of Verona, who was to make up for any deficiency of experience on the part of the legate, and to put him on his guard against pride. Henry VIII, on learning the nature of his young cousin's mission, was exceedingly angry. He declared Pole a rebel, set a price on his head, and promised fifty thousand crowns to anyone who should kill him. Cromwell, following his master's example, exclaimed, "I will make him eat his own heart." This was only a figure of speech, but it was rather a strong one. No sooner had Henry VIII heard of the arrival of Pole in France than he demanded that Francis I should deliver him up, as a subject in rebellion against his king. Pole had not been long at Paris before he heard of this demand. It aroused in his heart more pride than fear. It revealed to him his own importance, and turning to his attendants he said, "This news makes me glad; I know now that I am a cardinal." Francis I did not concede the demand of the angry Tudor, but he did consider the mission of Pole as one of those attacks on the power of kings in which the papacy from time to time indulged. When Pole, therefore, made his appearance at the palace he was refused admission. While still only at the door, and even before he had had time to knock, he himself tells us, he was sent away. "I am ready to weep," he added, "to find that a king does not
receive a legate of Rome.” Francis I having sent him an order to leave France, he fled to Cambrai, which at that time formed part of the Netherlands.

No sooner was he there then, under great excitement about what had occurred to him at Paris, he wrote to Cromwell, complaining bitterly that Henry VIII, in order to get him into his power, did not scruple to violate both God’s law and man’s, and even “to disturb all commerce between country and country.” “I was ashamed to hear that... a prince of honor should desire of another prince of like honor, ‘Betray thine own ambassador, betray the legate, and give him into my ambassador’s hands to be brought to me.’” The like, he says, was never heard of in Christendom. Pole had more hope of the Emperor than of Francis I, but he was soon undeceived. He was not permitted to go out of the town, and a courier entrusted with his dispatches was arrested by the Imperialists at Valenciennes and sent back to him. He now resolved on taking a step towards opening communication with the English government, and as he did not venture to present himself to the ambassadors of Henry VIII in France, he sent to them the bishop of Verona. But this prelate, likewise, was not received, and he was only allowed to speak to one of the secretaries. He endeavored to convince him of the perfect innocence of Pole and of his mission. “The cardinal-legate,” he said, “is solely charged by the pope to treat of the safety of Christendom.” This was true in the sense intended by Rome, but it is well known what this safety, in her view, required.

Fresh movements in the North of England tended to increase the anger of Henry VIII. It was not enough that Pole had been driven from France. The king himself now wrote to Hutton, his envoy at Brussels, “You shall deliver unto the regent (Margaret) our letters for the stay of his entry into the Emperor’s dominions; ... you shall press them... neither to admit him to her presence, nor to suffer unto him to have any other entertainment than beseemeth the traitor and rebel of their friend and ally. ... You shall in any wise cause good secret and substantial espial to be made upon him from place to place where he shall be.” Pole, on his part, spoke as a Roman legate. He summoned the queen to prove her submission to the apostolic see and to grant him an audience, and he made use of serious menaces. “If traitors, conspirators, rebels, and other offenders,” said the English ambassador, “might under the shadow of legacy have sure access into all places, and thereby to trouble and espy all things, that were overmuch dangerous.” This was no question of rebellion—Pole sent word to the regent by the bishop of Verona—but of the Reformation, and he was sent to refute the errors which it was spreading in England. Her opinion was that he should return, “for that she had no commission of the Emperor to intermeddle in any point of his legacy.”

Hereupon Pole went from Cambrai to Liége, but in consequence of the advice of the bishop of Liége, he only ventured to go there in disguise. He was received into the bishop’s palace, but his stay there was "not without great fear." He set out again on August 22, and went to Rome. Never had any mission
of a Roman pontiff so entirely failed. The ambitious projects of the pope against the Reformation in England had proved abortive. But one of the secrets of Roman policy is to put a good face on a bad case. The less successful Pole had been, the more necessary it was to assume an air of satisfaction with him and his embassy. In any case, was it not a victory for him to have returned safe and sound after having to do with Francis I, Henry VIII, and Charles V? It was November when he reached Rome, and he was received as generals used to be received by the ancient Romans after great victories. They carried him, so to speak, on their arms; everyone heaped upon him demonstrations of respect and joy; and his secretary, on the last day of the year 1537, wrote to the Catholics of England, to describe to them *the great triumph that was made at Rome for the safe arrival of his master.* Rome may win or lose, she always celebrates a triumph.

This mission of Reginald Pole had fatal consequences. In the following year, his brother, Henry lord Montague, and his kinsmen, Henry the marquis of Exeter, and Sir Edward Nevil, were arrested and committed to the Tower. Some time afterwards his mother, Margaret countess of Salisbury, the last of the Plantagenets, a woman of remarkable spirit, was likewise arrested. They were charged with aiming at the deposition of Henry and at placing Reginald on the throne. "I do perceive," it was said, "it should be for my lord Montague's brother, which is beyond the sea with the bishop of Rome, and is an arrant traitor to the king’s Highness." They were condemned and executed in January 1539. The countess was not executed till May 1541.

Paul III had been mistaken is selecting the cousin of the king to stir up Catholic Europe against him. But some other legate might have a chance of success. Henry felt the necessity of securing allies upon the Continent. Cranmer promptly availed himself of this feeling to persuade Henry to unite with the Protestants of Germany. The elector of Saxony, the landgrave of Hesse, and the other Protestant princes, finding that the king had resolutely broken with the pope, had suppressed the monasteries and begun other reforms, consented to send a deputation. On May 12, 1538, Francis Burkhardt, vice-chancellor of Saxony, George von Boyneburg, doctor of law, and Frederick Myconius, superintendent of the church of Gotha—a diplomatist, a jurist, and a theologian—set out for London. The princes wished to be worthily represented, and the envoys were to live in magnificent style and keep a liberal table. The king received them with much good will. He thanked them that, laying aside their own affairs, they had undertaken so laborious a journey, and he especially spoke of Melanchthon in the most loving terms. But the delegates, whilst they were so honorably treated by their own princes and by the king of England, were much less so by inferior agents. They were hardly settled in the house assigned to them than they were attacked by the inhabitants, "a multitude of rats daily and nightly running in their chambers." In addition to this annoyance, the kitchen was adjacent to the parlor in which they were to dine, so that the house was full of smells, and all who came in were offended.
But certain bishops were to give them more trouble than the rats. Cranmer received them as friends and brethren, and endeavored to take advantage of their presence to promote the triumph of the Gospel in England, but Tunstall, Stokesley, and others left no stone unturned to render their mission abortive. The discussion took place in the archbishop’s palace at Lambeth, and they did their best to protract it, obstinately defending the doctrines and the customs of the Middle Ages. They were willing, indeed, to separate from Rome, but this was in order to unite with the Greek church, not with the evangelicals. Each of the two conflicting parties endeavored to gain over to itself those English doctors who were still wavering. One day, Richard Sampson, bishop of Chichester, who usually went with the Scholastic party, having come to Lambeth at an early hour, Cranmer took him aside and so forcibly urged on him the necessity of abandoning tradition that the bishop, a weak man, was convinced. But Stokesley, who had doubtless noticed something in the course of the discussion, in his turn took Sampson aside into the gallery, just when the meeting was breaking up, and spoke to him very earnestly in behalf of the practices of the church. These customs are essential, said Stokesley, for they are found in the Greek church. The bishop of Chichester, driven in one direction by the bishop of London and in the opposite by the archbishop of Canterbury, was much embarrassed, and did not know which way to turn. His decision was for the last speaker. The semi-Roman doctors at this period, who sacrificed to the king the Roman rite, felt it incumbent upon them to cross all Europe for the purpose of finding in the Turkish empire the Greek rite, which was for them the Gospel. England must be dressed in a Grecian garb. But Cranmer would not hear of it, and he presented to his countrymen the wedding garment of which the Savior speaks.

The summer was now drawing to an end. The German delegates had been in London for some three months without having made any progress. Wearied with fruitless discussions, they began to think of their departure. But before setting out, about the middle of August, they forwarded to the king a document in which they argued from Holy Scripture, from the testimony of the most ancient of the Fathers, and from the practice of the primitive church, against the withdrawal of the cup from the laity, private masses, and the celibacy of priests, three errors which they looked upon as having essentially contributed to the deformation of Christendom. When Cranmer heard of their intention to leave England, he was much affected. Their departure dissipated all his hopes. Must he then renounce the hope of seeing the Word of God prevail in England as it was prevailing in evangelical Germany? He summoned them to Lambeth, and entreated them earnestly and with much kindliness for the king’s sake to remain. They replied “that at the king’s request they would be very well content to tarry during his pleasure, not only a month or two, but a year or two, if they were at their own liberty. But forasmuch they had been so long from their princes, and had not all this season any letters from them, it was not to be doubted but that they were daily looked for at home, and therefore they durst not tarry.” However, after renewed entreaties, they said, “We will
consult together.” They discussed with one another the question whether they ought to leave England just at the time when she was perhaps on the point of siding with the truth. Shall we refuse to sacrifice our private convenience to interests so great? They adopted the least convenient but most useful course. We will tarry, they said, for a month, “upon hope that their tarrying should grow into some good success concerning the points of their commission,” and “trusting that the king’s Majesty would write unto their princes for their excuse in thus long tarrying.” The evangelicals of Germany believed it to be their duty to tolerate certain secondary differences, but frankly to renounce those errors and abuses which were contrary to the essential doctrines of the Gospel, and to unite in the great truths of the faith. This was precisely what the Catholic party and the king himself had no intention of doing. When Cranmer urged the bishops to apply themselves to the task of answering the Germans, they replied “that the king’s grace hath taken upon himself to answer the said orators in that behalf... and therefore they will not meddle with the abuses, lest they should write therein contrary to that the king shall write.” It was, indeed, neither pleasant nor safe to contradict Henry VIII. But in this case the king’s opinion was only a convenient veil, behind which the bishops sought to conceal their ill will and their evil doctrines. Their reply was nothing but an evasion. The book was written, not by the king, but by one of themselves, Tunstall bishop of Durham. He ran no risk of contradicting himself. In spite of this ill will, the Germans remained not only one month but two. Their conduct, like that of Cranmer, was upright, devoted, noble, and Christian; while the bishops of London and Durham and their friends, clever men no doubt, were souls of a lower cast, who strove to escape by chicanery from the free discussion proposed to them, and passed off their knavery as prudence.

The German doctors had now nothing more to do. They had offered the hand and it had been rejected. The vessel which was to convey them was waiting. They were exhausted with fatigue, and one of them, Myconius, whom the English climate appeared not to suit, was very ill. They set out at the beginning of October, and gave an account of their mission to their sovereigns and to Melanchthon. The latter thought that, considering the affection which the king displayed towards him, he might, if he intervened at this time, do something to incline the balance the right way. He therefore wrote to Henry VIII a remarkable letter, in which, after expressing his warm gratitude for the king’s good will, he added, “I commend to you, Sire, the cause of the Christian religion. Your Majesty knows that the principal duty of sovereigns is to protect and propagate the heavenly doctrine, and for this reason God gives them the same name as his own, saying to them, Ye are gods (Psalm 82:6). My earnest desire is to see a true agreement, so far as regards the doctrine of piety, established between all the churches which condemn Roman tyranny, an agreement which should cause the glory of God to shine forth, should induce the other nations to unite with us and maintain peace in the churches.” Melanchthon was right as to the last point, but was he right as to the office he assigned to kings? In his view it was a heroic action to take up arms for the
church. But what church was it necessary to protect and extend sword in hand? Catholic princes, assuredly, drew the sword against the Protestants rather than the Protestants against the Catholics. The most heroic kings, by this rule, would be Philip II and Louis XIV. Melanchthon’s principle leads by a straight road to the Inquisition. To express our whole thought on the matter, what descendant of the Huguenots could possibly acknowledge as true, as divine, a principle by virtue of which his forefathers, men of whom the world was not worthy, were stripped of everything, afflicted, tormented, scattered in the deserts, mountains, and caves of the earth, cast into prison, tortured, banished, and put to death? Conscience, which is the voice of God, is higher than all the voices of men.

CHAPTER 2

An "Appeal to Caesar" and its Outcome

1538

The Romish party in England did not confine itself to preventing the union of Henry with the Protestants of Germany, but contended at all points against evangelical reformation, and strove to gain over the king by a display of enthusiastic devotion to his person and his ecclesiastical supremacy. This was especially the policy of Bishop Stephen Gardiner. Endowed with great acuteness of intellect, he had studied the king's character, and he put forth all his powers to secure his adoption of his own views. Henry did not esteem his character, but highly appreciated his talents, and on this account employed him. Now Gardiner was the mainstay of the Scholastic doctrines and the most inflexible opponent of the Reformation. He had been employed by the King and Wolsey in numerous diplomatic missions on the Continent, where his extensive knowledge of canon law gave him great advantages. He had visited the court of the Emperor, and had had interviews with the Roman legate. One day, at Ratisbon, an Italian named Ludovico, a servant of the legate, while talking with one of the attendants of Sir Henry Knyvet, who was a member of the English embassy, had confided to him the statement that Gardiner had secretly been reconciled with the pope, and had entered into correspondence with him. Knyvet, exceedingly anxious to know what to think of it, had had a conference with Ludovico, and had come away convinced of the reality of the fact. No sooner did Gardiner get wind of these things, than he betook himself to Granvella, chancellor of the Empire, and sharply complained to him of the calumnies of Ludovico. The chancellor ordered the Italian to be put in prison, but in spite of this measure many continued to believe that he had spoken truth. We are inclined to think that Ludovico said more than he knew. The story, however, indicates from which quarter the wind was blowing in the
sphere in which Gardiner moved. He had set out for Paris on October 1, 1535; and on September 28, 1538, there was to be seen entering London a brilliant and numerous band, mules and chariots hung with draperies on which were embroidered the arms of the master, lackeys, gentlemen dressed in velvet, with many ushers and soldiers. This was Gardiner and his suite.

The three years’ absence of this formidable adversary of the Gospel had been marked by a slackening of the persecution, and by a more active propagation of the Holy Scriptures. His return was to be distinguished by a vigorous renewal of the struggle against the Gospel. This was the main business of Gardiner. To this he consecrated all the resources of the most acute understanding and the most persistent character. He began immediately to lay snares round the king, whom in this respect it was not very hard to entrap. Two difficulties, however, arose. At first Henry VIII, by the influence of the deceased queen as some have supposed, had been somewhat softened towards the Reformation. Then the rumors of the reconciliation of Gardiner with the pope might have alienated the king from him. The crafty man proceeded cleverly and killed two birds with one stone. "The pope," he said to the king, "is doing all he can to ruin you." Henry, provoked at the mission of Pole, had no doubt of that. "You ought then, Sire," continued the bishop, "to do all that is possible to conciliate the Continental powers, and to place yourself in security from the treacherous designs of Rome. Now the surest means of conciliating Francis I, Charles V, and other potentates, is to proceed rigorously against heretics." Henry agreed to the means proposed with the more readiness because he had always been a fanatic for the corporal presence, and because the Lutherans, in his view, could not take offense at seeing him burn some who denied it.

A beginning was made with the Anabaptists. These wretched people were persecuted in all European countries. Some of them had taken refuge in England. In October 1538 the king appointed a commission to examine certain people "lately come into the kingdom, who are keeping themselves in concealment in various nooks and corners." The commission was authorized to proceed, even supposing this should be in contravention of any statutes of the realm.

Four Anabaptists bore the faggots at Paul’s church, and two others, a man and a woman, originally from the Netherlands, were burnt in Smithfield. Cranmer and Bonner sat on this commission, side by side with Stokesley and Sampson. This fact shows what astonishing error prevailed at the time in the minds of men. Gardiner wanted to go further; and while associating, when persecution was in hand, with such men as Cranmer, he had secret conferences with Stokesley, bishop of London, Tunstall of Durham, Sampson of Chichester, and others who were devoted to the doctrines of the Middle Ages. They talked over the means of resisting the reforms of Cranmer and Cromwell, and of restoring Catholicism.
Bishop Sampson, one of Gardiner’s allies, was a staunch friend of ancient superstitions, and attached especial importance to the requirement that God should not be addressed in a language understood by the common people. "In all places," he said, "both with the Latins and the Greeks, the ministers of the church sung or said their offices or prayers in the Latin or Greek grammatical tongue, and not in the vulgar. That the people prayed apart in such tongues as they would... and he wished that all the ministers were so well learned that they understood their offices, service, or prayers which they said in the Latin tongue.” In his view, it was not lawful to speak to God except grammatically.

Sampson, a weak and narrow-minded man, was swayed by prejudices and ruled by stronger men, and he had introduced in his diocese customs contrary to the orders of the king. Weak minds are often in the van when important movements are beginning; the strong ones are in the rear and urge them on. This was the case with Sampson and Gardiner. Cromwell, who had a keen and penetrating intellect, and whose glance easily searched the depths of men’s hearts and pierced to the core of facts, perceived that some project was hatching against the Reformation, and as he did not dare to attack the real leaders, he had Sampson arrested and committed to the Tower. The bishop was not strong-minded and trembled for a slight cause; it may, therefore, be imagined how it was with him when he found himself in the state prison. He fell into great trouble and extraordinary dejection of mind. His imagination was filled with fatal presentiments, and his soul was assailed by great terrors. To have displeased the king and Cromwell, what a crime! One might have thought that he would die of it, says a historian. He saw himself already on the scaffold of Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More. At this time the powerful minister summoned him to his presence. Sampson admitted the formation of an alliance between Gardiner, Stokesley, Tunstall, and himself to maintain the old religion, its traditions and rites, and to resist any innovation. He avowed the fact that his colleagues and himself stood pledged to put forth all their efforts for the restoration of degenerated Catholicism. In their opinion, nothing which the Greeks had preserved ought to be rejected in England. One day when Bishop Sampson was passing over the Thames in a barge, in company with the bishop of Durham, to Lambeth Palace, the latter produced an old Greek book which he used to carry in his pocket, and showed Sampson several places in that book wherein matters that were then in controversy were ordained by the Greek Church. These bishops, who spoke so courageously to each other, did not speak so with the king. They feigned complete accordance with him, and for him they had nothing but flatteries. Cranmer was not strong, but at least he was never a hypocrite. Sampson, however, exhibited so much penitence and promised so much submission that he was liberated. But Cromwell now knew what to think of the matter. A conspiracy was threatening the work which he had been at so much pains to accomplish. He observed that the archbishop’s influence was declining at court, and he began to have secret forebodings of calamity in which he would be himself involved.
Gardiner, in fact, energetically urged the king to re-establish all the ancient usages. Thus, although but a little while before orders had been given to place Bibles in the churches, and to preach against pilgrimages, tapers, kissing of relics, and other like practices, it was now forbidden to translate, publish, and circulate any religious works without the king’s permission; and injunctions were issued for the use of holy water, for processions, for kneeling down and crawling before the cross, and for lighting of tapers before the Corpus Christi. Discussions about the sacrament of the Eucharist were prohibited. It was Gardiner’s wish to seal these ordinances with the blood of martyrs. He proceeded therefore to strike a blow at an evangelical and esteemed Englishman, and to invest his death with a certain importance.

We have previously mentioned a certain young minister, John Nicholson, surnamed Lambert, who had been arrested and imprisoned in 1532, but afterwards released. The passing of the years only deepened his firm evangelical convictions.

In 1538, being informed one day that Doctor Taylor was to preach at St. Peter’s Church, Cornhill, Lambert went to hear him, not only because of his well-known gifts, but also because he was not far from the Gospel. He was later appointed bishop of Lincoln under pious King Edward, and was deprived of that office under the fanatical Mary. Taylor preached that day on the real presence of Christ in the bread and the wine. Lambert also believed, indeed, in the presence of the Lord in the Supper, but this presence, he believed, was in the hearts of the faithful. After the service he went to see Taylor, and with modesty and kindliness urged various arguments against the doctrines which he had been setting forth. “I have not time just now,” said the doctor, “to discuss the point with you, as other matters demand my attention, but oblige me by putting your thoughts in writing and call again when I am more at leisure.” Lambert applied himself to the task of writing, and against the doctrine of the presence in the bread he adduced ten arguments, which were, says Foxe, very powerful. It does not appear that Taylor replied to them. He was an upright man, who gave impartial consideration to these questions, and by Lambert’s reasoning he seems to have been somewhat shaken. As Taylor was anxious to be enlightened himself and to try to satisfy his friendly opponent, he communicated the document to Dr. Barnes. The latter, a truly evangelical Christian, was nevertheless of opinion that to put forward the doctrine of this little work would seriously injure the cause of the Reformation. He therefore advised Taylor to speak to Archbishop Cranmer on the subject. Cranmer, who was of the same opinion, invited Lambert to a conference, at which Barnes, Taylor, and Latimer were also present. These four divines had not at this time abandoned the view which the ex-chaplain of Antwerp opposed; and considering the fresh revival of sacramental Catholicism, they were not inclined to do so. They strove therefore to change the opinion of the pious minister, but in vain. Finding that they unanimously condemned his views, he
exclaimed, “Well then, I appeal to the king.” This was a foolish and fatal appeal.

Gardiner did not lose a minute, but promptly took the business in hand, because he saw in it an opportunity of striking a heavy blow; and, what was an inestimable advantage, he would have on his side, he thought, Cranmer and the other three evangelical divines. He therefore “went straight to the king,” and requesting a private audience, addressed him in the most flattering terms. Then, as if the interests of the king were dearer to him than to the king himself, he respectfully pointed out that he had everywhere excited by various recent proceedings suspicion and hatred; but that at this moment a way was open for pacifying men’s minds, “if only in this matter of John Lambert, he would manifest unto the people how strictly he would resist heretics; and by this new rumor he would bring to pass not only to extinguish all other former rumors, and as it were with one nail to drive out another, but also should discharge himself of all suspicion, in that he now began to be reported to be a favorer of new sects and opinions.”

The vanity as well as the interests of Henry VIII dictated to him the same course as Gardiner advised. He determined to avail himself of this opportunity to make an ostentatious display of his own knowledge and zeal. He would make arrangements of an imposing character; it would not be enough to hold a mere conversation, but there must be a grand show. He therefore ordered invitations to be sent to a great number of nobles and bishops to attend the solemn trial at which he would appear as head of the church. He was not content with the title alone; he would show that he acted the part. One of the principal characteristics of Henry VIII was a fondness for showing off what he conceived himself to be or what he supposed himself to know, without ever suspecting that display is often the ruin of those who wish to seem more than they are.

Meanwhile Lambert, confined at Lambeth, wrote an apology for his faith which he dedicated to the king, and in which he solidly established the doctrine which he had professed. He rejoiced that his request to be heard before Henry VIII had been granted. He desired that his trial might be blessed, and he indulged in the pleasing illusion that the king, once set in the presence of the truth, must needs be enlightened and would publicly proclaim it. These pleasant fancies gave him courage, and he lived and hoped.

On the appointed day, Friday, November 16, 1538, the assembly was constituted in Westminster Hall. The king, in his robes of state, sat upon the throne. On his right were the bishops, judges, and jurisconsults; on his left the lords temporal of the realm and the officers of the royal house. The guards, attired in white, were near their master, and a crowd of spectators filled the hall. The prisoner was placed at the bar. The bishop of Chichester spoke to the following effect: that the king in this session would have all states, degrees, bishops, and all others to be admonished of his will and pleasure, that no man
should conceive any sinister opinion of him, as that now, the authority and name of the bishop of Rome being utterly abolished, he would also extinguish all religion, or give liberty unto heretics to perturb and trouble, without punishment, the churches of England, whereof he is the head. And moreover that they should not think that they were assembled at that present to make any disputation upon the heretical doctrine, but only for this purpose, that by the industry of him and other bishops the heresies of this man here present (meaning Lambert), and the heresies of all such like, should be refuted or openly condemned in the presence of them all. Henry's part then began. His look was sternly fixed on Lambert, who stood facing him; his features were contracted, his brows were knit. His whole aspect was adapted to inspire terror, and indicated a violence of anger unbecoming in a judge, and still more so in a sovereign. He rose, stood leaning on a white cushion, and looking Lambert full in the face, he said to him in a disdainful tone, "Ho! good fellow, what is thy name?" The accused, humbly kneeling down, replied, "My name is John Nicholson, although of many I be called Lambert." "What!" said the king, "have you two names? I would not trust you, having two names, although you were my brother." "O most noble prince," replied the accused, "your bishops forced me of necessity to change my name." Thereupon the king, interrupting him, commanded him to declare what he thought as touching the sacrament of the altar. "Sire," said Lambert, "first of all I give God thanks that you do not disdain to hear me. Many good men, in many places, are put to death, without your knowledge. But now, forasmuch as that high and eternal King of kings, in whose hands are the hearts of all princes, hath inspired and stirred up the king's mind to understand the causes of his subjects, specially whom God of His divine goodness hath so abundantly endued with so great gifts of judgment and knowledge, I do not mistrust but that God will bring some great thing to pass through him, to the setting forth of the glory of His Name." Henry, who could not bear to be praised by a heretic, rudely interrupted Lambert, and said to him in an angry tone, "I came not hither to hear mine own praises thus painted out in my presence; but briefly go to the matter, without any more circumstance." There was so much harshness in the king's voice that Lambert was agitated and confused. He had dreamed of something very different. He had conceived a sovereign just and elevated above the reach of clerical passions, whose noble understanding would be struck with the beauty of the Gospel. But he saw a passionate man, a servant of the priests. In astonishment and confusion he kept silence for a few minutes, questioning within himself what he ought to do in the extremity to which he was reduced.

Lambert was especially attached to the great verities of the Christian religion, and during his previous trial he made unreserved confession of them. "Our Savior would not have us greatly esteem our merits," said he, "when we have done what is commanded by God, but rather reckon ourselves to be but servants unprofitable to God... not regarding our merit, but His grace and benefit. Woe be to the life of men, said St. Augustine, be they ever so holy, if Thou shalt examine them, setting Thy mercy aside. ... Again he says, Doth any
man give what he oweth not unto Thee, that Thou should’st be in his debt? and hath any man aught that is not Thine? ... All my hope is in the Lord’s death. His death is my merit, my refuge, my health, and my resurrection. And thus," adds Lambert, "we should serve God with hearty love as children, and not for need or dread, as unloving thralls and servants."

On this occasion the king wanted to localize the attack and to limit the examination of Lambert to the subject of the sacrament. Finding that the accused stood silent, the king said to him in a hasty manner with anger and vehemency, "Why standest thou still? Answer as touching the sacrament of the altar, whether dost thou say that it is the body of Christ or wilt deny it?" After uttering these words, the king lifted up his cap adorned with pearls and feathers, probably as a token of reverence for the subject under discussion. "I answer with St. Augustine," said Lambert, "that it is the body of Christ after a certain manner." The king replied, "Answer me neither out of St. Augustine, nor by the authority of any other; but tell me plainly whether thou sayest it is the body of Christ or no." Lambert felt what might be the consequences of his answer, but without hesitation he said, "Then I deny it to be the body of Christ." "Mark well!" exclaimed the king, "for now thou shalt be condemned even by Christ’s own word, *hoc est corpus meum* (this is my body)."

The king then turning to Cranmer commanded him to refute the opinion of the accused. The archbishop spoke with modesty, calling Lambert "brother," and although opposing his arguments he told him that if he proved his opinion from Holy Scripture, he (Cranmer) would willingly embrace it. Gardiner, finding that Cranmer was too weak, began to speak. Tunstall and Stokesley followed. Lambert had put forward ten arguments, and ten doctors were appointed to deal with them, each doctor to impugn one of them. Of the whole disputation the passage which made the deepest impression on the assembly was Stokesley’s argument. "It is the doctrine of the philosophers," he said, "that a substance cannot be changed but into a substance." Then, by the example of water boiling on the fire, he affirmed the substance of the water to pass into the substance of the air. On hearing this argument, the aspect of the bishops, hitherto somewhat uneasy, suddenly changed. They were transported with joy, and considered this transmutation of the elements as giving them the victory, and they cast their looks over the whole assembly with an air of triumph. Loud shouts of applause for some time interrupted the sitting. When silence was at length restored, Lambert replied that the moistness of the water, its real essence, remained even after this transformation, that nothing was changed but the form; while in their system of the *corpus domini* (the body of the Lord) the substance itself was changed, and that it is impossible that the qualities and accidents of things should remain in their own nature apart from their own subject. But Lambert was not allowed to finish his refutation. The king and the bishops, indignant that he ventured to impugn an argument which had transported them with admiration, gave vent to their rage against him, so that he was forced to silence, and had to endure patiently all their insults.
The sitting had lasted from noon till five o’clock. It had been a real martyrdom for Lambert. Loaded with rebukes and insults, intimidated by the solemnity of the proceedings and by the authority of the persons with whom he had to do, alarmed by the presence of the king and by the terrible threats which were uttered against him, his body too, which was weak before, giving way under the fatigue of a session of five hours, during which, standing all the time, he had been compelled to fight a fierce battle, convinced that the clearest and most irresistible demonstrations would be smothered amidst the outcries of the bystanders, he called to mind these words of Scripture, “Be still,” and was silent. This self-restraint was regarded as defeat. “Where is the knowledge so much boasted of?” they said. “Where is his power of argumentation?” The assembly had looked for great bursts of eloquence, but the accused was silent. The palm of victory was awarded to the king and the bishops by noisy and universal shouts of applause.

It was now night. The servants of the royal house appeared in the hall and lighted the torches. Henry began to find his part as head of the church somewhat wearisome. He determined to bring the business to a conclusion, and by his severity to give to the pope and to Christendom a brilliant proof of his orthodoxy. “What sayest thou now,” he said to Lambert, “after all these great labors which thou hast taken upon thee, and all the reasons and instructions of these learned men? Art thou not yet satisfied? Wilt thou live or die? What sayest thou? Thou hast yet free choice.” Lambert answered, “I commend my soul into the hands of God, but my body I wholly yield and submit unto your clemency.” Then said the king, “In that case you must die, for I will not be a patron unto heretics.” Unhappy Lambert! He had committed himself to the mercy of a prince who never spared a man who offended him, were it even his closest friend. The monarch turned to his vicar-general and said, “Cromwell, read the sentence of condemnation.” This was a cruel task to impose upon a man universally considered to be the friend of the evangelicals. But Cromwell felt the ground already trembling under his feet. He took the sentence and read it. Lambert was condemned to be burnt.

Four days afterwards, on Tuesday, November 20, the evangelist was taken out of the prison at eight o’clock in the morning and brought to Cromwell’s house. Cromwell summoned him to his room and announced that the hour of his death was come. The tidings greatly consoled and gladdened Lambert. It is stated that Cromwell added some words by way of excuse for the part which he had taken in his condemnation, and sent him into the room where the gentlemen of his household were at breakfast. He sat down and at their invitation partook of the meal with them, with all the composure of a Christian. Immediately after breakfast he was taken to Smithfield, and was there placed on the pile, which was not raised high. His legs only were burnt, and nothing remained but the stumps. He was, however, still alive; and two of the soldiers, observing that his whole body could not be consumed, thrust into him their halberds, one on each side, and raised him above the fire. The martyr, stretching towards the people
his hands now burning, said, "None but Christ! None but Christ!" At this moment
the soldiers withdrew their weapons and let the pious Lambert drop into the
fire, which speedily consumed him.

Henry VIII, however, was not satisfied. The hope which he had entertained of
inducing Lambert to recant had been disappointed. The Anglo-Catholic party
made up for this by everywhere extolling his learning and his eloquence. They
praised his sayings to the skies—every one of them was an oracle; he was in
very deed the defender of the faith. There was one, not belonging to that
party, who wrote to Sir Thomas Wyatt, then foreign minister to the king, as
follows: "It was marvelous to see the gravity and the majestic air with which his
Majesty discharged the functions of Supreme Head of the Anglican Church, the
mildness with which he tried to convert that unhappy man, the force of
reasoning with which he opposed him. Would that the princes and potentates
of Christendom could have been present at the spectacle; they would certainly
have admired the wisdom and judgment of his Majesty, and would have said
that the king is the most excellent prince in the Christian world."

This writer was Cromwell himself. He suppressed at this time all the best
aspirations of his nature, believing that, as is generally thought, if one means
to retain the favor of princes, it is necessary to adapt one's self to all their
wishes. A mournful fall, which was not to be the only one of the kind! It has
been said, "Every flatterer, whoever he may be, is always a treacherous and
hateful creature."

CHAPTER 3

The "Whip of Six Strings"
1538–1540

While the English Catholic party were recovering their former influence over
Henry’s mind, some members of the Roman Catholic party were laboring to re-
establish the influence of the pope. They supposed that they had found a clue
by means of which the king might be brought back to the obedience of Rome.
Henry who, while busy in preparing fires for the martyrs, did not forget the
marriage altar, was very desirous of obtaining the hand of Christina of
Denmark, duchess of Milan and a widow. Now, it was this princess, a niece of
Charles V, of whom it was thought possible to make use for gaining over the
king to the pope. She was now at the court of Brussels, and it is related that to
the first offer of Henry VIII she had replied with a smile, "I have but one head;
if I had two, one of them should be at the service of his Majesty." If she did not
say this, as some friends of Henry VIII have maintained, something like it was
doubtless said by one of the courtiers. However this may be, the king did not meet with a refusal. Francis I, alarmed at the prospect of an alliance between Henry VIII and Charles V, sent word to Henry that the Emperor was deceiving him. The king did not believe it. The queen regent of the Netherlands endeavored to bring about this union; Spanish commissioners arrived to conduct the negotiation, and Wriothesley, the English envoy at Brussels, devoted himself zealously to the business. One of the principal officers of the court, taking supper with the latter, in June 1538, inquired of him for news about the negotiation. Wriothesley expressed his surprise "that the Emperor had been so slack therein." His companion remarked that the only difficulty in the matter was that Henry VIII had "married the lady Catherine, to whom the duchess is near kinswoman," so that the marriage could not be solemnized without a dispensation from the pope.

The Emperor spoke more clearly still. Wyatt was instructed to tell the king that the hand of the duchess of Milan would be given to him, with a dowry of one hundred thousand crowns, and an annuity of fifteen thousand, secured on the duchy, and that for the gift of this beautiful and accomplished young widow all they required of him was that he should be reconciled with the bishop of Rome. This was fixing a high price on the hand of Christina. The princess, considering perhaps that it was a glorious task to bring back Henry VIII to the bosom of the papacy, declared her readiness to obey the Emperor. The pope, on his part, was willing to grant the necessary dispensation, but the king must first make his submission. To the great regret of the Roman party nothing came of these proposals. One circumstance might have influenced the king’s decision. Before the negotiations were closed, in December 1538, the pope published the bull of 1535, in which he excommunicated Henry VIII. Had the pontiff no hope of good from the matrimonial intrigue, or did he intend to catch the king by fear?

During the late summer of 1538, while these mundane negotiations were continuing, a remarkable decision had been taken on a totally different matter. It had been strangely resolved by the king’s Majesty that the Bible in an English translation should be made available to all his Majesty’s subjects. "Strangely" in respect of the king’s character and religious inclinations, but perhaps not so when looked at in the light of the dying Tyndale’s prayer, "Lord, open the king of England’s eyes." The royal sanction was transmitted to the nation through Injunctions issued by Thomas Cromwell to all the clergy, and dated the 5th of September:

"In the name of God, Amen. By the authority and commission of... Henry... I, Thomas lord Cromwell, lord privy seal, vicegerent to the king’s said highness, for all his jurisdiction ecclesiastical within this realm, do for the advancement of the true honour of Almighty God, increase of virtue, and discharge of the king’s majesty, give and exhibit unto you (Parson So and so) these injunctions following:
Item, That ye shall provide... one book of the whole Bible of the largest volume in English, and the same shall be set up in some convenient place within the... church... whereas your parishioners may most commodiously resort to the same and read it; the charge of which book shall be ratably borne between you the parson and the parishioners aforesaid, the one half by you and the other half by them.

Item, That you shall discourage no man privily or apertly from the reading and hearing of the said Bible, but shall expressly provoke, stir, and exhort every person to read the same, as that which is the very lively Word of God, that every Christian person is bound to embrace, believe and follow, if they look to be saved; admonishing them nevertheless to avoid all contention and altercation therein, but to use an honest sobriety in the inquisition of the true sense of the same, and to refer the explication of obscure places to men of higher judgment in Scripture. …"

Other Items deal with the memorizing of the Pater Noster, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments; the turning away from objects of superstition and idolatry; a warning not to repose trust in works devised by men, such as pilgrimages, and the offering of money to images and at the shrines of relics; and the necessity for keeping a parish register of weddings, christenings, and burials.

A truly momentous series of Injunctions! the first official recognition of the authority, necessity, and availability of the Holy Book of God! the first clear declaration of the infinite value to men’s souls of God’s Word written! It is remarkable that another king than Henry played a part in introducing the Bible into the churches. The Emperor and Francis I, king of France, occasionally coquetted with the king of England, whom each of them was anxious to win over to his own side. Francis, knowing how sensitive Henry was on the subject of marriage, offered him his son Henry of Orleans for the princess Mary. Cromwell, who was now giving way to the Anglo-Catholic party on many points essential to reform, was all the more desirous of holding by those which his master would really permit. Amongst these was the translation of the Bible. He saw in the offer made by Francis I an opening of which he might avail himself. An edition of the Bible, extending to 2,500 copies, published the year before by the eminent printer Richard Grafton in conjunction with Whitchurch, was now exhausted. Cromwell determined to issue a new one; and as printing was better executed at Paris than in London, the French paper also being superior, he begged the king to request permission of Francis I to have the edition printed at Paris. Francis addressed a royal letter to his beloved Grafton and Whitchurch, saying that having received credible testimonies to the effect that his very dear brother, the king of the English, whose subjects they were, had granted full and lawful liberty to print, both in Latin and in English, the Holy
Bible, and to import it into his kingdom, he gave them himself his authorization so to do. Francis comforted himself with the thought that his own subjects spoke neither English nor Latin; and, besides, this book so much dreaded would be immediately exported from France.

Grafton and the pious and learned Coverdale arrived at Paris, at the end of spring 1538, to undertake this new edition of Tyndale’s translation. They lodged in the house of the printer Francis Regnault, who had for some time printed missals for England. As the sale of these had very much fallen off, Regnault changed his course, and determined to print the Bible. The two Englishmen selected a fine type and the best paper to be had in France. But these were expensive, and as early as June 23 they were obliged to apply to Cromwell to furnish them with the means for carrying on his edition of the Bible. They were moreover beset with other difficulties. They could not make their appearance out of doors in Paris without being exposed to threats, and they were in daily expectation that their work would be interrupted. Francis I, their reputed protector, was gone to Nice. By December 13, after six months’ labor, their fears had become so serious that when Bonner, who had succeeded Gardiner as English ambassador in France, was setting out from Paris on his way to London, they begged him to take with him the portion already printed and deliver it to Cromwell. The hypocritical Bonner, not satisfied with all the benefices he now held, was grasping at the bishopric of Hereford, which he called a great good fortune, and which he succeeded in getting. He was at this time bent on currying favor with Cromwell, on whose influence the election depended, and therefore, hiding his face under a gracious mask, which he was ere long impudently to throw off, he had most eagerly complied with the request.

Four days later, December 17, the officers of the French inquisitor-general entered the printing office and presented a document signed by Le Tellier, summoning Regnault and all whom it concerned to appear and make answer touching the printing of the Bible. He was at the same time enjoined to suspend the work, and forbidden to take away what was already printed. Are we to suppose that the Inquisition did not trouble itself about the royal letters of Francis I, or that the prince had changed his mind? Either of these suppositions might be entertained. In consequence of the dispatch of the packet to London, there were but a few sheets to be seized, and these were condemned to be burnt in the Place Maubert. But the officer was even more greedy of gain than fanatical, and gold being offered him by the Englishmen for the property, almost all the sheets were restored to them. His compliance is perhaps partly to be explained by the consideration that this was not a common case. The proprietors of the sheets seized were the lord Cromwell, first secretary of state, and the king of England. The matter did not rest here; the bold Cromwell was not to be baffled. Agents sent by him to Paris got possession of the presses, the types, and even the printers, and took the whole away with them to London. In two months from the time of their arrival the printing was completed. On the last page appeared the statement, The whole Bible finished in 1539, and the grateful editors added, To the Lord the
achievement is due. The violent proceeding of the Inquisition turned to a great
gain for England. Many French printers and a large stock of type had been
imported, and henceforward many and more beautiful editions of the Bible
were printed in England. "The wicked diggeth a pit and falleth into it."
Two parties therefore existed in England, and these frequently concerned
themselves more with the points on which they differed than with the great
facts of their religion. In one pulpit a preacher would call for reformation of
the abuses of Rome; in a neighboring church, another preacher would advocate
their maintenance at any cost. One monk of York preached against purgatory,
while some of his colleagues defended the doctrine. All this gave rise to most
exciting discussion amongst the hearers. In addition to the two chief parties,
there were the profane, animated by a spirit of unbelief and without reverence
for sacred things. While pious men were peacefully assembled for the reading
of the Holy Scriptures these mockers sat in public-houses over their pots of
beer, uttering their sarcasms against everybody, and especially against the
priests. If they spoke of those who gave only the wafer, and not the wine, they
would say, "That is because he has drunk the whole of it; the bottle is empty."
At times they undertook even to discuss, as in old times was done at
Byzantium, the most difficult points in theology, and this was still worse. The
king, anxious to play his part as head of the church, was desirous of bringing
about a union of the two chief parties, and had no doubt that the party of the
profane would then disappear. His favorite notion, like that of princes in
general, was to have but one single religious opinion in his kingdom. In a royal
proclamation he required that the party of reformation and the party of
tradition should "draw in one yoke," like a pair of good oxen at the plough. He
did not omit, however, to read the priests a lesson. He rebuked them for
busying themselves far more with the distribution of the consecrated wafer and
with the sprinkling of their flocks with holy water than with teaching them
what these acts meant.
When the parliament met on April 28, 1539, the lord chancellor announced that
the king was very anxious to see all his subjects holding one and the same
opinion in religion, and required that a committee should be nominated to
examine the various opinions, and to draw up articles of agreement to which
everyone might give his consent. On May 5, nine commissioners were named,
five of whom were rigid Catholics, and at their head was Lee, archbishop of
York. A project was presented "for extirpating heresies among the people." A
catalogue of heresies was to be drawn up and read at all the services. The
commissioners held discussion for one day, but neither of the two parties would
make any concession. As the vicegerent Cromwell and the archbishop of
Canterbury were in the ranks of the reformation party, the majority was unable
to gain the ascendancy, and the commission arrived at no decision.
The king was very much dissatisfied with this result. He had been willing to
leave the work of conciliation in the hands of the bishops, and now the bishops
did not agree. His patience, of which he had no large stock, was exhausted.
The Catholic party took advantage of his dissatisfaction, and hinted to him that
if he really aimed at unity he would have to take the matter into his own
hands, and settle the doctrine to which all must assent. Why should he allow his subjects the liberty of thinking for themselves? Was he not in England master and ruler of everything?

Another circumstance, of an entirely different kind, acted powerfully, about this time, upon the king’s mind. The pope had just entered into an alliance with the Emperor and the king of France. Invasion threatened. A fact of such importance could not fail to make a great noise in England. “Methinks,” said one of the foreign diplomatists now in England, “that if the pope sent an interdict and excommunications, with an injunction that no merchant should trade in any way with the English, the nation would, without further trouble, bestir itself and compel the king to return to the church.” Henry, in alarm, adopted two measures of defense against this triple alliance. He gave orders for the fortification of the ports, examination of the condition of various landing places, and reviewing of the troops; and at the same time, instead of endeavoring after a union of the two parties, he determined to throw himself entirely on the Scholastic and Catholic side. He hoped thereby to satisfy the majority of his subjects, who still adhered to the Roman church, and perhaps also to appease the powers. “The king is determined on grounds of policy,” it was said, “that these articles should pass.”

Six articles were therefore drawn up of a reactionary character, and the duke of Norfolk was selected to bring them forward. He did not pride himself on scriptural knowledge. “I have never read the Holy Scriptures and I never will read them,” he said, “all that I want is that everything should be as it was of old.” But if Norfolk was not a great theologian, he was the most powerful and the most Catholic lord of the Privy Council and of the kingdom. On the 16th of May, the duke rose in the upper house and spoke to the following effect: “The commission which you had named has done nothing, and this we had clearly foreseen. We come, therefore, to present to you six articles, which, after your examination and approval, are to become binding. They are the following: 1st, if anyone allege that after consecration there remains any other substance in the sacrament of the altar than the natural body of Christ conceived of the Virgin Mary, he shall be adjudged a heretic and suffer death by burning, and shall forfeit to the king all his lands and goods, as in the case of high treason; 2nd, if anyone teach that the sacrament is to be given to laymen under both kinds; or 3rd, that any man who has taken holy orders may nevertheless marry; 4th, that any man or woman who has vowed chastity may marry; 5th, that private masses are not lawful and should not be used; or 6th, that auricular confession is not according to the law of God—any such person shall be adjudged to suffer death, and forfeit lands and goods as a felon.”

Cromwell had been obliged to sanction, and perhaps even to prepare, this document. When once the king energetically announced his will the minister bowed his head, knowing well that if he raised it in opposition he would certainly lose it. Nevertheless, that he might to some extent be justified in his own sight, he had resolved that the weapon should be two-edged, and had added an article purporting that any priest giving himself up to uncleanness
should for the first offense be deprived of his benefices, his goods, and his liberty, and for the second should be punished with death like the others. These articles, which have been called the Whip with six strings and the Bloody Statute, were submitted to the parliament. But none of the lords temporal, or of the commons, aware that the king was fully resolved, ventured to assay them. One man, however, rose, and this was Cranmer. "Like a constant patron of God's cause," says the chronicler, "he took upon him the earnest defence of the truth, oppressed in the parliament; three days together disputing against those six wicked articles; bringing forth such allegations and authorities as might easily have helped the cause, if the majority, as is often the case, had not overthrown the better." Cranmer spoke temperately, with respect for the sovereign, but also with fidelity and courage. "It is not my own cause that I defend," he said, "it is that of God Almighty."

The archbishop of Canterbury was not, however, alone. The bishops who belonged to the evangelical party, Latimer of Worcester, Hilsey of Rochester, Barlow of St. David’s, Goodrich of Ely, and Shaxton of Salisbury, likewise spoke against the articles. But the king insisted, and the act passed. These articles, said Cranmer at a later time, were "in some things so enforced by the evil counsel of certain papists against the truth and common judgment both of divines and lawyers, that if the king’s Majesty himself had not come personally into the parliament house, those laws had never passed." Cranmer never signed nor consented to the Six Articles.

The parliament at the same time conferred on the king unlimited powers. A bill was carried purporting that some having by their disobedience shown that they did not well understand what a king can do by virtue of his royal power, it was decreed that every proclamation of his Majesty, even when inflicting fines and penalties, should have the same force as an Act of parliament. The Act was not passed without difficulty and as soon as Henry died it was repealed. But the fact was clearly shown in 1539 that when truth was sacrificed, liberty became the next victim.

Latimer, bishop of Worcester, immediately after the close of the Parliamentary session, received word from Cromwell that the king requested him to resign his office. His heart leaped for joy as he laid aside his episcopal vestments. "Now I am rid of a heavy burden," he said, "and never did my shoulders feel so light." One of his former colleagues having expressed his surprise, he replied, "I am resolved to be guided only by the Book of God, and sooner than depart one jot from that, let me be trampled under the feet of wild horses!" It seems highly probable that, although the king must have been offended at Latimer’s resistance to the Six Articles, he had not himself actually informed Cromwell that Latimer must be removed from his post. But the resignation having been tendered ("freely" says the subsequent ‘writ to elect’ a successor), Henry allowed it to stand, and, to show his royal displeasure, he ordered the ex-bishop to be kept in custody in the house of Sampson, bishop of Chichester, near Chancery Lane. It seems probable that after several months he was allowed his liberty. The fact is, however, that his activities between 1540 and 1547 when the king died, are very obscure. He certainly ended this period as a
prisoner in the Tower of London. Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury, likewise resigned his see, after the Six Articles were passed. Under Queen Mary he became a violent persecutor. Many evangelical Christians quitted England, and among them especially to be noted are John Hooper, John Rogers, and John Butler. Cranmer remained in his archiepiscopal palace at Lambeth. Historians have generally stated that he sent away his wife and children to his wife’s relations in Germany, but there is no strong evidence for such a belief. Cranmer, during his trial in Mary’s reign, admitted that he had kept his wife secretly during the latter years of Henry’s reign and had brought her out during the reign of Edward, but no suggestion was made that her years of hiding were spent with her relations in Germany.

That Cranmer did not resign is only explicable on the ground of the efforts made by Henry VIII to retain him. On the day of the prorogation of parliament, June 28, 1539, Henry, fearing lest the archbishop, disheartened and distrusted, should offer to him his resignation, sent for him, and, receiving him with all the graciousness of manner which he knew so well how to assume when he wished, said, "I have heard with what force and learning you opposed the Six Articles. Pray state your arguments in writing, and deliver the statement to me." Nor was this all that Henry did. Desirous that all men, and particularly the adherents of English Catholicism, should know the esteem which he felt for the primate, he commanded the leader of this party, the duke of Norfolk, his brother-in-law, the duke of Suffolk, Norfolk’s rival, lord Cromwell, and several other lords to dine the next day with the archbishop at Lambeth. "You will assure him," he said, "of my sincere affection, and you will add that although his arguments did not convince the parliament, they displayed much wisdom and learning."

The company, according to the king’s request, arrived at the archbishop’s palace, and Cranmer gave his guests an honorable reception. The latter executed the king’s commission, adding that he must not be disheartened although the parliament had come to a decision contrary to his opinion. Cranmer replied that "he was obliged to his Majesty for his good affection, and to the lords for the pains they had taken." Then he added resolutely, "I have hope in God that hereafter my allegations and authorities will take place, to the glory of God and commodity of the realm." They sat down to table. Every guest apparently did his best to make himself agreeable to the primate. "My lord of Canterbury," said Cromwell, "you are most happy of all men, for you may do and speak what you list, and, say what all men can against you, the king will never believe one word to detriment or hindrance." The meal, however, did not pass altogether so smoothly. The king had brought together, in Cromwell and Norfolk, the most heterogeneous elements, and the feast of peace was disturbed by a sudden explosion. Cromwell, continuing his praises, instituted a parallel between cardinal Wolsey and the archbishop of Canterbury. "The cardinal," he said, "lost his friends by his haughtiness and pride, while you gain over your enemies by your kindliness and your meekness."

"You must be well aware of that, my lord Cromwell," said the duke of Norfolk, "for the cardinal was your master." Cromwell, stung by these words,
acknowledged the obligations under which he lay to the cardinal, but added, "I was never so far in love with him as to have waited upon him to Rome if he had been chosen pope, as I understand, my lord duke, that you would have done." Norfolk denied this. But Cromwell persisted in his assertion, and even specified a considerable sum which the duke was to receive for his services as admiral to the new pope, and for conducting him to Rome. The duke, no longer restraining himself, swore with great oaths that Cromwell was a liar. The two speakers, forgetting that they were attending a feast of peace, became more and more excited and did not spare hard words. Cranmer interposed to pacify them. But from this time these two powerful ministers of the king swore deadly hatred to each other. One or other of them must needs fall.

The king’s course with respect to Cranmer is not so strange as it appears. Without Cranmer, he would have been under the necessity of choosing another primate, and what a task would that have been. Gardiner, indeed, was quite ready to take the post, but the king, although he listened to him, did not place complete confidence in him. Not only did it seem to Henry difficult to find any other man than Cranmer, but there was a further difficulty of appointing an archbishop in due form. Could it be done by the aid of the pope? Impossible. Without the pope? This too was very difficult. The priesthood would not concede such a power to the king, nor was it probable that they would accept his choice. The king foresaw troubles and conflicts without end. The best course was to keep the present primate, and this was the course adopted. Herein lay the security of the archbishop in the midst of the misfortunes and scenes of blood around him. He had made a declaration of his faith, and he did not withdraw from it. He hoped for better things, according to the advances which were made him. He believed that by keeping his post he might prevent many calamities. The Six Articles were a storm which must be allowed to blow over, and, in accordance with his character, he bowed his head while the wind blew in that direction.

It should further be remembered that, in the sixteenth century, the idea of the overriding obligation of duty to the State and the Sovereign normally held the rights of the individual conscience in abeyance, whenever the two came into conflict. In modern times men feel free to resign public posts which begin to trouble their consciences. In the time of the Tudors this was rarely the case; the martyrs were exceptions. Men in office esteemed the royal power and prerogative to be so great that most of them would have considered opposition to the king’s will almost tantamount to rebellion against God.

Moreover, Henry’s absolutism was in practice modified by a spasmodic consideration and understanding which he showed towards servants he favored. In certain circumstances he was prepared to permit the exercise of their private consciences. Thus, Sir Thomas More, Chancellor though he was, disapproved of the king’s desire for a divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Accordingly, Henry was careful not to require him to put his hand to the business. Similarly, the king exempted Archbishop Cranmer from the awful work of enforcing the penalties imposed by the "whip of six strings." Cranmer,
therefore, continued to hold office. Never had he passed through a sadder term of years.
The "bloody statute" was the cause of profound sorrow among the evangelical Christians. Some of them, more hasty than others, making use of the strong language of the time, asserted that the Six Articles had been written, not with Gardiner’s ink, as people said, "but with the blood of a dragon, or rather the claws of the devil." They have been spoken of, by Roman Catholics of a later age, as "the enactments of this severe and barbarous statute." But the Catholics of that age rejoiced in them, and believed that it was all over with the Reformation. Commissioners were immediately named to execute this cruel law, and there was always a bishop among them. These commissioners, who sat in London in Mercer’s Chapel, formerly a dwelling house and reputed to be the place of Becket’s birth, even exaggerated the harshness of the Six Articles. Fifteen days had not elapsed before five hundred persons were imprisoned, some for having read the Bible, others for their posture at church. The greatest zeal was displayed by Norfolk among the lords temporal, and by Stokesley, Gardiner, and Tunstall among the lords spiritual. Their aim was to get a Book of Ceremonies, a strange farrago of Romish superstitions, adopted as the rule of worship.
The violent thunderclap which had suddenly pealed over England, and occasioned so much trouble, was nowhere on the Continent more unexpected, nowhere excited a greater commotion than at Wittenberg. Bucer on one side, and several refugees arriving at Hamburg on the other, had made known this barbarous statute to the reformers, and had entreated the Protestants of Germany to interpose with Henry in behalf of their fellow religionists. Luther, Melanchthon, Jonas, and Bugenhagen met together, and were unanimous in their indignation. "The king," they said, "knows perfectly well that our doctrine concerning the sacrament, the marriage of priests, and other analogous subjects, is true. How many books he has read on the subject! How many reports have been made to him by the most competent judges! He has even had a book translated, in which the whole matter is explained, and he makes use of this book every day in his prayers. Has he not heard and approved Latimer, Cranmer, and other pious divines? He has even censured the king of France for condemning this doctrine. And now he condemns it himself more harshly than the king or the pope. He makes laws like Nebuchadnezzar and declares that he will put to death anyone who does not observe them. Great sovereigns of our day are taking it into their heads to fashion for themselves religions which may turn to their own advantage, like Antiochus Epiphanes of old. ‘I have power,’ says the king of England, ‘to require that any one of my courtiers shall not marry so long as he intends to remain at court; for the same reason I have also power to forbid the marriage of priests.’ We are now entreated to address remonstrances to this prince. The Scripture certainly teaches us to endeavor to bring back the weak, but it requires that the proud who compound with their conscience should be left to go in their own way. It is clear that the king of England makes terms with conscience. He has already been warned, and has paid no attention; there is, therefore, no hope that he
will listen to reason if he be warned anew. Consider, besides, what kind of men those are in whose hands he places himself. Look at Gardiner, who while exposing before all the nation his scandalous connexions (liaisons) dares to assert that it is contrary to the law of God for a minister of God to have a lawful wife."

Thus did the theologians of Wittenberg talk of the matter. Calvin thought with them, and he wrote, almost on the same day, that the king of England had distinctly shown his disposition by the impious edict which he had published. On behalf of the theologians, Melanchthon wrote to Henry; and after an exordium in which he endeavored to prepare the king’s mind, he said, “What affects and afflicts me is not only the danger of those who hold the same faith as we do, but it is to see you making yourself the instrument of the impiety and cruelty of others; the doctrine of Christ is set aside in your kingdom, superstitious rites are perpetuated, and debauchery is sanctioned; in a word, the Roman antichrist is rejoicing in his heart because you take up arms on his side and against us, and is hoping, by means of your bishops, easily to recover what by wise counsel has been taken from him.” Melanchthon then combats the several articles and refutes the sophisms of the Catholic party on the subject.

"Illustrious king," he continued, "I am grieved at heart that you, while condemning the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, should undertake the defence of institutions which are the very sinews of his power. You are threatening the members of Jesus Christ with the most atrocious punishments, and you are putting out the light of evangelical truth which was beginning to shine in your churches. Sire, this is not the way to put away antichrist, this is establishing him... this is confirmation of his idolatry, his errors, his cruelty, and his debaucherries.

"I implore you, therefore, to alter the decree of your bishops. Let the prayers offered up to God by so many pious souls throughout the world for the true reformation of the Church, for the suppression of impious rites, and for the propagation of the Gospel, move you. Do justice to those pious men who are now in prison for the Lord’s sake. If you do this, your great clemency will be praised by posterity as long as learning exists. Behold how Jesus Christ wandered about from place to place. He was hungry, He was thirsty, naked and bound; He complained of the raging of the priests, of the unjust cruelty of kings; He commands that the members of His body should not be torn in pieces, and that His Gospel should be honoured. It is the duty of a pious king to receive this Gospel and to watch over it. By doing so, you will he rendering to God acceptable worship."

Had these eloquent exhortations any influence on Henry VIII? On a former occasion he had shown himself provoked rather than pleased by letters of the reformer. However, after the loud peal of thunder which had alarmed evangelical Christians in every part of Europe, the horizon cleared a little, and the future looked less threatening.

About this time a bill was passed withdrawing heretics from the jurisdiction of the bishops, and subjecting them to the secular courts. The chancellor, supported by Cranmer, Cromwell, and Suffolk, and with the sanction of the
king, set at liberty the five hundred persons who had been committed to prison. The thunderbolt had indeed trenched the seas, but nobody was hurt—at least for the moment.

Henry resorted to other means for the purpose of reassuring those who imagined that the pope was already re-established in England. He exhibited to the citizens of London the spectacle of one of those sea-fights on which the ancient Romans used to lavish such enormous sums. Two galleys, one of them decorated with the royal ensigns, the other with the papal arms, appeared on the Thames, and a naval combat began. The two crews attacked each other; the struggle was sharp and obstinate; at length the soldiers of the king boarded the enemy and threw into the water amidst the shouts of the people an effigy of the pope and images of several cardinals. The pontifical phantom, seized by bold hands, was dragged through the streets; it was then hanged and burnt. It would have been better for the king to let alone such puerile and vulgar sports, which pleased none but the mob, and to give more serious proofs of his attachment to the Gospel.

CHAPTER 4
A Bitter Cup for Henry VIII
1539–1540

At the period which we have now reached, Henry VIII displayed to an increasingly marked degree that autocratic disposition which submits to no control. He lifted up or cast down; he crowned men with honors or sent them to the scaffold. He pronounced things white or black as suited him, and there was no other rule but his own absolute and arbitrary power. A simple and modest princess was one of the first to learn by experience that he was a despot in his family as well as in church and state.

Henry had now been a widower for two years—a widower against his will; for shortly after the death of Jane Seymour he had sought in almost all quarters for a wife, but he had failed. The two great Continental sovereigns had just been reconciled with each other, and the Emperor had even cast a slight upon the king of England in the affair of the duchess of Milan. Henry was therefore now desirous of contracting a marriage which should give offense to Charles, and should at the same time win for himself allies among the enemies of that potentate. Cromwell, for his part, felt the ground tremble under his feet; Norfolk and Gardiner had confirmed their triumph by getting the Six Articles passed. The vicegerent was therefore aiming to strengthen at once his own position and that of the Reformation, both of them impaired. Some have supposed it possible that his scheme was to unite the nations of the Germanic race, England, Germany, and the North, in support of the Reformation against the nations of the Latin race. We do not think that Cromwell went so far as this. A young Protestant princess, Anne, daughter of the duke of Cleves and sister-in-law of the elector of Saxony, who consequently possessed both the religious and the political qualifications looked for by the king and his minister, was proposed to Henry by his ambassadors on the Continent, and Cromwell
immediately took the matter in hand. This union would bring the king of
England into intimate relations with the Protestant princes, and would ensure,
he thought, the triumph of the Reformation in England, for Henry's wives
appeared to have great influence over him, at least so long as they were in
favor. Henry was, however, seeking something more in his betrothed than
diplomatic advantages. Cromwell knew this, and did not fail to make use of
that argument. "Everyone praises the beauty of this lady," he wrote to the king
(March 18, 1539), "and it is said that she surpasses all other women, even the
duchess of Milan. She excels the latter both in the features of her countenance
and in her whole figure as much as the golden sun excelleth the silver moon.
Her portrait shall be sent you. At the same time, everyone speaks of her virtue,
her chastity, her modesty, and the seriousness of her aspect." The portrait of
Anne, painted by Hans Holbein, was presented to the king, and it gave him the
idea of a lady not only very beautiful, but of tall and majestic stature. He was
charmed and hesitated no longer. On September 16, the Count Palatine of the
Rhine and other ambassadors of the elector of Saxony and the duke of Cleves
arrived at Windsor. Cromwell having announced them to the king, the latter
desired his minister to put all other matters out of his head, saving this only.
The affair was arranged, the marriage contract signed on October 4 at
Hampton Court, and the ambassadors on their departure received magnificent
presents.
The princess, whose father was dead and had been succeeded by his son, left
Germany towards the close of the year 1539. Her suite numbered two hundred
and sixty-three persons, among them a great many seigneurs, thirteen
trumpeters, and two hundred and twenty-eight horses. The earl of
Southampton, lord Howard, and four hundred other noblemen and gentlemen,
arrayed in damask, satin, and velvet, went a mile out of Calais to escort her.
The superb cortège entered the town, and came in sight of the English vessels
decorated with a hundred banners of silk and gold, and the marines all under
arms. As soon as the princess appeared, the trumpets sounded, volleys of
cannon succeeded each other, and so dense was the smoke that the members
of the suite could no longer see each other. Everyone was in admiration. After
a repast provided by Southampton, there were jousts and tourneys. The
progress of the princess being delayed by rough weather, Southampton, aware
of the impatience of his master,felt it necessary to write to him to remember
"that neither the winds nor the seas obey the commands of men." He added
that "the surpassing beauty of the princess did not fall short of what had been
told him." Anne was of simple character and timid disposition, and very
desirous of pleasing the king, and she dreaded making her appearance at the
famous and sumptuous court of Henry VIII. Southampton having called the next
day to pay his respects to her, she invited him to play with her some game at
cards which the king liked, with a view to her learning it and being able to play
with his Majesty. The earl took his seat at the card table in company with Anne
and lord William Howard, while other courtiers stood behind the princess and
taught her the game. "I can assure your Majesty," wrote the courtier, "that she
plays with as much grace and dignity as any noble lady that I ever saw in my
life." Anne, resolved on serving her apprenticeship to the manners of the court, begged Southampton to return to sup with her, bringing with him some of the nobles, because she was "much desirous to see the manner and fashion of Englishmen sitting at their meat." The earl replied that this would be contrary to English custom, but at length he yielded to her wish.

As soon as the weather appeared more promising, the princess and her suite crossed the Channel and reached Dover, whence, in the midst of a violent storm, they proceeded to Canterbury. The archbishop, accompanied by several other bishops, received Anne in his episcopal town, in a high wind and heavy rain; the princess appearing as if she might be the sun which was to disperse the fogs and the darkness of England, and to bring about there the triumph of evangelical light. Anne went on to Rochester, about half way between Canterbury and London. The king, unable to rest, eagerly longing to see his intended spouse, set out accompanied by his grand equerry, Sir Anthony Brown, and went incognito to Rochester. He was announced, and entered the room in which the princess was; but no sooner had he crossed the threshold and seen Anne, than he stopped confused and troubled. Never had any man been more deceived in his expectation. His imagination—that mistress of error and of falsehood, as it has been called—had depicted to him a beauty full of majesty and grace, and one glance had dispersed all his dreams. Anne was good and well-meaning, but rather weak-minded. Her features were coarse; her brown complexion was not at all like roses and lilies; she was very corpulent, and her manners were awkward. Henry had exquisite good taste; he could appreciate beauties and defects, especially in the figure, the bearing, and the attire of a woman. Taste is not without its corresponding distaste. Instead of love, the king felt for Anne only repugnance and aversion. Struck with astonishment and alarm, he stood before her, amazed and silent. Moreover, any conversation would have been impossible, for Anne was not acquainted with English nor Henry with German. The betrothed couple could not even speak to each other. Henry left the room, not having courage even to offer to the princess the handsome present which he brought for her. He threw himself into his bark, and returned gloomy and pensive to Greenwich. "He was woe," he said to himself, "that ever she came unto England." He deliberated with himself how to break it off. How could men in their senses have made him reports so false? He was glad, he said, that "he had kept himself from making any pact of bond with her." He thought, however, that the matter was too far gone for him to break it off. "It would drive the duke her brother into the Emperor or French king’s hands." The inconvenience of a flattering portrait had never been so deeply felt. It is not to be doubted that if at this very moment the Emperor and the king of France had not been together at Paris, Henry would have immediately sent back the unfortunate young lady.

Shortly after the king’s arrival at Greenwich, Cromwell, the promoter of this unfortunate affair, presented himself to his Majesty, not without fear, and inquired how he liked the lady Anne. The king replied, "Nothing so well as she was spoken of. Had I known as much before as I do now, she should not have come within this realm." Then, with a deep sigh, he exclaimed, "What remedy?"
"I know none," said Cromwell, "and I am very sorry therefor." The agents of the king had given proof neither of intelligence nor of integrity in the matter. Southampton, who had had a good view of her at Calais, had spoken to the king only of her beauty. On the following day Anne arrived at Greenwich; the king conducted her to the apartment assigned to her, and then retired to his own, very melancholy and in an ill humor. Cromwell again presented himself. "My lord," said the king, "say what they will, she is nothing so fair as she hath been reported... howbeit, she is well and seemly." "By my faith, sir," replied Cromwell, "ye say truth, but I think she has a queenly manner." "Call together the council," said Henry.

The princess made her entry into London in great pomp, and appeared at the palace. The court had heard of Henry’s disappointment and was in consternation. "Our king," they said, "could never marry such a queen." In default of speech, music would have been a means of communication; it speaks and moves. Henry and his courtiers were passionately fond of it, but Anne did not know a single note. She knew nothing but the ordinary occupations of women. In vain did Cromwell venture to say to his master that she had, nevertheless, a portly and fine person. Henry’s only thought was how to get rid of her. The marriage ceremony was deferred for a few days. The council took into consideration the question whether certain projects of union between Anne and the son of the duke of Lorraine did not form an obstacle to her marriage with Henry. But they found here no adequate ground of objection. "I am not well treated," the king said to Cromwell. Many were afraid of a rupture. The divorce between Henry and Catherine, the cruelty with which he had treated the innocent Anne Boleyn, had already given rise to so much discontent in Europe that people dreaded a fresh outbreak. The cup was bitter, but he must drink it. The 6th of January was positively fixed for the fatal nuptials. The king was heard the day before murmuring in a low tone with an accent of despair, "It must be; it must be," and presently after, "I will put my neck under the yoke." He determined to live in a becoming way with the queen. An insuperable antipathy filled his heart, but courteous words were on his lips. In the morning the king said to Cromwell, "If it were not for the great preparations that my states and people have made for her, and for fear of making a ruffle in the world, and of driving her brother into the hands of the Emperor and the French king’s hands, being now together, I would never have married her." Cromwell’s position had been first shaken by his quarrel with Norfolk; it sustained a second shock from the king’s disappointment. Henry blamed him for his misfortune, and Cromwell in vain laid the blame on Southampton.

On January 6 the marriage ceremony was performed at Greenwich by the archbishop, with much solemnity but also with great mournfulness. Henry comforted himself for his misfortune by the thought that he should be allied with the Protestant princes against the Emperor, if only they would consent somewhat to modify their doctrine. On the morrow Cromwell again asked him how he liked the queen. Worse than ever, replied the king. He continued, however, to testify to his wife the respect due to her.
It was generally anticipated that this union would be favorable to the
Reformation. Butler, in a letter to Bullinger at Zurich, wrote, "The state and
condition of that kingdom is much more sound and healthy since the marriage
of the queen than it was before. She is an excellent woman, and one who fears
God; great hopes are entertained of a very extensive propagation of the Gospel
by her influence." And in another letter he says, "There is great hope that it
[the kingdom] will ere long be in a much more healthy state, and this every
good man is striving for in persevering prayer to God." Religious books were
publicly offered for sale, and many faithful ministers, particularly Barnes,
freely preached the truth with much power, and no one troubled them. These
good people were under a delusion. "The king," they said, "who is exceedingly
merciful, would willingly desire the promotion of the truth."
But the Protestantism of the king of England was displayed not so much in
matters of faith as in public affairs. He showed much irritation against the
Emperor, and this gave rise to a characteristic conversation. Henry having
instructed (January 1540) his ambassador in the Netherlands, Sir Thomas
Wyatt, to make certain representations and demands on various subjects which
concerned his government, "I shall not interfere," Charles dryly replied. Wyatt
having further made complaint that the English merchants in Spain were
interfered with by the Inquisition, the Emperor laconically answered that he
knew nothing about it, and referred him to Granvella. Wyatt then having been
so bold as to remark that the monarch answered him in an ungracious manner,
Charles interrupted him and said that he "abused his words toward him." But
the ambassador, who meant exactly to carry out his master’s orders, did not
stop, but uttered the word ingratitude. Henry considered Charles ungrateful on
the ground that he had greatly obliged him on one important occasion. In fact,
the Emperor Maximilian having offered to secure the Empire for the king of
England, the thought of encircling his brows with the crown of the Roman
emperors inflamed the ardent imagination of the young prince, who was an
enthusiast for the romantic traditions of the Middle Ages. But, after the death
of Maximilian, the Germans decided in favor of Charles. The latter then came
to England, and the two kings met. Not very much is known of what they said in
their interview; but whatever it might be, Henry yielded, and he believed that
to his generosity Charles was indebted for the Empire. "Ingratitude," replied
the Emperor to the ambassador. "From whom mean you to proceed that
ingratitude? ... I would ye knew I am not ingrate, and if the king your master
hath done me a good turn I have done him as good or better. And I take it so,
that I cannot be toward him ingrate; the inferior may be ingrate to the greater.
But peradventure because the language is not your natural tongue, ye may
mistake the term."
"Sir," replied Wyatt, "I do not know that I misdo in using the term that I am
commanded."
The Emperor was much moved. "Monsieur l’ambassadeur," he said, "the king’s
opinions be not always the best."
"My master," Wyatt answered, "is a prince to give reason to God and to the
world sufficient in his opinions."
"It may be," Charles said coolly. His intentions were evidently becoming more and more aggressive. Henry VIII clearly perceived what his projects were. "Remember," said the king the same month to the duke of Norfolk, whom he had sent as envoy extraordinary to France, "that Charles has it in his head to bring Christendom to a monarchy. For if he be persuaded that he is a superior to all kings, then it is not to be doubted that he will by all ways and means... cause all those whom he so reputeth for his inferiors to acknowledge his superiority in such sort as their estates should easily be altered at his will." These words show that Henry possessed more political good sense than was usually attributed to him, but they are not exactly a proof of his evangelical zeal.

He did something, however, in this direction. Representatives of the elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse had accompanied Anne of Cleves to England. Henry received them kindly and entertained them magnificently; he succeeded so well in dazzling them by his converse and his manners, that these grave ambassadors sent word to their masters how the nuptials of his Majesty had been celebrated under joyful and sacred auspices. Nevertheless, they did not conceal from Henry VIII that the elector and the landgrave "had been thrown into consternation, as well as many others, by an atrocious decree, the result of the artifices of certain bishops, partisans of Roman impiety."

Thereupon the king, who wished by all means to gain over the evangelical princes, declared to their representatives "that his wisdom should soften the harshness of the decree, that he would even suspend its execution, and that there was nothing in the world that he more desired than to see the true doctrine of Christ shine in all churches, and that he was determined always to set heavenly truth before the tradition of men." In consequence of these statements of the king, the Wittenberg theologians sent to him some evangelical articles, to which they requested his adherence, and which were entirely opposed to those of Gardiner. We shall presently see how Henry proceeded to fulfil his promises.

Cromwell was anxious to take advantage of these declarations to get the Gospel preached, and he knew men capable of preaching it. He relied most of all on Barnes, who had returned to England with the most flattering testimonials from the Wittenberg reformers, and even from the elector of Saxony and the king of Denmark. Barnes had been employed by Henry in the negotiation of his marriage with Anne of Cleves, and had thus contributed to this union, a circumstance which did not greatly recommend him to the king. There were, besides, Thomas Garret, curate of All Saints’ Church, in Honey-lane, of whom we have elsewhere spoken; William Jerome, vicar of Stepney, and others. Bonner, who on his return from France was elected bishop of London, and who was afterwards a zealous persecutor, designated these three evangelical ministers to preach at Paul’s Cross during Lent in 1540. Bonner, perhaps, still wished to curry favor with Cromwell, or perhaps these preachers had been complained of, and the king wished to put them to the test. Barnes was to preach the first Sunday (February 14), but Gardiner, foreboding danger, wished to prevent him, and consequently sent word to Bonner that he would
himself preach that day. Barnes resigned the pulpit to this powerful prelate, who, well aware what doctrine the three evangelicals would proclaim at St. Paul’s, was determined to prevent them, and craftily to stir up prejudices against the innovators and their innovations. Confutation beforehand, he thought, is more useful than afterwards. It is better to be first than second, better to prevent evils than to cure them. He displayed some ingenuity and wit. Many persons were attracted by the notion that the Reformation was a progress and advance. He alleged that it was the contrary; and, taking for his text the words addressed to Jesus by the tempter on the pinnacle of the temple, *Cast thyself down*, he said, "Now-a-days the devil tempteth the world and biddeth them to cast themselves backward. There is no ‘forward’ in the new teaching, but all backward. Now the devil teacheth, ‘Come back from fasting, come back from praying, come back from confession, come back from weeping for thy sins’; and all is backward, insomuch that men must now learn to say their Pater-Noster backward." The bishop of Winchester censured with especial severity the evangelical preachers, on the ground that they taught the remission of sins through faith and not by works. Of old, he said, heaven was sold at Rome for a little money; now that we have done with all that trumpery the devil hath invented another—he offers us heaven for nothing! A living faith which unites us to the Savior was counted as nothing by Gardiner. On a subsequent Sunday Barnes preached. The lord mayor and Gardiner, side by side, and many other reporters, says the chronicle, were present at the service. The preacher vigorously defended the doctrine attacked by the bishop; but unfortunately, he indulged, like him, in attempts at wit, and even in a play upon his name, complaining of the gardener who "had planted such evil herbs in the garden of God’s Scripture." This punning would anywhere have been offensive; it was doubly offensive in the pulpit in the presence of the bishop himself. "Punning," says one, "is the poorest kind of would-be wit." Garret preached energetically the next Sunday, but he studiously avoided offending anyone. Lastly, Jerome preached, and taking up the passage relating to Sarah and Hagar in the epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians, maintained that all those who are born of Sarah, the lawful wife, that is, who have been regenerated by faith, are fully and positively justified.

Bishop Gardiner and his friends lost no time in complaining to the king of the "intolerable arrogance of Barnes." "A prelate of the kingdom to be thus insulted at Paul’s Cross!" said the former ambassador to France. Henry sent for the culprit to his cabinet. Barnes confessed that he had forgotten himself, and promised to be on his guard against such rash speeches in future. Jerome and Garret likewise were reprimanded, and the king commanded the three evangelists to read in public on the following Sunday, at the solemn Easter service celebrated in the church of St. Mary’s Hospital, a retractation which was delivered to them in writing. They felt bound to submit unreservedly to the commands of the king. Barnes, therefore, when the 4th of April was come, ascended the pulpit and read word for word the official paper which he had received. After this, turning to the bishop of Winchester, who was present by order of the king, he earnestly and respectfully begged his pardon, asking him
twice to lift up his hand, if he forgave him. Gardiner "with much ado, wagged his finger a little." Having thus discharged, as he believed, his duty, first as a subject, then as a Christian, Barnes felt bound to discharge also that of a minister of God. He therefore preached powerfully the doctrine of salvation by grace, the very doctrine for which he was persecuted. The lord mayor, who was sitting by Gardiner’s side, turned to the bishop and asked him whether he should send him from the pulpit to prison for preaching so boldly contrary to his retractation. Garret and Jerome having followed the example of Barnes, the king gave orders that the three evangelists should be taken and confined in the Tower. "Three of our best ministers," wrote Butler to Bullinger, "are confined in the Tower of London. You may judge from this of our misfortunes." At the same time that Henry VIII was imprisoning the ministers of God’s Word, he was giving more liberty to the Word itself. It must be confessed that in his conflict with the pope he did make use of the Bible. He interpreted it, indeed, in his own way, but still he used it and helped to circulate it. This was a fact of importance for the Reformation in England.

The edition of the Bible sometimes called "Cranmer’s Bible" appeared at this time (April 1540). Actually it was the second edition of the Great Bible already mentioned, but as the archbishop supplied a preface to it, his name has thus been honorably linked with the Word. The preface commends to the subjects of Henry the widespread reading of the Holy Scriptures, and appeals to the authority of the ancient fathers of the church in support of the claim that the Word is the sufficient rule of faith and life.

"Here may all manner of persons: men, women, young, old; learned, unlearned; rich, poor; priests, laymen; lords, ladies; officers, tenants, and mean men; virgins, wives, widows; lawyers, merchants, artificers, husbandmen; and all manner of persons, of what estate or condition soever they be; may in This Book learn all things, what they ought to believe, what they ought to do, and what they should not do, as well concerning Almighty God, as also concerning themselves, and all others... to the reading of Scripture none can be enemy. ... I would advise you all, that come to the reading or hearing of This Book, which is the Word of God, the most precious jewel and most holy relic that remaineth upon earth, that ye bring with you the fear of God... and use not your knowledge thereof to vain glory of frivolous disputation, but to the honour of God, increase of virtue, and edification both of yourselves and of others."

Thus ran Cranmer’s preface. In the fourth and sixth editions the title includes mention of the fact that Cuthbert Tunstall was one of the two bishops made responsible for the oversight of the work of printing and publishing. We may well conjecture whether Tunstall did this work with a willing mind; he was the bishop of London who had refused help and permission to Tyndale to translate the Word into English, and who had previously bought up copies of the Testaments in order to burn them at Paul’s Cross, and the book he now helped to bring before the people was based, in part, on the work he had so vigorously opposed!
A magnificent copy on vellum was presented to the king. In the same month appeared another Bible, printed in smaller type; in July another great Bible; in November a third in folio, authorized by Henry VIII, "supreme head of his church." It would seem even that there was one more edition this year. The enemies of the Bible were in power. Nevertheless the Bible was gaining the victory, and the luminary which was to enlighten the world was beginning to shed abroad its light everywhere.

CHAPTER 5
The Disgrace and Death of Thomas Cromwell
1540

Eight days after the imprisonment of Barnes and his two friends (April 12, 1540), parliament opened for the first time without abbots or priors. Cromwell was thoughtful and uneasy; he saw everywhere occasions of alarm; he felt his position insecure. The statute of the Six Articles, the conviction which possessed his mind that the doctrines of the Middle Ages were regaining an indisputable ascendancy over the king, the wrath of Norfolk, and Henry’s ill will on account of the queen whom Cromwell had chosen for him—these were the dark points which threatened his future. His friends were scattered or persecuted; his enemies were gathered about the throne. Henry, however, made no sign, but secretly meditated a violent blow. He concealed the game he was playing so that others, and especially Cromwell himself, should have no perception of it. The powerful minister, therefore, appeared in parliament, assuming a confident air, as the ever-powerful organ of the supreme will of the king. Henry VIII, the man of extremes, thought proper at this time to exhibit himself as an advocate of a middle course. The country is agitated by religious dissensions, said the vicegerent, his representative; and in his speech to the House he set forth on the one hand the rooted superstition and obstinate clinging to popery, and on the other thoughtless and impertinent and culpable rashness (referring doubtless to Barnes). He said that the king desired a union of the two parties, that he leaned to neither side, that he would equally repress the license of heretics and that of the papists, and that he "set the pure and sincere doctrine of Christ before his eyes." These words of Cromwell were wise. Union in the truth is the great want of all ages. But Henry added his comment. He refused to turn to the right or to the left. He would not himself hold, nor did he intend to permit England to hold, any other doctrine than that prescribed by his own sovereign authority, sword in hand. Cromwell did not fail to let it be known by what method the king meant to bring about this union; he insisted on penalties against all who did not submit to the Bible and against those who put upon it a wrong interpretation. Henry intended to strike right and left with his vigorous hand. To carry out the scheme of union a commission was appointed, the result of which, after two years’ labors, was a confused medley of truths and errors. Strange to say, although Cromwell was now on the brink of an abyss, the king still heaped favors upon him. He was already chancellor of the exchequer, first
secretary of state, vicegerent and vicar-general of England in spiritual affairs, lord privy seal, and knight of the Garter; but he was now to see fresh honors added to all these. The earl of Essex had just died, and a week later died William, lord Sandys of "The Vyne," who had been lord chamberlain. Hereupon Henry made Cromwell, "the blacksmith’s son,” whom Norfolk and the other nobles despised so heartily, earl of Essex and lord chamberlain, and had his name placed at the head of the roll of peers. Wealth was no more wanting to him than honors. He received a large portion of the property of the deceased lord Essex; the king conferred on him numerous manors taken from the suppressed monasteries; he owned great estates in eight counties; and he still continued to superintend the business of the crown. We might well ask how it came to pass that such a profusion of favors fell to his lot just at the time when the king was angry with him as the man who had given him Anne of Cleves for a wife; when the imprisonment of Barnes, his friend and confidential agent, greatly compromised him; and when, in addition to these things, Norfolk, Gardiner, and the whole Catholic party were striving to put down this parvenu, who offended them and stood in their way. Two answers may be given to this question. Henry was desirous that Cromwell should make a great effort to secure the assent of parliament to bills of a very extraordinary character but very advantageous to the king, and it was his hope that the titles under which Cromwell would appear before the houses would make success easier. Several contemporaries, however, assigned a different cause for these royal favors. "Some persons now suspect," wrote Hilles to Bullinger, "that this was all an artifice, to make people conclude that he [Cromwell] must have been a most wicked traitor, and guilty of treason in every possible way, or else the king would never have executed one who was so dear to him, as was made manifest by the presents he had bestowed upon him.” Besides, was it not the custom of the ancients to crown their victims with flowers before sacrificing them? Henry was greedy of money, and was in want of it, for he spent it prodigally. He applied to Cromwell for it. The latter was aware that in making himself the king’s instrument in this matter he was estranging from himself the mind of the nation; but he considered that a great sovereign must have great resources, and he was always willing to sacrifice himself for the king, for to him he owed everything, and he loved him in spite of his faults. On April 23, four days after receiving from the king such extraordinary favors, Cromwell proposed to the House to suppress the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and urged that their estates, which were considerable, should be given to the king. This was agreed to by Parliament. On May 3 he demanded for his Majesty a subsidy of unparalleled character, namely, four tenths and fifteenths, in addition to ten per cent on the rents of lands and five per cent on the value of merchandise. This also he obtained. Next he went to the convocation of the clergy, and claimed from them two tenths and twenty per cent on ecclesiastical revenues for two years. Again he succeeded. By May 8 the king had obtained through Cromwell’s energy all that he wished for. On the very next day, Sunday, May 9, Cromwell received in his palace a note from the king thus worded:
"Henry R. By the King.

"Right trusty and well beloved cousin, We greet you well; signifying unto you our pleasure and commandment is that forthwith, and upon the receipt of these our letters, setting all other affairs apart, ye do repair unto us, for the treaty of such great and weighty matters as whereupon doth consist the surety of our person, the preservation of our honour, and the tranquillity and quietness of you, and all other our loving and faithful subjects, like as at your arrival here ye shall more plainly perceive and understand. And that ye fail not hereof, as we specially trust you.

"Given under our signet, at our manor of Westminster, the 9th day of May."

What could this urgent and mysterious note mean? Cromwell could not rest after reading it. "The surety of our person, the preservation of our honour" are in question, said the king. We may imagine the agitation of his mind, his fears as to the result of the visit, and the state of perplexity in which, without losing a minute, he went in obedience to the king's command. We have no information as to what passed at this interview. Probably the minister supposed that he had justified himself in his master's sight. On the following day, Monday, the earl of Essex was present as usual in the House of Lords and introduced a bill. The day after, parliament was prorogued till May 25. What could be the reason for this? It has been supposed that Cromwell's enemies wished to gain the time needful for collecting evidence in support of the charges which they intended to bring against him. When the fifteen days had elapsed, parliament met again, and the earl of Essex was in his place on the first and following days. He was still in the assembly as minister of the king on June 10, on which day, at three o'clock, there was a meeting of the Privy Council. The duke of Norfolk, the earl of Essex, and the other members were quietly seated round the table, when the duke rose and accused Cromwell of high treason. Cromwell understood that Norfolk was acting under the sanction of the king, and he recollected the note of May 9. The lord chancellor arrested him and had him conducted to the Tower.

Norfolk was more than ever in favor, for Henry, husband of Anne of Cleves, was at this time enamored of Norfolk's niece. He believed—and Gardiner, doubtless, did not fail to encourage the belief—that he must promptly take advantage of the extraordinary good will which the king testified to him to overthrow the adversary of English Catholicism, the powerful protector of the Bible and the Reformation. In the judgment of this party, Cromwell was a heretic and a chief of heretics. This was the principal motive, and substantially the only motive of the attack made on the earl of Essex. In a letter addressed at this time by the Council to Sir John Wallop, ambassador at the court of France, a circular letter sent also to the principal officers and representatives
of the king, the crime of which Cromwell was accused is distinctly set forth. "The lord privy seal," it was therein said, "to whom the king's said Majesty hath been so special good and gracious lord, neither remembering his duty herein to God, nor yet to his Highness... hath not only wrought clean contrary to this his Grace's most godly intent, secretly and indirectly advancing the one of the extremes, and leaving the mean indifferent true and virtuous way which his Majesty sought and so entirely desired; but also hath showed himself so fervently bent to the maintenance of that his outrage that he hath not spared most privily, most traitorously, to devise how to continue the same, and plainly in terms to say, as it hath been justified to his face by good witness, that if the king and all his realm would turn and vary from his opinions, he would fight in the field in his own person, with his sword in his hand, against him and all other; adding that if he lived a year or two he trusted to bring things to that frame that it should not lie in the king's power to resist or let it, if he would; binding his words with such oaths and making such gesture and demonstration with his arms, that it might well appear he had no less fixed in his heart than was uttered with his mouth. For the which apparent and most detestable treasons, and also for... other enormities... he is committed to the Tower of London, there to remain till it shall please his Majesty to have him thereupon tried according to the order of his laws." It was added that the king, remembering how men wanting the knowledge of the truth would speak diversely of the matter, desired them to declare and open the whole truth. Nothing could be more at variance with the character and the whole life of Cromwell than the foolish sayings attributed to him. Every intelligent man might see that they were mere falsehoods invented by the Catholic party to hide its own criminal conduct. But at the same time it most clearly pointed out in this letter the real motive of the blow aimed at Cromwell, the first, true, efficient cause of his fall, the object which his enemies had in view and towards which they were working. They fancied that the overthrow of Cromwell would be the overthrow of the Reformation. Wallop did not fail to impart the information to the court to which he was accredited, and Henry VIII was delighted to hear of "the friendly rejoyce of our good brother the French king, the constable and others there," on learning of the arrest of the lord privy seal. This rejoicing was very natural on the part of Francis I, Montmorency, and the rest of them.

As soon as the arrest of June 10 was known, the majority of those who had most eagerly sought after the favor of Cromwell, and especially Bonner, bishop of London, immediately turned round and declared against him. He had gained no popularity by promoting the last bills passed to the king's advantage, and the news of his imprisonment was therefore received with shouts of joy. In the midst of the general dejection, one man alone remained faithful to the prisoner—this was Cranmer. The man who had formerly undertaken the defense of Anne Boleyn now came forward in defense of Cromwell. The archbishop did not attend the Privy Council on Thursday, June 10, but being in his place on the Friday, he heard that the earl of Essex had been arrested as a traitor. The tidings astonished and affected him deeply. He saw in Cromwell at this time
not only his personal friend, not only the prudent and devoted supporter of the
Reformation, but also the ablest minister and the most faithful servant of the
king. He saw the danger to which he exposed himself by undertaking the
defense of the prisoner, and he felt that it was his duty not recklessly to offend
the king. He therefore wrote to him in a prudent manner, reminding him,
nevertheless, energetically of all that Cromwell had been. His letter to the king
was written the day after he heard of the fall of the minister. "I heard
yesterday in your Grace's council," he says, "that he [Cromwell] is a traitor; yet
who cannot be sorrowful and amazed that he should be a traitor against your
Majesty, he that was so advanced by your Majesty; he whose surety was only by
your Majesty; he who loved your Majesty (as I ever thought) no less than God;
he who studied always to set forwards whatsoever was your Majesty's will and
pleasure; he that cared for no man's displeasure to serve your Majesty; he that
was such a servant, in my judgment, in wisdom, diligence, faithfulness, and
experience, as no prince in this realm ever had; he that was so vigilant to
preserve your Majesty from all treasons that few could be so secretly conceived
but he detected the same in the beginning? If the noble princes of memory,
king John, Henry II, and Richard II had had such a counsellor about them, I
suppose that they should never have been so traitorously abandoned and
overthrown as those good princes were. ... I loved him as my friend, for so I
took him to be, but I chiefly loved him for the love which I thought I saw him
bear ever towards your Grace, singularly above all other. But now, if he be a
traitor, I am sorry that ever I loved him or trusted him, and I am very glad that
his treason is discovered in time. But yet again I am very sorrowful, for who
shall your Grace trust hereafter, if you might not trust him? Alas! I bewail and
lament your Grace's chance herein, I wot not whom your Grace may trust. But I
pray God continually night and day to send such a counsellor in his place whom
your Grace may trust, and who for all his qualities can and will serve your
Grace like to him, and that will have so much solicitude and care to preserve
your Grace from all dangers as I ever thought he had."
Cranmer was doubtless a weak man; but assuredly it was a proof of some
devotion to truth and justice, and of some boldness too, thus to plead the
cause of the prisoner before a prince so absolute as Henry VIII, and even to
express the wish that some efficient successor might be found. Cranmer wrote
to the king boldly. The prince being intolerant of contradiction, this step of the
archbishop was more than was needed to ruin him as well as Cromwell.
Meanwhile, the enemies of the prisoner were trying to find other grounds of
accusation besides that which they had first brought forward. Indeed, it
seemed to some persons a strange thing that he who, under Henry VIII, was
head of the church, vicegerent in spiritual affairs, should be a heretic and a
patron of heretics; and many found in this charge an "occasion of merriment."
They set to work, therefore, after the blow, to discover offenses on the part of
the accused. After taking great pains, this is what they discovered and set forth
in the bill of attainder: 1. That he had set at liberty some prisoners suspected
of treason, a crime indeed in the eyes of a gloomy despot, but in the judgment
of righteous men an act of justice and virtue. 2. That he had granted freedom
of export of corn, horses, and other articles of commerce—the crime of free
trade which would be no crime now. Not a single instance can be specified in
which Cromwell had received a present for such license. 3. That he had,
though a low-born man, given places and orders, saying only that he was sure
that the king would approve them. On this point Cromwell might reasonably
allege the multiplicity of matters entrusted to his care, and the annoyance to
which it must have subjected the king, had he continually troubled him to
decide the most trifling questions. 4. That he had given permission, both to the
king’s subjects and to foreigners, to cross the sea "without any search." This
intelligent minister appears to have aimed at an order of things less vexatious
and more liberal than that established under Henry VIII, and in this respect he
stood ahead of his age. 5. That he had made a large fortune, that he had lived
in great state, and had not duly honored the nobility. There were not a few of
the nobles who were far from being honorable, and this great worker had no
liking for drones and idlers. With respect to his fortune, Cromwell incurred
heavy expenses for the affairs of the realm. In many countries he kept well-
paid agents, and the money which he had in his hands was spent more in state
affairs than in satisfying his personal wishes. In all this there was evidently
more to praise than to blame. But Cromwell had enemies who went further
than his official accusers. The Roman Catholics gave out that he had aspired to
the hand of the king’s daughter, the princess Mary.
These groundless charges were followed by the true motives for his disgrace. It
was alleged that he had adopted heretical (that is to say, evangelical) opinions,
that he had promoted the circulation of heretical works, that he had settled in
the realm many heretical ministers, and that he had caused men accused of
heresy to be set at liberty. That when anyone went to him to make complaint
of detestable errors, he defended the heretics and severely censured the
informers; and that in March last, persons having complained to him of the new
preachers, he answered that "their preaching was good." For these crimes, the
acts of a Christian, honest, and beneficent man, condemnation must be
pronounced. Cromwell indeed was guilty.
The conduct of the prosecution was entrusted to Richard Rich, formerly
speaker of the House of Commons, now solicitor-general and chancellor of the
court of augmentations. He had already rendered service to the king in the
trials of Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More; the same might be expected of him
in the trial of Cromwell. It appears that he accused Cromwell of being
connected with Throgmorton, the friend and agent of Cardinal Pole. Now the
mere mention of Pole’s name would put Henry out of temper. Cromwell’s
alliance with this friend of the pope was the pendant of his scheme of marriage
with the lady Mary; the one was as probable as the other. Cromwell wrote from
his prison to the king on the subject, and stoutly denied the fable. It was not
introduced into the formal pleadings, but the charge was left vaguely
impending over him, and it was reasserted that he was guilty of treason.
Cromwell was certainly not faultless. He was above all a politician, and
political interests had too much weight with him. He was the advocate of some
vexatious and unjust measures, and he acted sometimes in opposition to his
own principles. But his main fault was a too servile devotion to the prince who pretended that he had been betrayed by him. His fall, in certain respects, resembles that of his earlier master, Cardinal Wolsey.

His enemies were afraid that, if the trial were conducted openly before his peers according to law, he would make his voice heard and clear himself of all their imputations. They resolved therefore to proceed against him without trial and without discussion, by the parliamentary method, by bill of attainder—a course pronounced by Roman Catholics themselves "a most iniquitous measure." He ought to have been tried, and he was not tried. He was, however, confronted on Friday, June 11, the day after his arrest, with one of his accusers, and thus learned what were the charges brought against him. Conducted again to the Tower, he became fully aware of the danger which was impending over him. The power of his enemies, Gardiner and Norfolk, the increasing disfavor of Anne of Cleves, which seemed inevitably to involve his own ruin, the proceedings instituted against Barnes and other evangelists, the anger of the king—all these things alarmed him and produced the conviction in his mind that the issue was doubtful, and that the danger was certain. He was in a state of great distress and deep melancholy; gloomy thoughts oppressed him, and his limbs trembled. The prison has been called the porch of the grave, and Cromwell indeed looked upon it as a grave. On June 30 he wrote to the king from his gloomy abode an affecting letter, "with heavy heart and trembling hand," as he himself said.

About the end of June, the duke of Norfolk, the lord chancellor, and the lord high admiral went to the Tower, instructed to examine Cromwell and to make various declarations to him on the part of the king. The most important of these related to the marriage of Henry VIII with Anne of Cleves. They called upon him to state all that he knew touching this marriage, "as he might do before God on the dread day of judgment." On June 30 Cromwell wrote to the king a letter in which he set forth what he knew on the subject, and he added, "And this is all that I know, most gracious and most merciful sovereign lord, beseeching Almighty God... to counsel you, preserve you, maintain you, remedy you, relieve and defend you, as may be most to your honour, with prosperity, health, and comfort of your heart’s desire... [giving you] continuance of Nestor’s years. ... I am a most woeful prisoner, ready to take the death, when it shall please God and your Majesty; and yet the frail flesh inciteth me continually to call to your Grace for mercy and grace for mine offences: and thus Christ save, preserve, and keep you.

"Written at the Tower this Wednesday, the last day of June, with the heavy heart and trembling hand of your Highness’ most heavy and most miserable prisoner and poor slave,

"Thomas Cromwell."

After having signed the letter, Cromwell, overpowered with terror at his future prospects, added, "Most gracious prince, I cry for mercy, mercy, mercy." The heads of the clerical party, impatient to be rid of an enemy whom they hated, hurried on the fatal decree. The parliament met on Thursday, June 17, seven days after Cromwell’s imprisonment; and Cranmer, who had attended
the sittings of the House of Lords on the previous days, was not present on this occasion. The earl of Southampton, who had become lord keeper of the privy seal in Cromwell’s place, entered and presented the bill of attainder against his predecessor. It was read a first time. The second and third readings followed on Saturday the 19th. Cranmer, whose absence had probably been noticed, was present, and, according to his lamentable system, adapted to the despotism of his master; after having complied with the dictate of his conscience by calling to mind the merits of Cromwell, he complied with the will of the king, and by his silence acquiesced in the proceedings of the House. The bill was sent to the lower House. It appears that the commons raised some scruples or objections, for the bill remained under consideration for ten days. It was not until June 29 that the commons sent the bill back to the peers, with some amendments, and the peers, ever in haste, ordered that the three readings should take place at the same sitting. They then sent it to the king, who gave his assent to it. The man who was prosecuted had been so powerful that it was feared lest he should regain his strength and begin to advance with fresh energy.

The king, meanwhile, seems to have hesitated. He was less decided than those who at this time enjoyed his favor. Although the lord chancellor, the duke of Norfolk, and lord Russell had come to announce to Cromwell that the Bill of Attainder had passed, he remained still a whole month in the Tower. The royal commissioners interrogated him at intervals on various subjects. It seems even that the king sent him relief, probably to mitigate the severities of his imprisonment. Cromwell habitually received the king’s commissioners with dignity, and answered them with discretion. Whether the questions touched on temporal or ecclesiastical affairs, he ever showed himself better informed than his questioners. Henry sent word to him that he might write anything that he thought meet under his present circumstances. From this, Cromwell appears to have conceived a hope that the king would not permit his sentence to be executed. He took courage and wrote to the king. “Most gracious king,” he said, “your most lamentable servant and prisoner, prostrate at the feet of your most excellent Majesty, have heard your pleasure that I should write. ... First, where I have been accused to your Majesty of treason, to that I say, I never in all my life thought willingly to do that thing that might or should displease your Majesty. ... What labours, pains, and travails I have taken, according to my most bounden duty God also knoweth. ... If it had been or were in my power, to make your Majesty so puissant, as all the world should be compelled to obey you, Christ He knoweth I would, ... for your Majesty hath been... more like a dear father... than a master. Should any faction or any affection to any point make me a traitor to your Majesty, then all the devils in hell confound me, and the vengeance of God light upon me. ... Yet our Lord, if it be His will, can do with me as he did with Susan, who was falsely accused. ... Other hope than in God and your Majesty I have not. ... Amongst other things, most gracious Sovereign, master comptroller shewed me that your Grace shewed him that within these fourteen days ye committed a matter of great secrecy, which I did
reveal. ... This I did. ... I spake privily with her [the queen’s] lord chamberlaine... desiring him... to find some mean that the queen might be induced to order your Grace pleasantly in her behaviour towards you. ... If I have offended your Majesty therein, prostrate at your Majesty’s feet I most lowly ask mercy and pardon of your Highness. ... Written with the quaking hand and most sorrowful heart of your most sorrowful subject and most humble servant and prisoner, this Saturday at the Tower of London.

"Thomas Cromwell."

Cromwell was resigned to death, and the principal object of his concern was the fate of his son, his grandchildren, and likewise of his domestic servants. His son was in a good position, having married a sister of the queen Jane Seymour. "Sir, upon my knees," he said, "I most humbly beseech your gracious Majesty to be a good and gracious lord to my poor son, the good and virtuous woman his wife, and their poor children, and also to my servants. And this I desire of your Grace for Christ’s sake." The unhappy father, returning to his own case, finished by saying, "Most gracious prince, mercy, mercy, mercy!" Cromwell wrote twice in this manner, and the king was so much affected by the second of these letters that he "commanded it thrice to be read to him."

Would Cromwell then, after all, escape? Those who were ignorant of what was passing at court looked upon it as impossible that he should be sacrificed so long as Anne of Cleves was queen of England. But the very circumstances which seemed to them the guarantee of his safety were to be instead the occasion of his ruin.

Henry’s dislike to his wife was ever increasing, and he was determined to get rid of her. But, as usual, he concealed beneath flowers the weapon with which he was about to strike her. In the month of March, the king gave, in honor of the queen, a grand fete with a tournament, as he had done for Anne Boleyn; and amongst the numerous combatants who took part in the jousting were Sir Thomas Seymour, the earl of Sussex, Harry Howard, and Richard Cromwell, nephew of the earl of Essex, and ancestor of the great Protector Oliver.

One circumstance contributed to hasten the decision of the king. There was at the court a young lady, small of stature, of a good figure and beautiful countenance, of ladylike manners, coquettish and forward, who at this time made a deep impression on Henry. This was Catherine Howard, a niece of the duke of Norfolk, now residing with her grandmother, the duchess dowager, who allowed her great liberty. Catherine was in every respect a contrast to Anne of Cleves. Henry resolved to marry her, and for this purpose to get rid forthwith of his present wife. As he was desirous of being provisionally relieved of her presence, he persuaded her that a change of air would be very beneficial to her, and that it was necessary that she should make a stay in the country. On June 24 he sent the good princess, who felt grateful for his attentions, to Richmond. At the same time he dispatched the bishop of Bath to her brother, the duke of Cleves, with a view to prepare him for the very unexpected decision which was impending over his sister, and to avert any vexatious consequences.
Cromwell, then, had no aid to look for at the hands of a queen already forsaken and ere long repudiated. He could not hope to escape death. His enemies were urgent for the execution of the bill. They professed to have discovered a correspondence which he had carried on with the Protestant princes of Germany.

Cromwell’s determination to offer no opposition to the king led him to commit serious mistakes, unworthy of a Christian. Nevertheless, according to documents still extant, he died like a Christian. He was not the first, nor the last, who in the presence of death, of capital punishment, has examined himself, and confessed himself a sinner. While he spurned the accusations made by his enemies, he humbled himself before the weightier and more solemn accusations of his own conscience. How often had his own will been opposed to the commandments of the divine will! But at the same time he discovered in the Gospel the grace which he had but imperfectly known, and the doctrines which the Catholic church of the first ages had professed became dear to him.

On July 28, 1540, Cromwell was taken to Tower Hill, the place of execution. On reaching the scaffold he said, "I am come hither to die, and not to purge myself. ... For since the time that I have had years of discretion, I have lived a sinner and offended my Lord God, for the which I ask Him heartily forgiveness. And it is not unknown to many of you that I have been a great travailler in this world, and being but of a base degree, was called to high estate; and since the time I came thereunto I have offended my prince, for the which I ask him heartily forgiveness, and beseech you all to pray to God with me, that He will forgive me. O Father, forgive me! O Son, forgive me! O Holy Ghost, forgive me! O Three Persons in one God, forgive me! ... I die in the Catholic faith. ... I heartily desire you to pray for the king’s grace, that he may long live with you in health and prosperity."

By insisting in so marked a manner on the doctrine of the Trinity, professed in the fourth century by the councils of Nicæa and Constantinople, Cromwell doubtless intended to show that this was the Catholic doctrine in which he asserted that he died. But he did not omit to give evidence that his faith was that of the Scriptures.

After his confession, he knelt down, and at this solemn hour he uttered this Christian and fervent prayer: "O Lord Jesu! which art the only health of all men living and the everlasting life of them which die in Thee, I, wretched sinner, do submit myself wholly unto Thy most blessed will, and being sure that the thing cannot perish which is committed unto Thy mercy, willingly now I leave this frail and wicked flesh, in sure hope that Thou wilt, in better wise, restore it to me again at the last day in the resurrection of the just. I beseech Thee, most merciful Lord Jesus Christ! that Thou wilt by Thy grace make strong my soul against all temptations, and defend me with the buckler of Thy mercy against all the assaults of the devil. I see and acknowledge that there is in myself no hope of salvation, but all my confidence, hope, and trust is in Thy most merciful goodness. I have no merits nor good works which I may allege before Thee. Of sins and evil works, alas! I see a great heap, but yet through Thy
mercy I trust to be in the number of them to whom Thou wilt not impute their sins, but wilt take and accept me for righteous and just, and to be the inheritor of everlasting life. Thou, merciful Lord! wast born for my sake; Thou didst suffer both hunger and thirst for my sake; Thou didst teach, pray, and fast for my sake; all Thy holy actions and works Thou wroughtest for my sake; Thou sufferedest most grievous pains and torments for my sake; finally, Thou gayest Thy most precious body and Thy blood to be shed on the cross for my sake. Now, most merciful Savior! let all these things profit me, that Thou freely hast done for me, which hast given Thyself also for me. Let Thy blood cleanse and wash away the spots and foulness of my sins. Let Thy righteousness hide and cover my unrighteousness. Let the merits of Thy passion and blood-shedding be satisfaction for my sins. Give me, Lord! Thy grace, that the faith of my salvation in Thy blood waver not in me, but may ever be firm and constant, that the hope of Thy mercy and life everlasting never decay in me, that love wax not cold in me. Finally, that the weakness of my flesh be not overcome with the fear of death. Grant me, merciful Savior! that when death hath shut up the eyes of my body, yet the eyes of my soul may still behold and look upon Thee, and when death hath taken away the use of my tongue, yet my heart may cry and say unto Thee, ‘Lord! into Thy hands I commend my soul; Lord Jesu! receive my Spirit!’ Amen.”

This is one of the most beautiful prayers handed down to us in Christian times. Cromwell having finished his prayer and being now ready, a stroke of the axe severed his head from his body. Thus died a man who, although he had risen from the lowliest to the loftiest estate, never allowed himself to be seduced by pride, nor made giddy by the pomps of the world, who continued attached to his old acquaintances, and was eager to honor the meanest who had rendered him any service; a man who powerfully contributed to the establishment of Protestantism in England, although his enemies, unaware of the very different meanings of the words “Catholicism” and “Popery,” took pleasure in circulating the report in Europe, after his death, that he died a Roman Catholic; a man who for eight years governed his country, the king, the parliament, and convocation, who had the direction of all domestic as well as foreign affairs; who executed what he had advised, and who, in spite of the blots which he himself lamented, was one of the most intelligent, most active, and most influential of English ministers. It is said that the king ere long regretted him. However this may be, he protected his son and gave him proofs of his favors, doubtless in remembrance of his father.

Another nobleman, Walter, lord Hungerford, was beheaded at the same time with Cromwell, for having endeavored to ascertain, by “conjuring,” how long the king would live.

CHAPTER 6
The Divorce of Anne of Cleves
1540
The Catholic party was triumphant. It had set aside the Protestant queen and sacrificed the Protestant minister; and it now proceeded to take measures of a less startling character, but which were a more direct attack on the very work of the Reformation. It thought proper to put to death some of those zealous men who were boldly preaching the pure Gospel, not only for the sake of getting rid of them, but even more for the purpose of terrifying those who were imitating them or who were willing to do so. Of these men, Barnes, Garret, and Jerome were best known. They were in prison, but Henry had hitherto scrupled about sacrificing men who preached a doctrine opposed to the pope. The party, moreover, united all their forces to bring about the fall of Cromwell, who had been confined within the same walls. After his death, the death of the preachers followed as a matter of course; it was merely the corollary; it was a natural consequence, and needed no special demonstration; the sentence, according to the Romish party, had only to be pronounced to be evidently justified. On these principles the king’s council and the parliament proceeded; and two days after the execution of Cromwell, these three evangelists, without any public hearing, without knowing any cause of their condemnation, without receiving any communication whatsoever, were taken out of prison, July 30, 1540, to be conducted to Smithfield, where they were to be deprived, not only of their ministry, but of their lives.

Henry, however, was not free from uneasiness. He had openly asserted that he leaned neither to one side nor to the other; that he weighed both parties in a just balance; and now, while he is boasting of his impartiality, everybody persists in saying that he gives all the advantage to the papists. What is he to do in order to be just and impartial? Three papists must be found to be put to death at the same time with the evangelicals. Then nobody will venture to assert that the king does not hold the balance even. The measure shall be faultless and one of the glories of his reign. The three papists selected to be placed in the other scale bore the names of Abel, Powel, and Fetherstone. The first two were political pamphleteers who had supported the cause of Catherine of Aragon, and the third was, like them, an opponent of royal supremacy. It seems that in this matter the king also made allowance for the composition of his own council, which comprised both friends and enemies of the Reformation. Amongst the former were the archbishop of Canterbury, the duke of Suffolk, viscounts Beauchamp and Lisle, Russell, Paget, Sadler, and Audley. Amongst the latter were the bishops of Winchester and Durham, the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Southampton, Sir Anthony Browne, Paulet, Baker, Richard, and Wingfield. There was therefore a majority of one against the Reformation, just enough to turn the scale. Henry, with a show of impartiality, assigned three victims to each of these parties. Preparations were made at the Tower for carrying out this equitable sentence. In the courtyard were three hurdles, of oblong shape, formed of branches of trees closely intertwined, on which the culprits were to be drawn to the place of execution. Why three only, as there were six condemned? The reason was soon to be seen. When the three prisoners of each side were brought out, they proceeded to lay one evangelical
on the first hurdle, and by his side a papist, binding them properly to each other to keep them in this strange coupling. The same process was gone through with the second and the third hurdles; they then set out, and the six prisoners were drawn two and two to Smithfield. Thus, in every street through which the procession passed, Henry VIII proclaimed by this strange spectacle that his government was impartial, and condemned alike the two classes of divines and of doctrines.

The three hurdles reached Smithfield. Two and two, the prisoners were unbound, and the three evangelicals were conducted to the stake. No trial having been allowed them by the court, these upright and pious men felt it their duty to supply its place at the foot of the scaffold. The day of their death thus became for them the day of hearing. The tribunal was sitting and the assembly was large. Barnes was the first speaker. He said, "I am come hither to be burned as a heretic. ... God I take to record, I never (to my knowledge) taught any erroneous doctrine... and I neither moved nor gave occasion of any insurrection. ... I believe in the Holy and Blessed Trinity, ... and that this blessed Trinity sent down the second person, Jesus Christ, into the womb of the most blessed and purest Virgin Mary. ... I believe that through His death he overcame sin, death and hell; and that there is none other satisfaction to the Father, but this His death and passion only." At these words Barnes, deeply moved, raised his hands to heaven, and prayed God to forgive him his sins. This profession of faith did not satisfy the sheriff. Then some one asked him what he thought of praying to the saints. "I believe," answered Barnes, "that they are worthy of all the honor that Scripture willeth them to have. But, I say, throughout all Scripture we are not commanded to pray to any saints. ... If saints do pray for us, then I trust to pray for you within the next half-hour." He was silent, and the sheriff said to him, "Well, have you anything more to say?" He answered, "Have ye any articles against me for the which I am condemned?"
The sheriff answered, "No." Barnes then put the question to the people whether any knew wherefore he died. No one answered. Then he resumed, "They that have been the occasion of it, I pray God forgive them, as I would be forgiven myself. And Doctor Stephen, bishop of Winchester that now is, if he have sought or wrought this my death, either by word or deed, I pray God forgive him. ... I pray that God may give [the king] prosperity, and that he may long reign among you, and after him that godly prince Edward may so reign that he may finish those things that his father hath begun." Then collecting himself, Barnes addressed three requests to the sheriff, the prayer of a dying man. The first was that the king might employ the wealth of the abbeys which had been poured into the treasury in relieving his poor subjects who were in great need of it. The second was that marriage might be respected, and that men might not live in uncleanness. The third, that the name of God might not be taken in vain in abominable oaths. These prayers of a dying man, who was sent to the scaffold by Henry himself, ought to have produced some impression on the heart of the king. Jerome and Garret likewise addressed affecting exhortations to the people. After this, these three Christians uttered together their last prayer, shook hands with and embraced one another, and then
meekly gave themselves up to the executioner. They were bound to the same stake, and breathed their last in patience and in faith.

On the same day, at the same hour, and at the same place where the three friends of the Gospel were burnt, the three followers of the pope, Abel, Fetherstone, and Powel were hanged. A foreigner who was present exclaimed: “What strange people live here? Here they hang papists, there they burn anti-papists!” The simple-minded and ignorant asked what kind of religion people should have in England, seeing that both Romanism and Protestantism led to death. A courtier exclaimed: “Verily, henceforth I will be of the king’s religion, that is to say, of none at all!”

Cromwell and these six men were not to be the only objects of the king’s displeasure. Even before they had undergone their sentence, the king had caused his divorce to be pronounced. In marrying Anne of Cleves, his chief object had been to form an alliance with the Protestants against the Emperor. Now these two opponents were by this time reconciled with each other. Henry, therefore, deeply irritated, no longer hesitated to rid himself of the new queen. He was influenced, moreover, by another motive. He was smitten with the charms of another woman. However, as he dreaded the raillery, the censures, and even the calamities which the divorce might bring upon him, he was anxious not to appear as the originator of it, and should the accusation be made, to be able to repel it as a foul imposture without shadow of reality. He resolved, therefore, to adopt such a course that this strange proceeding should seem to have been imposed upon him. This intention he hinted to one of the lords in whom he had full confidence, and the latter made some communications about it, on July 3, to the Privy Council. On the 6th his Majesty’s ministers pointed out to the upper house the propriety of their humbly requesting the king, in conjunction with the lower house, that the convocation of the clergy might examine into his marriage with Anne of Cleves, and see whether it were valid. The lords adopted the proposal; and a commission consisting of the lord chancellor, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, presented it to the commons, who gave their assent to it. Consequently the whole house of lords and a commission of twenty members of the lower house appeared before the king, and stated that the matter about which they had to confer with him was of such an important character that they must first request his permission to lay it before them. Henry, feigning utter ignorance of what they meant, commanded them to speak. They then said, “We humbly pray your Majesty to allow the validity of your marriage to be investigated by the convocation of the clergy; we attach all the more importance to this proceeding because the question bears upon the succession to the throne of your Majesty.” It was well known that the king did not love Anne, and that he was even in love with another. This is a striking instance of the degree of meanness to which Henry VIII had reduced his parliament; for an assembly, even if some mean souls are to be found in it, undertakes not to be despicable, and what is noblest in it usually comes to the surface. But if the shameful compliances of the parliament astonish us, the audacious hypocrisy of Henry VIII surprises us still more. He stood up to answer
as if in the presence of the Deity, and concealing his real motives he said, "There is nothing in the world more dear to me than the glory of God, the good of England, and the declaration of the truth." All the actors in this comedy played their parts to perfection. The king immediately sent to Richmond some of his councilors, amongst them Suffolk and Gardiner, to communicate to the queen the demand of the parliament and to ascertain her opinion with respect to it. Without delay, Anne gave her consent to the proposal. The next day, July 7, the matter was brought before convocation by Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, who was very anxious to see a Roman Catholic queen upon the throne of England. A committee was nominated for the purpose of examining the witnesses, and of this committee the bishop was a member. An autograph declaration of the king was produced, in which he dwelt strongly on the fact that he took such a dislike to Anne as soon as he saw her that he thought instantly of breaking off the match, that he never inwardly consented to the marriage, and that in fact it had never been consummated. Within two days all the witnesses were heard. Henry was impatient, and the Roman party urgently appealed to the assembly to deliver a judgment which would rid England of a Protestant queen. Cranmer, out of fear or feebleness (he had just seen Cromwell lose his head), went with the rest of them. On July 9, convocation, relying upon the two reasons given by the king, and upon the fact that there was something ambiguous in Anne’s engagement with the son of the duke of Lorraine, decided that his Majesty "was at liberty to contract another marriage for the good of the realm." None of these reasons had any validity. Nor did Henry escape the condemnation and the raillery which he had so much feared. "It appears," said Francis I, "that over there they are pleased to do with their women as with their geldings, bring a number of them together and make them trot, and then take the one which goes easiest." The archbishop of Canterbury on July 10 reported to the upper house that convocation had declared the marriage null and void by virtue both of the law of God and of the law of England. The bishop of Winchester read the judgment and explained at length the grounds of it, and the house declared itself satisfied. The archbishop and the bishop made the same report to the commons. On the following day Henry did not intend that any time should be lost—the lord chancellor, the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Southampton, and the bishop of Winchester betook themselves to Richmond again, and informed Anne, on the king’s behalf, of the proceedings of parliament and of convocation. Anne was distressed by the communication. She had supposed that the clergy would acknowledge, as it was their duty to do, the validity of her marriage. However it may be, so sharp was the stroke that she fainted away. The necessary care was bestowed on her, and she recovered, and gradually reconciled herself to the thought of submission to Henry’s will. The delegates told her that the king, while requiring her to renounce the title of queen, conferred on her that of his adopted sister, and gave her precedence in rank of all the ladies of the court, immediately after the queen and the daughters of the king. Anne was modest; she did not think highly of herself, and had often felt that she was not made to be queen of England. She
therefore submitted, and the same day, July 11, wrote to the king, "Though this case must needs be most hard and sorrowful unto me, for the great love which I bear to your most noble person, yet having more regard to God and His truth than to any worldly affection, as it beseemed me. ... I knowledge myself hereby to accept and approve the same [determination of the clergy] wholly and entirely putting myself, for my state and condition, to your Highness's goodness and pleasure, most humbly beseeching your Majesty... to take me for one of your most humble servants." She subscribed herself "Your Majesty's most humble sister and servant, Anne of Cleves."

The king sent word to her that he conferred on her a pension of four thousand pounds a year, and the palace at Richmond. Anne wrote to him again, July 16, to thank him for his great kindness, and at the same time sent him her ring. She preferred—and herein she showed some pride—to remain in England, rather than to go home after such a disgrace had fallen upon her. "I account God pleased," she wrote to her brother, "with what is done, and know myself to have suffered no wrong or injury. ... I find the king's Highness... to be as a most kind, loving and friendly father and brother. ... I am so well content and satisfied, that I much desire my mother, you, and other mine allies so to understand it, accept and take it." Seldom has a woman carried self-renunciation to such a length.

CHAPTER 7
Catherine Howard, the Fifth Queen
1540

Who should take the place of the repudiated queen? This was the question discussed at court and in the town. The Anglican Catholics, delighted at the dismissal of the Protestant queen, were determined to do all they possibly could to place on the throne a woman of their own party. Such a one was already found. The bishop of Winchester, for some time past, had frequently been holding feasts and entertainments for the king. To these he invited a young lady, who though of small stature was of elegant carriage, and had handsome features and a graceful figure and manners. She was the fifth child and second daughter of Lord Edmund Howard, and niece of the duke of Norfolk, the leader of the Catholic party. She very soon attracted the attention of the king, who took increasing pleasure in her society. This occurred before the divorce of Anne. "It is a certain fact," says a contemporary, "that about the same time many citizens of London saw the king very frequently in the daytime, and sometimes at midnight, pass over to her on the river Thames in a little boat. ... The citizens regarded all this not as a sign of divorcing the queen, but of adultery." Whether this supposition was well founded or not we cannot say. The king, when once he had decided on a separation from Anne of Cleves, had thought of her successor. He was quite determined, after his mischance, to be guided neither by his ministers, nor by his ambassadors, nor by political considerations, but solely by his own eyes, his own tastes, and the happiness he might hope for. Catherine pleased him very much, and his union
with Anne was no sooner annulled than he proceeded to his fifth marriage. The nuptials were celebrated on the 8th of August, eleven days after the execution of Cromwell, and on the same day Catherine was presented at court as queen. The king was charmed with Catherine Howard, his pretty young wife; she was so amiable, her intercourse was so pleasant, that he believed he had, after so many more or less unfortunate attempts, found his ideal at last. Her virtuous sentiments, the good behavior which she resolved to maintain filled him with delight; and he was ever expressing his happiness in "having obtained such a jewel of womanhood." He had no foreboding of the terrible blow which was soon to shatter all this happiness.

The new queen was distinguished from the former chiefly by the difference in religion, with a corresponding difference in morality. The niece of the duke of Norfolk, Gardiner’s friend, was of course an adherent of the Catholic faith, and the Catholic party hailed her as at once the symbol and the instrument of reaction. They had had plenty of Protestant queens, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, and Anne of Cleves. Now that they had a Catholic queen, Catholicism—many said popery—would recover its power. Henry was so much enamored of his new spouse that, in honor of her, he once more became a fervent Catholic.

He celebrated all the Saints’ days, frequently received the holy sacrament, and publicly offered thanksgiving to God for this happy union which he hoped to enjoy for a long time. The conversion of Henry, for the change was nothing less, brought with it a change of policy. He now abandoned France and the German Protestants in order to ally himself with the Empire, and we find him ere long busily engaged in a project for the marriage of his daughter Mary to the Emperor Charles V. This project, however, came to nothing. Gardiner, Norfolk, and the other leaders of the Catholic party, rejoicing in the breeze which bore their vessel onward, set all sails to the wind. Just after the divorce of Anne of Cleves, and by way of a first boon to the Romish party, the penalties for impure living imposed on the priests and nuns were mitigated. In contempt of the authority of Holy Scripture as well as of that of parliament itself, Henry got an Act passed by virtue of which every determination concerning faith, worship, and ceremonies, adopted with the sanction of the king by a commission of archbishops, bishops, and other ecclesiastics nominated by him, was to be received, believed, and observed by the whole nation, just as if parliament had approved every one of these articles, even if this decree were contrary to former usages and ordinances. This was a proclamation of infallibility in England, for the benefit of the pope-king, under cover of which he might found a religion to his own taste. Cranmer had established in all cathedral churches professors entrusted with the teaching of Hebrew and Greek, in order that students might become well acquainted with sacred literature, and that the church might never want ministers capable of edifying it. But the enemies of the Reformation, who now enjoyed royal favor, fettered or abolished this institution and other similar ones, to the great damage both of religion and the country. On the other hand, the Catholic ceremonies, abrogated by Cranmer and Cromwell—the consecration of bread and of water, the embers with which the priest marked the foreheads of the faithful, the
palm branches blessed on Palm Sunday, the tapers carried at Candlemas, and other like customs—were re-established, and penalties were imposed on those who should neglect them. A new edition of the *Institution of a Christian Man* explained to the people the king’s doctrine. It treated of the seven sacraments, the mass, transubstantiation, the salutation of the Virgin, and other doctrines of the kind to which conformity was required. At length, as if with a view to ensure the permanence of this system, Bonner was made bishop of London; and this man, who had been the most abject flatterer and servant of Cromwell during his life, turned about after his death and became the persecutor of those whom Cromwell had protected.

At the spectacle of this reaction, so marvelous in their eyes, the Anglican Catholics and even the papists broke out with joy, and awaited with impatience “the crowning of the edifice.” England, in their view, was saved. The church was triumphant. But while there was rejoicing on the one side, there was mourning on the other. The establishment of superstitious practices, the prospect of the penalties contained in the statute of the Six Articles, penalties which had not yet been enforced but were on the point of being so, spread distress and alarm among the evangelicals. Those who did not add to their faith manly energy shut up their convictions in their own breasts, carefully abstained from conversation on religious subjects, and looked with suspicion upon every stranger, fearing that he might be one of Gardiner’s spies. Bonner was active and eager, going forward in pursuit of his object and allowing nothing to check him. Cromwell and Cranmer, to whom he used to make fair professions, believed that he was capable of being of service to the Reformation, and therefore gave him promotion in ecclesiastical offices. But no sooner had Cromwell been put in prison than his signal deceitfulness showed itself. Grafton, who printed the Bible under the patronage of the vicegerent, having met Bonner, to whom Cromwell had introduced him, exclaimed, “How grieved I am to hear that lord Cromwell has been sent to the Tower!” “It would have been much better,” replied Bonner, “if he had been sent there long ago.” Shortly after, Grafton was cited before the council, and was accused of having printed, by Cromwell’s order, certain suspected verses; and Bonner, for the purpose of aggravating his criminality, did not fail to report what the accused had said to him about the man who had been his own personal benefactor. The chancellor, however, a friend of Grafton, succeeded in saving the printer of the Bible. Bonner indemnified himself for this disappointment by persecuting a great many citizens of London. He vented his rage especially on a poor youth of fifteen, ignorant and uncultivated, named Richard Mekins, whom he accused of having spoken against the Eucharist and in favor of Barnes, but the grand jury found him “not guilty.” Hereupon Bonner became furious. “You are perjured,” he said to the jury. “The witnesses do not agree,” they replied. “The one deposed that Mekins had said the sacrament was nothing but a ceremony, and the other that it was nothing but a signification.” “But did he not say,” exclaimed the bishop, “that Barnes died holy?” “But we cannot find these words,” said the jury, “to be against the statute.” Upon which Bonner cursed and was in a great rage. “Retire again,” he said, “consult together, and bring in
the bill.” Mekins was condemned to die. In vain was it shown that he was a poor ignorant creature and that he had done nothing worse than repeat what he had heard, and this without even understanding it. In vain, too, did his father and mother, who were in great distress, attempt to mitigate the harsh treatment to which he was subjected in prison. The poor lad was ready to say or do anything to escape being burnt. They made him speak well of Bonner and of his great charity towards him; they made him declare that he hated all heretics, and then they burnt him. This was only the beginning, and Bonner hoped by such proceedings to prepare the way for greater triumphs.

The persecution became more general. Two hundred and two persons were prosecuted in thirty-nine London parishes. The offenses were such as the following: having read the Holy Scriptures aloud in the churches; having refused to carry palm branches on Palm Sunday; having had one or other of their kinsfolk buried without the masses for the dead; having received Latimer, Barnes, Garret, or other evangelicals; having held religious meetings in their houses of an evening; having said that the holy sacrament was a good thing, but was not, as some asserted, God Himself; having spoken much about the Holy Scriptures; having declared that they liked better to hear a sermon than a mass; and other the like offenses. Among the delinquents were some of the priests. One of these was accused of having caused suspected persons to be invited to his sermons by his beadle, without having the bells rung; another of having preached without the orders of his superior; others, of not making use of holy water, of not going in procession, and so on.

The inquisition which was made at this time was so rigorous that all the prisons of London would not hold the accused. They had to place some of them in the halls of various buildings. The case was embarrassing. The Catholics of the court were not alone in instigating the king to persecution. Francis I sent word to him by Wallop, “that it had well liked him to hear that his Majesty was reforming the Lutheran sect, for that he was ever of opinion that no good could come of them but much evil.” But there were other influences at court besides that of Francis I, Norfolk, and Gardiner. Lord Audley obtained the king’s sanction for the release of the prisoners, who, however, had to give their promise to appear at the Star Chamber on All Souls’ Day. Ultimately they were let alone.

But this does not mean that all the evangelicals were spared. Two ministers were at this time distinguished both for their high connections and for their faith and eloquence. One of these was the Scotsman, Alexander Seaton, chaplain to the duke of Suffolk. Preaching powerfully at St. Antholin’s church, in London, he said, “Of ourselves we can do nothing, says St. Paul; I pray thee, then, where is thy will? Art thou better than Paul, James, Peter, and all the apostles? Hast thou any more grace than they? Tell me now if thy will be anything or nothing? ... Paul said he could do nothing. ... If you ask me when we will leave preaching only Christ, even when they do leave to preach that works do merit, and suffer Christ to be a whole satisfier and only mean to our justification.” Seaton was condemned to bear a faggot at Paul’s Cross. Another minister, Dr. Crome, was a learned man and a favorite of the archbishop. This
did not prevent the king from commanding him to preach that the sacrifice of
the mass is useful both for the living and the dead. Crome preached the Gospel
in its simplicity at St. Paul’s on the appointed day, and contented himself with
reading the king’s order after the sermon. He was immediately forbidden to
preach.
Laymen were treated with greater severity. Bibles, it is known, had been
placed in all the churches, and were fastened by chains to the pillars. A crowd
of people used to gather about one of these pillars. On one occasion a young
man of fine figure, possessed of great zeal, and gifted with a powerful voice,
stood near the pillar holding the Bible in his hands, and reading it aloud so that
all might hear him. His name was John Porter. Bonner sharply rebuked him. “I
trust I have done nothing against the law,” said Porter, and this was true. But
the bishop committed him to Newgate. There this young Christian was put in
irons; his legs, his arms, and his head were attached to the wall by means of an
iron collar. One of his kinsmen, by a gift of money, induced the gaoler to
deliver him from this punishment, and the favor they accorded him was to
place him in the company of thieves and murderers. Porter exhorted them to
repent, and taught them the way of salvation. The unhappy man was then cast
into the deepest dungeon, was cruelly treated, and loaded with irons. Eight
days afterwards he died. Cries and groans had been heard in the night. Some
said that he had been subjected to the torture called “the devil on the neck,” a
horrible instrument by which, in three or four hours, the back and the whole
body were torn in pieces.
Meanwhile, a far more formidable blow was preparing. Cromwell, the lay
protector of the Reformation, had already been sacrificed; its ecclesiastical
protector, Cranmer, must now fall in the same way. This second blow seemed
easier than the first. Since the fall of Cromwell, men of the utmost moderation
thought “there was no hope that reformed religion should any one week longer
stand.” All those of feeble character sided with the opposite party. Cranmer
alone, amongst the bishops and the ecclesiastical commissioners of the king,
still upheld evangelical truth. This obstacle in the way of the extension of
English catholicism must be utterly overthrown.
Plot after plot was formed against him, but Cranmer’s foes retired baffled.
New plans were concocted. Doctor London and other agents of the party which
looked up to Gardiner as its head took in hand to go over the diocese of the
archbishop with a view to collecting all the sayings and all the facts, true or
false, which they might turn to account as weapons against him. In one place a
conversation was reported to them; in another a sermon was denounced;
everwhere neglected ritual was talked about. “Three of the preachers of the
cathedral church,” they were told, namely, Ridley, Drum and Scory, “are
attacking the ceremonies of the church.” Some of the canons, opponents of the
primate, brought various charges against him, and strove to depict his marriage
in the most repulsive colors. Sir John Gostwick, whose accounts as treasurer of
war and of the court were not correct, accused Cranmer before the parliament
of being the pastor of heretics. All these grievances were set forth in a
memorial which was presented to the king. At the same time, the most
influential members of the privy council declared to the king that the realm was infested with heresies; that thereby "horrible commotions and uproars" might spring up, as had been the case in Germany; and that these calamities must be chiefly imputed to the archbishop of Canterbury, who both by his own preaching and that of his chaplains had filled England with pernicious doctrines. "Who is his accuser?" said the king. The lords replied, "Forasmuch as Cranmer is a councilor, no man durst take upon him to accuse him. But if it please your Highness to commit him to the Tower for a time, there would be accusations and proofs enough against him." "Well then," said the king, "I grant you leave to commit him tomorrow to the Tower for his trial." The enemies of the archbishop and of the Reformation went away well content.

Meanwhile, Henry VIII began to reflect on the answer which he had given to his councilors. There is nothing to show that it was not made in earnest, but he foresaw that Cranmer’s death would leave an awkward void. When Cranmer was gone, how should he maintain the conflict with the pope and the papists, with whom he had no mind to be reconciled? The primate’s character and services came back to his memory. Time was passing. At midnight the king, unable to sleep, sent for Sir Antony Denny and said to him, "Go to Lambeth and command the archbishop to come forthwith to the court." Henry then, in a state of excitement, began to walk about in one of the corridors of the palace, awaiting the arrival of Cranmer. At length the primate entered and the king said to him, "Ah, my lord of Canterbury, I can tell you news. ... It is determined by me and the council, that you tomorrow at nine o’clock shall be committed to the Tower, for that you and your chaplains (as information is given us) have taught and preached, and thereby sown within the realm such a number of execrable heresies, that it is feared the whole realm being infected with them no small contentions and commotions will rise thereby amongst my subjects, ... and therefore the council have requested me, for the trial of this matter, to suffer them to commit you to the Tower."

The story of Cromwell was to be repeated, and this was the first step. Nevertheless, Cranmer did not utter a word of opposition or supplication. Kneeling down before the king, according to his custom, he said, "I am content, if it please your Grace, with all my heart to go thither at your Highness’ commandment, and I most humbly thank your Majesty that I may come to my trial, for there be that have many ways slandered me, and now this way I hope to show myself not worthy of such a report." The king, touched by his uprightness, said, "Oh Lord, what manner of man be you! What simplicity is in you! ... Do you not know... how many great enemies you have? Do you consider what an easy thing it is to procure three or four false knaves to witness against you? Think you to have better luck that way than Christ your master had? I see it, you will run headlong to your undoing, if I would suffer you. Your enemies shall not so prevail against you, for I have otherwise devised with myself to keep you out of their hands. Yet, notwithstanding, tomorrow when the council shall sit and send for you, resort unto them; and if in charging you with this matter they do commit you to the Tower, require of them... that you may have your accusers brought before them and that you may answer their
accusations. ... If no entreaty or reasonable request will serve, then deliver unto them this ring”—the king at the same time delivered his ring to the archbishop—"and say unto them, ‘If there be no remedy, my lords, but that I must needs go to the Tower, then I revoke my cause from you and appeal to the king’s own person by this his token to you all.’ So soon as they shall see this my ring, they know it so well, that they shall understand that I have resumed the whole cause into mine own hands.” The archbishop was so much moved by the king’s kindness that he “had much ado to forbear tears.” "Well," said the king, "go your ways, my lord, and do as I have bidden you." The archbishop bent his knee in expression of his gratitude, and taking leave of the king returned to Lambeth before day.

On the morrow, about eight o’clock, the council sent an usher of the palace to summon the archbishop. He set out forthwith and presented himself at the door of the council chamber. But his colleagues, glad to complete the work which they had begun by putting the vicegerent to death, were not content with sending the primate to the scaffold, but were determined to subject Cranmer to various humiliations before the final catastrophe. The archbishop could not be let in, but was compelled to wait there among the pages, lackeys, and other serving-men. Doctor Butts, the king’s physician, happening to pass through the room, and observing how the archbishop was treated, went to the king and said, "My lord of Canterbury, if it please your Grace, is well promoted; for now he is become a lackey or a serving-man, for yonder he standeth this half-hour without the council-chamber door amongst them." "It is not so," said the king, "I trow, nor the council hath not so little discretion as to use the metropolitan of the realm in that sort, specially being one of their own number, but let them alone, and we shall hear more soon."

At length the archbishop was admitted. He did as the king had bidden him, and when he saw that none of his statements or reasons were of any avail with the council, he presented the king’s ring, appealing at the same time to his Majesty. Hereupon, the whole council was struck with astonishment, and the earl of Bedford, who was not one of Gardiner’s party, with a solemn oath exclaimed, "When you first began this matter, my lords, I told you what would come of it. Do you think that the king will suffer this man’s finger to ache? Much more, I warrant you, will he defend his life against brabbling varlets. You do but cumber yourselves to hear tales and fables against him." The members of the council immediately rose and carried the king’s ring to him, thus surrendering the matter, according to the usage of the time, into his hands. When they had all come into the presence of the king, he said to them with a severe countenance, "Ah, my lords, I thought I had had wiser men of my council than now I find you. What discretion was this in you, thus to make the primate of the realm, and one of you in office, to wait at the council-chamber door amongst serving-men? ... You had no such commission of me to handle him. I was content that you should try him as a councilor, and not as a mean subject. But now I well perceive that things be done against him maliciously, and if some of you might have had your minds, you would have tried him to the uttermost. But I do you all to wit, and protest, that if a prince may be
beholding unto his subject" (and here Henry laid his hand solemnly upon his breast), "by the faith I owe to God, I take this man here, my lord of Canterbury, to be of all other a most faithful subject unto us, and one to whom we are much beholding." The Catholic members of the council were disconcerted, confused, and unable to make any answer. One or two of them, however, took courage, made excuses, and assured the king that their object in trying the primate was to clear him of the calumnies of the world, and not to proceed against him maliciously. The king, who was not to be imposed upon by these hypocritical assertions, said, "Well, well, my lords, take him and well use him, as he is worthy to be, and make no more ado." All the lords then went up to Cranmer, and took him by the hand as if they had been his dearest friends. The archbishop, who was of a conciliatory disposition, forgave them. But the king sent to prison for a certain time some of the archbishop’s accusers; and he sent a message to Sir John Gostwick, to the effect that he was a wicked varlet, and that unless he made his apologies to the metropolitan, he would make of him an example which should be a warning to all false accusers. These facts are creditable to Henry VIII. It was doubtless his aim to keep a certain middle course, and like many other despots he had happy intervals.

At the end of August 1541, Henry went to York, for the purpose of holding an interview with his nephew, the king of Scotland, whom he was anxious to persuade to declare himself independent of the pope. Henry made magnificent preparations for his reception, but Cardinal Beaton prevented the young prince from going. This excited the bitterest discontent in Henry’s mind, and became afterwards the cause of a breach. The queen, who accompanied him, endeavored to divert him from his vexation; and the king, more and more pleased with his marriage, after his return to London, made public thanksgiving on All Saints Day (October 24) that God had given him so amiable and excellent a wife, and even requested the bishop of Lincoln to join in his commendations of her. This excessive satisfaction was ere long to be interrupted.

During the king’s journey, one John Lascelles, who had a married sister living in the county of Sussex, paid her a visit. This woman had formerly been in the service of the old duchess of Norfolk, grandmother to the queen, and by whom Catherine had been brought up. In the course of conversation the brother and sister talked about this young lady, whom the sister had known well, and who had now become wife to the king. The brother, ambitious for his sister’s advancement, said to her, "You ought to ask the queen to place you among her attendants." "I shall certainly not do so," she answered, "I cannot think of the queen but with sadness."

"Why?"

"She is so frivolous in character and in life."

"How so?"

Then the woman related that Catherine had had improper intercourse with one of the officers of the ducal house of Norfolk, named Francis Derham, and that she had been very familiar with another whose name was Manox. Lascelles perceived the importance of these statements, and as he could not take upon himself the responsibility of concealing them, he determined to report them to
the archbishop. The communication greatly embarrassed Cranmer. If he should keep the matter secret and it should afterwards become known, he would be ruined. Nor would he less certainly be ruined if he should divulge it, and then no proof be forthcoming. But what chiefly weighed upon his mind was the thought of the agitation which would be excited. To think of another wife of the king executed at the Tower! To think of this prince, his country, and perhaps also the work which was in process of accomplishment in England, becoming the objects of ridicule and perhaps of abhorrence! As he was unwilling to assume alone the responsibility imposed by so grave a communication, he opened his mind on the subject to the lord chancellor and to other members of the privy council, to whom the king had entrusted the dispatch of business during his absence. "They were greatly troubled and inquieted." After having well weighed the reasons for and against, they came to the conclusion that, as this matter mainly concerned the king, Cranmer should inform him of it. This was a hard task to undertake, and the archbishop, who was deeply affected, durst not venture to make viva voce so frightful a communication. He therefore put down in writing the report which had been made to him, and had it laid before the king. The latter was terribly shocked, but as he tenderly loved his wife and had a high opinion of her virtue, he said that it was a calumny. However, he privately assembled in his cabinet the lord privy seal, the lord admiral, Sir Anthony Browne, and Sir Thomas Wriothesley, a friend of the duke of Norfolk, who had taken a leading part in the divorce of Anne of Cleves, and laid the case before them, declaring at the same time that he did not believe in it. These lords privately examined Lascelles and his sister, who persisted in their depositions; next Manox and Derham, who asserted the truth of their statements; the latter, moreover, mentioning three of the duchess of Norfolk’s women who likewise had knowledge of the facts. The members of the council made their report to the king, who, pierced with grief, remained silent for some time. At length he burst into tears, and commanded the duke of Norfolk, the queen’s uncle, the archbishop of Canterbury, the high chamberlain, and the bishop of Winchester, who had promoted the marriage, to go to Catherine and examine her. At first she denied everything. But when Cranmer was sent to her, on the evening of the first inquisition, the words of the primate, his admonitions, the reports which he made to her, which proved that her conduct was perfectly well known, convinced her of the uselessness of her denials, and she then made full confession, and even added some strange details. It does not appear that the queen felt it her duty to confess her offenses to God, but she resolved at least to confess them to men. While making her confession she was in a state of so great agitation that the archbishop was in dread every moment of her losing her reason. He thought, according to her confessions, that she had been seduced by the infamous Derham, with the privity even of his own wife. The household of the duchess dowager of Norfolk appears to have been very disorderly. Cranmer wrote down or caused to be written this confession, and Catherine signed it. He had scarcely left the unhappy woman, when she fell into a state of raving delirium.
The king was thrown into great excitement by the news of Catherine’s confession of the reality of his misfortune. The very intensity of his love served to increase his trouble and his wrath, but, for all this, some feeling of pity remained in his heart. "Return to her," he said to Cranmer, "and first make use of the strongest expressions to give her a sense of the greatness of her offenses; second, state to her what the law provides in such cases, and what she must suffer for her crime; and lastly express to her my feelings of pity and forgiveness." Cranmer returned to Catherine and found her in a fit of agitation so violent that he never remembered—so he wrote to the king—seeing any creature in such a state. The keepers told him that this had continued from his departure from her. "It would have pitied," said the good archbishop, "any man’s heart in the world to have looked upon her." Indeed, she was almost in a frenzy; she was not without strength, but her strength was that of a frantic person. The archbishop had had too much experience in the cure of souls to adopt the order prescribed by the king. He saw that if he spoke first to her of the crime and its punishment, he might throw her into some dangerous ecstasy, from which she could not be rescued. He therefore began with the last part of the royal message, and told the queen that his Majesty’s mercy extended to her, and that he had compassion on her misfortune. Catherine hereupon lifted up her hands, became quiet, and gave utterance to the humblest thanksgivings to the king who showed her so much mercy. She became more self-possessed, continuing, however, to sob and weep. But "after a little pausing, she suddenly fell into a new state of agony, much worse than she was before."
Cranmer, desirous of delivering her from this frightful delirium, said to her, "Some new fantasy has come into your head, madam; pray open it to me." After a time, when her passion subsided and she was capable of speech, she wept freely and said, "Alas, my lord, that I am alive! The fear of death grieved me not so much before, as doth now the remembrance of the king’s goodness. For when I remember how gracious and loving a prince I had, I cannot but sorrow; but this sudden mercy, and more than I could have looked for, showed unto me so unworthy at this time, maketh mine offenses to appear before mine eyes much more heinous than they did before; and the more I consider the greatness of his mercy, the more I do sorrow in my heart that I should so misorder myself against his Majesty." The fact that the compassion of the king touched Catherine more than the fear of a trial and of death, seemed to indicate a state of mind less wayward than one might have expected. But in vain Cranmer said to her everything calculated to pacify her; she remained for a long time "in a great pang," and even fell soon into another fearful state of agitation. At length, in the afternoon she came gradually to herself, and was in a quiet state till night. Cranmer, during this interval of relief, had "good communications with her." He rejoiced at having brought her into some quiet. She told him that there had been a marriage contract between her and Derham, only verbal indeed, she said; but that nevertheless, though never announced and acknowledged, it had been consummated. She added that she had acted under compulsion of that man. At six o’clock, she had another fit of frenzy. "Ah," she said afterwards to Cranmer, "when the clock struck, I remembered the time
when Master Heneage was wont to bring me knowledge of his Grace." In consequence of Cranmer’s report, Henry commanded that the queen should be conducted to Sion House, where two apartments were to be assigned to her and attendants nominated by the king. Charges against Catherine were accumulating. She had taken into her service, as queen, the wretched Derham and, employing him as secretary, had often admitted him into her private apartments; and this the council regarded as evidence of adultery. She had also again attached to herself one of the women implicated in her first irregularities. At length it was proved that another gentleman, one Culpepper, a kinsman of her mother, had been introduced, in the king’s absence on a journey, into the queen’s private apartments by Lady Rochford, at a suspicious hour and under circumstances which usually indicate crime. Culpepper confessed it. Now began the condemnations and the executions, and Henry VIII included in the trial not only those who were guilty but also the near relatives and servants of the queen, who, though well knowing her offenses, had not reported them to the king. On the 7th the council determined that the duchess-dowager of Norfolk, grandmother to the queen, her uncle, Lord William Howard, her aunts Lady Howard and Lady Bridgewater, together with Alice Wilks, Catherine Tynney, Damport, Walgrave, Malin Tilney, Mary Lascelles, Bulmer, Ashby, Anne Haward and Margaret Benet were all guilty of not having revealed the crime of high treason, and that they should be prosecuted. On the 13th the king ordered that all these persons, Mary Lascelles excepted, should be committed to the Tower, and this was done. Lord William Howard was imprisoned on December 9, the Duchess of Norfolk on the 10th, and Lady Bridgewater on the 13th. All of them stoutly protested their ignorance and their innocence. On December 10, 1541, Culpepper was beheaded at Tyburn, and the same day Derham was hanged, drawn, and quartered. Meanwhile, the Duke of Norfolk had taken refuge at Kenninghall, about ninety miles from London. On December 15, he wrote to the king, saying that by reason of the offenses committed by his family he found himself in the utmost perplexity. Twice in his letter he "prostrates himself at the king’s feet," and he expresses "some hope that your Highness will not conceive any displeasure in your most gentle heart against me, that, God knoweth, never did think thought which might be to your discontentation." There did, however, remain something in the "most gentle heart" of Henry VIII. Parliament met, by the king’s command, on January 16, 1542, to give its attention to this business. Thus it was to the highest national assembly that the king entrusted the regulation of his domestic interests. On January 21, the chancellor introduced in the upper house a bill in which the king was requested not to trouble himself about the matter, considering that it might shorten his life, to declare guilty of high treason the queen and all her accomplices, and to condemn the queen and Lady Rochford to death. The bill passed both houses and received the royal assent. On February 12, the queen—she was only about twenty years of age—and Lady Rochford, her accomplice, were taken to Tower Hill and beheaded. The queen,
while she confessed the offenses which had preceded her marriage, protested to the last before God and His holy angels that she had never violated her faith to the king. But her previous offenses gave credibility to those which were subsequent to her marriage. With regard to Lady Rochford, the confidant of the queen, she was universally hated. People called to mind the fact that her calumnies had been the principal cause of the death of the innocent Anne Boleyn and of her own husband, and nobody was sorry for her. The king pardoned the old duchess of Norfolk and some others who had been prosecuted for not disclosing the crime.

These events did not call forth within the realm many remarks of a painful kind for Henry VIII, but the great example of immorality presented by the English court lessened the esteem in which it was held in Europe. There was no lack of similar licentiousness in France and elsewhere, but there a veil was thrown over it, while in England it was public talk. Opinion afterwards became severe with regard to the king; and when his conduct to three of his former wives was remembered, people said of the disgrace cast on him by Catherine Howard, that he well deserved it. As for the Catholic party, which had given Catherine to Henry and had cherished the hope that by her influence it should achieve its final triumph, it was greatly mortified. Some Catholics, referring to these offenses, have since tried to lessen the abhorrence and the shame of them by saying "that a conspiracy was hatched to bring the queen to the scaffold." But the evidence produced against Catherine is so clear that they have been obliged to alter their tone. Catholicism assuredly has had its virtuous princesses in abundance, but it must be acknowledged that she who became its patroness in England in 1541 did not do it much honor.

The elevation of Catherine Howard to the throne had been followed by an elevation of Catholicism in England, and the fall of this unhappy woman was followed by a depression of the party to which she belonged. This is our reason for dwelling on her history. These last events appear to have given offense at Rome. Pope Paul III displayed more irritation than ever against Henry VIII. One of the king’s ambassadors at Venice wrote to him at this time, "The bishop of Rome is earnestly at work to bring about a union of the Emperor and the king of France for the ruin of your Majesty." The zeal and the caution of Cranmer in the affair of Catherine had greatly increased the king’s liking for him. Cranmer, however, was in no haste to take advantage of this to get any bold measures passed in favor of the Reformation. He knew that any such attempt would have had a contrary result. But he lost no opportunity of diffusing in England the principles of the Reformation.

The convocation of the clergy met on the 20th of January. On Friday, February 17, the translation of the Holy Scriptures was on the order of the day. The suppression of the English Bible was desired by the majority of the bishops, most of all by Gardiner, who, since the fall of Catherine Howard, felt more than ever the necessity of resisting reformation. As he was unable to re-establish at once the Vulgate as a whole, he endeavored to retain what he could of it in the translation, so that the people might not understand what they read and might abandon it altogether. He proposed therefore to keep in
the English translation one hundred and two Latin words "for the sake of their native meaning and their dignity." Among these words were *Ecclesia, pænitentia, pontifex, holocaustum, simulacrum, episcopus, confessio, hostia*, and others. In addition to the design which he entertained of preventing the people from understanding what they read, he had still another in regard to such as might understand any part of it. If he was desirous of retaining certain words, this was for the purpose of retaining certain dogmas. "Witness," says Fuller, "the word *Penance*, which according to *vulgar sound*, contrary to the *original sense* thereof, was a *magazine of will-worship*, and brought in much *gain* to the *Priests* who were desirous to *keep that word*, because that *word kept them.*" Cranmer gave the king warning of the matter, and it was agreed that the bishops should have nothing to do with the translation of the Bible. On March 10 the archbishop informed convocation that it was the king’s intention to have the translation examined by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The bishops were greatly annoyed, but Cranmer assured them that the king’s determination was to be carried out. All the prelates but two protested against this course. This decree, however, had no other object than to get rid of the bishops, for the universities were never consulted. This was obviously a blow struck at the convocation of the clergy.

The change which resulted from the disgrace of the Howard’s was apparent even in the case of the enemies of the Reformation. Bonner, bishop of London, a man at once violent and fickle, who after the death of Cromwell had suddenly turned against the Reformation, after the death of Catherine made a show of turning in the contrary direction. He published various admonitions and injunctions for the guidance of his diocese. "It is very expedient," he said to the laity, "that whosoever repaireth hither [to the church] to read this book, or any such like, in any other place, he prepare himself chiefly and principally with all devotion, humility, and quietness to be edified and made the better thereby."

To the clergy he said, "Every parson, vicar and curate shall read over and diligently study every week one chapter of the Bible, ... proceeding from chapter to chapter, from the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew, to the end of the New Testament. ... You are to instruct, teach, and bring up in learning the best ye can all such children of your parishioners as shall come to you for the same, or at the least to teach them to read English, ... so that they may thereby the better learn and know how to believe, how to pray, how to live to God’s pleasure."

---

CHAPTER 8
Cranmer Pursues his Task
1542

The principles of the Reformation were spreading more and more, and especially among the London merchants, doubtless because they held more intercourse than other classes with foreigners. These men of business were much better informed than we in our days would suppose. One of them, Richard Hilles, had large business transactions with Strasburg and the rest of
Germany, and while engaged in these he paid some attention to theological literature. He not merely read, but formed an opinion of the works which he read, and was thus at the same time merchant and critic. He read the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius, as well as his *Preparation* and *Demonstration*, but he was not satisfied with Eusebius. He found in his writings false notions on free will and on the marriage of ministers. On the other hand he was exceedingly pleased with this author’s comments on Daniel’s seventy weeks. Tertullian charmed him by his simplicity, his piety, and likewise by the soundness of his judgment on the Eucharist, but he found much fault with his work on *Prescriptions against Heretics*. Cyprian edified him by the fulness of his piety, but he was shocked by his overmuch severity, and by his opinions on satisfaction, which in his view were derogatory to the righteousness of Christ. Lactantius he loved as the defender of the cause of God, but he sharply criticized his opinions on the virtue of almsgiving, on the necessity of abstinence from the use of flowers and perfumes, on the method of making up for evil works by good ones, on the millennium, and many other subjects. Origen, Augustine, and Jerome were also included in the cycle of his studious labors. Hilles considered it a great loss, even to a merchant, to pursue no studies. He found in them a remedy against the too strong influences of worldly affairs. For him, however, the essential matter was the study of the Word of God. He used frequently to read and expound it in the houses of evangelical Christians in London. Bishop Gardiner, when examining one of Hilles’ neighbors, said to him, “Has not Richard Hilles been every day in your house, teaching you and others like you, and poisoning my flock?” Some ecclesiastics one day called upon him, while making a collection for placing tapers before the crucifix and the sepulchre of Christ in the parish church. He refused to contribute. The priests entreated his kinsmen and friends to urge him not to set himself against a practice which had existed for five centuries. No custom, said he, can prevail against the word of Christ—they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The priests now increased their threatenings, and Hilles left London and went to Strasburg, keeping up at the same time his house of business in London. The reader of Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen, and Augustine, on leaving the banks of the Rhine, went to Frankfort and to Nuremberg to sell his cloth. Moreover he made a good use of the money which he received. “I send herewith to your piety,” he wrote to Bullinger, “ten Italian crowns, which I desire to be laid out according to your pleasure, as occasion may offer, upon the poor exiles (rich, however, in Christ), and those especially, if such there be, who are in distress among you.”

While laymen thus joined knowledge with faith, and business with teaching, Cranmer was slowly pursuing his task. When parliament met, January 22, 1543, the archbishop introduced a *Bill for the advancement of true religion*. This Act at once prohibited and enjoined the reading of the Bible. Was this intentional or accidental? We are disposed to think it accidental. There were two currents of opinion in England, and both of them reappeared in the laws. Only it is to be noted that the better current was the stronger; it was the good cause which
seemed ultimately to gain the ascendancy on this occasion. It was ordered that
the Bibles bearing Tyndale’s name should be suppressed; but the printers still
issued his translation with hardly any alteration, shielding it under the names
of Matthew, Taverner, Cranmer, and even Tunstall and Heath. It was therefore
read everywhere. The Act forbade that anyone should read the Bible to others,
either in any church or elsewhere, without the sanction of the king or of some
bishop. But at the same time the chancellor of England, officers of the army,
the king’s judges, the magistrates of any town or borough, and the Speaker of
the House of Commons, who were accustomed to take a passage of Scripture as
the text of their discourses, were empowered to read it. Further, every person
of noble rank, male or female, being head of a family, was permitted to read
the Bible or to cause it to be read by one of their domestics, in their own
house, their garden or orchard, to their own family. Likewise, every trader or
other person being head of a household was allowed to read it in private; but
apprentices, workpeople and such like, were to abstain. This enactment, thus
interdicting the Bible to the common people, was both impious and absurd;
impious in its prohibition, but also absurd, because reading in the family was
recommended, and this might be done even by the domestics. The knowledge
of the Scriptures might thus reach those to whom they were proscribed.
At the same time, on the demand of Cranmer, the Act of Six Articles was
somewhat modified. Those who had infringed its clauses were no longer to be
punished with death, if they were laymen, and priests were to incur this
penalty only after the third offence. This was certainly no great gain, but the
primate obtained what he could.
He also endeavored to render as harmless as possible the book, The necessary
doctrine and erudition of any Christian Man, which was published in 1543, and
was called The King’s Book, to distinguish it from The Institution of a Christian
Man of 1537, which was called The Bishops’ Book. This book of the king held a
middle course between the doctrine of the pope and that of the Reformation,
leaning, however, towards the latter. The grace and the mercy of God were
established as the principle of our justification. Some reforms were introduced
with respect to the worship of images and of the saints; the article on
purgatory was omitted; large rights were granted to the church of every
country; the vulgar tongue was recognized as necessary to meet the religious
wants of the people. Still, many obscurities and errors were to be found in this
book.
An event was approaching which would draw the king more decisively to the
side of the Reformation. Although he had now made five successive marriages,
and had experienced, undoubtedly by his own fault, only a long series of
disappointments and vexations, he was once more looking for a wife. A law
which had been passed after the discovery of the misconduct of Catherine
Howard terrified the maidens of England, even the most innocent among them;
they would have been afraid of falling victims to the unjust suspicions of Henry
VIII. The new law stated that any unchaste woman marrying a king of England
without informing him of her unchastity would be guilty of high treason. Henry
now determined to marry a widow.
Catherine Parr, a lady of some thirty years of age, already twice widowed, was now at the court. She was a woman of good sense, of virtuous and amiable character, beautiful, and agreeable in manners. But she was wanting in that human prudence, so necessary at the court, and particularly to the wife of Henry VIII, and hereby she was exposed to great danger. The king was now in a declining state, and his bodily infirmities as well as his irritable temper made it a necessity that some gentle and very considerate wife should take care of him. He married the noble dowager on July 12, 1543, and he found in her the affection and the kind attentions of a virtuous lady. The crown was to Catherine but a poor compensation, but she discharged her duty devotedly, and shed some rays of sunshine over the last years of the king. The queen was favorable to the Reformation, as was likewise her brother, who was created earl of Essex, and her uncle, made Lord Parr of Horton. Cranmer and all those who wished for a real reformation were on the side of the new queen; while Gardiner and his party, including the new chancellor, Wriothesley (now created Baron), taking alarm at this influence which was opposed to them, became more zealous than ever in the maintenance of the old doctrine. These men felt that the power which they had possessed under Catherine Howard might slip out of their hands, and they resolved to spread terror among the friends of the Reformation, not excepting the queen herself, by attacking Cranmer. It was always this man at whom they aimed and struck their blows, nor was this the last time they did so.

The prebendaries of Canterbury and other priests of the same diocese, strongly attached to the Catholic doctrine, and disquieted and shocked by the reforming principles of the archbishop, came to an understanding with Gardiner, held a great many meetings among themselves, and collected a large number of reports hostile to the archbishop. They accused him of having removed images and prohibited the partisans of the old doctrines from preaching, and the rumor was soon everywhere current that "the bishop of Winchester had bent his bow to shoot at some of the head deer." The long list of charges brought against the primate was forwarded to the king. Amongst the accusers were found some members of Cranmer’s church, magistrates whom he had laid under obligation to him, and men who almost daily sat at his table. Henry was pained and irritated; he loved Cranmer, but these numerous accusations disturbed him. Taking the document with him, he went out, as if going to take a walk alone on the banks of the Thames. He entered his bark. "To Lambeth," he said to his boatmen. Some of the domestics of the archbishop saw the boat approaching; they recognized the king, and gave information to their master, who immediately came down to pay his respects to his Majesty. Henry invited him to enter the bark; and when they were seated together, the boatmen being at a distance, the king began to lament the growth of heresy, and the debates which would inevitably result from it, and declared that he was determined to find out who was the principal promoter of these false doctrines and to make an example of him. "What think you of it?" he added. "Sir," replied Cranmer, "it is a good resolution, but I entreat you to consider well what heresy is, and not to condemn those as heretics who stand for the
Word of God against human inventions." After further explanations, the king said to him, "You are the man who, as I am informed, is the chief encourager of heresy." The king then handed to him the articles of accusation collected by his opponents. Cranmer took the papers and read them. When he had finished, he begged the king to appoint a commission to investigate these grievances, and frankly explained to him his own view of the case. The king, touched by his simplicity and candor, disclosed to him the conspiracy, and promised to nominate a commission, insisting, however, that the primate should be the chief member and that he should proceed against his accusers. Cranmer refused to do this. The commission was nominated, but as some of its members secretly favored the cause of Cranmer’s opponents, it made little progress during the six long weeks of its sittings.

At this point the king’s favorite physician, and an influential gentleman of the chamber intervened. In consequence, Sir (Dr.) Thomas Legh, a layman of York, who had acquired a reputation for energy and thoroughness during the visitation of the monasteries, was introduced into the commission. He made diligent inquiry, and found that men to whom Cranmer had rendered great services were in the number of the conspirators. Cranmer bore himself with great meekness towards them. He declined to confound and put them to shame as the king had required him to do, and the result was that, instead of condemning Cranmer, every one of them acknowledged that he was the first to practice the virtues which he preached to others, and thus showed himself to be a true bishop and a worthy reformer.

As Gardiner and his colleagues had failed in their attempt to bring down the head deer, they determined to indemnify themselves by attacking lesser game. A society of friends of the Gospel had been formed at Oxford, the members of which were leading lowly and quiet lives, but at the same time were making courageous confession of the truth. Fourteen of them were apprehended by Doctor London, supported by the bishop of Winchester. The persecutors chiefly directed their attack against three of these men. Robert Testwood, famed for his musical attainments and attached as a "singing-man" to the chapel of Windsor College, used to speak with respect of Luther, ventured to read the Holy Scriptures, and exhorted his acquaintances not to bow down before dumb images, but to worship only the true and living God. Henry Filmer, a churchwarden, could not endure the fooleries which the priests retailed in the pulpit, and the latter, greatly stung by his criticism, accused him of being so thoroughly corrupted by heresy that he alone would suffice to poison the whole nation. Antony Peerson, a priest, preached with so much faith and eloquence that the people flocked in crowds to hear him, both at Oxford and in the surrounding country places.

A fourth culprit at length appeared before the council. He was a poor man, simple-minded, and of mean appearance. Some loose sheets of a book lay upon the table in front of the bishop of Winchester. "John Marbeck," said the bishop, "dost thou know wherefore thou art sent for?" "No, my lord," he replied. The bishop, taking up some of the sheets said to him, "Understandest thou the Latin tongue?" "No, my lord," he answered, "but simply." Gardiner then stated to the
council that the book he held in his hand was a Concordance, and that it was translated word for word from the original compiled for the use of preachers. He asserted "that if such a book should go forth in English, it would destroy the Latin tongue." Two days later Gardiner again sent for Marbeck. "Marbeck," said the bishop, "what a devil made thee to meddle with the Scriptures? Thy vocation was another way... why the devil didst thou not hold thee there? ... What helpers hadst thou in setting forth thy book?" "Forsooth, my lord," answered Marbeck, "none." "It is not possible that thou should'st do it without help," exclaimed the bishop. Then addressing one of his chaplains: "Here is a marvelous thing; this fellow hath taken upon him to set out the Concordance in English, which book, when it was set out in Latin, was not done without the help and diligence of a dozen learned men at least, and yet will he bear me in hand that he hath done it alone." Then, addressing Marbeck, he said, "Say what thou wilt, except God himself would come down from heaven and tell me so, I will not believe it." Marbeck was taken back to prison, and was placed in close confinement, with irons on his hands and feet. He was five times examined, and on the fifth occasion a new charge was brought against him—he had written out with his own hand a letter of John Calvin. This was worse than spending his time over the Bible.

Gardiner exerted himself to the utmost to secure the condemnation of this man to death, in company with Testwood, Filmer, and Peerson. His efforts met with success. These three Christians were burnt alive; and they met death with so much humility, patience, and devotion to Jesus, their only refuge, that some of the bystanders declared that they would willingly have died with them and like them. But the persecutors failed in their attempt with respect to Marbeck. Cranmer was able to convince the king that the making of a Concordance to the Bible ought not to be visited with death. It is well known that Henry VIII attached much importance to the Holy Scriptures, which he considered the most powerful weapon against the pope. Marbeck, therefore, was spared. It is, moreover, no wonder that there should still have been martyrs. The queen, indeed, was friendly to their cause, but political circumstances were not favorable. After forty years’ intermittent friendship with France, Henry VIII was about to declare war against that kingdom. The pretexts for this course were many. The first was the alliance of the king of France with the Turks, "who are daily advancing to destroy and ruin our holy faith and religion, to the great regret of all good Christians," said the Privy Council. A second pretext was that the sums of money which France was bound to pay annually to the king had fallen into arrear for nine years; there was also the question of the subsidies granted by France to Scotland during the war between Henry VIII and the Scots in 1542; the reception and protection of English rebels by Francis I; and the detention in French ports of faithful subjects of the king, merchants and others, with their ships and merchandise. In the dispatch which we have just cited, the king also declared that, if within twenty days the grievances set forth were not redressed, he should claim the kingdom of France unjustly held by Francis I. The French ambassador replied in a conciliatory manner. Diplomacy made no reference to other grounds of complaint of a more private
character, which perhaps throw light upon those which occasioned the rupture. Francis I had jested about the way in which Henry VIII dealt with his wives. Henry had sought the hand of French princesses, and they had no mind for this foreign husband; and lastly, Francis did not fulfil the promise which he had made to separate from Rome. There were many other pretenses besides, more or less reasonable, which determined the king to invade France. While withdrawing from alliance with Francis I, Henry could not but at the same time enter into closer relation with Charles V. This reconciliation seemed natural, for the king of England was really, in respect to religion, more in harmony with the Emperor than with the Protestants of Germany, whose alliance he had for some time desired. But Charles required first of all that the legitimacy and the rights of his cousin, the princess Mary, should be acknowledged; and this Henry refused to do, because it would have involved an acknowledgment of his injustice to Catherine of Aragon. A solution which satisfied the Emperor was ultimately devised. It was provided by Act of Parliament that if Prince Edward should die without children, "the crown should go to the lady Mary." But in this Act no mention was made of her legitimacy. The result of the concession of this point to Charles V was to bring on England a five years' bloody persecution, and to give her people Philip II of Spain for their king. In default of any issue of Mary, Elizabeth was to succeed to the throne. This matter being arranged, the Emperor Charles V and Henry concluded a treaty of alliance in February 1543, agreeing to attack France jointly within the next two years.

The war which Henry VIII, "king of England, France, and Ireland," said the parliament, now carried on against Francis I has little to do with the history of the Reformation. The king, having named the queen regent of his kingdom, embarked for Calais on July 14, 1544, on a vessel hung with cloth of gold. He was now feeble and corpulent and he suffered from an open ulcer in his leg, but his vanity and love of display were always conspicuous, even when setting out for a war. He arrived on the frontier of France at the head of a considerable force, but he himself did not take active control. The Emperor, who had got the start of him, was already within two days' march of Paris, and the city was in alarm at the approach of the Germans. "I cannot prevent my people of Paris from being afraid," said Francis, "but I will prevent them from suffering injury." Charles paid little respect to his engagement with Henry VIII, and now treated separately with Francis at Crépy, near Laon, September 19, and left the king of England to get out of the affair as well as he could. Henry captured Boulogne, but this was all that he had of his kingdom of France. On September 30 he returned to London.

The war, however, continued until 1546. England, abandoned by the Emperor, found sympathy in a quarter where it might least have been expected—in Italy. Some of the Italians, who were conscious of the evils brought on their own land by the papacy, were filled with admiration for the prince and the nation which had cast off its yoke. Edmund Harvel, ambassador of Henry VIII in Italy, being at this time at Venice, was continually receiving visits from captains of high reputation, who came to offer their services. Among these was Ercole Visconti
of Milan, a man of high birth, a great captain, and one who, having extensive
collections in Italy, might render great service to the king. The French were
now making an attempt to retake Boulogne, but the Italian soldiers who were
serving in their army were constantly going over to the English, at the rate of
thirty per day. The Italian companies were thus so largely reduced that the
captains requested permission to leave the camp for want of soldiers to
command, and permission was given them. In this matter the pope was
involved in difficulty. He had undertaken to furnish Francis I with a body of
four thousand men; but as the king was afraid that these Roman soldiers would
pass over to the English army, he requested Paul III to substitute for these
auxiliaries a monthly subsidy of 16,000 crowns. "As the Italian nation," added
the English ambassador optimistically in his letter to Henry VIII, "is alienate
from the French king, so the same is more and more inclined to your Majesty."
But if in Italy there were many supporters of Protestantism, in England its
opponents were still more numerous. The fanatical party had attempted in
1543 to expel the reformed party from the town of Windsor by means of
martyrdom. But the account was not settled; it still remained to purify the
castle. It was known that Testwood, Filmer, Peerson, and Marbeck himself had
had patrons in Sir Thomas and Lady Cardine, Sir Philip and Lady Hobby, Dr.
Haynes, dean of Exeter, and other persons at the court. Dr. London, who was
always on the lookout for heretics, and a pleader named Simons, sent to
Gardiner one Robert Ockam, a secretary, with letters, accusations, and secret
documents as to the way in which they intended to proceed. But one of the
queen’s servants reached the court before him and gave notice of the scheme.
Ockam, on his arrival, was arrested, all the papers were examined, and
evidence was discovered in them of an actual conspiracy against many persons
at the court. This aroused great indignation in the king’s mind. It is highly
probable that these gentlemen and their wives owed their safety to the
influence of the queen and of Cranmer. London and Simons, unaware that their
letters and documents had fallen into the hands of their judges, denied the
plot, and this even upon oath. Their own writings were now produced, it was
proved that they were guilty of perjury, and they were condemned to
ignominious punishment. London, that great slayer of heretics, and his
colleague were conducted on horseback, facing backwards, with the name of
perjurer on their foreheads, through the streets of Windsor, Reading, and
Newbury, the king being now at the last-named town. They were afterwards
set in the pillory, and then taken back to prison. London died there of distress
caused by this public disgrace. It was well that the wind should change, and
that persecutors should be punished instead of the persecuted, but the
manners of the time subjected these wretches to shocking sufferings which it
would have been better to spare them.

CHAPTER 9
The Last Martyrs of Henry’s Reign
1545
Henry VIII, sick and fretful, was easily drawn first to one side, then to the other. He was a victim of indecision of violent excitement and of irresolution. His brother-in-law, the duke of Suffolk, who of all the members of the Privy Council was the most determined supporter of the Reformation, had died in August 1545, and that body was thenceforward impelled in an opposite direction, and carried the king along with it.

Shaxton, having resigned his see of Salisbury after the publication of the Six Articles, had been put in prison, and had long rejected all proposals of recantation addressed to him. Having aggravated his offense while in prison by asserting that the natural body of Christ was not in the sacrament, he was condemned to be burnt. The bishops of London and Worcester, sent by the king, visited him in the prison and strove to convince him. This weak unfortunate man readily professed himself persuaded, and thanked the king "for that he had delivered him at the same time from the temporal and from the everlasting fire." On July 13, 1546, he was set at liberty. As he grew old his understanding became still weaker, and in Mary’s reign the unhappy man was one of the most eager to burn those whom he had called his brethren.

While there were men like Shaxton, whose fall was decisive and final, others were to be met with who, although in their own hearts decided for the truth, were alarmed when they found themselves in danger of death, and subscribed the Catholic declarations which were offered to them. But after having thus plunged into the abyss, they lifted up their heads as soon as possible and again confessed the truth. One of this class was Dr. Edward Crome, who, at this period, gave way on two occasions, but recovered himself.

Many other blemishes were visible in the general state of the Anglican church; and the obstinacy of the king, in particular, in maintaining in his kingdom, side by side, two things in opposition to each other, the Catholic doctrines and the reading of the Bible, subjected the sacred volume to strange honors. The king in person prorogued the parliament on December 24, and on this occasion made his last speech to the highest body in the state. He spoke as vicar of God, and gave a lecture to the ministers and the members of the church. It was his taste; he believed that he was born for this position, and there was in his nature as much of the preceptor as of the king. Moreover, there was nothing which offended him so much as the attempt to address a lecture to himself. Anyone who did so risked his own life. But while he was easily hurt, he did not shrink from hurting the feelings of others. He handled the rod more easily than the scepter. The Speaker of the house of commons having delivered an address to the king in which he extolled his virtues, Henry replied as follows: "Whereas you... have both praised and extolled me for the notable qualities you have conceived to be in me, I most heartily thank you all that you put me in remembrance of my duty, which is to endeavor myself to obtain and get such excellent qualities and necessary virtues. ... No prince in the world more favoreth his subjects than I do you, nor any subjects or commons more love and obey their sovereign lord than I perceive you do me. Yet, although I with you, and you with me, be in this perfect love and concord, this friendly amity cannot continue except you, my lords temporal, and you, my lords spiritual,
and you, my loving subjects, study and take pains to amend one thing, which is surely amiss and far out of order, ... which is, that charity and concord is not among you, but discord and dissension beareth rule in every place. St. Paul saith to the Corinthians, in the thirteenth chapter, ‘Charity is gentle, charity is not envious, charity is not proud,’ and so forth. Behold then what love and charity is amongst you when one calleth the other heretic and anabaptist; and he calleth him again papist, hypocrite, and pharissee. Be these things tokens of charity amongst you? Are these the signs of fraternal love between you? No, no, I assure you that this lack of charity amongst yourselves will be the hindrance and assuaging of the fervent love between us, except this wound be salved and clearly made whole. I must needs judge the fault and occasion of this discord to be partly by the negligence of you, the fathers and preachers of the spirituality. ... I see and hear daily that you of the clergy preach one against another, ... and few or none do preach truly and sincerely the Word of God. ... Alas! how can the poor souls live in concord when you preachers sow amongst them, in your sermons, debate and discord? Of you they look for light, and you bring them to darkness. Amend these crimes, I exhort you, and set forth God’s Word, both by true preaching and good example-giving; or else I, whom God hath appointed His vicar and high minister here, will see these divisions extinct. ... Although (as I say) the spiritual men be in some fault... yet you of the temporalty be not clean and unspotted of malice and envy, for you rail on bishops, speak slanderously of priests, and rebuke and taunt preachers. ... Although you be permitted to read Holy Scripture, and to have the Word of God in your mother tongue, you must understand that it is licensed you so to do, only to inform your own conscience, and to instruct your children and family, not to dispute and make Scripture a railing and a taunting stock against priests and preachers, as many light persons do. I am very sorry to know and hear how unreverently that most precious jewel, the Word of God, is disputed, rhymed, sung, and jangled in every alehouse and tavern, contrary to the true meaning and doctrine of the same. ... Be in charity one with another, ... to the which I, as your supreme head and sovereign lord, exhort and require you; and then I doubt not but that love and league, which I spake of in the beginning, shall never be dissolved or broken between us.”

The schoolmaster had not spoken amiss. The parliament did not make the retort, "Physician, heal thyself," though it might have been applicable. One of the measures by which the king manifested his sweet charity proves that, if he were not, like some old schoolmasters, a tyrant of words and syllables, he tyrannized over the peace and the lives of his people.

There were at the court a certain number of ladies of the highest rank who loved the Gospel—the duchess of Suffolk, the countess of Sussex, the countess of Hertford, lady Denny, lady Fitzwilliam, and above all the queen. Associated with these was a pious, lively, and beautiful young lady, of great intelligence and amiable disposition, whose fine qualities had been improved by education. Her name was Anne Askew. She was the second daughter of Sir William Askew, member of a very ancient Lincolnshire family. She had two brothers and two sisters. Her brother Edward was a member of the king’s bodyguard. The queen
frequently received Anne and other Christian women in her private apartments, and there prayer was made and the Word of God expounded by an evangelical minister. The king, indeed, was aware of these secret meetings, but he feigned ignorance. Anne was at this time in great need of the consolations of the Gospel. Her father, Sir William, had a rich neighbor named Thomas Kyme, with whom he was intimate; and being anxious that his eldest daughter, Martha, should marry a rich man, he arranged with Kyme that she should wed his eldest son. The young lady died before the nuptials took place; and Sir William, reluctant to let slip so good a chance, compelled his second daughter Anne to marry the betrothed of her sister, and by him she became the mother of two children. The Holy Scriptures in the English version attracted Anne’s attention, and ere long she became so attached to them that she meditated on them day and night. Led by them to a living faith in Jesus Christ, she renounced Romish superstitions. The priests, who were greatly annoyed, stirred up her young husband against her; being a rough man and a staunch papist, he “violently drove her out of his house.” Anne said, “Since, according to the Scripture, if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases—I claim my divorce.” She went to London to take the necessary proceedings, and either through her brother, or otherwise, made the acquaintance of the pious ladies of the court and of the queen herself. It was a great vexation to the enemies of the Reformation to see persons of the highest rank almost openly professing the evangelical faith. As they did not dare to attack them, they determined to make a beginning with Anne Askew, and thereby to terrify the rest. She had said one day, “I would sooner read five lines in the Bible than hear five masses in the church.” On another occasion she had denied the corporeal presence of the Savior in the sacrament. She was sent to prison. When she was taken to Sadler’s Hall, the judge, Christopher Dare, asked her, “Do you not believe that the sacrament hanging over the altar is the very body of Christ really?” Anne replied, “Wherefore was St. Stephen stoned to death?” Dare, doubtless, remembered that Stephen had said, “I see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of God.” From this it followed that He was not in the sacrament. He preferred to answer, “I cannot tell.” It is possible, however, that his ignorance was not feigned. “No more,” said Anne, “will I solve your vain question.” Anne was afterwards taken before the lord mayor, Sir Martin Bowes, a passionate bigot. He was under-treasurer of the Mint, and in 1550 obtained the king’s pardon for all the false money which he had coined. The magistrate gravely asked her whether a mouse, eating the host, received God or no? “I made no answer, but smiled,” says Anne. The bishop’s chancellor, who was present, sharply said to her, “St. Paul forbade women to speak or to talk of the Word of God.” “How many women,” she said in reply, “have you seen go into the pulpit and preach?” “Never any,” he said. “You ought not to find fault in poor women, except they have offended the law.” She was unlawfully committed to prison, and for eleven days no one was allowed to see her. At this time she was about twenty-five years of age. One of her cousins, named Brittayne, was admitted to see her. He immediately did everything he could to get Anne released on bail. The lord mayor bade him
apply to the chancellor of the bishop of London. The chancellor replied to him, "Apply to the bishop." The bishop said, "I will give order for her to appear before me tomorrow at three o'clock in the afternoon." He then subjected her to a long examination. He asked her, amongst other things, "Do you not think that private masses help the souls departed?" "It is great idolatry," she replied, "to believe more in private masses than in the healthsome death of the dear Son of God." "What kind of answer is this?" said the bishop of London. "It is a mean one," replied Anne, "but good enough for your question." After the examination, at which Anne made clear and brief replies, Bonner wrote down a certain number of articles of faith, and required that Anne should set her hand to them. She wrote, "I believe so much thereof as the Holy Scripture doth agree unto." This was not what Bonner wanted. The bishop pressed the point, and said, "Sign this document." Anne then wrote, "I, Anne Askew, do believe all manner of things contained in the faith of the Catholic Church." The bishop, well knowing what Anne meant by this word, hurried away into an adjoining room in a great rage. Her cousin Brittayne followed him and implored him to treat his kinswoman kindly. "She is a woman," exclaimed the bishop, "and I am nothing deceived in her." "Take her as a woman," said Brittayne, "and do not set her weak woman's wit to your lordship's great wisdom." At length, Anne's two sureties, to wit, Brittayne and Master Spilman of Grays Inn, were on the following day accepted, and she was set at liberty. These events took place in the year 1545.

Anne having continued to profess the Gospel and to have meetings with her friends, she was again arrested three months later, and was brought before the privy council at Greenwich. On the opening of the examination she refused to go into the matter before the council, and said, "If it be the king's pleasure to hear me, I will show him the truth." "It is not meet," they replied, "for the king to be troubled with you." She answered, "Solomon was reckoned the wisest king that ever lived, yet disliked he not to hear two poor common women, much more his Grace a single woman and his faithful subject." "Tell me your opinion on the sacrament," said the Lord Chancellor. "I believe," she said, "that so oft as I, in a Christian congregation, do receive the bread in remembrance of Christ's death, and with thanksgiving... I receive therewith the fruits also of His most glorious passion." "Make a direct answer to the question," said Gardiner. "I will not sing a new song of the Lord," she said, "in a strange land." "You speak in parables," said Gardiner. "It is best for you," she answered, "for if I show the open truth, ye will not accept it." "You are a parrot," said the incensed bishop. She replied, "I am ready to suffer all things at your hands, not only your rebukes, but all that shall follow besides, yea, and all that gladly." The next day Anne once more appeared before the council. They began the examination on the subject of transubstantiation. Seeing lord Parr, uncle to the queen, and lord Lisle, she said to them, "It is a great shame for you to counsel contrary to your knowledge." "We would gladly," they answered, "all things were well." Gardiner wished to speak privately with her, but this she refused. Wriothesley, the lord chancellor, then began to examine her again. "How long," said Anne, "will you halt on both sides?" "Where do you find that saying?" said
he. "In the Scripture," replied Anne. "You shall be burnt," said the bishop of London. She replied, "I have searched all the Scriptures, yet could I never find that either Christ or His apostles put any creature to death."

Anne was sent back to prison. She was very ill, and believed herself to be near death. Never had she had to endure such attacks. She requested leave to see Latimer, friend and comforter of evangelicals, but this consolation was not allowed her. Resting firmly, as she did, on Scriptural grounds, she did not suffer herself to swerve. To her constitutional resolution she added that which was the fruit of communion with God, and she was thus placed by faith above the attacks which she experienced. Having a good foundation, she resolutely defended the freedom of her conscience and her full trust in Christ; and not only did she encounter her enemies without wavering, but she spoke to them with a power sufficient to awe them, and gave home-thrusts which threw them into confusion. Nevertheless she was only a weak woman, and her bodily strength began to fail. In Newgate she said, "In all my life afore I was never in such pain. The Lord strengthen us in the truth. Pray, pray, pray." She composed while in prison some stanzas which have been pronounced extraordinary, not only for simple beauty and sublime sentiment, but also for the noble structure and music of the verse:

Like as the armèd knight
Appointed to the field,
With this world will I fight,
And faith shall be my shield.

Faith is that weapon strong
Which will not fail at need;
My foes therefore among
Therewith will I proceed.

I now rejoice in heart,
And hope bids me do so,
For Christ will take my part,
And ease me of my woe.

Thou saidst, Lord, whoso knock,
To him wilt Thou attend;
Undo therefore the lock,
And Thy strong power send.

More enemies now I have
Than hairs upon my head,
Let them not me deprave
But fight Thou in my stead.
On Thee my care I cast,
For all their cruel spite
I set not by their haste,
For Thou art my delight.

I am not she that list
My anchor to let fall
For every drizzling mist;
My ship’s substantial.

Not oft use I to write
In prose nor yet in rhyme,
Yet will I shew one sight
That I saw in my time.

I saw a royal throne
Where justice should have sit,
But in her stead was one
Of moody cruel wit;

Absorpt was righteousness,
As by the raging flood;
Satan, in his excess,
Suck’d up the guiltless blood.

Then thought I, Jesus Lord!
When Thou shalt judge us all,
Hard is it to record
On these men what will fall.

Yet, Lord, I Thee desire,
For that they do to me,
Let them not taste the hire
Of their iniquity.

By law, Anne had a right to be tried by jury; but on June 28, 1546, she was
condemned by the lord chancellor and the council, without further process, to
be burnt, for having denied the corporeal presence of Christ in the sacrament.
"They would needs know," said Anne, "whether the bread in the box were God,
or no; I said ‘God is a Spirit and will be worshipped in spirit and truth.’" They
asked her whether she wished for a priest; she smiled and said she would
confess her faults unto God, for she was sure that He would hear her with
favor. She added, "I think His grace shall well perceive me to be weighed in an
uneven pair of balances. ... Here I take heaven and earth to record that I shall
die in mine innocence."
It was proved that Anne had derived her faith from the Holy Scriptures. Gardiner and his partisans therefore prevailed upon the government, eight days before the death of this young Christian, to draw up a proclamation purporting "that from henceforth no man, woman, or person of what estate, condition or degree soever he or they be [consequently including the ladies and gentlemen of the court as well as others], shall, after the last day of August next ensuing, receive, have, take or keep in their possession the text of the New Testament, of Tyndale’s or Coverdale’s translation in English, nor any other than is permitted by the Act of Parliament; ... nor after the said day shall receive, have, take or keep in his or their possession any manner of books printed or written in the English tongue which be or shall be set forth in the names of Fryth, Tyndale, Wycliffe, ... Barnes, Coverdale, ... or by any of them..." and it was required that all such books should be delivered to the mayor, bailiff, or chief constable of the town to be openly burned (Proclamation of July 8, 1546). This was a remarkable proceeding on the part of Henry VIII. But events were stronger than the proclamation, and it remained a dead letter.

Anne’s sentence was pronounced before the issue of the proclamation. The trial was over, and there was to be no further inquiry. But her death was not enough to satisfy Rich, Wriothesley and their friends. They had other designs, and were about to perpetrate the most shameful and cruel acts. The object which these men now proposed to themselves was to obtain such evidence as would warrant them in taking proceedings against those ladies of the court who were friends of the Gospel. They went (July 13) to the Tower, where Anne was still confined, and questioned her about her accomplices, naming the duchess-dowager of Suffolk, the countess of Sussex and several others. Anne answered, "If I should pronounce anything against them, I should not be able to prove it." They next asked her whether there were no members of the royal council who gave her their support. She said, none. "The king is informed," they replied, "that if you choose you can name a great many persons who are members of your sect." She answered that "the king was as well deceived in that behalf as dissembled with in other matters." The only effect of these denials was to irritate Wriothesley and his colleague; and, determined at any cost to obtain information against influential persons at the court, they ordered the rack to be applied to the young woman. This torture lasted a long time, but Anne gave no hint, nor even uttered a cry. The lord chancellor, more and more provoked, said to Sir Antony Knyvet, lieutenant of the Tower, "Strain her on the rack again." The latter refused to do this. It was to no purpose that Wriothesley threatened him if he would not obey. Rich, a member of the privy council, had frequently given proof of his baseness. Wriothesley was ambitious, inflated with self-conceit, haughty, and easily angered if his advice was not taken. These two men now forgot themselves, and the spectacle was presented of the lord chancellor of England and a privy councilor of the king turned into executioners. They set their own hands to the horrible instrument, and so severely applied the torture to the innocent young woman, that she was almost broken upon it and quite dislocated. She fainted away and was well-nigh dead. "Then the lieutenant caused me to be loosed; incontinently I swooned, and
then they recovered me again. After that I sat two long hours, reasoning with
my lord chancellor on the bare floor, where he, with many flattering words,
persuaded me to leave my opinion. But my Lord God (I thank His everlasting
goodness) gave me grace to persevere and will do, I hope, to the very end."
Henry VIII himself censured Wriothesley for his cruelty, and excused the
lieutenant of the Tower. "Then was I brought to a house," says Anne, "and laid
in a bed, with as weary and painful bones as ever had patient Job." The
chancellor sent word to her that if she renounced her faith she would be
pardoned and should want for nothing, but that otherwise she should be burnt.
She answered, "I will sooner die than break my faith." At the same time she fell
on her knees in the dungeon and said, "O Lord, I have more enemies now than
there be hairs on my head; yet, Lord, let them never overcome me with vain
words, but fight Thou, Lord, in my stead, for on Thee I cast my care. With all
the spite they can imagine, they fall upon me, who am Thy poor creature. Yet,
sweet Lord, let me not set by them that are against me, for in Thee is my
whole delight. And Lord, I heartily desire of Thee, that Thou wilt of Thy most
merciful goodness forgive them that violence which they do, and have done,
unto me. Open also Thou their blind hearts, that they may hereafter do that
thing in Thy sight, which is only acceptable before Thee, and to set forth Thy
verity aright, without all vain fantasies of sinful men. So be it, O Lord, so be
it."
The 16th of July, the day fixed for the last scene of this tragedy, had arrived;
everything was ready for the burning of Anne at Smithfield. The execution was
to take place not in the morning, the usual time, but at nightfall, to make it
the more terrible. It was thus, in every sense, a deed of darkness. They were
obliged to carry Anne to the place of execution, for in her state at that time
she was unable to walk. When she reached the pile, she was bound to the post
by her waist, with a chain which prevented her from sinking down. The
wretched Shaxton, nominated for the purpose, then completed his apostasy by
delivering a sermon on the sacrament of the altar, a sermon abounding in
errors. He had visited Anne in prison and advised her to recant as he had done.
She had replied that it had been better for him if he had never been born. In
reply to his sermon, Anne, who was in full possession of her faculties,
contented herself with saying, "He misseth, and speaketh without the Book."
Three other evangelical Christians were to die at the same time with her—
Nicholas Belenian, a priest of Shropshire; John Lacels (Lascelles), of the king’s
household, probably the man who had revealed the incontinence of Catherine
Howard, a deed for which the Roman party hated him; and one John Adams, a
Colchester tailor. "Now, with quietness," said Lacels, "I commit the whole world
to their pastor and herdsman Jesus Christ, the only Savior and true Messias. ..."
The letter from which we quote is subscribed, "John Lacels, late servant to the
king, and now I trust to serve the everlasting King, with the testimony of my
blood in Smithfield."
There was an immense gathering of the people. On a platform erected in front
of St. Bartholomew’s church were seated, as presidents at the execution,
Wriothesley, lord chancellor of England, the old duke of Norfolk, the old earl of
Bedford, the lord mayor Sir Martin Bowes, and various other notables. When the fire was about to be lighted, the chancellor sent a messenger to Anne Askew, instructed to offer her the king’s pardon if she would recant. She answered, "I am not come hither to deny my Lord and Master." The same pardon was offered to the other martyrs, but they refused to accept it and turned away their heads. Then stood up the ignorant and fanatical Bowes, and exclaimed with a loud voice, "Fiat justitia" (let justice be done). Anne was soon wrapped in the flames, and this noble victim who freely offered herself a sacrifice to God, gave up her soul in peace. Her companions did likewise.

These four persons were the last victims of the reign of Henry VIII. The enemies of the Reformation were especially annoyed at this time to see women of the first families of England embrace the faith which they hated. On a woman of most superior mind, but young and weak, fell the last blow leveled against the Gospel by the defender of the faith. Anne Askew fell, but the great doctrines which she had so courageously professed were soon to be triumphant in the midst of her fellow countrymen.

CHAPTER 10
Death Casts its Shadow over Catherine Parr
1546

It might be asked how it came to pass that the queen did not put a stop to these cruel executions. The answer is easy—she was herself in danger. The enemies of the Reformation, perceiving her influence over the king, bethought themselves that the execution of Anne Askew and of her companions did not advance their cause; that to make it triumphant the death of the queen was necessary; and that if Catherine were ruined, the Reformation would fall with her. Shortly after the king’s return from France, these men approached him and cautiously insinuated that the queen had made large use of her liberty during his absence; that she diligently read and studied the Holy Scriptures; that she chose to have about her only women who shared her opinions; that she had engaged certain wise and pious persons to assist her in attaining a thorough knowledge of the sacred writings; that she held private conferences with them on spiritual subjects all the year round, and that "in Lent every day in the afternoon, for the space of an hour, one of her said chaplains, in her privy chamber," expounded the Word of God to the queen, to the ladies of her court and of her bedchamber and others who were disposed to hear these expositions; that the minister frequently attacked what he called the abuses of the existing church; that the queen read heretical books proscribed by royal ordinances; further, that she, the queen of England, employed her leisure hours in translating religious works, and in composing books of devotion; and that she had turned some of the psalms into verse, and had made a collection entitled Prayers or Meditations. The king had always ignored these meetings, determined not to see what was nevertheless clear, that the queen was an evangelical Christian like Anne Askew who had lately been burnt.
Catherine was encouraged by this consideration on the part of the king. She professed her faith in the Gospel unreservedly, and boldly took up the cause of the evangelicals. Her one desire was to make known the truth to the king, and to bring him to the feet of Jesus Christ to find forgiveness for the errors of his life. Without regard to consequences she allowed her overflowing zeal to have free and unrestricted course. She longed to transform not the king alone, but England also. She often exhorted the king “that as he had, to the glory of God and his eternal fame, begun a good and a godly work in banishing that monstrous idol of Rome, so he would thoroughly perfect and finish the same, cleansing and purging his church of England clean from the dregs thereof, wherein as yet remained great superstition.”

Was the passionate Henry going to act rigorously towards this queen as he had towards the others? Catherine’s blameless conduct, the affection which she testified for him, her respectful bearing, her unwearied endeavor to please him, the attentions which she lavished on him had so much endeared her to him that he allowed her the privilege of being freespoken; and had it not been for the active opposition of its enemies, she might have propagated the Gospel throughout the kingdom. As these determined enemies of the Reformation were beginning to fear the total ruin of their party, they strove to rekindle the evil inclinations of Henry VIII, and to excite his anger against Catherine. In their view it seemed that the boldness of her opinions must inevitably involve her ruin.

But the matter was more difficult than they thought. The king not only loved his wife, but he also liked discussion, especially on theological subjects, and he had too much confidence in his own cleverness and knowledge to dread the arguments of the queen. The latter therefore continued her petty warfare, and in respectful terms advanced good scriptural proofs in support of her faith. Henry used to smile and take it all in good part, or at least never appeared to be offended. Gardiner, Wriothesley and others who heard these discussions were alarmed at them. They were almost ready to give up all for lost, and trembling for themselves, they renounced their project. Not one of them ventured to breathe a word against the queen either before the king or in his absence. At length, they found an unexpected auxiliary.

The ulcer burst in the king’s leg, and gave him acute pain which constantly increased. Henry had led a sensual life, and had now become so corpulent, that it was exceedingly difficult to move him from one room to another. He insisted that no one should take notice of his failing powers, and those about him hardly dared to speak of the fact in a whisper. His condition made him peevish; he was restless, and thought that his end was not far off. The least thing irritated him; gloomy and passionate, he had frequent fits of rage. To approach and attend to him had become a difficult task, but Catherine, far from avoiding it, was all the more zealous. Since his illness Henry had given up coming into the queen’s apartments, but he invited her to come to see him, and she frequently went of her own accord, after dinner, or after supper, or at any other favorable opportunity. The thought that Henry was gradually drawing near to the grave filled her heart with the deepest emotion, and she availed
herself of every opportunity of bringing him to a decision in favor of evangelical truth. Her endeavors for this end may sometimes have been made with too much urgency. One evening when Wriothesley and Gardiner, the two leaders of the Catholic party, were with the king, Catherine, who ought to have been on her guard, carried away by the ardor of her faith, endeavored to prevail upon Henry to undertake the reformation of the church. The king was hurt. His notion that the queen was lecturing him as a pupil in the presence of the lord chancellor and the bishop of Winchester, increased his vexation. He roughly "brake off that matter and took occasion to enter into other talk." This he had never before done, and Catherine was surprised and perplexed. Henry, however, did not reproach her, but spoke affectionately, which was certainly on his part the mark of real love. The queen having risen to retire, he said to her as usual, "Farewell! sweet heart." Catherine meanwhile was disquieted, and felt that keen distress of mind which seizes upon a refined and susceptible woman when she has acted imprudently.

The chancellor and the bishop remained with the king. Gardiner had observed the king's breaking off the conversation, and he thought, says a contemporary, "that he must strike while the iron was hot," that he must take advantage of Henry's ill humor, and by a skillful effort get rid of Catherine and put an end to her proselytism. It was a beaten track; the king had already in one way or another rid himself of four of his queens, and it would be an easy matter to do as much with a fifth.

Henry furnished them with the wished-for opportunity. Annoyed at having been humiliated in the presence of the two lords, he said to them in an ironical tone, "A good hearing it is when women become such clerks, and a thing much to my comfort, to come in mine old days to be taught by my wife." The bishop adroitly availed himself of this opening, and put forth all his powers and all his malice to increase the anger of the king. He urged that it was lamentable that the queen "should, so much forget herself as to take upon her to stand in any argument with his Majesty"; he praised the king to his face "for his rare virtues, and especially for his learned judgment in matters of religion, above not only princes of that and other ages, but also above doctors professed in theology." He said "that it was an unseemly thing for any of his Majesty's subjects to reason and argue with him so malapertly," and that it was "grievous to him (Gardiner) for his part, and other of his Majesty's counselors and servants to hear the same." He added "that they all by proof knew his wisdom to be such that it was not needful for any to put him in mind of any such matters, inferring, moreover, how dangerous and perilous a matter it is... for a prince to suffer such insolent words at his subjects' hands, who, as they take boldness to contrary their sovereign in words, so want they no will, but only power and strength, to overthwart him in deeds. Besides this, that the religion by the queen so stiffly maintained did not only disallow and dissolve the policy and politic government of princes, but also taught the people that all things ought to be in common." The bishop went on to assert that "whosoever (saving the reverence due to her for his Majesty's sake) should defend the principles maintained by the queen, deserved death." He did not, however, dare, he said,
to speak of the queen, unless he were sure that his Majesty would be his buckler. But with his Majesty's consent his faithful counselors would soon tear off the hypocritical mask of heresy and would disclose treasons so horrible that his Majesty would no longer cherish a serpent in his own bosom.
The lord chancellor spoke in his turn, and the two conspirators did everything they could to stir up the anger of the king against the queen. They filled his head with a variety of tales, both about herself and about some of her lady-attendants; they told him that they had been favorable to Anne Askew, that they had in their possession heretical books, and that they were guilty of treason as well as of heresy. Suspicion and distrust, to which the king's disposition was too naturally inclined, took possession of him, and he required his two councilors to ascertain whether any articles of law could be brought forward against the queen, even at the risk of her life. They quitted the king's presence, promising to make very good use of the commission entrusted to them.
The bishop and the chancellor set to work immediately. They resorted to means of every kind—tricks, intrigues, secret correspondence—for the purpose of making out an appearance of guilt on the part of the queen. By bribing some of her domestics they were enabled to get a catalogue of the books which she had in her cabinet. Taking counsel with some of their accomplices, it occurred to them that if they began by attacking the queen, this step would excite almost universal reprobation. They determined, therefore, to prepare men's minds by making a beginning with the ladies who enjoyed her confidence, and particularly with those of her own kindred—lady Herbert, afterwards countess of Pembroke, the queen's sister, and first lady of her court; lady Lane, her cousin-german; and lady Tyrwhitt, who by her virtues had gained her entire confidence. Their plan was to examine these three ladies on the Six Articles; to institute a rigorous search in their houses with a view to finding some ground of accusation against Queen Catherine; and, in case they should succeed, to arrest the queen herself and carry her off by night, in a barge, to the Tower. The further they proceeded with their work of darkness, the more they encouraged and cheered each other on; they considered themselves quite strong enough to strike at once the great blow, and they resolved to make the first attack on the queen. They therefore drew up against her a bill of indictment, which purported especially that she had contravened the Six Articles, had violated the royal proclamation by reading prohibited books, and, in short, had openly maintained heretical doctrine. Nothing was wanting but to get the king's signature to the bill, for if, without the sanction of this signature, they should cast suspicions on the queen, they would expose themselves to a charge of high treason.
Henry VIII was now at Whitehall, and in consequence of the state of his health he very seldom left his private apartments. But few of his councilors, and these only by special order, were allowed to see him. Gardiner and Wriothesley alone came to the palace more frequently than usual to confer with him on the mission which he had entrusted to them. Taking with them their hateful indictment, they went to the palace, were admitted to the king's presence,
and after a suitable introduction they laid before him the fatal document, requesting him to sign it. Henry read it, and took careful note of its contents; then asked for writing materials, and notwithstanding his feebleness he signed it. This was a great victory for the bishop, the chancellor and the Catholic party, and it was a great defeat for the Reformation party, apparently the signal for its ruin. Nothing was now wanting but a writ of arrest, and the chancellor of England would send the queen to the Tower. Once there, her situation would be hopeless.

So cleverly had the plot been managed that during the whole time the queen had neither known nor suspected anything; she paid her usual visits to the king, and had gradually allowed herself to speak to him on religion as she used to do. The king permitted this without gainsaying her; he did not choose to enter into explanations with her. He was, however, ill at ease. The burden was oppressive, and one evening, just after the queen left him, he opened his mind to one of his physicians—his name appears to have been Thomas Wendy—in whom he placed full confidence, and said, "I do not like the queen’s religion, and I do not intend to be much longer worried by the discourses of this doctress." He likewise revealed to the physician the project formed by some of his councilors, but forbade him, upon pain of death, to say a word about it to any living soul. Apparently forgetting the wives whom he had already sacrificed, Henry was thus coolly preparing, at the very time when he was himself about to go down to the grave, to add another victim to the hecatomb.

The queen, although encompassed with deadly enemies who were contriving her ruin, was in a state of perfect calmness, when suddenly there burst upon her one of those heavy squalls which so unexpectedly dash the most powerful vessels against the rocks. The chancellor, contented with his triumph, but at the same time agitated, snatched up the paper which, now bearing the king’s signature, ensured the ruin of the queen. Vehement passions sometimes distract men and produce absence of mind. In this case it appears that Wriothesley carelessly thrust the paper into his bosom, and dropped it while crossing one of the apartments of the palace. A pious woman of the court, happening to pass that way shortly afterwards, saw the paper and picked it up. Perceiving at the first glance its importance she took it immediately to the queen. Catherine opened it, read the articles with fear and trembling, and as soon as she saw Henry’s signature, was struck as by a thunderbolt, and fell into a frightful agony. Her features were completely changed; she uttered loud cries, and seemed to be in her death-struggle. She too, then, was to lay down her life on the scaffold. All her attentions, all her devotion to the king had availed nothing; she must undergo the common lot of the wives of Henry VIII. She bewailed her fate and struggled against it. At other times she had glimpses of her own faults and uttered reproaches against herself, and then her distress and her lamentations increased. Those of her ladies who were present could hardly bear the sight of so woeful a state, and, trembling themselves, and supposing that the queen was about to be put to death, they were unable to offer her consolation. The remembrance of this harrowing scene was never effaced from their minds.
Someone brought word to the king that the queen was in terrible distress, and that her life seemed to be in danger. A feeling of compassion was awakened in him, and he sent to her immediately the physicians who were with him. They, finding Catherine in this extremity, endeavored to bring her to herself, and gradually she recovered her senses. The physician to whom Henry had revealed Gardiner’s project, discovering from some words uttered by the queen that the conspiracy was the cause of her anxiety, requested leave to speak to her in private. He told her that he was risking his life by thus speaking to her, but that his conscience would not allow him to take part in the shedding of innocent blood. He therefore confirmed the foreboding of danger which was impending over her, but added that if she henceforward endeavored to behave with humble submission to his Majesty, she would regain, he did not doubt, his pardon and his favor.

These words were not enough to deliver Catherine from her disquietude. Her danger was not concealed from the king, and, unable to endure the thought that she might die of grief, he had himself carried into her room. At the sight of the king Catherine rallied sufficiently to explain to him the despair into which she was thrown by the belief that he had totally abandoned her. Henry then spoke to her as an affectionate husband, and comforted her with gentle words, and this poor heart, till then agitated like a stormy sea, gradually became calm again.

The king could now forget the faults of the queen, but the queen herself did not forget them. She understood that she had habitually assumed a higher position than belonged to a wife, and that the king was entitled to an assurance that this state of things should be changed. After supper the next evening, therefore, Catherine rose and, taking with her only her sister, lady Herbert, on whom she leaned, and lady Jane Grey, who carried a candle before her, went to the king’s bedchamber. When the three ladies were introduced, Henry was seated and speaking with several gentlemen who stood round him. He received the queen very courteously, and of his own accord, contrary to his usual practice, began to talk with her about religion, as if there was one point on which he wished for further information from the queen. She replied discreetly and as the circumstances required. She then added meekly and in a serious and respectful tone, “Your Majesty doth right well know, neither I myself am ignorant, what great imperfection and weakness by our first creation is allotted unto us women, to be ordained and appointed as inferior and subject unto man as our head, from which head all our direction ought to proceed. And that as God made man in his own shape and likeness, whereby he being endued with more special gifts of perfection, might rather be stirred to the contemplation of heavenly things and to the earnest endeavor to obey His commandments, even so also made He woman of man, of whom and by whom she is to be governed, commanded and directed. ... Your Majesty being so excellent in gifts and ornaments of wisdom, and I a silly poor woman, so much inferior in all respects of nature unto you, how then cometh it now to pass that your Majesty in such diffuse causes of religion will seem to require my judgment? Which when I have uttered and said what I can, yet must I, will I,
refer my judgment... to your Majesty’s wisdom, as my only anchor, supreme
head and governor here in earth, next under God, to lean unto.”

“Not so,” said the king, ”you are become a doctor, Kate, to instruct us (as we
take it), and not to be instructed or directed by us.”

“If your Majesty take it so,” replied the queen, ”then hath your Majesty very
much mistaken me, who have ever been of the opinion, to think it very
unseemly and preposterous for the woman to take upon her the office of an
instructor or teacher to her lord and husband, but rather to learn of her
husband and be taught by him. And whereas I have, with your Majesty’s leave,
heretofore been bold to hold talk with your Majesty, wherein sometimes in
opinions there hath seemed some difference, I have not done it so much to
maintain opinion, as I did it rather to minister talk, not only to the end your
Majesty might with less grief pass over this painful time of your infirmity, being
attentive to our talk, and hoping that your Majesty should reap some ease
thereby; but also that I, hearing your Majesty’s learned discourse, might
receive to myself some profit thereby; wherein I assure your Majesty, I have
not missed any part of my desire in that behalf, always referring myself in all
such matters unto your Majesty, as by ordinance of nature it is convenient for
me to do."

"And is it even so, sweet heart?" answered the king, "and tended your
arguments to no worse end? Then perfect friends we are now again, as ever at
any time heretofore." Then, as if to seal this promise, Henry, who was sitting in
his chair, embraced the queen and kissed her. He added, "It does me more
good at this time to hear the words of your mouth, than if I had heard present
news that a hundred thousand pounds in money had fallen unto me."

Lavishing on Catherine tokens of his affection and his happiness, he promised
her that such misapprehensions with regard to her should never arise again.
Then, resuming general conversation, he talked on various interesting subjects
with the queen and with the lords who were present, until the night was
advanced, when he gave the signal for their departure. There may possibly
have been somewhat of exaggeration in Catherine’s words. She had not been
altogether so submissive a learner as she said, but she felt the imperative
necessity of entirely dispersing the clouds which the ill will of her enemies had
gathered over the king’s mind, and it is not to be doubted that in saying what
she did she uttered her inmost thought.

Meanwhile, the queen’s enemies, who had no suspicion of the turn things were
taking, gave their orders and made their preparations for the great work of the
morrow, which was to confine Catherine in the Tower. The day was fine, and
the king, wishing to take an airing, went in the afternoon into the park,
accompanied only by two of the gentlemen of his bedchamber. He sent an
invitation to the queen to bear him company, and Catherine immediately
arrived, attended by her three favorite ladies in waiting. Conversation began,
but they did not talk of theology. Never had the king appeared more amiable,
and his good humor inspired the rest with cheerfulness. In his conversation
there was all the liveliness of a frank communicative disposition, and the
mirth, it seems, was even noisy. Suddenly, forty halberds were seen gleaming
through the park trees. The lord chancellor was at the head of the men, and forty bodyguards followed him. He was coming to arrest the queen and her three ladies and to conduct them to the Tower. The king, breaking off the conversation which entertained him so pleasantly, glanced sternly at the chancellor, and stepping a little aside called him to him. The chancellor knelt down and addressed to the king, in a low voice, some words which Catherine could not understand. She heard only that Henry replied to him in insulting terms, "Fool, beast, arrant knave!" At the same time he commanded the chancellor to be gone. Wriothesley and his followers disappeared. Such was the end of the conspiracy formed against the king’s Protestant wife by Wriothesley, Gardiner, and their friends. Henry then rejoined the queen. His features still reflected his excitement and anger, but as he approached her he tried to assume an air of serenity. She had not clearly understood what was the subject of conversation between the king and the chancellor, but the king’s words had startled her. She received him gracefully and sought to excuse Wriothesley, saying, "Albeit I know not what just cause your Majesty has at this time to be offended with him, yet I think that ignorance, not will, was the cause of his error, and so I beseech your Majesty (if the cause be not very heinous), at my humble suit to take it." "Ah, poor soul!" said the king, "thou little knowest how evil he deserveth this grace at thy hands. On my word, sweet heart, he hath been to thee a very knave." Says Foxe, "Thus departed the lord chancellor out of the king’s presence as he came, with all his train, the whole mould of all his device being utterly broken."

CHAPTER 11
The Last Days of Henry VIII
1546 to January 1547

Weighty consequences followed the miscarriage of the conspiracy formed against the queen. It had been aimed at the queen and the Reformation, but it turned against Roman Catholicism and its leaders. The proverb was again fulfilled—whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein. The wind changed; Romanism suffered an eclipse, it was no longer illumined by the sun of royalty. The first to fall into disgrace with Henry VIII was, as we have seen, Wriothesley. The king displayed his coolness in various ways. The chancellor, disquieted and alarmed for his own pecuniary interests, was annoyed to see preparations for establishing a new Court of Augmentations, by which his privileges and emoluments would be lessened. He earnestly entreated the king that it might not be established in his time. "I shall have cause," he wrote on October 16, "to be sorry in my heart during my life, if the favour of my gracious master shall so fail, that partly in respect of his poor servant he do not somewhat of his clemency temper it. Thus I make an end, praying God long to preserve his Majesty." In spite of all his efforts, he lost the royal favor, and the new court which he so much dreaded was erected.

A still heavier blow fell upon Gardiner. After the reconciliation between Henry and Catherine, he was obliged to abstain from making his appearance at the
court. On December 2, he wrote to the king, "I am so bold to molest your Majesty with these very letters, which be only to desire your Highness, of your accustomed goodness and clemency, to be my good and gracious lord, and to continue such opinion of me as I have ever trusted and, by manifold benefits, certainly known your Majesty to have had of me... declare mine inward rejoice of your Highness’ favour, and that I would not willingly offend your Majesty for no worldly thing." This man, at other times so strong, now saw before him nothing but disgrace and became excessively fearful. He might be overtaken by a long series of penalties. Who could tell whether Henry, like Ahasuerus of old, would not inflict upon the accuser the fate which he had designed for the accused? The bishop, restless, wrote to Paget, secretary of state, "I hear no specialty of the king’s Majesty’s miscontentment in this matter of lands, but confusedly that my doings should not be well taken." No answer to either of these two letters is extant. Towards the end of December, the king excluded Gardiner from the number of his executors and from the council of regency under his successor, Edward; and this involved a heavy loss of honor, money, and influence. Henry felt that for the guardianship of his son and of his realm, he must make his choice between Cranmer and Gardiner. Cranmer was selected. It was in vain that Sir Anthony Browne appealed to him, and requested him to reinstate the bishop of Winchester in this office. "If he be left among you," said the king, "he would only sow trouble and division. Do not speak of it." The conspiracy against the queen was not the sole, although probably it was the determining cause of Gardiner’s disgrace.

This, however, was but the beginning of the storm. The first lord of the realm and his family were about to be attacked. If Henry no longer struck to the right, he struck to the left, but he dealt his blows without intermission; in one thing he was ever consistent—cruelty.

In addition to the suffering caused by his disease, the king was oppressed by anxiety at the thought of the ambition and rebellion which might snatch the crown from his son and create disturbances in the kingdom after his death. The court was at this time divided into two parties. One of these was headed by the duke of Norfolk, who, owing to his position as chief of the ancient family of the Howard’s, allied even to the blood royal, was next to the king the most influential man in England. He had been lord treasurer for twenty-five years, and had rendered signal services to the crown. Opposed to this party was that of the Seymour’s, who had not hitherto played any great part, but who now, as uncles to the young prince, found themselves continually advancing in esteem and authority. Norfolk was the chief of the Catholic party, and a great number of evangelical Christians had been burnt while his influence was dominant. His son, Henry, the earl of Surrey, was likewise attached to the doctrines of the Middle Ages, and was even suspected of having associated in Italy with Cardinal Pole. The Seymour’s, on the other hand, had always shown themselves friendly to the Reformation, and while Norfolk supported Gardiner, they supported Cranmer. It appeared inevitable that, after the king’s death, war would break out between these chiefs, and what would happen then? The more Henry’s strength declined, the more numerous became the partisans of the Seymour’s.
The sun was rising for the uncles of the young prince, and was setting for Norfolk. The duke, perceiving this, made advances to the Seymour’s. He would have liked his son to marry the daughter of Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford, and his daughter, widow of the duke of Richmond, the natural son of the king, to marry Sir Thomas Seymour, Hertford’s brother. But neither Surrey nor the duchess were disposed to the match. There was therefore nothing to expect but a vigorous conflict, and the king chose that the victory of the one party and the defeat of the other should be determined in his lifetime and through his intervention. To which of the two parties would the king give the preference? He had always leaned for support upon Norfolk, and the religious views of this old servant were his own. Would he separate from him at this critical moment? After having from the first resisted the Reformation, would he, on the brink of the grave, give it the victory? The past had belonged to Roman Catholicism; should the future belong to the Gospel preached by the party of reform? Should his death belie his whole life? The infamous conspiracy formed against the queen by the Catholic party would not have been enough in itself to induce the king to adopt so strange a resolution. A circumstance of another kind occurred to determine his course.

At the beginning of December 1546, Sir Richard Southwell, who had been one of Cromwell’s men, and was afterwards a member of the privy council under Queen Mary, gave the king a warning that the powerful family of the Howard’s would expose his son to great danger. Before the birth of Edward, Norfolk had been designated as one of the claimants of the crown. His eldest son was a young man of great intelligence, high spirit, and indomitable courage, and excelled in military exercises. To these qualifications he added the polish of a courtier, fine taste, and an ardent love for the fine arts; his contemporaries were charmed by his poems, and he was looked upon as the flower of the English nobility. These brilliant endowments formed a snare for him. “His head,” people said to the king, “is filled with ambitious projects.” He had borne the arms of Edward the Confessor in the first quarter, which the king alone had the right to do; if, it was added, he has refused the hand of the daughter of the earl of Hertford, it is because he aspires to that of the princess Mary, and if he should marry her after the death of the king, prince Edward will lose the crown.

The king ordered his chancellor to investigate the charges against the duke of Norfolk and his son, the earl of Surrey, and Wriothesley ere long presented to him a paper, in the form of questions, in his (Wriothesley’s) own handwriting. The king read it attentively, pen in hand, hardly able to repress his anger, and underlined with a trembling hand those passages which appeared to him the most important. The following sentences are specimens of what he read:

“If a man coming of the collateral line to the heir of the crown, who ought not to bear the arms of England but on the second quarter... do presume... to bear them in the first quarter, ... how this man’s intent is to be judged. ...

“If a man compassing with himself to govern the realm do actually go about to rule the king, and should for that purpose advise his daughter or sister to
become the king’s harlot, thinking thereby to bring it to pass... what this importeth.

"If a man say these words, ‘If the king die, who should have the rule of the prince but my father or I?’ what it importeth."

[The words underlined by the king are here printed in italics.]

On Saturday, December 12, the duke and the earl were separately arrested and taken to the Tower, one by land, the other by the river, neither of them being aware that the other was suffering the same fate. The king had often shown himself very hasty in a matter of this kind, but in this case he was more so than usual. He had not long to live, and he desired that these two great lords should go before him to the grave. The same evening the king sent Sir Richard Southwell, Sir John Gate, and Wymound Carew to Kenninghall, in Norfolk, a principal seat of the family, about ninety miles from London. They traveled as swiftly as they could, and arrived at the mansion by daybreak on Tuesday. They had orders to examine the members of the family, and to affix seals to the effects.

The Howard family, unhappily for itself, was deeply divided. Elizabeth, duchess of Norfolk, daughter of the duke of Buckingham, an irritable and passionate woman, had been separated from her husband since 1533, and apparently not without reason. She said of one of the ladies who were in attendance on her, Elizabeth Holland, "This woman is the cause of all my unhappiness." There was a certain coolness between the earl of Surrey and his sister, the duchess of Richmond, probably because the latter leaned to the side of the Reformation. Surrey had also had a quarrel with his father, and he was hardly yet reconciled to him. A house divided against itself will not stand. The members of the family, therefore, accused one another; the duchess, it may be believed, did not spare her husband, and the duke called his son a fool. When Sir Richard Southwell and his two companions arrived at Kenninghall on Tuesday morning, they caused all the doors to be securely closed so that no one might escape; and after having taken some evidence of the almoner, they requested to see the duchess of Richmond, the only member of the family then at the mansion, and Mistress Elizabeth Holland, who passed for the duke’s favorite. These ladies had only just risen from their beds, and were not ready to make their appearance. However, when they heard that the king’s envoys requested to see them, they betook themselves as quickly as possible to the dining room. Sir John Gate and his friends informed them that the duke and the earl had just been committed to the Tower. The duchess, deeply moved at this startling news, trembled and almost fainted away. She gradually recovered herself, and kneeling down humbled herself as though she were in the king’s presence. She said, “Although nature constrains me sore to love my father, whom I have ever thought to be a true and faithful subject, and also to desire the well-doing of his son my natural brother, whom I note to be a rash man, yet for my part I would nor will hide or conceal anything from his Majesty’s knowledge, specially if it be of weight.” The king’s agent searched the house of the duchess of Richmond, inspected her cabinets and her coffers, but they found nothing tending to compromise her. They found no jewels, for she had parted with her
own to pay her debts. Next, they visited Elizabeth Holland’s room, where they found much gold, many pearls, rings and precious stones, and of these they sent a list to the king. They laid aside the books and manuscripts of the duke, and the next day by their direction the duchess of Richmond and Mistress Holland set out for London, where they were to be examined. Mistress Holland was examined first. She deposed that the duke had said to her “that the king was sickly, and could not long endure, and the realm like to be in an ill case through diversity of opinions.” The duchess of Richmond deposed “that the duke her father would have had her marry Sir Thomas Seymour, brother to the earl of Hertford, which her brother also desired, wishing her withal to endear herself so into the king’s favor, as she might the better rule here as others had done, and that she refused.” The deposition appears to corroborate one of the charges brought against Norfolk by the chancellor. Nevertheless, the supposition that a father, from ambitious motives, could urge his daughter to consent to incestuous intercourse is so revolting, that one can hardly help asking whether there really was anything more in the case than an exercise of the natural influence of a daughter-in-law over her father-in-law. The duchess corroborated the accusation touching the royal arms borne by Surrey, his hatred of the Seymour’s, and the ill which he meditated doing them after the king’s death, and she added that he had urged her not to carry too far the reading of the Holy Scriptures.

Various other depositions having been taken, the duke and his son were declared guilty of high treason (January 7). On the 13th, Surrey was tried before a jury at Guildhall. He defended himself with much spirit, but he was condemned to death after a special message from the king had settled the mind of the hesitant jury. This young nobleman, only about thirty years of age, the idol of his countrymen, was executed on Tower Hill. Public feeling was shocked by this act of cruelty, and everyone extolled the high qualities of the earl. His sister, the duchess of Richmond, took charge of his five children, and admirably fulfilled her duty as their aunt, appointing as their tutor John Foxe, author of the \textit{Acts and Monuments of the Martyrs}.

The king was now dangerously ill, but he showed no signs of tenderness. People said that he had never hated or ruined anyone by halves, and he was determined, after the death of the eldest son, to sacrifice the father. Norfolk was very much surprised to find himself a prisoner in the Tower, to which he had consigned so many prisoners. He wrote to the lords to let him have some books, for he said that unless he could read he fell asleep. He asked also for a confessor, as he was desirous of receiving his Creator, and for permission to hear mass and to walk outside his apartment in the daytime. At the age of seventy-three, after having taken the lead in the most cruel measures of the reign of Henry VIII, from the death of Anne Boleyn to the death of Anne Askew, he now found that the day of terror was approaching for himself. His heart was agitated, and fear chilled him. He knew the king too well to have any hope that the great and numerous services which he had rendered to him would avail to arrest the sword already suspended over his head. Meanwhile the prospect of death alarmed him, and in his distress he wrote from his prison in the Tower
to his royal master, "Most gracious and merciful sovereign lord, I your most humble subject prostrate at your foot, do most humbly beseech you to be my good and gracious lord. ... In all my life I never thought one untrue thought against you or your succession, nor can no more judge or cast in my mind what should be laid to my charge than the child that was born this night. ... I know not that I have offended any man... unless it were such as are angry with me for being quick against such as have been accused for sacramentaries." And fancying that he detected the secret motive of his trial, he added, "Let me recover your gracious favor, with taking of me all the lands and goods I have, or as much thereof as pleaseth your Highness."

The charges brought against Norfolk and Surrey were mere pretexts. No notice having been taken of the letter just cited, the old man, who was anxious by any means to save his life, determined to humble himself still further. On January 12, nine days before the death of Surrey, in the hope of satisfying the king, he made, in the presence of the members of the privy council, the following confession: "I, Thomas, duke of Norfolk do confess and acknowledge myself... to have offended the king’s most excellent Majesty, in the disclosing... of his privy and secret counsel... to the great peril of his Highness. ... That I have concealed high treason, in keeping secret the false and traitorous act... committed by my son... against the king’s Majesty... in the putting and using the arms of Edward the Confessor, ... in his scutcheon or arms. ... Also, that to the peril, slander, and disinherison of the king’s majesty and his noble son, Prince Edward, I have... borne in the first quarter of my arms... the arms of England. ... Although I be not worthy to have... the king’s clemency and mercy to be extended to me, ... yet with a most sorrowful and repentant heart do beseech his Highness to have mercy, pity, and compassion on me."

All was fruitless; Norfolk must die like the best servants and friends of the king—like Fisher, Sir Thomas More, and Cromwell. But the duke, the chief nobleman of the land, could not be tried as was his son. The king assembled the parliament; a bill of attainder was presented to the house of lords, and the three readings were hurried through on January 18, 19, 20. The bill, sent down to the commons, was passed by them, and was sent back on the 24th. Although it was customary to reserve the final step to the close of the session, the king, who was in haste, gave his assent on Thursday the 27th, and the execution of Norfolk was fixed for the morning of the next day. All the preparations for this last act were made during the night, and but a few moments were to intervene before this once powerful man was to be led to the scaffold.

Two victims were now awaiting the remorseless scythe of destiny. Death was approaching at the same time the threshold of the palace and that of the prison. Two men who had filled the world with their renown, who during their lifetime had been closely united, and were the foremost personages of the realm, were about to pass the inexorable gates and to be bound with those bonds which God alone can burst. The only question was which of the two would be the first to receive the final stroke. The general expectation was, no
doubt, that Norfolk would be the first, for the executioner was already sharpening the axe which was to smite him.

While the duke, still full of vigorous life, was awaiting in his dungeon the cruel death which he had striven so much to avert, Henry VIII was prostrate on his sickbed at Whitehall. Although everything showed that his last hour was at hand, his physicians did not venture to inform him of it, as it was against the law for anyone to speak of the death of the king. One might almost have said that he was determined to have himself declared immortal by act of parliament. At length, however, Sir Antony Denny, chief gentleman of the chamber, who hardly ever left him, took courage and, approaching the bedside of the dying monarch, cautiously told him that all hope, humanly speaking, was lost, and entreated him to prepare for death. The king, conscious of his failing strength, accused himself of various offenses, but added that the grace of God could forgive him all his sins. It has been asserted that he did really repent of his errors. "Several English gentlemen," says Thevet, "assured me that he was truly repentant, and among other things, on account of the injury and crime committed against the said queen (Anne Boleyn)." This is not certain, but we know that Denny, glad to hear him speak of his sins, asked him whether he did not wish to see some ecclesiastic. "If I see anyone," said Henry, "it must be Archbishop Cranmer." "Shall I send for him?" said Denny. The king replied, "I will first take a little sleep, and then, as I feel myself, I will advise upon the matter." An hour or two later the king awoke, and finding that he was now weaker, he asked for Cranmer. The archbishop was at Croydon, and when he arrived the dying man was unable to speak, and was almost unconscious. However, when he saw the primate, he stretched out his hand, but could not utter a word. The archbishop exhorted him to put all his trust in Christ and to implore His mercy. "Give some token with your eyes or hand," he said, "that you trust in the Lord." The king wrung Cranmer’s hand as hard as he could, and soon after breathed his last. He died at two o’clock in the morning, Friday, January 28, 1547. By Henry’s death Norfolk’s life was saved. The new government declined to begin the new reign by putting to death the foremost peer of England. Norfolk lived for eight years longer. He spent, indeed, the greater part of it in prison, but for more than a year he was at liberty, and died at last at Kenninghall.

Henry died at the age of fifty-six years. It is no easy task to sketch the character of a prince whose principal feature was inconsistency. Moreover, as Lord Herbert of Cherbury said, his history is his best portrait. The epoch in which he lived was that of a resurrection of the human mind. Literature and the arts, political liberty, and evangelical faith were now coming forth from the tomb and returning to life. The human mind, since the outburst of bright light which then illumined it, has sometimes given itself up, it must be confessed, to strange errors, but it has never again fallen into its old sleep. There were some kings, such as Henry VIII and Francis I, who took an interest in the revival of letters, but the greater number were alarmed at the revival of freedom and of faith, and instead of welcoming tried to stifle them. Some authors, and particularly Foxe, the martyrologist, have asserted that if death
had not prevented him, Henry VIII would have so securely established the Reformation as not to leave a single mass in the kingdom. This is nothing more than a hypothesis, and it appears to us a very doubtful one. The king had made his will some two years before his death, when he was setting out for the war with France. In it, his chief object was to regulate the order of succession and the composition of the council of regency, but at the same time it contains positive signs of scholastic Catholicism. In this document the king says, “We do instantly desire and require the blessed Virgin Mary His mother, with all the holy company of heaven, continually to pray for us and with us while we live in this world, and in time of passing out of the same.”

Moreover, he ordained that the dean and canons of the chapel royal, Windsor, and their successors forever, should have two priests to say masses at the altar. The will was rewritten on December 13, 1546, and the members of the Privy Council signed it as witnesses. But the only change which the king introduced was the omission of Gardiner’s name among the members of the council of regency. The passages respecting the Virgin and masses for his soul were retained.

Henry had brought into the world with him remarkable capacities, and these had been improved by education. He has been praised for his application to the business of the State, for his wonderful cleverness, his rare eloquence, his high courage. His abilities certainly give him a place above the average of kings. He regularly attended the council, corresponded with his ambassadors, and took much pains. In politics he had some clear views; he caused the Bible to be printed, but the moral sentiment is shocked when he is held up as a model. The two most conspicuous features of his character were pride and sensuality, and by these vices he was driven to most blameworthy actions, and even to crimes. Pride led him to make himself head of the church, to claim the right to regulate the faith of his subjects, and to punish cruelly those who had the audacity to hold any other opinions on matters of religion than his own. The Reformation of which he is assumed to be the author was hardly a pseudo-reform; we might rather see in it another species of deformation. Claiming autocracy in matters of faith, he naturally claimed the same in matters of state. All the duties of his subjects were summed up by him in the one word obedience, and those who refused to bow the head to his despotic rule were almost sure to lose it. He was covetous, prodigal, capricious, suspicious; not only was he fickle in his friendships, but on many occasions he did not hesitate to take his victims from amongst his best friends. His treatment of his wives, and especially of Anne Boleyn, condemns him as a man; his bloody persecutions of the evangelicals condemn him as a Christian; the scandalous servility which he endeavored, and not unsuccessfully, to engraft in the nobles, the bishops, the house of commons and the people, condemn him as a king.

The End of Volume 2, Book Three
Oliver Cromwell is a fascinating historical personage. He has to rank as one of the great Christian statesmen of history. His heroic efforts as a life-long champion of civil and religious liberty demand admiration and respect. The ultimate irony was that the only way he could maintain liberty and keep the forces of despotism at bay was by the sword. In a sense it took a dictator to forcibly keep tyranny at bay and impose liberty. It took the rule of the major generals to keep England free. Nobody really wanted freedom, especially nobody wanted religious liberty. They all wanted to impose their views.

The Presbyterians wanted a religious establishment that support a Presbyterian Church and ban and suppress all others. The Anglicans wanted a return to the Stuart dynasty with a monopoly for the Church of England and suppression of the Puritan and Presbyterian party, etc. Cromwell stood for religious liberty. If he could solve the political problems of loyalty to a Pope who claimed political powers and urged his followers to overthrow Protestant princes and establish catholic governments, he would have granted full religious liberty to Roman Catholics. He wanted to disestablish the Church of England and have full religious liberty, but his advisors, even the great Puritan theologian and his court chaplain, John Owen, an independent, warned him that it was not politically possible as the people were too fond of their church.
When the Scotch Presbyterians foolishly accepted the lies of the Stuart dynasty to establish Presbyterianism if the Scotch would restore them to the throne and sought to do so, Cromwell fought them and prevailed. When Catholic Ireland became a base for Stuart invasion to retake England Cromwell fought them and prevailed. Anywhere and everywhere Cromwell fought the forces of civil and religious tyranny and as long as God gave him breath he prevailed. Under his vigorous leadership England became a world power and Cromwell used that power to support religious freedom for persecuted Protestants such as the French Huguenots and the Waldenses. When he died the England returned as a dog to her vomit and restored the Stuart dynasty. A corrupt and licentious court soon suppressed and persecuted the Puritans, ejecting all Puritan ministers from the Church of England in The Great Ejection. It was not long before the "Killing Times" came to Scotland as the faithful Presbyterians were harassed and slain and a corrupt monarchy sought to force episcopacy and unscriptural ceremonies on the land. Yet Cromwell, who had kept these forces at bay and granted full religious liberty to all, was styled as the "conquering usurper." Such are the ironies of history.

Church's biography is an inspiring and fascinating account of the life and labors of this great man. All should read it and learn the lessons of history and profit by the example of him who was probably the godliest ruler ever to reign over England.

The book has been divided into three sections of approximately ten chapters each as follows...

Section 1  The Parliamentarian

Section 2  The Parliamentary General

Section 3  The Lord Protector
CHAPTER I

Ancestry, Birth, and Early Life

Oliver Cromwell, perhaps the most startling, certainly the most unique figure in the whole pageantry of English history, was born at Huntingdon, on the 25th of April, 1599, and was christened in the parish church four days later, as shown by the register which is still preserved.

His family has been traced to Welsh extraction, and after his rise to power the heralds were able to invent for him a genealogical table which a worthy biographer naively describes as being two feet four inches in width and eight feet long. In this fabulous pedigree his descent from the ancient Lords of Powis
and Cardigan is asserted, dating back to the Norman Conquest, but on this subject Oliver says, simply, "I was by birth a gentleman, living neither in any considerable height, nor yet in obscurity." An offshoot of that stock gives us Morgan Williams, the great-great-grandfather of the Protector, with whom the authentic history of the family really begins.

This Morgan Williams was a gentleman of Glamorganshire who enjoyed the income of a small estate, and he seems to have acquired an honorable position at the Court of Henry VII. He was married to Elizabeth, a sister of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, and upon this brilliant alliance established the claim of his family to recognition at Court.

Richard Williams, the son of Morgan Williams, was a great favorite with Henry VIII. In a tournament at Westminster, on May-day, 1540, Richard, who had won his spurs and was now a Knight, performed daring deeds of valor, and, as the King’s champion against the challengers of France, Flanders, Spain, and Scotland, dexterously unhorsed his opponents until the merry Monarch vociferously called him from the lists and laughingly said, "Formerly thou wast my Dick, but hereafter thou shalt be my diamond." With that he took a diamond ring from his finger and bade Sir Richard wear it, commanding that he ever after bear such a one in the fore gamb of the demi-lion in his crest. And this ring appears on the armorial bearings of the Protector a century later. It was this Sir Richard who first assumed the name of Cromwell, acting under the advice of the King and out of compliment to his celebrated but unfortunate relative, Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex; and in the deeds and wills which were thereafter recorded, the name is written Williams, alias Cromwell. Sir Richard was a useful and valiant Knight, and for his part in suppressing an insurrection of His Majesty’s Catholic subjects in Lincolnshire he received a grant of the nunnery of Hinchinbrook, together with other spoils which flowed from Henry’s demolition of the monasteries. In the war with France (1543) he was sent over in command of the King’s infantry forces, and on his return to England the King bestowed upon him various marks of the Royal favor.

Sir Henry (Williams) Cromwell, the eldest son and heir of Sir Richard-of-the-Diamond, enjoyed the esteem of Elizabeth and was knighted by the Virgin Queen in 1563. In the course of his public services he sat in the House of Commons for Huntingdon, was four times Sheriff of Huntingdon and Cambridge shires, and was Commissioner in the inquiry concerning the Draining of the Fens, a matter which thenceforward engaged the attention of the Cromwell family for one hundred years. His domestic establishments were in Huntingdonshire, Ramsey being his summer and Hinchinbrook his winter seat. Some elaborate additions were made to Hinchinbrook House, and Sir Henry expended his ample means with so much munificence that he was called the Golden Knight throughout all that country. Whenever he came to Ramsey from Hinchinbrook, "he threw considerable sums of money to the poor townsmen." The Golden Knight seems to have been a chivalrous gentleman of the old school.
and he was universally beloved for his beneficence. He was twice married. His first wife was Joan, daughter of Sir Ralph Warren, Knight, twice Lord Mayor of London. After her death he espoused a gentlewoman of the name of Weeks, who in turn died of a lingering illness, and the popular superstition at once claimed that she had been bewitched. Our patient biographer, Mr. Noble, relates this incident in connection with her mysterious sufferings and death:

"John Samwell, Alice his wife, and Ann their daughter, then inhabitants of Warboys, were ridiculously supposed to be the authors of this lady’s death, and were committed to prison. The mother (who seems by age to have been weak and decrepit), was so seized and tortured in prison, and kept constantly without sleep, that her faculties (much impaired before) became now entirely lost, and at length she confessed any the most strange fooleries, that the malice and folly of her enemies could devise, in consequence of which they were all, in defiance of common-sense, tried before Mr. Justice Fenner, April 4, 1593, and convicted of the fact, of not only being the cause of the death of Lady Cromwell, but also bewitching five of Mr. Throgmorton’s children, and seven of his servants, the gaoler’s man, etc. No mercy, we may readily imagine, would be shown to these unbefriended victims, when even Majesty degraded itself by writing the most idle nonsense (some years after this) to prove, not only that there were witches, but recommending certain means to be used as infallible ways to discover them; they were therefore all three publicly murdered, suffering amidst the acclamations of a barbarous and rude populace, who rejoiced that they themselves were relieved from (as they supposed) dangerous neighbours. It was found upon their conviction, that their goods, which amounted in value to £40, were forfeited to Sir Henry as lord of the manor of Warboys; but he, unwilling to possess himself of the supposed felon goods, gave them to the corporation conditionally, that they procured from Queen’s College in Cambridge a doctor or bachelor of divinity to preach every day of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, a sermon against the sin of witchcraft in one of the churches in Huntingdon."

This sermon was preached annually as late as Mr. Noble’s day, 1787. The Golden Knight had eleven children born of his first marriage, his second yielding no progeny. These were six sons and five daughters, of whom Sir Oliver Cromwell was the first son and heir, and Robert, the father of the Lord Protector, the second son.

Upon the death of the Golden Knight (January 6, 1603), Sir Oliver, the Protector’s uncle, established his residence at Hinchinbrook and lived a life of prodigality which was perhaps not surpassed in England. He was knighted at the Court of Elizabeth in 1598. When James VI of Scotland, after waiting a score of
years with ill-disguised impatience for the death of Elizabeth, came over upon her demise to become James I of England (1603), he stopped at Hinchinbrook with a large retinue, and was sumptuously entertained from Wednesday until Friday as Sir Oliver Cromwell’s guest. The memory of this hospitality was ever afterwards gratefully cherished by the King. The abundance and variety of the meats and wines were rare even to Majesty; it was said that no subject had ever furnished such a feast to a King, and Sir Oliver’s gifts to the monarch at parting included a cup of gold, superb horses, fine hounds and hawks, besides “fifty pounds amongst his Majesty’s officers.” “Morry, mon,” said James in his broad Scotch tongue, “thou hast treated me better than anyone since I left Edinburgh.” The high esteem which was entertained by the Court for Sir Oliver and his family was shown by the subsequent visits of King James to Hinchinbrook in 1605, 1616, and 1617; and Sir Oliver, beholding the darkest hours of his country’s history, never wavered in his adherence to the Royal fortunes. He died on the 28th of August, 1655, in the ninety-third year of his age.

Robert Cromwell, brother to Sir Oliver, and father of the Lord Protector, was a poor man and possessed an estate in the town of Huntingdon, the total income of which did not exceed £300 a year. He married Elizabeth, daughter of William Steward, of Ely, and widow of William Lynne, a gentleman of Bassingbourne. It is said that she was related to the Royal House of Stuart, and the usual genealogies exist to support the doubtful claim. Her family had been enriched from the revenues of the Church upon the spoliation of the monasteries, and her great-uncle, Robert Steward, D.D., was for twenty years the last Catholic Prior, and then, for twenty years more, the first Protestant Dean, of Ely. She was a woman of most exalted virtue and was gifted with a wise sense of domestic economy. In the management of their living, and especially of the brewery (which it has been impossible for the fond biographers of Oliver to explain or laugh away), she exercised a guiding care. By her frugality she was enabled to bestow the advantages of a modest education upon the seven children who lived to maturity out of a family of ten, and afterwards to provide each with a fair settlement in life. Oliver, the only son who lived, possessed her tenderest affection, which he most ardently reciprocated. In his young manhood he deferred to her advice, and later, when he had achieved honor and power, he established her in the Royal Palace of Whitehall, and when she died he buried her in Westminster Abbey.

Oliver Cromwell, afterwards the Lord Protector, was the fifth child of this marriage, and the only son who grew to manhood. When he was four years old (1603), his good grandfather, the Golden Knight, died, and Oliver had thus an early taste of solemn and woeful surroundings. All attempts to relate the story of his early life have failed for lack of authentic information. The few incidents of his boyhood days which have come down to us are nothing more than village traditions. Among them is the story that, one day when he was sent to Hinchinbrook to visit his grandfather, an ape seized him in the cradle and carried him to the roof of the house. Again, there is the incredible tale of his wrestling when four years old with Prince Charles, one
year younger, an encounter in which his victory was said to prophesy the outcome of their later combat. A third narrative tells us that one day, while reposing after a fatiguing sport, a gigantic figure having the appearance of a woman drew the curtains of his bed, and after gazing at him for a silent moment, told him that he would become the greatest man in England. The specter did not mention the word king, and it was gravely asserted that this significant omission caused him to reject the Royal title when his Parliament pressed him to accept it. Another tradition, based on the doubtful authority of the Royalist, Heath, relates that Oliver, while at school in Huntingdon, enacted the part of Tactus in an absurd play entitled *The Five Senses*. Tactus, after stumbling over a robe and crown, soliloquises in this ridiculous fashion:

"Tact. Tactus, thy sneezing somewhat did portend.  
Was ever man so fortunate as I?  
To break his shins at such a stumbling-block!  
Roses and bays pack hence; this crown and robe  
My brows and body circles and invests!  
How gallantly it fits me! Sure the slave  
Measured my head that wrought this coronet.  
They lie that say complexions cannot change;  
My blood’s ennobled, and I am transformed  
Unto the sacred temper of a king.  
Methinks I hear my noble Parasites  
Styling me Caesar or great Alexander,  
Licking my feet, and wondering where I got  
This precious ointment. How my pace is mended!  
How princely do I speak! How sharp I threaten!  
Peasants, I’ll curb your headstrong impudence,  
And make you tremble when the lion roars.  
Ye earth-bred worms! Oh, for a looking-glass!  
Poets will write whole volumes of this change!  
Where’s my attendants? Come hither, sirrahs, quickly,  
Or, by the wings of Hermes..."

Again, Oliver was saved from drowning by Mr. Johnston, a clergyman, who when asked in later years by Cromwell if he remembered it, replied, "Yes, I do, but I wish I had put you in rather than see you in arms against your King!"

But we do know that when he was very young his education was first committed to the Rev. Mr. Long, of Huntingdon, and then to Dr. Beard, master of the free grammar school in that place, a man of erudition and sense. That he made progress in his studies and possessed a reasonably studious habit, is proved by the strong mental development which his letters exhibit. He had a good understanding of Greek and Latin literature, and when he came into power he encouraged men of letters with liberality and discretion. He collected one of the best libraries in England, and an official dispatch to The Hague in the days of the Protectorate describes an interview of two hours
between the Dutch Ambassador, Beveringe, and the Protector, in which Oliver gave his answers in Latin. This record of his scholarship is sufficient to refute the statements of the Royalist writers that his entire youth was passed in debauchery. His warm admirer, Mark Noble, quoting from the Royalist writers, Heath, Dugdale, and Warwick, has said that Oliver was a fast youth, that there was much sowing of wild oats, that gambling was his favorite pastime, and that there was a vein of coarseness in him which led to acts of extreme vulgarity. But these stories are not supported by any evidence that may be accepted as entirely credible, and they are doubtless founded upon partisan exaggeration of a country lad’s indiscreet pranks. Sir Philip Warwick, a careful but biased writer, says:

"The first years of his [Cromwell’s] manhood were spent in a dissolute course of life, in good-fellowship and gaming, which afterwards he seemed very sensible of and sorrowful for; and as if it had been a good spirit that had guided him therein, he used a good method upon his conversion, for he declared he was ready to make restitution unto any man who would accuse him, or whom he could accuse himself to have wronged (to his honour I speak this, for I think the public acknowledgments men make of the public evils they have done to be the most glorious trophies they can have assigned to them); when he was thus civilised, he joined himself to men of his own temper, who pretended unto transports and revelations."

The wild career which his enemies have ascribed to his youth could not have developed to any serious extent when Oliver, on the 23rd of April, 1616, being then only seventeen years old, entered Cambridge University as a fellow of Sidney-Sussex College. In the next year (1617) Oliver’s father died, and he, the only son among seven living children, became at eighteen a young heir, weighed with grave responsibilities, and compelled thus early to assume the direction of affairs. This bereavement forced his retirement from college, and he speedily returned to Huntingdon. There is a tradition that he shortly afterwards came to London and engaged in the study of law. Carrington says, "He came to Lincoln’s Inn, where he associated himself with those of the best rank and quality, and the most ingenious persons; for though he were of a nature not adverse to study and contemplation, yet he seemed rather addicted to conversation, and the reading of men and their several tempers, than to a continual poring upon authors."

On one of his visits to Huntingdon an incident occurred which had well-nigh left a permanent stain upon his early life. This was an attempt of Cromwell’s to seize the management of the estate of his uncle, Sir Thomas Steward, through an inquest of lunacy which he procured upon his uncle’s mind. The inquiry failed of its expected result, much, we may presume, to Oliver’s discomfiture. The story was first printed in Sir William Dugdale’s Short View of the Late
Troubles, and pictures Cromwell in financial straits making application to his uncle for assistance. "Finding," says Dugdale, "that by a smooth way of application to him he could not prevail, he endeavoured by colour of law to lay hold of his estate, representing him as a person not able to govern it." Sir Thomas was naturally incensed at this conduct, but Oliver's mother, and his uncle, old Sir Oliver, undertook to restore peace between them with so much success that Sir Thomas, dying soon after, left the coveted property by will to his over-impatient nephew. The only excuse that can be presented in Oliver's behalf is that he was sincerely convinced of the mental incapacity of the old Knight.

His studies of the law at Lincoln's Inn were probably of a cursory nature. That he came to London at frequent intervals, if he did not indeed reside there, is proved by a very interesting record. In Saint Giles' Church, Cripplegate, London, is a carefully preserved record containing the following entry of his marriage:

"Oliver Cromwell to Elizabeth Bourchier, August 22, 1620."

He was married early, being at this time only twenty-one years and four months old. His bride, one year his senior, was the daughter of Sir James Bourchier, a Knight who had acquired affluent means as a London furrier, and had established a country seat at Felsted, in Essex. She was a woman of noble spirit, and of gentle and amiable manners. At their marriage Cromwell had conveyed to her, "for the term of her life, for her jointure, all that parsonage house of Hartford, with all the glebe lands and tithes," in the County of Huntingdon. But some years later, when his necessities seemed to require it, this docile and excellent woman surrendered her jointure, which went to the extinguishment of his debts, together with the ample fortune which she had brought him. There is a letter from this lady to her husband, written after they had been married thirty years, which exhibits so much tender affection between this exalted pair, that our history would be incomplete if it were left out. "My Lord Chief justice" is Oliver St. John; "President" is John Bradshaw, the President of the Regicides Court; "Speaker" is William Lenthall, of the House of Commons.

"27th December, 1650.

"My Dearest, I wonder you should blame me for writing no oftener, when I have sent three for one: I cannot but think they are miscarried. Truly if I know my own heart, I should as soon neglect myself as to omit the least thought towards you, who in doing it, I must do it to myself. But when I do write, my Dear, I seldom have any satisfactory answer; which makes me think my writing is slighted; as well it may: but I cannot but think your love covers my weakness and infirmities.

"I should rejoice to hear your desire in seeing me; but I desire to submit to the Providence of God; hoping the Lord, who hath
separated us, and hath often brought us together again, will in His good time bring us again, to the praise of His name. Truly my life is but half a life in your absence, did not the Lord make it up in Himself, which I must acknowledge to the praise of His grace.

"I would you would think to write sometimes to your dear friend my Lord Chief justice, of whom I have often put you in mind. And truly, my Dear, if you would think of what I put you in mind of some, it might be to as much purpose as others; writing sometimes a letter to the President, and sometimes to the Speaker. Indeed, my Dear, you cannot think the wrong you do yourself in the want of a letter, though it were but seldom. I pray think on; and so rest,

"Yours in all faithfulness,
"Elizabeth Cromwell."

Elizabeth was a woman of warm heart, faithful in her affections, and without genius. In the elevated station in which she afterwards flourished, she preserved a good sense and a homely wisdom which protected her from ridicule. While her husband trusted her judgment somewhat less than that of his mother, he leaned much upon her steadfast sympathy and always cherished a fondness for her society. After their marriage he took his wife home to live with his mother at Huntingdon, and settled down to a life that was quiet and industrious, engaging himself about the farm, studying the drainage of the fens, taking the part of a good citizen in such affairs as might concern the town, and rejoicing in the birth of his children. His first son was born in the year following his marriage, and in all there came five sons and four daughters, of whom three sons and all the daughters lived to maturity.

Oliver Cromwell’s Children.
(Married to Elizabeth Bourchier, 22nd August, 1620.)

1. Robert, baptized at St. John’s Church, Huntingdon, 13th October, 1621; died while at Felsted Free Grammar School, in Essex, 31st May, 1639.

2. Oliver, baptized at St. John’s, 6th February, 1623; went to Felsted school; a captain in Troop Eight of the Earl of Bedford’s Horse, 1642; at Peterborough Cathedral when the Puritan soldiers broke its stained glass, 1643; and died of smallpox at Newport Pagnell shortly before the battle of Marston Moor.

3. Bridget, baptized at St. John’s, Huntingdon, 4th August, 1624; married to Henry Ireton, 15th June, 1646; widowed, 26th
November, 1651; married to Charles Fleetwood in 1652; died at Stoke Newington, near London, September, 1681.

4. Richard, born at Huntingdon, 4th October, and baptized at St. John’s, 19th October, 1626; attended Felsted school. Noble says that he was entered in Lincoln’s Inn, 27th May, 1647—his name cannot now be found there; married, in 1649, Richard Mayer’s daughter, of Hursley, Hants; first in Parliament, 1654; succeeded his father as Protector, 1658; died at Cheshunt, 12th July, 1712, aged 86.

5. Henry, born at Huntingdon, 20th January, 1628; baptized at All Saint’s Church, 29th same month; Felsted school; in the army at sixteen; Captain in 1647; Colonel in 1649, and in Ireland with his father; Lord Deputy of Ireland in 1657; in 1660, his father being dead and his weak brother deprived of power, he retired to Spinney Abbey, in Cambridgeshire; died 23rd March, 1674; buried in Wicken church; a man of amiability and gentleness, and having much of the force of his father’s character.

6. Elizabeth, baptized at St. John’s, Huntingdon, 2nd July, 1629; married to John Claypoole, 1646 (Noble, in Vol. II, p. 375, says Claypoole married Mary, the second daughter—an obvious slip of the pen); died at Hampton Court, 6th August, 1658, four weeks before her father.

7. James, named for his mother’s father; baptized at St. John’s, Huntingdon, 8th January, 1632; buried next day.

8. Mary, baptized at St. John’s, Huntingdon, 9th February, 1637; married Thomas, Viscount Fauconberg, 18th November, 1657; died 14th March, 1712.

9. Frances, baptized at St. Mary’s, Ely, 6th December, 1638. It was said that Charles II seriously desired to marry her, hoping thereby to obtain Cromwell’s consent to the restoration, but that Oliver rejected the alliance, fearing that Charles would never forgive him his father’s death. She married Robert Rich, grandson to Earl of Warwick, 11th November, 1657. He died three months later, 16th February, 1658; and she married Sir John Russell, 7th May, 1663. Died 27th January, 1720.

The Protector’s widow died at Norborough, her son-in-law Claypoole’s place, in Northamptonshire, 8th October, 1672.

It can be well understood how this pastoral life, unfolding its beautiful domestic incidents, and strengthening from day to day the ties of family love,
would gradually develop the divinity that slept in the soul of Oliver Cromwell. The Puritan spirit of the age was beginning to exercise its influence upon him. Dr. Simcott, Cromwell’s physician in Huntingdon, told Sir Philip Warwick "that for many years his patient was a most splenetic man, and had fancies about the cross in that town; and that he had been called up to him at midnight, and such unseasonable hours, very many times, upon a strong fancy, which made him believe that he was then dying." A valuable piece of professional information was that from Dr. Simcott, and it reveals the great struggles which night and day racked that mighty heart while the problems of eternity were pressing themselves upon him. But the light came at last to his groping soul. He formed his first clear understanding of Christianity, not indeed the broad and generous Christian spirit of today, but the dark and dogmatic system of that age which he, and those who believed as he did, received from Calvin and the Puritan reformers. He was converted to a firm belief in Christianity, and went heart and soul with the Puritans.

Waller, his kinsman, or rather Hampden’s kinsman, for the poet was not, strictly speaking, akin to Cromwell, wrote thus of him:

Oft have we wondered, how you hid in peace
A mind proportioned to such things as these;
How such a ruling spirit you could restrain
And practise first over yourself to reign.
Your private life did a just pattern give
How fathers, husbands, pious sons should live;
Born to command, your princely virtues slept
Like humble David’s while the flock he kept."

And he was prospering in worldly things. In John Milton’s panegyric there is this lofty passage: "Being now arrived to a ripe and mature age, all which time he spent as a private person, noted for nothing so much as the culture of pure religion and an integrity of life, he was grown rich at home; and enlarging his hopes with reliance in God for any the most exalted times, he nursed his great soul in silence."

We would like to leave him there, in the quiet town on the banks of the winding river Ouse, before his mind had conceived the thought of dominion. His lot would have been happier though without glory, had he been permitted to pass his life away with his family, and his livestock, and his fens, and left the King and the Commons to fight it out. But in 1628 Charles I called his third Parliament, and Oliver Cromwell was elected a member for the town of Huntingdon.

CHAPTER II
Charles I, Spanish Adventures, and First Parliaments
When Charles Stuart, by the death of his brother Henry, became Prince of Wales and heir to the British throne, it was considered a public misfortune; for Charles from his youth was noted as an autocratic and ceremonial Prince, with a gift for polemic discussion which fitted him better for the Church than the State.

While Prince Henry lived, King James had conceived an overpowering ambition to contract a matrimonial alliance with the Royal House of Spain, and a treaty had been in negotiation for several years under which the Prince of Wales was betrothed to the Infanta. On Henry’s demise Charles was substituted on the part of England. The English Ambassador pressed the alliance with great assiduity, but the Spanish Court procrastinated until their good faith was gravely suspected. The concessions in matters of religion which were demanded by the Spaniards inflamed the popular prejudices of the English, and the proposed match provoked general disfavor and resentment. A knowledge of this condition of public feeling in England impelled the Pope to use every obstacle to break the match, and the Spanish King never intended until the last moment to permit the nuptials to be celebrated. The Earl of Bristol was Ambassador from England in this affair, but in spite of the humiliating assent of King James to every fresh demand for concessions, he was unable to bring the Infanta home to England.

Coupled with this long-sought marriage was another feature of English policy which was to go hand in hand with the match. The beautiful Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I, had been espoused by Frederick, the Elector Palatine, who, at the breaking out of the Thirty Years’ War, had been deposed by the Catholic League as King of Bohemia. The English Court craved the assistance of the Spaniards in the restoration of this Prince. The Spaniards as a Catholic nation demurred. France, Germany, and Rome opposed the English claims. But the fatuous heart of James was led to hope that by an alliance with Spain he could secure both the marriage and the restoration. It was in this emergency, when reasons of State demanded the early marriage of the Prince, that the Duke of Buckingham, then the favorite at Court, proposed the quixotic scheme of a personal visit to Spain by the Prince and himself.

The King opposed it, but Charles pleaded earnestly for the Royal permission, which was reluctantly granted. The romantic excursion was arranged with all the secrecy which such a rash adventure required. On the 17th of February, 1624, accompanied by only two followers, the Prince and the Duke left London, well disguised, and rode in haste to Dover, whence they sailed to Boulogne, and then by horse reached Paris. While they tarried there to observe the splendor of the French Court, the Prince, with an emotion which somewhat diminished the ardor of his present mission, beheld the beautiful Henrietta Maria, the sister of Louis XIII and England’s future Queen.

On the 7th of March they arrived in Madrid, where, in spite of their attempted secrecy, Olivarez, the Prime Minister, had already received advice of their coming. The Spanish King at once arranged for the entertainment of the Prince on a scope of magnificence which could not have been surpassed. It was ordered that on all occasions of meeting Charles should have precedence of the
King, that he should make his entrance into the Royal Palace with the degree of ceremonial which was used by the Kings of Spain at their coronation, that he should reside under the King’s roof, that a hundred of the guard should attend him, and that he be obeyed as the King’s own self.

Receptions, processions, and public honors of every sort overwhelmed him, but in the midst of them all he was carefully guarded from any opportunity of meeting the Infanta, and the joyous pleasures of courtship were jealously denied him. After a time he was indeed permitted to see the Princess, but only in the presence of the Court, and the conversation which he was expected to address to her was written out and supplied to him beforehand by Olivarez, which was certainly a mean indignity upon a Prince so accomplished and correct.

Charles now became aware of a settled purpose on the part of those both in Spain and at Rome, to secure his conversion to the Catholic faith, or end the match. The day following their arrival Olivarez had hinted at this to Buckingham, and Bristol had soon after informed Charles that there was no other expectation in Court or public than to see him renounce his own convictions and assume those of the Infanta. To Bristol, Charles replied, “I wonder what you have ever found in me, that you should conceive I would ever be so base and unworthy as for a wife to change my religion.” The truth of Bristol’s remark was corroborated by a letter which Pope Gregory XV addressed to Charles, urging him to adopt the ancient religion which his fathers had practiced. He wrote in terms of great courtesy urging upon the Prince’s attention his favorite argument, that a Church that had once been the seat of truth could not now live in error. A letter from the same didactic pen implored Buckingham to perpetuate his own name in the Book of Life by compassing the Prince’s conversion, thus adding a soul to salvation. Charles answered the letter politely, pressing for the dispensation and promising his protection to his Catholic subjects in England, but offered no prospects that his own convictions would change. Death claimed Gregory before this letter reached him, and his successor, Urban VIII, wrote to both Charles and his father, still pressing the Prince’s reconciliation to the Roman dogmas.

This unseemly attack upon his conscience, the many humiliations in his addresses to the Infanta, and the undisguised duplicity of the Spanish Court in its present treatment of the match, cooled the affections of the Prince, and he reflected upon a speedy return to England. It was not long before he discovered, however, that the Spaniards had set a watch on him, and he sent home a despairing message to his father, that if the King of Spain should detain him a prisoner, he would be pleased never to be thought of again as a son, and bade him reflect upon the good of his sister and the safety of the English Crown.

The strained situation of this affair was increased by a trivial misunderstanding which arose between Olivarez and Buckingham; and just when matters were become most gloomy for the young Prince, the dispensation arrived from Rome, and the Spanish King announced his readiness to proceed with the marriage. Charles presented a message from his father commanding his
immediate return. The Spaniard pressed him with apparent cordiality to remain, and the Infanta added her solicitations. Now, and not until now, was Spain in earnest about the match, and now was England as much opposed to its further consideration.

It is at this stage of the negotiation that we perceive the first indication of that elasticity of conscience and lack of sincerity in Charles, which were afterwards developed into enormous defects in his character. The question of the Prince’s ability to depart from Spain before the solemnization of the marriage ceremony was full of grave doubts. Upon learning that a watch was kept on his movements, he sent Buckingham to tell them, that although they had stolen thither out of love, they would never steal thence out of fear. But this courageous tone was simulated; for being now resolved against the match, and fearing a consequence that he would never again see England, he wrote in deep despair to the King his father, "You must now, Sir, look upon my sister and her children, never thinking more of me, and forgetting that you ever had such a son." He communicated to His Spanish Majesty the necessity for his instant return to his native land. Philip was startled at this announcement, and urged upon him that, having waited so many years for a wife, he would stay some few months longer. He told him that if he would consent to postpone the nuptials until spring, he would sign a blank power and permit him to write his own conditions for the restitution of the Palatinate. Charles’ secret resolution was inexorable, but he executed a proxy under the most solemn oath before high Heaven, authorizing the espousals to be made in his name by the King of Spain and Don Carlos, his brother. This paper was delivered into the custody of the Earl of Bristol, with direction that the ceremony take place within ten days after ratification by the Pope. But a creature of the Duke of Buckingham’s was entrusted with an instrument commanding the Earl to stay the delivery of the proxy until the receipt of further instructions from England, and Bristol was kept in ignorance of this instruction until the Prince had sailed away.

When Charles returned home without the Infanta, all England was ablaze with bonfires. King James sent an embassy to Madrid to thank Philip for the magnificent hospitality which he had extended to his son. But new conditions touching the Palatinate were insisted upon to the discomfiture of the Spanish Court.

So grave was this international question now become that James called a Parliament which was entertained by Buckingham with a highly wrought description of the Spanish adventure. The Duke, formerly envied and mistrusted, was now a popular hero. Some of the members, with a mischoice of words which in that Puritan age smacked of impiety, declared that he was their Savior. The Parliament presented an address to the King, advising that the treaties both for the marriage and the Palatinate be broken off, and offered to bestow upon him a very large appropriation if war should result.

And war did result, but it was a pusillanimous war. Twelve thousand troops were dispatched under the command of Count Mansfeldt, a German soldier of fortune, and supported by the Navy under the Duke of Buckingham,
commissioned to secure the restoration of the Palatinate to King James’ son-in-law, the Elector Frederick. The attempt ended in defeat, and when his troops returned with decimated ranks King James had been gathered to his fathers. His last words to Charles, now betrothed to the French Princess, Henrietta Maria, exhorted him to love his wife but not her religion; to take especial care of the children of his sister, the Queen of Bohemia; and to exercise all his power to re-establish himself in the ancient dignity of England’s former kings. Nothing was said to the young Prince concerning those great principles of civil rights which were burning themselves upon the mind of the nation. With a last gasp for prerogative, on the 27th of March, 1625, he yielded up his spirit.

Charles the First! Blushing in youth, affluent in health and strength, descended from a long line of kings, possessing great dignity of mind, bearing a noble and commanding carriage, beloved for his virtue and soberness, and full of that sweetness of hope which sat well on his twenty-five years of life, gifted thus, he seemed an ideal monarch, and the nation hailed his accession with great joy.

The contract of marriage with Henrietta Maria, Catholic daughter to the Protestant champion, Henry IV of France, had been already duly executed. The French Duke of Chevereux, acting as proxy for Charles, was attended by a retinue containing the flower of the English nobility. Cardinal Richelieu pronounced the ceremony which made the Princess Queen of Great Britain.

Then, while the nuptial mass was sung, the English party withdrew to the house of their Ambassador—a mournful presage that they, having escaped one Catholic marriage, were not prepared to divest themselves of prejudice against another. But while this shadow of mistrust was present at the marriage feast, there was nevertheless great rejoicing over the union of two young hearts in that exalted station. The Duke of Buckingham, accounted to be the handsomest and courtliest man in Europe, came over to escort the Queen to her lord. A Royal Navy convoyed her across the Channel. On arriving at Dover the youthful Queen, then only fifteen years and seven months old, being somewhat discomposed by a slight seasickness, sent to Charles, begging him not to come until the morrow. At ten o’clock on the following morning the King came with all his Court to receive her. She was at breakfast, but flew to meet him. She tried to kneel and kiss his hand, but he caught her in his arms and kissed her.

She then began a set speech. “Sire, I am come into this Your Majesty’s country to be at your command.” A flood of girlish tears prevented her from continuing, and Charles, to whose heart they appealed more earnestly than her words, took her aside and soothed her with his vows of devoted love. He playfully expressed surprise that she appeared so much taller than he expected, and glanced down at her feet, thinking that she stood on tiptoe. Perceiving his look, she said in French, with her head reaching to his shoulder, “Sire, I stand upon my own feet. Thus high am I, neither higher nor lower.”

She then besought him, out of her respect and love to him as her husband, that he would not be angry with her for her faults of ignorance or youth before he had first instructed her how to banish them, and especially desired him to use
no third person when she did anything amiss, but to inform her of her failing himself. To this womanly appeal the King granted his affectionate submission. The first Parliament began on the eighteenth day of June 1625. The King’s necessities for money were imperative. The war with Spain, undertaken by his predecessor in response to the desire of Parliament, the expenses of his marriage, the funeral and unpaid debts of his father, the promise of subsidies to the King of Denmark for the war against the Catholic League—these and other obligations called for generous supplies. So confident was Charles that the loyalty and affection of this Parliament would dictate to them the granting of a sufficient appropriation, that he would ask for no sum, nor would he allow his ministers to influence the amount. Every sentiment of national honor and religion demanded a wise grant of funds. The disappointment of the King can therefore be well understood when, without any attempt to disclose a motive for their parsimony, they voted him, for all the expenses of his grave situation, the sum of two subsidies, equal to about one hundred and twelve thousand pounds.

That this grant was niggardly and detestable, and calculated only to stir the King’s resentment, cannot be denied. And yet the men who sat in that Parliament were the ablest in England. Among them were Sir John Eliot, the most prominent of the agitators for constitutional government; Sir Edward Coke, wise in statesmanship and learned in the law; John Pym, unsurpassed for his fearless advocacy of popular rights; and Sir Thomas Wentworth, afterwards risen to melancholy celebrity as the Earl of Strafford. The proprieties of the case, the necessities of the existing complications, could not be forgotten in the deliberations of these men. It is rather to be inferred that the education of the public mind through centuries of monarchal government had produced a universal desire to confine within constitutional bounds the powers of the Royal authority, and to perform by consent of the people in Parliament a great many of those functions which had been previously exercised by the sole pleasure of the Sovereign. Swayed partly by their love of liberty, and partly by the fear of an unwholesome influence of the Catholic marriage, the subjects of Charles I had determined at the commencement of his reign to use those methods of popular agitation which finally drove the refractory House of Stuart out of England and reduced the King’s actual prerogative to a mere semblance of power. So they voted him two subsidies, when twelve would hardly have permitted him to meet his engagements.

The King preserved an admirable patience in this extremity, and sought to move the Parliament by explaining to them the plans which had reduced him to such urgent necessities. He told them that by a promise of money to the King of Denmark he had secured a pledge from that monarch to enter Germany with an army and conduct a war of diversion; that a large force of English soldiers under Count Mansfeldt was ready to invade Spain; that the maintenance of the fleet and the defence of Ireland required liberal provision; that he was obliged to press the war for the restitution of the Palatinate to his kindred; that debts amounting to three hundred thousand pounds, contracted by his father, were pressing him sorely; and that in spite of great frugality in his establishment the
private purse of the Crown was empty and must be replenished. He condescended to remind them that this was the commencement of his reign; that he was young; and that if he now met with kind and dutiful usage it would endear him to the use of Parliaments, and would forever preserve an entire harmony between him and his people. The plague now broke out in London and raged with such fatal fury that the Parliament adjourned to Oxford. And while sitting there they were apprised of an incident which caused so much consternation that they at once became inexorable to any further demands for appropriations. When King James had grown weary of the Spanish match and negotiated the alliance with France, he had engaged to furnish Louis XIII, the brother of Henrietta Maria, with eight warships to be employed against the Genoese. It was not long before a cry went up from the besieged Huguenots in La Rochelle that it was the real object of the French King to use these ships to batter down their walls. When the fleet reached Dieppe this surmise proved to be true. To the honor of the English sailors, they mutinied at the command to surrender their vessels into the hands of the French for an assault on La Rochelle; and their commander, Captain John Pennington, declared that he would rather be hanged in England for disobedience than fight against his brother Protestants in France. The ships returned to England, where Buckingham, Lord Admiral, artfully told them that peace had been declared between the Huguenots and the French King, and ordered them back. When they reached Dieppe the second time, they found that they had been falsely informed by the Duke, whereupon one vessel escaped to England, and all the officers and all the sailors of the other ships immediately deserted. One gunner alone preferred to obey his King rather than his conscience, and the news of his death in the first attack was received with great delight in England. Further supplies were refused. The Commons sent many dutiful and affectionate messages to the King, but gave him no money. They likewise presented a petition concerning religion, and the King assented to all of its demands. In the meantime the La Rochelle affair led to a general denunciation of the duke of Buckingham, whose continued favor at Court was much resented, and when it developed that the House of Commons intended to press his impeachment, the King, on the 12th of August, 1625, dissolved the Parliament. Charles now adopted the bad alternative of borrowing money from his subjects, through the issue of Privy Seals. With means raised in this way he equipped a fleet, and sent it to Spain to intercept the rich galleons from America, but it was attacked with the plague and obliged to return home with thinned ranks. The Duke of Buckingham did not accompany this enterprise, but placed Sir Edward Cecil in command, neglecting Sir Robert Mansel, a sailor of much larger capacity. The indignation that stirred the nation upon this incompetent expedition forced the King to call his second Parliament. Before they assembled Charles called for a full execution of the laws against the Catholics, hoping thus to assuage the narrow hatred of the Puritans against those persecuted people. In order to keep out the leading men who had in the last
Parliament opposed his wishes, he had appointed four of the popular leaders—Sir Thomas Wentworth, Sir Edward Coke, Sir Robert Phillips, and Sir Francis Seymour—thus incapacitating them to serve in the House of Commons. But the rising spirit of the times could not be quieted by such measures. The second Parliament met February 6, 1626. The Commons voted him this time three subsidies and three fifteens, but held the bill back until the end of the session, a plain intimation that they themselves would now endeavor to regulate and control every part of the Government which was not to their liking. The popular passion demanded a victim, and the Commons selected the Duke of Buckingham for punishment.

A fifteen was an ancient English tax, being one fifteenth of the valuation of the personal property in each town.

"The Duke was indeed," says Lord Clarendon, "a very extraordinary person, and never any man in any age, nor I believe in any country or nation, rose, in so short a time, to so much greatness of honor, fame, and fortune, upon no other advantage or recommendation than of the beauty and gracefulness of his person." The Duke was a younger son of Sir George Villiers of Brooksby, whose family traced its line to the Conquest. In his youth he was sent into France, where he acquired the accomplishments and education of a gentleman. Returning to England at the age of twenty-one, he went to Court, where his manly beauty instantly attracted the attention of King James, who made him his cupbearer. Excelling in the arts of a courtier, he won so much upon the Royal favor that the marks of the King’s esteem fell thick and fast upon him. He was knighted, was made a Gentleman of the Bed-Chamber, and received the Order of the Garter. He was then elevated successively to the rank of Baron, Viscount, Earl, Marquis, and finally became Duke of Buckingham. He was appointed Lord High Admiral of England, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Captain-General of the Army, Master of the Horse, Constable of Dover and Windsor Castles, and Master of the King’s Forests and Chases. All rivals to the Royal favor were displaced in his rapid rise. He became himself the dispenser of patronage, and the members of his own family received a large share of the public bounty. So much success could not fail to excite great jealousy. So much responsibility could not fail to overtax the capacity of one so young. But when Charles came to the throne, Buckingham, who had won his confidence in the Spanish affair, was continued in power, a thing which surprised those who knew that the Duke had once, in a moment of rage, threatened the Prince with personal assault.

The nation evinced a disposition to lay all the common ills at the door of the Duke’s administration. He was known to be responsible for a great many objectionable things in existing treaties with Catholic countries, which drew upon him the rage and hatred of the Puritans. The visible decline of English power upon the high seas was attributed to his incompetent control of the Navy. Dr. Samuel Turner, Sir John Eliot, and others ventured to suggest in Parliament an impeachment against the Duke. The proposition was received by the Commons with profound though cautious approbation. Charles, upon hearing of this, arrogantly commanded them not to touch his servant, and
ordered them to finish the bill for the subsidies, as he intended in a few days to dismiss them. And it was intimated very plainly to them that if they did not exhibit a more dutiful regard for the King, he would be likely to dispense with Parliaments and govern exclusively by his prerogative. Unabashed by his rebuke, they brought in an impeachment against Buckingham, and refused to make the appropriations, and the King determined to dissolve them before the attack upon his favorite could be concluded.

In this impeachment Buckingham was accused of having united many offices in his own person; of having obtained two of them by the payment of money; of neglecting to protect English commerce on the seas, insomuch that many merchant ships had been captured by the enemy; of delivering the eight ships to the King of France to attack La Rochelle; of accepting bribes for his patronage; of accepting extensive grants from the Crown; of procuring many titles of honor for his kindred; and lastly, of applying a plaster to the late King without consulting the physicians.

The Duke answered these charges with frankness and skill, admitting most of the allegations to be true, but disclaiming any dishonest or unworthy motive. And in this condition the affair was pushed upon the deliberation of the Lords. While the matter of the impeachment was taking legal shape, the Earl of Suffolk, who was Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, died, and Buckingham, through the influence of the Court, was chosen Chancellor for that great seat of learning. The Commons resented this, and protested to the King against it. But in order to show his contempt for them, the King wrote a letter to the University in high praise of the Duke, and commended them for his election.

Other unpleasant incidents preceded the dissolution of the Parliament, and inflamed the resentment of that body to the King. It was alleged that Sir Dudley Digges and Sir John Eliot, in their presentation of the impeachment, had used seditious language against the King’s honor, and they were both thrown into prison. The Commons protested to a man that the words had not been used; the two imprisoned members denied them; and the King, expressing his belief in their statements, restored them to liberty.

A second matter affected the Lords. Buckingham, who had never forgiven the Earl of Bristol for pressing the Spanish match after Charles and himself decided to relinquish it, had influenced the King to dismiss Bristol from Court. Not satisfied with this victory, he had, at the calling of this Parliament, prevailed upon Charles to withhold a writ from Bristol. The Earl appealed to the Lords for the privilege of his peerage. The Lords petitioned the King in Bristol’s behalf, whereupon the Monarch sent him his writ with a letter commanding him not to obey its summons to Parliament. Bristol in his reply made the ingenious point that the writ, under the Great Seal, commanded him, on his faith and allegiance, to attend the Parliament, while in the letter under the Privy Seal, the King had expressed his pleasure that he would personally continue in retirement. In the end Bristol was permitted to come to Parliament, where he joined in the impeachment of Buckingham, and was in turn accused of high treason by the Duke.
In a further instance of what he considered a just exercise of the powers of the Crown, Charles aroused the apprehension of the Lords, who were thus far loyal to him and opposed to the encroachments of the Commons. The King had privately taken offense at the Earl of Arundel, on account of a marriage negotiated by the Earl for his son with a sister of the Duke of Lenox, and had committed him to the tower during the sitting of Parliament without assigning a cause. The Lords respectfully remonstrated against this as a violation of privilege. Many messages between the King and the Lords ensued. At length the Lords refused to sit until the Earl was restored to them, or a cause assigned for his arrest, and the King was forced to yield him up.

The Commons, still refusing supplies, were persistently urging their grievances at the foot of the Throne. They used every endeavor to gain the King’s assistance in the Puritan legislation that had been framed to stamp out the Catholic faith in England. A cry against Popery was eternally on their tongues. Charles, hungrily waiting for an appropriation, was quick in his promises but ever slow in his performance. The House, forced by the temerity of its own conduct to expect a wrathful dissolution, conceived a measure which would forever cripple the King’s attempt to conduct the government despotically in the absence of a Parliament. They began to prepare a remonstrance against the levying of tonnage and poundage without consent of Parliament. The income from this source constituted an important part of the revenues of the Crown. The King, apprised of their proceeding, and perceiving that there was an intention to hold back all legislation until they had accomplished a revolution in the ancient methods of the government, dissolved them on the 15th of June, 1626.

As this action was expected, the Commons had made haste to complete their remonstrance, which, at the dissolution, was published to the country. The King, anxious to stand well in the eyes of his subjects, likewise published a declaration, in which he gave his reasons for dissolving their sitting before they had finished a single act.

A careful study of the conflict during the session of this Parliament, in which the King indomitably strove for the preservation of his prerogative, and the Commons as stubbornly contended for popular rights, discloses weakness on both sides. The King had no settled purpose but to oppose their aggressions. He was surrounded by unwise counselors who could neither advise him to yield with grace a part of their demands, nor propose a counter course of action so expedient as to compel their approval. The Commons had no settled policy for their guidance but to oppose the King in every measure which they knew him to value. They frivolously passed from a remonstrance upon one grievance to a remonstrance upon another grievance without pressing any point to final victory. But their steadfast opposition was an evidence to the nation, whose representatives they were, that they were fixed in their purpose to alter and improve the Constitution while preserving its ancient form. And these conflicting views of duty, honestly entertained by the King and the Commons, were well represented by the party cries, “Prerogative” and “Privilege.”
The theory of the character of the English Sovereign in that age presented him as a mysterious being, perfect and immortal. As King he was not subject to death, being a corporate part of the Constitution, and speaking in the plural pronouns *our* and *we*. Though in infancy, he was always mature, and not human in his office, he could do no wrong. Ubiquitous, he could act simultaneously in all parts of his dominion, and such was the value of a King’s word that whatever he declared to have passed in his presence became legal truth. His prerogative was so complete that laws were made or failed by his single voice, and peace or war rested solely upon his will. Cherishing this strictly legal but theoretical construction of his power, Charles now determined to sway the scepter absolutely.

His first act was to close a peace with Spain. Commissioners were then appointed to gather the customs duties, which, it was held by the Commons, could not lawfully be levied except by act of Parliament. Large sums of money were collected from the Catholics upon the practical nullification of the laws against teem. He called upon the nobles for large loans. He demanded one hundred thousand pounds from the City of London. He required the seaport towns to furnish him with ships. A general tax was levied, equal to the four subsidies and three fifteens which the late Parliament had intended to grant to the King. The Lord Lieutenants of the several counties were directed to muster men for military service, with commissions to execute martial law upon public enemies or rebels. Preparations were made to equip a fleet for foreign service. In the month of September 1626, Charles received advice that the King of Denmark had been defeated by the Emperor of Germany. Thereupon, a further general tax was assessed upon all Englishmen for the war in the Palatinate. The soldiers who returned from Spain were billeted upon the people, and outrage and disorder followed them wherever they appeared. The Bishop of Lincoln, having expressed sympathy with the Puritans who were opposing the tax, was prosecuted in the Court of Star Chamber. Dr. Sibthorpe and Dr. Mainwaring, at the instigation of the court, preached sermons calling upon the people to pay the money as a religious obligation to their rulers. Sir John Eliot, Sir Thomas Wentworth, and John Hampden were among those who were thrown into prison for refusing to pay.

While the young Monarch was, by these rash measures, bringing troublous times upon his people, the specter of discontent appeared upon his own hearthstone. The Catholic marriage was not in its first years a happy one. The nuptial contract provided that the Queen should have a certain number of priests for her household chaplains, together with a bishop, who should exercise all ecclesiastical jurisdiction matters of religion. The arrogant bearing of these priests soon offended the high-minded Monarch. They began to announce that the pope, upon the marriage treaty, assumed to himself, or his delegates, the direction and control of the Queen’s whole family, and that the King of England, being a heretic, had no power to intermeddle therein. Beneath the influence of this false teaching, the Queen became somewhat restless under the King’s authority, and an unhappy estrangement ensued between the Royal
pair. Buckingham did what he could to enlarge this infelicity, lest the Queen’s influence might prevail against his own. As a matter of fact, the contract of marriage between Charles and his vivacious Queen contained certain concessions which the youthful Monarch, under the glamour of ardent and irresponsible love, had yielded without alarm. But with a larger experience in life, Charles as a reflecting husband and hopeful father, now observed with dismay that these obligations pinched his conscience and irritated his mind. One article of the treaty provided that “the children of this future marriage shall be brought up by their mother till the age of thirteen years.” With the Catholics this was doubtless a stipulation for the religion of the children. “James the First,” says a Dutch historian of the times, “here betrayed the cause of his religion, and thus drew on his posterity all their calamities.” That this obligation became hateful to Charles is shown by an authentic story which represents the King as coming into the Queen’s chamber during the early infancy of their first child, and beholding a Catholic priest about to baptize it, whereupon Charles stopped him and called in an Episcopal minister, who performed the rite. Among the last letters still extant which Charles wrote to the Prince of Wales is one in which he charges him most solemnly to obey his mother in all things saving religion. The King has left an interesting account of a scene that transpired in the Royal bed-chamber. He says:

“One night when I was abed, she put a paper in my hand, telling me it was a list of those she desired to be of her retinue. I took it and said I would read it next morning; but withal told her that, by agreement in France, I had the naming of them. She said there were both English and French in the note. I replied that those English I thought fit to serve her I would confirm; but for the French, it was impossible for them to serve her in that nature. Then she said all those in the paper had breviates from her mother and herself, and that she would admit no other. Then I said that it was neither in her mother’s power nor hers to admit any without my leave, and if she stood upon that, whomsoever she recommended should not come in. Then she bade me plainly take my lands to myself, for if she had no power to put in whom she would in those places, she would neither have lands nor houses of me, but bade me give her what I thought fit in pension. I bade her then remember to whom she spoke, and told her that she ought not to use me so. Then she fell into a passionate discourse, how she is miserable, in having no power to place servants; and that business succeeded the worse for her recommendation; which when I offered to answer, she would not so much as hear me. Then she went on saying she was not of that base quality to be used so ill. Then I made her both hear me and end that discourse.”
The individual whose presence among his wife’s attendants most annoyed the King was Father Saucy, the Queen’s confessor. Charles had already once expelled this meddling priest from the kingdom, but the French King sent him back to England, to the great indignation of Charles, who had discovered that he had enticed from the Queen disclosures of the most sacred passages in their married life.

What pained the King above all things, however, was the refusal of Henrietta Maria to be crowned with him in Westminster Abbey, her priestly advisers having forbidden her participation in the religious ceremonies of the Established Church. On that august occasion Charles walked alone, clad in a dress of white velvet, emblematic of the purity of his bridal union with the State. As the Royal procession neared the church, the Queen viewed it from an adjacent window, and exchanged frivolous comments with her ladies on the imposing celebration. No entreaties could break through the narrow bigotry of her mind, and no ceremony of coronation was ever performed in her behalf. She was Queen of England only by virtue of her marriage, and not by her installation into that office. In later years Cromwell refused to pay her dower upon the demand of the French King, because of this imperfect title.

Charles was especially inflamed against his wife’s religious advisers, because he believed that they had made her walk in penance to Tyburn and fix her gaze on the gallows. The Queen denied that she had gone thither by counsel of her priests, and explained that in leaving her chapel after the vesper service she had turned her footsteps through the park in the direction of Tyburn entirely without design.

Another source of the King’s displeasure was in her refusal during her early residence in England to learn the language and observe the customs of the country. But while the Queen’s Catholic zeal and the occasional explosion of her temper led to those infelicities which often surround an ill-assorted marriage, she was nevertheless an affectionate and devoted wife, fond of her husband, and the object always of his adoring passion.

It has been charged that Charles was swayed too much by his Queen’s influence in those measures which made his reign unpopular, and the charge seems to be well sustained by historical evidence. At the time of her departure for Holland to sell the Crown jewels for the prosecution of the war, Charles had made her a solemn promise that he would receive no person into favor or trust without her knowledge and consent; and that, as she had undergone many reproaches and calumnies at the commencement of the war, he would never make any peace but by her mediation, that the kingdom might receive that blessing only from her. Undoubtedly a knowledge of this ascendancy of the Queen in her husband’s affairs had great weight with the Commons in their persistent obstinacy during the war.

But Charles, smarting under the interference of the Queen’s priests and some of her ladies, whom he justly charged with alienating his wife’s confidence and esteem, dismissed the entire French retinue and sent them home to France. This, as a violation of the marriage contract, was followed by a declaration of war, and a Navy was dispatched to France under the command of Buckingham.
This force made for La Rochelle, but the wary Huguenots, filled with distrust of the English under a remembrance of the ships that were shortly before employed against them, refused to admit them inside their fortifications. The Duke then landed upon the Isle of Rhée, whence, after some insignificant and inglorious adventures, he was forced to depart without honor and with the loss of a considerable portion of his men.
The clamor of the nation over this mortifying disaster became so loud that there was no alternative, even for Charles Stuart, but to call a Parliament. Accordingly, on the 17th of March, 1628, his third Parliament assembled, in no pacific frame of mind.

CHAPTER III
Cromwell Sees the Parliament in Tears

Oliver Cromwell, while cultivating his land at Huntingdon and studying the law of God’s eternal mercies and judgments from the new translation of the Bible, was called to the third Parliament of Charles I in 1628, as member for the town of Huntingdon. The austerity of Puritanism had burnt itself into his soul. For popery he entertained the intolerant hatred of his party, and he looked with but little more patience upon the dignified and stately ceremonial of the Established Church. The persecutions of the Puritans in the Star Chamber had driven many of these straightlaced believers to more hospitable homes in the New World; and the tradition that both Oliver Cromwell and his cousin, John Hampden, had intended, if liberty perished, to try their fortunes in America, is probably founded on fact.
Parliament found public affairs in a bad state, and all because the House of Stuart would never profit by experience, nor attempt to forecast for the signs of the times. They believed, with Shakespeare,
"There’s such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would."
The three leading nations of Europe were ruled by three youths, Philip of Spain, Louis of France, and Charles of England, who in turn were almost wholly swayed by their intriguing ministers, Olivarez, Richelieu, and Buckingham. It was the zenith of the monarchical system, and the time was ripe for the assertion of popular rights.
When Oliver Cromwell, at the age of twenty-nine, entered the House of Commons, clad in home-spun clothes and walking with a shambling, slouching gait, with neither grace of manner nor dignity of carriage, he attracted but little attention. "Who," cried a Royalist clergyman in a sermon preached after the Restoration, "Who that beheld such a bankrupt, beggarly fellow as Cromwell first entering the Parliament House, with a threadbare, torn coat, and a greasy hat (and perhaps neither of them paid for), could have suspected that, in the course of so few years, he should, by the murder of one King and the banishment of another, ascend the throne, be invested in the Royal robes, and want nothing of the state of a King but the changing of his hat into a crown?" "Odds fish, Lory!" exclaimed Charles II, when he heard this speech from
the man who had been glad to eulogize Cromwell when living, "Odds fish, man! Your chaplain must be a bishop. Put me in mind of him at the next vacancy."
The Lords in their robes and the Commons being assembled, the King made them a speech from the Throne, calling their attention to the necessities for supply. "Every man must do according to his conscience," said he, "wherefore if you (as God forbid) should not do your duties in contributing what the State at this time needs, I must in discharge of my conscience use those other means which God hath put into my hands, to save that which the follies of particular men may otherwise hazard to lose. Take not this as a threatening," he continued, with rising spirit, "for I scorn to threaten any but my equals."
After this high speech the King departed, and the Commons at once began a discussion of grievances and the state of the kingdom, taking into consideration the late arbitrary acts of the Privy Council, as the billeting of soldiers, forced loans, and the imprisonment of certain patriots who had refused to pay the tax. It was shown that their ancestors had been so careful to secure the liberties of Englishmen, that six several statutes, as well as a provision in Magna Charta, already prohibited such infractions as the late imprisonments.
Sir Francis Seymour opened the debate with great ability. He said:

"This is the great council of the kingdom, and here with certainty, if not here only, His Majesty may see, as in a true glass, the state of the kingdom. We are called hither by his writs, in order to give him faithful counsel, such as may stand with his honor, and this we must do without flattery. We are also sent hither by the people, in order to deliver their just grievances, and this we must do without fear. Let us not act like Cambyses’ judges, who, when their approbation was demanded by the Prince to some illegal measure, said that ‘though there was a written law, the Persian Kings might follow their own will and pleasure.’ This was base flattery, fitter for our reproof than our imitation; and as fear, so flattery, taketh away the judgment. For my part, I shall shun both, and speak my mind with as much duty as any man to His Majesty, without neglecting the public. But how can we express our affections while we retain our fears, or speak of giving till we know whether we have anything to give? For if his Majesty may be persuaded to take what he will, what need we give? That this hath been done, appeareth by the billeting of soldiers, a thing nowise advantageous to the King’s service, and a burden to the Commonwealth; by the imprisonment of gentlemen for refusing the loan, who, if they had done the contrary for fear, had been as blamable as the projectors of that oppressive measure. To countenance these proceedings, hath it not been preached from the pulpit, or rather prated, that ‘all we have is the King’s by Divine right’? But when preachers forsake their own calling, and turn ignorant statesmen, we see how willing they are to exchange a good conscience for a bishopric. He, I must confess, is no good
subject, who would not willingly and cheerfully lay down his life, when that sacrifice may promote the interests of his Sovereign, and the good of the Commonwealth. But he is not a good subject, he is a slave, who will allow his goods to be taken from him against his will, and his liberty against the laws of the kingdom."

Sir Thomas Wentworth, after reciting some of the recent grievances, fulminated a future impeachment against himself as an "evil counselor" in these words:

"This hath not been done by the King, under the pleasing shade of whose Crown I hope we shall ever gather the fruits of justice, but by projectors, who have extended the prerogative of the King beyond the just symmetry which maketh a sweet harmony of the whole. They have brought the Crown into greater want than ever by anticipating the revenues. And can the shepherd be thus smitten and the sheep not scattered? They have introduced a Privy Council ravishing at once the spheres of all ancient government, imprisoning us without either bail or bond. They have taken from us—what? Shall I say, indeed, what have they left us? ... By one and the same thing have King and people been hurt, and by the same must they be cured. To vindicate, what, new things? No, our ancient, vital liberties."

Sir Benjamin Rudyard, alarmed at the tone of these speeches, arose and pleaded for a medium course, which, if followed by the Parliament, would possibly have saved all the blood and treasure of the Civil War. With dramatic emphasis, he cried:

"This is the crisis of Parliaments! We shall know by this if Parliament live or die. ... Men and brethren, what shall we do? Is there no balm in Gilead? If the King draw one way, the Parliament another, we must all sink. I respect no particular; I am not so wise to contemn what is determined by the major part. One day tells another, and one Parliament instructs another. I desire this House to avoid all contestations; the hearts of Kings are great; it is comely that Kings have the better of their subjects. Give the King leave to come off; I believe His Majesty expects but the occasion. It is lawful and our duty to advise His Majesty, but the way is to take a right course to attain the right end, which I think may be thus: by trusting the king, and to breed a trust in him, by giving him a large supply according to his wants, [and then] by prostrating our grievances humbly at his feet. From thence they will have the best way to his heart, that is done is duty to his Majesty. And to say all at once: Let us all labor to get the King on
our side, and this may be no hard matter, considering the near subsistence between the King and people."

Sir Edward Coke said he was willing to give supply to His Majesty, yet with some caution. He continued:

"I am not able to fly at all grievances, but only at loans. Let us not tatter ourselves. Who will give subsidies, if the King may impose what he will, and if after Parliament the King may enhance what he pleaseth? the King will not do it; I know he is a religious King, free from personal vices. But he deals with other men’s hands, and sees with other men’s eyes. Will any give a subsidy that may be taxed after Parliament at pleasure? The King cannot tax any by way of loans. ... In Magna Charta it is provided, that ‘No freeman shall be taken, or imprisoned, or restrained from his freehold, or liberties, or immunities, nor outlawed, nor exiled, nor in any manner destroyed, nor will we come upon him or send against him, except by legal judgment of his peers or the law of the land. We will sell or deny justice to none, nor put off right or justice’—which charter hath been confirmed by good kings above thirty times."

Sir Robert Phillips said:

"I read of a custom among the old Romans, that once every year they held a solemn festival, in which their slaves had liberty, without exception, to speak what they pleased, in order to ease their afflicted minds; and, on conclusion of the festival, the slaves severally returned to their former servitudes. This institution may, with some distinction, well set forth our present state and condition. After the revolution of some time, and the grievous sufferance of many violent oppressions, we have now at last, as those slaves, obtained, for a day, some liberty of speech; but shall not, I trust, be hereafter slaves, for we are born free. Yet what new illegal burdens our estates and burdens have groaned under, my heart yearns to think of, my tongue falters to utter! The grievances by which we are oppressed, I draw under two heads—acts of power against law, and the judgments of lawyers against our liberty."

It will be seen from these speeches that the cry for constitutional government was almost universal. Even the Court party could not defend the late abuses, and the King’s ministers were forced to ask for subsidies with grievances, a concession that so charmed the Commons that they voted an appropriation of five subsidies. The King received word of this generous action with tears of gratitude. So fearful were they, however, of the insincerity of his promises for
the permanent redress of their grievances, that it was determined to hold back the grant until they could provide an impregnable law which would forever protect their liberties from the encroachments of the Crown. Forced loans, benevolences, taxes without consent of Parliament, arbitrary imprisonments, the billeting of soldiers, martial law—these made up the story of their grievances; and to abolish such burdens for themselves and their posterity, that statute was framed which has come down to us as a precious heritage with Magna Charta, and which is known as the Petition of Right.

The King learned of the preparation of the Petition of Right with undisguised alarm. The Lord Keeper was dispatched to the Parliament House with message after message, all of which, though couched in varying tones of entreaty, self-abasement, or command, equally displayed the agitation of the King’s mind. The Court party opposed the measure with skill and vigor. They argued, with truth, that Magna Charta contained in substance all that the Commons sought to incorporate in the Petition of Right. The Commons, admitting this, recalled that it had been necessary to secure a confirmation of Magna Charta from their Kings thirty times—why not secure its confirmation from Charles? The Court party claimed that arbitrary imprisonment was already unlawful under the Great Charter. The others pointed to the six statutes which frequent violations of the Charter had required to be enacted—why not incorporate a seventh statute in the Petition of Right? The insidious influence of the Court prevailed upon the Lords to propose to the Commons that the concluding clause in the Petition be worded as follows: "We present this our humble Petition to Your Majesty, with the care not only of preserving our own liberties, but with due regard to leave entire that sovereign power wherewith Your Majesty is trusted for the protection, safety, and happiness of the people." The subtle force of this apparently humble peroration would have left the whole without effect, and it was an evidence of the intelligence of the House that they instantly rejected it. The Petition passed in the form of a declaratory statute, and was delivered to the King. For two centuries it had been customary for the Sovereign to approve or reject a bill by one word, yet when Charles came in State before the Parliament, he spoke these ambiguous words, which were considered to contain his assent to the Petition:

"The King willeth that right be done according to the laws and customs of the realm, and that the statutes be put in due execution, that his subjects may have no cause to complain of any wrong or oppressions, contrary to their just rights and liberties, to the preservation whereof he holds himself in conscience as well obliged as of his prerogative."

There were great disputations after the King’s departure. The Commons would not be content with such equivocation. But while they were discussing the means of securing the King’s positive assent, a message from the throne commanded them to finish the appropriations, as they would be dismissed in one week. Not alarmed at this threat, they calmly neglected the matter of supply, and framed an impeachment against Dr. Roger Mainwaring "for seducing the conscience of the King," by having insisted in a sermon on the duty of
paying the forced loan. Having forwarded this impeachment to the Lords, they
turned to strike at the Duke of Buckingham.
Instantly came a message from the King, reminding them of their impending
adjournment and commanding them not to cast any aspersion or scandal upon
his favorite.
Consternation and woe seemed suddenly to engulf the House. Sir John Eliot
attempted to speak, but one of the King’s ministers, apprehending that he
would mention the Duke’s name, commanded him not to proceed. "Hereupon,"
says John Rushworth, who was present, "there was a sad silence in the House
for a while." Thomas Alured, one of the members, has left a pathetic
description of the scene that now ensued. He writes:

"Yesterday was a day of desolation among us in Parliament, and
this day we fear will be the day of dissolution. … Sir Robert
Phillips of Somersetshire spake and mingled his words with
weeping. Mr. Pym did the like. Sir Edward Coke, overcome with
passion, seeing the desolation likely to ensue, was forced to sit
down, when he began to speak, by the abundance of tears. Yea,
the Speaker in his speech could not refrain from weeping and
shedding of tears. Besides a great many whose grief made them
dumb. But others bore up in that storm and encouraged the rest."

By-and-bye they became somewhat more composed. But what a scene for that
young and thoughtful Oliver Cromwell to witness! No hope of quarter for the
King from him, if ever the memory of that day come back to him on the field of
battle! "Did they not in former times," says Alured, "proceed by fining and
committing John of Gaunt, the King’s own son; had they not in very late times
meddled with and sentenced the Lord Chancellor Bacon and others?"
Sir Edward Coke made another effort. He now saw that God had not accepted
of their humble and moderate carriages and fair proceedings; and he feared
the reason was, they had not dealt sincerely with the King and country, and
made a true representation of all their miseries. "Let us palliate no longer," he
cried. "I think the Duke of Buckingham is the cause of all our miseries, and till
the King be informed thereof, we shall never go out with honor or sit with
honor here. That man is the grievance of grievances!"
The Lords attempted to direct the alarm into other channels. They began to
talk of the peril of the nation from Continental entanglements. They referred
to the growing power of the House of Austria, the ambition of the King of Spain
who was seeking to make his monarchy universal, the increasing danger of the
Catholic League, and the lack of their own preparation to meet any emergency.
But the Commons would not be diverted from their course.
The King perceived that he had gone too far in his absolutism, and came down
to the Parliament House, and gave his assent to the Petition of Right in the
usual form, speaking the words, "Let it be law as is desired."
The tenth article of the Petition of Right, which rehearses the grievances
complained of in the preceding articles, is as follows:
"They [the Parliament] do therefore humbly pray Your Most Excellent Majesty, that no man hereafter be compelled to make or yield any gift, loan, benevolence, tax, or such like charge, without common consent, by act of Parliament; and that none be called to make answer, or take such oath, or to give attendance, or be confined or otherways molested or disquieted concerning the same, or for refusal thereof; and that no freeman, in any such manner as is before mentioned, be imprisoned or detained; and that Your Majesty would be pleased to remove the said soldiers or mariners, and that people may not be so burdened in time to come; and that the aforesaid commissions, for proceeding by martial law, may be revoked and annulled; and that hereafter no commissions of like nature may issue forth, to any person or persons whatsoever, to be executed as aforesaid, lest, by color of them, any of Your Majesty's subjects be destroyed, or put to death, contrary to the laws and franchise of the land."

The Commons now persisted in completing the Buckingham impeachment, and they presented it to the King, who, after considering it in the Star Chamber, ordered that all record of any charges against the Duke be expunged. They then began a remonstrance against tonnage and poundage, which brought the King to the Parliament House so hastily that the Lords had not sufficient time to put on their robes. And they were presently prorogued until October (and later until January) with every mark of the Royal displeasure.

CHAPTER IV
The King and the Commons

The English nation, in its desire for constitutional government, would perhaps have felt itself completely satisfied by the enactment of the Petition of Right, had not Charles Stuart, in the knowledge of all men, lacked those elements of candor and sincerity which were essential to the enforcement of any law designed to protect the liberties of his people. Before giving his assent to the Petition of Right, he had called the two chief justices, Hyde and Richardson, to Whitehall, and propounded certain questions, directing that the other judges should likewise pass upon them. His first question was, "Whether in no case whatsoever the King may not commit a subject without showing cause?" The flexibility of the most sacred laws, in the hands of pliant judges, is shown by their reply. "We are of opinion," said the judges, the two chief justices concurring, "that by the general rule of law, the cause of commitment by His Majesty ought to be shown, yet some cases may require such secrecy, that the King may commit a subject without showing the cause for a convenient time." The King then asked them a second question: "Whether in case a habeas corpus be brought, and a warrant from the King without any general or special cause returned, the judges ought to deliver him before they understand the cause from the King?" This answer was equally elastic. "Upon a habeas corpus brought
for one committed by the King," they said, "if the cause be not specially or
generally returned, so as the court may take knowledge thereof, the party
ought by the general rule of the law to be delivered. But, if the case be such
that the same requireth secrecy and may not presently be disclosed, the court
in discretion may forbear to deliver the prisoner for a convenient time, to the
end the court may be advertised of the truth thereof." A third question from
the Monarch was advanced: "Whether, if the King grant the Commons Petition,
he doth not thereby exclude himself from committing or restraining a subject
for any time or cause whatsoever without showing a cause?" And the judges
replied, "Every law, after it is made, hath its exposition, and so this petition
and answer must have an exposition as the case in the nature thereof shall
require to stand with justice, which is to be left to the courts of justice to
determine, which cannot particularly be discovered until such case shall
happen. And although the Petition be granted, there is no fear of conclusion as
is intimated in the question."
The truth must be confessed that Charles had an utter contempt for the very
notion of popular rights. He had imbibed his ideas of the responsibility of a King
from his father, whose view of the question is shown in a letter which he wrote
late in life to the House of Commons, commanding "that none therein shall
presume henceforth to meddle with anything concerning our Government." It
was this narrow conception of the monarchical system which led Charles to
violate every statute that was aimed at the powers of the Crown, and his oft-
repeated promises, "on the word of a King," were found by his unhappy
subjects to be without any binding force upon his conscience.
Free for a time from the interventions of his Parliament, Charles now
participated in those operations of war which had engaged nearly the whole of
Europe. The Earl of Denbigh, brother-in-law of the Duke of Buckingham, had
been dispatched to the relief of the Huguenots besieged in the town of La
Rochelle. The Huguenots bore so much resemblance to the Puritans, whom the
King despised, that it is not likely his concern for their welfare had more than a
political depth. An army and a fleet had gathered at Portsmouth, and thither
Buckingham proceeded, to give his personal attention to their departure. The
King and his Court followed Buckingham, and were hourly expected to arrive,
when an event occurred which threw the nation into the wildest excitement.
This was the assassination of the Duke of Buckingham.
John Felton, a lieutenant of a company whose captain had met his death in the
inglorious retreat from the Isle of Rhée, had taken umbrage at Buckingham
because the command of the company had not fallen to him, and had resigned
from the army. He was descended from a good family, but was of a taciturn
and brooding disposition. While in London he learned something of those
debates in the House of Commons in connection with the impeachment of the
Duke, in which Buckingham was declared to be a public enemy, responsible for
all the evils which the kingdom suffered. Walking through the streets of the
great city, a murderous-looking knife in a cutler’s window riveted his
attention, and, instantly seized by the design of ridding the nation of its
tyrant, he purchased the weapon. The morning of the 23rd of August, 1628, found him at Portsmouth prepared to finish his sanguinary undertaking. The Duke had just received letters informing him that the French, under command of Cardinal Richelieu, had been forced by the Protestant forces in La Rochelle to retire, and he directed his breakfast to be served forthwith in order that he might carry the tidings to the King at the house of Sir Daniel Morton, at Southwick, only five miles away. After discussing the situation of La Rochelle with some French gentlemen who were in his chamber, Buckingham started to go to his breakfast, which had been laid for him in another room. As he lifted the curtain of a dark passage-way connecting the two apartments, the Duke turned to give an order to one of his officers, Colonel Fryar, who then stood close beside him, when a hand out of the dark passage-way reached over Fryar’s shoulder, and plunged a knife into the Duke’s heart. "The villain hath killed me!" he exclaimed, and drawing the dagger from his bosom, he fell to the floor and expired.

So expertly was the deed accomplished that no one had seen the blow nor the assassin. The greatest consternation ensued, and there was a disposition shown to charge the murder upon the Frenchmen, whose loud voices had been indistinctly heard outside in the discussion of the letters from La Rochelle. A close search in the passage-way discovered a hat which had evidently been dropped by the culprit in his flight. In the crown of this hat was a paper containing some words from the impeachment proceedings, styling the Duke an enemy to the kingdom, with a brief prayer following them. Several men were taken into custody under suspicion, but in the midst of the excitement, when all were asking, "Where is the murderer?" Felton came up in perfect composure, and said, "I am he." Some hot-headed adherents of the Duke drew their swords and advanced to kill him, but he eyed their approach calmly and without fear. This stolid demeanor secured his protection from those of quieter nerve, who beat down the weapons of his assailants and remanded him to the charge of the guard.

Felton was now dragged into a private room, where, in order to ascertain whether he had confederates, his captors dissembled insomuch as to tell him that the Duke was not dead but only severely wounded. He answered with a disdainful smile that the Duke, he knew full well, had received a blow which had terminated all their hopes. When asked at whose instigation he had performed the atrocious murder, he replied, still smiling, that they should not trouble themselves on that point, as no man living had credit or power enough with him to have impelled him to such a deed, that he had never entrusted his purpose or resolution to any man, that it proceeded only from the impulse of his own conscience, and that the motives of his conduct would appear if his hat were found, in which he had deposited them, because he had expected to perish in his attempt and desired to leave his reasons on record.

Felton’s bearing in this arduous examination was that of a man who had done Heaven a good service. But after he had been in prison some time his conscience convinced him of the enormity of his crime, and he acknowledged that what he had understood to be a whispering of Divine purpose he now
perceived was an instigation of Satan. He humbly solicited the forgiveness of the King and of the Duke’s widow and friends, and he implored the judges who pronounced capital punishment upon him that his right hand might be struck off before he would be put to death. The King was at public prayers in the church at Southwick, when Sir John Hippesly spurred up to the door and entered. Without waiting for a pause in the services, the eager messenger informed the King what had happened. Charles received the news with an undisturbed countenance. So great was the control which he exercised over his feelings that his courtiers, who scrutinized his face, concluded he was secretly glad to be rid of a minister who had become an object of public odium. But under this outward composure the monarch concealed an agony to which he gave full expression shortly afterwards in the privacy of his own chamber. The attacks that had been made on Buckingham through all sources of public expression had only increased the King’s love for him. He retained an affectionate interest in Buckingham’s friends and cherished to the last a prejudice for his enemies. His kindness to the Duke’s wife and children was unremitting, and the large debts standing against Buckingham were discharged by the King’s bounty. When Felton’s trial came on, the King was desirous of putting him to the torture as a full measure of revenge for the murder of his favorite, but his advisers dissuaded him from this on the ground that it would be obnoxious to public sentiment. Felton was before the King’s privy council when Bishop Laud proposed to put him on the rack and make him name his confederates. Felton ingeniously retorted that if that were done he might in his extremity name his Lordship as quickly as any other, whereupon the Bishop pressed the point no further.

Before passing from the Duke of Buckingham, it may not be without interest to briefly describe the character of that most picturesque man. He was gifted with a generous disposition, and possessed a noble nature according to the standard of his times. His affability and courtesy towards all men, his apparent willingness to oblige all suitors, and his unquestioned personal courage, extorted the admiration of his countrymen. But the happy affluence of his own career caused him to offer such rash counsels to the King that admiration was soon succeeded by contempt, and contempt by open indignation and revolt. He was most vehement in his attachments and would go all lengths to oblige a friend. In dealing with his enemies he never affected dissimulation, but would acquaint them frankly with the causes of his resentment and warn them of his purpose of revenge. His manners were charming and his deportment was unequalled, not only in the fastidious Court of Charles, but even in Paris, where perfect manners were the aim of life. In his embassy to France to bring home the Queen, where he appeared in all the brilliance with which the wealth of England could adorn him, he far surpassed the gay courtiers of Louis in those vanities in which they esteemed themselves unrivaled. Trained in the favor of two Royal masters, it is not strange that his conceit was without bounds. While in Paris he even dared to entertain a passion for the French Queen, and, mistaking her graciousness for encouragement, he returned secretly after having taken public leave, and attempted to pay his addresses to her, but was
dismissed with a gentleness which proved that even Majesty was not insensible to his charms. His ambition was great, yet his honors followed on each other’s heels so swiftly that he could yearn for nothing. It was the misfortune of his career that there was no one among all his friends to warn him frankly of those impetuous passions which provoked the indignation of the people. He considered every act which met their disfavor as a mere incident to be forgotten in the achievement of some new glory, and he never attempted to atone for such slights upon their judgment by mending his conduct or altering his policy. His private life was not free from the gallantries of the age, although he seems to have been an affectionate husband. Had he been permitted to attain maturity of years before undertaking those great responsibilities of power, his name would doubtless have been an illustrious one on the page of history. But his performances were the experiments of youth, and his life ended in an inglorious tragedy, without drawing tears from his countrymen. He was thirty-six years old when he died.

The King, now free from the counsels of his dangerous favorite, might gracefully have adopted the occasion as propitious for retracing those steps which he had made towards the assumption of absolute power. The progress of English civilization required it. The consensus of English opinion demanded it. But Charles went unfalteringly forward.

William Laud, now Bishop of London, succeeded Buckingham as the King’s most influential adviser. Sir Richard Weston, a much abler man, who had recently been made Lord Treasurer, and who was fitted for a prudent councilor, found his importance second to that of Laud. The Bishop of London was the head and front of the High Church party, ready to surpass the Catholics in ceremony, and for that reason an object of the bitter hatred of the Puritans. Laud was a virtuous man who abstained from pleasures and applied all his vast interest with the Court to exalt the power of the clergy. He was unsuited to a high station by his lack of patience and discretion. He imagined that all his enemies were necessarily the enemies of the State, and he persecuted them accordingly. Many temptations were sent to him from Rome to bring him over to the Catholic Church. He received a secret assurance from the pope that he could have a cardinal’s hat, but while of a narrow and bigoted mind, he was personally honest and he refused the offer. It was his desire to secure to the Episcopal Church in England that absolute sway over the souls of the people which the Catholic Church enjoyed in Italy and Spain. In the pursuit of this aim he persuaded the King to adopt a policy called “Thorough,” which was responsible for a large part of the oppressions that ended in Civil War. His selection, therefore, as the successor of Buckingham was not calculated to appease the restless suspicions of the Parliament, soon to reassemble.

Dr. Mainwaring, who had preached that sermon on passive obedience which had evoked a sentence from Parliament prohibiting him forever from preferment in the Church, was pardoned by the King and presented with two rich livings. Dr. Montague, whose Appeal to Caesar had likewise stirred the wrath of Parliament, was made Bishop of Chichester.
The fleet which Buckingham had fitted out for the relief of La Rochelle was dispatched thither in command of the Earl of Lindesey. Expecting this succor to his foes, Richelieu, a man whose vast genius was equal to every emergency in war as in peace, had devised an engineer’s boom which obstructed the boisterous ocean for a mile on the seafront of La Rochelle. When the English fleet arrived, they found it impossible to convey their supplies over this barricade, seeing which, the unhappy Huguenots surrendered. The indomitable inhabitants of the town, buoyed up by the expectation of assistance from England, had subsisted for many weeks upon horse flesh, hides, and leather, and dogs and cats. Their situation at the surrender, in full view of armed assistance, was most deplorable. Out of fifteen thousand who had held the city at the commencement of the siege, but four thousand were alive when the gates were opened to the invaders. Their surrender with a succoring Navy in sight presented to the world another example of the incapacity of the English military system under a Government that was not supported by popular opinion.

The Parliament, which was to have reassembled on the 20th of October, 1628, met by proclamation on the 20th of January, 1629. They began at once to discuss their grievances, and learned to their great disgust that the copies of the Petition of Right which had been distributed to the nation had by Royal order the King’s first answer appended, in which he had equivocally confirmed the petition, instead of the usual form in which his second answer had been framed. They found that tonnage and poundage had been levied in express violation of the Petition of Right, and that merchants had had their goods seized for refusing to pay the duties. Among these merchants were Mr. Chambers, Mr. Vassal, and Mr. Rolls, of London, whose consignments of goods were seized by the customs officers for their failure to pay the imposts. The merchants had pleaded the statute of Magna Charta for exemption from taxes assessed without consent of Parliament, and had sued out writs of replevin for their goods. The King’s judges had ordered the sheriffs not to recognize the writs, and thus had the commercial privileges of the nation been invaded. As it was this question of tonnage and poundage, or, in modern parlance, customs duties, which so often caused a breach between Charles and his Parliaments, it seems fitting to give a brief account of the controversy. The levying of customs duties in former times had been generally done as a temporary grant of Parliament. But when, on the accession of Henry V, the martial spirit of the nation was fired by the conquests of that youthful Sovereign, the right of tonnage and poundage was conferred upon him, and afterwards upon all succeeding Princes, during life. The necessity of these taxes for the support of the Navy was so apparent that each King had claimed it immediately on his accession, and the Parliament had usually granted the Claim. In the time of Henry VIII no grant of tonnage and poundage was made by Parliament until the sixth year of his reign. Yet Henry, who had not then reached the height of his power, continued to levy the tax all through that time, and when Parliament did make the grant they censured the merchants who had neglected to pay the Crown officers. Four succeeding Sovereigns had
continued the old custom, which was undoubtedly a violation of the spirit of
the constitution, but which Parliament had never undertaken to check until
now. In the short interval which passed between the accession of Charles and
the meeting of his first Parliament, he had followed the example of his
predecessors, and when Parliament assembled they made no complaint. But
what happened to be the first intimation on the part of that House of Commons
that they had thus early formed a plan for making the young Monarch the
creature of Parliaments and not the master of them, was that, instead of
granting tonnage and poundage during the King’s lifetime, as it had been done
in the preceding reigns, they voted it only for a year, reserving the power of
renewing or refusing it after the year would have elapsed. The House of Lords,
who believed that this duty was necessary to the increasing necessities of the
Crown, and who always viewed the encroachments of the Commons with
jealousy, rejected the bill in this form, and the Parliament had been dissolved
without further action on that question. The King continued to levy the tax, at
first without any signs of discontent on the part of his subjects. But the
discussion of the matter in the succeeding Parliament inflamed everyone
against it. There was an effort made to have it declared illegal to levy tonnage
and poundage without consent of Parliament. But that Parliament was likewise
abruptly dissolved ere they had taken decisive action.
In the interval between the second and third Parliaments there had been so
many violent applications of the King’s prerogative, that the matter of tonnage
and poundage had been somewhat obscured by more important affairs. But in
the first session of the third Parliament, the Commons, not content with the
large concessions that had been granted to them in the Petition of Right, had
proceeded to take up tonnage and poundage, showing a fixed intention of
exacting, in return for the grant of this revenue, a still further relinquishment
of the powers of the Crown. Their hasty prorogation was brought about by their
intended remonstrance on that subject.
When the King opened the second session, he had foreseen that tonnage and
poundage would be the first subject the Commons would consider, and the
tone of his speech from the throne was very mild and patient. He assured them
“that he had not taken these duties as appertaining to his hereditary
prerogative, but that it ever was, and still is, his meaning to enjoy them as a
gift of his people; and that if he had levied tonnage and poundage he
pretended to justify himself only by the necessity of so doing, not by any right
which he assumed.” Some of the King’s friends then presented a bill granting
the right to collect tonnage and poundage as it had been done in former reigns,
and the King sent a message directing the Commons to speedily consider the
measure. The House, not intending to pass the bill in that form, resented its
introduction by one of the King’s creatures, and sullenly refused to take any
action with it as put before them. That their express plan to grant tonnage and
poundage at their own pleasure, and for limited periods, was strictly within the
limits of the constitution, is undoubtedly true. By the King’s own expressions,
which have just been quoted, and by the form of every bill which had granted
this tax to the Crown, the levy was shown to be a free gift of Parliament, and,
consequently, might be withheld at pleasure. The money was granted to maintain the Navy for the protection of the seacoast and of commerce. But had not Parliament the right to say to what extent they would maintain the Navy, even for those purposes?

But Charles, notwithstanding his declaration to the Commons, was not prepared to give his assent to these propositions. He was persuaded that a certain class in the House of Commons, which was swayed by visionary ideas of a limited Monarchical system, was determined to derogate from the Crown every prerogative that made it an object of sovereign power. His predecessors would not have yielded to such influences, neither would he yield to them. If they pressed him too hard, he secretly determined that he would himself seize every function of Government, and conduct an absolute monarchy.

The Commons persistently refused to vote on the bill for tonnage and poundage, in spite of the King’s frequent messages commanding them to do so; but they passed to a discussion of the state of religion, and presented His Majesty a remonstrance on that subject.

The English people, not satisfied to deal only with those problems of civil government which seemed to be tearing the nation asunder, were distressed by the agitation of religious disputes. Fatalism and free will were the opposing sentiments which occasioned the controversy. The early reformers, led by John Calvin, had based their teachings upon predestination and absolute decrees. These tenets met with opposition from James Arminius, a prominent divine of Leyden, Holland, whose followers, the Arminians, soon introduced the discussion into England. The King and the High Church party generally entertained the Arminian theories, and some of the Arminians themselves, under the indulgence of James and Charles, had been appointed to the highest preferments in the Church. Bishops Laud, Neile, Montague, and others high in ecclesiastical station, who were the chief supporters of the beautiful ceremonial system of the Episcopal Church, were stigmatized as Arminians.

Some members of the House of Commons believed that in attacking Arminianism, which they considered an esoteric and mysterious system, they could lay against that denomination a suspicion of disguised popery, and their attacks were consequently a matter of great frequency. "To impartial spectators, surely," says the philosophic Hume, "if any such had been at that time in England, it must have given great entertainment to see a popular assembly, inflamed with faction and enthusiasm, pretend to discuss questions to which the greatest philosophers, in the tranquility of retreat, had never hitherto been able to find any satisfactory solution."

In the speeches that remain to us, we can witness the fervor that possessed those men. Francis Rouse spoke thus in warning tones:

"I desire that it may be considered how the see of Rome doth eat into our religion, and fret into the banks and walls of it, the laws and statutes of this realm, especially since those laws have been made in a measure by themselves, even by their own treasons and bloody designs. And since popery is a confused heap of errors,
casting down Kings before popes, the precepts of God before the traditions of men, ... I desire that we may consider the increase of Arminianism, an error that makes the grace of God lackey it after the will of men, that makes the sheep to keep the shepherd, and makes a mortal seed of an immortal God. Yea, I desire that we may look into the very belly and bowels of this Trojan horse to see if there be not men in it ready to open the gates to Romish tyranny, and Spanish monarchy, for an Arminian is the spawn of a Papist."

And then John Pym, the leader of liberty, but, like the others, somewhat narrow on religious toleration, arose and spoke about a violation of the law "in bringing in of superstitious ceremonies amongst us, especially at Durham, by Mr. Cozens, as angels, crucifixes, saints, altars, candles on Candlemas Day, burnt in the church after the popish manner."
Sir John Eliot denied the infallibility of the bishops in these words:

"It is said, if there be any difference in opinion concerning the seasonable interpretation of the Thirty-nine Articles, the bishops and the clergy in the convocation have power to dispute it, and to order which way they please; and for aught I know popery and Arminianism may be introduced by them, and then it most be received by all. A slight thing that the power of religion should be left to the persons of these men! I honor their profession; there are among our bishops such as are fit to be made examples for all ages, who shine in virtue and are firm for our religion. But the contrary faction I like not. I remember a character I have seen in a diary of Edward VI, that young Prince of famous memory, where he doth express the condition of the bishops of that time under his own handwriting: ‘That some for sloth, some for age, some for ignorance, some for luxury, and some for popery, were unfit for discipline and government.’"

And what of Oliver Cromwell? Where is he all this time? Still dressed in homespuns, Oliver keeps his seat and listens, has kept his seat all through these two sessions, has witnessed the endeavors of these honest men to bring the King to constitutional government, has observed and thought, has wept and prayed. And now he rises to speak.

It was not much of a speech that young Oliver made. He never was a good speaker, and as yet he had not tried it at all. But he informed the Commons what countenance the Bishop of Winchester did give to some persons that preached flat popery, and mentioned the persons by name; and how by this bishop’s means, Mainwaring (who by censure the last Parliament was disabled from ever holding any ecclesiastical dignity in the Church, and confessed the justice of that censure) is nevertheless preferred to a rich living. "If these be the steps to Church preferment," cried Oliver, "what may we expect?"
Though he was employed in the work of important committees of the House, this is the only public performance we have from Oliver in that Parliament; but it is enough to show the bent of his mind, enough to show which side he will take if it come to choosing sides. That "flat Popery" was a thing that offended him to the soul then, and aroused him to anger many times in later years, until in the growth of his mind he came at last to look with tolerable patience even upon popery.

And all this time messages were coming from the King, and were evaded in various ways by the Commons, on the matter of tonnage and poundage. And as every day found the King and the Commons farther apart, there was little hope that any more public business would be done by this Parliament than was done by the two former ones. Finally, when the King, in a rather more peremptory tone than he had yet used, demanded a settlement of the tonnage and poundage, the Commons fell to attacking his ministers. Sir John Eliot named the Lord Treasurer Weston "in whose person all evil is contracted. I find him acting and building on those grounds laid by his master the great Duke." A question of impeachment was moved, but the Speaker said that the King had commanded him not to put it to the House. The Commons, unable to transact business, adjourned until Wednesday, February 25th. When they came together on that date, they were again adjourned by the King's order until March 2nd. On March 2nd they met again and urged the Speaker to put the question, but he informed them that he had an order from his Majesty to adjourn until March 10th, and put no question. He then attempted to leave the chair, when two members, Denzil Hollis and William Strode, foreseeing a dissolution, dragged him back, swearing "by God's wounds, he should stay there as long as the House chose!" Sir Thomas Esmond and his friends strove to rescue the Speaker. Other members drew their swords, and amid tears, groans, imprecations, and shouts, Sir Michael Hobart locked the door. In the midst of this scene of violence a protestation was read in the House, which denounced as public enemies (1) anyone who should bring popery or Arminianism into the Church, (2) anyone who should counsel or advise the levying of tonnage or poundage without consent of Parliament, and (3) anyone who should pay the same if levied.

On March 10, 1629, the King dissolved the Parliament, and eleven years elapsed before another sat in England.

CHAPTER V
The Lord of the Fens

After the violent dissolution of the third Parliament, Oliver Cromwell returned to Huntingdon in much perturbation of mind. The mad pace at which the nation seemed going to destruction filled him with vague alarms. He had not won a large share of public attention. His sole part in the debates had consisted in that denunciation of "flat Popery" which Dr. Alablaster had preached at Paul’s Cross. His fame was of slow growth, and the fact that he was not proscribed
with the five members twelve years later shows that he had not even then become a leader among the English patriots. Shortly after his return to Huntingdon he was appointed a Justice of the Peace for that borough, Thomas Beard, D.D., his old schoolmaster, and Robert Barnard, Esquire, likewise securing commissions. In the new charter that was granted to Huntingdon, Cromwell saw that the Aldermen had received power to work injustice to the property owners in the borough, and he spoke his mind in a savage way to Robert Barnard, then Mayor. On complaint at London, Cromwell was summoned before the Council, where he acknowledged that his words had been spoken in the heat of passion, and the matter was dropped. While residing at Huntingdon, he wrote this letter, the first from his pen that has been preserved, relating to his third son, Richard. The young father’s pride of heart is discernible:

"To my approved good friend, Mr. Henry Downhall, at his Chambers in St. John’s College, Cambridge: These.

"Huntingdon, 14th October, 1626.

"Loving Sir:

"Make me so much your servant as to be Godfather unto my child. I would myself have come over to have made a formal invitation, but my occasions would not permit me, and therefore hold me in that excused. The day of your trouble is Thursday next. Let me entreat your company on Wednesday.

"By this time it appears, I am more apt to encroach upon you for new favours than to show my thankfulness for the love I have already found. But I know your patience and your goodness cannot be exhausted by your friend and servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

But he grew tired of Huntingdon, and prevailed upon his wife and mother to join with him in the sale of certain lands there, out of which his present living was derived. This sale put him in possession of about £1,800, and with this money he bought livestock for a grazing farm which he had rented at St. Ives, five miles down the Ouse River, and moved there with his wife and a rapidly increasing family of children. His mother remained at Huntingdon, where her old associations were doubtless too tenderly cherished to be hastily severed. His life at St. Ives was quiet, thoughtful, and at times moved with doubts, at others full of hope. Striving after godliness was his chiefest care. Prayer was an institution in his household, and the laborers on his farm were called from their work frequently to join the family in its devotions. In the morning they knelt
with him in the worship of God until the sun was high in the heavens, and at
even they came early from their toil to renew their supplications to the Throne
of Grace. Under this strict application of piety the farm did not thrive, but
Oliver’s soul grew rich in grace, and it was here that he penned that letter to
Mr. Storie, which, as the only remaining epistolary relic of the St. Ives
residence, is given here. It exposes a very lively interest in religion:

"To my very loving friend, Mr. Storie, at the sign of the Dog in the
Royal Exchange, London: Deliver these.

"St. Ives, 11th January, 1636.

"Mr. Storie:

"Amongst the catalogue of those good works which your fellow-
citizens and our countrymen have done, this will not be reckoned
for the least, that they have provided for the feeding of souls.
Building of hospitals provides for men’s bodies; to build material
temples is judged a work of piety; but they that procure spiritual
food, they that build-up spiritual temples, they are the men truly
charitable, truly pious. Such a work as this was your erecting the
Lecture in our country; in the which you placed Dr. Wells, a man
of goodness and industry, and ability to do good every way; not
short of any I know in England; and I am persuaded that, since his
coming, the Lord hath by him wrought much good among us.

"It only remains now that He who first moved you to this, put you
forward in the continuance thereof; it was the Lord; and
therefore to Him lift we up our hearts that He would perfect it.
And surely, Mr. Storie, it were a piteous thing to see a Lecture
fall, in the hands of so many able and godly men, as I am
persuaded the founders of this are; in these times, wherein we
see they are suppressed, with too much haste and violence, by
the enemies of God’s truth. Far be it that so much guilt should
stick to your hands, who live in a city so renowned for the clear
shining light of the Gospel. You know, Mr. Storie, to withdraw the
pay is to let fall the Lecture: for who goeth to warfare at his own
cost? I beseech you therefore in the bowels of Jesus Christ, put it
forward and let the good man have his pay. The souls of God’s
children will bless you for it; and so shall I; and ever rest, your
loving friend in the Lord,

"Oliver Cromwell.

"P.S.: Commend my hearty love to Mr. Busse, Mr. Beadly, and my
other good friends. I would have written to Mr. Busse; but I was
loathe to trouble him with a long letter, and I feared I should not receive an answer from him: from you I expect one so soon as conveniently you may. Vale."

At this time his mother’s brother, old Sir Thomas Steward, Knight, lay fatally ill at Ely. This was the uncle on whom the inquest of lunacy had been held. The record notes that he was buried in the Cathedral of Ely, 30th January, 1636, and Oliver received the principal part of his property under the will. This inheritance induced him to remove to Ely, which he did shortly after Sir Thomas’ death, and continued to reside there until the time of the Long Parliament, and his family still after that until about the close of the first Civil War. His mother appears to have joined him at Ely, thinking to pass her days in the shadow of the old Cathedral, and never dreaming of her apartments in the Palace of Whitehall, where her spirit was finally to pass away.

It was at Ely that, while cultivating his farms, fondly rearing his children, and still pondering the divine mystery, he wrote a beautiful letter to his cousin, Mrs. St. John—a letter warm with the spirit of God’s peace, and in which he tells her of that spiritual regeneration by which his soul had been lifted out of moral darkness into a higher light. The letter reveals completely the religion of a zealous and enthusiastic Puritan:

"To my beloved Cousin, Mrs. St. John, at Sir William Masham his House called Otes, in Essex: Present these.

"Ely, 13th October, 1638.

"Dear Cousin:

"I thankfully acknowledge your love in your kind remembrance of me upon this opportunity. Alas, you do too highly prize my lines, and my company. I may be ashamed to own your expressions considering how unprofitable I am, and the mean improvement of my talent.

"Yet to honour my God by declaring what He hath done for my soul, in this I am confident, and I will be so. Truly, then, this I find: That He giveth springs in a dry barren wilderness where no water is. I live, you know where—in Meshec, which they say signifies Prolonging; in Kedar, which signifies Blackness; yet the Lord forsaketh me not. Though He do prolong, yet He will I trust bring me to His tabernacle, to His resting-place. My soul is with the congregation of the firstborn, my body rests in hope; and if here I may honour my God either by doing or by suffering, I shall be most glad."
"Truly no poor creature hath more cause to put himself forth in the cause of his God than I. I have had plentiful wages beforehand; and I am sure I shall never earn the least mite. The Lord accept me in His Son, and give me to walk in the light, as He is the light! He it is that enlighteneth our blackness, our darkness. I dare not say, He hideth His face from me. He giveth me to see light in His light. One beam in a dark place hath exceeding much refreshment in it—blessed be His name for shining upon so dark a heart as mine! You know what my manner of life hath been. Oh, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light; I was a chief, the chief of sinners. This is true: I hated godliness, yet God had mercy on me. O the riches of His mercy! Praise Him for me; pray for me, that He who hath begun a good work would perfect it in the day of Christ.

"Salute all my friends in that Family whereof you are yet a member. I am much bound unto them for their love. I bless the Lord for them; and that my Son, by their procurement, is so well. Let him have your prayers, your counsel; let me have them.

"Salute your Husband and Sister from me—He is not a man of his word! He promised to write about Mr. Wrath of Epping; but as yet I receive no letters—put him in mind to do what with conveniency may be done for the poor Cousin I did solicit him about.

"Once more farewell. The Lord be with you; so prayeth your truly loving Cousin,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Here is another brief note from Ely. This crude young farmer Oliver has interested himself in a sick and destitute man, one Benson:

"Ely, 13th September, 1638.

"Mr. Hand:

"I doubt not but I shall be as good as my word for your money. I desire you to deliver Forty Shillings of the Town Money to this Bearer, to pay for the physic for Benson’s cure. If the Gentlemen will not allow it at the time of account, keep this Note, and I will pay it out of my own purse. So I rest, your loving friend,

"Oliver Cromwell."
These four letters are all that remain of Oliver’s writings previous to the Long Parliament. During the eleven years that passed between the third and fourth Parliaments, the “draining of the Fens” was commenced. This was a work of vast importance throughout Cambridgeshire, and it embraced the construction of the great Bedford Level, to carry the Ouse River directly to the North Sea, holding it safely in strong embankments for about twenty miles and not leaving it in winding stagnation to inundate the whole country, as formerly. Oliver’s part in this affair has never been clearly disclosed. There seems to have been much dissatisfaction with a part of the plan, however, and Cromwell became spokesman for those who raised the clamor, acquitting himself with so much success and pushing the work forward with so much vigor, that he was called “The Lord of the Fens” in the good-humored approbation of his neighbors. In these St. Ives days, his firstborn, Robert, in whom his soul delighted, was at Felsted school, in Essex, and there he fell ill and died. His age was seventeen years and seven months. What the nature of his sickness was we do not know. It may have been smallpox, for they buried him at Felsted. The old Parish register at Felsted contains a Latin note of his burial, written by the vicar some years after the event, to this effect: "Robert Cromwell, son of the illustrious warrior, Oliver Cromwell, and of Elizabeth, his wife, was buried May 31st, 1639. And Robert was a remarkably pious youth, fearing God above many." Oliver was well-nigh overwhelmed with grief at this bereavement. But the anguish of the Puritan father found its sure solace in that religion which was the food of his life. "I know both how to be abased and how to abound," he cried, repeating the words of Paul. "Everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me." Twenty years later, while he lay on his deathbed, his thoughts sped back beyond his conquests to this early sorrow, and he repeated the words, assuring his watchers with an emotion that stirred every heart, that, "this Scripture did once save my life, when my eldest son died, which went as a dagger to my heart, indeed it did." It is surprising how little of his early private life has been preserved, and much of that which remains is misty with tradition. We have seen enough, however, to recognize a man of fine domestic qualities, an honest neighbor, and a good citizen, who would have passed his life in a quiet way among his fellows, seeking God with all the ardor of his soul, had not the trumpet blast of civil war called him to fight against his King and countrymen on a field of action the like of which England had never seen before.

CHAPTER VI
A Short Account of Religion

As the approaching conflict concerns the religious as well as the political rights of Englishmen, it seems proper, before following Cromwell into Parliament, to take a brief view of the progress of the Christian religion from the earliest times.
The history of religion may be described as the search of men and nations after the true God. When the lowly Nazarene began his ministry, the world was at the feet of pagan idols. But his doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man soon took hold so irresistibly upon the hearts of men, and his teachings sprang into such sudden favor, that the four centuries following his death were marked by an intense conflict between the Christian Church and the Roman Empire for the possession of the human race, in the end whereof the Empire went down. On the ruined throne of the Caesars the prelates of the Church, who were now become luxurious through the prestige of success, and seemed forgetful of the humble fisherman whose followers they claimed to be, proceeded to establish an oligarchy which should be more powerful than any government the world had ever known. Their ambitious design was achieved by confining the political judgments of men under an inflexible ecclesiastical yoke. The Christian Church, so named in the Apostolic days of Antioch, became the Holy Catholic Church, and its dogmas filled the earth. But while the seat of spiritual authority was maintained without grave interruption at Rome, the decline of martial glory there, when contrasted with the military pomp of the Byzantine Empire, furnished occasion to a ductile people to transfer their attentions from the West to the East, from Rome to Constantinople. The Emperor Constantine had submissively accepted the Christian doctrines as preached to him by Sylvester, a pope who wisely claimed his title from the Emperor rather than from Saint Peter; and it was not long before the Patriarch of Constantinople vied with the Bishop of Rome in a career of magnificent authority. This rivalry led pope Gregory to make his famous declaration that any bishop who claimed the title of Universal Bishop was Antichrist. The simple doctrines which the Christ had expounded to the world in his Sermon on the Mount, as an ample exposition of the whole duty of man, were now augmented by unnecessary and perplexing additions. Under Leo the Great, the definitions of the authority of the Bishop of Rome had transformed the earthly head of the Church from a shepherd to a despot. The transparent forms of the primitive Gospel were thrust aside for the impressive and sensuous embellishments of reviving arts. The relics of saints were invested with the power of divine healing. Their graven images could work wondrous miracles. The sacerdotal character assumed an ascendency which rightfully belonged only to intellectual supremacy. The people were taught to venerate the effigies of departed prelates. The mystical doctrine of transubstantiation was unfolded. The ceremony of the mass was inaugurated. The system of auricular confession was instituted. Purgatory was established for the souls of the dead who were to be eased in their sufferings by the prayers of the faithful at the altar. The use of indulgences was expounded as of great efficacy to men. The Church placed itself in close sympathy with the emotions of the human mind. The priesthood assured salvation to all who would confess and do penance, the most depraved of the race receiving an absolution at death which secured for them the glories of eternal life upon equal terms with those who had lived holy and devout lives. The natural yearning of mortality to pierce the mysteries of the unseen world led to that pretended communication between earth and heaven, in the
most minute affairs, through the interposition of the machinery of the Church, which afterwards provoked the Protestant revolt. The pope was affirmed to be the veritable successor of Peter and to hold the keys of heaven, and he straightway proclaimed that the eternal gates should be opened to no one outside the pale of the Catholic Church. The sinner who believed could cease from striving, the Church having made his succor sure. Under this policy the papacy seemed impregnable established. If the precedents contained in the Bible fell short of the aspirations of the Roman hierarchy, mystical traditions were brought forward and invested with an authority equal to that of Holy Writ.

This was the elaborate and magnificent system of religion which was built upon the name of the lowly and unostentatious Nazarene. When the decay of the Roman Empire left Rome a prey to the barbarians who constantly threatened to invade the eternal city, the pope intrepidly seized the reins of temporal power. The princes of the earth trembled before him; his shepherd’s crook was more potent than all their scepters, and he became the greatest suzerain in Europe. From having been in the first century “the Servant of the Servants of God,” the pope was, under the style of the papal salute, transformed in much less than a thousand years into “Lord of Lords and King of Kings.” He assembled armies and marched them to Palestine; he wrested the Holy Sepulchre from the custody of the infidel. His lieutenants were the crowned kings of Europe. When Constantinople rejected his claim of supremacy as Peter’s successor he angrily turned his back upon her, and the Turk came and smote her, and was unmolested in his spoil. Kings who questioned his commands lost their crowns. He was not only Christ’s vicar on earth, but the Council of Lateran styled him “Our Lord God the pope.” The ancient Jewish theocracy had been reincarnated and earth was again ruled by a kingdom of priests. But the stern aspect of the authority which was borrowed from the Jews was delightfully emblazoned with the beauties of the old pagan rites. The papal discipline had all the Jewish severity; the papal ceremonies had all the Olympian felicity.

With this view of the divine origin and omnipotent power of the papacy impressed upon the rude minds of those early ages, it is not a cause for wonder that the people bowed in languorous obedience to the invincible pope. Compare his condition with that of any earthly tyrant. The King dies and his encroachment ends. The pope lives forever, and the trembling creature whose intellect begins to question the unfathomable mystery of Rome stops affrighted when he realizes at the start that heaven may be lost by an excommunication, or that earth may become a barren desert by an interdict. An inexhaustible indulgence brought gracious pardon and divine healing to the soul of every confessing sinner within the Church; the believer could not offend beyond the power of priestly absolution, and only the “unpardonable sin” of adverse private judgment could consign the erring mortal to the endless tortures of an eternal hell.

Could any timorous man exercise his mind or raise his arm against the genius of the papacy as thus implanted in the heart of Europe? Strange indeed would it be to see the absolute pope losing his followers, both kings and their peoples
departing from the ancient faith or allegiance, until he himself is reduced to
the sovereignty of a small portion of Italy, is finally imprisoned by a Catholic
Emperor, and then divested of all temporal power. Yet such was his fate.
Neither the Inquisition nor the stake, though both were ceaselessly employed
to preserve his power, could avert it.
History does not disclose when the first protest against the papacy was made.
It is doubtless true that there were those who transmitted the faith in its
ancient simplicity from the days of the Apostles. As early as the fifth century,
we find pope Leo denouncing heresy, a word which originally meant simply
choice. But it is certain that in primitive times the valleys of Piedmont became
known as the nursery of a large sect called the Vaudois or Waldenses (Men of
the Valleys), who were the earliest Protestants and were distinguished for their
pious and exemplary lives. Their organization has been attributed to one Peter
Waldus, a rich merchant of Lyon, who became so grievously offended with the
impurities of the Church (1160) that he led the people of the Piedmont valleys
to a system of independent worship by which each man followed the Christian
teachings according to his own understanding of the Scriptures. Saint Bernard,
writing of Waldus' work says, "The churches are without people, the people
without priests, the priests without honour, and Christians without Christ. The
churches are no longer conceived holy, nor the sacraments sacred, nor are the
festivals any more celebrated." But while Waldus was one of the prophets of
the Waldenses, it seems clear that their tenets flourished much more
anciently. A Dominican named Rainer Saccho gives this testimony:

"There is no sect so dangerous as the Leontists (Waldenses, that
is, the People of Lyon) for three reasons: First, it is the most
ancient—some say as old as Sylvester (A.D. 314), others as the
apostles themselves. Secondly, it is very generally disseminated;
there is no country where it has not gained some footing. Thirdly,
while other sects are profane and blasphemous, this retains the
utmost show of piety; they live justly before men, and believe
nothing respecting God which is not good; only they blaspheme
against the Roman Church and clergy, and thus gain many
followers."

This passage was written only a few years after the death of Waldus, and if
Peter had been indeed the founder of this noble band, the Dominican would
not have conceded their origin to so remote an age.
About the same time other sects were noticed in a more or less flourishing
condition in France, in Flanders, in Germany, and in the north of Italy, who
were distinguished for their opposition to the Roman Church. But while the
ancient darkness was thus pierced by an occasional faint ray of light, it was in
England that there suddenly burst upon the religious world with dazzling
brilliance and audacity the Morning Star of the Reformation. John Wycliffe,
then thirty-seven years old, was master of Balliol College, Oxford, in 1361.
Thirteen years later, during the struggle that was maintained by Edward III and
his Parliament against the pretensions of the papacy, he electrified Europe by
the learning and eloquence of his reply to the pope’s claim of supremacy. The
King soon afterwards sent him to Bruges to confer with the papal legate for the
mitigation of certain grave abuses practiced by the Catholic Church in England.
While in Flanders he seems to have determined his course, for upon his return
to England he boldly attacked the system of the papacy and styled the pope
"Antichrist" and "the proud, worldly Priest of Rome." Efforts were made to
repress him, but he thrived under persecution. Believing the Bible to be the
true guide of the people, he declared that they ought to read it, and he
translated it and organized a great body of poor preachers to go from town to
town and distribute copies of the Scriptures. He refuted the dogma of
transubstantiation, and denied the infallibility of the pope. His teachings made
a vast impression on the public mind. Finally he was "silenced" by ecclesiastical
judgment, and ordered into retirement, but persisted with a manly courage
and simple faith in addressing the people. He was stricken with paralysis while
preaching and died two days later (1384), when sixty years old. His followers
were the Lollards, and while they met with many mischances after Wycliffe’s
death, they were never wholly extirpated even up to the time of the
Reformation.
But there came a time when there were three giants in the earth—Leo X, pope
of Rome; Michael Angelo, the master of the Renaissance; and Martin Luther,
the Monk of Wittenburg. The history of the Reformation is too vast to be
recounted here. But the incident which aroused Luther’s sleeping passion was
the sale of indulgences, by the proceeds of which Leo was able to avail himself
of the genius of Angelo in the decoration of his churches and palaces. The
system of indulgences had become a universal scandal. Gradually, the idea that
it was in the power of the Church to forgive sin had expanded into the notion
that the pope could issue pardons of his own free will, which, being dispensed
to his people, exculpated them from their moral transgressions. The sale of
these pardons had become a fruitful source of the papal revenue; and John
Tetzel, a Dominican friar, was one of the chief agents in this shameless traffic.
Luther’s indignation, smothered for a time, became irrepressible. He wrote
ninety-five theses denying the pope’s right to forgive sins, and nailed them on
the church door at Wittenburg (1521), offering to maintain them in the
university against all disputants. His doctrine was, "If the sinner was truly
contrite, he received complete forgiveness. The pope’s absolution had no value
in and for itself." His attack on indulgences soon broadened into a warfare on
the whole papal system. The Emperor of Germany summoned him before the
Imperial Diet at Worms and he there confronted the most splendid audience
that Europe could assemble. "Unless I be convinced," he said, "by Scripture and
reason, I neither can nor dare retract anything, for my conscience is a captive
to God’s word, and it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. There I
take my stand. God help me, I can take no other course."
Here was a champion who overthrew the pope. Luther established the
Reformation imperishably. Germany revolted from the papal yoke. All through
Europe the new doctrines caused disquiet. Henry VIII heard of them in England
and hastened to write a book against them which prompted the agitated Holder of the Keys to dub him "Defender of the Faith." But this champion of the papacy was soon to become its greatest scourge. While the spread of Protestantism was temporarily checked by Henry’s zeal, a much less holy motive than that which had swayed the mind of Luther finally instigated Henry himself to revolt against the ancient Church.

Henry VIII, under a dispensation from Pope Julius II, had in contravention of the laws of all civilized countries married the wife of his deceased brother, Arthur. It is now a settled judgment that no pope has power to dispense with the principle of those laws. Three sons and two daughters had been born to this couple, but they had died in infancy and the Princess Mary survived as their only offspring. An appalling apprehension of a renewal of the Wars of the Roses, to follow a disputed succession at his death, filled Henry with the greatest perturbation. He had, indeed, a natural son whose mother was a daughter of Sir John Blount, but while illegitimacy was not an absolute bar, William the Conqueror having been a natural son, it was improbable that the English people would peaceably accept such a Sovereign. Mary was the presumptive heir to the Crown, but no woman had ever reigned alone in her own right in England. It was impossible that Catherine could again enjoy the privilege of motherhood. Henry was in the flower of his age and yearned for a lawful son. Under these considerations, the repugnance which he had long endured respecting his unnatural alliance, now became insupportable. He appealed to Clement to break the tie which Julius had illegally authorized.

An army of 24,000 Germans, Spaniards, and Italians, commanded by the Duke of Bourbon, had captured Rome and made Clement practically a prisoner. His position was an extremely delicate one. Henry demanded his divorce. Spain, ruled by the brother, and Germany by the nephew of Catherine, threatened him with their displeasure if he yielded. France, which had been led by Wolsey to hope for a matrimonial alliance with Henry, favored the suit of the English Monarch. Clement at length acceded to Henry’s petition. It is gratifying to be able to quote Dr. Lingard, the most eminent of Catholic historians, on this disputed subject. Dr. Lingard says:

"The envoys presented to him [the pope] for signature two instruments which had been drawn up in England, by the first of which, he empowered Wolsey to hear and decide the cause of the divorce; by the second he granted to Henry a dispensation to marry, in the place of Catharine, any other woman whomsoever, even if she were already promised to another, or related to himself within the first degree of affinity."

Clement signed these remarkable documents and formally delegated his full powers to Campeggio and Wolsey, himself declaring the King’s marriage null and void, and in advance of hearing the case, authorizing them to give sentence for Henry. But the proceedings were most tedious. The divorce had been first agitated in 1527; the influence of the German and Spanish Crowns
had retarded it; Wolsey had joined the opposition and thereby forfeited his power. Finally Henry defied Rome, declared himself Head of the Church, snatched the English dominions away from the papacy, and received at the hands of Cranmer, as Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1533, an annulment of the fateful marriage.

The pope promptly excommunicated Henry, delivering over his soul to the Devil and his dominions to the first invader; but the interdict did not turn the English people back to the papacy, as a similar curse had turned the French in the time of Philip Augustus. The Parliament, standing for the national independence, passed the Act of Supremacy by which the interference of foreign bishops, princes, and potentates was repudiated within the limits of the English dominions. Henry, assuming to himself the power and jurisdiction of a pope, then commenced the reformation of the Church; still, he could not break far away from the Roman forms. He endeavored, though with ill success, to suppress Tyndale’s translation of the Bible—the only one known to Englishmen; he affirmed that the sacrament of bread and wine was the real body, and approved of the worship of images; he hinted that auricular confession to a priest was necessary, although contrition and amendment of life might accomplish salvation; he averred that ceremonies were good and lawful, as having mystical significations in them; but he renounced Purgatory, declaring that while the souls of the departed might be prayed for, yet they should be left to God’s mercy, and that the gross abuses of this doctrine, as in papal pardons and masses, should be corrected. It was a vast advance for freedom of religion. Four of the seven sacraments were passed over. The Bible and the ancient creeds were made the standards of faith without the traditions of the Church or the decrees of the pope.

That the clergy had followed their King in his revolt against the papacy is shown by the signing of this declaration by the Archbishop of Canterbury, seventeen bishops, forty abbots and friars, and fifty archdeacons and proctors of the convocation. But a reactionary feeling shortly led Henry and the Parliament to pass the law of the Six Articles, establishing the communion in one kind, the perpetual obligation of vows of chastity, the utility of private masses, the celibacy of the clergy, and the necessity of auricular confession, leaving the papacy and some of its traditions still eliminated.

Impelled partly by his avarice and partly by his contempt for Rome, Henry now began to suppress the monasteries which under the encouragement of the papal system had acquired fabulous wealth and power. It was asserted after due examination that these institutions were the hotbeds of the grossest immorality, and they were accordingly seized and their revenues and lands either annexed to the Crown or bestowed upon the favorites of the Court. This confiscation comprised 645 monasteries, of which twenty-eight had abbots who enjoyed a seat in Parliament; ninety colleges; 2,374 chantries and free chapels; and 110 hospitals. Certainly the brusque Tudor earned the pseudonym which was with grave humor bestowed upon him, Mauler of Monasteries.

When, upon the death of Henry, Edward VI, his son by Jane Seymour, came to the throne, the Reformation was pushed forward with a piety and spiritual zeal
which had been absent in the preceding reign. Edward, though in his boyhood, was gifted with singular wisdom and moderation. The statute of the Six Articles was promptly repealed, and it was enacted that the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper should be administered in both kinds, in accordance with its first institution and the practice of the Church for five hundred years. Private masses were prohibited. Uniformity of worship was enjoined upon the people. But at this moment there arose a controversy over an infinitely inconsiderable incident which led to a permanent schism in the Church of England. The clergy had continued to wear the vestments of the Roman forms. Many of the preachers were poor, and it was now alleged that the prescribed habits were relics of popery and should be abolished. Bishop Hooper refused to be consecrated in the clerical robes. Cranmer and Ridley insisted that he must conform to custom. Dr. Rogers and others upheld Hooper. Conformists and Nonconformists disputed about clothes, the Nonconformists soon winning the greater popularity. Out of this breach ultimately grew the various Protestant denominations, and it is fortunate for mankind that the controversy, however trivial in its origin, became unreconcilable; for uniformity in that age would inevitably have fastened another intolerant sacerdotal tyranny upon the world in the place of that which had just been overthrown. Much was heard then and much is heard in this age of an almost universal desire for Christian union; but so long as all Christians acknowledge one Divine Author of their faith, is it not unquestionably to the interest of Christendom that men should maintain honest differences of opinion in matters that are not essential to salvation? It can probably be safely affirmed that a large numerical preponderance in any one of the Christian denominations, ancient or modern, would lead to political inequalities in a greater or less degree which would be prejudicial to the common welfare. Bishop Burnet, on behalf of the King and the Conformists, propounded this question: “What must be done when the major part of a Church is, according to the conscience of the supreme civil magistrate, in an error, and the lesser part is in the right?” The Bishop then answers himself with true Royalist doctrine: “There is no promise in Scripture,” he says, “that the majority of pastors shall be in the right; on the contrary it is certain, that truth, separate from interest, has few votaries. Now, as it is not reasonable that the smaller part should depart from their sentiments, because opposed by the majority, whose interest led them to oppose the Reformation, therefore they might take sanctuary in the authority of the prince and the law.” But this is a very palpable fallacy. A hundred and forty years later James II was on the throne, and James and the minority were Roman Catholics. Would it have been right then for the majority to be guided by the conscience of the supreme civil magistrate? The good bishop would hardly admit so much. The growth of sects at any stage of the world’s history has always emphasized the intellectual and spiritual expansion of the race and broadened the lines of human liberty. From a disputation concerning clothes, the schism soon spread until the Nonconformists directed their attacks against the assumption which the State maintained that it had the right to control the worship and the consciences of the people. Those persons who refused to subscribe the liturgy,
ceremonies, and discipline of the Church, as arranged by Archbishop Parker and his Episcopal coadjutors (1564) were called Puritans as a term of reproach for their aspirations after pure hearts and a holy conversation. The divisions which came among the Puritans at a later date will be described in another place. The principles of religion which Edward endeavored, during his short reign, to impress upon his people as the essential spirit of the Reformation, were the right of private judgment, and the sufficiency of the Bible as the rule of faith and life; and, in despite of a multiplicity of sects, no Protestant congregation has ever departed from this broad foundation. No papists were burnt in Edward’s time. Cranmer, the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, did much to promote the new forms; but he was narrow, weak, bigoted, and cruel, and while he exhibited a commendable patience towards the Catholics, he destroyed dissenting brethren of his own faith with horrid tortures. At Edward’s death (1553), Mary came to the throne without serious opposition; and then might have been realized the words of the Savior of Mankind, who, foreseeing the miseries that would attend the establishment of His religion, mournfully warned the world that he came not to bring peace but a sword. A pliable Parliament instantly subverted England to that execrable subordination to the papacy which Rome had exacted of King John when his barons were endeavoring to establish their liberties at Runnymede. Mary and her bishops, Rochester and Bonner, lighted the torch which burned uninterruptingly for five years amid the cries of expiring martyrs. All of King Edward’s laws with regard to religion were repealed. "It was determined," says Hume, "to let loose the laws in their full vigor against the reformed religion; and England was soon filled with scenes of horror, which have ever since rendered the Catholic religion the object of general detestation, and which prove that no human depravity can equal revenge and cruelty covered with the mantle of religion." Dr. Rogers, Bishop Hooper, Doctors Sanders, Taylor, Philpot, and Farrar, all noted for their fine characters and their prominence in the Church, were burnt at the stake. The torture of Bishops Ridley and Latimer followed in like manner. Cranmer was thrown into prison and there pusillanimously signed no less than six recantations, but without avail, and he died in the flames to which he himself had cruelly consigned others. To deny the real presence, though only in private conversation, was a sufficient cause for this ferocious penalty. Neither age nor sex was spared. It is computed that 277 victims suffered death at the stake for their opinions under Mary’s persecutions. Her reign was marked by a deep trail of blood and a smoking cloud of fagots, which have made her for all time the most odious of England’s sovereigns.

Many of the Puritans fled to the Continent and found refuge among their Protestant brethren in France, Flanders, Germany, and Switzerland. In Geneva John Calvin was soon made their leader, and John Knox was likewise there, until sent for to take charge of the church at Frankfort. A disagreement arose among the expatriated Puritans over their forms of worship, some inclining to King Edward’s Book of Common Prayer, while others objected to it as the "leavings of popish dregs." At Mary’s death, while they all agreed on the
essentials of their religion, they were farther apart as to its outward forms than they had been before.

The accession of Elizabeth was hailed as a providential deliverance from the enormities of the past reign. This famous Sovereign restored the Protestant faith to its greatest supremacy, and under her beneficent government an almost universal toleration was established in England. But while Elizabeth’s policy was such as to win for her the uninterrupted loyalty and esteem of her subjects, her wisdom was not sufficiently enlightened to convince her that the coercion of religious convictions was beyond the power of an earthly ruler. Therefore her first Parliament passed an act (June 24, 1559) for the uniformity of religion, which was a source of mental disquiet to the Nonconformists throughout her reign, and which produced strife in the Church for nearly a hundred years. Some men preferred their ministers in black gowns, others in surplices, and others in no especial habit; and in attempting to enforce a rigid observance of non-essentials, their gracious Sovereign forgot the precedent of the disagreement among the Romans about eating flesh and observing festivals, which was expediently adjusted by the Apostle Paul in this wise injunction: "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not, and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. Why dost thou judge thy brother? or, why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ" [Romans 14:3]. Had the Reformation returned at once to a wise tolerance of minor variation in forms, as it returned to the doctrines of the Apostolic Church, much bitterness and reproach would have been avoided.

From the broad church structure which Cranmer had endeavored to graft on the roots of English papacy, and which he vainly hoped would win the approval of all those who dissented from Rome, there grew branches of Protestantism which were none the less parts of the parent stem because they were branches. The Presbyterians, opposing the rule of bishops, first sprang up in Geneva under Calvin, and in Scotland under Knox. The Independents or Congregationalists arose later (about 1550) out of the Presbyterian Church. The policy of the Independents was that each church or congregation was entitled "to elect its own officers, to manage all its own affairs, and to stand independent of, and irresponsible to, all authority, saving that only of the Supreme and Divine Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ." Its theory was, therefore, the widest departure that had yet transpired in the desertion of the Roman dogmas; and it was the spirit of Independency, whether in or out of that denomination, which finally secured religious freedom to Protestants, and repulsed the encroachments of the civil power. Sir Walter Raleigh, speaking in Parliament in 1592, opposed a bill to transport the Independents (or Brownists, as they were improperly called). "I am sorry for it," he said, "but I am afraid there is near twenty thousand of them in England; and when they are gone, who shall maintain their wives and children?" It was not until Independency took so deep a root in the English religion, and its followers became so numerous in the masses of the people, that the true spirit of Protestantism flourished. The Roman fallacy, that there must be an earthly head of the
Church, and that heresy, or choice of opinion, was dangerous to the State, could not be exterminated until the Puritans rose in arms and crushed it—and crushed with it the pretensions of Church and Crown to absolute power. Henry, in breaking with Rome, was an actual pope in England, and Cranmer, who came immediately after him, was little less than pope. Calvin, severe and cruel in spite of his gigantic work in the Reformation, was a pope in Geneva. Luther, autocratic and splenetic, was a pope in Germany. Knox, uncompromising and dictatorial, was a pope in Scotland. These men were all Reformers, and as such they deserve the grateful esteem of mankind; but had either of them been suffered to reconstruct religion unopposed by a healthful variation of opinions, he would verily have substituted in the place of the Roman oligarchy a system which shortly would have become equally tyrannical and corrupt.

This digression has taken a wide range, but it seemed necessary, in order that the reader might be in possession of the motives and the secret springs of the approaching struggle, to briefly review the history of the search of men and nations after the true God. As Cromwell set out from Huntingdon to take his seat at Westminster, he could not but reflect, in his spirit of deep devotion, that if other men were in spiritual strife or doubt, he at least had found fulfillment of the promise, "Seek and ye shall find."

CHAPTER VII

Absolute Monarchy

The eleven years which elapsed between the dissolution of King Charles' third Parliament and the assembling of his fourth formed a period of great tranquility for the nation. Lord Clarendon, in his fascinating history, observes that all His Majesty’s dominions "enjoyed the greatest calm and the fullest measure of felicity that any people in any age, for so long time together, have been blessed with, to the wonder and envy of all the other parts of Christendom."

Still, the absolute Government which the perturbed Monarch now sought to impose upon his people was but impatiently accepted by them. Charles, who, since the death of Buckingham, had refused to trust others as he had trusted that brilliant and erratic adviser, became his own Minister, and developed his administration upon those narrow theories of kingcraft which he had received from his father. There were no military incidents in this period, excepting a contribution of six thousand men to aid the Protestant cause in the invasion of Germany by the illustrious Gustavus of Sweden, and the religious controversy with Scotland, which brought about, first, the Short Parliament, and afterwards the Long Parliament, and which will be explained on a further page. The King’s chief advisers were, Henrietta Maria, his Queen, the Earl of Strafford, and Archbishop Laud. The Queen, possessed of sense and spirit, beautiful, accomplished, and full of affection, had been enabled ever to hold the unshaken fidelity and devotion of Charles, whose passion for her increased as the difficulties of his situation encompassed him more and more. Strafford, who as Sir Thomas Wentworth had opposed the King in the preceding
Parliaments and been instrumental in forwarding the passage of the Petition of Right, was now come over to the Court party, and enjoyed the lucrative posts of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and President of the Council of York. William Laud, Bishop of London, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury and Commissioner of the Treasury, acquired a high ascendency over the ceremonial King; and it was chiefly by his counsels that those measures of religious restriction were adopted which, taken with the evils of the civil government, finally aroused the Puritans to revolt.

It was the severity, intolerance, and bigotry of William Laud in the spiritual affairs of the realm, more than the political course of the King and of Strafford, which finally led the people to form themselves into two conflicting armies. The Puritans would rather have given up all they possessed, and turned their backs on country and kindred, than conform to the innovations which the Archbishop had introduced into the English Church, and Laud would rather have had them leave the country than not conform. The unwisdom of this course will be seen by comparing it with the policy of Richelieu, who, while entertaining a violent hatred of Protestantism, so wrought upon the patriotism of the Protestants that they were always glad to join the Catholics in defense of their common country. In England Laud depressed the Puritans so as to undermine their loyalty to the Crown. Under his system of governmental preferments, it soon became apparent to all that the good order, morality, and piety of the Church were suffering a serious decline.

The first step taken by Charles after the dissolution of the third Parliament was to lay an information in the Star Chamber for seditious speech against nine members of the House of Commons, Sir John Eliot, Denzil Hollis, Benjamin Valentine, Walter Long, William Coriton, William Strode, John Selden, Sir Miles Hobart, and Sir Peter Hayman. Of these men Sir John Eliot refused to acknowledge his fault, was fined heavily, and thrown into prison, where he died, while two others, Hollis and Strode, were twelve years later immortalized by being named in the writ for the arrest of the five members. A proclamation was issued accounting it presumption for anyone to suggest the calling of another Parliament. Tonnage and poundage continued to be assessed by the royal authority without the consent of Parliament.

In order that the militia might be duly drilled, each county was assessed a certain sum for maintaining a muster-master, appointed for that purpose. Compositions were openly made with the recusant Catholics, and the religion of that sect became a regular source of the revenue. The Catholics were not oppressed in any other way during the reign of Charles, and the harsh laws which the Puritan spirit of the nation had called forth against them were allowed to sink into a tolerant inactivity. A commission was issued for compounding with those enjoying Crown lands upon defective titles—an expedient by which some money was secured to the gaping Treasury.
An old statute, now thought to be obsolete, was revived, by which all who possessed twenty pounds a year should be obliged, when summoned, to appear and receive the order of knighthood.

Monopolies were erected. Soap, leather, salt, and other commodities were put under the control of commercial oligarchies, which extorted large prices for their goods.

The last and perhaps the most obnoxious measure for replenishing the royal exchequer, was the famous, or infamous, writ of ship-money, in which the sheriff of every county in England was directed "to provide a ship of war for the King’s service, and to send it amply provided and fitted, by such a day, to such a place"; and with that writ instructions were sent to each sheriff, that “instead of a ship, he should levy upon his county such a sum of money, and return the same to the Treasurer of the Navy for His Majesty’s use," with directions for proceeding against those who refused to pay. This was ship-money, "a word," says Clarendon, "of a lasting sound in the memory of this kingdom, by which for some years really accrued the yearly sum of two hundred thousand pounds to the King’s coffers." It was John Hampden’s refusal to pay this tax (his share of which was only some twenty shillings), and the great trial which followed, that first won for him the admiration of all patriotic Englishmen. In this trial the judgment of the court was in the King’s behalf, and men who had heretofore paid the tax as a loan or favor to the King in his necessity, were now offended when it was exacted as his legal right. "They no more looked upon it," remarks the noble historian, "as the case of one man, but the case of the kingdom, nor as an imposition laid upon them by the King, but by the judges, which they thought themselves bound in conscience to the public justice not to submit to."

Men were willing to admit that urgent necessity or public safety would justify on occasion an extreme exercise of the regal power in the levying of this arbitrary tax. But when the judges sustained the action of the King’s council as sound doctrine of law, and found the levy of the twenty shillings to be legal for no other reason than that Hampden could afford to pay the money, it was justly considered that the liberties of the subject were being unduly invaded.

In 1633 Charles made a royal progress to Scotland to be crowned King there, and he was received by the people with every sign of welcome and loyalty. The popular discontents did not then seem to have passed beyond the Tweed. Dr. Laud preached on a Sunday in the chapel at Edinburgh, and took occasion to recommend to his hearers the duty of conformity to the Episcopalian worship, his remarks on that subject being received with an apparently gracious accord. The Court of Star Chamber resumed its activities upon the King’s return to London. Sir David Fowlis was fined five thousand pounds for having dissuaded a friend from compounding with the commissioners of knighthood.

There were three individuals whose malice towards the government was notorious, and whose parts were looked upon with slight respect, yet who now became popular heroes by the severe treatment they received in the Star Chamber. These were William Prynne, a lawyer, Henry Burton, a preacher, and John Bastwick, a physician. While they were not esteemed to possess unusual ability in their several professions, yet, like others of mediocre parts, they
were all too willing to accept the crown of martyrdom, and martyrs they became. Prynne had written an absurd book vulgarly denouncing the established hierarchy and the practices of the English Church, especially the new superstitions introduced by Laud. He was condemned to be disbarred from practice; to stand in the pillories of Westminster and Cheapside; to have both ears cut off, one in each place; to pay five thousand pounds to the King; and suffer imprisonment for life. The other two offenders were treated with equal brutality. Prynne, regaining his liberty after a time, renewed his attacks, and had his ears—or what was left of them—cut off a second time, receiving another heavy fine and another imprisonment. These persecutions aroused general indignation. The universal desire for political and religious liberty drove many of the Puritans to America. On one occasion, eight ships were weighing anchor in the Thames and ready to sail, when they were stayed by an order from Council. According to two Royalist historians, there were present on those vessels Sir Arthur Hazelrig, John Hampden, John Pym, and Oliver Cromwell in search of new homes in a new world. The story is popular but not credible, as Rushworth records, that, on receiving a petition from the merchants, passengers, and owners of the ships, "His Majesty was graciously pleased to free them from their late restraint, to proceed in their intended voyage." If our four patriots were on the ships there was thus no reason for their disembarkation. But there can be no doubt that an emigration to America, as a means of evading the insufferable evils of the times, had been discussed among these men and their associates. Lord Brooke and Lord Saye-and-Sele had purchased a large tract of land in America and established a settlement named after both, Saybrook, and there is evidence that Pym, Hampden, Sir Benjamin Rudyard, Lord Mandeville, and the Earl of Warwick were financially interested in the transaction. It is entirely reasonable to assume that Oliver Cromwell, encouraged by his cousin John Hampden, was also an investor. It might be interesting to conjecture what the history of England would have been, had these men undertaken to endure a patriot’s exile in America instead of engaging in the alternative of civil war. Laud, in 1637, sought to introduce the English liturgy into Scotland, and his efforts were attended by a disastrous failure. Any project which this man laid his hand to was instantly beset with the cry of popery, so great was the nation’s abhorrence of the innovations which he had introduced. A papist he was not, although he had at times considered the feasibility of a reconciliation between the English and the Roman Churches. But the texture of his religion was similar to that of Rome. Hume says, "The same profound respect was exacted to the sacerdotal character, the same submission required to the creeds and decrees of synods and councils, the same pomp and ceremony was affected in worship, and the same superstitious regard to days, postures, meats, and vestments. No wonder, therefore, that this prelate was everywhere among the Puritans regarded with horror, as the forerunner of Antichrist." And so, on Sunday, the 23rd of July, 1637, a Scottish bishop, acting as the instrument of Laud, took up the new liturgy. "Let us read the collect of the day," he said, and Jennie Geddes hurled her stool at his head! "De’il colic the
wame of thee!" answered Jennie. "Thou foul thief, wilt thou say mass at my lug?" The word "mass" was taken up and there was a great outcry. "A pope, a pope!" cried some, "stone him!" Turbulent scenes were enacted in all the other churches where attempts were made to introduce the new ceremonies. In short, the Scottish nation with one voice rejected the liturgy. Hume, always an apologist and pleader for the King, sententiously observes, "The treacherous, the cruel, the unrelenting Philip, accompanied with all the terrors of a Spanish Inquisition, was scarcely, during the preceding century, opposed in the Low Countries with more determined fury, than was now, by the Scots, the mild, the humane Charles, attended with his inoffensive liturgy."

The first act in Scotland which followed the rejection of the liturgy was the universal adoption of the famous Covenant. This obligation required the subscribers to renounce popery, to resist religious innovations, and to defend each other against all opposition whatever, for the greater glory of God, and the greater honor and advantage of their King and country. The people, without regard to age, sex, or condition, made haste to sign the Covenant. There was no subsidence of the tumult, and Charles sent the Marquis of Hamilton, the most prominent Scottish nobleman, and closely attached to the royal interests, as commissioner to treat with the Covenanters. When Hamilton proposed that they renounce and recall the Covenant, they plainly told him that they would sooner renounce their baptism. Hamilton returned to England with this answer, and was immediately sent back with more satisfactory concessions. The King was now willing to abandon all those measures of religion for Scotland which had been so patiently cherished both by King James and himself. He would abolish the liturgy, the canons, and the high commission court, and Hamilton was invested with authority to call first an Assembly, and then a Parliament, where every national grievance might receive redress. These proposals displayed the humanity and betrayed the weakness of the King. The Covenanters willingly accepted the Assembly and the Parliament, in which they expected to have control, but they relinquished nothing on their own part. The Scottish people were filled with devotion to the King and respect for his government, but their fear of popery and their detestation of the ecclesiastical tyranny of Laud moved them to the adoption of such measures for the protection of their religion that Charles summoned an army and marched towards Scotland to subdue them. This was in May 1639.

The brave Northerners were not to be frightened by a show of force, and they gathered a small army under the command of David Leslie, a soldier trained in the Low Country wars, and marched forward with Scotland’s best nobility in the ranks to "humbly present their grievances to the King."

The English army was commanded by the Earl of Arundel, a nobleman of such magnificence that he "resorted sometimes to the Court because there only was a greater man than himself, and went thither the seldomer because there was a greater man than himself." The Earl of Essex was Lieutenant-General, and the Earl of Holland General of the Horse. The royal fleet was entrusted to the charge of the Marquis of Hamilton. Charles had, under an old feudal custom, summoned all the nobility of his realm to attend him in this expedition at their
own charge, and it seems clear that he depended more upon the pomp and circumstance of war to overcome the opposition of his Scottish subjects, than upon a sanguinary battle. This feeling was likewise entertained by the Army, the common soldiers calling it "a bishops' war." By the time the King reached York a suspicion had gained lodgment in his breast that certain men of station who accompanied him did not regard the uprising in Scotland with that abhorrence of rebellion which should inflame a loyal subject. It was unwisely proposed that a short protestation be drawn, in which all men should "profess their loyalty and obedience to His Majesty, and disclaim and renounce the having any intelligence, or holding any correspondence with the rebels." This device unmasked some malcontents, Lord Brooke and Lord Saye being among those who could not in conscience subscribe the protestation; and we have the admission from Whitelock, the Parliamentary historian, that both Pym and Hampden, while not in this army, were engaged in correspondence with the Scottish leaders who were responsible for this aggression.

Essex moved forward with a large part of the royal forces, and occupied Berwick without other opposition than the solemn warning, repeated many times by Scottish gentlemen whom he met on his march, that he would be overwhelmed and annihilated by a superior army as soon as he approached the walls of that town. The King followed Essex to the borders of Scotland, and encamped his forces in an open field called the Berks, on the farther side of Berwick. The Earl of Holland with three thousand horse, two thousand foot, and a train of artillery, marched some twelve miles beyond the border to a place called Dunce. When he came in sight of the Scottish forces, their banners bearing the legend "For Christ’s Crown and Covenant," he was deceived, by reason of the manner in which they were placed among the trees on the brow of a hill, and thinking their numbers greatly in excess of what they really were, he instantly retired to the King’s camp "with an account," says Clarendon with naive humor, "of what he heard and saw, or believed he saw, and yet thought not fit to stay for an answer."

The Scots promptly sent letters to the King "lamenting their ill fortune, that their enemies had so great credit with the King, as to persuade him to believe that they were or could be disobedient to him, a thing that could never enter into their loyal hearts, that they desired nothing but to be admitted into the presence of their gracious Sovereign, to lay their grievances at his royal feet, and leave the determination of them entirely to his own wisdom and pleasure." Other messages, the most humble and submissive in spirit, were sent to the King, and a peace, known as the Pacification of Berwick, soon followed. The King indiscreetly disbanded his army before any of the obligations of this agreement were carried out by the Scots, and he had no sooner reached London than he discovered that the late military affair was wholly without substantial result; and he then determined, with fatal tenacity, to make war upon them a second time and conquer their obstinacy.

In all these years every expedient known to absolute rulers had been used to raise a revenue sufficient to carry on the government. But taxes and loans, monopolies, compoundings, knighthoods, ship-money, and all the other
desperate resources of this desperate Monarch, had been exhausted. There was palpably but one thing which he could now do. That was to trust his people. Accordingly he called his fourth Parliament, to the great joy of all England which had thought never to see a Parliament again. Before this step was taken, the Earl of Strafford was dispatched to Ireland, to call a Parliament there, from which he procured a large sum of money, with a further offer of "their persons and estates," if required. It was vainly hoped that this action would influence the English Parliament to like liberality and devotion. The fourth Parliament, known to history as the Short Parliament, met April 13, 1640, with Oliver Cromwell sitting in it for Cambridge. Its members, smarting under the arbitrary acts of the King’s Government during the past eleven years, had assembled under a grim determination to assert their rights as representatives of the people of England. The King sent the usual message, requesting supply. The Commons pursued their usual dilatory and exasperating tactics, giving precedence to their grievances, which were set forth in a great speech by John Pym. The House of Lords, swayed by the most amicable sentiments towards both King and Commons, presumed to advise that the first business should be supply. The Commons resented this timely advice as "so high a breach of privilege, that they could not proceed with any other matter until they first received satisfaction and reparation from the House of Peers." The Lords apologized humbly, but the Commons would not be appeased, and they appointed a committee to examine the history of England in order that it might be ascertained whether so grievous an affront had ever before been put upon a House of Commons. When several days had been spent in this manner, and the urgent necessities of the government were no nearer relief, the King sent them a message, commiserating the unhappy estrangement between the two Houses, and offering, if Parliament would grant him twelve subsidies to be paid in three years, to forever relinquish his claims to the obnoxious ship-money tax. Acquiescence with this suggestion would have gone far towards relaxing the strained relations which existed between Charles and his Parliament. But the Commons would not have it so. Certain members observed that "they were to purchase a release of an imposition very unjustly laid upon the kingdom, and by purchasing it they should upon the matter confess it had been just, which no man in his heart acknowledged." A whole day was consumed in a fruitless though good-tempered debate on the message. There was but one ill-natured speech made, and that was by "a private country gentleman, little known," who observed that the supply was to be employed in supporting the Episcopal war, which he thought the bishops were fittest to do themselves. The identity of this speaker has not been disclosed. The next day, John Hampden, the most popular man in the House, perhaps the most popular man in England, moved the question, "Whether the House would consent to the proposition made by the King as it was contained in the message?" This motion would undoubtedly have been carried against the King, if put to the question then. But Sergeant Glanvile, the Speaker of the House, who stood upon the floor while the Commons, as Committee of the Whole, were debating the message, delivered an eloquent and pathetic speech,
pleading for a grant of the sum demanded by the King. He denounced ship-
money and the judgment of the court against Hampden on that tax. But he
advised them that he had computed the amount which he would have to pay on
his extensive estates under the twelve subsidies, and the amount seemed so
small as to disarm opposition. He implored them to comply with the King’s
desire “for the good of the nation, and to reconcile him to Parliaments forever,
which this seasonable testimony of their affections would infallibly do.” This
appeal seemed to touch his hearers sensibly, but some who were bent on
nothing if not to oppose the royal will demurred to his counsels and demanded
the question.
Then Lord Clarendon, at that time sitting as Mr. Hyde, arose, and desired that
the question might not be put. He told Mr. Hampden that it was a captious
question, to which only those who were opposing the King would give their
votes. He reminded the House that those who desired to give the King a supply,
as he believed most did, while they might differ as to the proportion and the
manner, could receive no satisfaction by that question. He therefore proposed
an amendment that the question of supply alone should be put, to be followed,
if carried in the affirmative, by questions for the amount and the manner. If
the first motion were carried in the negative, he told them, it would produce
the same effect as the other question proposed by Mr. Hampden would do.
Hyde’s motion was expedient and timely, and contained an easy solution of the
existing entanglement, and there were loud calls for the Speaker to put the
question. "Mr. Hyde’s question," cried some. "Mr. Hampden’s question," cried
others. The confusion increased, and the spirit of the House waxed hot. There
was a chance for Hyde’s motion to pass when Sir Henry Vane the elder rashly
stood up, and, as an officer of the King’s household, warned the House that it
would be useless to adopt Hyde’s motion, "For," he said, "if you should pass a
vote for the giving the King a supply, if not in the manner and proportion
proposed in His Majesty’s message, it will not be accepted by him!"
This speech, which Clarendon avers to be the outcome of Vane’s malice, and of
which Whitelock says that in demanding twelve subsidies Vane exceeded the
King’s wish by one half, incensed the Parliament. The afternoon was far spent
and the House wearily adjourned. When they met the next morning they were
summoned to the House of Lords, and dissolved by the royal command. This
was on the 5th of May, 1640.
This Parliament lasted but three weeks, and the time was consumed by Pym’s
speech on the grievances of the nation, the altercation between the two
Houses on the right of the Commons to originate the appropriation bills, and
the debate on the King’s message asking for twelve subsidies.
The nation was greatly distressed by this sudden dissolution, for it was thought
that an equal number of sober and dispassionate men would never sit in
Parliament again during those troubous times. It must be acknowledged,
however, that while the general bearing of the Commons was extremely loyal
and apparently pliant to the King’s desires, there were those among them who,
wearing smooth faces and speaking meek words, had come to Parliament with
a deep-rooted desire to subdue the King and destroy his power.
The King was greatly discomfited by the failure of his effort to win the support of his Parliament. He saw that he had been guilty of rash judgment in its hasty dissolution, and even inquired of his advisers whether he might by proclamation assemble them once more. Finding that impossible, and being wholly without money, his borders threatened by an invading army, and every measure for unlawful taxation already exhausted, he was well-nigh driven to despair. In this embarrassing situation he made an emphatic appeal to his friends for assistance. The Lords of the Council, and others of the nobility, as well as private gentlemen of means, advanced him money with so much alacrity that in the course of a fortnight he was in possession of £300,000, an amount contributed by a few friends which was equal to nearly six of the twelve subsidies he had sought to obtain from the whole nation.

An army was quickly raised for service against the Scots. The officers of the former campaign were generally slighted, an affront to be remembered by them at a later day. The Earls of Essex, Arundel, and Holland were displaced. The young Earl of Northumberland was made General, and Lord Conway General of the Horse. The Earl of Strafford went to Ireland and gathered both men and money there. In the meantime Northumberland was seized with a dangerous sickness, and Strafford, himself in ill health, hurried back to England to take command as Lieutenant-General, leaving the Earl of Ormond in charge of Irish affairs.

Before the arrival of Strafford, the Lord Keeper Conway, a man of voluptuous habits, but who had already won an enviable reputation in arms, a man of learning, and of unquestioned devotion to the King, marched his cavalry to the banks of the Tweed near Newburn, and sat down there in a secure encampment to watch the Scots. And it was here that his army was subjected to a rout that was irreparable, unexplainable, and infamous. The Scottish hosts appeared upon the opposite bank of the river at a time and place when they were expected, made their way through a deep though fordable stream, and up a hill where the English waited in battle array to receive them. On the near approach of the Scots the whole English force, without giving or taking a blow, turned and fled pell-mell, the horse flying from Newburn, and the foot, who had caught the infection of fear, retreating in disorder from Newcastle. Conway made no attempt to stop this headlong flight, although his troops, when they found themselves not pursued, were heartily ashamed of themselves and begged that they be led once more to meet the foe. But they were conducted to Durham, where Strafford found them on his return from Ireland.

The Scots, meanwhile, unable to comprehend that they had won a great victory, surrounded the fortifications of Newcastle, but dared not enter until, after standing there for two days, they felt reasonably sure that the stronghold could be occupied without resistance.

The King and Strafford were incensed at the cowardly retreat of the English forces, and Strafford expressed his indignation so forcibly that he became an object of greater aversion to the Army than the Scots themselves, against whom it seems pretty well established there was no very bitter hatred. He withdrew the army to Yorkshire and he himself followed the King to York. If the
English troops had proved themselves worthy of reliance they could have beat back the Scots beyond the Tweed without great effort. Or if the nation had been filled with a tranquil loyalty towards the King, the train bands of Yorkshire alone could have crushed this invasion. But the King could trust no one. Once more his money was gone. A foreign enemy was fortified in his very kingdom. His army, and the people generally, he felt to be unfaithful. In this extremity a petition arrived from a number of Lords and other influential persons in London, plainly bearing the handiwork of Pym and Hampden, beseeching him to call a Parliament.

And a Parliament must needs be called forthwith. But Charles was not sufficiently courageous to assemble his Parliament by the most direct method. That would be too humiliating. Instead, he called a great council of all the Peers of England to attend him at York, that their advice might be had in this pressing emergency. The precise object of Charles in calling his Peers together was not explained at the time, nor has research in our times disclosed a satisfactory reason. Whether it was the King’s thought that they, as a part of the highest estate of the realm, would recognize his perilous situation, and, through that, their own dangerous environment; whether he expected them to stand with him in his usurpation of all the powers of the government and set the Commons at defiance; or whether, by having the whole body of the Peers petition for a Parliament, he intended to save a part of his dignity, at the same time acceding to this great desire of the nation, are questions which each student of history must resolve for himself. It is probable that the King was moved by a partial consideration of all these motives. The Peers came together, and promptly advised that a Parliament be straightway called. The King acceded to this request with such grace as the occasion permitted, and writs were issued calling the Parliament for November 3, 1640.

The Council of State, which had supported the King in the amazing methods of government of the past eleven years, contained Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Strafford, and Lord Cottington, as principal ministers; and joined with them were the Earl of Northumberland, a young nobleman to whom Charles was much attached; Juxon, Bishop of London, as High-Treasurer; and the two secretaries, Sir Henry Vane the elder and Sir Francis Windebank. The Marquis of Hamilton, an intriguing but powerful Scot, was also closely identified with the King’s policy.

In the meantime a treaty of peace was put into negotiation with the Scots at Ripon, the sitting of the commission for pacification being shortly afterwards removed to London, where the Court followed them. The Scottish army was still on English soil. With this situation of affairs confronting the nation, on the 3rd of November, 1640, the Long Parliament met at Westminster.

In the chair was Speaker Lenthall, and in front of him, John Rushworth, as Assistant Clerk, making careful record of the proceedings for the perusal of posterity. Pym sat on the left side some distance down the hall. Between him and the Speaker were Edmund Waller, the poet; Denzil Hollis, afterwards named as one of the five members; Henry Marten, the witty, the delightful, the dissolute Republican; and Oliver St. John, a severe and unrelenting patriot,
whose place as Attorney-General could not corrupt him from his conscientious opposition to the Court. On the opposite side were Edward Hyde, afterwards the Earl of Clarendon, whose graceful history is one of the chief literary achievements of that age; his friend Lord Falkland, and Sir Henry Vane, Senior, one of the King’s Secretaries. Near these, on the same side, were William Strode, another one of the obnoxious five, Alderman Pennington, and the Huntingdon “sloven,” Oliver Cromwell. John Selden, Sir Arthur Hazelrig, and young Sir Harry Vane were also there, together with many others whose names became prominent only as the stirring times afforded them opportunities to play their parts.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EARL OF STRATFORD

No sooner had the Long Parliament come together than a desperate blow was struck at the assumptions of the Crown. This consisted in a successful attempt to destroy the Prime Minister. Sir Thomas Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, Baron Wentworth, and Baron of Raby, was born in Chancery Lane on Good Friday, April 13, 1593. His family boasted a descent from John of Gaunt, and later, from Margaret, Duchess of Somerset, the grandmother of Henry VII. He was educated at St. John’s College, Cambridge, where the elegant occupations of scholarship consumed all of his time. His letters indicate that at this period he explored nearly the whole realm of polite literature. Having attained the age of eighteen, he, in accordance with a custom of the time, set out for foreign travel, spending some fourteen months on the Continent in charge of a tutor. Upon his return to England he was knighted by James I, and married soon afterwards to Lady Margaret Clifford, a daughter of the Earl of Cumberland. This lady lived but a short time. After a decent period of mourning, he married his best-beloved spouse, Lady Arabella Hollis, a sister of Denzil Hollis, and after her death he was united to Elizabeth Rhodes, the daughter of a simple Knight, this third wife surviving him. He sat in the Parliaments of King James, and enjoyed sufficient favor from Buckingham to secure the office of Keeper of the Records for the West Riding of Yorkshire. In the Parliaments of Charles he continued to be a prominent member, and was identified with Pym, Selden, Seymour, and Eliot in those early measures of the first Parliament which it was fondly hoped would restrict the King’s authority. Early in 1626 he made formal application to Buckingham for the Presidency of the Council of York, a judicial body erected with somewhat extraordinary powers, with jurisdiction in the northern parts of England. He failed of his desire, and in the next Parliament (1626) his place of Keeper of the Rolls was taken from him through Buckingham’s displeasure. At the expiration of this Parliament the Forced Loans were demanded, and Wentworth was assessed for £40. He refused to pay this and was thrown into prison, his incarceration being shared by the Lady Arabella, who presented him with his second child there. While thus restrained of his liberty he was elected to the third Parliament of Charles (1628), where he became further distinguished for the vehemence of
his opposition to the Court. He inveighed with great warmth of language against those measures of the King’s advisers, the adoption of which by himself at a later day cost him his head. He said:

"They have introduced a Privy Council, ravishing at once the spheres of all ancient government, imprisoning us without bail or bond. They have taken from us—what shall I say? Indeed, what have they left us? They have taken from us all means of supplying the King and ingratiating ourselves with him by tearing up the roots of all property, which, if they be not seasonably set into the ground by his Majesty’s hand, we shall have instead of beauty, baldness."

Through all the debates in this Parliament on subsidies Wentworth spoke and voted with the opposition, keeping fully abreast with Pym and Eliot in the boldness of his denunciations of the King’s demands. What was the astonishment of the country, therefore, when, within three weeks of the prorogation of this Parliament, they learned that Sir Thomas Wentworth, the staunch patriot, had been created a Baron, and shortly afterwards a Viscount, and, finally, that he had been appointed to the important position of President of the North! The reasons for his apostasy are not known. A fair presumption is that he was ambitious, as other able men have been ambitious, and that as his preferment could come only from the King’s favor, he had surrendered, or altered, his principles of popular rights in such a manner as to permit his advocating for the future the policy of the Crown. That he honestly believed the Commons were at that time carrying their restriction of the prerogative with a too high hand, cannot for a moment be admitted. He had been far too active in the conduct of the opposition to make so charitable an explanation plausible. One theory of his desertion is that he joined the popular side only for the purpose of convincing Buckingham, who had refused him the Presidency of the North, that he was not one who could be safely despised, and having proved his power, he was now ready to support the Crown. But whatever the cause, his desertion was viewed by the Parliamentarians with the deepest chagrin, and Pym is reported to have said to him, on the eve of his departure for York, “You are going to leave us, I see, but we will never leave you while your head is on your shoulders.”

No sooner had he attached himself to the Court party than Buckingham, falling beneath the murderous stroke of Felton’s knife, passed away, and Wentworth entered upon the discharge of his duties in the Council of the North with greater freedom for his abilities than would have been permitted to him under the control of the favorite. In his inaugural address before that body he said (and who would look for these words from the hotheaded patriot of a year before?):

"To the joint individual well-being of sovereignty and subjection do I here vow all my cares and diligence through the whole course
of my ministry. I confess I am not ignorant how some distempered minds have of late endeavored to divide the consideration of the two as if their ends were distinct, not the same, nay, in opposition; a monstrous, a prodigious birth of a licentious conception; for so should we become all head or all members. But God be praised, human wisdom, common experience, Christian religion, teach us far otherwise."

Then, in a burst of enthusiastic loyalty, he picturesquely observes:

"Princes are to be indulgent, nursing fathers to their people; their modest liberties, their sober rights, ought to be precious in their eyes; the branches of their government be for shadow, for habitation, the comfort of life. They repose safe and still under the protection of their scepters. Subjects, on the other side, ought, with solicitous eyes of jealousy, to watch over the prerogatives of the Crown. The authority of a King is the keystone which closeth up the arch of order and government, which contains each part in due relation to the whole, and, which once shaken and infirmed, all the frame falls together into a confused heap of foundation and battlement, of strength and beauty."

When it became necessary to assess those obnoxious measures of taxation which have been already described, Wentworth exacted them with an iron hand and punished contumacious landholders with very little display of patience, forgetting, it seemed, the imprisonment which he himself had undergone rather than pay unlawful fines. The success of his administration was complete, and, his capacity for larger employment having been fully developed, he was (1632) appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland, a position to which the major part of his melancholy fame belongs.

Upon assuming charge of the Lord Deputyship he discovered that Irish affairs were in a very deplorable condition. Of the annual contribution of £120,000 for the support of the Army, not more than £106,000 had been paid in. Wentworth refused to listen to any suggestion to reduce the military establishment, and found himself confronted with the necessity for devising new methods of finance. The arsenals had been suffered to lapse into decay; the coasts were guarded only by two small vessels which the Lord Justices declared were all the country could afford, although the channels were infested with pirates, who had just captured a ship containing linen of the value of £500 belonging to the Lord Deputy; Dublin Castle was in a ruinous condition; and the churches were lacking repair, one of them being used as a stable for the horses of Wentworth’s predecessor.

The new Lord Deputy began his administration with the wisdom and energy which always characterized his public services. He laid a more autocratic hand on public affairs than his companions at the Irish Council table could view with favor, and some enmities were engendered in their bosoms which burst forth in
the hour of his peril to ruin him. The Lord Justices desired him to recoup the
revenue by a merciless infliction of the penalties prescribed against Catholics.
This he refused to do, and directed that the taxes be assessed in lawful
proportion, unbiased by religious prejudices. He paid special attention to the
cultivation of the commercial industries of Ireland, especially flax, hemp, and
wool. His mind was possessed with a desire to develop the natural resources of
that fruitful island. "Ireland," he wrote to the Home Government, "seems now
only to want foreign commerce to make them a rich, civil, and contented
people, and consequently more easily governed by Your Majesty’s Ministers
under the dictate of your wisdom, and the more profitably for your Crown,
than in a savage and poor condition." A naval force was secured from England
and piracy was suppressed. A Parliament was called to sit at Dublin (1635-36)
which, under Wentworth’s firm hand, was perfectly tractable to the King’s
desires. Charles had been reluctant to assemble the Parliament, but the Lord
Deputy had persisted until he carried his point. It was here that the first clear
glimpse of his policy of “Thorough” is obtained. Should the Parliament fail to
grant the King’s demands, "I could not," writes Wentworth, "in a cause so just
and necessary, deny to appear for him at the head of the army, and there
either persuade them fully that His Majesty had reason on his side, or else
think it a great honour to die in the pursuit”—of what both justice and piety
command him to regard as his duty.

The marks of the royal favor which his vigorous policy in Ireland elicited,
encouraged him to apply for an earldom, but it was refused. Soon after he was
summoned to England to answer charges against his administration, which were
met by him with so much skill and candor that Charles was delighted, and the
earldom was again asked for. Wentworth argued that if he returned to Ireland
without the coveted promotion, his vindication would not be complete, and the
strength of his government would be weakened. But Charles again refused.
"The marks of my favor," said the King, with an apparent frankness which only
irritated his aspiring Minister, "which stop malicious tongues are neither places
nor titles, but the little welcome I give to accusers, and the willing ear I give to
my servants. I will end with a rule that may serve for a statesman, a courtier,
or a lover—never make an apology till you be accused."

It does not appear that the King availed himself of Wentworth’s judgment up to
this time in affairs other than those connected with his positions in Ireland and
the Council of the North. But now the war cloud was appearing over Scotland,
and Wentworth imparted his views on that matter to the Earl of
Northumberland in July 1638, and it is very probable that they were laid before
the King. He advised that the Scottish ports be blockaded and their shipping
seized. He said:

"It may be asked how money shall be found to carry us through
the least part of this. In good faith every man will give it, I hope,
from his children upon such an extremity as this, when no less,
verily, than all we have comes thus to the stake. In a word, we
are, God be praised, rich and able, and in this case, it may be
justly said, *Salus populi suprema lex*, and the King must not want our substance for the preservation of the whole."

The English forces moved forward and made that valorous march to Dunce Hill and that ignominious retreat from Dunce Hill, which will ever recall the nursery rhyme,

\[
\text{The King of France and forty thousand men} \\
\text{Marched up a hill—and then marched down again!}
\]

and the first war with Scotland was over, and the Pacification of Berwick begun.

Charles now turned with full reliance to the ablest man in his party. He wrote to Wentworth to come to England, but bade him be sure to conceal the cause. He wished, he said, to consult him on some military projects, but added, "I have much more, and indeed too much, to desire your counsel and attendance for some time, which I think not fit to express by letter more than this, the Scottish Covenant spreads too far." Wentworth replied with alacrity, expressing his willingness to go, but asked that power from His Majesty be sent for the administration of Irish affairs during his absence. He complained, too, of the gout, which had racked an exceedingly frail body with pain for several years past. Charles had every reason to solicit his counsels. His advice was always judicious. The great force and firmness of his personal character had impressed itself upon the government of Ireland, and he was fitted now both by his experience and his natural parts, to become the King’s Prime Minister. Greatly deterred by his gout, he reached London in November, 1639, and resumed his place in the Privy Council.

In January, 1640, he was created Earl of Strafford, invested with the Order of the Garter, and in place of the title of Lord Deputy of Ireland received that of Lord Lieutenant, which had not been used since the administration of Elizabeth’s unhappy Earl of Essex. To this was also added at his request the Barony of Raby—a peerage which the Vane’s claimed as pertaining to their family by right, and they resented Strafford’s assumption of the title with a revengeful bitterness which they afterwards displayed in his trial. He had made other enemies at Court. Holland "could not forget a sharp, sudden saying of his," says Clarendon ("I cannot," adds the historian quaintly, "call it counsel or advice"), "that the King would do well to cut off his (Holland’s) head." The Earl of Essex, a friend of the late Lord Clanricarde whom Strafford had grievously offended in Ireland, "was naturally enough disinclined to his person, his power, and his parts." The Duke of Hamilton had no love for him, and the whole Scottish nation hated him for the declaration he had procured in Ireland against their Covenant. Clarendon continues:

"So that he had reason to expect as hard measures from popular councils as he saw were like to be in request, as all these disadvantages would create towards him. And yet, no doubt, his
confidence was so great in himself and in the form of justice
(which he could not suspect would be so totally confounded) that
he never apprehended a greater censure than a sequestration
from all public employment in which, it is probable, he had
abundant satiety; and this confidence could not have proceeded
(considering the full knowledge he had of his own judges) but
from a proportionate stock of, and satisfaction in, his own
innocence."

The Short Parliament was called, and Strafford made that hasty trip to Dublin
to obtain from an Irish Parliament a vote of their "persons and estates," if
necessary, to the King's cause. He also levied an army of eight thousand men
to assist the King in the reduction of the Scotch rebellion, and was then struck
down by an excruciating attack of his old malady. On his return he stopped at
Chester, unable to travel farther; and here the news was brought him that his
own county of York had refused to furnish the King two hundred men for the
garrison of Berwick. While the Privy Council were considering what satisfaction
they should demand of the county authorities, Strafford wrote indignantly from
his sickbed to one of the Secretaries of State, expressing his astonishment that
"the Council should think of any other satisfaction than sending for them up
and laying them by the heels." The second Scotch war, and the events which
led up to the assembling of the Long Parliament, have been already recounted;
and with this necessary sketch of Strafford's career, we approach its closing
scenes.

The opening session of the Long Parliament was a loud outburst of complaint on
behalf of the whole nation. The universal fear was that the liberties of the
people were to be surrendered into the hands of the pope, and Strafford and
Laud were publicly execrated as the instigators of the unholy bargain. The
Queen and her mother were urgently pressing the pope for money and men,
and an impregnable alliance might have been promoted could Charles but have
turned Catholic. In this very moment of darkness, a popular marriage was
arranged between Prince William of Orange and the young Princess Mary of
England; but it was learned that a rash assertion had been made by the Queen
to the papal legate, that the Prince was to bring over twenty thousand men,
that Strafford would be rescued from his impending fate, and that France and
Ireland would actively cooperate in these measures. It cannot be a matter of
wonder, therefore, that the alarmed Commons set out to make a bloody
sacrifice.

The Parliament met on the 3rd of November. By the 6th, John Pym,
preeminently the leader of the lower House, had carried a motion for inquiry
into the alleged abuses in Ireland. Strafford's friends, in great perturbation of
mind, pressed him to return to Ireland, but he scorned to fly. He did indeed
prefer to remain in command of the army at York, a situation in which he could
have defended himself and contended for his cherished principles of monarchy.
But with characteristic courage he sped to London, reaching the capital on the
10th; and on the 11th, at three in the afternoon, he hastened to his place in the
House of Lords, prepared to charge treason against some of his enemies. He
came too late! Almost at the moment of his arrival, Pym appeared with his
committee at the bar of the House, and, reading a resolution from the
Commons directing his impeachment, prayed their Lordships that he might be
at once committed to prison. The haughty Earl, with a "proud, glooming
countenance," was approaching his place, when a chorus of voices arose
"bidding him void the House." So great was the clamor that he was barely
accorded the right to speak. But he was not the man to be deterred by noise.
He arose with dignity and earnestly pleaded for his release during the
formulation of the charges against him, and reminded their Lordships what
mischief they might bring on themselves if, upon a mere general accusation
without the mention of any one crime, a Peer of the realm could be committed
to prison and deprived of his place in that House where he was summoned by
the King’s writ to assist in their counsels. He then withdrew, and the Lords,
terrified under the furious lash of the Commons, resolved to commit him to the
custody of Black Rod, and he was forthwith restrained of his liberty. And now
nothing could stop the Commons.
On December 18, Laud was arrested and lodged in the Tower on the charge of
high treason. Finch and Windebank, of the King’s party, would have been
impeached, but, warned in time, they fled the country. Christopher
Wandesford, a trusted counselor of the Lord Lieutenant’s, would have been
assailed, but he was so shocked on learning the news of his master’s arrest that
he fell in a faint and expired.
On March 22, 1641, nearly three months after his arrest, the trial of Strafford
began. The number of the articles of impeachment had grown to ninety-eight,
and embraced every act of his life and every expression of a fearless tongue
which malice or the heat of party could torture into crime. The introduction
was delivered by Pym, whose power of invective was never so well displayed,
and who referred to Strafford, with melodramatic effect, as "the wicked Earl."
The fallen Minister behaved himself with humility and submission, yet with
great courage, never losing an advantage, and making a very dexterous
defense. As the trial progressed, it was soon discerned by the watchful
Commons that they would fail to prove high treason against him. This crime
had been defined through all the jurisprudence of England as an act of hostility
against the King’s right or person, whereas the acts of arbitrary authority which
made up the sum of the accusations against Strafford were at the worst only in
contravention of that constitutional government which up to this time had
never been clearly defined. The general charge was an "endeavor to overthrow
the fundamental laws of the government and to introduce an arbitrary power."
No one of the articles of impeachment would sustain this charge.
At this moment there was injected into the prosecution an ingenious and
plausible but dangerous theory, that as high treason was not proved by any
single article, yet the evidence supporting all of the articles was sufficiently
strong to make conviction on the general charge; and this was to be done under
a process by which each article was strengthened and supported by the others,
thus making a sort of cumulative high treason out of the whole. Strafford tore
the mask from this specious theory by demanding, “When one thousand
misdemeanors will not make one felony, shall twenty-eight misdemeanors
heighten it to a treason?”
It likewise became necessary in this proceeding “to make one witness, with
divers circumstances, as good as two.” The elder Sir Henry Vane, still smarting
under the loss of the ancient Barony of Raby, had appeared as a witness against
Strafford, and betrayed the secrets of the Privy Council by testifying that
Strafford had advised the King to employ the Irish army for the subjugation of
England. “You must,” he was alleged to have said, “prosecute the war
vigorously; you have an army in Ireland with which you may reduce this
kingdom.” Strafford denied that he had used the words, but with his usual
adroitness pointed out that, even if they had been used, the Committee was
then sitting as a Committee for Scotch Affairs, and the Court was invited to
adopt the reasonable conclusion that the “war” which was to be prosecuted
vigorously was the Scotch war, and that “this kingdom” which was to be
reduced was the kingdom of Scotland. There were four other councilors present
at the time the words were said to have been used—Northumberland,
Hamilton, Cottington, and Juxon, who all declared on oath, while recollecting
all the rest of Strafford’s language as reported by Vane, that they had heard
nothing about the army in Ireland or the threatened reduction of England. With
Vane asserting, Strafford denying, and the other four not remembering the
treasonable words, the legal inference was in Strafford’s favor.
But the managers of the prosecution were equal to the emergency. Pym arose
and informed the House that he was responsible for the insertion of that charge
against Strafford. He then proceeded to make a most remarkable disclosure.
Some months before he had called to visit young Sir Harry Vane, who was just
recovering from an attack of ague. Sir Harry seemed troubled about the state
of the kingdom, and referred with suppressed horror to a mysterious paper
which he had found while making a clandestine search through his father’s
cabinet. This paper was a minute of a part of the proceedings of the Privy
Council, taken down by the elder Sir Henry, and contained these words as
coming from Strafford: “Absolved from the rules of Government; prosecute the
war vigorously; an army in Ireland to subdue this kingdom.” After much
pressure young Sir Harry permitted Pym to take a copy of the document, the
original being then returned to the cabinet, and afterwards destroyed by the
elder Vane. Mr. Pym said:

“That though there was but one witness in the point, Sir Henry Vane
the Secretary, whose handwriting that paper was, whereof this
was a copy, yet he conceived those circumstances of his and
young Sir Henry Vane’s having seen those original results, and
being ready to swear that the paper read by him was a true copy
of the other, might reasonably amount to the validity of another
witness.”
Young Sir Harry rose and with an apparent shame corroborated Pym’s statement. He was conscious, he said, that this discovery would prove little less than ruinous in the good opinion of his father, but having been drawn by a tender conscience towards the common parent, his country, to trespass against his natural father, he hoped he should find compassion from that House, though he had little hopes of pardon elsewhere.

Then the elder Vane, “with a pretty confusion,” played his part in this picturesque incident. He had been much amazed, he said, when he found himself pressed by such interrogatories as made him suspect some discoveries to be made by some person as conversant in the councils as himself, but he was now satisfied to whom he owed his misfortunes, in which he was sure the guilty person should bear his share.

Clarendon says:

“This scene was so well acted, with such passion and gestures, between the father and son, that many speeches were made in commendation of the conscience, integrity, and merit of the young man, and a motion made ‘that the father might be enjoined by the House to be friends with his son,’ but for some time there was, in public, a great distance observed between them.”

After seventeen days spent in the trial, the arguments began. Strafford presented his own defense with skill and eloquence. The Lords appointed attorneys to assist him in points of law, a privilege accorded to the meanest criminal, but for which they were churlishly rebuked by the Commons. The Earl, in that touching peroration to his final speech, said:

"My Lords, I have now troubled your Lordships a great deal longer than I should have done. Were it not for the interest of these pledges that a saint in Heaven left me, I should be loath, my Lords... (Here he paused for a moment, overcome by his emotion, and then, leaving the sentence unfinished, continued.) What I forfeit for myself it is nothing. But I confess that my indiscretion should forfeit for them, it wounds me very deeply. You will be pleased to pardon my infirmity; something I should have said, but I see I shall not be able, and therefore I will leave it. And now, my Lords, I thank God I have been, by his good blessing towards me, taught that the afflictions of the present life are not to be compared with that eternal weight of glory that shall be revealed hereafter. And so, my Lords, even so, with all humility and with all tranquility of mind, I do submit myself clearly and freely unto your judgment, whether that righteous judgment shall be to life or death. Te Deum laudamus, ie Dominum confitemur."
The prosecution wavered. The House of Lords inquired of the judges whether some of the articles amounted to treason, and the judges answered unanimously that upon all which their Lordships had voted to be proved, it was their opinion the Earl of Strafford did deserve to undergo the pains and penalties of high treason by law. This decision merely placed upon the Lords the responsibility of declaring whether the charges had been sustained by the evidence.

But before the opinion was taken, the Commons, fearful that their culprit would escape, resolved to make that a crime by *ex post facto* law which could not under the existing statutes be capitally punished. A bill of attainder was passed in the lower House, immediately followed by a bill exempting Strafford’s children from the penalties of forfeiture and corruption of blood—an act of generosity which was startling in that moment of passion. The attainder carried its own condemnation in one of its articles, which prohibited the judges from construing it as a precedent. The Lords hesitated. Their sympathies were with Strafford, but the fifty-nine members of the Commons who had voted against the bill of attainder had since been treated with so much open contempt that their Lordships, fearful of the popular wrath, passed the bill by a vote of twenty-six to nineteen, those who could find a sufficient excuse remaining away. Strafford, with a tongue of prophecy, protested against the sacrifice of his life lest such inconveniences and miseries should follow within a few years as that no man should know what to do, or what to say.

In the meantime, the frightened Monarch found his heart tossed between the emotions of hope and despair. On April 23, two days after the bill passed the Commons, he wrote to Strafford assuring him on that much abused “word of a King,” that, though the “misfortune that had fallen upon him” made it impossible that he could be employed hereafter in the royal affairs, he should not “suffer in life, honour, or fortune.” On May 1, the King went down to the House of Lords in state, and informed the Parliament in a dignified and courageous speech that he could not consider Strafford to have been guilty of high treason, and, denying explicitly Vane’s army story, suggested that Strafford should be punished only for misdemeanor. This interference of the King brought forth a furious protest from the Commons in behalf of the privilege of Parliament, and it was this uproar which forced from the Lords an unwilling assent to the attainder.

The mobs now surrounded the King’s palace and cried out for Strafford’s blood. Charles, in terror, summoned the bishops and acquainted them with his promise to Strafford. The assurance of protection had been most solemn; but panic had seized upon the royal household, and the only calm man in England probably was Strafford himself. That chivalrous gentleman wrote to Charles releasing him from his obligation. “To say, Sir,” he said, “that there hath not been a strife in me, were to make me less man than, God knoweth, my infirmities make me; and to call a destruction upon myself and my young children (where the intentions of my heart at least have been innocent of this great offence) may be believed will find no easy consent from flesh and blood.” Concluding in a strain of loftiest magnanimity, he said:
"So now, to set your Majesty’s conscience at liberty, I do most humbly beseech Your Majesty, for prevention of evils which may happen by your refusal, to pass this bill, and by this means to remove, praised be God (I cannot say this accursed, but, I confess), this unfortunate thing forth of the way towards that blessed agreement which God, I trust, shall ever establish between you and your subjects. Sir, my consent shall more acquit you herein to God than all the world can do besides. To a willing man there is no injury done. And as, by God’s grace, I forgive all the world with a calmness and meekness of infinite contentment to my dislodging soul, so, Sir, to you I can give the life of this world, with all the cheerfulness imaginable, in the just acknowledgment of your exceeding favours."

This letter cleared the way for the bishops to advise his Majesty—with the honorable exception of Juxon—that a King had two consciences, one public, the other private; and that “his public conscience as a King might not only dispense with, but oblige him to do, that which was against his conscience as a man.” Under this specious reasoning the King, coquetting still further with his conscience, appointed a commissioner to sign the bill, and on Monday, May 10, it became law.

On the next day the wretched Monarch made an effort to secure clemency. Fearful now of exercising that boasted prerogative by granting Strafford a pardon, as he had a full constitutional right to do, he dispatched a message to the House of Lords by the hand of the youthful Prince of Wales, beseeching them to use their offices in securing from the Commons their approval to the pardon. After making a dignified and pathetic statement of the quality of mercy, and expressing a desire that Strafford might live out the natural course of his life in a close imprisonment, he hastily added, as if afraid of turning their wrath upon himself, “But if no less than his life can satisfy my people, I must say, fiat justitia.” Then in a postscript which destroyed the force of it all, he wrote, “If he must die, it were charity to reprieve him until Saturday.” When Strafford received the news of the King’s assent to the bill of attainder, the treachery with which he had been sacrificed wrung from his lips the Scriptural words, “Put not your trust in princes, for in them there is no help!”

On Wednesday, May 12, 1641, Strafford was conducted to Tower Hill. As he passed the cell where Archbishop Laud was confined, that aged prelate stood at the window, and with choking voice sent forth a feeble blessing, the Earl kneeling reverently to receive it. He then walked on with the courage of a conqueror. When he had mounted the scaffold, Strafford turned to the multitude who had lately howled for his blood, but were now hushed in the presence of impending death. Addressing them with an air of calm fortitude, he protested his innocence of high treason, and proclaimed his steadfast adherence to the Protestant faith. But it augured ill, he told them, for the people’s happiness, to write the commencement of a reformation in letters of blood. He implored them, “for Christian charity’s sake,” to believe him that he
had always thought Parliaments in England to be the happy constitution of the kingdom and nation. He charged his eldest son to avoid ambition, and to seek no higher preferment than Justice of the Peace in his own county. The executioner approached, and, according to an ancient custom, entreated his forgiveness, which was freely given. Strafford joined for a few moments in prayer with Archbishop Usher, and, after bidding farewell to those of his kinsmen who were on the scaffold, he knelt before the block and received the headsman’s blow.

When Strafford fell, the theory of absolute monarchy fell also. He was cast in a heroic mold, and with another master he might have made England great, as Cromwell afterwards made her great. But the times were out of joint; Charles was not equal to the task of enforcing his own principles in the government, and when the Commons pursued Strafford to the foot of the throne as a scapegoat for all the oppressions of this reign, the wretched Monarch pusillanimously permitted the destruction of the only man who could possibly have preserved his Crown for him against the rising tide of rebellion. If Strafford had lived—if his frail health had been spared—history might have recorded different results at Marston Moor and Naseby. English liberty might have been set back for a hundred years. Who can tell?

CHAPTER IX

The Long Parliament for Popular Government

"Pray, Mr. Hampden," cried Lord Digby, overtaking the great Commoner one day as he was leaving Parliament House, "who is that man—that sloven who spoke just now?" Hampden, turning round and perceiving that his kinsman, Oliver Cromwell, was the object of this animadversion, gazed calmly at his interrogator while he answered in the memorable and prophetic words, "That sloven whom you see before you hath no ornament in his speech; that sloven, I say, if we should ever come to a breach with the King—which God forbid!—in such a case, I say, that sloven will be the greatest man in England."

The grave Royalist, Sir Philip Warwick, writes this famous description of Cromwell:

"The first time that ever I took notice of him was in the very beginning of the parliament held in November, 1640, when I vainly thought myself a courtly young gentleman; for we courtiers valued ourselves much upon our good clothes. I came one morning into the House well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking (whom I knew not) very ordinarily appareled, for it was a plain cloth suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor; his linen was plain and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar; his hat was without a hatband, his stature was of a good size, his sword stuck close to his side, his countenance swollen and reddish, his voice sharp and untunable,
and his eloquence full of fervor, for the subject matter would not bear much of reason, it being in behalf of a servant of Mr. Prynne’s, who had disbursed libels against the Queen for her dancing, and such like innocent and courtly sports; and he aggravated the imprisonment of this man by the Council table unto that height, that one would have believed the very Government itself had been in great danger by it. I sincerely profess it lessened much my reverence unto that great Council, for he was very much hearkened unto. And yet I lived to see this very gentleman, whom out of no ill will to him I thus describe, by multiplied good successes, and by real, but usurped power (having had a better tailor and more converse among good company), in my own eye, when for six weeks together I was a prisoner in his Sergeant’s hands and daily waited at Whitehall, appear of a great and majestic deportment and comely presence. Of him, therefore, I will say no more, but that verily I believe he was extraordinarily designed for those extraordinary things which one while most wickedly and facinorously he acted, and at another as successfully and greatly performed."

There is another reference to Cromwell in which his deep passion for social justice is unconsciously illuminated. It was in the early days of the Long Parliament, when Clarendon, speaking of himself as Mr. Hyde, wrote:

"Mr. Hyde was often heard to mention one private committee, in which he was put accidentally into the chair; upon an Enclosure which had been made of great wastes, belonging to the Queen’s Manors, without the consent of the tenants, the benefit whereof had been given by the Queen to a servant of her near trust, who forthwith sold the lands enclosed to the Earl of Manchester, Lord Privy Seal; who together with his son Mandevil were now most concerned to maintain the Enclosure; against which, as well the inhabitants of other manors, who claimed common in those wastes, as the Queen’s tenants of the same, made loud complaints, as a great oppression, carried upon them with a very high hand, and supported by power.

"The Committee sat in the Queen’s Court; and Oliver Cromwell being one of them, appeared much concerned to countenance the Petitioners, who were numerous together with their Witnesses; the Lord Mandevil being likewise present as a party, and by the direction of the Committee sitting covered. Cromwell, who had never before been heard to speak in the House of Commons [at least not by Mr. Hyde, though he had spoken there], ordered the Witnesses and Petitioners in the method of the proceeding; and seconded, and enlarged upon what they said, with great passion;
and the Witnesses and persons concerned, who were a very rude kind of people, interrupted the Counsel and Witnesses on the other side, with great clamour, when they said anything that did not please them; so that Mr. Hyde (whose office it was to oblige men of all sorts to keep order) was compelled to use some sharp reproofs, and some threats, to reduce them to such a temper that the business might be quietly heard. Cromwell, in great fury, reproached the Chairman for being partial, and that he discountenanced the Witnesses by threatening them: the other appealed to the Committee; which justified him, and declared that he behaved himself as he ought to do; which more inflamed him [Cromwell], who was already too much angry. When upon any mention of matter-of-fact, or of the proceeding before and at the Enclosure the Lord Mandevil desired to be heard, and with great modesty related what had been done, or explained what had been said, Mr. Cromwell did answer, and reply upon him with so much indecency and rudeness, and in language so contrary and offensive, that every man would have thought, that as their natures and their manners were as opposite as it is possible, so their interests could never have been the same. In the end his whole carriage was so tempestuous, and his behaving so insolent, that the Chairman found himself obliged to reprehend him: and to tell him, that if he [Cromwell] proceeded in the same manner, he [Hyde] would presently adjourn the Committee, and the next morning complain to the House of him. Which he never forgave; and took all occasions afterward to pursue him with the utmost malice and revenge, to his [Cromwell’s] death.”

But it was not Cromwell’s destiny to rise to any great height as a Parliamentary leader. He was not a popular speaker, and his tongue could not command the ready wit nor control itself by the equable patience of a successful debater. His heart seems to have been stirred more by the religious side of the quarrel between the King and the Parliament than by the political side; and the great danger to the Protestant faith which he, in common with all the other Puritans, beheld in the extreme Episcopalianism of Laud’s unbridled administration, incited him, as it did them, to a resistance which finally brought both parties to armed combat. Cromwell was an active force in the private counsels of his party in the Long Parliament, but he was not sufficiently prominent in their public proceedings, even after the session had lasted fourteen months, to make himself personally obnoxious to the King, else we may conclude that he would have been named with the five members in whose attempted arrest Charles sought to save his perishing Majesty.

It has been suggested that the Long Parliament was, in part, a league of families confederated for the purpose of restraining the power of the Crown. In tracing this theory through the roll of membership it is curious to discover the remarkable prominence of Cromwell’s family interest. Pym and Vane stood
almost alone in this respect, but Cromwell was related in the ties which men call family to no less than thirty-one of the members of the House of Commons. To set forth the details of this relationship would occupy more space, perhaps, than the reader would patiently approve. But we find that, either through the ties of blood, or the marriage of his immediate relatives, Cromwell held kinship with John Hampden; Oliver St. John; Edmund Dunch; Sir Thomas Barrington; Edmund Waller; Sir Richard Knightley; Sir Robert Pye; Sir John Trevor; Valentine Walton; Sir Gilbert Gerrard; Sir William Masham; Francis Gerrard; Thomas Trevor; Sir Oliver Luke; Sir Samuel Luke; Humphrey Salwey; (perhaps) Henry Marten; Sir Francis Russell; Richard Norton; Nathaniel, James, and John Fiennes; Sir John Barrington; Sir John Bouchier; William Masham; John Trevor; John Jones; Thomas Waller; Richard Ingoldsby; Henry Ireton; and Richard Salwey. This made thirty-one votes, although, as some of them were elected on account of the death or defection of others, they did not all sit at one time. The connecting family line is sometimes indistinct, but in the larger part of the names it is indisputable. On the other hand, Pym was related possibly to Bradshaw, and, perhaps, to Milton, who was, however, unknown in the zenith of the Civil War. Denzil Hollis, the leader of the Presbyterians, was Strafford’s brother-in-law, but Strafford was an impediment to any Puritan. Sir Harry Vane belonged to a powerful family, of whom we recognize, however, only his father and the Pelham’s in the House. No one of these men had around him the family strength in the Parliament which supported Hampden, and, afterwards, until he went beyond them, Cromwell. Yet, despite this stupendous array of kin, it is clear that Cromwell’s rise was wholly due to his own ability, as his public position was insignificant until he stood illustrious, but alone, as the only successful soldier on the Puritan side.

The Long Parliament was endeavoring to accomplish a revolution by Parliamentary methods. While they never wavered in their resolution to strip the Crown of every vestige of its ancient individual power, they advanced step by step under the forms of reverence and duty, and, had Charles consented at the last moment—even after he had raised the standard of civil war at Nottingham—to a government through ministers chosen with the consent of Parliament, all that vast sacrifice of blood and treasure which ensued would have been saved.

There were some bright spots on the troubled sky. On the 19th of April, 1641, Prince William of Orange arrived to claim the heart and hand of the King’s eldest daughter, the Princess Mary, and the Protestant nation hailed the match with every sound of joy. But even while the glad bells were pealing forth the happiness of the event, there were those who said that the Dutch Prince had brought with him the sum of 1,200,000 ducats to relieve the pressing necessities of his future father-in-law. This cannot be established as a fact, but it is clear that Charles was at that time put in possession of funds which were sent to York to pay his army and hold their wavering loyalty. He expected to be successful in this, as the Parliament had provoked the soldiers to anger by paying to the Scottish troops, still encamped on the English soil, the sum of £10,000, which had been levied for the pay of the English army.
The same tumultuous outcry which had impelled the King, in a moment of extreme terror, to sign the bill for the execution of the Earl of Strafford, had likewise coerced him to sign a bill inhibiting the dissolution of the present Parliament except with its own consent. The importance of this measure in the interest of the nation—for now the apparent interest of the nation was distinctly opposed to the apparent interest of Charles—is shown by a remark made by the Marquis of Dorset at that time to the King. "I may live to do you a kindness," said Dorset, "but you can do me none."

The Commons, having thus struck a deadly blow at the royal prerogative, now devised an equally effective measure against the Established Church. A bill was passed excluding the bishops from the House of Lords and cutting off the power of the Church in civil affairs. The discussion on this bill gave rise to the formation of parties in the modern Parliamentary sense. Those members of the House of Commons who were in favor of destroying the political power of the Episcopal Church, as it rested in the bishops and the clergy, became known as the Root-and-Branch party; while those who favored the preservation of Episcopalianism as the established worship and aimed only to curtail the imitations of the Roman Catholic forms which had evoked the cry of popery against Laud, were called Episcopali ans. Between these two parties, Pym and Hampden and their supporters, like accomplished politicians, held the balance of power.

The Bishops’ Exclusion Bill was rejected by the Lords, which inspired young Sir Henry Vane and Oliver Cromwell to devise a bill for the complete extinction of Episcopacy. But at the present time such a measure could not be passed. Pope Urban VIII thought he saw an opportunity now to rekindle the extinguished flame of the ancient religion in the breast of the English nation, and his Ambassador, early in June, called on the Queen to learn whether any success rewarded her cherished labor of making the King a Catholic. She then admitted the impossibility of inducing Charles to change his religion, but said if the pope would send over £150,000 he would grant religious liberty in Ireland, and for the present would allow the Catholics in England to worship in the chapels of the Queen, and of foreign Ambassadors. After reducing his subjects to obedience, the Catholics should have full religious liberty, with permission to open chapels of their own. Every religion but those of Rome and the Established Church should be abolished. Speaking of some recent hostile legislation she betrayed the King’s insincerity and her own by saying that, according to the law of England, what was granted by a King under compulsion was null and void. These promises she offered to put in writing for the pope, and engaged to obtain Charles’s counter-signature to her letter.

On the 8th of June a report was made to the Commons on a plot in which the Army was to have been used during Strafford’s last days, conniving at that doomed nobleman’s escape, and the statements of the witnesses made it only too clear that the King had himself possessed knowledge of the conspiracy. Indeed it was now, when Charles was being hemmed in on every side, that the weakness of his character led him into rash enterprises which have left the stigma of duplicity upon his fame. The discovery of this first army plot—there
were two—threw the House into the liveliest tumult. An officer named Billingsley had received instructions from the Court, with a pass from the King, to enter the Tower with one hundred men. Sir William Balfour, the Lieutenant of the Tower, a brusque Scot, refused to admit the armed band, and that was all there was to it so far as Strafford’s release was concerned. A Colonel Goring had, however, engaged to incite the officers of the Army in Yorkshire to espouse the King’s cause; Goring himself was to hold the fortifications of Portsmouth for the King, and the Queen was to embark there for France, taking her children with her. Digby and Wilmot, who were concerned in the plot, were in the House at the time the report was read, and they attempted to withdraw. Others sought to stop them. A riot ensued, and Speaker Lenthall confessed next morning that he had not expected to come away alive. It soon appeared, from a vote clearing Goring of dishonor, that that treacherous officer had betrayed the plot to Pym, who had caused it to be brought before the House. The next morning it was proposed to discipline Digby, but the King had already put him beyond the vengeance of the House by making him a Peer of the realm. It was in this month of June that a new champion arose among the Puritans. John Milton threw aside the poet’s lyre for the patriot’s pen, and brought all the great wealth of his learning and eloquence to bear upon the controversy of Presbyterianism against Episcopalianism, his pamphlet adding much to the flame of the present situation.

Within a few days Charles was concocting another army plot. This time the object was to purchase the neutrality of the invading Scottish Army and move the northern English Army down to London for the purpose of overawing the Parliament. This, like the other, came to nothing except that its disclosure before the House of Commons a few months later only increased the popular distrust of the King.

On June 22, a tonnage and poundage bill was passed, granting to Charles, for a period of three weeks only, the revenues of the customs, and in this law the King bound himself forever to levy no customs duties except by consent of Parliament. And yet they would trust him no longer with these revenues than three weeks.

On June 24, Pym sent up to the Lords ten propositions which had unanimously passed the Commons, and to which he invited the counsel and cooperation of the Peers. These propositions asked that the armies might be disbanded as soon as money could be provided, that the King’s proposed journey to Scotland might be delayed, and that His Majesty would remove any evil counselors about his person and commit “his own business and the affairs of the kingdom to such counselors and officers as the Parliament may have cause to confide in.” The articles called for the removal of Catholics from Court, and from attendance on the Queen; for the expulsion of Rosetti, the pope’s Ambassador; for the placing of the military and naval forces in safe hands; for the granting of a general pardon; and, finally, for the appointment of a committee of the two Houses “for the reducing of these propositions to effect for the public good.” The Lords softened the article bearing on the Queen’s attendants so as to spare that lady’s feelings as much as possible, and adopted the series of propositions,
thus giving the sanction of a united Parliament to a scheme for the reform of the government which provided for the complete destruction of the royal prerogative.

This measure, offensive to the King's dignity as it must have been, afforded him a golden opportunity for securing tranquility for his people, a lawful government for his kingdoms, and popularity for himself. But he preferred to follow the vacillating policy which finally destroyed him. He granted a part of the demands of his people, but impaired the effect of graciousness by withholding the rest. He consented to the disbandment of the Army and to the dismissal of Rosetti; but he ignored the request for a Parliamentary ministry, and he informed the Earl of Bath in a blaze of anger that he knew of no evil counselors about his person.

Charles had already, in the preceding February, made an attempt to conciliate Parliament by taking a step in the direction of popular government. This consisted in the appointment of seven opposition Lords as Privy Councillors—Bristol, Bedford, Essex, Hertford, Saye, Mandeville, and Saville. But a Privy Councilor at Whitehall had little or nothing to do with the administration of the government. The rumor had been circulated in February, in April, and again in July, that the King would appoint the Puritans to office. Pym was to have been Chancellor of the Exchequer; Hampden, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; Hollis or Mandeville, Secretary of State; Bedford, Lord Treasurer; Brooke, Privy Councilor; and Saye, Master of the Wards; but while the King doubtless reflected on these promotions, he lacked the courage to anticipate necessity by making the appointments.

The Parliamentary destruction of the prerogative went on with startling rapidity. On July 3, the King was constrained to sign the Poll-Tax Bill. On the 5th he assented to the abolition of his cherished courts of Star Chamber and High Commission—courts whose arbitrary judgments had confirmed the prerogative in its most flourishing vigor. The Council of the North, of which Strafford had been the able President, was voted down. The Council of Wales, of arbitrary powers, was annulled, and this was the last of those extraordinary courts which had come into the hands of the Stuart Kings from the Tudors. The King's powers must now be exercised through the courts created by acts of Parliament. If that were not enough, he could be brought to terms by the Commons stopping the supplies. This method had, indeed, in spite of all the machinery of the prerogative, reduced him to extremity. It might fail for a time if the King resorted to violent methods. But he had already resorted to violent methods and they had proved inadequate to his necessities. The King had come to the end of the resources of his absolutism; his resources were exhausted, his absolutism was confined within Parliamentary bounds.

Charles made one more effort to win popular favor. The occupation of the Palatinate by a Protestant ruler was a deep-seated desire of the English people. Prince Frederick, who had married Charles' sister, was dead. His eldest son, Charles Lewis, was now in England seeking military assistance. The person and address of this Prince so favorably impressed the English people that there were those bold enough to whisper that if it became necessary to dethrone the
reigning King, Charles Lewis might worthily wear the English Crown. Some vain idea of this kind doubtless filled the young Prince’s mind, and when the Civil War began, he adroitly absented himself from England, leaving his younger brothers, Rupert and Maurice, to win a renown in arms which was forever lost to him. But Charles had received as yet no cause to doubt the young man’s affections, and he was himself extremely desirous of seeing Charles Lewis on the throne of Bohemia. He therefore issued a manifesto in favor of Charles Lewis as King of Bohemia, and asked Parliament to supply the Prince with the means to win back his father’s inheritance. The Houses listened respectfully and returned a decorous reply, but voted no money. It was too late to succor Bohemia.

The King was determined, contrary to the advice of his Parliament, to proceed on his journey to Scotland; and Henrietta Maria, now an object of the people’s hatred, was not willing to remain near the Parliament in his absence. She had at first proposed a visit to France, but Richelieu, ever watchful of events, had dissuaded her from that purpose. A trip to Spa was then suggested. It was said that the fair Queen was falling into a consumption, and that the curative waters would be beneficial to her health. She would take advantage of the opportunity, she said, to escort her daughter to the Prince of Orange. But the Parliament feared that she meant to carry with her the Crown jewels and plate, and they prevented her departure.

The object of Charles’ visit to his Scottish subjects, who had even now an armed host in England in subversion of his authority, is not easily understood except when we view the hopelessness of his situation in England. But it seems clear, when viewed from this standpoint, that Charles hoped to gain a party in Scotland that would apply a salve to his bleeding honor in England. The Duke of Argyle and the Duke of Montrose, the two most powerful of the Scottish nobility, were at mortal enmity. In the first Bishops’ War, Montrose had taken arms for the Covenant, but the dissensions among the noble houses of Scotland had brought him over to the King. He had recently written Charles a letter, setting forth his political principles in terms which had completely captivated that Monarch. In this epistle he asserted that sovereign power must exist in every State. It might be placed, according to the circumstances of each country, in the hands of a democracy, an aristocracy, or a monarchy. In Scotland it must be entrusted to a monarchy. The nobles were incapable of sacrificing their private interests to the public good. The people were too easily led astray to offer a secure foundation for a stable government. Let the King, therefore, come in person to Scotland to preside over the coming Parliament. Let him freely grant to his subjects the exercise of their religion and their just liberties. Let him be ready to consult Parliaments frequently in order to learn the wants of his people, and win his subjects’ hearts by ruling them with wisdom and moderation.

It was the possibility of reaping an advantage from this invitation which at first seriously drew Charles’ attention to the desirability of a progress to Scotland. But it was not in his nature to go as a King in distress, ready to trust to the sympathy and loyalty of his subjects. Modern research has disclosed in the
archives of Venice a motive for this visit, which we may well believe would have caused an explosion had it been known to the Long Parliament at the time of his departure. The Venetian Ambassador writes to his government on July 30, 1642, that the Queen had informed him that she intended to remove a hundred miles from London when the King went north, in order that she might not be exposed "to those dangers which will be inevitable when the King resolves to return to this realm, accompanied by the Scottish army and by the English troops at York." While the Parliament was not acquainted with this intention of the King’s, it believed him to be capable of compassing such an undertaking.

On Saturday, August 7, Charles announced that he would depart for Scotland on the following Monday, and the House instantly implored him to defer his journey. On that day he signed two important bills, one in relation to ship-money, the other limiting the forest boundaries, and both restricting his own expiring powers. On Saturday night the Commons held a stormy session. It was even said on the floor of the House, though not publicly, that the King had forfeited his Crown. The extremity of their terror may be seen in the session which was held next day, by which the consciences of those sturdy Puritans were put to sleep while the debate was carried on during Sunday. The House appealed to the Scottish Commissioners to counsel delay in the King’s departure. Charles sent another message to the Commissioners begging them to do nothing of the kind, and the good understanding that existed between the King and themselves was shown in their reply, that they would risk their lives to restore him to his authority. He waited over until Tuesday to make some promotions among his adherents. Bristol, the now aged rival of Buckingham in the affair of the Spanish match, was made a Gentleman of the Bed-Chamber. Bristol’s son, the brilliant Lord Digby, was appointed Ambassador to France. The Earl of Lenox, now on friendly terms with the King, was made Duke of Richmond. To preserve a balance in these promotions, the Lords asked that two Peers of their own selection, Salisbury and Pembroke, might be appointed to office, but the King was in no humor to grant them favors, and he declined their request. A crowd of apprentices, as in the time of Strafford’s trial, assembled at Westminster, but the King’s spirit was proof against the mob, and he said that he would make anyone repent it who laid hands on his horse’s reins to stop him. His last official acts were to sign the Treaty of Peace with Scotland, and give his assent to a bill securing the payment of £220,000 to the Scottish army as soon as they should have passed beyond the Tweed. As the King and his royal retinue disappeared, the Scottish Commissioners turned to say that their nation would do all in its power to place the King in his authority again, and that, when he appeared in Scotland, all political differences would be at an end, and they would serve their natural Prince as one man.

And Charles had left England without a government. No provision had been made to pass bills, except a few which should receive the royal assent through a commission appointed for that purpose. In this juncture of affairs the Parliament adopted a bold expedient. Sir Symonds D’Ewes, the best informed man on Parliamentary precedents in that distinguished body, cited an
ordinance that had been passed in 1373, and suggested that an ordinance of the two Houses in Parliament had always been of great authority. The Commons quickly adopted the idea and passed an ordinance (August 20), which was sent to the Lords and passed by them. This first ordinance provided for the appointment of a commission to wait upon the King in Scotland, ostensibly to observe the progress of a further treaty, but really to keep a watch upon the mistrusted Monarch. John Hampden was a member of this commission.

The English Army was disbanded as fast as it could be paid off, and, on September 25, General Leslie led his Scottish forces across the Tweed. The Parliament could now breathe freely, and it is certain that a better sentiment began to prevail towards the King, who might now have returned to London with peace and security. At that very moment, however, Charles was writing to the Queen that by promises of promotion he had won over certain powerful Scots who had hitherto opposed him bitterly, and that he could rely upon the aid of four thousand foot and one thousand horse whenever he might demand them. He was at the same time writing to the Duke of Ormond in Ireland for Irish assistance, thus presenting the odd spectacle of an Episcopalian Monarch effecting a coalition between the Scottish Presbyterians and the Irish Catholics for the subjugation of the English Puritans.

By this time the plague and the small-pox were raging in London and Westminster, and the members of the two Houses, worn out by the severe experiences of the past ten months, determined to seek a short and necessary rest. Most of them had already gone home without leave, there being about eighty of the Commons and less than a score of the Lords in attendance at the present sittings. On August 28, when all danger had disappeared from the North, the 8th of September was fixed for the adjournment, and October 20 for the reassembling.

As soon as the adjournment had been decided upon, there were certain members of the Commons whose consciences reproached them for the failure of the House to do anything for religion. The apprehension of popery had long been the nightmare of the Puritans, and the tyrannical innovations of Laud in the forms of the Established Church had aroused in their minds a suspicion that that Church was the Roman worship in a thin disguise. The Catholics were now undergoing punishment for their adherence to the ancient dogmas by the merciless enforcement of cruel statutes, while the unhappy Laud was languishing in prison, destined ere long to suffer death for his rash zeal. But this was not enough. It was determined that the communion tables should be removed from the east end of the churches, and the rails taken down; that “all crucifixes, scandalous pictures of one or more persons of the Trinity, and all images of the Virgin Mary” should be taken away, and “all tapers, candlesticks, and basins be removed from the communion table”; that “all corporal bowing at the name of Jesus or towards the east end of the church, or towards the communion table, be henceforth foreborne”; that all dancing and sports be forborne on Sunday, and the preaching of sermons be permitted in the afternoon. If the Puritans in the House had stopped here they might have carried their measure. But an unknown member suggested that it would be well
to think of some alterations in the Book of Common Prayer. This roused the Episcopalians who had previously fought the Root-and-Branch Bill. The party spirit was carried further than ever before. Culpepper instantly demanded by resolution that the House provide a punishment for any person who would attack or vilify that venerable collection of human supplications. Oliver Cromwell retorted that there were passages in the Prayer Book to which grave and learned divines could not submit. The House was thin. In a vote of ninety-two the Prayer Book was sustained by a majority of eighteen.

On September 6, Culpepper’s resolution was called up for further discussion. Pym and his supporters sought to break its force by an amendment, while Culpepper wished to enlarge its scope, and he again carried his point. Before the final vote was taken, it was recommitted in a spirit of forbearance. The Lords, as usual, attempted to hold the radical spirit of the lower House in check. On the 8th they agreed to the resolution on the removal of the communion table. Images of the Virgin, which had been erected more than twenty years, were to be allowed to stand, and everyone was to be left free in the matter of bowing. The clause concerning Sunday was left for further consideration on the 9th, the adjournment having been postponed one day. A spirit of jealousy of the Lords, which had been growing for some time, was now openly displayed. The Commons resented the half-hearted action of the Peers on these resolutions, and passed a declaration on the authority of the lower House only, making it lawful for parishioners to set up lectures at their own charge. The Lords took offense, and laid aside the Sunday resolution which they had intended to discuss on the 9th. They ordered, instead, that a former order should be printed and published, “that the divine service be performed as it is appointed by the acts of Parliament of this realm; and that all such as shall disturb that wholesome order shall be severely punished according to law.” The Commons were not asked to concur, and they in their turn were offended. D’Ewes reminded the House that all men who loved the truth expected a mitigation of the laws already established touching religion, and not a severe execution of them. Pym, seeing the drift towards anarchy, proposed that a messenger should be dispatched to ask the King to revoke the Lords’ order by a royal proclamation. It was at last determined that the Commons’ resolutions should be published together with the order of the Lords, a commentary to be attached expressing surprise that such an important action should be pressed by the Peers when there were but twenty of them present at its passage. With an appeal from the Commons to all men to obey the laws with patience until Parliament could adjust religious grievances, the Houses adjourned on the 9th of September, 1642.

Thus far the labors of the Long Parliament had been for the benefit of the nation, and a priceless boon to posterity. At the restoration of Charles II, practically all that it had done up to this adjournment was permitted to stand, and its work has never since been materially disturbed. The abolishment of those extraordinary courts which had been the main support of the old monarchical system, had brought the government very near to the modern constitutional form. The acts of arbitrary power which those courts had
unjustly sustained under the forms of law, necessarily ceased when there was no longer any machinery of judicature for their further support. The King’s prerogative was already a mere form. But after the reassembling of Parliament, the leaders of the new system pressed on without a specific object, seemingly to pull down without planning to build up. Was it because they were distrustful of Charles? Or was it because there were some there who aimed at self-aggrandizement and power? Perhaps both of these considerations had their weight. After tying the King’s hands as they had now done, it would have been well to pause. Instead of this, they diverted their attacks from the King’s power to institutions which were dear to the hearts of many of their countrymen. The spirit of faction, the formation of heated parties, the rapid growth of incivism, were the logical fruits of their persistency.

CHAPTER X
Scottish Intrigues and Irish Massacres

In the meantime, the vexed Monarch had arrived in Edinburgh, where he received a loyal and enthusiastic reception. He wrote to a Government official that all difficulties in Scotland were now passed. He assured his impatient Queen that Argyle had promised to do him faithful service, and that Leslie, who was equally devoted, had driven with him round the town amid the shouts of the people. His line of vision was not sufficiently clear to discern that these demonstrations were only the natural homage that was due to the unusual presence of Majesty. Endymion Porter, a member of Parliament and an acute observer, wrote “that the King was, as usual, pushing subtle designs of gaining popular opinion, and weak executions for the upholding of monarchy.” Charles at first attempted to ingratiate himself with the Presbyterian middle class, but had not gone far before he turned to the turbulent aristocracy. Among these noblemen there was a condition of jealous strife which would have convinced a broader mind of the futility of seeking their united support. But with Charles, it was a natural conclusion that out of their animosities he might reap advantages which would strengthen his fainting sovereignty. Argyle, the most powerful of Scotland’s chieftains, had won the confidence of the great middle classes and of the common people. His influence was resented by the other nobles, and the valiant Montrose was now confined in prison for the temerity with which he had opposed Argyle’s growing power. The Marquis of Hamilton, who is suspected of having cherished designs on the Crown of Scotland, had attached himself to Argyle from motives of self-exaltation. Out of this situation, there arose an affair which is known in history as “The Incident.” The Scottish Parliament was already curbing the King’s ambition, and dissipating the fond hopes which he had brought with him into their country. After having passed an act requiring the officers of State to be appointed with the consent of Parliament, they had virtually construed that statute to vest the very appointments with themselves, and certain nominations which the King sent them were rejected, to his great discomfiture. Charles cast the blame on Hamilton’s intrigues, which brought that nobleman’s brother, the Earl of
Lanark, to plead his cause before the King. Charles received him coldly, and dismissed him without favor.

Montrose seized this moment as one to ameliorate his own fate. He had already written twice, offering to make revelations of the utmost importance to the King’s Crown and dignity, but Charles had spurned to hear him. In the third letter, the victims of these revelations appeared to be Hamilton and Argyle. But in the rude condition of legal processes it would be impossible to arrest these stalwart leaders, having at their call, according to popular belief, armed retainers amounting to five thousand men. "The Incident" grew out of a plan devised by the Earl of Crawford, a Catholic and head of the House of Lindsey, to privately seize Hamilton and Argyle, and, if rescue were attempted, to assassinate them. It is not clear that the King was aware of this conspiracy to seize the two men, and, even if he knew of it, it is scarcely possible that he possessed the slightest information of their proposed murder. After all that can be justly said against him, there is nothing in his character that will permit the assumption of his connivance in such an atrocious plan. Information of the plot was carried to Leslie, who was expected to furnish a military guard for the incarceration of the two noblemen in the event of their arrest. But Leslie made a full disclosure of the affair to Hamilton and Argyle, who, with Lanark, precipitately fled from the city.

At the instant of their disappearance Charles was on his way to the Parliament House, followed by an armed escort of five hundred men, and it was this imposing approach that had led to the flight of the accused noblemen, who professed their unwillingness to incur a slaughter in the streets in the King’s presence.

Charles quickly detected a suspicion against himself, which led him with tears in his eyes to deny all knowledge of "The Incident," and to remind his people that on another occasion when a charge of disloyalty had been laid against Hamilton he had permitted that friend of his youth to sleep in his own royal chamber as a mark of his unabated confidence and regard. In the end there was no very serious termination to the affair. Montrose obtained his liberty. The Marquis of Hamilton was created a duke and the Earl of Argyle a marquis, while General Leslie took his seat in the Scottish Parliament as Earl of Leven. But popular interest which might have been attracted to an investigation of "The Incident" was quickly diverted by the appalling news of a bloody uprising of the native inhabitants of Ireland against the English settlers. The administration of Irish affairs since the accession of the Stuart dynasty had been based upon a singular disregard of the rights of the indigenous population. The worship of the Catholic religion had been proscribed among a people who knew no other faith, and any manifestation of spiritual zeal on the part of the Irish was sure to meet with contumelious treatment from the English. But it was not alone in their faith that the Irish were touched. The attempt to establish an English plantation in the province of Ulster was an attempt to wrest their lands from this rude and nearly barbarous people. Under an artificial process of law, six entire counties were declared to be forfeited to the Crown, and a Protestant emigration from England and Scotland was without
much further ceremony invested with the richest parts of that fertile soil. The original owners were thrust forth, not even being allowed to serve the new possessors for hire, the settlers thinking it safer, as doubtless it was, to have the Irish out of sight of their despoiled lands.

It had been a commendable intention in the mind of Charles, whenever he felt himself sufficiently secure to follow out his own desires, to proclaim religious liberty to the Catholics in Ireland; and while the narrow spirit of that age would have made this a perilous move, posterity would have applauded its wisdom and humanity. It was one of his promises to the pope, in return for the oft-solicited contribution of funds, that he would do so. But when his difficulties continued to increase, the project was laid aside.

In the meantime, the loud discussions in England and Scotland over the questions of political and religious privileges had very naturally led the Irish to inquire among themselves whether they possessed any similar privileges as subjects of the British Crown. The treatment of Catholics in England led them to shortly expect equally severe repression in Ireland. As early as February, 1640, the Irish Catholics had talked secretly together concerning retaliation. In June of that year, when a part of the disbanded Irish army was on the march for foreign service, the priests and friars intercepted them and warned them to remain, as they would find use for their arms at home. In August, 1641, a general uprising in the North and the seizure of Dublin Castle were planned to take place on October 23. Early in the latter month a convention of priests and laymen was held in the Abbey of Mulyfarnham, in Westmeath, and the question of a course to be taken against the English and other Protestants was agitated. Nearly all the priests, and many of the lay members, urged that no massacre occur. The insurgents were requested to treat the English as the Spaniards had treated the Moors, sending them back to their own country with at least some part of their property. Others loudly demanded a general slaughter. To banish them would simply provoke them to return with swords in their hands. With this divergence of opinion the convention dispersed, all knowing that there would soon be a mad carnage in Ireland.

On the evening preceding the date set for the attack on the Castle, the secret was carried to the English authorities by Owen O’Connolly, a Protestant, who informed the Lord Justices that all the Englishmen in Dublin were to be put to death the next day, and all the Protestants in the other towns to be slaughtered that very night. The English acted with promptness and courage. Lord Maguire and Hugh McMahon, the leaders of the Dublin Irish, were seized, and the other insurgents were overawed by a display of force in the castle’s garrison.

But outside of Dublin the red hand of rebellion would be content with nothing but the rout and massacre of the English. In Fermanagh three hundred English were killed on the first day of the outbreak. At many places where captives were taken, those who would have spared human life were driven off, and all the prisoners were sacrificed, women and children being murdered with the rest. The bodies of the dead were allowed to lie where they fell, without burial, putrefying for many weeks.
In Cavan, Philip O’Reilly, who headed the rebellion, sternly forbade his followers to commit cruelty or murder. He gave leave to some eight hundred English to depart, taking some of their property with them. They had not gone far before other rebels waylaid them, killed a part, and stripped the others to the skin, compelling them to go forward empty-handed and naked to Kilmore. Two thousand fugitives from Belturbet, under a guard of two hundred Irishmen, had proceeded a few miles when they were set upon by an angry horde of men, women, and children, who robbed them of all they carried, and took from every one the last vestige of clothing, leaving not even a rag for modesty’s sake. Many of them perished on the way from hunger and cold, the rest reaching Dublin more dead than alive.

In northern Ireland the cruelties were more deliberate and more atrocious. Protestants were hung and stabbed with ferocious delight. Noses and ears were cut off; women were foully abused in the presence of husbands and brothers, and afterwards had their hands and legs cut off at the joints; and at Portadown and Corbridge many persons were flung from the bridges to drown in the rivers beneath. Thousands of men, women, and children were indiscriminately driven naked through the cold November nights, and the Irish considered it a benign mercy to let them escape thus, carrying only their lives with them. Sir Phelim O’Neill, who was in command, in so far as such a horde could be commanded, had issued a proclamation at the outset, declaring that no harm was intended to the King nor to any of his subjects. In view of what followed, the proclamation seemed to be a grim satire. The estimates of the Protestants who were atrociously slain vary all the way from 50,000 to 200,000. The real number was probably much less than 5,000.

The Long Parliament had met again on the 20th of October. On the 1st of November a letter from the Lord Justices was read at Westminster, describing the conspiracy against Dublin Castle, and telling all that could be learned of the projected uprising throughout Ireland. On the 11th further advices reached Parliament. The ever-ready cry of a popish plot was heard in London. It was voted to send two thousand troops to Ireland at once, and to ask Scotland for one thousand more. Even in this emergency, when the honor of England and the life of thousands of her subjects were at stake, King Pym, as he was now beginning to be called, pushed forward his work of revolution. He moved a vote that unless the King would dismiss his “evil counselors,” and select ministers approved by Parliament, they would not hold themselves bound to assist him in Ireland. It was a proposition that startled even the boldest man in that House. Hyde declared it was a menace to the King. Waller said it absolved the House from its duty, as Strafford absolved the King from all rules of government. Pym’s own followers shrank from so radical a step, and the House rejected his motion. But a few days later it was carried in a modified form, the sting remaining just as severe as in the original shape, but veiled in more considerate language. On the 17th the details of the second army plot were presented to Parliament, from which it appeared that a petition bearing the King’s initials had been circulated among the soldiers, in which they were asked to express their detestation of the leading members of Parliament, and
to declare their readiness to march to London to suppress the tumults which those leaders had raised. The Grand Remonstrance, a document devised by Pym, which reviewed all the unwholesome acts of power since the commencement of the present reign, was pushed forward, and became the subject of a great debate. The only purpose of the Grand Remonstrance was to appeal to the country against the King by exciting popular indignation over his usurpations. The Episcopalian party had by this time become the Royalist party. The Root-and-Branch party became the Puritan or Parliamentary party. In the Royalist party men who had voted for every measure that curtailed the King’s authority now perceived that the King’s person stood for social order and security of property, which would be menaced by further attacks upon his dignity. They also plainly saw the intention of the Puritans, now victorious over the prerogative, to turn their hands to the work of destroying that stately and ceremonial worship of the Established Church which was dear to the hearts of so many Englishmen. These considerations led the Royalist party to bitterly oppose the passage of the Grand Remonstrance. When the question was finally put, the relative strength of the two parties was shown by the vote. There were 159 aye’s and 148 noe’s, a majority of 11 votes for the Puritans. The Puritans were afraid that the King purposed to take away from them their religion, and the Grand Remonstrance was their appeal to the nation for the preservation of their faith. The Royalists were equally fearful that the passage of that measure would inflame the public mind against the English Church. And thus it came about that sober and God-fearing Englishmen arrayed themselves against each other because each party had imbibed a deep-seated distrust of the other on questions of religious belief, which only an appeal to the sword could overcome.

Oliver Cromwell had thrown the whole weight of his enthusiastic nature on the side of the Remonstrance. He had boasted to Lord Falkland that its friends in the House were so numerous that it would pass almost without debate. But the small majority of eleven votes showed an error in his conclusion. As they left the Chamber, after the passage of the measure, Falkland asked Cromwell in a tone of irony, whether there had been a debate? "I will take your word for it another time," was the answer. "If the Remonstrance had been rejected, I would have sold all I had the next morning, and never have seen England any more; and I know there are many other honest men of this same resolution." The remark shows the impression which the present evils had made on the hearts of the Puritans. When it became impossible to correct abuses by Parliamentary action, they would, rather than endure a circumscribed faith, seek a new and precarious home in that distant wilderness beyond the sea.

Charles returned from Scotland late in November. All his expectations of material assistance from that quarter were dissipated. He had found himself but King in name there, as he was fast finding himself but King in name in England. That deep look of care, which, preserved on Vandyke’s portrait, has won for Charles thousands of passionate admirers, had driven from his face the smile of youth and power. Adversity had given to his mind a new dignity. Those weak schemes which were revealed in the disclosure of the two army plots
gave way to better methods. There is reason to believe that the King had made an earnest effort while in Scotland to fasten on the leaders of Parliament the responsibility for the Scottish invasion, and that he hoped to bring them to the block under the forms of law as they had brought Strafford to the block under the forms of law. But while the King was convinced in his own mind of their treason, the evidence attainable was not such as would legally fasten the charge upon them, defended as they would be by a Parliamentary majority. Charles, like the Puritans, was now appealing to the people. He sent word of his intention to pass through London on his return, and this announcement had given great joy to the people. The Queen had joined him at Theobalds and accompanied him in his progress through the city. A vast concourse of people received the royal pair with enthusiastic acclamations. Charles addressed them and complimented their city. He assured them that the Irish lands which had been acquired by the City Corporation would be restored to them. He hoped, with the assistance of Parliament, to re-establish for them a flourishing trade. He had come back with a hearty affection to his people in general. He would govern them according to the laws, and would maintain the Protestant religion as it had been established in the times of Elizabeth and his father. "This I will do," he said, "if need be, to the hazard of my life and all that is dear to me." This was his answer to the Grand Remonstrance. There was now to be no compromise, no conciliation, no surrender. Puritanism might look for no sympathy from the Established Church. Sectarianism should never flourish with the royal sanction. The character of the people that surrounded him impressed him favorably. "I see," said Charles, "that all these former tumults and disorders have only risen from the meaner sort of people, and that the dispositions of the better and main part of the city have ever been loyal and affectionate to my person and government." Richard Gurney, the Lord Mayor, knelt, was touched on the shoulder, and arose Sir Richard Gurney. The people cried, "God bless King Charles, long live Queen Mary!" At Guildhall there was a splendid banquet, after which the royal procession passed on to Whitehall, where the King once more slept in the palace of his fathers.

As a means of quieting the alarms with which the Puritans were vexing the public mind, Charles dismissed the guard which had been stationed around the Parliament House ever since the news of the Irish rebellion had been received. A crowd of Londoners, armed with swords and staves, thereupon appeared in Westminster and demanded the exclusion of the bishops from the House of Lords. They were dispersed without bloodshed, and the Royalists openly made the charge that the Puritans had invited the mob to approach. It is very probable that the charge was true. A similar charge had been made as to the source of mob inspiration in the days of the Strafford trial. Pym made the counter-charge "that he was informed that there was a conspiracy by some members of this House to accuse other members of the same of treason." On December 2, Charles came to Westminster to give his assent to a tonnage and poundage bill. The two Houses met him in the Lords’ Chamber, and he spoke with scorn of the misplaced alarm which was distressing the Commons. He referred with gratification to his reception in the city, and expressed a hope
that his presence would dispel all fears. He was resolved, he told them in solemn and assuring words, not only to maintain all the acts of the existing Parliament, but to grant whatever else could be justly desired in point of liberties or in the maintenance of the established religion.

Meanwhile the tumults still continued about Westminster. The mobs even threw out insolent menaces against the King himself. This brought from a number of young gentlemen who had been officers in the late army an offer of service for the King. They called the turbulent ones who composed the mob, Roundheads, intending to deride their short-cropped hair. These in turn contemptuously referred to the King’s adherents as Cavaliers. Such was the origin of those party appellations, first applied in scorn, which the respective possessors were afterwards proud to claim.

The burden of the popular cry demanded the exclusion of the bishops from the House of Lords. In a spirit of rash judgment, Archbishop Williams drew up a protestation signed by the twelve bishops, setting forth that though they had an undoubted right to sit and vote in Parliament, yet in coming thither they had been menaced, assaulted, and affronted by the unruly multitude, and they could no longer with safety attend their duty in the House. For this reason they protested against all laws, votes, and resolutions, as null and invalid, which should pass during the time of their constrained absence.

The position assumed by the bishops in this protestation, while strictly legal and just under the old theory of the constitution, was ill-timed and unwise under the existing clamor. Unfortunately the King took no time for considering the propriety of such a paper, but, when it was laid before him, he was moved by its abstract justice to order it presented to the Lords with his approbation. As soon as it was read in the Upper House the Lords desired a conference with the Commons, whom they informed of this astounding document. The Commons saw in it an instant triumph. An impeachment of high treason was immediately sent up against the bishops, as endeavoring to subvert the fundamental laws, and to invalidate the authority of Parliament, and they were all straightway committed to the Tower.

Of this incident Clarendon writes:

"When the passion, rage, and fury of this time shall be forgotten, and posterity shall find amongst the records of the supreme court of judicature so many orders and resolutions in vindication of the liberty of the subject against the imprisoning of any man, though by the King himself, without assigning such a crime as the law hath determined to be worthy of imprisonment; and in the same year, by this high court, shall find twelve Bishops, members of this court, committed to prison for high treason, for the presenting this protestation, men will surely wonder at the spirit of that reformation."

The King’s honor was further prejudiced about this time by a story that came from Ireland, by which it appeared that Sir Phelim O’Neill had lately taken
Armagh, and had boldly exhibited a commission under the Great Seal of England, by which he said he was authorized by the King to restore the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland. This commission has clearly been proved a forgery, but the Commons never paused to ascertain the authenticity of a document so valuable to their plans. Pym notified the Lords that as the Commons were the representative body of the whole nation, while the Lords were but as particular persons coming to Parliament in a particular capacity, the Lords should no longer hold back certain bills which should be passed for the safety of the kingdom, or, if they did, he plainly intimated that the Commons would go forward without them. One of the bills referred to was the Impressment Bill. The Commons were afraid to draft an army for service in Ireland under the common laws lest the King should use it against the Parliament. In this bill they therefore took away his right to compel men to military service beyond the borders of their own county, except under a sudden emergency caused by a foreign invasion. The stoppage of this bill in the House of Lords, and the pressing necessity for sending a large force to Ireland, finally impelled the Commons to tear off the mask. If it was good law, as it seemed to be, that the King could levy troops in any part of England, to employ them against another part, they would demand a new law which would take the sword out of his hand. On December 7, St. John, the Solicitor General, who might have shown a more tender regard for his oath of fealty to the King, brought in the Militia Bill, in which it was proposed that a Lord General, whose name was left blank, should be nominated to have supreme command over the militia. He was to have plenary powers. He was to raise men, to levy money to pay them, and to execute martial law. A Lord Admiral was to be provided for the Navy with similar powers. This was revolution that appalled the most radical revolutionist. “Away with it! Cast it out!” were the cries that resounded through the House. Culpepper defined it rightly when he said that it took away from the King the power which was left to him by the law, and placed an unlimited arbitrary power in another. Nor were the objections confined to the Royalist party alone. Many who had gone on with the Root-and-Branch party without faltering, paused at the spectacle of a military despotism which this bill presented. The House wavered, although a proposal to throw the bill out without further consideration was rejected by a majority of thirty-three. The Commons, in their desperation, urged the Lords to send ten thousand Scottish troops to Ireland. The Lords refused to place Ireland in the hands of a Scottish Presbyterian host unless the Commons would agree to send ten thousand English soldiers at the same time. The Commons would give no such assurance, and no troops were sent, and the Irish massacres continued without restriction. Charles now removed Sir William Balfour from the command of the Tower. Balfour had been lieutenant in the days of Strafford’s imprisonment, and had refused to admit Billingsly and his men in the plot for the Earl’s escape, and his removal was a significant indication of the King’s wariness. This was further apparent in the appointment of one Colonel Lunsford as his successor, a man of a hard conscience, who was supposed to be capable of any violence. The Commons took fright at this incident and asked the Lords to join them in a
protest against Lunsford’s continuance. The Lords refused to interfere in the
King’s undoubted right to make the appointment, but privately suggested to
Charles that it would be well to appoint another, and he, mindful of the
friendly spirit of the Lords, put Sir John Byron in the position.
And now came that attempt to arrest the five members, and destroy the
Parliamentary opposition, the failure of which cost Charles Stuart his Crown
and life, and made possible the wondrous career of Oliver Cromwell.

END OF SECTION ONE

The PARLIAMENTARY
GENERAL

Chapter XI  The Arrest of the Five Members
Chapter XII  The Paper War
Chapter XIII  The King Beats All but Cromwell
Chapter XIV  Marston Moor
Chapter XV   Naseby
Chapter XVI  Close of the First Civil War
Chapter XVII  The Army Against the Parliament
Chapter XVIII The Second Civil War
Chapter XIX  The Chief Delinquent

CHAPTER XI
About the time of his last visit to Scotland, Charles I had conceived the design of regaining his authority by destroying the leaders of the Parliamentary party. While in Edinburgh, he had in vain sought for the evidence of that correspondence between the members of his Parliament and the Scottish malcontents which he believed had led to the two Bishops’ Wars. Failing in this, he had bided his time, impatient and sick at heart to see each day taking from him something of his kingly power.

But it was religion more than politics that was now pushing the revolution forward. Had there been a satisfactory understanding on religion between the people and their King, the loyalty of British hearts would long since have restored contentment to the nation, and a sufficient authority to the King. But the prejudiced spirit of that age was stirred to distraction by the fear of a papal thraldom, and the knowledge which reached Pym, that Henrietta Maria was soliciting the pope for an armed force and for money with which to overthrow the Parliament, led to a secret discussion of the feasibility of impeaching the Queen.

Even the vacillating Charles could no longer delay. He loved his Queen with an ardor which now led him to imperil life and kingdom for her sake. Strafford, the far-seeing and fearless victim of Puritan prejudice, had counseled an attack on the Parliamentary leaders more than a year before, and Charles had hesitated to act. It was the brilliant and erratic Lord Digby who now proposed to save the Queen by destroying the conspirators.

John Pym, who ruled the House of Commons by the force of his genius; John Hampden, who had won the affection of all Englishmen in opposing ship-money; Sir Arthur Hazelrig, a stalwart agitator and afterwards one of the regicide judges; and Denzil Hollis and William Strode, who had held the Speaker in his chair twelve years before while the Remonstrance was read, were the five members selected for punishment; Lord Kimbolton, better known as Mandeville, in the House of Lords, was included with them. The impeachment was fixed for January 3, 1642. Sir Edward Herbert, the Attorney General, had received instructions, written in the King’s own hand, commanding him, as soon as the charge was laid before the Lords, to ask for a secret committee to examine the evidence. If any of the Puritan Lords were named as members of it, he was to object on the ground that the King intended to use them as witnesses.

On the appointed day, as soon as the Lords met, Herbert appeared and made the charge of high treason against the six persons named in his instructions. It was specified that they had traitorously endeavored to subvert the
fundamental laws and government of the kingdom, and deprive the King of his regal power, and to place on his subjects an arbitrary and tyrannical power. That they had endeavored by many foul aspersions on His Majesty, and his Government, to alienate the affections of his people, and to make the King odious to them. That they had endeavored to draw the late Army into disobedience to the King’s command, and to side with them in their machinations. That they had invited the Scots to invade England. That they had endeavored to subvert the very rights and beings of Parliament. That they had endeavored, by force and terror, to compel the Parliament to join with them in their traitorous designs, and to that end had raised and countenanced tumults against the King and Parliament. Lastly, "that they have traitorously conspired to levy, and actually have levied war against the King."

The House of Lords was thunderstruck at this audacious move. The majority of the fifty-nine members present that day were loyal to the King, and only twenty-one of them afterwards opposed him in the Civil War. But they dared not to invite the imperious wrath of the Commons. The Attorney General asked for the arrest of the members. They took time to consider it till the next day, that they might see how the Commons would receive this attack. Lord Digby, who had volunteered to move for Kimbolton’s incarceration, whispered to that Lord that the King was ill advised, and hurried out of the House.

In the House of Commons, Pym had just stated that his own study, as well as those of Hampden and Hollis, had been sealed by the King’s orders; and it was resolved that to do this without leave from the House was a breach of privilege. A sergeant-at-arms now appeared with orders from the King to arrest the five members. A committee was named to acquaint the King that the demand concerned their privileges, and a reply would be returned as soon as they had given the subject full consideration. In the meantime, the five members would be ready to answer a legal accusation, and they were ordered to appear in their places from day to day.

If the charge of high treason against Strafford was a just charge, then the charge of high treason against Pym and his associates was likewise a just charge. If "to subvert the fundamental laws" meant to overthrow the uncertain precedents of former times, if it referred to the controversy between the prerogatives of the Crown and the privileges of the subject, which had started with King John’s barons at Runnymede, then Strafford was guilty, and Pym was guilty. For each had sought to efface the misty lines of the old constitution in accordance with the notions of power or right which he cherished as the correct theory of modern government. But it was a time of revolution, and revolutions are not governed by the solution of fine-spun ethical questions.

That night the King privately determined to arrest the five members himself. The next morning he wavered, and took the Queen aside to tell her his doubts of the wisdom of the act. Her quick French spirit would not hear him with
patience. "Go, poltroon," she cried, "pull these rogues out by the ears, or never see my face more!" There is some palliation for her fierce words in the fact that it was her dignity and honor, perhaps her very life, that the Commons were preparing to attack. Charles obeyed her imperious command, knowing at the time that it was unwise, and referring to it afterwards as "a casual mistake." Had he seized the five members at early morning while they slept, his project might have been attended with success. He waited until three o'clock in the afternoon of January 4, and taking with him his young nephew, the Elector Palatine, he hurried down stairs, calling out, "Let my faithful subjects and soldiers follow me." At the door he entered his coach, and drove off followed by some four hundred armed men.

As the King and his retinue disappeared from her window, the Queen, impetuous and triumphant, communicated the secret of his purpose to the Countess of Carlisle. Lady Carlisle, who was believed to cherish a tender regard for the Puritan widower, Mr. Pym, stole out of the Queen's presence, and dispatched a hasty note to Pym by a French messenger, whose swift foot would enable him to reach Westminster in advance of the King. The messenger ran breathless to the House of Commons, and delivered his message to Pym.

The House was instantly advised of the King's approach, and the five members were requested to withdraw. Pym, Hampden, Hazelrig, and Hollis obeyed this prudent injunction, and left the House. Strode rashly proposed to remain, but a member seized him by the cloak and dragged him to the bank of the Thames where he took a boat for the city.

And indeed there was no time to be lost. As the King approached, followed by a fierce band of armed men, he struck terror into the hearts of the shopkeepers who gathered about Westminster. As he neared the Commons' door, Charles, ever precise in his deportment, assumed a repose of manner which must have been foreign to his feelings at that fatal moment. Passing between the ranks of the armed throng, he opened the Commons' door, and commanded his followers on their lives not to enter. He then passed in, accompanied only by Prince Charles Henry, the Elector Palatine. The members rose and uncovered, and the King himself took off his hat, and gained the Speaker's stand. "By your leave, Mr. Speaker," he said, "I must borrow your chair a little." Standing in front of it, he darted a quick look on the right hand, near the bar of the House, looking for Pym whom he knew well. Not seeing him, he took another step towards the chair, which the Speaker vacated for him, but stopped again to search long and earnestly among the sullen faces of the standing members for the five fugitives.

The moment was a thrilling one. It was the first time that ever a King of England had appeared in the House of Commons. The door of the chamber was held open by the Earl of Roxburgh, and by his side stood Captain Hyde, a man of unsavory reputation. Beyond, in plain view of the members, were the
soldiers handling their swords and pistols, and it was remarked that many of
the King’s followers had thrown away their cloaks for the purpose of having
their sword arms free.

The King at length sat down, and as his eyes still failed to detect the men he
sought, he became somewhat embarrassed.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am sorry for this occasion of coming unto you.
Yesterday I sent a sergeant-at-arms upon a very important occasion, to
apprehend some that, by my command, were accused of high treason,
whereunto I did expect obedience, and not a message; and I must declare unto
you here that albeit no King that ever was in England shall be more careful of
your privileges, to maintain them to the uttermost of his power, than I shall
be, yet you must know that in cases of treason no person hath a privilege, and
therefore I am come to know if any of these persons that were accused are
here."

Once more he cast his eyes around the House, and called aloud on Mr. Pym. "I
do not see any of them," he said. "I think I should know them." And then,
continuing his address, he went on, "For I must tell you, gentlemen, that so
long as these persons that I have accused, for no slight crime, but for treason,
are here, I cannot expect that this House will be in the right way that I do
heartily wish it. Therefore I am come to tell you that I must have them
wheresoever I find them."

He mentioned the name of Denzil Hollis, but there was no reply. He turned to
Speaker Lenthall and inquired, "Are any of these persons in the House?" The
Speaker, who was deeply affected, made an ingenious answer. Falling upon his
knees, he said, "May it please Your Majesty, I have neither eyes to see, nor
tongue to speak, in this place, but as this House is pleased to direct me, whose
servant I am here; and I humbly beg Your Majesty’s pardon that I cannot give
any other answer than this to what Your Majesty is pleased to demand of me."

"Well," said Charles, baffled, but attempting to assume an air of cheerfulness,
"since I see all the birds are flown, I do expect from you that you will send
them unto me as soon as they return hither. But I assure you, on the word of a
King," he continued with great solemnity, as if in a last effort to impress them
with a desire for a better understanding, "I never did intend any force, but
shall proceed against them in a legal and fair way, for I never meant any other.
And now, since I see I cannot do what I came for, I think this no unfit occasion
to repeat what I have said formerly, that whatsoever I have done in favor and
to the good of my subjects, I do mean to maintain it. I will trouble you no
more, but tell you I do expect, as soon as they come to the House, you will
send them to me, otherwise I must take my own course to find them."
The King stepped down from the Speaker’s chair, and left the House with gloom and disappointment on his brow. "Privilege, Privilege!" were the ominous words that were hurled at him by the members whom he had left behind. The Cavaliers who waited without were exasperated at the failure of his mission. They were ready for bloody work if the command had been spoken. "I warrant you," said one, looking through the open doorway at the Commons, "I am a good marksman. I will hit sure." An officer said the next day that they had gone to Westminster because they heard that the House of Commons would not obey the King, and therefore they came to force them to it. He thought if the word had been given they certainly would have fallen upon the members.

When the King returned to Henrietta Maria with the news of his failure, she was overcome with grief, and acknowledged that she had indiscreetly betrayed him to Lady Carlisle. Long afterwards she told Madame de Motteville that, although she had ruined his affairs, the King had never upbraided her for her lack of prudence.

The Commons instantly adjourned until one o’clock the next day, with the feeling that they had barely escaped violent death.

But the King could not stop now. He at once issued a proclamation, directing that the ports should be closed to prevent the escape of the five members and forbidding any person to harbor them.

The next day, January 5, he rode to the city, having with him in his coach the Duke of Hamilton and the Earls of Essex, Holland, and Newport, who were in high favor with the London populace. Arriving at Guildhall he demanded the five members from the Common Council. The feeling was divided. One faction shouted, "Parliament! Privileges of Parliament!" Others cried, "God bless the King!" Charles made a move for popularity by asking that those who had anything to say would speak their minds. "It is the vote of this Court," cried one, "that Your Majesty hear the advice of your Parliament." "It is not the vote of this Court," shouted another, "it is your own vote." The King took up this thought. "Who is it," he said, "that says I do not take the advice of my Parliament? I do take their advice, but I must distinguish between the Parliament and some traitors in it." A man shouted, "Privileges of Parliament!" "I have and will observe all the privileges of Parliament," answered the King, maintaining his patience, "but no privileges can protect a traitor from a legal trial." The five members were not surrendered, and the alternating shouts of "Privilege!" and "God save the King!" followed him to his coach. He stopped to dine with one of the sheriffs. On his way to Whitehall after dinner, a bold Puritan threw into his coach a paper on which was written, "To your tents, O Israel!"—a significant allusion to the war cry of the Israelites in their revolt against King Rehoboam.
As soon as Charles had left Guildhall the Common Council agreed on a petition in favor of the five members. The city thus arrayed itself officially on the side of the Parliament. In the meantime the Commons met at Westminster at one o’clock, drew up a declaration of their violated privileges, and adjourned until the 11th. They continued to meet as a Committee of the Whole at Guildhall, under the protection of the city, where the unlawfulness of the impeachment was daily discussed. It has been declared that the only way to have legally prosecuted the five members was by trial before a petit jury on an indictment by the grand jury. But there was one precedent on the King’s side—a precedent established in his own reign in the impeachment of the Earl of Bristol. But it was now resolved that the King could not issue a warrant. The King was not accountable for his acts, and a warrant must be issued by one of the King’s ministers, who would be accountable. If the King made a false arrest, he could not be sued for damages. If the King’s officers made a false arrest, the injured party could obtain redress.

On the 7th, a herald, standing in front of Whitehall, proclaimed the six impeached persons traitors, and an official was sent to the city to arrest them, but was compelled to return without them, having been badly treated by the mob.

On the 8th, the Commons, sitting as a committee, passed a resolution declaring it to be legal to require the sheriffs to bring the militia forces of the county for the security of Parliament; and they called upon the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen, and the Common Council, on such a pressing and extraordinary occasion, to provide officers and men for their defense.

The next day was Sunday, doubtless a Sunday of great excitement. On Monday the 10th, Philip Skippon, a plain, pious man, destined to win renown in the Parliamentary army, but now the Captain of the Artillery Garden, was appointed Sergeant Major-General, to take command of the city trained bands. Some of the members of the House of Lords, sitting in a similar manner as a committee, approved of these measures of protection. The sailors on the Thames offered to assist in the defense of Parliament, and their offer was accepted.

The five members were the heroes of the hour. Great crowds gathered around the lodgings of Pym, and four thousand horsemen of Buckinghamshire held themselves ready at a moment’s notice to ride to London to defend their representative, John Hampden. The other three accused members were guarded with equal solicitude.

Charles saw that he was beaten. He had frightened the Commons away from Westminster, but he had not crushed them. They were more formidable now as an oppressed committee in Guildhall than as a free Parliament in Westminster. The King felt certain that their next move would be to tear his Queen away
from him. He determined to make his flight from the capital. The Earls of Holland and Essex, loyal to the Monarch though they opposed his assumptions of power, besought some who were in the King’s confidence to plead with him for delay. Heenvliet, the Dutch Agent, who was known to have the King’s ear, was finally appealed to, but as he beheld the mournful look of grim determination on that usually irresolute face, he could only reply, “Who would dare to do it?”

Charles turned his back upon his throne to save his wife. Acknowledging by flight the supremacy of his Parliament, he could take with him the consolatory conviction that he had denied them nothing which they had demanded in preservation of the liberties of Englishmen. He had sacrificed his favorite Minister, Strafford, who, guiltless of a capital crime, yet stood for the theory of autocratic authority. He had signed the bills which destroyed those arbitrary courts, the Star Chamber, the High Commission, and the Council of York, by the use of which his prerogative had been upheld. He had allowed this Parliament to exist during its own pleasure. He had assented to the bill for the compulsory assembling of triennial Parliaments. He had resigned his claims to the right of taxation without the consent of Parliament. By no single step, not even after they had the entire power of the State in their own hands, did the Parliament advance the political amelioration of England beyond the concessions which Charles had granted to them at the time of his flight. In fact, the revolution was already accomplished. Why, then, did they push the King to civil war? There were two reasons for it. They feared that Charles, still clinging to the ancient theories of monarchy, would overthrow the civil reforms which they had wrested from his unwilling hands, at any moment when, by possessing a sufficient army, he might feel himself strong enough to defy them. They likewise were in deadly apprehension lest his too Catholic Queen, whose influence in matters of faith they much over-rated, would turn the King to her own views, and then attempt to overwhelm the Protestant religion by an inundation of the dogmas of Rome.

On the 10th of January, the King set out from Whitehall accompanied by a modest retinue. He was never to see that place again but as a prisoner condemned to death. It must have cut him to the heart when Essex and Holland refused to go with him, and told him that his proper place was with his Parliament. When the royal party reached Hampton Court that evening, no preparation had been made for their reception, and the King and Queen and three of their children slept in one room.

CHAPTER XII

The Paper War
On the day following the King’s flight from the capital the Parliament returned to Westminster in triumph.

The Thames was covered with gaily-decorated craft, and its banks were lined by joyous citizens whose loud huzzas proclaimed the vindication of the privileges of Parliament. Two rows of boats were formed, reaching from London Bridge to Westminster Hall, and between these, in a vessel manned by sailors who had volunteered their services, the five members returned in a halo of popular glory to the seats from which an angry King had driven them one week before. As soon as Pym—now indeed "King Pym"—reached his old seat, he rose, and with Hampden, Hazelrig, Hollis, and Strode standing uncovered beside him, he gratefully, in behalf of himself and his companions, returned thanks to the citizens of London for the favors and protection which they had extended to the five men who were under the ban of a Monarch’s wrath. The sheriffs were then similarly thanked by a unanimous vote of the House, and orders were issued that a guard, selected from the train-bands of the city, should attend daily to watch over the safety of the Parliament.

It was a great day for the Parliamentary leaders. With more than half the nation at their back they never faltered in pressing on the revolution. They would employ peaceful means if possible; if not, they would endure bloodshed and war. The threatened arrest had cemented some discordant fractures in the Parliamentary ranks, it had brought over some wavering Lords to the popular side, and, above all, it had kindled in the hearts of the five members a sense of personal injury which nerved them to aggressions at which patriotism would have timidly paused. Lord Clarendon has observed that "Mr. Hampden was much altered after this accusation; his nature and courage seeming much fiercer than before." And it is certain that Pym and Hampden inspired and led those extremists for root-and-branch measures, both as to the Crown and the Church, whose fiery and uncompromising zeal overthrew all overtures for peace, and finally produced war. Among these men were Oliver Cromwell, Oliver St. John, and young Sir Harry Vane. Of the conduct of the Parliament after the King’s flight, the great Lord Chatham has justly said, "There was ambition, there was sedition, there was violence; but no man shall persuade me that it was not the cause of liberty on one side, and of tyranny on the other."

The purpose of the Commons to regard themselves as the principal part of the government was rather ludicrously shown in a vote that had passed not long before, in which it was declared that a majority vote of their House, together with a minority vote of the House of Lords, would be sufficient to enact laws. A perspicacious member who suggested that this principle could be reversed so as to make a majority of the Lords and a minority of the Commons defeat such
legislation was instantly committed for contempt, and made to retract his words before he could again assume his seat.

But the Lower House soon gave a more formidable expression to this assumption of superiority. They were desperately in need of money, and applied to the City of London for a loan. The authorities, under the dictation of Pym, refused to advance the funds except upon certain conditions, which were delivered in the form of twelve specific grievances, for which they demanded instant redress. These grievances consisted of those crying evils which had afflicted the nation since the beginning of the present reign. In a conference between the two Houses, Pym asked for the concurrence of the Lords in further restrictive legislation, and concluded a long speech in these words:

"The Commons will be glad to have your concurrence and help in saving of the kingdom; but, if they fail of it, it shall not discourage them in doing their duty. And whether the kingdom be lost or saved (I hope, through God’s blessing, it will be saved!), they shall be sorry that the story of this present Parliament should tell posterity that, in so great a danger and extremity, the House of Commons should be enforced to save the Kingdom alone, and that the Peers should have no part in the honor of the preservation of it, having so great an interest in the good success of those endeavors in respect of their great estates and high degrees of nobility."

The first step towards the beginning of the Civil War was now taken. At Hull, a town on the Humber, in the North of England, and commanding the sea, were still stored the munitions which had been collected for the second Bishops’ War. Besides, the place was convenient for the landing of such foreign troops as Charles might be able to enlist for the subjugation of his kingdom. The Parliament learned that the King had appointed the Earl of Newcastle to be Governor of Hull, and that he had given instructions to Captain Legg, an officer who had been concerned in the army plots, to hasten to Hull and secure the good will of the people in the North to their new Governor. The Parliament issued orders to Sir John Hotham to secure Hull by means of the Yorkshire trained bands, and not to deliver it up until he was ordered to do so by "the King’s authority, signified unto him by the Lords and Commons now assembled in Parliament." In a few minutes young John Hotham, the son of Sir John, and himself a member of Parliament, was spurring his horse over the frozen road, and it was a race for Hull between him and Captain Legg, in which Hotham arrived first, and secured the adherence of the old Knight to the Parliament. In the face of such a stirring incident, the Lords joined with the Commons in measures looking to the common safety. A bill was promptly passed enabling Parliament to adjourn itself to any place it would, the intention being to enable it to sit at Guildhall instead of at Westminster. This was sent to the King, who was now gone to Windsor, and who returned answer that he would
take time to consider the bill; and he took occasion to announce to the Parliament that, as the legality of his impeachment of the accused members had been disputed, he would now abandon it and proceed against them "in an unquestionable way." This declaration that he would not drop the prosecution threw the Commons into a greater irritation. Four thousand of Hampden’s constituents rode up from Buckinghamshire, and announced that they were ready to live and die in defense of the privileges of Parliament.

As the King’s friends were meeting in armed parties from time to time, the Parliament invited all the counties of England to call out their trained bands for drilling and defense. The declaration stated that all that had occurred amiss was caused by the papists. It was the firm belief of Parliament that there was a vast conspiracy for the restoration jointly of absolute monarchy and popery, and the Irish rebellion, the impeachment of the five members, and the growing cloud of civil war were considered to be due to the unfolding of that plot.

On January 17, 1642, Heenvliet, the agent of the Prince of Orange, was requested by the King to mediate with the Parliament. In this interview, Charles exhibited that singular insensibility to his environments which marked all his negotiations with the Parliament. Heenvliet asked him what message he should carry to them. "Tell them," replied Charles, "that you find me hard to satisfy, and then they will be anxious to secure your help." With his power and Crown already taken away, it was a bad time to tell them that he was hard to satisfy. The Queen was present and made bitter complaints of the Commons for their accusations against her. She declared that she had never given evil counsels to the King, and affirmed that she detested the Irish rebellion. The King, she said, would be content to enjoy his revenue as he had had it before these troubles, and would have his Parliament meet every three years instead of remaining in perpetual session. He would wait two days at Windsor for an answer. If none came he would take her and the Princess to Portsmouth where they would be put in safe custody, while he and the Prince of Wales would go on to Yorkshire. The King’s name, she said, was reverenced everywhere outside of London. He would issue a manifesto announcing his desire for peace and forbidding the trained bands to obey anyone but himself. But if they went to Portsmouth, she concluded, the Prince of Orange must not allow the King to perish. Nothing of good or ill resulted from Heenvliet’s interposition.

The two Houses passed a bill excluding the bishops from their seats in the House of Lords. It was a blow which paralyzed the power of the Church to interfere in temporal affairs. The King was much displeased. "How am I to take away the bishops," he said, "having sworn at my coronation to maintain them in their privileges and preeminences? At the beginning I was told that all would go well if I would allow the execution of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; then it was, if I would grant a triennial Parliament; then it was, if I would allow the present Parliament to remain sitting as long as it wished; now it is, if I will place the ports, the Tower, and the militia in their hands; and scarcely has that request been presented, when they ask me to remove the bishops." But
Charles, anxious for peace, signed the Exclusion Bill, and appointed Conyers, a Puritan, to the Lieutenancy of the Tower, in place of Byron. Beyond all that he had heretofore granted, he now consented to give them the control of the militia if they would but set a limit to the time at which their control should expire. Both Houses thanked him warmly for his concessions, but immediately impeached his loyal adherent, Lord Digby, for high treason, on account of a letter to the Queen in which Digby had only used expressions which proved his unswerving loyalty to the King. The King and Queen had now reached Dover in their hapless wanderings. Henrietta Maria, accompanied by her daughter and carrying with her the Crown jewels and much precious plate, set sail for Holland, entertaining a high hope of her ability to obtain both men and money for the rehabilitation of the King’s dignity. Charles bade her a most tender farewell, and galloped along the high gray cliffs with the vessel’s course, until the ship, bearing its precious burden, put out to sea and was lost to view. The Queen being out of danger, he refused to sign the militia ordinance.

The “Paper War,” which name has been applied to the exchange of the messages between the King and his Parliament, was waxing warm. The King sent them word that he was willing to accept the persons to command the militia whom they would nominate, but they must receive their commissions from himself, and those commissions must cease whenever he should so desire it. As this arrangement would give them no security against the King’s caprice, the Houses voted that the answer was equivalent to a denial of their request. They begged him to fix his residence nearer to Westminster, as his peripatetic course was stirring up excitement and danger. "For my residence near you," the King answered, "I wish it might be so safe and honorable that I had no cause to absent myself from Whitehall; ask yourselves whether I have or not." The day after this answer was dispatched (March 2, 1642), Charles started for the North. On March 5, the Houses passed their ordinance putting the militia in charge of their own officers, and thus seized the power of the sword into their own custody. On the 9th the King was overtaken at Newmarket by a Parliamentary committee. Would not His Majesty approve their control of the militia for a limited time? "No, by God," thundered the aroused King, "not for an hour. You have asked that of me in this, was never asked of a king, and with which I will not trust my wife and children." They read him a list of grievances. "That’s false!" "That’s a lie!" were the comments which he passed upon each article. "What would you have?" he cried. "Have I violated your laws? Have I denied to pass one bill for the ease and security of my subjects? I do not ask you what you have done for me. God so deal with me and mine, as all my thoughts and intentions are upright for the maintenance of the true Protestant profession, and for the observation and preservation of the laws of this land; and I hope God will bless and assist those laws for my preservation." The Earl of Pembroke begged Charles to come nearer to Westminster, and to say clearly what he desired. "I would whip a boy in Westminster School," he replied, "who could not tell that by my answer."
The King’s proclamation that the ordinances of the two Houses were not to be obeyed without his consent, drew forth a sharp answer from Parliament, which was revolutionary to the core, "that when the Lords and Commons in Parliament, which is the supreme court of judicature in the kingdom, shall declare what the law of the land is, to have this not only questioned and controverted, but contradicted, and a command that it should not be obeyed, is a high breach of the privilege of Parliament." The King adroitly quoted a speech of Pym’s against the present course of the Commons:

"Mr. Pym himself tells you, in his speech against the Earl of Strafford (published by the order of the House of Commons), 'The law is the safeguard, the custody of all private interests; your honors, your lives, your liberties and estates are all in the keeping of the law; without this, every man hath a like right to anything.' And we would fain be answered, what title any subject of our own kingdom hath to his house or land, that we have not to our town of Hull... We conclude with Mr. Pym’s own words: ‘If the prerogative of the King overwhelm the liberty of the people, it will be turned to tyranny; if liberty undermine the prerogative, it will grow into anarchy’; and so we say into confusion."

The Commons, in their reply to this deft thrust, struck the keynote of their own feelings in the controversy. "If," they answered, "we have done more than our ancestors have done, we have suffered more than ever they have suffered." Their many denunciations of the King’s conduct, in which they dutifully charged its reprehensible parts to "his evil counselors," led Charles to say to them that "he could wish that his own immediate actions, which he avows on his own honor, might not be so roughly censured under that common style of evil counselors." This evoked a reply which showed that one principle, at least, of the old constitution remained intact and alive in the respect of the nation. "We, His Majesty’s loyal and dutiful subjects," said they, "can use no other style, according to that maxim in the law, The King can do no wrong, but if any ill be committed in matter of state, the council must answer for it; if in matters of justice, the judges." This ancient and humane concession to the individuality of the sovereign was swept away at a later day in that burst of fanaticism and party spirit which brought Charles to the block.

Charles, notwithstanding all the errors of his government, was intensely in earnest in striving to stop the tide of incivism which was overthrowing public order. In a further message to Parliament he quoted a fine passage from one of Pym’s speeches in the Strafford trial, thus showing his respect for Pym’s intellect and at the same time thrusting upon the Commons a rebuke in Pym’s own words. The King appealed to them thus:

"It was well said in a speech made by a private person (Mr. Pym), ‘The law is that which puts a difference betwixt good and evil, betwixt just and unjust. If you take away the law, all things will
fall into a confusion; every man will become a law unto himself, which, in the depraved condition of human nature, must needs produce many great enormities. Lust will become a law, and envy will become a law; covetousness and ambition will become laws; and what dictates, what decisions such laws will produce, may easily be discerned.’ So said that gentleman, and much more, very well, in defense of the law, and against arbitrary power. It is worth looking over and considering; and if the most zealous defense of the true Protestant profession and the most resolved protection of the law be the most necessary duty of a Prince, we cannot believe this miserable distance and misunderstanding can be long continued between us; we have often and earnestly declared them to be the chiefest desires of our soul, and the end and rule of all our actions.”

When Parliament asked his permission to bring the military stores from Hull to London, he correctly referred to their appointment of Hotham as an illegal act, and then made a candid appeal to their sense of right. He wrote:

"And now let us ask you; ... Will there never be a time to offer to, as well as to ask of us? We will propose no more particulars to you, having no such luck to please or to be understood by you. Take your own time for what concerns our particulars; but be sure you have an early speedy care of the public, that is, of the only rule which preserves the public, the law of the land; preserve the dignity and reverence due to that."

The "Paper War" was feeding a bitterness of spirit between the two parties which must soon break out into a sanguinary conflict. Charles firmly believed that the Puritan majority in the House of Commons was endeavoring to strip him of his lawful and regal authority in order to destroy the Established Church. The Commons just as firmly believed that Charles, under the inspiration of his Catholic spouse, was engaged in a wicked plot to establish the pope’s authority throughout the British dominions. Civil liberty had long since ceased to be the goal of this revolution. It was Protestantism, and all that Protestantism had done to make free the minds and the consciences of men, which was inspiring the conduct of the Commons. It was the old theory of the divine right and the individual power of the sovereign which led Charles to resist. And however exalted may have been the motives of the Commons, or however selfish the motives of the King, the candid historian cannot but acknowledge that the two parties were at cross-purposes, and that they were led into war rather by an overpowering suspicion which each held against the other’s rectitude, than by those irremediable oppressions which have always justified revolutions in the past, and will ever palliate them in the future. The Queen was busily at work in Holland, and expected to be able to embark a band of mercenary soldiers whenever the King’s affairs might require their aid.
She wrote to Charles that he must seize Hull in order to possess a seaport for landing troops, for the Parliament now controlled the Navy. On the 19th of March, 1642, the King and his retinue rode into York, and Charles exerted every art of his princely manner to win the cordial sympathy of his northern subjects. He likewise sought favor with the Puritans by ordering the execution of all the laws against the Catholics. The people received him loyally. Indeed, Charles had by this time gathered a party to his side in the pending controversy. In 1640 he had stood alone. In 1642, having yielded his assent to measures which made the formation of a model government possible, the fear of arbitrary power, which had once been held with full justice against him, was now held—shall we say with equal justice?—against the House of Commons. A large preponderance of the nobility and gentry was heartily in sympathy with the King. But up to this time there was a very small number indeed who would proclaim themselves ready to take arms against a Parliament to which the nation indubitably owed the establishment of its civil liberty. Under the pretext of a wish to keep state at Easter and at the Feast of St. George, but really to demonstrate that the center of the State was present wherever his own person was, the King summoned the Lords Holland and Essex, with others from the Upper House at Westminster, to attend him at York. The House of Lords refused to let them go, and ordered them to remain in attendance upon their Parliamentary duties. On March 25, the grand jury of Kent drew up a petition to the Parliament praying for the protection of the Episcopal religion, the prevention of the spread of sectarianism, the execution of the anti-Catholic laws, and the settlement of the militia by and with the King’s consent. This Kentish petition was the first formal declaration of any portion of the people in favor of the King’s cause. Its reading in the House of Commons excited the gravest indignation, and the persons who were instrumental in its preparation were summoned to Westminster as offenders against the privilege and dignity of Parliament, and two of them were committed to the Tower. Thus the Parliament, while giving the widest publicity to the petitions which favored their side of the dispute, violently attempted to throttle a fair discussion of the principles involved as seen from the Cavaliers’ point of view. With the vote which made prisoners of these Kentish petitioners, the outraged feelings of those in the minority brought the party spirit to a condition where war seemed to be the inevitable solution of the vexing question. It at once became apparent that this perpetual Parliament no longer represented the nation, but only a part—and no man could say how large a part—of the nation. The Commons were clearly aiming at arbitrary power under the sway of Pym, as much as the King had aimed at arbitrary power under the sway of Strafford. And men began to ponder, while forming themselves on the party lines of Roundhead or Cavalier, whether it were not better to preserve the ancient form of the government under the now limited prerogative of the King, than to tacitly permit the Commons to establish further new and untried theories in the organic constitution.
Orders were sent from Parliament to Hotham to reinforce his garrison at Hull, and a few days later a body of horsemen rode out of London to join the King at York. Pym still believed, or professed to believe, that he had all England at his back, but when a member proposed to send a delegation into each county to inquire into the state of public feeling, he was not willing to submit his popularity to such a test.

The King now informed the Parliament of his desire to lead an army into Ireland for the suppression of the rebellion which was still raging there, but the Parliament interpreted this offer as an attempt to place himself at the head of an armed host for their own subjugation, and they therefore begged him not to endanger the safety of his sacred person in such a laudable but hazardous expedition. Both parties were waiting for an overt act of war, each fearful to take the initiative.

The Queen was rashly importuning the King to begin hostilities by seizing Hull. She said in one of her letters:

"As to what you wrote me that everybody dissuades you concerning Hull from taking it by force, unless the Parliament begins, is it not beginning to put persons into it against your orders? ... For your having Hull is not beginning anything violent, for it is only against the rascal who refuses it to you... Think that if you had not stopped so prematurely, our affairs would perhaps be in a better state than they are, and you would at this moment have Hull."

The King accepted this logic, bad as it was. On the 22nd of April he sent the Elector Palatine and his own son, the Duke of York, to visit the town, as if in the way of friendly inspection. With them were some fifty true men. The following day the King approached the town with only three hundred of his followers. When almost in sight of the walls he sent a message to Hotham informing him that he was coming to view his magazines. Had Charles ridden into the town unannounced, Hotham would hardly have dared to oppose his King’s entry into his own possessions. But forewarned, he had time to act. He closed the gates and raised the drawbridges, sending word to the King that he could not break his trust with the Parliament. In a few moments Charles appeared, and his men cried out to the garrison to kill Hotham and throw him over the wall. Charles offered to take only twenty men with him if the gates were opened. Hotham, fearing the royalist sentiment of the populace, on which the King doubtless counted, refused. The repulsed Monarch ordered the herald to proclaim Hotham a traitor, and rode away. The advantage was certainly with the Parliament. They at once issued an order for the removal of the Hull magazine to London; and on May 10 both Houses reviewed the London trained bands, to the number of 8,000, in Finsbury Fields.

On the 14th the King issued an order requiring the gentry of the county to appear under arms at York on the 20th as a guard for his person. He also sent instructions to Skippon, in command of the London trained bands, to come to
York, and ordered the Lord Keeper to remove the law courts from Westminster to York. The Parliament promptly voted these orders illegal, and on the 20th they declared that the King intended to make war on his Parliament, and begged him to desist from his purpose of raising troops. The King’s guard was becoming formidable. He had now a regiment of trained bands, and about two hundred gentlemen of Yorkshire well mounted. He had summoned such of the Lords and Commons as were willing to support him to come to him, and many of them accepted his invitation. Indeed, a stream of persons of the better conditions began to set in towards York.

On June 2nd a further step was made in the "Paper War" by the Parliament sending their Nineteen Propositions off to the King. In these propositions the Parliament sought to establish their own complete sovereignty. They were to select the King’s Council, his officials, the judges of the land. They were to control the Army and the Navy. The King’s guard was to be dismissed. The laws against Catholics were to be executed, and the children of Catholics educated as Protestants. The Episcopal Church was to be reformed according to the desires of Parliament. The boldness of these propositions was startling even to Charles, who would not expect to be startled by any demand they might make. Their adoption would completely abrogate the ancient constitution, and yet, except for the provisions against the Catholics and the references to merely temporary affairs, they were no more than a recital of those principles of popular government which prevail in England today.

Four days later they went still further in their claim of a right to administer all the functions of government, and that, too, in the King’s name. They declared that "what they do herein hath the stamp of royal authority, although his Majesty, seduced by evil counsel, do in his own person oppose or interrupt the same; for the King’s supreme and royal pleasure is exercised and declared in this high court of law and counsel, after a more eminent and obligatory manner than it can be by personal act or resolution of his own."

On the 3rd of June there was a vast meeting of the farmers and freeholders of Yorkshire, by the King’s order, on Heyworth Moor, the gathering being variously estimated at from 40,000 to 80,000 persons. An effort to engage the sympathy of this mixed crowd wholly for the King did not fully succeed, as there were shouts all day for both King and Parliament.

The King had issued a proclamation forbidding the execution of the Militia Ordinance, but, finding his prohibition without avail, he determined to organize his own forces, and to that end he issued commissions of array, directing the trained bands to place themselves only at the disposal of officers appointed by himself.

In the meantime the Queen had sold her jewels and purchased arms in Amsterdam. She then successively applied for armed assistance from Holland, Denmark, Bavaria, France, and Spain, but received no encouragement; and the King, learning of these futile efforts, resolved then, as he should long ago have resolved, to depend upon Englishmen alone to correct whatever evils were arising from the encroachments of Englishmen. On June 13, he publicly declared that he would maintain the just privileges of Parliament, and would
not make war upon them except in the necessary defense of himself and of the
loyal subjects who surrounded his person. All the Peers at York, there being
thirty-five, then joined in a protest that no aggressive war was intended, but
that they, who were on the ground and familiar with the King’s designs, would
testify to the world that all his endeavors were intended to secure the true
Protestant religion, the just privileges of Parliament, the liberty of the subject,
and the law, peace, and prosperity of the kingdom. This declaration of the
Peers was the most important event that had occurred since the King’s flight
from London, for it was the first distinct notice the world received that Charles
had formed a Royalist party upon firm constitutional principles, led by the
nobility of the realm, who were even now prepared to defend him with their
swords.

Money and plate began to pour in both at Westminster and at York. The people
were taking sides, and were willing to sacrifice all their possessions in defense
of the cause they espoused. So narrow was the dividing line that families were
often parted by a son choosing for the Parliament and a father for the King;
and it has been said that there were families owning large estates, who, out of
a fear of future confiscation, would send one member to the King and another
to the Parliament, so that he who might be on the winning side could protect
the interests of all.

Under the commissions of array the King’s officers attempted to assemble the
trained bands. In some of the counties the militia obeyed them. In others they
refused.

The greatest disadvantage which Charles had incurred when he fled from his
capital was the abandonment of those financial resources which were his
according to the law. He had but £600 when he left Whitehall, and he would
long since have yielded through inanition had it not been for the generosity of
two of his Catholic Peers, the Earl of Worcester and his accomplished son, Lord
Herbert. By the time the King arrived at York he had received £22,000 from
these devoted subjects, and when war appeared to be inevitable, Lord Herbert
(afterwards, as the Marquis of Worcester, to become the inventor of that “fire-
water machine” which preceded Watt’s discovery of steam by more than a
century) drained all the resources of his family’s estates, and presented
Charles with £100,000, which enabled the delighted King to prepare for war.

Charles now dismissed the Earl of Northumberland from his office of Lord High
Admiral, and appointed Pennington in his place. The Parliament instantly
appointed the Earl of Warwick, who arrived at the coast first, and, boarding
the flagship, summoned the Captains of the fleet to accept him as their
Admiral. Five of them stood for the King, but their crews were for the
Parliament, and before the day had closed, Warwick’s authority had been
conceded by the entire fleet.

On July 6, the Parliament resolved to raise an army in London and the
surrounding country of ten thousand men. There were some staunch Puritans in
the House of Commons who were appalled at this apparent inaugural of war.
Sir Simonds D’Ewes, adhering to the majority, made this significant
declaration, at a moment when the war cloud was already rolling overhead,
and which posterity must accept as at least a partial vindication of the
concessions which Charles I had already made to his people: "In respect of civil
affairs," said D'Ewes, "I dare be bold to say that the liberty and property of the
subject were never so clearly asserted to them as they are at present. The
main matter then which yet remains to be secured to us is the reformation of
religion."
The King was actively massing his troops in the North, and he now appointed
the Earl of Lindsey General of his Army. On the 11th of July the Parliament
passed a declaration that the King had actually begun the war, and on the 12th
the Earl of Essex was appointed to command the Parliamentary Army. It was a
stirring time at Westminster, and both Houses solemnly united in a declaration
to live and die with Essex in the cause for which he had accepted their
commission.
The great universities were with the King. Oxford sent him 10,000 pounds and
Cambridge 6,000 pounds. On August 9th Charles proclaimed Essex and his
officers traitors, but offered a free pardon to all who would within the week
throw down their arms. Colonel George Goring, who had betrayed the King in
the army plot one year ago, now betrayed the Parliament, and held Portsmouth
in the King’s name. In Warwickshire the Earl of Northampton took some guns
that were sent by the Parliament for the defense of Warwick Castle. The Earl
of Hertford had organized an enthusiastic band of Royalists in Somerset. On
August 12, the King issued a proclamation inviting his loyal subjects to rally
round the royal standard, which was shortly to be set up. On the 18th the
Parliament denounced as traitors all who gave assistance to the King. On the
20th the King appeared before the walls of Coventry and demanded that the
gates be opened. A sally followed, and some of his followers were killed.
On the 22nd the King arrived at Nottingham, accompanied by his two sons and
his nephew, Prince Rupert, together with a proper retinue. The royal standard
was presently brought from the castle and firmly erected, and its silken folds
were defiantly flung to the breeze, while a blare of trumpets from the heralds
proclaimed that the Civil War had begun. An inauspicious wind blew down the
standard the same night.
Prince Rupert, a heroic and splendid figure, now comes upon our story, and
simultaneously with his advent into England are heard the loud alarums of war.
"This Prince," says an extravagant biographer, "began to be illustrious many
ages before his birth, and we must look back into history above two thousand
years, to discover the first rays of his glory." His father was Frederick, Prince
Palatine of the Rhine and King of Bohemia, and his mother was Elizabeth
Stuart, the beautiful sister of Charles I, called the Pearl of Britain, and beloved
by one half of Europe for her sweetness and virtue and her sufferings in the
Protestant War. Rupert, the young Palatine, was born on the 18th of December,
1619, at Prague, and was the second son of his parents. He was ushered into
the world amid the panoply and pomp of war. A knight in complete armor
received the babe from the physicians’ hands, and the assembled nobles
declared that he should be their future Grand Duke of Lithuania. But the
fortunes of war drove the royal family out of Prague, and when the future
Cavalier was one year old, his mother, then a fugitive from pursuing hosts, gave birth to her third son, the Prince Maurice (December 25, 1620). Then came those futile negotiations on the part of the English Court for the restoration of the Palatinate to this unfortunate family, which lasted through many years, and which have in part already been related. Young Rupert was sent to school at the University of Leyden, where he was "made Jesuit-proof," so that those "subtle priests with whom he had been much conversant, could never make him stagger."
The bigoted and tyrannical oppressions of Austria and Spain were suddenly opposed by the mailed hand of Sweden’s King, Gustavus Adolphus, and through his brilliant victories Protestantism was invincibly advanced on the Continent of Europe. The death of Gustavus on the field of Lutzen (1632) at the moment when his adversaries were dispersed in flight, deprived a victorious army of a powerful personal force. But the cause flourished; the Prince of Orange continued the warfare, and under him Rupert gained his first experience in arms. His earliest encounters on the field were marked by that gallant but reckless courage which afterwards, in the English Civil Wars, made him so illustrious a soldier and so unfortunate a commander. When he was sixteen years of age he accompanied his elder brother, Charles Louis, to England, where he was received with great favor at the Court of Charles. On his return he was made a Colonel in the Prince of Orange’s army, and in a fight in which he displayed great bravery was taken prisoner by the Austrians, and was for a long time confined in the fortress of Lintz, on the Danube River. Shortly after his release from this irksome captivity, the affairs of his royal uncle had reached a pass which caused the young Palatine to hasten to England, and he reached the harassed Monarch barely in time to attend the raising of the standard at Nottingham.

He was now nearly twenty-three. His portrait by Vandyke presents the figure of a tall and powerful youth, full of grace and dignity. He had large, dark eyebrows, a chiseled Norman nose, a firm and handsome mouth. His "love-locks" fell below his neck. His face was clean shaven. His eye was like that of the hawk, and like the hawk was his swoop upon the battlefield, audacious, swift, and cruel. He was a beautiful and indomitable Prince, whose life at the time of his arrival in England was sufficiently marked by romance to win the adoration of those gay horsemen of the King’s army over whom he was now appointed General. Rupert had great bodily vigor, quick decision, and an unfaltering but rash courage which would have made him an ideal cavalry leader if his authority had been subordinated to a capable commander. The time is coming when he must be held responsible for his share in the failure of the royal cause. Yet the strange paradox must be remembered that in all the battles in which he engaged he won his part of the fight. It was so at Edgehill, at Newbury, at Marston Moor, at Naseby. The forces which he personally opposed were put to slaughter or to flight, but while he swept like a whirlwind of death in the pursuit, disaster inevitably smote the friends who were battling behind him.
Oliver Cromwell, hitherto unknown to the English nation, now found a field in which the vast stature of his abilities was soon revealed. At the commencement of the Civil War he emerged from the obscurity of a Parliamentary career to which he was not suited, and embraced the soldier’s life like one born to the profession of arms. He placed himself promptly on the side of the Puritans by subscribing £500 for the service.

In the middle of July (1642), he spent his own money to purchase arms which were sent to Cambridge for the defense of the county. Through the influence of his cousin, John Hampden, he was made captain of a troop of horse. His activity and energy were conspicuous at the outset. Riding into Cambridge early in August with a few followers, he found the University about to send its plate, valued at £20,000, to the King at Nottingham. He seized this fine offering and presented it to the Parliament. Two sons of Bramston, the ship-money judge, who were riding from York to London on the King’s business about the middle of August, were stopped by Cromwell and made to give an account of themselves.

The intelligence that came from Nottingham of the continued accessions to the King’s camp induced the Parliament with grim earnestness to prepare an army. There was a natural hesitation in drawing up the commission for the Earl of Essex as Commander-in-Chief. It was a flagrant kind of high treason, compared with which, anything they had previously done could have been easily overlooked. But at length Essex was appointed “Lord General for King and Parliament,” with instructions to deliver the person of His Sacred Majesty from malignant traitors and evil counselors who had seduced him. The Earl of Peterborough was General of the Ordnance. The Earl of Bedford was General of the Horse, with seventy-five troops of sixty men each. In troop sixty-seven the captain was Oliver Cromwell, the member for Cambridge. In troop eight there was another Oliver Cromwell, cornet, a son of the member for Cambridge, and then about twenty years old. Hampden was a colonel; Hazelrig and Hollis enlisted, making three of the five members to draw their swords against the King. Many other members preferred the Army to the legislature, and followed Essex; while still others joined the Royal Army at Nottingham. Thus it went on until the Parliament had mustered 15,000 men and the King about 12,000.

There is a story told in the old books of a visit which Cromwell made to Huntingdon, during which he learned of the active participation his uncle, that fine old Knight, Sir Oliver Cromwell, was taking in the Cavalier uprising. Sir Oliver was a staunch King’s man, and both he and his sons served the King with fidelity and zeal throughout the war. He had collected a store of arms for the Royal Army when the future Protector came riding into his country place, followed by a stout troop of Roundheads. The old Royalist entertained but small patience for the Puritan opinions of his nephew, and received him coldly. But Oliver was not to be rebuffed. He took off his hat dutifully, and insisted on
keeping it off while in his uncle’s presence for near two hours, and even besought the old Knight’s blessing. When this favor had been reluctantly granted, he seized all the arms and ammunition about the place, and appropriated them, together with all of Sir Oliver’s plate, for the public service. The Journals of the House of Commons six years later (April 17, 1648) contain an entry which makes some reparation for this harsh conduct. When the Royalist cause had compassed the ruin of every man who adhered to the King, the sequestration of the estates of this broken Knight was, through the influence of his nephew, taken off, and he was permitted to enjoy his property in the day of Puritan ascendancy.

While making the most active preparations for war, both parties continued to utter the loudest asseverations for peace. The "Paper War" grew hotter as the time for actual conflict approached. The Parliament continued to demand the control of the Church and the Sword. The King continued to insist that he had already granted all that made the liberty and happiness of his people secure. The Earl of Essex at length felt himself ready to move. On the 9th of September, 1642, he set out from London in great state, accompanied by many members of both the Houses, and proceeded to St. Albans, where the full strength of the Parliamentary forces assembled. The appearance of the troops was extremely picturesque. The old feudal notion of military individuality was still popular. Hampden’s stout yeomen were arrayed in green coats; Colonel Meyrick’s in gray. Lord Saye and Lord Mandeville had dressed their men in blue. Purple distinguished Lord Brooke’s men; and Denzil Hollis led the London recruits in bright scarlet. The guards of Lord Essex adopted the buff leather coats, which afterwards became the uniform dress of the Roundheads. The Parliamentary standard was black, with a buff Bible, and the motto, in letters of gold, "God With Us." The men were supplied with arms and ammunition gathered from the fortress of Hull and from the Tower of London.

The King appointed Shrewsbury for the rendezvous of his army. In the meantime Prince Rupert was making his name a terror through the land. "This Prince," says a Parliamentary historian, "was a fiery youth, and with his flying squadrons of horse burnt towns and villages, destroying the countries where he came, and indulging his soldiers in plunder and blood." He levied ruthlessly on the possessions of all the enemies of the King, and the new word plunder, which had been brought into England from the wars of Gustavus Adolphus, was appropriately given to his marauding methods. He paused in his meteor-like progress long enough to send a challenge to the Earl of Essex to decide their cause by a duel, and the Earl declared his readiness to meet him. But King Charles I was the only man living whose sacrifice in single combat could have appeased the nation’s quarrel.

Sir John Byron was holding Worcester for the King; and Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes and Colonel Sandys, with a force of Parliament troops, marched thither (September 24) to drive him out. The attack was not well planned. Fiennes expected Essex to support him, but when he arrived he found Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers there, who put him to flight with a loss of four hundred slain.
Essex came up on the 25th with the main force, and Rupert and Byron retired with the prestige of first victory.

Late in September the King arrayed his army in the park at Shrewsbury. His forces were not so well equipped as those of the Parliament. There were more men from the organized county militia with the Parliament than with the King. But the Cavalier Lords had contributed their wealth with extraordinary liberality, and many of them rode into Shrewsbury with companies of soldiers who were dressed, armed, and mounted out of their private fortunes. Foremost in the array was the King’s troop of Life Guards under Lord Bernard Stuart, and composed of all the lords and gentlemen who had no separate commands. They still wore the casque and plume of the old Knights, and each guard was laced in a glittering cuirass with gay scarf and gilded sword belt. Steel pieces protected their shoulders and arms, and mailed gauntlets their hands. Cuisses over their thighs completed the defensive armor of the Cavaliers from the top of the head to the saddle-seat. Great leather boots capable of reaching the hip, though usually worn doubled down below the knee, covered their legs. An embroidered lace collar was worn for ornament, and their curled locks fell long and loosely on their shoulders. For arms they carried long, but rather slight straight swords, half basket-hilted, and a brace of clumsy pistols; some carried, besides, a short battle axe at the saddle-bow.

The ordinary cavalry troops were appointed after the same general fashion, though with less magnificence. Most of them were men who were able to bring their own horses into the field; others were fitted out by their great neighbors from the armories in the old baronial halls. Harquebusier was the name applied to these yeoman troopers, and they wore a lighter headpiece than the Cavalier, with bars of iron to protect the face, instead of a visor, and only a back- and breast-piece of steel. They carried the harquebuss or carbine, three feet in length, and a long straight sword. The dragoon was the third class of cavalry, dressed in a buff coat with long skirts, and wearing an iron skullcap, with cheek-pieces of the same metal. His musket was slung by a leathern belt across the right shoulder. Another belt carried his powder flask, priming box, bullets, and sword. There were a few lancers, though their service was not conspicuous except at Marston Moor. This cavalry was invincible throughout the war, and it broke the opposing ranks in every charge it made; but the high spirits of the men could never be subjected to a proper discipline, and its usual fortune was to sweep one wing of the opposing army off the field, and, while pursuing it in slaughter and pillage, leave the remaining troops to disaster at the hands of the other wing.

But the King’s reliance was mainly on his infantry. The pikeman was dressed in leathern doublet, steel cap, cloth hose, and square-toed shoes. Over his coat, when it could be obtained, was a back- and breast-piece of steel, with an iron hook at the back on which to hang his steel cap while marching. The musketeer wore a broad belt for his powder and bullets over his left shoulder, and a sword belt over his right. These were the prescribed dresses of the infantry. But it must be told that there were hundreds of them who came to Shrewsbury wearing their farming clothes, and armed with nothing but the rude
implements of husbandry; and indeed, at the opening of the war, there were a few who viewed the conflict empty-handed, incapable for the time either to attack or defend.

The King began his march with about 2,000 cavalry, 6,000 infantry, and 1,500 dragoons. His artillery and his non-combatant followers swelled his total force to 12,000. The line of his march was straight to London.

Essex, as we have seen, commanded an army of 15,000 men. He sat still at Worcester until the King had advanced a day ahead of him towards the capital. This situation threw the Parliament into great terror, and there was a suspicion that a large part of the London citizens would grant aid and comfort to the King as soon as he came within safe distance. They sent messengers to Essex, commanding him to make all speed to their relief, and they themselves exhausted every effort to strengthen their defenses. On Sunday, October 23, 1642, Essex came in sight of the King at Edgehill, near Keinton, on the south edge of Warwickshire.

The King was astir at sunrise. Taking with him his sons, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, then in their tender youth, he ascended the hill. Prince Rupert and the Cavalier officers were already there. The King applied his prospective glass. The air was cold and clear. Far below him lay the vale of Red-Horse, extending in an unbroken plain to the town of Keinton. About one mile distant was the Lord General and the Parliamentary army, forming for the first battle of the Civil War. There was no haste on either side, and each seemed reluctant to make the first attack.

When Essex had completed his preparations he sat still on the plain. Far up on the hillside the Cavaliers began to move. But a dispute arose as to the order of battle. Lord Lindsey, the King’s General, had fought with Essex in the continental wars, and he now desired to follow the Low Country rules of cautious maneuver. Rupert, on the other hand, urged that a bold dash on the raw levies of the Roundheads would end it all. The King yielded to Rupert, and Lindsey, refusing to draw up a battle on another’s plan, declared that he would fight for his King as a simple colonel at the head of his Lincoln regiment. His son, Lord Willoughby, who commanded a troop in the Prince of Wales’ regiment, refused after this affair to fight under Rupert, and he took his post at his father’s side on foot. Charles then appointed Lord Ruthven, an experienced commander, to the post of General, thus, in his usual absence of tact, fostering private grievances on a most inopportune occasion. The formation of the King’s line then proceeded slowly. The infantry did not arrive until eleven o’clock, and the artillery not until one. The royal troops came down the hill, and the cautious Essex permitted them to form their lines on the plain without molestation. There were earnest prayers said in both armies. In the Puritan ranks the preachers rode through every regiment, exhorting their men in God’s name. Among the King’s men this prayer from old Sir Jacob Astley has been preserved. “O Lord!” he said, “thou knowest how busy I must be this day. If I forget thee, do not thou forget me!” Then rising from his knees, he cried, “March on, boys!”
It was near three o’clock when three shots from the Parliament guns opened
the battle. The King’s artillery instantly responded. There was a blaze of fire
along both lines, and the Cavaliers advanced rapidly. The King’s Life Guard,
impatient of restraint, had obtained permission to charge with Prince Rupert,
leaving Charles under inadequate protection. As the royal cavalry rode on, Sir
Faithful Fortescue and his entire regiment left the Parliamentary ranks and
joined the Cavaliers, although some of his men were killed before their
desertion was understood. Essex knew not how many others would behave with
similar treachery, but the defection was forgotten in the assault that ensued.
The Prince was charging their left wing. A thousand swords flashed in the
afternoon sun. "For God and the King!" was the shout that came from every
throat. The mettled steeds were urged onward with spur and voice. No foe
could withstand that charge. It was the chivalry of England attacking the rude
train-bands of the Midland counties. There was no resistance. Denzil Hollis and
young Colonel Essex vainly strove to hold the Puritans. They turned and fled,
throwing away their arms as they ran, but even then too slow to avoid the
slaughter. Tired out with chasing the fleeing enemy, the Cavaliers turned to
pillage the wagon trains, and found spoil enough to complete the equipment of
their army.

From the King’s left wing the Cavaliers charged with equal impetuosity, and
Meldrum’s Puritans fled with equal haste. The forces under Sir Arthur Aston,
General Wilmot, Sir John Byron, and Lord Digby routed and pursued the Puritan
right wing. With victory nearly won, the King’s infantry now stood unsupported
in the center. In their extreme rear was the King, almost alone. It was the Lord
General’s opportunity. Colonel Ballard charged in upon the royal artillery and
cut down the gunners. His cry was "God with us!" Then, wheeling round, he
struck the infantry in rear. Bad generalship on the King’s side was now
apparent. The Cavaliers had held no reserve. Their center was broken and put
to flight with disaster equal to any that had befallen the Roundheads. The
King’s person was in danger. Threescore men fell dead in front of him. The
Parliament men cut through the guard that had remained about him, and after
a fierce fight captured the royal standard, killing Sir Edmund Verney, who
bravely defended it. At the same time Lord Lindsey fell, mortally wounded,
and his son, Lord Willoughby, was taken prisoner by his side. Charles had now
less than a hundred of his guard with him. The Duke of Richmond and Sir John
Culpepper urged the King to fly, but he sternly refused. His physical courage
was beyond dispute. His fortunes were staked on this day’s fight, and he would
abide the result. He saw that Ruthven and Astley were still keeping the division
under Essex hotly engaged. His guards continued to fight. The royal standard
was floating over the heads of a body of exultant Puritans, and Captain John
Smith, of the King’s Life Guard, spurred his charger into the very midst of
them, recaptured it, and, returning it to the King, was knighted on the spot. At
this moment Prince Rupert appeared, and desired to re-form for another
charge. He would probably have carried the day, as Essex, having spent all his
ammunition and seeing half his army in flight, believed himself defeated, and
had taken his stand in front of his pikemen, resolved to die with them in the
next assault. But night was falling on the field. Nearly six thousand on both sides had fallen. Both men and horses were spent. The battle was undecisive. The King, while not beaten, could not claim a victory. "In this doubt on all sides," says Lord Clarendon, who was with the King all day, "night, the common friend to wearied and dismayed armies, parted them."

Of Oliver Cromwell, we only know that he was in this battle. The part he took was not important.

King Charles retired with his much weakened forces to the hill, while Essex, equally broken, bivouacked upon the field. The night was cold, and there was neither tree nor hedge to protect the men from the biting wind. Provisions were scarce, and wounded men died from lack of nourishment and care, while many of those who were unhurt slept supperless upon the stony ground.

The next day the two armies faced each other in sullen quiet. Essex had received during the preceding night fresh troops to the number of twenty-five hundred, including John Hampden’s regiment of horse, and he was advised to renew the battle, but refused to do so.

On Monday evening the King retired in order, and on Wednesday he reached Banbury, where the castle and town surrendered to him without a blow, and a regiment of the Parliamentary troops joined his army. After appointing a governor and garrison for Banbury Castle, he proceeded to Woodstock, and thence to Oxford, the one entirely loyal spot in England. Here he held his quarters through the winter, while Lord Essex established himself at Warwick.

In the meantime Prince Rupert was marauding fiercely over the country, and coming dangerously near to London, so that Essex was summoned back to Westminster, where he received the thanks of Parliament and a gratuity of 5,000 pounds. The Prince captured Lord Saye’s house at Broughton, and at other places laid rude hands on money, clothing, forage, and goods of every variety, wheresoever he could find them. The King’s cause was highly prosperous. In Yorkshire the Earl of Cumberland had raised large levies, and Lord Newcastle had beaten the Fairfaxes, Sir Hugh Cholmondeley, and the Hothams. Sir Ralph Hopton, one of the ablest of the King’s generals, was recruiting a powerful army in the West. In Wales the Earl of Worcester, with a great body of the Welsh, maintained the authority of the Crown.

The Parliament sent to Scotland imploring the aid of that kingdom, and began to talk about making a treaty of peace. During the first year of the war there was a much larger degree of success on the King’s side than on that of the Parliament. As soon as Charles had established himself in Oxford and sufficiently fortified the town, he began a gradual approach to London. As he neared Reading, Henry Marten, the Parliament’s governor, and himself a member of the House of Commons, fled to London with his garrison, leaving the place to Prince Rupert’s men. At Reading the King received the Parliament’s request for a safe-conduct for their committee on a treaty of peace. He instantly issued the pass, only objecting to Sir John Evelyn whom he had previously proclaimed a traitor. Thereupon the Parliament declared that it was a high breach of privilege to except any one of their House. The King then moved to Colebrooke, on the outskirts of the capital, when the Parliament,
yielding to their own fears and the clamor of the citizens of London, sent again
to sue for peace, passing over the breach of privilege, and asking him to
appoint a place near London for the conference. He proposed Windsor Castle,
or, if that were refused, he would receive their proposals even at the gates of
London. While these topics were under discussion the King moved on Brainford,
still nearer to London, where Prince Rupert furiously attacked the
Parliamentary troops, and after beating back Hampden, Hollis, and Brooke, he
held the place, and captured five hundred prisoners and fifteen guns. The
assault was unexpected by the Roundheads, and there was a loud outcry that
the King had taken advantage of a cessation of hostilities to attack them. Essex
drew near with the city forces, and the Royalists retired to Reading, and
thence to Oxford for the winter. Essex advanced to Tedstock, only ten miles
from Oxford, and sat down there, where the pickets of the two armies were in
sight of each other for many weeks.
The King kept his troops in good humor by paying them regularly, their weekly
earnings amounting to three thousand pounds. These and other enormous
expenses were met wholly by the voluntary contributions of the King’s friends.
The Parliament, possessing larger resources, paid the expenses of the war with
less difficulty. They had, even prior to the battle of Edgehill, confiscated all
the King’s revenues, which were now augmented by their seizure of all the
income of the Church and by the sequestration of the property of Cavaliers.
In January (1643) the Parliament sent a committee to treat for peace, but
there was no spirit of accommodation on either side; the Parliament made
demands which the King would not grant, and the negotiations came to
nothing. While the treaty was still sitting intelligence was received that Rupert
had taken Cirencester, the most important capture yet made on the King’s
account.
In February the Queen arrived in the North from Holland with a large escort
and plenty of money and arms. She was met at Burlington by a party of
Cavaliers dispatched thither by the Earl of Newcastle, the brave Marquis of
Montrose being with them. Henrietta Maria began a triumphal march to York,
and the power of Majesty attracted to her standard hundreds of the men of
Yorkshire who were loyal to the King’s cause. At York, where she was most
enthusiastically received by the people, she assumed a residence, being unable
to journey to the King at Oxford, through fear of the many Parliamentary
troops who lay between that city and York.
Charles was impatient to enjoy the society of his beloved Queen, and he
dispatched Prince Rupert to cut his way to the North and bring her to him. The
bold Prince eagerly accepted this commission, and on his way thither he
captured Birmingham and Lichfield after hard fighting. At Gloucester the King’s
forces, under Lord Herbert of Glamorgan, were beaten by Sir William Waller,
and Rupert was recalled from his northward march by the unexpected action of
Lord Essex in laying siege to Reading. Before the Prince could arrive in time to
succor the garrison, the place was indiscreetly surrendered by Colonel Fielding,
who was permitted to retire with his forces to Oxford. For this unsoldierly
behavior Fielding was sentenced to death, but was afterwards pardoned and
fought through the war as a common soldier. In the West of England, the Royalists, under Sir Ralph Hopton, Lord Hertford, and Prince Maurice, were winning victories over the Earl of Stamford. In the North the Earl of Newcastle was disputing every inch of ground with the Fairfaxes.

Oliver Cromwell, now a colonel, had been active all winter in organizing the military forces of the "Eastern Association," composed of the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridge, Herts, Hunts, and Lincoln. When the high sheriff of Herts attempted to read the King's commission of array, Cromwell attacked him, captured him, and sent him down to London, where the Parliament ordered him into confinement. In Norfolkshire Cromwell dispersed a party of Royalists at Lowestoft, and crushed out all open sympathy for the Cavalier cause in the territory of the Eastern Association. There were 12,000 militia organized in these counties, which Cromwell assembled at Cambridge upon information that Lord Capel intended to make an attack on the town; but, as the Royalists thought it prudent not to approach the place, Cromwell permitted them to return to their various counties, advising them to stand ready for another alarm.

Cromwell had said to John Hampden, after the battle of Edgehill, that the army must be recruited from better men. He continued:

"Your troops are most of them old decayed serving men and tapsters, and such kind of fellows; and their troops (i.e., the Cavaliers) are gentlemen's sons, younger sons, and persons of quality. Do you think that the spirits of such base and mean fellows will be ever able to encounter gentlemen, that have honour and courage and resolution in them? You must get men of a spirit; and take it not ill what I say—I know you will not—of a spirit that is likely to go on as far as gentlemen will go: or else you will be beaten still."

What he meant was that they should have the spirit of religion in them. Hampden replied that it was a good notion if it could be executed. Cromwell was guided by this theory in his selection of men from that moment. He was not bigoted as to the religious opinions of his men, provided only that they were not papists. One of his recruiting officers had objected to a certain man because he was an Anabaptist, which, coming to the ears of Cromwell, drew from him the following forcible letter, outlining a broad and wise policy in the handling of men, and disclosing his own invincible views of justice and right:

"To Major-General Crawford: These.

"Cambridge, 10th March, 1643.

"Sir: The complaints you preferred to my Lord against your Lieutenant-Colonel, both by Mr. Lee and your own Letters, have occasioned his stay here my Lord being so employed, in regard of
many occasions which are upon him, that he hath not been at leisure to hear him make his defence: which, in pure justice, ought to be granted him or any man before a judgment be passed upon him.

"During his abode here and absence from you, he hath acquainted me what a grief it is to him to be absent from his charge, especially now the regiment is called forth to action: and therefore, asking of me my opinion, I advised him speedily to repair unto you. Surely you are not well advised thus to turn off one so faithful to the Cause, and so able to serve you as this man is. Give me leave to tell you I cannot be of your judgment; cannot understand, if a man is notorious for wickedness, for oaths, for drinking, hath as great a share in your affections as one who fears an oath, who fears to sin—that this doth commend your election of men to serve as fit instruments in this work!

"Ay, but the man ‘is an Anabaptist.' Are you sure of that? Admit he be, shall that render him incapable to serve the Public? ‘He is indiscreet.' It may be so in some things: we have all human infirmities. I tell you, if you had none but such ‘indiscreet men' about you, and would be pleased to use them kindly, you would find as good a fence to you as any you have yet chosen.

"Sir, the State, in choosing men to serve it, takes no notice of their opinions; if they be willing faithfully to serve it, that satisfies. I advised you formerly to bear with men of different minds from yourself: if you had done it when I advised you to it, I think you would not have had so many stumbling-blocks in your way. It may be you judge otherwise; but I tell you my mind. I desire you would receive this man into your favour and good opinion. I believe, if he follow my counsel, he will deserve no other but respect from you. Take heed of being sharp, or too easily sharpened by others, against those to whom you can object little but that they square not with you in every opinion concerning matters of religion. If there be any other offence to be charged upon him, that must in a judicial way receive determination. I know you will not think it fit my Lord should discharge an Officer of the Field but in a regulate way. I question whether you or I have any precedent for that.

"I have not farther to trouble you: but rest, your humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."
This bold and tolerant doctrine was not in sympathy with the Presbyterian sentiment which was fast becoming a part of the Puritan character. Baillie, the Scottish Commissioner, writes at this period that Cromwell "is a very wise and active head, universally well beloved as religious and stout, but a known Independent; the most of the soldiers who loved new ways put themselves under his command." From the start he exacted of his soldiers that they should be God-fearing and devout, and it was his art in every action to stir their religious enthusiasm until they were transported with an irresistible valor. He was persistent and inexorable in his rule of enlisting for the war only men of good character. A society of young men and women had written to him offering to assist in the work of recruiting. He replied in these practical words:

"I approve of the business: only I desire to advise you that your ‘foot company’ may be turned into a troop of horse, which indeed will, by God’s blessing, far more advantage the Cause than two or three companies of foot, especially if your men be honest godly men, which by all means I desire. I thank God for stirring-up the youth to cast in their mite, which I desire may be employed to the best advantage; therefore my advice is, that you would employ your Twelve-score Pounds to buy pistols and saddles, and I will provide Four-score horses; for 400 l. more will not raise a troop of horse. As for the muskets that are bought, I think the Country will take them of you. Pray raise honest godly men, and I will have them of my regiment. As for your Officers, I leave it as God shall or hath directed to choose."

These principles are unusual in the history of wars. The demand of most generals is for men, it matters not what kind of men so that they be able to march and carry guns. But Cromwell would have none but those he delighted to describe as "God-fearing" and "sober." This was the secret of his success, and all the fruits of his wars sprang from his knowledge of men and his power to ennoble whole regiments by stamping his own character upon them. Let us transcribe the following letter as evincing his insistence on this point, and displaying at the same time his correct military foresight and judgment:

"To my noble Friends, Sir William Spring, Knight and Baronet, and Maurice Barrow, Esquire: Present these.

"Cambridge, September, 1643.

"Gentlemen:

"I have been now two days at Cambridge, in expectation to hear the fruit of your endeavours in Suffolk towards the public assistance. Believe it, you will hear of a storm in a few days! You have no Infantry at all considerable; hasten your Horses; a few
hours may undo you, neglected. I beseech you be careful what Captains of Horse you choose, what men be mounted: a few honest men are better than numbers. Some time they must have for exercise. If you choose godly honest men to be Captains of Horse, honest men will follow them; and they will be careful to mount such.

"The King is exceedingly strong in the West. If you be able to foil a force at the first coming of it, you will have reputation; and that is of great advantage in our affairs. God hath given it to our handful; let us endeavour to keep it. I had rather have a plain russet-coated Captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than that which you call ‘a Gentleman’ and is nothing else. I honour a Gentleman that is so indeed!

"I understand Mr. Margery hath honest men will follow him: if so, be pleased to make use of him; it much concerns your good to have conscientious men. I understand that there is an Order for me to have 3000 l. out of the Association; and Essex [i.e., the county] hath sent their part, or near it. I assure you we need exceedingly. I hope to find your favour and respect. I protest, if it were for myself, I would not move you. That is all, from your faithful servant,

"Oliver Cromwell.

"P.S.: If you send such men as Essex hath sent, it will be to little purpose. Be pleased to take care of their march; and that such may come along with them as will be able to bring them to the main Body; and then I doubt not but we shall keep them and make good use of them. I beseech you, give countenance to Mr. Margery! Help him in raising his Troop; let him not want your favour in whatsoever is needful for promoting this work; and command your servant. If he can raise the horses from Malignants, let him have your warrant: it will be of special service."

By and bye there come officious persons among the committees who dislike some of the soldiers and their doings. Cromwell is vigorous and high-minded in their defense. The letter which he here answers must have contained something very much like "horse-stealing"; his reply indicates that, and there is so much ebullition of spirit in his pen that he signs his letter and then writes again, and in the postscript mentions a beast which he himself has had assigned to his use, and which, if the owner can prove himself not a malignant Royalist, he is most anxious to pay for:
"To his honoured friends, Sir William Spring and Mr. Barrow: These present.

"Holland, Lincolnshire, 28\textsuperscript{th} Sept., 1643.

"Gentlemen:

"It hath pleased God to bring off Sir Thomas Fairfax his Horse over the river from Hull, being about One-and-twenty Troops of Horse and Dragoons. The Lincolnshire Horse laboured to hinder this work, being about Thirty-four Colours of Horse and Dragoons: we marched up to their landing place and the Lincolnshire Horse retreated.

"After they were come over, we all marched toward Holland; and when we came to our last quarter upon the edge of Holland, the Enemy quartered within four miles of us, and kept the field all night with his whole body; his intendment, as we conceive, was to fight us; or hoping to interpose betwixt us and our retreat; having received, to his Thirty-four Colors of Horse, Twenty fresh Troops, ten companies of Dragoons, and about a Thousand Foot, being General King's own Regiment. With these he attempted our guards and our quarters; and, if God had not been merciful, had ruined us before we had known of it; the Five Troops we set to keep the watch failing much of their duty. But we got to horse, and retreated in good order, with the safety of all our Horse of the Association; not losing four of them that I hear of, and we got five of theirs. And for this we are exceedingly bound to the goodness of God, who brought our troops off with so little loss.

"I write unto you to acquaint you with this; the rather that God may be acknowledged; and that you may help forward, in sending such force away unto us as lie unprofitably in your country. And especially that Troop of Captain Margery's, which surely would not be wanting, now we so much need it!

"I hear there hath been much exception taken to Captain Margery and his officers for taking of horses. I am sorry you should discountenance those who (not to make benefit to themselves, but to serve their Country) are willing to venture their lives, and to purchase to themselves the displeasure of bad men, that they may do a Public benefit. I undertake not to justify all Captain Margery's actions: but his own conscience knows whether he hath taken the horses of any but Malignants; and it were somewhat too hard to put it upon the consciences of your fellow Deputy Lieutenants, whether they had not freed the horses of known
Malignants? A fault not less, considering the sad estate of this Kingdom, than to take a horse from a known honest man; the offence being against the Public, which is a considerable aggravation! I know not the measure every one takes of Malignants. I think it is not fit Captain Margery should be the judge; but if he, in this taking of horses, hath observed the plain character of a Malignant, and cannot be charged for one horse otherwise taken, it had been better that some of the bitterness wherewith he and his have been followed had been spared! The horses that his Cornet Boulry took, he will put himself upon that issue for them all.

"If these men be accounted ‘troublesome to the Country,’ I shall be glad you would send them all to me. I’ll bid them welcome. And when they have fought for you, and endured some other difficulties of war which your ‘honester’ men will hardly bear, I pray you then let them go for honest men! I protest unto you, many of those men which are of your Country’s choosing, under Captain Johnson, are so far from serving you, that, were it not that I have honest Troops to master them, although they be well paid, yet they are so mutinous that I may justly fear they would cut my throat! Gentleman, it may be it provokes some spirits to see such plain men made Captains of Horse. It had been well that men of honour and birth had entered into these employments; but why do they not appear? Who would have hindered them? But seeing it was necessary the work must go on, better plain men than none; but best to have men patient of wants, faithful and conscientious in their employment. And such, I hope, these will approve themselves to be. Let them therefore, if I be thought worthy of any favour, leave your Country with your good wishes and a blessing. I am confident they will be well bestowed. And I believe before it be long, you will be in their debt; and then it will not be hard to quit scores.

"What arms you can furnish them withal, I beseech you do it. I have hitherto found your kindness great to me; I know not what I have done to lose it; I love it so well, and price it so high, that I would do my best to gain more. You have the assured affection of your most humble and faithful servant,

"Oliver Cromwell.

"P.S.: I understand there were some exceptions taken at a Horse that was sent to me, which was seized out of the hands of one Mr. Goldsmith of Wilby. If he be not by you judged a Malignant, and that you do not aprov of my having the Horse, I shall as willingly
return him again as you shall desire. And therefore, I pray you, signify your pleasure to me herein under your hands. Not that I would, for ten thousand horses, have the Horse to my own private benefit, saving to make use of him for the Public; for I will most gladly return the value of him to the State. If the Gentleman stand clear in your judgments, I beg it as a special favour that, if the Gentleman be freely willing to let me have him for my money, let him set his own price; I shall very justly return him the money. Or if he be unwilling to part with him, but keeps him for his own pleasure, be pleased to send me an answer thereof; I shall instantly return him his Horse; and do it with a great deal more satisfaction to myself than keep him. Therefore I beg it of you to satisfy my desire in this last request; it shall exceedingly oblige me to you. If you do it not, I shall rest very unsatisfied, and the Horse will be a burden to me so long as I keep him."

Cromwell received his training in the art of war from Colonel Dalbier, a soldier who had fought in the Low Countries, and who gave vast assistance to Oliver in drilling and marching his recruits. But the real discipline of war they received from Cromwell himself. At first unskillful in handling their arms and managing their horses, they soon became, by diligence and industry, excellent soldiers. Cromwell required them daily to look after, feed, and groom their horses, and, on occasion, to lie with them upon the ground. He taught them to keep their arms bright and clean, and to have them ready for service; to choose the best armor, and to be armed for action when danger was impending. At the outbreak of the war he devised a stratagem to test their spirit. Twelve of his men were, unknown to their fellows, placed in ambush and the rest of the troops were marched thither. At a signal the twelve charged furiously with trumpet blast and battle cry upon the unsuspecting soldiers, who were thrown into much confusion, and many of them turned and fled. When they paused for breath and discovered that the attack was made by their own comrades, they were so overcome with shame that they all vowed never to run again; and they never did.

Sir Philip Warwick, the Royalist writer, says that Cromwell taught his men, "as they too readily taught themselves, that they engaged for God, when he led them against His vicegerent, the King; and where this opinion met with a natural courage, it made them the bolder, and too often the crueler. ... And these men, habited more to spiritual pride than carnal riot or intemperance, so consequently having been industrious and active in their former callings and professions, where natural courage wanted, zeal supplied its place; and at first they chose rather to die than fly; and custom removed fear of danger." And Lord Clarendon, who mournfully characterizes the King's army, at the time that Lord Hopton was appointed its commander, as "a dissolute, undisciplined, wicked, beaten army," says that Cromwell's host was "an army whose order and discipline, whose sobriety and manners, whose courage and success hath made it famous and terrible over the world."
One evening in May (1643), Cromwell came unexpectedly upon a party of Royalists, near Grantham. Hastily drawing up his men, he charged and routed the Cavaliers, pursuing them for two miles, slaying many and taking forty-five prisoners.

The war feeling was growing stronger in the Parliament. On May 10, the King proposed a peace. The Parliament committed his messenger to prison, and proceeded to impeach the Queen of high treason for aiding the King in his warfare.

On May 20, Sir Thomas Fairfax defeated the Royalists at Wakefield under General (Lord) Goring, and captured Goring and 1,500 of his men. Goring was soon afterwards exchanged and resumed his important commands in the King’s army.

On Sunday, June 18, 1643, that disastrous fight took place in which John Hampden met his death. Prince Rupert was making one of his swift dashes over the country and Hampden sought to stop him. An engagement occurred at Chalgrove Field in which Rupert had the advantage of numbers. The fight was fierce, and, while spurring his horse into the thickest part of the battle, the brave Puritan received two carbine balls in the shoulder. Feeling that he was badly wounded, he turned and rode off the field in the direction of his father-in-law’s house. But the Cavaliers covered the ground between, and he took the way to Thame. Coming to a brook which it was necessary for him to cross, he spurred his horse and cleared it at a leap, by this time suffering intense agony from his wound. Almost fainting, he reached Thame, and was taken to the house of Ezekiel Browne, where his wounds were dressed. As soon as this was done, he dictated letters to the Parliament urging them to a more active military policy. He felt sure that while Essex continued his Fabian tactics the war would be fatal to Puritan hopes, and he held grave fears that the close proximity to London of the King’s victorious troops was a standing menace to the safety of the capital. After six days of great pain his dissolution drew near. He partook of the Lord’s Supper, declaring that “though he could not away with the governance of the Church by bishops, and did utterly abominate the scandalous lives of some clergymen, he thought its doctrine in the greater part primitive and conformable to God’s word, as in Holy Scriptures revealed.” As he felt his spirit passing away, he turned to die in prayer. “O Lord God of Hosts,” he said, in a fast sinking voice, “great is thy mercy, just and holy are thy dealings to us sinful men. Save me, O Lord, if it be thy good will, from the jaws of death. Pardon my manifold transgressions. O Lord, save my bleeding country. Lord Jesus, receive my soul!” Thus died Hampden.

He was the hope of England, and the most beloved man in the King’s dominions. Already there had been talk of putting him in Essex’s place as Lord General, and if this had been done he doubtless possessed sufficient vigor and ability to push the war to a speedy conclusion. He was the one altogether pure and upright patriot of that age, doing what he did only for the sake of his country. To his participation in the Parliament’s designs, more than to that of any other man, was due that large support which the cause of modern liberty received from the nation. His body was carried from Thame to Hampden, and
deposited with great military honors, and amid universal sorrow, in his father’s tomb. He was fifty years old at his death.

The death of Hampden threw the Parliament party into consternation, and it was followed by a series of disasters which reduced their hopes to the lowest ebb. On July 5, Sir William Waller, a general of whom the Roundheads expected so much that they foolishly named him William the Conqueror, engaged Sir Ralph Hopton and Prince Maurice at Lansdown, and after a well-fought and sanguinary but indecisive action, both armies were glad to welcome the night. Eight days later, Lord Wilmot commanding the Royalists, another battle was fought on Roundway Down, where Waller was badly beaten and his army dispersed. Lord Essex lay only ten miles away, yet he permitted Wilmot to lead his reinforcements from Oxford, a distance of thirty miles, to Roundway, without molestation. Henrietta Maria had marched the length of the kingdom from York with three thousand well-appointed troops, and was met at Edgehill by the delighted King, together with Prince Rupert and a gay throng of Cavaliers, who conveyed her to Oxford.

The Royalists then besieged Bristol, the second city in the kingdom, held for the Parliament by Nathaniel Fiennes; and after an assault which left the field strewn with the bodies of the Cavaliers, Fiennes, in a moment of weakness, surrendered to Prince Rupert and the Marquis of Hertford. This loss of Bristol, with the defeat of Waller in the West, and of Fairfax at Bramham Moor, and again at Adderton Moor, in the North, produced a great discouragement among the Roundhead party. Essex was heaped with reproaches for having failed to harass the Queen’s progress to Oxford, insomuch that he drew off his army to Uxbridge, and seemed to abandon any intention to fight the King for the present.

The Parliament had tried its favorites, and they had failed. They waited for a new deliverer, and a fight at Gainsborough on the 27th of July, 1643, in a time of general defeat, brought Oliver Cromwell before the eyes of all men as a victorious soldier. The Roundhead forces consisted of some of Cromwell’s men in the Eastern Association, by this time a well-drilled organization. The Cavaliers were commanded by young Charles Cavendish, second son to the Earl of Devonshire. After the first charge it became a hand-to-hand fight. “We disputed it,” says Cromwell, “with our swords and pistols a pretty time.” The Royalist foot were put to flight, and the Roundheads pursued them for five miles. Cromwell remained on the ground with his regiment to engage the reserve. Cavendish led this body in person, and with great courage, putting some Lincolnshire troops to flight. Cromwell then charged in on his rear, and forced him down a steep declivity, fighting at every step, until the young Cavalier found himself fast in a quagmire with only a handful of his followers. In this situation, scorning to ask quarter, he fell from a sword thrust given by Cromwell’s lieutenant, and expired.

The defeat and death of so considerable a person naturally caused Cromwell to be a subject of universal talk. “This was the beginning of his great fortunes,” says Whitelock, “and now he began to appear in the world.” His energy and spirit at this time are perceived in his letters. He was fully conscious of the ill
fortunes of his party, and he rightly laid the blame on the inactive military policy. He wrote vigorous letters to those in charge of the Eastern Association, urging them always to procure men, money, and supplies. He begins his report of the fight with Cavendish thus:

"Huntingdon, 31st July, 1643.

"Gentlemen,

"No man desires more to present you with encouragement than myself, because of the forwardness I find in you, to your honour be it spoken, to promote this great Cause. And truly God follows us with encouragements, who is the God of blessings; and I beseech you let Him not lose His blessings upon us! They come in season, and with all the advantages of heartening; as if God should say, ‘Up and be doing, and I will stand by you, and help you!’ There is nothing to be feared but our own sin sloth."

After describing with much detail the military events which we have briefly recounted, he draws to a conclusion in this manner:

"Thus you have this true relation, as short as I could. What you are to do upon it, is next to be considered. If I could speak words to pierce your hearts with the sense of our and your condition, I would! If you will raise 2000 Foot at present to encounter this army of Newcastle’s, to raise the siege, and to enable us to fight him, we doubt not, by the grace of God, but that we shall be able to relieve the Town, and beat the enemy on the other side of Trent. Whereas if somewhat be not done in this, you will see Newcastle’s Army march up into your bowels; being now, as it is, on this side Trent. I know it will be difficult to raise thus many in so short time: but let me assure you, it’s necessary, and therefore to be done. At least do what you may, with all possible expedition! I would I had the happiness to speak with one of you: truly I cannot come over, but must attend my charge; the Enemy is vigilant. The Lord direct you what to do. Gentlemen, I am your faithful servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Already he was teaching his men the discipline of self-control, the forgetfulness of fear, which in the end was to win for them the memorable name of Ironsides. A newspaper of that time (May 1643) notes that "As for Colonel Cromwell, he hath 2000 brave men, well disciplined; and no man swears but he pays his twelve-pence; if he be drunk, he is set in the stocks, or worse; if one calls the other Roundhead he is cashiered." This was the
foundation of piety which he had told John Hampden it was necessary to build their army on in order to vanquish the men of honor on the King’s side. Wherever he came in contact with men he seemed to impress a part of his own fervid and indomitable courage upon them, and thereby to make them straightway better soldiers.

In August, Lord Kimbolton, or Mandeville, now become the Earl of Manchester—whose name as a member of the House of Lords had been included in the warrant for the arrest of the five members—was appointed to the command of the Eastern Association, and Cromwell soon became his second in command. While the Roundhead soldiers under other leaders were deserting, or exhibiting a bad and mutinous spirit, Cromwell’s men, unpaid and suffering for shoes and clothing, were maintaining a hearty enthusiasm. His great control over his men—the ascendancy, by the strong force of character, of one man over many—is shown in this extract from a letter to Oliver St. John imploring him for money to pay his troops. The comparison which is drawn between his men and those of Lord Manchester is striking:

"Of all men I should not trouble you with money matters, did not the heavy necessities my Troops are in, press me beyond measure. I am neglected exceedingly! I am now ready for my march towards the Enemy; who hath entrenched himself over against Hull, my Lord Newcastle having besieged the Town. Many of my Lord Manchester’s Troops are come to me: very bad and mutinous, not to be confided in; they paid to a week almost; mine nowise provided-for to support them, except by the poor Sequestrations of the County of Huntingdon! My Troops increase. I have a lovely company; you would respect them, did you know them. They are no ‘Anabaptists’; they are honest, sober Christians: they expect to be used as men!"

And then he says that he has spent already eleven or twelve hundred pounds out of his private funds for the expenses of the war, and can raise no further supply until the counties contribute for the pay of his men.

In this manner opposition to the tyranny of the Crown, which had, in a ruder age, produced Wat Tyler and Jack Cade, was now, after centuries of progress, when guided by a better understanding of popular rights, manifesting itself irresistibly and with permanent force in the career of the modern deliverer, Oliver Cromwell.

In June (1643) Sir John Hotham, whose refusal to admit the King to Hull had incensed the Royalists, was detected in a treasonable correspondence with the Earl of Newcastle, and, after attempting to escape, was captured, tried before a Parliamentary tribunal, and executed. His son, young John Hotham, was also executed for a similar offense about the same time.

CHAPTER XIV

Marston Moor
There now began to be factions in the King’s army, and the gay Cavaliers at Oxford were intriguing for place and power. After the capture of Bristol, a dispute arose between Prince Rupert and the Marquis of Hertford as to the governorship of the city. The Prince claimed the post for himself, while Lord Hertford desired the appointment for Sir Ralph Hopton. The contention waxed so warm that Charles felt impelled to go in person to Bristol, where, by a compromise that made no one happy, he named Rupert as Governor, but appointed Sir Ralph Hopton Lieutenant-Governor to enjoy the powers pertaining to the superior title. It must be said that in the strife over his appointment Sir Ralph took no part, and any feeling that may have been engendered in his breast was appeased when, within a few days, he was made Lord Hopton by his grateful King.

A question of the precedence of the Palatine Princes then arose. Rupert, as a prince of the royal blood, would receive orders from no one but the King, and this resolution interfered with the usefulness of the cavalry as a part of the whole army under Lord Brentford. The policy of massing the King’s troops for a march to London was discussed in the royal council, and was put aside because in that case Prince Maurice could have been only a private Colonel. Prince Maurice, indeed, was not quite satisfied that a nephew to the King should be Lieutenant-General to a Marquis; and with the aid of Rupert and his friends he prevailed on Charles to attach the Marquis of Hertford to his private service as a Gentleman of the Bed-Chamber, sending the Earl of Carnarvon into the West with the horse and dragoons, and permitting Maurice to follow with the foot a day behind. Lord Hopton remained at Bristol, and Lord Hertford at Oxford.

The King now marched to Gloucester, and on the 10th of August, after summoning it to surrender and receiving a defiant reply, he sat down before it. This was perhaps his greatest mistake in the war. His successes had filled the citizens of London with alarm. A mob of women had marched to Westminster and shrieked for the sacrifice of John Pym. The King’s oft-repeated overtures to treat for peace had been recounted in every street. The Lords had implored the Commons to effect a treaty. The soldiers themselves had lost their military spirit, the Lord General seemingly to a greater extent than any others. And a large party in the House of Commons had joined their voices to the cry for peace. Indeed, many members of both Houses had lately fled to the King at Oxford. But the spirit that had started this revolution was not so easily discouraged. John Pym, Sir Harry Vane, and a few others were able to hold in check what seemed to be a universal demand for peace; and while the subject was still in earnest controversy they all learned that the King had marched to Gloucester instead of London, and they breathed freely once more. The war feeling was revived. It was resolved to enlist further recruits for Essex and Waller, and Lord Manchester was empowered to raise an army in the Eastern Association. The negotiations for Scottish assistance were pressed energetically, and under Vane’s direction the English Parliament agreed to sign the Scottish Covenant in return for military succor from beyond the Tweed.
When the King had sat before Gloucester for sixteen days, Essex, who had employed himself with unaccustomed zeal in recruiting men, felt his army strong enough to march to its relief. On the 5th of September the beleaguered city saw his signal fires, and the King, whose cavalry had harassed the Lord General’s progress, but who was unwilling to risk a battle, drew off his forces. Essex was received with acclamations of joy, and after a fitting celebration of the rescue, he marched back for London. The King followed him briskly, and at Newbury (September 20) forced him to a battle. Essex again, as at Edgehill, used his Low Country tactics, and stood on the defensive through the action. His horse was dispersed, but his infantry, composed chiefly of the well-drilled train-bands of London, presented their pikes resistlessly to every charge, preserving an unbroken line, and leaving the issue not decided. The next day the Earl proceeded on towards London, Prince Rupert distressing his rear for a considerable distance. He stopped to refresh his men at Reading and thence entered London, where he was received with the honors of a conqueror. The King, following him, took Reading again without resistance, and leaving a garrison there, returned to Oxford with his army.

Charles lost some of the best of his chivalry at Newbury, among the slain being the Earl of Sunderland, the Earl of Carnarvon, and especially the accomplished Lord Viscount Falkland, upon whose death Clarendon pathetically observes, "that if there were no other brand upon this odious and accursed Civil War than that single loss, it must be most infamous and execrable to all posterity." Upon the return of Essex to London the Parliament subscribed the Scottish Covenant, and copies for the signatures of the people were immediately distributed through all those parts of England that were under Puritan control. This proceeding created an extraordinary impression on the minds of Englishmen. The Covenant was a visible injection of religion into the existing strife, and all sectarian differences were put aside in the enthusiasm with which men and women eagerly signed their names to it. From the moment in which the Solemn League and Covenant was officially presented to the people, the subject of religion became uppermost in the minds of the Puritans; and the subject of unjust oppressions in the government, out of which the war had avowedly grown, assumed a minor importance.

There was fine politics in the adoption of the Covenant, and that astute Puritan, young Sir Harry Vane, had led in the negotiations which secured this new source of inspiration from Scotland. Vane was an Independent; so were Cromwell and many of the other Parliamentary leaders; and as Independents they were jealous of the ascendancy of the Presbyterians. Yet they one and all signed the Presbyterian Covenant, doubtless justifying their conduct as a necessary measure of the war. Henceforward the Parliamentary plea was the protection of the Protestant religion. In this Covenant, the subscribers engaged mutually to defend each other against all opponents; bound themselves to endeavor, without respect of persons, the extirpation of popery and prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, and profaneness; to maintain the rights and privileges of Parliaments, together with the King’s authority; and to discover and bring to justice all incendiaries and malignants. The Scottish Parliament
immediately began to raise an army. The King, apprised of their design, cast an eye to his military forces in Ireland.

The Cavaliers continued to win some light successes. Prince Maurice had taken Exeter and Dartmouth, and the King’s power was secure in the West. Prince Rupert had captured Bedford in the midland. The Earl of Newcastle was laying siege to Hull in the North.

Lincolnshire had recently (September 20, 1643) become a part of the Eastern Association, and Manchester and Cromwell were working with their usual energy to clear the county of Royalist troops, as they had already cleared every other county in the territory under their charge. At Winceby, a small hamlet among the Wolds, a fight occurred on October 11 between their forces and a large body of Royalists. The Cavalier cry was "Cavendish," in memory of him who had fallen in the bog at Gainsborough. That of the Roundheads was "Truth and Peace." The Parliament charge was led by Cromwell impetuously; but, as he advanced in full career, his horse was killed and fell upon him. Endeavoring to rise, he was knocked down by Sir Ingram Hopton, to whose sword his life would have been yielded up, but for the prompt and gallant succor of his men. Being quickly rescued from his peril he mounted a trooper’s horse, and shouting "Truth and Peace," pressed onward. The fury of his assault forced the Royalists back on their reserves in great disorder; the combat was sharp and bloody, and soon the Cavaliers fled away before the indomitable Puritan, but not until they had left their Commander, Sir Ingram Hopton, dead on the field, and near one thousand of their fellows killed or taken.

Cromwell had been appointed Governor of Ely, and the services in the cathedral there under the English ritual were exceedingly offensive to the Puritans of the place. Cromwell accordingly addressed a note to the rector, the Reverend Mr. Hitch, in these sharp words:

"Ely, 10th January, 1643.

"Mr. Hitch:

"Lest the Soldiers should, in any tumultuary or disorderly way, attempt the reformation of the Cathedral Church, I require you to forbear altogether your choir service, so unedifying and offensive; and this as you shall answer it, if any disorder should arise thereupon.

"I advise you to catechise, and read and expound the Scripture to the people; not doubting but the Parliament, with the advice of the Assembly of Divines, will direct you further. I desire your Sermons too, where usually they have been, but more frequent.

"Your loving friend,

"Oliver Cromwell."
But the rector gave it no attention. This brought Cromwell one day into the church with a file of soldiers, and he discovered Mr. Hitch in the very act of chanting the choir service to the surpliced attendants. Cromwell never removed his hat. "I am a man under authority," he cried, "and am commanded to dismiss this assembly." The rector attempted to be oblivious of his presence, and proceeded with the service: "As it was in the beginning!" "Leave off your fooling, and come down, Sir!" thundered the Puritan leader in a voice which brought Mr. Hitch down straightway, and the choir service was absent from those parts for many years thereafter.

Towards the close of the year the Puritan party was shocked by the death of John Pym (December 8, 1643). Pym was the ablest member of that famous Parliament, and he had molded the opinion of his associates until their opposition to the Crown resulted in the Civil War. From the outset of his public life until his eyes closed forever on the world, he was an implacable foe of the ancient monarchical government. He used his power in the great council of the nation to strike down every defender of the Prerogative of the Crown. He framed those measures which forced the King to grant concessions that brought the constitution into resemblance to its modern form. Swayed by the popular mistrust of the King’s sincerity, and by his own uncompromising and imperious will, he led his party, under cold expressions of loyalty and respect, in a series of addresses on the never-ceasing plea of Privilege, which finally frightened Charles out of his capital. Controlling the public sentiment of London, and supported by the City Corporation with its immense financial resources, his faith in the ultimate success of the Parliament’s cause never wavered for an instant; and the cry of Peace, which was ingeminated at times by every other man in England, had no charm for his ear. When Essex himself was longing for peace, Pym went to his tent, and besought him to continue the war until the last resource was spent.

Death came to him in perfect tranquility. His body, escorted by the two Houses, was carried to Westminster Abbey on the shoulders of ten of his chief associates in the House of Commons, among them, Denzil Hollis, Sir Arthur Hazelrig, young Sir Harry Vane, Oliver St. John, and William Strode. Three of them were of the five members. Hampden had passed away, and his own death occurred just at the time when the fortunes of his party began to rise. During the winter the King summoned to Oxford all the members of either House who adhered to his cause, and established them in Parliament. The House of Lords was numerically larger than that at Westminster, notwithstanding that many of the Cavalier Lords were employed in military service in different parts of the country. The House of Commons consisted of near one hundred and forty members, about one half the number of those at Westminster. The King again proposed a peace, but the Parliament at Westminster refused to treat.

In January, 1644, a Scottish army of about 20,000 men under the command of General Leslie (sometime since made Earl of Leven) invaded England. This was a fearful menace to the royal cause, and it carried alarm to the heart of every Cavalier. The Marquis of Newcastle gathered a large army, and marched north
to fight Leslie, leaving Colonel John Bellasis in charge of affairs in Yorkshire. Sir Thomas Fairfax attacked Bellasis and captured him and the larger part of his men. This defeat put York in danger, and Newcastle returned in all haste to that city, leaving the way open for the Scots to advance whither they pleased. The King now received some troops from Ireland, who, under Lord Byron, took the castles of Hawarden, Beeston, Acton, and Deddington. Sir Thomas Fairfax, a noted general since his victory over Bellasis, met them at Nantwich, and totally defeated them, capturing Colonel George Monk, who, after suffering a short captivity, engaged in the service of the Parliament, and lived to become illustrious by restoring Charles II to his throne.

The Cavalier siege of Hull was abandoned, Newcastle being forced to prepare himself for a siege at York. The Roundheads threatened Newark, and Prince Rupert hastened there from Oxford and beat them off. After relieving Newark the Prince began his march northward for the relief of York. On his way thither he paused to succor a distressed lady, whose history is one of the most romantic of that age.

Charlotte de la Tremouille, Countess of Derby, was at Lathom House, when, on the 22nd of February, 1644, Sir William Waller summoned her to surrender that stately castle to his army. Her husband, the Earl of Derby, was absent in the King’s military service, and was unable to come to her relief. She was a lady of the most eminent virtue and of rare courage, and she returned a defiant answer to the summons. Waller laid siege to the castle, leaving Colonel Rigby in charge, and passed on with the principal part of his army. The Countess, by conducting a number of parleys with Rigby, managed to gain a sufficient time to arrange for her defense, and to strengthen and recruit her little garrison. The walls of the great mansion were high and strong, being six feet in thickness; and seven lofty towers and two lesser ones added to their strength, besides the great gate, and the Eagle Tower, high over all, in the center of the building. The house itself stood so low, that the shots from the Roundhead guns on the surrounding slopes could scarcely reach it. Around the walls was a wide moat with strong palisades, and it could be crossed only over the bridge at the postern gates, which were now guarded by trusty sentinels. The garrison consisted of three hundred men, over which the Countess had appointed six captains, arraying herself in semi-armor as their commander-in-chief. The house was stocked with arms and provisions, and was well appointed to endure a siege.

The besieging force numbered about three thousand, and the first gun was fired on the 12th of March. There was but one cannon that wrought any considerable damage to the castle, and one night the Countess sallied out with a party who cut their way to this gun, hoisted it on a wheeled carriage which they had brought with them, and returned with it in triumph to the garrison. The Roundheads were unable to make their muskets tell on the discreet guards on the walls, but suffered many losses themselves from the well-aimed shots of the garrison. On the 23rd of May, Rigby, who was apprehensive of Rupert’s approach, sent his final summons to the Countess, demanding that she and her children submit themselves to the mercy of the Parliament. She replied that
she would set her castle on fire and perish in the flames before she would accept the mercies of the wicked and cruel! Rigby assaulted the castle, but was unable to make any impression on its walls. The conflict was growing hotter and the beautiful defender’s peril was momentarily increasing, when Prince Rupert and the Earl of Derby opportuneley arrived and put the Puritans to flight. The gallant Prince pursued them to Bolton and gave them battle, securing a full revenge for the discomforts which the Countess had sustained in resisting this memorable siege for more than three months.

The Marquis of Montrose arrived from Scotland to pay homage to King Charles, and received a commission to return to Scotland and conduct a war of diversion there, which might make Leven wish himself and his troops at home. Lord Hopton, with an army of nearly six thousand men, marched into the West after Sir William Waller, and captured Arundel Castle. He then offered battle to Waller, and was severely beaten at Cheriton, on March 29, 1644.

The Queen, being now in delicate health, left Oxford. The King accompanied her as far as Bath, where, on the 3rd of April, 1644, the loving and faithful pair separated with streaming eyes, never to meet on earth again. The Queen was then conveyed to Exeter, and on the 16th of June she gave birth to a daughter. Two weeks later, while the Queen was extremely ill, the Earl of Essex sat down before Exeter, and began a siege. Henrietta Maria sent to him, beseeching his permission to retire to Bath for the completion of her health, to which the Lord General made answer “That it was his intention to escort Her Majesty to London, where her presence was required to answer to Parliament for having levied war in England.” The suffering Queen then made her escape from the city in disguise, and after many painful adventures she sailed for France. In a few days after her departure, Charles, who was hastening to her succor, drew near, and Essex retired.

When the King returned to Oxford, Essex and Waller approached from the opposite direction in such a way as they would surely have taken him prisoner; but he passed out during the night and escaped between their two armies. Essex then marched into the West, and drove Prince Maurice away from Lyme, which he had been besieging, while Waller followed the King. The Parliamentary forces under Waller came up with the King on the 29th of June, and Charles attacked and defeated them at Cropredy Bridge, distinguishing himself by his usual bravery and correct military judgment when in personal command. While Waller retreated to recruit his army, the King marched west, instructing Hopton to follow him with all the men that could be spared from Bristol, and intending to form a junction with the army of Prince Maurice, and then fall on Essex and destroy him. On July 15, he arrived at Bath, but long ere that he received the news of Marston Moor, a battle which resulted in the permanent and rapid decline of his fortunes.

The Scottish troops under the Earl of Leven, united with the forces of Lord Fairfax, had sat down before York, 20,000 strong; and they were soon joined by the forces of the Eastern Association, led by the Earl of Manchester and Oliver Cromwell, and consisting of 6,000 foot and 3,000 horse, a total of 29,000 men. Prince Rupert approached York with an army that cannot be so accurately
counted. Cromwell says it amounted to 20,000 men at Marston Moor; it was near that number, which included about 2,500 men of Newcastle’s garrison. Lord Fairfax had endeavored to intercept the Prince, and had drawn up his men on Hessam Moor in a manner that presented an impassable barrier to the Cavaliers. But Rupert, by a brilliant stratagem that was not usual in his impulsive methods, discovered a ford in the Ouse River, which was unknown to the allies, crossed over with his army after dark, and entered York on another side on the night of July 1, 1644.

There were dissensions among the Scottish and English factions in the Parliament armies, Fairfax and Cromwell desiring to offer battle, while Leven stood out for a retreat. Leven’s counsel was reluctantly accepted, and the army took up its winding march in the direction of Long Marston village, about five miles west of York.

At the same instant a discussion of like importance was taking place between Prince Rupert and the Marquis of Newcastle behind the walls of York. The Marquis urged that the Roundheads be permitted to retreat, arguing correctly that their abandonment of the siege would be equal to the prestige of a victory. But the impetuous Prince pleaded that he had received written instructions from the King to fight the rebellious Scots, and he insisted upon instantly following the Puritans with all the available forces, and giving them battle.

It was on July 2, 1644, and the Roundheads had gone as far as Marston Moor, when Sir Thomas Fairfax, who commanded the rear of the column, began to feel the hot breath of Rupert’s pursuit. The alarm was sent forward—the Scots were far in advance—and quick preparations were made to form the armies in the line of battle. The Earl of Leven, as Commander-in-chief, held the reserve of horse in the rear of the center, which was composed of two long lines of Scottish infantry under Lord Fairfax. The right wing was commanded by Sir Thomas Fairfax, and embraced, beside his own regiment, those of Lambert, Eglinton, Balgony, and Dalhousie. On his extreme right was a troop of lancers, and in his rear a reserve of horse. The left wing was in charge of Oliver Cromwell with his own regiment, destined to win their name of Ironsides by their conduct that day. In this wing were also Manchester’s foot and Crawford’s horse. Leslie’s cavalry composed the reserve. The artillery was placed between the two wings on each flank of the center. The hoarse commands directing the formation of battle were frequently interrupted by the fierce exhortations of the preachers, or the shout of psalms proclaiming the glory of the Lord, and the word that was given to the soldiers to inspire them in the approaching conflict was, “God and our Cause!”

As the Prince came up he prepared to meet this preparation with equal energy. Over his shining corselet he wore his cloak of scarlet, and a flowing plume waved from his helmet. His face was lighted with the happy confidence of youth. A huge white dog, “Boy,” which he had trained in Germany, and which had followed him through the glory of his career, bounded upon the heels of his gallant steed. He was now, as ever, the idol of his soldiers. His left wing contained Sir George Goring, Sir John Hurry, Sir Charles Lucas, and Rupert’s
life-guard. In the center were General James King and the foot, with the Marquis of Newcastle’s regiment of white coats, called "the Lambs," and led that day by Newcastle’s brother, Sir Charles Cavendish. On the right were Newcastle’s own two regiments and other troops from the midland counties, with Lord Byron and the Irish horse, and Lords Grandison and Bellasis. Back of all were strong reserves of horse and foot, and the Prince’s artillery was placed where it was designed to work the deadliest execution. The Royalist word was "God and our King!"

Since three o’clock there had been an occasional cannon shot, but it was now past six and the battle had not begun.

The day was drawing to a close. The Marquis of Newcastle, feeling that there would be no engagement at that late hour, had retired to his traveling carriage to nurse his wrath, when a wild alarm smote his ear, and he emerged to fight bravely, but as a volunteer soldier, as Lord Lindsey had fought under a similar personal grievance at Edgehill.

A ditch called "the White Syke," running across the Moor, divided the two armies. Suddenly a stir was seen on the left of the Parliament side, and Manchester’s infantry advanced and plunged across the ditch. As by an electric touch the whole machinery of war responded, and fifty thousand Englishmen sprang forward, meeting each other in the shock of battle. Shout answered shout, and the clash of sabers, the roar of guns, and the plunge of mettled steeds shook the plain. It was after six o’clock in the evening, and a summer storm broke over the field, so that the booming guns were echoed in the thunders of Heaven. Sir Thomas Fairfax and his right wing were hampered in their advance by the broken ground, and while they were struggling forward through a rather narrow lane, they were struck with fearful force by the Cavaliers. Rupert and his life-guard were in that charge, and no army had ever yet withstood his onslaught. Nor could the Parliament men resist it that day. For one moment they stood and looked, and then they fled. Fairfax bravely tried to rally them, forcing his horse forward in the thick of danger, until a flashing saber struck him in the face, and he himself was swept back wounded and bleeding. The whole right wing was utterly broken and routed, and Rupert found himself occupying their ground, and flanking the Parliament center. These were the invading Scots, and Charles had written him to "beat the rebel armies of both kingdoms." Moved by the inspiration of his uncle’s command, he fell upon them, and they, too, fled, Leven himself leading the mad retreat under the impression that all was lost. With shouts of victory the Cavaliers pursued them; but the day was not yet decided.

Far over on the Parliament left was a body of 2,300 riders, whose fine discipline, high courage, and religious zeal were the wonder of that army. They were the God-fearing men whom Oliver Cromwell had wisely chosen to beat the younger sons and men of honor in the King’s army. When Manchester’s infantry sprang across the White Syke ditch, they were mowed down in platoons by a murderous fire from the Prince’s artillery. Cromwell, watching for the result of the first onset to govern his own course, saw them falter before the awful flame and smoke of Rupert’s cannon. With a passionate word
of command he led his Ironsides around to the right in order to avoid the ditch. The movement occupied some moments, during which the infantry met with increasing distress. But their deliverer was near. The stern Puritans went charging down the Moor, striking the Royal right wing like a tornado of death. The Cavaliers in their turn were appalled. No such solid and compact body of men as Cromwell then led had ever been seen in England before. The Royalists were stricken with panic. "God made them as stubble to our swords," wrote Cromwell, three days afterwards. "We charged their regiments of foot with our horse, and routed all we charged." Cromwell was wounded in the neck, which for a moment checked his pursuit. The men at his side were alarmed until they heard him say cheerily, "A miss is as good as a mile." Refusing to consider it anything but a trifling hurt, he pressed in on the enemy's guns, struck down the men who served them, and turned their flaming mouths upon the fleeing Cavaliers. He then struck the enemy's center on the flank, just as Rupert had done on the other side of the ditch. There he met Lord Newcastle's "White Coats," embracing the flower of Yorkshire manhood, and not even the Ironsides could make them flinch. Oliver and his men went at them shouting, "God and our Cause!" at every charge. They fell, indeed, like "stubble" before saber-thrust and carbine, but still they answered, "God and our King!" until the last man fell. Out of that gallant band of a thousand men only forty were breathing when the battle ended. Then Cromwell and his men turned and approached the ditch in the quiet satisfaction of victory. The storm had ceased with the temporary cessation of the fight. The sun was sinking in the West, and the soft gloaming of a summer night was falling on the field. On the other side of the ditch Prince Rupert was returning from the pursuit. The position of Cavalier and Puritan had been nearly reversed, and each now occupied in part the ground at first held by his enemy. Suddenly each of the conquerors found himself confronted by an advancing army, and instantly the battle was renewed. Cromwell struck the jaded Cavaliers in front. Sir Thomas Fairfax, having gathered the larger part of his men together in Willstrop Wood at the back edge of the Moor, charged them in the rear. The Prince strove to hold his troops steady, but Cromwell was upon them before they could re-form. Attacked on every side, they were soon put to flight leaving the spoils of victory behind them. The retreat became a rout, and the Prince narrowly escaped capture by leaping his good horse over a fence and making his way to York. The Roundheads captured 3,000 prisoners, 25 cannon, 130 barrels of powder, 10,000 arms, and the Prince's wagon train, while more than 4,000 men died on the field, the larger part being Cavaliers. The slaughter was kept up nearly to the walls of York. At last it was over; and the battle of Marston Moor, after three Parliamentary generals had been put to flight by the invincible Prince, was won by their subordinate, Oliver Cromwell, and by the devout men who had received their whole training in warfare from him.

Prince Rupert, crestfallen by the failure of the first great battle in which he had held the chief command, left York with a few thousand broken soldiers early the next morning, and went across to Lancashire and south to Shropshire
to gather reinforcements. The Marquis of Newcastle, who had enjoyed almost sovereign power in the North, having received a commission from the King which authorized him to raise armies, coin money, and confer knighthood, now perceived that the Royal cause was hopeless of ultimate success, and so, smarting with rage over the Prince’s rash and unfortunate conduct in forcing this battle, he, too, fled from York, followed by about eighty of his kinsmen and friends, and left England, to remain in exile for many years.

Sir Thomas Glenham, having been put in charge of York, was forced to surrender that city on the 16th of July, having first stipulated for leave to march to the King with his garrison under all the honors of war. By the victory won at Marston Moor, Cromwell’s reputation became firmly established as the first soldier in England. But he was slow to covet the honor of the highest rank; and while his personal spirit and influence dominated the Puritan hosts from that day, he did not receive nor would he accept the chief command until six years later when the unready Fairfax stepped aside, and Oliver led the army into Scotland as its General.

In this battle of Marston Moor, Cromwell’s sister’s son, young Captain Walton, was killed by a cannon ball. This bereavement threw a sad shade over Cromwell’s victory, not only out of his affection for the young man, but because it vividly recalled the death of his own son Oliver a short time before. The contemplation of these family losses, weighing heavily upon his heart, drew from him the following letter to the young man’s father:

"To my loving brother, Colonel Valentine Walton: These.

"Leaguer before York, 5th July, 1644.

"Dear Sir:

"It’s our duty to sympathise in all mercies; and to praise the Lord together in chastisements or trials, that so we may sorrow together.

"Truly England and the Church of God hath had a great favour from the Lord, in this great victory given unto us, such as the like never was since this war began. It had all the evidences of an absolute victory obtained by the Lord’s blessing upon the Godly Party principally. We never charged but we routed the enemy. The Left Wing, which I commanded, being our own horse, saving a few Scots in our rear, beat all the Prince’s horse. God made them as stubble to our swords. We charged their regiments of foot with our horse, and routed all we charged. The particulars I cannot relate now, but I believe, of Twenty-thousand the Prince hath not Four-thousand left. Give glory, all the glory, to God."
"Sir, God hath taken away your eldest son by a cannon-shot. It brake his leg. We were necessitated to have it cut off, whereof he died.

"Sir, you know my own trials this way; but the Lord supported me with this, That the Lord took him into the happiness we all pant for and live for. There is your precious child full of glory, never to know sin or sorrow any more. He was a gallant young man, exceedingly gracious. God give you His comfort. Before his death he was so full of comfort that to Frank Russell and myself he could not express it, ‘It was so great above his pain.’ This he said to us. Indeed it was admirable. A little after, he said, One thing lay upon his spirit. I asked him, What that was? He told me it was, That God had not suffered him to be any more the executioner of His enemies. At his fall, his horse being killed with the bullet, and as I am informed three horses more, I am told he bid them, Open to the right and left, that he might see the rogues run. Truly he was exceedingly beloved in the Army, of all that knew him. But few knew him; for he was a precious young man, fit for God. You have cause to bless the Lord. He is a glorious Saint in Heaven; wherein you ought exceedingly to rejoice. Let this drink up your sorrow; seeing these are not feigned words to comfort you, but the thing is so real and undoubted a truth. You may do all things by the strength of Christ. Seek that, and you shall easily bear your trial. Let this public mercy to the Church of God make you to forget your private sorrow. The Lord be your strength; so prays your truly faithful and loving brother,

"Oliver Cromwell.

"My love to your Daughter, and my Cousin Perceval, Sister Desborrow, and all friends with you."

CHAPTER XV

Naseby

While the Parliamentary armies had achieved a splendid success in the North, the King was pursuing Essex in the West with able strategy. The war had come to a pass where those Puritans who were of aristocratic birth perceived that a final victory for the Parliament in arms would lead to the extirpation of both the King
and his nobility. On the other hand, a military conquest by the
King would tempt him to a further exercise of autocratic power.
The conservative men of both parties were therefore in favor of
an honorable peace. Charles had made many overtures for peace,
and the Parliament had confessed an equal desire to put an end
to the present miseries. But neither party would make the
necessary concessions to this end.

Lord Essex was extremely solicitous for peace, and the King,
failing to secure terms from the Parliament, applied to Essex in a
direct and specific proposal to end the war forthwith. But the
loyalty of this Puritan soldier was superior to his severe
temptation. He declined to treat with the Royalists and promptly
forwarded the correspondence to the Parliament, which thanked
him profusely for having preserved his own honor and their safety.

The King pressed in on Essex and followed him into Cornwall. On
the 1st of September (1644) he had so encompassed the Puritans
that, after their horse had forced their way through his lines and
Essex himself had fled from his army and put to sea in a small
boat for Plymouth, the entire Parliamentary infantry surrendered
their train of artillery, their ammunition and baggage, and all
their arms, and were then permitted to disperse in disorder and
contempt.

The Parliament condoled with their General and recruited his
forces. On October 27th the two armies fought the second battle
of Newbury without a positive result. Essex was sick, and the Earl
of Manchester commanded the Puritans, the subordinate direction
resting with Waller and Skippon. Cromwell did not take part in
this engagement. "Where those horses were that Lieutenant-
General Cromwell commanded," says Manchester in his account of
this battle, "I have as yet had no certain account." The truth is,
that Cromwell and the Ironsides had been on a hard march for
eight days preceding the battle. The opening of the engagement
late in the day found them on the wrong side of the river, with no
ford convenient. Manchester was clearly unequal to the task of
leadership. There were bitter dissensions between himself and
Cromwell, and Cromwell gravely suspected his willingness to beat
the King. The Parliamentary forces therefore fought without unity
of purpose and there was no bold and masterful generalship to
inspire them to victory. The King made a charge or two, and then
drew off his army in the moonlight without opposition, taking with
him a lot of Manchester's cannon. A few days afterwards
Manchester sent an order to Cromwell to bring his troops to a
rendezvous, and Cromwell, who knew that the horses were jaded,
replied by inquiring with some heat whether the Earl intended to flay the horses, for if he called them to a rendezvous "he might have their skins, but no service from them." The King, who had marched away from Newbury after the fight, was now returning. Dennington Castle, lying close to Newbury, was under siege by the Puritans, and it was given out that the King was coming to its relief. Manchester’s order to mass the troops was made with an intention to stop the King. But the chiefs of the Parliamentary army were still at cross-purposes, and before their misunderstandings could be adjusted, Charles had forced his way to the castle and given the garrison abundant relief (November 9). He then drew out "leisurely and soldierlike," says General Skippon, took his cannon train with him, and sent a party of his horse to attack some of the Puritans and put them to flight. Both armies then withdrew to their winter quarters.

The recent Parliamentary reverses in the West had produced the gravest discontents both in the Army and in the two Houses, and as soon as military operations had ceased for the winter, some of the members under the inspiration of Cromwell began to devise a plan for a complete reorganization of the Army.

The quarrel between Cromwell and Manchester was fiercely renewed, and Cromwell made a speech in the House of Commons (November 25, 1644) in which he boldly accused the Earl of being "indisposed and backward" in his military duties, being against ending the war by the sword and in favor of a disadvantageous peace. He said that since the capture of York, Manchester had made no effort to oppress the enemy, "as if he thought the King too low and the Parliament too high," and that he had neglected many opportunities of bettering the popular cause in direct opposition to his Council of War and the Committee of Both Kingdoms. Cromwell declared that at the last moment of the campaign which had just closed so ingloriously, after the King had relieved Dennington Castle and was withdrawing his army in triumph to Oxford, he had vehemently urged Manchester to attack Charles with the combined strength of his own force and those of Essex and Waller. But Manchester stubbornly refused to risk a battle, telling the Lieutenant-General that, "if we beat the King ninety-nine times, he would be King still, and his posterity, and we subjects still; but if he beat us but once, we should be hanged and our posterity undone."

This outburst drew from Manchester, by way of recrimination, a statement which was intended to be very damaging to Cromwell’s reputation. On a certain occasion when Oliver had proposed a
measure which Manchester thought the Parliament would not approve, Cromwell said, "My lord, if you will stick firm to honest men, you shall find yourself at the head of an army which shall give law both to King and Parliament." "This discourse," said the Earl, "made the greater impression on me, because I knew the Lieutenant-General to be a man of very deep designs; and he has even ventured to tell me, that it never would be well with England till I were Mr. Montague, and there were ne’er a lord or peer in the Kingdom."

This quarrel was espoused on Manchester’s behalf by the Presbyterians, comprising a majority of both Houses. But the Independents, devoted to the complete toleration of everything in religion except popery, had become a powerful faction in the Puritan party. Their leaders were young Sir Henry Vane, Nathaniel Fiennes, and Oliver St. John. Their ideal soldier and champion militant was Oliver Cromwell. A large part of the Army, including the Ironsides, were Independents. The powerful influence of these men was exerted in Cromwell’s interest. They were opposed to peace except under conditions which they knew the King would never grant. They purposed to conquer him thoroughly before laying down their arms. In no other way would they believe that liberty could be established. The Presbyterians in Parliament and in the Army were noxious to them both for their desire for a speedy termination of the war, and for their opposition to liberty of conscience. A game for supremacy was now played by these two parties which first brought to the surface the wonderful political ability of Cromwell.

In coming to the consideration of this part of his character we are met with the charge, so frequently made, that he constantly practiced a deep dissimulation. In reply to this we ask, Has the world produced a statesman who did not dissimulate? Is not dissimulation a faculty of the diplomatic mind? The word is used to denote a concealment of motives and designs. What, then, would be thought of a man who, in the perilous times of revolution, and while acting the supreme part in his country’s history, would make a frivolously candid disclosure of his motives and designs? What would be the outcome of a revolution under such a leader? Cromwell did dissimulate. When encompassed with political difficulties, and surrounded by secret enemies on the Puritan side, dissimulation was the weapon which he employed to accomplish his designs. Major Huntingdon asserts that Cromwell told him it was "lawful to play the knave with a knave." If Oliver used this blunt assertion he used it to fit a particular case. "Cromwell," says Prof. Gardiner, "was certainly not one of those
simple-minded men who wear their hearts upon their sleeves, and he undoubtedly did not think it in accordance with his duty to inform his political opponents what means he was about to adopt to countermine their machinations."

One night late in November (1644) the Lord General Essex secretly invited some very prominent persons to his house. Essex was no longer the idol of his party, and the sting of public disfavor rankled in his mind. Among those who came to see him were Whitelock, Maynard, Denzil Hollis, Sir Philip Stapleton, and the Scottish Commissioners. Lord Loudon, Chancellor of Scotland, addressed these members and informed them that Cromwell was no friend to the Scottish Army, that he had used the arts of an incendiary to detract from their honor and merit, and that he was no friend to Lord Essex. He desired to know whether it would be deemed expedient to draw up a prosecution against Cromwell before Parliament, demanding his punishment as an incendiary under the agreement between the two countries, and an enemy to the common weal. Whitelock and the others discussed this audacious proposition, but they all came to the wise conclusion that Cromwell’s influence in Parliament was too powerful to be overthrown by such a proceeding, and they resolved that no move should be made until absolute proofs against him could be collected.

Cromwell was promptly informed of these designs to destroy him, and he prepared at once to crush his enemies and establish his own position firmly in the Army. On the 9th of December, in the House of Commons, after there had been a general silence for a good space of time, each member waiting to see whether his neighbour would broach this embarrassing business, Oliver Cromwell rose and spoke upon the Self-Denying Ordinance. This ordinance provided that no member of either House should henceforth hold office in either the Army, the Navy, or the civil Government. His speech was brusque and practical. He said:

"It is now a time to speak, or forever hold the tongue. The important occasion now is no less than to save a nation out of a bleeding, nay, almost dying condition; which the long continuance of this war hath already brought it into; so that without a more speedy, vigorous, and effectual prosecution of the War—casting off all lingering proceedings like those of soldiers of fortune beyond sea, to spin out a war—we shall make the kingdom weary of us, and hate the name of Parliament."
"For what do the Enemy say? Nay, what do many say that were friends at the beginning of the Parliament? Even this, that the members of both Houses have got great places and commands, and the sword into their hands; and, what by interest in Parliament, what by power in the Army, will perpetually continue themselves in grandeur, and not permit the war speedily to end, lest their own power should determine with it. This that I speak here to our own faces is what others do utter abroad behind our backs. I am far from reflecting on any. I know the worth of those commanders, members of both Houses, who are yet in power; but if I may speak my conscience without reflection upon any, I do conceive if the Army be not put into another method, and the war more vigorously prosecuted, the People can bear the War no longer, and will enforce you to a dishonorable peace.

"But this I would recommend to your prudence, not to insist upon any complaint or oversight of any Commander-in-chief upon any occasion whatsoever; for as I must acknowledge myself guilty of oversights, so I know they can rarely be avoided in military affairs. Therefore, waiving a strict inquiry into the causes of these things, let us apply ourselves to the remedy, which is most necessary. And I hope we have such true English hearts, and zealous affections towards the general weal of our Mother Country, as no Members of either House will scruple to deny themselves, and their own private interests, for the public good, nor account it to be a dishonor done to them, whatever the Parliament shall resolve upon in this weighty matter."

Sir Harry Vane also spoke, accusing himself for holding a gainful office, that of Treasurer of the Navy. Other members were eloquent in their praise of this plan for establishing their patriotism on sure foundations. The Presbyterians opposed the ordinance. The Independent design of leveling social and family distinctions was darkly hinted at. Whitelock told them that their present commanders were trained to military authority, that greater confidence might safely be reposed in men of family and fortune than in mere adventurers, that the Army should be held in strict subordination to the civil
power, and that those who now enjoyed these trusts should not be disturbed.

Then Cromwell replied briefly to all the other speeches. He said:

"I am not of the mind that the calling of the members to sit in Parliament will break or scatter our armies. I can speak this for my own soldiers, that they look not upon me, but upon you, and for you they will fight, and live and die in your cause; and if others be of that mind that they are of, you need not fear them. They do not idolize me, but look upon the cause they fight for. You may lay upon them what commands you please; they will obey your commands in that cause they fight for."

Too modest indeed was Cromwell in saying that his soldiers did not idolize him.

It was a hard struggle, but the Self-Denying Ordinance was at length passed in both Houses, and among those who immediately resigned their commands were Essex, Waller, Manchester, Warwick, Denbigh, and Brereton—all Presbyterians. Skippon, being an Independent, was retained as Major-General to please the City of London.

The Earl of Essex had been chosen to lead the Parliamentary hosts because his noble birth, his elevated character, and his military experience in the Continental wars had commended him to the Puritans as an ideal general. He had been upheld in every reverse by the loyalty and devotion of his party. His inactive policy of watch-and-wait had been accepted with deference by those who yearned to see him fight a crushing battle. When he did meet the King, as at Edgehill and Newbury, he maneuvered his troops with the skillful judgment of an unbeaten soldier. But he never struck a decisive blow; he always permitted the enemy to withdraw in order, and in time there were those who cried vehemently that his Lordship was a King's man at heart, and that he was not striving in good faith for the Parliament’s supremacy. The bad condition of the Roundhead cause under his leadership, and the good fortune which quickly followed when Cromwell, Manchester, and Fairfax were separated from his authority, convinced the Puritans, after long forbearance, that he was not available for the post of conqueror in the revolution which they were resolved to accomplish. The Self-Denying Ordinance was the engine which swept him and his friends aside. Essex was voted a pension of £10,000 a year, but he died in less than two years after his resignation—that is, on September 14, 1646, at the age of fifty-
five years. He was buried in great state in the presence of both Houses of Parliament.
The passage of the Self-Denying Ordinance was due to Cromwell’s personal management. Under its indiscriminating provisions he should at once have resigned from the Army. But there are no grounds for believing that he ever intended to resign. Says William Godwin:

"It is sufficiently singular that at this time when the names of the General, the Major-General, and twenty-four colonels were voted, the appointment of Lieutenant-General was passed over in silence. It cannot be reasonably doubted that there was a special reason for keeping the name of the officer second in command in reserve; and that reason, as appeared in the sequel, was that the situation was destined for Cromwell."

At the time the resignations of the other officers were received, he was on his way to Taunton to relieve a siege there. Comment having naturally been made on his absence, orders were dispatched for his immediate attendance in Parliament, and Sir Thomas Fairfax, the new General, was instructed to employ some other officer in that service. A day was accordingly named on which he would return and take his seat in the House. But Fairfax, having appointed a rendezvous for the Army, forwarded a petition to the Parliament, bearing the signatures of himself and sixteen colonels, in which they begged permission for Cromwell to remain at headquarters for a few days, as his advice would be useful in supplying the places of those officers who had resigned. Shortly afterwards, he earnestly besought the Parliament to allow Cromwell to serve for three months, which was granted, and then four months more, and six months again, as Lieutenant-General. And his martial achievements during these times were so colossal that even his enemies could not again press the matter of his retirement, while the great body of the people viewed his performances in the field with wonder and admiration; and the soldiers broke out into fierce denunciation when it was proposed to revoke his commission.

Soon after the retirement of the Presbyterian generals from the Army had been accomplished, the Self-Denying Ordinance was forgotten, and the Independent officers in the Army were elected to Parliament to fill vacancies, among them being Sir Oliver and Sir Samuel Luke, Henry Ireton, Thomas Rainsborough, Algernon Sidney, Richard Ingoldsby, Edmund Ludlow, and Charles Fleetwood. The political and strategic purpose of this measure is
therefore plain, but it opened the way to a reform in the personnel of the Army which was much needed. The ordinance for the "New Model" of the Army quickly followed the Self-Denying Ordinance. This provided for recruiting the Parliamentary Army to 21,000 men, Sir Thomas Fairfax being General. Fairfax was a man of humane nature, and esteemed for his bravery. At the time of his elevation to the chief command, he was only thirty-four years of age, and as he had a narrow understanding of all affairs other than those of war, it was natural that he should lean on Cromwell and imbibe some part of the religious zeal and personal enthusiasm of that masterful man. And to the end of his military service, Fairfax, nominally the General, was really a trusting follower of Cromwell in all the important measures of the war. A noticeable thing in the commission of Fairfax was the omission of those instructions which the Parliament had formerly given to Essex for the care of the King's person.

The ordinance for the New Model gave to Fairfax and Cromwell, and to their adherents in Parliament, an opportunity to reconstruct the Army in a manner that gave the chief official places to Independents. The Covenant, never regarded by them as more than a political expedient to gain the Scottish Army, was now practically suspended. The new recruits were not required to subscribe it. The efficiency of the military service was greatly enhanced, jealousies disappeared, and every soldier seemed possessed by a wild and weird zeal to fight the enemies of Zion—who, of course, were the Cavaliers—to the death. Religious enthusiasm was at its height when the New Model was completed. Those Puritan hosts performed every action in the name of God. When they were not fighting, they were either preaching or reading, and expounding the Scriptures. Conversation was often carried on in Biblical phrases. Every argument was clinched with a text from the sacred book. The private soldiers, disciplined to perfect obedience in the drill or on the field, forgot their subordination in the relaxed freedom of the camp, and often lectured their officers fiercely when they were suspected of a weakness of the flesh. They adopted the old Jewish theory of the personal leadership of Jehovah. The Old Testament was explored for instances of modern application. They delighted to quote the inspired promise that the saints shall possess the earth. They proclaimed that they had drawn the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Agag, the hated Amalekite King, was the name by which they referred to Charles. They were in arms against the Ammonites and the Moabites. The children of Belial were opposing them. The popish soldiers were led by the priests of Baal. They would overcome their foes at Armageddon. The Scarlet
Woman would be slain. Agag would be covered with confusion. Then would peace come to Shiloh.

The placing of the whole power of the sword in the hands of the Independents under the New Model speedily awakened a jealousy among the Presbyterian majority in the Parliament, which was to grow into a bitterness nearly equal to that which now existed between the King and the Commons. But momentous affairs obscured this incipient strife for the time being. While Fairfax and Cromwell were thus reconstructing and re-inspiring the Army, the Parliament found time to bring the aged Archbishop Laud to trial, he having lain in prison ever since the days of the Strafford agitation. His trial bore much resemblance to that of Strafford, and it has been equally a subject of heated controversy. He was accused, in the same manner as Strafford had been accused, of high treason, in endeavoring to subvert the fundamental laws of the kingdom. The same specious but illegal theory of a cumulative crime and a constructive evidence was adopted. After more than one hundred and fifty witnesses had testified, the Parliament found, as in the Strafford trial, that there was so little likelihood of obtaining a verdict, that they fell back upon the old expedient of an *ex-post-facto* law, and passed an ordinance to take away his life. The Lords made some show of opposition, but so far had their influence declined that they soon withdrew their virtuous objections, and concurred with the lower House. It is but fair to say that when the question was put, only seven of the Peers were present to vote, the others having purposely remained away in a conscious shame of the act. The original sentence was that he should be hanged, drawn, and quartered, but upon an earnest solicitation from the Lords, the Commons, after once refusing, finally granted, with much reluctance, a petition from Laud that he might be beheaded, which was accordingly done on the 10th of January, 1645, in the face of a free pardon which Charles formally issued to him from Oxford.

About the same time the Parliament, endeavoring to give a finishing blow to the English Church, passed an ordinance abolishing the *Book of Common Prayer*.

The King sent several messages for peace, and at length succeeded in having commissioners appointed by the Parliament, who met his own representatives at Uxbridge; and thence ensued the treaty which took its name from that place. In order to secure this commission, Charles had been compelled to recede from his former resolution, and address the Houses at Westminster as the Parliament of England. This concession apparently stultified his Oxford Parliament, but he ordered a secret entry to be made in the council books, that, though he had
called them the Parliament, he had not acknowledged them for such, and a letter to his Queen in which this casuistry was set forth was taken at Naseby, and was made one of the grounds for the charge of political perfidy which has ever since been stoutly advanced against him. But straightforward dealing is not the ruling virtue of either party in times of war.

At the time that the treaty of Uxbridge was commenced, there was no sincere belief in the breast of any of the Commissioners that a peace would be secured. The Presbyterians were naturally afraid of punishment if they restored the King to power. The Independents were openly demanding a pure Republic. The Royalists were unwilling to grant any further concessions than those which had been yielded before the war began.

The Parliamentary commissioners demanded that the power of the sword should forever be entrusted to such persons as the Parliament would appoint, but afterwards seven years was named as the time. They required that the truce with the Irish rebels should be abrogated, and the management of the war and of the civil administration in Ireland be placed with the Parliament. They desired the King and all his party to sign the Covenant and adopt the worship of the Presbyterian Church, forsaking Episcopacy. They then set forth other demands, that the King should attaint and except from a general pardon forty of the most considerable of his English subjects, and nineteen of those of Scotland, together with all the Catholics in both kingdoms who had borne arms for him. Forty-eight others, with all the members who had sat in either House at Oxford, and all lawyers and ministers who had embraced the King’s party, should be made incapable of holding office, be forbidden the exercise of their professions, be prohibited from attending the Court, and should forfeit one third of their estates to the Parliament. Whoever had borne arms for the King should forfeit one tenth of their estates, or, if that were not sufficient for the payment of the public debts, one sixth. Finally, it was demanded, that the Court of Wards should be abolished, that all the important officers of the Crown, and all the judges should be appointed by the Parliament, and that the prerogative of peace or war should not be exercised without the Parliament’s consent. Some of these proposals were in exact accord with the correct understanding of a nation’s liberty. But some of them were barbarous. After twenty days had been spent in fruitless debates, the treaty was abandoned.

In April, a body of troops from the new-modeled Army was overtaken by the intrepid Prince Rupert near Lidbury, and put to rout, two hundred of them being taken prisoners. Cromwell, who had come to Windsor ostensibly to resign his commission, received orders to intercept the King, who, it was reported, intended to
march from Oxford, and join Rupert at Worcester. He met the advance guard at Islip Bridge, and defeated them, he likewise taking two hundred prisoners. The fugitives were pursued to Blechington House, a strongly fortified and well garrisoned castle commanded by Colonel Windebank, a son of the King’s former Secretary. Cromwell, as a mere formality of war, summoned them to surrender, but he never expected their compliance, and would have passed on without assaulting them. But Windebank, who was enjoying his honeymoon, hastily surrendered, and reaching Oxford in disgrace, was immediately shot by sentence of court-martial. Cromwell was overcome with surprise at the yielding of this stronghold, and as usual when unexpected advantages fell to him, his fervid soul attributed it all to divine interposition. In his official report, he said:

"This was the mercy of God, and nothing is more due than a real acknowledgment. And though I have had greater mercies, yet none clearer; because, in the first place, God brought them to our hands when we looked not for them; and delivered them out of our hands when we laid a reasonable design to surprise them, and which we carefully endeavoured. His mercy appears in this also, that I did much doubt the storming of the House, it being strong and well manned and I having few dragoons, and this being not my business; and yet we got it. I hope you will pardon me if I say, God is not enough owned. We look too much to men and visible helps. This hath much hindered our success. But I hope God will direct all to acknowledge him alone in all things."

Leaving a guard at Blechington, Cromwell marched to Witney, and beat up the Royalist quarters at Brampton Bush, capturing a number of prisoners. He then summoned Farrington Castle in this fierce style:

"To the Governor of the Garrison in Farrington.

"29th April, 1645.

"Sir:

"I summon you to deliver into my hands the house wherein you are, and your ammunition, with all things else there; together with your persons, to be disposed of as the Parliament shall appoint. Which if
you refuse to do, you are to expect the utmost extremity of war. I rest, your servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

But Roger Burgess, a stout Cavalier, who had the Blechington affair and Windebank’s fate in his mind, defied him to do his worst. Cromwell assaulted the walls at three in the morning, and was repulsed, leaving fourteen of his men killed, and ten other prisoners. By this time, Fairfax believed the new Army to be sufficiently well organized to take the field. The Parliament ordered a day of public humiliation and prayer for its success; and on April 30, 1645, he marched from Windsor, and reaching Newbury on May 2, he was joined by Cromwell. The Lieutenant-General learned from some prisoners of a design of General Goring’s to attack his troops, which had been left at Farrington that night, and he made haste thither, but arrived just in time to see his troops, under Major Bethel, attacked on the opposite side of the river. The skirmish occurred at Radcot Bridge, and as soon as Cromwell came over the fight became furious, Bethel was taken prisoner, and four or five Roundheads were slain. Cromwell had barely reached the front when darkness came on, much to Goring’s delight, who, being unwilling to risk a general engagement, drew off his men with the purpose of intercepting Fairfax’s march to the relief of Taunton, then under siege by the Royalists. In this endeavor he was not successful, as Fairfax dispatched a large body of men under Colonel Weldon, who drew up before Taunton on May 12, causing the Royalists to withdraw. They were soon met, however, by Goring and Hopton, under whose command the Cavaliers again took up the siege of Taunton, immuring Weldon and his relief party close prisoners within the beleaguered walls. In the meantime, the King had left Oxford, accompanied by Prince Rupert and 8,000 soldiers, and after taking some Puritan castles on his march, he forced the Parliamentarians to raise the siege of Chester. Retracing his march, the King stopped before the city of Leicester, and summoned it to surrender. Receiving a refusal, he planted his batteries and stormed the walls (May 30), carrying them after a brilliant and heroic assault. This victory was a great one, as he captured 1,500 prisoners and a vast store of war materials, together with much money, plate, and goods. While the King was winning these victories, Fairfax had sat down before Oxford, where he had been surprised by a sally in which one hundred of his men were killed. On receiving intelligence of the successful storming of Leicester the Parliament peremptorily commanded him to quit Oxford and go into the Associated
Counties, where it was feared the King would next wend his way. It was this period of disaster which evoked from the Parliament a formal authority for Cromwell, still the only Roundhead who was winning victories, to serve as Lieutenant-General, commanding the horse.

It was the intention of General Goring in the West to join his forces with the King’s Army, and he wrote letters to Charles dissuading him from risking a battle until this junction could be effected. But the Parliament intercepted these letters and their wise counsel was lost to the ill-fated Sovereign, who was widening the distance every day between himself and Goring by pursuing his march northward towards Pontefract Castle.

The Scottish Army was still in the far North. Its Presbyterian generals had perceived with much disfavor the establishment of Independent ascendancy in the New-Model Army of the Parliament, and the natural jealousies which already existed between the armies were fanned into new heat by the religious and political prejudices which had grown out of the operations of the Self-Denying Ordinance. This was one reason why Fairfax could not look for any immediate assistance from the invaders. But there was a more potent excuse for Scottish inactivity in the North.

James Graham, the Marquis of Montrose, who, as a zealous Covenanter, had opposed Charles in the two Bishops’ Wars, had since become his most devoted adherent. Young, ardent, and brave, he had offered his sword to his King, and Charles had granted him supreme authority to conduct a war of diversion in Scotland, hoping that he could force Leven to re-cross his Army over the Tweed and transfer the field of war to Scotland. Montrose, returning to Scotland alone, was laughed at for his pretensions. But in a very short period of time he had gathered under his banner a goodly number of the hereditary followers of his house, and was soon reinforced by the Earl of Antrim, who came over from Ireland with 1,500 soldiers. Possessing courage equal to that of Rupert, but withal a better judgment, Montrose entered into his campaign with so much fervency and zeal that he very shortly became almost the conqueror of Scotland. His Army increased as victory followed victory. At Tippermuir, Perth, and Aberdeen he had broken the strength of the Covenanters; and, with the intelligence of this havoc of war ringing in his ears, yet still unwilling to leave England, General Leven dared not march too far away from the borders of his native land.

But as soon as Fairfax was permitted to raise the irksome siege of Oxford, he made quick marches on the heels of the King, intent to give him battle.
Charles was in excellent spirits. A courier from Montrose had just brought word of a new victory. The King wrote to Henrietta Maria, "Never since the beginning of the rebellion have my affairs been in so good a position." He and his courtiers rode away from the Army to hunt the stag. He had reached Naseby on his march, when, on the night of June 13, Henry Ireton, with the Roundhead advance guard, beat up his quarters and compelled him at midnight to fly to Harborough, where a council of war was held with Prince Rupert, and a rash resolve was taken to fight the next day.

The hamlet of Naseby stands on a hilltop, on the northwestern border of Northamptonshire, in the very heart of England. The high moor-ground is covered with clay hills, undulating for miles in extent. Early on the morning of June 14 (1645) the King marched his soldiers out on the moor and formed them on the elevated ground known as Dust Hill. A little later, General Fairfax, marching out from Naseby, ascended Mill Hill to reconnoiter the ground. Beside him was Cromwell, just arrived the day before with 600 horse from the fen country and received with a mighty shout of welcome by his Ironsides, who believed that victory abided in his presence. After inspecting the field the two generals began to withdraw into a hollow behind Mill Hill, seeking a better position; whereupon, the chafing and impatient Rupert, who was acting as his own scout-master, sent back a hasty message announcing to the King that the Roundheads were retreating and begging him to advance with all speed. The vantage ground on Dust Hill was accordingly forsaken, and the Cavaliers marched across the field for a mile and a half to meet the foe. Behind Lantford Hedge on the west side of the field, flanking the Cavaliers' march, Cromwell had placed his Anabaptist major, Okey. He himself took charge of the right wing with six regiments of horse. The left wing was commanded by Henry Ireton, the most uncompromising Republican of his time, a scholar, lawyer, and soldier, a man of good brain and stout heart, who, through Cromwell's good opinion of him, had that day been raised into high command from a Captain to Commissary-General of the Horse. In front of the Parliament center was the "forlorn hope," or skirmish guard, who were expected to draw the first fire and feel the pulse of the enemy. In charge of the center with Fairfax was old Philip Skippon, a Low Country soldier, the leader of the London trained bands, who had won the hearts of his men by this cheerful shout, "Come, my boys, my brave boys! Let us pray heartily and fight heartily. I will run the same fortunes and hazards with you. Remember the cause is for God and for the defense of yourselves, your wives, and your children!" Behind the center with the reserve stood Colonel Pride and Colonel Hammond
—the one to win future renown in the "Purge" of the Presbyterians from the Parliament, the other to meet his wandering King on an island and make him a hapless captive.

On the opposite side, as Generalissimo and directly commanding the main body, was the King, in full armor and splendidly mounted, destined that day to snatch from the wreck of his kingdom a reputation as one of the most gallant and courageous captains of his time. On the right wing was the fiery Prince and his invincible cavalry, smarting to meet Cromwell and avenge the beating inflicted on him at Marston Moor, but now facing Ireton. With Rupert was his brother, Prince Maurice, a saturnine but brave soldier. In Rupert’s rear was the reserve, under the Earl of Lindsey and Sir Jacob Astley. The left wing, facing Cromwell, was commanded by Sir Marmaduke Langdale, a pale and thin Yorkshireman, a stranger to fear, but the possessor of a temper which at times somewhat disturbed the equilibrium of his men. The Roundheads numbered nearly 14,000 men, and the Cavaliers about 7,500.

Every division had its standard, and every regiment its colors. The buff standard of the Parliament, with its Bible and sacred inscription, was planted on Mill Hill. Over the King’s center waved the royal crimson banner, embroidered with a gold crown and lion. Near it was the Queen’s white ensign with its *fleur-de-lis*. The flag of light-blue color on the right wing, emblazoned with the arms of the Palatinate, was Rupert’s.

The Royal Army advanced with so much alacrity across the rolling ground dividing Dust Hill from Mill Hill, that there was no time for turning their cannons ere the battle began. The guns of the Roundheads were placed so high on Mill Hill that they were equally useless, their fire going over the heads of the Cavaliers. A rattling fire from the Anabaptist muskets behind the hedge emptied a few saddles as the Cavaliers charged past Okey’s ambush. On they came, to the foot of Mill Hill, crying their battle word, "Queen Mary." The "forlorn hope" beheld their approach, and then turned with discretion and sought security amid the main ranks. Then came a shout from the Puritans, "God Our Strength," and the battle was on.

Rupert charged up the hill, his followers mowing a wide pathway through Ireton’s squadrons. The gallant Roundhead tried to hold his men, but they were overridden and sabered by the young Palatine, swept down as by a wave from the sea, and covered with confusion and despair. Ireton’s horse was shot under him. Regaining his feet, a pike was thrust into his thigh, and a halbert wounded his face. He was taken prisoner, but in the excitement of the pursuit he soon escaped and rallied some of his panic-stricken followers. And Rupert sped on over the sloping hills, his
Cavaliers dealing death to a flying victim with every stroke of their flashing swords. Exhilarated by this chase for human game, they forgot about the battle on the plain, forgot their King, and left him to his defeat, never dreaming but they had won the day. When they turned back they stopped to plunder the wagon train, where John Rushworth was taking notes for the Parliament and for posterity; but a sudden thought of the King occurred to them, and they spurred back to the field, paying no heed to a parting volley from the wagon train.

When the Puritan main body was struck by the Cavaliers under the leadership of Charles, a like disaster seemed about to ensue. With the exception of Fairfax’s own regiment, which held the Royalists in check, the front ranks broke and fled, but their enraged officers brought forward the reserves, which encouraged the others to advance again, and soon the two opposing hosts were battling at point of pike and thrust of sword, and clubbing their muskets, in the endeavor to win the day. Skippon was painfully shot in the side, and Fairfax urged him to leave the field, but he answered he would not stir so long as a man would stand. A blow from a sword beat off Fairfax’s helmet, and he rode about the field bareheaded, refusing to accept another from one of his officers. When his troops had become hardened to their work, he pointed to a division of the royal infantry which had seemed impregnable to every assault. "Can’t those people be got at?" he inquired of one of his most active colonels, "have you charged them?" "Twice, General, but I could not break them." "Well, take them in front, I will take them in the rear, and we will meet in the middle," and under these tactics the Royal foot gave way. Fairfax killed with his own hand an ensign, and caught the Royal flag from his relaxing grasp. For three hours the fight was stubborn and furious, and long afterwards the regicide witnesses testified that the most fell where the King stood.

But there was another quarter of the field where the Parliamentary troops met a better fortune. On the right wing, Cromwell, with 3,600 of the Ironsides, had charged Sir Marmaduke Langdale and his 2,000 veterans, and again the gay Cavaliers fell like stubble to their swords. They made, indeed, a stout resistance; Whalley charged them once for Cromwell, and they repelled him. But when Oliver led his men, a new inspiration seized them. Shouting their psalms, they rushed to victory, and literally pushed the Royalists off the field. Then the military caution of Cromwell was made to appear. He left a sufficient body of horse on the spot where he stopped his pursuit to keep Sir Marmaduke’s squadrons from returning to the King’s succor, perceiving, by the disappearance of Rupert, that the main body, bereft of the support of both wings, would be doomed to defeat.
He then took the flower of his command and fell upon the King’s center. In the meantime, Charles had carried himself with magnificent courage. At the moment when Cromwell had turned from his pursuit of Langdale, there had been a cessation of the conflict. This was caused by Fairfax calling off his troops to reform, while Ireton joined him with some of his fugitive horse on the left, and Cromwell was returning on the right. He had thus an army well formed in a manner as at the start, and he permitted his men to breathe before renewing the struggle. The sight struck the practiced eye of Charles with dismay. But at that moment, Rupert, having perceived too late his fatal mistake, dashed on the field. There was still a large body of horse with the King, but they were weary and despondent. Charles, with despair stamped on every feature, waved his sword. "One charge more, gentlemen," he cried. "One charge more, and the day is ours!" There was an answering shout, and Charles would have put his life into that attempt. But the Earl of Carnwarth, seizing his bridle, checked his horse and turned him round. With a great oath the Earl cried, "Will you go upon your death in an instant?" The golden moment was lost. Before Charles could release his charger from the Earl’s grasp, his followers had likewise turned their steeds. Cromwell was thundering on their rear. Fairfax and Ireton were charging on their flank. The retreat became a rout; and the Puritans, after killing 800 men, capturing the entire infantry, numbering nearly 5,000, and taking the wagon train and all the artillery, arms, and ammunition, pursued the Cavaliers for twelve miles, until they sought shelter behind the walls of Leicester. The devout soul of Cromwell had but one explanation for this superb victory. He wrote to the Speaker of the House of Commons thus:

"Sir, this is none other but the hand of God; and to him alone belongs the glory, wherein none are to share with him. The General served you with all faithfulness and honour; and the best commendation I can give him is, that I daresay he attributes all to God, and would rather perish than assume to himself. Which is an honest and thriving way: and yet as much for bravery may be given to him, in this action, as to a man. Honest men [here he alludes to his own followers, the Independents] served you faithfully in this action. Sir, they are trusty; I beseech you, in the name of God, not to discourage them. I wish this action may beget thankfulness and
humility in all that are concerned in it. He that
ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish
he trust God for the liberty of his conscience and you
for the liberty he fights for. In this he rests who is
your most humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

CHAPTER XVI

Close of the First Civil War

The King and Prince Rupert tarried but a few hours
in Leicester, and then fled on with a broken
following, riding all night to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and
all the next day to Hereford, by which time they had
begun to cherish a fatuous hope of raising a new
army in a part of the country which was already
exhausted by the ravages of the war. As soon as the
King had established himself in some comfort at
Hereford, Rupert, ever impatient in the presence of
superior authority, rode off to Bristol to look after
the defenses of that great city. Within a few days
Leicester was surrendered back to the Parliament.

The Parliament then published the King’s letters
which had been taken at Naseby. Under the title of
"The King’s Cabinet Opened," this correspondence
was spread before the eyes of Englishmen, and from
it they learned that their King, although amiable and
pure in his private character, was, in his political
aspect, a creature of duplicity, whose conscience
could not be bound by his most solemn
asverations.

On July 10th Fairfax met Goring at Langport and
forced him to fight, severely defeating him. On July
23 he took Bridgewater, and on the 29th Bath
surrendered to the Parliament, Rupert hovering four
miles away, but not strong enough to give succor.
About this time the waste of war had produced violent discontent among a class of men who had refrained thus far from actively participating with either side. Under the name of Clubmen, these men banded together for the purpose of enforcing a peace. They had their greatest strength in the southwest counties. Prince Charles had recently been met with their importunities, and now, upon the approach of the Parliamentary Army, they renewed their demonstrations insomuch that Cromwell was dispatched to disperse them. On August 4, he spied a party of about 4,000 of them on a high hill near Shaftesbury, and sent to ask them the reason for their assembling. They fired on his guard, but with great forbearance he sent a second time commanding them to depart to their homes. They told his messengers they were Royalists, and that Lord Hopton was coming to command them, and then fired another volley, whereupon Cromwell charged them in front and rear, killed a few, wounded a great many, took 300 prisoners, and permitted the others to fly to their homes. This ended the trouble with the Clubmen.

Soon after this, the King, who was still an alert and energetic commander, rode into the counties of the Eastern Association and took Cromwell’s own town of Huntingdon. Going into the West again, he was attacked by the Roundhead troops under Poyntz and Jones on Rowton Heath (September 24, 1645), and after a spirited fight, was beaten with much loss, Lord Bernard Stuart being slain. After retreating into Wales, the King returned with Sir Marmaduke Langdale and 3,000 men, and stormed and captured the Earl of Chesterfield’s Castle at Shelford (November 3).

It was now a question with the Parliamentary generals whether to follow Hopton and Goring into the South, or turn back and give their attention to Rupert. That Prince was again powerful. As Governor of Bristol he had recruited his forces, and was daily marauding the country, and inflicting terror and loss on all who were known to be well-affected to the Parliament. Besides, it was feared that if the Roundheads marched south, the Clubmen would join
Rupert, and as there were some twelve or fifteen thousand of them, this was considered a sufficient reason for the determination which was now formed to march upon Bristol.

Bristol was the second city of importance in the kingdom. It was well prepared for a siege, being protected by stone walls and huge forts, in the midst of which was a feudal castle of great strength. The garrison numbered more than 2,500 men, although Rupert afterwards claimed that he could never muster over 1,500 at any one time during the siege. There was ample store of provision, the Prince having procured immense supplies of corn from Wales and driven in all the cattle from the surrounding country. While there was no Royalist army in the vicinity to give him immediate succor, Rupert could reasonably have assumed that either the King, Hopton, or Goring, being themselves relieved from pursuit, would recuperate their forces and march to his relief ere he could come to the last extremity of distress, and he had written to the King that he could hold the place for four months if there was no mutiny.

The siege began on Friday, August 22, 1645, and Fairfax and Cromwell placed their men on all sides, completely surrounding the city. Rupert displayed his usual heroic spirit and kept his cannon playing from the Great Fort. Watching for opportunities to catch the Puritans unawares, he led out his men in various sallies, once making an attack with almost his entire command.

The Parliamentarians had been led to believe that a large portion of the inhabitants were in sympathy with their cause, and the two generals succeeded in passing printed circulars into the town, promising protection to anyone who would commence a demonstration of revolt, and they even suggested that an effort be made to seize the Prince’s person. But finding that they had been falsely informed in this, they determined to storm the walls. Before putting this plan in execution, Fairfax, undoubtedly at the instigation of Cromwell, addressed a curious letter to the Prince, and it is hard to say by how
much his conduct afterwards was influenced by this epistle. After making the usual formal demand for the surrender of the city, Fairfax spoke of the Prince's royal birth, his relation to the Crown of England, the present troublous times, and the desire of all good men that peace might come. He praised Rupert's valor, and reminded him how much of the nation's gratitude would be his if, instead of wasting the blood of Englishmen, he would yield the city, and thus permit the approach of peace. He made the old arguments pointing to a distinction between the King's person and his office, promised punishment to the "evil counselors," and said they were fighting for the constitutional principle of a government responsible to the whole nation as represented by the Parliament. He then urged him to surrender the city, and named an hour by which he would expect a reply. This letter is not mentioned in some of the modern histories, but the present author believes that it was a stroke of diplomacy which affected the youthful Prince's judgment more powerfully than any actual military demonstration that was made during the siege. Rupert perceiving, as did all other Cavaliers, the utter hopelessness of a further protraction of the war, had only recently advised the King to sue for peace on the best terms he could get, to which Charles had made the mournful reply that, while ruin was indeed inevitable, he would not give up either his religion or his friends. With this desolate situation before his eyes, Rupert, who lacked both the patience and the discretion which are essential to the commander of a beleaguered city, and whose boisterous spirit pined under the tedious restraints of a siege, may have secretly looked forward to some share of public approbation in the approaching day of the Parliament's triumph. But his loyalty never faltered, and he refused to deliver up his charge, although the correspondence concerning its evacuation was spun out for a full week's time in the hope that encouragement would be received from the King.

On the 10th of September, after learning of another victory to Montrose in Scotland, Fairfax and Cromwell stormed the walls, commencing their assault at one o'clock in the morning. They met with
a desperate resistance, and as some of the besiegers were required to mount scaling ladders of thirty steps, their undertaking was most hazardous. But by daybreak the Puritans had possessed themselves of the outer walls and forts, and driven the Prince and his garrison into the Great Fort and Castle. This was an almost impregnable position, which the Prince might have maintained for several weeks, but as some of his subordinate commanders were cut off from him in the lesser forts, and were in imminent peril of the last fate of soldiers, he sent a trumpeter to Fairfax to treat for a surrender, and on the next day, September 11, having received fair terms, he marched out of Bristol at the head of his troops with all the honors of war, but carrying a broken heart under his steel corselet, and took his way to Oxford. Three days later a proclamation was issued by the King, revoking all the Prince’s military commissions. An angry letter enclosed it to Rupert, directing him to leave the kingdom and seek his subsistence beyond seas, which in due time he did, accompanied by his brother Maurice.

Cromwell, who had been the chief actor in the scenes connected with the siege and capture of Bristol, was directed by Fairfax to write the official report to the Parliament, and after giving them a history of the affair, his deep conviction of a divine ordering of the result was set forth in these stern and glowing words:

"Thus I have given you a true, but not a full account of this great business; wherein he that runs may read, that all this is none other than the work of God. He must be a very Atheist that doth not acknowledge it. It may be thought that some praises are due to those gallant men, of whose valour so much mention is made—their humble suit to you and all that have an interest in this blessing, is that in the remembrance of God’s praises they be forgotten. It’s their joy that they are instruments of God’s glory and their country’s good. It’s their honour that
God vouchsafes to use them. Sir, they that have been employed in this service know, that faith and prayer obtained this City for you: I do not say ours only, but of the people of God with you and all England over, who have wrestled with God for a blessing in this very thing. Our desires are, that God may be glorified by the same spirit of faith by which we ask all our sufficiency and have received it. It is meet that He have all the praise. Presbyterians, Independents, all have here the same spirit of faith and prayer; the same presence and answer; they agree here, have no names of difference: pity it is it should be otherwise anywhere! All that believe, have the real unity, which is most glorious; because inward, and spiritual, in the Body, and to the Head. For being united in forms, commonly called Uniformity, every Christian will for peace-sake study and do, as far as conscience will permit. And for brethren, in things of the mind we look for no compulsion, but that of light and reason. In other things, God hath put the sword in the Parliament’s hands, for the terror of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well. If any plead exemption from that, he knows not the gospel: if any would wring that out of your hands, or steal it from you under what pretence soever, I hope they shall do it without effect. That God may maintain it in your hands, and direct you in the use thereof, is the prayer of your humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

After the taking of Bristol, the Parliamentary forces divided, Fairfax with the main body going to Bath for rest and refreshment, while Cromwell, with the horse, went on an expedition against various small but troublesome garrisons which occupied the
Royalist strongholds between London and the West. His first capture was the castle of the Devizes. The governor, Sir Charles Lloyd, when summoned to surrender, defiantly replied that Cromwell "must win and wear if." But when the redoubtable Roundheads made a breach in the walls, and began to inflict the penalties of war on the defenders, the governor made haste to come to terms. Cromwell then approached Winchester Castle and what ensued shall be read in his own spirited account:

"To the Right Honourable Sir Thomas Fairfax, General of the Parliament’s Army: These.

"Winchester, 6th October, 1645.

"Sir:

"I came to Winchester on the Lord’s day the 28th of September; with Colonel Pickering, commanding his own, Colonel Montague’s, and Sir Hardress Waller’s regiments. After some dispute with the Governor, we entered the Town. I summoned the Castle; was denied; whereupon we fell to prepare batteries, which we could not perfect (some of our guns being out of order) until Friday following. Our battery was six guns; which being finished, after firing one round, I sent in a second summons for a treaty; which they refused. Whereupon we went on with our work, and made a breach in the wall near the Black Tower; which after about 200 shot, we thought stormable; and purposed on Monday morning to attempt it. On Sunday night about ten of the clock, the Governor beat a parley, desiring to treat. I agreed unto it; and sent Colonel Hammond and Major Harrison in to him, who agreed upon these enclosed Articles."
“Sir, this is the addition of another mercy. You see God is not weary in doing you good: I confess, Sir, His favour to you is as visible, when He comes by His power upon the hearts of your enemies, making them quit places of strength to you, as when He gives courage to your soldiers to attempt hard things. His goodness in this is much to be acknowledged: for the Castle was well manned with Six-hundred-and-eighty horse and foot, there being near two-hundred gentlemen, officers, and their servants: well victualled, with fifteen hundred-weight of cheese, very great store of wheat and beer; near twenty barrels of powder, seven pieces of cannon; the works were exceeding good and strong. It’s very likely it would have cost much blood to have gained it by storm. We have not lost twelve men: this is repeated to you, that God may have all the praise, for it’s all His due. Sir, I rest, your most humble servant,

“Oliver Cromwell.”

The messenger who brought this welcome tidings to London, who chanced to be the celebrated army chaplain, Hugh Peters, was voted fifty pounds for his good news.

It appears that "these enclosed articles" were violated by the Roundhead soldiers in plundering their prisoners, whereupon, complaint being made to Cromwell, he instantly brought six of his soldiers before a court-martial. They were duly found guilty and one was by lot hanged, and the other five were marched off to Oxford for such punishment as the Royalist governor desired to mete to them. But that officer returned the prisoners to Cromwell with a polite acknowledgment “of the Lieutenant-General’s nobleness.”

Cromwell then turned towards Basing House, the most formidable castle in the South, which had already resisted both siege and assault. Its walls
were a mile around. The old castle had stood for several centuries and a newer one had recently been reared beside it. Its owner, the Marquis of Winchester, had used a refined taste and an ample purse to adorn it with pictures, sculpture, and furniture, and his own private bed-chamber had been supplied with a luxury which amazed the stiff-necked Roundheads when they plundered it. Cromwell planted his batteries the night before the assault, and then, with his Ironsides about him, he called on the Most High to sustain him on the morrow. "He spent much time with God in prayer the night before the storm," said Chaplain Hugh Peters, in his narration to the Parliament, "and he seldom fights without some text of Scripture to support him." The Psalm which he chose for the edification of his men was the 115th. The pleading tones of his voice in the solemn quiet of that dark night resound in fancy’s ear now:

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory; for thy mercy and for thy truth’s sake. Wherefore should the Heathen say, Where is now their Lord? Our God is in the Heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. Their idols are silver and gold; the work of men’s hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat! They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them!"

With a firm faith in the righteousness of this denunciation of their foes, they stormed the breastworks at daybreak with irresistible fury, and soon were masters of the place. A large part of the garrison was put to the sword, the stately pile was burned, and all its costly treasures which escaped the flames were carried off for spoil. This was an achievement of the highest importance, and
Cromwell wrote the following account of it to the Parliament:

"To the Honourable William Lenthal, Speaker of the Commons’ House of Parliament: These.

"Basingstoke, 14th October, 1645.

"Sir:

"I thank God, I can give you a good account of Basing. After our batteries placed, we settled the several posts for the storm; Colonel Dalbier was to be on the north side of the House next the Grange; Colonel Pickering on his left hand, and Sir Hardress Waller’s and Colonel Montague’s regiments next him. We stormed, this morning, after six of the clock: the signal for falling-on was the firing four of our cannon; which being done our men fell on with great resolution and cheerfulness. We took the two houses without any considerable loss to ourselves. Colonel Pickering stormed the New House, passed through, and got the gate of the Old House; whereupon they summoned a parley, which our men would not hear.

"In the meantime Colonel Montague’s and Sir Hardress Waller’s regiments assaulted the strongest work, where the Enemy kept his Court of Guard; which, with great resolution, they recovered; beating the Enemy from a whole culverin, and from that work: which having done, they drew their ladders after them, and got over another work, and the house-wall, before they could enter. In this Sir Hardress Waller, performing his duty with honour and diligence, was shot in the arm, but not dangerously."
"We have had little loss: many of the enemy our men put to the sword, and some officers of quality; most of the rest we have prisoners, amongst whom the Marquis of Winchester himself, and Sir Robert Peak, with divers other officers, whom I have ordered to be sent up to you. We have taken about ten pieces of ordnance, with much ammunition, and our soldiers a good encouragement.

"I humbly offer to you, to have this place utterly slighted, for these following reasons: It will ask about Eight-hundred men to manage it; it is no frontier; the country is poor about it; the place exceedingly ruined by our batteries and mortar pieces, and by a fire which fell upon the place since our taking it. If you please to take the Garrison at Farnham, some out of Chichester, and a good part of the foot which were here under Dalbier, and to make a strong Quarter at Newbury with three or four troops of horse, I dare be confident it would not only be a curb to Dennington, but a security and frontier to all these parts; in as much as Newbury lies upon the River, and will prevent any incursion from Dennington, Wallingford, or Farrington into these parts; and by lying there, will make the trade most secure between Bristol and London for all carriages. And I believe the gentlemen of Sussex and Hampshire will with more cheerfulness contribute to maintain a garrison on the frontier than in their bowels, which will have less safety in it.

"Sir, I hope not to delay, but to march toward the West to-morrow; and to be as diligent as I may in my expedition thither. I must speak my judgment to you, That if you intend to have your
work carried on, recruits of Foot must be had, and a course taken to pay your Army; else, believe me, Sir, it may not be able to answer the work you have for it to do.

"I entrusted Colonel Hammond to wait upon you, who was taken by a mistake whilst we lay before this Garrison, whom God safely delivered to us, to our great joy; but to his loss of almost all he had, which the Enemy took from him. The Lord grant that these mercies may be acknowledged with all thankfulness: God exceedingly abounds in His goodness to us, and will not be weary until righteousness and peace meet; and until He hath brought forth a glorious work for the happiness of this poor Kingdom. Wherein desires to serve God and you, with a faithful heart, your most humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

When Cromwell drew up his men before Langford House, the terror of his name and the uselessness of a defense united to produce a surrender without opposition. Indeed, strong castles could now be had almost for the asking, so swift was the decline of the King’s fortunes. Fairfax was taking his share of them. Tiverton Castle was stormed and captured, likewise the town of Dartmouth, and then Hopton, the best of the King’s generals, was beaten at Torrington. The King turned his eyes to Scotland. From the blackness of his ruin he saw the star of Montrose rise luminous with glory across the Tweed. Charles determined to join him, and, reclaiming Scotland, rest content with the single crown of his ancestors. Already David Leslie had been dispatched to Scotland to command the Covenanters, who were in terror now with Montrose thundering at the gates of Edinburgh. The King was prepared to go to his successful general, who had only recently won two great victories, at Alford and Kilsyth, when a
messenger brought him the gruesome tidings that Leslie had met and vanquished Montrose at Philiphaugh (September 13, 1645). Oxford was now the only spot in his kingdom which Charles could claim as his own, and thither he repaired and passed a cheerless winter. Before the snows of early March (1646) had melted, Lord Hopton surrendered his army in Cornwall to Fairfax, and followed the Cavaliers who had already gone beyond seas. A few days later that fine old knight, Sir Jacob Astley, while on his way to Oxford, was defeated and captured at Stow, among the wolds of Gloucestershire, surrendering himself with these scornful words: "You have now done your work and may go to play—unless you will fall out among yourselves."

The Parliamentary Army made no attempt to capture the King's person. That was the one thing which, all through the war, they had tried not to do. It was their policy to waste him, to wear him out. But to take him prisoner, to see him absolutely at their mercy, was a climax which would bring many embarrassments in its train, and they had avoided it. Charles had begun earnestly to sue for peace. He sent three several messages to the Parliament on this subject in the month of December (1645), to the last of which they made a cold reply that they would in due time present to him some propositions for peace. He continued to write frequently to the Parliament, his last message bearing date the 23rd of March, 1646, but his urgent, even humble, appeals were received with silent disdain. Two hundred and thirty-five new members had recently been elected to Parliament to fill the seats of the disqualified Royalist members, and that body, now compact and victorious, was in no mood for a peace which would extend any generous concessions to the beaten foe. Fairfax, returning victorious from the capture of Hopton’s army in the West, stopped to take Exeter, and then drew on towards Oxford. Charles sent a message to Ireton, who was with Fairfax, offering to place himself in the custody of the Commissary-General if Ireton would attend him with the Army to the Parliament and prevail on them to receive him with honor and freedom. The bearer of this desperate message was never permitted to return.
There was now but one step left for the King to take. To be carried back to London a prisoner would be an insufferable indignity. But his expatriated Queen had been urging him from her Parisian retreat to seek his safety in the Army of the Scots. A French ambassador had obtained the promise of the Scottish chiefs that they would receive Charles under their protection. The King determined to fly to their camp. Always visionary in his statemanship, he imagined that he could magnify the jealousies which were well known to exist between the Scottish and the English Armies, so that he might still be enabled in the end to dictate terms by military force. On Monday, near midnight of the 27th of April, 1646, the King rode out of Oxford in disguise, accompanied by only two persons, Dr. Hudson, a clergyman, and John Ashburnham, groom of the bed-chamber, whose servant the King assumed to be. They went quietly to Newark, where Leven was conducting a siege, and there the King gave himself into the custody of the Scottish invaders, and ordered the Governor of Newark to surrender his city to the Parliament, which was accordingly done. He likewise dispatched instructions to those loyal garrisons which were still suffering the hardship of siege, to surrender on honorable terms. In a short time the Marquis of Ormond in Ireland, the Marquis of Montrose in Scotland, and the Marquis of Worcester in Wales laid down their arms, while Oxford and all the King’s castles in England were given over to the Parliament, and in August, 1646, the First Civil War was ended, after having raged with great bitterness and much bloodshed for four years. While the army of Fairfax lay before Oxford waiting only for the completion of the articles of surrender to take possession of the last royal stronghold, Bridget Cromwell, now a little past twenty-one years old, and escorted by her father, came to Lady Whorwood’s house at Holton, which was the headquarters of Fairfax. Thither also came Commissary-General Henry Ireton, who had found opportunity in spite of battles and sieges to win the heart of Cromwell’s daughter. So on June 15, 1646, Mr. Dell, the General’s chaplain, performed the ceremony which made Ireton and Bridget husband and wife.
With the cessation of war, Cromwell resumed his seat in Parliament, passing frequently, however, between Westminster and the Army. His letters disclose many times the kindness of his heart which made him ever ready to speak in behalf of those who sought his influence. Here is one in the interest of some "Honest poor neighbors," the exact nature of whose oppression we cannot now discover, but they had doubtless gone or sent to London to see Cromwell, who took up their affair with compassionate attention:

"For my noble Friend Thomas Knuyett, Esquire, at his House at Ashwellthorpe: These.

"London, 27th July, 1646.

"Sir:

"I cannot pretend any interest in you for anything I have done, nor ask any favour for any service I may do you. But because I am conscious to myself of a readiness to serve any gentlemen in all possible civilities, I am bold to be beforehand with you to ask your favour on behalf of your honest poor neighbours of Hapton, who, as I am informed, are in some trouble, and are likely to be put to more, by one Robert Browne, your Tenant, who, not well pleased with the way of these men, seeks their disquiet all he may.

"Truly nothing moves me to desire this more than the pity I bear them in respect of their honesties, and the trouble I hear they are likely to suffer for their consciences. And however the world interprets it, I am not ashamed to solicit for such as are anywhere under pressure of this kind; doing even as I would be done by. Sir, this is a quarrelsome age; and the anger seems to me to be the worse, where the
ground is difference of opinion; which to cure, to hurt men in their names, persons or estates, will not be found an apt remedy. Sir, it will not repent you to protect those poor men of Hapton from injury and oppression: which that you would is the effect of this Letter. Sir, you will not want the grateful acknowledgement, nor utmost endeavours of requital from your most humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

But the real sweetness and tenderness of Cromwell’s disposition were reserved for his immediate family. He loved his children with touching affection, and the meager lot of letters preserved from those which he wrote to them, reveal better than any other existing evidence his true piety and greatness. There is a spirit of playfulness in this one to Ireton’s bride, and yet his solicitude for her happiness and spiritual welfare is reflected in every line. Her "Sister Claypole" is Elizabeth Cromwell, married in the preceding spring, now but seventeen, and always her father’s favorite child. "Your friends at Ely" implies that the Cromwell family had not yet removed from Ely to London:

"For my beloved Daughter Bridget Ireton, at Cornbury, General’s Quarters: These.


"Dear Daughter,

"I write not to thy Husband; partly to avoid trouble, for one line of mine begets many of his, which I doubt makes him sit up too late; partly because I am myself indisposed at this time, having some other considerations."
"Your Friends at Ely are well: your Sister Claypole is, I trust in mercy, exercised with some perplexed thoughts. She sees her own vanity and carnal mind; bewailing it: she seeks after (as I hope also) what will satisfy. And thus to be a seeker is to be of the best sect next to a finder; and such an one shall every faithful humble seeker be at the end. Happy seeker, happy finder! Who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, without some sense of self, vanity and badness? Who ever tasted that graciousness of His, and could go less in desire, less than pressing after full enjoyment? Dear Heart, press on; let not Husband, let not anything cool thy affections after Christ. I hope he [i.e., thy Husband] will be an occasion to inflame them. That which is best worthy of love in thy Husband is that of the image of Christ he bears. Look on that and love it best, and all the rest for that. I pray for thee and him; do so for me.

"My service and dear affections to the General and Generaless. I hear she is very kind to thee; it adds to all other obligations. I am thy dear Father,

"Oliver Cromwell."

CHAPTER XVII

The Army against the Parliament

The unexpected surrender of King Charles to the Scottish Army produced a profound emotion among the English Puritans. Before receiving intelligence of his arrival at Newark, they feared
that he had come secretly to London, and the Parliament gave notice that instant death would be the portion of any one who should harbor or conceal him. An official communication from the Scots soon informed them of the King’s whereabouts, and assured them of the undying fidelity with which their existing engagements with the Parliament would be discharged. The English at once asserted their right to the custody of the King’s person; and the Scots, not ready to yield so splendid an advantage, folded their tents and marched into the North, never pausing until they reached Newcastle.

In truth, King Charles, as soon as he laid aside the armor of a heroic commander, had again assumed the character of a purblind politician. His surrender to the Scots was but part of a visionary expectation of reclaiming his authority by exciting the jealousy of his foes. His Queen had shortly before dispatched Montreuil with plenary powers from the Court of France to negotiate for Scottish aid, and on the eve of departing from Oxford Charles had written to the Marquis of Ormond in Ireland in these words:

"Having lately received very good security that We, and all that do and shall adhere to Us, shall be safe in our persons, honours, and consciences in the Scottish army; and that they shall really and effectually join with us, and with such as will come in to us, and join with them for our preservation, and shall employ their armies and
forces to assist us to the
procuring of an happy and
well-grounded peace, for
the good of Us and our
Kingdoms, in the recovery
of our just right; we have
resolved to put ourselves
to the hazard of passing
into the Scots’ army, now
lying before Newark. And
if it shall please God that
we come safe thither, we
are resolved to use our
best endeavour, with their
assistance and with the
conjunction of the forces
under the Marquis of
Montrose, and such of our
well affected subjects of
England as shall rise for
us, to procure, if it may
be, an honourable and
speedy peace with those
who have hitherto refused
to give any ear to any
means tending thereto."

How far Montreuil had failed to procure
for the King that dutiful homage which
Charles had fondly hoped to receive,
was shown on the first night of his
entrance into the Scottish camp. He
was treated with outward marks of
extreme respect; but under the pretext
of furnishing a guard for his person he
was immediately surrounded by armed
sentries, and when, endeavoring to
ascertain his real position, he
attempted to give out the watchword
for the night, the Earl of Leven
interrupted him with, "Pardon me, Sire.
I am the oldest soldier here: Your
Majesty will permit me to undertake
that duty."
The Scottish Army soon presented a
petition to the King praying him to sign
the Covenant. If he had yielded promptly to them in this desire, it is possible that they, as Presbyterians, would have turned upon the Parliamentary Independents, and begun another war. But Charles refused. Then came propositions from the Parliament for peace, containing the old conditions requiring him to destroy the Episcopal Church, to sign the Covenant, to give over all his old commanders, including the two Palatine Princes, to punishment, to incapacitate all who had borne arms on his side for public employment, and to confiscate the estates of the Cavaliers for the payment of the public debts. The King spurned these proposals. Alexander Henderson, a noted Scotch divine, about this time entered into a controversy with the King concerning the true religion. James I had long ago said of Charles, "I tell ye, Charles shall manage a point in controversy with the best studied divine of ye all." In these arguments with Henderson, Charles confirmed the high opinion which his father had expressed. Deprived of books and of the company of the Episcopal doctors, he met every statement of Henderson with so much learning and adroitness that the Scot was completely discomfited, and retired to Scotland to die within a few weeks, some said on account of his deep vexation.

On an occasion when Charles attended their religious services, a stern preacher ordered this psalm to be sung:

Why dost thou, tyrant,
boast thyself
Thy wicked deeds to praise?"
The King stood up, and plaintively requested this one to be substituted:

    Have mercy, Lord, on me,
    I pray;
    For men would me devour."

From May 1646 to January 1647, the negotiations between the English Parliament and the Scottish commissioners, touching the disposal of the King's person, were carried on with much circumlocution, the end of which was that Scotland agreed to recall her Army and leave the King behind, in consideration of the payment of £400,000, one half of which was in cash. It was a cruel and heartless affair of money, which has left an ineffaceable stigma upon the Scots. They stipulated, indeed, that, until a formal peace was executed between the King and his Parliament, no harm, prejudice, injury, or violence should be done to his person, nor his posterity be prejudiced in their succession to the Crown. But no hostages were taken for the performance of these conditions, and they were forgotten in the madness which ensued. The Scots had indeed endeavored to reconcile the King and his people. The Scottish Chancellor, Loudon, had implored Charles to yield to the Parliament's terms. "All England will rise against you," he had said, "they will process and depose you, and set up another government." But these prophetic words could not provoke Charles to a wise policy. He rejected the overtures. On January 30, 1647, the Scots marched out of Newcastle, leaving the King, who was anxious to accompany them to Edinburgh, in the hands of General Skippon and the English commissioners. His Majesty was
then conveyed to Holmby (or Holdenby) House, in Northamptonshire, under the escort of Fairfax, where he was kept in the state pertaining to his rank, but a prisoner to his Parliament. The war being ended, the nation was surprised to see that their happiness was not yet secured. In fact, the situation was graver and more perilous than ever. The Presbyterian majority in Parliament, supported by the entire populace of the City of London, conceived a jealousy and mistrust of the Army, as representing the Independent party out of which it was organized. In this Parliamentary faction were some of the supplanted commanders of the old Army, among them Sir William Waller and Denzil Hollis. It was proposed to send 12,000 men of the Army to Ireland under Skippon, and to disband the others. The soldiers refused to march except under their present commanders, nor would they consent to disband until large arrearages of pay were settled, and other grievances redressed. Cromwell, for the most part, kept his seat in Parliament, although his passages between Westminster and the Army, which was now forbidden to approach nearer than twenty-five miles to London, were frequent. He wrote to Fairfax:

"We have had a very long petition from the City; how it strikes at the army, and what other aims it has, you will see by the contents of it; and also what is the prevailing temper at this present, and what is to be expected from men. But this is our comfort, God is
in Heaven, and He doth
what pleaseth Him; His,
and only His counsel shall
stand, whatsoever the
designs of men, and the
fury of the people be."

But the course of the Presbyterians in
dealing with the Army became very
obnoxious to the Independents, and on
one occasion, when there was a heated
debate, Cromwell, indicating the policy
which already filled his mind,
whispered to Edmund Ludlow, “These
men will never leave till the Army pull
them out by the ears.” In a letter to
Fairfax he wrote:

"There want not, in all
places, men who have so
much malice against the
army as besets them: the
late Petition, which
suggested a dangerous
design upon the
Parliament in your coming
to those quarters, doth
sufficiently evidence the
same: but they got
nothing by it, for the
Houses did assoil the army
from all suspicion, and
have left you to quarter
where you please. Never
were the spirits of men
more embittered than
now. Surely the Devil hath
but a short time. Sir, it’s
good the heart be fixed
against all this. The naked
simplicity of Christ, with
that wisdom he is pleased
to give, and patience, will
overcome all this. That
God would keep your
heart as he has done
hitherto, is the prayer of
your Excellency’s most
humble servant,” etc.

The various troops composing the Army
appointed commissioners to represent
their grievances, the private soldiers of
each troop or company choosing two
persons to form a kind of subordinate
council, while the officers elected
themselves into a higher assembly; but
this plan was soon changed, and two
persons, either privates or officers,
were elected for each regiment. These
men were called Agitators, or Agents of
the Army. The Agitators held many
conferences with the Parliamentary
committees, but without arriving at
satisfactory conclusions. How far the
events, which soon forced this
controversy into a quarrel, were
controlled by Cromwell, is a matter
which recent research has lifted out of
the obscured realm of conjecture, and
we now know that he was steadfastly
opposed to violence so long as there
was hope for the ultimate potency of
reason and right. “No one rises so high,”
Cromwell declared to the French
Ambassador, “as he who knows not
whither he is going.” And it was this
philosophic observation which led
Cardinal de Retz, through a mistake of
judgment, to call him a fortunate fool.
From the time of the Self-Denying
Ordinance, he was the dominant force
and spirit of his age. It must be
admitted that the adoption of a
definite policy, at the close of the war,
by the Army and its adherents, against
the ascendency of the Presbyterian
Parliament, unquestionably had its
birth in the profound depths of his
intellect. In the committee rooms at the camp he soon displayed that mastery over the minds of men which had made them the instruments of his will on the field of war. By whatever could honestly appeal to their private interest, their individual ambition, their religious zeal, or their self-love, he brought the faithful companions of his battles to join with him in working out the salvation of England. His own enthusiasm for religious and political liberty the Independents could not resist. His belief in the destiny of the Army to cure the present evils inflamed the ardor of his soldiers. Without treachery or tergiversation, he was all things to all men. Ireton, a zealous and intellectual Republican, followed him with implicit faith. Lambert, ambitious, vain, and brilliant, gave him a soldier’s devotion. Harrison, seeking after righteousness, found a kindred spirit in Cromwell’s pious soul. Hammond was under obligations to him for promoting his marriage with a daughter of John Hampden. Pride, Rainsborough, and the others adhered to him, because his superior soul forced their homage. “What misery” he said, when deftly sounding young Ludlow, “to serve a Parliament! to whom, let a man be never so faithful, if one pragmatical fellow amongst them rise up and asperse him, he shall never wipe it off; whereas, when one serves under a General, he may do as much service, and yet be free from all blame and envy. If thy father were alive”—and there is the voice of Cassius in this incitement—“he would soon let some of them hear what they deserve.” But the genius of Cromwell had begun to dominate his country now insomuch that he had become an object of hatred and envy to all those who
opposed him on either religious or political grounds. This feeling had recently made itself manifest by a vote in the Commons (March 8, 1647) that there should be no officer in the Army with rank above that of Colonel; that no member of the House of Commons should hold command in England, and that no person who refused to sign the Covenant should be an officer at all. The good fortune of the Lieutenant-General, however, was steadfast in this emergency, and while the vote was aimed at him and at him alone, no attempt was made to enforce it. The spirit of mutiny in the Army was now become ominous. The soldiers had not received their pay for many months, and they learned with much disfavor that there was an intention on the part of the government to disband some of the forces and send others to Ireland. Most of the regiments had refused to obey the commands of their officers, and they forced Fairfax to call a council of war at which the officers and the Agitators voted that the proposals of the Parliament were not satisfactory.

The Parliament and the city with one accord turned their eyes towards the King at Holmby House. That Monarch had not been treated with great magnanimity. In its contempt for the Episcopal Church the Parliament had twice refused him the attendance of his chaplains, and would have compelled him to accept the services of their own divines; his trusted servants had been removed from him; his correspondence with his wife, his children, and his nearest friends had been cut off. Yet they had permitted him to enjoy the ceremonies of his Royal state. Their commissioners were treated kindly by him; they attended
him at his games and in his walks. The Lords requested the King to reside nearer London; the Commons, without joining in the vote, entertained the same wish. There were mysterious letters passing back and forth, and a hope began to take deep root in the breast of the Londoners that the King would soon return to his Parliament, and tranquility in all things ensue.

Suddenly, the news was brought to the startled Parliament, that the Army had seized the King’s person.

It was on the 2nd of June, 1647, after dinner, while the King was playing at bowls on Althorpe Down, two miles from Holmby, that the commissioners who accompanied him remarked the presence of a stranger in the uniform of Fairfax’s regiment. When they demanded his name, he answered them haughtily and with reserve. A report was circulated that a large body of horse was approaching, and the players immediately returned to the castle. Near midnight five hundred troops arrived under the walls, and demanded entrance. When asked who commanded them, they replied, “We all command.” Then the stranger who had appeared on Althorpe Down, came forward. “My name is Joyce,” said he. “I am a cornet in the General’s guard; I want to speak to the King.” “From whom?” said they on the wall. “From myself,” answered Joyce, whereat they all laughed derisively. “It’s no laughing matter,” cried the midnight intruder, “I come not hither to be advised by you; I have no business with the commissioners; my errand is to the King, and speak with him I must, and will presently.” The commandant of the garrison ordered his soldiers to hold themselves in readiness to fire, but they had by this time been in free conversation with
Joyce’s men, who, entering the gates and dismounting, announced that they had come, by order of the Army, to place the King in safety, as there was a plot to carry him off, take him to London, raise other troops, and begin another civil war; and the chief conspirator, they said, was Colonel Greaves, the commandant of Holmby House. Greaves fled and Joyce took command of the castle. By this time it was past noon of the 3rd, and Joyce retired until evening to give his men repose. At ten o’clock that night he requested to be taken to the King, but was told that he was in bed. He replied that he did not care; he had waited long enough, and he must see him. With a cocked pistol in his hand he approached the apartments occupied by Charles. "I am sorry," said he to the attendants, "to disturb the rest of His Majesty, but I cannot help it; I must needs speak with him, and that at once." The altercation aroused the King, who gave orders that he should be admitted, and Joyce entered the royal presence still carrying his pistol. The King sent for the commissioners, and, after a long interview, assured Joyce that, if his soldiers confirmed what the Cornet had promised, he would go with him. The next morning at six o’clock the King appeared at the top of the stairs and beheld Joyce’s men on horseback in the castle yard. He demanded by what authority Joyce pretended to seize him and take him away. "Sir," replied the bold young man, "I am sent by authority of the Army, to prevent the designs of its enemies, who would once more plunge the Kingdom in blood." Charles pressed him to specify by whom he had been sent, but Joyce refused to be more explicit than simply to say, the
Army, and when the King asked him where was his commission, he pointed behind him to his men, and said, "There!" "Believe me," answered the King, smiling, "your instructions are written in very legible characters; it is truly a fair commission." The King then rode off with them to Hinchinbrook, and thence to Childersley, near Cambridge.

At the same moment a messenger was dispatched to London bearing a letter from Joyce to Cromwell that all had succeeded. Oliver was with the Army, and the letter was given to Colonel Fleetwood. Fairfax was undoubtedly in complete ignorance of what had occurred until Cromwell told him, and he was much troubled. "I do not like it," he said to Ireton, "who gave such orders?" Ireton replied that he had ordered that the King be secured at Holmby, but not carried away. And Cromwell, who had inspired it all, said sternly that it was quite necessary, or the King would have been taken back to the Parliament. Fairfax sent Whalley with two regiments to meet the King and escort him back to Holmby House, but Charles refused to return, and two days afterwards (June 7) Fairfax and his staff, Cromwell, Ireton, Skippon, Hammond, Lambert, and Rich, presented themselves to the King at Childersley, where all respectfully kissed his hand. Fairfax protested that he knew nothing of the King’s removal. "I will not believe it," said Charles, "unless you have Joyce forthwith hanged." But in spite of his assumed indignation, Charles was secretly pleased to see the dissensions between the Parliament and the Army take this violent turn.

On receiving intelligence of the King’s seizure, the Parliament expressed
disapprobation of the act, and their indignation was so intense that Cromwell thought it prudent to go at once to the Army, fearing arrest. The Parliament (August 2, 1647) sent an invitation to Charles to come to London, assuring him that he should reside there with honor, freedom, and safety, and that they would at once endeavor to secure a safe and well grounded peace.

"Cromwell began now," says Whitelock, "to mount still higher, and carried his business with great subtlety." His enemies attempted to ruin him, and Sir Harbottle Grimstone made an accusation against him in the House of Commons of plotting to destroy the Parliament. Two witnesses related the story of how he had told them that he would use the Army to purge the House of Commons. When they had withdrawn, Cromwell arose, and falling on his knees, and in a passion of tears, sobs, and exclamations, vowed before High Heaven that no man in the kingdom was more faithful to that House than he. His vehemence prevailed on the members so overwhelmingly, that Grimstone said, thirty years afterwards, "if he had pleased, the House would have sent us to the Tower, me and my officers, as calumniators." But on the next day Cromwell wisely went to the Army and there boldly became the leader of the Army measures.

The Army now began a gradual approach to London. The Parliament, in terror, called out the militia and made every preparation for defense. Fairfax ordered a rendezvous at Royston, on June 10, where 21,000 men assembled—the finest army that England had ever known. Fairfax and Cromwell rode to each regiment and inquired whether
they would obey the Parliament, and to the last man they shouted, No! After the rendezvous, on the same day, a letter was written by Cromwell and signed by all the leading officers, warning the City of London not to arm against them. As this letter contains a candid statement of the policy of the Army in its dispute with the Parliament, and reveals so fairly and frankly the motives of Cromwell and his brother officers in the military coercion which they had now set on foot, we have copied it in full as containing a valuable illumination of the controversy:

"To the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of London: These.

"Royston, 10th June, 1647.

"Right Honourable and Worthy Friends:

"Having, by our letters and other Addresses presented by our General to the Honourable House of Commons, endeavoured to give satisfaction of the clearness of our just Demands; and having also, in Papers published by us, remonstrated the grounds of our proceedings in prosecution thereof; all of which being published in
print, we are confident they have come to your hands, and received at least a charitable construction from you.

"The sum of all these our Desires as Soldiers, is no other than this: Satisfaction to our undoubted Claims as Soldiers; and reparation upon those who have, to the utmost, improved all opportunities and advantages, by false suggestions, misrepresentation and otherwise, for the destruction of this Army with a perpetual blot of ignominy upon it. Which [injury] we should not value, if it singly concerned our own particular persons; being ready to deny ourselves in this, as we have done in other cases, for the Kingdom's good; but under this pretence, we find, no less is involved than the overthrow of the privileges both of Parliament and People; and rather than they [i.e., The Presbyterian leaders in Parliament—Hollis, Stapleton, Harley, Waller, etc.] shall fail in their designs, or we receive what in the eyes of all good men is our just right, the Kingdom is endeavoured to be engaged in a new War. [In
a new War,] and this singly by those who, when the truth of these things shall be made to appear, will be found to be the authors of those [said] evils that are feared; and who have no other way to protect themselves from question and punishment but by putting the Kingdom into blood, under the pretence of their honour of and their love of the Parliament. As if that were dearer to them than to us; or as if they had given greater proof of their faithfulness to it than we.

"But we perceive that, under these veils and pretences, they seek to interest in their design the City of London—as if that City ought to make good their miscarriages, and should prefer a few self-seeking men before the welfare of the Public. And indeed we have found these men so active to accomplish their designs, and to have such apt instruments for their turn in that City, that we have cause to suspect they may engage many therein upon mistakes, which are easily swallowed, in times of such prejudice against them that have given (we may speak it without vanity) the most public testimony of their good
affections to the Public, and to that City in particular.

"[As] for the thing we insist upon as Englishmen—and surely our being Soldiers hath not stript us of that interest, although our malicious enemies would have it so—we desire a Settlement of the Peace of the Kingdom and of the Liberties of the subjects, according to the Votes and Declarations of Parliament, which, before we took arms, were, by the Parliament, used as arguments and inducements to invite us and divers of our dear friends out, some of whom have lost their lives in this War. Which being now, by God's blessing finished, we think we have as much right to demand, and desire to see, a happy settlement, as we have to our money and [to] the other common interest of Soldiers which we have insisted upon. We find also the ingenious and honest People, in almost all parts of the Kingdom where we come, full of the sense of ruin and misery if the Army should be disbanded before the Peace of the Kingdom, and those other things before mentioned, have a
full and perfect
Settlement.

"We have said before, and
profess it now, We desire
no alteration of the Civil
Government. As little do
we desire to interrupt or
in the least to
intermeddle with, the
settling of the
Presbyterian Government.
Nor did we seek to open a
way for licentious liberty,
under pretence of
obtaining ease for tender
consciences. We profess,
as ever in these things,
when once the State has
made a Settlement, we
have nothing to say but to
submit or suffer. Only we
could wish that every
good citizen, and every
man who walks peaceably
in a blameless
conversation, and is
beneficial to the
Commonwealth, might
have liberty and
encouragement; this being
according to the true
policy of all States, and
even to justice itself.

"These in brief are our
Desires, and things for
which we stand; beyond
which we shall not go.
And for the obtaining of
these things, we are
drawing near your City;
professing sincerely from
our hearts, [That] we
intend not evil toward
you; declaring, with all
confidence and assurance,
That if you appear not
against us in these our
just desires, to assist that
wicked Party which will
embroil us and the
Kingdom, neither we nor
our Soldiers shall give you
the least offence. We
come not to do any act to
prejudice the being of
Parliaments, or to the
hurt of this Parliament in
order to the present
Settlement of the
Kingdom. We seek the
good of all. And we shall
wait here, or remove to a
farther distance to abide
there, if once we be
assured that a speedy
settlement of things is in
hand, until it is
accomplished. Which
done, we shall be most
ready, either all of us, or
so many of the Army as
the Parliament shall think
fit, to disband, or to go
for Ireland.

"And although you may
suppose that a rich City
may seem an enticing bait
to poor hungry Soldiers to
venture far to gain the
wealth thereof, yet, if not
provoked by you, we do
profess, Rather than any
such evil should fall out,
the soldiers shall make
their way through our
blood to effect it. And we
can say this for most of
them, for your better
assurance, that they so
little value their pay, in comparison of higher concernsments to a Public Good, that rather than they will be unrighted in the matter of their honesty and integrity (which hath suffered by the men they aim at and desire justice upon), or want the settlement of the Kingdom’s Peace, and their own and their fellow-subject’s Liberties, they will lose all. Which may be a strong assurance to you that it is not your wealth they seek, but the things tending in common to your and their welfare. That they may attain these, you shall do like Fellow-Subjects and Brethren if you solicit the Parliament for them, on their behalf.

"If after all this, you, or a considerable part of you, be seduced to take up arms in opposition to, or hindrance of, these our just undertakings, we hope we have, by this brotherly premonition, to the sincerity of which we call God to witness, freed ourselves from all that ruin which may befall that great and populous City; having thereby washed our hands thereof. We rest, your affectionate friends to serve you,
They then advanced to St. Albans. On June 14, laying aside their grievances, they addressed to the Parliament, under the title of An Humble Representation, an expression of their views as to public affairs, the conclusion of this Parliament, the elections, the right of petition, and the general reform of the State. To these demands was joined an accusation of treason against eleven of the most prominent of the Presbyterian members—Hollis, Waller, Stapleton, Lewis, Clotworthy, Maynard, Glyn, Long, Harley, Nichols, and Massey. The Commons objected that the specifications were vague and general. The Army answered reproachfully that the first accusation against Strafford was also vague and entirely general; "as you did then," they said, "we will do now, furnish our proofs afterwards." The accused members, after much indignant protesting, relieved the embarrassment of the situation by offering to retire beyond seas for six months with the consent of Parliament. But the Army drew nearer to the capital, and on June 26 its headquarters were at Uxbridge. Commissioners hastened thither, but with no effect, and the Parliament
acceded to all the demands of the Army, voting at once a month’s pay, agreeing to provide for its support, to appoint commissioners in conjunction with those of the Army for settling the affairs of the kingdom, and to refrain from bringing the King again into their own custody by drawing him to Richmond, as they declared they would do. With these concessions granted to them, the Army drew back a few miles, and (June 30) appointed ten commissioners to treat with the Parliament, of whom Cromwell was the first named.

The King was much depressed at the failure of the plans for his immediate return to London. And now a great desire filled his heart to meet once more with his children. He spoke to Fairfax on this subject, who wrote at once to the Parliament urging that the favor be granted. "Who, if he imagine it to be his own case," he inquired, "cannot but be sorry if His Majesty’s natural affection to his children, in so small a thing, should not be complied with." Since the surrender of Oxford his younger children, the Duke of York, the Princess Elizabeth, and the Duke of Gloucester, had resided either at St. James’ Palace or at Sion House, near London, under the care of the Earl of Northumberland to whom the Parliament had committed them. This affecting interview took place at Maidenhead (July 15), and it excited the liveliest emotions among the people, who flocked to the town in large numbers and strewed the path of the Monarch and his little ones with flowers and evergreens. Nor were the officers of the Army less tenderly touched by this pathetic scene, for they permitted the King to take his children to Caversham, where he then
resided, and keep them with him for two days.
Cromwell’s own fatherly heart was deeply stirred by this incident. In speaking of it soon afterwards to Sir John Berkeley, he said that he had lately seen the tenderest sight that ever his eyes beheld, which was the interview between the King and his children. He wept plentifully at the remembrance thereof, saying that never man was so abused as he in his sinister opinion of the King, who, he thought, was the most upright and conscientious of his kingdom. He declared that they of the Independent party had infinite obligations to him for not consenting to the propositions sent to him at Newcastle, which would have totally ruined them, and which His Majesty’s interest seemed to invite him to. And then he confirmed all with this solemn wish, that God would be pleased to look upon him according to the sincerity of his heart towards the King. In short, the lovable qualities in Charles’ character had completely won the regard of Cromwell, who, in the contemplation of his personal gentleness and worth, seemed to lose sight of the King’s incurable political duplicity. But at this very instant, Charles was writing official commands to Ormond to cease his negotiations with the Irish Catholics, and with the same pen was privately instructing him to continue them. Cromwell, unaware of this, said to Berkeley that the officers were all convinced that if the King did not resume possession of his just rights, no man in England could enjoy in security his life and property; and a decisive step on their parts would soon leave no doubts on His Majesty’s mind of their true sentiments.
When Berkeley hastened to the King with this surprising assurance from Cromwell, he was amazed at the cold reception which Charles gave it. Ireton, observant and suspicious, boldly said to the King, “Sir, you have an intention to be arbitrator between the Parliament and us, and we mean to be so between you and the Parliament.” The King, still thinking he must naturally reap the advantage by promoting the strife, believed that neither party could succeed without his affiliation. Ireton consented to draw up very liberal propositions, in which the Episcopal Church was left intact; the King was required to give up the command of the militia for ten years, and the nomination to the great offices of state; seven of his councilors were to remain banished from the kingdom; all civil and coercive power should be withdrawn from the Presbyterian clergy; no Peer created since the outbreak of the war should sit in the House of Lords, and no Cavalier should be admitted into the next Parliament. Nothing so moderate had yet been offered to the King, but he objected to them. Ireton insisted that there must be a difference between conquerors and those whom they had beaten, and naturally declined to consider the King’s counter-proposition for a Parliament in which the Royalists would have the ascendancy.

Cromwell became impatient at the King’s slowness to accept the Army’s terms, and Berkeley, who represented Charles, expostulated with his Royal master, and reminded him that men who had come through so many dangers and difficulties were entitled to their advantages, and he would mistrust their sincerity if they offered less; and that a crown that was so near lost was
never recovered so easily as this would be, if the proposals were accepted. But Charles was fatally blinded to his own interests. He had lately been privately assured by some of the Presbyterians at London that they would oppose the Army to the last extremity, and when the officers waited on him for his reply he spoke to them with a sharp and bitter tongue, indiscreetly repeating his regret that he had consented to Strafford’s death or to the abolition of Episcopacy in Scotland. “You cannot be without me,” he said with rising voice, “You will fall to ruin if I do not sustain you.” Berkeley whispered angrily in his ear, “Sir, you speak as if you had some secret strength and power which I do not know of; and since you have concealed it from me, I wish you had done it from these men also.”

The failure to arrive at a satisfactory peace not only incensed the Army, but it threw London again into turbulent emotions. Mobs of excited men surrounded the Parliament building, and even invaded the two Houses, forcing the Commons’ Speaker back into the chair which he had endeavored to vacate and compelling him to put their own question, whether the King should return with honor and safety to London. Ludlow alone had courage to speak a loud “No!” Massey, Waller, Poyntz, and other officers of the old Army, took measures to enlist men, and then Fairfax and Cromwell advanced again on London. They came as far as Hounslow Heath where a rendezvous was held, the King in the meantime going to Hampton Court under Whalley’s escort. Many members of the Parliament fled to the Army for safety. Had Charles for one moment been gifted with moderate political wisdom,
he could now have yielded a little to the Army and made himself master of the kingdom. But out of all this tumult the deep disgust which the soldiers had imbibed against the King’s tergiversation led to the formation of a sentiment of revenge which had hitherto been absent. They began to cry for justice on offenders. They called themselves The Levelers, and, as a means of leveling all distinctions in those guilty of crimes against the state, they named Charles as the Chief Delinquent. At first it was a whisper, and then it grew into a loud and fierce demand for his blood.

On the 8th of August, the Army entered London, and made a magnificent, but quiet and solemn, march through the city. Fairfax was in the van, surrounded by many notable members of his staff. Skippon was in the center, while Cromwell, the real hero, rode at the rear. The object of this military demonstration was simultaneously to overawe and reassure the city and the Parliament. There was no disorder, nor plunder, nor licentiousness, but the dignity, the sobriety, the stern resolution, which appeared on the faces of 21,000 Puritan veterans, convinced all beholders that here was a force which could not be safely defied. But it was ominous of future woe. It marked the triumph of the Army over the civil power, and the ascendancy of the Independents over the Presbyterians.

The King was at his old palace of Hampton Court, in full intercourse with his former friends, and with some of his "evil councilors "attending him," vainly imagining that these fast-crowding events portended his own restoration to power. Cromwell and Ireton were with him much, urging him to a peace
while there was yet time. So zealous was Cromwell at this period to restore the King, that he incurred the violent jealousy of the Army by the assiduity of his attentions to Charles. His wife and his daughter, Bridget Ireton, were graciously received by the King. It was said by Berkeley, who was in the King’s full confidence, that Cromwell had secured a promise of the office of Commander-in-chief, the colonelcy of the King’s Guards, and the Order of the Garter; and that he was to receive the title of Earl of Essex, which, through his ancient relationship with that house, would have gratified him exceedingly. Ireton was to receive the Government of Ireland. There was danger in all this for Cromwell. "If you despise as hitherto, my warnings," wrote Freeborn John Lilburne, "be sure I will use against you all the power and influence I have, and so as to produce in your fortune changes that shall little please you." The Lieutenant-General became more cautious and begged the King’s friends, Ashburnham and Berkeley to visit him no more, but "if I am an honest man," he said, "I have done enough to convince His Majesty of the sincerity of my intentions; if not, nothing will suffice." Ireton sent word to the King that they were determined to purge the House, and purge it again, and purge it still, until it should be disposed to arrange amicably His Majesty’s affairs.

The Scottish commissioners once more besought the King to adopt the Covenant and to throw his power with the Presbyterians, assuring him that their party alone was sincere in its desire to save him. The military party redoubled its efforts to hold the King fast. Charles, however, would not treat either side with sincerity. Cromwell’s
good opinion of him began to wane. There was talk of a Scottish Army and a rising of English Cavaliers. The Levelers were goaded to fury and they now publicly demanded the death of the Chief Delinquent. The precise circumstance which finally set Cromwell against the King cannot now be discovered. The old story tells that Cromwell and Ireton learned that Charles had dispatched a letter to his Queen, which was sewed up in a saddle; that they disguised themselves as private soldiers, overtook the King’s messenger at the Blue Boar tavern, quaffed a tankard of old ale with him, and then, after ripping open the saddle with their swords, read the letter, in which Charles told Henrietta Maria that he was coquetting with both parties, but favored the Scots, and that the Army leaders expected much of him, but that instead of a garter he would give the rogues a halter. That Charles would be capable of writing such a letter there can be no doubt; that he did write it has not been clearly proved. But his vacillations between the Scots and the Parliament, and between the Parliament and the Army at length convinced Cromwell that he could not be trusted. And, after withdrawing his trust from him, Cromwell made a magnanimous effort to save his life, and counseled him to seek his safety in flight. Charles was dumbfounded, but he now saw that his ruin was complete. Assassination was already designed for him. His custodian, Whalley, a cousin of Cromwell’s, had received a letter from Oliver, written for the King’s eye, calling on him to have a care of his guards. The letter is brief and terrible:

"Dear Cos. Whalley:
"There are rumors abroad of some intended attempt on His Majesty's person. Therefore I pray have a care of your guards. If any such thing should be done, it would be accounted a most horrid act. Yours,

"Oliver Cromwell."

The King was thrown into a great agitation and left Hampton Court on the night of the 11th of November, with Ashburnham and Berkeley, a hunted fugitive, going he knew not whither, and at length arrived at the Isle of Wight where his presence was indiscreetly discovered to Colonel Robert Hammond, the Parliamentary governor, and he was confined a prisoner in Carisbrooke Castle. His escape from Hampton Court was not seriously investigated. It was very clear that it had been connived at by Cromwell, Ireton, and Whalley, and it afforded relief to those who dreaded his murder to learn that he had fled. On November 15, during a rendezvous of the Army at Ware, the discontent of the soldiers broke out into open mutiny. Cromwell rode to the head of each regiment, and addressed them in a manner so vehement that he subdued the wrath of most of them and won the cheers with which his presence was always greeted. But there were two regiments which would not be pacified. They had expelled all their officers above the rank of lieutenant with the exception of one Captain Bray who now commanded them. Every soldier wore in his hat an incendiary paper, and as Cromwell rode toward them he was
greeted by defiant and seditious shouts. "Take that paper from your hats!" he cried, but they refused to obey him. Spurring his horse into the midst of them, his face being inflamed with passion, he pointed out fourteen of the ringleaders and placed them under arrest. Then dragging them to the front, he assembled a court-martial on the spot and condemned three of them to death, one of whom was instantly shot. The mutiny was quelled, and there was never again any lack of obedience among his soldiers. The Speaker of the House of Commons publicly thanked Cromwell for his bravery in suppressing this refractory outburst.

It was near this time that Cromwell wrote a letter to the Parliament contributing £1,000 annually to the public Treasury out of the estates of the Marquis of Worcester which had been bestowed upon him, and releasing the Parliament from the payment of £1,500 back pay that was now due for his services as Lieutenant-General. Charles, amidst the gloom of his confinement in the Isle of Wight, had received exaggerated accounts of the mutiny at Ware, and his love of intrigue prompted him to immediately dispatch Sir John Berkeley to the Army headquarters to remind the generals of their duty to him. But Berkeley met with a harsh reception. Ireton threatened to send him under arrest to the Parliament. Cromwell would not see him, but sent him word, "I will do my best to serve the King, but he must not expect I shall ruin myself for his sake." The same messenger whispered the fearful warning, "If the King can escape, let him do it, as he loves his life!"
At the opening of the year 1648, the Presbyterian majority in the House of Commons had prepared grounds for a safe peace in the form of four bills, which were sent to the King at Carisbrooke Castle. These bills provided (1) that the command of all military and naval forces should rest with the Parliament for twenty years, (2) that the King should revoke all his proclamations against the legality of the past proceedings of the Parliament, (3) that he should annul all the patents of peerage which had been issued since he left London, (4) that the Parliament should be empowered to adjourn for whatever time, and to whatever place it might think proper. Charles, although almost in his last extremity, had no intention of approving these bills, which would have made the Puritan revolt a legitimate resistance to his authority. Besides, the Scottish Parliament, now controlled by the Duke of Hamilton, had likewise sent commissioners to treat for peace, and they were offering Charles better terms than he could hope to obtain from his English subjects. The King dallied with the English while he secretly concluded a treaty with the Scots. This paper was completed in two days and hidden in a garden until it could be taken away safely. It provided for a Scottish Army to reestablish him in his just rights, on condition that he would confirm the Presbyterian establishment in England for three years, himself and his friends not being compelled to conform to it, and that at the end of that time the Assembly of Divines should, in conjunction with the King and the Parliament, settle the religious constitution of the kingdom. The Cavaliers were to rise in England, and the Marquis of Ormond was to return to
Ireland and conduct a war there. The King was to reject the four propositions of the English Parliament, then fly to Scotland, and wait for the outbreak of another war. In compliance with this treaty Charles rejected the English proposals.

There was deep wrath in the House of Commons when the failure of the four bills was reported. They could easily surmise the dangerous negotiations with the Scots which had been carried on under the very eyes of their commissioners at Carisbrooke Castle. On January 3, they voted that they would make no more addresses to the King, nor receive any from him, and that death should be the portion of any member who would correspond with him.

The King had resolved to make his escape from the Isle of Wight, but Colonel Hammond, suspecting his design, dismissed all the royal attendants and shut the King up in the castle. A stormy interview ensued. Charles was filled with vexation and uneasiness, and after demanding in vain to know by whose orders Hammond had so abused him, and being denied even a chaplain, the King said, "You use me neither like a gentleman nor a Christian." Hammond answered that he would speak with him when he was in a better temper. "I have slept well tonight," said Charles. "Why do you not use me civilly?" "Sir, you are too high," answered Hammond. "My shoemaker’s fault, then," was the King’s angry retort, and Hammond left the room with tears in his eyes, but firm in his purpose to secure the King. Cromwell undertook to pacify the factious spirit existing between the Parliament and the Army, and a meeting of all the leaders was held at
his house in King Street for a restoration of mutual confidence and esteem. Passages from the Scriptures were read, and words of exhortation were spoken, but no agreement was reached, and the meeting broke up with an exhibition of buffoonery, in which Cromwell sometimes innocently indulged for the relief of his feelings. He seized a cushion and flung it at Ludlow's head, and then frivolously started to run down the stairs, but Ludlow threw another after him which struck him on the shoulders and "made him hasten down faster than he desired."

The tramp of a great Army could now be heard on the borders of Scotland, and the Cavaliers were rising in all parts of England. Cromwell and the leaders of the English Army assembled themselves together in prayer meeting. They called upon the name of Jehovah with all the stern piety of former days. They resolved, not any dissenting, to go forth and destroy their enemies with a humble confidence in the name of the Lord only. "And we were also enabled then," says one who was present, "after serious seeking His face, to come to a very clear and joint resolution, on many grounds at large there debated amongst us, that it was our duty, if ever the Lord brought us back in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to an account for that blood he had shed and mischief he had done to his utmost against the Lord's cause and people in these poor nations."

CHAPTER XVIII
The Second Civil War

The domestic events in this period of Cromwell's life necessarily occurred under the storm cloud of civil strife. His eldest son, Richard, was now twenty-two years old, and he had never evinced
any ambition to win fame in the big wars. He was an idle youth, whose thoughts turned to matrimony, and Cromwell’s respect for the sacredness of marriage led him, with the deepest solicitude, to counsel his son in the choice of a wife.

Colonel Richard Norton, Member of Parliament for Hants, and a fellow soldier of Cromwell’s in the days of the Eastern Association, was a family friend who could advise young Richard in this tender affair. To him Oliver wrote a letter, showing both a worldly and a spiritual comprehension of his son’s settlement. The "Mr. M." is Richard Mayor, who had a lovely daughter. Had Oliver at this time cherished the bold schemes for dominion which his enemies impute to him, he would never have sought this obscure alliance with the daughter of a country gentleman, but would have accepted the "very great proposition" which he here discards:

For My Noble Friend, Colonel Richard Norton: These.

"London, 25th February, 1648.

"Dear Norton:

"I have sent my son over to thee, being willing to answer Providence; and although I had an offer of a very great proposition from a father, of his daughter, yet truly I rather incline to this in my thoughts, because, though the other be very far greater, yet I see difficulties, and not that assurance of godliness—though indeed of fairness. I confess that which is told me concerning the estate of Mr. M. is more than I can look for as things now stand.

"If God please to bring it about, the consideration of piety in the parents, and such hopes of the gentlewoman in that respect, make the business to me a great mercy; concerning which I desire to wait upon God.

"I am confident of thy love; and desire things may be carried with privacy. The Lord do His will—that’s best—to which submitting, I rest, your humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."
Soon after writing this letter Cromwell was stricken with what he apprehended to be a fatal illness. But his rugged constitution enabled him to recover from the attack, which produced this fervent acknowledgment of his faith:

"For His Excellency, Sir Thomas Fairfax, General of the Parliament’s Armies, at Windsor; These.

"London, 7th March, 1648.

"Sir:

"It hath pleased God to raise me out of a dangerous sickness; and I do most willingly acknowledge that the Lord hath, in this visitation, exercised the bowels of a Father towards me. I received in myself the sentence of death, that I might learn to trust in Him that raiseth from the dead, and have no confidence in the flesh. It’s a blessed thing to die daily. For what is there in this world to be accounted of! The best men, according to the flesh, and things, are lighter than vanity. I find this only good, To love the Lord and His poor despised people, to do for them, and to be ready to suffer with them: and he that is found worthy of this hath obtained great favour from the Lord; and he that is established in this shall (being confirmed to Christ and the rest of the Body) participate in the glory of a Resurrection which will answer all.

"Sir, I must thankfully confess your favour in your last Letter. I see I am not forgotten; and truly, to be kept in your remembrance is very great satisfaction to me; for I can say in the simplicity of my heart, I put a high and true value upon your love, which, when I forget, I shall cease to be a grateful and an honest man.

"I most humbly beg my service may be presented to your Lady, to whom I wish all happiness, and establishment in the truth. Sir, my prayers are for you, as becomes your Excellency’s most humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."
He is soon well enough to take up Richard’s marriage again; and he alludes to some startling war rumors.

"For my noble Friend Colonel Richard Norton: These.

"Farnham, 28th March, 1648.

"Dear Dick:

"It had been a favour indeed to have met you here at Farnham. But I hear you are a man of great business; therefore I say no more: if it be a favour to the House of Commons to enjoy you, what is it to me! But, in good earnest, when will you and your brother Russel [i.e., a brother member] be a little honest, and attend your charge there? Surely some expect it; especially the good fellows who chose you!

"I have met with Mr. Mayor; we spent two or three hours together last night. I perceive the gentleman is very wise and honest; and indeed much to be valued. Some things of common fame did a little stick: I gladly heard his doubts, and gave such answers as was next at hand, I believe, to some satisfaction. Nevertheless, I exceedingly liked the gentleman’s plainness and free dealing with me. I know God has been above all ill reports, and will in His own time vindicate me; I have no cause to complain. I see nothing but that this particular business between him and me may go on. The Lord’s will be done.

"For news out of the North there is little: only the malignant Party is prevailing in the Parliament of Scotland. They are earnest for a war; the Ministers oppose as yet. Mr. Marshall is returned, who says so. And so do many of our Letters. Their Great Committee of Danger have two Malignants for one right. It’s said they have voted an army of 40,000 in Parliament; so say some of Yesterday’s Letters. But I account my news ill bestowed, because upon an idle person.

"I shall take speedy course in the business concerning my Tenants; for which, thanks. My service to your lady. I am really your affectionate servant,
This marriage turned out to be an affair requiring much negotiation. Mr. Mayor had many stipulations to make on behalf of his daughter, nor was Cromwell behindhand in remembering Richard’s welfare. The lands that are referred to in the following letter had but recently been bestowed upon him by the Parliament, as his share of the spoils of war. “My two little wenches” are Mary and Frances Cromwell, the former aged twelve, the latter ten. Mary was afterwards married to Lord Fauconberg, and Frances, who was gossiped about as a possible bride for Charles II, became the wife of Robert Rich, grandson of the Earl of Warwick, and, afterwards, of Sir John Russell.

“For my noble Friend, Colonel Richard Norton:
These.

“London, 3rd April, 1648.

“Dear Norton:

“I could not in my last give you a perfect account of what passed between me and Mr. Mayor; because we were to have a conclusion of our speed that morning after I wrote my Letter to you. Which we had; and having had a full view of one another’s minds, we parted with this: That both would consider with our relations, and according to satisfactions given there, acquaint one another with our minds.

“I cannot tell better how to do, in order to give or receive satisfaction, than by you; who, as I remember, in your last, said, That, if things did stick between us, you would use your endeavour towards a close.

“The things insisted upon were these, as I take it: Mr. Mayor desired 400 l. per annum of Inheritance, lying in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, to be presently settled [i.e., on the young couple], and to be for maintenance; wherein I desired to be advised by my Wife. I offered the land in Hampshire for present maintenance; which I dare say, with copses and ordinary fells, will be, communibus annis, 500 l. per annum: and besides this, 500 l. per annum in Tenants’ hands holding but for one life; and about
300 l. per annum, some for two lives, some for three lives. But as to this, if the latter offer be not liked of, I shall be willing a farther conference be held in regard to the first.

"In point of jointure I shall give satisfaction. And as to the settlement of lands given me by the Parliament, satisfaction to be given in like manner, according as we discoursed. And in what else was demanded of me, I am willing, so far as I remember any demand was, to give satisfaction. Only, I having been informed by Mr. Robinson that Mr. Mayor did, upon a former match, offer to settle the Manor wherein he lived, and to give 2,000 l. in money, I did insist upon that; and do desire it may not be with difficulty. The money I shall need for my two little Wenches; and thereby I shall free my Son from being charged with them. Mr. Mayor parts with nothing at present but that money; except the board [of the young Pair], which I should not be unwilling to give them, to enjoy the comfort of their society; which it’s reason he smart for, if he will rob me altogether of them.

"Truly the land to be settled—both what the Parliament gives me, and my own—is very little less than 3,000 l. per annum, all things considered, if I be rightly informed. And a Lawyer of Lincoln’s Inn, having searched all the Marquis of Worcester’s writings, which were taken at Ragland, and sent for by the Parliament, and this Gentleman appointed by the Committee to search the said writings, assures me there is no scruple concerning the title. And it so fell out that this gentleman who searched was my own lawyer, a very godly, able man, and my dear friend; which I reckon no small mercy. He is also possessed of the writings for me.

"I thought fit to give you this account; desiring you to make such use of it as God shall direct you: and I doubt not but you will do the part of a friend between two friends. I account myself one; and I have heard you say Mr. Mayor was entirely so to you. What the good pleasure of God is, I shall wait; there alone is rest. Present my service to your Lady, to Mr. Mayor, &c. I rest, your affectionate servant,
"P.S.: I desire you to carry this business with all privacy. I beseech you to do so, as you love me. Let me entreat you not to lose a day herein, that I may know Mr. Mayor’s mind; for I think I may be at leisure for a week to attend this business, to give and take satisfaction; from which perhaps I may be shut up afterwards by employment. I know thou art an idle fellow: but prithee neglect me not now; delay may be very inconvenient to me: I much rely upon you. Let me hear from you in two or three days. I confess the principal consideration as to me, is the absolute settlement (by Mr. Mayor) of the Manor where he lives; which he would not do but conditionally, in case they have a son, and but 3,000 l. in case they have no son. But as to this, I hope farther reason may work him to more."

But Cromwell could stay no longer to press his son’s courtship. The marriage of Richard must wait for a year, while Oliver once more leads his devoted Ironsides to battle. The Second Civil War, in 1648, was the result of an outburst of popular discontent against the Parliament and the Army, as the First Civil War, in 1642, had been the result of popular discontent against the King. In Wales, Colonel Poyer and his troops, being angered at the failure of the Parliament to pay their arrears, seized Pembroke Castle, an almost impregnable fortress, and held it for the King. In the North of England, Colonel Morris had seized Pontefract Castle, stronger even than Pembroke, having entered it with a party of Cavaliers, disguised as laborers, and had hoisted the royal ensign. Then tumult, riot, and insurrection followed each other in every part of England. The troops no sooner dispersed one turbulent multitude, but they were called in haste to disperse another in an opposite quarter. Sir Marmaduke Langdale and Colonels Glenham and Musgrave were enlisting large numbers of men in the North for the King’s service, and had already occupied Berwick and Carlisle. In Essex, Hertfordshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Northampton, Lincoln, and Sussex, the old Cavalier leaders were calling their friends to arms. The Royalists in Kent chose General Goring (now Earl of Norwich) to lead them, and he took possession of Sandwich, Dover, and other strongholds with his usual alacrity. Some of the ships in the Navy mutinied, and, sending their officers ashore, sailed for Holland, where the Duke of York, who had lately escaped the Parliament’s custody, and soon after, the Prince of
Wales himself, took command of them. Even in London the revolt was almost equally open. The apprentices captured two of the city gates, and came to much grief at the hands of the troops. The young Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Holland, and other noblemen, left London with a large body of followers in the King’s interest, but they were overtaken by the Parliamentary forces, and routed, a brother of the Duke being killed, and the Earl of Holland shortly losing his head for high treason.

In Scotland an army was ready to march. In Ireland the Lord Inchiquin, Lord Lieutenant of the Province of Munster, a trusted Parliamentary governor, had come over to the King’s side. Fairfax pursued Goring, who shut himself up in Colchester and bade defiance to the Parliament. Wales seemed hopelessly lost, and Cromwell marched thither with five regiments, to regain Pembroke Castle and crush the Cavaliers. Lambert was dispatched to the North to keep watch on Langdale.

In the midst of this unhappy strife all men feared to see a decisive victory fall to either party. But the Presbyterian party was now plainly inclining towards the King. On April 28, the Commons voted that the government of the kingdom should still be by King, Lords, and Commons, and the former vote of non-addresses was rescinded. The proscription of the eleven members was annulled, and they were invited to resume their seats (June 8). A new treaty was proposed with the King, who was to be invited to come to London, but this met with violent opposition. "If you treat with this enraged King in London," said Thomas Scott, an Independent member, "who can secure the Parliament that the city will not make their peace with him by delivering up your heads to him for a sacrifice, as the men of Samaria did the heads of the seventy sons of Ahab?" Colonel Harvey said, if the King promised to reside in one of his houses not nearer London than ten miles, what security would his word be that he would remain there till the treaty was concluded? "The King’s promise hath been broken over and over again: put not your trust in princes." Sir Simonds D’Ewes, always for a moderate course, combated these views. He said:

"I am quite of a contrary opinion. The House not only ought, but must trust the King. Mr. Speaker, if you know not in what condition you are, give me leave, in a word, to tell you it. Your silver is clipped, your gold shipped, your ships are revolted, yourselves contemned, your Scots friends enraged against you, and the affection of the city and kingdom quite alienated from you. Judge, then, whether you are not in a low condition, and also if it be not high time
to endeavor a speedy settlement and reconciliation with His Majesty."

These were the conflicting views which were tearing at the vitals of the Parliament.
The Scottish Army invaded England July 8. Their number was near 20,000, and the Duke of Hamilton was their commander. Lambert began an orderly retreat before them. Cromwell was still before Pembroke, and Fairfax before Colchester, and the march of the Scots was not seriously impeded.
Colonel Poyer was giving Cromwell much trouble in his stubborn defense of Pembroke. One of the soldiers wrote of him, "The man is certainly in two dispositions every day, in the morning sober and penitent, but in the afternoon drunk and full of plots." On one occasion he sent out five of his men in the dark and received them back in daylight with a salute of guns, endeavoring to convey the impression that they were an embassy sent to him from France. When a wayfaring gentleman fell into his hands, he demanded whether he was Independent or Presbyterian.

"Neither," he replied, "for I am a Protestant." "Why, so am I," answered Poyer, "therefore let us be merry." And the chronicle relates that they went in and drank so hard that neither was able to stir for twenty-four hours.
Cromwell wrote to Speaker Lenthall on the 14th of June that he would take the castle in fourteen days, but in spite of all his efforts Poyer held out for nearly a month. Finally, he was starved out, and surrendered his command on quarter for his men, himself to be at the mercy of the Parliament. On July 11, Cromwell reported the capture of Pembroke Castle, explaining to the Parliament that certain prisoners were excepted from pardon "because they have sinned against so much light, and against so many evidences of Divine Providence going along with and prospering a just cause, in the management of which they themselves had a share."
Cromwell then turned to the North, and joined his forces with Lambert early in August, England in the meantime holding its breath to watch the result of the inevitable meeting between him and Hamilton.
The Duke of Hamilton was a man who, though endowed with rare gifts, never succeeded in anything he undertook to perform. Intriguing and ambitious, yet brave and generous; vain in his estimate of his own powers as a statesman and a general, yet utterly inefficient as either; a kinsman and trusted friend of the King, yet always suspected of cherishing designs on the Crown; contradictory in all the elements of his character; he is one of the most enigmatical men of that period. When a young man he was
remarked at the gay Court of Charles for the melancholy cast of his countenance, and he seems ever to have been distrustful and unhappy. He once led an army of 6,000 Scots to aid the heroic Gustavus Adolphus, but failed to make any impression in those stirring wars. In the first days of the Covenant in Scotland, he had been Charles’ High Commissioner, but did little to assuage the bitterness of that controversy. When the attempt to enforce Episcopacy led to the Bishops’ Wars, he raised an army of 5,000 men for the King, but never performed any action except to unload them from their ships on an island in the Frith, whence they dwindled away and disappeared. When the Covenanters invaded England in 1644, just previous to the fatal battle of Marston Moor, it was urged by Montrose and other courtiers that he had participated in the call to arms, and Charles was forced by their suspicion to imprison him in Cornwall; but he obtained his liberty, and, appearing once more in Scotland, had secured a majority in Parliament which enabled him to raise this army for the restoration of the King. While Argyile and the clergy opposed him, he carried all against their influence. But he encountered many disappointments. The Court of France had promised him arms and ammunition, but none were sent. The Prince of Wales was expected to come over to take the command, but he remained in Holland. When Hamilton set his foot on English soil, the chivalrous Langdale could not join him intimately, because the English Cavaliers would not take the Covenant, and the Scots would therefore have no fellowship with them. Langdale’s command was treated as a separate body. The main Army was practically split in two, Sir George Monro, with the Scottish horse being always a day’s march in the rear, and not at hand when the battle was joined, while Hamilton and his lieutenant-general, Calender, were fiercely jealous of each other, and had divided the Army into factions. The Scottish Parliament had authorized the enlistment of 40,000 men, but the premature outbreak of the insurrections in England had compelled Hamilton to take the field with less than half that number. The only considerable battle of this second war was that which was fought at Preston, on the northern border of Lancashire, on August 7, 1648. Cromwell had marched over the river Ribble the night before, and camped in a field about nine miles from Preston. At daybreak he marched to Preston, and the fight was commenced on a ground so rough and muddy from the recent tempestuous weather that the operations of his cavalry were conducted with great difficulty and toil. His center line advanced through a deep and narrow lane, and the two wings, commanded by his colonels, moved forward on either side of this hedge-lined road. Cromwell’s force consisted of between eight and nine
thousand, and the Scots and the English Royalists he computed at 21,000. As his advance guard came in sight of Langdale’s cavalry, the Puritans in the lane paused and desired to wait for the reserves to come up. But Cromwell thundered the order to charge, and the well-disciplined Roundheads sprang forward with the songs of David on their tongues, their leader in the front of the fight. Hamilton supposed this army to be the forces of Colonel Ashton, a singular lack of intelligence; and Sir Marmaduke never knew until he was beaten that he was once more face-to-face with Oliver and his Ironsides. The whole line of battle was now in action, and the field was fiercely contested. But the Scots were undisciplined and for the most part poorly officered. They could not long hold together under the unwavering advances of the Parliamentarians. They did indeed fight to push of pike and thrust of sword. Hamilton, Calender, Langdale, Baillie, and Turner spurned all danger and kept their men in spirit as long as daring courage could do it. For three hours Royalty and the Parliament were locked together in a death struggle. Then the Scots were halted, pushed back, made one or two gallant charges, retreated again, and finally broke and fled.

Cromwell’s men were so jaded and distressed by the fatigue of their long march from Wales, and the country was so obstructed by the impediments of the weather, that the pursuit was irksome and slow. "If I had a thousand horse that could trot but thirty miles," wrote Cromwell, "I should not doubt but to give a very good account of them: but truly we are so harassed and haggled out in this business, that we are not able to do more than walk at an easy pace after them." But the rout of the Scottish Army was kept up for three days. When the invaders arrived at Wigan on the second day, they made a stand and fought until a thousand of them were slain. Night came on and the moon broke through the clouds while the carnage continued. In the fury of their despair the Scots had forced the Roundheads to retreat, but reinforcements coming up, a shout that Cromwell was there spread an instant panic. General Turner tried to rally his men, when two of them in an extremity of terror assaulted him and ran a pike through his thigh. Enraged at his wound he ordered his cavalry to attack his infantry, thus enhancing the horrors of that scene. The retreat was resumed, the fight lasting all through the night, Cromwell keeping close on the heels of the fugitives until they reached Warrington, where a third battle was fought. Here the Scots had the protection of "a town, a river, and a bridge," but the next day the whole infantry under Baillie and Turner surrendered.

For more than thirty miles Cromwell had chased them. The fruits of this victory were several thousand killed, nearly ten thousand
prisoners, the capture of the Scottish artillery, baggage, guns, and ammunition, and the annihilation of Hamilton’s military power. Hamilton fled south to Uttoxeter, in Staffordshire, and surrendered with the remainder of his forces there on August 25. Being an English Peer, Earl of Cambridge, he was beheaded the next year for this invasion, as an act of high treason against the Parliament.

In his letter to the Speaker of Parliament describing this battle, Cromwell’s change of mind concerning the fate of the King is for the first time dimly suggested. He says:

"Surely, Sir, this is nothing but the hand of God; and wherever anything in this world is exalted, or exalts itself, God will pull it down; for this is the day wherein He alone will be exalted. It is not for me to give advice, nor to say a word what use you should make of this, more than to pray you, and all that acknowledge God, that they would exalt Him, and not hate His people, who are as the apple of His eye, and for whom even Kings shall be reproved; and that you would take courage to do the work of the Lord, in fulfilling the end of your magistracy, in seeking the peace and welfare of this land, that all that will live peaceably may have countenance from you, and that they that are incapable and will not leave troubling the land may speedily be destroyed out of the land. And if you take courage in this, God will bless you, and good men will stand by you, and God will have glory, and the land will have happiness by you in despite of all your enemies."

Cromwell had crushed the second war. Eleven days after the beginning of the fight at Preston (August 28), Goring surrendered Colchester to Fairfax without terms, and was sent prisoner to the Tower. Two of the most gallant Cavaliers in England, Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle, were shot on the place, on a fierce suggestion from Ireton. Lord Capel was beheaded at London. Having been the first man to complain of grievances at the opening of the Long Parliament, he was an object of especial dislike. Sir Marmaduke Langdale was captured, but afterwards escaped. The Prince of Wales, who had arrived in the Downs with the revolted ships, made haste back to Holland. The lagging Monro, who had never seen the battle, beat a hasty retreat beyond the Tweed with his cavalry. When the royal captive in Carisbrooke Castle learned of Hamilton’s defeat, he observed that "it was the worst news that ever came to England." In Scotland
the Presbyterian zealots arose in what was called "the Whiggamore raid," and the party appellation of Whig was thenceforth applied to those who evinced a disposition to oppose the Court, and to treat Protestant Nonconformists with indulgence. The old Earl of Leven and David Leslie, backed by Argyle and the Kirk party, regained their control of the military power.

But Cromwell was not yet satisfied with his performance. He marched north and recaptured Berwick and Carlisle without a struggle. Then (about September 20) he entered the kingdom of Scotland and marched to Edinburgh, where he was received by all the well-affected notables with some trepidation and much respect. He impelled the Scottish Parliament to disqualify all persons who had taken part in the late invasion from employment in any public place or trust whatever, thus causing the unseating of many of its members. When he had done this, and had impressed the fear of his strength upon the intriguing Scots, he was banqueted with elaborate honor at Edinburgh Castle; and then, leaving Lambert with two regiments behind, he departed, arriving back in England in the middle of October. Proceeding to Yorkshire, he sat down before Pontefract Castle (November 9).

The governor of this stronghold had recently driven in all the cattle of the surrounding country to the number of two hundred and forty, and was prepared to stand a siege for a year. He could expect no mercy, so that he stubbornly refused to surrender. The place was well watered and situated upon a rock, so that to resort to mining was impossible. The walls were very thick and high, with strong towers. The outside country was so poor that the subsistence of the Parliamentarians was a grave difficulty. But the reduction of this castle was the last necessity of the war, and Cromwell set himself to accomplish it.

But at Westminster Cromwell’s Presbyterian rivals beheld with undisguised dismay the indications of his continued ascendency. His triumph presaged their ruin, and they had taken advantage of his absence with the Independent Army to reopen an ever-hopeless treaty with the King. Forty days had been devoted to the solemn discussion of this treaty by the Parliamentary commissioners and the King and his friends, at the Isle of Wight. Denzil Hollis, Oliver’s most bitter foe, who had been banished with the eleven to appease the jealousies of the Army, was now back in his seat in the House of Commons. Robert Huntington, a Major in Cromwell’s own regiment, had presented a vindictive memorial to the House of Lords, denouncing the Lieutenant-General for his intrigues, his broken promises, his perfidy to the King, his ambition, his contempt of Parliament and of the law, his disregard of the rights of men, his pernicious principles, and his
threatening designs. The Peers received this charge with private satisfaction, and sent their messengers with the malignant document to the House of Commons, but Cromwell’s friends shrewdly prevented its introduction before the lower House, although Huntington placed a copy of it in the Speaker’s hands. Cromwell by this time stood too high to be successfully attacked. The Independents in Parliament were greatly alarmed by the evident approach of an agreement between the King and the Presbyterian section, and Ludlow was sent by them to interview Fairfax at Colchester in regard to a policy for the preservation of the Army. Ludlow stated the question to be, whether the King should govern as a god by his will, and the nation be governed by force like beasts, or, whether the people should be governed by laws made by themselves, and live under a Government derived from their own consent. Fairfax refused to commit himself to any direct engagement, contenting himself with a general expression of his intention to discharge his duty to the people. Ludlow thereupon sought Ireton, whom Cromwell had left with the Lord General for his own purposes. That astute soldier was not in the least alarmed by the disclosures of the Presbyterian designs which were made to him. "Let them go on," he said, "until the King and the Parliament make an agreement. We will wait until we have made a full discovery of their intentions, and then oppose them." An answer was at length obtained from the King. He refused to abolish the bishops, but consented that those who had bought the Church lands from the Parliament should enjoy them by lease for a term of years. As a satisfaction for the blood that had been shed, he agreed to except six considerable persons from pardon, taking care to name those who had found a safe asylum beyond seas. The Parliament was to control the Army for ten years. These concessions were not those which would naturally be expected from a conquered monarch, but in the absence of better terms, the Presbyterians resolved to stem the tide of anarchy by accepting them as a basis for peace. The Army leaders preserved an ominous silence before the public, but they had long since arrived at a grim determination to prevent the consummation of this treaty at the proper time. But the duplicity of Charles was never exercised with less conscience than in the days of this treaty. He had combated the commissioners with skill and learning at every point in the discussion. "If you call this a treaty," he said to one of them, "consider whether it be not like the fray in the comedy where the man comes out and says, ‘There has been a fray and no fray,’ and being asked how that could be, ‘Why,’ says he, ‘there hath been three blows given, and I had them all.’ Look whether this be not a parallel case; I have granted absolutely most of your propositions,
and with great moderation limited only some few of them, and you make me no concessions." After having promised to stop all hostilities in Ireland, he secretly wrote to Ormond, "Obey my wife's orders, not mine, until I shall let you know I am free from all restraint, nor trouble yourself about my concessions as to Ireland; they will not lead to anything." In regard to the concessions of the Army, he wrote to Sir William Hopkins, "To tell you the truth, my great concession this morning was made only with a view to facilitate my approaching escape; without that hope, I never should have yielded in this manner." In short, Charles believed implicitly in his moral right to hoodwink those whom he viewed simply as rebels against his lawful authority, and the most solemn engagements which they deemed necessary to secure their own safety and the prosperity of the people at large, had no binding force upon his conscience. This, once more, was the kingcraft of his father.

Of this period, Sir Philip Warwick writes, "There are no words in the Army, but that the King hath been a man of blood, and therefore must be prosecuted to blood." Edmund Ludlow quoted this Scripture for the act that was coming to pass: "Blood defileth the land, and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." And Cromwell, from the leaguer at Pontefract, wrote this letter to Fairfax, enclosing numerous petitions from his soldiers that justice be done to the Chief Delinquent:

"Knottingly, 20th Nov., 1648.

"My Lord:

"I find in the Officers of the Regiments a very great sense of the sufferings of this poor Kingdom; and in them all a very great zeal to have impartial justice done upon Offenders. And I must confess, I do in all, from my heart, concur with them; and I verily think and am persuaded they are things which God puts into our hearts.

"I shall not need to offer anything to your Excellency: I know, God teaches you; and that He hath manifested His presence so to you as that you will give glory to Him in the eyes of all the world, I held it my duty, having received these Petitions and Letters, and being [so] desired by the framers thereof, to present them to you. The good Lord work His will upon your heart, enabling you to it; and the
presence of Almighty God go along with you. Thus prays, my Lord, your most humble and faithful servant,

“Oliver Cromwell.”

He likewise wrote a long and very remarkable letter to Hammond, the Governor of the Isle of Wight, endeavoring to persuade him that the intentions of the Army in this matter were just and lawful in the sight of God. Five times had the Parliament voted the King’s concessions insufficient (October 2, 11, and 27; November 2 and 24). They were trusting to Hammond to preserve the King from the machinations of the Army. But on the 27th of November, Fairfax recalled Hammond to Windsor, where his own headquarters were now established, and Colonel Ewer, a Leveler, took charge of the King at the Isle of Wight. The Royal prisoner was removed to Hurst Castle, a small, dark, and gloomy stronghold on the mainland across the narrow channel known as the Solent. His friends were dismissed, and he was left alone with the terror of assassination at the hands of his fanatical guards constantly before him. The Presbyterian majority at Westminster now rejected a Remonstrance from the Army, and the Army moved nearer to London. Cromwell had returned from the North, leaving Pontefract Castle to Lambert, and was with them. On Friday, the 1st of December, on Saturday, and again on Monday, the Commons debated the question, whether his Majesty’s concessions are a ground of settlement. All of Monday night they continue the debate, and so many have spoken that the Independents know they will be beaten when the vote comes. Nathaniel Fiennes, an Independent and a soldier, is speaking now for the King. They will not be overawed by the advancing tread of the Army. At five o’clock in the morning it is voted that the King’s concessions are sufficient. One hundred and twenty-nine vote yea, eighty-three vote nay—a majority of forty-six. Cromwell and the Army spend all of that day in praying and planning. The next day, by an order from Commissary General Ireton, Colonel Rich’s regiment of horse and Colonel Pride’s regiment of foot came to Westminster as a guard to the Parliament, and dismissed the city train-bands from that service. Fairfax knew nothing of their errand; Cromwell and Ireton had arranged all. As the members began to arrive, Lord Grey of Groby, standing beside Colonel Pride, whispered the names of the Presbyterians who approached. Among them were Sir Simonds D’Ewes, William Prynne, Sir William Waller “the Conqueror,” Sir Benjamin Rudyard, Sir Harbottle Grimstone, William Strode, and Nathaniel Fiennes.
Pride promptly seized them until forty-seven were in his custody, and hurried them off to the Queen’s Court. Each and every one of them demanded, "By what law? By what law?" And when Chaplain Hugh Peters visited them, and they repeated this solemn question, he replied, with stern satisfaction, "It is by the law of Necessity, truly, by the power of the Sword!"
This was Pride’s Purge.
The next day, Thursday, Cromwell quietly took his seat in the House, and received a vote of thanks from the Speaker for his services in the war. He had not, he said, been acquainted with this design; yet, since it was done, he was glad of it, and would endeavor to maintain it. In addition to the forty-seven imprisoned members ninety-six others were personally denied entrance to the House by Colonel Pride, so that only seventy-eight members were present to discuss Cromwell’s course under this vote, and twenty-eight of them opposed him, and came no more to Parliament. This left a "Rump" at that time of fifty members. A few days later it was necessary, in order to obtain a quorum, to bring one of the imprisoned members out of his incarceration to the House. The city was now full of troops. The Independents controlled both the civil power and the sword.
On Wednesday, December 13, the purged House renewed the vote for non-addresses, declared the recent revocation of this vote to have been highly dishonorable, and annulled the vote for a treaty with the King.
Four of the Lords and about twenty of the Commons, together with many other Independents, attended at St. Margaret’s Church at Westminster. Chaplain Hugh Peters occupied the pulpit and took his text from the Book of Psalms:

"Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud in their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishment upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron. This honour have all his saints."

In his discourse Peters compared the state of the kingdom with the bringing of the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage. He declared that there were 5,000 men in the Army who were no less saints than those who conversed with God himself in heaven. He then dropped his head suddenly upon the cushion, and, raising it after a while, he shouted that he had had a vision, and that the way to be brought out of their bondage was to extirpate monarchy, both here and in all other places. Then, with the flow
of tears which seemed to be one of the arts of exhortation in that age, he begged them to execute justice upon that great Barabbas at Windsor.

On the 14th, Cromwell went to Windsor. On the 16th, a detachment of horse led by Colonel Harrison was sent from headquarters with orders to bring the King from Hurst Castle to Windsor. Harrison was the son of a butcher, but withal was a man of military capacity who had won Cromwell’s esteem and patronage. After the party of soldiers had brought the King some distance from Hurst Castle, Charles, who believed it to be a part of their design to assassinate him at the first fitting opportunity, spoke frankly to Harrison of the rumor he had heard that he himself had declared he would do the deed. “Nothing can be more false,” said Harrison, “this is what I said, and I can repeat it; it is, that the law was equally obligatory to great and small, and that justice had no respect to persons.” The last words were spoken with an emphasis which stirred the King to great alarm, and he did not again address Harrison.

On leaving Farnham, the King expressed his desire to stop and dine in the forest, at the house of Lord Newburgh, who was one of his most devoted adherents. Harrison tried to dissuade him, but the King uttered his wish so persistently, that the Roundhead chief consented. Newburgh was the owner of a fine stable, among which was a horse reputed to be the fleetest in England. It had secretly been planned that Charles should mount this horse and speed away into the forest, whose by-paths were well known to him, where he could easily find a shelter from his guards on their slow service horses. He accordingly, before arriving at Lord Newburgh’s, began to complain loudly of a lameness in the horse he was then riding, and when this was later mentioned to his Cavalier confidant, Newburgh instantly offered him a fresh horse. Ill fate, however, frustrated his enterprise, when the fleet steed was found to have been badly injured by a kick from another horse. The King would have attempted flight on his present mount, but Harrison, whose suspicions had been aroused, surrounded him with bold troopers on every side, and escape was impossible. That evening he arrived at Windsor Castle, where he was received by many of his old friends and servants, who were permitted to attend him with the ceremonies which were due to his exalted rank.

CHAPTER XIX
The Chief Delinquent

Cromwell’s part in the King’s trial and death is the least creditable portion of his history. And yet he had sincerely
endeavored to save the life of Charles. When the King was a prisoner at Hampton Court, Cromwell had purposely frightened him away with that letter about assassination. When Charles fatuously strayed into captivity at Carisbrooke Castle, Cromwell again warned him, through Sir John Berkeley, to escape if he loved his life. When, after he had discovered the King’s duplicity, he was importuned by the friends of Charles to engage himself in his behalf, he had replied that he would do what he could, but the King must not expect him to ruin himself for his sake. But when, after two civil wars the demand of the Army for the punishment of the Chief Delinquent became irresistible, Cromwell abandoned his scruples, and he and Ireton became the foremost among those who brought the King to the block. He declared that this second war was "a more prodigious treason than any that had been perfected before; because the former quarrel was that Englishmen might rule over one another, this to vassalise us to a foreign nation."

On the day following the King’s enforced return to Windsor Castle (Saturday, December 23, 1648), the Commons appointed a committee of thirty-eight to draw up a charge against him in order that he might be brought to judgment. Petitions were coming in from every quarter of England, under the manipulations of the Agitators, praying for the trial of the Chief Delinquent, and all the arts which could be used to excite the public mind to approbation of their design were skillfully employed. On the 27th, the Council of War, which had taken charge of the King’s person, ordered that no ceremonies of State should longer be performed with respect to him. On the 28th an ordinance was reported for attainting the King of high treason, prescribing that he should be tried by a tribunal to be erected for that purpose and to be known as the High Commission Court. There was a storm of horrified protest from many members, some of whom did not think until then that the Levelers would dare to go to the last extremity. Cromwell’s public expressions were most cautiously framed. We have already seen that on at least two occasions he had in his letters expressed the increasing desire of the soldiers for the King’s punishment without himself abhorring it. But now he affected moderation. "If anyone," he said, "had moved this upon design, I should think him the greatest traitor in the world, but since Providence and necessity have cast us upon it, I pray God to bless our counsels, though I am not prepared on the sudden to give my advice." But there was no real difficulty in obtaining a majority for the ordinance; Pride’s Purge had assured the Independents of the successful termination of their design. It was necessary, however, even for these zealous enthusiasts to preserve the appearance of law, and this could only be done by
the expedient of an *ex post facto* law, for there was none on the statute books at present that would sanction their proceedings. On the 2nd of December they had voted that it was high treason for a King of England to make war against his Parliament. They then adopted their ordinance for the erection of the High Court of Justice. It was to be composed of one hundred and fifty persons, including six peers, three judges, eleven baronets, ten knights, six aldermen of London, and the prominent Independents in the Army and the city, excepting St. John and Vane, who declared that they disapproved of the scheme and would take no part in it.

On January 2, 1649, the ordinance was sent to the Lords, who, servile until now under the lash of the Commons, indignantly spurned this measure. The illegal pretensions of the ordinance were very clearly exposed by the debate in the upper House. The Earl of Manchester, to whom Cromwell had made that radical outburst in 1644 concerning the leveling of peers and titles, was the first speaker. He said that by the fundamental laws of England, the Parliament consisted of three estates, of which the King is the first; that the King only had power to call and dissolve them, and to confirm all their acts, and that without him there can be no Parliament; and therefore it was absurd to say that the King could be a traitor against the Parliament. The Earl of Northumberland contended that the greatest part, even twenty to one, of the people of England were not yet satisfied whether the King did levy war against the Houses first, or the Houses first against him; and besides, if the King did levy war first, they had no law extant, or that could be produced, to make it treason in him to do so; "And for us, my Lords," he said, "to declare it treason by an ordinance, when the matter of fact is not yet proved, nor any law in being to judge it by, seems to me very unreasonable." The Earl of Pembroke said, briefly, that he loved not to meddle with businesses of life and death, and, for his part, he would neither speak against the ordinance nor consent to it. And the Earl of Denbigh declared that whereas the Commons were pleased to put his name into the ordinance, as one of the commissioners he would choose to be torn in pieces, rather than have any share in so infamous a business. These were Puritan Lords who spoke thus. It was resolved that the ordinance should be cast out, after which the Lords adjourned for one week without vouchsafing to send the lower House a message. The next day the Commons seized their journal, and found that the Lords had refused to concur in the declaration that it was high treason for a King to make war, and that they had unanimously rejected the ordinance for the King’s trial. On the 4th they voted that the people being, after God, the original of all just powers, and they themselves being the representatives of the people, they
were possessed of the sovereign power, and that whatsoever they should enact, though lacking the concurrence of the King and the Lords, should have the force of law. On the 7th they passed a fresh ordinance, instituting the High Court of Justice in the name of the Commons only, reducing the membership to 135, and empowering twenty or more to be a quorum. A proclamation was made throughout the city that the King would be tried, and that all who had anything to say against him would be heard.

The High Court met in private on the 8th, 10th, 12th, 13th, 15th, 17th, 18th, and 19th of January. John Bradshaw, a cousin of Milton, was chosen President. He was a Puritan of the strictest type, fanatical and ready to die for his opinions, yet ambitious and a lover of gold. Fearing assault, he prudently wore a shot-proof hat. Fairfax, Cromwell, and Ireton were the first three names that appeared in the ordinance creating the court. Fairfax sat the first day and never took part in the proceedings again. Other prominent members were Skippon, Harrison, Pride, Whalley, Desborough, Lambert, Ludlow, and Hazelrig. The court was unwieldy, and dissensions crept in at the very start. Many who attended the first meetings did so to announce their opposition to the trial. Young Algernon Sidney opposed the proceedings with fervid eloquence, and expressed the fear that the people would rise up in a sudden insurrection, and by saving the King, lose the projected Commonwealth. "No one will stir," said Cromwell, who, first and last, controlled the court absolutely, "I tell you we will cut his head off with the Crown upon it." Dissenting members were discouraged from attending, and the court began to arrange the forms of the trial. Steel was chosen Attorney-General, Cook was appointed Solicitor, and Henry Scobill, clerk. It was decided that the trial should take place at Westminster, and the 20th of January was appointed as the day on which the King should appear before the court.

On Friday, the 19th of January, a troop of horse under the command of General Harrison was sent to Windsor for the King. Charles entered a coach drawn by six horses, and was conveyed to London, and thence to St. James' Palace, where he was strictly guarded by the soldiers. But one of his friends, Sir Thomas Herbert, Groom of the Chamber, was allowed access to him. The next day, the 20th, about noon, while the High Court was discussing the final preparations for the trial, their attention was attracted by the approach of the King, who was carried in a sedan-chair between two files of soldiers. Cromwell, looking from the window, said, "My masters, he is come—he is come and now we are doing that great work that the whole nation will be full of. Therefore, I desire you to let us resolve here what answer we shall give the King, when he comes before us, for the first
question he will ask us will be, by what authority and commission we do try him." Cromwell's astute surmise was correct, for the King's first words questioned their authority to bring him to trial. The High Court entered Westminster Hall in solemn procession, Bradshaw at their head preceded by the Sword and Mace, and twenty halberdiers. A strong guard surrounded the building. Bradshaw, as President, occupied a chair of crimson velvet, and sixty-seven members of the court took their seats. The King soon appeared under the guard of Colonel Tomlinson and thirty-two halberdiers, and advanced towards a chair of crimson velvet which had been placed for him at the bar. Pausing he cast a long and searching look on the court, and then sat down without removing his hat. Rising suddenly, he looked behind him at the guards and at the great crowd of spectators who had been freely admitted, then gazed once more into the severe faces of his judges, and again sat down amidst a general silence. The names of the members of the court were read, and when that of Fairfax was called, the assembly was startled to hear a woman in the gallery say, "He had more wit than to be here." Afterwards, when the impeachment was read in the name of all the good people of England, the same voice cried, "No, not the hundredth part of them. Where are they or their consents? Oliver Cromwell is a traitor!" An officer bade his soldiers fire at the woman, who could be but dimly distinguished, but when they drew nearer to her the astonishing discovery was made that the indignant disturber was the General's wife, Lady Fairfax, who thereupon withdrew. Bradshaw rose and addressed the King. "Charles Stuart, King of England," said he, "the Commons of England, assembled in Parliament, being deeply sensible of the evils and calamities that have been brought upon this nation, and of the innocent blood that has been spilt in it, which is fixed on you as the principal author of it, have resolved to make inquisition for this blood, and to bring you to trial and judgment for it, for which purpose this High Court of justice has been constituted." Solicitor Cook then began to read the charges, when the King laid his cane softly on Cook's shoulder two or three times and bade him hold. The handle of his cane came off and fell to the floor, and as his attendants were not near him, he stooped and picked it up himself, and then sat down. The Solicitor read the charge against him, laying upon Charles the responsibility for all the evils arising from his tyrannical government and from the war, and demanding judgment on him as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and an enemy to his country. The King smiled at these words, but said nothing.
"Sir," said Bradshaw to the King, "you have heard the charge; the court awaits your answer."
Charles rose and looked calmly into the eyes of his questioner, and demanded to know by what lawful authority he was brought there. Bradshaw replied, In the name of the Commons of England. Charles retorted that he saw no Lords there which should make a Parliament, including the King, and urged that the kingdom of England was hereditary, not successive, and that he should betray his trust if he acknowledged or answered to them, for he was not convinced that they were a lawful authority. But lately, he said, he was treating with the commissioners of Parliament in the Isle of Wight for a peace, and the treaty was near perfection. "I desire to know," he continued, "by what authority I was hurried thence hither; I mean lawful authority, for there are many unlawful powers, such as that of highwaymen. I desire to know this, I say, before I answer your charge." Bradshaw pressed him to plead to the charge, and the King continued to demand their authority. Looking round upon the members of the House of Commons, he asked, with scorn, "Is this what you call bringing the King to his Parliament?"
Bradshaw replied, "Sir, the court awaits from you a definitive answer. If what we tell you of our authority is not sufficient for you, it is sufficient for us; we know it is founded on the authority of God and of the kingdom." As Charles still refused to plead he was ordered to be taken away, and his guards conveyed him to the house of Sir Robert Cotton, which was near at hand, and where his residence was fixed during the trial. After his departure some of the judges desired to pass sentence at once, but in order to avoid the reproach of a hasty and rash judgment it was decided to require his appearance at two other sittings and to press him to answer to the accusation.
On Monday, January 22, he was brought a second time before them, sixty-two of the judges being present, where much the same ground was covered. Bradshaw demanded an answer, and the King argued against their authority with much learning and dignity. As often as his reasoning brought him to this point he was interrupted by Bradshaw, who refused to permit him to discuss the question. The King claimed his right as an Englishman to raise a demurrer to their proceedings; but Bradshaw said his demurrer was overruled, and spoke of precedents, when the King quickly said, "Show me one precedent." Bradshaw was unable to answer his challenge, and, falling back upon his dignity, rebuked him for interrupting the court. The King said, "I require that I may give my reasons why I do not answer," and Bradshaw replied, "Sir, it is not for prisoners to require." "Prisoners!" thundered the King, "Sir, I am not an ordinary prisoner." A few more hot words were
exchanged, the King demanding to speak for the liberty of his people, when he was again taken away. As he passed down the stairs the soldiers repeated their cry of "Justice, justice!" but the populace cried, "God save the King! God save Your Majesty!"
The next day he appeared a third time, and Bradshaw sternly commanded him to answer, and forbade his discoursings. The King said, "For the charge, I value it not a rush; it is the liberty of the people of England I stand for. For me to acknowledge a new court, that I never heard of before— I, that am your King, that should be an example to all the people of England—to uphold justice, to maintain the old laws, indeed, I do not know how to do it." Still refusing to plead, he was hurried away by his guards. As he passed out, one of the soldiers cried, "Sire, God bless you!" An officer struck the man with his cane. "Sir," said the King, "the punishment exceeds the offense." He disappeared amid the same exclamations of sympathy and of reproach which had followed him on the preceding days.
Indeed, the King's bearing in his perilous situation was so majestic, and his conduct was marked by so much patience and forbearance, that the people were turning to him in multitudes. Outside of the Army there were few Englishmen who could view with complacence the end that was felt to be approaching so swiftly. Besides, their tardy sympathy was accelerated by the energetic efforts which one half the world seemed to be making in his behalf. The States-General of Holland, under the filial persuasion of the Prince of Wales, had sent an ambassador to intercede with the Parliament and with Cromwell for his life. A commission came from Scotland to recall to the Lord-General's mind that provision in the Covenant which bound them all to preserve His Majesty's person, but Cromwell told them his crimes were beyond pardon. Another came from France on a like errand of mercy. Henrietta Maria, who, with the royal family of France, was under restraint in the siege of Paris during an insurrection there, found opportunity to send a letter to the English Parliament, making a passionate lamentation for the sad condition of her husband, and desiring that they would grant her a pass to come over to him. She offered to exercise all her influence with him to give them satisfaction; but, if they would not consent to this, then she implored that she might at least be near him to perform the duty she owed him in his last extremity. John Cromwell, a cousin to Oliver, and now employed in the Dutch service, besought the Lieutenant-General with entreaties, reproaches, almost with threats, to interpose his power in behalf of Charles. All was without avail. Cromwell and the High Court of Justice were inexorable.
On the 24th and 25th they examined thirty-two witnesses who testified to seeing the King present when his standard was set up at Nottingham; that he was on the field at Edgehill and Newbury, and before Gloucester during the siege; that he dismounted from his horse at Cropredy Bridge and led his troops with sword in hand, putting Waller’s army to flight; and that he was in the front of his army at Naseby. This was the sum of the evidence against him. On the 25th, towards the close of the day, Ireton and five others were appointed to draw up the sentence. There were forty-six members present that day. On the 26th, with sixty-two members, the court passed on the form of the sentence. On the 27th the court met, with sixty-seven present, to pass their sentence. Charles entered the hall, pale, inwardly agitated, but every inch a king. Before taking his seat, he said to Bradshaw, "Sir, I shall ask to speak a word; I hope I shall not give you occasion to interrupt me."

Bradshaw: "You may answer in your turn. Hear the court first."
The King: "If it please you, Sir, I desire to be heard, and I shall not give any occasion of interruption, and it is only in a word. A sudden judgment—"

Bradshaw (interrupting): "Sir, you shall be heard in due time, but you are to hear the court first."
The King: "Sir, I desire it, it will be in order to what I believe the court will say; and therefore, Sir, a hasty judgment is not so soon recalled."

Bradshaw: "Sir, you shall be heard before the judgment be given, and in the meantime you may forbear."
The King sat down, and Bradshaw addressed the court, censuring the King for his contumacy in impeaching the jurisdiction of the court. He then gave the King permission to speak in his own defense, but warned him that he must not again question their authority.

It had never penetrated the soul of Charles that they would dare to put him to death otherwise than by assassination until he was brought before them on this occasion for judicial sentence. He had spoken a short time before of holding in reserve three resources, the least of which would enable him to save his life. The first two of these were probably a fanciful power to treat with either the Parliamentary or the Army party in a last extremity. The final alternative was his abdication of the Crown in favor of his son. This was what he now resolved to perform. Before the law he would be considered legally dead as soon as sentence was passed upon him. Hence his impassioned appeal to be allowed to speak as soon as he had come before them. He arose and began to speak amid a profound silence. He said that, since he had been forbidden to further discuss the lack of
authority of those who had brought him to trial, which he himself considered the most material question in the proceedings, he would make no further allusion to it. He had not entertained a tenacious hold upon his life, else he would have chosen to conduct his defense in a different manner. He had prized the peace of the kingdom and the liberty of his subjects more highly than the life of their King, all of which were involved in this affair, otherwise he would have been tempted to at least delay the passing of an ugly sentence which he now believed would be laid upon him. But now he thought that a hasty sentence once passed may sooner be repented of than recalled. Desiring the peace of the kingdom and the liberty of his subjects more than his own particular ends, he asked that he might be privileged to meet with the two Houses of Parliament in the Painted Chamber, as he had a communication to make to the Lords and Commons which was of the greatest importance to the nation. If they refused, then these offers of liberty and peace were pure shows.

The King’s speech had been followed closely by the court, and by the vast audience, and when he made that mysterious reference to a plan of settlement, his purpose to abdicate was inferred by all, and a wave of excitement swept over the whole assembly. Charles had outwitted the court and had taken them completely by surprise. They had held a secret meeting that morning, and planned a line of conduct for their own guidance in any one of half a dozen things which they conjectured the King might say. But they had never anticipated his request to meet with his Parliament for such an obvious and important communication. Bradshaw attempted to break the force of the speech by denouncing it as a further aspersion on the authority of the High Court of justice, and a subterfuge to gain time. The King answered that if his message was not found to be worthy of the importance which he had ascribed to it, the shame would be his. Bradshaw resumed his speech, in which he continued to deny the King’s request, when the excitement that possessed both court and spectators broke out into a disturbance. The soldiers, urged on by Axtell, their Colonel, cried, "Justice! Execution!" and when Charles, in the deepest agitation, cried, "Hear me! hear me!" the same shouts were repeated. Colonel Downs, who was one of the judges, rose up, while two of his colleagues, Cawley and Wanton, endeavored to pull him down. "Have we hearts of stone?" he asked. "Are we men?" "You will ruin us and yourself," said Cawley. "No matter," replied Downs, "if I die for it, I must do it." Cromwell turned to him angrily, and said, "Colonel, are you yourself? What mean you? Can’t you be quiet?" "No, Sir," answered Downs, "I cannot be quiet." He then formally addressed the President, and told him that he could not give his consent to the sentence, and
desired that the court would retire in order that he might state his reasons. Bradshaw, wishing to preserve the decorum of the court, unwillingly consented, and the judges withdrew for conference.

There was a stormy interview in the Court of Wards, whither they had retired, but all opposition was silenced, and at the end of half an hour they returned to the hall and Bradshaw informed the King that the court rejected his proposal. When Charles still insisted on the urgency of his communication, Bradshaw made the unjudicial retort, "Sir, you have not owned us as a court, and you looked upon us as a sort of people met together, and we know what language we received from your party." The King replied, "I know nothing of that." The clerk then read the sentence, which, after reciting the charge against him, provided, "for all which treasons and crimes, this court doth adjudge, that he, the said Charles Stuart, as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and a public enemy, shall be put to death by the severing of his head from his body."

The sentence having been read, Bradshaw said, "The sentence now read and published, is the act, sentence, judgment, and resolution of the whole court." Each one of the Regicides thereupon stood up in token of consent. The soldiers gathered round the King. "Sir," said Charles, suddenly, "will you hear me a word?"

Bradshaw: "Sir, you are not to be heard after the sentence."
The King: "No, Sir?"
Bradshaw: "No, Sir, by your favor, Sir. Guard, withdraw your prisoner."
The King: "I may speak after sentence by your favor, Sir. I may speak after sentence, Ever! By your favor (to the guards), Hold! The sentence, Sir—I say, Sir, I do!—I am not suffered to speak, expect what justice other people will have!"

With these broken words of fallen but courageous majesty, Charles was hurried from the bar. His ejaculation of the word "Ever" was supremely dramatic. As he walked down the stairs, some of the soldiers blew the smoke from their pipes into his face, and jeered him. Others shouted, "Justice! Execution!" Still others on the outskirt cried, "God save your Majesty! God deliver your Majesty from the hands of your enemies!" Amid this turbulence he was taken to Whitehall.

The next day, Sunday the 28th, Dr. Juxon, Bishop of London, came to give the King the consolations of religion. On Monday the Commons sent his young children, the Princess Elizabeth, aged twelve, and the Duke of Gloucester, aged eight, to see him, they being the only members of his family in England. Charles took them upon his knees, and mingled his tears with theirs. He told
his daughter to assure her mother that he loved her as much as on their marriage day, and charged his son not to let them make him a King, as long as his elder brothers, Charles and James, were alive. He then fervently kissed them, again and again, and at last ordered them to be taken away. When they reached the door, they flew back to his arms, sobbing aloud, until Charles tore himself from their caresses, and blessed them, and then fell upon his knees, and prayed.

The court drew up a warrant for his execution the next day, which was addressed to Colonels Hacker, Huncks, and Phayr, and which required them to see it executed. This was signed by Bradshaw, Cromwell, and fifty-seven other members of the court. When it came Cromwell’s turn to affix his signature, he wrote his name hastily, and then, in a nervous burst of mirth, he smeared the ink on his pen across the face of Henry Marten, who, after signing, did likewise in the face of Oliver.

On Monday the King was removed to the Palace of St. James, in order that full preparations for his execution might be made at Whitehall. On Tuesday morning Cromwell met Ireton, Harrison, and Axtell, together with the three colonels who were to have charge of the execution. Cromwell told Huncks to draw up the order to the headsman, but Huncks stoutly refused to do so, whereupon Oliver sat down and penned the fatal instrument himself, Hacker signing it.

Charles, after having slept soundly through the night, left his bed at four o’clock. Herbert, who had watched in deep agitation beside his master’s bed, related a dream in which he had seen Archbishop Laud come in and kiss the King’s hand. Charles merely said it was remarkable, and then, ”Let me be as trim today as may be,” said he, ”this is my second marriage day, for before night I hope to be espoused to my blessed Jesus.” In dressing he put on an extra shirt. ”The season is so sharp,” he said, ”as may make me shake, which some observers will imagine proceeds from fear. I would have no such imputation; I fear not death; death is not terrible to me. I bless my God I am prepared.” At dawn Bishop Juxon arrived, and read to him the twenty-seventh chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, which recites the last sufferings and death of the Savior. ”My Lord,” asked Charles, ”did you choose this chapter as being applicable to my present condition?” ”May it please Your Majesty,” replied the bishop, ”it is the proper lesson for the day, as the calendar indicates.” Charles answered, ”I bless God it has thus fallen out.”

About ten o’clock in the morning Hacker knocked gently on his door, and told him in a kindly voice that it was time to go to Whitehall, but assured him that he would have some further time to rest there. After saying a few more prayers the King stepped
forth on his march to the execution. A detachment of halberdiers preceded him, and a regiment of infantry followed him. Their drums were beating, and their colors flying. Charles walked with a firm tread; his face was serene, his eye was bright. On his right hand was Bishop Juxon, on his left, Colonel Tomlinson, who had charge of his person. Many of his gentlemen walked before him uncovered. A soldier maliciously inquired whether he had not concurred with the late Duke of Buckingham in the death of the King, his father. "Friend," answered Charles, with mild scorn, "if I had no other sin—I speak it with reverence to God's Majesty—I assure thee I should never ask him pardon." Arrived at Whitehall, the King entered the chamber where he had formerly slept, and partook of the sacrament. He refused to dine, but about twelve o'clock he drank a glass of wine, and ate a piece of bread. While he was on his knees, some of the Puritan preachers came to the door, and desired to be permitted to pray with him. He sent Dr. Juxon to thank them; "But tell them plainly," he said, "that they that have so often and causelessly prayed against me, shall never pray with me in this agony."

Hacker's knock was again heard at the door. "Now," said the King, rising from his devotions, "let the rogues come; I have heartily forgiven them, and am prepared for all I am to undergo." A double rank of soldiers stood beyond his door, and behind them a great crowd of men and women who offered their prayers and shed their tears without restraint. Charles walked through the banqueting hall and stepped out of a window upon the scaffold. He then made a speech to the people, defending himself against the charges upon which he had been tried. He told them he died a martyr to the people. In one sentence he defined his whole theory of monarchal Government. "A subject and a sovereign," he said, "are clean different things; the liberty and freedom of the people consist in having of the government those laws by which their lives and their goods may be most their own, but for having a share in the government is nothing pertaining to them." He declared himself a Protestant according to the Church of England, and he reproached himself for consenting to Strafford's death; and, turning to Dr. Juxon, he said, "I have a good cause, and a gracious God on my side." A soldier struck his foot against the axe, and Charles, fearing he might blunt its edge, said, "Take heed of the axe, pray, take heed of the axe!" Then to Colonel Hacker he said, "Take care that they do not put me to needless pain." Bishop Juxon said, "Sire, there is but one stage more. This stage is turbulent and troublesome. It is a short one. But you may consider, it will soon carry you a very great way; it will carry you from earth to heaven, and there you shall find to your great joy the prize; you haste to a crown of glory." The King replied, "I go
from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no
disturbance can be." He then laid aside his cloak, and taking off
his George, handed the decoration to the bishop with the secret
word "Remember." As his eyes fell upon the block he smiled to
perceive that they had arranged a contrivance to fasten him down
in case he should offer resistance. He said to the executioner, a
man disguised and wearing a black mask, "Place it so it may be
firm." "It is firm, Sir," answered the headsman. "I will say a short
prayer," said Charles, "and when I hold out my hands, then."
He stood in silent devotion for a moment, then raised his eyes to
heaven. Kneeling, he laid his head upon the block. The
executioner stooped to put his hair under the white satin nightcap
which he wore. "Wait for the signal," said Charles, thinking he was
going to strike. "I shall wait for it, Sir," answered the man. In a
moment the King held out his hands, and the judgment of the
Regicides was consummated by a single blow from the axe. "This
is the head of a traitor," cried the executioner holding it aloft,
and the soldiers shouted their approbation of the deed. A deep
groan arose from the multitude, and many pressed forward to dip
their handkerchiefs in his blood. The body was put in a coffin,
which was covered with black velvet, and carried through the
fallen snow to his apartment in Whitehall. Cromwell came that
night, and, uncovering the King’s body and gazing long upon it,
muttered the words, "Cruel necessity." Noting its apparent vigor
and strength, he remarked that it was sound and well made for
longevity. A soldier profanely asked him what government they
should have, and he replied hastily, the same that then was.
Viewed as an act of public policy, the execution of Charles I was
the greatest political blunder of the age. The people regarded it
as needless cruelty and oppression upon a monarch who was
already dethroned and a captive. It aroused for Charles all those
popular sympathies which the misfortunes of a good man
invariably excite. Even a hostile poet sang these words:

He nothing common did or mean,
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye,
The axe’s edge did try;
Nor called the gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

He was universally known to be, in his private life, as pure a King
as ever wore a crown. His passionate attachment for his wife and
his deep love for his children, were the uppermost affections in
his heart. The violence by which his end had been accomplished, and the heroic manner of his death, had effaced the memory of his encroachments upon the liberties of the people. Aside from those fanatics in the Army who had, under their plan to introduce a republic, brought him to the scaffold as the Chief Delinquent, the whole nation looked upon his execution with emotions varying from mild regret to absolute horror. But beyond all this was the fact which had been established for more than a thousand years in the English Constitution, that the King’s son inherited the Crown. Charles I, beholding him in the Puritan point of view, was a man who had misgoverned and oppressed his people, and then made war upon them. Stained with these malversations, his death would appease the wrath of his enemies, while at the very instant of his dissolution, the whole nation, longing to be at rest from civil war, must inevitably turn its eyes and its heart to his legal and natural successor in the Government—a prince having all the attractions of youth, esteemed as capable of being guided by a fruitful experience, and who was now become, by the law of the land, Charles the Second. They might interrupt the operation of the law for a time by violence and force; others might usurp the functions of the Crown; but from the day of the death of Charles I the desire for a lawful succession steadily increased, until eleven years later it secured the restoration of Charles II. But blessings come in disguise; and the candid reader will not lose sight of the fact that out of all the bloodshed and turbulence, past, present, and to come, the Sovereign Power of the English People was evolved and confirmed. When the unhappy Charles perished so pitiably upon the block, there perished with him that ancient theory of the Royal Prerogative which had led him to tell his people, with his last breath, that "having a share in the government is nothing pertaining to them."

THE LORD PROTECTOR
The Commonwealth of England was practically established when, at the death of Charles I, the monarchical principle was put to sleep, and the Parliament adopted a new great seal, bearing a representation of the House of Commons, with the words, "In the first year of Freedom by God’s blessing restored, 1648" (1649).

This device was suggested by the witty Harry Marten, who, while the measures for changing the form of the Government were in preparation, had used the words, "Restored to its ancient form of Commonwealth." A member questioned the propriety of the word "Restored," as he had never heard of the antiquity of the Commonwealth. Marten made the whimsical but ingenious rejoinder, that there was a text which had often troubled his spirit concerning the man who was blind from his mother’s womb, but whose sight was at length restored to the sight which he should have had.

A proclamation was issued declaring that instant death would be the portion of anyone who should proclaim Charles II, or any other, King, without the consent of the Parliament. It was ordered that all court proceedings should be conducted in the name of the Parliament of England. One hundred pounds was voted as a gratuity to the King’s executioner.

One week after the King’s death (February 6, 1649) the Commons, by a vote of forty-four to twenty-nine on the previous question, and by unanimous vote on the main question, solemnly abolished the House of Lords. On the next day they passed a vote running thus: "It hath been found by experience, and this House doth declare, that the office of the King, in this nation, and to have the power thereof in any single person, is unnecessary, burthensome, and
dangerous to the liberty, safety, and public interest of the people of this nation, and therefore ought to be abolished."

On February 13, the Parliament, now consisting only of the "Rump" of the old House of Commons, provided for the creation of a Council of State, which was henceforth to have the executive power and to consist of forty-one persons. Cromwell, Bradshaw, Fairfax, Whitelock, Marten, Ludlow, and Vane were members.

On March 21, the Parliament passed a declaration stating their reasons for establishing a Commonwealth, which contained a full account of their past grievances, together with an appeal to the popular prejudices by aspersing the King’s memory under the old and absurd fable that he had possessed a guilty knowledge of the cause of his father’s death.

On April 25, the Parliament attempted to restore public confidence by passing an act of oblivion.

On May 19, the Parliament enacted:

"That the people of England, and of all the dominions and territories thereunto belonging, are and shall be, and are hereby constituted, made, established, and confirmed to be, A Commonwealth or Free State; and shall from henceforth be governed as a Commonwealth or Free State, by the supreme authority of this nation the representatives of the people in Parliament, and by such as they shall appoint and constitute officers and ministers under them for the good of the people; and that without any King or House of Lords."

When the Council of State first met, Cromwell seems to have been chosen as its President, though afterwards Bradshaw filled the office.

Soon (March 13, 1649) John Milton was pressed by the Council of State to accept service as one of the Latin secretaries for the Commonwealth. He was then engaged in other work, was writing history, had contracted an unhappy marriage, and was planning a series of papers proclaiming the pernicious doctrine that divorce is a boon to society. But he was wanted especially to write a reply to that book of Charles I, *Eikon Basilikè—The King’s Image*. Its pathos and tender piety were smiting the consciences of all Englishmen. Immediately after the death of Charles, this book had arisen as an advocate almost out of his grave. It was printed and sold within a very few days of his execution. The King was at once assumed to be its author, and the claim has never been successfully denied, although the question has ever since been the subject of an interesting controversy. The book contains the King’s answer to all the political accusations which the Parliamentary party had made against him; and it was written with so much piety and meekness, and his sufferings
were referred to with so much patience, that it caused a tremendous revulsion of feeling. The demand for the book was so great that it passed rapidly through forty-seven editions, amounting to 48,500 copies, which were disposed of in England alone. Translations appeared in foreign countries, and the sentiment that the King had indeed died a martyr began to take such a firm hold upon the public mind, that the Parliamentary party implored John Milton to write a reply, which he promptly proceeded to do in a book entitled *Eikonoklastes*, or *The King's Image Destroyed*. But his style was so sarcastic and severe that it only increased the anger of the Royalists and Presbyterians.

Milton was now forty-one years old. He had been educated at St. Paul's School, and taken his degree at Cambridge. A season of travel on the Continent had added much to the stores of his mind. He had already produced *Comus*, besides a number of religious treatises. His political essays, sometimes coarse in expression, sometimes harsh with passion, always suggesting the partisan and the advocate, and seldom the philosopher, were nevertheless powerful additions to the discussions of the times. Firm in his self-confidence, he had already promised the world that he would write a poem which would be the glory of his country. While pursuing his arduous duties as Cromwell's secretary, he became totally blind. Long afterwards, in a forced retirement which followed the Restoration, he wrote *Paradise Lost*, and sold it to his publisher for five pounds, with the promise of five more when 1,300 copies should be sold. He had received one thousand pounds for *Eikonoklastes*. In the following noble sonnet, he paid a tribute of homage to the Puritan leader:

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,
And on the neck of crowned fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwin stream with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
To conquer still; peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war; new foes arise
Threat'ning to bind our souls with secular chains;
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw."

Oliver Cromwell was very busy in these days. The marriage settlement was still to be arranged for his son Richard, idle Richard, who had taken no part in these big wars. Oliver advised him to learn business, to study mathematics, to read Raleigh's *History of the World*, to do something, anything, that would make the world respect him. Richard was by this time much in love with Mistress Dorothy, and there was much correspondence between Richard's father and Dorothy's father concerning her portion. Oliver was exacting, Mr. Mayor was cautious and thrifty. But Richard was impetuous, in short, a fond lover. "Sir," writes Oliver to Mr. Mayor, "my son had a great desire to come down, and wait
upon your daughter. I perceive he minds that more than to attend to business here." A little more negotiation followed, and then all was agreed to. At last they were married (May 1, 1649), and Richard led a dull, stupid, respectable, and uneventful life at Hursely, acquiring nothing from the experience of the times to fit him for his future Protectorship. Discontent, jealousy, suspicion, seem to be spreading all over the land. The Army becomes infected. John Lilburne, an officer, is writing vicious pamphlets about England’s New Chains Discovered. Whalley’s regiment mutinies. Cromwell, furious in the face of insubordination, hastens to their quarters at Bishopsgate, arrests fifteen of the ringleaders, condemns six of them to death, but pardons five, and makes an example of one young trooper, Lockyer, who is shot. This quells the mutiny, and order is restored. But Lilburne’s pamphlets are very troublesome. They spread disorder everywhere. Their author is now a close prisoner in the Tower, but his virile pen has wrought much mischief. The Levelers rise, knowing not what they would have, exactly, but they dislike the present order of things. Their aspect is threatening. The country people swell their ranks. Their of husbandry are converted into arms. Their rude implements must be crushed. Cromwell marches upon them, Fairfax being with him. The Levelers retreat north, sorry now that they ever held a grievance. The Lieutenant-General follows them with speed. All through a Sunday and Monday in the middle of May he rides after them. He covers nearly fifty miles in a day, comes up with them at midnight on Monday at the town of Burford. There is no resistance. Three of them are shot to death. He gathers others into a church, and harangues them in the Puritan style, and then pardons them. “England’s New Chains” are now worn without further revolt, and Cromwell returns to London to be banqueted and thanked. He had saved the nation from anarchy. And now for Ireland. Never, since the Catholic massacre of 1641, had the English Government been able to assert its power in that distressed country. Unpunished crime had made the bigoted rebels bold to continue the most atrocious cruelties. The heir to the throne, now calling himself Charles II, had renewed Ormond’s commission as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and the whole island, except the city of Dublin, was held by parties hostile to the Parliament. Ormond, an able and audacious Royalist, had planted his troops in many of the old castles. Owen Roe O’Neil, of an ancient extraction, swayed the native Catholics, and bade defiance to all English, either for King or Parliament. Abbas O’Teague led the excommunicated hordes. In Ulster there were Episcopalians for the King, Presbyterians for the King and the Covenant, and many Sectarians for the Parliament. In Dublin there was Michael Jones, a General commanding for the Parliament, who had just won a great victory by beating the Marquis of Ormond’s army. The Parliament selected Oliver Cromwell to go to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, with plenary powers to reduce that country to obedience. He arrived in Dublin August 15, 1649. Henry Cromwell, his gallant son, and Henry Ireton, his son-in-law, were with him. A fearful anarchy prevailed on all sides. The war which had broken out in 1641 had embodied the Irish method of demanding religious
liberty for Catholics. Looking back from this enlightened age, we must see that the native population had been sorely oppressed. The narrow spirit of the times had denied to them the right to practice their religion according to the forms in which they had been instructed. A Catholic had no protection for his conscience before the pale of English law, and when their churches were closed, and their lands and money confiscated, they resisted, as people who are treated with like rigor by the ruling powers must ever have the right to resist. But their extreme barbaric ignorance, their savage hatred of their oppressors, and the native fierceness of their disposition, led them beyond the line of conduct of a just rebellion into acts of cruelty and ferocity which made them resemble wild beasts. The story of their brutal treatment of the English settlers has already been told. Cromwell, with a mind oblivious of their own wrongs, brought his invading hosts to conquer them, and wreak a fearful vengeance on their crimes. But his purpose was not one of indiscriminate slaughter. Immediately after his arrival at Dublin, he issued a declaration, warning his soldiers against the practice of any cruelties, pillage, or robbery upon the common people, or those not in arms, and he threatened with death any who disobeyed in this respect. He was transported to believe himself the captain of the Most High, commissioned by Eternal Heaven to lift that unhappy land out of centuries of ignorance and superstition, and to cleave the way for the true gospel of Christ by the power of his sword.

"It is a principle," observes a philosophic French writer, "that every religion which is persecuted becomes itself persecuting, for as soon as by some accidental turn it arises from persecution, it attacks the religion which persecuted it, not as a religion, but as a tyranny."

On the 3rd of September Cromwell appeared before Drogheda, or Tredagh, as it was then called, and summoned it to surrender. This city is situated in the province of Leinster, thirty-one miles north of Dublin, on the historic Boyne River. The summons being denied, he planted his batteries with extreme leisure, and did not begin to play his guns until one week after. His official report to Speaker Lenthall of this affair is terrible in its simplicity and directness. He writes:

"Upon Tuesday, the 10th of this instant, about five o’clock in the evening, we began the storm; and after some hot dispute we entered, about seven or eight hundred men; the enemy disputing it very stiffly with us. And indeed, through the advantages of the place, and the courage God was pleased to give the defenders, our men were forced to retreat quite out of the breach, not without some considerable loss."

He does not tell the fact that he, viewing this repulse from the batteries, placed himself at the head of the charging column, and led the second attack in person. But he says:
"Being encouraged to recover their loss, they made a second attempt; wherein God was pleased so to animate them that they got ground of the enemy, and, by the goodness of God, forced him to quit his entrenchments. ... Divers of the enemy retreated into the Mill-Mount: a place very strong and of difficult access, being exceedingly high, having a good graft, and strongly palisadoed. The Governor, Sir Arthur Aston, and divers considerable officers being there, our men getting up to them, were ordered by me to put them all to the sword. And indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town: and, I think, that night they put to the sword about 2,000 men; divers of the officers and soldiers being fled over the bridge into the other part of the town, where about 100 of them possessed St. Peter’s Church-steepie, some the Westgate, and others a strong Round Tower next the Gate called St. Sunday’s. These being summoned to yield to mercy, refused. Whereupon I ordered the steeple of St. Peter’s Church to be fired, when one of them was heard to say in the midst of the flames, ‘God damn me, God confound me, I burn, I burn!’"

Night put a stop to the dreadful carnage. But at daybreak it was resumed. Sir Arthur Aston, the English Governor, and Sir Edmund Verney, son of the standard-bearer at Edgehill, were slain. The frightened survivors were caught and killed. Especial delight was manifested in killing the priests. But two of these men escaped the first slaughter, and they were found the next day, and knocked on the head by the soldiers. In all, 3,000 men were put to the sword. Cromwell justifies his conduct by a soldier’s logic. He writes:

"I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood, and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future: which are the satisfactory grounds to such actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret. The officers and soldiers of this garrison were the flower of their army; and their great expectation was, that our attempting this place would put fair to ruin us, they being confident of the resolution of their men, and the advantage of the place. ... And now give me leave to say how it comes to pass that this work is wrought. It was set upon some of our hearts, that a great thing should be done, not by power or might, but by the Spirit of God. And is it not so, clearly? That which caused your men to storm so courageously, it was the Spirit of God who gave your men courage, and took it away again; and gave the enemy courage, and took it away again; and gave your men courage again, and therewith this happy success. And therefore it is good that God alone have all the glory."
We have told the story of this frightful encounter chiefly in Cromwell’s own words, because Cromwell, as his own witness, has not attempted to evade any part of the responsibility for the slaughter. His purpose in killing the garrison of Drogheda is very plainly expressed by him, and that the result which he so acutely anticipated was speedily accomplished, is shown by this testimony from Carte, the biographer of Ormond: “The execrable policy of that Regicide,” says Carte, “had the effect he proposed. It spread abroad the terror of his name.” Cromwell entreated the Parliament to send him money and recruits. “We keep the field much,” he wrote, “our tents sheltering us from the wet and cold. But yet the country sickness overtakes many: and therefore we desire recruits, and some fresh regiments of foot, may be sent us. For it’s easily conceived by what the garrisons already drink up, what our field army will come to, if God shall give more garrisons into our hands.” From Drogheda Cromwell marched to Dundalk, a seaport town. He was not a bloodthirsty man; in spite of all the rigors of his battles his policy was that of a stern but humane general. Leading an unconquerable army, he sent this summons to the Governor of Dundalk. A bloodthirsty man would not have written thus:

"12th September, 1649.

"Sir:

"I offered mercy to the Garrison of Tredagh (Drogheda), in sending the Governor a Summons before I attempted the taking of it. Which being refused brought their evil upon them.

"If you, being warned thereby, shall surrender your Garrison to the use of the Parliament of England, which by this I summon you to do, you may thereby prevent effusion of blood. If, upon refusing this Offer, that which you like not befalls you, you will know whom to blame. I rest, your servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Dundalk surrendered; so did Trim, to the South of it. The intrepid commander left a force of Ironsides to garrison each captured city, which diminished the strength of his marching column, and he sent divers parties to conquer other strongholds. Upon receiving the reports of his operations, the Parliament made haste to send him more troops, which joined him in due time. After refreshing his soldiers at Dublin, Cromwell (September 23) marched south, and proceeded to invest his troops in some twenty Irish strongholds with scarcely any opposition. The Castle of Arklow, belonging to Ormond, was taken without resistance. At Limerick, Ferns, and Enniscorthy strong castles fell into his hands with varied spoil. By October 1, he had reached the southeastern extremity of Ireland and come before Wexford, a seaport city seventy-four
miles south of Dublin, situated at the mouth of the river Slaney, in the province of Leinster. A large garrison of English and Irish soldiers was strongly fortified in this town, under the command of Colonel David Sinnott, and it was their fierce intention to resist the Puritan invaders to victory or death. Cromwell has been often anathematized as a man of blood for his massacres at Drogheda and Wexford. But an examination of the facts must vindicate his conduct. He had offered fair terms to the garrison at Drogheda before assaulting their stronghold, and they had preferred to take the chances of battle. At Wexford he urged for many days the peaceable surrender of the place, postponing the last extremity of war even after he perceived that the defenders were trifling with him, and were prolonging the negotiations only to gain time for receiving reinforcements. The correspondence which passed between Cromwell and David Sinnott, the Governor of Wexford, is sufficient to exculpate the Puritan leader from the charge of a thirst for human blood. His first summons was as follows:

"To the Commander-In-Chief of the Town Of Wexford.

"Before Wexford, 3rd October, 1649.

"Sir,

"Having brought the Army belonging to the Parliament of England before this place, to reduce it to its due obedience: to the end effusion of blood may be prevented, and the Town and Country about it preserved from ruin, I thought fit to summon you to deliver the same to me, to the use of the State of England.

"By this offer, I hope it will clearly appear where the guilt will lie, if innocent persons should come to suffer with the nocent. I expect your speedy answer; and rest, Sir, your servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

To this Sinnott replied:

"For the Lord-General Cromwell.

"Wexford, 3rd October, 1649,

"Sir,

"I received your Letter of Summons for the delivery of this Town into your hands. Which standeth not with my honour to do of myself; neither will I take it upon me, without the advice of the rest of the Officers and Mayor of this Corporation; this town being
of so great consequence to all Ireland. Whom I will call together, and confer with; and return my resolution to you to-morrow by twelve of the clock.

"In the mean time, if you be so pleased, I am content to forbear all acts of hostility, so you permit no approach to be made. Expecting your answer in that particular, I remain, my Lord, your Lordship’s servant,

"D. Sinnott."

Cromwell’s answer was brief and to the point:

"Sir,

"I am contented to expect your resolution by twelve of the clock to-morrow morning. Because our tents are not so good a covering as your houses, and for other reasons, I cannot agree to a cessation. I rest, your servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

But Sinnott adroitly spun out the correspondence until the 9th, and Cromwell’s official report says:

"Our cannon being landed, and we having removed all our quarters to the south-east end of the Town, next the Castle, which stands without the Walls, 6th October, it was generally agreed that we should bend the whole strength of our artillery upon the Castle; being persuaded that if we got the Castle the Town would easily follow. Upon Thursday the 11th instant (our batteries being finished the night before), we began to play betimes in the morning; and having spent near a hundred shot, the Governor’s stomach came down; and he sent to me to give leave for four persons, intrusted by him, to come unto me, and offer terms of surrender. Which I condescended to, two Field-Officers, with an Alderman of the Town, and the Captain of the Castle brought out the Propositions enclosed, which for their abominableness manifesting also the impudence of the men, I thought fit to present to your view—together with my Answer:"

The propositions contained in addition to the usual conditions for the lives and property of the inhabitants some severe stipulations for the permanent establishment of the Catholic religion, stipulations which were very repugnant and utterly offensive to the leader of a Puritan Army. But Cromwell wrote a very patient and reasonable reply, and his report continues:
"Whilst these papers were passing between us, I sent the Lieutenant General, Michael Jones, with a party of dragoons, horse and foot, to endeavour to reduce their Fort, which lay at the mouth of their harbour, about ten miles distant from us. To which he sent a troop of dragoons; but the Enemy quitted their Fort, leaving behind them about seven great guns; betook themselves, by the help of their boats, to a Frigate of twelve guns lying in the harbour, within cannon-shot of the Fort. The dragoons possessed the Fort: and some seamen belonging to your Fleet coming happily in at the same time, they bent their guns at the Frigate, and she immediately yielded to mercy—both herself, the soldiers that had been in the Fort, and the seamen that manned her. And whilst our men were in her, the Town, not knowing what had happened, sent another small vessel to her; which our men also took.

"The Governor of the Town having obtained from me a Safe-conduct for the four persons mentioned in one of the papers, to come and treat with me about the surrender of the Town, I expected they should have done so. But instead thereof, the Earl of Castlehaven brought to their relief, on the north side of the river, about five-hundred foot. Which occasioned their refusal to send out any to treat; and caused me to revoke my safe-conduct, not thinking it fit to leave it for them to make use of it when they pleased."

Still Sinnott wrote apologies for not surrendering, and still Cromwell sent him fairly polite replies; one of which follows:

"For the Commander-In-Chief In The Town Of Wexford,

"Before Wexford, 11th October, 1649."

Sir,

"I have had the patience to peruse your Propositions; to which I might have returned an Answer with some disdain. But, to be short—

"I shall give the Soldiers and Noncommissioned officers quarter for life, and leave to go to their several habitations, with their wearing-clothes; they engaging themselves to live quietly there, and to take up arms no more against the Parliament of England. And the Commissioned Officers quarter for their lives, but to render themselves Prisoners. And as for the Inhabitants, I shall engage myself that no violence shall be offered to their goods, and that I shall protect the Town from plunder."
"I expect your positive Answer instantly; and if you will upon these terms surrender and quit, [and] shall, in one hour, send forth to me Four Officers of the quality of Field-Officers, and Two Aldermen, for the performance thereof, I shall thereupon forbear all acts of hostility. Your servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

As Sinnott still vacillated, the Irish officer in charge of the Castle was bribed to surrender it. The Roundheads then stormed the walls of the town and entered it with their ladders. The garrison resisted gallantly but their chance of life was now gone. The entire force under arms, and some of the noncombatants, were violently put to death to the number of 2,000. The townspeople fled away in terror and the city became the spoil of Cromwell’s troopers. Those who attempted to escape by boats so overloaded the frail crafts that they met death in the water. Cromwell continues his report:

"I believe, in all, there was lost of the enemy not many less than two thousand, and I believe not twenty of yours from first to last of the siege. And indeed it hath, not without cause, been deeply set upon our hearts, that, we intending better to this place than so great a ruin, hoping the town might be of more use to you and your army, yet God would not have it so; but by an unexpected providence, in His righteous justice, brought a just judgment upon them; causing them to become a prey to the soldier who in their piracies had made preys of so many families, and now with their血液 to answer the cruelties which they had exercised upon the lives of divers poor Protestants! Two instances of which I have been lately acquainted with. About seven or eight score poor Protestants were by them put into an old vessel; which being, as some say, bulged by them, the vessel sank, and they were all presently drowned in the Harbour. The other [instance] was thus: They put divers poor Protestants into a Chapel (which, since, they have used for a Mass-house, and in which one or more of their priests were now killed), where they were famished to death.

"The soldiers got a very good booty in this place; and had not they had opportunity to carry their goods over the River, whilst we besieged it, it would have much more: I could have wished for their own good, and the good of the Garrison, they had been more moderate. Some things which were not easily portable, we hope we shall make use of to your behoof. There are great quantities of iron, hides, tallow, salt, pipe- and barrel-staves; which are under Commissioners’ hands, to be secured. We believe there are near a hundred cannon in the Fort, and elsewhere in and about the Town. Here is likewise some very good shipping; here are three
vessels, one of them of thirty-four guns, which a week’s time would fit to sea; there is another of about twenty guns, very near ready likewise. And one other Frigate of twenty guns, upon the stocks; made for sailing; which is built up to the uppermost deck; for her handsomeness’ sake, I have appointed the workmen to finish her, here being materials to do it, if you or the Council of State shall approve thereof. The Frigate, also, taken beside the Fort, is a most excellent vessel for sailing. Besides divers other ships and vessels in the Harbour.

"This Town is now so in your power, that of the former inhabitants, I believe scarce one in twenty can challenge any property in their houses. Most of them are run away, and many of them killed in this service. And it were to be wished, that an honest people would come and plant here; where are very good houses, and other accommodations fitted in their hands, which may by your favour be made of encouragement to them. As also a seat of good trade, both inward and outward; and of marvellous great advantage in the point of the herring and other fishing. The Town is pleasantly seated and strong, having a rampart of earth within the wall near fifteen feet thick.

"Thus it hath pleased God to give into your hands this other mercy. For which, as for all, we pray God may have all the glory. Indeed your instruments are poor and weak and can do nothing but through believing, and that is the gift of God also.

"I humbly take leave, and rest, your most humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

This was the "Curse of Cromwell" which the Puritan invader had fastened upon Ireland. To this day his memory is execrated by the native Catholics. There were many rumors in England of his progress, some of which indicated that he had been slain and his Army destroyed; others, that his pathway was marked by fire and death and conquest; on hearing which a Royalist poet, Will Douglas, wrote thus:

Cromwell is dead, and risen; and dead again,
And risen the third time after he was slain
No wonder! For he’s messenger of Hell:
And now he buffets us, now posts to tell
What’s past; and for one more game new counsel takes
Of his good friend the Devil, who keeps the stakes.
The duties and the fatigues of war could never disengage Cromwell’s heart from those whom he had left at home. He wrote this letter to the father of
Richard’s wife. There is an exquisite tenderness and pathos in it; the soldier in a hostile country is homesick, we suspect:

"For my beloved Brother Richard Mayor, Esquire, at Hursley:
These.

"Ross, 13th November, 1649.

"Dear Brother:

"I am not often at leisure, nor now, to salute my friends; yet unwillingly to lose this opportunity. I take it, only to let you know that you and your Family are often in my prayers. As for Dick, I do not much expect it from him, knowing his idleness; but I am angry with my Daughter as a promise-breaker. Pray tell her so; but I hope she will redeem herself.

"It has pleased the Lord to give us (since the taking of Wexford and Ross) a good interest in Munster, by the accession of Cork and Youghal, which are both submitted; their Commanders are now with me. Divers other lesser Garrisons are come in also. The Lord is wonderful in these things; it’s His hand alone does them; oh that all the praise might be ascribed to Him!

"I have been crazy in my health; but the Lord is pleased to sustain me. I beg your prayers. I desire you to call upon my Son to mind the things of God more and more! alas, what profit is there in the things of this world! except they be enjoyed in Christ they are snares. I wish he may enjoy his Wife so, and she him; I wish I may enjoy them both so.

"My service to my dear Sister and Cousin Ann; my blessing to my Children, and love to my Cousin Barton and the rest. Sir, I am, your affectionate brother and servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Young Charles the Second had come as far as the Isle of Jersey, being strongly tempted to join Ormond in Ireland; but when the story of how his affairs were failing there was brought to him he came not thither. Prince Rupert, bearing an Admiral’s commission, and having done some bold things on the high seas which were not far from piracy, had reached the coast of Ireland, expecting further glory. He now sailed away to the West Indies, where he soon after lost his brother, Prince Maurice, beneath a tempestuous wave. Rupert troubled the Parliament but little henceforward.
From Wexford Cromwell proceeded to Ross. Ormond, Castlehaven, and other generals were there, but after providing a strong garrison, they themselves discreetly retired. The Governor, Sir Lucas Taaffe, made some show of intending to resist, but Cromwell’s sharp letters and sharper batteries brought him to his senses in time, and he surrendered. "You may see how God pulls down proud stomachs," was Oliver’s comment. Sir Lucas had stipulated for liberty of conscience for the inhabitants of Ross, and Cromwell replied, "As for that which you mention concerning liberty of conscience, I meddle not with any man’s conscience. But if, by liberty of conscience, you mean a liberty to exercise the Mass, I judge it best to use plain dealing, and to let you know, where the Parliament of England have power, that will not be allowed of." The English part of the garrison enlisted under him. There was victory everywhere; but neither the magnificent Army which Cromwell himself had organized and disciplined until it was sensible and pliant to his lightest designs, nor its incomparable and splendid achievements, could evoke any sentiment in his devout heart but that of fervent gratitude to Heaven as the fountain of all mercies. He wrote:

"We are able to say nothing as to all this but that the Lord is still pleased to own a company of poor worthless creatures; for which we desire his name to be magnified, and that the hearts of all concerned may be provoked to walk worthy of such continued favours."

Intelligence came to him that the sentiment of the people at Cork was daily becoming more favorable to a Parliamentary allegiance. He prayed the Parliament to send money, clothes, shoes, and stockings for his men, and likewise new soldiers. "Through the same blessed Presence that has gone along with us," he wrote, "I hope, before it be long, to see Ireland no burden to England, but a profitable part of its Commonwealth."

Cromwell was prostrated by sickness at Ross. And so were many of his followers. "To the praise of God I speak it," he said, "I scarce know one officer of forty amongst us that hath not been sick. And how many considerable ones we have lost, is no little thought of heart to us." But he would never stop the work he had undertaken. He sent Ireton and Jones ahead with the Army, who came up with Lord Inchiquin and the rebels, and after an inconsiderable engagement put them to flight. Cromwell soon joined them and sat down before Waterford.

In describing his many fresh victories to the Parliament as he lay in the cold November nights before Waterford, he makes use of this characteristic language:

"Sir, what can be said in these things? Is it an arm of flesh that hath done these things? Is it the wisdom and counsel, or strength of men? It is the Lord only! God will curse that man and his house that dares to think otherwise! Sir, you see the work is done by a
Divine leading. God gets into hearts of men, and persuades them to come under you. I tell you, a considerable part of your Army is fitter for an hospital than the field: if the Enemy did not know it, I should have held it impolitic to have writ this. They know it; yet they know not what to do."

He then undertakes to advise his brethren in England against dissensions. "I beg of those that are faithful," he says, "that they give glory to God. I wish it may have influence upon the hearts and spirits of all those that are now in place of government, in the greatest trust, that they may all in heart draw near to God; giving him glory by holiness of life and conversation." Was it a wonder that these letters of the great Puritan were publicly read, by order of Parliament, in all the pulpits of England? He hopes—

"that these unspeakable mercies may teach dissenting brethren on all sides to agree, at least, in praising God. And if the Father of the family be so kind, why should there be such jarrings and heartburnings among the children? And if it will not be received that these are the seals of God’s approbation of your great Change of Government—which indeed are no more yours than these victories and successes are ours—yet let them with us say, even the most unsatisfied heart amongst them, that both are the righteous judgments and mighty works of God. He hath pulled the mighty from his seat, and called to an account for innocent blood. He thus breaks the enemies of his Church in pieces. And let them not be sullen, but praise the Lord, and think of us as they please; and we shall be satisfied, and pray for them and wait upon our God. And we hope we shall seek the welfare and peace of our native country: and the Lord give them hearts to do so too. Indeed, Sir, I was constrained in my bowels to write thus much."

It was thus that his faith stirred the heart of Cromwell in the gloom of the winter siege in that hostile country.

Waterford was, for the present, unassailable. Large reinforcements had just arrived for the rebels. Cromwell’s Army was in no condition to attempt to storm it; and so, on the 2nd of December, 1649—"So terrible a day," he says, "as ever I marched in all my life"—he set out for Cork, but paused to beat Ormond at a place called the Fort of Passage.

Under Cromwell’s extraordinary genius his pen possessed a power equal to that of his sword. Arrived at Cork he published A Declaration for the Undeceiving of Deluded and Seduced People, in which he replied to all the charges of cruelty and persecution which the Irish priests had made against him since his coming into their country. There is a tone of thunder in his scorn. In speaking of their Union which was organized to resist him, he says:
"By the grace of God, we fear not, we care not for it. Your covenant is with Death and Hell! Your union is like that of Simeon and Levi: ‘Associate yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; take counsel together, and it shall come to naught!’ For though it becomes us to be humble in respect of ourselves, yet we can say to you: God is not with you. You say, Your union is against a common enemy, and to this, if you will be talking of ‘union,’ I will give you some wormwood to bite on; by which it will appear God is not with you. ... You, unprovoked, put the English to the most unheard of and most barbarous massacre (without respect of sex or age) that ever the Sun beheld."

He boldly advances upon polemic grounds:

"He that bids us ‘contend for the faith once delivered to the saints,’ tells us that we should do it by ‘avoiding the spirit of Cain, Corah, and Balaam’; and by building up ourselves in the most holy faith—not pinning it upon other men’s sleeves. Praying ‘in the Holy Ghost,’ not mumbling over Matins. Keeping ‘ourselves in the love of God,’ not destroying men because they will not be of our faith. ‘Waiting for the mercy of Jesus Christ,’ not cruel, but merciful! But, alas, why is this said? Why are these pearls cast before you? You are resolved not to be charmed from ‘using the instrument of a foolish shepherd’! You are a part of Antichrist, whose Kingdom the Scripture so expressly speaks should be ‘laid in blood’; yea, ‘in the blood of the saints.’ You have shed great store of that already!"

The recent abuses spring up in his mind. He says:

"Arbitrary power is a thing men begin to be weary of, in Kings and Churchmen; their juggle between them mutually to uphold Civil and Ecclesiastical Tyranny begins to be transparent. Some have cast off both; and hope by the grace of God to keep so. Others are at it! Many thoughts are laid up about it, which will have their issue and vent. This principle, That people are for Kings and Churches, and saints are for the Pope or Churchmen, as you call them, begins to be exploded, and therefore I wonder not to see the Fraternity so much enraged. I wish the people wiser than to be troubled at you; or solicitous for what you say or do."

His hatred of Popery blazes out:

"But how dare you assume to call these men your Flocks, whom you have plunged into so horrid a rebellion, by which you have made them and the country almost a ruinous heap? And whom you
have fleeced and polled and peeled hitherto, and make it your business to do so still. You cannot feed them! You poison them with your false, abominable and antichristian doctrine and practices. You keep the Word of God from them; and instead thereof give them your senseless orders and Traditions. You teach them ‘implicit belief’; he that goes amongst them may find many that do not understand anything in the matters of your Religion. I have had few better answers from any since I came into Ireland that are of your Flocks than this, That indeed they did not trouble themselves about matters of Religion, but left that to the Church! Thus are your Flocks fed; and such credit have you of them. But they must take heed of ‘losing their Religion.’ Alas, poor creatures, what have they to lose?”

He answers their allegation that he came to despoil them of their lands, thus:

"But what? Was the English Army brought over for this purpose, as you allege? Do you think that the State of England will be at five or six millions charge merely to procure purchasers to be invested in that for which they did disburse little above a quarter of a million? ... No, I can give you a better reason for the Army coming over than this. England hath had experience of the blessing of God in prosecuting just and righteous causes, whatever the cost and hazard be! And if ever men were engaged in a righteous cause in the world, this will scarce be a second to it. We are come to ask an account of the innocent blood that hath been shed, and to endeavour to bring to an account—by the blessing and presence of the Almighty, in whom alone is our hope and strength—all who, by appearing in arms, seek to justify the same. We come to break the power of a company of lawless rebels, who having cast off the authority of England, live as enemies to human society; whose principles, the world hath experience, are, to destroy and subjugate all men not complying with them. We come, by the assistance of God, to hold forth and maintain the lustre and glory of English liberty in a nation where we have undoubted right to do it; wherein the people of Ireland (if they listen not to such seducers as you are) may equally participate in all benefits; to use their liberty and fortune equally with Englishmen, if they keep out of arms."

The expenses of his military operations were enormous, and the extraordinary drain upon the resources of his already impoverished country moved him to the deepest solicitude. But he looked upon the Irish war as a necessity of civilization and of Protestantism, and with this view before his mind he wrote to the Parliament on the subject as follows:
"Sir, I desire the charge [cost] of England as to this War may be abated as much as may be, and as we know you do desire, out of your care to the Commonwealth. But if you expect your work to be done, if the marching Army be not constantly paid, and the course taken that hath been humbly represented, indeed it will not be for the thrift of England, as far as England is concerned in the speedy reduction of Ireland. The money we raise upon the counties maintains the garrison forces; and hardly that. If the active force be not maintained, and all contingencies defrayed, how can you expect but to have a lingering business of it? Surely we desire not to spend a shilling of your treasury, wherein our consciences do not prompt us. We serve you; we are willing to be out of our trade of war; and shall hasten, by God’s assistance and grace, to the end of our work, as the labourer doth to be at his rest. This makes us bold to be earnest with you for necessary supplies: that of money is one. As there be some other things—which indeed I do not think for your service to speak of publicly, which I shall humbly represent to the Council of State—wherewith I desire we may be accommodated."

With the opening of the year 1650, he gives his soldiers a breathing spell, while he, spurning to spare himself, turns his attention to rehabilitating the courts of justice in Dublin, and doing much other work not only in the way of conquest but of pacification.

Michael Jones, his valiant aide, perished under the privations of the war, and Cromwell speaks thus touchingly of his death:

"The noble Lieutenant-General—whose finger, to our knowledge, never ached in all these expeditions—fell sick; we doubt upon a cold taken upon our late march and ill accommodation: and went to Dungarvan, where, struggling some four or five days with a fever, he died; having run his course with so much honour, courage, and fidelity, as his actions better speak than my pen. What England lost hereby, is above me to speak. I am sure I lost a noble friend and companion in labours. You see how God mingles out the cup unto us. Indeed we are at this time a crazy company: yet we live in His sight; and shall work the time that is appointed us, and shall rest after that in peace."

On the 29th of January he again took the field. "Though God hath blessed you with a great longitude of land," he wrote to Speaker Lenthall, "along the shore, yet hath it but little depth into the country." His second campaign was planned to accomplish the reduction of the inland fortresses. There was grave reason for his haste. The Parliament was becoming alarmed at the unmistakable tendencies in Scotland for Charles II. Cromwell was the only Englishman capable of restoring English authority in that kingdom. A formal letter,
recalling him to England, had already been dispatched, but he delayed his return until he could still further advance the work in Ireland. His march was northward, and every day almost he took a castle, a garrison, or a town. Kilkenny Castle opened its gates as soon as he appeared before them. Next Clogheen House submitted. Then Roghill Castle, the town of Knocktofer, and a fort called Old Castletown, were taken. Fitzharris Castle attempted a defense, but was carried by storm, and all its officers were slain, the common soldiers being spared. These conquests required the Lord-Lieutenant to leave many of his troops behind to do garrison duty, and, as he had sent Ireton and Henry Cromwell on other service, he arrived at the town of Fethard with only two hundred followers, and without ladders or guns, and sent his summons in the night. They rashly fired on his trumpeter, which they would have dearly repaid had he been better accompanied. But when they found it was really Cromwell who stood outside the walls they yielded their town to him, although there were then "about seventeen companies of the Ulster foot in Cashel, above five miles from thence." Gaining some reinforcements, Callan was taken, and some officers "who betrayed our garrison of Enniscorthy" were hanged. Ballysonan and Craigue House fell, and then Cromwell, for the first time since coming to Ireland, faced an officer of high rank, the Earl of Castlehaven. But Castlehaven had no spirit to stand before the indomitable conqueror, and vanished away. Leighlin Castle was reduced by assault; Gowran Castle resisted, but was taken by storm, and its officers were shot to death with the exception of one who had urged a surrender at the first summons. "In the same Castle also," says Cromwell, "we took a Popish priest, who was chaplain to the Catholics in this regiment; who was caused to be hanged."

On the 25th of February, 1650, the Commons gratefully passed a vote of thanks to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland for his services; and they then ordered that Cromwell’s family should have the use of the lodgings called the Cockpit, a sumptuous royal house in Whitehall. Cromwell thought that his mission was not yet sufficiently accomplished to permit of his return to England, and he wrote thus to the Speaker:

"Having given you this account concerning your affairs, I am now obliged to give you an account concerning myself, which I shall do with all clearness and honesty.

"I have received divers private intimations of your pleasure to have me come in person to wait upon you in England, as also copies of Votes of the Parliament to that purpose. But considering the way they came to me was but by private intimations, and the Votes did refer to a Letter to be signed by the Speaker, I thought it would have been too much forwardness in me to have left my charge here, until the said Letter came; it being not fit for me to prophesy whether the Letter would be an absolute command, or having limitations with a liberty left by the Parliament to me, to consider in what way to yield my obedience. Your Letter came to
my hands upon Friday, the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of March, the same day that I
came before the City of Kilkenny, and when I was near the same.
And I understood by Dr. Cartwright, who delivered it to me, that
reason of cross winds, and the want of shipping in the West of
England, where he was, hindered him from coming with it sooner;
it bearing date the 8\textsuperscript{th} of January, and not coming to my hands
until the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of March.

"The Letter supposed your Army in Winter-quarters, and the time
of the year not suitable for present action; making this as the
reason of your command. And your forces have been in action
ever since the 29\textsuperscript{th} of January; and your Letter, which was to be
the rule of my obedience, coming to my hands after our having
been so long in action, with respect had to the reasons you were
pleased to use therein, [I knew not what to do.] And having
received a Letter signed by yourself, of the 26\textsuperscript{th} of February,
which mentions not a word of the continuance of your pleasure
concerning my coming over, I did humbly conceive it much
consisting with my duty, humbly to beg a positive signification
what your will is; professing (as before the Lord) that I am most
ready to obey your commands herein with all alacrity; rejoicing
only to be about that work which I am called to by those whom
God hath set over me, which I acknowledge you to be; and fearing
only in obeying you, to disobey you.

"I most humbly and earnestly beseech you to judge for me,
whether your Letter doth not naturally allow me the liberty of
begging a more clear expression of your command and pleasure.
Which, when vouchsafed unto me, will find most, ready and
cheerful obedience from, Sir, your most humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

On March 22, he sat down before the town of Kilkenny, and demanded its
reduction to the obedience of the State of England, "from which," he wrote, "by
an unheard-of massacre of the innocent English, you have endeavored to rend
yourselves. And as God hath begun to judge you with His sore plagues, so will
he follow you until he hath destroyed you, if you repent not." But his demand
was stoutly refused by Sir Walter Butler, its Royalist governor. Thereupon the
batteries began to play on the town walls until, after a hundred cannon shot, a
breach was forced, and a storming party entered. This brought the garrison to
a sense of its peril, and, on the fourth day, the city was rendered to him. Some
officers who had revolted from the Parliament service were quickly hanged.
Amid the deep concerns of State and war, Cromwell took time to write letters
to his family, which, more than any other evidence we can present, disclose
the real piety and nobility of his mind. To Richard Mayor he said:
"The taking of the City of Kilkenny hath been one of our last works; which indeed I believe hath been a great discomposing the Enemy—it's so much in their bowels. We have taken many considerable places lately, without much loss. What can we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? Who can fight against the Lord and prosper? Who can resist His will? The Lord keep us in His love.

"I desire your prayers; your Family is often in mine. I rejoice to hear how it hath pleased the Lord to deal with my Daughter. The Lord bless her and sanctify all His dispensations to them and us. I have committed my Son to you; I pray counsel him. Some Letters I have lately had from him have a good savour: the Lord treasure up grace there, that out of that treasury He may bring forth good things."

And then to Richard Cromwell he wrote this letter, which only a Puritan father could write to a beloved son:

"For my beloved Son Richard Cromwell, Esquire, at Hursley in Hampshire: These.

"Carrick, 2nd April, 1650.

"Dick Cromwell,

"I take your letter kindly: I like expressions when they come plainly from the heart, and are not strained nor affected.

"I am persuaded it’s the Lord’s mercy to place you where you are: I wish you may own it and be thankful, fulfilling all relations to the glory of God. Seek the Lord and His face continually: let this be the business of your life and strength, and let all things be subservient and in order to this! You cannot find nor behold the face of God but in Christ; therefore labour to know God in Christ, which the Scripture makes to be the sum of all, even Life Eternal. Because the true knowledge is not literal or speculative; [no] but inward; transforming the mind to it. It’s uniting to, and participating of, the Divine Nature (Second Peter 1:4): ‘That by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.’ It’s such a knowledge as Paul speaks of (Philippians 3:8-10): ‘Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. For whom I have suffered the loss of all things; and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the
Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by Faith; that I may know Him, and the power of His Resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings; being made conformable unto His death.’ How little of this knowledge is among us! My weak prayers shall be for you.

"Take heed of an unactive vain spirit! Recreate yourself with Sir Walter Raleigh’s History; it’s a Body of History; and will add much more to your understanding than fragments of Story. Intend [endeavour] to understand the Estate I have settled: it’s your concernment to know it all, and how it stands. I have heretofore suffered much by too much trusting others. I know my brother Mayor will be helpful to you in all this.

"You will think, perhaps, I need not advise you to love your wife! The Lord teach you how to do it; or else it will be done ill-favouredly. Though Marriage be no instituted Sacrament, yet where the undefiled bed is, and love, this union aptly resembles [that of] Christ and his Church. If you can truly love your Wife, what [love] doth Christ bear to His Church and every poor soul therein, who ’ gave Himself’ for it and to it! Commend me to your Wife; tell her I entirely love her, and rejoice in the goodness of the Lord to her. I wish her everyway fruitful. I thank her for her loving Letter.

"I have presented my love to my Sister and Cousin Ann, etc., in my Letter to my Brother Mayor. I would not have him alter his affairs because of my debt. My purse is as his: my present thoughts are but to lodge such a sum for my two little Girls; it’s in his hand as well as anywhere. I shall not be wanting to accommodate him to his mind; I would not have him solicitous. Dick, the Lord bless you every way. I rest, your loving Father,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Retracing his steps a little, he came before Clonmel (May 9) in Tipperary, on the river Suir, and met the stoutest foe he had encountered in all Ireland. The commander in Clonmel was Hugh O’Neil, who fought Cromwell’s storming hosts until it became a death-struggle in the trenches. For four hours the soldiers were at push of pike, and there were more Roundheads slain than in any other engagement of that campaign. But night came and O’Neil drew out his forces and retreated. Cromwell, having battered down the castle, occupied the town, and when he found the garrison had quitted it, he set out after them and slew two hundred in the pursuit.

The Puritan Parliament passed a humane act for the settlement of Ireland whereby "all husbandmen, ploughmen, laborers, artificers, and others of the
meaner sort" should be exempt from punishment for the awful massacre, which Cromwell had already avenged; and prescribing graded punishments, under trial at law, of death, banishment, or confiscation of their estates, for those who held official positions or had influenced the atrocities against the Protestants. A Protestant Church of Ireland was likewise established, and the Puritan doctrines of righteousness and salvation were preached every Sunday from pulpits where Calvinistic Presbyterianism had never before been heard. In a large part of Ireland the ancient faith was well-nigh exterminated. This arrangement of order, piety, and peace was the "Curse" which Cromwell put upon the country, and even Lord Clarendon admits that Ireland never flourished to such an extent before.

He would have lingered in Ireland through the approaching summer, but affairs in Scotland would not wait. He appointed his son-in-law, Henry Ireton, his Deputy Lord-Lieutenant. For Ireton’s judgment, vigor, and tact he entertained a high regard, and Ireton’s prosecution of the Irish work was brilliantly pressed forward until, on the 11th of November, 1651, he died of the plague before the beleaguered walls of Limerick. Edmund Ludlow, who, in spite of the sour Memorials he has left us, was a valiant soldier of the Commonwealth, succeeded to the command of the Irish forces at the death of Ireton. Henry Cromwell was likewise appointed to continue in Ireland, where he acquitted himself with most admirable ability and courage. Leaving these men to subdue the last sparks of rebellion, Oliver Cromwell, having set the "Curse of Cromwell" on that land in such a way as to restore the distracted nation to peace and prosperity, embarked on board a Parliamentary frigate, and in the last days of May returned to England. He had killed men in the trade of war. Alas! many thousands of them had fallen before his sword. But his practice first and last was to offer quarter, and then, if resisted, to pursue his victory to the last extremity. He held with all successful Generals, that battles are fought to conquer, not to conciliate, the enemy. This was the extent of his "cruelties" in Ireland. He had been equally "cruel" in England at Marston Moor and Naseby, and he was soon to employ the same policy against the Scots at Dunbar and Worcester. Ireland, in spite of her woes, was never before so tranquil as in the days of his ascendancy, nor has she ever since been so prosperous in her commerce and her industry.

Fairfax and the chief officers of the Army, with the members of Parliament and of the Council of State, met him on Hounslow Heath and escorted him to London. "What a crowd come out to see your Lordship’s triumph," said one of his admirers. "Yes," answered Oliver, with that dry humor which he was ever fond to indulge, "but if it were to see me hanged, how many more would there be!"

CHAPTER XXI
Scotland, Dunbar And Worcester

The heroic Marquis of Montrose, acting under a commission from Charles II, had returned to Scotland, followed by a troop of mercenary foreign soldiers, with
the design of restoring that country to the authority of his royal master. Montrose had written a poem containing these lines, characteristic of his own daring soul:

"He either fears his fate too much,  
Or his deserts are small,  
That dares not put it to the touch  
To gain or lose it all."

The rise of the Independents in England had caused great consternation to the Presbyterian party in Scotland, and the execution of Charles I had pinched the conscience and wounded the vanities of the Scots, insomuch that many of their considerable men were now intriguing for the succession of the younger Charles to the Crown. Many assurances had secretly been given to Montrose that as soon as he should appear he would be joined by his old adherents and by many of the nobility who were ostensibly opposing him. Notwithstanding these promises, Argyle, who enjoyed at this time all the power of a dictator, prepared so comprehensively to crush his old enemy, that when Montrose landed in Scotland he found himself compelled to depend almost wholly upon his foreign battalion. The number of his men was small. Nearly a thousand of them had perished by shipwreck on the way over. He was entirely destitute of cavalry, and was thereby prevented from obtaining necessary intelligence of the enemy's movements. The Earl of Sutherland, while marching to join him with fifteen hundred men, was intercepted by Argyle's troops under General David Leslie and Colonel Strachan, and he immediately took service with them. The Covenanters surprised Montrose at Corbiesdale, when he had but six or seven hundred Germans and a few personal friends with him. His situation was entirely hopeless, but with the chivalrous courage which distinguished him as one of the most illustrious of the Cavaliers, he formed his soldiers for battle and fought until a hundred of them were killed and the rest ran away. He himself was taken prisoner, and, after receiving many indignities and oppressions from those who should have treated so eminent a man with the forms of decency, he was publicly hanged (May 21, 1650), his head was suspended on a pole, and his body was ignominiously buried beneath the gibbet. He was but thirty-eight years old at the time of his death. While destroying in this cruel manner the man who carried the commission of Charles II as Lieutenant-General of Scotland, Argyle had formed a compact with Charles himself by which the young King was to be crowned in Scotland. Charles, after demurring for many months, had swallowed his prejudices and subscribed the Covenant with the insincerity and contempt which were characteristic of his family in their political performances. He wrote to the Committee of Estates, with all the ardor of a Presbyterian: "We have, with you, Religion, the Gospel, and the Covenant, against which Hell shall not prevail, much less a number of sectaries stirred up by it." The Royalists in the three kingdoms were encouraging this alliance as a source of deliverance; Charles finally went to Scotland, and was crowned King; and it was high time that the
English Parliament should take alarm. It was now clear that they must either invade Scotland or be invaded by Scotland. They determined upon the former course.

Oliver Cromwell had returned to London on the 31st of May, 1650. He desired Fairfax to lead the army into Scotland, but Fairfax, controlled by his Presbyterian wife, refused to go, and resigned his commission. Thereupon Cromwell was appointed (June 26) Captain-General and Commander-in-chief of all the forces raised or to be raised by authority of Parliament within the Commonwealth of England.

Fairfax was in some respects a good soldier, but he was woefully out of place in his nominal position of General. He gives this pitiable account of himself: "From the time they [the Army] declared their usurped authority at Triplow-Heath, I never gave my free consent to anything they did. But being yet undischarged of my place, they set my name in way of course to all their papers, whether I consented or not: and to such failings are all authorities subject. Under Parliamentary authority many injuries have been done; so here hath a General’s power been broken and crumbled into a leveling faction, yet even this, I hope, all impartial judges will interpret as force and ravishment of a good name, rather than a voluntary consent, which might make me equally criminal with that faction. And if, in a multitude of words, much more in a multitude of actions, there must be some transgressions, yet I can truly say, they were never designedly or wilfully committed by me." A Short Memorial, quoted by Harris, Life of Cromwell, p. 141. See the interview between Fairfax and Cromwell and the officers, in which they endeavored to persuade Fairfax to go with the Army to Scotland, in Whitelock, Vol. III, p. 207, who observes: "None of the committee [was] so earnest to persuade the General to continue his commission as Cromwell and the soldiers; yet there was cause enough to believe that they did not overmuch desire it."

While the Army preparations were going forward, Cromwell one day took Ludlow aside and discoursed to him about public affairs in that enthusiastic manner which led Sir Philip Warwick to scoff at him as the Inspired Seraphic Independent. In this interview Ludlow notes that Cromwell talked for almost an hour upon the 110th Psalm. It was the General’s way of expressing his faith in the Providence of God. It was characteristic of him. It was characteristic of his party. The Psalm is short and reads thus:

"The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power; in the
beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning: Thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord, at thy right hand, shall strike through Kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the Heathen; he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

While Cromwell is bustling amid the preparations for a new war, being deprived of the companionship of his family, he writes hastily to obtain the latest word from them. His son Richard—idle Dick—seems undutiful and neglectful. He has just become a father, and Oliver writes to Mr. Mayor in these words. Is there "hypocrisy," is there "cant" in these private utterances to those who were of his flesh and blood? Could any man write these wonderful letters and be a hypocrite?

"For my very loving Brother Richard Mayor, Esquire, at his House at Hursley: These.

"Alnwick, 17th July, 1650.

"Dear Brother,

"The exceeding crowd of business I had at London is the best excuse I can make for my silence this way. Indeed, Sir, my heart beareth me witness I want no affection to you or yours; you are all often in my poor prayers."

"I should be glad to hear how the little Brat doth. I could chide both Father and Mother for their neglects of me: I know my Son is idle, but I had better thoughts of Doll [Dorothy]. I doubt now her husband hath spoiled her; pray tell her so from me. If I had as good leisure as they, I should write sometimes. If my Daughter be breeding, I will excuse her, but not for her nursery! The Lord bless them. I hope you give my Son good counsel; I believe he needs it. He is in the dangerous time of his age; and it's a very vain world. O, how good it is to close with Christ betimes; there is nothing else worth the looking after. I beseech you call upon Him. I hope you will discharge my duty and your own love: you see how I am employed. I need pity. I know what I feel. Great place and business in the world is not worth the looking after; I should have no comfort in mine but that my hope is in the Lord's presence. I have not sought these things; truly I have been called unto them by the Lord; and therefore am not without some assurance that He will enable His poor worm and weak servant to do His will, and
to fulfil my generation. In this I desire your prayers. Desiring to be lovingly remembered to my dear Sister [Mayor’s wife], to our Son and Daughter, to my Cousin Ann and the good Family, I rest, your very affectionate brother,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Cromwell marched north on the 29th of June, 1650—less than one month since his return from Ireland. His army numbered about sixteen thousand horse and foot. John Lambert, an officer who had attracted notice by his service at Marston Moor and Naseby, and was now only thirty-one years old, was his Major-General. Charles Fleetwood, afterwards his son-in-law, was General of the Horse. Whalley, his cousin, who had charge of the King’s person at the time Charles was permitted to escape from Hampton Court, was Commissary-General. Overton, Pride, and George Monk were among his colonels. His rank and file was composed of the flower of the Ironsides. John Rushworth accompanied him as his secretary.

By the 22nd of July the Army had reached Berwick, the northernmost part of England, and crossed the Tweed. It then marched northward along the coast of Scotland to Dunbar, and thence to Musselburgh, a small town but six miles from Edinburgh. In the latter place Leslie was fortified with a strong army, and Cromwell endeavored to provoke him to fight; but Leslie, wary of the man who had won the victory at Marston Moor after he himself had lost it, would not appear now. A drenching rain and lack of provisions compelled Cromwell to draw back his forces, seeing which, Leslie attacked his rear, "and indeed," says Oliver, "had like to have engaged our rear brigade of horse with their whole army, had not the Lord by his Providence put a cloud over the moon, thereby giving us opportunity to draw off those horse to the rest of our army." Upon which, Leslie withdrew to his trenches. Cromwell writes:

"The Enemy, when we drew off, fell upon our rear; and put them into some little disorder: but our bodies of horse being in some readiness, came to a grapple with them; where indeed there was a gallant and hot dispute; the Major-General and Colonel Whalley being in the rear; and the Enemy drawing out great bodies to second their first affront. Our men charged them up to the very trenches, and beat them in. The Major-General’s horse was shot in the neck and head; himself run through the arm with a lance, and run into another place of his body, was taken prisoner by the Enemy, but rescued immediately by Lieutenant Empson of my regiment. Colonel Whalley, who was then nearest to the Major-General, did charge very resolutely; and repulsed the Enemy, and killed divers of them upon the place, and took some prisoners, without any considerable loss. Which indeed did so amaze and quiet them, that we marched off to Musselburgh, but they dared not send out a man to trouble us. We hear their young King looked
on upon all this, but was very ill satisfied to see their men do no better."

Again he says:

"I did not think advisable to attempt upon the Enemy, lying as he doth: but surely this would sufficiently provoke him to fight if he had a mind to. I do not think he is less than six or seven thousand horse, and fourteen or fifteen thousand foot. The reason, I hear, that they give out to their people why they do not fight us, is, Because they expect many bodies of men more out of the North of Scotland; which when they come, they give out they will then engage. But I believe they would rather tempt us to attempt them in their fastness, within which they are entrenched; or else hoping we shall famish for want of provisions; which is very likely to be, if we be not timely and fully supplied."

Cromwell drew his officers about him and made them a characteristic discourse upon the greatness of the work that was to be performed. He spoke to them "as a Christian and a soldier," and besought them to be doubly and trebly diligent, to be worthy and wary, for sure enough, he said, they had work before them. But had they not had God's blessing hitherto? "Then let us go on faithfully," he cried, "and hope for the like still!" The officers, who believed him to be, indeed, the "Inspired Seraphic Independent," received his words with acclamations. No man could come in contact with him and escape the magnetic spell of his enthusiasm. Every soldier in his army loved him and was fearless of any foe when he was on the field.

And Cromwell loved a jest. On that same evening of his discourse to the officers, he heard a great shout among the soldiers and looked out of the window. Some of the men had found a Scotch churn filled with rich cream, which they were greedily drinking from their iron hats. One fellow, who seemed afraid he would miss his portion, raised the churn to his mouth and attempted to drink from it; but another merrily pushed it up until it fell over his head, spilling the cream over his clothing, and sticking fast on his head like a great hat. Cromwell laughed heartily at the ludicrous sight.

On another occasion, when Cromwell rode out with a small guard to reconnoiter, a Scottish soldier from a concealed position discharged his carbine at him, but missed his mark. Cromwell called to him that if he had been one of his soldiers he would have cashiered him for firing at such a distance. When he brought his troops before Hume Castle and demanded its surrender, the Governor answered, "I know not Cromwell; and as for my Castle, it is built on a rock." The guns were then turned upon the stronghold, which caused the doughty Governor to write this singular epistle to Cromwell:

"I, William of the Wastle,
Am now in my Castle;
And aw the dogs in the town
Shanna gar me gang down."
But his poetry brought forth such a shower of shot and shell that he soon
abated his tone and made a hasty capitulation.
A "Paper War," the usual accompaniment of those unhappy strifes, then
ensued. The Kirk of Scotland violently denounced Cromwell and the
Independents through many bitter pamphlets, and Cromwell replied in letters
of equal rancor and ability. In one of these papers he said:

"Indeed we are not, through the grace of God, afraid of your
numbers, nor confident in ourselves. We could—I pray God you do
not think we boast—meet your Army, or what you have to bring
against us. We have given—humbly we speak it before our God, in
whom all our hope is—some proof that thoughts of that kind
prevail not upon us. The Lord hath not hid His face from us since
our approach so near unto you."

And here come strange words from a General to an armed foe:

"Your own guilt is too much for you to bear: bring not therefore
upon yourselves the blood of innocent men, deceived with
pretences of King and Covenant; from whose eyes you hide a
better knowledge! I am persuaded that divers of you, who lead
the People, have laboured to build yourselves in these things;
wherein you have censured others, and established yourselves
‘upon the Word of God.’ Is it therefore infallibly agreeable to the
Word of God, all that you say? I beseech you, in the bowels of
Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken. Precept may be
upon precept, line may be upon line, and yet the Word of the
Lord may be to some a Word of judgment; that they may fall
backwards, and be broken, and be snared and be taken! There
may be a spiritual fulness, which the World may call drunkenness;
as in the second Chapter of Acts. There may be, as well, a carnal
confidence upon misunderstood and misapplied precepts, which
may be called spiritual drunkenness. There may be a Covenant
made with Death and Hell! I will not say yours was so. But judge if
such things have a politic aim: To avoid the overflowing scourge;
or, To accomplish worldly interests? And if therein we have
confederated with wicked and carnal men, and have respect for
them, or otherwise have drawn them in to associate with us,
Whether this be a Covenant of God, and spiritual? Bethink
yourselves; we hope we do.

"I pray you read the Twenty-eighth of Isaiah, from the fifth to the
fifteenth verse. And do not scorn to know that it is the Spirit that
quickens and giveth life.
"The Lord give you and us understanding to do that which is well-pleasing in His sight. Committing you to the grace of God, I rest, your humble servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Here is the passage from Isaiah:

"In that day shall the Lord of Hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of His people. And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate. But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way! The Priest and the Prophet have erred through strong drink; they are swallowed up of wine; they are out of the way through strong drink. They err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness; so that there is no place clean. Whom shall he teach knowledge? Whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little. For with stammering lips and another tongue will He speak to this people. To whom He said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest, and this is the refreshment; yet they would not hear. But the Word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, That they might go, and fall backward, and be broken and snared and taken! Wherefore hear ye the Word of the Lord, ye scornful men that rule this people which is in Jerusalem!"

We assume that honest David Leslie, the Scottish General, cherished but little real sympathy for the casuistries under which the Kirk theologians were endeavoring to reconcile austere Presbyterianism with the profligate branch of the Episcopalian party that was represented by the young King Charles. But Leslie, in a very brief letter, and with no relish for the business, forwarded to Cromwell, by command of the General Assembly, a Declaration, "wherein we are resolved," said Leslie, "by the Lord’s assistance, to fight your army when the Lord shall be pleased to call us thereunto." Unhappy Leslie! Upon him and upon his party Cromwell straightway pours out the vials of his wrath. He writes:

"But that under the pretence of the Covenant mistaken and wrested from the most native intent and equity thereof a King should be taken in by you, to be imposed upon us; and this [be] called ‘the Cause of God and the Kingdom’; and this done upon ‘the satisfaction of God’s People in both Nations,’ as is alleged, together with a disowning of Malignants; although he [Charles
Stuart] who is the head of them, in whom all their hope and comfort lies, be received; who, at this very instant, hath a Popish Army fighting for and under him in Ireland; hath Prince Rupert, a man who hath had his hand deep in the blood of many innocent men of England, now in the head of our Ships, stolen from us upon a Malignant account; hath the French and Irish ships daily making depredations on our coasts; and strong combinations by the Malignants in England, to raise Armies in our bowels, by virtue of his commissions, who hath of late issued out very many to that purpose: How the [Godly] Interest you pretend to have received him upon, and the Malignant Interests in their ends and consequences [all] centring in this man, can be secured, we cannot discern! And how we should believe, that whilst known and notorious Malignants are fighting and plotting against us on the one hand, and you are declaring for him on the other, it should not be an ‘espousing of a Malignant Party’s Quarrel or Interest’; but be a mere ‘fighting upon former grounds and principles, and in defence of the Cause of God and the Kingdoms, as hath been these twelve years last past,’ as you say: how this should be ‘for the security and satisfaction of God’s People in both Nations’; or [how] the opposing of this should render us enemies to the Godly with you, we cannot well understand. Especially considering that all these Malignants take their confidence and encouragement from the late transactions of your Kirk and State with your King. For as we have already said, so we tell you again, It is but [some] satisfying security to those who employ us and [who] are concerned, that we seek. Which we conceive will not be by a few formal and feigned Submissions, from a Person [i.e. Charles II] that could not tell otherwise how to accomplish his Malignant ends, and [is] therefore counselled to this compliance, by them who assisted his Father, and have hitherto actuated himself in his most evil and desperate designs; designs which are now again by them set on foot. Against which, How you will be able, in the way you are in, to secure us or yourselves? [this it now] is (forasmuch as concerns ourselves) our duty to look after.

"If the state of your Quarrel be thus, upon which, as you say, you resolve to fight our Army, you will have opportunity to do that; else what means our abode here? And if our hope be not in the Lord, it will be ill with us. We commit both you and ourselves to Him who knows the heart and tries the reins; with whom are all our ways; who is able to do for us and you above what we know: Which we desire may be in much mercy to His poor People, and to the glory of His great Name."
One evening (July 28) Cromwell placed his army within a mile of Edinburgh, “so tired and wearied for want of sleep,” said Cromwell, “and so dirty by reason of the wetness of the weather, that we expected the enemy would make an infall upon us.” Whereupon Leslie endeavored to insert his troops between the Lord General and his supplies. At dawn of the next morning Cromwell perceived the dangerous situation. There were hasty marchings by both armies and a severe skirmish, but the English succeeded in regaining their quarters at Musselburgh. It became clear by this time that it was Leslie’s policy to remain in safety behind the walls of Edinburgh, and to tire out the strength and patience of his enemy. It was a wise design. Cromwell could not conveniently unload his provisions at Musselburgh, his men were falling sick, and, after exhausting every expedient to provoke an engagement, he was forced to retreat to Dunbar where there was a fine harbor and he could fortify himself for the winter and wait a chance for battle.

Dunbar is situated about thirty miles northeast of Edinburgh on high ground on the rockbound coast. The town is on a sort of peninsula, about a mile and a half across its breast from sea to sea; and to landward of it are huge hills which are impassable except by one road. As Oliver, with an uncomfortable sense of being in full retreat, passed through these hills, Leslie, leading an army of 23,000 men, followed him and blocked up the passes. On one side of the Parliamentary host was the sea, on the other side a range of unscaleable hills and a hostile army. The ground on which they had set their tents was marked with plashes of water and rough bent grass. It was no suitable place for a fight. The Roundheads were in a trap.

For the first time in his life Cromwell was in despair, "being sensible of our disadvantages," he wrote, "and having some weakness of the flesh." His men now numbered scarce 11,000, and they were all conscious of the grave peril of their situation. Cromwell, standing for the first time in the presence of palpable defeat, wrote the following letter to Sir Arthur Hazelrig, plainly intimating his expectation of the annihilation of his command.

"To the Honourable Sir Arthur Hazelrig, at Newcastle or elsewhere: These. Haste, haste.

"Dunbar, 2nd September, 1650.

"Dear Sir:

"We are upon an Engagement very difficult. The Enemy hath blocked-up our way at the pass at Copperspath, through which we cannot get without almost a miracle. He lieth so much upon the Hills that we know not how to come that way without great difficulty; and our lying here daily consumeth our men, who fall sick beyond imagination.
"I perceive, your forces are not in a capacity for present release. Wherefore, whatever becomes of us, it will be well for you to get what forces you can together, and the South to help what they can. The business nearly concerneth all Good People. If your forces had been in a readiness to have fallen upon the back of Copperspath, it might have occasioned supplies to have come to us. But the only wise God knows what is best. All shall work for Good. Our spirits are comfortable, praised be the Lord, though our present condition be as it is. And indeed we have much hope in the Lord; of whose mercy we have had large experience.

"Indeed, do you get together what forces you can against them. Send to friends in the South to help with more. Let H. Vane know what I write. I would not make it public, lest danger should accrue thereby. You know what use to make hereof. Let me hear from you. I rest, your servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

"P. S.: It’s difficult for me to send to you. Let me hear from you after you receive this."

His position was indeed very similar to that of Essex in 1644, when he surrendered his army to Charles on the Cornwall promontory. But before Cromwell had dispatched his letter to Hazelrig, Leslie brought his troops down to the foot of the hills and placed them in such a position that the practiced eye of the Puritan leader joyfully discerned that there was still a chance for victory. He called quickly to Lambert and Monk, who likewise perceived the error of the Scottish formation.

Between the two armies a wide and deep brook ran. Far on the left of Cromwell’s men there was a ford except at which the stream was impassable. Leslie placed his foot near this ford and then surrounded them with his horse, concentrating the full strength of his army on this right wing. Cromwell believed that if he could but pass over the ford he would be able to strike such a blow on the foot soldiers as would force them back upon their own horse and throw the whole into confusion. To cross the ford first would be a point of vantage. With the armies in these postures the night fell.

An English soldier, who strayed too near this ford, was captured and taken before General Leslie. "Soldier," asked the General, "how will you fight, when you have shipped half of your men, and all your great guns?" "Sir," replied the Roundhead, "if you please to draw down your men, you shall find both men and great guns too!" An officer demanded how he dare answer the General so
sauceily. “Sir,” he said, “I only answer the question put to me.” Leslie set him at liberty, and he returned across the brook to Cromwell, complaining that he had been plundered of twenty shillings, which Cromwell made good to him from his own pocket.

Early on the morning of Tuesday, September 3, soon after three o’clock, the English were astir. The Lord General had explained his plan, and selected Lambert, Fleetwood, Whalley, and Monk to lead the charge. It was indeed victory or destruction. Lambert was slow to leave his tent, and Cromwell chafed at the delay. But by four o’clock the Ironsides were at the ford—were passing over. “They were actuated,” said Cromwell, “with as much courage as ever hath been seen in any action since this war.” There was a loud alarm in the Scottish camp. Their bugles called their men to arms. Before they were well aware of it, the English were upon them. The Roundhead horse were bravely met by the Scottish foot. Leslie’s men had hardly time to light their gun-matches. They were forced to use sword and pike. Oliver’s foot came across the stream and were bravely repulsed. Whalley’s horse was killed under him, but he quickly mounted another. They charged again, and the fight raged for nearly an hour. The Scottish horse attempted an onset, but were so fairly in the rear of their own infantry that they could make little headway. “The Covenant, the Covenant!” cried the Scots, now beginning to give ground. “The Lord of Hosts!” answered the English, “The Lord of Hosts!” Just then the tardy sun rose far out in the distant ocean. Oliver saw it. “Let God arise!” he shouted, “Let his enemies be scattered!” Old Noll, as the soldiers loved to call him, was in the heat of the battle, directing every movement of his men. “They run! I profess they run!” he cried. They were indeed beginning to yield. The words of the 117th Psalm sprang from the lips of the enthusiastic conqueror; to his warring hosts it sounded like a hymn of battle. “O! praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise him, all ye people!” he cried. “For his merciful kindness is great towards us; and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord!”

The troops caught the psalm from his lips and repeated it. He pressed to the front; once more the Roundheads charged—and won. The pursuit and slaughter were kept up for eight miles. Three thousand Scots were slain. Ten thousand of them were taken prisoners. All their artillery, ammunition, colors, and stores, and 15,000 arms, were captured. Leslie was foremost in the flight—he got to Edinburgh, thirty miles away, by nine o’clock that morning. The power of the Scots was crushed. The young King, who, before the Scots would fight for him, had been forced to sign a disgraceful declaration acknowledging that his late father had been justly punished for his sins, fled in terror to the Highlands. The English had won their victory by their gallant and invincible charge; they lost not over a score of men in the battle.

On the day after this victory Oliver wrote to his wife this touching letter:

“For my beloved Wife Elizabeth Cromwell, at the Cockpit: These.

“Dunbar, 4th September, 1650.”
"My Dearest,

"I have not leisure to write much. But I could chide Thee that in many of thy Letters thou writest to me, That I should not be unmindful of thee and thy little ones. Truly, if I love you not too well, I think I err not on the other hand much. Thou art dearer to me than any creature; let that suffice.

"The Lord hath showed us an exceeding mercy—who can tell how great it is! My weak faith hath been upheld. I have been in my inward man marvellously supported; though I assure thee, I grow an old man, and feel infirmities of age marvellously stealing upon me. [He was now 51 years old.] Would my corruptions as fast decrease! Pray on my behalf in the latter respect.

"The particulars of our late success Harry Vane or Gilbert Pickering will impart to thee. My love to all dear friends. I rest thine,

"Oliver Cromwell."

He appears unable to express his joy and thankfulness in the victory too fervently. Writing to Richard Cromwell’s father-in-law, he says:

"I desire my love may be presented to my dear sister Mayor’s wife, and to all your family. I pray tell Doll I do not forget her nor her little Brat. She writes very cunningly and complimentally to me; I expect a letter of plain dealing from her. She is too modest to tell me whether she breeds or not. I wish a blessing upon her and her husband. The Lord make them fruitful in all that’s good. They are at leisure to write often; but indeed they are both idle and worthy of blame."

He seemed to yearn for frequent letters from his family, and they seemed to write all too infrequently.
The same day he wrote to Ireton, who was winning rapid victories in Ireland, and was soon to die there:

"We have been engaged upon a service the fullest of trial ever poor creatures were upon. We made great professions of love; knowing we were to deal with many who were Godly, and [who] pretended to be stumbled at our Invasion: indeed, our bowels were pierced again and again; the Lord helped us to sweet words, and in sincerity to mean them. We were rejected again and again; yet still we begged to be believed that we loved them as our own souls; they often returned evil for good. We prayed for security:
[against young Charles Stuart’s designs.] they would not hear or answer a word to that. We made often appeals to God; they appealed also. We were near engagements three or four times, but they lay upon advantages. A heavy flux fell upon our Army; brought it very low, from Fourteen to Eleven thousand: Three-thousand five-hundred horse, and Seven-thousand five-hundred foot. The enemy Sixteen-thousand foot, and Six-thousand horse."

After writing to the Parliament a full account of his operations in Scotland up to this time, he spoke in these eloquent terms of the duties of the hour. He believed that the promise "The saints shall possess the earth" was in course of fulfillment, and his words sound like those of the ancient Prophets, with whom, indeed, he felt his spirit to be in kindred intercourse:

"Thus you have the prospect of one of the most signal mercies God hath done for England and His People, this War—and now may it please you to give me the leave of a few words. It is easy to say, The Lord hath done this. It would do you good to see and hear our poor foot to go up and down making their boast of God. But, Sir, it’s in your hands, and by these imminent mercies God puts it more into your hands, To give glory to Him; to improve your power, and His blessings, to His praise. We that serve you beg of you not to own us, but God alone. We pray you own His people more and more; for they are the chariots and horsemen of Israel. Disown yourselves—but own your Authority; and improve it to curb the proud and the insolent, such as would disturb the tranquillity of England, though under what specious pretences soever. Relieve the oppressed, hear the groans of poor prisoners in England. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions—and if there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not the Commonwealth. If He that strengthens your servants to fight, please to give you hearts to set upon these things, in order to His glory, and the glory of your Commonwealth, [then] besides the benefit England shall feel thereby, you shall shine forth to other Nations, who shall emulate the glory of such a pattern, and through the power of God turn—in to the like!

"These are our desires. And that you may have liberty and opportunity to do these things, and not to be hindered, we have been and shall be (by God’s assistance) willing to venture our lives; and [will] not desire you should be precipitated by importunities, from your care of safety and preservation; but that the doing of these things may have their place amongst those which concern well-being, and so be wrought in their time and order.
"Since we came in Scotland, it hath been our desire and longing to have avoided blood in this business; by reason that God hath a people here fearing His name, though deceived. And to that end have we offered much love unto such, in the bowels of Christ; and concerning the truth of our hearts therein, have we appealed unto the Lord. The Ministers of Scotland have hindered the passage of these things to the hearts of those to whom we intended them. And now we hear, that not only the deceived people, but some of the Ministers are also fallen in this Battle. This is the great hand of the Lord, and worthy of the consideration of all those who take into their hands the instruments of a foolish shepherd—to wit, meddling with worldly policies, and mixtures of earthly power, to set up that which they call the Kingdom of Christ, which is neither it, nor, if it were it, would such means be found effectual to that end—and neglect, or trust not to, the Word of God, the Sword of the Spirit; which is alone powerful and able for the setting up of that Kingdom; and, when trusted to, will be found effectually able to that end, and will also do it! This is humbly offered for their sakes who have lately too much turned aside: that they might return again to preach Jesus Christ, according to the simplicity of the Gospel; and then no doubt they will discern and find your protection and encouragement. Beseeching you to pardon this length, I humbly take leave; and rest, Sir, your most obedient servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Cromwell marched back to Edinburgh, in triumph entered the city this time, and began another "Paper War" with the preachers who were shut up in the Castle far above him. In this controversy he drives home the fact that they have departed from the Puritan fold by their resumption of the Stuart allegiance. He said:

"And although they [the Scottish Ministers] seem to comfort themselves with being sons of Jacob, from whom (they say) God hath hid His face for a time; yet it’s no wonder when the Lord hath lifted up His hand so eminently against a Family as He hath done so often against this [the Stuart Family], and men will not see His hand, it’s no wonder if the Lord hide His face from such; putting them to shame both for it and their hatred of His people, as it is this day. When they purely trust to the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, which is powerful to bring down strongholds and every imagination that exalts itself—which alone is able to square and fit the stones for the new Jerusalem—then and not before, and by that means and no other, shall Jerusalem,
the City of the Lord, which is to be the praise of the whole Earth, be built; the Sion of the Holy One of Israel."

The Scottish pamphleteers had said some harsh things about the late King’s execution, which stirred Cromwell to speak his mind boldly as to that, and the new government in England:

"Now if the Civil Authority, or that part of it which continued faithful to their trust [an allusion to Pride’s Purge], and true to the ends of the Covenant, did, in answer to their consciences, turn-out a Tyrant, in a way which the Christians in after times will mention with honour, and all Tyrants in the world look at with fear; and [if] while many thousands of saints in England rejoice to think of it, and have received from the hand of God a liberty from the fear of like usurpations, and have cast-off him [young Charles Stuart] who trod in his Father’s steps, doing mischief as far as he was able (whom you have received like fire into your bosom, of which God will, I trust, in time make you sensible): if, I say, Ministers railing at the Civil Power, and calling them murderers and the like for doing these things, have been dealt with as you mention, will this be found a ‘personal persecution’? Or is sin so, because they say so? They that acted this great business (the King’s Execution) have given a reason of their faith in the action; and some here are ready farther to do it against all gainsayers."

When the Scottish ministers attempted to reprove the English Puritans, and made themselves "the judges and determiners of sin," Cromwell said:

"This [method of censure] was not practised by the church since our Saviour’s time, till Antichrist, assuming the Infallible Chair, and all that he called Church to be under him, practised this authoritatively over civil governors. The way to fulfill your ministry with joy is to preach the Gospel; which I wish some who take pleasure in reproofs at a venture, do not forget too much to do."

In the midst of his solemn polemics, he strikes out some wise truths of public policy:

"Indeed, you err through mistaking of the Scriptures. Approbation is an act of conveniency in respect of order; not of necessity, to give faculty to preach the Gospel. Your pretended fear lest Error should step in, is like the man who would keep all the wine out of the country lest men should be drunk. It will be found an unjust and unwise jealousy, to deprive a man of his natural liberty upon a supposition he may abuse it. When he doth abuse it, judge. If a man speak foolishly, ye suffer him gladly because ye are wise; if erroneously, the truth more appears by your conviction [of him.] Stop such a man’s mouth by sound words which cannot be gainsay’d. If he speak blasphemously, or to the disturbance of the
public peace, let the Civil Magistrate punish him: if truly, rejoice in the truth. And if you will call our speakings together since we came into Scotland—to provoke one another to love and good works, to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and repentance from dead works; [and] to charity and love towards you, to pray and mourn for you, and for your bitter returns to our love of you, and your incredulity of our professions of love to you, of the truth of which we have made our solemn and humble appeals to the Lord our God, which He hath heard and borne witness to: if you will call [these things] scandalous to the Kirk, and against the Covenant, because done by men of Civil callings—we rejoice in them, notwithstanding what you say."

It must be repeated, Cromwell was not a man of blood. He had treated the Scottish people with great leniency, and he vainly hoped by the power of his pen to convert them to his own Independent theology, rather than to compel their obedience to England by military conquest. He wrote to the Council of State:

"I am in great hopes, through God’s mercy, we shall be able this Winter to give the People such an understanding of the justness of our Cause, and our desires for the just liberties of the People, that the better sort of them will be satisfied therewith; although, I must confess, hitherto they continue obstinate. I thought I should have found in Scotland a conscientious People, and a barren country: about Edinburgh it is as fertile for corn as any part of England; but the People generally (are so) given to the most impudent lying and frequent swearing, as is incredible to be believed."

On the 24th of December the great castle was surrendered to him, together with a store of ordnance more vast than could be found in any other stronghold in Scotland. The praying quality of Cromwell’s godly men and his high appreciation of piety in the Army, are shown in a letter which the Lord General wrote to Colonel Hacker, refusing to appoint one Captain Hubbert to a place then held by Captain Empson:

"I pray let Captain Hubbert know I shall not be unmindful of him, and that no disrespect is intended to him. But indeed I was not satisfied with your last speech to me about Empson, That he was a better preacher than fighter or soldier, -or words to that effect. Truly I think he that prays and preaches best will fight best. I know nothing [that] will give like courage and confidence as the knowledge of God and Christ will; and I bless God to see any in this Army able and willing to impart the knowledge they have, for
the good of others. And I expect it to be encouraged, by all the Chief Officers in this Army especially; and I hope you will do so. I pray receive Captain Empson lovingly; I dare assure you he is a good man and a good officer; I would we had no worse."

His wife at London is proud of his career and writes him (December 27) intimating that it will advance his interest if he write occasionally to Oliver St. John, now Lord Chief justice, and to John Bradshaw, now President of the Council of State [her letter is quoted in Chapter 1]. Letters also came from London informing him of his appointment as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, a compliment which pleased him much, and called forth this letter:

"To the Reverend Dr. Greenwood, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and other Members of the Convocation.

"Edinburgh, 4th Feb., 1650.

"Honoured Gentlemen:

"I have received by the hands of those worthy Persons of your University sent by you into Scotland, a Testimony of very high respect and honour, in [your] choosing me to be your Chancellor. Which deserves a fuller return, of deep resentment [appreciation], value and acknowledgement, than I am any ways able to make. Only give me a little to expostulate, on your and my own behalf. I confess it was in your freedom to elect, and it would be very uningenious in me to reflect upon your action; only (though somewhat late) let me advise you of my unfitness to answer the ends of so great a Service and Obligation, with some things very obvious.

"I suppose a principal aim in such elections hath not only respected abilities and interest to serve you, but freedom [as] to opportunities of time and place. As the first may not be well supposed, so the want of the latter may well become me to represent to you. You know where Providence hath placed me for the present; and to what I am related if this call were off [Lord Lieutenant of Ireland], I being tied to attendance in another Land as much out of the way of serving you as this, for some certain time yet to come appointed by the Parliament. The known esteem and honour of this place is such, that I should wrong it and your favour very much, and your freedom in choosing me, if, either by pretended modesty or in any unbenign way, I should dispute the acceptance of it. Only I hope it will not be imputed to me as a neglect towards you, that I cannot serve you in the measure I desire."
"I offer these exceptions with all the candour and clearness to you, as [leaving you] most free to mend your choice in case you think them reasonable; and shall not reckon myself the less obliged to do all good offices for the University. But if these prevail not, and that I must continue this honour, until I can personally serve you, you shall not want my prayers That that seed and stock of Piety and Learning, so marvellously springing up amongst you, may be useful to that great and glorious Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; of the approach of which so plentiful an effusion of the Spirit upon those hopeful plants is one of the best presages. And in all other things I shall, by the Divine assistance, improve my poor abilities and interests in manifesting myself, to the University and yourselves, your most cordial friend and servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

In February, 1651, he was stricken down by a dangerous sickness—the "infirmities of age" were indeed stealing upon him. His friends in England, including the Parliament and the Council of State, were greatly alarmed. But he recovered his strength and health, and wrote this letter to Bradshaw:

"Indeed, my Lord, your service needs not me; I am a poor creature; and have been a dry bone; and am still an unprofitable servant to my Master and you. I thought I should have died of this fit of sickness; but the Lord seemeth to dispose otherwise. But truly, my Lord, I desire not to live, unless I may obtain mercy from the Lord to approve my heart and life to Him in more faithfulness and thankfulness, and [to] those I serve in more profitableness and diligence. And I pray God, your Lordship, and all in public trust, may improve all those unparalleled experiences of the Lord's wonderful workings in your sight, with singleness of heart to His glory, and the refreshment of His People; who are to Him as the apple of His eye; and upon whom your enemies, both former and latter, who have fallen before you, did split themselves."

At the same period he wrote to his wife—wrote often to her doubtless, but too few of his family letters have been preserved. Those that do exist are profoundly attractive, illuminating as they do the secret soul of Cromwell. Of the persons referred to, "Betty" and "him" are his daughter Elizabeth and Claypole, her husband; "the Lord Herbert" is Henry Somerset, eldest son of the Marquis of Worcester, a Protestant only because the times made it expedient to be one, and therefore to be avoided:

"For my beloved Wife Elizabeth Cromwell, at the Cockpit: These.
"Edinburgh, 12th April, 1651.

"My Dearest:

"I praise the Lord I am increased in strength in my outward man. But that will not satisfy me except I get a heart to love and serve my heavenly Father better; and I get more of the light of His countenance, which is better than life, and more power over my corruptions: in these hopes I wait, and am not without expectation of a gracious return. Pray for me; truly I do daily for thee and the dear Family; and God Almighty bless you with all His spiritual blessings.

"Mind poor Betty of the Lord’s great mercy. Oh, I desire her not only to seek the Lord in her necessity, but in deed and in truth to turn to the Lord; and to keep close to Him; and to take heed of a departing heart, and of being cozened with worldly vanities and worldly company, which I doubt she is too subject to. I earnestly and frequently pray for her and for him. Truly they are dear to me, very dear; and I am in fear lest Satan should deceive them, knowing how weak our hearts are, and how subtle the adversary is, and what way the deceitfulness of our hearts and the vain world make for his temptations. The Lord give them truth of heart to Him. Let them seek Him in truth, and they shall find Him.

"My love to the dear little ones; I pray for grace for them. I thank them for their letters; let me have them often.

"Beware of my Lord Herbert’s resort to your house. If he do so, it may occasion scandal, as if I were bargaining with him. Indeed, be wise—you know my meaning. Mind Sir Henry Vane of the business of my estate. Mr. Floyd knows my whole mind in that matter.

"If Dick Cromwell and his Wife be with you, my dear love to them. I pray for them: they shall, God willing, hear from me. I love them very dearly. Truly I am not able as yet to write much. I am very weary; and rest, thine,

"Oliver Cromwell."

And here is another, the last that we have from this husband to his wife:

"For my beloved Wife Elizabeth Cromwell, at the Cockpit: These.

"Edinburgh, 3rd May, 1651.
"My Dearest:

"I could not satisfy myself to omit this post, although I have not much to write; yet indeed I love to write to my Dear, who is very much in my heart. It joys me to hear thy soul prospereth: the Lord increase His favours to thee more and more. The great good thy soul can wish is, That the Lord lift upon thee the light of His countenance, which is better than life. The Lord bless all thy good counsel and example to all those about thee, and hear all thy prayers, and accept thee always.

"I am glad to hear thy Son and Daughter are with thee. I hope thou wilt have some good opportunity of good advice to him. Present my duty to my Mother, my love to all the Family. Still pray for thine,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Some of the good people of Durham had petitioned the Parliament to convert "the houses of the late Dean and Chapter," in the city of Durham into a college or school of literature, but the matter had slumbered while more active affairs flourished. It is evidence of the common respect that was held for Cromwell’s liberal mind that those who were pushing the college establishment now made a perilous midwinter journey to Edinburgh to secure his co-operation in the scheme. He entered into the project with hearty accord, and wrote to Speaker Lenthall in these terms:

"Truly it seems to me a matter of great concernment and importance; as that which, by the blessing of God, may such conduce to the promoting of learning and piety in those poor rude and ignorant parts; there being also many concurred advantages to this Place, as pleasantness and aptness of situation, healthful air and plenty of provisions, which seem to favour and plead for their desires therein. And besides the good, so obvious to us, [which] those Northern Counties may reap thereby, who knows but the setting on foot this work at this time may suit with God’s present dispensations; and may—if due care and circumspection be used in the right constituting and carrying-on the same—tend to, and by the blessing of God produce, such happy and glorious fruits as are scarce thought on or foreseen."

Upon the receipt of his letter there was some further debate concerning the school, but it was put aside until seven years later, when, in the fulness of his own power, he erected a seat of learning at Durham with considerate generosity to its necessities.
He marched near to Stirling, where Charles II and the remnant of the Scottish Army were in winter quarters, but finding them too strongly fortified, and the weather terribly severe, he returned to Edinburgh and passed the winter there. In April he marched west and entered Glasgow where his Army spent ten days. He was again thrown into a violent sickness—the third attack this winter. The disease was an ague; and the Council of State was instructed by the Parliament to request him to return to England for milder air. Two physicians were sent from London to see him. But he was undaunted in the face of sickness, and wrote thus hopefully:

"I shall not need to recite the extremity of my last sickness: it was so violent that indeed my nature was not able to bear the weight thereof. But the Lord was pleased to deliver me, beyond expectation; and to give me cause to say once more 'He hath plucked me out of my grave!' My Lord, the indulgence of the Parliament expressed by their Order is a very high and undeserved favour: of which although it be fit I keep a thankful remembrance, yet I judge it would be too much presumption in me to return a particular acknowledgement. I beseech you give me the boldness to return my humble thankfulness to the Council for sending two such worthy persons, so great a journey, to visit me. From whom I have received much encouragement, and good directions for recovery of health and strength, which I find [now] by the goodness of God, growing to such a state as may yet, if it be His good will, render me useful according to my poor ability, in the situation wherein He hath set me."

In approaching Glasgow, Lambert, commanding the advance guard, encountered a considerable force of Scots and fought them, slaying 2,000 and taking nearly 600 prisoners. Hear the words of the great Puritan in closing his account of their victory:

"This is an unspeakable mercy. I trust the Lord will follow it until He hath perfected peace and truth. We can truly say we were gone as far as we could in our counsel and action and we did say one to another, we knew not what to do. Wherefore, it’s sealed upon our hearts, that this, as all the rest, is from the Lord’s goodness, and not from man. I hope it becometh me to pray, That we may walk humbly and self-denyingly before the Lord, and believingly also. That you whom we serve, as the authority over us, may do the work committed to you, with uprightness and faithfulness, and thoroughly, as to the Lord. That you may not suffer anything to remain that offends the eyes of His jealousy. That common weal may more and more be sought, and justice done impartially. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro; and as He finds out His enemies here, to be avenged on them, so will He
not spare them for whom He doth good, if by His loving kindness they become not good. I shall take the humble boldness to represent this Engagement of David’s, in the Hundred-and-nineteenth Psalm, verse Hundred-and-thirty-fourth, ‘Deliver me from the oppression of man, so will I keep Thy precepts.’”

How often and how quickly his history turns from the soldier to the man! On one day he writes of a battle in which the destinies of his country hang upon his sword. On the next the welfare of a human soul stirs him to the deepest emotion. Richard Cromwell—Idle Dick—is still a most despicably lazy and vain young man. Cromwell’s sorrow is intense, and he sternly rebukes the young man’s shiftless course in this painful letter to Mr. Mayor:

“To my very loving Brother Richard Mayor, Esquire, at Hursley:

These.

Burntisland, 28th July, 1651.

'Dear Brother:

'I was glad to receive a letter from you; for, indeed, anything that comes from you is very welcome to me. I believe your expectation of my Son’s coming is deferred. I wish he may see a happy delivery of his wife first, for whom I frequently pray.

'I hear my son hath exceeded his allowance, and is in debt. Truly I cannot commend him therein; wisdom requiring his living within compass, and calling for it at his hands. And in my judgment, the reputation arising from thence would have been more real honour than what is attained the other way. I believe vain men will speak well of him that does ill.

'I desire to be understood that I grudge him not laudable recreations, nor an honourable carriage of himself in them; nor is any matter of charge, like to fall to my share, a stick with me. Truly I can find in my heart to allow him not only a sufficiency but more, for his good. But if pleasure and self-satisfaction be made the business of a man’s life, [and] so much cost laid out upon it, so much time spent in it, as rather answers appetite than the will of God, or is comely before His Saints, I scruple to feed this humour; and God forbid that his being my Son should be his allowance to live not pleasingly to our Heavenly Father, who hath raised me out of the dust to be what I am!

'I desire your faithfulness (he being also your concernment as well as mine) to advise him to approve himself to the Lord in his
course of life; and to search His statutes for a rule of conscience
and to seek grace from Christ to enable him to walk therein. This
hath life in it, and will come to somewhat; what is a poor
creature without this? This will not abridge of lawful pleasures;
but teach such a use of them as will have the peace of a good
conscience going along with it. Sir, I write what is in my heart; I
pray you communicate my mind herein to my Son, and be his
remembrancer in these things. Truly I love him, he is dear to me;
so is his wife; and for their sakes do I thus write. They shall not
want comfort nor encouragement from me, so far as I may afford
it. But, indeed, I cannot think I do well to feed a voluptuous
humour in my Son, if he should make pleasures the business of his
life—in a time when some precious Saints are bleeding and
breathing out their last, for the safety of the rest. Memorable is
the speech of Uriah to David (Second Samuel 11:11).

"Sir, I beseech you, believe I here say not this to save my purse,
for I shall willingly do what is convenient to satisfy his occasions
as I have opportunity. But as I pray he may not walk in a course
not pleasing to the Lord, so I think it lieth upon me to give him, in
love, the best counsel I may; and know not how better to convey
it to him than by so good a hand as yours. Sir, I pray you, acquaint
him with these thoughts of mine, and remember my love to my
Daughter, for whose sake I shall be induced to do any reasonable
thing. I pray for her happy deliverance, frequently and earnestly.

"I am sorry to hear that my Bailiff in Hantshire should do to my
Son as is intimated by your letter. I assure you I shall not allow
any such thing. If there be any suspicion of his abuse of the Wood,
I desire it may be looked after, and inquired into; that so, if
things appear true, he may be removed—although, indeed, I must
needs say he had the repute of a godly man, by divers that knew
him, when I placed him there.

"Sir, I desire my hearty affection may be presented to my Sister;
to my Cousin Ann, and her Husband, though unknown. I praise the
Lord I have obtained much mercy in respect of my health; the
Lord give me a truly thankful heart. I desire your prayers; and
rest, your very affectionate brother and servant,

"Oliver Cromwell."

Second Samuel 11:11: "And Uriah said unto David, The Ark, and
Israel, and Judah abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the
servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I,
then, go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my
wife? As thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing."

After returning to Edinburgh, Cromwell marched north to make a final attempt on Perth, to dislodge the young King, and end the war. So well were his plans conceived that by August 1 he had placed his Army in Fife, so as to cut off the Scots from their base of supplies, and he now expected to force them to come out of Perth and fight.

But young Charles Stuart, prompted by that spirit of romantic bravery which distinguished his unfortunate house, immediately adopted a brilliant expedient which surprised and temporarily baffled the astute Cromwell, and filled every Puritan breast in England with alarm. In a moment of supreme self-assertion he snatched the command of the Scottish troops away from the Committee of Preachers who had hitherto held full authority, and passed to the West and South of Cromwell’s position, and, by a swift march, invaded England (August 6, 1651) with an army of 14,000 men. It was his expectation that all who were discontented with the present government would flock to his standard, and that he would soon be enabled to assume the Crown of his fathers in all its ancient splendor and authority.

Cromwell was deeply mortified by the stratagem that had been played upon him, but he prepared to dispel this new peril with all his energy and skill. He wrote to the Speaker:

"I do apprehend, that if he [Charles II] goes for England, being some few days march before us, it will trouble some men’s thoughts; and may occasion some inconveniences; which we hope we are as deeply sensible of, and have been, and I trust shall be, as diligent to prevent, as any. And indeed this is our comfort, that in simplicity of heart as towards God, we have done to the best of our judgments; knowing that if some issue were not put to this Business, it would occasion another Winter’s war: to the ruin of your soldiery, for whom the Scots are too hard in respect of enduring the Winter difficulties of this country; and to the endless expense of the treasure of England in prosecuting this war. It may be supposed we might have kept the Enemy from this, by interposing between him and England. Which truly I believe we might: but how to remove him out of this place, without doing what we have done, unless we had had a commanding Army on both sides of the River of Forth, is not clear to us; or how to answer the inconveniences aforementioned, we understand not."

Leaving Monk with 7,000 men in charge of military operations in Scotland, he dispatched Lambert with the larger part of the horse to follow Charles with all possible rapidity. "With the rest of the horse," he wrote "and nine regiments of foot, most of them of your old foot and horse [his Ironsides], I am hastening up; and shall, by the Lord’s help, use utmost diligence." He wrote letters to the
Parliament acquainting them with what had occurred and besought them to call out all the militia of the kingdom to intercept the invaders. Then he proceeded with the infantry in the trail of Lambert.

As Charles pursued his hasty march down through England he became greatly disappointed by the failure of his friends to join his Army. Many of the Scots who were with him began to repent of their rash adventure, and fell away. The English Presbyterians had received no notice of his coming, and his progress was much too rapid to draw them into his march. The old Cavaliers needed nothing but the sound of his bugle to call them forth in all their old enthusiasm, but they were Episcopalians, and the bigoted men who controlled the policy of Charles’ Army would permit the enlistment of no one, not even in this dangerous extremity, who would not subscribe the Covenant. The Earl of Derby did lead a body of Royalists in Lancashire, but they were quickly suppressed, and the Earl afterwards lost his head for the attempt. Under these circumstances Charles sped on past York, Nottingham, and Coventry, summoning each town to surrender, but scarcely pausing to receive their negative replies, for the steady tread of Cromwell’s pursuit was ever in his ears. He reached the city of Worcester on the 22nd of August, having but a few more men than he had started with, probably 16,000. He was permitted to enter the city, and was encouraged and sustained by the devotion of the populace. Six days later Cromwell came in sight with an army of 30,000 men.

The battle of Worcester was fought on the 3rd of September, 1651 (Oliver’s fortunate day), about four o’clock in the afternoon. The city is on the bank of the Severn River. Cromwell built two bridges of boats across the river, and passed about half his Army over to the side opposite the city, under Fleetwood, where a large party of Scots promptly engaged him in a hot fight and were pressed back. Charles watched the fight from the roof of the old Cathedral, and when he saw so many of the English go across the river he decided that it would be well to sally forth and attack Cromwell’s main body. This was done, and the struggle was as fierce as any which the great leader had ever witnessed—“as stiff a contest for four or five hours,” he wrote, “as I have seen.” His men were repulsed; many of them were the raw militia levies, and would not stand before the furious Scots, who were fighting with the energy of despair.

Cromwell himself had been with Fleetwood on the other side of the river, had been the first man in fact to cross the bridge of boats, and he had driven all before him. But now he is back on the Worcester side. A glance shows him the danger. He spurs forward his horse. He rides in the very front to a regiment of Scottish foot and offers them quarter, and they fire their guns at him. His men press forward again. There is no dismay when he is with them. The Scots retreat into Worcester streets, and the English press in upon them pell-mell. Charles himself is doing a soldier’s part; he makes one gallant charge at the head of his troops, but it avails not. On the other side the Scots turn to Fleetwood’s bridges, and hurry across to the city. Fleetwood follows them, and they are thus surrounded by Cromwell on the one hand and Fleetwood on the other. And then it is hot passion, and blood, and woe. Their fort within the city is taken, and Cromwell turns their own guns upon them. Many hundreds of
them are slain. Duke Hamilton, brother to the former Duke, is killed. Seven thousand surrender, including nearly the whole of the Scottish nobility in arms. Many others fly—weary, frightened fugitives, who are pursued and struck down by Lambert, hunted, killed, or taken, in every by-path in the Midland counties. The young King left Worcester with fifty or sixty friends about six o’clock in the evening, and rode twenty-six miles without a stop. Then he separated from his companions and rode through the forest to Bascobel, on the borders of Staffordshire, and stopped at the house of a farmer named Penderell. To him he discovered his identity, and Penderell kept him with him for some days garbed as a wood-chopper. He had many narrow escapes, and once climbed hastily into a tall oak tree while a party of Parliamentary soldiers paused beneath to discuss his whereabouts. It was even said that Charles spent two or three days in Cromwell’s Army disguised as a boy servant to one of the Puritan officers. He went to Bristol disguised as a serving man to one of his faithful friends, but could find no suitable vessel there for his departure. After many adventures, in the course of which his person became known to some forty men and women, he succeeded in obtaining a passage from Shoreham, in Sussex, and sailed away for France, there to remain in comparative quiet until after the death of his relentless foe.

Worcester was Cromwell’s last battle. He wrote to the Parliament:

"The dimensions of this mercy are above my thoughts. It is for aught I know a crowning mercy. Surely, if it be not, such a one we shall have, if this provoke those that are concerned in it to thankfulness; and the Parliament to do the will of Him who hath done His will for it, and for the Nation; whose good pleasure it is to establish the Nation and the Change of the Government, by making the People so willing to the defence thereof, and so signally blessing the endeavours of your servants in this late great work. I am bold humbly to beg, That all thoughts may tend to the promoting of His honour who hath wrought so great salvation; and that the fatness of these continuous mercies may not occasion pride and wantonness, as formerly the like hath done to a chosen Nation (Deuteronomy 32:15); but that the fear of the Lord, even for His mercies, may keep an Authority and a People so prospered, and blessed, and witnessed unto, humble and faithful; and that justice and righteousness, mercy and truth, may flow from you, as a thankful return to our gracious God."

When the Parliament received these tidings they voted that the anniversary of Worcester should be a holiday for all time to come.

It will be seen that Cromwell’s art in war was to find out his enemy and fight him on sight. In the campaign in Scotland there were three occasions on which the strategy of his enemy placed him in peril—at Musselburgh, when he was cut off from his supplies; at Dunbar, when he found his Army in a trap; and in Fife,
when he permitted young Charles to pass around behind him and invade England.

After Worcester he never drew his sword in war, and it was in the Senate and in the Council Chamber that his genius was henceforth to shine. He returned to London ten days after the Worcester battle, and was received with all the pomp and acclamation which a grateful people could bestow upon their deliverer. Chaplain Hugh Peters was much impressed by the magnificence of Cromwell’s triumph, and, amid the booming of cannon and the huzzas of the people, he could not refrain from saying, "This man will be King of England yet!" Why not? He had conquered England, and Ireland, and Scotland. What better man was there to assume the government?

CHAPTER XXII
The Rump Expelled-The Lord Protector

The Power of Cromwell’s sword had by this time placed the Commonwealth of England upon an assured and successful foundation. At the beginning of the year 1651 the three kingdoms had been rocking in the throes of civil war. When that year closed, there was scarcely in all Great Britain or Ireland a hostile soldier under arms. A solid and substantial peace ensued, and much of the bitterness of the strife was forgotten amid the material prosperity which began to attend the nation. Sir Harry Vane and Oliver St. John, the most astute politicians in England, were sent as commissioners to Scotland, and they succeeded by their diplomatic skill in securing the voluntary consent of all the counties and towns of that conquered country to a permanent affiliation with the Commonwealth. "The great shot of Cromwell and Vane," wrote Baillie, the Scottish Covenanter, "is to have a liberty of all religions without any exception."

The new Government, having pacified its own dominions, turned its ambitious attention to foreign conquests. The kingdom of Portugal, which had given aid and comfort to Prince Rupert’s fleet, was humiliated and made to sue for pardon. A war with Holland was entered upon (1652) on account of the English Navigation Act. In the first engagement at sea the great Dutch commanders, Van Tromp and De Ruiter, won the advantage over Blake, the English Admiral; and Van Tromp fixed a broom to his main mast as a warning that he intended to sweep the English ships from the sea. Smarring under this taunt, Blake (1653) gathered together an invincible Navy, and attacked Tromp; and after a three days’ fight in which both the armadas were handled with the utmost skill and bravery, the Dutchman was beaten. The power of England was henceforth esteemed by all the world as invulnerable both on the land and the sea. "In two years," said Algernon Sidney, "our fleets grew to be as famous as our land armies, and the reputation and power of our nation rose to a greater height than when we possessed the better half of France and had the Kings of France and Scotland for our prisoners."

But the steady development of the naval power under the direction of the Parliament, and the consequent rivalry of interest between the Army and the
Navy, produced a grave jealousy in the Army. An order from the Parliament employing several regiments of soldiers to serve in the Navy increased the discontent. With Blake winning victories every day, the Parliament would soon stand unassailable with the Navy behind it. The eminent services of Cromwell might soon be forgotten in the newer glories of Blake. Cromwell and his Army were in favor of putting an end to the Dutch war. The Parliament and Blake, winning prizes every day, discouraged all negotiations for peace.

That Cromwell had for a long time intended to forcibly terminate the Long Parliament seems to be beyond dispute. He and Ireton had discussed it frequently, as we have already seen, in the days of the treaties with Charles. He had spoken of it to Ludlow. He had declared it boldly to Whitelock, adding an astounding suggestion about taking it upon himself to be King. His complaint to Whitelock was that the Army had begun to have a strong distaste against the Parliament; that they were overcome with pride, and ambition, and self-seeking; that they engrossed all places of honor and profit to themselves and their friends; that they meddled in private matters between parties, contrary to the usage of Parliaments, and were unjust and partial in such affairs; and that many of them led scandalous lives.

A further reason for Cromwell’s growing aversion was the estrangement which had taken place between himself and young Sir Harry Vane—"young Sir Harry" still, for his father yet sat beside him in Parliament, and died in 1654. Vane was to the Parliament what Cromwell was to the Army and what Blake was to the Navy. Since the execution of the King, to which he had been unalterably opposed, Vane had lost ground in Cromwell’s esteem. Now, as Treasurer of the Navy, his genius had just perfected a plan for raising £120,000 a month for the war with Holland, and for the consequent increase of the power of the fleet. Besides, he was proposing to publicly sell all the royal palaces in order to remove from the eyes of any ambitious man in the kingdom a palpable temptation to seize the Crown.

But Vane was forced by an almost universal demand to make some preparations for the election of a new Parliament. The existing basis of representation was outrageously unfair. Some of the boroughs which were represented by two members had scarcely a house upon them. The single county of Cornwall elected forty-four, while more thickly populated counties, like Essex, had only six. The entire symmetry of the Parliament, as representative of the English people, had been destroyed by Pride’s Purge.

The popular discontent impelled the Army leaders to send the Parliament a remonstrance appealing for the dissolution of that body. They acknowledged that the Parliament had completed great undertakings, and had overcome gigantic difficulties. Yet it was not fair to the rest of the nation, they said, to be excluded from bearing any part in the service of their country. It was now full time for them to give place to others; and they therefore desired them, after appointing a council to execute the laws, to summon a new Parliament, and establish that free and equal government which they had so long promised the nation.
The Rump members were naturally averse to a free election, as it was not unlikely that a quick revulsion of feeling would take place among the people that would result in the election of a Parliament which would restore the banished Stuarts, and cause the abandonment of all that had been accomplished for the national liberty. They therefore prepared a bill upon a general plan suggested long before by Henry Ireton for a free election, but with the important provisions added to it—first, that all the present members were to continue to hold their seats without re-election; and, secondly, that a committee of the Rump was to superintend the elections and judge of their validity and fitness. November 3, 1653, the thirteenth anniversary of the assembling of the Long Parliament, was fixed as the period of their sitting. The introduction of this bill in Parliament threw Cromwell into a violent rage. He desired to see a new Parliament elected which would represent the Independent party alone, esteeming the time as not yet ripe for entrusting the whole people with a voice in the Government. But while the safeguards in Vane’s bill would prevent the election of a Royalist majority, the increasing prestige of the Navy would likewise operate towards the choosing of a body favorable to Vane and Blake, rather than to Cromwell and the Army. He inwardly resolved that, rather than throw away the fruits of his great victories, or place them in jeopardy at the hands of a new and possibly hostile Parliament, he would dissolve the Rump without immediate provision for its successor. His strong desire to avoid an ignominious ejection of a Parliament so illustrious in the eyes of the world, drew from him many overtures for its peaceful and honorable retirement. Since the preceding October he had held fully a dozen meetings with their leaders, but had not yet secured their consent to its dissolution.

In the meantime, Vane’s bill was hurried through its legislative stages in April 1653, and was soon made ready for passage. On the 19th of April, Cromwell summoned all the Parliamentary leaders to his lodgings at Whitehall. On Cromwell’s side there were St. John, Lambert, Harrison, Fleetwood, Desborough, and many other principal officers of the Army. With Vane were Whitelock, Hazelrig, Scott, Marten, Sidney, and seventeen others. The discussion was acrimonious and lasted until after midnight. The Parliament men reproached the Army leaders with a desire to assume all the civil as well as the military power. The Army men brusquely replied that the members of Parliament would not be permitted to prolong their own power. The conference degenerated into what was very much like a fight for the spoils of war. Harrison remarked that Cromwell merely desired to pave the way for the Government of Jesus and his Saints; and it was answered that Jesus ought to come quickly then, for if he delayed it long he would come too late—he would find his place occupied. To all of Cromwell’s entreaties the Parliament men replied, "that nothing would do good for this nation but the continuance of this Parliament." He attempted to draw them into a committal that neither Royalists nor Presbyterians should enjoy the electoral franchise. "For it’s one thing to love a brother," he said, "to bear with and love a person with different judgment in the matters of religion, and another thing to have anybody so far
set in the saddle on that account, as to have all the rest of his brethren at mercy." But they stubbornly refused to make him any promises. He told them they were endeavoring only to perpetuate themselves in authority, and again they answered that only so could the good of the nation be secured. Midnight came without any satisfactory concessions on either side. Finally Vane promised to suspend further proceedings about the bill until after another conference with the military party, and with this understanding they separated.

The next morning (April 20, 1653) shortly after the Parliament met, Colonel Ingoldsby, and afterwards a second and a third messenger, came hastily to Cromwell to say that the members were pushing to a final vote the bill for the election of a new Parliament and the continuance of their own seats therein. All the sleeping passion in the General’s breast was aroused by this perfidious proceeding. He summoned a reliable body of troops from his own regiment of Ironsides and walked briskly to the Parliament House. As he entered the Commons’ Chamber, he said to St. John that he had come with a purpose of doing what grieved him to the very soul, and what he had earnestly with tears besought the Lord not to impose upon him, that he would rather be torn in pieces than do it; but there was a necessity in order to the glory of God and good of the nation. He sat down in his accustomed seat, clad in plain black clothes and gray worsted stockings, and listened attentively to the debate on the bill. Then he beckoned to Major-General Harrison and whispered that he judged the Parliament ripe for a dissolution, and thought this was the time for doing it. Harrison replied that the work was very great and dangerous, and asked him to seriously consider before he engaged in it. Whereupon Cromwell sat still for some fifteen minutes. The question for passing the bill was then put, and Cromwell said to Harrison, "This is the time I must do it," and rose up, put off his hat, and began to speak. There were not more than fifty-three members present. At the start he said much in commendation of the Parliament for their valuable public services, but as the importance of his purpose began to press upon his mind, he changed his style and spoke with a tongue of flame. He loaded them with reproaches, saying that they had no heart to do anything for the public good, that they had espoused the corrupt interest of Presbytery and the lawyers, who were the supporters of tyranny and oppression. He accused them of an intention to perpetuate themselves in power, and said that they had brought forward the act of dissolution merely because they had been forced to do so, although he believed they never intended to observe its provisions. He told them—and there was the roar of the lion in his voice now—that the Lord had done with them, and had chosen other instruments for the carrying on his work that were more worthy. Sir Peter Wentworth was the only man who dared to rise amid that tempest of wrath. He said that this was the first time he had ever heard such unbecoming language given to the Parliament, and that it was the more horrid in that it came from their servant—their servant whom they had so highly trusted and obliged. But when Wentworth had gone thus far, Cromwell clapped on his hat and interrupted him with, "Come, come, we have had enough of this!" He
walked furiously up and down the floor. "I will put an end to your prating," he cried, in a high voice. He stamped his feet upon the floor—no man had ever seen the like of such rage in a Parliament before. "It is not fit that you should sit here any longer. You are no Parliament!" Oh, the scorn of his tone! "I say you are no Parliament!" To an officer he cried, "Call them in, call them in"; and the grim companions of his battles entered, with eyes alert and guns ready, and waited his further orders.

"I say you are no Parliament." They are on their feet now, their faces blazing with amazement. Sir Harry Vane gravely speaks: "This is not honest; yea, it is against morality and common honesty." Cromwell is all passion. "Sir Harry Vane, Sir Harry Vane! The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" He glares on Tom Challoner, and says, "Some of you are drunkards!" His eye lights on Harry Marten, and he cries, "Some of you are lewd-livers, living in open contempt of God’s commandments!" His flashing eyes pass from face to face and he says, "Some of you are corrupt, unjust persons, scandalous to the profession of the Gospel." As the once great Parliament stands cowering before him, he thunders out their final doom. "Depart, I say!" They began to go out. There was no gainsaying this man. They understood then, perhaps, why he had never been defeated in his battles. His eye fell upon the Mace, the emblem of authority, but it aroused no respect in his mind. "Take away that bauble," he said to one of his soldiers. Lenthall still sat in the Speaker’s chair. His dignity was imperturbable, and when Cromwell ordered him to come down he tarried. Harrison then took him by the hand and helped him down, and he vanished. So did they all; and as young Sir Harry walked sadly away, Cromwell said to him reproachfully, alluding to the broken agreement of the night before, that he might have prevented this extraordinary course, but he was a juggler and had not so much as common honesty. The bill which had produced this scene of violence was taken by Cromwell and carried away under his cloak, and was never found afterwards. Cromwell was the last to leave that historic Chamber, and as he passed out he locked the door and took the key with him. The State of England was then without King, Lords, or Commons; it was bereft of all legal government whatsoever.

The expulsion of the Long Parliament was one of the most remarkable scenes in English history. And yet Cromwell said, "Not a dog barked at their going." As a violation of popular liberty it certainly surpassed the attempt of Charles to arrest five of its members. The Parliament had sat nearly thirteen years. It had secured for Englishmen substantial liberties which have never faded away, and which will always be a boon to mankind. The temptations of power had made it tyrannical, perhaps corrupt. But while the high spirit of patriotism which had marked the first years of its sitting had indisputably deteriorated, while the unanimity of its design to promote the nation’s welfare had given place to factious and sectarian jealousies, while its various purgings had left it as the mere Rump of a great original, it was still, with all its faults, yea, with all its crimes, the venerable champion of England’s liberties, and it deserved a more felicitous exit from the stage.
Cromwell left the vacant Parliament House and went to the Council of State, who were in official session. As he entered he said to them, "Gentlemen, if you are met here as private persons, you shall not be disturbed; but if as a Council of State, this is no place for you, and since you can’t but know what was done at the House this morning, so take notice, that the Parliament is dissolved." John Bradshaw, the President, attempted to oppose him. "Sir," said Bradshaw, "we have heard what you did in the House this morning, and before many hours all England will hear it. But, sir, you are mistaken to think that the Parliament is dissolved, for no power under Heaven can dissolve them but themselves; therefore take you notice of that." But Cromwell’s will could not be turned by words like these, and the Council of State vanished as the Parliament had done.

Cromwell’s power was now supreme. As "Lord General and Commander-in-Chief of all the Armies and forces raised and to be raised," he was naturally the highest authority in the nation. But he seems to have desired to establish at least the forms of a constitutional government. He accordingly issued a summons to 140 Puritan Englishmen, "persons fearing God, and of approved fidelity and honesty," to assemble at Whitehall on the 4th of July, to whom was to be committed "the peace, safety, and good government of the Commonwealth." This body is known in history as the Little Parliament, or in a more familiar way as Barebone’s Parliament, from the spiritual prominence of one of its members, Praise-God Barebone, or Barbone, who was a leather merchant in London. Among the members were some notable men—Admiral Blake; Alderman Ireton, a brother of the dead soldier; Richard Mayor, the father-in-law of Richard Cromwell; men of good family, as Colonel Charles Howard and Colonel Edward Montague; and many who were neither notable nor of good family. They were all Puritans, and, generically, Independents, but they were subdivided into Anabaptists, or those who believed that infant baptism was not valid, and Millenarians, or Fifth Monarchy men, who believed that after the rotative domination in the world of the Assyrian, Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires, the reign of Christ for a thousand years was at last about to begin on this earth.

Cromwell inaugurated their session by a very remarkable speech, which is in part an apology for his conduct, in part a statement of the existing situation, and in part a sermon of the times. He told them that the last Parliament had been dismissed, partly, because of their intention not to give the people a right of choice, forgetting that the men whom he was then addressing had not been called by the people’s right of choice, but by his own command. His own broad toleration of religious beliefs was indicated by this exhortation:

"Therefore, I beseech you—but I think I need not—have a care of the whole flock! Love the sheep, love the lambs; love all, tender all, cherish and countenance all, in all things that are good. And if the poorest Christian, the most mistaken Christian, shall desire to live peaceably and quietly under you, I say if any shall desire but to lead a life of godliness and honesty, let him be protected!"
He counseled them in regard to their choice of officials. "If I were to choose any servant," he said, "the meanest officer for the Army or the Commonwealth, I would choose a godly man that hath principles."

He then committed the whole of the civil power into their hands, as a Parliament, to be exercised in accordance with the provisions of The Instrument of Government, drawn up by himself and his officers. And the announcement of the coming of the Millennium, of the beginning of the Reign of the Saints, was given to them in this peroration, than which no stranger address was ever heard in a civil gathering before. But there was nothing of hypocrisy about it. It was an outburst of faith and pious joy, a song of prophecy from an earnest soul, which believed that, after battling with the darkness, it now bathed in the eternal presence of the Spirit of Christ. He said:

"Indeed, I have but one more word to say to you; though in that perhaps I shall show my weakness: it’s by way of encouragement to go on in this Work. And give me leave to begin thus. I confess I never looked to see such a Day as this—it may be nor you neither—when Jesus Christ should be so owned as He is, this day, in this Work. Jesus Christ is owned this day by the Call of You; and you own Him by your willingness to appear before Him. And you manifest this, as far as poor creatures may do, to be a Day of the Power of Christ. I know you well remember that Scripture, ‘He makes His People willing in the day of His power.’ God manifests this to be the Day of the Power of Christ; having, through so much blood, and so much trial as hath been upon these Nations, made this to be one of the great issues thereof: To have His People called to the Supreme Authority. He makes this to be the greatest mercy, next to His own Son. God hath owned His Son; and He hath owned you, and made you own Him. I confess I never looked to have seen such a day; I did not. Perhaps you are not known by face to one another; indeed I am confident you are strangers, coming from all parts of the Nation as you do; but we shall tell you that indeed we have not allowed ourselves the choice of one person in whom we had not this good hope, That there was in him faith in Jesus Christ, and love to all His people and Saints."

While the Little Parliament was appointing its committees, Cromwell had organized a Council of State in conformity with The Instrument of Government. This Council consisted of thirty-one members, and it soon became apparent that upon it must devolve the discharge of the actual duties of the State. Cromwell had hoped that his Parliament would, by a kind of divine intuition, be enabled to wisely administer the government; but, while they spent whole days in seeking the Lord, they had not sat a week before he discerned that the Reign of the Saints on earth, in other words, the Fifth Monarchy, had not yet been established from on high. His strivings after these unattainable things are full
of pathos. He wrote thus to Fleetwood, his son-in-law, now commander-in-chief in Ireland, and married to Bridget Cromwell, Ireton’s widow:

"Fain would I have my service accepted of the Saints, if the Lord will; but it is not so. Being of different judgments, and those of each sort seeking most to propagate their own, that spirit of kindness that is [in me] to them all, is hardly accepted of any. I hope I can say it, My life has been a willing sacrifice—and I hope—for them all. ... If the day of the Lord be so near as some say, how should our moderation appear! If every one, instead of contending, would justify his farm of judgment by love and meekness, Wisdom would be [justified of her children]. But, alas!"

Then follows this sad reflection, his pen and thoughts running into the sorrows of David in their kindred feeling:

"I am, in my temptation, ready to say, Oh, would I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest!"

He recalls himself to his duty, and says:

"I bless the Lord I have somewhat keeps me alive: some sparks of the light of His countenance, and same sincerity above man’s judgment. Excuse me thus unbowelling myself to you: pray for me; and desire my friends to do so also. My love to thy dear Wife, whom indeed I entirely love, both naturally and upon the best account; and my blessing, if it be worth anything, upon thy little Babe."

Surely, no hypocrite could write thus. His design for a Theocratic Government was impracticable, let us even say fanatical, but he himself was devoutly moved by his "transports" to believe in the certainty of the unveiling of God’s mysteries upon earth. But his faith became shaken by the cold hand of experience.

The Little Parliament, believing that Cromwell’s deposit of power in their custody was genuine, as he intended it to be, began to attempt the reformation of the country. They first attacked the clergy as a privileged class which derived its functions from the papacy, claiming that all men had an equal right to preach at will. They abolished the system of tithes as a relic of Judaism. Learning and the Universities were deemed unnecessary and incompatible with the spirit of the true Gospel. The lawyers were then taken into consideration, all, including Cromwell, having a special pique at that profession. Indeed, Cromwell had said to Ludlow, that the main operation of the law, as at present constituted, was to maintain the lawyers, and assist the
rich in oppressing the poor. He added that Cooke, who was justice in Ireland, by proceeding in a summary and expeditious way, determined more causes in a week, than Westminster Hall in a year. Ireland, he observed, was a clean paper in that particular, and capable of being governed by such laws as should be found most agreeable to justice, which might be so impartially administered there, as to afford a good precedent to England itself, "where, when we shall once perceive that property may be preserved at so easy and cheap a rate, we shall certainly never allow ourselves to be cheated and abused as we have been."

Finally, it was determined to destroy the Court of Chancery, the highest court of judicature in the kingdom. There was some palliation for their deep contempt of the heaviness of the law when it is stated that there were 23,000 causes of from five to thirty years’ continuance then lying undetermined in Chancery. One member not inaptly said that for dilatoriness, chargeableness, and a faculty of bleeding people in the purse-vein, even to their utter perishing and undoing, the Court of Chancery surpassed any court in the world. The Parliament began to forget the manner of their assembling under Cromwell’s invitation, and to assume a direct power from the Lord, which pleased not the Lord General. Cromwell resolved to dismiss this Parliament. But they were by this time divided among themselves, and he could not get a clear majority to do his bidding. It was necessary to dissemble, and Cromwell was a political dissembler of the first rank.

On Monday morning, the 12th of December, 1653, those members who were faithful to Cromwell, including Francis Rouse, the Speaker, met early by concert and resolved, "That the sitting of this Parliament any longer, as now constituted, will not be for the good of the Commonwealth; and that therefore it is requisite to deliver-up unto the Lord General Cromwell the powers which we received from him." They then hastened away to Whitehall where a formal deed transferring their powers to Cromwell was waiting them, and so great was his desire for haste that they signed their names on separate bits of paper which were afterwards pasted on the document itself. They then disappeared from Whitehall and from history. General Harrison and about twenty more were in the meantime met in the House where they placed one of their brethren in the chair and began to draw up protests against abolishing the Reign of the Saints. But presently Colonel White came with a body of soldiers from Cromwell and asked them what they did there, to which they answered that they were seeking the Lord. "Then you may go elsewhere," said he, "for to my certain knowledge, he has not been here these many years."

The conduct of the Little Parliament had highly alarmed all those of the legal and clerical professions, in fact, all the scholars and men of mind, and had turned their thoughts towards Cromwell as a desirable head of the State. His formal assumption of authority was a necessity of the times—the only settlement of a great emergency. The officers of the Army and the common soldiers demanded it; the rest of the population of England clearly expected it. And Cromwell consented to it as a public duty.
A new *Instrument of Government* was drawn up by Lambert. It consisted of forty-two articles and comprised a clear and liberal constitution. It provided for the appointment of a new Council of State to consist of not more than twenty-one nor less than thirteen persons; the head of the State was to be one person to be called the Lord Protector, who was to be the supreme magistrate. He could pardon all crimes but murder and treason, and he held the prerogatives of peace, war, and alliance; he was obliged to summon a Parliament every three years, and allow them to sit five months without interruption; all bills passed by the Parliament were to be submitted to the Lord Protector, but if within twenty days they were not returned with his approval, they were then to become laws by the single voice of the Parliament. But they were not to touch the Army in number or pay, nor legislate against any man’s conscience except as to the Catholics, nor make any alteration in the *Instrument of Government*. The Army was to consist permanently of 20,000 foot and 10,000 horse. During the intervals of Parliament the Lord Protector and his Council might enact laws, which must afterwards receive the assent of the Parliament. The chief officers of the State were to be chosen by and with the advice and consent of the Parliament, or, in times of its non-sitting, by the Council, subject to their future confirmation by the Parliament. Cromwell was named the Lord Protector and was to hold office for life, but it was distinctly declared that it was not hereditary, but elective, and at his death the Council should fill his place immediately.

Was this the *Instrument* of a tyrant or of a constitutional ruler? The privileges which were reserved to the Protector were not nearly equal to the well-defined prerogatives of the King. It is true that in reserving to himself the entire control of the Army, Cromwell was to be the chooser of his own bounds; but there is a very clear and definite purpose in this *Instrument* to establish a Government by the people, in so far as the people could be trusted in those bitter times, with a sufficient authority in the background to rescue the destinies of England whenever they might seem to be in peril.

We have seen that the Little Parliament was dissolved on Monday, December 12, 1653. On Friday, the 16th, Cromwell was installed at Westminster as Lord Protector amidst great pageantry. He left Whitehall preceded by the Commissioners of the Great Seal; after them came the judges and Barons of the Exchequer in the insignia of their office; then the Council of State; the Lord Mayor and Aldermen in their scarlet robes; and then Cromwell, dressed in a plain but rich suit of black velvet, riding in the coach of state with its outriders, and attended by the chief officers of the Army and an imposing escort of soldiery. A chair of state was set for him in Westminster Hall and he stood beside it, uncovered, while the *Instrument of Government* was read and a solemn oath administered, by which he bound himself to support it. He then sat down and resumed his hat, and General Lambert presented him with a sword in its scabbard, representing the Civil Sword. The Lord Protector accepted this, and put off his own, signifying that military rule was ended. He was then proclaimed Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, after which he returned to Whitehall in the same order.
in which he had come thence, being greeted along the line of march by the acclamations of the citizens and soldiers. On arriving at Whitehall, he immediately provided that all the ceremony and state should be observed with regard to his person that was usual with the Kings of England.

CHAPTER XXIII
England’s Greatest Strength

Cromwell, at the time of his installment as Lord Protector, was a little past fifty-four years of age. His frame was cast in a large mold, and lacked but two inches of six feet in height. His head was massive—"you might see it," said John Maidstone, "a storehouse and shop both of a vast treasury of natural parts." There was the historic wart above the right eyebrow, nose large and wide at nostril, full lips, and deep gray eyes, full of all tenderness, or, if need be, of all fierceness. Rich dark brown locks, now showing many a silver hair, fell flowing below his collar-band. A slight mustache only partially covered his upper lip, while just under his nether lip was a little tuft of beard scarce half an inch long. A hero he was, whose face and figure had been bathed in the storms of battle, and on which the eternal dignities of a great life had set an indelible and distinguished mark.

After his death, when it was esteemed a sign of moral obliquity to praise him, John Maidstone, who knew him well, said:

"His temper [was] exceedingly fiery, as I have known, but the flame of it [was] kept down for the most part, or soon allayed with those moral endowments he had. He was naturally compassionate towards objects in distress, even to an effeminate measure; though God had made him a heart wherein was left little room for any fear, but what was due to himself, of which there was a large proportion, yet did he exceed in tenderness towards sufferers. A larger soul, I think, hath seldom dwelt in a house of clay than his was."

Continuing his description with a candor which proves its truthfulness, Maidstone says:

"I do believe, if his story were impartially transmitted, and the unprejudiced world well possessed with it, she would add him to her nine worthies, and make up that number a decemviri. He lived and died in comfortable communion with God, as judicious persons near him well observed. He was that Mordecai that sought the welfare of his people, and spake peace to his seed, yet were his temptations such, as it appeared frequently, that he, that hath grace enough for many men, may have too little for himself; the treasure he had being but in an earthen vessel, and that equally defiled with original sin, as any other man’s nature is."
There was no seed of hypocrisy in Cromwell’s heart. In times of danger he could practice dissimulation and concealment in affairs of State, but his soul was so thoroughly enveloped in the mysticism of what he believed to be a personal communion with God, that there was no guile in his religion. This trait is indicated in General Harrison’s exhortation to him about the time of the Little Parliament. "My dear lord," said Harrison, "let waiting upon Jehovah be the greatest and most considerable business you have every day; reckon it so more than to eat, sleep, or counsel together. Run aside sometimes from your company, and get a word with the Lord. Why should not you have three or four precious souls always standing at your elbow, with whom you might now and then turn into a corner? I have found refreshment and mercy in such a way." Immediately after his assumption of the Protectorate, his council, by virtue of the powers conferred by The Instrument of Government, passed certain wise ordinances, regulating the financial and political exigencies of the nation. Other ordinances—perhaps not so wise—were enacted in matters of religion, by which the Government assumed to inspect the characters of the preachers. And yet it was a time of complete religious toleration and liberty, excepting popery, which the Puritan party sternly refused to recognize as a part or parcel of the scheme of life in England. But Cromwell, greater than his fellows, perceived their weakness when he said, "Every sect saith, 'Oh, give me liberty.' But give him it, and, to his power, he will not yield it to anybody else. Liberty of conscience is a natural right, and he that would have it, ought to give it." He in time broadened his own mental powers so as to look upon Catholicism with the eye of a statesman instead of with that of the fanatic. He wrote to Cardinal Mazarin, the French Prime Minister, in these remarkable words, the style proving the letter his own and not Milton’s:

"The obligations, and many instances of affection, which I have received from your Eminency, do engage me to make returns suitable to your merits. But although I have this set home upon my spirit, I may not (shall I tell you, I cannot?) at this juncture of time, and as the face of my affairs now stands, answer to your call for Toleration.

"I say, I cannot, as to a public Declaration of my sense in that point; although I believe that under my Government your Eminency, in the behalf of Catholics, has less reason for complaint as to rigour upon men’s consciences than under the Parliament. For I have of some, and those very many, had compassion; making a difference. Truly I have (and I may speak it with cheerfulness in the presence of God, who is a witness within me to the truth of what I affirm) made a difference; and, as Jude speaks, ‘plucked many out of the fire,’ the raging fire of persecution, which did tyrannise over their consciences, and encroached by an arbitrariness of power upon their estates. And herein it is my purpose, as soon as I can remove impediments, and
He writes again, yet more definitely: "I desire from my heart—I have prayed for it—I have waited for the day to see union and right understanding between the godly people, Scots, English, Jews, Gentiles, Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, and all."

But more remarkable than his change of sentiment concerning Catholic toleration was his magnanimous attempt to restore the Jews to the privileges of English residents. These unfortunate people were despised and persecuted in all parts of Christendom as the murderers of Jesus, and the superstitious hatred which had arisen against them in the Middle Ages had made them the wretched victims of cruel and barbarous tortures on every hand. Yet the fire of their afflictions molded them into a patient, industrious, and thrifty race. Under the laws of Europe they could neither own land nor acquire public honors. Abhorred by all the rest of mankind, and deprived of both the political and religious liberties which are so dear to the human heart, the unhappy Jews seemed by a common agreement to have made the acquisition of wealth their sole endeavor. They, therefore, began to occupy almost every channel of trade until their influence upon commerce forced from the world a universal acknowledgment. In 1290 they had been publicly banished from England, since which time, with individual exceptions, their presence had been unknown in the British dominions. After the lapse of three and a half centuries, Cromwell resolved to remove this harsh proscription from the wretched race. As an act of toleration, this project appealed to his conscience; as a beneficent help to a deserving people, it won the approval of his most liberal mind, while he was quick to recognize, as the head of the State, its unbounded influence upon the industrial system of England.

The claims of the Jewish race were first brought to Cromwell’s attention by Manassah Ben Israel, a rich Amsterdam Jew, of Portuguese origin. This man was believed to be the most erudite of all his people, and he was respected for this as well as for his correct life. His wife was of the family of Abrabenels, and boasted a descent from the tribe of Judah and the royal house of David. Manassah had applied to the Long Parliament, immediately upon the establishment of the Commonwealth, for a passport to come into England, and his request had been granted. But other affairs had prevented him from making the journey, until, in October, 1655, he learned that Cromwell would not be unwilling to see him, and he accordingly came to London. As soon as he arrived in the English capital, he published a pamphlet, entitled, *A Humble Address to the Lord Protector in Behalf of the Jewish Nation.*

Cromwell received him with a cordial welcome, and summoned to a conference a distinguished body of lawyers, citizens, and preachers, before whom he placed, with many favorable remarks, the propositions of Manassah Ben Israel. These articles were so entirely simple and reasonable that human pity is all the more profoundly extended to a race that was compelled to sue for such concessions. The Jew asked that those of his countrymen who would be willing
to reside in England might have the protection of the government; that they might purchase or erect a synagogue in London; that they might possess a cemetery for the burial of their dead; that they might be allowed to trade as other English merchants; that they might determine disputes among themselves without resort to the English courts, where both parties to the cause were so agreed; and that such laws as were hostile to these privileges might be revoked. Four conferences were held, which Cromwell personally attended. Sir Paul Ricaut, who was present, said he never heard a man speak so well as Cromwell did at one of these meetings. The lawyers and citizens were generally favorable to admitting the Jews, but the preachers quoted a hundred texts of Scripture forbidding it. Since the preachers were largely the makers of public opinion, Cromwell deemed it expedient to put an end to the open discussion of his project. He was thus baffled in his desire to grant them lawful establishment. But he issued to many of them his dispensation to come to London, and engage in their avocations of life; and it was not long, under his tacit protection, before they had gathered together a Hebrew community and opened a synagogue.

The public benefits arising out of the expansion of trade taught the Lord Protector to welcome to the shores of England every man of decent character, without respect to race or creed. A notable incident of his liberal policy toward the Jews was the appearance of Rabbi Jakob Ben Azahel, who came all the way from Asia to go to Huntingdon, there to study the family tree of one whose habitual use of the language of the Psalms suggested that he might be of Jewish origin, nay, perhaps even the promised Lion of the House of Judah. The most important ordinance of his Council was that which consolidated permanently the two kingdoms of England and Scotland. This was an undertaking which the Long Parliament, under the colossal leadership of Sir Harry Vane, had attempted to accomplish, but without entire success. Cromwell’s ordinance was passed April 12, 1654, and was entitled, "Scotland made one Commonwealth with England." This act declared that Scotland shall be incorporated with England, and in every Parliament, to be held successively, thirty persons shall be elected from Scotland. Kingship was abolished there; the arms of Scotland were to be borne with the arms of the English Commonwealth; and many feudal institutions, including servitude and vassalage, were taken away. Superiorities, lordships, and jurisdictions were abolished, and the heritors freed from military service, and all forfeitures fell to the Lord Protector. The effect of this ordinance was to destroy the ancient power of the great nobles, which had survived in Scotland long after its decay in England, and to ease the burdens of the common people. No reparation was made to the despoiled lords, as their recent invasion of England had given a fine pretext for the sequestration of their estates. But there was no opposition; and the Lord Protector’s ordinance was paramount.

Another ordinance related to the settlement of a Gospel ministry, by which Cromwell fondly hoped to establish a tolerant and enduring Puritanism throughout England. There was as much confusion in the spiritual as in the political affairs of the country. Episcopacy had been officially overthrown;
Presbyterianism had not in England, as in Scotland, been established. Cromwell was heart and soul for Independency—the independence of each congregation, whereby a complete freedom of worship might be enjoyed without oppression from clerical persons or synods. With this purpose in his mind, the Lord Protector chose thirty-eight men, the best of the English Puritans, and organized them as a body of Triers. Among them were nine laymen with Francis Rouse at their head, and twenty-nine preachers. Cromwell had not taken pains to get men of a certain sect for his Triers; there were Independents, Presbyterians, and even a few Anabaptists among them. Any person desiring to hold a church living, or levy tithe or clergy dues in England, had first to be tried and approved by these men. It was the Lord Protector’s notion of the right means of teaching the true Gospel in England. Baxter testifies that these Triers—

"saved many a congregation from ignorant, ungodly, drunken teachers. ... So that, though many of them were somewhat partial to the Independents, Separatists, Fifth-Monarchy men and Anabaptists, and against the Prelatists and Arminians, yet so great was the benefit, above the hurt that they brought to the church, that many thousands of souls blessed God for the faithful ministers whom they let in, and grieved when the Prelatists afterward [at the Restoration] cast them out again."

Other ordinances forbade the subjects to compass or imagine the death of the Lord Protector; to raise forces against the present Government; to deny that the Lord Protector and the people assembled in Parliament are the supreme authority of the nation, or that the exercise of the chief magistracy is centered in him; to affirm that the Government is tyrannical, usurped, or illegal, or that there is any Parliament now in being; and to proclaim any of the posterity of the late King. Severe penalties were prescribed to effect the suppression of profane swearing and immoral vices. The fanaticism of the times led to many extravagances in religion, and those who suffered from deluded minds made the extraordinary claims to divine inspiration which are so apt to follow periods of excitement and enthusiasm. A body of men who indulged in wild and whirling words were known as Ranters. They interpreted Christ’s fulfilling the law for his people as a discharge from any obligation or duty the law required from them, and they argued that it was now no sin to do those things which formerly had been sinful. The slavish fear of the law being taken away, all things that man did were good if he did them with the mind and persuasion of virtue. A respectable and elevated sect sprang up in the Quakers, yet their practices gave much offense in those formal times. These men refused to put off their hats, or to observe any of the established forms of courtesy, holding that the Christian religion required of its votaries that they should be no respecters of persons. They opposed war as unlawful, denied the payment of tithes, and disclaimed the sanction of an oath. They married in a form of their own, not
submitting in this respect to the laws of their country; and they declared that the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper were of temporary obligation, and were now become obsolete. Yet among this sedate community there was one John Robins who proclaimed himself to be God Almighty; and some of his followers addressed him in that character with a devotion which would seem remarkable, were it not remembered that even in this day of ours similar claims are made, and similar faith is extorted in cases where enthusiasm has gone mad.

Another notable pretender was James Naylor, who was saluted by his devout admirers as "The Everlasting Son, the Prince of Peace, the Fairest among Ten Thousand." Naylor professed to believe that the Second Person of the Trinity was incarnated in him. He affected to raise the dead, and Dorcas Ebery announced that he had restored her to life after she had lain two days in the grave. When he passed through the streets of Bristol, a multitude of women followed him, and sang, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Israel, Hosanna in the Highest!" When he was tried before the Parliament for blasphemy, General Skippon quoted Cromwell as having said that he had always been for allowance to tender consciences, but that he never intended to indulge such things as were now under trial. The point illustrates Cromwell’s disapproval of extreme fanaticism. These extravagant people—and there were many of them whom we have not paused to describe—must not be assumed to represent the English Puritans. Their public appearances were the usual episodes of a disordered state of society.

Contrary to the general expectation of his enemies, the manifestations of opposition to Cromwell’s government were few and mild. But, on the other hand, congratulatory addresses were sent to him by the fleet, by the Army, and by many of the chief corporations and official persons in England. The congregations of saints everywhere assured him of their fealty. The Royalists, while hating the man who had executed their King, expected more lenient treatment from him than they had received from the Parliament, and were contented to bide their time. The Presbyterians were filled with satisfaction to see the Independents turned out by the man whom they had claimed to own. It looked like the dawn of peace at home, and, in the meantime, the Lord Protector was feeding the pride of his countrymen by his conquests on the seas.

It was his boast that he would make the name of an English citizen as necessary of respect throughout the world as that of a Roman had ever been. The first fruits of this resolution, which simply meant that he proposed to conduct a vigorous foreign military policy, came from the war with Holland. He had been a little fearful of the loyalty of the renowned Admiral Blake, though without cause, and had recalled General Monk from Scotland, and given him the chief command at sea. Blake gracefully accepted this humiliation like a true sailor, and continued at his post, notifying the fleet that "it was not the business of seamen to mind State affairs, but to keep foreigners from fooling us." The third in command in the Navy was Dean, who had risen from a common seaman to the reputation of a bold and excellent officer.
On the 2nd of June, 1654, the English fleet under Monk and Dean engaged the Dutch fleet under Van Tromp, De Ruiter, and De Witte. Each Navy consisted equally of about a hundred sail. For two days the battle was fiercely fought. A jealousy between the Dutch admirals threw the advantage to the English. On the third day Blake came up with a fresh squadron, and produced a panic among the Dutch. Van Tromp tried to hold his ships in line, but they fled down the wind, seeking shelter along the shallow coast of Zealand. Monk took eleven of their ships, sunk eight, and blew up two with gunpowder. He took 1,300 prisoners, besides killing many of the Dutch sailors. His own loss was not heavy. This defeat was a fearful blow to the pride of Holland, who had thought to straightway crush the new Commonwealth by her invincible armada. She hastily dispatched her ambassadors to England to sue for peace. Cromwell received them imperturbably, and before terms could be arranged, another battle occurred.

Holland had made haste to repair her fleet, and by the end of July Tromp was enabled to sail with about eighty ships, and De Witte had twenty-five more. Monk and Blake had for eight weeks blockaded the channels of the Dutch merchantmen at the mouth of the Texel, and on the evening of the 29th they cleared for a decisive action. Monk issued an order, containing all of Cromwell's spirit of war, that "no English ship should surrender to the enemy, and that they should accept no surrender of the vessels against which they fought. Their business was not to take ships, but to sink and destroy to the extent of their power." On the first day of the battle, night came before anything decisive had been done. On the second day, the wind was so high that each fleet was busy in its own preservation. On the third day, which was Sunday, July 31, the engagement was resumed with great fury, when a musket ball struck the illustrious Van Tromp, and he fell dead on the deck of his ship. This irretrievable disaster broke the spirits of the Dutch. They fled again, but with greater loss than before. Nearly thirty of their ships were burned or sunk, a large number of seamen was killed, and 1,200 of them were taken prisoners. The English had 500 killed and 800 wounded.

These victories threw the English people into ecstasies of delight. "The sovereignty of the seas," which England had long claimed, was now conceded to her prowess. The Navigation Act which had produced the war was allowed to stand. Cromwell proposed the novel plan of a maritime alliance between Holland and England, but did not press his demand, and soon after the last fight he consented to the terms of a generous peace.

In the meantime, young Charles Stuart and his peripatetic Court beheld with detestation and dismay the firm foundations of the Lord Protector’s Government. Charles was now in Paris, where the exigencies of his banishment compelled himself and his courtiers actually to suffer both the pangs of hunger and the humiliation of poor clothes. In this emergency it naturally occurred to the minds of the distressed Royalists to employ foul means for the destruction of a foe who had proved himself invulnerable in honorable warfare. With the approval of the wandering heir it was decided that Cromwell must be assassinated. A proclamation purporting to come direct from the hand of
Charles was distributed in England, offering a colonel’s commission and £500 a year to any soldier who would kill the Lord Protector.

There are good grounds for doubting the authenticity of this instrument, but in Thurloe (Vol. I, p. 708) the Duke of York coolly writes to Charles proposing the full plan of an assassination in language which shows that it had been discussed by Charles in person.

Under the cloak of patriotism there are always instruments available for such atrocities. An enthusiastic young Royalist named John Gerard came secretly to England and completed the details of the plot. Cromwell was to be murdered on the road as he passed from Whitehall to Hampton Court, and Charles II was to be instantly proclaimed. The assassins were in ambush, and Cromwell, who learned of the conspiracy only a few hours before it was to have been consummated, escaped by crossing the water at Putney. He succeeded in capturing Gerard and Vowel, the ringleaders, and some of their confederates. Afraid to risk a trial by jury, the Lord Protector instantly erected one of his high courts of justice before whom the two misguided men were straightway sentenced to death, and they soon after perished on the scaffold. A similar attempt at his assassination was made some time later by Miles Sindercomb. Sindercomb had been a zealous soldier in the Parliamentary Army, but had let his sympathies carry him into the councils of the Levelers, and had been condemned to be shot. A pardon was granted to him, and he was allowed to enlist with Monk’s Army in Scotland, where his talent for plotting caused him to be cashiered. Returning to London, he managed to attach himself to Cromwell’s life guard, and for a consideration of £1,600, he basely contracted to destroy the Lord Protector. His first plan was to fire his blunderbuss at Cromwell, whom he found to be so well guarded that he was forced to abandon it. He then arranged to set fire to the palace of Whitehall in the night, hoping to suffocate the Deliverer in the conflagration. On Thursday night, January 8, 1657, the sentinel on guard caught the smell of fire, and upon a hasty examination of the premises, discovered a vast quantity of wildfire so placed as to make the destruction of the palace and its inhabitants assured had not the guard been called at once to extinguish it. Cromwell and his Council were quickly called. There was much agitation. Sindercomb was taken and thrust in the Tower. He was soon afterwards tried by a jury, found guilty, and sentenced to death, but cheated the gallows by taking poison the night before the date for his execution (February 13, 1647).

In order to prevent such base designs, Cromwell now organized a bureau of information and sent his spies into every corner of Europe, who kept him fully advised not only of the plans of the Royalists, but of their conversation and gossip, so that it was not long before he became familiar with everything that was contrived or said against him in any part of the world. This system of secret intelligence was so exhaustive and universal that it cost Cromwell £60,000 a year to pay his agents. One of his informants was Sir Richard Willis, a
confident of Lord Clarendon’s, and who was considered an able and wise man. Cromwell procured a secret interview with Willis, and assured him that he did not intend to injure any of the King’s party; his design was rather to save them from ruin; they were apt, after their cups, he said, to run into foolish and ill-concerted plots, which would only bring them to disaster. All he desired was to be informed of their plots so that none might suffer for them, and if he cast any of them into prison, it should only be for a short period; and if they were interrogated, it should be about some trifling discourse, but not about the main business. Willis accepted £2,000 a year, and his secret revelations to Cromwell kept the Royalist party in amazement as to the quickness with which the Lord Protector followed up all their plotting.

Once, the Duke of Richmond, who had stood high in the confidence of Charles I, asked Cromwell’s leave to travel abroad, which was granted on the explicit condition that he would not see the royal heir. When the Duke returned, he presented himself before the Lord Protector, who demanded to know whether he had strictly observed his promise, and was answered by the Duke that he had not seen young Charles. Cromwell inquired, "When you met Charles Stuart, who put out the candles?" The Duke was too much startled to reply. "And what," continued Oliver, "did Charles Stuart say to you?" Richmond protested that nothing confidential had passed. "Did he not give you a letter?" The Duke said, "No." Then Oliver, with a scorn which may easily be imagined, cried out, "The letter was sewed into the lining of your hat!" He seized the hat, discovered the treasonable paper, and sent the Duke to the Tower.

After Gerard’s futile attempt on his life, and in view of the further discussions of his murder which were reported to him in every post, Cromwell told the Royalists openly, that assassinations were base and odious, and he never would begin such shameful practices; but he warned them that if the first Provocation came from them, he would retaliate and would never stop until he had exterminated the royal family. But he was alarmed for his safety from these cowardly foes. While he wore no secret armor, he carried weapons for his defense, and his old mother never heard a gun fired in the Park without sending hastily to inquire whether Oliver was killed.

About this time an accident occurred from which Cromwell narrowly escaped a painful death. The Count of Oldenburgh had presented him with six fine Friesland coach horses, and Cromwell intrepidly attempted to drive them through Hyde Park. The exhilaration of the drive encouraged him to apply his whip with too much freedom, whereupon the spirited beasts sprang away from his control, and he was thrown from the box upon the pole between them and dragged some distance, but finally disengaged himself and fell to the ground without serious hurt. In his fall a pistol which he carried in his pocket was discharged, which betrayed to his guards the haunting sense of danger that oppressed him.

Cromwell’s fearlessness of the anger of foreign Courts was disclosed in his treatment of Don Pantaleon Sa, a brother of the Portuguese Ambassador. A quarrel had occurred between the Don and an English gentleman; and the former, with some of his compatriots from the Embassy, while lying in wait for
the Englishman in the dusk of evening, attacked the first-comer, and assassinated the wrong man. Don Pantaleon then fled to the Embassy and claimed an Ambassador’s privilege from arrest. But Cromwell ordered him to be seized, in defiance of the law of nations, defining for himself the ambassadorial privilege as extending only to the Ambassador in person and not to his suite. The Portuguese Minister pleaded for his brother’s pardon, but the Lord Protector was inexorable. In the meantime a treaty of peace between England and Portugal was under consideration, and on the very day that the Portuguese Ambassador, in the depths of human woe, signed this treaty, his erring brother was beheaded on the scaffold by Cromwell’s order. This bold vindication of the law gave great satisfaction to the people.

To show the dominant will and fixed purposes of Cromwell, we copy this letter to Thurloe which serves formal notice upon all the place-holders in England that the Lord Protector will write no recommendation or suggestion but it must be instantly obeyed:

To Mr. Secretary Thurloe.

"Whitehall, 28th July, 1655.

"You receive from me, this 28th instant, a Petition from Margery Beacham, desiring the admission of her Son into the Charterhouse; whose Husband was employed one day in an important secret service, which he did effectually, to our great benefit and the Commonwealth’s.

"I have wrote under it a common Reference to the Commissioners; but I mean a great deal more: That it shall be done, without their debate or consideration of the matter. And so do you privately hint to — —. I have not the particular shining bauble for crowds to gaze at or kneel to, but—To be short—I know how to deny Petitions; and whatever I think proper, for outward form, to ‘refer’ to any Officer or Office, I expect that such my compliance with custom shall be looked upon as an indication of my will and pleasure to have the thing done. Thy true friend.

"Oliver P."

Cromwell’s power now surpassed that of any ruler in Europe, and his state was equal to the most magnificent. Ambassadors from every nation crowded the waiting rooms of his palaces. His family was established at Whitehall in regal luxury. His mother had its choicest apartments. With him were his wife and three of his daughters—Elizabeth, his favorite; Mary, “the handsome likeness of himself”; and Frances, his youngest, affectionately called “Frank” in the domestic circle, and looked upon by all the gossips of Europe as soon to wed Charles II. But when the Earl of Orrery suggested this match to Oliver, the
Protector answered that the King could never forgive his father’s blood. Orrery urged that Cromwell was but one among many who had brought the King to the block, but with this marriage he would be alone in restoring him, and he might stipulate to still command the Army. Cromwell replied that Charles “is so damnably debauched that he would undo us all.” And there the matter ended. Mrs. Hutchinson, Cromwell’s bitter foe, says of him at this period, "To speak the truth of himself, he had much natural greatness, and well became the place he had usurped."

Sir Philip Warwick, a staunch Cavalier, said, "I lived to see him [Cromwell] appear of a great and majestic deportment, and comely presence." Even Lord Clarendon, the most partial of Royalists, wrote of him, "As he grew into place and authority, his parts seemed to be raised, as if he had concealed his faculties till he had occasion to use them; and when he was to act the part of a great man, he did it without any indecency, notwithstanding the want of custom." Lord Digby’s ’’Sloven’’ had now indeed become, in verification of Hampden’s prophecy, the greatest man in England.

The purity of this Puritan’s Court was an unusual thing amidst the luxury and splendor of his station. A writer of the times observes that “whereas formerly it was very difficult to live at Court without a prejudice to religion, it is now impossible to be a courtier without it.” Dr. Bates says, “His own Court was regulated according to a severe discipline; here no drunkard, nor lewd-liver, nor any guilty of bribery, was to be found, without severe punishment.”

Whitelock relates that when he informed Cromwell of the Queen of Sweden’s plan to visit England, the Lord Protector would give her no encouragement, placing his objection upon the ill example she would give by her course of life, and no diplomatic reasoning would induce him to alter his determination. A Danish Ambassador came to England and was received by Cromwell with marks of great favor until it was made known that he was a man of evil habits, whereupon the Lord Protector refused to have further intercourse with him, and the Dane was forced to return to his own country. Milton says of Cromwell:

"He was a soldier disciplined to perfection in a knowledge of himself. He had either extinguished, or by habit learned to subdue, the whole host of vain hopes, fears, and passions which infest the soul. He first acquired the government of himself so that on the first day he took the field against the external enemy, he was a veteran in arms."

It was in the banqueting room at Whitehall that the Lord Protector received the Ambassadors. He stood on a raised platform three steps higher than the floor, before a chair of state. Each Ambassador was required to make an obeisance three times, the first at the entrance, the second midway, and the third at the foot of the platform, which Cromwell would acknowledge by a slight bow of his head.

On the declaration of peace between Holland and England, the Dutch Ambassador, after describing the manifestations of popular joy, writes to his
government of a State dinner given to him by the Lord Protector, and speaks thus of Cromwell’s manners:

"The music played all the time we were at dinner. The Lord Protector had us into another room, where the Lady Protectrice and others came to us, where we had also music and voices, and a psalm sung, which His Highness gave us, and told us that it was yet the best paper that had been exchanged between us. And from thence we were had into a gallery next the river, where we walked with His Highness about half-an-hour, and then took our leaves. My Lord Protector showed a great deal of kindness to my wife and daughter in particular."

As required by his Instrument of Government, Cromwell issued writs calling the Parliament to meet on the 3rd of September, 1654. Soon afterwards, he went in great pomp to London, where he was entertained at dinner by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen. At the conclusion of the feast, the Lord Protector, exercising for the first time this prerogative of royalty, conferred the honor of knighthood upon the Lord Mayor, and graciously presented him with his own sword which he took from his belt for that purpose.

Cromwell’s engagement to call a free Parliament was an extremely hazardous matter. The only electors who had been disfranchised were those who had borne arms against the Parliament in the late wars. This left the great majority of Englishmen free to vote, and to most of them Cromwell’s yoke was irksome and hateful. The Episcopalians of course despised him; so, likewise, did the Presbyterians. The Republicans had turned from him, suspicious of his integrity. The fanatics—the Fifth Monarchy men and the Anabaptists—regarded him as one fallen from grace. To give these men the power of calling a Parliament which was to hold an authority co-ordinate with himself in the Government, taxed the fortitude of a man so great as Cromwell. But he was hopeful of establishing at least the forms of a constitutional government. He intended, if the nation would be pliable to his views of policy, to bestow upon his countrymen a representative government, under which all measures for the public good should receive their consent in Parliament.

The Parliament met according to the call. In the assembly were Richard and Henry Cromwell; Whitelock; Lenthall, the old Speaker; General Skippon; Sir Francis Rouse; Lord Herbert, the son of the Marquis of Worcester; Dr. Owen, of Oxford; many officers of the Army; Fleetwood; Lambert; and Claypole. More prominently, there were Lord Fairfax, Bradshaw, Hazelrig, and old Sir Harry Vane—the son staying sulkily at home.

In all there were 340 Englishmen, thirty Scots, and thirty Irish, a total of 400 members.

The 3rd of September was Sunday, the Lord Protector’s Fortunate Day, and he had insisted on calling the Parliament together on that day. The formal opening of the House did not take place until the next day. Cromwell rode in State from Whitehall. Several hundred gentlemen and officers went before him
bareheaded; likewise his life guard and the servants of his household. On one side of his coach was Sir Walter Strickland, the captain of his guard. On the other side was Colonel Charles Howard. Henry Cromwell and Lambert sat in the coach with him, both uncovered. After him came Claypole, his son-in-law and Master of the Horse, with a led horse richly caparisoned. Next were the officers of the government, including the Commissioners of the Treasury and of the Seal. After hearing a sermon in Westminster Abbey, the Lord Protector, with the same following, proceeded to the Painted Chamber, and inaugurated his Parliament.

He made them a speech which no other man could imitate. It was full of fervid piety, of rugged eloquence, of wise statesmanship, of political instruction. His sentences must sometimes have sounded rambling and obscure. His oratory suggests that he started a pregnant sentence with his mind so concentrated on his thought that his words would in spite of himself become tangled and involved. It is not so with his letters, which are usually models of clear expression. But notwithstanding this grave defect in his speeches, it requires no serious mental strain to follow his ideas, which are at all times uppermost. He told his Parliament that they were met on the greatest occasion that England ever saw, and that they had on their shoulders the interests of all the Christian people in the world. It would have been beyond all their thoughts, some months since, after so many changes and turnings as the nation had labored under, to have such a day of hope as that was. He devoutly quoted David’s Psalm: “Many, O Lord, my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.” He referred to the lesson that Dr. Goodwin had preached to them that morning—of Israel’s bringing out of Egypt through a wilderness by many signs and wonders, towards a place of rest. But he deftly reminded them that it was thus far only towards it. He then passed to the miseries of the late wars, and attacked the theories of the Levelers in desiring the extirpation of social distinctions. He said that a nobleman, a gentleman, a yeoman, had been the ranks and orders of Englishmen for hundreds of years. He spoke of the driving-out of Anti-Christ, by which he meant popery, and Dr. Laud’s imitations of popery. He praised the liberty of conscience and the liberty of the subject as two things as glorious as God had given them, but severely censured those fanatics who prated of liberty to such an extent that they inveighed against the printing of the Bible, lest it should be unfairly imposed upon the consciences of men. The Presbyterians had formerly caused the axe to be laid at the foot of an irresponsible pulpit, so that no man might preach unless ordained. Now, there were many who looked upon an ordained preacher, no matter how holy and pious he might be, with contempt. He criticized this condition as exhibiting too much of an imposing spirit in matters of conscience, “a spirit,” said he, “unchristian enough in any times, most unfit for these times, denying liberty of conscience to men who have earned it with their blood!”

He reviewed with a broad charity some of the worst features of the prevailing sectarianism. He dwelt upon the Fifth Monarchy notion—that, after the reign of
Nebuchadnezzar in Assyria, of Cyrus in Persia, of Alexander in Greece, and of the Caesars in Rome, Jesus Christ himself should reign on earth through his saints for a thousand years. He said patiently that they could all honor the notion that Christ would have a time to set up his reign in their hearts, by subduing those corruptions, and lusts, and evils that are there, "which," he added with grim wisdom, "now reign more in the world than, I hope, in due time they shall do. And when more fullness of the Spirit is poured forth to subdue iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, then will the approach of that glory be." It was General Harrison whom he was attacking here—his former friend, but now, as the leader of these very Fifth Monarchy men, denouncing Cromwell as an usurper, until the Lord Protector had been forced to put him under restraint. "If the magistrate," said he, indicating himself, "by punishing visible miscarriages, save them by that discipline, God having ordained him for that end, I hope it will evidence love and not hatred, so as to punish where there is cause."

He denounced those who proclaimed that liberty and property are not the badges of the Kingdom of Christ, and that laws, instead of being regulated, should be abrogated and subverted. During the recent troubles, when family was against family, husband against wife, parents against children, and there was nothing in the hearts and minds of men but "Overturn, overturn, overturn!" the common enemy slept not! The emissaries of the Jesuits never came in such swarms as they had done since those things had been set on foot. They had attempted to pervert and deceive the people.

Passing from this mournful review of the religious differences of his people, Cromwell made some references to the condition of foreign affairs; He told them of the peace with Holland, of the danger of a war with France unless she abated somewhat her contemptuous bearing towards this young Commonwealth. A desirable alliance had been formed with Sweden, another with Denmark. France and Spain, their Catholic neighbors, they could expect no good from. English ships were now sovereign on the seas. He had made peace with Portugal, by which many commercial advantages were secured to England, but above all, he had exacted that for his countrymen, which had never been granted to Protestants in that country before—the privilege of liberty of conscience, and to worship in chapels of their own. "There is not a nation in Europe," he said, "but is very willing to ask a good understanding with you."

One thing more his Government had done—it had called together this free Parliament; he repeated the words, a free Parliament.

He then came to the great question of taxes—always a burning question in troublous times. He spoke of the charges for the Army, and the expenditure of £120,000 a month for the Navy. All forfeited lands had been sold—the King’s, Queen’s, bishops’, Dean-and-Chapters’ lands; still much more money was needed. The bounteous mercies of God which he had pointed out to them but indicated the entrances and doors of hope, "whereby, through the blessing of God, you may enter into rest and peace. But you are not yet entered!" "You were told today," he continued, in words which exhibited his anxious hope for a
good understanding with this Parliament, "of a people brought out of Egypt
towards the land of Canaan; but through unbelief, murmuring, repining, and
other temptations and sins wherewith God was provoked, they were fain to
come back again, and linger many years in the wilderness before they came to
the Place of Rest. We are thus far, through the mercy of God. We have cause
to take notice of it, that we are not brought into misery, but have, as I said
before, a door of hope open. And I may say this to you: If the Lord’s blessing
and His presence go along with the management of affairs at this meeting, you
will be enabled to put the topstone to the work, and make the nation happy.
But this must be by knowing the true state of affairs. ... And therefore I wish
that you may go forward, and not backward, and that you may have the
blessing of God upon your endeavors. It’s one of the great ends of calling this
Parliament, that the Ship of the Commonwealth may be brought into a safe
harbor, which, I assure you, it will not be, without your counsel and advice. ...
I do therefore persuade you to a sweet, gracious, and holy understanding of
one another, and of your business." He concluded by telling them that he had
not spoken these things as one who assumed dominion over them, but as one
who had resolved to be their fellow servant, for the welfare of the people.
There was general satisfaction with the matter of his speech, and murmurs of
approbation were heard from every part of the hall. But the people were not
ready to turn their backs upon the flesh-pots of Egypt.
It is notable that Cromwell did not claim the prerogative usually observed by
the Sovereign in naming a Speaker for the Parliament. When, therefore, he had
withdrawn, and the members had assembled in their own House, the selection
of a Speaker was their first task. Cromwell’s friends—to be known henceforth
as the Court party—named Lenthall for the office. An Opposition party was
instantly unmasked through a counter-proposal to elect Bradshaw. But there
was no serious contest, and Lenthall, the famous Speaker of the Long
Parliament, took the chair.
It was clearly the duty of this Parliament, having consented to assemble under
the Instrument of Government, to raise no question concerning the authority
under which they sat. To attack Cromwell’s right to call them together would
obviously destroy their own authority as representatives, and change their
condition from that of a free Parliament into that of an irresponsible
convention. By accepting Cromwell’s dictatorship as the natural result of his
conquest in their behalf over an anciently established government, they might
have enjoyed the distinguished honor of settling the nation in peace and
prosperity on the conditions which he pressed upon them. But following on the
heels of a sanguinary rebellion, in the midst of a great revolution, with the
smoking embers of the people’s rage threatening to change the present
confusion into a more dreadful anarchy, with this situation confronting them,
the Parliament fell to debating constitutional principles at a time when
constitutional principles could mean nothing but the maxims of the existing
Government.
On the second day of their sitting Bradshaw moved that they should form
themselves into a Committee of the Whole, to deliberate on the question
whether the Parliament should approve of the system of government by a single person and a Parliament, as provided for in The Instrument of Government. The motion led to a fierce debate, and was carried by a majority of five votes—a defeat for the Lord Protector. All through the week the contest raged, and on Monday of the next week. Bradshaw, Hazelrig, and Scott were marshalling a formidable Republican party to attack the dictatorship. Oliver had defied the lightning before; he perceived the necessity for doing so once again.

On Tuesday morning, the 12th of September, 1654, when the members came to the House, they found that during the preceding night Cromwell’s soldiers had taken possession of all the principal posts in the city. Those who made an effort to enter the House were told by armed guards that the doors were locked, but that they might repair to the Painted Chamber, where the Lord Protector desired to meet them. Thither they all presently gathered, being moved with varied emotions of curiosity, indignation, or despair. He had bound himself by solemn oath not to interfere with their sitting for five months. But what was he now about to do?

Cromwell began to address them with a grave and sorrowful demeanor, rousing himself at times into flashes of fire, of scorn and anger, and then relapsing into a deep melancholy which seemed to overwhelm his soul.

He told them it was not long since he had met them there, on an occasion which gave him much more content. He had told them then that they were a free Parliament. And so they were, whilst they would acknowledge the government and authority which called them thither. But certainly that word, free Parliament, implied a reciprocation or it implied nothing at all. He had always been of this mind since he first entered upon his office. If God will not bear it up, let it sink! He then made a declaration which astonished many of those who were charging all the existing ills to his ambition.

"I called not myself to this place. I say again, I called not myself to this place! Of that God is witness—and I have many witnesses, who, I do believe, could lay down their lives bearing witness to the truth of that; namely, that I called not myself to this place. And being in it, I bear not witness to myself (or my office), but God and the people of these nations have also borne testimony to it and me. If my calling be from God, and my testimony from the people, God and the people shall take it from me, else I will not part with it! I should be false to the trust that God hath placed in me, and to the interest of the people of these nations, if I did."

Very dramatic was Oliver, always—either when fighting his battles, or in those sterner duties when he was breaking the backs of his Parliaments. He told them how he had come to his present elevation. "I was by birth a gentleman, living neither in any considerable height, nor yet in obscurity. I have been called to several employments in the nation—to serve in Parliament, and others; and—not to be overtedious—I did endeavor to discharge the duty of an honest man in
those services, to God and his People’s interest, and to the Commonwealth.” He referred to various occasions on which he believed himself to have been the special instrument of God’s Providences, and told them that having seen the wars ended, he had hoped in a private capacity to enjoy the fruits of their conquests. But after the battle of Worcester he had discovered the design of the Long Parliament to perpetuate itself. He himself had been tempted by some of its eminent members to connive at their intentions, by which vacancies were to be supplied by new elections, and the House to sit from generation to generation. That Parliament had been dissolved. Hoping then that a few might settle the affairs of the nation, he had called the Little Parliament, and had desired to lay down his power into their hands! "I say to you again," he solemnly asseverated, "in the presence of that God who hath blessed, and been with me in all my adversities and successes, that was, as to myself, my greatest end! A desire perhaps, I am afraid, sinful enough, to be quit of the power God had most clearly by this Providence put into my hands, before he called me to lay it down, before those honest ends of our fighting were attained and settled—I say, the authority I had in my hand being so boundless as it was, for, by Act of Parliament, I was General of all the forces in the three nations of England, Scotland, and Ireland, in which unlimited condition I did not desire to live a day—we called that meeting, for the ends before expressed."

The Little Parliament had re-consigned to his hands the power he had delivered unto them, and had dissolved. Then there was no Government. The officers of the Army had drawn up the existing model without his knowledge, and had pressed him to accept the chief place. He had long refused to do this until they convinced him that The Instrument Of Government, instead of advancing his power, which he already possessed, would limit him to a co-ordinate authority with a free Parliament. He told them that his consent to this request had drawn forth the congratulations of noblemen, gentlemen, and yeomen throughout the country. But they—his hearers—to sit and not own the authority by which they sat, astonished more men than himself.

He told them that there were certain fundamental principles which were deeper than the law. The government by a single person and a Parliament was a fundamental. That Parliaments should not make themselves perpetual was a fundamental. Liberty of conscience in religion was a fundamental. The control of the sword by the Supreme Magistrate and the Parliament was a fundamental.

There were other things, he said, which were circumstantial. The present Army of 30,000 men could be reduced to 15,000 if they would but unite to compose the spirits of the people. But they must accept the government as then established so that succeeding Parliaments would not forever try to alter it. And rather than throw away the government, which had been acknowledged by God and approved by men, he would be willing to be rolled into his grave and buried with infamy.

There was no room for doubting the spirit of a man who could speak thus to 400 members of Parliament! He is coming to the point now.
He told them that he had proposed to himself to obtain an acknowledgment of the full authority of *The Instrument of Government*, and of his own powers under that *Instrument*, before permitting them originally to assemble. He had not done so. What he had forborne to do upon a just confidence at first, they necessitated him unto now. As the authority which called them together was so little valued, and so much slighted, he had caused a stop to be put to their entrance into the Parliament House, until they should testify their consent to the existing government. "I am sorry!" he cried, "I am sorry! And I could be sorry to the death that there is cause for this! But there is cause. And if things be not satisfied which are reasonably demanded, I, for my part, will do that which becomes me, seeking my counsel from God." He informed them that there was a parchment in the Lobby, without the Parliament door, which he required them all to sign before they might resume their Parliamentary privileges, which bound them to be true to him as Lord Protector, and to preserve the government in a Single Person and a Parliament. If they would but do this, he reminded them that they had power to pass laws without his consent, and that he would cheerfully permit them to limit his own prerogatives in anything that would tend to the preservation of the cause and interest so long contended for.

When he had finished, about a hundred withdrew to the Lobby and signed the Acknowledgment. Within a few days some 200 others signed. The rabid Republicans—Bradshaw, Hazelrig, Scott, and a hundred others—turned their backs on Oliver and on his Parliament, and went their ways in deep anger. The reduced and circumscribed Parliament resumed its debates, talked of religion, investigated some "scandals" in the pulpit, and then fell again to debating everlastingly of constitutional rule. Abraham Cowley, the poet, inquired about that time, "Did we fight for liberty against our Prince, that we might become slaves to our servant?"

But while Oliver sat impatiently at hand, forced to perceive in their pedagogic contumacy the certain failure of his fond scheme for a co-ordinate Parliament, an event occurred in his own household which bowed his head with deepest sorrow. His mother was ninety-four years old. She had watched her son’s career with a mother’s anxiety for its dangers. Ludlow says, "At the sound of a musket she would often be afraid her son was shot, and could not be satisfied unless she saw him once a day at least." On the 16th of November, 1654, the dear old woman was called home. Cromwell sat at her bedside; his great soul had never known a bereavement like this. A little before her death she gave him her blessing in these words—we can almost see the fading eyes and hear the sweet voice across two centuries: "The Lord cause His face to shine upon you, and comfort you in all your adversities, and enable you to do great things for the glory of your Most High God, and to be a relief unto His people. My dear son, I leave my heart with thee. A good night!" And so she passed away.

The Pedant Parliament accomplished nothing. It ignored Oliver, it ignored the national necessities. It spent the time in idle words. In Scotland the pay of the soldiers was thirty weeks in arrears and there was some talk among them of displacing General Monk, choosing the fanatic Overton to command them, and
marching into England to adjust grievances themselves. Even this prospect did not move the Parliament to patriotic action. No scheme of taxation was devised to meet this issue. But Oliver sent for Overton to come to Whitehall, and, when he came, he put him in the Tower. By The Instrument of Government he must wait five months on this Parliament to finish its business. It seemed that the time would never pass. Meanwhile their debates kept up, and other persons were beginning to repeat their talk of constitutional rule. There was real danger from Royalist plots, yet they never heeded it. Oliver was visibly irritated. Someone suggested that five months need not mean five calendar months. The soldiers were paid by months of four weeks, or twenty-eight days. This was enough. On Monday morning, January 22, 1655, he summoned them before him. They felt secure for twelve days longer, and wondered what he would now say. More in sorrow than in anger he addressed them. There was no disguise in the words in which he told them of their failure. He told them that instead of peace and settlement, instead of mercy and truth being brought together, and righteousness and peace kissing each other, to reconcile the people of these nations, only weeds and nettles, briers and thorns had thriven under the shadow of their tree. Attempts had been made to undermine the loyalty of the Army. In some quarters a mutinous spirit had appeared. The Cavalier party were already arming for another uprising. But the State had received no succor from the Parliament. "I do not know," he said, with fine scorn, "whether you have been alive or dead. I have not once heard from you all this time; I have not, and that you all know." He criticized them for the time they had spent in debating against a hereditary succession. If the hereditary principle had been inserted in The Instrument of Government, he declared that he would have rejected it. "I can say that no particular interest, either of myself, estate, honor, or family, are, or have been, prevalent with me to this undertaking." He quoted from Ecclesiastes: "Who knoweth whether he may beget a fool or a wise man?" Then came an expression of that constant belief that the Divinity of Christ was identified with England's present government, and that he himself was God's especial servant for the work in hand. He said, in one of his enthusiastic bursts:

"Supposing this cause, or this business must be carried on, it is either of God, or of man. If it be of man, I would I had never touched it with a finger. If I had not had a hope fixed in me that this cause and this business was of God, I would many years ago have run from it. If it be of God, He will bear it up. If it be of man, it will tumble; as everything that hath been of man since the world began hath done. And what are all our histories, and other traditions of actions in former times, but God manifesting Himself, that he hath shaken, and tumbled down and trampled upon, everything that He had not planted? And if this is so, let the All-Wise God deal with it. If this be of human structure and invention, and if it be an old plotting and contriving to bring
things to this issue, and that they are not the births of Providence, then they will tumble. But if the Lord take pleasure in England, and if He will do us good, He is very able to bear us up! Let the difficulties be whatsoever they will, we shall in His strength be able to encounter with them. And I bless God I have been inured to difficulties; and I never found God failing when I trusted in Him. I can laugh and sing, in my heart, when I speak of these things to you or elsewhere.

He answered some of the charges that had been made against his "cunning," and his "ambition," protesting that he had at the first and now acted only from an urgent necessity. Then came this amazing conclusion:

"I think myself bound, as in my duty to God, and to the people of these nations, for their safety and good in every respect—I think it my duty to tell you that it is not for the profit of these nations nor for common and public good, for you to continue here any longer. And therefore I do declare unto you that I do dissolve this Parliament."

The Pedant Parliament disappeared, and Cromwell’s cherished plan of governing England under constitutional forms was simultaneously dissolved.

CHAPTER XXIV
The Major-Generals-Foreign Policy

When the English nation, by the failure of its Parliament, refused to give its assent to Cromwell’s policy of State, it forced him to become, through the necessities of a sanguinary revolution, theoretically, and in the best interpretation of the words, a usurper, a tyrant, and a despot. We do not mean that he was a usurper as Richard the Third was a usurper, seizing the chief place in the State because of the splendor of its robes and the glitter of its Crown. We do not mean that he was a tyrant as Henry VIII was a tyrant, making his own will the law of his people because he derived the most pleasure in making his own will paramount. We do not mean that he was a despot as Ivan the Terrible was a despot, sacrificing human life with gleeful persistence, because in killing his subjects he demonstrated his personal power. He was a usurper because the law as it stood provided for the succession of another ruler. He was a tyrant because the necessities of the revolution required him to meet desperate emergencies with prompt and bold expedients. He was a despot because he occupied his high place unrecognized by the law and maintained his government by force. But even in the front of such a startling paradox, we maintain that, as usurper, tyrant, and despot, Cromwell stood for the liberties of the people against the encroachments of Church and State under the forms of law. And it was the inspiration of all his labors to hope that a free Parliament might in time be assembled, which would
gratefully accept the Commonwealth he had established and consent to maintain it for posterity.

His most obnoxious exercise of supreme authority was the establishment of his oppressive system of the Major-Generals. The avenues of secret intelligence which brought to his ears the faintest whispers of treason whenever and by whomever they were spoken, had been employed recently by the Protector to divine the latest plots for his overthrow. Royalists and Republicans were hand in hand in these enterprises. Charles Stuart had come to the Dutch seacoast to be in readiness to invade England whenever it might be safe for him to do so. Lord Clarendon, his Chancellor, expressed himself as being "cocksure" of their uprising. The place appointed for the first outbreak was Yorkshire, where Sir Henry Slingsby and Lord Malevrier were seized and sent to prison before they could make much headway. The next effort was made in the South of England. On Sunday night, March 11, 1655, about 200 Cavaliers, led by Sir Joseph Wagstaff, Colonel Penruddock, and Major Grove, entered the city of Salisbury, and seized the judges and the high sheriff and his deputies in their beds. The next morning they commanded the sheriff to proclaim King Charles. He refused —said he would be hanged first. Failing to obtain the popular support which they had expected, they returned towards Cornwall. Captain Unton Crook pursued them, overtook them at three o’clock in the morning at South Moulton in Devonshire, smote them fiercely, and ended their insurrection. Wagstaff escaped. Penruddock and Grove, two very gallant Cavaliers, were tried by jury, found guilty, and beheaded. Many of their followers were hanged; many others were sent as slaves to Barbadoes.

So quick was Cromwell to stamp out these seditious fires that active plotting ceased from that time forward. Not even the chivalrous devotion of the old Cavaliers to the royal cause could henceforth impel them to lead their undisciplined household servants against the trained soldiery who now occupied every county in England. But Cromwell was not content with having crushed them. He determined to sap their life energies, and with this purpose in his mind he divided England into twelve military divisions and appointed the chief officers of his Army to command therein as Major-Generals.

Fleetwood, who became one of the Major-Generals, had married Ireton’s widow, Bridget Cromwell, and had been appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland. But Fleetwood was not the man for Ireland, and the piercing eye of Cromwell soon perceived that a bolder hand must guide the policy in that country. Still he was not ready to displace Fleetwood without a further trial of his parts, but he sent Henry Cromwell on a service of inspection to Ireland, in order that he might obtain a trustworthy account of the State’s business there, and wrote thus to Fleetwood:

"Whitehall, 22nd June, 1655.

"Dear Charles:
"I write not often; at once I desire thee to know I most dearly love thee, and indeed my heart is plain to thee as thy heart can well desire; let nothing shake thee in this. The wretched jealousies that are amongst us, and the spirit of calumny turn all into gall and wormwood. My heart is for the People of God; that the Lord knows, and will in due time manifest, yet thence are my wounds, which though it grieves me, yet through the grace of God doth not discourage me totally. Many good men are repining at everything, though indeed very many good are well satisfied, and satisfying daily. The will of the Lord will bring forth good in due time.

"It's reported that you are to be sent for, and Harry to be Deputy, which truly never entered into my heart. The Lord knows, my desire was for him and his Brother to have lived private lives in the country; and Harry knows this very well, and how difficultly I was persuaded to give him his commission for his present place. This I say as from a simple and sincere heart. The noise of my being crowned, etc. are similar malicious figments.

"Use this Bearer, Mr. Brewster, kindly. Let him be near you: indeed he is a very able holy man; trust me you will find him so. He was a bosom-friend of Mr. Tillinghurst; ask him of him; you will thereby know Mr. Tillinghurst’s spirit. This Gentleman brought him to me a little before he died, and Mr. Cradock; Mr. Throughton, a godly minister being by, with Mr. Tillinghurst himself, who cried ‘Shame!’

"Dear Charles, my dear love to thee; and to my dear Biddy, who is a joy to my heart, for what I hear of the Lord in her. Bid her be cheerful, and rejoice in the Lord once and again: if she knows the Covenant of Grace, she cannot but do so. For that Transaction is without her; sure and stedfast, between the Father and the Mediator in His blood; therefore, leaning upon the Son, or looking to Him, thirsting after Him, and embracing Him, we are His Seed; and the Covenant is sure to all the Seed. The Compact is for the Seed; God is bound in faithfulness to Christ, and in Him to us; the Covenant is without us; a Transaction between God and Christ. Look up to it. God engageth in it to pardon us; to write His Law in our heart; to plant His fear so that we shall never depart from him. We, under all our sins and infirmities, can daily offer a perfect Christ; and thus we have peace and safety, and apprehension of love, from a Father in Covenant, who cannot deny Himself. And truly in this is all my salvation; and this helps me to bear my great burdens."
"If you have a mind to come over with your dear Wife, etc., take the best opportunity for the good of the Public and your own convenience. The Lord bless you all. Pray for me, that the Lord would direct, and keep me His servant. I bless the Lord I am not my own; but my condition to flesh and blood is very hard. Pray for me; I do for you all. Commend me to all friends. I rest, your loving father,

"Oliver P."

But in January of the next year Fleetwood came to London to join Whitelock and others in the custody of the Treasury, and Henry Cromwell was appointed Lord Deputy to Ireland, and he conducted a vigorous but patient and magnanimous administration there. Cromwell counseled his son in these sagacious words:

"For my Son Henry Cromwell, at Dublin, Ireland.

"Whitehall, 21st November, 1655.

"Son:

"I have seen your Letter writ unto Mr. Secretary Thurloe; and do find thereby that you are very apprehensive of the carriage of some persons with you, towards yourself and the public affairs.

"I do believe there may be some particular persons who are not very well pleased with the present condition of things, and may be apt to show their discontent as they have opportunity: but this should not make too great impressions in you. Time and patience may work them to a better frame of spirit, and bring them to see that which, for the present, seems to be hid from them; especially if they shall see your moderation and love towards them, if they are found in other ways towards you. Which I earnestly desire you to study and endeavour, all that lies in you. Whereof both you and I too shall have the comfort, whatsoever the issue and event thereof be.

"For what you write of more help, I have long endeavoured it; and shall not be wanting to send you some farther addition to the Council, so soon as men can be found out who are fit for the trust. I am also thinking of sending over to you a fit person who may command the North of Ireland; which I believe stands in great need of one; and I am of your opinion that Trevor and Colonel Mervin are very dangerous persons, and may be made the heads of a new rebellion. And therefore I would have you move
the Council that they be secured in some very safe place, and the farther out of their own countries the better.

"I commend you to the Lord; and rest, your affectionate father,

"Oliver P."

And a little later, Oliver sends Henry this soothing letter, containing words which will greatly profit the young man’s mind, much harassed, doubtless, by the difficulties of his position:

"For my Son Harry Cromwell.

"Whitehall, 21st April, 1656.

"Harry:

"I have received your letters, and have also seen some from you to others; and am sufficiently satisfied of your burden, and that if the Lord be not with you, to enable you to bear it, you are in a very sad condition.

"I am glad to hear what I have heard of your carriage: study still to be innocent; and to answer every occasion, roll yourself upon God, which to do needs much grace. Cry to the Lord to give you a plain single heart. Take heed being over-jealous, lest your apprehensions of others cause you to offend. Know that uprightness will preserve you; in this be confident against men.

"I think the Anabaptists are to blame in not being pleased with you. That’s their fault! It will not reach you, whilst you with singleness of heart make the glory of the Lord your aim. Take heed of professing religion without the power: that will teach you to love all who are after the similitude of Christ. Take care of making it a business to be too hard for the men who contest with you. Being over-concerned may train you into a snare. I have to do with those poor men; and am not without my exercise. I know they are weak; because they are so peremptory in judging others. I quarrel not with them but in their seeking to supplant others; which is done by some, first by branding them with antichristianism, and then taking away their maintenance.

"Be not troubled with the late Business: we understand the men. Do not fear the sending of any over to you but such as will be considering men, loving all godly interests, and men that will be friends to justice. Lastly, take heed of studying to lay for yourself
the foundation of a great estate. It will be a snare to you: they
will watch you; bad men will be confirmed in covetousness. The
thing is an evil which God abhors. I pray you think of me in this.

"If the Lord did not sustain me, I were undone: but I live, and I
shall live, to the good pleasure of His grace: I find mercy at need.
The God of all grace keep you. I rest, your loving father,

"Oliver P.

"My love to my dear Daughter (whom I frequently pray for) and to
all friends."

The appointment of the Major-Generals (August 1655) gave to those officers
supreme control over the persons and property of all who lived within their
jurisdiction. Cromwell, who affected to consider that the recent insurrections
involved the whole of the Royalist party, now prescribed a measure of the
utmost severity against them. He issued an order that they should all be
assessed the tenth penny of their possessions, and as most of them had been
already reduced to poverty by the exactions of the war, the distress caused by
this harsh measure was most extreme. No regard was paid to former
compositions, articles of capitulation, or acts of indemnity. Harassed as they
had already been by the rigors of the conquerors, the Cavaliers were again
required to purchase their immunity from prison by paying the most
extravagant sums.
The Major-Generals collected these taxes with relentless precision, and
discharged the other extraordinary powers of their offices in a manner which
placed the liberties of all Englishmen in bondage. They were expected to look
after the good of the Commonwealth, both as to religious and civil affairs,
according to their own discretion. They could silence or eject "scandalous"
ministers; summon disaffected or suspected persons before them, and send
them to prison if impulse or expediency suggested it to their minds. All stage
plays and public sports were strictly suppressed. They had command of the
militia of the counties, and troops were kept ready under vast public charge to
march wherever their presence might be deemed necessary. There was no
appeal from their exactions but to the Lord Protector and his Council, and well
might Cromwell say, "Many good men are repining at everything!"
Yet was England in the zenith of her glory. A military dictatorship oppressed
her people at home, but the same institution exalted her power and glory
abroad. We have seen that Holland, Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal had made
haste to claim terms of amity and peace with her. France and Spain were now
vying with each other to obtain an alliance with the Protector. They addressed
him obsequiously as "the Most Invincible of Sovereigns," the "Greatest and
Happiest of Princes." When Louis of France wrote to him as "Your Serene
Highness," Cromwell refused to receive the letter. "What?" said Louis to
Mazarin, "are we to call this fellow our brother?" "Call him your father, Sire,"
answered the wily minister, "if it will secure his friendship." "It was hard to discover," wrote Clarendon, "which feared him most—France, Spain, or the Low Countries." The King of Spain sent an ambassador to express his great satisfaction with Cromwell’s accession to the government, and solemnly engaged himself, if Oliver would go one step further and take the Crown upon him, to hazard the Crown of Spain in his defense.

After apparently dallying with the ambassadors from both Paris and Madrid, Oliver determined to form an alliance with France. But in June 1655, there came news to England of cruelties to the Protestants of Piedmont which caused him to break off the treaty until their protection could be secured. The Duke of Savoy had decided to convert his Protestant subjects in the Valleys of the Alps to Catholic tenets even at the cannon’s mouth. These Savoyards were a pious and industrious peasantry, said to be descendants of the ancient Waldenses. They had long since thrown off the yoke of Rome, and when the Catholic soldiers came among them and were met with a stubborn rejection of the Roman dogmas, a sanguinary massacre ensued, which spared neither age nor sex. All manner of cruelties and atrocities were put upon these poor suffering ones. They were driven out of their houses and away from their fields, and when they attempted to fly, many of them were slaughtered by the roadside. On the day that the news of this affair reached England, the French treaty was to have been signed. But Cromwell threw it indignantly aside. He refused to negotiate further until Louis and Mazarin would assist him in restoring the Savoyards to their houses. He gave £2,000 from his own purse to their relief and sent collectors to obtain contributions from others who were able to give. He wrote to Louis by the hand of Milton in this lofty and pathetic strain:

"To the Most Serene and Potent Prince, Louis, King of France.

"Most Serene and Potent King, Most Close Friend and Ally:

"Your Majesty may recollect that during the negotiation between us for the renewing of our League (which many advantages to both Nations, and much damage to their common Enemies, resulting therefrom, now testify to have been very wisely done), there fell out that miserable Slaughter of the People of the Valleys; whose cause, on all sides deserted and trodden down, we, with the utmost earnestness and pity, recommended to your mercy and protection. Nor do we think your Majesty, for your own part, has been wanting in an office so pious and indeed so human; in so far as either by authority or favour you might have influence with the Duke of Savoy: we certainly, and many other Princes and States, by embassies, by letters, by entreaties directed thither, have not been wanting.

"After that most sanguinary Massacre, which spared no age nor either sex, there was at last a Peace given; or rather, under the
specious name of Peace, a certain more disguised hostility. The terms of the Peace were settled in your Town of Pignerol: hard terms; but such as those poor People, indigent and wretched, after suffering all manner of cruelties and atrocities, might gladly acquiesce in; if only, hard and unjust as the bargain is, it were adhered to. It is not adhered to; those terms are broken; the purport of every one of them is, by false interpretation and various subterfuges, eluded and violated. Many of these People are ejected from their old Habitations; their Native Religion is prohibited to many: new Taxes are exacted; a new Fortress has been built over them, out of which soldiers frequently sallying plunder or kill whomsoever they meet. Moreover, new Forces have of late been privily got ready against them; and such as follow the Romish Religion are directed to withdraw from among them within a limited time so that everything seems now again to point towards the extermination of all among those unhappy People, whom the former Massacre had left.

"Which now, O Most Christian King, I beseech and obtest thee, by thy right-hand which pledged a League and Friendship with us, by the sacred honour of that Title of Most Christian, permit not to be done: nor let such license of Savagery, I do not say to any Prince (for indeed no cruelty like this could come into the mind of any Prince, much less into the tender years of that young Prince, or into the woman’s heart of his Mother), but to those most accursed Assassins, be given. Who while they profess themselves the servants and imitators of Christ our Saviour, who came into this world that He might save sinners, abuse His most merciful Name and Commandments to the cruelest slaughterings. Snatch, thou who art able, and who in such an elevation art worthy to be able, those poor Suppliants of thine from the hands of Murderers, who, lately drunk with blood, are again athirst for it, and think convenient to turn the discredit of their own cruelty upon their Prince’s score. Suffer not either thy Titles and the Environs of thy Kingdom to be soiled with that discredit, or the peaceable Gospel of Christ by that cruelty, in thy Reign. Remember that these very People became subjects of thy Ancestor, Henry, most friendly to Protestants; when Lesdiguières victoriously pursued him of Savoy across the Alps, through those same Valleys, where indeed the most commodious pass to Italy is. The Instrument of that, their Paction and Surrender, is yet extant in the public acts of your Kingdom; in which this among other things is specified and provided against, That these People of the Valleys should not thereafter be delivered over to any one except on the same conditions under which thy invincible Ancestor had received them into fealty. This promised protection they now implore; promise
of thy Ancestor they now, from thee the Grandson, suppliantly demand. To be thine rather than his whose they now are, if by any means of exchange it could be done, they would wish and prefer; if that may not be, thine at least by succour, by commiseration and deliverance.

"There are likewise reasons of State which might give inducement not to reject these People of the Valleys flying for shelter to thee: but I would not have thee, so great a King as thou art, be moved to the defence of the unfortunate by other reasons than the promise of thy Ancestors, and thy own piety and royal benignity and greatness of mind. So shall the praise and fame of this most worthy action be unmixed and clear; and thyself shalt find the Father of Mercy, and His Son Christ the King, whose Name and Doctrine thou shalt have vindicated, the more favourable to thee, and propitious through the course of life.

"May the Almighty, for His own glory, for the safety of so many most innocent Christian men, and for your true honour, dispose Your Majesty to this determination. Your Majesty’s most friendly

"Oliver


"Westminster, 26th May, 1658."

His intercession was potent, and Mazarin compelled the Duke of Savoy to make restitution, so far as it could be done, to his injured subjects. Then, the Protector consented to form the alliance with France. It was an unique tribute to the puissance of Cromwell that Louis, the brother-in-law of that Charles Stuart whom Oliver had brought to the block, should have made so many condescensions before the English government would grant its political affiliation. Cromwell’s political sagacity has been severely censured for his treaties with both Sweden and France. It has been said that his power should have been thrown to the side of Spain as a check to the dangerous ambition of France, and that the interests of Europe would have been better preserved by curbing the tendency of Sweden to northern conquests. This might have been the natural policy of England under the ancient theories of government. But Cromwell was an individual force in the world. He had an individual mission to accomplish. He doubtless argued to himself that a French treaty would secure the liberties of the long-oppressed Huguenots, and that the Protestant interest everywhere would be advanced by the picturesque alliance of two anti-Catholic nations so renowned as England and Sweden. And his maxims were correct. On the other hand, the Spaniards were much more intolerant and bigoted than the
French. They had erected the atrocious and bloody tribunal of the Inquisition. They had dotted the land with the graves of tortured martyrs. And it was upon Spain that Cromwell determined to hurl his armies, and punish her for her crimes against humanity.

In December 1654, Cromwell had dispatched a fleet to the Spanish West Indies under command of Admiral Penn (father of William Penn the Quaker) and Admiral Venables. No living man save the Lord Protector knew the object of that fleet. So secret was his purpose that not even to the Admirals would he disclose it, but presented them with sealed orders which they were not to open until they arrived at Barbadoes. Here they discovered that they were to attack the Spanish possessions in the New World. Taking on board 5,000 of their expatriated countrymen, which, added to those they had brought from England made their total number 9,000 men, they determined to attempt St. Domingo, the only place of strength in the island of Hispaniola. But Cromwell had in this enterprise been unfortunate in his selection of leaders. Neither Penn nor Venables was equal to a great undertaking. There was disagreement among the officers, the exiled soldiers from Barbadoes were an unruly set, and there was much sickness.

When the fleet of sixty ships appeared off Hispaniola the Spanish residents were struck with terror and fled away from their houses. But the English, fearing to land in a populous part of the island, sailed some sixty miles along the coast. They then disembarked and attempted without guides to make their way to St. Domingo on foot. For four days they tramped through the woods with but scant food, and, what was worse in that tropical climate, without water. They soon became completely demoralized, whereupon the Spaniards attacked them with an inconsiderable force and drove them in frantic terror back to their ships, killing 600 and wounding many more.

Knowing well the punishment that would fall upon them if they returned to England on the heels of such a needless disaster, Penn and Venables sailed for the island of Jamaica. On May 3, 1655, they assailed and captured this island, which is by far the most valuable of the English possessions in the West Indies. The importance of the acquisition of Jamaica was overlooked in England beside the ignominious failure at St. Domingo, but Cromwell himself instantly perceived its value.

He wrote to Admiral Goodson, giving him minute instructions concerning the war with Spain, and said:

"We are sending to you, with all possible speed, seven more stout men-of-war, some of them forty guns, and the rest not under thirty, for your assistance. This ship goes before, with instructions, to encourage you to go on in the work. ... And I hope your counsels will enter into that which may be for the glory of God and good of this Nation. It is not to be denied but the Lord hath greatly humbled us in that sad loss sustained at Hispaniola; and we doubt we have provoked the Lord; and it is good for us to know and to be abased for the same. But yet certainly His name is
concerned in the work; and therefore though we should, and I hope do, lay our mouths in the dust, yet He would not have us despond, but I trust give us leave to make mention of His name and of His righteousness, when we cannot make mention of our own. You are left there; and I pray you set-up your banners in the name of Christ; for undoubtedly it is His cause. And let the reproach and shame that hath been for our sins, and through (also we may say) the misguidance of some, work-up your hearts to confidence in the Lord, and for the redemption of His honour from the hands of men who attribute their success to their Idols, the work of their own hands. And though He hath torn us, yet He will heal us; though He hath smitten us, yet He will bind us up; after two days He will revive us, in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. The Lord Himself hath a controversy with your Enemies; even with that Roman Babylon, of which the Spaniard is the great underpropper. In that respect we fight the Lord’s battles; and in this the Scriptures are most plain. The Lord therefore strengthen you with faith, and cleanse you from all evil: and doubt not but He is able, and I trust as willing, to give you as signal success as He gave your Enemies against you. Only the Covenant-fear of the Lord be upon you.”

No details escaped Cromwell’s cautious mind. To Daniel Serle, the Governor of Barbadoes, he wrote:

"Having said this, I think fit to let you know that we have twenty men-of-war already there [at Jamaica], and are sending eight more, many whereof have forty guns and upwards, and the rest above thirty. We hope the plantation is not wanting in anything; having at the least seven thousand fighting men upon the place: and we are providing to supply them constantly with fresh men; and we trust they are furnished with a twelvemonth’s victuals; and I think, if we have it in England, they shall not want. We have also sent to the colonies of New England like offers with yours, To remove thither; our resolution being to people and plant that Island. And indeed we have very good reason to expect considerable numbers from thence, forasmuch as the last winter was very destructive, and the summer hath proved so very sickly. I pray God direct you."

To General Fortescue, at Jamaica, he wrote, showing his care of England’s most distant possessions:

"And let me tell you, as an encouragement to you and those with you to improve the utmost diligence, and to excite your courage in this business, though not to occasion any negligence in
prosecuting that affair, nor to give occasion to slacken any improvement of what the place may afford, that you will be followed with what necessary supplies, as well for comfortable subsistence as for your security against the Spaniard, this place may afford, or you want.

"And therefore study first your security by fortifying: and although you have not moneys, for the present, to do it in such quantities as were to be wished; yet, your case being as that of a marching army, wherein every soldier, out of principles of nature, and according to the practice of all discipline, ought to be at pains to secure the common quarter, we hope no man amongst you will be so wanting to himself, considering food is provided for you, as not to be willing to help to the uttermost therein. And therefore I require you and all with you, for the safety of the whole, that this be made your most principal intention. The doing of this will require that you be very careful not to scatter, till you have begun a security in some one place. Next I desire you that you would consider how to form such a body of good Horse as may, if the Spaniard should attempt upon you at his next coming into the Indies with his Galeons, be in readiness to march to hinder his landing; who will hardly land upon a body of Horse; and if he shall land, [you will] be in a posture to keep the provisions of the country from him, or him from the provisions, if he shall endeavour to march towards you.

"We have sent Commissioners and Instructions into New England, to try what people may be drawn thence. We have done the like to the Windward English Islands; and both in England, and Scotland, and Ireland, you will have what men and women we can well transport. To conclude: As we have cause to be humbled for the reproof God gave us at St. Domingo, upon the account of our own sins as well as others’, so, truly, upon the reports brought hither to us, of the extreme avarice, pride and confidence, disorders and debauchedness, profaneness, and wickedness, commonly practiced amongst the Army, we can not only bewail the same, but desire that all with you may do so; and that a very special regard may be had so to govern, for time to come, as that all manner of vice may be thoroughly discountenanced, and severely punished; and that such a frame of government may be exercised that virtue and godliness may receive due encouragement."

Then, in one of those measures which are often made necessary by the gruesome necessities of conquest, he instructed his son, Henry Cromwell, who was now Lord Deputy of Ireland, to seize and transport to Jamaica one
thousand Irish maidens and an equal number of young men, in order to increase the population as rapidly as possible.

Penn and Venable now ventured to return to England, but the story of their St. Domingo folly had so embittered the Lord Protector, that he was overcome with passion, and threw them both into confinement in the Tower—a warning to his other commanders to win their battles or suffer lasting disgrace.

Admiral Blake, whose fame was now spread over Europe, sailed with the second fleet in the spring of 1655, in another direction. With thirty fine ships he entered the Mediterranean, whose waters had not been ploughed by any English Navy since the Crusades. From one end to the other of that beautiful sea there was no power to resist him. Alexander VII, who had just ascended the Chair of St. Peter, trembled in daily expectation of hearing the Protector’s guns thundering at the gates of Rome. The Duke of Tuscany, seeing the Puritan fleet approaching Leghorn, made haste to repay those losses which English merchantmen had sustained from his rapacious greed. Blake then cast anchor before Algiers, and after punishing the pirates who had infested those parts, he compelled the Dey of Algiers to permanently suppress them. Coming before Tunis he made similar demands of the Dey, who arrogantly told him to look upon his castles on the shore and his ships in the bay, and do his worst. The intrepid Admiral took him at his word, and sailed so close to the shore that the guns in the castles on the hills could not harm him. He sent out his sailors in their long-boats, who set fire to the Tunisian fleet and destroyed it. He then battered down the castles on the shore, and took what spoil he could carry away, and departed. Montague was soon afterwards joined in the command with Blake, and Cromwell personally directed their movements at sea in so far as their policy was concerned.

The war with Spain was prosecuted with great brilliancy. On one occasion Blake and Montague intercepted the plate fleet from America and captured almost incalculable treasure.

Again they pursued a Spanish fleet of sixteen sail to the Bay of Santa Cruz where they faced a line of seven forts and a strong castle. The Spanish ships were placed with their broadsides to the sea and the guns on shore were in readiness to join them should the English dare to venture an attack. But Blake indomitably approached and fought them at close range for four hours, at the end of which he had destroyed all their ships by fire. The enraged Governor on shore now thought to destroy him, but the wind suddenly changed and Blake sailed happily away, almost without harm. This was the last and most formidable action of the great Admiral. The hardships of his life on shipboard had afflicted him with dropsy and scurvy, and he set sail toward England in order that his spirit might pass away amidst the beloved scenes of his native land. As his ship came within sight of Plymouth (April 20, 1657), he expired. He had lived an inflexible Republican, and throughout all the changes in the Government he had never sought opportunity for private aggrandizement, but was content to serve his country as a true and simple sailor. As such he achieved a fame as glorious as any that British annals preserve.
Oliver pushed the war with vigor and enthusiasm, eagerly watching, cautiously directing, every movement of his fleets. His spirit is disclosed in these words:

"Make any peace with any state that is Popish and subjected to the determination of Rome and of the Pope himself—you are bound, and they are loose! It is the pleasure of the Pope at any time to tell you, That though the man is murdered, yet his murderer has got into the sanctuary. And equally true is it, and hath been found by common and constant experience, that peace is but to be kept so long as the Pope saith Amen to it."

England had no treaty with any Catholic State except France, and Cromwell said, "And there is no other Popish State we can speak of, save this only, but will break their promise or keep it as they please upon these grounds, being under the lash of the Pope, to be by him determined."

He formed a new and more intimate treaty with France (March 23, 1657), by which a French and English assault was to be made upon the Spanish power in the Netherlands. Louis was to contribute 20,000 and Cromwell 6,000 men. The Spaniards at that time held three French towns on the northernmost coast of France—Gravelines, Mardike, and Dunkirk, and it was the object of the expedition to reduce these places. If successful, Gravelines was to belong to France, and Mardike and Dunkirk to England.

Sir William Lockhart was the English commander, a brave Scot who had come into England in the Duke of Hamilton’s ill-fated invasion, but had since obtained Cromwell’s pardon, married the Protector’s niece, Robina Sewster, and was now winning diplomatic and military honors in France.

Contrary to Cromwell’s desire, the French authorities planned to besiege Gravelines, their town, first. This did not please the Lord Protector. He fain would have his two towns taken first—put into his possession as guarantee of good faith. He was a plain-spoken man. "I pray you tell the Cardinal for me," he wrote to Lockhart, "that we desire, that the design be Dunkirk rather than Gravelines." He would send over "Two of our old regiments and two more, if need be, if Dunkirk be the design." The Cardinal yielded, marched first for Mardike, captured it (September 21, 1657), and delivered it to the English. Don John of Austria, aided by the English Duke of York, made an attempt to retake it, but was repulsed. Siege was then laid to Dunkirk.

Dunkirk was a more important stronghold, and was the key to Belgium (then called Flanders) on the North and East. In aspiring to Dunkirk, it was not only Cromwell’s aim to crush the nest of pirates who preyed thence on English commerce, but also to convince all Europe at once that in thus planting himself between three warring neighbors like France, Holland, and Spain, he would keep the peace between them and stop the spread of the Holy Empire, which both Spain and Rome would have made universal.

As soon as Dunkirk’s peril was made known to the Spaniards, Don John hastened thither with 15,000 men, the Duke of York and a few Irish regiments being again with him. A great battle was fought before the walls of the city
June 14, 1658. The first charge was made by the English, and the French were coldly inactive. Lockhart’s own regiment broke the line of the Spaniards and put their foot to flight. Then the French horse charged the Spanish cavalry. The Ironsides shouted the Psalms as of old, and pushed their advantage, never wavering in their magnificent advance. It was the last fight of Cromwell’s Army. Soon the Spaniards, Don John, the Duke of York, and the Irish contingent were in full flight, their men being slaughtered at every step—a crushing, killing blow that the Lord Protector dealt that day to his Spanish enemy, causing his rapid and permanent decline.

But in spite of his vast and permanent military successes abroad, the main object of Cromwell’s foreign policy was the organization of a Protestant Alliance that would dictate religious toleration to the rest of Europe; and in this benign project he did not succeed. Sweden and Denmark were in open war. Holland was jealous and irritable. The narrow Protestant princes of Germany would not see beyond the borders of their own States. Only the prestige of England and of Oliver was great throughout the world.

CHAPTER XXV
Dallying with the Crown

"If there was a man in England," says Daniel Neal, in his History of the Puritans, "who excelled in any faculty or science, the Protector would find him out, and reward him according to his merit." He directed the learned professors of the universities to mark the rising youth of England, and commend to his attention such as they deemed apt for public station. His choice of men throughout his administration was wise and fortunate, and gave great satisfaction to the nation.

The magnanimous conduct by which he won Lord Broghill’s friendship deserves to be related. Lord Broghill had lain quiet on his estate in England after the death of Charles I, until he felt that he could no longer endure the humiliation which his party then suffered. Accordingly he determined to apply to young Charles Stuart, then a wanderer on the Continent, for a commission authorizing him to raise an insurrection in England. He appealed to the Earl of Warwick for a pass to go to Spa to be treated for the gout, and when this pretext was presented to Cromwell and his Council, backed by the recommendation of Warwick, who believed in his friend’s honesty of purpose, the pass was issued, and Broghill came to London to receive it. By the time he arrived there, Cromwell had learned the whole story of his intentions, and, coming in person to Broghill’s lodging, he demanded to know for what purpose his Lordship was going abroad. Broghill answered, to Spa to be treated for his gout. Then Cromwell told him that he knew all, and that the Council had ordered him to the Tower for treason. The frightened Lord at first denied that his designs were treacherous, but he was finally compelled to confess his purposes, upon hearing which Cromwell astounded him by offering him a military command in Ireland with high rank, if he would fight against the Irish papists, assuring him that no oaths or obligations would be exacted of him beyond his promise to
assist in subduing the Irish rebellion. Broghill at first demurred, but when the alternative of imprisonment was put before him, he accepted the generous offer, and was a steadfast servant of the Commonwealth.

Cromwell was extremely solicitous that the great nobles who were yet in England should come to his Court, or at least accept his Government with passive obedience, and to that end he made them many courteous advances. "The nobles and great men," says Dr. Bates, who was physician, in turn, to Charles I, to Oliver, and to Charles II, "(for with some few of them he had an intimacy) he delighted with raillery and jesting, contended with them in mimical gestures, and entertained them with merry collations, music, hunting, and hawking. When he was in the country, he used once or oftener a year, to give the neighbours a buck, to be run down in his park, and money to buy wine to make merry with." He had all the human emotions, this Oliver, both grave and gay. He loved horses and deer, and was extremely fond of music, having a great organ in the gallery at Hampton Court where it was frequently played to him. In an interview with the old Marquis of Hertford, a staunch King's-man and royal counselor, Cromwell told the Marquis that he was weary of the cares of Government, and begged him, as one familiar with affairs of State, to give him some advice. The grizzled nobleman objected on the ground that he had been a Privy Counselor to the late King, and it would be highly inapposite for him to offer advice to the Protector. But Cromwell pressed him until the Marquis with much feeling, said, "Our young master that is abroad—that is, my master, and the master of us all—restore him to his Crowns, and by doing this you may have what you please." Cromwell answered quietly that in his circumstances he could not trust, nor could the King forgive.

His yearning desire for recognition from the people without regard to party, which was stubbornly withheld by many men, can be appreciated when it is remembered that nearly all the bosom friends of his earlier triumphs were now bitterly hostile to him. Vane, Lambert, Harrison, Bradshaw, Hazelrig, Ludlow, Lawson, Rich, Okey, Alured, Wildman, and Lilburne, once his devoted adherents, were now in opposition to his government and the declared enemies of his person.

Cromwell was easy of access to anyone who had occasion to see him. George Fox, the Quaker leader, had been subjected to some governmental injustice, and sought the Protector. The interview was satisfactory. As Fox was withdrawing, Cromwell caught him by the hand. "Come again to my house," he said. "If thou and I were but an hour of the day together, we should be nearer one to the other. I wish no more harm to thee than I do to my own soul."

His mind broadened as his public policy expanded. While he was an Independent by conviction, he extended his friendship and confidence to men of all other opinions. Manton prayed at his inauguration; Baxter preached at his Court; Calamy was consulted by him in spiritual affairs; yet all three were Presbyterians. Dr. Browning, Episcopal Bishop of Exeter, was treated by Cromwell with marked respect. Another Episcopalian, Dr. Barnard, he rescued from the slaughter at Drogheda, and made him his almoner. He advanced Archbishop Usher to places of honor and profit. His behavior was equally
humane to those whose faith was intolerable to other Englishmen. To John Bidwell, a Unitarian suffering banishment in Scilly, he granted a pension of a hundred crowns a year. Jeremiah White and Peter Sterry he placed among his chaplains, though their speculations concerning the ends of Providence were far from the beaten path of Puritanism. John Goodwin, denounced by all the ministers at his Court, continued constantly in his favor. Even the Catholics who avoided seditious company, though proscribed by the laws of England, were treated with secret sympathy by Oliver. Sir Kenelm Digby, a refined and sensible Catholic, who was hospitably entertained at Whitehall, said to Secretary Thurloe:

"My obligations to his Highness are so great that it would be a crime in me to behave myself so negligently as to give cause for any shadow of the least suspicion, or to do anything that might require an excuse or apology. I should think my heart were not an honest one if the blood about it were not warmed with any the least imputation upon my respects and my duty to his Highness to whom I owe so much."

Beyond all, his undisguised respect for Manassah Ben Israel, and for the Jews for whose protection the Rabbi pleaded, must set Cromwell high above the bigotry which marked his age.

His law courts were administered by honest and able judges. Clarendon says, "In matters which did not concern the life of his jurisdiction, he seemed to have great reverence for the law, rarely interposing between party and party." And Coke says, "Westminster Hall was never replenished with more learned and upright judges than by him; nor was justice either in law or equity, in civil cases more equally distributed, where he was not a party." Sir Matthew Hale, a Royalist, was chosen by Cromwell for a judge of the Common Pleas Court entirely because of his reputation for perfect honesty. Bishop Burnet’s father, who was likewise a Royalist, was sent for to come from Scotland and serve as a judge, his piety and integrity outweighing his political disabilities.

Still, there were occasions on which the Lord Protector construed his "law of necessity" unto the packing of juries, the removal of unpliant judges, and the illegal commitment of men to prison. The high-sheriff of Wilts writes to Oliver that he is choosing on the juries only those who will work his Highness’ pleasure. "Baron Thorp [a judge] and Judge Newdigate," says Whitelock, "were put out of their places for not observing the Protector’s pleasure in all his commands." Bradshaw, the President of the Regicides’ Court, was removed from his place of Chief Justice of Chester because of his cooling loyalty. When the disturbing John Lilburne—Freeborn John—was tried for writing seditious pamphlets, and acquitted by the jury, Oliver kept him in prison notwithstanding his vindication. Colonel Rich was imprisoned at Windsor, and General Harrison at Pendennis, without legal process. Likewise Lord Willoughby of Parham, Lord Tufton, Colonel Ashburnham, Sir Robert Sherley, Sir Luke Fitzgerald, and seven others were sent to the Tower because the Protector felt
his government to be safer with them there. And, yet, in spite of all, England was governed with infinitely more liberality and justice at home, and under a policy which secured a vaster respect abroad, than she had known or was to know under any Stuart King.

Writs were issued for a new Parliament. Cromwell had determined once again to appeal to his people for constitutional support. The Royalists were again restrained from voting, and the vast influence of the military organization was employed through the Major-Generals to aid such candidates as were thought to be favorably disposed towards the ruling power. By this means Bradshaw was defeated. But Hazeltig, Scott, and Cooper, together with other irreconcilable Republicans, were elected. Vane, who tried in three places, missed in all.

A brief word should be spoken of Sir Harry Vane before dismissing him from our story. His three attempts to gain a seat in this Parliament were frustrated by the interference of two of the Major-Generals—Whalley and Lilburne. In much chagrin he retired to Raby Castle, the ancient seat of his family, in Durham, where he wrote a treatise advocating the adoption of a written constitution for the government of his country. When Cromwell, upon the failure of the Parliament, issued a declaration (March 14, 1656), calling upon the people to observe a general fast, in the hope that some better way might be divinely revealed, Vane wrote a tract, entitled "A Healing Question propounded and resolved upon Occasion of the late public and seasonable Call to Humiliation in order to Love and Union amongst the Honest Party, and with a Desire to apply Balm to the Wound before it become incurable." In this discourse his Republican principles were defined with decorous insistence. The document was sent to Cromwell by the hand of Fleetwood, but the Protector soon returned it to its author, who straightway published it. Cromwell summoned his old friend before the Council, which demanded bonds in the sum of £5,000 for his future silence. Vane imperiously refused to recognize this judgment, and was committed to prison in Carisbrooke Castle. After a confinement of four months he was released, and returned to Raby Castle smarting under his wrongs. Yet he believed that the Reign of the Saints was now established, and that the Fifth Monarchy had been inaugurated on earth, and that a divine Prince of Peace would soon appear in the second advent. When, however, he was urged to accept the present Government, he mournfully replied that he would defer his share in its benefits until he came to Heaven. He was seen no more until Richard’s Parliament assembled. Always active and aggressive, he was still for popular government. In a passionate speech he referred to Richard as "an idiot without courage, without sense, nay, without ambition," and then said:

"One could bear a little with Oliver Cromwell, though contrary to his oath of fidelity to the Parliament, contrary to his duty to the public, contrary to the respect he owed that venerable body from whom he received his authority, he usurped the Government. His merit was so extraordinary, that our judgments, our passions, might be blinded by it. He made his way to empire by the most
illustrious actions; he had under his command an Army that had made him a Conqueror, and a People that had made him their General. But as for Richard Cromwell, his son, who is he? What are his titles? We have seen that he has his sword by his side; but did he ever draw it? And what is of more importance in this case, is he fit to get obedience from a mighty nation who could never make a footman obey him? Yet we must recognise this man as our King, under the style of Protector! a man without birth, without courage, without conduct. For my part, I declare, Sir, it shall never be said that I made such a man my master."

Upon the restoration of Charles II, Vane would not have been molested if he had preserved a discreet silence; but as his tongue and pen were kept busy attacking monarchy, he was again made prisoner in a lonely castle on the Scilly Islands off Land’s End in the Atlantic, and, after two years, was brought to trial for his share in the late King’s dethronement and death, and was condemned. Even then, Charles would have pardoned him, but his carriage before the Court was so proud and his denunciation of royalty so scathing, that his execution was deemed necessary to the safety of the Crown; and so, on the 14th of June, 1662, he was beheaded on Tower Hill.

The Second Protectorate Parliament met on the 17th of September, 1656. Cromwell addressed them as usual, and explained to them the state of the nation and of foreign affairs. He bitterly reproached the Royalist party for their continual agitations by which a permanent settlement was prevented. He referred to their frequent conspiracies as a justification of his plan of the Major-Generals. He once more palliated all the acts of his administration on the plea of necessity. By reducing the rate of taxes he said his government had incurred debts of more than two million pounds. He told them of the mischievous plottings of the Jesuits in England. He reminded them of their high duty to the nation, and in every sentence of his speech he gave utterance to his inexhaustible religious enthusiasm and earnest belief that God was doing all.

There had been 400 members elected, and, as we have already said, there were some among them who were unwelcome to the Protector. As the members left the Council-chamber to repair to their House, they were stopped in the lobby and informed that none might serve unless certified as acceptable to the Lord Protector. Three hundred received certificates. One hundred, including all the Republicans and others known to be unfriendly, were rejected. A high-handed proceeding, of course—tyrannical, despotic—defensible only on the ground of necessity, but on that ground easily understood, and, conceding Cromwell’s honesty of purpose to settle the nation, perfectly excusable.

Oliver Cromwell desired to be King of England. And why should he not be the King? The word King comes from König, and means the man that can! Every monarch in Europe, if he trace his title back far enough, will find his kingship
dating from a battle fought and won. And who among the battle heroes shall stand before Cromwell? Why should he not be the King?
The situation in which his destiny had placed him was such that he found himself in possession of all the authority of the most autocratic sovereign. But he had not assumed to put on the Crown, and without the Crown it was impossible for Englishmen to forget the traditions of their country sufficiently to look upon a Lord Protector as other than a ruler for an emergent period. As King of England his person would soon be in a measure forgotten amid the resplendent glories of his Office, but as Lord Protector he was disdainfully looked upon by very many as a parvenu. The laws permitted the people to obey a usurping King, but they were silent concerning homage to a Lord Protector. As King he might hope that at least some of the ancient Peers, with their incalculable influence on public opinion, would in time come into his presence, from which, as Lord Protector, he saw with deep chagrin they now contemnuously absented themselves. As King his government would be accepted by the great body of the people as a settlement of all popular distempers; as Lord Protector he was merely an expedient for the occasion. As King his office would be established upon the ancient foundations of the laws of England, while as Lord Protector it rested simply upon an Instrument devised by himself and his officers. As King he would be legally entitled to discharge all the functions of the State; as Lord Protector he was merely a General of the Army arbitrarily exercising the civil and military powers of government. His position was anomalous, unhappy, and full of peril. His own wonderful abilities had put him in the lead of all other men, and now, in order to secure his own safety as well as to establish the results of the war upon permanent principles, it seemed necessary that he should go the full length of his course and assume the Crown.
The first mention of Cromwell in connection with the Kingship was made by Hugh Peters, Oliver’s Army chaplain, to General Ludlow, on the way home from the great victory of Worcester. "This man will be King of England yet," said the fanatic Peters. Again, only two days after receiving information of the death of his son-in-law, Henry Ireton, who was a most uncompromising Republican, than whom "no man could prevail more nor order him farther," Cromwell called a meeting of the Parliamentary and Army leaders at Speaker Lenthall’s house (December 10, 1651), and told them that now that the old King was dead, and his son being defeated, he held it necessary to come to a settlement of the nation. This was the first open and official discussion of the Kingship, and Whitelock reports that it proceeded as follows:

- Speaker: My Lord, this company were very ready to attend your Excellency, and the business you are pleased to propound to us is very necessary to be considered. God hath given marvellous success to our forces under your command, and if we do not improve these mercies to some settlement, such as may be to God’s honour and the good of this Commonwealth, we shall be very much blame-worthy.
Harrison: I think that which my Lord General hath propounded is to advise as to a settlement both of our civil and spiritual liberties, and so that the mercies which the Lord hath given in to us may not be cast away: how this may be done is the great question.

Whitelock: It is a great question, indeed, and not suddenly to be resolved, yet it were pity that a meeting of so many able and worthy persons as I see here should be fruitless. I should humbly offer, in the first place, whether it be not requisite to be understood in what way this settlement is desired, whether of an absolute republic, or with any mixture of monarchy.

Cromwell: My Lord Commissioner Whitelock hath put us upon the right point; and indeed it is my meaning that we should consider whether a republic or a mixed monarchical government will be best to be settled; and if any thing monarchical, then in whom that power shall be placed.

Sir Thomas Widdrington: I think a mixed monarchical government will be most suitable to the laws and people of this nation; and if any monarchical, I suppose we shall hold it most just to place that power in one of the sons of the late King.

Colonel Fleetwood: I think that the question, whether an absolute republic or a mixed monarchy be best to be settled in this nation, will not be very easy to be determined.

Lord Chief Justice St. John: It will be found that the government of this nation, without something of monarchical power, will be very difficult to be so settled as not to shake the foundation of our laws and the liberties of the people.

Speaker: It will breed a strange confusion to settle a government of this nation without something of monarchy.

Colonel Desborough: I beseech you, my lord, why may not this as well as other nations be governed in the way of a republic?

Whitelock: The laws of England are so interwoven with the power and practice of monarchy, that to settle a government without something of monarchy in it, would make so great an alteration in the proceedings of our law, that you have scarce time to rectify, nor can we well foresee, the inconveniences which will arise thereby.
Colonel Whalley: I do not well understand matters of law, but it seems to me the best way not to have any thing of monarchical power in the settlement of our government; and if we should resolve upon any, whom have we to pitch upon? The King’s eldest son hath been in arms against us, and his second son likewise is our enemy.

Sir Thomas Widdrington: But the late King’s third son, the Duke of Gloucester, is still among us, and too young to have been in arms against us, or infected with the principles of our enemies.

Whitelock: There may be a day given for the King’s eldest son or for the Duke of York, his brother, to come into the Parliament, and upon such terms as shall be thought fit and agreeable both to our civil and spiritual liberties; a settlement may be made with them.

Cromwell: That will be a business of more than ordinary difficulty; but, really, I think, if it may be done with safety and preservation of our rights, both as Englishmen and as Christians, that a settlement of somewhat with monarchical power in it would be very effectual.

A surprising result of this conference was that the soldiers who were present were strongly opposed to the monarchal form of Government, while the lawyers and the other civilians, except Widdrington, were in favor of it. Nearly a year later (November 1652), Whitelock records that, on a fair evening, while walking in St. James’ Park, to refresh himself after business of toil, and for a little exercise, he met the Lord General Cromwell. Before passing to the momentous interview which then took place, it should be said that Whitelock, while a pompous, egotistical, and self-inflated man, yet possessed great wisdom, was deeply learned in the law, and was a sagacious and influential member of the Parliament. Cromwell, while holding his vanity in contempt, cherished a great respect for his indisputable abilities, and in the days of the Protectorate was glad to appoint him to the most important official positions, on one occasion sending him as Ambassador to Queen Christina of Sweden. The conversation in St. James’ Park is undoubtedly authentic, although, as it was written out for the world after the Restoration, Whitelock may have changed the color of his own words or of those of Cromwell to suit the altered conditions. His history, usually dull and tedious, becomes suddenly most interesting in this grave discourse. He says that Cromwell saluted him with more than ordinary courtesy, and desired him to walk aside with him, that they might talk privately, which they did to this effect:

Cromwell: My lord Whitelock, I know your faithfulness and engagement in the same good cause with myself and the rest of
our friends, and I know your ability in judgment and your particular friendship and affection for me, indeed I am sufficiently satisfied in these things, and therefore I desire to advise with you in the main and most important affairs relating to our present condition.

- Whitelock: Your Excellency hath known me long, and, I think, will say that you never knew any unfaithfulness or breach of trust by me; and for my particular affection to your person, your favours to me, and your public services, have deserved more than I can manifest, only there is (with your favour) a mistake in this one thing, touching my weak judgment, which is uncapable to do any considerable service for yourself or this Commonwealth; yet to the utmost of my power I shall be ready to serve you, and that with all diligence and faithfulness.

- Cromwell: I have cause to be, and am, without the least scruple of your faithfulness, and I know your kindness to me, your old friend, and your abilities to serve the Commonwealth, and there are enough besides me that can testify it; and I believe our engagements for this Commonwealth have been and are as deep as most men’s, and there never was more need of advice and solid hearty counsel than the present state of our affairs doth require.

- Whitelock: I suppose no man will mention his particular engagement in this cause, at the same time when your Excellency’s engagement is remembered, yet to my capacity and in my station few men have engaged further than I have done and that (besides the goodness of your own nature and personal knowledge of me) will keep you from any jealousy of my faithfulness.

- Cromwell: I wish there were no more ground of suspicion of others than of you; I can trust you with my life, and the most secret matters relating to our business; and to that end I have now desired a little private discourse with you; and really, my lord, there is very great cause for us to consider the dangerous condition we are all in, and how to make good our station, to improve the mercies and successes which God hath given us, and not to be fooled out of them again, nor to be broken in pieces by our particular jarrings and animosities one against another, but to unite our counsels and hands and hearts, to make good what we have so dearly bought with so much hazard, blood, and treasure; and that the Lord having given us an entire conquest over our enemies, we should not now hazard all again by our private
janglings, and bring those mischiefs upon ourselves which our enemies could never do.

- Whitelock: My lord, I look upon our present danger as greater than ever it was in the field, and (as your Excellency truly observes) our proneness to destroy ourselves, when our enemies could not do it. It is no strange thing for a gallant Army (as yours is) after full conquest of their enemies, to grow into factions and ambitious designs, and it is a wonder to me that they are not in high mutinies, their spirits being active, and few thinking their services to be duly rewarded, and the emulation of the officers breaking out daily more and more in this time of their vacancy from their employment; besides, the private soldiers, it may be feared, will in this time of their idleness grow into disorder, and it is your excellent conduct, which, under God, hath kept them so long in discipline, and free from mutinies.

- Cromwell: I have used and shall use the utmost of my poor endeavours to beep them all in order and obedience.

- Whitelock: Your Excellency hath done it hitherto even to admiration.

- Cromwell: Truly God hath blessed me in it exceedingly, and I hope will do so still. Your lordship hath observed most truly the inclinations of the officers of the Army to particular factions, and to murmurings, that they are not rewarded according to their deserts, that others who have adventure least have gained most, and they have neither profit, nor preferment, nor place in Government, which others hold who have undergone no hardships nor hazards for the Commonwealth; and herein they have too much of truth, yet their insolency is very great, and their influence upon the private soldiers works them to the like discontents and murmurings.

Then as for the members of Parliament, the Army begins to have a strange distaste against them, and I wish there were not too much cause for it, and really their pride and ambition and self-seeking, engrossing all places of honour and profit to themselves and their friends, and their daily breaking forth into new and violent parties and factions.

Their delays of business and the power in their design to perpetuate themselves, and to continue the power in their own hands; their meddling in private matters between party and party, contrary to the institution of Parliaments; and their
injustice and partiality in those matters, and the scandalous lives of some of the chief of them; these things, my lord, do give too much ground for people to open their mouths against them and to dislike them.

Nor can they be kept within the bounds of justice and law or reason, they themselves being the supreme power of the nation, liable to no account to any, nor to be controlled or regulated by any other power, there being none superior or co-ordinate with them.

So that unless there be some authority and power so full and so high as to restrain and keep things in better order, and that may be a check to these exorbitances, it will be impossible in human reason to prevent our ruin.

- Whitelock: I confess the danger we are in by these extravagances and inordinate powers is more than I doubt is generally apprehended; yet as to that part of it which concerns the soldiery, your Excellency’s power and commission is sufficient already to restrain and keep them in their due obedience, and, blessed be God, you have done it hitherto, and I doubt not but by your wisdom you will be able still to do it.

As to the members of Parliament, I confess the greatest difficulty lies there, your commission being from them, and they being acknowledged the supreme power of the nation, subject to no control, nor allowing any appeal from them.

Yet I am sure your Excellency will not look upon them as generally depraved, too many of them are much to blame in those things you have mentioned, and many unfit things have passed among them; but I hope well of the major part of them, when great matters come to a decision.

- Cromwell: My lord, there is little hopes of a good settlement to be made by them, really there is not; but a great deal of fear that they will destroy again what the Lord hath done graciously for them and us; we all forget God, and God will forget us, and give us up to confusion; and these men will help it on, if they be suffered to proceed in their ways; some course must be thought on to curb and restrain them, or we shall be ruined by them.

- Whitelock: We ourselves have acknowledged them the supreme power, and taken our commissions and authority in the
highest concerns from them, and how to restrain and curb them after this it will be hard to find out a way for it.

- Cromwell: What if a man should take upon him to be King?
- Whitelock: I think that remedy would be worse than the disease.
- Cromwell: Why do you think so?
- Whitelock: As to your own person the title of King would be of no advantage, because you have the full kingly power in you already, concerning the militia, as you are General.

As to the nomination of civil officers, those whom you think fittest are seldom refused; and although you have no negative vote in the passing of laws, yet what you dislike will not easily be carried, and the taxes are already settled, and in your power to dispose the money raised. And as to foreign affairs, though the ceremonial application be made to the Parliament, yet the expectation of good or bad success in it is from your Excellency, and particular solicitations of foreign ministers are made to you only;

So that I apprehend indeed less envy and danger and pomp, but not less power and real opportunities of doing good in your being General than would be if you had assumed the title of King.

- Cromwell: I have heard some of your profession observe that he who is actually King, whether by election or by descent, yet being once King, all acts done by him as King are lawful and justifiable, as by any King who hath the crown by inheritance from his forefathers; and that by an act of Parliament in Henry VII’s time, it is safer for those who act under a King (be his title what it will) than for those who act under any other power. And surely the power of a King is so great and high, and so universally understood and reverenced by the people of this nation, that the title of it might not only indemnify in a great measure those that act under it, but likewise be of great use and advantage in such times as these, to curb the insolences and extravagances of those whom the present powers cannot control, or at least are the persons themselves who are thus insolent.

- Whitelock: I agree in the general with what you are pleased to observe as to this title of King, but whether for your excellency to take this title upon you, as things now are, will be for the good and advantage either of yourself and friends, or of the Commonwealth, I do very much doubt, notwithstanding that act of Parliament ii. Hen. VII, which will be little regarded or
observed to us by our enemies if they should come to get the upper hand of us.

- Cromwell: What do you apprehend would be the danger of taking this title?

- Whitelock: The danger I think would be this—one of the main points of controversy betwixt us and our adversaries is whether the government of this nation shall be established in monarchy or in a free state or commonwealth, and most of our friends have engaged with us upon the hopes of having the government settled in a free state, and to effect that, have undergone all their hazards and difficulties. They being persuaded (though, I think, much mistaken) that under the government of a commonwealth they shall enjoy more liberty and right, both as to their spiritual and civil concernments, than they shall under monarchy, the pressures and dislike whereof are so fresh in their memories and sufferings.

Now, if your excellency shall take upon you the title of King, this state of our cause will be thereby wholly determined, and monarchy established in your person; and the question will be no more whether our government shall be by a monarch or by a free state, but whether Cromwell or Stuart shall be our King and monarch.

And that question, wherein before so great parties of the nation were engaged, and which was universal, will by this means become in effect a private controversy only; before, it was national what kind of government we should have, now it will become particular who shall be our governor, whether of the family of the Stuarts or of the family of the Cromwells.

Thus the state of our controversy being totally changed, all those who were for a commonwealth (and they are a very great and considerable party) having their hopes therein frustrated, will desert you, your hands will be weakened, your interest straitened, and your cause in apparent danger to be ruined.

- Cromwell: I confess you speak reason in this, but what other thing can you propound that may obviate the present dangers and difficulties wherein we are all engaged?

- Whitelock: It will be the greatest difficulty to find out such an expedient; I have had many things in my private thoughts upon
this business, some of which perhaps are not fit or safe for me to communicate.

- Cromwell: I pray, my lord, what are they? You may trust me with them; there shall no prejudice come to you by any private discourse betwixt us; I shall never betray my friend; you may be as free with me as with your own heart, and shall never suffer by it.

- Whitelock: I make no scruple to put my life and fortune in your excellency’s hand, and so I shall if I impart these fancies to you, which are weak and perhaps may prove offensive to your Excellency, therefore my best way will be to smother them.

- Cromwell: Nay, I prithee, my lord Whitelock, let what they will, they cannot be offensive to me, but I shall take it kindly from you; therefore, I pray, do not conceal those thoughts of yours from your faithful friend.

- Whitelock: Your Excellency honours me with a title far above me, and since you are pleased to command it, I shall discover to you my thoughts herein, and humbly desire you not to take in ill part what I shall say to you.

- Cromwell: Indeed I shall not, but I shall take it (as I said) very kindly from you.

- Whitelock: Give me leave, then, first to consider your Excellency’s condition: you are environed with secret enemies; upon your subduing of the public enemy, the officers of your Army account themselves all victors, and to have had an equal share in the conquest with you.

The success which God hath given us hath not a little elated their minds, and many of them are busy and of turbulent spirits, and are not without their designs how they may dismount your Excellency, and some of themselves get up into the saddle—how they may bring you down and set up themselves.

They want not counsel and encouragement herein, it may be, from some members of the Parliament, who may be jealous of your power and greatness, lest you should grow too high for them, and in time overmaster them; and they will plot to bring you down first, or to clip your wings.
Cromwell: I thank you that you so fully consider my condition; it is a testimony of your love to me and care of me, and you have rightly considered it, and I may say, without vanity, that in my condition yours is involved, and all our friends, and those that plot my ruin will hardly bear your continuance in any condition worthy of you.

Besides this, the cause itself may possibly receive some disadvantage by the strugglings and contentions among ourselves; but what, sir, are your thoughts for prevention of those mischiefs that hang over our heads?

Whitelock: Pardon me, sir, in the next place, a little to consider the condition of the King of Scots.

This Prince being now, by your valour and the success which God hath given to the Parliament and to the Army under your command, reduced to a very low condition, both he and all about him cannot but be very inclinable to hearken to any terms whereby their lost hopes may be revived of his being restored to the Crown, and they to their fortunes and native country.

By a private treaty with him you may secure yourself and your friends, and their fortunes; you may make yourself and your posterity as great and permanent, to all human probability, as ever any subject was, and provide for your friends. You may put such limits to monarchical power as will secure our spiritual and civil liberties, and you may secure the cause in which we are all engaged; and this may be effectually done by having the power of the militia continued in yourself, and whom you shall agree upon after you.

I propound therefore for your Excellency to send to the King of Scots, and to have a private treaty with him for this purpose; and I beseech you to pardon what I have said upon the occasion; it is out of my affection and service to your Excellency, and to all honest men; and I humbly pray you not to have any jealousy thereupon of my approved faithfulness to your Excellency and to this Commonwealth.

Cromwell: I have not, I assure you, the least distrust of your faithfulness and friendship to me, and to the cause of this Commonwealth, and I think you have much reason for what you propound; but it is a matter of so high importance and difficulty, that it deserves more of consideration and debate than is at
present allowed us. We shall therefore take a further time to
discourse of it.

Since that conversation in the Park with Whitelock, there had been various
public and semi-public discussions of the project, and upon the ousting of the
Long Parliament, a few of Cromwell’s officers had pressed him to use that
opportunity for assuming the regal dignity. But he had steadily refused to seize
the shining diadem without at least an appearance of popular consent. It was
now left to this Second Parliament to formally invite him to wear the Crown.
But before they drew their discussions towards that stupendous topic, they
endeavored to impress upon the Lord Protector a proper sense of the vast
unpopularity of his institution of the Major-Generals. Their efforts met with so
much success that Cromwell withdrew his Major-Generals and abandoned the
harsh system of decimation by which he had so severely oppressed the Royalists
(January 1657). This arrayed against him General Lambert, who, smarting
already over the loss of the Lord Deputyship of Ireland, was now most reluctant
to part with his military privileges in the North.
The negotiations for his assumption of the Crown began in February and lasted
until May 1657. On Monday, February 23, Sir Christopher Pack, an alderman,
and member for London, gravely asked leave to introduce a Remonstrance from
the Parliament to his Highness. The debate ran into the night, and when Pack
received permission to read his paper a candle was brought in to enable him to
do so. His Remonstrance proved to be a new Instrument of Government, in
which the powers of the Parliament were somewhat more clearly defined and
those of the Single Person rather enlarged. The discussion of this paper ran
through the early spring, and under its new name, "Petition and Advice
Presented to his Highness," the fact was finally acknowledged with all the
formality of pen and ink, that Oliver Cromwell was desired by his people
represented in Parliament to take upon himself the title and office of King of
England. The vote was 123 for the Kingship and 62 against. In the opposition
were Lambert, Desborough, and Fleetwood, who passionately declared that
Cromwell would never consent to it, "and therefore that it was very strange
that any men should importune the putting such a question, before they knew
that he would accept it, unless they took this way to destroy him."
On the Friday following Alderman Pack’s broaching of the subject, the
Kingship, having reached the public as a matter of news, was a question of very
general debate. New party lines were instantly formed to square with the new
proposition. And a delegation of 100 officers came to the Lord Protector to tell
him that they had heard of the project with real dismay; that its evil effects
would be a scandal to the people of God, hazardous to His Highness’s person;
and would clear the way for the return of Charles Stuart.
Oliver answered them, that he now specifically heard of this project for the
first time; he had not been caballing about it, for it or against it. He said, with
some scorn, that the title of King need not startle them so palpably, as they
had already offered it to him and pressed him to accept it when his
government was formed! The title was a mere feather in the hat. He suggested
that all expedients had thus far failed. The Little Parliament, the First
Protectorate Parliament, the Major-Generalcies had merely increased the
common embarrassment. A House of Lords, as proposed to accompany the
Kingship, would have a real value as a check upon any arbitrary propensities of
a Single House of Commons. This was a reference to the case of one James
Naylor who had permitted a company of ignorant women to worship him as
Christ, whereupon this, Parliament had condemned him to ride in a cart with
his face to the tail, to be whipped, to be branded, to be set in the pillory, to
be bored through the tongue with a hot iron, and then to labor in prison. He
dismissed the officers somewhat sharply; the matter was not in shape for him
to say Yes or No.
On Thursday, March 31, the Parliament waited upon him in the banqueting
house in Whitehall, and presented their Petition and Advice, in which they
offered him the Kingship with the power of naming his own successor. It was
this principle of the succession which led Lambert to oppose Cromwell’s
elevation, as his great ambition led him vainly to suppose that he would be
made Lord Protector at Cromwell’s death. Cromwell’s reply was dignified,
thoughtful, and earnest. He did not refuse, neither did he display any coquetry
or rash judgment in the face of such an overpowering temptation. He told them
they had had time to prepare their plan; they must give him time to decide his
course. He had lived the latter part of his life in the fire, in the midst of
troubles. But nothing that had befallen him since he first engaged in the affairs
of this Commonwealth had so moved his heart and spirit with the fear and
reverence of God that became a Christian, as did this that they had offered
him. He was perhaps at the end of his work, and he must not run upon such a
work as this without due consideration. He must have time to ask counsel of
God and of his own heart, and would give them a decision as speedily as the
importance of the question would permit.
Three days later (April 3) Cromwell wrote the Speaker that if he would send a
committee to Whitehall he would give them an answer. The committee came—
Lord Broghill, General Montague, the Earl of Tweedale, his cousin General
Whalley, his brother-in-law General Desborough, and Bulstrode Whitelock.
He told them a sickness yesterday and the day before had prevented him from
replying to their offer earlier. He must bear testimony how careful the
Parliament had been of religion and civil liberty. He desired through this
committee to return the Parliament his grateful thanks. But he must needs say,
that that might be fit for them to offer which might not be fit for him to
undertake. He begged them not to urge his reasons for it, excepting this, that
he was not able for such a trust and charge. He had not been able to find it his
duty to God to undertake this charge under that title. Really and sincerely it
was his conscience that guided him to this answer, and he desired them to
convey the substance of it to the Parliament.
This rejection of the high office was not peremptory. But it conveyed to all the
grave doubts which filled the Lord Protector’s mind in regard to the wisdom
and propriety of such a step. The opposition of the Army was becoming
formidable. They had fought to destroy Kingship and could not now look with
favor on the proposition to revive it. Without the full consent of the Army, Cromwell could do nothing.

On April 8, the Parliament came again to the Lord Protector and, reminding him that they spoke in the name of the three nations, implored him to accept their Petition and Advice. He answered that he put great value on the desires and advice of his Parliament. There were many things in their paper which he would be glad to have elucidated to him. This meant that the negotiations might go on.

But the Fifth-Monarchy men looked on the proposal to name Cromwell King as a proposal to put him in the place of King Jesus, whose reign of a thousand years on earth was now ready to begin, if Oliver would but keep himself in the background. Accordingly, on the next day a large number of them gathered on Mile-End Green, near London. They had many chests of arms and many seditious pamphlets. One Venner, a wine-cooper, was their leader, and they were going to restore King Jesus and end King Oliver. But Oliver was well posted on their foolish plot; he and Thurloe were in possession of all its details. Before they had had time to greet each other at their rendezvous, Cromwell’s soldiers charged them and arrested all the ringleaders. General Harrison, who was of their sect though not now with them, was likewise imprisoned. A very watchful Lord Protector!

Then the matter of the Kingship was resumed. On April 11, the committee appeared at Whitehall and presented to His Highness the reasons why he should be King. The arguments were spoken by the different members with clearness and force, and were based upon the grounds of expediency and law. Oliver debated with them, suggested his doubts, had them repeat their advice, asked further time to consider, and told them (this being Saturday) to come again on Monday morning.

So on Monday morning, April 13, the full committee of ninety-nine persons waited upon him at Whitehall. He spoke at greater length than he had previously done on this question. He quoted some Latin maxims with easy confidence and displayed great learning and readiness in the law. Replying to their statement that the Kingship was known to the law and the Protectorship was not, he told them a King was made by supreme authority in the nation and that title could be changed by a similar supreme authority. What four or five letters gave the word King any superior signification? Twice the supreme authority had been exercised under titles differing from that—once by a Long Parliament called Keeper of the Liberties of England, and now by a Lord Protector. He had taken his present place not so much out of hope of doing any good as out of a desire to prevent mischief and evil. He was ready to serve, so far as he could, not as a King, but as a Constable. As the speech proceeded and the magnitude of the occasion impressed itself upon him and them, he turned his thoughts from the office to himself and to the history which had become associated with his destiny. With a touch of swelling pride, he told them this memorable secret of his success:
"If you do not all of you, I am sure some of you do, and it behooves me to say that I do, know my calling from the first to this day. I was a person who, from my first employment, was suddenly preferred and lifted up from lesser trusts to greater: from my first being a Captain of a Troop of Horse, and did labour as well as I could to discharge my trust, and God blessed me therein as it pleased Him. And I did truly and plainly—and in a way of foolish simplicity, as it was judged by very great and wise men, and good men, too—desire to make my instruments help me in that work. And I will deal plainly with you: I had a very worthy friend then, and he was a very noble person, and I know his memory is very grateful to all—Mr. John Hampden. At my first going out into this engagement, I saw our men were beaten at every hand. I did indeed, and desired him that he would make some additions to my Lord Essex’s army, of some new regiments, and I told him I would be serviceable to him in bringing such men in as I thought had a spirit that would do something in the work. This is very true that I tell you; God knows I lie not. ‘Four troops,’ said I, ‘are most of them old decayed serving men, and tapsters, and such kind of fellows, and,’ said I, ‘their troops are gentlemen’s sons, younger sons and persons of quality. Do you think that the spirits of such base and mean fellows will ever be able to encounter gentlemen, that have honour, and courage, and resolution in them?’ Truly I did represent to him in this manner conscientiously, and truly I did tell him, ‘You must get men of a spirit, and take it not ill what I say—I know you will not—of a spirit that is likely to go on as far as gentlemen will go, or else you will be beaten still.’ I told him so; I did truly. He was a wise and worthy person, and he did think that I talked a good notion, but an impracticable one. Truly I told him I could do something in it. I did so [that is, he himself enlisted such men], and truly I must needs say this to you—impute it to what you please—I raised such men as had the fear of God before them, as made some conscience of what they did. And from that day forward, I must say to you, they were never beaten, and wherever they were engaged against the enemy, they beat continually! And truly this is matter of praise to God, and it hath some instruction in it to own [acknowledge] men who are religious and godly."

He then discussed their argument that it was “necessary” for him to assume the royal title, and proved to them that it was not necessary. The grounds of expediency were next approached, and his remarks showed them that he was very far from having come to a decision, but that the tendency of his thoughts was to reject the title. He told them to come to him again the next day, and dismissed them.
The next day, which was Tuesday, they came to Whitehall, and Cromwell sent word that he could not see them as he was not in health. On Wednesday they came again, but the Lord Protector was suffering from a cold. Again on Thursday they appeared, and Oliver met them. The committee labored with him, endeavoring with much learning and some eloquence to overcome his scruples. They told him he was rejecting the advice of his Parliament, which not even the actual Kings of England would do. They appealed to his sense of duty. After hearing their speeches, he told them to come again tomorrow. On Friday the Parliament came to him, but he would not meet them. On Monday, April 20, they came again, and he addressed them ambiguously in the old strain, keeping every mind in doubt and satisfying them in nothing, and concluding with an invitation to come the next day. On Tuesday they came and in his longest speech he presented them with his views on their Petition and Advice, except as to the Kingship, which he did not even mention.

The Parliament returned to Westminster much disappointed. They had expected a decisive answer, and were met merely with further procrastination. But it was the general opinion that Cromwell would accept the title in his own time, and the House spent the next two weeks in further debating the proposed new rules of government under their Petition and Advice.

In the meantime the Lord Protector held several private conferences with the Parliamentary leaders, in which his scruples were not put forward so prominently. He was frequently closeted with Whitelock, Lord Broghill, Thurloe, and others for three or four hours together, when he would sometimes lay aside his greatness, and by way of diversion make verses, directing every one in his turn to try his skill at rhyming. He usually called for pipes and tobacco, and frequently smoked with them. But after being most familiar he could instantly resume a natural and imposing dignity.

Whitelock relates another anecdote which illustrates Cromwell’s affability. “As they” [Cromwell and Ireton], he says, “went home from my house, their coach was stopped and they examined by the guards, to whom they told their names; but the captain of the guards would not believe them, and threatened to carry these two great officers to the court of guard. Ireton grew a little angry, but Cromwell was cheerful with the soldiers, gave them twenty shillings, and commended them and their captain for doing their duty.”

But while some of Cromwell’s scruples in the Kingship arose from his conscience, they would have been silenced had not the chiefs of the Army so plainly indicated their opposition to the scheme. Sir Francis Russell wrote (April 27) to Henry Cromwell, his son-in-law, that he expected in his next letter to address him as Duke of York, as the Lord Protector was expected soon to take the kingly power upon him. Cromwell told Whitelock privately that he was satisfied in his own mind of the expediency of accepting the Crown, and Whitelock says the arrangements for his coronation were made. But the most
obstinate resistance was encountered in his own family. Fleetwood and Desborough, the one married to his daughter, the other to his sister, opposed him inflexibly. So did his cousin, General Whalley. Cromwell had them to dinner, and told them the monarchy was but a feather in a man’s cap, and he therefore wondered that men would not please the children and permit them to enjoy their rattle. But they told him there was more in this matter than he perceived, that those who were the most assiduously pressing the title upon him were the secret friends of Charles Stuart, and that he would inevitably ruin himself and his friends if he yielded to this temptation. He answered them merely that they were over-scrupulous. On another occasion, when he had called the Parliament to receive his reply, he met Desborough in the Park and told him that he expected to consent, to which Desborough answered that he then gave both the cause and Cromwell’s family for lost, and while he would not act against him, neither would he affiliate with his plans in the future. When Desborough arrived at his house he met Colonel Pride and told him of Cromwell’s resolution to accept the Crown. Pride vowed that he should never do it, and when asked how he would prevent it, said it could be done by presenting a petition against it from the Army to the Parliament. They both went to Dr. Owen and prevailed upon him to draw up a petition.

The Parliament was in session, expecting every moment to be summoned to Whitehall to receive Cromwell’s affirmative answer, when Desborough announced that there was a deputation of officers outside who desired to present a petition. It was at once assumed that as Desborough announced the petition its contents were favorable to the Kingship. The amazement of the House may therefore be partially understood when they heard the petition read, in which the officers declared that they had hazarded their lives against Monarchy, and were still ready to do so, in defense of the liberties of the nation, that having observed in some men great endeavors to bring the nation again under its old servitude, by pressing their General to take on him the title and government of a King, in order to destroy him, and weaken the hands of those who were faithful to the public, they therefore humbly desired that the Parliament would discountenance all such persons and endeavors, and continue steadfast to the good old cause, for the preservation of which they for their parts were most ready to lay down their lives. This petition was signed by nine Colonels, eight Majors, and sixteen Captains, who, with those officers who were opposing the title as members of the House, made up the majority of the Army officers then stationed at London.

There was great consternation in the Parliament, and the clerk had scarcely finished reading the petition before Cromwell was apprised of the affair. He sent instantly for Fleetwood and reproached him for permitting the petition to be brought in when he already knew of his resolution to refuse the Crown unless the Army would consent. He instructed him to go at once to the House and prevent any discussion of the petition, and by another messenger he summoned them to Whitehall. This was on the 8th of May, 1657.

It was certainly an extraordinary occasion. Here was a man who was both a supreme conqueror and a dictator, met with a perfectly friendly Parliament to
refuse the title of King of England which they had implored him to accept. He
could see the sullen Army in the background. The offer was the colossal
temptation of his life; its rejection was doubtless his greatest disappointment.
He said:

"Mr. Speaker: I come hither to answer that that was in your last
paper to your committee you sent to me, which was in relation to
the desires that were offered me by the House in That they called
their Petition [The Petition and Advice]. I confess, that business
hath put the House, the Parliament, to a great deal of trouble,
and spent much time [February 23 to May 8, over ten weeks]. I
am very sorry for that. It hath cost me some, too, and some
thoughts, and because I have been the unhappy occasion of the
expense of so much time, I shall spend little on it now."

He spoke in commendation of some of the improvements that they proposed to
introduce into the government, in regard to liberty of conscience and civil
rights. He then said:

"I have only had the unhappiness, both in my conferences with
your committees, and in the best thoughts I could take to myself,
not to be convinced of the necessity of that thing which hath
been so often insisted on by you—to wit, the title of King—as in
itself so necessary as it seems to be apprehended by you. And yet
I do, with all honor and respect, testify that, cæteris paribus, no
private judgment is to be in the balance with the judgment of
Parliament. But in things that respect particular persons, every
man who is to give an account to God of his actions, he must in
some measure be able to prove his own work, and to have an
approbation in his own conscience of that which he is to do or to
forbear. And whilst you are granting others’ liberties, surely you
will not deny me this, it being not only a liberty but a duty, and
such a duty as I cannot without sinning forbear to examine my
own heart and thoughts and judgment, in every work which I am
to set my hand to, or to appear in or for. ... I have truly thought,
and I do still think, that, at the best, if I should do anything on
this account to answer your expectation, at the best I should do it
doubtingly. And certainly whatsoever is so is not of faith. And
whatsoever is not so, whatsoever is not of faith, is sin to him that
doeth it."

He was approaching the climax; they hardly yet believed he would refuse. He
said:

"I, lying under this consideration, think it my duty—Only I could
have wished I had done it sooner, for the sake of the House, who
have laid such infinite obligations on me; I wish I had done it sooner for your sake, and for saving time and trouble; and for the committee’s sake, to whom I must acknowledge I have been unreasonably troublesome! But truly this is my answer, That (although I think the Act of Government doth consist of very excellent parts, in all but that one thing, of the title as to me) I should not be an honest man, if I did not tell you that I cannot accept of the Government, nor undertake the trouble and charge of it—as to which I have a little more experimented than everybody what troubles and difficulties do befall men under such trusts and in such undertakings [sentence breaks down]—I say I am persuaded to return this Answer to you, that I cannot undertake this Government with the title of King. And that is mine answer to this great and weighty business."

The Parliament silently withdrew. The Kingship was thus put aside forever. The House granted the Protector some needed supplies, putting a tax of £340,000 a month on England, £6,000 on Scotland, and £9,000 on Ireland. They completed their Petition and Advice, providing for the continuation of the present title of Lord Protector, and creating a second House, intended to be a House of Lords, to consist of seventy members to be named by Cromwell, but which was alluded to at all times dubiously as "the Other House." They stipulated for the admittance of the excluded members, for an election of a free Parliament once in three years, for the non-interference with their privileges, and for a disuse of the law-making power by the Lord Protector and his Council. Cromwell approved this Instrument, and the Parliament adjourned June 20, not to meet again for seven months. The purposes of this long adjournment were to allow Cromwell to choose the members of the Other House and to install him a second time as Lord Protector under the authority of the Parliament.

On the 26th of June, 1657, Cromwell, with most magnificent ceremonies, was again proclaimed Lord Protector. He entered Westminster Hall with all the pomp that his civil and military administration could afford. A platform was raised at the upper end of the hall, on which there was a chair of State. Cromwell stood in front of this wearing the robes of State. Around him were the Earl of Warwick, the Dutch and French Ambassadors, Richard Cromwell, Fleetwood, Claypole, the Earl of Manchester, Lord Wharton, Montague, Whitelock, and others, all with drawn swords. After the heralds had commanded silence, Speaker Widdrington, on behalf of the Parliament, presented him with a rich and elegant robe of purple velvet, lined with ermine; a Bible, ornamented with bosses and clasps, richly gilt; a sword of exquisite workmanship; and a scepter of massy gold; each of which was explained by Widdrington to be symbolical of his relations to the State. Cromwell then took the oath, and after a prayer by Mr. Manton, the heralds proclaimed him Lord Protector, the trumpets sounded, and the people shouted their loud huzzas.
After this Cromwell returned to Whitehall in all the sovereignty of a King save the name and the Crown. Was this inauguration sufficient to preserve his power? Could it maintain his prestige and authority? Did his necessary dictatorship and despotism receive any greater degree of real loyalty from the people? We fear not. It seems rather to be possible to trace, from the day on which the public became aware of his inability to accept the Kingship, a gradual and almost imperceptible diminution of the power of his sway, a doubt of the sufficiency of his government, and an ill-disguised wish for the ancient forms of King and Parliament. But while his honors sat wearily on him at home, his name abroad was becoming more than ever illustrious. His Ironsides—his God-fearing men, his men of religion—were winning those victories at Mardike and Dunkirk which have been already described, and Louis XIV had personally come to their camp to inspect the Army, he said, of a Prince whom he had always considered as the greatest and happiest in Europe. Lord Fauconberg, who married Mary Cromwell (November 18, 1657), was sent by Oliver on a wedding tour as ambassador to France, and was received by Louis like a Prince of the Blood. Within a few weeks of this second inauguration Cromwell resigned the office of Chancellor of the University of Oxford, considering it incompatible with his present dignity to longer hold that position. When the Parliament (January 20, 1658) reassembled, the Other House, which had been created in the interim, occupied the House of Lords. Under the Petition and Advice the 100 excluded members sat with the Commons. In the Other House, sitting as Lords, were Richard and Henry Cromwell, Whitelock, Lisle, Glyn, Widdrington, Desborough, Sir Francis Rouse, Alderman Pack; William Lenthall, the Long Parliament Speaker; Jones, Fleetwood, and Claypole. Hazelrig had been named a Lord, but he scornfully rejected the title. Oliver had summoned sixty-one members, including several of his Council, some gentlemen of family, and a few lawyers and officers. Of eight ancient peers who were called only two responded, Lord Eure, and Lord Fauconberg, his son-in-law. Lords Warwick, Manchester, Mulgrave, and Wharton refused to come. The Earl of Warwick, his old friend, whose grandson, Mr. Rich, was now married (November 11, 1657) to Fanny Cromwell, declared that he could not sit in the same assembly with Colonel Hewson, who had been a shoemaker, and Colonel Pride, who had been a drayman. The experience of this Other House was very dismal. The House of Commons refused to treat it with any respect, its pretensions were received with very general contempt, and even Cromwell finally became ashamed of it. Cromwell opened the Parliament in the House of Lords under a canopy of State, commencing his speech with the ancient form, "My Lords and Gentlemen." He told them that after the expense of so much blood and treasure they were now to search for what blessings God had in store for these nations. The cause of the quarrel, in which most of them had been actors, was the maintaining of the liberty of these nations, our civil liberties as men, our spiritual liberties as Christians. Poisonous popish ceremonies had been imposed upon those that were accounted the Puritans of the nation, and professors of...
religion among us, driving them to seek their bread in a howling wilderness, as was instanced to our friends who were forced to fly for Holland, New England, almost anywhither, to find liberty for their consciences. He then descanted in his exalted way on the 85th Psalm, and expounded the mercies of God, "who had pardoned all their iniquities and covered all their sin, and taken away all His wrath. Pardoning, as God pardoneth the man whom he justifieth! He breaks through, and overlooks iniquity, and pardoneth because He will pardon. And sometimes God pardoneth nations, also." Hear this Puritan speaking to his Parliament! If he could only make them see as he saw, and feel as he felt, all would yet be well!

"But what's the reason, think you," he continued, "that men slip in this age wherein we live? As I told you before, they love not the works of God. They consider not the operation of His laws. They consider not that God resisted and broke in pieces the Powers that were, that men might fear Him, [that they] might have liberty to do and enjoy all that we have been speaking of. Which certainly God has manifested to have been the end, and so hath He brought the things to pass! Therefore it is that men yet slip, and engage themselves against God."

He said he was in infirm health and could not speak long; he had been much in ill health of late, we find by the old books. If they succeeded in the work which they had been called there to do, "You," said Oliver, "shall all be called the Blessed of the Lord. The generations to come will bless us. You shall be 'the repairers of breaches, and the restorers of paths to dwell in!' And if there be any higher work which mortals can attain unto in the world beyond this, I acknowledge my ignorance of it."

After concluding his speech, the Lord Protector withdrew, and the trouble instantly began. The new House sent a message to the old House proposing that his Highness be requested to have a day of fasting. Under the incendiary lead of the restored Republicans, Hazelrig and Scott, the old House began a heated debate as to what name their new House was to have. The Petition and Advice simply called it the Other House. For five days the time-serving members debated this foolish point, forgetting that their continued discussions might spread abroad and bring about a Restoration in time which would lay the heads of some of these very speakers beneath the revengeful axe of Charles II.

Scott was executed among the Regicides. Hazelrig died just in time to escape a like fate.

It was a bad time for dissensions among the Puritans. A few days ago the Duke of Ormond, disguised so that not even Cromwell’s matchless system of espionage could detect him, had come into England. He stopped at Colchester to play at shuffleboard and drink hot ale with the farmers, and then came right on to London, "a rustic-looking man." He was just from Flanders, had organized a Spanish invasion, had four Irish regiments already at his service—the same which had fled before Montague and Lockhart on the Continent; Don John had
promised 10,000 Spaniards more, and Ormond was come to England to stir up the Royalists to revolt, so that a general and bloody war might ensue. Oliver knew these things—all but the presence of Ormond in his capital—and he summoned his refractory Parliament before him January 25, only five days after their last meeting. He was still feeling indisposed, but he delivered an address which gave them a full and forcible view of the domestic and foreign situation. Without indicating an alarm within his own mind, he spoke with a candor and directness which left no room in the minds of any of them to doubt the peril that surrounded them. It was, perhaps, his ablest speech. He vividly described the dangers from abroad which threatened the common cause of Puritan England and of Protestantism. He told them in still more direct words of the perils which infested the country from the Cavaliers at home. His own life had been attempted—his assassination had been publicly urged as a boon to the nation in a pamphlet entitled *Killing No Murder*.

This rare pamphlet [is] severally alleged to have been written by William Allen, by Colonel Silas Titus, and by Colonel Edward Sexby. Sexby, while a prisoner in the Tower of London, professed that he "owned it as his work, and was still of the same judgment" (Thurloe, Vol. VI, p. 560). It is dedicated to Cromwell and opens in a style of lively irony. "To your Highness," says the writer, "justly belongs the honour of dying for the people; and it cannot choose but be an unspeakable consolation to you in the last moments of your life, to consider with how much benefit to the world you are likely to leave it. It is then only, my Lord, the titles you now usurp will be truly yours. You will then be indeed the deliverer of your country, and free it from a bondage little inferior to that from which Moses delivered his. This we hope from your Highness’s happy expiration, who are the true father of your country; for, while you live, we can call nothing ours, and it is from your death that we hope for our inheritances." ... This scurrilous and wicked pamphlet created a great excitement and undoubtedly threw Cromwell into much perturbation of mind.

But especially he directed their attention to the condition of the Army. His soldiers on the 25th of January were barefoot. Both those here and in Scotland were six months in arrears in their pay, and those in Ireland were much more behind. He intimated very plainly that either with or without their help he would do his duty to the nation. He said:

"I have taken my oath to govern according to the laws that are now made, and I trust I shall fully answer it. And know, I sought not this place. I speak it before God, Angels, and Men: i did not. You sought me for it, you brought me to it; and I took my oath to be faithful to the interests of these nations, to be faithful to the Government. All those things were implied, in my eye, in the oath
to be faithful to this Government, upon which we have now met. And I trust, by the grace of God, as I have taken my oath to serve this Commonwealth on such an account, I shall—i must—see it done, according to the Articles of Government. That every just interest may be preserved; that a godly ministry may be upheld, and not affronted by seducing and seduced spirits; that all men may be preserved in their just rights, whether civil or spiritual. Upon this account did I take oath, and swear to this Government! And so having declared my heart and mind to you in this, I have nothing more to say, but to pray, God Almighty bless you."

He had pointed out their dangers; from the mountain tops he had warned them. What would they do?
For ten days longer the Parliament continued to invite destruction by its unimpeded torrent of debate. Some very useful bills were indeed presented; there were some members there who desired to see this government succeed. But Hazelrig, Scott, and other Republicans who disliked the framework of the new constitution, shutting their eyes to the spirit of it, were utterly irrepressible. Oliver stood nearby, and the gathering gloom on his brow might have indicated to them that they were trifling with the lion. But they seemed to forget about England and all her interests, and talked on unceasingly. Unceasingly, until Oliver stopped them. On the 4th of February, 1658, he came down to the House of Lords and summoned both Houses before him. It was only fifteen days since their reassembling. His bearing was now calm and dignified, but his speech was full of suppressed passion. He reminded them that they had called him to take his present place. He reproached them for not supporting the government. He would rather have lived under his woodside and tended a flock of sheep than rule alone. He informed them that Charles Stuart had an army at the water’s edge ready to invade England, which they had known and had taken no measures to prevent. The speech was brief and full of cold scorn. Its concluding sentence struck amazement into the dull, constitutional heads of the members. After mentioning the threatened invasion, he said, "And if this be so, I do assign it to the cause—your not assenting to what you did invite me to by your Petition and Advice, as that which might prove the settlement of the nation. And if this be the end of your sitting, and this be your carriage, I think it high time that an end be put to your sitting. And I do dissolve this parliament. And let God be the judge between you and me."

The members filed out of the ancient halls, chagrined under his stinging rebuke. And as his Second and last Parliament vanished finally from the scene, Cromwell felt, perhaps for the first time, the full weight of the refractory empire whose government must be borne upon his shoulders alone.

CHAPTER XXVI
Death of Cromwell
To keep English Puritanism paramount, with its Open Bible and Drawn Sword—this was the mission which it was Oliver Cromwell’s destiny to fulfil. In the matter of finances he was grievously embarrassed, for he dared not now to lay a general tax without consent of Parliament. One Cony, who had refused to pay an arbitrary assessment, had been imprisoned, and when he employed counsel to defend him, Cromwell audaciously sent his three lawyers to the Tower. But the incident convinced him that popular consent was essential to taxation, and his broad perceptions at once conceived another Parliament which might prove to be more patriotic to the cause. With a third Parliament, pliable to his will, he hoped for a law which would permit him to fill his empty coffers by taxing the Royalists even to one half of their estates.

It was not long before he discovered the presence of the Duke of Ormond in London; and that nobleman, one morning in March, while reposing at the house of a Catholic surgeon in a very thorough disguise, was thunderstruck when his friend Lord Broghill came to him direct from Cromwell and advised him to leave England immediately. He adopted the advice with alacrity and made haste to the Continent, where he informed Charles Stuart that it was useless to attempt an invasion at present, Oliver being too well prepared for them. An insurrection which had been stirred up in London was crushed by the watchful Protector, and its leaders were punished. It is amazing to find that Sir William Walter was concerned in this affair, and that even Fairfax was expected to support it at the proper time. Among the ringleaders was Dr. John Hewit, an Episcopal clergyman, who had contributed his personal influence towards the plot to restore the exiled King. He was brought to trial before a High Court of justice, and with him was arraigned Sir Henry Slingsby, who, not content with his connection with a former assassination plot, had just been caught tampering with the officers at Hull, seeking to gain that famous fortress over to the interest of his master. Slingsby was an uncle of Lord Fauconberg, the Protector’s son-in-law, but this served him not. Neither could numerous petitions from prominent persons in behalf of Dr. Hewit secure mercy for him. Both the offenders were beheaded on Tower Hill on the 8th of June, 1658.

In the same June days the crowning victory of Oliver’s wars was secured by the capture of Dunkirk, and Mazarin sent over a splendid embassy personally to congratulate the Protector.

Amid the exhilaration of victory, personal afflictions began to fall upon Cromwell. Young Robert Rich, the Earl of Warwick’s grandson, who had married Frances Cromwell last November, died in February (16, 1658), after a wedded life of only three months, and poor Fanny’s heart was broken. Cromwell sympathized passionately with her sorrow. The Earl of Warwick, who was much esteemed by Cromwell, died on May 19 of this year. Just before his death, while bowed under the bereavement of young Rich’s demise, the Earl had written to Oliver in these words, replying to a letter of condolence from the Protector, which has not been preserved: ‘Others’ goodness is their own; yours is a whole country’s, yea, three Kingdoms’, for which you justly possess interest and renown with great and good men; virtue is a thousand escutcheons. Go on, my Lord; go on happily, to love religion, to exemplify it.
May your Lordship long continue an instrument of use, a pattern of virtue, and a precedent of glory."

But a greater trial was in store for Cromwell. His favorite daughter, Elizabeth Claypole, fell sick of a painful and distressing malady, affecting the internal organs. The physicians did not seem to understand her case, and they were unable to afford her any relief. The Protector flung aside all business of the State and sat by her bedside for twenty-four days. It was a sorrowful scene there at Hampton Court, when, on the 6th day of August, 1658, this beloved daughter breathed her last.

The painful agonies of her long sickness had cut like a knife to Cromwell’s heart, and her death was insupportable and crushing. When, after her funeral, he failed to recover his accustomed strength and it became necessary to acknowledge that he was dangerously sick, a fearful alarm possessed his friends. The stupendous results that would follow the death of the Lord Protector had not been seriously considered by the Puritans until the moment when the grim specter seemed to approach.

He had been in ill health for some time. As far back as the battle of Dunbar he had written to his wife that he had felt the infirmities of age stealing over him. The robust energies of life had been prematurely sapped by the too vigorous existence which he had led. His gout seemed to leave his leg and retire into his body, and for four or five days he was racked with intolerable pain in his bowels and back, which made it impossible for him to sleep. But by August 17 he was so far improved as to be able to ride out for an hour, to the unspeakable joy of his friends. Within a few days it developed that his sickness was due to an intermittent, or tertian, fever and ague, the fits attacking him with great violence every other day. On one of the intermediate days (August 24), he felt well enough to be removed from Hampton Court to Whitehall, and the only business that he would consider was that the writs for calling the new Parliament be postponed.

In one of his moments of repining for the death of the dear Elizabeth, he had them read this passage from Philippians: "Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and by all things, I am instructed; both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." His thoughts reverted over many years to his firstborn, Robert, who had died at Felsted School, nineteen years ago, in the flower of young manhood. "That Scripture did once save my life," he told them, "when my eldest son died, which went as a dagger to my heart indeed it did."

He then repeated Paul’s words: "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again, wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." His habit of expounding was strong. "It’s true, Paul, you have learned this, and attained to this measure of grace. But what shall I do? Ah, poor creature, it is a hard lesson for me to take out. I find it so." But when he again came to the words, "I can do
all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," his faith was strong, and he cried, "He that was Paul's Christ is my Christ too!"

While he was taking that last ride in the fresh air at Hampton Court, George Fox, the Quaker, approached him to intercede for the Society of Friends. This was on August 20. "I met him riding into Hampton Court Park," says Fox, "and before I came to him, as he rode at the head of his Life Guard, I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him."

But the belief which had followed Cromwell throughout his life, that he was privileged to hold personal communication with the Most High God, was strangely asserted in these last days. He besought the Lord that, for the good of his people, he would spare his life a little longer; and he then announced that his prayer had been granted, using a manner of such mysterious assurance that his hearers were transported with amazement.

One of his chaplains, Dr. Goodwin, thereupon made this strange prayer: "Lord, we beg not for his recovery, for that Thou hast already granted, and assured us of, but for his speedy recovery."

The whole body of that theology which had ever been the meat and drink of his soul, sustained him in the hour of his last combat. He spoke of there having been two covenants—one of works, in which personal responsibility was a fearful thing; and one of grace, in which the Father of Mercy overlooks and pardons all, to those who believe. "There were two," he exclaimed, while earth was growing dark around him, "two, but put into one before the foundation of the world." Again: "It is holy and true, it is holy and true, it is holy and true! Who made it holy and true? Who kept it holy and true? The great Mediator of the Covenant!" Here was indeed the very soul of Puritanism on its deathbed! "The Covenant is but one," he said. "Faith in the Covenant is my only support. Yet, if I believe not, he abides faithful!"

"Whatsoever sins thou hast, doest, or shall commit," he said, "if you lay hold upon free grace, you are safe, but if you put yourself under a covenant of works, you bring yourself under the law, and so under the curse; then you are gone."

His eyes, great and glorious, their fire undimmed by sickness, fell upon his weeping wife and children. Tenderly he said to them, "Love not this world. I say unto you, it is not good that you should love this world. Children, live like Christians—I leave you the Covenant to feed upon!"

There were moments when excruciating pain seemed to plunge his faith into darkness. Once he moaned, "Is there none that says, 'Who will deliver me from the peril?'" Nearly every Puritan in England was then praying for him. "Man can do nothing," he said, "God can do what He will. Is there none that will come and praise God?"

All his mighty battles were but as children's combats compared with this death struggle. "Lord," he said, speaking with Omnipotence again in that confidential way, "Thou knowest that if I desire to live, it is to show forth Thy praise and declare Thy works?" Three times he cried, with extreme vehemence of spirit, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" Election, Predestination, were the images that arose in his mind. And then the promises
of Christ relieved him: "All the promises of God are in Him: Yes, and in Him, Amen; to the glory of God by us, by us in Jesus Christ." Soon all was serene. "The Lord hath filled me with as much assurance of His pardon, and His love, as my soul can hold." There was self-abasement in this: "I think I am the poorest wretch that lives, but I love God, or rather am beloved by God." The conflicts of his life suggested this to the Christian soldier: "I am a conqueror, and more than a conqueror, through Christ that strengtheneth me!"

His fever had now become a double tertian, twice turning the blood in his veins on every alternate day, then leaving him in a chill like death. He uttered this prayer: "Lord, though I am a miserable and wretched creature, I am in covenant with Thee through grace. And I may, I will, come to Thee for Thy People. Thou hast made me, though very unworthy, a mean instrument to do them some good, and Thee service; and many of them have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death; but Lord, however Thou dost dispose of me, continue and go on to do good for them. Give them consistency of judgment, one heart, and mutual love, and go on to deliver them; and with the work of reformation make the name of Christ glorious in the world. Teach those who look too much upon Thy instruments, to depend more upon Thyself. Pardon such as desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, for they are Thy people too. And pardon the folly of this short prayer—even for Jesus Christ’s sake. And give us a good night, if it be Thy pleasure. Amen."

On Thursday night, September 2, Thurloe, his faithful secretary, and Fauconberg, his son-in-law, together with four or five of the Council, being present, he was asked to name his successor. He had written a paper containing his wishes in the matter, previous to the assembling of his first Parliament, and Thurloe was told where it could be found. The strictest search failed to discover it, and Cromwell seemed strangely reluctant now to nominate his successor. But when they named Richard for the office, he at length indicated his consent that it should be so. Then Cromwell turned his thoughts again to Heaven. "Truly God is good," he said, "indeed he is. He will not leave me." His love of life was strong. "I would be willing to live to be further serviceable to God and His people, but my work is done. Yet God will be with His people."

But the end was fast approaching. He tossed upon the bed in utter weariness all through the night. They offered him a drink. "It is not my design to drink or to sleep," he said, "but my design is to make what haste I can to be gone." The last extremity indeed!

A storm arose—the most tempestuous storm of wind and rain that England had known. It was impossible for horses to walk in it. All day of Friday, the 3rd of September, 1658, the anniversary of Dunbar and of Worcester, the elements raged, while Oliver Cromwell lay speechless and in his last agony. Late in the afternoon, about four o’clock on his Fortunate Day, his spirit passed out amid the lightnings.

The Lord Protector was dead!
CHAPTER XXVII
Cromwell’s Place in History

Cromwell had finished his work. He had sprung from the heart of the people of England to vindicate their liberties. He had walked up and down the earth like a war god arrayed in the thunders of battle. He had conquered his autocratic King and all the nobility of England. He had overthrown a bloody rebellion in Ireland and transformed the environment of that mad people into industry and peace. In the space of one year he had entirely subdued Scotland, which had successfully resisted the Kings of England for 800 years.

His military career had been prodigious, far excelling the contemporaneous work of Gustavus Adolphus and of Wallenstein. The brilliance of his victories outshone the single battle of William the Conqueror and all the contests in the Wars of the Roses. His political domination was not surpassed by the ephemeral sway of Napoleon, and in martial supremacy he was equal to Caesar. Individually, his pure patriotism, his sacrifice to duty, his public wisdom, and his endeavor for the right course in every difficulty, gave him a transcendent character which, in the history of dangerous epochs, suggests but two men who are worthy to be compared with him as righteous rulers—Washington and Lincoln. Among the world’s heroes he stands high above all the rest, because the results of his illustrious performances are of more enduring benefit to mankind.

He was not ambitious to found a dynasty, and he permitted the succession to fall to Richard, because he knew that the existing order of things would suffer a less rude shock at Richard’s hands than if he turned the Government over to Lambert or to Fleetwood. It has been asked why he did not restore Charles II to the throne under constitutional pledges. But when this had been proposed to him, he replied, “Charles is so damnably debauched he will undo us all”; and the history of the reign of Charles and of James demonstrates that Cromwell’s connivance in the Restoration would not have enhanced his own fame nor England’s welfare. His foresight was too astute to permit him to hope for the preservation of the Commonwealth under its present form, although he believed that its principles were ineffaceably established.

When he stood at the head of that supreme Army, whose victories had worn away the last fabric of a legal but oppressive administration, he discovered that by the law of necessity the government had fallen upon his shoulders. It was a thankless task, which no other man in England could have successfully encountered. As he trod on in the line of strict duty, he perceived with crushing sorrow that his burden afforded neither joy to himself nor gratitude to his people.

But while his government was unstable as simply an expedient of the time, and while it was so soon to fade away, his work must endure while men inhabit the earth. For Cromwell and his Puritan hosts engrafted it imperishably upon civilization, that nations have the right to govern themselves, and that all just powers in the State are derived from the people. Above all else, he destroyed the dangerous theory of a fundamental union between Church and State,
whereby the rulers assume the right to coerce the consciences of dissenters; and he broke in pieces an ecclesiastical system which promised to become as intolerant and tyrannical as that which it had displaced. He insisted that it was the natural right of every individual to worship God from his own heart and lips, free from the interposition of all sacerdotal machinery. And the absolute freedom of conscience and equality before the law which are so largely the principles of modern civilization, wherever they may have had their birth, flourished into healthy and permanent life under the nourishing and zealous care of Oliver Cromwell’s government. 

He has no monument in England, and he can have none with the sanction of the government, because a monument to Cromwell would be an official acknowledgment of successful rebellion. But the great Deliverer needs no marble shaft while mankind cherishes the remembrance of his works. When the news of Cromwell’s fatal sickness reached Ireland, Henry Cromwell solicitously inquired, “Where is that person of wisdom, courage, conduct, and (which is equivalent to all) reputation at home and abroad, which we see necessary to preserve our peace? Would not good men fear one another, and the world them?”

But while Lambert, until the abolishment of the Major-Generals had stirred him to mortal enmity against Cromwell, had expected to succeed to the Protectorship, and while Fleetwood, even at the death of Oliver, had held some faint hopes of being called to the office, yet there was none of sufficient courage to gainsay Richard’s claim. Accordingly, within three hours of Oliver’s death, Richard was proclaimed Lord Protector. There was no tumult, nor any apparent opposition, although the Cavalier party instantly became alert and impatiently awaited their opportunity to rise. “There is not a dog that wags his tongue,” wrote Thurloe, “so great a calm as we are in.”

That incomparable Army, which the great Puritan had molded into the finest military machine in Europe, received the intelligence of his death in the lethargy and gloom of hopeless sorrow. They felt that they had “not lost a General and Protector only, but a dear and tender father to them all and the Lord’s people.”

But within four days of Cromwell’s death Thurloe’s watchful eye detected the signs of revolt. On September 7 he wrote to Henry Cromwell that there were already secret murmurings that Richard was not a soldier and had no common interest with the Army, and that he ought to resign the command to one of their own Generals.

In the meantime, preparations for the late Protector’s funeral were made, and the body, after lying in state for more than two months, was buried with the greatest pomp in Westminster Abbey, that dormitory of Kings. The malignant revenge of the Stuarts afterwards caused it to be disinterred and hanged at Tyburn, the head to be placed on a pole over Westminster Hall, where it stood against the blasts of twenty winters, and the body, together with those of his sainted mother and Ireton and Bradshaw, to be thrown into a lime pit in St. Margaret’s churchyard.
Richard called a Parliament which might have done something for the good of the nation. But as the Army cabal led by Fleetwood and Desborough considered Parliaments offensive on general principles, they forced Richard to dismiss this one, and then they dismissed Richard, who retired into obscurity after a pusillanimous reign of seven months and twenty-eight days. He lived in exile for twenty years after the Restoration, away from wife and children, apparently more in fear of his creditors than of the wrath of his King, who despised him. On his return to England he assumed the name of Clark for a short time. He died in 1712 at the advanced age of eighty-six years.

After the deposition of Richard, Henry Cromwell resigned his post in Ireland and passed the remainder of his days in England. He was an accomplished and able man, and might have preserved the glory of his house had Oliver entrusted him, instead of Richard, with the government. He was happily married and lived in honorable retirement at Spinney Abbey, and died when forty-six years old. With the resignation of Henry from the Lord Deputyship, the fall of the Cromwell family was complete, and they passed out of history, whose gilded page no descendant of theirs has since notably invaded. Of Cromwell’s daughters, Bridget, who had successively married Ireton and Fleetwood, died at fifty-seven; Mary, Lady Fauconberg, at seventy-five; and Frances, married to Robert Rich and afterwards to Sir John Russell, at eighty-two. All of the Protector’s children who married left offspring except Mary, and the line is still in existence.

After Richard Cromwell’s deposition the Long Parliament was permitted to return, and it made an attempt to settle the peace of the nation. But jealousy and ambition prevented its success. Lambert was for a moment supreme with the Army, but his insignificant parts were unequal to such a heroic situation. George Monk, with the Army from Scotland, marched down to London, silent, cautious, and watchful, and overthrew Lambert. He first dismissed the Long Parliament and then restored it; and finally, when he perceived that nothing would pacify his countrymen but the succession of Charles II, he permitted that remarkable body which had held the name of Parliament for seventeen years, with its history at once illustrious and contemptible, glorious and base, to arrange for the recall of the King. On the 29th of May, 1660, after Cromwell had been twenty months dead, Charles Stuart entered London. His people, wearied with civil wars, forgot their battles and their wounds, and welcomed him back to the heritage of his fathers with glad acclamations. But in the hearts of the Ironsides, who at Blackheath received Charles that day with loyalty and peace, there must have been many sad and tender and touching memories of that beloved General who had been the wonder of Europe and the glory of his age, Oliver Cromwell.
Theodore Beza, one of the lesser-known names of Reformation history in our day and age, was born in Vézelay, France in 1519 and would become one of the most important leaders of French Protestants during the critical period of the sixteenth century. Leaving behind the pleasures and security that come with a wealthy family of nobility, he chose to cast his lot with the persecuted people of God. After his conversion to the Gospel of Christ in 1548, he forsook his worldly education and career and left his native country for Geneva, Switzerland, where he was welcomed by John Calvin and became a Protestant preacher. Beza also became a champion of the Huguenots as their foremost representative to King Charles IX and the Catholic ecclesiastical leaders of France, risking his life in his travels as he plead the case of the suffering French Christians. They would turn to him time and time again for counsel and leadership during the dark days of civil war and brutal persecutions, including the infamous massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, 1572. Beza also contributed greatly to the writing of the French Psalter, which fueled the fire of the Huguenot cause, and inspired their soldiers with courage as they faced the armies of Catholic tyranny on the battlefield. Beza became John Calvin's successor at Geneva and labored tirelessly in preaching and in caring for the thousands of destitute, persecuted saints who fled to Geneva for refuge. He remained at Geneva for many years until his death in 1605.
Section 1  Early Life and Labors

Section 2  Laboring with Calvin

Section 3  Calvin's Successor

Chapter 1  Childhood and Youth
Chapter 2  Beza in Paris
Chapter 3  Conversion of Beza
Chapter 4  Treatise on the Punishment of Heretics
Chapter 5  Activity at Lausanne
CHAPTER I
Childhood and Youth
1519–1539

The leaders of the great Reformation differed from one another as distinctly in personal traits as in the incidents of their lives and the work which they were called to perform. Theodore Beza, whose career and influence I purpose to trace, did not possess precisely the same remarkable natural endowments that fitted Martin Luther and John Calvin for the accomplishment of their brilliant undertakings, but in a different sphere his task was of scarcely inferior importance, and was accomplished equally well. Like Melanchthon, he belonged to another and not less essential class of men whose great office it is to consolidate and render permanent what has been begun and carried forward to a certain point of development by others. But between Beza and Melanchthon there was a marked contrast of allotted activity. Melanchthon was born fourteen years later than Luther, and survived him by the same number of years. He was, therefore, a younger contemporary of the great German Reformer, and his office was preeminently that of supplementing what seemed naturally lacking in the master whom he loved and revered, moderating that master’s inordinate fire, by his prudence restraining the older Reformer’s intemperate zeal, by his superior learning and scholarship qualifying himself to become in a peculiarly appropriate sense the teacher of the doctrines which Luther had propounded. Beza was still nearer to Calvin in point of birth, for only the space of ten years separated them. But he outlived Calvin more than four times that number of years, and ended his life at over fourscore, and early in another century. Thus while Melanchthon is naturally to be regarded as a companion of Luther, Beza presents himself to view chiefly as a theological successor of Calvin, in whose doctrinal system he introduced little change and which he merely accentuated, and as an independent leader of the French Reformed Churches during over a third of a century.

More, perhaps, than any of the other prominent leaders of the great religious movement of his time, Beza is entitled to be styled the “courtly Reformer.” Sprung from the ranks of the old French nobility, a man for whom access to the favored circle of the powerful and opulent was open from earliest youth, with wealthy connections, nurtured in ease and in the prospect of preferment, into whatever department of Church or State he might elect to enter, he manifested in his bearing, his manners, and even in his language the effects of association upon equal terms with the best and most highly educated men of his time. This was an advantage that widened the sphere of his influence, both at the court of Charles IX and at that of Henry IV.

The members of the family from which he sprang wrote their name De Besze. Theodore himself so wrote it to the end of his days, save when he gave it the Latin form of Beza. The family was of old Burgundian stock. Theodore’s
birthplace was the town of Vézelay, now a decayed and insignificant place of somewhat less than twelve hundred souls. Situated about one hundred and fifty miles southeast of the capital of France, it continues in its obscurity to carry on a limited traffic in wood, grain, and wine, the wood being obtained in the extensive forest of Avalon and being sent down the river Yonne, to supply in part the needs of Paris and its environs. Even in the 16th century, Vézelay lived chiefly on memories of its past distinction. In attestation of former greatness, it pointed with pride to a famous abbey church dedicated to Saint Mary Magdalene. The ruins still crown a hill overlooking the town, and even now arouse the curiosity and elicit the admiration of such visitors as, from time to time, turn aside from the beaten ways of travel to more secluded paths. Hard-by is still pointed out the spot where, on Palm Sunday, in the year 1146, the Second Crusade was preached by Bernard, the celebrated Abbot of Clairvaux. The slope of a hill at the gate of the place was occupied on that famous occasion by a throng of lords and knights, of ecclesiastics and persons of every station, too numerous to be contained by any building, all of whom were attracted to Vézelay by the fame of the eloquence and piety of the future saint. Upon the great platform erected at the base of the hill sat Louis VII, King of France, and near him the orator who divided with his Majesty the attention of the vast concourse of spectators. Here it was that, at the close of Bernard’s fervid appeal for Palestine, just bereft of the flower of its possessions by the fall of the city of Edessa, not only the lords almost to a man, but Louis VII himself and his wife Eleanor of Guyenne, begged the privilege of attaching the symbol of the holy cross to their garments and of joining the crusade soon to set forth to rescue from the polluting foot of the infidel the land once made holy by the tread of the Son of God.

Nearly four centuries had elapsed from the day on which Vézelay resounded with the cries of "Deus vult! Deus volt!" interrupting Bernard’s address, when, in 1519, on Saint John Baptist’s Day, the 14th of June, Old Style, or the 24th, New Style, was born the future French Reformer. He was a son of Pierre de Bèze, the baili of the place. Vézelay, having lost its importance in other respects, still retained the honor of being the seat of a royal officer bearing this designation. The position was as honorable as it was influential. Pierre de Bèze had married Marie Bourdelot, also of noble descent, by whom he had had six children before the birth of Theodore—two sons and four daughters. Her kinsmen, as well as his, were persons of prominence. Nicholas de Bèze, brother of Pierre, was a counsellor or judge of the Parliament of Paris, the highest judicial body in France. Being wealthy, unmarried, and of an affectionate disposition, Nicholas would gladly have had all the children of Pierre brought to his house in the capital, there to be reared under the most favorable circumstances, nor would he have spared either trouble or expense. Theodore subsequently styled him the "Mæcenas" of the family. Another brother, having entered the Church, possessed, as Abbot of Froidmont, the means of rendering himself no less serviceable to the promotion of the interests of his nephews.
Evidently if Theodore should fail of promotion either in Church or in the judicial career, it would not be from the lack of strong family connections.

There must, it would seem, have been something particularly winning in Theodore, the youngest child in a family of seven children; for he had not emerged from infancy when his uncle, the member of the Parliament of Paris, being on a visit to the bailiff of Vézelay, conceived so strong an admiration and affection for the child that he begged to be allowed to take him back with him to the capital. The father consented. The mother at first demurred, but afterwards yielded reluctantly in deference to her husband’s command. She insisted, however, on accompanying her little son to Paris, where she left him. Nor did she long survive the enforced separation from her child. Theodore, who in after years set it down as a singular mark of the divine goodness that he had been born of such a mother, praises, and apparently not without sufficient reason, both the intellectual and the moral endowments of Marie Bourdelot. To extraordinary nerve and dexterity she added great kindliness of heart. Her attention to the wants of the poor was assiduous. They repaid her untiring solicitude with a sincere love.

It was no ordinary misfortune for Theodore to be separated from, and shortly after deprived altogether of, such a mother and at a so tender age. He was but a puny child, of so weakly a constitution that he barely walked at five years of age. When this dangerous stage was passed, his physical ailments seemed only to increase. At one point in his childhood he became the victim of a malady so painful that he was once, when crossing one of the bridges over the Seine, about to throw himself into the river for the purpose of ending his life and his misery in a single moment.

Such are some of the incidents that have come down to us in regard to Beza’s childhood and for which we are indebted to the autobiographical notices inserted in a letter prefaced to his *Confession of the Christian Faith*. The letter was addressed to Melchior Wolmar, a distinguished scholar, to whom, under God, the future Reformer owed, more than to father or mother, that training both of the intellect and of the affections which qualified him for the great part he was to play in the affairs of Church and State.

Melchior Wolmar was born in ancient Suabia, or in what now constitutes the southerly part of the kingdom of Württemberg, at the little town of Rottweil. Following an uncle, Michael Röttli, to Bern, in Switzerland, he became first pupil, then successor of his kinsman in a Latin school which the latter had founded. Thence Wolmar passed to Fribourg, and a year or two later to Paris. Extreme indigence did not prevent him from gratifying his taste for study, and he gave himself so ardently to the mastery of the Greek language, under the guidance of Nicholas Bérauld and other competent instructors, that of one hundred young men that came up for the degree of licentiate at the University, his name was the first upon the list of the successful candidates. The pleasures
or honors of the capital were not so attractive to him as to detain him long on the banks of the Seine, or, more probably, Wolmar’s leaning toward Protestant views was too pronounced to make a sojourn at Paris either comfortable or safe. Thus it was that, about the year 1527, he established at Orleans a school for youth which soon obtained a considerable degree of popularity. A few boys were received into the family of the founder.

It was perhaps a year after this time that Beza’s uncle happened to entertain at his house in Paris a relation residing in Orleans. The guest was a man of high position, being a member of the king’s greater council. In the course of the meal, noticing Theodore, who was present, a boy nine years old, he remarked that he had himself a son of about the same age, whom he had placed with a certain Wolmar. So highly did he praise the learning and abilities of this foreigner that, on the instant, Beza’s uncle, who had never before heard of Wolmar, declared his intention to take the rare opportunity and to send his nephew to Orleans. He begged that Theodore might be a companion of his guest’s son. He would make no account of the opposition which all the rest of the family made to the plan. It is almost needless to say that, when, many years later, Beza reviewed the circumstances from the standpoint of a Protestant and a Protestant leader, he could not but regard the impulse that led his uncle on the spur of the moment to send him away from the University of Paris, long since regarded as the most august educational establishment of the world, to a school newly started in a province by a stranger, as a signal exhibition of the direct interference of God. He styled the day on which he reached Wolmar’s house at Orleans—it was the fifth of December, 1528—his second nativity, for it was the point in his life from which was to be reckoned the beginning of every advantage he received. Never has pupil more enthusiastically admitted the instructor of his boyhood into the company of men whose pictures he affectionately cherishes in his memory, than did Beza insert the portrait of Wolmar in the gallery of worthies which, many years later, he gave to the world with words of high praise. Judging from the profile there sketched, the eminent scholar’s appearance indicated the strength of the mind that lay within. The forehead was high and prominent, the nose slightly aquiline, the eyes full of life, the mouth small but firm.

Melchior Wolmar was no longer an obscure man. About 1530 he was invited by the good Princess Margaret of Angoulême, sister of Francis I and grandmother of Henry IV, to be one of that band of eminent scholars with whom she surrounded herself in Bourges, the capital of her duchy of Berry. When Wolmar accepted the call, young Theodore Beza went with him to continue his studies.

If the autobiographical letter which we print in the Appendix fails to supply us with a complete list of the branches the boy pursued under his beloved teacher, his words afford a sketch which the reader’s imagination may readily fill out. The teacher was painstaking and gave himself unreservedly to his pupils. He found in Beza a mind fired with a desire to learn. If the natural
sciences were few and imperfectly understood at that time, the literature of ancient Rome and Greece was a treasury upon which students might draw without stint. It would have been difficult for a lad of even moderate ability to be constantly under the faithful instruction of any respectable teacher for seven years without acquiring great familiarity with the classical tongues. Under so admirable a humanist as Wolmar, and so unselfishly devoted to his little group of ambitious youth, Beza and his companions gained a command of both Latin and Greek such as few men in our times can claim to possess. To Beza, Latin became as familiar as his mother tongue. He used it ever afterwards readily, correctly, and effectively, as one needed to be able to use it who was to speak before kings and the most cultured of audiences. The two languages at once became the key to unlock the treasures of knowledge laid up in past ages. It was no hyperbole in Beza’s mouth to say that there was not a branch of learning, even to jurisprudence, into whose mysteries he was not at least partially initiated under the guidance of an instructor who held himself rather a friend and companion in study than a distant and austere pedagogue. Best of all, in Beza’s view, Wolmar had not neglected the religious welfare of his pupils, and had imbued them with the knowledge of true religion drawn from the Word of God, thereby giving him a claim to their imperishable gratitude.

Yet Theodore Beza was certainly at this time no ardent convert in whom clear convictions of truth had been immediately succeeded by overmastering convictions of duty and by a determination to renounce all selfish plans in favor of a life of voluntary consecration to a Master whose service he henceforth joyfully espoused. This assertion is abundantly proved by his life for the next ten years. Fully as he may have accepted, and doubtless did accept, the Word of God as authoritative, and sincerely as he rejected in his heart, and purposed at some future and convenient season to repudiate openly, such doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church as he had learned to be unscriptural, along with the rites which he now viewed as absurd and superstitious, he was by no means ready as yet to make the sacrifices which the frank acceptance of the “new faith” demanded. If his intellect approved the creed in attestation of which many humble men and women—carders, weavers, and the like—cheerfully suffered martyrdom in France about this time, counting the present life as insignificant and valueless in comparison with the life eternal, Beza was still to wait many a year before reaching such a condition of mind and heart as was theirs. The present life with its pleasures and ambitions occupied both mind and heart pretty fully as yet.

It is interesting at this point to notice that there was another youth destined to be a leader in the Protestant Reformation whose life was equally, possibly even more deeply, affected by contact with Melchior Wolmar. This was the young student from Noyon, Jean Calvin, who also sought to profit by the German instructor’s great familiarity with the Greek language. His residence was not a protracted one. He arrived after Wolmar had removed to Bourges, and he was
very shortly recalled home by the death of his father. Whether the two pupils, Beza and Calvin, were at this time brought into relations of close intimacy, is not clear. The disparity of their ages may well have kept apart the young man of twenty-two and the boy of twelve, but the elder not less than the younger imbibed the views of their common teacher. It is in fact the statement of one of the most inveterate enemies of the French Reformation, that it was owing to a direct suggestion of Wolmar that the young Calvin abandoned the study of the Code of Justinian to apply himself to the study of theology, and that this was the beginning of that career which was to prove the source of countless damage to the Christian Church. Wolmar, although feigning to be a Catholic, was, says this writer, a means of instilling into Calvin the Lutheran poison, with which Calvin during his own lifetime in turn infected many thousands of souls to their eternal ruin.

Calvin’s stay with Wolmar was suddenly brought to an end, as has been stated. That of Beza was terminated, four or five years later, by Wolmar’s return to Germany. Recalled to his native land, Wolmar would gladly have taken with him his promising student, but Beza’s father resolutely declined to grant his permission, and insisted that Theodore should retrace his steps to the city of Orleans, there to devote himself to the mastery of civil law.

As the son obeyed reluctantly (May 1535), so he found no great pleasure in his new task. The study of the law pursued without intelligent method, and taught, as it appeared to him, in a barbarous manner, inspired him, not with admiration, but with aversion. Consequently, while not neglecting his legal studies, he began to devote a considerable, possibly the greater, part of his time to polite letters, and found a singular delight in both Greek and Latin authors. It should be remembered that the French tongue was as yet rude. France had thus far produced few writers of genuine literary merit. There was little in contemporaneous literature to divert Beza from the perusal of the masterpieces of ancient Athens and Rome.

Poetry, in particular, attracted him greatly. He appreciated the verses of the poets of a bygone age, and it was no difficult thing for a youth of his tastes and station to imagine himself born to be a poet. Nor indeed was he altogether mistaken. Whatever may be said of the use to which he at first applied his poetical abilities, and however much those abilities, when subsequently employed in the service of religion, have, especially in our age, been studiously underrated, it will be seen in the sequel that while Beza was possessed of no genius calculated by its scintillations to arouse the enthusiastic admiration of the world, his poetical gifts were of no mean rank. It is no accident that the “battle-psalm” of the Huguenots, so well adapted to be sung at the charge, as it was so often sung during the course of whole centuries, was not from the pen of the facile and timid Clément Marot, but from the pen of Theodore Beza, his resolute and more thoroughly convinced collaborator in the preparation of the Huguenot psalter.
The time for writing the Protestant battle-psalm and such serious compositions, however, was as yet in the distant future, then to be composed under the play of strong and serious views of life. For the present, his poetical gifts led Beza to associate himself with a select band of young men of similar tastes, all inclined to unite the study of the law with the more seductive pursuit of the Muses. They were some of the most cultured and learned members of the University of Orleans, men who, when at a later date Beza was beginning his remarkable career as a Reformer in Switzerland, had already secured high honors in the land upon which Beza’s conscientious convictions had compelled him reluctantly but deliberately to turn his back.

What the poems were that Beza wrote at this period, we shall examine a little farther on.

Four years elapsed from the date when Beza parted from Wolmar—four years of a decorous and blameless life spent in the society of honorable and scholarly men—when, in August 1539, his stay at Orleans came to an end. He had been promoted to the degree of licentiate in law, and he left the university on the banks of the Loire to return to Paris. Let it not be imagined that the training he had received at Orleans even in the matter of law had been insignificant in its bearing upon his subsequent course, nor that he had failed to exhibit that wonderful power of acquisition which characterized his subsequent efforts in every other department of knowledge. Of his great popularity with his fellow students, there is evidence enough in the circumstance that “the nation of Germany”—the scholastic division into which, as a native of Burgundy, he was admitted—selected him to be its head under the title of “procurator.” As such not only did he preside over the internal affairs of the students of his “nation,” but, with the other nine procurators, had a vote in the university council even in such important matters as the election of the rector of the institution.

CHAPTER II

Beza in Paris
1539-1548

Theodore Beza had lately entered upon his twenty-first year when, having further literary or professional studies in view, he returned to the French capital. His prospects and his mental attitude deserve notice. He was a man of leisure, well provided with friends, possessed of abundant means of present support, and apparently the master of a secure future. His uncle, the member of the judicial Parliament of Paris, the best friend of his childhood, had indeed been dead for seven years; but his father’s other brother, the Abby de
Froidmont, was still alive and was not less attached to him than the judge had been. Theodore was in the enjoyment of the revenues of two rich benefices amounting together to about seven hundred gold crowns. His friends had made this weighty provision for him in his absence and despite the fact that he was not in orders, and, according to his own admission, as ignorant as any other layman could possibly be of all matters of a clerical nature. As if this were not enough, his good uncle had fully made up his mind that Theodore should succeed him in his abbey, worth, at the very least, 5,000 gold crowns a year. Besides this, Theodore’s eldest brother, so infirm in body that his life was despaired of, held certain other ecclesiastical benefices. There was every reason to believe that these would ultimately go to swell Theodore’s income.

In short, the young man was surrounded with every allurement to a life of ease and comfort. Relatives and connections of the family by marriage were alike disposed to further his desires; while other friends, whose favor was conciliated by the reputation he had already gained and by the predictions made of his future distinction, stood ready to applaud and congratulate. Whether he should select the Church or the Bar, his success seemed equally assured.

In his reminiscences of the period of his life now in question, Beza informs us that at this very time he was conscious that all these advantages were but snares laid for his feet by the powers of evil, with the view of preventing him from choosing the path which his inner convictions prompted him to enter upon. He had, that is to say, long since formed the resolution that, so soon as he should find himself master of himself and possessed of a certain competence, he would leave France. He would make his way to Germany, rejoin his old preceptor, and, in society with Wolmar, enjoy the liberty of professing his conscientious convictions, even at the sacrifice of more brilliant worldly prospects.

Meanwhile, however, there was little to show that he had not renounced the hopes kindled within him by the words and example of Wolmar. Without giving a loose rein to dissipation or riot, and while living what was regarded as an exemplary life for a young man of station, wealth, and brilliant expectations, he was quite content to devote the ease conferred upon him by his position to the pursuit of the Muses and to whatever literary studies his fancy might dictate.

Such a life, however, was as far from meeting the legitimate ambition of his father, as it was from satisfying the demands of conscience. Consequently, the next few years were in reality as full of struggle and discontent as they might have been supposed replete with satisfaction and quiet. A brief sketch of Beza’s experience at this time is fortunately left us in a letter written by him to an old comrade at Dijon. When he returned from Orleans, Theodore says to his friend, his father looked to his devoting himself at once to the practice of
the legal profession. Unfortunately the very thought of such a life inspired him with disgust. The "palais," or parliament-house, seemed a house of bondage; to enter its walls was to become a bondman for whom there was no hope of escaping a hateful drudgery. As much as the father insisted, so much the son resisted, urging, not without reason, that his previous training, not to speak of the natural bent of his mind, disqualified him for the lucrative but repulsive profession to which he was urged. Apparently the disputes between father and son were frequent, protracted, and animated. They were ended, or at least adjourned, through the intercession of Beza’s elder brother. Unable to oppose the united entreaties of his two sons, the father became less obdurate, and domestic harmony was finally restored by a compact on these terms that the two brothers should hire for themselves a house at common expense, and that, while the elder should devote himself to the family affairs, the younger should enjoy his liberty to study.

"Accordingly," says Beza, "I lived one year and then a second in by far the most blessed manner, since I lacked neither leisure, nor any kind of teachers, nor abundance of means, nor, in fine, the inclination to master those studies which, as you know, have pleased me supremely."

The untimely, if not altogether unexpected, death of his brother broke rudely in upon Beza’s delight. This blow recalled to the father’s mind his former purposes regarding his son, and caused him again to insist upon a final renunciation of the scholarly life to which Theodore had hitherto devoted himself.

"I am weighed down," said Pierre, "by a great mass of affairs, and have reached an advanced age. It is but just and fair that you, my son, upon whom all my hopes are fixed, should assume the burden. Yield at length and consult your own best interests and the interests of your friends, and give up those empty and profitless studies which you have pursued for so many years."

Theodore, however, was not convinced that the path urged upon him was that which he ought to take, and resisted with great determination. Conscious of the possession of abilities for which the life of routine in a profession which he detested offered no scope, he felt that to yield would be to make shipwreck of all higher aspirations. In this he was doubtless encouraged by the judgments which his associates had passed upon his literary powers, although not even their most sanguine anticipations could have forecast the particular sphere of his brilliant successes. It is difficult, however, in view of the great part which Beza was destined to play in the religious and political history of the 16th century, to close our eyes to the providential guidance of his mind and will in the strenuous opposition which he instituted and maintained to forces that might have made him possibly a counsellor of parliament—conspicuous for intelligence and for greater freedom from class prejudice than his fellows, but
exercising no appreciable influence upon the great movements of the intellectual and religious thought of his generation.

How long the obstinate contest between father and son might have lasted, and to what lengths the former might have gone in his indignation at the disappointment of his cherished hopes, had it not been for the enlightened views and calm judgment of the Abby de Froidmont, are questions that we cannot answer. That sagacious kinsman, who had more than once before given useful advice, being now chosen, by mutual consent of the parties, to the honorable office of umpire, gave a decision which, if it did not satisfy his nephew’s desires, at least seemed to him slightly more equitable than the course hitherto prescribed. "Inasmuch as Theodore is so averse to the practice of the law," he said, "let him indeed continue in the course upon which he has entered; let him, however, become the client of some prince or magnate from whom there may be hope of deriving some fruit of his labors." Sooth to say, the line of life suggested by his uncle was scarcely less repugnant to the young and ambitious student than that which his father would have had him follow.

“What do you fancy that my feelings were then, my friend Pompon?” he exclaimed. "Was I to go to the court, I who had learned neither how to dissemble nor how to flatter? Was I to embrace this mode of life subject to so many tumults, I who hoped to live in such honorable leisure?"

Yet yield he must, for fear that worse might befall him. He had chosen, or there had been chosen for him, the Bishop of Coutances as the patron under whose auspices he was to enter upon the life of a courtier; he had in fact just been introduced to the palace and household of this "magnate," when circumstances occurred which, as was thought at the time, merely deferred until a future occasion the execution of his uncle’s designs, but which in reality, as it turned out, altogether frustrated them. In his contemporaneous correspondence the circumstances in question are somewhat vaguely designated as the "storms of wars," but as the letter containing the expression is unfortunately without the date of the year, it is perhaps impossible to ascertain definitely the political or military events particularly referred to. Meanwhile Beza gladly welcomed any respite from the employment to which he had so lately deemed himself condemned.

"Thus has it come to pass," he gleefully wrote, "that I have returned to my former manner of life, in which, unless some greater force shall hinder, I shall assuredly grow old. And I feel confident that at length I shall leave to posterity the proof that Beza did not live utterly idle, albeit he lived in the greatest leisure."

The last words, written in the confidence of friendship, give us the clue to the employments and aspirations of this somewhat obscure period of Beza’s life. His was no trifler’s existence. If he daily spent some hours in the company of a
select number of wits of his own age, and if he may occasionally have seemed to have no higher aim than by intercourse with them to strive to give a keener edge to his incisive speech, by far the greater part of his time was devoted to more serious efforts. Year by year, partly alone, partly with the help of the numerous excellent teachers whom he had at command, he was making progress in the departments of study upon which he had already entered, and entering fields previously unexplored. All this was to be no less serviceable to him in that future of which he could as yet have had scarcely even a suspicion, than the literary acumen which attrition with men of similar tastes and gifts was conferring upon him. There seem to have been some fruits early in his residence at Paris of the legal studies imposed upon him by his father, or undertaken from a sense of compunction at seeming to pay little or no respect to that father’s wishes. A casual reference made in the postscript of one of his letters, to a treatise on the Salic Law, that might be expected to issue from the press within a few months, and “under his auspices,” points apparently to some results of attention given to the theory of law, which was less repugnant to him than its practice. Be that as it may, there is, so far as I know, no evidence that the book or booklet in question ever actually appeared. In the same letter the writer speaks of devoting hours to the reading of Hebrew. Occasionally, too, he varied his work by perfecting his acquaintance with mathematics. To Latin and Greek he undoubtedly still gave great attention. If the foundations of an accurate knowledge of the latter tongue had been well laid while he was under the instruction of Wolmar, there must have been built up during the years of private study at Paris that superstructure of close and intimate familiarity with the idiom of the language which stood him in good stead both at Lausanne and at Geneva. It was evidently a long course of preliminary reading that qualified him for the discharge of the duties of professor of Greek in the college of Lausanne—a position which he accepted soon after his expatriation, and which he retained for the next nine or ten years—as well as for his work of Biblical interpretation.

In the enjoyment of means and of leisure, now at length secured, to gratify to the full his literary and studious tastes, it might have seemed that Beza must possess everything essential to his happiness. It was not so. I have already referred to the unrest of his soul from the moment of his return to Paris, and to the distinct purpose which he had soon formed to break loose in due time from everything detaining him in a land where he could not profess the doctrines with which he had become imbued from association with Wolmar—the purpose to direct his steps to a country in which liberty of conscience reigned, and where, in company with his old preceptor, he might live an ideal existence. This purpose he never renounced. Neither, on the other hand, did the allurements by which he was surrounded lose their force. Between the higher and the lower motives, the struggle in Beza’s soul was severe and protracted. I pass on to the events in which the conflict issued.

Of these the first was his secret marriage.
Beza had not taken the first step toward becoming a priest. He had never assumed the vows that condemn to a life of celibacy. Yet, in accordance with an abuse against which complaints had certainly been numerous enough, but which no complaints had been potent enough to eradicate, he was enjoying, although a layman, the income of more than one ecclesiastical foundation. He was flattered by the hope of obtaining still greater resources of the same kind in future. There were many other favorites of fortune that found themselves in a similar situation. The world was so used to the sight of laymen fattening upon the Church’s pastures, that the unthinking were not even greatly startled when the intruder was the most unfit of men for the discharge of sacred functions, possibly as unblushing in the immorality of his life as the libertine Abbé de Brantôme of a later period. They were shocked only when the lay abbot married and shut himself off from the possibility of ever becoming a clergyman.

Claudine Desnoz was the name of the young woman upon whom Beza’s choice fell. She was of a reputable family, but, as Beza himself admits, of a family inferior in station to his own. In view of the fact that her husband, who was by no means indifferent to matters of the kind, has nothing to say of her gentle birth, we may well dismiss as pure fictions such statements as that she was the daughter of an advocate of Paris, or the sister of a bishop of Grenoble. Be this, however, as it may, the marriage took place apparently at some time in the year 1544, and the witnesses were two of Beza’s most intimate and honorable friends, both of them jurists of distinction, Laurent de Normandy and Jean Crespin. Of the latter I shall have more to say presently. As to the marriage itself, much as the secrecy with which it was entered into must be condemned, the union, duly ratified as it was four years later in a public ceremonial, proved a harmonious and congenial one that lasted until the death of Claudine.

In later times Beza proved himself no irresolute man. At the present time, whether it should be said that the desirability of earthly possessions and ease and leisure to pursue his studies with an assiduity that had won him among his companions the playful appellation of "the new philosopher," loomed up before his eyes in exaggerated proportions, or that the far more exceeding value of the favor of God and of a clear conscience void of offense with Him and with men had not yet become to him a living reality, he long remained in a pitiable condition of uncertainty, not so much respecting what he ought to do as respecting what he could bring himself to do. Nothing short of a miracle seemed necessary to draw him out of the mire in which, to use his own expression, he found himself caught, unable to come to a definite conclusion— with all his relations prompting him to adopt some certain course of life from which he might acquire wealth and distinction, and his kindly uncle offering him the prospect of still greater property, while, on the other hand, conscience pointed him in a different direction and his wife pressed him again and again to execute his long-deferred purpose to acknowledge her before the world.
That miracle was wrought in his conversion, which dates from the latter part of
the year 1548.

Before speaking of this turning-point in his life, it is appropriate that I should
speak of the publication, early in the same year, of the collection of his poems
which came to be styled his *Juvenilia*. These celebrated pieces belong
altogether to his youth, that is, to the period in which he was in no sense a
Reformer, but, instead, a brilliant and ambitious devotee of belles-lettres.
Though many of them had circulated freely among the author's friends and
admirers, they had never been given to the public through the press.

It was evidently not without some scarcely concealed satisfaction at the
neatness of his work, that Beza dedicated these first-fruits of his poetical
efforts to his old preceptor Melchior Wolmar. Beza was twenty-eight or twenty-
nine years of age. Neither the young man who dedicated, nor the old man who
accepted the dedication with obvious delight, saw anything amiss in these
poems.

Twelve years more elapsed, and Beza, now become a man of forty, an avowed
Protestant and a zealous Reformer, had occasion to dedicate to his former
teacher a second volume of an entirely different character, which he entitled a
*Confession of the Christian Faith*. He assigned two motives for so doing. The
one was that he might return to Wolmar some harvest from the field which
Wolmar had sown; the other, that he might have the opportunity of offering his
master a book infinitely better and more holy than the poems which, it seems,
Wolmar had urged him to republish. To this statement he appended a few
pathetic words:

"As respects those poems, who is there that either has condemned
them more than I, their unhappy author, or that detests them
more than I do today? Would, therefore, that they might at length
be buried in perpetual oblivion. And may the Lord grant that,
since it is impossible that what has been done should be undone,
the persons who shall read writings of mine far different from
those poems may rather congratulate me upon the greatness of
God's goodness to me, than accuse him who voluntarily makes
confession and deprecates the fault of his youth."

These are the brave and honest words of a man true to his convictions and
more anxious to set himself right at the bar of his own conscience than to
forestall the adverse judgment of others. For, in point of fact, learned and
cultured men, and none more than the adherents of the other faith, applauded
the sprightliness of his verses and never thought of condemning them as
wanton, certainly never gave expression to such a thought. Thus the grave and
learned President Étienne Pasquier, in his great work on *The Researches of
France*, remarked that "Beza in his youth composed divers French and Latin
poems which were very favorably received throughout all France, and particularly his Latin epigrams, wherein he celebrated his mistress under the name of Candida." "In 1548" he adds, when he changed his religion, he made a show of despising them.

Literary productions upon which their author himself sets a low estimate have in ordinary cases a fair chance of being forgotten by others naturally less interested in preserving them. The odium theologicum of which Beza was the object may safely be credited with being the cause of the survival and celebrity of the Juvenilia. In fact, the outrageous misrepresentation of enemies, determined to discover, in what was most innocent, untold depths of depravity, compelled the very author who had vainly sought to consign them to forgetfulness, himself to bring them out again in subsequent editions, so that he might be able to show to the world what were in reality these lighter poems so maligned by men who had a manifest purpose in their inventions. The contrast between the Juvenilia and the sacred drama of Abraham Sacrifiant, or the metrical translation of the Psalms of David, might be unedifying enough; but, at least, the republication was sufficient to cast to the winds those foul calumnies that breed most readily in darkness and ignorance.

What, then, were these much-abused epigrams? Just such poems as a very young man—almost all of them were written before Beza’s twentieth year, although they were published some years later—might write, especially if that young man were possessed of a certain skill in composing verses and were much encouraged thereto by the applause that welcomed his first efforts—most of all if, wielding a facile pen, he were uncommonly learned for his age in classical literature, admiring Virgil, adoring Ovid, and conscious of no higher ambition, so far as style was concerned, than to spend his hours of relaxation in imitating and endeavoring to equal or, if possible, excel the wonderful elegance of Catullus. It was the fashion of the age to indulge in a freedom of language which offends a more modern sense of propriety, but by no means proves that the life of the writer was impure. Indeed, the poet indignantly protests against such an inference and confidently appeals to the testimony of those that knew him intimately to establish the contrary.

"There are among my poems," he wrote, "a few that are written in somewhat too free a tone, that is, in imitation of Catullus and Ovid; but I had not the slightest fear at that time, nor do I now fear, lest those that knew me as I was should gauge my morals by those playful inventions of my imagination."

On this score nothing more need be said than that not many of the Juvenilia are open to the charge of indelicacy, while many are above reproach, none more charming and innocent than the celebrated poem addressed to a fictitious Audebert, a companion and equal in years, wherein the rival claims of friendship and love are poetically set forth. It has been the misfortune of Beza, as it is a striking illustration of the perverse imaginations of those who will see evil in everything on which they cast their jaundiced eyes, that this most graceful and delightful of lyrics has been furiously attacked as if it were a shameless avowal of unnatural passion.
In sum, it may be safely said that poems which were read and admired by the cultured throughout France would never have met with censure or provoked controversy, had it not been that their author, subsequently to their publication and many years later than their composition, was converted to other and worthier views of life and its great objects. They belong to a stage of Beza’s life with which he had completely broken when, under the sway of strong religious convictions, he turned his steps toward Switzerland, and so far from seeking for a life of quiet and self-indulgence, deliberately renounced a future of ease for the prospect of comparative poverty, of conflict, and of peril.

CHAPTER III
Conversion of Beza
Departure from France
Call to Lausanne
"Abraham’s Sacrifice"
1548–1550

The conversion of Theodore Beza occurred a few months after the publication of the *Juvenilia* and in connection with an illness of so serious a nature that his life was for a time in doubt. Never had man greater reason to regard an apparent calamity as a blessing in disguise. He rose from the bed upon which disease had cast him with views and aims totally different from those which he had cherished until then. The same letter that has enabled us to trace to some extent his intellectual development, raises for a moment the veil that hides the innermost spiritual experiences of the man from the scrutiny of his fellow. Hours of enforced idleness, as well as of extreme peril and suffering, were the condition of his gaining the first glimpse of his true character in God’s sight. Past and present alike seemed to arise and accuse him, and their testimony could not be silenced or refuted. Turn his eyes which way he would, he found confronting him the judgment throne of an offended Deity. The agony was sharp and protracted. It was mercifully succeeded by a view of the pardon extended to him no less distinct and beyond the realm of doubt. Abhorrence of his sins was followed by petitions for forgiveness, and these by a full consecration of his powers to the service of his Savior. From extreme darkness verging upon despair, he emerged into a brilliant and enduring light.

Clearness of religious conviction led to decided and instantaneous action. Old objections and obstacles vanished or were brushed aside. Theodore Beza once thoroughly convinced of duty was not the man to postpone action, or, in the apostle’s words, to be disobedient to the heavenly vision. He did not even wait until he was fully restored to health, but while still far from strong carried into effect the resolution which he had formed of betaking himself to a land where he could freely make profession of his religious belief. He gathered together such of his property as he could carry with him, and, not announcing his purpose to any of his friends or relatives, made his way, accompanied by his
wife, and under the assumed name, it is said, of Thibaud de May, to the city of Geneva. He reached it on the 24th of October, 1548.

Such in brief is Beza’s account of the decisive step of his life—no precipitate and enforced flight of a villain unwhipped of justice, a flight rendered necessary by flagitious crimes committed (as malignant and mendacious calumniators subsequently and down to our times have dared to assert with unblushing effrontery), but the honorable withdrawal of an honest man from a country with which were bound up all his prospects of preferment and of worldly prosperity, that in a foreign land he might seek and obtain, along possibly with the discomforts of poverty, the freedom to worship God in accordance with the dictates of his conscience. One of his first acts on reaching Geneva was to procure the public and solemn recognition of his marriage with Claudine Desnoz.

His future was all unknown to him. He possessed no handicraft by means of which the emigrant may hope, as soon as he has gained a slight footing in a foreign land, to secure subsistence. Of learned and unpractical scholars there was an abundance both in Switzerland and in Germany. Many of these were penniless and a burden upon their hosts. We have no reason to believe that this was the case with Theodore Beza, who in his quiet removal from his native land may well be supposed to have been able to bring with him all the funds necessary to meet the temporary needs at least of himself and his wife. But his open renunciation of the Roman Catholic Church cut off every channel of supply that had flowed so freely hitherto, save such as came from the paternal estates, and the anger of father, uncle, and other kinsmen might well be expected to interrupt, if not permanently end, all expectations from this quarter. Under these circumstances, Beza’s thoughts at first turned to a pursuit which, although not strictly a learned profession, had been taken up by some of the most eminent scholars of the day. I refer to the printing of books, which, in the hands of the Aldi at Venice and the Étienne’s or Stephen’s of his own native land, had attained, or was soon to attain, the distinction of ranking with the fine arts. Jean Crespin, a native of Arras, came to Geneva at the same time with Beza. They were men of about the same age. Both had studied law, and both had been affected by the “new doctrines,” as they were called. Crespin, in particular, had witnessed in the city of Paris, where he was admitted as an advocate of the court of Parliament, the triumphant death of at least one Protestant martyr. The constancy of Claude Le Peintre, a goldsmith, burnt alive on the Place Maubert in 1540, seems to have led Crespin to the distinct espousal of the tenets of the Reformed Churches. Similarity of views brought the young men together, and they naturally conceived the idea of establishing at Geneva, on the very frontiers of France, a great printing establishment from which books and publications of various kinds in favor of the Gospel might be issued and circulated far and near throughout the kingdom. The project as a joint enterprise finally fell through, for there was in store for Beza a career of usefulness of quite a different character and better suited to his resplendent abilities. But Jean Crespin did not abandon his purpose. His plans were realized within a few years so successfully that not only did his presses gain a celebrity
for the beauty of their products only second to the fame of the presses of the 
great printers I have named, but became instrumental in giving a great impulse 
to the doctrines of the Reformation.
His own personal activity as an author did good service in his great 
martyrology, which, in successive editions and under different titles, 
chronicled "the Acts and Monuments of the martyrs who from Wycliffe and Huss 
until this our age have steadfastly sealed the truth of the Gospel with their 
blood in Germany, France, England, Flanders, Italy, and Spain itself." It was a 
great historical and biographical work, not indeed free from occasional errors— 
errors that may well be excused, in view of the difficulty and dangers 
encountered in the collection of so great a number of particular facts from 
widely different sources and even from well-guarded prisons and places of 
execution—but a work, nevertheless, for the most part, wonderfully exact and 
trustworthy, with which Crespin is to be congratulated for having linked his 
name for all time.
But while it may not have been very long before Beza definitely renounced the 
career to which Crespin would gladly have welcomed him, it did not at once 
appear to what department of activity a man of such marked abilities should 
devote himself. For manifold were the advantages he possessed. His personal 
appearance was striking. He was of good stature and well proportioned. His 
countenance was very pleasing. Refinement was stamped upon his features. His 
whole bearing was that of a man accustomed to the best society. His manners 
at once conciliated the favor of the great and found him friends among the 
gentle sex. This is the testimony both of the inimical historian of The Origin, 
Progress, and Ruin of the Heresies of Our Time, Florimond de Ræmond, and of 
the Jesuit Maimbourg. The latter writer furthermore volunteers the statement 
that it was undeniable that Beza's intellect was of a very high order, being 
keen, ready, acute, sprightly, and bright, for he had taken pains to cultivate it 
by the study of belles-lettres and particularly of poetry, wherein he excelled 
both in French and in Latin. To which very handsome tribute the critic 
somewhat grudgingly adds a concession that Beza knew a little philosophy and 
jurisprudence, learned in the schools of Orleans. Allowance being made in the 
last sentence for the strong prejudice of the partisan historian, the portrait 
may be accepted as sufficiently accurate, as it is unexpectedly favorable. 
That Theodore Beza was welcomed with delight by John Calvin need scarcely 
be said. The great Reformer, now at the height of his renown and usefulness, 
had never forgotten the promising lad, ten years his junior, who had studied 
under the same teacher and of whose singular brilliancy that teacher had never 
tired of making mention. And now that, after a long period of hesitation, Beza, 
by a single bold step, had broken with the past and, sacrificing rank, ease, and 
every worldly consideration, had thrown himself in for life or for death with 
the reformatory movement to which Calvin had devoted his own magnificent 
powers, the joy and the thankfulness to Heaven with which the latter 
welcomed the new recruit were mingled with lively curiosity respecting the 
particular work which Providence had reserved for him to accomplish.
As I have said, that work did not at once disclose itself to view. The enfeebled condition of Beza, but lately risen from a very critical illness, did not incline him to great haste in the search. Thus it was that after a few months’ stay in Geneva he fulfilled what had for years been a strong wish of his heart, and made a journey to southern Germany to see his old preceptor, Melchior Wolmar, at Tübingen. Pupil and teacher seem not to have met since Wolmar made Beza a brief visit, early in the latter’s stay at Paris, when the German was sent on a diplomatic errand by the Duke of Würtemberg to the French court. That was ten years ago, but the intensity of the mutual love of Wolmar and Beza had suffered no abatement. The greetings were as kind and affectionate as could be imagined. Yet Beza made no attempt to carry out his early dream of study and leisure in Wolmar’s neighborhood. It must be supposed that scholarly idleness had lost its charm for a man who had now acquired a new earnestness of purpose, and, in the troubled state of Germany at the moment, Beza saw no opportunities beyond the Rhine to further the work to which he had devoted his life.

On his way back to Geneva, Beza naturally passed through Lausanne, the most important place in what at the present time constitutes the Canton of Vaud, one of the members of the Helvetic Union. At Lausanne he met Pierre Viret, himself a native of Orbe in this district, who after having played an important part in the reformation of Geneva, had of late been laboring for the same cause in his native region. Viret recognized in Theodore Beza the very man whom he needed as a colleague in the "Académie," or University, recently established at Lausanne, and he begged him to accept a chair in this institution.

The Pays de Vaud, as it was styled, had long been a part of the dominions of the Duke of Savoy. Its conquest by the Bernese was a sequence of the campaign of 1536, in the course of which the great Swiss Canton of Bern sent an army of 6,000 men, under the celebrated Naegeli, to the relief of Geneva. Not content with having accomplished the chief object of their undertaking, and encouraged by the absence of the opposition which they had expected to meet, the Bernese proceeded to annex not only the district of Chablais, on the southern side of Lake Leman, but the district of Gex, and the greater part of that of Vaud, on the western and northern shores. At first the rich bishopric of the "imperial" city of Lausanne was exempted from seizure. But the prize was too tempting. In a second incursion, made only two months later in the same year, the episcopal domain also was incorporated in the possessions of the Canton of Bern.

For his misfortune the Bishop of Lausanne, Sebastian de Montfaucon, had only himself to blame. He had been so imprudent as to write from the town of Fribourg, where he had taken refuge, a letter inciting the people of his diocese to take up arms against the Bernese. This was early in 1536. At once the conquerors set about consolidating their power by the abolition of the three special "estates" of Lausanne, as well as of the "estates" by which Vaud was governed, and by the substitution of a government administered through eight bailiffs set up at as many places in the district. A solemn conference, or
colloquy, was called by the Lords of Bern and met, in October, in the cathedral of Lausanne during a number of successive days. Here were discussed ten theses drawn up by the Reformer William Farel. Six commissioners of Bern and of Vaud were present to hear the debate. Four presidents superintended the sessions. Four notaries kept an official record of the proceedings, and read, as the occasion arose, any chapter of Holy Scripture that might be called for. The discussion covered in general the whole field of controversy between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. It was carried on with vigor, but with more hopefulness by the Reformers—Farel, Viret, Calvin, and others—than by their opponents. As the Roman Catholics entered upon the struggle reluctantly, their first step was to submit a protest on the part of the chapter of the cathedral itself against any disputation. God is not, said they, the author of dissension but of peace, and discussion may be pernicious to the particular church, which even though gathered in Christ's name is liable to fall into error. When this protest and other protests of a like kind were disregarded, the opposition instituted was somewhat wanting in courage, as though the result of the matter were a foregone conclusion. Once, indeed, Jean Michodus, "the Reverend of Vevey," grew confident when replying to the Protestant view of the impossibility of justification by works as set forth by Saint Paul, and turned upon one of the champions of the other side, Caroli—formerly a Roman Catholic doctor of the Sorbonne, now a professed Protestant, although later he returned to his original faith. "I have heard many good doctors at Paris," said he, "but they did not, like you, explain the third chapter of Romans as referring to the deeds of the law, but Only to the ceremonies. And you yourself, Monsieur our master Caroli, I have heard you explain this passage otherwise than as you expound it now." To which Caroli could only reply, "That I expounded this passage as you assert, I confess. I was then of the number of the persons of whom Saint Peter speaks, those ignorant men that wrest the Holy Scriptures, because they do not understand them. So I acted, and could not satisfy my own conscience. Then I set myself to reading the Scriptures and comparing passage with passage, and praying God to grant me a true intelligence. And God has opened my understanding. He has brought me to the true knowledge of His gospel, as you see. Do not therefore marvel if I have changed, but rather do as I have done; forsake every doctrine not taken from the Scriptures, and hold by them alone."

There was a dramatic episode at one point when the ground of justification was under discussion. Farel called for the reading of the latter part of Romans 3, and exclaimed, "You see how that it is freely, without desert, without the deeds of the law, that a man is justified!" Hereupon the Roman Catholic disputant, a physician, Dr. Blancherose, burst out, "I do not believe that it is so." At once a Bible was brought and laid before him, not a printed volume of modern times, whose authority might be questioned, but an old manuscript Bible written on parchment, taken from the library of the Franciscan convent, and he was bidden to read the passage for himself. There to his amazement were the words themselves, and, though scarcely believing the evidence of his senses, he cried out, "It is true! A man is justified by faith as the holy Apostle
says! We are not saved by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy, God saved us!"
The commissioners had no judicial powers. They could only report the proceedings of the colloquy to the Lords of Bern. The answer of the latter was soon forthcoming. The conference ended on Sunday, the eighth of October; on Thursday, the 19th, or only eleven days later, the decree was issued. By virtue of their duty, not only to govern their subjects in equity and justice, but "to employ all diligence and force that these subjects may live according to God in true and lively faith which produces good works," the Bernese proclaimed their decision "to cast down all idolatries, papal ceremonies, traditions, and ordinances of men not conformable to the Word of God." In the execution of this purpose, they ordered all their bailiffs and subordinate officers to make a personal visitation, immediately upon the receipt of these letters, and command all priests, deans, canons, and other churchmen so called at once to desist from all "papistical ceremonies, sacrifices, offices, institutions, and traditions," as they desired to avoid the displeasure of the government. They especially recommended them without delay to overthrow all images, idols, and altars, whether in church or monastery, doing all this without disorder or tumult. And they bade all these and their other subjects to betake themselves, for the purpose of hearing the Word of God, to the nearest places in which preachers had already been appointed or should hereafter be appointed, and to give them a favorable audience. As to the further dispositions respecting the so-called churchmen and church property, the latter gave promise, with God’s help, of "so reasonable and holy a reformation that God and the world shall be well pleased."

Lausanne had not waited for the receipt of the decision of Bern. No sooner was the conference concluded, than the people, anticipating the forthcoming decree, began in an unauthorized fashion the work of destruction and spoliation. The beautiful cathedral of Nôtre Dame was the first victim of their iconoclastic zeal, and a church whose erection is traced back to the early part of the 13th century still bears testimony to the zeal of men who were resolved to remove every trace of a superstitious worship. Here, as elsewhere throughout Vaud, there was no lack of opposition; but the overwhelming influence of the great Canton of Bern everywhere carried the day, and the whole district was ultimately brought over to a profession of the Reformed doctrines.

The immense store of treasures which the cathedral contained was dispersed. A large part found its way to Bern. But fortunately the government of this sagacious republic saw the propriety of applying no inconsiderable portion of the ecclesiastical property that fell into its hands to the promotion of the higher intellectual interests of the region itself. Whether from disinterested motives, or from the desire to attach their new subjects to them by self-interest, the Lords of Bern gave to the communes, or sold to them at an insignificant price, lands heretofore belonging to churches and monastic foundations, and we are told that the proceeds of this property served to form
those school and eleemosynary funds which the Vaudois townships still possess at the present day.

A fragment of the treasures, or of the endowment of the cathedral of Lausanne, was applied to the establishment of the "Académie." The Bernese in the capacity of lords paramount had, in accordance with the prevalent ideas of the rights and duties of the civil government, undertaken to change the religion of the Pays de Vaud. They had taken away a religion that appealed to the senses and to the imagination of the people, and substituted for it a religion which presupposed a knowledge of the Word of God; but they had found themselves utterly unable to supply the teachers or preachers of that Word whom every place, even to the smallest village, absolutely required in order to prevent the inhabitants from lapsing into a state of still more abject ignorance than had hitherto prevailed. It was primarily for the purpose of training men for the pastoral office, and not for that of preparing men for professional or public life, that the "Académie" was founded.

Beza did not at once undertake the duties which he was invited to assume, but returned to Geneva and consulted with his brethren and especially with John Calvin. The call was altogether unexpected, and Beza was at first disposed to decline it. Doubtless, as Professor Baum suggests, the state of his health, not yet altogether restored, was one chief reason for this. But it would appear from the sequel that when he thought of deciding to go to Lausanne, the matter of the recent publication of his unfortunate *Juvenilia* weighed much in his mind against such a step. But Viret wrote to Calvin, and the latter with other friends endeavored to remove Beza's scruples. The authorities of the Canton of Bern, adopting the action of the Academy of Lausanne, extended a formal but flattering invitation. To this Beza felt himself no longer at liberty to turn a deaf ear. It is characteristic of the man, however, and the circumstance throws a bright light upon the sincerity of his character and the thoroughness of his conversion, that before he consented to be inducted into the office of a teacher of sacred as well as secular learning to whom the interests of the young were entrusted, he was foremost in calling the attention of the ecclesiastical council which, as the manner of the Reformed Churches was, met to inquire into his past life and into his doctrinal belief, to the great error of his youth.

"Of my own accord," he writes at a later time, "I made mention of the Epigrams I had published, lest perchance the matter might be to the damage of the Church, because there were among them some of an amatory character and certainly now and then written with too much license, that is, in imitation of the ancient poets. It pleased the assembly of the brethren that nevertheless I should assume that function in the Church, in the first place because it seemed plainly unjust that in the case of a person who had passed over to Christ from the Papal religion, just as from paganism, there should be imputed to him the error in question in a life otherwise honorable and blameless, and in the second place, because I voluntarily pledged myself to make it publicly known to all men how greatly that inconsiderate act of mine displeased me."
On assuming his office, Beza took an oath declaring his hearty approval of all the decrees of the disputation held at Bern in 1528 respecting the Christian religion, and promised, on pain of God’s anger, to conform his life and teaching thereto. Thus began the course of a brilliant and fruitful professorship extending over a period of nine years (1549–1558). The work was congenial. All his past studies had prepared Theodore Beza for a thorough discharge of its duties. Greek was his favorite tongue. Its direct bearing upon the preparation for the Christian ministry of the youth that were drawn to his classroom by the reputation of his learning, procured him peculiar gratification. There had been a time when secular learning pursued for its own sake satisfied his highest aspirations; now he could not be happy without the conviction that, in the professor’s chair, he was rendering no less important a service to the advancement of religion than he would have rendered in the pulpit devoting his entire time to the work of a popular preacher. Thus it was that his labor became from the very start a labor of love. Apart from the inspiration created by contact with bright minds among his pupils, there was also the friendly intercourse with his eminent colleagues and the growing intimacy with scholars and theologians eminent for their attainments residing in neighboring cities, men already well known to him by reputation, but now beginning to be familiar to him through personal relations or by correspondence—no small compensation to his mind for the losses he had sustained in forsaking home and native land—men like Bullinger, Musculus, and Haller, not to speak of Calvin himself and Viret. We should have known, even had not Beza himself expressly told us, that it was this thought and the analogy of the patriarch who, at the bidding of Jehovah, left the land of his nativity not knowing whither he went, that chiefly influenced Beza in the choice of the subject of the first poetical production that he brought out after his conversion. He had not been quite a year at Lausanne when he gave to the world a sacred tragedy, under the title of Abraham’s Sacrifice. In the preface he introduced it with these words (dated Lausanne, October 1, 1550): "I admit that by nature I have always delighted in poetry, and I cannot yet repent of it; but much do I regret to have employed the slender gifts with which God has endowed me in this regard, upon things of which the mere recollection at present makes me blush. I have therefore given myself to such matters as are more holy, hoping to continue therein hereafter."

The drama was written originally for the use of the students, and was first performed by them in one of the halls of the former "officiality," or seat of the judge representing the late Bishop of Lausanne in the trial of ecclesiastical cases. So favorable was its reception by the public, that it was repeatedly brought on the boards. From Lausanne it passed to other places, not only in Switzerland, but in France, where it was played with great applause in many cities. It was also translated into foreign tongues. The famous President Étienne Pasquier, while he is certainly mistaken in the date and occasion to which he ascribes the work, is a witness whose testimony cannot be challenged to the impression it made upon himself: "Theodore Beza, a fine poet, both Latin and French, composed, on the accession of King Henry
[the Second], the Sacrifice of Abraham in French verse, so well portrayed to
the life, that, as I read it in former days, tears flowed from my eyes." The most
pathetic passage is naturally that which culminates in the last dialogue
between the patriarch and his son as the latter is about to be sacrificed. A
modern French critic of high standing may here be allowed to speak, especially
as he institutes a favorable comparison between Beza's work and that of the
great Racine himself, which might be esteemed presumptuous if instituted by a
foreigner. In analyzing the latter part of the drama, A. Sayous, in his Études
Littéraires, observes upon the passage where Abraham turns to immolate Isaac,
that "Here begins a scene that amply justifies Pasquier's tears. It is conducted
with singular art. The emotion grows from the beginning to the end—the
dénouement naturally suspended and the father's anguish prolonged by the
young son's questions, the tears of Isaac, his childish prayer, his thought of his
mother, and his artless resignation—all this is of a truthfulness that surpasses in
pathos the scenes in the French Iphigénie, between Agamemnon and his
dughter." In which bold advocacy of the composition of the French Reformer,
the acute critic fortifies himself by citing the German poet Chamisso "who
pushed his admiration so far as to compare the dialogue between Isaac and
Abraham to the most divine productions of the Greeks."

CHAPTER IV

Treatise on the Punishment of Heretics

With little pleasure we turn from the first of the poetical compositions written
after Theodore Beza's conversion, to the first of his graver and more important
writings in prose.

Abundant attention was given in a previous chapter to the youthful error of
Beza into which he fell before he broke with his old thoughts and purposes in
life, an error at a later time not merely deplored, but heartily repented of,
candidly confessed, and publicly condemned by him to the end of his days. I
must now speak of an act of his more mature life which our later age must
regard as most reprehensible, an act for which not only did he never express
repentance, but which he continued to justify as proper and righteous
throughout a full half-century, or to the very time of his death, with an
unshaken conviction that he was in the right. I refer to his public advocacy of
the tenet, then held by the vast majority of educated and religious men, but
now as universally repudiated, that heretics, and especially outrageous
blasphemers, may and ought to be punished by the civil authorities, even
capitally. In 1554 Beza first published his treatise "Concerning the duty of
punishing heretics by the civil magistrate: in answer to the medley of Martin
Bellius and the sect of the new Academics" ("De hæreticis a civili magistratu
puniendis, adversus Martini Bellii farraginem, et novorum Academicorum
sectam").

The controversy arose from the execution of the Spanish physician Michael
Servetus, burnt alive at the stake on the hill of Champel, at Geneva, on
October 27, 1553.
The main facts in the case are incontrovertible and are so familiar to all readers of history, that the barest reminder is necessary in this place. Having been apprehended at Vienne, near Lyons, Servetus escaped from the hands of the Roman Catholic judges by a secret flight, and in his absence was condemned, as a heretic and a fugitive, to a death by slow fire. But he had avoided one danger only to fall into another equally appalling. Discovered in the city of Geneva by John Calvin, and by him denounced to the civil authorities, he was again tried, found guilty, and sentenced to the same punishment. Calvin had long since forewarned Servetus of the peril he would incur by coming to Geneva. He now openly advocated his being put to death. It is the great blot upon his name. It is the one great error of his life which has given occasion to his enemies and the adversaries of the Protestant faith to blaspheme. And this is none the less true if we concede, as we must concede, that his fault was the fault of the great majority of his contemporaries, even the most pious and excellent, who with him held the pestilent doctrine that sins against God, transgressions against the first table of the law, may be punished, even capitally, by the civil magistrate. It is not that, according to the popular impression, John Calvin burned Servetus; for, in point of fact, so far from burning him, he opposed this mode of execution as cruel; but that he, with his intellect of the highest order and with a heart which we know otherwise to have been kindly, had not enfranchised himself from old and traditional theories of the province of the secular power, and as a Christian knew not what spirit he was of; indeed, that he seemed to have receded from his own tolerant expressions in the earliest edition of his Institutes, wherein he asserted, respecting our treatment of the excommunicated, that we should live with them as with Turks, Saracens, and other enemies of religion, striving, meanwhile, in every possible manner, whether by exhortation and by teaching, or by mildness and gentleness, or by prayers to God, to induce them to turn to the better way and the society of the faithful.

To cruelty in the putting of men out of the world, the men of the 16th century were, unfortunately, pretty well used. The estrapade, in the neighboring kingdom of France, had had its host of victims, and the estrapade, ingeniously contrived to prolong the tortures of the dying victim, by alternately lowering him into the flames and hoisting him out, in preparation for a new exposure to the fire, was, to say the least, quite as cruel as the ordinary execution at the stake. It was therefore not so much the cruelty of the means used to put Servetus to death, as the inconsistency of the Reformers in resorting to violence to suppress heresy, that shocked many contemporaries, as it shocks us.

Among those that entered a protest against the principle involved in the execution of Servetus, was a writer who signed himself Martin Bellius, but whose true name was suspected by Beza of being Sebastian Chasteillon, or Castalio. It was in answer to his treatise that Beza wrote. Castalio, if indeed it was he, had given to his small volume, now become extremely rare, the form of an inquiry into the question, "Whether heretics ought to be proceeded against, or persecuted, and, in general, how they should
be dealt with." It claimed to be a book "of the utmost necessity in this most
turbulent time," and was made up of a collection of the sentiments of the
learned in ancient and in modern times. To us, as we shall see presently, the
chief interest centers in the remarkable dedicatory letter which the author
prefixed to it. Castalio was a very erudite man, whose most noteworthy
production was a new translation of the Bible into the Latin language, the
result of the labors of ten years. In this he strove, while often making a slight
sacrifice of the literal form, to give to the Holy Scriptures a clearness and an
elegance of expression that would commend them to a wider circle of readers,
and enable them to supplant profane writings in the schools. It is no
impeachment of his good intentions, or, indeed, of his scholarship, to admit
that his Bible won no such place as was anticipated for it by its author. Yet
Castalio was no contemptible exegete. If the scholarly reader will take the
trouble to run through the pages of the lengthy treatise in which Beza reviews
some of the passages translated in his own Latin version of the New Testament,
and to compare them with the same passages as rendered by Castalio, he will
convince himself of this. For if he find Beza's judgment in the great majority of
cases to be more sound than that of his opponent, yet will he discover others
where the latter shows himself superior. Thus Beza's interpretation of Hebrews
5:7, in which he coincides with Calvin, is forced and undoubtedly erroneous,
while that of Castalio is endorsed by the latest and best of recent scholars, and
is certainly correct. As a teacher and successor of the famous Mathurin
Corderius, Castalio had worthily discharged the duties of his office in the
college of Geneva, until, in consequence of differences of opinion between
himself and his old friend Calvin, he voluntarily retired, and took up his abode
first at Lausanne and then at Basel. Here he spent the rest of his days in an
honorable but painful struggle against poverty. History has in our own times
vindicated his claim to be classed among the first and noblest assertors of the
rights of the human conscience. The letter to the Duke of Würtemberg which
"Martin Bellius" prefixed to his book on the treatment of heretics, and in which
he fully sets forth his view, has been justly styled "one of the purest
inspirations of the century," "one of those beneficent revelations that console
for the excesses of another age," in which "its author proclaims, with rare
eloquence, a truth so novel that it was to scandalize contemporaries—the right
of every man to believe freely and to assert his belief, remaining responsible
for his errors only before God." A few sentences describing the state of
Christendom may suffice to convey a notion of its spirit:

"Nobody can stand the slightest contradiction, and, although there
are today nearly as many opinions as there are men, there is not
one sect that does not condemn the others; hence exiles, chains,
fires, the gallows, and that lamentable array of punishments for
the simple crime of holding views displeasing to the powerful of
the earth, on questions in dispute for centuries and still
unsettled." "I have long been seeking to find out what a heretic is,
and here is what I have discovered: he is a man that thinks
otherwise than we do respecting religion." "I ask you, Who would wish to be a Christian, when he sees men that lay claim to that designation dragged to execution and treated more cruelly than we treat thieves and robbers? Who would not believe that Christ is a Moloch or some pitiless divinity demanding human sacrifices upon his altars?"

It is deplorable to see a man of the intellect of Beza, through the long course of a treatise which, in the edition of his collected theological works, fills not less than eighty-five closely printed folio pages, laboring to overthrow the arguments, for the most part clear and cogent, by means of which Castalio and others, doubtless otherwise his inferiors in dialectic skill, but on this question speaking from the fulness of conviction, had built up a structure which in our eyes at least is impregnable. It is not the only case in which, looking back from a considerable distance of time upon a past conflict of arms, we cannot divest ourselves of the conviction that there has been some frightful mistake, and that, from their character, from their antecedents, from the community of their great aims, the combatants ought to have been fighting, not as enemies, but as friends, in order to conserve and not to tear down, making a common front against common foes. Nor perhaps, is it an unwarrantable surmise that the strong personal friendship in which he held Calvin, and the ardent desire to vindicate the propriety of Calvin’s course, added unconsciously to the virulence with which Theodore Beza treated both the memory of Servetus himself and the man who called in question the justice of the punishment of Servetus. As for that heretic, he is to Beza, I may remark, "of all men that have hitherto lived the most impious and blasphemous," while the men who have condemned his trial as iniquitous, are for him the "emissaries of Satan."

Castalio and his allies, according to Beza, took three positions, each of which they defended by a variety of arguments. The first was that heretics ought not to be punished. The second was that heretics cannot justly be punished by the civil magistrate. The third was that heretics should not be punished with death. In order to prove that heretics should not be punished, they alleged that the matters in controversy are not as yet necessary to be known, nor can they be known save by the pure in heart, nor, if known, would they make men better; that they cannot be decided by God’s written Word. They argued from the examples of Judas Maccabeus and of Moses, from the authority of Gamaliel and Paul, from the Scriptural description of Charity, from the mildness and gentleness that should characterize all Christians. They asserted that no class of men are less to be feared than are heretics. They brought up instances of Christ’s clemency and benignity. They showed that the civil magistrate leaves unpunished much greater offenders—Turks, Jews, the proud, the avaricious, and the like. They boldly claimed that in point of fact no one can be compelled to believe, and therefore the attempt ought not to be made to compel men to believe. They proved that, if to be punished at all, the punishment of heretics does not belong to the civil magistrate, by our Lord’s own assertion that His kingdom is
not of this world, and by that of Saint Paul that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. Theologians, they said, can defend their doctrine, as do the professors of the other sciences, without a recourse to the magistrate. They used Christ and His apostles as examples. They did not forget to notice that the world is incompetent to judge of heresy, and that most princes abuse their authority in this as in other things. They fortified themselves with evidence drawn from the practice of the ancient Church.

As to the third head, they made effective use of the Parable of the Tares and the command to let the tares grow until the harvest. To permit the magistrate to kill the heretic is, said they, to permit him to exercise God’s prerogative of killing the soul. If heretics are to be slain, then the greater part of mankind should be put to death. Saint Paul bids us “avoid,” not “kill,” the heretic, and enjoins us, “Judge nothing before the time.” The fear of death makes men hypocrites. Many are the instances where such punishment has resulted very badly. By the Church under the Emperors the life of even such an arch-heretic as Arius was spared.

Such were, according to Beza, the arguments, often crudely stated, by which the forerunners of that tolerance which has become the law of our higher civilization undertook to establish principles which for us have become axiomatic truths. As historic evidence of human progress they deserve a place here. Nor would it be altogether uninteresting to note in detail the answers by which Beza attempts to break the force of the arguments of his opponents. But more important is it to examine the grounds on which he undertakes affirmatively to establish his own allegations.

"Heretics are to be punished." By heretics are not meant unbelievers, like Jews and Turks; nor men of blameworthy lives, like thieves and murderers; nor men that err from the truth through sheer simplicity and ignorance; but such persons as lay claim to be called the faithful, and, having been legitimately convicted from God’s Word, yet, following their own judgment, so pertinaciously and resolutely defend certain false doctrines against the Church, as not to hesitate by their factions to rend the Church’s peace and concord.

That such men ought to be punished, “no one—to my knowledge at least,” says Beza, ”has been found thus far to call in question, with the exception of these new Academics.” They are the greatest pests of the Church, true instruments of the devil for its destruction. The great part of men live far from exemplary lives, and are exposed to the violent assaults of the external foes of the Church; but so long as Doctrine remains safe, it appears as a brilliant constellation, a Cynosure by whose rays the pious may hold their course in the midst of the tempests. But when Doctrine itself is so corrupted that the devil lurks beneath it, what remains but that very many will embrace the devil in place of God? What but that very many, abandoning the hope of knowing the truth, will cast from them all religion, and, in fine, there will arise a horrible confusion in the Church of God? The evil is most grave when Satan has transformed himself and attacks the very vitals of the Church. Then the most prompt, the sharpest, of remedies is called for. So far from having no obligation to keep within bounds the spreading cancer, it may be necessary, in
order to save the rest of the body, for men to resort to cautery and knife. This is shown by the testimony of God’s Word. Not to speak of laws against blasphemers and false prophets, or of the acts of Moses, Asa, and Josiah, he that will not hear the Church, we are told, is to be regarded as a Gentile and a publican. If this was said of one who had committed a private wrong, much more ought it to hold good in the case of one who plucks up religious Doctrine itself. Thus did the apostles give over to Satan the heretics Philetus and Hymenæus. The conclusion of the whole matter is, therefore, that "those who think that heretics ought not to be punished, are attempting to introduce into the Church of God the most pestilent of all opinions, a view that conflicts with the doctrine first given by God the Father, subsequently renewed by Christ, and finally practiced by the universal orthodox Church by perpetual consent." "So that to me, indeed," observes Beza, "such men appear to act more absurdly than if they were to deny that sacrilegious persons or parricides ought to be punished, since heretics are infinitely worse than all such criminals. For which reason I shall not employ more words to prove this part of the question, which I am confident that all who are not altogether unjust judges will concede to me."

If heretics, then, should be punished, by whom may punishment be inflicted? "They are to be punished by the civil magistrate," Beza replies. The chief end of human society is that God may receive the honor which men are bound to pay Him. Now, the civil magistrate is the appointed guardian and governor of human society. He ought therefore in the administration of the affairs of human society to take the greatest account of this its chief end. It is his duty indeed, so far as in him lies, to see that no discord shall intervene in the dealings of the citizens with one another; but since it is not the ultimate and chief end of human society that men should live together in peace, but rather that, living in peace, they should worship God, it is the duty of the magistrate, even at the cost of external peace, if it cannot be done otherwise, to secure the true worship of God throughout the extent of his jurisdiction. So far is it from being his duty to abstain from exercising solicitude for religion. But he cannot conserve religion unless he coerces the pertinacious and factious despisers of religion by the sword (jure gladii). It remains, that whoever undertakes to divorce the magistrate from religion either does not know what is the true end of human society, or conceals what he knows perfectly well. The exterior discipline of the Church must be entrusted to one of the two—either to the civil magistrate or to the ministers of the Church—otherwise there is anarchy. It cannot be entrusted to the latter, else there would be a confused mingling of the power of the sword and that of the keys. It must therefore be entrusted to the former.

To illustrate: An Anabaptist is denounced. The body of presbyters assembles. He is summoned, but answers that he will have nothing to do with sinners. How does the Church act? If it acts according to God’s Word, when the unhappy man cannot be corrected in any other way, it delivers him unto Satan, that he may learn not to blaspheme. He, on the other hand, willingly and of his own accord, separates himself from the Church. Other fanatics follow him and so a
defection arises. Next some disciple of Servetus or Osiander will come forward. On being summoned, he will present himself, but it will be to judge the Church. Being cast out, he too will find disciples, and hence another faction. At length some "Academic," an excellent and modest man, forsooth, will make his appearance. When summoned, he will come and will state, by way of preamble, that he is eager to learn, and that he reads and hears everything. If you undertake to teach him, however, he prays that no violence be done to his conscience. If you insist and expose his impudence in corrupting the Scriptures, quite unlike the old philosophers of the Academy, who used to assert that the only thing they knew was that they knew nothing, he will tell you that no one knows anything but himself, and yet he will protest that he condemns nobody. If he can find any means of so doing, he, too, on being ejected from the Church, will set up another conventicle.

What shall the Church do in these circumstances? Cry unto the Lord, you say. Yes, and despite Satan’s vain opposition, the Church will be saved. But the hungry man cries and does not wait to be fed by an angel as was Elijah. The bread that is given him, or that he seeks to obtain by his industry, he regards as provided for him by God. Suppose that there be in the Church a Christian magistrate. Must he, who will not tolerate the dissensions of the citizens in profane matters, remain quiet when the great end for which human society was instituted is in question? Or, are those rather to whom the power of the sword is not entrusted, to be permitted to take upon them to exercise coercion? Who does not see that if the ministry thus intrude on the office of the magistrate, as the Roman Antichrist has done, there is the greatest danger of dire confusion as the result of commingling what God Himself has made distinct? Then, again, if the pastors, the shepherds of the flock, become transformed into wolves, what is to be done? You will say, Let a Council be convened and let it compel the submission of the unruly. But who shall summon the Council, especially the Universal Council, if not the civil magistrate? For the apostle’s prescription remains fixed: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers."

All this, says Beza, is confirmed by the authority of the Word of God—and here he cites a multitude of passages of the Old Testament and of the New—and by the opinions of the learned men of more modern times—Luther, Melanchthon, Bucer, and the like.

"Heretics are occasionally to be coerced even by capital punishment." The right of the magistrate to punish heretics being once proven, as Beza believed that he had proved it, he found little difficulty in the matter of the amount or severity of the punishment. The gravity of the crime of heresy is the first and chief ground for the infliction of the penalty of death. Inasmuch as the purpose of the law is to deter men from sin by the example of the punishment meted out to the wrong-doer, it is right that the judge should take great account of humanity. Thus it happens that one and the same offense is visited in the same region, now with a more severe, now with a milder sentence. But there are some crimes which, because of their enormity, are punished, among all races of men above the rank of savages, not indeed by one particular kind of
execution, but yet universally by some form of death. Such are parricide, voluntary homicide, sacrilege, blasphemy, impiety, or the violation of the publicly received religion, and other crimes of the sort. The case is clear enough as far as parricide, voluntary homicide, and sacrilege are concerned. It is surprising that anybody should entertain doubts respecting blasphemy and impiety, for nobody can deny that the magnitude of a crime is to be measured by the quality of the person against whom the offense is committed. Blasphemy and impiety, by which God’s majesty is attacked, are, therefore, so much the greater crimes, as His glory excels the dignity of men. Not that all blasphemers and impious persons indiscriminately are to be punished, but only those that act willingly and knowingly. Those that are without the Church must be left to God, who will judge them or in His own time enlighten them. But those that are within the Church must be admonished, first, privately, then before a greater number, possibly dealt with more sharply. But if to blasphemy and impiety there be added heresy, that is, a stubborn contempt of the Word of God and of Church discipline, and if a mad fury for corrupting others also has taken possession of them, what greater or more flagitious crime can arise among men? If, then, the mode of punishment ought to be regulated according to the greatness of the crime, it would seem that no adequate penalty can be found for this heinous enormity. A man who slays another, or commits any other crime against his neighbor, attacks the commonwealth, yet so as that some estimate can be made of the injury; but he that publicly opens the way for the corruption of God’s true worship, starts a conflagration which possibly shall scarcely be extinguished by the everlasting destruction of an infinite number of men. Whether to vindicate the glory of God or to preserve human society, therefore, there are no men whom the magistrate ought to punish more severely than heretical blasphemers.

Such, briefly stated, were Beza’s arguments. He found them to be in full accord with the precepts given by the Lord in the Old Testament to slay without pity the introducer of strange gods, the false prophet, the blasphemer, and the profaner of the Sabbath. Such commands, he said, have never been repealed. The Mosaic Law remains in force, with the exception of the ceremonial part. Of the other two divisions, the Decalogue or Moral Law, being an accurate transcript of the Natural Law, in which man’s conscience agrees with the unchanging will of God, cannot suffer destruction before nature itself perishes, but abides the certain rule of right and wrong for all nations and for all ages. The third division of the Mosaic Law, the judicial, is also of universal obligation, insofar as its precepts do not relate to one people alone, nor punish the violation of ceremonies now abolished by the Gospel, but embrace that code of general equity which should everywhere prevail. "In fine," said Beza, "I do not hesitate to affirm that those princes do their duty who adopt as examples for their own imitation these laws of God, by establishing, if not the very same kind of penalty, yet certainly the very same measure of penalty, and who, as against factious apostates, enact some form of capital punishment for horrible blasphemy and crime. For the majesty of God should be held to be of such moment among all men, through the
everlasting ages, that, whoever scoffs at it, because he scoffs at the very Author of life, most justly deserves to be put to death by violence. This I say, this I cry aloud, relying upon the truth of God and the testimony of conscience. Let my opponents shout until they are hoarse that we are savage, cruel, inhuman, bloodthirsty. Yet shall the truth conquer and show at length that those deserve these epithets who, in their preposterous or insincere zeal for clemency, suffer the wolves to fatten upon the life of the sheep rather than do their duty in vindicating the majesty of God."

Most deplorable indeed is the error of Beza, both because of the perverted view he presented of the duty of the Christian Church to appeal to the State for aid in its conflict with heresy, and because of the equally disastrous notion he entertained of the duty of the Christian ruler to punish, even with death, the crime of active dissent from the Church’s tenets. It is impossible for us, however, to deny the sincerity of the conviction, animating him and his fellow Reformers, that the indiscriminate admission into the Christian State of all shades of religious thought would at no distant period prove the State’s ruin. It was this conviction that rendered Beza blind to the consequences that were sure to follow, and that did follow, the approval of the principle enunciated by Saint Augustine that constraint may lawfully be employed to bring the recalcitrant into the Gospel fold. Not to speak of the justification of every form of cruelty found by the apologists for Romanism in the execution of Servetus by Protestants, the enforced conversions of the dragonnades, a hundred years later, seemed to have an anticipated vindication in the theories advanced by those Protestant writers who with strange inconsistency have striven to clear Calvin and Geneva from the imputation of persecution.

Yet Beza was honest in this. He was also honest in his relentless opposition to Castalio, the advocate of toleration—a man whom, in his Life of Calvin, written ten years later, he did not hesitate to style a "monster," who "by advising every man to believe what he chose, opened the door to all heresies and false doctrines." Meanwhile, no more singular fact could be instanced in this connection than that the Protestant martyrs, commonly known as the "Five from Geneva," while daily awaiting death at the hands of the executioner for their religious opinions, set the seal of their unequivocal approval on the sentence meted out to Michael Servetus. One of their number, Antoine Laborie, himself informs us of the fact, in a letter written shortly before his execution. On being reminded by one of his judges "that God distinctly commanded through Moses, that heretics should be most severely punished," the future martyr tells us, "I readily conceded that heretics ought certainly to be punished, and for an example I brought up that impure dog Servetus, upon whom was inflicted the last of punishments at Geneva, but I bade them be very cautious lest they should treat Christians and the sons of God as heretics."

CHAPTER V
Activity at Lausanne
1549–1558
The life of Beza at Lausanne was far from being uneventful. His health, which we have seen was precarious when he accepted his responsible post in the University of Lausanne, not without fear that it might tax his strength beyond his powers of endurance, was subjected to a severe strain by an attack of one of those strange epidemics which were in the 16th century confusedly spoken of as "the plague." This occurred in the summer of 1551, when Beza had been professor for less than two years. Within another twelve months, Providence laid new burdens upon him.

Five young men, all of them Frenchmen by birth, who had been studying both sacred and profane letters at his feet and at the feet of his colleagues for a longer or shorter space of time, conceived the brave project of suspending their studies that they might visit each his native region in the fatherland and enlighten their own friends and kindred in the truths which they had themselves embraced. It was a particularly hazardous venture to which they felt themselves individually called by God's Holy Spirit, for the French Protestants had fallen on exceptionally perilous times. The cruel Edict of Châteaubriand had lately been enacted. "A right of appeal to the highest courts has hitherto been granted, and still is granted, to persons guilty of poisoning, forgery, and robbery," wrote Calvin respecting the new law, "but this appeal is denied to Christians. They are condemned by the ordinary judges to be dragged straight to the flames, without any liberty of appeal." To forsake the hospitable halls of Lausanne and enter France, was to rush headlong into a fiery furnace. One of the five, Bernard Sequin by name, a refugee from the region of Limousin, had been an inmate of Beza's house, possibly earning his livelihood in part by service. Another had lived with Viret. But so far from dissuading them, their teachers and patrons applauded their manly and Christian resolve, and gave them letters commendatory of their character addressed to the faithful whom they might meet. However, the immediate issue did not correspond with their expectations. At Lyons, the very first place of importance which they entered, they were arrested, thrown into prison, examined on the capital charge of heresy, and condemned to death. It looked like a sheer waste of valuable lives which, with a little more prudence, might have been saved. In truth, however, there was no waste. Contrary to all anterior probability, under a law meant to expedite the execution of dissidents from the Church of Rome, they were kept in prison for over a year. During all that time, and long after, the letters that they wrote, containing minutes of the fearless words they uttered in the presence of everything that would naturally have terrified weaker men into silence or submission, thrilled the hearts of multitudes of men and women into whose hands they fell. It is safe to say that each of the five "scholars of Lausanne," writing from the noisome dungeon of Lyons, made many more converts than he would have gained had he been permitted to reach his home and preach without hindrance to his friends and neighbors.

The cause of the delay that rendered this activity possible is to be found in the influences which Beza and Viret were able to set in motion. The young men were the protégés and the recipients of the bounty of the powerful Canton of
Bern, owner of the Pays de Vaud, and founder of the University of Lausanne. To secure the intercession of the Lords of Bern with the French king, who was in need of Swiss troops, and to direct the efforts of Bern in every quarter that appeared to offer promise of success—this was the incessant study of Beza and his colleagues. They did not hesitate to go in person and plead before the magistracy the cause of their beloved pupils. If all their efforts and all the honest endeavors of the Bernese failed to accomplish the release of the captives, the fault must be laid at the door of Henry II and of Cardinal Tournon, rivals in the ignoble practice of violating assurances and promises solemnly given.

But labors such as this episode of martyr history imposed were far easier to be endured than the trial that awaited Beza two or three years later. I have spoken at the beginning of this work of the high position of the Reformer’s family, of the ambition of his father and uncles, and of the hopes which both father and uncles based upon the brilliant abilities of the possession of which Theodore had given proof. Even now, although four or five years had elapsed since his withdrawal from France, they could not bring themselves to renounce the dream of seeing him once more at Paris, well started upon a career that would add great luster and wealth to the already fortunate family. They were encouraged to make the attempt to reclaim him, by false rumors that his success abroad had by no means corresponded with his anticipations, and that they might more easily persuade him because he was a disappointed than.

First, therefore, Theodore’s elder brother John presented himself unannounced at Lausanne, fully prepared to offer sufficient inducements to bring the exile home. If Theodore was surprised by his unexpected but welcome advent, John was much more astonished to find Theodore occupying a position of honor and influence. Calumny had reported him to be living a dissolute life. He was said to be as much despised by others for his vices as he was himself wanting in self-respect. On the contrary, John found him a prominent citizen of Lausanne, a beloved colleague of scholars of high repute, a teacher enjoying the confidence of his pupils, the pride of a great school of learning. The result of the conference of the two brothers was such as might have been looked for. "You must before this have heard of the unexpected arrival of my elder brother," Beza wrote to Calvin. "He came to institute a struggle with me, in which, thank God! I was so successful that I gained access to the attainment of what I never ventured to hope." Unfortunately, we have no further information respecting the interview or its ulterior results. We only know that from Theodore Beza’s last will and testament it would appear that some of his nephews had been brought up in the principles of a pure Gospel.

The conflict was not over. John Beza at his departure stated to Theodore that, in case his persuasions proved ineffectual, his aged father would come in person to make a supreme effort. Accordingly, some months later, father and son met, on the confines of Franche-Comté. The Reformer looked forward with no little trepidation to an interview of which, if he did not fear the consequences, so far as his own steadfastness was concerned, he dreaded the results in the case of his infirm parent. He therefore wrote to Farel:
“I have received a fresh message respecting my father, which gives me great hope that either he will shortly come in person to us, or that I shall certainly meet him not far from here. Pray for me, I beg you, that I may not be compelled to be the minister of death to him through whom the Lord conferred this life upon me, and, in the next place, that against the impending temptation, the most severe of all, my strength may suffice that I may truly and earnestly ponder what the Lord says: ‘Every one that hath forsaken father or mother for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life.’ For, otherwise, who am I that I should resist these temptations? But I hope to be able to do both this and all things through Him who is in truth my Father.”

About the same time he wrote to Calvin respecting the same matter:

“A still harder struggle threatens me with my father, whom I am to meet in five days on the borders of the [Franche] Comté. May God give me grace, as I hope in Him, not only to withstand courageously his powerful assaults upon my heart, but to win him over, if possible, for my Master. More than all other threats I fear that look, the caressing prayers, the tears of the father, the old man. But I hope that here also, as so often heretofore, my compassionate God will graciously stand by me, that all may redound to His glory.”

This is all that has come down to us respecting the last, painful interview of Beza; but we infer that after a renewed but ineffectual presentation of all the motives which his father could marshal, both parent and child returned to their homes, doubly sorrowful because neither could hide it from himself that their conference had made the gulf of separation between them wider and final. It is not out of place here to draw attention to a feature of the life of Beza which it had in common with the lives of most, if not indeed of all the rest, of the Reformers, although perhaps to a higher degree than they. The work which they were originally summoned to undertake, and which they accepted under the impression that it was to occupy their undivided attention for the residue of their days, so far from proving to be their sole vocation, was only one, and often by no means the most important, part of their future activities. When, at William Farel’s solicitations, reinforced by his solemn and awful commination, John Calvin renounced his projected studies elsewhere, he supposed himself to be assuming charge of the reformation of the single city of Geneva. He little dreamed of the vast responsibilities, even “the care of all the churches,” that lay ready to be placed upon his shoulders, whether he wished to bear them or not. In like manner, Theodore Beza, a convalescent, distrustful of his strength to do even this work, accepted the congenial duties of a professorship of the Greek language in the University of Lausanne, little foreseeing, we must
suppose, that his chair would introduce him, naturally and by easy stages, to an incomparably wider sphere of usefulness; that, in point of fact, the university classroom was to serve merely as the vestibule of a grander structure; that from a teacher of youth it was to make of him a powerful advocate of the oppressed brethren of his own faith, at a later time the first recognized apologist before kings and princes of the principles for which the martyrs of the Reformed Churches of France had ineffectually striven to secure a hearing; and ultimately the honored and trusted Counsellor and Leader of French Protestantism. It was in the years now under consideration that Beza took the first steps in this direction. We have seen how the circumstance that he had been their teacher induced Beza to assume a prominent part in the efforts put forth to save the lives of beloved pupils, destined victims of religious intolerance. The skill he manifested and the consciousness to which he awoke—that his mental characteristics, his liberal training, his familiarity from infancy with the best society, his cultivated manners, and his easy and dignified address afforded him special facilities, and therefore conferred special responsibility, for representing the cause of the oppressed at court and in the homes of the powerful—opened his eyes to his advantages and to his duty. As a natural consequence, from this time forward, whenever there were delicate negotiations to be conducted in behalf of the churches of his faith, the eyes of men turned with ever-increasing confidence to Theodore Beza as the most promising man in the Reformed communion to conduct them. On the other hand, Beza himself permitted no considerations of private comfort or ease to deter him from undertaking a work often tedious and burdensome, always making a heavy draft upon his sympathy. His first attempt in this direction had a political as well as a religious side. The alliance between the powerful and aggrandizing Canton of Bern and the far less extensive and independent city of Geneva had been made for a definite number of years and was to terminate on February 8, 1556. It was by no means certain that the ambitious government of the former state would renew a relation from which the weaker city seemed to derive all the benefit. Moreover, Bern had more than once made it clear that there was no lack of persons powerful in its councils who would gladly extend its territory to the outlet of Lake Leman and hold Geneva upon the same tenure on which it already held the Pays de Vaud. If this project should fail, there were men ready to recommend the acceptance of the offers of a close alliance made contemporaneously by Duke Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy. The danger to Protestantism was imminent. Forsaken by Bern, the nearest and most powerful of the cantons in which the Reformation had taken root, the republic of Geneva, the object of the implacable hatred of the Roman Pontiff and of the Roman Catholics throughout Europe, could not have failed to be ground to pieces between the two adjoining countries—France and Savoy—of which the one or the other seemed destined to destroy its independent existence. The danger that menaced Geneva was a danger menacing Protestantism entire, and
Beza helped to avert it, by exhibiting, and by inducing others to exhibit, to those in power the consequences that were certain to follow the suicidal policy of disunion. The renewal of the alliance between Bern and Geneva, in 1557, was in great part the result of Beza’s intercession at Zurich and with the other Protestant cantons, and constituted in itself a claim to the gratitude of the city which was soon to become his home for the remainder of his life. It formed a new link in the chain already binding him in the closest friendship to John Calvin.

Meanwhile, before this disquieting question had been set at rest, another cause of solicitude arose. The valleys inhabited by the Waldenses, or Vaudois, of Piedmont, constituted a part of the territories taken from the Duke of Savoy by Francis I in 1535. During the score of years which the French occupation had now lasted, the inhabitants, professing to be in full accord with the Protestants, but claiming that they had held their pure faith for centuries before the birth of Luther and even from the time of the apostles, enjoyed a respite from persecution, as grateful as unlooked for. While relentlessly vexing the adherents of the Reformed faith in their own dominions, Francis I and Henry II had either from policy abstained from similarly maltreating the professors of a kindred faith in the newly acquired domain, or, possibly, had forgotten the very existence of an insignificant body of dissenters who gave them no trouble in a time of general confusion. In consequence of their unwonted exemption from external interference, the Vaudois began to make a freer profession of their faith, to hold more public religious services, and to seek and obtain the services of twenty or more preachers, many of them trained for the sacred ministry in Switzerland, and especially at the school of Lausanne. In the Val d’Angroga, in particular, they even commenced the erection of houses of worship. Such boldness could not long escape notice. The French Parliament of Turin sent two of its members, the President de Saint Julien and the Counsellor Della Chiesa, with an ample escort to visit the valleys and put a stop to the progress of heresy. If proclamations could have effected this, the menaces addressed to those that refused to submit, and the rewards offered to those who consented to embrace the Roman Catholic faith, would have sufficed. But the Vaudois either forsook their homes or were deaf alike to threats and to entreaties. This was in 1556. The next year more strenuous measures were instituted. It became evident that nothing short of a determined effort to suppress the Vaudois religion was to be expected. That it would fail miserably in the end, as all similar efforts, before that time and since, have failed, was, it is true, almost a certainty. A Waldesian martyr, put to death for his constancy twenty years before, expressed the truth in a homely fashion, when, just before his execution and being already bound to the stake, he requested a bystander to hand him two stones, and having received them began to rub the one against the other, and then addressed these words to a crowd now curious to learn the significance of his strange actions: “You imagine that by your persecutions you will abolish our churches, but that will be no more possible for you than it is possible for me to destroy these stones with my hands or by eating them up.” Nonetheless was the
prospect of one of those massacres, that have so often drenched the Waldensian mountainsides with blood, so terrible that no time was lost in sending forth a cry of distress to summon all friends in Switzerland and elsewhere to the rescue.

Both Geneva and Lausanne heard the news with pity and with horror. Among the destined victims of persecution and death were prominent ministers of whom many formerly studied theology in those cities under Calvin and Beza. There was no opportunity for long consultation. Someone must be promptly dispatched to arouse the four great Protestant cantons and the Protestant princes of southern Germany, and induce them to use the privilege of friends or allies with the King of France, by remonstrating against the execution of the proscriptive measures ordered by the court. That man must be courageous, energetic, and quick and fertile in expedients. Above all, he must be sufficiently catholic in his views to be able to conciliate in favor of the proposed intervention the partisans of the different shades of the Reformed faith and the Lutherans, whether broad or narrow in their views. He must, moreover, be a man of conspicuous tact and address, who from his birth and associations would stand unabashed in the presence of princes and courtiers. Such a man was found in Theodore Beza, and the choice of him was fully justified by the sequel. With him went, as fellow envoy, the now aged William Farel, the memory of whose masterful ministry of evangelization in French-speaking Switzerland and in the neighboring parts was still fresh in men’s minds, and whose rash impetuosity, if not altogether extinguished by added years, was well kept in check by the surer judgment of his younger colleague, whom he thoroughly respected and admired.

Bern not only gave leave of absence to Beza, but provided him and Farel with strong letters of recommendation to her three confederate cantons of Zurich, Basel, and Schaffhausen. In these places, as everywhere else, Beza was the spokesman. Being unfamiliar with the German language, he spoke in Latin, the universal language of courts and universities, and his ornate periods and graceful eloquence secured him a favorable hearing from all the learned. When it was necessary, the Reformer Bullinger, of Zurich, and others gladly acted as interpreters. With the support of such a man at Zurich, of the leading pastor, Simpert Vogt, at Schaffhausen, and of Simon Sulzer at Basel, it was easy to bring the magistrates to look favorably on the plan of sending a body of envoys from the four evangelical cantons to the French court. The “instruction” given to them as a guide for the discharge of their commission in a delicate undertaking has come down to us. It was written by Theodore Beza, and is the first and a very favorable example of his papers dealing with political affairs. The difficulties increased as Beza and Farel pursued their way, but these were overcome. At Montbéliard—capital of a county now forming part of France—which, many years before, Farel and Toussain had undertaken to evangelize in the midst of great commotions, they found the place altogether won over to Protestantism, but they also found Toussain, who was now at the head of the Church, not only decided in his adhesion to the Lutheran view of the Lord’s Supper as opposed to the Zwinglian or to the Calvinistic, but particularly
alienated from Geneva and pronounced in his disapproval of the execution of Servetus, and of the apologies written in justification of that lamentable event. This did not, however, in the end, prevent Montbéliard also from endorsing and heartily recommending the mission of the envoys. At Strasburg, Beza was welcomed by François Hotman. This eminent scholar, his attached colleague in the University of Lausanne, had, a year or two since, accepted a chair in the University of Strasburg. Here, as elsewhere, the presence of the venerable Farel, who had written nothing to offend Lutheran susceptibilities, proved advantageous. The senate of the city not only paid him and Beza other flattering attentions, but sent Hotman with them, mounted, and with mounted guards of honor, at the city's expense, to carry two letters, the one addressed to Otto Henry, elector palatine, and the other to Duke Christopher of Würtemberg. Both these princes received the envoys graciously, the former at Baden, where he was sojourning for his health's sake, the latter at Göppingen. The elector palatine, desirous of making the German intercession more effective with the French king by the addition of the influence of Hesse, wrote and dispatched by a special messenger of his own a letter to the Landgrave Philip of Hesse.

An object which Beza had incidentally proposed to himself in his mission, an object of even greater permanent importance to Christendom than the rescue of the Waldenses, was the unification of Protestantism by the reconciliation of the views respecting the Lord's Supper held by the two great subdivisions of the Protestant world. He had conferred at Strasburg with the superintendent and doctor of theology, John Marbach. At Göppingen he met and conversed long with the eminent Jacob Andrew, his future disputant in a more formal colloquy. There seemed to be some prospect of substantial agreement, and, as the references to Calvin's expressed views were deemed insufficient, Beza was induced to draw up a new and brief confession of faith touching the chief point in controversy. Written with the evident desire to reduce to a minimum the difference between the opinions of Lutherans and Calvinists, the document is a literary and religious curiosity. In some regards it may be compared with those extraordinary articles, with their amazing concessions, which Melanchthon drew up, a quarter of a century earlier, in the vain hope of being able to bring together such discordant views as those of Rome and those of the adherents of the Reformation. Calvin and Beza undoubtedly rejected the opinion of Zwingli, that the elements of bread and wine in the Eucharist are mere signs. It is equally certain that they did not hold with Luther that the body and blood of Christ are really present in, with, and under the bread and wine, though these are not miraculously transmuted into very flesh and blood. But it must be confessed that, in the Confession now under consideration, as we shall see, Beza approached as nearly to the Lutheran view as it was possible to do without actually abandoning the Reformed position.

Both the Swiss and the Germans fulfilled their promises and sent envoys to France. Their reception need not detain us long. The Swiss, honest but simple-minded rustics, were kindly but somewhat contemptuously treated, and received no definite answer to their plea in behalf of the Waldenses. They
deserve our respect, however, for this, at least, that when at their departure King Henry II, who, through Constable Montmorency, had previously promised them each a gold chain, now sent them a present of two hundred ducats, they proved themselves to be no mercenary boors, by indignantly rejecting the proffered bounty, with the exclamation, "We seek not gold nor silver, but the safety of brethren who are our members and partakers in the same religion." The German envoys, who arrived in Paris a full month later than the Swiss, represented seven Protestant princes, all of them entitled to high consideration. They were instructed to impress upon the King of France the injury to his reputation which the report of the cruelties exercised upon his innocent subjects would produce. They were also to urge upon his Majesty the necessity of instituting an impartial investigation, which would surely establish both the purity of the doctrinal tenets and the loyalty of the persecuted. But although a reply was made to the envoys, in the monarch’s name, it was of no very satisfactory import. For it plainly betrayed the annoyance of the king at what he considered an unnecessary appeal of his conquered subjects to their sovereign’s friends, and confined itself to the expression of a hope that the inhabitants of the Val d’Angroga would henceforth so order their lives, like the rest of his subjects, as not to compel him to exercise severity toward them. Exactly how much good was effected by the German and Swiss intervention, it is difficult to ascertain. Despite his affected indifference, Henry and his advisers were not insensible to the importance of maintaining a good understanding with their Protestant neighbors and allies. Beside this, however, the king had within a few weeks more engrossing and perplexing matters on hand. On August 10, 1557, his army was defeated with great loss in a pitched battle at Saint Quentin. Constable Montmorency, who commanded it, was taken prisoner. Paris was threatened. It was no time to think about the Vaudois and their proposed annihilation. The project was dropped. Less than two years later, by the treaty of Cateau Cambrésis (on April 3, 1559), the Vaudois valleys, with all the rest of Piedmont, save Turin and two or three other places, passed out of the hands of the French and were restored to their rightful sovereign, the Duke of Savoy.

This was but the first of three successive visits of Beza to Germany in the interest of his oppressed fellow believers. From the Vaudois or Waldensian valleys of Piedmont, the scene of persecution shifted to France and to the city of Paris itself. So precarious was the situation of the Protestants of the capital, in view of the sanguinary legislation of Henry II, that although their number was by no means insignificant and was daily growing, they dared meet only by night and with the utmost secrecy. Unhappily, a nocturnal gathering held in a house of the Rue Saint Jacques was surprised by their enemies, and, out of a much larger number of worshippers, one hundred and twenty persons, mostly women, with a few men and some children, were apprehended and dragged to prison. Many of them were shortly put to death, and the mob had the gratification of beholding such a sight as a Parisian mob never tired of seeing—the victims of its hatred, some of them young women and respectable matrons, roasted in the flames of the estrapade.
The political juncture was particularly inauspicious for the "Lutherans," as the dissenters from the Roman Catholic Church were still styled. Bigots represented the calamity that had lately befallen the kingdom in the defeat of Saint Quentin as a direct punishment for its sin in tolerating heresy, and stirred up the populace to welcome any new blow aimed at the Protestants. The latter, terrified by what had befallen their brethren, and apprehensive of what might still be in store, anxious above all to save the lives of the prisoners from their impending fate, sent in haste to Geneva to acquaint Calvin with the new disaster and to beg that everything should be done to enlist the interest of neighboring Protestant states. Again was Beza chosen, in conjunction with the aged Farel and with Budaeus and Carmel, to lay the pitiful case of the French before as many as would listen to their cry of distress. Not once but twice did the Reformer leave Lausanne and exert himself to the utmost to bring both Swiss cantons and German princes to prompt and decisive intercession.

The direct results were not over-encouraging. The Swiss envoys, when they reached the court of France, allowed themselves to be so completely hoodwinked by the Cardinal of Lorraine, always rich in promises of support, that leaving all to him they found themselves in the end dismissed by the monarch with a message to the effect that he had expected that Zurich, Bern, Basel, and Schaffhausen would be content with his response to them in the matter of the Waldenses of Angroga, and abstain from sending him ambassadors on a similar occasion, as they had now done. At any rate, he begged his "very dear and good friends" from this time forth to give themselves no care or solicitude respecting what he might do in his kingdom, since he was resolved to maintain his religion therein as the most Christian kings, his predecessors, had done. In this matter, he said, he had to give an account of his actions to no one but to God.

The elector palatine wrote a letter which seems to have had some effect in securing a lull in the persecution. Others, especially good Christopher of Würtemberg, did the same. But the German princes were not always moved to prompt and effective action. The old disunion between Lutherans and Reformed had not been suffered to die out by the zeal of the theologians who looked askance at the orthodoxy of their Swiss brethren and were disposed to magnify rather than to attenuate the disastrous differences of Luther and Zwingli, now that Luther and Zwingli had long been in their graves. It seemed to Beza an opportune time to labor to conciliate the favor of the Germans, by showing them that the persecuted French Protestants whom they were entreated to help were no heretics, but brethren in substantial agreement with themselves as to the essential truths of the Reformation held in Germany. In common with his colleagues, therefore, he laid before Melanchthon, Brentius, Marbach, Andreæ, and the other most prominent representatives of Lutheran theology, at their gathering at Worms, a written exposition of the tenets of the French Churches, of so irenic a character that the divergences seemed not merely smoothed down, but almost obliterated. In all the Augsburg Confession of 1530, they found but one article which was not in agreement with their own Confession and which they did not accept, namely, the article respecting the
Lord’s Supper. Even the difficulties in this article they thought could be removed by a conference of learned and pious men. Meanwhile, they declared that “they had never believed, nor had they taught, that the Lord’s Supper is merely a sign of profession, as the Anabaptists believe, or merely a sign of the absent Christ.”

A few months before, while on the embassy to plead the cause of the Waldenses, Beza, speaking for himself and for Farel, expressed himself no less strongly, in a confession of faith which he handed to the Duke of Württemberg, at Göppingen, as setting forth the doctrine held by the Churches of Switzerland and Savoy, or Piedmont. A sentence or two from this, the first of Beza’s utterances respecting the Lord’s Supper, it may be well to quote, in order to show the length to which the Reformer was willing to go in the effort to find a common ground on which to stand with his German brethren:

“We confess that in the Lord’s Supper not only all the benefits of Christ, but also the very substance of the Son of man—I say, that true flesh which the everlasting Word took into perpetual unity of person, in which He was born and suffered for us, rose and ascended into the heavens, and that true blood which He shed for us—are not merely signified, or set forth symbolically, figuratively, or typically, as the memorial of an absent person, but are truly and certainly represented, exhibited, and offered to be applied, there being added to the thing itself symbols that are by no means bare symbols, but such that, so far as appertains to God’s promise and offer, they always have the thing itself truly and certainly conjoined, whether they be set forth to believers or to unbelievers.”

It is not surprising that, in his attempt to gain over the German Protestants, Beza should have incurred not a little risk of alienating his own friends in Switzerland. His apparent concessions to Lutheran views were highly distasteful to the adherents of the Zwinglian theology, and Bullinger, the Reformer of Zurich, had succeeded not only to the influence but in a great measure to the views of Zwingli. Endearred as he was to Beza by ties of cordial affection and good will, Bullinger could not but view the utterances of Beza at Göppingen with grave apprehension, as indicative of a danger of schism among Swiss churches thus far harmonious. Calvin understood his friend better and poured oil on the troubled waters. “As there is no lurking danger in Beza’s confession,” he wrote to Bullinger, August 7, 1557, “I readily excuse him, because, in consideration of the brethren, with studied moderation he has striven to reconcile fierce men; especially as he previously distinctly explained all his different meanings.” But Bullinger was not fully appeased even by Calvin’s intercession, and Beza’s efforts to reconcile Lutherans and Reformed by reducing to an apparent minimum the differences that kept them apart, gave rise to an interchange of letters between Lausanne and Zurich, extending over a number of months, which even now may be read with profit. Upon Beza’s
project of a conference to be held with the view of harmonizing discordant views upon the matter under consideration, Bullinger looked with scant favor. He accepted with kindness the explanations of his meaning which Beza, sincerely sorry to have incurred the disapproval of so excellent a friend, made at great length in successive epistles, and he conceded frankly the desirability of mutual love and holy concord between the servants of a common Master. "Meanwhile," said he and his colleagues, the pastors and doctors of the Church of Zurich, "it is not any and every sort of a concord that we long for, but a concord that is religious, moderate, conflicting in nothing with the pure truth hitherto professed, introducing no obscurity or doubt into manifest light and perspicuous doctrine, a concord which on account of its clearness shall be common and welcome to all the pious, abiding and stable, and that shall scatter abroad no new beginnings of fresh dissensions."

Thus it was that Theodore Beza’s attempt to effect a reconciliation between the warring elements within the bosom of Protestantism itself, aroused the suspicion, and drew upon him the animadversion, of many of his own most sincere friends. So had Melanchthon’s equally well-meant project of bringing together again the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, two- or three-and-twenty years earlier, drawn upon him the displeasure of the greater part of those who learned of it. As, however, Philip Melanchthon comforted himself, when accused of being a deserter to the Protestant cause, not only by the consciousness of his integrity of purpose but by the support and approval of Martin Luther, so did Theodore Beza find ample compensation for the not altogether unreasonable annoyance expressed by others, in the unswerving confidence extended to him by the great Reformer of Geneva. For to Calvin he felt a devotion not inferior to that which characterized the relation of the younger of the Wittenberg theologians to his father in the Lord. Both Beza and Melanchthon, if unsuccessful in accomplishing the desired union, had this consolation, at least, that their labors had been expended in the most honorable and humane of causes, the endeavor to realize the great purpose of the common Lord of all Christian people, that they might be one even as He and His Father were one. And both Melanchthon and Beza were specially inspired by an earnest desire and hope thereby to put an end to the further effusion of blood at the hands of those professing the same Christian faith.

End of Section 1
CHAPTER VI

Beza Becomes Calvin’s Coadjutor and Rector of the University of Geneva
1558–1559

In the year 1558, Beza resigned the professorship which he had held for a little short of nine years, to accept a chair in the new institution which Calvin had long been anxious to found at Geneva, for the promotion of higher learning, but, especially, of theological science.

His course in Lausanne had been brilliant and successful. Of this there could be no question. He had discharged the duties of his office with signal ability and faithfulness, and had been rewarded for his toil not only by the applause of the learned, but by a marked increase in the number of his pupils. From a mere handful of students, the Académie of Lausanne had come to boast an attendance of seven hundred. To this development no instructor, not even
François Hotman, the distinguished jurisconsult, during his connection with the University, had contributed so much as Beza. The magnetism of the Reformer’s personality, the profound impression made from the very start by his wonderful erudition, his wide acquaintance with classical as well as sacred antiquity, his growing reputation not only as a controversialist, but as a man honored in the councils of the leading Protestant powers of Switzerland and Germany and entrusted with the advocacy of the claims of the persecuted both of France and Piedmont—all enhanced in the eyes of the studious the attraction of the school of learning of which he was a chief ornament.

Why, then, did Beza consent to leave a position so enviable and of such extensive usefulness? The answer to the question is found partly, at least, in the unfortunate condition of discord and embarrassment of the Church of Lausanne. The union of Church and State, always a source, if not of actual, yet certainly of possible trouble, is most productive of mischief in a region which itself is dependent upon another region, its superior by right of conquest or by some other form of proprietorship. The natural and healthy development of the Reformation at Lausanne was hampered by the suzerainty of Bern. It might perhaps have triumphed over the lukewarmness or positive enmity of the irreligious part of the subject city; it was impotent when that element of the population was encouraged by the avowed determination of the paramount authority to tolerate no innovation in the accepted order of things.

The Reformer Pierre Viret had, many years before, taken an important part in the preparatory work that led to the religious change of Geneva in advance of Calvin’s advent, and had subsequently been for a time one of the ministers of that city. He was now and had long been the leading pastor of Lausanne. It was he, as has been seen, that induced Theodore Beza to accept the chair he had held with honor to the city and with credit to himself. A man of solid attainments and of sterling worth, he was at the same time as impetuous and uncompromising as Farel had been in his youth, and had learned none of the prudence that had come to Farel with advancing years. The laxity of morals of a city, many of whose inhabitants utterly failed to recognize the external change of religion as affecting their personal and social life, had long weighed upon Viret’s heart and conscience. To admit to a participation in the most sacred of Christian rites men and women of whose unfitness there could be no doubt, and who seemed so much the more anxious to present themselves as their coming was opposed by all the good, seemed to him as a pastor to be an unjustifiable act of complicity in a criminal profanation. He resolved to put a stop to it. Having by his ardent zeal brought his colleagues over to his opinions, he gave notice that at the coming Easter the customary celebration of the Lord’s Supper would not be observed. He would not desecrate the most sublime and holy ordinance in heaven or on earth. He and his fellow ministers demanded nothing less than the institution of a system of church government such as had been successfully established in Geneva and had made of a city noted for the dissoluteness of its denizens the model State and Church of
Christendom. Instead of the promiscuous admission to the Lord’s Supper of all applicants, whatever their knowledge or ignorance, their consistency or inconsistency of deportment, he demanded the erection of a church consistory, or session, with power of discipline ranging from the mildest admonition even to formal excommunication. The better and more earnest part of the people, especially the fugitives from persecution in France, welcomed his efforts. But these efforts met with strenuous opposition from such of the inhabitants of Lausanne as looked back with regret to the days when, under the rule of the former bishops of the place, there was little or no inquiry into the life of the laity, or even of the clergy.

The resident representatives of Bern gave to Viret’s opponents the support of their authority. With a view to the removal of exciting topics from the pulpit, Bern particularly forbade the public discussion of the subject of Predestination. Four clergymen of Thonon, believing it to be their duty, despite the prohibition, to preach on the doctrine in question, were deprived of their places by the government. The classis of Bern replied by demanding freedom of preaching and a form of church government not unlike that of Geneva, declaring that unless it were granted they could not with a clear conscience continue to exercise their churchly functions. Thereupon the chief magistrate and council of Bern resolved to show the world who was master in the Pays de Vaud, and formally cited by name all the preachers and professors to appear in person before them in the city of Bern, on or before a given date, to receive an answer to the “articles” in which their demands had been couched. So rough a summons addressed to the clergy and professors of the subject city was itself an indignity; the answer which they received amounted almost to positive insult. For while Viret and his associates were graciously informed that they might preach about Predestination if they had a natural occasion to do so and if they preached in a moderate and edifying manner, they were not encouraged to look for any such improvement in the administration of the Church as they had declared indispensable to the continuance of the discharge of their offices. In fact, the Bernese council demanded a categorical reply, upon the morrow, as to what the pastors and professors intended to do. They, moreover, intimated that, if the latter persisted in the declaration they had made, to the effect that in case all their requests were not granted they must ask leave to lay down their offices, they would not only be allowed to do so, but forthwith be banished from the country.

Beza, himself no friend of extreme measures, had originally disapproved Viret’s course and maintained a middle ground, entertaining relations of kindly intercourse with both parties. He doubtless hoped that, in the course of time and without resort to an attitude of such pronounced hostility to the ruling power, the desired advantages might be secured through the milder methods of persuasion and greater enlightenment. That he was lukewarm or underrated the importance of the points upon which Viret insisted, is disproved not only by his subsequent attitude when at the head of the Church of Geneva, but by the
vigor, zeal, and ability with which in this very year (1558) he maintained in an extended answer to Sebastian Castalio, that the doctrine of the everlasting predestination of God is the sole foundation of man’s salvation. He had been induced, reluctantly and against his better judgment, to acquiesce in the course taken by his more radical brethren, lest he might appear to have deserted them at a critical juncture. He thus came to share in the humiliating journey to Bern and the insolent treatment at the hands of the chief magistrate and council.

These last circumstances, however, were not needed to complete Beza’s disgust with the situation of affairs at Lausanne. Long before their occurrence, he had fully made up his mind to sever his relations with the university and to accept the more congenial work to which Calvin invited him and in the discharge of which he had the alluring prospect of association with the great Reformer whom of all men he honored and loved most. Viret might be annoyed at the determination of his colleague, and might blame him for abandoning a post which Viret himself had by his ill-judged course contributed to make unendurable for a high-spirited gentleman, indeed, for a man of ordinary self-respect; he could not induce Beza to reconsider his action or consent to prolong his stay in a city where he might look for the repetition of scenes such as he had of late witnessed. The event fully justified his action. Within a few months, Viret and the greater part of his associates in Church and University were themselves reduced to the necessity of following Beza’s example. Within that time, the decadence of the institution to which Beza’s learning had lent a temporary luster set in. Thus Lausanne lost its great opportunity of permanently possessing the school for the training of the Christian athletes who were to achieve wonders in the cause of French Protestantism down to the time of the disastrous Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685). How, after that event, Lausanne regained a certain prestige in the times of the Church of the Desert, it does not belong to us to relate here.

As for Beza himself, he said nothing, either at the time or subsequently, that might seem to reflect upon Pierre Viret, a man who had in the past deserved well of the Reformation, and was destined still to do good service, both in Geneva and in the Church of Lyons, a man to whom he was attached by strong ties of affection. In his letter to Wolmar, within a year and a half later, he confines himself to the statement, that at the end of his stay at Lausanne, he returned, with the kind consent of the council of Bern, to Geneva, partly because he was desirous of giving himself wholly to theology, partly for other reasons which it was unnecessary to rehearse. And he adds that, not so much of his own choice, as by the advice of men of great eminence, he was induced at Geneva to undertake the office of the sacred ministry.

In Geneva, Theodore Beza was at last in the spot where for years, because of his increasing friendship and intimacy with John Calvin, he had found his chief intellectual and moral support and sympathy. Geneva is not distant much over
thirty miles in a straight line from Lausanne, and the lake, then as now, afforded an easy and pleasant route. The proximity of the two cities to one another had encouraged the younger man to make frequent visits to his old schoolfellow, now become an associate in the work of the Reformation. It was time, however, that two such kindred spirits should no longer be separated even by so trifling a distance. There can be no doubt that irrespective of his plans for making use of Theodore Beza's extraordinary scholarship for the upbuilding of his projected university, Calvin had before this begun to look to Beza as the most suitable man to succeed to the great and multiform duties which Providence had thrown upon him. It is true that Calvin himself was not yet fifty years old, and might, so far as age was concerned, have had the prospect of a long course of activity. But his constitution, never robust, was enfeebled by prodigious study and devotion to the claims of others. At an age when many a scholar is full of strength and vigor, Calvin thought it none too soon to seek for a younger man to be a sharer of his toil and the prospective heir of an inheritance of unremitting solicitude for the welfare of the churches.

The plan of Calvin for the "Académie" of Geneva contemplated nothing less than the erection of a true university—a daring undertaking in a little commonwealth of a few thousand souls, poor in resources, and threatened by powerful neighbors. The founders were compelled to solve a difficult problem as to the source from which the necessary funds could be obtained. It is a significant circumstance that contemporaneously with the purchase of a site for the school, there was published an order of the magistrates of the little republic, commanding all notaries to exhort those persons who might thereafter employ them to draw up wills, to make bequests for the institution.

As Geneva had hitherto possessed no school for higher learning, a "College," or Gymnasium, was also created, for the purpose of affording preparatory training for the Académie, or University proper, thus replacing a more modest school once taught by Mathurin Corderius, of whom I have already spoken, a scholar whose *Colloquies* were long in vogue, as a manual for the drill of the young in the familiar use of the Latin language. The study of Latin literature was assiduously pursued in the College and found no place in the Académie. In the latter a close acquaintance with the exclusive tongue of the learned was an absolute prerequisite—for who could profit by instruction given in a language which he understood not at all or but imperfectly? Of the departments of a university only the School of Theology was at first instituted, and of this Theodore Beza was the first head or Rector. It was hoped that other schools would soon be added, and indeed the anticipation was partially realized, but the efforts made in this direction were spasmodic and short-lived. A School of Medicine in a small town or village encounters insuperable difficulties through the lack of large hospitals and of clinical instruction. To encourage the study of medicine at Geneva, it is true, a law was passed in 1564, five years after the establishment of the university, which permitted the dissection of the bodies of criminals executed for their offenses and even of the corpses of patients that
died at the city hospital. But the provision was inadequate even in an age which sent men to the gallows or to the block for a great variety of crimes, and in which the laws of health were very imperfectly known or observed. Three years later (1567), Beza, in asking the prayers of the pastors of Zurich, drew special attention to the new medical department of the university. The study of Law fared better than that of Medicine, but the eminent teachers that were called to lecture were very inadequately compensated for their work or proved restless for other reasons, and made but a short tarry. This was the case with Hotman, after the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew’s Day (1572). The School of Theology and its teachers fared better. Yet the narrowness of the provision for their support, which has been estimated as the equivalent of 1,000 francs, or two hundred dollars of our present money, was not without its discouraging effect.

The solemn opening of the institution took place on June 5, 1559, in the spacious cathedral of the city, in the presence of the two syndics and of the members of the council of Geneva. The services were impressive. On this occasion, Beza, who had at his arrival been merely constituted public professor of Greek literature, but had subsequently been chosen (October 15, 1558) to preach the Gospel and requested to continue his lectures on the Sacred Scriptures, was formally proclaimed Rector, and inducted into office.

A few months later, on November 9, 1559, he subscribed his name to the laws of the Académie, and to the Confession of Faith of the Church of the city. The signature, "Theodorus Beza Vezelius scholæ rector," may still be read either in the original Livre du Recteur, or in the faithful transcript of the manuscript which has been printed in our own days. The name is followed by the signatures of Antoine Cavallier, of Vire in Normandy, professor of Hebrew; of Jean Tagaut, of Paris, professor of Arts, or Philosophy; and of François Béraud, of Paris, professor of Greek. The last two had been colleagues of Beza at Lausanne and had already followed him to Geneva. Others were yet to come. But with these we have nothing to do here. As to Beza, he began at once to devote himself to theology. Calvin had for years been teaching this same subject, and he continued to do so, although he was never formally inscribed as a professor. How they divided the instruction between them is not quite certain, but it must have been as Calvin, the author of the entire scheme, had arranged. The instruction of both was essentially exegetical. Calvin and Beza at first confined themselves to the simple interpretation of the books of the Bible, and successively lectured upon them in alternate weeks. At a later time, while one of the two professors continued to devote himself to exegesis, his colleague treated in his lectures of the "common places," or systematic theology.

Self-sacrifice was the law of the school. The salaries, always inadequate to the support of the incumbents of the chairs, were neither regularly nor fully paid. In times of public calamity we shall see Theodore Beza continuing to teach
without compensation, and, indeed, taking upon his shoulders the burden of the entire school, until the return of better days. And in all periods of the history of the Académie of Geneva, from Calvin’s time to ours, so high has been the credit of this seat of learning that men eminent in science have, we are told, accepted as a great honor the position of teaching professors. Twice, too, within a space of sixty years, professors raised to the rank of the first magistrate of the republic have continued, despite this high dignity, to instruct their students.

These students, writing their names below the signatures of the professors whom I have named upon the Livre du Recteur, at first, like their instructors, subscribed to the doctrines of the Confession of Faith of the Church of Geneva. This practice continued from 1559 to 1576, when, under the presidency of Beza, and no doubt with his full approval, the "Venerable Company of the Pastors" of the city relieved the young men of the obligation—"inasmuch," say the minutes, "as this [subscription] deprives Papists and Lutherans of the opportunity to come and receive profit from this church, and inasmuch as it does not seem reasonable to press after this fashion a conscience that is resolved not to sign what it does not understand. Moreover the Saxons [Lutherans] have taken advantage of this ordinance to compel our students that go to them to sign the Confession of Augsburg."

Calvin had well selected his colleague and successor. As unsparing of himself, as indefatigable in labor, as devoted to the interests of the faith which he had embraced as was his master, Beza of all men living was best qualified to carry out what Calvin had initiated. Geneva and the world hardly realized the change when the direction of affairs passed, after a comparatively brief interval, from the hands of the one to the other. For Beza, while no blind partisan and no servile imitator, had heartily accepted the system of Calvin, and had become so thoroughly imbued with his spirit, that there was no perceptible break in the influence which emanated from the little city upon the Rhône. Meanwhile, even before Calvin’s removal, that influence seemed to be doubled by the accession of Beza as Calvin’s coadjutor, and Beza did for France what Calvin himself could not have accomplished.

CHAPTER VII

Beza at Nérac

The crisis was fast approaching at which Theodore Beza was to be called to take a more active part in the affairs of Protestantism than was offered by embassies in behalf of persecuted Vaudois. Before long the French court,
indeed France entire, was to witness his coming as an advocate of the professors of the doctrines which men still persisted in contemptuously stigmatizing as "new," and was to hear from his lips the first great plea uttered in defense of those doctrines.

Meanwhile, an incident occurred, at first sight of evanescent importance, but destined to exercise a lasting influence both upon Beza's life and upon the course of at least one great personage in France.

Toward the close of the brief reign of Francis II, after the conclusion of the famous Assembly of the Notables at Fontainebleau, Antoine of Bourbon, titular King of Navarre, was sojourning in the city of Nérac in the province of Guyenne, of which he was governor by appointment of the King of France. Here he deliberated with his most trusted supporters respecting the position which he should assume in the distracted state of the kingdom. The Huguenots, as the Protestants of the realm had, within a few months, begun to be nicknamed, were making such rapid progress that the Papal Church trembled for the consequences. In the late Assembly, Admiral Coligny spoke boldly in favor of a frank concession of religious liberty and advocated a complete cessation of persecution. Others supported his views and did not quail in face of the defiant attitude and threatening words of the Duke of Guise and his partisans. Antoine had held aloof and had not been present at the discussions. Though cowardly and unstable, he had given and still gave men reason to believe that he sympathized with the Reformed and would uphold their cause. When, therefore, Theodore Beza received at Geneva a very pressing invitation from the King and the Queen of Navarre to visit Nérac and give them the benefit of his counsel, it seemed impossible to decline. The "Venerable Company of the Pastors of Geneva" cheerfully approved his going, while prudently recording upon their minutes a simple statement that, "on the 20th of July, our brother, Monsieur de Bèze, was sent to Guyenne to the King and Queen of Navarre, for the purpose of instructing them in the Word of God." Nor did Beza, in his efforts to fulfill the part of his mission which in their caution the ministers had refrained from mentioning, neglect the rare opportunity afforded him to work for the more purely religious end which they had put prominently forward. Consternation fell upon the opponents of Protestantism when they learned that Beza had from the pulpit preached publicly before his royal auditors the very doctrines for the profession of which men and women had for so many weary years been subjected to all forms of punishment, even to burning to death.

But Beza's activity was not confined to the purely religious sphere. For the first time he had the opportunity to display the abilities of a clear-sighted man of affairs. He was the best adviser of Antoine of Bourbon. His voice rose in protest against the insidious projects of the court. When, at the instigation of the Guises, the King of Navarre was urged to comply with the command given in the name of Francis II to come northward and to bring with him his younger brother Louis of Bourbon, Prince of Condé, in order that the latter might have
an opportunity to clear himself of the grave accusations of which he was the object, no one opposed the foolhardy venture more strenuously than Beza. His words were little heeded. Antoine, as credulous as he was inconstant, preferred to listen to the suggestions of Cardinal Bourbon, who came on the unfraternal errand of luring his two brothers to their destruction. Before setting out, indeed, the same king who, a few weeks since, had not dissembled his aversion to the Mass and avowed his preference for the Communion as celebrated by the Protestants under both forms, was seen approving by his presence the Roman ceremonial of the Mass, and compelling the attendance of his little son, the future Henry IV. Deaf to the suggestion of his friends that, if go he must, he should proceed to court under the protection of a powerful escort, he persisted in declining the repeated offers made to him successively, at various points in his journey, of the thousands of men that could be brought to him from Poitou and Gascony, from Provence and Languedoc, in the South, and from Normandy in the North. He fancied himself safe in trusting the person of Condé and his own person to the most perfidious of personal enemies. Condé, strange to say, for the time partook of his delusion. Neither awoke to the danger until it was too late. That in the end they escaped the fate to which one, if not both, of them seemed likely to be consigned, was due to no foresight of theirs, but to a circumstance beyond the reach of human prescience—the speedy and sudden death of the boy-king, Francis II.

The Cardinal of Lorraine had endeavored to persuade Antoine to bring to court in his train the Genevese theologian, as well, apparently, as the famous jurisconsult François Hotman, and others of his Protestant advisers. However, neither Beza nor Hotman had any taste for the adventure. Beza accompanied the Bourbon princes only a part of the way, possibly as far as to Limoges, and then struck out, through a country far from safe, in the direction of Geneva. Hotman took some other way. Both had heavy hearts, because both seemed to have labored in vain. Before Beza there stretched a journey that would have occupied many days under the most auspicious circumstances. He must travel unobserved, and therefore in disguise, and by night. Under the kind protection of Heaven, he escaped every danger, and safely reached Geneva, where his friends, ignorant of his fortunes, had well-nigh despaired of seeing him again. His short absence of a little over three months was not so barren of permanent advantage as at the time he, and perhaps his friends also, imagined.

Until now, Jeanne d’Albrét, Queen of Navarre, had been timid. While her husband seemed to burn with zeal for the Reformation, she was reserved and cold. Sagacious and discerning, she weighed the dangers that invested an espousal of Protestantism. The principality of Béarn and the rest of the kingdom of Navarre on the northern slope of the Pyrenees were after all but a contracted territory in a peculiarly exposed situation. Her ancestors had not been able to protect the greater part of their possessions from Spanish rapacity. How should she, a woman, rescue the small remainder, were she to
incur the enmity of the Papal See by a change of faith? What more effective way than this to invite invasion from without and insurrection from within? Yet just in the proportion that Antoine’s fervor cooled, did her own ardor rise to a glowing heat. Immediately after Beza’s visit to Nérac, and, it would seem, greatly as a consequence of his exposition of the Word of God, she came to a decision from which during all the rest of her life she never swerved. The story is best told in the simple narrative of the history of the Reformed Churches of France composed, if not by Beza, at least under his supervision:

"The Queen of Navarre, after the departure of the king her husband, withdrew to Béarn, where she received within a few days tidings of the arrest of the Prince [of Condé] at Orleans, and of the conspiracy against her husband, as well as of certain conferences held in Spain having in view the surprise of her principality of Béarn and the remnant of Navarre. Seeing then that the trust which she had reposed in man was lost, and that all human help failed her, and being touched to the quick by the love of God, she had recourse to Him in all humility, with cries and tears, as her sole refuge, and solemnly declared her purpose to keep His commandments. Thus was it that, in the time of her greatest tribulation, she made public profession of the pure doctrine, being strengthened in her intention by François le Guay, otherwise known as Bois Normand, and N. Henri, faithful ministers of God’s Word. And committing the issue altogether to the divine mercy, she put on a virile and magnanimous courage, and started to visit and provision for a long siege her stronghold of Navarrenx in Béarn, which, it was rumored, the Spaniards intended to surprise. There she heard the news of the illness of the king [Francis II] and, soon after, of his death. At Christmas following the receipt of this intelligence, she again made a full and clear confession of her faith and partook of the Lord’s Supper. Very soon thereafter she sent to the king [Charles IX] her aforesaid Confession of Faith composed by herself, and written and signed with her own hand; for she was of a singularly fine mind."

Certainly it was worth all the trouble which Beza took and all the dangers he encountered by the way to know that he had contributed to bring the mother of Henry IV to so resolute a stand. Nor is it strange, in view of all the circumstances, that Beza, when referring to this visit, in the dedication to Henry IV of a treatise published in 1591, should have remarked, "Moreover, Sire, I am myself one of those that had the grace from the Almighty to be called and received and attentively heard, proclaiming the word of my Master, in your royal house of Nérac, thirty-one years ago."

As for Theodore Beza, he had shown that he was not only a devoted Protestant, but an able statesman as well. It was through no fault of his that Antoine did not present himself at the French court with a body of men sufficient to
enforce the demand for a righteous performance of the promises made at Fontainebleau by a royal council which, while outwardly approving, had no honest intention to execute its engagements.
From this time forth, the eyes of the Protestants of France were fixed upon Theodore Beza. When the critical moment arrived that demanded a man both ardent in his religious convictions and eminent in his theological attainments, a man firm and unflinching in the advocacy of the Protestant faith, a man in the constitution of whose character courage and prudence were singularly well balanced, it was no fortuitous thing that Theodore Beza was summoned to assume an important part with high expectations regarding his success, which, as the sequel proved, were not to be disappointed.

CHAPTER VIII
Recall to France

The contingency to which reference was made at the close of the last chapter arose in the year following the incidents therein described. It is important therefore to form some conception of the France to which the Reformer was now officially invited to return after an expatriation of thirteen years, interrupted only by the short visit to Nérac. For his native land had undergone a series of wonderful changes, the most wonderful of them all within the brief compass of the last few months preceding his return.

When Beza withdrew secretly from Paris in 1548, he forsook a country governed with a strong hand, if not in fact by a monarch of mature years, at least, in his name and under his legitimate authority, by the favorites to whom he chose to delegate the entire management of affairs. Francis I had then been in his grave but a year. The reign of the monarch whose chief claim to recognition, whose sole pretense to be called “great,” was that, as patron of letters and scholars, he aspired to be the representative of the spirit of the Renaissance, had gone out ingloriously in the glare of the burning villages of the Vaudois of Cabrières and Mérindol, and amid the lurid flames of the holocaust of the “Fourteen” roasted alive on the squares of Meaux. Proscription of the “Lutheran heresy” and of all suspected of being tainted with it, was the watchword of the last years of a prince who was at one time believed to favor what were still styled “the new doctrines,” despite the stout assertions of their advocates that they were but “the old doctrines” of the Church restated.

If the Reformed doctrines made any progress during the twelve years of Henry II, they made it in defiance of the personal hatred of the king and of a systematic legislation of the most severe and sanguinary character. Yet the advance was both rapid and substantial. Of this the most satisfactory proof is found in the excesses of the inquisitorial tribunal erected by the judges of the Parliament of Paris. That tribunal, from the facility and regularity with which it sent its victims to the flames, came to be familiarly designated as the Chambre Ardente. The recent fortunate discovery and publication of the original records of its proceedings gives, in fact, the impression that one half of the atrocities
of the famous court had not been told and that popular rumor did injustice to
the activity rather than to the humanity of its members.
That Protestantism actually grew, instead of being destroyed root and branch,
was patent evidence that it possessed extraordinary vitality. Year by year
reports became more frequent of whole provinces “infected” by the “poison” of
heresy. The capital itself contained its body of believers meeting regularly, but
with the utmost secrecy. They had indeed been organized as a church, with
pastors and other officers. Of this the government was possibly as ignorant as it
was ignorant of the fact that, a few months before Henry’s death, a
representative assembly met within the walls of Paris, composed of delegates
from different parts of the kingdom, and adopted a Confession of Faith and
settled the Directory for Worship and the Form of Government of the Churches
for the time to come. But if Henry was not kept fully informed of these things
by his spies, he knew, at any rate, that the judges of his own high Court of
Parliament were by no means sound in the faith as judged by the tests of
orthodoxy. For did he not, within a month of his death, hear them avow
heterodox sentiments in a judicial conference, and did he not openly declare
that he would see the guilty burned before his eyes?
The fatal thrust of the misdirected lance of Count Montgomery, in the fatal
tourney in honor of the nuptials of Philip II of Spain and Elizabeth of France,
rendered futile this threat, by depriving Henry both of eyesight and of life. At
his death French Protestantism entered upon a new and more surprising course
of growth and development. The princes and nobles that came into power
were, indeed, no less determined to suppress the Reformation than Henry had
been. But what had appeared possible for a monarch in the flower of his age,
was soon seen to be utterly hopeless for a mere stripling, confessedly not ruling
by himself, who deliberately handed over the reins of authority to his wife’s
uncles, the Duke and Cardinal of Guise. For now men who might have
continued for an indefinite time to submit to the cruel commands of a lawful
king, believed it no sin to oppose the mandates of subjects who had illegally
possessed themselves of the machinery of government. The outbreak known as
"The Tumult of Amboise" (1560) was no strange phenomenon. It would rather
have been strange had no outbreak occurred. Nor is it surprising that, although
the ill-concerted enterprise was speedily put down, the popular ferment was
not quieted but rather increased. Now the religious instinct of the masses of
the people began more openly to demand satisfaction. Unable to obtain
churches for their worship, the crowds resorted to the fields, especially in the
provinces most remote from the capital. The services were conducted by
ministers, many of them trained in the city of Calvin, and were celebrated, as
men said, "after the manner of Geneva," that is, with public prayers such as
Calvin had drawn up in his liturgy, with the preaching of God’s Word, and with
the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
Mandates of bishops, for the most part non-resident, and proclamations of
royal governors and lieutenant-governors might lead to the capture and
execution of here and there a minister or of some courageous layman. But
these incidents had little or no permanent effect. They did not arrest the
advance of a religion which confessedly bore good fruit by promoting morality
and good order. At this juncture the government resolved to try the
experiment of convening an assembly of the Notables of the realm, for the
purpose of obtaining the best advice for allaying the prevalent spirit of
discontent.
But the Assembly of Fontainebleau (August 1560), so far from devising the
means of suppressing the Reformation, gave to the advocates of the
Reformation their first opportunity to demand liberty of worship. Here it was
that Admiral Coligny boldly brought forward two petitions, the one addressed
to the monarch, the other to his mother, Queen Catharine de’ Medici, and both
documents presented in the name of “the faithful” of all parts of France. The
documents were unsigned, but the admiral asserted that he could secure, if
necessary, 50,000 signatures in the single province of Normandy. They
demanded houses for worship and the clear recognition of the right to
assemble in these houses for the service of God. Here too it was that, a day or
two later, the same nobleman took the bold step of openly espousing the cause
of the Protestant Reformers. At a moment when, under the law, such
sentiments as he uttered rendered him liable to the capital charge of heresy,
he solemnly declared his belief that, should the houses of worship be accorded
and should the royal judges be instructed to maintain his Majesty’s authority
and the public peace, quiet and universal contentment would at once return. It
was a notable circumstance that the occasion upon which Admiral Coligny
pledged life and property in the belief that the people in no wise wished the
crown ill, the occasion upon which he warned the king’s advisers that it is a
perilous thing to nurture in the king a suspicion of the loyalty of his subjects,
was a Saint Bartholomew’s Day, just twelve years before that inauspicious
Sunday in August on which the gray-haired Huguenot hero laid down his life, a
sacrifice attesting the sincerity of his religious convictions.
The next twelvemonth, the last that elapsed before Beza’s recall to France,
was probably more eventful than any other period of equal duration in the 16th
century. This was certainly the fact so far as the Protestants were concerned.
Francis II died after one of the briefest reigns in French history. The means
devised by the enemies of the Protestants for their destruction, including the
convocation of the states-general that were to seal the overthrow of their
protectors, seemed to have been ordained by Providence for its own ulterior
and wiser ends. With the death of their nephew the Guises lost their
undisputed ascendancy, and the King of Navarre gained a fresh opportunity to
vindicate his right, as first prince of the blood, to the regency of the kingdom.
How he was induced to throw away this advantage and other advantages that
might have materially affected the progress of the Protestant doctrines, and
what were the fruits of his recreancy, I do not purpose to state in detail in this
place.
As it was, the day of religious emancipation appeared to have dawned. Many
incidents of the early part of the year 1561 might be cited in evidence. One
distinguished Roman Catholic prelate made no little stir by openly championing
the Protestant movement. Cardinal Odet de Chastillon was the elder brother of
Admiral Coligny. He had in his youth entered the Church, having no leaning to the profession of arms. He had recently been making less and less of a secret of his full acceptance of the doctrines of the Reformation. He was count and bishop of the old city of Beauvais, and, as such, one of the twelve ancient peers of the kingdom. Even thus, however, he could scarcely defend himself against the fury of the rabble, when it was noised abroad that, not content with fostering the growth of the "new doctrines" in his diocese, he had at Easter absented himself from his cathedral and celebrated the great Christian feast in the chapel of his episcopal palace. There the Gospel had been preached and the Holy Communion administered "after the manner of Geneva, though something discrepant"—to use Sir Nicholas Throkmorton's words—each participant receiving both elements at the hands of the officiating clergyman. Naturally the opposition originated with the clergy. "Wherewith," pursues the English ambassador, "the canons and divers of the popular people, not content, murmured and assembled in great numbers to have wrought their wicked wills upon the Cardinal, who shut himself and his, with divers of the communicants of the town, within his house; yet not so speedily but that some were hurt and killed, and one of the townsmen brought violently before the Cardinal's gate, and there burned out of hand without further proceeding of justice in the matter."

This was in April. Before the close of the same month about one hundred gentlemen and others gathered in a house of the suburbs of Paris, near the Pré aux Clercs, and there held Protestant services. Being discovered, an assault was made upon the house by the populace, but the besieged gentlemen repelled it with harquebuses and such other weapons as they carried. Seven or eight of the assailants were killed before the mob was tardily dispersed by the officers of justice. A few months earlier, the Protestants would certainly have been arrested and tried, and the sequel would have been a holocaust of victims offered up on the altar of religious intolerance. Instead of this, the King of Navarre, opportunistly coming to the capital in company with Prince La Roche sur Yon, the Duke of Longueville, and many other noblemen, to repress disorders, gave some sound advice to the authors and abettors of all the mischief to which the Parisians were prone. He called before him in the hall of the Louvre, says Throkmorton, "all the head curates and churchwardens of all the parishes of the town and two of every religious house, with the regents [professors] of the colleges, exhorting them in the king's name to quietness, and charging others for seditious preaching and rather moving the people to tumults and sedition than edifying them."

He assured them that "when the same should happen hereafter, the king would make them feel his indignation, and advised them not to molest any man living without open scandal, nor to seek men in their houses, as had been done at the instigation of some there present, whom he knew and [who] had changed their own weed under color of scholars."

Thus wrote the envoy to his royal mistress in May. A few days passed and her Majesty was informed of a still more significant event. The solemn anointing and coronation of young King Charles IX was duly celebrated in the cathedral of
Rheims according to immemorial usage, the Cardinal of Lorraine, as archbishop of the city, officiating and saying mass, and the twelve peers of the kingdom assisting. But no inconsiderable number of the nobles, and these among the most powerful, absented themselves, and their absence was known to be for no other reason than their unwillingness to countenance a worship which they had come to repudiate as idolatrous. Of the number were the Prince of Condé, Admiral Coligny, the Duke of Longueville, Marshal Montmorency, and his brother Damville. Moreover men noticed that, on the part of most of those noblemen who attended, there was little or no reverence paid at the solemn moment of the elevation of the host. “So far forth, thanks be to God, is true religion in this country!” exclaimed the Earl of Hertford, an eyewitness.

At this time, it may be observed, a little frank espousal of the Protestant cause on the part of Queen Elizabeth, a few unmistakable words declaring her firm purpose never to return to the Roman Catholic Church, might possibly have decided the French noblemen that still wavered between the two religions. As it was, the pope, the Emperor, and the King of Spain received confident assurances from England itself that there would be no difficulty in making the queen change her religion, and Elizabeth’s envoy informed her that when a Protestant spoke on the subject to Cardinal Lorraine and Mary of Scots, these “made their advantage of the cross and candles in your [Queen Elizabeth’s] chapel, saying you were not yet fully resolved of what religion you should be.” Yet, with or without the aid of Elizabeth’s example, the Protestants were becoming more and more bold. Old proscriptive laws could no longer be executed. Protestants would assemble for worship. When, a little later, the Queen of Navarre journeyed by short stages to court, she had preaching services in her presence wherever she stopped. Then the attendance was marvelous. Fifteen thousand persons joined with her at Orleans in partaking of the Holy Communion. The city had declared itself of the new sect, according to the Venetian Suriano.

Earnest Roman Catholics were startled and discouraged, not least of all the papal nuncio, the Bishop of Viterbo. So sure was he that everything was going to rack and ruin, that he sought and obtained his recall. His successor, Cardinal Santa Cruce, was a man who never lost heart and who came determined to win in spite of all difficulties. Yet it may be noted that, before he had been many months in the country, the correspondence of even this sanguine personage took on almost precisely the same mournful tone as that for which he had criticized his predecessor, and he too was begging to be permitted to return to Rome, in order that he might not witness with his own eyes the funeral obsequies of an unfortunate kingdom.

The one thing that pope and nuncio, priests and cardinals, united in dreading as the direst of catastrophes was the very thing which Huguenots and patriots with equal unanimity desired as the consummation of all their hopes—that liberty of conscience and of religious worship might at length be conceded. But, at the bare suggestion that the “heretics” should be publicly heard in defense of their erroneous views, bigots were beside themselves with anger. The only way to deal with such accursed men was to condemn them offhand
and without a hearing, lest their insinuating words should infect others with the poison of heresy. Laymen added their influence to that of clergymen in dissuading the government from making a dangerous experiment. On the eve of the colloquy respecting which we are next to speak, Catharine de' Medici, who had, or feigned that she had, the highest respect for the Doge of Venice, while she was suspicious of everybody else, asked advice of Suriano, the Doge's ambassador. The latter gave the customary recommendation—to temporize, to keep things as quiet as possible, to resort now and then, as occasion demanded, to persuasion or admonition, to use a little severity, to gain over by gifts and by promises. But when the queen-mother somewhat shamefacedly admitted that it had been agreed that Theodore Beza should have a hearing in the convocation of the bishops, and that she had hopes of gaining him over in one or another of the ways which the ambassador had just suggested, Suriano demurred, "In order that she might never be able to assert that this course had ever been counseled or approved by me, I told her that the Canons had expressly forbidden disputing or treating with heretics, and that the bishops would fall under censure. Such a proceeding would be the source of scandal and peril. If it is desired to gain Beza in this way, it were better done privately in a room." Catharine replying that the bishops were themselves satisfied with the contemplated arrangement, the ambassador stood his ground, and could only reiterate his strong belief that privacy was better than publicity, and that in any case, only a few persons should be permitted to be present at the colloquy.

Of assurances that no important changes would be made, indeed, no changes at all affecting the religion professed by the kings of France, predecessors of the present occupant of the throne—of assurances that the obedience of France to the pope would be maintained to the utmost and that no attempt would be made to alienate the property of the Church—of such assurances Catharine de' Medici was prodigal enough. But whether any reliance could be placed on her word was doubtful. The trouble with her and with her council was that they were as ready to unsay as to say, and that they did not hesitate, when convenient, to deny that they had ever uttered any of their previous assertions.

The queen-mother was, in the estimation of all well-informed men, timid and irresolute. Whether she would favor or oppose the progress of the Reformed religion, was a question which it was at the time impossible to answer with certainty, simply because the decision ultimately reached would not be made according to principles fixed and stable, but must depend upon motives of expediency shifting with the apparent demands of the hour. Of settled convictions upon moral or religious matters she had, or appeared to have, few or none. She was profoundly ignorant respecting doctrine.

"I do not believe," says Suriano, "that her Majesty understands what is meant by the word dogmas, but I suspect that, like others who every day want to dispute concerning religion—all of them, or at least the greater part of them, ignorant people—she confuses dogmas, rites, and abuses, as if they were all one and the
same thing. Hence there arises every form of confusion in their disputes and, possibly, also in their opinions."

But if Catharine de’ Medici was timid and irresolute, there were others who had fully made up their minds and had the courage inspired by their convictions. The King of Navarre might waver and ultimately throw in his lot with the enemies of the Reformation, but his younger brother, Condé, had no hesitation. Nor was there hesitation on the part of the three brothers Chastillon—the Admiral of Coligny, d’Andelot, and the reforming cardinal, who though he still wore the red robe as a member of the Roman Sacred College, was, as we have seen, not afraid to celebrate the Holy Communion and at a later time to take to himself a wife, and, during his residence at Queen Elizabeth’s court, to do efficient work in the interest of the Huguenots and of the other Protestants of the Continent. And, behind these and other important nobles, stood a great body of men, titled and untitled, the majority unknown as yet to the world, though, as the most virtuous and intelligent element of the population, exerting a quiet influence, willing and ready, however, should the occasion come, to suffer loss of property and even death in attestation of their faith.

The times had clearly changed essentially since Beza retired from the kingdom and sought a refuge in hospitable Geneva. True, the battle for religious liberty was not yet won. Legislation was still hostile in the extreme. It was no easy thing for a judge to be both equitable and observant of the law; and between the dictates of the bloodthirsty edicts, as yet unrepealed, and the dictates of natural justice reinforced by a powerful public sentiment in favor of more leniency in dealing with respectable citizens whose only fault was that they did not believe what the greater part of the nation believed or imagined that they believed, the parliaments as well as the lower courts exhibited a singular record of inconsistency verging upon absurdity. Of all the incidents of the year of Beza’s return to France, indeed, the most inconsistent and absurd was the publication of a fresh law, known from the time of its issue as the Edict of July—little better than an anachronism, inasmuch as at a juncture imperatively calling for the supply of relief, it reenacted severe penalties against all such as should attend conventicles where there was preaching or where the sacraments were administered. The best that could be said for it was that the measure was evidently of a temporary character, a sop thrown to the priests to gain a brief respite from their incessant complaints of the indulgence shown to dissent.

Meanwhile the government had, some months before, so far yielded to the insistence of the friends of progress as to decide definitely that an opportunity should at last be afforded the Protestants of meeting with their opponents and setting forth their views and the grounds of those views. Even the time had been fixed. In an interview which Admiral Coligny held with the ambassador of Queen Elizabeth by appointment at a place three leagues distant from Fontainebleau, on the 24th of April, he informed him in profound secrecy, “that yesterday it was resolved, in Council, that in August next the king would assemble his clergy and keep a National Council in France for religion. And as the Queen of England had dissuaded the king from accepting the Council of
Trent and [urged him] to desire one in his own realm, where things might be handled with more sincerity, and it was said that the queen would assist him therein, it is now thought that she will show herself a good friend to the king and to the promotion of true religion, if she will send some of her best learned divines to this assembly, and exhort the Princes Protestant to do the like."

It is very certain, however, that if such were the hopes of Coligny and other leaders of the Reformed faith, Catherine de’ Medici never had the idea of inviting either Elizabeth or any German prince to be represented in a French National Council, nor indeed of holding any Council at all in which Protestants should sit as members. As it was, about the same time as the other two orders of the kingdom were in session in the so-called states-general at Pontoise, she summoned all the bishops of France to meet in the neighboring convent of Poissy, at a convenient distance from the royal castle of Saint Germain en Laye. In justification of her action in calling these representatives of the clergy to consider the present religious situation of France without waiting for the General Council of the Church, which was the great desire of her heart, she excused herself by alleging that she had no intention to make any innovations in ecclesiastical matters, and consequently no intention to do anything at which the pope could take umbrage.

"But," said she, "those who are extremely ill are excusable if they apply all sorts of remedies to alleviate their pain when unendurable, the meantime waiting for the good physician, which I esteem must be a good Council, for so furious and dangerous a disease of which those may speak with more boldness who feel it and are most affected by it."

Moreover she defended herself for inviting the Protestant ministers, by calling attention to the admirable opportunity that would be offered to convince them of the error of their ways!

"Having been requested by the greater part of the nobles and commons of this kingdom, a few months ago, to grant a hearing to the ministers scattered in various cities of this kingdom, on their Confession of Faith," she wrote to the French ambassador at the court of the Emperor, "I was advised to do so by my brother, the King of Navarre, the rest of the princes of the blood, and the members of the council of the king my son. Long and mature deliberation has convinced me that in such great troubles there is no better or more effective means of leading the ministers to abandon their views and of drawing off their adherents than to make their teaching known and discover what errors and heresies it contains."

It was determined therefore for the first time that the Protestants of France should be heard in defense of their doctrine—a very simple and natural thing, which they had been asking for years with persistence, yet a thing which their enemies had as persistently opposed and denied. They still opposed it, on the present occasion, with one solitary exception. Cardinal Lorraine, strange to say, was quite willing that the Protestants should make a public appearance through their chosen representatives, taking, in fact, so different an attitude from that of his colleagues in the Sacred College as to lay himself open to not a
little suspicion. We shall see further on whether this suspicion was well grounded.

Undoubtedly, when the Protestants began to look for the man best qualified to represent them at Poissy, their minds turned instinctively to John Calvin, than whom no other was mentally or morally better equipped—a native Frenchmen, moreover, who had never lost his interest in the land of his birth, but was more active than any other man alive in promoting by his voice and by his pen the progress of the Reformation in France. Calvin, however, was not to be thought of for an instant. With all their affection for him, the ministers of the Church of Paris distinctly told him so and gave him their reasons. "We see no means of having you here," they wrote him, "without grave peril, in view of the rage which all the enemies of the Gospel have conceived against you, and the disturbances which your name alone would excite in this country, were you known to be present. In fact, the admiral [Coligny] is by no means in favor of your undertaking the journey, and we have learned with certainty that the queen [Catherine de’ Medici] would not relish seeing you. She says frankly that she would not pledge herself for your safety, as for that of the rest. On the other hand, the enemies of the Gospel assert that they would be glad to listen to all the other [Reformers], but that, as for you, they could not bring themselves to hear you or to look at you. You see, sir, in what esteem you are held by these venerable prelates. I suspect that you will not be much grieved by it, nor consider yourself dishonored by being so viewed by such gentry."

On the contrary, there existed among the adherents of the Roman Catholic party no such inveterate prejudice against Beza. Men had not forgotten that he was once addicted to the lighter forms of literature and was a graceful poet. He would not be out of his native element in the royal court. He might not equal Calvin in his mastery of the science of theology, but he would be a more acceptable disputant. The believers of Paris wrote urging him to come; so did also the Prince of Condé and Admiral Coligny, who, although as yet unknown to him as a correspondent, not only sent him a letter but dispatched a trusty agent to lay before him the absolute need of him in which Protestant France stood. As to the King of Navarre, he declared with his usual impetuosity that Beza had no friend at court to whom his appearance would be more grateful than to him, and he promised cheerfully to do everything in his power for the Reformer.

Still Beza delayed his coming. This is not surprising. The Edict of July, to which reference has been made, was poor evidence of any intention on the part of the court to deal fairly by Protestantism, whose condition, so far as public worship was concerned, it rendered worse rather than better. The Protestants at Paris were nearly in despair. The colloquy of prelates was in session and the time was short. Men began to say that the Protestants would not dare to appear before so goodly a company and stand up for their errors. Should the colloquy finish its business and adjourn without their having presented themselves to maintain the cause of the Gospel, the mouths of the malevolent would be open to decry their pusillanimity and asperse their religion. The princes hitherto favorable would be disgusted. Catherine de’ Medici, never
slow to make cutting speeches, was already saying to one and another that she
would never be able to persuade herself that the Reformers had any right on
their side if they failed to seize the opportunity offered them to manifest and
maintain the grounds of their faith. We have an earnest letter in which the
Protestants of Paris laid the situation before Beza, imploring him to make no
tarrying, and assuring him that the Edict of July—better understood at home
than it could be understood at a distance—had been simply made to satisfy King
Philip of Spain and the pope and to extract money from the purses of the
reluctant prelates of Poissy—bad motives, doubtless, but containing nothing to
discourage the advocates of the truth. Nor was this all. Antoine of Navarre
again wrote by a special messenger, this time to "the magnificent Lords, the
Syndics and Council of the Seigniory of Geneva," praying them in the most
affectionate manner to consent to send his "dear and well-beloved Theodore de
Bèze," than whom he could ask for no person more highly approved, and to
dispatch him as expeditiously as possible "to the end that his delay might not
hinder the progress of so good a work."
It was no longer decent or possible to turn a deaf ear to such appeals. Without
waiting even for a safe-conduct, Beza set off on the 16th of August for the
scene of the coming theological encounter. Six days later he reached Paris.

CHAPTER IX
Reception at Court
The first tidings that awaited Beza upon his arrival in Paris were by no means
encouraging. It is true that he was informed that a number of his colleagues,
delegates of Huguenot Churches, some eight pastors in all, had reached the
court of France before him, and had been received by the king publicly and
with the utmost kindness. Charles was pleased to permit them to present him a
petition, and assured them, meanwhile looking upon them "with a very goodly
countenance," that he would communicate their requests to his council and
reply to them by his chancellor. And, inasmuch as these requests were to the
effect that their avowed enemies, the ecclesiastics, should not be permitted to
act as their judges, but that the king himself should preside at the approaching
colloquy, and that the Sacred Scriptures in their Hebrew and Greek originals
should form the sole ground for the decision of controverted points, it must be
confessed that the Protestants might well be pardoned for entertaining
sanguine expectations of the issue. But, on the other hand, there came news of
plots on the part of their antagonists, no longer, as was believed, vain rumors,
but ascertained facts. A still more tangible cause for apprehension was that the
very chief of their enemies—the same Duke of Guise who, after the enactment
of the intolerant Edict of July, boasted that his sword would never rest in its
scabbard when the execution of this law was concerned—expected to reach the
royal court on the morrow, at the head of a powerful band of friends and
retainers. Well might Beza write to Calvin, when he had been but a few hours
in Paris, that he did not know but that he had fallen rather upon a civil war
than upon a peaceable conference.
To feelings of discouragement must soon have succeeded more cheerful emotions. The King of France and his court had for some time been at his castle or palace of Saint Germain, or, as it was designated more particularly, in order to distinguish it from the six- or seven-score places bearing the name of one of the most popular worthies in the Roman Catholic calendar, Saint Germain en Laye. The very day of Beza’s arrival at Paris, a messenger rode in haste to convey to the expectant and delighted Huguenot nobles about his Majesty, the welcome intelligence that the man upon whom, more than upon any other, they depended in the approaching struggle, was safe and ready to come to their aid. The distance yet to be traversed by the Genevese Reformer was but fourteen miles. Before nightfall a return messenger was dispatched to beg him to come at once to the royal court. Accordingly, the next day (August 23), Beza set forth on horseback, accompanied by a cavalcade of friendly Huguenots, reaching in time for the evening meal the abode of the Cardinal of Chastillon at Saint Germain, where he and the delegates of the French Protestant Churches were to be hospitably entertained.

He was not allowed to eat in peace, so anxious were his friends to see him and so pressing were the invitations to come to the castle or palace. A flattering reception awaited him. On entering he was met by the new Chancellor of France, not so famous now as he was destined shortly to become, nor so thoroughly understood to be a lover of country and of toleration, the learned and venerable Michel de l’Hôpital. That great man coveted the honor of introducing Beza at the French court, as Beza clearly saw and afterwards wrote down; but the Reformer, not recognizing the great heart of l’Hôpital, and the great patriotism which that heart contained, was wary and suspicious. There was no time, however, for conference. At the door of the chamber into which he passed, Beza found himself confronted with a number of the grandees of the kingdom. First came the great admiral, Gaspard de Coligny, whom he had barely time to salute before the King of Navarre and his brother, the Prince of Condé, threw themselves upon him, “with a very great affection, it seemed to me,” as Beza, who by this time was tolerably well acquainted with the shallow and untrustworthy character of the elder Bourbon, noted not without some pardonable misgivings. Meanwhile, two prelates drew near, the cardinals of Bourbon and of Chastillon, both of whom offered him their hands. It were to be wished that Beza had found space to relate, in his letter to Calvin, all that was said, for the little that he did set down is enough to show that in quickness and in tact he was quite ready for the occasion. As he grasped the proffered hand of Cardinal Bourbon, he could not deny himself the satisfaction of protesting, doubtless with a mischievous twinkle of the eye, that he, Beza, had undergone no change since—at Nérac, a year ago—the prelate had declined to speak to him, for fear of being excommunicated. The poor cardinal, in his embarrassment, could only answer that he was desirous of understanding matters in truth, to which Beza naturally replied by begging Bourbon to abide by his purpose and by offering his own services to that end. A discussion had almost begun, but both saw that it was no suitable time for controversy, and stopped. To Bourbon’s brother, the King of Navarre, Beza playfully, yet
earnestly, observed that he greatly feared that his Majesty would soon be less joyful at his arrival, unless he (the king) made up his mind to change his present course of action. To this Antoine replied by an outburst of laughter, and Beza in turn confined himself to assuring him that the words were spoken in all seriousness and that he would do well to think upon the matter. Such, almost in Beza’s own words, were the incidents of the first few minutes of his stay at Saint Germain. New honors awaited him. He was conducted by a company “far greater than he could have expected,” to pay his respects to the Princess of Condé and to the wife of Admiral Coligny. The next day, which was Sunday, in the lodgings of the Prince of Condé, and in the presence of a large and honorable company that had assembled to hear him, the Genevese Reformer preached a Protestant discourse. At that very moment the prince himself was joining with the Duke of Guise, before the queen-mother and the royal council, in a solemn act of amity and reconciliation. The Duke of Guise solemnly asseverated that he was in nowise the cause or author of the prince’s imprisonment at Orleans, and when the prince had declared that he held to be wicked all that had been its cause, the duke positively asserted that he thought so too, and that the matter did not concern him at all. It was a farce, whose insincerity was transparent to all eyes, played with scarcely an attempt, on the part of the actors, to conceal its worthlessness. All that it effected was to permit the prince and the duke to meet in the ordinary intercourse of life with the semblance of having buried all recollection of the unfortunate Tumult of Amboise and of the subsequent counterplot to destroy the Bourbon princes in the last hours of the reign of Francis II. That day the Protestant deputies received from the king a favorable reply to the petition which has already been referred to. They were assured, although the promise was not as yet in writing and in authentic form, that they should be admitted to an audience and that their opponents should not be suffered to act as their judges.

At about nine o’clock in the evening, Beza was summoned to the chamber of the King of Navarre. Great was his surprise, on entering, to find that, instead of Antoine alone, there were gathered the queen-mother, Catherine de’ Medici, Prince Condé, the Duke d’Étampes, Cardinals Bourbon and Lorraine, and one or two ladies of the court. Startled though he was and possibly suspecting some snare laid for him, the Reformer did not lose his self-possession and promptly addressed himself to Catherine. In a few words he laid before her the reason of his coming to France. This was in brief his earnest desire to be of service to his native land. The queen-mother replied courteously and kindly, expressing her very great joy should a conclusion in very deed be reached that might procure peace and quiet to the realm. Thus far there was not a ripple to disturb the interview. Apparently Cardinal Lorraine did not intend that it should end so amicably. After some complimentary words, in which he acknowledged the intellectual ability of the newcomer, he added that he had hitherto known Beza merely by his writings, but now that he had come, he exhorted him to study the peace and concord of the kingdom. As Beza had heretofore afflicted France, he now had it in his
power to assuage her woes. The taunt did not pass unanswered. Again Beza protested the fervency of his desire to serve his king and his country. It stood next only to his desire to serve his God. "So great a kingdom as France," he said, "has nothing to fear in the way of disturbance from my slender abilities. Nay, the idea of such a thing has ever been as alien as possible from my thoughts. My writings have shown this, and a comparison of their contents will make it plain." "Have you written anything in French?" asked the queen-mother. To this Beza replied, "I have written a translation of the Psalms, and a certain Answer to the Confession of the Duke of Northumberland." Catherine’s question, it came out, had been occasioned by the circulation in France of an insulting song, ascribed to Beza as its author, the previous year. Beza positively and at some length denied that the song in question emanated from him. The mention of defamatory books brought on a theological discussion. "I have at Poissy," said the cardinal, "a book attributed to you, treating of the Sacrament, in which you assert what seems to me an absurdity, that Christ is as much to be sought in the Lord’s Supper as before He was born of the Virgin. Moreover, I am told, although this I am not willing to affirm, as I have never seen the book, that you state that Christ is not more in Cæna than in Cæno" (a play upon words, signifying "not more in the Supper than in the mire"). At this the queen-mother and the other listeners were evidently moved, but Beza quietly replied that, when, the books were produced, he would not disavow them, if they were his. As to the two propositions which the cardinal had referred to, the sense of the former might be true, although only an inspection of the book would show that; but the latter could not be found either in his books or in those of anyone else possessed of the slightest intelligence in the world. "Our Confession of Faith," he added, "proves in what reverence we hold the Sacraments."

The discussion drifted into an argument respecting the meaning of the words of our Lord in the institution of His Supper. "I teach the children of my diocese," said the cardinal, "when they are asked the question, ‘What is the bread in the Supper?’ to answer that it is the body of Christ. Do you find fault with this?" "Why should I not approve the words of Christ?" replied Beza. "But the question is, ‘In what way is the bread called the body of Christ?’" Hereupon he proceeded to set forth his own and the Reformed view—namely, that the signs used retain their original nature, the bread continuing to be bread and the wine to be wine; that the thing signified in the Sacrament is the very body of Christ affixed to the cross and His very blood poured out on the cross; that the bread and water used are not common bread and water, from which, however, they differ only in that they become visible signs of the body and blood of Christ; that therefore the body and blood of Christ, so far as they are truly given and communicated, are truly present in the use of the Supper, not, as they are esteemed to be, under, or in, or with the bread, or anywhere else than in heaven whither Christ has ascended, that there He may reside, so far as appertains to His human nature, until He shall return to judge the quick and the dead; finally, that, in the Communion, the visible signs are given us to be taken by the hand, to be eaten, to be drunk in a natural manner, but, so far as
the thing signified is concerned, that is, the body and blood of Christ, they are
offered indeed to all, but they cannot be partaken of, save spiritually and by
faith, not by the hand, not by the mouth.
Once and again in the course of the conversation, the cardinal expressed his
acquiescence in the doctrine propounded. He rejoiced greatly, he said, to hear
that these were the sentiments of Beza and his friends, for he had understood
that they had thought differently. At one point he expressed a hope that for
himself he might retain the doctrine of Transubstantiation; yet he conceded
that it might be omitted by the theologians, and he indeed would be unwilling
that there should be a schism in the churches because of Transubstantiation.
Later on, he protested that he was not urgent in behalf of Transubstantiation
and admitted that Christ must be sought for in heaven. In fact he plainly
showed to the skilled disputant with whom he had to do that his views were by
no means settled, and that he had no true mastery of the subject. His time, he
said, had been taken up with other studies. At length he went so far as to say,
"I am unpracticed in discussions of this kind, but you lave heard what I would
say." "And you in like manner," returned Beza, "have heard from me what
should satisfy you. I sum all up thus: The bread is the body of Christ
sacramentally, that is, although that body is today in heaven and nowhere else,
yet the signs are with us upon the earth. Yet just so truly is that body given to
us, and just so truly is it partaken of by us through faith, and that to life
eternal because of God's promise, as the sign is naturally extended to our
hands."
Beza's statement contented, or seemed to content, the cardinal. Turning to
the queen-mother, who had sat through the long discussion, "Madam," he said,
"I believe so too, and this satisfies me." Whereupon Beza also addressed her
and exclaimed, "Behold then those wretched 'Sacramentarians' so long vexed
and borne down with all sorts of calumnies!"
There was an animated scene for a moment. Catharine de' Medici, overjoyed,
was not silent. "Do you hear, my lord cardinal, that the opinion of the
Sacramentarians is none other than that which you yourself have approved?"
She added a few words about union and conciliation. Cardinal Lorraine himself
congratulated the Reformer and said these very words to him: "Monsieur de
Bèze, I have greatly rejoiced to see and hear you. I adjure you, in God's name,
to let me understand your reasons and that you also understand mine. And you
will not find me so black as some people make me to be." Beza thanked him
and in turn begged him not to desist from pursuing the path of conciliation,
professing his own purpose to use for this end every gift God had conferred
upon him. Thus the disputants separated and the little gathering broke up. Not,
however, before witty Madame de Cursol, one of the auditors, who understood
the cardinal well, had taken his hand as she bade him good-night with the
significant words: "Good man for this evening, but tomorrow, what?" With a
true intuition she foresaw precisely what came to pass. Scarceley had the next
morning come when the cardinal was boasting that he had overcome Beza and
brought him over to his opinion.
All these particulars we learn from a letter which Beza dispatched to Calvin the following evening. Upon the receipt of it, Calvin, not a little amused at Lorraine’s pretended friendship, wrote to warn Beza not to trust the prelate’s professions. Thirteen years before, he told him, a papal legate, the Cardinal of Ferrara, had imposed upon him (Calvin), lavishing caresses upon him and promising to be the best of friends. And he added playfully his advice that Beza should not display any over- elation because of Cardinal Lorraine’s effusive demonstration, nor assume lordly airs towards him, his fellow Reformer, in view of the circumstance that Calvin could so easily retaliate, particularly inasmuch as a papal legate is the superior of any and every simple cardinal. Meanwhile it looked as if the Parisian Protestants might have spared themselves the feverish haste with which they sent for Beza, and that Beza himself might have come by slower stages. The prelates were in no hurry to meet either the representatives of the Protestant Churches or the Reformer from Geneva. They had been in session for three weeks. Instead of any more imposing designation, which would, if it approached the notion of a national synod, have excited the ire of the pope, their coming together had, as we have seen, been styled a colloquy, that is, a more or less informal conference. Their time had thus far been spent to little profit—in angry wrangling over such matters as the discipline of the Church, the number of priests, the dignity of the episcopate and of cathedral churches, and the reformation of the monastic rules. They were fully determined, after they had settled all these matters, to adjourn and go home, without giving the slightest attention to the true object for which they had been convened. Happily, Catharine de’ Medici was for the time under the influence of good advisers, among whom were prominent the liberal Bishop of Valence and the new chancellor, Michel de l’Hôpital. The one or the other of these two men was probably the true author of a letter which Catharine had recently sent to the pope over her own signature, outlining the radical changes which she regarded as necessary concessions to the spirit of the times. Being ready to give up image worship, the denial of the cup to the laity in the Lord’s Supper, the use of the Latin language in public worship, the practice of the celebration of private masses, and other abuses to which the bigots clung tenaciously, she was not likely to listen with patience to the protests of a few bishops who had the effrontery to propose to disperse without giving a moment’s consideration to the vital questions that were occupying the serious thoughts of a great part of France and threatened to create a lasting schism. But the delays were interminable, and the air was full of rumors that the Protestants would either fail of obtaining the hearing for which they had been brought to Saint Germain, or, if heard at all, would be heard in such a manner as to defeat the very object in view. The dilatory government was brought to the necessity of instant decision when, on the eighth of September, Beza, having been fully sixteen days at Saint Germain, the Protestant ministers, envoys of the churches, presented themselves before Catharine de’ Medici, and respectfully but firmly demanded that impartial treatment which they had been promised, and
assured her that they would immediately leave unless measures were taken to
defeat the machinations of their enemies. Whatever hesitation Catharine had displayed at once disappeared. Before being
dismissed from her presence, the ministers had the satisfaction of seeing
informal action taken by the members of the royal council that were present,
granting essentially all the Protestant requests. The prelates would not be their
judges. The minutes of the proceedings would be reduced to writing by one of
the secretaries of state, but to this official record the Protestants might add
notes or comments of their own. The young king, Charles IX, would be present,
in company with the princes of the blood. To this determination Catharine
remained firm. The Sorbonne, or theological faculty of the University of Paris,
sent some of their number to wait upon her, entreating her to give no audience
to heretics, whose teachings the Church had heretofore often condemned, or,
At least, if she would hear them herself, not to suffer her young son’s
orthodoxy to be jeopardized by exposure to such infection. But Catharine was
inflexible. The conference was appointed for the morrow, and Charles IX and
his suite were to hear what the Reformers had to say for themselves and for
their teachings.

CHAPTER X
Speech at the Colloquy of Poissy

The occurrence which is next to be described constitutes one of the critical
events in the history of the Reformation in France. Its importance can scarcely
be exaggerated. The adherents of the Reformed Churches had one standing grievance to allege
against the established Church and against the government which in the
religious domain did little more than carry out the suggestions of that Church. They maintained that the faith they professed was rational and Scriptural. Each
separate doctrine was based upon some distinct utterance of the Word of God. Instead of being newly invented, their belief was the original belief of the
Christian Church. Upon every point where it differed from the present creed
and the current practice, antiquity was in their favor. Their opponents who
cloaked themselves with the pretense of following immemorial usage were
themselves innovators, since they upheld a system that came into existence
long after the times of the Apostles, so that at best it was fairly entitled only
to the designation of inveterate error. These Protestant claims appeared to the
multitude and even to the greater part of educated men at first sight strange
and paradoxical, for they involved an overturning of all preconceived notions. But the Reformers did not ask to be believed on their own simple assertion.
From the greatest to the least they offered to prove the truth of their
statements by the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Their adversaries stopped their ears. They would not listen to the Protestants
when living and still less when dying. If a martyr undertook to vindicate the
doctrine for which he was suffering the torture of slow death by fire, his voice
was conveniently drowned by the incessant beating of drums, unless, indeed, a
gag of wood or iron had already been forced into his mouth to impose silence upon him.

All that the Reformers asked of the ruling powers was to be heard. If they could but gain the ear of the king, they made sure that their arguments were so convincing, the truth so patent, that there could be little fear of the result. If he would listen kindly, candidly, impartially, they cared little for anything else; but they insisted that he and no one else should preside at the audience, and that their enemies should not pronounce upon the truth or falsity of their allegations. If this last was to be the case, that is, if the "Gospel," as they confidently styled their doctrine, was to be granted a pretended hearing only to be subjected to the indignity of a prearranged humiliation and defeat—in this case, and in this case alone, they were resolved to refuse to plead. Even personal affront was of little account, so long as it affected them alone. Only let the Word have a fair hearing. All else was immaterial.

It will be seen that just this personal affront was to be offered them in the coming encounter. Strange to say, John Calvin had predicted, some ten years before, the very insult which was put upon the Reformers at Poissy, and had then expressed in their name a willingness to endure it. For when, on January 24, 1551, he dedicated to young King Edward VI of England his Commentary on the Catholic Epistles of the New Testament, he exclaimed with reference to the attitude of inferiority in which the enemies of the Reformation so persistently sought to place its friends, "Then let them sit, provided we are heard, declaring the Truth while standing."

It was therefore with no slight sense of the importance of the occasion, and with a hearty prayer to Heaven for help to make good use of it, that, about ten o’clock on the morning of Tuesday, September 9, 1561, Theodore Beza set out for Poissy, escorted by a strong detachment of about one hundred horsemen, sent as a bodyguard to preclude the possibility of any such treacherous attack as, in the present excited condition of the public mind, would have been nothing less than a national disaster. With him rode, also on horseback, those faithful and courageous men, the ministers and the representatives of the churches to whom had been prayerfully entrusted such a commission as all felt it had never before been the privilege and responsibility of any similar body of men to discharge. It is not probable that, even without Beza, they would have proved unequal to the task of setting forth with clearness and force the Protestant side in the great controversy. In an age much addicted to discussion, these were picked men, whose equals, for learning as well as natural ability, could scarcely have been found, man for man, throughout the kingdom. Three or four ministers stood forth preeminent. Augustin Marlorat, of Rouen, was the distinguished man who after the siege and capture of the capital of Normandy, not much over a year later, in the first civil war, was judicially murdered for his religion’s sake by the provincial Parliament. Nicholas des Gallars was the well-known pastor of the French refugees at London. John Raymond Merlin, a skillful professor of Hebrew at Geneva, was that same chaplain of Admiral Coligny who was as by a miracle saved from the dagger when, in 1572, his patron was assassinated at the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew’s Day, and who
subsequently, when lying in the garret into which in his fight he had fallen, was
as strangely saved from starvation by the hen that daily came and laid an egg
for his supply. François de Saint Paul, more famed as a theologian, came from
distant Provence, where he was honored as the founder of more than one
church.
The distance from the castle of Saint Germain to the nuns’ convent at Poissy is
possibly a little over three miles. A straight and broad avenue led from the one
place to the other, cutting off the greater part of the extensive forest of Saint
Germain on the right from the small portion that lay on the left hand. It
required less than half an hour for Beza to reach his destination. The Duke of
Guise, to whom this duty had been assigned, received him with as gracious an
aspect as he could assume and handed him and his associates over to the
conduct of the captain of the royal guard. Following the latter, they were
subsequently ushered into the presence of Charles IX.
The large refectory of the conventual edifice had been prepared for the
unusual meeting, as best it could be, at short notice. A quaint engraving of the
time, which Montfaucon has reproduced in his *Monuments de la Monarchie
Françoise*, may help us to form an idea of the place in which were assembled
all the most distinguished personages of France.
The tables of the nuns ran along the sides of the room, the table of the abbess
along the side farthest from the spectator as he entered. In front of this table
sat a number of great lords in a row, and before them in turn the princes of the
blood royal. In advance of these were six detached seats, places of highest
honor. Here sat young King Charles IX, with his younger brother (the future
Henry III), and Antoine, King of Navarre, on his right, while the seats to his left
were occupied by his mother, Catherine de’ Medici, his sister, Margaret of
Valois, future bride of Henry IV, and Jeanne d’Albrét, Queen of Navarre. Chairs
had been arranged for the six French cardinals that were in attendance at
court, in two rows facing one another and somewhat nearer the door. On the
spectator’s right were Cardinals Armagnac, Bourbon, and Guise; on his left
Cardinals Tournon, Chastillon, and Lorraine, with the High Chancellor of
France, Michel de l’Hôpital, sitting between the last two. In three rows on
benches advancing towards the spectator’s left hand were gathered bishops
and doctors, while other dignitaries of the same grade occupied a similar
position on his right. More toward the center of the room were a table and
seats for the secretaries of state.
No seats had been provided for Beza and his companions, the Protestant
ministers and delegates, to occupy on their arrival. Swiss guards, in their
picturesque costume, and bodyguards of the king stood on either side of the
entrance; and the lower end of the hall was crowded with men curious to
witness and listen to the proceedings.
Charles IX, being a boy of eleven years of age, opened the session with the few
simple words which he had been instructed by his mother to utter, and bade
the chancellor to set forth the object for which the conference had been
appointed. Thus directed, Michel de l’Hôpital, seating himself on a stool,
"pretty far forward in the hall toward the right side," made an appropriate address.

"Both the king’s predecessors," said he, "and the king himself have tried every means, forcible and mild, to reunite his people so unfortunately divided by a diversity of opinions. Neither force nor mildness has been of much avail. Consequently the division long since begun has been succeeded by a capital enmity between his Majesty’s subjects, from which, unless God supplies some prompt and quick remedy, only the entire ruin of the State is to be apprehended. It is for this reason that, following the example of the action of former monarchs in similar straits, the king has called you together, that he may communicate to you his need of counsel and help. Before all things else, he begs you, so far as possible, to devise the means of appeasing God, whose anger is certainly provoked, and of rooting out and removing whatever has offended Him. And should it be found that, through the sloth and avarice of those that are in charge of His service, there have crept in abuses contrary to God’s Word, contrary to the prescriptions of the Holy Apostles and the ancient constitutions of the Church, his Majesty begs you, so far as your authority extends, to put forth your hands with a resolution that shall take away from your enemies the occasion upon which they have laid hold to speak ill of you and to draw the people away from your obedience. Look also to all that may reform both your lives and the administration of your charges.

"Now, inasmuch as the diversity of opinions is the principal ground of troubles and seditions, the king, following in this the decisions of the two meetings heretofore held, has granted a safe-conduct to the ministers of the new sect, in the hope that a kindly and gracious conference with them may be of great advantage. I therefore beg this entire company to receive them as a father receives his children, and to take pains to teach and instruct them. Then, should the opposite of what was hoped for come to pass, and no means be found to bring them back or to unite us all, it will not, at least, be possible hereafter to say, as has been said in the past, that they have been condemned without having been heard. When this dispute shall have been faithfully reported and published throughout the kingdom, as it really was held, the people will be able to understand that it is for good, just, and certain reasons, and not by force or authority, that this doctrine has been rejected and condemned. Meantime his Majesty promises to be, as all the king’s predecessors have always been, in everything and everywhere, the protector and defender of his Church."

Scarcely had the chancellor concluded his temperate speech when Tournon, the oldest of the cardinals present, arose and addressed the king before l’Hôpital could carry out his purpose to summon the Protestants. In spite of every rebuff, the bigots had not lost courage and strove at the last moment to prevent the promised conference from taking place. The cardinal was presiding officer of the assembled clergy, both in virtue of seniority and by rank. For he was dean of the college of Roman cardinals and primate of France by reason of his archbishopric of Lyons, to which the primacy was attached. He thanked the king and his mother for their presence, and briefly complimented the
chancellor upon a speech which he said was so learned, so wise, and so well constructed that it could not be surpassed. He added that he had come prepared to answer all the chief points in the letters of convocation sent to the prelates, but that now a number of questions of prime importance had just been raised, to which he professed his unwillingness and his inability to reply offhand. He must consult with his colleagues, and he asked for a written copy of the chancellor’s propositions. This request l’Hôpital denied, saying that everybody had had the opportunity to hear them. Tournon then insisted, on the ground that he needed the paper especially for the benefit of such bishops as had not been present at Poissy and were coming in from day to day. But l’Hôpital refused to accord the dilatory motion and ordered the Protestants to present themselves and speak.

At the word, Theodore Beza and the delegates who had chosen him to be their spokesman were brought into the hall by the captain of the king’s guard, and came forward until their farther advance was stopped by a rail barring their nearer approach to the king and to the gathered dignitaries of his court and Church. Petty malice had planned the arrangement in order to give to the Protestant ministers the aspect of accused persons who were permitted to clear themselves of crimes laid to their charge, or of culprits about to be sentenced to condign punishment. Of petty malice, sooth to say, this was by no means the: only manifestation. “Here come the Genevese curs!” spitefully exclaimed one of the cardinals, in tones loud enough to be heard distinctly by Beza as he entered in company with another minister from the city of Calvin. To whom the courtly Reformer replied with unruffled composure, “Faithful dogs are much needed in the Lord’s sheepfold to bark at the wolves.”

Beza, like his companions, was simply dressed in the long black Genevan gown, worn in public from the time of the Reformation to the present day by the pastors of the Churches of France and French Switzerland. On reaching the rail he stood for an instant and then addressed the young king in these words: “Sire, inasmuch as the issue of all enterprises, both great and small, depends upon the help and favor of our God, and chiefly when these enterprises concern the interests of His service and matters that surpass the capacity of our understandings, we hope that your Majesty will not find it amiss or strange if we begin by the invocation of His name, beseeching Him after the following manner.”

A hush fell upon the entire assembly, as the speaker, ending this exhortation, knelt on the floor and began to repeat the beautiful prayer of Calvin’s liturgy. His colleagues on his right hand and on his left also knelt. This example was contagious. The queen-mother fell on her knees. The cardinals and possibly the bishops arose and stood with uncovered heads while Beza reverently uttered the Huguenot confession of sins and supplication for pardon—the very words that had been used and were still to be used by many a martyr suffering the penalty of death for attending conventicles where this prayer was customarily repeated. His words were:
"Lord God! Almighty and everlasting Father, we acknowledge and confess before Thy holy Majesty that we are miserable sinners, conceived and born in guilt and corruption, prone to do evil, unfit for any good; who, by reason of our depravity, transgress unceasingly Thy holy commandments. Whereby we draw down upon ourselves, by Thy just judgment, ruin and perdition. Nevertheless, O Lord, we are sore displeased that we have offended Thee, and we condemn ourselves and our evil ways, with a true repentance, beseeching Thee that Thy grace may succor our distress. Be pleased, therefore, to have pity upon us, O most gracious God! Father of all mercies! for the sake of Thy Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and only Redeemer. Blot out our sins and our pollution, and set us free, and grant us the daily increase of the graces of Thy Holy Spirit; to the end that, acknowledging from our inmost hearts our unrighteousness, we may be touched with a sorrow that shall work in us true repentance, and that this may cause us to die unto all sin and to bring forth the fruits of righteousness and purity that shall be well pleasing to Thee, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord and only Savior.

"And, inasmuch as it doth please Thee this day so far to exhibit Thy favor to Thy poor and unprofitable servants, as to enable them freely, and in the presence of the king whom Thou hast set over them, and of the most noble and illustrious company on earth, to declare that which Thou hast given them to know of Thy holy truth, may it please Thee to continue the course of Thy goodness and loving-kindness, O God and Father of lights, and so to illumine our understandings, guide our affections, and form them to all teachableness, and so to order our words, that in all simplicity and truth, after having conceived, according to the measure which it shall please Thee to grant unto us, the secret things which Thou hast revealed to men for their salvation, we may be able with heart and with mouth to set forth that which may conduce to the glory and honor of Thy holy name, and the prosperity and greatness of our king and of all those that belong to him, with the rest and comfort of all Christendom, and especially of this kingdom. O Almighty Lord and Father, we ask Thee all these things in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Savior, as He Himself hath taught us to seek them, saying, ‘Our Father, which art in heaven,’” etc.

The solemn confession of sins of the Genevan liturgy, and the equally beautiful prayer of Beza’s own composition with which he had associated it, predisposed his hearers to listen to the eloquent and forcible address to his Majesty that followed.
"Sire," he said, when he had risen from his knees and again stood at the bar, "it is a great happiness for a loyal and affectionate subject to look upon the face of his prince, since it represents to him, as it were, the visible majesty of God, and he cannot therefore but be greatly moved by the sight to consider the obedience and submission that he owes him. But if it so happen, that not only is he permitted to see his prince, but also be seen of him, and, what is of more importance, heard and finally received and approved, then truly is his a very great and peculiar satisfaction.

"Of these four advantages, Sire, it has pleased God in His secret counsels that a part of your very humble and obedient subjects should for a long time have been deprived to their very great regret, until now in His mercy, having heard our continual cries and groans, He has so favored us as to grant us a blessing rather desired than hoped for—the blessing of seeing your Majesty, Sire, and, better still, of being seen and heard by you in the most noble and illustrious company on earth. Should we therefore never receive any other advantage now or hereafter, yet would the remainder of our lives be insufficient duly to thank our God and render worthy praises to your Majesty.

"But when, together with this, we consider that this same day not merely opens the way, but invites us and, after so benignant and gracious a fashion and one so becoming your royal gentleness, constrains us unitedly to testify to our obligation to confess the name of our God, and to declare the obedience we render you, we are compelled to admit, Sire, that our intelligence is incapable of conceiving the magnitude of such a boon, our tongues still less competent to express what affection enjoins. So great a favor surpassing all human eloquence, we prefer to confess our own impotence by a modest silence, rather than belittle such a benefit by the defect of our words."

Having thus given utterance in graceful periods, if in an exaggerated style quite foreign to the taste of our later times, to those sentiments of submission which the men of the 16th century found none too strong for their unbounded loyalty, the orator proceeded to point out the single blessing which he and his friends still lacked. They had been permitted to see their king, to be seen by him, to be received by him with kindness. There yet remained the fourth point, that their service be accepted as agreeable by his Majesty.

"This also we hope to obtain," said Beza, "and God grant that our coming may put an end not so much to our past wretchedness and calamities, the memory of which is as it were extinguished by this happy day, as to what has ever seemed to us more grievous than death itself, namely, to the troubles and disorders that have come upon this kingdom by reason of religion, with the ruin of a great number of your poor subjects. Now several things have hitherto prevented us from enjoying so great a benefit, and these would still cause us to despair, were it not that, on the other hand, there are a number of things that tend to strengthen and assure us.

"There is, in the first place, a persuasion rooted in the hearts of many persons by a certain misfortune and perverseness of the times, that we are turbulent and ambitious men, obstinate in our opinions, enemies of all concord and tranquility. It may also be that there are other people whose notion of us is,
that, although we are not altogether enemies of peace, yet we demand it under conditions so rough and harsh as to be in nowise admissible, as if we were undertaking to turn the whole world upside down, in order to create another after our own fashion, and even to despoil some of their property in order to possess ourselves of it. There are several other hindrances of like magnitude or even greater, Sire; but we much prefer that their memory be buried rather than that we should reopen ancient sores by rehearsing them, now that we are on the point, not of making lamentations and complaints, but of seeking the most prompt and suitable remedies.

"And what then gives us such assurance in the midst of so many hindrances? Sire, it is no reliance upon anything in us, seeing that we are, in every way, of the smallest and most contemptible in the world. Neither is it, thank God! a vain presumption or arrogance, for our vesture and lowly condition do not comport therewith. It is rather, Sire, our good conscience, which assures us of the excellence and justice of our cause, of which, therefore, we hope that our God, by means of your Majesty, will be the defender and protector. It is also the gentleness already to be recognized in your face, your speech, and your countenance. It is the equity which we see and have learned by experience to be impressed upon your heart, Madam"—here he turned to Catharine de’ Medici. "It is the uprightness of you, Sire, and the illustrious Princes of the Blood"—this he said, bowing to the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and those that sat with them. "It is also the evident grounds we have to cherish the hope that you, our highly honored lords of the Council, conforming yourselves to one and the same resolution, will not be less inclined to grant us so holy and necessary a concord than we are to receive it. And what more shall we say? There is still another consideration that encourages us. It is that we presume, according to the rule of charity, that you, gentlemen, with whom we are to confer”—and here he turned to the cardinals and bishops on his right and on his left—"will exert yourselves in conjunction with us, according to our small measure, rather to clear up the truth than to obscure it, to instruct rather than to debate, to weigh arguments rather than to gainsay—in short, to prevent the malady from making farther progress rather than to render it altogether incurable and fatal. Such, gentlemen, is the opinion we have conceived of you, and we pray you, in the name of that great God who has gathered us here and who will be the judge of our thoughts and of our words, that notwithstanding everything that has been said, written, or done during the space of forty years or thereabouts, you will with us lay aside all the passions and prejudices that might hinder the fruits of so holy and praiseworthy an undertaking, and that you will expect of us, if you please, what, with the help of God’s grace, you will find in us—namely, a mind tractable and ready to receive everything that shall be proved by the pure Word of God.

"Do not think that we are come to maintain any error, but to discover and correct every defect that shall be found, either on your side or on ours. Do not regard us as possessed of such overweening conceit as to undertake to ruin the Church of our God which we know to be eternal. Do not imagine that we are seeking the means of making you like unto ourselves in our poor and humble
condition, wherein nevertheless, thank God, we find singular contentment. Our desire is that the ruins of Jerusalem may be rebuilt, that this spiritual temple may rise again, that the house of God built of living stones may be restored in its integrity, that the flocks so scattered and dispersed by a just vengeance of God and by the carelessness of men may be rallied and gathered again in the sheepfold of the supreme and only Shepherd.

"Such is our purpose, such all our desire and our intention, gentlemen. If you have not believed it heretofore, we hope that you will believe it when we shall have conferred, in all patience and mildness, respecting what God has given us. Would to God that, without going farther, instead of entering upon opposing arguments, we might all raise a hymn to the Lord and join hands with one another, as has sometimes happened between the armies even of unbelievers and infidels drawn up in battle array. It were a great shame for us if we profess to preach the doctrine of peace and good will and meantime are the most easily estranged and the most difficult to reconcile. What then? These things men can and ought to desire; but it belongs to God to grant them, as also He will do when it shall please Him to cover our sins by His goodness and dissipate our darkness by His light.

"And while on this topic, Sire, in order that it may be understood that we intend to proceed with a good conscience, simply, clearly, and frankly, we shall declare, if it please your Majesty to grant us permission, what in sum are the principal points of this conference, yet in such a manner that, with God’s help, no one shall have any just occasion of offense. There are some who think and would gladly persuade others that we differ only respecting things of slight consequence, or respecting matters that are indifferent rather than essential points in our faith. There are others who, quite on the contrary, through lack of being well informed respecting our belief, suppose that we are agreed as to nothing whatever, any more than Jews or Mohammedans. The intention of the former is as praiseworthy as the opinion of the latter is to be rejected. This will, we hope, appear in the sequel. But certainly neither those who hold the one nor those that hold the other view open the way to a true and solid agreement. For if the latter are to be believed, the one of the two parties can exist only by ruining the other, a thing too inhuman to be thought of and most horrible in the execution. If again the opinion of the former is to be received, it will be necessary that many matters remain undecided. From this there will result discord more dangerous and damaging than ever.

"Thus, then, we admit (and we can scarcely make the admission without tears) that just as we agree respecting some of the principal points of our Christian faith, so also we disagree as to a part of them. We confess that there is only one God, in one and the same infinite and incomprehensible essence, distinct in three persons, consubstantial and equal in everything and everywhere, that is to say, the Father unbegotten, the Son eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son. We acknowledge one only Jesus Christ, true God and true man, without confusion or separation of the two natures or of the properties of the same. We acknowledge that insofar as He is man, He is not the son of Joseph, but was conceived by the secret
power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, virgin, I say, both before and after His birth. We acknowledge His nativity, His life, His death, His burial, His descent into hell, His resurrection, and His ascension, as they are contained in the Holy Gospel. We believe that He is on high in the skies, seated on the right hand of God, where he will remain until He comes to judge the quick and the dead. We believe in the Holy Ghost, who enlightens, comforts, and sustains us. We believe that there is a holy Catholic, that is, universal Church, which is the assembly and communion of saints, outside of which there is no salvation. We are assured of the free remission of our sins through the blood of Jesus Christ, in virtue of which, after that these same bodies being raised again shall have been reunited to our souls, we shall enjoy blessed and eternal life with God.

"How then?" someone will say, ‘Are not these the articles of our faith? Wherein then are we discordant?’ First, in the interpretation of a part of them; secondly, in that it seems to us (and, if we are mistaken in this particular, we shall be very glad to know it), that men have not been satisfied with the aforesaid articles, but for a long time have not ceased adding articles to articles; as if the Christian religion were a structure that is never completed. Moreover, we say that what has been newly built, so far as we are able to learn, has not always been built upon the old foundations. Consequently, it rather disfigures the structure than serves to deck it out and adorn it. Nevertheless, more attention has often been given to these accessories than to what is essential. But to the end that our intention may be still better understood, we shall bring out these points in detail.

"We assert, therefore, and we hope to establish our assertion in all sobriety by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, that the true God, in whom we are to believe, is robbed of His perfect righteousness, if we undertake to set up, in opposition to His anger and just judgment any other satisfaction or cleansing, in this world or in the next, than that entire and complete obedience which can be found in no other than in one only, Jesus Christ. And, in like manner, if we say that He frees us from only one part of our debts, inasmuch as we pay the other, He is despoiled of His perfect mercy. Hence it follows, so far as we can judge, that when we would learn on what ground we obtain paradise we must take our stand upon the death and passion of one only, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, or else, instead of the true God, we should adore a strange God, who would be neither perfectly just nor perfectly merciful.

"From this also depends another point of very great importance touching the office of Jesus Christ. For if He alone is not entirely our salvation, that so precious name of Jesus, that is to say, Savior, announced by the angel Gabriel, would not be His proper name. In like manner, if He is not our only prophet, having fully made known to us the will of God His father for our salvation, first, by the mouth of the prophets, afterwards in person in the fulness of times, and later by His faithful apostles; if He is not also the sole head and spiritual king of our consciences; if He is not also our only eternal priest, after the order of Melchisedek, having, by one offering of Himself, made once and never repeated, reconciled men to God, and become now sole intercessor for us in
heaven until the end of the world; in short, if we are not altogether complete in Him alone, then the name and title of Messiah or Christ, that is to say, anointed of God and devoted to this end, will not belong to Him.

"If therefore, men will not be satisfied with Christ’s own word alone, faithfully preached and subsequently reduced to writing by the prophets and apostles; Christ is dispossessed of His office of prophet. He is also degraded from His position as head and spiritual king of His Church, if new laws are made for men’s consciences, and from His place as priest forever, by those who undertake to offer Him up anew for the remission of sins and who are not satisfied to have Him as sole advocate and intercessor in heaven between God and men.

"In the third place, we are not agreed either as to the definition, or as to the origin, or as to the effects of the faith which, following Saint Paul, we call ‘justifying faith,’ and through which alone we believe that Jesus Christ with all His benefits is applied to us. As to good works, if there are some persons who regard us as despising them, they are very ill informed; for we do not separate faith from charity any more than we can separate light and heat. And we say with Saint John, in his first epistle, that whoever says that he knows God and does not keep His commandments makes himself a liar by his own conscience and in his entire life. However, we frankly confess that we disagree in this matter on three principal points. The first is touching the origin and first source from which good works proceed; the second, what they are; the third, for what they are good. As to the first, we find no other free will in man save that which is made free by the sole grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and we say that our nature, in the state into which it is fallen, needs before all things to be, not helped and sustained, but rather slain and mortified by the power of God’s Spirit, inasmuch as grace finds it not only wounded and weakened, but altogether destitute of strength and opposed to everything that is good, yes, even dead and decayed in sin and corruption. And we render this honor to God, that we do not claim to share in this matter with Him. For we ascribe the beginning, and the middle, and the end of our good works to His sole grace and mercy working in us. As to the second point, we accept no other rule of righteousness and obedience before God than His commandments, as they are written and recorded in His Holy Word. To these commandments we do not regard it lawful for any creature to add, nor to subtract from them, so as to bind the conscience. Respecting the third point, namely, for what purpose they are good, we confess that so far as they proceed from the Spirit of God working in us, since they proceed from so good a source, they ought to be called good, although if God were to examine them strictly, He would find only too much to find fault with.

"We say also that they are good for another purpose, inasmuch as by them our God is glorified, men are drawn to the knowledge of Him, and we are assured that, the Spirit of God dueling in us (a fact which is known by its fruits), we are of the number of His elect and predestinated to salvation. But when we seek to discover on what grounds we have eternal life, we say with Saint Paul that it is a free gift of God, and not a reward due to our merits. For Jesus Christ, in this
respect, justifies us by His sole righteousness, which is imputed to us, sanctifies us by His holiness, which is imparted to us, and has redeemed us by His one sacrifice of Himself, which is granted to us, through a true and living faith, by the mere grace and free gift of our God. All these treasures are communicated by the power of the Holy Ghost, making use to this end of the preaching of God’s Word and the administration of His Holy Sacraments. Not that these are necessary, seeing that He is Almighty God, but forasmuch as it pleases Him to make use of these ordinary means to create and nurture in us that precious gift of faith which is, as it were, the only hand to lay hold on, and, as it were, the only vessel to receive Jesus Christ for salvation with all His treasures."

From this exposition of the Protestant view of good works, the speaker naturally proceeded to consider the Word of God and the Sacraments to which he had just referred. "We receive as the Word of God only the teachings recorded in the books of the prophets and apostles, called the Old and New Testaments. For by whom shall we be certified of our salvation if not by those who are witnesses above reproach? As to the writings of the ancient Doctors and the Councils, before receiving them without dispute, we should have first to make them accord altogether with the Scriptures, and next among themselves, seeing that the Spirit of God never contradicts Himself. This, gentlemen, we think you will never undertake to do. Should you undertake to do it, you will please pardon us if we say that we shall never believe it possible until we see it actually accomplished. What then? Are we of the race of that wretched Ham, son of Noah, who uncovered his father’s nakedness? Do we esteem ourselves more learned than so many ancient Greek and Latin Fathers? Are we so conceited as to think that we are the first that have discovered the truth and to condemn for ignorance the whole world? God forbid, gentlemen, that we should be such. But methinks you will allow that there have been councils and councils, doctors and doctors, seeing that it is not in our days alone that there have been false prophets in the Church of God, as the apostles warn us in a number of places and, particularly, in the fourth chapter of the first epistle to Timothy, and in the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. In the second place, as to the councils and doctors that are received, since all the truth that can be found in them must necessarily have been drawn from the Scriptures, what more certain means shall we find of deriving benefit from their intelligence than by testing everything by that touchstone, and considering the testimony and the reasons given by the Scriptures, on which they will be found to have based their interpretation?"

The conclusion drawn by Beza is: "We therefore receive the Holy Scriptures as a complete declaration of everything needful for our salvation. As to what may be found in councils or in the books of the doctors, we cannot and ought not to prevent you, or ourselves, from deriving help from them, provided it be founded on the express testimony of Scripture. But, for the honor of God, do not bring up to us their bare authority, without trying everything by this touchstone. For we say with Saint Augustine (in the second book of Christian
Doctrine, chapter sixth), ‘If there be any difficulty in the interpretation of a passage, the Holy Ghost hath so tempered the Holy Scriptures, that what is obscurely stated in one place, is very clearly stated elsewhere.’ I have spoken at some length on this point, in order that everyone may understand that we are not enemies either of the Councils or of the old Fathers, by whom God has been pleased to instruct His Church.

Beza had reserved to the last the consideration of two subjects—the sacraments and the government of the Church. He excused himself on the ground of lack of time from the fuller treatment of the former which its importance would justify, and confined himself to a summary statement of the belief of the Protestant Churches.

"We are in agreement with the Roman Catholics as we think," said he, "in the description of this word ‘sacrament,’ namely, that the sacraments are visible signs by means of which our union with our Lord Jesus Christ is not simply signified or represented to us, but also is truly offered on the Lord’s side, and consequently ratified, sealed, and as it were engraven by the virtue of the Holy Ghost upon those who by a true faith apprehend Him who is thus signified and presented to them. I use this word ‘signified,’ gentlemen, not to enervate or annihilate the sacraments, but to distinguish the sign from the thing it signifies in all virtue and efficacy. Consequently, we grant that in the sacraments there must of necessity intervene a heavenly and supernatural mutation. For we do not assert that the water of the Holy Baptism is simply water, but that it is a true sacrament of our regeneration and of the cleansing of our souls in the blood of Jesus Christ. In like manner, we do not assert that in the Holy Supper of our Lord the bread is simply bread, but the sacrament of the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for us; nor that the wine is simply wine, but the sacrament of the precious blood that was shed for us. However, we do not say that this change is effected in the substance of the signs, but in the use and the end for which they are ordained. Nor again do we say that it is effected by virtue of certain words pronounced, nor by the intention of him who pronounces them, but by the sole power and will of Him who has ordained this action so divine and heavenly, of which therefore the institution ought to be repeated aloud and clearly, in a tongue that is understood, and distinctly set forth, in order that it may be understood and received by all that are present. So much for the external signs. Let us come to what is testified and exhibited by the Lord through these signs.

"We do not say, what some, in consequence of having failed to understand us well, have thought that we teach, namely, that in the Holy Supper there is a simple commemoration of the death of our Lord Jesus. Therefore we do not say that in it we are made partakers merely of the fruit of His death and passion; but we join the inheritance with the fruits proceeding therefrom, saying with Saint Paul in the tenth chapter of First Corinthians, that the bread which we break according to His institution is the communion of the true body of Jesus Christ which was given for us, and that the cup of which we drink is the communion of the true blood which was shed for us, even in that same substance which He assumed in the womb of the virgin and which He took from
among us to heaven. And I pray you, gentlemen, in God’s name, what can you therefore seek or find in this holy sacrament which we also do not seek and find there?"

The statement was certainly far removed from the view of the Reformer Zwingli and of the Sacramentarians, so called. But Beza did not hide from himself the fact that it would satisfy neither the Roman Catholics nor the Lutherans.

"I understand very well that a reply is quite ready on this point. The one party will ask us to acknowledge that the bread and wine are transmuted, I do not say into sacraments of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ (for this we have already admitted), but into the very body and blood of Jesus Christ. The other party, perhaps, will not press us so far as this, but will require us to grant that the body and blood are really and corporeally either in, or with, or under the bread. But on this matter, gentlemen, for the honor of God, hear us patiently without being scandalized, and put off for a time all the opinion you have conceived of us. When either one of these opinions shall have been proved to us by Holy Scripture, we are ready to embrace it and to hold it until death. But it seems to us, according to the small measure of knowledge that we have received of God, that this transubstantiation is inconsistent with the analogy and propriety of our faith, insomuch as it is directly contrary to the nature of the sacraments, in which the substantial signs must of necessity continue to be true signs of the substance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ; and it likewise overthrows the truth of His human nature and His ascension. I say the like of the second opinion, that of consubstantiation, which, in addition to all that has been said, has no foundation in the words of Jesus Christ, and is in nowise necessary to our being partakers of the fruit of the sacraments.

"If hereupon someone asks us whether we make Jesus Christ to be absent from His Holy Supper, we reply that we do not. But if we look to the distance of the places (as we must when the question respects His corporeal presence and His humanity distinctively considered), we say that His body is as far removed from the bread and wine as the highest heaven is removed from the earth, in view of the fact that, so far as we are concerned, we are on the earth and the sacraments also, and that as to Him, His flesh is in heaven, glorified in such wise that, as says Saint Augustine, glory has not taken away from Him the nature of a true body, but its infirmity. If then anyone would conclude from this that we make Jesus Christ absent from His Holy Supper, we answer that this is an erroneous conclusion; for we render this honor to God, that we believe, according to His Word, that, although the body of Jesus Christ is now in heaven and not elsewhere, and we are on the earth and not elsewhere, we are nevertheless made partakers of His body and blood in a spiritual manner and by means of faith, as veritably as we see the sacraments with the eye, touch them with the hand, put them into our mouth, and live of their substance in this bodily life.

"This, gentlemen, is in sum our faith on this point. As it seems to us (and if we are mistaken we shall be very glad to be informed) it does no violence to the
words of Jesus Christ or of Saint Paul. It does not destroy the human nature of Jesus Christ, nor the article of His ascension, nor the institution of the sacraments. It does not open the door to any curious and inexplicable questions and distinctions. It does not at all detract from our union with Jesus Christ, which is the chief end for which the sacraments were instituted, and not to be either adored, or kept, or carried, or offered to God. And lastly, if we are not deceived, it does much more honor to the power and to the word of the Son of God than if we imagine that His body must be really joined to the signs in order that we should become partakers of them.

"We do not touch on what remains concerning the administration of Holy Baptism; for we believe that no one of you, gentlemen, would place us in the ranks of the anabaptists, who have no stouter enemies than we are. And as to some other particular questions on this score, we hope, with God’s help, that, the chief points being settled in this mild and friendly conference, the rest will be concluded of itself.

"As to the other five so-called sacraments, true it is that we cannot give them this name until we have been better instructed in the Holy Scriptures. Meanwhile, however, we think that we have re-established true confirmation, which consists in catechising and instructing those that have been baptized in infancy, and in general all persons before admitting them to the Lord’s Supper. We teach true penitence also, which consists in a true acknowledgment of one’s faults and satisfaction to the offended parties, be it public or private, in the abysm in which we have in the blood of Jesus Christ, and in amendment of life. We approve of marriage, following the injunction of Saint Paul, in the case of all those who have not the gift of continence, and consequently do not think it lawful to bind anyone thereto by a vow or perpetual profession, and we condemn all wantonness and lust in word, gesture, or act. We receive the degrees of ecclesiastical charges according as God has ordained them in His house by His Holy Word. We approve of the visitation of the sick as a principal part of the sacred ministry of the Gospel. We teach with Saint Paul to judge no man in a distinction of days and meats, knowing that the kingdom of God does not consist in such corruptible things. Meanwhile, however, we condemn all dissoluteness, exhorting men continually to all sobriety, to the mortification of the flesh according to every man’s need, and to assiduous prayer.

"There still remains the last point, concerning the external order and government of the Church. Respecting this, we are of the opinion that we may be permitted, gentlemen, to say, with your consent, that everything therein is so perverted, that everything is in such confusion and ruin, that, whether one consider the order as now established, or have a regard to life and manners, scarcely can the best architects in the world recognize the marks and vestiges of that ancient edifice so well adjusted by the apostles with compass and rule. Of this you yourselves are good witnesses, as you have busied yourselves about it of late. In short, we shall pass over these matters, which are sufficiently well understood, and which it were better to cover in silence than to utter.

"To conclude, we declare before God and His angels, before your Majesty, Sire, and all the illustrious company that is about you, that our only purpose and
desire is that the form of the Church may be brought back to the simple purity and beauty which it had in the times of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; and, as to those things that have since been added, that such as shall be found superstitious, or manifestly contrary to the Word of God, may be altogether abolished; that those which are superfluous may be cut off; that those which experience has taught us lead to superstition may be removed. If there be found others useful and proper for edification, after a mature consideration of the ancient canons and authorities of the Fathers, let them be retained and observed in God’s name, according to what may be suited to the times, places, and persons, to the end that with one accord God shall be worshipped in spirit and in truth, under your obedience and protection, Sire, and the protection of the persons established by God under your Majesty for the government of this realm. For if there be any that still think that the doctrines which we profess turn men away from the subjection which they owe to their kings and superiors, we have, Sire, wherewith to answer them with a good conscience. "It is true that we teach that our first and principal obedience is due to our God, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. But if our writings do not suffice to clear us from such a crime laid to our charge (as disloyalty to our sovereign), we shall bring up, Sire, the example of very many lordships and principalities, and even kingdoms, which have been reformed according to this same doctrine. These will suffice us as good and sufficient testimony for our acquittal. In short, we take our stand respecting this matter on what Saint Paul says in the thirteenth chapter of Romans, where, speaking of temporal government, he expressly enjoins that every soul be subject unto the higher powers. ‘Nay,’ Saint John Chrysostom says on this passage, ‘even were you an apostle or an evangelist, for that such subjection does not derogate from the service of God.’ But if it has happened, or if it should hereafter happen, that some, covering themselves with the mantle of our doctrine, should be found guilty of rebellion against the least of your officers, Sire, we protest before God and your Majesty, that they are not of us, and that they could not have more bitter enemies than we are, according as our poor condition permits. "In fine, Sire, the desire we have to advance the glory of our God, the obedience and very humble service due to your Majesty, our affection for our native land and specially for the Church of God—these have brought us to this place in which we hope that our good God and Father, continuing the course of His loving-kindness and mercies, will confer upon you, Sire, grace such as that which He conferred on the young King Josiah, two thousand two hundred and two years ago; and that under your happy government, Madam [Catharine de’ Medici], assisted by you, Sire [the King of Navarre], and the other and excellent princes of the blood and lords of your council, the ancient memory shall be revived of that renowned Queen Clotilde, who served of old as the instrument of our God to give the knowledge of Himself to this realm. Such is our hope. For this we are ready, Sire, to employ our own lives, to the end that, rendering to you very humble service in a matter so holy and praiseworthy, we may behold the true golden age in which our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ shall be
worshipped by all with one accord, as to Him belong all honor and glory for ever. Amen."

Here Beza and his company kneeled for a moment. Then, rising, he continued, at the same time presenting to the king the Confession of Faith of the French Churches: "Sire, your Majesty will be pleased to give no thought to our language, rough and unpolished as it is, but rather to the affection that is wholly given to you. And, inasmuch as the points of our doctrine are contained clearly and more fully in this Confession of Faith which we have already presented to you, and on which the present conference will turn, we very humbly beseech your Majesty to do us again this favor of receiving it from our hands, hoping by God's grace that, after having conferred on it in all sobriety and reverence for His holy name, we shall find ourselves in agreement as to it. And if, on the contrary, our iniquities prevent such a blessed consummation, we doubt not that your Majesty, with your good council, will know how to provide for everything, without prejudice to either of the two parties, according to God and to reason."

Such was the first plea of the Reformation that reached the ear of a king of France. It was confessedly not unworthy of the orator from whose mouth it came, of the rare occasion, of the subject, of the presence in which it was delivered.

One dramatic incident that interrupted the quiet course of Beza’s speech has been purposely omitted, in order that the reader may have before him the unbroken argument. I must go back to narrate it. The dignified bearing and the well-chosen words of Beza, uttered with force and grace and breathing the spirit of profound conviction, had commanded the close and respectful attention of his hearers, even when he uttered unpalatable sentiments, from the beginning of his discourse until he was well on in the discussion of the nature of the sacraments. It was otherwise when the Reformer came, after a formal rejection both of the Roman Catholic and of the Lutheran doctrines, to speak of the relative places of the body of Jesus Christ and of the consecrated elements in the Lord's Supper. At the words, "We say that His body is as far removed from the bread and wine as the highest heaven is removed from the earth," a number of the prelates who had long been inwardly chafing with anger and indignation could contain themselves no longer. Cardinals, bishops, doctors of the Sorbonne, began to express their dissent in loud and violent tones. Amid the din that instantly arose, Beza's voice was quite drowned for the time, and the only intelligible words that could be made out were exclamations of "He has blasphemed! He has blasphemed God!" coming from one and another of the ecclesiastics. The bystanders looked for nothing else than that they should accompany their cries with a symbolic rending of their clothes. Cardinal Tournon, who had risen to his feet, turned to the young king, and prayed him either to command Beza to desist from speaking, or to suffer him with his brethren, the Roman Catholic prelates, to retire from the place. The queen-mother, however, thought that there had been quite enough of this, and commanded silence. Cardinal Lorraine, less ardent or more politic than some of his colleagues, joined with
her in the attempt to restore order. Beza, who meanwhile had stood unmoved by the sudden outbreak of this unexpected storm, continued his speech and finished it according to his original design.

At the close of Beza’s address there was a second demonstration. No sooner had he stopped than Cardinal Tournon, “all trembling with wrath,” rose and, as primate and presiding officer of the assembly of prelates, addressed the king. It was, he said, by his Majesty’s express command that the cardinals and bishops, in order to obey him, had consented (not, however, without conscientious scruples) to listen to these new evangelists. For they foresaw that the latter might, as they had done, utter things unworthy of the ear of a Most Christian King, things that might well have offended many people who were about his Majesty. The assembly of the prelates, suspecting that this might occur, had, continued the cardinal, instructed him in this case to beseech the monarch very humbly not to believe or give credit either to the meaning or to the words uttered by the person who had spoken in behalf of the adherents of the new religion, and to beg him to suspend the judgment he might form on the matter until he should have heard the remonstrances which the assembly intended to make to him. By this means the prelate hoped that his Majesty and all the honorable company by which the king was supported would be able to learn the difference there exists between truth and falsehood. He begged that a day might be assigned the prelates for this purpose, and he added that, but for the respect they entertained for his Majesty, they would have arisen on hearing the blasphemous and abominable words that had been uttered, and would not have suffered the conference to proceed. What they had done, they had done in order to obey his Majesty’s command; and they prayed him very humbly to persevere in the faith of his fathers, and invoked the Virgin Mary and the blessed saints in paradise, both male and female, that this might be.

The cardinal was about to say more, but Catharine cut his speech short. She assured him that nothing had been done in the affair save by the decision of the royal council and with the concurrence of the Parliament of Paris. The end in view, said she, was not to make innovations or commotions, but, on the contrary, to appease the troubles proceeding from the diversity of religious opinions, and to bring back those that had strayed from the right way. The truth was to be established by means of the simple Word of God, which must be the sole rule. "We are here to hear both sides," said she. "Reply, therefore, to the speech of Monsieur de Bèze to which you have just listened." Cardinal Tournon declined to accept the challenge on the ground that the speech had been a long one, and could not be answered offhand, but he promised that if a written copy were afforded to the prelates, they would prepare a suitable rejoinder. The point was conceded, and herewith the proceedings of the day came to an end.

CHAPTER XI
Further Discussions
The Edict of January
Massacre of Vassy
1561–1562

In the last chapter I have given a translation of Beza’s speech of September 9, 1561, before the King of France, the chief noblemen of his court, and the assembled cardinals and bishops of the realm. Of this memorable address I have inserted nearly the whole, and almost always in a close rendering. Two reasons have moved me to do this. The speech possesses a peculiar historical importance, irrespective of the person who was the mouthpiece of the Protestants, now for the first time officially summoned for their defense to the bar of public opinion. As such, it may be regarded in the light of a great State paper, wherein every sentence is of weight, while every position that is taken has a more or less direct bearing on the subsequent course of the French reformatory movement. This is the more general consideration. The more special and personal has reference to Theodore Beza himself. As a work of art, the address at the Colloquy of Poissy exhibits, better, perhaps, than any of his other productions, the striking oratorical abilities of the man whose name it instantly made famous. At the same time, its importance as an exposition of the theological views of Beza, and, we may add, of Calvin, should not be overlooked in a biographical work like the present. The doctrinal contrast between the Reformation and the Roman Catholic system, on the one hand, and between the position of Beza and the positions of the Reformers of Wittenberg and Zurich, on the other, is so clearly marked in this document, that the most superficial of readers can have little difficulty in forming a distinct conception of the individuality of Beza as a theologian.

That his effort had proved a great success cannot be denied. Friends and foes were agreed on this point at least. Hubert Languet, the distinguished Protestant negotiator, who chanced to be in Paris at the time, expressed himself scarcely more strongly respecting the brilliancy of the oration than did Claude Haton, the curate of Provins. But whereas the Protestants gave it their unqualified approval, the Roman Catholics condemned with great bitterness those utterances respecting the sacraments which had raised the passionate protests of Cardinal Tournon and his associates. There is no doubt that Catharine de’ Medici and others who shared her politic views regarded Beza’s frank statement as a needless and offensive expression of opinion, and deplored what they stigmatized as a blunder that came near wrecking the conference. But whoever will look with calmness at the entire situation must come to a different conclusion. A suppression of the candid views of the Reformers on so critical a point might indeed have prevented an explosion of priestly indignation at this particular juncture. But it could only have postponed what must have come sooner or later. And such difficulties are for the most part best met when met most promptly. A conference broken off because of a clear and unmistakable expression of opinion on an important theological subject—had indeed such a result ensued—would have wrought far
less damage to the Protestant cause than might have resulted from an insincere and dishonest treatment of a distinctive dogma, or from a politic silence, by which the whole tone of the discussion would have been lowered and the self-respect of its professors would have been sacrificed. Calvin saw this, and, so far from condemning, he applauded Beza’s boldness in unqualified terms. "Your speech is now before us," he wrote to Beza on receiving the text of the oration, “wherein God wonderfully directed your mind and your tongue. The testimony that stirred up the wrath of the holy fathers could not but be given, unless you had consented basely to practice evasion and expose yourself to their derision."

Beza had nothing to retract and no apology to make. Hearing, however, that the queen-mother was, or pretended to be, displeased with what he had said on the matter of the Lord’s Supper, he wrote to her, the next day, to explain both what he had said, which, on account of the uproar created by the prelates, she had possibly not heard distinctly, and the object for which he had said it. The letter is a model of manly frankness. Far from modifying his speech in any particulars, he repeated for Catharine’s benefit the very words that had given offense. He declared that what had moved him to use them was a desire to defend his co-religionists from the charge of sacrilegiously making Jesus Christ to be absent from His Holy Supper. "But," said he, "there is a great difference between making Him present insomuch as that He there truly gives us His body and blood, and saying that His body and blood are united with the bread and wine. I acknowledged the former, which is also the chief thing; I denied the latter."

Beza begged as a favor that he might be permitted to set forth his views more fully before her and any other persons who might give him instruction in case he was wrong. He closed his letter with passages from Saint Augustine and Vigilius, Bishop of Trent, who had expressed themselves quite as strongly as he had done respecting the matter in hand.

It is perhaps needless to say that no such opportunity as Beza asked for was vouchsafed to him. The prelates, averse from the beginning to anything like free and fair discussion with the Protestants, were still more disinclined to treat with them since they had heard the magnificent exposition of the Reformed doctrines by one who was at the same time forcible and gentle, courteous and self-possessed. But a promise had been given that Beza should be answered, and that promise the Cardinal of Lorraine undertook to redeem just one week after Beza had spoken. The place was the same; the assembled dignitaries were the same; the Protestants were the same except that their numbers were increased by the arrival of the distinguished Peter Martyr. In one respect, however, there was a notable difference. The cardinal, instead of speaking, like Beza, from behind a bar, was provided with a pulpit from which he might deliver his discourse as one having authority, and thus appear to be either a learned preacher instructing the ignorant, or a judge pronouncing the final sentence of the law upon offenders.

And how did he attempt to answer the full, clear, and candid exposition of the Reformed faith made by Beza? Chiefly by an assumption of a lordly superiority,
with a slight admixture of patronizing condescension and unsolicited compassion. He began by lauding at great length both the temporal authority of kings and the spiritual authority of ecclesiastics. He concluded with an appeal to Charles IX to adhere to the religion of his predecessors, all of them loyal to the holy Catholic faith, from whom he had inherited the distinction of being styled not only "Most Christian" but "First Son of the Church," and with a corresponding appeal to Catharine de' Medici, promising for himself and all his associates of the Gallican Church that they would not spare their very life-blood in the maintenance of the true Catholic doctrine, nor fail to do their full duty in the service of the king and the support of his crown. On only two points of the Reformed confession did the cardinal even pretend to enter into argument. He maintained that the Church is no mere aggregation of the elect, but includes the tares along with the wheat. He argued that the presence of the Lord in the Eucharist is not spiritual alone, but real and corporeal, as well. As for the rest, he treated the Protestants as wayward but misguided children for whom he had no reproaches to utter, but only pity—the more so that they had shown some disposition to receive instruction and to return to a Church that was ready to welcome them so soon as they consented to submit to her authority. But if they would not return, and if their ministers would accord in doctrine neither with the Latin nor with the Greek Church, and indeed remained at variance with their fellow Reformers, the Lutherans of Germany, he suggested that the French Protestants ought to withdraw to some remote region where they would cease to disturb flocks over which they had no legitimate authority, to a solitude where at least they might remain until their new-fangled opinions should grow as old and venerable as the creed of the established Church.

When the Cardinal of Lorraine was through, the prelates at once made a dramatic demonstration of their approval, starting to their feet in a body, and, with Cardinal Tournon at their head, pressing about Charles IX. They begged the young prince to remain constant to the teachings of the Church, and particularly to require that Beza and his associates should accept and sign what they had just been taught, before being permitted to receive any additional instruction. The Genevese Reformer rose in his turn and claimed the privilege of answering Cardinal Lorraine on the spot—a request which, for reasons of her own, Catharine de' Medici thought fit to deny, promising that he should have an opportunity at a later time.

With this incident the Colloquy of Poissy assumed so different a shape as scarcely to be the same. The clergy could with difficulty be persuaded to consent to meet the Protestants a third time, and when they yielded to pressure, the small room of the prioress was large enough to contain all that presented themselves—a dozen bishops and cardinals with about as many attendant theologians bearing ponderous tomes, the works of the Church Fathers of the first five centuries, from which Cardinal Lorraine was to refute the Reformed doctrine. On the other side, the twelve Protestant ministers were again admitted, but not the laymen. Charles IX was absent. In his place came Catharine de’ Medici and the King and Queen of Navarre, with sundry
members of the royal council. The conference was undignified and disorderly. Its regular course was interrupted by the intemperate speech of a Dominican friar, Claude de Sainctes, and by the absurd demand sprung upon the French Protestants by Cardinal Lorraine that they should answer categorically the question, whether or no they would consent to subscribe to the Augsburg Confession which was received by the Protestants of Germany. Evidently no good could be expected to come from a conference which bade fair to degenerate into an unseemly wrangle. Yet, two days later, in a meeting at which Beza was permitted to reply to the prelate’s unreasonable proposal, the Reformer maintained his dignified composure. He reminded the queen-mother, with manly frankness, of the issues dependent upon the conference. It was of supreme importance that this should be conducted in a fair and friendly manner. He retorted with quiet but effective irony to an ill-timed speech made at the last session by a Roman Catholic theologian, Claude d’Espense, who endeavored to show that the Protestant ministers were intruders who had assumed their office without a proper “call.” What, asked Beza, if a bishop were to ask a Reformed pastor his authority for undertaking to preach and administer the sacraments, and were to be met with the counter-questions: “Were you elected to the episcopate by the elders of your church? Did the people seek for you? Were inquiries instituted regarding your conduct, your life, and your belief?” or, “Who ordained you, and how much money did you pay to be ordained?” Many a bishop’s cheek would blush were he compelled to reply to such an interrogatory. Nor was Beza less happy when he drew attention to the circumstance that Cardinal Lorraine, instead of undertaking to prove by the Church Fathers of the first centuries the falsity of the Protestant position, and thus affording his antagonists the opportunity to meet him on the field of honest discussion, demanded of them that they subscribe to an article said to be extracted from the Augsburg Confession and treating of the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper, as the condition of future conference. Beza was ably reinforced by the Florentine, Peter Martyr Vermigli. This famous Italian exile, now over sixty years of age, respecting whom an opponent (d’Espense) frankly admitted that there was no other man of his time that had written so amply and with so much erudition on the subject of the Lord’s Supper, had come to France upon the pressing invitation of Catharine de’ Medici, and provided with a special safe-conduct from Charles IX. He was a striking personage. Beza, in his collection of lives of worthies and their portraits, written long after, felicitously styles him a phoenix born from the ashes of Savonarola. From a monk and visitor-general of the Augustinian order, Martyr had become a Reformer, and had fled beyond the Alps. He was a professor at Strasburg with Bucer. In King Edward’s reign he labored in England with zeal and acquired a distinguished place among those who strove to make the services of the Established Church free from the taint of Roman Catholicism. He was appointed to lecture on the Scriptures at Oxford. After her accession, Queen Elizabeth, as Bishop Jewel tells us, was altogether desirous that he should be invited back to England, that, “as he had formerly tilled, as it were, the University by his lectures, so he might again water it by the same.”
He had now been five or six years at Zurich, a coadjutor of Bullinger, at the head of the Church and exercising a powerful influence across the Channel, especially by his letters. His great reputation and the dignity of his presence added force to his admirable address. In French he could not have spoken with freedom. He would therefore naturally have used Latin, the common language of the learned world; but he preferred to fall back upon his native tongue, in order that Catharine de’ Medici, like himself a Florentine, might understand him the more readily. A little while later on the same day, when Lainez, the second general of the Jesuit order, and as such the successor of Ignatius Loyola, obtained permission to speak and uttered a coarse tirade against the Reformers, likewise employing the Italian tongue, no objection was made to his procedure. But Peter Martyr was rudely interrupted by the Cardinal of Lorraine, who petulantly exclaimed that he did not want to listen to a foreign tongue.

There was little more of the colloquy which had begun so pompously, and it adjourned never to meet again. In its train followed a few private conferences in which five Roman Catholics chosen for their supposed moderation of sentiment met an equal number of Protestant ministers in one of the rooms of the mansion occupied at Saint Germain by the King of Navarre, and deliberated upon some of the points at issue. Beza was one of the company. His colleagues were Peter Martyr Vermigli, Augustin Marlorat, Jean de l’Espine, and Nicholas des Gallars. The party was compelled by the demand of the bishops at Poissy to take up first the question of the presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper.

Although this was the very point of difficulty between Reformed and Roman Catholics, less trouble was found in coming to an agreement than anyone not familiar with the constitution of the joint commission on the Roman Catholic side would have apprehended. Peter Martyr, loyal successor of Zwingli and Zwingli’s views, put the matter plainly from the Protestant position when he told his associates that, for his part, he believed that the body of Christ is truly and as to its substance nowhere else than in heaven; while he did not deny that the true body and true blood of Christ, given on the cross for the salvation of men, are, by faith and spiritually, received by believers in the Holy Supper.

Twice did the conferees laboriously draw up an article which should express the thought of Martyr, yet in such language as to satisfy both parties. The first result of their efforts was instantly rejected by the bishops. When the supposed objection had been obviated by important changes of phraseology and a second article had been prepared, which the Roman Catholic members felt confident would prove fully acceptable, their work was scornfully repudiated and the bearers were dismissed with the accusation of having betrayed their cause to the Protestants. The Protestants were no better pleased with the article than were the Roman Catholics, and by mutual consent all further attempts were abandoned to reconcile what was really irreconcilable; or, rather, to gloss over substantial disagreement by means of terms that could be, and would be, interpreted diversely by different persons. All that could be said to the credit of the recent effort was that it had been honestly made with the earnest
purpose to postpone, or, if possible, avert altogether, the outbreak of civil war
which all intelligent men saw to be imminent.
With the discharge of Beza’s commission to plead the Protestant cause in the
Colloquy of Poissy, the object of his coming to France was fulfilled. He was
anxious to resume his duties at Geneva. When, however, he applied for leave
to start on his homeward way, he was so far from obtaining it that Catharine
de’ Medici sent for him and strongly urged that he should remain at least for a
time. Her request might have been disregarded, high as was the advantageous
estimate of his character and services which it implied. It was otherwise when
Prince Condé, Gaspard de Coligny, and the most prominent members of the
Huguenot party added their vehement solicitations, begging that he should not
desert them at a time when it was given out that the settlement of the
religious status of the adherents of the Reformed faith was about to be settled
by an Assembly of Notables. In the circumstances, Beza had no choice but to
subordinate his personal preferences to the general good of the cause. He was
the less anxious to by at home, perhaps, that he heard from Geneva that the
theological school was suffering no detriment by reason of the absence of one
of its two theological professors, since his colleague was teaching immense
numbers of students. Just at this moment an enthusiastic correspondent of
Farel wrote, “It is a marvel to see the number of persons that listen to Monsieur
Calvin’s lectures. I estimate them at more than a thousand daily.” Meanwhile,
still more phenomenal was the continual increase of avowed Protestants in
almost all quarters of France. Everybody heard of the unprecedented
gatherings of worshippers that took place in certain cities and towns; but
everybody did not know, as Catharine de’ Medici learned by instituting a
special inquiry, that the Huguenots had over 2,000 churches in France—more
precisely, 2,150 and over—varying in size from a single church comprising
almost all the inhabitants of some considerable town and ministered to by two
or more pastors, down to a church of a few members in the midst of an
overwhelmingly superior Roman Catholic population. As for Beza, his most
pressing desire for the moment was that the Protestants, conscious of growing
numbers, might restrain their natural impetuosity for at least two months; so
were his hopes that the coming Assembly of Notables would materially better
their condition. The queen-mother was evidently glad to give audience to the
Genevese Reformer in France, and reckoned upon his cooperation in the
maintenance of peace. Nor were his services unimportant.
On January 17, 1562, the results of the deliberations of the Assembly of
Notables were published in the form of a royal edict—known in history as the
Edict of January. For the first time in French history the Protestants were
accorded official recognition, and gained a part, at least, of their natural
rights. Not only were they suffered to reside in the kingdom, but they were
permitted to worship God in gatherings of unarmed men and women, anywhere
outside of the walls of the cities. If they were commanded to surrender all the
edifices of which they had taken possession situated within the city walls, the
loss was of small consequence in view of the importance of the cardinal
concession, especially as the law guaranteed them safety and protection on the way to and from their places of worship. After the enactment of the Edict of January, there remained much to occupy Beza’s attention. First of all, there was the task of allaying the dissatisfaction of his fellow believers, who had not unreasonably hoped for a law that should accord complete religious equality both of worship and of profession, and who were impatient that their anticipations remained unfulfilled. Here Beza’s ability and wide influence were of great service to the queen, who, there can be no doubt, was sincerely desirous of ending the present state of uncertainty and consequent danger, by the cordial acceptance of the edict by both religious parties. I may instance, in particular, a letter which he drew up in the name of the ministers and deputies of the Churches while these still remained at Saint Germain, and which was sent to all the Protestant congregations throughout France, counseling them to accept loyally the king’s edict, and encouraging them to hope that the new law would prove only the harbinger of better things to come. The letter was accompanied by a paper taking up all the fourteen articles of the new law, examining each in turn, and explaining how it should be observed. I cannot speak further of these able documents, the circulation of which had the desired effect of securing the submission of the Huguenots. Nor shall I detain the reader long with a fresh conference between Protestant and Roman Catholic theologians, in which Beza played a conspicuous part, and as a consequence of which he attained yet greater prominence. Catharine de’ Medici still clung to the hope that by discussion a common ground might be reached. Under her auspices a larger company than the last convened in the grand council hall of the castle of Saint Germain. Iconoclasm had become a common feature of the reformatory movement of late, much against the will of the leading Reformers, despite, indeed, their vehement protests; but it was difficult to restrain the people, and the statues and paintings of saints, whether adorning the interior or the exterior of churches, fared ill at the hands of mobs intent on the forcible removal of the insignia of popery. It may have been this circumstance that led Catharine to propose Images and Image Worship as the special topic for the consideration of the learned men she brought together. But nothing came of their debates, unless it be that they showed not only that the views of the Roman Catholics and of the Protestants were irreconcilable, but that the former were not agreed among themselves. It was the Roman Catholic Bishop of Valence, Montluc, that brought out the startling fact that one zealous controversialist, Artus Désiré, had had the effrontery to compose a metrical substitute for the second Commandment, as versified by the Protestants, wherein the Almighty was made to order, instead of to forbid, the making of graven images of anything in heaven, on the earth, or under the earth, and to be greatly pleased with, instead of condemning, whatever honor or worship was paid to it. Beza’s long speech was a masterly discussion of the entire theme, and received the strong commendation of his brethren, however little it may have convinced his opponents. The profitless conference lasted about a fortnight, from the 28th of January to the 11th of February, 1562.
Twenty days later came the Massacre of Vassy, the spark which kindled a conflagration that was to rage in France for most of the rest of the century. The Edict of January, with its equitable, but limited, concessions to the Protestants, was supremely distasteful to the Roman Catholic Church and to the bigoted adherents of that Church who would have toleration for none but themselves. It was, consequently, an object of special abhorrence to the family of Guise, a family which aspired to represent the most extreme tendencies in Church and State and thereby to strengthen its already exorbitant influence. The enactment of the Edict of January was a virtual repeal of the intolerant Edict of July of the previous summer, respecting which Duke Francis of Guise, more blunt of speech and less politic than his brother, Cardinal Lorraine, had openly boasted that his sword would never rest in its scabbard when the execution of the ordinance was in question. He was in a state of irritation which any fortuitous incident might easily convert into insane fury. On Sunday morning, March 1, 1562, while on his return from a conference at Saverne, near the banks of the Rhine, with Duke Christopher of Württemberg, he chanced to enter a small town of Champagne named Vassy, at this time a fief whose revenues were enjoyed by his kinswoman Mary, Queen of Scots. A congregation of Huguenots were worshipping in a rude barn which they had transformed into a sanctuary. Their services were interrupted by the duke’s followers. It is needless here to decide precisely how the assault was brought on, whether by the nobleman’s express orders, or by the forward zeal of his attendants and without his previous participation. The main facts are indisputable. A band of peaceable Protestants were broken in upon, in the midst of their prayers and hymns, under the eyes of one of the first noblemen of the kingdom, and men, women, and children, who had come to worship the Prince of Peace, were slaughtered like sheep, and without distinction of age or sex. Many fell within the rude but sacred enclosure, fugitives were picked off by the arquebusiers and slain before they could reach a place of safety. Fifty or sixty persons dead and about twice that number of badly wounded were the fruits of that Sunday morning’s work.

Say what they would, the friends of Guise could never prove that the massacre was not in glaring violation of the edict signed only six weeks previously, forbidding judges, magistrates, and all other persons, of whatever station, quality, or condition they might be, from hindering, disquieting, molesting, or in any wise attacking “those of the new religion” in or when going to or from their places of assembly outside of the walls of the cities. When the news reached the French court and the capital, the Protestants loudly protested against the daring infringement of the law, and demanded the punishment of the law-breaker, whom they denounced as a murderer. Beza was still in France. The Churches begged him to represent them and to use his recently acquired influence in securing from the queen-mother and her advisers a prompt condemnation of this first blow struck at the Edict of January. Francour accompanied him as a representative of the Protestant nobles. The two envoys found Charles IX and Catharine de’ Medici at Monceaux. In an audience at which were present Antoine of Bourbon, King of Navarre, the
recently arrived papal legate, Cardinal Ferrara, and others, Beza clearly and forcibly set forth the attack that had been made upon the solemn decree of the king by one of his subjects, on his own personal responsibility, and the evident plots laid to ruin the Huguenots of France. He frankly and temperately laid before his Majesty the disasters that must certainly flow from such flagrant acts of injustice if permitted to pass unpunished. Catharine returned a gracious reply, promising that the matter should be thoroughly investigated, and that, if the Protestants exercised self-restraint, ample provision should be made to satisfy them. The Duke of Guise would not, she hoped, pursue his journey to Paris. She had written to him and requested him not to do so.

There was one person who had listened to Beza’s remarks and to the queen’s conciliatory response with ill-concealed anger, and who could contain himself no longer. This was Antoine of Bourbon, formerly, as we have seen, and so long as it served his purpose, an ardent friend of the Reformation, but of late a pronounced ally of the Guises, since the promise of the restoration of his old kingdom had been held forth to allure him, he now broke out with reproaches against the Protestants for going, as he said, armed to their preaching services. "Arms in the hands of the wise," replied Beza, "are bearers of peace. The occurrence at Vassy shows how necessary they are to the Church, unless safety be otherwise provided, and this provision, Sire, I most humbly beg you, in the name of the Church which until now has cherished such hope in you, to make."

The legate, a troublesome priest, whose sole mission to France was in the interest of the maintenance of proscription laws against the Huguenots, here attempted to support Navarre’s allegations by descanting upon the misdeeds of the Protestants which recently had caused riot and bloodshed at their place of assembly near the church of Saint Médard. Beza, having been present on the occasion referred to, was able to refute the prelate’s calumny on the spot, after which he repeated the demand for the punishment of the Duke of Guise, who was known to be coming armed as in a time of war—a procedure from which nothing but mischief could ensue. Hereupon Antoine of Bourbon threw off all disguise, and avowed himself the duke’s friend and partisan. "Whoever," said he, "shall touch my brother the Duke of Guise with the tip of his finger, will touch my whole body."

It was a critical juncture in the history of French Protestantism, and the champion of French Protestantism realized the full responsibility that devolved upon him. First he begged Antoine to hear him patiently as one whom he had long known and whom he had, not many months ago, requested to come to France to help in giving peace to the realm. Next he reminded him that the way of justice is God’s way, and that justice is a debt which kings owe to their poor subjects. To ask for justice is to wrong nobody. Antoine had attempted to excuse the massacre at Vassy by alleging that the Protestant worshippers had thrown stones at Guise and his followers, and that thereupon the former had been unable to restrain the fury of his men, and bloodshed followed. Princes, said he, are not to be expected to submit to being stoned. "If that be so," the Reformer quietly responded, "the Duke of Guise will be exculpated on producing the persons who committed the fault." And then it was that, rising to
the height of that commanding eloquence which few of his contemporaries knew so well how to attain, he closed his address to the insincere King of Navarre with words which the Churches of France never forgot, but which, through the ages of persecution that were to follow, they cherished as a motto to sustain their courage. "Sire," he gravely said, "it belongs in truth to the Church of God, in whose name I speak, to endure blows and not to inflict them. But it will also please your Majesty to remember that she is an anvil that has worn out many hammers."

Thus the incident closed, and Beza took his leave. "It was God's will," says the author of the history of the origins of the Protestant Churches, "that these words should be spoken to the King of Navarre, and that, notwithstanding, Beza should return safe and sound, having discharged a sufficiently hazardous commission."

Within a few weeks there broke out the first of those unfortunate civil wars in which the Huguenots became involved. Condé took the field at their head. Catharine de’ Medici, who had implored his assistance in letters still extant, the authenticity of which cannot rationally be doubted, ended a period of vacillation, and not so much consented, as was forced, to put herself into the power of his opponents. Beza could not in conscience desert the Huguenots at a moment when his services were imperatively needed. His return to his pulpit and to his lecture-room at Geneva was of necessity long deferred.

CHAPTER XII
Counsellor of Condé and the Huguenots in the First Civil War 1562–1563

It was not without an effort that the French Protestants had succeeded in obtaining from the little republic of Geneva, ever jealous of its rights, the "loan" of Theodore Beza until this hour. The earnest letters of the excellent and highly respected Jeanne d’Albrèt, Queen of Navarre, supported as they were by the entreaties of Admiral Coligny and other Huguenot noblemen, however, prevailed over the reluctance of the Genevese, and on December 22, 1561, the Great Council prolonged Beza’s leave of absence for three or four months. We shall see that this was not the last time that the request was repeated, and that the patience of the government of Geneva was sorely tried.

In the 16th century there was such a thing as having a pastor and professor who was too much in demand.

For there was one thing upon which friends and foes were in full agreement—both assigned to Theodore Beza, with signal unanimity, the foremost place among Protestants for eloquence. Claude Haton, the prejudiced but discriminating curate whose memoirs are among the most readable papers of the century and well reflect public sentiment on nearly every point, proclaimed him the most highly esteemed of all the preachers of France for his fair words, more than for his learning. To have conceded the superiority in learning also, would have seemed to the ecclesiastic a species of endorsement of Beza’s success at Poissy.
The people, making no such distinction, flocked to the Huguenot services to hear him. On the very day and at almost the precise hour that the Duke of Guise entered Paris, despite the queen-mother’s prohibition, Prince Condé was accompanying the Huguenot minister, with a bodyguard of four or five hundred horsemen (others said more), to a preaching place beyond the Porte Saint Jacques, where he discoursed to a crowded gathering. The papal nuncio, Cardinal Santa Croce, writing to the pope’s minister, Cardinal Borromeo, the next day, found in this and similar occurrences presages of evil to come. For, as the nuncio never tired of reiterating at the French court, unless the preachers were driven from the kingdom, all other precautions would be of little avail for the rescue of the Roman Catholic cause.

The duties now devolving upon Beza were of the most varied and complex character, and the literary training which had qualified him for dealing with very different subjects was called into constant requisition. As a Christian minister, who was also the most highly trusted friend of Condé, he was at one moment occupied in consulting for the best interests of religion and morality in the Huguenot camp, at another in justifying to friends and foes the course of the prince and his associates. The tergiversation of Antoine of Navarre had made the position of his queen, brave Jeanne d’Albrét, a difficult one at court; it had also made the attitude of the Huguenots to the wife of their new opponent by no means simple. It was soon reported to the Queen of Navarre that the Protestant soldiers in their camp had dropped all references to her husband from the petitions which, as dutiful subjects, they were wont to utter in behalf of the King of France and the princes of royal blood. We have a noble letter in which Theodore Beza, replying to a communication from Jeanne, who complained of this omission, as well as of the iconoclasm of the Huguenot troops, espouses the cause of his brethren with manly frankness and firmness, yet also with respect and true affection. A few sentences alone can here be given of a paper that deserves to be reproduced entire. The Reformer does not conceal his aversion to the prevalent image worship, but neither does he permit this aversion to prevail over his love of law and order.

"As to the first point, Madam, respecting which you were pleased to write me," wrote Beza, "I can say nothing about this overthrowing of images, except what I have always felt and preached: that is to say, that this mode of action does not please me at all, inasmuch as it seems to me to have no foundation in the Word of God, and as it is to be feared that it proceeds rather from impetuosity than from zeal. Nevertheless, because the deed itself is in accordance with the will of God, who condemns idols and idolatry, and because it seems as if, in so widespread a movement, there were some secret counsel of God, who, it may be, intends by this means to put to shame the greatest by means of the smallest, I content myself with reprehending in general what is deserving of reprehension, and with moderating such impetuous procedures as much as it lies in my power. But that destruction of the monuments of the dead is entirely inexcusable, and I can assure you, Madam, that the prince is fully resolved not only to make the most thorough investigation, but also to inflict such punishment as may serve as an example to others."
"As to the last point in your letter, ... I shall tell you frankly what I think and what attitude all the Churches of these regions take. So long as the king your husband gave evidence of the fear of God, he was named with you in the public prayers, because of the hope that was entertained that he would improve little by little, as so often he professed his purpose to do. Subsequently, when it was seen that he was banding together with the enemies of God, still we did not cease to make supplications for him by name in the prayers of the Church, and this with so much the more ardor as we foresaw the danger of ruin to be greater and more evident. This lasted until, to our great regret, he so burst all bounds as not only to scandalize the Church, but, what is worse, to proclaim himself head and protector of those whose hands are reeking with the blood of the children of God, of those who have always professed themselves the persecutors and desperate enemies of the latter. You may believe, Madam, that it was not without deep anguish that we heard and witnessed this piteous change, and that we were brought to this point. For how could we pray against the enemies of God and His Church, and, at the same time, name one of the chief enemies among those persons whom we hold in highest esteem? Yet would I not come to the point of pronouncing a final sentence of rejection, for there are those who have drawn very near to that point who yet have received grace and mercy. As for myself, although I see in him at present more evidence of rejection than of salvation, yet am I unwilling to determine what God has counseled for the future, according to the riches of His great mercies, and I am content to be ignorant of what God has concealed, rather than too rashly condemn the sinner with his sin. I have not therefore removed him from the prayers, as though cutting him off forever from the Church, but his name has merely been omitted from the place where he was mentioned for the foregoing reasons. Yet nothing prevents his being comprehended under the general designation of ‘the princes of the blood,’ whom we conjoin with the king in special respect. Otherwise you would have far greater occasion to complain than he; for it has seemed indecorous to name you without him, and I see that the greater number [of worshippers], in order to cover the matter in some fashion, omit mention of you also. And yet I am as certain as that I shall die, that your memory, Madam, is as precious and dear to all the Churches of God as that of any person in this world.”

These words would seem to have been penned shortly after a narrow escape of Beza from falling into the hands of his enemies, to which he alludes near the close of his letter.

"I came near being surprised on my return from Angers," he writes, "and, from what I learn, the king your husband, Madam, must have written expressly on the subject with threats little befitting the service which all my life long I have desired to render him. Praised be God, who delivered me from this danger, showing me in very deed that it is better to serve Him than to serve men. But I protest before my God, that this has not changed my affection, and that I would not bemoan my death today, were it to conduce to his salvation."
Very different in style was the document which Beza was perhaps at this very moment preparing for publication in the name of the Prince of Condé, and which was given to the world a week later. The three leading Roman Catholic noblemen, having fully determined to precipitate a civil war, ostensibly for the purpose of hindering the further progress of Protestantism, but in reality so as to secure for themselves the undisputed mastery, had just presented to the crown their exorbitant demands in the form of two petitions, of one and the same date, and constituting in effect a single document. The contents were sufficiently radical to satisfy the most bigoted friend of the old order of things. Ignoring altogether the recent tolerant edict of the king, the subscribers stipulated that the exercise of any other religion than the Roman Catholic and Apostolic religion be interdicted in France by a perpetual and irrevocable law, and that all royal officers, of whatever kind, be compelled to conform to that religion or else leave the realm. Churches that had been seized and damaged must be restored and repaired, the sacrilegious must be punished, all that had taken up arms without authority from the King of Navarre must lay them down or be pronounced rebels. If all this were done, they professed themselves ready to retire from the kingdom, in fact, to go to the ends of the earth. They would not even require as a condition that Condé should participate in their exile, nay, they would prefer to have him return to the royal court, where, doubtless, he would deport himself in a manner worthy of a prince of the blood royal. In other words, should the prince dismiss all the Protestant troops that were flocking to his standard, he was welcome to make a fresh trial of the perils that await the credulous man who risks his neck upon the good faith and promises of inveterate enemies. Only the opportune decease of Francis II had saved Condé’s life at Orleans, a little over two years since; he was now invited to find out by a new experience whether Heaven would a second time interfere as signally in his behalf.

We can scarcely suspect the Duke of Guise, Constable Montmorency, and Marshal Saint André of such simplicity as to imagine that they could impose upon the Prince of Condé, but they had hopes of imposing upon the people by their cheap display of magnanimity. It required a skillful hand to defeat their purpose, and certain it is that Condé had at his command no more skillful hand than that of Theodore Beza. The reply which went out to the world in the name of Louis de Bourbon was so keen that ordinarily well-informed contemporaries such as the historian De Thou, at a loss to ascertain who could have composed it, were driven to the absurdity of conjecturing that it might have emanated from the pen of the shrewd and versatile Bishop Montluc, author of some of the ablest State papers of the period. The writer branded the pretended petition or petitions of the Roman Catholic leaders as an arrogant assumption of authority that in no sense belonged to them. What they had put forth was in point of fact not a petition but a decree, made by the duke, the constable, and the marshal, with the cooperation of the legate, the nuncio, and the Spanish ambassador. The league they had formed was more full of danger and more sanguinary than that of Sulla, or that of
Caesar, or that of the Triumvirate of Rome. Its authors had refused to obey the queen’s commands and retire to their governments. They had come to Paris in arms, contrary to her express commands, and no prayer of hers or of the young king could induce them to leave the capital. They had forcibly brought Catharine and Charles from Fontainebleau to Melun, and from Melun to Paris. Such was the reverence and humility of which they prated, while the love they pretended to bear to their country did not prevent them from calling in foreign arms to plunder it, and, if God did not prevent, to subdue and ruin it.

"And then," wrote Beza in Condé’s name, "they demand a perpetual edict to settle matters of religion; and when we ask for the maintenance of the edict that has been made until the king’s majority, they tell us that this is an uncivil and unreasonable demand; that it is the prerogative of the king, when it seems good to him, to change, limit, amplify, and restrict his edicts; and that when we ask of him that what has already been ordained by him and his council be kept and maintained during his minority, we wish to keep his Majesty in prison and captivity. Meanwhile they want the edict which they three have framed to be perpetual and irrevocable. If the reason alleged by them against us is to be received, for that same reason we shall conclude that they themselves wish to detain the king a prisoner both in his minority and in his majority, nay, we are warranted in saying that they think that they can lord it over not merely the person of the king, but over the whole realm, since in a matter of so great importance and involving such consequences, they dare present an ordinance authorized by but three persons. What more did ever Augustus, Mark Antony, and Lepidus, when by their wicked and infamous Triumvirate they overturned the laws and the Roman commonwealth? Had they been moved by honest zeal, as they assert, by a peaceable and not a seditious zeal, by a zeal for religion and not for ambition, they would not have begun by active measures. They would have come unarmed, they would have presented themselves with humility and reverence; they would have set forth the causes that moved them to disapprove of the Edict of January; they would very humbly have begged the king and queen to examine, in conjunction with their council, with the advice of the parliaments, and the other estates, whether by some other means a remedy might be found for the troubles, to the preservation of the honor of God, and of the security and greatness of the king and kingdom. Had they thus spoken, they would have shown that they were inspired by no other passion than the zeal of their consciences. As it is, their course of action sufficiently reveals the fact that religion serves them only as a means to secure a following and to introduce division among the king’s subjects. With one portion and in conjunction with foreigners, they purpose to make themselves masters and lords of everything. To them I am constrained to say that the princes of the blood, whose enemies they have always been and whom they have ever driven into the background, so far as they were able, will not suffer foreigners and persons not called to the government, to take it upon themselves to make edicts and ordinances in this kingdom. Yet they want and demand that the Romish religion, which they call Catholic and Apostolic, alone be established and recognized in France, and that preaching and the sacraments be forbidden
to the adherents of the Reformed religion. It is a Duke of Guise, a foreign prince, a Sieur de Montmorency, and a Sieur de Saint André, who enact an ordinance contrary to the Edict of January, accorded by the king and the queen his mother, the King of Navarre, the princes of the blood, with the king’s council and forty of the greatest and most notable personages of all the parliaments. It is these three that draw up a law against the petition presented by the States, that is to say, the nobles and Third Estate at Orleans and, later, at Saint Germain; both of which estates petitioned the king to be pleased to grant places of worship to the adherents of the Reformed religion. These three make an ordinance that cannot be executed without a civil war, without putting the kingdom in danger of evident ruin. This they themselves see and admit. And this is the way the kingdom stands indebted to them, and this is the fruit born of their wisdom and good zeal, or, to speak more properly, of their intrigues, underhand practices, and ambition to rule.”

With such words did Beza make the Prince of Condé to characterize the new Triumvirs, while defending the cause which these Triumvirs had conspired to overthrow. Again, as in his letter over his own signature to the Queen of Navarre, being compelled to touch upon the iconoclasm out of which the enemies of the Protestants made so great an accusation, he dwelt upon the efforts that had been conscientiously put forth to check and punish the practice, and again he contrasted the fault, as fault it undeniably was, of destroying lifeless statue in stone, with the far more heinous crime of ruthlessly destroying the persons of men and women made in the likeness of God:

“If the breaking of images merits punishment, as I fully believe it does—inasmuch as the act is committed contrary to the king’s ordinance—what punishment do those expect who cloak themselves so readily with the king’s name, for the murders that have been committed by themselves and, following their example and at their solicitation, at Vassy, at Sens, at Castelnaudary, and at Angers—where it is well known that five hundred men and women have been slain for no other reason than their religion? He that dictated the ‘petition’ should have examined his own conscience and have recognized the fact that it is not found that the lifeless image has ever cried for vengeance; but the blood of man, who is the living image of God, cries for it to Heaven, and calls it down, and brings it, even though it tarry long.”

To the suggestion that Condé and those who were in arms with him ought to be declared rebels, the prince was made to respond that this was an article that called for a reply in another way than in writing. He hoped, he said, within a few days, to go in search of those that made the assertion, and settle by arms the question, whether it belonged to a foreigner and two insignificant persons such as they were, to judge a prince of the blood and two thirds of the noblemen of the kingdom, and pronounce them to be rebels and enemies of the kingdom.

Finally, in a passage of great beauty and oratorical force, the prince was made by Beza to institute a startling contrast between the demand of the new Triumvirs and that which he himself made:
"I ask for the maintenance of the Edict of January, and they wish of their own authority to annul and abolish it. They ask for the destruction of an infinite number of houses, as well of the nobles as of the common people; I ask and desire that all the king’s subjects, of whatever quality they may be, shall be upheld, protected in their estates and property, and preserved from all insult and violence. They wish to exterminate all the adherents of the Reformed religion; and I desire that we may be reserved to the time when the king shall reach his majority (at which time we will obey what he shall be pleased to command us), and that meanwhile the adherents of the Romish Church shall not be disturbed, molested, or constrained in their property or in the exercise of their charges. They demand an armed force to execute what they have undertaken, and do not consider that they will compel an infinite number of worthy people to defend themselves. They do not take into consideration the scarcity of the means at their disposal, nor regard the troubles and the ruin that civil war brings. What is worse, they have engaged in writing to introduce foreign arms, which means, in plain talk, to give the kingdom to be the prey of its enemies. On the contrary, I do not ask to retain my arms, I do not make use of the king’s money, I do not call foreigners to enter the kingdom, and have declined those offered to me. God is my witness that I have begged them not to come and to prevent others from coming, either for or against us. ... They demand that we be declared rebels; they demand our lives, our honor, and our consciences. We demand nothing whatever of their lives, their honor, their property, or their consciences, nor wish them any other ill save that to which we are willing to bind ourselves—which is, that they and we withdraw to our houses, and this according to the conditions more fully set forth in our Declarations and Protestations heretofore made and sent to the king and queen."

Such was the tenor and such were a few points of the noble document wherein the brilliant Genevese Reformer supplied the young Prince of Condé with a defence clear and convincing to every dispassionate reader, if, in those exciting times, any dispassionate readers were still to be found. A recital of the incidents of this eventful war do not belong here. The reader must look elsewhere for the massacres on the one side and the reprisals on the other, for the wearisome tale of acts of unnecessary cruelty and brutality, for the blunders almost surpassing belief committed by men who esteemed themselves and were regarded by others as wise and prudent. Contrary to his expectations, Beza was detained with the army at Orleans, where he took a part in drawing up that remarkable set of articles regulating the discipline and morals of the army, which was intended to make Huguenot warfare a model for all future generations, but which in reality lasted barely a couple of months. The daily prayers and the frequent preaching in the prince’s presence devolved upon him, but was the smallest part of his duties. It was not forgotten that he was no novice in diplomacy, and when Admiral Coligny’s youngest brother, Andelot, was dispatched to levy troops in Germany as auxiliaries to the depleted army of the prince at Orleans, it was natural that Beza should be thought of as of all men the most likely to succeed in securing the favor of the
German princes with whom he had treated when pleading the cause of the persecuted Waldenses of Piedmont and the victims of calumny and judicial murder in Paris.

His visit to the banks of the Rhine and to Switzerland afforded him an opportunity to go to Geneva and confer with Calvin. It did not permit him to resume his cherished duties at the University and in the church of Saint Pierre. His allotted place was evidently still in France and with his brethren who were there fighting against almost overwhelming odds and never more in need of a clear-headed, far-sighted counsellor, a faithful, energetic, and untiring man of affairs. Beza’s leave of absence, even with the renewal which had been granted, had long since run out. But when Calvin added his solicitations to Beza’s exposition of the critical condition of Protestantism in France, the syndics and council of the republic were forced to see that the interests of the Reformation everywhere were involved in their decision, and preferred the general good to the convenience of Geneva. In doing so, they recognized the fact that new responsibilities had been thrown upon Beza, and that, in view of his great administrative abilities, he had been compelled to assume an office scarcely less important than that of a military commander, since it had to do with the supply and control of the sinews of war. The minute of their action, which is still extant, is as honorable to their disinterestedness as to Beza’s tried integrity of character.

"Monsieur de Bèze," the record states, "being called to France not only as a minister, but also as treasurer, the Council and the ministers have found themselves in great embarrassment, reflecting, on the one side, upon the great need we have of so great a man and upon the dangers which he may run, and, on the other, upon the desolation of the Church and the comfort he will administer to her, and upon the unseemliness of discouraging, by a refusal to let him go, those who are with so much valor and firmness defending the cause of the Gospel, and of incurring notable reproaches at their hands. Finally, we have judged that we ought not to have our own particular interest so much at heart, as the advancement of God’s kingdom and glory; and the said Beza has been permitted to act as he shall deem fit."

After his return to France, Beza was present at the battle of Dreux, and witnessed the defeat and capture of the Prince of Condé, singularly enough offset in the same battle by the capture of Marshal Montmorency, the commanding general of the Roman Catholics, and the death of Marshal Saint André, a second of the so-called “Triumvirs.” That inveterate calumniator, Claude de Saintes, who will be remembered as one of the disputants at the Colloquy of Poissy, accused the Reformer, some years later, of having fought in that engagement, an assertion which Beza denied.

"I was certainly present at the battle, both at the beginning and the end (why should I not, having been duly called there?), and, indeed, which you may wonder at more, dressed in my cloak and not armed, nor may anyone cast in my teeth either the slaying of anybody or flight."

The first civil war lasted two or three months more. Its conclusion was hastened by a tragic event. Duke Francis of Guise, while inspecting the works
by means of which he seemed about to capture the city of Orleans, then held by the Huguenots, was treacherously shot by a miscreant named Poltrot, and died within six days. By whom the assassin had been instigated to the deed is even now uncertain. After at first glorying in his act, he broke down through fear of death and accused Admiral Coligny, Beza, M. de Soubise, and others. Subsequently he retracted his statements and declared them to be false; but while suffering his horrible sentence and being torn asunder by four horses, he again returned to his improbable story. Admiral Coligny and all those whom he had accused denied with the greatest solemnity that they had prompted the assassin to commit his dastardly action. With others we have nothing to do. Theodore Beza said that, so far from having counseled the man, he had never, to the best of his knowledge, laid eyes upon him. All fair-minded men cleared him, and most men held the crackbrained assailant of Guise to be a wild enthusiast whom fancied personal wrongs or the wrongs of his party had led to seek vengeance for himself.

At the expiration of hostilities Beza returned to Geneva and resumed the functions he had been compelled to intermit for about a year and a half. To the admiration which he had aroused in friends and foes alike, he had added the strong affection and confidence of all the French Huguenots won by his arduous and disinterested services in their behalf. Of dangers incurred there had been no lack. For just in proportion as his friends had come to love and rely upon him, so had the enemies of Protestantism, within and without the kingdom, come to hate him as the most redoubtable of opponents. That they invented falsehoods respecting him was nothing strange; it was Beza’s experience to the very end of his days. On the present occasion the fabrication was a rumor that obtained wide currency to the effect that Beza and Calvin had had so violent a quarrel that the former did not dare to return to Geneva! In the full belief that the story was true, the Duchess of Parma, Spanish Regent of the Low Countries, thinking it likely that Beza might wend his way to Holland or Germany, secretly ordered the frontiers to be watched and offered a reward of 1,000 florins for Beza’s capture, dead or alive. The Reformer was portrayed as a man of medium stature, with a high and broad face, and a beard that was half gray.

End of Section 2
CHAPTER XIII

Beza Succeeds Calvin
He Edits the Greek New Testament
1563–1565

The public records of Geneva bear witness to the general joy and thanksgiving to God that were felt and expressed at the safe return of Theodore Beza after his long and eventful absence. He reached his home on May 5, 1563. It was therefore over twenty months since he had set out upon his important mission, full of courage, but not blind to the dangers of the enterprise. Within two days of his arrival, a minute appears on the registers of the Council, to the effect that “great thanks, and offers of every kind of service, have been received from all the French Protestant lords, for the great and important services which Monsieur de Bèze has rendered to them, as well as to all the churches of the kingdom.” And a strong light is shed upon the esteem in which the Reformer was held in his adopted city, and upon the reputation he had gained through
the unselfishness of his past life, by a statement in the same documents, six days later (May 13, 1563), that a resolution had been passed voting to grant all that he may need to Beza—"le Spectable de Bèze," in the curious phraseology of the times—"who has expended much money in his travels and who would say nothing about it, even were he in great straits."

By no one was he more cordially welcomed than by Calvin himself, not an old man—for he was not yet fifty-four years of age—but evidently fast nearing his end. The relation between the two men had long been of the closest and most affectionate character. Although the difference of age was only ten years, Beza had, from the first moment that he set foot in Geneva, assumed to the older Reformer the relation of a child to his parent. Intense admiration for the wonderful intellectual endowments of Calvin ripened into a love such as can exist only between strong characters that think the same great thoughts. Calvin saw in Beza not the slavish copy of himself, but a scholar of greater polish and wider knowledge of polite society, better capable of dealing with courts, with a stronger physical constitution, and therefore having the promise of being able to accomplish much that was denied to his own enfeebled health. The mutual discovery of their respective qualifications to carry on different parts of the great work committed to them, supplementing each other, yet acting in complete harmony, came early. It came on Calvin's part long before Beza's stay at Lausanne approached its end. For when, in 1551, Beza, having occupied his chair in the Académie of that city for only two years, was ill of the pestilence that proved mortal to so many, and was reported to be dying, Calvin tells us that he was prostrated with anxiety, and this not for himself alone, but also and chiefly for the Church to which he felt him to be so essential. "I should not be a man," he wrote at this time, "if I did not love him who loves me with more than a brother's love and honors me as a father." Beza's life was mercifully spared on that occasion, and, now that twelve years of the most confiding friendship and interchange of views on every important point that could interest intelligent men had passed over their heads, the love was still more intense.

But a return to the precise relations subsisting between the two men before Beza went to France was now impossible, so rapidly had Calvin's health failed. He must assume the heavier of Calvin's burdens, while waiting for the dreaded moment when, with Calvin's death, he must attempt to bear them alone.

It is a notable circumstance connected with the period of the world's history of which we are treating, that it gave birth to a horde of writers, not merely lovers of scandal but authors of impudent calumny against whose envenomed pen the reputation of no prominent champion of the so-called "new doctrines" was safe, either as to great matters or as to small. Beza's antagonist at Poissy, the monk Claude de Saintes, was of this type. Among his many inventions, he was not ashamed to assert that, so far from having been selected by Calvin to be his successor, Beza, in his inordinate ambition and rapacity, scarcely waited
for Calvin’s removal from the earth to foist himself upon the Church and State of Geneva. Beza’s reply to this fabrication is, as usual, dignified and crushing.

“There was no one in this city at that time,” he writes, “who did not know that when, at length, I had returned home from your slaughter-house, that is, from the first civil war, and when illness precluded Calvin’s presence at our gatherings and especially at the meetings of the presbyters, I was designated, by the request of all my colleagues and of Calvin himself, who urged me to accept when I declined to do so, to sustain a portion of his load. And this also does everybody know, and the whole Council first of all, that, when Calvin died, it was only unwillingly and with reluctance that I took upon my shoulders this load; that in this matter I was moved by no consideration more than by Calvin’s own will, expressed while he was yet alive; and that I accepted it on no other condition but that at the end of the year someone else should be elected. I call God and all my brethren now to bear witness that each successive year I begged of my colleagues that this should be done, but never obtained my request.”

The records of the “Venerable Company” prove the truth of Beza’s solemn assertion. They tell us, moreover, that the pastors took the precaution to reserve for themselves the right of examining and, if necessary, censuring even before the end of the year whatever might seem deserving of reprobation in the conduct of him whom they continued to regard as only the equal of his brethren.

"The moderator," so the minutes read, "shall always recall Monsieur Calvin, who, so severe against the vicious and the impious, never made use of an inordinate authority in his relations with his brethren; but, on the contrary, adapting himself so far as possible to all, managed to lighten the task of each."

And so the custom remained until 1580, when a more frequent renewal of the election came into vogue. Even then it was Beza himself, with the support of Trembley, that urged a change by which each member was in turn called upon to preside at the meetings for a single week. The innovation could not, in the very nature of the case, make any diminution in some of Beza’s other engrossing cares, especially such as arose from his vastly extended correspondence with the churches of all parts of Protestant Christendom.

It fell to Beza’s lot, as the friend upon whom the mantle of the master fell, to tell the story of Calvin’s life and death to the world, and to tell it promptly.

Of Calvin’s works, the last to be finished was his Commentary on Joshua. It remained unpublished at the time of his death. Beza brought the work out with a biography of the author prefixed, in lieu of the customary preface from the author’s own pen. It opened with a few touching and appropriate words.
"Had it pleased God to preserve to us longer His faithful servant, Mr. John Calvin, or, rather, had not the perversity of the world moved the Lord to take him to Himself so soon, the present would not be the last of the works in which he has so faithfully and happily busied himself for the advancement of God’s glory and for the edification of the Church. Nor would this commentary issue without being crowned as it were by some excellent preface, like the rest. But it has happened to it as to poor orphans who are less highly favored than their brethren, in that their father has left them too early. However, I see this orphan to be sprung from so goodly a house, thank God, and bearing so strong a resemblance to his father, that without any other testimony he will make himself not only very agreeable, but also very honorable in the eyes of all that shall see it. For this reason I purpose not to recommend it by any testimony of my own—what need of it?—but rather to lament with it the death of him who has been a common father both to it and to me. For I neither can nor ought I to esteem him less my father because of what God has taught me through him, than should this book and so many other books for having been written by him. I shall therefore bewail my loss, but this shall not be without consolation. For, as regards him of whom I speak, I should have loved him too little while alive here below, if the blessedness into which he is now admitted did not change my personal sadness into rejoicing because of his gain. And I should have derived little profit from his teaching so holy and admirable, from his life so good and upright, from his death so happy and Christian, had I not been instructed by all these means to submit myself to the Providence of God with all satisfaction and content."

A full year had not passed since Calvin’s death when Beza gave to the world, in 1565, the most notable of his contributions to Biblical science. This was an edition of the Greek text of the New Testament, accompanied in parallel columns by two translations into Latin, the one being the text of the Vulgate, the other an original translation of his own. This latter translation he had published as far back as in 1556. This was the reason that the present work bore the misleading designation of a second edition, although it was in reality the first edition of the Greek text. There were added annotations which Beza had also previously published, but which on this occasion he greatly enriched and enlarged.

In the preparation of this edition of the Greek text, but much more in the preparation of the second edition of that text which he brought out seventeen years later (in 1582), Beza might have availed himself of the help of a valuable manuscript of great antiquity which the fortunes of war threw into his hands. The uncial now known to the literary world as the "Codex Bezæ," and briefly referred to by the letter D, had apparently long rested in the library of the Monastery of Saint Irenaeus at Lyons. It was a copy of the New Testament made in the middle of the sixth century, and comprised the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles both in Greek and Latin. In the iconoclasm and pillage to which Lyons was subjected by Huguenot soldiers in the first civil war, this precious
monument of antiquity was happily saved, and passed into the possession of Beza. The great Hellenist undoubtedly recognized its value, but startled, it is said, by the singularity of some of its readings, made little use of it in the preparation of his editions. When, after a score of years, the decline of his powers warned him of the near approach of the close of his period of studious productiveness, he presented the manuscript to the University of Cambridge, where it may still be seen among the choice possessions of that seat of learning. In a similar way, Beza had the advantage of access, for the latter part of the New Testament, to the text of a second manuscript containing only that portion of the Sacred Scriptures, and dating from but a little later in the same sixth century. From the circumstance that it had been found by Beza in Clermont, this manuscript, which is now in the National Library at Paris, is known as the "Codex Claromontanus."

It was not, however, to these sources that Beza was chiefly indebted, but rather to the previous edition of the eminent Robert Stephens (1550), itself based in great measure upon one of the later editions (the fourth or fifth, it is said) of Erasmus.

"In order to produce this entire work," says Beza himself, in his preface, "I have compared with the remarks of a Valla, Peter Stapulensis, and Erasmus, the most learned writings both of the Greeks and the Romans, as well as the moderns, and I acknowledge that I have often been essentially supported by these, even though I have not made myself so dependent on either these or those as not to remain true to my own judgment. To all this there was added a copy from the library of our Stephens which had been most carefully collated by his son, Henry Stephens (who has inherited his father’s indefatigability), with some five and twenty manuscripts and almost all the printed editions."

The result of Beza’s labors was a new edition of the text of the New Testament which, especially in the improved form in which it appeared in 1582 and thereafter, has a recognized place of great influence in the history of Biblical study. That the learned author succeeded in making all the use of his material, limited as it was, which a modern scholar trained in the rigid system now practiced might have derived even from such inadequate apparatus, cannot be affirmed. The rules of textual criticism were of the crudest kind, and Beza himself would seem at times to have adhered with less consistency than at others to the canons which he himself had laid down. But at least there was progress, and Beza’s labors in this direction were exceedingly helpful to those that came after.

The same thing may be asserted with equal truth of Beza's Latin version and of the copious notes with which it was accompanied. The former is said to have been published over a hundred times. Both were composed with the purpose of conveying a more exact notion of the sense than could be derived from the Vulgate. Both bear in every verse marks of the keen insight, close
discrimination, well trained linguistic skill of a scholar who had made himself by an unusually comprehensive study of profane as well as sacred literature almost as familiar with the idioms of the Greek as with those of the Latin tongue. The apparently unprofitable years spent at Paris in reading the works of the ancients, with no present object in view other than the gratification of personal literary tastes, now bore abundant fruit in an unexpected direction. The Biblical exegete, not less than the elegant orator at Poissy, drew upon a treasury of classic lore stored up in the years of leisure when the chief end of the elegant youth from Vézelay seemed to be above everything else to avoid compulsion to wear life away in the dull and repulsive practice of the law. The merits of his work have been variously estimated, for indeed it possessed along with its conspicuous excellences some peculiarities regarded by adverse critics as undeniable defects. Of these the chief has been found by some to consist in the preponderating influence exercised upon the interpretation of Scripture by the author’s view of the doctrine of Predestination. However this may be, there is no question that Beza added much both by his version and by his notes to a clearer understanding of the New Testament. He was no servile follower of the Vulgate, and while he was not always felicitous, either from the standpoint of style or from that of interpretation, in his departures from the rendering of the Vulgate, it is quite certain, as we might expect to be the case in the serious work of so earnest a student, that he introduced no changes for change’s sake.

CHAPTER XIV

Beza’s Broad Sympathies
Synod of La Rochelle
Massacre of Saint Bartholomew’s Day
The English Reformation
1566–1574

With Calvin’s responsibilities, Theodore Beza had also inherited Calvin’s broad sympathies and his insatiable avidity to learn everything occurring in any part of the world that bore upon the progress of the kingdom of Christ. This occupied his thoughts almost to the exclusion of matters of purely secular importance. This filled a great part of his correspondence, especially with men likeminded but less favorably situated for the receipt of intelligence from abroad. In particular, his letters to Bullinger, throughout a long series of years, contain what may properly be styled the current history of Christendom. A few sentences of a letter to the Zurich Reformer, written from Geneva, June 6, 1566, may serve as a specimen of this correspondence, while giving a glimpse
of the state of Europe two years after Calvin’s death. It has never been published.

"We are enjoying our peace, through the singular and incredible kindness of God. For it is clear to us that never have our enemies been more animated than they now are against this little church and this school. But hitherto God has frustrated all the efforts of the wicked. It is probable that, were we to stand aloof and hold our peace, [the Duke of] Savoy would easily secure everything against that slave of all iniquity, Geneva, wherein reigns that notable robber Beza. We shall live, however, so long as it shall seem good to the Lord. Doubtless you have learned fully all that has been done at Augsburg, and how those thunderbolts of theirs have vanished in empty sound. I hope that the Lord will dissipate the rest of the tempests that are imminent. …

"For the rest, so far as appertains to the French Churches themselves, they are happily growing in the sight of their adversaries. But it is certain that the latter are only watching to obtain an opportunity for overwhelming the chief men and subsequently ruining the rest. Of this our friends have no doubt, and meanwhile look to God [for help]. Among the Piedmontese [Waldenses] after the departure of Mr. Junius, the same thing occurred to our brethren that befell the Israelites when Pharaoh was wonderfully exasperated at the first appeal of Moses. What will happen, God only knows. In England, everything is gradually tending to a manifest contempt of all religion; good men, indeed, groan, but only too few. In Scotland after the slaying of Secretary David [Rizzio] the queen is said to have become so insane as even to have his bones interred in the sepulchre of her fathers. Hence fresh disturbances have arisen. But in short it is represented that all matters are now settled on conditions that are not unequal, if only they be sufficiently stable. Thus much I have to write. Farewell, my father, and continue, as you do, to commend us to God. Two days ago we counted up two thousand students at the promotions of our school. Pray that the Lord may bless these beginnings, while Satan impotently gnashes his teeth."

The attempt to make of Geneva a model to Christendom for the purity of its morals, enforced by a legislation of unexampled strictness, was not suspended at Calvin’s death, but found in Theodore Beza as decided an advocate as it possessed in his predecessor. Calvin had not been in his grave two years when a signal proof of this fact was afforded.

The number of bishops that were converted to Protestantism and resigned their sees, in the early days of the French Reformation, was larger than one might suppose. Among them was Jacques Paul Spifame, Seigneur de Passy, Bishop of Nevers, who, in 1559, forsook the kingdom and took refuge in Geneva. Here, as a nobleman, he was readily admitted to citizenship, as well as to the ministry. Subsequently he served as pastor at Issoudun. Calvin urged him, in a letter still extant, to return to Nevers and take charge of the newly established Protestant
church, showing the people of his former diocese that if he had formerly been their bishop only in name, it was his purpose now to be a bishop in deed. But unfortunately Spifame was not of the stuff of which good pastors are made. The inconsistencies that appeared in his life both when the Prince of Condé selected him for some diplomatic work in Germany, and when he sojourned at the court of the Queen of Navarre, led to investigation, and investigation disclosed crime. In the end he was arrested and tried for adultery at Geneva, and being found guilty was sentenced to death. Despite his tardy confession and the contrition for his sins which he testified on the scaffold, by an address to the people that was accepted as satisfactory proof of repentance, he was publicly put to death on March 23, 1566.

It need scarcely be said that so severe a punishment for a crime of which in the neighboring kingdom the courts of justice were not wont to take cognizance, created a profound sensation and drew down upon the little republic of Geneva, and upon the ministers that approved the republic’s course, almost universal condemnation. But the government did not flinch in the determination to uphold the law, nor did Beza fail to espouse its defense. Writing to the eminent Pithou, of Troyes, in Champagne, less than a month after the event, he says, in a letter which, I believe, is inedited:

"I know well that everybody will pass his own judgment, and that Satan will not spare us. But I hope that the wise will call to mind the Lord’s warning that bids us not to judge rashly of our brethren, and therefore, with still greater reason, not to think ill of an entire Christian Seigniory and Church. ... As to the others, who will judge as they please, it is God’s province to stop their mouths, and to Him we appeal from all foolish judgments passed in so many places against us."

While every part of Christendom where the truth was struggling for existence claimed and secured Beza’s attention and prayers, it was, next to Geneva and its schools, the work in France that lay nearest to his heart. In that kingdom the interval of quiet was short. Then two more civil wars rudely disturbed the delusive dream of steady progress in which the Protestants had indulged. The disasters of Jarnac and Moncontour at first seemed fatal blows from which the Huguenot cause would be slow to recover, if ever it should recover from them at all. But the marvelous ability developed by Admiral Coligny, in turning a flight before the enemy into a successful advance that carried war almost to the gates of the capital, raised the hopes of the despondent and wrested from unwilling hands the concession of a peace on favorable terms.

So long as it lasted, the French war brought new cares and anxieties for Beza. Fugitives poured into Geneva in an almost incessant stream, and these fugitives were for the time to be provided with food and shelter. At such crises it was to Beza that all eyes looked for advice and direction. Never did he fail to secure the needy material aid. Furnished with strong letters of recommendation, envoys sent from Geneva at his suggestion laid the pitiable condition of the
destitute Huguenot refugees before the charitable Swiss cantons, while by direct appeals the Reformer reached those that were like-minded in the Low Countries and beyond the English Channel.

Meanwhile, although the period was indeed one of deep solicitude, it was relieved, for Beza, from time to time, by some rays of encouragement and hope. The Church of Geneva was steadily growing, the theological school received a constant and indeed a swelling stream of students. In 1569 Beza was able to write to John Knox that the University had so greatly increased the number of its students that he believed that there were few institutions of the kind in Christendom that were better attended. Colladon and he taught theology upon alternate weeks, and there had now come a third professor, Gallasius by name, driven into this haven, as had an almost countless crowd been driven thither, by the tempests of France. Yet were there two circumstances that prevented the Reformer from taking such solid joy as he might otherwise have experienced from these tokens of prosperity; the one was that if the church was growing in a marvelous fashion, it was growing because of the ruin of other churches; the second, that the plague which had sorely vexed the little city on Lake Leman a year back had within about a month entered upon a new course of destruction. The state of things was worse, instead of better, three years later, a few months before the news came of the Parisian massacre.

"While you off yonder," he wrote to the same correspondent, alluding to the intestine commotions and to the deeds of violence that were enacted in Scotland, "are exercised by tragedies such as not even Greece entire celebrated in her theatres, we have meantime been contending for a full period of six years with the plague, not are we yet altogether through with this combat, which has certainly carried off not fewer than twelve thousand persons in this little town."

In fact, he informed Knox, Geneva was no longer the place he had seen years before, for War and Plague had severely handled her, and the forms of the school, once crowded with pupils, were now empty.

When the Peace of Saint Germain, in 1570, closed the deadliest war to which the Protestants had had yet been exposed, the ardor of Beza's interest in the affairs of his native land did not flag. A few months later there was held, in the month of April, 1571, and within the walls of La Rochelle, most Protestant perhaps of all the cities of France, the seventh in order of the national synods of the Reformed Churches, and one of the most impressive of all these historical assemblies. Not only did Theodore Beza come all the way from Geneva to preside as moderator over this body representative of all the adherents of the Protestant faith, but there was a brilliant representation at its sessions of that large class of princes and nobles that stood at the head of the Huguenot party and had lately been foremost in maintaining its rights on the
field of battle. Their enthusiasm had never run higher. Jeanne d’Albrét, Queen of Navarre, was there. With her were the two princes in whom centered the hopes of the Protestants—Henry of Navarre, who, it was hoped, would make good the damage wrought by the defection of his father, and Henry of Condé, whom popular expectation regarded as destined to replace his father Louis, slain at Jarnac. There, too, were Admiral Coligny, Count Louis of Nassau (brother of William the Silent, Prince of Orange), and others scarcely less distinguished. The national synods were purely religious bodies, unlike in this the "political assemblies" which were occasionally convened for more secular purposes. But the present synod seemed almost to be a joint convention of everything most highly revered in Church and State. The most august moment was when three copies of the Confession of Faith of the Protestant Churches having been carefully engrossed on parchment, each copy was signed, in accordance with a solemn resolution adopted on the first day of the sessions, not only by all the ministers and elders, but also by Queen Jeanne d’Albrét and by all the princes and noblemen in the company. The first copy was to be preserved in La Rochelle, the second in a city of the district of Béarn; the third was sent for safe keeping to Geneva.

It was not a mere form in which the delegates engaged when giving to the Confession of Faith, which the French Churches had adopted and presented to Francis II twelve years before, their renewed and solemn adhesion. It was not merely to honor Theodore Beza that the Queen of Navarre and her wise counsellors, disregarding his first refusal, had insisted, in a reiterated appeal, that he should come to preside over the synod. Nor was it an accident that the very first subject to be considered was that of the Confession of Faith, to be followed immediately by the Ecclesiastical Discipline or Form of Government. The very existence of the churches under their present constitution was in question, and it had to be decided firmly, explicitly, and once for all, that the structure whose foundations had been so firmly laid, but whose order and symmetry the years of war and confusion through which the Protestants had been passing had seriously menaced, should be reared according to its original design. There were those who wished to disturb the representative system with its successive courts, rising from the session or consistory of the individual church, through the classis or presbytery and the provincial synod, to the national synod of the entire kingdom, and, in place of securing to the faithful a purely independent existence, to subordinate the Church to the State, and make the pastor, instead of the free choice of the Christian community, the appointee of the civil magistrate. "The civil magistrate," someone had lately written, "is the head of the Church, and what the ministers are undertaking to exercise is a pure tyranny." Theodore Beza was requested by the national synod to reply to the attacks made upon the Confession and Government of the churches. It was not the first nor the last of such important charges which were placed in his hands by the Protestants of France, assembled in their highest ecclesiastical councils.
The year following beheld the occurrence of an event which changed the whole face of French history, the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew’s Day, of the tragic story of which we may not in this place even attempt to give an outline.

The butchery of the Huguenots that began in the city of Paris on the morning of Sunday, August 24, 1572, afforded a fresh opportunity to Beza, and to the little republic of which he was now avowedly the leading statesman, to display their charity toward the persecuted Protestants of France. Several days would have been required in the midst of profound peace for the tidings to pass from the capital to the borders of Switzerland; the news was purposely retarded in the turmoil into which the kingdom was thrown by the dastardly crime that inaugurated the carnage. Not until Saturday, the 30th, did the first information reach Geneva, brought by merchants from Lyons. These were the advance-guard of a great host of fugitives soon to be expected. Startling as was the horrible announcement to the majority of the citizens, it can scarcely be said to have surprised Beza, a keen observer of contemporaneous history, whom acquaintance with the main actors in French affairs and careful study of their characters had prepared even for so tragic a scene as that now presented to the eye in his native land. Least of all did the fate of the magnanimous and unsuspicious Admiral Coligny astonish him, for he had foreseen the catastrophe and attempted to set the victim on his guard. "Never," he wrote to a friend in Heidelberg, "has so much perfidy, so much atrocity, been seen. How many times did I predict the thing to him [Coligny]? How many times did I forewarn him!" Yet Beza’s apprehensions had probably been rather for the life of the great Huguenot leader, and could scarcely have embraced the lives of so many thousands, especially of more obscure men, women, and children whose blood drenched the ground in almost every part of the country. In the midst of the deep affliction into which the tidings cast him, the faithlessness of the young king and the ineffable meanness of the afterthought by which it was attempted to make culprits of the innocent, especially raised his indignant protest.

"The king at first laid everything to the account of the Guises," Beza wrote to a friend in the letter just quoted, "now he writes that all was done by his own orders. He dares to accuse of a conspiracy those men whom he caused to be assassinated at Paris in their beds, men of whom the world was not worthy."

Most of all did his sympathies go out toward the region nearest to Geneva, from which came the majority of those who safely reached its hospitable refuge.

"At Lyons, all, excepting a small number of persons saved by the cupidity of the soldiers, presented themselves of their own accord to be shut up in the prisons; then themselves offered their necks [to the knife]. Not one drew a sword, not one murmured, not one was questioned. All were butchered like sheep at the shambles, and meanwhile the pretext was raised of a conspiracy. O Lord, Thou hast seen these things, and Thou wilt judge! Pray for us too, who may expect
the same fate. Our government is doing its duty, but it is in God that we must
put our hope."

During the weeks that followed, Beza found no lack of employment in
encouraging and stimulating the Genevese, whose resources were taxed to the
utmost by the sudden addition to their numbers of a multitude of once
prosperous but now homeless and destitute refugees, only too glad to have
escaped from France with their lives. Not that the citizens themselves needed
to be reminded of the claims of common humanity and a common faith. They
could boast, in after days, of the fact that as fast as the fugitives arrived, they
were carried off to private homes, one citizen contending with another as to
which should have the honor of entertaining and caring for those that bore the
marks of having endured the greatest hardships or received the most wounds.
In fact, so fully did individual liberality provide for immediate wants, that, at
first, no public help was called for. Only after the lapse of a month was the
need felt of lightening the burden assumed by the citizens. Then a collection of
funds was made, in which the wealthy councillors and the pastors took, we are
told, the largest part. It was Beza who, conscious that, in the danger that
threatened Geneva, regarded by the fanatics both of Italy and of France as the
very "mine of heresy," his own peril was the most imminent, turned his own
mind and the minds of others to the certainty of the divine protection. "My
thoughts," he wrote to Bullinger, "are more occupied with death than with life."
It was he who, on the day set apart for solemn fasting and prayer to Almighty
God, preached in the pulpit of the old church which Calvin had so often filled
in former years. His words inculcated firm and unshaken reliance on the
goodness of God.

"The hand of the Lord is not shortened," he said. "He will not suffer a hair of
our heads to fall to the ground without His will. Let us not be affrighted
because of the plot of those who have unjustly devised to put us all to death
with our wives and our children. Let us rather be assured that, if the Lord has
ordained to deliver all or any of us, none shall be able to resist Him. If it shall
please Him that we all die, let us not fear; for it is our Father's good pleasure
to give us another home, which is the heavenly kingdom, where there is no
change, no poverty, no want, where there are no tears, no crying, no
mourning, no sorrow, but, on the contrary, everlasting joy and blessedness. It
is far better to dwell with the beggar Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, than in hell
with the rich man, with Cain, with Saul, with Herod, or with Judas. Meanwhile,
we must drink of the cup which the Lord has prepared for us, each according to
his portion. We must not be ashamed of the Cross of Christ, nor be loath to
drink the gall of which He has first drunk, knowing that our sorrow shall be
turned into joy, and that we shall laugh in our turn when the wicked shall weep
and gnash their teeth."

Fully twenty Protestant pastors had found their way to Geneva. These
shepherds driven from their flocks were the special objects of Beza's fraternal
solicitude. The perils to which they had found themselves exposed did not
discourage others from entering upon the studies that would qualify them to
embrace the same dangerous vocation. Beza’s hands were full with providing
for the relief of their extreme want. "Our school," he wrote at the beginning of
winter, "is full, almost too full; but the greater part of our students have come
to us in a state of utter destitution." At that very time—such was the
Reformer’s untiring literary activity—he could write that the second volume of
his theological works, a ponderous folio, was in press, in which, he added, "he
contemplated the insertion of several new pieces, especially some theological
letters, should God grant him leisure."

The Parisian massacre, great as was the disappointment of cherished hopes
which it created, did not permanently dishearten Theodore Beza and those
that, like Beza, had looked for the speedy conversion of France to the Gospel.
Much less did it chill his affection and dampen his interest in his native land.
After it, not less than before it, he remained the advocate and counsellor of
French Protestantism.

The emergency might be purely ecclesiastical, or might have reference to the
political relations of his fellow believers; but whatever it was, the Huguenots
regarded themselves as entitled to the services of a man equally at home in
religion and in diplomacy. Prince Henry of Condé felt that he could not do
without this prudent adviser; and so often did he invite the Genevese to make
him a "loan" of their leading theologian, that at length, becoming impatient of
the inconvenience to which they were repeatedly put, they politely informed
his Highness that he would do well henceforth to depend on the letters, in lieu
of the visits, of Beza. Nor was the latter less a tried friend and adviser of Henry
of Navarre, who rarely failed to communicate to the Reformer his conclusions
on all matters of prime importance, and attempt to justify his course in the
Reformer’s eyes, in case he seemed to have acted precipitately or ill-advisedly.
This does not mean that the wayward prince was much disposed to follow
Beza’s recommendations, save where these coincided with his own
predilections. But he professed to value them highly and not to reject Beza’s
“holy admonitions,” even when not profiting by them.

"I beg you to love me always," was the postscript of one of his letters, "assuring
you that you could not give a share of your friendship to any prince that would
be less ungrateful for it, and to continue your good reproof as if you were my
father."

Others were equally anxious to obtain Beza’s views and more certain to be
influenced by them. The records of the national synods of the French Reformed
Churches prove that at perplexing points it was customary to rely much upon
Geneva, and that Geneva’s wise leader was consulted whether, for example, it
was deemed opportune to draw up a statement of the reasons for which the
Decrees of the Council of Trent were held to be null and void by the Protestant
world, or to frame an answer to anti-Trinitarian books. No action of importance indeed seemed complete which had not been communicated to Theodore Beza.

There was probably no country in which Protestantism had taken any root that did not claim a share of Beza’s attention, and with which he did not at some time or other enter into relations by his singularly extended correspondence. Most interesting to us is his part in the reformatory movement in Great Britain, and especially in England.

It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader of the bitter disappointment which upon their return to England, in 1558 and later, awaited the exiles who had fled to the Continent to avoid the persecution reigning in England during the five years of the reign of Queen Mary Tudor. Whereas they had looked for a still more perfect reformation than under Edward VI, they found a retrograde movement tending to the reintroduction of theories and practices long since discarded. In place of greater liberty, they met with more determined repression. In nothing were they more deceived than in the attitude of the new queen. Elizabeth, upon whose sincere Protestantism they had built their hopes during the weary years intervening between her brother’s death and that of her elder sister, proved to be far less ardent a friend than they had anticipated. With Geneva and Genevan theologians she had a grievance of her own. It was from Geneva that had issued the unfortunate treatise entitled "The First Blast against the Monstrous Regiment and Empire of Women." John Knox, who wrote it, was at the time one of the corps of preachers, being pastor of the English church of the city of Geneva. In vain could it be shown that his brethren in the ministry had no part in the composition of the treatise, that they disapproved of it, that Calvin expressed his displeasure to Knox and to Beza, and was only deterred from publicly condemning it by the consideration that it was too late for the application of such a remedy to do any good. Queen Elizabeth’s secretary, William Cecil, was apparently satisfied with the explanation, but Elizabeth herself would not be reconciled to the Genevese, whom she regarded as over-severe and precise.

The new queen was peculiarly fond of pompous ceremonial, more fond, in fact, than the very bishops whom she selected to take the places of the prelates of Mary’s time, who had been removed by death or whom she had deprived. One of their number, John Jewel, writing apparently just before his own nomination to the see of Salisbury, but giving some of the names of his future colleagues, states his "hope that it has been arranged, under good auspices, that religion shall be restored to the same state as it was in under Edward." But he adds in the same breath, "The scenic apparatus of divine worship is now under agitation, and those very things which you and I have so often laughed at are now seriously and solemnly entertained by certain persons (for we are not consulted), as if the Christian religion could not exist without something tawdry. Our minds indeed are not sufficiently disengaged to make these fooleries of much importance."
Bishop Grindal, of London, reverting in mind to this period, wrote six or seven years later:

"We, who are now bishops, on our first return, and before we entered on our ministry, contended long and earnestly for the removal of those things that have occasioned the present dispute; but as we were unable to prevail, either with the queen or the parliament, we judged it best, after a consultation on the subject, not to desert our churches for the sake of a few ceremonies, and those not unlawful in themselves, especially since the pure doctrine of the Gospel remained in all its integrity and freedom."

There were others, however, and these among the most sincere and pious of the ministers recently returned from the Continent, who honestly regarded the vestments which the queen and her advisers were determined to reintroduce as more of consequence than even the excellent bishops esteemed them, and refused to don them; who viewed the use of the sign of the cross in baptism as no indifferent matter, but as a relic of popery; who declined to kneel at the administration of the Lord’s Supper, because to them it seemed to be a plain act of worship and marked a belief in the real corporeal presence of Christ in His sacrament. The neglect or refusal of these men to obey the new prescriptions was visited with harsh measures on the part of the government. The most sincere of Christians and the most devoted of pastors were deprived of their places for no other reason than their scruples of conscience. Particulars of the course of events during these most mournful and disastrous years of English ecclesiastical history must be sought elsewhere. We have no room for them here, save as bearing upon the position taken by the Reformers of Geneva and Zurich. For to Zurich and Geneva the unfortunate clergymen of England naturally turned for sympathy and advice. In those cities many of them had sojourned during their exile. All of them had formed relations of friendship with the leading men of the churches of one or both of the cities. The bishops themselves were on terms of intimacy with Beza, in the one, and with Bullinger and Rudolph Gualter, Zwingli’s son-in-law and Bullinger’s younger colleague and subsequently his successor, in the other. In fact, Bishop Parkhurst, of Norwich, had during four years been a guest in Gualter’s house at Zurich. Theirs was an ancient friendship begun as far back as when Gualter was studying at Oxford.

Between the ministers returned from the Continent that protested strenuously against the innovations and the reintroduction of practices abolished in the time of King Edward VI, on the one hand, and the new bishops who, after a period of active resistance, acquiesced more or less completely in the measures dictated by Queen Elizabeth, on the other, the position of the Swiss Reformers, consulted now by the former and now by the latter, was of a delicate nature and by no means free from difficulties. The Zurich pastors were less happy than Beza at Geneva in meeting these difficulties.
At first, when the trouble seemed to turn chiefly upon the question of vestments, or, at least, was so understood by them, the attitude of Beza and that of Bullinger and Gualter were the same. Beza was at one with his Zurich friends in treating the matter of ecclesiastical habiliments, however absurd and unsuitable these might seem to him to be, as too insignificant to warrant him in countenancing any disposition on the part of aggrieved ministers to abandon the established church. But a divergence of sentiment developed itself later, when the queen demanded a slavish submission and the bishops acquiesced in the demand. The Zurich theologians, having once given their confidence to the bishops, saw no reason to withdraw it, believing them men of piety and integrity. More than all, they were determined not to be involved in a conflict in which the feelings of the contestants had become so exasperated that each side was now to blame, and hardly any remedy could be discovered for the mischief. They disclaimed any power to dictate to the bishops, and therefore refused positively to take part against them when they were pleading their own cause. They equally abstained from attempting to dissuade their opponents from presenting to the elector palatine a petition drawn up by George Withers, one of their number, with the view of inducing that prince to use his influence with Queen Elizabeth to complete the reformation of the Church, or, if this boon could not be obtained, to secure "for those that abominated the relics of antichrist the liberty of not being obliged to adopt them against their conscience, or to relinquish the ministry." Bullinger and Gualter wrote to Beza at length that it was now their decided resolution to have nothing more to do with anyone in this controversy, whether in conversation or by letter. "And if any other parties think of coming hither," they added, "let them know that they will come to no purpose."

Meanwhile they remained on such terms of friendship with the prelates to whom Withers bade the elector palatine transfer all the blame from the queen, as to be frequent recipients of presents, especially of cloth, doubtless very welcome to them in their self-denying and slenderly paid labors, until Bullinger found himself compelled to beg Bishop Sandys and Grindal, now become Archbishop of Canterbury, to desist from sending more. Their enemies were asserting that the bishops sent presents to learned men to draw them to their side. "I had rather," said the aged Bullinger, "that men who are so ready to speak evil and calumnie, should not have the least occasion of detracting from me and my ministry."

Beza, on the other hand, although still remaining unmoved in his love and respect for Bullinger, as his copious extant correspondence abundantly proves, and although after Bullinger’s death, in 1575, continuing his close relations with Zurich by a frequent interchange of letters with Rudolph Gualter, was much more outspoken in his condemnation of the course of the queen and in expressions of sympathy with the distressed ministers who suffered for their conscientious refusal to conform to her arbitrary demands.
The letter which Beza wrote to Bishop Grindal (June 27, 1566) is a very long and striking document, intended to stimulate that excellent prelate to put forth strenuous exertion to terminate the distressing state of affairs in England. I shall not even recapitulate the arguments employed to exhibit the dangers of the course upon which the queen had launched the ecclesiastical establishment. He subordinated the question of ritual to doctrine, conceding that, while the latter, as it has come down to us from the apostles, is perfect, admitting neither addition nor diminution, the forms of worship were not fixed by the apostles themselves for all times and all places. But he deplored the retention of practices either absurd in themselves or injurious in their tendencies. He condemned still more strongly the reintroduction of objectionable practices after they had been discontinued for a considerable space of time—practices in defense of which it could not therefore be truthfully urged that they were followed, through fear lest the weak might be offended. He charged the responsibility for schism, if schism should arise, not so much to the account of such brethren as might forsake the Church, as to the account of those who virtually expelled them.

"Relying upon your sense of equity," said he, "I shall not fear to say this: If those men sin who, rather than have things of the kind forced upon them contrary to their consciences, prefer to leave the Church, much greater guilt in the sight of God and the angels is incurred by men, if such there be, who allow flocks to be deprived of their shepherds and pastors, and thus permit the beginnings of a horrible dissipation, rather than see ministers in all other respects blameless [officiate] clad in this rather than that garb, and prefer that no Supper be offered anywhere to the starving sheep, rather than that kneeling be omitted." "If this be the result," he adds, "which I can scarcely believe, it will be the beginning of much greater calamities. And if it be true, as is everywhere asserted, though I do not yet credit it, that private baptism [as in the Romish Church] by women is permitted, I cannot see what it is to return from the goal to the starting-point, unless it be this. Whence has this foulest of errors emanated, save from dense ignorance as to the nature of the sacraments? Whoever is not sprinkled with water (say those that uphold this profanation of baptism) is damned. If this be so, the salvation of infants will arise not from God's covenant (which, however, is clearly the foundation of our salvation), but from the very seal of the covenant that is affixed, and this not that it may be rendered more certain in itself, but rather that we should be made more certain of it. What would be more unjust still, the entire salvation of infants would depend upon the diligence or negligence of parents."

There were other rumors still more incredible—so improbable were they—that the English prelates had reintroduced abuses than which the antichristian church had none that were more intolerable—the plurality of benefices, licenses for non-residence, permits to contract marriage, and for the use of meats, and other things of that sort. If the story was true, these were not a corruption of the Christian religion; they were a clear defection from Christ.
Those consequently were not to be condemned that opposed such attempts; they were rather to be commended.

The letter ended with some stinging words of rebuke for those who wished to force the ministers to pledge themselves to obey whatever the queen and the bishops might hereafter prescribe in matters of ecclesiastical ritual.

"I have yet to learn," wrote Beza, "by what right, whether you look at the Word of God or at the ancient canons, the civil magistrate is authorized to introduce new rites in churches that have been constituted, or to abrogate old ones; what right bishops have, without the advice and consent of their body of elders, to ordain anything novel. For I see that these two curses [arising from] the base and ambitious adulation of superior bishops addressed to their princes, partly abusing their virtues, partly even ministering to their vices, have ruined the Christian Church; until it has come to such a pass that the most powerful of the Metropolitanans of the West, by the just judgment of God punishing both magistrates and bishops, has snatched up for himself all rights, human and divine. Yet I confess that my whole nature shudders as often as I reflect on these things and looking forward see that the same and yet more bitter punishments threaten most of the peoples which so eagerly embraced the Gospel at the beginning, but now are gradually departing from it. Nor do I doubt that the same groans of all the good are everywhere arising. Oh that the Lord may answer them, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, His Son, give to kings and princes a truly pious and religious mind, and good and courageous counsellors. May He bestow His Holy Spirit upon the leaders of His Church, imparting to them, first of all, in abundant measure, both knowledge and zeal; and may He increase and preserve the peoples that have already professed the true faith, in purity of doctrine and rites and in holiness of life. Farewell, and in turn continue to love me together with this entire Church and school, and to assist us with your prayers."

Meanwhile, Beza, as he informs us, was consulted again and again by those brethren in the English churches who found themselves in the utmost perplexity respecting their duty, in view of the novelties thrust upon them. To their inquiries he states that he long avoided replying, and this for three reasons—first, he was unwilling to believe that such men as the bishops could do things alien to the duty of their office; secondly, he was reluctant to pronounce an opinion based upon ex parte statements; thirdly, he feared that he might do more harm than good. Compelled at length to notice the points laid before him, he addressed himself first to the most important of all:

"Can you approve the irregularity of a call to the ministry when a crowd of candidates are enrolled, without the legitimate vote of the body of presbyters, or the assignment of any parish, and after a very slight examination into their life and morals, upon whom subsequently, at the mere good pleasure of the
bishop, authority is conferred to preach the Word of God for a certain time, or simply to recite the liturgy?"

"We reply," says Beza, "that calls and ordinations of such a kind by no means appear to us to be lawful, whether we look at the express Word of God or the more pure among the canons. Yet we know that it is better to have something than nothing. We pray God with all our hearts that He may grant to England a more legitimate call to the ministry, in default of which the blessing of the teaching of the truth will surely be lost to her or maintained only in some extraordinary and truly heavenly way. We must beg the queen to attend in earnest to this reform, and her council and the bishops to further it. But, meantime, what? Certainly, as for ourselves, we cannot accept the function of the ministry, even if offered, in this fashion, much less seek it. Yet those to whom the Lord has in this manner opened an avenue to the propagation of the glory of His kingdom, we exhort to persevere courageously in the fear of God; on this added condition, however, that they be permitted to discharge their entire ministry holily and religiously, and consequently to propose and urge, according to the measure of their office, such things as tend to the amelioration of the condition of affairs. For otherwise, if this liberty be taken away, and they be ordered so to connive at a manifest abuse, as even to approve of what clearly should be corrected, what other advice shall we give but that they prefer rather to be private individuals than contrary to their conscience to favor an evil which will necessarily soon bring with it the utter ruin of the churches?"

On another point about which he had been consulted, namely, whether they might not continue to discharge their office contrary to the will of the queen and the bishops, Beza replied that he shuddered at the thought, for reasons which needed not to be explained.

The subject of the vestments naturally received attention and condemnation at Beza's hands. Yet, after a long discussion of their nature and tendencies, when the question recurred, "What shall those do upon whom these things are thrust?" he could not but reply that they did not seem to him to be of such moment as that, on their account, either ministers should desert their ministry rather than wear them, or the flocks lose their spiritual nourishment rather than listen to ministers thus arrayed. "But if the order is issued to the ministers, not only to endure these things, but approve them as right by their signatures, or favor them by their silence, what other counsel can we give than that, after testifying their innocence and trying every remedy in God’s fear, they yield to open violence?" Such in sum was the advice given by the Genevese Reformer, not indeed without a strong feeling of discouragement, yet also with the hope, which he expressed before concluding, that better things might be in store for a kingdom whose reformation had been sealed by the blood of so many excellent martyrs.
The fortunes of Puritanism in England were watched by Beza with interest that did not diminish as time went on. Less solicitous with regard to details of ritual than with regard to the integrity of the discipline of the Church, he lent his full sympathy to the Presbyterian movement. He honored and estimated at his true worth Thomas Cartwright, that prince of theologians, of whom on one occasion he wrote, "The sun, I think, does not see a more learned man." When Cartwright, for his sturdy maintenance of his views, was deprived of his chair as Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University and of his fellowship in Trinity College, and forbidden to preach or teach, he crossed the Channel, and at Geneva was welcomed by Beza and his colleagues. Strengthened by conference with them and other Reformers of the Continent, he returned later to his native land in time to support by his voice and vigorous pen the "Admonition to Parliament for the Reformation of Church Discipline," which so infuriated the opposite party, that its authors, Field and Wilcox, were consigned to prison for their audacity. The Genevese Reformer was held responsible for a great share of the changes which it was sought to introduce into the government of the Church of England. Bishop Sandys wrote to Gualter at Zurich (August 9, 1574):

"Our innovators, who have been striving to strike out for us a new form of a church, are not doing us much harm; nor is this new fabric of theirs making such progress as they expected. Our nobility are at last sensible of the object to which this novel fabrication is tending. The author of these novelties, and after Beza the first inventor, is a young Englishman, by name Thomas Cartwright, who they say is sojourning at Heidelberg."

Unlike Beza, Bullinger’s associate Gualter had little sympathy with a movement whose ulterior results he suspected, and had written to Bishop Cox a few months earlier, March 16, 1574: "I greatly fear there is lying concealed under the presbytery an affectation of oligarchy, which may at length degenerate into monarchy, or even into open tyranny."

CHAPTER XV

Controversies and Controversial Writings

We see, in his autobiographical letter to Wolmar, that Beza claims for himself, as a theologian, little or no originality. And, although this letter was written in 1560, that is, very early in his literary career, and he lived and studied for not much less than a half-century longer, he would, doubtless, have taken no very different view at the end of the period. His theology was essentially the theology of his great master, John Calvin. Accordingly the leading doctrines of
the system of Calvin were also most prominent and fundamental in that of Beza. If there was any difference, these doctrines were more strongly accentuated by Beza and more rigidly carried out to their legitimate consequences. Most of the controversies in which the disciple became involved arose therefore in connection with the doctrines of the divine sovereignty and election, and with the Reformed view of the Lord’s Supper.

It would manifestly be impossible, within the compass of the present volume, to speak in detail of all the numerous theological disputes in which Beza took part in the course of his long life, and of the works from his pen to which they gave rise. The greater number of the latter may be read in the three large volumes of his *Theological Treatises* (*Tractationes Theologicæ*), revised and republished by the author himself in 1582. Since his opponents were wont to reply, as best they could, to his arguments, Beza, unwilling to leave the last word to them, usually rejoined with a defense of his first position. Thus, we not infrequently find two or even three treatises bearing upon the same point and pursuing the same lines of thought, addressed to the same antagonist.

It will be remembered that Beza informs us that the important work to which he prefixed the letter to Wolmar was his *Confession of the Christian Faith*, composed primarily with the hope of gaining over his aged father, by clearing away the calumnies which the enemies of the truth had circulated respecting it. Subsequently given to the world, this *Confession* took a classical position and was recognized, both by friend and by foe, as an authoritative exposition of the Reformed belief. The former bought and read it, especially in the French language, and circulated it in many successive editions. There are said to have been six French editions printed in Geneva alone, within three years of the original publication. It was translated into English and Italian. That it met with the animadversion of the Roman Catholic Church is not surprising: the reading of any theological writing of Beza is strictly forbidden by the official Index of Prohibited Books down to our own times. But it is certainly significant of the influence which the *Confession* continued to exercise, long after the death of its author, that about a century and a quarter from its first appearance—that is, in 1685, the very year that Louis XIV recalled the Edict of Nantes—it was still so widely read, and esteemed by the clergy of France so dangerous a book, that it called forth from the Archbishop of Paris a distinct condemnation in a special circular-letter. What rendered the *Confession* specially odious in the eyes of the prelate was the circumstance that, not content with setting forth the Protestant views on such important points as the Trinity, the Church and its Government, and the Final judgment, the author gave up the last third of the book to a "Brief Contrast between the Papacy and Christianity," of a particularly exasperating character. The amenities of discussion were rarely made of much account by disputants in the 16th century. The very first position which Beza undertakes to establish is that "Papists, in place of the true God, worship a fictitious and imaginary divinity that is neither perfectly just nor perfectly merciful," for "that cannot be a perfect justice which approves of
human acts of satisfaction, nor that a perfect mercy which only supplies the
deficiency in man’s merit."

To the same class of general treatises belongs A Summary of the Whole of
Christianity, with the alternative title, "A Description and Distribution of the
Causes of the Salvation of the Elect and the Destruction of the Reprobate,
Collected from the Sacred Scriptures." At the head stands a table or diagram,
occupying a single page, wherein the author’s conception of the whole scheme
of God’s dealings with the human race is presented to the eye. This is followed
by a "Brief Explanation of the Foregoing Table," covering thirty-five pages
chiefly taken up with proof-texts derived from Holy Writ, but introduced by
sundry citations from Saint Augustine, indicating that the question about
Predestination is not a question of mere curiosity or of little profit for the
Church of God. This treatise is, if we except the defense of the right of the
magistrate to punish heretics, which we have considered in a separate chapter,
the first of Beza’s writings on religious topics, having been written and
published in 1555, during his professorate at Lausanne. It is almost needless to
remark that it closely reflects the influence of Calvin.

Ten years after the Confession and fifteen years after the Summary appeared
(1570) another systematic treatise from Beza’s pen, entitled "A Little Book of
Christian Questions and Answers, in which the Chief Heads of the Christian
Religion are Epitomized" (Quæstionum et Responsionum Christianarum
Libellus, etc.). It was subsequently enlarged and accompanied by a
"Compendious Catechism." For clearness of exposition this third treatise, the
fruit of Beza’s later thought, surpasses its predecessors. The three treatises
together comprise the best results of a long study of systematic theology, and
the last, in particular, will repay a careful perusal.

On the subject of Predestination, Beza crossed swords, as early as 1558, with
Sebastian Castalio, in defending Calvin’s doctrine from the accusation of being
contrary to natural affection on the part of God, as the Father of mankind, and
from other similar accusations.

What Beza believed on the subject of the Lord’s Supper we learn well enough
from his own utterances respecting it, both in his great speech before Charles
IX at the Colloquy of Poissy, and on other occasions. While denying that the
elements of bread and wine are in the Communion transformed into the
substance of the body and blood of Christ, according to the Roman Catholic
view, or that the body and blood of Christ are present in, with, and under the
bread and wine, according to the Lutheran view, he declined, on the other
hand, to assert that the elements are mere signs and that the act of partaking
is a mere commemoration, as was the Zwinglian view held in German
Switzerland, but, with Calvin, believed that the worthy partaker, not in any
carnal sense, but none the less truly, by faith feeds upon the body of Christ. He
repudiated the notion that he would divorce Christ from the feast he had
instituted.

But not even so did Calvin or Beza escape attack from the more ardent
advocates of the doctrine of Consubstantiation, and the scholar felt himself
compelled to appear in his master’s defense as well as his own. To the
scurrilous assault made by Joachim Westphal, at Hamburg, he wrote a careful
and, on the whole, a more temperate reply than could have been expected in
the circumstances. It was entitled "A Plain and Clear Treatise Respecting the
Lord’s Supper, in which the Calumnies of Joachim Westphal are Refuted"
(1559). As Westphal, not content with discussing the main question, had raised
a hue and cry against the rejection by the Reformed of so many ancient usages,
Beza answered in defense of their position that while themselves dropping the
practices which they disapproved, they carefully refrained from condemning
their brethren who continued to observe such practices when these related to
things indifferent. But Beza waxes angry with a holy indignation when he comes
to advert to the gross and vituperative language used by Westphal as to the
witnesses for the faith, members of the Reformed Churches of France, burned
at the stake, whose ashes were even yet smoking.

“For the insults which you have not been ashamed to vomit forth against the
holy martyrs of the Lord, whom Popish tyranny is daily snatching from our
assemblies, you will yourself see to it how you shall answer at the Lord’s
judgment-seat. Their writings survive and will hand down their blessed
memory, whether you approve of it or not, to a grateful posterity. In the name
of all Christian Churches, I am ashamed that in any Church there could be
found a man so insolently wanton as to utter sharp words against those, even
when dead, whom their very executioners revered while they were dying.
Certainly the Lord will not suffer to go unavenged this more than inhuman and
barbarous cruelty. To Him we commend the cause of His martyrs.”

Nor does Beza leave unnoticed the abuse which Westphal, at the very same
time that he complains of Calvin’s severity, heaps on Calvin’s devoted head,
not only accusing him of gluttony and winebibbing, but hinting that the
Reformer’s language, being fit only for the ears of courtesans, he had possibly
learned from his mother, the concubine of a parish priest. We can well excuse
the outburst of indignant remonstrance to which Beza gives vent, when he
stigmatizes, with deserved contempt, the man who, in order to crush a
theological opponent, accuses the most abstemious of men of excess, and
exhumes from the grave a respected matron of an honorable and noble family
in Noyon, long since dead, that he may without proof besmirch her unspotted
memory.

To Westphal succeeded, in 1561, Tilemann Hesshus, as a defender of the
Lutheran phase of doctrine, and as an assailant of the Genevese church and its
theologians. That Beza regarded him as a stupid adversary was no sufficient
excuse for the open contempt and rudeness with which he treated him, even if we give all the weight possible to the somewhat frivolous plea that the exacerbation of his temper was due to a particularly annoying attack of catarrhal fever with which he was afflicted when he wrote.

These were discussions of the earlier part of Beza’s course, anterior to the Colloquy of Poissy, and before the Reformer assumed a place among the disputants most widely known throughout Christendom. After that event, and after the death of Calvin coming so close upon it, Beza fell heir to new controversies, carried on by him, not as Calvin’s younger adjutant, but as Calvin’s legitimate successor, partly in the same general direction, partly on new lines.

Some of these, doubtless, were not only needlessly bitter, but altogether unnecessary. Such, perhaps, was the controversy that arose from the attempt of Castalio, in his translation of the Scriptures, to modernize his version and replace the Hebraisms of the Vulgate with good Ciceronian phrases. Yet Beza was right in his position that fidelity to the text had not in a few instances been sacrificed by Castalio to the supposed exigencies of a flawless Latinity.

In the case of the aged and respected Italian scholar, Bernardino Ochino, of Siena, there was much to regret in the attitude taken by Beza and by other Reformers. Ochino was not only a man of great ability, but a Christian that had sacrificed everything for his faith. Before his adoption of Protestantism he had enjoyed wonderful popularity in his native land as a pulpit orator. At the age of fifty he was the prince of Lenten preachers. The praise lavished upon him by the learned was surpassed only by the plaudits of the multitudes that flocked to hear him whenever it was announced that he would speak. If Cardinal Bembo, a leading scholar of the period, wrote to Colonna, in March 1539, that he had never discoursed with a person of greater sanctity, and that he intended "not to miss a single one of his beautiful, solemn, and edifying discourses," the next month he was informing the same correspondent that, at Venice, from which he wrote, Ochino was "literally adored," "there was no one that did not praise him to the skies." Twice was he elected Vicar General of the Capuchin Order, and so well did he stand with the Holy See that his nomination was cheerfully confirmed by the pope. But Ochino was becoming more and more evangelical in his preaching, as the Roman Church became more and more pronounced in its opposition to any form of reformation. The inevitable logic of his recognition of the doctrine of Justification by Faith led him out of the establishment in which he held so high and influential a position, to the lands beyond the Alps where he could give free expression to his new convictions. He did not hesitate to take a step which involved the loss of all things that men prize highest—rank, ease, the esteem of the multitude. He fled first to Switzerland.
The autumn of the year 1542 found him in Geneva, "an old man of venerable appearance," according to Calvin, and one who "was greatly respected in his own country." He was warmly welcomed by the Genevan Reformers, and he, in his turn, delighted with the order, purity, and simple worship which he witnessed, poured out an encomium upon the city and its usages which I should be glad, were there space here, to reproduce. From this time forth he lived an exemplary and useful life as a Protestant and a Protestant minister. When he left Geneva, at the end of three years, he went provided with a letter of "special recommendation" from Calvin. He was well received by Bucer at Strasburg. At Augsburg he became by public appointment Italian preacher to his compatriots residing in that city. Compelled to flee, in 1547, on the approach of the Emperor Charles V, one of the first of whose demands was that the city should surrender to him the person of Bernardino Ochino, he was that same year invited to England by Cranmer, shortly after the accession of Edward VI. The six years of that estimable prince’s reign were spent by Ochino in labors for his compatriots sojourning in London whether for mercantile purposes or as exiles for religion’s sake. Meanwhile, he was made non-resident prebendary of Canterbury. When Mary came to the throne, Ochino hastily retired to the Continent, and for ten years (1553–1563), or until within about a year of his death, he lived in Switzerland, first at Geneva, and afterwards at Basel and Zurich. At Zurich he accepted the office of minister to Italian Protestants from Locarno.

Unfortunately, in this period of his life, Ochino developed a tendency to indulge in curious speculations, for a full discussion of which the reader must look elsewhere. Suffice it to say here that, in a book which he wrote, not so much by direct assertion as by inference, the soundness of the aged author was brought into suspicion. If, for the most part, he seemed in the dialogue himself to assume the defense of the current belief and left the attack to another, yet, with an impartiality carried to the extreme of complaisance, he lent such cogency to the arguments of his opponents as to lay himself open to the charge of a virtual surrender of principles and beliefs that should have been dear to him. Thus his belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ and His equality with the Father naturally becomes in the judgment of the reader more than doubtful. The great problems affecting man and his destiny, divine grace and human ability, and all the views and theories that have troubled the ages, are presented in so antithetical a manner, and the arguments in favor and in opposition are marshaled in such a formidable array, that the decision is veiled in uncertainty. Of such contests the natural issue is in doubt, if not in positive despair of the attainment of certainty in matters of religion. Nor indeed in matters of faith alone. Ochino exhibited the same method in the treatment of moral questions. In setting forth the reasons in favor of polygamy and in condemnation of it, he left the final decision in such suspense that the answer to the question whether, in certain cases, an individual man might or should marry a second wife during the lifetime of a first wife was referred to that man’s own decision acting under the inspiration of God. If, after prayer to the
Almighty for the grace of continence, the gift is not received, Ochino’s ultimate counsel to him is to do whatever God prompts him to do, if only he knows for certain that God is prompting him; for whatever is done by divine inspiration cannot be sin.

That the Swiss Reformers, Bullinger, Beza, and all the others, should have been shocked, amazed, indignant, at the promulgation of such views by a professed adherent of the Reformation, is not surprising. Nor is it surprising that Beza regarded the last matter mentioned as of such vital importance that he published, in refutation of Ochino’s views, his two treatises On Polygamy and On Repudiation and Divorce, extracted from his lectures on the First Epistle to the Corinthians. That Beza styled him “an impure apostate” may be explained, if it may not be excused, by the fact that the whole trend of Ochino’s disputations was directly to that “academic uncertainty” respecting all truth which the Reformers regarded as more pernicious than any single error of doctrine, since it sapped the foundations of all religion. But it was certainly not to the credit of the Protestant Reformers, especially those of Zurich and Basel, that in their detestation of the utterances of their misguided brother, long their associate in Christian work and the object of their Christian affection, they forgot the past too completely, and sanctioned, if they did not urge, the severe punishment which the magistrates dealt out to Ochino, without allowing him to be heard in his own defense, or in explanation of books written, not in the vernacular for circulation among the people, but in a foreign tongue for the consideration of the learned and curious. The circumstance that Sebastian Castalio had acted as his translator aggravated the resentment of the indignant Zurchers at having ignorantly harbored for so long a time in their city a disloyal Protestant, in one whom they had known only as a brother in the faith. Old and infirm—he was in the seventy-sixth or seventy-seventh year of his age—the venerable man whom all had so lately united in honoring for his past services was in midwinter bidden to depart from the city and jurisdiction of Zurich, in company with his four children, within a term of a fortnight or, at furthest, three weeks. Basel would not long receive him, Mühlhausen refused him a refuge, Nuremberg consented only to his passing the winter there. From Poland he was expelled with all foreigners not Roman Catholics. He died of the plague at Schlackau in Moravia, in the latter part of the year 1564.

Respecting the bodily presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, Beza continued to be drawn into controversies, reaching through many years, partly with Roman Catholics, partly with fellow Protestants. Among the former the most prominent was the white friar, Claude de Sainctes, whom he had encountered at the third session of the Colloquy of Poissy. It was Claude who had on that occasion made the astounding assertion that tradition stands on more stable foundation than do the Holy Scriptures themselves, inasmuch as the latter can be dragged hither and thither by a variety of interpretations. He showed no more wit in the treatise which he brought out, five or six years later, under the title, An Examination of the Calvinistic and Bezæan Doctrine of the Lord’s
Supper. The author’s crudity would seem to have warranted Beza’s somewhat contemptuous designation of him as a “theologaster.” De Sainctes had aimed at currying favor with his patron, the Cardinal of Lorraine, by reinforcing the prelate’s peculiar attempt to confound or win over Beza and his companions at the great colloquy. The cardinal’s strength did not lie in the breadth or depth of his theological acquisitions, but he certainly had no lack of cunning. If, he thought, the Calvinists could not be silenced by argument, at least their cause would be prejudiced if, in any way, they could be set by the ears with their fellow Protestants from beyond the Rhine.

In his written attack, Claude de Sainctes, reviving his patron’s tactics, endeavored to establish that a difference of theological views separated Geneva from the neighboring cantons of Switzerland, while there was a fundamental contradiction, amounting to real enmity, between the Calvinists and the Lutherans. Whereupon Beza reminded the friar that his contention did not possess even the merit of novelty.

"Have you forgotten, Claude," he said, "the answer I gave to your cardinal, in that more absurd than serious skirmish of his, at a time when he was devising the very same assault that you are now making? Drawing from his bosom a paper which he at first pretended to be the Confession of Augsburg, but which was in reality, as subsequently appeared, a copy of a private confession of a certain one of the Wittenberg theologians, recently brought to him by one Rascalo, his spy, without their knowledge, the cardinal inquired of me whether we would give our assent to it. In turn, I asked him to tell me whether he himself assented to it. Startled by my unexpected reply, he frankly admitted that he could not do so. Thereupon I retorted, ‘What affair is it, then, of yours whether we agree with them or no, since you dissent from us both? And yet, lest you should suppose that I am seeking to evade the question, I will tell you that we regard those whom you call “Protestants” as our very dear brethren; that we disagree with the Augsburg Confession on only a very few points; and that these very points themselves, suitably interpreted, could easily be reconciled, did not the unreasonableness of certain persons stand in the way.’ This is what I said on that occasion. I do not imagine that you have forgotten my words. For this reason I should be the more astonished that you have now undertaken the same plan, were it not that the whole world has come to understand what is your sense of shame, what your conscience."

Into the systematic refutation of the Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation and the Real Presence, occupying in particular the whole of Beza’s third and last answer to Claude de Sainctes, there is no need of our entering. Let it be enough to say that it was careful, comprehensive, cogent. To us, however, the chief interest attaching to the whole controversy is the personal element which the friar introduced into the matter in his first attack upon Calvin and upon Beza himself. The circumstance that he had not neglected a single opportunity to calumniate them, that he had not omitted a
single incident of their lives that could be misinterpreted or wrested to their
disadvantage, makes De Saintes’ accusations with Beza’s replies uncommonly
interesting reading, and invests them with a certain historical importance.
Witness, for example, the triumphant retort of Beza to the monk’s scurrilous
slanders respecting the alleged impurity of his early life at Paris and his
compulsory and clandestine flight to Geneva in order to avoid condign
punishment for his vices. “Had I been seized with the love of lewd women,” said
he, “should I have betaken myself to that city which is almost the only one
where licentious living is punished by public ignominy and by no insignificant
fines, and adultery by death?”

More lamentable than any controversies with the Roman Catholics, because
more unnecessary and more productive of evil and discord within the bosom of
Protestantism itself, were the controversies with representatives of the
dominant phase of the theology of Germany. I am glad that the scope of this
work is such that I am not compelled to rehearse in detail the mournful story of
the manner in which the divergence of views already subsisting became more
and more pronounced, and a mere difference of theory led to a separation, a
schism, almost to a positive hatred, between men who should have loved and
respected each other as members of one Christian host arrayed against one
common enemy.

What were Beza’s feelings toward the Lutherans we have already seen. What
he said to the Cardinal of Lorraine at the Colloquy of Poissy was the sincere
sentiment of his heart—they were his very dear brethren in Christ. That there
were differences between their views on the mode of Christ’s presence in the
Sacrament and respecting the alleged ubiquity of His human body, he did not
affect to deny. But he was disposed, instead of magnifying these differences,
to reduce them to the smallest possible dimensions. His manly honesty did not
allow him, indeed, to abstain from strenuously maintaining the truth, as he
conceived it to be, against every successive opponent, but this loyalty to
principle did not prevent him from sincerely desiring, what was also the sincere
desire of Philip Melanchthon, especially in his later years, that a cordial and
charitable union might be effected between the two great branches of the
Church of the Reformation. But that friend of concord was no more, and the
loss to Christendom by his removal by death was in Beza’s view irreparable.
Scarcely had five years elapsed when the latter wrote to the brethren of Bern
and Zurich that the enemy were now hoping to effect their designs with much
greater ease than hitherto, because now, as never before, they would have the
papists as allies in the condemnation of the Reformed, and because “no
Melanchthon survived to restrain them by his great authority.”

It is a thousand-fold to be deplored that his advances toward conciliation were
not responded to with a corresponding cordiality, but met with coldness when
they did not call forth an absolute denial of the fraternal bond. The latter was
the case at the conclusion of the conference held at Montbéliard, in March
1586. The excellent Count Frederick of Würtemberg, under whose auspices the gathering of theologians was held, was an ardent lover of peace and leaned to the Reformed views. Beza, now an old man, had not, in his zeal for union, hesitated to come in person and endeavor to find the common ground upon which he was convinced that Calvinists and Lutherans could honorably stand without sacrifice of dignity or principle. But the attitude of Andreæ, the chief representative of the other side, was unconciliatory, and, at the end of the discussion, the two parties were farther apart than they were at its commencement. In vain had it been made clear to every impartial man that the two great wings of the Protestant Church were practically in complete accord as against the Church of Rome. When, the conference over, Beza offered his right hand in token of love and confidence to the man with whom the argument had been chiefly sustained, Andrew declined to take it. He could as little see, he said, how Beza was able to esteem him and the other Würtemberg theologians, to whom he had imputed all sorts of errors, as brethren, as he himself could recognize fraternal communion with Beza, who had shown that he held the imaginations of men above the Word of God. But while he could not greet him as a brother, Andreæ was pleased to offer him his hand as a fellow man. Beza, however, promptly rejected the ostentatious mark of condescension.

CHAPTER XVI

Beza and the Huguenot Psalter

It has frequently been said that to Beza the world is indebted, if not for the whole of the Huguenot liturgy for the Lord’s Day service, at least for the beautiful confession of sins and prayer that constitute its most striking feature. It has been asserted that this simple but grand formula was taken from the extemporaneous words used by the Reformer at the beginning of his historical defense of the Reformed Churches and their doctrine at the Colloquy of Poissy, without doubt the most picturesque and impressive scene not only in the life of Beza himself, but in the early period of the French Reformation. We have seen, however, that the story is a pleasing fiction, and that the confession of sins, so far from being uttered for the first time before the august assembly that met in the nuns’ refectory of Poissy, had before then been repeatedly on the lips of martyrs at the stake, nay, that for nearly twenty years it had been a component part of Protestant worship, both when secretly and when openly celebrated, at Strasburg, at Geneva, and in a multitude of places in France. Composed and used for several years before Theodore Beza fully broke with the Church of Rome, that liturgy had for its author not the young student from Vézelay, but John Calvin himself.
But Beza rendered to Huguenot devotion a service not less notable in another direction. The worship of God’s house could have been conducted in an orderly and impressive manner and with undiminished fervor without Calvin’s liturgy at all; but, deprived of the metrical psalms, the worship would have lost its most characteristic feature. Without those psalms, too, the very history of the Huguenots, civil as well as religious, would have been robbed of a great part of its individuality. In the long conflict that arose out of the effort to crush the Protestant doctrines and their professors in France, from the first outbreak of civil war in the middle of the 16th century down to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in the 17th, and indeed far beyond that time, when the Reformed faith was supposed to have been annihilated, the psalms were the badge by which the Huguenots were recognized by friend and foe alike; they were the stimulus of the brave, the battle cry of the combatant, the last consolatory words whispered in the ears of the dying.

Now the French psalms were peculiarly the work of Theodore Beza.

True, indeed, it is that the collection bears and has always borne the joint names of Clément Marot and Théodore de Bèze, and that it was the success of the brilliant and versatile poet of the Renaissance in his attempts to turn the psalms of David into French verse that led Beza to follow his example. But what had been approached by the former, it would seem, mainly as a literary task, aiming first of all at the gratification of the reader, was with the latter a labor of love and an attempt to achieve for the cause to which he had devoted his life, the most noble of works. For it can hardly be denied that efforts which give to pious thought the most appropriate vehicle for its expression fall short of no other human ambitions in usefulness and dignity.

It may be admitted from the start that in native poetical genius Beza falls distinctly below Marot. The verdict of the literary world on this point is not likely to be reversed. In any production of a kind demanding the exercise of a lively imagination, on any subject where the light touch of a master in the graceful expression of thought is of the first importance, there can be no question that his countrymen would give the palm to the poet whose days were spent in the court and in the frivolous circles of the great. Yet it is not unreasonable to look for a more adequate treatment of religious themes at the hands of a writer in full and lasting sympathy with their high truths than at the hands of a poet whose religious feelings are either shallow or evanescent. As Beza could enter more easily than Marot into the devotional spirit of the Hebrew original, so there are psalms or parts of psalms which have been rendered by him with a dignity approaching to grandeur, with a dignity which the most prejudiced critic must confess is unsurpassed in anything from the pen of Marot. Among these psalms stands prominent the sixty-eighth, of which the initial stanza of twelve lines deserves, more than any other passage, to be regarded as the choicest jewel of the entire collection—a worthy introduction to the psalm which stands unchallenged as, above all the rest, the Huguenot
battle song. Sung at the charge at many an encounter of the period when the Huguenots were at their strongest, it is no less associated in every line with those humbler but scarcely less glorious and equally heroic conflicts when, in the Camisard war of the 18th century, the "Children of God," as they styled themselves, having survived the supposed overthrow of their religion, dared defy the arms of Louis XIV.

It was in the year 1533, apparently, that the first of Clément Marot’s translated psalms appeared in print, appended to the former part of that curious work of the Duchess of Alençon, only sister of Francis I, entitled Miroir de très chrestienne princesse Marguerite de France. This was the sixth psalm of David, whose plaintive cry was admirably reproduced in the opening verses, "Ne vueilles pas, O Sire," etc.

Six years later came out at Strasburg what has been styled the first edition of the Protestant Psalter, containing twelve new psalms translated by Marot, but strangely enough omitting the sixth, with which the editor or publisher seems not to have been acquainted. Two years more passed, and in 1541 there appeared with the imprint of Anvers (Antwerp) a fuller collection of thirty psalms translated by Marot. Finally, in 1543, there was given to the world by Marot the entire collection of fifty psalms, with which his activity in this direction closed, together with the Song of Simeon and the Ten Commandments, as well as one or two versifications such as the Angelic Salutation, which never found a permanent place in the Protestant Psalter. It was to this publication that the poet prefixed the poetical "Letter Addressed to the Ladies of France" which he had recently written to persuade his fair readers to substitute for the songs of love, always worldly and often foul, with which their abodes resound, songs of quite another strain; yet songs of Love alone, their author very Love, composing them by His supreme wisdom (while vain man has been but the mere writer), and having conferred language and voice to sing His own high praises. Blessed be he, exclaims the poet, that shall live to see that golden age when God alone shall be adored, praised, and sung, and when the laborer at his plough, the teamster on the road, and the artisan in his shop shall lighten their toil by a psalm or hymn; happy he that shall hear the shepherd and the shepherdess in the wood make rocks and lakes echo and repeat after them the holy name of their Creator. The whole was summed up in the closing injunction thus to hasten the coming of the golden age.

The poem, if it does not prove that its author was a true Huguenot at heart, a Protestant by deep conviction, at least furnishes evidence that he was not devoid at times of genuine religious feeling.

Clément Marot died at Turin in the summer of 1544. After a life of singular variety, in which his unconcealed aversion to the Roman Catholic Church had exposed him to danger and imprisonment in France, and led him to sojourn at the court of Duchess Renée at Ferrara, and for a time in Venice, he spent a
little over a year in Geneva. Not only did he frequently confer with Calvin on
the matter of the translation of the psalms, but the great Reformer himself
recommended the council of the city to employ him at public expense in
completing the work. The council rejected the application, and Marot
withdrew from Geneva. That he was compelled to do so, having been found
guilty of adultery and escaping only through Calvin’s intercession, seems to be
a pure fabrication of the royal historiographer Cayet, who, having from
Protestant turned Roman Catholic, was not unwilling to circulate stories of the
kind against the poet who had attacked his newly espoused faith. For the fact
is that no record of any proceedings against Marot has been found on the
Genevese registers, while, on the other hand, it is known that the penalty for
the crime of adultery had not as yet been fixed at death, and was not so fixed
until sixteen years after Marot’s death.

At Clément Marot’s death the Protestants had an incomplete psalter, consisting
of barely one third of the whole number of psalms, and these not continuous,
but with certain gaps. A writer uniting the requisites of a faithful translator to
those of a poet by nature it was not easy to find. Marot had no rival during his
lifetime, nor had he his equal among the poets that survived him; but it was
natural that, under the circumstances, the eyes of Calvin and of others should
turn to Beza. The Juvenilia, written and published before his conversion, had
long since proved him to possess high literary abilities. He was himself anxious
to show that these abilities could be employed to better purpose than when
the ambition to rival Ovid and Catullus reigned supreme in his breast.
Accordingly, within about two years from the date of his reaching Lausanne,
that is, in 1551, we find Beza publishing a separate collection of thirty-four
psalms. A year later he republished these in connection with forty-nine of
those which Marot had translated. With these eighty-three psalms the
Protestant psalter was more than half-way on toward completion. It was
appropriate that Beza, in imitation of Marot, should now provide it with a
poetic letter dedicatory. Marot had dedicated his psalms to his patron, Francis
I, and had written to the "Ladies" of France to incite them to sing these in lieu
of worldly songs. Beza addressed the epistle which he placed at the head of his
work to "The Church of our Lord," the "little flock" which in its littleness
surpasses the greatness of the world, the little flock "held in contempt by this
round globe and yet its only treasure." The choice of Beza was the better, and
he made of his address, regarded by some writers not without reason as his
masterpiece, so excellent an introduction to the psalms that for centuries it
continued to hold its place even when the circumstances to which it made
reference had long since faded from the memory of the majority of the faithful
who used the collection in their devotions.

The exordium is calm in its quiet strength.

    Petit Troupeau, qui en to petitesse
    Vas surmontant du monde la hautesse;
Petit Troupeau, le mespris de ce monde,
Et seul thresor de la machine ronde;

Tu es celui auquel gist mon courage,
Pour te donner ce mien petit ouvrage
Petit, je di, en ce qui est du mien
Mais au surplus si grand, qu’il n’y a rien

Assez exquis en tout cest univers,
Pour esgaler un moindre de ces vers.
Voila pourquoi chose tant excellente
A toi, sur tout excellent, je presente."

Let kings and princes, clothed in gold and silver, but not in virtues, stand back. With them lying flatterers fill their pages. They are not addressed here. Not that they are not spoken to; but they have neither ears to hear, nor heart to learn the message. The poem is for those other true kings and true princes, worthy to possess realms and provinces, potentates who beneath the shadow of their wings defend the life of many a poor believer. Let them hear the enchanting harp of the great David, and being kings hearken to the voice of a king. Let shepherds listen to a shepherd’s pipe which God Himself was pleased to sound. Let the sheep catch the divine music which communicates both joy and healing. Do they mourn? They shall be comforted. Do they hunger? They shall be filled. Do they endure suffering? They shall be relieved."

The poet was writing, as I have said, in 1551, that is, in the midst of the persecutions under Henry II. That very year the monarch published a terrible law against the Protestants of his realm. The Edict of Châteaubriand, of June 27, 1551, we have already seen, sent the new heretics straight to the flames on the mere sentence of an ordinary judge, and cut off all right of appeal. Nor was Geneva forgotten by the legislator. As Calvin remarked, that city was honored with a mention in the ordinance more than ten times. The importation of books of any kind from Geneva, and from other places well known to be in rebellion against the papacy, was prohibited under severe penalties. So was also the retention by booksellers of any condemned book, as well as clandestine publications in any shape. Every printing establishment was now subjected to a visitation twice a year. The great fairs of Lyons were searched three times a year, because it had been discovered that many suspected books were introduced into France by that channel. In fact all book packages from abroad were to be examined by the clergy, before their contents could be put into circulation. Book-peddling was utterly forbidden, on the ground that peddlers from Geneva smuggled books into France under cover of disposing of other merchandise. It became a punishable offense to be the bearer of a simple letter from Geneva. To have fled thither was sufficient to lead to confiscation of property, and the informer was promised one third of the forfeited goods. So resolved was the king to extinguish Protestantism once for all, that all simple folk were warned not even to discuss matters of faith, the
sacraments, and the government of the Church, at table, in the fields, or in the secret meeting. Would it have been surprising, when Geneva was thus singled out for special hostility by the malice of Henry II, had Beza, in his general view of the enemies of the "little flock," noticed with peculiar execration the king of his native land? Yet, while the pope naturally comes in for mention, as "the wolf that wears the triple crown, surrounded by other beasts of his kind," the poet prefers to call attention among monarchs only to the good King Edward VI of England, hospitably greeting on the shores of his insular domain the fugitives that have escaped the fires of persecution. For him he prays that, as in his youth he has already surpassed all other kings, so in his advancing years he may surpass even himself:

Que Dieu to doint, O Roy qui en enfance
As surmonté des plus grands l'espérance,
Croissans tes ans, si bien croistre en ses graces,
Qu’ après tous Rois toi-mesme tu surpasses."

But the poet’s thoughts turned by preference to the victims of persecution with whom the prisons of France were overflowing. To these sufferers, Beza’s words were words of encouragement to patience and endurance in the profession of their faith, with the lips, if speech was allowed them; if not, let courage supply a testimony which the tongue was not permitted to give. After which the poet enforces his injunction with a couplet that seems to anticipate by ten years the famous warning which this same Beza made to the recreant King of Navarre, to the effect that the Church of God is indeed an anvil to receive and not strike blows, but an anvil that has worn out many hammers. Let persecutors, he says, tire of murdering God’s children sooner than the latter tire of withstanding the assaults of His enemies:

Que les tyrans soient de nous martyrer
Plustost lassez [lassés], que nous de l’endurer."

The remainder of the "Epistle to the Church of our Lord" need not detain us long. In order that no one should have an excuse for not singing God’s praise, Marot, says Beza, turned into French the psalms once written by David, but, alas! died when he had completed only one third of his task. What was worse, he died leaving no one in the world, no learned poet, to continue his labors. This was the reason that when death snatched him away, with him David also was silent, for all the best minds feared to try their hands at the task which a Marot had undertaken. What, then, someone will say, makes you so brave as to attempt so grave a work? To which question Beza replies by pleading his own consciousness that his powers fall far short of his good will, and by promising to applaud the efforts of those whom he would incite to enter upon the same office and perform it in a manner more worthy of its great importance. In conclusion, as Clément Marot had begged the "Ladies" to cease singing of Cupid, "the winged god of love," and give themselves to the celebration of the true, the Divine Love, so Beza challenges the poets of his time, those "minds of heavenly birth," to turn from the low subjects of their songs to themes of higher merit. Let the time past suffice to have followed such vain inventions,
and objects of adoration which shall perish with the works of their adorers. But whatever others may conclude to do, the poet declares that, insignificant as he is, he will celebrate the praises of his God. The mountains and the fields shall be witnesses, the shores of the lake shall repeat, the Alps shall take up the cry in the clouds.

We have seen that in 1551 Beza had added only thirty-four psalms to those translated by Marot, and that the united collection comprised but eighty-three. Eleven years more passed before the Genevese Reformer gave to the world (in 1562) the remaining sixty-seven, and thus completed the Psalter. The appearance of this work coincides in time with most striking events in the history of the French Protestants, and itself marks a singular crisis in their fortunes.

Up to this date the psalms in the vernacular had been almost uniformly proscribed by Church and State. The singing of them by the common people was taken as a sure sign of heresy. It is true that there was a short period in the reign of Francis I when they seemed to be in high favor at court. Charmed by the rhythm, or by the music to which they were sung, the monarch and the nobles of his suite were pleased to adopt certain psalms as their favorite melodies, quite regardless of the religious sentiment expressed. According to the account of a contemporary, a gentleman by the name of Villemadon, Francis himself was so much pleased with the thirty psalms translated by Clément Marot and dedicated to the king, that he bade the poet present his work to the Emperor Charles V, who in turn set high store by the translation, rewarding the author with a gift of two hundred doubloons, encouraging him to complete his work, and asking him, in particular, to send him as soon as possible his version of the psalm "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever" (Psalm 107).

The dauphin, the future Henry II, showed particular fondness for the psalms, and ordinarily went about singing or humming them, to the great satisfaction, we are told, of all good and pious souls. Nothing more was needed to induce the courtiers, and even the king’s old mistress, Diana of Poitiers, to pick out each his or her favorite psalm, and beg of the dauphin to let them have it, to his no small perplexity as to which one of them he should thus gratify. For himself, Henry, as yet childless, though he had been married to Catharine de’ Medici for not far from a score of years, chose Marot’s rendering of the 128th psalm—a selection dictated, doubtless, by the wish that he too might be blessed as the man that feared the Lord, his wife being as a fruitful vine by the sides of his house, and his children like olive plants round about his table. It was about the same time, and for a similar reason, that Catharine de’ Medici declared her preference for the 142nd psalm (“I cried unto the Lord with my voice,” etc.).

The short-lived enthusiasm of the court for the singing of the psalms had little or no effect upon legislation. For nearly twenty years after this time the laws against the use of the psalter in the vernacular continued to be as severe and were as persistently executed as ever. It was not, as has been said, until 1562, that a change, induced by political considerations, was effected.
For two years and more France had seemed to be arousing itself from the sleep of ages and clamoring for the Word of God. Thus, for instance, in 1558, about a year before the sudden death of the persecuting Henry II, a singular and unlooked-for outbreak of psalm-singing took place in the heart of Paris and on the favorite promenade of the best society, the so-called Pré aux Clercs. Here, just across the Seine from the Louvre, it happened one afternoon in May that two or three voices started the tune of one of the proscribed psalms. In an instant other voices joined in, showing that the words and the air were familiar to many, and soon almost the whole body of promenaders—students, gentlemen, ladies among the rest—were unitedly celebrating God’s glory. The next day, and the next, the thing was repeated. There were said at last to be five or six thousand engaged in the unlawful act of praising the Almighty in French, among them many notable personages of state, including the King and Queen of Navarre. The irregularity did not escape the notice of the bigots of the neighboring college of the Sorbonne, the theological faculty of Paris; nor did they rest until the bishop of the city had called the attention of parliament to an incident which was declared to tend to sedition, public commotion, and a disturbance of the public peace.

Other features of the awakening are referred to elsewhere, and need not be recalled here. Let it suffice my present purpose to repeat what Montluc, Bishop of Valence, said in his famous speech in the Assembly of Notables held at Fontainebleau, in August, 1560, while the old laws were still in full force. After begging the young king (Francis II) to have daily preaching in his palace, in order that the mouths of those might be closed who asserted that God was never spoken of among those about his Majesty’s person, the prelate turned to Catharine de’ Medici and Mary of Scots, and exclaimed:

"And you, Mesdames the Queens, be pleased to pardon me if I venture to beg you to command that, in place of silly songs, your maids and all your suite shall sing only the psalms of David and the spiritual songs that contain the praises of God. And remember that God’s eye searches out all places and all men in this world, but rests nowhere [with favor] save where His name is invoked, praised, and exalted." "And hereupon," he added, addressing himself to the king, "I cannot abstain from saying that I find extremely strange the view of those who would interdict the singing of the psalms, and who give occasion to the seditious to say that we are no longer fighting against men but against God, for we strive to prevent His praises from being proclaimed and heard by all."

This he followed by proof which it would have been difficult for his opponents to refute, and which they took good care not to notice.

The Guises kept the good advice of Montluc and others from bearing fruit, but the movement which he represented did not stay its course. At last, in September 1561, the colloquy came. It was no longer a matter of doubt that a considerable body of people in France had espoused the doctrines of the Reformation, although it had not yet been decided definitely how they were to be dealt with. Then it was that a few weeks before the publication of the tolerant "Edict of January," Beza secured for the complete psalter translated by
Clément Marot and himself a privilege, or governmental authorization and copyright. The date of its issue was December 26, 1561. And now began a very deluge of editions of the psalter following one another almost without intermission. Such was the new and quickened demand, that it was difficult, almost impossible, to keep up with it. Besides other issues which have undoubtedly escaped notice, we know of twenty-five or twenty-six distinct editions that were put out within the bounds of the single year 1562; that is, a distinct edition on the average for every fortnight. Six different printers or companies of printers published nine editions in the city of Geneva alone for circulation in France. Paris was not far behind with seven editions. Lyons had three. Saint Lô had one. Five editions were without designation of place. There are known fourteen editions of 1563, ten of 1564, thirteen of 1565—in all more than sixty editions in four years. The books were of all sizes. There were diminutive volumes and stately folios. No other book of the period, not the most fascinating of romances, had such a surprising circulation. It was not curiosity that had to be gratified; it was a veritable famine for the Word of God that had to be satisfied. The men, women, and children even would sing the psalms, and at any price they must have the books containing the psalms, for use at home, in the shop, especially in over 2,000 congregations. That the Reformed religion gained ground in no slight extent from the stress that was laid upon psalm-singing, is a fact that cannot be ignored; nor can it be denied that the psalms themselves owed much of their power to the suitable and attractive music to which they were set. In the Roman Catholic churches the psalms were indeed repeated, but in a language not understood by the laity, being monotonously chanted by the clergy. The enemies of the Protestants might inveigh against the novelty of permitting every worshipper to take part in what was the priest’s prerogative by immemorial usage. They might with Florimond de Ræmond condemn and ridicule as incongruous, if not positively indecorous and profane, the very idea that these holy compositions of David the king should be transferred from the church to the workshops of artisans, that the cobbler as he sewed shoes should sing the divine "Miserere" (the 51st psalm) at his bench, or the blacksmith as he smote upon the anvil, drone the solemn "De Profundis" (the 130th psalm), or the baker hum some other psalm at his oven. They might make much of the confusion arising in a great congregation when in one part of the vast building in which they were assembled the singers were engaged in repeating one verse and in a distant part a different one, the leader being unable by use of hands or feet to bring them into unison. They might protest that not without reason had the Catholic Church prohibited the promiscuous, rash, and indiscreet use of those holy and divine hymns dictated to David by the Holy Spirit Himself, on the ground that the worship of God is not to be mingled with our ordinary actions, unless with an attention and reverence bred of honor and respect, and that a boy ought not to be permitted to delight himself at his work with the psalms as with a pastime, in the midst of vain and frivolous thoughts. They might question whether when, in the smaller congregations, the maidens raised their sweet voices in song, their hearts were as firmly directed to God as both the hearts
and the eyes of the listening youth were riveted upon the fair singers. Whatever the jealous enemies of the Protestants and their worship might affirm or suspect, at least they could not deny that in the popular use of the psalms lay a most attractive feature of the Protestant service. The celebrity attained by Beza as a translator of the psalms led the national synods of France to look to him for help when the need was felt of enriching the worship of God's house with additional hymns. Late in the century, the 13th national synod, meeting at Montauban in 1594, requested him "to translate into French rhyme the Hymns of the Bible, for the purpose of their being sung in the church together with the Psalms." Four years later, the 15th synod, of Montpellier, inserted in its records a minute to the effect that "as regards the Hymns of the Bible which have been put in rhyme by Monsieur de Bèze, at the request of several synods, they shall be sung in the families to train the people and incline them to make public use of them in our churches; but this regulation shall have effect only until the next national synod." The fact, however, seems to be that the Huguenots took less kindly to these later poetical productions of the venerable author than to his early efforts. The hymns, sixteen in number, appeared in 1595, but promptly fell into disuse. On the other hand, Marot’s and Beza’s psalms retained their place in the love of the Huguenots, throughout the checkered existence of French Protestantism, though with many verbal alterations dictated by changes in the French language, down almost to our own times.

CHAPTER XVII

Beza’s Contributions to History

Theodore Beza’s direct contributions to historical science were few. He was a scholar and a teacher first, and by preference, afterwards a man of action through the strength of his convictions and the force of providential circumstances. As a teacher, he wrote to inform and convince others, and readily passed from the field of calm and quiet instruction into the field of controversy, that he might refute and silence those who held different views from his, and who undertook to maintain these views by argument. As the man of action, he was chiefly concerned with the future of the great cause to which he had deliberately sacrificed every prospect of wealth and promotion in his native country. Present duties left him little time to look backward, had his tastes inclined him so to do. The nearest approach that Beza ever made to entering upon the writing of history was a sketch dashed off on the spur of the moment and with a distinct bearing upon present controversies. I have already had occasion to refer to the Life of Calvin, as a tribute of filial love and respect to one whom he held above all others to be entitled to the appellation of father. Melchior Wolmar alone could have disputed with John Calvin the claim to be Beza’s intellectual and spiritual parent. But great as was Beza’s indebtedness to him who had emancipated his higher powers from the slavery of ignorance and superstition, and implanted a thirst for the truth, it was to the wonderful hold that Calvin took upon him that was due the mysterious
change that made of Beza a true Reformer qualified to take up the onerous work of leader of the Church of Geneva and preeminently the counsellor of French Protestantism.

The Life of Calvin breathes in every line the deep affection and unbounded reverence in which his biographer holds him. It is no blind panegyric, but a eulogy based on firm conviction. The writer’s contention is contained in two or three sentences:

"It can be affirmed (and all those that have known him will be good and sufficient witnesses to the truth of this), that never has Calvin had an enemy who, in assailing him, has not waged war against God. For from the time that God introduced His champion into the lists, it may well be said that Satan has selected him, as though having forgotten all the other challengers, for the object of his assault, and has sought to bring him, if possible, to the ground. On the other hand, God has shown him this favor, that He has conferred on him as many trophies as he has had enemies opposed to him. If therefore an inquiry be instituted into the combats he has sustained from within for doctrine’s sake, nothing can make them appear slight but the diligence he has used so as not to give his enemies leisure to recover their breath, and the steadfastness God has conferred on him never to yield, be it ever so little, in the Lord’s quarrel.”

In carrying on these struggles with God’s enemies, of whom Beza gives the formidable list, and wherewith he occupies many pages of his treatise, he does not deny that the subject of his biography was vehement and by nature prone to anger, but maintains that that vehemence in God’s service assumed a truly prophetic type and invested him with a majesty apparent to all.

"Those who shall read his writings and shall seek the glory of God in uprightness, will there behold the shining of the majesty whereof I speak,” says the admiring writer. “As for those who at the present time treat religion as they treat political affairs, being colder than ice in regard to the affairs of God, more aflame than fire in what concerns themselves, and call anger everything that is more frankly said than pleases them; as he never tried to please that kind of people, I also shall make it a matter of conscience not to amuse myself with answering them. What then would these wise men say, these men so moderate (provided that God alone be in question), if they had had experience of such anger from closer at hand? I feel confident that they would have been as much displeased as I myself esteem, and shall all my life long esteem, myself happy to have been the hearer of so great and rare an excellence, both in public and in private.”

To Theodore Beza has been commonly ascribed the authorship of an extensive work that appeared in three volumes at Antwerp in 1580. The title in translation reads, “Ecclesiastical History of the Reformed Churches in the Kingdom of France; wherein are truthfully described their revival and growth from the year 1521 until the year 1563, their laws or discipline, synods, persecutions both general and particular, the names and labors of those who have happily toiled, the cities and places where they were established, with the account of the first troubles or civil wars.”
Of the value of this history too much cannot be said. It is the earliest, as it is
the fullest, account of the first forty years of the Reformation in France. It is
accurate, thorough, authentic. There is no pretense of anything like fine
writing, the author being quite content with the simple statement of events as
they occurred. This being its object, its author has not hesitated to incorporate
into his narrative extensive passages in which the phraseology agrees word for
word with passages in other contemporary Huguenot writings, such as the
_Histoire de l'Estat de France sous le Règne de François II_, attributed to Regnier
de la Planche, the _Commentaires_ of Pierre de la Place, the _Martyrology_ of Jean
Crespin, and others. Documents of importance are inserted without change or
abridgment. The stories of the growth and development of individual churches
are reproduced apparently in the very words of the local accounts forwarded to
Geneva or Paris. In short, it is a compilation laboriously and judiciously made,
the general trustworthiness of which has been established beyond controversy
by a comparison with information derived from other sources, and, within our
own days, more than once corroborated by the unexpected discovery of official
documents long hidden from the knowledge of men.

Who the true author was will perhaps never be known. It was certainly not
Beza, although he was a friend of Beza and doubtless received much help from
Beza in the collection of materials for the composition of the work. This is
evident from a mere inspection of the book itself. The writer speaks of Beza
uniformly in the third person. He is prevented by no feeling of modesty from
praising Beza's great speech at Poissy, asserting that it was delivered in a
manner very agreeable to all those who were present, as the most difficult to
please subsequently admitted, and that it was listened to with remarkable
attention until the orator reached the point in his discourse which the prelates
chose to make an occasion for their noisy interruption. He refers to
conversations which he had himself held with Beza, as where he says, "Beza
made no answer for the moment because, as I have since heard him say, he
was satisfied with replying to the chief point without touching upon what was
accessory." He inserts an address made by Beza to Queen Catharine de’ Medici
in the name of the Protestant ministers in the great council chamber of the
castle of Saint Germain, prefacing it with the remark that it was "as follows, so
far as could be gathered." But the inference drawn from the contents of the
work that it was written by someone else than Beza is converted into certainty
by a passage in a letter to the Landgrave of Hesse, from the hand of Beza
himself, who, in sending a copy of the history, soon after its publication,
commends it both for its substance and for the fidelity and absence of all
literary embellishment with which it is written, "although the author has
suppressed his name, fearing that truest of sayings, ‘Truth begets hatred.’"

Somewhat more than a mere collection of eulogies, yet decidedly less than a
series of unprejudiced biographies, was a book, the genuine work of Beza, that
saw the light of day in the same year 1580. It bore the title _Icones_ (Images),
with a subtitle showing that it consisted of "True Portraits of the men,
illustrious for learning and piety, by whose ministry chiefly, on the one hand,
the studies of good letters were restored, and, on the other, true religion was
renewed in various regions of the Christian world within our memory and that of our fathers; with the addition of descriptions of their life and works." It was a veritable gallery wherein the reader seemed to pass successively in front of not far from one hundred picture-frames, intended to be filled by correct representations of the most famous characters of the modern religious world. The desire of the author had indeed outrun his ability. Over one half of the places were unoccupied, and the descriptions confronted blank spaces which the reader was exhorted, if possible, to supply with the necessary canvases. Nonetheless were the rude delineations of the more fortunate subjects calculated to deepen in the reader's mind the impression made by those heroic characters that had played a prominent part in the religious affairs of the century. A few representatives of earlier centuries were there in their appropriate places—the forerunners or advance-guard in the great procession—Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome of Prague, and Savonarola; but the majority were men of contemporary times, or, at least, of times within the memory of men still alive. To anyone that remembers the close connection which the Reformers always recognized as existing between the progress of letters and the advance of pure religion, it will not be startling to find occupying no inconspicuous place, not only the great humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam, in company with his rival Reuchlin, but Francis I of France, as the patron of learning and of the Renaissance, with the corps of literary men with whom he and his sister surrounded themselves—Budé, Vatable, and Toussain—while Michel de l'Hôpital, Scaliger, and the great printer Robert Étienne, or Stephens, were not far off. Clément Marot, the translator of one third of the psalter, had his own place as a reward for "the extreme usefulness to the churches of the work which he had accomplished, a work deserving eternal remembrance," despite the fact, recorded by his appreciative continuator, that the poet had never, even to the last days of his life, amended his bad morals, acquired during a protracted residence at court, that worst of teachers of piety and honorable deportment. Apart from the pictorial illustrations, the Icones, notwithstanding the brevity of the sketches, constitute an important source of trustworthy information, to which we willingly admit our indebtedness on more than one occasion. For if the spirit of high appreciation pervades the work, the words of panegyric are, for the most part, reserved for the epigrams that are interspersed—a species of composition to which Beza was much addicted even down to his latest years.

No more convenient place than this may occur to make a passing reference to the circumstance that Beza interested himself in the matter of the correct pronunciation both of the Latin and Greek languages and of the French, and published short treatises on the subject of the first two in the years 1580 and 1587, and of the third in 1584. This last treatise, of which copies have now become so extremely scarce as to be practically unobtainable, possesses a real value as a historical discussion of the fluctuations of Beza's native tongue.

CHAPTER XVIII
Beza the Patriotic Preacher
Beza and Henry IV’s Apostasy
1590–1593

The patriotism which Beza had always exhibited in behalf of the little commonwealth which he chose to be his adopted country, had a fresh opportunity to display itself in the new dangers that menaced Geneva in the years from 1590 to 1592. The peril came from the persistent efforts of an implacable enemy, the Duke of Savoy. To the exposure to actual warfare were added the discomfort and losses of a state of virtual siege, emphasized from time to time by an approach to a real famine of bread. There was dissension at home. If the greater part of the citizens did not falter in their purpose, there was no lack of faint-hearted men, even among the citizens, men who would have been glad to purchase safety with submission. But in the crisis of the peril, the voice of Beza was raised in no irresolute tones, proclaiming from the old pulpit of the church of Saint Pierre the same doctrine that he had advocated more than a generation before. The sermons which he preached—he believed they would be his last—were intended to be a testimony and, so to speak, a testament containing a final recapitulation of the teaching of a lifetime. He inculcated, on the one hand, repentance and amendment of life in the sight of God, and, on the other, a bold and unflinching maintenance of the rights and the liberties of the republic. The war was unavoidable. It was also just, because waged in self-defense. Seldom has an orator of threescore years and ten more vigorously or more eloquently set forth the motives for a hearty and hopeful prosecution of an honorable struggle. Let me give a single passage which has deservedly called forth the admiration of an acute writer of recent times, who, referring to its construction formed altogether on classical models, well observes that we might almost fancy that we were listening in Athens itself to the voice of Pericles exhorting his fellow citizens to persevere in carrying on the Peloponnesian War.

"Humanly speaking," says Beza, "common sense of itself teaches us to lay down life for the salvation of our country and for a just freedom. And, before going any farther, people of Geneva, how often, in conflict against the same enemies, have your fathers, when reduced to the last extremity, maintained very bravely that liberty which they have left you—a liberty which I also hope and dare assure myself that, with the Lord’s help, you will preserve to the very end! And this for a reason still more just than that which all your predecessors had. For, not to mention the yoke of a miserable slavery which men would impose upon us, it is God’s glory and truth, it is our souls, our conscience, our eternal salvation that are now at stake, whatever color or pretext may be alleged to the contrary. As for all the fine promises that may be made to you on this point, have you not made proof enough of what the good faith and the honesty of those with whom you have to do amount to? And as to us, gathered here from so many
different places, who have found here not an Egypt, but all
gentleness and kindness, can it be that there should be found one
in the midst of us that would consent, in so cowardly a manner
and with such base ingratitude, to leave the home under the
shelter of which we have been received, rather than show by our
deeds, and until the last breath of life, that it was zeal for the
glory of God alone, and the desire to be fed with His holy Word,
and to serve Him purely, that made us renounce all the
advantages of this world in order to obtain that pearl of great
price which we have found and which illuminates us in this place?
I do not believe it, nor is it this that leads me to speak. I speak
solely for the purpose of persuading those that may be in doubt,
and confirming those that may in any way be wavering.

"But let us consider whether the difficulties are such and so great
as they are represented to be. If it be a question of provisions, it
cannot be said that there is a lack as yet. If in this circumstance
we do not recognize the great and extraordinary kindness of God,
experienced more than once within a few years, when not only
war, but famine, from far and near, threatened to be
immediately upon us, shall we not deserve by our ingratitude that
what we fear and still worse may befall us? I ask, upon his
conscience, if there is a person in this assembly who, had he
thought that this war would last three months only, would have
dared to promise himself that there would be a market for the
purchase of the necessaries of life in Geneva? Yet God has brought
this to pass and still continues it, after the loss of harvest and
vintage, after so many fires and the devastation of the whole
region. And what shall make us distrustful respecting the future,
if it be not forgetfulness of the past? What! shall those miserable
Parisians and other conspirators against their king go so far as to
eat their horses and asses, instead of renouncing what they have
so miserably undertaken, and can it be that we should lose
courage so soon in so just and necessary a defense of our
property, our lives, and our souls?

"Our money has given out. Perhaps our enemy is not in less
perplexity than we are. But, however that may be, he that has
provided for us hitherto is not dead, He will never die. And were
those to fail us who serve us only for money’s sake, let us boldly
say that we should have lost nothing whereon we ought to have
leaned. A single man armed with faith toward God, with zeal for
His glory, and with love of his country, will be worth a thousand
hirelings. The chief captains are confined to their beds in
consequence of disease or wounds. So be it; God will raise them
up again when it shall please Him, and when they shall be
needed. We shall then have learned from experience more than once, to the great astonishment of the captains themselves, that the arm of the God of hosts is not dependent upon either the prudence and experience of captains or the valor of soldiers to such a degree that He cannot do His work all by Himself, when it so pleases Him. And when will it please Him? When those who fear Him and trust in Him have need.

"We have been twice beaten with rods within a few days; but let not our enemies boast. It is neither their courage nor their strength that has done this, but our fault and rashness. To go back to the source of this disaster, it is our too great and long-continued errors that God has determined to chastise very lightly and for our great good, if He be pleased to grant us grace to amend our ways. The ten tribes of Israel in the very just and necessary war against Benjamin lost forty thousand men in two battles; yet they did not desist and happily accomplished what they had justly begun. And, I pray you, ought this sortie, which met with poor success in consequence of our great mistake, to have more power to astonish us and lead us to adopt disorderly plans than over six stout and stiff encounters against a larger force of our adversary shall have to encourage us when we have God before us and with us? If the Lord demands our lives as a sacrifice for His glory, what greater happiness could we desire than to pass from this life into life everlasting in so just a defense of the cause of the Lord and of our country together? And those who, by reason of a lack of the true and holy steadfastness of which we speak, may be disposed through cowardice to abandon our standard, whereon the name of Jesus Christ is inscribed, whither shall they flee to escape from His hands?

"Now this is not spoken, my brethren, for the purpose of trumpeting the war, to which may our good God and Father be pleased to put a good and happy end. But in order that we may reach it, let us not take counsel of distrust or of an inordinate apprehension of the difficulties that offer. But knowing how we entered upon the war, let us commit ourselves to Him who is the safe refuge of the oppressed and who requites the proud and ambitious. Let us acknowledge and correct the faults because of which what had been well and holily resolved upon has not always been carried out in like manner. Let us ask Him for the increase of zeal unto His glory, and of the faith needed in the midst of such tempests, that we be not swallowed up of them, but reach the haven through all these winds and storms. Let us not join His arm to the arm of flesh, but commit ourselves to Him with such prudence as it may please Him to give us, as well respecting the
means as respecting the time of our deliverance. Let us keep bound and close, first to Him, the strongest of the strong, and then to one another, by a true mutual love, so as at last to say with David, ‘I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me.’ So doing, what have we to fear, since God is for us, and death itself is made for us the entrance into the true life? Otherwise, we must needs come to what was published in the camp of God’s people in the matter of war: ‘What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren’s heart melt as well as his heart.’ But I dare to hope that none such shall be found, and that rather the great God of hosts will show us His great wonders. Amen.”

It is a somewhat singular circumstance that so staunch a Protestant, so fearless an advocate of the principles of the Reformation, as Theodore Beza should have been misrepresented as actually approving, if not applauding, the act of apostasy by which Henry IV secured undisputed possession of the crown of France at the price of the denial of his conscientious convictions. Still more strange is it that it is not a Roman Catholic, but a Protestant biographer of the Reformer and a writer of no mean repute, Friedrich Christoph Schlosser, who makes the paradoxical assertion, maintaining that Beza gave a signal proof that he was far removed from a blind fanaticism, in that, instead of lamenting the king’s defection, he regarded that defection as a necessary step to heal the wounds of a country rent asunder by religious dissension.

In point of fact, so far from acquiescing in Henry’s defection, Beza opposed it with all his might. Using the freedom of an old friend, he wrote earnestly in advance to dissuade the king from showing any weakness. His letter has been brought to light and shows that Beza, at seventy-four years of age, had lost none of his old-time vigor. Apprehending the increasing severity of the attacks to which Henry would certainly be exposed in the conference with the Roman Catholic prelates for which the time of meeting was already determined upon, the Reformer tells the monarch that the prayers of his fellow believers continually rise to heaven that by his steadfastness he may win in the sight of God and man a crown far more precious than the two earthly crowns (of France and Navarre) which were already divinely conferred upon him, although as yet he had not come into complete possession of them. He therefore begs him to see to it that, in the coming conference for instruction, the truth shall be provided with good and sufficient advocates as against the teachers of falsehood, and that only such arms shall be allowed as ought to be employed in this spiritual combat. Let not the king permit himself to be dazzled by the glitter of alleged antiquity and of Fathers and Councils of the Church, but insist on an appeal to the Holy Scriptures alone, all additions thereto of whatever kind having first been removed. Then let the world know that he enters into this conference, not because he is in doubt or irresolute respecting a religion in which he has been nurtured from his infancy, but because he would have all men know that he is a lover of truth, and neither a heretic nor a relapsed
person, as there are some that dare to affirm. Let Henry make it understood that he cannot and will not suffer violence to be done to his own conscience, as he will never use violence toward the conscience of others. Let him therefore humble himself and from the bottom of his heart pray for a truly contrite spirit, to the end that having obtained pardon for everything wherein he has offended, being a man as he is, God may not take away from him His Holy Spirit, without whom it were far better to have been only a simple private person rather than a king or prince, yea, never to have been born at all rather than live and draw upon himself a condemnation so much more severe, as he has received more favors from the Creator. As to the difficulties of his position, let Henry ask himself whether he has not by the grace of God encountered and overcome greater perils from his childhood up. Has he never been accompanied by fewer friends? Has he never been more destitute of human help? Here Beza could scarcely have been more frank and insistent:

"Have not your most faithful servants been massacred, as it were, in your very arms? And how many times has your life been at the mercy of your enemies, in thousands and thousands of ways? Thereupon, what has become of the enemies of God and your enemies, against whom He has stretched forth His powerful arm, yea, when you could not have imagined it? Have not enemies that remain still to do with the same Judge and for the same cause? Has that great God changed in His power against His hardened enemies, or in His will to maintain and raise up His own servants, when and in such manner as it shall please Him? The issue can never be other than very good and very happy for those that follow Him without straying from the path by which He leads them. ...

Moreover, Sire, we are assured that, over and above what we have said, and all that could be said on this point, you have not forgotten and never will forget that precious sentiment of which, as we have learned, you were so expressly reminded by the late queen, your mother of immortal and most blessed memory, in her last will and testament, namely, that ‘God knows them that honor Him and casts dishonor on them that dishonor Him.’ Nor also, as we believe, have you forgotten that excellent speech which God put into your heart and into your mouth to utter in the midst of alarms, as it has peen reported to us: ‘If it be my God’s will that I reign, I shall reign, despite any attempt to prevent me; and if it be not His will, neither is it mine.’ They were words worthy of a king Most Christian both in name and in fact. Such God grant that you may always be, for His glory and for the establishment of your France, and may your Majesty remember the firmness of the poor city of Geneva, for religion’s sake reduced to great straits—Geneva that is little in power, but very sincere in its attachment to your service."

The letter closed with a reference to the instructive example of King David, rescued from a thousand deaths, miraculously carried to the throne, and, after exposure for years to civil war, finally placed in full possession of his regal rights, and with a prayer that Henry might surpass even David, by avoiding David’s faults and imitating David’s virtues.

The author of so sturdy a plea for manly perseverance amid temptations to weakness would have been slow to approve the pusillanimous surrender of
principle made by Henry IV, on July 25, 1593, at the abbey of Saint Denis. He would have been the last man on earth to applaud the Abjuration as a necessary step to heal the wounds of his unfortunate kingdom, or, to use a more modern phrase, as a disinterested sacrifice of personal preferences upon the altar of patriotism.

CHAPTER XIX

Beza’s Later Years in Geneva

The last twenty or twenty-five years of Beza’s life at Geneva were years of diminishing activity, but not of idleness. Burdens too heavy for his impaired health were gradually thrown off, but there remained a wide range of labors useful to Church and Republic.

His property did not, we may believe, place him among the wealthy citizens of Geneva. It sufficed for his wants and not only made him independent of others, but permitted him to gratify his well-known hospitality and liberality. Thus it was that, on occasion, when the university lost its professors whom it had no means of paying, Beza was glad to carry on the work of instruction at his own charges, until the advent of better times.

With the same gratitude to Heaven with which in his autobiography he chronicles the fact that he was born of a noble Burgundian family, he alludes in his later years to the comparative ease of his pecuniary circumstances. He was no indigent refugee. In dedicating the first edition of his collected theological works to Sir Thomas Mildmay (in February 1570), he stated it as his chief reason for so doing, that the English knight had in times of great calamity generously relieved the necessities of the poor exiles who had forsaken their native land for the Gospel’s sake.

“Since then,” he adds, “I also am one of their number—by no means indeed needy, by God’s kindness, but nevertheless so united with them by the same spirit in Christ, that whatever things befall them I regard as my own—I have believed that I could not escape the vice of ingratitude, unless I gave expression to the respect in which I hold you, by proffering these volumes as a pledge. The time is most opportune, since I had them in my hands at the very moment when the announcement reached me of your benevolence toward our poor students.”

Evidently the Rector of the University of Geneva was not dependent upon the scanty emolument, irregularly paid, of his office, but had retained or recovered no insignificant part of the family inheritance.* If the sight of the honorable position attained by Beza, the professor at Lausanne, had affected deeply his father and brothers, who had learned of his departure from France with great displeasure, the admiration of the survivors knew no bounds when, at the court of France, about the time of the Colloquy of Poissy, their kinsman gained such distinction as he could not possibly have acquired through the favor and patronage of his Roman Catholic connections.
M. Charles Borgeaud refers (Bulletin, XLVIII [1899], 64) to the fact that a number of Beza’s scholars lived under his roof and ate at his table, and adds: “This great man, who was the counsellor of so many kings and princes, the incontestable head of a powerful party, and the spiritual director of a republic, was throughout his whole life obliged, in view of the slenderness of his resources, to have boarders in his home. To one of these last, George Sigismond of Zastrisell, he sold his library (for six hundred gold crowns).”

The truth seems to be that while Beza’s means were ample for his personal wants, he was so liberal in his gifts to every good work, including the university, and to every deserving applicant for his assistance, that he could put to good account every little addition to his income. He was childless, and his house could accommodate without inconvenience additional guests. He and his wife were of a social disposition, and were not averse to having the companionship of young people, if of congenial tastes.

One circumstance, a result of Beza’s voluntary withdrawal from France in 1548, has not been noticed. A year or more had elapsed since he reached Geneva, when the “procureur general,” or king’s attorney, attached to the Parliament of Paris took cognizance of the fact. As an absentee, Beza was summoned to appear before the court within the space of three days, and, having failed to present himself, was, on the last day of May, 1550, condemned to be executed in effigy, all his property being declared forfeited to the king. The sentence was never published or executed. Fourteen years later, both Henry II and Francis II being now dead, the Reformer obtained from Charles IX (August 1, 1564) a formal annulment under the great seal of France and accompanied by honorable expressions. It was the king’s will, moreover, that Beza should enjoy, in company with all his other subjects, the full benefits of the edict of pacification. The document was a complete refutation of the malignant accusations of Beza’s enemies.

This was three years after the Colloquy of Poissy. To the period of the colloquy itself belongs a touching incident of family history. The Reformer was unexpectedly visited at court, probably at Saint Germain, by his brother Nicholas, toward the end of September, or at the beginning of October, 1561. The brother brought the intelligence that the aged father—he was seventy-six years old—was fast declining in health, and was anxious to see his son Theodore at Vézelay before he died. The latter dutifully promised to go there on his return to Geneva. But, as we have seen, the return was long deterred. The colloquy was followed by private conferences, the conferences by the Assembly of Notables, and there was no one whom the queen-mother and the royal council regarded it more important for the peace of France to detain at court than Beza. With the passage of time, Pierre de Bèze became more urgent. In a letter written to his son in French, which Beza translated and inserted in his own letter of November 25, 1561, to Calvin, he said:
"That you have not yet come, my son, I forgive, because you have wisely placed public affairs before private. But see to it that you remember also what you owe a parent, and that you do this as soon as possible, when you shall be permitted. I desire that your brother also, who is there, should come with his wife, and that you should summon your wife also when you come. For I have resolved in the presence of you all, my children, to make my will, and, if so it please God, to die. Consequently you will do me a grateful service if you should be able to bring also from her monastery your sister, who is now my only daughter."

It was an unfortunate conclusion to the matter that Beza and his father after all did not meet again. The civil war broke out. It became impossible for Beza to traverse Burgundian territory, and the long looked-for opportunity never came to reach Vézelay before his father’s death.

I have said that Beza’s burdens were somewhat lessened as the years passed on. Let it not be supposed, however, that they were, until the very last, what most men would call light. In a letter to Melanchthon’s son-in-law, Gaspard Peucer, written in 1594, we find a few lines telling us what he could and did accomplish at seventy-five years of age:

"With the exception of a trembling of the hand that almost prevents my tracing a line, I am well enough, thank God! to preach every Sunday and to deliver every fortnight my three theological lectures. The auditorium is pretty well filled for these trying times. I am overwhelmed with occupations of different sorts and infinite in number—not those which depend on my office and to which I am accustomed by virtue of it, but occupations that come every instant from without, difficulties that must absolutely be met and solved, of which you can easily imagine the multitude and importance in this whirlwind of war that drags us along. Thus it is that in the midst of agitations, I struggle and am nearing the end of my course, with my spirit as much as possible on high."

Meanwhile Beza found time to give a careful and final revision to the French version of the Bible in common use among Protestants. This was essentially the translation made by Robert Olivetanus, a cousin of John Calvin, regarding which the most interesting circumstance was that the Waldenses of Piedmont, out of their deep poverty, had collected the sum, enormous for them, of fifteen hundred gold crowns, to pay the expenses of the printing, in 1535 by Paul de Wingle, in the village of Serrières, dear Neufchâtel. Calvin and others had labored to perfect it. Now Beza and his colleagues—especially Corneille Bertram, who held the chair of Hebrew—gave it a further revision. Thus was developed the famous "Bible of the Pastors and Professors of Geneva," which, from 1588 on to almost our own times, has passed through a multitude of editions and exercised a vast influence on successive generations of readers. The remarkable preface was written by Beza at the request of the Venerable Company of Pastors. The Library of Geneva still boasts among its many objects of interest a richly bound copy of this Bible, bearing the arms of France and Navarre, which the Council of the city had had prepared for presentation to Henry IV. Its companion volume, similarly prepared for his sister, Catharine of Bourbon, was graciously accepted by her. But Henry, when his copy reached
the court, was about to abjure, and the presentation, which would at the time have led to embarrassing complications, was deferred until some favorable juncture might arise, and the Bible ultimately returned to Geneva. Of all the lectures in the university, those of Beza were naturally the best attended. The students of all the faculties made it a point to be present at them, no matter what part of the Bible he happened to be commenting upon. It was the Epistle of Paul to the Romans when young Louis Iselin, in 1581, wrote a letter to his uncle which has come down to us. Beza’s lecture hour alone was announced by the ringing of the bell of the cathedral of Saint Pierre, as if calling to a religious function, and precisely as it used to ring for the lectures of John Calvin before the university was instituted. Nor was this strange. Beza was the first citizen of Geneva, the man who was always at his post, however it might be with others, the one man whom everybody went to see on arriving, and again before his departure. No student was well satisfied with himself unless he took away a letter of commendation from the old patriarch, or, at the very least, an album in which was inscribed his characteristic signature with some verses kindly composed for the occasion. In the estimation of the University and of the burgesses, and not less in that of the outside world, Beza stood for both School and State. Every appeal to foreign princes or foreign commonwealths for one or the other either originated from him or was urged under his patronage. It was the authority of his great name, the memory of his great services in the past in behalf of Protestantism, that secured the great results which flowed from the appeals, the abundant funds which saved both the school and the commonwealth from a destruction which otherwise might have overtaken both almost at any moment in a long succession of years. So long as he lived, such was his high standing, such were his relations with the Protestant sovereigns of Europe, that they made of him, as it were, a permanent minister of foreign affairs. In the year 1588 Beza’s wife died of the plague after a married life of forty-four years. She was the Claude or Claudine Desnoz whom he had espoused secretly, but before witnesses, three or four years before leaving France, afterwards confirming and ratifying his engagements in the presence of the church, immediately upon his arrival at Geneva. The union, although childless, had otherwise proved a source of unmingled happiness. The wife, whom he had married for love and in an irregular manner, was devoted, affectionate, and helpful. Her husband celebrated her virtues and his own grief in a long consolatory poem addressed to the eminent Jacques Lect, a member of the Council of Geneva, who, not long after the death of Beza’s wife, had been called to pass through a similar affliction. Not many months, apparently, after Claudine’s sudden death, Beza married a second wife, Geneviève del Piano, the widow of a Genoese refugee. Being now in his 70th year, and somewhat of a victim to rheumatism, he had been urged to this step by his friends, who wished to provide him with a companion in his loneliness. As the expressions of his joy over his new union were moderate, so the results were satisfactory to the full measure of his wishes and prayers.
"Here again, esteemed friend and very dear brother," he wrote to Pastor Grynaeus, of Basel, August 20, 1588, "here again, by the advice of friends, and led by the very many inevitable ills of old age to seek for the help of another, I have returned to matrimony. I have taken to wife a widow approaching her fiftieth year, so adorned, according to the testimony of all good people, with piety and every matronal virtue, that a wife more suitable and more to my mind could not fall to my lot. Regarding this blessing of God toward me, I wish you to render thanks to Him with me, and to join your prayers to mine that the sequel may correspond to this commencement."

Beza had no children by either of his wives.
The even tenor of the aged Reformer's later years was interrupted by a curious attempt at conversion. A young ecclesiastic of noble family, born at Sales, a castle belonging to his family in the neighborhood of Annecy, was at this time engaged in a brilliant work of proselytism which was to render the name of Francis of Sales famous throughout Christendom. It has been the boast of his friends and admirers, that by his instrumentality no fewer than 70,000 Protestants, constituting almost the entire population of the district of Chablais, east and south of the Lake of Geneva, were brought into the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church. His methods have been represented as purely spiritual, inspired by love and carried out in gentleness. In reality they were an appeal to worldly considerations, backed by a display of military force and characterized by cruelties such as have rarely been exceeded in the history of religious intolerance. The conversion of Chablais was a foretaste of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes; for the Dragonnades of the Duke of Savoy were only the counterpart, on a smaller scale, of the "booted missions" organized under Louvois and executed by Foucault and the other servile intendants of Louis XIV. The future Saint Francis of Sales was the prototype of the prelates of that monarch's court.

It was while engaged in the reduction of the Protestants of Chablais that a suggestion was made to Francis of Sales that he should try his skill in bringing over to Roman Catholicism Theodore Beza, the hero of many an intellectual contest and the famous Protestant champion. Beza was born in 1519, early in the century. Sales was born in 1567, when two thirds of the 16th century had elapsed. In 1597, the former was consequently almost an octogenarian, the latter was barely thirty years old. What a triumph would it be if the experienced Goliath of the heretics were to be overthrown by a well-directed pebble from the sling of the youthful David!

Francis of Sales was moved to make the attempt by a papal brief of which his nephew has given us a translation:

"Dear and Well-Beloved Son: We have been informed of the piety that is in you and the zeal you have for the honor of God, a thing that has been agreeable to us. The messenger will intimate to you in our name certain matters which concern the glory of God and which we have much at heart. You will employ herein all the
diligence which we promise ourselves from your prudence and affection to the Holy See. At Rome, October 1, 1596."

All accounts agree that Francis of Sales made several visits to Beza at his home in the city of Geneva, and that he was met with kindness. Beza was, says Auguste de Sales, the future saint’s nephew and biographer, "a handsome old man of about seventy years, who affected an appearance of gravity," and his visitor, "on entering his abode, did not forget the dictates of civility in saluting him, as also Beza received him very courteously." According to the same authority, Francis introduced the conversation with a jest, of no great merit certainly, but sufficient to draw a hearty laugh from his indulgent host. It consisted in a play of words, made on the spur of the moment, upon an inscription which had caught the guest’s eye below a portrait of Beza’s great predecessor. By the slight change of two or three words in the Latin verses, Francis of Sales, without marring the meter, had made Geneva from "happily" to "insanely" listening to the words of her great teacher Calvin, and that teacher’s writings "condemned," in place of "celebrated," by the pious throughout the world.

From trivialities the talk turned to things more serious, and Francis of Sales plied Beza with the question so commonly raised in contemporaneous controversy with Protestants, whether a man could not be saved in the Roman Catholic Church. To this Beza promptly answered that a man might thus be saved, not, however, by means of that multitude of ordinances and ceremonies with which Christ’s teachings had been overlaid. A discussion ensued on the subject of good works which would be immaterial to our purpose, even could we know with certainty what was really said.

Francis did not fail to report this interview to Pope Clement VIII, in words reproduced by his nephew:

"I began by entertaining good hopes of the conversion of the first of Calvinistic heretics. With this object in view, I entered Geneva several times, but never had the least opportunity to speak to the man in private; until finally, three days after Easter, I found him alone and did my very best. But his heart was not moved. He is altogether stony, being inveterate in his hardness, as the result of a long series of years miserably spent. Perhaps I shall bring him back to the fold; but what is to be done?"

To which the pontiff replied in his letter of May 29, 1597:

"Your zeal is worthy of a servant of God. We approve what you have done until now, in the matter of bringing back the lost sheep. We passionately seek this divine work. Prosecute therefore, with the help of the grace of God, what you have begun."

Thus encouraged, Francis repeated his visit and entered upon new discussions, involving the question of good works and the authority of the Holy See. In the course of the conversation, as he reported, Theodore Beza made the remark, "As for myself, if I am not in the right way, I pray to God every day that He will lead me into it." The words, for some reason or other, gave his visitor fresh hope, possibly because they were accompanied by a sigh. In a third interview
he returned to the charge. His panegyrists regard it as a signal proof of his
courage that he thrice exposed himself to the peril of entering Geneva and
encountering enemies enraged at him by his previous visits, though certain it is
that never was he safer in his life than he was within its walls. It was on this
occasion that, approaching Beza, as his nephew tells us, De Sales made an
extraordinary speech:
"Sir, you are doubtless agitated by many thoughts, and since you recognize the
truth of the Catholic religion, I do not doubt that you have the wish to return
to her. She calls you to enter her pale. But it may be that you fear lest, should
you return to her, the comforts of life may fail you. Ah! sir, if that be all,
according to the assurance I have received from His Holiness, I bring you the
promise of a pension of four thousand crowns of gold every year. In addition,
all your effects will be paid for at double the price at which you value them."
Up to this point we may believe Francis of Sales’ nephew. Another biographer,
Marsollier, writing in the present century, in a notice prefixed to the complete
works of Saint Francis of Sales, asserts that, convinced of Beza’s friendly
dispositions toward him and resolved to take advantage of them, Francis
informed the Reformer that he had brought with him a pontifical brief,
recently received, in which Beza was offered an honorable refuge wherever he
might choose to go, a pension of 4,000 gold crowns, the payment for his
furniture and books at his own valuation, in fine all the security he might judge
proper to exact.
Up to this point, I repeat, we can believe narratives possibly the one a
reproduction of the other, but both from Roman Catholic sources. It is
otherwise, however, when Auguste de Sales makes "poor Beza remain
speechless with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and then confess that the
Roman Church was the mother Church, but add that he did not despair of being
saved in the religion wherein he was.” Whereupon the future saint gave up the
case as lost and returned to Thonon. Fortunately there are other accounts that
have more verisimilitude and do less violence to our knowledge of Beza’s manly
dignity, to which his nearly fourscore years had lent a still greater title to
respect.
"When," adds a Genevese manuscript, "Beza heard these odious words, a severe
majesty replaced on his countenance the kindly cordiality with which he had
been speaking to the young priest. He pointed to his library shelves empty of
books; for these had been sold to defray the expenses of the support of a
number of French refugees. Then conducting his visitor to the door, he took
leave of him with the words: ‘Vade retro, Satanas!’—‘Get thee behind me,
Satan!’"
And an oral tradition makes Beza conclude his leave-taking with the trenchant
observation, "Go, sir, I am too old and deaf to be able to give ear to such
words!” But whatever may have been the particular form of De Sales’ dismissal,
this much is certain, that he returned whence he came without having effected
his purpose. Unfortunately, he or his friends had boasted of his victory before
it was won. Therefore the news was spread throughout Europe that De Sales
was about to lead his aged convert in triumph to be reconciled to Mother Holy
Church at the See of Saint Peter. Crowds waited at Siena and elsewhere on the road to Rome for the edifying spectacle, but waited in vain. Beza never came. Others reported the story differently. The arch-heretic, Calvin’s successor, had died, forsooth, but, before his death, he had recanted in the presence of the Council of Geneva, had begged them to be reconciled to the Romish Church and to send for the Jesuits, and had himself received absolution by special order from the pope, at the hands of the (titular) Bishop of Geneva, Francis of Sales. Wherefore, after Beza’s death, the city sent to Rome an embassage of submission. It is Sir Edwin Sandys that gives us, in his *Europæ Speculum*, this amusing account of the death-bed conversion of the Reformer, who did not die for a good period of eight years yet, and of the “ambassadors of Geneva, yet invisible.” The Jesuits took part in the matter by printing a document which Lestoile, in his Journal, says began with the words, “Geneva, mother and refuse of heresies, now at length that Beza is dead, embraces the Catholic faith.” As for Beza himself, thus quickly blotted out of existence by popular rumor and inimical pamphleteers, it seemed good to him to vindicate both his own existence and his honor, by publishing a letter that very year and over his own name, full of the old sprightliness and setting forth with relentless sarcasm the shameless inventions of the members of the “company of monks that lyingly assume the name of Jesus.” This and a pungent epigram called out by the same circumstances are among the very last of the products of Beza’s pen that have come down to us.

But up to the end of his life the passion for letters continued, and now that the time for sustained labors had clearly passed, it was chiefly in poetry that he continued to divert himself, the epigram which had been the pastime of his youth thus becoming the solace of his old age. The homeliest circumstance of everyday life afforded subject enough for verses—Latin verses, of course—in which the trivial occurrence was turned to spiritual account and made to bear a higher interpretation. In the freedom of familiar correspondence with his old friend, Grynæus, the pastor of Basel, he jots down, for example, the fact that that very morning of his 76th birthday, his aged servant had greeted him on awaking with news from the poultry-yard. A hen had been bought a month before and had been lost sight of at once; she just now appears, but not alone; fifteen little chickens, her progeny, follow and crowd about her.

“You see,” he writes to Grynæus, “by this homely incident how unconventionally I treat you. I gave thanks for this increase of wealth to the Author of all good, and I saw in it—shall I tell you?—without regarding myself in this as being guilty of superstition—the presage of some special favor. I even composed on this subject an epigram, and I send it to you, in order not to leave you a stranger to these light relaxations of my mind.”

The eight verses enclosed were of faultless Latinity, but need not be transcribed here. The thought was simple but pious. The hen bought but a month ago rewards her purchaser, who expended for her but ten sous, with a whole brood of young. “And I, O Christ full of benignity, what fruits have I returned to Thee in the seventy-six years that I have lived until now?”
It was five years later (1600) that a nobleman from Guyenne, happening to pass through Geneva on his way back from Rome in company with the physician of the King of Morocco, as Florimond de Raemond relates called upon Beza. The patriarch, now past fourscore, received his visitors with all his old-time dignity, courtesy, and affability. He was clad in a long tunic that came down almost to his feet and girt with a leathern belt held by a large buckle in front. His beard was long and gray. His hair reached his well-turned shoulders. Upon his head was a broad hat of generous dimensions. Altogether the sketch drawn by Raemond’s pen is a counterpart of the famous portrait that still hangs in the Public Library of Geneva.

Beza had been writing, and still held in his hand some leaves of paper on which his visitors could see verses written and rewritten with many erasures, and when he looked up and greeted them at their coming in, he remarked as he called their attention to the lines, "This is the way that I beguile my time!" It is a pleasant view to which the historian introduces us, of a man of magnificent natural endowments and magnificent achievements in Church and State, placidly occupying the enforced leisure of old age, and striving to forget the ailments of a suffering body, by the composition of unpretending stanzas, for the amusement of himself or the chance friend that might drop in. Not so in the opinion of his suspicious visitor. We hardly know whether we should rather be diverted by the silliness or be disgusted by the malignant suggestions of the "nobleman from Guyenne." He could not read the verses Beza had been scribbling, and therefore used to say that he was in doubt whether they were of an amatory character or not; but, at any rate, he sighed and said to himself, "Alas! Does this holy man, with one foot already in Charon’s bark, so spend his old age! Is this the sort of meditations with which a theologian occupies himself!"

Meanwhile, though apparently retired from active participation in affairs whether of Church or of State, Beza did not fail to exert himself to good purpose where anything could be done by him either for the advantage of the cause of religion or for the good of the republic of Geneva. Henry IV, in particular, entertained for him a reverence and accorded to him a consideration which even the events of the unfortunate Abjuration, and Beza’s manly frankness in rebuking that Abjuration, had been unable to disturb. Nominal Roman Catholic that he was, the tone of his correspondence was unaltered.

"Monsieur de Bèze," he writes, February 9, 1599, "I have heard with much satisfaction of your continued good will towards me, and that you lose no opportunity to exercise it for the advantage of my affairs. This increases still more the favor which I have always borne you, and while waiting to display it in deeds, I have been desirous to assure you anew by this message, that you could not seek for its manifestation for yourself or for others in any matter in which you will not find me greatly disposed to gratify you. Meantime I pray God to have you, Monsieur de Bèze, in His holy guard. This ninth of February, at Gandelu."
Nor were these empty words, as the event proved. In 1600, Henry, when starting out upon his Italian campaign, passed near Geneva, and encamped, at the distance of two leagues from that city, before the fort known as Sainte-Catherine. This fort, originally erected by the Duke of Savoy, had been a source of great annoyance and anxiety to the Genevese, ever suspicious, and not without good reason, of their neighbor and enemy. When the syndic and deputies of the city went out to congratulate the monarch, the latter inquired very kindly regarding the health of Theodore Beza and expressed a desire to see him. Despite his years, the Reformer promptly hastened to pay Henry his respects, and greeted him with a short address in the name of the pastors, which could not have been better received.

"My father," Henry replied, addressing the Protestant patriarch in the hearing of all, "your few words signify much, being worthy of the reputation for eloquence which M. de Bèze has gained. I take them very kindly and with all the tender feelings they deserve."

And then upon the very spot he granted to the Genevese what Beza and his fellow citizens had asked.

"I want to do for you," he said, "all that may be to your convenience. Fort Sainte-Catherine shall be torn down, and here," pointing to the Duke of Sully, who stood by, "is a man in whom you may trust with good reason, and to whom I now issue my commands."

The speech was the more remarkable as a testimony of affection and esteem because Henry had styled Beza "father," a title which, as Benoist observes, is little used by Protestants in addressing their pastors, but upon which the monks pride themselves and which they have, as it were, appropriated to themselves among the Roman Catholics. They were consequently scarcely less indignant when the king applied it to Beza than they were a year later, when, before restoring Fort Sainte-Catherine to the Duke of Savoy, according to the terms of the treaty of peace, he secretly allowed the inhabitants of Geneva to destroy the walls with their own hands, a permission of which they availed themselves so gladly that, when the moment arrived for turning the fort over to their hereditary enemy, there was not one stone upon another where the walls had lately stood.

The perils to which Geneva was exposed were not dissipated by the overthrow of Fort Sainte-Catherine, for Charles Emmanuel was an implacable foe whose treacherous attempts upon the republic ended only with his life. He made little account of compacts or of treaties of peace. Scarcely had two years elapsed since Henry’s visit when a new and more formidable conspiracy was set on foot. The Savoyard frontier at that time ran closer to Geneva than the French frontier does at present, the canton having gained a considerable accession of territory and population in the 19th century. An army secretly massed on the border could traverse the intervening space and reach the walls by a few minutes’ march. This is what occurred on the night of December 21, 1602, one of the longest, as it is apt to be one of the darkest, nights of the year. There were 8,000 soldiers in the force that stealthily approached the fortifications, preceded by their four generals and a picked body of troops. It is said that as
the ladders were raised and the advance-guard began to climb in the most profound silence, the Savoyards were encouraged by the whispers of the Jesuit missionaries in attendance, who said, "Climb boldly; every round is a step heavenward!" The project had almost proved a complete success, for no one on the inside had perceived them, when a sentinel on guard gave the alarm by discharging his musket. Two hundred men had already scaled the walls and stood on the ramparts. A few soldiers had actually entered the city. The main body was approaching the gate which a traitor had agreed to open to them. But a Vaudois, Mercier by name, thwarted the plot by his presence of mind and let the portcullis fall. The citizens, awakened from their sleep, rushed to meet such of the enemy as had penetrated into the streets, and slew to the number of three hundred of the assailants. The survivors were put to flight, and retired to Savoy. Sixty-seven that were taken prisoners were afterwards ruthlessly beheaded. Of the Genevese there were but seventeen killed.

The conflict over, the people flocked to the church of Saint Pierre to render thanks to Almighty God for His wonderful interposition in their behalf. In the religious services, Theodore Beza, notwithstanding his advanced age and bodily feebleness, took the most prominent part. At his bidding the worshippers with one accord chanted the words of the 124th psalm, turned into verse by the Reformer himself a half-century before, than which no jubilant words more appropriate to the occasion could have been found in a collection that lends itself wonderfully to the expression of every phase of human experience.

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
   Now may Israel say;
If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
   When men rose up against us;
Then they had swallowed us up quick,
   When their wrath was kindled against us.

Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us
   As a prey to their teeth.
Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers;
   The snare is broken and we are escaped.
Our help is in the name of the Lord,
   Who made heaven and earth."

On every recurring anniversary of "The Escalade," from that day to this, the same psalm is joyfully sung in Saint Pierre at the commemorative services; and the visitor sees upon one of the bas-reliefs of a fountain erected in 1857, on the Rue des Allemands, and known as "The Monument of the Escalade," a representation of Theodore Beza in the act of returning thanks to God.

CHAPTER XX
Closing Days
Honored for his long years of service, revered for his signal piety and the virtues that had characterized his entire life, held in special veneration as the sole survivor of the group of Reformers that glorified the first half of the 16th century, and now by his very aspect recalling an age long since passed, Theodore Beza spent the remnant of his earthly existence in placid contentment and with a happy anticipation of the rewards of the heavenly. As his infirmities increased, so also multiplied the sedulous attentions of his devoted friends and of his colleagues in Church and University. A touching evidence of affection and solicitude was given in the resolution adopted by his brethren of the ministry, a few months before the end, to the effect that at least two of their number should visit him daily, to inquire respecting his health, and to minister such comfort as they might be able. Thus as the flame of life flickered in the socket before quite going out, there were always friendly eyes that watched with mingled hope and fear. When for a brief moment he seemed to be snatched from the borders of the grave, there sat by his side those from whose lips the precious assurances of the Gospel were doubly precious, because recalled by friends with whom he had enjoyed sweet communion in the past. On Saturday, October 12, 1605, he listened with folded hands and with evident joy, as his colleague La Faye recited the words of Saint Paul, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and discoursed respecting God’s grace to the called according to His purpose, whom He has justified and glorified. On the morrow, the last day of his life, he awoke feeling so much relieved of suffering that he rose, allowed himself to be dressed, offered his morning prayer, took a few steps, and ate a little food. It was characteristic that his last thoughts before the end came were directed to his beloved Geneva, which for its own sake, and as the representative of the cause of the truth, had long been dearer to him than life itself. "Is the city in full safety and quiet?" he asked. Then, on receiving an affirmative answer, he suddenly sank down, losing strength and consciousness at once, and in a few minutes passed peacefully away, while sorrowing friends prayed about his bedside.

A great man, indeed, had fallen, over whose mortal remains all that was highest and best in Church or State in Geneva did well to weep, deploring the loss that both State and Church had sustained. There is still in existence, saved by one of those strange freaks of fortune which occasionally preserve the most fragile of shells through the midst of the storms that dash to pieces the most strongly built frigate, a copy of the simple notice that summoned the friends to attend the last rites in Beza’s honor. It runs thus in translation:

"What the haven is to those that sail, that is the removal into another life to those whose death is precious in the eyes of the Lord. Inasmuch, therefore, as yesterday that great light of the Church, that reverend man, Doctor Theodore Beza, worn out with years, was peacefully translated from this transitory and wretched life to that other life in which there is eternal
blessedness free from disquietude, and inasmuch as he is this day to be consigned to burial, the illustrious and generous lords, counts, barons, nobles, all in fine that apply themselves to letters now present in this Academy, are invited, in the name of the Pastors and Professors, today at noon, to pay this last honor due to so great a man and one that has died in so pious a manner, and to attend his funeral. Whose body indeed, like as the bodies of all that die in Christ, is sown in corruption, but shall be raised in incorruption: in such wise that neither death nor life shall separate us from the love which is in Jesus Christ our Lord, who translates His children from death to life. He died on the thirteenth of October, 1605."

In imitation of his great master, John Calvin, and in accordance with the city ordinances, Theodore Beza, before his death, had expressed a wish that his body should be interred in the public cemetery of Plainpalais, outside the walls. His preference was disregarded, and the magistrates ordered that the place of burial be in the heart of Geneva itself. It was not so much for the sake of conferring superior honor upon the great theologian and leader that this resolution was reached, as to forestall the possibility of danger to the republic. A watchful enemy was in the neighborhood, and might take advantage of the moment when all Geneva’s best citizens and most valiant soldiers should have gone forth accompanying Beza’s remains to the grave, to make a sudden attack upon the defenseless place. Moreover, there were rumors that the enemies of the Reformer intended at a later time to disinter his corpse and, if they exposed it to no other indignity, to carry it off in triumph to Rome. Accordingly, it was to the buildings then known as the cloisters of the cathedral church of Saint Pierre that Beza’s body was carried on the shoulders of his former students, and was there laid to rest within a stone’s throw of the sacred edifice where he had for so many years lectured and preached. Strange as it may appear, during the course of the 18th century, the cloisters, having fallen into a ruinous condition, were torn down, and the tomb of Beza shared in the demolition. Whither his remains were taken is unknown. It is as impossible for the visitor to Geneva at the present time to discover the last resting place of Theodore Beza, the pupil, as to identify the humble and unmarked grave of his master, John Calvin, at Plainpalais.

Church and State pledged themselves to one another over Beza’s grave to concord and a union of effort for the welfare of Geneva. Speaking through his successor in the moderator’s chair, the Venerable Company recalled to memory the fact that the Reformer lead been not only a shining light in the house of the Lord, but a wall of defense to the republic of Geneva, which owed to his prevalent intercession every honor and every favor which it had received at the hands of foreign princes. And the syndic who responded in the name of the magistracy, reciprocated the hope that, for the advantage of the common country, there might ever subsist a good understanding between Church and State. To the accomplishment of this end, he urged that all should walk in the
footsteps of those two great men, John Calvin and Theodore Beza, who had so happily served the interests of the commonwealth.

End of Section 3

Rise of the Dutch Republic

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

New York
Harper & Brothers, Publishers
1855

American Christians have always been inspired by the history of their country. The rise of the American republic is indeed a great testimony to the Lord's providence, working on behalf of His people. But two centuries earlier, an even greater struggle was breaking out on the other side of the Atlantic, and another Christian people was fighting for its very existence against a powerful tyrant. And their trials and suffering far surpassed what our American forefathers endured. This is the story of the rise of the Dutch Republic.

When King Phillip II of Spain took the throne, it marked the beginning of a long period of persecution and suffering for the freedom-loving people of the "Low Countries" on the western coast of Europe. Phillip enforced a merciless Inquisition, and any limited freedoms the Netherlanders may have retained under his father, Emperor Charles V, were abolished. The Dutch people languished under the oppressive rule of five successive Spanish administrators,
during which they died by the hundreds of thousands in executions, in massacres, and in battle.

They would wage a desperate war for eighty years before gaining permanent independence. And God would raise up a man to become their champion, a man who would sacrifice his fortune, his health, and ultimately his life for the deliverance of the common people. William of the House of Orange, renowned in history as William the Silent, was a rare historical figure of the sixteenth century, standing firm for complete religious liberty, in an age of bigotry and intolerance among Catholics and Protestants alike. He led his countrymen through overwhelming sorrow and tragedy, as the Dutch provinces united to lay the foundation for their great future republic. Known as the "Father of his country" and the "Tranquil Prince" for his unwavering fortitude and peace of mind through never-ending adversity, he faithfully persevered, denying himself to ease the suffering of others, until he fell under the assassin's bullet, and the Lord called him home to glory. His story and the story of his country are an enduring testimony to the faithfulness of our gracious God as He sustains His people throughout all their afflictions.

Contents
Preface
Historical Introduction
Part 1 Philip II in the Netherlands
Part 2 Administration of the Duchess Margaret
   Chapters 1-4
   Chapters 5-7
   Chapters 8-10
Part 3 Alva
   Chapters 1-3
   Chapters 4-6
   Chapters 7-9
Part 4 Administration of the Grand Commander
   Chapters 1-3
   Chapters 4-5
Part 5 Don John of Austria
   Chapters 1-3
   Chapters 4-5
Part 6 Alexander of Parma
   Chapters 1-2
   Chapters 3-4
   Chapters 5-7
Contents

PART ONE
Philip II in the Netherlands
1555–1559

CHAPTER I
The Abdication of Emperor Charles V

Abdication of Charles Resolved Upon — Brussels in the 16th Century — Hall of the Palace Described — Portraits of Prominent Individuals Present at the
CHAPTER II

Philip II and the Conflict with France


CHAPTER III

State of the Netherlands and the Beginning of Persecution in Spain

PART TWO

Administration of the Duchess Margaret
1559–1567

CHAPTER I

Preparations for Persecution in the Netherlands

Biographical Sketch and Portrait of Margaret of Parma — The State Council — Berlaymont — Viglius — Sketch of William the Silent — Portrait of Antony Perrenot, afterwards Cardinal Granvelle — General View of the Political, Social and Religious Condition of the Netherlands — Habits of the Aristocracy — Emulation in Extravagance — Pecuniary Embarrassments — Sympathy for the Reformation Steadily Increasing among the People, the True Cause of the Impending Revolt — Measures of the Government — Edict of 1550 Described — Papal Bulls Granted to Philip for Increasing the Number of Bishops in the Netherlands — Necessity for Retaining the Spanish troops to Enforce the Policy of Persecution

CHAPTER II

Opposition to Philip and Cardinal Granvelle in the Netherlands
The Marriage of William of Orange to Princess Anna of Saxony

Recalled — Philip’s Personal Attention to the Details of Persecution — Perrenot becomes Cardinal de Granvelle — All the Power of Government in his Hands — His Increasing Unpopularity — Animosity and Violence of Egmont towards the Cardinal — Relations between Orange and Granvelle — Ancient Friendship Gradually Changing to Enmity — Renewal of the Magistracy at Antwerp — Quarrel between the Prince and Cardinal — Joint Letter of Orange and Egmont to the King — Answer of the King — Indignation of Philip against Count Horn — Secret Correspondence between the King and Cardinal — Remonstrances against the New Bishoprics — Philip’s Private Financial Statements — Penury of the Exchequer in Spain and in the Provinces — Plan for Debasing the Coin — Marriage of William the Silent with the Princess of Lorraine Circumvented — Negotiations for his Matrimonial Alliance with Princess Anna of Saxony — Correspondence between Granvelle and Philip upon the Subject — Opposition of Landgrave Philip and of Philip II — Character and Conduct of Elector Augustus — Mission of Count Schwartzburg — Communications of Orange to the King and to Duchess Margaret — Characteristic Letter of Philip — Artful Conduct of Granvelle and of the Regent — Visit of Orange to Dresden — Proposed “Note” of Elector Augustus — Refusal of the Prince — Protest of the Landgrave against the Marriage — Preparations for the Wedding at Leipsic — Notarial Instrument Drawn up on the Marriage Day — Wedding Ceremonies and Festivities — Entrance of Granvelle into Mechlin as Archbishop — Compromise in Brabant between the Abbeys and Bishops

CHAPTER III

The Inquisition and the Conflicts between Granvelle and the Nobles

The Inquisition the Great Cause of the Revolt — The Three Varieties of the Institution — The Spanish Inquisition Described — The Episcopal Inquisition in the Netherlands — The Papal Inquisition Established in the Provinces by Charles V — His Instructions to the Inquisitors — They are Renewed by Philip — Inquisitor Titelmann — Instances of his Manner of Proceeding — Spanish and Netherland Inquisitions Compared — Conduct of Granvelle — Faveau and Mallart Condemned at Valenciennes — "Journée des Maubrulés" — Severe Measures at Valenciennes — Attack of the Rhetoric Clubs upon Granvelle — Granvelle’s Insinuations against Egmont and Simon Renard — Timidity of Viglius — Universal Hatred toward the Cardinal — Buffoonery of Brederode and Lume — Courage of Granvelle — Philip Taxes the Netherlands for the Suppression of the Huguenots in France — Meeting of the Knights of the Fleece — Assembly at the House of Orange — Demand upon the Estates for Supplies — Montigny appointed envoy to Spain — Open and Determined Opposition to Granvelle — Secret Representations by the Cardinal to Philip, Concerning Egmont and other Seigniors — Line of Conduct Traced out for the King — Montigny’s Representations in Spain — Unsatisfactory Result of his Mission

CHAPTER IV
The Departure and Retirement of Cardinal Granvelle

Joint letter to Philip from Orange, Egmont, and Horn — Egmont’s quarrel with Aerschot and with Aremberg — Philip’s Answer to the Three Nobles — His Instructions to the Duchess — Egmont Declines the King’s Invitation to Visit Spain — Second Letter of the Three Seigniors — Mission of Armenteros — Letter of Alva — Secret Letters of Granvelle to Philip — The Cardinal’s Insinuations and Instructions — His Complaints as to the Lukewarmness of Berghen and Montigny in the Cause of the Inquisition — Anecdotes to their Discredit Privately Chronicled by Granvelle — Supposed Necessity for the King’s Presence in the Provinces — Correspondence of Lazarus Schwendi — Approaching Crisis — Anxiety of Granvelle to Retire — Banquet of Caspar Schetz — Invention of the Fools-cap Livery — Correspondence of the Duchess and of the Cardinal with Philip upon the subject — Entire Withdrawal of the Three Seigniors from the State Council — The King Advises with Alva Concerning the Recall of Granvelle — Elaborate Duplicity of Philip’s Arrangements — His Secret Note to the Cardinal — His Dissembling Letters to Others — Departure of Granvelle from the Netherlands — Various Opinions as to its Cause — Ludicrous Conduct of Brederode and Hoogstraaten — Fabulous Statements in Granvelle’s Correspondence Concerning his Recall — Universal Mystification — The Cardinal Deceived by the King — Granvelle in Retirement — His Epicureanism — Fears in the Provinces as to his Return — Universal Joy at his Departure — Representations to his Discredit Made by the Duchess to Philip — Her Hypocritical Letters to the Cardinal — Masquerade at Count Mansfeld’s — Chantonnay’s Advice to his Brother — Review of Granvelle’s Administration and Estimate of his Character

CHAPTER V

Persecutions and Resistance

Vehement Declarations of Philip — His Instructions to Egmont at his Departure — Proceedings of Orange in Regard to his Principality — Egmont’s Report to the State Council concerning his Mission — His Vainglory — Renewed Orders from Philip to Continue the Persecution — Indignation of Egmont — Habitual Dissimulation of the King — Reproof of Egmont by Orange — Assembly of Doctors in Brussels — Result of their Deliberations Transmitted to Philip — Universal Excitement in the Netherlands — New Punishment for Heretics — Interview at Bayonne between Catharine de Medici and her Daughter, the Queen of Spain — Mistaken Views upon this Subject — Diplomacy of Alva — Artful Conduct of Catharine — Stringent Letters from Philip to the Duchess with Regard to the Inquisition — Consternation of Margaret and of Viglius — New Proclamation of the Edicts, the Inquisition, and the Council of Trent — Fury of the People — Resistance of the Leading Seigniors and of the Brabant Council — Brabant Declared Free of the Inquisition — Prince Alexander of Parma Betrothed to Donna Maria of Portugal — Her Portrait — Expensive Preparations for the Nuptials — Assembly of the Golden Fleece — Oration of Viglius — Wedding of Prince Alexander

CHAPTER VI

Continued Conflicts and Field-Preaching in the Netherlands

Field-Preaching near Antwerp — Embarrassment of the Regent — Excitement at Antwerp — Pensionary Wesenbeck sent to Brussels — Orange at Antwerp — His Patriotic Course — Misrepresentation of the duchess — Intemperate Zeal of Dr. Rythovius — Meeting at St. Trond — Conference at Duffel — Louis of Nassau Deputed to the Regent — Unsatisfactory Negotiations

CHAPTER VII

The Destruction of the Idols


CHAPTER VIII

The Nobles Strive to Avoid Rebellion

Secret Policy of the Government-Berghen and Montigny fn Spain — Debates at Segovia — Correspondence of the duchess with Philip—Procrastination and Dissimulation of the king — Secret Communication to the Pope — Effect in the Provinces of the king’s Letters to the Government — Secret Instructions to the duchess — Responding Statements of Margaret — Her Misrepresentations concerning Orange, Egmont, and Others — Wrath and Duplicity of Philip — Egmont’s Exertions in Flanders — Orange returns to Antwerp — His Tolerant Spirit — Agreement of the Second of September — Horn at Tournay — Excavations in the Cathedral — Almost Universal Attendance at the Preaching — Building of Temples Commenced — Difficult Position of Horn — Preaching in the Clothiers’ Hall — Horn Recalled — Noircarmes at Tournay — Friendly Correspondence of Margaret with Orange, Egmont, Horn, and Hoogstraaten — Her Secret Defamation of these Persons

CHAPTER IX

The Siege of Valenciennes and the Courage of William of Orange at Antwerp

CHAPTER X

Despair in the Provinces and Mass Emigration

Egmont and Aerschot before Valenciennes — Severity of Egmont — Capitulation of the City — Escape and Capture of the Ministers — Execution of La Grange and De Bray — Horrible Cruelty at Valenciennes — Effects of the Reduction of Valenciennes — The Duchess at Antwerp — Armed Invasion of the Provinces Decided upon in Spain — Appointment of Alva — Indignation of Margaret — Mission of De Billy — Pretended Visit of Philip — Attempts of the Duchess to Gain over Orange — Message of Berty — Interview between Orange and Egmont at Willebrock — Orange’s letters to Philip, to Egmont, and to Horn — Orange Departs from the Netherlands — Philip’s Letter to Egmont — Secret Intelligence Received by Orange — La Torre’s Mission to Brederode — Brederode’s Departure and Death — Death of Berghen — Despair in the Provinces — Great Emigration — Cruelties Practiced upon Those of the New Religion — Edict of the 24th of May — Wrath of the King

PART THREE

ALVA
CHAPTER I

The Arrival of the Duke of Alva, the Blood-Council, and the Departure of Duchess Margaret


CHAPTER II

The First Battles of the Eighty Years’ War and the Executions of Egmont and Horn

Orange, Count Louis, Hoogstraaten, and others Cited before the Blood-Council — Charges against Them — Letter of Orange in Reply — Position and Sentiments of the Prince — Seizure of Count de Buren — Details of that Transaction — Petitions to the Council from Louvain and other Places — Sentence of Death
against the whole Population of the Netherlands Pronounced by the Spanish
Inquisition and proclaimed by Philip — Cruel Inventions against Heretics — The
Wild Beggars — Preliminary Proceedings of the Council against Egmont and Horn
— Interrogatories Addressed to them in Prison — Articles of Accusation against
Them — Foreclosure of the Cases — Pleas to the Jurisdiction — Efforts by the
Countesses Egmont and Horn, by many Knights of the Fleece, and by the
Emperor, in favor of the Prisoners — Answers of Alva and of Philip — Obsequious
Behavior of Viglius — Difficulties Arising from the Golden Fleece Statutes set
Aside — Particulars of the Charges against Count Horn and of his Defense —
Articles of Accusation against Egmont — Sketch of his Reply — Reflections upon
the Two Trials — Attitude of Orange — His Published "Justification" — His Secret
Combinations — His Commission to Count Louis — Large Sums of Money
Subscribed by the Nassau Family, by Netherland Refugees, and Others — Great
Personal Sacrifices Made by the Prince — Quadruple Scheme for Invading the
Netherlands — Defeat of the Patriots under Cocqueville — Defeat of Villers —
Invasion of Friesland by Count Louis — Measures of Alva to Oppose Him —
Command of the Royalists Entrusted to Aremberg and Meghen — The Duke’s
Plan for the Campaign — Skirmish at Dam — Detention of Meghen — Count Louis
at Heiliger-Lee — Nature of the Ground — Advance of Aremberg — Disposition
of the Patriot Forces — Impatience of the Spanish Troops to Engage — Battle of
Heiliger-Lee — Defeat and Death of Aremberg — Death of Adolphus Nassau —
Effects of the Battle — Anger and Severe Measures of Alva — Eighteen Nobles
Executed at Brussels — Sentence of Death Pronounced upon Egmont and Horn —
The Bishop of Ypres Sent to Egmont — Fruitless Intercession by the Prelate and
the Countess — Egmont’s Last Night in Prison — The ‘Grande Place’ at Brussels
— Details Concerning the Execution of Egmont and Horn — Observation upon
the Characters of the Two Nobles — Destitute Condition of Egmont’s Family

CHAPTER III

Alva Defeats Louis of Nassau

Preparations of the Duke against Count Louis — Precarious Situation of Louis in
Friesland — Timidity of the Inhabitants — Alva in Friesland — Skirmishing near
Groningen — Retreat of the Patriots-Error Committed by Louis — His Position at
Jemmingen — Mutinous Demonstrations of his Troops — Louis Partially Restores
Order — Attempt to Destroy the Dykes Interrupted by the Arrival of Alva’s
Forces — Artful Strategy of the Duke — Defeat of Count Louis and Utter
Destruction of his Army — Outrages Committed by the Spaniards — Alva at
Utrecht — Execution of Vrouw van Diemen — Episode of Don Carlos — Fables
concerning him and Queen Isabella — Mystery Concerning his Death — Secret
Letters of Philip to the Pope — The One Containing the Truth of the Transaction
still Concealed in the Vatican — Case against Philip as Related by Mathieu, De
Thou, and Others — Testimony in the King’s Favor by the Nuncio, the Venetian
Envoy, and Others — Doubtful State of the Question — Anecdotes concerning
Don Carlos — His character
CHAPTER IV

The Prince of Orange Contends with the Duke of Alva

Continued and Excessive Barbarity of the Government — Execution of Antony van Straalen, of "Red-Rod" Spelle — The Prince of Orange Advised by his German Friends to Remain Quiet — Heroic Sentiments of Orange — His Religious Opinions — His Efforts in Favor of Toleration — His Fervent Piety — His Public Correspondence with the Emperor — His "Justification," his "Warning," and other Papers Characterized — The Prince, with a Considerable Army, crosses the Rhine — Passage of the Meuse at Stochem — He Offers Battle to Alva — Determination of the Duke to Avoid an Engagement — Comparison of his Present Situation with his Previous Position in Friesland — Masterly Tactics of the Duke — Skirmish on the Geta — Defeat of the Orangists — Death of Hoogstraaten — Junction with Genlis — Adherence of Alva to his Original Plan — The Prince Crosses the Frontier of France — Correspondence between Charles IX and Orange — The Patriot Army Disbanded at Strasburg — Comments by Granvelle upon the Position of the Prince — Triumphant Attitude of Alva — Festivities at Brussels — Colossal Statue of Alva Erected by himself in Antwerp Citadel — Intercession of the Emperor with Philip — Memorial of Six Electors to the Emperor — Mission of the Archduke Charles to Spain — His Negotiations with Philip — Public and Private Correspondence between the King and Emperor — Duplicity of Maximilian — Abrupt Conclusion to the Intervention — Granvelle’s Suggestions to Philip concerning the Treaty of Passau

CHAPTER V

The Tyranny of Alva and Philip, the Murder of Montigny, and the Flood of 1570

Character of the Amnesty — Dissatisfaction of the People with the Act — Complaints of Alva to the king — Fortunes and Fate of Baron Montigny in Spain — His Confinement at Segovia — His Attempt to Escape — Its Failure — His Mock Trial — His Wife’s Appeal to Philip — His Condemnation — His Secret Assassination Determined Upon — Its Details, as Carefully Prescribed and Superintended by the King — Terrible Inundation throughout the Netherlands — Immense Destruction of Life and Property in Friesland — Lowestestein Castle Taken by De Ruyter, by Stratagem — Recapture of the Place by the Spaniards — Desperate Resistance and Death of De Ruyter

CHAPTER VI

The Fortitude of Orange, the Treachery of Philip, and Rebellion against Alva’s Taxation

Orange and Count Louis in France — Peace with the Huguenots — Coligny’s Memoir, Presented by Request to Charles IX, on the Subject of Invading the Netherlands — Secret Correspondence of Orange Organized by Paul Buys-Privateering Commissions Issued by the Prince — Regulations Prescribed by him for the Fleets thus Created — Impoverished Condition of the Prince — His Fortitude — His Personal Sacrifices and Privations — His Generosity — Renewed Contest between the Duke and the Estates on the Subject of the Tenth and Twentieth Pence — Violent Disputes in the Council — Firm Opposition of Viglius — Edict Commanding the Immediate Collection of the Tax — Popular Tumults — Viglius Denounced by Alva-The Duke’s Fierce Complaints to the King — Secret Schemes of Philip against Queen Elizabeth of England — The Ridolphi Plot to Murder Elizabeth Countenanced by Philip and Pius V — The King’s Orders to Alva to Further the Plan — The Duke’s Remonstrances — Explosion of the Plot — Obstnacy of Philip-Renewed Complaints of Alva as to the Impudent Service Required of Him — Other Attempts of Philip to Murder Elizabeth — Don John of Austria in the Levant — Battle of Lepanto — Slothfulness of Selim — Appointment of Medina Cœli — Incessant Wrangling in Brussels upon the Tax — Persevering efforts of Orange — Contempt of Alva for the Prince — Proposed Sentence of Ignominy against his Name — Sonoy’s Mission to Germany — Remarkable Papers Issued by the Prince — The "Harangue" — Intense Hatred for Alva Etertained by the Highest as well as Lower Orders — Visit of Francis de Alva to Brussels — His Unfavorable Report to the King — Querulous Language of the Duke — Deputation to Spain — Universal Revolt against the Tax — Ferocity of Alva — Execution of Eighteen Tradesmen Secretly Ordered — Interrupted by the Capture of Brill-Beggars of the Sea-The Younger Wild Boar of Ardennes — Reconciliation between the English Government and that of Alva — The Netherland Privateersmen Ordered out of English ports — De la Marck’s Fleet before Brill — The Town Summoned to Surrender — Commissioners Sent out to the Fleet — Flight of the Magistrates and Townspeople — Capture of the Place — Indignation of Alva — Popular Exultation in Brussels — Puns and Caricatures — Bossu Ordered to Recover the town of Brill — His Defeat — His Perfidious
Entrance into Rotterdam — Massacre in that City — Flushing Revolutionized — Unsuccessful Attempt of Governor de Bourgogne to Recall the Citizens to their Obedience — Expedition under Treslong from Brill to Assist the Town of Flushing — Murder of Pacheco by the Patriots — de’t Zeraerts Appointed Governor of Walcheren by Orange

CHAPTER VII

The Power and Self-Restraint of Orange, and the Atrocities of the Spaniards

Municipal Revolution throughout Holland and Zeeland — Characteristics of the Movement in Various Places — Sonoy Commissioned by Orange as Governor of North Holland — Theory of the Provisional Government — Instructions of the Prince to his Officers — Oath Prescribed — Clause of Toleration — Surprise of Mons by Count Louis — Exertions of Antony Oliver — Details of the Capture — Assembly of the Citizens — Speeches of Genlis and of Count Louis — Effect of the Various Movements upon Alva — Don Frederic Ordered to invest Mons — The Duke’s Impatience to Retire — Arrival of Medina Cœli — His Narrow Escape — Capture of the Lisbon Fleet — Affectation of Cordiality between Alva and Medina — Concessions by King and Viceroy on the Subject of the Tenth Penny — Estates of Holland Assembled, by Summons of Orange, at Dort — Appeals from the Prince to this Congress for Funds to Pay his Newly Levied Army — Theory of the Provisional States’ Assembly — Source and Nature of its Authority — Speech of St. Aldegonde — Liberality of the Estates and the Provinces — Pledges Exchanged between the Prince’s Representative and the Congress — Commission to De la Marck Ratified — Virtual Dictatorship of Orange — Limitation of his Power by his Own Act — Count Louis at Mons — Reinforcements Led from France by Genlis — Rashness of that Officer — His Total Defeat — Orange Again in the Field — Roormond Taken — Excesses of the Patriot Army — Proclamation of Orange, Commanding Respect to All Personal and Religious Rights — His Reply to the Emperor’s Summons — His Progress in the Netherlands — Hopes Entertained from France — Reinforcements under Coligny Promised to Orange by Charles IX — The Massacre of St. Bartholomew — The Event Characterized — Effect in England, in Rome, and in Other Parts of Europe — Excessive Hilarity of Philip — Extravagant Encomium Bestowed by him upon Charles IX — Order Sent by Philip to Put All French Prisoners in the Netherlands to Death — Secret Correspondence of Charles IX with his Envoy in the Netherlands — Exultation of the Spaniards before Mons — Alva Urged by the French Envoy, according to his Master’s Commands, to Put All the Frenchmen in Mons, and Those Already Captured, to Death — Effect of the Massacre upon the Prince of Orange — Alva and Medina in the Camp before Mons — Hopelessness of the Prince’s Scheme to Obtain Battle from Alva — Romero’s Encamisada — Narrow Escape of the Prince — Mutiny and Dissolution of his Army — His Return to Holland — His Steadfastness — Desperate Position of Count Louis in Mons — Sentiments of Alva — Capitulation of Mons — Courteous Reception of Count
Louis by the Spanish Generals — Hypocrisy of these Demonstrations — Nature of the Mons Capitulation — Horrible Violation of its Terms — Noircarmes at Mons — Establishment of a Blood Council in the City — Wholesale Executions — Cruelty and Cupidity of Noircarmes — Late Discovery of the Archives of these Crimes — Return of the Revolted Cities of Brabant and Flanders to Obedience — Sack of Mechlin by the Spaniards — Details of that Event

CHAPTER VIII

The Battles of Tergoes and Harlem

Affairs in Holland and Zealand—Siege of Tergoes by the Patriots — Importance of the Place — Difficulty of Relieving It — Its Position — Audacious Plan for Sending Succor across the “Drowned Land” — Brilliant and Successful Expedition of Mondragon — The Siege Raised — Horrible Sack of Zutphen — Base Conduct of Count Van den Berg — Refusal of Naarden to Surrender — Subsequent Unsuccessful Deputation to Make Terms with Don Frederic — Don Frederic before Naarden — Treachery of Romero — The Spaniards Admitted — General Massacre of the Garrison and Burghers — The City Burned to the Ground — Warm Reception of Orange in Holland — Secret Negotiations with the Estates — Desperate Character of the Struggle Between Spain and the Provinces — Don Frederic in Amsterdam — Plans for Reducing Holland — Skirmish on the Ice at Amsterdam — Preparation in Harlem for the Expected Siege — Description of the City — Early Operations — Complete Investment — Numbers of Besiegers and Besieged — Mutual Barbarities Determined Repulse of the First Assault — Failure of Batenburg’s Expedition — Cruelties in City and Camp — Mining and Countermining — Second Assault Victoriously Repelled — Suffering and Disease in Harlem — Disposition of Don Frederic to Retire — Memorable Rebuke By Alva — Efforts of Orange to Relieve the Place — Sonoy’s Expedition — Exploit of John Haring — Cruel Execution of Prisoners on Both Sides — Quiryn Dirkzoon and his Family Put to Death in the City — Fleets upon the Lake — Defeat of the Patriot Armada — Dreadful Suffering and Starvation in the City — Parley with the Besiegers — Despair of the City — Appeal to Orange — Expedition under Batenburg to Relieve the City — His Defeat and Death — Desperate Condition of Harlem — Its Surrender at Discretion — Sanguinary Executions — General Massacre — Expense of the Victory in Blood and Money — Joy of Philip at the News

CHAPTER IX

The Siege of Alkmaar and the Eventual Failure of the Duke of Alva

Position of Alva — Hatred Entertained for him by Elevated Personages — Quarrels between him and Medina Coeli — Departure of the Latter — Complaints to the King by Each of the Other — Attempts at Conciliation Addressed by
PART FOUR

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GRAND COMMANDER

1573–1576

CHAPTER I
The Beginning of Requesens’ Administration and the Battle of Mookerheyde


CHAPTER II

The Siege of Leyden


CHAPTER III
Peace Negotiations
Marriage of William of Orange to Charlotte de Bourbon
The Death of Requesens

Latter Days of the Blood-Council — Informal and Insincere Negotiations for Peace — Characteristics of the Negotiators and of their Diplomatic Correspondence — Dr. Junius — Secret Conferences between Dr. Leoninus and Orange — Steadfastness of the Prince — Changes in the Internal Government of the Northern Provinces — Generosity and Increasing Power of the Municipalities — Incipient Jealousy in Regard to Orange Rebuked — His Offer of Resignation Refused by the Estates — His Elevation to Almost Unlimited Power — Renewed Mediation of Maximilian — Views and Positions of the Parties — Advice of Orange Opening of Negotiations at Breda — Propositions and Counter-Propositions — Adroitness of the Plenipotentiaries on Both Sides — Insincere Diplomacy and Unsatisfactory Results — Union of Holland and Zealand under the Prince of Orange — Act Defining his Powers — Charlotte de Bourbon — Character, Fortunes, and Fate of Anna of Saxony — Marriage of Orange with Mademoiselle de Bourbon — Indignation Thereby Excited — Horrible Tortures inflicted upon Papists by Sonoy in North Holland — Oudewater and Schoonoven Taken by Hierges — The Isles of Zeeland — A Submarine Expedition Projected — Details of the Adventure — Its Entire Success — Death of Chiappin Vitelli — Deliberations in Holland and Zealand concerning the Renunciation of Philip’s Authority — Declaration at Delft — Doubts as to which of the Great Powers the Sovereignty Should be Offered — Secret International Relations — Mission to England — Unsatisfactory Negotiations with Elizabeth — Position of the Grand Commander — Siege of Zierickzee — Generosity of Count John — Desperate Project of the Prince — Death and Character of Requesens

CHAPTER IV

The Continued Vigilance of Orange and the Outbreak of Mutiny in the Spanish Troops


CHAPTER V

The Congress of Ghent and the "Spanish Fury"


PART FIVE

DON JOHN OF AUSTRIA

1576–1578
CHAPTER I

The Beginning of Don John’s Administration and the Perpetual Edict

Birth and Parentage of Don John — Barbara Blomberg — Early Education and Recognition by Philip — Brilliant Military Career — Campaign against the Moors — Battle of Lepanto — Extravagant Ambition — Secret and Rapid Journey of the New Governor to the Netherlands — Contrast between Don John and William of Orange — Secret Instructions of Philip and Private Purposes of the Governor — Cautious Policy and Correspondence of the Prince — Preliminary Negotiations with Don John at Luxemburg Characterized — Union of Brussels — Resumption of Negotiations with the Governor at Huy — The Discussions Analyzed and Characterized — Influence of the New Emperor Rudolph II and of his Envoys — Treaty of Marche en Famine, or the Perpetual Edict, Signed — Remarks upon that Transaction — Views and Efforts of Orange in Opposition to the Treaty — His Letter, in Name of Holland and Zeeland, to the States-General — Anxiety of the Royal Government to Gain over the Prince — Secret Mission of Leoninus — His Instructions from Don John — Fruitless Attempts to Corrupt the Prince — Secret Correspondence between Don John and Orange — Don John at Louvain — His Efforts to Ingratiate himself with the Netherlanders — His Incipient Popularity — Departure of the Spanish Troops — Duke of Aerschot Appointed Governor of Antwerp Citadel — His Insincere Character

CHAPTER II

The Convictions of the Prince of Orange and his Negotiations with Don John

Triumphal Entrance of Don John into Brussels — Reverse of the Picture — Analysis of the Secret Correspondence of Don John and Escovedo with Antonio Perez — Plots against the Governor’s Liberty — His Desponding Language and Gloomy Anticipations — Recommendation of Severe Measures — Position and Principles of Orange and his Family — His Private Views on the Question of Peace and War — His Toleration to Catholics and Anabaptists Censured by his Friends — Death of Vigilius — New Mission from the Governor to Orange — Details of the Gertruydenberg Conferences — Nature and Results of these Negotiations — Papers Exchanged between the Envoys and Orange — Peter Panis Executed for Heresy — Three Parties in the Netherlands — Dissimilation of Don John — His Dread of Capture

CHAPTER III

Further Activities and Correspondence of the Prince of Orange and Don John
The City of Namur — Margaret of Valois — Her Intrigues in Hainault in Favor of Alençon — Her Reception by Don John at Namur — Festivities in her Honor — Seizure of Namur Citadel by Don John — Plan for Seizing that of Antwerp — Letter of the Estates to Philip, Sent by Escovedo — Fortunes and Fate of Escovedo in Madrid — Repairing of Dykes — The Prince’s Visit to Holland — His Letter to the Estates-General on the Subject of Namur Citadel — His Visit to Utrecht — Correspondence and Commissioners between Don John and the Estates — Acrimonious and Passionate Character of these Colloquies — Attempt of Treslong upon Antwerp Citadel Frustrated by De Bourse — Fortunate Panic of the German Mercenaries — Antwerp Evacuated by the Foreign Troops — Renewed Correspondence — Audacity of the Governor’s Demands — Letters of Escovedo and Others Intercepted — Private Schemes of Don John not Understood by the Estates — His Letter to the Empress Dowager — More Correspondence with the Estates — Painful and False Position of the Governor — Demolition, in Part, of Antwerp Citadel, and of Other Fortresses by the Patriots — Statue of Alva — Letter of Estates-General to the King

CHAPTER IV

The New Brussels Union and the Destruction of the States’ Army

Orange Invited to Visit Brussels — His Correspondence upon the Subject with the Estates-General — Triumphant Journey of the Prince to the Capital — Stop Put by him to the Negotiations with Don John — New and Stringent Demands Made upon the Governor — His Indignation — Open Rupture — Intrigue of Netherland Grandees with Archduke Matthias — Policy of Orange — Attitude of Queen Elizabeth — Flight of Matthias from Vienna — Anxiety of Elizabeth — Adroitness of the Prince — The Office of Ruward — Election of Orange to that Dignity — His Complaints against the Great Nobles — Aerschot Governor of Flanders — A Storm Brewing in Ghent — Ryhove and Imbize — Blood-Councillor Hessels — Arrogance of the Aristocratic Party in Flanders — Ryhove’s Secret Interview with Orange — Outbreak at Ghent — Arrest of Aerschot, Hessels, and Others of the Reactionary Party — The Duke Liberated at Demand of Orange — The Prince’s Visit to Ghent — "Rhetorical" Demonstrations — The New Brussels Union Characterized — Treaty with England — Articles by which Matthias is Nominally Constituted Governor-General — His Inauguration at Brussels — Brilliant and Fantastic Ceremonies — Letter of Don John to the Emperor — His Anger with England — An Army Collecting — Arrival of Alexander Farnese — Injudicious Distribution of Offices in the States’ Army — The States’ Army Fall Back upon Gemblours, Followed by Don John — Tremendous Overthrow of the Patriots — Wonderful Disparity in the Respective Losses of the Two Armies

CHAPTER V

The Struggles, Failures, and Death of Don John of Austria

PART SIX

ALEXANDER OF PARMA

1578–1584

CHAPTER I

Alexander Farnese of Parma, Treason among the Nobles, and the Union of Utrecht

CHAPTER II

Religious Tumults in the Cities and the Siege of Maestricht

Parma’s Feint upon Antwerp — He Invests Maestricht — Deputation and Letters from the States-General, from Brussels, and from Parma, to the Walloon Provinces — Active Negotiations by Orange and by Farnese — Walloon Envoys in Parma’s Camp before Maestricht — Festivities — The Treaty of Reconciliation — Rejoicings of the Royalist Party — Comedy Enacted at the Paris Theatres — Religious Tumults in Antwerp, Utrecht, and Other Cities — Religious Peace enforced by Orange — Philip Egmont’s Unsuccessful Attempt upon Brussels — Siege of Maestricht — Failure at the Tongres Gate — Mining and Counter-Mining — Partial Destruction of the Tongres Ravelin — Simultaneous Attack upon the Tongres and Bois-le-Duc Gates — The Spaniards Repulsed with Great Loss — Gradual Encroachments of the Besiegers — Bloody Contests — The Town Taken — Horrible Massacre — Triumphal Entrance and Solemn Thanksgiving — Calumnious Attacks upon Orange — Renewed Troubles in Ghent — Imbize and Dathenus — The Presence of the Prince Solicited — Coup d’État of Imbize — Order Restored, and Imbize Expelled by Orange
CHAPTER III

Negotiations, Dissensions, and Treason

The Cologne Conferences — Intentions of the Parties — Preliminary Attempt by Government to Purchase the Prince of Orange — Offer and Rejection of Various Articles among the Plenipoten tiaries — Departure of the Imperial Commissioners — Ultimatum of the States Compared with that of the Royal Government — Barren Negotiations Terminated — Treason of De Bours, Governor of Mechlin — Liberal Theories concerning the Nature of Government — Abjuration of Philip Imminent — Self-Denial of Orange — Attitude of Germany — Of England — Marriage Negotiations between Elizabeth and Anjou — Orange Favors the Election of the Duke as Sovereign — Address and Speeches of the Prince — Parsimony and Interprovincial Jealousy Rebuked — Secret Correspondence of Count Renneberg with the Royal Government — His Treason at Groningen

CHAPTER IV

The Declaration of Independence of the United Provinces


CHAPTER V

The Inauguration of the Duke of Anjou, and an Attempt to Assassinate the Prince of Orange

CHAPTER VI

The Treachery of Anjou and the ”French Fury”

Parma Recalls the Foreign Troops — Siege of Oudenarde — Coolness of Alexander — Capture of the City and of Ninove — Inauguration of Anjou at Ghent — Attempt upon his Life and that of Orange — Lamoral Egmont’s Implication in the Plot — Parma’s Unsuccessful Attack upon Ghent — Secret Plans of Anjou — Dunkirk, Ostend, and Other Towns Surprised by his Adherents — Failure at Bruges — Suspicions at Antwerp — Duplicity of Anjou — The ”French Fury” — Details of that Transaction — Discomfiture and Disgrace of the Duke — His Subsequent Effrontery — His Letters to the Magistracy of Antwerp, to the Estates, and to Orange — Extensive Correspondence between Anjou and the French Court with Orange and the Estates — Difficult Position of the Prince — His Policy — Remarkable Letter to the States-General — Provisional Arrangement with Anjou — Marriage of the Archbishop of Cologne — Marriage of Orange with Louisa do Coligny — Movements in Holland, Brabant, Flanders, and Other Provinces, to Induce the Prince to Accept Sovereignty over the Whole Country — His Steady Refusal — Treason of Van den Berg in Gueldres — Intrigues of Prince Chimay and Imbize in Flanders — Counter-Efforts of Orange and the Patriot Party — Fate of Imbize — Reconciliation of Bruges — Death of Anjou

CHAPTER VII

The Legacy of William the Silent

Various Attempts upon the Life of Orange — Delft — Mansion of the Prince Described — Francis Guion or Balthazar Gérard — His Antecedents — His Correspondence and Interviews with Parma and with d’Assonleville — His Employment in France — His Return to Delft and Interview with Orange — The
The rise of the Dutch Republic must ever be regarded as one of the leading events of modern times. Without the birth of this great commonwealth, the various historical phenomena of the 16th and following centuries must have either not existed, or have presented themselves under essential modifications. Itself an organized protest against ecclesiastical tyranny and universal empire, the Republic guarded with sagacity, at many critical periods in the world’s history, that balance of power which, among civilized states, ought always to be identical with the scales of divine justice. The splendid empire of Charles V was erected upon the grave of liberty. It is a consolation to those who have hope in humanity to watch, under the reign of his successor, the gradual but triumphant resurrection of the spirit over which the sepulchre had so long been sealed. From the handbreadth of territory called the province of Holland rises a power which wages eighty years’ warfare with the most potent empire upon earth, and which, during the progress of the struggle, becoming itself a mighty state and binding about its own slender form a zone of the richest possessions
of earth, from pole to tropic, finally dictates its decrees to the empire of Charles.

So much is each individual state but a member of one great international commonwealth, and so close is the relationship between the whole human family, that it is impossible for a nation, even while struggling for itself, not to acquire something for all mankind. The maintenance of the right by the little provinces of Holland and Zeland in the 16th, by Holland and England united in the 17th, and by the United States of America in the 18th, centuries, forms but a single chapter in the great volume of human fate; for the so-called revolutions of Holland, England, and America, are all links of one chain.

To the Dutch Republic, even more than to Florence at an earlier day, is the world indebted for practical instruction in that great science of political equilibrium which must always become more and more important as the various states of the civilized world are pressed more closely together, and as the struggle for preeminence becomes more feverish and fatal. Courage and skill in political and military combinations enabled William the Silent to overcome the most powerful and unscrupulous monarch of his age. The same hereditary audacity and fertility of genius placed the destiny of Europe in the hands of William’s great-grandson, and enabled him to mold into an impregnable barrier the various elements of opposition to the overshadowing monarchy of Louis XIV. As the schemes of the Inquisition and the unparalleled tyranny of Philip in one century led to the establishment of the Republic of the United Provinces, so in the next the revocation of the Nantes Edict and the invasion of Holland are avenged by the elevation of the Dutch stadholder upon the throne of the stipendiary Stuarts.

To all who speak the English language, the history of the great agony through which the Republic of Holland was ushered into life must have peculiar interest, for it is a portion of the records of the Anglo-Saxon race—essentially the same, whether in Friesland, England, or Massachusetts. A great naval and commercial commonwealth, occupying a small portion of Europe, but conquering a wide empire by the private enterprise of trading companies; girdling the world with its innumerable dependencies in Asia, America, Africa, Australia; exercising sovereignty in Brazil, Guiana, the West Indies, New York, at the Cape of Good Hope, in Hindostan, Ceylon, Java, Sumatra, New Holland; having first laid together, as it were, many of the Cyclopean blocks, out of which the British realm, at a later period, has been constructed, must always be looked upon with interest by Englishmen, as in a great measure the precursor in their own scheme of empire.

For America the spectacle is one of still deeper import. The Dutch Republic originated in the opposition of the rational elements of human nature to sacerdotal dogmatism and persecution—in the courageous resistance of historical and chartered liberty to foreign despotism. Neither that liberty nor
aura was born of the cloud-embraces of a false Divinity with a Humanity of impossible beauty, nor was the infant career of either arrested in blood and tears by the madness of its worshipers. "To maintain," not to overthrow, was the device of the Washington of the 16th century, as it was the aim of our own hero and his great contemporaries.

The great Western Republic, therefore—in whose Anglo-Saxon veins flows much of that ancient and kindred blood received from the nation once ruling a noble portion of its territory, and tracking its own political existence to the same parent spring of temperate human liberty—must look with affectionate interest upon the trials of the elder commonwealth. These volumes recite the achievement of Dutch independence, for its recognition was delayed till the acknowledgment was superfluous and ridiculous. The existence of the Republic is properly to be dated from the Union of Utrecht in 1581, while the final separation of territory into independent and obedient provinces, into the Commonwealth of the United States and the Belgian provinces of Spain, was in reality affected by William the Silent, with whose death, three years subsequently, the heroic period of the history may be said to terminate. At this point these volumes close. Another series, with less attention to minute details, and carrying the story through a longer range of years, will paint the progress of the Republic in its palmy days, and narrate the establishment of its external system of dependencies and its interior combinations for self-government and European counterpoise. The lessons of history and the fate of free states can never be sufficiently pondered by those upon whom so large and heavy a responsibility for the maintenance of rational human freedom rests.

I have only to add that this work is the result of conscientious research, and of an earnest desire to arrive at the truth. I have faithfully studied all the important contemporary chroniclers and later historians—Dutch, Flemish, French, Italian, Spanish, or German. Catholic and Protestant, Monarchist and Republican, have been consulted with the same sincerity. The works of Bor (whose enormous but indispensable folios form a complete magazine of contemporary state-papers, letters and pamphlets, blended together in mass, and connected by a chain of artless but earnest narrative), of Meteren, De Thou, Burgundius, Heuterus, Tassis, Viglius, Hoofd, Haraeus, Van der Haer, Grotius—of Van der Vynckt, Wagenaer, Van Wyn, De Jonghe, Kluit, Van Kampen, Dewez, Kappelle, Bakhuyzen, Groen van Prinsterer—of Ranke and Raumer, have been as familiar to me as those of Mendoza, Carnero, Cabrera, Herrera, Ulloa, Bentivoglio, Peres, Strada. The manuscript relations of those Argus-eyed Venetian envoys who surprised so many courts and cabinets in their most unguarded moments, and daguerreotyped their character and policy for the instruction of the crafty Republic, and whose reports remain such an inestimable source for the secret history of the 16th century, have been carefully examined—especially the narratives of the caustic and accomplished Badovaro, of Suriano, and Michele. It is unnecessary to add that all the
publications of M. Gachard—particularly the invaluable correspondence of Philip II, and of William the Silent, as well as the "Archives et Correspondance" of the Orange Nassau family, edited by the learned and distinguished Groen van Prinsterer, have been my constant guides through the tortuous labyrinth of Spanish and Netherland politics. The large and most interesting series of pamphlets known as "The Duncan Collection," in the Royal Library at the Hague, has also afforded a great variety of details by which I have endeavored to give color and interest to the narrative. Besides these, and many other printed works, I have also had the advantage of perusing many manuscript histories, among which may be particularly mentioned the works of Pontes Payen, of Renom de France, and of Pasquier de la Barre; while the vast collection of unpublished documents in the Royal Archives of the Hague, of Brussels, and of Dresden, has furnished me with much new matter of great importance. I venture to hope that many years of labor, a portion of them in the archives of those countries whose history forms the object of my study, will not have been entirely in vain; and that the lovers of human progress, the believers in the capacity of nations for self-government and self-improvement, and the admirers of disinterested human genius and virtue, may find encouragement for their views in the detailed history of an heroic people in its most eventful period, and in the life and death of the great man whose name and fame are identical with those of his country.

No apology is offered for this somewhat personal statement. When an unknown writer asks the attention of the public upon an important theme, he is not only authorized, but required, to show that by industry and earnestness he has entitled himself to a hearing. The author too keenly feels that he has no further claims than these, and he therefore most diffidently asks for his work the indulgence of his readers.

I would take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to Dr. Klemm, Hofrath and Chief Librarian at Dresden, and to Mr. Von Weber, Ministerial-rath and Head of the Royal Archives of Saxony, for the courtesy and kindness extended to me so uniformly during the course of my researches in that city. I would also speak a word of sincere thanks to Mr. Campbell, Assistant Librarian at the Hague, for his numerous acts of friendship during the absence of his chief, M. Holtrop. To that most distinguished critic and historian, M. Bakhuyzen van den Brinck, Chief Archivist of the Netherlands, I am under deep obligations for advice, instruction, and constant kindness, during my residence at the Hague; and I would also signify my sense of the courtesy of Mr. Charter-Master de Schwane, and of the accuracy with which copies of manuscripts in the archives were prepared for me by his care. Finally, I would allude in the strongest language of gratitude and respect to M. Gachard, Archivist-General of Belgium, for his unwearied courtesy and manifold acts of kindness to me during my studies in the Royal Archives of Brussels.

John Lothrop Motley, 1855
End of Preface

Historical Introduction

Segment I
Segment II
Segment III
Segment IV
Segment V
Segment VI
Segment VII
Segment VIII
Segment IX
Segment X
Segment XI
Segment XII
Segment XIII
Segment XIV
Segment XV
The northwestern corner of the vast plain which extends from the German ocean to the Ural mountains, is occupied by the countries called the Netherlands. This small triangle, enclosed between France, Germany, and the sea, is divided by the modern kingdoms of Belgium and Holland into two nearly equal portions. Our earliest information concerning this territory is derived from the Romans. The wars waged by that nation with the northern barbarians have rescued the damp island of Batavia, with its neighboring morasses, from the obscurity in which they might have remained for ages, before anything concerning land or people would have been made known by the native inhabitants. Julius Caesar has saved from oblivion the heroic savages who fought against his legions in defense of their dismal homes with ferocious but unfortunate patriotism; and the great poet of England, learning from the conqueror’s Commentaries the name of the boldest tribe, has kept the Nervii, after almost twenty centuries, still fresh and familiar in our ears.

Tacitus, too, has described with singular minuteness the struggle between the people of these regions and the power of Rome, overwhelming, although tottering to its fall; and has moreover, devoted several chapters of his work upon Germany to a description of the most remarkable Teutonic tribes of the Netherlands.

Geographically and ethnographically, the Low Countries belong both to Gaul and to Germany. It is even doubtful to which of the two the Batavian island, which is the core of the whole country, was reckoned by the Romans. It is, however, most probable that all the land, with the exception of Friesland, was considered a part of Gaul.

Three great rivers—the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheld—had deposited their slime for ages among the dunes and sandbanks heaved up by the ocean around their mouths. A delta was thus formed, habitable at last for man. It was by nature a wide morass, in which oozy islands and savage forests were interspersed among lagoons and shallows; a district lying partly below the level of the ocean at its higher tides, subject to constant overflow from the rivers, and to frequent and terrible inundations by the sea.

The Rhine, leaving at last the regions where its storied lapse, through so many ages, has been consecrated alike by nature and art, by poetry and eventful truth, flows reluctantly through the basalt portal of the Seven Mountains into the open fields which extend to the German sea. After entering this vast
meadow, the stream divides itself into two branches, becoming thus the two-horned Rhine of Virgil, and holds in these two arms the island of Batavia.

The Meuse, taking its rise in the Vosges, pours itself through the Ardennes wood, pierces the rocky ridges upon the southeastern frontier of the Low Countries, receives the Sambre in the midst of that picturesque anthracite basin where now stands the city of Namur, and then moves toward the North, through nearly the whole length of the country, till it mingles its waters with the Rhine.

The Scheld, almost exclusively a Belgian river, after leaving its fountains in Picardy, flows through the present provinces of Flanders and Hainault. In Caesar’s time it was suffocated before reaching the sea in quicksands and thickets, which long afforded protection to the savage inhabitants against the Roman arms; and which the slow process of nature and the untiring industry of man have since converted into the archipelago of Zealand and South Holland. These islands were unknown to the Romans.

Such were the rivers which, with their numerous tributaries, coursed through the spongy land. Their frequent overflow, when forced back upon their currents by the stormy sea, rendered the country almost uninhabitable. Here, within a half-submerged territory, a race of wretched ichthyophagi dwelt upon terpen, or mounds, which they had raised, like beavers, above the almost fluid soil. Here, at a later day, the same race chained the tyrant Ocean and his mighty streams into subserviency, forcing them to fertilize, to render commodious, to cover with a beneficent network of veins and arteries; and to bind by watery highways with the furthest ends of the world, a country disinherit by nature of its rights. A region, outcast of ocean and earth, wrested at last from both domains their richest treasures. A race, engaged for generations in stubborn conflict with the angry elements, was unconsciously educating itself for its great struggle with the still more savage despotism of man.

The whole territory of the Netherlands was girt with forests. An extensive belt of woodland skirted the seacoast, reaching beyond the mouths of the Rhine. Along the outer edge of this carrier, the dunes cast up by the sea were prevented by the close tangle of thickets from drifting further inward, and thus formed a breastwork which time and art were to strengthen. The groves of Haarlem and the Hague are relics of this ancient forest. The Badahuenna wood, horrid with Druidic sacrifices, extended along the eastern line of the vanished lake of Flevo. The vast Hercynian forest, nine days’ journey in breadth, closed in the country on the German side, stretching from the banks of the Rhine to the remote regions of the Dacians, in such vague immensity (says the conqueror of the whole country) that no German, after traveling sixty days, had ever reached, or even heard of, its commencement. On the South, the famous
groves of Ardennes, haunted by faun and satyr, embowered the country, and separated it from Celtic Gaul.

Thus inundated by mighty rivers, quaking beneath the level of the ocean, belted about by hirsute forests, this low land, nether land, hollow land, or Holland, seemed hardly deserving the arms of the all-accomplished Roman. Yet foreign tyranny, from the earliest ages, has coveted thin meager territory as lustfully as it has sought to wrest from their native possessors those lands with the fatal gift of beauty for their dower; while the genius of liberty has inspired as noble a resistance to oppression here as it ever aroused in Grecian or Italian breasts.

II

It can never be satisfactorily ascertained who were the aboriginal inhabitants. The record does not reach beyond Caesar’s epoch, and he found the territory on the left of the Rhine mainly tenanted by tribes of the Celtic family. That large division of the Indo-European group which had already overspread many portions of Asia Minor, Greece, Germany, the British Islands, France, and Spain, had been long settled in Belgic Gaul, and constituted the bulk of its population. Checked in its westward movement by the Atlantic, its current began to flow backwards towards its fountains, so that the Gallic portion of the Netherland population was derived from the original race in its earlier wanderings and from the later and refluent tide coming out of Celtic Gaul. The modern appellation of the Walloons points to the affinity of their ancestors with the Gallic, Welsh, and Gaelic family. The Belgæ were in many respects a superior race to most of their blood-allies. They were, according to Caesar’s testimony, the bravest of all the Celts. This may be in part attributed to the presence of several German tribes, who, at this period had already forced their way across the Rhine, mingled their qualities with the Belgic material, and lent an additional mettle to the Celtic blood. The heart of the country was thus inhabited by a Gallic race, but the frontiers had been taken possession of by Teutonic tribes.

When the Cimbri and their associates, about a century before our era, made their memorable onslaught upon Rome, the early inhabitants of the Rhine island of Batavia, who were probably Celts, joined in the expedition. A recent and tremendous inundation had swept away their miserable home, and even the trees of the forests, and had thus rendered them still more dissatisfied with their gloomy abodes. The island was deserted of its population. At about the same period a civil dissension among the Chatti—a powerful German race within the Hercynian forest—resulted in the expatriation of a portion of the
people. The exiles sought a new home in the empty Rhine island, called it "Bet-
auy," or "good-meadow," and were themselves called, thenceforward, Batavi, 
or Batavians.

These Batav tans, according to Tacitus, were the bravest of all the Germans. 
The Chatti, of whom they formed a portion, were a preeminently warlike race. 
"Others go to battle," says the historian, "these go to war." Their bodies were 
more hardy, their minds more vigorous, than those of other tribes. Their young 
men cut neither hair nor beard till they had slain an enemy. On the field of 
battle, in the midst of carnage and plunder, they, for the first time, bared 
their faces. The cowardly and sluggish, only, remained unshorn. They wore an 
iron ring, too, or shackle upon their necks until they had performed the same 
achievement, a symbol which they then threw away, as the emblem of sloth. 
The Batavians were ever spoken of by the Romans with entire respect. They 
conquered the Belgians, they forced the free Frisians to pay tribute, but they 
called the Batavians their friends. The tax gatherer never invaded their island. 
Honorable alliance united them with the Romans. It was, however, the alliance 
of the giant and the dwarf. The Roman gained glory and empire, the Batavian 
gained nothing but the hardest blows. The Batavian cavalry became famous 
throughout the Republic and the Empire. They were the favorite troops of 
Caesar, and with reason, for it was their valor which turned the tide of battle 
at Pharsalia. From the death of Julius down to the times of Vespasian, the 
Batavian legion was the imperial body guard, the Batavian island the basis of 
operations in the Roman wars with Gaul, Germany, and Britain.

Beyond the Batavians, upon the North, dwelt the great Frisian family, 
occupying the regions between the Rhine and Ems. The Zuyder Zee and the 
Dollart, both caused by the terrific inundations of the 13th century and not 
existing at this period, did not then interpose boundaries between kindred 
tribes. All formed a homogeneous nation of pure German origin.

Thus, the population of the country was partly Celtic, partly German. Of these 
two elements, dissimilar in their tendencies and always difficult to blend, the 
Netherland people has ever been compounded. A certain fatality of history has 
perpetually helped to separate still more widely these constituents, instead of 
detecting and stimulating the elective affinities which existed. Religion, too, 
upon all great historical occasions, has acted as the most powerful of 
dissolvents. Otherwise, had so many valuable and contrasted characteristics 
been early fused into a whole, it would be difficult to show a race more richly 
endowed by Nature for dominion and progress than the Belgo-Germanic people.

Physically the two races resembled each other. Both were of vast stature. The 
gigantic Gaul derided the Roman soldiers as a band of pigmies. The German 
excited astonishment by his huge body and muscular limbs. Both were fair, 
with fierce blue eyes, but the Celt had yellow hair floating over his shoulders, 
and the German long locks of fiery red, which he even dyed with woad to
heighten the favorite color, and wore twisted into a war-knot upon the top of his head. Here the German’s love of finery ceased. A simple tunic fastened at his throat with a thorn, while his other garments defined and gave full play to his limbs, completed his costume. The Gaul, on the contrary, was so fond of dress that the Romans divided his race respectively into long-haired, breeched, and gowned Gaul (Gallia comata, braccata, togata). He was fond of brilliant and parti-colored clothes, a taste which survives in the Highlander’s costume. He covered his neck and arms with golden chains. The simple and ferocious German wore no decoration save his iron ring, from which his first homicide relieved him. The Gaul was irascible, furious in his wrath, but less formidable in a sustained conflict with a powerful foe. "All the Gauls are of very high stature," says a soldier who fought under Julian (Amm. Marcel. XV. 12. 1).

"They are white, golden-haired, terrible in the fierceness of their eyes, greedy of quarrels, bragging and insolent. A band of strangers could not resist one of them in a brawl, assisted by his strong blue-eyed wife, especially when she begins, gnashing her teeth, her neck swollen, brandishing her vast and snowy arms, and kicking with her heels at the same time, to deliver her fisticuffs, like bolts from the twisted strings of a catapult. The voices of many are threatening and formidable. They are quick to anger, but quickly appeased. All are clean in their persons; nor among them is ever seen any man or woman, as elsewhere, squalid in ragged garments. At all ages they are apt for military service. The old man goes forth to the fight with equal strength of breast, with limbs as hardened by cold and assiduous labor, and as contemptuous of all dangers, as the young. Not one of them, as in Italy is often the case, was ever known to cut off his thumbs to avoid the service of Mars."

The polity of each race differed widely from that of the other. The government of both may be said to have been republican, but the Gallic tribes were aristocracies, in which the influence of clanship was a predominant feature; while the German system, although nominally regal, was in reality democratic. In Gaul were two orders, the nobility and the priesthood, while the people, says Caesar, were all slaves. The knights or nobles were all trained to arms. Each went forth to battle, followed by his dependents, while a chief of all the clans was appointed to take command during the war. The prince or chief governor was elected annually, but only by the nobles. The people had no rights at all, and were glad to assign themselves as slaves to any noble who was strong enough to protect them. In peace the Druids exercised the main functions of government. They decided all controversies, civil and criminal. To rebel against their decrees was punished by exclusion from the sacrifices—a most terrible excommunication, through which the criminal was cut off from all intercourse with his fellow creatures.

With the Germans, the sovereignty resided in the great assembly of the people. There were slaves, indeed, but in small number, consisting either of prisoners of war or of those unfortunates who had gambled away their liberty in games of chance. Their chieftains, although called by the Romans princes and kings,
were, in reality, generals, chosen by universal suffrage. Elected in the great assembly to preside in war, they were raised on the shoulders of martial freemen; amid wild battle cries and the clash of spear and shield. The army consisted entirely of volunteers, and the soldier was for life infamous who deserted the field while his chief remained alive. The same great assembly elected the village magistrates and decided upon all important matters both of peace and war. At the full of the moon it was usually convoked. The nobles and the popular delegates arrived at irregular intervals, for it was an inconvenience arising from their liberty, that two or three days were often lost in waiting for the delinquents. All state affairs were in the hands of this fierce democracy. The elected chieftains had rather authority to persuade than power to command.

The Gauls were an agricultural people. They were not without many arts of life. They had extensive flocks and herds, and they even exported salted provisions as far as Rome. The truculent German, Ger-mane, Heer-mann, War-man, considered carnage the only useful occupation, and despised agriculture as enervating and ignoble. It was base, in his opinion, to gain by sweat what was more easily acquired by blood. The land was divided annually by the magistrates, certain farms being assigned to certain families, who were forced to leave them at the expiration of the year. They cultivated as a common property the lands allotted by the magistrates. But it was easier to summon them to the battlefield than to the plough. Thus they were more fitted for the roaming and conquering life which Providence was to assign to them for ages, than if they had become more prone to root themselves in the soil. The Gauls built towns and villages. The German built his solitary hut where inclination prompted. Close neighborhood was not to his taste.

In their system of religion the two races were most widely contrasted. The Gauls were a priest-ridden race. Their Druids were a dominant caste, presiding even over civil affairs, while in religious matters their authority was despotic. What were the principles of their wild theology will never be thoroughly ascertained, but we know too much of its sanguinary rites. The imagination shudders to penetrate those shaggy forests, ringing with the death-shrieks of ten thousand human victims, and with the hideous hymns chanted by smoke- and blood-stained priests to the savage gods whom they served.

The German, in his simplicity, had raised himself to a purer belief than that of the sensuous Roman or the superstitious Gaul. He believed in a single, supreme, almighty God, All-Vater or All-father. This divinity was too sublime to be incarnated or imaged, too infinite to be enclosed in temples built with hands. Such is the Roman’s testimony to the lofty conception of the German. Certain forests were consecrated to the unseen God whom the eye of reverent faith could alone behold. Thither, at stated times, the people repaired to worship. They entered the sacred grove with feet bound together, in token of submission. Those who fell were forbidden to rise, but dragged themselves
backwards on the ground. Their rites were few and simple. They had no caste of priests, nor were they, when first known to the Romans, accustomed to offer sacrifice. It must be confessed that in a later age, a single victim, a criminal or a prisoner, was occasionally immolated. The purity of their religion was soon stained by their Celtic neighborhood. In the course of the Roman dominion it became contaminated, and at last profoundly depraved. The fantastic intermixture of Roman mythology with the gloomy but modified superstition of Romanized Celts was not favorable to the simple character of German theology. The entire extirpation, thus brought about, of any conceivable system of religion, prepared the way for a true revelation. Within that little river territory, amid those obscure morasses of the Rhine and Scheld, three great forms of religion—the sanguinary superstition of the Druid, the sensuous polytheism of the Roman, the elevated but dimly groping creed of the German—stood for centuries, face to face, until, having mutually debased and destroyed each other, they all faded away in the pure light of Christianity.

Thus contrasted were Gaul and German in religious and political systems. The difference was no less remarkable in their social characteristics. The Gaul was singularly unchaste. The marriage state was almost unknown. Many tribes lived in most revolting and incestuous concubinage; brethren, parents, and children, having wives in common. The German was loyal as the Celt was dissolute. Alone among barbarians, he contented himself with a single wife, save that a few dignitaries, from motives of policy, were permitted a larger number. On the marriage day the German offered presents to his bride—not the bracelets and golden necklaces with which the Gaul adorned his fair-haired concubine, but oxen and a bridled horse, a sword, a shield, and a spear—symbols that thenceforward she was to share his labors and to become a portion of himself.

They differed, too, in the honors paid to the dead. The funerals of the Gauls were pompous. Both burned the corpse, but the Celt cast into the flames the favorite animals, and even the most cherished slaves and dependents of the master. Vast monuments of stone or piles of earth were raised above the ashes of the dead. Scattered relics of the Celtic age are yet visible throughout Europe, in these huge but unsightly memorials.

The German was not ambitious at the grave. He threw neither garments nor odors upon the funeral pyre, but the arms and the war-horse of the departed were burned and buried with him. The turf was his only sepulchre, the memory of his valor his only monument. Even tears were forbidden to the men. "It was esteemed honorable," says the historian, "for women to lament, for men to remember."

The parallel need be pursued no further. Thus much it was necessary to recall to the historical student concerning the prominent characteristics by which the two great races of the land were distinguished—characteristics which Time has rather hardened than effaced. In the contrast and the separation lies the key
to much of their history. Had Providence permitted a fusion of the two races, it is possible, from their position, and from the geographical and historical link which they would have afforded to the dominant tribes of Europe, that a world empire might have been the result, different in many respects from any which has ever arisen. Speculations upon what might have been are idle. It is well, however, to ponder the many misfortunes resulting from a mutual repulsion, which, under other circumstances and in other spheres, has been exchanged for mutual attraction and support.

It is now necessary to sketch rapidly the political transformations undergone by the country, from the early period down to the middle of the 16th century, the epoch when the long agony commenced, out of which the Batavian republic was born.

III

The earliest chapter in the history of the Netherlands was written by their conqueror. Celtic Gaul is already in the power of Rome; the Belgic tribes, alarmed at the approaching danger, arm against the universal tyrant. Inflammable, quick to strike, but too fickle to prevail against so powerful a foe, they hastily form a league of almost every clan. At the first blow of Caesar’s sword, the frail confederacy falls asunder like a rope of sand. The tribes scatter in all directions. Nearly all are soon defeated, and sue for mercy. The Nervii, true to the German blood in their veins, swear to die rather than surrender. They, at least, are worthy of their cause. Caesar advances against them at the head of eight legions. Drawn up on the banks of the Sambre, they await the Roman’s approach. In three days’ march Caesar comes up with them, pitches his camp upon a steep hill sloping down to the river, and sends some cavalry across. Hardly have the Roman horsemen crossed the stream, than the Nervii rush from the wooded hilltop, overthrow horse and rider, plunge in one great mass into the current, and, directly afterwards, are seen charging up the hill into the midst of the enemy’s force. “At the same moment,” says the conqueror, “they seemed in the wood, in the river, and within our lines.” There is a panic among the Romans, but it is brief. Eight veteran Roman legions, with the world’s victor at their head, are too much for the brave but undisciplined Nervii. Snatching a shield from a soldier, and otherwise unarmed, Caesar throws himself into the hottest of the fight. The battle rages foot to foot and hand to hand but the hero’s skill, with the cool valor of his troops, proves invincible as ever. The Nervii, true to their vow, die, but not a man surrenders. They fought upon that day till the ground was heaped with their dead, while, as the foremost fell thick and fast, their comrades, says the Roman, sprang upon their piled-up bodies, and hurled their javelins at the enemy as from a
hill. They fought like men to whom life without liberty was a curse. They were not defeated, but exterminated. Of many thousand fighting men went home but five hundred. Upon reaching the place of refuge where they had bestowed their women and children, Caesar found, after the battle, that there were but three of their senators left alive. So perished the Nervii. Caesar commanded his legions to treat with respect the little remnant of the tribe which had just fallen to swell the empty echo of his glory, and then, with hardly a breathing pause, he proceeded to annihilate the Aduatici, the Menapii, and the Morini.

Gaul being thus pacified, as, with sublime irony, he expresses himself concerning a country some of whose tribes had been annihilated, some sold as slaves, and others hunted to their lairs like beasts of prey, the conqueror departed for Italy. Legations for peace from many German races to Rome were the consequence of these great achievements. Among others the Batavians formed an alliance with the masters of the world. Their position was always an honorable one. They were justly proud of paying no tribute, but it was, perhaps, because they had nothing to pay. They had few cattle, they could give no hides and horns like the Frisians, and they were therefore allowed to furnish only their blood. From this time forth their cavalry, which was the best of Germany, became renowned in the Roman army upon every battlefield of Europe.

It is melancholy, at a later moment, to find the brave Batavians distinguished in the memorable expedition of Germanicus to crush the liberties of their German kindred. They are forever associated with the sublime but misty image of the great Hermann, the hero, educated in Rome, and aware of the colossal power of the empire, who yet, by his genius, valor, and political adroitness, preserved for Germany her nationality, her purer religion, and perhaps even that noble language which her late-flowering literature has rendered so illustrious—but they are associated as enemies, not as fiends.

Galba, succeeding to the purple upon the suicide of Nero, dismissed the Batavian life-guards to whom he owed his elevation. He is murdered; Otho and Vitellius contend for the succession, while all eyes are turned upon the eight Batavian regiments. In their hands the scales of empire seem to rest. They declare for Vitellius, and the civil war begins. Otho is defeated, Vitellius acknowledged by senate and people. Fearing, like his predecessors, the imperious turbulence of the Batavian legions, he, too, sends them into Germany. It was the signal for a long and extensive revolt, which had well-nigh overturned the Roman power in Gaul and Lower Germany.
Claudius Civilis was a Batavian of noble race, who had served twenty-five years in the Roman armies. His Teutonic name has perished, for, like most savages who become denizens of a civilized state, he had assumed an appellation in the tongue of his superiors. He was a soldier of fortune, and had fought wherever the Roman eagles flew. After a quarter of a century’s service he was sent in chains to Rome, and his brother executed, both falsely charged with conspiracy. Such were the triumphs adjudged to Batavian auxiliaries. He escaped with life, and was disposed to consecrate what remained of it to a nobler cause. Civilis was no barbarian. Like the German hero Arminius, he had received a Roman education, and had learned the degraded condition of Rome. He knew the infamous vices of her rulers; he retained an unconquerable love for liberty and for his own race. Desire to avenge his own wrongs was mingled with loftier motives in his breast. He knew that the scepter was in the gift of the Batavian soldiery. Galba had been murdered, Otho had destroyed himself, and Vitellius, whose weekly gluttony cost the empire more gold than would have fed the whole Batavian population and converted their whole island-morass into fertile pastures, was contending for the purple with Vespasian, once an obscure adventurer like Civilis himself, and even his friend and companion in arms. It seemed a time to strike a blow for freedom.

By his courage, eloquence, and talent for political combinations, Civilis effected a general confederation of all the Netherland tribes, both Celtic and German. For a brief moment there was a united people, a Batavian commonwealth. He found another source of strength in German superstition. On the banks of the Lippe, near its confluence with the Rhine, dwelt the Virgin Velleda, a Bructerian weird woman, who exercised vast influence over the warriors of her nation. Dwelling alone in a lofty tower, shrouded in a wild forest, she was revered as an oracle. Her answers to the demands of her worshippers concerning future events were delivered only to a chosen few. To Civilis, who had formed a close friendship with her, she promised success, and the downfall of the Roman world. Inspired by her prophecies, many tribes of Germany sent large subsidies to the Batavian chief.

The details of the revolt have been carefully preserved by Tacitus, and form one of his grandest and most elaborate pictures. The spectacle of a brave nation, inspired by the soul of one great man and rising against an overwhelming despotism, will always speak to the heart, from generation to generation. The battles, the sieges, the defeats, the indomitable spirit of Civilis, still flaming most brightly when the clouds were darkest around him, have been described by the great historian in his most powerful manner. The high-born Roman has thought the noble barbarian’s portrait a subject worthy his genius.

The struggle was an unsuccessful one. After many victories and many overthrows, Civilis was left alone. The Gallic tribes fell off, and sued for peace. Vespasian, victorious over Vitellius, proved too powerful for his old comrade.
Even the Batavians became weary of the hopeless contest, while fortune, after much capricious hovering, settled at last upon the Roman side. The imperial commander Cerialis seized the moment when the cause of the Batavian hero was most desperate to send emissaries among his tribe, and even to tamper with the mysterious woman whose prophecies had so inflamed his imagination. These intrigues had their effect. The fidelity of the people was sapped; the prophetess fell away from her worshipper, and foretold ruin to his cause. The Batavians murmured that their destruction was inevitable, that one nation could not arrest the slavery which was destined for the whole world. How large a part of the human race were the Batavians? What were they in a contest with the whole Roman empire? Moreover, they were not oppressed with tribute. They were only expected to furnish men and valor to their proud allies. It was the next thing to liberty. If they were to have rulers, it was better to serve a Roman emperor than a German witch.

Thus murmured the people. Had Civilis been successful, he would have been deified; but his misfortunes, at last, made him odious in spite of his heroism. But the Batavian was not a man to be crushed, nor had he lived so long in the Roman service to be outmatched in politics by the barbarous Germans. He was not to be sacrificed as a peace offering to revengeful Rome. Watching from beyond the Rhine the progress of defection and the decay of national enthusiasm, he determined to be beforehand with those who were now his enemies. He accepted the offer of negotiation from Cerialis. The Roman general was eager to grant a full pardon, and to re-enlist so brave a soldier in the service of the empire.

A colloquy was agreed upon. The bridge across the Nabalia was broken asunder in the middle, and Cerialis and Civilis met upon the severed sides. The placid stream by which Roman enterprise had connected the waters of the Rhine with the lake of Flevo, flowed between the imperial commander and the rebel chieftain.

Here the story abruptly terminates. The remainder of the Roman’s narrative is lost, and upon that broken bridge the form of the Batavian hero disappears forever. His name fades from history; not a syllable is known of his subsequent career; everything is buried in the profound oblivion which now steals over the scene where he was the most imposing actor.

The soul of Civilis had proved insufficient to animate a whole people; yet it was rather owing to position than to any personal inferiority, that his name did not become as illustrious as that of Hermann. The German patriot was neither braver nor wiser than the Batavian, but he had the infinite forests of his fatherland to protect him. Every legion which plunged into those unfathomable depths was forced to retreat disastrously, or to perish miserably. Civilis was hemmed in by the ocean; his country, long the basis of Roman military operations, was accessible by river and canal. The patriotic spirit which he had
for a moment raised, had abandoned him; his allies had deserted him; he stood alone and at bay, encompassed by the hunters, with death or surrender as his only alternative. Under such circumstances, Hermann could not have shown more courage or conduct, nor have terminated the impossible struggle with greater dignity or adroitness.

The contest of Civilis with Rome contains a remarkable foreshadowing of the future conflict with Spain, through which the Batavian republic, fifteen centuries later, was to be founded. The characters; the events; the amphibious battles, desperate sieges, slippery alliances; the traits of generosity, audacity, and cruelty; the generous confidence; the broken faith, seem so closely to repeat themselves, that History appears to present the self-same drama played over and over again, with but a change of actors and of costume. There is more than a fanciful resemblance between Civilis and William the Silent, two heroes of ancient German stock, who had learned the arts of war and peace in the service of a foreign and haughty world empire. Determination, concentration of purpose, constancy in calamity, elasticity almost preternatural, self-denial, consummate craft in political combinations, personal fortitude, and passionate patriotism, were the heroic elements in both. The ambition of each was subordinate to the cause which he served. Both refused the crown, although each, perhaps, contemplated, in the sequel, a Batavian realm of which he would have been the inevitable chief. Both offered the throne to a Gallic prince, for Classicus was but the prototype of Anjou, as Brinno of Brederode, and neither was destined, in this world, to see his sacrifices crowned with success.

The characteristics of the two great races of the land portrayed themselves in the Roman and the Spanish struggle with much the same colors. The Southrons, inflammable, petulant, audacious, were the first to assault and to defy the imperial power in both revolts, while the inhabitants of the northern provinces, slower to be aroused, but of more enduring wrath, were less ardent at the commencement, but, alone, steadfast at the close of the contest. In both wars the southern Celts fell away from the league, their courageous but corrupt chieftains having been purchased with imperial gold to bring about the abject submission of their followers; while the German Netherlands, although eventually subjugated by Rome, after a desperate struggle, were successful in the great conflict with Spain, and trampled out of existence every vestige of her authority. The Batavian republic took its rank among the leading powers of the earth; the Belgic provinces remained Roman, Spanish, Austrian property.
Obscure but important movements in the regions of eternal twilight, revolutions of which history has been silent, in the mysterious depths of Asia, outpourings of human rivers along the sides of the Altai mountains, convulsions up-heaving remote realms and unknown dynasties, shock after shock throbbing throughout the barbarian world and dying upon the edge of civilization, vast throes which shake the earth as precursory pangs to the birth of a new empire—as dying symptoms of the proud but effete realm which called itself the world—scattered hordes of sanguinary, grotesque savages pushed from their own homes, and hovering with vague purposes upon the Roman frontier, constantly repelled and perpetually reappearing in ever-increasing swarms, guided thither by a fierce instinct, or by mysterious laws—such are the well-known phenomena which preceded the fall of western Rome. Stately, externally powerful, although undermined and putrescent at the core, the death-stricken empire still dashed back the assaults of its barbarous enemies.

During the long struggle intervening between the age of Vespasian and that of Odoacer, during all the preliminary ethnographical revolutions which preceded the great people’s wandering, the Netherlands remained subject provinces. Their country was upon the high road which led the Goths to Rome. Those low and barren tracts were the outlying marches of the empire. Upon that desolate beach broke the first surf from the rising ocean of German freedom which was soon to overwhelm Rome. Yet, although the ancient landmarks were soon well-nigh obliterated, the Netherlands still remained faithful to the Empire, Batavian blood was still poured out for its defense.

By the middle of the fourth century, the Franks and Allemanians, alle-männez, all-men, a mass of united Germans are defeated by the Emperor Julian at Strasburg, the Batavian cavalry, as upon many other great occasions, saving the day for despotism. This achievement, one of the last in which the name appears upon historic record, was therefore as triumphant for the valor as it was humiliating to the true fame of the nation. Their individuality soon afterwards disappears, the race having been partly exhausted in the Roman service, partly merged in the Frank and Frisian tribes who occupy the domains of their forefathers.

For a century longer, Rome still retains its outward form, but the swarming nations are now in full career. The Netherlands are successively or simultaneously trampled by Franks, Vandals, Alani, Suevi, Saxons, Frisians, and even Sclavonians, as the great march of Germany to universal empire, which her prophets and bards had foretold, went majestically forward. The fountains of the frozen North were opened, the waters prevailed, but the ark of Christianity floated upon the flood. As the deluge assuaged, the earth had returned to chaos, the last pagan empire had been washed out of existence, but the dimly, groping, faltering, ignorant infancy of Christian Europe had begun.
After the wanderings had subsided, the Netherlands are found with much the same ethnological character as before. The Frank dominion has succeeded the Roman, the German stock preponderates over the Celtic, but the national ingredients, although in somewhat altered proportions, remain essentially the same. The old Belgæ, having become Romanized in tongue and customs, accept the new Empire of the Franks. That people, however, pushed from their hold of the Rhine by thickly thronging hordes of Gepidi, Quadi, Sarmati, Heruli, Saxons, Burgundians, move towards the South and West. As the Empire falls before Odoacer, they occupy Celtic Gaul with the Belgian portion of the Netherlands, while the Frisians—into which ancient German tribe the old Batavian element has melted, not to be extinguished, but to live a renovated existence, the "free Frisians," whose name is synonymous with liberty, nearest blood relations of the Anglo-Saxon race—now occupy the northern portion, including the whole future European territory of the Dutch republic.

The history of the Franks becomes, therefore, the history of the Netherlands. The Frisians struggle, for several centuries, against their dominion, until eventually subjugated by Charlemagne. They even encroach upon the Franks in Belgic Gaul, who are determined not to yield their possessions. Moreover, the pious Merovingian *fainéans* desire to plant Christianity among the still pagan Frisians. Dagobert, son of the second Clotaire, advances against them as far as the Weser, takes possession of Utrecht, founds there the first Christian church in Friesland, and establishes a nominal dominion over the whole country.

Yet the feeble Merovingians would have been powerless against rugged Friesland, had not their dynasty already merged in that puissant family of Brabant, which long wielded their power before it assumed their crown. It was Pepin of Heristal, grandson of the Netherlander, Pepin of Landen, who conquered the Frisian Radbod (a.d. 692), and forced him to exchange his royal for the ducal title.

It was Pepin’s bastard, Charles the Hammer, whose tremendous blows completed his father’s work. The new mayor of the palace soon drove the Frisian chief into submission, and even into Christianity. A bishop’s indiscretion, however, neutralized the apostolic blows of the mayor. The pagan Radbod had already immersed one of his royal legs in the baptismal font, when a thought struck him. “Where are my dead forefathers at present?” he said, turning suddenly upon Bishop Wolfran. “In Hell, with all other unbelievers,” was the imprudent answer. “Mighty well,” replied Radbod, removing his leg, “then will I rather feast with my ancestors in the halls of Woden, than dwell with your little starveling band of Christians in Heaven.” Entreaties and threats were unavailing. The Frisian declined positively a rite which was to cause an eternal separation from his buried kindred, and he died as he had lived, a heathen. His son, Poppo, succeeding to the nominal sovereignty, did not actively oppose the introduction of Christianity among his people, but himself refused to be converted. Rebelling against the Frank dominion, he was totally routed by
Charles Martell in a great battle (a.d. 750) and perished with a vast number of Frisians.

The Christian dispensation, thus enforced, was now accepted by these northern pagans. The commencement of their conversion had been mainly the work of their brethren from Britain. The monk Wilfred was followed in a few years by the Anglo-Saxon Willibrod. It was he who destroyed the images of Woden in Walcheren, abolished his worship, and founded churches in North Holland. Charles Martell rewarded him with extensive domains about Utrecht, together with many slaves and other chattels. Soon afterwards he was consecrated Bishop of all the Frisians. Thus rose the famous episcopate of Utrecht. Another Anglo-Saxon, Winfred, or Bonifacius, had been equally active among his Frisian cousins. His crosier had gone hand in hand with the battle axe. Bonifacius followed close upon the track of his orthodox coadjutor Charles. By the middle of the eighth century, some hundred thousand Frisians had been slaughtered, and as many more converted. The hammer which smote the Saracens at Tours was at last successful in beating the Netherlanders into Christianity. The labors of Bonifacius through Upper and Lower Germany were immense; but he, too, received great material rewards. He was created Archbishop of Mayence, and, upon the death of Willibrod, Bishop of Utrecht. Faithful to his mission, however, he met, heroically, a martyr’s death at the hands of the refractory pagans at Dokkum. Thus was Christianity established in the Netherlands.

Under Charlemagne, the Frisians often rebelled, making common cause with the Saxons. In a.d. 785, they were, however, completely subjugated, and never rose again until the epoch of their entire separation from the Frank empire. Charlemagne left them their name of free Frisians, and the property in their own land. The feudal system never took root in their soil. “The Frisians,” says their statute book, “shall be free, as long as the wind blows out of the clouds and the world stands.” They agreed, however, to obey the chiefs whom the Frank monarch should appoint to govern them, according to their own laws. Those laws were collected, and are still extant. The vernacular version of their Asega book contains their ancient customs, together with the Frank additions. The general statutes of Charlemagne were, of course, in vigor also; but that great legislator knew too well the importance attached by all mankind to local customs, to allow his imperial capitulars to interfere, unnecessarily, with the Frisian laws.

Thus again the Netherlands, for the first time since the fall of Rome, were united under one crown imperial. They had already been once united, in their slavery to Rome. Eight centuries pass away, and they are again united, in subjection to Charlemagne. Their union was but in forming a single link in the chain of a new realm. The reign of Charlemagne had at last accomplished the promise of the sorceress Velleda and other soothsayers. A German race had re-established the empire of the world. The Netherlands, like the other provinces of the great monarch’s dominion, were governed by crown-appointed
functionaries, military and judicial. In the northeastern, or Frisian portion, however, the grants of land were never in the form of revocable benefices or feuds. With this important exception, the whole country shared the fate, and enjoyed the general organization of the Empire.

But Charlemagne came an age too soon. The chaos which had brooded over Europe since the dissolution of the Roman world was still too absolute. It was not to be fashioned into permanent forms, even by his bold and constructive genius. A soil, exhausted by the long culture of pagan empires, was to lie fallow for a still longer period. The discordant elements out of which the Emperor had compounded his realm, did not coalesce during his lifetime. They were only held together by the vigorous grasp of the hand which had combined them. When the great statesman died, his Empire necessarily fell to pieces. Society had need of farther disintegration before it could begin to reconstruct itself locally. A new civilization was not to be improvised by a single mind. When did one man ever civilize a people? In the eighth and ninth centuries there was not even a people to be civilized. The construction of Charles was, of necessity, temporary. His empire was supported by artificial columns, resting upon the earth, which fell prostrate almost as soon as the hand of their architect was cold. His institutions had not struck down into the soil. There were no extensive and vigorous roots to nourish, from below, a flourishing Empire through time and tempest.

Moreover, the Carlovingian race had been exhausted by producing a race of heroes like the Pepin’s and the Charles’s. The family became, soon, as contemptible as the ox-drawn, longhaired "do-nothing’s" whom it had expelled; but it is not our task to describe the fortunes of the Emperor’s ignoble descendants. The realm was divided, sub-divided, at times partially reunited, like a family farm, among monarchs incompetent alike to hold, to delegate, or to resign the inheritance of the great warrior and lawgiver. The meek, bald, fat, stammering, simple Charles, or Louis, who successively sat upon his throne—princes whose only historic individuality consists in these insipid appellations—had not the sense to comprehend, far less to develop, the plans of their ancestor.

Charles the Simple was the last Carlovingian who governed Lotharingia, in which were comprised most of the Netherlands and Friesland. The German monarch, Henry the Fowler, at that period called King of the East Franks, as Charles of the West Franks, acquired Lotharingia by the treaty of Bonn, Charles reserving the sovereignty over the kingdom during his lifetime. In a.d. 925, however, the Simpleton having been imprisoned and deposed by his own subjects, the Fowler was recognized King of Lotharingia. Thus the Netherlands passed out of France into Germany, remaining, still, provinces of a loose, disjointed empire.
This is the epoch in which the various dukedoms, earldoms, and other petty sovereignties of the Netherlands became hereditary. It was in the year 922 that Charles the Simple presented to Count Dirk the territory of Holland, by letters patent. This narrow hook of land, destined, in future ages, to be the cradle of a considerable empire, stretching through both hemispheres, was, thenceforth, the inheritance of Dirk’s descendants. Historically, therefore, he is Dirk I, Count of Holland.

Of this small sovereign and his successors, the most powerful foe, for centuries, was ever the Bishop of Utrecht, the origin of whose greatness has been already indicated. Of the other Netherland provinces, now or before become hereditary, the first in rank was Lotharingia, once the kingdom of Lothaire, now the dukedom of Lorraine. In 965 it was divided into Upper and Lower Lorraine, of which the lower duchy alone belonged to the Netherlands. Two centuries later, the Counts of Louvain, then occupying most of Brabant, obtained a permanent hold of Lower Lorraine, and began to call themselves Dukes of Brabant. The same principle of local independence and isolation which created these dukes, established the hereditary power of the counts and barons who formerly exercised jurisdiction under them and others. Thus arose sovereign Counts of Namur, Hainault, Limburg, Zutphen; Dukes of Luxemburg and Gueldres; Barons of Mechlin; Marquesses of Antwerp; and others, all petty autocrats. The most important of all, after the house of Lorraine, were the Earls of Flanders; for the bold foresters of Charles the Great had soon wrested the sovereignty of their little territory from his feeble descendants as easily as Baldwin, with the iron arm, had deprived the bald Charles of his daughter. Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Overyssel, Groningen, Drenthe and Friesland (all seven being portions of Friesland in a general sense), were crowded together upon a little desolate corner of Europe, an obscure fragment of Charlemagne’s broken empire.

They were afterwards to constitute the United States of the Netherlands, one of the most powerful republics of history. Meantime, for century after century, the Counts of Holland and the Bishops of Utrecht were to exercise divided sway over the territory.

Thus the whole country was broken into many shreds and patches of sovereignty. The separate history of such half-organized morsels is tedious and petty. Trifling dynasties, where a family or two were everything, the people nothing, leave little worth recording. Even the most devout of genealogists might shudder to chronicle the long succession of so many illustrious obscure.

A glance, however, at the general features of the governmental system now established in the Netherlands, at this important epoch in the world’s history, will show the transformations which the country, in common with other portions of the western world, had undergone.
In the tenth century the old Batavian and later Roman forms have faded away. An entirely new polity has succeeded. No great popular assembly asserts its sovereignty, as in the ancient German epoch; no generals and temporary kings are chosen by the nation. The elective power had been lost under the Romans, who, after conquest, had conferred the administrative authority over their subject provinces upon officials appointed by the metropolis. The Franks pursued the same course. In Charlemagne’s time, the revolution is complete. Popular assemblies and popular election entirely vanish. Military, civil, and judicial officers—dukes, earls, margraves, and others—are all king’s creatures, *knegton des konings, pueri regis*, and so remain, till they abjure the creative power, and set up their own. The principle of Charlemagne, that his officers should govern according to local custom, helps them to achieve their own independence, while it preserves all that is left of national liberty and law.

The counts, assisted by inferior judges, hold diets from time to time—thrice, perhaps, annually. They also summon assemblies in case of war. Thither are called the great vassals, who, in turn, call their lesser vassals, each armed with “a shield, a spear, a bow, twelve arrows, and a cuirass.” Such assemblies, convoked in the name of a distant sovereign, whose face his subjects had never seen, whose language they could hardly understand, were very different from those tumultuous mass-meetings, where boisterous freemen, armed with the weapons they loved the best, and arriving sooner or later, according to their pleasure, had been accustomed to elect their generals and magistrates and to raise them upon their shields. The people are now governed, their rulers appointed by an invisible hand. Edicts, issued by a power, as it were, supernatural, demand implicit obedience. The people, acquiescing in their own annihilation, abdicate not only their political but their personal rights. On the other hand, the great source of power diffuses less and less of light and warmth. Losing its attractive and controlling influence, it becomes gradually eclipsed, while its satellites fly from their prescribed bounds and chaos and darkness return. The scepter, stretched over realms so wide, requires stronger hands than those of degenerate Carlovingians. It breaks asunder. Functionaries become sovereigns, with hereditary, not delegated, right to own the people, to tax their roads and rivers, to take tithings of their blood and sweat, to harass them in all the relations of life. There is no longer a metropolis to protect them from official oppression. Power, the more sub-divided, becomes the more tyrannical. The sword is the only symbol of law, the cross is a weapon of offense, the bishop is a consecrated pirate, every petty baron a burglar, while the people, alternately the prey of duke, prelate, and seignor, shorn and butchered like sheep, esteem it happiness to sell themselves into slavery, or to huddle beneath the castle walls of some little potentate, for the sake of his wolfish protection. Here they build hovels, which they surround from time to time with palisades and muddy entrenchments; and here, in these squalid abodes of ignorance and misery, the genius of Liberty, conducted by the spirit of Commerce, descends at last to awaken mankind from its sloth and cowardly stupor. A longer night was to intervene, however, before the dawn of day.
The crown-appointed functionaries had been, of course, financial officers. They collected the revenue of the sovereign, one third of which slipped through their fingers into their own coffers. Becoming sovereigns themselves, they retain these funds for their private emolument. Four principal sources yielded this revenue—royal domains, tolls and imposts, direct levies, and a pleasantry called voluntary contributions or benevolences. In addition to these supplies were also the proceeds of fines. Taxation upon sin was, in those rude ages, a considerable branch of the revenue. The old Frisian laws consisted almost entirely of a discriminating tariff upon crimes. Nearly all the misdeeds which man is prone to commit, were punished by a money-bote only. Murder, larceny, arson, rape—all offenses against the person were commuted for a definite price. There were a few exceptions, such as parricide, which was followed by loss of inheritance, sacrilege and the murder of a master by a slave, which were punished with death. It is a natural inference that, as the royal treasury was enriched by these imposts, the sovereign would hardly attempt to check the annual harvest of iniquity by which his revenue was increased. Still, although the moral sense is shocked by a system which makes the ruler’s interest identical with the wickedness of his people, and holds out a comparative immunity in evil-doing for the rich, it was better that crime should be punished by money rather than not be punished at all. A severe tax, which the noble reluctantly paid and which the penniless culprit commuted by personal slavery, was sufficiently unjust as well as absurd, yet it served to mitigate the horrors with which tumult, rapine, and murder enveloped those early days. Gradually, as the light of reason broke upon the dark ages, the most noxious features of the system were removed, while the general sentiment of reverence for law remained.

VI

Five centuries of isolation succeed. In the Netherlands, as throughout Europe, a thousand obscure and slender rills are slowly preparing the great stream of universal culture. Five dismal centuries of feudalism—during which period there is little talk of human right, little obedience to divine reason. Rights there are none, only forces; and, in brief, three great forces, gradually arising, developing themselves, acting upon each other, and upon the general movement of society.

The sword—the first, for a time the only force, the force of iron. The “land’s master,” having acquired the property in the territory and in the people who feed thereon, distributes to his subalterns, often but a shade beneath him in power, portions of his estate, getting the use of their faithful swords in return. Vavasours subdivide again to vassals, exchanging land and cattle, human or
otherwise, against fealty, and so the iron chain of a military hierarchy, forged of mutually interdependent links, is stretched over each little province. Impregnable castles, here more numerous than in any other part of Christendom, dot the level surface of the country. Mail-clad knights, with their followers, encamp permanently upon the soil. The fortunate fable of divine right is invented to sanction the system; superstition and ignorance give currency to the delusion. Thus the grace of God, having conferred the property in a vast portion of Europe upon a certain idiot in France, makes him competent to sell large fragments of his estate, and to give a divine, and, therefore, most satisfactory title along with them. A great convenience to a man, who had neither power, wit, nor will to keep the property in his own hands. So the Dirks of Holland get a deed from Charles the Simple, and, although the grace of God does not prevent the royal grantor himself from dying a miserable, discrowned captive, the conveyance to Dirk is nonetheless hallowed by almighty fiat. So the Robert’s and Guy’s, the John’s and Baldwin’s, become sovereigns in Hainault, Brabant, Flanders and other little districts, affecting supernatural sanction for the authority which their good swords have won and are ever ready to maintain.

Thus organized, the force of iron asserts and exerts itself. Duke, count, seignor and vassal, knight and squire, master and man, swarm and struggle amain. A wild, chaotic, sanguinary scene. Here, bishop and baron contend, centuries long, murdering human creatures by ten-thousands for an acre or two of swampy pasture; there, doughty families, hugging old musty quarrels to their heart, buffet each other from generation to generation; thus they go on, raging and wrestling among themselves, with all the world, shrieking insane war cries which no human soul ever understood—red caps and black, white hoods and gray, Hooks and Kabbeljaws, dealing destruction, building castles and burning them, tilting at tourneys, stealing bullocks, roasting Jews, robbing the highways, crusading—now upon Syrian sands against Paynim dogs, now in Frisian quagmires against Albigenses, Stedingers, and other heretics—plunging about in blood and fire, repenting, at idle times, and paying their passage through purgatory with large slices of ill-gotten gains placed in the ever-extended dead-hand of the Church; acting, on the whole, according to their kind, and so getting themselves civilized or exterminated, it matters little which. Thus they play their part, those energetic men-at-arms; and thus one great force, the force of iron, spins and expands itself, century after century, helping on, as it whirls, the great progress of society towards its goal, wherever that may be.

Another force—the force clerical—the power of clerks, arises; the might of educated mind measuring itself against brute violence; a force embodied, as often before, as priest-craft—the strength of priests—craft meaning, simply, strength, in our old mother tongue. This great force, too, develops itself variously, being sometimes beneficent, sometimes malignant. Priesthood works out its task, age after age, now smoothing penitent deathbeds, consecrating
graves, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, incarnating the Christian
precepts, in an age of rapine and homicide, doing a thousand deeds of love and
charity among the obscure and forsaken—deeds of which there shall never be
human chronicle, but a leaf or two, perhaps, in the recording angel’s book—
hiving precious honey from the few flowers of gentle art which bloom upon a
howling wilderness; holding up the light of science over a stormy sea;
treasuring in convents and crypts the few fossils of antique learning which
become visible, as the extinct Megatherium of an elder world reappears after
the gothic deluge; and now, careering in helm and hauberk with the other
ruffians, bandying blows in the thickest of the fight, blasting with bell, book,
and candle its trembling enemies, while sovereigns, at the head of armies,
grovel in the dust and offer abject submission for the kiss of peace; exercising
the same conjury over ignorant baron and cowardly hind, making the fiction of
apostolic authority to bind and loose, as prolific in acres as the other divine
right to have and hold; thus the force of cultivated intellect, wielded by a
chosen few and sanctioned by supernatural authority, becomes as potent as the
sword.

A third force, developing itself more slowly, becomes even more potent than
the rest—the power of gold. Even iron yields to the more ductile metal. The
importance of municipalities, enriched by trade, begins to be felt. Commerce,
the mother of Netherland freedom, and, eventually, its destroyer—even as in
all human history the vivifying becomes afterwards the dissolving principle—
commerce changes insensibly and miraculously the aspect of society. Clusters
of hovels become towered cities; the green and gilded Hanse of commercial
republicanism coils itself around the decaying trunk of feudal despotism. Cities
leagued with cities throughout and beyond Christendom—empire within empire
—bind themselves closer and closer in the electric chain of human sympathy,
and grow stronger and stronger by mutual support. Fishermen and river
raftsmen become ocean adventurers and merchant princes. Commerce plucks
up half-drowned Holland by the locks and pours gold into her lap. Gold wrests
power from iron. Needy Flemish weavers become mighty manufacturers.
Armies of workmen, fifty thousand strong, tramp through the swarming streets.
Silk makers, clothiers, brewers become the gossips of kings, lend their royal
gossips vast sums, and burn the royal notes of hand in fires of cinnamon wood.

Wealth brings strength, strength confidence. Learning to handle crossbow and
dagger, the burghers fear less the baronial sword, finding that their own will
cut as well, seeing that great armies—flowers of chivalry—can ride away before
them fast enough at battles of spurs and other encounters. Sudden riches beget
insolence, tumults, civic broils. Internecine quarrels, horrible tumults, stain
the streets with blood, but education lifts the citizens more and more out of
the original dough. They learn to tremble as little at priest-craft as at sword-
craft, having acquired something of each. Gold, in the end, unsanctioned by
right divine, weighs up the other forces, supernatural as they are. And so,
struggling along their appointed path, making cloth, making money, making
treaties with great kingdoms, making war by land and sea, ringing great bells, waving great banners, they, too—these insolent, boisterous burghers—accomplish their work. Thus, the mighty power of the purse develops itself and municipal liberty becomes a substantial fact. A fact, not a principle, for the old theorem of sovereignty remains undisputed as ever. Neither the nation, in mass, nor the citizens, in class, lay claim to human rights. All upper attributes—legislative, judicial, administrative—remain in the land-master’s breast alone. It is an absurdity, therefore, to argue with Grotius concerning the unknown antiquity of the Batavian republic. The republic never existed at all till the 16th century, and was only born after long years of agony. The democratic instincts of the ancient German savages were to survive in the breasts of their cultivated descendants, but an organized, civilized, republican polity had never existed.

The cities, as they grew in strength, never claimed the right to make the laws or to share in the government. As a matter of fact, they did make the laws, and shared, beside, in most important functions of sovereignty, in the treaty-making power, especially. Sometimes by bargains, sometimes by blood, by gold, threats, promises, or good hard blows, they extorted their charters. Their codes, statutes, joyful entrances, and other constitutions were dictated by the burghers and sworn to by the monarch. They were concessions from above, privileges, private laws, fragments indeed of a larger liberty, but vastly better than the slavery for which they had been substituted; solid facts instead of empty abstractions, which, in those practical and violent days, would have yielded little nutriment; but they still rather sought to reconcile themselves, by a rough, clumsy fiction, with the hierarchy which they had invaded, than to overturn the system. Thus the cities, not regarding themselves as representatives or aggregations of the people, became fabulous personages, bodies without souls, corporations which had acquired vitality and strength enough to assert their existence. As persons, therefore—gigantic individualities—they wheeled into the feudal ranks and assumed feudal powers and responsibilities. The city of Dort, of Middelburg, of Ghent, of Louvain, was a living being, doing fealty, claiming service, bowing to its lord, struggling with its equals, trampling upon its slaves.

Thus, in these obscure provinces, as throughout Europe, in a thousand remote and isolated corners, civilization builds itself up, synthetically and slowly; yet at last, a whole is likely to get itself constructed. Thus, impelled by great and conflicting forces, now obliquely, now backward, now upward, yet, upon the whole, onward, the new society moves along its predestined orbit, gathering consistency and strength as it goes. Society, civilization, perhaps, but hardly humanity. The people has hardly begun to extricate itself from the clods in which it lies buried. There are only nobles, priests, and, latterly, cities. In the northern Netherlands, the degraded condition of the mass continued longest. Even in Friesland, liberty, the dearest blessing of the ancient Frisians, had been forfeited in a variety of ways. Slavery was both voluntary and compulsory.
Paupers sold themselves that they might escape starvation. The timid sold themselves that they might escape violence. These voluntary sales, which were frequent, were usually made to cloisters and ecclesiastical establishments, for the condition of Church-slaves was preferable to that of other serfs. Persons worsted in judicial duels, shipwrecked sailors, vagrants, strangers, criminals unable to pay the money-bote imposed upon them, were all deprived of freedom; but the prolific source of slavery was war. Prisoners were almost universally reduced to servitude. A free woman who inter-married with a slave condemned herself and offspring to perpetual bondage. Among the Ripuarian Franks, a free woman thus disgracing herself, was girt with a sword and a distaff. Choosing the one, she was to strike her husband dead; choosing the other, she adopted the symbol of slavery, and became a chattel for life.

The ferocious inroads of the Normans scared many weak and timid persons into servitude. They fled, by throngs, to church and monastery, and were happy, by enslaving themselves, to escape the more terrible bondage of the sea-kings. During the brief dominion of the Norman Godfrey, every free Frisian was forced to wear a halter around his neck. The lot of a Church-slave was freedom in comparison. To kill him was punishable by a heavy fine. He could give testimony in court, could inherit, could make a will, could even plead before the law, if law could be found. The number of slaves throughout the Netherlands was very large; the number belonging to the bishopric of Utrecht, enormous.

The condition of those belonging to laymen was much more painful. The Lyfeigene, or absolute slaves, were the most wretched. They were mere brutes. They had none of the natural attributes of humanity, their life and death were in the master’s hands, they had no claim to a fraction of their own labor or its fruits, they had no marriage, except under condition of the infamous jus primae noctis. The villagers, or villeins, were the second class and less forlorn. They could commute the labor due to their owner by a fixed sum of money, after annual payment of which, the villein worked for himself. His master, therefore, was not his absolute proprietor. The chattel had a beneficial interest in a portion of his own flesh and blood.

The crusades made great improvement in the condition of the serfs. He who became a soldier of the cross was free upon his return, and many were adventurous enough to purchase liberty at so honorable a price. Many others were sold or mortgaged by the crusading knights, desirous of converting their property into gold, before embarking upon their enterprise. The purchasers or mortgagees were in general churches and convents, so that the slaves, thus alienated, obtained at least a preferable servitude. The place of the absent serfs was supplied by free labor, so that agricultural and mechanical occupations, now devolving upon a more elevated class, became less degrading, and, in process of time, opened an ever-widening sphere for the industry and progress of freemen. Thus a people began to exist. It was,
however, a miserable people, with personal, but no civil rights whatever. Their condition, although better than servitude, was almost desperate. They were taxed beyond their ability, while priest and noble were exempt. They had no voice in the apportionment of the money thus contributed. There was no redress against the lawless violence to which they were perpetually exposed. In the manorial courts, the criminal sat in judgment upon his victim. The functions of highwayman and magistrate were combined in one individual.

By degrees, the class of freemen, artisans, traders, and the like, becoming the more numerous, built stronger and better houses outside the castle gates of the “land’s master” or the burghs of the more powerful nobles. The superiors, anxious to increase their own importance, favored the progress of the little boroughs. The population, thus collected, began to divide themselves into guilds. These were soon afterwards erected by the community into bodies corporate; the establishment of the community, of course, preceding the incorporation of the guilds. Those communities were created by charters or Keuren, granted by the sovereign. Unless the earliest concessions of this nature have perished, the town charters of Holland or Zealand are nearly a century later than those of Flanders, France, and England.

The oldest Keur, or act of municipal incorporation, in the provinces afterwards constituting the republic, was that granted by Count William the First of Holland and Countess Joanna of Flanders, as joint proprietors of Walcheren, to the town of Middelburg. It will be seen that its main purport is to promise, as a special privilege to this community, law, in place of the arbitrary violence by which mankind, in general, were governed by their betters.

"The inhabitants," ran the Charter, "are taken into protection by both counts. Upon fighting, maiming, wounding, striking, scolding; upon peace-breaking, upon resistance to peace-makers and to the judgment of Schepens; upon contemning the Ban, upon selling spoiled wine, and upon other misdeeds fines are imposed for behoof of the Count, the city, and sometimes of the Schepens. ... To all Middelburgers one kind of law is guaranteed. Every man must go to law before the Schepens. If any one being summoned and present in Walcheren does not appear, or refuses submission to sentence, he shall be banished with confiscation of property. Schout or Schepen denying justice to a complainant, shall, until reparation, hold no tribunal again. ... A burgher having a dispute with an outsider (buiten mann) must summon him before the Schepens. An appeal lies from the Schepens to the Count. No one can testify but a householder. All alienation of real estate must take place before the Schepens. If an outsider has a complaint against a burgher, the Schepens and Schout must arrange it. If either party refuses submission to them, they must ring the town bell and summon an assembly of all the burghers to compel him. Any one ringing the town bell, except by general consent, and any one not appearing when it tolls, are liable to a fine. No Middelburger can be arrested or held in durance within Flanders or Holland, except for crime."
This document was signed, sealed, and sworn to by the two sovereigns in the year 1217. It was the model upon which many other communities, cradles of great cities, in Holland and Zealand, were afterwards created.

These charters are certainly not very extensive, even for the privileged municipalities which obtained them, when viewed from an abstract standpoint. They constituted, however, a very great advance from the standpoint at which humanity actually found itself. They created, not for all inhabitants, but for great numbers of them, the right, not to govern themselves but to be governed by law. They furnished a local administration of justice. They provided against arbitrary imprisonment. They set up tribunals, where men of burgher class were to sit in judgment. They held up a shield against arbitrary violence from above and sedition from within. They encouraged peace-makers, punished peace-breakers. They guarded the fundamental principle, ut sua tenerent, to the verge of absurdity; forbidding a freeman, without a freehold, from testifying—a capacity not denied even to a country slave. Certainly all this was better than fist-law and courts manorial. For the commencement of the 13th century, it was progress.

The Schout and Schepens, or chief magistrate and aldermen, were originally appointed by the sovereign. In process of time, the election of these municipal authorities was conceded to the communities. This inestimable privilege, however, after having been exercised during a certain period by the whole body of citizens, was eventually monopolized by the municipal government itself, acting in common with the deans of the various guilds.

Thus organized and inspired with the breath of civic life, the communities of Flanders and Holland began to move rapidly forward. More and more they assumed the appearance of prosperous little republics. For this prosperity they were indebted to commerce, particularly with England and the Baltic nations, and to manufactures, especially of wool.

The trade between England and the Netherlands had existed for ages, and was still extending itself, to the great advantage of both countries. A dispute, however, between the merchants of Holland and England, towards the year 1275, caused a privateering warfare, and a ten years’ suspension of intercourse. A reconciliation afterwards led to the establishment of the English wool staple, at Dort. A subsequent quarrel deprived Holland of this great advantage. King Edward refused to assist Count Florence in a war with the Flemings, and transferred the staple from Dort to Bruges and Mechlin.

The trade of the Netherlands with the Mediterranean and the East was mainly through this favored city of Bruges, which, already in the 13th century, had risen to the first. rank in the commercial world. It was the resting-place for the Lombards and other Italians, the great entrepot for their merchandise. It now became, in addition, the great marketplace for English wool, and the woolen
fabrics of all the Netherlands, as well as for the drugs and spices of the East. It had, however, by no means reached its apogee, but was to culminate with Venice, and to sink with her decline. When the overland Indian trade fell off with the discovery of the Cape passage, both cities withered. Grass grew in the fair and pleasant streets of Bruges, and sea-weed clustered about the marble halls of Venice. At this epoch, however, both were in a state of rapid and insolent prosperity.

The cities, thus advancing in wealth and importance, were no longer satisfied with being governed according to law, and began to participate, not only in their own, but in the general government. Under Guy of Flanders, the towns appeared regularly, as well as the nobles, in the assembly of the provincial estates (a.d. 1386-1389). In the course of the following century, the six chief cities, or capitals, of Holland (Dort, Harlem, Delft, Leyden, Goada, and Amsterdam) acquired the right of sending their deputies regularly to the estates of the provinces. These towns, therefore, with the nobles, constituted the parliamentary power of the nation. They also acquired letters patent from the count, allowing them to choose their burgomasters and a limited number of councillors or senators (Vroedschappen).

Thus the liberties of Holland and Flanders waxed daily stronger. A great physical convulsion in the course of the 13th century came to add its influence to the slower process of political revolution. Hitherto there had been but one Friesland, including Holland, and nearly all the territory of the future republic. A slender stream alone separated the two great districts. The low lands along the Vlie, often threatened, at last sank in the waves. The German Ocean rolled in upon the inland Lake of Flevo. The stormy Zuyder Zee began its existence by engulfing thousands of Frisian villages, with all their population, and by spreading a chasm between kindred peoples. The political, as well as the geographical, continuity of the land was obliterated by this tremendous deluge. The Hollanders were cut off from their relatives in the East by as dangerous a sea as that which divided them from their Anglo-Saxon brethren in Britain. The deputies to the general assemblies at Aurich could no longer undertake a journey grown so perilous. West Friesland became absorbed in Holland. East Friesland remained a federation of rude but self-governed maritime provinces, until the brief and bloody dominion of the Saxon dukes led to the establishment of Charles V’s authority. Whatever the nominal sovereignty over them, this most republican tribe of Netherlanders, or of Europeans, had never accepted feudalism. There was an annual congress of the whole confederacy. Each of the seven little states, on the other hand, regulated its own internal affairs. Each state was subdivided into districts, each district governed by a Griet-mann (great-man, selectman) and assistants. Above all these district officers was a Podestà, a magistrate identical, in name and functions, with the chief officer of the Italian republics. There was sometimes but one Podestà, sometimes one for each province. He was chosen by the people, took oath of fidelity to the separate estates, or, if Podestà-general, to the federal diet, and was generally
elected for a limited term, although sometimes for life. He was assisted by a board of eighteen or twenty councillors. The deputies to the general congress were chosen by popular suffrage in Easter-week. The clergy were not recognized as a political estate.

Thus, in those lands which a niggard nature had apparently condemned to perpetual poverty and obscurity, the principle of reasonable human freedom, without which there is no national prosperity or glory worth contending for, was taking deepest and strongest root. Already in the 13th and 14th centuries Friesland was a republic, except in name; Holland, Flanders, Brabant, had acquired a large share of self-government. The powerful commonwealth, at a later period to be evolved out of the great combat between centralized tyranny and the spirit of civil and religious liberty, was already foreshadowed. The elements, of which that important republic was to be compounded, were germinating for centuries. Love of freedom, readiness to strike and bleed at any moment in her cause, manly resistance to despotism, however overshadowing, were the leading characteristics of the race in all regions or periods, whether among Frisian swamps, Dutch dykes, the gentle hills and dales of England, or the pathless forests of America. Doubtless, the history of human liberty in Holland and Flanders, as everywhere else upon earth where there has been such a history, unrolls many scenes of turbulence and bloodshed, although these features have been exaggerated by prejudiced historians. Still, if there were luxury and insolence, sedition and uproar, at any rate there was life. Those violent little commonwealths had blood in their veins. They were compact of proud, self-helping, muscular vigor. The most sanguinary tumults which they ever enacted in the face of day, were better than the order and silence born of the midnight darkness of despotism. That very unruliness was educating the people for their future work. Those merchants, manufacturers, country squires, and hard-fighting barons, all pent up in a narrow corner of the earth, quarrelling with each other and with all the world for centuries, were keeping alive a national pugnacity of character, for which there was to be a heavy demand in the 16th century, and without which the fatherland had perhaps succumbed in the most unequal conflict ever waged by man against oppression.

To sketch the special history of even the leading Netherland provinces, during the five centuries which we have thus rapidly sought to characterize, is foreign to our purpose. By holding the clue of Holland’s history, the general maze of dynastic transformations throughout the country may, however, be swiftly threaded. From the time of the first Dirk to the close of the 13th century there were nearly four hundred years of unbroken male descent, a long line of Dirks and Florences. This iron-handed, hot-headed, adventurous race, placed as sovereign upon its little sandy hook, making ferocious exertions to swell into larger consequence, conquering a mile or two of morass or barren furze, after harder blows and bloodier encounters than might have established an empire under more favorable circumstances, at last dies out. The countship falls to the
house of Avennes, Counts of Hainault. Holland, together with Zealand, which it had annexed, is thus joined to the province of Hainault. At the end of another half century the Hainault line expires. William IV died childless in 1355. His death is the signal for the outbreak of an almost interminable series of civil commotions. Those two great parties, known by the uncouth names of Hook and Kabbeljaw, come into existence, dividing noble against noble, city against city, father against son, for some hundred and fifty years, without foundation upon any abstract or intelligible principle. It may be observed, however, that, in the sequel, and as a general rule, the Kabbeljaw, or codfish party, represented the city or municipal faction, while the Hooks (fishhooks), that were to catch and control them, were the nobles; iron and audacity against brute number and weight.

Duke William of Bavaria, sister’s son of William the Fourth, gets himself established in 1354. He is succeeded by his brother Albert, Albert by his son William. William, who had married Margaret of Burgundy, daughter of Philip the Bold, dies in 1417. The goodly heritage of these three Netherland provinces descends to his daughter Jacqueline, a damsel of seventeen. Little need to trace the career of the fair and ill-starred Jacqueline. Few chapters of historical romance have drawn more frequent tears. The favorite heroine of ballad and drama, to Netherlanders she is endued with the palpable form and perpetual existence of the Iphigenia’s, Mary Stuart’s, Joan’s of Arc, or other consecrated individualities.

Exhausted and broken-hearted, after thirteen years of conflict with her own kinsmen, consoled for the cowardice and brutality of three husbands by the gentle and knightly spirit of the fourth, dispossessed of her father’s broad domains, degraded from the rank of sovereign to be lady forester of her own provinces by her cousin, the bad Duke of Burgundy, Philip surnamed “the Good,” she dies at last, and the good cousin takes undisputed dominion of the land (1437).

VII

The five centuries of isolation are at end. The many obscure streams of Netherland history are merged in one broad current. Burgundy has absorbed all the provinces which, once more, are forced to recognize a single master. A century and a few years more succeed, during which this house and its heirs are undisputed sovereigns of the soil.

Philip the Good had already acquired the principal Netherlands, before dispossessioning Jacqueline. He had inherited, beside the two Burgundies,
counties of Flanders and Artois. He had purchased the county of Namur, and had usurped the duchy of Brabant, to which the duchy of Limburg, the marquisate of Antwerp, and the barony of Mechlin, had already been annexed. By his assumption of Jacqueline’s dominions, he was now lord of Holland, Zealand, and Hainault, and titular master of Friesland. He acquired Luxemburg a few years later.

Lord of so many opulent cities and fruitful provinces, he felt himself equal to the kings of Europe. Upon his marriage with Isabella of Portugal, he founded, at Bruges, the celebrated order of the Golden Fleece. What could be more practical or more devout than the conception? Did not the Lamb of God, suspended at each knightly breast, symbolize at once the woolen fabrics to which so much of Flemish wealth and Burgundian power was owing, and the gentle humility of Christ, which was ever to characterize the order? Twenty-five was the limited number, including Philip himself, as grand master. The chevaliers were emperors, kings, princes, and the most illustrious nobles of Christendom; while a leading provision, at the outset, forbade the brethren, crowned heads excepted, to accept or retain the companionship of any other order.

The accession of so potent and ambitious a prince as the good Philip boded evil to the cause of freedom in the Netherlands. The spirit of liberty seemed to have been typified in the fair form of the benignant and unhappy Jacqueline, and to be buried in her grave. The usurper, who had crushed her out of existence, now strode forward to trample upon all the laws and privileges of the provinces which had formed her heritage.

At his advent, the municipal power had already reached an advanced stage of development. The burgher class controlled the government, not only of the cities, but often of the provinces, through its influence in the estates. Industry and wealth had produced their natural results. The supreme authority of the sovereign and the power of the nobles were balanced by the municipal principle which had even begun to preponderate over both. All three exercised a constant and salutary check upon each other. Commerce had converted slaves into freemen, freemen into burghers, and the burghers were acquiring daily a larger practical hold upon the government. The town councils were becoming almost omnipotent. Although with an oligarchical tendency, which at a later period was to be more fully developed, they were now composed of large numbers of individuals, who had raised themselves, by industry and intelligence, out of the popular masses. There was an unquestionably republican tone to the institutions. Power, actually, if not nominally, was in the hands of many who had achieved the greatness to which they had not been born.

The assemblies of the estates were rather diplomatic than representative. They consisted, generally, of the nobles and of the deputations from the cities. In
Holland, the clergy had neither influence nor seats in the parliamentary body. Measures were proposed by the stadholder, who represented the sovereign. A request, for example, of pecuniary accommodation, was made by that functionary or by the count himself in person. The nobles then voted upon the demand, generally as one body, but sometimes by heads. The measure was then laid before the burgheers. If they had been specially commissioned to act upon the matter, they voted, each city as a city, not each deputy, individually. If they had received no instructions, they took back the proposition to lay before the councils of their respective cities, in order to return a decision at an adjourned session, or at a subsequent diet. It will be seen, therefore, that the principle of national, popular representation was but imperfectly developed. The municipal deputies acted only under instructions. Each city was a little independent state, suspicious not only of the sovereign and nobles, but of its sister cities. This mutual jealousy hastened the general humiliation now impending. The center of the system waxing daily more powerful, it more easily unsphered these feeble and mutually repulsive bodies.

Philip’s first step, upon assuming the government, was to issue a declaration, through the council of Holland, that the privileges and constitutions, which he had sworn to as Ruward, or guardian, during the period in which Jacqueline had still retained a nominal sovereignty, were to be considered null and void, unless afterwards confirmed by him as count. At a single blow he thus severed the whole knot of pledges, oaths, and other political complications, by which he had entangled himself during his cautious advance to power. He was now untrammeled again. As the conscience of the smooth usurper was, thenceforth, the measure of provincial liberty, his subjects soon found it meted to them more sparingly than they wished. From this point, then, through the Burgundian period, and until the rise of the republic, the liberty of the Netherlands, notwithstanding several brilliant but brief laminations, occurring at irregular intervals, seemed to remain in almost perpetual eclipse.

The material prosperity of the country had, however, vastly increased. The fisheries of Holland had become of enormous importance. The invention of the humble Beukelzoon of Biervliet, had expanded into a mine of wealth. The fisheries, too, were most useful as a nursery of seamen, and were already indicating Holland’s future naval supremacy. The fishermen were the militia of the ocean, their prowess attested in the war with the Hanseatic cities, which the provinces of Holland and Zealand, in Philip’s name, but by their own unassisted exertions, carried on triumphantly at this epoch. Then came into existence that race of cool and daring mariners, who, in after-times, were to make the Dutch name illustrious throughout the world, the men whose fierce descendants, the "beggars of the sea," were to make the Spanish empire tremble, the men whose later successors swept the seas with brooms at the masthead and whose ocean battles with their equally fearless English brethren often lasted four uninterrupted days and nights.
The main strength of Holland was derived from the ocean, from whose destructive grasp she had wrested herself, but in whose friendly embrace she remained. She was already placing securely the foundations of commercial wealth and civil liberty upon those shifting quicksands which the Roman doubted whether to call land or water. Her submerged deformity, as she floated, mermaid-like, upon the waves, was to be forgotten in her material splendor. Enriched with the spoils of every clime, crowned with the divine jewels of science and art, she was, one day, to sing a siren song of freedom, luxury, and power.

As with Holland, so with Flanders, Brabant, and the other leading provinces. Industry and wealth, agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, were constantly augmenting. The natural sources of power were full to overflowing, while the hand of despotism was deliberately sealing the fountain.

For the house of Burgundy was rapidly culminating and as rapidly curtailing the political privileges of the Netherlands. The contest was, at first, favorable to the cause of arbitrary power; but little seeds were silently germinating, which, in the progress of their gigantic development, were, one day, to undermine the foundations of tyranny and to overshadow the world. The early progress of the religious reformation in the Netherlands will be outlined in a separate chapter. Another great principle was likewise at work at this period. At the very epoch when the greatness of Burgundy was most swiftly ripening, another weapon was secretly forging, more potent in the great struggle for freedom than any which the wit or hand of man has ever devised or wielded. When Philip the Good, in the full blaze of his power, and flushed with the triumphs of territorial aggrandizement, was instituting at Bruges the order of the Golden Fleece, "to the glory of God, of the blessed Virgin, and of the holy Andrew, patron saint of the Burgundian family," and enrolling the names of the kings and princes who were to be honored with its symbols, at that very moment, an obscure citizen of Harlem, one Lorenz Coster, or Lawrence the Sexton, succeeded in printing a little grammar, by means of movable types. The invention of printing was accomplished, but it was not ushered in with such a blaze of glory as heralded the contemporaneous erection of the Golden Fleece. The humble setter of types did not deem emperors and princes alone worthy his companionship. His invention sent no thrill of admiration throughout Christendom; and yet, what was the good Philip of Burgundy, with his Knights of the Golden Fleece, and all their effulgent trumpery, in the eye of humanity and civilization, compared with the poor sexton and his wooden types?*

* The question of the time and place to which the invention of printing should be referred, has been often discussed. It is not probable that it will ever be settled to the entire satisfaction of Holland and Germany. The Dutch claim that movable types were first used at Harlem, fixing the time variously between the years 1423 and 1440. The first and very faulty editions of Lorenz are religiously preserved at Harlem.
Philip died in February 1467. The details of his life and career do not belong to our purpose. The practical tendency of his government was to repress the spirit of liberty, while especial privileges, extensive in nature, but limited in time, were frequently granted to corporations. Philip, in one day, conferred thirty charters upon as many different bodies of citizens. These were, however, grants of monopoly, not concessions of rights. He also fixed the number of city councils, or Vroedschappen, in many Netherland cities, giving them permission to present a double list of candidates for burgomasters and judges, from which he himself made the appointments. He was certainly neither a good nor great prince, but he possessed much administrative ability. His military talents were considerable, and he was successful in his wars. He was an adroit dissembler, a practical politician. He had the sense to comprehend that the power of a prince, however absolute, must depend upon the prosperity of his subjects. He taxed severely the wealth, but he protected the commerce and the manufactures of Holland and Flanders. He encouraged art, science, and literature. The brothers, John and Hubert Van Eyck, were attracted by his generosity to Bruges, where they painted many pictures. John was even a member of the duke’s council. The art of oil painting was carried to great perfection by Hubert’s scholar, John of Bruges. An incredible number of painters, of greater or less merit, flourished at this epoch in the Netherlands, heralds of that great school, which, at a subsequent period, was to astonish the world with brilliant colors, profound science, startling effects, and vigorous reproductions of Nature. Authors, too, like Olivier de la Marche and Philippe de Comines, who, in the words of the latter, “wrote, not for the amusement of brutes, and people of low degree, but for princes and other persons of quality,” these and other writers, with aims as lofty, flourished at the court of Burgundy, and were rewarded by the Duke with princely generosity. Philip remodeled and befriended the university of Louvain. He founded at Brussels the Burgundian library, which became celebrated throughout Europe. He levied largely, spent profusely, but was yet so thrifty a housekeeper, as to leave four hundred thousand crowns of gold, a vast amount in those days, besides three million marks’ worth of plate and furniture, to be wasted like water in the insane career of his son.

The exploits of that son require but few words of illustration. Hardly a chapter of European history or romance is more familiar to the world than the one which records the meteoric course of Charles the Bold. The propriety of his title was never doubtful. No prince was ever bolder, but it is certain that no quality could be less desirable, at that particular moment in the history of his house. It was not the quality to confirm a usurping family in its ill-gotten possessions. Renewed aggressions upon the rights of others justified retaliation and invited attack. Justice, prudence, firmness, wisdom of internal administration, were desirable in the son of Philip and the rival of Louis. These attributes the gladiator lacked entirely. His career might have been a brilliant one in the old days of chivalry. His image might have appeared as imposing as the romantic forms of Baldwin Bras de Fer or Godfrey of Bouillon, had he not
been misplaced in history. Nevertheless, he imagined himself governed by a profound policy. He had one dominant idea—to make Burgundy a kingdom. From the moment when, with almost the first standing army known to history, and with coffers well filled by his cautious father’s economy, he threw himself into the lists against the crafty Louis, down to the day when he was found dead, naked, deserted, and with his face frozen into a pool of blood and water, he faithfully pursued this thought. His ducal cap was to be exchanged for a kingly crown, while all the provinces which lay beneath the Mediterranean and the North Sea, and between France and Germany, were to be united under his scepter. The Netherlands, with their wealth, had been already appropriated, and their freedom crushed. Another land of liberty remained, physically the reverse of Holland but stamped with the same courageous nationality, the same ardent love of human rights. Switzerland was to be conquered. Her eternal battlements of ice and granite were to constitute the great bulwark of his realm. The world knows well the result of the struggle between the lord of so many duchies and earldoms, and the Alpine mountaineers. With all his boldness, Charles was but an indifferent soldier. His only merit was physical courage. He imagined himself a consummate commander, and, in conversation with his jester, was fond of comparing himself to Hannibal. “We are getting well Hannibalized today, my lord,” said the bitter fool, as they rode off together from the disastrous defeat of Gransen. Well “Hannibalized” he was, too, at Gransen, at Murten, and at Nancy. He followed in the track of his prototype only to the base of the mountains.

As a conqueror, he was signally unsuccessful; as a politician, he could outwit none but himself; it was only as a tyrant within his own ground that he could sustain the character which he chose to enact. He lost the crown, which he might have secured, because he thought the emperor’s son unworthy the heiress of Burgundy; and yet, after his father’s death, her marriage with that very Maximilian alone secured the possession of her paternal inheritance. Unsuccessful in schemes of conquest, and in political intrigue, as an oppressor of the Netherlands, he nearly carried out his plans. Those provinces he regarded merely as a bank to draw upon. His immediate intercourse with the country was confined to the extortion of vast requests. These were granted with ever-increasing reluctance by the estates. The new taxes and excises, which the sanguinary extravagance of the duke rendered necessary, could seldom be collected in the various cities without tumults, sedition, and bloodshed. Few princes were ever a greater curse to the people whom they were allowed to hold as property.

He nearly succeeded in establishing a centralized despotism upon the ruins of the provincial institutions. His sudden death alone deferred the catastrophe. His removal of the supreme court of Holland from the Hague to Mechlin, and his maintenance of a standing army, were the two great measures by which he prostrated the Netherlands. The tribunal had been remodeled by his father; the expanded authority which Philip had given to a bench of judges dependent upon himself was an infraction of the rights of Holland. The court, however, still held its sessions in the country; and the sacred privilege—de non evocando
—the right of every Hollander to be tried in his own land, was, at least, retained. Charles threw off the mask; he proclaimed that this council—composed of his creatures, holding office at his pleasure—should have supreme jurisdiction over all the charters of the provinces, that it was to follow his person and derive all authority from his will. The usual seat of the court he transferred to Mechlin. It will be seen, in the sequel, that the attempt under Philip II to enforce its supreme authority was a collateral cause of the great revolution of the Netherlands.

Charles, like his father, administered the country by stadholders. From the condition of flourishing self-ruled little republics, which they had, for a moment, almost attained, they became departments of an ill-assorted, ill-conditioned, ill-governed realm, which was neither commonwealth nor empire, neither kingdom nor duchy, and which had no homogeneousness of population, no affection between ruler and people, small sympathies of lineage or of language.

His triumphs were but few, his fall ignominious. His father’s treasure was squandered, the curse of a standing army fixed upon his people, the trade and manufactures of the country paralyzed by his extortions, and he accomplished nothing. He lost his life in the forty-fourth year of his age (1477), leaving all the provinces, duchies, and lordships, which formed the miscellaneous realm of Burgundy, to his only child, the Lady Mary. Thus already the countries which Philip had wrested from the feeble hand of Jacqueline, had fallen to another female. Philip’s own granddaughter, as young, fair, and unprotected as Jacqueline, was now sole mistress of those broad domains.

VIII

A crisis, both for Burgundy and the Netherlands, succeeds. Within the provinces there is an elastic rebound, as soon as the pressure is removed from them by the tyrant’s death. A sudden spasm of liberty gives the whole people gigantic strength. In an instant they recover all, and more than all, the rights which they had lost. The cities of Holland, Flanders, and other provinces call a convention at Ghent. Laying aside their musty feuds, men of all parties—Hooks and Kabbeljaws, patricians and people—move forward in phalanx to recover their national constitutions. On the other hand, Louis XI seizes Burgundy, claiming the territory for his crown, the heiress for his son. The situation is critical for the Lady Mary. As usual in such cases, appeals are made to the faithful commons. A prodigality of oaths and pledges is showered upon the people, that their loyalty may be refreshed and grow green. The congress meets at Ghent. The Lady Mary professes much, but she will keep her vow. The deputies are called upon to rally the country around the duchess, and to resist the fraud and force of Louis. The congress is willing to maintain the cause of its young mistress. The members declare, at the same time, very roundly, “that the provinces have been much impoverished and oppressed by the enormous taxation imposed upon them by the ruinous wars waged by Duke Charles from the beginning to the end of his life.” They rather require “to be relieved than
additionally encumbered." They add that, "for many years past, there has been a constant violation of the provincial and municipal charters, and that they should be happy to see them restored."
The result of the deliberations is the formal grant by Duchess Mary of the "Groot Privilegie," or Great Privilege, the Magna Charta of Holland. Although this instrument was afterwards violated, and indeed abolished, it became the foundation of the republic. It was a recapitulation and recognition of ancient rights, not an acquisition of new privileges. It was a restoration, not a revolution. Its principal points deserve attention from those interested in the political progress of mankind.

"The duchess shall not marry without consent of the estates of her provinces. All offices in her gift shall be conferred on natives only. No man shall fill two offices. No office shall be farmed. The "Great Council and Supreme Court of Holland" is re-established. Causes shall be brought before it on appeal from the ordinary courts. It shall have no original jurisdiction of matters within the cognizance of the provincial and municipal tribunals. The estates and cities are guaranteed in their right not to be summoned to justice beyond the limits of their territory. The cities, in common with all the provinces of the Netherlands, may hold diets as often and at such places as they choose. No new taxes shall be imposed but by consent of the provincial estates. Neither the duchess nor her descendants shall begin either an offensive or defensive war without consent of the estates. In case a war be illegally undertaken, the estates are not bound to contribute to its maintenance. In all public and legal documents, the Netherland language shall be employed. The commands of the duchess shall be invalid, if conflicting with the privileges of a city. The seat of the Supreme Council is transferred from Mechlin to the Hague. No money shall be coined, nor its value raised or lowered, but by consent of the estates. Cities are not to be compelled to contribute to requests which they have not voted. The sovereign shall come in person before the estates, to make his request for supplies."

Here was good work. The land was rescued at a blow from the helpless condition to which it had been reduced. This summary annihilation of all the despotic arrangements of Charles was enough to raise him from his tomb. The law, the sword, the purse, were all taken from the hand of the sovereign and placed within the control of parliament. Such sweeping reforms, if maintained, would restore health to the body politic. They gave, moreover, an earnest of what was one day to arrive. Certainly, for the 15th century, the "Great Privilege" was a reasonably liberal constitution. Where else upon earth, at that day, was there half so much liberty as was thus guaranteed? The congress of the Netherlands, according to their Magna Charta, had power to levy all taxes,
to regulate commerce and manufactures, to declare war, to coin money, to raise armies and navies. The executive was required to ask for money in person, could appoint only natives to office, recognized the right of disobedience in his subjects, if his commands should conflict with law, and acknowledged himself bound by decisions of courts of justice. The cities appointed their own magistrates, held diets at their own pleasure, made their local by-laws and saw to their execution. Original cognizance of legal matters belonged to the municipal courts, appellate jurisdiction to the supreme tribunal, in which the judges were appointed by the sovereign. The liberty of the citizen against arbitrary imprisonment was amply provided for. The *jus de non evocando*, the *habeas corpus* of Holland, was re-established. Truly, here was a fundamental law which largely, roundly, and reasonably recognized the existence of a people with hearts, heads, and hands of their own. It was a vast step in advance of natural servitude, the dogma of the dark ages. It was a noble and temperate vindication of natural liberty, the doctrine of more enlightened days. To no people in the world more than to the stout burghers of Flanders and Holland belongs the honor of having battled audaciously and perennially in behalf of human rights. Similar privileges to the great charter of Holland are granted to many other provinces, especially to Flanders, ever ready to stand forward in fierce vindication of freedom. For a season all is peace and joy, but the duchess is young, weak, and a woman. There is no lack of intriguing politicians, reactionary councillors. There is a cunning old king in the distance, lying in wait, seeking what he can devour. A mission goes from the estates to France. The well-known tragedy of Imbrecourt and Hugonet occurs. Envoys from the states, they dare to accept secret instructions from the duchess to enter into private negotiations with the French monarch, against their colleagues, against the great charter, against their country. Sly Louis betrays them, thinking that policy the more expedient. They are seized in Ghent, rapidly tried, and as rapidly beheaded by the enraged burghers. All the entreaties of the Lady Mary, who, dressed in mourning garments, with disheveled hair, unloosed girdle, and streaming eyes, appears at the town-house and afterwards in the marketplace, humbly to intercede for her servants, are fruitless. There is no help for the juggling diplomatists. The punishment was sharp. Was it more severe and sudden than that which betrayed monarchs usually inflict? Would the Fleming’s, at that critical moment, have deserved their freedom had they not taken swift and signal vengeance for this first infraction of their newly recognized rights? Had it not been weakness to spare the traitors who had thus stained the childhood of the national joy at liberty regained?

**IX**

Another step, and a wide one, into the great stream of European history. The Lady Mary espouses the Archduke Maximilian. The Netherlands are about to become Habsburg property. The Ghenters reject the pretensions of the dauphin, and select for husband of their duchess the very man whom her father
had so stupidly rejected. It had been a wiser choice for Charles the Bold than for the Netherlanders. The marriage takes place on the 18th of August, 1477. Mary of Burgundy passes from the guardianship of Ghent burghers into that of the emperor’s son. The crafty husband allies himself with the city party, feeling where the strength lies. He knows that the voracious Kabbeljaws have at last swallowed the Hooks, and run away with them. Promising himself future rights of reconsideration, he is liberal in promises to the municipal party. In the meantime he is governor and guardian of his wife and her provinces. His children are to inherit the Netherlands and all that therein is. What can be more consistent than laws of descent, regulated by right divine? At the beginning of the century, good Philip dispossesses Jacqueline, because females cannot inherit. At its close, his granddaughter succeeds to the property, and transmits it to her children. Pope and emperor maintain both positions with equal logic. The policy and promptness of Maximilian are as effective as the force and fraud of Philip.

The Lady Mary falls from her horse and dies. Her son, Philip, four years of age, is recognized as successor. Thus the house of Burgundy is followed by that of Austria, the fifth and last family which governed Holland, previously to the erection of the republic. Maximilian is recognized by the provinces as governor and guardian, during the minority of his children. Flanders alone refuses. The burghers, ever prompt in action, take personal possession of the child Philip, and carry on the government in his name. A commission of citizens and nobles thus maintain their authority against Maximilian for several years.

In 1488, the archduke, now King of the Romans, with a small force of cavalry, attempts to take the city of Bruges, but the result is a mortifying one to the Roman king. The citizens of Bruges take him. Maximilian, with several councillors, is kept a prisoner in a house on the market-place. The magistrates are all changed, the affairs of government conducted in the name of the young Philip alone.

Meantime, the estates of the other Netherlands assemble at Ghent—anxious, unfortunately, not for the national liberty, but for that of the Roman king. Already Holland, torn again by civil feuds, and blinded by the artifices of Maximilian, has deserted, for a season, the great cause to which Flanders has remained so true. At last, a treaty is made between the archduke and the Fleming’s. Maximilian is to be regent of the other provinces; Philip, under guardianship of a council, is to govern Flanders. Moreover, a congress of all the provinces is to be summoned annually, to provide for the general welfare. Maximilian signs and swears to the treaty on the 16th of May, 1488. He swears, also, to dismiss all foreign troops within four days. Giving hostages for his fidelity, he is set at liberty.

Oaths and hostages when prerogative and the people are contending? Emperor Frederic sends to his son an army under the Duke of Saxony. The oaths are broken, the hostages left to their fate. The struggle lasts a year, but, at the end of it, the Fleming’s are subdued. What could a single province effect, when its sister states, even liberty-loving Holland, had basely abandoned the common cause?
A new treaty is made (October 1489). Maximilian obtains uncontrolled guardianship of his son, absolute dominion over Flanders and the other provinces. The insolent burghers are severely punished for remembering that they had been freemen. The magistrates of Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres, in black garments, ungirdled, bare-headed, and kneeling, are compelled to implore the despot’s forgiveness, and to pay 300,000 crowns of gold as its price. After this, for a brief season, order reigns in Flanders.

The course of Maximilian had been stealthy, but decided. Allying himself with the city party, he had crushed the nobles. The power thus obtained, he then turned against the burghers. Step by step he had trampled out the liberties which his wife and himself had sworn to protect. He had spurned the authority of the "Great Privilege," and all other charters. Burgomasters and other citizens had been beheaded in great numbers for appealing to their statutes against the edicts of the regent, for voting in favor of a general congress according to the unquestionable law. He had proclaimed that all landed estates should, in lack of heirs male, escheat to his own exchequer. He had debased the coin of the country, and thereby authorized unlimited swindling on the part of all his agents, from stadholders down, to the meanest official. If such oppression and knavery did not justify the resistance of the Fleming’s to the guardianship of Maximilian, it would be difficult to find any reasonable course in political affairs save abject submission to authority.

In 1493, Maximilian succeeds to the imperial throne, at the death of his father. In the following year his son, Philip the Fair, now seventeen years of age, receives the homage of the different states of the Netherlands. He swears to maintain only the privileges granted by Philip and Charles of Burgundy, or their ancestors, proclaiming null and void all those which might have been acquired since the death of Charles. Holland, Zeeland, and the other provinces accept him upon these conditions, thus ignominiously, and without a struggle, relinquishing the Great Privilege, and all similar charters.

Friesland is, for a brief season, politically separated from the rest of the country. Harassed and exhausted by centuries of warfare, foreign and domestic, the free Frisians, at the suggestion or command of Emperor Maximilian, elect the Duke of Saxony as their Podestà. The sovereign prince, naturally proving a chief magistrate far from democratic, gets himself acknowledged, or submitted to, soon afterwards, as legitimate sovereign of Friesland. Seventeen years afterward Saxony sells the sovereignty to the Austrian house for 350,000 crowns. This little country, whose statutes proclaimed her to be “free as the wind, as long as it blew,” whose institutions Charlemagne had honored and left unmolested, who had freed herself with ready poniard from Norman tyranny, who never bowed her neck to feudal chieftain, nor to the papal yoke, now driven to madness and suicide by the dissensions of her wild children, forfeits at last her independent existence. All the provinces are thus united in a common servitude, and regret, too late, their supineness at a moment when their liberties might yet have been vindicated. Their ancient and cherished charters, which their bold ancestors
had earned with the sweat of their brows and the blood of their hearts, are at the mercy of an autocrat, and liable to be superseded by his edicts. In 1496, the momentous marriage of Philip the Fair with Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile and Aragon, is solemnized. Of this union, in the first year of the century, is born the second Charlemagne, who is to unite Spain and the Netherlands, together with so many vast and distant realms, under a single scepter. Six years afterwards (September 25, 1506), Philip dies at Burgos. A handsome profligate, devoted to his pleasures, and leaving the cares of state to his ministers, Philip, "croit-conseil," is the bridge over which the house of Habsburg passes to almost universal monarchy, but, in himself, is nothing.

X

Two prudent marriages, made by Austrian archdukes within twenty years, have altered the face of the earth. The stream, which we have been tracing from its source, empties itself at last into the ocean of a world empire. Count Dirk I, lord of a half-submerged corner of Europe, is succeeded by Count Charles II of Holland, better known as Charles V, King of Spain, Sicily, and Jerusalem, Duke of Milan, Emperor of Germany, Dominator in Asia and Africa, autocrat of half the world. The leading events of his brilliant reign are familiar to every child. The Netherlands now share the fate of so large a group of nations, a fate, to these provinces, most miserable.

The weddings of Austria Felix were not so prolific of happiness to her subjects as to herself. It can never seem just or reasonable that the destiny of many millions of human beings should depend upon the marriage settlements of one man with one woman, and a permanent, prosperous empire can never be reared upon so frail a foundation. The leading thought of the first Charlemagne was a noble and a useful one, nor did his imperial scheme seem chimerical, even although time, wiser than monarchs or lawgivers, was to prove it impracticable. To weld into one great whole the various tribes of Franks, Frisians, Saxons, Lombards, Burgundians, and others, still in their turbulent youth, and still composing one great Teutonic family; to enforce the mutual adhesion of naturally coherent masses, all of one lineage, one language, one history, and which were only beginning to exhibit their tendencies to insulation, to acquiesce in a variety of local laws and customs, while an iron will was to concentrate a vast, but homogeneous, people into a single nation; to raise up from the grave of corrupt and buried Rome a fresh, vigorous, German, Christian empire; this was a reasonable and manly thought. Far different the conception of the second Charlemagne. To force into discordant union, tribes which, for seven centuries, had developed themselves into hostile nations, separated by geography and history, customs and laws, to combine many millions under one scepter, not because of natural identity, but for the sake of composing one splendid family property, to establish unity by annihilating local institutions, to supersede popular and liberal charters by the edicts of a central despotism, to do battle with the whole spirit of an age, to
regard the souls as well as the bodies of vast multitudes as the personal property of one individual, to strive for the perpetuation in a single house of many crowns, which accident had blended, and to imagine the consecration of the whole system by placing the pope’s triple diadem forever upon the imperial head of the Habsburgs—all this was not the effort of a great, constructive genius, but the selfish scheme of an autocrat.

The union of no two countries could be less likely to prove advantageous or agreeable than that of the Netherlands and Spain. They were widely separated geographically, while in history, manners, and politics, they were utterly opposed to each other. Spain, which had but just assumed the form of a single state by the combination of all its kingdoms, with its haughty nobles descended from petty kings, and arrogating almost sovereign power within their domains, with its fierce enthusiasm for the Catholic religion, which, in the course of long warfare with the Saracens, had become the absorbing characteristic of a whole nation, with its sparse population scattered over a wide and stern country, with a military spirit which led nearly all classes to prefer poverty to the wealth attendant upon degrading pursuits of trade; Spain, with her gloomy, martial, and exaggerated character, was the absolute contrast of the Netherlands.

These provinces had been rarely combined into a whole, but there was natural affinity in their character, history, and position. There was life, movement, bustling activity everywhere. An energetic population swarmed in all the flourishing cities which dotted the surface of a contracted and highly cultivated country. Their ships were the carriers for the world; their merchants, if invaded in their rights, engaged in vigorous warfare with their own funds and their own frigates; their fabrics were prized over the whole earth; their burghers possessed the wealth of princes, lived with royal luxury, and exercised vast political influence; their love of liberty was their predominant passion. Their religious ardor had not been fully awakened, but the events of the next generation were to prove that in no respect more than in the religious sentiment, were the two races opposed to each other. It was as certain that the Netherlanders would be fierce reformers as that the Spaniards would be uncompromising persecutors. Unhallowed was the union between nations thus utterly contrasted.

Philip the Fair and Ferdinand had detested and quarreled with each other from the beginning. The Spaniards and Fleming’s participated in the mutual antipathy, and hated each other cordially at first sight. The unscrupulous avarice of the Netherland nobles in Spain, their grasping and venal ambition, enraged and disgusted the haughty Spaniards. This international malignity furnishes one of the keys to a proper understanding of the great revolt in the next reign.

The provinces, now all united again under an emperor, were treated, opulent and powerful as they were, as obscure dependencies. The regency over them was entrusted by Charles to his near relatives, who governed in the interest of his house, not of the country. His course towards them upon the religious question will be hereafter indicated. The political character of his
administration was typified, and, as it were, dramatized, on the occasion of
the memorable insurrection at Ghent. For this reason, a few interior details
concerning that remarkable event seem requisite.

XI

Ghent was, in all respects, one of the most important cities in Europe.
Erasmus, who, as a Hollander and a courtier, was not likely to be partial to the
turbulent Fleming’s, asserted that there was no town in all Christendom to be
compared to it for size, power, political constitution, or the culture of its
inhabitants. It was, said one of its inhabitants at the epoch of the insurrection,
rather a country than a city. The activity and wealth of its burghers were
proverbial. The bells were rung daily, and the drawbridges over the many arms
of the river intersecting the streets were raised, in order that all business
might be suspended, while the armies of workmen were going to or returning
from their labors. As early as the fourteenth century, the age of the
Arteveldes, Froissart estimated the number of fighting men whom Ghent could
bring into the field at 80,000. The city, by its jurisdiction over many large but
subordinate towns, disposed of more than its own immediate population, which
has been reckoned as high as 200,000.

Placed in the midst of well-cultivated plains, Ghent was surrounded by strong
walls, the external circuit of which measured nine miles. Its streets and
squares were spacious and elegant, its churches and other public buildings
numerous and splendid. The sumptuous church of Saint John or Saint Bavon,
where Charles V had been baptized, the ancient castle whither Baldwin Bras de
Fer had brought the daughter of Charles the Bald, the city hall with its graceful
Moorish front, the well-known belfry, where for three centuries had perched
the dragon sent by the Emperor Baldwin of Flanders from Constantinople, and
where swung the famous Roland, whose iron tongue had called the citizens,
generation after generation, to arms, whether to win battles over foreign kings
at the head of their chivalry, or to plunge their swords in each others’ breasts,
were all conspicuous in the city and celebrated in the land. Especially the great
bell was the object of the burghers’ affection, and, generally, of the
sovereign’s hatred; while to all it seemed, as it were, a living historical
personage, endowed with the human powers and passions which it had so long
directed and inflamed.

The constitution of the city was very free. It was a little republic in all but
name. Its population was divided into fifty-two guilds of manufacturers and
into thirty-two tribes of weavers, each fraternity electing annually or
biannually its own deans and subordinate officers. The senate, which exercised
functions legislative, judicial, and administrative, subject of course to the
grand council of Mechlin and to the sovereign authority, consisted of twenty-six
members. These were appointed partly from the upper class, or the men who
lived upon their means, partly from the manufacturers in general, and partly
from the weavers. They were chosen by a college of eight electors, who were
appointed by the sovereign on nomination by the citizens. The whole city, in its
collective capacity, constituted one of the four estates (Membra) of the province of Flanders. It is obvious that so much liberty of form and of fact, added to the stormy character by which its citizens were distinguished, would be most offensive in the eyes of Charles, and that the delinquencies of the little commonwealth would be represented in the most glaring colors by all those quiet souls, who preferred the tranquility of despotism to the turbulence of freedom. The city claimed, moreover, the general provisions of the “Great Privilege” of the Lady Mary, the Magna Charta, which, according to the monarchical party, had been legally abrogated by Maximilian. The liberties of the town had also been nominally curtailed by the “calf skin” (Kalf Vel). By this celebrated document, Charles V, then fifteen years of age, had been made to threaten with condign punishment all persons who should maintain that he had sworn at his inauguration to observe any privileges or charters claimed by the Ghenters before the peace of Cadsand.

The immediate cause of the discontent, the attempt to force from Flanders a subsidy of 400,000 caroli, as the third part of the 1,200,000 granted by the states of the Netherlands, and the resistance of Ghent in opposition to the other three members of the province, will, of course, be judged differently, according as the sympathies are stronger with popular rights or with prerogative. The citizens claimed that the subsidy could only be granted by the unanimous consent of the four estates of the province. Among other proofs of this their unquestionable right, they appealed to a muniment, which had never existed, save in the imagination of the credulous populace. At a certain remote epoch, one of the Counts of Flanders, it was contended, had gambled away his courtship to the Earl of Holland, but had been extricated from his dilemma by the generosity of Ghent. The burghers of the town had paid the debts and redeemed the sovereignty of their lord, and had thereby gained, in return, a charter, called the Bargain of Flanders (Koop van Flandern). Among the privileges granted by this document, was an express stipulation that no subsidy should ever be granted by the province without the consent of Ghent. This charter would have been conclusive in the present emergency, had it not labored under the disadvantage of never having existed. It was supposed by many that the magistrates, some of whom were favorable to government, had hidden the document. Lieven Pyl, an ex-senator, was supposed to be privy to its concealment. He was also, with more justice, charged with an act of great baseness and effrontery. Deputed by the citizens to carry to the Queen Regent their positive refusal to grant the subsidy, he had, on the contrary, given an answer, in their name, in the affirmative. For these delinquencies, the imaginary and the real, he was inhumanly tortured and afterwards beheaded. “I know, my children,” said he upon the scaffold, “that you will be grieved when you have seen my blood flow, and that you will regret me when it is too late.” It does not appear, however, that there was any especial reason to regret him, however sanguinary the punishment which had requited his broken faith. The mischief being thus afoot, the tongue of Roland, and the easily-excited spirits of the citizens, soon did the rest. Ghent broke forth into open insurrection. They had been willing to enlist and pay troops under their own
banners, but they had felt outraged at the enormous contribution demanded of them for a foreign war, undertaken in the family interests of their distant master. They could not find the "Bargain of Flanders," but they got possession of the odious "calf skin," which was solemnly cut in two by the dean of the weavers. It was then torn in shreds by the angry citizens, many of whom paraded the streets with pieces of the hated document stuck in their caps, like plumes. From these demonstrations they proceeded to intrigues with Francis I. He rejected them, and gave notice of their overtures to Charles, who now resolved to quell the insurrection at once.

Francis wrote, begging that the Emperor would honor him by coming through France, "wishing to assure you," said he, "my lord and good brother, by this letter, written and signed by my hand, upon my honor, and on the faith of a prince, and of the best brother you have, that in passing through my kingdom every possible honor and hospitality will be offered you, even as they could be to myself." Certainly, the French king, after such profuse and voluntary pledges, to confirm which, he moreover offered his two sons and other great individuals as hostages, could not, without utterly disgracing himself, have taken any unhandsome advantage of the Emperor’s presence in his dominions. The reflections often made concerning the high-minded chivalry of Francis, and the subtle knowledge of human nature displayed by Charles upon the occasion, seem, therefore, entirely superfluous. The Emperor came to Paris.

"Here," says a citizen of Ghent, at the time, who has left a minute account of the transaction upon record, but whose sympathies were ludicrously with the despot and against his own townspeople, "here the Emperor was received as if the God of Paradise had descended." On the 9th of February, 1540, he left Brussels; on the 14th he came to Ghent. His entrance into the city lasted more than six hours. Four thousand lancers, one thousand archers, five thousand halberdmen and musketeers composed his bodyguard, all armed to the teeth and ready for combat. The Emperor rode in their midst, surrounded by "cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and other great ecclesiastical lords," so that the terrors of the Church were combined with the panoply of war to affright the souls of the turbulent burghers. A brilliant train of "dukes, princes, earls, barons, grand masters, and seignors, together with most of the Knights of the Fleece," were, according to the testimony of the same eyewitness, in attendance upon his Majesty. This unworthy son of Ghent was in ecstasies with the magnificence displayed upon the occasion. There was such a number of "grand lords, members of sovereign houses, bishops, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries going about the streets, that," as the poor soul protested with delight, "there was nobody else to be met with." Especially the fine clothes of these distinguished guests excited his warmest admiration. It was wonderful to behold, he said, "the nobility and great richness of the princes and seignors, displayed as well in their beautiful furs, martins, and sables, as in the great chains of fine gold which they wore twisted round their necks, and the pearls and precious stones in their bonnets and otherwise, which they displayed in great abundance. It was a very triumphant thing to see them thus richly dressed and accoutred."
An idea may be formed of the size and wealth of the city at this period, from the fact that it received and accommodated 60,000 strangers, with their 15,000 horses, upon the occasion of the Emperor’s visit. Charles allowed a month of awful suspense to intervene between his arrival and his vengeance. Despair and hope alternated during the interval. On the 17th of March, the spell was broken by the execution of nineteen persons, who were beheaded as ringleaders. On the 29th of April, he pronounced sentence upon the city. The hall where it was rendered was open to all comers, and graced by the presence of the Emperor, the Queen Regent, and the great functionaries of Court, Church, and State. The decree, now matured, was read at length. It annulled all the charters, privileges, and laws of Ghent. It confiscated all its public property, rents, revenues, houses, artillery, munitions of war, and in general everything which the corporation, or the traders, each and all, possessed in common. In particular, the great bell Roland was condemned and sentenced to immediate removal. It was decreed that the 400,000 florins, which had caused the revolt, should forthwith be paid, together with an additional fine by Ghent of 150,000, besides 6,000 a year, forever after. In place of their ancient and beloved constitution, thus annihilated at a blow, was promulgated a new form of municipal government of the simplest kind, according to which all officers were in future to be appointed by himself and the guilds, to be reduced to half their number, shorn of all political power, and deprived entirely of self-government.

It was, moreover, decreed, that the senators, their pensionaries, clerks and secretaries, thirty notable burghers, to be named by the Emperor, with the great dean and second dean of the weavers, all dressed in black robes, without their chains, and bareheaded, should appear upon an appointed day, in company with fifty persons from the guilds, and fifty others, to be arbitrarily named, in their shirts, with halters upon their necks. This large number of deputies, as representatives of the city, were then to fall upon their knees before the Emperor, say in a loud and intelligible voice, by the mouth of one of their clerks, that they were extremely sorry for the disloyalty, disobedience, infraction of laws, commotions, rebellion, and high treason, of which they had been guilty, promise that they would never do the like again, and humbly implore him, for the sake of the Passion of Jesus Christ, to grant them mercy and forgiveness.

The third day of May was appointed for the execution of the sentence. Charles, who was fond of imposing exhibitions and prided himself upon arranging them with skill, was determined that this occasion should be long remembered by all burghers throughout his dominions who might be disposed to insist strongly upon their municipal rights. The streets were alive with troops; cavalry and infantry in great numbers keeping strict guard at every point throughout the whole extent of the city; for it was known that the hatred produced by the sentence was most deadly, and that nothing but an array of invincible force could keep those hostile sentiments in check. The senators in their black mourning robes, the other deputies in linen shirts, bareheaded, with halters on their necks, proceeded, at the appointed hour, from the senate house to the
imperial residence. High on his throne, with the Queen Regent at his side, surrounded by princes, prelates and nobles, guarded by his archers and halberdiers, his crown on his head and his scepter in his hand, the Emperor, exalted, sat. The senators and burghers, in their robes of humiliation, knelt in the dust at his feet. The prescribed words of contrition and of supplication for mercy were then read by the pensionary, all the deputies remaining upon their knees, and many of them crying bitterly with rage and shame. "What principally distressed them," said the honest citizen, whose admiration for the brilliant accoutrement of the princes and prelates has been recorded, "was to have the halter on their necks, which they found hard to bear, and, if they had not been compelled, they would rather have died than submit to it."

As soon as the words had been all spoken by the pensionary, the Emperor, whose cue was now to appear struggling with mingled emotions of reasonable wrath and of natural benignity, performed his part with much dramatic effect. "He held himself coyly for a little time," says the eyewitness, "without saying a word, deporting himself as though he were considering whether or not he would grant the pardon for which the culprits had prayed." Then the Queen Regent enacted her share in the show. Turning to his Majesty "with all reverence, honor, and humility, she begged that he would concede forgiveness, in honor of his nativity, which had occurred in that city."

Upon this the Emperor "made a fine show of benignity," and replied "very sweetly" that in consequence of his "fraternal love for her, by reason of his being a gentle and virtuous prince, who preferred mercy to the rigor of justice, and in view of their repentance, he would accord his pardon to the citizens."

The Netherlands, after this issue to the struggle of Ghent, were reduced, practically, to a very degraded condition. The form of local self-government remained, but its spirit, when invoked, only arose to be derided. The supreme court of Mechlin, as in the days of Charles the Bold, was again placed in despotic authority above the ancient charters. Was it probable that the lethargy of provinces, which had reached so high a point of freedom only to be deprived of it at last, could endure forever? Was it to be hoped that the stern spirit of religious enthusiasm, allying itself with the keen instinct of civil liberty, would endue the provinces with strength to throw off the Spanish yoke?

It is impossible to comprehend the character of the great Netherland revolt in the sixteenth century without taking a rapid retrospective survey of the religious phenomena exhibited in the provinces. The introduction of Christianity has been already indicated. From the earliest times, neither prince, people, nor even prelates were very dutiful to the pope. As the papal authority made progress, strong resistance was often made to its decrees. The bishops of Utrecht were dependent for their wealth and territory upon the good will of the Emperor. They were the determined opponents of Hildebrand, warm adherents of the Hohenstaufers—Ghibelline rather than Guelph. Heresy was a plant of early growth in the Netherlands. As early as the beginning of the
12th century, the notorious Tanchelyn preached at Antwerp, attacking the authority of the pope and of all other ecclesiastics, scoffing at the ceremonies and sacraments of the Church. Unless his character and career have been grossly misrepresented, he was the most infamous of the many impostors who have so often disgraced the cause of religious reformation. By more than four centuries, he anticipated the licentiousness and greediness manifested by a series of false prophets, and was the first to turn both the stupidity of a populace and the viciousness of a priesthood to his own advancement, an ambition which afterwards reached its most signal expression in the celebrated John of Leyden.

The impudence of Tanchelyn and the superstition of his followers seem alike incredible. All Antwerp was his harem. He levied, likewise, vast sums upon his converts, and whenever he appeared in public, his apparel and pomp were befitting an emperor. Three thousand armed satellites escorted his steps and put to death all who resisted his commands. So groveling became the superstition of his followers that they drank of the water in which he had washed, and treasured it as a divine elixir. Advancing still further in his experiments upon human credulity, he announced his approaching marriage with the Virgin Mary, bade all his disciples to the wedding, and exhibited himself before an immense crowd in company with an image of his holy bride. He then ordered the people to provide for the expenses of the nuptials and the dowry of his wife, placing a coffer upon each side of the image, to receive the contributions of either sex. Which is the most wonderful manifestation in the history of this personage—the audacity of the impostor, or the bestiality of his victims? His career was so successful in the Netherlands that he had the effrontery to proceed to Rome, promulgating what he called his doctrines as he went. He seems to have been assassinated by a priest in an obscure brawl, about the year 1115.

By the middle of the 12th century, other and purer heresiarchs had arisen. Many Netherlanders became converts to the doctrines of Waldo. From that period until the appearance of Luther, a succession of sects—Waldenses, Albigenses, Perfectists, Lollards, Poplicans, Arnaldists, Bohemian Brothers—waged perpetual but unequal warfare with the power and depravity of the Church, fertilizing with their blood the future field of the Reformation. Nowhere was the persecution of heretics more relentless than in the Netherlands. Suspected persons were subjected to various torturing but ridiculous ordeals. After such trial, death by fire was the usual, but, perhaps, not the most severe form of execution. In Flanders, monastic ingenuity had invented another most painful punishment for Waldenses and similar malefactors. A criminal whose guilt had been established by the hot iron, hot ploughshare, boiling kettle, or other logical proof, was stripped and bound to the stake; he was then flayed, from the neck to the navel, while swarms of bees were let loose to fasten upon his bleeding flesh and torture him to a death of exquisite agony.

Nevertheless, heresy increased in the face of oppression. The Scriptures, translated by Waldo into French, were rendered into Netherland rhyme, and the converts to the Vaudois doctrine increased in numbers and boldness.
At the same time, the power and luxury of the clergy was waxing daily. The bishops of Utrecht, no longer the defenders of the people against arbitrary power, conducted themselves like little popes. Yielding in dignity neither to king nor kaiser, they exacted homage from the most powerful princes of the Netherlands. The clerical order became the most privileged of all. The accused priest refused to acknowledge the temporal tribunals. The protection of ecclesiastical edifices was extended over all criminals and fugitives from justice—a beneficent result in those sanguinary ages, even if its roots were sacerdotal pride. To establish an accusation against a bishop, seventy-two witnesses were necessary; against a deacon, twenty-seven; against an inferior dignitary, seven; while two were sufficient to convict a layman. The power to read and write helped the clergy to much wealth. Privileges and charters from petty princes, gifts and devises from private persons, were documents which few, save ecclesiastics, could draw or dispute. Not content, moreover, with their territories and their tithings, the churchmen perpetually devised new burdens upon the peasantry. Ploughs, sickles, horses, oxen, all implements of husbandry, were taxed for the benefit of those who toiled not, but who gathered into barns. In the course of the twelfth century, many religious houses, richly endowed with lands and other property, were founded in the Netherlands.

Was hand or voice raised against clerical encroachment, the priests held ever in readiness a deadly weapon of defense—a blasting anathema was thundered against their antagonist, and smote him into submission. The disciples of Him who ordered his followers to bless their persecutors, and to love their enemies, invented such Christian formulas as these: "In the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, the blessed virgin Mary, John the Baptist, Peter and Paul, and all other Saints in Heaven, do we curse and cut off from our Communion him who has thus rebelled against us. May the curse strike him in his house, barn, bed, field, path, city, castle. May he be cursed in battle, accursed in praying, in speaking, in silence, in eating, in drinking, in sleeping. May he be accursed in his taste, hearing, smell, and all his senses. May the curse blast his eyes, head, and his body, from his crown to the soles of his feet. I conjure you, Devil, and all your imps, that you take no rest till you have brought him to eternal shame; till he is destroyed by drowning or hanging, till he is torn to pieces by wild beasts, or consumed by fire. Let his children become orphans, his wife a widow. I command you, Devil, and all your imps, that even as I now blow out these torches, you do immediately extinguish the light from his eyes. So be it, so be it. Amen. Amen." So speaking, the cursor was wont to blow out two waxen torches which he held in his hands, and, with this practical illustration, the anathema was complete.

Such insane ravings, even in the mouth of some impotent beldame, were enough to excite a shudder, but in that dreary epoch, these curses from the lips of clergymen were deemed sufficient to draw down celestial lightning upon the head, not of the blasphemer, but of his victim. Men, who trembled neither at sword nor fire, cowered like slaves before such horrid imprecations, uttered by tongues gifted, as it seemed, with superhuman power. Their fellow men
shrank from the wretches thus blasted, and refused communication with them as unclean and abhorred.

By the end of the 13th century, however, the clerical power was already beginning to decline. It was not the corruption of the Church, but its enormous wealth which engendered the hatred, with which it was by many regarded. Temporal princes and haughty barons began to dispute the right of ecclesiastics to enjoy vast estates, while refusing the burden of taxation, and unable to draw a sword for the common defense. At this period, the Counts of Flanders, of Holland, and other Netherland sovereigns, issued decrees, forbidding clerical institutions from acquiring property, by devise, gift, purchase, or any other mode. The downfall of the rapacious and licentious knights-templar in the provinces and throughout Europe, was another severe blow administered at the same time. The attacks upon Church abuses redoubled in boldness, as its authority declined. Towards the end of the 14th century, the doctrines of Wycliffe had made great progress in the land. Early in the fifteenth, the executions of Huss and Jerome of Prague, produce the Bohemian rebellion. The pope proclaims a crusade against the Hussites. Knights and prelates, esquires and citizens, enlist in the sacred cause, throughout Holland and its sister provinces; but many Netherlanders, who had felt the might of Zisca’s arm, come back, feeling more sympathy with the heresy which they had attacked, than with the Church for which they had battled.

Meantime, the restrictions imposed by Netherland sovereigns upon clerical rights to hold or acquire property, become more stern and more general. On the other hand, with the invention of printing, the cause of Reformation takes a colossal stride in advance. A Bible, which, before, had cost five hundred crowns, now costs but five. The people acquire the power of reading God’s Word, or of hearing it read, for themselves. The light of truth dispels the clouds of superstition, as by a new revelation. The pope and his monks are found to bear, very often, but faint resemblance to Jesus and his apostles. Moreover, the instinct of self-interest sharpens the eye of the public. Many greedy priests, of lower rank, had turned shopkeepers in the Netherlands, and were growing rich by selling their wares, exempt from taxation, at a lower rate than lay hucksters could afford. The benefit of clergy, thus taking the bread from the mouths of many, excites jealousy; the more so, as, besides their miscellaneous business, the reverend traders have a most lucrative branch of commerce from which other merchants are excluded. The sale of absolutions was the source of large fortunes to the priests. The enormous impudence of this traffic almost exceeds belief. Throughout the Netherlands, the price current of the wares thus offered for sale, was published in every town and village. God’s pardon for crimes already committed, or about to be committed, was advertised according to a graduated tariff. Thus, poisoning, for example, was absolved for eleven ducats, six livres tournois. Absolution for incest was afforded at thirty-six livres, three ducats. Perjury came to seven livres and three carlines. Pardon for murder, if not by poison, was cheaper. Even a parricide could buy forgiveness at God’s tribunal at one ducat, four livres, eight carlines. Henry de Montfort, in the year 1448, purchased absolution for
that crime at that price. Was it strange that a century or so of this kind of work should produce a Luther? Was it unnatural that plain people, who loved the ancient Church, should rather desire to see her purged of such blasphemous abuses, than to hear of St. Peter’s dome rising a little nearer to the clouds on these proceeds of commuted crime? At the same time, while ecclesiastical abuses are thus augmenting, ecclesiastical power is diminishing in the Netherlands. The Church is no longer able to protect itself against the secular arm. The halcyon days of ban, book and candle, are gone. In 1459, Duke Philip of Burgundy prohibits the churches from affording protection to fugitives. Charles the Bold, in whose eyes nothing is sacred save war and the means of making it, lays a heavy impost upon all clerical property. Upon being resisted, he enforces collection with the armed hand. The sword and the pen, strength and intellect, no longer the exclusive servants or instruments of priest-craft, are both in open revolt. Charles the Bold storms one fortress, Doctor Grandfort, of Groningen, batters another. This learned Frisian, called “the light of the world,” friend and compatriot of the great Rudolph Agricola, preaches throughout the provinces, uttering bold denunciations of ecclesiastical error. He even disputes the infallibility of the pope, denies the utility of prayers for the dead, and inveighs against the whole doctrine of purgatory and absolution.

With the beginning of the 16th century, the great Reformation was actually alive. The name of Erasmus of Rotterdam was already celebrated; the man, who, according to Grotius, “so well showed the road to a reasonable reformation.” But if Erasmus showed the road, he certainly did not travel far upon it himself. Perpetual type of the quietist, the moderate man, he censured the errors of the Church with discrimination and gentleness, as if Borgianism had not been too long rampant at Rome, as if men’s minds throughout Christendom were not too deeply stirred to be satisfied with mild rebukes against sin, especially when the mild rebuker was in receipt of livings and salaries from the sinner. Instead of rebukes, the age wanted reforms. The Sage of Rotterdam was a keen observer, a shrewd satirist, but a moderate moralist. He loved ease, good company, the soft repose of princely palaces, better than a life of martyrdom and a death at the stake. He was not of the stuff of which martyrs are made, as he handsomely confessed on more than one occasion. “Let others affect martyrdom,” he said, “for myself I am unworthy of the honor”; and, at another time, “I am not of a mind,” he observed “to venture my life for the truth’s sake; all men have not strength to endure the martyr’s death. For myself, if it came to the point, I should do no better than Simon Peter.” Moderate in all things, he would have liked, he said, to live without eating and drinking, although he never found it convenient to do so, and he rejoiced when advancing age diminished his tendency to other carnal pleasures in which he had moderately indulged. Although awake to the abuses of the Church, he thought Luther going too fast and too far. He began by applauding—ended by censuring the monk of Wittenberg. The Reformation might have been delayed for centuries had Erasmus and other moderate men been the only reformers. He will long be honored for his elegant Latinity. In the republic of
letters, his efforts to infuse a pure taste, a sound criticism, a love for the
beautiful and the classic, in place of the owlish pedantry which had so long
upped and hooted through medieval cloisters, will always be held in grateful
reverence. In the history of the religious Reformation, his name seems hardly
to deserve the commendations of Grotius.
As the schism yawns, more and more ominously, throughout Christendom, the
Emperor naturally trembles. Anxious to save the state, but being no antique
Roman, he wishes to close the gulf, but with more convenience to himself. He
conceives the highly original plan of combining Church and Empire under one
crown. This is Maximilian’s scheme for Church reformation. A hereditary
papacy, a perpetual pope-emperor, the Charlemagne and Hildebrand systems
united and simplified—thus the world may yet be saved. "Nothing more
honorable, nobler, better, could happen to us," writes Maximilian to Paul
Lichtenstein (September 16, 1511), "than to re-annex the said popedom—which
properly belongs to us—to our Empire. Cardinal Adrian approves our reasons
and encourages us to proceed, being of opinion that we should not have much
trouble with the cardinals. It is much to be feared that the Pope may die of his
present sickness. He has lost his appetite, and fills himself with so much drink
that his health is destroyed. As such matters can not be arranged without
money, we have promised the cardinals, whom we expect to bring over,
300,000 ducats, which we shall raise from the Fuggers, and make payable in
Rome upon the appointed day."
These business-like arrangements he communicates, two days afterwards, in a
secret letter to his daughter Margaret, and already exults at his future
eminence, both in this world and the next. "We are sending Monsieur de
Gurce," he says, "to make an agreement with the Pope, that we may be taken
as coadjutor, in order that, upon his death, we may be sure of the papacy,
and, afterwards, of becoming a saint. After my decease, therefore, you will be
constrained to adore me, of which I shall be very proud. I am beginning to
work upon the cardinals, in which affair two or three hundred thousand ducats
will be of great service." The letter was signed, "From the hand of your good
father, Maximilian, future Pope."
These intrigues are not destined, however, to be successful. Pope Julius lives
two years longer; Leo X succeeds; and, as Medici are not much prone to Church
reformation, some other scheme, and perhaps some other reformer, may be
wanted. Meantime, the traffic in bulls of absolution becomes more horrible
than ever. Money must be raised to supply the magnificent extravagance of
Rome. Accordingly, Christians, throughout Europe, are offered by papal
authority, guarantees of forgiveness for every imaginable sin, "even for the
rape of God’s mother, if that were possible," together with a promise of life
eternal in Paradise, all upon payment of the price affixed to each crime. The
Netherlands, like other countries, are districted and farmed for the collection
of this papal revenue. Much of the money thus raised, remains in the hands of
the vile collectors. Sincere Catholics, who love and honor the ancient religion,
shrink with horror at the spectacle offered on every side. Criminals buying
Paradise for money, monks spending the money thus paid in gaming-houses,
taverns, and brothels; this seems, to those who have studied their Testaments, a different scheme of salvation from the one promulgated by Christ. There has evidently been a departure from the system of earlier apostles. Innocent conservative souls are much perplexed; but, at last, all these infamies arouse a giant to do battle with the giant wrong. Martin Luther enters the lists, all alone, armed only with a quiver filled with ninety-five propositions, and a bow which can send them all over Christendom with incredible swiftness. Within a few weeks the ninety-five propositions have flown through Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, and are found in Jerusalem. At the beginning, Erasmus encourages the bold friar. So long as the axe is not laid at the foot of the tree, which bears the poisonous but golden fruit, the moderate man applauds the blows. "Luther’s cause is considered odious," writes Erasmus to the Elector of Saxony, "because he has, at the same time, attacked the bellies of the monks and the bulls of the Pope." He complains that the zealous man had been attacked with railing, but not with arguments. He foresees that the work will have a bloody and turbulent result, but imputes the principal blame to the clergy. "The priests talk," said he, "of absolution in such terms, that laymen can not stomach it. Luther has been for nothing more censured than for making little of Thomas Aquinas; for wishing to diminish the absolution traffic; for having a low opinion of mendicant orders, and for respecting scholastic opinions less than the gospels. All this is considered intolerable heresy."

Erasmus, however, was offending both parties. A swarm of monks were already buzzing about him for the bold language of his Commentaries and Dialogues. He was called Errasmus for his errors, Arasmus because he would plough up sacred things, Erasinus because he had written himself an ass, Behemoth, Antichrist, and many other names of similar import. Luther was said to have bought the deadly seed in his barn. The egg had been laid by Erasmus, hatched by Luther. On the other hand, he was reviled for not taking side manfully with the reformer. The moderate man received much denunciation from zealots on either side. He soon clears himself, however, from all suspicions of Lutheranism. He is appalled at the fierce conflict which rages far and wide. He becomes querulous as the mighty besom sweeps away sacred dust and consecrated cobwebs. "Men should not attempt every thing at once," he writes, "but rather step by step. That which men can not improve they must look at through the fingers. If the godlessness of mankind requires such fierce physicians as Luther, if man can not be healed with soothing ointments and cooling drinks, let us hope that God will comfort, as repentant, those whom he has punished as rebellious. If the dove of Christ—not the owl of Minerva—would only fly to us, some measure might be put to the madness of mankind."

Meantime the man, whose talk is not of doves and owls, the fierce physician, who deals not with ointments and cooling draughts, strides past the crowd of gentle quacks to smite the foul disease. Devils, thicker than tiles on housetops, scare him not from his work. Bans and bulls, excommunications and decrees, are rained upon his head. The paternal Emperor sends down dire edicts, thicker than hail upon the earth. The Holy Father blasts and raves from Rome. Louvain
doctors denounce, Louvain hangmen burn, the bitter, blasphemous books. The immoderate man stands firm in the storm, demanding argument instead of illogical thunder; shows the hangmen and the people too, outside the Elster gate at Wittenberg, that papal bulls will blaze as merrily as heretic scrolls. What need of allusion to events which changed the world—which every child has learned—to the war of Titans, uprooting of hoary trees and rock-ribbed hills, to the Worms diet, Peasant wars, the Patmos of Eisenach, and huge wrestlings with the Devil?

Imperial edicts are soon employed to suppress the Reformation in the Netherlands by force. The provinces, unfortunately, are the private property of Charles, his paternal inheritance; and most paternally, according to his view of the matter, does he deal with them. Germany cannot be treated thus summarily, not being his heritage. "As it appears," says the edict of 1521, "that the aforesaid Martin is not a man, but a devil under the form of a man, and clothed in the dress of a priest, the better to bring the human race to hell and damnation, therefore all his disciples and converts are to be punished with death and forfeiture of all their goods." This was succinct and intelligible. The bloody edict, issued at Worms, without even a pretence of sanction by the estates, was carried into immediate effect. The papal inquisition was introduced into the provinces to assist its operations. The bloody work, for which the reign of Charles is mainly distinguished in the Netherlands, now began. In 1523, July 1st, two Augustine monks were burned at Brussels, the first victims to Lutheranism in the provinces. Erasmus observed, with a sigh, that "two had been burned at Brussels, and that the city now began strenuously to favor Lutheranism."

Pope Adrian VI, the Netherland boat maker’s son and the Emperor’s ancient tutor, was sufficiently alive to the sins of churchmen. The humble scholar of Utrecht was, at least, no Borgia. At the diet of Nuremberg, summoned to put down Luther, the honest pope declared roundly, through the Bishop of Fabriane, that "these disorders had sprung from the sins of men, more especially from the sins of priests and prelates. Even in the holy chair," said he, "many horrible crimes have been committed. Many abuses have grown up in the ecclesiastical state. The contagious disease, spreading from the head to the members—from the Pope to lesser prelates—has spread far and wide, so that scarcely any one is to be found who does right, and who is free from infection. Nevertheless, the evils have become so ancient and manifold, that it will be necessary to go step by step."

In those passionate days, the ardent reformers were as much outraged by this pregnant confession as the ecclesiastics. It would indeed be a slow process, they thought, to move step by step in the Reformation, if between each step, a whole century was to intervene. In vain did the gentle pontiff call upon Erasmus to assuage the stormy sea with his smooth rhetoric. The Sage of Rotterdam was old and sickly; his day was over. Adrian’s head, too, languishes beneath the triple crown but twenty months. He dies September 13, 1523, having arrived at the conviction, according to his epitaph, that the greatest misfortune of his life was to have reigned.
Another edict, published in the Netherlands, forbids all private assemblies for devotion; all reading of the scriptures; all discussions within one’s own doors concerning faith, the sacraments, the papal authority, or other religious matter, under penalty of death. The edicts were no dead letter. The fires were kept constantly supplied with human fuel by monks, who knew the art of burning reformers better than that of arguing with them. The scaffold was the most conclusive of syllogisms, and used upon all occasions. Still the people remained unconvinced. Thousands of burned heretics had not made a single convert.

A fresh edict renewed and sharpened the punishment for reading the scriptures in private or public. At the same time, the violent personal altercation between Luther and Erasmus, upon predestination, together with the bitter dispute between Luther and Zwingli concerning the real presence, did more to impede the progress of the Reformation than ban or edict, sword or fire. The spirit of humanity hung her head, finding that the bold reformer had only a new dogma in place of the old ones, seeing that dissenters, in their turn, were sometimes as ready as papists, with age, fagot, and excommunication. In 1526, Felix Mants, the anabaptist, is drowned at Zurich, in obedience to Zwingli’s pithy formula—

\[ \text{Qui iterum mergit mergatur.} \]

Thus the anabaptists, upon their first appearance, were exposed to the fires of the Church and the water of the Zwinglians.

There is no doubt that the anabaptist delusion was so ridiculous and so loathsome, as to palliate or at least render intelligible the wrath with which they were regarded by all parties. The turbulence of the sect was alarming to constituted authorities, its bestiality disgraceful to the cause of religious reformation. The leaders were among the most depraved of human creatures, as much distinguished for licentiousness, blasphemy, and cruelty as their followers for groveling superstition. The evil spirit, driven out of Luther, seemed, in orthodox eyes, to have taken possession of a herd of swine. The Germans, Muncer and Hoffmann, had been succeeded, as chief prophets, by a Dutch baker, named Matthiazo, of Harlem, who announced himself as Enoch. Chief of this man’s disciples was the notorious John Boccold, of Leyden. Under the government of this prophet, the anabaptists mastered the city of Munster. Here they confiscated property, plundered churches, violated females, murdered men who refused to join the gang, and, in brief, practiced all the enormities which humanity alone can conceive or perpetrate. The prophet proclaimed himself King of Sion, and sent out apostles to preach his doctrines in Germany and the Netherlands. Polygamy being a leading article of the system, he exemplified the principle by marrying fourteen wives. Of these, the beautiful widow of Matthiszoon was chief, was called the Queen of Sion, and wore a golden crown. The prophet made many fruitless efforts to seize Amsterdam and Leyden. The armed invasion of the anabaptists was repelled, but their contagious madness spread. The plague broke forth in Amsterdam. On a cold winter’s night (February 1535), seven men and five women, inspired by the Holy Ghost, threw off their clothes and rushed naked and raving through the streets, shrieking "Wo, wo, wo! the wrath of God, the wrath of God!" When
arrested, they obstinately refused to put on clothing. "We are," they observed, "the naked truth." In a day or two, these furious lunatics, who certainly deserved a madhouse rather than the scaffold, were all executed. The numbers of the sect increased with the martyrdom to which they were exposed, and the disorder spread to every part of the Netherlands. Many were put to death in lingering torments, but no perceptible effect was produced by the chastisement. Meantime the great chief of the sect, the prophet John, was defeated by the forces of the Bishop of Munster, who recovered his city and caused the "King of Sion" to be pinched to death with red-hot tongs. Unfortunately the severity of government was not wreaked alone upon the prophet and his mischievous crew. Thousands and ten-thousands of virtuous, well-disposed men and women, who had as little sympathy with anabaptistical as with Roman depravity, were butchered in cold blood, under the sanguinary rule of Charles, in the Netherlands. In 1533, Queen Dowager Mary of Hungary, sister of the Emperor, Regent of the provinces, the "Christian widow" admired by Erasmus, wrote to her brother that "in her opinion all heretics, whether repentant or not, should be prosecuted with such severity as that error might be, at once, extinguished, care being only taken that the provinces were not entirely depopulated." With this humane limitation, the "Christian Widow" cheerfully set herself to superintend as foul and wholesale a system of murder as was ever organized. In 1535, an imperial edict was issued at Brussels, condemning all heretics to death; repentant males to be executed with the sword, repentant females to be buried alive; the obstinate, of both sexes, to be burned. This and similar edicts were the law of the land for twenty years, and rigidly enforced. Imperial and papal persecution continued its daily deadly work with such diligence as to make it doubtful whether the limits set by the Regent Mary might not be overstepped. In the midst of the carnage, the Emperor sent for his son Philip, that he might receive the fealty of the Netherlands as their future lord and master. Contemporaneously, a new edict was published at Brussels (April 29, 1549), confirming and re-enacting all previous decrees in their most severe provisions. Thus stood religious matters in the Netherlands at the epoch of the imperial abdication.

XIII

The civil institutions of the country had assumed their last provincial form, in the Burgundo-Austrian epoch. As already stated, their tendency, at a later period a vicious one, was to substitute fictitious personages for men. A chain of corporations was wound about the liberty of the Netherlands; yet that liberty had been originally sustained by the system in which it one day might be strangled. The spirit of local self-government, always the life-blood of liberty, was often excessive in its manifestations. The centrifugal force had been too much developed, and, combining with the mutual jealousy of corporations, had often made the nation weak against a common foe. Instead of popular rights there were state rights, for the large cities, with extensive districts and villages under their government, were rather petty states than municipalities.
Although the supreme legislative and executive functions belonged to the sovereign, yet each city made its by-laws, and possessed, beside, a body of statutes and regulations, made from time to time by its own authority and confirmed by the prince. Thus a large portion, at least, of the nation shared practically in the legislative functions, which, technically, it did not claim, nor had the requirements of society made constant legislation so necessary, as that to exclude the people from the work was to enslave the country. There was popular power enough to effect much good, but it was widely scattered, and, at the same time, confined in artificial forms. The guilds were vassals of the towns, the towns, vassals of the feudal lord. The guild voted in the "broad council" of the city as one person; the city voted in the estates as one person. The people of the United Netherlands was the personage yet to be invented. It was a privilege, not a right, to exercise a handiwork, or to participate in the action of government. Yet the mass of privileges was so large, the shareholders so numerous, that practically the towns were republics. The government was in the hands of a large number of the people. Industry and intelligence led to wealth and power. This was great progress from the general servitude of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, an immense barrier against arbitrary rule. Loftier ideas of human rights, larger conceptions of commerce, have taught mankind, in later days, the difference between liberties and liberty, between guilds and free competition. At the same time it was the principle of mercantile association, in the middle ages, which protected the infant steps of human freedom and human industry against violence and wrong. Moreover, at this period, the tree of municipal life was still green and vigorous. The healthful flow of sap from the humblest roots to the most verdurous branches indicated the internal soundness of the core, and provided for the constant development of exterior strength. The road to political influence was open to all, not by right of birth, but through honorable exertion of heads and hands. The chief city of the Netherlands, the commercial capital of the world, was Antwerp. In the North and East of Europe, the Hanseatic league had withered with the revolution in commerce. At the South, the splendid marble channels, through which the overland India trade had been conducted from the Mediterranean by a few stately cities, were now dry, the great aqueducts ruined and deserted. Verona, Venice, Nuremberg, Augsburg, Bruges, were sinking, but Antwerp, with its deep and convenient river, stretched its arm to the ocean and caught the golden prize, as it fell from its sister cities’ grasp. The city was so ancient that its genealogists, with ridiculous gravity, ascended to a period two centuries before the Trojan war, and discovered a giant, rejoicing in the classic name of Antigonus, established on the Scheld. This patriarch exacted one half the merchandise of all navigators who passed his castle, and was accustomed to amputate and cast into the river the right hands of those who infringed this simple tariff. Thus Hand-<i>werpen</i>, hand-throwing, became <i>Antwerp</i>, and hence, two hands, in the escutcheon of the city, were ever held up in heraldic attestation of the truth. The giant was, in his turn, thrown into the Scheld by a hero, named Brabo, from whose exploits Brabant derived its name: "<i>de quo Brabonica tellus</i>." But for these antiquarian
researches, a simpler derivation of the name would seem *an t’ werf*, "on the wharf."

It had now become the principal entrepôt and exchange of Europe. The Fuggers, Velsens, Ostetts, of Germany, the Gualterotti and Bonvisi of Italy, and many other great mercantile houses were there established. No city, except Paris, surpassed it in population, none approached it in commercial splendor. Its government was very free. The sovereign, as Marquis of Antwerp, was solemnly sworn to govern according to the ancient charters and laws. The stadholder, as his representative, shared his authority with the four estates of the city. The Senate of eighteen members was appointed by the stadholder out of a quadruple number nominated by the Senate itself and by the fourth body, called the Borgery. Half the board was thus renewed annually. It exercised executive and appellate judicial functions, appointed two burgomasters, and two pensionaries or legal councillors, and also selected the lesser magistrates and officials of the city. The board of ancients or ex-senators, held their seats *ex officio*. The twenty-six ward masters, appointed, two from each ward, by the Senate on nomination by the wards, formed the third estate. Their especial business was to enroll the militia and to attend to its mustering and training. The deans of the guilds, fifty-four in number, two from each guild, selected in the Senate, from a triple list of candidates presented by the guilds, composed the fourth estate. This influential body was always assembled in the broad-council of the city. Their duty was likewise to conduct the examination of candidates claiming admittance to any guild and offering specimens of art or handiwork, to superintend the general affairs of the guilds and to regulate disputes.

There were also two important functionaries, representing the king in criminal and civil matters. The Vicarius capitalis, Scultetus, Schout, Sheriff, or Margrave, took precedence of all magistrates. His business was to superintend criminal arrests, trials, and executions. The Vicarius civilis was called the Amman, and his office corresponded with that of the Podestà in the Frisian and Italian republics. His duties were nearly similar, in civil, to those of his colleague, in criminal matters.

These four branches, with their functionaries and dependents, composed the commonwealth of Antwerp. Assembled together in council, they constituted the great and general court. No tax could be imposed by the sovereign, except with consent of the four branches, all voting separately.

The personal and domiciliary rights of the citizen were scrupulously guarded. The Schout could only make arrests with the Burgomaster’s warrant, and was obliged to bring the accused, within three days, before the judges, whose courts were open to the public.

The condition of the population was prosperous. There were but few poor, and those did not seek but were sought by the almoners. The schools were excellent and cheap. It was difficult to find a child of sufficient age who could not read, write, and speak, at least, two languages. The sons of the wealthier citizens completed their education at Louvain, Douay, Paris, or Padua.
The city itself was one of the most beautiful in Europe. Placed upon a plain along the banks of the Scheld, shaped like a bent bow with the river for its string, it enclosed within its walls some of the most splendid edifices in Christendom. The world-renowned church of Notre Dame, the stately Exchange where 5,000 merchants daily congregated, prototype of all similar establishments throughout the world, the capacious mole and port where 2,500 vessels were often seen at once, and where five hundred made their daily entrance or departure, were all establishments which it would have been difficult to rival in any other part of the world.

From what has already been said of the municipal institutions of the country, it may be inferred that the powers of the Estates-general were limited. The members of that congress were not representatives chosen by the people, but merely a few ambassadors from individual provinces. This individuality was not always composed of the same ingredients. Thus, Holland consisted of two members, or branches—the nobles and the six chief cities; Flanders, of four branches—the cities, namely, of Ghent, Bruges, Ypres, and the "freedom of Bruges"; Brabant, of Louvain, Brussels, Bois le Duc, and Antwerp—four great cities, without representation of nobility or clergy; Zealand, of one clerical person, the abbot of Middelburg, one noble, the Marquis of Veer and Vliessingen, and six chief cities; Utrecht, of three branches—the nobility, the clergy, and five cities. These, and other provinces, constituted in similar manner, were supposed to be actually present at the diet when assembled. The chief business of the states-general was financial; the sovereign, or his stadholder, only obtaining supplies by making a request in person, while any single city, as branch a province, had a right to refuse the grant.

Education had felt the onward movement of the country and the times. The whole system was, however, pervaded by the monastic spirit, which had originally preserved all learning from annihilation, but which now kept it wrapped in the ancient cerecloths, and stiffening in the stony sarcophagus of a bygone age. The university of Louvain was the chief literary institution in the provinces. It had been established in 1423 by Duke John IV of Brabant. Its government consisted of a President and Senate, forming a close corporation, which had received from the founder all his own authority, and the right to supply their own vacancies. The five faculties of law, canon law, medicine, theology, and the arts, were cultivated at the institution. There was, besides, a high school for under graduates, divided into four classes. The place reeked with pedantry, and the character of the university naturally diffused itself through other scholastic establishments. Nevertheless, it had done and was doing much to preserve the love for profound learning, while the rapidly advancing spirit of commerce was attended by an ever increasing train of humanizing arts.

The standard of culture in those flourishing cities was elevated, compared with that observed in many parts of Europe. The children of the wealthier classes
enjoyed great facilities for education in all the great capitals. The classics, music, and the modern languages, particularly the French, were universally cultivated. Nor was intellectual cultivation confined to the higher orders. On the contrary, it was diffused to a remarkable degree among the hard-working artisans and handicraftsmen of the great cities.

For the principle of association had not confined itself exclusively to politics and trade. Besides the numerous guilds by which citizenship was acquired in the various cities, were many other societies for mutual improvement, support, or recreation. The great secret, architectural or masonic brotherhood of Germany, that league to which the artistic and patient completion of the magnificent works of Gothic architecture in the middle ages is mainly to be attributed, had its branches in nether Germany, and explains the presence of so many splendid and elaborately finished churches in the provinces. There were also military sodalities of musketeers, crossbowmen, archers, swordsmen in every town. Once a year these clubs kept holiday, choosing a king, who was selected for his prowess and skill in the use of various weapons. These festivals, always held with great solemnity and rejoicing, were accompanied by many exhibitions of archery and swordsmanship. The people were not likely, therefore, voluntarily to abandon that privilege and duty of freemen, the right to bear arms, and the power to handle them.

Another and most important collection of brotherhoods were the so-called guilds of Rhetoric, which existed, in greater or less number, in all the principal cities. These were associations of mechanics, for the purpose of amusing their leisure with poetical effusions, dramatic and musical exhibitions, theatrical processions, and other harmless and not inelegant recreations. Such chambers of rhetoric came originally in the 15th century from France. The fact that in their very title they confounded rhetoric with poetry and the drama indicates the meager attainments of these early "Rederykers." In the outset of their career they gave theatrical exhibitions. "King Herod and his Deeds" was enacted in the cathedral at Utrecht in 1418. The associations spread with great celerity throughout the Netherlands, and, as they were all connected with each other, and in habits of periodical intercourse, these humble links of literature were of great value in drawing the people of the provinces into closer union. They became, likewise, important political engines. As early as the time of Philip the Good, their songs and lampoons became so offensive to the arbitrary notions of the Burgundian government, as to cause the societies to be prohibited. It was, however, out of the sovereign’s power permanently to suppress institutions, which already partook of the character of the modern periodical press combined with functions resembling the show and license of the Athenian drama. Viewed from the standpoint of literary criticism, their productions were not very commendable in taste, conception, or execution. To torture the Muses to madness, to wire-draw poetry through inextricable coils of difficult rhymes and impossible measures, to hammer one golden grain of wit into a sheet of infinite platitude, with frightful ingenuity to construct ponderous anagrams and preternatural acrostics, to dazzle the vulgar eye with tawdry costumes, and to tickle the vulgar ear with virulent personalities, were tendencies which
perhaps smacked of the hammer, the yardstick and the pincers, and gave
sufficient proof, had proof been necessary, that literature is not one of the
mechanical arts, and that poetry can not be manufactured to a profit by joint
stock companies. Yet, if the style of these lucubrations was often depraved,
the artisans rarely received a better example from the literary institutions
above them. It was not for guilds of mechanics to give the tone to literature,
nor were their efforts in more execrable taste than the emanations from the
pedants of Louvain. The "Rhetoricians" are not responsible for all the bad taste
of their generation. The gravest historians of the Netherlands often relieved
their elephantine labors by the most asinine gambols, and it was not to be
expected that these bustling weavers and cutlers should excel their literary
superiors in taste or elegance.
Philip the Fair enrolled himself as a member in one of these societies. It may
easily be inferred, therefore, that they had already become bodies of
recognized importance. The rhetorical chambers existed in the most obscure
villages. The number of yards of Flemish poetry annually manufactured and
consumed throughout the provinces almost exceed belief. The societies had
regular constitutions. Their presiding officers were called kings, princes,
captains, archdeacons, or rejoiced in similar high-sounding names. Each
chamber had its treasurer, its buffoon, and its standard-bearer for public
processions. Each had its peculiar title or blazon, as the Lily, the Marigold, or
the Violet, with an appropriate motto. By the year 1493, the associations had
become so important that Philip the Fair summoned them all to a general
assembly at Mechlin. Here they were organized, and formally incorporated
under the general supervision of an upper or mother society of Rhetoric,
consisting of fifteen members, and called by the title of "Jesus with the balsam
flower."
The sovereigns were always anxious to conciliate these influential guilds by
becoming members of them in person. Like the players, the Rhetoricians were
the brief abstract and chronicle of the time, and neither prince nor private
person desired their ill report. It had, indeed, been Philip’s intention to
convert them into engines for the arbitrary purposes of his house, but
fortunately the publicly organized societies were not the only chambers. On
the contrary, the unchartered guilds were the most numerous and influential.
They exercised a vast influence upon the progress of the religious reformation,
and the subsequent revolt of the Netherlands. They ridiculed, with their farces
and their satires, the vices of the clergy. They dramatized tyranny for public
execration. It was also not surprising that among the leaders of the wild
anabaptists, who disgraced the great revolution in church and state by their
hideous antics, should be found many who, like David of Delft, John of Leyden,
and others, had been members of rhetorical chambers. The genius for
mummery and theatrical exhibitions, transplanted from its sphere, and
exerting itself for purposes of fraud and licentiousness, was as baleful in its
effects as it was healthy in its original manifestations. Such exhibitions were
but the excrescences of a system which had true good fruit. These literary
guilds befitted and denoted a people which was alive, a people which had
neither sunk to sleep in the lap of material prosperity, nor abased itself in the
sty of ignorance and political servitude. The spirit of liberty pervaded these
rude but not illiterate assemblies, and her fair proportions were distinctly
visible, even through the somewhat grotesque garb which she thus assumed.
The great leading recreations which these chambers afforded themselves and
the public, were the periodic jubilees which they celebrated in various capital
cities. All the guilds of rhetoric throughout the Netherlands were then invited
to partake and to compete in magnificent processions, brilliant costumes, living
pictures, charades, and other animated, glittering groups, and in trials of
dramatic and poetic skill, all caged under the superintendence of the particular
association which, in the preceding year, had borne away the prize. Such
jubilees were called "Land-jewels."
From the amusements of a people may be gathered much that is necessary for
a proper estimation of its character. No unfavorable opinion can be formed as
to the culture of a nation, whose weavers, smiths, gardeners, and traders,
found the favorite amusement of their holidays in composing and enacting
tragedies or farces, reciting their own verses, or in personifying moral and
esthetic sentiments by ingeniously-arranged groups, or gorgeous habiliments.
The cramoisy velvets and yellow satin doublets of the court, the gold-brocaded
mantles of priests and princes are often but vulgar drapery of little historic
worth. Such costumes thrown around the swart figures of hard-working
artisans, for literary and artistic purposes, have a real significance, and are
worthy of a closer examination. Were not these amusements of the
Netherlanders as elevated and humanizing as the contemporary bull-fights and
autos-da-fé of Spain? What place in history does the gloomy bigot merit who,
for the love of Christ, converted all these gay cities into shambles, and
changed the glittering processions of their Land-jewels into fettered marches
to the scaffold?
Thus fifteen ages have passed away, and in the place of a horde of savages,
living among swamps and thickets, swarm three millions of people, the most
industrious, the most prosperous, perhaps the most intelligent under the sun.
Their cattle, grazing on the bottom of the sea, are the finest in Europe, their
agricultural products of more exchangeable value than if nature had made their
land to overflow with wine and oil. Their navigators are the boldest, their
mercantile marine the most powerful, their merchants the most enterprising in
the world. Holland and Flanders, peopled by one race, vie with each other in
the pursuits of civilization. The Flemish skill in the mechanical and in the fine
arts is unrivalled. Belgian musicians delight and instruct other nations, Belgian
pencils have, for a century, caused the canvas to glow with colors and
combinations never seen before. Flemish fabrics are exported to all parts of
Europe, to the East and West Indies, to Africa. The splendid tapestries, silks,
linens, as well as the more homely and useful manufactures of the Netherlands,
are prized throughout the world. Most ingenious, as they had already been
described by the keen-eyed Caesar, in imitating the arts of other nations, the
skillful artificers of the country at Louvain, Ghent, and other places, reproduce
the shawls and silks of India with admirable accuracy.
Their national industry was untiring, their prosperity unexampled, their love of liberty indomitable, their pugnacity proverbial. Peaceful in their pursuits, phlegmatic by temperament, the Netherlands were yet the most belligerent and excitable population of Europe. Two centuries of civil war had but thinned the ranks of each generation without quenching the hot spirit of the nation. The women were distinguished by beauty of form and vigor of constitution. Accustomed from childhood to converse freely with all classes and sexes in the daily walks of life, and to travel on foot or horseback from one town to another, without escort and without fear, they had acquired manners more frank and independent than those of women in other lands, while their morals were pure and their decorum undoubted. The prominent part to be sustained by the women of Holland in many dramas of the revolution would thus fitly devolve upon a class, enabled by nature and education to conduct themselves with courage.

Within the little circle which encloses the seventeen provinces are 208 walled cities, many of them among the most stately in Christendom, 150 chartered towns, 6,300 villages, with their watchtowers and steeples, besides numerous other more insignificant hamlets, the whole guarded by a belt of sixty fortresses of surpassing strength.

Thus in this rapid sketch of the course and development of the Netherland nation during sixteen centuries, we have seen it ever marked by one prevailing characteristic, one master passion—the love of liberty, the instinct of self-government. Largely compounded of the bravest Teutonic elements, Batavian and Frisian, the race ever battles to the death with tyranny, organizes extensive revolts in the age of Vespasian, maintains a partial independence even against the sagacious dominion of Charlemagne, refuses in Friesland to accept the papal yoke or feudal chain, and, throughout the dark ages, struggles resolutely towards the light, wresting from a series of petty sovereigns a gradual and practical recognition of the claims of humanity. With the advent of the Burgundian family, the power of the commons has reached so high a point, that it is able to measure itself, undaunted, with the spirit of arbitrary rule, of which that engrossing and tyrannical house is the embodiment. For more than a century the struggle for freedom, for civic life, goes on; Philip the Good, Charles the Bold, Mary’s husband Maximilian, Charles V, in turn, assailing or undermining the bulwarks raised, age after age, against the despotic principle. The combat is ever renewed. Liberty, often crushed, rises again and again from her native earth with redoubled energy. At last, in the 16th century, a new and more powerful spirit, the genius of religious freedom, comes to participate in the great conflict. Arbitrary power, incarnated in the second Charlemagne, assails the new combination with unscrupulous, unforgiving fierceness. Venerable civic magistrates, haltered, grovel in sackcloth and ashes; innocent, religious reformers burn in holocausts. By the middle of the century, the battle rages more fiercely than ever. In the little Netherland territory, Humanity,
bleeding but not killed, still stands at bay and defies the hunters. The two great powers have been gathering strength for centuries. They are soon to be matched in a longer and more determined combat than the world had ever seen. The emperor is about to leave the stage. The provinces, so passionate for nationality, for municipal freedom, for religious reformation, are to become the property of an utter stranger, a prince foreign to their blood, their tongue, their religion, their whole habits of life and thought. Such was the political, religious, and social condition of a nation who were now to witness a new and momentous spectacle.

End of Historical Introduction

Part One
Phillip II in the Netherlands

Chapter 1  The Abdication of Emperor Charles V
Chapter 2  Philip II and the Conflict with France
Chapter 3  State of the Netherlands and the Beginning of Persecution in Spain

CHAPTER 1
The Abdication of Emperor Charles V
On the 25th day of October, 1555, the estates of the Netherlands were assembled in the great hall of the palace at Brussels. They had been summoned to be the witnesses and the guarantees of the abdication which Charles V had long before resolved upon, and which he was that day to execute. The emperor, like many potentates before and since, was fond of great political spectacles. He knew their influence upon the masses of mankind. Although plain, even to shabbiness, in his own costume, and usually attired in black, no one ever understood better than he how to arrange such exhibitions in striking and artistic style. We have seen the theatrical and imposing manner in which he quelled the insurrection at Ghent, and nearly crushed the life forever out of that vigorous and turbulent little commonwealth. The closing scene of his long and energetic reign he had now arranged with profound study, and with an accurate knowledge of the manner in which the requisite effects were to be produced. The termination of his own career, the opening of his beloved Philip’s, were to be dramatized in a manner worthy the august character of the actors, and the importance of the great stage where they played their parts. The eyes of the whole world were directed upon that day towards Brussels; for an imperial abdication was an event which had not, in the 16th century, been staled by custom.

The gay capital of Brabant—of that province which rejoiced in the liberal constitution known by the cheerful title of the "joyful entrance," was worthy to be the scene of the imposing show. Brussels had been a city for more than five centuries, and, at that day, numbered about 100,000 inhabitants. Its walls, six miles in circumference, were already two hundred years old. Unlike most Netherland cities, lying usually upon extensive plains, it was built along the sides of an abrupt promontory. A wide expanse of living verdure, cultivated gardens, shady groves, fertile cornfields, flowed round it like a sea. The foot of the town was washed by the little river Senne, while the irregular but picturesque streets rose up the steep sides of the hill like the semicircles and stairways of an amphitheatre. Nearly in the heart of the place rose the audacious and exquisitely embroidered tower of the townhouse, three hundred and sixty-six feet in height, a miracle of needlework in stone, rivaling in its intricate carving the cobweb tracery of that lace which has for centuries been synonymous with the city, and rearing itself above a façade of profusely decorated and brocaded architecture. The crest of the elevation was crowned by the towers of the old ducal palace of Brabant, with its extensive and thickly-wooded park on the left, and by the stately mansions of Orange, Egmont, Aremberg, Culemburg, and other Flemish grandees, on the right. The great forest of Soignies, dotted with monasteries and convents, swarming with every variety of game, whither the citizens made their summer pilgrimages, and where the nobles chased the wild boar and the stag, extended to within a quarter of a mile of the city walls. The population, as thrifty, as intelligent, as prosperous as that of any city in Europe, was divided into fifty-two guilds of artisans, among which the most important were the armorers, whose suits of mail would turn a musket ball; the gardeners, upon whose gentler creations
incredible sums were annually lavished; and the tapestry workers, whose
gorgeous fabrics were the wonder of the world. Seven principal churches, of
which the most striking was that of St. Gudule, with its twin towers, its
charming façade, and its magnificently painted windows, adorned the upper
part of the city. The number seven was a magic number in Brussels, and was
supposed at that epoch, during which astronomy was in its infancy and
astrology in its prime, to denote the seven planets which governed all things
terrestrial by their aspects and influences. Seven noble families, springing from
seven ancient castles, supplied the stock from which the seven senators were
selected who composed the upper council of the city. There were seven great
squares, seven city gates, and upon the occasion of the present ceremony, it
was observed by the lovers of wonderful coincidences, that seven crowned
heads would be congregated under a single roof in the liberty-loving city.

The palace where the states-general were upon this occasion convened, had
been the residence of the Dukes of Brabant since the days of John II, who had
built it about the year 1300. It was a spacious and convenient building, but not
distinguished for the beauty of its architecture. In front was a large open
square, enclosed by an iron railing; in the rear an extensive and beautiful park,
filled with forest trees, and containing gardens and labyrinths, fish ponds and
game preserves, fountains and promenades, race courses and archery grounds.
The main entrance to this edifice opened upon a spacious hall, connected with
a beautiful and symmetrical chapel. The hall was celebrated for its size,
harmonious proportions, and the richness of its decorations. It was the place
where the chapters of the famous order of the Golden Fleece were held. Its
walls were hung with a magnificent tapestry of Arras, representing the life and
achievements of Gideon, the Midianite, and giving particular prominence to the
miracle of the "fleece of wool," vouchsafed to that renowned champion, the
great patron of the Knights of the Fleece.

On the present occasion there were various additional embellishments of
flowers and votive garlands. At the western end a spacious platform or stage,
with six or seven steps, had been constructed, below which was a range of
benches for the deputies of the seventeen provinces. Upon the stage itself
there were rows of seats, covered with tapestry, upon the right hand and upon
the left. These were respectively to accommodate the knights of the order and
the guests of high distinction. In the rear of these were other benches, for the
members of the three great councils. In the center of the stage was a splendid
canopy, decorated with the arms of Burgundy, beneath which were placed
three gilded armchairs. All the seats upon the platform were vacant, but the
benches below, assigned to the deputies of the provinces, were already filled.
Numerous representatives from all the states but two—Gelderland and
Overyssel—had already taken their places. Grave magistrates, in chain and
gown, and executive officers in the splendid civic uniforms for which the
Netherlands were celebrated, already filled every seat within the space
allotted. The remainder of the hall was crowded with the more favored portion
of the multitude which had been fortunate enough to procure admission to the exhibition. The archers and hallebardiers of the bodyguard kept watch at all the doors. The theatre was filled; the audience was eager with expectation; the actors were yet to arrive. As the clock struck three, the hero of the scene appeared. Caesar, as he was always designated in the classic language of the day, entered, leaning on a shoulder of William of Orange. They came from the chapel, and were immediately followed by Philip II and Queen Mary of Hungary. The Archduke Maximilian, the Duke of Savoy, and other great personages came afterwards, accompanied by a glittering throng of warriors, councillors, governors, and Knights of the Fleece.

Many individuals of existing or future historic celebrity in the Netherlands, whose names are so familiar to the student of the epoch, seemed to have been grouped, as if by premeditated design, upon this imposing platform, where the curtain was to fall forever upon the mightiest emperor since Charlemagne, and where the opening scene of the long and tremendous tragedy of Philip’s reign was to be simultaneously enacted. There was the Bishop of Arras, soon to be known throughout Christendom by the more celebrated title of Cardinal Granvelle, the serene and smiling priest whose subtle influence over the destinies of so many individuals then present, and over the fortunes of the whole land, was to be so extensive and so deadly. There was that flower of Flemish chivalry, the lineal descendant of ancient Frisian kings, already distinguished for his bravery in many fields, but not having yet won those two remarkable victories which were soon to make the name of Egmont like the sound of a trumpet throughout the whole country. Tall, magnificent in costume, with dark flowing hair, soft brown eye, smooth cheek, a slight moustache, and features of almost feminine delicacy; such was the gallant and ill-fated Lamoral Egmont. The Count of Horn, too, with bold, sullen face, and fan-shaped beard—a brave, honest, discontented, quarrelsome, unpopular man; those other twins in doom—the Marquis Berghen and the Lord of Montigny; the Baron Berlaymont, brave, intensely loyal, insatiably greedy for office and wages, but who, at least, never served but one party; the Duke of Arschot, who was to serve all, essay to rule all, and to betray all—a splendid seignor, magnificent in cramoisy velvet, but a poor creature, who traced his pedigree from Adam, according to the family monumental inscriptions at Louvain, but who was better known as grand-nephew of the emperor’s famous tutor, Chièvres; the bold, debauched Brederode, with handsome, reckless face and turbulent demeanor; the infamous Noircarmes, whose name was to be covered with eternal execration, for aping towards his own compatriots and kindred as much of Alva’s atrocities and avarice, as he was permitted to exercise; the distinguished soldiers Meghen and Aremberg—these, with many others whose deeds of arms were to become celebrated throughout Europe, were all conspicuous in the brilliant crowd. There, too, was that learned Frisian, President Viglius, crafty, plausible, adroit, eloquent—a small, brisk man, with long yellow hair, glittering green eyes, round, tumid, rosy cheeks, and flowing beard. Foremost among the Spanish grandees, and close to Philip, stood the
famous favorite, Ruy Gomez, or as he was familiarly called "Re y Gomez" (King and Gomez), a man of meridional aspect, with coal-black hair and beard, gleaming eyes, a face pallid with intense application, and slender but handsome figure; while in immediate attendance upon the emperor, was the immortal Prince of Orange.

Such were a few only of the most prominent in that gay throng, whose fortunes, in part, it will be our humble duty to narrate; how many of them passing through all this glitter to dark and mysterious doom!—some to perish on public scaffolds, some by midnight assassination; others, more fortunate, to fall on the battlefield—nearly all, sooner or later, to be laid in bloody graves!

All the company present had risen to their feet as the emperor entered. By his command, all immediately afterwards assumed their places. The benches at either end of the platform were accordingly filled with the royal and princely personages invited, with the Fleece Knights, wearing the insignia of their order, with the members of the three great councils, and with the governors. The Emperor, the King, and the Queen of Hungary, were left conspicuous in the center of the scene. As the whole object of the ceremony was to present an impressive exhibition, it is worth our while to examine minutely the appearance of the two principal characters.

Charles V was then fifty-five years and eight months old, but he was already decrepit with premature old age. He was of about the middle height, and had been athletic and well-proportioned. Broad in the shoulders, deep in the chest, thin in the flank, very muscular in the arms and legs, he had been able to match himself with all competitors in the tourney and the ring, and to vanquish the bull with his own hand in the favorite national amusement of Spain. He had been able in the field to do the duty of captain and soldier, to endure fatigue and exposure, and every privation except fasting. These personal advantages were now departed. Crippled in hands, knees and legs, he supported himself with difficulty upon a crutch, with the aid of an attendant’s shoulder. In face he had always been extremely ugly, and time had certainly not improved his physiognomy. His hair, once of a light color, was now white with age, close-clipped and bristling; his beard was gray, coarse, and shaggy. His forehead was spacious and commanding; the eye was dark blue, with an expression both majestic and benignant. His nose was aquiline but crooked. The lower part of his face was famous for its deformity. The under lip, a Burgundian inheritance, as faithfully transmitted as the duchy and county, was heavy and hanging; the lower jaw protruding so far beyond the upper, that it was impossible for him to bring together the few fragments of teeth which still remained, or to speak a whole sentence in an intelligible voice. Eating and talking, occupations to which he was always much addicted, were becoming daily more arduous, in consequence of this original defect, which now seemed hardly human, but rather an original deformity.
So much for the father. The son, Philip II, was a small, meager man, much below the middle height, with thin legs, a narrow chest, and the shrinking, timid air of a habitual invalid. He seemed so little, upon his first visit to his aunts, the Queens Eleanor and Mary, accustomed to look upon proper men in Flanders and Germany, that he was fain to win their favor by making certain attempts in the tournament, in which his success was sufficiently problematical. "His body," says his professed panegyrist, "was but a human cage, in which, however brief and narrow, dwelt a soul to whose flight the immeasurable expanse of heaven was too contracted." The same wholesale admirer adds, that "his aspect was so reverend, that rustics who met him alone in a wood, without knowing him, bowed down with instinctive veneration." In face, he was the living image of his father, having the same broad forehead, and blue eye, with the same aquiline, but better proportioned, nose. In the lower part of the countenance, the remarkable Burgundian deformity was likewise reproduced. He had the same heavy, hanging lip, with a vast mouth, and monstrously protruding lower jaw. His complexion was fair, his hair light and thin, his beard yellow, short, and pointed. He had the aspect of a Fleming, but the loftiness of a Spaniard. His demeanor in public was still, silent, almost sepulchral. He looked habitually on the ground when he conversed, was chary of speech, embarrassed, and even suffering in manner. This was ascribed partly to a natural haughtiness which he had occasionally endeavored to overcome, and partly to habitual pains in the stomach, occasioned by his inordinate fondness for pastry.

Such was the personal appearance of the man who was about to receive into his single hand the destinies of half the world; whose single will was, for the future, to shape the fortunes of every individual then present, of many millions more in Europe, America, and at the ends of the earth, and of countless millions yet unborn.

The three royal personages being seated upon chairs placed triangularly under the canopy, such of the audience as had seats provided for them, now took their places, and the proceedings commenced. Philibert de Bruxelles, a member of the privy-council of the Netherlands, arose at the emperor’s command, and made a long oration. He spoke of the emperor’s warm affection for the provinces, as the land of his birth; of his deep regret that his broken health and failing powers, both of body and mind, compelled him to resign his sovereignty, and to seek relief for his shattered frame in a more genial climate. Caesar’s gout was then depicted in energetic language, which must have cost him a twinge as he sat there and listened to the councilor’s eloquence. "'Tis a most truculent executioner," said Philibert, "it invades the whole body, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, leaving nothing untouched. It contracts the nerves with intolerable anguish, it enters the bones, it freezes the marrow, it converts the lubricating fluids of the joints into chalk, it pauses not until, having exhausted and debilitated the whole body, it has rendered all its necessary instruments useless, and conquered the
mind by immense torture." Engaged in mortal struggle with such an enemy, Caesar felt himself obliged, as the councilor proceeded to inform his audience, to change the scene of the contest from the humid air of Flanders to the warmer atmosphere of Spain. He rejoiced, however, that his son was both vigorous and experienced, and that his recent marriage with the Queen of England had furnished the provinces with a most valuable alliance. He then again referred to the emperor’s boundless love for his subjects, and concluded with a tremendous, but superfluous, exhortation to Philip on the necessity of maintaining the Catholic religion in its purity. After this long harangue, which has been fully reported by several historians who were present at the ceremony, the councilor proceeded to read the deed of cession, by which Philip, already sovereign of Sicily, Naples, Milan, and titular King of England, France, and Jerusalem, now received all the duchies, marquisates, earldoms, baronies, cities, towns, and castles of the Burgundian property, including, of course, the seventeen Netherlands.

As De Bruxelles finished, there was a buzz of admiration throughout the assembly, mingled with murmurs of regret, that in the present great danger upon the frontiers from the belligerent King of France and his warlike and restless nation, the provinces should be left without their ancient and puissant defender. The emperor then rose to his feet. Leaning on his crutch, he beckoned from his seat the personage upon whose arm he had leaned as he entered the hall. A tall, handsome youth of twenty-two came forward—a man whose name from that time forward, and as long as history shall endure, has been, and will be, more familiar than any other in the mouths of Netherlanders. At that day he had rather a southern than a German or Flemish appearance. He had a Spanish cast of features, dark, well chiseled, and symmetrical. His head was small and well placed upon his shoulders. His hair was dark brown, as were also his moustache and peaked beard. His forehead was lofty, spacious, and already prematurely engraved with the anxious lines of thought. His eyes were full, brown, well opened, and expressive of profound reflection. He was dressed in the magnificent apparel for which the Netherlanders were celebrated above all other nations, and which the ceremony rendered necessary. His presence being considered indispensable at this great ceremony, he had been summoned but recently from the camp on the frontier, where, notwithstanding his youth, the emperor had appointed him to command his army in chief against such antagonists as Admiral Coligny and the Duc de Nevers.

Thus supported upon his crutch and upon the shoulder of William of Orange, the Emperor proceeded to address the states, by the aid of a closely-written brief which he held in his hand. He reviewed rapidly the progress of events from his seventeenth year up to that day. He spoke of his nine expeditions into Germany, six to Spain, seven to Italy, four to France, ten to the Netherlands, two to England, as many to Africa, and of his eleven voyages by sea. He sketched his various wars, victories, and treaties of peace, assuring his hearers
that the welfare of his subjects and the security of the Roman Catholic religion
had ever been the leading objects of his life. As long as God had granted him
health, he continued, only enemies could have regretted that Charles was
living and reigning; but now that his strength was but vanity, and life fast
ebbing away, his love for dominion, his affection for his subjects, and his
regard for their interests, required his departure. Instead of a decrepit man
with one foot in the grave, he presented them with a sovereign in the prime of
life and the vigor of health. Turning toward Philip, he observed that for a dying
father to bequeath so magnificent an empire to his son was a deed worthy of
gratitude, but that when the father thus descended to the grave before his
time, and by an anticipated and living burial sought to provide for the welfare
of his realms and the grandeur of his son, the benefit thus conferred was surely
far greater. He added that the debt would be paid to him and with usury,
should Philip conduct himself in his administration of the province with a wise
and affectionate regard to their true interests. Posterity would applaud his
abdication, should his son prove worthy of his bounty; and that could only be
by living in the fear of God, and by maintaining law, justice, and the Catholic
religion in all their purity, as the true foundation of the realm. In conclusion,
he entreated the estates, and through them the nation, to render obedience to
their new prince, to maintain concord and to preserve inviolate the Catholic
faith; begging them, at the same time, to pardon him all errors or offenses
which he might have committed towards them during his reign, and assuring
them that he should unceasingly remember their obedience and affection in his
every prayer to that Being to whom the remainder of his life was to be
dedicated.

Such brave words as these, so many vigorous asseverations of attempted
performance of duty, such fervent hopes expressed of a benign administration
in behalf of the son, could not but affect the sensibilities of the audience,
already excited and softened by the impressive character of the whole display.
Sobs were heard throughout every portion of the hall, and tears poured
profusely from every eye. The Fleece Knights on the platform and the burghers
in the background were all melted with the same emotion. As for the Emperor
himself, he sank almost fainting upon his chair as he concluded his address. An
ashy paleness overspread his countenance, and he wept like a child. Even the
icy Philip was almost softened, as he rose to perform his part in the ceremony.
Dropping upon his knees before his father’s feet, he reverently kissed his hand.
Charles placed his hands solemnly upon his son’s head; made the sign of the
cross, and blessed him in the name of the Holy Trinity. Then raising him in his
arms he tenderly embraced him, saying, as he did so, to the great potentates
around him, that he felt a sincere compassion for the son on whose shoulders
so great a weight had just devolved, and which only a life-long labor would
enable him to support. Philip now uttered a few words expressive of his duty to
his father and his affection for his people. Turning to the orders, he signified
his regret that he was unable to address them either in the French or Flemish
language, and was therefore obliged to ask their attention to the Bishop of
Arras, who would act as his interpreter. Antony Perrenot accordingly, arose, and in smooth, fluent, and well-turned commonplaces, expressed at great length the gratitude of Philip towards his father, with his firm determination to walk in the path of duty, and to obey his father’s counsels and example in the future administration of the provinces. This long address of the prelate was responded to at equal length by Jacob Maas, member of the Council of Brabant, a man of great learning, eloquence, and prolixity, who had been selected to reply on behalf of the states-general, and who now, in the name of these bodies, accepted the abdication in an elegant and complimentary harangue. Queen Mary of Hungary, the "Christian widow" of Erasmus, and Regent of the Netherlands during the past twenty-five years, then rose to resign her office, making a brief address expressive of her affection for the people, her regrets at leaving them, and her hopes that all errors which she might have committed during her long administration would be forgiven her. Again the redundant Maas responded, asserting in terms of fresh compliment and elegance the uniform satisfaction of the provinces with her conduct during her whole career.

The orations and replies having now been brought to a close, the ceremony was terminated. The Emperor, leaning on the shoulders of the Prince of Orange and of the Count de Buren, slowly left the hall, followed by Philip, the Queen of Hungary, and the whole court; all in the same order in which they had entered, and by the same passage into the chapel.

It is obvious that the drama had been completely successful. It had been a scene where heroic self-sacrifice, touching confidence, ingenuous love of duty, patriotism, and paternal affection upon one side; filial reverence, with a solemn regard for public duty and the highest interests of the people on the other, were supposed to be the predominant sentiments. The happiness of the Netherlands was apparently the only object contemplated in the great transaction. All had played well their parts in the past; all hoped the best in the times which were to follow. The abdicating Emperor was looked upon as a hero and a prophet. The stage was drowned in tears. There is not the least doubt as to the genuine and universal emotion which was excited throughout the assembly. "Caesar’s oration," says Secretary Godelaevus, who was present at the ceremony, "deeply moved the nobility and gentry, many of whom burst into tears; even the illustrious Knights of the Fleece were melted." The historian, Pontus Heuterus, who, then twenty years of age, was likewise among the audience, attests that "most of the assembly were dissolved in tears; uttering the while such sonorous sobs that they compelled his Caesarean Majesty and the Queen to cry with them." "My own face," he adds, "was certainly quite wet." The English envoy, Sir John Mason, describing in a dispatch to his government the scene which he had just witnessed, paints the same picture. "The Emperor," he said, "begged the forgiveness of his subjects if he had ever unwittingly omitted the performance of any of his duties towards them." "And here," continues the envoy, "he broke into a weeping, whereunto,
besides the dolefulness of the matter, I think, he was moche provoked by seeing the whole company to do the lyke before; there beyng in myne opinion not one man in the whole assemblie, stranger or another, that dewring the time of a good piece of his oration poured not out as abundantly teares, some more, some lesse. And yet he prayed them to beare with his imperfections, proceeding of his sickly age, and of the mentioning of so tender a matter as the departing from such a sort of dere and loving subjects."

And yet what was the Emperor Charles to the inhabitants of the Netherlands that they should weep for him? His conduct towards them during his whole career had been one of unmitigated oppression. What to them were all these forty voyages by sea and land, these journeyings back and forth from Friesland to Tunis, from Madrid to Vienna? What was it to them that the imperial shuttle was thus industriously flying to and fro? The fabric wrought was but the daily growing grandeur and splendor of his imperial house; the looms were kept moving at the expense of their hardly-earned treasure, and the wool was often dyed red in the blood of his bravest subjects. The interests of the Netherlands had never been even a secondary consideration with their master. He had fulfilled no duty towards them, he had committed the gravest crimes against them. He had regarded them merely as a treasury upon which to draw; while the sums which he extorted were spent upon ceaseless and senseless wars, which were of no more interest to them than if they had been waged in another planet. Of five millions of gold annually, which he derived from all his realms, two millions came from these industrious and opulent provinces, while but a half million came from Spain and another half from the Indies. The mines of wealth which had been opened by the hand of industry in that slender territory of ancient morass and thicket, contributed four times as much income to the imperial exchequer as all the boasted wealth of Mexico and Peru. Yet the artisans, the farmers, and the merchants, by whom these riches were produced, were consulted about as much in the expenditure of the imposts upon their industry as were the savages of America as to the distribution of the mineral treasures of their soil.

The rivalry of the houses of Habsburg and Valois, this was the absorbing theme, during the greater part of the reign which had just been so dramatically terminated. To gain the empire over Francis, to leave to Don Philip a richer heritage than the Dauphin could expect, were the great motives of the unparalleled energy displayed by Charles during the longer and the more successful portion of his career. To crush the Reformation throughout his dominions, was his occupation afterward, till he abandoned the field in despair. It was certainly not desirable for the Netherlanders that they should be thus controlled by a man who forced them to contribute so largely to the success of schemes, some of which were at best indifferent, and others entirely odious to them. They paid 1,200,000 crowns a year regularly; they paid in five years an extraordinary subsidy of eight millions of ducats, and the States were roundly rebuked by the courtly representatives of their despot, if they
presumed to inquire into the objects of the appropriations, or to express an interest in their judicious administration. Yet it may be supposed to have been a matter of indifference to them whether Francis or Charles had won the day at Pavia, and it certainly was not a cause of triumph to the daily increasing thousands of religious reformers in Holland and Flanders that their brethren had been crushed by the Emperor at Mühlberg. But it was not alone that he drained their treasure, and hampered their industry. He was in constant conflict with their ancient and dearly-bought political liberties. Like his ancestor Charles the Bold, he was desirous of constructing a kingdom out of the provinces. He was disposed to place all their separate and individual charters on a pro-crustean bed, and shape them all into uniformity simply by reducing the whole to a nullity.

The difficulties in the way, the stout opposition offered by burghers, whose fathers had gained these charters with their blood, and his want of leisure during the vast labors which devolved upon him as the autocrat of so large a portion of the world, caused him to defer indefinitely the execution of his plan. He found time only to crush some of the foremost of the liberal institutions of the provinces, in detail. He found the city of Tournay a happy, thriving, self-governed little republic in all its local affairs; he destroyed its liberties, without a tolerable pretext, and reduced it to the condition of a Spanish or Italian provincial town. His memorable chastisement of Ghent for having dared to assert its ancient rights of self-taxation, is sufficiently known to the world, and has been already narrated at length. Many other instances might be adduced, if it were not a superfluous task, to prove that Charles was not only a political despot, but most arbitrary and cruel in the exercise of his despotism.

But if his sins against the Netherlands had been only those of financial and political oppression, it would be at least conceivable, although certainly not commendable, that the inhabitants should have regretted his departure. But there are far darker crimes for which he stands arraigned at the bar of history, and it is indeed strange that the man who had committed them should have been permitted to speak his farewell amid blended plaudits and tears. His hand planted the inquisition in the Netherlands. Before his day it is idle to say that the diabolical institution ever had a place there. The isolated cases in which inquisitors had exercised functions proved the absence and not the presence of the system, and will be discussed in a later chapter. Charles introduced and organized a papal inquisition, side by side with those terrible "placards" of his invention, which constituted a masked inquisition even more cruel than that of Spain. The execution of the system was never permitted to languish. The number of Netherlanders who were burned, strangled, beheaded, or buried alive, in obedience to his edicts, and for the offenses of reading the Scriptures, of looking askance at a graven image, or of ridiculing the actual presence of the body and blood of Christ in a wafer, have been placed as high as 100,000 by distinguished authorities, and have never been put at a lower mark than 50,000. The Venetian envoy Navigerc placed the number of victims in the
provinces of Holland and Friesland alone at 30,000, and this in 1546, ten years before the abdication, and five before the promulgation of the hideous edict of 1550.

The edicts and the inquisition were the gift of Charles to the Netherlands, in return for their wasted treasure and their constant obedience. For this, his name deserves to be handed down to eternal infamy, not only throughout the Netherlands, but in every land where a single heart beats for political or religious freedom. To eradicate these institutions after they had been watered and watched by the care of his successor, was the work of an eighty years’ war, in the course of which millions of lives were sacrificed. Yet the abdicating Emperor had summoned his faithful estates around him, and stood up before them in his imperial robes for the last time, to tell them of the affectionate regard which he had always borne them, and to mingle his tears with theirs.

Could a single phantom have risen from one of the many thousand graves where human beings had been thrust alive by his decree, perhaps there might have been an answer to the question propounded by the Emperor amid all that piteous weeping. Perhaps it might have told the man who asked his hearers to be forgiven if he had ever unwittingly offended them, that there was a world where it was deemed an offense to torture, strangle, burn, and drown one’s innocent fellow creatures. The usual but trifling excuse for such enormities can not be pleaded for the Emperor. Charles was no fanatic. The man whose armies sacked Rome, who laid his sacrilegious hands on Christ’s vicegerent, and kept the infallible head of the Church a prisoner to serve his own political ends, was then no bigot. He believed in nothing, save that when the course of his imperial will was impeded, and the interests of his imperial house in jeopardy, pontiffs were to succumb as well as anabaptists. It was the political heresy which lurked in the restiveness of the religious reformers under dogma, tradition, and supernatural sanction to temporal power, which he was disposed to combat to the death. He was too shrewd a politician not to recognize the connection between aspirations for religious and for political freedom. His hand was ever ready to crush both heresies in one. Had he been a true son of the Church, a faithful champion of her infallibility, he would not have submitted to the peace of Passau, so long as he could bring a soldier to the field. Yet he acquiesced in the Reformation for Germany, while the fires for burning the reformers were ever blazing in the Netherlands, where it was death even to allude to the existence of the peace of Passau. Nor did he acquiesce only from compulsion, for long before his memorable defeat by Maurice, he had permitted the German troops, with whose services he could not dispense, regularly to attend Protestant worship performed by their own Protestant chaplains. Lutheran preachers marched from city to city of the Netherlands under the imperial banner, while the subjects of those patrimonial provinces were daily suffering on the scaffold for their nonconformity. The influence of this garrison-preaching upon the progress of the Reformation in the Netherlands is well known. Charles hated Lutherans, but he required
soldiers, and he thus helped by his own policy to disseminate what, had he been the fanatic which he perhaps became in retirement, he would have sacrificed his life to crush. It is quite true that the growing Calvinism of the provinces was more dangerous both religiously and politically, than the Protestantism of the German princes, which had not yet been formally pronounced heresy, but it is thus the more evident that it was political rather than religious heterodoxy which the despot wished to suppress.

No man, however, could have been more observant of religious rites. He heard mass daily. He listened to a sermon every Sunday and holiday. He confessed and received the sacrament four times a year. He was sometimes to be seen in his tent at midnight, on his knees before a crucifix with eyes and hands uplifted. He ate no meat in Lent, and used extraordinary diligence to discover and to punish any man, whether courtier or plebeian, who failed to fast during the whole forty days. He was too good a politician not to know the value of broad phylacteries and long prayers. He was too nice an observer of human nature not to know how easily mint and cummin could still outweigh the "weightier matters of law, judgment, mercy and faith"; as if the founder of the religion which he professed, and to maintain which he had established the inquisition and the edicts, had never cried woe upon the Pharisees. Yet there is no doubt that the Emperor was at times almost popular in the Netherlands, and that he was never as odious as his successor. There were some deep reasons for this, and some superficial ones; among others, a singularly fortunate manner. He spoke German, Spanish, Italian, French, and Flemish, and could assume the characteristics of each country as easily as he could use its language. He could be stately with Spaniards, familiar with Flemings, witty with Italians. He could strike down a bull in the ring like a matador at Madrid, or win the prize in the tourney like a knight of old; he could ride at the ring with the Flemish nobles, hit the popinjay with his crossbow among Antwerp artisans, or drink beer and exchange rude jests with the boors of Brabant. For virtues such as these, his grave crimes against God and man, against religion and chartered and solemnly-sworn rights have been palliated, as if oppression became more tolerable because the oppressor was an accomplished linguist and a good marksman.

But the great reason for his popularity no doubt lay in his military genius. Charles was inferior to no general of his age. "When he was born into the world," said Alva, "he was born a soldier," and the Emperor confirmed the statement and reciprocated the compliment, when he declared that "the three first captains of the age were himself first, and then the Duke of Alva and Constable Montmorency." It is quite true that all his officers were not of the same opinion, and many were too apt to complain that his constant presence in the field did more harm than good, and "that his Majesty would do much better to stay at home." There is, however, no doubt that he was both a good soldier and a good general, He was constitutionally fearless, and he possessed great energy and endurance. He was ever the first to arm when a battle was to be
fought, and the last to take off his harness. He commanded in person and in chief, even when surrounded by veterans and crippled by the gout. He was calm in great reverses. It was said that he was never known to change color except upon two occasions—after the fatal destruction of his fleet at Algiers, and in the memorable flight from Innspruck. He was of a phlegmatic, stoical temperament, until shattered by age and disease; a man without a sentiment and without a tear. It was said by Spaniards that he was never seen to weep, even at the death of his nearest relatives and friends, except on the solitary occasion of the departure of Don Ferrante Gonzaga from court. Such a temperament was invaluable in the stormy career to which he had devoted his life. He was essentially a man of action, a military chieftain. "Pray only for my health and my life," he was accustomed to say to the young officers who came to him from every part of his dominions to serve under his banners, "for so long as I have these I will never leave you idle, at least in France. I love peace no better than the rest of you. I was born and bred to arms, and must of necessity keep on my harness till I can bear it no longer." The restless energy and the magnificent tranquility of his character made him a hero among princes, an idol with his officers, a popular favorite everywhere. The promptness with which, at much personal hazard, he descended like a thunderbolt in the midst of the Ghent insurrection; the juvenile ardor with which the almost bedridden man arose from his sickbed to smite the Protestants at Mühlberg; the grim stoicism with which he saw 60,000 of his own soldiers perish in the wintry siege of Metz; all ensured him a large measure of that applause which ever follows military distinction, especially when the man who achieves it happens to wear a crown. He combined the personal prowess of a knight of old with the more modern accomplishments of a scientific tactician. He could charge the enemy in person like the most brilliant cavalry officer, and he thoroughly understood the arrangements of a campaign, the marshalling and victualling of troops, and the whole art of setting and maintaining an army in the field.

Yet, though brave and warlike as the most chivalrous of his ancestors, Gothic, Burgundian, or Suabian, he was entirely without chivalry. Fanaticism for the faith, protection for the oppressed, fidelity to friend and foe, knightly loyalty to a cause deemed sacred, the sacrifice of personal interests to great ideas, generosity of hand and heart; all those qualities which unite with courage and constancy to make up the ideal chevalier, Charles not only lacked but despised. He trampled on the weak antagonist, whether burgher or petty potentate. He was false as water. He inveigled his foes who trusted to imperial promises by arts unworthy an emperor or a gentleman. He led about the unfortunate John Frederic of Saxony, in his own language, "like a bear in a chain," ready to be slipped upon Maurice should "the boy" prove ungrateful. He connived at the famous forgery of the prelate of Arras, to which the Landgrave Philip owed his long imprisonment, a villany worse than many for which humbler rogues have suffered by thousands upon the gallows. The contemporary world knew well the history of his frauds, on scale both colossal and minute, and called him familiarly "Charles qui triche."
The absolute master of realms on which the sun perpetually shone, he was not only greedy for additional dominion, but he was avaricious in small matters, and hated to part with a hundred dollars. To the soldier who brought him the sword and gauntlets of Francis I, he gave a hundred crowns, when ten thousand would have been less than the customary present; so that the man left his presence full of desperation. The three soldiers who swam the Elbe, with their swords in their mouths, to bring him the boats with which he passed to the victory of Mühlberg, received from his imperial bounty a doublet, a pair of stockings, and four crowns apiece. His courtiers and ministers complained bitterly of his habitual niggardliness, and were fain to eke out their slender salaries by accepting bribes from every hand rich enough to bestow them. In truth Charles was more than anything else a politician, notwithstanding his signal abilities as a soldier. If to have founded institutions which could last, be the test of statesmanship, he was even a statesman; for many of his institutions have resisted the pressure of three centuries. But those of Charlemagne fell as soon as his hand was cold, while the works of many ordinary legislators have attained to a perpetuity denied to the statutes of Solon or Lycurgus. Durability is not the test of merit in human institutions. Tried by the only touchstone applicable to governments, their capacity to insure the highest welfare of the governed, we shall not find his polity deserving of much admiration. It is not merely that he was a despot by birth and inclination, nor that he naturally substituted as far as was practicable, the despotic for the republican element, wherever his hand can be traced. There may be possible good in despotisms as there is often much tyranny in democracy. Tried however according to the standard by which all governments may be measured, those laws of truth and divine justice which all Christian nations recognize, and which are perpetual, whether recognized or not, we shall find little to venerate in the life work of the Emperor. The interests of his family, the security of his dynasty, these were his end and aim. The happiness or the progress of his people never furnished even the indirect motives of his conduct, and the result was a baffled policy and a crippled and bankrupt empire at last.

He knew men, especially he knew their weaknesses, and he knew how to turn them to account. He knew how much they would bear, and that little grievances would sometimes inflame more than vast and deliberate injustice. Therefore he employed natives mainly in the subordinate offices of his various states, and he repeatedly warned his successor that the haughtiness of Spaniards and the incompatibility of their character with the Flemish, would be productive of great difficulties and dangers. It was his opinion that men might be tyrannized more intelligently by their own kindred, and in this perhaps he was right. He was indefatigable in the discharge of business, and if it were possible that half a world could be administered as if it were the private property of an individual, the task would have been perhaps as well accomplished by Charles as by any man. He had not the absurdity of supposing it possible for him to attend to the details of every individual affair in every
one of his realms; and he therefore entrusted the stewardship of all specialties to his various ministers and agents. It was his business to know men and to deal with affairs on a large scale, and in this he certainly was superior to his successor. His correspondence was mainly in the hands of Granvelle the elder, who analyzed letters received, and frequently wrote all but the signatures of the answers.

The same minister usually possessed the imperial ear, and farmed it out for his own benefit. In all this there was of course room for vast deception, but the Emperor was quite aware of what was going on, and took a philosophic view of the matter as an inevitable part of his system. Granvelle grew enormously rich under his eye by trading on the imperial favor and sparing his majesty much trouble. Charles saw it all, ridiculed his peculations, but called him his "bed of down." His knowledge of human nature was however derived from a contemplation mainly of its weaknesses, and was therefore one-sided. He was often deceived, and made many a fatal blunder, shrewd politician though he was. He involved himself often in enterprises which could not be honorable or profitable, and which inflicted damage on his greatest interests. He often offended men who might have been useful friends, and converted allies into enemies. "His Majesty," said a keen observer who knew him well, "has not in his career shewn the prudence which was necessary to him. He has often offended those whose love he might have conciliated, converted friends into enemies, and let those perish who were his most faithful partisans." Thus it must be acknowledged that even his boasted knowledge of human nature and his power of dealing with men was rather superficial and empirical than the real gift of genius.

His personal habits during the greater part of his life were those of an indefatigable soldier. He could remain in the saddle day and night, and endure every hardship but hunger. He was addicted to vulgar and miscellaneous incontinence. He was an enormous eater. He breakfasted at five, on a fowl seethed in milk and dressed with sugar and spices. After this he went to sleep again. He dined at twelve, partaking always of twenty dishes. He supped twice; at first, soon after vespers, and the second time at midnight or one o’clock, which meal was, perhaps, the most solid of the four. After meat he ate a great quantity of pastry and sweetmeats, and he irrigated every repast by vast draughts of beer and wine. His stomach, originally a wonderful one, succumbed after forty years of such labors. His taste, but not his appetite began to fail, and he complained to his major domo, that all his food was insipid. The reply is, perhaps, among the most celebrated of facetiae. The cook could do nothing more unless he served his Majesty a pasty of watches. The allusion to the Emperor’s passion for horology was received with great applause. Charles "laughed longer than he was ever known to laugh before, and all the courtiers (of course) laughed as long as his Majesty." The success of so sorry a jest would lead one to suppose that the fooling was less admirable at the imperial court than some of the recorded quips of Tribaulet would lead us to suppose.
The transfer of the other crowns and dignitaries to Philip, was accomplished a month afterwards, in a quiet manner. Spain, Sicily, the Balearic Islands, America, and other portions of the globe, were made over without more display than an ordinary *donatio inter vivos*. The Empire occasioned some difficulty. It had been already signified to Ferdinand that his brother was to resign the imperial crown in his favor, and the symbols of sovereignty were accordingly transmitted to him by the hands of William of Orange. A deputation, moreover, of which that nobleman, Vice-Chancellor Seld, and Dr. Wolfgang Haller were the chiefs, was dispatched to signify to the electors of the Empire the step which had been thus resolved upon. A delay of more than two years, however, intervened, occasioned partly by the deaths of three electors, partly by the war which so soon broke out in Europe, before the matter was formally acted upon. In February 1553, however, the electors, having been assembled in Frankfort, received the abdication of Charles, and proceeded to the election of Ferdinand. That Emperor was crowned in March, and immediately dispatched a legation to the pope to apprize him of the fact. Nothing was less expected than any opposition on the part of the pontiff. The querulous dotard, however, who then sat in St. Peter’s chair, hated Charles and all his race. He accordingly denied the validity of the whole transaction, without sanction previously obtained from the pope, to whom all crowns belonged. Ferdinand, after listening, through his envoys, to much ridiculous dogmatism on the part of the pope, at last withdrew from the discussion, with a formal protest, and was first recognized by Caraffa’s successor, Pius IV.

Charles had not deferred his retirement till the end of these disputes. He occupied a private house in Brussels, near the gate of Louvain, until August of the year 1556. On the 27th of that month, he addressed a letter from Ghent to John of Osnabruck, president of the Chamber of Spiers, stating his abdication in favor of Ferdinand, and requesting that in the interim the same obedience might be rendered to Ferdinand, as could have been yielded to himself. Ten days later, he addressed a letter to the estates of the Empire, stating the same fact; and on the 17th September, 1556, he set sail from Zealand for Spain. These delays and difficulties occasioned some misconceptions. Many persons who did not admire an abdication, which others, on the contrary, esteemed as an act of unexampled magnanimity, stoutly denied that it was the intention of Charles to renounce the Empire. The Venetian envoy informed his government that Ferdinand was only to lieutenant for Charles, under strict limitations, and that the emperor was to resume the government so soon as his health would allow. The Bishop of Arras and Don Juan de Manrique had both assured him, he said, that Charles would not, on any account, definitely abdicate. Manrique even asserted that it was a mere farce to believe in any such intention. The Emperor ought to remain to protect his son, by the resources of the Empire, against France, the Turks, and the heretics. His very shadow was terrible to the Lutherans, and his form might be expected to rise again in stern reality from its temporary grave.
Time has shown the falsity of all these imaginings, but views thus maintained by those in the best condition to know the truth, prove how difficult it was for men to believe in a transaction which was then so extraordinary, and how little consonant it was in their eyes with true propriety. It was necessary to ascend to the times of Diocletian, to find an example of a similar abdication of empire, on so deliberate and extensive a scale, and the great English historian of the Roman Empire has compared the two acts with each other. But there seems a vast difference between the cases. Both emperors were distinguished soldiers; both were merciless persecutors of defenseless Christians; both exchanged unbounded empire for absolute seclusion. But Diocletian was born in the lowest abyss of human degradation—the slave and the son of a slave. For such a man, after having reached the highest pinnacle of human greatness, voluntarily to descend from power, seems an act of far greater magnanimity than the retreat of Charles. Born in the purple, having exercised unlimited authority from his boyhood, and having worn from his cradle so many crowns and coronets, the German Emperor might well be supposed to have learned to estimate them at their proper value.

Contemporary minds were busy, however, to discover the hidden motives which could have influenced him; and the world, even yet, has hardly ceased to wonder. Yet it would have been more wonderful, considering the Emperor’s character, had he remained. The end had not crowned the work; it not unreasonably discrowned the workman. The earlier, and indeed the greater part of his career had been one unbroken procession of triumphs. The cherished dream of his grandfather, and of his own youth, to add the pope’s triple crown to the rest of the hereditary possessions of his family, he had indeed been obliged to resign.

He had too much practical Flemish sense to indulge long in chimeras, but he had achieved the Empire over formidable rivals, and he had successively not only conquered, but captured almost every potentate who had arrayed himself in arms against him. Clement and Francis, the Dukes and Landgraves of Cleves, Hesse, Saxony, and Brunswick, he had bound to his chariot wheels, forcing many to eat the bread of humiliation and captivity during long and weary years. But the concluding portion of his reign had reversed all its previous glories. His whole career had been a failure. He had been defeated, after all, in most of his projects. He had humbled Francis, but Henry had most signally avenged his father. He had trampled upon Philip of Hesse and Frederic of Saxony, but it had been reserved for one of that German race, which he characterized as “dreamy, drunken, and incapable of intrigue,” to outwit the man who had outwitted all the world, and to drive before him, in ignominious flight, the conqueror of the nations. The German lad who had learned both war and dissimulation in the court and camp of him who was so profound a master of both arts, was destined to eclipse his teacher on the most august theatre of Christendom. Absorbed at Innspruck with the deliberations of the Trent Council, Charles had not heeded the distant mutterings of the tempest which
was gathering around him. While he was preparing to crush, forever, the Protestant Church, with the arms which a bench of bishops were forging, lo! the rapid and desperate Maurice, with long red beard streaming like a meteor in the wind, dashing through the mountain passes, at the head of his lancers—arguments more convincing than all the dogmas of Granvelle! Disguised as an old woman, the Emperor had attempted on the 6th of April, to escape in a peasant’s wagon, from Innspruck into Flanders. Saved for the time by the mediation of Ferdinand, he had, a few weeks later, after his troops had been defeated by Maurice, at Füssen, again fled at midnight of the 22nd of May, almost unattended, sick in body and soul, in the midst of thunder, lightning, and rain, along the difficult Alpine passes from Innspruck into Carinthia. His pupil had permitted his escape, only because in his own language, "for such a bird he had no convenient cage."

The imprisoned princes now owed their liberation, not to the Emperor’s clemency, but to his panic. The peace of Passau, in the following August, crushed the whole fabric of the Emperor’s toil, and laid the foundation of the Protestant Church. He had smitten the Protestants at Mühlberg for the last time. On the other hand, the man who had dealt with Rome, as if the pope, not he, had been the vassal, was compelled to witness, before he departed, the insolence of a pontiff who took a special pride in insulting and humbling his house, and trampling upon the pride of Charles, Philip, and Ferdinand. In France too, the disastrous siege of Metz had taught him that in the imperial zodiac the fatal sign of Cancer had been reached. The figure of a crab, with the words "plus citra," instead of his proud motto of "plus ultra," scrawled on the walls where he had resided during that dismal epoch, avenged more deeply, perhaps, than the jester thought, the previous misfortunes of France. The Grand Turk, too, Solyman the Magnificent, possessed most of Hungary, and held at that moment a fleet ready to sail against Naples, in cooperation with the pope and France. Thus the Infidel, the Protestant, and the Holy Church were all combined together to crush him. Towards all the great powers of the earth, he stood not in the attitude of a conqueror, but of a disappointed, baffled, defeated potentate.

Moreover, he had been foiled long before in his earnest attempt to secure the imperial throne for Philip. Ferdinand and Maximilian had both stoutly resisted his arguments and his blandishments. The father had represented the slender patrimony of their branch of the family, compared with the enormous heritage of Philip; who, being after all, but a man, and endowed with finite powers, might sink under so great a pressure of empire as his father wished to provide for him. Maximilian, also, assured his uncle that he had as good an appetite for the crown as Philip, and could digest the dignity quite as easily. The son, too, for whom the Emperor was thus solicitous, had already, before the abdication, repaid his affection with ingratitude. He had turned out all his father’s old officials in Milan, and had refused to visit him at Brussels, till assured as to the
amount of ceremonial respect which the new-made king was to receive at the hands of his father.

Had the Emperor continued to live and reign, he would have found himself likewise engaged in mortal combat with that great religious movement in the Netherlands, which he would not have been able many years longer to suppress, and which he left as a legacy of blood and fire to his successor. Born in the same year with his century, Charles was a decrepit, exhausted man at fifty-five, while that glorious age, in which humanity was to burst forever the cerements in which it had so long been buried, was but awakening to a consciousness of its strength.

Disappointed in his schemes, broken in his fortunes, with income anticipated, estates mortgaged, all his affairs in confusion, failing in mental powers, and with a constitution hopelessly shattered, it was time for him to retire. He showed his keenness in recognizing the fact that neither his power nor his glory would be increased, should he lag superfluous on the stage where mortification instead of applause was likely to be his portion. His frame was indeed but a wreck. Forty years of unexampled gluttony had done their work. He was a victim to gout, asthma, dyspepsia, gravel. He was crippled in the neck, arms, knees, and hands. He was troubled with chronic cutaneous eruptions. His appetite remained, while his stomach, unable longer to perform the task still imposed upon it, occasioned him constant suffering. Physiologists, who know how important a part this organ plays in the affairs of life, will perhaps see in this physical condition of the Emperor a sufficient explanation, if explanation were required, of his descent from the throne. Moreover, it is well known that the resolution to abdicate before his death had been long a settled scheme with him. It had been formally agreed between himself and the Empress that they should separate at the approach of old age, and pass the remainder of their lives in a convent and a monastery. He had, when comparatively a young man, been struck by the reply made to him by an aged officer, whose reasons he had asked for, earnestly soliciting permission to retire from the imperial service. It was, said the veteran, that he might put a little space of religious contemplation between the active portion of his life and the grave.

A similar determination, deferred from time to time, Charles had now carried into execution. While he still lingered in Brussels, after his abdication, a comet appeared, to warn him to the fulfillment of his purpose. From first to last, comets and other heavenly bodies were much connected with his evolutions and arrangements. There was no mistaking the motives with which this luminary had presented itself. The Emperor knew very well, says a contemporary German chronicler, that it portended pestilence and war, together with the approaching death of mighty princes. "My fates call out," he cried, and forthwith applied himself to hasten the preparations for his departure.
The romantic picture of his philosophical retirement at Juste, painted originally by Sandoval and Siguenza, reproduced by the fascinating pencil of Strada, and imitated in frequent succession by authors of every age and country, is unfortunately but a sketch of fancy. The investigations of modern writers have entirely thrown down the scaffolding on which the airy fabric, so delightful to poets and moralists, reposed. The departing Emperor stands no longer in a transparency robed in shining garments. His transfiguration is at an end. Every action, almost every moment of his retirement, accurately chronicled by those who shared his solitude, have been placed before our eyes, in the most felicitous manner, by able and brilliant writers. The Emperor, shorn of the philosophical robe in which he had been conventionally arrayed for three centuries, shivers now in the cold air of reality.

So far from his having immersed himself in profound and pious contemplation, below the current of the world’s events, his thoughts, on the contrary, never were for a moment diverted from the political surface of the times. He read nothing but dispatches; he wrote or dictated interminable ones in reply, as dull and prolix as any which ever came from his pen. He manifested a succession of emotions at the course of contemporary affairs, as intense and as varied, as if the world still rested in his palm. He was, in truth, essentially a man of action. He had neither the taste nor talents which make a man great in retirement. Not a lofty thought, not a generous sentiment, not a profound or acute suggestion in his retreat has been recorded from his lips. The epigrams which had been invented for him by fabulists have been all taken away, and nothing has been substituted, save a few dull jests exchanged with stupid friars. So far from having entertained and even expressed that sentiment of religious toleration for which he was said to have been condemned as a heretic by the inquisition, and for which Philip was ridiculously reported to have ordered his father’s body to be burned, and his ashes scattered to the winds, he became in retreat the bigot effectually, which during his reign he had only been conventionally.

Bitter regrets that he should have kept his word to Luther, as if he had not broken faith enough to reflect upon in his retirement; stern self-reproach for omitting to put to death, while he had him in his power, the man who had caused all the mischief of the age; fierce instructions thundered from his retreat to the inquisitors to hasten the execution of all heretics, including particularly his ancient friends, preachers, and almoners, Cazalla and Constantine de Fuente; furious exhortations to Philip—as if Philip needed a prompter in such a work—that he should set himself to "cutting out the root of heresy with rigor and rude chastisement"; such explosions of savage bigotry as these, alternating with exhibitions of revolting gluttony, with surfeits of sardine omelettes, Estramadura sausages, eel pies, pickled partridges, fat capons, quince syrups, iced beer, and flagons of Rhenish, relieved by copious draughts of senna and rhubarb, to which his horror-stricken doctor doomed him as he ate, compose a spectacle less attractive to the imagination than the
ancient portrait of the cloistered Charles. Unfortunately it is the one which was
painted from life.

CHAPTER 2

Philip II and the Conflict with France

Philip II had received the investiture of Milan and the Crown of Naples,
previously to his marriage with Mary Tudor. The imperial crown he had been
oblige, much against his will, to forego. The archduchy of Austria, with the
hereditary German dependencies of his father’s family, had been transferred
by the Emperor to his brother Ferdinand, on the occasion of the marriage of
that prince with Anna, only sister of King Louis of Hungary. Ten years
afterwards, Ferdinand (King of Hungary and Bohemia since the death of Louis,
slain in 1526 at the battle of Mohacaz) was elected King of the Romans, and
steadily refused all the entreaties afterwards made to him in behalf of Philip,
to resign his crown and his succession to the Empire, in favor of his nephew.
With these diminutions, Philip had now received all the dominions of his father.
He was King of all the Spanish kingdoms and of both the Sicilies. He was titular
King of England, France, and Jerusalem. He was “Absolute Dominator” in Asia,
Africa, and America; he was Duke of Milan and of both Burgundies, and
Hereditary Sovereign of the seventeen Netherlands.

Thus the provinces had received a new master. A man of foreign birth and
breeding, not speaking a word of their language, nor of any language which the
mass of the inhabitants understood, was now placed in supreme authority over
them, because he represented, through the females, the “good” Philip of
Burgundy, who a century before had possessed himself by inheritance,
purchase, force, or fraud, of the sovereignty in most of those provinces. It is
necessary to say an introductory word or two concerning the previous history of
the man to whose hands the destiny of so many millions was now entrusted.

He was born in May 1527, and was now therefore twenty-eight years of age. At
the age of sixteen he had been united to his cousin, Maria of Portugal,
daughter of John III and of the Emperor’s sister, Donna Catalina. In the
following year (1544) he became father of the celebrated and ill-starred Don
Carlos, and a widower. The princess owed her death, it was said, to her own
imprudence and to the negligence or bigotry of her attendants. The Duchess of
Alva, and other ladies who had charge of her during her confinement, deserted
her chamber in order to obtain absolution by witnessing an auto-da-fé of
heretics. During their absence, the princess partook voraciously of a melon,
and forfeited her life in consequence.
In 1548, Don Philip had made his first appearance in the Netherlands. He came thither to receive homage in the various provinces as their future sovereign, and to exchange oaths of mutual fidelity with them all. Andrew Doria, with a fleet of fifty ships, had brought him to Genoa, whence he had passed to Milan, where he was received with great rejoicing. At Trent he was met by Duke Maurice of Saxony, who warmly begged his intercession with the Emperor in behalf of the imprisoned Landgrave of Hesse. This boon Philip was graciously pleased to promise, and to keep the pledge as sacredly as most of the vows plighted by him during this memorable year. The Duke of Aerschot met him in Germany with a regiment of cavalry and escorted him to Brussels. A summer was spent in great festivities, the cities of the Netherlands vying with each other in magnificent celebrations of the ceremonies, by which Philip successively swore allegiance to the various constitutions and charters of the provinces, and received their oaths of future fealty in return. His oath to support all the constitutions and privileges was without reservation, while his father and grandfather had only sworn to maintain the charters granted or confirmed by Philip and Charles of Burgundy. Suspicion was disarmed by these indiscriminate concessions, which had been resolved upon by the unscrupulous Charles to conciliate the good will of the people. In view of the pretensions which might be preferred by the Brederode family in Holland, and by other descendants of ancient sovereign races in other provinces, the Emperor, wishing to ensure the succession to his sisters in case of the deaths of himself, Philip, and Don Carlos without issue, was unsparing in those promises which he knew to be binding only upon the weak. Although the house of Burgundy had usurped many of the provinces on the express pretest that females could not inherit, the rule had been already violated, and he determined to spare no pains to conciliate the estates, in order that they might be content with a new violation, should the contingency occur.

Philip’s oaths were therefore without reserve, and the light-hearted Flemings, Brabantines, and Walloons received him with open arms. In Valenciennes the festivities which attended his entrance were on a most gorgeous scale, but the "joyous entrance" arranged for him at Antwerp was of unparalleled magnificence. A cavalcade of the magistrates and notable burghers, "all attired in cromoisy velvet," attended by lackies in splendid liversies and followed by four thousand citizen soldiers in full uniform, went forth from the gates to receive him. Twenty-eight triumphal arches, which alone, according to the thrifty chronicler, had cost 26,800 Carolus guldens, were erected in the different streets and squares, and every possible demonstration of affectionate welcome was lavished upon the Prince and the Emperor. The rich and prosperous city, unconscious of the doom which awaited it in the future, seemed to have covered itself with garlands to honor the approach of its master. Yet icy was the deportment with which Philip received these demonstrations of affection, and haughty the glance with which he looked down upon these exhibitions of civic hilarity, as from the height of a grim and inaccessible tower. The impression made upon the Netherlanders was anything
but favorable, and when he had fully experienced the futility of the projects on
the Empire which it was so difficult both for his father and himself to resign, he
returned to the more congenial soil of Spain.

In 1554 he had again issued from the peninsula to marry the Queen of England,
a privilege which his father had graciously resigned to him. He was united to
Mary Tudor at Winchester, on the 25th of July of that year, and if congeniality
of tastes could have made a marriage happy, that union should have been
thrice blessed. To maintain the supremacy of the Church seemed to both the
main object of existence, to execute unbelievers the most sacred duty imposed
by the Deity upon anointed princes, to convert their kingdoms into a hell the
surest means of winning Heaven for themselves. It was not strange that the
conjunction of two such wonders of superstition in one sphere should have
seemed portentous in the eyes of the English nation. Philip's mock efforts in
favor of certain condemned reformers, and his pretended intercessions in favor
of the Princess Elizabeth, failed entirely of their object. The parliament
refused to confer upon him more than a nominal authority in England. His
children, should they be born, might be sovereigns; he was but husband of the
Queen, of a woman who could not atone by her abject but peevish fondness for
himself, and by her congenial blood-thirstiness towards her subjects, for her
eleven years' seniority, her deficiency in attractions, and her incapacity to
make him the father of a line of English monarchs.

It Almost excites compassion even for Mary Tudor, when her passionate efforts
to inspire him with affection are contrasted with impassiveness. Tyrant, bigot,
murderess though she was, was still woman, and she lavished upon her husband
all that was not ferocious in her nature. Forbidding prayers to be said for the
soul of her father, hating her sister and her people, burning bishops, bathing
herself in the blood of heretics, to Philip she was all submissiveness and
feminine emotion. It was a most singular contrast, Mary the Queen England and
Mary the wife of Philip. Small, lean and sickly; painfully near-sighted, yet with
an eye of fierceness and fire; her face wrinkled by the hands of care and evil
passions still more than by Time; with a big man's voice, whose harshness
made those in the next room tremble; yet feminine in her tastes, skillful with
her needle, fond of embroidery work, striking the lute with a touch remarkable
for its science and feeling, speaking many languages, including Latin, with
fluency and grace; most feminine, too, in her constitutional sufferings;
hysterical of habit; shedding floods of tears daily at Philip's coldness,
undisguised infidelity, and frequent absences from England; she almost
awakens compassion and causes a momentary oblivion of her identity.

Her subjects, already half maddened by religious persecution, were
exasperated still further by the pecuniary burdens which she imposed upon
them to supply the King's exigencies, and she unhesitatingly confronted their
frenzy, in the hope of winning a smile from him. When at last her chronic
maladies had assumed the memorable form which caused Philip and Mary to
unite in a letter to Cardinal Pole, announcing not the expected but the actual birth of a prince, but judiciously leaving the date in blank, the momentary satisfaction and delusion of the Queen was unbounded. The false intelligence was transmitted everywhere. Great were the joy and the festivities in the Netherlands, where people were so easily made to rejoice and keep holiday for anything. "The Regent, being in Antwerp," wrote Sir Thomas Gresham to the lords of council, "did cause the great bell to ringe to give all men to understand that the news was trewe. The Queene’s highness’ mere merchants caused all our Inglishe ships to shoote off with such joy and triumph, as by men’s arts and pollicey coulde be devised—and the Regent sent our Inglishe maroners one hundred crownes to drynke." If bell ringing and cannon firing could have given England a Spanish sovereign, the devoutly-wished consummation would have been reached. When the futility of the royal hopes could no longer be concealed, Philip left the country, never to return till his war with France made him require troops, subsidies, and a declaration of hostilities from England.

The personal appearance of the new sovereign has already been described. His manner was far from conciliatory, and in this respect he was the absolute reverse of his father. Upon his first journey out of Spain, in 1548, into his various dominions, he had made a most painful impression everywhere. "He was disagreeable," says Envoy Suriano, "to the Italians, detestable to the Flemings, odious to the Germans."

The remonstrances of the Emperor, and of Queen Mary of Hungary, at the impropriety of his manners, had produced, however, some effect, so that on his wedding journey to England, he manifested much "gentleness and humanity, mingled with royal gravity." Upon this occasion, says another Venetian, accredited to him, "he had divested himself of that Spanish haughtiness, which, when he first came from Spain, had rendered him so odious." The famous ambassador, Badovaro confirms the impression. "Upon his first journey," he says, "he was esteemed proud, and too greedy for the imperial succession; but now ’tis the common opinion that his humanity and modesty are all which could be desired." These humane qualities, however, it must be observed, were exhibited only in the presence of ambassadors and grandees, the only representatives of "humanity" with whom he came publicly and avowedly in contact.

He was thought deficient in manly energy. He was an infirm valetudinarian, and was considered as sluggish in character, as deficient in martial enterprise, as timid of temperament as he was fragile and sickly of frame. It is true, that on account of the disappointment which he occasioned by his contrast to his warlike father, he mingled in some tournaments in Brussels, where he was matched against Count Mansfeld, one of the most distinguished chieftains of the age, and where, says his professed panegyrist, "he broke his lances very much to the satisfaction of his father and aunts."
That learned and eloquent author, Estelle Calvete, even filled the greater part of a volume, in which he described the journey of the Prince, with a minute description of these feasts and jousts, but we may reasonably conclude that to the loyal imagination of his eulogist Philip is indebted for most of these knightly trophies.

It was the universal opinion of unprejudiced cotemporaries, that he was without a spark of enterprise. He was ever censured for a culpable want of ambition, and for being inferior to his father in this respect, as if the love of encroaching on his neighbor’s dominions, and a disposition to foreign commotions and war would have constituted additional virtues, had he happened to possess them. Those who were most disposed to think favorably of him, remembered that there was a time when even Charles V was thought weak and indolent, and were willing to ascribe Philip’s pacific disposition to his habitual cholic and side-ache, and to his father’s inordinate care for him in youth. They even looked forward to the time when he should blaze forth to the world as a conqueror and a hero. These, however, were views entertained by but few; the general, and the correct opinion, as it proved, being, that Philip hated war, would never certainly acquire any personal distinction in the field, and when engaged in hostilities would be apt to father his laurels at the hands of his generals, rather than with his own sword. He was believed to be the reverse of the Emperor. Charles sought great enterprises; Philip would avoid them. The Emperor never recoiled before threats; the son was reserved, cautious, suspicious of all men, and capable of sacrificing a realm from hesitation and timidity. The father had a genius for action, the son a predilection for repose. Charles took “all men’s opinions, but reserved his judgment,” and acted on it, when matured, with irresistible energy; Philip was led by others, was vacillating in forming decisions, and irresolute in executing them when formed.

Philip, then, was not considered, in that warlike age, as likely to shine as a warrior. His mental capacity, in general, was likewise not very highly esteemed. His talents were, in truth, very much below mediocrity. His mind was incredibly small. A petty passion for contemptible details characterized him from his youth, and, as long as he lived, he could neither learn to generalize, nor understand that one man, however diligent, could not be minutely acquainted with all the public and private affairs of fifty millions of other men. He was a glutton of work. He was born to write dispatches, and to scrawl comments upon those which he received. He often remained at the council-board four or five hours at a time, and he lived in his cabinet. He gave audiences to ambassadors and deputies very willingly, listening attentively to all that was said to him, and answering in monosyllables. He spoke no tongue but Spanish, and was sufficiently sparing of that, but he was indefatigable with his pen. He hated to converse, but he could write a letter eighteen pages long, when his correspondent was in the next room, and when the subject was,
perhaps, one which a man of talent could have settled with six words of his tongue.

The world, in his opinion, was to move upon protocols and apostilles. Events had no right to be born throughout his dominions, without a preparatory course of his obstetrical pedantry. He could never learn that the earth would not rest on its axis, while he wrote a programme of the way it was to turn. He was slow in deciding, slower in communicating his decisions. He was prolix with his pen, not from affluence, but from paucity of ideas. He took refuge in a cloud of words, sometimes to conceal his meaning, oftener to conceal the absence of any meaning, thus mystifying not only others but himself.

To one great purpose, formed early, he adhered inflexibly. This, however, was rather an instinct than an opinion; born with him, not created by him. The idea seemed to express itself through him, and to master him, rather than to form one of a stock of sentiments which a free agent might be expected to possess. Although at certain times, even this master-feeling could yield to the pressure of a predominant self-interest—thus showing that even in Philip bigotry was not absolute—yet he appeared on the whole the embodiment of Spanish chivalry and Spanish religious enthusiasm, in its late and corrupted form. He was entirely a Spaniard. The Burgundian and Austrian elements of his blood seemed to have evaporated, and his veins were filled alone with the ancient ardor, which in heroic centuries had animated the Gothic champions of Spain. The fierce enthusiasm for the Cross, which in the long internal warfare against the Crescent, had been the romantic and distinguishing feature of the national character, had degenerated into bigotry. That which had been a nation’s glory now made the monarch’s shame. The Christian heretic was to be regarded with a more intense hatred than even Moor or Jew had excited in the most Christian ages, and Philip was to be the latest and most perfect reincarnation of all this traditional enthusiasm, this perpetual hate. Thus he was likely to be single-hearted in his life. It was believed that his ambition would be less to extend his dominions than to vindicate his title of the most Catholic king. There could be little doubt entertained that he would be, at least, dutiful to his father in this respect, and that the edicts would be enforced to the letter.

He was by birth, education, and character, a Spaniard, and that so exclusively, that the circumstance would alone have made him unfit to govern a country so totally different in habits and national sentiments from his native land. He was more a foreigner in Brussels, even, than in England. The gay, babbling, energetic, noisy life of Flanders and Brabant was detestable to him. The loquacity of the Netherlands was a continual reproach upon his taciturnity. His education had imbued him, too, with the antiquated international hatred of Spaniard and Fleming, which had been strengthening in the metropolis, while the more rapid current of life had rather tended to obliterate the sentiment in the provinces.
The flippancy and profligacy of Philip the Handsome, the extortion and insolence of his Flemish courtiers, had not been forgotten in Spain, nor had Philip II forgiven his grandfather for having been a foreigner. And now his mad old grandmother, Joanna, who had for years been chasing cats in the lonely tower where she had been so long imprisoned, had just died; and her funeral, celebrated with great pomp by both her sons, by Charles at Brussels and Ferdinand at Augsburg, seemed to revive a history which had begun to fade, and to recall the image of Castilian sovereignty which had been so long obscured in the blaze of imperial grandeur.

His education had been but meager. In an age when all kings and noblemen possessed many languages, he spoke not a word of any tongue but Spanish, although he had a slender knowledge of French and Italian, which he afterwards learned to read with comparative facility. He had studied a little history and geography, and he had a taste for sculpture, painting, and architecture. Certainly if he had not possessed a feeling for art, he would have been a monster. To have been born in the earlier part of the 16th century, to have been a king, to have had Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands as a birthright, and not to have been inspired with a spark of that fire which glowed so intensely in those favored lands and in that golden age, had indeed been difficult.

The King’s personal habits were regular. His delicate health made it necessary for him to attend to his diet, although he was apt to exceed in sweetmeats and pastry. He slept much, and took little exercise habitually, but he had recently been urged by the physicians to try the effect of the chase as a corrective to his sedentary habits. He was most strict in religious observances, as regular at mass, sermons, and vespers as a monk; much more, it was thought by many good Catholics, than was becoming to his rank and age. Besides several friars who preached regularly for his instruction, he had daily discussions with others on abstruse theological points. He consulted his confessor most minutely as to all the actions of life, inquiring anxiously whether this proceeding or that were likely to burthen his conscience.

He was grossly licentious. It was his chief amusement to issue forth at night disguised, that he might indulge in vulgar and miscellaneous incontinence in the common haunts of vice. This was his solace at Brussels in the midst of the gravest affairs of state. He was not illiberal, but, on the contrary, it was thought that he would have been even generous, had he not been straitened for money at the outset of his career. During a cold winter, he distributed alms to the poor of Brussels with an open hand. He was fond of jests in private, and would laugh immoderately, when with a few intimate associates, at buffooneries, which he checked in public by the icy gravity of his deportment. He dressed usually in the Spanish fashion, with close doublet, trunk hose, and short cloak, although at times he indulged in the more airy fashions of France and Burgundy, wearing buttons on his coats and feathers in his hat. He was not
thought at that time to be cruel by nature, but was usually spoken of, in the conventional language appropriated to monarchs, as a prince "clement, benign, and debonnaire." Time was to show the justice of his claims to such honorable epithets.

The court was organized during his residence at Brussels on the Burgundian, not the Spanish model, but of the one hundred and fifty persons who composed it, nine tenths of the whole were Spaniards; the other fifteen or sixteen being of various nations—Flemings, Burgundians, Italians, English, and Germans. Thus it is obvious how soon he disregarded his father's precept and practices in this respect, and began to lay the foundation of that renewed hatred to Spaniards which was soon to become so intense, exuberant, and fatal throughout every class of Netherlanders. He esteemed no nation but the Spanish, with Spaniards he consorted, with Spaniards he counseled, through Spaniards he governed.

His council consisted of five or six Spanish grandees, the famous Ruy Gomez—then Count of Melito, afterwards Prince of Eboli—the Duke of Alva, the Count de Feria, the Duke of Franca Villa, Don Antonio Toledo, and Don Juan Manrique de Lara. The "two columns," said Suriano, "which sustain this great machine, are Ruy Gomez and Alva, and from their councils depends the government of half the world." The two were ever bitterly opposed to each other. Incessant were their bickerings, intense their mutual hate, desperate and difficult the situation of any man, whether foreigner or native, who had to transact business with the government. If he had secured the favor of Gomez, he had already earned the enmity of Alva. Was he protected by the Duke, he was sure to be cast into outer darkness by the favorite. Alva represented the war party, Ruy Gomez the pacific polity more congenial to the heart of Philip. The Bishop of Arras, who in the opinion of the envoys was worth them all for his capacity and this experience, was then entirely in the background, rarely entering the council except when summoned to give advice in affairs of extraordinary delicacy or gravity. He was, however, to reappear most signally in course of the events already preparing. The Duke of Alva, also to play so tremendous a part in the yet unborn history of the Netherlands, was not beloved by Philip. He was eclipsed at this period by the superior influence of the favorite, and his sword, moreover, became necessary in the Italian campaign which was impending.

It is remarkable that it was a common opinion even at that day that the duke was naturally hesitating and timid. One would have thought that his previous victories might have earned for him the reputation for courage and skill which he most unquestionably deserved. The future was to develop those other characteristics which were to make his name the terror and wonder of the world.

The favorite, Ruy Gomez da Silva, Count de Melito, was the man upon whose shoulders the great burden of the state reposed. He was of a family which was
originally Portuguese. He had been brought up with the King, although some eight years his senior, and their friendship dated from earliest youth. It was said that Ruy Gomez, when a boy, had been condemned to death for having struck Philip, who had come between him and another page with whom he was quarrelling. The Prince threw himself passionately at his father’s feet, and implored forgiveness in behalf of the culprit with such energy that the Emperor was graciously pleased to spare the life of the future prime minister. The incident was said to have laid the foundation of the remarkable affection which was supposed to exist between the two, to an extent never witnessed before between king and subject. Ruy Gomez was famous for his tact and complacency, and omitted no opportunity of cementing the friendship thus auspiciously commenced. He was said to have particularly charmed his master, upon one occasion, by hypocritically throwing up his cards at a game of hazard played for a large stake, and permitting him to win the game with a far inferior hand. The King learning afterwards the true state of the case, was charmed by the grace and self-denial manifested by the young nobleman. The complacency which the favorite subsequently exhibited in regard to the connection which existed so long and so publicly between his wife, the celebrated Princess Eboli, and Philip, placed his power upon an impregnable basis, and secured it till his death.

At the present moment he occupied the three posts of valet, state councilor, and finance minister. He dressed and undressed his master, read or talked him to sleep, called him in the morning, admitted those who were to have private audiences, and superintended all the arrangements of the household. The rest of the day was devoted to the enormous correspondence and affairs of administration which devolved upon him as first minister of state and treasury. He was very ignorant. He had no experience or acquirement in the arts either of war or peace, and his early education had been limited. Like his master, he spoke no tongue but Spanish, and he had no literature. He had prepossessing manners, a fluent tongue, a winning and benevolent disposition. His natural capacity for affairs was considerable, and his tact was so perfect that he could converse face to face with statesmen, doctors, and generals upon campaigns, theology, or jurisprudence, without betraying any remarkable deficiency. He was very industrious, endeavoring to make up by hard study for lack of general knowledge, and to sustain with credit the burden of his daily functions. At the same time, by the King’s desire, he appeared constantly at the frequent banquets, masquerades, tourneys, and festivities, for which Brussels at that epoch was remarkable. It was no wonder that his cheek was pale, and that he seemed dying of overwork. He discharged his duties cheerfully, however, for in the service of Philip he knew no rest. "After God," said Badovaro, "he knows no object save the felicity of his master." He was already, as a matter of course, very rich, having been endowed by Philip with property to the amount of 26,000 dollars yearly, and the tide of his fortunes was still at the flood.
Such were the two men, the master and the favorite, to whose hands the destinies of the Netherlands were now entrusted.

The Queen of Hungary had resigned the office of Regent of the Netherlands, as has been seen, on the occasion of the Emperor’s abdication. She was a woman of masculine character, a great huntress before the Lord, a celebrated horsewoman, a worthy descendant of the Lady Mary of Burgundy. Notwithstanding all the fine phrases exchanged between herself and the eloquent Maas, at the great ceremony of the 25th of October, she was, in reality, much detested in the provinces, and she repaid their aversion with abhorrence. “I could not live among these people,” she wrote to the Emperor, but a few weeks before the abdication, “even as a private person, for it would be impossible for me to do my duty towards God and my prince. As to governing them, I take God to witness that the task is so abhorrent to me, that I would rather earn my daily bread by labor than attempt it.” She added that a woman of fifty years of age, who had served during twenty-five of them, had a right to repose, and that she was moreover “too old to recommence and learn her A, B, C.” The Emperor, who had always respected her for the fidelity with which she had carried out his designs, knew that it was hopeless to oppose her retreat. As for Philip, he hated his aunt, and she hated him—although, both at the epoch of the abdication and subsequently, he was desirous that she should administer the government.

The new Regent was to be the Duke of Savoy. This wandering and adventurous potentate had attached himself to Philip’s fortunes, and had been received by the King with as much favor as he had ever enjoyed at the hands of the Emperor. Emanuel Philibert of Savoy, then about twenty-six or seven years of age, was the son of the late unfortunate duke, by Donna Beatrice of Portugal, sister of the Empress. He was the nephew of Charles, and first cousin to Philip. The partiality of the Emperor for his mother was well known, but the fidelity with which the family had followed the imperial cause had been productive of nothing but disaster to the duke. He had been ruined in fortune, stripped of all his dignities and possessions. His son’s only inheritance was his sword.

The young Prince of Piedmont, as he was commonly called in his youth, sought the camp of the Emperor, and was received with distinguished favor. He rose rapidly in the military service. Acting always upon his favorite motto, “Spoliatis arma supersunt,” he had determined, if possible, to carve his way to glory, to wealth, and even to his hereditary estates, by his sword alone. War was not only his passion, but his trade. Every one of his campaigns was a speculation, and he had long derived a satisfactory income by purchasing distinguished prisoners of war at a low price from the soldiers who had captured them, and were ignorant of their rank, and by ransoming them afterwards at an immense advance. This sort of traffic in men was frequent in that age, and was considered perfectly honorable. Marshal Strozzi, Count Mansfeld, and other professional soldiers, derived their main income from the system. They were
naturally inclined, therefore, to look impatiently upon a state of peace as an unnatural condition of affairs which cut off all the profits of their particular branch of industry, and condemned them both to idleness and poverty. The Duke of Savoy had become one of the most experienced and successful commanders of the age, and an especial favorite with the Emperor. He had served with Alva in the campaigns against the Protestants of Germany, and in other important fields. War being his element, he considered peace as undesirable, although he could recognize its existence. A truce he held, however, to be a senseless paradox, unworthy of the slightest regard. An armistice, such as was concluded on the February following the abdication, was, in his opinion, only to be turned to account by dealing insidious and unsuspected blows at the enemy, some portion of whose population might repose confidence in the plighted faith of monarchs and plenipotentiaries.

He had a show of reason for his political and military morality, for he only chose to execute the evil which had been practiced upon himself. His father had been beggared, his mother had died of spite and despair, he had himself been reduced from the rank of a sovereign to that of a mercenary soldier, by spoliations made in time of truce. He was reputed a man of very decided abilities, and was distinguished for headlong bravery. His rashness and personal daring were thought the only drawbacks to his high character as a commander. He had many accomplishments. He spoke Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian with equal fluency, was celebrated for his attachment to the fine arts, and wrote much and with great elegance. Such had been Philibert of Savoy, the pauper nephew of the powerful Emperor, the adventurous and vagrant cousin of the lofty Philip, a prince without a people, a duke without a dukedom; with no hope but in warfare, with no revenue but rapine; the image, in person, of a bold and manly soldier; small, but graceful and athletic; martial in bearing, "wearing his sword under his arm like a corporal," because an internal malady made a belt inconvenient; and ready to turn to swift account every chance which a new series of campaigns might open to him. With his new salary as governor, his pensions, and the remains of his possessions in Nice and Piedmont, he had now the splendid annual income of 100,000 crowns, and was sure to spend it all.

It had been the desire of Charles to smooth the commencement of Philip’s path. He had for this purpose made a vigorous effort to undo, as it were, the whole work of his reign, to suspend the operation of his whole political system. The Emperor and conqueror, who had been warring all his lifetime, had attempted, as the last act of his reign, to improvise a peace. But it was not so easy to arrange a pacification of Europe as dramatically as he desired, in order that he might gather his robes about him, and allow the curtain to fall upon his eventful history in a grand hush of decorum and quiet.

During the autumn and winter of 1555, hostilities had been virtually suspended, and languid negotiations ensued. For several months armies confronted each
other without engaging, and diplomatists fenced among themselves without any palpable result. At last the peace commissioners, who had been assembled at Vaucelles since the beginning of the year 1556, signed a treaty of truce rather than of peace, upon the 5th February. It was to be an armistice of five years, both by land and sea, for France, Spain, Flanders, and Italy, through all the dominions of the French and Spanish monarchs.

The pope was expressly included in the truce, which was signed on the part of France by Admiral Coligny and Sebastian l’Aubespine; on that of Spain, by Count de Lalain, Philibert de Bruxelles, Simon Renard, and Jean Baptiste Sciceio, a jurisconsult of Cremona. During the previous month of December, however, the pope had concluded with the French monarch a treaty, by which this solemn armistice was rendered an egregious farce. While Henry’s plenipotentiaries had been plighting their faith to those of Philip, it had been arranged that France should sustain, by subsidies and armies, the scheme upon which Paul was bent, to drive the Spaniards entirely out of the Italian peninsula. The king was to aid the pontiff, and, in return, was to carve thrones for his own younger children out of the confiscated realms of Philip. When was France ever slow to sweep upon Italy with such a hope? How could the ever-glowing rivalry of Valois and Habsburg fail to burst into a general conflagration, while the venerable vicegerent of Christ stood thus beside them with his fan in his hand?

For a brief breathing space, however, the news of the pacification occasioned much joy in the provinces. They rejoiced even in a temporary cessation of that long series of campaigns from which they could certainly derive no advantage, and in which their part was to furnish money, soldiers, and battlefields, without prospect of benefit from any victory, however brilliant, or any treaty, however elaborate. Manufacturing, agricultural and commercial provinces, filled to the full with industrial life, could not but be injured by being converted into perpetual camps. All was joy in the Netherlands, while at Antwerp, the great commercial metropolis of the provinces and of Europe, the rapture was unbounded. Oxen were roasted whole in the public squares; the streets, soon to be empurpled with the best blood of her citizens, ran red with wine; a hundred triumphal arches adorned the pathway of Philip as he came thither; and a profusion of flowers, although it was February, were strewn before his feet. Such was his greeting in the light-hearted city, but the countenance was more than usually sullen with which the sovereign received these demonstrations of pleasure. It was thought by many that Philip had been really disappointed in the conclusion of the armistice, that he was inspired with a spark of that martial ambition for which his panegyrists gave him credit, and that knowing full well the improbability of a long suspension of hostilities, he was even eager for the chance of conquest which their resumption would afford him. The secret treaty of the pope was of course not so secret but that the hollow intention of the contracting parties to the truce of Vaucelles were thoroughly suspected—intentions which certainly went far to justify the maxims
and the practice of the new governor-general of the Netherlands upon the subject of armistices. Philip, understanding his position, was revolving renewed military projects while his subjects were ringing merry bells and lighting bonfires in the Netherlands. These schemes, which were to be carried out in the immediate future, caused, however, a temporary delay in the great purpose to which he was to devote his life.

The Emperor had always desired to regard the Netherlands as a whole, and he hated the antiquated charters and obstinate privileges which interfered with his ideas of symmetry. Two great machines, the court of Mechlin and the inquisition, would effectually simplify and assimilate all these irregular and heterogeneous rights. The civil tribunal was to annihilate all diversities in their laws by a general cassation of their constitutions, and the ecclesiastical court was to burn out all differences in their religious faith. Between two such millstones it was thought that the Netherlands might be crushed into uniformity.

Philip succeeded to these traditions. The father had never sufficient leisure to carry out all his schemes, but it seemed probable that the son would be a worthy successor, at least in all which concerned the religious part of his system. One of the earliest measures of his reign was to re-enact the dread edict of 1550. This he did by the express advice of the Bishop of Arras who represented to him the expediency of making use of the popularity of his father’s name, to sustain the horrible system resolved upon. As Charles was the author of the edict, it could be always argued that nothing new was introduced; that burning, hanging, and drowning for religious differences constituted a part of the national institutions; that they had received the sanction of the wise Emperor, and had been sustained by the sagacity of past generations. Nothing could have been more subtle, as the event proved, than this advice. Innumerable were the appeals made in subsequent years, upon this subject, to the patriotism and the conservative sentiments of the Netherlanders. Repeatedly they were summoned to maintain the inquisition, on the ground that it had been submitted to by their ancestors, and that no change had been made by Philip, who desired only to maintain church and crown in the authority which they had enjoyed in the days of his father “of very laudable memory.”

Nevertheless, the King’s military plans seemed to interfere for the moment with this cherished object. He seemed to swerve, at starting, from pursuing the goal which he was only to abandon with life. The edict of 1550 was re-enacted and confirmed, and all office-holders were commanded faithfully to enforce it upon pain of immediate dismissal. Nevertheless, it was not vigorously carried into effect anywhere. It was openly resisted in Holland, its proclamation was flatly refused in Antwerp, and repudiated throughout Brabant. It was strange that such disobedience should be tolerated, but the King wanted money. He was willing to refrain for a season from exasperating the provinces by fresh
The joy, therefore, with which the pacification had been hailed by the people was far from an agreeable spectacle to the King. The provinces would expect that the forces which had been maintained at their expense during the war would be disbanded, whereas he had no intention of disbanding them. As the truce was sure to be temporary, he had no disposition to diminish his available resources for a war which might be renewed at any moment. To maintain the existing military establishment in the Netherlands, a large sum of money was required, for the pay was very much in arrear. The king had made a statement to the provincial estates upon this subject, but the matter was kept secret during the negotiations with France. The way had thus been paved for the "Request" or "Bede," which he now made to the estates assembled at Brussels, in the spring of 1556. It was to consist of a tax of one per cent (the hundredth penny) upon all real estate, and of two per cent upon all merchandise, to be collected in three payments. The request, insofar as the imposition of the proposed tax was concerned, was refused by Flanders, Brabant, Holland, and all the other important provinces, but as usual, a moderate, even a generous, commutation in money was offered by the estates. This was finally accepted by Philip, after he had become convinced that at this moment, when he was contemplating a war with France, it would be extremely impolitic to insist upon the tax. The publication of the truce in Italy had been long delayed, and the first infractions which it suffered were committed in that country. The arts of politicians, the schemes of individual ambition, united with the short-lived military ardor of Philip to place the monarch in an eminently false position, that of hostility to the pope. As was unavoidable, the secret treaty of December acted as an immediate dissolvent to the truce of February.

Great was the indignation of Paul Caraffa, when that truce was first communicated to him by the Cardinal de Tournon, on the part of the French Government. Notwithstanding the protestations of France that the secret league was still binding, the pontiff complained that he was likely to be abandoned to his own resources, and to be left single-handed to contend with the vast power of Spain.

pope Paul IV, of the house of Caraffa, was, in position, the well-known counterpart of the Emperor Charles. At the very moment when the conqueror and autocrat was exchanging crown for cowl, and the proudest throne of the universe for a cell, this aged monk, as weary of scientific and religious seclusion as Charles of pomp and power, had abdicated his scholastic preeminence, and exchanged his rosary for the keys and sword. A pontifical Faustus, he had become disgusted with the results of a life of study and abnegation, and immediately upon his election appeared to be glowing with mundane passions, and inspired by the fiercest ambition of a warrior. He had rushed from the cloister as eagerly as Charles had sought it. He panted for the
tempests of the great external world as earnestly as the conqueror who had so long ridden upon the whirlwind of human affairs sighed for a haven of repose.

None of his predecessors had been more despotic, more belligerent, more disposed to elevate and strengthen the temporal power of Rome. In the inquisition he saw the grand machine by which this purpose could be accomplished, and yet found himself for a period the antagonist of Philip! The single circumstance would have been sufficient, had other proofs been wanting, to make manifest that the part which he had chosen to play was above his genius. Had his capacity been at all commensurate with his ambition, he might have deeply influenced the fate of the world; but fortunately no wizard’s charm came to the aid of Paul Caraffa, and the triple-crowned monk sat upon the pontifical throne, a fierce, peevish, querulous, and quarrelsome dotard—the prey and the tool of his vigorous enemies and his intriguing relations. His hatred of Spain and Spaniards was unbounded. He raved at them as "heretics, schismatics, accursed of God, the spawn of Jews and Moors, the very dregs of the earth."

To play upon such insane passions was not difficult, and a skillful artist stood ever ready to strike the chords thus vibrating with age and fury. The master spirit and principal mischief-maker of the papal court was the well-known Cardinal Caraffa, once a wild and dissolute soldier, nephew to the pope. He inflamed the anger of the pontiff by his representations that the rival house of Colonna, sustained by the Duke of Alva, now viceroy of Naples, and by the whole Spanish power, thus relieved from the fear of French hostilities, would be free to wreak its vengeance upon their family.

It was determined that the court of France should be held by the secret league. Moreover, the pope had been expressly included in the treaty of Vaucelles, although the troops of Spain had already assumed a hostile attitude in the South of Italy. The Cardinal was for immediately proceeding to Paris, there to excite the sympathy of the French monarch for the situation of himself and his uncle. An immediate rupture between France and Spain, a rekindling of the war flames from one end of Europe to the other, were necessary to save the credit and the interests of the Caraffa’s. Cardinal de Tournon, not desirous of so sudden a termination to the pacific relations between his country and Spain, succeeded in detaining him a little longer in Rome. He remained, but not in idleness. The restless intriguer had already formed close relations with the most important personage in France, Diana of Poitiers. This venerable courtesan, to the enjoyment of whose charms Henry had succeeded, with the other regal possessions, on the death of his father, was won by the flatteries of the wily Caraffa, and by the assiduities of the Guise family. The best and most sagacious statesmen, the Constable, and the Admiral, were in favor of peace, for they knew the condition of the kingdom. The Duke of Guise and the Cardinal Lorraine were for a rupture, for they hoped to increase their family influence by war. Coligny had signed the treaty of Vaucelles, and wished to
maintain it, but the influence of the Catholic party was in the ascendant. The result was to embroil the Catholic king against the pope and against themselves. The queen was as favorably inclined as the mistress to listen to Caraffa, for Catherine de Medici was desirous that her cousin, Marshal Strozzi, should have honorable and profitable employment in some fresh Italian campaigns.

In the meantime an accident favored the designs of the papal court. An open quarrel with Spain resulted from an insignificant circumstance. The Spanish ambassador at Rome was in the habit of leaving the city very often, at an early hour in the morning, upon shooting excursions, and had long enjoyed the privilege of ordering the gates to be opened for him at his pleasure. By accident or design, he was refused permission upon one occasion to pass through the gate as usual. Unwilling to lose his day’s sport, and enraged at what he considered an indignity, his excellency, by the aid of his attendants, attacked and beat the guard, mastered them, made his way out of the city, and pursued his morning’s amusement. The pope was furious; Caraffa artfully inflamed his anger.

The envoy was refused an audience, which he desired, for the sake of offering explanations, and the train being thus laid, it was thought that the right moment had arrived for applying the firebrand. The Cardinal went to Paris post haste. In his audience of the king, he represented that his holiness had placed implicit reliance upon his secret treaty with his majesty, that the recently concluded truce with Spain left the pontiff at the mercy of the Spaniard, that the Duke of Alva had already drawn the sword, that the pope had long since done himself the pleasure and the honor of appointing the French monarch protector of the papal chair in general, and of the Caraffa family in particular, and that the moment had arrived for claiming the benefit of that protection. He assured him, moreover, as by full papal authority, that in respecting the recent truce with Spain, his majesty would violate both human and divine law. Reason and justice required him to defend the pontiff, now that the Spaniards were about to profit by the interval of truce to take measure for his detriment. Moreover, as the pope was included in the truce of Vaucelles, he could not be abandoned without a violation of that treaty itself. The arts and arguments of the Cardinal proved successful; the war was resolved upon in favor of the pope. The Cardinal, by virtue of powers received and brought with him from his holiness, absolved the king from all obligation to keep his faith with Spain. He also gave him a dispensation from the duty of prefacing hostilities by a declaration of war. Strozzi was sent at once into Italy, with some hastily collected troops, while the Duke of Guise waited to organize a regular army.

The mischief being thus fairly afoot, and war let loose again upon Europe, the Cardinal made a public entry into Paris, as legate of the pope. The populace crowded about his mule, as he rode at the head of a stately procession through the streets. All were anxious to receive a benediction from the holy man who
had come so far to represent the successor of St. Peter, and to enlist the efforts of all true believers in his cause. He appeared to answer the entreaties of the superstitious rabble with fervent blessings, while the friends who were nearest him were aware that nothing but gibes and sarcasms were falling from his lips. "Let us fool these poor creatures to their heart’s content, since they will be fools," he muttered, smiling the while upon them benignantly, as became his holy office. Such were the materials of this new combination; such was the fuel with which this new blaze was lighted and maintained. Thus were the great powers of the earth—Spain, France, England, and the papacy—embroiled, and the nations embattled against each other for several years.

The preceding pages show how much national interests, or principles, were concerned in the struggle thus commenced, in which thousands were to shed their lifeblood, and millions to be reduced from peace and comfort to suffer all the misery which famine and rapine can inflict. It would no doubt have increased the hilarity of Caraffa, as he made his triumphant entry into Paris, could the idea have been suggested to his mind that the sentiments, or the welfare of the people throughout the great states now involved in his meshes, could have any possible bearing upon the question of peace or war. The world was governed by other influences. The wiles of a cardinal; the arts of a concubine; the snipe-shooting of an ambassador; the speculations of a soldier of fortune; the ill temper of a monk; the mutual venom of Italian houses; above all, the perpetual rivalry of the two great historical families who owned the greater part of Europe between them as their private property—such were the wheels on which rolled the destiny of Christendom. Compared to these, what were great moral and political ideas, the plans of statesmen, the hopes of nations? Time was soon to show. Meanwhile, government continued to be administered exclusively for the benefit of the governors. Meanwhile, a petty war for paltry motives was to precede the great spectacle which was to prove to Europe that principles and peoples still existed, and that a phlegmatic nation of merchants and manufacturers could defy the powers of the universe, and risk all their blood and treasure, generation after generation, in a sacred cause.

It does not belong to our purpose to narrate the details of the campaign in Italy; neither is this war of politics and chicane of any great interest at the present day. To the military minds of their age, the scientific duel which now took place upon a large scale, between two such celebrated captains as the Dukes of Guise and Alva, was no doubt esteemed the most important of spectacles; but the progress of mankind in the art of slaughter has stripped so antiquated an exhibition of most of its interest, even in a technical point of view. Not much satisfaction could be derived from watching an old-fashioned game of war, in which the parties sat down before each other so tranquilly, and picked up piece after piece, castle after castle, city after city, with such scientific deliberation as to make it evident that, in the opinion of the commanders, war was the only serious business to be done in the world; that it
was not to be done in a hurry, nor contrary to rule, and that when a general
had a good job upon his hands, he ought to know his profession much too
thoroughly to hasten through it before he saw his way clear to another.

From the point of time, at the close of the year 1556, when that well-trained
but not very successful soldier, Strozzi, crossed the Alps, down to the autumn
of the following year, when the Duke of Alva made his peace with the pope,
there was hardly a pitched battle, and scarcely an event of striking interest.
Alva, as usual, brought his dilatory policy to bear upon his adversary with great
effect. He had no intention, he observed to a friend, to stake the whole
kingdom of Naples against a brocaded coat of the Duke of Guise. Moreover, he
had been sent to the war, as Ruy Gomez informed the Venetian ambassador,
"with a bridle in his mouth." Philip, sorely troubled in his mind at finding
himself in so strange a position as this hostile attitude to the Church, had
earnestly interrogated all the doctors and theologians with whom he habitually
took counsel, whether this war with the pope would not work a forfeiture of his
title of the Most Catholic King. The Bishop of Arras and the favorite both
disapproved of the war, and encouraged, with all their influence, the pacific
inclinations of the monarch. The doctors were, to be sure, of opinion that
Philip, having acted in Italy only in self-defense, and for the protection of his
states, ought not to be anxious as to his continued right to the title on which
he valued himself so highly. Nevertheless, such ponderings and misgivings could
not but have the effect of hampering the actions of Alva. That general chafed
inwardly at what he considered his own contemptible position. At the same
time, he enraged the Duke of Guise still more deeply by the forced calmness of
his proceedings. Fortresses were reduced, towns taken, one after another, with
the most provoking deliberation, while his distracted adversary in vain strove
to defy or to delude him, into trying the chances of a stricken field.

The battle of Saint Quentin, the narrative of which belongs to our subject, and
will soon occupy our attention, at last decided the Italian operations. Egmont’s
brilliant triumph in Picardy rendered a victory in Italy superfluous, and placed
in Alva’s hand the power of commanding the issue of his own campaign. The
Duke of Guise was recalled to defend the French frontier, which the bravery of
the Flemish hero had imperiled, and the pope was left to make the best peace
which he could. All was now prosperous and smiling, and the campaign closed
with a highly original and entertaining exhibition. The pontiff’s puerile
ambition, sustained by the intrigues of his nephew, had involved the French
monarch in a war which was contrary to his interests and inclination. Paul now
found his ally too sorely beset to afford him that protection upon which he had
relied, when he commenced, in his dotage, his career as a warrior. He was,
therefore, only desirous of deserting his friend, and of relieving himself from
his uncomfortable predicament, by making a treaty with his Catholic majesty
upon the best terms which he could obtain.
The King of France, who had gone to war only for the sake of his holiness, was to be left to fight his own battles, while the pope was to make his peace with all the world. The result was a desirable one for Philip. Alva was accordingly instructed to afford the holy father a decorous and appropriate opportunity for carrying out his wishes. The victorious general was apprized that his master desired no fruit from his commanding attitude in Italy and the victory of Saint Quentin, save a full pardon from the pope for maintaining even a defensive war against him. An amicable siege of Rome was accordingly commenced, in the course of which an assault or "camiciata" on the holy city, was arranged for the night of the 26th of August, 1557. The pontiff agreed to be taken by surprise, while Alva, through what was to appear only a superabundance of his habitual discretion, was to draw off his troops at the very moment when the victorious assault was to be made. The imminent danger to the holy city and to his own sacred person thus furnishing the pontiff with an excuse for abandoning his own cause, as well as that of his ally, the Duke of Alva was allowed, in the name of his master and himself, to make submission to the Church and his peace with Rome.

The Spanish general, with secret indignation and disgust, was compelled to humor the vanity of a peevish but imperious old man. Negotiations were commenced, and so skilfully had the Duke played his game during the spring and summer, that when he was admitted to kiss the pope’s toe, he was able to bring a hundred Italian towns in his hand, as a peace-offering to his holiness. These he now restored, with apparent humility and inward curses, upon the condition that the fortifications should be razed, and the French alliance absolutely renounced. Thus did the fanaticism of Philip reverse the relative position of himself and his antagonist. Thus was the vanquished pontiff allowed almost to dictate terms to the victorious general. The king who could thus humble himself to a dotard, while he made himself the scourge of his subjects, deserved that the bull of excommunication which had been prepared should have been fulminated. He, at least, was capable of feeling the scathing effects of such anathemas.

The Duke of Guise, having been dismissed with the pontiff’s assurance that he had done little for the interests of his sovereign, less for the protection of the Church, and least of all for his own reputation, set forth with all speed for Civita Vecchia, to do what he could upon the Flemish frontier to atone for his inglorious campaign in Italy. The treaty between the pope and the Duke of Alva was signed on the 14th of September (1557), and the Spanish general retired for the winter to Milan. Cardinal Caraffa was removed from the French court to that of Madrid, there to spin new schemes for the embroilment of nations and the advancement of his own family. Very little glory was gained by any of the combatants in this campaign. Spain, France, nor Paul IV, not one of them came out of the Italian contest in better condition than that in which they entered upon it. In fact all were losers. France had made an inglorious retreat, the pope a ludicrous capitulation, and the only victorious party, the King of Spain,
had, during the summer, conceded to Cosmo de Medici the sovereignty of Sienna. Had Venice shown more cordiality towards Philip, and more disposition to sustain his policy, it is probable that the Republic would have secured the prize which thus fell to the share of Cosmo. That astute and unprincipled potentate, who could throw his net so well in troubled water, had successfully duped all parties, Spain, France, and Rome. The man who had not only not participated in the contest, but who had kept all parties and all warfare away from his borders, was the only individual in Italy who gained territorial advantage from the war.

To avoid interrupting the continuity of the narrative, the Spanish campaign has been briefly sketched until the autumn of 1557, at which period the treaty between the pope and Philip was concluded. It is now necessary to go back to the close of the preceding year.

Simultaneously with the descent of the French troops upon Italy, hostilities had broken out upon the Flemish border. The pains of the Emperor in covering the smoldering embers of national animosities so precipitately, and with a view rather to scenic effect than to a deliberate and well-considered result, were thus set at nought, and within a year from the day of his abdication, hostilities were reopened from the Tiber to the German Ocean. The blame of first violating the truce of Vaucelles was laid by each party upon the other with equal justice, for there can be but little doubt that the reproach justly belonged to both. Both had been equally faithless in their professions of amity. Both were equally responsible for the scenes of war, plunder, and misery, which again were desolating the fairest regions of Christendom.

At the time when the French court had resolved to concede to the wishes of the Caraffa family, Admiral Coligny, who had been appointed governor of Picardy, had received orders to make a foray upon the frontier of Flanders. Before the formal annunciation of hostilities, it was thought desirable to reap all the advantage possible from the perfidy which had been resolved upon.

It happened that a certain banker of Lucca, an ancient gambler and debauchee, whom evil courses had reduced from affluence to penury, had taken up his abode upon a hill overlooking the city of Douay. Here he had built himself a hermit’s cell. Clad in sackcloth, with a rosary at his waist, he was accustomed to beg his bread from door to door. His garb was all, however, which he possessed of sanctity, and he had passed his time in contemplating the weak points in the defenses of the city with much more minuteness than those in his own heart. Upon the breaking out of hostilities in Italy, the instincts of his old profession had suggested to him that a good speculation might be made in Flanders, by turning to account as a spy the observations which he had made in his character of a hermit. He sought an interview with Coligny, and laid his propositions before him. The noble Admiral hesitated, for his sentiments were more elevated than those of many of his contemporaries.
He had, moreover, himself negotiated and signed the truce with Spain, and he shrank from violating it with his own hand, before a declaration of war. Still he was aware that a French army was on its way to attack the Spaniards in Italy; he was under instructions to take the earliest advantage which his position upon the frontier might offer him; he knew that both theory and practice authorized a general, in that age, to break his fast, even in time of truce, if a tempting morsel should present itself, and, above all, he thoroughly understood the character of his nearest antagonist, the new governor of the Netherlands, Philibert of Savoy, whom he knew to be the most unscrupulous chieftain in Europe. These considerations decided him to take advantage of the hermit-banker’s communication.

A day was accordingly fixed, at which, under the guidance of this newly-acquired ally, a surprise should be attempted by the French forces, and the unsuspecting city of Douay given over to the pillage of a brutal soldiery. The time appointed was the night of Epiphany, upon occasion of which festival, it was thought that the inhabitants, overcome with sleep and wassail, might be easily overpowered (January 6, 1557). The plot was a good plot, but the Admiral of France was destined to be foiled by an old woman. This person, apparently the only creature awake in the town, perceived the danger, ran shrieking through the streets, alarmed the citizens while it was yet time, and thus prevented the attack. Coligny, disappointed in his plan, recompensed his soldiers by a sudden onslaught upon Lens in Arthois, which he sacked and then leveled with the ground. Such was the wretched condition of frontier cities, standing, even in time of peace, with the ground undermined beneath them, and existing every moment, as it were, upon the brink of explosion.

Hostilities having been thus fairly commenced, the French government was in some embarrassment. The Duke of Guise, with the most available forces of the kingdom, having crossed the Alps, it became necessary forthwith to collect another army. The place of rendezvous appointed was Pierrepoint where an army of 18,000 infantry and 5,000 horse were assembled early in the spring. In the meantime, Philip finding the war fairly afoot, had crossed to England for the purpose (exactly in contravention of all his marriage stipulations) of cajoling his wife and browbeating her ministers into a participation in his war with France. This was easily accomplished. The English nation found themselves accordingly engaged in a contest with which they had no concern, which, as the event proved, was very much against their interests, and in which the moving cause for their entanglement was the devotion of a weak, bad, ferocious woman, for a husband who hated her.

A herald sent from England arrived in France, disguised, and was presented to King Henry at Rheims. Here, dropping on one knee, he recited a list of complaints against his majesty, on behalf of the English Queen, all of them fabricated or exaggerated for the occasion, and none of them furnishing even a decorous pretest for the war which was now formally declared in consequence.
The French monarch expressed his regret and surprise that the firm and amicable relations secured by treaty between the two countries should thus, not without sufficient cause, be violated. In accepting the wager of warfare thus forced upon him, he bade the herald, Norris, inform his mistress that her messenger was treated with courtesy only because he represented a lady, and that, had he come from a king, the language with which he would have been greeted would have befitted the perfidy manifested on the occasion. God would punish this shameless violation of faith, and this wanton interruption to the friendship of two great nations. With this, the herald was dismissed from the royal presence, but treated with great distinction, conducted to the hotel of the English ambassador, and presented, on the part of the French Sovereign, with a chain of gold.

Philip had dispatched Ruy Gomez to Spain for the purpose of providing ways and means, while he was himself occupied with the same task in England. He stayed there three months. During this time, he "did more," says a Spanish contemporary, "than any one could have believed possible with that proud and indomitable nation. He caused them to declare war against France with fire and sword, by sea and land." Hostilities having been thus chivalrously and formally established, the Queen sent an army of 8,000 men, cavalry, infantry, and pioneers, who, "all clad in blue uniform," commanded by Lords Pembroke and Clinton, with the three sons of the Earl of Northumberland, and officered by many other scions of England’s aristocracy, disembarked at Calais, and shortly afterwards joined the camp before Saint Quentin.

Philip meantime had left England, and with more bustle and activity than was usual with him, had given directions for organizing at once a considerable army. It was composed mainly of troops belonging to the Netherlands, with the addition of some German auxiliaries. Thirty-five thousand foot and twelve thousand horse had, by the middle of July, advanced through the province of Namur, and were assembled at Givet under the Duke of Savoy, who, as Governor-General of the Netherlands, held the chief command. All the most eminent grandees of the provinces—Orange, Aerschot, Berlaymont, Meghen, Brederode—were present with the troops, but the life and soul of the army, upon this memorable occasion, was the Count of Egmont.

Lamoral, Count of Egmont, Prince of Gavere, was now in the thirty-sixth year of his age, in the very noon of that brilliant life which was destined to be so soon and so fatally overshadowed. Not one of the dark clouds, which were in the future to accumulate around him, had yet rolled above his horizon. Young, noble, wealthy, handsome, valiant, he saw no threatening phantom in the future, and caught eagerly at the golden opportunity, which the present placed within his grasp, of winning fresh laurels on a wider and more fruitful field than any in which he had hitherto been a reaper. The campaign about to take place was likely to be an imposing, if not an important one, and could not fail to be attractive to a noble of so ardent and showy a character as Egmont. If there
were no lofty principles or extensive interests to be contended for, as there
certainly were not, there was yet much that was stately and exciting to the
imagination in the warfare which had been so deliberately and pompously
arranged. The contending armies, although of moderate size, were composed
of picked troops, and were commanded by the flower of Europe’s chivalry.
Kings, princes, and the most illustrious paladins of Christendom were arming
for the great tournament to which they had been summoned by herald and
trumpet, and the Batavian hero, without a crown or even a country, but with
as lofty a lineage as many anointed sovereigns could boast, was ambitious to
distinguish himself in the proud array.

Upon the northwestern edge of the narrow peninsula of North Holland, washed
by the stormy waters of the German Ocean, were the ancient castle, town, and
lordship whence Egmont derived his family name and the title by which he was
most familiarly known. He was supposed to trace his descent, through a line of
chivalrous champions and crusaders, up to the pagan kings of the most ancient
of existing Teutonic races. The eighth century names of the Frisian Radbold
and Adgild among his ancestors were thought to denote the antiquity of a
house whose luster had been increased in later times by the splendor of its
alliances. His father, united to Françoise de Luxemburg, Princess of Gavere,
had acquired by this marriage, and transmitted to his posterity, many of the
proudest titles and richest estates of Flanders. Of the three children who
survived him, the only daughter was afterwards united to the Count of
Vaudemont, and became mother of Louise de Vaudemont, queen of the French
monarch, Henry III. Of his two sons, Charles, the elder, had died young and
unmarried, leaving all the estates and titles of the family to his brother.
Lamoral, born in 1522, was in early youth a page of the Emperor. When old
enough to bear arms he demanded and obtained permission to follow the
career of his adventurous sovereign. He served his apprenticeship as a soldier
in the stormy expedition to Barbary, where, in his nineteenth year, he
commanded a troop of light horse, and distinguished himself under the
Emperor’s eye for his courage and devotion, doing the duty not only of a
gallant commander but of a hardy soldier. Returning, unscathed by the war,
flood, or tempest of that memorable enterprise, he reached his country by the
way of Corsica, Genoa, and Lorraine, and was three years afterwards united (in
the year 1545) to Sabina of Bavaria, sister of Frederick, Elector Palatine. The
nuptials had taken place at Spiers, and few royal weddings could have been
more brilliant. The Emperor, his brother Ferdinand King of the Romans, with
the Archduke Maximilian, all the imperial electors, and a concourse of the
principal nobles of the empire, were present on the occasion.

In the following year, Charles invested him with the order of the Fleece at a
chapter held at Utrecht. In 1553, he had been at the Emperor’s side during the
unlucky siege of Metz; in 1554 he had been sent at the head of a splendid
embassy to England, to solicit for Philip the hand of Mary Tudor, and had
witnessed the marriage in Winchester Cathedral, the same year. Although one
branch of his house had, in past times, arrived at the sovereignty of Gueldres, and another had acquired the great estates and titles of Buren, which had recently passed, by intermarriage with the heiress, into the possession of the Prince of Orange, yet the Prince of Gavere, Count of Egmont, was the chief of a race which yielded to none of the great Batavian or Flemish families in antiquity, wealth, or power. Personally, he was distinguished for his bravery, and although he was not yet the idol of the camp, which he was destined to become, nor had yet commanded in chief on any important occasion, he was accounted one of the five principal generals in the Spanish service. Eager for general admiration, he was at the same time haughty and presumptuous, attempting to combine the characters of an arrogant magnate and a popular chieftain. Terrible and sudden in his wrath, he was yet of inordinate vanity, and was easily led by those who understood his weakness. With a limited education, and a slender capacity for all affairs except those relating to the camp, he was destined to be as vacillating and incompetent as a statesman, as he was prompt and fortunately audacious in the field. A splendid soldier, his evil stars had destined him to tread, as a politician, a dark and dangerous path, in which not even genius, caution, and integrity could ensure success, but in which rashness alternating with hesitation, and credulity with violence, could not fail to bring ruin. Such was Count Egmont, as he took his place at the head of the king’s cavalry in the summer of 1557.

The early operations of the Duke of Savoy were at first intended to deceive the enemy. The army, after advancing as far into Picardy as the town of Vervins, which they burned and pillaged, made a demonstration with their whole force upon the city of Guise. This, however, was but a feint, by which attention was directed and forces drawn off from Saint Quentin, which was to be the real point of attack. In the meantime, the Constable of France, Montmorency, arrived upon the 28th of July (1557), to take command of the French troops. He was accompanied by the Maréchal de Saint André and by Admiral Coligny. The most illustrious names of France, whether for station or valor, were in the officers’ list of this select army. Nevers and Montpensier, Enghien and Condé, Vendôme and Rochefoucauld, were already there, and now the Constable and the Admiral came to add the strength of their experience and lofty reputation to sustain the courage of the troops. The French were at Pierrepoint, a post between Champagne and Picardy, and in its neighborhood. The Spanish army was at Vervins, and threatening Guise. It had been the opinion in France that the enemy’s intention was to invade Champagne, and the Duc de Nevers, governor of that province, had made a disposition of his forces suitable for such a contingency. It was the conviction of Montmorency, however, that Picardy was to be the quarter really attacked, and that Saint Quentin, which was the most important point at which the enemy’s progress, by that route, towards Paris could be arrested, was in imminent danger. The Constable’s opinion was soon confirmed by advices received by Coligny. The enemy’s army, he was informed, after remaining three days before Guise, had withdrawn from that point, and had invested Saint Quentin with their whole force.
This wealthy and prosperous city stood upon an elevation rising from the river Somme. It was surrounded by very extensive suburbs, ornamented with orchards and gardens, and including within their limits large tracts of a highly cultivated soil. Three sides of the place were covered by a lake, thirty yards in width, very deep at some points, in others, rather resembling a morass, and extending on the Flemish side a half mile beyond the city. The inhabitants were thriving and industrious; many of the manufacturers and merchants were very rich, for it was a place of much traffic and commercial importance.

Teligny, son-in-law of the Admiral, was in the city with a detachment of the Dauphin’s regiment; Captain Brueuil was commandant of the town. Both informed Coligny of the imminent peril in which they stood. They represented the urgent necessity of immediate reinforcements both of men and supplies. The city, as the Admiral well knew, was in no condition to stand a siege by such an army, and dire were the consequences which would follow the downfall of so important a place. It was still practicable, they wrote, to introduce succor, but every day diminished the possibility of affording effectual relief. Coligny was not the man to let the grass grow under his feet, after such an appeal in behalf of the principal place in his government. The safety of France was dependent upon that of St. Quentin. The bulwark overthrown, Paris was within the next stride of an adventurous enemy. The Admiral instantly set out, upon the 2nd of August, with strong reinforcements. It was too late. The English auxiliaries, under Lords Pembroke, Clinton, and Grey, had, in the meantime, effected their junction with the Duke of Savoy, and appeared in the camp before St. Quentin. The route, by which it had been hoped that the much needed succor could be introduced, was thus occupied and rendered impracticable. The Admiral, however, in consequence of the urgent nature of the letters received from Brueuil and Teligny, had outstripped, in his anxiety, the movements of his troops. He reached the city, almost alone and unattended. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of his officers, he had listened to no voice save the desperate entreaties of the besieged garrison, and had flown before his army. He now shut himself up in the city, determined to effect its deliverance by means of his skill and experience, or, at least, to share its fate. As the gates closed upon Coligny, the road was blocked up for his advancing troops.

A few days were passed in making ineffectual sorties, ordered by Coligny for the sake of reconnoitering the country, and of discovering the most practicable means of introducing supplies. The Constable, meantime, who had advanced with his army to La Fère, was not idle. He kept up daily communications with the beleaguered Admiral, and was determined, if possible, to relieve the city. There was, however, a constant succession of disappointments. Moreover, the brave but indiscreet Teligny, who commanded during a temporary illness of the Admiral, saw fit, against express orders, to make an imprudent sortie. He paid the penalty of his rashness with his life. He was rescued by the Admiral in person, who, at imminent hazard, brought back the unfortunate officer
covered with wounds, into the city, there to die at his father’s feet, imploring forgiveness for his disobedience.

Meantime the garrison was daily growing weaker. Coligny sent out of the city all useless consumers, quartered all the women in the cathedral and other churches, where they were locked in, lest their terror and their tears should weaken the courage of the garrison; and did all in his power to strengthen the defenses of the city, and sustain the resolution of the inhabitants. Affairs were growing desperate. It seemed plain that the important city must soon fall, and with it most probably Paris. One of the suburbs was already in the hands of the enemy.

At last Coligny discovered a route by which he believed it to be still possible to introduce reinforcements. He communicated the results of his observations to the Constable. Upon one side of the city the lake, or morass, was traversed by a few difficult and narrow pathways, mostly under water, and by a running stream which could only be passed in boats. The Constable, in consequence of this information received from Coligny, set out from La Fère upon the 8th of August, with 4,000 infantry and 2,000 horse. Halting his troops at the village of Essigny, he advanced in person to the edge of the morass, in order to reconnoiter the ground and prepare his plans. The result was a determination to attempt the introduction of men and supplies into the town by the mode suggested. Leaving his troops drawn up in battle array, he returned to La Fère for the remainder of his army, and to complete his preparations. Coligny in the meantime was to provide boats for crossing the stream.

Upon the 10th of August, which was the festival of St. Laurence, the Constable advanced with four pieces of heavy artillery, four culverines, and four lighter pieces, and arrived at nine o’clock in the morning near the Faubourg d’Isle, which was already in possession of the Spanish troops. The whole army of the Constable consisted of 12,000 German, with fifteen companies of French infantry, making in all some 16,000 foot, with 5,000 cavalry in addition. The Duke of Savoy’s army lay upon the same side of the town, widely extended, and stretching beyond the river and the morass. Montmorency’s project was to be executed in full view of the enemy. Fourteen companies of Spaniards were stationed in the Faubourg. Two companies had been pushed forward as far as a water-mill, which lay in the pathway of the advancing Constable. These soldiers stood their ground for a moment, but soon retreated, while a cannonade was suddenly opened by the French upon the quarters of the Duke of Savoy. The Duke’s tent was torn to pieces, and he had barely time to hurry on his cuirass, and to take refuge with Count Egmont.

The Constable, hastening to turn this temporary advantage to account at once, commenced the transportation of his troops across the morass. The enterprise was, however, not destined to be fortunate. The number of boats which had been provided was very inadequate; moreover they were very small, and each
as it left the shore was consequently so crowded with soldiers that it was in danger of being swamped. Several were overturned, and the men perished. It was found also that the opposite bank was steep and dangerous. Many who had crossed the river were unable to effect a landing, while those who escaped drowning in the water lost their way in the devious and impracticable paths, or perished miserably in the treacherous quagmires. Very few effected their entrance into the town, but among them was Andelot, brother of Coligny, with five hundred followers.

Meantime, a council of officers was held in Egmont’s tent. Opinions were undecided as to the course to be pursued under the circumstances. Should an engagement be risked, or should the Constable, who had but indifferently accomplished his project and had introduced but an insignificant number of troops into the city, be allowed to withdraw with the rest of his army? The fiery vehemence of Egmont carried all before it. Here was an opportunity to measure arms at advantage with the great captain of the age. To relinquish the prize, which the fortune of war had now placed within reach of their valor, was a thought not to be entertained. Here was the great Constable Montmorency, attended by princes of the royal blood, the proudest of the nobility, the very crown and flower of the chivalry of France, and followed by an army of her bravest troops. On a desperate venture he had placed himself within their grasp. Should he go thence alive and unmolested? The moral effect of destroying such an army would be greater than if it were twice its actual strength. It would be dealing a blow at the very heart of France, from which she could not recover. Was the opportunity to be resigned, without a struggle, of laying at the feet of Philip, in this his first campaign since his accession to his father’s realms, a prize worthy of the proudest hour of the Emperor’s reign? The eloquence of the impetuous Batavian was irresistible, and it was determined to cut off the Constable’s retreat.

Three miles from the Faubourg d’Isle, to which that general had now advanced, was a narrow pass or defile, between steep and closely hanging hills. While advancing through this ravine in the morning, the Constable had observed that the enemy might have it in their power to intercept his return at that point. He had therefore left the Rhinegrave, with his company of mounted carabineers, to guard the passage. Being ready to commence his retreat, he now sent forward the Duc de Nevers, with four companies of cavalry to strengthen that important position, which he feared might be inadequately guarded. The act of caution came too late. This was the fatal point which the quick glance of Egmont had at once detected. As Nevers reached the spot, two thousand of the enemy’s cavalry rode through and occupied the narrow passage. Inflamed by mortification and despair, Nevers would have at once charged those troops, although outnumbering his own by nearly four to one. His officers restrained him with difficulty, recalling to his memory the peremptory orders which he had received from the Constable to guard the passage, but on no account to hazard an engagement, until sustained by the body of the army. It was a case
in which rashness would have been the best discretion. The headlong charge
which the Duke had been about to make, might possibly have cleared the path
and have extricated the army, provided the Constable had followed up the
movement by a rapid advance upon his part. As it was, the passage was soon
blocked up by freshly advancing bodies of Spanish and Flemish cavalry, while
Nevers slowly and reluctantly fell back upon the Prince of Condé, who was
stationed with the light horse at the mill where the first skirmish had taken
place. They were soon joined by the Constable, with the main body of the
army.

The whole French force now commenced its retrograde movement. It was,
however, but too evident that they were enveloped. As they approached the
fatal pass through which lay their only road to La Fère, and which was now in
complete possession of the enemy, the signal of assault was given by Count
Egmont. That general himself, at the head of two thousand light horse, led the
charge upon the left flank. The other side was assaulted by the Dukes Eric and
Henry of Brunswick, each with a thousand heavy dragoons, sustained by Count
Horn, at the head of a regiment of mounted gendarmerie. Mansfeld, Lalain,
Hoogstraaten, and Vilain, at the same time made a furious attack upon the
front. The French cavalry wavered with the shock so vigorously given. The
camp followers, sutlers, and peddlers, panic-struck, at once fled helter-
skelter, and in their precipitate retreat, carried confusion and dismay
throughout all the ranks of the army. The rout was sudden and total. The onset
and the victory were simultaneous. Nevers, riding through a hollow with some
companies of cavalry in the hope of making a detour and presenting a new
front to the enemy, was overwhelmed at once by the retreating French and
their furious pursuers. The day was lost, retreat hardly possible, yet, by a
daring and desperate effort, the Duke, accompanied by a handful of followers,
cut his way through the enemy and effected his escape. The cavalry had been
broken at the first onset and nearly destroyed. A portion of the infantry still
held firm, and attempted to continue their retreat. Some pieces of artillery,
however, now opened upon them, and before they reached Essigny, the whole
army was completely annihilated.

The defeat was absolute. Half the French troops actually engaged in the
enterprise, lost their lives upon the field. The remainder of the army was
captured or utterly disorganized. When Nevers reviewed, at Laon, the wreck of
the Constable’s whole force, he found some thirteen hundred French and three
hundred German cavalry, with four companies of French infantry remaining out
of fifteen, and 4,000 German foot remaining of 12,000. Of twenty-one or two
thousand remarkably fine and well-appointed troops, all but 6,000 had been
killed or made prisoners within an hour. The Constable himself, with a wound
in the groin, was a captive. The Duke of Enghien, after behaving with brilliant
valor, and many times rallying the troops, was shot through the body, and
brought into the enemy’s camp only to expire. The Duc de Montpensier, the
Marshal de Saint André, the Duc de Longueville, Prince Ludovic of Mantua, the
Baron Corton, la Roche du Mayne, the Rhinegrave, the Counts de Rochefoucauld, d'Aubigni, de Rochefort, all were taken. The Duc de Nevers, the Prince of Condé, with a few others, escaped; although so absolute was the conviction that such an escape was impossible, that it was not believed by the victorious army. When Nevers sent a trumpet, after the battle, to the Duke of Savoy, for the purpose of negotiating concerning the prisoners, the trumpeter was pronounced an impostor, and the duke's letter a forgery; nor was it till after the whole field had been diligently searched for his dead body without success, that Nevers could persuade the conquerors that he was still in existence.

Of Philip's army but fifty lost their lives. Lewis of Brederode was smothered in his armor, and the two counts Spiegelberg and Count Waldeck were also killed; besides these, no officer of distinction fell. All the French standards and all their artillery but two pieces were taken, and placed before the king, who the next day came into the camp before Saint Quentin. The prisoners of distinction were likewise presented to him in long procession. Rarely had a monarch of Spain enjoyed a more signal triumph than this which Philip now owed to the gallantry and promptness of Count Egmont.

While the king stood reviewing the spoils of victory, a light horseman of Don Henrico Manrique's regiment approached, and presented him with a sword. "I am the man, may it please your Majesty," said the trooper, "who took the Constable; here is his sword; may your Majesty be pleased to give me something to eat in my house." "I promise it," replied Philip, upon which the soldier kissed his Majesty's hand and retired. It was the custom universally recognized in that day, that the king was the king's captive, and the general the general's, but that the man, whether soldier or officer, who took the commander-in-chief, was entitled to 10,000 ducats. Upon this occasion the Constable was the prisoner of Philip, supposed to command his own army in person. A certain Spanish Captain Valenzuela, however, disputed the soldier's claim to the Constable's sword. The trooper advanced at once to the Constable, who stood there with the rest of the illustrious prisoners. "Your excellency is a Christian," said he, "please to declare upon your conscience and the faith of a cavalier, whether 'twas I that took you prisoner. It need not surprise your excellency that I am but a soldier, since with soldiers his Majesty must wage his wars." "Certainly," replied the Constable, "you took me and took my horse, and I gave you my sword. My word, however, I pledged to Captain Valenzuela." It appearing, however, that the custom of Spain did not recognize a pledge given to anyone but the actual captor, it was arranged that the soldier should give two thousand of his ten thousand ducats to the captain. Thus the dispute ended.

Such was the brilliant victory of Saint Quentin, worthy to be placed in the same list with the world-renowned combats of Crecy and Agincourt. Like those battles, also, it derives its main interest from the personal character of the
leader, while it seems to have been hallowed by the tender emotions which
sprang from his subsequent fate. The victory was but a happy move in a
winning game. The players were kings, and the people were stakes—not
parties. It was a chivalrous display in a war which was waged without
honorable purpose, and in which no single lofty sentiment was involved. The
Flemish frontier was, however, saved for the time from the misery which was
now to be inflicted upon the French border. This was sufficient to cause the
victory to be hailed as rapturously by the people as by the troops. From that
day forth the name of the brave Hollander was like the sound of a trumpet to
the army. "Egmont and Saint Quentin" rang through every mouth to the furthest
extremity of Philip's realms. A deadly blow was struck to the very heart of
France. The fruits of all the victories of Francis and Henry withered. The
battle, with others which were to follow it, won by the same hand, were soon
to compel the signature of the most disastrous treaty which had ever disgraced
the history of France.

The fame and power of the Constable faded. His misfortunes and captivity fell
like a blight upon the ancient glory of the house of Montmorency; his enemies
destroyed his influence and his popularity, while the degradation of the
kingdom was simultaneous with the downfall of his illustrious name. On the
other hand, the exultation of Philip was as keen as his cold and stony nature
would permit. The magnificent palace-convent of the Escurial, dedicated to
the saint on whose festival the battle had been fought, and built in the shape
of the gridiron on which that martyr had suffered, was soon afterwards erected
in pious commemoration of the event. Such was the celebration of the victory.
The reward reserved for the victor was to be recorded on a later page of
history.

The coldness and caution, not to say the pusillanimity of Philip, prevented him
from seizing the golden fruits of his triumph. Ferdinand Gonzaga wished the
blow to be followed up by an immediate march upon Paris. Such was also the
feeling of all the distinguished soldiers of the age. It was unquestionably the
opinion, and would have been the deed, of Charles, had he been on the field of
Saint Quentin, crippled as he was, in the place of his son. He could not conceal
his rage and mortification when he found that Paris had not fallen, and is said
to have refused to read the dispatches which recorded that the event had not
been consummated. There was certainly little of the conqueror in Philip's
nature, nothing which would have led him to violate the safest principles of
strategy. He was not the man to follow up enthusiastically the blow which had
been struck; Saint Quentin, still untaken, although defended by but eight
hundred soldiers, could not be left behind him; Nevers was still in his front,
and although it was notorious that he commanded only the wreck of an army,
yet a new one might be collected, perhaps, in time to embarrass the
triumpant march to Paris. Out of his superabundant discretion, accordingly,
Philip refused to advance till Saint Quentin should be reduced.
Although nearly driven to despair by the total overthrow of the French in the recent action, Coligny still held bravely out, being well aware that every day by which the siege could be protracted was of advantage to his country. Again he made fresh attempts to introduce men into the city. A fisherman showed him a submerged path, covered several feet deep with water, through which he succeeded in bringing one hundred and fifty unarmed and half-drowned soldiers into the place. His garrison consisted barely of eight hundred men, but the siege was still sustained, mainly by his courage and sagacity, and by the spirit of his brother Andelot. The company of cavalry, belonging to the Dauphin’s regiment, had behaved badly, and even with cowardice, since the death of their commander Teligny. The citizens were naturally weary and impatient of the siege. Mining and countermining continued till the 21st of August. A steady cannonade was then maintained until the 27th. Upon that day, eleven breaches having been made in the walls, a simultaneous assault was ordered at four of them. The citizens were stationed upon the walls, the soldiers in the breaches. There was a short but sanguinary contest, the garrison resisting with uncommon bravery. Suddenly an entrance was effected through a tower which had been thought sufficiently strong, and which had been left unguarded. Coligny, rushing to the spot, engaged the enemy almost single-handed. He was soon overpowered, being attended only by four men and a page, was made a prisoner by a soldier named Francisco Diaz, and conducted through one of the subterranean mines into the presence of the Duke of Savoy, from whom the captor received 10,000 ducats in exchange for the Admiral’s sword. The fighting still continued with great determination in the streets, the brave Andelot resisting to the last. He was, however, at last overpowered and taken prisoner. Philip, who had, as usual, arrived in the trenches by noon, armed in complete harness, with a page carrying his helmet, was met by the intelligence that the city of Saint Quentin was his own.

To a horrible carnage succeeded a sack and a conflagration still more horrible. in every house entered during the first day, every human being was butchered. The sack lasted all that day and the whole of the following, till the night of the 28th. There was not a soldier who did not obtain an ample share of plunder, and some individuals succeeded in getting possession of two, three, and even twelve thousand ducats each. The women were not generally outraged, but they were stripped almost entirely naked, lest they should conceal treasure which belonged to their conquerors, and they were slashed in the face with knives, partly in sport, partly as a punishment for not giving up property which was not in their possession. The soldiers even cut off the arms of many among these wretched women, and then turned them loose, maimed and naked, into the blazing streets; for the town, on the 28th, was fired in a hundred places, and was now one general conflagration. The streets were already strewn with the corpses of the butchered garrison and citizens, while the survivors were now burned in their houses. Human heads, limbs, and trunks, were mingled among the bricks and rafters of the houses, which were falling on every side.
The fire lasted day and night, without an attempt being made to extinguish it, while the soldiers dashed like devils through flame and smoke in search of booty. Bearing lighted torches, they descended into every subterranean vault and receptacle, of which there were many in the town, and in every one of which they hoped to discover hidden treasure. The work of killing, plundering, and burning lasted nearly three days and nights. The streets, meanwhile, were encumbered with heaps of corpses, not a single one of which had been buried since the capture of the town. The remains of nearly all the able-bodied male population, dismembered, gnawed by dogs, or blackened by fire, polluted the midsummer air.

The women, meantime, had been again driven into the cathedral, where they had housed during the siege, and where they now crouched together in trembling expectation of their fate. On the 29th of August, at two o'clock in the afternoon, Philip issued an order that every woman, without an exception, should be driven out of the city into the French territory. Saint Quentin, which seventy years before had been a Flemish town, was to be re-annexed, and not a single man, woman, or child who could speak the French language was to remain another hour in the place. The tongues of the men had been effectually silenced. The women, to the number of 3,500, were now compelled to leave the cathedral and the city. Some were in a starving condition; others had been desperately wounded; all, as they passed through the ruinous streets of what had been their home, were compelled to tread upon the unburied remains of their fathers, husbands, or brethren. To none of these miserable creatures remained a living protector—hardly even a dead body which could be recognized—and thus the ghastly procession of more than 3,000 women, many with gaping wounds in the face, many with their arms cut off and festering, of all ranks and ages, some numbering more than ninety years, bareheaded, with gray hair streaming upon their shoulders; others with nursing infants in their arms, all escorted by a company of heavy-armed troopers, left forever their native city. All made the dismal journey upon foot, save that carts were allowed to transport the children between the ages of two and six years. The desolation and depopulation were now complete.

"I wandered through the place, gazing at all this," says a Spanish soldier who was present, and kept a diary of all which occurred, "and it seemed to me that it was another destruction of Jerusalem. What most struck me was to find not a single denizen of the town left, who was or who dared to call himself French. How vain and transitory, thought I, are the things of this world! Six days ago what riches were in the city, and now remains not one stone upon another."

The expulsion of the women had been accomplished by the express command of Philip, who moreover had made no effort to stay the work of carnage, pillage, and conflagration. The pious King had not forgotten, however, his duty to the saints. As soon as the fire had broken out, he had sent to the cathedral, whence he had caused the body of Saint Quentin to be removed and placed in
the royal tent. Here an altar was arranged, upon one side of which was placed the coffin of that holy personage, and upon the other the head of the "glorious Saint Gregory" (whoever that glorious individual may have been in life), together with many other relics brought from the church. Within the sacred enclosure many masses were said daily, while all this devil’s work was going on without. The saint who had been buried for centuries was comfortably housed and guarded by the monarch, while dogs were gnawing the caresses of the freshly-slain men of Saint Quentin, and troopers were driving into perpetual exile its desolate and mutilated women.

The most distinguished captives upon this occasion were, of course, Coligny and his brother. Andelot was, however, fortunate enough to make his escape that night under the edge of the tent in which he was confined. The Admiral was taken to Antwerp. Here he lay for many weeks sick with a fever. Upon his recovery, having no better pastime, he fell to reading the Scriptures. The result was his conversion to Calvinism, and the world shudders yet at the fate in which that conversion involved him.

Saint Quentin being thus reduced, Philip was not more disposed to push his fortune. The time was now wasted in the siege of several comparatively unimportant places, so that the fruits of Egmont’s valor were not yet allowed to ripen. Early in September Le Catelet was taken. On the 12th of the same month the citadel of Ham yielded, after receiving 2,000 shots from Philip’s artillery, while Nojon, Chanly, and some other places of less importance, were burned to the ground. After all this smoke and fire upon the frontier, productive of but slender consequences, Philip disbanded his army, and retired to Brussels. He reached that city on the 12th of October. The English returned to their own country. The campaign of 1557 was closed without a material result, and the victory of Saint Quentin remained for a season barren.

In the meantime the French were not idle. The army of the Constable had been destroyed, but the Duke de Guise, who had come post-haste from Italy after hearing the news of Saint Quentin, was very willing to organize another. He was burning with impatience both to retrieve his own reputation, which had suffered some little damage by his recent Italian campaign, and to profit by the captivity of his fallen rival the Constable. During the time occupied by the languid and dilatory proceedings of Philip in the autumn, the Duke had accordingly recruited in France and Germany a considerable army. In January (1558) he was ready to take the field. It had been determined in the French cabinet, however, not to attempt to win back the places which they had lost in Picardy, but to carry the war into the territory of the ally.

It was fated that England should bear all the losses, and Philip appropriate all the gain and glory, which resulted from their united exertions. It was the war of the queen’s husband, with which the queen’s people had no concern, but in which the last trophies of the Black Prince were to be forfeited.
On the first January, 1558, the Duc de Guise appeared before Calais. The Marshal Strozzi had previously made an expedition, in disguise, to examine the place. The result of his examination was that the garrison was weak, and that it relied too much upon the citadel. After a tremendous cannonade, which lasted a week, and was heard in Antwerp, the city was taken by assault. Thus the key to the great Norman portal of France, the time-honored key which England had worn at her girdle since the eventful day of Crecy, was at last taken from her. Calais had been originally won after a siege which had lasted a twelvemonth, had been held two hundred and ten years, and was now lost in seven days. Seven days more, and 10,000 discharges from thirty-five great guns sufficed for the reduction of Guines. Thus the last vestige of English dominion, the last substantial pretext of the English sovereign to wear the title and the lilies of France, was lost forever. King Henry visited Calais, which after two centuries of estrangement had now become a French town again, appointed Paul de Thermes governor of the place, and then returned to Paris to celebrate soon afterwards the marriage of the Dauphin with the niece of the Guises, Mary, Queen of Scots.

These events, together with the brief winter campaign of the Duke, which had raised for an instant the drooping head of France, were destined before long to give a new face to affairs, while it secured the ascendancy of the Catholic party in the kingdom. Disastrous eclipse had come over the house of Montmorency and Coligny, while the star of Guise, brilliant with the conquest of Calais, now culminated to the zenith.

It was at this period that the memorable interview between the two ecclesiastics, the Bishop of Arras and the Cardinal de Lorraine, took place at Peronne. From this central point commenced the weaving of that widespread scheme, in which the fate of millions was to be involved. The Duchess Christina de Lorraine, cousin of Philip, had accompanied him to Saint Quentin. Permission had been obtained by the Duc de Guise and his brother, the Cardinal, to visit her at Peronne. The Duchess was accompanied by the Bishop of Arras, and the consequence was a full and secret negotiation between the two priests. It may be supposed that Philip’s short-lived military ardor had already exhausted itself. He had mistaken his vocation, and already recognized the false position in which he was placed. He was contending against the monarch in whom he might find the surest ally against the archenemy of both kingdoms, and of the world. The French monarch held heresy in horror, while, for himself, Philip had already decided upon his life’s mission.

The crafty bishop was more than a match for the vain and ambitious cardinal. That prelate was assured that Philip considered the captivity of Coligny and Montmorency a special dispensation of Providence, while the tutelar genius of France, notwithstanding the reverses sustained by that kingdom, was still preserved. The cardinal and his brother, it was suggested, now held in their hands the destiny of the kingdom, and of Europe. The interests of both nations,
of religion, of humanity, made it imperative upon them to put an end to this unnatural war, in order that the two monarchs might unite hand and heart for the extirpation of heresy. That hydra-headed monster had already extended its coils through France, while its pestilential breath was now wafted into Flanders from the German as well as the French border. Philip placed full reliance upon the wisdom and discretion of the cardinal. It was necessary that these negotiations should for the present remain a profound secret; but in the meantime a peace ought to be concluded with as little delay as possible, a result which, it was affirmed, was as heartily desired by Philip as it could be by Henry.

The bishop was soon aware of the impression which his artful suggestions had produced. The cardinal, inspired by the flattery thus freely administered, as well as by the promptings of his own ambition, lent a willing ear to the bishop’s plans. Thus was laid the foundation of a vast scheme, which time was to complete. A crusade with the whole strength of the French and Spanish crowns, was resolved upon against their own subjects. The bishop’s task was accomplished. The cardinal returned to France, determined to effect a peace with Spain. He was convinced that the glory of his house was to be infinitely enhanced, and its power impregnably established, by a cordial cooperation with Philip in his dark schemes against religion and humanity. The negotiations were kept, however, profoundly secret. A new campaign and fresh humiliations were to precede the acceptance by France of the peace which was thus proffered.

Hostile operations were renewed soon after the interview at Peronne. The Duke of Guise, who had procured 5,000 cavalry and 14,000 infantry in Germany, now, at the desire of the King, undertook an enterprise against Thionville, a city of importance and great strength in Luxemburg, upon the river Moselle. It was defended by Peter de Quarebbe, a gentleman of Louvain, with a garrison of 1,800 men. On the 5th of June, thirty-five pieces of artillery commenced the work; the mining and countermining continuing seventeen days; on the 22nd the assault was made, and the garrison capitulated immediately afterwards. It was a siege conducted in a regular and business-like way, but the details possess no interest. It was, however, signalized by the death of one of the eminent adventurers of the age, Marshal Strozzi. This brave, but always unlucky soldier was slain by a musket ball while assisting the Duke of Guise—whose arm was, at that instant, resting upon his shoulder—to point a gun at the fortress.

After the fall of Thionville, the Duc de Guise, for a short time, contemplated the siege of the city of Luxemburg, but contented himself with the reduction of the unimportant places of Vireton and Arlon. Here he loitered seventeen days, making no exertions to follow up the success which had attended him at the opening of the campaign. The good fortune of the French was now neutralized by the same languor which had marked the movements of Philip after the
victory of Saint Quentin. The time, which might have been usefully employed
in following up his success, was now wasted by the Duke in trivial business, or
in absolute torpor. This may have been the result of a treacherous
understanding with Spain, and the first fruits of the interview at Peronne.
Whatever the cause, however, the immediate consequences were disaster to
the French nation, and humiliation to the crown.

It had been the plan of the French cabinet that Marshal de Thermes, who, upon
the capture of Calais, had been appointed governor of the city, should take
advantage of his position as soon as possible. Having assembled an army of
some 8,000 foot and 1,500 horse, partly Gascons and partly Germans, he was
accordingly directed to ravage the neighboring country, particularly the county
of Saint Pol. In the mean time, the Duc de Guise, having reduced the cities on
the southern frontier, was to move in a northerly direction, make a junction
with the Marshal, and thus extend a barrier along the whole frontier of the
Netherlands.

De Thermes set forth from Calais, in the beginning of June, with his newly-
organized army. Passing by Gravelines and Bourbourg, he arrived before
Dunkirk on the 2nd of July. The city, which was without a garrison, opened
negotiations, during the pendency of which it was taken by assault and
pillaged. The town of Saint Winochsberg shared the same fate. De Thermes,
who was a martyr to the gout, was obliged at this point temporarily to resign
the command to d’Estonteville, a ferocious soldier, who led the predatory army
as far as Niewport, burning, killing, ravishing, plundering, as they went.
Meantime, Philip, who was at Brussels, had directed the Duke of Savoy to
oppose the Duc de Guise with an army which had been hastily collected and
organized at Maubeuge, in the province of Namur. He now desired, if possible,
to attack and cut off the forces of De Thermes before he should extend the
hand to Guise, or make good his retreat to Calais.

Flushed with victory over defenseless peasants, laden with the spoils of sacked
and burning towns, the army of De Thermes was already on its homeward
march. It was the moment for a sudden and daring blow. Whose arm should
deal it? What general in Philip’s army possessed the requisite promptness, and
felicitous audacity—who, but the most brilliant of cavalry officers, the bold and
rapid hero of St. Quentin? Egmont, in obedience to the King’s command, threw
himself at once into the field. He hastily collected all the available forces in
the neighborhood. These, with drafts from the Duke of Savoy’s army, and with
detachments under Marshal Bignicourt from the garrisons of Saint Omer,
Bethune, Aire, and Bourbourg, soon amounted to 10,000 foot and 2,000 horse.
His numbers were still further swollen by large bands of peasantry, both men
and women, maddened by their recent injuries, and thirsting for vengeance.
With these troops the energetic chieftain took up his position directly in the
path of the French army. Determined to destroy De Thermes with all his force,
or to sacrifice himself, he posted his army at Gravelines, a small town lying near the seashore, and about midway between Calais and Dunkirk.

The French general was putting the finishing touch to his expedition by completing the conflagration at Dunkirk, and was moving homeward, when he became aware of the lion in his path. Although suffering from severe sickness, he mounted his horse and personally conducted his army to Gravelines. Here he found his progress completely arrested. On that night, which was the 12th of July, he held a council of officers. It was determined to refuse the combat offered, and, if possible, to escape at low tide along the sands toward Calais. The next morning he crossed the river Aa, below Gravelines. Egmont, who was not the man, on that occasion at least, to build a golden bridge for a flying enemy, crossed the same stream just above the town, and drew up his whole force in battle array. De Thermes could no longer avoid the conflict thus resolutely forced upon him. Courage was now his only counsellor. Being not materially outnumbered by his adversaries, he had, at least, an even chance of cutting his way through all obstacles, and of saving his army and his treasure. The sea was on his right hand, the Aa behind him, the enemy in front. He piled his baggage and wagons so as to form a barricade upon his left, and placed his artillery, consisting of four culverines and three falconets, in front. Behind these he drew up his cavalry, supported at each side by the Gascons, and placed his French and German infantry in the rear.

Egmont, on the other hand, divided his cavalry into five squadrons. Three of light horse were placed in advance for the first assault—the center commanded by himself, the two wings by Count Pontenals and Henrico Henriquez. The black hussars of Lazarus Schwendi and the Flemish gendarmes came next. Behind these was the infantry, divided into three nations, Spanish, German, and Flemish, and respectively commanded by Carvajal, Mönchausen, and Bignicourt. Egmont, having characteristically selected the post of danger in the very front of battle for himself, could no longer restrain his impatience. "The foe is ours already," he shouted, "follow me, all who love their fatherland." With that he set spurs to his horse, and having his own regiment well in hand, dashed upon the enemy.

The Gascons received the charge with coolness, and, under cover of a murderous fire from the artillery in front, which mowed down the foremost ranks of their assailants, sustained the whole weight of the first onset without flinching. Egmont’s horse was shot under him at the commencement of the action. Mounting another, he again cheered his cavalry to the attack. The Gascons still maintained an unwavering front, and fought with characteristic ferocity. The courage of despair inflamed the French, the hope of a brilliant and conclusive victory excited the Spaniards and Flemings. It was a wild, hand to hand conflict—general and soldier, cavalier and pikeman, lancer and musketeer, mingled together in one dark, confused, and struggling mass; foot
to foot, breast to breast, horse to horse—a fierce, tumultuous battle on the sands, worthy the fitful pencil of the national painter, Wouvermans.

For a long time it was doubtful on which side victory was to incline, but at last ten English vessels unexpectedly appeared in the offing, and ranging up soon afterwards as close to the shore as was possible, opened their fire upon the still unbroken lines of the French. The ships were too distant, the danger of injuring friend as well as foe too imminent, to allow of their exerting any important influence upon the result. The spirit of the enemy was broken, however, by this attack upon their seaward side, which they had thought impregnable. At the same time, too, a detachment of German cavalry which had been directed by Egmont to make their way under the downs to the southward, now succeeded in turning their left flank. Egmont, profiting by their confusion, charged them again with redoubled vigor. The fate of the day was decided. The French cavalry wavered, broke their ranks, and in their flight carried dismay throughout the whole army. The rout was total; horse and foot, French, Gascon, and German fled from the field together. Fifteen hundred fell in the action, as many more were driven into the sea, while great numbers were torn to pieces by the exasperated peasants, who now eagerly washed out their recent injuries in the blood of the dispersed, wandering, and wounded soldiers.

The army of De Thermes was totally destroyed, and with it, the last hope of France for an honorable and equal negotiation. She was now at Philip’s feet, so that this brilliant cavalry action, although it has been surpassed in importance by many others, in respect to the numbers of the combatants and the principles involved in the contest, was still, in regard to the extent both of its immediate and its permanent results, one of the most decisive and striking which have ever been fought. The French army engaged was annihilated. Marshal de Thermes, with a wound in the head, Senarpont, Annibault, Villefon, Morvilliers, Chanlis, and many others of high rank were prisoners. The French monarch had not much heart to set about the organization of another army, a task which he was now compelled to undertake. He was soon obliged to make the best terms which he could, and to consent to a treaty which was one of the most ruinous in the archives of France.

The Marshal de Thermes was severely censured for having remained so long at Dunkirk and in its neighborhood. He was condemned still more loudly for not having at least effected his escape beyond Gravelines, during the night which preceded the contest. With regard to the last charge, however, it may well be doubted whether any nocturnal attempt would have been likely to escape the vigilance of Egmont. With regard to his delay at Dunkirk, it was asserted that he had been instructed to await in that place the junction with the Duc de Guise, which had been previously arranged. But for the criminal and, then, inexplicable languor which characterized that commander’s movements, after the capture of Thionville, the honor of France might still have been saved.
Whatever might have been the faults of De Thermes or of Guise, there could be little doubt as to the merit of Egmont. Thus within eleven months of the battle of Saint Quentin, had the Dutch hero gained another victory so decisive as to settle the fate of the war, and to elevate his sovereign to a position from which he might dictate the terms of a triumphant peace. The opening scenes of Philip’s reign were rendered as brilliant as the proudest days of the Emperor’s career, while the provinces were enraptured with the prospect of early peace. To whom, then, was the sacred debt of national and royal gratitude due but to Lamoral of Egmont? His countrymen gladly recognized the claim. He became the idol of the army, the familiar hero of ballad and story, the mirror of chivalry, and the god of popular worship. Throughout the Netherlands he was hailed as the right hand of the fatherland, the savior of Flanders from devastation and outrage, the protector of the nation, the pillar of the throne.

The victor gained many friends by his victory, and one enemy. The bitterness of that foe was likely, in the future, to outweigh all the plaudits of his friends. The Duke of Alva had strongly advised against giving battle to De Thermes. He depreciated the triumph after it had been gained, by reflections upon the consequences which would have flowed, had a defeat been suffered instead. He even held this language to Egmont himself after his return to Brussels. The conqueror, flushed with his glory, was not inclined to digest the criticism, nor what he considered the venomous detraction of the Duke. More vain and arrogant than ever, he treated his powerful Spanish rival with insolence, and answered his observations with angry sarcasms, even in the presence of the King. Alva was not likely to forget the altercation, nor to forgive the triumph.

There passed, naturally, much bitter censure and retort on both sides at court, between the friends and adherents of Egmont and those who sustained the party of his adversary. The battle of Gravelines was fought over daily, amid increasing violence and recrimination, between Spaniard and Fleming, and the old international hatred flamed more fiercely than ever. Alva continued to censure the foolhardiness which had risked so valuable an army on a single blow. Egmont’s friends replied that it was easy for foreigners, who had nothing at risk in the country, to look on while the fields of the Netherlands were laid waste, and the homes and hearths of an industrious population made desolate, by a brutal and rapacious soldiery. They who dwelt in the Provinces would be ever grateful to their preserver for the result. They had no eyes for the picture which the Spanish party painted of an imaginary triumph of De Thermes and its effects. However the envious might cavil, now that the blow had been struck, the popular heart remained warm as ever, and refused to throw down the idol which had so recently been set up.
CHAPTER 3

State of the Netherlands and the Beginning of Persecution in Spain

The battle of Gravelines had decided the question. The intrigues of the two cardinals at Peronne having been sustained by Egmont’s victory, all parties were ready for a peace. King Henry was weary of the losing game which he had so long been playing, Philip was anxious to relieve himself from his false position, and to concentrate his whole mind and the strength of his kingdom upon his great enemy, the Netherland heresy, while the Duke of Savoy felt that the time had at last arrived when an adroit diplomacy might stand him in stead, and place him in the enjoyment of those rights which the sword had taken from him, and which his own sword had done so much towards winning back. The sovereigns were inclined to peace, and as there had never been a national principle or instinct or interest involved in the dispute, it was very certain that peace would be popular every where, upon whatever terms it might be concluded.

Montmorency and the Prince of Orange were respectively empowered to open secret negotiations. The Constable entered upon the task with alacrity, because he felt that every day of his captivity was alike prejudicial to his own welfare and the interests of his country. The Guises, who had quarreled with the Duchess de Valentionois (Diane de Poitiers), were not yet powerful enough to resist the influence of the mistress; while, rather to baffle them than from any loftier reasons, that interest was exerted in behalf of immediate peace. The Cardinal de Lorraine had by no means forgotten the eloquent arguments used by the Bishop of Arras; but his brother, the Duc de Guise, may be supposed to have desired some little opportunity of redeeming the credit of the kingdom, and to have delayed the negotiations until his valor could secure a less inglorious termination to the war.

A fresh army had, in fact, been collected under his command, and was already organized at Pierrepoint. At the same time, Philip had assembled a large force, consisting of 30,000 foot and 15,000 cavalry, with which he had himself taken the field, encamping towards the middle of August upon the banks of the river Anthies, near the border of Picardy. King Henry, on the other hand, had already arrived in the camp at Pierrepoint, and had reviewed as imposing an army as had ever been at the disposal of a French monarch. When drawn up in battle array it covered a league and a half of ground, while three hours were required to make its circuit on horseback. All this martial display was only for effect. The two kings, at the head of their great armies, stood looking at each other while the negotiations for peace were proceeding. An unimportant skirmish or two at the outposts, unattended with loss of life, were the only military results of these great preparations.
Early in the autumn, all the troops were disbanded, while the commissioners of both crowns met in open congress at the abbey of Cercamp, near Cambray, by the middle of October. The envoys on the part of Philip were the Prince of Orange, the Duke of Alva, the Bishop of Arras, Ruy Gomez de Silva, the president Viglius; on that of the French monarch, the Constable, the Marshal de Saint André, the Cardinal de Lorraine, the Bishop of Orleans, and Claude l’Aubespine. There were also envoys sent by the Queen of England, but as the dispute concerning Calais was found to hamper the negotiations at Cercamp, the English question was left to be settled by another congress, and was kept entirely separate from the arrangements concluded between France and Spain.

The death of Queen Mary, on the 17th of November, caused a temporary suspension of the proceedings. After the widower, however, had made a fruitless effort to obtain the hand of her successor, and had been unequivocally repulsed, the commissioners again met in February, 1559, at Cateau Cambresis. The English difficulty was now arranged by separate commissioners, and on the third of April a treaty between France and Spain was concluded.

By this important convention, both kings bound themselves to maintain the Catholic worship inviolate by all means in their power, and agreed that an ecumenical council should at once assemble, to compose the religious differences, and to extinguish the increasing heresy in both kingdoms. Furthermore, it was arranged that the conquests made by each country during the preceding eight years should be restored. Thus all the gains of Francis and Henry were annulled by a single word, and the Duke of Savoy converted, by a dash of the pen, from a landless soldier of fortune into a sovereign again. He was to receive back all his estates, and was moreover to marry Henry’s sister Margaret, with a dowry of 300,000 crowns. Philip, on the other hand, now a second time a widower, was to espouse Henry’s daughter Isabella, already betrothed to the Infant Don Carlos, and to receive with her a dowry of 400,000 crowns. The restitutions were to be commenced by Henry, and to be completed within three months. Philip was to restore his conquests in the course of a month afterwards.

Most of the powers of Europe were included by both parties in this treaty—the pope, the Emperor, all the Electors, the republics of Venice, Genoa, and Switzerland; the kingdoms of England, Scotland, Poland, Denmark, Sweden; the duchies of Ferrara, Savoy, and Parma, besides other inferior principalities. Nearly all Christendom, in short, was embraced in this most amicable compact, as if Philip were determined that, henceforth and forever, Calvinists and Mahometans, Turks and Flemings, should be his only enemies.

The King of France was to select four hostages from among Philip’s subjects, to accompany him to Paris as pledges for the execution of all the terms of the treaty. The royal choice fell upon the Prince of Orange, the Duke of Alva, the Duke of Aerschot, and the Count of Egmont.
Such was the treaty of Cateau Cambresis. Thus was a termination put to a war between France and Spain, which had been so wantonly undertaken.

Marshal Monluc wrote that a treaty so disgraceful and disastrous had never before been ratified by a French monarch. It would have been difficult to point to any one more unfortunate upon her previous annals, if any treaty can be called unfortunate, by which justice is done and wrongs repaired, even under coercion. The accumulated plunder of years, which was now disgorged by France, was equal in value to one third of that kingdom. One hundred and ninety-eight fortified towns were surrendered, making, with other places of greater or less importance, a total estimated by some writers as high as four hundred. The principal gainer was the Duke of Savoy, who, after so many years of knight-errantry, had regained his duchy, and found himself the brother-in-law of his ancient enemy.

The well-known tragedy by which the solemnities of this pacification were abruptly concluded in Paris, bore with it an impressive moral. The monarch who, in violation of his plighted word and against the interests of his nation and the world, had entered precipitately into a causeless war, now lost his life in fictitious combat at the celebration of peace. On the tenth of July, Henry II died of the wound inflicted by Montgomery in the tournament held eleven days before. Of this weak and worthless prince, all that even his flatterers could favorably urge was his great fondness for war, as if a sanguinary propensity, even when unaccompanied by a spark of military talent, were of itself a virtue. Yet, with his death the kingdom fell even into more pernicious hands, and the fate of Christendom grew darker than ever. The dynasty of Diane de Poitiers was succeeded by that of Catherine de Medici; the courtesan gave place to the dowager; and France—during the long and miserable period in which she lay bleeding in the grasp of the Italian she-wolf and her litter of cowardly and sanguinary princes—might even lament the days of Henry and his Diana. Charles IX, Henry III, Francis of Alençon, last of the Valois race—how large a portion of the fearful debt which has not yet been discharged by half a century of revolution and massacre was of their accumulation!

The Duchess of Valentinois had quarreled latterly with the house of Guise, and was disposed to favor Montmorency. The king, who was but a tool in her hands, might possibly have been induced, had he lived, to regard Coligny and his friends with less aversion. This is, however, extremely problematical, for it was Henry II who had concluded that memorable arrangement with his royal brother of Spain, to arrange for the Huguenot chiefs throughout both realms, a “Sicilian Vespers,” upon the first favorable occasion. His death and the subsequent policy of the Queen-Regent deferred the execution of the great scheme till fourteen years later. Henry had lived long enough, however, after the conclusion of the secret agreement to reveal it to one whose life was to be employed in thwarting this foul conspiracy of monarchs against their subjects. William of Orange, then a hostage for the execution of the treaty of Cateau
Cambresis, was the man with whom the king had the unfortunate conception to confer on the subject of the plot. The Prince, who had already gained the esteem of Charles V by his habitual discretion, knew how to profit by the intelligence and to bide his time; but his hostility to the policy of the French and Spanish courts was perhaps dated from that hour.

Pending the peace negotiations, Philip had been called upon to mourn for his wife and father. He did not affect grief for the death of Mary Tudor, but he honored the Emperor’s departure with stately obsequies at Brussels. The ceremonies lasted two days (the 29th and 30th of December, 1558). In the grand and elaborate procession which swept through the streets upon the first day, the most conspicuous object was a ship floating apparently upon the waves, and drawn by a band of Tritons who disported at the bows. The masts, shrouds, and sails of the vessel were black, it was covered with heraldic achievements, banners and emblematic mementos of the Emperor’s various expeditions, while the flags of Turks and Moors trailed from her sides in the waves below. Three allegorical personages composed the crew. Hope, "all clothed in brown, with anker in hand," stood at the prow; Faith, with sacramental chalice and red cross, clad in white garment, with her face veiled "with white tiffany," sat on a "stool of estate" before the mizzenmast; while Charity "in red, holding in her hand a burning heart," was at the helm to navigate the vessel. Hope, Faith, and Love were thought the most appropriate symbols for the man who had invented the edicts, introduced the inquisition, and whose last words, inscribed by a hand already trembling with death, had adjured his son, by his love, allegiance, and hope of salvation, to deal to all heretics the extreme rigor of the law, "without respect of persons and without regard to any plea in their favor."

The rest of the procession, in which marched the Duke of Alva, the Prince of Orange, and other great personages, carrying the sword, the globe, the scepter, and the "crown imperial," contained no emblems or imagery worthy of being recorded. The next day the king, dressed in mourning and attended by a solemn train of high officers and nobles, went again to the church. A contemporary letter mentions a somewhat singular incident as forming the concluding part of the ceremony. "And the service being done," wrote Sir Richard Clough to Sir Thomas Gresham, "there went a nobleman into the herse (so far as I could understand, it was the Prince of Orange), who, standing before the herse, struck with his hand upon the chest and sayd, ‘He is dead.’ Then standing still awhile, he sayd, ‘He shall remain dead.’ And then resting awhile, he struck again and sayd, ‘He is dead, and there is another risen up in his place greater than ever he was.’ Whereupon the Kyne’s hoode was taken off and the Kyne went home without his hoode."

If the mourning for the dead Emperor was but a mummery and a masquerade, there was, however, heartiness and sincerity in the rejoicing which now burst forth like a sudden illumination throughout the Netherlands, upon the advent
of peace. All was joy in the provinces, but at Antwerp, the metropolis of the
land, the enthusiasm was unbounded. Nine days were devoted to festivities.
Bells rang their merriest peals; artillery thundered; beacons blazed; the
splendid cathedral spire flamed nightly with three hundred burning cressets;
the city was strewn with flowers and decorated with triumphal arches; the
Guilds of Rhetoric amazed the world with their gorgeous processions, glittering
dresses, and bombastic versification; the burghers all, from highest to
humblest, were feasted and made merry; wine flowed in the streets and oxen
were roasted whole; prizes on poles were climbed for; pigs were hunted
blindfold; men and women raced in sacks, and in short, for nine days long there
was one universal and spontaneous demonstration of hilarity in Antwerp and
throughout the provinces.

But with this merry humor of his subjects, the sovereign had but little
sympathy. There was nothing in his character or purposes which owed affinity
with any mood of this jocund and energetic people. Philip had not made peace
with all the world that the Netherlanders might climb on poles or ring bells, or
strew flowers in his path for a little holiday time, and then return to their
industrious avocations again. He had made peace with all the world that he
might be free to combat heresy; and this archenemy had taken up its
stronghold in the provinces. The treaty of Cateau Cambresis left him at liberty
to devote himself to that great enterprise. He had never loved the
Netherlands; a residence in these constitutional provinces was extremely
irksome to him, and he was therefore anxious to return to Spain. From the
depths of his cabinet he felt that he should be able to direct the enterprise he
was resolved upon, and that his presence in the Netherlands would be
superfluous and disagreeable.

The early part of the year 1559 was spent by Philip in organizing the
government of the provinces and in making the necessary preparations for his
departure. The Duke of Savoy, being restored to his duchy, had, of course, no
more leisure to act as Regent of the Netherlands, and it was necessary,
therefore, to fix upon his successor in this important post, at once. There were
several candidates. The Duchess Christina of Lorraine had received many half
promises of the appointment, which she was most anxious to secure; the
Emperor was even said to desire the nomination of the Archduke Maximilian, a
step which would have certainly argued more magnanimity upon Philip’s part
than the world could give him credit for; and besides these regal personages,
the high nobles of the land, especially Orange and Egmont, had hopes of
obtaining the dignity. The Prince of Orange, however, was too sagacious to
deceive himself long, and became satisfied very soon that no Netherlander was
likely to be selected for Regent. He therefore threw his influence in favor of
the Duchess Christina, whose daughter, at the suggestion of the Bishop of
Arras, he was desirous of obtaining in marriage.
The king favored for a time, or pretended to favor, both the appointment of Madame de Lorraine and the marriage project of the prince. Afterwards, however, and in a manner which was accounted both sudden and mysterious, it appeared that the duchess and Orange had both been deceived, and that the king and bishop had decided in favor of another candidate, whose claims had not been considered, before, very prominent. This was the Duchess Margaret of Parma, natural daughter of Charles V. A brief sketch of this important personage, so far as regards her previous career, is reserved for the following chapter. For the present it is sufficient to state the fact of the nomination. In order to afford a full view of Philip’s political arrangements before his final departure from the Netherlands, we defer until the same chapter, an account of the persons who composed the boards of council organized to assist the new regent in the government.

These bodies themselves were three in number—a state and privy council and one of finance. They were not new institutions, having been originally established by the Emperor, and were now arranged by his successor upon the same nominal basis upon which they had before existed. The finance council, which had superintendence of all matters relating to the royal domains and to the annual budgets of the government, was presided over by Baron Berlaymont. The privy council, of which Viglius was president, was composed of ten or twelve learned doctors, and was especially entrusted with the control of matters relating to law, pardons, and the general administration of justice. The state council, which was far the most important of the three boards, was to superintend all high affairs of government—war, treaties, foreign intercourse, internal and interprovincial affairs. The members of this council were the Bishop of Arras, Viglius, Berlaymont, the Prince of Orange, Count Egmont, to which number were afterwards added the Seigneur de Glayon, the Duke of Aerschot, and Count Horn. The last-named nobleman, who was admiral of the provinces, had, for the present, been appointed to accompany the king to Spain, there to be specially entrusted with the administration of affairs relating to the Netherlands. He was destined, however, to return at the expiration of two years.

With the object, as it was thought, of curbing the power of the great nobles, it had been arranged that the three councils should be entirely distinct from each other, that the members of the state council should have no participation in the affairs of the two other bodies; but, on the other hand, that the finance and privy councillors, as well as the Knights of the Fleece, should have access to the deliberations of the state council. In the course of events, however, it soon became evident that the real power of the government was exclusively in the hands of the consulta, a committee of three members of the state council, by whose deliberations the Regent was secretly instructed to be guided on all important occasions. The three, Viglius, Berlaymont, and Arras, who composed the secret conclave or cabinet, were in reality but one. The Bishop of Arras was in all three, and the three together constituted only the Bishop of Arras.
There was no especial governor or stadholder appointed for the province of Brabant, where the regent was to reside and to exercise executive functions in person. The stadholders for the other provinces were, for Flanders and Artois, the Count of Egmont; for Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht, the Prince of Orange; for Gueldres and Zutphen, the Count of Meghen; for Friesland, Groningen, and Overyssel, Count Aremberg; for Hainault, Valenciennes, and Cambray, the Marquis of Berghen; for Tournay and Tournaisis, Baron Montigny; for Namur, Baron Berlaymont; for Luxemburg, Count Mansfeld; for Ryssel, Douay, and Orchies, the Baron Courèieres. All these stadholders were commanders-in-chief of the military forces in their respective provinces. With the single exception of Count Egmont, in whose province of Flanders the stadholders were excluded from the administration of justice, all were likewise supreme judges in the civil and criminal tribunal.

The military force of the Netherlands in time of peace was small, for the provinces were jealous of the presence of soldiery. The only standing army which then legally existed in the Netherlands were the Bandes d’Ordonnance, a body of mounted gendarmerie—amounting in all to 3,000 men—which ranked among the most accomplished and best disciplined cavalry of Europe. They were divided into fourteen squadrons, each under the command of a stadholder, or of a distinguished noble. Besides these troops, however, there still remained in the provinces a foreign force amounting in the aggregate to 4,000 men. These soldiers were the remainder of those large bodies which year after year had been quartered upon the Netherlands during the constant warfare to which they had been exposed. Living upon the substance of the country, paid out of its treasury, and as offensive by their licentious and ribald habits of life as were the enemies against whom they were enrolled, these troops had become an intolerable burden to the people. They were now disposed in different garrisons, nominally to protect the frontier. As a firm peace, however, had now been concluded between Spain and France, and as there was no pretext for compelling the provinces to accept this protection, the presence of a foreign soldiery strengthened a suspicion that they were to be used in the onslaught which was preparing against the religious freedom and the political privileges of the country. They were to be the nucleus of a larger army, it was believed, by which the land was to be reduced to a state of servile subjection to Spain. A low, constant, but generally unheeded murmur of dissatisfaction and distrust upon this subject was already perceptible throughout the Netherlands, a warning presage of the coming storm.

All the provinces were now convoked for the 7th of August (1559), at Ghent, there to receive the parting communication and farewell of the king. Previously to this day, however, Philip appeared in person upon several solemn occasions, to impress upon the country the necessity of attending to the great subject with which his mind was exclusively occupied. He came before the great council of Mechlin, in order to address that body with his own lips upon the necessity of supporting the edicts to the letter, and of trampling out every
vestige of heresy, wherever it should appear, by the immediate immolation of all heretics, whoever they might be.

He likewise caused the estates of Flanders to be privately assembled, that he might harangue them upon the same great topic. In the latter part of July he proceeded to Ghent, where a great concourse of nobles, citizens, and strangers had already assembled. Here, in the last week of the month, the twenty-third chapter of the Golden Fleece was held with much pomp, and with festivities which lasted three days. The fourteen vacancies which existed were filled with the names of various distinguished personages. With this last celebration, the public history of Philip the Good’s ostentatious and ambitious order of knighthood was closed. The subsequent nominations were made ex indultu apostolico, and without the assembling of a chapter.

The estates having duly assembled upon the day prescribed, Philip, attended by Margaret of Parma, the Duke of Savoy, and a stately retinue of ambassadors and grandees, made his appearance before them. After the customary ceremonies had been performed, the Bishop of Arras arose and delivered, in the name of his sovereign, an elaborate address of instructions and farewells. In this important harangue, the states were informed that the king had convened them in order that they might be informed of his intention of leaving the Netherlands immediately. He would gladly have remained longer in his beloved provinces, had not circumstances compelled his departure. His father had come hither for the good of the country in the year 1543, and had never returned to Spain, except to die.

Upon the King’s accession to the sovereignty, he had arranged a truce of five years, which had been broken through by the faithlessness of France. He had, therefore, been obliged, notwithstanding his anxiety to return to a country where his presence was so much needed, to remain in the provinces till he had conducted the new war to a triumphant close. In doing this he had been solely governed by his intense love for the Netherlands, and by his regard for their interests. All the money which he had raised from their coffers had been spent for their protection. Upon this account his Majesty expressed his confidence that the estates would pay an earnest attention to the "Request" which had been laid before them, the more so, as its amount, three millions of gold florins, would all be expended for the good of the provinces. After his return to Spain he hoped to be able to make a remittance. The Duke of Savoy, he continued, being obliged, in consequence of the fortunate change in his affairs, to resign the government of the Netherlands, and his own son, Don Carlos, not yet being sufficiently advanced in years to succeed to that important post, his Majesty had selected his sister, the Duchess Margaret of Parma, daughter of the Emperor, as the most proper person for regent. As she had been born in the Netherlands, and had always entertained a profound affection for the provinces, he felt a firm confidence that she would prove faithful both to their interests and his own.
As at this moment many countries, and particularly the lands in the immediate neighborhood, were greatly infested by various "new, reprobate, and damnable sects"; as these sects, proceeding from the foul fiend, father of discord, had not failed to keep those kingdoms in perpetual dissension and misery, to the manifest displeasure of God Almighty; as his Majesty was desirous to avert such terrible evils from his own realms, according to his duty to the Lord God, who would demand reckoning from him hereafter for the well-being of the provinces; as all experience proved that change of religion ever brought desolation and confusion to the commonweal; as low persons, beggars and vagabonds, under color of religion, were accustomed to traverse the land for the purpose of plunder and disturbance; as his Majesty was most desirous of following in the footsteps of his lord and father; as it would be well remembered what the Emperor had said to him upon the memorable occasion of his abdication; therefore his Majesty had commanded the Regent Margaret of Parma, for the sake of religion and the glory of God, accurately and exactly to cause to be enforced the edicts and decrees made by his imperial Majesty, and renewed by his present Majesty, for the extirpation of all sects and heresies. All governors, councillors, and others having authority were also instructed to do their utmost to accomplish this great end.

The great object of the discourse was thus announced in the most impressive manner, and with all that conventional rhetoric of which the Bishop of Arras was considered a consummate master. Not a word was said on the subject which was nearest the hearts of the Netherlanders—the withdrawal of the Spanish troops. Not a hint was held out that a reduction of the taxation, under which the provinces had so long been groaning, was likely to take place; but, on the contrary, the king had demanded a new levy of considerable amount. A few well-turned paragraphs were added on the subject of the administration of justice—"without which the republic was a dead body without a soul"—in the bishop's most approved style, and the discourse concluded with a fervent exhortation to the provinces to trample heresy and heretics out of existence, and with the hope that the Lord God, in such case, would bestow upon the Netherlands health and happiness.

After the address had been concluded, the deputies, according to ancient form, requested permission to adjourn, that the representatives of each province might deliberate among themselves on the point of granting or withholding the Request for the three millions. On the following day they again assembled in the presence of the king, for the purpose of returning their separate answers to the propositions.

The address first read was that of the Estates of Artois. The chairman of the deputies from that province read a series of resolutions, drawn up, says a contemporary, "with that elegance which characterized all the public acts of the Artesians, bearing witness to the vivacity of their wits." The deputies spoke of the extreme affection which their province had always borne to his Majesty
and to the Emperor. They had proved it by the constancy with which they had endured the calamities of war so long, and they now cheerfully consented to the Request, so far as their contingent went. They were willing to place at his Majesty’s disposal, not only the remains of their property, but even the last drop of their blood.

As the eloquent chairman reached this point in his discourse, Philip, who was standing with his arm resting upon Egmont’s shoulder, listening eagerly to the Artesian address, looked upon the deputies of the province with a smiling face, expressing by the unwonted benignity of his countenance the satisfaction which he received from these loyal expressions of affection, and this dutiful compliance with his Request.

The deputy, however, proceeded to an unexpected conclusion, by earnestly entreating his Majesty, as a compensation for the readiness thus evinced in the royal service, forthwith to order the departure of all foreign troops then in the Netherlands. Their presence, it was added, was now rendered completely superfluous by the ratification of the treaty of peace so fortunately arranged with all the world.

At this sudden change in the deputy’s language, the king, no longer smiling, threw himself violently upon his chair of state, where he remained, brooding with a gloomy countenance upon the language which had been addressed to him. It was evident, said an eyewitness, that he was deeply offended. He changed color frequently, so that all present “could remark, from the working of his face, how much his mind was agitated.”

The rest of the provinces were even more explicit than the deputies of Artois. All had voted their contingents to the Request, but all had made the withdrawal of the troops an express antecedent condition to the payment of their respective quotas.

The king did not affect to conceal his rage at these conditions, exclaiming bitterly to Count Egmont and other seigniors near the throne that it was very easy to estimate, by these proceedings, the value of the protestations made by the provinces of their loyalty and affection.

Besides, however, the answers thus addressed by the separate states to the royal address, a formal remonstrance had also been drawn up in the name of the States General, and signed by the Prince of Orange, Count Egmont, and many of the leading patricians of the Netherlands. This document, which was formally presented to the king before the adjournment of the assembly, represented the infamous “pillaging, insults, and disorders” daily exercised by the foreign soldiery, stating that the burden had become intolerable, and that the inhabitants of Marienburg, and of many other large towns and villages, had
absolutely abandoned their homes rather than remain any longer exposed to such insolence and oppression.

The king, already enraged, was furious at the presentation of this petition. He arose from his seat, and rushed impetuously from the assembly, demanding of the members as he went, whether he too, as a Spaniard, was expected immediately to leave the land, and to resign all authority over it. The Duke of Savoy made use of this last occasion in which he appeared in public as regent, violently to rebuke the estates for the indignity thus offered to their sovereign.

It could not be forgotten, however, by nobles and burghers, who had not yet been crushed by the long course of oppression which was in store for them, that there had been a day when Philip’s ancestors had been more humble in their deportment in the face of the provincial authorities. His great-grandfather, Maximilian, kept in durance by the citizens of Bruges; his great-grandmother, Mary of Burgundy, with streaming eyes and disheveled hair, supplicating in the marketplace for the lives of her treacherous ambassadors, were wont to hold a less imperious language to the delegates of the states.

This burst of ill temper on the part of the monarch was, however, succeeded by a different humor. It was still thought advisable to dissemble, and to return rather an expostulatory than a peremptory answer to the remonstrance of the States General. Accordingly a paper of a singular tone was, after the delay of a few days, sent into the assembly. In this message it was stated that the king was not desirous of placing strangers in the government—a fact which was proved by the appointment of the Duchess Margaret; that the Spanish infantry was necessary to protect the land from invasion; that the remnant of foreign troops only amounted to three or four thousand men, who claimed considerable arrears of pay, but that the amount due would be forwarded to them immediately after his Majesty’s return to Spain. It was suggested that the troops would serve as an escort for Don Carlos when he should arrive in the Netherlands, although the king would have been glad to carry them to Spain in his fleet, had he known the wishes of the estates in time. He would, however, pay for their support himself, although they were to act solely for the good of the provinces. He observed, moreover, that he had selected two seigniors of the provinces, the Prince of Orange and Count Egmont, to take command of these foreign troops, and he promised faithfully that, in the course of three or four months at furthest, they should all be withdrawn.

On the same day in which the estates had assembled at Ghent, Philip had addressed an elaborate letter to the grand council of Mechlin, the supreme court of the provinces, and to the various provincial councils and tribunals of the whole country. The object of the communication was to give his final orders on the subject of the edicts, and for the execution of all heretics in the most universal and summary manner. He gave stringent and unequivocal instructions that these decrees for burning, strangling, and burying alive,
should be fulfilled to the letter. He ordered all judicial officers and magistrates "to be curious to enquire on all sides as to the execution of the placards," stating his intention that "the utmost rigor should be employed without any respect of persons," and that not only "the transgressors should be proceeded against, but also the judges who should prove remiss in their prosecution of heretics." He alluded to a false opinion which had gained currency that the edicts were only intended against anabaptists. Correcting this error, he stated that they were to be "enforced against all sectaries, without any distinction or mercy, who might be spotted merely with the errors introduced by Luther."

The king, notwithstanding the violent scenes in the assembly, took leave of the estates at another meeting with apparent cordiality. His dissatisfaction was sufficiently manifest, but it expressed itself principally against individuals. His displeasure at the course pursued by the leading nobles, particularly by the Prince of Orange, was already no secret.

Philip, soon after the adjournment of the assembly, had completed the preparations for his departure. At Middleburg he was met by the agreeable intelligence that the pope had consented to issue a bull for the creation of the new bishoprics which he desired for the Netherlands. This important subject will be resumed in another chapter; for the present we accompany the king to Flushing, whence the fleet was to set sail for Spain. He was escorted thither by the Duchess Regent, the Duke of Savoy, and by many of the most eminent personages of the provinces. Among others William of Orange was in attendance to witness the final departure of the king, and to pay him his farewell respects. As Philip was proceeding on board the ship which was to bear him forever from the Netherlands, his eyes lighted upon the prince. His displeasure could no longer be restrained. With angry face he turned upon him, and bitterly reproached him for having thwarted all his plans by means of his secret intrigues. William replied with humility that everything which had taken place had been done through the regular and natural movements of the states. Upon this the king, boiling with rage, seized the prince by the wrist, and shaking it violently, exclaimed in Spanish, "No los estados, ma vos, vos, vos!"—Not the estates, but you, you, you!—repeating thrice the word vos, which is as disrespectful and uncourteous in Spanish as "toi" in French.

After this severe and public insult, the Prince of Orange did not go on board his Majesty’s vessel, but contented himself with wishing Philip, from the shore, a fortunate journey. It may be doubted, moreover, whether he would not have made a sudden and compulsory voyage to Spain had he ventured his person in the ship, and whether, under the circumstances, he would have been likely to effect as speedy a return. His caution served him then as it was destined to do on many future occasions, and Philip left the Netherlands with this parting explosion of hatred against the man who, as he perhaps instinctively felt, was destined to circumvent his measures and resist his tyranny to the last.
The fleet, which consisted of ninety vessels, so well provisioned that, among other matters, 15,000 capons were put on board, according to the Antwerp chronicler, set sail upon the 26th of August (1559), from Flushing. The voyage proved tempestuous, so that much of the rich tapestry and other merchandise which had been accumulated by Charles and Philip was lost. Some of the vessels foundered; to save others it was necessary to lighten the cargo, and "to enrobe the roaring waters with the silks," for which the Netherlands were so famous; so that it was said that Philip and his father had impoverished the earth only to enrich the ocean. The fleet had been laden with much valuable property, because the king had determined to fix for the future the wandering capital of his dominions in Spain. Philip landed in safety, however, at Laredo, on the 8th of September. His escape from imminent peril confirmed him in the great purpose to which he had consecrated his existence. He believed himself to have been reserved from shipwreck only because a mighty mission had been confided to him, and lest his enthusiasm against heresy should languish, his eyes were soon feasted, upon his arrival in his native country, with the spectacle of an auto-da-fé.

Early in January of this year, the king being persuaded that it was necessary everywhere to use additional means to check the alarming spread of Lutheran opinions, had written to the pope for authority to increase, if that were possible, the stringency of the Spanish inquisition. The pontiff, nothing loath, had accordingly issued a bull directed to the inquisitor general, Valdez, by which he was instructed to consign to the flames all prisoners whatever, even those who were not accused of having "relapsed." Great preparations had been made to strike terror into the hearts of heretics by a series of horrible exhibitions, in the course of which the numerous victims, many of them persons of high rank, distinguished learning, and exemplary lives, who had long been languishing in the dungeons of the holy office, were to be consigned to the flames.

The first auto-da-fé had been consummated at Valladolid on the 21st of May (1559), in the absence of the king, of course, but in the presence of the royal family and the principal notabilities—civil, ecclesiastical, and military. The princess regent, seated on her throne, close to the scaffold, had held on high the holy sword. The Archbishop of Seville, followed by the ministers of the inquisition and by the victims, had arrived in solemn procession at the "cadahalso," where, after the usual sermon in praise of the holy office and in denunciation of heresy, he had administered the oath to the Infante, who had duly sworn upon the crucifix to maintain forever the sacred inquisition and the apostolic decrees. The archbishop had then cried aloud, "So may God prosper your Highnesses and your estates," after which the men and women who formed the object of the show had been cast into the flames.

It being afterwards ascertained that the king himself would soon be enabled to return to Spain, the next festival was reserved as a fitting celebration for his
arrival. Upon the 8th of October, accordingly, another auto-da-fé took place at Valladolid. The King, with his sister and his son, the high officers of state, the foreign ministers, and all the nobility of the kingdom, were present, together with an immense concourse of soldiery, clergy, and populace. The sermon was preached by the Bishop of Cuença. When it was finished, Inquisitor General Valdez cried with a loud voice, "Oh God, make speed to help us!" The king then drew his sword. Valdez, advancing to the platform upon which Philip was seated, proceeded to read the protestation: "Your Majesty swears by the cross of the sword, whereon your royal hand reposes, that you will give all necessary favor to the holy office of the inquisition against heretics, apostates, and those who favor them, and will denounce and inform against all those who, to your royal knowledge, shall act or speak against the faith." The King answered aloud, "I swear it," and signed the paper. The oath was read to the whole assembly by an officer of the inquisition. Thirteen distinguished victims were then burned before the monarch’s eyes, besides one body which a friendly death had snatched from the hands of the holy office, and the effigy of another person who had been condemned, although not yet tried or even apprehended. Among the sufferers was Carlos de Sessa, a young noble of distinguished character and abilities, who said to the king as he passed by the throne to the stake, "How can you thus look on and permit me to be burned?" Philip then made the memorable reply, carefully recorded by his historiographer and panegyrist, "I would carry the wood to burn my own son withal, were he as wicked as you."

In Seville, immediately afterwards, another auto-da-fé was held, in which fifty living heretics were burned, besides the bones of Doctor Constantine Ponce de la Fuente, once the friend, chaplain, and almoner of Philip’s father. This learned and distinguished ecclesiastic had been released from a dreadful dungeon by a fortunate fever. The holy office, however, not content with punishing his corpse, wreaked also an impotent and ludicrous malice upon his effigy. A stuffed figure, attired in his robes and with its arms extended in the attitude which was habitual with him in prayer, was placed upon the scaffold among the living victims, and then cast into the flames, that bigotry might enjoy a fantastic triumph over the grave.

Such were the religious ceremonies with which Philip celebrated his escape from shipwreck, and his marriage with Isabella of France, immediately afterwards solemnized. These human victims, chained and burning at the stake, were the blazing torches which lighted the monarch to his nuptial couch.

End of Part One
Part Two
Administration of the Duchess Margaret
Chapters 1-4

Chapter 1  Preparations for Persecution in the Netherlands
Chapter 2  Opposition to Philip and Cardinal Granvelle in the Netherlands
Chapter 3  The Inquisition & Conflicts between Granvelle and the Nobles
Chapter 4  The Departure and Retirement of Cardinal Granvelle

CHAPTER 1
Preparations for Persecution in the Netherlands

Margaret of Parma, newly appointed Regent of the Netherlands, was the natural daughter of Charles V, and his eldest born child. Her mother, of a respectable family called Van der Genst, in Oudenarde, had been adopted and brought up by the distinguished house of Hoogstraaten. Peculiar circumstances, not necessary to relate at length, had palliated the fault to which Margaret owed her imperial origin, and gave the child almost a legitimate claim upon its
father’s protection. The claim was honorably acknowledged. Margaret was in her infancy placed by the Emperor in the charge of his paternal aunt, Margaret of Savoy, then regent of the provinces. Upon the death of that princess, the child was entrusted to the care of the Emperor’s sister, Mary, Queen Dowager of Hungary, who had succeeded to the government, and who occupied it until the abdication. The huntress-queen communicated her tastes to her youthful niece, and Margaret soon outrivaled her instructress. The ardor with which she pursued the stag, and the courageous horsemanship which she always displayed, proved her, too, no degenerate descendant of Mary of Burgundy.

Her education for the distinguished position in which she had somewhat surreptitiously been placed was at least not neglected in this particular. When, soon after the memorable sack of Rome, the pope and the Emperor had been reconciled, and it had been decided that the Medici family should be elevated upon the ruins of Florentine liberty, Margaret’s hand was conferred in marriage upon the pontiff’s nephew Alexander. The wretched profligate who was thus selected to mate with the Emperor’s eldest born child and to appropriate the fair demesnes of the Tuscan republic was nominally the offspring of Lorenzo de Medici by a Moorish slave, although generally reputed a bastard of the pope himself.

The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp at Naples, where the Emperor rode at the tournament in the guise of a Moorish warrior. At Florence splendid festivities had also been held, which were troubled with omens believed to be highly unfavorable. It hardly needed, however, preternatural appearances in heaven or on earth to proclaim the marriage ill-starred which united a child of twelve years with a worn-out debauchee of twenty-seven. Fortunately for Margaret, the funereal portents proved true. Her husband, within the first year of their wedded life, fell a victim to his own profligacy, and was assassinated by his kinsman, Lorenzino de Medici. Cosmo, his successor in the tyranny of Florence, was desirous of succeeding to the hand of Margaret, but the politic Emperor, thinking that he had already done enough to conciliate that house, was inclined to bind to his interests the family which now occupied the papal throne. Margaret was accordingly a few years afterwards united to Ottavio Farnese, nephew of Paul III. It was still her fate to be unequally matched. Having while still a child been wedded to a man of more than twice her years, she was now, at the age of twenty, united to an immature youth of thirteen. She conceived so strong an aversion to her new husband, that it became impossible for them to live together in peace. Ottavio accordingly went to the wars, and in 1541 accompanied the Emperor in his memorable expedition to Barbary.

Rumors of disaster by battle and tempest reaching Europe before the results of the expedition were accurately known, reports that the Emperor had been lost in a storm, and that the young Ottavio had perished with him, awakened remorse in the bosom of Margaret. It seemed to her that he had been driven
forth by domestic inclemency to fall a victim to the elements. When, however, the truth became known, and it was ascertained that her husband, although still living, was lying dangerously ill in the charge of the Emperor, the repugnance which had been founded upon his extreme youth changed to passionate fondness. His absence, and his faithful military attendance upon her father, caused a revulsion in her feelings, and awakened her admiration. When Ottavio, now created Duke of Parma and Piacenza, returned to Rome, he was received by his wife with open arms. Their union was soon blessed with twins, and but for a certain imperiousness of disposition which Margaret had inherited from her father, and which she was too apt to exercise even upon her husband, the marriage would have been sufficiently fortunate.

Various considerations pointed her out to Philip as a suitable person for the office of regent, although there seemed some mystery about the appointment which demanded explanation. It was thought that her birth would make her acceptable to the people; but perhaps, the secret reason with Philip was, that she alone of all other candidates would be amenable to the control of the churchman in whose hand he intended placing the real administration of the provinces. Moreover, her husband was very desirous that the citadel of Piacenza, still garrisoned by Spanish troops, should be surrendered to him. Philip was disposed to conciliate the duke, but unwilling to give up the fortress. He felt that Ottavio would be flattered by the nomination of his wife to so important an office, and be not too much dissatisfied at finding himself relieved for a time from her imperious fondness. Her residence in the Netherlands would guarantee domestic tranquility to her husband, and peace in Italy to the king. Margaret would be a hostage for the fidelity of the Duke, who had, moreover, given his eldest son to Philip to be educated in his service.

She was about thirty-seven years of age when she arrived in the Netherlands, with the reputation of possessing high talents, and a proud and energetic character. She was an enthusiastic Catholic, and had sat at the feet of Loyola, who had been her confessor and spiritual guide. She felt a greater horror for heretics than for any other species of malefactors, and looked up to her father’s bloody edicts as if they had been special revelations from on high. She was most strenuous in her observance of Roman rites, and was accustomed to wash the feet of twelve virgins every holy week, and to endow them in marriage afterwards. Her acquirements, save that of the art of horsemanship, were not remarkable.

Carefully educated in the Machiavellian and Medicean school of politics, she was versed in that “dissimulation,” to which liberal Anglo-Saxons give a shorter name, but which formed the main substance of statesmanship at the court of Charles and Philip. In other respects her accomplishments were but meager, and she had little acquaintance with any language but Italian. Her personal appearance, which was masculine, but not without a certain grand and imperial fascination, harmonized with the opinion generally entertained of her
character. The famous moustache upon her upper lip was supposed to indicate authority and virility of purpose, an impression which was confirmed by the circumstance that she was liable to severe attacks of gout, a disorder usually considered more appropriate to the sterner sex.

Such were the previous career and public reputation of the Duchess Margaret. It remains to be unfolded whether her character and endowments, as exemplified in her new position, were to justify the choice of Philip.

The members of the state council, as already observed, were Berlaymont, Viglius, Arras, Orange, and Egmont.

The first was, likewise, chief of the finance department. Most of the Catholic writers described him as a noble of loyal and highly honorable character. Those of the Protestant party, on the contrary, uniformly denounced him as greedy, avaricious, and extremely sanguinary. That he was a brave and devoted soldier, a bitter papist, and an inflexible adherent to the royal cause, has never been disputed. The baron himself, with his four courageous and accomplished sons, were ever in the front ranks to defend the crown against the nation. It must be confessed, however, that fanatical loyalty loses most of the romance with which genius and poetry have so often hallowed the sentiment, when the "legitimate" prince for whom the sword is drawn is not only an alien in tongue and blood, but filled with undisguised hatred for the land he claims to rule.

Viglius van Aytta van Zuichem was a learned Frisian, born, according to some writers, of "boors' degree, but having no inclination for boorish work." According to other authorities, which the president himself favored, he was of noble origin; but, whatever his race, it is certain that whether gentle or simple, it derived its first and only historical illustration from his remarkable talents and acquirements. These in early youth were so great as to acquire the commendation of Erasmus. He had studied in Louvain, Paris, and Padua, had refused the tutorship of Philip when that prince was still a child, and had afterwards filled a professorship at Ingolstadt. After rejecting several offers of promotion from the Emperor, he had at last accepted in 1542 a seat in the council of Mechlin, of which body he had become president in 1545.

He had been one of the peace commissioners to France in 1558, and was now president of the privy council, a member of the state council, and of the inner and secret committee of that board, called the Consulta. Much odium was attached to his name for his share in the composition of the famous edict of 1550. The rough draught was usually attributed to his pen, but he complained bitterly, in letters written at this time, of injustice done him in this respect, and maintained that he had endeavored, without success, to induce the Emperor to mitigate the severity of the edict. One does not feel very strongly inclined to accept his excuses, however, when his general opinions on the subject of religion are remembered. He was most bigoted in precept and
practice. Religious liberty he regarded as the most detestable and baleful of doctrines; heresy he denounced as the most unpardonable of crimes.

From no man’s mouth flowed more bitter or more elegant commonplaces than from that of the learned president against those blackest of malefactors, the men who claimed within their own walls the right to worship God according to their own consciences. For a common person, not learned in law or divinity, to enter into his closet, to shut the door, and to pray to Him who seeth in secret, was, in his opinion, to open wide the gate of destruction for all the land, and to bring in the Father of Evil at once to fly away with the whole population, body and soul. "If every man," said he to Hopper, "is to believe what he likes in his own house, we shall have hearth gods and tutelar divinities again, the country will swarm with a thousand errors and sects, and very few there will be, I fear, who will allow themselves to be enclosed in the sheepfold of Christ."

"I have ever considered this opinion," continued the president, "the most pernicious of all. They who hold it have a contempt for all religion, and are neither more nor less than atheists. This vague, fireside liberty should be by every possible means extirpated; therefore did Christ institute shepherds to drive his wandering sheep back into the fold of the true Church; thus only can we guard the lambs against the ravening wolves, and prevent their being carried away from the flock of Christ to the flock of Belial. Liberty of religion, or of conscience, as they call it, ought never to be tolerated."

This was the cant with which Viglius was ever ready to feed not only his faithful Hopper, but all the world beside. The president was naturally anxious that the fold of Christ should be entrusted to none but regular shepherds, for he looked forward to taking one of the most lucrative crooks into his own hand, when he should retire from his secular career.

It is now necessary to say a few introductory words concerning the man who, from this time forth, begins to rise upon the history of his country with daily increasing grandeur and influence. William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, although still young in years, is already the central personage about whom the events and the characters of the epoch most naturally group themselves, destined as he is to become more and more with each succeeding year the vivifying source of light, strength, and national life to a whole people.

The Nassau family first emerges into distinct existence in the middle of the eleventh century. It divides itself almost as soon as known into two great branches. The elder remained in Germany, ascended the imperial throne in the thirteenth century in the person of Adolph of Nassau, and gave to the country many electors, bishops, and generals. The younger and more illustrious branch retained the modest property and petty sovereignty of Nassau Dillenbourg, but at the same time transplanted itself to the Netherlands, where it attained at an early period to great power and large possessions. The ancestors of William, as Dukes of Gueldres, had begun to exercise sovereignty in the provinces four
centuries before the advent of the house of Burgundy. That overshadowing family afterwards numbered the Netherland Nassau’s among its most stanch and powerful adherents. Engelbert II was distinguished in the turbulent councils and in the battlefields of Charles the Bold, and was afterwards the unwavering supporter of Maximilian, in court and camp. Dying childless, he was succeeded by his brother John, whose two sons, Henry and William, of Nassau, divided the great inheritance after their father’s death.

William succeeded to the German estates, became a convert to Protestantism, and introduced the Reformation into his dominions. Henry, the eldest son, received the family possessions and titles in Luxembourg, Brabant, Flanders, and Holland, and distinguished himself as much as his uncle Engelbert, in the service of the Burgundo-Austrian house. The confidential friend of Charles V, whose governor he had been in that Emperor’s boyhood, he was ever his most efficient and reliable adherent. It was he whose influence placed the imperial crown upon the head of Charles. In 1515 he espoused Claudia de Chalons, sister of Prince Philibert of Orange, “in order,” as he wrote to his father, “to be obedient to his imperial Majesty, to please the King of France, and more particularly for the sake of his own honor and profit.”

His son Réné de Nassau-Chalons succeeded Philibert. The little principality of Orange, so pleasantly situated between Provence and Dauphiny, but in such dangerous proximity to the seat of the “Babylonian captivity” of the popes at Avignon, thus passed to the family of Nassau. The title was of high antiquity. Already in the reign of Charlemagne, Guillaume an Court-Nez, or “William with the Short Nose,” had defended the little town of Orange against the assaults of the Saracens. The interest and authority acquired in the demesnes thus preserved by his valor became extensive, and in process of time hereditary in his race. The principality became an absolute and free sovereignty, and had already descended, in defiance of the Salic law, through the three distinct families of Orange, Baux, and Chalons.

In 1544, Prince Réné died at the Emperor’s feet in the trenches of Saint Dizier. Having no legitimate children, he left all his titles and estates to his cousin-german, William of Nassau, son of his father’s brother William, who thus at the age of eleven years became William IX of Orange. For this child, whom the future was to summon to such high destinies and such heroic sacrifices, the past and present seemed to have gathered riches and power together from many sources. He was the descendant of the Otho’s, the Engelbert’s, and the Henry’s, of the Netherlands, the representative of the Philibert’s, and the Réné’s of France; the chief of a house, humbler in resources and position in Germany, but still of high rank, and which had already done good service to humanity by being among the first to embrace the great principles of the Reformation.
His father, younger brother of the Emperor’s friend Henry, was called William the Rich. He was, however, only rich in children. Of these he had five sons and seven daughters by his wife Juliana of Stolberg. She was a person of most exemplary character and unaffected piety. She instilled into the minds of all her children the elements of that devotional sentiment which was her own striking characteristic, and it was destined that the seed sown early should increase to an abundant harvest. Nothing can be more tender or more touching than the letters which still exist from her hand, written to her illustrious sons in hours of anxiety or anguish, and to the last, recommending to them with as much earnest simplicity as if they were still little children at her knee, to rely always in the midst of the trials and dangers which were to beset their paths through life, upon the great hand of God. Among the mothers of great men, Juliana of Stolberg deserves a foremost place, and it is no slight eulogy that she was worthy to have been the mother of William of Orange and of Lewis, Adolphus, Henry, and John of Nassau.

At the age of eleven years, William having thus unexpectedly succeeded to such great possessions, was sent from his father’s roof to be educated in Brussels. No destiny seemed to lie before the young prince but an education at the Emperor’s court, to be followed by military adventures, embassies, viceroyalties, and a life of luxury and magnificence. At a very early age he came, accordingly, as a page into the Emperor’s family. Charles recognized, with his customary quickness, the remarkable character of the boy. At fifteen, William was the intimate, almost confidential friend of the Emperor, who prided himself, above all other gifts, on his power of reading and of using men. The youth was so constant an attendant upon his imperial chief that even when interviews with the highest personages, and upon the gravest affairs, were taking place, Charles would never suffer him to be considered superfluous or intrusive. There seemed to be no secrets which the Emperor held too high for the comprehension or discretion of his page. His perceptive and reflective faculties, naturally of remarkable keenness and depth, thus acquired a precocious and extraordinary development. He was brought up behind the curtain of that great stage where the world’s dramas were daily enacted. The machinery and the masks which produced the grand delusions of history had no deceptions for him.

Carefully to observe men’s actions, and silently to ponder upon their motives, was the favorite occupation of the prince during his apprenticeship at court. As he advanced to man’s estate, he was selected by the Emperor for the highest duties. Charles, whose only merit, so far as the provinces were concerned, was in having been born in Ghent, and that by an ignoble accident, was glad to employ this representative of so many great Netherland houses, in the defense of the land. Before the prince was twenty-one he was appointed general-in-chief of the army on the French frontier, in the absence of the Duke of Savoy. The post was coveted by many most distinguished soldiers—the Counts of Buren, Bossu, Lalaing, Aremberg, Meghem, and particularly by Count Egmont;
yet Charles showed his extraordinary confidence in the Prince of Orange, by selecting him for the station, although he had hardly reached maturity, and was moreover absent in France. The young prince acquitted himself of his high command in a manner which justified his appointment.

It was the Prince’s shoulder upon which the Emperor leaned at the abdication, the Prince’s hand which bore the imperial insignia of the discrowned monarch to Ferdinand at Augsburg. With these duties his relations with Charles were ended, and those with Philip begun. He was with the army during the hostilities which were soon after resumed in Picardy; he was the secret negotiator of the preliminary arrangement with France, soon afterwards confirmed by the triumphant treaty of April 1559. He had conducted these initiatory conferences with the Constable Montmorency and Marshal de Saint André with great sagacity, although hardly a man in years, and by so doing he had laid Philip under deep obligations. The king was so inexpressibly anxious for peace that he would have been capable of conducting a treaty upon almost any terms. He assured the prince that "the greatest service he could render him in this world was to make peace, and that he desired to have it at any price whatever, so eager was he to return to Spain." To the envoy Suriano, Philip had held the same language. "Oh, Ambassador," said he, "I wish peace on any terms, and if the King of France had not sued for it, I would have begged for it myself."

With such impatience on the part of the sovereign, it certainly manifested diplomatic abilities of a high character in the prince, that the treaty negotiated by him amounted to a capitulation by France. He was one of the hostages selected by Henry for the due execution of the treaty, and while in France made that remarkable discovery which was to color his life. While hunting with the king in the forest of Vincennes, the Prince and Henry found themselves alone together, and separated from the rest of the company. The French monarch’s mind was full of the great scheme which had just secretly been formed by Philip and himself, to extirpate Protestantism by a general extirpation of Protestants. Philip had been most anxious to conclude the public treaty with France, that he might be the sooner able to negotiate that secret convention, by which he and his Most Christian Majesty were solemnly to bind themselves to massacre all the converts to the new religion, in France and the Netherlands. This conspiracy of the two kings against their subjects was the matter nearest the hearts of both. The Duke of Alva, a fellow hostage with William of Orange, was the plenipotentiary to conduct this more important arrangement. The French monarch, somewhat imprudently imagining that the prince was also a party to the plot, opened the whole subject to him without reserve. He complained of the constantly increasing numbers of sectaries in his kingdom, and protested that his conscience would never be easy, nor his state secure until his realm should be delivered of "that accursed vermin." A civil revolution, under pretext of a religious reformation, was his constant apprehension, particularly since so many notable personages in the realm, and even princes of the blood, were already tainted with heresy. Nevertheless,
with the favor of heaven, and the assistance of his son and brother Philip, he hoped soon to be master of the rebels. The king then proceeded, with cynical minuteness, to lay before his discreet companion the particulars of the royal plot, and the manner in which all heretics, whether high or humble, were to be discovered and massacred at the most convenient season.

For the furtherance of the scheme in the Netherlands, it was understood that the Spanish regiments would be exceedingly efficient. The prince, although horror-struck and indignant at the royal revelations, held his peace, and kept his countenance. The king was not aware that, in opening this delicate negotiation to Alva's colleague and Philip's plenipotentiary, he had given a warning of inestimable value to the man who had been born to resist the machinations of Philip and of Alva. William of Orange earned the name of "the Silent," from the manner in which he received these communications of Henry without revealing to the monarch, by word or look, the enormous blunder which he had committed. His purpose was fixed from that hour. A few days afterwards he obtained permission to visit the Netherlands, where he took measures to excite, with all his influence, the strongest and most general opposition to the continued presence of the Spanish troops, of which forces, much against his will, he had been, in conjunction with Egmont, appointed chief. He already felt, in his own language, that "an inquisition for the Netherlands had been resolved upon more cruel than that of Spain; since it would need but to look askance at an image to be cast into the flames." Although having as yet no spark of religious sympathy for the reformers, he could not, he said, "but feel compassion for so many virtuous men and women thus devoted to massacre," and he determined to save them if he could.

At the departure of Philip he had received instructions, both patent and secret, for his guidance as stadholder of Holland, Friesland, and Utrecht. He was ordered "most expressly to correct and extirpate the sects reprobated by our Holy Mother Church; to execute the edicts of his Imperial Majesty, renewed by the King, with absolute rigor." He was to see that the judges carried out the edicts, "without infraction, alteration, or moderation, since they were there to enforce, not to make or to discuss the law." In his secret instructions he was informed that the execution of the edicts was to be with all rigor, and without any respect of persons. He was also reminded that, whereas some persons had imagined the severity of the law "to be only intended against Anabaptists, on the contrary, the edicts were to be enforced on Lutherans and all other sectaries without distinction." Moreover, in one of his last interviews with Philip, the king had given him the names of several "excellent persons suspected of the new religion," and had commanded him to have them put to death. This, however, he not only omitted to do, but on the contrary gave them warning, so that they might effect their escape, "thinking it more necessary to obey God than man."
William of Orange, at the departure of the king for Spain, was in his twentyseventh year. He was a widower, his first wife, Anne of Egmont, having died in 1558, after seven years of wedlock. This lady, to whom he had been united when they were both eighteen years of age, was the daughter of the celebrated general, Count de Buren, and the greatest heiress in the Netherlands. William had thus been faithful to the family traditions, and had increased his possessions by a wealthy alliance. He had two children, Philip and Mary. The marriage had been more amicable than princely marriages arranged for convenience often prove. The letters of the prince to his wife indicate tenderness and contentment. At the same time he was accused, at a later period, of "having murdered her with a dagger." The ridiculous tale was not even credited by those who reported it, but it is worth mentioning, as a proof that no calumny was too senseless to be invented concerning the man whose character was from that hour forth to be the mark of slander, and whose whole life was to be its signal, although often unavailing, refutation.

Yet we are not to regard William of Orange, thus on the threshold of his great career, by the light diffused from a somewhat later period. In no historical character more remarkably than in his, is the law of constant development and progress illustrated. At twenty-six he is not the "pater patriae," the great man struggling upward and onward against a host of enemies and obstacles almost beyond human strength, and along the dark and dangerous path leading through conflict, privation, and ceaseless labor to no repose but death. On the contrary, his foot was hardly on the first step of that difficult ascent which was to rise before him all his lifetime. He was still among the primrose paths. He was rich, powerful, of sovereign rank. He had only the germs within him of what was thereafter to expand into moral and intellectual greatness. He had small sympathy for the religious reformation, of which he was to be one of the most distinguished champions. He was a Catholic, nominally, and in outward observance. With doctrines he troubled himself but little. He had given orders to enforce conformity to the ancient Church, not with bloodshed, yet with comparative strictness, in his principality of Orange. Beyond the compliance with rites and forms, thought indispensable in those days to a personage of such high degree, he did not occupy himself with theology. He was a Catholic, as Egmont and Horn, Berlaymont and Mansfeld, Montigny and even Brederode, were Catholic. It was only tanners, dyers, and apostate priests who were Protestants at that day in the Netherlands. His determination to protect a multitude of his harmless inferiors from horrible deaths did not proceed from sympathy with their religious sentiments, but merely from a generous and manly detestation of murder. He carefully averted his mind from sacred matters.

If indeed the seed implanted by his pious parents were really the germ of his future conversion to Protestantism, it must be confessed that it lay dormant a long time. But his mind was in other pursuits. He was disposed for an easy, joyous, luxurious, princely life. Banquets, masquerades, tournaments, the
chase, interspersed with the routine of official duties, civil and military, seemed likely to fill out his life. His hospitality, like his fortune, was almost regal. While the king and the foreign envoys were still in the Netherlands, his house, the splendid Nassau palace of Brussels, was ever open. He entertained for the monarch, who was, or who imagined himself to be, too poor to discharge his own duties in this respect, but he entertained at his own expense. This splendid household was still continued. Twenty-four noblemen and eighteen pages of gentle birth officiated regularly in his family. His establishment was on so extensive a scale that upon one day twenty-eight master cooks were dismissed, for the purpose of diminishing the family expenses, and there was hardly a princely house in Germany which did not send cooks to learn their business in so magnificent a kitchen. The reputation of his table remained undiminished for years. We find at a later period, that Philip, in the course of one of the nominal reconciliations which took place several times between the monarch and William of Orange, wrote that, his head cook being dead, he begged the Prince to "make him a present of his chief cook, Master Herman, who was understood to be very skilful."

In this hospitable mansion, the feasting continued night and day. From early morning till noon, the breakfast tables were spread with wines and luxurious viands in constant succession, to all comers and at every moment. The dinner and supper were daily banquets for a multitude of guests. The highest nobles were not those alone who were entertained. Men of lower degree were welcomed with a charming hospitality which made them feel themselves at their ease. Contemporaries of all parties unite in eulogizing the winning address and gentle manners of the prince. "Never," says a most bitter Catholic historian, "did an arrogant or indiscreet word fall from his lips. He, upon no occasion, manifested anger to his servants, however much they might be in fault, but contented himself with admonishing them graciously, without menace or insult. He had a gentle and agreeable tongue, with which he could turn all the gentlemen at court any way he liked. He was beloved and honored by the whole community." His manner was graceful, familiar, caressing, and yet dignified. He had the good breeding which comes from the heart, refined into an inexpressible charm from his constant intercourse, almost from his cradle, with mankind of all ranks.

It may be supposed that this train of living was attended with expense. Moreover, he had various other establishments in town and country, besides his almost royal residence in Brussels. He was ardently fond of the chase, particularly of the knightly sport of falconry. In the country he "consoled himself by taking every day a heron in the clouds." His falconers alone cost him annually 1,500 florins, after he had reduced their expenses to the lowest possible point. He was much in debt, even at this early period and with his princely fortune. "We come of a race," he wrote carelessly to his brother Louis, "who are somewhat bad managers in our young days, but when we grow older, we do better, like our late father: sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper
et in secula seculorum.” “My greatest difficulty,” he adds, “as usual, is on account of the falconers.”

His debts already amounted, according to Granvelle’s statement, to 800,000 or 900,000 florins. He had embarrassed himself, not only through his splendid extravagance, by which all the world about him were made to partake of his wealth, but by accepting the high offices to which he had been appointed. When general-in-chief on the frontier, his salary was three hundred florins monthly, "not enough," as he said, "to pay the servants in his tent," his necessary expenses being 2,500 florins, as appears by a letter to his wife. His embassy to carry the crown to Ferdinand, and his subsequent residence as a hostage for the treaty in Paris, were also very onerous, and he received no salary; according to the economical system in this respect pursued by Charles and Philip. In these two embassies or missions alone, together with the entertainments offered by him to the court and to foreigners, after the peace at Brussels, the prince spent, according to his own estimate, 1,500,000 florins.

He was, however, although deeply, not desperately involved, and had already taken active measures to regulate and reduce his establishment. His revenues were vast, both in his own right and in that of his deceased wife. He had large claims upon the royal treasury for service and expenditure. He had besides ample sums to receive from the ransoms of the prisoners of St. Quentin and Gravelines, having served in both campaigns. The amount to be received by individuals from this source may be estimated from the fact that Count Horn, by no means one of the most favored in the victorious armies, had received from Leonor d’Orleans, Duc de Longueville, a ransom of 80,000 crowns. The sum due, if payment were enforced, from the prisoners assigned to Egmont, Orange, and others, must have been very large. Granvelle estimated the whole amount at two millions, adding characteristically, "that this kind of speculation was a practice" which our good old fathers, lovers of virtue, would not have found laudable. In this the churchman was right, but he might have added that the "lovers of virtue" would have found it as little "laudable" for ecclesiastics to dispose of the sacred offices in their gift, for carpets, tapestry, and annual payments of certain percentages upon the cure of souls. If the profits respectively gained by military and clerical speculators in that day should be compared, the disadvantage would hardly be found to lie with those of the long robe.

Such, then, at the beginning of 1560, was William of Orange—a generous, stately, magnificent, powerful grandee. As a military commander, he had acquitted himself very creditably of highly important functions at an early age. Nevertheless it was the opinion of many persons that he was of a timid temperament. He was even accused of having manifested an unseemly manic at Philippeville, and of having only been restrained by the expostulations of his officers, from abandoning both that fortress and Charlemont to Admiral Coligny, who had made his appearance in the neighborhood, merely at the
head of a reconnoitering party. If the story were true, it would be chiefly important as indicating that the Prince of Orange was one of the many historical characters, originally of an excitable and even timorous physical organization, whom moral courage and a strong will have afterwards converted into dauntless heroes. Certain it is that he was destined to confront open danger in every form, that his path was to lead through perpetual ambush, yet that his cheerful confidence and tranquil courage were to become not only unquestionable but proverbial. It may be safely asserted, however, that the story was an invention to be classed with those fictions which made him the murderer of his first wife, a common conspirator against Philip’s crown and person, and a crafty malefactor in general, without a single virtue. It must be remembered that even the terrible Alva, who lived in harness almost from the cradle to the grave, was, so late as at this period, censured for timidity, and had been accused in youth of flat cowardice. He despised the insinuation, which for him had no meaning. There is no doubt too that caution was a predominant characteristic of the prince. It was one of the chief sources of his greatness. At that period, perhaps at any period, he would have been incapable of such brilliant and dashing exploits as had made the name of Egmont so famous. It had even become a proverb, “the counsel of Orange, the execution of Egmont,” yet we shall have occasion to see how far this physical promptness which had been so felicitous upon the battlefield was likely to avail the hero of St. Quentin in the great political combat which was approaching.

As to the talents of the prince, there was no difference of opinion. His enemies never contested the subtlety and breadth of his intellect, his adroitness and capacity in conducting state affairs, his knowledge of human nature, and the profoundness of his views. In many respects it must be confessed that his surname of The Silent, like many similar appellations, was a misnomer. William of Orange was neither “silent” nor “taciturn,” yet these are the epithets which will be forever associated with the name of a man who, in private, was the most affable, cheerful, and delightful of companions, and who on a thousand great public occasions was to prove himself, both by pen and by speech, the most eloquent man of his age. His mental accomplishments were considerable. He had studied history with attention, and he spoke and wrote with facility Latin, French, German, Flemish, and Spanish.

The man, however, in whose hands the administration of the Netherlands was in reality placed, was Anthony Perrenot, then Bishop of Arras, soon to be known by the more celebrated title of Cardinal Granvelle. He was the chief of the Consulta, or secret council of three, by whose deliberations the Duchess Regent was to be governed. His father, Nicholas Perrenot, of an obscure family in Burgundy, had been long the favorite minister and man of business to the Emperor Charles. Anthony, the eldest of thirteen children, was born in 1517. He was early distinguished for his talents. He studied at Dôle, Padua, Paris, and Louvain. At the age of twenty he spoke seven languages with perfect facility, while his acquaintance with civil and ecclesiastical laws was considered
prodigious. At the age of twenty-three he became a canon of Liege Cathedral. The necessary eight quarters of gentility produced upon that occasion have accordingly been displayed by his panegyrists in triumphant refutation of that theory which gave him a blacksmith for his grandfather. At the same period, although he had not reached the requisite age, the rich bishopric of Arras had already been prepared for him by his father’s care. Three years afterwards, in 1543, he distinguished himself by a most learned and brilliant harangue before the Council of Trent, by which display he so much charmed the Emperor, that he created him councilor of state. A few years afterwards he rendered the unscrupulous Charles still more valuable proofs of devotion and dexterity by the part he played in the memorable imprisonment of the Landgrave of Hesse and the Saxon Dukes. He was thereafter constantly employed in embassies and other offices of trust and profit.

There was no doubt as to his profound and varied learning, nor as to his natural quickness and dexterity. He was ready witted, smooth and fluent of tongue, fertile in expedients, courageous, resolute. He thoroughly understood the art of managing men, particularly his superiors. He knew how to govern under the appearance of obeying. He possessed exquisite tact in appreciating the characters of those far above him in rank and beneath him in intellect. He could accommodate himself with great readiness to the idiosyncrasies of sovereigns. He was a chameleon to the hand which fed him. In his intercourse with the king, he colored himself, as it were, with the king’s character. He was not himself, but Philip; not the sullen, hesitating, confused Philip, however, but Philip endowed with eloquence, readiness, facility. The king ever found himself anticipated with the most delicate obsequiousness, beheld his struggling ideas change into winged words without ceasing to be his own. No flattery could be more adroit. The bishop accommodated himself to the king’s epistolary habits. The silver-tongued and ready debater substituted protocols for conversation, in deference to a monarch who could not speak. He corresponded with Philip, with Margaret of Parma, with everyone. He wrote folios to the duchess when they were in the same palace. He would write letters forty pages long to the king, and send off another courier on the same day with two or three additional dispatches of identical date. Such prolixity enchanted the king, whose greediness for business epistles was insatiable. The painstaking monarch toiled, pen in hand, after his wonderful minister in vain. Philip was only fit to be the bishop’s clerk, yet he imagined himself to be the directing and governing power. He scrawled apostilles in the margins to prove that he had read with attention, and persuaded himself that he suggested when he scarcely even comprehended. The bishop gave advice and issued instructions when he seemed to be only receiving them. He was the substance while he affected to be the shadow. These tactics were comparatively easy and likely to be triumphant, so long as he had only to deal with inferior intellects like those of Philip and Margaret. When he should be matched against political genius and lofty character combined, it was possible that his resources might not prove so all-sufficient.
His political principles were sharply defined in reality, but smoothed over by a conventional and decorous benevolence of language, which deceived vulgar minds. He was a strict absolutist. His deference to arbitrary power was profound and slavish. God and "the master," as he always called Philip, he professed to serve with equal humility. "It seems to me," said he, in a letter of this epoch, "that I shall never be able to fulfil the obligation of slave which I owe to your majesty, to whom I am bound by so firm a chain; at any rate, I shall never fail to struggle for that end with sincerity."

As a matter of course, he was a firm opponent of the national rights of the Netherlands, however artfully he disguised the sharp sword of violent absolutism under a garland of flourishing phraseology. He had strenuously warned Philip against assembling the States-general before his departure for the sake of asking them for supplies. He earnestly deprecated allowing the constitutional authorities any control over the expenditures of the government, and averred that this practice under the Regent Mary had been the cause of endless trouble. It may easily be supposed that other rights were as little to his taste as the claim to vote the subsidies, a privilege which was in reality indisputable. Men who stood forth in defense of the provincial constitutions were, in his opinion, mere demagogues and hypocrites, their only motive being to curry favor with the populace. Yet these charters were, after all, sufficiently limited. The natural rights of man were topics which had never been broached. Man had only natural wrongs. None ventured to doubt that sovereignty was heaven-born, anointed of God. The rights of the Netherlands were special, not general; plural, not singular; liberties, not liberty; "privileges," not maims. They were practical, not theoretical; historical, not philosophical. Still, such as they were, they were facts, acquisitions. They had been purchased by the blood and toil of brave ancestors; they amounted—however open to criticism upon broad humanitarian grounds, of which few at that day had ever dreamed—to a solid, substantial dyke against the arbitrary power which was ever chafing and fretting to destroy its barriers.

No men were more subtle or more diligent in corroding the foundation of these bulwarks than the disciples of Granvelle. Yet one would have thought it possible to tolerate an amount of practical freedom so different from the wild, social speculations which, in later days, have made both tyrants and reasonable lovers of our race tremble with apprehension. The Netherlanders claimed, mainly, the right to vote the money which was demanded in such enormous profusion from their painfully-acquired wealth; they were also unwilling to be burned alive if they objected to transubstantiation. Granvelle was most distinctly of an opposite opinion upon both topics. He strenuously deprecated the interference of the states with the subsidies, and it was by his advice that the remorseless edict of 1550, the Emperor’s ordinance of blood and fire, was re-enacted, as the very first measure of Philip’s reign. Such were his sentiments as to national and popular rights by representation. For the people
itself—"that vile and mischievous animal called the people"—as he expressed it, he entertained a cheerful contempt.

His aptitude for managing men was very great, his capacity for affairs incontestable; but it must be always understood as the capacity for the affairs of absolutism. He was a clever, scheming politician, an adroit manager; it remained to be seen whether he had a claim to the character of a statesman. His industry was enormous. He could write fifty letters a day with his own hand. He could dictate to half a dozen amanuenses at once, on as many different subjects, in as many different languages, and send them all away exhausted.

He was already rich. His income from his see and other livings was estimated, in 1557, at 10,000 dollars; his property in ready money, "furniture, tapestry, and the like," at 250,000 dollars. When it is considered that, as compared with our times, these sums represent a revenue of a hundred thousand, and a capital of two millions and a half in addition, it may be safely asserted that the prelate had at least made a good beginning. Besides his regular income, moreover, he had handsome receipts from that simony which was reduced to a system, and which gave him a liberal profit, generally in the shape of an annuity, upon every benefice which he conferred. He was, however, by no means satisfied. His appetite was as boundless as the sea; he was still a shameless mendicant of pecuniary favors and lucrative offices. Already, in 1552, the Emperor had roundly rebuked his greediness. "As to what you say of getting no 'merced' nor 'ayuda de costa,'" said he, "tis merced and ayuda de costa quite sufficient, when one has fat benefices, pensions, and salaries, with which a man might manage to support himself." The bishop, however, was not easily abashed, and he was at the epoch which now occupies us, earnestly and successfully soliciting from Philip the lucrative abbey of Saint Armand. Not that he would have accepted this preferment, "could the abbey have been annexed to any of the new bishoprics"; on the contrary, he assured the king that "to carry out so holy a work as the erection of those new sees, he would willingly have contributed even out of his own miserable pittance." It not being considered expedient to confiscate the abbey to any particular bishop, Philip accordingly presented it to the prelate of Arras, together with a handsome sum of money in the shape of an "ayuda de costa" beside. The thrifty bishop, who foresaw the advent of troublous times in the Netherlands, however, took care in the letters by which he sent his thanks, to instruct the king to secure the money upon crown property in Arragon, Naples, and Sicily, as matters in the provinces were beginning to look very precarious.

Such, at the commencement of the Duchess Margaret’s administration, were the characters and the previous histories of the persons into whose hands the Netherlands were entrusted. None of them have been prejudged. We have contented ourselves with stating the facts with regard to all, up to the period at which we have arrived. Their characters have been sketched, not according
to subsequent developments, but as they appeared at the opening of this important epoch.

The aspect of the country and its inhabitants offered many sharp contrasts, and revealed many sources of future trouble.

The aristocracy of the Netherlands was excessively extravagant, dissipated, and already considerably embarrassed in circumstances. It had been the policy of the Emperor and of Philip to confer high offices—civil, military, and diplomatic—upon the leading nobles, by which enormous expenses were entailed upon them, without any corresponding salaries. The case of Orange has been already alluded to, and there were many other nobles less able to afford the expense, who had been indulged with these ruinous honors. During the war, there had been, however, many chances of bettering broken fortunes. Victory brought immense prizes to the leading officers. The ransoms of so many illustrious prisoners as had graced the triumphs of Saint Quentin and Gravelines had been extremely profitable. These sources of wealth had now been cut off; yet, on the departure of the king from the Netherlands, the luxury increased instead of diminishing. "Instead of one court," said a contemporary, "you would have said that there were fifty." Nothing could be more sumptuous than the modes of life in Brussels. The household of Orange has been already painted. That of Egmont was almost as magnificent. A rivalry in hospitality and in display began among the highest nobles, and extended to those less able to maintain themselves in the contest. During the war there had been the valiant emulation of the battlefield; gentlemen had vied with each other how best to illustrate an ancient name with deeds of desperate valor, to repair the fortunes of a ruined house with the spoils of war. They now sought to surpass each other in splendid extravagance. It was an eager competition who should build the stateliest palaces, have the greatest number of noble pages and gentlemen in waiting, the most gorgeous liveries, the most hospitable tables, the most scientific cooks. There was, also, much depravity as well as extravagance. The morals of high society were loose. Gaming was practiced to a frightful extent.

Drunkenness was a prevailing characteristic of the higher classes. Even the Prince of Orange himself, at this period, although never addicted to habitual excess, was extremely convivial in his tastes, tolerating scenes and companions, not likely at a later day to find much favor in his sight. "We kept Saint Martin’s joyously," he wrote, at about this period, to his brother, "and in the most jovial company. Brederode was one day in such a state that I thought he would certainly die, but he has now got over it." Count Brederode, soon afterwards to become so conspicuous in the early scenes of the revolt, was, in truth, most notorious for his performances in these banqueting scenes. He appeared to have vowed as uncompromising hostility to cold water as to the inquisition, and always denounced both with the same fierce and ludicrous vehemence. Their constant connection with Germany at that period did not improve the sobriety of the Netherlands’ nobles. The aristocracy of that
country, as is well known, were most "potent at potting." "When the German finds himself sober," said the bitter Badovaro, "he believes himself to be ill." Gladly, since the peace, they had welcomed the opportunities afforded for many a deep carouse with their Netherlands cousins. The approaching marriage of the Prince of Orange with the Saxon princess—an episode which will soon engage our attention—gave rise to tremendous orgies. Count Schwartzburg, the Prince’s brother-in-law, and one of the negotiators of the marriage, found many occasions to strengthen the bonds of harmony between the countries by indulgence of these common tastes. "I have had many princes and counts at my table," he wrote to Orange, "where a good deal more was drunk than eaten. The Rhinegrave’s brother fell down dead after drinking too much malvoisie; but we have had him balsamed and sent home to his family."

These disorders among the higher ranks were in reality so extensive as to justify the biting remark of the Venetian: "The gentlemen intoxicate themselves every day," said he, "and the ladies also, but much less than the men." His remarks as to the morality, in other respects, of both sexes were equally sweeping, and not more complimentary.

If these were the characteristics of the most distinguished society, it may be supposed that they were reproduced with more or less intensity throughout all the more remote but concentric circles of life, as far as the seductive splendor of the court could radiate. The lesser nobles emulated the grandees, and vied with each other in splendid establishments, banquets, masquerades, and equipages. The natural consequences of such extravagance followed. Their estates were mortgaged, deeply and more deeply; then, after a few years, sold to the merchants, or rich advocates and other gentlemen of the robe, to whom they had been pledged. The more closely ruin stared the victims in the face, the more heedlessly did they plunge into excesses. "Such were the circumstances," moralizes a Catholic writer, "to which, at an earlier period, the affairs of Catiline, Cethegus, Lentulus, and others of that faction had been reduced, when they undertook to overthrow the Roman republic." Many of the nobles being thus embarrassed, and some even desperate, in their condition, it was thought that they were desirous of creating disturbances in the commonwealth, that the payment of just debts might be avoided, that their mortgaged lands might be wrested by main force from the low-born individuals who had become possessed of them, that, in particular, the rich abbey lands held by idle priests might be appropriated to the use of impoverished gentlemen who could turn them to so much better account. It is quite probable that interested motives such as these were not entirely inactive among a comparatively small class of gentlemen. The religious reformation in every land of Europe derived a portion of its strength from the opportunity it afforded to potentates and great nobles for helping themselves to Church property. No doubt many Netherlanders thought that their fortunes might be improved at the expense of the monks, and for the benefit of religion. Even without apostasy from the mother Church, they looked with longing eyes on the wealth
of her favored and indolent children. They thought that the king would do well to carve a round number of handsome military commanderies out of the abbey lands, whose possessors should be bound to military service after the ancient manner of fiefs, so that a splendid cavalry, headed by the gentlemen of the country, should be ever ready to mount and ride at the royal pleasure, in place of a horde of lazy epicureans, telling beads and indulging themselves in luxurious vice.

Such views were entertained, such language often held. These circumstances and sentiments had their influence among the causes which produced the great revolt now impending. Care should be taken, however, not to exaggerate that influence. It is a prodigious mistake to refer this great historical event to sources so insufficient as the ambition of a few great nobles, and the embarrassments of a larger number of needy gentlemen. The Netherlands revolt was not an aristocratic, but a popular, although certainly not a democratic movement. It was a great episode—the longest, the darkest, the bloodiest, the most important episode in the history of the religious reformation in Europe. The nobles so conspicuous upon the surface at the outbreak, only drifted before a storm which they neither caused nor controlled. Even the most powerful and the most sagacious were tossed to and fro by the surge of great events, which, as they rolled more and more tumultuously around them, seemed to become both irresistible and unfathomable.

For the state of the people was very different from the condition of the aristocracy. The period of martyrdom had lasted long and was to last longer; but there were symptoms that it might one day be succeeded by a more active stage of popular disease. The tumults of the Netherlands were long in ripening; when the final outbreak came it would have been more philosophical to enquire, not why it had occurred, but how it could have been so long postponed. During the reign of Charles, the 16th century had been advancing steadily in strength as the once omnipotent Emperor lapsed into decrepitude. That extraordinary century had not dawned upon the earth only to increase the strength of absolutism and superstition. The new world had not been discovered, the ancient world reconquered, the printing press perfected, only that the inquisition might reign undisturbed over the fairest portions of the earth, and chartered hypocrisy fatten upon its richest lands. It was impossible that the most energetic and quick-witted people of Europe should not feel sympathy with the great effort made by Christendom to shake off the incubus which had so long paralyzed her hands and brain. In the Netherlands, where the attachment to Rome had never been intense, where in the old times, the Bishops of Utrecht had been rather Ghibelline than Guelph, where all the earlier sects of dissenters—Waldenses, Lollards, Hussites—had found numerous converts and thousands of martyrs, it was inevitable that there should be a response from the popular heart to the deeper agitation which now reached to the very core of Christendom. In those provinces, so industrious and energetic,
the disgust was likely to be most easily awakened for a system under which so many friars battened in luxury upon the toils of others, contributing nothing to the taxation, nor to the military defense of the country, exercising no productive avocation, except their trade in indulgences, and squandering in taverns and brothels the annual sums derived from their traffic in licenses to commit murder, incest, and every other crime known to humanity.

The people were numerous, industrious, accustomed for centuries to a state of comparative civil freedom, and to a lively foreign trade, by which their minds were saved from the stagnation of bigotry. It was natural that they should begin to generalize, and to pass from the concrete images presented them in the Flemish monasteries to the abstract character of Rome itself. The Flemish, above all their other qualities, were a commercial nation. Commerce was the mother of their freedom, so far as they had acquired it, in civil matters. It was struggling to give birth to a larger liberty, to freedom of conscience. The provinces were situated in the very heart of Europe. The blood of a world-wide traffic was daily coursing through the thousand arteries of that water-inwoven territory. There was a mutual exchange between the Netherlands and all the world, and ideas were as liberally interchanged as goods. Truth was imported as freely as less precious merchandise. The psalms of Marot were as current as the drugs of Molucca or the diamonds of Borneo. The prohibitory measures of a despotic government could not annihilate this intellectual trade, nor could bigotry devise an effective quarantine to exclude the religious pest which lurked in every bale of merchandise, and was wafted on every breeze from East and West.

The edicts of the Emperor had been endured, but not accepted. The horrible persecution under which so many thousands had sunk had produced its inevitable result. Fertilized by all this innocent blood, the soil of the Netherlands became as a watered garden, in which liberty, civil and religious, was to flourish perennially. The scaffold had its daily victims, but did not make a single convert. The statistics of these crimes will perhaps never be accurately adjusted, nor will it be ascertained whether the famous estimate of Grotius was an exaggerated or an inadequate calculation. Those who love horrible details may find ample material. The chronicles contain the lists of these obscure martyrs; but their names, hardly pronounced in their lifetime, sound barbarously in our ears, and will never ring through the trumpet of fame. Yet they were men who dared and suffered as much as men can dare and suffer in this world, and for the noblest cause which can inspire humanity. Fanatics they certainly were not, if fanaticism consists in show, without corresponding substance. For them all was terrible reality. The Emperor and his edicts were realities; the axe, the stake were realities; and the heroism with which men took each other by the hand and walked into the flames, or with which women sang a song of triumph while the grave digger was shoveling the earth upon their living faces, was a reality also.
Thus, the people of the Netherlands were already pervaded, throughout the whole extent of the country, with the expanding spirit of religious reformation. It was inevitable that sooner or later an explosion was to arrive. They were placed between two great countries, where the new principles had already taken root. The Lutheranism of Germany and the Calvinism of France had each its share in producing the Netherland revolt, but a mistake is perhaps often made in estimating the relative proportion of these several influences. The Reformation first entered the provinces, not through the Augsburg, but the Huguenot gate. The fiery field-preachers from the South of France first inflamed the excitable hearts of the kindred population of the southwestern Netherlands. The Walloons were the first to rebel against and the first to reconcile themselves with papal Rome, exactly as their Celtic ancestors, fifteen centuries earlier, had been foremost in the revolt against imperial Rome, and precipitate in their submission to her overshadowing power. The Batavians, slower to be moved but more steadfast, retained the impulse which they received from the same source which was already agitating their "Welsh" compatriots. There were already French preachers at Valenciennes and Tournay, to be followed, as we shall have occasion to see, by many others. Without undervaluing the influence of the German Churches, and particularly of the garrison-preaching of the German military chaplains in the Netherlands, it may be safely asserted that the early Reformers of the provinces were mainly Huguenots in their belief. The Dutch Church became, accordingly, not Lutheran, but Calvinistic, and the founder of the commonwealth hardly ceased to be a nominal Catholic before he became an adherent to the same creed.

In the meantime, it is more natural to regard the great movement, psychologically speaking, as a whole, whether it revealed itself in France, Germany, the Netherlands, England, or Scotland. The policy of governments, national character, individual interests, and other collateral circumstances, modified the result, but the great cause was the same; the source of all the movements was elemental, natural, and single. The Reformation in Germany had been adjourned for half a century by the Augsburg religious peace, just concluded. It was held in suspense in France through the Machiavellian policy which Catharine de Medici had just adopted, and was for several years to prosecute, of balancing one party against the other, so as to neutralize all power but her own. The great contest was accordingly transferred to the Netherlands, to be fought out for the rest of the century, while the whole of Christendom were to look anxiously for the result. From the East and from the West the clouds rolled away, leaving a comparatively bright and peaceful atmosphere, only that they might concentrate themselves with portentous blackness over the devoted soil of the Netherlands. In Germany, the princes, not the people, had conquered Rome, and to the princes, not the people, were secured the benefits of the victory—the spoils of churches and the right to worship according to conscience. The people had the right to conform to their ruler’s creed or to depart from his land. Still, as a matter of fact, many of the princes being Reformers, a large mass of the population had acquired the
privilege for their own generation and that of their children to practice that
religion which they actually approved. This was a fact, and a more comfortable
one than the necessity of choosing between what they considered wicked
idolatry and the stake—the only election left to their Netherland brethren. In
France, the accidental splinter from Montgomery’s lance had deferred the
Huguenot massacre for a dozen years. During the period in which the Queen
Regent was resolved to play her fast and loose policy, all the persuasions of
Philip and the arts of Alva were powerless to induce her to carry out the
scheme which Henry had revealed to Orange in the forest of Vincennes. When
the crime came at last, it was as blundering as it was bloody, at once
premeditated and accidental, the isolated execution of an interregnal
conspiracy, existing for half a generation yet exploding without concert, a
wholesale massacre but a piecemeal plot.

The aristocracy and the masses being thus, from a variety of causes, in this
agitated and dangerous condition, what were the measures of the government?

The edict of 1550 had been re-enacted immediately after Philip’s accession to
sovereignty. It is necessary that the reader should be made acquainted with
some of the leading provisions of this famous document, thus laid down above
all the constitutions as the organic law of the land. A few plain facts, entirely
without rhetorical varnish, will prove more impressive in this case than
superfluous declamation. The American will judge whether the wrongs inflicted
by Laud and Charles upon his Puritan ancestors were the severest which a
people has had to undergo, and whether the Dutch Republic does not track its
source to the same high, religious origin as that of our own commonwealth.

"No one," said the edict, "shall print, write, copy, keep, conceal, sell, buy or
give in churches, streets, or other places, any book or writing made by Martin
Luther, John Ecolampadius, Ulrich Zwinglius, Martin Bucer, John Calvin, or
other heretics reprobated by the Holy Church; nor break, or otherwise injure
the images of the holy virgin or canonized saints; nor in his house hold
conventicles, or illegal gatherings, or be present at any such in which the
adherents of the above-mentioned heretics teach, baptize, and form
conspiracies against the Holy Church and the general welfare." "Moreover, we
forbid," continues the edict, in name of the sovereign, "all lay persons to
converse or dispute concerning the Holy Scriptures, openly or secretly,
especially on any doubtful or difficult matters, or to read, teach, or expound
the Scriptures, unless they have duly studied theology and been approved by
some renowned university; or to preach secretly, or openly, or to entertain any
of the opinions of the above-mentioned heretics; on pain, should any one be
found to have contravened any of the points above-mentioned, as perturbers
of our state and of the general quiet, to be punished in the following manner."

And how were they to be punished? What was the penalty inflicted upon the
man or woman who owned a hymnbook, or who hazarded the opinion in
private, that Luther was not quite wrong in doubting the power of a monk to sell for money the license to commit murder or incest; or upon the parent, not being a Roman Catholic doctor of divinity, who should read Christ’s Sermon on the Mount to his children in his own parlor or shop? How were crimes like these to be visited upon the transgressor? Was it by reprimand, fine, imprisonment, banishment, or by branding on the forehead, by the cropping of the ears or the slitting of nostrils, as was practiced upon the Puritan fathers of New England for their nonconformity? It was by a sharper chastisement than any of these methods. The Puritan fathers of the Dutch Republic had to struggle against a darker doom. The edict went on to provide:

"That such perturbers of the general quiet are to be executed, to wit: the men with the sword and the women to be buried alive, if they do not persist in their errors; if they do persist in them, then they are to be executed with fire; all their property in both cases being confiscated to the crown."

Thus, the clemency of the sovereign permitted the repentant heretic to be beheaded or buried alive, instead of being burned.

The edict further provided against all misprision of heresy by making those who failed to betray the suspected liable to the same punishment as if suspected or convicted themselves. "We forbid," said the decree, "all persons to lodge, entertain, furnish with food, fire, or clothing, or otherwise to favor any one holden or notoriously suspected of being a heretic; and any one failing to denounce any such we ordain shall be liable to the above-mentioned punishments."

The edict went on to provide, "that if any person, being not convicted of heresy or error, but greatly suspected thereof, and therefore condemned by the spiritual judge to abjure such heresy, or by the secular magistrate to make public fine and reparation, shall again become suspected or tainted with heresy—although it should not appear that he has contravened or violated any one of our above-mentioned commands—nevertheless, we do will and ordain that such person shall be considered as relapsed, and, as such, be punished with loss of life and property, without any hope of moderation or mitigation of the above-mentioned penalties."

Furthermore, it was decreed, that "the spiritual judges, desiring to proceed against any one for the crime of heresy, shall request any of our sovereign courts or provincial councils to appoint any one of their college, or such other adjunct as the council shall select, to preside over the proceedings to be instituted against the suspected. All who know of any person tainted with heresy are required to denounce and give them up to all judges, officers of the bishops, or others having authority on the premises, on pain of being punished according to the pleasure of the judge. Likewise, all shall be obliged, who know of any place where such heretics keep themselves, to declare them to
the authorities, on pain of being held as accomplices, and punished as such heretics themselves would be if apprehended."

In order to secure the greatest number of arrests by a direct appeal to the most ignoble, but not the least powerful principle of human nature, it was ordained "that the informer, in case of conviction, should be entitled to one half the property of the accused, if not more than one hundred pounds Flemish; if more, then ten percent of all such excess."

Treachery to one’s friends was encouraged by the provision, "that if any man being present at any secret conventicle, shall afterwards come forward and betray his fellow-members of the congregation, he shall receive full pardon."

In order that neither the good people of the Netherlands, nor the judges and inquisitors should delude themselves with the notion that these fanatic decrees were only intended to inspire terror, not for practical execution, the sovereign continued to ordain "to the end that the judges and officers may have no reason, under pretext that the penalties are too great and heavy and only devised to terrify delinquents, to punish them less severely than they deserve—that the culprits be really punished by the penalties above declared, forbidding all judges to alter or moderate the penalties in any manner—"forbidding any one, of whatsoever condition, to ask of us, or of any one having authority, to grant pardon, or to present any petition in favor of such heretics, exiles, or fugitives, on penalty of being declared forever incapable of civil and military office, and of being arbitrarily punished besides."

Such were the leading provisions of this famous edict, originally promulgated in 1550 as a recapitulation and condensation of all the previous ordinances of the Emperor upon religious subjects. By its style and title it was a perpetual edict, and, according to one of its clauses, was to be published forever, once in every six months, in every city and village of the Netherlands. It had been promulgated at Augsburg, where the Emperor was holding a diet, upon the 25th of September. Its severity had so appalled the Dowager Queen of Hungary, that she had made a journey to Augsburg expressly to procure a mitigation of some of its provisions. The principal alteration which she was able to obtain of the Emperor was, however, in the phraseology only. As a concession to popular prejudice, the words "spiritual judges" were substituted for "inquisitors" wherever that expression had occurred in the original draft.

The edict had been re-enacted by the express advice of the Bishop of Arras, immediately on the accession of Philip. The prelate knew the value of the Emperor’s name; he may have thought, also, that it would be difficult to increase the sharpness of the ordinances. "I advised the King," says Granvelle, in a letter written a few years later, "to make no change in the placards, but to proclaim the text drawn up by the Emperor, republishing the whole as the King’s edict, with express insertion of the phrase, ‘Carolus,’ etc. I
recommended this lest men should calumniate his Majesty as wishing to introduce novelties in the matter of religion."

This edict, containing the provisions which have been laid before the reader, was now to be enforced with the utmost rigor, every official personage, from the stadholders down, having received the most stringent instructions to that effect, under Philip’s own hand. This was the first gift of Philip and of Granvelle to the Netherlands; of the monarch who said of himself that he had always, "from the beginning of his government, followed the path of clemency, according to his natural disposition, so well known to all the world"; of the prelate who said of himself, "that he had ever combated the opinion that anything could be accomplished by terror, death, and violence."

During the period of the French and Papal war, it has been seen that the execution of these edicts had been permitted to slacken. It was now resumed with redoubled fury. Moreover, a new measure had increased the disaffection and dismay of the people, already sufficiently filled with apprehension. As an additional security for the supremacy of the ancient religion, it had been thought desirable that the number of bishops should be increased. There were but four sees in the Netherlands, those of Arras, Cambray, Tournay, and Utrecht. That of Utrecht was within the archiepiscopate of Cologne; the other three were within that of Rheims. It seemed proper that the prelates of the Netherlands should owe no extra-provincial allegiance. It was likewise thought that three millions of souls required more than four spiritual superintendents. At any rate, whatever might be the interest of the flocks, it was certain that those broad and fertile pastures would sustain more than the present number of shepherds. The wealth of the religious houses in the provinces was very great. The abbey of Afflighem alone had a revenue of 50,000 florins, and there were many others scarcely inferior in wealth. But these institutions were comparatively independent both of king and pope. Electing their own superiors from time to time, in nowise desirous of any change by which their ease might be disturbed and their riches endangered, the honest friars were not likely to engage in any very vigorous crusade against heresy, nor for the sake of introducing or strengthening Spanish institutions, which they knew to be abominated by the people, to take the risk of driving all their disciples into revolt and apostasy. Comforting themselves with an Erasmian philosophy, which they thought best suited to the times, they were as little likely as the Sage of Rotterdam himself would have been, to make martyrs of themselves for the sake of extirpating Calvinism. The abbots and monks were, in political matters, very much under the influence of the great nobles, in whose company they occupied the benches of the upper house of the States-general.

Doctor Francis Sonnius had been sent on a mission to the pope, for the purpose of representing the necessity of an increase in the episcopal force of the Netherlands. Just as the king was taking his departure, the commissioner arrived, bringing with him the bull of Paul IV, dated May 18, 1559. This was
afterwards confirmed by that of Pius IV, in January of the following year. The document stated that "Paul IV, slave of slaves, wishing to provide for the welfare of the provinces and the eternal salvation of their inhabitants, had determined to plant in that fruitful field several new bishoprics." “The enemy of mankind being abroad,” said the bull, “in so many forms at that particular time, and the Netherlands, then under the sway of that beloved son of his holiness, Philip the Catholic, being compassed about with heretic and schismatic nations, it was believed that the eternal welfare of the land was in great danger. At the period of the original establishment of Cathedral churches, the provinces had been sparsely peopled; they had now become filled to overflowing, so that the original ecclesiastical arrangement did not suffice. *The harvest was plentiful, but the laborers were few.*"

In consideration of these and other reasons, three archbishoprics were accordingly appointed. That of Mechlin was to be principal, under which were constituted six bishoprics, those, namely, of Antwerp, Bois le Duc, Rurmond, Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres. That of Cambray was second, with the four subordinate dioceses of Tournay, Arras, Saint Omer and Namur. The third archbishopric was that of Utrecht, with the five sees of Haarlem, Middelburg, Leeuwarden, Groningen and Deventer.

The nomination to these important offices was granted to the king, subject to confirmation by the pope. Moreover, it was ordained by the bull that “each bishop should appoint *nine additional prebendaries*, who were to assist him in the matter of the *inquisition* throughout his bishopric, *two of whom were themselves to be inquisitors.*"

To sustain these two great measures, through which Philip hoped once and forever to extinguish the Netherland heresy, it was considered desirable that the Spanish troops still remaining in the provinces should be kept there indefinitely.

The force was not large, amounting hardly to four thousand men, but they were unscrupulous, and admirably disciplined. As the entering wedge, by which a military and ecclesiastical despotism was eventually to be forced into the very heart of the land, they were invaluable. The moral effect to be hoped from the regular presence of a Spanish standing army during a time of peace in the Netherlands could hardly be exaggerated. Philip was therefore determined to employ every argument and subterfuge to detain the troops.

---

**CHAPTER 2**
Opposition to Philip and Cardinal Granvelle in the Netherlands
The Marriage of William of Orange to Princess Anna of Saxony

The years 1560 and 1561 were mainly occupied with the agitation and dismay produced by the causes set forth in the preceding chapter.

Against the arbitrary policy embodied in the edicts, the new bishoprics and the foreign soldiery, the Netherlands appealed to their ancient constitutions. These charters were called "handvests" in the vernacular Dutch and Flemish, because the sovereign made them fast with his hand. As already stated, Philip had made them faster than any of the princes of his house had ever done, so far as oath and signature could accomplish that purpose, both as hereditary prince in 1549, and as monarch in 1555. The reasons for the extensive and unconditional manner in which he swore to support the provincial charters, have been already indicated.

Of these constitutions, that of Brabant, known by the title of the joyeuse entrée, blyde inkomst, or blithe entrance, furnished the most decisive barrier against the present wholesale tyranny. First and foremost, the "joyous entry" provided "that the prince of the land should not elevate the clerical state higher than of old has been customary and by former princes settled; unless by consent of the other two estates, the nobility and the cities."

Again, "the prince can prosecute no one of his subjects nor any foreign resident, civilly or criminally, except in the ordinary and open courts of justice in the province, where the accused may answer and defend himself with the help of advocates."

Further, "the prince shall appoint no foreigners to office in Brabant."

Lastly, "should the prince, by force or otherwise, violate any of these privileges, the inhabitants of Brabant, after regular protest entered, are discharged of their oaths of allegiance, and as free, independent and unbound people, may conduct themselves exactly as seems to them best."

Such were the leading features, so far as they regarded the points now at issue, of that famous constitution which was so highly esteemed in the Netherlands, that mothers came to the province in order to give birth to their children, who might thus enjoy, as a birthright, the privileges of Brabant. Yet the charters of the other provinces ought to have been as effective against the arbitrary course of the government. "No foreigner," said the constitution of Holland, "is eligible as councillor, financier, magistrate, or member of a court. Justice can be administered only by the ordinary tribunals and magistrates. The ancient laws and customs shall remain inviolable. Should the prince infringe any of these provisions, no one is bound to obey him."
These provisions, from the Brabant and Holland charters, are only cited as illustrative of the general spirit of the provincial constitutions. Nearly all the provinces possessed privileges equally ample, duly signed and sealed. So far as ink and sealing wax could defend a land against sword and fire, the Netherlands were impregnable against the edicts and the renewed episcopal inquisition. Unfortunately, all history shows how feeble are barriers of paper or lambskin, even when hallowed with a monarch’s oath, against the torrent of regal and ecclesiastical absolutism. It was on the reception in the provinces of the new and confirmatory bull concerning the bishoprics, issued in January 1560, that the measure became known, and the dissatisfaction manifest. The discontent was inevitable and universal. The ecclesiastical establishment which was not to be enlarged or elevated but by consent of the estates, was suddenly expanded into three archiepiscopates and fifteen bishoprics. The administration of justice, which was only allowed in free and local courts, distinct for each province, was to be placed, so far as regarded the most important of human interests, in the hands of bishops and their creatures, many of them foreigners and most of them monks. The lives and property of the whole population were to be at the mercy of these utterly irresponsible conclaves.

All classes were outraged. The nobles were offended because ecclesiastics, perhaps foreign ecclesiastics, were to be empowered to sit in the provincial estates and to control their proceedings in place of easy, indolent, ignorant abbots and friars, who had generally accepted the influence of the great seignors. The priests were enraged because the religious houses were thus taken out of their control and confiscated to a bench of bishops, usurping the places of those superiors who had formally been elected by and among themselves. The people were alarmed because the monasteries, although not respected nor popular, were at least charitable, and without ambition to exercise ecclesiastical cruelty; while, on the other hand, by the new episcopal arrangements, a force of thirty new inquisitors was added to the apparatus for enforcing orthodoxy already established. The odium of the measure was placed upon the head of that churchman, already appointed Archbishop of Mechlin, and soon to be known as Cardinal Granvelle. From this time forth, this prelate began to be regarded with a daily increasing aversion. He was looked upon as the incarnation of all the odious measures which had been devised, as the source of that policy of absolutism which revealed itself more and more rapidly after the king’s departure from the country. It was for this reason that so much stress was laid by popular clamor upon the clause prohibiting foreigners from office. Granvelle was a Burgundian; his father had passed most of his active life in Spain, while both he and his more distinguished son were identified in the general mind with Spanish politics. To this prelate, then, were ascribed the edicts, the new bishoprics, and the continued presence of the foreign troops. The people were right as regarded the first accusation. They were mistaken as to the other charges.
The king had not consulted Anthony Perrenot with regard to the creation of the new bishoprics. The measure, which had been successively contemplated by Philip "the Good," by Charles the Bold, and by the Emperor Charles, had now been carried out by Philip II, without the knowledge of the new Archbishop of Mechlin. The king had for once been able to deceive the astuteness of the prelate, and had concealed from him the intended arrangement, until the arrival of Sonnius with the bulls. Granvelle gave the reasons for this mystery with much simplicity. "His Majesty knew," he said, "that I should oppose it, as it was more honorable and lucrative to be one of four than one of eighteen." In fact, according to his own statement, he lost money by becoming archbishop of Mechlin, and ceasing to be Bishop of Arras. For these reasons he declined, more than once, the proffered dignity, and at last only accepted it from fear of giving offense to the king, and after having secured compensation for his alleged losses. In the same letter (of May 29, 1560) in which he thanked Philip for conferring upon him the rich abbey of Saint Armand, which he had solicited, in addition to the "merced" in ready money, concerning the safe investment of which he had already sent directions, he observed that he was now willing to accept the archbishopric of Mechlin; notwithstanding the odium attached to the measure, notwithstanding his feeble powers, and notwithstanding that, during the life of the Bishop of Tournay, who was then in rude health, he could only receive three thousand ducats of the revenue, giving up Arras and gaining nothing in Mechlin; notwithstanding all this, and a thousand other things besides, he assured his Majesty that, "since the royal desire was so strong that he should accept, he would consider nothing so difficult that he would not at least attempt it."

Having made up his mind to take the see and support the new arrangements, he was resolved that his profits should be as large as possible. We have seen how he had already been enabled to indemnify himself. We shall find him soon afterwards importuning the king for the Abbey of Afflighem, the enormous revenue of which the prelate thought would make another handsome addition to the rewards of his sacrifices. At the same time, he was most anxious that the people, and particularly the great nobles, should not ascribe the new establishment to him, as they persisted in doing. "They say that the episcopates were devised to gratify my ambition," he wrote to Philip two years later, "whereas your Majesty knows how steadily I refused the see of Mechlin, and that I only accepted it in order not to live in idleness, doing nothing for God and your Majesty." He therefore instructed Philip, on several occasions, to make it known to the government of the regent, to the seignors, and to the country generally, that the measure had been arranged without his knowledge, that the Marquis Berghen had known of it first, and that the prelate had, in truth, been kept in the dark on the subject until the arrival of Sonnius with the bulls. The king, always docile to his minister, accordingly wrote to the duchess the statements required, in almost the exact phraseology suggested, taking pains to repeat the declarations on several occasions, both by letter and by word of mouth, to many influential persons.
The people, however, persisted in identifying the bishop with the scheme. They saw that he was the head of the new institutions, that he was to receive the lion’s share of the confiscated abbeys, and that he was foremost in defending and carrying through the measure, in spite of all opposition. That opposition waxed daily more bitter, till the cardinal, notwithstanding that he characterized the arrangement to the king as "a holy work," and warmly assured Secretary Perez that he would contribute his fortune, his blood, and his life, to its success, was yet obliged to exclaim in the bitterness of his spirit, "Would to God that the erection of these new sees had never been thought of. Amen! Amen!"

Foremost in resistance was the prince of Orange. Although a Catholic, he had no relish for the horrible persecution which had been determined upon. The new bishoprics he characterized afterwards as parts "of one grand scheme for establishing the cruel inquisition of Spain; the said bishops to serve as inquisitors, burners of bodies, and tyrants of conscience: two prebendaries in each see being actually constituted inquisitors." For this reason he omitted no remonstrance on the subject to the duchess, to Granvelle, and by direct letters to the king. His efforts were seconded by Egmont, Berghen, and other influential nobles. Even Berlaymont was at first disposed to side with the opposition, but upon the argument used by the duchess, that the bishoprics and prebends would furnish excellent places for his sons and other members of the aristocracy, he began warmly to support the measure. Most of the labor, however, and all the odium, of the business fell upon the bishop’s shoulders. There was still a large fund of loyalty left in the popular mind, which not even forty years of the Emperor’s dominion had consumed, and which Philip was destined to draw upon as prodigally as if the treasure had been inexhaustible. For these reasons it still seemed most decorous to load all the hatred upon the minister’s back, and to retain the consolatory formula that Philip was a prince, "clement, benign, and debonair."

The bishop, true to his habitual conviction, that words, with the people, are much more important than things, was disposed to have the word "inquisitor" taken out of the text of the new decree. He was anxious at this juncture to make things pleasant, and he saw no reason why men should be unnecessarily startled. If the inquisition could be practiced, and the heretics burned, he was in favor of its being done comfortably. The word “inquisitor” was unpopular, almost indecent. It was better to suppress the term and retain the thing. "People are afraid to speak of the new bishoprics," he wrote to Perez, "on account of the clause providing that of nine canons one shall be inquisitor. Hence people fear the Spanish inquisition." He, therefore, had written to the king to suggest instead, that the canons or graduates should be obliged to assist the bishop, according as he might command. Those terms would suffice, because, although not expressly stated, it was clear that the bishop was an ordinary inquisitor; but it was necessary to expunge words that gave offence.
It was difficult, however, with all the bishop’s eloquence and dexterity, to construct an agreeable inquisition. The people did not like it, in any shape, and there were indications, not to be mistaken, that one day there would be a storm which it would be beyond human power to assuage. At present the people directed their indignation only upon a part of the machinery devised for their oppression. The Spanish troops were considered as a portion of the apparatus by which the new bishoprics and the edicts were to be forced into execution. Moreover, men were weary of the insolence and the pillage which these mercenaries had so long exercised in the land. When the king had been first requested to withdraw them, we have seen that he had burst into a violent passion. He had afterward dissembled. Promising, at last, that they should all be sent from the country within three or four months after his departure, he had determined to use every artifice to detain them in the provinces. He had succeeded, by various subterfuges, in keeping them there fourteen months, but it was at last evident that their presence would no longer be tolerated.

Towards the close of 1560 they were quartered in Walcheren and Brill. The Zealanders, however, had become so exasperated by their presence that they resolutely refused to lay a single hand upon the dykes, which, as usual at that season, required great repairs. Rather than see their native soil profaned any longer by these hated foreign mercenaries, they would see it sunk forever in the ocean. They swore to perish—men, women, and children together—in the waves, rather than endure longer the outrages which the soldiery daily inflicted. Such was the temper of the Zealanders that it was not thought wise to trifle with their irritation. The bishop felt that it was no longer practicable to detain the troops, and that all the pretext devised by Philip and his government had become ineffectual. In a session of the State Council, held on the 25th of October, 1560, he represented in the strongest terms to the regent the necessity for the final departure of the troops. Viglius, who knew the character of his countrymen, strenuously seconded the proposal. Orange briefly but firmly expressed the same opinion, declining any longer to serve as commander of the legion, an office which, in conjunction with Egmont, he had accepted provisionally, with the best of motives, and on the pledge of Philip that the soldiers should be withdrawn. The duchess urged that the order should at least be deferred until the arrival of Count Egmont, then in Spain, but the proposition was unanimously negatived.

Letters were accordingly written, in the name of the regent, to the king. It was stated that the measure could no longer be delayed, that the provinces all agreed in this point, that so long as the foreigners remained not a stiver should be paid into the treasury; that if they had once set sail, the necessary amount for their arrears would be furnished to the government; but that if they should return it was probable that they would be resisted by the inhabitants with main force, and that they would only be allowed to enter the cities through a breach in their wall. It was urged, moreover, that three or four thousand Spaniards
would not be sufficient to coerce all the provinces, and that there was not money enough in the royal exchequer to pay the wages of a single company of the troops. "It cuts me to the heart," wrote the bishop to Philip, "to see the Spanish infantry leave us; but so they must. Would to God that we could devise any pretext, as your Majesty desires, under which to keep them here! We have tried all means humanly possible for retaining them, but I see no way to do it without putting the provinces in manifest danger of sudden revolt."

Fortunately for the dignity of the government, or for the repose of the country, a respectable motive was found for employing the legion elsewhere. The important loss which Spain had recently met with in the capture of Zerby made a reinforcement necessary in the army engaged in the Southern service. Thus, the disaster in Barbary at last relieved the Netherlands of the pest which had afflicted them so long. For a brief breathing space the country was cleared of foreign mercenaries.

The growing unpopularity of the royal government, still typified, however, in the increasing hatred entertained for the bishop, was not materially diminished by the departure of the Spaniards. The edicts and the bishoprics were still there, even if the soldiers were gone. The churchman worked faithfully to accomplish his master’s business. Philip, on his side, was industrious to bring about the consummation of his measures. Ever occupied with details, the monarch, from his palace in Spain, sent frequent informations against the humblest individuals in the Netherlands. It is curious to observe the minute reticulations of tyranny which he had begun already to spin about a whole people, while cold, venomous, and patient, he watched his victims from the center of his web. He forwarded particular details to the duchess and cardinal concerning a variety of men and women, sending their names, ages, personal appearance, occupations, and residence, together with directions for their immediate immolation. Even the inquisitors of Seville were set to work to increase, by means of their branches or agencies in the provinces, the royal information on this all-important subject. "There are but few of us left in the world," he moralized in a letter to the bishop, "who care for religion. 'Tis necessary, therefore, for us to take the greater heed for Christianity. We must lose our all, if need be, in order to do our duty." "In fine," added he, with his usual tautology, "it is right that a man should do his duty."

Granvelle—as he must now be called, for his elevation to the cardinalship will be immediately alluded to—wrote to assure the king that every pains would be taken to ferret out and execute the individuals complained of. He bewailed, however, the want of heartiness on the part of the Netherland inquisitors and judges. "I find," said he, "that all judicial officers go into the matter of executing the edicts with reluctance, which I believe is caused by their fear of displeasing the populace. When they do act they do it but languidly, and when these matters are not taken in hand with the necessary liveliness, the fruit desired is not gathered. We do not fail to exhort and to command them to do
their work.” He added that Viglius and Berlaymont displayed laudable zeal, but that he could not say as much for the Council of Brabant. Those councillors "were forever prating," said he, "of the constitutional rights of their province, and deserved much less commendation."

The popularity of the churchman, not increased by these desperate exertions to force an inhuman policy upon an unfortunate nation, received likewise no addition from his new elevation in rank. During the latter part of the year 1560, Margaret of Parma, who still entertained a profound admiration of the prelate, and had not yet begun to chafe under his smooth but imperious dominion, had been busy in preparing for him a delightful surprise. Without either his knowledge or that of the king, she had corresponded with the pope, and succeeded in obtaining, as a personal favor to herself, the cardinal’s hat for Anthony Perrenot. In February 1561, Cardinal Borromeo wrote to announce that the coveted dignity had been bestowed. The duchess hastened, with joyous alacrity, to communicate the intelligence to the bishop, but was extremely hurt to find that he steadily refused to assume his new dignity, until he had written to the king to announce the appointment, and to ask his permission to accept the honor. The duchess, justly wounded at his refusal to accept from her hands the favor which she, and she only, had obtained for him, endeavored in vain to overcome his pertinacity. She represented that although Philip was not aware of the application or the appointment, he was certain to regard it as an agreeable surprise. She urged, moreover, that his temporary refusal would be misconstrued at Rome, where it would certainly excite ridicule, and very possibly give offense in the highest quarter. The bishop was inexorable. He feared, says his panegyrist, that he might one day be on worse terms than at present with the duchess, and that then she might reproach him with her former benefits. He feared also that the king might, in consequence of the step, not look with satisfaction upon him at some future period, when he might stand in need of his favors. He wrote, accordingly, a most characteristic letter to Philip, in which he informed him that he had been honored with the cardinal’s hat. He observed that many persons were already congratulating him, but that before he made any demonstration of accepting or refusing, he waited for his Majesty’s orders—upon his will he wished ever to depend. He also had the coolness, under the circumstances, to express his conviction that "it was his Majesty who had secretly procured this favor from his Holiness."

The king received the information very graciously, observing in reply that, although he had never made any suggestion of the kind, he had “often thought upon the subject.” The royal command was of course at once transmitted, that the dignity should be accepted. By special favor, moreover, the pope dispensed the new cardinal from the duty of going to Rome in person, and dispatched his chamberlain, Theophilus Friso, to Brussels, with the red hat and tabbard.

The prelate, having thus reached the dignity to which he had long aspired, did not grow more humble in his deportment, or less zealous in the work through
which he had already gained so much wealth and preferment. His conduct with
regard to the edicts and bishoprics had already brought him into relations
which were far from amicable with his colleagues in the council. More and
more he began to take the control of affairs into his own hand. The consulta,
or secret committee of the state council, constituted the real government of
the country. Here the most important affairs were decided upon without the
concurrence of the other seignors, Orange, Egmont, and Glayon, who, at the
same time, were held responsible for the action of government. The cardinal
was smooth in manner, plausible of speech, generally even-tempered, but he
was overbearing and blandly insolent. Accustomed to control royal personages,
under the garb of extreme obsequiousness, he began, in his intercourse with
those of less exalted rank, to omit a portion of the subserviency while claiming
a still more undisguised authority. To nobles like Egmont and Orange, who
looked down upon the son of Nicolas Perrenot and Nicola Bonvalot as a person
immeasurably beneath themselves in the social hierarchy, this conduct was
sufficiently irritating. The cardinal, placed as far above Philip, and even
Margaret, in mental power as he was beneath them in worldly station, found it
comparatively easy to deal with them amicably. With such a man as Egmont, it
was impossible for the churchman to maintain friendly relations. The count,
who, notwithstanding his romantic appearance, his brilliant exploits, and his
interesting destiny, was but a commonplace character, soon conceived a
mortal aversion to Granvelle. A rude soldier, entertaining no respect for
science or letters, ignorant and overbearing, he was not the man to submit to
the airs of superiority which pierced daily more and more decidedly through
the conventional exterior of the cardinal. Granvelle, on the other hand,
entertained a gentle contempt for Egmont, which manifested itself in all his
private letters to the king, and was sufficiently obvious in his deportment.

There had also been distinct causes of animosity between them. The
governorship of Hesdin having become vacant, Egmont, backed by Orange and
other nobles, had demanded it for the Count de Roeulx, a gentleman of the
Croy family, who, as well as his father, had rendered many important services
to the crown. The appointment was, however, bestowed, through Granvelle’s
influence, upon the Seigneur d’Helfault, a gentleman of mediocre station and
character, who was thought to possess no claims whatever to the office.
Egmont, moreover, desired the abbey of Trulle for a poor relation of his own,
but the cardinal, to whom nothing in this way ever came amiss, had already
obtained the king’s permission to appropriate the abbey to himself. Egmont
was now furious against the prelate, and omitted no opportunity of expressing
his aversion, both in his presence and behind his back. On one occasion, at
least, his wrath exploded in something more than words. Exasperated by
Granvelle’s polished insolence in reply to his own violent language, he drew his
dagger upon him in the presence of the regent herself, “and,” says a
contemporary, “would certainly have sent the cardinal into the next world had
he not been forcibly restrained by the prince of Orange and other persons
present, who warmly represented to him that such griefs were to be settled by
deliberate advice, not by choler." At the same time, while scenes like these were occurring in the very bosom of the state council, Granvelle, in his confidential letters to secretary Perez, asserted warmly that all reports of a want of harmony between himself and the other seignors and councillors were false, and that the best relations existed among them all. It was not his intention, before it should be necessary, to let the king doubt his ability to govern the counsel according to the secret commission with which he had been invested.

His relations with Orange were longer in changing from friendship to open hostility. In the prince the cardinal met his match. He found himself confronted by an intellect as subtle, an experience as fertile in expedients, a temper as even, and a disposition sometimes as haughty as his own. He never affected to undervalue the mind of Orange. "'Tis a man of profound genius, vast ambition—dangerous, acute, politic," he wrote to the king at a very early period. The original relations between himself and the prince had been very amicable. It hardly needed the prelate’s great penetration to be aware that the friendship of so exalted a personage as the youthful heir to the principality of Orange, and to the vast possessions of the Chalons-Nassau house in Burgundy and the Netherlands, would be advantageous to the ambitious son of the Burgundian Councillor Granvelle. The young man was the favorite of the Emperor from boyhood; his high rank, and his remarkable talents marked him indisputably for one of the foremost men of the coming reign. Therefore it was politic in Perrenot to seize every opportunity of making himself useful to the prince. He busied himself with securing, so far as it might be necessary to secure, the succession of William to his cousin’s principality. It seems somewhat ludicrous for a merit to be made not only for Granvelle but for the Emperor, that the prince should have been allowed to take an inheritance which the will of Réné de Nassau most unequivocally conferred, and which no living creature disputed. Yet, because some of the crown lawyers had propounded the dogma that "the son of a heretic ought not to succeed," it was gravely stated as an immense act of clemency upon the part of Charles V that he had not confiscated the whole of the young prince’s heritage. In return Granvelle’s brother Jerome had obtained the governorship of the youth, upon whose majority he had received an honorable military appointment from his attached pupil. The prelate had afterwards recommended the marriage with the Count de Buren’s heiress, and had used his influence with the Emperor to overcome certain objections entertained by Charles, that the prince, by this great accession of wealth, might be growing too powerful. On the other hand, there were always many poor relations and dependents of Granvelle, eager to be benefited by Orange’s patronage, who lived in the prince’s household, or received handsome appointments from his generosity. Thus, there had been great intimacy, founded upon various benefits mutually conferred; for it could hardly be asserted that the debt of friendship was wholly upon one side.
When Orange arrived in Brussels from a journey, he would go to the bishop’s before alighting at his own house. When the churchman visited the prince, he entered his bedchamber without ceremony before he had risen; for it was William’s custom, through life, to receive intimate acquaintances, and even to attend to important negotiations of state, while still in bed.

The show of this intimacy had lasted longer than its substance. Granvelle was the most politic of men, and the prince had not served his apprenticeship at the court of Charles V to lay himself bare prematurely to the criticism or the animosity of the cardinal with the recklessness of Horn and Egmont. An explosion came at last, however, and very soon after an exceedingly amicable correspondence between the two upon the subject of an edict of religious amnesty which Orange was preparing for his principality, and which Granvelle had recommended him not to make too lenient. A few weeks after this, the Antwerp magistracy was to be renewed. The prince, as hereditary burgrave of that city, was entitled to a large share of the appointing power in these political arrangements, which at the moment were of great importance. The citizens of Antwerp were in a state of excitement on the subject of the new bishops. They openly, and in the event, successfully resisted the installation of the new prelate for whom their city had been constituted a diocese. The prince was known to be opposed to the measure, and to the whole system of ecclesiastical persecution. When the nominations for the new magistracy came before the regent, she disposed of the whole matter in the secret consulta, without the knowledge, and in a manner opposed to the views of Orange. He was then furnished with a list of the new magistrates, and was informed that he had been selected as commissioner along with Count Aremberg, to see that the appointments were carried into effect.

The indignation of the prince was extreme. He had already taken offense at some insolent expressions upon this topic, which the cardinal had permitted himself. He now sent back the commission to the duchess, adding, it was said, that he was not her lackey, and that she might send someone else with her errands. The words were repeated in the state council. There was a violent altercation, Orange vehemently resenting his appointment merely to carry out decisions in which he claimed an original voice. His ancestors, he said, had often changed the whole of the Antwerp magistracy by their own authority. It was a little too much that this matter, as well as every other state affair, should be controlled by the secret committee of which the cardinal was the chief. Granvelle, on his side, was also in a rage. He flung from the council-chamber, summoned the Chancellor of Brabant, and demanded, amid bitter execrations against Orange, what common and obscure gentleman there might be, whom he could appoint to execute the commission thus refused by the prince and by Aremberg. He vowed that in all important matters he would, on future occasions, make use of nobles less inflated by pride, and more tractable than such grand seignors. The chancellor tried in vain to appease the churchman’s wrath, representing that the city of Antwerp would be highly
offended at the turn things were taking, and offering his services to induce the withdrawal, on the part of the prince, of the language which had given so much offense. The cardinal was inexorable and peremptory. "I will have nothing to do with the prince, Master Chancellor," said he, "and these are matters which concern you not." Thus the conversation ended, and thus began the open state of hostilities between the great nobles and the cardinal, which had been brooding so long.

On the 23rd of July, 1561, a few weeks after the scenes lately described, the Count of Egmont and the prince of Orange addressed a joint letter to the king. They reminded him in this dispatch that they had originally been reluctant to take office in the state council, on account of their previous experience of the manner in which business had been conducted during the administration of the Duke of Savoy. They had feared that important matters of state might be transacted without their concurrence. The king had, however, assured them, when in Zealand, that all affairs would be uniformly treated in full council. If the contrary should ever prove the case, he had desired them to give him information to that effect, that he might instantly apply the remedy. They accordingly now gave him that information. They were consulted upon small matters; momentous affairs were decided upon in their absence. Still they would not even now have complained had not Cardinal Granvelle declared that all the members of the state council were to be held responsible for its measures, whether they were present at its decisions or not. Not liking such responsibility, they requested the king either to accept their resignation or to give orders that all affairs should be communicated to the whole board and deliberated upon by all the councillors.

In a private letter, written some weeks later (August 15), Egmont begged secretary Erasso to assure the king that their joint letter had not been dictated by passion, but by zeal for his service. It was impossible, he said, to imagine the insolence of the cardinal, nor to form an idea of the absolute authority which he arrogated.

In truth, Granvelle, with all his keenness, could not see that Orange, Egmont, Berghen, Montigny and the rest, were no longer pages and young captains of cavalry, while he was the politician and the statesman. By six or seven years the senior of Egmont, and by sixteen years of Orange, he did not divest himself of the superciliousness of superior wisdom, not unjust nor so irritating when they had all been boys. In his deportment towards them, and in the whole tone of his private correspondence with Philip, there was revealed, almost in spite of himself, an affectation of authority, against which Egmont rebelled and which the prince was not the man to acknowledge. Philip answered the letter of the two nobles in his usual procrastinating manner. The Count of Horn, who was about leaving Spain (whither he had accompanied the king) for the Netherlands, would be entrusted with the resolution which he should think
proper to take upon the subject suggested. In the meantime, he assured them
that he did not doubt their zeal in his service.

As to Count Horn, Granvelle had already prejudiced the king against him. Horn
and the cardinal had never been friends. A brother of the prelate had been an
aspirant for the hand of the admiral’s sister, and had been somewhat
contemptuously rejected. Horn, a bold, vehement, and not very good-
tempered personage, had long kept no terms with Granvelle, and did not
pretend a friendship which he had never felt. Granvelle had just written to
instruct the king that Horn was opposed bitterly to that measure which was
nearest the king’s heart—the new bishoprics. He had been using strong
language, according to the cardinal, in opposition to the scheme, while still in
Spain. He therefore advised that his Majesty, concealing, of course, the source
of the information, and speaking as it were out of the royal mind itself, should
expostulate with the admiral upon the subject. Thus prompted, Philip was in
no gracious humor when he received Count Horn, then about to leave Madrid
for the Netherlands, and to take with him the king’s promised answer to the
communication of Orange and Egmont. His Majesty had rarely been known to
exhibit so much anger towards any person as he manifested upon that occasion.
After a few words from the admiral, in which he expressed his sympathy with
the other Netherland nobles, and his aversion to Granvelle, in general terms,
and in reply to Philip’s interrogatories, the king fiercely interrupted him:
"What! miserable man!" he vociferated, "you all complain of this cardinal, and
always in vague language. Not one of you, in spite of all my questions, can give
me a single reason for your dissatisfaction." With this, the royal wrath boiled
over in such unequivocal terms that the admiral changed color, and was so
confused with indignation and astonishment, that he was scarcely able to find
his way out of the room.

This was the commencement of Granvelle’s long mortal combat with Egmont,
Horn, and Orange. This was the first answer which the seignors were to receive
to their remonstrances against the churchman’s arrogance. Philip was enraged
that any opposition should be made to his coercive measures, particularly to
the new bishoprics, the "holy work" which the cardinal was ready to
"consecrate his fortune and his blood" to advance. Granvelle fed his master’s
anger by constant communications as to the efforts made by distinguished
individuals to delay the execution of the scheme. Assonville had informed him,
he wrote, that much complaint had been made on the subject by several
gentlemen, at a supper of Count Egmont’s. It was said that the king ought to
have consulted them all, and the state councillors especially. The present
nominees to the new episcopates were good enough, but it would be found,
they said, that very improper personages would be afterwards appointed. The
estates ought not to permit the execution of the scheme. In short, continued
Granvelle, "there is the same kind of talk which brought about the recall of
the Spanish troops." A few months later, he wrote to inform Philip that a
petition against the new bishoprics was about to be drawn up by "the two
lords.” They had two motives, according to the cardinal, for this step—first, to let the king know that he could do nothing without their permission; secondly, because in the states’ assembly they were then the *cocks of the walk*. They did not choose, therefore, that in the clerical branch of the estates any body should be above the abbots, whom they could frighten into doing whatever they chose.

At the end of the year, Granvelle again wrote to instruct his sovereign how to reply to the letter which was *about to be addressed* to him by the prince of Orange and the Marquis Berghen on the subject of the bishoprics. They would tell him, he said, that the incorporation of the Brabant abbeys into the new bishoprics was contrary to the constitution of the "joyful entrance." Philip was, however, to make answer that he had consulted the universities, and those learned in the laws, and had satisfied himself that it was entirely constitutional. He was therefore advised to send his command that the prince and marquis should use all their influence to promote the success of the measure. Thus fortified, the king was enabled not only to deal with the petition of the nobles, but also with the deputies from the estates of Brabant, who arrived about this time at Madrid. To these envoys, who asked for the appointment of royal commissioners, with whom they might treat on the subject of the bishoprics, the abbeys, and the "joyful entrance," the king answered proudly, "that in matters which concerned the service of God, he was his own commissioner." He afterwards, accordingly, recited to them, with great accuracy, the lesson which he had privately received from the ubiquitous cardinal.

Philip was determined that no remonstrance from great nobles or from private citizens should interfere with the thorough execution of the grand scheme on which he was resolved, and of which the new bishoprics formed an important part. Opposition irritated him more and more, till his hatred of the opponents became deadly; but it, at the same time, confirmed him in his purpose. "'Tis no time to temporize," he wrote to Granvelle, "we must inflict chastisement with full rigor and severity. These rascals can only be made to do right through fear, and not always even by that means."

At the same time, the royal finances did not admit of any very active measures, at the moment, to enforce obedience to a policy which was already so bitterly opposed. A rough estimate, made in the king’s own handwriting, of the resources and obligations of his exchequer, a kind of balance sheet for the years 1560 and 1561, drawn up much in the same manner as that in which a simple individual would make a note of his income and expenditure, gave but a dismal picture of his pecuniary condition. It served to show how intelligent a financier is despotism, and how little available are the resources of a mighty empire when regarded merely as private property, particularly when the owner chances to have the vanity of attending to all details himself. "Twenty millions of ducats," began the memorandum, "will be required to disengage my
revenues. "But of this," added the king, with whimsical pathos for an account-book, "we will not speak at present, as the matter is so entirely impossible." He then proceeded to enter the various items of expense which were to be met during the two years; such as so many millions due to the Fuggers (the Rothschild’s of the 16th century), so many to merchants in Flanders, Seville, and other places, so much for Prince Doria’s galleys, so much for three years’ pay due to his guards, so much for his household expenditure, so much for the tuition of Don Carlos and Don Juan d’Austria, so much for salaries of ambassadors and councillors, mixing personal and state expenses, petty items and great loans, in one singular jumble, but arriving at a total demand upon his purse of 10,990,000 ducats.

To meet this expenditure he painfully enumerated the funds upon which he could reckon for the two years. His ordinary rents and taxes being all deeply pledged, he could only calculate from that source upon 200,000 ducats. The Indian revenue, so called, was nearly spent; still it might yield him 420,000 ducats. The quicksilver mines would produce something, but so little as hardly to require mentioning. As to the other mines, they were equally unworthy of notice, being so very uncertain, and not doing as well as they were wont. The licenses accorded by the crown to carry slaves to America were put down at 50,000 ducats for the two years. The product of the "crozada" and "cuarta," or money paid to him in small sums by individuals, with the permission of his Holiness, for the liberty of abstaining from the Church fasts, was estimated at 500,000 ducats. These and a few more meager items only sufficed to stretch his income to a total of 1,330,000 for the two years, against an expenditure calculated at near eleven millions. "Thus, there are nine millions, less three thousand ducats, deficient," he concluded ruefully (and making a mistake in his figures in his own favor of 663,000 besides), "which I may look for in the sky, or try to raise by inventions already exhausted."

Thus, the man who owned all America and half of Europe could only raise a million ducats a year from his estates. The possessor of all Peru and Mexico could reckon on "nothing worth mentioning" from his mines, and derived a precarious income mainly from permissions granted his subjects to carry on the slave trade and to eat meat on Fridays. This was certainly a gloomy condition of affairs for a monarch on the threshold of a war which was to outlast his own life and that of his children, a war in which the mere army expenses were to be half a million florins monthly, in which about seventy percent of the annual disbursements was to be regularly embezzled or appropriated by the hands through which it passed, and in which for every four men on paper, enrolled and paid for, only one, according to the average, was brought into the field.

Granvelle, on the other hand, gave his master but little consolation from the aspect of financial affairs in the provinces. He assured him that "the government was often in such embarrassment as not to know where to look for ten ducats." He complained bitterly that the states would meddle with the
administration of money matters, and were slow in the granting of subsidies. The cardinal felt especially outraged by the interference of these bodies with the disbursement of the sums which they voted. It has been seen that the states had already compelled the government to withdraw the troops, much to the regret of Granvelle. They continued, however, to be intractable on the subject of supplies. "These are very vile things," he wrote to Philip, "this authority which they assume, this audacity with which they say whatever they think proper, and these impudent conditions which they affix to every proposition for subsidies." The cardinal protested that he had in vain attempted to convince them of their error, but that they remained perverse.

It was probably at this time that the plan for debasing the coin, suggested to Philip some time before by a skillful chemist named Malen, and always much approved of both by himself and Ruy Gomez, recurred to his mind. "Another and an extraordinary source of revenue, although perhaps not a very honorable one," wrote Suriano, "has hitherto been kept secret, and on account of differences of opinion between the king and his confessor, has been discontinued." This source of revenue, it seemed, was found in "a certain powder, of which one ounce mixed with six ounces of quicksilver would make six ounces of silver." The composition was said to stand the test of the hammer, but not of the fire. Partly in consequence of theological scruples, and partly on account of opposition from the states, a project formed by the king to pay his army with this kind of silver was reluctantly abandoned. The invention, however, was so very agreeable to the king, and the inventor had received such liberal rewards, that it was supposed, according to the envoy, that in time of scarcity his Majesty would make use of such coin without reluctance.

It is necessary, before concluding this chapter, which relates the events of the years 1560 and 1561, to allude to an important affair which occupied much attention during the whole of this period. This is the celebrated marriage of the prince of Orange with the princess Anna of Saxony. By many superficial writers, a moving cause of the great Netherland revolt was found in the connection of the great chieftain with this distinguished Lutheran house. One must have studied the characters and the times to very little purpose, however, to believe it possible that much influence could be exerted on the mind of William of Orange by such natures as those of Anna of Saxony, or of her uncle the Elector Augustus, surnamed "the Pious."

The prince had become a widower in 1558, at the age of twenty-five. Granvelle, who was said to have been influential in arranging his first marriage, now proposed to him, after the year of mourning had expired, an alliance with Mademoiselle Renée, daughter of the duchess de Lorraine, and granddaughter of Christiern III of Denmark, and his wife Isabella, sister of the Emperor Charles V. Such a connection, not only with the royal house of Spain but with that of France—for the young Duke of Lorraine, brother of the lady, had espoused the
daughter of Henry II—was considered highly desirable by the prince. Philip and the Duchess Margaret of Parma both approved, or pretended to approve, the match. At the same time the Dowager Duchess of Lorraine, mother of the intended bride, was a candidate, and a very urgent one, for the regency of the Netherlands. Being a woman of restless ambition and intriguing character, she naturally saw in a man of William’s station and talents a most desirable ally in her present and future schemes. On the other hand, Philip—who had made open protestation of his desire to connect the prince thus closely with his own blood, and had warmly recommended the match to the young lady’s mother—soon afterwards, while walking one day with the prince in the park at Brussels, announced to him that the duchess of Lorraine had declined his proposals. Such a result astonished the prince, who was on the best of terms with the mother, and had been urging her appointment to the regency with all his influence, having entirely withdrawn his own claims to that office. No satisfactory explanation was ever given of this singular conclusion to a courtship, begun with the apparent consent of all parties. It was hinted that the young lady did not fancy the prince; but, as it was not known that a word had ever been exchanged between them, as the prince, in appearance and reputation, was one of the most brilliant cavaliers of the age, and as the approval of the bride was not usually a matter of primary consequence in such marriages of state, the mystery seemed to require a further solution. The prince suspected Granvelle and the king, who were believed to have held mature and secret deliberation together, of insincerity. The bishop was said to have expressed the opinion that, although the friendship he bore the prince would induce him to urge the marriage, yet his duty to his master made him think it questionable whether it were right to advance a personage already placed so high by birth, wealth, and popularity, still higher by so near an alliance with his Majesty’s family. The king, in consequence, secretly instructed the Duchess of Lorraine to decline the proposal, while at the same time he continued openly to advocate the connection.

The prince is said to have discovered this double dealing, and to have found in it the only reasonable explanation of the whole transaction. Moreover, the duchess of Lorraine, finding herself equally duped, and her own ambitious scheme equally foiled by her unscrupulous cousin—who now, to the surprise of every one, appointed Margaret of Parma to be regent, with the bishop for her prime minister—had as little reason to be satisfied with the combinations of royal and ecclesiastical intrigue as the Prince of Orange himself.

Soon after this unsatisfactory mystification, William turned his attentions to Germany. Anna of Saxony, daughter of the celebrated Elector Maurice, lived at the court of her uncle, the Elector Augustus. A musket ball, perhaps a traitorous one, in an obscure action with Albert of Brandenburg, had closed the adventurous career of her father seven years before. The young lady, who was thought to have inherited much of his restless, stormy character, was sixteen years of age. She was far from handsome, was somewhat deformed, and
limped. Her marriage-portion was deemed, for the times, an ample one; she had seventy thousand rix dollars in hand, and the reversion of 30,000 on the death of John Frederic II, who had married her mother after the death of Maurice. Her rank was accounted far higher in Germany than that of William of Nassau, and in this respect, rather than for pecuniary considerations, the marriage seemed a desirable one for him. The man who held the great Nassau-Chalons property, together with the heritage of Count Maximilian de Buren, could hardly have been tempted by 100,000 thalers. His own provision for the children who might spring from the proposed marriage was to be a settlement of 70,000 florins annually. The fortune which permitted of such liberality was not one to be very materially increased by a dowry which might seem enormous to many of the pauper princes of Germany. “The bride’s portion,” says a contemporary, “after all, scarcely paid for the banquets and magnificent festivals which celebrated the marriage. When the wedding was paid for, there was not a thaler remaining of the whole sum.” Nothing, then, could be more puerile than to accuse the prince of mercenary motives in seeking this alliance—an accusation, however, which did not fail to be brought.

There were difficulties on both sides to be arranged before this marriage could take place. The bride was a Lutheran, the prince was a Catholic. With regard to the religion of Orange not the slightest doubt existed, nor was any deception attempted. Granvelle himself gave the most entire attestation of the prince’s orthodoxy. “This proposed marriage gives me great pain,” he wrote to Philip, “but I have never had reason to suspect his principles.” In another letter he observed that he wished the marriage could be broken off, but that he hoped so much from the virtue of the prince that nothing could suffice to separate him from the true religion. On the other side there was as little doubt as to his creed. Old Landgrave Philip of Hesse, grandfather of the young lady, was bitterly opposed to the match. “‘Tis a papist,” said he, “who goes to mass, and eats no meat on fast days.” He had no great objection to his character, but insurmountable ones to his religion. “Old Count William,” said he, “was an evangelical lord to his dying day. This man is a papist.” The marriage, then, was to be a mixed marriage. It is necessary, however, to beware of anachronisms upon the subject. Lutherans were not yet formally denounced as heretics. On the contrary, it was exactly at this epoch that the pope was inviting the Protestant princes of Germany to the Trent Council, where the schism was to be closed, and all the erring lambs to be received again into the bosom of the fold. So far from manifesting an outward hostility, the papal demeanor was conciliating. The letters of invitation from the pope to the princes were sent by a legate, each commencing with the exordium, “To my beloved son,” and were all sent back to his Holiness, contemptuously, with the coarse jest for answer, “We believe our mothers to have been honest women, and hope that we had better fathers.” The great council had not yet given its decisions. Marriages were of continual occurrence, especially among princes and potentates, between the adherents of Rome and of the new religion. Even Philip had been most anxious to marry the Protestant Elizabeth, whom, had she
been a peasant, he would unquestionably have burned, if in his power. Throughout Germany, also, especially in high places, there was a disposition to cover up the religious controversy; to abstain from disturbing the ashes where devastation still glowed, and was one day to rekindle itself. It was exceedingly difficult for any man, from the Archduke Maximilian down, to define his creed. A marriage, therefore, between a man and woman of discordant views upon this topic was not startling, although in general not considered desirable.

There were, however, especial reasons why this alliance should be distasteful, both to Philip of Spain upon one side, and to the Landgrave Philip of Hesse on the other. The bride was the daughter of the elector Maurice. In that one name were concentrated nearly all the disasters, disgrace, and disappointment of the Emperor’s reign. It was Maurice who had hunted the Emperor through the Tyrolean mountains; it was Maurice who had compelled the peace of Passau; it was Maurice who had overthrown the Catholic Church in Germany; it was Maurice who had frustrated Philip’s election as king of the Romans. If William of Orange must seek a wife among the pagans, could no other bride be found for him than the daughter of such a man?

Anna’s grandfather, on the other hand, Landgrave Philip, was the celebrated victim to the force and fraud of Charles V. He saw in the proposed bridegroom, a youth who had been from childhood, the petted page and confidant of the hated Emperor, to whom he owed his long imprisonment. He saw in him too, the intimate friend and ally—for the brooding quarrels of the state council were not yet patent to the world—of the still more deeply detested Granvelle, the crafty priest whose substitution of "einig" for "ewig" had inveigled him into that terrible captivity. These considerations alone would have made him unfriendly to the prince, even had he not been a Catholic.

The Elector Augustus, however, uncle and guardian to the bride, was not only well-disposed but eager for the marriage, and determined to overcome all obstacles, including the opposition of the Landgrave, without whose consent he was long pledged not to bestow the hand of Anna. For this there were more than one reason. Augustus, who, in the words of one of the most acute historical critics of our day, was "a Byzantine Emperor of the lowest class, reappearing in electoral hat and mantle," was not firm in his rights to the dignity he held. He had inherited from his brother, but his brother had dispossessed John Frederic. Maurice, when turning against the Emperor, who had placed him in his cousin’s seat, had not thought it expedient to restore to the rightful owner the rank which he himself owed to the violence of Charles. Those claims might be re vindic ated, and Augustus be degraded in his turn, by a possible marriage of the princess Anna, with some turbulent or intriguing German potentate. Out of the land she was less likely to give trouble. The alliance, if not particularly desirable on the score of rank, was, in other worldly respects, a most brilliant one for his niece. As for the religious point, if he could
overcome or circumvent the scruples of the Landgrave, he foresaw little difficulty in conquering his own conscience.

The Prince of Orange, it is evident, was placed in such a position that it would be difficult for him to satisfy all parties. He intended that the marriage, like all marriages among persons in high places at that day, should be upon the "uti possidetis" principle, which was the foundation of the religious peace of Germany. His wife, after marriage and removal to the Netherlands, would "live Catholically"; she would be considered as belonging to the same Church with her husband, was to give no offense to the government, and bring no suspicion upon himself, by violating any of the religious decencies. Further than this, William, who at that day was an easy, indifferent Catholic, averse to papal persecutions, but almost equally averse to long, puritanical prayers and faces, taking far more pleasure in worldly matters than in ecclesiastical controversies, was not disposed to advance in this thorny path. Having a stern bigot to deal with in Madrid, and another in Cassel, he soon convinced himself that he was not likely entirely to satisfy either, and thought it wiser simply to satisfy himself.

Early in 1560, Count Gunther de Schwartzburg, betrothed to the prince's sister Catherine, together with Colonel George von Holl, were dispatched to Germany to open the marriage negotiations. They found the Elector Augustus already ripe and anxious for the connection. It was easy for the envoys to satisfy all his requirements on the religious question. If, as the elector afterwards stated to the landgrave, they really promised that the young lady should be allowed to have an evangelical preacher in her own apartments, together with the befitting sacraments, it is very certain that they traveled a good way out of their instructions, for such concessions were steadily refused by William in person. It is, however, more probable that Augustus, whose slippery feet were disposed to slide smoothly and swiftly over this dangerous ground, had represented the prince's communications under a favorable gloss of his own. At any rate, nothing in the subsequent proceedings justified the conclusions thus hastily formed.

The Landgrave Philip, from the beginning, manifested his repugnance to the match. As soon as the proposition had been received by Augustus, that potentate dispatched Hans von Carlowitz to the grandfather at Cassel. The Prince of Orange, it was represented, was young, handsome, wealthy, a favorite of the Spanish monarch; the princess Anna, on the other hand, said her uncle was not likely to grow straighter or better proportioned in body, nor was her crooked and perverse character likely to improve with years. It was therefore desirable to find a settlement for her as soon as possible. The elector, however, would decide upon nothing without the landgrave’s consent.

To this frank and not very flattering statement, so far as the young lady was concerned, the landgrave answered stoutly and characteristically. The prince
was a Spanish subject, he said, and would not be able to protect Anna in her belief, who would sooner or later become a fugitive; he was but a count in Germany, and no fitting match for an elector’s daughter; moreover, the lady herself ought to be consulted, who had not even seen the prince. If she were crooked in body, as the elector stated, it was a shame to expose her; to conceal it, however, was questionable, as the prince might complain afterwards that a straight princess had been promised, and a crooked one fraudulently substituted, and so on, though a good deal more of such quaint casuistry, in which the landgrave was accomplished. The amount of his answer, however, to the marriage proposal was an unequivocal negative, from which he never wavered.

In consequence of this opposition, the negotiations were for a time suspended. Augustus implored the prince not to abandon the project, promising that every effort should be made to gain over the landgrave, hinting that the old man might "go to his long rest soon," and even suggesting that if the worst came to the worst, he had bound himself to do nothing without the knowledge of the landgrave, but was not obliged to wait for his consent.

On the other hand, the prince had communicated to the King of Spain the fact of the proposed marriage. He had also held many long conversations with the regent and with Granvelle. In all these interviews he had uniformly used one language: his future wife was to "live as a Catholic," and if that point were not conceded, he would break off the negotiations. He did not pretend that she was to abjure her Protestant faith. The duchess, in describing to Philip the conditions, as sketched to her by the prince, stated expressly that Augustus of Saxony was to consent that his niece "should live Catholically after the marriage," but that it was quite improbable that "before the nuptials she would be permitted to abjure her errors, and receive necessary absolution, according to the rules of the Church." The duchess, while stating her full confidence in the orthodoxy of the prince, expressed at the same time her fears that attempts might be made in the future by his new connections "to pervert him to their depraved opinions."

A silence of many months ensued on the part of the sovereign, during which he was going through the laborious process of making up his mind, or rather of having it made up for him by people a thousand miles off. In the autumn Granvelle wrote to say that the prince was very much surprised to have been kept so long waiting for a definite reply to his communications, made at the beginning of the year concerning his intended marriage, and to learn at last that his Majesty had sent no answer, upon the ground that the match had been broken off, the fact being, that the negotiations were proceeding more earnestly than ever.

Nothing could be more helpless and more characteristic than the letter which Philip sent, thus pushed for a decision. "You wrote me," said he, "that you had
hopes that this matter of the prince’s marriage would go no further, and seeing that you did not write oftener on the subject, I thought certainly that it had been terminated. This pleased me not a little, because it was the best thing that could be done.” “Likewise,” continued the most tautological of monarchs, “I was much pleased that it should be done.” “Nevertheless,” he added, “if the marriage is to be proceeded with, I really don’t know what to say about it, except to refer it to my sister, inasmuch as a person being upon the spot can see better what can be done with regard to it; whether it be possible to prevent it, or whether it be best, if there be no remedy, to give permission. But if there be a remedy, it would be better to take it, because,” concluded the king, pathetically, “I don’t see how the prince could think of marrying with the daughter of the man who did to his majesty, now in glory, that which Duke Maurice did.”

Armed with this luminous epistle, which, if it meant anything, meant a reluctant affirmation to the demand of the prince for the royal consent, the regent and Granvelle proceeded to summon William of Orange, and to catechize him in a manner most galling to the pride, and with a latitude not at all justified by any reasonable interpretation of the royal instructions. They even informed him that his Majesty had assembled "certain persons learned in cases of conscience, and versed in theology," according to whose advice a final decision, not yet possible, would be given at some future period. This assembly of learned conscience-keepers and theologians had no existence save in the imaginations of Granvelle and Margaret. The king’s letter, blind and blundering as it was, gave the duchess the right to decide in the affirmative on her own responsibility; yet fictions like these formed a part of the "dissimulation," which was accounted profound statesmanship by the disciples of Machiavelli. The prince, however irritated, maintained his steadiness, assured the regent that the negotiation had advanced too far to be abandoned, and repeated his assurance that the future Princess of Orange was to "live as a Catholic."

In December 1560, William made a visit to Dresden, where he was received by the elector with great cordiality. This visit was conclusive as to the marriage. The appearance and accomplishments of the distinguished suitor made a profound impression upon the lady. Her heart was carried by storm. Finding, or fancying herself very desperately enamored of the proposed bridegroom, she soon manifested as much eagerness for the marriage as did her uncle, and expressed herself frequently with the violence which belonged to her character. "What God had decreed," she said, "the Devil should not hinder."

The prince was said to have exhibited much diligence in his attention to the services of the Protestant Church during his visit at Dresden. As that visit lasted, however, but ten or eleven days, there was no great opportunity for showing much zeal.
At the same period one William Knuttel was dispatched by Orange on the forlorn hope of gaining the old landgrave’s consent, without making any vital concessions. "Will the prince," asked the landgrave, "permit my granddaughter to have an evangelical preacher in the house?" "No," answered Knuttel. "May she at least receive the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper in her own chamber, according to the Lutheran form?" "No," answered Knuttel, "neither in Breda, nor anywhere else in the Netherlands. If she imperatively requires such sacraments, she must go over the border for them, to the nearest Protestant sovereign."

Upon the 14th of April, 1561, the elector, returning to the charge, caused a little note to be drawn up on the religious point, which he forwarded, in the hope that the prince would copy and sign it. He added a promise that the memorandum should never be made public to the signer’s disadvantage. At the same time he observed to Count Louis, verbally, "that he had been satisfied with the declarations made by the prince when in Dresden, upon all points, except that concerning religion." He therefore felt obliged to beg for a little agreement in writing. "By no means! by no means!" interrupted Louis promptly, at the very first word, "the prince can give your electoral highness no such assurance. 'Twould be risking life, honor, and fortune to do so, as your grace is well aware." The elector protested that the declaration, if signed, should never come into the Spanish monarch’s hands, and insisted upon sending it to the prince. Louis, in a letter to his brother, characterized the document as "singular, prolix, and artful," and strongly advised the prince to have nothing to do with it.

This note, which the prince was thus requested to sign, and which his brother Louis thus strenuously advised him not to sign, the prince never did sign. Its tenor was to the following effect: the Princess, after marriage, was, neither by menace nor persuasion, to be turned from the true and pure Word of God, or the use of the sacrament according to the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession. The prince was to allow her to read books written in accordance with the Augsburg Confession. The prince was to permit her, as often, annually, as she required it, to go out of the Netherlands to some place where she could receive the sacrament according to the Augsburg Confession. In case she were in sickness or perils of childbirth, the prince, if necessary, would call to her an evangelical preacher, who might administer to her the holy sacrament in her chamber. The children who might spring from the marriage were to be instructed as to the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession.

Even if executed, this celebrated memorandum would hardly have been at variance with the declarations made by the prince to the Spanish government. He had never pretended that his bride was to become a Catholic, but only to live as a Catholic. All that he had promised, or was expected to promise was that his wife should conform to the law in the Netherlands. The paper, in a general way, recognized that law. In case of absolute necessity, however, it
was stipulated that the princess should have the advantage of private sacraments. This certainly would have been a mortal offense in a Calvinist or Anabaptist, but for Lutherans the practice had never been so strict. Moreover, the prince already repudiated the doctrines of the edicts, and rebelled against the command to administer them within his government. A general promise, therefore, made by him privately, in the sense of the memorandum drawn up by the elector, would have been neither hypocritical nor deceitful, but worthy the man who looked over such groveling heads as Granvelle and Philip on the one side, or Augustus of Saxony on the other, and estimated their religious pretences at exactly what they were worth. A formal document, however, technically according all these demands made by the elector, would certainly be regarded by the Spanish government as a very culpable instrument. The prince never signed the note, but, as we shall have occasion to state in its proper place, he gave a verbal declaration, favorable to its tenor, but in very vague and brief terms, before a notary, on the day of the marriage.

If the reader be of opinion that too much time has been expended upon the elucidation of this point, he should remember that the character of a great and good man is too precious a possession of history to be lightly abandoned. It is of no great consequence to ascertain the precise creed of Augustus of Saxony, or of his niece; it is of comparatively little moment to fix the point at which William of Orange ceased to be an honest, but liberal Catholic, and opened his heart to the light of the Reformation; but it is of very grave interest that his name should be cleared of the charge of deliberate fraud and hypocrisy. It has therefore been thought necessary to prove conclusively that the prince never gave, in Dresden or Cassel, any assurance inconsistent with his assertions to king and cardinal. The whole tone of his language and demeanor on the religious subject was exhibited in his reply to the electress, who, immediately after the marriage, entreated that he would not pervert her niece from the paths of the true religion. “She shall not be troubled,” said the prince, “with such melancholy things. Instead of holy writ she shall read ‘Amadis de Gaule,’ and such books of pastime which discourse de amore; and instead of knitting and sewing she shall learn to dance a galliarde, and such courtoisies as are the mode of our country and suitable to her rank.”

The reply was careless, flippant, almost contemptuous. It is very certain that William of Orange was not yet the “father William” he was destined to become—grave, self-sacrificing, deeply religious, heroic—but it was equally evident from this language that he had small sympathy, either in public or private, with Lutheranism or theological controversy. Landgrave William was not far from right when he added, in his quaint style, after recalling this well-known reply, “Your grace will observe, therefore, that when the abbot has dice in his pocket, the convent will play.”

So great was the excitement at the little court of Cassel, that many Protestant princes and nobles declared that “they would sooner give their daughters to a
boor or a swineherd than to a papist.” The landgrave was equally vigorous in his protest, drawn up in due form on the 26th of April, 1561. He was not used, he said, “to flatter or to tickle with a foxtail.” He was sorry if his language gave offense, nevertheless “the marriage was odious, and that was enough.” He had no especial objection to the prince, “who before the world was a brave and honorable man.” He conceded that his estates were large, although he hinted that his debts also were ample; allowed that he lived in magnificent style; had even heard “of one of his banquets, where all the tablecloths, plates, and every thing else, were made of sugar”; but thought he might be even a little too extravagant; concluding, after a good deal of skimble-skamble of this nature, with “protesting before God, the world, and all pious Christians, that he was not responsible for the marriage, but only the Elector Augustus and others, who therefore would one day have to render account thereof to the Lord.”

Meantime the wedding had been fixed to take place on Sunday, the 24th of August, 1561. This was St. Bartholomew’s, a nuptial day which was not destined to be a happy one in the 16th century. The landgrave and his family declined to be present at the wedding, but a large and brilliant company were invited. The King of Spain sent a bill of exchange to the regent, that she might purchase a ring worth three thousand crowns, as a present on his part to the bride. Beside this liberal evidence that his opposition to the marriage was withdrawn, he authorized his sister to appoint envoys from among the most distinguished nobles to represent him on the occasion. The Baron de Montigny, accordingly, with a brilliant company of gentlemen, was deputed by the duchess, although she declined sending all the governors of the provinces, according to the request of the prince. The marriage was to take place at Leipsic. A slight picture of the wedding festivities, derived entirely from unpublished sources, may give some insight into the manners and customs of high life in Germany and the Netherlands at this epoch.

The Kings of Spain and Denmark were invited, and were represented by special ambassadors. The Dukes of Brunswick, Lauenburg, Mecklenburg, the Elector and Margraves of Brandenburg, the Archbishop of Cologne, the Duke of Cleves, the Bishops of Naumburg, Meneburg, Meissen, with many other potentates, accepted the invitations, and came generally in person, a few only being represented by envoy. The town councils of Erfurt, Leipsic, Magdeburg, and other cities, were also bidden. The bridegroom was personally accompanied by his brothers John, Adolphus, and Louis; by the Buren’s, the Leuchtenberg’s, and various other distinguished personages.

As the electoral residence at Leipsic was not completely finished, separate dwellings were arranged for each of the sovereign families invited, in private houses, mostly on the marketplace. Here they were to be furnished with provisions by the elector’s officials, but they were to cook for themselves. For this purpose all the princes had been requested to bring their own cooks and butlers, together with their plate and kitchen utensils. The sovereigns themselves were to dine daily with the elector at the town-house, but the
attendants and suite were to take their meals in their own lodgings. A brilliant collection of gentlemen and pages, appointed by the elector to wait at his table, were ordered to assemble at Leipsic on the 22nd, the guests having been all invited for the 23rd. Many regulations were given to these noble youths, that they might discharge their duties with befitting decorum. Among other orders, they received particular injunctions that they were to abstain from all drinking among themselves, and from all riotous conduct whatever, while the sovereigns and potentates should be at dinner. "It would be a shameful indecency," it was urged, "if the great people sitting at table should be unable to hear themselves talk on account of the screaming of the attendants." This provision did not seem unreasonable. They were also instructed that if invited to drink by any personage at the great tables they were respectfully to decline the challenge, and to explain the cause after the repast.

Particular arrangements were also made for the safety of the city. Besides the regular guard of Leipsic, two hundred and twenty arquebuseers, spearmen, and halberdmen were ordered from the neighboring towns. These were to be all dressed in uniform—one arm, side, and leg in black, and the other in yellow, according to a painting distributed beforehand to the various authorities. As a mounted patrol, Leipsic had a regular force of two men. These were now increased to ten, and received orders to ride with their lanterns up and down all the streets and lanes, to accost all persons whom they might find abroad without lights in their hands, to ask them their business in courteous language, and at the same time to see generally to the peace and safety of the town. Fifty arquebuseers were appointed to protect the town-house, and a burgher watch of six hundred was distributed in different quarters, especially to guard against fire.

On Saturday, the day before the wedding, the guests had all arrived at Leipsic, and the prince of Orange, with his friends, at Meneburg. On Sunday, the 24th of August, the elector at the head of his guests and attendants, in splendid array, rode forth to receive the bridegroom. His cavalcade numbered four thousand. William of Orange had arrived, accompanied by one thousand mounted men. The whole troop now entered the city together, escorting the prince to the town-house. Here he dismounted, and was received on the staircase by the princess Anna, attended by her ladies. She immediately afterwards withdrew to her apartments.

It was at this point, between 4 and 5 p.m., that the elector and electress, with the bride and bridegroom, accompanied also by the Dame Sophia von Miltitz and the Councillors Hans von Ponika and Ulrich Woltersdorff upon one side, and by Count John of Nassau and Heinrich von Wiltberg upon the other, as witnesses, appeared before Wolf Seidel, notary, in a corner room of the upper story of the town-house. One of the councillors, on the part of the elector, then addressed the bridegroom. He observed that his highness would remember, no doubt, the contents of a memorandum or billet, sent by the
elector on the 14th of April of that year, by the terms of which the prince was to agree that he would, neither by threat nor persuasion, prevent his future wife from continuing in the Augsburg Confession; that he would allow her to go to places where she might receive the Augsburg sacraments; that in case of extreme need she should receive them in her chamber; and that the children who might spring from the marriage should be instructed as to the Augsburg doctrines. As, however, continued the councillor, his highness the Prince of Orange has, for various reasons, declined giving any such agreement in writing, as therefore it had been arranged that before the marriage ceremony the prince should, in the presence of the bride and of the other witnesses, make a verbal promise on the subject, and as the parties were now to be immediately united in marriage, therefore the elector had no doubt that the prince would make no objection in presence of those witnesses to give his consent to maintain the agreements comprised in the memorandum or note. The note was then read. Thereupon, the prince answered verbally. "Gracious elector, I remember the writing which you sent me on the 14th April. All the points just narrated by the doctor were contained in it. I now state to your highness that I will keep it all as becomes a prince, and conform to it." Thereupon he gave the elector his hand.

What now was the amount and meaning of this promise on the part of the prince? Almost nothing. He would conform to the demands of the elector, exactly as he had hitherto said he would conform to them. Taken in connection with his steady objections to sign and seal any instrument on the subject; with his distinct refusal to the landgrave (through Knuttel) to allow the princess an evangelical preacher or to receive the sacraments in the Netherlands; with the vehement, formal, and public protest, on the part of the landgrave, against the marriage; with the prince’s declarations to the Elector at Dresden, which were satisfactory on all points save the religious point; what meaning could this verbal promise have, save that the prince would do exactly as much with regard to the religious question as he had always promised, and no more? This was precisely what did happen. There was no pretense on the part of the elector, afterwards, that any other arrangement had been contemplated. The princess lived catholically from the moment of her marriage, exactly as Orange had stated to the Duchess Margaret, and as the elector knew would be the case. The first and the following children born of the marriage were baptized by Catholic priests, with very elaborate Catholic ceremonies, and this with the full consent of the elector, who sent deputies and officiated as sponsor on one remarkable occasion.

Who, of all those guileless lambs then—Philip of Spain, the Elector of Saxony, or Cardinal Granvelle—had been deceived by the language or actions of the prince? Not one. It may be boldly asserted that the prince, placed in a transition epoch, both of the age and of his own character, surrounded by the most artful and intriguing personages known to history, and involved in a network of most intricate and difficult circumstances, acquitted himself in a
manner as honorable as it was prudent. It is difficult to regard the notarial instrument otherwise than as a memorandum, filed rather by Augustus than by wise William, in order to put upon record for his own justification, his repeated though unsuccessful efforts to procure from the prince a regularly signed, sealed, and holographic act, upon the points stated in the famous note.

After the delay occasioned by these private formalities, the bridal procession, headed by the court musicians, followed by the court marshals, councillors, great officers of state, and the electoral family, entered the grand hall of the town-house. The nuptial ceremony was then performed by "the Superintendent Doctor Pfeffinger." Immediately afterwards, and in the same hall, the bride and bridegroom were placed publicly upon a splendid, gilded bed, with gold-embroidered curtains, the princess being conducted thither by the elector and electress. Confects and spiced drinks were then served to them and to the assembled company. After this ceremony they were conducted to their separate chambers, to dress for dinner. Before they left the hall, however, Margrave Hans of Brandenburg, on part of the Elector of Saxony, solemnly recommended the bride to her husband, exhorting him to cherish her with faith and affection, and "to leave her undisturbed in the recognized truth of the holy gospel and the right use of the sacraments."

Five round tables were laid in the same hall immediately afterwards, each accommodating ten guests. As soon as the first course of twenty-five dishes had been put upon the chief table, the bride and bridegroom, the elector and electress, the Spanish and Danish envoys and others, were escorted to it, and the banquet began. During the repast, the elector’s choir and all the other bands discoursed the "merriest and most ingenious music." The noble vassals handed the water, the napkins, and the wine, and everything was conducted decorously and appropriately. As soon as the dinner was brought to a close, the tables were cleared away, and the ball began in the same apartment. Dances, previously arranged, were performed, after which "confects and drinks" were again distributed, and the bridal pair were then conducted to the nuptial chamber.

The wedding, according to the Lutheran custom of the epoch, had thus taken place not in a church, but in a private dwelling, the hall of the town-house, representing, on this occasion, the elector’s own saloons. On the following morning, however, a procession was formed at seven o’clock to conduct the newly-married couple to the church of St. Nicholas, there to receive an additional exhortation and benediction. Two separate companies of gentlemen, attended by a great number of "fifers, drummers, and trumpeters," escorted the bride and the bridegroom, "twelve counts, wearing each a scarf of the princess Anna’s colors, with golden garlands on their heads and lighted torches in their hands," preceding her to the choir, where seats had been provided for the more illustrious portion of the company. The church had been magnificently decked in tapestry, and, as the company entered, a full
orchestra performed several fine motettos. After listening to a long address from Dr. Pfeffinger, and receiving a blessing before the altar, the Prince and Princess of Orange returned, with their attendant processions, to the town-house.

After dinner, upon the same and the three following days, a tournament was held. The lists were on the marketplace, on the side nearest the town-house; the electress and the other ladies looking down from balcony and window to "rain influence and adjudge the prize." The chief hero of these jousts, according to the accounts in the Archives, was the Elector of Saxony. He "comported himself with such especial chivalry" that his far-famed namesake and remote successor, Augustus the Strong, could hardly have evinced more knightly prowess. On the first day he encountered George von Wiedebach, and unhorsed him so handsomely that the discomfited cavalier’s shoulder was dislocated. On the following day he tilted with Michael von Denstedt, and was again victorious, hitting his adversary full in the target, and "bearing him off over his horse’s tail so neatly, that the knight came down, heels over head, upon the earth."

On Wednesday, there was what was called the pallia-tourney. The Prince of Orange, at the head of six bands, amounting in all to twenty-nine men; the Margrave George of Brandenburg, with seven bands, comprising thirty-four men, and the Elector Augustus, with one band of four men, besides himself, all entered the lists. Lots were drawn for the "gate of honor," and gained by the margrave, who accordingly defended it with his band. Twenty courses were then run between these champions and the Prince of Orange, with his men. The Brandenburg’s broke seven lances, the prince’s party only six, so that Orange was obliged to leave the lists discomfited. The ever-victorious Augustus then took the field, and ran twenty courses against the defenders, breaking fourteen spears to the Brandenburgs’ ten. The margrave, thus defeated, surrendered the "gate of honor" to the elector, who maintained it the rest of the day against all comers. It is fair to suppose, although the fact is not recorded, that the elector’s original band had received some reinforcement. Otherwise, it would be difficult to account for these constant victories, except by ascribing more than mortal strength, as well as valor, to Augustus and his four champions. His party broke one hundred and fifty-six lances, of which number the elector himself broke thirty-eight and a half. He received the first prize, but declined other guerdons adjudged to him. The reward for the hardest hitting was conferred on Wolf von Schönberg, "who thrust Kurt von Arnim clean out of the saddle, so that he fell against the barriers."

On Thursday was the riding at the ring. The knights who partook of this sport wore various strange garbs over their armor. Some were disguised as hussars, some as miners, some as lansquenettes; others as Tartans, pilgrims, fools, bird-catchers, hunters, monks, peasants, or Netherland cuirassiers. Each party was attended by a party of musicians, attired in similar costume. Moreover, Count
Gunter von Schwartzburg made his appearance in the lists, accompanied "by five remarkable giants of wonderful proportions and appearance, very ludicrous to behold, who performed all kind of odd antics on horseback."

The next day there was a foot tourney, followed in the evening by "mummeries," or masquerades. These masques were repeated on the following evening, and afforded great entertainment. The costumes were magnificent, "with golden and pearl embroidery," the dances were very merry and artistic, and the musicians, who formed a part of the company, exhibited remarkable talent. These "mummeries" had been brought by William of Orange from the Netherlands, at the express request of the elector, on the ground that such matters were much better understood in the provinces than in Germany.

Such is a slight sketch of the revels by which this ill-fated Bartholomew marriage was celebrated. While William of Orange was thus employed in Germany, Granvelle seized the opportunity to make his entry into the city of Mechlin, as archbishop, believing that such a step would be better accomplished in the absence of the prince from the country. The cardinal found no one in the city to welcome him. None of the great nobles were there. The people looked upon the procession with silent hatred. No man cried, God bless him. He wrote to the king that he should push forward the whole matter of the bishoprics as fast as possible, adding the ridiculous assertion that the opposition came entirely from the nobility, and that "if the seigniors did not talk so much, not a man of the people would open his mouth on the subject."

The remonstrance offered by the three estates of Brabant against the scheme had not influenced Philip. He had replied in a peremptory tone. He had assured them that he had no intention of receding, and that the province of Brabant ought to feel itself indebted to him for having given them prelates instead of abbots to take care of their eternal interests, and for having erected their religious houses into episcopates. The abbeys made what resistance they could, but were soon fain to come to a compromise with the bishops, who, according to the arrangement thus made, were to receive a certain portion of the abbey revenues, while the remainder was to belong to the institutions, together with a continuance of their right to elect their own chiefs, subordinate, however, to the approbation of the respective prelates of the diocese. Thus was the episcopal matter settled in Brabant. In many of the other bishoprics the new dignitaries were treated with disrespect, as they made their entrance into their cities, while they experienced endless opposition and annoyance on attempting to take possession of the revenue assigned to them.

CHAPTER 3
The Inquisition and the Conflicts between Granvelle and the Nobles

The great cause of the revolt which, within a few years, was to break forth throughout the Netherlands, was the inquisition. It is almost puerile to look further or deeper, when such a source of convulsion lies at the very outset of any investigation. During the war there had been, for reasons already indicated, an occasional pause in the religious persecution. Philip had now returned to Spain, having arranged, with great precision, a comprehensive scheme for exterminating that religious belief which was already accepted by a very large portion of his Netherland subjects. From afar there rose upon the provinces the prophetic vision of a coming evil still more terrible than any which had yet oppressed them. As across the bright plains of Sicily, when the sun is rising, the vast pyramidal shadow of Mount Etna is definitely and visibly projected—the phantom of that ever-present enemy, which holds fire and devastation in its bosom—so, in the morning hour of Philip’s reign, the shadow of the inquisition was cast from afar across those warm and smiling provinces—a specter menacing fiercer flames and wider desolation than those which mere physical agencies could ever compass.

There has been a good deal of somewhat superfluous discussion concerning the different kinds of inquisition. The distinction drawn between the papal, the episcopal, and the Spanish inquisitions, did not, in the 16th century, convince many unsophisticated minds of the merits of the establishment in any of its shapes. However classified or entitled, it was a machine for inquiring into a man’s thoughts, and for burning him if the result was not satisfactory.

The Spanish inquisition, strictly so called, that is to say, the modern or later institution established by Pope Alexander VI and Ferdinand the Catholic, was doubtless invested with a more complete apparatus for inflicting human misery, and for appalling human imagination, than any of the other less artfully arranged inquisitions, whether papal or episcopal. It had been originally devised for Jews or Moors, whom the Christianity of the age did not regard as human beings, but who could not be banished without depopulating certain districts. It was soon, however, extended from pagans to heretics. The Dominican Torquemada was the first Moloch to be placed upon this pedestal of blood and fire, and from that day forward the "holy office" was almost exclusively in the hands of that band of brothers. In the eighteen years of Torquemada’s administration, 10,220 individuals were burned alive, and 97,321 punished with infamy, confiscation of property, or perpetual imprisonment, so that the total number of families destroyed by this one friar alone amounted to 114,401.

In course of time the jurisdiction of the office was extended. It taught the savages of India and America to shudder at the name of Christianity. The fear of its introduction froze the earlier heretics of Italy, France, and Germany into orthodoxy. It was a court owning allegiance to no temporal authority, superior
to all other tribunals. It was a bench of monks without appeal, having its
familiars in every house, diving into the secrets of every fireside, judging and
executing its horrible decrees without responsibility. It condemned not deeds,
but thoughts. It affected to descend into individual conscience, and to punish
the crimes which it pretended to discover. Its process was reduced to a
horrible simplicity. It arrested on suspicion, tortured till confession, and then
punished by fire.

Two witnesses, and those to separate facts, were sufficient to consign the
victim to a loathsome dungeon. Here he was sparingly supplied with food,
forbidden to speak, or even to sing—to which pastime it could hardly be
thought he would feel much inclination—and then left to himself, till famine
and misery should break his spirit. When that time was supposed to have
arrived he was examined. Did he confess, and forswear his heresy, whether
actually innocent or not, he might then assume the sacred shirt, and escape
with confiscation of all his property. Did he persist in the avowal of his
innocence, two witnesses sent him to the stake, one witness to the rack. He
was informed of the testimony against him, but never confronted with the
witness. That accuser might be his son, father, or the wife of his bosom, for all
were enjoined, under the death penalty, to inform the inquisitors of every
suspicious word which might fall from their nearest relatives. The indictment
being thus supported, the prisoner was tried by torture. The rack was the court
of justice; the criminal’s only advocate was his fortitude, for the nominal
counsellor, who was permitted no communication with the prisoner, and was
furnished neither with documents nor with power to procure evidence, was a
puppet, aggravating the lawlessness of the proceedings by the mockery of legal
forms.

The torture took place at midnight, in a gloomy dungeon, dimly lighted by
torches. The victim—whether man, matron, or tender virgin—was stripped
naked, and stretched upon the wooden bench. Water, weights, fires, pulleys,
screws—all the apparatus by which the sinews could be strained without
cracking, the bones crushed without breaking, and the body racked exquisitely
without giving up its ghost—were now put into operation. The executioner,
enveloped in a black robe from head to foot, with his eyes glaring at his victim
through holes cut in the hood which muffled his face, practiced successively all
the forms of torture which the devilish ingenuity of the monks had invented.
The imagination sickens when striving to keep pace with these dreadful
realities. Those who wish to indulge their curiosity concerning the details of
the system, may easily satisfy themselves at the present day. The flood of light
which has been poured upon the subject more than justifies the horror and the
rebellion of the Netherlanders.

The period during which torture might be inflicted from day to day was
unlimited in duration. It could only be terminated by confession—so that the
scaffold was the sole refuge from the rack. Individuals have borne the torture and the dungeon fifteen years, and have been burned at the stake at last.

Execution followed confession, but the number of condemned prisoners was allowed to accumulate, that a multitude of victims might grace each great gala-day. The auto-da-fé was a solemn festival. The monarch, the high functionaries of the land, the reverend clergy, the populace regarded it as an inspiring and delightful recreation. When the appointed morning arrived, the victim was taken from his dungeon. He was then attired in a yellow robe without sleeves, like a herald’s coat, embroidered all over with black figures of devils. A large conical paper miter was placed upon his head, upon which was represented a human being in the midst of flames, surrounded by imps. His tongue was then painfully gagged, so that he could neither open nor shut his mouth. After he was thus accoutered, and just as he was leaving his cell, a breakfast, consisting of every delicacy, was placed before him, and he was urged, with ironical politeness, to satisfy his hunger. He was then led forth into the public square. The procession was formed with great pomp. It was headed by the little school children, who were immediately followed by the band of prisoners, each attired in the horrible yet ludicrous manner described. Then came the magistrates and nobility, the prelates and other dignitaries of the Church; the holy inquisitors, with their officials and familiars, followed, all on horseback, with the blood-red flag of the “sacred office” waving above them, blazoned upon either side with the portraits of Alexander and of Ferdinand, the pair of brothers who had established the institution. After the procession came the rabble.

When all had reached the neighborhood of the scaffold, and had been arranged in order, a sermon was preached to the assembled multitude. It was filled with laudations of the inquisition, and with blasphemous revilings against the condemned prisoners. Then the sentences were read to the individual victims. Then the clergy chanted the fifty-first psalm, the whole vast throng uniting in one tremendous miserere. If a priest happened to be among the culprits, he was now stripped of the canonicals which he had hitherto worn, while his hands, lips, and shaven crown were scraped with a bit of glass, by which process the oil of his consecration was supposed to be removed. He was then thrown into the common herd. Those of the prisoners who were reconciled, and those whose execution was not yet appointed, were now separated from the others. The rest were compelled to mount a scaffold, where the executioner stood ready to conduct them to the fire. The inquisitors then delivered them into his hands, with an ironical request that he would deal with them tenderly, and without blood-letting or injury. Those who remained steadfast to the last were then burned at the stake; they who in the last extremity renounced their faith were strangled before being thrown into the flames.
Such was the Spanish inquisition, technically so called. It was, according to the biographer of Philip II, a "heavenly remedy, a guardian angel of Paradise, a lions' den in which Daniel and other just men could sustain no injury, but in which perverse sinners were torn to pieces. It was a tribunal superior to all human law, without appeal, and certainly owing no allegiance to the powers of earth or heaven. No rank, high or humble, was safe from its jurisdiction. The royal family were not sacred, nor the pauper's hovel. Even death afforded no protection. The holy office invaded the prince in his palace and the beggar in his shroud. The corpses of dead heretics were mutilated and burned. The inquisitors preyed upon carcasses and rifled graves. A gorgeous festival of the holy office had, as we have seen, welcomed Philip to his native land. The news of these tremendous *autos-da-fé*, in which so many illustrious victims had been sacrificed before their sovereign's eyes, had reached the Netherlands almost simultaneously with the bulls creating the new bishoprics in the provinces. It was not likely that the measure would be rendered more palatable by this intelligence of the royal amusements.

The Spanish inquisition had never flourished in any soil but that of the peninsula. It is possible that the king and Granvelle were sincere in their protestations of entertaining no intention of introducing it into the Netherlands, although the protestations of such men are entitled to but little weight. The truth was that the inquisition existed already in the provinces. It was the main object of the government to confirm and extend the institution. The episcopal inquisition, as we have already seen, had been enlarged by the enormous increase in the number of bishops, each of whom was to be head inquisitor in his diocese, with two special inquisitors under him. With this apparatus and with the edicts, as already described, it might seem that enough had already been done for the suppression of heresy. But more had been done. A regular papal inquisition also existed in the Netherlands. This establishment, like the edicts, was the gift of Charles V. A word of introduction is here again necessary—nor let the reader deem that too much time is devoted to this painful subject. On the contrary, no definite idea can be formed as to the character of the Netherland revolt without a thorough understanding of this great cause—the religious persecution in which the country had lived, breathed, and had its being, for half a century, and in which, had the rebellion not broken out at last, the population must have been either exterminated or entirely imbruted. The few years which are immediately to occupy us in the present and succeeding chapter, present the country in a daily increasing ferment from the action of causes which had existed long before, but which received an additional stimulus as the policy of the new reign developed itself.

Previously to the accession of Charles V, it can not be said that an inquisition had ever been established in the provinces. Isolated instances to the contrary, adduced by the canonists who gave their advice to Margaret of Parma, rather proved the absence than the existence of the system. In the reign of Philip the Good, the vicar of the inquisitor-general gave sentence against some heretics,
who were burned in Lille (1448). In 1459, Pierre Troussart, a Jacobin monk, condemned many Waldenses, together with some leading citizens of Artois, accused of sorcery and heresy. He did this, however, as inquisitor for the Bishop of Arras, so that it was an act of episcopal, and not papal inquisition. In general, when inquisitors were wanted in the provinces, it was necessary to borrow them from France or Germany. The exigencies of persecution making a domestic staff desirable, Charles V, in the year 1522, applied to his ancient tutor, whom he had placed on the papal throne.

Charles had, however, already, in the previous year appointed Francis Van der Hulst to be inquisitor-general for the Netherlands. This man, whom Erasmus called a "wonderful enemy to learning," was also provided with a coadjutor, Nicholas of Egmond by name, a Carmelite monk, who was characterized by the same authority as "a madman armed with a sword." The inquisitor-general received full powers to cite, arrest, imprison, torture heretics without observing the ordinary forms of law, and to cause his sentences to be executed without appeal. He was, however, in pronouncing definite judgments, to take the advice of Laurens, president of the grand council of Mechlin, a coarse, cruel, and ignorant man, who "hated learning with a more than deadly hatred," and who might certainly be relied upon to sustain the severest judgments which the inquisitor might fulminate. Adrian, accordingly, commissioned Van der Hulst to be universal and general inquisitor for all the Netherlands. At the same time it was expressly stated that his functions were not to supersede those exercised by the bishops as inquisitors in their own sees. Thus the papal inquisition was established in the provinces.

Van der Hulst, a person of infamous character, was not the man to render the institution less odious than it was by its nature. Before he had fulfilled his duties two years, however, he was degraded from his office by the Emperor for having forged a document. In 1525, Buedens, Houseau and Coppin were confirmed by Clement VII as inquisitors in the room of Van der Hulst. In 1537, Ruard Tapper and Michael Drutius were appointed by Paul III, on the decease of Coppin, the other two remaining in office. The powers of the papal inquisitors had been gradually extended, and they were, by 1545, not only entirely independent of the episcopal inquisition, but had acquired right of jurisdiction over bishops and archbishops, whom they were empowered to arrest and imprison. They had also received and exercised the privilege of appointing delegates, or sub-inquisitors, on their own authority. Much of the work was, indeed, performed by these officials, the most notorious of whom were Barbier, De Monte, Titelmann, Fabry, Campo de Zon, and Stryen. In 1545, and again in 1550, a stringent set of instructions were drawn up by the Emperor for the guidance of these papal inquisitors. A glance at their context shows that the establishment was not intended to be an empty form.

They were empowered to inquire, proceed against, and chastise all heretics, all persons suspected of heresy, and their protectors. Accompanied by a
notary, they were to collect written information concerning every person in the provinces, "infected or vehemently suspected." They were authorized to summon all subjects of his Majesty, whatever their rank, quality, or station, and to compel them to give evidence, or to communicate suspicions. They were to punish all who pertinaciously refused such depositions with death. The Emperor commanded his presidents, judges, sheriffs, and all other judicial and executive officers to render all "assistance to the inquisitors and their familiars in their holy and pious inquisition, whenever required so to do," on pain of being punished as encouragers of heresy, that is to say, with death.

Whenever the inquisitors should be satisfied as to the heresy of any individual, they were to order his arrest and detention by the judge of the place, or by others arbitrarily to be selected by them. The judges or persons thus chosen were enjoined to fulfil the order, on pain of being punished as protectors of heresy, that is to say, with death, by sword or fire. If the prisoner were an ecclesiastic, the inquisitor was to deal summarily with the case "without noise or form in the process—selecting an imperial councillor to render the sentence of absolution or condemnation." If the prisoner were a lay person, the inquisitor was to order his punishment, according to the edicts, by the council of the province. In case of lay persons suspected but not convicted of heresy, the inquisitor was to proceed to their chastisement, "with the advice of a counsellor or some other expert."

In conclusion, the Emperor ordered the "inquisitors to make it known that they were not doing their own work, but that of Christ, and to persuade all persons of this fact." This clause of their instructions seemed difficult of accomplishment, for no reasonable person could doubt that Christ, had he reappeared in human form, would have been instantly crucified again, or burned alive in any place within the dominions of Charles or Philip. The blasphemy with which the name of Jesus was used by such men to sanctify all these nameless horrors, is certainly not the least of their crimes.

In addition to these instructions, a special edict had been issued on the 26th of April, 1550, according to which all judicial officers, at the requisition of the inquisitors, were to render them all assistance in the execution of their office, by arresting and detaining all persons suspected of heresy, according to the instructions issued to said inquisitors; and this, notwithstanding any privileges or charters to the contrary. In short, the inquisitors were not subject to the civil authority, but the civil authority to them. The imperial edict empowered them "to chastise, degrade, denounce, and deliver over heretics to the secular judges for punishment; to make use of gaols, and to make arrests, without ordinary warrant, but merely with notice given to a single counsellor, who was obliged to give sentence according to their desire, without application to the ordinary judge."
These instructions to the inquisitors had been renewed and confirmed by Philip, in the very first month of his reign (November 28, 1555). As in the case of the edicts, it had been thought desirable by Granvelle to make use of the supposed magic of the Emperor’s name to hallow the whole machinery of persecution. The action of the system during the greater part of the imperial period had been terrible. Suffered for a time to languish during the French war, it had lately been renewed with additional vigor. Among all the inquisitors, the name of Peter Titelmann was now preeminent. He executed his infamous functions throughout Flanders, Douay, and Tournay, the most thriving and populous portions of the Netherlands, with a swiftness, precision, and even with a jocularity which hardly seemed human. There was a kind of grim humor about the man. The woman who, according to Lear’s fool was wont to thrust her live eels into the hot paste, “rapping them o’ the coxcombs with a stick and crying reproachfully, ‘Wantons, lie down!’” had the spirit of a true inquisitor. Even so dealt Titelmann with his heretics writhing on the rack or in the flames. Contemorary chronicles give a picture of him as of some grotesque yet terrible goblin, careering through the country by night or clay, alone, on horseback, smiting the trembling peasants on the head with a great club, spreading dismay far and wide, dragging suspected persons from their firesides or their beds, and thrusting them into dungeons, arresting, torturing, strangling, burning, with hardly the shadow of warrant, information, or process.

The secular sheriff, familiarly called Red-Rod, from the color of his wand of office, meeting this inquisitor Titelmann one day upon the high road, thus wonderingly addressed him, "How can you venture to go about alone, or at most with an attendant or two, arresting people on every side, while I dare not attempt to execute my office, except at the head of a strong force, armed in proof, and then only at the peril of my life?"

"Ah! Red-Rod," answered Peter, jocosely, "you deal with bad people. I have nothing to fear, for I seize only the innocent and virtuous, who make no resistance, and let themselves be taken like lambs."

"Mighty well," said the other, "but if you arrest all the good people and I all the bad, 'tis difficult to say who in the world is to escape chastisement." The reply of the inquisitor has not been recorded, but there is no doubt that he proceeded like a strong man to run his day’s course.

He was the most active of all the agents in the religious persecution at the epoch of which we are now treating, but he had been inquisitor for many years. The martyrology of the provinces reeks with his murders. He burned men for idle words or suspected thoughts; he rarely waited, according to his frank confession, for deeds. Hearing once that a certain schoolmaster, named Geleyn de Muler, of Audenarde, "was addicted to reading the Bible," he summoned the culprit before him and accused him of heresy. The schoolmaster claimed, if he were guilty of any crime, to be tried before the judges of his town. "You are
"my prisoner," said Titelmann, "and are to answer me and none other." The inquisitor proceeded accordingly to catechize him, and soon satisfied himself of the schoolmaster’s heresy. He commanded him to make immediate recantation. The schoolmaster refused. "Do you not love your wife and children?" asked the demoniac Titelmann. "God knows," answered the heretic, "that if the whole world were of gold, and my own, I would give it all only to have them with me, even had I to live on bread and water and in bondage." "You have then," answered the inquisitor, "only to renounce the error of your opinions." "Neither for wife, children, nor all the world, can I renounce my God and religious truth," answered the prisoner. Thereupon Titelmann sentenced him to the stake. He was strangled and then thrown into the flames.

At about the same time, Thomas Calberg, tapestry weaver, of Tournay, within the jurisdiction of this same inquisitor, was convicted of having copied some hymns from a book printed in Geneva. He was burned alive. Another man, whose name has perished, was hacked to death with seven blows of a rusty sword, in presence of his wife, who was so horror-stricken that she died on the spot before her husband. His crime, to be sure, was anabaptism, the most deadly offense in the calendar. In the same year, one Walter Kapell was burned at the stake for heretical opinions. He was a man of some property, and beloved by the poor people of Dixmuyde, in Flanders, where he resided, for his many charities. A poor idiot, who had been often fed by his bounty, called out to the inquisitor’s subalterns, as they bound his patron to the stake, "Ye are bloody murderers; that man has done no wrong; but has given me bread to eat." With these words, he cast himself headlong into the flames to perish with his protector, but was with difficulty rescued by the officers. A day or two afterwards, he made his way to the stake, where the half-burnt skeleton of Walter Kapell still remained, took the body upon his shoulders, and carried it through the streets to the house of the chief burgomaster, where several other magistrates happened then to be in session. Forcing his way into their presence, he laid his burden at their feet, crying, "There, murderers! ye have eaten his flesh, now eat his bones!" It has not been recorded whether Titelmann sent him to keep company with his friend in the next world. The fate of so obscure a victim could hardly find room on the crowded pages of the Netherland martyrdom.

This kind of work, which went on daily, did not increase the love of the people for the inquisition or the edicts. It terrified many, but it inspired more with that noble resistance to oppression, particularly to religious oppression, which is the sublimest instinct of human nature. Men confronted the terrible inquisitors with a courage equal to their cruelty. At Tournay, one of the chief cities of Titelmann’s district, and almost before his eyes, one Bertrand le Blas, a velvet manufacturer, committed what was held an almost incredible crime. Having begged his wife and children to pray for a blessing upon what he was about to undertake, he went on Christmas day to the Cathedral of Tournay and stationed himself near the altar. Having awaited the moment in which the
priest held on high the consecrated host, Le Blas then forced his way through the crowd, snatched the wafer from the hands of the astonished ecclesiastic, and broke it into bits, crying aloud, as he did so, "Misguided men, do ye take this thing to be Jesus Christ, your Lord and Saviour?" With these words, he threw the fragments on the ground and trampled them with his feet.* The amazement and horror were so universal at such an appalling offense, that not a finger was raised to arrest the criminal. Priests and congregation were alike paralyzed, so that he would have found no difficulty in making his escape. He did not stir, however; he had come to the church determined to execute what he considered a sacred duty, and to abide the consequences. After a time, he was apprehended.

The inquisitor demanded if he repented of what he had done. He protested, on the contrary, that he gloried in the deed, and that he would die a hundred deaths to rescue from such daily profanation the name of his Redeemer, Christ. He was then put thrice to the torture, that he might be forced to reveal his accomplices. It did not seem in human power for one lean to accomplish such a deed of darkness without confederates. Bertrand had none, however, and could denounce none. A frantic sentence was then devised as a feeble punishment for so much wickedness. He was dragged on a hurdle, with his mouth closed with an iron gag, to the market-place. Here his right hand and foot were burned and twisted off between two red-hot irons. His tongue was then torn out by the roots, and because he still endeavors to call upon the name of God, the iron gag was again applied. With his arms and legs fastened together behind his back, he was then hooked by the middle of his body to an iron chain, and made to swing to and fro over a slow fire till he was entirely roasted. His life lasted almost to the end of these ingenious tortures, but his fortitude lasted as long as his life.

* It may be well supposed that this would be regarded as a crime of almost inconceivable magnitude. It was death even to refuse to kneel in the streets when the wafer was carried by. Thus, for example, a poor huckster, named Simon, at Bergen-op-Zoom, who neglected to prostrate himself before his booth at the passage of the host, was immediately burned. Instances of the same punishment for that offense might be multiplied. In this particular case, it is recorded that the sheriff who was present at the execution was so much affected by the courage and fervor of the simple-minded victim, that he went home, took to his bed, became delirious, crying constantly, "Ah, Simon! Simon!" and died miserably, "notwithstanding all that the monks could do to console him."

In the next year, Titelmann caused one Robert Ogier, of Ryssel, in Flanders, to be arrested, together with his wife and two sons. Their crime consisted in not going to mass, and in practicing private worship at home. They confessed the offense, for they protested that they could not endure to see the profanation of their Savior’s name in the idolatrous sacraments. They were asked what rites they practiced in their own house. One of the sons, a mere boy, answered, "We fall on our knees, and pray to God that he may enlighten our hearts, and
forgive our sins. We pray for our sovereign, that his reign may be prosperous, and his life peaceful. We also pray for the magistrates and others in authority, that God may protect and preserve them all." The boy’s simple eloquence drew tears even from the eyes of some of his judges, for the inquisitor had placed the case before the civil tribunal. The father and eldest son were, however, condemned to the flames. "Oh God!" prayed the youth at the stake, "Eternal Father, accept the sacrifice of our lives, in the name of thy beloved Son." "Thou liest, scoundrel!" fiercely interrupted a monk, who was lighting the fire, "God is not your father; ye are the devil’s children." As the flames rose about them, the boy cried out once more, "Look, my father, all heaven is opening, and I see ten hundred thousand angels rejoicing over us. Let us be glad, for we are dying for the truth." "Thou liest! thou liest!" again screamed the monk, "all hell is opening, and you see ten thousand devils thrusting you into eternal fire." Eight days afterwards, the wife of Osier and his other son were burned, so that there was an end of that family. Such are a few isolated specimens of the manner of proceeding in a single district of the Netherlands. The inquisitor Titelmann certainly deserved his terrible reputation. Men called him Saul the persecutor, and it was well known that he had been originally tainted with the heresy which he had, for so many years, been furiously chastising. At the epoch which now engages our attention, he felt stimulated by the avowed policy of the government to fresh exertions, by which all his previous achievements should be cast into the shade. In one day he broke into a house in Ryssel, seized John de Swarte, his wife and four children, together with two newly-married couples, and two other persons, convicted them of reading the Bible, and of praying in their own doors, and had them all immediately burned. Are these things related merely to excite superfluous horror? Are the sufferings of these obscure Christians beneath the dignity of history? Is it not better to deal with murder and oppression in the abstract, without entering into trivial details? The answer is, that these things are the history of the Netherlands at this epoch; that these hideous details furnish the causes of that immense movement, out of which a great republic was born and an ancient tyranny destroyed; and that Cardinal Granvelle was ridiculous when he asserted that the people would not open their mouths if the seigniors did not make such a noise. Because the great lords "owed their very souls"; because convulsions might help to pay their debts, and furnish forth their masquerades and banquets; because the Prince of Orange was ambitious, and Egmont jealous of the cardinal; therefore superficial writers found it quite natural that the country should be disturbed, although that "vile and mischievous animal, the people," might have no objection to a continuance of the system which had been at work so long. On the contrary, it was exactly because the movement was a popular and a religious movement that it will always retain its place among the most important events of history. Dignified documents, state papers, solemn treaties, are often of no more value than the lambskin on which they are engrossed. Ten thousand nameless victims, in the cause of religious and civil freedom, may build up great states and alter the aspect of whole continents.
The nobles, no doubt, were conspicuous, and it was well for the cause of the right that, as in the early hours of English liberty, the crown and miter were opposed by the baron’s sword and shield. Had all the seigniors made common cause with Philip and Granvelle, instead of setting their breasts against the inquisition, the cause of truth and liberty would have been still more desperate. Nevertheless they were directed and controlled, under Providence, by humbler, but more powerful agencies than their own. The nobles were but the gilded hands on the outside of the dial—the hour to strike was determined by the obscure but weighty movements within.

Nor is it, perhaps, always better to rely upon abstract phraseology, to produce a necessary impression. Upon some minds, declamation concerning liberty of conscience and religious tyranny makes but a vague impression, while an effect may be produced upon them, for example by a dry, concrete, cynical entry in an account book, such as the following, taken at hazard from the register of municipal expenses at Tournay, during the years with which we are now occupied:

"To Mr. Jacques Barra, executioner, for having tortured, twice, Jean de Lannoy, ten sous."

"To the same, for having executed, by fire, said Lannoy, sixty sous. For having thrown his cinders into the river, eight sous."

This was the treatment to which thousands, and tens of thousands, had been subjected in the provinces. Men, women, and children were burned, and their "cinders" thrown away, for idle words against Rome, spoken years before, for praying alone in their closets, for not kneeling to a wafer when they met it in the streets, for thoughts to which they had never given utterance, but which, on inquiry, they were too honest to deny. Certainly with this work going on year after year in every city in the Netherlands, and now set into renewed and vigorous action by a man who wore a crown only that he might the better torture his fellow creatures, it was time that the very stones in the streets should be moved to mutiny.

Thus it may be seen of how much value were the protestations of Philip and of Granvelle, on which much stress has latterly been laid, that it was not their intention to introduce the Spanish inquisition. With the edicts and the Netherland inquisition, such as we have described them, the step was hardly necessary.

In fact, the main difference between the two institutions consisted in the greater efficiency of the Spanish in discovering such of its victims as were disposed to deny their faith. Devised originally for more timorous and less conscientious infidels who were often disposed to skulk in obscure places and to renounce without really abandoning their errors, it was provided with a set of venomous familiars who glided through every chamber and coiled themselves at every fireside. The secret details of each household in the realm being therefore known to the holy office and to the monarch, no infidel or heretic
could escape discovery. This invisible machinery was less requisite for the Netherlands. There was comparatively little difficulty in ferreting out the "vermin"—to use the expression of a Walloon historian of that age—so that it was only necessary to maintain in good working order the apparatus for destroying the noxious creatures when unearthed. The heretics of the provinces assembled at each other's houses to practice those rites described in such simple language by Baldwin Ogier, and denounced under such horrible penalties by the edicts. The inquisitorial system of Spain was hardly necessary for men who had but little prudence in concealing, and no inclination to disavow their creed.

"It is quite a laughable matter," wrote Granvelle, who occasionally took a comic view of the inquisition, "that the king should send us depositions made in Spain by which we are to hunt for heretics here, as if we did not know of thousands already. Would that I had as many doubloons of annual income," he added, "as there are public and professed heretics in the provinces." No doubt the inquisition was in such eyes a most desirable establishment. "To speak without passion," says the Walloon, "the inquisition well administered is a laudable institution, and not less necessary than all the other offices of spirituality and temporality belonging both to the bishops and to the commissioners of the Roman see." The papal and episcopal establishments, in cooperation with the edicts, were enough, if thoroughly exercised and completely extended. The edicts alone were sufficient. "The edicts and the inquisition are one and the same thing," said the Prince of Orange. The circumstance that the civil authorities were not as entirely superseded by the Netherland, as by the Spanish system, was rather a difference of form than of fact. We have seen that the secular officers of justice were at the command of the inquisitors. Sheriff, gaoler, judge, and hangman were all required, under the most terrible penalties, to do their bidding. The reader knows what the edicts were. He knows also the instructions to the corps of papal inquisitors, delivered by Charles and Philip. He knows that Philip, both in person and by letter, had done his utmost to sharpen those instructions, during the latter portion of his sojourn in the Netherlands. Fourteen new bishops, each with two special inquisitors under him, had also been appointed to carry out the great work to which the sovereign had consecrated his existence. The manner in which the hunters of heretics performed their office has been exemplified by slightly sketching the career of a single one of the sub-inquisitors, Peter Titelmann. The monarch and his minister scarcely needed, therefore, to transplant the peninsular exotic. Why should they do so? Philip, who did not often say a great deal in a few words, once expressed the whole truth of the matter in a single sentence: "Wherefore introduce the Spanish inquisition?" said he, "the inquisition of the Netherlands is much more pitiless than that of Spain." Such was the system of religious persecution commenced by Charles, and perfected by Philip. The king could not claim the merit of the invention, which justly belonged to the Emperor. At the same time, his responsibility for the unutterable woe caused by the continuance of the scheme is not a jot diminished. There was a time when the whole system had fallen into
comparative desuetude. It was utterly abhorrent to the institutions and the manners of the Netherlanders. Even a great number of the Catholics in the provinces were averse to it. Many of the leading grandees, every one of whom was Catholic, were foremost in denouncing its continuance. In short, the inquisition had been partially endured, but never accepted. Moreover, it had never been introduced into Luxemburg or Gröningen. In Gelderland it had been prohibited by the treaty through which that province had been annexed to the emperor’s dominions, and it had been uniformly and successfully resisted in Brabant. Therefore, although Philip, taking the artful advice of Granvelle, had sheltered himself under the Emperor’s name by re-enacting, word for word, his decrees, and re-issuing his instructions, he can not be allowed any such protection at the bar of history. Such a defense for crimes so enormous is worse than futile.

In truth, both father and son recognized instinctively the intimate connection between ideas of religious and of civil freedom. “The authority of God and the supremacy of his Majesty” was the formula used with perpetual iteration to sanction the constant recourse to scaffold and funeral pile. Philip, bigoted in religion, and fanatical in his creed of the absolute power of kings, identified himself willingly with the Deity, that he might more easily punish crimes against his own sacred person. Granvelle carefully sustained him in these convictions, and fed his suspicions as to the motives of those who opposed his measures. The minister constantly represented the great seigniors as influenced by ambition and pride. They had only disapproved of the new bishoprics, he insinuated, because they were angry that his Majesty should dare to do anything without their concurrence, and because their own influence in the states would be diminished. It was their object, he said, to keep the king “in tutelage,” to make him a “shadow and a cipher,” while they should themselves exercise all authority in the provinces. It is impossible to exaggerate the effect of such suggestions upon the dull and gloomy mind to which they were addressed. It is easy, however, to see that a minister with such views was likely to be as congenial to his master as he was odious to the people. For already, at the beginning of 1562, Granvelle was extremely unpopular. “The cardinal is hated of all men,” wrote Sir Thomas Gresham. The great struggle between him and the leading nobles had already commenced. The people justly identified him with the whole infamous machinery of persecution, which he had either originated or warmly made his own. Viglius and Berlaymont were his creatures. With the other members of the state council, according to their solemn statement, already recorded, he did not deign to consult, while he affected to hold them responsible for the measures of the administration. Even the regent herself complained that the cardinal took affairs quite out of her hands, and that he decided upon many important matters without her cognizance. She already began to feel herself the puppet which it had been intended she should become; she already felt a diminution of the respectful attachment for the ecclesiastic which had inspired her when she procured his red hat.
Granvelle was, however, most resolute in carrying out the intentions of his master. We have seen how vigorously he had already set himself to the inauguration of the new bishoprics, despite of opposition and obloquy. He was now encouraging or rebuking the inquisitors in their "pious office" throughout all the provinces. Notwithstanding his exertions, however, heresy continued to spread. In the Walloon provinces the infection was most prevalent, while judges and executioners were appalled by the mutinous demonstrations which each successive sacrifice provoked. The victims were cheered on their way to the scaffold. The hymns of Marot were sung in the very faces of the inquisitors. Two ministers, Faveau and Mallart, were particularly conspicuous at this moment at Valenciennes. The governor of the province, Marquis Berghen, was constantly absent, for he hated with his whole soul the system of persecution. For this negligence Granvelle denounced him secretly and perpetually to Philip. "The Marquis says openly," said the cardinal, "that 'tis not right to shed blood for matters of faith. With such men to aid us, your Majesty can judge how much progress we can make." It was, however, important, in Granvelle's opinion, that these two ministers at Valenciennes should be at once put to death. They were avowed heretics, and they preached to their disciples, although they certainly were not doctors of divinity. Moreover, they were accused, most absurdly, no doubt, of pretending to work miracles. It was said that, in presence of several witnesses, they had undertaken to cast out devils, and they had been apprehended on an accusation of this nature. Their offense really consisted in reading the Bible to a few of their friends. Granvelle sent Philibert de Bruxelles to Valenciennes to procure their immediate condemnation and execution. He rebuked the judges and inquisitors; he sent express orders to Marquis Berghen to repair at once to the scene of his duties. The prisoners were condemned in the autumn of 1561. The magistrates were, however, afraid to carry the sentence into effect. Granvelle did not cease to censure them for their pusillanimity, and wrote almost daily letters, accusing the magistrates of being themselves the cause of the tumults by which they were appalled. The popular commotion was, however, not lightly to be braved. Six or seven months long the culprits remained in confinement, while daily and nightly the people crowded the streets, hurling threats and defiance at the authorities, or pressed about the prison windows, encouraging their beloved ministers, and promising to rescue them in case the attempt should be made to fulfil the sentence. At last Granvelle sent down a peremptory order to execute the culprits by fire. On April 27, 1562, Faveau and Mallart were accordingly taken from their jail and carried to the marketplace, where arrangements had been made for burning them. Simon Faveau, as the executioner was binding him to the stake, uttered the invocation, "O! Eternal Father!" A woman in the crowd, at the same instant, took off her shoe and threw it at the funeral pile. This was a preconcerted signal. A movement was at once visible in the crowd. Men in great numbers dashed upon the barriers which had been erected in the square around the place of execution. Some seized the fagots, which had been already lighted, and scattered them in every direction; some tore up the pavements;
others broke in pieces the barriers. The executioners were prevented from carrying out the sentence, but the guard were enabled, with great celerity and determination, to bring off the culprits and to place them in their dungeon again. The authorities were in doubt and dismay. The inquisitors were for putting the ministers to death in prison, and hurling their heads upon the street. Evening approached while the officials were still pondering. The people who had been chanting the Psalms of David through the town, without having decided what should be their course of action, at last determined to rescue the victims. A vast throng, after much hesitation, accordingly directed their steps to the prison. "You should have seen this vile populace," says an eyewitness, "moving, pausing, recoiling, sweeping forward, swaying to and fro like the waves of the sea when it is agitated by contending winds." The attack was vigorous, the defense was weak—for the authorities had expected no such fierce demonstration, notwithstanding the menacing language which had been so often uttered. The prisoners were rescued, and succeeded in making their escape from the city.

The day in which the execution had been thus prevented was called, thenceforward, the "day of the ill-burned," (Journée des mau-brulez). One of the ministers, however, Simon Faveau, not discouraged by this near approach to martyrdom, persisted in his heretical labors, and was a few years afterwards again apprehended. "He was then," says the chronicler, cheerfully, "burned well and finally" in the same place whence he had formerly been rescued. This desperate resistance to tyranny was for a moment successful, because, notwithstanding the murmurs and menaces by which the storm had been preceded, the authorities had not believed the people capable of proceeding to such lengths. Had not the heretics—in the words of Inquisitor Titelmann—allowed themselves, year after year, to be taken and slaughtered like lambs? The consternation of the magistrates was soon succeeded by anger. The government at Brussels was in a frenzy of rage when informed of the occurrence. A bloody vengeance was instantly prepared, to vindicate the insult to the inquisition. On the 29th of April, detachments of Bossu's and of Berghen's "band of ordonnance" were sent into Valenciennes, together with a company of the Duke of Aerschot's regiment. The prisons were instantly filled to overflowing with men and women arrested for actual or suspected participation in the tumult. Orders had been sent down from the capital to make a short process and a sharp execution for all the criminals. On the 16th of May, the slaughter commenced. Some were burned at the stake; some were beheaded; the number of victims was frightful. "Nothing was left undone by the magistrates," says an eyewitness, with great approbation, "which could serve for the correction and amendment of the poor people." It was long before the judges and hangmen rested from their labors. When at last the havoc was complete, it might be supposed that a sufficient vengeance had been taken for the "day of the ill-burned," and an adequate amount of "amendment" provided for the "poor people."

Such scenes as these did not tend to increase the loyalty of the nation, nor the popularity of the government. On Granvelle's head was poured a daily
increasing torrent of hatred. He was looked upon in the provinces as the impersonation of that religious oppression which became every moment more intolerable. The king and the regent escaped much of the odium which belonged to them, because the people chose to bestow all their maledictions upon the cardinal. There was, however, no great injustice in this embodiment. Granvelle was the government. As the people of that day were extremely reverent to royalty, they vented all their rage upon the minister, while maintaining still a conventional respect for the sovereign.

The prelate had already become the constant butt of the "Rhetoric Chambers." These popular clubs for the manufacture of homespun poetry and street farces out of the raw material of public sentiment, occupied the place which has been more effectively filled in succeeding ages, and in free countries by the daily press. Before the invention of that most tremendous weapon, which liberty has ever wielded against tyranny, these humble but influential associations shared with the pulpit the only power which existed of moving the passions or directing the opinions of the people. They were eminently liberal in their tendencies. The authors and the actors of their comedies, poems, and pasquils were mostly artisans or tradesmen, belonging to the class out of which proceeded the early victims, and the later soldiers of the Reformation. Their bold farces and truculent satire had already effected much in spreading among the people a detestation of Church abuses. They were particularly severe upon monastic licentiousness. "These corrupt comedians, called rhetoricians," says the Walloon contemporary already cited, "afforded much amusement to the people. Always some poor little nuns or honest monks were made a part of the farce. It seemed as if the people could take no pleasure except in ridiculing God and the Church."

The people, however, persisted in the opinion that the ideas of a monk and of God were not inseparable. Certainly the piety of the early reformers was sufficiently fervent, and had been proved by the steadiness with which they confronted torture and death, but they knew no measure in the ridicule which they heaped upon the men by whom they were daily murdered in droves. The rhetoric comedies were not admirable in an aesthetic point of view, but they were wrathful and sincere. Therefore they cost many thousand lives, but they sowed the seed of resistance to religious tyranny, to spring up one day in a hundredfold harvest. It was natural that the authorities should have long sought to suppress these perambulating dramas. "There was at that tyme," wrote honest Richard Clough to Sir Thomas Gresham, "syche playes (of Reteryke) played thet hath cost many a 1000 man’s lyves, for in these plays was the Word of God first opened in thys country. Weche playes were and are forbidden moche more strictly than any of the bookes of Martin Luther."

These rhetoricians were now particularly inflamed against Granvelle. They were personally excited against him, because he had procured the suppression of their religious dramas. "These rhetoricians who make farces and street plays," wrote the cardinal to Philip, "are particularly angry with me, because two years ago I prevented them from ridiculing the holy Scriptures."

Nevertheless, these institutions continued to pursue their opposition to the
course of the government. Their uncouth gambols, their awkward but stunning blows rendered daily service to the cause of religious freedom. Upon the newly-appointed bishops they poured out an endless succession of rhymes and rebuses, epigrams, caricatures and extravaganzas. Poems were pasted upon the walls of every house, and passed from hand to hand. Farces were enacted in every street, the odious ecclesiastics figuring as the principal buffoons. These representations gave so much offense that renewed edicts were issued to suppress them. The prohibition was resisted, and even ridiculed in many provinces, particularly in Holland. The tyranny which was able to drown a nation in blood and tears, was powerless to prevent them from laughing most bitterly at their oppressors.

The tanner, Cleon, was never belabored more soundly by the wits of Athens, than the prelate by these Flemish "rhetoricians." With infinitely less Attic salt, but with as much heartiness as Aristophanes could have done, the popular rhymers gave the minister ample opportunity to understand the position which he occupied in the Netherlands. One day a petitioner placed a paper in his hand and vanished. It contained some scurrilous verses upon himself, together with a caricature of his person. In this he was represented as a hen seated upon a pile of eggs, out of which he was hatching a brood of bishops. Some of these were clipping the shell, some thrusting forth an arm, some a leg, while others were running about with miters on their heads, all bearing whimsical resemblance to various prelates who had been newly-appointed. Above the cardinal’s head the devil was represented hovering, with these words issuing from his mouth: "This is my beloved Son, listen to him, my people."

There was another lampoon of a similar nature, which was so well executed, that it especially excited Granvelle’s anger. It was a rhymed satire of a general nature, like the rest, but so delicate and so stinging, that the cardinal ascribed it to his old friend and present enemy, Simon Renard. This man, a Burgundian by birth, and college associate of Granvelle, had been befriended both by himself and his father. Aided by their patronage and his own abilities, he had arrived at distinguished posts, having been Spanish envoy both in France and England, and one of the negotiators of the truce of Vaucelles. He had latterly been disappointed in his ambition to become a councillor of state, and had vowed vengeance upon the cardinal, to whom he attributed his ill success. He was certainly guilty of much ingratitude, for he had been under early obligations to the man in whose side he now became a perpetual thorn. It must be confessed, on the other hand, that Granvelle repaid the enmity of his old associate with a malevolence equal to his own, and if Renard did not lose his head as well as his political station, it was not for want of sufficient insinuation on the part of the minister. Especially did Granvelle denounce him to "the master" as the perverter of Egmont, while he usually described that nobleman himself, as weak, vain, "a friend of smoke," easily misguided, but in the main well-intentioned and loyal. At the same time, with all these vague commendations, he never omitted to supply the suspicious king with an account of every fact or every rumor to the count’s discredit. In the case of this particular satire, he informed Philip that he could swear it came from the
pen of Renard, although, for the sake of deception, the rhetoric comedians had been employed. He described the production as filled with "false, abominable, and infernal things," and as treating not only himself, but the pope and the whole ecclesiastical order with as much contumely as could be showed in Germany. He then proceeded to insinuate, in the subtle manner which was peculiarly his own, that Egmont was a party to the publication of the pasquil. Renard visited at that house, he said, and was received there on a much more intimate footing than was becoming. Eight days before the satire was circulated, there had been a conversation in Egmont’s house, of a nature exactly similar to the substance of the pamphlet. The man in whose hands it was first seen, continued Granvelle, was a sword cutler, a godson of the count. This person said that he had torn it from the gate of the city hall, but God grant, prayed the cardinal, that it was not he who had first posted it up there. ’Tis said that Egmont and Mansfeld, he added, have sent many times to the cutler to procure copies of the satire, all which augments the suspicion against them.

With the nobles he was on no better terms than with the people. The great seigniors, Orange, Egmont, Horn, and others, openly avowed their hostility to him, and had already given their reasons to the king. Mansfeld and his son at that time were both with the opposition. Aerschot and Aremberg kept aloof from the league which was forming against the prelate, but had small sympathy for his person. Even Berlaymont began to listen to overtures from the leading nobles, who, among other inducements, promised to supply his children with bishoprics. There were none truly faithful and submissive to the cardinal but such men as the Prévot Morillon, who had received much advancement from him. This distinguished pluralist was popularly called "double A, B, C," to indicate that he had twice as many benefices as there were letters in the alphabet. He had, however, no objection to more, and was faithful to the dispensing power. The same course was pursued by Secretary Bave, Esquire Bordey, and other expectants and dependents.

Viglius, always remarkable for his pusillanimity, was at this period already anxious to retire. The erudite and opulent Frisian preferred a less tempestuous career. He was in favor of the edicts, but he trembled at the uproar which their literal execution was daily exciting, for he knew the temper of his countrymen. On the other hand, he was too sagacious not to know the inevitable consequence of opposition to the will of Philip. He was therefore most eager to escape the dilemma. He was a scholar, and could find more agreeable employment among his books. He had accumulated vast wealth, and was desirous to retain it as long as possible. He had a learned head and was anxious to keep it upon his shoulders. These simple objects could be better attained in a life of privacy. The post of president of the privy council and member of the "Consulta" was a dangerous one. He knew that the king was sincere in his purposes. He foresaw that the people would one day be terribly in earnest. Of ancient Frisian blood himself, he knew that the spirit of the ancient Batavians and Frisians had not wholly deserted their descendants. He knew that they were not easily roused, that they were patient, but that they
would strike at last and would endure. He urgently solicited the king to release him, and pleaded his infirmities of body in excuse. Philip, however, would not listen to his retirement, and made use of the most convincing arguments to induce him to remain. Four hundred and fifty annual florins, secured by good reclaimed swamps in Friesland, two thousand more in hand, with a promise of still larger emoluments when the king should come to the Netherlands, were reasons which the learned doctor honestly confessed himself unable to resist. Fortified by these arguments, he remained at his post, continued the avowed friend and adherent of Granvelle, and sustained with magnanimity the invectives of nobles and people. To do him justice, he did what he could to conciliate antagonists and to compromise principles. If it had ever been possible to find the exact path between right and wrong, the president would have found it, and walked in it with respectability and complacency.

In the council, however, the cardinal continued to carry it with a high hand; turning his back on Orange and Egmont, and retiring with the duchess and president to consult, after every session. Proud and important personages, like the prince and count, could ill brook such insolence; moreover, they suspected the cardinal of prejudicing the mind of their sovereign against them. A report was very current, and obtained almost universal belief, that Granvelle had expressly advised his Majesty to take off the heads of at least half a dozen of the principal nobles in the land. This was an error; "These two seigniors," wrote the cardinal to Philip, "have been informed that I have written to your Majesty, that you will never be master of these provinces without taking off at least half a dozen heads, and that because it would be difficult, on account of the probable tumults which such a course would occasion, to do it here, your Majesty means to call them to Spain and do it there. Your Majesty can judge whether such a thing has ever entered my thoughts. I have laughed at it as a ridiculous invention. This gross forgery is one of Renard’s." The cardinal further stated to his Majesty that he had been informed by these same nobles that the Duke of Alva, when a hostage for the treaty of Cateau Cambresis, had negotiated an alliance between the crowns of France and Spain for the extirpation of heresy by the sword. He added that he intended to deal with the nobles with all gentleness, and that he should do his best to please them. The only thing which he could not yield was the authority of his Majesty; to sustain that, he would sacrifice his life, if necessary. At the same time Granvelle carefully impressed upon the king the necessity of contradicting the report alluded to, a request which he took care should also be made through the regent in person. He had already, both in his own person and in that of the duchess, begged for a formal denial, on the king’s part, that there was any intention of introducing the Spanish inquisition into the Netherlands, and that the cardinal had counseled, originally, the bishoprics. Thus instructed, the king accordingly wrote to Margaret of Parma to furnish the required contradictions. In so doing, he made a pithy remark. "The cardinal had not counseled the cutting off the half a dozen heads," said the monarch, "but perhaps it would not be so bad to do it!" Time was to show whether Philip was likely to profit by the hint conveyed in the cardinal’s disclaimer, and whether the factor "half
“dozen” were to be used or not as a simple multiplier in the terrible account preparing.

The contradictions, however sincere, were not believed by the persons most interested. Nearly all the nobles continued to regard the cardinal with suspicion and aversion. Many of the ruder and more reckless class vied with the rhetoricians and popular caricaturists in the practical jests which they played off almost daily against the common foe. Especially Count Brederode, "a madman, if there ever were one," as a contemporary expressed himself, was most untiring in his efforts to make Granvelle ridiculous. He went almost nightly to masquerades, dressed as a cardinal or a monk; and as he was rarely known to be sober on these or any other occasions, the wildness of his demonstrations may easily be imagined. He was seconded on all these occasions by his cousin Robert de la Marck, Seigneur de Lumei, a worthy descendant of the famous "Wild Boar of Ardennes," a man brave to temerity, but utterly depraved, licentious, and sanguinary. These two men, both to be widely notorious, from their prominence in many of the most striking scenes by which the great revolt was ushered in, had vowed the most determined animosity to the cardinal, which was manifested in the reckless, buffooning way which belonged to their characters. Besides the ecclesiastical costumes in which they always attired themselves at their frequent festivities, they also wore fox-tails in their hats instead of plumes. They decked their servants also with the same ornaments, openly stating that by these symbols they meant to signify that the old fox Granvelle, and his cubs, Viglius, Berlaymont, and the rest, should soon be hunted down by them, and the brush placed in their hats as a trophy.

Moreover, there is no doubt that frequent threats of personal violence were made against the cardinal. Granvelle informed the king that his life was continually menaced by the nobles, but that he feared them little, for he believed them too prudent to attempt anything of the kind. There is no doubt, when his position with regard to the upper and lower classes in the country is considered, that there was enough to alarm a timid man, but Granvelle was constitutionally brave. He was accused of wearing a secret shirt of mail, of living in perpetual trepidation, of having gone on his knees to Egmont and Orange, of having sent Richardot, Bishop of Arras, to intercede for him in the same humiliating manner with Egmont. All these stories were fables. Bold as he was arrogant, he affected at this time to look down with a forgiving contempt on the animosity of the nobles.

He passed much of his time alone, writing his eternal dispatches to the king. He had a country house, called La Fontaine, surrounded by beautiful gardens, a little way outside the gates of Brussels, where he generally resided, and whence, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his friends, he often returned to town, after sunset, alone, or with but a few attendants. He avowed that he feared no attempts at assassination, for, if the seigniors took his life, they would destroy the best friend they ever had. This villa, where most of his plans were matured and his state papers drawn up, was called by the people, in derision of his supposed ancestry, "The Smithy." Here, as they believed, was
the anvil upon which the chains of their slavery were forging; here, mostly
deserted by those who had been his earlier associates, he assumed a
philosophical demeanor which exasperated, without deceiving his adversaries.
Over the great gate of his house he had placed the marble statue of a female.
It held an empty wine cup in one hand, and an urn of flowing water in the
other. The single word “Durate” was engraved upon the pedestal. By the motto,
which was his habitual device, he was supposed, in this application, to signify
that his power would outlast that of the nobles, and that perennial and pure as
living water, it would flow tranquilly on, long after the wine of their life had
been drunk to the lees.
The fiery extravagance of his adversaries, and the calm and limpid moderation
of his own character, thus symbolized, were supposed to convey a moral lesson
to the world. The hieroglyphics, thus interpreted, were not relished by the
nobles; all avoided his society, and declined his invitations. He consoled
himself with the company of the lesser gentry, a class which he now began to
patronize, and which he urgently recommended to the favor of the king,
hinting that military and civil offices bestowed upon their inferiors would be a
means of lowering the pride of the grandees. He also affected to surround
himself with even humbler individuals. "It makes me laugh," he wrote to Philip,
"to see the great seigniors absenting themselves from my dinners; nevertheless,
I can always get plenty of guests at my table, gentlemen and councillors. I
sometimes invite even citizens, in order to gain their good will."
The regent was well aware of the anger excited in the breasts of the leading
nobles by the cool manner in which they had been thrust out of their share in
the administration of affairs. She defended herself with acrimony in her letters
to the king, although a defense was hardly needed in that quarter for implicit
obedience to the royal commands. She confessed her unwillingness to consult
with her enemies. She avowed her determination to conceal the secrets of the
government from those who were capable of abusing her confidence. She
represented that there were members of the council who would willingly take
advantage of the trepidation which she really felt, and which she should
exhibit if she expressed herself without reserve before them. For this reason
she confined herself, as Philip had always intended, exclusively to the
Consulta. It was not difficult to recognize the hand which wrote the letter thus
signed by Margaret of Parma.
Both nobles and people were at this moment irritated by another
circumstance. The civil war having again broken out in France, Philip,
according to the promise made by him to Catharine de Medici, when he took
her daughter in marriage, was called upon to assist the Catholic party with
auxiliaries. He sent three thousand infantry, accordingly, which he had levied
in Italy, as many more collected in Spain, and gave immediate orders that the
duchess of Parma should dispatch at least two thousand cavalry from the
Netherlands. Great was the indignation in the council when the commands
were produced. Sore was the dismay of Margaret. It was impossible to obey the
king. The idea of sending the famous mounted gendarmerie of the provinces to
fight against the French Huguenots could not be tolerated for an instant. The
"bands of ordonnance" were very few in number, and were to guard the frontier. They were purely for domestic purposes. It formed no part of their duty to go upon crusades in foreign lands, still less to take a share in a religious quarrel, and least of all to assist a monarch against a nation. These views were so cogently presented to the duchess in council, that she saw the impossibility of complying with her brother’s commands. She wrote to Philip to that effect. Meantime, another letter arrived out of Spain, chiding her delay, and impatiently calling upon her to furnish the required cavalry at once. The Duchess was in a dilemma. She feared to provoke another storm in the council, for there was already sufficient wrangling there upon domestic subjects. She knew it was impossible to obtain the consent, even of Berlaymont and Viglius, to such an odious measure as the one proposed. She was, however, in great trepidation at the peremptory tone of the king’s dispatch. Under the advice of Granvelle, she had recourse to a trick. A private and confidential letter of Philip was read to the council, but with alterations suggested and interpolated by the cardinal. The king was represented as being furious at the delay, but as willing that a sum of money should be furnished instead of the cavalry, as originally required. This compromise, after considerable opposition, was accepted. The duchess wrote to Philip, explaining and apologizing for the transaction. The king received the substitution with as good a grace as could have been expected, and sent fifteen hundred troopers from Spain to his Medicean mother-in-law, drawing upon the Duchess of Parma for the money to pay their expenses. Thus was the industry of the Netherlands taxed that the French might be persecuted by their own monarch.

The regent had been forbidden, by her brother, to convoke the states-general, a body which the Prince of Orange, sustained by Berghen, Montigny, and other nobles, was desirous of having assembled. It may be easily understood that Granvelle would take the best care that the royal prohibition should be enforced. The duchess, however, who, as already hinted, was beginning to feel somewhat uncomfortable under the cardinal’s dominion, was desirous of consulting some larger council than that with which she held her daily deliberations. A meeting of the Knights of the Fleece was accordingly summoned. They assembled in Brussels, in the month of May, 1562. The learned Viglius addressed them in a long and eloquent speech, in which he discussed the troubled and dangerous condition of the provinces, alluded to some of its causes, and suggested various remedies. It may be easily conceived, however, that the inquisition was not stated among the causes, nor its suppression included among the remedies. A discourse, in which the fundamental topic was thus conscientiously omitted, was not likely, with all its concinnities, to make much impression upon the disaffected knights, or to exert a soothing influence upon the people. The orator was, however, delighted with his own performance. He informs us, moreover, that the duchess was equally charmed, and that she protested she had never in her whole life heard anything more "delicate, more suitable, or more eloquent." The Prince of Orange, however, did not sympathize with her admiration. The president’s elegant periods produced but little effect upon his mind. The
meeting adjourned, after a few additional words from the duchess, in which she begged the knights to ponder well the causes of the increasing discontent, and to meet her again, prepared to announce what, in their opinion, would be the course best adapted to maintain the honor of the king, the safety of the provinces, and the glory of God.

Soon after the separation of the assembly, the prince of Orange issued invitations to most of the knights, to meet at his house for the purpose of private deliberation. The president and cardinal were not included in these invitations. The meeting was, in fact, what we should call a caucus, rather than a general gathering. Nevertheless, there were many of the government party present—men who differed from the prince, and were inclined to support Granvelle. The meeting was a stormy one. Two subjects were discussed. The first was the proposition of the duchess, to investigate the general causes of the popular dissatisfaction; the second was an inquiry how it could be rendered practicable to discuss political matters in future—a proceeding now impossible, in consequence of the perverseness and arrogance of certain functionaries, and one which, whenever attempted, always led to the same inevitable result. This direct assault upon the cardinal produced a furious debate. His enemies were delighted with the opportunity of venting their long suppressed spleen. They indulged in savage invectives against the man whom they so sincerely hated. His adherents, on the other hand—Bossu, Berlaymont, Courieres—were as warm in his defense. They replied by indignant denials of the charge against him, and by bitter insinuations against the Prince of Orange. They charged him with nourishing the desire of being appointed governor of Brabant, an office considered inseparable from the general stadholderate of all the provinces. They protested for themselves that they were actuated by no ambitious designs—that they were satisfied with their own position, and not inspired by jealousy of personages more powerful than themselves. It is obvious that such charges and recriminations could excite no healing result, and that the lines between cardinalists and their opponents would be defined in consequence more sharply than ever. The adjourned meeting of the chevaliers of the Fleece took place a few days afterwards.

The duchess exerted herself as much as possible to reconcile the contending factions, without being able, however, to apply the only remedy which could be effective. The man who was already fast becoming the great statesman of the country knew that the evil was beyond healing, unless by a change of purpose on the part of the government. The regent, on the other hand, who it must be confessed never exhibited any remarkable proof of intellectual ability during the period of her residence in the Netherlands, was often inspired by a feeble and indefinite hope that the matter might be arranged by a compromise between the views of conflicting parties. Unfortunately the inquisition was not a fit subject for a compromise.

Nothing of radical importance was accomplished by the Assembly of the Fleece. It was decided that an application should be made to the different states for a grant of money, and that, furthermore, a special envoy should be dispatched to Spain. It was supposed by the duchess and her advisers that more satisfactory
information concerning the provinces could be conveyed to Philip by word of
mouth than by the most elaborate epistles. The meeting was dissolved after
these two measures had been agreed upon. Doctor Viglius, upon whom
devolved the duty of making the report and petition to the states, proceeded
to draw up the necessary application. This he did with his customary elegance,
and, as usual, very much to his own satisfaction. On returning to his house,
however, after having discharged this duty, he was very much troubled at
finding that a large mulberry tree, which stood in his garden, had been torn up
by the roots in a violent hurricane. The disaster was considered ominous by the
president, and he was accordingly less surprised than mortified when he found,
subsequently, that his demand upon the orders had remained as fruitless as his
ruined tree. The tempest which had swept his garden he considered typical of
the storm which was soon to rage through the land, and he felt increased
anxiety to reach a haven while it was yet comparatively calm.
The estates rejected the Request for supplies, on various grounds—among
others, that the civil war was drawing to a conclusion in France, and that less
danger was to be apprehended from that source than had lately been the case.
Thus, the "cup of bitterness," of which Granvelle had already complained, was
again commended to his lips, and there was more reason than ever for the
government to regret that the national representatives had contracted the
habit of meddling with financial matters.
Florence de Montmorency, Seigneur de Montigny, was selected by the regent
for the mission which had been decided upon for Spain. This gentleman was
brother to Count Horn, but possessed of higher talents and a more amiable
character than those of the admiral. He was a warm friend of Orange, and a
bitter enemy to Granvelle. He was a sincere Catholic, but a determined foe to
the inquisition. His brother had declined to act as envoy. This refusal can
excite but little surprise, when Philip’s wrath at their parting interview is
recalled, and when it is also remembered that the new mission would
necessarily lay bare fresh complaints against the cardinal, still more extensive
than those which had produced the former explosion of royal indignation.
Montigny, likewise, would have preferred to remain at home, but he was
overruled. It had been written in his destiny that he should go twice into the
angry lion’s den, and that he should come forth once, alive.
Thus it has been shown that there was an open, avowed hostility on the part of
the grand seignors and most of the lesser nobility to the cardinal and his
measures. The people fully and enthusiastically sustained the Prince of Orange
in his course. There was nothing underhand in the opposition made to the
government. The Netherlands did not constitute an absolute monarchy. They
did not even constitute a monarchy. There was no king in the provinces. Philip
was King of Spain, Naples, Jerusalem, but he was only Duke of Brabant, Count
of Flanders, Lord of Friesland, hereditary chief, in short, under various titles,
of seventeen states, each one of which, although not republican, possessed
constitutions as sacred as, and much more ancient than, the Crown. The
resistance to the absolutism of Granvelle and Philip was, therefore, logical,
legal, constitutional. It was no cabal, no secret league, as the cardinal had the
effrontery to term it, but a legitimate exercise of powers which belonged of old to those who wielded them, and which only an unrighteous innovation could destroy.

Granvelle’s course was secret and subtle. During the whole course of the proceedings which have just been described, he was in daily confidential correspondence with the king, besides being the actual author of the multitudinous dispatches which were sent with the signature of the duchess. He openly asserted his right to monopolize all the powers of the government; he did his utmost to force upon the reluctant and almost rebellious people the odious measures which the king had resolved upon, while in his secret letters he uniformly represented the nobles who opposed him, as being influenced, not by an honest hatred of oppression and attachment to ancient rights, but by resentment, and jealousy of their own importance. He assumed, in his letters to his master, that the absolutism already existed of right and in fact, which it was the intention of Philip to establish. While he was depriving the nobles, the states, and the nation of their privileges, and even of their natural rights (a slender heritage in those days), he assured the king that there was an evident determination to reduce his authority to a cipher.

The estates, he wrote, had usurped the whole administration of the finances, and had farmed it out to Antony van Stralen and others, who were making enormous profits in the business. “The seignors,” he said, “declare at their dinner parties that I wish to make them subject to the absolute despotism of your Majesty. In point of fact, however, they really exercise a great deal more power than the governors of particular provinces ever did before; and it lacks but little that Madame and your Majesty should become mere ciphers, while the grandees monopolize the whole power.” “This,” he continued, “is the principal motive of their opposition to the new bishoprics. They were angry that your Majesty should have dared to solicit such an arrangement at Rome, without first obtaining their consent. They wish to reduce your Majesty’s authority to so low a point that you can do nothing unless they desire it. Their object is the destruction of the royal authority and of the administration of justice, in order to avoid the payment of their debts, telling their creditors constantly that they have spent their all in your Majesty’s service, and that they have never received recompense or salary. This they do to make your Majesty odious.”

As a matter of course, he attributed the resistance on the part of the great nobles, every man of whom was Catholic, to base motives. They were mere demagogues, who refused to burn their fellow creatures, not from any natural repugnance to the task, but in order to gain favor with the populace. “This talk about the inquisition,” said he, “is all a pretext. ’Tis only to throw dust in the eyes of the vulgar, and to persuade them into tumultuous demonstrations, while the real reason is, that they choose that your Majesty should do nothing without their permission, and through their hands.”

He assumed sometimes, however, a tone of indulgence toward the seignors—who formed the main topics of his letters—an affectation which might, perhaps, have offended them almost as much as more open and sincere
denunciation. He could forgive offenses against himself. It was for Philip to
decide as to their merits or crimes so far as the Crown was concerned. His
language often was befitting a wise man who was speaking of very little
children. "Assonleville has told me, as coming from Egmont," he wrote, "that
many of the nobles are dissatisfied with me, hearing from Spain that I am
endeavoring to prejudice your Majesty against them." Certainly the tone of the
cardinal’s daily letters would have justified such suspicion, could the nobles
have seen them. Granvelle begged the king, however, to disabuse them upon
this point. "Would to God," said he, piously, "that they all would decide to
sustain the authority of your Majesty, and to procure such measures as tend to
the service of God and the security of the states. May I cease to exist if I do not
desire to render good service to the very least of these gentlemen. Your
Majesty knows that, when they do anything for the benefit of your service, I
am never silent. Nevertheless, thus they are constituted. I hope, however, that
this flurry will blow over, and that when your Majesty comes they will all be
found to deserve rewards of merit."
Of Egmont, especially, he often spoke in terms of vague, but somewhat
condescending commendation. He never manifested resentment in his letters,
although, as already stated, the count had occasionally indulged, not only in
words, but in deeds of extreme violence against him. But the cardinal was too
forgiving a Christian, or too keen a politician not to pass by such offenses, so
long as there was a chance of so great a noble’s remaining or becoming his
friend. He, accordingly, described him, in general, as a man whose principles,
in the main, were good, but who was easily led by his own vanity and the
perverse counsels of others. He represented him as having been originally a
warm supporter of the new bishoprics, and as having expressed satisfaction
that two of them, those of Bruges and Ypres, should have been within his own
stadjolderate. He regretted, however, to inform the king, that the count was
latterly growing lukewarm, perhaps from fear of finding himself separated from
the other nobles. On the whole, he was tractable enough, said the cardinal, if
he were not easily persuaded by the vile; but one day, perhaps, he might open
his eyes again. Notwithstanding these vague expressions of approbation, which
Granvelle permitted himself in his letters to Philip, he never failed to transmit
to the monarch every fact, every rumor, every innuendo which might prejudice
the royal mind against that nobleman or against any of the noblemen, whose
characters he at the same time protested he was most unwilling to injure.
It is true that he dealt mainly by insinuation, while he was apt to conclude his
statements with disclaimers upon his own part, and with hopes of improvement
in the conduct of the seignors. At this particular point of time he furnished
Philip with a long and most circumstantial account of a treasonable
correspondence which was thought to be going on between the leading nobles
and the future emperor, Maximilian. The narrative was a good specimen of the
masterly style of innuendo in which the cardinal excelled, and by which he was
often enabled to convince his master of the truth of certain statements while
affecting to discredit them. He had heard a story, he said, which he felt bound
to communicate to his Majesty, although he did not himself implicitly believe
it. He felt himself the more bound to speak upon the subject because it tallied exactly with intelligence which he had received from another source. The story was that one of these seigniors (the cardinal did not know which, for he had not yet thought proper to investigate the matter) had said that rather than consent that the king should act in this matter of the bishoprics against the privileges of Brabant, the nobles would elect for their sovereign some other prince of the blood. This, said the cardinal, was perhaps a fantasy rather than an actual determination. Count Egmont, to be sure, he said, was constantly exchanging letters with the King of Bohemia (Maximilian), and it was supposed, therefore, that he was the prince of the blood who was to be elected to govern the provinces. It was determined that he should be chosen King of the Romans, by fair means or by force, that he should assemble an army to attack the Netherlands, that a corresponding movement should be made within the states, and that the people should be made to rise, by giving them the reins in the matter of religion. The cardinal, after recounting all the particulars of this fiction with great minuteness, added, with apparent frankness, that the correspondence between Egmont and Maximilian did not astonish him, because there had been much intimacy between them in the time of the late Emperor. He did not feel convinced, therefore, from the frequency of the letters exchanged, that there was a scheme to raise an army to attack the provinces and to have him elected by force. On the contrary, Maximilian could never accomplish such a scheme without the assistance of his imperial father the Emperor, whom Granvelle was convinced would rather die than be mixed up with such villainy against Philip. Moreover, unless the people should become still more corrupted by the bad counsels constantly given them, the cardinal did not believe that any of the great nobles had the power to dispose in this way of the provinces at their pleasure. Therefore, he concluded that the story was to be rejected as improbable, although it had come to him directly from the house of the said Count Egmont. It is remarkable that, at the commencement of his narrative, the cardinal had expressed his ignorance of the name of the seignior who was hatching all this treason, while at the end of it he gave a local habitation to the plot in the palace of Egmont. It is also quite characteristic that he should add that, after all, he considered that nobleman one of the most honest of all, if appearances did not deceive.

It may be supposed, however, that all these details of a plot which was quite imaginary, were likely to produce more effect upon a mind so narrow and so suspicious as that of Philip, than could the vague assertions of the cardinal, that in spite of all, he would dare be sworn that he thought the count honest, and that men should be what they seemed.

Notwithstanding the conspiracy, which, according to Granvelle’s letters, had been formed against him, notwithstanding that his life was daily threatened, he did not advise the king at this period to avenge him by any public explosion of wrath. He remembered, he piously observed, that vengeance belonged to God, and that He would repay. Therefore he passed over insults meekly, because that comported best with his Majesty’s service. Therefore, too, he instructed Philip to make no demonstration at that time, in order not to
damage his own affairs. He advised him to dissemble, and to pretend not to know what was going on in the provinces. Knowing that his master looked to him daily for instructions, always obeyed them with entire docility, and, in fact, could not move a step in Netherland matters without them, he proceeded to dictate to him the terms in which he was to write to the nobles, and especially laid down rules for his guidance in his coming interviews with the Seigneur de Montigny. Philip, whose only talent consisted in the capacity to learn such lessons with laborious effort, was at this juncture particularly in need of tuition. The cardinal instructed him, accordingly, that he was to disabuse all men of the impression that the Spanish inquisition was to be introduced into the provinces. He was to dictate to the seigniors, promising to pay them their arrears of salary; he was to exhort them to do all in their power for the advancement of religion and maintenance of the royal authority; and he was to suggest to them that, by his answer to the Antwerp deputation, it was proved that there was no intention of establishing the inquisition of Spain, under pretext of the new bishoprics.

The king was, furthermore, to signify his desire that all the nobles should exert themselves to efface this false impression from the popular mind. He was also to express himself to the same effect concerning the Spanish inquisition, the bishoprics, and the religious question, in the public letters to Madame de Parma, which were to be read in full council. The cardinal also renewed his instructions to the king as to the manner in which the Antwerp deputation were to be answered, by giving them, namely, assurances that to transplant the Spanish inquisition into the provinces would be as hopeless as to attempt its establishment in Naples. He renewed his desire that Philip should contradict the story about the half dozen heads, and he especially directed him to inform Montigny that Berghen had known of the new bishoprics before the cardinal. This, urged Granvelle, was particularly necessary, because the seigniors were irritated that so important a matter should have been decided upon without their advice, and because the Marquis Berghen was now the "cock of the opposition."

At about the same time, it was decided by Granvelle and the regent, in conjunction with the king, to sow distrust and jealousy among the nobles, by giving greater "mercedes" to some than to others, although large sums were really due to all. In particular, the attempt was made in this paltry manner, to humiliate William of Orange. A considerable sum was paid to Egmont, and a trifling one to the prince, in consideration of their large claims upon the treasury. Moreover the Duke of Aerschot was selected as envoy to the Frankfort Diet, where the King of the Romans was to be elected, with the express intention, as Margaret wrote to Philip, of creating divisions among the nobles, as he had suggested. The duchess at the same time informed her brother that, according to Berlaymont, the Prince of Orange was revolving some great design, prejudicial to his Majesty's service. Philip, who already began to suspect that a man who thought so much must be dangerous, was eager to find out the scheme over which William the Silent was supposed to be brooding, and wrote for fresh intelligence to the duchess.
Neither Margaret nor the cardinal, however, could discover any thing against the prince—who, meantime, although disappointed of the mission to Frankfort, had gone to that city in his private capacity—saving that he had been heard to say, "One day we shall be the stronger." Granvelle and Madame de Parma both communicated this report upon the same day, but this was all that they were able to discover of the latent plot.

In the autumn of this year (1562) Montigny made his visit to Spain, as confidential envoy from the regent. The king being fully prepared as to the manner in which he was to deal with him, received the ambassador with great cordiality. He informed him in the course of their interviews, that Granvelle had never attempted to create prejudice against the nobles, that he was incapable of the malice attributed to him, and that even were it otherwise, his evil representations against other public servants would produce no effect. The king furthermore protested that he had no intention of introducing the Spanish inquisition into the Netherlands, and that the new bishops were not intended as agents for such a design, but had been appointed solely with a view of smoothing religious difficulties in the provinces, and of leading his people back into the fold of the faithful. He added that as long ago as his visit to England for the purpose of espousing Queen Mary, he had entertained the project of the new episcopates, as the Marquis Berghen, with whom he had conversed freely upon the subject, could bear witness. With regard to the connection of Granvelle with the scheme, he assured Montigny that the cardinal had not been previously consulted, but had first learned the plan after the mission of Sonnius.

Such was the purport of the king’s communications to the envoy, as appears from memoranda in the royal handwriting and from the correspondence of Margaret of Parma. Philip’s exactness in conforming to his instructions is sufficiently apparent, on comparing his statements with the letters previously received from the omnipresent cardinal. Beyond the limits of those directions the king hardly hazarded a syllable. He was merely the plenipotentiary of the cardinal, as Montigny was of the regent. So long as Granvelle’s power lasted, he was absolute and infallible. Such, then, was the amount of satisfaction derived from the mission of Montigny. There was to be no diminution of the religious persecution, but the people were assured upon royal authority, that the inquisition, by which they were daily burned and beheaded, could not be logically denominated the Spanish inquisition. In addition to the comfort, whatever it might be, which the nation could derive from this statement, they were also consoled with the information that Granvelle was not the inventor of the bishoprics. Although he had violently supported the measure as soon as published, secretly denouncing as traitors and demagogues, all those who lifted their voices against it; although he was the originator of the renewed edicts; although he took, daily, personal pains that this Netherland inquisition, "more pitiless than the Spanish," should be enforced in its rigor; and although he, at the last, opposed the slightest mitigation of its horrors, he was to be represented to the nobles and the people as a man of mild and unprejudiced character, incapable of injuring even his enemies. "I will deal with the seigniors
most blandly," the cardinal had written to Philip, "and will do them pleasure, even if they do not wish it, for the sake of God and your Majesty."

It was in this light, accordingly, that Philip drew the picture of his favorite minister to the envoy. Montigny, although somewhat influenced by the king’s hypocritical assurances of the benignity with which he regarded the Netherlands, was, nevertheless, not to be deceived by this flattering portraiture of a man whom he knew so well and detested so cordially as he did Granvelle. Solicited by the king, at their parting interview, to express his candid opinion as to the causes of the dissatisfaction in the provinces, Montigny very frankly and most imprudently gave vent to his private animosity towards the cardinal. He spoke of his licentiousness, greediness, ostentation, despotism, and assured the monarch that nearly all the inhabitants of the Netherlands entertained the same opinion concerning him. He then dilated upon the general horror inspired by the inquisition and the great repugnance felt to the establishment of the new episcopates. These three evils, Granvelle, the inquisition, and the bishoprics, he maintained were the real and sufficient causes of the increasing popular discontent. Time was to reveal whether the open-hearted envoy was to escape punishment for his frankness, and whether vengeance for these crimes against Granvelle and Philip were to be left wholly, as the cardinal had lately suggested, in the hands of the Lord.

Montigny returned late in December. His report concerning the results of his mission was made in the state council, and was received with great indignation. The professions of benevolent intentions on the part of the sovereign made no impression on the mind of Orange, who was already in the habit of receiving secret information from Spain with regard to the intentions of the government. He knew very well that the plot revealed to him by Henry II in the wood of Vincennes was still the royal program, so far as the Spanish monarch was concerned. Moreover, his anger was heightened by information received from Montigny that the names of Orange, Egmont, and their adherents, were cited to him as he passed through France as the avowed defenders of the Huguenots, in politics and religion. The prince, who was still a sincere Catholic, while he hated the persecutions of the inquisition, was furious at the statement. A violent scene occurred in the council. Orange openly denounced the report as a new slander of Granvelle, while Margaret defended the cardinal and denied the accusation, but at the same time endeavored with the utmost earnestness to reconcile the conflicting parties.

It had now become certain, however, that the government could no longer be continued on its present footing. Either Granvelle or the seigniors must succumb. The Prince of Orange was resolved that the cardinal should fall or that he would himself withdraw from all participation in the affairs of government. In this decision he was sustained by Egmont, Horn, Montigny, Berghen, and the other leading nobles.

CHAPTER 4
The Departure and Retirement of Cardinal Granvelle
On the 11th of March, 1563, Orange, Horn, and Egmont united in a remarkable letter to the king. They said that as their longer "taciturnity" might cause the ruin of his Majesty’s affairs, they were at last compelled to break silence. They hoped that the king would receive with benignity a communication which was pure, frank, and free from all passion. The leading personages of the province, they continued, having thoroughly examined the nature and extent of Cardinal Granvelle’s authority, had arrived at the conclusion that everything was in his hands. This persuasion, they said, was rooted in the hearts of all his Majesty’s subjects, and particularly in their own, so deeply, that it could not be eradicated as long as the cardinal remained. The king was therefore implored to consider the necessity of remedying the evil. The royal affairs, it was affirmed, would never be successfully conducted so long as they were entrusted to Granvelle, because he was so odious to so many people. If the danger were not imminent, they should not feel obliged to write to his Majesty with so much vehemence. It was, however, an affair which allowed neither delay nor dissimulation. They therefore prayed the king, if they had ever deserved credence in things of weight, to believe them now. By so doing, his Majesty would avoid great mischief. Many grand seigniors, governors, and others, had thought it necessary to give this notice, in order that the king might prevent the ruin of the country. If, however, his Majesty were willing, as they hoped, to avoid discontenting all for the sake of satisfying one, it was possible that affairs might yet prosper. That they might not be thought influenced by ambition or by hope of private profit, the writers asked leave to retire from the state council. Neither their reputation, they said, nor the interests of the royal service would permit them to act with the cardinal. They professed themselves dutiful subjects and Catholic vassals. Had it not been for the zeal of the leading seigniors, the nobility, and other well-disposed persons, affairs would not at that moment be so tranquil; the common people having been so much injured, and the manner of life pursued by the cardinal not being calculated to give more satisfaction than was afforded by his unlimited authority. In conclusion, the writers begged his Majesty not to throw the blame upon them, if mischance should follow the neglect of this warning.

This memorable letter was signed by Guillaume de Nassau, Lamoral d’Egmont, and Philippe de Montmorency (Count Horn). It was dispatched under cover to Charles de Tisnacq, a Belgian, and procurator for the affairs of the Netherlands at Madrid, a man whose relations with Count Egmont were of a friendly character. It was impossible, however, to keep the matter a secret from the person most interested. The cardinal wrote to the king the day before the letter was written, and many weeks before it was sent, to apprize him that it was coming, and to instruct him as to the answer he was to make. Nearly all the leading nobles and governors had adhered to the substance of the letter, save the Duke of Aerschot, Count Aremberg, and Baron Berlaymont. The duke and count had refused to join the league, violent scenes having occurred upon the subject between them and the leaders of the opposition party. Egmont, being with a large shooting party at Aerschot’s country place, Beaumont, had taken occasion to urge the duke to join in the general
demonstration against the cardinal, arguing the matter in the rough, off-hand, reckless manner which was habitual with him. His arguments offended the nobleman thus addressed, who was vain and irascible. He replied by affirming that he was a friend to Egmont, but would not have him for his master. He would have nothing to do, he said, with their league against the cardinal, who had never given him cause of enmity. He had no disposition to dictate to the king as to his choice of ministers, and his Majesty was quite right to select his servants at his own pleasure. The duke added that if the seigniors did not wish him for a friend, it was a matter of indifference to him. Not one of them was his superior; he had as large a band of noble followers and friends as the best of them, and he had no disposition to accept the supremacy of any nobleman in the land. The conversation carried on in this key soon became a quarrel, and from words the two gentlemen would soon have come to blows, but for the interposition of Aremberg and Robles, who were present at the scene. The Duchess of Parma, narrating the occurrence to the king, added that a duel had been the expected result of the affair, but that the two nobles had eventually been reconciled. It was characteristic of Aerschot that he continued afterward to associate with the nobles upon friendly terms, while maintaining an increased intimacy with the cardinal.

The gentlemen who sent the letter were annoyed at the premature publicity which it seemed to have attained. Orange had in vain solicited Count Aremberg to join the league, and had quarrelled with him in consequence. Egmont, in the presence of Madame de Parma, openly charged Aremberg with having divulged the secret which had been confided to him. The count fiercely denied that he had uttered a syllable on the subject to a human being, but added that any communication on his part would have been quite superfluous, while Egmont and his friends were daily boasting of what they were to accomplish. Egmont reiterated the charge of a breach of faith by Aremberg. That nobleman replied by laying his hand upon his sword, denouncing as liars all persons who should dare to charge him again with such an offense, and offering to fight out the quarrel upon the instant. Here, again, personal combat was, with much difficulty, averted.

Egmont, rude, reckless, and indiscreet, was already making manifest that he was more at home on a battlefield than in a political controversy where prudence and knowledge of human nature were as requisite as courage. He was at this period more liberal in his sentiments than at any moment of his life. Inflamed by his hatred of Granvelle, and determined to compass the overthrow of that minister, he conversed freely with all kinds of people, sought popularity among the burghers, and descanted to everyone with much imprudence upon the necessity of union for the sake of liberty and the national good. The regent, while faithfully recording in her dispatches everything of this nature which reached her ears, expressed her astonishment at Egmont’s course, because, as she had often taken occasion to inform the king, she had always considered the count most sincerely attached to his Majesty’s service. Berlaymont, the only other noble of prominence who did not approve the 11th of March letter, was at this period attempting to “swim in two waters,” and, as
usual in such cases, found it very difficult to keep himself afloat. He had refused to join the league, but he stood aloof from Granvelle. On a hope held out by the seigniors that his son should be made Bishop of Liege, he had ceased during a whole year from visiting the cardinal, and had never spoken to him at the council-board. Granvelle, in narrating these circumstances to the king, expressed the opinion that Berlaymont, by thus attempting to please both parties, had thoroughly discredited himself with both.

The famous epistle, although a most reasonable and manly statement of an incontrovertible fact, was nevertheless a document which it required much boldness to sign. The minister at that moment seemed omnipotent, and it was obvious that the king was determined upon a course of political and religious absolutism. It is, therefore, not surprising that, although many sustained its principles, few were willing to affix their names to a paper which might prove a death warrant to the signers. Even Montigny and Berghen, although they had been active in conducting the whole cabal, if cabal it could be called, refused to subscribe the letter. Egmont and Horn were men of reckless daring, but they were not keen-sighted enough to perceive fully the consequences of their acts. Orange was often accused by his enemies of timidity, but no man ever doubted his profound capacity to look quite through the deeds of men. His political foresight enabled him to measure the dangerous precipice which they were deliberately approaching, while the abyss might perhaps be shrouded to the vision of his companions. He was too tranquil of nature to be hurried, by passion, into a grave political step, which in cooler moments he might regret. He resolutely, therefore, and with his eyes open, placed himself in open and recorded enmity with the most powerful and dangerous man in the whole Spanish realm, and incurred the resentment of a king who never forgave. It may be safely averred that as much courage was requisite thus to confront a cold and malignant despotism, and to maintain afterwards, without flinching, during a whole lifetime, the cause of national rights and liberty of conscience, as to head the most brilliant charge of cavalry that ever made hero famous.

Philip answered the letter of the three nobles on the 6th of June following. In this reply, which was brief, he acknowledged the zeal and affection by which the writers had been actuated. He suggested, nevertheless, that, as they had mentioned no particular cause for adopting the advice contained in their letter, it would be better that one of them should come to Madrid to confer with him. Such matters, he said, could be better treated by word of mouth. He might thus receive sufficient information to enable him to form a decision, for, said he in conclusion, it was not his custom to aggrieve any of his ministers without cause.

This was a fine phrase, but under the circumstances of its application, quite ridiculous. There was no question of aggrieving the minister. The letter of the three nobles was very simple. It consisted of a fact and a deduction. This fact stated was that the cardinal was odious to all classes of the nation. The deduction drawn was that the government could no longer be carried on by him without imminent danger of ruinous convulsions. The fact was indisputable. The person most interested confirmed it in his private letters. "'Tis said," wrote
Granvelle to Philip, "that grandees, nobles, and people, all abhor me, nor am I surprised to find that grandees, nobles, and people are all openly against me, since each and all have been invited to join in the league." The cardinal’s reasons for the existence of the unpopularity, which he admitted to the full, have no bearing upon the point in the letter. The fact was relied upon to sustain a simple, although a momentous inference. It was for Philip to decide upon the propriety of the deduction, and to abide by the consequences of his resolution when taken. As usual, however, the monarch was not capable of making up his mind. He knew very well that the cardinal was odious and infamous, because he was the willing impersonation of the royal policy. Philip was, therefore, logically called upon to abandon the policy or to sustain the minister. He could make up his mind to do neither the one nor the other. In the meantime, a well-turned period of mock magnanimity had been furnished him. This he accordingly transmitted as his first answer to a most important communication upon a subject which, in the words of the writers, "admitted neither of dissimulation nor delay." To deprive Philip of dissimulation and delay, however, was to take away his all. They were the two weapons with which he fought his long life’s battle. They summed up the whole of his intellectual resources. It was inevitable, therefore, that he should at once have recourse to both on such an emergency as the present one.

At the same time that he sent his answer to the nobles, he wrote an explanatory letter to the regent. He informed her that he had received the communication of the three seigniors, but instructed her that she was to appear to know nothing of the matter until Egmont should speak to her upon the subject. He added that, although he had signified his wish to the three nobles, that one of them, without specifying which, should come to Madrid, he in reality desired that Egmont, who seemed the most tractable of the three, should be the one deputed. The king added that his object was to divide the nobles and to gain time.

It was certainly superfluous upon Philip’s part to inform his sister that his object was to gain time. Procrastination was always his first refuge, as if the march of the world’s events would pause indefinitely while he sat in his cabinet and pondered. It was, however, sufficiently puerile to recommend to his sister an affectation of ignorance on a subject concerning which nobles had wrangled, and almost drawn their swords in her presence. This, however, was the king’s statesmanship when left to his unaided exertions. Granvelle, who was both Philip and Margaret when either had to address or to respond to the world at large, did not always find it necessary to regulate the correspondence of his puppets between themselves. In order more fully to divide the nobles, the king also transmitted to Egmont a private note, in his own handwriting, expressing his desire that he should visit Spain in person, that they might confer together upon the whole subject.

These letters, as might be supposed, produced anything but a satisfactory effect. The discontent and rage of the gentlemen who had written or sustained the 11th of March communication, was much increased. The answer was, in truth, no answer at all. "'Tis a cold and bad reply," wrote Louis of Nassau, "to
send after so long a delay. 'Tis easy to see that the letter came from the cardinal’s smithy. In summâ, it is a vile business, if the gentlemen are all to be governed by one person. I hope to God his power will come soon to an end."

"Nevertheless," added Louis, "the gentlemen are all wide awake, for they trust the red fellow not a bit more than he deserves."
The reader has already seen that the letter was indeed “from the cardinal’s smithy,” Granvelle having instructed his master how to reply to the seigniors before the communication had been dispatched.
The duchess wrote immediately to inform her brother that Egmont had expressed himself willing enough to go to Spain, but had added that he must first consult Orange and Horn. As soon as that step had been taken, she had been informed that it was necessary for them to advise with all the gentlemen who had sanctioned their letter. The duchess had then tried in vain to prevent such an assembly, but finding that, even if forbidden, it would still take place, she had permitted the meeting in Brussels, as she could better penetrate into their proceedings there, than if it should be held at a distance. She added that she should soon send her secretary Armenteros to Spain, that the king might be thoroughly acquainted with what was occurring.

Egmont soon afterwards wrote to Philip, declining to visit Spain expressly on account of the cardinal. He added that he was ready to undertake the journey, should the king command his presence for any other object. The same decision was formally communicated to the regent by those Chevaliers of the Fleece who had approved the 11th of March letter—Montigny, Berghen, Meghem, Mansfeld, Ligne, Hoogstraaten, Orange, Egmont, and Horn. The Prince of Orange, speaking in the name of all, informed her that they did not consider it consistent with their reputation, nor with the interest of his Majesty, that any one of them should make so long and troublesome a journey, in order to accuse the cardinal. For any other purpose, they all held themselves ready to go to Spain at once. The duchess expressed her regret at this resolution. The prince replied by affirming that, in all their proceedings, they had been governed, not by hatred of Granvelle but by a sense of duty to his Majesty. It was now, he added, for the king to pursue what course it pleased him.

Four days after this interview with the regent, Orange, Egmont, and Horn addressed a second letter to the king. In this communication they stated that they had consulted with all the gentlemen with whose approbation their first letter had been written. As to the journey of one of them to Spain, as suggested, they pronounced it very dangerous for any seignior to absent himself, in the condition of affairs which then existed. It was not a sufficient cause to go thither on account of Granvelle. They disclaimed any intention of making themselves parties to a process against the cardinal. They had thought that their simple, brief announcement would have sufficed to induce his Majesty to employ that personage in other places, where his talents would be more fruitful. As to "aggrieving the cardinal without cause," there was no question of aggrieving him at all, but of relieving him of an office which could not remain in his hands without disaster. As to "no particular cause having been mentioned," they said the omission was from no lack of many such. They had
charged none, however, because, from their past services and their fidelity to his Majesty, they expected to be believed on their honor, without further witnesses or evidence. They had no intention of making themselves accusers. They had purposely abstained from specifications. If his Majesty should proceed to ampler information, causes enough would be found. It was better, however, that they should be furnished by others than by themselves. His Majesty would then find that the public and general complaint was not without adequate motives. They renewed their prayer to be excused from serving in the council of state, in order that they might not be afterwards inculpated for the faults of others. Feeling that the controversy between themselves and the cardinal de Granvelle in the state council produced no fruit for his Majesty's affairs, they preferred to yield to him. In conclusion, they begged the king to excuse the simplicity of their letters, the rather that they were not by nature great orators, but more accustomed to do well than to speak well, which was also more becoming to persons of their quality.

On the 4th of August, Count Horn also addressed a private letter to the king, written in the same spirit as that which characterized the joint letter just cited. He assured his Majesty that the cardinal could render no valuable service to the crown on account of the hatred which the whole nation bore him, but that, as far as regarded the maintenance of the ancient religion, all the nobles were willing to do their duty.

The regent now dispatched, according to promise, her private secretary, Thomas de Armenteros, to Spain. His instructions, which were very elaborate, showed that Granvelle was not mistaken when he charged her with being entirely changed in regard to him, and when he addressed her a reproachful letter, protesting his astonishment that his conduct had become suspicious, and his inability to divine the cause of the weariness and dissatisfaction which she manifested in regard to him.

Armenteros, a man of low, mercenary, and deceitful character, but a favorite of the regent, and already beginning to acquire that influence over her mind which was soon to become so predominant, was no friend of the cardinal. It was not probable that he would diminish the effect of that vague censure mingled with faint commendation, which characterized Margaret’s instructions by any laudatory suggestions of his own. He was directed to speak in general terms of the advance of heresy, and the increasing penury of the exchequer. He was to request 200,000 crowns toward the lottery, which the regent proposed to set up as a financial scheme. He was to represent that the Duchess had tried, unsuccessfully, every conceivable means of accommodating the quarrel between the cardinal and the seigniors. She recognized Granvelle’s great capacity, experience, zeal, and devotion—for all which qualities she made much of him—while on the other hand she felt that it would be a great inconvenience, and might cause a revolt of the country, were she to retain him in the Netherlands against the will of the seigniors. These motives had compelled her, the messenger was to add, to place both views of the subject before the eyes of the king. Armenteros was, furthermore, to narrate the
circumstances of the interviews which had recently taken place between herself and the leaders of the opposition party.

From the tenor of these instructions, it was sufficiently obvious that Margaret of Parma was not anxious to retain the cardinal, but that, on the contrary, she was beginning already to feel alarm at the dangerous position in which she found herself. A few days after the three nobles had dispatched their last letter to the king, they had handed her a formal remonstrance. In this document they stated their conviction that the country was on the high road to ruin, both as regarded his Majesty’s service and the common weal. The exchequer was bare, the popular discontent daily increasing, the fortresses on the frontier in a dilapidated condition. It was to be apprehended daily that merchants and other inhabitants of the provinces would be arrested in foreign countries, to satisfy the debts owed by his Majesty. To provide against all these evils, but one course, it was suggested, remained to the government—to summon the states-general, and to rely upon their counsel and support. The nobles, however, forbore to press this point, by reason of the prohibition which the regent had received from the king. They suggested, however, that such an interdiction could have been dictated only by a distrust created between his Majesty and the estates by persons having no love for either, and who were determined to leave no resource by which the distress of the country could be prevented. The nobles, therefore, begged her highness not to take it amiss if, so long as the king was indisposed to make other arrangements for the administration of the provinces, they should abstain from appearing at the state council. They preferred to cause the shadow at last to disappear, which they had so long personated. In conclusion, however, they expressed their determination to do their duty in their several governments, and to serve the regent to the best of their abilities.

After this remonstrance had been delivered, the Prince of Orange, Count Horn, and Count Egmont abstained entirely from the sessions of the state council. She was left alone with the cardinal, whom she already hated, and with his two shadows, Viglius and Berlaymont.

Armenteros, after a month spent on his journey, arrived in Spain, and was soon admitted to an audience by Philip. In his first interview, which lasted four hours, he read to the king all the statements and documents with which he had come provided, and humbly requested a prompt decision. Such a result was of course out of the question. Moreover, the Cortes of Tarragon, which happened then to be in session, and which required the royal attention, supplied the monarch with a fresh excuse for indulging in his habitual vacillation.

Meantime, by way of obtaining additional counsel in so grave an emergency, he transmitted the letters of the nobles, together with the other papers, to the Duke of Alva, and requested his opinion on the subject. Alva replied with the roar of a wild beast.

"Every time," he wrote, "that I see the dispatches of those three Flemish seigneors my rage is so much excited that if I did not use all possible efforts to restrain it, my sentiments would seem those of a madman." After this splenitve exordium he proceeded to express the opinion that all the hatred
and complaints against the cardinal had arisen from his opposition to the convocation of the states-general. With regard to persons who had so richly deserved such chastisement, he recommended "that their heads should be taken off; but, until this could be done, that the king should dissemble with them." He advised Philip not to reply to their letters, but merely to intimate, through the regent, that their reasons for the course proposed by them did not seem satisfactory. He did not prescribe this treatment of the case as "a true remedy, but only as a palliative; because for the moment only weak medicines could be employed, from which, however, but small effect could be anticipated." As to recalling the cardinal, "as they had the impudence to propose to his Majesty," the Duke most decidedly advised against the step. In the meantime, and before it should be practicable to proceed "to that vigorous chastisement already indicated," he advised separating the nobles as much as possible by administering flattery and deceitful caresses to Egmont, who might be entrapped more easily than the others.

Here, at least, was a man who knew his own mind. Here was a servant who could be relied upon to do his master's bidding whenever this master should require his help. The vigorous explosion of wrath with which the duke thus responded to the first symptoms of what he regarded as rebellion, gave a feeble intimation of the tone which he would assume when that movement should have reached a more advanced stage. It might be guessed what kind of remedies he would one day prescribe in place of the "mild medicines" in which he so reluctantly acquiesced for the present.

While this had been the course pursued by the seigniors, the regent, and the king, in regard to that all-absorbing subject of Netherland politics—the struggle against Granvelle—the cardinal, in his letters to Philip, had been painting the situation by minute daily touches, in a manner of which his pencil alone possessed the secret.

Still maintaining the attitude of an injured but forgiving Christian, he spoke of the nobles in a tone of gentle sorrow. He deprecated any rising of the royal wrath in his behalf; he would continue to serve the gentlemen, whether they would or no; he was most anxious lest any considerations on his account should interfere with the king's decision in regard to the course to be pursued in the Netherlands. At the same time, notwithstanding these general professions of benevolence towards the nobles, he represented them as broken spendthrifts, wishing to create general confusion in order to escape from personal liabilities, as conspirators who had placed themselves within the reach of the attorney-general, as ambitious malcontents who were disposed to overthrow the royal authority, and to substitute an aristocratic republic upon its ruins. He would say nothing to prejudice the king's mind against these gentlemen, but he took care to omit nothing which could possibly accomplish that result. He described them as systematically opposed to the policy which he knew lay nearest the king's heart, and as determined to assassinate the faithful minister who was so resolutely carrying it out, if his removal could be effected in no other way. He spoke of the state of religion as becoming more and more unsatisfactory, and bewailed the difficulty with which he could procure the burning of heretics,
difficulties originating in the reluctance of men from whose elevated rank better things might have been expected.

As Granvelle is an important personage, as his character has been alternately the subject of much censure and of more applause, and as the epoch now described was the one in which the causes of the great convulsion were rapidly germinating, it is absolutely necessary that the reader should be placed in a position to study the main character, as painted by his own hand—the hand in which were placed, at that moment, the destinies of a mighty empire. It is the historian’s duty, therefore, to hang the picture of his administration fully in the light. At the moment when the 11th of March letter was dispatched, the cardinal represented Orange and Egmont as endeavoring by every method of menace or blandishment to induce all the grand seigniors and petty nobles to join in the league against himself. They had quarrelled with Aerschot and Aremberg, they had more than half seduced Berlaymont, and they stigmatized all who refused to enter into their league as cardinalists and familiars of the inquisition. He protested that he should regard their ill will with indifference, were he not convinced that he was himself only a pretext, and that their designs were really much deeper. Since the return of Montigny, the seigniors had established a league which that gentleman and his brother, Count Horn, had both joined. He would say nothing concerning the defamatory letters and pamphlets of which he was the constant object, for he wished no heed taken of matters which concerned exclusively himself; notwithstanding this disclaimer, however, he rarely omitted to note the appearance of all such productions for his Majesty’s especial information. "It was better to calm men’s spirits," he said, "than to excite them."

As to fostering quarrels among the seigniors, as the king had recommended, that was hardly necessary, for discord was fast sowing its own seeds. "It gave him much pain," he said, with a Christian sigh, "to observe that such dissensions had already arisen, and unfortunately on his account." He then proceeded circumstantially to describe the quarrel between Aerschot and Egmont, already narrated by the regent, omitting in his statement no particular which could make Egmont reprehensible in the royal eyes. He likewise painted the quarrel between the same noble and Aremberg, to which he had already alluded in previous letters to the king, adding that many gentlemen, and even the more prudent part of the people, were dissatisfied with the course of the grandees, and that he was taking underhand but dexterous means to confirm them in such sentiments. He instructed Philip how to reply to the letter addressed to him, but begged his Majesty not to hesitate to sacrifice him if the interests of his crown should seem to require it.

With regard to religious matters, he repeatedly deplored that, notwithstanding his own exertions and those of Madame de Parma, things were not going on as he desired, but, on the contrary, very badly. "For the love of God and the service of the holy religion," he cried out fervently, "put your royal hand valiantly to the work, otherwise we have only to exclaim, ‘Help, Lord, for we perish!’" Having uttered this pious exhortation in the ear of a man who needed no stimulant in the path of persecution, he proceeded to express his regrets
that the judges and other officers were not taking in hand the chastisement of heresy with becoming vigor.

Yet, at that very moment Peter Titelmann was raging through Flanders, tearing whole families out of bed and burning them to ashes, with such utter disregard to all laws or forms as to provoke in the very next year a solemn protest from the four estates of Flanders; and Titelmann was but one of a dozen inquisitors. Granvelle, however, could find little satisfaction in the exertions of subordinates so long as men in high station were remiss in their duties. The Marquis Berghen, he informed Philip, showed but little disposition to put down heresy in Valenciennes, while Montigny was equally remiss at Tournay. They were often heard to say, to any who chose to listen, that it was not right to inflict the punishment of death for matters of religion. This sentiment, uttered in that age of blood and fire, and crowning the memory of those unfortunate nobles with eternal honor, was denounced by the churchman as criminal, and deserving of castigation. He intimated, moreover, that these pretences of clemency were mere hypocrisy, and that self-interest was at the bottom of their compassion. “‘Tis very black,” said he, “when interest governs; but these men are all in debt, so deeply that they owe their very souls. They are seeking every means of escaping from their obligations, and are most desirous of creating general confusion.” As to the Prince of Orange, the cardinal asserted that he owed 900,000 florins, and had hardly 25,000 a year clear income, while he spent 90,000, having counts, barons, and gentlemen in great numbers, in his household. At this point, he suggested that it might be well to find employment for some of these grandees in Spain and other dominions of his Majesty, adding that perhaps Orange might accept the viceroyalty of Sicily.

Resuming the religious matter, a few weeks later, he expressed himself a little more cheerfully. “We have made so much outcry,” said he, “that at last Marquis Berghen has been forced to burn a couple of heretics at Valenciennes. Thus, it is obvious,” moralized the cardinal, “that if he were really willing to apply the remedy in that place, much progress might be made; but that we can do but little so long as he remains in the government of the provinces and refuses to assist us.” In a subsequent letter, he again uttered complaints against the marquis and Montigny, who were evermore his scapegoats and bugbears. “Berghen will give us no aid,” he wrote, “despite of all the letters we send him. He absents himself for private and political reasons. Montigny has eaten meat in Lent, as the bishop of Tournay informs me. Both he and the Marquis say openly that it is not right to shed blood for matters of faith, so that the king can judge how much can be effected with such coadjutors.” “Berghen avoids the persecution of heretics,” wrote the cardinal again, a month later, to Secretary Perez. “He has gone to Spa for his health although those who saw him last say he is fat and hearty.” Granvelle added, however, that they had at last “burned one more preacher alive.” The heretic, he stated, had feigned repentance to save his life, but finding that, at any rate, his head would be cut off as a dogmatizer, he retracted his recantation. “So,” concluded the cardinal, complacently, “they burned him.”
He chronicled the sayings and doings of the principal personages in the Netherlands, for the instruction of the king, with great regularity, insinuating suspicions when unable to furnish evidence, and adding charitable apologies, which he knew would have but small effect upon the mind of his correspondent. Thus he sent an account of a "very secret meeting" held by Orange, Egmont, Horn, Montigny and Berghen, at the abbey of La Forest, near Brussels, adding that he did not know what they had been doing there, and was at loss what to suspect. He would be most happy, he said, to put the best interpretation upon their actions, but he could not help remembering with great sorrow the observation so recently made by Orange to Montigny, that one day they should be stronger. Later in the year, the cardinal informed the king that the same nobles were holding a conference at Weerdt, that he had not learned what had been transacted there, but thought the affair very suspicious. Philip immediately communicated the intelligence to Alva, together with an expression of Granvelle’s fears and of his own, that a popular outbreak would be the consequence of the continued presence of the minister in the Netherlands.

The cardinal omitted nothing in the way of anecdote or innuendo, which could injure the character of the leading nobles, with the exception, perhaps, of Count Egmont. With this important personage, whose character he well understood, he seemed determined, if possible, to maintain friendly relations. There was a deep policy in this desire, to which we shall advert hereafter. The other seigniors were described in general terms as disposed to overthrow the royal authority. They were bent upon Granvelle’s downfall as the first step, because, that being accomplished, the rest would follow as a matter of course. "They intend," said he, "to reduce the state into the form of a republic, in which the king shall have no power except to do their bidding." He added that he saw with regret so many German troops gathering on the borders, for he believed them to be in the control of the disaffected nobles of the Netherlands. Having made this grave insinuation, he proceeded in the same breath to express his anger at a statement said to have been made by Orange and Egmont, to the effect that he had charged them with intending to excite a civil commotion, an idea, he added, which had never entered his head. In the same paragraph, he poured into the most suspicious ear that ever listened to a tale of treason, his conviction that the nobles were planning a republic by the aid of foreign troops, and uttered a complaint that these nobles had accused him of suspecting them. As for the Prince of Orange, he was described as eternally boasting of his influence in Germany, and the great things which he could effect by means of his connexions there, "so that," added the cardinal, "we hear no other song."

He had much to say concerning the projects of these grandees to abolish all the councils, but that of state, of which body they intended to obtain the entire control. Marquis Berghea was represented as being at the bottom of all these intrigues. The general and evident intention was to make a thorough change in the form of government. The Marquis meant to command in every thing, and the duchess would soon have nothing to do in the provinces as regent for the
king. In fact, Philip himself would be equally powerless, "for," said the cardinal, "they will have succeeded in putting your Majesty completely under guardianship." He added, moreover, that the seigniors, in order to gain favor with the people and with the estates, had allowed them to acquire so much power, that they would respond to any request for subsidies by a general popular revolt. "This is the simple truth," said Granvelle, "and moreover, by the same process, in a very few days there will likewise be no religion left in the land." When the deputies of some of the states, a few weeks later, had been irregularly convened in Brussels, for financial purposes, the cardinal informed the monarch that the nobles were endeavoring to conciliate their good will, by offering them a splendid series of festivities and banquets.

He related various anecdotes which came to his ears from time to time, all tending to excite suspicions as to the loyalty and orthodoxy of the principal nobles. A gentleman coming from Burgundy had lately, as he informed the king, been dining with the Prince of Orange, with whom Horn and Montigny were then lodging. At table, Montigny called out in a very loud voice to the strange cavalier, who was seated at a great distance from him, to ask if there were many Huguenots in Burgundy. No, replied the gentleman, nor would they be permitted to exist there. Then there can be very few people of intelligence in that province, returned Montigny, for those who have any wit are mostly all Huguenots. The Prince of Orange here endeavored to put a stop to the conversation, saying that the Burgundians were very right to remain as they were; upon which Montigny affirmed that he had heard masses enough lately to last him for three months. These things may be jests, commented Granvelle, but they are very bad ones; and 'tis evident that such a man is an improper instrument to remedy the state of religious affairs in Tournay.

At another large party, the king was faithfully informed by the same chronicler, that Marquis Berghen had been teasing the Duke of Aerschot very maliciously, because he would not join the league. The duke had responded as he had formerly done to Egmont, that his Majesty was not to receive laws from his vassals, adding that, for himself, he meant to follow in the loyal track of his ancestors, fearing God and honoring the king. In short, said Granvelle, he answered them with so much wisdom, that although they had never a high opinion of his capacity, they were silenced. This conversation had been going on before all the servants, the Marquis being especially vociferous, although the room was quite full of them. As soon as the cloth was removed, and while some of the lackies still remained, Berghen had resumed the conversation. He said he was of the same mind as his ancestor, John of Berghen, had been, who had once told the king’s grandfather, Philip the Fair, that if his Majesty was bent on his own perdition, he had no disposition to ruin himself. If the present monarch means to lose these provinces by governing them as he did govern them, the marquis affirmed that he had no wish to lose the little property that he himself possessed in the country. "But if," argued the Duke of Aerschot, "the king absolutely refuse to do what you demand of him, what then?" "Par la cordieu!" responded Berghen, in a rage, "we will let him see!" whereupon all became silent.
Granvelle implored the king to keep these things entirely to himself; adding that it was quite necessary for his Majesty to learn in this manner what were the real dispositions of the gentlemen of the provinces. It was also stated in the same letter, that a ruffian Genoese, who had been ordered out of the Netherlands by the regent, because of a homicide he had committed, was kept at Weert, by Count Horn, for the purpose of murdering the cardinal. He affirmed that he was not allowed to request the expulsion of the assassin from the count’s house, but that he would take care, nevertheless, that neither this ruffian nor any other, should accomplish his purpose. A few weeks afterwards, expressing his joy at the contradiction of a report that Philip had himself been assassinated, Granvelle added, "I too, who am but a worm in comparison, am threatened on so many sides, that many must consider me already dead. Nevertheless, I will endeavor, with God’s help, to live as long as I can, and if they kill me, I hope they will not gain every thing." Yet, with characteristic Jesuitism, the cardinal could not refrain, even in the very letter in which he detailed the rebellious demonstrations of Berghen, and the murderous schemes of Horn, to protest that he did not say these things "to prejudice his Majesty against anyone, but only that it might be known to what a height the impudence was rising." Certainly the king and the ecclesiastic, like the Roman soothsayers, would have laughed in each other’s face, could they have met, over the hollowness of such demonstrations. Granvelle’s letters were filled, for the greater part, with pictures of treason, stratagem, and bloody intentions, fabricated mostly out of reports, table-talk, disjointed chat in the careless freedom of domestic intercourse, while at the same time a margin was always left to impress his own wounded sense of the injurious suspicions uttered against him by the various subjects of his letters. "God knows," said he to Perez, “that I always speak of them with respect, which is more than they do of me. But God forgive them all. In times like these, one must hold one’s tongue. One must keep still, in order not to stir up a hornet’s nest.”

In short, the cardinal, little by little, during the last year of his residence in the Netherlands, was enabled to spread a canvas before his sovereign’s eye, in which certain prominent figures, highly colored by patiently accumulated touches, were represented as driving a whole nation, against its own will, into manifest revolt. The estates and the people, he said, were already tired of the proceedings of the nobles, and those personages would find themselves very much mistaken in thinking that men who had anything to lose would follow them, when they began a rebellion against his Majesty. On the whole, he was not desirous of prolonging his own residence, although, to do him justice, he was not influenced by fear. He thought or affected to think that the situation was one of a factitious popular discontent, procured by the intrigues of a few ambitious and impoverished Catilines and Cethegi, not a rising rebellion such as the world had never seen, born of the slowly-awakened wrath of a whole people, after the martyrdom of many years. The remedy that he recommended was that his Majesty should come in person to the provinces. The monarch would cure the whole disorder as soon as he appeared, said the cardinal, by
merely making the sign of the cross. Whether, indeed, the rapidly-increasing cancer of national discontent would prove a mere king’s evil, to be healed by the royal touch, as many persons besides Granvelle believed, was a point not doomed to be tested. From that day forward Philip began to hold out hopes that he would come to administer the desired remedy, but even then it was the opinion of good judges that he would give millions rather than make his appearance in the Netherlands. It was even the hope of William of Orange that the king would visit the provinces. He expressed his desire, in a letter to Lazarus Schwendi, that his sovereign should come in person, that he might see whether it had been right to sow so much distrust between himself and his loyal subjects. The prince asserted that it was impossible for any person not on the spot to imagine the falsehoods and calumnies circulated by Granvelle and his friends, accusing Orange and his associates of rebellion and heresy, in the most infamous manner in the world. He added, in conclusion, that he could write no more, for the mere thought of the manner in which the government of the Netherlands was carried on filled him with disgust and rage.

This letter, together with one in a similar strain from Egmont, was transmitted by the valiant and highly intellectual soldier to whom they were addressed, to the king of Spain, with an entreaty that he would take warning from the bitter truths which they contained. The colonel, who was a most trusty friend of Orange, wrote afterwards to Margaret of Parma in the same spirit, warmly urging her to moderation in religious matters. This application highly enraged Morillon, the cardinal’s most confidential dependent, who accordingly conveyed the intelligence to his already departed chief, exclaiming in his letter, ‘what does the ungrateful baboon mean by meddling with our affairs? pretty state of things, truly, if kings are to choose or retain their ministers at the will of the people; little does he know of the disasters which would be caused by a relaxation of the edicts.” In the same sense, the cardinal, just before his departure, which was now imminent, wrote to warn his sovereign of the seditious character of the men who were then placing their breasts between the people and their butchers. He assured Philip that upon the movement of those nobles depended the whole existence of the country. It was time that they should be made to open their eyes. They should be solicited in every way to abandon their evil courses, since the liberty which they thought themselves defending was but abject slavery, but subjection to a thousand base and contemptible personages, and to that “vile animal called the people.”

It is sufficiently obvious, from the picture which we have now presented of the respective attitudes of Granvelle, of the seigniors and of the nation, during the whole of the year 1563, and the beginning of the following year, that a crisis was fast approaching. Granvelle was, for the moment, triumphant, Orange, Egmont, and Horn had abandoned the state council, Philip could not yet make up his mind to yield to the storm, and Alva howled defiance at the nobles and the whole people of the Netherlands. Nevertheless, Margaret of Parma was utterly weary of the minister, the cardinal himself was most anxious to be gone, and the nation—for there was a nation, however vile the animal might be—was becoming daily more enraged at the presence of a man in whom,
whether justly or falsely, it beheld the incarnation of the religious oppression under which they groaned. Meantime, at the close of the year, a new incident came to add to the gravity of the situation. Caspar Schetz, Baron of Grobbendonck, gave a great dinner party, in the month of December, 1563. This personage, whose name was prominent for many years in the public affairs of the nation, was one of the four brothers who formed a very opulent and influential mercantile establishment. He was the king’s principal factor and financial agent. He was one of the great pillars of the Bourse at Antwerp. He was likewise a tolerable scholar, a detestable poet, an intriguing politician, and a corrupt financier. He was regularly in the pay of Sir Thomas Gresham, to whom he furnished secret information, for whom he procured differential favors, and by whose government he was rewarded by gold chains and presents of hard cash, bestowed as secretly as the equivalent was conveyed adroitly. Nevertheless, although his venality was already more than suspected, and although his peculations during his long career became so extensive that he was eventually prosecuted by government, and died before the process was terminated, the lord of Grobbendonch was often employed in most delicate negotiations, and, at the present epoch, was a man of much importance in the Netherlands.

The treasurer-general accordingly gave his memorable banquet to a distinguished party of noblemen. The conversation, during dinner, turned, as was inevitable, upon the cardinal. His ostentation, greediness, insolence, were fully canvassed. The wine flowed freely as it always did in those Flemish festivities; the brains of the proud and reckless cavaliers became hot with excitement, while still the odious ecclesiastic was the topic of their conversation, the object alternately of fierce invective or of scornful mirth. The pompous display which he affected in his equipages, liveries, and all the appurtenances of his household, had frequently excited their derision, and now afforded fresh matter for their ridicule. The customs of Germany, the simple habiliments in which the retainers of the greatest houses were arrayed in that country, were contrasted with the tinsel and glitter in which the prelate pranked himself. It was proposed, by way of showing contempt for Granvelle, that a livery should be forthwith invented, as different as possible from his in general effect, and that all the gentlemen present should indiscriminately adopt it for their own menials. Thus would the people whom the cardinal wished to dazzle with his finery learn to estimate such gauds at their true value. It was determined that something extremely plain, and in the German fashion, should be selected. At the same time, the company, now thoroughly inflamed with wine, and possessed by the spirit of mockery, determined that a symbol should be added to the livery, by which the universal contempt for Granvelle should be expressed. The proposition was hailed with acclamation, but who should invent the hieroglyphical costume? All were reckless and ready enough, but ingenuity of device was required. At last it was determined to decide the question by hazard. Amid shouts of hilarity, the dice were thrown. Those men were staking their lives, perhaps, upon the issue, but the reflection gave only a keener zest to the game. Egmont won. It was the most fatal victory
which he had ever achieved, a more deadly prize even than the trophies of St. Quentin and Gravelingen.
In a few days afterwards, the retainers of the house of Egmont surprised Brussels by making their appearance in a new livery. Doublet and hose of the coarsest grey, and long hanging sleeves, without gold or silver lace, and having but a single ornament, comprised the whole costume. An emblem which seemed to resemble a monk’s cowl, or a fool’s cap and bells, was embroidered upon each sleeve. The device pointed at the cardinal, as did, by contrast, the affected coarseness of the dress. There was no doubt as to the meaning of the hood, but they who saw in the symbol more resemblance to the jester’s cap, recalled certain biting expressions which Granvelle had been accustomed to use. He had been wont, in the days of his greatest insolence, to speak of the most eminent nobles as zanies, lunatics, and buffoons. The embroidered fool’s cap was supposed to typify the gibe, and to remind the arrogant priest that a Brutus, as in the olden time, might be found lurking in the costume of the fool. However witty or appropriate the invention, the livery had an immense success. According to agreement, the nobles who had dined with the treasurer ordered it for all their servants. Never did a new dress become so soon the fashion.

The unpopularity of the minister assisted the quaintness of the device. The fool’s-cap livery became the rage. Never was such a run upon the haberdashers, mercers, and tailors, since Brussels had been a city. All the frieze-cloth in Brabant was exhausted. All the serge in Flanders was clipped into monastic cowls. The duchess at first laughed with the rest, but the cardinal took care that the king should be at once informed upon the subject. The regent was, perhaps, not extremely sorry to see the man ridiculed whom she so cordially disliked, and she accepted the careless excuses made on the subject by Egmont and by Orange without severe criticism. She wrote to her brother that, although the gentlemen had been influenced by no evil intention, she had thought it best to exhort them not to push the jest too far. Already, however, she found that two thousand pairs of sleeves had been made, and the most she could obtain was that the fools’ caps, or monks’ hoods, should in the future be omitted from the livery. A change was accordingly made in the costume, at about the time of the cardinal’s departure. A bundle of arrows, or in some instances a wheat-sheaf, was substituted for the cowls. Various interpretations were placed upon this new emblem. According to the nobles themselves, it denoted the union of all their hearts in the king’s service, while their enemies insinuated that it was obviously a symbol of conspiracy. The costume thus amended was worn by the gentlemen themselves, as well as by their servants. Egmont dined at the regent’s table, after the cardinal’s departure, in a camlet doublet, with hanging sleeves, and buttons stamped with the bundle of arrows.

For the present, the cardinal affected to disapprove of the fashion only from its rebellious tendency. The fools’ caps and cowls, he meekly observed to Philip, were the least part of the offense, for an injury to himself could be easily forgiven. The wheat-sheaf and the arrow-bundles, however, were very vile
things, for they betokened and confirmed the existence of a conspiracy, such as never could be tolerated by a prince who had any regard for his own authority.

This incident of the livery occupied the public attention, and inflamed the universal hatred during the later months of the minister’s residence in the country. Meantime the three seigniors had become very impatient at receiving no answer to their letter. Margaret of Parma was urging her brother to give them satisfaction, repeating to him their bitter complaints that their characters and conduct were the subject of constant misrepresentation to their sovereign, and picturing her own isolated condition. She represented herself as entirely deprived of the support of those great personages, who, despite her positive assurances to the contrary, persisted in believing that they were held up to the king as conspirators, and were in danger of being punished as traitors. Philip, on his part, was conning Granvelle’s dispatches, filled with hints of conspiracy, and holding counsel with Alva, who had already recommended the taking off several heads for treason. The Prince of Orange, who already had secret agents in the king’s household, and was supplied with copies of the most private papers in the palace, knew better than to be deceived by the smooth representations of the regent. Philip had, however, at last begun secretly to yield. He asked Alva’s advice, whether on the whole it would not be better to let the cardinal leave the Netherlands, at least for a time, on pretense of visiting his mother in Burgundy, and to invite Count Egmont to Madrid, by way of striking one link from the chain, as Granvelle had suggested. The duke had replied that he had no doubt of the increasing insolence of the three seigniors, as depicted in the letters of the Duchess Margaret, nor of their intention to make the cardinal their first victim, it being the regular principle in all revolts against the sovereign to attack the chief minister in the first place. He could not, however, persuade himself that the king should yield and Granvelle be recalled. Nevertheless, if it were to be done at all, he preferred that the cardinal should go to Burgundy without leave asked either of the duchess or of Philip, and that he should then write, declining to return, on the ground that his life was not safe in the Netherlands. After much hesitation, the monarch at last settled upon a plan, which recommended itself through the extreme duplicity by which it was marked, and the complicated system of small deceptions, which it consequently required. The king, who was never so thoroughly happy or at home as when elaborating the ingredients of a composite falsehood, now busily employed himself in his cabinet. He measured off in various letters to the regent, to the three nobles, to Egmont alone, and to Granvelle, certain proportionate parts of his whole plan, which, taken separately, were intended to deceive, and did deceive nearly every person in the world, not only in his own generation, but for three centuries afterwards, but which arranged synthetically, as can now be done, in consequence of modern revelations, formed one complete and considerable lie, the observation of which furnishes the student with a lesson in the political chemistry of those days, which was called Machiavellian statesmanship. The termination of the Granvelle regency is, moreover, most important, not only
for the grave and almost interminable results to which it led, but for the illustration which it affords of the inmost characters of the cardinal and "his master."

The courier who was to take Philip’s letters to the three nobles was detained three weeks, in order to allow Armenteros, who was charged with the more important and secret dispatches for the duchess and Granvelle to reach Brussels first. All the letters, however, were ready at the same time. The letter of instructions for Armenteros enjoined upon that envoy to tell the regent that the heretics were to be chastised with renewed vigor, that she was to refuse to convocate the states-general under any pretext, and that if hard pressed, she was to refer directly to the king. With regard to Granvelle, the secretary was to state that his Majesty was still deliberating, and that the duchess would be informed as to the decision when it should be made. He was to express the royal astonishment that the seigniors should absent themselves from the state council, with a peremptory intimation that they should immediately return to their posts. As they had specified no particularities against the cardinal, the king would still reflect upon the subject.

He also wrote a private note to the duchess, stating that he had not yet sent the letters for the three nobles, because he wished that Armenteros should arrive before their courier. He, however, enclosed two notes for Egmont, of which Margaret was to deliver that one, which, in her opinion, was, under the circumstances, the best. In one of these missives the king cordially accepted, and in the other he politely declined Egmont’s recent offer to visit Spain. He also forwarded a private letter in his own handwriting to the cardinal.

Armenteros, who traveled but slowly on account of the state of his health, arrived in Brussels towards the end of February. Five or six days afterwards, on the 1st of March, namely, the courier arrived bringing the dispatches for the seigniors. In his letter to Orange, Egmont, and Horn, the king expressed his astonishment at their resolution to abstain from the state council. "Nevertheless," said he, imperatively, "fail not to return thither and to show how much more highly you regard my service and the good of the country than any other particularity whatever." "As to Granvelle," continued Philip, "since you will not make any specifications, my intention is to think over the matter longer, in order to arrange it as may seem most fitting."

This letter was dated February 19 (1564), nearly a month later therefore than the secret letter to Granvelle, brought by Armenteros, although all the dispatches had been drawn up at the same time and formed parts of the same plan. In this brief note to Granvelle, however, lay the heart of the whole mystery.

"I have reflected much," wrote the king, "on all that you have written me during these last few months, concerning the ill-will borne you by certain personages. I notice also your suspicions that if a revolt breaks out, they will commence with your person, thus taking occasion to proceed from that point to the accomplishment of their ulterior designs. I have particularly taken into consideration the notice received by you from the curate of Saint Gudule, as well as that which you have learned concerning the Genoese who is kept at
Weert; all which has given me much anxiety as well from my desire for the preservation of your life, in which my service is so deeply interested, as for the possible results if any thing should happen to you, which God forbid. I have thought, therefore, that it would be well, in order to give time and breathing space to the hatred and rancor which those persons entertain towards you, and in order to see what course they will take in preparing the necessary remedy for the provinces, for you to leave the country for some days, in order to visit your mother, and this with the knowledge of the duchess, my sister, and with her permission, which you will request, and which I have written to her that she must give, without allowing it to appear that you have received orders to that effect from me. You will also beg her to write to me requesting my approbation of what she is to do. By taking this course neither my authority nor yours will suffer prejudice; and according to the turn which things may take, measures may be taken for your return when expedient, and for whatever else there may be to arrange."

Thus, in two words, Philip removed the unpopular minister forever. The limitation of his absence had no meaning, and was intended to have none. If there were not strength enough to keep the cardinal in his place, it was not probable that the more difficult task of reinstating him after his fall would be very soon attempted. It seemed, however, to be dealing more tenderly with Granvelle’s self-respect thus to leave a vague opening for a possible return, than to send him an unconditional dismissal.

Thus, while the king refused to give any weight to the representations of the nobles, and affected to be still deliberating whether or not he should recall the cardinal, he had in reality already recalled him. All the minute directions according to which permission was to be asked of the duchess to take a step which had already been prescribed by the monarch, and Philip’s indulgence craved for obeying his own explicit injunctions, were fulfilled to the letter. As soon as the cardinal received the royal order, he privately made preparations for his departure. The regent, on the other hand, delivered to Count Egmont the one of Philip’s two letters in which that gentleman’s visit was declined, the duchess believing that, in the present position of affairs, she should derive more assistance from him than from the rest of the seigniors. As Granvelle, however, still delayed his departure, even after the arrival of the second courier, she was again placed in a situation of much perplexity. The three nobles considered Philip’s letter to them extremely “dry and laconic,” and Orange absolutely refused to comply with the order to re-enter the state council. At a session of that body, on the 3rd of March, where only Granvelle, Viglius, and Berlaymont were present, Margaret narrated her fruitless attempts to persuade the seigniors into obedience to the royal orders lately transmitted, and asked their opinions. The extraordinary advice was then given, that “she should let them champ the bit a little while longer, and afterwards see what was to be done.” Even at the last moment, the cardinal, reluctant to acknowledge himself beaten, although secretly desirous to retire, was inclined for a parting struggle. The duchess, however, being now armed with the king’s express commands, and having had enough of holding the reins while such
powerful and restive personages were “champing the bit,” insisted privately that the cardinal should make his immediate departure known. Pasquinades and pamphlets were already appearing daily, each more bitter than the other; the livery was spreading rapidly through all classes of people, and the seigniors most distinctly refused to recede from their determination of absenting themselves from the council so long as Granvelle remained. There was no help for it, and on the 13th of March the cardinal took his departure. Notwithstanding the mystery of the whole proceeding, however, William of Orange was not deceived. He felt certain that the minister had been recalled, and thought it highly improbable that he would ever be permitted to return. "Although the cardinal talks of coming back again soon," wrote the prince to Schwartzburg, "we nevertheless hope that, as he lied about his departure, so he will also spare the truth in his present assertions." This was the general conviction, so far as the question of the minister’s compulsory retreat was concerned, of all those who were in the habit of receiving their information and their opinions from the Prince of Orange. Many even thought that Granvelle had been recalled with indignity and much against his will. "When the cardinal," wrote Secretary Lorich to Count Louis, "received the king’s order to go, he growled like a bear, and kept himself alone in his chamber for a time, making his preparations for departure. He says he shall come back in two months, but some of us think they will be two long months which will eat themselves up like money borrowed of the Jews." A wag, moreover, posted a large placard upon the door of Granvelle’s palace in Brussels as soon as the minister’s departure was known, with the inscription, in large letters, "For sale, immediately." In spite of the royal ingenuity, therefore, many shrewdly suspected the real state of the case, although but very few actually knew the truth.

The cardinal left Brussels with a numerous suite, stately equipages, and much parade. The duchess provided him with her own mules and with a sufficient escort, for the king had expressly enjoined that every care should be taken against any murderous attack. There was no fear of such assault, however, for all were sufficiently satisfied to see the minister depart. Brederode and Count Hoogstraaten were standing together, looking from the window of a house near the gate of Caudenberg, to feast their eyes with the spectacle of their enemy’s retreat. As soon as the cardinal had passed through that gate, on his way to Namur, the first stage of his journey, they rushed into the street, got both upon one horse, Hoogstraaten, who alone had boots on his legs, taking the saddle and Brederode the croup, and galloped after the cardinal, with the exultation of schoolboys. Thus mounted, they continued to escort the cardinal on his journey. At one time, they were so near his carriage, while it was passing through a ravine, that they might have spoken to him from the heights above, where they had paused to observe him; but they pulled the capes of their cloaks over their faces and suffered him to pass unchallenged. "But they are young folk," said the cardinal, benignantly, after relating all these particulars to the duchess, "and one should pay little regard to their actions." He added that one of Egmont’s gentlemen dogged their party on the journey,
lodging in the same inns with them, apparently in the hope of learning something from their conversation or proceedings. If that were the man’s object, however, Granvelle expressed the conviction that he was disappointed, as nothing could have been more merry than the whole company, or more discreet than their conversation.

The cardinal began at once to put into operation the system of deception, as to his departure, which had been planned by Philip. The man who had been ordered to leave the Netherlands by the king, and pushed into immediate compliance with the royal command by the duchess, proceeded to address letters both to Philip and Margaret. He wrote from Namur to beg the regent that she would not fail to implore his Majesty graciously to excuse his having absented himself for private reasons at that particular moment. He wrote to Philip from Besangon, stating that his desire to visit his mother, whom he had not seen for nineteen years, and his natal soil, to which he had been a stranger during the same period, had induced him to take advantage of his brother’s journey to accompany him for a few days into Burgundy. He had, therefore, he said, obtained the necessary permission from the duchess, who had kindly promised to write very particularly by the first courier, to beg his Majesty’s approval of the liberty which they had both taken. He wrote from the same place to the regent again, saying that some of the nobles pretended to have learned from Armenteros that the king had ordered the cardinal to leave the country and not to return, all which, he added, was a very false Renardesque invention, at which he did nothing but laugh.

As a matter of course, his brother, in whose company he was about to visit the mother whom he had not seen for the past nineteen years, was as much mystified as the rest of the world. Chantonnay was not aware that anything but the alleged motives had occasioned the journey, nor did he know that his brother would perhaps have omitted to visit their common parent for nineteen years longer had he not received the royal order to leave the Netherlands. Philip, on the other side, had sustained his part in the farce with much ability. Viglius, Berlaymont, Morillon, and all the lesser cardinalists were entirely taken in by the letters which were formally dispatched to the duchess in reply to her own and the cardinal’s notification. "I can not take it amiss," wrote the king, "that you have given leave of absence to Cardinal de Granvelle, for two or three months, according to the advices just received from you, that he may attend to some private affairs of his own." As soon as these letters had been read in the council, Viglius faithfully transmitted them to Granvelle for that personage’s enlightenment, adding his own innocent reflection, that "this was very different language from that held by some people, that your most illustrious lordship had retired by order of his Majesty." Morillon also sent the cardinal a copy of the same passage in the royal dispatch, saying, very wisely, "I wonder what they will all say now, since these letters have been read in council." The duchess, as in duty bound, denied flatly, on all occasions, that Armenteros had brought any letters recommending or ordering the minister’s retreat. She conscientiously displayed the letters of his Majesty, proving the
contrary, and yet, said Viglius, it was very hard to prevent people talking as they liked.

Granvelle omitted no occasion to mystify everyone of his correspondents on the subject, referring, of course, to the same royal letters which had been written for public reading, expressly to corroborate these statements. "You see by his Majesty’s letters to Madame de Parma," said he to Morillon, "how false is the report that the king had ordered me to leave Flanders, and in what confusion those persons find themselves who fabricated the story." It followed of necessity that he should carry out his part in the royal program, but he accomplished his task so adroitly, and with such redundancy of zeal, as to show his thorough sympathy with the king’s policy. He dissembled with better grace, even if the king did it more naturally. Nobody was too insignificant to be deceived, nobody too august. Emperor Ferdinand fared no better than "Esquire" Bordey. "Some of those who hate me," he wrote to the potentate, "have circulated the report that I had been turned out of the country, and was never to return. This story has ended in smoke, since the letters written by his Majesty to the Duchess of Parma on the subject of the leave of absence which she had given me."

Philip himself addressed a private letter to Granvelle, of course that others might see it, in which he affected to have just learned that the cardinal had obtained permission from the regent "to make a visit to his mother, in order to arrange certain family matters," and gravely gave his approbation to the step. At the same time it was not possible for the king to resist the temptation of adding one other stroke of dissimulation to his own share in the comedy. Granvelle and Philip had deceived all the world, but Philip also deceived Granvelle. The cardinal made a mystery of his departure to Pollwiller, Viglius, Morillon, to the Emperor, to his own brother, and also to the king’s secretary, Gonzalo Perez; but he was not aware that Perez, whom he thought himself deceiving as ingenuously as he had done all the others, had himself drawn up the letter of recall, which the king had afterwards copied out in his own hand and marked "secret and confidential." Yet Granvelle might have guessed that in such an emergency Philip would hardly depend upon his own literary abilities.

Granvelle remained month after month in seclusion, doing his best to philosophize. Already, during the latter period of his residence in the Netherlands, he had lived in a comparative and forced solitude. His house had been avoided by those power-worshippers whose faces are rarely turned to the setting sun. He had, in consequence, already, before his departure, begun to discourse on the beauties of retirement, the fatigues of greatness, and the necessity of repose for men broken with the storms of state. A great man was like a lake, he said, to which a thirsty multitude habitually resorted till the waters were troubled, sullied, and finally exhausted.

Power looked more attractive in front than in the retrospect. That which men possessed was ever of less value than that which they hoped. In this fine strain of eloquent commonplace the falling minister had already begun to moralize upon the vanity of human wishes. When he was established at his charming retreat in Burgundy, he had full leisure to pursue the theme. He remained in
retirement till his beard grew to his waist, having vowed, according to report, that he would not shave till recalled to the Netherlands. If the report were true, said some of the gentlemen in the provinces, it would be likely to grow to his feet. He professed to wish himself blind and deaf, that he might have no knowledge of the world’s events, described himself as buried in literature, and fit for no business save to remain in his chamber, fastened to his books, or occupied with private affairs and religious exercises.

He possessed a most charming residence at Orchamps, where he spent a great portion of his time. In one of his letters to Vice-Chancellor Seld, he described the beauties of this retreat with much delicacy and vigor: "I am really not as badly off here," said he, "as I should be in the Indies. I am in sweet places where I have wished for you a thousand times, for I am certain that you would think them appropriate for philosophy and worthy the habitation of the Muses. Here are beautiful mountains, high as heaven, fertile on all their sides, wreathed with vineyards, and rich with every fruit; here are rivers flowing through charming valleys, the waters clear as crystal, filled with trout, breaking into numberless cascades. Here are umbrageous groves, fertile fields, lovely meadows; on the one side great warmth, on the other side delectable coolness, despite the summer’s heat. Nor is there any lack of good company, friends, and relations, with, as you well know, the very best wines in the world."

Thus it is obvious that the cardinal was no ascetic. His hermitage contained other appliances save those for study and devotion. His retired life was, in fact, that of a voluptuary. His brother, Chantonnay, reproached him with the sumptuousness and disorder of his establishment. He lived in "good and joyous cheer." He professed to be thoroughly satisfied with the course things had taken, knowing that God was above all, and would take care of all. He avowed his determination to extract pleasure and profit even from the ill will of his adversaries. "Behold my philosophy," he cried, "to live joyously as possible, laughing at the world, at passionate people, and at all their calumnies."

It is evident that his philosophy, if it had any real existence, was sufficiently Epicurean. It was, however, mainly compounded of pretense, like his whole nature and his whole life. Notwithstanding the mountains high as heaven, the cool grottos, the trout, and the best Burgundy wines in the world, concerning which he descanted so eloquently, he soon became in reality most impatient of his compulsory seclusion. His pretense of "composing himself as much as possible to tranquillity and repose" could deceive none of the intimate associates to whom he addressed himself in that edifying vein. While he affected to be blind and deaf to politics, he had eyes and ears for nothing else. Worldly affairs were his element, and he was shipwrecked upon the charming solitude which he affected to admire. He was most anxious to return to the world again, but he had difficult cards to play. His master was even more dubious than usual about everything. Granvelle was ready to remain in Burgundy as long as Philip chose that he should remain there. He was also ready to go to "India, Peru, or into the fire," whenever his king should require any such excursion, or to return to the Netherlands, confronting any danger
which might lie in his path. It is probable that he nourished for a long time a
hope that the storm would blow over in the provinces, and his resumption of
power become possible.
William of Orange, although more than half convinced that no attempt would
be made to replace the minister, felt it necessary to keep strict watch on his
movements. "We must be on our guard," said he, "and not be deceived. Perhaps
they mean to put us asleep, in order the better to execute their design. For the
present things are peaceable, and all the world is rejoiced at the departure of
that good Cardinal." The prince never committed the error of undervaluing the
talents of his great adversary, and he felt the necessity of being on the alert in
the present emergency. "'Tis a sly and cunning bird that we are dealing with,"
said he, "one that sleeps neither day nor night if a blow is to be dealt to us."
Honest Brederode, after solacing himself with the spectacle of his enemy’s
departure, soon began to suspect his return, and to express himself on the
subject, as usual with ludicrous vehemence. "They say the red fellow is back
again," he wrote to Count Louis, "and that Berlaymont has gone to meet him at
Namur. The Devil after the two would be a good chase."
Nevertheless, the chances of that return became daily fainter. Margaret of
Parma hated the cardinal with great cordiality. She fell out of her servitude to
him into far more contemptible hands, but for a brief interval she seemed to
take a delight in the recovery of her freedom. According to Viglius, the court,
after Granvelle’s departure, was like a school of boys and girls when the
pedagogue’s back is turned. He was very bitter against the duchess for her
manifest joy at emancipation. The poor president was treated with the most
marked disdain by Margaret, who also took pains to show her dislike to all the
cardinalists. Secretary Armenteros forbade Bordey, who was Granvelle’s cousin
and dependent, from even speaking to him in public. The regent soon became
more intimate with Orange and Egmont than she had ever been with the
cardinal. She was made to see—and, seeing, she became indignant—the cipher
which she had really been during his administration. "One can tell what’s
o’clock," wrote Morillon to the fallen minister, "since she never writes to you
nor mentions your name." As to Armenteros, with whom Granvelle was still on
friendly relations, he was restless in his endeavors to keep the once-powerful
priest from rising again. Having already wormed himself into the confidence of
the regent, he made a point of showing to the principal seigniors various
letters, in which she had been warned by the cardinal to put no trust in them.
"That devil," said Armenteros, "thought he had got into Paradise here; but he is
gone, and we shall take care that he never returns."
It was soon thought highly probable that the king was but temporizing, and that
the voluntary departure of the minister had been a deception. Of course
nothing was accurately known upon the subject. Philip had taken good care of
that, but meantime the bets were very high that there would be no
restoration, with but few takers. Men thought if there had been any royal favor
remaining for the great man, that the duchess would not be so decided in her
demeanor on the subject. They saw that she was scarlet with indignation
whenever the cardinal’s name was mentioned. They heard her thank Heaven
that she had but one son, because if she had had a second he must have been an ecclesiastic and as vile as priests always were. They witnessed the daily contumely which she heaped upon poor Viglius, both because he was a friend of Granvelle and was preparing in his old age to take orders.
The days were gone, indeed, when Margaret was so filled with respectful affection for the prelate, that she could secretly correspond with the Holy Father at Rome, and solicit the red hat for the object of her veneration. She now wrote to Philip, stating that she was better informed as to affairs in the Netherlands than she had ever formerly been. She told her brother that all the views of Granvelle and of his followers, Viglius with the rest, had tended to produce a revolution which they hoped that Philip would find in full operation when he should come to the Netherlands. It was their object, she said, to fish in troubled waters, and, to attain that aim, they had ever pursued the plan of gaining the exclusive control of all affairs. That was the reason why they had ever opposed the convocation of the states-general. They feared that their books would be read, and their frauds, injustice, simony, and rapine discovered. This would be the result, if tranquility were restored to the country, and therefore they had done their best to foment and maintain discord. The duchess soon afterwards entertained her royal brother with very detailed accounts of various acts of simony, peculation, and embezzlement committed by Viglius, which the cardinal had aided and abetted, and by which he had profited. These revelations are inestimable in a historical point of view. They do not raise our estimate of Margaret’s character, but they certainly give us a clear insight into the nature of the Granvelle administration.
At the same time it was characteristic of the duchess, that while she was thus painting the portrait of the cardinal for the private eye of his sovereign, she should address the banished minister himself in a secret strain of condolence, and even of penitence. She wrote to assure Granvelle that she repented extremely having adopted the views of Orange. She promised that she would state publicly everywhere that the cardinal was an upright man, intact in his morals and his administration, a most zealous and faithful servant of the king. She added that she recognized the obligations she was under to him, and that she loved him like a brother. She affirmed that if the Flemish seigniors had induced her to cause the cardinal to be deprived of the government, she was already penitent, and that her fault deserved that the king, her brother, should cut off her head, for having occasioned so great a calamity.
There was certainly discrepancy between the language thus used simultaneously by the duchess to Granvelle and to Philip, but Margaret had been trained in the school of Machiavelli, and had sat at the feet of Loyola. The cardinal replied with equal suavity, protesting that such a letter from the duchess left him nothing more to desire, as it furnished him with an “entire and perfect justification” of his conduct. He was aware of her real sentiments, no doubt, but he was too politic to quarrel with so important a personage as Philip’s sister.
An incident which occurred a few months after the minister’s departure served to show the general estimation in which he was held by all ranks of
Netherlanders. Count Mansfeld celebrated the baptism of his son, Philip Octavian, by a splendid series of festivities at Luxemburg, the capital of his government. Besides the tournaments and similar sports, with which the upper classes of European society were accustomed at that day to divert themselves, there was a grand masquerade, to which the public were admitted as spectators. In this "mummery" the most successful spectacle was that presented by a group arranged in obvious ridicule of Granvelle. A figure dressed in cardinal's costume, with the red hat upon his head, came pacing through the arena upon horseback. Before him marched a man attired like a hermit, with long white beard, telling his beads upon a rosary, which he held ostentatiously in his hands. Behind the mounted cardinal came the devil, attired in the usual guise considered appropriate to the Prince of Darkness, who scourged both horse and rider with a whip of fox-tails, causing them to scamper about the lists in great trepidation, to the immense delight of the spectators. The practical pun upon Simon Renard's name embodied in the fox-tail, with the allusion to the effect of the manifold squibs perpetrated by that most bitter and lively enemy upon Granvelle, were understood and relished by the multitude. Nothing could be more hearty than the blows bestowed upon the minister's representative, except the applause with which this satire, composed of actual fustigation, was received. The humorous spectacle absorbed all the interest of the masquerade and was frequently repeated. It seemed difficult to satisfy the general desire to witness a thorough chastisement of the culprit.

The incident made a great noise in the country. The cardinalists felt naturally very much enraged, but they were in a minority. No censure came from the government at Brussels and Mansfeld was then and for a long time afterwards the main pillar of royal authority in the Netherlands. It was sufficiently obvious that Granvelle, for the time at least, was supported by no party of any influence.

Meantime he remained in his seclusion. His unpopularity did not, however, decrease in his absence. More than a year after his departure, Berlaymont said the nobles detested the cardinal more than ever, and would eat him alive if they caught him. The chance of his returning was dying gradually out. At about the same period Chantonnay advised his brother to show his teeth. He assured Granvelle that he was too quiet in his disgrace, reminded him that princes had warm affections when they wished to make use of people, but that when they could have them too cheaply, they esteemed them but little, making no account of men whom they were accustomed to see under their feet. He urged the cardinal, in repeated letters, to take heart again, to make himself formidable, and to rise from his crouching attitude. All the world say, he remarked, that the game is up between the king and yourself, and before long everyone will be laughing at you, and holding you for a dupe.

Stung or emboldened by these remonstrances, and weary of his retirement, Granvelle at last abandoned all intention of returning to the Netherlands, and towards the end of 1565, departed to Rome, where he participated in the election of Pope Pius V. Five years afterwards he was employed by Philip to
negotiate the treaty between Spain, Rome, and Venice against the Turk. He was afterwards Viceroy of Naples, and in 1575, he removed to Madrid, to take an active part in the management of the public business, "the disorder of which," says the Abbé Boisot, "could be no longer arrested by men of mediocre capacity." He died in that city on the 21st of September, 1586, at the age of seventy, and was buried at Besançon.

We have dwelt at length on the administration of this remarkable personage, because the period was one of vital importance in the history of the Netherland commonwealth. The minister who deals with the country at an epoch when civil war is imminent, has at least as heavy a responsibility upon his head as the man who goes forth to confront the armed and full-grown rebellion. All the causes out of which the great revolt was born, were in violent operation during the epoch of Granvelle’s power. By the manner in which he comported himself in presence of those dangerous and active elements of the coming convulsions, must his character as a historical personage be measured. His individuality had so much to do with the course of the government, the powers placed in his hands were so vast, and his energy so untiring, that it is difficult to exaggerate the importance of his influence upon the destiny of the country which he was permitted to rule. It is for this reason that we have been at great pains to present his picture, sketched as it were by his own hand. A few general remarks are, however, necessary. It is the historian’s duty to fix upon one plain and definite canvas the chameleon colors in which the subtle cardinal produced his own image. Almost any theory concerning his character might be laid down and sustained by copious citations from his works; nay, the most opposite conclusions as to his interior nature may be often drawn from a single one of his private and interminable letters. Embarked under his guidance, it is often difficult to comprehend the point to which we are tending. The oarsman’s face beams upon us with serenity, but he looks in one direction, and rows in the opposite course. Even thus it was three centuries ago. Was it to be wondered at that many did not see the precipice towards which the bark which held their all was gliding under the same impulse?

No man has ever disputed Granvelle’s talents. From friend and foe his intellect has received the full measure of applause which it could ever claim. No doubt his genius was of a rare and subtle kind. His great power was essentially dramatic in its nature. He mastered the characters of the men with whom he had to deal, and then assumed them. He practiced this art mainly upon personages of exalted station, for his scheme was to govern the world by acquiring dominion over its anointed rulers. A smooth and supple slave in appearance, but, in reality, while his power lasted, the despot of his masters, he exercised boundless control by enacting their parts with such fidelity that they were themselves deceived. It is impossible not to admire the facility with which this accomplished Proteus successively assumed the characters of Philip and of Margaret, through all the complicated affairs and voluminous correspondence of his government.

When envoys of high rank were to be dispatched on confidential missions to Spain, the cardinal drew their instructions as the duchess—threw light upon
their supposed motives in secret letters as the king’s sister—and answered their representations with ponderous wisdom as Philip, transmitting dispatches, letters, and briefs for royal conversations, in time to be thoroughly studied before the advent of the ambassador. Whoever traveled from Brussels to Madrid in order to escape the influence of the ubiquitous cardinal, was sure to be confronted with him in the inmost recesses of the king’s cabinet as soon as he was admitted to an audience. To converse with Philip or Margaret was but to commune with Antony. The skill with which he played his game, seated quietly in his luxurious villa, now stretching forth one long arm to move the king at Madrid, now placing Margaret upon what square he liked, and dealing with bishops, Knights of the Fleece, and lesser dignitaries, the Richardot’s, the Morillon’s, the Viglius’s, and the Berlaymont’s, with sole reference to his own scheme of action, was truly of a nature to excite our special wonder. His aptitude for affairs and his power to read character were extraordinary, but it was necessary that the affairs should be those of a despotism, and the characters of an inferior nature. He could read Philip and Margaret, Egmont or Berlaymont, Alva or Viglius, but he had no plummet to sound the depths of a mind like that of William the Silent. His genius was adroit and subtle, but not profound. He aimed at power by making the powerful subservient, but he had not the intellect which deals in the daylight face to face with great events and great minds. In the violent political struggle of which his administration consisted, he was foiled and thrown by the superior strength of a man whose warfare was open and manly, and who had no defense against the poisoned weapons of his foe.

His literary accomplishments were very great. His fecundity was prodigious, and he wrote at will in seven languages. This polyglot facility was not in itself a very remarkable circumstance, for it grew out of his necessary education and geographical position. Few men in that age and region were limited to their mother tongue. The Prince of Orange, who made no special pretense to learning, possessed at least five languages. Egmont, who was accounted an ignorant man, was certainly familiar with three. The cardinal, however, wrote not only with ease, but with remarkable elegance, vigor, and vivacity, in whatever language he chose to adopt. The style of his letters and other documents, regarded simply as compositions, was inferior to that of no writer of the age. His occasional orations, too, were esteemed models of smooth and flowing rhetoric, at an epoch when the art of eloquence was not much cultivated. Yet it must be allowed that beneath all the shallow but harmonious flow of his periods, it would be idle to search for a grain of golden sand. Not a single sterling, manly thought is to be found in all his productions. If at times our admiration is excited with the appearance of a gem of true philosophy, we are soon obliged to acknowledge, on closer inspection, that we have been deceived by a false glitter. In retirement, his solitude was not relieved by serious application to any branch of knowledge. Devotion to science and to the advancement of learning, a virtue which has changed the infamy of even baser natures than his into glory, never dignified his seclusion. He had elegant tastes, he built fine palaces, he collected paintings, and he discoursed of the fine arts.
with the skill and eloquence of a practiced connoisseur; but the nectared fruits of divine philosophy were but harsh and crabbed to him. His moral characteristics are even more difficult to seize than his intellectual traits. It is a perplexing task to arrive at the intimate interior structure of a nature which hardly had an interior. He did not change, but he presented himself daily in different aspects. Certain peculiarities he possessed, however, which were unquestionable. He was always courageous, generally calm. Placed in the midst of a nation which hated him, exposed to the furious opposition of the most powerful adversaries, having hardly a friend, except the cowardly Viglius and the pluralist Morillon, secretly betrayed by Margaret of Parma, insulted by rude grandees, and threatened by midnight assassins, he never lost his self-possession, his smooth arrogance, his fortitude. He was constitutionally brave. He was not passionate in his resentments. To say that he was forgiving by nature would be an immense error, but that he could put aside vengeance at the dictate of policy is very certain. He could temporize, even after the reception of what he esteemed grave injuries, if the offenders were powerful. He never manifested rancor against the duchess. Even after his fall from power in the Netherlands, he interceded with the pope in favor of the principality of Orange, which the pontiff was disposed to confiscate. The prince was at that time as good a Catholic as the cardinal. He was apparently on good terms with his sovereign, and seemed to have a prosperous career before him. He was not a personage to be quarrelled with. At a later day, when the position of that great man was most clearly defined to the world, the cardinal’s ancient affection for his former friend and pupil did not prevent him from suggesting the famous ban by which a price was set upon his head, and his life placed in the hands of every assassin in Europe. It did not prevent him from indulging in the jocularity of a fiend, when the news of the first-fruits of that bounty upon murder reached his ears. It did not prevent him from laughing merrily at the pain which his old friend must have suffered, shot through the head and face with a musket ball, and at the mutilated aspect which his “handsome face must have presented to the eyes of his apostate wife.” It did not prevent him from stoutly disbelieving and then refusing to be comforted, when the recovery of the illustrious victim was announced. He could always dissemble without entirely forgetting his grievances. Certainly, if he were the forgiving Christian he pictured himself, it is passing strange to reflect open the ultimate fate of Egmont, Horn, Montigny, Berghen, Orange, and a host of others, whose relations with him were inimical.

His extravagance was enormous, and his life luxurious. At the same time he could leave his brother Champagny—a man, with all his faults, of a noble nature, and with scarcely inferior talents to his own—to languish for a long time in abject poverty, supported by the charity of an ancient domestic. His greediness for wealth was proverbial. No benefice was too large or too paltry to escape absorption, if placed within his possible reach. Loaded with places and preferments, rolling in wealth, he approached his sovereign with the whine of a mendicant. He talked of his property as a "misery" when he asked for boons, and expressed his thanks in the language of a slave when he received
them. Having obtained the abbey of St. Armand, he could hardly wait for the burial of the bishop of Tourney before claiming the vast revenues of Afflighem, assuring the king as he did so that his annual income was but 18,000 crowns. At the same time, while thus receiving or pursuing the vast rents of St. Armand and Afflighem, he could seize the abbey of Trulle from the expectant hands of poor dependents, and accept tapestries and hogsheads of wine from Jacques Lequien and others, as a tax on the benefices which he procured for them. Yet the man who, like his father before him, had so long fattened on the public money, who at an early day had incurred the Emperor’s sharp reproof for his covetousness, whose family, beside all these salaries and personal property, possessed already fragments of the royal domain, in the shape of nineteen baronies and seignories in Burgundy, besides the county of Cantecroix and other estates in the Netherlands, had the effrontery to affirm, "We have always rather regarded the service of the master than our own particular profit."

In estimating the conduct of the minister, in relation to the provinces, we are met upon the threshold by a swarm of vague assertions which are of a nature to blind or distract the judgment. His character must be judged as a whole, and by its general results, with a careful allowance for contradictions and equivocations. Truth is clear and single, but the lights are parti-colored and refracted in the prism of hypocrisy. The great feature of his administration was a prolonged conflict between himself and the leading seigniors of the Netherlands. The ground of the combat was the religious question. Let the quarrel be turned or tortured in any manner that human ingenuity can devise, it still remains unquestionable that Granvelle’s main object was to strengthen and to extend the inquisition, that of his adversaries to overthrow the institution. It followed, necessarily, that the ancient charters were to be trampled in the dust before that tribunal could be triumphant. The nobles, although all Catholics, defended the cause of the poor religious martyrs, the privileges of the nation, and the rights of their order. They were conservatives, battling for the existence of certain great facts, entirely consonant to any theory of justice and divine reason—for ancient constitutions which had been purchased with blood and treasure. "I will maintain," was the motto of William of Orange. Philip, bigoted and absolute almost beyond comprehension, might perhaps have proved impervious to any representations, even of Granvelle. Nevertheless, the minister might have attempted the task, and the responsibility is heavy upon the man who shared the power and directed the career, but who never ceased to represent the generous resistance of individuals to frantic cruelty, as offenses against God and the king.

Yet extracts are drawn from his letters to prove that he considered the Spaniards as “proud and usurping,” that he indignantly denied ever having been in favor of subjecting the Netherlands to the soldiers of that nation, that he recommended the withdrawal of the foreign regiments, and that he advised the king, when he came to the country, to bring with him but few Spanish troops. It should, however, be remembered that he employed, according to his own statements, every expedient which human ingenuity could suggest to keep the foreign soldiers in the provinces, that he “lamented to his inmost soul” their
forced departure, and that he did not consent to that measure until the people were in a tumult, and the Zealanders threatening to lay the country under the ocean. "You may judge of the means employed to excite the people," he wrote to Perez in 1563, "by the fact that a report is circulated that the Duke of Alva is coming hither to tyrannize the provinces." Yet it appears by the admission of Del Ryo, one of Alva’s blood council, that, "Cardinal Granvelle expressly advised that an army of Spaniards should be sent to the Netherlands, to maintain the obedience to his Majesty and the Catholic religion, and that the Duke of Alva was appointed chief by the advice of Cardinal Spinosa, and by that of Cardinal Granvelle, as appeared by many letters written at the time to his friends." By the same confessions, it appeared that the course of policy thus distinctly recommended by Granvelle, "was to place the country under a system of government like that of Spain and Italy, and to induce it entirely under the council of Spain." When the terrible duke started on his errand of blood and fire, the cardinal addressed him a letter of fulsome flattery, protesting "that all the world knew that no person could be found so appropriate as he, to be employed in an affair of such importance," urging him to advance with his army as rapidly as possible upon the Netherlands, hoping that "the Duchess of Parma would not be allowed to consent that any pardon or concession should be made to the cities, by which the construction of fortresses would be interfered with, or the revocation of the charters which had been forfeited be prevented," and giving him much advice as to the general pleasures to be adopted, and the persons to be employed upon his arrival, in which number the infamous Noirarmes was especially recommended.

In a document found among his papers, these same points, with others, were handled at considerable length. The incorporation of the provinces into one kingdom, of which the king was to be crowned absolute sovereign; the establishment of a universal law for the Catholic religion, care being taken not to call that law inquisition, "because there was nothing so odious to the northern nations as the word Spanish Inquisition, although the thing in itself be most holy and just"; the abolition and annihilation of the broad or general council in the cities, the only popular representation in the country; the construction of many citadels and fortresses to be garrisoned with Spaniards, Italians, and Germans. Such were the leading features in that remarkable paper.

The manly and open opposition of the nobles was stigmatized as a cabal by the offended priest. He repeatedly whispered in the royal ear that their league was a treasonable conspiracy which the attorney-general ought to prosecute, that the seigniors meant to subvert entirely the authority of the Sovereign; that they meant to put their king under tutelage, to compel him to obey all their commands, to choose another prince of the blood for their chief, to establish a republic by the aid of foreign troops. If such insinuations, distilled thus secretly into the ear of Philip, who, like his predecessor, Dionysius, took pleasure in listening daily to charges against his subjects and to the groans of his prisoners, were not likely to engender a dangerous gangrene in the royal mind, it would...
be difficult to indicate any course which would produce such a result. Yet the cardinal maintained that he had never done the gentlemen ill service, but that "they were angry with him for wishing to sustain the authority of the master." In almost every letter he expressed vague generalities of excuse, or even approbation, while he chronicled each daily fact which occurred to their discredit. The facts he particularly implored the king to keep to himself, the vague laudation he as urgently requested him to repeat to those interested. Perpetually dropping small innuendos like pebbles into the depths of his master’s suspicious soul, he knew that at last the waters of bitterness would overflow, but he turned an eversmiling face upon those who were to be his victims. There was ever something in his irony like the bland request of the inquisitor to the executioner that he would deal with his prisoners gently. There was about the same result in regard to such a prayer to be expected from Philip as from the hangman. Even if his criticisms had been uniformly indulgent, the position of the nobles and leading citizens thus subjected to a constant but secret superintendence, would have been too galling to be tolerated. They did not know, so precisely as we have learned after three centuries, that all their idle words and careless gestures as well as their graver proceedings, were kept in a noting book to be pored over and conned by rote in the recesses of the royal cabinet and the royal mind; but they suspected the espionage of the cardinal, and they openly charged him with his secret malignity.

The men who refused to burn their fellow creatures for a difference in religious opinion were stigmatized as demagogues, as ruined spendthrifts who wished to escape from their liabilities in the midst of revolutionary confusion, as disguised heretics who were waiting for a good opportunity to reveal their true characters. Montigny, who, as a Montmorency, was nearly allied to the Constable and Admiral of France, and was in epistolary correspondence with those relatives, was held up as a Huguenot, of course, therefore, in Philip’s eye, the most monstrous of malefactors.

Although no man could strew pious reflections and holy texts more liberally, yet there was always an afterthought even in his most edifying letters. A corner of the mask is occasionally lifted and the deadly face of slow but abiding vengeance is revealed. "I know very well," he wrote, soon after his fall, to Viglius, "that vengeance is the Lord’s—God is my witness that I pardon all the past." In the same letter, nevertheless, he added, "My theology, however, does not teach me, that by enduring, one is to enable one’s enemies to commit even greater wrongs. If the royal justice is not soon put into play, I shall be obliged to right myself. This thing is going on too long—patience exhausted changes to fury. ’Tis necessary that every man should assist himself as he can, and when I choose to throw the game into confusion I shall do it perhaps more notably than the others." A few weeks afterwards, writing to the same correspondent, he observed, "We shall have to turn again, and rejoice together. Whatever the king commands I shall do, even were I to march into the fire, whatever happens, and without fear or respect for any person. I mean to remain the same man to the end—Durate—and I have a head that is hard enough when I do
undertake anything—\textit{nec animum despondeo."} Here, certainly, was significant foreshadowing of the general wrath to come, and it was therefore of less consequence that the portraits painted by him of Berghen, Horn, Montigny, and others, were so rarely relieved by the more flattering tints which he occasionally mingled with the somber coloring of his other pictures. Especially with regard to Count Egmont, his conduct was somewhat perplexing and, at first sight, almost inscrutable. That nobleman had been most violent in opposition to his course, had drawn a dagger upon him, had frequently covered him with personal abuse, and had crowned his offensive conduct by the invention of the memorable fool’s-cap livery. Yet the cardinal usually spoke of him with pity and gentle consideration, described him as really well disposed in the main, as misled by others, as a "friend of smoke," who might easily be gained by flattery and bribery. When there was question of the count’s going to Madrid, the cardinal renewed his compliments with additional expression of eagerness that they should be communicated to their object. Whence all this Christian meekness in the author of the ban against Orange and the eulogist of Alva? The true explanation of this endurance on the part of the cardinal lies in the estimate which he had formed of Egmont’s character. Granvelle had taken the man’s measure, and even he could not foresee the unparalleled cruelty and dullness which were eventually to characterize Philip’s conduct towards him. On the contrary, there was every reason why the cardinal should see in the count a personage whom brilliant services, illustrious rank, and powerful connections, had marked for a prosperous future. It was even currently asserted that Philip was about to create him governor-general of the Netherlands, in order to detach him entirely from Orange, and to bind him more closely to the Crown. He was, therefore, a man to be forgiven. Nothing apparently but a suspicion of heresy could damage the prospects of the great noble, and Egmont was orthodox beyond all peradventure. He was even a bigot in the Catholic faith. He had privately told the Duchess of Parma that he had always been desirous of seeing the edicts thoroughly enforced, and he denounced as enemies all those persons who charged him with ever having been in favor of mitigating the system. "He was reported, to be sure, at about the time of Granvelle’s departure from the Netherlands, to have said "\textit{post pocula, that the quarrel was not with the cardinal, but with the king, who was administering the public affairs very badly, even in the matter of religion.}"

Such a bravado, however, uttered by a gentleman in his cups, when flushed with a recent political triumph, could hardly outweigh in the cautious calculations of Granvelle, distinct admissions in favor of persecution. Egmont in truth stood in fear of the inquisition. The hero of Gravelingen and St. Quentin actually trembled before Peter Titelmann. Moreover, notwithstanding all that had past, he had experienced a change in his sentiments in regard to the cardinal. He frequently expressed the opinion that, although his presence in the Netherlands was inadmissible, he should be glad to see him pope. He had expressed strong disapprobation of the buffooning masquerade by which he had been ridiculed at the Mansfeld christening party. When at Madrid he not only spoke well of Granvelle himself, but would allow nothing disparaging
concerning him to be uttered in his presence. When, however, Egmont had fallen from favor, and was already a prisoner, the cardinal diligently exerted himself to place under the king’s eye what he considered the most damning evidence of the count’s imaginary treason, a document with which the public prosecutor had not been made acquainted. Thus, it will be seen by this retrospect how difficult it is to seize all the shifting subtleties of this remarkable character. His sophisms, even when self-contradictory, are so adroit that they are often hard to parry. He made a great merit to himself for not having originated the new episcopates, but it should be remembered that he did his utmost to enforce the measure, which was "so holy a scheme that he would sacrifice for its success his fortune and his life." He refused the archbishopric of Mechlin, but his motives for so doing were entirely sordid. His revenues were for the moment diminished, while his personal distinction was not, in his opinion, increased by the promotion. He refused to accept it because "it was no addition to his dignity, as he was already Cardinal and Bishop of Arras," but in this statement he committed an important anachronism. He was not cardinal when he refused the see of Mechlin; having received the red hat upon February 26, 1561, and having already accepted the archbishopric in May of the preceding year. He affirmed that "no man would more resolutely defend the liberty and privileges of the provinces than he would do," but he preferred being tyrannized by his prince to maintaining the joyful entrance. He complained of the insolence of the states in meddling with the supplies; he denounced the convocation of the representative bodies, by whose action alone, what there was of "liberty and privilege" in the land could be guarded; he recommended the entire abolition of the common councils in the cities. He described himself as having always combated the opinion that "any thing could be accomplished by terror, death, and violence," yet he recommended the mission of Alva, in whom "terror, death, and violence" were incarnate. He was indignant that he should be accused of having advised the introduction of the Spanish inquisition, but his reason was that the term sounded disagreeably in northern ears, while the thing was most commendable. He manifested much anxiety that the public should be disabused of their fear of the Spanish inquisition, but he was the indefatigable supporter of the Netherland inquisition, which Philip declared with reason to be "the more pitiless institution" of the two. He was the author, not of the edicts, but of their re-enactment, verbally and literally, in all the horrid extent to which they had been carried by Charles V, and had recommended the use of the Emperor’s name to sanctify the infernal scheme. He busied himself personally in the execution of these horrible laws, even when judge and hangman slackened. To the last he denounced all those "who should counsel his Majesty to permit a moderation of the edicts," and warned the king that if he should consent to the least mitigation of their provisions, things would go worse in the provinces than in France. He was diligent in establishing the reinforced episcopal inquisition side by side with these edicts, and with the papal inquisition already in full operation. He omitted no occasion of encouraging the industry of all these various branches in the business of
persecution. When at last the loud cry from the oppressed inhabitants of Flanders was uttered in unanimous denunciation by the four estates of that province of the infamous Titelmann, the cardinal’s voice, from the depths of his luxurious solitude, was heard, not in sympathy with the poor innocent wretches, who were daily dragged from their humble homes to perish by sword and fire, but in pity for the inquisitor who was doing the work of hell. "I deeply regret," he wrote to Viglius, "that the states of Flanders should be pouting at inquisitor Titelmann. Truly he has good zeal, although sometimes indiscreet and noisy; still he must be supported, lest they put a bridle upon him, by which his authority will be quite enervated.” The reader who is acquainted with the personality of Peter Titelmann can decide as to the real benignity of the joyous epicurean who could thus commend and encourage such a monster of cruelty. If popularity be a test of merit in a public man, it certainly could not be claimed by the cardinal. From the moment when Gresham declared him to be “hated of all men,” down to the period of his departure, the odium resting upon him had been rapidly extending. He came to the country with two grave accusations resting upon his name. The Emperor Maximilian asserted that the cardinal had attempted to take his life by poison, and he persisted in the truth of the charge thus made by him, till the day of his death. Another accusation was more generally credited. He was the author of the memorable forgery by which the Landgrave Philip of Hesse had been entrapped into his long imprisonment. His course in and towards the Netherlands has been sufficiently examined. Not a single charge has been made lightly, but only after careful sifting of evidence. Moreover they are all sustained mainly from the criminal’s own lips. Yet when the secrecy of the Spanish cabinet and the Machiavellian scheme of policy by which the age was characterized are considered, it is not strange that there should have been misunderstandings and contradictions with regard to the man’s character till a full light had been thrown upon it by the disinterment of ancient documents. The word “Durate,” which was the cardinal’s device, may well be inscribed upon his mask, which has at last been torn aside, but which was formed of such durable materials, that it has deceived the world for three centuries.

Part Two
Administration of the Duchess Margaret
Chapters 5-7

**Chapter 5**  Persecutions and Resistance

**Chapter 6**  Continued Conflicts and Field-Preaching in the Netherlands

**Chapter 7**  The Destruction of the Idols

---

**CHAPTER 5**

**Persecutions and Resistance**

The remainder of the year, in the spring of which the cardinal had left the Netherlands, was one of anarchy, confusion, and corruption. At first there had been a sensation of relief. Philip had exchanged letters of exceeding amity with Orange, Egmont, and Horn. These three seigniors had written, immediately upon Granvelle’s retreat, to assure the king of their willingness to obey the royal commands, and to resume their duties at the state council. They had, however, assured the duchess that the reappearance of the cardinal in the country would be the signal for their instantaneous withdrawal.

They appeared at the council daily, working with the utmost assiduity often till late into the night. Orange had three great objects in view, by attaining which, the country, in his opinion, might yet be saved and the threatened convulsions averted. These were to convocate the states-general, to moderate or abolish the edicts, and to suppress the council of finance and the privy council, leaving only the council of state. The two first of these points, if gained, would, of course, subvert the whole absolute policy which Philip and Granvelle had enforced; it was, therefore, hardly probable that any impression would be made upon the secret determination of the government in these respects. As to the council of state, the limited powers of that body, under the administration of the cardinal, had formed one of the principal complaints against that minister. The justice and finance councils were sinks of iniquity. The most barefaced depravity reigned supreme.

A gangrene had spread through the whole government. The public functionaries were notoriously and outrageously venal. The administration of justice had
been poisoned at the fountain, and the people were unable to slake their daily thirst at the polluted stream. There was no law but the law of the longest purse. The highest dignitaries of Philip’s appointment had become the most mercenary hucksters who ever converted the divine temple of justice into a den of thieves. Law was an article of merchandise, sold by judges to the highest bidder. A poor customer could obtain nothing but stripes and imprisonment, or, if tainted with suspicion of heresy, the fagot or the sword, but for the rich everything was attainable. Pardons for the most atrocious crimes, passports, safe conducts, offices of trust and honor, were disposed of at auction to the highest bidder.

Against all this sea of corruption did the brave William of Orange set his breast, undaunted and unflinching. Of all the conspicuous men in the land, he was the only one whose worst enemy had never hinted through the whole course of his public career, that his hands had known contamination. His honor was ever un tarnished by even a breath of suspicion. The cardinal could accuse him of pecuniary embarrassment, by which a large proportion of his revenues were necessarily diverted to the liquidation of his debts, but he could not suggest that the prince had ever freed himself from difficulties by plunging his hands into the public treasury, when it might easily have been opened to him.

It was soon, however, sufficiently obvious that as desperate a struggle was to be made with the many-headed monster of general corruption as with the cardinal by whom it had been so long fed and governed. The prince was accused of ambition and intrigue. It was said that he was determined to concentrate all the powers of government in the state council, which was thus to become an omnipotent and irresponsible senate, while the king would be reduced to the condition of a Venetian doge. It was, of course, suggested that it was the aim of Orange to govern the new Tribunal of Ten.

No doubt the prince was ambitious. Birth, wealth, genius, and virtue could not have been bestowed in such eminent degree on any man without carrying with them the determination to assert their value. It was not his wish so much as it was the necessary law of his being to impress himself upon his age and to rule his fellow men. But he practiced no arts to arrive at the supremacy which he felt must always belong to him, whatever might be his nominal position in the political hierarchy. He was already, although but just turned of thirty years, vastly changed from the brilliant and careless grandee, as he stood at the hour of the imperial abdication. He was becoming careworn in face, thin of figure, sleepless of habit. The wrongs of which he was the daily witness, the absolutism, the cruelty, the rottenness of the government, had marked his face with premature furrows. "They say that the prince is very sad," wrote Morillon to Granvelle, "and 'tis easy to read as much in his face. They say he can not sleep." Truly might the monarch have taken warning that here was a man who was dangerous, and who thought too much. "Sleekheaded men, and such as slept o’ nights," would have been more eligible functionaries, no doubt, in the
royal estimation, but, for a brief period, the king was content to use, to watch, and to suspect the man who was one day to be his great and invincible antagonist. He continued assiduous at the council, and he did his best, by entertaining nobles and citizens at his hospitable mansion, to cultivate good relations with large numbers of his countrymen. He soon, however, had become disgusted with the court. Egmont was more lenient to the foul practices which prevailed there, and took almost a childish pleasure in dining at the table of the duchess, dressed, as were many of the younger nobles, in short camlet doublet with the wheat-sheaf buttons.

The prince felt more unwilling to compromise his personal dignity by countenancing the flagitious proceedings and the contemptible supremacy of Armenteros, and it was soon very obvious, therefore, that Egmont was a greater favorite at court than Orange. At the same time the count was also diligently cultivating the good graces of the middle and lower classes in Brussels, shooting with the burghers at the popinjay, calling every man by his name, and assisting at jovial banquets in town-house or guild-hall. The prince, although at times a necessary partaker also in these popular amusements, could find small cause for rejoicing in the aspect of affairs. When his business led him to the palace, he was sometimes forced to wait in the ante-chamber for an hour, while Secretary Armenteros was engaged in private consultation with Margaret upon the most important matters of administration. It could not be otherwise than galling to the pride and offensive to the patriotism of the prince, to find great public transactions entrusted to such hands. Thomas de Armenteros was a mere private secretary—a simple clerk. He had no right to have cognizance of important affairs, which could only come before his Majesty’s sworn advisers. He was moreover an infamous peculator. He was rolling up a fortune with great rapidity by his shameless traffic in benefices, charges, offices, whether of church or state. His name of Armenteros was popularly converted into Argenteros, in order to symbolize the man who was made of public money. His confidential intimacy with the duchess procured for him also the name of "Madam’s barber," in allusion to the famous ornaments of Margaret’s upper lip, and to the celebrated influence enjoyed by the barbers of the duke of Savoy, and of Louis XI. This man sold dignities and places of high responsibility at public auction.

The regent not only connived at these proceedings, which would have been base enough, but she was full partner in the disgraceful commerce. Through the agency of the secretary, she, too, was amassing a large private fortune. "The duchess has gone into the business of vending places to the highest bidders," said Morillon, "with the bit between her teeth." The spectacle presented at the council-board was often sufficiently repulsive not only to the cardinalists, who were treated with elaborate insolence, but to all men who loved honor and justice, or who felt an interest in the prosperity of government. There was nothing majestic in the appearance of the duchess, as she sat conversing apart with Armenteros, whispering, pinching, giggling, or
disputing, while important affairs of state were debated, concerning which the secretary had no right to be informed. It was inevitable that Orange should be offended to the utmost by such proceedings, although he was himself treated with comparative respect. As for the ancient adherents of Granvelle, the Bordey’s, Bave’s, and Morillon’s, they were forbidden by the favorite even to salute him in the streets.

Berlaymont was treated by the duchess with studied insult. "What is the man talking about?" she would ask with languid superciliousness, if he attempted to express his opinion in the state-council. Viglius, whom Berlaymont accused of doing his best, without success, to make his peace with the seigniors, was in even still greater disgrace than his fellow cardinalists. He longed, he said, to be in Burgundy, drinking Granvelle’s good wine. His patience under the daily insults which he received from the government made him despicable in the eyes of his own party. He was described by his friends as pusillanimous to an incredible extent, timid from excess of riches, afraid of his own shadow. He was becoming exceedingly pathetic, expressing frequently a desire to depart and end his days in peace. His faithful Hopper sustained and consoled him, but even Joachim could not soothe his sorrows when he reflected that after all the work performed by himself and colleagues, "they had only been beating the bush for others," while their own share in the spoils had been withheld. Nothing could well be more contumelious than Margaret’s treatment of the learned Frisian. When other councillors were summoned to a session at three o’clock, the president was invited at four. It was quite impossible for him to have an audience of the duchess except in the presence of the inevitable Armenteros. He was not allowed to open his mouth, even when he occasionally plucked up heart enough to attempt the utterance of his opinions. His authority was completely dead. Even if he essayed to combat the convocation of the states-general by the arguments which the duchess, at his suggestion, had often used for the purpose, he was treated with the same indifference. "The poor President," wrote Granvelle to the king’s chief secretary, Gonzalo Perez, "is afraid, as I hear, to speak a word, and is made to write exactly what they tell him." At the same time the poor president, thus maltreated and mortified, had the vanity occasionally to imagine himself a bold and formidable personage. The man whom his most intimate friends described as afraid of his own shadow, described himself to Granvelle as one who went his own gait, speaking his mind frankly upon every opportunity, and compelling people to fear him a little, even if they did not love him. But the cardinal knew better than to believe in this magnanimous picture of the doctor’s fancy.

Viglius was anxious to retire, but unwilling to have the appearance of being disgraced. He felt instinctively, although deceived as to the actual facts, that his great patron had been defeated and banished. He did not wish to be placed in the same position. He was desirous, as he piously expressed himself, of withdrawing from the world, "that he might balance his accounts with the Lord, before leaving the lodgings of life." He was, however, disposed to please "the
master" as well as the Lord. He wished to have the royal permission to depart in peace. In his own lofty language, he wished to be sprinkled on taking his leave "with the holy water of the court." Moreover, he was fond of his salary, although he disliked the sarcasms of the duchess.

Egmont and others had advised him to abandon the office of president to Hopper, in order, as he was getting feeble, to reserve his whole strength for the state-council. Viglius did not at all relish the proposition. He said that by giving up the seals, and with them the rank and salary which they conferred, he should become a deposed saint. He had no inclination, as long as he remained on the ground at all, to part with those emoluments and honors, and to be converted merely into the "ass of the state-council." He had, however, with the sagacity of an old navigator, already thrown out his anchor into the best holding ground during the storms which he foresaw were soon to sweep the state. Before the close of the year which now occupies us, the learned doctor of laws had become a doctor of divinity also, and had already secured, by so doing, the wealthy prebend of Saint Bavon of Ghent. This would be a consolation in the loss of secular dignities, and a recompense for the cold looks of the duchess.

He did not scruple to ascribe the pointed dislike which Margaret manifested towards him to the awe in which she stood of his stern integrity of character. The true reason why Armenteros and the duchess disliked him was because, in his own words, "he was not of their mind with regard to lotteries, the sale of offices, advancement to abbeys, and many other things of the kind, by which they were in such a hurry to make their fortune." Upon another occasion he observed, in a letter to Granvelle, that "all offices were sold to the highest bidder, and that the cause of Margaret's resentment against both the cardinal and himself was, that they had so long prevented her from making the profit which she was now doing from the sale of benefices, offices, and other favors."

The duchess, on her part, characterized the proceedings and policy, both past and present, of the cardinalists as factious, corrupt, and selfish in the last degree. She assured her brother that the simony, rapine, and dishonesty of Granvelle, Viglius, and all their followers, had brought affairs into the ruinous condition which was then but too apparent. They were doing their best, she said, since the cardinal's departure, to show, by their sloth and opposition, that they were determined to allow nothing to prosper in his absence. To quote her own vigorous expression to Philip, "Viglius made her suffer the pains of hell." She described him as perpetually resisting the course of the administration, and she threw out dark suspicions, not only as to his honesty but his orthodoxy. Philip lent a greedy ear to these scandalous hints concerning the late omnipotent minister and his friends.

It is an instructive lesson in human history to look through the cloud of dissimulation in which the actors of this remarkable epoch were ever
enveloped, and to watch them all stabbing fiercely at each other in the dark, with no regard to previous friendship, or even present professions. It is edifying to see the cardinal, with all his genius and all his grimace, corresponding on familiar terms with Armenteros, who was holding him up to obloquy upon all occasions; to see Philip inclining his ear in pleased astonishment to Margaret’s disclosures concerning the cardinal, whom he was at the very instant assuring of his undiminished confidence; and to see Viglius, the author of the edict of 1550, and the uniform opponent of any mitigation in its horrors, silently becoming involved without the least suspicion of the fact in the meshes of inquisitor Titelmann.

Upon Philip's eager solicitations for further disclosures, Margaret accordingly informed her brother of additional facts communicated to her, after oaths of secrecy had been exchanged, by Titelmann and his colleague del Canto. They had assured her, she said, that there were grave doubts touching the orthodoxy of Viglius. He had consorted with heretics during a large portion of his life, and had put many suspicious persons into office. As to his nepotism, simony, and fraud, there was no doubt at all. He had richly provided all his friends and relations in Friesland with benefices. He had become in his old age a priest and churchman, in order to snatch the provostship of Saint Bavon, although his infirmities did not allow him to say mass, or even to stand erect at the altar. The inquisitors had further accused him of having stolen rings, jewels, plate, linen, beds, tapestry, and other furniture, from the establishment, all which property he had sent to Friesland, and of having seized 10,000 florins in ready money which had belonged to the last abbé—an act consequently of pure embezzlement. The duchess afterwards transmitted to Philip an inventory of the plundered property, including the furniture of nine houses, and begged him to command Viglius to make instant restitution. If there be truth in the homely proverb, that in case of certain quarrels honest men recover their rights, it is perhaps equally certain that when distinguished public personages attack each other, historians may arrive at the truth. Here certainly are edifying pictures of the corruption of the Spanish regency in the Netherlands, painted by the president of the state-council, and of the dishonesty of the president painted by the regent.

A remarkable tumult occurred in October of this year, at Antwerp. A Carmelite monk, Christopher Smith, commonly called Fabricius, had left a monastery in Bruges, adopted the principles of the Reformation, and taken to himself a wife. He had resided for a time in England, but, invited by his friends, he had afterwards undertaken the dangerous charge of gospel-teacher in the commercial metropolis of the Netherlands. He was, however, soon betrayed to the authorities by a certain bonnet dealer, popularly called Long Margaret, who had pretended, for the sake of securing the informer’s fee, to be a convert to his doctrines.
He was seized, and immediately put to the torture. He manfully refused to betray any members of his congregation, as manfully avowed and maintained his religious creed. He was condemned to the flames, and during the interval which preceded his execution, he comforted his friends by letters of advice, religious consolation, and encouragement, which he wrote from his dungeon. He sent a message to the woman who had betrayed him, assuring her of his forgiveness, and exhorting her to repentance. His calmness, wisdom, and gentleness excited the admiration of all. When, therefore, this humble imitator of Christ was led through the streets of Antwerp to the stake, the popular emotion was at once visible.

To the multitude who thronged about the executioners with threatening aspect, he addressed an urgent remonstrance that they would not compromise their own safety by a tumult in his cause. He invited all, however, to remain steadfast to the great truth for which he was about to lay down his life. The crowd, as they followed the procession of hangmen, halberdmen, and magistrates, sang the 130th Psalm in full chorus. As the victim arrived upon the market-place, he knelt upon the ground to pray, for the last time. He was, however, rudely forced to rise by the executioner, who immediately chained him to the stake, and fastened a leathern strap around his throat. At this moment the popular indignation became uncontrollable; stones were showered upon the magistrates and soldiers, who, after a slight resistance, fled for their lives. The foremost of the insurgents dashed into the enclosed arena to rescue the prisoner. It was too late. The executioner, even as he fled, had crushed the victim’s head with a sledgehammer, and pierced him through and through with a poniard.

Some of the bystanders maintained afterwards that his fingers and lips were seen to move, as if in feeble prayer, for a little time longer, until, as the fire mounted, he fell into the flames. For the remainder of the day, after the fire had entirely smoldered to ashes, the charred and half-consumed body of the victim remained on the market-place, a ghastly spectacle to friend and foe. It was afterwards bound to a stone and cast into the Scheld. Such was the doom of Christopher Fabricius, for having preached Christianity in Antwerp. During the night, an anonymous placard, written with blood, was posted upon the wall of the town-house, stating that there were men in the city who would signally avenge his murder. Nothing was done, however, towards the accomplishment of the threat. The king, when he received the intelligence of the transaction, was furious with indignation, and wrote savage letters to his sister, commanding instant vengeance to be taken upon all concerned in so foul a riot. As one of the persons engaged had, however, been arrested and immediately hanged, and as the rest had effected their escape, the affair was suffered to drop.

The scenes of outrage, the frantic persecutions, were fast becoming too horrible to be looked upon by Catholic or Calvinist. The prisons swarmed with
victims, the streets were thronged with processions to the stake. The population of thriving cities, particularly in Flanders, were maddened by the spectacle of so much barbarity inflicted, not upon criminals, but usually upon men remarkable for propriety of conduct and blameless lives. It was precisely at this epoch that the burgomasters, senators, and council of the city of Bruges (all Catholics) humbly represented to the duchess regent, that Peter Titelmann, inquisitor of the Faith, against all forms of law, was daily exercising inquisition among the inhabitants, not only against those suspected or accused of heresy, but against all, however untainted their characters; that he was daily citing before him whatever persons he liked, men or women, compelling them by force to say whatever it pleased him; that he was dragging people from their houses, and even from the sacred precincts of the church; often in revenge for verbal injuries to himself, always under pretext of heresy, and without form or legal warrant of any kind. They therefore begged that he might be compelled to make use of preparatory examinations with the cooperation of the senators of the city, to suffer that witnesses should make their depositions without being intimidated by menace, and to conduct all his subsequent proceedings according to legal forms, which he had uniformly violated; publicly declaring that he would conduct himself according to his own pleasure. The four estates of Flanders having, in a solemn address to the king, represented the same facts, concluded their brief but vigorous description of Titelmann’s enormities by calling upon Philip to suppress these horrible practices, so manifestly in violation of the ancient charters which he had sworn to support. It may be supposed that the appeal to Philip would be more likely to call down a royal benediction than the reproof solicited upon the inquisitor’s head. In the privy council, the petitions and remonstrances were read, and, in the words of the president, “found to be in extremely bad taste.” In the debate which followed, Viglius and his friends recalled to the duchess, in earnest language, the decided will of the king, which had been so often expressed. A faint representation was made, on the other hand, of the dangerous consequences, in case the people were driven to a still deeper despair. The result of the movement was but meager. The duchess announced that she could do nothing in the matter of the request until further information, but that meantime she had charged Titelmann to conduct himself in his office “with discretion and modesty.” The discretion and modesty, however, never appeared in any modification of the inquisitor’s proceedings, and he continued unchecked in his infamous career until death, which did not occur till several years afterwards. In truth, Margaret was herself in mortal fear of this horrible personage. He besieged her chamber door almost daily, before she had risen, insisting upon audiences which, notwithstanding her repugnance to the man, she did not dare to refuse. “May I perish,” said Morillon, “if she does not stand in exceeding awe of Titelmann. Under such circumstances, sustained by the King in Spain, the Duchess in Brussels, the privy council, and by a leading member of what had been thought the liberal party, it was not difficult for the
inquisition to maintain its ground, notwithstanding the solemn protestations of the estates and the suppressed curses of the people.

Philip, so far from having the least disposition to yield in the matter of the great religious persecution, was more determined as to his course than ever. He had already, as early as August of this year, dispatched orders to the duchess that the decrees of the Council of Trent should be published and enforced throughout the Netherlands. The memorable quarrel as to precedency between the French and Spanish delegates had given some hopes of a different determination. Nevertheless, those persons who imagined that, in consequence of this quarrel of etiquette, Philip would slacken in his allegiance to the Church, were destined to be bitterly mistaken. He informed his sister that, in the common cause of Christianity, he should not be swayed by personal resentments. How, indeed, could a different decision be expected? His envoy at Rome, as well as his representatives at the council, had universally repudiated all doubts as to the sanctity of its decrees.

“To doubt the infallibility of the council, as some have dared to do,” said Francis de Vargas, “and to think it capable of error, is the most devilish heresy of all. Nothing could so much disturb and scandalize the world as such a sentiment. Therefore the Archbishop of Granada told, very properly, the bishop of Tortosa, that if he should express such an opinion in Spain, they would burn him.” These strenuous notions were shared by the king. Therefore, although all Europe was on tip-toe with expectation to see how Philip would avenge himself for the slight put upon his ambassador, Philip disappointed all Europe.

In August 1564, he wrote to the duchess regent that the decrees were to be proclaimed and enforced without delay. They related to three subjects—the doctrines to be inculcated by the Church, the reformation of ecclesiastical morals, and the education of the people. General police regulations were issued at the same time, by which heretics were to be excluded from all share in the usual conveniences of society, and were in fact to be strictly excommunicated. Inns were to receive no guests, schools no children, almshouses no paupers, graveyards no dead bodies, unless guests, children, paupers, and dead bodies were furnished with the most satisfactory proofs of orthodoxy. Midwives of unsuspected Romanism were alone to exercise their functions, and were bound to give notice within twenty-four hours of every birth which occurred; the parish clerks were as regularly to record every such addition to the population, and the authorities to see that Catholic baptism was administered in each case with the least possible delay. Births, deaths, and marriages could only occur with validity under the shadow of the Church. No human being could consider himself born or defunct unless provided with a priest’s certificate. The heretic was excluded, so far as ecclesiastical dogma could exclude him, from the pale of humanity, from consecrated earth, and from eternal salvation.
The decrees contained many provisions which not only conflicted with the privileges of the provinces, but with the prerogatives of the sovereign. For this reason many of the lords in council thought that at least the proper exceptions should be made upon their promulgation. This was also the opinion of the duchess, but the king, by his letters of October and November (1564), expressly prohibited any alteration in the ordinances, and transmitted a copy of the form according to which the canons had been published in Spain, together with the expression of his desire that a similar course should be followed in the Netherlands.

Margaret of Parma was in great embarrassment. It was evident that the publication could no longer be deferred. Philip had issued his commands, but grave senators and learned doctors of the university had advised strongly in favor of the necessary exceptions. The extreme party, headed by Viglius, were in favor of carrying out the royal decisions. They were overruled, and the duchess was induced to attempt a modification, if her brother’s permission could be obtained. The president expressed the opinion that the decrees, even with the restrictions proposed, would “give no contentment to the people, who, moreover, had no right to meddle with theology.” The excellent Viglius forgot, however, that theology had been meddling altogether too much with the people to make it possible that the public attention should be entirely averted from the subject. Men and women who might be daily summoned to rack, stake, and scaffold, in the course of these ecclesiastical arrangements, and whose births, deaths, marriages, and position in the next world, were now to be formally decided upon, could hardly be taxed with extreme indiscretion, if they did meddle with the subject.

In the dilemma to which the duchess was reduced, she again bethought herself of a special mission to Spain. At the end of the year (1564), it was determined that Egmont should be the envoy. Montigny excused himself on account of private affairs, Marquis Berghen “because of his indisposition and corpulence.” There was a stormy debate in council after Egmont had accepted the mission and immediately before his departure. Viglius had been ordered to prepare the Count’s instructions. Having finished the rough draught, he laid it before the board. The paper was conceived in general terms, and might mean anything or nothing. No criticism upon its language was, however, offered until it came to the turn of Orange to vote upon the document. Then, however, William the Silent opened his lips, and poured forth a long and vehement discourse, such as he rarely pronounced, but such as few except himself could utter. There was no shuffling, no disguise, no timidity in his language. He took the ground boldly that the time had arrived for speaking out. The object of sending an envoy of high rank and European reputation like the Count of Egmont, was to tell the king the truth. Let Philip know it now. Let him be unequivocally informed that this whole machinery of placards and scaffolds, of new bishops and old hangmen, of decrees, inquisitors, and informers, must once and forever be abolished. Their day was over. The Netherlands were free provinces, they were
surrounded by free countries, they were determined to vindicate their ancient
privileges. Moreover, his Majesty was to be plainly informed of the frightful
corruption which made the whole judicial and administrative system
loathsome. The venality which notoriously existed everywhere, on the bench,
in the council chamber, in all public offices, where purity was most essential,
was denounced by the prince in scathing terms. He tore the mask from
individual faces, and openly charged the Chancellor of Brabant, Engelbert
Maas, with knavery and corruption. He insisted that the king should be
informed of the necessity of abolishing the two inferior councils, and of
enlarging the council of state by the admission of ten or twelve new members
selected for their patriotism, purity, and capacity. Above all, it was necessary
plainly to inform his Majesty that the canons of Trent, spurned by the whole
world, even by the Catholic princes of Germany, could never be enforced in
the Netherlands, and that it would be ruinous to make the attempt. He
proposed and insisted that the Count of Egmont should be instructed
accordingly. He avowed in conclusion that he was a Catholic himself and
intended to remain in the Faith, but that he could not look on with pleasure
when princes strove to govern the souls of men, and to take away their liberty
in matters of conscience and religion.

Here certainly was no daintiness of phraseology, and upon these leading points,
thus slightly indicated, William of Orange poured out his eloquence, bearing
conviction upon the tide of his rapid invective. His speech lasted till seven in
the evening, when the duchess adjourned the meeting. The council broke up,
the regent went to supper, but the effect of the discourse upon nearly all the
members was not to be mistaken.

Viglius was in a state of consternation, perplexity, and despair. He felt
satisfied that, with perhaps the exception of Berlaymont, all who had listened
or should afterwards listen to the powerful arguments of Orange, would be
inevitably seduced or bewildered. The president lay awake, tossing and
tumbling in his bed, recalling the prince’s oration, point by point, and
endeavoring to answer it in order. It was important, he felt, to obliterate the
impression produced. Moreover, as we have often seen, the learned doctor
valued himself upon his logic. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, that in his
reply, next day, his eloquence should outshine that of his antagonist. The
president thus passed a feverish and uncomfortable night, pronouncing and
listening to imaginary harangues. With the dawn of day he arose and proceeded
to dress himself. The excitement of the previous evening and the subsequent
sleeplessness of his night had, however, been too much for his feeble and
slightly superannuated frame. Before he had finished his toilet, a stroke of
apoplexy stretched him senseless upon the floor. His servants, when they soon
afterwards entered the apartment, found him rigid, and to all appearance
dead. After a few days, however, he recovered his physical senses in part, but
his reason remained for a longer time shattered, and was never perhaps fully
restored to its original vigor.
This event made it necessary that his place in the council should be supplied. Viglius had frequently expressed intentions of retiring, a measure to which he could yet never fully make up his mind. His place was now temporarily supplied by his friend and countryman, Joachim Hopper, like himself a Frisian doctor of ancient blood and extensive acquirements, well versed in philosophy and jurisprudence, a professor of Louvain and a member of the Mechlin council. He was likewise the original founder and projector of Douay University, an institution which at Philip’s desire he had successfully organized in 1556, in order that a French university might be furnished for Walloon youths, as a substitute for the seductive and poisonous Paris. For the rest, Hopper was a mere man of routine. He was often employed in private affairs by Philip, without being entrusted with the secret at the bottom of them. His mind was a confused one, and his style inexpressibly involved and tedious. "Poor master Hopper," said Granvelle, "did not write the best French in the world; may the Lord forgive him. He was learned in letters, but knew very little of great affairs." His manners were as cringing as his intellect was narrow. He never opposed the duchess, so that his colleagues always called him Councillor "Yes, Madam," and he did his best to be friends with all the world.

In deference to the arguments of Orange, the instructions for Egmont were accordingly considerably modified from the original draughts of Viglius. As drawn up by the new president, they contained at least a few hints to his Majesty as to the propriety of mitigating the edicts and extending some mercy to his suffering people. The document was, however, not very satisfactory to the prince, nor did he perhaps rely very implicitly upon the character of the envoy.

Egmont set forth upon his journey early in January (1565). He traveled in great state. He was escorted as far as Cambray by several nobles of his acquaintance, who improved the occasion by a series of tremendous banquets during the count’s sojourn, which was protracted till the end of January. The most noted of these gentlemen were Hoogstraaten, Brederode, the younger Mansfeld, Culemburg, and Noircarmes. Before they parted with the envoy, they drew up a paper which they signed with their blood, and afterwards placed in the hands of his countess. In this document they promised, on account of their "inexpressible and very singular affection" for Egmont, that if, during his mission to Spain, any evil should befall him, they would, on their faith as gentlemen and cavaliers of honor, take vengeance, therefore, upon the Cardinal Granvelle, or upon all who should be the instigators thereof.

Wherever Brederode was, there, it was probable, would be much severe carousing. Before the conclusion, accordingly, of the visit to Cambray, that ancient city rang with the scandal created by a most uproarious scene. A banquet was given to Egmont and his friends in the citadel. Brederode, his cousin Lumeoy, and the other nobles from Brussels, were all present. The Archbishop of Cambray, a man very odious to the liberal party in the provinces,
was also bidden to the feast. During the dinner, this prelate, although treated with marked respect by Egmont, was the object of much banter and coarse pleasantry by the ruder portion of the guests. Especially these convivial gentlemen took infinite pains to overload him with challenges to huge bumpers of wine, it being thought very desirable, if possible, to place the archbishop under the table.

This pleasantry was alternated with much rude sarcasm concerning the new bishoprics. The conversation then fell upon other topics, among others, naturally upon the mission of Count Egmont. Brederode observed that it was a very hazardous matter to allow so eminent a personage to leave the land at such a critical period. Should anything happen to the count, the Netherlands would sustain an immense loss. The archbishop, irritated by the previous conversation, ironically requested the speaker to be comforted, "because," said he, "it will always be easy to find a new Egmont." Upon this, Brederode, beside himself with rage, cried out vehemently, "Are we to tolerate such language from this priest?" Culemburg, too, turning upon the offender, observed, "Your observation would be much more applicable to your own case. If you were to die, 'twould be easy to find five hundred of your merit, to replace you in the see of Cambray." The conversation was, to say the least, becoming personal.

The bishop, desirous of terminating this keen encounter of wits, lifted a goblet full of wine and challenged Brederode to drink. That gentleman declined the invitation. After the cloth had been removed, the cup circulated more freely than ever. The revelry became fast and furious. One of the younger gentlemen who was seated near the bishop snatched the bonnet of that dignitary from his head and placed it upon his own. He then drained a bumper to his health, and passed the goblet and the cap to his next neighbor. Both circulated till they reached the Viscount of Ghent, who arose from his seat and respectfully restored the cap to its owner. Brederode then took a large "cup of silver and gild," filled it to the brim, and drained it to the confusion of Cardinal Granvelle, stigmatizing that departed minister, as he finished, by an epithet of more vigor than decency. He then called upon all the company to pledge him to the same toast, and denounced as cardinalists all those who should refuse.

The archbishop, not having digested the affronts which had been put upon him already, imprudently ventured himself once more into the confusion, and tried to appeal to the reason of the company. He might as well have addressed the crew of Comus. He gained nothing but additional insult. Brederode advanced upon him with threatening gestures. Egmont implored the prelate to retire, or at least not to take notice of a nobleman so obviously beyond the control of his reason. The bishop, however, insisted—mingling reproof, menace, and somewhat imperious demands—that the indecent Saturnalia should cease. It would have been wiser for him to retire. Count Hoogstraaten, a young man and small of stature, seized the gilt laver, in which the company had dipped their fingers before seating themselves at table. "Be quiet, be quiet, little man," said
Egmont, soothingly, doing his best to restrain the tumult. "Little man, indeed," responded the count, wrathfully, "I would have you to know that never did little man spring from my race." With those words he hurled the basin, water, and all, at the head of the archbishop. Hoogstraaten had no doubt manifested his bravery before that day; he was to display, on future occasions, a very remarkable degree of heroism; but it must be confessed that the chivalry of the noble house of Lalaing was not illustrated by this attack upon a priest. The bishop was sprinkled by the water, but not struck by the vessel. Young Mansfeld, ashamed of the outrage, stepped forward to apologize for the conduct of his companions and to soothe the insulted prelate. That personage, however, exasperated, very naturally, to the highest point, pushed him rudely away, crying, "Begone, begone! Who is this boy that is preaching to me?" whereupon, Mansfeld, much irritated, lifted his hand towards the ecclesiastic, and snapped his fingers contemptuously in his face. Some even said that he pulled the archiepiscopal nose, others that he threatened his life with a drawn dagger. Nothing could well have been more indecent or more cowardly than the conduct of these nobles upon this occasion. Their intoxication, together with the character of the victim, explained, but certainly could not palliate, the vulgarity of the exhibition. It was natural enough that men like Brederode should find sport in this remarkable badgering of a bishop, but we see with regret the part played by Hoogstraaten in the disgraceful scene.

The prelate, at last, exclaiming that it appeared that he had been invited only to be insulted, left the apartment, accompanied by Noirarmes and the Viscount of Ghent, and threatening that all his friends and relations should be charged with his vengeance. The next day a reconciliation was effected, as well as such an arrangement was possible, by the efforts of Egmont, who dined alone with the prelate. In the evening, Hoogstraaten, Culemburg, and Brederode called upon the bishop, with whom they were closeted for an hour, and the party separated on nominal terms of friendship.

This scandalous scene, which had been enacted not only before many guests, but in presence of a host of servants, made necessarily a great sensation throughout the country. There could hardly be much difference of opinion among respectable people as to the conduct of the noblemen who had thus disgraced themselves. Even Brederode himself, who appeared to have retained, as was natural, but a confused impression of the transaction, seemed in the days which succeeded the celebrated banquet, to be in doubt whether he and his friends had merited any great amount of applause. He was, however, somewhat self-contradictory, although always vehement in his assertions on the subject. At one time he maintained—after dinner, of course—that he would have killed the archbishop if they had not been forcibly separated; at other moments he denounced as liars all persons who should insinuate that he had committed or contemplated any injury to that prelate, offering freely to fight any man who disputed either of his two positions.
The whole scene was dramatized and represented in masquerade at a wedding festival given by Councillor d’Assonleville, on the marriage of Councillor Hopper’s daughter, one of the principal parts being enacted by a son of the president-judge of Artois. It may be supposed that if such eminent personages, in close connection with the government, took part in such proceedings, the riot must have been considered of a very pardonable nature. The truth was that the bishop was a cardinalist, and therefore entirely out of favor with the administration. He was also a man of treacherous, sanguinary character, and consequently detested by the people. He had done his best to destroy heresy in Valenciennes by fire and sword. "I will say one thing," said he in a letter to Granvelle, which had been intercepted, "since the pot is uncovered, and the whole cookery known, we had best push forward and make an end of all the principal heretics, whether rich or poor, without regarding whether the city will be entirely ruined by such a course. Such an opinion I should declare openly were it not that we of the ecclesiastical profession are accused of always crying out for blood." Such was the prelate’s theory. His practice may be inferred from a specimen of his proceedings which occurred at a little later day. A citizen of Cambray, having been converted to the Lutheran Confession, went to the archbishop, and requested permission to move out of the country, taking his property with him. The petitioner having made his appearance in the forenoon, was requested to call again after dinner, to receive his answer. The burgher did so, and was received, not by the prelate, but by the executioner, who immediately carried the Lutheran to the market-place, and cut off his head. It is sufficiently evident that a minister of Christ, with such propensities, could not excite any great sympathy, however deeply affronted he might have been at a drinking party, so long as any Christians remained in the land.

Egmont departed from Cambray upon the 30th of January, his friends taking a most affectionate farewell of him, and Brederode assuring him, with a thousand oaths, that he would forsake God for his service. His reception at Madrid was most brilliant. When he made his first appearance at the palace, Philip rushed from his cabinet into the grand hall of reception, and fell upon his neck, embracing him heartily before the count had time to drop upon his knee and kiss the royal hand. During the whole period of his visit he dined frequently at the king’s private table, an honor rarely accorded by Philip, and was feasted and flattered by all the great dignitaries of the court as never a subject of the Spanish crown had been before. All vied with each other in heaping honors upon the man whom the king was determined to honor. Philip took him out to drive daily in his own coach, sent him to see the wonders of the new Escorial, which he was building to commemorate the battle of St. Quentin, and, although it was still winter, insisted upon showing him the beauties of his retreat in the Segovian forest. Granvelle’s counsels as to the method by which the "friend of smoke" was so easily to be gained, had not fallen unheeded in his royal pupil’s ears.
The count was lodged in the house of Ruy Gomez, who soon felt himself able, according to previous assurances to that effect, contained in a private letter of Armenteros, to persuade the envoy to any course which Philip might command. Flattery without stint was administered. More solid arguments to convince the count that Philip was the most generous and clement of princes were also employed with great effect. The royal dues upon the estate of Gaasbecque, lately purchased by Egmont, were remitted. A mortgage upon his Seigneurie of Ninove was discharged, and a considerable sum of money presented to him in addition. Altogether, the gifts which the ambassador received from the royal bounty amounted to 100,000 crowns.

Thus feasted, flattered, and laden with presents, it must be admitted that the count more than justified the opinions expressed in the letter of Armenteros, that he was a man easily governed by those who had credit with him. Egmont hardly broached the public matters which had brought him to Madrid. Upon the subject of the edicts, Philip certainly did not dissemble, however loudly the envoy may have afterwards complained at Brussels. In truth, Egmont, intoxicated by the incense offered to him at the Spanish court, was a different man from Egmont in the Netherlands, subject to the calm but piercing glance and the irresistible control of Orange.

Philip gave him no reason to suppose that he intended any change in the religious system of the provinces, at least in any sense contemplated by the liberal party. On the contrary, a council of doctors and ecclesiastics was summoned, at whose deliberations the count was invited to assist, on which occasion the king excited general admiration by the fervor of his piety and the vehemence of his ejaculations. Falling upon his knees before a crucifix, in the midst of the assembly, he prayed that God would keep him perpetually in the same mind, and protested that he would never call himself master of those who denied the Lord God. Such an exhibition could leave but little doubt in the minds of those who witnessed it as to the royal sentiments, nor did Egmont make any effort to obtain any relaxation of those religious edicts, which he had himself declared worthy of approbation, and fit to be maintained. As to the question of enlarging the state-council, Philip dismissed the subject with a few vague observations, which Egmont, not very zealous on the subject at the moment, perhaps misunderstood. The punishment of heretics by some new method, so as to secure the pains but to take away the glories of martyrdom, was also slightly discussed, and here again Egmont was so unfortunate as to misconceive the royal meaning, and to interpret an additional refinement of cruelty into an expression of clemency.

On the whole, however, there was not much negotiation between the monarch and the ambassador. When the count spoke of business, the king would speak to him of his daughters, and of his desire to see them provided with brilliant marriages. As Egmont had eight girls, besides two sons, it was natural that he should be pleased to find Philip taking so much interest in looking out husbands
for them. The king spoke to him, as hardly could be avoided, of the famous fool's-cap livery. The count laughed the matter off as a jest, protesting that it was a mere foolish freak, originating at the wine-table, and asseverating, with warmth, that nothing disrespectful or disloyal to his Majesty had been contemplated upon that or upon any other occasion. Had a single gentleman uttered an undutiful word against the king, Egmont vowed he would have stabbed him through and through upon the spot, had he been his own brother. These warm protestations were answered by a gentle reprimand as to the past by Philip, and with a firm caution as to the future. "Let it be discontinued entirely, count," said the king, as the two were driving together in the royal carriage.

Egmont expressed himself in handsome terms concerning the cardinal, in return for the wholesale approbation quoted to him in regard to his own character, from the private letters of that sagacious personage to his Majesty. Certainly, after all this, the count might suppose the affair of the livery forgiven. Thus amicably passed the hours of that mission, the preliminaries for which had called forth so much eloquence from the Prince of Orange and so nearly carried off with apoplexy the President Viglius.

On his departure, Egmont received a letter of instructions from Philip as to the report which he was to make upon his arrival in Brussels to the duchess. After many things personally flattering to himself, the envoy was directed to represent the king as overwhelmed with incredible grief at hearing the progress made by the heretics, but as immutably determined to permit no change of religion within his dominions, even were he to die a thousand deaths in consequence. The king, he was to state, requested the duchess forthwith to assemble an extraordinary session of the council, at which certain bishops, theological doctors, and very orthodox lawyers, were to assist, in which, under pretense of discussing the Council of Trent matter, it was to be considered whether there could not be some "new way devised for executing heretics, not indeed one by which any deduction should be made from their sufferings (which certainly was not the royal wish, nor likely to be grateful to God or salutary to religion), but by which all hopes of glory—that powerful incentive to their impiety—might be precluded." With regard to any suggested alterations in the council of state, or in the other two councils, the king was to be represented as unwilling to form any decision until he should hear, at length, from the duchess regent upon the subject.

Certainly here was a sufficient amount of plain speaking upon one great subject, and very little encouragement with regard to the other. Yet Egmont, who immediately after receiving these instructions set forth upon his return to the Netherlands, manifested nothing but satisfaction. Philip presented to him, as his traveling companion, the young Prince Alexander of Parma, then about to make a visit to his mother in Brussels, and recommended the youth, afterwards destined to play so prominent a part in Flemish history, to his
peculiar care. Egmont addressed a letter to the king from Valladolid, in which he indulged in ecstasies concerning the Escorial and the wood of Segovia, and declared that he was returning to the Netherlands "the most contented man in the world."

He reached Brussels at the end of April. Upon the fifth of May he appeared before the council, and proceeded to give an account of his interview with the king, together with a statement of the royal intentions and opinions. These were already sufficiently well known. Letters, written after the envoy’s departure, had arrived before him, in which, while in the main presenting the same views as those contained in the instructions to Egmont, Philip had expressed his decided prohibition of the project to enlarge the state council and to suppress the authority of the other two. Nevertheless, the count made his report according to the brief received at Madrid, and assured his hearers that the king was all benignity, having nothing so much at heart as the temporal and eternal welfare of the provinces. The siege of Malta, he stated, would prevent the royal visit to the Netherlands for the moment, but it was deferred only for a brief period. To remedy the deficiency in the provincial exchequer, large remittances would be made immediately from Spain. To provide for the increasing difficulties of the religious question, a convocation of nine learned and saintly personages was recommended, who should devise some new scheme by which the objections to the present system of chastising heretics might be obviated.

It is hardly necessary to state that so meager a result to the mission of Egmont was not likely to inspire the hearts of Orange and his adherents with much confidence. No immediate explosion of resentment, however, occurred. The general aspect for a few days was peaceful.

Egmont manifested much contentment with the reception which he met with in Spain, and described the king’s friendly dispositions towards the leading nobles in lively colors. He went to his government immediately after his return, assembled the states of Artois, in the city of Arras, and delivered the letters sent to that body by the king. He made a speech on this occasion, informing the estates that his Majesty had given orders that the edicts of the Emperor were to be enforced to the letter, adding that he had told the king, freely, his own opinion upon the subject, in order to dissuade him from that which others were warmly urging. He described Philip as the most liberal and debonair of princes, his council in Spain as cruel and sanguinary. Time was to show whether the epithets thus applied to the advisers were not more applicable to the monarch than the eulogies thus lavished by the blind and predestined victim. It will also be perceived that this language, used before the estates of Artois, varied materially from his observation to the Dowager Duchess of Aerschot, denouncing as enemies the men who accused him of having requested a moderation of the edicts. In truth, this most vacillating, confused, and unfortunate of men perhaps scarcely comprehended the purport of his recent
negotiations in Spain, nor perceived the drift of his daily remarks at home. He was, however, somewhat vainglorious immediately after his return, and excessively attentive to business. "He talks like a king," said Morillon, spitefully, "negotiates night and day, and makes all bow before him." His house was more thronged with petitioners, courtiers, and men of affairs, than even the palace of the duchess. He avowed frequently that he would devote his life and his fortune to the accomplishment of the king's commands, and declared his uncompromising hostility to all who should venture to oppose that loyal determination.

It was but a very short time, however, before a total change was distinctly perceptible in his demeanor. These halcyon days were soon fled. The arrival of fresh letters from Spain gave a most unequivocal evidence of the royal determination, if, indeed, any doubt could be rationally entertained before. The most stringent instructions to keep the whole machinery of persecution constantly at work were transmitted to the duchess, and aroused the indignation of Orange and his followers. They avowed that they could no longer trust the royal word, since, so soon after Egmont's departure, the king had written dispatches so much at variance with his language, as reported by the envoy. There was nothing, they said, clement and debonair in these injunctions upon gentlemen of their position and sentiments to devote their time to the encouragement of hangmen and inquisitors. The duchess was unable to pacify the nobles. Egmont was beside himself with rage. With his usual recklessness and wrath, he expressed himself at more than one session of the state council in most unmeasured terms. His anger had been more inflamed by information which he had received from the second son of Berlaymont, a young and indiscreet lad, who had most unfortunately communicated many secrets which he had learned from his father, but which were never intended for Egmont's ear.

Philip's habitual dissimulation had thus produced much unnecessary perplexity. It was his custom to carry on correspondence through the aid of various secretaries, and it was his invariable practice to deceive them all. Those who were upon the most confidential terms with the monarch, were most sure to be duped upon all important occasions. It has been seen that even the astute Granvelle could not escape this common lot of all who believed their breasts the depositories of the royal secrets. Upon this occasion, Gonzalo Perez and Ruy Gomez complained bitterly that they had known nothing of the letters which had recently been dispatched from Valladolid, while Tisnacq and Courterville had been ignorant of the communications forwarded by the hands of Egmont. They avowed that the king created infinite trouble by thus treating his affairs in one way with one set of councillors and in an opposite sense with the others, thus dissembling with all, and added that Philip was now much astonished at the dissatisfaction created in the provinces by the discrepancy between the French letters brought by Egmont, and the Spanish letters since dispatched to the duchess. As this was his regular manner of transacting
business, not only for the Netherlands, but for all his dominions, they were of opinion that such confusion and dissatisfaction might well be expected.

After all, however, notwithstanding the indignation of Egmont, it must be confessed that he had been an easy dupe. He had been dazzled by royal smiles, intoxicated by court incense, contaminated by yet baser bribes. He had been turned from the path of honor and the companionship of the wise and noble to do the work of those who were to compass his destruction. The Prince of Orange reproached him to his face with having forgotten, when in Spain, to represent the views of his associates and the best interests of the country, while he had well remembered his own private objects, and accepted the lavish bounty of the king. Egmont, stung to the heart by the reproof, from one whom he honored and who wished him well, became sad and somber for a long time, abstained from the court and from society, and expressed frequently the intention of retiring to his estates. He was, however, much governed by his secretary, the Seigneur de Bakerzeel, a man of restless, intriguing, and deceitful character, who at this period exercised as great influence over the count as Armenteros continued to maintain over the duchess, whose unpopularity from that and other circumstances was daily increasing.

In obedience to the commands of the king, the canons of Trent had been published. They were nominally enforced at Cambray, but a fierce opposition was made by the clergy themselves to the innovation in Mechlin, Utrecht, and many other places. This matter, together with other more vitally important questions, came before the assembly of bishops and doctors, which, according to Philip’s instructions, had been convoked by the duchess. The opinion of the learned theologians was, on the whole, that the views of the Trent Council, with regard to reformation of ecclesiastical morals and popular education, was sound. There was some discordancy between the clerical and lay doctors upon other points. The seigniors, lawyers, and deputies from the estates were all in favor of repealing the penalty of death for heretical offences of any kind. President Viglius, with all the bishops and doctors of divinity, including the prelates of St. Omer, Namur, and Ypres, and four theological professors from Louvain, stoutly maintained the contrary opinion. The president especially, declared himself vehemently in favor of the death punishment, and expressed much anger against those who were in favor of its abolition.

The duchess, upon the second day of the assembly, propounded formally the question whether any change was to be made in the chastisement of heretics. The Prince of Orange, with Counts Horn and Egmont, had, however, declined to take part in the discussions, on the ground that it was not his Majesty’s intention that state councillors should deliver their opinions before strangers, but that persons from outside had been summoned to communicate their advice to the Council. The seigniors having thus washed their hands of the matter, the doctors came to a conclusion with great alacrity. It was their unanimous opinion that it comported neither with the service of God nor the
common weal, to make any change in the punishment, except, perhaps, in the
case of extreme youth, but that, on the contrary, heretics were only to be
dealt with by retaining the edicts in their rigor, and by courageously chastising
the criminals.

After sitting for the greater part of six days, the bishops and doctors of divinity
reduced their sentiments to writing and affixed their signatures to the
document. Upon the great point of the change suggested in the penalties of
heresy, it was declared that no alteration was advisable in the edicts, which
had been working so well for thirty-five years. At the same time it was
suggested that "some persons, in respect to their age and quality, might be
executed or punished more or less rigorously than others; some by death, some
by galley slavery, some by perpetual banishment and entire confiscation of
property." The possibility was also admitted of mitigating the punishment of
those who, without being heretics or sectaries, might bring themselves within
the provisions of the edicts, "through curiosity, nonchalance, or otherwise."
Such offenders, it was hinted, might be "whipped with rods, fined, banished, or
subjected to similar penalties of a lighter nature." It will be perceived by this
slight sketch of the advice thus offered to the duchess that these theologians
were disposed very carefully to strain the mercy, which they imagined possible
in some cases, but which was to drop only upon the heads of the just. Heretics
were still to be dealt with, so far as the bishops and presidents could affect
their doom, with unmitigated rigor.

When the assembly was over, the duchess, thus put in possession of the
recorded wisdom of these special councillors, asked her constitutional advisers
what she was to do with it. Orange, Egmont, Horn, Mansfeld replied, however,
that it was not their affair, and that their opinion had not been demanded by
his Majesty in the premises. The duchess accordingly transmitted to Philip the
conclusions of the assembly, together with the reasons of the seigniors for
refusing to take part in its deliberations. The sentiments of Orange could
hardly he doubtful, however, nor his silence fail to give offense to the higher
powers. He contented himself for the time with keeping his eyes and ears open
to the course of events, but he watched well. He had "little leisure for amusing
himself," as Brederode suggested. That free-spoken individual looked upon the
proceedings of the theological assembly with profound disgust. "Your letter," he
wrote to Count Louis, "is full of those blackguards of bishops and presidents. I
would the race were extinct, like that of green dogs. They will always combat
with the arms which they have ever used, remaining to the end avaricious,
brutal, obstinate, ambitious, et cetera. I leave you to supply the rest."

Thus, then, it was settled beyond peradventure that there was to be no
compromise with heresy. The king had willed it. The theologians had advised
it. The duchess had proclaimed it. It was supposed that without the axe, the
fire, and the rack, the Catholic religion would be extinguished, and that the
whole population of the Netherlands would embrace the Reformed Faith. This
was the distinct declaration of Viglius, in a private letter to Granvelle. "Many seek to abolish the chastisement of heresy," said he, "if they gain this point, acturn est de religione Catholicâ; for as most of the people are ignorant fools, the heretics will soon be the great majority, if by fear of punishment they are not kept in the true path."

The uneasiness, the terror, the wrath of the people seemed rapidly culminating to a crisis. Nothing was talked of but the edicts and the inquisition. Nothing else entered into the minds of men. In the streets, in the shops, in the taverns, in the fields; at market, at church, at funerals, at weddings; in the noble’s castle, at the farmer’s fireside, in the mechanic’s garret, upon the merchants’ exchange, there was but one perpetual subject of shuddering conversation. It was better, men began to whisper to each other, to die at once than to live in perpetual slavery. It was better to fall with arms in hand than to be tortured and butchered by the inquisition. Who could expect to contend with such a foe in the dark?

They reproached the municipal authorities with lending themselves as instruments to the institution. They asked magistrates and sheriffs how far they would go in their defense before God’s tribunal for the slaughter of his creatures, if they could only answer the divine arraignment by appealing to the edict of 1550. On the other hand, the inquisitors were clamorous in abuse of the languor and the cowardice of the secular authorities. They wearied the ear of the duchess with complaints of the difficulties which they encountered in the execution of their functions—of the slight alacrity on the part of the various officials to assist them in the discharge of their duties. Notwithstanding the express command of his Majesty to that effect, they experienced, they said, a constant deficiency of that cheerful cooperation which they had the right to claim, and there was perpetual discord in consequence. They had been empowered by papal and by royal decree to make use of the gaols, the constables, the whole penal machinery of each province; yet the officers often refused to act, and had even dared to close the prisons.

Nevertheless, it had been intended, as fully appeared by the imperial and royal instructions to the inquisitors, that their action through the medium of the provincial authorities should be unrestrained. Not satisfied with these representations to the regent, the inquisitors had also made a direct appeal to the king. Judocus Tiletanus and Michael de Bay addressed to Philip a letter from Louvain. They represented to him that they were the only two left of the five inquisitors-general appointed by the pope for all the Netherlands, the other three having been recently converted into bishops. Daily complaints, they said, were reaching them of the prodigious advance of heresy, but their own office was becoming so odious, so calumniated, and exposed to so much resistance, that they could not perform its duties without personal danger. They urgently demanded from his Majesty, therefore, additional support and assistance.
Thus the duchess, exposed at once to the rising wrath of a whole people and to
the shrill blasts of inquisitorial anger, was tossed to and fro, as upon a stormy
sea. The commands of the king, too explicit to be tampered with, were
obeyed. The theological assembly had met and given advice. The Council of
Trent was here and there enforced. The edicts were republished and the
inquisitors encouraged. Moreover, in accordance with Philip’s suggestion,
orders were now given that the heretics should be executed at midnight in
their dungeons, by binding their heads between their knees, and then slowly
suffocating them in tubs of water. Secret drowning was substituted for public
burning, in order that the heretic’s crown of vainglory, which was thought to
console him in his agony, might never be placed upon his head.

In the course of the summer, Margaret wrote to her brother that the popular
frenzy was becoming more and more intense. The people were crying aloud,
she said, that the Spanish inquisition, or a worse than Spanish inquisition, had
been established among them by means of bishops and ecclesiastics. She urged
Philip to cause the instructions for the inquisitors to be revised. Egmont, she
said, was vehement in expressing his dissatisfaction at the discrepancy
between Philip’s language to him by word of mouth and that of the royal
dispatches on the religious question. The other seigniors were even more
indignant.

While the popular commotion in the Netherlands was thus fearfully increasing,
another circumstance came to add to the prevailing discontent. The celebrated
interview between Catharine de Medici and her daughter, the Queen of Spain,
occurred in the middle of the month of June, at Bayonne. The darkest
suspicions as to the results to humanity of the plots to be engendered in this
famous conference between the representatives of France and Spain were
universally entertained. These suspicions were most reasonable, but they were
nevertheless mistaken. The plan for a concerted action to exterminate the
heretics in both kingdoms had, as it was perfectly well known, been formed
long before this epoch. It was also no secret that the Queen Regent of France
had been desirous of meeting her son-in-law in order to confer with him upon
important matters, face to face. Philip, however, had latterly been disinclined
for the personal interview with Catharine. As his wife was most anxious to
meet her mother, it was nevertheless finally arranged that Queen Isabella
should make the journey; but he excused himself, on account of the
multiplicity of his affairs, from accompanying her in the expedition. The Duke
of Alva was, accordingly, appointed to attend the queen to Bayonne. Both were
secretly instructed by Philip to leave nothing undone in the approaching
interview toward obtaining the hearty cooperation of Catherine de Medici in a
general and formally-arranged scheme for the simultaneous extermination of
all heretics in the French and Spanish dominions.

Alva’s conduct in this diplomatic commission was stealthy in the extreme. His
letters reveal a subtlety of contrivance and delicacy of handling such as the
world has not generally reckoned among his characteristics. All his adroitness, as well as the tact of Queen Isabella, by whose ability Alva declared himself to have been astounded, proved quite powerless before the steady fencing of the wily Catherine. The queen regent, whose skill the duke, even while defeated, acknowledged to his master, continued firm in her design to maintain her own power by holding the balance between Guise and Montmorency, between Leaguer and Huguenot. So long as her enemies could be employed in exterminating each other, she was willing to defer the extermination of the Huguenots. The great massacre of St. Bartholomew was to sleep for seven years longer. Alva was, to be sure, much encouraged at first by the language of the French princes and nobles who were present at Bayonne. Monluc protested that "they might saw the queen dowager in two before she would become Huguenot." Montpensier exclaimed that "he would be cut in pieces for Philip’s service—that the Spanish monarch was the only hope for France," and, embracing Alva with fervor, he affirmed that "if his body were to be opened at that moment, the name of Philip would be found imprinted upon his heart." The Duke, having no power to proceed to an autopsy, physical or moral, of Montpensier’s interior, was left somewhat in the dark, notwithstanding these ejaculations.

His first conversation with the youthful king, however, soon dispelled his hopes. He found immediately, in his own words, that Charles IX "had been doctored." To take up arms, for religious reasons, against his own subjects, the monarch declared to be ruinous and improper. It was obvious to Alva that the royal pupil had learned his lesson for that occasion. It was a pity for humanity that the wisdom thus hypocritically taught him could not have sunk into his heart. The duke did his best to bring forward the plans and wishes of his royal master, but without success. The queen regent proposed a league of the two kings and the Emperor against the Turk, and wished to arrange various matrimonial alliances between the sons and daughters of the three houses. Alva expressed the opinion that the alliances were already close enough, while, on the contrary, a secret league against the Protestants would make all three families the safer. Catherine, however, was not to be turned from her position. She refused even to admit that the Chancellor de l’Hopital was a Huguenot, to which the duke replied that she was the only person in her kingdom who held that opinion. She expressed an intention of convoking an assembly of doctors, and Alva ridiculed in his letters to Philip the affectation of such a proceeding. In short, she made it sufficiently evident that the hour for the united action of the French and Spanish sovereigns against their subjects had not struck, so that the famous Bayonne conference was terminated without a result. It seemed not the less certain, however, in the general opinion of mankind, that all the particulars of a regular plot had been definitely arranged upon this occasion, for the extermination of the Protestants, and the error has been propagated by historians of great celebrity of all parties, down to our own days. The secret letters of Alva, however, leave no doubt as to the facts.
In the course of November, fresh letters from Philip arrived in the Netherlands, confirming everything which he had previously written. He wrote personally to the inquisitors-general, Tiletanus and De Bay, encouraging them, commending them, promising them his support, and urging them not to be deterred by any consideration from thoroughly fulfilling their duties. He wrote Peter Titelmann a letter, in which he applauded the pains taken by that functionary to remedy the ills which religion was suffering, assured him of his gratitude, exhorted him to continue in his virtuous course, and avowed his determination to spare neither pains, expense, nor even his own life, to sustain the Catholic Faith. To the duchess he wrote at great length, and in most unequivocal language. He denied that what he had written from Valladolid was of different meaning from the sense of the dispatches by Egmont. With regard to certain Anabaptist prisoners, concerning whose fate Margaret had requested his opinion, he commanded their execution, adding that such was his will in the case of all, whatever their quality, who could be caught. That which the people said in the Netherlands touching the inquisition, he pronounced extremely distasteful to him. That institution, which had existed under his predecessors, he declared more necessary than ever; nor would he suffer it to be discredited. He desired his sister to put no faith in idle talk, as to the inconveniences likely to flow from the rigor of the inquisition. Much greater inconveniences would be the result if the inquisitors did not proceed with their labors, and the duchess was commanded to write to the secular judges, enjoining upon them to place no obstacles in the path, but to afford all the assistance which might be required.

To Egmont, the king wrote with his own hand, applauding much that was contained in the recent decisions of the assembly of bishops and doctors of divinity, and commanding the count to assist in the execution of the royal determination. In affairs of religion, Philip expressed the opinion that dissimulation and weakness were entirely out of place.

When these decisive letters came before the state council, the consternation was extreme. The duchess had counted, in spite of her inmost convictions, upon less peremptory instructions. The Prince of Orange, the Count of Egmont, and the admiral were loud in their denunciations of the royal policy. There was a violent and protracted debate. The excitement spread at once to the people. Inflammatory handbills were circulated. Placards were posted every night upon the doors of Orange, Egmont, and Horn, calling upon them to come forth boldly as champions of the people and of liberty in religious matters. Banquets were held daily at the houses of the nobility, in which the more ardent and youthful of their order, with brains excited by wine and anger, indulged in flaming invectives against the government, and interchanged vows to protect each other and the cause of the oppressed provinces. Meanwhile the privy council, to which body the duchess had referred the recent dispatches from Madrid, made a report upon the whole subject to the state council, during the month of November, sustaining the royal views, and insisting upon the necessity of carrying them into effect. The edicts and inquisition having been so vigorously
insisted upon by the king, nothing was to be done but to issue new proclamations throughout the country, together with orders to bishops, councils, governors and judges, that every care should be taken to enforce them to the full.

This report came before the state council, and was sustained by some of its members. The Prince of Orange expressed the same uncompromising hostility to the inquisition which he had always manifested, but observed that the commands of the king were so precise and absolute, as to leave no possibility of discussing that point. There was nothing to be done, he said, but to obey, but he washed his hands of the fatal consequences which he foresaw. There was no longer any middle course between obedience and rebellion. This opinion, the soundness of which could scarcely be disputed, was also sustained by Egmont and Horn.

Viglius, on the contrary, nervous, agitated, appalled, was now disposed to temporize. He observed that if the seigniors feared such evil results, it would be better to prevent, rather than to accelerate the danger which would follow the proposed notification to the governors and municipal authorities throughout the country, on the subject of the inquisition. To make haste was neither to fulfill the intentions nor to serve the interests of the king, and it was desirable "to avoid emotion and scandal." Upon these heads the president made a very long speech, avowing, in conclusion, that if his Majesty should not find the course proposed agreeable, he was ready to receive all the indignation upon his own head.

Certainly, this position of the president was somewhat inconsistent with his previous course. He had been most violent in his denunciations of all who should interfere with the execution of the great edict of which he had been the original draughtsman. He had recently been ferocious in combating the opinion of those civilians in the assembly of doctors who had advocated the abolition of the death penalty against heresy. He had expressed with great energy his private opinion that the ancient religion would perish if the machinery of persecution were taken away; yet he now for the first time seemed to hear or to heed the outcry of a whole nation, and to tremble at the sound. Now that the die had been cast, in accordance with the counsels of his whole life, now that the royal commands, often enigmatical and hesitating, were at last too distinct to be misconstrued, and too peremptory to be tampered with, the president imagined the possibility of delay.

The health of the ancient Frisian had but recently permitted him to resume his seat at the council board. His presence there was but temporary, for he had received from Madrid the acceptance of his resignation, accompanied with orders to discharge the duties of president until the arrival of his successor, Charles de Tisnacq. Thus, in his own language, the duchess was still obliged to rely for a season "upon her ancient Palinurus," a necessity far from agreeable to
her, for she had lost confidence in the pilot. It may be supposed that he was anxious to smooth the troubled waters during the brief period in which he was still to be exposed to their fury, but he poured out the oil of his eloquence in vain. Nobody sustained his propositions. The duchess, although terrified at the probable consequences, felt the impossibility of disobeying the deliberate decree of her brother. A proclamation was accordingly prepared, by which it was ordered that the Council of Trent, the edicts and the inquisition, should be published in every town and village in the provinces, immediately, and once in six months forever afterwards. The deed was done, and the Prince of Orange, stooping to the ear of his next neighbor, as they sat at the council-board, whispered that they were now about to witness the commencement of the most extraordinary tragedy which had ever been enacted. The prophecy was indeed a proof that the prince could read the future, but the sarcasm of the president, that the remark had been made in a tone of exultation, was belied by every action of the prophet’s life.

The fiat went forth. In the market-place of every town and village of the Netherlands, the inquisition was again formally proclaimed. Every doubt which had hitherto existed as to the intention of the government was swept away. No argument was thenceforward to be permissible as to the constitutionality of the edicts—as to the compatibility of their provisions with the privileges of the land. The cry of a people in its agony ascended to Heaven. The decree was answered with a howl of execration. The flames of popular frenzy arose lurid and threatening above the housetops of every town and village. The impending conflict could no longer be mistaken. The awful tragedy which the great watchman in the land had so long unceasingly predicted, was seen sweeping solemnly and steadily onward. The superstitious eyes of the age saw supernatural and ominous indications in the sky. Contending armies trampled the clouds; blood dropped from heaven; the exterminating angel rode upon the wind.

There was almost a cessation of the ordinary business of mankind. Commerce was paralyzed. Antwerp shook as with an earthquake. A chasm seemed to open, in which her prosperity and her very existence were to be forever engulfed. The foreign merchants, manufacturers, and artisans fled from her gates as if the plague were raging within them. Thriving cities were likely soon to be depopulated. The metropolitan heart of the whole country was almost motionless.

Men high in authority sympathized with the general indignation. The Marquis Berghen, the younger Mansfeld, the Baron Montigny, openly refused to enforce the edicts within their governments. Men of eminence inveighed boldly and bitterly against the tyranny of the government, and counseled disobedience. The Netherlanders, it was stoutly maintained, were not such senseless brutes as to be ignorant of the mutual relation of prince and people. They knew that
the obligation of a king to his vassals was as sacred as the duties of the subjects to the sovereign.

The four principal cities of Brabant first came forward in formal denunciation of the outrage. An elaborate and conclusive document was drawn up in their name, and presented the regent. It set forth that the recent proclamation violated many articles in the "joyous entry." That ancient constitution had circumscribed the power of the clergy, and the jealousy had been felt in old times as much by the sovereign as the people. No ecclesiastical tribunal had therefore been allowed, excepting that of the Bishop of Cambray, whose jurisdiction was expressly confined to three classes of cases—those growing out of marriages, testaments, and mortmains.

It would be superfluous to discuss the point at the present day, whether the directions to the inquisitors and the publication of the edicts conflicted with the "joyous entrance." To take a man from his house and burn him, after a brief preliminary examination, was clearly not to follow the letter and the spirit of the Brabantine habeas corpus, by which instability of domicile and regular trials were secured and sworn to by the monarch; yet such had been the uniform practice of inquisitors throughout the country. The petition of the four cities was referred by the regent to the council of Brabant. The chancellor, or president-judge of that tribunal, was notoriously corrupt—a creature of the Spanish government. His efforts to sustain the policy of the administration were, however, vain. The duchess ordered the archives of the province to be searched for precedents, and the council to report upon the petition. The case was too plain for argument or dogmatism, but the attempt was made to take refuge in obscurity. The answer of the council was hesitating and equivocal.

The duchess insisted upon a distinct and categorical answer to the four cities. Thus addressed, the council of Brabant declared roundly that no inquisition of any kind had ever existed in the provinces. It was impossible that any other answer could be given, but Viglius, with his associates in the privy council, were extremely angry at the conclusion. The concession was, however, made, notwithstanding the bad example which, according to some persons, the victory thus obtained by so important a province would afford to the people in the other parts of the country. Brabant was declared free of the inquisition.

Meanwhile, the pamphlets, handbills, pasquils, and other popular productions were multiplied. To use a Flemish expression, they "snowed in the streets." They were nailed nightly on all the great houses in Brussels. Patriots were called upon to strike, speak, redress. Pungent lampoons, impassioned invectives, and earnest remonstrances were thrust into the hands of the duchess. The publications, as they appeared, were greedily devoured by the people. "We are willing," it was said, in a remarkable letter to the king, "to die for the Gospel, but we read therein, ‘Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s, and unto God that which is God’s.’ We thank God that our enemies
themselves are compelled to bear witness to our piety and patience; so that it is a common saying: ‘He swears not, he is a Protestant; he is neither a fornicator nor a drunkard; he is of the new sect.’ Yet, notwithstanding these testimonials to our character, no manner of punishment has been forgotten by which we can possibly be chastised.” This statement of the morality of the Puritans of the Netherlands was the justification of martyrs—not the self-glorification of Pharisees. The fact was incontrovertible. Their tenets were rigid, but their lives were pure. They belonged generally to the middling and lower classes. They were industrious artisans, who desired to live in the fear of God and in honor of their king. They were protected by nobles and gentlemen of high position, very many of whom came afterwards warmly to espouse the creed which at first they had only generously defended. Their whole character and position resembled, in many features, those of the English Puritans, who, three quarters of a century afterwards, fled for refuge to the Dutch Republic, and thence departed to establish the American Republic. The difference was that the Netherlanders were exposed to a longer persecution and a far more intense martyrdom.

Towards the end of the year (1565) which was closing in such universal gloom, the contemporary chronicles are enlivened with a fitful gleam of sunshine. The light enlivens only the more elevated regions of the Flemish world, but it is pathetic to catch a glimpse of those nobles, many of whose lives were to be so heroic, and whose destinies so tragic, as amid the shadows projected by coming evil they still found time for the chivalrous festivals of their land and epoch. A splendid tournament was held at the Chateau d’Antoing to celebrate the nuptials of Baron Montigny with the daughter of Prince d’Espinoy. Orange, Horn, and Hoogstraaten were the challengers, and maintained themselves victoriously against all comers, Egmont and other distinguished knights being among the number.

Thus brilliantly and gaily moved the first hours of that marriage which before six months had fled was to be so darkly terminated. The doom which awaited the chivalrous bridegroom in the dungeon of Simancas was ere long to be recorded in one of the foulest chapters of Philip’s tyranny.

A still more elaborate marriage festival, of which the hero was, at a later day, to exercise a most decisive influence over the fortunes of the land, was celebrated at Brussels before the close of the year. It will be remembered that Alexander, Prince of Parma, had accompanied Egmont on his return from Spain in the month of April. The duchess had been delighted with the appearance of her son, then twenty years of age, but already an accomplished cavalier. She had expressed her especial pleasure in finding him so thoroughly a Spaniard “in manner, costume, and conversation,” that it could not be supposed he had ever visited any other land, or spoken any other tongue than that of Spain.
The nobles of the Flemish court did not participate in the mother’s enthusiasm. It could not be denied that he was a handsome and gallant young prince, but his arrogance was so intolerable as to disgust even those most disposed to pay homage to Margaret’s son. He kept himself mainly in haughty retirement, dined habitually alone in his own apartments, and scarcely honored any of the gentlemen of the Netherlands with his notice. Even Egmont, to whose care he had been especially recommended by Philip, was slighted. If, occasionally, he honored one or two of the seigniors with an invitation to his table, he sat alone in solemn state at the head of the board, while the guests, to whom he scarcely vouchsafed a syllable, were placed on stools without backs, below the salt. Such insolence, it may be supposed, was sufficiently galling to men of the proud character, but somewhat reckless demeanor, which distinguished the Netherland aristocracy. After a short time they held themselves aloof, thinking it sufficient to endure such airs from Philip.

The duchess at first encouraged the young prince in his haughtiness, but soon became sad as she witnessed its effects. It was the universal opinion that the young prince was a mere compound of pride and emptiness. “There is nothing at all in the man,” said Chantonnay. Certainly the expression was not a fortunate one. Time was to show that there was more in the man than in all the governors dispatched successively by Philip to the Netherlands, but the proof was to be deferred to a later epoch. Meantime, his mother was occupied and exceedingly perplexed with his approaching nuptials. He had been affianced early in the year to the Princess Donna Maria of Portugal. It was found necessary, therefore, to send a fleet of several vessels to Lisbon, to fetch the bride to the Netherlands, the wedding being appointed to take place in Brussels. This expense alone was considerable, and the preparations for banquets, jousts, and other festivities were likewise undertaken on so magnificent a scale that the duke, her husband, was offended at Margaret’s extravagance. The people, by whom she was not beloved, commented bitterly on the prodigalities which they were witnessing in a period of dearth and trouble. Many of the nobles mocked at her perplexity. To crown the whole, the young prince was so obliging as to express the hope, in his mother’s hearing, that the bridal fleet, then on its way from Portugal, might sink with all it contained, to the bottom of the sea.

The poor duchess was infinitely chagrined by all these circumstances. The “insane and outrageous expenses” in which the nuptials had involved her, the rebukes of her husband, the sneers of the seigniors, the undutiful epigrams of her son, the ridicule of the people, affected her spirits to such a degree, harassed as she was with grave matters of state, that she kept her rooms for days together, weeping, hour after hour, in the most piteous manner. Her distress was the town talk; nevertheless, the fleet arrived in the autumn, and brought the youthful Maria to the provinces. This young lady, if the faithful historiographer of the Farnese house is to be credited, was the paragon of princesses. She was the daughter of Prince Edward, and granddaughter of John
III. She was young and beautiful; she could talk both Latin and Greek, besides being well versed in philosophy, mathematics, and theology. She had the scriptures at her tongue’s end, both the old dispensation and the new, and could quote from the fathers with the promptness of a bishop. She was so strictly orthodox that, on being compelled by stress of weather to land in England, she declined all communication with Queen Elizabeth, on account of her heresy. She was so eminently chaste that she could neither read the sonnets of Petrarch, nor lean on the arm of a gentleman. Her delicacy upon such points was, indeed, carried to such excess, that upon one occasion when the ship which was bringing her to the Netherlands was discovered to be burning, she rebuked a rude fellow who came forward to save her life, assuring him that there was less contamination in the touch of fire than in that of man. Fortunately, the flames were extinguished, and the Phoenix of Portugal was permitted to descend, unburned, upon the bleak shores of Flanders.

The occasion, notwithstanding the recent tears of the duchess, and the arrogance of the prince, was the signal for much festivity among the courtiers of Brussels. It was also the epoch from which movements of a secret and important character were to be dated. The chevaliers of the Fleece were assembled, and Viglius pronounced before them one of his most classical orations. He had a good deal to say concerning the private adventures of Saint Andrew, patron of the Order, and went into some details of a conversation which that venerated personage had once held with the proconsul Ægeas. The moral which he deduced from his narrative was the necessity of union among the magnates for the maintenance of the Catholic faith, the nobility and the Church being the two columns upon which the whole social fabric reposed. It is to be feared that the president became rather prosy upon the occasion. Perhaps his homily, like those of the fictitious Archbishop of Granada, began to smack of the apoplexy from which he had so recently escaped. Perhaps, the meeting being one of hilarity, the younger nobles became restive under the infliction of a very long and very solemn harangue. At any rate, as the meeting broke up, there was a good deal of jesting on the subject. De Hammes, commonly called “Toison d’Or,” councilor and king-at-arms of the Order, said that the president had been seeing visions and talking with Saint Andrew in a dream. Marquis Berghen asked for the source whence he had derived such intimate acquaintance with the ideas of the saint. The president took these remarks rather testily, and, from trifling, the company became soon earnestly engaged in a warm discussion of the agitating topics of the day. It soon became evident to Viglius that De Hammes and others of his comrades had been dealing with dangerous things. He began shrewdly to suspect that the popular heresy was rapidly extending into higher regions, but it was not the president alone who discovered how widely the contamination was spreading. The meeting, the accidental small talk, which had passed so swiftly from gaiety to gravity, the rapid exchange of ideas, and the free-masonry by which intelligence upon forbidden topics had been mutually conveyed, became events of historical importance. Interviews between nobles, who, in the course of the festivities
produced by the Montigny and Parma marriages, had discovered that they entertained a secret similarity of sentiment upon vital questions, became of frequent occurrence. The result to which such conferences led will be narrated in the following chapter.

Meantime, upon the 11th of November, 1565, the marriage of Prince Alexander and Donna Maria was celebrated, with great solemnity, by the Archbishop of Cambray, in the chapel of the court at Brussels. On the following Sunday the wedding banquet was held in the great hall, where, ten years previously, the memorable abdication of the bridegroom's imperial grandfather had taken place.

The walls were again hung with the magnificent tapestry of Gideon, while the Knights of the Fleece, with all the other grandees of the land, were assembled to grace the spectacle. The king was represented by his envoy in England, Don Guzman de Silva, who came to Brussels for the occasion, and who had been selected for this duty because, according to Armenteros, "he was endowed, beside his prudence, with so much witty gracefulness with ladies in matters of pastime and entertainment." Early in the month of December, a famous tournament was held in the great market-place of Brussels, the duke of Parma, the duke of Aerschot, and Count Egmont being judges of the jousts. Count Mansfeld was the challenger, assisted by his son Charles, celebrated among the gentry of the land for his dexterity in such sports. To Count Charles was awarded upon this occasion the silver cup from the lady of the lists. Count Bossu received the prize for breaking best his lances, the Seigneur de Beauvoir for the most splendid entrance, Count Louis of Nassau for having borne himself most gallantly in the mêlée. On the same evening, the nobles, together with the bridal pair, were entertained at a splendid supper, given by the city of Brussels in the magnificent Hôtel de Ville. On this occasion the prizes gained at the tournament were distributed, amid the applause and hilarity of all the revelers.

Thus, with banquet, tourney, and merry marriage bells, with gaiety gilding the surface of society, while a deadly hatred to the inquisition was eating into the heart of the nation, and while the fires of civil war were already kindling, of which no living man was destined to witness the extinction, ended the year 1565.

CHAPTER 6

Continued Conflicts and Field-Preaching in the Netherlands
The most remarkable occurrence in the earlier part of the year 1556 was the famous Compromise. This document, by which the signers pledged themselves to oppose the inquisition, and to defend each other against all consequences of such a resistance, was probably the work of Philip de Marnix, Lord of Sainte Aldegonde. Much obscurity, however, rests upon the origin of this league. Its foundations had already been laid in the latter part of the preceding year. The nuptials of Parma with the Portuguese princess had been the cause of much festivity, not only in Brussels, but at Antwerp. The great commercial metropolis had celebrated the occasion by a magnificent banquet. There had been triumphal arches, wreaths of flowers, loyal speeches, generous sentiments, in the usual profusion. The chief ornament of the dinner table had been a magnificent piece of confectionary, setting elaborately forth the mission of Count Mansfeld with the fleet to Portugal to fetch the bride from her home, with exquisitely finished figures in sugar—portraits, it is to be presumed—of the principal personages as they appeared during the most striking scenes of the history. At the very moment, however, of these delectations, a meeting was held at Brussels of men whose minds were occupied with sterner stuff than sugar-work. On the wedding day of Parma, Francis Junius, a dissenting minister then residing at Antwerp, was invited to Brussels to preach a sermon in the house of Count Culemburg, on the horse-market (now called Little Sablon), before a small assembly of some twenty gentlemen.

This Francis Junius, born of a noble family in Bourges, was the pastor of the secret French congregation of Huguenots at Antwerp. He was very young, having arrived from Geneva, where he had been educated, to take charge of the secret church, when but just turned of twenty years. He was, however, already celebrated for his learning, his eloquence, and his courage. Towards the end of 1565, it had already become known that Junius was in secret understanding with Louis of Nassau, to prepare an address to government on the subject of the inquisition and edicts. Orders were given for his arrest. A certain painter of Brussels affected conversion to the new religion, that he might gain admission to the congregation, and afterwards earn the reward of the informer. He played his part so well that he was permitted to attend many meetings, in the course of which he sketched the portrait of the preacher, and delivered it to the duchess regent, together with minute statements as to his residence and daily habits. Nevertheless, with all this assistance, the government could not succeed in laying hands on him. He escaped to Breda, and continued his labors in spite of persecution. The man’s courage may be estimated from the fact that he preached on one occasion a sermon, advocating the doctrines of the reformed Church with his usual eloquence, in a room overlooking the market-place, where, at the very instant, the execution by fire of several heretics was taking place, while the light from the flames in which the brethren of their Faith were burning, was flickering through the glass windows of the conventicle. Such was the man who preached a sermon in
Culemburg Palace on Parma’s wedding day. The nobles who listened to him were occupied with grave discourse after conclusion of the religious exercises. Junius took no part in their conversation, but in his presence it was resolved that a league against the "barbarous and violent inquisition" should be formed, and that the confederates should mutually bind themselves both within and without the Netherlands to this great purpose. Junius, in giving this explicit statement, has not mentioned the names of the nobles before whom he preached. It may be inferred that some of them were the more ardent and the more respectable among the somewhat miscellaneous band by whom the Compromise was afterwards signed.

At about the same epoch, Louis of Nassau, Nicolas de Hammes, and certain other gentlemen met at the baths of Spa. At this secret assembly, the foundations of the Compromise were definitely laid. A document was afterwards drawn up, which was circulated for signatures in the early part of 1566. It is, therefore, a mistake to suppose that this memorable paper was simultaneously signed and sworn to at any solemn scene like that of the declaration of American Independence, or like some of the subsequent transactions in the Netherland revolt, arranged purposely for dramatic effect. Several copies of the Compromise were passed secretly from hand to hand, and in the course of two months some two thousand signatures had been obtained. The original copy bore but three names—those of Brederode, Charles de Mansfeld, and Louis of Nassau. The composition of the paper is usually ascribed to Sainte Aldegonde, although the fact is not indiscutable. At any rate, it is very certain that he was one of the originators and main supporters of the famous league. Sainte Aldegonde was one of the most accomplished men of his age. He was of ancient nobility, as he proved by an abundance of historical and heraldic evidence, in answer to a scurrilous pamphlet in which he had been accused, among other delinquencies, of having sprung from plebeian blood. Having established his "extraction from true and ancient gentlemen of Savoy, paternally and maternally," he rebuked his assailants in manly strain. "Even had it been that I was without nobility of birth," said he, "I should be none the less or more a virtuous or honest man; nor can any one reproach me with having failed in the point of honor or duty. What greater folly than to boast of the virtue or gallantry of others, as do many nobles who, having neither a grain of virtue in their souls nor a drop of wisdom in their brains, are entirely useless to their country! Yet there are such men, who, because their ancestors have done some valorous deed, think themselves fit to direct the machinery of a whole country, having from their youth learned nothing but to dance and to spin like weathercocks with their heads as well as their heels."

Certainly Sainte Aldegonde had learned other lessons than these. He was one of the many-sided men who recalled the symmetry of antique patriots. He was a poet of much vigor and imagination, a prose writer whose style was surpassed by that of none of his contemporaries, a diplomatist in whose tact and delicacy William of Orange afterwards reposed in the most difficult and important
negotiations, an orator whose discourses on many great public occasions attracted the attention of Europe, a soldier whose bravery was to be attested afterwards on many a well-fought field, a theologian so skillful in the polemics of divinity, that, as it will hereafter appear, he was more than a match for a bench of bishops upon their own ground, and a scholar so accomplished, that, besides speaking and writing the classical and several modern languages with facility, he had also translated for popular use the Psalms of David into vernacular verse, and at a very late period of his life was requested by the states-general of the republic to translate all the Scriptures, a work, the fulfillment of which was prevented by his death. A passionate foe to the inquisition and to all the abuses of the ancient Church, an ardent defender of civil liberty, it must be admitted that he partook also of the tyrannical spirit of Calvinism. He never rose to the lofty heights to which the spirit of the great founder of the commonwealth was destined to soar, but denounced the great principle of religious liberty for all consciences as godless. He was now twenty-eight years of age, having been born in the same year with his friend Louis of Nassau. His device, "Repos ailleurs," finely typified the restless, agitated, and laborious life to which he was destined.

That other distinguished leader of the newly-formed league, Count Louis, was a true knight of the olden time, the very mirror of chivalry. Gentle, generous, pious; making use, in his tent before the battle, of the prayers which his mother sent him from the home of his childhood, yet fiery in the field as an ancient crusader; doing the work of general and soldier with desperate valor and against any numbers; cheerful and steadfast under all reverses; witty and jocund in social intercourse; animating with his unceasing spirits the graver and more foreboding soul of his brother; he was the man to whom the eyes of the most ardent among the Netherland Reformers were turned at this early epoch, the trusty staff upon which the great Prince of Orange was to lean till it was broken. As gay as Brederode, he was unstained by his vices, and exercised a boundless influence over that reckless personage, who often protested that he would "die a poor soldier at his feet." The career of Louis was destined to be short, if reckoned by years, but if by events, it was to attain almost a patriarchal length. At the age of nineteen he had taken part in the battle of St. Quentin, and when once the war of freedom opened, his sword was never to be sheathed. His days were filled with life, and when he fell into his bloody but unknown grave, he was to leave a name as distinguished for heroic valor and untiring energy as for spotless integrity. He was small of stature, but well formed, athletic in all knightly exercises, with agreeable features, a dark laughing eye, close-clipped brown hair, and a peaked beard.

"Golden Fleece," as Nicholas de Hammes was universally denominated, was the illegitimate scion of a noble house. He was one of the most active of the early adherents to the league, kept the lists of signers in his possession, and scoured the country daily to procure new confederates. At the public preachings of the reformed religion, which soon after this epoch broke forth throughout the
Netherlands as by a common impulse, he made himself conspicuous. He was accused of wearing, on such occasions, the ensigns of the Fleece about his neck, in order to induce ignorant people to believe that they might themselves legally follow, when they perceived a member of that illustrious fraternity to be leading the way. As De Hammes was only an official or servant of that Order, but not a companion, the seduction of the lieges by such false pretenses was reckoned among the most heinous of his offenses. He was fierce in his hostility to the government, and one of those fiery spirits whose premature zeal was prejudicial to the cause of liberty, and disheartening to the cautious patriotism of Orange. He was for smiting at once the gigantic atrocity of the Spanish dominion, without waiting for the forging of the weapons by which the blows were to be dealt. He forgot that men and money were as necessary as wrath, in a contest with the most tremendous despotism of the world. "They wish," he wrote to Count Louis, "that we should meet these hungry wolves with remonstrances, using gentle words, while they are burning and cutting off heads. Be it so then. Let us take the pen—let them take the sword. For them deeds, for us words. We shall weep, they will laugh. The Lord be praised for all; but I can not write this without tears." This nervous language painted the situation and the character of the writer.

As for Charles Mansfeld, he soon fell away from the league which he had embraced originally with excessive ardor.

By the influence of the leaders many signatures were obtained during the first two months of the year. The language of the document was such that patriotic Catholics could sign it as honestly as Protestants. It inveighed bitterly against the tyranny of "a heap of strangers," who, influenced only by private avarice and ambition, were making use of an affected zeal for the Catholic religion, to persuade the king into a violation of his oaths. It denounced the refusal to mitigate the severity of the edicts. It declared the inquisition, which it seemed the intention of government to fix permanently upon them, as "iniquitous, contrary to all laws, human and divine, surpassing the greatest barbarism which was ever practiced by tyrants, and as redounding to the dishonor of God and to the total desolation of the country." The signers protested, therefore, that "having a due regard to their duties as faithful vassals of his Majesty, and especially as noblemen—and in order not to be deprived of their estates and their lives by those who, under pretext of religion, wished to enrich themselves by plunder and murder," they had bound themselves to each other by holy covenant and solemn oath to resist the inquisition. They mutually promised to oppose it in every shape, open or covert, under whatever mask it might assume, whether bearing the name of inquisition, placard, or edict, "and to extirpate and eradicate the thing in any form, as the mother of all iniquity and disorder." They protested before God and man, that they would attempt nothing to the dishonor of the Lord or to the diminution of the king’s grandeur, majesty, or dominion. They declared, on the contrary, an honest purpose to "maintain the monarch in his estate, and to suppress all seditions, tumults,
monopolies, and factions.” They engaged to preserve their confederation, thus formed, forever inviolable, and to permit none of its members to be persecuted in any manner, in body or goods, by any proceeding founded on the inquisition, the edicts, or the present league.

It will be seen therefore, that the Compromise was in its origin, a covenant of nobles. It was directed against the foreign influence by which the Netherlands were exclusively governed, and against the inquisition, whether papal, episcopal, or by edict. There is no doubt that the country was controlled entirely by Spanish masters, and that the intention was to reduce the ancient liberty of the Netherlands into subjection to a junta of foreigners sitting at Madrid. Nothing more legitimate could be imagined than a constitutional resistance to such a policy.

The Prince of Orange had not been consulted as to the formation of the league. It was sufficiently obvious to its founders that his cautious mind would find much to censure in the movement. His sentiments with regard to the inquisition and the edicts were certainly known to all men. In the beginning of this year, too, he had addressed a remarkable letter to the duchess, in answer to her written commands to cause the Council of Trent, the inquisition, and the edicts, in accordance with the recent commands of the king, to be published and enforced throughout his government. Although his advice on the subject had not been asked, he expressed his sense of obligation to speak his mind on the subject, preferring the hazard of being censured for his remonstrance, to that of incurring the suspicion of connivance at the desolation of the land by his silence. He left the question of reformation in ecclesiastical morals untouched, as not belonging to his vocation. As to the inquisition, he most distinctly informed her highness that the hope which still lingered in the popular mind of escaping the permanent establishment of that institution, had alone prevented the utter depopulation of the country, with entire subversion of its commercial and manufacturing industry. With regard to the edicts, he temperately but forcibly expressed the opinion that it was very hard to enforce those placards now in their rigor, when the people were exasperated, and the misery universal, inasmuch as they had frequently been modified on former occasions. The king, he said, could gain nothing but difficulty for himself, and would be sure to lose the affection of his subjects by renewing the edicts, strengthening the inquisition, and proceeding to fresh executions, at a time when the people, moved by the example of their neighbors, were naturally inclined to novelty. Moreover, when by reason of the daily increasing prices of grain a famine was impending over the land, no worse moment could be chosen to enforce such a policy. In conclusion, he observed that he was at all times desirous to obey the commands of his Majesty and her Highness, and to discharge the duties of “a good Christian.” The use of the latter term is remarkable, as marking an epoch in the history of the prince’s mind. A year before he would have said a good Catholic, but it was during this year that his mind began to be thoroughly pervaded by religious doubt, and that the great
question of the Reformation forced itself, not only as a political, but as a moral problem upon him, which he felt that he could not much longer neglect instead of solving.

Such were the opinions of Orange. He could not, however, safely entrust the sacred interests of a commonwealth to such hands as those of Brederode—however deeply that enthusiastic personage might drink the health of "Younker William," as he affectionately denominated the prince—or to "Golden Fleece," or to Charles Mansfeld, or to that younger wild boar of Ardennes, Robert de la Marck. In his brother and in Sainte Aldegonde he had confidence, but he did not exercise over them that control which he afterwards acquired. His conduct towards the confederacy was imitated in the main by the other great nobles. The covenanters never expected to obtain the signatures of such men as Orange, Egmont, Horn, Meghen, Berghen, or Montigny, nor were those eminent personages ever accused of having signed the Compromise, although some of them were afterwards charged with having protected those who did affix their names to the document. The confederates were originally found among the lesser nobles. Of these some were sincere Catholics, who loved the ancient Church but hated the inquisition; some were fierce Calvinists or determined Lutherans; some were troublous and adventurous spirits, men of broken fortunes, extravagant habits, and boundless desires, who no doubt thought that the broad lands of the Church, with their stately abbeys, would furnish much more fitting homes and revenues for gallant gentlemen than for lazy monks. All were young, few had any prudence or conduct, and the history of the league more than justified the disapprobation of Orange. The nobles thus banded together, achieved little by their confederacy. They disgraced a great cause by their orgies, almost ruined it by their inefficiency, and when the robe of sand which they had twisted fell asunder, the people had gained nothing and the gentry had almost lost the confidence of the nation. These remarks apply to the mass of the confederates and to some of the leaders. Louis of Nassau and Sainte Aldegonde were ever honored and trusted as they deserved.

Although the language of the Compromise spoke of the leaguers as nobles, yet the document was circulated among burghers and merchants also, many of whom, according to the satirical remark of a Netherland Catholic, may have been influenced by the desire of writing their names in such aristocratic company, and some of whom were destined to expiate such vainglory upon the scaffold.

With such associates, therefore, the profound and anxious mind of Orange could have little in common. Confidence expanding as the numbers increased, their audacity and turbulence grew with the growth of the league. The language at their wild banquets was as hot as the wine which confused their heads; yet the prince knew that there was rarely a festival in which there did not sit some calm, temperate Spaniard, watching with quiet eye and cool brain the extravagant demeanor, and listening with composure to the dangerous
avowals or bravados of these revelers, with the purpose of transmitting a
record of their language or demonstrations to the inmost sanctuary of Philip’s
cabinet at Madrid. The prince knew, too, that the king was very sincere in his
determination to maintain the inquisition, however dilatory his proceedings
might appear. He was well aware that an armed force might be expected ere
long to support the royal edicts. Already the prince had organized that system
of espionage upon Philip, by which the champion of his country was so long
able to circumvent its despot. The king left letters carefully locked in his desk
at night, and unseen hands had forwarded copies of them to William of Orange
before the morning. He left memoranda in his pockets on retiring to bed, and
exact transcripts of those papers found their way, likewise, ere he rose, to the
same watchman in the Netherlands. No doubt that an inclination for political
intrigue was a prominent characteristic of the prince, and a blemish upon the
purity of his moral nature. Yet the dissimulating policy of his age he had
mastered only that he might accomplish the noblest purposes to which a great
and good man can devote his life—the protection of the liberty and the religion
of a whole people against foreign tyranny. His intrigue served his country, not a
narrow personal ambition, and it was only by such arts that he became Philip’s
master, instead of filling at once, like so many great personages, a blind and
infatuated victim. No doubt his purveyors of secret information were often
destined fearfully to atone for their contraband commerce, but they who trade
in treason must expect to pay the penalty of their traffic.

Although, therefore, the great nobles held themselves aloof from the
confederacy, yet many of them gave unequivocal signs of their dissent from the
policy adopted by government. Marquis Berghen wrote to the duchess,
resigning his posts, on the ground of his inability to execute the intention of
the king in the matter of religion. Meghen replied to the same summons by a
similar letter. Egmont assured her that he would have placed his offices in the
king’s hands in Spain, could he have foreseen that his Majesty would form such
resolutions as had now been proclaimed. The sentiments of Orange were
avowed in the letter to which we have already alluded. His opinions were
shared by Montigny, Culemburg, and many others. The duchess was almost
reduced to desperation. The condition of the country was frightful. The most
determined loyalists, such as Berlaymont, Viglius, and Hopper, advised her not
to mention the name of inquisition in a conference which she was obliged to
hold with a deputation from Antwerp. She feared, all feared, to pronounce the
hated word. She wrote despairing letters to Philip, describing the condition of
the land and her own agony in the gloomiest colors. Since the arrival of the
royal orders, she said, things had gone from bad to worse. The king had been ill
advised. It was useless to tell the people that the inquisition had always
existed in the provinces. They maintained that it was a novelty, that the
institution was a more rigorous one than the Spanish Inquisition, which, said
Margaret, “was most odious, as the king knew.” It was utterly impossible to
carry the edicts into execution. Nearly all the governors of provinces had told
her plainly that they would not help to burn fifty or sixty thousand
Thus bitterly did Margaret of Parma bewail the royal decree; not that she had any sympathy for the victims, but because she felt the increasing danger to the executioner. One of two things it was now necessary to decide upon—concession or armed compulsion. Meantime, while Philip was slowly and secretly making his levies, his sister, as well as his people, was on the rack. Of all the seigniors, not one was placed in so painful a position as Egmont. His military reputation and his popularity made him too important a personage to be slighted, yet he was deeply mortified at the lamentable mistake which he had committed. He now averred that he would never take arms against the king, but that he would go where man should never see him more.

Such was the condition of the nobles, greater and less. That of the people could not well be worse. Famine reigned in the land. Emigration, caused not by over population, but by persecution, was fast weakening the country. It was no wonder that not only foreign merchants should be scared from the great commercial cities by the approaching disorders, but that every industrious artisan who could find the means of escape should seek refuge among strangers, wherever an asylum could be found. That asylum was afforded by Protestant England, who received these intelligent and unfortunate wanderers with cordiality, and learned with eagerness the lessons in mechanical skill which they had to teach. Already 30,000 emigrant Netherlanders were established in Sandwich, Norwich, and other places, assigned to them by Elizabeth. It had always, however, been made a condition of the liberty granted to these foreigners for practicing their handiwork, that each house should employ at least one English apprentice. "Thus," said a Walloon historian, splenetically, "by this regulation, and by means of heavy duties on foreign manufactures, have the English built up their own fabrics and prohibited those of the Netherlands. Thus have they drawn over to their own country our skilful artisans to practice their industry, not at home but abroad, and our poor people are thus losing the means of earning their livelihood. Thus has cloth-making, silk-making and the art of dyeing declined in this country, and would have been quite extinguished but by our wise countervailing edicts." The writer, who derived most of his materials and his wisdom from the papers of Councillor d'Assonleville, could hardly doubt that the persecution to which these industrious artisans, whose sufferings he affected to deplore, had been subjected, must have had something to do with their expatriation; but he preferred to ascribe it wholly to the protective system adopted by England. In this he followed the opinion of his preceptor. "For a long time," said Assonleville, "the Netherlands have been the Indies to England; and as long as she has them, she needs no other. The French try to surprise our fortresses and cities; the English make war upon our wealth and upon the purses of the people." Whatever the cause, however, the current of trade was already turned. The cloth-making of England was already gaining preponderance over that of the provinces. Vessels now went every week from Sandwich to Antwerp, laden with silk, satin, and cloth, manufactured in England, while as many but a
few years before, had borne the Flemish fabrics of the same nature from
Antwerp to England.

It might be supposed by disinterested judges that persecution was at the
bottom of this change in commerce. The Prince of Orange estimated that up to
this period 50,000 persons in the provinces had been put to death in obedience
to the edicts. He was a moderate man, and accustomed to weigh his words. As
a new impulse had been given to the system of butchery, as it was now
sufficiently plain that "if the father had chastised his people with a scourge,
the son held a whip of scorpions"—as the edicts were to be enforced with
renewed vigor—it was natural that commerce and manufactures should make
their escape out of a doomed land as soon as possible, whatever system of
tariffs might be adopted by neighboring nations.

A new step had been resolved upon early in the month of March by the
confederates. A petition, or "Request," was drawn up, which was to be
presented to the duchess regent in a formal manner by a large number of
gentlemen belonging to the league. This movement was so grave, and likely to
be followed by such formidable results, that it seemed absolutely necessary for
Orange and his friends to take some previous cognizance of it before it was
finally arranged. The prince had no power, nor was there any reason why he
should have the inclination, to prevent the measure, but he felt it his duty to
do what he could to control the vehemence of the men who were moving so
rashly forward, and to take from their manifesto, as much as possible, the
character of a menace.

For this end, a meeting ostensibly for social purposes and "good cheer" was
held, in the middle of March, at Breda, and afterwards adjourned to
Hoogstraaten. To these conferences Orange invited Egmont, Horn,
Hoogstraaten, Berghen, Meghen, Montigny, and other great nobles. Brederode,
Tholouse, Boxtel, and other members of the league were also present. The
object of the prince in thus assembling his own immediate associates,
governors of provinces, and knights of the Fleece, as well as some of the
leading members of the league, was twofold. It had long been his opinion that
a temperate and loyal movement was still possible, by which the impending
convulsions might be averted. The line of policy which he had marked out
required the assent of the magnates of the land, and looked towards the
convocation of the states-general. It was natural that he should indulge in the
hope of being seconded by the men who were in the same political and social
station with himself. All, although Catholics, hated the inquisition. As Viglius
pathetically exclaimed, "Saint Paul himself would have been unable to
persuade these men that good fruit was to be gathered from the inquisition in
the cause of religion." Saint Paul could hardly be expected to reappear on
earth for such a purpose. Meantime the arguments of the learned president had
proved powerless, either to convince the nobles that the institution was
laudable or to obtain from the duchess a postponement in the publication of
the late decrees. The Prince of Orange, however, was not able to bring his usual associates to his way of thinking. The violent purposes of the leaguers excited the wrath of the more loyal nobles. Their intentions were so dangerous, even in the estimation of the prince himself, that he felt it his duty to lay the whole subject before the duchess, although he was not opposed to the presentation of a modest and moderate Request. Meghen was excessively indignant at the plan of the confederates, which he pronounced an insult to the government, a treasonable attempt to overawe the duchess, by a "few wretched vagabonds." He swore that "he would break every one of their heads, if the king would furnish him with a couple of hundred thousand florins." Orange quietly rebuked this truculent language, by assuring him both that such a process would be more difficult than he thought, and that he would also find many men of great respectability among the vagabonds.

The meeting separated at Hoogstraaten without any useful result, but it was now incumbent upon the prince, in his own judgment, to watch, and in a measure to superintend, the proceedings of the confederates. By his care the contemplated Request was much altered, and especially made more gentle in its tone. Meghen separated himself thenceforth entirely from Orange, and ranged himself exclusively upon the side of government. Egmont vacillated, as usual, satisfying neither the prince nor the duchess.

Margaret of Parma was seated in her council chamber very soon after these occurrences, attended both by Orange and Egmont, when the Count of Meghen entered the apartment. With much precipitation, he begged that all matters then before the board might be postponed, in order that he might make an important announcement. He then stated that he had received information from a gentleman on whose word he could rely, a very affectionate servant of the king, but whose name he had promised not to reveal, that a very extensive conspiracy of heretics and sectaries had been formed, both within and without the Netherlands, that they had already a force of 35,000 men, foot and horse, ready for action, that they were about to make a sudden invasion, and to plunder the whole country, unless they immediately received a formal concession of entire liberty of conscience, and that, within six or seven days, 1,500 men-at-arms would make their appearance before her Highness. These ridiculous exaggerations of the truth were confirmed by Egmont, who said that he had received similar information from persons whose names he was not at liberty to mention, but from whose statements he could announce that some great tumult might be expected every day. He added that there were among the confederates many who wished to change their sovereign, and that the chieftains and captains of the conspiracy were all appointed. The same nobleman also laid before the council a copy of the Compromise, the terms of which famous document scarcely justified the extravagant language with which it had been heralded. The duchess was astounded at these communications. She had already received, but probably not yet read, a letter from the Prince of Orange upon the subject, in which a moderate and plain statement of the
actual facts was laid down, which was now reiterated by the same personage by word of mouth. An agitated and inconclusive debate followed, in which, however, it sufficiently appeared, as the duchess informed her brother, that one of two things must be done without further delay. The time had arrived for the government to take up arms, or to make concessions.

In one of the informal meetings of councillors, now held almost daily, on the subject of the impending Request, Aremberg, Meghen, and Berlaymont maintained that the door should be shut in the face of the petitioners without taking any further notice of the petition. Berlaymont suggested also, that if this course were not found advisable, the next best thing would be to allow the confederates to enter the palace with their Request, and then to cut them to pieces to the very last man, by means of troops to be immediately ordered from the frontiers. Such sanguinary projects were indignantly rebuked by Orange. He maintained that the confederates were entitled to be treated with respect. Many of them, he said, were his friends—some of them his relations—and there was no reason for refusing to gentlemen of their rank, a right which belonged to the poorest plebeian in the land. Egmont sustained these views of the prince as earnestly as he had on a previous occasion appeared to countenance the more violent counsels of Meghen.

Meantime, as it was obvious that the demonstration on the part of the confederacy was soon about to be made, the duchess convened a grand assembly of notables, in which not only all the state and privy councillors, but all the governors and knights of the Fleece were to take part. On the 28th of March, this assembly was held, at which the whole subject of the Request, together with the proposed modifications of the edicts and abolition of the inquisition, was discussed. The duchess also requested the advice of the meeting whether it would not be best for her to retire to some other city, like Mons, which she had selected as her stronghold in case of extremity. The decision was that it would be a high-handed proceeding to refuse the right of petition to a body of gentlemen, many of them related to the greatest nobles in the land, but it was resolved that they should be required to make their appearance without arms. As to the contemplated flight of the duchess, it was urged, with much reason, that such a step would cast disgrace upon the government, and that it would be a sufficiently precautionary measure to strengthen the guards at the city gates, not to prevent the entrance of the petitioners, but to see that they were unaccompanied by all armed force.

It had been decided that Count Brederode should present the petition to the duchess at the head of a deputation of about three hundred gentlemen. The character of the nobleman thus placed foremost on such an important occasion has been sufficiently made manifest. He had no qualities whatever but birth and audacity to recommend him as a leader for a political party. It was to be seen that other attributes were necessary to make a man useful in such a position, and the count’s deficiencies soon became lamentably conspicuous. He
was the lineal descendant and representative of the old Sovereign Counts of Holland. Five hundred years before his birth, his ancestor Sikko, younger brother of Dirk III, had died, leaving two sons, one of whom was the first Baron of Brederode. A descent of five centuries in unbroken male succession from the original sovereigns of Holland, gave him a better genealogical claim to the provinces than any which Philip of Spain could assert through the usurping house of Burgundy. In the approaching tumults he hoped for an opportunity of again asserting the ancient honors of his name. He was a sworn foe to Spaniards and to "water of the fountain." But a short time previously to this epoch he had written to Louis of Nassau, then lying ill of a fever, in order gravely to remonstrate with him on the necessity of substituting wine for water on all occasions, and it will be seen in the sequel that the wine cup was the great instrument on which he relied for effecting the deliverance of the country. Although "neither bachelor nor chancellor," as he expressed it, he was supposed to be endowed with ready eloquence and mother wit. Even these gifts, however, if he possessed them, were often found wanting on important emergencies. Of his courage there was no question, but he was not destined to the death either of a warrior or a martyr. Headlong, noisy, debauched, but brave, kind-hearted and generous, he was a fitting representative of his ancestors, the hard-fighting, hard-drinking, crusading, free-booting sovereigns of Holland and Friesland, and would himself have been more at home and more useful in the eleventh century than in the sixteenth.

It was about six o’clock in the evening, on the third day of April (1566), that the long-expected cavalcade at last entered Brussels. An immense concourse of citizens of all ranks thronged around the noble confederates as soon as they made their appearance. They were about two hundred in number, all on horseback, with pistols in their holsters, and Brederode, tall, athletic, and martial in his bearing, with handsome features and fair curling locks upon his shoulders, seemed an appropriate chieftain for that band of Batavian chivalry. The procession was greeted with frequent demonstrations of applause as it wheeled slowly through the city till it reached the mansion of Orange Nassau. Here Brederode and Count Louis alighted, while the rest of the company dispersed to different quarters of the town.

"They thought that I should not come to Brussels," said Brederode, as he dismounted. "Very well, here I am, and perhaps I shall depart in a different manner." In the course of the next day, Counts Culemburg and Van den Berg entered the city with one hundred other cavaliers.

On the morning of the fifth of April, the confederates were assembled at the Culemburg mansion, which stood on the square called the Sabon, within a few minutes’ walk of the palace. A straight handsome street led from the house along the summit of the hill, to the splendid residence of the ancient Dukes of Brabant, then the abode of Duchess Margaret. At a little before noon, the gentlemen came forth, marching on foot, two by two, to the number of three
hundred. Nearly all were young, many of them bore the most ancient historical names of their country, every one was arrayed in magnificent costume. It was regarded as ominous, that the man who led the procession, Philip de Bailleul, was lame. The line was closed by Brederode and Count Louis, who came last, walking arm in arm. An immense crowd was collected in the square in front of the palace, to welcome the men who were looked upon as the deliverers of the land from Spanish tyranny, from the cardinalists, and from the inquisition. They were received with deafening huzzas and clappings of hands by the assembled populace. As they entered the council chamber, passing through the great hall, where ten years before the Emperor had given away his crowns, they found the Emperor’s daughter seated in the chair of state, and surrounded by the highest personages of the country. The emotion of the duchess was evident, as the procession somewhat abruptly made its appearance; nor was her agitation diminished as she observed among the petitioners many relatives and retainers of the Orange and Egmont houses, and saw friendly glances of recognition exchanged between them and their chiefs.

As soon as all had entered the senate room, Brederode advanced, made a low obeisance, and spoke a brief speech. He said that he had come thither with his colleagues to present a humble petition to her Highness. He alluded to the reports which had been rife, that they had contemplated tumult, sedition, foreign conspiracies, and, what was more abominable than all, a change of sovereign. He denounced such statements as calumnies, begged the duchess to name the men who had thus aspersed an honorable and loyal company, and called upon her to inflict exemplary punishment upon the slanderers. With these prefatory remarks he presented the petition. The famous document was then read aloud. Its tone was sufficiently loyal, particularly in the preamble, which was filled with protestations of devotion to both king and duchess. After this conventional introduction, however, the petitioners proceeded to state, very plainly, that the recent resolutions of his Majesty, with regard to the edicts and the inquisition, were likely to produce a general rebellion. They had hoped, they said, that a movement would be made by the seigniors or by the estates, to remedy the evil by striking at its cause, but they had waited in vain. The danger, on the other hand, was augmenting every day, universal sedition was at the gate, and they had therefore felt obliged to delay no longer, but come forward the first and do their duty. They professed to do this with more freedom, because the danger touched them very nearly. They were the most exposed to the calamities which usually spring from civil commotions, for their houses and lands situate in the open fields, were exposed to the pillage of all the world. Moreover there was not one of them, whatever his condition, who was not liable at any moment to be executed under the edicts, at the false complaint of the first man who wished to obtain his estate, and who chose to denounce him to the inquisitor, at whose mercy were the lives and property of all. They therefore begged the duchess regent to dispatch an envoy on their behalf, who should humbly implore his Majesty to abolish the edicts. In the meantime they requested her Highness to order a general surcease of the
inquisition, and of all executions, until the king's further pleasure was made
known, and until new ordinances, made by his Majesty with advice and consent
of the states-general duly assembled, should be established. The petition
terminated as it had commenced, with expressions of extreme respect and
devoted loyalty.

The agitation of Duchess Margaret increased very perceptibly during the
reading of the paper. When it was finished, she remained for a few minutes
quite silent, with tears rolling down her cheeks. As soon as she could overcome
her excitement, she uttered a few words to the effect that she would advise
with her councillors and give the petitioners such answer as should be found
suitable. The confederates then passed out from the council chamber into the
grand hall, each individual, as he took his departure, advancing towards the
duchess and making what was called the "caracole," in token of reverence.
There was thus ample time to contemplate the whole company, and to count
the numbers of the deputation.

After this ceremony had been concluded, there was much earnest debate in the
council. The Prince of Orange addressed a few words to the duchess, with the
view of calming her irritation. He observed that the confederates were no
seditious rebels, but loyal gentlemen, well born, well connected, and of
honorable character. They had been influenced, he said, by an honest desire to
save their country from impending danger—not by avarice or ambition. Egmont
shrugged his shoulders, and observed that it was necessary for him to leave the
court for a season, in order to make a visit to the baths of Aix, for an
inflammation which he had in the legs. It was then that Berlaymont, according
to the account, which has been sanctioned by nearly every contemporary
writer, whether Catholic or Protestant, uttered the gibe which was destined to
become immortal, and to give a popular name to the confederacy. "What,
Madam," he is reported to have cried in a passion, "is it possible that your
Highness can entertain fears of these beggars? (gueux) Is it not obvious what
manner of men they are? They have not had wisdom enough to manage their
own estates, and are they now to teach the king and your Highness how to
govern the country? By the living God, if my advice were taken, their petition
should have a cudgel for a commentary, and we would make them go down the
steps of the palace a great deal faster than they mounted them."

The Count of Meghen was equally violent in his language. Aremberg was for
ordering "their reverences, the confederates," to quit Brussels without delay.
The conversation, carried on in so violent a key, might not unnaturally have
been heard by such of the gentlemen as had not yet left the grand hall
adjoining the council chamber. The meeting of the council was then adjourned
for an hour or two, to meet again in the afternoon, for the purpose of deciding
deliberately upon the answer to be given to the Request. Meanwhile, many of
the confederates were swaggering about the streets, talking very bravely of the
scene which had just occurred, and it is probable, boasting not a little of the
effect which their demonstration would produce. As they passed by the house of Berlaymont, that nobleman, standing at his window in company with Count Aremberg, is said to have repeated his jest. "There go our fine beggars again," said he. "Look, I pray you, with what bravado they are passing before us!"

On the 6th of April, Brederode, attended by a large number of his companions, again made his appearance at the palace. He then received the petition, which was returned to him with an apostille or commentary to this effect: her Highness would dispatch an envoy for the purpose of inducing his Majesty to grant the Request. Everything worthy of the king's unaffected (naïve) and customary benignity might be expected as to the result. The duchess had already, with the assistance of the state and privy councillors, Fleece knights and governors, commenced a project for moderating the edicts to be laid before the king. As her authority did not allow her to suspend the inquisition and placards, she was confident that the petitioners would be satisfied with the special application about to be made to the king. Meantime, she would give orders to all inquisitors, that they should proceed "modestly and discreetly" in their office, so that no one would have cause to complain. Her Highness hoped likewise that the gentlemen on their part would conduct themselves in a loyal and satisfactory manner, thus proving that they had no intention to make innovations in the ancient religion of the country.

Upon the next day but one, Monday, 8th of April, Brederode, attended by a number of the confederates, again made his appearance at the palace, for the purpose of delivering an answer to the Apostille. In this second paper the confederates rendered thanks for the prompt reply which the duchess had given to their Request, expressed regrets that she did not feel at liberty to suspend the inquisition, and declared their confidence that she would at once give such orders to the inquisitors and magistrates that prosecutions for religious matters should cease, until the king's further pleasure should be declared. They professed themselves desirous of maintaining whatever regulations should be thereafter established by his Majesty, with the advice and consent of the states-general, for the security of the ancient religion, and promised to conduct themselves generally in such wise that her Highness would have every reason to be satisfied with them. They, moreover, requested that the duchess would cause the Petition to be printed in authentic form by the government printer.

The admission that the confederates would maintain the ancient religion had been obtained, as Margaret informed her brother, through the dexterous management of Hoogstraaten, without suspicion on the part of the petitioners that the proposition for such a declaration came from her.

The duchess replied by word of mouth to the second address thus made to her by the confederates, that she could not go beyond the Apostille which she had put on record. She had already caused letters for the inquisitors and
magistrates to be drawn up. The minutes for those instructions should be laid before the confederates by Count Hoogstraaten and Secretary Berty. As for the printing of their petition, she was willing to grant their demand, and would give orders to that effect.

The gentlemen, having received this answer, retired into the great hall. After a few minutes’ consultation, however, they returned to the council chamber, where the Seigneur d’Esquерdes, one of their number, addressed a few parting words, in the name of his associates, to the regent, concluding with a request that she would declare the confederates to have done no act, and made no demonstration, inconsistent with their duty and with a perfect respect for his Majesty.

To this demand the duchess answered somewhat dryly that she could not be judge in such a cause. Time and their future deeds, she observed, could only bear witness as to their purposes. As for declarations from her, they must be satisfied with the Apostille which they had already received.

With this response, somewhat more tart than agreeable, the nobles were obliged to content themselves, and they accordingly took their leave.

It must be confessed that they had been disposed to slide rather cavalierly over a good deal of ground towards the great object which they had in view. Certainly the petitio principii was a main feature of their logic. They had, in their second address, expressed perfect confidence as to two very considerable concessions. The duchess was practically to suspend the inquisition, although she had declared herself without authority for that purpose. The king, who claimed, de jure and de facto, the whole legislative power, was thenceforth to make laws on religious matters by and with the consent of the states-general. Certainly, these ends were very laudable, and if a civil and religious revolution could have been effected by a few gentlemen going to court in fine clothes to present a petition, and by sitting down to a tremendous banquet afterwards, Brederode and his associates were the men to accomplish the task. Unfortunately, a sea of blood and long years of conflict lay between the nation and the promised land, which for a moment seemed so nearly within reach.

Meantime, the next important step in Brederode’s eyes was a dinner. He accordingly invited the confederates to a magnificent repast which he had ordered to be prepared in the Culemburg mansion. Three hundred guests sat down, upon the 8th of April, to this luxurious banquet, which was destined to become historical. The board glittered with silver and gold. The wine circulated with more than its usual rapidity among the band of noble Bacchanals, who were never weary of drinking the healths of Brederode, of Orange, and of Egmont. It was thought that the occasion imperiously demanded an extraordinary carouse, and the political events of the past three days lent an additional excitement to the wine. There was an earnest discussion as to an
appropriate name to be given to their confederacy. Should they call themselves the "Society of Concord," the restorers of lost liberty, or by what other attractive title should the league be baptized? Brederode was, however, already prepared to settle the question. He knew the value of a popular and original name; he possessed the instinct by which adroit partisans in every age have been accustomed to convert the reproachful epithets of their opponents into watchwords of honor, and he had already made his preparations for a startling theatrical effect. Suddenly, amid the din of voices, he arose, with all his rhetorical powers at command. He recounted to the company the observations which the Seigneur de Berlaymont was reported to have made to the duchess, upon the presentation of the Request, and the name which he had thought fit to apply to them collectively. Most of the gentlemen then heard the memorable sarcasm for the first time. Great was the indignation of all that the state councilor should have dared to stigmatize as beggars a band of gentlemen with the best blood of the land in their veins. Brederode, on the contrary, smoothing their anger, assured them with good humor that nothing could be more fortunate. "They call us beggars!" said he, "let us accept the name. We will contend with the inquisition, but remain loyal to the king, even till compelled to wear the beggar’s sack."

He then beckoned to one of his pages, who brought him a leathern wallet, such as was worn at that day by professional mendicants, together with a large wooden bowl, which also formed part of their regular appurtenances. Brederode immediately hung the wallet around his neck, filled the bowl with wine, lifted it with both hands, and drained it at a draught. "Long live the beggars!" he cried, as he wiped his beard and set the bowl down. "Vivent les gueux." Then for the first time, from the lips of those reckless nobles rose the famous cry, which was so often to ring over land and sea, amid blazing cities, on blood-stained decks, through the smoke and carnage of many a stricken field. The humor of Brederode was hailed with deafening shouts of applause. The count then threw the wallet around the neck of his nearest neighbor, and handed him the wooden bowl. Each guest, in turn, donned the mendicant’s knapsack. Pushing aside his golden goblet, each filled the beggars’ bowl to the brim, and drained it to the beggars’ health. Roars of laughter, and shouts of "Vivent les gueux" shook the walls of the stately mansion, as they were doomed never to shake again. The shibboleth was invented. The conjuration which they had been anxiously seeking was found. Their enemies had provided them with a spell, which was to prove, in after days, potent enough to start a spirit from palace or hovel, forest or wave, as the deeds of the "wild beggars," the "wood beggars," and the "beggars of the sea" taught Philip at last to understand the nation which he had driven to madness.

When the wallet and bowl had made the circuit of the table, they were suspended to a pillar in the hall. Each of the company in succession then threw some salt into his goblet, and, placing himself under these symbols of the brotherhood, repeated a jingling distich, produced impromptu for the occasion.
By this salt, by this bread, by this wallet we swear,
These beggars ne'er will change, though all the world should stare.

Par le sel, par le pain, par la besache,
Les gueulx ne changeront quoy qu’on se fache.

This ridiculous ceremony completed the rites by which the confederacy received its name, but the banquet was by no means terminated. The uproar became furious. The younger and more reckless nobles abandoned themselves to revelry, which would have shamed heathen Saturnalia. They renewed to each other, every moment, their vociferous oaths of fidelity to the common cause, drained huge beakers to the beggars’ health, turned their caps and doublets inside out, danced upon chairs and tables. Several addressed each other as Lord Abbot, or Reverend Prior, of this or that religious institution, thus indicating the means by which some of them hoped to mend their broken fortunes.

While the tumult was at its height, the Prince of Orange with Counts Horn and Egmont entered the apartment. They had been dining quietly with Mansfeld, who was confined to his house with an inflamed eye, and they were on their way to the council chamber, where the sessions were now prolonged nightly to a late hour. Knowing that Hoogstraaten, somewhat against his will, had been induced to be present at the banquet, they had come round by the way of Culemburg House, to induce him to retire. They were also disposed, if possible, to abridge the festivities which their influence would have been powerless to prevent.

These great nobles, as soon as they made their appearance, were surrounded by a crew of “beggars,” maddened and dripping with their recent baptism of wine, who compelled them to drink a cup amid shouts of “Vivent le roi et les gueux!” The meaning of this cry they of course could not understand, for even those who had heard Berlaymont’s contemptuous remarks, might not remember the exact term which he had used, and certainly could not be aware of the importance to which it had just been elevated. As for Horn, he disliked and had long before quarreled with Brederode, had prevented many persons from signing the Compromise, and, although a guest at that time of Orange, was in the habit of retiring to bed before supper, to avoid the company of many who frequented the house. Yet his presence for a few moments, with the best intentions, at the conclusion of this famous banquet, was made one of the most deadly charges which were afterwards drawn up against him by the Crown. The three seigniors refused to be seated, and remained but for a moment, “the length of a Miserere,” taking with them Hoogstraaten as they retired. They also prevailed upon the whole party to break up at the same time, so that their presence had served at least to put a conclusion to the disgraceful riot. When they arrived at the council chamber they received the thanks of the duchess for what they had done.

Such was the first movement made by the members of the Compromise. Was it strange that Orange should feel little affinity with such companions? Had he
not reason to hesitate, if the sacred cause of civil and religious liberty could only be maintained by these defenders and with such assistance?
The "beggars" did not content themselves with the name alone of the tine-honored fraternity of Mendicants in which they had enrolled themselves. Immediately after the Culemburg banquet, a costume for the confederacy was decided upon. These young gentlemen, discarding gold lace and velvet, thought it expedient to array themselves in doublets and hose of ashen gray, with short cloaks of the same color, all of the coarsest materials. They appeared in this guise in the streets, with common felt hats on their heads, and beggars’ pouches and bowls at their sides. They caused also medals of lead and copper to be struck, bearing upon one side the head of Philip, upon the reverse, two hands clasped within a wallet, with the motto, "Faithful to the king, even to wearing the beggar’s sack." These badges they wore around their necks, or as buttons to their hats. As a further distinction they shaved their beards close, excepting the moustaches, which were left long and pendent in the Turkish fashion, that custom, as it seemed, being an additional characteristic of Mendicants.

Very soon after these events the nobles of the league dispersed from the capital to their various homes. Brederode rode out of Brussels at the head of a band of cavaliers, who saluted the concourse of applauding spectators with a discharge of their pistols. Forty-three gentlemen accompanied him to Antwerp, where he halted for a night. The duchess had already sent notice to the magistrates of that city of his intended visit, and warned them to have an eye upon his proceedings. "The great beggar," as Hoogstraaten called him, conducted himself, however, with as much propriety as could be expected. Four or five thousand of the inhabitants thronged about the hotel where he had taken up his quarters. He appeared at a window with his wooden bowl, filled with wine, in his hands, and his wallet at his side. He assured the multitude that he was ready to die to defend the good people of Antwerp and of all the Netherlands against the edicts and the inquisition. Meantime he drank their healths, and begged all who accepted the pledge to hold up their hands. The populace, highly amused, held up and clapped their hands as honest Brederode drained his bowl, and were soon afterwards persuaded to retire in great good humor.

These proceedings were all chronicled and transmitted to Madrid. It was also both publicly reported and secretly registered, that Brederode had eaten capons and other meat at Antwerp, upon Good Friday, which happened to be the day of his visit to that city. He denied the charge, however, with ludicrous vehemence. "They who have told Madame that we ate meat in Antwerp," he wrote to Count Louis, "have lied wickedly and miserably, twenty-four feet down in their throats." He added that his nephew, Charles Mansfeld, who, notwithstanding the indignant prohibition of his father, had assisted at the presentation of the Request, and was then in his uncle’s company at Antwerp, had ordered a capon, which Brederode had countermanded. "They told me afterwards," said he, "that my nephew had broiled a sausage in his chamber. I
suppose that he thought himself in Spain, where they allow themselves such
dainties."
Let it not be thought that these trifles are beneath the dignity of history.
Matters like these filled the whole soul of Philip, swelled the bills of indictment
for thousands of higher and better men than Brederode, and furnished
occupation as well for secret correspondents and spies as for the most dignified
functionaries of government. Capons or sausages on Good Friday, the Psalms of
Clement Marot, the Sermon on the Mount in the vernacular, led to the rack,
the gibbet, and the stake, but ushered in a war against the inquisition which
was to last for eighty years. Brederode was not to be the hero of that party
which he disgraced by his buffoonery. Had he lived, he might, perhaps, like
many of his confederates, have redeemed, by his bravery in the field, a
character which his orgies had rendered despicable. He now left Antwerp for
the North of Holland, where, as he soon afterwards reported to Count Louis,
"the beggars were as numerous as the sands on the seashore."
His "nephew Charles," two months afterwards, obeyed his father’s injunction,
and withdrew formally from the confederacy.
Meantime the rumor had gone abroad that the Request of the nobles had
already produced good fruit, that the edicts were to be mitigated, the
inquisition abolished, liberty of conscience eventually to prevail. "Upon these
reports," says a contemporary, "all the vermin of exiles and fugitives for
religion, as well as those who had kept in concealment, began to lift up their
heads and thrust forth their horns." It was known that Margaret of Parma had
ordered the inquisitors and magistrates to conduct themselves "modestly and
discreetly." It was known that the privy council was hard at work upon the
project for "moderating" the edicts. Modestly and discreetly, Margaret of
Parma, almost immediately after giving these orders, and while the
"moderation" was still in the hands of the lawyers, informed her brother that
she had given personal attention to the case of a person who had snatched the
holy wafer from the priest’s hand at Oudenarde. This "quidam," as she called
him—for his name was beneath the cognizance of an Emperor’s bastard
daughter—had by her orders received rigorous and exemplary justice. And what
was the "rigorous and exemplary justice" thus inflicted upon the "quidam"? The
procurator of the neighboring city of Tournay has enabled us to answer. The
young man, who was a tapestry weaver, Hans Tiskaen by name, had, upon the
30th of May, thrown the holy wafer upon the ground. For this crime, which was
the same as that committed on Christmas day of the previous year by Bertrand
le Blas, at Tournay, he now met with a similar although not quite so severe a
punishment. Having gone quietly home after doing the deed, he was pursued,
arrested, and upon the Saturday ensuing taken to the market-place of
Oudenarde. Here the right hand with which he had committed the offense was
cut off, and he was then fastened to the stake and burned to death over a slow
fire. He was fortunately not more than a quarter of an hour in torment, but he
persisted in his opinions, and called on God for support to his last breath.
This homely tragedy was enacted at Oudenarde, the birthplace of Duchess
Margaret. She was the daughter of the puissant Charles V, but her mother was
only the daughter of a citizen of Oudenarde, of a "quidam" like the nameless weaver who had thus been burned by her express order. It was not to be supposed, however, that the circumstance could operate in so great a malefactor's favor. Moreover, at the same moment, she sent orders that a like punishment should be inflicted upon another person then in a Flemish prison, for the crime of Anabaptism. The privy council, assisted by thirteen knights of the Fleece, had been hard at work, and the result of their wisdom was at last revealed in a "moderation" consisting of fifty-three articles. What now was the substance of those fifty-three articles, so painfully elaborated by Viglius, so handsomely drawn up into shape by Councillor d'Assonleville? Simply to substitute the halter for the fagot. After elimination of all verbiage, this fact was the only residuum. It was most distinctly laid down that all forms of religion except the Roman Catholic were forbidden, that no public or secret conventicles were to be allowed, that all heretical writings were to be suppressed, that all curious inquiries into the Scriptures were to be prohibited. Persons who infringed these regulations were divided into two classes—the misleaders and the misled. There was an affectation of granting mercy to persons in the second category, while death was denounced upon those composing the first. It was merely an affectation, for the rambling statute was so open in all its clauses, that the Juggernaut car of persecution could be driven through the whole of them, whenever such a course should seem expedient. Every man or woman in the Netherlands might be placed in the list of the misleaders, at the discretion of the officials. The pretended mercy to the misguided was a mere delusion. The superintendents, preachers, teachers, ministers, sermon-makers, deacons, and other officers, were to be executed with the halter, with confiscation of their whole property. So much was very plain. Other heretics, however, who would abjure their heresy before the bishop, might be pardoned for the first offense, but if obstinate, were to be banished. This seemed an indication of mercy, at least to the repentant criminals. But who were these "other" heretics? All persons who discussed religious matters were to be put to death. All persons, not having studied theology at a "renowned university," who searched and expounded the Scriptures, were to be put to death. All persons in whose houses any act of the perverse religion should be committed, were to be put to death. All persons who harbored or protected ministers and teachers of any sect, were to be put to death. All the criminals thus carefully enumerated were to be executed, whether repentant or not. If, however, they abjured their errors, they were to be beheaded instead of being strangled. Thus it was obvious that almost any heretic might be brought to the halter at a moment's notice. Strictly speaking, the idea of death by the halter or the axe was less shocking to the imagination than that of being burned or buried alive. In this respect, therefore, the edicts were softened by the proposed "Moderation." It would, however, always be difficult to persuade any considerable number of intelligent persons, that the infliction of a violent death, by whatever process, on account of religious opinions, was an act of clemency. The Netherlands
were, however, to be persuaded into this belief. The draft of the new edict was ostentatiously called the "Moderatie," or the "Moderation." It was very natural, therefore, that the common people, by a quibble, which is the same in Flemish as in English, should call the proposed "Moderation" the "Murderation." The rough mother-wit of the people had already characterized and annihilated the project, while dull formalists were carrying it through the preliminary stages.

A vote in favor of the project having been obtained from the estates of Artois, Hainault, and Flanders, the instructions for the envoys, Baron Montigny and Marquis Berghen, were made out in conformity to the scheme. Egmont had declined the mission, not having reason to congratulate himself upon the diplomatic success of his visit to Spain in the preceding year. The two nobles who consented to undertake the office were persuaded into acceptance sorely against their will. They were aware that their political conduct since the king’s departure from the country had not always been deemed satisfactory at Madrid, but they were, of course, far from suspecting the true state of the royal mind. They were both as sincere Catholics and as loyal gentlemen as Granvelle, but they were not aware how continuously, during a long course of years, that personage had represented them to Philip as renegades and rebels. They had maintained the constitutional rights of the state, and they had declined to act as executioners for the inquisition, but they were yet to learn that such demonstrations amounted to high treason.

Montigny departed, on the 29th of May, from Brussels. He left the bride to whom he had been wedded amid scenes of festivity, the preceding autumn—the unborn child who was never to behold its father’s face. He received warnings in Paris, by which he scorned to profit. The Spanish ambassador in that city informed him that Philip’s wrath at the recent transactions in the Netherlands was high. He was most significantly requested, by a leading personage in France, to feign illness, or to take refuge in any expedient by which he might avoid the fulfillment of his mission. Such hints had no effect in turning him from his course, and he proceeded to Madrid, where he arrived on the 17th of June.

His colleague in the mission, Marquis Berghen, had been prevented from setting forth at the same time, by an accident which, under the circumstances, might almost seem ominous. Walking through the palace park, in a place where some gentlemen were playing at pall-mall, he was accidentally struck in the leg by a wooden ball. The injury, although trifling, produced so much irritation and fever that he was confined to his bed for several weeks. It was not until the first of July that he was able to take his departure from Brussels. Both these unfortunate nobles thus went forth to fulfil that dark and mysterious destiny from which the veil of three centuries has but recently been removed.

Besides a long historical discourse, in eighteen chapters, delivered by way of instruction to the envoys, Margaret sent a courier beforehand with a variety of intelligence concerning the late events. Alonzo del Canto, one of Philip’s spies in the Netherlands, also wrote to inform the king that the two ambassadors were the real authors of all the troubles then existing in the country. Cardinal
Granvelle, too, renewed his previous statements in a confidential communication to his Majesty, adding that no persons more appropriate could have been selected than Berghen and Montigny, for they knew better than anyone else the state of affairs in which they had borne the principal part. Nevertheless, Montigny, upon his arrival in Madrid on the 17th of June, was received by Philip with much apparent cordiality, admitted immediately to an audience, and assured in the strongest terms that there was no dissatisfaction in the royal mind against the seigniors, whatever false reports might be circulated to that effect. In other respects, the result of this and of his succeeding interviews with the monarch was sufficiently meager. It could not well be otherwise. The mission of the envoys was an elaborate farce to introduce a terrible tragedy. They were sent to procure from Philip the abolition of the inquisition and the moderation of the edicts. At the very moment, however, of all these legislative and diplomatic arrangements, Margaret of Parma was in possession of secret letters from Philip, which she was charged to deliver to the Archbishop of Sorrento, papal nuncio at the imperial court, then on a special visit to Brussels. This ecclesiastic had come to the Netherlands ostensibly to confer with the Prince of Orange upon the affairs of his principality, to remonstrate with Count Culemburg, and to take measures for the reformation of the clergy. The real object of his mission, however, was to devise means for strengthening the inquisition and suppressing heresy in the provinces. Philip, at whose request he had come, had charged him by no means to divulge the secret, as the king was anxious to have it believed that the ostensible was the only business which the prelate had to perform in the country. Margaret accordingly delivered to him the private letters, in which Philip avowed his determination to maintain the *inquisition and the edicts in all their rigor*, but enjoined profound secrecy upon the subject. The duchess, therefore, who knew the face of the cards, must have thought it a superfluous task to continue the game, which to Philip’s cruel but procrastinating temperament was perhaps a pleasurable excitement. The scheme for mitigating the edicts by the substitution of strangling for burning, was not destined therefore for much success either in Spain or in the provinces; but the people by whom the next great movement was made in the drama of the revolt, conducted themselves in a manner to shame the sovereign who oppressed, and the riotous nobles who had undertaken to protect their liberties.

At this very moment, in the early summer of 1566, many thousands ofburghers, merchants, peasants, and gentlemen, were seen mustering and marching through the fields of every province, armed with arquebus, javelin, pike, and broadsword. For what purpose were these gatherings? Only to hear sermons and to sing hymns in the open air, as it was unlawful to profane the churches with such rites. This was the first great popular phase of the Netherland rebellion. Notwithstanding the edicts and the inquisition with their daily hecatombs, notwithstanding the special publication at this time throughout the country by the duchess regent that all the sanguinary statutes concerning religion were in as great vigor as ever, notwithstanding that
Margaret offered a reward of seven hundred crowns to the man who would bring her a preacher dead or alive, the popular thirst for the exercises of the reformed religion could no longer be slaked at the obscure and hidden fountains where their priests had so long privately ministered. Partly emboldened by a temporary lull in the persecution, partly encouraged by the presentation of the Request and by the events to which it had given rise, the Reformers now came boldly forth from their lurking places and held their religious meetings in the light of day. The consciousness of numbers and of right had brought the conviction of strength. The audacity of the Reformers was wonderful to the mind of President Viglius, who could find no language strong enough with which to characterize and to deplore such blasphemous conduct. The field-preaching seemed in the eyes of government to spread with the rapidity of a malignant pestilence. The miasma flew upon the wings of the wind. As early as 1562, there had been public preaching in the neighborhood of Ypres. The executions which followed, however, had for the time suppressed the practice both in that place as well as throughout Flanders and the rest of the provinces. It now broke forth as by one impulse from one end of the country to the other.

In the latter part of June, Hermann Strycker or Modet, a monk who had renounced his vows to become one of the most popular preachers in the Reformed Church, addressed a congregation of seven or eight thousand persons in the neighborhood of Ghent. Peter Dathenus, another unfrocked monk, preached at various places in West Flanders, with great effect. A man endowed with a violent, stormy eloquence, intemperate as most zealots, he was then rendering better services to the cause of the Reformation than he was destined to do at later periods.

But apostate priests were not the only preachers. To the ineffable disgust of the conservatives in Church and State, there were men with little education, utterly devoid of Hebrew, of lowly station—hatters, curriers, tanners, dyers, and the like—who began to preach also, remembering, unseasonably perhaps, that the early disciples, selected by the founder of Christianity, had not all been doctors of theology, with diplomas from a "renowned university." But if the nature of such men were subdued to what it worked in, that charge could not be brought against ministers with the learning and accomplishments of Ambrose Wille, Marnier, Guy de Bray, or Francis Junius, the man whom Scaliger called the "greatest of all theologians since the days of the apostles." An aristocratic sarcasm could not be leveled against Peregrine de la Grange, of a noble family in Provence, with the fiery blood of southern France in his veins, brave as his nation, learned, eloquent, enthusiastic, who galloped to his field-preaching on horseback, and fired a pistol shot as a signal for his congregation to give attention.

On the 28th of June, 1566, at eleven o’clock at night, there was an assemblage of 6,000 people near Tournay, at the bridge of Ernonville, to hear a sermon from Ambrose Wille, a man who had studied theology in Geneva, at the feet of Calvin, and who now, with a special price upon his head, was preaching the doctrines he had learned. Two days afterwards, 10,000 people assembled at
the same spot, to hear Peregrine de la Grange. Governor Moulbais thundered forth a proclamation from the citadel, warning all men that the edicts were as rigorous as ever, and that every man, woman, or child who went to these preachings, was incurring the penalty of death. The people became only the more ardent and excited. Upon Sunday, the seventh of July, 20,000 persons assembled at the same bridge to hear Ambrose Wille. One man in three was armed. Some had arquebuses, others pistols, pikes, swords, pitchforks, poniards, clubs. The preacher, for whose apprehension a fresh reward had been offered, was escorted to his pulpit by a hundred mounted troopers. He begged his audience not to be scared from the word of God by menace; assured them that although but a poor preacher himself, he held a divine commission that he had no fear of death; that, should he fall, there were many better than he to supply his place, and 50,000 men to avenge his murder.

The duchess sent forth proclamations by hundreds. She ordered the instant suppression of these armed assemblies and the arrest of the preachers. But of what avail were proclamations against such numbers with weapons in their hands? Why irritate to madness these hordes of enthusiasts, who were now entirely pacific, and who marched back to the city, after conclusion of divine service, with perfect decorum? All classes of the population went eagerly to the sermons. The gentry of the place, the rich merchants, the notables, as well as the humbler artisans and laborers, all had received the infection. The professors of the Reformed religion outnumbered the Catholics by five or six to one. On Sundays and other holidays, during the hours of service, Tournay was literally emptied of its inhabitants. The streets were as silent as if war or pestilence had swept the place. The duchess sent orders, but she sent no troops. The trained-bands of the city, the crossbowmen of St. Maurice, the archers of St. Sebastian, the sword-players of St. Christopher, could not be ordered from Tournay to suppress the preaching, for they had all gone to the preaching themselves. How idle, therefore, to send peremptory orders without a matchlock to enforce the command.

Throughout Flanders similar scenes were enacted. The meetings were encampments, for the Reformers now came to their religious services armed to the teeth, determined, if banished from the churches, to defend their right to the fields. Barricades of upturned wagons, branches, and planks, were thrown up around the camps. Strong guards of mounted men were stationed at every avenue. Outlying scouts gave notice of approaching danger, and guided the faithful into the enclosure. Peddlers and hawkers plied the trade upon which the penalty of death was fixed, and sold the forbidden hymnbooks to all who chose to purchase. A strange and contradictory spectacle! An army of criminals doing deeds which could only be expiated at the stake; an entrenched rebellion, bearding the government with pike, matchlock, javelin, and barricade, and all for no more deadly purpose than to listen to the precepts of the pacific Jesus.

Thus the preaching spread through the Walloon provinces to the northern Netherlands. Towards the end of July, an apostate monk, of singular eloquence, Peter Gabriel by name, was announced to preach at Overeen near
Harlem. This was the first field-meeting which had taken place in Holland. The people were wild with enthusiasm, the authorities beside themselves with apprehension. People from the country flocked into the town by thousands. The other cities were deserted, Harlem was filled to overflowing. Multitudes encamped upon the ground the night before. The magistrates ordered the gates to be kept closed in the morning till long after the usual hour. It was of no avail. Bolts and bars were but small impediments to enthusiasts who had traveled so many miles on foot or horseback to listen to a sermon. They climbed the walls, swam the moat and thronged to the place of meeting long before the doors had been opened. When these could no longer be kept closed without a conflict, for which the magistrates were not prepared, the whole population poured out of the city with a single impulse. Tens of thousands were assembled upon the field. The bulwarks were erected as usual, the guards were posted, the necessary precautions taken. But upon this occasion, and in that region there was but little danger to be apprehended. The multitude of Reformers made the edicts impossible, so long as no foreign troops were there to enforce them. The congregation was encamped and arranged in an orderly manner. The women, of whom there were many, were placed next the pulpit, which, upon this occasion, was formed of a couple of spears thrust into the earth, sustaining a cross-piece, against which the preacher might lean his back. The services commenced with the singing of a psalm by the whole vast assemblage. Clement Marot’s verses, recently translated by Dathenus, were then new and popular. The strains of the monarch minstrel, chanted thus in their homely but nervous mother tongue by a multitude who had but recently learned that all the poetry and rapture of devotion were not irrevocably coffined with a buried language, or immured in the precincts of a church, had never produced a more elevating effect. No anthem from the world-renowned organ in that ancient city ever awakened more lofty emotions than did those 10,000 human voices ringing from the grassy meadows in that fervid midsummer noon. When all was silent again, the preacher rose, a little, meager man, who looked as if he might rather melt away beneath the blazing sunshine of July, than hold the multitude enchained four uninterrupted hours long, by the magic of his tongue. His text was the 8th, 9th, and 10th verses of the second chapter of Ephesians; and as the slender monk spoke to his simple audience of God’s grace, and of faith in Jesus, who had descended from above to save the lowliest and the most abandoned, if they would put their trust in Him, his hearers were alternately exalted with fervor or melted into tears. He prayed for all conditions of men—for themselves, their friends, their enemies, for the government which had persecuted them, for the king whose face was turned upon them in anger. At times, according to one who was present, not a dry eye was to be seen in the crowd. When the minister had finished, he left his congregation abruptly, for he had to travel all night in order to reach Alkmaar, where he was to preach upon the following day.

By the middle of July the custom was established outside all the principal cities. Camp-meetings were held in some places, as, for instance, in the neighborhood of Antwerp, where the congregations numbered often fifteen
thousand and on some occasions were estimated at between twenty and thirty thousand persons at a time, "very many of them," said an eyewitness, "the best and wealthiest in the town."

The sect to which most of these worshippers belonged was that of Calvin. In Antwerp there were Lutherans, Calvinists, and Anabaptists. The Lutherans were the richest sect, but the Calvinists the most numerous and enthusiastic. The Prince of Orange at this moment was strenuously opposed both to Calvinism and Anabaptism, but inclining to Lutheranism. Political reasons at this epoch doubtless influenced his mind in religious matters. The aid of the Lutheran princes of Germany, who detested the doctrines of Geneva, could hardly be relied upon for the Netherlanders, unless they would adopt the Confession of Augsburg. The prince knew that the Emperor, although inclined to the Reformation, was bitterly averse to Calvinism, and he was, therefore, desirous of healing the schism which existed in the general Reformed Church. To accomplish this, however, would be to gain a greater victory over the bigotry which was the prevailing characteristic of the age than perhaps could be expected. The prince, from the first moment of his abandoning the ancient doctrines, was disposed to make the attempt.

The duchess ordered the magistrates of Antwerp to put down these mass-meetings by means of the guild-militia. They replied that at an earlier day such a course might have been practicable, but that the sects had become quite too numerous for coercion. If the authorities were able to prevent the exercises of the Reformed religion within the city, it would be as successful a result as could be expected. To prevent the preaching outside the walls, by means of the burgher force, was an utter impossibility. The dilatoriness of the sovereign placed the regent in a frightful dilemma, but it was sufficiently obvious that the struggle could not long be deferred. "There will soon be a hard nut to crack," wrote Count Louis. "The King will never grant the preaching; the people will never give it up, if it cost them their necks. There's a hard puff coming upon the country before long." The duchess was not yet authorized to levy troops, and she feared that if she commenced such operations, she should perhaps offend the king, while she at the same time might provoke the people into more effective military preparations than her own. She felt that for one company levied by her, the sectaries could raise ten. Moreover, she was entirely without money, even if she should otherwise think it expedient to enroll an army. Meantime she did what she could with "public prayers, processions, fasts, sermons, exhortations," and other ecclesiastical machinery which she ordered the bishops to put in motion. Her situation was indeed sufficiently alarming.

Egmont, whom many of the sectaries hoped to secure as their leader in case of a civil war, showed no disposition to encourage such hopes, but as little to take up arms against the people. He went to Flanders, where the armed assemblages for field-preaching had become so numerous that a force of thirty or forty thousand men might be set on foot almost at a moment’s warning, and where the conservatives, in a state of alarm, desired the presence of their renowned governor. The people of Antwerp, on their part, demanded William
of Orange. The prince, who was hereditary burgrave of the city, had at first declined the invitation of the magistracy. The duchess united her request with the universal prayer of the inhabitants. Events meantime had been thickening, and suspicion increasing. Meghen had been in the city for several days, much to the disgust of the Reformers, by whom he was hated. Aremberg was expected to join him, and it was rumored that measures were secretly in progress under the auspices of these two leading cardinalists, for introducing a garrison, together with great store of ammunition, into the city. On the other hand, the "great beggar," Brederode, had taken up his quarters also in Antwerp; had been daily entertaining a crowd of roystering nobles at his hotel, previously to a second political demonstration, which will soon be described; and was constantly parading the street, followed by a swarm of adherents in the beggar livery.

The sincere Reformers were made nearly as uncomfortable by the presence of their avowed friends, as by that of Meghen and Aremberg, and earnestly desired to be rid of them all. Long and anxious were the ponderings of the magistrates upon all these subjects. It was determined, at last, to send a fresh deputation to Brussels, requesting the regent to order the departure of Meghen, Aremberg, and Brederode from Antwerp; remonstrating with her against any plan she might be supposed to entertain of sending mercenary troops into the city; pledging the word of the senate to keep the peace, meanwhile, by their regular force; and above all, imploring her once more, in the most urgent terms, to send thither the burgrave, as the only man who was capable of saving the city from the calamities into which it was so likely to fall.

The Prince of Orange being thus urgently besought, both by the government of Antwerp, the inhabitants of that city, and by the regent herself, at last consented to make the visit so earnestly demanded. On the 13th of July, he arrived in Antwerp. The whole city was alive with enthusiasm. Half its population seemed to have come forth from the gates to bid him welcome, lining the road for miles. The gate through which he was to pass, the ramparts, the roofs of the houses were packed close, with expectant and eager faces. At least 30,000 persons had assembled to welcome their guest. A long cavalcade of eminent citizens had come as far as Berghen to meet him and to escort him into the city. Brederode, attended by some of the noble confederates, rode at the head of the procession. As they encountered the prince, a discharge of pistol shots was fired by way of salute, which was the signal for a deafening shout from the assembled multitude. The crowd thronged about the prince as he advanced, calling him their preserver, their father, their only hope. Wild shouts of welcome rose upon every side, as he rode through the town, mingled with occasional vociferations of "long life to the beggars." These party cries were instantly and sharply rebuked by Orange, who expressed, in Brederode's presence, the determination that he would make men unlearn that mischievous watchword. He had, moreover, little relish at that time for the tumultuous demonstrations of attachment to his person, which were too fervid to be censured, but too unseasonable to be approved. When the crowd had at last been made to understand that their huzzas were distasteful to the prince, most
of the multitude consented to disperse, feeling, however, a relief from impending danger in the presence of the man to whom they instinctively looked as their natural protector.

The senators had come forth in a body to receive the burgrave and escort him to the hotel prepared for him. Arrived there, he lost no time in opening the business which had brought him to Antwerp. He held at once a long consultation with the upper branch of the government. Afterwards, day after day, he honestly, arduously, sagaciously labored to restore the public tranquility. He held repeated deliberations with every separate portion of the little commonwealth—the senate, the council of ancients, the corporation of ward-masters, the deans of trades. Nor did he confine his communication to these organized political bodies alone. He had frequent interviews with the officers of the military associations, with the foreign merchant companies, with the guilds of "Rhetoric." The chambers of the "Violet" and the "Marigold" were not too frivolous or fantastic to be consulted by one who knew human nature and the constitution of Netherland society so well as did the prince. Night and day he labored with all classes of citizens to bring about a better understanding, and to establish mutual confidence. At last by his efforts tranquility was restored. The broad-council having been assembled, it was decided that the exercise of the Reformed religion should be excluded from the city, but silently tolerated in the suburbs, while an armed force was to be kept constantly in readiness to suppress all attempts at insurrection. The prince had desired that 1,200 men should be enlisted and paid by the city, so that at least a small number of disciplined troops might be ready at a moment's warning, but he found it impossible to carry the point with the council. The magistrates were willing to hold themselves responsible for the peace of the city, but they would have no mercenaries.

Thus, during the remainder of July and the early part of August, was William of Orange strenuously occupied in doing what should have been the regent's work. He was still regarded both by the duchess and by the Calvinist party—although having the sympathies of neither—as the only man in the Netherlands who could control the rising tide of a national revolt. He took care, said his enemies, that his conduct at Antwerp should have every appearance of loyalty, but they insinuated that he was a traitor from the beginning, who was insidiously fomenting the troubles which he appeared to rebuke. No one doubted his genius, and all felt or affected admiration at its display upon this critical occasion. "The Prince of Orange is doing very great and notable services at Antwerp to the king and to the country," said Assonleville. "That seignior is very skilful in managing great affairs." Margaret of Parma wrote letters to him filled with the warmest gratitude, expressions of approbation, and of wishes that he could both remain in Antwerp and return to assist her in Brussels. Philip, too, with his own pen, addressed him a letter, in which implicit confidence in the prince's character was avowed, all suspicion on the part of the sovereign indignantly repudiated, earnest thanks for his acceptance of the Antwerp mission uttered, and a distinct refusal given to the earnest request made by Orange to resign his offices. The prince read or listened to all this
commendation, and valued it exactly at its proper worth. He knew it to be pure grimace. He was no more deceived by it than if he had read the letter sent by Margaret to Philip, a few weeks later, in which she expressed herself as “thoroughly aware that it was the intention of Orange to take advantage of the impending tumults, for the purpose of conquering the provinces and of dividing the whole territory among himself and friends.” Nothing could be more utterly false than so vile and ridiculous a statement.

The course of the prince had hitherto been, and was still, both consistent and loyal. He was proceeding step by step to place the monarch in the wrong, but the only art which he was using, was to plant himself more firmly upon the right. It was in the monarch’s power to convoke the assembly of the states-general, so loudly demanded by the whole nation; to abolish the inquisition; to renounce persecution; to accept the great fact of the Reformation. To do so he must have ceased to be Philip. To have faltered in attempting to bring him into that path, the prince must have ceased to be William of Orange. Had he succeeded, there would have been no treason and no Republic of Holland. His conduct at the outbreak of the Antwerp troubles was firm and sagacious. Even had his duty required him to put down the public preaching with peremptory violence, he had been furnished with no means to accomplish the purpose. The rebellion, if it were one, was already full-grown. It could not be taken by the throat and strangled with one hand, however firm.

A report that the High Sheriff of Brabant was collecting troops by command of government, in order to attack the Reformers at their field-preachings, went far to undo the work already accomplished by the prince. The assemblages swelled again from ten or twelve thousand to twenty-five thousand, the men all providing themselves more thoroughly with weapons than before. Soon afterwards, the intemperate zeal of another individual, armed to the teeth—not, however, like the martial sheriff and his forces, with arquebus and javelin, but with the still more deadly weapons of polemical theology—was very near causing a general outbreak. A peaceful and not very numerous congregation were listening to one of their preachers in a field outside the town. Suddenly an unknown individual in plain clothes and with a pragmatical demeanor, interrupted the discourse by giving a flat contradiction to some of the doctrines advanced. The minister replied by a rebuke, and a reiteration of the disputed sentiment. The stranger, evidently versed in ecclesiastical matters, volubly and warmly responded. The preacher, a man of humble condition and moderate abilities, made as good show of argument as he could, but was evidently no match for his antagonist. He was soon vanquished in the wordy warfare. Well he might be, for it appeared that the stranger was no less a personage than Peter Rythovius, a doctor of divinity, a distinguished pedant of Louvain, a relation of a bishop and himself a Church dignitary. This learned professor, quite at home in his subject, was easily triumphant, while the poor dissenter, more accustomed to elevate the hearts of his hearers than to perplex their heads, sank prostrate and breathless under the storm of texts, glosses, and hard Hebrew roots with which he was soon overwhelmed. The professor’s triumph was, however, but short-lived, for the simple-minded congregation,
who loved their teacher, were enraged that he should be thus confounded. Without more ado, therefore, they laid violent hands upon the Quixotic knight-errant of the Church, and so cudgeled and belabored him bodily that he might perhaps have lost his life in the encounter had he not been protected by the more respectable portion of the assembly. These persons, highly disapproving the whole proceeding, forcibly rescued him from the assailants, and carried him off to town, where the news of the incident at once created an uproar. Here he was thrown into prison as a disturber of the peace, but in reality that he might be personally secure. The next day the Prince of Orange, after administering to him severe rebuke for his ill-timed exhibition of pedantry, released him from confinement, and had him conveyed out of the city. "This theologian," wrote the prince to Duchess Margaret, "would have done better, methinks, to stay at home; for I suppose he had no especial orders to perform this piece of work." Thus, so long as this great statesman could remain in the metropolis, his temperate firmness prevented the explosion which had so long been expected. His own government of Holland and Zealand, too, especially demanded his care. The field-preaching had spread in that region with prodigious rapidity. Armed assemblages, utterly beyond the power of the civil authorities, were taking place daily in the neighborhood of Amsterdam. Yet the duchess could not allow him to visit his government in the North. If he could be spared from Antwerp for a day, it was necessary that he should aid her in a fresh complication with the confederated nobles. In the very midst, therefore, of his Antwerp labors, he had been obliged, by Margaret’s orders, to meet a committee at Duffel. For in this same eventful month of July a great meeting was held by the members of the Compromise at St. Trond, in the bishopric of Liege. They came together on the 13th of the month, and remained assembled till the beginning of August. It was a wild, tumultuous convention, numbering some 1,500 cavaliers, each with his esquires and armed attendants, a larger and more important gathering than had yet been held. Brederode and Count Louis were the chieftains of the assembly, which, as may be supposed from its composition and numbers, was likely to be neither very orderly in its demonstrations nor wholesome in its results. It was an ill-timed movement. The convention was too large for deliberation, too riotous to inspire confidence. The nobles quartered themselves everywhere in the taverns and the farmhouses of the neighborhood, while large numbers encamped upon the open fields. There was a constant din of revelry and uproar, mingled with wordy warfare, and an occasional crossing of swords. It seemed rather like a congress of ancient, savage Batavians, assembled in Teutonic fashion to choose a king amid hoarse shouting, deep drinking, and the clash of spear and shield, than a meeting for a lofty and earnest purpose, by their civilized descendants. A crowd of spectators, landlopers, mendicants, daily aggregated themselves to the aristocratic assembly, joining, with natural unction, in the incessant shout of "Vivent les gueux!" It was impossible that so soon after their baptism the self-styled beggars should repudiate all connection with the time-honored fraternity in which they had enrolled themselves.
The confederates discussed, if an exchange of vociferations could be called discussion, principally two points—whether, in case they obtained the original objects of their petition, they should pause or move still further onward; and whether they should insist upon receiving some pledge from the government that no vengeance should be taken upon them for their previous proceedings. Upon both questions, there was much vehemence of argument and great difference of opinion. They, moreover, took two very rash and very grave resolutions—to guarantee the people against all violence on account of their creeds, and to engage a force of German soldiery, 4,000 horse and forty companies of infantry, by "wart geld" or retaining wages. It was evident that these gentlemen were disposed to go fast and far. If they had been ready in the spring to receive their baptism of wine, the "beggars" were now eager for the baptism of blood. At the same time it must be observed that the levies which they proposed, not to make, but to have at command, were purely for defense. In case the king, as it was thought probable, should visit the Netherlands with fire and sword, then there would be a nucleus of resistance already formed.

Upon the 18th of July, the Prince of Orange, at the earnest request of the regent, met a committee of the confederated nobles at Duffel. Count Egmont was associated with him in this duty. The conference was not very satisfactory. The deputies from St. Trond, consisting of Brederode, Culemburg, and others, exchanged with the two seigniors the old arguments. It was urged upon the confederates that they had made themselves responsible for the public tranquility so long as the regent should hold to her promise; that, as the duchess had sent two distinguished envoys to Madrid, in order to accomplish, if possible, the wishes of the nobles, it was their duty to redeem their own pledges; that armed assemblages ought to be suppressed by their efforts rather than encouraged by their example; and that, if they now exerted themselves zealously to check the tumults, the duchess was ready to declare, in her own name and that of his Majesty, that the presentation of the Request had been beneficial.

The nobles replied that the pledges had become a farce, that the regent was playing them false, that persecution was as fierce as ever, that the "Moderation" was a mockery, that the letters recommending "modesty and discretion" to the inquisitors had been mere waste paper, that a price had been set upon the heads of the preachers as if they had been wild beasts, that there were constant threats of invasions from Spain, that the convocation of the states-general had been illegally deferred, that the people had been driven to despair, and that it was the conduct of government, not of the confederates, which had caused the Reformers to throw off previous restraint and to come boldly forth by tens of thousands into the fields, not to defy their king, but to worship their God.

Such, in brief, was the conference of Duffel. In conclusion, a paper was drawn up which Brederode carried back to the convention, and which it was proposed to submit to the duchess for her approval. At the end of the month, Louis of Nassau was accordingly sent to Brussels, accompanied by twelve associates,
who were familiarly called his twelve apostles. Here he laid before her Highness in council a statement, embodying the views of the confederates. In this paper they asserted that they were ever ready to mount and ride against a foreign foe, but that they would never draw a sword against their innocent countrymen. They maintained that their past conduct deserved commendation, and that in requiring letters of safe conduct in the names both of the duchess and of the Fleece knights, they were governed not by a disposition to ask for pardon, but by a reluctance without such guarantees to enter into stipulations touching the public tranquility. If, however, they should be assured that the intentions of the regent were amicable and that there was no design to take vengeance for the past; if, moreover, she were willing to confide in the counsels of Horn, Egmont, and Orange, and to take no important measure without their concurrence; if, above all, she would convene the states-general, then, and then only, were the confederates willing to exert their energies to preserve peace, to restrain popular impetuosity and banish universal despair.

So far Louis of Nassau and his twelve apostles. It must be confessed that, whatever might be thought of the justice, there could be but one opinion as to the boldness of these views. The duchess was furious. If the language held in April had been considered audacious, certainly this new request was, in her own words, "still more bitter to the taste and more difficult of digestion." She therefore answered in a very unsatisfactory, haughty, and ambiguous manner, reserving decision upon their propositions till they had been discussed by the state council, and intimating that they would also be laid before the Knights of the Fleece, who were to hold a meeting upon the 26th of August.

There was some further conversation without any result. Esquerdes complained that the confederates were the mark of constant calumny, and demanded that the slanderers should be confronted with them and punished. "I understand perfectly well," interrupted Margaret, "you wish to take justice into your own hands and to be king yourself." It was further intimated by these reckless gentlemen, that if they should be driven by violence into measures of self-protection, they had already secured friends in a certain country.

The duchess, probably astonished at the frankness of this statement, is said to have demanded further explanations. The confederates replied by observing that they had resources both in the provinces and in Germany. The state council decided that to accept the propositions of the confederates would be to establish a triumvirate at once, and the duchess wrote to her brother distinctly advising against the acceptance of the proposal. The assembly at St. Trond was then dissolved, having made violent demonstrations which were not followed by beneficial results, and having laid itself open to various suspicions, most of which were ill-founded, while some of them were just.

Before giving the reader a brief account of the open and the secret policy pursued by the government at Brussels and Madrid, in consequence of these transactions, it is now necessary to allude to a startling series of events, which at this point added to the complications of the times, and exercised a fatal influence upon the situation of the commonwealth.
CHAPTER 7
The Destruction of the Idols

The Netherlands possessed an extraordinary number of churches and monasteries. Their exquisite architecture and elaborate decoration had been the earliest indication of intellectual culture displayed in the country. In the vast number of cities, towns, and villages which were crowded upon that narrow territory, there had been, from circumstances operating throughout Christendom, a great accumulation of ecclesiastical wealth. The same causes can never exist again which at an early day covered the soil of Europe with those magnificent creations of Christian art. It was in these anonymous but entirely original achievements that Gothic genius, awaking from its long sleep of the dark ages, first expressed itself. The early poetry of the German races was hewn and chiseled in stone. Around the steadfast principle of devotion then so firmly rooted in the soil, clustered the graceful and vigorous emanations of the newly-awakened mind. All that science could invent, all that art could embody, all that mechanical ingenuity could dare, all that wealth could lavish, whatever there was of human energy which was panting for pacific utterance, wherever there stirred the vital principle which instinctively strove to create and to adorn at an epoch when vulgar violence and destructiveness were the general tendencies of humanity, all gathered around these magnificent temples, as their aspiring pinnacles at last pierced the mist which had so long brooded over the world.

There were many hundreds of churches, more or less remarkable, in the Netherlands. Although a severe criticism might regret to find in these particular productions of the great Germanic school a development of that practical tendency which distinguished the Batavian and Flemish branches—although it might recognize a departure from that mystic principle which, in its efforts to symbolize the strivings of humanity towards the infinite object of worship above, had somewhat disregarded the wants of the worshippers below; although the spaces might be too wide and the intercolumniations too empty, except for the convenience of congregations—yet there were, nevertheless, many ecclesiastical masterpieces, which could be regarded as very brilliant manifestations of the Batavian and Belgic mind during the 13th and 14th centuries. Many were filled with paintings from a school which had precedence in time and merit over its sister nurseries of art in Germany. All were peopled with statues. All were filled with profusely-adorned chapels, for the churches had been enriched generation after generation by wealthy penitence, which had thus purchased absolution for crime and smoothed a pathway to heaven. And now, for the space of only six or seven summer days and nights, there raged a storm by which all these treasures were destroyed. Nearly every one of these temples was entirely rifled of its contents; not for the purpose of plunder, but of destruction. Hardly a province or a town escaped. Art must forever weep over this bereavement; humanity must regret that the reforming is thus always ready to degenerate into the destructive principle, but it is impossible to censure very severely the spirit which prompted the brutal, but
not ferocious deed. Those statues, associated as they were with the
remorseless persecution which had so long desolated the provinces, had ceased
to be images. They had grown human and hateful, so that the people arose and
devoted them to indiscriminate massacre.
No doubt the iconoclastic fury is to be regretted, for such treasures can
scarcely be renewed. The age for building and decorating great cathedrals is
past. Certainly, our own age, practical and benevolent, if less poetical, should
occupy itself with the present, and project itself into the future. It should
render glory to God rather by causing wealth to fertilize the lowest valleys of
humanity, than by rearing gorgeous temples where paupers are to kneel. To
clothe the naked, redeem the criminal, feed the hungry, less by alms and
homilies than by preventive institutions and beneficent legislation; above all,
by the diffusion of national education to lift a race upon a level of culture
hardly attained by a class in earlier times, is as lofty a task as to accumulate
piles of ecclesiastical splendor.
It would be tedious to recount in detail the events which characterized the
remarkable image-breaking in the Netherlands. As Antwerp was the central
point in these transactions, and as there was more wealth and magnificence in
the great cathedral of that city than in any church of northern Europe, it is
necessary to give a rapid outline of the events which occurred there. From its
exhibition in that place the spirit everywhere will best be shown.
The Church of Our Lady, which Philip had so recently converted into a
cathedral, dated from the year 1124, although it may be more fairly considered
a work of the 14th century. Its college of canons had been founded in another
locality by Godfrey of Bouillon. The Brabantine hero, who so romantically
incarnated the religious poetry of his age, who first mounted the walls of
redeemed Jerusalem, and was its first Christian monarch, but who refused to
accept a golden diadem on the spot where the Savior had been crowned with
thorns; the Fleming who lived and was the epic which the great Italian,
centuries afterwards, translated into immortal verse, is thus fitly associated
with the beautiful architectural poem which was to grace his ancestral realms.
The body of the church—the interior and graceful perspectives of which were
not liable to the reproach brought against many Netherland churches, of
assimilating themselves already to the municipal palaces which they were to
suggest—was completed in the 14th century. The beautiful façade, with its
tower, was not completed till the year 1518. The exquisite and daring spire,
the gigantic stem upon which the consummate flower of this architectural
creation was to be at last unfolded, was a plant of a whole century’s growth.
Rising to a height of nearly five hundred feet, over a church of as many feet in
length, it worthily represented the upward tendency of Gothic architecture.
Eternally and internally the cathedral was a true expression of the Christian
principle of devotion. Amid its vast accumulation of imagery, its endless
ornaments, its multiplicity of episodes, its infinite variety of details, the
central, maternal principle was ever visible. Everything pointed upwards, from
the spire in the clouds to the arch which enshrined the smallest sculptured
saint in the chapels below. It was a sanctuary, not like pagan temples, to
enclose a visible deity, but an edifice where mortals might worship an unseen Being in the realms above.
The church, placed in the center of the city, with the noisy streets of the busiest metropolis in Europe eddying around its walls, was a sacred island in the tumultuous main. Through the perpetual twilight, tall columnar trunks in thick profusion grew from a floor checkered with prismatic lights and sepulchral shadows. Each shaft of the petrified forest rose to a preternatural height, their many branches intermingling in the space above, to form an impenetrable canopy. Foliage, flowers, and fruit of colossal luxuriance, strange birds, beasts, griffins and chimeras in endless multitudes, the rank vegetation and the fantastic zoology of a fresher or fabulous world, seemed to decorate and to animate the serried trunks and pendant branches, while the shattering symphonies or dying murmurs of the organ suggested the rushing of the wind through the forest—now the full diapason of the storm and now the gentle cadence of the evening breeze.

Internally, the whole church was rich beyond expression. All that opulent devotion and inventive ingenuity could devise, in wood, bronze, marble, silver, gold, precious jewelry, or blazing sacramental furniture, had been profusely lavished. The penitential tears of centuries had incrusted the whole interior with their glittering stalactites. Divided into five naves, with external rows of chapels, but separated by no screens or partitions, the great temple forming an imposing whole, the effect was the more impressive, the vistas almost infinite in appearance. The wealthy citizens, the twenty-seven guilds, the six military associations, the rhythmical colleges, besides many other secular or religious sodalities, had each their own chapels and altars. Tombs adorned with the effigies of mailed crusaders and pious dames covered the floor, tattered banners hung in the air, the escutcheons of the Golden Fleece, an order typical of Flemish industry, but of which emperors and kings were proud to be the chevaliers, decorated the columns. The vast and beautifully-painted windows glowed with scriptural scenes, antique portraits, homely allegories, painted in those brilliant and forgotten colors which Art has not ceased to deplore. The daylight melting into gloom or colored with fantastic brilliancy, priests in effulgent robes chanting in unknown language, the sublime breathing of choral music, the suffocating odors of myrrh and spikenard, suggestive of the oriental scenery and imagery of Holy Writ, all combined to bewilder and exalt the senses. The highest and humblest seemed to find themselves upon the same level within those sacred precincts, where even the bloodstained criminal was secure, and the arm of secular justice was paralyzed.

But the work of degeneration had commenced. The atmosphere of the cathedral was no longer holy in the eyes of increasing multitudes. Better the sanguinary rites of Belgic Druids, better the yell of slaughtered victims from the “wild wood without mercy” of the pagan forefathers of the nation, than this fantastic intermingling of divine music, glowing colors, gorgeous ceremonies, with all the burning, beheading, and strangling work which had characterized the system of human sacrifice for the past half-century.
Such was the church of Nôtre Dame at Antwerp. Thus indifferent or hostile towards the architectural treasure were the inhabitants of a city, where in a previous age the whole population would have risked their lives to defend what they esteemed the pride and garland of their metropolis.

The Prince of Orange had been anxiously solicited by the regent to attend the conference at Duffel. After returning to Antwerp, he consented, in consequence of the urgent entreaties of the senate, to delay his departure until the 18th of August should be past. On the 13th of that month he had agreed with the magistrates upon an ordinance, which was accordingly published, and by which the preachings were restricted to the fields. A deputation of merchants and others waited upon him with a request to be permitted the exercises of the Reformed religion in the city. This petition the prince peremptorily refused, and the deputies, as well as their constituents, acquiesced in the decision, “out of especial regard and respect for his person.” He, however, distinctly informed the duchess that it would be difficult or impossible to maintain such a position long, and that his departure from the city would probably be followed by an outbreak. He warned her that it was very imprudent for him to leave Antwerp at that particular juncture.

Nevertheless, the meeting of the Fleece knights seemed, in Margaret’s opinion, imperatively to require his presence in Brussels. She insisted by repeated letters that he should leave Antwerp immediately.

Upon the 18th of August, the great and time-honored ceremony of the Ommegang occurred. Accordingly, the great procession, the principal object of which was to conduct around the city a colossal image of the Virgin, issued as usual from the door of the cathedral. The image, bedizened and effulgent, was borne aloft upon the shoulders of her adorers, followed by the guilds, the military associations, the rhetoricians, the religious sodalities, all in glittering costume, bearing blazoned banners, and marching triumphantly through the streets with sound of trumpet and beat of drum. The pageant, solemn but noisy, was exactly such a show as was most fitted at that moment to irritate Protestant minds and to lead to mischief. No violent explosion of ill feeling, however, took place. The procession was followed by a rabble rout of scoffers, but they confined themselves to words and insulting gestures. The image was incessantly saluted, as she was borne along the streets, with sneers, imprecations, and the rudest ribaldry. "Mayken! Mayken!" (little Mary) "your hour is come. 'Tis your last promenade. The city is tired of you." Such were the greetings which the representative of the Holy Virgin received from men grown weary of antiquated mummary. A few missiles were thrown occasionally at the procession as it passed through the city, but no damage was inflicted. When the image was at last restored to its place, and the pageant brought to a somewhat hurried conclusion, there seemed cause for congratulation that no tumult had occurred.

On the following morning there was a large crowd collected in front of the cathedral. The image, instead of standing in the center of the church, where, upon all former occasions, it had been accustomed during the week succeeding the ceremony to receive congratulatory visits, was now ignominiously placed
behind an iron railing within the choir. It had been deemed imprudent to leave
it exposed to sacrilegious hands. The precaution excited derision. Many
vagabonds of dangerous appearance, many idle apprentices and ragged urchins
were hanging for a long time about the imprisoned image, peeping through the
railings, and indulging in many a brutal jest. "Mayken! Mayken!" they cried, "art
thou terrified so soon? Hast flown to thy nest so early? Dost think thyself
beyond the reach of mischief? Beware, Mayken! thine hour is fast
approaching!'" Others thronged around the balustrade, shouting "Vivent les
gueux," and hoarsely commanding the image to join in the beggar's cry. Then,
leaving the spot, the mob roamed idly about the magnificent church, sneering
at the idols, execrating the gorgeous ornaments, scoffing at crucifix and altar.
Presently one of the rabble, a ragged fellow of mechanical aspect, in a
tattered black doublet and an old straw hat, ascended the pulpit. Opening a
sacred volume which he found there, he began to deliver an extemporaneous
and coarse caricature of a monkish sermon. Some of the bystanders applauded,
some cried shame, some shouted, "Long live the beggars!" some threw sticks
and rubbish at the mountebank, some caught him by the legs and strove to pull
him from the place. He, on the other hand, manfully maintained his ground,
hurling back every missile, struggling with his assailants, and continuing the
while to pour forth a malignant and obscene discourse. At last a young sailor,
warm in the Catholic Faith, and impulsive as mariners are prone to be,
ascended the pulpit from behind, sprang upon the mechanic, and flung him
headlong down the steps. The preacher grappled with his enemy as he fell, and
both came rolling to the ground. Neither was much injured, but a tumult
ensued. A pistol shot was fired, and the sailor wounded in the arm. Daggers
were drawn, cudgels brandished, the bystanders taking part generally against
the sailor, while those who protected him were somewhat bruised and
belabored before they could convey him out of the church. Nothing more,
however, transpired that day, and the keepers of the cathedral were enabled
to expel the crowd and to close the doors for the night.
Information of this tumult was brought to the senate, then assembled in the
Hôtel de Ville. That body was thrown into a state of great perturbation. In
losing the Prince of Orange, they seemed to have lost their own brains, and the
first measure which they took was to dispatch a messenger to implore his
return. In the meantime, it was necessary that they should do something for
themselves. It was evident that a storm was brewing. The pest which was
sweeping so rapidly through the provinces would soon be among them.
Symptoms of the dreaded visitation were already but too manifest. What
precaution should they take? Should they issue a proclamation? Such documents
had been too common of late, and had lost their virtue. It was the time not to
assert but to exercise authority. Should they summon the ward-masters, and
order the instant arming and mustering of their respective companies? Should
they assemble the captains of the military associations? Nothing better could
have been desired than such measures in cases of invasion or of ordinary
tumult, but who should say how deeply the poison had sunk into the body
politic—who should say with how much or how little alacrity the burgher militia
would obey the mandates of the magistracy? It would be better to issue no proclamation unless they could enforce its provisions; it would be better not to call out the citizen soldiery unless they were likely to prove obedient. Should mercenary troops at this late hour be sent for? Would not their appearance at this crisis rather inflame the rage than intimidate the insolence of the sectaries? Never were magistrates in greater perplexity. They knew not what course was likely to prove the safest, and in their anxiety to do nothing wrong, the senators did nothing at all. After a long and anxious consultation, the honest burgomaster and his associates all went home to their beds, hoping that the threatening flame of civil tumult would die out of itself, or perhaps that their dreams would supply them with that wisdom which seemed denied to their waking hours.

In the morning, as it was known that no precaution had been taken, the audacity of the Reformers was naturally increased. Within the cathedral a great crowd was at an early hour collected, whose savage looks and ragged appearance denoted that the day and night were not likely to pass away so peacefully as the last. The same taunts and imprecations were hurled at the image of the Virgin; the same howling of the beggars’ cry resounded through the lofty arches. For a few hours, no act of violence was committed, but the crowd increased. A few trifles, drifting, as usual, before the event, seemed to indicate the approaching convulsion. A very paltry old woman excited the image-breaking of Antwerp. She had for years been accustomed to sit before the door of the cathedral with wax-tapers and wafers, earning a scanty subsistence from the profits of her meager trade, and by the small coins which she sometimes received in charity. Some of the rabble began to chaffer with this ancient hucksteress. They scoffed at her consecrated wares; they bandied with her ribald jests, of which her public position had furnished her with a supply; they assured her that the hour had come when her idolatrous traffic was to be forever terminated, when she and her patroness, Mary, were to be given over to destruction together. The old woman, enraged, answered threat with threat, and gibe with gibe. Passing from words to deeds, she began to catch from the ground every offensive missile or weapon which she could find, and to lay about her in all directions. Her tormentors defended themselves as they could. Having destroyed her whole stock-in-trade, they provoked others to appear in her defense. The passers-by thronged to the scene; the cathedral was soon filled to overflowing; a furious tumult was already in progress.

Many persons fled in alarm to the town-house, carrying information of this outbreak to the magistrates. John van Immerzeel, Margrave of Antwerp, was then holding communication with the senate, and awaiting the arrival of the ward-masters, whom it had at last been thought expedient to summon. Upon intelligence of this riot, which the militia, if previously mustered, might have prevented, the senate determined to proceed to the cathedral in a body, with the hope of quelling the mob by the dignity of their presence. The margrave, who was the high executive officer of the little commonwealth, marched down to the cathedral accordingly, attended by the two burgomasters and all the senators. At first their authority, solicitations, and personal influence produced
a good effect. Some of those outside consented to retire, and the tumult partially subsided within. As night, however, was fast approaching, many of the mob insisted upon remaining for evening mass. They were informed that there would be none that night, and that for once the people could certainly dispense with their vespers. Several persons now manifesting an intention of leaving the cathedral, it was suggested to the senators that if they should lead the way, the populace would follow in their train, and so disperse to their homes. The excellent magistrates took the advice, not caring, perhaps, to fulfil any longer the dangerous but not dignified functions of police officers. Before departing, they adopted the precaution of closing all the doors of the church, leaving a single one open, that the rabble still remaining might have an opportunity to depart. It seemed not to occur to the senators that the same gate would as conveniently afford an entrance for those without as an egress for those within. That unlooked-for event happened, however. No sooner had the magistrates retired than the rabble burst through the single door which had been left open, overpowered the margrave, who, with a few attendants, had remained behind, vainly endeavoring by threats and exhortations to appease the tumult, drove him ignominiously from the church, and threw all the other portals wide open. Then the populace flowed in like an angry sea. The whole of the cathedral was at the mercy of the rioters, who were evidently bent on mischief. The wardens and treasurers of the church, after a vain attempt to secure a few of its most precious possessions, retired. They carried the news to the senators, who, accompanied by a few halberdmen, again ventured to approach the spot. It was but for a moment, however, for, appalled by the furious sounds which came from within the church, as if subterranean and invisible forces were preparing for a catastrophe which no human power could withstand, the magistrates fled precipitately from the scene. Fearing that the next attack would be upon the town-house, they hastened to concentrate at that point their available forces, and left the stately cathedral to its fate. And now, as the shadows of night were deepening the perpetual twilight of the church, the work of destruction commenced. Instead of evening mass rose the fierce music of a Psalm, yelled by a thousand angry voices. It seemed the preconcerted signal for a general attack. A band of marauders flew upon the image of the Virgin, dragged it forth from its receptacle, plunged daggers into its inanimate body, tore off its jeweled and embroidered garments, broke the whole figure into a thousand pieces, and scattered the fragments along the floor. A wild shout succeeded, and then the work which seemed delegated to a comparatively small number of the assembled crowd, went on with incredible celerity. Some were armed with axes, some with bludgeons, some with sledgehammers; others brought ladders, pulleys, ropes, and levers. Every statue was hurled from its niche, every picture torn from the wall, every wonderfully-painted window shivered to atoms, every ancient monument shattered, every sculptured decoration, however inaccessible in appearance, hurled to the ground. Indefatigably, audaciously, endowed, as it seemed, with preternatural strength and nimbleness, these furious iconoclasts clambered up
the dizzy heights, shrieking and chattering like malignant apes, as they tore off in triumph the slowly-matured fruit of centuries. In a space of time wonderfully brief, they had accomplished their task.

A colossal and magnificent group of the Savior crucified between two thieves adorned the principal altar. The statue of Christ was wrenched from its place with ropes and pulleys, while the malefactors, with bitter and blasphemous irony, were left on high, the only representatives of the marble crowd which had been destroyed. A very beautiful piece of architecture decorated the choir—the "repository," as it was called—in which the body of Christ was figuratively enshrined. This much-admired work rested upon a single column, but rose, arch upon arch, pillar upon pillar, to the height of three hundred feet, till quite lost in the vault above. "It was now shattered into a million pieces." The statues, images, pictures, ornaments, as they lay upon the ground, were broken with sledgehammers, hewn with axes, trampled, torn, and beaten into shreds. A troop of harlots, snatching waxen tapers from the altars, stood around the destroyers and lighted them at their work. Nothing escaped their omnivorous rage. They desecrated seventy chapels, forced open all the chests of treasure, covered their own squalid attire with the gorgeous robes of the ecclesiastics, broke the sacred bread, poured out the sacramental wine into golden chalices, quaffing huge draughts to the beggars’ health; burned all the splendid missals and manuscripts, and smeared their shoes with the sacred oil, with which kings and prelates had been anointed. It seemed that each of these malicious creatures must have been endowed with the strength of a hundred giants. How else, in the few brief hours of a midsummer night, could such a monstrous desecration have been accomplished by a troop which, according to all accounts, was not more than one hundred in number. There was a multitude of spectators, as upon all such occasions, but the actual spoilers were very few. The noblest and richest temple of the Netherlands was a wreck, but the fury of the spoilers was excited, not appeased. Each seizing a burning torch, the whole herd rushed from the cathedral, and swept howling through the streets. "Long live the beggars!" resounded through the sultry midnight air, as the ravenous pack flew to and fro, smiting every image of the Virgin, every crucifix, every sculptured saint, every Catholic symbol which they met with upon their path. All night long, they roamed from one sacred edifice to another, thoroughly destroying as they went. Before morning they had sacked thirty churches within the city walls. They entered the monasteries, burned their invaluable libraries, destroyed their altars, statues, pictures, and descending into the cellar, broached every cask which they found there, pouring out in one great flood all the ancient wine and ale with which those holy men had been wont to solace their retirement from generation to generation. They invaded the nunneries, whence the occupants, panic-stricken, fled for refuge to the houses of their friends and kindred. The streets were filled with monks and nuns, running this way and that, shrieking and fluttering, to escape the claws of these fiendish Calvinists. The terror was imaginary, for not the least remarkable feature in these transactions was that neither insult nor injury was offered to man or woman, and that not a farthing’s value of the immense amount of property
destroyed, was appropriated. It was a war not against the living, but against graven images, nor was the sentiment which prompted the onslaught in the least commingled with a desire of plunder. The principal citizens of Antwerp, expecting every instant that the storm would be diverted from the ecclesiastical edifices to private dwellings, and that robbery, rape, and murder would follow sacrilege, remained all night expecting the attack, and prepared to defend their hearths, even if the altars were profaned. The precaution was needless. It was asserted by the Catholics that the confederates and other opulent Protestants had organized this company of profligates for the meager pittance of ten stivers a-day. On the other hand, it was believed by many that the Catholics had themselves plotted the whole outrage in order to bring odium upon the Reformers. Both statements were equally unfounded. The task was most thoroughly performed, but it was prompted by a furious fanaticism, not by baser motives.

Two days and nights longer the havoc raged unchecked through all the churches of Antwerp and the neighboring villages. Hardly a statue or picture escaped destruction. Fortunately, the illustrious artist, whose labors were destined in the next generation to enrich and ennoble the city, Rubens, most profound of colorists, most dramatic of artists, whose profuse tropical genius seemed to flower the more luxuriantly, as if the destruction wrought by brutal hands were to be compensated by the creative energy of one divine spirit, had not yet been born. Of the treasures which existed the destruction was complete. Yet the rage was directed exclusively against stocks and stones. Not a man was wounded nor a woman outraged. Prisoners, indeed, who had been languishing hopelessly in dungeons were liberated. A monk, who had been in the prison of the Barefoot Monastery, for twelve years, recovered his freedom. Art was trampled in the dust, but humanity deplored no victims.

These leading features characterized the movement everywhere. The process was simultaneous and almost universal. It was difficult to say where it began and where it ended. A few days in the midst of August sufficed for the whole work. The number of churches desecrated has never been counted. In the single province of Flanders, four hundred were sacked. In Limburg, Luxemburg, and Namur, there was no image-breaking. In Mechlin, seventy or eighty persons accomplished the work thoroughly, in the very teeth of the grand council, and of an astonished magistracy.

In Tournay, a city distinguished for its ecclesiastical splendor, the reform had been making great progress during the summer. At the same time the hatred between the two religions had been growing more and more intense. Trifles and serious matters alike fed the mutual animosity.

A tremendous outbreak had been nearly occasioned by an insignificant incident. A Jesuit of some notoriety had been preaching a glowing discourse in the pulpit of Nôtre Dame. He earnestly avowed his wish that he were good enough to die for all his hearers. He proved to demonstration that no man should shrink from torture or martyrdom in order to sustain the ancient faith. As he was thus expatiating, his fervid discourse was suddenly interrupted by three sharp, sudden blows, of a very peculiar character, struck upon the great
portal of the church. The priest, forgetting his love for martyrdom, turned pale and dropped under the pulpit. Hurrying down the steps, he took refuge in the vestry, locking and barring the door. The congregation shared in his panic. “The beggars are coming,” was the general cry. There was a horrible tumult, which extended through the city as the congregation poured precipitately out of the cathedral, to escape a band of destroying and furious Calvinists. Yet when the shock had a little subsided, it was discovered that a small urchin was the cause of the whole tumult. Having been bathing in the Scheldt, he had returned by way of the church with a couple of bladders under his arm. He had struck these against the door of the Cathedral, partly to dry them, partly from a love of mischief. Thus a great uproar, in the course of which it had been feared that Tournay was to be sacked and drenched in blood, had been caused by a little wanton boy who had been swimming on bladders.

This comedy preceded by a few days only the actual disaster. On the 22nd of August the news reached Tournay that the churches in Antwerp, Ghent, and many other places had been sacked. There was an instantaneous movement towards imitating the example on the same evening. Pasquier de la Barre, procureur-general of the city, succeeded by much entreaty in tranquilizing the people for the night. The “guard of terror” was set, and hopes were entertained that the storm might blow over. The expectation was vain. At daybreak next day, the mob swept upon the churches and stripped them to the very walls. Pictures, statues, organs, ornaments, chalices of silver and gold, reliquaries, albs, chasubles, copes, cibories, crosses, chandeliers, lamps, censers, all of richest material, glittering with pearls, rubies, and other precious stones, were scattered in heaps of ruin upon the ground.

As the spoilers burrowed among the ancient tombs, they performed, in one or two instances, acts of startling posthumous justice. The embalmed body of Duke Adolphus of Gueldres, last of the Egmont’s, who had reigned in that province, was dragged from its sepulchre and recognized. Although it had been there for ninety years, it was as uncorrupted, “owing to the excellent spices which had preserved it from decay,” as upon the day of burial. Thrown upon the marble floor of the church, it lay several days exposed to the execrations of the multitude. The duke had committed a crime against his father, in consequence of which the province which had been ruled by native races, had passed under the dominion of Charles the Bold. Weary of waiting for the old duke’s inheritance, he had risen against him in open rebellion. Dragging him from his bed at midnight in the depth of winter, he had compelled the old man, with no covering but his night gear, to walk with naked feet twenty-five miles over ice and snow from Grave to Buren, while he himself performed the same journey in his company on horseback. He had then thrown him into a dungeon beneath the tower of Buren castle, and kept him a close prisoner for six months. At last, the Duke of Burgundy summoned the two before his council, and proposed that Adolphus should allow his father 6,000 florins annually, with the title of Duke till his death. “He told us,” said Comines, “that he would sooner throw the old man head-foremost down a well and jump in himself afterwards. His father had been Duke forty-four years, and it was time
for him to retire." Adolphus being thus intractable, had been kept in prison till
after the death of Charles the Bold. To the memorable insurrection of Ghent,
in the time of the Lady Mary, he owed his liberty. The insurgent citizens took
him from prison, and caused him to lead them in their foray against Tournay.
Beneath the walls of that city he was slain, and buried under its cathedral. And
now as if his offense had not been sufficiently atoned for by the loss of his
ancestral honors, his captivity, and his death, the earth, after the lapse of
nearly a century, had cast him forth from her bosom. There, once more
beneath the sunlight, amid a ribald crew of a later generation which had still
preserved the memory of his sin, lay the body of the more than parricide,
whom "excellent spices" had thus preserved from corruption, only to be the
mark of scorn and demoniac laughter.

A large assemblage of rioters, growing in numbers as they advanced, swept
over the province of Tournay, after accomplishing the sack of the city
churches. Armed with halberds, hammers, and pitchforks, they carried on the
war, day after day, against the images. At the convent of Marchiennes,
considered by contemporaries the most beautiful abbey in all the Netherlands,
they halted to sing the ten commandments in Marot’s verse. Hardly had the
vast chorus finished the precept against graven images...

Tailler ne te feras imaige
De quelque chose que ce soit,
Sy honneur luy fais ou hommaige,
Bon Dieu jalousie en recoit...

when the whole mob seemed seized with sudden madness. Without waiting to
complete the Psalm, they fastened upon the company of marble martyrs, as if
they had possessed sensibility to feel the blows inflicted. In an hour they had
laid the whole in ruins.

Having accomplished this deed, they swept on towards Anchin. Here, however,
they were confronted by the Seigneur de la Tour, who, at the head of a small
company of peasants, attacked the marauders and gained a complete victory.
Five or six hundred of them were slain, others were drowned in the river and
adjacent swamps, the rest were dispersed. It was thus proved that a little more
spirit upon the part of the orderly portion of the inhabitants, might have
brought about a different result than the universal image-breaking.

In Valenciennes, "the tragedy," as an eyewitness calls it, was performed upon
Saint Bartholomew’s day. It was, however, only a tragedy of statues. Hardly as
many senseless stones were victims as there were to be living Huguenots
sacrificed in a single city upon a Bartholomew which was fast approaching. In
the Valenciennes massacre, not a human being was injured.

Such in general outline and in certain individual details, was the celebrated
iconomachy of the Netherlands. The movement was a sudden explosion of
popular revenge against the symbols of that Church from which the Reformers
had been enduring such terrible persecution. It was also an expression of the
general sympathy for the doctrines which had taken possession of the national
heart. It was the depravation of that instinct which had in the beginning of the summer drawn Calvinists and Lutherans forth in armed bodies, 20,000 strong, to worship God in the open fields. The difference between the two phenomena was that the field-preaching was a crime committed by the whole mass of the Reformers—men, women, and children confronting the penalties of death, by a general determination—while the image-breaking was the act of a small portion of the populace. A hundred persons belonging to the lowest order of society sufficed for the desecration of the Antwerp churches. It was, said Orange, "a mere handful of rabble" who did the deed. Sir Richard Clough saw ten or twelve persons entirely sack church after church, while 10,000 spectators looked on, indifferent or horror-struck. The bands of iconoclasts were of the lowest character, and few in number. Perhaps the largest assemblage was that which ravaged the province of Tournay, but this was so weak as to be entirely routed by a small and determined force. The duty of repression devolved upon both Catholics and Protestants. Neither party stirred. All seemed overcome with special wonder as the tempest swept over the land.

The ministers of the Reformed religion, and the chiefs of the liberal party, all denounced the image-breaking. Francis Junius bitterly regretted such excesses. Ambrose Wille, pure of all participation in the crime, stood up before 10,000 Reformers at Tournay—even while the storm was raging in the neighboring cities, and when many voices around him were hoarsely commanding similar depravities—to rebuke the outrages by which a sacred cause was disgraced. The Prince of Orange, in his private letters, deplored the riots, and stigmatized the perpetrators. Even Brederode, while, as suzerain of his city of Viane, he ordered the images there to be quietly taken from the churches, characterized this popular insurrection as insensate and flagitious. Many of the leading confederates not only were offended with the proceedings, but, in their eagerness to chastise the iconoclasts and to escape from a league of which they were weary, began to take severe measures against the ministers and Reformers, of whom they had constituted themselves in April the especial protectors.

The next remarkable characteristic of these tumults was the almost entire abstinence of the rioters from personal outrage and from pillage. The testimony of a very bitter, but honest Catholic at Valenciennes, is remarkable upon this point. "Certain chroniclers," said he, "have greatly mistaken the character of this image-breaking. It has been said that the Calvinists killed a hundred priests in this city, cutting some of them into pieces, and burning others over a slow fire. I remember very well every thing which happened upon that abominable day, and I can affirm that not a single priest was injured. The Huguenots took good care not to injure in any way the living images." This was the case every where. Catholic and Protestant writers agree that no deeds of violence were committed against man or woman. It would be also very easy to accumulate a vast weight of testimony as to their forbearance from robbery. They destroyed for destruction’s sake, not for purposes of plunder. Although belonging to the lowest classes of society, they left heaps of jewelry, of gold and silver plate, of costly embroidery, lying
unheeded upon the ground. They felt instinctively that a great passion would be contaminated by admixture with paltry motives. In Flanders a company of rioters hanged one of their own number for stealing articles to the value of five shillings. In Valenciennes the iconoclasts were offered large sums if they would refrain from desecrating the churches of that city, but they rejected the proposal with disdain. The honest Catholic burgher who recorded the fact, observed that he did so because of the many misrepresentations on the subject, not because he wished to flatter heresy and rebellion.

At Tournay, the greatest scrupulousness was observed upon this point. The floor of the cathedral was strewn with "pearls and precious stones, with chalices and reliquaries of silver and gold"; but the ministers of the reformed religion, in company with the magistrates, came to the spot, and found no difficulty, although utterly without power to prevent the storm, in taking quiet possession of the wreck. "We had every thing of value," says Procureur-Général De la Barre, "carefully inventoried, weighed, locked in chests, and placed under a strict guard in the prison of the Halle, to which one set of keys were given to the ministers, and another to the magistrates." Who will dare to censure in very severe language this havoc among stocks and stones in a land where so many living men and women, of more value than many statues, had been slaughtered by the inquisition, and where Alva's "Blood Tribunal" was so soon to eclipse even that terrible institution in the number of its victims and the amount of its confiscations?

Yet the effect of the riots was destined to be most disastrous for a time to the reforming party. It furnished plausible excuses for many lukewarm friends of their cause to withdraw from all connection with it. Egmont denounced the proceedings as highly flagitious, and busied himself with punishing the criminals in Flanders. The regent was beside herself with indignation and terror. Philip, when he heard the news, fell into a paroxysm of frenzy. "It shall cost them dear!" he cried, as he tore his beard for rage, "it shall cost them dear! I swear it by the soul of my father!" The Reformation in the Netherlands, by the fury of these fanatics, was thus made apparently to abandon the high ground upon which it had stood in the early summer. The sublime spectacle of the multitudinous field-preaching was sullied by the excesses of the image-breaking. The religious war, before imminent, became inevitable.

Nevertheless, the first effect of the tumults was a temporary advantage to the Reformers. A great concession was extorted from the fears of the duchess regent, who was certainly placed in a terrible position. Her conduct was not heroic, although she might be forgiven for trepidation. Her treachery, however, under these trying circumstances was less venial. At three o'clock in the morning of the 22nd of August, Orange, Egmont, Horn, Hoogstraaten, Mansfeld, and others were summoned to the palace. They found her already equipped for flight, surrounded by her waiting-women, chamberlains and lackeys, while the mules and hackneys stood harnessed in the courtyard, and her bodyguard were prepared to mount at a moment's notice. She announced her intention of retreating at once to Mons, in which city, owing to Aerschot's care, she hoped to find refuge against the fury of the rebellion then sweeping
the country. Her alarm was almost beyond control. She was certain that the
storm was ready to burst upon Brussels, and that every Catholic was about to
be massacred before her eyes. Aremberg, Berlaymont, and Noirarmes were
with the duchess when the other seigniors arrived.
A part of the Duke of Aerschot’s company had been ordered out to escort the
projected flight to Mons. Orange, Horn, Egmont, and Hoogstraaten implored
her to desist from her fatal resolution. They represented that such a retreat
before a mob would be the very means of ruining the country. They denounced
all persons who had counseled the scheme, as enemies of his Majesty and
herself. They protested their readiness to die at her feet in her defense, but
besought her not to abandon the post of duty in the hour of peril. While they
were thus anxiously debating, Viglius entered the Chamber. With tears
streaming down her cheeks, Margaret turned to the aged president, uttering
fierce reproaches and desponding lamentations. Viglius brought the news that
the citizens had taken possession of the gates, and were resolved not to permit
her departure from the city. He reminded her, according to the indispensable
practice of all wise counsellors, that he had been constantly predicting this
result. He, however, failed in administering much consolation, or in suggesting
any remedy. He was, in truth, in as great a panic as herself, and it was,
according to the statement of the duchess, mainly in order to save the
president from threatened danger, that she eventually resolved to make
concessions. "Viglius," wrote Margaret to Philip, "is so much afraid of being cut
to pieces, that his timidity has become incredible." Upon the warm assurance
of Count Horn, that he would enable her to escape from the city, should it
become necessary, or would perish in the attempt, a promise in which he was
seconded by the rest of the seigniors, she consented to remain for the day in
her palace. Mansfeld was appointed captain-general of the city; Egmont, Horn,
Orange, and the others agreed to serve under his orders, and all went down
together to the town-house. The magistrates were summoned, a general
meeting of the citizens was convened, and the announcement made of
Mansfeld’s appointment, together with an earnest appeal to all honest men to
support the government. The appeal was answered by a shout of unanimous
approbation, an enthusiastic promise to live or die with the regent, and the
expression of a resolution to permit neither reformed preaching nor image-
breaking within the city.
Nevertheless, at seven o’clock in the evening, the duchess again sent for the
seigniors. She informed them that she had received fresh and certain
information that the churches were to be sacked that very night; that Viglius,
Berlaymont, and Aremberg were to be killed; and that herself and Egmont were
to be taken prisoners. She repeated many times that she had been ill-advised,
expressed bitter regret at having deferred her flight from the city, and called
upon those who had obstructed her plan, now to fulfil their promises. Turning
fiercely upon Count Horn, she uttered a volley of reproaches upon his share in
the transaction. "You are the cause," said she, "that I am now in this position.
Why do you not redeem your pledge and enable me to leave the place at once."
Horn replied that he was ready to do so if she were resolved to stay no longer.
He would at the instant cut his way through the guard at the Caudenberg gate, and bring her out in safety, or die in the effort. At the same time he assured her that he gave no faith to the idle reports flying about the city; reminded her that nobles, magistrates, and citizens were united in her defense; and in brief used the same arguments which had before been used to pacify her alarm. The nobles were again successful in enforcing their counsels, the duchess was spared the ignominy and the disaster of a retreat before an insurrection which was only directed against statues, and the ecclesiastical treasures of Brussels were saved from sacrilege.

On the 25th of August came the crowning act of what the Reformers considered their most complete triumph, and the regent her deepest degradation. It was found necessary under the alarming aspect of affairs, that liberty of worship, in places where it had been already established, should be accorded to the new religion. Articles of agreement to this effect were accordingly drawn up and exchanged between the government and Louis of Nassau, attended by fifteen others of the confederacy. A corresponding pledge was signed by them, that so long as the regent was true to her engagement, they would consider their previously existing league annulled, and would assist cordially in every endeavor to maintain tranquility and support the authority of his Majesty. The important Accord was then duly signed by the duchess. It declared that the inquisition was abolished, that his Majesty would soon issue a new general edict, expressly and unequivocally protecting the nobles against all evil consequences from past transactions, that they were to be employed in the royal service, and that public preaching according to the forms of the new religion was to be practiced in places where it had already taken place. Letters general were immediately dispatched to the senates of all the cities, proclaiming these articles of agreement and ordering their execution. Thus for a fleeting moment there was a thrill of joy throughout the Netherlands. The inquisition was thought forever abolished, the era of religious reformation arrived.

Part Two
Administration of the Duchess Margaret
CHAPTER 8

The Nobles Strive to Avoid Rebellion

Egmont in Flanders, Orange at Antwerp, Horn at Tournay, Hoogstraaten at Mechlin, were exerting themselves to suppress insurrection and to avert ruin. What, meanwhile, was the policy of the government? The secret course pursued both at Brussels and at Madrid may be condensed into the usual formula—dissimulation, procrastination, and again dissimulation.

It is at this point necessary to take a rapid survey of the open and the secret proceedings of the king and his representatives from the moment at which Berghen and Montigny arrived in Madrid. Those ill-fated gentlemen had been received with apparent cordiality, and admitted to frequent, but unmeaning, interviews with his Majesty. The current upon which they were embarked was deep and treacherous, but it was smooth and very slow. They assured the king that his letters, ordering the rigorous execution of the inquisition and edicts, had engendered all the evils under which the provinces were laboring. They told him that Spaniards and tools of Spaniards had attempted to govern the country, to the exclusion of native citizens and nobles, but that it would soon be found that Netherlanders were not to be trodden upon like the abject inhabitants of Milan, Naples, and Sicily. Such words as these struck with an unaccustomed sound upon the royal ear, but the envoys, who were both Catholic and loyal, had no idea, in thus expressing their opinions, according to their sense of duty, and in obedience to the king’s desire, upon the causes of the discontent, that they were committing an act of high treason.
When the news of the public preaching reached Spain, there were almost daily consultations at the grove of Segovia. The eminent personages who composed the royal council were the Duke of Alva, the count de Feria, Don Antonio de Toledo, Don Juan Manrique de Lara, Ruy Gomez, Quixada, Councillor Tisnacq, recently appointed President of the State Council, and Councillor Hopper. Six Spaniards and two Netherlanders, one of whom, too, a man of dull intellect and thoroughly subservient character, to deal with the local affairs of the Netherlands in a time of intense excitement? The instructions of the envoys had been to represent the necessity of according three great points—abolition of the inquisition, moderation of the edicts according to the draft prepared in Brussels, and an ample pardon for past transactions. There was much debate upon all these propositions. Philip said little, but he listened attentively to the long discourses in council, and he took an incredible quantity of notes. It was the general opinion that this last demand on the part of the Netherlanders was the fourth link in the chain of treason. The first had been the cabal by which Granvelle had been expelled; the second, the mission of Egmont, the main object of which had been to procure a modification of the state council, in order to bring that body under the control of a few haughty and rebellious nobles; the third had been the presentation of the insolent and seditious Request; and now, to crown the whole, came a proposition embodying the three points—abolition of the inquisition, revocation of the edicts, and a pardon to criminals, for whom death was the only sufficient punishment.

With regard to these three points, it was, after much wrangling, decided to grant them under certain restrictions. To abolish the inquisition would be to remove the only instrument by which the Church had been accustomed to regulate the consciences and the doctrines of its subjects. It would be equivalent to a concession of religious freedom, at least to individuals within their own domiciles, than which no concession could be more pernicious. Nevertheless, it might be advisable to permit the temporary cessation of the papal inquisition, now that the episcopal inquisition had been so much enlarged and strengthened in the Netherlands, on the condition that this branch of the institution should be maintained in energetic condition. With regard to the Moderation, it was thought better to defer that matter till the proposed visit of his Majesty to the provinces. If, however, the regent should think it absolutely necessary to make a change, she must cause a new draft to be made, as that which had been sent was not found admissible. Touching the pardon general, it would be necessary to make many conditions and restrictions before it could be granted. Provided these were sufficiently minute to exclude all persons whom it might be found desirable to chastise, the amnesty was possible. Otherwise it was quite out of the question.

Meantime, Margaret of Parma had been urging her brother to come to a decision, painting the distracted condition of the country in the liveliest colors, and insisting, although perfectly aware of Philip’s private sentiments, upon a favorable decision as to the three points demanded by the envoys. Especially
she urged her incapacity to resist any rebellion, and demanded succor of men and money in case the "Moderation" were not accepted by his Majesty.

It was the last day of July before the king wrote at all, to communicate his decisions upon the crisis which had occurred in the first week of April. The disorder for which he had finally prepared a prescription had, before his letter arrived, already passed through its subsequent stages of the field-preaching and the image-breaking. Of course these fresh symptoms would require much consultation, pondering, and note-taking before they could be dealt with. In the meantime they would be considered as not yet having happened. This was the masterly procrastination of the sovereign, when his provinces were in a blaze.

His masterly dissimulation was employed in the direction suggested by his councillors. Philip never originated a thought, nor laid down a plan, but he was ever true to the falsehood of his nature, and was indefatigable in following out the suggestions of others. No greater mistake can be made than to ascribe talent to this plodding and pedantic monarch. The man’s intellect was contemptible, but malignity and duplicity, almost superhuman, have effectually lifted his character out of the regions of the commonplace. He wrote accordingly to say that the pardon, under certain conditions, might be granted, and that the papal inquisition might cease—the bishops now being present in such numbers, “to take care of their flocks,” and the episcopal inquisition being therefore established upon so secure a basis. He added that if a moderation of the edicts were still desired, a new project might be sent to Madrid, as the one brought by Berghen and Montigny was not satisfactory. In arranging this wonderful scheme for composing the tumults of the country, which had grown out of a determined rebellion to the inquisition in any form, he followed not only the advice, but adopted the exact language of his councillors.

Certainly, here was not much encouragement for patriotic hearts in the Netherlands. A pardon, so restricted that none were likely to be forgiven save those who had done no wrong; an episcopal inquisition stimulated to renewed exertions, on the ground that the papal functionaries were to be discharged; and a promise that, although the proposed Moderation of the edicts seemed too mild for the monarch’s acceptance, yet at some future period another project would be matured for settling the matter to universal satisfaction—such were the propositions of the Crown. Nevertheless, Philip thought he had gone too far, even in administering this meager amount of mercy, and that he had been too frank in employing so slender a deception, as in the scheme thus sketched. He therefore summoned a notary, before whom, in presence of the Duke of Alva, the Licentiate Menchaca and Dr. Velasco, he declared that, although he had just authorized Margaret of Parma, by force of circumstances, to grant pardon to all those who had been compromised in the late disturbances of the Netherlands, yet as he had not done this spontaneously nor
freely, he did not consider himself bound by the authorization, but that, on the contrary, he reserved his right to punish all the guilty, and particularly those who had been the authors and encouragers of the sedition.

So much for the pardon promised in his official correspondence.

With regard to the concessions, which he supposed himself to have made in the matter of the inquisition and the edicts, he saved his conscience by another process. Revoking with his right hand all which his left had been doing, he had no sooner dispatched his letters to the duchess regent than he sent off another to his envoy at Rome. In this dispatch he instructed Requesens to inform the pope as to the recent royal decisions upon the three points, and to state that there had not been time to consult his Holiness beforehand. Nevertheless, continued Philip “the prudent,” it was perhaps better thus, since the abolition could have no force, unless the pope, by whom the institution had been established, consented to its suspension. This matter, however, was to be kept a profound secret. So much for the inquisition matter. The papal institution, notwithstanding the official letters, was to exist, unless the pope chose to destroy it; and his Holiness, as we have seen, had sent the Archbishop of Sorrento, a few weeks before, to Brussels, for the purpose of concerting secret measures for strengthening the “Holy Office” in the provinces.

With regard to the proposed moderation of the edicts, Philip informed Pius V, through Requesens, that the project sent by the duchess not having been approved, orders had been transmitted for a new draft, in which all the articles providing for the severe punishment of heretics were to be retained, while alterations, to be agreed upon by the state and privy councils, and the knights of the Fleece, were to be adopted—certainly in no sense of clemency. On the contrary, the king assured his Holiness that, if the severity of chastisement should be mitigated the least in the world by the new articles, they would in no case receive the royal approbation. Philip further implored the pope “not to be scandalized” with regard to the proposed pardon, as it would be by no means extended to offenders against religion. All this was to be kept entirely secret. The king added that rather than permit the least prejudice to the ancient religion, he would sacrifice all his states, and lose a hundred lives if he had so many, for he would never consent to be the sovereign of heretics. He said he would arrange the troubles of the Netherlands, without violence, if possible, because forcible measures would cause the entire destruction of the country. Nevertheless they should be employed, if his purpose could be accomplished in no other way. In that case the king would himself be the executor of his own design, without allowing the peril which he should incur, nor the ruin of the provinces, nor that of his other realms, to prevent him from doing all which a Christian prince was bound to do, to maintain the Catholic religion and the authority of the Holy See, as well as to testify his personal regard for the reigning pontiff, whom he so much loved and esteemed.
Here was plain speaking. Here were all the coming horrors distinctly foreshadowed. Here was the truth told to the only being with whom Philip ever was sincere. Yet even on this occasion, he permitted himself a falsehood by which his Holiness was not deceived. Philip had no intention of going to the Netherlands in person, and the pope knew that he had none. "I feel it in my bones," said Granvelle, mournfully, "that nobody in Rome believes in his Majesty's journey to the provinces." From that time forward, however, the king began to promise this visit, which was held out as a panacea for every ill, and made to serve as an excuse for constant delay.

It may well be supposed that, if Philip's secret policy had been thoroughly understood in the Netherlands, the outbreak would have come sooner. On the receipt, however, of the public dispatches from Madrid, the administration in Brussels made great efforts to represent their tenor as highly satisfactory. The papal inquisition was to be abolished, a pardon was to be granted, a new moderation was to be arranged at some indefinite period; what more would men have? Yet without seeing the face of the cards, the people suspected the real truth, and Orange was convinced of it. Viglius wrote that if the king did not make his intended visit soon, he would come too late, and that every week more harm was done by procrastination than could be repaired by months of labor and perhaps by torrents of blood. What the precise process was, through which Philip was to cure all disorders by his simple presence, the president did not explain.

As for the measures propounded by the king after so long a delay, they were of course worse than useless, for events had been marching while he had been musing. The course suggested was, according to Viglius, but "a plaster for a wound, but a drag-chain for the wheel." He urged that the convocation of the states-general was the only remedy for the perils in which the country was involved, unless the king should come in person. He however expressed the hope that by general consultation some means would be devised by which, if not a good, at least a less desperate aspect would be given to public affairs, "so that the commonwealth, if fall it must, might at least fall upon its feet like a cat, and break its legs rather than its neck."

Notwithstanding this highly figurative view of the subject, and notwithstanding the urgent representations of Duchess Margaret to her brother, that nobles and people were all clamoring about the necessity of convening the states-general, Philip was true to his instincts on this as on the other questions. He knew very well that the states-general of the Netherlands and Spanish despotism were incompatible ideas, and he recoiled from the idea of the assembly with infinite aversion. At the same time a little wholesome deception could do no harm. He wrote to the duchess, therefore, that he was determined never to allow the states-general to be convened. He forbade her to consent to the step under any circumstances, but ordered her to keep his prohibition a profound secret. He wished, he said, the people to think that it was only for the moment that
the convocation was forbidden, and that the duchess was expecting to receive the necessary permission at another time. It was his desire, he distinctly stated, that the people should not despair of obtaining the assembly, but he was resolved never to consent to the step, for he knew very well what was meant by a meeting of the states-general. Certainly after so ingenuous but secret a declaration from the disciple of Machiavelli, Margaret might well consider the arguments to be used afterward by herself and others, in favor of the ardently desired measure, as quite superfluous.

Such then was the policy secretly resolved upon by Philip, even before he heard of the startling events which were afterwards to break upon him. He would maintain the inquisition and the edicts; he would exterminate the heretics, even if he lost all his realms and his own life in the cause; he would never hear of the national representatives coming together. What then were likely to be his emotions when he should be told of 20,000 armed heretics assembling at one spot, and 15,000 at another, in almost every town in every province, to practice their blasphemous rites; when he should be told of the whirlwind which had swept all the ecclesiastical accumulations of ages out of existence; when he should read Margaret’s despairing letters, in which she acknowledged that she had at last committed an act unworthy of God, of her king, and of herself, in permitting liberty of worship to the renegades from the ancient church!

The account given by the duchess was in truth very dismal. She said that grief consumed her soul and crimson suffused her cheeks while she related the recent transactions. She took God to witness that she had resisted long, that she had past many sleepless nights, that she had been wasted with fever and grief. After this penitential preface she confessed that, being a prisoner and almost besieged in her palace, sick in body and soul, she had promised pardon and security to the confederates, with liberty of holding assemblies to heretics in places where the practice had already obtained. These concessions had been made valid until the king, by and with the consent of the states-general, should definitely arrange the matter. She stated, however, that she had given her consent to these two demands, not in the royal name, but in her own. The king was not bound by her promise, and she expressed the hope that he would have no regard to any such obligation. She further implored her brother to come forth as soon as possible to avenge the injuries inflicted upon the ancient church, adding, that if deprived of that consolation, she should incontinently depart this life. That hope alone would prevent her death.

This was certainly strong language. She was also very explicit in her representations of the influence which had been used by certain personages to prevent the exercise of any authority upon her own part. "Wherefore," said Margaret, "I eat my heart, and shall never have peace till the arrival of your Majesty."
There was no doubt who those personages were who, as it was pretended, had thus held the duchess in bondage, and compelled her to grant these infamous concessions. In her secret Italian letters, she furnished the king with a tissue of most extravagant and improbable falsehoods, supplied to her mainly by Noircarmes and Mansfeld, as to the course pursued at this momentous crisis by Orange, Egmont, Horn, and Hoogstraaten. They had all, she said, declared against God and against religion. Horn, at least, was for killing all the priests and monks in the country, if full satisfaction were not given to the demands of the heretics. Egmont had declared openly for the beggars, and was levying troops in Germany. Orange had the firm intention of making himself master of the whole country, and of dividing it among the other seigniors and himself. The prince had said that if she took refuge in Mons, as she had proposed, they would instantly convocate the states-general, and take all necessary measures. Egmont had held the same language, saying that he would march at the head of 40,000 men to besiege her in that city. All these seigniors, however, had avowed their determination to prevent her flight, to assemble the estates, and to drag her by force before the assembly, in order to compel her consent to every measure which might be deemed expedient. Under all these circumstances, she had been obliged to defer her retreat, and to make the concessions which had overwhelmed her with disgrace.

With such infamous calumnies, utterly disproved by every fact in the case, and unsupported by a tittle of evidence, save the hearsay reports of a man like Noircarmes, did this "woman, nourished at Rome, in whom no one could put confidence," dig the graves of men who were doing their best to serve her.

Philip’s rage at first hearing of the image-breaking has been indicated. He was ill of an intermittent fever at the wood of Segovia when the news arrived, and it may well be supposed that his wrath at these proceedings was not likely to assuage his malady. Nevertheless, after the first burst of indignation, he found relief in his usual deception. While slowly maturing the most tremendous vengeance which anointed monarch ever deliberately wreaked upon his people, he wrote to say, that it was "his intention to treat his vassals and subjects in the provinces like a good and clement prince, not to ruin them nor to put them into servitude, but to exercise all humanity, sweetness, and grace, avoiding all harshness." Such were the avowed intentions of the sovereign towards his people at the moment when the terrible Alva, who was to be the exponent of all this "humanity, sweetness, and grace," was already beginning the preparations for his famous invasion of the Netherlands.

The essence of the compact agreed to upon the 23rd of August between the confederates and the regent, was that the preaching of the Reformed religion should be tolerated in places where it had previously to that date been established. Upon this basis Egmont, Horn, Orange, Hoogstraaten, and others were directed once more to attempt the pacification of the different provinces.
Egmont departed for his government of Flanders, and from that moment vanished all his pretensions, which at best had been slender enough, to the character of a national chieftain. During the whole of the year his course had been changeful. He had felt the influence of Orange; he had generous instincts; he had much vanity; he had the pride of high rank, which did not easily brook the domination of strangers, in a land which he considered himself and his compeers entitled by their birth to rule. At this juncture, however, particularly when in the company of Noircarmes, Berlaymont, and Viglius, he expressed, notwithstanding their calumnious misstatements, the deepest detestation of the heretics. He was a fervent Catholic, and he regarded the image-breaking as an unpardonable crime. "We must take up arms," said he, "sooner or later, to bring these Reformers to reason, or they will end by laying down the law for us." On the other hand, his anger would be often appeased by the grave but gracious remonstrances of Orange. During part of the summer, the Reformers had been so strong in Flanders that upon a single day 60,000 armed men had been assembled at the different field-preachings within that province. "All they needed was a Jacquemart, or a Philip van Artevelde," says a Catholic contemporary, "but they would have scorned to march under the banner of a brewer; having dared to raise their eyes for a chief, to the most illustrious warrior of his age." No doubt, had Egmont ever listened to these aspirations, he might have taken the field against the government with an invincible force, seized the capital, imprisoned the regent, and mastered the whole country, which was entirely defenseless, before Philip would have had time to write more than ten dispatches upon the subject.

These hopes of the Reformers, if hopes they could be called, were now destined to be most bitterly disappointed. Egmont entered Flanders, not as a chief of rebels, not as a wise pacificator, but as an unscrupulous partisan of government, disposed to take summary vengeance on all suspected persons who should fall in his way. He ordered numerous executions of image-breakers and of other heretics. The whole province was in a state of alarm, for, although he had not been furnished by the regent with a strong body of troops, yet the name of the conqueror at Saint Quentin and Gravelines was worth many regiments. His severity was excessive. His sanguinary exertions were ably seconded also by his secretary Bakkerzeel, a man who exercised the greatest influence over his chief, and who was now fiercely atoning for having signed the Compromise by persecuting those whom that league had been formed to protect. "Amid all the perplexities of the Duchess Regent," says a Walloon historian, "this virtuous princess was consoled by the exploits of Bakkerzeel, gentleman in Count Egmont's service. On one occasion he hanged twenty heretics, including a minister, at a single heat."

Such achievements as these by the hands or the orders of the distinguished general who had been most absurdly held up as a possible protector of the civil and religious liberties of the country, created profound sensation. Flanders and Artois were filled with the wives and children of suspected thousands who had
fled the country to escape the wrath of Egmont. The cries and piteous lamentations of these unfortunate creatures were heard on every side. Count Louis was earnestly implored to intercede for the persecuted Reformers. "You who have been so nobly gifted by Heaven, you who have good will and singular bounty written upon your face," said Utenhove to Louis, "have the power to save these poor victims from the throats of the ravenous wolves." The count responded to the appeal, and strove to soften the severity of Egmont, without, however, producing any very signal effect. Flanders was soon pacified, nor was that important province permitted to enjoy the benefits of the agreement which had been extorted from the duchess. The preachings were forbidden, and the ministers and congregations arrested and chastised, even in places where the custom had been established previously to the 23rd of August. Certainly such vigorous exertions upon the part both of master and man did not savor of treason to Philip, and hardly seemed to indicate the final doom of Egmont and Bakkerzeel.

The course of Orange at Antwerp was consistent with his whole career. He honestly came to arrange a pacification, but he knew that this end could be gained only by loyally maintaining the Accord which had been signed between the confederates and the regent. He came back to the city on the 26th of August, and found order partially re-established. The burghers having at last become thoroughly alarmed, and the fury of the image-breakers entirely appeased, it had been comparatively easy to restore tranquility. The tranquility, however, rather restored itself, and when the calm had succeeded to the tempest, the placid heads of the burgomasters once more emerged from the waves.

Three image-breakers, who had been taken in the act, were hanged by order of the magistrates upon the 28th of August. The presence of Orange gave them courage to achieve these executions which he could not prevent, as the fifth article of the Accord enjoined the chastisement of the rioters. The magistrates chose that the "chastisement" on this occasion should be exemplary, and it was not in the power of Orange to interfere with the regular government of the city when acting according to its laws. The deed was not his, however, and he hastened, in order to obviate the necessity of further violence, to prepare articles of agreement, upon the basis of Margaret’s concessions. Public preaching, according to the Reformed religion, had already taken place within the city. Upon the 22nd, possession had been taken of at least three churches. The senate had deputed pensionary Wesenbeck to expostulate with the ministers, for the magistrates were at that moment not able to command. Taffin, the Walloon preacher, had been tractable, and had agreed to postpone his exercises. He furthermore had accompanied the pensionary to the cathedral, in order to persuade Herman Modet that it would be better for him likewise to defer his intended ministrations. They had found that eloquent enthusiast already in the great church, burning with impatience to ascend upon the ruins, and quite unable to resist the temptation of setting a Flemish psalm
and preaching a Flemish sermon within the walls which had for so many centuries been vocal only to the Roman tongue and the Roman ritual. All that he would concede to the entreaties of his colleague and of the magistrate, was that his sermon should be short. In this, however, he had overrated his powers of retention, for the sermon not only became a long one, but he had preached another upon the afternoon of the same day. The city of Antwerp, therefore, was clearly within the seventh clause of the treaty of the 24th of August, for preaching had taken place in the cathedral, previously to the signing of that Accord.

Upon the second September, therefore, after many protracted interviews with the heads of the Reformed religion, the prince drew up sixteen articles of agreement between them, the magistrates, and the government, which were duly signed and exchanged. They were conceived in the true spirit of statesmanship, and could the rulers of the land have elevated themselves to the mental height of William de Nassau, had Philip been able of comprehending such a mind, the prince, who alone possessed the power in those distracted times of governing the wills of all men, would have enabled the monarch to transmit that beautiful cluster of provinces, without the loss of a single jewel, to the inheritors of his crown.

If the prince were playing a game, he played it honorably. To have conceived the thought of religious toleration in an age of universal dogmatism; to have labored to produce mutual respect among conflicting opinions, at a period when many dissenters were as bigoted as the orthodox, and when most Reformers fiercely proclaimed not liberty for every Christian doctrine, but only a new creed in place of all the rest; to have admitted the possibility of several roads to heaven, when zealots of all creeds would shut up all pathways but their own; if such sentiments and purposes were sins, they would have been ill-exchanged for the best virtues of the age. Yet, no doubt, this was his crying offense in the opinion of many contemporaries. He was now becoming apostate from the ancient Church, but he had long thought that emperors, kings, and popes had taken altogether too much care of men’s souls in times past, and had sent too many of them prematurely to their great account. He was equally indisposed to grant full powers for the same purpose to Calvinists, Lutherans, or Anabaptists. "He censured the severity of our theologians," said a Catholic contemporary, accumulating all the religious offenses of the prince in a single paragraph, "because they keep strictly the constitutions of the Church without conceding a single point to their adversaries; he blamed the Calvinists as seditious and unruly people, yet nevertheless had a horror for the imperial edicts which condemned them to death; he said it was a cruel thing to take a man’s life for sustaining an erroneous opinion; in short, he fantasized in his imagination a kind of religion, half Catholic, half Reformed, in order to content all persons; a system which would have been adopted could he have had his way." This picture, drawn by one of his most brilliant and bitter enemies, excites our admiration while intended to inspire aversion.
The articles of agreement at Antwerp thus promulgated assigned three churches to the different sects of Reformers, stipulated that no attempt should be made by Catholics or Protestants to disturb the religious worship of each other, and provided that neither by mutual taunts in their sermons, nor by singing street ballads, together with improper allusions and overt acts of hostility, should the good fellowship which ought to reign between brethren and fellow citizens, even although entertaining different opinions as to religious rites and doctrines, be for the future interrupted. This was the basis upon which the very brief religious peace, broken almost as soon as established, was concluded by William of Orange, not only at Antwerp, but at Utrecht, Amsterdam, and other principal cities within his government.

The prince, however, notwithstanding his unwearied exertions, had slender hopes of a peaceful result. He felt that the last step taken by the Reformation had been off a precipice. He liked not such rapid progress. He knew that the king would never forgive the image-breaking. He felt that he would never recognize the Accord of the 24th of August. Sir Thomas Gresham, who, as the representative of the Protestant Queen of England in the great commercial metropolis of Europe, was fully conversant with the turn things were taking, was already advising some other place for the sale of English commodities. He gave notice to his government that commerce would have no security at Antwerp "in those brabbling times." He was on confidential terms with the prince, who invited him to dine upon the 4th of September, and caused pensionary Wesenbeck, who was also present, to read aloud the agreement which was that day to be proclaimed at the town-house. Orange expressed himself, however, very doubtfully as to the future prospects of the provinces, and as to the probable temper of the king. "In all his talke," says Gresham, "the prince saide unto me, 'I know this will nothing contente the king.'"

While Egmont had been thus busied in Flanders, and Orange at Antwerp, Count Horn had been doing his best in the important city of Tournay. The admiral was not especially gifted with intellect, nor with the power of managing men, but he went there with an honest purpose of seeing the Accord executed, intending, if it should prove practicable, rather to favor the government than the Reformers. At the same time, for the purpose of giving satisfaction to the members of "the religion," and of manifesting his sincere desire for a pacification, he accepted lodgings which had been prepared for him at the house of a Calvinist merchant in the city, rather than take up his quarters with fierce old governor Moulbais in the citadel. This gave much offense to the Catholics, and inspired the Reformers with the hope of having their preaching inside the town. To this privilege they were entitled, for the practice had already been established there, previously to the 24th of October. Nevertheless, at first he was disposed to limit them, in accordance with the wishes of the duchess, to extramural exercises.
Upon his arrival, by a somewhat ominous conjuncture, he had supped with some of the leading citizens in the hall of the "gehenna," or torture room, certainly not a locality calculated to inspire a healthy appetite. On the following Sunday he had been entertained with a great banquet, at which all the principal burghers were present, held in a house on the market-place. The festivities had been interrupted by a quarrel, which had been taking place in the cathedral. Beneath the vaults of that edifice, tradition said that a vast treasure was hidden, and the canons had been known to boast that this buried wealth would be sufficient to rebuild their temple more magnificently than ever, in case of its total destruction. The admiral had accordingly placed a strong guard in the church as soon as he arrived, and commenced very extensive excavations in search of this imaginary mine. The regent informed her brother that the count was prosecuting this work with the view of appropriating whatever might be found to his own benefit. As she knew that he was a ruined man, there seemed no more satisfactory mode of accounting for these proceedings. Horn had, however, expressly stated to her that every penny which should come into his possession from that or any other source would carefully be restored to the rightful owners. Nothing of consequence was ever found to justify the golden legends of the monks, but in the meantime the money-diggers gave great offense. The canons, naturally alarmed for the safety of their fabulous treasure, had forced the guard, by surreptitiously obtaining the countersign from a certain official of the town. A quarrel ensued which ended in the appearance of this personage, together with the commander of the military force on guard in the cathedral, before the banqueting company. The count, in the rough way habitual with him, gave the culprit a sound rebuke for his intermeddling, and threatened, in case the offense were repeated, to have him instantly bound, gagged, and forwarded to Brussels for further punishment. The matter thus satisfactorily adjusted, the banquet proceeded, the merchants present being all delighted at seeing the said official, who was exceedingly unpopular, "so well huffed by the count." The excavations were continued for a long time, until there seemed danger of destroying the foundation of the church, but only a few bits of money were discovered, with some other articles of small value.

Horn had taken his apartments in the city in order to be at hand to suppress any tumults, and to inspire confidence in the people. He had come to a city where five sixths of the inhabitants were of the Reformed religion, and he did not, therefore, think it judicious to attempt violently the suppression of their worship. Upon his arrival he had issued a proclamation, ordering that all property which might have been pillaged from the religious houses should be instantly restored to the magistracy, under penalty that all who disobeyed the command should "be forthwith strangled at the gibbet." Nothing was brought back, however, for the simple reason that nothing had been stolen. There was, therefore, no one to be strangled.
The next step was to publish the Accord of 24\textsuperscript{th} of August, and to signify the intention of the admiral to enforce its observance. The preachings were as enthusiastically attended as ever, while the storm which had been raging among the images had in the meantime been entirely allayed. Congregations of 15,000 were still going to hear Ambrose Wille in the suburbs, but they were very tranquil in their demeanor. It was arranged between the admiral and the leaders of the Reformed consistories, that three places, to be selected by Horn, should be assigned for their places of worship. At these spots, which were outside the walls, permission was given the Reformers to build meeting-houses. To this arrangement the duchess formally gave her consent.

Nicholas Taffin, councillor, in the name of the Reformers, made "a brave and elegant harangue" before the magistrates, representing that, as on the most moderate computation, three quarters of the population were dissenters, as the regent had ordered the construction of the new temples, and as the Catholics retained possession of all the churches in the city, it was no more than fair that the community should bear the expense of the new buildings. It was indignantly replied, however, that Catholics could not be expected to pay for the maintenance of heresy, particularly when they had just been so much exasperated by the image-breaking. Councillor Taffin took nothing, therefore by his "brave and elegant harangue," saving a small vote of forty livres.

The building was, however, immediately commenced. Many nobles and rich citizens contributed to the work, some making donations in money, others giving quantities of oaks, poplars, elms, and other timber trees, to be used in the construction. The foundation of the first temple outside the Porte de Cocquerel was immediately laid. Vast heaps of broken images and other ornaments of the desecrated churches were most unwisely used for this purpose, and the Catholics were exceedingly enraged at beholding those male and female saints, who had for centuries been placed in such "reverend and elevated positions," fallen so low as to be the foundation stones of temples whose builders denounced all those holy things as idols.

As the autumn began to wane, the people were clamorous for permission to have their preaching inside the city. The new buildings could not be finished before the winter, but in the meantime the camp-meetings were becoming, in the stormy seasons fast approaching, a very inconvenient mode of worship. On the other hand, the duchess was furious at the proposition, and commanded Horn on no account to consent that the interior of Tournay should be profaned by these heretical rites. It was in vain that the admiral represented the justice of the claim, as these exercises had taken place in several of the city churches previously to the Accord of the 24\textsuperscript{th} of August. That agreement had been made by the duchess only to be broken. She had already received money and the permission to make levies, and was fast assuming a tone very different from the abject demeanor which had characterized her in August. Count Horn had been used even as Egmont, Orange, and Hoogstraaten had been employed, in
order that their personal influence with the Reformers might be turned to account. The tools and the work accomplished by them were to be thrown away at the most convenient opportunity.

The admiral was placed in a most intolerable position. An honest, commonplace, sullen kind of man, he had come to a city full of heretics, to enforce concessions just made by the government to heresy. He soon found himself watched, paltered with, suspected by the administration at Brussels. Governor Moulbais in the citadel, who was nominally under his authority, refused obedience to his orders, was evidently receiving secret instructions from the regent, and was determined to cannonade the city into submission at a very early day. Horn required him to pledge himself that no fresh troops should enter the castle. Moulbais swore he would make no such promise to a living soul. The admiral stormed with his usual violence, expressed his regret that his brother Montigny had so bad a lieutenant in the citadel, but could make no impression upon the determined veteran, who knew, better than Horn, the game which was preparing. Small reinforcements were daily arriving at the castle; the soldiers of the garrison had been heard to boast "that they would soon carve and eat the townsmen’s flesh on their dressers," and all the good effect from the admiral’s proclamation on arriving, had completely vanished.

Horn complained bitterly of the situation in which he was placed. He knew himself the mark of incessant and calumnious misrepresentation both at Brussels and Madrid. He had been doing his best, at a momentous crisis, to serve the government without violating its engagements, but he declared himself to be neither theologian nor jurist, and incapable, while suspected and unassisted, of performing a task which the most learned doctors of the council would find impracticable. He would rather, he bitterly exclaimed, endure a siege in any fortress by the Turks, than be placed in such a position. He was doing all that he was capable of doing, yet whatever he did was wrong. There was a great difference, he said, between being in a place and talking about it at a distance.

In the middle of October he was recalled by the duchess, whose letters had been uniformly so ambiguous that he confessed he was quite unable to divine their meaning. Before he left the city, he committed his most unpardonable crime. Urged by the leaders of the Reformed congregations to permit their exercises in the Clothiers’ Hall until their temples should be finished, the count accorded his consent provisionally, and subject to revocation by the regent, to whom the arrangement was immediately to be communicated.

Horn departed, and the Reformers took instant possession of the hall. It was found in a very dirty and disorderly condition, encumbered with benches, scaffoldings, stakes, gibbets, and all the machinery used for public executions upon the market-place. A vast body of men went to work with a will;
The admiral went to Brussels. Secretary de la Torre, a very second-rate personage, was dispatched to Tournay to convey the orders of the regent. Governor Moulbais, now in charge of affairs both civil and military, was to prepare all things for the garrison, which was soon to be dispatched under Noircarmes. The duchess had now arms in her hands, and her language was bold. La Torre advised the Reformers to be wise "while the rod was yet green and growing, lest it should be gathered for their backs; for it was unbecoming in subjects to make bargains with their King." There was hardly any decent pretext used in violating the Accord of the 24th of August, so soon as the government was strong enough to break it. It was always said that the preachings suppressed, had not been established previously to that arrangement; but the preachings had in reality obtained almost everywhere, and were now universally abolished. The ridiculous quibble was also used that, in the preachings other religious exercises were not included, whereas it was notorious that they had never been separated. It is, however, a gratuitous task to unravel the deceptions of tyranny when it hardly deigns to disguise itself. The dissimulations which have resisted the influence of centuries are more worthy of serious investigation, and of these the epoch offers us a sufficient supply.

At the close of the year, the city of Tournay was completely subjugated and the Reformed religion suppressed. Upon the second day of January, 1567, the Seignior de Noircarmes arrived before the gates at the head of eleven companies, with orders from Duchess Margaret to strengthen the garrison and disarm the citizens. He gave the magistrates exactly one hour and a half to decide whether they would submit without a murmur. He expressed an intention of maintaining the Accord of 24th August, a ridiculous affectation under the circumstances, as the event proved. The notables were summoned, submission agreed upon, and within the prescribed time the magistrates came before Noircarmes, with an unconditional acceptance of his terms. That truculent personage told them, in reply, that they had done wisely, for if they had delayed receiving the garrison a minute longer, he would have instantly burned the city to ashes and put every one of the inhabitants to the sword. He had been fully authorized to do so, and subsequent events were to show, upon more than one dreadful occasion, how capable Noircarmes would have been of fulfilling this menace.
The soldiers, who had made a forced march all night, and who had been firmly persuaded that the city would refuse the terms demanded, were excessively disappointed at being obliged to forego the sack and pillage upon which they had reckoned. Eight or nine hundred rascally peasants, too, who had followed in the skirts of the regiments, each provided with a great empty bag, which they expected to fill with booty which they might purchase of the soldiers, or steal in the midst of the expected carnage and rapine, shared the discontent of the soldiery, by whom they were now driven ignominiously out of the town.

The citizens were immediately disarmed. All the fine weapons which they had been obliged to purchase at their own expense when they had been arranged by the magistrates under eight banners, for defense of the city against tumult and invasion, were taken from them; the most beautiful cutlasses, carbines, poniards, and pistols, being divided by Noircarmes among his officers. Thus Tournay was tranquilized.

During the whole of these proceedings in Flanders, and at Antwerp, Tournay, and Mechlin, the conduct of the duchess had been marked with snore than her usual treachery. She had been disavowing acts which the men upon whom she relied in her utmost need had been doing by her authority; she had been affecting to praise their conduct, while she was secretly misrepresenting their actions and maligning their motives, and she had been straining every nerve to make foreign levies, while attempting to amuse the confederates and sectaries with an affectation of clemency.

When Orange complained that she had been censuring his proceedings at Antwerp, and holding language unfavorable to his character, she protested that she thoroughly approved his arrangements—excepting only the two points of the intramural preachings and the permission to heretics of other exercises than sermons—and that if she were displeased with him he might be sure that she would rather tell him so than speak ill of him behind his back. The prince, who had been compelled by necessity, and fully authorized by the terms of the "Accord," to grant those two points which were the vital matter in his arrangements, answered very calmly that he was not so frivolous as to believe in her having used language to his discredit, had he not been quite certain of the fact, as he would soon prove by evidence. Orange was not the man to be deceived as to the position in which he stood, nor as to the character of those with whom he dealt. Margaret wrote, however, in the same vein concerning him to Hoogstraaten, affirming that nothing could be further from her intention than to characterize the proceedings of "her cousin, the Prince of Orange, as contrary to the service of his Majesty; knowing, as she did, how constant had been his affection, and how diligent his actions, in the cause of God and the king." She also sent Councillor d’Assonleville on a special mission to the prince, instructing that smooth personage to inform her said cousin of Orange that he was and always had been "loved and cherished by his Majesty, and that for herself she had ever loved him like a brother or a child."
She wrote to Horn, approving of his conduct in the main, although in obscure terms, and expressing great confidence in his zeal, loyalty, and good intentions. She accorded the same praise to Hoogstraaten, while as to Egmont she was perpetually reproaching him for the suspicions which he seemed obstinately to entertain as to her disposition and that of Philip, in regard to his conduct and character.

It has already been partly seen what were her private sentiments and secret representations as to the career of the distinguished personages thus encouraged and commended. Her pictures were painted in daily darkening colors. She told her brother that Orange, Egmont, and Horn were about to place themselves at the head of the confederates, who were to take up arms and had been levying troops; that the Lutheran religion was to be forcibly established; that the whole power of the government was to be placed in the triumvirate thus created by those seigniors; and that Philip was in reality to be excluded entirely from those provinces which were his ancient patrimony. All this information she had obtained from Mansfeld, at whom the nobles were constantly sneering as at a faithful valet who would never receive his wages.

She also informed the king that the scheme for dividing the country was already arranged—that Augustus of Saxony was to have Friesland and Overysseh; Count Brederode, Holland; the Dukes of Cleves and Lorraine, Gueldres; the King of France, Flanders, Artois, and Hainault, of which territories Egmont was to be perpetual stadholder; the Prince of Orange, Brabant; and so on indefinitely. A general massacre of all the Catholics had been arranged by Orange, Horn, and Egmont, to commence as soon as the king should put his foot on shipboard to come to the country. This last remarkable fact Margaret reported to Philip upon the respectable authority of Noircarmes.

She apologized for having employed the service of these nobles, on the ground of necessity. Their proceedings in Flanders, at Antwerp, Tournay, Mechlin, had been highly reprehensible, and she had been obliged to disavow them in the most important particulars. As for Egmont, she had most unwillingly entrusted forces to his hands for the purpose of putting down the Flemish sectaries. She had been afraid to show a want of confidence in his character, but at the same time she believed that all soldiers under Egmont’s orders would be so many enemies to the king. Notwithstanding his protestations of fidelity to the ancient religion and to his Majesty, she feared that he was busied with some great plot against God and the king. When we remember the ruthless manner in which the unfortunate count had actually been raging against the sectaries, and the sanguinary proofs which he had been giving of his fidelity to “God and the king,” it seems almost incredible that Margaret could have written down all these monstrous assertions.

The duchess gave, moreover, repeated warnings to her brother, that the nobles were in the habit of obtaining possession of all the correspondence between
Madrid and Brussels, and that they spent a vast deal of money in order to read her own and Philip’s most private letters. She warned him therefore, to be upon his guard, for she believed that almost all their dispatches were read. Such being the case, and the tenor of those documents being what we have seen it to be, her complaints as to the incredulity of those seigniors to her affectionate protestations, seem quite wonderful.

CHAPTER 9

The Siege of Valenciennes and the Courage of William of Orange at Antwerp

It is necessary to allude to certain important events contemporaneous with those recorded in the last chapter, that the reader may thoroughly understand the position of the leading personages in this great drama at the close of the year 1566.

The Prince of Orange had, as we have seen, been exerting all his energies faithfully to accomplish the pacification of the commercial metropolis, upon the basis assented to beforehand by the duchess. He had established a temporary religious peace, by which alone at that crisis the gathering tempest could be averted; but he had permitted the law to take its course upon certain rioters, who had been regularly condemned by courts of justice. He had worked day and night—notwithstanding immense obstacles, calumnious misstatements, and conflicting opinions—to restore order out of chaos; he had freely imperiled his own life—dashing into a tumultuous mob on one occasion, wounding several with the halberd which he snatched from one of his guard, and dispersing almost with his single arm a dangerous and threatening insurrection—and he had remained in Antwerp, at the pressing solicitations of the magistracy, who represented that the lives of not a single ecclesiastic would be safe as soon as his back was turned, and that all the merchants would forthwith depart from the city. It was nevertheless necessary that he should make a personal visit to his government of Holland, where similar disorders had been prevailing, and where men of all ranks and parties were clamoring for their stadholder.

Notwithstanding all his exertions however, he was thoroughly aware of the position in which he stood towards the government. The sugared phrases of Margaret, the deliberate commendation of the “benign and debonair” Philip, produced no effect upon this statesman, who was accustomed to look through and through men’s actions to the core of their hearts. In the hearts of Philip and Margaret he already saw treachery and revenge indelibly imprinted. He had been especially indignant at the insult which the duchess regent had put upon
him, by sending Duke Eric of Brunswick with an armed force into Holland in order to protect Gouda, Woerden, and other places within the prince’s own government. He was thoroughly conversant with the general tone in which the other seigniors and himself were described to their sovereign. He was already convinced that the country was to be conquered by foreign mercenaries, and that his own life, with those of many other nobles, was to be sacrificed. The moment had arrived in which he was justified in looking about him for means of defense, both for himself and his country, if the king should be so insane as to carry out the purposes which the prince suspected. The time was fast approaching in which a statesman placed upon such an elevation before the world as that which he occupied, would be obliged to choose his part for life. To be the unscrupulous tool of tyranny, a rebel, or an exile, was his necessary fate. To a man so prone to read the future, the moment for his choice seemed already arrived. Moreover, he thought it doubtful, and events were most signal to justify his doubts, whether he could be accepted as the instrument of despotism, even were he inclined to prostitute himself to such service. At this point, therefore, undoubtedly began the treasonable thoughts of William the Silent, if it be treason to attempt the protection of ancient and chartered liberties against a foreign oppressor. He dispatched a private envoy to Egmont, representing the grave suspicions manifested by the duchess in sending Duke Eric into Holland, and proposing that means should be taken into consideration for obviating the dangers with which the country was menaced. Catholics as well as Protestants, he intimated, were to be crushed in one universal conquest as soon as Philip had completed the formidable preparations which he was making for invading the provinces. For himself, he said, he would not remain in the land to witness the utter desolation of the people, nor to fall an unresisting victim to the vengeance which he foresaw. If, however, he might rely upon the cooperation of Egmont and Horn, he was willing, with the advice of the states-general, to risk preparations against the armed invasion of Spaniards by which the country was to be reduced to slavery. It was incumbent, however, upon men placed as they were, "not to let the grass grow under their feet," and the moment for action was fast approaching.

This was the scheme which Orange was willing to attempt. To make use of his own influence and that of his friends, to interpose between a sovereign insane with bigotry, and a people in a state of religious frenzy, to resist brutal violence if need should be by force, and to compel the sovereign to respect the charters which he had sworn to maintain, and which were far more ancient than his sovereignty; so much of treason did William of Orange already contemplate, for in no other way could he be loyal to his country and his own honor.

Nothing came of this secret embassy, for Egmont’s heart and fate were already fixed. Before Orange departed, however, for the North, where his presence in the Dutch provinces was now imperatively required, a memorable interview took place at Dendermonde between Orange, Horn, Egmont, Hoogstraaten, and
Count Louis. The nature of this conference was probably similar to that of the secret mission from Orange to Egmont just recorded. It was not a long consultation. The gentlemen met at eleven o’clock, and conversed until dinner was ready, which was between twelve and one in the afternoon. They discussed the contents of a letter recently received by Horn from his brother Montigny at Segovia, giving a lively picture of Philip’s fury at the recent events in the Netherlands, and expressing the Baron’s own astonishment and indignation that it had been impossible for the seigniors to prevent such outrages as the public preaching, the image-breaking, and the Accord. They had also some conversation concerning the dissatisfaction manifested by the duchess at the proceedings of Count Horn at Tournay, and they read a very remarkable letter which had been furnished them, as having been written by the Spanish envoy in Paris, Don Francis of Alava, to Margaret of Parma. This letter was forged. At least the regent, in her Italian correspondence, asserted it to be fictitious, and in those secret letters to Philip she usually told the truth. The astuteness of William of Orange had in this instance been deceived. The striking fidelity, however, with which the present and future policy of the government was sketched, the accuracy with which many unborn events were foreshadowed, together with the minute touches which gave an air of genuineness to the fictitious dispatch, might well deceive even so sagacious an observer as the prince.

The letters alluded to the deep and long-settled hostility of Philip to Orange, Horn, and Egmont, as to a fact entirely within the writer’s knowledge, and that of his correspondent, but urged upon the duchess the assumption of an extraordinary degree of apparent cordiality in her intercourse with them. It was the king’s intention to use them and to destroy them, said the writer, and it was the regent’s duty to second the design. “The tumults and troubles have not been without their secret concurrence,” said the supposititious Alava, “and your Highness may rest assured that they will be the first upon whom his Majesty will seize, not to confer benefits, but to chastise them as they deserve. Your Highness, however, should show no symptom of displeasure, but should constantly maintain in their minds the idea that his Majesty considers them as the most faithful of his servants. While they are persuaded of this, they can be more easily used, but when the time comes, they will be treated in another manner. Your Highness may rest assured that his Majesty is not less inclined than your Highness that they should receive the punishment which they merit.” The duchess was furthermore recommended “to deal with the three seigniors according to the example of the Spanish governments in its intercourse with the envoys, Bergen and Montigny, who are met with a smiling face, but who are closely watched, and who will never be permitted to leave Spain alive.” The remainder of the letter alludes to supposed engagements between France and Spain for the extirpation of heresy, from which allusion to the generally accepted but mistaken notion as to the Bayonne conference, a decided proof seems to be furnished that the letter was not genuine. Great complaints, however, are made, as to the conduct of the queen regent, who is
described as "a certain lady well known to her Highness, and as a person without faith, friendship, or truth; the most consummate hypocrite in the world." After giving instances of the duplicity manifested by Catherine de Medici, the writer continues, "She sends her little black dwarf to me upon frequent errands, in order that by means of this spy she may worm out my secrets. I am, however, upon my guard, and flatter myself that I learn more from him than she from me. She shall never be able to boast of having deceived a Spaniard."

An extract or two from this very celebrated document seemed indispensable, because of the great importance attached to it, both at the Dendermonde Conference, and at the trials of Egmont and Horn. The contemporary writers of Holland had no doubt of its genuineness, and what is more remarkable, Strada, the historiographer of the Farnese family, after quoting Margaret’s denial of the authenticity of the letter, coolly observes, "Whether this were only an invention of the conspirators, or actually a dispatch from Alava, I shall not decide. It is certain, however, that the duchess declared it to be false."

Certainly, as we read the epistles, and observe how profoundly the writer seems to have sounded the deep guile of the Spanish Cabinet, and how distinctly events, then far in the future, are indicated, we are tempted to exclaim, "aut Alava, aut Diabolus," either the envoy wrote the dispatch, or Orange. Who else could look into the future, and into Philip’s heart so unerringly?

As the charge has never been made, so far as we are aware, against the prince, it is superfluous to discuss the amount of immorality which should belong to such a deception. A tendency to employ stratagem in his warfare against Spain was, no doubt, a blemish upon his high character. Before he is condemned, however, in the Court of Conscience, the ineffable wiles of the policy with which he had to combat must be thoroughly scanned, as well as the pure and lofty purpose for which his life’s long battle was fought.

There was, doubtless, some conversation at Dendermonde on the propriety or possibility of forcible resistance to a Spanish army, with which it seemed probable that Philip was about to invade the provinces, and take the lives of the leading nobles. Count Louis was in favor of making provision in Germany for the accomplishment of this purpose. It is also highly probable that the prince may have encouraged the proposition. In the sense of his former communication to Egmont, he may have reasoned on the necessity of making levies to sustain the decisions of the states-general against violence. There is, however, no proof of any such fact. Egmont, at any rate, opposed the scheme, on the ground that "it was wrong to entertain any such ill opinion of so good a king as Philip, that he had never done any thing unjust towards his subjects, and that if any one was in fear, he had better leave the country." Egmont, moreover, doubted the authenticity of the letters from Alava, but agreed to
carry them to Brussels, and to lay them before the regent. That lady, when she saw them, warmly assured the count that they were inventions.

The conference broke up after it had lasted an hour and a half. The nobles then went to dinner, at which other persons appear to have been present, and the celebrated Dendermonde meeting was brought to a close. After the repast was finished, each of the five nobles mounted his horse, and departed on his separate way.

From this time forth, the position of these leading seigniors became more sharply defined. Orange was left in almost complete isolation. Without the assistance of Egmont, any effective resistance to the impending invasion from Spain seemed out of the question. The count, however, had taken his irrevocable and fatal resolution. After various oscillations during the stormy period which had elapsed, his mind, notwithstanding all the disturbing causes by which it had hitherto been partially influenced, now pointed steadily to the point of loyalty. The guidance of that pole star was to lead him to utter shipwreck. The unfortunate noble, entrenched against all fear of Philip by the brazen wall of an easy conscience, saw no fault in his past at which he should grow pale with apprehension. Moreover, he was sanguine by nature, a Catholic in religion, a royalist from habit and conviction. Henceforth he was determined that his services to the crown should more than counterbalance any idle speeches or insolent demonstrations of which he might have been previously guilty.

Horn pursued a different course, but one which separated him also from the prince, while it led to the same fate which Egmont was blindly pursuing. The admiral had committed no act of treason. On the contrary, he had been doing his best, under most difficult circumstances, to avert rebellion and save the interests of a most ungrateful sovereign. He was now disposed to wrap himself in his virtue, to retreat from a court life, for which he had never felt a vocation, and to resign all connection with a government by which he felt himself very badly treated. Moody, wrathful, disappointed, ruined, and calumniated, he would no longer keep terms with king or duchess. He had griefs of long standing against the whole of the royal family. He had never forgiven the Emperor for refusing him, when young, the appointment of chamberlain. He had served Philip long and faithfully, but he had never received a stiver of salary or "merced," notwithstanding all his work as state councillor, as admiral, as superintendent in Spain; while his younger brother had long been in receipt of nine or ten thousand florins yearly. He had spent 400,000 florins in the king’s service; his estates were mortgaged to their full value; he had been obliged to sell his family plate. He had done his best in Tournay to serve the duchess, and he had averted the "Sicilian vespers," which had been imminent at his arrival.
He had saved the Catholics from a general massacre, yet he heard nevertheless from Montigny, that all his actions were distorted in Spain, and his motives blackened. His heart no longer inclined him to continue in Philip’s service, even were he furnished with the means of doing so. He had instructed his secretary, Alonzo de la Loo, whom he had dispatched many months previously to Madrid, that he was no longer to press his master’s claims for a “merced,” but to signify that he abandoned all demands and resigned all posts. He could turn hermit for the rest of his days, as well as the Emperor Charles. If he had little, he could live upon little. It was in this sense that he spoke to Margaret of Parma, to Assonleville, to all around him. It was precisely in this strain and temper that he wrote to Philip, indignantly defending his course at Tournay, protesting against the tortuous conduct of the duchess, and bluntly declaring that he would treat no longer with ladies upon matters which concerned a man’s honor.

Thus, smarting under a sense of gross injustice, the admiral expressed himself in terms which Philip was not likely to forgive. He had undertaken the pacification of Tournay, because it was Montigny’s government, and he had promised his services whenever they should be requisite. Horn was a loyal and affectionate brother, and it is pathetic to find him congratulating Montigny on being, after all, better off in Spain than in the Netherlands. Neither loyalty nor the sincere Catholicism for which Montigny at this period commended Horn in his private letters, could save the two brothers from the doom which was now fast approaching.

Thus Horn, blind as Egmont—not being aware that a single step beyond implicit obedience had created an impassable gulf between Philip and himself—resolved to meet his destiny in sullen retirement. Not an entirely disinterested man, perhaps, but an honest one, as the world went, mediocre in mind, but brave, generous, and direct of purpose, goaded by the shafts of calumny, hunted down by the whole pack which fawned upon power as it grew more powerful, he now retreated to his “desert,” as he called his ruined home at Weert, where he stood at bay, growling defiance at the regent, at Philip, at all the world.

Thus were the two prominent personages upon whose cooperation Orange had hitherto endeavored to rely, entirely separated from him. The confederacy of nobles, too, was dissolved, having accomplished little, notwithstanding all its noisy demonstrations, and having lost all credit with the people by the formal cassation of the Compromise in consequence of the Accord of August. As a body, they had justified the sarcasm of Hubert Languet, that “the confederated nobles had ruined their country by their folly and incapacity.” They had profaned a holy cause by indecent orgies, compromised it by seditious demonstrations, abandoned it when most in need of assistance. Bakkerzeel had distinguished himself by hanging sectaries in Flanders. "Golden Fleece" de Hammes, after creating great scandal in and about Antwerp, since the Accord, had ended by accepting an artillery commission in the Emperor’s army,
together with three hundred crowns for convoy from Duchess Margaret. Culemburg was serving the cause of religious freedom by defacing the churches within his ancestral domains, pulling down statues, dining in chapels, and giving the holy wafer to his parrot. Nothing could be more stupid than these acts of irreverence, by which Catholics were offended and honest patriots disgusted. Nothing could be more opposed to the sentiments of Orange, whose first principle was abstinence by all denominations of Christians from mutual insults. At the same time, it is somewhat revolting to observe the indignation with which such offenses were regarded by men of the most abandoned character. Thus, Armenteros, whose name was synonymous with government swindling, who had been rolling up money year after year, by peculations, auctioneering of high posts in church and state, bribes, and all kinds of picking and stealing, could not contain his horror as he referred to wafers eaten by parrots, or “toasted on forks” by renegade priests; and poured out his emotions on the subject into the faithful bosom of Antonio Perez, the man with whose debaucheries, political villainies, and deliberate murders all Europe was to ring.

No doubt there were many individuals in the confederacy for whom it was reserved to render honorable service in the national cause. The names of Louis Nassau, Marnix of St. Aldegonde, Bernard de Merode, were to be written in golden letters in their country’s rolls; but at this moment they were impatient, inconsiderate, out of the control of Orange. Louis was anxious for the king to come from Spain with his army, and for “the bear dance to begin.” Brederode, noisy, bawling, and absurd as ever, was bringing ridicule upon the national cause by his buffoonery, and endangering the whole people by his inadequate yet rebellious exertions.

What course was the Prince of Orange to adopt? He could find no one to comprehend his views. He felt certain at the close of the year that the purpose of the government was fixed. He made no secret of his determination never to lend himself as an instrument for the contemplated subjugation of the people. He had repeatedly resigned all his offices. He was now determined that the resignation once for all should be accepted. If he used dissimulation, it was because Philip’s deception permitted no man to be frank. If the sovereign constantly disavowed all hostile purposes against his people, and manifested extreme affection for the men whom he had already doomed to the scaffold, how could the prince openly denounce him? It was his duty to save his country and his friends from impending ruin. He preserved, therefore, an attitude of watchfulness. Philip, in the depth of his cabinet, was under a constant inspection by the sleepless prince. The sovereign assured his sister that her apprehensions about their correspondence was groundless. He always locked up his papers, and took the key with him. Nevertheless, the key was taken out of his pocket and the papers read. Orange was accustomed to observe, that men of leisure might occupy themselves with philosophical pursuits and with the secrets of nature, but that it was his business to study the hearts of kings. He
knew the man and the woman with whom he had to deal. We have seen enough of the policy secretly pursued by Philip and Margaret to appreciate the accuracy with which the prince, groping as it were in the dark, had judged the whole situation. Had his friends taken his warnings, they might have lived to render services against tyranny. Had he imitated their example of false loyalty, there would have been one additional victim, more illustrious than all the rest, and a whole country hopelessly enslaved.

It is by keeping these considerations in view, that we can explain his connection with such a man as Brederode. The enterprises of that noble, of Tholouse, and others, and the resistance of Valenciennes, could hardly have been prevented even by the opposition of the prince. But why should he take the field against men who, however rashly or ineffectually, were endeavoring to oppose tyranny, when he knew himself already proscribed and doomed by the tyrant? Such loyalty he left to Egmont. Till late in the autumn, he had still believed in the possibility of convoking the states-general, and of making preparations in Germany to enforce their decrees.

The confederates and sectaries had boasted that they could easily raise an army of 60,000 men within the provinces, that twelve hundred thousand florins monthly would be furnished by the rich merchants of Antwerp, and that it was ridiculous to suppose that the German mercenaries enrolled by the duchess in Saxony, Hesse, and other Protestant countries, would ever render serious assistance against the adherents of the reformed religion. Without placing much confidence in such exaggerated statements, the prince might well be justified in believing himself strong enough, if backed by the confederacy, by Egmont, and by his own boundless influence, both at Antwerp and in his own government, to sustain the constituted authorities of the nation even against a Spanish army, and to interpose with legitimate and irresistible strength between the insane tyrant and the country which he was preparing to crush. It was the opinion of the best informed Catholics that, if Egmont should declare for the confederacy, he could take the field with 60,000 men, and make himself master of the whole country at a blow. In conjunction with Orange, the moral and physical force would have been invincible.

It was therefore not Orange alone, but the Catholics and Protestants alike, the whole population of the country, and the duchess regent herself, who desired the convocation of the estates. Notwithstanding Philip’s deliberate but secret determination never to assemble that body, although the hope was ever to be held out that they should be convened, Margaret had been most importunate that her brother should permit the measure. “There was less danger,” she felt herself compelled to say, “in assembling than in not assembling the States; it was better to preserve the Catholic religion for a part of the country, than to lose it altogether.” “The more it was delayed,” she said, “the more ruinous and desperate became the public affairs. If the measure were postponed much longer, all Flanders, half Brabant, the whole of Holland, Zealand, Gueldres,
Tournay, Lille, Mechlin, would be lost forever, without a chance of ever restoring the ancient religion." The country, in short, was "without faith, King, or law," and nothing worse could be apprehended from any deliberation of the states-general. These being the opinions of the duchess, and according to her statement those of nearly all the good Catholics in the country, it could hardly seem astonishing or treasonable that the prince should also be in favor of the measure.

As the duchess grew stronger, however, and as the people, aghast at the fate of Tournay and Valenciennes, began to lose courage, she saw less reason for assembling the states. Orange, on the other hand, completely deserted by Egmont and Horn, and having little confidence in the characters of the ex-confederates, remained comparatively quiescent but watchful.

At the close of the year, an important pamphlet from his hand was circulated, in which his views as to the necessity of allowing some degree of religious freedom were urged upon the royal government with his usual sagacity of thought, moderation of language, and modesty in tone. The man who had held the most important civil and military offices in the country almost from boyhood, and who was looked up to by friend and foe as the most important personage in the three millions of its inhabitants, apologized for his "presumption" in coming forward publicly with his advice. "I would not," he said, "in matters of such importance, affect to be wiser or to make greater pretensions than my age or experience warrants, yet seeing affairs in such perplexity, I will rather incur the risk of being charged with forwardness than neglect that which I consider my duty."

This, then, was the attitude of the principal personages in the Netherlands, and the situation of affairs at the end of the eventful year 1566, the last year of peace which the men then living or their children were to know. The government, weak at the commencement, was strong at the close. The confederacy was broken and scattered. The Request, the beggar banquets, the public preaching, the image-breaking, the Accord of August, had been followed by reaction. Tournay had accepted its garrison. Egmont, completely obedient to the crown, was compelling all the cities of Flanders and Artois to receive soldiers sufficient to maintain implicit obedience, and to extinguish all heretical demonstrations, so that the regent was at comparative leisure to effect the reduction of Valenciennes.

This ancient city, in the province of Hainault, and on the frontier of France, had been founded by the Emperor Valentinian, from whom it had derived its name. Originally established by him as a city of refuge, it had received the privilege of affording an asylum to debtors, to outlaws, and even to murderers. This ancient right had been continued, under certain modifications, even till the period with which we are now occupied. Never, however, according to the government, had the right of asylum, even in the wildest times, been so abused
by the city before. What were debtors, robbers, murderers, compared to heretics? Yet these worst enemies of their race swarmed in the rebellious city, practicing even now the foulest rites of Calvin, and obeying those most pestilential of all preachers, Guido de Bray, and Peregrine de la Grange. The place was the hotbed of heresy and sedition, and it seemed to be agreed, as by common accord, that the last struggle for what was called the new religion, should take place beneath its walls.

Pleasantly situated in a fertile valley, provided with very strong fortifications and very deep moats, Valenciennes, with the Scheld flowing through its center, and furnishing the means of laying the circumjacent meadows under water, was considered in those days almost impregnable. The city was summoned, almost at the same time as Tournay, to accept a garrison. This demand of government was met by a peremptory refusal. Noircarmes, towards the middle of December, ordered the magistrates to send a deputation to confer with him at Condé. Pensionary Outreman accordingly repaired to that neighboring city, accompanied by some of his colleagues. This committee was not unfavorable to the demands of government. The magistracies of the cities, generally, were far from rebellious, but in the case of Valenciennes the real power at that moment was with the Calvinist consistory and the ministers. The deputies, after their return from Condé, summoned the leading members of the Reformed religion, together with the preachers. It was urged that it was their duty forthwith to use their influence in favor of the demand made by the government upon the city.

"May I grow mute as a fish!" answered de la Grange, stoutly, "may the tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, before I persuade my people to accept a garrison of cruel mercenaries, by whom their rights of conscience are to be trampled upon."

Councillor Outreman reasoned with the fiery minister, that if he and his colleague were afraid of their own lives, ample provision should be made with government for their departure under safe conduct. La Grange replied that he had no fears for himself, that the Lord would protect those who preached and those who believed in his holy word, but that He would not forgive them should they now bend their necks to His enemies.

It was soon very obvious that no arrangement could be made. The magistrates could exert no authority, the preachers were all-powerful, and the citizens, said a Catholic inhabitant of Valenciennes, "allowed themselves to be led by their ministers like oxen." Upon the 17th of December, 1566, a proclamation was accordingly issued by the duchess regent, declaring the city in a state of siege, and all its inhabitants rebels. The crimes for which this penalty was denounced, were elaborately set forth in the edict. Preaching according to the Reformed religion had been permitted in two or three churches, the sacrament according to the Calvinistic manner had been publicly administered, together
with a renunciation by the communicants of their adhesion to the Catholic Church, and now a rebellious refusal to receive the garrison sent to them by the duchess had been added to the list of their iniquities. For offenses like these, the regent deemed it her duty to forbid all inhabitants of any city, village, or province of the Netherlands holding communication with Valenciennes, buying or selling with its inhabitants, or furnishing them with provisions, on pain of being considered accomplices in their rebellion, and as such of being executed with the halter.

The city was now invested by Noircarmes with all the troops which could be spared. The confederates gave promises of assistance to the beleaguered citizens; Orange privately encouraged them to hold out in their legitimate refusal; Brederode and others busied themselves with hostile demonstrations which were destined to remain barren; but in the meantime, the inhabitants had nothing to rely upon save their own stout hearts and arms.

At first, the siege was sustained with a light heart. Frequent sallies were made, smart skirmishes were ventured, in which the Huguenots, on the testimony of a most bitter Catholic contemporary, conducted themselves with the bravery of veteran troops, and as if they had done nothing all their lives but fight; forays were made upon the monasteries of the neighborhood for the purpose of procuring supplies, and the broken statues of the dismantled churches were used to build a bridge across an arm of the river, which was called in derision the Bridge of Idols. Noircarmes and the six officers under him, who were thought to be conducting their operations with languor, were christened the Seven Sleepers. Gigantic spectacles, three feet in circumference, were planted derisively upon the ramparts, in order that the artillery, which it was said that the papists of Arras were sending, might be seen, as soon as it should arrive. Councillor Outreman, who had left the city before the siege, came into it again, on commission from Noircarmes. He was received with contempt, his proposals on behalf of the government were answered with outcries of fury; he was pelted with stones, and was very glad to make his escape alive. The pulpits thundered with the valiant deeds of Joshua, Judas Maccabeus, and other Bible heroes. The miracles wrought in their behalf served to encourage the enthusiasm of the people, while the movements making at various points in the neighborhood encouraged a hope of a general rising throughout the country.

Those hopes were destined to disappointment. There were large assemblages made, to be sure, at two points. Nearly 3,000 sectaries had been collected at Lannoy under Pierre Cornaille, who, having been a locksmith and afterwards a Calvinist preacher, was now disposed to try his fortune as a general. His band was, however, disorderly. Rustics armed with pitchforks, young students and old soldiers out of employment, furnished with rusty matchlocks, pikes, and halberds, composed his force. A company similar in character, and already amounting to some 1,200 in number, was collecting at Watrelots. It was hoped that an imposing array would soon be assembled, and that the two bands,
making a junction, would then march to the relief of Valenciennes. It was boasted that in a very short time, 30,000 men would be in the field. There was even a fear of some such result felt by the Catholics.

It was then that Noircarmes and his "seven sleepers" showed that they were awake. Early in January 1567, that fierce soldier, among whose vices slothfulness was certainly never reckoned before or afterwards, fell upon the locksmith's army at Lannoy, while the Seigneur de Rassinghem attacked the force at Watrelots on the same day. Noircarmes destroyed half his enemies at the very first charge. The ill-assorted rabble fell asunder at once. The preacher fought well, but his undisciplined force fled at the first sight of the enemy. Those who carried arquebusses threw them down without a single discharge, that they might run the faster. At least a thousand were soon stretched dead upon the field; others were hunted into the river. Twenty-six hundred, according to the Catholic accounts, were exterminated in an hour.

Rassinghem, on his part, with five or six hundred regulars, attacked Teriel's force, numbering at least twice as many. Half of these were soon cut to pieces and put to flight. Six hundred, however, who had seen some service, took refuge in the cemetery of Watrelots. Here, from behind the stone wall of the enclosure, they sustained the attack of the Catholics with some spirit. The repose of the dead in the quiet country churchyard was disturbed by the uproar of a most sanguinary conflict. The temporary fort was soon carried, and the Huguenots retreated into the church. A rattling arquebusade was poured in upon them as they struggled in the narrow doorway. At least four hundred corpses were soon strewn among the ancient graves. The rest were hunted into the church, and from the church into the belfry. A fire was then made in the steeple and kept up till all were roasted or suffocated. Not a man escaped.

This was the issue in the first stricken field in the Netherlands, for the cause of religious liberty. It must be confessed that it was not very encouraging to the lovers of freedom. The partisans of government were elated, in proportion to the apprehension which had been felt for the result of this rising in the Walloon country. "These good hypocrites," wrote a correspondent of Orange, "are lifting up their heads like so many dromedaries. They are becoming unmanageable with pride." The Duke of Aerschot and Count Meghen gave great banquets in Brussels, where all the good chevaliers drank deep in honor of the victory, and to the health of his Majesty and Madame. "I saw Berlaymont just go by the window," wrote Schwartz to the prince. "He was coming from Aerschot's dinner with a face as red as the Cardinal's new hat."

On the other hand, the citizens of Valenciennes were depressed in equal measure with the exultation of their antagonists. There was no more talk of seven sleepers now, no more lunettes stuck upon lances, to spy the coming forces of the enemy. It was felt that the government was wide awake, and that the city would soon see the impending horrors without telescopes. The siege
was pressed more closely. Noircarmes took up a commanding position at Saint Armand, by which he was enabled to cut off all communication between the city and the surrounding country. All the villages in the neighborhood were pillaged; all the fields laid waste. All the infamies which an insolent soldiery can inflict upon helpless peasantry were daily enacted. Men and women who attempted any communication with the city were murdered in cold blood by hundreds. The villagers were plundered of their miserable possessions, children were stripped naked in the midst of winter for the sake of the rags which covered them; matrons and virgins were sold at public auction by the tap of drum; sick and wounded wretches were burned over slow fires, to afford amusement to the soldiers. In brief, the whole unmitigated curse which military power inflamed by religious bigotry can embody, had descended upon the heads of these unfortunate provincials who had dared to worship God in Christian churches without a Roman ritual.

Meantime, the city maintained a stout heart still. The whole population were arranged under different banners. The rich and poor alike took arms to defend the walls which sheltered them. The town paupers were enrolled in three companies, which bore the significant title of the "Tous-nuds" or the "Stark-nakeds," and many was the fierce conflict delivered outside the gates by men, who, in the words of a Catholic then in the city, might rather be taken for "experienced veterans than for burghers and artisans." At the same time, to the honor of Valenciennes, it must be stated, upon the same incontestable authority, that not a Catholic in the city was injured or insulted. The priests who had remained there were not allowed to say mass, but they never met with an opprobrious word or look from the people.

The inhabitants of the city called upon the confederates for assistance. They also issued an address to the Knights of the Fleece; a paper which narrated the story of their wrongs in pathetic and startling language. They appealed to those puissant and illustrious chevaliers to prevent the perpetration of the great wrong which was now impending over so many innocent heads. "Wait not," they said, "till the thunderbolt has fallen, till the deluge has overwhelmed us, till the fires already blazing have laid the land in coals and ashes, till no other course be possible, but to abandon the country in its desolation to foreign barbarity. Let the cause of the oppressed come to your ears. So shall your conscience become a shield of iron; so shall the happiness of a whole country witness before the angels, of your truth to his Majesty, in the cause of his true grandeur and glory."

These stirring appeals to an order of which Philip was chief, Viglius chancellor, Egmont, Mansfeld, Aerschot, Berlaymont, and others, chevaliers, were not likely to produce much effect. The city could rely upon no assistance in those high quarters.
Meantime, however, the bold Brederode was attempting a very extensive diversion, which, if successful, would have saved Valenciennes and the whole country beside. That eccentric personage, during the autumn and winter had been creating disturbances in various parts of the country. Wherever he happened to be established, there came from the windows of his apartments a sound of revelry and uproar. Suspicious characters in various costumes thronged his door and dogged his footsteps. At the same time the authorities felt themselves obliged to treat him with respect. At Horn he had entertained many of the leading citizens at a great banquet. The health of the beggars had been drunk in mighty potations, and their shibboleth had resounded through the house. In the midst of the festivities, Brederode had suspended a beggar’s medal around the neck of the burgomaster, who had consented to be his guest upon that occasion, but who had no intention of enrolling himself in the fraternities of actual or political mendicants. The excellent magistrate, however, was near becoming a member of both. The emblem by which he had been conspicuously adorned proved very embarrassing to him upon his recovery from the effects of his orgies with the “great beggar,” and he was subsequently punished for his imprudence by the confiscation of half his property.

Early in January, Brederode had stationed himself in his city of Viane. There, in virtue of his seignorial rights, he had removed all statues and other popish emblems from the churches, performing the operation, however, with much quietness and decorum. He had also collected many disorderly men-at-arms in this city, and had strengthened its fortifications, to resist, as he said, the threatened attacks of Duke Eric of Brunswick and his German mercenaries. A printing press was established in the place, whence satirical pamphlets, hymnbooks, and other pestiferous productions, were constantly issuing to the annoyance of government. Many lawless and uproarious individuals enjoyed the count’s hospitality. All the dregs and filth of the provinces, according to Doctor Viglius, were accumulated at Viane as in a cesspool. Along the placid banks of the Lech, on which river the city stands, the “hydra of rebellion” lay ever coiled and threatening.

Brederode was supposed to be revolving vast schemes, both political and military, and Margaret of Parma was kept in continual apprehension by the bravado of this very noisy conspirator. She called upon William of Orange, as usual, for assistance. The prince, however, was very ill-disposed to come to her relief. An extreme disgust for the policy of the government already began to characterize his public language. In the autumn and winter he had done all that man could do for the safety of the monarch’s crown, and for the people’s happiness. His services in Antwerp have been recorded. As soon as he could tear himself from that city, where the magistrates and all classes of citizens clung to him as to their only savior, he had hastened to tranquilize the provinces of Holland, Zealand, and Utrecht. He had made arrangements in the principal cities there upon the same basis which he had adopted in Antwerp, and to which Margaret had consented in August. It was quite out of the
question to establish order without permitting the Reformers, who constituted much the larger portion of the population, to have liberty of religious exercises at some places, not consecrated, within the cities.

At Amsterdam, for instance, as he informed the duchess, there were swarms of unlearned, barbarous people, mariners and the like, who could by no means perceive the propriety of doing their preaching in the open country, seeing that the open country, at that season, was quite under water. Margaret’s gracious suggestion that, perhaps, something might be done with boats, was also considered inadmissible. "I know not," said Orange, "who could have advised your highness to make such a proposition." He informed her, likewise, that the barbarous mariners had a clear right to their preaching, for the custom had already been established previously to the August treaty, at a place called the "Lastadge," among the wharves. "In the name of God, then," wrote Margaret, "let them continue to preach in the Lastadge." This being all the barbarians wanted, an Accord, with the full consent of the regent, was drawn up at Amsterdam and the other northern cities. The Catholics kept churches and cathedrals, but in the winter season, the greater part of the population obtained permission to worship God upon dry land, in warehouses and dockyards.

Within a very few weeks, however, the whole arrangement was coolly cancelled by the duchess, her permission revoked, and peremptory prohibition of all preaching within or without the walls proclaimed. The government was growing stronger. Had not Noircarmes and Rassinghem cut to pieces three or four thousand of these sectaries marching to battle under parsons, locksmiths, and similar chieftains? Were not all lovers of good government "erecting their heads like dromedaries?"

It may easily be comprehended that the prince could not with complacency permit himself to be thus perpetually stultified by a weak, false, and imperious woman. She had repeatedly called upon him when she was appalled at the tempest and sinking in the ocean; and she had as constantly disavowed his deeds and reviled his character when she felt herself in safety again. He had tranquilized the old Batavian provinces, where the old Batavian spirit still lingered, by his personal influence and his unwearied exertions. Men of all ranks and religions were grateful for his labors. The Reformers had not gained much, but they were satisfied. The Catholics retained their churches, their property, their consideration.

The states of Holland had voted him 50,000 florins, as an acknowledgment of his efforts in restoring peace. He had refused the present. He was in debt, pressed for money, but he did not choose, as he informed Philip, "that men should think his actions governed by motives of avarice or particular interest, instead of the true affection which he bore to his Majesty's service and the
good of the country." Nevertheless, his back was hardly turned before all his work was undone by the regent.

A new and important step on the part of the government had now placed him in an attitude of almost avowed rebellion. All functionaries, from governors of provinces down to subalterns in the army, were required to take a new oath of allegiance, "novum et hactenus inusitatum religionis juramentum," as the prince characterized it, which was, he said, quite equal to the inquisition. Every man who bore his Majesty’s commission was ordered solemnly to pledge himself to obey the orders of government, everywhere, and against every person, without limitation or restriction. Count Mansfeld, now "factotum at Brussels," had taken the oath with great fervor. So had Aerschot, Berlaymont, Meghen, and, after a little wavering, Egmont. Orange spurned the proposition. He had taken oaths enough which he had never broken, nor intended now to break. He was ready still to do everything conducive to the real interest of the monarch. Who dared do more was no true servant to the government, no true lover of the country. He would never disgrace himself by a blind pledge, through which he might be constrained to do acts detrimental, in his opinion, to the safety of the crown, the happiness of the commonwealth, and his own honor. The alternative presented he willingly embraced. He renounced all his offices, and desired no longer to serve a government whose policy he did not approve, a king by whom he was suspected.

His resignation was not accepted by the duchess, who still made efforts to retain the services of a man who was necessary to her administration. She begged him, notwithstanding the purely defensive and watchful attitude which he had now assumed, to take measures that Brederode should abandon his mischievous courses. She also reproached the prince with having furnished that personage with artillery for his fortifications. Orange answered, somewhat contemptuously, that he was not Brederode’s keeper, and had no occasion to meddle with his affairs. He had given him three small field-pieces, promised long ago, not that he mentioned that circumstance as an excuse for the donation. "Thank God," said he, "we have always had the liberty in this country of making to friends or relatives what presents we liked, and methinks that things have come to a pretty pass when such trifles are scrutinized." Certainly, as Suzerain of Viane, and threatened with invasion in his seignorial rights, the count might think himself justified in strengthening the bulwarks of his little stronghold, and the prince could hardly be deemed very seriously to endanger the safety of the crown by the insignificant present which had annoyed the regent.

It is not so agreeable to contemplate the apparent intimacy which the prince accorded to so disreputable a character, but Orange was now in hostility to the government, was convinced by evidence, whose accuracy time was most signally to establish, that his own head, as well as many others, were already doomed to the block, while the whole country was devoted to abject servitude,
and he was therefore disposed to look with more indulgence upon the follies of those who were endeavoring, however weakly and insanely, to avert the horrors which he foresaw. The time for reasoning had passed. All that true wisdom and practical statesmanship could suggest, he had already placed at the disposal of a woman who stabbed him in the back even while she leaned upon his arm—of a king who had already drawn his death warrant, while reproaching his "cousin of Orange" for want of confidence in the royal friendship. Was he now to attempt the subjugation of his country by interfering with the proceedings of men whom he had no power to command, and who, at least, were attempting to oppose tyranny? Even if he should do so, he was perfectly aware of the reward reserved for his loyalty. He liked not such honors as he foresaw for all those who had ever interposed between the monarch and his vengeance. For himself he had the liberation of a country, the foundation of a free commonwealth to achieve. There was much work for those hands before he should fall a victim to the crowned assassin.

Early in February, Brederode, Hoogstraaten, Horn, and some other gentlemen, visited the prince at Breda. Here it is supposed the advice of Orange was asked concerning the new movement contemplated by Brederode. He was bent upon presenting a new petition to the duchess with great solemnity. There is no evidence to show that the prince approved the step, which must have seemed to him superfluous, if not puerile. He probably regarded the matter with indifference. Brederode, however, who was fond of making demonstrations, and thought himself endowed with a genius for such work, wrote to the regent for letters of safe conduct that he might come to Brussels with his petition. The passports were contemptuously refused. He then came to Antwerp, from which city he forwarded the document to Brussels in a letter.

By this new Request, the exercise of the reformed religion was claimed as a right, while the duchess was summoned to disband the forces which she had been collecting, and to maintain in good faith the "August" treaty. These claims were somewhat bolder than those of the previous April, although the liberal party was much weaker and the confederacy entirely disbanded. Brederode, no doubt, thought it good generalship to throw the last loaf of bread into the enemy's camp before the city should surrender. His haughty tone was at once taken down by Margaret of Parma. She "wondered," she said, "what manner of nobles these were, whom after requesting, a year before, to be saved only from the inquisition, now presumed to talk about preaching in the cities." The concessions of August had always been odious, and were now canceled. "As for you and your accomplices," she continued to the count, "you will do well to go to your homes at once without meddling with public affairs, for, in case of disobedience, I shall deal with you as I shall deem expedient."

Brederode, not easily abashed, disregarded the advice, and continued in Antwerp. Here, accepting the answer of the regent as a formal declaration of hostilities, he busied himself in levying troops in and about the city.
Orange had returned to Antwerp early in February. During his absence, Hoogstraaten had acted as governor at the instance of the prince and of the regent. During the winter, that nobleman, who was very young and very fiery, had carried matters with a high hand, whenever there had been the least attempt at sedition. Liberal in principles, and the devoted friend of Orange, he was disposed however to prove that the champions of religious liberty were not the patrons of sedition. A riot occurring in the cathedral, where a violent mob were engaged in defacing whatever was left to deface in that church, and in heaping insults on the papists at their worship, the little count, who, says a Catholic contemporary, "had the courage of a lion," dashed in among them, sword in hand, killed three upon the spot, and, aided by his followers, succeeded in slaying, wounding, or capturing all the rest. He had also tracked the ringleader of the tumult to his lodging, where he had caused him to be arrested at midnight, and hanged at once in his shirt without any form of trial. Such rapid proceedings little resembled the calm and judicious moderation of Orange upon all occasions, but they certainly might have sufficed to convince Philip that all antagonists of the inquisition were not heretics and outlaws.

Upon the arrival of the prince in Antwerp, it was considered advisable that Hoogstraaten should remain associated with him in the temporary government of the city.

During the month of February, Brederode remained in Antwerp, secretly enrolling troops. It was probably his intention—if so desultory and irresponsible an individual could be said to have an intention—to make an attempt upon the Island of Walcheren. If such important cities as Flushing and Middelburg could be gained, he thought it possible to prevent the armed invasion now soon expected from Spain. Orange had sent an officer to those cities, who was to reconnoiter their condition, and to advise them against receiving a garrison from government without his authority. So far he connived at Brederode’s proceedings, as he had a perfect right to do, for Walcheren was within what had been the prince’s government, and he had no disposition that these cities should share the fate of Tourney, Valenciennes, Bois le Duc, and other towns which had already passed or were passing under the spears of foreign mercenaries.

It is also probable that he did not take any special pains to check the enrollments of Brederode. The peace of Antwerp was not endangered, and to the preservation of that city the prince seemed now to limit himself. He was hereditary burgrave of Antwerp, but officer of Philip’s never more. Despite the shrill demands of Duchess Margaret, therefore, the prince did not take very active measures by which the crown of Philip might be secured. He, perhaps, looked upon the struggle almost with indifference. Nevertheless, he issued a formal proclamation by which the count’s enlistments were forbidden. Van der Aa, a gentleman who had been active in making these levies, was compelled to leave the city. Brederode was already gone to the north to busy himself with further enrolments.
In the meantime, there had been much alarm in Brussels. Egmont, who omitted no opportunity of manifesting his loyalty, offered to throw himself at once into the Isle of Walcheren, for the purpose of dislodging any rebels who might have effected an entrance. He collected accordingly seven or eight hundred Walloon veterans, at his disposal in Flanders, in the little port of Sas de Ghent, prepared at once to execute his intention, "worthy," says a Catholic writer, "of his well-known courage and magnanimity." The duchess expressed gratitude for the count’s devotion and loyalty, but his services in the sequel proved unnecessary. The rebels, several boat-loads of whom had been cruising about in the neighborhood of Flushing during the early part of March, had been refused admittance into any of the ports on the island. They therefore sailed up the Scheld, and landed at a little village called Ostrawell, at the distance of somewhat more than a mile from Antwerp.

The commander of the expedition was Marnix of Tholouse, brother to Marnix of Saint Aldegonde. This young nobleman, who had left college to fight for the cause of religious liberty, was possessed of fine talents and accomplishments. Like his illustrious brother, he was already a sincere convert to the doctrines of the Reformed Church. He had nothing, however, but courage to recommend him as a leader in a military expedition. He was a mere boy, utterly without experience in the field. His troops were raw levies, vagabonds, and outlaws.

Such as it was, however, his army was soon posted at Ostrawell in a convenient position, and with considerable judgment. He had the Scheld and its dykes in his rear, on his right and left the dykes and the village. In front he threw up a breastwork and sunk a trench. Here then was set up the standard of rebellion, and hither flocked daily many malcontents from the country round. Within a few days 3,000 men were in his camp. On the other hand, Brederode was busy in Holland, and boasted of taking the field ere long with 6,000 soldiers at the very least. Together they would march to the relief of Valenciennes, and dictate peace in Brussels.

It was obvious that this matter could not be allowed to go on. The duchess, with some trepidation, accepted the offer made by Philip de Lannoy, Seigneur de Beauvoir, commander of her bodyguard in Brussels, to destroy this nest of rebels without delay. Half the whole number of these soldiers was placed at his disposition, and Egmont supplied De Beauvoir with four hundred of his veteran Walloons.

With a force numbering only eight hundred, but all picked men, the intrepid officer undertook his enterprise, with great dispatch and secrecy. Upon the 12th of March, the whole troop was sent off in small parties, to avoid suspicion, and armed only with sword and dagger. Their helmets, bucklers, arquebusses, corselets, spears, standards and drums, were delivered to their officers, by whom they were conveyed noiselessly to the place of rendezvous. Before daybreak, upon the following morning, De Beauvoir met his soldiers at the
abbey of Saint Bernard, within a league of Antwerp. Here he gave them their arms, supplied them with refreshments, and made them a brief speech. He instructed them that they were to advance, with furled banners and without beat of drum, till within sight of the enemy, that the foremost section was to deliver its fire, retreat to the rear and load, to be followed by the next, which was to do the same, and above all, that not an arquebus should be discharged till the faces of the enemy could be distinguished.

The troop started. After a few minutes’ march they were in full sight of Ostrawell. They then displayed their flags and advanced upon the fort with loud huzzas. Tholouse was as much taken by surprise as if they had suddenly emerged from the bowels of the earth. He had been informed that the government at Brussels was in extreme trepidation. When he first heard the advancing trumpets and sudden shouts, he thought it a detachment of Brederode’s promised force. The cross on the banners soon undeceived him. Nevertheless “like a brave and generous young gentleman as he was,” he lost no time in drawing up his men for action, implored them to defend their breastworks, which were impregnable against so small a force, and instructed them to wait patiently with their fire, till the enemy were near enough to be marked.

These orders were disobeyed. The “young scholar,” as De Beauvoir had designated him, had no power to infuse his own spirit into his rabble rout of followers. They were already panic-struck by the unexpected appearance of the enemy. The Catholics came on with the coolness of veterans, taking as deliberate aim as if it had been they, not their enemies, who were behind breastworks. The troops of Tholouse fired wildly, precipitately, quite over the heads of the assailants. Many of the defenders were slain as fast as they showed themselves above their bulwarks. The ditch was crossed, the breastwork carried at a single determined charge. The rebels made little resistance, but fled as soon as the enemy entered their fort. It was a hunt, not a battle. Hundreds were stretched dead in the camp; hundreds were driven into the Scheld; six or eight hundred took refuge in a farmhouse, but De Beauvoir’s men set fire to the building, and every rebel who had entered it was burned alive or shot. No quarter was given. Hardly a man of the 3,000 who had held the fort escaped. The body of Tholouse was cut into a hundred pieces. The Seigneur de Beauvoir had reason, in the brief letter which gave an account of this exploit, to assure her Highness that there were “some very valiant fellows in his little troop.” Certainly they had accomplished the enterprise entrusted to them with promptness, neatness, and entire success. Of the great rebellious gathering, which every day had seemed to grow more formidable, not a vestige was left.

This bloody drama had been enacted in full sight of Antwerp. The fight had lasted from daybreak till ten o’clock in the forenoon, during the whole of which period, the city ramparts looking towards Ostrawell, the roofs of houses,
the towers of churches had been swarming with eager spectators. The sound of drum and trumpet, the rattle of musketry, the shouts of victory, the despairing cries of the vanquished were heard by thousands who deeply sympathized with the rebels thus enduring so sanguinary a chastisement. In Antwerp there were 40,000 people opposed to the Church of Rome. Of this number the greater proportion were Calvinists, and of these Calvinists there were thousands looking down from the battlements upon the disastrous fight.

The excitement soon became uncontrollable. Before ten o’clock vast numbers of sectaries came pouring towards the Red Gate, which afforded the readiest egress to the scene of action, the drawbridge of the Ostrawell Gate having been destroyed the night before by command of Orange. They came from every street and alley of the city. Some were armed with lance, pike, or arquebus; some bore sledgehammers; others had the partisans, battle-axes, and huge two-handed swords of the previous century; all were determined upon issuing forth to the rescue of their friends in the fields outside the town. The wife of Tholouse, not yet aware of her husband’s death, although his defeat was obvious, flew from street to street, calling upon the Calvinists to save or to avenge their perishing brethren.

A terrible tumult prevailed. Ten thousand men were already up and in arms. It was then that the Prince of Orange, who was sometimes described by his enemies as timid and pusillanimous by nature, showed the mettle he was made of. His sense of duty no longer bade him defend the crown of Philip—which thenceforth was to be entrusted to the hirelings of the Inquisition—but the vast population of Antwerp, the women, the children, and the enormous wealth of the richest city in the world had been confided to his care, and he had accepted the responsibility. Mounting his horse, he made his appearance instantly at the Red Gate, before as formidable a mob as man has ever faced. He came there almost alone, without guards. Hoogstraaten arrived soon afterwards with the same intention. The prince was received with howls of execration. A thousand hoarse voices called him the pope’s servant, minister of Antichrist, and lavished upon him many more epithets of the same nature. His life was in imminent danger. A furious clothier leveled an arquebus full at his breast. “Die, treacherous Villain!” he cried, “thou who art the cause that our brethren have perished thus miserably in yonder field.” The loaded weapon was struck away by another hand in the crowd, while the prince, neither daunted by the ferocious demonstrations against his life, nor enraged by the virulent abuse to which he was subjected, continued tranquilly, earnestly, imperatively to address the crowd. William of Orange had that in his face and tongue “which men willingly call master-authority.” With what other talisman could he, without violence and without soldiers, have quelled even for a moment ten thousand furious Calvinists, armed, enraged against his person, and thirsting for vengeance on Catholics?
The postern of the Red Gate had already been broken through before Orange and his co-league, Hoogstraaten, had arrived. The most excited of the Calvinists were preparing to rush forth upon the enemy at Ostrawell. The prince, after he had gained the ear of the multitude, urged that the battle was now over, that the Reformers were entirely cut to pieces, the enemy retiring, and that a disorderly and ill-armed mob would be unable to retrieve the fortunes of the day. Many were persuaded to abandon the design. Five hundred of the most violent, however, insisted upon leaving the gates, and the governors, distinctly warning these zealots that their blood must be upon their own heads, reluctantly permitted that number to issue from the city. The rest of the mob, not appeased, but uncertain, and disposed to take vengeance upon the Catholics within the walls, for the disaster which had been occurring without, thronged tumultuously to the long, wide street, called the Mere, situate in the very heart of the city.

Meantime the ardor of those who had sallied from the gate grew sensibly cooler, when they found themselves in the open fields. De Beauvoir, whose men, after the victory, had scattered in pursuit of the fugitives, now heard the tumult in the city. Suspecting an attack, he rallied his compact little army again for a fresh encounter. The last of the vanquished Tholousians who had been captured, more fortunate than their predecessors, had been spared for ransom. There were three hundred of them, rather a dangerous number of prisoners for a force of eight hundred, who were just going into another battle. De Beauvoir commanded his soldiers, therefore, to shoot them all. This order having been accomplished, the Catholics marched towards Antwerp, drums beating, colors flying. The five hundred Calvinists, not liking their appearance, and being in reality outnumbered, retreated within the gates as hastily as they had just issued from them. De Beauvoir advanced close to the city moat, on the margin of which he planted the banners of the unfortunate Tholouse, and sounded a trumpet of defiance. Finding that the citizens had apparently no stomach for the fight, he removed his trophies, and took his departure.

On the other hand, the tumult within the walls had again increased. The Calvinists had been collecting in great numbers upon the Mere. This was a large and splendid thoroughfare, rather an oblong marketplace than a street, filled with stately buildings, and communicating by various cross streets with the Exchange and with many other public edifices. By an early hour in the afternoon twelve or fifteen thousand Calvinists, all armed and fighting men, had assembled upon the place. They had barricaded the whole precinct with pavements and upturned wagons. They had already broken into the arsenal and obtained many field-pieces, which were planted at the entrance of every street and by-way. They had stormed the city jail and liberated the prisoners, all of whom, grateful and ferocious, came to swell the numbers who defended the stronghold on the Mere. A tremendous mischief was afoot. Threats of pillaging the churches and the houses of the Catholics, of sacking the whole opulent city, were distinctly heard among this powerful mob, excited by religious
enthusiasm, but containing within one great heterogeneous mass the elements of every crime which humanity can commit. The alarm throughout the city was indescribable. The cries of women and children, as they remained in trembling expectation of what the next hour might bring forth, were, said one who heard them, "enough to soften the hardest hearts."

Nevertheless the diligence and courage of the prince kept pace with the insurrection. He had caused the eight companies of guards enrolled in September to be mustered upon the square in front of the city hall, for the protection of that building and of the magistracy. He had summoned the senate of the city, the board of ancients, the deans of guilds, the ward-masters, to consult with him at the council-room. At the peril of his life he had again gone before the angry mob in the Mere, advancing against their cannon and their outrages, and compelling them to appoint eight deputies to treat with him and the magistrates at the town-hall. This done, quickly but deliberately he had drawn up six articles, to which those deputies gave their assent, and in which the city government cordially united. These articles provided that the keys of the city should remain in the possession of the prince and of Hoogstraaten, that the watch should be held by burghers and soldiers together, that the magistrates should permit the entrance of no garrison, and that the citizens should be entrusted with the care of the charters, especially with that of the joyful entrance.

These arrangements, when laid before the assembly at the Mere by their deputies, were not received with favor. The Calvinists demanded the keys of the city. They did not choose to be locked up at the mercy of any man. They had already threatened to blow the city hall into the air if the keys were not delivered to them. They claimed that burghers, without distinction of religion, instead of mercenary troops, should be allowed to guard the market-place in front of the town-hall.

It was now nightfall, and no definite arrangement had been concluded. Nevertheless, a temporary truce was made, by means of a concession as to the guard. It was agreed that the burghers, Calvinists and Lutherans, as well as Catholics, should be employed to protect the city. By subterfuge, however, the Calvinists detailed for that service, were posted not in the town-house square, but on the ramparts and at the gates.

A night of dreadful expectation was passed. The army of 15,000 mutineers remained encamped and barricaded on the Mere, with guns loaded and artillery pointed. Fierce cries of "Long live the beggars," "Down with the papists," and other significant watchwords, were heard all night long, but no more serious outbreak occurred.

During the whole of the following day, the Calvinists remained in their encampment, the Catholics and the city guardsmen at their posts near the city
hall. The prince was occupied in the council-chamber from morning till night
with the municipal authorities, the deputies of "the religion," and the guild
officers, in framing a new treaty of peace. Towards evening fifteen articles
were agreed upon, which were to be proposed forthwith to the insurgents, and
in case of non-acceptance to be enforced. The arrangement provided that
there should be no garrison; that the September contracts permitting the
Reformed worship at certain places within the city should be maintained; that
men of different parties should refrain from mutual insults; that the two
governors, the prince and Hoogstraaten, should keep the keys; that the city
should be guarded by both soldiers and citizens, without distinction of religious
creed; that a band of four hundred cavalry and a small flotilla of vessels of war
should be maintained for the defense of the place, and that the expenses to be
incurred should be levied upon all classes, clerical and lay, Catholic and
Reformed, without any exception.

It had been intended that the governors, accompanied by the magistrates,
should forthwith proceed to the Mere, for the purpose of laying these terms
before the insurgents. Night had, however, already arrived, and it was
understood that the ill temper of the Calvinists had rather increased than
diminished, so that it was doubtful whether the arrangement would be
accepted. It was, therefore, necessary to await the issue of another day,
rather than to provoke a night battle in the streets.

During the night the prince labored incessantly to provide against the dangers
of the morrow. The Calvinists had fiercely expressed their disinclination to any
reasonable arrangement. They had threatened, without further pause, to
plunder the religious houses and the mansions of all the wealthy Catholics, and
to drive every papist out of town. They had summoned the Lutherans to join
with them in their revolt, and menaced them, in case of refusal, with the same
fate which awaited the Catholics. The prince, who was himself a Lutheran, not
entirely free from the universal prejudice against the Calvinists, whose sect he
afterwards embraced, was fully aware of the deplorable fact, that the enmity
at that day between Calvinists and Lutherans was as fierce as that between
Reformers and Catholics. He now made use of this feeling, and of his influence
with those of the Augsburg Confession, to save the city. During the night he had
interviews with the ministers and notable members of the Lutheran churches,
and induced them to form an alliance upon this occasion with the Catholics and
with all friends of order, against an army of outlaws who were threatening to
burn and sack the city. The Lutherans, in the silence of night, took arms and
encamped, to the number of three or four thousand, upon the riverside, in the
neighborhood of Saint Michael’s cloister. The prince also sent for the deans of
all the foreign mercantile associations—Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, English,
Hanseatic—engaged their assistance also for the protection of the city, and
commanded them to remain in their armor at their respective factories, ready
to act at a moment’s warning. It was agreed that they should be informed at
frequent intervals as to the progress of events.
On the morning of the 15th, the city of Antwerp presented a fearful sight. Three distinct armies were arrayed at different points within its walls. The Calvinists, 15,000 strong, lay in their encampment on the Mere; the Lutherans, armed, and eager for action, were at St. Michael’s; the Catholics and the regulars of the city guard were posted on the square. Between thirty-five and forty thousand men were up, according to the most moderate computation. All parties were excited, and eager for the fray. The fires of religious hatred burned fiercely in every breast. Many malefactors and outlaws, who had found refuge in the course of recent events at Antwerp, were in the ranks of the Calvinists, profaning a sacred cause, and inspiring a fanatical party with bloody resolutions. Papists, once and forever, were to be hunted down, even as they had been for years pursuing Reformers. Let the men who had fed fat on the spoils of plundered Christians be dealt with in like fashion. Let their homes be sacked, their bodies given to the dogs—such were the cries uttered by thousands of armed men.

On the other hand, the Lutherans, as angry and as rich as the Catholics, saw in every Calvinist a murderer and a robber. They thirsted after their blood, for the spirit of religious frenzy, the characteristic of the century, can with difficulty be comprehended in our colder and more skeptical age. There was every probability that a bloody battle was to be fought that day in the streets of Antwerp—a general engagement, in the course of which, whoever might be the victors, the city was sure to be delivered over to fire, sack, and outrage. Such would have been the result, according to the concurrent testimony of eyewitnesses, and contemporary historians of every country and creed, but for the courage and wisdom of one man. William of Orange knew what would be the consequence of a battle, pent up within the walls of Antwerp. He foresaw the horrible havoc which was to be expected, the desolation which would be brought to every hearth in the city. “Never were men so desperate and so willing to fight,” said Sir Thomas Gresham, who had been expecting every hour his summons to share in the conflict. If the prince were unable that morning to avert the impending calamity, no other power, under heaven, could save Antwerp from destruction.

The articles prepared on the 14th had been already approved by those who represented the Catholic and Lutheran interests. They were read early in the morning to the troops assembled on the square and at St. Michael’s, and received with hearty cheers. It was now necessary that the Calvinists should accept them, or that the quarrel should be fought out at once. At ten o’clock, William of Orange, attended by his colleague Hoogstraaten, together with a committee of the municipal authorities, and followed by a hundred troopers, rode to the Mere. They wore red scarves over their armor, as symbols by which all those who had united to put clown the insurrection were distinguished. The 15,000 Calvinists, fierce and disorderly as ever, maintained a threatening aspect. Nevertheless, the prince was allowed to ride into the midst of the square. The articles were then read aloud by his command, after which, with
great composure, he made a few observations. He pointed out that the arrangement offered them was founded upon the September concessions, that the right of worship was conceded, that the foreign garrison was forbidden, and that nothing further could be justly demanded or honorably admitted. He told them that a struggle upon their part would be hopeless, for the Catholics and Lutherans, who were all agreed as to the justice of the treaty, outnumbered them by nearly two to one. He, therefore, most earnestly and affectionately adjured them to testify their acceptance to the peace offered by repeating the words with which he should conclude. Then, with a firm voice, the prince exclaimed, "God save the king?" It was the last time that those words were ever heard from the lips of the man already proscribed by Philip. The crowd of Calvinists hesitated an instant, and then, unable to resist the tranquil influence, convinced by his reasonable language, they raised one tremendous shout of "Vive le Roi!"

The deed was done, the peace accepted, the dreadful battle averted, Antwerp saved. The deputies of the Calvinists now formally accepted and signed the articles. Kind words were exchanged among the various classes of fellow citizens, who but an hour before had been thirsting for each other’s blood; the artillery and other weapons of war were restored to the arsenals; Calvinists, Lutherans, and Catholics all laid down their arms; and the city, by three o’clock, was entirely quiet. Fifty thousand armed men had been up, according to some estimates, yet, after three days of dreadful expectation, not a single person had been injured, and the tumult was new appeased.

The prince had, in truth, used the mutual animosity of Protestant sects to a good purpose, averting bloodshed by the very weapons with which the battle was to have been waged. Had it been possible for a man like William the Silent to occupy the throne where Philip the Prudent sat, how different might have been the history of Spain and the fate of the Netherlands. Gresham was right, however, in his conjecture that the regent and court would not "take the business well." Margaret of Parma was incapable of comprehending such a mind as that of Orange, or of appreciating its efforts. She was surrounded by unscrupulous and mercenary soldiers, who hailed the coming civil war as the most profitable of speculations. "Factotum" Mansfeld, the Counts Arembera and Meghen, the Duke of Aerschot, the sanguinary Noircarmes, were already counting their share in the coming confiscations. In the internecine conflict approaching, there would be gold for the gathering, even if no honorable laurels would wreath their swords. "Meghen with his regiment is desolating the country," wrote William of Orange to the Landgrave of Hesse, "and reducing many people to poverty. Arember is doing the same in Friesland. They are only thinking how, under the pretext of religion, they may grind the poor Christians, and grow rich and powerful upon their estates and their blood."

The Seignior de Beauvoir wrote to the duchess, claiming all the estates of Tholouse, and of his brother St. Aldegonde, as his reward for the Ostrawell
victory, while Noircarmes was at this very moment to commence at Valenciennes that career of murder and spoliation which, continued at Mons a few years afterwards, was to load his name with infamy.

From such a regent, surrounded by such councillors, was the work of William de Nassau’s hands to gain applause? What was it to them that carnage and plunder had been spared in one of the richest and most populous cities in Christendom? Were not carnage and plunder the very elements in which they disported themselves? And what more dreadful offense against God and Philip could be committed than to permit, as the prince had just permitted, the right of worship in a Christian land to Calvinists and Lutherans? As a matter of course, therefore, Margaret of Parma denounced the terms by which Antwerp had been saved as a "novel and exorbitant capitulation," and had no intention of signifying her approbation either to prince or magistrate.

CHAPTER 10

Despair in the Provinces and Mass Emigration

Valenciennes, whose fate depended so closely upon the issue of these various events, was now trembling to her fall. Noircarmes had been drawing the lines more and more closely about the city, and by a refinement of cruelty had compelled many Calvinists from Tournay to act as pioneers in the trenches against their own brethren in Valenciennes. After the defeat of Tholouse, and the consequent frustration of all Brederode’s arrangements to relieve the siege, the duchess had sent a fresh summons to Valenciennes, together with letters acquainting the citizens with the results of the Ostrawell battle. The intelligence was not believed. Egmont and Aerschot, however, to whom Margaret had entrusted this last mission to the beleaguered town, roundly rebuked the deputies who came to treat with them, for their insolence in daring to doubt the ward of the regent. The two seigniors had established themselves in the Chateau of Beusnage, at a league’s distance from Valenciennes. Here they received commissioners from the city, half of whom were Catholics appointed by the magistrates, half Calvinists deputed by the consistories. These envoys were informed that the duchess would pardon the city for its past offenses, provided the gates should now be opened, the garrison received, and a complete suppression of all religion except that of Rome acquiesced in without a murmur. As nearly the whole population was of the Calvinist faith, these terms could hardly be thought favorable. It was, however, added, that fourteen days should be allowed to the Reformers for the purpose of converting their property, and retiring from the country.
The deputies, after conferring with their constituents in the city, returned on the following day with counter-propositions, which were not more likely to find favor with the government. They offered to accept the garrison, provided the soldiers should live at their own expense, without any tax to the citizens for their board, lodging, or pay. They claimed that all property which had been seized should be restored, all persons accused of treason liberated. They demanded the unconditional revocation of the edict by which the city had been declared rebellious, together with a guarantee from the Knights of the Fleece and the state council that the terms of the proposed treaty should be strictly observed.

As soon as these terms had been read to the two seigniors, the duke of Aerschot burst into an immoderate fit of laughter. He protested that nothing could be more ludicrous than such propositions, worthy of a conqueror dictating a peace, thus offered by a city closely beleaguered, and entirely at the mercy of the enemy. The duke's hilarity was not shared by Egmont, who, on the contrary, fell into a furious passion. He swore that the city should be burned about their ears, and that every one of the inhabitants should be put to the sword for the insolent language which they had thus dared to address to a most clement sovereign. He ordered the trembling deputies instantly to return with this peremptory rejection of their terms, and with his command that the proposals of government should be accepted within three days' delay.

The commissioners fell upon their knees at Egmont's feet, and begged for mercy. They implored him at least to send this imperious message by some other hand than theirs, and to permit them to absent themselves from the city. They should be torn limb from limb, they said, by the enraged inhabitants, if they dared to present themselves with such instructions before them. Egmont, however, assured them that they should be sent into the city, bound hand and foot, if they did not instantly obey his orders. The deputies, therefore, with heavy hearts, were fain to return home with this bitter result to their negotiations. The terms were rejected, as a matter of course, but the gloomy forebodings of the commissioners, as to their own fate at the hands of their fellow citizens, were not fulfilled.

Instant measures were now taken to cannonade the city. Egmont, at the hazard of his life, descended into the foss, to reconnoiter the works, and to form an opinion as to the most eligible quarter at which to direct the batteries. Having communicated the result of his investigations to Noircarmes, he returned to report all these proceedings to the regent at Brussels. Certainly the count had now separated himself far enough from William of Orange, and was manifesting an energy in the cause of tyranny which was sufficiently unscrupulous. Many people who had been deceived by his more generous demonstrations in former times, tried to persuade themselves that he was acting a part. Noircarmes, however—and no man was more competent to decide the question—distinctly expressed his entire confidence in Egmont's loyalty. Margaret had responded
warmly to his eulogies, had read with approbation secret letters from Egmont to Noircarmes, and had expressed the utmost respect and affection for "the Count." Egmont had also lost no time in writing to Philip, informing him that he had selected the most eligible spot for battering down the obstinate city of Valenciennes, regretting that he could not have had the eight or ten military companies, now at his disposal, at an earlier day, in which case he should have been able to suppress many tumults, but congratulating his sovereign that the preachers were all fugitive, the Reformed religion suppressed, and the people disarmed. He assured the king that he would neglect no effort to prevent any renewal of the tumults, and expressed the hope that his Majesty would be satisfied with his conduct, notwithstanding the calumnies of which the times were full.

Noircarmes meanwhile, had unmasked his batteries, and opened his fire exactly according to Egmont’s suggestions. The artillery played first upon what was called the "White Tower," which happened to bear this ancient, rhyming inscription:

"When every man receives his own,
And justice reigns for strong and weak,
Perfect shall be this tower of stone,
And all the dumb will learn to speak."

For some unknown reason, the rather insipid quatrain was tortured into a baleful prophecy. It was considered very ominous that the battery should be first opened against this Sibylline tower. The chimes, too, which had been playing, all through the siege, the music of Marot's sacred songs, happened that morning to be sounding forth from every belfry the twenty-second psalm: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

It was Palm Sunday, the 23rd of March. The women and children were going mournfully about the streets, bearing green branches in their hands, and praying upon their knees, in every part of the city. Despair and superstition had taken possession of citizens, who up to that period had justified La Noue’s assertion that none could endure a siege like Huguenots. As soon as the cannonading began, the spirit of the inhabitants seemed to depart. The ministers exhorted their flocks in vain as the tiles and chimneys began to topple into the streets, and the concussions of the artillery were responded to by the universal wailing of affrighted women.

Upon the very first day after the unmasking of the batteries, the city sent to Noircarmes, offering almost an unconditional surrender. Not the slightest breach had been effected—not the least danger of an assault existed—yet the citizens, who had earned the respect of their antagonists by the courageous manner in which they had sallied and skirmished during the siege, now in despair at any hope of eventual succor, and completely demoralized by the course of recent events outside their walls, surrendered ignominiously, and at
discretion. The only stipulation agreed to by Noircarmes was that the city should not be sacked and that the lives of the inhabitants should be spared. This pledge was, however, only made to be broken. Noircarmes entered the city and closed the gates. All the richest citizens, who of course were deemed the most criminal, were instantly arrested. The soldiers, although not permitted formally to sack the city, were quartered upon the inhabitants, whom they robbed and murdered, according to the testimony of a Catholic citizen, almost at their pleasure.

Michael Herlin, a very wealthy and distinguished burgher, was arrested upon the first day. The two ministers, Guido de Bray and Peregrine de la Grange, together with the son of Herlin, effected their escape by the water-gate. Having taken refuge in a tavern at Saint Arnaud, they were observed, as they sat at supper, by a peasant, who forthwith ran off to the mayor of the borough with the intelligence that some individuals, who looked like fugitives, had arrived at Saint Arnaud. One of them, said the informer, was richly dressed, and wore a gold-hilted sword with velvet scabbard. By the description, the mayor recognized Herlin the younger, and suspected his companions. They were all arrested, and sent to Noircarmes. The two Herlin's, father and son, were immediately beheaded. Guido de Bray and Peregrine de la Grange were loaded with chains, and thrown into a filthy dungeon, previously to their being hanged. Here they were visited by the Countess de Roeulx, who was curious to see how the Calvinists sustained themselves in their martyrdom. She asked them how they could sleep, eat, or drink, when covered with such heavy fetters. "The cause, and my good conscience," answered De Bray, "make me eat, drink, and sleep better than those who are doing me wrong. These shackles are more honorable to me than golden rings and chains. They are more useful to me, and as I hear their clank, methinks I hear the music of sweet voices and the tinkling of lutes."

This exultation never deserted these courageous enthusiasts. They received their condemnation to death "as if it had been an invitation to a marriage feast." They encouraged the friends who crowded their path to the scaffold with exhortations to remain true in the Reformed faith. La Grange, standing upon the ladder, proclaimed with a loud voice, that he was slain for having preached the pure word of God to a Christian people in a Christian land. De Bray, under the same gibbet, testified stoutly that he, too, had committed that offense alone. He warned his friends to obey the magistrates, and all others in authority, except in matters of conscience; to abstain from sedition, but to obey the will of God. The executioner threw him from the ladder while he was yet speaking. So ended the lives of two eloquent, learned, and highly-gifted divines.

Many hundreds of victims were sacrificed in the unfortunate city. "There were a great many other citizens strangled or beheaded," says an aristocratic Catholic historian of the time, "but they were mostly personages of little quality, whose names are quite unknown to me." The franchises of the city were all revoked. There was a prodigious amount of property confiscated to the benefit of Noircarmes and the rest of the "Seven Sleepers." Many Calvinists
were burned, others were hanged. "For two whole years," says another Catholic, who was a citizen of Valenciennes at the time, "there was scarcely a week in which several citizens were not executed and often a great number were despatched at a time. All this gave so much alarm to the good and innocent, that many quitted the city as fast as they could." If the good and innocent happened to be rich, they might be sure that Noircarmes would deem that a crime for which no goodness and innocence could atone. Upon the fate of Valenciennes had depended, as if by common agreement, the whole destiny of the anti-Catholic party. "People had learned at last," says another Walloon, "that the king had long arms, and that he had not been enlisting soldiers to string beads. So they drew in their horns and their evil tempers, meaning to put them forth again, should the government not succeed at the siege of Valenciennes." The government had succeeded, however, and the consternation was extreme, the general submission immediate and even abject. "The capture of Valenciennes," wrote Noircarmes to Granvelle, "has worked a miracle. The other cities all come forth to meet me, putting the rope around their own necks." No opposition was offered anywhere. Tournay had been crushed; Valenciennes, Bois le Duc, and all other important places, accepted their garrisons without a murmur. Even Antwerp had made its last struggle, and as soon as the back of Orange was turned, knelt down in the dust to receive its bridle. The prince had been able, by his courage and wisdom, to avert a sanguinary conflict within its walls, but his personal presence alone could not guarantee anything like religious liberty for the inhabitants, now that the rest of the country was subdued. On the 26th of April, sixteen companies of infantry, under Count Mansfeld, entered the gates. On the 28th, the duchess made a visit to the city, where she was received with respect, but where her eyes were shocked by that which she termed the "abominable, sad, and hideous spectacle of the desolated churches."

To the eyes of all who loved their fatherland and their race, the sight of a desolate country, with its ancient charters superseded by brute force, its industrious population swarming from the land in droves, as if the pestilence were raging, with gibbets and scaffolds erected in every village, and with a sickening and universal apprehension of still darker disasters to follow, was a spectacle still more sad, hideous, and abominable. For it was now decided that the duke of Alva, at the head of a Spanish army, should forthwith take his departure for the Netherlands. A land already subjugated was to be crushed, and every vestige of its ancient liberties destroyed. The conquered provinces, once the abode of municipal liberty, of science, art, and literature, and blessed with an unexampled mercantile and manufacturing prosperity, were to be placed in absolute subjection to the cabinet council at Madrid. A dull and malignant bigot, assisted by a few Spanish grandees, and residing at the other extremity of Europe, was thenceforth to exercise despotic authority over countries which for centuries had enjoyed a local administration, and a system nearly approaching to complete self-government. Such was the policy devised by Granvelle and Spinosa, which the duke of Alva, upon the 15th of April, had left Madrid to enforce.
It was very natural that Margaret of Parma should be indignant at being thus superseded. She considered herself as having acquired much credit by the manner in which the latter insurrectionary movements had been suppressed, so soon as Philip, after his endless tergiversations, had supplied her with arms and money. Therefore she wrote in a tone of great asperity to her brother, expressing her discontent. She had always been trammeled in her action, she said, by his restrictions upon her authority. She complained that he had no regard for her reputation or her peace of mind. Notwithstanding all impediments and dangers, she had at last settled the country, and now another person was to reap the honor. She also dispatched the Seigneur de Billy to Spain, for the purpose of making verbal representations to his Majesty upon the inexpediency of sending the duke of Alva to the Netherlands at that juncture with a Spanish army.

Margaret gained nothing, however, by her letters and her envoy, save a round rebuke from Philip, who was not accustomed to brook the language of remonstrance, even from his sister. His purpose was firmed. Absolute submission was now to be rendered by all. "He was highly astonished and dissatisfied," he said, "that she should dare to write to him with so much passion, and in so resolute a manner. If she received no other recompense, save the glory of having restored the service of God, she ought to express her gratitude to the king for having given her the opportunity of so doing."

The affectation of clement intentions was still maintained, together with the empty pretense of the royal visit. Alva and his army were coming merely to prepare the way for the king, who still represented himself as "debonair and gentle, slow to anger, and averse from bloodshed." Superficial people believed that the king was really coming, and hoped wonders from his advent. The duchess knew better. The pope never believed in it, Granvelle never believed in it, Councillor d'Assonleville never believed in it. "His Majesty," says the Walloon historian, who wrote from Assonleville's papers, "had many imperative reasons for not coming. He was fond of quiet, he was a great negotiator, distinguished for phlegm and modesty, disinclined to long journeys, particularly to sea voyages, which were very painful to him. Moreover, he was then building his Escorial with so much taste and affection that it was impossible for him to leave home." These excellent reasons sufficed to detain the monarch, in whose place a general was appointed, who, it must be confessed, was neither phlegmatic nor modest, and whose energies were quite equal to the work required. There had in truth never been anything in the king's project of visiting the Netherlands but pretense.

On the other hand, the work of Orange for the time was finished. He had saved Antwerp, he had done his best to maintain the liberties of the country, the rights of conscience, and the royal authority, so far as they were compatible with each other. The alternative had now been distinctly forced upon every man, either to promise blind obedience or to accept the position of a rebel. William of Orange had thus become a rebel. He had been requested to sign the new oath, greedily taken by the Mansfeld’s, the Berlaymont’s, the Aerschot’s,
and the Egmont’s, to obey every order which he might receive, against every
person and in every place, without restriction or limitation, and he had
distinctly and repeatedly declined the demand. He had again and again insisted
upon resigning all his offices. The duchess, more and more anxious to gain over
such an influential personage to the cause of tyranny, had been most
importunate in her requisitions. "A man with so noble a heart," she wrote to
the prince, "and with a descent from such illustrious and loyal ancestors, can
surely not forget his duties to his Majesty and the country."
William of Orange knew his duty to both better than the duchess could
understand. He answered this fresh summons by reminding her that he had
uniformly refused the new and extraordinary pledge required of him. He had
been true to his old oaths, and therefore no fresh pledge was necessary.
Moreover, a pledge without limitation he would never take.
The case might happen, he said, that he should be ordered to do things
contrary to his conscience, prejudicial to his Majesty’s service, and in violation
of his oaths to maintain the laws of the country. He therefore once more
resigned all his offices, and signified his intention of leaving the provinces.
Margaret had previously invited him to an interview at Brussels, which he had
deprecated, because he had discovered a conspiracy in that place to "play him a
trick." Assenleville had already been sent to him without effect. He had refused
to meet a deputation of Fleece Knights at Mechlin, from the same suspicion of
foul play. After the termination of the Antwerp tumult, Orange again wrote to
the duchess, upon the 19th of March, repeating his refusal to take the oath, and
stating that he considered himself as at least suspended from all his functions,
since she had refused, upon the ground of incapacity, to accept his formal
resignation. Margaret now determined, by the advice of the state council, to
send Secretary Berty, provided with an ample letter of instructions, upon a
special mission to the prince at Antwerp. That respectable functionary
performed his task with credit, going through the usual formalities, and
adducing the threadbare arguments in favor of the unlimited oath, with much
adroitness and decorum. He mildly pointed out the impropriety of laying down
such responsible posts as those which the prince now occupied at such a
juncture. He alluded to the distress which the step must occasion to the
debonair sovereign.
William of Orange became somewhat impatient under the official lecture of
this secretary to the privy council, a mere man of sealing-wax and protocols.
The slender stock of platitudes with which he had come provided was soon
exhausted. His arguments shriveled at once in the scorn with which the prince
received them. The great statesman, who, it was hoped, would be entrapped
to ruin, dishonor, and death by such very feeble artifices, asked indignantly
whether it were really expected that he should acknowledge himself perjured
to his old obligations by now signing new ones; that he should disgrace him self
by an unlimited pledge which might require him to break his oaths to the
provincial statutes and to the Emperor; that he should consent to administer
the religious edicts which he abhorred; that he should act as executioner of
Christians on account of their religious opinions, an office against which his
soul revolted; that he should bind himself by an unlimited promise which might require him to put his own wife to death, because she was a Lutheran. Moreover, was it to be supposed that he would obey without restriction any orders issued to him in his Majesty’s name, when the king’s representative might be a person whose supremacy it ill became one of his race to acknowledge? Was William of Orange to receive absolute commands from the duke of Alva? Having mentioned that name with indignation, the prince became silent.

It was very obvious that no impression was to be made upon the man by formalists. Poor Berty having conjugated his paradigm conscientiously through all its moods and tenses, returned to his green board in the council-room with his procès verbal of the conference. Before he took his leave, however, he prevailed upon Orange to hold an interview with the Duke of Aerschot, Count Mansfeld, and Count Egmont.

This memorable meeting took place at Willebroek, a village midway between Antwerp and Brussels, in the first week of April. The Duke of Aerschot was prevented from attending, but Mansfeld and Egmont—accompanied by the faithful Berty, to make another procès verbal—duly made their appearance. The prince had never felt much sympathy with Mansfeld, but a tender and honest friendship had always existed between himself and Egmont, notwithstanding the difference of their characters, the incessant artifices employed by the Spanish court to separate them, and the impassable chasm which now existed between their respective positions towards the government. The same commonplaces of argument and rhetoric were now discussed between Orange and the other three personages, the prince distinctly stating, in conclusion, that he considered himself as discharged from all his offices, and that he was about to leave the Netherlands for Germany. The interview, had it been confined to such formal conversation, would have but little historic interest. Egmont’s choice had been made. Several months before he had signified his determination to hold those for enemies who should cease to conduct themselves as faithful vassals, declared himself to be without fear that the country was to be placed in the hands of Spaniards, and disavowed all intention, in any case whatever, of taking arms against the king. His subsequent course, as we have seen, had been entirely in conformity with these solemn declarations. Nevertheless, the prince, to whom they had been made, thought it still possible to withdraw his friend from the precipice upon which he stood, and to save him from his impending fate. His love for Egmont had, in his own noble and pathetic language, "struck its roots too deeply into his heart" to permit him, in this their parting interview, to neglect a last effort, even if this solemn warning were destined to be disregarded.

By any reasonable construction of history, Philip was an unscrupulous usurper, who was attempting to convert himself from a Duke of Brabant and a Count of Holland into an absolute king. It was William who was maintaining, Philip who was destroying; and the monarch who was thus blasting the happiness of the provinces, and about to decimate their population, was by the same process to undermine his own power forever, and to divest himself of his richest
inheritance. The man on whom he might have leaned for support, had he been capable of comprehending his character, and of understanding the age in which he had himself been called upon to reign, was, through Philip’s own insanity, converted into the instrument by which his most valuable provinces were to be taken from him, and eventually re-organized into an independent commonwealth. Could a vision, like that imagined by the immortal dramatist for another tyrant and murderer, have revealed the future to Philip, he, too, might have beheld his victim, not crowned himself, but pointing to a line of kings, even to some who two-fold balls and treble scepters carried, and smiling on them for his. But such considerations as these had no effect upon the Prince of Orange. He knew himself already proscribed, and he knew that the secret condemnation had extended to Egmont also. He was anxious that his friend should prefer the privations of exile, with the chance of becoming the champion of a struggling country, to the wretched fate towards which his blind confidence was leading him. Even then it seemed possible that the brave soldier, who had been recently defiling his sword in the cause of tyranny, might become mindful of his brighter and earlier fame. Had Egmont been as true to his native land as, until “the long divorce of steel fell on him,” he was faithful to Philip, he might yet have earned brighter laurels than those gained at St. Quentin and Gravelingen. Was he doomed to fall, he might find a glorious death upon freedom’s battlefield, in place of that darker departure then so near him, which the prophetic language of Orange depicted, but which he was too sanguine to fear. He spoke with confidence of the royal clemency. ”Alas, Egmont,” answered the prince, “the king’s clemency, of which you boast, will destroy you. Would that I might be deceived, but I foresee too clearly that you are to be the bridge which the Spaniards will destroy so soon as they have passed over it to invade our country.” With these last, solemn words he concluded his appeal to awaken the count from his fatal security. Then, as if persuaded that he was looking upon his friend for the last time, William of Orange threw his arms around Egmont, and held him for a moment in a close embrace. Tears fell from the eyes of both at this parting moment—and then the brief scene of simple and lofty pathos terminated—Egmont and Orange separated from each other, never to meet again on earth.

A few days afterwards, Orange addressed a letter to Philip. once more resigning all his offices, and announcing his intention of departing from the Netherlands for Germany. He added that he should be always ready to place himself and his property at the king’s orders in everything which he believed conducive to the true service of his Majesty. The prince had already received a remarkable warning from old Landgrave Philip of Hesse, who had not forgotten the insidious manner in which his own memorable captivity had been brought about by the arts of Granvelle and of Alva. “Let them not smear your mouths with honey,” said the landgrave. ”If the three seigniors, of whom the Duchess Margaret has had so much to say, are invited to court by Alva, under pretext of friendly consultation, let them be wary, and think twice ere they accept. I know the duke of Alva and the Spaniards, and how they dealt with me.”
The prince, before he departed, took a final leave of Horn and Egmont, by letters, which, as if aware of the monumental character they were to assume for posterity, he drew up in Latin. He desired, now that he was turning his back upon the country, that those two nobles who had refused to imitate, and had advised against his course, should remember that he was acting deliberately, conscientiously, and in pursuance of a long-settled plan.

To Count Horn he declared himself unable to connive longer at the sins daily committed against the country and his own conscience. He assured him that the government had been accustoming the country to panniers, in order that it might now accept patiently the saddle and bridle. For himself, he said, his back was not strong enough for the weight already imposed upon it, and he preferred to endure any calamity which might happen to him in exile, rather than be compelled by those whom they had all condemned to acquiesce in the object so long and steadily pursued.

He reminded Egmont, who had been urging him by letter to remain, that his resolution had been deliberately taken, and long since communicated to his friends. He could not, in conscience, take the oath required; nor would he, now that all eyes were turned upon him, remain in the land, the only recusant. He preferred to encounter all that could happen, rather than attempt to please others by the sacrifice of liberty, of his fatherland, of his own conscience. "I hope, therefore," said he to Egmont in conclusion, "that you, after weighing my reasons, will not disapprove my departure. The rest I leave to God, who will dispose of all as may most conduce to the glory of his name. For yourself, I pray you to believe that you have no more sincere friend than I am. My love for you has struck such deep root into my heart, that it can be lessened by no distance of time or place, and I pray you in return to maintain the same feelings towards me which you have always cherished."

The prince had left Antwerp upon the 11th of April, and had written these letters from Breda, upon the 13th of the same month. Upon the 22nd, he took his departure for Dillenburg, the ancestral seat of his family in Germany, by the way of Grave and Cleves.

It was not to be supposed that this parting message would influence Egmont's decision with regard to his own movements, when his determination had not been shaken at his memorable interview with the prince. The count's fate was sealed. Had he not been praised by Noircarmes; had he not earned the hypocritical commendations of Duchess Margaret; nay more, had he not just received a most affectionate letter of thanks and approbation from the King of Spain himself? This letter, one of the most striking monuments of Philip's cold-blooded perfidy, was dated the 26th of March. "I am pleased, my cousin," wrote the monarch to Egmont, "that you have taken the new oath, not that I considered it at all necessary so far as regards yourself, but for the example which you have thus given to others, and which I hope they will all follow. I have received not less pleasure in hearing of the excellent manner in which you are doing your duty, the assistance you are rendering, and the offers which you are making to my sister, for which I thank you, and request you to continue in the same course."
The words were written by the royal hand which had already signed the death-warrant of the man to whom they were addressed. Alva, who came provided with full powers to carry out the great scheme resolved upon, unrestrained by provincial laws or by the statutes of the Golden Fleece, had left Madrid to embark for Carthagea, at the very moment when Egmont was reading the royal letter. "The Spanish honey," to use once more old Landgrave Philip’s homely metaphor, had done its work, and the unfortunate victim was already entrapped.

Count Horn remained in gloomy silence in his lair at Weert, awaiting the hunters of men, already on their way. It seemed inconceivable that he, too, who knew himself suspected and disliked, should have thus blinded himself to his position. It will be seen, however, that the same perfidy was to be employed to ensnare him which proved so successful with Egmont.

As for the prince himself, he did not move too soon. Not long after his arrival in Germany, Vandenesse, the king’s private secretary, but Orange’s secret agent, wrote him word that he had read letters from the king to Alva, in which the Duke was instructed to "arrest the Prince as soon as he could lay hands upon him, and not to let his trial last more than twenty-four hours."

Brederode had remained at Viane, and afterwards at Amsterdam, since the ill-starred expedition of Tholouse, which he had organized, but at which he had not assisted. He had given much annoyance to the magistracy of Amsterdam, and to all respectable persons, Calvinist or Catholic. He made much mischief, but excited no hopes in the minds of Reformers. He was ever surrounded by a host of pot companions, swaggering nobles disguised as sailors, bankrupt tradesmen, fugitives and outlaws of every description, excellent people to drink the beggars’ health and to bawl the beggars’ songs, but quite unfit for any serious enterprise. People of substance were wary of him, for they had no confidence in his capacity, and were afraid of his frequent demands for contributions to the patriotic cause. He spent his time in the pleasure gardens, shooting at the mark with arquebus or crossbow, drinking with his comrades and shrieking "Vivent les gueux."

The regent, determined to dislodge him, had sent Secretary La Torre to him in March, with instructions that if Brederode refused to leave Amsterdam, the magistracy were to call for assistance upon Count Meghen, who had a regiment at Utrecht. This clause made it impossible for La Torre to exhibit his instructions to Brederode. Upon his refusal, that personage, although he knew the secretary as well as he knew his own father, coolly informed him that he knew nothing about him; that he did not consider him as respectable a person as he pretended to be; that he did not believe a word of his having any commission from the duchess, and that he should therefore take no notice whatever of his demands. La Torre answered meekly that he was not so presumptuous, nor so destitute of sense, as to put himself into comparison with a gentleman of Count Brederode’s quality, but that as he had served as secretary to the privy council for twenty-three years, he had thought that he might be believed upon his word. Hereupon La Torre drew up a formal protest, and Brederode drew up another. La Torre made a procès verbal of their
interview, while Brederode stormed like a madman, and abused the duchess for a capricious and unreasonable tyrant. He ended by imprisoning La Torre for a day or two, and seizing his papers. By a singular coincidence, these events took place on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of March, the very days of the great Antwerp tumult. The manner in which the Prince of Orange had been dealing with forty or fifty thousand armed men, anxious to cut each other’s throats, while Brederode was thus occupied in browbeating a pragmatical but decent old secretary, illustrated the difference in caliber of the two men.

This was the count’s last exploit. He remained at Amsterdam some weeks longer, but the events which succeeded changed the Hector into a faithful vassal. Before the 12th of April, he wrote to Egmont, begging his intercession with Margaret of Parma, and offering “carte blanche” as to terms, if he might only be allowed to make his peace with government. It was, however, somewhat late in the day for the “great beggar” to make his submission. No terms were accorded him, but he was allowed by the duchess to enjoy his revenues provisionally, subject to the king’s pleasure. Upon the 25th of April, he entreated a select circle of friends at his hotel in Amsterdam, and then embarked at midnight for Embden. A numerous procession of his adherents escorted him to the ship, bearing lighted torches, and singing bacchanalian songs. He died within a year afterwards, of disappointment and hard drinking, at Castle Hardenberg, in Germany, after all his fretting and fury, and notwithstanding his vehement protestations to die a poor soldier at the feet of Louis Nassau.

That “good chevalier and good Christian,” as his brother affectionately called him, was in Germany, girding himself for the manly work which Providence had destined him to perform. The life of Brederode, who had engaged in the early struggle, perhaps from the frivolous expectation of hearing himself called Count of Holland, as his ancestors had been, had contributed nothing to the cause of freedom, nor did his death occasion regret. His disorderly band of followers dispersed in every direction upon the departure of their chief. A vessel in which Batenburg, Galaina, and other nobles, with their men-at-arms, were escaping towards a German port, was carried into Harlingen, while those gentlemen, overpowered by sleep and wassail, were unaware of their danger, and delivered over to Count Meghen, by the treachery of their pilot. The soldiers were immediately hanged. The noblemen were reserved to grace the first great scaffold which Alva was to erect upon the horse-market in Brussels. The confederacy was entirely broken to pieces. Of the chieftains to whom the people had been accustomed to look for support and encouragement, some had rallied to the government, some were in exile, some were in prison. Montigny, closely watched in Spain, was virtually a captive, pining for the young bride to whom he had been wedded amid such brilliant festivities but a few months before his departure, and for the child which was never to look upon its father’s face.

His colleague, Marquis Berghen, more fortunate, was already dead. The excellent Viglius seized the opportunity to put in a good word for Noircarmes, who had been grinding Tournay in the dust, and butchering the inhabitants of
Valenciennes. "We have heard of Berghen’s death," wrote the president to his faithful Joachim. "The Lord of Noircarmes, who has been his substitute in the governorship of Hainault, has given a specimen of what he can do. Although I have no private intimacy with that nobleman, I can not help embracing him with all my benevolence. Therefore, oh my Hopper, pray do your best to have him appointed governor."

With the departure of Orange, a total eclipse seemed to come over the Netherlands. The country was absolutely helpless, the popular heart cold with apprehension. All persons at all implicated in the late troubles, or suspected of heresy, fled from their homes. Fugitive soldiers were hunted into rivers, cut to pieces in the fields, hanged, burned, or drowned, like dogs, without quarter, and without remorse. The most industrious and valuable part of the population left the land in droves. The tide swept outwards with such rapidity that the Netherlands seemed fast becoming the desolate waste which they had been before the Christian era. Throughout the country, those Reformers who were unable to effect their escape betook themselves to their old lurking-places. The new religion was banished from all the cities, every conventicle was broken up by armed men, the preachers and leading members were hanged, their disciples beaten with rods, reduced to beggary, or imprisoned, even if they sometimes escaped the scaffold. An incredible number, however, were executed for religious causes. Hardly a village so small, says the Antwerp chronicler, but that it could furnish one, two, or three hundred victims to the executioner. The new churches were leveled to the ground, and out of their timbers gallows were constructed. It was thought an ingenious pleasantry to hang the Reformers upon the beams under which they had hoped to worship God. The property of the fugitives was confiscated. The beggars in name became beggars in reality. Many who felt obliged to remain, and who loved their possessions better than their creed, were suddenly converted into the most zealous of Catholics. Persons who had for years not gone to mass, never omitted now their daily and nightly visits to the churches. Persons who had never spoken to an ecclesiastic but with contumely, now could not eat their dinners without one at their table. Many who were suspected of having participated in Calvinistic rites, were foremost and loudest in putting down and denouncing all forms and shows of the reformation. The country was as completely "pacified," to use the conqueror’s expression, as Gaul had been by Caesar.

The regent issued a fresh edict upon the 24th of May, to refresh the memories of those who might have forgotten previous statutes, which were, however, not calculated to make men oblivious. By this new proclamation, all ministers and teachers were sentenced to the gallows. All persons who had suffered their houses to be used for religious purposes were sentenced to the gallows. All parents or masters whose children or servants had attended such meetings were sentenced to the gallows, while the children and servants were only to be beaten with rods. All people who sang hymns at the burial of their relations were sentenced to the gallows. Parents who allowed their newly-born children to be baptized by other hands than those of the Catholic priest were sentenced
to the gallows. The same punishment was denounced against the persons who should christen the child or act as its sponsors. Schoolmasters who should teach any error or false doctrine were likewise to be punished with death. Those who infringed the statutes against the buying and selling of religious books and songs were to receive the same doom, after the first offense. All sneers or insults against priests and ecclesiastics were also made capital crimes. Vagabonds, fugitives, apostates, runaway monks, were ordered forthwith to depart from every city on pain of death. In all cases confiscation of the whole property of the criminal was added to the hanging. This edict, says a contemporary historian, increased the fear of those professing the new religion to such an extent that they left the country "in great heaps." It became necessary, therefore, to issue a subsequent proclamation forbidding all persons, whether foreigners or natives, to leave the land or to send away their property, and prohibiting all shipmasters, wagoners, and other agents of travel, from assisting in the flight of such fugitives, all upon pain of death.

Yet will it be credited that the edict of the 24th of May, the provisions of which have just been sketched, actually excited the wrath of Philip on account of its clemency. He wrote to the duchess, expressing the pain and dissatisfaction which he felt, that an edict so indecent, so illegal, so contrary to the Christian religion, should have been published. Nothing, he said, could offend or distress him more deeply, than any outrage whatever, even the slightest one, offered to God and to His Roman Catholic Church. He therefore commanded his sister instantly to revoke the edict. One might almost imagine from reading the king’s letter that Philip was at last appalled at the horrors committed in his name. Alas, he was only indignant that heretics had been suffered to hang who ought to have been burned, and that a few narrow and almost impossible loopholes had been left through which those who had offended might effect their escape. And thus, while the country is paralyzed with present and expected woe, the swiftly advancing trumpets of the Spanish army resound from beyond the Alps. The curtain is falling upon the prelude to the great tragedy which the prophetic lips of Orange had foretold. When it is again lifted, scenes of disaster and of bloodshed, battles, sieges, executions, deeds of unfaltering but valiant tyranny, of superhuman and successful resistance, of heroic self-sacrifice, fanatical courage and insane cruelty, both in the cause of the Wrong and the Right, will be revealed in awful succession—a spectacle of human energy, human suffering, and human strength to suffer, such as has not often been displayed upon the stage of the world’s events.

End of Part Two
CHAPTER 1

The Arrival of the Duke of Alva, the Blood-Council, and the Departure of Duchess Margaret

The armed invasion of the Netherlands was the necessary consequence of all which had gone before. That the inevitable result had been so long deferred lay rather in the incomprehensible tardiness of Philip’s character than in the circumstances of the case. Never did a monarch hold so steadfastly to a deadly purpose, or proceed so languidly and with so much circumvolution to his goal. The mask of benignity, of possible clemency, was now thrown off, but the delusion of his intended visit to the provinces was still maintained. He assured the regent that he should be governed by her advice, and as she had made all needful preparations to receive him in Zealand, that it would be in Zealand he should arrive.

The same two men among Philip’s advisers were prominent as at an earlier day—the prince of Eboli and the duke of Alva. They still represented entirely
opposite ideas, and in character, temper, and history, each was the reverse of
the other. The policy of the prince was pacific and temporizing, that of the
duke uncompromising and ferocious. Ruy Gomez was disposed to prevent, if
possible, the armed mission of Alva, and he now openly counseled the king to
fulfil his long-deferred promise, and to make his appearance in person before
his rebellious subjects. The jealousy and hatred which existed between the
prince and the duke—between the man of peace and the man of wrath—were
constantly exploding, even in the presence of the king. The wrangling in the
council was incessant. Determined, if possible, to prevent the elevation of his
rival, the favorite was even for a moment disposed to ask for the command of
the army himself. There was something ludicrous in the notion, that a man
whose life had been pacific, and who trembled at the noise of arms, should
seek to supersede the terrible Alva, of whom his eulogists asserted, with
Castilian exaggeration, that the very name of fear inspired him with horror. But
there was a limit beyond which the influence of Anna de Mendoza and her
husband did not extend. Philip was not to be driven to the Netherlands against
his will, nor to be prevented from assigning the command of the army to the
most appropriate man in Europe for his purpose.

It was determined at last that the Netherland heresy should be conquered by
force of arms. The invasion resembled both a crusade against the infidel, and a
treasure-hunting foray into the auriferous Indies, achievements by which
Spanish chivalry had so often illustrated itself. The banner of the cross was to
be replanted upon the conquered battlements of three hundred infidel cities,
and a torrent of wealth, richer than ever flowed from Mexican or Peruvian
mines, was to flow into the royal treasury from the perennial fountains of
confiscation. Who so fit to be the Tancred and the Pizarro of this bi-colored
expedition as the duke of Alva, the man who had been devoted from his
earliest childhood, and from his father’s grave, to hostility against unbelievers,
and who had prophesied that treasure would flow in a stream, a yard deep,
from the Netherlands as soon as the heretics began to meet with their deserts.
An army of chosen troops was forthwith collected, by taking the four legions,
or terzios, of Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, and Lombardy, and filling their places in
Italy by fresh levies. About 10,000 picked and veteran soldiers were thus
obtained, of which the duke of Alva was appointed general-in-chief.

Ferdinando Alvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alva, was now in his sixtieth year. He
was the most successful and experienced general of Spain, or of Europe. No
man had studied more deeply, or practiced more constantly, the military
science. In the most important of all arts at that epoch he was the most
consummate artist. In the only honorable profession of the age, he was the
most thorough and the most pedantic professor. Since the days of Demetrius
Poliorcetes, no man had besieged so many cities. Since the days of Fabius
Cunctator, no general had avoided so many battles, and no soldier, courageous
as he was, ever attained to a more sublime indifference to calumny or
depreciation. Having proved in his boyhood, at Fontarabia, and in his maturity
at Mühlberg, that he could exhibit heroism and headlong courage, when necessary, he could afford to look with contempt upon the witless gibes which his enemies had occasionally perpetrated at his expense. Conscious of holding his armies in his hand, by the power of an unrivalled discipline, and the magic of a name illustrated by a hundred triumphs, he could bear with patience and benevolence the murmurs of his soldiers when their battles were denied them.

He was born in 1508, of a family which boasted imperial descent. A Palæologus, brother of a Byzantine emperor, had conquered the city of Toledo, and transmitted its appellation as a family name. The father of Ferdinando, Don Garcia, had been slain on the isle of Gerbes, in battle with the Moors, when his son was but four years of age. The child was brought up by his grandfather, Don Frederic, and trained from his tenderest infancy to arms. Hatred to the infidel, and a determination to avenge his father’s blood, crying to him from a foreign grave, were the earliest of his instincts. As a youth he was distinguished for his prowess. His maiden sword was fleshed at Fontarabia, where, although but sixteen years of age, he was considered, by his constancy in hardship, by his brilliant and desperate courage, and by the example of military discipline which he afforded to the troops, to have contributed in no small degree to the success of the Spanish arms.

In 1530, he accompanied the Emperor in his campaign against the Turk. Charles, instinctively recognizing the merit of the youth who was destined to be the life-long companion of his toils and glories, distinguished him with his favor at the opening of his career. Young, brave, and enthusiastic, Ferdinand de Toledo at this period was as interesting a hero as ever illustrated the pages of Castilian romance. His mad ride from Hungary to Spain and back again, accomplished in seventeen days, for the sake of a brief visit to his newly-married wife, is not the least attractive episode in the history of an existence which was destined to be so dark and sanguinary. In 1535, he accompanied the Emperor on his memorable expedition to Tunis. In 1546 and 1547 he was generalissimo in the war against the Smalcaldian league. His most brilliant feat of arms—perhaps the most brilliant exploit of the Emperor’s rein—was the passage of the Elbe and the battle of Mühlberg, accomplished in spite of Maximilian’s bitter and violent reproaches, and the tremendous possibilities of a defeat. That battle had finished the war. The gigantic and magnanimous John Frederic, surprised at his devotions in the church, fled in dismay, leaving his boots behind him, which for their superhuman size, were ridiculously said afterwards to be treasured among the trophies of the Toledo house. The rout was total. “I came, I saw, and God conquered,” said the Emperor, in pious parody of his immortal predecessor’s epigram. Maximilian, with a thousand apologies for his previous insults, embraced the heroic Don Ferdinand over and over again, as, arrayed in a plain suit of blue armor, unadorned save with streaks of his enemies blood, he returned from pursuit of the fugitives. So complete and so sudden was the victory, that it was found impossible to account for it, save on the ground of miraculous interposition. Like Joshua, in
the vale of Ajalon, Don Ferdinand was supposed to have commanded the sun to stand still for a season, and to have been obeyed. Otherwise, how could the passage of the river, which was only concluded at six in the evening, and the complete overthrow of the Protestant forces, have all been accomplished within the narrow space of an April twilight? The reply of the duke to Henry II of France, who questioned him subsequently upon the subject, is well known. "Your Majesty, I was too much occupied that evening with what was taking place on the earth beneath, to pay much heed to the evolutions of the heavenly bodies." Spared as he had been by his good fortune from taking any part in the Algerine expedition, or in witnessing the ignominious retreat from Innspruck, he was obliged to submit to the intercalation of the disastrous siege of Metz in the long history of his successes. Doing the duty of a field marshal and a sentinel, supporting his army by his firmness and his discipline when nothing else could have supported them, he was at last enabled, after half the 100,000 men with whom Charles had begun the siege had been sacrificed, to induce his imperial master to raise the siege before the remaining 50,000 had been frozen or starved to death.

The culminating career of Alva seemed to have closed in the mist which gathered around the setting star of the empire. Having accompanied Philip to England in 1554, on his matrimonial expedition, he was destined in the following years, as viceroy and generalissimo of Italy, to be placed in a series of false positions. A great captain engaged in a little war, the champion of the cross in arms against the successor of St. Peter, he had extricated himself, at last, with his usual adroitness, but with very little glory. To him had been allotted the mortification, to another the triumph. The luster of his own name seemed to sink in the ocean while that of a hated rival, with new spangled ore, suddenly "flamed in the forehead of the morning sky." While he had been paltering with a dotard, whom he was forbidden to crush, Egmont had struck down the chosen troops of France, and conquered her most illustrious commanders. Here was the unpardonable crime which could only be expiated by the blood of the victor. Unfortunately for his rival, the time was now approaching when the long-deferred revenge was to be satisfied.

On the whole, the Duke of Alva was inferior to no general of his age. As a disciplinarian he was foremost in Spain, perhaps in Europe. A spendthrift of time, he was an economist of blood, and this was, perhaps, in the eye of humanity, his principal virtue. Time and myself are two, was a frequent observation of Philip, and his favorite general considered the maxim as applicable to war as to politics. Such were his qualities as a military commander. As a statesman, he had neither experience nor talent. As a man his character was simple. He did not combine a great variety of vices, but those which he had were colossal, and he possessed no virtues. He was neither lustful nor intemperate, but his professed eulogists admitted his enormous avarice, while the world has agreed that such an amount of stealth and ferocity, of patient vindictiveness and universal bloodthirstiness, were never
found in a savage beast of the forest, and but rarely in a human bosom. His history was now to show that his previous thrift of human life was not derived from any love of his kind.

Personally he was stern and overbearing. As difficult of access as Philip himself, he was even more haughty to those who were admitted to his presence. He addressed everyone with the depreciating second person plural. Possessing the right of being covered in the presence of the Spanish monarch, he had been with difficulty brought to renounce it before the German Emperor.

He was of an illustrious family, but his territorial possessions were not extensive. His duchy was a small one, furnishing him with not more than 14,000 crowns of annual income, and with four hundred soldiers. He had, however, been a thrifty financier all his life, never having been without a handsome sum of ready money at interest. Ten years before his arrival in the Netherlands, he was supposed to have already increased his income to 40,000 a year by the proceeds of his investments at Antwerp.

As already intimated, his military character was sometimes profoundly misunderstood. He was often considered rather a pedantic than a practical commander, more capable to discourse of battles than to gain them. Notwithstanding that his own life had been an almost unbroken campaign, the ridiculous accusation of timidity was frequently made against him. A gentleman at the court of the Emperor Charles once addressed a letter to the duke with the title of "General of his Majesty's armies in the Duchy of Milan in time of peace, and major-domo of the household in the time of war." It was said that the lesson did the duke good, but that he rewarded very badly the nobleman who gave it, having subsequently caused his head to be taken off. In general, however, Alva manifested a philosophical contempt for the opinions expressed concerning his military fame, and was especially disdainful of criticism expressed by his own soldiers. "Recollect," said he, at a little later period, to Don John of Austria, "that the first foes with whom one has to contend are one’s own troops, with their clamors for an engagement at this moment, and their murmurs about results at another; with their ‘I thought that the battle should be fought,’ or, ‘it was my opinion that the occasion ought not to be lost.’ Your highness will have opportunity enough to display valor, and will never be weak enough to be conquered by the babble of soldiers."

In person he was tall, thin, erect, with a small head, a long visage, lean yellow cheek, dark twinkling eyes, adust complexion, black bristling hair, and a long sable-silvered beard, descending in two waving streams upon his breast.

Such being the design, the machinery was well selected. The best man in Europe to lead the invading force was placed at the head of 10,000 picked veterans. The privates in this exquisite little army, said the enthusiastic connoisseur Brantome, who traveled post into Lorraine expressly to see them
on their march, all wore engraved or gilded armor, and were in every respect equipped like captains. They were the first who carried muskets, a weapon which very much astonished the Flemings when it first rattled in their ears. The musketeers, he observed, might have been mistaken for princes, with such agreeable and graceful arrogance did they present themselves. Each was attended by his servant or esquire, who carried his piece for him, except in battle, and all were treated with extreme deference by the rest of the army, as if they had been officers. The four regiments of Lombardy, Sardia, Sicily, and Naples, composed a total of not quite 9,000 of the best foot soldiers in Europe. They were commanded respectively by Don Sancho de Lodroño, Don Gonzalo de Bracamonte, Julien Romero, and Alfonso de Ulloa, all distinguished and experienced generals. The cavalry, amounting to about 1,200, was under the command of the natural son of the duke, Don Ferdinando de Toledo, Prior of the Knights of St. John. Chiapin Vitelli, Marquis of Cetona, who had served the king in many a campaign, was appointed Maréchal de camp, and Gabriel Cerbelloni was placed in command of the artillery. On the way the duke received, as a present from the duke of Savoy, the services of the distinguished engineer, Pacheco, or Paciotti, whose name was to be associated with the most celebrated citadel of the Netherlands, and whose dreadful fate was to be contemporaneous with the earliest successes of the liberal party.

With an army thus perfect, on a small scale, in all its departments, and furnished, in addition, with a force of 2,000 prostitutes, as regularly enrolled, disciplined, and distributed as the cavalry or the artillery, the duke embarked upon his momentous enterprise, on the tenth of May, at Carthagena. Thirty-seven galleys, under command of Prince Andrea Doria, brought the principal part of the force to Genoa, the duke being delayed a few days at Nice by an attack of fever. On the second of June, the army was mustered at Alexandria de Palla, and ordered to rendezvous again at San Ambrosio at the foot of the Alps. It was then directed to make its way over Mount Cenis and through Savoy, Burgundy, and Lorraine, by a regularly arranged triple movement. The second division was each night to encamp on the spot which had been occupied upon the previous night by the vanguard, and the rear was to place itself on the following night in the camp of the corps de bataille. Thus coiling itself along almost in a single line by slow and serpentine windings, with a deliberate, deadly, venomous purpose, this army, which was to be the instrument of Philip’s long deferred vengeance, stole through narrow mountain pass and tangled forest. So close and intricate were many of the defiles through which the journey led them that, had one tithe of the treason which they came to punish, ever existed, save in the diseased imagination of their monarch, not one man would have been left to tell the tale. Egmont, had he really been the traitor and the conspirator he was assumed to be, might have easily organized the means of cutting off the troops before they could have effected their entrance into the country which they had doomed to destruction. His military experience, his qualifications for a daring strobe, his great popularity, and the
intense hatred entertained for Alva, would have furnished him with a sufficient machinery for the purpose.

Twelve days’ march carried the army through Burgundy, twelve more through Lorraine. During the whole of the journey they were closely accompanied by a force of cavalry and infantry, ordered upon this service by the King of France, who, for fear of exciting a fresh Huguenot demonstration, had refused the Spaniards a passage through his dominions. This reconnoitering army kept pace with them like their shadow, and watched all their movements. A force of 6,000 Swiss, equally alarmed and uneasy at the progress of the troops, hovered likewise about their flanks, without, however, offering any impediment to their advance. Before the middle of August they had reached Thionville, on the Luxemburg frontier, having on the last day marched a distance of two leagues through a forest, which seemed expressly arranged to allow a small defensive force to embarrass and destroy an invading army. No opposition, however, was attempted, and the Spanish soldiers encamped at last within the territory of the Netherlands, having accomplished their adventurous journey in entire safety, and under perfect discipline.

The duchess had in her secret letters to Philip continued to express her disapprobation of the enterprise thus committed to Alva. She had bitterly complained that now when the country had been pacified by her efforts, another should be sent to reap all the glory, or perhaps to undo all that she had so painfully and so successfully done. She stated to her brother, in most unequivocal language, that the name of Alva was odious enough to make the whole Spanish nation detested in the Netherlands. She could find no language sufficiently strong to express her surprise that the king should have decided upon a measure likely to be attended with such fatal consequences without consulting her on the subject, and in opposition to what had been her uniform advice. She also wrote personally to Alva, imploring, commanding, and threatening, but with equally ill success. The duke knew too well who was sovereign of the Netherlands now, his master’s sister or himself. As to the effects of his armed invasion upon the temper of the provinces, he was supremely indifferent. He came as a conqueror not as a mediator. "I have tamed people of iron in my day," said he, contemptuously, "shall I not easily crush these men of butter?"

At Thionville he was, however, officially waited upon by Berlaymont and Noirincarmes, on the part of the regent. He at this point, moreover, began to receive deputations from various cities, bidding him a hollow and trembling welcome, and deprecating his displeasure for anything in the past which might seem offensive. To all such embassies he replied in vague and conventional language, saying, however, to his confidential attendants, "I am here—so much is certain—whether I am welcome or not is to me a matter of little consequence." At Tirlemont, on the 22nd of August, he was met by Count Egmont, who had ridden forth from Brussels to show him a becoming respect,
as the representative of his sovereign. The count was accompanied by several other noblemen, and brought to the duke a present of several beautiful horses. Alva received him, however, but coldly, for he was unable at first to adjust the mask to his countenance as adroitly as was necessary. Behold the greatest of all the heretics, he observed to his attendants, as soon as the nobleman’s presence was announced, and in a voice loud enough for him to hear. Even after they had exchanged salutations, he addressed several remarks to him in a half jesting, half biting tone, saying among other things, that his countship might have spared him the trouble of making this long journey in his old age. There were other observations in a similar strain which might have well aroused the suspicion of any man not determined, like Egmont, to continue blind and deaf. After a brief interval, however, Alva seems to have commanded himself. He passed his arm lovingly over that stately neck, which he had already devoted to the block, and—the count having resolved beforehand to place himself, if possible, upon amicable terms with the new viceroy—the two rode along side by side in friendly conversation, followed by the regiment of infantry and three companies of light horse, which belonged to the duke’s immediate command. Alva, still attended by Egmont, rode soon afterwards through the Louvain gate into Brussels, where they separated for a season. Lodgings had been taken for the duke at the house of a certain Madame de Jasse, in the neighborhood of Egmont’s palace. Leaving here the principal portion of his attendants, the captain-general, without alighting, forthwith proceeded to the palace to pay his respects to the Duchess of Parma.

For three days the regent had been deliberating with her council as to the propriety of declining any visit from the man whose presence she justly considered a disgrace and an insult to herself. This being the reward of her eight years’ devotion to her brother’s commands, to be superseded by a subject, and one, too, who came to carry out a policy which she had urgently deprecated, it could hardly be expected of the Emperor’s daughter that she should graciously submit to the indignity, and receive her successor with a smiling countenance. In consequence, however, of the submissive language with which the duke had addressed her in his recent communications, offering with true Castilian but empty courtesy, to place his guards, his army, and himself at her feet, she had consented to receive his visit with or without his attendants.

On his appearance in the courtyard, a scene of violent altercation and almost of bloodshed took place between his bodyguard and the archers of the regent’s household, who were at last, with difficulty, persuaded to allow the mercenaries of the hated captain-general to pass. Presenting himself at three o’clock in the afternoon, after these not very satisfactory preliminaries, in the bedchamber of the duchess, where it was her habit to grant confidential audiences, he met, as might easily be supposed, with a chilling reception. The duchess, standing motionless in the center of the apartment, attended by Berlaymont, the Duke of Aerschot, and Count Egmont, acknowledged his
salutations with calm severity. Neither she nor any one of her attendants advanced a step to meet him. The duke took off his hat, but she, calmly recognizing his right as a Spanish grandee, insisted upon his remaining covered. A stiff and formal conversation of half an hour’s duration then ensued, all parties remaining upon their feet. The duke, although respectful, found it difficult to conceal his indignation and his haughty sense of approaching triumph. Margaret was cold, stately, and forbidding, disguising her rage and her mortification under a veil of imperial pride. Alva, in a letter to Philip, describing the interview, assured his Majesty that he had treated the duchess with as much deference as he could have shown to the queen, but it is probable, from other contemporaneous accounts, that an ill-disguised and even angry arrogance was at times very visible in his demeanor. The state council had advised the duchess against receiving him until he had duly exhibited his powers. This ceremony had been waived, but upon being questioned by the duchess at this interview as to their nature and extent, he is reported to have coolly answered that he really did not exactly remember, but that he would look them over, and send her information at his earliest convenience.

The next day, however, his commission was duly exhibited. In this document, which bore date January 31, 1567, Philip appointed him to be captain-general “in correspondence with his Majesty’s dear sister of Parma, who was occupied with other matters belonging to the government,” begged the duchess to cooperate with him and to command obedience for him, and ordered all the cities of the Netherlands to receive such garrisons as he should direct.

At the official interview between Alva and Madame de Parma, at which these powers were produced, the necessary preliminary arrangements were made regarding the Spanish troops, which were now to be immediately quartered in the principal cities. The duke, however, informed the regent that as these matters were not within her province, he should take the liberty of arranging them with the authorities, without troubling her in the matter, and would inform her of the result of his measures at their next interview, which was to take place on the 26th of August.

Circular letters signed by Philip, which Alva had brought with him, were now dispatched to the different municipal bodies of the country. In these the cities were severally commanded to accept the garrisons, and to provide for the armies whose active services the king hoped would not be required, but which he had sent beforehand to prepare a peaceful entrance for himself. He enjoined the most absolute obedience to the Duke of Alva until his own arrival, which was to be almost immediate. These letters were dated at Madrid on the 28th of February, and were now accompanied by a brief official circular, signed by Margaret of Parma, in which she announced the arrival of her dear cousin of Alva, and demanded unconditional submission to his authority.
Having thus complied with these demands of external and conventional propriety, the indignant duchess unbosomed herself, in her private Italian letters to her brother, of the rage which had been hitherto partially suppressed. She reiterated her profound regret that Philip had not yet accepted the resignation which she had so recently and so earnestly offered. She disclaimed all jealousy of the supreme powers now conferred upon Alva, but thought that his Majesty might have allowed her to leave the country before the duke arrived with an authority which was so extraordinary, as well as so humiliating to herself. Her honor might thus have been saved. She was pained to perceive that she was like to furnish a perpetual example to all others, who considering the manner in which she had been treated by the king, would henceforth have but little inducement to do their duty. At no time, on no occasion, could any person ever render him such services as hers had been. For nine years she had enjoyed not a moment of repose. If the king had shown her but little gratitude, she was consoled by the thought that she had satisfied her God, herself, and the world. She had compromised her health, perhaps her life, and now that she had pacified the country, now that the king was more absolute, more powerful than ever before, another was sent to enjoy the fruit of her labors and her sufferings.

The duchess made no secret of her indignation at being thus superseded, and as she considered the matter, outraged. She openly avowed her displeasure. She was at times almost beside herself with rage. There was universal sympathy with her emotions, for all hated the duke, and shuddered at the arrival of the Spaniards. The day of doom for all the crimes which had ever been committed in the course of ages, seemed now to have dawned upon the Netherlands. The sword which had so long been hanging over them, seemed now about to descend. Throughout the provinces, there was but one feeling of cold and hopeless dismay. Those who still saw a possibility of effecting their escape from the fated land, swarmed across the frontier. All foreign merchants deserted the great marts. The cities became as still as if the plague-banner had been unfurled on every housetop.

Meantime the captain-general proceeded methodically with his work. He distributed his troops through Brussels, Ghent, Antwerp, and other principal cities. As a measure of necessity and mark of the last humiliation, he required the municipalities to transfer their keys to his keeping. The magistrates of Ghent humbly remonstrated against the indignity, and Egmont was imprudent enough to make himself the mouthpiece of their remonstrance, which, it is needless to add, was unsuccessful. Meantime his own day of reckoning had arrived.

As already observed, the advent of Alva at the head of a foreign army was the natural consequence of all which had gone before. The delusion of the royal visit was still maintained, and the affectation of a possible clemency still displayed, while the monarch sat quietly in his cabinet without a remote
intention of leaving Spain, and while the messengers of his accumulated and long concealed wrath were already descending upon their prey. It was the deliberate intention of Philip, when the duke was dispatched to the Netherlands, that all the leaders of the anti-inquisition party, and all who had, at any time or in any way, implicated themselves in opposition to the government, or in censure of its proceedings, should be put to death. It was determined that the provinces should be subjugated to the absolute domination of the council of Spain, a small body of foreigners sitting at the other end of Europe, a junta in which Netherlanders were to have no voice and exercise no influence. The despotic government of the Spanish and Italian possessions was to be extended to these Flemish territories, which were thus to be converted into the helpless dependencies of a foreign and an absolute crown. There was to be a re-organization of the inquisition, upon the same footing claimed for it before the outbreak of the troubles, together with a re-enactment and vigorous enforcement of the famous edicts against heresy.

Such was the scheme recommended by Granvelle and Espinosa, and to be executed by Alva. As part and parcel of this plan, it was also arranged at secret meetings at the house of Espinosa, before the departure of the duke, that all the seigniors against whom the Duchess Margaret had made so many complaints, especially the Prince of Orange, with the Counts Egmont, Horn, and Hoogstraaten, should be immediately arrested and brought to chastisement. The Marquis Berghen and the Baron Montigny, being already in Spain, could be dealt with at pleasure. It was also decided that the gentlemen implicated in the confederacy or compromise, should at once be proceeded against for high treason, without any regard to the promise of pardon granted by the duchess.

The general features of the great project having been thus mapped out, a few indispensable preliminaries were at once executed. In order that Egmont, Horn, and other distinguished victims might not take alarm, and thus escape the doom deliberately arranged for them, royal assurances were dispatched to the Netherlands, cheering their despondency and dispelling their doubts. With his own hand Philip wrote the letter, full of affection and confidence, to Egmont, to which allusion has already been made. He wrote it after Alva had left Madrid upon his mission of vengeance. The same stealthy measures were pursued with regard to others. The Prince of Orange was not capable of falling into the royal trap, however cautiously baited. Unfortunately he could not communicate his wisdom to his friends.

It is difficult to comprehend so very sanguine a temperament as that to which Egmont owed his destruction. It was not the Prince of Orange alone who had prophesied his doom. Warnings had come to the count from every quarter, and they were now frequently repeated. Certainly he was not without anxiety, but he had made his decision, determined to believe in the royal word, and in the royal gratitude for his services rendered, not only against Montmorency and De
Thermes, but against the heretics of Flanders. He was, however, much changed. He had grown prematurely old. At forty-six years his hair was white, and he never slept without pistols under his pillow. Nevertheless he affected, and sometimes felt, a light-heartedness which surprised all around him. The Portuguese gentleman Robles, Seigneur de Billy, who had returned early in the summer from Spain, whither he had been sent upon a confidential mission by Madame de Parma, is said to have made repeated communications to Egmont as to the dangerous position in which he stood. Immediately after his arrival in Brussels he had visited the count, then confined to his house by an injury caused by the fall of his horse. "Take care to get well very fast," said De Billy, "for there are very bad stories told about you in Spain." Egmont laughed heartily at the observation, as if nothing could well be more absurd than such a warning. His friend—for De Billy is said to have felt a real attachment to the Count—persisted in his prophecies, telling him that "birds in the field sang much more sweetly than those in cages," and that he would do well to abandon the country before the arrival of Alva.

These warnings were repeated almost daily by the same gentleman, and by others, who were more and more astonished at Egmont's infatuation. Nevertheless, he had disregarded their admonitions, and had gone forth to meet the duke at Tirlemon. Even then he might have seen, in the coldness of his first reception, and in the disrespectful manner of the Spanish soldiers, who not only did not at first salute him, but who murmured audibly that he was a Lutheran and traitor, that he was not so great a favorite with the government at Madrid as he desired to be.

After the first few moments, however, Alva's manner had changed, while Chiappin Vitelli, Gabriel de Serbelloni, and other principal officers, received the count with great courtesy, even upon his first appearance. The grand prior, Ferdinando de Toledo, natural son of the duke, and already a distinguished soldier, seems to have felt a warm and unaffected friendship for Egmont, whose brilliant exploits in the field had excited his youthful admiration, and of whose destruction he was, nevertheless, compelled to be the unwilling instrument. For a few days, accordingly, after the arrival of the new governor-general all seemed to be going smoothly. The grand prior and Egmont became exceedingly intimate, passing their time together in banquets, masquerades, and play, as joyously as if the merry days which had succeeded the treaty of Cateau Cambresis were returned. The duke, too, manifested the most friendly dispositions, taking care to wend him large presents of Spanish and Italian fruits, received frequently by the government couriers.

Lapped in this fatal security, Egmont not only forgot his fears, but unfortunately succeeded in inspiring Count Horn with a portion of his confidence. That gentleman had still remained in his solitary mansion at Weert, notwithstanding the artful means which had been used to lure him from that "desert." It is singular that the very same person who, according to a well-
informed Catholic contemporary, had been most eager to warn Egmont of his danger, had also been the foremost instrument for effecting the capture of the admiral. The Seigneur de Billy, on the day after his arrival from Madrid, had written to Horn, telling him that the king was highly pleased with his services and character. De Billy also stated that he had been commissioned by Philip to express distinctly the royal gratitude for the count’s conduct, adding that his Majesty was about to visit the Netherlands in August, and would probably be preceded or accompanied by Baron Montigny.

Alva and his son Don Ferdinando had soon afterwards addressed letters from Gerverbiller (dated the 26th and 27th of July) to Count Horn, filled with expressions of friendship and confidence. The admiral, who had sent one of his gentlemen to greet the duke, now responded from Weert that he was very sensible of the kindness manifested towards him, but that for reasons which his secretary Alonzo de la Loo would more fully communicate, he must for the present beg to be excused from a personal visit to Brussels. The secretary was received by Alva with extreme courtesy. The duke expressed infinite pain that the king had not yet rewarded Count Horn’s services according to their merit, said that a year before he had told his brother Montigny how very much he was the admiral’s friend, and begged La Loo to tell his master that he should not doubt the royal generosity and gratitude. The governor added that, if he could see the count in person, he could tell him things which would please him, and which would prove that he had not been forgotten by his friends. La Loo had afterward a long conversation with the duke’s secretary Albornoz, who assured him that his master had the greatest affection for Count Horn, and that since his affairs were so much embarrassed, he might easily be provided with the post of governor at Milan, or viceroy of Naples, about to become vacant. The secretary added that the duke was much hurt at receiving no visits from many distinguished nobles whose faithful friend and servant he was, and that Count Horn ought to visit Brussels, if not to treat of great affairs, at least to visit the captain-General as a friend. “After all this,” said honest Alonzo, “I am going immediately to Weert, to urge his lordship to yield to the duke’s desires.”

This scientific maneuvering, joined to the urgent representations of Egmont, at last produced its effect. The admiral left his retirement at Weert to fall into the pit which his enemies had been so skillfully preparing at Brussels. On the night of the eighth of September, Egmont received another most significant and mysterious warning. A Spaniard, apparently an officer of rank, came secretly into his house, and urged him solemnly to effect his escape before the morrow. The countess, who related the story afterwards, always believed, without being certain, that the mysterious visitor was Julian Romero, maréchal de camp. Egmont, however, continued as blindly confident as before.

On the following day, September 9th, the grand prior, Don Ferdinando, gave a magnificent dinner, to which Egmont and Horn, together with Noircarmes, the Viscount of Ghent, and many other noblemen were invited. The banquet was
enlivened by the music of Alva’s own military band, which the duke sent to entertain the company. At three o’clock he sent a message begging the gentlemen, after their dinner should be concluded, to favor him with their company at his house (the maison de Jassey), as he wished to consult them concerning the plan of the citadel, which he proposed erecting at Antwerp.

At this moment, the grand prior who was seated next to Egmont, whispered in his ear, "Leave this place, Signor Count, instantly; take the fleetest horse in your stable and make your escape without a moment’s delay." Egmont, much troubled, and remembering the manifold prophecies and admonitions which he had passed by unheeded, rose from the table and went into the next room. He was followed by Noircarmes and two other gentlemen, who had observed his agitation, and were curious as to its cause. The count repeated to them the mysterious words just whispered to him by the grand prior, adding that he was determined to take the advice without a moment’s delay. "Ha! Count," exclaimed Noircarmes, "do not put lightly such implicit confidence in this stranger who is counseling you to your destruction. What will the Duke of Alva and all the Spaniards say of such a precipitate flight? Will they not say that your Excellency has fled from the consciousness of guilt? Will not your escape be construed into a confession of high treason?"

If these words were really spoken by Noircarmes, and that they were so, we have the testimony of a Walloon gentleman in constant communication with Egmont’s friends and with the whole Catholic party, they furnish another proof of the malignant and cruel character of the man. The advice fixed forever the fate of the vacillating Egmont. He had risen from table determined to take the advice of a noble-minded Spaniard, who had adventured his life to save his friend. He now returned in obedience to the counsel of a fellow countryman, a Flemish noble, to treat the well-meant warning with indifference, and to seat himself again at the last banquet which he was ever to grace with his presence.

At four o’clock, the dinner being finished, Horn and Egmont, accompanied by the other gentlemen, proceeded to the "Jassy" louse, then occupied by Alva, to take part in the deliberations proposed. They were received by the duke with great courtesy. The engineer, Pietro Urbino, soon appeared and laid upon the table a large parchment containing the plan and elevation of the citadel to be erected at Antwerp. A warm discussion upon the subject soon arose, Egmont, Horn, Noircarmes and others, together with the engineers Urbino and Pacheco, all taking part in the debate. After a short time, the Duke of Alva left the apartment, on pretext of a sudden indisposition, leaving the company still warmly engaged in their argument. The council lasted till near seven in the evening. As it broke up, Don Sancho d’Avila, captain of the duke’s guard, requested Egmont to remain for a moment after the rest, as he had a communication to make to him. After an insignificant remark or two, the Spanish officer, as soon as the two were alone, requested Egmont to surrender his sword. The count, agitated, and notwithstanding everything which had gone
before, still taken by surprise, scarcely knew what reply to make. Don Sancho repeated that he had been commissioned to arrest him, and again demanded his sword. At the same moment the doors of the adjacent apartment were opened, and Egmont saw himself surrounded by a company of Spanish musketeers and halberdmen. Finding himself thus entrapped, he gave up his sword, saying bitterly, as he did so, that it had at least rendered some service to the king in times which were past. He was then conducted to a chamber, in the upper story of the house, where his temporary prison had been arranged. The windows were barricaded, the daylight excluded, the whole apartment hung with black. Here he remained fourteen days (from the 9th to the 23rd of September). During this period, he was allowed no communication with his friends. His room was lighted day and night with candles, and he was served in strict silence by Spanish attendants, and guarded by Spanish soldiers. The captain of the watch drew his curtain every midnight, and aroused him from sleep that he might be identified by the relieving officer.

Count Horn was arrested upon the same occasion by Captain Salinas, as he was proceeding through the courtyard of the house, after the breaking up of the council. He was confined in another chamber of the mansion, and met with a precisely similar treatment to that experienced by Egmont. Upon the 23rd of September, both were removed under a strong guard to the castle of Ghent.

On this same day, two other important arrests, included and arranged in the same program, had been successfully accomplished. Bakkerzeel, private and confidential secretary of Egmont, and Antony Van Straalen, the rich and influential burgomaster of Antwerp, were taken almost simultaneously. At the request of Alva, the burgomaster had been invited by the Duchess of Parma to repair on business to Brussels. He seemed to have feared an ambuscade, for as he got into his coach to set forth upon the journey, he was so muffled in a multiplicity of clothing, that he was scarcely to be recognized. He was no sooner, however, in the open country and upon a spot remote from human habitations, than he was suddenly beset by a band of forty soldiers under command of Don Alberic Lodron and Don Sancho de Lodroño. These officers had been watching his movements for many days. The capture of Bakkerzeel was accomplished with equal adroitness at about the same hour.

Alva, while he sat at the council board with Egmont and Horn, was secretly informed that those important personages, Bakkerzeel and Straalen, with the private secretary of the admiral, Alonzo de la Loo, in addition, had been thus successfully arrested. He could with difficulty conceal his satisfaction, and left the apartment immediately that the trap might be sprung upon the two principal victims of his treachery. He had himself arranged all the details of these two important arrests, while his natural son, the Prior Don Ferdinando, had been compelled to superintend the proceedings. The plot had been an excellent plot, and was accomplished as successfully as it had been sagaciously conceived. None but Spaniards had been employed in any part of the affair.
Officers of high rank in his Majesty’s army had performed the part of spies and policemen with much adroitness, nor was it to be expected that the duty would seem a disgrace, when the Prior of the Knights of Saint John was superintendent of the operations, when the captain-general of the Netherlands had arranged the whole plan, and when all, from subaltern to viceroy, had received minute instructions as to the contemplated treachery from the great chief of the Spanish police, who sat on the throne of Castile and Aragon.

No sooner were these gentlemen in custody than the secretary Albornoz was dispatched to the house of Count Horn, and to that of Bakkerzeel, where all papers were immediately seized, inventoried, and placed in the hands of the duke.

Thus, if amid the most secret communications of Egmont and Horn or their correspondents, a single treasonable thought should be lurking, it was to go hard but it might be twisted into a cord strong enough to strangle them all.

The duke wrote a triumphant letter to his Majesty that very night. He apologized that these important captures had been deferred so long but stated that he had thought it desirable to secure all these leading personages at a single stroke. He then narrated the masterly manner in which the operations had been conducted. Certainly, when it is remembered that the duke had only reached Brussels upon the 23rd of August, and that the two Counts were securely lodged in prison on the ninth of September, it seemed a superfluous modesty upon his part thus to excuse himself for an apparent delay. At any rate, in the eyes of the world and of posterity, his zeal to carry out the bloody commands of his master was sufficiently swift.

The consternation was universal throughout the provinces when the arrests became known. Egmont’s great popularity and distinguished services placed him so high above the mass of citizens, and his attachment to the Catholic religion was moreover so well known, as to make it obvious that no man could now be safe, when men like him were in the power of Alva and his myrmidons. The animosity to the Spaniards increased hourly.

The duchess affected indignation at the arrest of the two nobles, although it nowhere appears that she attempted a word in their defense, or lifted, at any subsequent moment, a finger to save them. She was not anxious to wash her hands of the blood of two innocent men; she was only offended that they had been arrested without her permission. The duke had, it is true, sent Berlaymont and Mansfeld to give her information of the fact, as soon as the capture had been made, with the plausible excuse that he preferred to save her from all the responsibility and all the unpopularity of the measure. Nothing, however, could appease her wrath at this and every other indication of the contempt in which he appeared to hold the sister of his sovereign. She complained of his conduct daily to everyone who was admitted to her
presence. Herself oppressed by a sense of personal indignity, she seemed for a moment to identify herself with the cause of the oppressed provinces. She seemed to imagine herself the champion of their liberties, and the Netherlanders, for a moment, seemed to participate in the delusion. Because she was indignant at the insolence of the duke of Alva to herself, the honest citizens began to give her credit for a sympathy with their own wrongs. She expressed herself determined to move about from one city to another, until the answer to her demand for dismissal should arrive. She allowed her immediate attendants to abuse the Spaniards in good set terms upon every occasion. Even her private chaplain permitted himself, in preaching before her in the palace chapel, to denounce the whole nation as a race of traitors and ravishers, and for this offense was only reprimanded, much against her will, by the duchess, and ordered to retire for a season to his convent. She did not attempt to disguise her dissatisfaction at every step which had been taken by the duke. In all this there was much petulance, but very little dignity, while there was neither a spark of real sympathy for the oppressed millions, nor a throb of genuine womanly emotion for the impending fate of the two nobles. Her principal grief was that she had pacified the provinces, and that another had now arrived to reap the glory; but it was difficult, while the unburied bones of many heretics were still hanging, by her decree, on the rafters of their own dismantled churches, for her successfully to enact the part of a benignant and merciful regent. But it is very true that the horrors of the duke's administration have been propitious to the fame of Margaret, and perhaps more so to that of Cardinal Granvelle. The faint and struggling rays of humanity which occasionally illumined the course of their government, were destined to be extinguished in a chaos so profound and dark that these last beams of light seemed clearer and more bountiful by the contrast.

The Count of Hoogstraaten, who was on his way to Brussels, had, by good fortune, injured his hand through the accidental discharge of a pistol. Detained by this casualty at Cologne, he was informed, before his arrival at the capital, of the arrest of his two distinguished friends, and accepted the hint to betake himself at once to a place of safety.

The loyalty of the elder Mansfeld was beyond dispute even by Alva. His son Charles had, however, been imprudent, and, as we have seen, had even affixed his name to the earliest copies of the Compromise. He had retired, it is true, from all connection with the confederates, but his father knew well that the young count's signature upon that famous document would prove his death-warrant, were he found in the country. He therefore had sent him into Germany before the arrival of the duke.

The king's satisfaction was unbounded when he learned this important achievement of Alva, and he wrote immediately to express his approbation in the most extravagant terms. Cardinal Granvelle, on the contrary, affected astonishment at a course which he had secretly counseled. He assured his
Majesty that he had never believed Egmont to entertain sentiments opposed to the Catholic religion, nor to the interests of the Crown, up to the period of his own departure from the Netherlands. He was persuaded, he said, that the count had been abused by others, although, to be sure, the cardinal had learned with regret what Egmont had written on the occasion of the baptism of Count Hoogstraaten’s child. As to the other persons arrested, he said that no one regretted their fate. The cardinal added that he was supposed to be himself the instigator of these captures, but that he was not disturbed by that, or by other imputations of a similar nature.

In conversation with those about him, he frequently expressed regret that the Prince of Orange had been too crafty to be caught in the same net in which his more simple companions were so inextricably entangled. Indeed, on the first arrival of the news that men of high rank had been arrested in Brussels, the cardinal eagerly inquired if the Taciturn had been taken, for by that term he always characterized the prince. Receiving a negative reply, he expressed extreme disappointment, adding that, if Orange had escaped, they had taken nobody, and that his capture would have been more valuable than that of every man in the Netherlands.

Peter Titelmann, too, the famous inquisitor, who, retired from active life, was then living upon Philip’s bounty, and encouraged by friendly letters from that monarch, expressed the same opinion. Having been informed that Egmont and Horn had been captured, he eagerly inquired if “wise William” had also been taken. He was, of course, answered in the negative. “Then will our joy be but brief,” he observed. “Woe unto us for the wrath to come from Germany.”

On the 12th of July, of this year, Philip wrote to Granvelle to inquire the particulars of a letter which the Prince of Orange, according to a previous communication of the cardinal, had written to Egmont on the occasion of the baptism of Count Hoogstraaten’s child. On the 17th of August, the cardinal replied by setting the king right as to the error which he had committed. The letter, as he had already stated, was not written by Orange, but by Egmont, and he expressed his astonishment that Madame de Parma had not yet sent it to his Majesty. The duchess must have seen it, because her confessor had shown it to the person who was Granvelle’s informant. In this letter, the cardinal continued, the statement had been made by Egmont to the Prince of Orange that their plots were discovered, that the king was making armaments, that they were unable to resist him, and that therefore it had become necessary to dissemble and to accommodate themselves as well as possible to the present situation, while waiting for other circumstances under which to accomplish their designs. Granvelle advised, moreover, that Straalen, who had been privy to the letter, and perhaps the amanuensis, should be forthwith arrested.
The cardinal was determined not to let the matter sleep, notwithstanding his protestation of a kindly feeling towards the imprisoned count. Against the statement that he knew of a letter which amounted to a full confession of treason, out of Egmont's own mouth—a fact which, if proved, and perhaps, if even insinuated, would be sufficient with Philip to deprive Egmont of twenty thousand lives—against these constant recommendations to his suspicious and sanguinary master, to ferret out this document, if it were possible, it must be confessed that the churchman's vague and hypocritical expressions on the side of mercy were very little worth.

Certainly these seeds of suspicion did not fall upon a barren soil. Philip immediately communicated the information thus received to the Duke of Alva, charging him on repeated occasions to find out what was written, either by Egmont or by Straalen, at Egmont's instigation, stating that such a letter was written at the time of the Hoogstraaten baptism, that it would probably illustrate the opinions of Egmont at that period, and that the letter itself, which the confessor of Madame de Parma had once had in his hands, ought, if possible, to be procured. Thus the very language used by Granvelle to Philip was immediately repeated by the monarch to his representative in the Netherlands, at the moment when all Egmont's papers were in his possession, and when Egmont's private secretary was undergoing the torture, in order that secrets might be wrenched from him which had never entered his brain. The fact that no such letter was found, that the duchess had never alluded to any such document, and that neither a careful scrutiny of papers, nor the application of the rack, could elicit any satisfactory information on the subject, leads to the conclusion that no such treasonable paper had ever existed, save in the imagination of the cardinal. At any rate, it is no more than just to hesitate before affixing a damning character to a document, in the absence of any direct proof that there ever was such a document at all. The confessor of Madame de Parma told another person, who told the cardinal, that either Count Egmont, or Burgomaster Straalen, by command of Count Egmont, wrote to the Prince of Orange thus and so. What evidence was this upon which to found a charge of high treason against a man whom Granvelle affected to characterize as otherwise neither opposed to the Catholic religion, nor to the true service of the king? What vulpine kind of mercy was it on the part of the cardinal, while making such deadly insinuations, to recommend the imprisoned victim to clemency?

The unfortunate envoys, Marquis Berghen and Baron Montigny, had remained in Spain under close observation. Of those doomed victims who, in spite of friendly remonstrances and of ominous warnings, had thus ventured into the lion's den, no retreating footmarks were ever to be seen. Their fate, now that Alva had at last been dispatched to the Netherlands, seemed to be sealed, and the Marquis Berghen, accepting the augury in its most evil sense, immediately afterwards had sickened unto death. Whether it were the sickness of hope deferred, suddenly changing to despair, or whether it were a still more potent
and unequivocal poison which came to the relief of the unfortunate nobleman, will perhaps never be ascertained with certainty. The secrets of those terrible prison-houses of Spain, where even the eldest begotten son, and the wedded wife of the monarch, were soon afterwards believed to have been the victims of his dark revenge, can never perhaps be accurately known, until the grave gives up its dead, and the buried crimes of centuries are revealed.

It was very soon after the departure of Alva's fleet from Carthagena, that the Marquis Berghen felt his end approaching. He sent for the Prince of Eboli, with whom he had always maintained intimate relations, and whom he believed to be his disinterested friend. Relying upon his faithful breast, and trusting to receive from his eyes alone the pious drops of sympathy which he required, the dying noble poured out his long and last complaint. He charged him to tell the man whom he would no longer call his king, that he had ever been true and loyal, that the bitterness of having been constantly suspected, when he was conscious of entire fidelity, was a sharper sorrow than could be lightly believed, and that he hoped the time would come when his own truth and the artifices of his enemies would be brought to light. He closed his parting message by predicting that after he had been long laid in the grave, the impeachments against his character would be at last, although too late, retracted.

So spake the unhappy envoy, and his friend replied with words of consolation. It is probable that he even ventured, in the king's name, to grant him the liberty of returning to his home, the only remedy, as his physicians had repeatedly stated, which could possibly be applied to his disease. But the devilish hypocrisy of Philip, and the abject perfidy of Eboli, at this juncture, almost surpass belief. The prince came to press the hand and to close the eyes of the dying man whom he called his friend, having first carefully studied a billet of most minute and secret instructions from his master as to the deportment he was to observe upon this solemn occasion and afterward. This paper, written in Philip's own hand, had been delivered to Eboli on the very day of his visit to Berghen, and bore the superscription that it was not to be read nor opened till the messenger who brought it had left his presence. It directed the prince, if it should be evident that the marquis was past recovery, to promise him, in the king's name, the permission of returning to the Netherlands. Should, however, a possibility of his surviving appear, Eboli was only to hold out a hope that such permission might eventually be obtained. In case of the death of Berghen, the prince was immediately to confer with the grand inquisitor and with the Count of Feria, upon the measures to be taken for his obsequies. It might seem advisable, in that event, to exhibit the regret which the king and his ministers felt for his death and the great esteem in which they held the nobles of the Netherlands. At the same time, Eboli was further instructed to confer with the same personages as to the most efficient means for preventing the escape of Baron Montigny, to keep a vigilant eye upon his movements, and to give general directions to governors and to postmasters
to intercept his flight, should it be attempted. Finally, in case of Berghen’s
death, the prince was directed to dispatch a special messenger, apparently on
his own responsibility, and as if in the absence and without the knowledge of
the king, to inform the Duchess of Parma of the event, and to urge her
immediately to take possession of the city of Bergen-op-Zoom, and of all other
property belonging to the Marquis, until it should be ascertained whether it
were not possible to convict him, after death, of treason, and to confiscate his
estates accordingly.

Such were the instructions of Philip to Eboli, and, precisely in accordance with
the program, was the horrible comedy enacted at the deathbed of the envoy.
Three days after his parting interview with his disinterested friend, the marquis
was a corpse. Before his limbs were cold, a messenger was on his way to
Brussels, instructing the regent to sequestrate his property, and to arrest,
upon suspicion of heresy, the youthful kinsman and niece, who, by the will of
the marquis, were to be united in marriage and to share his estate. The whole
drama, beginning with the death scene, was enacted according to order.
Before the arrival of Alva in the Netherlands, the property of the marquis was
in the hands of the government, awaiting the confiscation, which was but for a
brief season delayed, while on the other hand, Baron Montigny, Berghen’s
companion in doom, who was not, however, so easily to be carried off by
homesickness, was closely confined in the alcazar of Segovia, never to leave a
Spanish prison alive. There is something pathetic in the delusion in which
Montigny and his brother, the Count Horn, both indulged, each believing that
the other was out of harm’s way, the one by his absence from the Netherlands,
the other by his absence from Spain, while both, involved in the same meshes,
were rapidly and surely approaching their fate.

In the same dispatch of the ninth of September, in which the duke
communicated to Philip the capture of Egmont and Horn, he announced to him
his determination to establish a new court for the trial of crimes committed
during the recent period of troubles. This wonderful tribunal was accordingly
created with the least possible delay. It was called the Council of Troubles, but
it soon acquired the terrible name, by which it will be forever known in history,
of the Blood-Council. It superseded all other institutions. Every court, from
those of the municipal magistracies up to the supreme councils of the
provinces, were forbidden to take cognizance in future of any cause growing
out of the late troubles. The council of state, although it was not formally
disbanded, fell into complete desuetude, its members being occasionally
summoned into Alva’s private chambers in an irregular manner, while its
principal functions were usurped by the Blood-Council. Not only citizens of
every province, but the municipal bodies and even the sovereign provincial
estates themselves, were compelled to plead, like humble individuals, before
this new and extraordinary tribunal. It is unnecessary to allude to the absolute
violation which was thus committed of all charters, laws, and privileges,
because the very creation of the council was a bold and brutal proclamation
that those laws and privileges were at an end. The constitution or maternal principle of this suddenly erected court was of a twofold nature. It defined and it punished the crime of treason. The definitions, couched in eighteen articles, declared it to be treason to have delivered or signed any petition against the new bishops, the Inquisition, or the edicts; to have tolerated public preaching under any circumstances; to have omitted resistance to the image-breaking, to the field-preaching, or to the presentation of the Request by the nobles, and "either through sympathy or surprise" to have asserted that the king did not possess the right to deprive all the provinces of their liberties, or to have maintained that this present tribunal was bound to respect in any manner any laws or any charters. In these brief and simple, but comprehensive terms, was the crime of high treason defined. The punishment was still more briefly, simply, and comprehensively stated, for it was instant death in all cases. So well too did this new and terrible engine perform its work, that in less than three months from the time of its erection, eighteen hundred human beings had suffered death by its summary proceedings; some of the highest, the noblest, and the most virtuous in the land among the number; nor had it then manifested the slightest indication of faltering in its dread career.

Yet, strange to say, this tremendous court, thus established upon the ruins of all the ancient institutions of the country, had not been provided with even a nominal authority from any source whatever. The king had granted it no letters patent or charter, nor had even the Duke of Alva thought it worthwhile to grant any commissions either in his own name or as captain-general, to any of the members composing the board. The Blood-Council was merely an informal club, of which the duke was perpetual president, while the other members were all appointed by himself.

Of these subordinate councillors, two had the right of voting, subject, however, in all cases to his final decision, while the rest of the number did not vote at all. It had not, therefore, in any sense, the character of a judicial, legislative, or executive tribunal, but was purely a board of advice by which the bloody labors of the duke were occasionally lightened as to detail, while not a feather’s weight of power or of responsibility was removed from his shoulders. He reserved for himself the final decision upon all causes which should come before the council, and stated his motives for so doing with grim simplicity. “Two reasons,” he wrote to the king, “have determined me thus to limit the power of the tribunal; the first that, not knowing its members, I might be easily deceived by them; the second, that the men of law only condemn for crimes which are proved; whereas your Majesty knows that affairs of state are governed by very different rules from the laws which they have here.”

It being, therefore, the object of the duke to compose a body of men who would be of assistance to him in condemning for crimes which could not be proved, and in slipping over statutes which were not to be recognized, it must be confessed that he was not unfortunate in the appointments which he made
to the office of councillors. In this task of appointment he had the assistance of the experienced Viglius. That learned jurisconsult, with characteristic lubricity, had evaded the dangerous honor for himself, but he nominated a number of persons from whom the duke selected his list. The sacerdotal robes which he had so recently and so “craftily” assumed, furnished his own excuse, and in his letters to his faithful Hopper he repeatedly congratulated himself upon his success in keeping himself at a distance from so bloody and perilous a post.

It is impossible to look at the conduct of the distinguished Frisian at this important juncture without contempt. Bent only upon saving himself, his property, and his reputation, he did not hesitate to bend before the “most illustrious Duke,” as he always denominatated him, with fulsome and fawning homage. While he declined to dip his own fingers in the innocent blood which was about to flow in torrents, he did not object to officiate at the initiatory preliminaries of the great Netherland holocaust. His decent and dainty demeanor seems even more offensive than the jocularity of the real murderers. Conscious that no man knew the laws and customs of the Netherlands better than himself, he had the humble effrontery to observe that it was necessary for him at that moment silently to submit his own unskillfulness to the superior judgment and knowledge of others.

Having at last been relieved from the stone of Sisyphus, which, as he plaintively expressed himself, he had been rolling for twenty years, having, by the arrival of Tisnacq, obtained his discharge as president of the state council, he was yet not unwilling to retain the emoluments and the rank of president of the privy council, although both offices had become sinecures since the erection of the Council of Blood. Although his life had been spent in administrative and judicial employments, he did not blush upon a matter of constitutional law to defer to the authority of such jurisconsults as the Duke of Alva and his two Spanish bloodhounds, Vargas and Del Rio.

He did not like, he observed, in his confidential correspondence, to gainsay the duke, when maintaining, that in cases of treason, the privileges of Brabant were powerless, although he mildly doubted whether the Brabantines would agree with the doctrine. He often thought, he said, of remedies for restoring the prosperity of the provinces, but in action he only assisted the duke, to the best of his abilities, in arranging the Blood-Council. He wished well to his country, but he was more anxious for the favor of Alva. “I rejoice,” said he, in one of his letters, “that the most illustrious Duke has written to the king in praise of my obsequiousness; when I am censured here for so reverently cherishing him, it is a consolation that my services to the king and to the governor are not unappreciated there.” Indeed, the duke of Alva, who had originally suspected the president’s character, seemed at last overcome by his indefatigable and cringing homage. He wrote to the king, in whose good graces the learned doctor was most anxious at that portentous period to maintain himself, that the president was very serviceable and diligent, and that he
deserved to receive a crumb of comfort from the royal hand. Philip, in consequence, wrote in one of his letters a few lines of vague compliment, which could be shown to Viglius, according to Alva’s suggestion. It is, however, not a little characteristic of the Spanish court and of the Spanish monarch, that, on the very day before, he had sent to the captain-general a few documents of very different import. In order, as he said, that the duke might be ignorant of nothing which related to the Netherlands, he forwarded to him copies of the letters written by Margaret of Parma from Brussels, three years before. These letters, as it will be recollected, contained an account of the secret investigations which the duchess had made as to the private character and opinions of Viglius—at the very moment when he apparently stood highest in her confidence—and charged him with heresy, swindling, and theft. Thus the painstaking and time-serving president, with all his learning and experience, was successively the dupe of Margaret and of Alva, whom he so obsequiously courted, and always of Philip, whom he so feared and worshipped.

With his assistance, the list of blood-councillors was quickly completed. No one who was offered the office refused it. Noircarmes and Berlaymont accepted with very great eagerness. Several presidents and councillors of the different provincial tribunals were appointed, but all the Netherlanders were men of straw. Two Spaniards, Del Rio and Vargas, were the only members who could vote, while their decisions, as already stated, were subject to reversal by Alva. Del Rio was a man without character or talent, a mere tool in the hands of his superiors, but Juan de Vargas was a terrible reality.

No better man could have been found in Europe for the post to which he was thus elevated. To shed human blood was, in his opinion, the only important business and the only exhilarating pastime of life. His youth had been stained with other crimes. He had been obliged to retire from Spain, because of his violation of an orphan child to whom he was guardian, but, in his manhood, he found no pleasure but in murder. He executed Alva’s bloody work with an industry which was almost superhuman, and with a merriment which would have shamed a demon. His execrable jests ring through the blood and smoke and death-cries of those days of perpetual sacrifice. He was proud to be the double of the iron-hearted duke, and acted so uniformly in accordance with his views, that the right of revision remained but nominal. There could be no possibility of collision where the subaltern was only anxious to surpass an incomparable superior. The figure of Vargas rises upon us through the mist of three centuries with terrible distinctness. Even his barbarous grammar has not been forgotten, and his crimes against syntax and against humanity have acquired the same immortality. “Heretici fraxerunt templa, boni nihili faxerunt contra, ergo debent omnes patibulare,”* was the comprehensive but barbarous formula of a man who murdered the Latin language as ruthlessly as he slaughtered his contemporaries.

*Heretici fraxerunt templa, boni nihili faxerunt contra, ergo debent omnes patibulare,* was the comprehensive but barbarous formula of a man who murdered the Latin language as ruthlessly as he slaughtered his contemporaries.
* "The heretics destroyed the temples, the good men did nothing to prevent it, therefore they should all be hanged."

Among the ciphers who composed the rest of the board, the Flemish Councillor Hessels was the one whom the duke most respected. He was not without talent or learning, but the duke only valued him for his cruelty. Being allowed to take but little share in the deliberations, Hessels was accustomed to doze away his afternoon hours at the council table, and when awakened from his nap in order that he might express an opinion on the case then before the court, was wont to rub his eyes and to call out "Ad patibulum, ad patibulum," ("to the gallows with him, to the gallows with him"), with great fervor, but in entire ignorance of the culprit's name or the merits of the case. His wife, naturally disturbed that her husband's waking and sleeping hours were alike absorbed with this hangman's work, more than once ominously expressed her hope to him, that he, whose head and heart were thus engrossed with the gibbet, might not one day come to hang upon it himself, a gloomy prophecy which the Future most terribly fulfilled.

The Council of Blood, thus constituted, held its first session on the 20th of September, at the lodgings of Alva. Springing completely grown and armed to the teeth from the head of its inventor, the new tribunal—at the very outset in possession of all its vigor—forthwith began to manifest a terrible activity in accomplishing the objects of its existence. The councillors having been sworn to "eternal secrecy as to any thing which should be transacted at the board, and having likewise made oath to denounce any one of their number who should violate the pledge," the court was considered as organized. Alva worked therein seven hours daily. It may be believed that the subordinates were not spared, and that their office proved no sinecure. Their labors, however, were not encumbered by antiquated forms. As this supreme and only tribunal for all the Netherlands had no commission or authority save the will of the captain-general, so it was also thought a matter of supererogation to establish a set of rules and orders such as might be useful in less independent courts. The forms of proceeding were brief and artless. There was a rude organization by which a crowd of commissioners, acting as inferior officers of the council, were spread over the provinces, whose business was to collect information concerning all persons who might be incriminated for participation in the recent troubles. The greatest crime, however, was to be rich, and one which could be expiated by no virtues, however signal. Alva was bent upon proving himself as accomplished a financier as he was indisputably a consummate commander, and he had promised his master an annual income of 500,000 ducats from the confiscations which were to accompany the executions.

It was necessary that the blood torrent should flow at once through the Netherlands, in order that the promised golden river, a yard deep, according to his vaunt, should begin to irrigate the thirsty soil of Spain. It is obvious, from the fundamental laws which were made to define treason at the same moment in which they established the council, that any man might be at any instant summoned to the court. Every man, whether innocent or guilty, whether papist
or Protestant, felt his head shaking on his shoulders. If he were wealthy, there seemed no remedy but flight, which was now almost impossible, from the heavy penalties affixed by the new edict upon all carriers, shipmasters, and wagoners, who should aid in the escape of heretics.

A certain number of these commissioners were particularly instructed to collect information as to the treason of Orange, Louis Nassau, Brederode, Egmont, Horn, Culemberg, Van den Berg, Berghen, and Montigny. Upon such information the proceedings against those distinguished seigniors were to be summarily instituted. Particular councillors of the Court of Blood were charged with the arrangement of these important suits, but the commissioners were to report in the first instance to the duke himself, who afterwards returned the paper into the hands of his subordinates.

With regard to the inferior and miscellaneous cases which were daily brought in incredible profusion before the tribunal, the same preliminaries were observed, by way of aping the proceedings in courts of justice. Alva sent the cart-loads of information which were daily brought to him, but which neither he nor any other man had time to read, to be disposed of by the board of councillors. It was the duty of the different subalterns, who, as already stated, had no right of voting, to prepare reports upon the cases. Nothing could be more summary. Information was lodged against a man, or against a hundred men, in one document. The duke sent the papers to the council, and the inferior councillors reported at once to Vargas. If the report concluded with a recommendation of death to the man, or the hundred men in question, Vargas instantly approved it, and execution was done upon the man, or the hundred men, within forty-eight hours. If the report had any other conclusion, it was immediately sent back for revision, and the reporters were overwhelmed with reproaches by the president.

Such being the method of operation, it may be supposed that the councillors were not allowed to slacken in their terrible industry. The register of every city, village, and hamlet throughout the Netherlands showed the daily lists of men, women, and children thus sacrificed at the shrine of the demon who had obtained the mastery over this unhappy land. It was not often that an individual was of sufficient importance to be tried—if trial it could be called—by himself. It was found more expeditious to send them in batches to the furnace. Thus, for example, on the fourth of January, eighty-four inhabitants of Valenciennes were condemned; on another day, ninety-five miscellaneous individuals, from different places in Flanders; on another, forty-six inhabitants of Malines; on another, thirty-five persons from different localities, and so on.

The evening of Shrovetide, a favorite holiday in the Netherlands, afforded an occasion for arresting and carrying off a vast number of doomed individuals at a single swoop. It was correctly supposed that the burghers, filled with wine and wassail, to which perhaps the persecution under which they lived lent an additional and horrible stimulus, might be easily taken from their beds in great numbers, and be delivered over at once to the council. The plot was ingenious, the net was spread accordingly. Many of the doomed were, however, luckily warned of the terrible termination which was impending over their festival,
and bestowed themselves in safety for a season. A prize of about five hundred prisoners was all which rewarded the sagacity of the enterprise. It is needless to add that they were all immediately executed. It is a wearisome and odious task to ransack the moldy records of three centuries ago, in order to reproduce the obscure names of the thousands who were thus sacrificed. The dead have buried their dead, and are forgotten. It is likewise hardly necessary to state that the proceedings before the council were all ex parte, and that an information was almost inevitably followed by a death-warrant. It sometimes happened even that the zeal of the councillors outstripped the industry of the commissioners. The sentences were occasionally in advance of the docket. Thus upon one occasion a man’s case was called for trial, but before the investigation was commenced it was discovered that he had been already executed. A cursory examination of the papers proved, moreover, as usual, that the culprit had committed no crime. "No matter for that," said Vargas, jocosely, "if he has died innocent, it will be all the better for him when he takes his trial in the other world."

But, however the councillors might indulge in these gentle jests among themselves, it was obvious that innocence was in reality impossible, according to the rules which had been laid down regarding treason. The practice was in accordance with the precept, and persons were daily executed with senseless pretexts, which was worse than executions with no pretexts at all. Thus Peter de Witt of Amsterdam was beheaded, because at one of the tumults in that city he had persuaded a rioter not to fire upon a magistrate. This was taken as sufficient proof that he was a man in authority among the rebels, and he was accordingly put to death. Madame Juriaen, who, in 1566, had struck with her slipper a little wooden image of the Virgin, together with her maidservant, who had witnessed without denouncing the crime, were both drowned by the hangman in a hogshead placed on the scaffold.

Death, even, did not in all cases place a criminal beyond the reach of the executioner. Egbert Meynartzoon, a man of high official rank, had been condemned, together with two colleagues, on an accusation of collecting money in a Lutheran church. He died in prison of dropsy. The sheriff was indignant with the physician, because, in spite of cordials and strengthening prescriptions, the culprit had slipped through his fingers before he had felt those of the hangman. He consoled himself by placing the body on a chair, and having the dead man beheaded in company with his colleagues.

Thus the whole country became a charnel-house; the death-bell tolled hourly in every village; not a family but was called to mourn for its dearest relatives, while the survivors stalked listlessly about, the ghosts of their former selves, among the wrecks of their former homes. The spirit of the nation, within a few months after the arrival of Alva, seemed hopelessly broken. The blood of its best and bravest had already stained the scaffold; the men to whom it had been accustomed to look for guidance and protection, were dead, in prison, or in exile. Submission had ceased to be of any avail, flight was impossible, and the spirit of vengeance had alighted at every fireside. The mourners went daily about the streets, for there was hardly a house which had not been made
desolate. The scaffolds, the gallows, the funeral piles, which had been sufficient in ordinary times, furnished now an entirely inadequate machinery for the incessant executions. Columns and stakes in every street, the doorposts of private houses, the fences in the fields were laden with human carcasses, strangled, burned, beheaded. The orchards in the country bore on many a tree the hideous fruit of human bodies.

Thus the Netherlands were crushed, and but for the stringency of the tyranny which had now closed their gates, would have been depopulated. The grass began to grow in the streets of those cities which had recently nourished so many artisans. In all those great manufacturing and industrial marts, where the tide of human life had throbbed so vigorously, there now reigned the silence and the darkness of midnight. It was at this time that the learned Viglius wrote to his friend Hopper, that all venerated the prudence and gentleness of the Duke of Alva. Such were among the first-fruits of that prudence and that gentleness.

The Duchess of Parma had been kept in a continued state of irritation. She had not ceased for many months to demand her release from the odious position of a cipher in a land where she had so lately been sovereign, and she had at last obtained it. Philip transmitted his acceptance of her resignation by the same courier who brought Alva’s commission to be governor-general in her place. The letters to the duchess were full of conventional compliments for her past services, accompanied, however, with a less barren and more acceptable acknowledgment, in the shape of a life income of 14,000 ducats instead of the 8,000 hitherto enjoyed by her Highness.

In addition to this liberal allowance, of which she was never to be deprived, except upon receiving full payment of 140,000 ducats, she was presented with 25,000 florins by the estates of Brabant, and with 30,000 by those of Flanders. With these substantial tokens of the success of her nine years’ fatigue and intolerable anxiety, she at last took her departure from the Netherlands, having communicated the dissolution of her connection with the provinces by a farewell letter to the Estates dated December 9, 1567. Within a few weeks afterwards, escorted by the Duke of Alva across the frontier of Brabant, attended by a considerable deputation of Flemish nobility into Germany, and accompanied to her journey’s end at Parma by the Count and Countess of Mansfeld, she finally closed her eventful career in the Netherlands.

The horrors of the succeeding administration proved beneficial to her reputation. Upon the dark ground of succeeding years the lines which recorded her history seemed written with letters of light. Yet her conduct in the Netherlands offers but few points for approbation, and many for indignant censure. That she was not entirely destitute of feminine softness and sentiments of bounty, her parting dispatch to her brother proved. In that letter she recommended to him a course of clemency and forgiveness, and reminded him that the nearer kings approach to God in station, the more they should endeavor to imitate him in his attributes of benignity. But the language of this farewell was more tender than had been the spirit of her government. One looks in vain, too, through the general atmosphere of kindness which pervades
the epistle, for a special recommendation of those distinguished and doomed seigniors, whose attachment to her person and whose chivalrous and conscientious endeavors to fulfil her own orders, had placed them upon the edge of that precipice from which they were shortly to be hurled. The men who had restrained her from covering herself with disgrace by a precipitate retreat from the post of danger, and who had imperiled their lives by obedience to her express instructions, had been long languishing in solitary confinement, never to be terminated except by a traitor’s death—yet we search in vain for a kind word in their behalf.

Meantime the second civil war in France had broken out. The hollow truce by which the Guise party and the Huguenots had partly pretended to deceive each other was hastened to its end, among other causes, by the march of Alva to the Netherlands. The Huguenots had taken alarm, for they recognized the fellowship which united their foes in all countries against the Reformation, and Condé and Coligny knew too well that the same influence which had brought Alva to Brussels would soon create an exterminating army against their followers. Hostilities were resumed with more bitterness than ever. The battle of St. Denis—fierce, fatal, but indecisive—was fought. The octogenarian hero, Montmorency, fighting like a foot soldier, refusing to yield his sword, and replying to the respectful solicitations of his nearest enemy by dashing his teeth down his throat with the butt-end of his pistol, the hero of so many battles, whose defeat at St. Quintin had been the fatal point in his career, had died at last in his armor, bravely but not gloriously, in conflict with his own countrymen, led by his own heroic nephew. The military control of the Catholic party was completely in the hand of the Guises; the Chancellor de l’Hôpital had abandoned the court after a last and futile effort to reconcile contending factions, which no human power could unite; the Huguenots had possessed themselves of Rochelle and of other strong places, and, under the guidance of adroit statesmen and accomplished generals, were pressing the Most Christian monarch hard in the very heart of his kingdom.

As early as the middle of October, while still in Antwerp, Alva had received several secret agents of the French monarch, then closely beleaguered in his capital. Cardinal Lorraine offered to place several strong places of France in the hands of the Spaniard, and Alva had written to Philip that he was disposed to accept the offer, and to render the service. The places thus held would be a guarantee for his expenses, he said, while in case King Charles and his brother should die, "their possession would enable Philip to assert his own claim to the French crown in right of his wife, the Salic law being merely a pleasantry."

The queen dowager, adopting now a very different tone from that which characterized her conversation at the Bayonne interview, wrote to Alva, that, if for want of 2,000 Spanish musketeers, which she requested him to furnish, she should be obliged to succumb, she chose to disavow herself in advance before God and Christian princes for the peace which she should be obliged to make. The duke wrote to her in reply, that it was much better to have a kingdom ruined in preserving it for God and the king by war, than to have it kept entire without war, to the profit of the devil and of his followers. He was
also reported on another occasion to have reminded her of the Spanish proverb—that the head of one salmon is worth those of a hundred frogs. The hint, if it were really given, was certainly destined to be acted upon.

The duke not only furnished Catherine with advice, but with the musketeers which she had solicited. Two thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse, under the Count of Aremberg, attended by a choice band of the Catholic nobility of the Netherlands, had joined the royal camp at Paris before the end of the year, to take their part in the brief hostilities by which the second treacherous peace was to be preceded.

Meantime, Alva was not unmindful of the business which had served as a pretext in the arrest of the two counts. The fortifications of the principal cities were pushed on with great rapidity. The memorable citadel of Antwerp in particular had already been commenced in October under the superintendence of the celebrated engineers, Pacheco and Gabriel de Cerbelloni. In a few months it was completed, at a cost of 1,400,000 florins, of which sum the citizens, in spite of their remonstrances, were compelled to contribute more than one quarter. The sum of 400,000 florins was forced from the burghers by a tax upon all hereditary property within the municipality.

Two thousand workmen were employed daily in the construction of this important fortress, which was erected, as its position most plainly manifested, not to protect, but to control the commercial capital of the provinces. It stood at the edge of the city, only separated from its walls by an open esplanade. It was the most perfect pentagon in Europe, having one of its sides resting on the Scheld, two turned towards the city, and two towards the open country. Five bastions, with walls of hammered stone, connected by curtains of turf and masonry, surrounded by walls measuring a league in circumference, and by an outer moat fed by the Scheld, enclosed a spacious enceinte, where a little church with many small lodging-houses, shaded by trees and shrubbery, nestled among the bristling artillery, as if to mimic the appearance of a peaceful and pastoral village. To four of the five bastions, the captain-general, with characteristic ostentation, gave his own names and titles. One was called the duke, the second Ferdinando, a third Toledo, a fourth Alva, while the fifth was baptized with the name of the ill-fated engineer, Pacheco. The water-gate was decorated with the escutcheon of Alva, surrounded by his Golden Fleece collar, with its pendant lamb of God—a symbol of blasphemous irony, which still remains upon the fortress, to recall the image of the tyrant and murderer.

Each bastion was honeycombed with casemates and subterranean storehouses, and capable of containing within its bowels a vast supply of provisions, munitions, and soldiers. Such was the celebrated citadel built to tame the turbulent spirit of Antwerp, at the cost of those whom it was to terrify and to insult.

CHAPTER 2
The First Battles of the Eighty Years’ War and the Executions of Egmont and Horn
Late in October, the Duke of Alva made his triumphant entry into the new fortress. During his absence, which was to continue during the remainder of the year, he had ordered the Secretary Courteville and the Councillor del Rio to superintend the commission, which was then actually engaged in collecting materials for the prosecutions to be instituted against the Prince of Orange and the other nobles who had abandoned the country. Accordingly, soon after his return, on the 19th of January, 1568, the prince, his brother Louis of Nassau, his brother-in-law, Count Van den Berg, the Count Hoogstraaten, the Count Culemburg, and the Baron Montigny, were summoned in the name of Alva to appear before the Blood-Council, within thrice fourteen days from the date of the proclamation, under pain of perpetual banishment with confiscation of their estates. It is needless to say that these seigniors did not obey the summons. They knew full well that their obedience would be rewarded only by death.

The charges against the Prince of Orange, which were drawn up in ten articles, stated, chiefly and briefly, that he had been, and was, the head and front of the rebellion; that as soon as his Majesty had left the Netherlands, he had begun his machinations to make himself master of the country and to expel his sovereign by force, if he should attempt to return to the provinces; that he had seduced his Majesty’s subjects by false pretenses that the Spanish Inquisition was about to be introduced; that he had been the secret encourager and director of Brederode and the confederated nobles; and that when sent to Antwerp, in the name of the regent, to put down the rebellion, he had encouraged heresy and accorded freedom of religion to the Reformers. The articles against Hoogstraaten and the other gentlemen were of similar tenor. It certainly was not a slender proof of the calm effrontery of the government thus to see Alva’s proclamation charging it as a crime upon Orange that he had inveigled the lieges into revolt by a false assertion that the Inquisition was about to be established, when letters from the duke to Philip, and from Granvelle to Philip, dated upon nearly the same day, advised the immediate restoration of the Inquisition as soon as an adequate number of executions had paved the way for the measure. It was also a sufficient indication of a reckless despotism, that while the duchess, who had made the memorable Accord with the Religionists, received a flattering letter of thanks and a farewell pension of 14,000 ducats yearly, those who, by her orders, had acted upon that treaty as the basis of their negotiations, were summoned to lay down their heads upon the block.

The prince replied to this summons by a brief and somewhat contemptuous plea to the jurisdiction. As a Knight of the Fleece, as a member of the Germanic Empire, as a sovereign prince in France, as a citizen of the Netherlands, he rejected the authority of Alva and of his self-constituted tribunal. His innocence he was willing to establish before competent courts and righteous judges. As a Knight of the Fleece, he said he could be tried only by his peers, the brethren of the Order, and, for that purpose, he could be summoned only by the king as Head of the Chapter, with the sanction of at least six of his fellow knights. In conclusion, he offered to appear before his
Imperial Majesty, the Electors, and other members of the Empire, or before the Knights of the Golden Fleece. In the latter case, he claimed the right, under the statutes of that order, to be placed while the trial was pending, not in a solitary prison, as had been the fate of Egmont and of Horn, but under the friendly charge and protection of the brethren themselves. The letter was addressed to the procurator-general, and a duplicate was forwarded to the duke.

From the general tenor of the document, it is obvious both that the prince was not yet ready to throw down the gauntlet to his sovereign, nor to proclaim his adhesion to the new religion. On departing from the Netherlands in the spring, he had said openly that he was still in possession of 60,000 florins yearly, and that he should commence no hostilities against Philip, so long as he did not disturb him in his honor or his estates. Far-seeing politician, if man ever were, he knew the course whither matters were inevitably tending, but he knew how much strength was derived from putting an adversary irretrievably in the wrong. He still maintained an attitude of dignified respect towards the monarch, while he hurled back with defiance the insolent summons of the viceroy. Moreover, the period had not yet arrived for him to break publicly with the ancient faith. Statesman, rather than religionist, at this epoch, he was not disposed to affect a more complete conversion than the one which he had experienced. He was, in truth, not for a new doctrine, but for liberty of conscience. His mind was already expanding beyond any dogmas of the age. The man whom his enemies stigmatized as atheist and renegade, was really in favor of toleration, and, therefore, the more deeply criminal in the eyes of all religious parties.

Events, personal to himself, were rapidly to place him in a position from which he might enter the combat with honor. His character had already been attacked, his property threatened with confiscation. His closest ties of family were now to be severed by the hand of the tyrant. His eldest child, the Count de Buren, torn from his protection, was to be carried into indefinite captivity in a foreign land. It was a remarkable oversight, for a person of his sagacity, that, upon his own departure from the provinces, he should leave his son, then a boy of thirteen years, to pursue his studies at the college of Louvain. Thus exposed to the power of the government, he was soon seized as a hostage for the good behavior of the father. Granvelle appears to have been the first to recommend the step in a secret letter to Philip, but Alva scarcely needed prompting. Accordingly, upon the 13th of February, 1568, the duke sent the seignior de Chassy to Louvain, attended by four officers and by twelve archers. He was furnished with a letter to the Count de Buren, in which that young nobleman was requested to place implicit confidence in the bearer of the dispatch, and was informed that the desire which his Majesty had to see him educated for his service, was the cause of the communication which the Seignior de Chassy was about to make.

That gentleman was, moreover, minutely instructed as to his method of proceeding in this memorable case of kidnapping. He was to present the letter to the young count in presence of his tutor. He was to invite him to Spain in the
name of his Majesty. He was to assure him that his Majesty’s commands were solely with a view to his own good, and that he was not commissioned to arrest, but only to escort him. He was to allow the count to be accompanied only by two valets, two pages, a cook, and a keeper of accounts. He was, however, to induce his tutor to accompany him, at least to the Spanish frontier. He was to arrange that the second day after his arrival at Louvain, the count should set out for Antwerp, where he was to lodge with Count Lodron, after which they were to proceed to Flushing, whence they were to embark for Spain. At that city he was to deliver the young prince to the person whom he would find there, commissioned for that purpose by the duke. As soon as he had made the first proposition at Louvain to the count, he was, with the assistance of his retinue, to keep the most strict watch over him day and night, but without allowing the supervision to be perceived.

The plan was carried out admirably, and in strict accordance with the program. It was fortunate, however, for the kidnappers, that the young prince proved favorably disposed to the plan. He accepted the invitation of his captors with alacrity. He even wrote to thank the governor for his friendly offices in his behalf. He received with boyish gratification the festivities with which Lodron enlivened his brief sojourn at Antwerp, and he set forth without reluctance for that gloomy and terrible land of Spain, whence so rarely a Flemish traveler had returned. A changeling, as it were, from his cradle, he seemed completely transformed by his Spanish tuition, for he was educated and not sacrificed by Philip. When he returned to the Netherlands, after a twenty years’ residence in Spain, it was difficult to detect in his gloomy brow, saturnine character, and Jesuitical habits, a trace of the generous spirit which characterized that race of heroes, the house of Orange-Nassau.

Philip had expressed some anxiety as to the consequences of this capture upon the governments of Germany. Alva, however, re-assured his sovereign upon that point, by reason of the extreme docility of the captive, and the quiet manner in which the arrest had been conducted. At that particular juncture, moreover, it would have been difficult for the government of the Netherlands to excite surprise anywhere, except by an act of clemency. The president and the deputation of professors from the university of Louvain waited upon Vargas, by whom, as acting president of the Blood-Council, the arrest had nominally been made, with a remonstrance that the measure was in gross violation of their statutes and privileges. That personage, however, with his usual contempt both for law and Latin, answered brutally, “Non curamus vestros privilegios,” and with this memorable answer, abruptly closed his interview with the trembling pedants.

Petitions now poured into the council from all quarters, abject recantations from terror-stricken municipalities, humble intercessions in behalf of doomed and imprisoned victims. To a deputation of the magistracy of Antwerp, who came with a prayer for mercy in behalf of some of their most distinguished fellow citizens, then in prison, the duke gave a most passionate and ferocious reply. He expressed his wonder that the citizens of Antwerp, that hotbed of treason, should dare to approach him in behalf of traitors and heretics. Let
them look to it in future, he continued, or he would hang every man in the whole city, to set an example to the rest of the country; for his Majesty would rather the whole land should become an uninhabited wilderness, than that a single Dissenter should exist within its territory.

Events now marched with rapidity. The monarch seemed disposed literally to execute the threat of his viceroy. Early in the year, the most sublime sentence of death was promulgated which has ever been pronounced since the creation of the world. The Roman tyrant wished that his enemies’ heads were all upon a single neck, that he might strike them off at a blow; the inquisition assisted Philip to place the heads of all his Netherland subjects upon a single neck for the same fell purpose. Upon the 16th of February, 1568, a sentence of the Holy Office condemned all the inhabitants of the Netherlands to death as heretics.

From this universal doom only a few persons, especially named, were excepted. A proclamation of the king, dated ten days later, confirmed this decree of the inquisition, and ordered it to be carried into instant execution, without regard to age, sex, or condition. This is probably the most concise death-warrant that was ever framed. Three millions of people, men, women, and children, were sentenced to the scaffold in three lines; and, as it was well known that these were not harmless thunders, like some bulls of the Vatican, but serious and practical measures, which it was intended should be enforced, the horror which they produced may be easily imagined. It was hardly the purpose of government to compel the absolute completion of the wholesale plan in all its length and breadth, yet in the horrible times upon which they had fallen, the Netherlanders might be excused for believing that no measure was too monstrous to be fulfilled. At any rate, it was certain that when all were condemned, any might at a moment’s warning be carried to the scaffold, and this was precisely the course adopted by the authorities.

Under this universal decree the industry of the Blood-Council might now seem superfluous. Why should not these mock prosecutions be dispensed with against individuals, now that a common sentence had swallowed the whole population in one vast grave? Yet it may be supposed that if the exertions of the commissioners and councillors served no other purpose, they at least furnished the government with valuable evidence as to the relative wealth and other circumstances of the individual victims. The leading thought of the government being that persecution, judiciously managed, might fructify into a golden harvest, it was still desirable to persevere in the cause in which already such bloody progress had been made.

And under this new decree, the executions certainly did not slacken. Men in the highest and the humblest positions were daily and hourly dragged to the stake. Alva, in a single letter to Philip, coolly estimated the number of executions which were to take place immediately after the expiration of holy week, "at eight hundred heads." Many a citizen, convicted of a hundred thousand florins and of no other crime, saw himself suddenly tied to a horse’s tail, with his hands fastened behind him, and so dragged to the gallows. But although wealth was an unpardonable sin, poverty proved rarely a protection. Reasons sufficient could always be found for dooming the starveling laborer as
well as the opulent burgher. To avoid the disturbances created in the streets by the frequent harangues or exhortations addressed to the bystanders by the victims on their way to the scaffold, a new gag was invented. The tongue of each prisoner was screwed into an iron ring, and then seared with a hot iron. The swelling and inflammation which were the immediate result, prevented the tongue from slipping through the ring, and of course effectually precluded all possibility of speech.

Although the minds of men were not yet prepared for concentrated revolt against the tyranny under which they were languishing, it was not possible to suppress all sentiments of humanity, and to tread out every spark of natural indignation. Unfortunately, in the bewilderment and misery of this people, the first development of a forcible and organized resistance was of a depraved and malignant character. Extensive bands of marauders and highway robbers sprang into existence, who called themselves the Wild Beggars, and who, wearing the mask and the symbols of a revolutionary faction, committed great excesses in many parts of the country, robbing, plundering, and murdering. Their principal wrath was exercised against religious houses and persons. Many monasteries were robbed, many clerical persons maimed and maltreated. It became a habit to deprive priests of their noses or ears, and to tie them to the tails of horses. This was the work of ruffian gangs, whose very existence was engendered out of the social and moral putrescence to which the country was reduced, and who were willing to profit by the deep and universal hatred which was felt against Catholics and monks. An edict thundered forth by Alva, authorizing and commanding all persons to slay the wild beggars at sight, without trial or hangman, was of comparatively slight avail. An armed force of veterans actively scouring the country was more successful, and the freebooters were, for a time, suppressed.

Meantime the Counts Egmont and Horn had been kept in rigorous confinement at Ghent. Not a warrant had been read or drawn up for their arrest. Not a single preliminary investigation, not the shadow of an information had preceded the long imprisonment of two men so elevated in rank, so distinguished in the public service. After the expiration of two months, however, the duke condescended to commence a mock process against them. The councillors appointed to this work were Vargas and Del Rio, assisted by Secretary Praets. These persons visited the admiral on the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 17th of November, and Count Egmont on the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 16th of the same month; requiring them to respond to a long, confused, and rambling collection of interrogatories. They were obliged to render these replies in prison, unassisted by any advocates, on penalty of being condemned in contumaciam. The questions, awkwardly drawn up as they seemed, were yet tortuously and cunningly arranged with a view of entrapping the prisoners into self-contradiction. After this work had been completed, all the papers by which they intended to justify their answers were taken away from them. Previously, too, their houses and those of their secretaries, Bakkerzeel and Alonzo de la Loo, had been thoroughly ransacked, and every letter and document which could be found placed in the hands of government. Bakkerzeel, moreover, as
already stated, had been repeatedly placed upon the rack, for the purpose of extorting confessions which might implicate his master. These preliminaries and precautionary steps having been taken, the counts had again been left to their solitude for two months longer. On the 10th of January, each was furnished with a copy of the declarations or accusations filed against him by the procurator-general. To these documents, drawn up respectively in sixty-three, and in ninety articles, they were required, within five days' time, without the assistance of an advocate, and without consultation with any human being, to deliver a written answer, on pain, as before, of being proceeded against and condemned by default.

This order was obeyed within nearly the prescribed period and here, it may be said, their own participation in their trial ceased, while the rest of the proceedings were buried in the deep bosom of the Blood-Council. After their answers had been delivered, and not till then, the prisoners were, by an additional mockery, permitted to employ advocates. These advocates, however, were allowed only occasional interviews with their clients, and always in the presence of certain persons, especially deputed for that purpose by the duke. They were also allowed commissioners to collect evidence and take depositions, but before the witnesses were ready, a purposely premature day, the 5th of May, was fixed upon for declaring the case closed, and not a single tittle of their evidence, personal or documentary, was admitted. Their advocates petitioned for an exhibition of the evidence prepared by government, and were refused. Thus, they were forbidden to use the testimony in their favor, while that which was to be employed against them was kept secret. Finally, the proceedings were formally concluded on the first of June, and the papers laid before the duke. The mass of matter relating to these two monster processes was declared, three days afterwards to have been examined—a physical impossibility in itself—and judgment was pronounced upon the fourth of June. This issue was precipitated by the campaign of Louis Nassau in Friesland, forming a series of important events which it will be soon our duty to describe. It is previously necessary, however, to add a few words in elucidation of the two mock trials which have been thus briefly sketched.

The proceedings had been carried on, from first to last, under protest by the prisoners, under a threat of contumacy on the part of the government. Apart from the totally irresponsible and illegal character of the tribunal before which they were summoned—the Blood-Council being a private institution of Alva's without pretext or commission—these nobles acknowledged the jurisdiction of but three courts.

As Knights of the Golden Fleece, both claimed the privilege of that Order to be tried by its statutes. As a citizen and noble of Brabant, Egmont claimed the protection of the "Joyeuse Entrée," a constitution which had been sworn to by Philip and his ancestors, and by Philip more amply than by all his ancestors. As a member and Count of the Holy Roman Empire, the admiral claimed to be tried by his peers, the electors and princes of the realm.

The Countess Egmont, since her husband's arrest, and the confiscation of his estates before judgment, had been reduced to a life of poverty as well as
agon. With her eleven children, all of tender age, she had taken refuge in a convent. Frantic with despair, more utterly desolate, and more deeply wronged than high-born lady had often been before, she left no stone unturned to save her husband from his fate, or at least to obtain for him an impartial and competent tribunal. She addressed the Duke of Alva, the king, the Emperor, her brother the Elector Palatine, and many leading Knights of the Fleece. The Countess Dowager of Horn, both whose sons now lay in the jaws of death, occupied herself also with the most moving appeals to the same high personages. No pains were spared to make the triple plea to the jurisdiction valid. The leading Knights of the Fleece, Mansfeld, whose loyalty was unquestioned, and Hoogstraaten, although himself an outlaw, called upon the King of Spain to protect the statutes of the illustrious order of which he was the chief. The estates of Brabant, upon the petition of Sabina, Countess Egmont, that they would take to heart the privileges of the province, so that her husband might enjoy that protection of which the meanest citizen in the land could not be justly deprived, addressed a feeble and trembling protest to Alva, and enclosed to him the lady’s petition. The Emperor, on behalf of Count Horn, wrote personally to Philip, to claim for him a trial before the members of the realm.

It was all in vain. The conduct of Philip and his viceroy coincided in spirit with the honest brutality of Vargas. "Non curamus vestros privilegios," summed up the whole of the proceedings. Non curamus vestros privilegios had been the unanswerable reply to every constitutional argument which had been made against tyranny since Philip mounted his father’s throne. It was now the only response deemed necessary to the crowd of petitions in favor of the counts, whether they proceeded from sources humble or august. Personally, the king remained silent as the grave. In writing to the Duke of Alva, he observed that "the Emperor, the Dukes of Bavaria and Lorraine, the Duchess and the Duchess-dowager, had written to him many times, and in the most pressing manner, in favor of the Counts Horn and Egmont." He added that he had made no reply to them, nor to other Knights of the Fleece who had implored him to respect the statutes of the order, and he begged Alva "to hasten the process as fast as possible." To an earnest autograph letter, in which the Emperor, on the second of March, 1568, made a last effort to save the illustrious prisoners, he replied, that "the whole world would at last approve his conduct, but that, at any rate, he would not act differently, even if he should risk the loss of the provinces, and if the sky should fall on his head."

But little heed was paid to the remonstrances in behalf of the imperial Courts, or the privileges of Brabant. These were but cobweb impediments which, indeed, had long been brushed away. President Viglius was even pathetic on the subject of Madame Egmont’s petition to the council of Brabant. It was so bitter, he said, that the duke was slightly annoyed, and took it ill that the royal servants in that council should have his Majesty’s interests so little at heart. It seemed indecent in the eyes of the excellent Frisian, that a wife pleading for her husband, a mother for her eleven children, so soon to be fatherless, should indulge in strong language.
The statutes of the Fleece were obstacles somewhat more serious. As, however, Alva had come to the Netherlands pledged to accomplish the destruction of these two nobles, as soon as he should lay his hands upon them, it was only a question of form, and even that question was, after a little reflection, unceremoniously put aside.

To the petitions in behalf of the two counts, therefore, that they should be placed in the friendly keeping of the Order, and be tried by its statutes, the duke replied, peremptorily, that he had undertaken the cognizance of this affair by commission of his Majesty, as sovereign of the land, not as head of the Golden Fleece, that he should carry it through as it had been commenced, and that the counts should discontinue presentations of petitions upon this point.

In the embarrassment created by the stringent language of these statutes, Doctor Viglius found an opportunity to make himself very useful. Alva had been turning over the laws and regulations of the Order, but could find no loophole. The president, however, came to his rescue, and announced it as his legal opinion that the governor need concern himself no further on the subject, and that the code of the Fleece offered no legal impediment to the process. Alva immediately wrote to communicate this opinion to Philip, adding, with great satisfaction, that he should immediately make it known to the brethren of the Order, a step which was the more necessary because Egmont’s advocate had been making great trouble with these privileges, and had been protesting at every step of the proceedings. In what manner the learned president argued these troublesome statutes out of the way, has nowhere appeared, but he completely reinstated himself in favor, and the king wrote to thank him for his legal exertions.

It was now boldly declared that the statutes of the Fleece did not extend to such crimes as those with which the prisoner were charged. Alva, moreover, received an especial patent, antedated eight or nine months, by which Philip empowered him to proceed against all persons implicated in the troubles, and particularly against Knights of the Golden Fleece.

It is superfluous to observe that these were merely the arbitrary acts of a despot. It is hardly necessary to criticize such proceedings. The execution of the nobles had been settled before Alva left Spain. As they were inhabitants of a constitutional country, it was necessary to stride over the constitution. As they were Knights of the Fleece, it was necessary to set aside the statutes of the Order. The Netherland constitutions seemed so entirely annihilated already, that they could hardly be considered obstacles, but the Order of the Fleece was an august little republic of which Philip was the hereditary chief, of which emperors, kings, and great seigniors were the citizens. Tyranny might be embarrassed by such subtle and golden filaments as these, even while it crashed through municipal charters as if they had been reeds and bulrushes. Nevertheless, the king’s course was taken. Although the 13th, 14th, and 15th chapters of the Order expressly provided for the trial and punishment of brethren who had been guilty of rebellion, heresy, or treason; and although the 11th chapter, perpetual and immutable, of additions to that constitution by the Emperor Charles, conferred on the Order exclusive jurisdiction over all crimes
whatever committed by the knights, yet it was coolly proclaimed by Alva, that the crimes for which the admiral and Egmont had been arrested, were beyond the powers of the tribunal. So much for the plea to the jurisdiction. It is hardly worthwhile to look any further into proceedings which were initiated and brought to a conclusion in the manner already narrated. Nevertheless, as they were called a process, a single glance at the interior of that mass of documents can hardly be superfluous. The declaration against Count Horn, upon which, supported by invisible witnesses, he was condemned, was in the nature of a narrative. It consisted in a rehearsal of circumstances, some true and some fictitious, with five inferences. These five inferences amounted to five crimes—high treason, rebellion, conspiracy, misprision of treason, and breach of trust. The proof of these crimes was evolved, in a dim and misty manner, out of a purposely confused recital. No events, however, were recapitulated which have not been described in the course of this history. Setting out with a general statement, that the admiral, the Prince of Orange, Count Egmont, and other lords had organized a plot to expel his Majesty from the Netherlands, and to divide the provinces among themselves, the declaration afterwards proceeded to particulars. Ten of its sixty-three articles were occupied with the Cardinal Granvelle, who, by an absurd affectation, was never directly named, but called "a certain personage—a principal personage—a grand personage, of his Majesty’s state-council." None of the offenses committed against him were forgotten—the 11th of March letter, the fool’s-cap, the livery, were reproduced in the most violent colors, and the cabal against the minister was quietly assumed to constitute treason against the monarch. The admiral, it was further charged, had advised and consented to the fusion of the finance and privy councils with that of state, a measure which was clearly treasonable. He had, moreover, held interviews with the Prince of Orange, with Egmont, and other nobles, at Breda and at Hoogstraaten, at which meetings the confederacy and the petition had been engendered. That petition had been the cause of all the evils which had swept the land. "It had scandalously injured the king, by affirming that the inquisition was a tyranny to humanity, which was an infamous and unworthy proposition." The confederacy, with his knowledge and countenance, had enrolled 30,000 men. He had done nothing, any more than Orange or Egmont, to prevent the presentation of the petition. In the consultation at the state-council which ensued, both he and the prince were for leaving Brussels at once, while Count Egmont expressed an intention of going to Aix to drink the waters. Yet Count Egmont’s appearance (proceeded this indictment against another individual) exhibited not a single sign of sickness. The admiral had, moreover, drank the toast of "Vivent les gueux" on various occasions, at the Culemberg House banquet, at the private table of the Prince of Orange, at a supper at the monastery of Saint Bernard’s, at a dinner given by Burgomaster Straalen. He had sanctioned the treaties with the rebels at Duffel, by which he had clearly rendered himself guilty of high treason. He had held an interview with Orange, Egmont, and Hoogstraaten, at
Denremonde, for the treasonable purpose of arranging a levy of troops to prevent his Majesty’s entrance into the Netherlands. He had refused to come to Brussels at the request of the Duchess of Parma, when the rebels were about to present the petition. He had written to his secretary that he was thenceforth resolved to serve neither king nor kaiser. He had received from one Taffin, with marks of approbation, a paper stating that the assembling of the states-general was the only remedy for the troubles in the land. He had repeatedly affirmed that the inquisition and edicts ought to be repealed.

On his arrival at Tournay in August 1566, the people had cried, "Vivent les gueux," a proof that he liked the cry. All his transactions at Tournay, from first to last, had been criminal. He had tolerated Reformed preaching, he had forbidden Catholics and Protestants to molest each other, he had omitted to execute heretics, he had allowed the religionists to erect an edifice for public worship outside the walls. He had said, at the house of Prince Espinoy, that if the king should come into the provinces with force, he would oppose him with 15,000 troops. He had said, if his brother Montigny should be detained in Spain, he would march to his rescue at the head of 50,000 men whom he had at his command. He had on various occasions declared that “men should live according to their consciences”—as if divine and human laws were dead, and men, like wild beasts, were to follow all their lusts and desires. Lastly, he had encouraged the rebellion in Valenciennes.

Of all these crimes and misdeeds the procurator declared himself sufficiently informed, and the aforesaid defendant entirely, commonly, and publicly defamed.

Wherefore, that officer terminated his declaration by claiming “that the cause should be concluded summarily, and without figure or form of process; and that therefore, by his Excellency or his sub-delegated judges, the aforesaid defendant should be declared to have in diverse ways committed high treason, should be degraded from his dignities, and should be condemned to death, with confiscation of all his estates.”

The admiral, thus peremptorily summoned, within five days, without assistance, without documents, and from the walls of a prison, to answer to these charges, solus ex vinculis causam dicere, undertook his task with the boldness of innocence. He protested, of course, to the jurisdiction, and complained of the want of an advocate, not in order to excuse any weakness in his defense, but only any inelegance in his statement. He then proceeded flatly to deny some of the facts, to admit others, and to repel the whole treasonable inference. His answer in all essential respects was triumphant. Supported by the evidence which, alas! was not collected and published till after his death, it was impregnable.

He denied that he had ever plotted against his king, to whom he had ever been attached, but admitted that he had desired the removal of Granvelle, to whom he had always been hostile. He had, however, been an open and avowed enemy to the cardinal, and had been engaged in no secret conspiracy against his character or against his life. He denied that the livery (for which, however, he was not responsible) had been intended to ridicule the cardinal, but asserted
that it was intended to afford an example of economy to an extravagant nobility. He had met Orange and Egmont at Breda and Hoogstraaten, and had been glad to do so, for he had been long separated from them. These interviews, however, had been social, not political, for good cheer and merrymaking, not for conspiracy and treason. He had never had any connection with the confederacy; he had neither advised nor protected the petition, but, on the contrary, after hearing of the contemplated movement, had written to give notice thereof to the duchess. He was in no manner allied with Brederode, but, on the contrary, for various reasons, was not upon friendly terms with him. He had not entered his house since his return from Spain. He had not been a party to the dinner at Culemburg House. Upon that day he had dined with the Prince of Orange, with whom he was lodging, and, after dinner, they had both gone together to visit Mansfeld, who was confined with an inflamed eye. There they had met Egmont, and the three had proceeded together to Culemburg House in order to bring away Hoogstraaten, whom the confederates had compelled to dine with them, and also to warn the nobles not to commit themselves by extravagant and suspicious excesses. They had remained in the house but a few minutes, during which time the company had insisted upon their drinking a single cup to the toast of "Vivent le roy et les gueux." They had then retired, taking with them Hoogstraaten, and all thinking that they had rendered a service to the government by their visit, instead of having made themselves liable to a charge of treason. As to the cries of "Vivent les gueux" at the tables of Orange, of the Abbot of Saint Bernard, and at other places, those words had been uttered by simple, harmless fellows; and as he considered the table a place of freedom, he had not felt himself justified in rebuking the manners of his associates, particularly in houses where he was himself but a guest. As for committing treason at the Duffel meeting, he had not been there at all. He thanked God that, at that epoch, he had been absent from Brussels, for had he, as well as Orange and Egmont, been commissioned by the duchess to arrange those difficult matters, he should have considered it his duty to do as they did. He had never thought of levying troops against his Majesty. The Denremonde meeting had been held to consult upon four subjects—the affairs of Tournay; the intercepted letters of the French ambassador, Alava; the letter of Montigny, in which he warned his brother of the evil impression which the Netherland matters were making in Spain; and the affairs of Antwerp, from which city the Prince of Orange found it necessary at that moment to withdraw. With regard to his absence from Brussels, he stated that he had kept away from the Court because he was ruined. He was deeply in debt, and so complete was his embarrassment, that he had been unable in Antwerp to raise 1,000 crowns upon his property, even at an interest of one hundred percent. So far from being able to levy troops, he was hardly able to pay for his daily bread. With regard to his transactions at Tournay, he had, throughout them all, conformed himself to the instructions of Madame de Parma. As to the cry of "Vivent les gueux," he should not have cared at that moment if the populace
had cried Vive Comte Horn, for his thoughts were then occupied with more substantial matters. He had gone thither under a special commission from the duchess, and had acted under instructions daily received by her own hand. He had, by her orders, effected a temporary compromise between the two religious parties, on the basis of the Duffel treaty. He had permitted the public preaching to continue, but had not introduced it for the first time. He had allowed temples to be built outside the gates, but it was by express command of Madame, as he could prove by her letters. She had even reproved him before the council, because the work had not been accomplished with sufficient dispatch.

With regard to his alleged threat, that he would oppose the king’s entrance with 15,000 men, he answered, with astonishing simplicity, that he did not remember making any such observation, but it was impossible for a man to retain in his mind all the nonsense which he might occasionally utter. The honest admiral thought that his poverty, already pleaded, was so notorious that the charge was not worthy of a serious answer. He also treated the observation which he was charged with having made, relative to his marching to Spain with 50,000 men to rescue Montigny as “frivolous and ridiculous.” He had no power to raise a hundred men. Moreover he had rejoiced at Montigny’s detention, for he had thought that to be out of the Netherlands was to be out of harm’s way. On the whole, he claimed that in all those transactions of his which might be considered anti-Catholic, he had been governed entirely by the instructions of the regent, and by her Accord with the nobles. That Accord, as she had repeatedly stated to him, was to be kept sacred until his Majesty, by advice of the states-general, should otherwise ordain.

Finally, he observed, that law was not his vocation. He was no pettifogger, but he had endeavored loyally to conform himself to the broad and general principles of honor, justice, and truth. In a very few and simple words, he begged his judges to have regard to his deeds, and to a life of loyal service. If he had erred occasionally in those times of tumult, his intentions had ever been faithful and honorable.

The charges against Count Egmont were very similar to those against Count Horn. The answers of both defendants were nearly identical. Interrogations thus addressed to two different persons, as to circumstances which had occurred long before, could not have been thus separately, secretly, but simultaneously answered in language substantially the same, had not that language been the words of truth. Egmont was accused generally of plotting with others to expel the king from the provinces, and to divide the territory among themselves. Through a long series of ninety articles, he was accused of conspiring against the character and life of Cardinal Granvelle. He was the inventor, it was charged, of the fool’s-cap livery. He had joined in the letters to the king, demanding the prelate’s removal. He had favored the fusion of the three councils. He had maintained that the estates-general ought to be forthwith assembled, that otherwise the debts of his Majesty and of the country could never be paid, and that the provinces would go to the French, to the Germans, or to the devil.
He had asserted that he would not be instrumental in burning forty or fifty thousand men, in order that the inquisition and the edicts might be sustained. He had declared that the edicts were rigorous. He had advised the duchess to moderate them, and remove the inquisition, saying that these measures, with a pardon-general in addition, were the only means of quieting the country. He had advised the formation of the confederacy, and promised to it his protection and favor. He had counseled the presentation of the petition. He had arranged all these matters, in consultation with the other nobles, at the interviews at Breda and Hoogstraaten. He had refused the demand of Madame de Parma, to take arms in her defense. He had expressed his intention, at a most critical moment, of going to the baths of Aix for his health, although his personal appearance gave no indication of any malady whatever. He had countenanced and counseled the proceedings of the rebel nobles at Saint Trond. He had made an accord with those of "the religion" at Ghent, Bruges, and other places. He had advised the duchess to grant a pardon to those who had taken up arms.

He had maintained, in common with the Prince of Orange, at a session of the state council, that if Madame should leave Brussels, they would assemble the states-general of their own authority, and raise a force of 40,000 men. He had plotted treason, and made arrangements for the levy of troops at the interview at Denremonde, with Horn, Hoogstraaten, and the Prince of Orange. He had taken under his protection on April 20, 1566, the confederacy of the rebels; had promised that they should never be molested, for the future, on account of the inquisition or the edicts; and that so long as they kept within the terms of the Petition and the Compromise, he would defend them with his own person. He had granted liberty of preaching outside the walls in many cities within his government. He had said repeatedly, that if the king desired to introduce the inquisition into the Netherlands, he would sell all his property and remove to another land, thus declaring with how much contempt and detestation he regarded the said inquisition. He had winked at all the proceedings of the sectaries. He had permitted the cry of "Vivent les gueux" at his table. He had assisted at the banquet at Culemburg House.

These were the principal points in the interminable act of accusation. Like the admiral, Egmont admitted many of the facts, and flatly denied the rest. He indignantly repelled the possibility of a treasonable inference from any of, or all, his deeds. He had certainly desired the removal of Granvelle, for he believed that the king’s service would profit by his recall. He replied, almost in the same terms as the admiral had done, to the charge concerning the livery, and asserted that its principal object had been to set an example of economy. The fool’s-cap and bells had been changed to a bundle of arrows, in consequence of a certain rumor which became rife in Brussels, and in obedience to an ordinance of Madame de Parma. As to the assembling of the states-general, the fusion of the councils, the moderation of the edicts, he had certainly been in favor of these measures, which he considered to be wholesome and lawful, not mischievous or treasonable. He had certainly maintained that the edicts were rigorous, and had advised the duchess, under
the perilous circumstances of the country, to grant a temporary modification until the pleasure of his Majesty could be known. With regard to the Compromise, he had advised all his friends to keep out of it, and many in consequence had kept out of it. As to the presentation of the petition, he had given Madame de Parma notice thereof, so soon as he had heard that such a step was contemplated. He used the same language as had been employed by Horn, with regard to the interview at Breda and Hoogstraaten—that they had been meetings of “good cheer” and good fellowship.

He had always been at every moment at the command of the duchess, save when he had gone to Flanders and Artois to suppress the tumults, according to her express orders. He had no connection with the meeting of the nobles at Saint Trond. He had gone to Duffel as special envoy from the duchess, to treat with certain plenipotentiaries appointed at the Saint Trond meeting. He had strictly conformed to the letter of instructions, drawn up by the duchess, which would be found among his papers, but he had never promised the nobles his personal aid or protection. With regard to the Denremonde meeting, he gave almost exactly the same account as Horn had given. The prince, the admiral, and himself, had conversed between a quarter past eleven and dinner time, which was twelve o’clock, on various matters, particularly upon the king’s dissatisfaction with recent events in the Netherlands, and upon a certain letter from the ambassador Alava in Paris to the Duchess of Parma. He had, however, expressed his opinion to Madame that the letter was a forgery. He had permitted public preaching in certain cities, outside the walls, where it had already been established, because this was in accordance with the treaty which Madame had made at Duffel, which she had ordered him honorably to maintain. He had certainly winked at the religious exercises of the Reformers, because he had been expressly commanded to do so, and because the government at that time was not provided with troops to suppress the new religion by force. He related the visit of Horn, Orange, and himself to Culemburg House, at the memorable banquet, in almost the same words which the admiral had used. He had done all in his power to prevent Madame from leaving Brussels, in which effort he had been successful, and from which much good had resulted to the country. He had never recommended that a pardon should be granted to those who had taken up arms, but on the contrary, had advised their chastisement, as had appeared in his demeanor towards the rebels at Osterwel, Tournay, and Valenciennes. He had never permitted the cry of “Vivent les gueux” at his own table, nor encouraged it in his presence anywhere else.

Such were the leading features in these memorable cases of what was called high treason. Trial there was none. The tribunal was incompetent; the prisoners were without advocates; the government evidence was concealed; the testimony for the defense was excluded; and the cause was finally decided before a thousandth part of its merits could have been placed under the eyes of the judge who gave the sentence.

But it is almost puerile to speak of the matter in the terms usually applicable to state trials. The case had been settled in Madrid long before the arrest of
the prisoners in Brussels. The sentence, signed by Philip in blank, had been brought in Alva’s portfolio from Spain. The proceedings were a mockery, and, so far as any effect upon public opinion was concerned, might as well have been omitted. If the gentlemen had been shot in the courtyard of Jasse-house, by decree of a drumhead court-martial, an hour after their arrest, the rights of the provinces and the sentiments of humanity would not have been outraged more utterly. Every constitutional and natural right was violated from first to last. This certainly was not a novelty. Thousands of obscure individuals, whose relations and friends were not upon thrones and in high places, but in booths and cellars, and whose fate therefore did not send a shudder of sympathy throughout Europe, had already been sacrificed by the Blood tribunal. Still this great case presented a colossal emblem of the condition in which the Netherlands were now gasping. It was a monumental exhibition of the truth which thousands had already learned to their cost, that law and justice were abrogated throughout the land. The country was simply under martial law—the entire population under sentence of death.

The whole civil power was in Alva’s hand; the whole responsibility in Alva’s breast. Neither the most ignoble nor the most powerful could lift their heads in the sublime desolation which was sweeping the country. This was now proved beyond peradventure. A miserable cobbler or weaver might be hurried from his shop to the scaffold, invoking *jus de non evocando* till he was gagged, but the Emperor would not stoop from his throne, nor electors palatine and powerful nobles rush to his rescue; but in behalf of these prisoners the most august hands and voices of Christendom had been lifted up at the foot of Philip’s throne, and their supplications had proved as idle as the millions of tears and death-cries which had been shed or uttered in the lowly places of the land. It was obvious, then, that all intercession must thereafter be useless.

Philip was fanatically impressed with his mission. His viceroy was possessed by his loyalty as by a demon. In this way alone, that conduct which can never be palliated may at least be comprehended. It was Philip’s enthusiasm to embody the wrath of God against heretics. It was Alva’s enthusiasm to embody the wrath of Philip. Narrow-minded, isolated, seeing only that section of the world which was visible through the loophole of the fortress in which Nature had imprisoned him for life, placing his glory in unconditional obedience to his superior, questioning nothing, doubting nothing, fearing nothing, the viceroy accomplished his work of hell with all the tranquility of an angel. An iron will, which clove through every obstacle; adamantine fortitude, which sustained without flinching a mountain of responsibility sufficient to crush a common nature, were qualities which, united to his fanatical obedience, made him a man for Philip’s work such as could not have been found again in the world.

The case, then, was tried before a tribunal which was not only incompetent, under the laws of the land, but not even a court of justice in any philosophical or legal sense. Constitutional and municipal law were not more outraged in its creation, than all national and natural maxims.

The reader who has followed step by step the career of the two distinguished victims through the perilous days of Margaret’s administration, is sufficiently
aware of the amount of treason with which they are chargeable. It would be an
insult to common sense for us to set forth, in full, the injustice of their
sentence. Both were guiltless towards the crown, while the hands of one, on
the contrary, were deeply dyed in the blood of the people. This truth was so
self-evident, that even a member of the Blood-Council, Pierre Arsens,
President of Artois, addressed an elaborate memoir to the Duke of Alva,
criticizing the case according to the rules of law, and maintaining that Egmont,
instead of deserving punishment, was entitled to a signal reward.
So much for the famous treason of Counts Egmont and Horn, so far as regards
the history of the proceedings and the merits of the case. The last act of the
tragedy was precipitated by occurrences which must be now narrated.
The Prince of Orange had at last thrown down the gauntlet. Proscribed,
outlawed, with his Netherland property confiscated, and his eldest child
kidnapped, he saw sufficient personal justification for at last stepping into the
lists, the avowed champion of a nation’s wrongs. Whether the revolution was to
be successful, or to be disastrously crushed; whether its result would be to
place him upon a throne or a scaffold, not even he, the deep-revolving and
taciturn politician, could possibly foresee. The Reformation, in which he took
both a political and a religious interest, might prove a sufficient lever in his
hands for the overthrow of Spanish power in the Netherlands. The inquisition
might roll back upon his country and himself, crushing them forever. The
chances seemed with the inquisition. The Spaniards, under the first chieftain in
Europe, were encamped and entrenched in the provinces. The Huguenots had
just made their fatal peace in France, to the prophetic dissatisfaction of
Coligny. The leading men of liberal sentiments in the Netherlands were captive
or in exile. All were embarrased by the confiscations which, in anticipation of
sentence, had severed the nerves of war. The country was terror-stricken,
paralyzed, motionless, abject, forswearing its convictions, and imploring only
life. At this moment William of Orange reappeared upon the scene.
He replied to the act of condemnation, which had been pronounced against him
in default, by a published paper, of moderate length and great eloquence. He
had repeatedly offered to place himself, he said, upon trial before a
competent court. As a Knight of the Fleece, as a member of the Holy Roman
Empire, as a sovereign prince, he could acknowledge no tribunal save the
chapters of the knights or of the realm. The Emperor’s personal intercession
with Philip had been employed in vain, to obtain the adjudication of his case
by either. It would be both death and degradation on his part to acknowledge
the jurisdiction of the infamous Council of Blood. He scorned, he said, to plead
his cause “before he knew not what base knaves, not fit to be the valets of his
companions and himself.”
He appealed therefore to the judgment of the world. He published not an
elaborate argument, but a condensed and scathing statement of the outrages
which had been practiced upon him. He denied that he had been a party to the
Compromise. He denied that he had been concerned in the Request, although
he denounced with scorn the tyranny which could treat a petition to
government as an act of open war against the sovereign. He spoke of Granvelle
with unmeasured wrath. He maintained that his own continuance in office had been desired by the cardinal, in order that his personal popularity might protect the odious designs of the government. The edicts, the inquisition, the persecution, the new bishoprics, had been the causes of the tumults. He concluded with a burst of indignation against Philip’s conduct toward himself. The monarch had forgotten his services and those of his valiant ancestors. He had robbed him of honor, he had robbed him of his son—both dearer to him than life. By thus doing he had degraded himself more than he had injured him, for he had broken all his royal oaths and obligations.

The paper was published early in the summer of 1568. At about the same time, the count of Hoogstraaten published a similar reply to the act of condemnation with which he had been visited. He defended himself mainly upon the ground that all the crimes of which he stood arraigned had been committed in obedience to the literal instructions of the Duchess of Parma, after her accord with the confederates.

The prince now made the greatest possible exertions to raise funds and troops. He had many meetings with influential individuals in Germany. The Protestant princes, particularly the Landgrave of Hesse and the Elector of Saxony, promised him assistance. He brought all his powers of eloquence and of diplomacy to make friends for the cause which he had now boldly espoused. The high-born Demosthenes electrified large assemblies by his indignant invectives against the Spanish Philip. He excelled even his royal antagonist in the industrious subtlety with which he began to form a thousand combinations. Swift, secret, incapable of fatigue, this powerful and patient intellect sped to and fro, disentangling the perplexed skein where all had seemed so hopelessly confused, and gradually unfolding broad schemes of a symmetrical and regenerated polity. He had high correspondents and higher hopes in England. He was already secretly or openly in league with half the sovereigns of Germany. The Huguenots of France looked upon him as their friend, and on Louis of Nassau as their inevitable chieftain, were Coligny destined to fall. He was in league with all the exiled and outlawed nobles of the Netherlands. By his orders recruits were daily enlisted, without sound of drum. He granted a commission to his brother Louis, one of the most skillful and audacious soldiers of the age, in whom the revolt could not have found a more determined partisan, nor the prince a more faithful lieutenant.

This commission, which was dated Dillenburg, April 6, 1568, was a somewhat startling document. It authorized the count to levy troops and wage war against Philip, strictly for Philip’s good. The fiction of loyalty certainly never went further. The Prince of Orange made known to all “to whom those presents should come,” that through the affection which he bore the gracious king, he purposed to expel his Majesty’s forces from the Netherlands. “To show our love for the monarch and his hereditary provinces,” so ran the commission, “to prevent the desolation hanging over the country by the ferocity of the Spaniards, to maintain the privileges sworn to by his Majesty and his predecessors, to prevent the extirpation of all religion by the edicts, and to save the sons and daughters of the land from abject slavery, we have
requested our dearly beloved brother Louis Nassau to enroll as many troops as he shall think necessary."

Van den Berg, Hoogstraaten, and others, provided with similar powers, were also actively engaged in levying troops, but the right hand of the revolt was Count Louis, as his illustrious brother was its head and heart. Two hundred thousand crowns was the sum which the prince considered absolutely necessary for organizing the army with which he contemplated making an entrance into the Netherlands. Half this amount had been produced by the cities of Antwerp, Amsterdam, Leyden, Harlem, Middelburg, Flushing, and other towns, as well as by refugee merchants in England. The other half was subscribed by individuals. The prince himself contributed 50,000 florins, Hoogstraaten 30,000, Louis of Nassau 10,000, Culemberg 30,000, Van der Berg 30,000, the Dowager-Countess Horn 10,000, and other persons in less proportion. Count John of Nassau also pledged his estates to raise a large sum for the cause. The prince himself sold all his jewels, plate, tapestry, and other furniture, which were of almost regal magnificence. Not an enthusiast, but a deliberate, cautious man, he now staked his all upon the hazard, seemingly so desperate. The splendor of his station has been sufficiently depicted. His luxury, his fortune, his family, his life, his children, his honor, all were now ventured, not with the recklessness of a gambler, but with the calm conviction of a statesman.

A private and most audacious attempt to secure the person of Alva and the possession of Brussels had failed. He was soon, however, called upon to employ all his energies against the open warfare which was now commenced.

According to the plan of the prince, the provinces were to be attacked simultaneously, in three places, by his lieutenants, while he himself was waiting in the neighborhood of Cleves, ready for a fourth assault. An army of Huguenots and refugees was to enter Artois upon the frontier of France; a second, under Hoogstraaten, was to operate between the Rhine and the Meuse, while Louis of Nassau was to raise the standard of revolt in Friesland.

The two first adventures were destined to be signally unsuccessful. A force under Seigneur de Cocqueville, latest of all, took the field towards the end of June. It entered the bailiwick of Hesdin in Artois, was immediately driven across the frontier by the count de Roeulx, and cut to pieces at St. Valery by Maréchal de Cossè, governor of Picardy. This action was upon the 18th of July. Of the 2,500 men who composed the expedition, scarce 300 escaped. The few Netherlanders who were taken prisoners were given to the Spanish government, and, of course, hanged.

The force under the Seigneur de Villars was earlier under arms, and the sooner defeated. This luckless gentleman, who had replaced the count of Hoogstraaten, crossed the frontier of Juliers, in the neighborhood of Maastricht, by the 20th of April. His force, infantry and cavalry, amounted to nearly 3,000 men. The object of the enterprise was to raise the country, and, if possible, to obtain a foothold by securing an important city. Roermonde was the first point of attack, but the attempts, both by stratagem and by force, to secure the town, were fruitless. The citizens were not ripe for revolt, and
refused the army admittance. While the invaders were, therefore, endeavoring
to fire the gates, they were driven off by the approach of a Spanish force.
The duke, so soon as the invasion was known to him, had acted with great
promptness. Don Sancho de Lodroño and Don Sancho de Avila, with five
vanderas of Spanish infantry, three companies of cavalry, and about three
hundred pikemen under Count Eberstein, a force amounting in all to about
1,600 picked troops, had been at once dispatched against Villars. The rebel
chieftain, abandoning his attempt upon Roermonde, advanced towards
Erkelens. Upon the 25th of April, between Erkelens and Dalem, the Spaniards
came up with him, and gave him battle. Villars lost all his cavalry and two
vanderas of his infantry in the encounter. With the remainder of his force,
amounting to 1,300 men, he effected his retreat in good order to Dalem. Here
he rapidly entrenched himself. At four in the afternoon, Sancho de Lodroño, at
the head of 600 infantry, reached the spot. He was unable to restrain the
impetuosity of his men, although the cavalry under Avila, prevented by the
difficult nature of the narrow path through which the rebels had retreated, had
not yet arrived. The enemy were two to one, and were fortified; nevertheless,
in half an hour the entrenchments were carried, and almost every man in the
 patriot army put to the sword. Villars himself, with a handful of soldiers,
escaped into the town, but was soon afterwards taken prisoner, with all his
followers. He sullied the cause in which he was engaged by a base confession of
the designs formed by the Prince of Orange—a treachery, however, which did
not save him from the scaffold. In the course of this day’s work, the Spanish
lost twenty men, and the rebels nearly two hundred. This portion of the
liberating forces had been thus disastrously defeated on the eve of the
entrance of Count Louis into Friesland.
As early as the 22nd of April, Alva had been informed, by the lieutenant-
governor of that province, that the beggars were mustering in great force in
the neighborhood of Embden. It was evident that an important enterprise was
about to be attempted. Two days afterwards, Louis of Nassau entered the
provinces, attended by a small body of troops. His banners blazed with
patriotic inscriptions. Nunc aut nunquam, Recuperare aut mori, were the
watchwords of his desperate adventure—"Freedom for fatherland and
conscience" was the device which was to draw thousands to his standard. On
the western wolds of Frisia, he surprised the castle of Wedde, a residence of
the absent Aremberg, stadholder of the province. Thence he advanced to
Appingadam, or Dam, on the tide waters of the Dollart. Here he was met by his
younger brother, the gallant Adolphus, whose days were so nearly numbered,
who brought with him a small troop of horse. At Wedde, at Dam, and at
Slochteren, the standard was set up. At these three points there daily gathered
armed bodies of troops, voluntary adventurers, peasants with any rustic
weapon which they could find to their hand. Lieutenant-governor Groesbeck
wrote urgently to the duke that the beggars were hourly increasing in force,
that the leaders perfectly understood their game, that they kept their plans a
secret, but were fast seducing the heart of the country.
On the 4th of May, Louis issued a summons to the magistracy of Gröningen, ordering them to send a deputation to confer with him at Dam. He was prepared, he said, to show the commission with which he was provided. He had not entered the country on a mere personal adventure, but had received orders to raise a sufficient army. By the help of the eternal God, he was determined, he said, to extirpate the detestable tyranny of those savage persecutors who had shed so much Christian blood. He was resolved to lift up the down-trod privileges, and to protect the fugitive, terror-stricken Christians and patriarchs of the country. If the magistrates were disposed to receive him with friendship, it was well. Otherwise, he should, with regret, feel himself obliged to proceed against them, as enemies of his Majesty and of the common weal.

As the result of this summons, Louis received a moderate sum of money, on condition of renouncing for the moment an attack upon the city. With this temporary supply he was able to retain a larger number of the adventurers, who were daily swarming around him.

In the mean time Alva was not idle. On the 30th of April, he wrote to Groesbeck, that he must take care not to be taken napping, that he must keep his eyes well open until the arrival of succor, which was already on the way. He then immediately ordered Count Aremberg, who had just returned from France on conclusion of hostilities, to hasten to the seat of war. Five vanderas of his own regiment, a small body of cavalry, and Braccamonte’s Sardinian legion, making in all a force of nearly 2,500 men, were ordered to follow him with the utmost expedition. Count Meghen, stadholder of Gueldres, with five vanderas of infantry, three of light horse, and some artillery, composing a total of about 1,500 men, was directed to cooperate with Aremberg. Upon this point the orders of the governor-general were explicit. It seemed impossible that the rabble rout under Louis Nassau could stand a moment before nearly 4,000 picked and veteran troops, but the duke was earnest in warning his generals not to undervalue the enemy.

On the seventh of May, Counts Meghen and Aremberg met and conferred at Arnheim, on their way to Friesland. It was fully agreed between them, after having heard full reports of the rising in that province, and of the temper throughout the eastern Netherlands, that it would be rash to attempt any separate enterprise. On the 11th, Aremberg reached Vollenhoven, where he was laid up in his bed with the gout. Bodies of men, while he lay sick, paraded hourly with fife and drum before his windows, and discharged pistols and arquebuses across the ditch of the blockhouse where he was quartered. On the 18th, Braccamonte, with his legion, arrived by water at Harlingen. Not a moment more was lost. Aremberg, notwithstanding his gout, which still confined him to a litter, started at once in pursuit of the enemy. Passing through Groningen, he collected all the troops which could be spared. He also received six pieces of artillery. Six cannon, which the lovers of harmony had baptized with the notes of the gamut, ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la, were placed at his disposal by the authorities, and have acquired historical celebrity. It was, however, ordained that when those musical pieces piped, the Spaniards were not to dance. On the 22nd, followed by his whole force, consisting of
Braccamonte’s legion, his own four vanderas, and a troop of Germans, he came in sight of the enemy at Dam. Louis of Nassau sent out a body of arquebusiers, about one thousand strong, from the city. A sharp skirmish ensued, but the beggars were driven into their entrenchments, with a loss of twenty or thirty men, and nightfall terminated the contest.

It was beautiful to see, wrote Aremberg to Alva, how brisk and eager were the Spaniards, notwithstanding the long march which they had that day accomplished. Time was soon to show how easily immoderate valor might swell into a fault. Meantime, Aremberg quartered his troops in and about Witterewerum Abbey, close to the little unwalled city of Dam.

On the other hand, Meghen, whose cooperation had been commanded by Alva, and arranged personally with Aremberg a fortnight before, at Arnheim, had been delayed in his movements. His troops, who had received no wages for a long time, had mutinied. A small sum of money, however, sent from Brussels, quelled this untimely insubordination. Meghen then set forth to effect his junction with his colleague, having assured the governor-general that the war would be ended in six days. The beggars had not a stiver, he said, and must disband or be beaten to pieces as soon as Aremberg and he had joined forces. Nevertheless he admitted that these same “master-beggars,” as he called them, might prove too many for either general alone.

Alva, in reply, expressed his confidence that four or five thousand choice troops of Spain would be enough to make a short war of it, but nevertheless warned his officers of the dangers of overweening confidence. He had been informed that the rebels had assumed the red scarf of the Spanish uniform. He hoped the stratagem would not save them from broken heads, but was unwilling that his Majesty’s badge should be altered.

He reiterated his commands that no enterprise should be undertaken, except by the whole army in concert, and enjoined the generals incontinently to hang and strangle all prisoners the moment they should be taken.

Marching directly northward, Meghen reached Coeverden, some fifty miles from Dam, on the night of the 22nd. He had informed Aremberg that he might expect him with his infantry and his light horse in the course of the next day. On the following morning, the 23rd, Aremberg wrote his last letter to the duke, promising to send a good account of the beggars within a very few hours. Louis of Nassau had broken up his camp at Dam about midnight. Falling back, in a southerly direction, along the Wold-weg, or forest road, a narrow causeway through a swampy district, he had taken up a position some three leagues from his previous encampment. Near the monastery of Heiliger-Lee, or the “Holy Lion,” he had chosen his ground. A little money in hand, ample promises, and the hopes of booty, had effectually terminated the mutiny, which had also broken out in his camp. Assured that Meghen had not yet effected his junction with Aremberg, prepared to strike, at last, a telling blow for freedom and fatherland, Louis awaited the arrival of his eager foe.

His position was one of commanding strength and fortunate augury. Heiliger-Lee was a wooded eminence, artificially reared by Premonstrant monks. It was the only rising ground in that vast extent of watery pastures, enclosed by the
Ems and Lippe—the “fallacious fields” described by Tacitus. Here Hermann, first of Teutonic heroes, had dashed out of existence three veteran legions of tyrant Rome. Here the specter of Varus, begrimed and gory, had risen from the morass to warn Germanicus, who came to avenge him, that Gothic freedom was a dangerous antagonist. And now, in the perpetual reproductions of history, another German warrior occupied a spot of vantage in that same perilous region. The tyranny with which he contended strove to be as universal as that of Rome, and had stretched its wings of conquest into worlds of which the Caesar’s had never dreamed. It was in arms, too, to crush not only the rights of man, but the rights of God. The battle of freedom was to be fought not only for fatherland, but for conscience. The cause was even holier than that which had inspired the arm of Hermann.

Although the swamps of that distant age had been transformed into fruitful pastures, yet the whole district was moist, deceitful, and dangerous. The country was divided into squares, not by hedges but by impassable ditches. Agricultural entrenchments had long made the country almost impregnable, while its defenses against the ocean rendered almost as good service against a more implacable human foe.

Aremberg, leading his soldiers along the narrow causeway, in hot pursuit of what they considered a rabble rout of fugitive beggars, soon reached Winschoten. Here he became aware of the presence of his despicable foe. Louis and Adolphus of Nassau, while sitting at dinner in the convent of the “Holy Lion,” had been warned by a friendly peasant of the approach of the Spaniards. The opportune intelligence had given the patriot general time to make his preparations. His earnest entreaties had made his troops ashamed of their mutinous conduct on the preceding day, and they were now both ready and willing to engage. The village was not far distant from the abbey, and in the neighborhood of the abbey Louis of Nassau was now posted. Behind him was a wood, on his left a hill of moderate elevation, before him an extensive and swampy field. In the front of the field was a causeway leading to the abbey. This was the road which Aremberg was to traverse. On the plain which lay between the wood and the hill, the main body of the beggars were drawn up. They were disposed in two squares or squadrons, rather deep than wide, giving the idea of a less number than they actually contained. The lesser square, in which were 2,800 men, was partially sheltered by the hill. Both were flanked by musketeers. On the brow of the hill was a large body of light armed troops, the enfans perdus of the army. The cavalry, amounting to not more than three hundred men, was placed in front, facing the road along which Aremberg was to arrive.

That road was bordered by a wood extending nearly to the front of the hill. As Aremberg reached its verge, he brought out his artillery, and opened a fire upon the body of light troops. The hill protected a large part of the enemy’s body from this attack. Finding the rebels so strong in numbers and position, Aremberg was disposed only to skirmish. He knew better than did his soldiers the treacherous nature of the ground in front of the enemy. He saw that it was one of those districts where peat had been taken out in large squares for fuel,
and where a fallacious and verdant scum upon the surface of deep pools simulated the turf that had been removed. He saw that the battleground presented to him by his sagacious enemy was one great sweep of traps and pitfalls. Before he could carry the position, many men must necessarily be engulfed.

He paused for an instant. He was deficient in cavalry, having only Martinengo’s troop, hardly amounting to four hundred men. He was sure of Meghen’s arrival within twenty-four hours. If, then, he could keep the rebels in check, without allowing them any opportunity to disperse, he should be able, on the morrow, to cut them to pieces, according to the plan agreed upon a fortnight before. But the count had to contend with a double obstacle. His soldiers were very hot, his enemy very cool. The Spaniards, who had so easily driven a thousand musketeers from behind their windmill, the evening before, who had seen the whole rebel force decamp in hot haste on the very night of their arrival before Dam, supposed themselves in full career of victory. Believing that the name alone of the old legions had stricken terror to the hearts of the beggars, and that no resistance was possible to Spanish arms, they reviled their general for his caution. His reason for delay was theirs for hurry. Why should Meghen’s loitering and mutinous troops, arriving at the eleventh hour, share in the triumph and the spoil? No man knew the country better than Aremberg, a native of the Netherlands, the stadholder of the province. Cowardly or heretical motives alone could sway him, if he now held them back in the very hour of victory. Inflamed beyond endurance by these taunts, feeling his pride of country touched to the quick, and willing to show that a Netherlander would lead wherever Spaniards dared to follow, Aremberg allowed himself to commit the grave error for which he was so deeply to atone. Disregarding the dictates of his own experience and the arrangements of his superior, he yielded to the braggart humor of his soldiers, which he had not, like Alva, learned to moderate or to despise.

In the meantime, the body of light troops which had received the fire from the musical pieces of Gröningen was seen to waver. The artillery was then brought beyond the cover of the wood, and pointed more fully upon the two main squares of the enemy. A few shots told. Soon afterward the enfans perdus retreated helter-skelter, entirely deserting their position. This apparent advantage, which was only a preconcerted stratagem, was too much for the fiery Spaniards. They rushed merrily forward to attack the stationary squares, their general being no longer able to restrain their impetuosity. In a moment the whole vanguard had plunged into the morass. In a few minutes more they were all helplessly and hopelessly struggling in the pools, while the musketeers of the enemy poured in a deadly fire upon them, without wetting the soles of their own feet. The pikemen, too, who composed the main body of the larger square, now charged upon all who were extricating themselves from their entanglement, and drove them back again to a muddy death. Simultaneously, the lesser patriot squadron, which had so long been sheltered, emerged from the cover of the hill, made a detour around its base, enveloped the rear-guard of the Spaniards before they could advance to the succor of their perishing
comrades, and broke them to pieces almost instantly. Gonzalo de Braccamonte, the very Spanish colonel who had been foremost in denunciation of Aremberg, for his disposition to delay the contest, was now the first to fly. To his bad conduct was ascribed the loss of the day. The anger of Alva was so high, when he was informed of the incident, that he would have condemned the officer to death but for the intercession of his friends and countrymen. The rout was sudden and absolute. The foolhardiness of the Spaniards had precipitated them into the pit which their enemies had dug. The day was lost. Nothing was left for Aremberg but to perish with honor. Placing himself at the head of his handful of cavalry, he dashed into the mêlée. The shock was sustained by young Adolphus of Nassau, at the head of an equal number of riders. Each leader singled out the other. They met as "captains of might" should do, in the very midst of the affray. Aremberg, receiving and disregarding a pistol shot from his adversary, laid Adolphus dead at his feet, with a bullet through his body and a saber cut on his head. Two troopers in immediate attendance upon the young count shared the same fate from the same hand. Shortly afterward, the horse of Aremberg, wounded by a musket ball, fell to the ground. A few devoted followers lifted the charger to his legs and the bleeding rider to his saddle. They endeavored to bear their wounded general from the scene of action. The horse staggered a few paces and fell dead. Aremberg disengaged himself from his body, and walked a few paces to the edge of a meadow near the road. Here, wounded in the action, crippled by the disease which had so long tormented him, and scarcely able to sustain longer the burden of his armor, he calmly awaited his fate. A troop of the enemy advanced soon afterwards, and Aremberg fell, covered with wounds, fighting like a hero of Homer, single-handed, against a battalion, with a courage worthy a better cause and a better fate. The sword by which he received his final death-blow was that of the Seigneur de Haultain. That officer having just seen his brother slain before his eyes, forgot the respect due to unsuccessful chivalry.

* This hotly contested field, with the striking catastrophe of Adolphus and Aremberg, suggests the chivalrous pictures in "Chevy Chase":

"At last these two stout earls did meet,
Like captains of great might,
Like lions wode, they laid on lode,
And made a cruel fight," etc., etc.

** The principal authority followed in the foregoing description of the first victory gained by the rebels in the eighty years' war, which had now fairly commenced, is the Spaniard Mendoza, who fought through this whole campaign in Friesland. Other historians give a still more picturesque aspect to the main incident of the battle. According to Strada (Vol. I, p. 320), who gives as his authority a letter from Mic. Barbanson to Margaret of Parma (May 30, 1568), Adolphus and Aremberg fell by each other's hands, and lay dead side by side. ... Cabrera (Vol. VIII, pp. 486-487) follows Mendoza literally, and ascribes the death of Adolphus to the hand of Aremberg, who in his turn was slain afterward in the mêlée. Meteren, on the contrary, seeming to think, as well as the
Spaniards, that the honor of the respective nations was at stake, on the individual prowess of the champions, prefers to appear ignorant that this striking single combat had taken place. He mentions the death of Adolphus as having occurred in the mêlée, and ascribes Aremberg’s death-blow to the Sieur de Haultain. Amelis van Amstel, in a report to the council of Gueldres, relates, on the authority of a prisoner taken in the battle, that the body of Aremberg was brought before Count Louis after the fight, and that the unfortunate but chivalrous officer had been shot through the throat, through the body, and through the head; or, in his own respectful language, “His lordship was shot through the windpipe of his lordship’s throat, in his aide through and through again, and likewise his lordship’s forehead, above his eyes, was very valiantly wounded.”

The battle was scarcely finished when an advancing trumpet was heard. The sound caused the victors to pause in their pursuit, and enabled a remnant of the conquered Spaniards to escape. Meghen’s force was thought to be advancing. That general had indeed arrived, but he was alone. He had reached Zuidlaren, a village some four leagues from the scene of action, on the noon of that day. Here he had found a letter from Aremberg, requesting him to hasten. He had done so. His troops, however, having come from Coevorden that morning, were unable to accomplish so long a march in addition. The count, accompanied by a few attendants, reached the neighborhood of Heiliger-Lee only in time to meet with some of the camp sutlers and other fugitives, from whom he learned the disastrous news of the defeat. Finding that all was lost, he very properly returned to Zuidlaren, from which place he made the best of his way to Gröningen. That important city, the key of Friesland, he was thus enabled to secure. The troops which he brought, in addition to the four German vanderas of Schaumburg, already quartered there, were sufficient to protect it against the ill-equipped army of Louis Nassau.

The patriot leader had accomplished, after all, but a barren victory. He had, to be sure, destroyed a number of Spaniards, amounting, according to the different estimates, from 500 to 1,600 men. He had also broken up a small but veteran army. More than all, he had taught the Netherlanders, by this triumphant termination to a stricken field, that the choice troops of Spain were not invincible. But the moral effect of the victory was the only permanent one. The count’s badly paid troops could with difficulty be kept together. He had no sufficient artillery to reduce the city whose possession would have proved so important to the cause. Moreover, in common with the Prince of Orange and all his brethren, he had been called to mourn for the young and chivalrous Adolphus, whose life-blood had stained the laurels of this first patriot victory. Having remained, and thus wasted the normal three days upon the battlefield, Louis now sat down before Gröningen, fortifying and entrenching himself in a camp within cannon-shot of the city.

On the 23rd we have seen that Aremberg had written, full of confidence, to the governor-general, promising soon to send him good news of the beggars. On the 26th, Count Meghen wrote that, having spoken with a man who had helped to place Aremberg in his coffin, he could hardly entertain any farther doubt as to his fate.
The wrath of the duke was even greater than his surprise. Like Augustus, he called in vain on the dead commander for his legions, but prepared himself to inflict a more rapid and more terrible vengeance than the Roman’s. Recognizing the gravity of his situation, he determined to take the field in person, and to annihilate this insolent chieftain who had dared not only to cope with, but to conquer his veteran regiments. But before he could turn his back upon Brussels, many deeds were to be done. His measures now followed each other in breathless succession, fulminating and blasting at every stroke. On the 28th of May, he issued an edict, banishing, on pain of death, the Prince of Orange, Louis Nassau, Hoogstraaten, Van den Berg, and others, with confiscation of all their property. At the same time he razed the Culemburg Palace to the ground, and erected a pillar upon its ruins, commemorating the accursed conspiracy which had been engendered within its walls. On the first of June, eighteen prisoners of distinction, including the two Barons Batenburg, Maximilian Kock, Blois de Treslong, and others, were executed upon the Horse-Market, in Brussels. In the vigorous language of Hoogstraaten, this horrible tragedy was enacted directly before the windows of that “cruel animal, Noircarmes,” who, in company of his friend, Berlaymont, and the rest of the Blood-Council, looked out upon the shocking spectacle. The heads of the victims were exposed upon stakes, to which also their bodies were fastened. Eleven of these victims were afterward deposited, uncoffined, in unconsecrated ground; the other seven were left unburied to molder on the gibbet. On the second of June, Villars, the leader in the Daalem rising, suffered on the scaffold, with three others.

On the third, Counts Egmont and Horn were brought in a carriage from Ghent to Brussels, guarded by ten companies of infantry and one of cavalry. They were then lodged in the “Brood-huis” opposite the Town Hall, on the great square of Brussels. On the fourth, Alva, having, as he solemnly declared before God and the world, examined thoroughly the mass of documents appertaining to those two great prosecutions which had only been closed three days before, pronounced sentence against the illustrious prisoners. These documents of iniquity signed and sealed by the duke, were sent to the Blood-Council, where they were read by Secretary Praets. The signature of Philip was not wanting, for the sentences had been drawn upon blanks signed by the monarch, of which the viceroy had brought a whole trunk full from Spain. The sentence against Egmont declared very briefly that the duke of Alva, having read all the papers and evidence in the case, had found the count guilty of high treason. It was proved that Egmont had united with the confederates, that he had been a party to the accursed conspiracy of the Prince of Orange, that he had taken the rebel nobles under his protection, and that he had betrayed the government and the Holy Catholic Church by his conduct in Flanders. Therefore the duke condemned him to be executed by the sword on the following day, and decreed that his head should be placed on high in a public place, there to remain until the duke should otherwise direct. The sentence against Count Horn was similar in language and purport.
That afternoon the duke sent for the Bishop of Ypres. The prelate arrived at
dusk. As soon as he presented himself, Alva informed him of the sentence
which had just been pronounced, and ordered him to convey the intelligence to
the prisoners. He further charged him with the duty of shriving the victims, and
preparing their souls for death. The bishop fell on his knees, aghast at the
terrible decree. He implored the governor-general to have mercy upon the two
unfortunate nobles. If their lives could not be spared, he prayed him at any
rate to grant delay. With tears and earnest supplications the prelate
endeavored to avert or to postpone the doom which had been pronounced. It
was in vain. The sentence, inflexible as destiny, had been long before
ordained. Its execution had been but hastened by the temporary triumph of
rebellion in Friesland. Alva told the bishop roughly that he had not been
summoned to give advice. Delay or pardon was alike impossible. He was to act
as confessor to the criminals, not as councillor to the viceroy. The bishop, thus
rebuked, withdrew to accomplish his melancholy mission. Meanwhile, on the
same evening, the miserable Countess of Egmont had been appalled by rumors,
too vague for belief, too terrible to be slighted. She was in the chamber of
Countess Aremberg, with whom she had come to condole for the death of the
count, when the order for the immediate execution of her own husband was
announced to her. She hastened to the presence of the governor-general. The
princess palatine, whose ancestors had been emperors, remembered only that
she was a wife and a mother. She fell at the feet of the man who controlled
the fate of her husband, and implored his mercy in humble and submissive
terms. The duke, with calm and almost incredible irony, reassured the countess
by the information that, on the morrow, her husband was certainly to be
released. With this ambiguous phrase, worthy the paltering oracles of
antiquity, the wretched woman was obliged to withdraw. Too soon afterward
the horrible truth of the words was revealed to her—words of doom, which she
had mistaken for consolation.
An hour before midnight the bishop of Ypres reached Egmont’s prison. The
count was confined in a chamber on the second story of the Brood-huis, the
mansion of the crossbowmen’s guild, in that corner of the building which rests
on a narrow street running back from the great square. He was aroused from
his sleep by the approach of his visitor. Unable to speak, but indicating by the
expression of his features the occurrence of a great misfortune, the bishop,
soon after his entrance, placed the paper given to him by Alva in Egmont’s
hands. The unfortunate noble thus suddenly received the information that his
death sentence had been pronounced, and that its execution was fixed for the
next morning. He read the paper through without flinching, and expressed
astonishment rather than dismay at its tidings.
Exceedingly sanguine by nature, he had never believed, even after his nine
months’ imprisonment, in a fatal termination to the difficulties in which he was
involved. He was now startled both at the sudden condemnation which had
followed his lingering trial, and at the speed with which his death was to fulfil
the sentence. He asked the bishop, with many expressions of amazement,
whether pardon was impossible, whether delay at least might not be obtained.
The prelate answered by a faithful narrative of the conversation which had just occurred between Alva and himself. Egmont, thus convinced of his inevitable doom, then observed to his companion, with exquisite courtesy, that, since he was to die, he rendered thanks both to God and to the duke that his last moments were to be consoled by so excellent a father confessor. Afterwards, with a natural burst of indignation, he exclaimed that it was indeed a cruel and unjust sentence. He protested that he had never in his whole life wronged his Majesty; certainly never so deeply as to deserve such a punishment. All that he had done had been with loyal intentions. The king’s true interest had been his constant aim. Nevertheless, if he had fallen into error, he prayed to God that his death might wipe away his misdeeds, and that his name might not be dishonored, nor his children brought to shame. His beloved wife and innocent children were to endure misery enough by his death and the confiscation of his estates. It was at least due to his long services that they should be spared further suffering. He then asked his father confessor what advice he had to give touching his present conduct. The bishop replied by an exhortation that he should turn himself to God, that he should withdraw his thoughts entirely from all earthly interests and prepare himself for the world beyond the grave. He accepted the advice, and kneeling before the bishop, confessed himself. He then asked to receive the sacrament, which the bishop administered after the customary mass. Egmont asked what prayer would be most appropriate at the hour of execution. His confessor replied that there was none more befitting than the one which Jesus had taught his disciples—Our Father, which art in heaven.

Some conversation ensued, in which the count again expressed his gratitude that his parting soul had been soothed by these pious and friendly offices. By a revulsion of feeling, he then bewailed again the sad fate of his wife and of his young children. The bishop entreated him anew to withdraw his mind from such harrowing reflections, and to give himself entirely to God. Overwhelmed with grief, Egmont exclaimed with natural and simple pathos, "Alas! how miserable and frail is our nature, that, when we should think of God only, we are unable to shut out the images of wife and children."

Recovering from his emotion, and having yet much time, he sat down and wrote with perfect self-possession two letters, one to Philip and one to Alva. The celebrated letter to the king was as follows:

"Sire, I have learned, this evening, the sentence which your Majesty has been pleased to pronounce upon me. Although I have never had a thought, and believe myself never to have done a deed, which could tend to the prejudice of your Majesty's person or service, or to the detriment of our true ancient and Catholic religion, nevertheless I take patience to bear that which it has pleased the good God to send. If, during these troubles in the Netherlands, I have done or permitted aught which had a different appearance, it has been with the true and good intent to serve God and your Majesty, and the necessity of the times."
Therefore, I pray your Majesty to forgive me, and to have compassion on my poor wife, my children, and my servants; having regard to my past services. In which hope I now commend myself to the mercy of God.

"From Brussels, "
"Ready to die, this 5\textsuperscript{th} June, 1568, "
"Your Majesty’s very humble and loyal vassal and servant, "
"Lamoral d’Egmont."

Having thus kissed the murderous hand which smote him, he handed the letter, stamped rather with superfluous loyalty than with Christian forgiveness, to the bishop, with a request that he would forward it to its destination, accompanied by a letter from his own hand. This duty the bishop solemnly promised to fulfill.

Facing all the details of his execution with the fortitude which belonged to his character, he now took counsel with his confessor as to the language proper for him to hold from the scaffold to the assembled people. The bishop, however, strongly dissuaded him from addressing the multitude at all. The persons farthest removed, urged the priest, would not hear the words, while the Spanish troops in the immediate vicinity would not understand them. It seemed, therefore, the part of wisdom and of dignity for him to be silent, communing only with his God. The count assented to this reasoning, and abandoned his intention of saying a few farewell words to the people, by many of whom he believed himself tenderly beloved. He now made many preparations for the morrow, in order that his thoughts, in the last moments, might not be distracted by mechanical details, cutting the collar from his doublet and from his shirt with his own hands, in order that those of the hangman might have no excuse for contaminating his person. The rest of the night was passed in prayer and meditation.

Fewer circumstances concerning the last night of Count Horn’s life have been preserved. It is, however, well ascertained that the admiral received the sudden news of his condemnation with absolute composure. He was assisted at his devotional exercises in prison by the curate of La Chapelle.

During the night, the necessary preparations for the morning tragedy had been made in the great square of Brussels. It was the intention of government to strike terror to the heart of the people by the exhibition of an impressive and appalling spectacle. The absolute and irresponsible destiny which ruled them was to be made manifest by the immolation of these two men, so elevated by rank, powerful connection, and distinguished service.

The effect would be heightened by the character of the locality where the gloomy show was to be presented. The great square of Brussels had always a striking and theatrical aspect. Its architectural effects, suggesting in some degree the meretricious union between Oriental and a corrupt Grecian art, accomplished in the medieval midnight, have amazed the eyes of many generations. The splendid Hôtel de Ville, with its daring spire and elaborate
front, ornamented one side of the place; directly opposite was the graceful but
incoherent façade of the Brood-huis, now the last earthly resting place of the
two distinguished victims, while grouped around these principal buildings rose
the fantastic palaces of the Archers, Mariners, and of other guilds, with their
festooned walls and toppling gables bedizened profusely with emblems,
statues, and quaint decorations. The place had been alike the scene of many a
brilliant tournament and of many a bloody execution. Gallant knights had
contented within its precincts, while bright eyes rained influence from all
those picturesque balconies and decorated windows. Martyrs to religious and to
political liberty had, upon the same spot, endured agonies which might have
roused every stone of its pavement to mutiny or softened them to pity. Here
Egmont himself, in happier days, had often borne away the prize of skill or of
valor, the cynosure of every eye; and hence, almost in the noon of a life
illustrated by many brilliant actions, he was to be sent, by the hand of tyranny,
to his great account.

On the morning of the fifth of June, 3,000 Spanish troops were drawn up in
battle array around a scaffold which had been erected in the center of the
square. Upon this scaffold, which was covered with black cloth, were placed
two velvet cushions, two iron spikes, and a small table. Upon the table was a
silver crucifix. The provost-marshal, Spelle, sat on horseback below, with his
red wand in his hand, little dreaming that for him a darker doom was reserved
than that of which he was now the minister. The executioner was concealed
beneath the draperies of the scaffold.

At eleven o'clock, a company of Spanish soldiers, led by Julian Romero and
Captain Salinas, arrived at Egmont’s chamber. The count was ready for them.
They were about to bind his hands, but he warmly protested against the
indignity, and, opening the folds of his robe, showed them that he had himself
shorn off his collars, and made preparations for his death. His request was
granted. Egmont, with the bishop at his side, then walked with a steady step
the short distance which separated him from the place of execution. Julian
Romero and the guard followed him. On his way, he read aloud the fifty-first
Psalm: “Hear my cry, O God, and give ear unto my prayer!” He seemed to have
selected these scriptural passages as a proof that, notwithstanding the
machinations of his enemies, and the cruel punishment to which they had led
him, loyalty to his sovereign was as deeply rooted and as religious a sentiment
in his bosom as devotion to his God. “Thou wilt prolong the king’s life; and his
years as many generations. He shall abide before God for ever! O prepare
mercy and truth which may preserve him.” Such was the remarkable prayer of
the condemned traitor on his way to the block.

Having ascended the scaffold, he walked across it twice or thrice. He was
dressed in a tabard or robe of red damask, over which was thrown a short black
mantle, embroidered in gold. He had a black silk hat, with black and white
plumes, on his head, and held a handkerchief in his hand. As he strode to and
fro, he expressed a bitter regret that he had not been permitted to die, sword
in hand, fighting for his country and his king. Sanguine to the last, he
passionately asked Romero, whether the sentence was really irrevocable,
whether a pardon was not even then to be granted. The marshal shrugged his shoulders, murmuring a negative reply. Upon this, Egmont gnashed his teeth together, rather in rage than despair. Shortly afterward commanding himself again, he threw aside his robe and mantle, and took the badge of the Golden Fleece from his neck. Kneeling, then, upon one of the cushions, he said the Lord’s Prayer aloud, and requested the bishop, who knelt at his side, to repeat it thrice. After this, the prelate gave him the silver crucifix to kiss, and then pronounced his blessing upon him. This done, the count rose again to his feet, laid aside his hat and handkerchief, knelt again upon the cushion, drew a little cap over his eyes, and, folding his hands together, cried with a loud voice, "Lord, into Thy hands I commit my spirit." The executioner then suddenly appeared, and severed his head from his shoulders at a single blow. A moment of shuddering silence succeeded the stroke. The whole vast assembly seemed to have felt it in their own hearts. Tears fell from the eyes even of the Spanish soldiery, for they knew and honored Egmont as a valiant general. The French ambassador, Mondoucet, looking upon the scene from a secret place, whispered that he had now seen the head fall before which France had twice trembled. Tears were even seen upon the iron cheek of Alva, as, from a window in a house directly opposite the scaffold, he looked out upon the scene.

A dark cloth was now quickly thrown over the body and the blood, and, within a few minutes, the admiral was seen advancing through the crowd. His bald head was uncovered, his hands were unbound. He calmly saluted such of his acquaintances as he chanced to recognize upon his path. Under a black cloak, which he threw off when he had ascended the scaffold, he wore a plain, dark doublet, and he did not, like Egmont, wear the insignia of the Fleece. Casting his eyes upon the corpse, which lay covered with the dark cloth, he asked if it were the body of Egmont. Being answered in the affirmative, he muttered a few words in Spanish, which were not distinctly audible. His attention was next caught by the sight of his own coat of arms reversed, and he expressed anger at this indignity to his escutcheon, protesting that he had not deserved the insult. He then spoke a few words to the crowd below, wishing them happiness, and begging them to pray for his soul. He did not kiss the crucifix, but he knelt upon the scaffold to pray, and was assisted in his devotions by the Bishop of Ypres. When they were concluded, he rose again to his feet. Then drawing a Milan cap completely over his face, and uttering, in Latin, the same invocation which Egmont had used, he submitted his neck to the stroke.

Egmont had obtained, as a last favor, that his execution should precede that of his friend. Deeming himself in part to blame for Horn’s reappearance in Brussels after the arrival of Alva, and for his death, which was the result, he wished to be spared the pang of seeing him dead. Gemma Frisius, the astrologer who had cast the horoscope of Count Horn at his birth, had come to him in the most solemn manner to warn him against visiting Brussels. The count had answered stoutly that he placed his trust in God, and that, moreover, his friend Egmont was going thither also, who had engaged that no worse fate should befall the one of them than the other.
The heads of both sufferers were now exposed for two hours upon the iron stakes. Their bodies, placed in coffins, remained during the same interval upon the scaffold. Meantime, notwithstanding the presence of the troops, the populace could not be restrained from tears and from execrations. Many crowded about the scaffold, and dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood, to be preserved afterwards as memorials of the crime and as ensigns of revenge. The bodies were afterwards delivered to their friends. A stately procession of the guilds, accompanied by many of the clergy, conveyed their coffins to the church of Saint Gudule. Thence the body of Egmont was carried to the convent of Saint Clara, near the old Brussels gate, where it was embalmed. His escutcheon and banners were hung upon the outward wall of his residence, by order of the countess. By command of Alva they were immediately torn down. His remains were afterwards conveyed to his city of Sottegem, in Flanders, where they were interred. Count Horn was entombed at Kempen. The bodies had been removed from the scaffold at two o’clock. The heads remained exposed between burning torches for two hours longer. They were then taken down, enclosed in boxes, and, as it was generally supposed, dispatched to Madrid. The King was thus enabled to look upon the dead faces of his victims without the trouble of a journey to the provinces.

Thus died Philip Montmorency, Count of Horn, and Lamoral of Egmont, Prince of Gaveren. The more intense sympathy which seemed to attach itself to the fate of Egmont, rendered the misfortune of his companion in arms and in death comparatively less interesting.

Egmont is a great historical figure, but he was certainly not a great man. His execution remains an enduring monument not only of Philip’s cruelty and perfidy but of his dullness. The king had everything to hope from Egmont and nothing to fear. Granvelle knew the man well, and, almost to the last, could not believe in the possibility of so unparalleled a blunder as that which was to make a victim, a martyr, and a popular idol of a personage brave indeed, but incredibly vacillating and inordinately vain, who, by a little management, might have been converted into a most useful instrument for the royal purposes.

It is not necessary to recapitulate the events of Egmont’s career. Step by step we have studied his course, and at no single period have we discovered even a germ of those elements which make the national champion. His pride of order rendered him furious at the insolence of Granvelle, and caused him to chafe under his dominion. His vanity of high rank and of distinguished military service made him covet the highest place under the Crown, while his hatred of those by whom he considered himself defrauded of his claims, converted him into a malcontent. He had no sympathy with the people, but he loved, as a grand Seignior, to be looked up to and admired by a gaping crowd. He was an unwavering Catholic, held sectaries in utter loathing, and, after the image-breaking, took a positive pleasure in hanging ministers, together with their congregations, and in pressing the besieged Christians of Valenciennes to extremities. Upon more than one occasion he pronounced his unequivocal approval of the infamous edicts, and he exerted himself at times to enforce
them within his province. The transitory impression made upon his mind by the lofty nature of Orange was easily effaced in Spain by court flattery and by royal bribes. Notwithstanding the coldness, the rebuffs, and the repeated warnings which might have saved him from destruction, nothing could turn him at last from the fanatic loyalty towards which, after much wavering, his mind irrevocably pointed. His voluntary humiliation as a general, a grandee, a Fleming, and a Christian before the insolent Alva upon his first arrival, would move our contempt were it not for the gentler emotions suggested by the infatuated nobleman’s doom. Upon the departure of Orange, Egmont was only too eager to be employed by Philip in any work which the monarch could find for him to do. Yet this was the man whom Philip chose, through the executioner’s sword, to convert into a popular idol, and whom Poetry has loved to contemplate as a romantic champion of freedom.

As for Horn, details enough have likewise been given of his career to enable the reader thoroughly to understand the man. He was a person of mediocre abilities and thoroughly commonplace character. His high rank and his tragic fate are all which make him interesting. He had little love for court or people. Broken in fortunes, he passed his time mainly in brooding over the ingratitude of Charles and Philip, and in complaining bitterly of the disappointments to which their policy had doomed him. He cared nothing for Cardinalists or confederates. He disliked Brederode, he detested Granvelle. Gloomy and morose, he went to bed, while the men who were called his fellow conspirators were dining and making merry in the same house with himself. He had as little sympathy with the cry of “Vivent les gueux” as for that of “Vive le Roy.” The most interesting features in his character are his generosity toward his absent brother and the manliness with which, as Montigny’s representative at Tournay, he chose rather to confront the anger of the government, and to incur the deadly revenge of Philip, than make himself the executioner of the harmless Christians in Tournay. In this regard, his conduct is vastly more entitled to our respect than that of Egmont, and he was certainly more deserving of reverence from the people, even though deserted by all men while living, and left headless and solitary in his coffin at Saint Gudule. The hatred for Alva, which sprang from the graves of these illustrious victims, waxed daily more intense. "Like things of another world," wrote Hoogstraaten, "seem the cries, lamentations, and just compassion which all the inhabitants of Brussels, noble or ignoble, feel for such barbarous tyranny, while this Nero of an Alva is boasting that he will do the same to all whom he lays his hands upon." No man believed that the two nobles had committed a crime, and many were even disposed to acquit Philip of his share in the judicial murder. The people ascribed the execution solely to the personal jealousy of the duke. They discoursed to each other not only of the envy with which the governor-general had always regarded the military triumphs of his rival, but related that Egmont had at different times won large sums of Alva at games of hazard, and that he had moreover, on several occasions, carried off the prize from the duke in shooting at the popinjay. Nevertheless, in spite of all these absurd rumors, there is no doubt that Philip and Alva must share equally in the guilt of the
transaction, and that the “chastisement” had been arranged before Alva had departed from Spain.
The Countess Egmont remained at the convent of Cambre with her eleven children, plunged in misery and in poverty. The duke wrote to Philip that he doubted if there were so wretched a family in the world. He, at the same time, congratulated his sovereign on the certainty that the more intense the effects, the more fruitful would be the example of this great execution. He stated that the countess was considered a most saintly woman, and that there had been scarcely a night in which, attended by her daughters, she had not gone forth barefooted to offer up prayers for her husband in every church within the city. He added that it was doubtful whether they had money enough to buy themselves a supper that very night, and he begged the king to allow them the means of supporting life. He advised that the countess should be placed, without delay in a Spanish convent, where her daughters might at once take the vail, assuring his Majesty that her dower was entirely inadequate to her support. Thus humanely recommending his sovereign to bestow an alms on the family which his own hand had reduced from a princely station to beggary, the viceroy proceeded to detail the recent events in Friesland, together with the measures which he was about taking to avenge the defeat and death of Count Aremberg.

CHAPTER 3
Alva Defeats Louis of Nassau

Those measures were taken with the precision and promptness which marked the duke’s character, when precision and promptness were desirable. There had been a terrible energy in his every step, since the successful foray of Louis Nassau. Having determined to take the field in person with nearly all the Spanish veterans, he had at once acted upon the necessity of making the capital secure, after his back should be turned. It was impossible to leave 3,000 choice troops to guard Count Egmont. A less number seemed insufficient to prevent a rescue. He had, therefore, no longer delayed the chastisement which had already been determined, but which the events in the North had precipitated. Thus the only positive result of Louis Nassau’s victory was the execution of his imprisoned friends.
The expedition under Aremberg had failed from two causes. The Spanish force had been inadequate, and they had attacked the enemy at a disadvantage. The imprudent attack was the result of the contempt with which they had regarded their antagonist. These errors were not to be repeated. Alva ordered Count Meghen, now commanding in the province of Gröningen, on no account to hazard hostilities until the game was sure. He also immediately ordered large reinforcements to move forward to the seat of war. The commanders entrusted with this duty were Duke Eric of Brunswick, Chiappin Vitelli, Noircarmes, and Count de Roeulx. The rendezvous for the whole force was Deventer, and here they all arrived on the 10th of July. On the same day the Duke of Alva himself
entered Deventer, to take command in person. On the evening of the 14th of July, he reached Rolden, a village three leagues distant from Gröningen, at the head of three terzios of Spanish infantry, three companies of light horse, and a troop of dragoons. His whole force in and about Gröningen amounted to 15,000 choice troops besides a large but uncertain number of less disciplined soldiery. Meantime, Louis of Nassau, since his victory, had accomplished nothing. For this inactivity there was one sufficient excuse, the total want of funds. His only revenue was the amount of blackmail which he was able to levy upon the inhabitants of the province. He repeated his determination to treat them all as enemies, unless they furnished him with the means of expelling their tyrants from the country.

He obtained small sums in this manner from time to time. The inhabitants were favorably disposed, but they were timid and despairing. They saw no clear way towards the accomplishment of the result concerning which Louis was so confident. They knew that the terrible Alva was already on his way. They felt sure of being pillaged by both parties, and of being hanged as rebels, besides, as soon as the governor-general should make his appearance.

Louis had, however, issued two formal proclamations for two especial contributions. In these documents he had succinctly explained that the houses of all recusants should be forthwith burned about their ears, and in consequence of these peremptory measures, he had obtained some 10,000 florins. Alva ordered counter-proclamations to be affixed to church doors and other places, forbidding all persons to contribute to these forced loans of the rebels, on penalty of paying twice as much to the Spaniards, with arbitrary punishment in addition, after his arrival. The miserable inhabitants, thus placed between two fires, had nothing for it but to pay one half of their property to support the rebellion in the first place, with the prospect of giving the other half as a subsidy to tyranny afterwards; while the gibbet stood at the end of the vista to reward their liberality. Such was the horrible position of the peasantry in this civil conflict. The weight of guilt thus accumulated upon the crowned head which conceived, and upon the red right hand which wrought all this misery, what human scales can measure?

With these precarious means of support, the army of Louis of Nassau, as may easily be supposed, was anything but docile. After the victory of Heiliger-Lee there had seemed to his German mercenaries a probability of extensive booty, which grew fainter as the slender fruit of that battle became daily more apparent. The two abbots of Wittewerum and of Heiliger-Lee, who had followed Aremberg’s train in order to be witnesses of his victory, had been obliged to pay to the actual conqueror a heavy price for the entertainment to which they had invited themselves, and these sums, together with the amounts pressed from the reluctant estates, and the forced contributions paid by luckless peasants, enabled him to keep his straggling troops together a few weeks longer. Mutiny, however, was constantly breaking out, and by the eloquent exhortations and vague promises of the count, was with difficulty suppressed.
He had, for a few weeks immediately succeeding the battle, distributed his
troops in three different stations. On the approach of the duke, however, he
hastily concentrated his whole force at his own strongly fortified camp, within
half cannon-shot of Gröningen. His army, such as it was, numbered from 10,000
to 12,000 men. Alva reached Gröningen early in the morning, and without
pausing a moment, marched his troops directly through the city. He then
immediately occupied an entrenched and fortified house, from which it was
easy to inflict damage upon the camp. This done, the duke, with a few
attendants, rode forward to reconnoiter the enemy in person. He found him in
a well fortified position, having the river on his front, which served as a moat
to his camp, and with a deep trench three hundred yards beyond, in addition.
Two wooden bridges led across the river; each was commanded by a fortified
house, in which was a provision of pine torches, ready at a moment’s warning,
to set fire to the bridges. Having thus satisfied himself, the duke rode back to
his army, which had received strict orders not to lift a finger till his return. He
then dispatched a small force of five hundred musketeers, under Robles, to
skirmish with the enemy, and, if possible, to draw them from their trenches.
The troops of Louis, however, showed no greediness to engage. On the
contrary, it soon became evident that their dispositions were of an opposite
tendency. The count himself, not at that moment trusting his soldiery, who
were in an extremely mutinous condition, was desirous of falling back before
his formidable antagonist. The duke, faithful, however, to his life-long
principles, had no intentions of precipitating the action in those difficult and
swampy regions. The skirmishing, therefore, continued for many hours, an
additional force of 1,000 men being detailed from the Spanish army. The day
was very sultry, however, the enemy reluctant, and the whole action languid.
At last, towards evening, a large body, tempted beyond their trenches,
engaged warmly with the Spaniards. The combat lasted but a few minutes, the
patriots were soon routed, and fled precipitately back to their camp. The panic
spread with them, and the whole army was soon in retreat. On retiring, they
had, however, set fire to the bridges, and thus secured an advantage at the
outset of the chase. The Spaniards were no longer to be held. Vitelli obtained
permission to follow with 2,000 additional troops. The 1,500 who had already
been engaged, charged furiously upon their retreating foes. Some dashed
across the blazing bridges, with their garments and their very beards on fire.
Others sprang into the river. Neither fire nor water could check the fierce
pursuit. The cavalry, dismounting, drove their horses into the stream, and
clinging to their tails, pricked the horses forward with their lances. Having thus
been dragged across, they joined their comrades in the mad chase along the
narrow dykes, and through the swampy and almost impassable country where
the rebels were seeking shelter.
The approach of night, too soon advancing, at last put an end to the hunt. The
duke with difficulty recalled his men, and compelled them to restrain their
eagerness until the morrow. Three hundred of the patriots were left dead upon
the field, besides at least an equal number who perished in the river and
canals. The army of Louis was entirely routed, and the duke considered it
virtually destroyed. He wrote to the state council that he should pursue them the next day, but doubted whether he should find anybody to talk with him. In this the governor-general soon found himself delightfully disappointed. Five days later, the duke arrived at Reyden, on the Ems. Owing to the unfavorable disposition of the country people, who were willing to protect the fugitives by false information to their pursuers, he was still in doubt as to the position then occupied by the enemy. He had been fearful that they would be found at this very village of Reyden. It was a fatal error on the part of Count Louis that they were not. Had he made a stand at this point, he might have held out a long time. The bridge which here crossed the river would have afforded him a retreat into Germany at any moment, and the place was easily to be defended in front. Thus he might have maintained himself against his fierce but wary foe, while his brother Orange, who was at Strasburg watching the progress of events, was executing his own long-planned expedition into the heart of the Netherlands. With Alva thus occupied in Friesland, the results of such an invasion might have been prodigious. It was, however, not on the cards for that campaign. The mutinous disposition of the mercenaries under his command had filled Louis with doubt and disgust. Bold and sanguine, but always too fiery and impatient, he saw not much possibility of paying his troops any longer with promises. Perhaps he was not unwilling to place them in a position where they would be obliged to fight or to perish. At any rate, such was their present situation. Instead of halting at Reyden, he had made his stand at Jemmingen, about four leagues distant from that place, and a little further down the river. Alva discovered this important fact soon after his arrival at Reyden, and could not conceal his delight. Already exulting at the error made by his adversary, in neglecting the important position which he now occupied himself, he was doubly delighted at learning the nature of the place which he had in preference selected. He saw that Louis had completely entrapped himself.

Jemmingen was a small town on the left bank of the Ems. The stream, here very broad and deep, is rather a tide inlet than a river, being but a very few miles from the Dollart. This circular bay, or ocean chasm, the result of the violent inundation of the 13th century, surrounds, with the river, a narrow peninsula. In the corner of this peninsula, as in the bottom of a sack, Louis had posted his army. His infantry, as usual, was drawn up in two large squares, and still contained 10,000 men. The rear rested upon the village, the river was upon his left; his meager force of cavalry upon the right. In front were two very deep trenches. The narrow road, which formed the only entrance to his camp, was guarded by a ravelin on each side, and by five pieces of artillery. The duke having reconnoitered the enemy in person, rode back, satisfied that no escape was possible. The river was too deep and too wide for swimming or wading, and there were but very few boats. Louis was shut up between twelve thousand Spanish veterans and the River Ems. The rebel army, although not insufficient in point of numbers, was in a state of disorganization. They were furious for money and reluctant to fight. They broke out into open mutiny upon the very verge of battle, and swore that they would instantly disband, if the
gold, which, as they believed, had been recently brought into the camp, were not immediately distributed among them. Such was the state of things on the eventful morning of the 21st of July. All the expostulations of Count Louis seemed powerless. His eloquence and his patience, both inferior to his valor, were soon exhausted. He peremptorily refused the money for which they clamored, giving the most cogent of all reasons, an empty coffer. He demonstrated plainly that they were in that moment to make their election, whether to win a victory or to submit to a massacre. Neither flight nor surrender was possible. They knew how much quarter they could expect from the lances of the Spaniards or the waters of the Dollart. Their only chance of salvation lay in their own swords. The instinct of self-preservation, thus invoked, exerted a little of its natural effect.

Meantime, a work which had been too long neglected, was then, if possible, to be performed. In that watery territory, the sea was only held in check by artificial means. In a very short time, by the demolition of a few dykes and the opening of a few sluices, the whole country through which the Spaniards had to pass could be laid under water. Believing it yet possible to enlist the ocean in his defense, Louis, having partially reduced his soldiers to obedience, ordered a strong detachment upon this important service. Seizing a spade, he commenced the work himself, and then returned to set his army in battle array. Two or three tide gates had been opened, two or three bridges had been demolished, when Alva, riding in advance of his army, appeared within a mile or two of Jemmingen. It was then eight o’clock in the morning. The patriots redoubled their efforts. By ten o’clock the waters were already knee high, and in some places as deep as to the waist. At that hour, the advanced guard of the Spaniards arrived. Fifteen hundred musketeers were immediately ordered forward by the duke. They were preceded by a company of mounted carabineers, attended by a small band of volunteers of distinction. This little band threw themselves at once upon the troops engaged in destroying the dykes. The rebels fled at the first onset, and the Spaniards closed the gates. Feeling the full importance of the moment, Count Louis ordered a large force of musketeers to recover the position, and to complete the work of inundation. It was too late. The little band of Spaniards held the post with consummate tenacity. Charge after charge, volley after volley, from the overwhelming force brought against them failed to loosen the fierce grip with which they held this key to the whole situation. Before they could be driven from the dykes, their comrades arrived, when all their antagonists at once made a hurried retreat to their camp.

Very much the same tactics were now employed by the duke, as in the engagement near Selwaert Abbey. He was resolved that this affair, also, should be a hunt, not a battle, but foresaw that it was to be a more successful one. There was no loophole of escape, so that after a little successful baiting, the imprisoned victims would be forced to spring from their lurking-place, to perish upon his spears. On his march from Reyden that morning, he had taken care to occupy every farmhouse, every building of whatever description along the road, with his troops. He had left a strong guard on the bridge at Reyden, and
had thus closed carefully every avenue. The same 1,500 musketeers were now advanced further towards the camp. This small force, powerfully but secretly sustained, was to feel the enemy, to skirmish with him, and to draw him as soon as possible out of his trenches. The plan succeeded. Gradually the engagements between them and the troops sent out by Count Louis grew more earnest. Finding so insignificant a force opposed to them, the mutinous rebels took courage. The work waxed hot. Lodroño and Romero, commanders of the musketeers, becoming alarmed, sent to the duke for reinforcements. He sent back word in reply, that if they were not enough to damage the enemy, they could, at least, hold their own for the present. So much he had a right to expect of Spanish soldiers. At any rate, he should send no reinforcements. Again they were more warmly pressed, again their messenger returned with the same reply. A third time they sent the most urgent entreaties for succor. The Duke was still inexorable.

Meantime, the result of this scientific angling approached. By noon, the rebels, not being able to see how large a portion of the Spanish army had arrived, began to think the affair not so serious. Count Louis sent out a reconnoitering party upon the river in a few boats. They returned without having been able to discover any large force. It seemed probable, therefore, that the inundation had been more successful in stopping their advance than had been supposed. Louis, always too rash, inflamed his men with temporary enthusiasm. Determined to cut their way out by one vigorous movement, the whole army at last marched forth from their entrenchments, with drums beating, colors flying; but already the concealed reinforcements of their enemies were on the spot. The patriots met with a warmer reception than they had expected. Their courage evaporated. Hardly had they advanced three hundred yards, when the whole body wavered and then retreated precipitately towards the encampment, having scarcely exchanged a shot with the enemy.

Count Louis, in a frenzy of rage and despair, flew from rank to rank, in vain endeavoring to rally his terror-stricken troops. It was hopeless. The battery which guarded the road was entirely deserted. He rushed to the cannon himself, and fired them all with his own hand. It was their first and last discharge. His single arm, however bold, could not turn the tide of battle, and he was swept backwards with his coward troops. In a moment afterwards, Don Lope de Figueroa, who led the van of the Spaniards, dashed upon the battery, and secured it, together with the ravelins. Their own artillery was turned against the rebels, and the road was soon swept.

The Spaniards in large numbers now rushed through the trenches in pursuit of the retreating foe. No resistance was offered, nor quarter given. An impossible escape was all which was attempted. It was not a battle, but a massacre. Many of the beggars in their flight threw down their arms; all had forgotten their use. Their antagonists butchered them in droves, while those who escaped the sword were hurled into the river. Seven Spaniards were killed, and seven thousand rebels. The swift ebb-tide swept the hats of the perishing wretches in such numbers down the stream, that the people at Embden knew the result of the battle in an incredibly short period of time. The skirmishing had lasted
from ten o’clock till one, but the butchery continued much longer. It took time to slaughter even unresisting victims. Large numbers obtained refuge for the night upon an island in the river. At low water next day the Spaniards waded to them, and slew every man. Many found concealment in hovels, swamps, and thickets, so that the whole of the following day was occupied in ferreting out and dispatching them. There was so much to be done, that there was work enough for all. “Not a soldier,” says, with great simplicity, a Spanish historian who fought in the battle, “not a soldier, nor even a lad, who wished to share in the victory, but could find somebody to wound, to kill, to burn, or to drown.” The wounding, killing, burning, drowning lasted two days, and very few escaped. The landward pursuit extended for three or four leagues around, so that the roads and pastures were covered with bodies, with corslets, and other weapons. Count Louis himself stripped off his clothes, and made his escape, when all was over, by swimming across the Ems. With the paltry remnant of his troops he again took refuge in Germany.

The Spanish army, two days afterwards, marched back to Gröningen. The page which records their victorious campaign is foul with outrage and red with blood. None of the horrors which accompany the passage of hostile troops through a defenseless country were omitted. Maids and matrons were ravished in multitudes, old men butchered in cold blood. As Alva returned, with the rear-guard of his army, the whole sky was red with a constant conflagration; the very earth seemed changed to ashes. Every peasant’s hovel, every farmhouse, every village upon the road had been burned to the ground. So gross and so extensive had been the outrage, that the commander-in-chief felt it due to his dignity to hang some of his own soldiers who had most distinguished themselves in this work. Thus ended the campaign of Count Louis in Friesland. Thus signally and terribly had the Duke of Alva vindicated the supremacy of Spanish discipline and of his own military skill.

On his return to Gröningen, the estates were summoned, and received a severe lecture for their suspicious demeanor in regard to the rebellion. In order more effectually to control both province and city, the governor-general ordered the construction of a strong fortress, which was soon begun but never completed. Having thus furnished himself with a key to this important and doubtful region, he returned by way of Amsterdam to Utrecht. There he was met by his son Frederic with strong reinforcements. The duke reviewed his whole army, and found himself at the head of 30,000 infantry and 7,000 cavalry. Having fully subdued the province, he had no occupation for such a force, but he improved the opportunity by cutting off the head of an old woman in Utrecht. The Vrouw van Diemen, eighteen months previously, had given the preacher Arendsoon a night’s lodging in her house. The crime had, in fact, been committed by her son-in-law, who dwelt under her roof, and who had himself, without her participation, extended this dangerous hospitality to a heretic; but the old lady, although a devout Catholic, was rich. Her execution would strike a wholesome terror into the hearts of her neighbors. The confiscation of her estates would bring a handsome sum into the government coffers. It would be made manifest that the same hand which could destroy an army of 12,000
rebels at a blow could inflict as signal punishment on the small delinquencies of obscure individuals. The old lady, who was past eighty-four years of age, was placed in a chair upon the scaffold. She met her death with heroism, and treated her murderers with contempt. "I understand very well," she observed, "why my death is considered necessary. The calf is fat and must be killed." To the executioner she expressed a hope that his sword was sufficiently sharp, "as he was likely to find her old neck very tough." With this grisly parody upon the pathetic dying words of Anne Boleyn, the courageous old gentlewoman submitted to her fate.

The tragedy of Don Carlos does not strictly belong to our subject, which is the rise of the Netherland commonwealth—not the decline of the Spanish monarchy, nor the life of Philip II. The thread is but slender which connects the unhappy young prince with the fortunes of the northern republic. He was said, no doubt with truth, to desire the government of Flanders. He was also supposed to be in secret correspondence with the leaders of the revolt in the provinces. He appeared, however, to possess very little of their confidence. His name is only once mentioned by William of Orange, who said in a letter that "the Prince of Spain had lately eaten sixteen pounds of fruit, including four pounds of grapes at a single sitting, and had become ill in consequence." The result was sufficiently natural, but it nowhere appears that the royal youth, born to consume the fruits of the earth so largely, had ever given the Netherlands any other proof of his capacity to govern them. There is no doubt that he was a most uncomfortable personage at home, both to himself and to others, and that he hated his father very cordially. He was extremely incensed at the nomination of Alva to the Netherlands, because he had hoped that either the king would go thither or entrust the mission to him, in either of which events he should be rid for a time of the paternal authority, or at least of the paternal presence. It seems to be well ascertained that Carlos nourished towards his father a hatred which might lead to criminal attempts, but there is no proof that such attempts were ever made. As to the fabulous amours of the prince and the queen, they had never any existence save in the imagination of poets, who have chosen to find a source of sentimental sorrow for the Infante in the arbitrary substitution of his father for himself in the marriage contract with the daughter of Henry II. As Carlos was but twelve or thirteen years of age when thus deprived of a bride whom he had never seen, the foundation for a passionate regret was but slight. It would hardly be a more absurd fantasy, had the poets chosen to represent Philip’s father, the Emperor Charles, repining in his dotage for the loss of "bloody Mary," whom he had so handsomely ceded to his son. Philip took a bad old woman to relieve his father; he took a fair young princess at his son’s expense; but similar changes in state marriages were such matters of course, that no emotions were likely to be created in consequence. There is no proof whatever, nor any reason to surmise, that any love passages ever existed between Don Carlos and his stepmother.

As to the process and the death of the prince, the mystery has not yet been removed, and the field is still open to conjecture. It seems a thankless task to grope in the dark after the truth at a variety of sources, when the truth really
exists in tangible shape if profane hands could be laid upon it. The secret is buried in the bosom of the Vatican. Philip wrote two letters on the subject to Pius V. The contents of the first (January 21, 1568) are known. He informed the pontiff that he had been obliged to imprison his son, and promised that he would, in the conduct of the affair, omit nothing which could be expected of a father and of a just and prudent king. The second letter, in which he narrated, or is supposed to have narrated, the whole course of the tragic proceedings, down to the death and burial of the prince, has never yet been made public. There are hopes that this secret missive, after three centuries of darkness, may soon see the light.

As Philip generally told the truth to the pope, it is probable that the secret, when once revealed, will contain the veritable solution of the mystery. Till that moment arrives, it seems idle to attempt fathoming the matter. Nevertheless, it may be well briefly to state the case as it stands. As against the king, it rests upon no impregnable, but certainly upon respectable authority. The Prince of Orange, in his famous Apology, calls Philip the murderer of his wife and of his son, and says that there was proof of the facts in France. He alludes to the violent death of Carlos almost as if it were an indisputable truth. "As for Don Charles," he says, "was he not our future sovereign? And if the father could allege against his son fit cause for death, was it not rather for us to judge him than for three or four monks or inquisitors of Spain?"

The historian, P. Matthieu, relates that Philip assembled his council of conscience; that they recommended mercy; that hereupon Philip gave the matter to the inquisition, by which tribunal Carlos was declared a heretic on account of his connection with Protestants, and for his attempt against his father’s life was condemned to death, and that the sentence was executed by four slaves, two holding the arms, one the feet, while the fourth strangled him. De Thou gives the following account of the transaction, having derived many of his details from the oral communications of Louis de Foix:

Philip imagined that his son was about to escape from Spain, and to make his way to the Netherlands. The King also believed himself in danger of assassination from Carlos, his chief evidence being that the prince always carried pistols in the pockets of his loose breeches. As Carlos wished always to be alone at night without any domestic in his chamber, de Foix had arranged for him a set of pulleys, by means of which he could open or shut his door without rising from his bed. He always slept with two pistols and two drawn swords under his pillow, and had two loaded arquebuses in a wardrobe close at hand. These remarkable precautions would seem rather to indicate a profound fear of being himself assassinated; but they were nevertheless supposed to justify Philip’s suspicions, that the Infante was meditating parricide. On Christmas eve, however (1567), Don Carlos told his confessor that he had determined to kill a man. The priest, in
consequence, refused to admit him to the communion. The prince demanded, at least, a wafer which was not consecrated, in order that he might seem to the people to be participating in the sacrament. The confessor declined the proposal, and immediately repairing to the King, narrated the whole story. Philip exclaimed that he was himself the man whom the prince intended to kill, but that measures should be forthwith taken to prevent such a design. The monarch then consulted the Holy Office of the inquisition, and the resolution was taken to arrest his son. De Foix was compelled to alter the pulleys of the door to the prince’s chamber in such a manner that it could be opened without the usual noise, which was almost sure to awaken him. At midnight, accordingly, Count Lerma entered the room so stealthily that the arms were all removed from the prince’s pillow and the wardrobe, without awakening the sleeper. Philip, Roy Gomez, the Duke de Feria, and two other nobles, then noiselessly crept into the apartment. Carlos still slept so profoundly that it was necessary for Lerma to shake him violently by the arm before he could be aroused. Starting from his sleep in the dead of night, and seeing his father thus accompanied, before his bed, the prince cried out that he was a dead man, and earnestly besought the bystanders to make an end of him at once. Philip assured him, however, that he was not come to kill him, but to chastise him paternally, and to recall him to his duty. He then read him a serious lecture, caused him to rise from his bed, took away his servants, and placed him under guard. He was made to array himself in mourning habiliments, and to sleep on a truckle bed. The Prince was in despair. He soon made various attempts upon his own life. He threw himself into the fire, but was rescued by his guards, with his clothes all in flames. He passed several days without taking any food, and then ate so many patties of minced meat that he nearly died of indigestion. He was also said to have attempted to choke himself with a diamond, and to have been prevented by his guard; to have filled his bed with ice; to have sat in cold draughts; to have gone eleven days without food, the last method being, as one would think, sufficiently thorough. Philip, therefore, seeing his son thus desperate, consulted once more with the Holy Office, and came to the decision that it was better to condemn him legitimately to death than to permit him to die by his own hand. In order, however, to save appearances, the order was secretly carried into execution. Don Carlos was made to swallow poison in a bowl of broth, of which he died in a few hours. This was at the commencement of his twenty-third year. The death was concealed for several months, and was not made public till after Alva’s victory at Jemmingen.
Such was the account drawn up by de Thou from the oral communications of de Foix, and from other sources not indicated. Certainly, such a narrative is far from being entitled to implicit credence. The historian was a contemporary, but he was not in Spain, and the engineer’s testimony is, of course, not entitled to much consideration on the subject of the process and the execution (if there were an execution), although conclusive as to matters which had been within his personal knowledge. For the rest, all that it can be said to establish is the existence of the general rumor, that Carlos came to his death by foul means and in consequence of advice given by the inquisition.

On the other hand, in all the letters written at the period by persons in Madrid most likely, from their position, to know the truth, not a syllable has been found in confirmation of the violent death said to have been suffered by Carlos. Secretary Erasso, the papal nuncio Castagna, the Venetian envoy Cavalli, all express a conviction that the death of the prince had been brought about by his own extravagant conduct and mental excitement—by alternations of starving and voracious eating, by throwing himself into the fire, by icing his bed, and by similar acts of desperation. Nearly every writer alludes to the incident of the refusal of the priest to admit Carlos to communion, upon the ground of his confessed deadly hatred to an individual whom all supposed to be the king. It was also universally believed that Carlos meant to kill his father. The nuncio asked Spinosa (then President of Castile) if this report were true. "If nothing more were to be feared," answered the priest, "the King would protect himself by other measures, but the matter was worse, if worse could be." The king, however, summoned all the foreign diplomatic body and assured them that the story was false. After his arrest, the prince, according to Castagna, attempted various means of suicide, abstaining, at last, many days from food, and dying in consequence, "discoursing, upon his deathbed, gravely and like a man of sense."

The historian Cabrera, official panegyrist of Philip II, speaks of the death of Carlos as a natural one, but leaves a dark kind of mystery about the symptoms of his disease. He states that the prince was tried and condemned by a commission or junta, consisting of Spinosa, Ruy Gomez, and the Licentiate Virviesca, but that he was carried off by an illness, the nature of which he does not describe.

Llorente found nothing in the records of the Inquisition to prove that the Holy Office had ever condemned the prince or instituted any process against him. He states that he was condemned by a commission, but that he died of a sickness which supervened. It must be confessed that the illness was a convenient one, and that such diseases are very apt to attack individuals whom tyrants are disposed to remove from their path, while desirous, at the same time, to save appearances.

It would certainly be presumptuous to accept implicitly the narrative of de Thou, which is literally followed by Hoofd, and by many modern writers. On the other hand, it would be an exaggeration of historical skepticism to absolve Philip from the murder of his son, solely upon negative testimony. The people about court did not believe in the crime. They saw no proofs of it. Of course
they saw none. Philip would take good care that there should be none if he had made up his mind that the death of the prince should be considered a natural one. An à priori argument, which omits the character of the suspected culprit, and the extraordinary circumstances of time and place, is not satisfactory. Philip thoroughly understood the business of secret midnight murder. We shall soon have occasion to relate the elaborate and ingenious method by which the assassination of Montigny was accomplished and kept a profound secret from the whole world, until the letters of the royal assassin, after three centuries’ repose, were exhumed, and the foul mystery revealed. Philip was capable of any crime. Moreover, in his letter to his aunt, Queen Catharine of Portugal, he distinctly declares himself, like Abraham, prepared to go all lengths in obedience to the Lord. "I have chosen in this matter," he said, "to make the sacrifice to God of my own flesh and blood, and to prefer His service and the universal welfare to all other human considerations." Whenever the letter to Pius V sees the light, it will appear whether the sacrifice which the monarch thus made to his God proceeded beyond the imprisonment and condemnation of his son, or was completed by the actual immolation of the victim.

With regard to the prince himself, it is very certain that, if he had lived, the realms of the Spanish Crown would have numbered one tyrant more. Carlos, from his earliest youth, was remarkable for the ferocity of his character. The Emperor Charles was highly pleased with him, then about fourteen years of age, upon their first interview after the abdication. He flattered himself that the lad had inherited his own martial genius together with his name. Carlos took much interest in his grandfather’s account of his various battles, but when the flight from Innspruck was narrated, he repeated many times, with much vehemence, that he never would have fled; to which position he adhered, notwithstanding all the arguments of the Emperor, and very much to his amusement. The young prince was always fond of soldiers, and listened eagerly to discourses of war. He was in the habit also of recording the names of any military persons who, according to custom, frequently made offers of their services to the heir apparent, and of causing them to take a solemn oath to keep their engagements. No other indications of warlike talent, however, have been preserved concerning him. "He was crafty, ambitious, cruel, violent," says the envoy Suriano, "a hater of buffoons, a lover of soldiers." His natural cruelty seems to have been remarkable from his boyhood. After his return from the chase, he was in the habit of cutting the throats of hares and other animals, and of amusing himself with their dying convulsions. He also frequently took pleasure in roasting them alive. He once received a present of a very large snake from some person who seemed to understand how to please this remarkable young prince. After a time, however, the favorite reptile allowed itself to bite its master’s finger, whereupon Don Carlos immediately retaliated by biting off its head.

He was excessively angry at the suggestion that the prince who was expected to spring from his father’s marriage with the English queen, would one day reign over the Netherlands, and swore he would challenge him to mortal combat in order to prevent such an infringement of his rights. His father and
grandfather were both highly diverted with this manifestation of spirit, but it was not decreed that the world should witness the execution of these fraternal intentions against the babe which was never to be born.

Ferocity, in short, seems to have been the leading characteristic of the unhappy Carlos. His preceptor, a man of learning and merit, who was called "the honorable John," tried to mitigate this excessive ardor of temperament by a course of Cicero de Officiis, which he read to him daily. Neither the eloquence of Tully, however, nor the precepts of the honorable John made the least impression upon this very savage nature. As he grew older he did not grow wiser nor more gentle. He was prematurely and grossly licentious. All the money which as a boy he was allowed, he spent upon women of low character, and when he was penniless, he gave them his chains, his medals, even the clothes from his back. He took pleasure in affronting respectable females when he met them in the streets, insulting them by the coarsest language and gestures. Being cruel, cunning, fierce and licentious, he seemed to combine many of the worst qualities of a lunatic. That he probably was one is the best defense which can be offered for his conduct. In attempting to offer violence to a female, while he was at the university of Alcalà, he fell down a stone staircase, from which cause he was laid up for a long time with a severely wounded head, and was supposed to have injured his brain.

The traits of ferocity recorded of him during his short life are so numerous that humanity can hardly desire that it should have been prolonged. A few drops of water having once fallen upon his head from a window, as he passed through the street, he gave peremptory orders to his guard to burn the house to the ground, and to put every one of its inhabitants to the sword. The soldiers went forthwith to execute the order, but more humane than their master, returned with the excuse that the Holy Sacrament of the Viaticum had that moment been carried into the house. This appeal to the superstition of the prince successfully suspended the execution of the crime which his inconceivable malignity had contemplated. On another occasion, a nobleman, who slept near his chamber, failed to answer his bell on the instant. Springing upon his dilatory attendant, as soon as he made his appearance, the prince seized him in his arms and was about to throw him from the window, when the cries of the unfortunate chamberlain attracted attention and procured a rescue.

The Cardinal Espinoza had once accidentally detained at his palace an actor who was to perform a favorite part by express command of Don Carlos. Furious at this detention, the prince took the priest by the throat as soon as he presented himself at the palace, and plucking his dagger from its sheath, swore, by the soul of his father, that he would take his life on the spot. The grand inquisitor fell on his knees and begged for mercy, but it is probable that the entrance of the king alone saved his life.

There was often something ludicrous mingled with the atrocious in these ungovernable explosions of wrath. Don Pedro Manuel, his chamberlain, had once, by his command, ordered a pair of boots to be made for the prince. When brought home, they were, unfortunately, too tight. The prince, after vainly endeavoring to pull them on, fell into a blazing passion. He swore that it
was the fault of Don Pedro, who always wore tight boots himself, but he at the same time protested that his father was really at the bottom of the affair. He gave the young nobleman a box on the ear for thus conspiring with the king against his comfort, and then ordered the boots to be chopped into little pieces, stewed and seasoned. Then sending for the culprit shoemaker, he ordered him to eat his own boots, thus converted into a pottage; and with this punishment the unfortunate mechanic, who had thought his life forfeited, was sufficiently glad to comply.

Even the puissant Alva could not escape his violence. Like all the men in whom his father reposed confidence, the duke was odious to the heir apparent. Don Carlos detested him with the whole force of his little soul. He hated him as only a virtuous person deserved to be hated by such a ruffian. The heir apparent had taken the Netherlands under his patronage. He had even formed the design of repairing secretly to the provinces, and could not, therefore, disguise his wrath at the appointment of the duke. It is doubtful whether the country would have benefited by the gratification of his wishes. It is possible that the pranks of so malignant an ape might have been even more mischievous than the concentrated and vigorous tyranny of an Alva. When the new captain-general called, before his departure, to pay his respects to the Infante, the duke seemed, to his surprise, to have suddenly entered the den of a wild beast. Don Carlos sprang upon him with a howl of fury, brandishing a dagger in his hand. He uttered reproaches at having been defrauded of the Netherland government. He swore that Alva should never accomplish his mission, nor leave his presence alive. He was proceeding to make good the threat with his poniard, when the duke closed with him. A violent struggle succeeded. Both rolled together on the ground, the prince biting and striking like a demoniac, the duke defending himself as well as he was able, without attempting his adversary’s life. Before the combat was decided, the approach of many persons put an end to the disgraceful scene. As decent a veil as possible was thrown over the transaction, and the duke departed on his mission. Before the end of the year, the prince was in the prison whence he never came forth alive.

The figure of Don Carlos was as misshapen as his mind. His head was disproportionately large, his limbs were rickety, one shoulder was higher, one leg longer than the other. With features resembling those of his father, but with a swarthy instead of a fair complexion, with an expression of countenance both fierce and foolish, and with a character such as we have sketched it, upon the evidence of those who knew him well, it is indeed strange that he should ever have been transformed by the magic of poetry into a romantic hero. As cruel and cunning as his father, as mad as his great-grandmother, he has left a name which not even his dark and mysterious fate can render interesting.
CHAPTER 4

The Prince of Orange Contends with the Duke of Alva

The duke having thus crushed the project of Count Louis, and quelled the insurrection in Friesland, returned in triumph to Brussels. Far from softened by the success of his army, he renewed with fresh energy the butchery which, for a brief season, had been suspended during his brilliant campaign in the north. The altars again smoked with victims; the hanging, burning, drowning, beheading, seemed destined to be the perpetual course of his administration, so long as human bodies remained on which his fanatical vengeance could be wreaked. Four men of eminence were executed soon after his return to the capital. They had previously suffered such intense punishment on the rack, that it was necessary to carry them to the scaffold and bind them upon chairs, that they might be beheaded. These four sufferers were a Frisian nobleman, named Galena, the secretaries of Egmont and Horn, Bakkerzeel and La Loo, and the distinguished burgomaster of Antwerp, Antony Van Straalen. The arrest of the three last-mentioned individuals, simultaneously with that of the two
counts, has been related in a previous chapter. In the case of Van Straalen, the services rendered by him to the provinces during his long and honorable career, had been so remarkable, that even the Blood-Council, in sending his case to Alva for his sentence, were inspired by a humane feeling. They felt so much compunction at the impending fate of a man who, among other meritorious acts, had furnished nearly all the funds for the brilliant campaign in Picardy, by which the opening years of Philip’s reign had been illustrated, as to hint at the propriety of a pardon. But the recommendation to mercy, though it came from the lips of tigers, dripping with human blood, fell unheeded on the tyrant’s ear. It seemed meet that the man who had supplied the nerves of war in that unforgiven series of triumphs, should share the fate of the hero who had won the laurels.

Hundreds of obscure martyrs now followed in the same path to another world, where surely they deserved to find their recompense, if steadfast adherence to their faith, and a tranquil trust in God amid tortures and death too horrible to be related, had ever found favor above. The "Red-Rod," as the provost of Brabant was popularly designated, was never idle. He flew from village to village throughout the province, executing the bloody behests of his masters with congenial alacrity. Nevertheless his career was soon destined to close upon the same scaffold where he had so long officiated. Partly from caprice, partly from an uncompromising and fantastic sense of justice, his master now hanged the executioner whose industry had been so untiring. The sentence which was affixed to his breast, as he suffered, stated that he had been guilty of much malpractice; that he had executed many persons without a warrant, and had suffered many guilty persons for a bribe, to escape their doom. The reader can judge which of the two clauses constituted the most sufficient reason.

During all these triumphs of Alva, the Prince of Orange had not lost his self-possession. One after another, each of his bold, skillfully conceived, and carefully prepared plans had failed. Villars had been entirely discomfited at Dalhem, Cocqueville had been cut to pieces in Picardy, and now the valiant and experienced Louis had met with an entire overthrow in Friesland. The brief success of the patriots at Heiliger-Lee had been washed out in the blood-torrents of Jemmingen. Tyranny was more triumphant, the provinces more timidly crouching, than ever. The friends on whom William of Orange relied in Germany, never enthusiastic in his cause, although many of them true-hearted and liberal, now grew cold and anxious. For months long, his most faithful and affectionate allies, such men as the Elector of Hesse and the Duke of Wirtemberg, as well as the less trustworthy Augustus of Saxony, had earnestly expressed their opinion that, under the circumstances, his best course was to sit still and watch the course of events.

It was known that the Emperor had written an urgent letter to Philip on the subject of his policy in the Netherlands in general, and concerning the position
of Orange in particular. All persons, from the Emperor down to the pettiest potentate, seemed now of opinion that the prince had better pause; that he was, indeed, bound to wait the issue of that remonstrance. "Your highness must sit still," said Landgrave William, "Your highness must sit still," said Augustus of Saxony. "You must move neither hand nor foot in the cause of the perishing provinces," said the Emperor. "Not a soldier—horse, foot, or dragoon—shall be levied within the Empire. If you violate the peace of the realm, and embroil us with our excellent brother and cousin Philip, it is at your own peril. You have nothing to do but to keep quiet and await his answer to our letter." But the prince knew how much effect his sitting still would produce upon the cause of liberty and religion. He knew how much effect the Emperor’s letter was like to have upon the heart of Philip. He knew that the more impenetrable the darkness now gathering over that land of doom which he had devoted his life to defend, the more urgently was he forbidden to turn his face away from it in its affliction. He knew that thousands of human souls, nigh to perishing, were daily turning towards him as their only hope on earth, and he was resolved, so long as he could dispense a single ray of light, that his countenance should never be averted.

It is difficult to contemplate his character, at this period, without being infected with a perhaps dangerous enthusiasm. It is not an easy task coldly to analyze a nature which contained so much of the self-sacrificing and the heroic, as well as of the adroit and the subtle; and it is almost impossible to give utterance to the emotions which naturally swell the heart at the contemplation of so much active virtue, without rendering oneself liable to the charge of excessive admiration. Through the mists of adversity, a human form may dilate into proportions which are colossal and deceptive. Our judgment may thus, perhaps, be led captive, but at any rate the sentiment excited is more healthful than that inspired by the mere shedder of blood, by the merely selfish conqueror. When the cause of the champion is that of human right against tyranny, of political end religious freedom against an all-engrossing and absolute bigotry, it is still more difficult to restrain veneration within legitimate bounds. To liberate the souls and bodies of millions, to maintain for a generous people, who had well-nigh lost their all, those free institutions which their ancestors had bequeathed, was a noble task for any man. But here stood a prince of ancient race, vast possessions, imperial blood, one of the great ones of the earth, whose pathway along the beaten track would have been smooth and successful, but who was ready to pour out his wealth like water, and to coin his heart’s blood, drop by drop, in this virtuous but almost desperate cause. He felt that of a man to whom so much had been entrusted, much was to be asked. God had endowed him with an incisive and comprehensive genius, unfaltering fortitude, and with the rank and fortune which enable a man to employ his faculties, to the injury or the happiness of his fellows, on the widest scale. The prince felt the responsibility, and the world was to learn the result.
It was about this time that a deep change came over his mind. Hitherto, although nominally attached to the communion of the ancient Church, his course of life and habits of mind had not led him to deal very earnestly with things beyond the world. The severe duties, the grave character of the cause to which his days were henceforth to be devoted, had already led him to a closer inspection of the essential attributes of Christianity. He was now enrolled for life as a soldier of the Reformation. The Reformation was henceforth his fatherland, the sphere of his duty and his affection. The religious Reformers became his brethren, whether in France, Germany, the Netherlands, or England. Yet his mind had taken a higher flight than that of the most eminent Reformers. His goal was not a new doctrine, but religious liberty. In an age when to think was a crime, and when bigotry and a persecuting spirit characterized Romanists and Lutherans, Calvinists and Zwinglians, he had dared to announce freedom of conscience as the great object for which noble natures should strive. In an age when toleration was a vice, he had the manhood to cultivate it as a virtue. His parting advice to the Reformers of the Netherlands, when he left them for a season in the spring of 1567, was to sink all lesser differences in religious union. Those of the Augsburg Confession and those of the Calvinistic Church, in their own opinion as incapable of commingling as oil and water, were, in his judgment, capable of friendly amalgamation. He appealed eloquently to the good and influential of all parties to unite in one common cause against oppression. Even while favoring daily more and more the cause of the purified Church, and becoming daily more alive to the corruption of Rome, he was yet willing to tolerate all forms of worship, and to leave reason to combat error.

Without a particle of cant or fanaticism, he had become a deeply religious man. Hitherto he had been only a man of the world and a statesman, but from this time forth he began calmly to rely upon God's providence in all the emergencies of his eventful life. His letters written to his most confidential friends, to be read only by themselves, and which have been gazed upon by no other eyes until after the lapse of nearly three centuries, abundantly prove his sincere and simple trust. This sentiment was not assumed for effect to delude others, but cherished as a secret support for himself. His religion was not a cloak to his designs, but a consolation in his disaster. In his letter of instruction to his most confidential agent, John Bazius, while he declared himself frankly in favor of the Protestant principles, he expressed his extreme repugnance to the persecution of Catholics. "Should we obtain power over any city or cities," he wrote, "let the communities of papists be as much respected and protected as possible. Let them be overcome, not by violence, but with gentle-mindedness and virtuous treatment." After the terrible disaster at Jemmingen, he had written to Louis, consoling him, in the most affectionate language, for the unfortunate result of his campaign. Not a word of reproach escaped from him, although his brother had conducted the operations in Friesland, after the battle of Heiliger-Lee, in a manner quite contrary to his own advice. He had counseled against a battle, and had foretold a defeat; but after the battle had
been fought and a crushing defeat sustained, his language breathed only
unwavering submission to the will of God, and continued confidence in his own
courage. "You may be well assured, my brother," he wrote, "that I have never
felt anything more keenly than the pitiable misfortune which has happened to
you, for many reasons which you can easily imagine. Moreover, it hinders us
much in the levy which we are making, and has greatly chilled the hearts of
those who otherwise would have been ready to give us assistance.
Nevertheless, since it has thus pleased God, it is necessary to have patience
and to lose not courage: conforming ourselves to His divine will, as for my part
I have determined to do in everything which may happen, still proceeding
onward in our work with his Almighty aid." *Soevis tranquillus in undis*, he was
never more placid than when the storm was wildest and the night darkest. He
drew his consolations and refreshed his courage at the never-failing fountains
of Divine mercy.

"I go to-morrow," he wrote to the unworthy Anne of Saxony, "but when I shall
return, or when I shall see you, I cannot, on my honor, tell you with certainty. I
have resolved to place myself in the hands of the Almighty, that he may guide
me whither it is His good pleasure that I should go. *I see well enough that I am
destined to pass this life in misery and labor, with which I am well content,*
*since it thus pleases the Omnipotent*, for I know that I have merited still
greater chastisement. I only implore Him graciously to send me strength to
endure with patience.

Such language, in letters the most private, never meant to be seen by other
eyes than those to which they were addressed, gives touching testimony to the
sincere piety of his character. No man was ever more devoted to a high
purpose, no man had ever more right to imagine himself, or less inclination to
pronounce himself, entrusted with a divine mission. There was nothing of the
charlatan in his character. His nature was true and steadfast. No narrow-
minded usurper was ever more loyal to his own aggrandizement than this large-
hearted man to the cause of oppressed humanity. Yet it was inevitable that
baser minds should fail to recognize his purity. While he exhausted his life for
the emancipation of a people, it was easy to ascribe all his struggles to the
hope of founding a dynasty. It was natural for groveling natures to search in the
gross soil of self-interest for the sustaining roots of the tree beneath whose
branches a nation found its shelter. What could they comprehend of living
fountains and of heavenly dews?

In May 1568, the Emperor Maximilian had formally issued a requisition to the
Prince of Orange to lay down his arms, and to desist from all levies and
machinations against the King of Spain and the peace of the realm. This
summons he was commanded to obey on pain of forfeiting all rights, fiefs,
privileges and endowments bestowed by imperial hands on himself or his
predecessors, and of incurring the heaviest disgrace, punishment, and penalties
of the Empire.
To this document the prince replied in August, having paid in the meantime but little heed to its precepts. Now that the Emperor, who at first was benignant, had begun to frown on his undertaking, he did not slacken in his own endeavors to set his army on foot. One by one, those among the princes of the empire who had been most stanch in his cause, and were still most friendly to his person, grew colder as tyranny became stronger; but the ardor of the prince was not more chilled by their despair than by the overthrow at Jemmingen, which had been its cause. In August, he answered the letter of the Emperor, respectfully but warmly. He still denounced the tyranny of Alva and the arts of Granvelle with that vigorous eloquence which was always at his command, while, as usual, he maintained a show of almost exaggerated respect for their monarch. It was not to be presumed, he said, that his Majesty, "a king debonair and bountiful," had ever intended such cruelties as those which had been rapidly retraced in the letter, but it was certain that the Duke of Alva had committed them all of his own authority. He trusted, moreover, that the Emperor, after he had read the "Justification" which the prince had recently published, would appreciate the reason for his taking up arms. He hoped that his Majesty would now consider the resistance just, Christian, and conformable to the public peace. He expressed the belief that rather than interpose any hindrance, his Majesty would thenceforth rather render assistance "to the poor and desolate Christians," even as it was his Majesty's office and authority to be the last refuge of the injured.

The "Justification against the false blame of his calumniators by the Prince of Orange," to which the prince thus referred, has been mentioned in a previous chapter. This remarkable paper had been drawn up at the advice of his friends, Landgrave William and Elector Augustus, but it was not the only document which the prince caused to be published at this important epoch. He issued a formal declaration of war against the Duke of Alva; he addressed a solemn and eloquent warning or proclamation to all the inhabitants of the Netherlands. These documents are all extremely important and interesting. Their phraseology shows the intentions and the spirit by which the prince was actuated on first engaging in the struggle. Without the prince and his efforts at this juncture, there would probably have never been a free Netherland commonwealth. It is certain, likewise, that without an enthusiastic passion for civil and religious liberty throughout the masses of the Netherland people, there would have been no successful effort on the part of the prince. He knew his countrymen; while they, from highest to humblest, recognized in him their savior. There was, however, no pretense of a revolutionary movement. The prince came to maintain, not to overthrow. The freedom which had been enjoyed in the provinces until the accession of the Burgundian dynasty, it was his purpose to restore. The attitude which he now assumed was a peculiar one in history. This defender of a people's cause set up no revolutionary standard. In all his documents he paid apparent reverence to the authority of the king. By a fiction, which was not unphilosophical, he assumed that the monarch was incapable of the crimes which he charged upon the viceroy. Thus he did not
assume the character of a rebel in arms against his prince, but in his own capacity of sovereign he levied troops and waged war against a satrap whom he chose to consider false to his master’s orders. In the interest of Philip, assumed to be identical with the welfare of his people, he took up arms against the tyrant who was sacrificing both. This mask of loyalty would never save his head from the block, as he well knew, but some spirits lofty as his own, might perhaps be influenced by a noble sophistry, which sought to strengthen the cause of the people by attributing virtue to the king.

And thus did the sovereign of an insignificant little principality stand boldly forth to do battle with the most powerful monarch in the world. At his own expense, and by almost superhuman exertions, he had assembled nearly 30,000 men. He now boldly proclaimed to the world, and especially to the inhabitants of the provinces, his motives, his purposes, and his hopes.

"We, by God’s grace Prince of Orange," said his declaration of August 31, 1568, "salute all faithful subjects of his Majesty. To few people is it unknown that the Spaniards have for a long time sought to govern the land according to their pleasure. Abusing his Majesty’s goodness, they have persuaded him to decree the introduction of the inquisition into the Netherlands. They well understood, that in case the Netherlanders could be made to tolerate its exercise, they would lose all protection to their liberty; that if they opposed its introduction, they would open those rich provinces as a vast field of plunder. We had hoped that his Majesty, taking the matter to heart, would have spared his hereditary provinces from such utter ruin. We have found our hopes futile. We are unable, by reason of our loyal service due to his Majesty, and of our true compassion for the faithful lieges, to look with tranquility any longer at such murders, robberies, outrages, and agony. We are, moreover, certain that his Majesty has been badly informed upon Netherland matters. We take up arms, therefore, to oppose the violent tyranny of the Spaniards, by the help of the merciful God, who is the enemy of all blood-thirstiness. Cheerfully inclined to wager our life and all our worldly wealth on the cause, we have now, God be thanked, an excellent army of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, raised all at our own expense. We summon all loyal subjects of the Netherlands to come and help us. Let them take to heart the uttermost need of the country, the danger of perpetual slavery for themselves and their children, and of the entire overthrow of the Evangelical religion. Only when Alva’s blood-thirstiness shall have been at last overpowered, can the provinces hope to recover their pure administration of justice, and a prosperous condition for their commonwealth."

In the "warning" or proclamation to all the inhabitants of the Netherlands, the prince expressed similar sentiments. He announced his intention of expelling the Spaniards forever from the country. To accomplish the mighty undertaking, money was necessary. He accordingly called on his countrymen to contribute, the rich out of their abundance, the poor even out of their poverty, to the furtherance of the cause. To do this, while it was yet time, he solemnly warned
them “before God, the fatherland, and the world.” After the title of this paper were cited the 28th, 29th, and 30th verses of the 10th chapter of Proverbs. The favorite motto of the prince, "pro lege, rege, grege," was also affixed to the document.

These appeals had, however, but little effect. Of 300,000 crowns, promised on behalf of leading nobles and merchants of the Netherlands by Marcus Perez, but ten or twelve thousand came to hand. The appeals to the gentlemen who had signed the Compromise, and to many others who had, in times past, been favorable to the liberal party were powerless. A poor Anabaptist preacher collected a small sum from a refugee congregation on the outskirts of Holland, and brought it, at the peril of his life, into the prince’s camp. It came from people, he said, whose will was better than the gift. They never wished to be repaid, he said, except by kindness, when the cause of reform should be triumphant in the Netherlands. The prince signed a receipt for the money, expressing himself touched by this sympathy from these poor outcasts. In the course of time, other contributions from similar sources, principally collected by dissenting preachers, starving and persecuted church communities, were received. The poverty-stricken exiles contributed far more, in proportion, for the establishment of civil and religious liberty, than the wealthy merchants or the haughty nobles.

Late in September, the prince mustered his army in the province of Treves, near the monastery of Romersdorf. His force amounted to nearly 30,000 men, of whom 9,000 were cavalry. Lumey, Count de la Marck, now joined him at the head of a picked band of troopers; a bold, ferocious partisan, descended from the celebrated Wild Boar of Ardennes. Like Civilis, the ancient Batavian hero, he had sworn to leave hair and beard unshorn till the liberation of the country was achieved, or at least till the death of Egmont, whose blood relation he was, had been avenged. It is probable that the fierce conduct of this chieftain, and particularly the cruelties exercised upon monks and papists by his troops, dishonored the cause more than their valor could advance it. But in those stormy times such rude but incisive instruments were scarcely to be neglected, and the name of Lumey was to be forever associated with the earliest and most important triumphs of the liberal cause.

It was fated, however, that but few laurels should be won by the patriots in this campaign. The prince crossed the Rhine at Saint Feit, a village belonging to himself. He descended along the banks as far as the neighborhood of Cologne. Then, after hovering in apparent uncertainty about the territories of Juliers and Limburg, he suddenly, on a bright moonlight night, crossed the Meuse with his whole army, in the neighborhood of Stochem. The operation was brilliantly effected. A compact body of cavalry, according to the plan which had been more than once adopted by Julius Caesar, was placed in the midst of the current, under which shelter the whole army successfully forded the river. The Meuse was more shallow than usual, but the water was as high as the soldiers’
necks. This feat was accomplished on the night and morning of the fourth and fifth of October. It was considered so bold an achievement that its fame spread far and wide. The Spaniards began to tremble at the prowess of a prince whom they had affected to despise. The very fact of the passage was flatly contradicted. An unfortunate burgher at Amsterdam was scourged at the whipping-post, because he mentioned it as matter of common report. The Duke of Alva refused to credit the tale when it was announced to him. "Is the army of the Prince of Orange a flock of wild geese," he asked, "that it can fly over rivers like the Meuse?" Nevertheless it was true. The outlawed, exiled prince stood once more on the borders of Brabant, with an army of disciplined troops at his back. His banners bore patriotic inscriptions. "Pro Lege, Rege, Grege," was emblazoned upon some. A pelican tearing her breast to nourish her young with her life-blood was the pathetic emblem of others. It was his determination to force or entice the Duke of Alva into a general engagement. He was desirous to wipe out the disgrace of Jemmingen. Could he plant his victorious standard thus in the very heart of the country, he felt that thousands would rally around it. The country would rise almost to a man, could he achieve a victory over the tyrant, flushed as he was with victory, and sated with blood.

With banners flying, drums beating, trumpets sounding, with all the pomp and defiance which an already victorious general could assume, Orange marched into Brabant, and took up a position within six thousand paces of Alva's encampment. His plan was at every hazard to dare or to decoy his adversary into the chances of a stricken field. The governor was entrenched at a place called Keiserslager, which Julius Caesar had once occupied. The city of Maestricht was in his immediate neighborhood, which was thus completely under his protection, while it furnished him with supplies. The prince sent to the duke a herald, who was to propose that all prisoners who might be taken in the coming campaign should be exchanged instead of being executed. The herald, booted and spurred, even as he had dismounted from his horse, was instantly hanged. This was the significant answer to the mission of mercy. Alva held no parley with rebels before a battle, nor gave quarter afterwards.

In the meantime, the duke had carefully studied the whole position of affairs, and had arrived at his conclusion. He was determined not to fight. It was obvious that the prince would offer battle eagerly, ostentatiously, frequently, but the governor was resolved never to accept the combat. Once taken, his resolution was unalterable. He recognized the important difference between his own attitude at present, and that in which he had found himself during the past summer in Friesland. There a battle had been necessary, now it was more expedient to overcome his enemy by delay. In Friesland, the rebels had just achieved a victory over the choice troops of Spain. Here they were suffering from the stigma of a crushing defeat. Then, the army of Louis Nassau was swelling daily by recruits, who poured in from all the country round. Now, neither peasant nor noble dared lift a finger for the prince. The army of Louis had been sustained by the one which his brother was known to be preparing. If
their movements had not been checked, a junction would have been effected. The armed revolt would then have assumed so formidable an aspect, that rebellion would seem, even for the timid, a safer choice than loyalty. The army of the prince, on the contrary, was now the last hope of the patriots. The three by which it had been preceded had been successively and signally vanquished.

Friesland, again, was on the outskirts of the country. A defeat sustained by the government there did not necessarily imperil the possession of the provinces. Brabant, on the contrary, was the heart of the Netherlands. Should the prince achieve a decisive triumph there, he would be master of the nation’s fate. The viceroy knew himself to be odious, and he reigned by terror. The prince was the object of the people’s idolatry, and they would rally round him if they dared. A victory gained by the liberator over the tyrant would destroy the terrible talisman of invincibility by which Alva governed. The duke had sufficiently demonstrated his audacity in the tremendous chastisement which he had inflicted upon the rebels under Louis. He could now afford to play that scientific game of which he was so profound a master, without risking any loss of respect or authority. He was no enthusiast. Although he doubtless felt sufficiently confident of overcoming the prince in a pitched battle, he had not sufficient relish for the joys of contest to be willing to risk even a remote possibility of defeat. His force, although composed of veterans and of the best musketeers and pikemen in Europe, was still somewhat inferior in numbers to that of his adversary. Against the 20,000 foot and 8,000 horse of Orange, he could oppose only fifteen or sixteen thousand foot and 5,500 riders. Moreover, the advantage which he had possessed in Friesland, a country only favorable to infantry, in which he had been stronger than his opponent, was now transferred to his new enemy. On the plains of Brabant, the prince’s superiority in cavalry was sure to tell. The season of the year, too, was an important element in the calculation. The winter alone would soon disperse the bands of German mercenaries, whose expenses Orange was not able to support, even while in active service. With unpaid wages and disappointed hopes of plunder, the rebel army would disappear in a few weeks as totally as if defeated in the open field. In brief, Orange by a victory would gain new life and strength, while his defeat could no more than anticipate, by a few weeks, the destruction of his army, already inevitable. Alva, on the contrary, might lose the mastery of the Netherlands if unfortunate, and would gain no solid advantage if triumphant. The prince had everything to hope, the duke everything to fear, from the result of a general action.

The plan, thus deliberately resolved upon, was accomplished with faultless accuracy. As a work of art, the present campaign of Alva against Orange was a more consummate masterpiece than the more brilliant and dashing expedition into Friesland. The duke had resolved to hang upon his adversary’s skirts, to follow him move by move, to check him at every turn, to harass him in a hundred ways, to foil all his enterprises, to parry all his strokes, and finally to drive him out of the country, after a totally barren campaign, when, as he felt
certain, his ill-paid hirelings would vanish in all directions, and leave their patriot prince a helpless and penniless adventurer. The scheme thus sagaciously conceived, his adversary, with all his efforts, was unable to circumvent.

The campaign lasted little more than a month. Twenty-nine times the prince changed his encampment, and at every remove the duke was still behind him, as close and seemingly as impalpable as his shadow. Thrice they were within cannon-shot of each other, twice without a single trench or rampart between them. The country people refused the prince supplies, for they trembled at the vengeance of the governor. Alva had caused the irons to be removed from all the mills, so that not a bushel of corn could be ground in the whole province. The country thus afforded but little forage for the 30,000 soldiers of the prince. The troops, already discontented, were clamorous for pay and plunder. During one mutinous demonstration, the prince’s sword was shot from his side, and it was with difficulty that a general outbreak was suppressed. The soldiery were maddened and tantalized by the tactics of Alva. They found themselves constantly in the presence of an enemy, who seemed to court a battle at one moment and to vanish like a phantom at the next. They felt the winter approaching, and became daily more dissatisfied with the irritating hardships to which they were exposed. Upon the night of the fifth and sixth of October, the prince had crossed the Meuse at Stochem. Thence he had proceeded to Tongres, followed closely by the enemy’s force, who encamped in the immediate neighborhood. From Tongres he had moved to Saint Trend, still pursued and still baffled in the name captious manner. The skirmishing at the outposts was incessant, but the main body was withdrawn as soon as there seemed a chance of its becoming involved.

From Saint Trend, in the neighborhood of which he had remained several days, be advanced in a southerly direction towards Jodoigne. Count de Genlis, with a reinforcement of French Huguenots, for which the prince had been waiting, had penetrated through the Ardennes, crossed the Meuse at Charlemont, and was now intending a junction with him at Waveron. The river Geta flowed between them. The prince stationed a considerable force upon a hill near the stream to protect the passage, and then proceeded leisurely to send his army across the river. Count Hoogstraaten, with the rear-guard, consisting of about 3,000 men, were alone left upon the hither bank, in order to provoke or to tempt the enemy, who, as usual, was encamped very near. Alva refused to attack the main army, but rapidly detached his son, Don Frederic, with a force of 4,000 foot and 3,000 horse, to cut off the rear-guard. The movement was effected in a masterly manner, the hill was taken, the 3,000 troops which had not passed the river were cut to pieces, and Vitelli hastily dispatched a gentleman named Barberini to implore the duke to advance with the main body, cross the river, and, once for all, exterminate the rebels in a general combat. Alva, inflamed, not with ardor for an impending triumph, but with rage, that his sagely-conceived plane could not be comprehended even by his
son and by his favorite officers, answered the eager messenger with peremptory violence. "Go back to Vitelli," he cried. "Is he, or am I, to command in this campaign? Tell him not to suffer a single man to cross the river. Warn him against sending any more envoys to advise a battle; for should you or any other man dare to bring me another such message, I swear to you, by the head of the king, that you go not hence alive."

With this decisive answer the messenger had nothing for it but to gallop back with all haste, in order to participate in what might be left of the butchery of Count Hoogstraaten's force, and to prevent Vitelli and Don Frederic in their ill-timed ardor, from crossing the river. This was properly effected, while in the meantime the whole rear-guard of the patriots had been slaughtered. A hundred or two, the last who remained, had made their escape from the field, and had taken refuge in a house in the neighborhood. The Spaniards set the buildings on fire, and standing around with lifted lances, offered the fugitives the choice of being consumed in the flames or of springing out upon their spears. Thus entrapped, some chose the one course, some the other. A few, to escape the fury of the fire and the brutality of the Spaniards, stabbed themselves with their own swords. Others embraced, and then killed each other, the enemies from below looking on, as at a theatrical exhibition; now hissing and now applauding, as the death struggles were more or less to their taste. In a few minutes all the fugitives were dead. Nearly 3,000 of the patriots were slain in this combat, including those burned or butchered after the battle was over.

The Sieur de Louverwal was taken prisoner, and soon afterwards beheaded in Brussels, but the greatest misfortune sustained by the liberal party upon this occasion was the death of Antony de Lalaing, Count of Hoogstraaten. This brave and generous nobleman, the tried friend of the Prince of Orange, and his colleague during the memorable scenes at Antwerp, was wounded in the foot during the action, by an accidental discharge of his own pistol. The injury, although apparently slight, caused his death in a few days. There seemed a strange coincidence in his good and evil fortunes. A casual wound in the hand from his own pistol while he was on his way to Brussels, to greet Alva upon his first arrival, had saved him from the scaffold. And now in his first pitched battle with the duke, this seemingly trifling injury in the foot was destined to terminate his existence. Another peculiar circumstance had marked the event. At a gay supper in the course of this campaign, Hoogstraaten had teased Count Louis, in a rough, soldierly way, with his disaster at Jemmingen. He had affected to believe that the retreat upon that occasion had been unnecessary. "We have been now many days in the Netherlands," said he, "and we have seen nothing of the Spaniards but their backs." "And when the duke does break loose," replied Louis, somewhat nettled, "I warrant you will see their faces soon enough, and remember them for the rest of your life." The half-jesting remark was thus destined to become a gloomy prophecy.
This was the only important action during the campaign. Its perfect success did not warp Alva’s purpose, and, notwithstanding the murmurs of many of his officers, he remained firm in his resolution. After the termination of the battle on the Geta, and the duke’s obstinate refusal to pursue his advantage, the Baron de Chevreau dashed his pistol to the ground, in his presence, exclaiming that the duke would never fight. The governor smiled at the young man’s chagrin, seemed even to approve his enthusiasm, but reminded him that it was the business of an officer to fight, of a general to conquer. If the victory were bloodless, so much the better for all.

This action was fought on the 20th of October. A few days afterwards, the prince made his junction with Genlis at Waveren, a place about three leagues from Louvain and from Brussels. This auxiliary force was, however, insignificant. There were only 500 cavalry and 3,000 foot, but so many women and children, that it seemed rather an emigrating colony than an invading army. They arrived late. If they had come earlier, it would have been of little consequence, for it had been written that no laurels were to be gathered in that campaign. The fraternal spirit which existed between the Reformers in all countries was all which could be manifested upon the occasion. The prince was frustrated in his hopes of a general battle, still more bitterly disappointed by the supineness of the country. Not a voice was raised to welcome the deliverer. Not a single city opened its gates. All was crouching, silent, abject. The rising, which perhaps would have been universal had a brilliant victory been obtained, was, by the masterly tactics of Alva, rendered an almost inconceivable idea. The mutinous demonstrations in the prince’s camp became incessant; the soldiers were discontented and weary. What the duke had foretold was coming to pass, for the prince’s army was already dissolving.

Genlis and the other French officers were desirous that the prince should abandon the Netherlands for the present, and come to the rescue of the Huguenots, who had again renewed the religious war under Condé and Coligny. The German soldiers, however, would listen to no such proposal. They had enlisted to fight the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands, and would not hear of making war against Charles IX in France. The prince was obliged to countermarch towards the Rhine. He recrossed the Geta, somewhat to Alva’s astonishment, and proceeded in the direction of the Meuse. The autumn rains, however, had much swollen that river since his passage at the beginning of the month, so that it could no longer be forded. He approached the city of Liege, and summoned their bishop, as he had done on his entrance into the country, to grant a free passage to his troops. The bishop who stood in awe of Alva, and who had accepted his protection, again refused. The prince had no time to parley. He was again obliged to countermarch, and took his way along the high road to France, still watched and closely pursued by Alva, between whose troops and his own daily skirmishes took place. At Le Quesnoy, the prince gained a trifling advantage over the Spaniards; at Cateau Cambresis he also obtained a slight and easy victory; but by the 17th of November, the Duke of
Alva had entered Cateau Cambresis, and the prince had crossed the frontier of France.

The Maréchal de Cossé, who was stationed on the boundary of France and Flanders, now harassed the prince by very similar tactics to those of Alva. He was, however, too weak to inflict any serious damage, although strong enough to create perpetual annoyance. He also sent a secretary to the prince, with a formal prohibition, in the name of Charles IX, against his entering the French territory with his troops.

Besides these negotiations, conducted by Secretary Favelles on the part of Maréchal de Cossé, the king, who was excessively alarmed, also dispatched the Maréchal Gaspar de Schomberg on the same service. That envoy accordingly addressed to the prince a formal remonstrance in the name of his sovereign. Charles IX, it was represented, found it very strange that the prince should thus enter the French territory. The king was not aware that he had ever given him the least cause for hostile proceedings, could not therefore take it in good part that the prince should thus enter France with a "large and puissant army," because no potentate, however humble, could tolerate such a proceeding, much less a great and powerful monarch. Orange was therefore summoned to declare his intentions, but was at the same time informed that, if he merely desired "to pass amiably through the country," and would give assurance, and request permission to that effect, under his hand and seal, his Majesty would take all necessary measures to secure that amiable passage.

The Prince replied by a reference to the statements which he had already made to Maréchal de Cossé. He averred that he had not entered France with evil intent, but rather with a desire to render very humble service to his Majesty, so far as he could do so with a clear conscience.

Touching the king’s inability to remember having given any occasion to hostile proceedings on the part of the prince, he replied that he would pass that matter by. Although he could adduce many, various, and strong reasons for violent measures, he was not so devoid of understanding as not to recognize the futility of attempting anything, by his own personal means, against so great and powerful a king, in comparison with whom he was "but a petty companion."

"Since the true religion," continued Orange, "is a public and general affair, which ought to be preferred to all private matters; since the prince, as a true Christian, is held by his honor and conscience to procure, with all his strength, its advancement and establishment in every place whatever; since, on the other hand, according to the edict published in September last by his Majesty, attempts have been made to force in their consciences all those who are of the Christian religion; and since it has been determined to exterminate the pure word of God, and the entire exercise thereof, and to permit no other religion than the Roman Catholic, a thing very prejudicial to the neighboring nations
where there is a free exercise of the Christian religion, therefore the prince would put no faith in the assertions of his Majesty, that it was not his Majesty’s intentions to force the consciences of any one."

Having given this very deliberate and succinct contradiction to the statements of the French king, the prince proceeded to express his sympathy for the oppressed Christians everywhere. He protested that he would give them all the aid, comfort, counsel, and assistance that he was able to give them. He asserted his conviction that the men who professed “the religion” demanded nothing else than the glory of God and the advancement of His word, while in all matters of civil polity they were ready to render obedience to his Majesty. He added that all his doings were governed by a Christian and affectionate regard for the king and his subjects, whom his Majesty must be desirous of preserving from extreme ruin. He averred, moreover, that if he should perceive any indication that those of the religion were pursuing any other object than liberty of conscience and security for life and property, he would not only withdraw his assistance from them, but would use the whole strength of his army to exterminate them. In conclusion, he begged the king to believe that the work which the prince had undertaken was a Christian work, and that his intentions were good and friendly towards his Majesty.

It was, however, in vain that the prince endeavored to induce his army to try the fortunes of the civil war in France. They had enlisted for the Netherlands, the campaign was over, and they insisted upon being led back to Germany. Schomberg, secretly instructed by the King of France, was active in fomenting the discontent, and the prince was forced to yield. He led his army through Champagne and Lorraine to Strasburg, where they were disbanded. All the money which the prince had been able to collect was paid them. He pawned all his camp equipage, his plate, his furniture. What he could not pay in money he made up in promises, sacredly to be fulfilled, when he should be restored to his possessions. He even solemnly engaged, should he return from France alive, and be still unable to pay their arrears of wages, to surrender his person to them as a hostage for his debt.

Thus triumphantly for Alva, thus miserably for Orange, ended the campaign. Thus hopelessly vanished the army to which so many proud hopes had attached themselves. Eight thousand men had been slain in paltry encounters, 30,000 were dispersed, not easily to be again collected. All the funds which the prince could command had been wasted without producing a result. For the present, nothing seemed to afford a ground of hope for the Netherlands, but the war of freedom had been renewed in France. A band of 1,200 mounted men-at-arms were willing to follow the fortunes of the prince. The three brothers accordingly, William, Louis, and Henry—a lad of eighteen, who had abandoned his studies at the university to obey the chivalrous instincts of his race—set forth early in the following spring to join the banner of Condé.
Cardinal Granvelle, who had never taken his eyes or thoughts from the provinces during his residence at Rome, now expressed himself with exultation. He had predicted, with cold malice, the immediate results of the campaign, and was sanguine enough to believe the contest over, and the prince forever crushed. In his letters to Philip he had taken due notice of the compliments paid to him by Orange in his Justification, in his Declaration, and in his letter to the Emperor. He had declined to make any answer to the charges, in order to enrage the prince the more. He had expressed the opinion, however, that this publication of writings was not the business of brave soldiers, but of cowards. He made the same reflection upon the alleged intrigues by Orange to procure an embassy on his own behalf from the Emperor to Philip—a mission which was sure to end in smoke, while it would cost the prince all credit, not only in Germany but the Netherlands. He felt sure, he said, of the results of the impending campaign. The Duke of Alva was a man upon whose administrative prudence and military skill his sovereign could implicitly rely, nor was there a person in the ranks of the rebels capable of conducting an enterprise of such moment. Least of all had the Prince of Orange sufficient brains for carrying on such weighty affairs, according to the opinion which he had formed of him during their long intercourse in former days.

When the campaign had been decided, and the prince had again become an exile, Granvelle observed that it was now proved how incompetent he and all his companions were to contend in military skill with the Duke of Alva. With a cold sneer at motives which he assumed, as a matter of course, to be purely selfish, he said that the prince had not taken the proper road to recover his property, and that he would now be much embarrassed to satisfy his creditors. Thus must those ever fall, he moralized, who would fly higher than they ought, adding that henceforth the prince would have enough to do in taking care of madam his wife, if she did not change soon in humor and character.

Meantime, the Duke of Alva, having dispatched from Cateau Cambresis a brief account of the victorious termination of the campaign, returned in triumph to Brussels. He had certainly amply indicated his claim to be considered the first warrior of the age. By his lieutenants he had summarily and rapidly destroyed two of the armies sent against him; he had annihilated in person the third, by a brilliantly successful battle, in which he had lost seven men, and his enemies seven thousand; and he had now, by consummate strategy, foiled the fourth and last under the idolized champion of the Netherlands, and this so decisively that, without losing a man, he had destroyed 8,000 rebels, and scattered to the four winds the remaining 20,000. Such signal results might well make even a meeker nature proud. Such vast and fortunate efforts to fix forever an impregnable military tyranny upon a constitutional country, might cause a more modest despot to exult. It was not wonderful that the haughty, and now apparently omnipotent Alva, should almost assume the god. On his return to Brussels he instituted a succession of triumphant festivals. The people were called upon to rejoice and to be exceeding glad, to strew flowers in his path,
to sing Hosannas in his praise who came to them covered with the blood of those who had striven in their defense. The holiday was duly culled forth; houses, where funeral hatchments for murdered inmates had been perpetually suspended, were decked with garlands; the bells, which had hardly once omitted their daily knell for the victims of an incredible cruelty, now rang their merriest peals; and in the very square where so lately Egmont and Horn, besides many other less distinguished martyrs, had suffered an ignominious death, a gay tournament was held, day after day, with all the insolent pomp which could make the exhibition most galling.

But even these demonstrations of hilarity were not sufficient. The conqueror and tamer of the Netherlands felt that a more personal and palpable deification was necessary for his pride. When Germanicus had achieved his last triumph over the ancient freedom of those generous races whose descendants, but lately in possession of a better organized liberty, Alva had been sent by the second and the worse Tiberius to insult and to crush, the valiant but modest Roman erected his trophy upon the plains of Idistavisus. "The army of Tiberius Caesar having subdued the nations between the Rhine and the Elbe, dedicate this monument to Mars, to Jupiter, and to Augustus." So ran the inscription of Germanicus, without a word of allusion to his own name. The Duke of Alva, on his return from the battlefields of Brabant and Friesland, reared a colossal statue of himself, and upon its pedestal caused these lines to be engraved: "To Ferdinand Alvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alva, Governor of the Netherlands under Philip the Second, for having extinguished sedition, chastised rebellion, restored religion, secured justice, established peace; to the king’s most faithful minister this monument is erected."

So pompous a eulogy, even if truthful and merited, would be sufficiently inflated upon a tombstone raised to a dead chieftain by his bereaved admirers. What shall we say of such false and fulsome tribute, not to a god, not to the memory of departed greatness, but to a living, mortal man, and offered not by his adorers but by himself? Certainly, self-worship never went farther than in this remarkable monument, erected in Alva’s honor, by Alva’s hands. The statue was colossal, and was placed in the citadel of Antwerp. Its bronze was furnished by the cannon captured at Jemmingen. It represented the duke trampling upon a prostrate figure with two heads, four arms, and one body. The two heads were interpreted by some to represent Egmont and Horn, by others, the two Nassau’s, William and Louis. Others saw in them an allegorical presentment of the nobles and commons of the Netherlands, or perhaps an impersonation of the Compromise and the Request. Besides the chief inscription on the pedestal, were sculptured various bas-reliefs; and the spectator, whose admiration for the governor-general was not satiated with the colossal statue itself, was at liberty to find a fresh personification of the hero, either in a torch-bearing angel or a gentle shepherd. The work, which had considerable aesthetic merit, was executed by an artist named Jacob
Jongeling. It remained to astonish and disgust the Netherlanders until it was thrown down and demolished by Alva’s successor, Requesens.

It has already been observed that many princes of the Empire had, at first warmly and afterwards, as the storm darkened around him, with less earnestness, encouraged the efforts of Orange. They had, both privately and officially, urged the subject upon the attention of the Emperor, and had solicited his intercession with Philip. It was not an interposition to save the prince from chastisement, however the artful pen of Granvelle alight distort the facts. It was an address in behalf of religious liberty for the Netherlands, made by those who had achieved it in their own persons, and who were at last enjoying immunity from persecution. It was an appeal which they who made it were bound to make, for the Netherland commissioners had assisted at the consultations by which the Peace of Passau had been wrung from the reluctant hand of Charles.

These applications, however, to the Emperor, and through him to the King of Spain, had been, as we have seen, accompanied by perpetual advice to the Prince of Orange, that he should “sit still.” The Emperor had espoused his cause with apparent frankness, so far as friendly mediation went, but in the meantime had peremptorily commanded him to refrain from levying war upon Alva, an injunction which the prince had as peremptorily declined to obey. The Emperor had even sent especial envoys to the duke and to the prince, to induce them to lay down their arms, but without effect. Orange knew which course was the more generous to his oppressed country; to take up arms, now that hope had been converted into despair by the furious tyranny of Alva, or to “sit still” and await the result of the protocols about to be exchanged between king and kaiser. His arms had been unsuccessful indeed, but had he attended the issue of this sluggish diplomacy, it would have been even worse for the cause of freedom. The sympathy of his best friends, at first fervent then lukewarm, had, as disasters thickened around him, grown at last stone-cold. From the grave, too, of Queen Isabella arose the most importunate phantom in his path. The King of Spain was a widower again, and the Emperor among his sixteen children had more than one marriageable daughter. To the titles of “beloved cousin and brother-in-law,” with which Philip had always been greeted in the Imperial proclamations, the nearer and dearer one of son-in-law was prospectively added.

The ties of wedlock were sacred in the traditions of the Habsburg house, but still the intervention was nominally made. As early as August 1568, the Emperor’s minister at Madrid had addressed a memorial to the king. He had spoken in warm and strong language of the fate of Egmont and Horn, and had reminded Philip that the executions which were constantly taking place in the provinces were steadily advancing the Prince of Orange’s cause. On September 22, 1568, the six electors had addressed a formal memorial to the Emperor. They thanked him for his previous interposition in favor of the Netherlands,
painted in lively colors the cruelty of Alva, and denounced the unheard-of rigor with which he had massacred, not only many illustrious seigniors, but people of every degree. Notwithstanding the repeated assurances given by the king to the contrary, they reminded the Emperor, that *the inquisition, as well as the Council of Trent, had now been established in the Netherlands in full vigor*. They maintained that the provinces had been excluded from the Augsburg religious peace, to which their claim was perfect. Nether Germany was entitled to the same privileges as Upper Germany. They begged the Emperor to make manifest his sentiments and their own. It was fitting that his Catholic Majesty should be aware that the princes of the Empire were united for the conservation of fatherland and of tranquility. To this end they placed in the Emperor’s hands their estates, their fortunes, and their lives.

Such was the language of that important appeal to the Emperor in behalf of oppressed millions in the Netherlands, an appeal which Granvelle had coldly characterized as an intrigue contrived by Orange to bring about his own restoration to favor!

The Emperor, in answer, assured the electoral envoys that he had taken the affair to heart, and had resolved to dispatch his own brother, the Archduke Charles, on a special mission to Spain.

Accordingly, on October 21, 1568, the Emperor presented his brother with an ample letter of instructions. He was to recall to Philip’s memory the frequent exhortations made by the Emperor concerning the policy pursued in the Netherlands. He was to mention the urgent interpellations made to him by the electors and princes of the Empire in their recent embassy. He was to state that the Emperor had recently deputed commissioners to the Prince of Orange and the Duke of Alva, in order to bring about, if possible, a suspension of arms. He was to represent that the great number of men raised by the Prince of Orange in Germany, showed the powerful support which he had found in the country. Under such circumstances he was to show that it had been impossible for the Emperor to decree the ban against him, as the Duke of Alva had demanded. The Archduke was to request the king’s consent to the reconciliation of Orange, on honorable conditions. He was to demand the substitution of clemency in the government of the Netherlands for severity, and to insist on the recall of the foreign soldiery from the Netherlands.

Furnished with this very warm and stringent letter, the archduke arrived in Madrid on December 10, 1568. A few days later he presented the king with a copy of the instructions; those brave words upon which the Prince of Orange was expected to rely instead of his own brave heart and the stout arms of his followers. Philip, having examined the letter, expressed his astonishment that such propositions should be made to him, and by the agency, too, of such a personage as the Archduke. He had already addressed a letter to the Emperor, expressing his dissatisfaction at the step now taken. He had been disturbed at
the honor thus done to the Prince of Orange, and at this interference with his own rights. It was, in his opinion, an unheard-of proceeding thus to address a monarch of his quality upon matters in which he could accept the law from no man. He promised, however, that a written answer should be given to the letter of instructions.

On January 20, 1569, that answer was placed in the hands of the archduke. It was intimated that the paper was a public one, fit to be laid by the Emperor before the electors; but that the king had also caused a confidential one to be prepared, in which his motives and private griefs were indicated to Maximilian.

In the more public document, Philip observed that he had never considered himself obliged to justify his conduct, in his own affairs, to others. He thought, however, that his example of severity would have been received with approbation by princes whose subjects he had thus taught obedience. He could not admit that, on account of the treaties which constituted the Netherlands a circle of the Empire, he was obliged to observe within their limits the ordinances of the imperial diet. As to the matter of religion, his principal solicitude, since his accession to the crown, had been to maintain the Catholic faith throughout all his states. In things sacred he could admit no compromise. The Church alone had the right to prescribe rules to the faithful. As to the chastisement inflicted by him upon the Netherland rebels, it would be found that he had not used rigor, as had been charged against him, but, on the contrary, great clemency and gentleness. He had made no change in the government of the provinces, certainly none in the edicts, the only statutes binding upon princes. He had appointed the Duke of Alva to the regency, because it was his royal will and pleasure so to appoint him. The Spanish soldiery were necessary for the thorough chastisement of the rebels, and could not be at present removed. As to the Prince of Orange, whose case seemed the principal motive for this embassy, and in whose interest so much had been urged, his crimes were so notorious that it was impossible even to attempt to justify them. He had been, in effect, the author of all the conspiracies, tumults, and seditious which had taken place in the Netherlands. All the thefts, sacrileges, and violations of temples, and other misdeeds of which these provinces had been the theatre, were, with justice, to be imputed to him. He had, moreover, levied an army and invaded his Majesty's territories. Crimes so enormous had closed the gate to all clemency. Notwithstanding his respect for the intercession made by the Emperor and the princes of the Empire, the king could not condescend to grant what was now asked of him in regard to the Prince of Orange. As to a truce between him and the Duke of Alva, his Imperial Majesty ought to reflect upon the difference between a sovereign and his rebellious vassal, and consider how indecent and how prejudicial to the king's honor such a treaty must be esteemed.

So far the public letter, of which the Archduke was furnished with a copy, both in Spanish and in Latin. The private memorandum was intended for the
Emperor’s eyes alone and those of his envoy. In this paper the king expressed himself with more warmth and in more decided language. He was astonished, he said, that the Prince of Orange, in levying an army for the purpose of invading the states of his natural sovereign, should have received so much aid and comfort in Germany. It seemed incredible that this could not have been prevented by imperial authority. He had been pained that commissioners had been sent to the prince. He regretted such a demonstration in his favor as had now been made by the mission of the Archduke to Madrid. That which, however, had caused the king the deepest sorrow, was that his Imperial Majesty should wish to persuade him in religious matters to proceed with mildness. The Emperor ought to be aware that no human consideration, no regard for his realms, nothing in the world which could be represented or risked, would cause him to swerve by a single hair’s breadth from his path in the matter of religion. This path was the same throughout all his kingdoms. He had ever trod in it faithfully, and he meant to keep in it perpetually. He would admit neither counsel nor persuasion to the contrary, and should take it ill if counsel or persuasion should be offered. He could not but consider the terms of the instructions given to the Archduke as exceeding the limits of amicable suggestion. They in effect amounted to a menace, and he was astonished that a menace should be employed, because, with princes constituted like himself, such means could have but little success.

On the January 23, 1569, the archduke presented the king with a spirited reply to the public letter. It was couched in the spirit of the instructions, and therefore need not be analyzed at length. He did not believe that his Imperial Majesty would admit any justification of the course pursued in the Netherlands. The estates of the Empire would never allow Philip’s reasoning concerning the connection of those countries with the Empire, nor that they were independent, except in the particular articles expressed in the treaty of Augsburg. In 1555, when Charles V and King Ferdinand had settled the religious peace, they had been assisted by envoys from the Netherlands. The princes of the Empire held the ground, therefore, that the religious peace, which alone had saved a vestige of Romanism in Germany, should, of right, extend to the provinces. As to the Prince of Orange, the archduke would have preferred to say nothing more, but the orders of the Emperor did not allow him to be silent. It was now necessary to put an end to this state of things in Lower Germany. The princes of the Empire were becoming exasperated. He recalled the dangers of the Smalcaldian war—the imminent peril in which the Emperor had been placed by the act of a single elector. They who believed that Flanders could be governed in the same manner as Italy and Spain were greatly mistaken, and Charles V had always recognized that error.

This was the sum and substance of the archduke’s mission to Madrid, so far as its immediate objects were concerned. In the course, however, of the interview between this personage and Philip, the king took occasion to administer a rebuke to his Imperial Majesty for his general negligence in
religious matters. It was a matter which lay at his heart, he said, that the Emperor, although, as he doubted not, a Christian and Catholic prince, was from policy unaccustomed to make those exterior demonstrations which matters of faith required. He therefore begged the archduke to urge this matter upon the attention of his Imperial Majesty.

The Emperor, despite this solemn mission, had become more than indifferent before his envoy had reached Madrid. For this indifference there were more reasons than one. When the instructions had been drawn up, the death of the Queen of Spain had not been known in Vienna. The archduke had even been charged to inform Philip of the approaching marriages of the two archduchesses, that of Anne with the King of France, and that of Isabella with the King of Portugal. A few days later, however, the envoy received letters from the Emperor, authorizing him to offer to the bereaved Philip the hand of the Archduchess Anne. The king replied to the archduke, when this proposition was made, that if he had regard only to his personal satisfaction, he should remain as he was. As however he had now no son, he was glad that the proposition had been made, and would see how the affair could be arranged with France.

Thus the ill success of Orange in Brabant, so disheartening to the German princes most inclined to his cause, and still more the widowhood of Philip, had brought a change over the views of Maximilian. On January 17, 1569, three days before his ambassador had entered upon his negotiations, he had accordingly addressed an autograph letter to his Catholic Majesty. In this epistle, by a few cold lines, he entirely annihilated any possible effect which might have been produced by the apparent earnestness of his interposition in favor of the Netherlands. He informed the king that the archduke had been sent, not to vex him, but to convince him of his friendship. He assured Philip that he should be satisfied with his response, whatever it might be. He entreated only that it might be drawn up in such terms that the princes and electors to whom it must be shown, might not be inspired with suspicion.

The archduke left Madrid on March 4, 1569. He retired, well pleased with the results of his mission, not because its ostensible objects had been accomplished, for those had signally failed, but because the king had made him a present of 100,000 ducats, and had promised to espouse the Archduchess Anne. On May 26, 1569, the Emperor addressed a final reply to Philip, in which he expressly approved the king’s justification of his conduct. It was founded, he thought, in reason and equity. Nevertheless, it could hardly be shown, as it was, to the princes and electors, and he had therefore modified many points which he thought might prove offensive.

Thus ended “in smoke,” as Granvelle had foretold, the famous mission of Archduke Charles. The Holy Roman Emperor withdrew from his pompous intervention, abashed by a rebuke, but consoled by a promise. If it were good
to be guardian of religious freedom in Upper and Nether Germany, it was better to be father-in-law to the King of Spain and both the Indies. Hence the lame and abrupt conclusion.

Cardinal Granvelle had been very serviceable in this juncture. He had written to Philip to assure him that, in his opinion, the Netherlands had no claim, under the transaction of Augsburg, to require the observance within their territory of the decrees of the Empire. He added that Charles V had only agreed to the treaty of Passau to save his brother Ferdinand from ruin, that he had only consented to it as Emperor and had neither directly nor indirectly included the Netherlands within its provisions. He stated, moreover, that the Emperor had revoked the treaty by an act which was never published, in consequence of the earnest solicitations of Ferdinand.

It has been seen that the king had used this opinion of Granvelle in the response presented to the archduke. Although he did not condescend to an argument, he had laid down the fact as if it were indisputable. He was still more delighted to find that Charles had revoked the treaty of Passau, and eagerly wrote to Granvelle to inquire where the secret instrument was to be found. The cardinal replied that it was probably among his papers at Brussels, but that he doubted whether it would be possible to find it in his absence. Whether such a document ever existed, it is difficult to say. To perpetrate such a fraud would have been worthy of Charles, to fable its perpetration not unworthy of the cardinal. In either case, the transaction was sufficiently high-handed and exceedingly disgraceful.

CHAPTER 5

The Tyranny of Alva and Philip, the Murder of Montigny, and the Flood of 1570

It was very soon after the duke’s return to Brussels that a quarrel between himself and the Queen of England took place. It happened thus. Certain vessels, bearing roving commissions from the Prince of Condé, had chased into the ports of England some merchantmen coming from Spain with supplies in specie for the Spanish army in the Netherlands. The trading ships remained in harbor, not daring to leave for their destination, while the privateers remained in a neighboring port ready to pounce upon them should they put to sea. The commanders of the merchant fleet complained to the Spanish ambassador in London. The envoy laid the case before the queen. The queen promised redress, and, almost as soon as the promise had been made, seized upon all the specie in the vessels, amounting to about 800,000 dollars, and appropriated the
whole to her own benefit. The pretext for this proceeding was twofold. In the first place, she assured the ambassador that she had taken the money into her possession in order that it might be kept safe for her royal brother of Spain. In the second place, she affirmed that the money did not belong to the Spanish government at all, but that it was the property of certain Genoese merchants, from whom, as she had a right to do, she had borrowed it for a short period. Both these positions could hardly be correct, but either furnished an excellent reason for appropriating the funds to her own use.

The Duke of Alva being very much in want of money, was furious when informed of the circumstance. He immediately dispatched Councillor d’Assonleville with other commissioners on a special embassy to the Queen of England. His envoys were refused an audience, and the duke was taxed with presumption in venturing, as if he had been a sovereign, to send a legation to a crowned head. No satisfaction was given to Alva, but a secret commissioner was dispatched to Spain to discuss the subject there. The wrath of Alva was not appeased by this contemptuous treatment. Chagrined at the loss of his funds, and stung to the quick by a rebuke which his arrogance had merited, he resorted to a high-handed measure. He issued a proclamation commanding the personal arrest of every Englishman within the territory of the Netherlands, and the seizure of every article of property which could be found belonging to individuals of that nation. The queen retaliated by measures of the same severity against Netherlanders in England. The duke followed up his blow by a proclamation (of March 31, 1569), in which the grievance was detailed, and strict non-intercourse with England enjoined. While the Queen and the viceroy were thus exchanging blows, the real sufferers were, of course, the unfortunate Netherlanders. Between the upper and nether millstones of Elizabeth’s rapacity and Alva’s arrogance, the poor remains of Flemish prosperity were well nigh crushed out of existence. Proclamations and commissions followed hard upon each other, but it was not till April 1573, that the matter was definitely arranged. Before that day arrived, the commerce of the Netherlands had suffered, at the lowest computation, a dead loss of two million florins, not a stiver of which was ever reimbursed to the sufferers by the Spanish government.

Meantime, neither in the complacency of his triumph over William of Orange, nor in the torrent of his wrath against the English queen, did the duke for a moment lose sight of the chief end of his existence in the Netherlands. The gibbet and the stake were loaded with their daily victims. The records of the period are foul with the perpetually renewed barbarities exercised against the new religion. To the magistrates of the different cities were issued fresh instructions, by which all municipal officers were to be guided in the discharge of their great duty. They were especially enjoined by the duke to take heed that Catholic midwives, and none other, should be provided for every parish, duly sworn to give notice within twenty-four hours of every birth which occurred, in order that the curate might instantly proceed to baptism. They
were also ordered to appoint certain spies who should keep watch at every administration of the sacraments, whether public or private, whether at the altar or at deathbeds, and who should report for exemplary punishment (that is to say, death by fire) all persons who made derisive or irreverential gestures, or who did not pay suitable honor to the said sacraments. Furthermore, in order that not even death itself should cheat the tyrant of his prey, the same spies were to keep watch at the couch of the dying, and to give immediate notice to government of all persons who should dare to depart this life without previously receiving extreme unction and the holy wafer. The estates of such culprits, it was ordained, should be confiscated, and their bodies dragged to the public place of execution.

An affecting case occurred in the North of Holland, early in this year, which, for its peculiarity, deserves brief mention. A poor Anabaptist, guilty of no crime but his fellowship with a persecuted sect, had been condemned to death. He had made his escape, closely pursued by an officer of justice, across a frozen lake. It was late in the winter, and the ice had become unsound. It trembled and cracked beneath his footsteps, but he reached the shore in safety. The officer was not so fortunate. The ice gave way beneath him, and he sank into the lake, uttering a cry for succor. There were none to hear him, except the fugitive whom he had been hunting. Dirk Willemzoon, for so was the Anabaptist called, instinctively obeying the dictates of a generous nature, returned, crossed the quaking and dangerous ice, at the peril of his life, extended his hand to his enemy, and saved him from certain death. Unfortunately for human nature, it cannot be added that the generosity of the action was met by a corresponding heroism. The officer was desirous, it is true, of avoiding the responsibility of sacrificing the preserver of his life, but the burgomaster of Asperen sternly reminded him to remember his oath. He accordingly arrested the fugitive, who, on the 16th of May following, was burned to death under the most lingering tortures.

Almost at the same time four clergymen, the eldest seventy years of age, were executed at the Hague, after an imprisonment of three years. All were of blameless lives, having committed no crime save that of having favored the Reformation. As they were men of some local eminence, it was determined that they should be executed with solemnity. They were condemned to the flames, and as they were of the ecclesiastical profession, it was necessary before execution that their personal sanctity should be removed. Accordingly, on the 27th of May, attired in the gorgeous robes of high mass, they were brought before the Bishop of Bois le Duc. The prelate, with a pair of scissors, cut a lock of hair from each of their heads. He then scraped their crowns and the tips of their fingers with a little silver knife very gently, and without inflicting the least injury. The mystic oil of consecration was thus supposed to be sufficiently removed. The prelate then proceeded to disrobe the victims, saying to each one as he did so, "Eximo tibi vestem justitiae, quern volens abjecisti," to which the oldest pastor, Arent Dirkzoon, stoutly replied, "imo
vestem injustitiae." The bishop having thus completed the solemn farce of desecration, delivered the prisoners to the Blood-Council, begging that they might be handled very gently. Three days afterwards they were all executed at the stake, having, however, received the indulgence of being strangled before being thrown into the flames.

It was precisely at this moment, while the agents of the duke’s government were thus zealously enforcing his decrees, that a special messenger arrived from the pope, bringing as a present to Alva a jeweled hat and sword. It was a gift rarely conferred by the Church, and never save upon the highest dignitaries, or upon those who had merited her most signal rewards by the most shining exploits in her defense. The duke was requested, in the autograph letter from his Holiness which accompanied the presents, “to remember, when he put the hat upon his head, that he was guarded with it as with a helmet of righteousness, and with the shield of God’s help, indicating the heavenly crown which was ready for all princes who support the Holy Church and the Roman Catholic faith.” The motto on the sword ran as follows: "Accipe sanctum gladium, munus a Deo in quo dejicies adversarios populi mei Israel."

The viceroy of Philip, thus stimulated to persevere in his master’s precepts by the vicegerent of Christ, was not likely to swerve from his path, nor to flinch from his work. It was beyond the power of man’s ingenuity to add any fresh features of horror to the religious persecution under which the provinces were groaning, but a new attack could be made upon the poor remains of their wealth.

The duke had been dissatisfied with the results of his financial arrangements. The confiscation of banished and murdered heretics had not proved the inexhaustible mine he had boasted. The stream of gold which was to flow perennially into the Spanish coffers, soon ceased to flow at all. This was inevitable. Confiscations must, of necessity, offer but a precarious supply to any treasury. It was only the frenzy of an Alva which could imagine possible to derive a permanent revenue from such a source. It was, however, not to be expected that this man, whose tyranny amounted to insanity, could comprehend the intimate connection between the interests of a people and those of its rulers, and he was determined to exhibit, by still more fierce and ludicrous experiments, how easily a great soldier may become a very paltry financier.

He had already informed his royal master that, after a very short time, remittances would no longer be necessary from Spain to support the expenses of the army and government in the Netherlands. He promised, on the contrary, that at least two millions yearly should be furnished by the provinces, over and above the cost of their administration, to enrich the treasury at home. Another Peru had already been discovered by his ingenuity, and one which was not dependent for its golden fertility on the continuance of that heresy which it
was his mission to extirpate. His boast had been much ridiculed in Madrid, where he had more enemies than friends, and he was consequently the more eager to convert it into reality. Nettled by the laughter with which all his schemes of political economy had been received at home, he was determined to show that his creative statesmanship was no less worthy of homage than his indisputable genius for destruction.

His scheme was nothing more than the substitution of an arbitrary system of taxation by the Crown, for the legal and constitutional right of the provinces to tax themselves. It was not a very original thought, but it was certainly a bold one. For although a country so prostrate might suffer the imposition of any fresh amount of tyranny, yet it was doubtful whether she had sufficient strength remaining to bear the weight after it had been imposed. It was certain, moreover, that the new system would create a more general outcry than any which had been elicited even by the religious persecution. There were many inhabitants who were earnest and sincere Catholics, and who therefore considered themselves safe from the hangman’s hands, while there were none who could hope to escape the grip of the new tax gatherers. Yet the governor was not the man to be daunted by the probable unpopularity of the measure. Courage he possessed in more than mortal proportion. He seemed to have set himself to the task of ascertaining the exact capacity of the country for wretchedness. He was resolved accurately to gauge its width and its depth, to know how much of physical and moral misery might be accumulated within its limits before it should be full to overflowing. Every man, woman, and child in the country had been solemnly condemned to death, and arbitrary executions, in pursuance of that sentence, had been daily taking place. Millions of property had been confiscated, while the most fortunate and industrious, as well as the bravest of the Netherlanders, were wandering penniless in distant lands. Still the blows, however recklessly distributed, had not struck every head. The inhabitants had been decimated, not annihilated, and the productive energy of the country, which for centuries had possessed so much vitality, was even yet not totally extinct. In the wreck of their social happiness, in the utter overthrow of their political freedom, they had still preserved the shadow, at least, of one great bulwark against despotism. The king could impose no tax.

The "Joyeuse Entrée" of Brabant, as well as the constitutions of Flanders, Holland, Utrecht, and all the other provinces, expressly prescribed the manner in which the requisite funds for government should be raised. The sovereign or his stadholder was to appear before the estates in person, and make his request for money. It was for the estates, after consultation with their constituents, to decide whether or not this petition (Bede) should be granted, and should a single branch decline compliance, the monarch was to wait with patience for a more favorable moment. Such had been the regular practice in the Netherlands, nor had the reigning houses often had occasion to accuse the estates of parsimony. It was, however, not wonderful that the Duke of Alva should be impatient at the continued existence of this provincial privilege. A
country of condemned criminals, a nation whose universal neck might at any moment be laid upon the block without ceremony, seemed hardly fit to hold the purse-strings, and to dispense alms to its monarch. The viceroy was impatient at this arrogant vestige of constitutional liberty. Moreover, although he had taken from the Netherlanders nearly all the attributes of freemen, he was unwilling that they should enjoy the principal privilege of slaves, that of being fed and guarded at their master’s expense. He had therefore summoned a general assembly of the provincial estates in Brussels, and on March 20, 1569, had caused the following decrees to be laid before them.

A tax of the hundredth penny, or one percent, was laid upon all property, real and personal, to be collected instantly. This impost, however, was not perpetual, but only to be paid once, unless, of course, it should suit the same arbitrary power by which it was assessed to require it a second time.

A tax of the twentieth penny, or five percent, was laid upon every transfer of real estate. This imposition was perpetual.

Thirdly, a tax of the tenth penny, or ten percent, was assessed upon every article of merchandise or personal property, to be paid as often as it should be sold. This tax was likewise to be perpetual.

The consternation in the assembly when these enormous propositions were heard, can be easily imagined. People may differ about religious dogmas. In the most bigoted persecutions there will always be many who, from conscientious although misguided motives, heartily espouse the cause of the bigot. Moreover, although resistance to tyranny in matters of faith is always the most ardent of struggles, and is supported by the most sublime principle in our nature, yet all men are not of the sterner stuff of which martyrs are fashioned. In questions relating to the world above, many may be seduced from their convictions by interest, or forced into apostasy by violence. Human nature is often malleable or fusible, where religious interests are concerned, but in affairs material and financial, opposition to tyranny is apt to be unanimous.

The interests of commerce and manufacture, when brought into conflict with those of religion, had often proved victorious in the Netherlands. This new measure, however—this arbitrary and most prodigious system of taxation, struck home to every fireside. No individual, however adroit or time-serving, could parry the blow by which all were crushed.

It was most unanswerably maintained in the assembly, that this tenth and twentieth penny would utterly destroy the trade and the manufactures of the country. The hundredth penny, or the one percent assessment on all property throughout the land, although a severe subsidy, might be borne with for once. To pay, however, a twentieth part of the full value of a house to the
government as often as the house was sold, was a most intolerable imposition. A house might be sold twenty times in a year, and in the course, therefore, of the year be confiscated in its whole value. It amounted either to a prohibition of all transfers of real estate, or to an eventual surrender of its price.

As to the tenth penny upon articles of merchandise, to be paid by the vendor at every sale, the scheme was monstrous. All trade and manufactures must, of necessity, expire, at the very first attempt to put it in execution. The same article might be sold ten times in a week, and might therefore pay one hundred percent weekly. An article, moreover, was frequently compounded of ten different articles, each of which might pay one hundred percent, and therefore the manufactured article, if ten times transferred, one thousand percent weekly. Quick transfers and unfettered movements being the nerves and muscles of commerce, it was impossible for it long to survive the paralysis of such a tax. The impost could never be collected, and would only produce an entire prostration of industry. It could by no possibility enrich the government.*

The king could not derive wealth from the ruin of his subjects; yet to establish such a system was the stern and absurd determination of the governor-general. The infantine simplicity of the effort seemed incredible. The ignorance was as sublime as the tyranny. The most lucid arguments and the most earnest remonstrances were all in vain. Too opaque to be illumined by a flood of light, too hard to be melted by a nation’s tears, the viceroy held calmly to his purpose. To the keen and vivid representations of Viglius, who repeatedly exhibited all that was oppressive and all that was impossible in the tax, he answered simply that it was nothing more nor less than the Spanish “alcabala,” and that he derived 50,000 ducats yearly from its imposition in his own city of Alva.

* While occupied with his attempts to enforce this tax, the duke established a commission to inquire into the value of the manufacturing industry of the provinces. In the year 1570, the aggregate annual value of manufactured articles was calculated at forty-five millions of florins (44,864,883 fl.) From this estimate, however, Luxemburg, Gueldres, Zealand, and the provinces beyond the Meuse, were excluded.

The returns for the others were thus stated:
Brabant: 11,197,416 florins
Flanders: 10,407,891
Valenciennes: 5, 223,980
Tournay: 2,369, 200
Holland: 2,029,148
Lille, Douay, and Orchies: 8,883,698
Hainault: 1,982,540
Malines: 262,880
Utrecht: 734,900
Overyssel: 1,610,260
Namur: 454,980
Viglius was upon this occasion in opposition to the duke. It is but justice to state that the learned jurisconsult manfully and repeatedly confronted the wrath of his superior in many a furious discussion in council upon the subject. He had never essayed to snatch one brand from the burning out of the vast holocaust of religious persecution, but he was roused at last by the threatened destruction of all the material interests of the land. He confronted the tyrant with courage, sustained perhaps by the knowledge that the proposed plan was not the king’s, but the governor’s. He knew that it was openly ridiculed in Madrid, and that Philip, although he would probably never denounce it in terms, was certainly not eager for its execution.

The president enlarged upon the difference which existed between the condition of a sparsely-peopled country of herdsmen and laborers in Spain, and the densely-thronged and bustling cities of the Netherlands. If the duke collected 50,000 ducats yearly from the alcabala in Alva, he could only offer him his congratulations, but could not help assuring him that the tax would prove an impossibility in the provinces. To his argument, that the impost would fall with severity not upon the highest nor the lowest classes of society, neither upon the great nobility and clergy nor on the rustic population, but on the merchants and manufacturers, it was answered by the president that it was not desirable to rob Saint Peter’s altar in order to build one to Saint Paul. It might have been simpler to suggest that the consumer would pay the tax, supposing it were ever paid at all, but the axiom was not so familiar three centuries ago as now.

Meantime, the report of the deputies to the assembly on their return to their constituents had created the most intense excitement and alarm. Petition after petition, report after report, poured in upon the government. There was a cry of despair, and almost of defiance, which had not been elicited by former agonies. To induce, however, a more favorable disposition on the part of the duke, the hundredth penny, once for all, was conceded by the estates. The tenth and twentieth occasioned severe and protracted struggles, until the various assemblies of the patrimonial provinces, one after another, exhausted, frightened, and hoping that no serious effort would be made to collect the tax, consented, under certain restrictions, to its imposition. The principal conditions were a protest against the legality of the proceeding, and the provision that the consent of no province should be valid until that of all had been obtained.

Holland, too, was induced to give in its adhesion, although the city of Amsterdam long withheld its consent; but the city and province of Utrecht were inexorable. They offered a handsome sum in commutation, increasing the sum first proposed from 70,000 to 200,000 florins, but they resolutely refused to be saddled with this permanent tax. Their stout resistance was destined to cost them dear. In the course of a few months Alva, finding them still resolute in their refusal, quartered the regiment of Lombardy upon them, and employed
other coercive measures to bring them to reason. The rude, insolent, unpaid
and therefore insubordinate soldiery were billeted in every house in the city,
so that the insults which the population were made to suffer by the intrusion of
these ruffians at their firesides would soon, it was thought, compel the assent
of the province to the tax. It was not so, however. The city and the province
remained stanch in their opposition. Accordingly, at the close of the year
(December 15, 1569) the estates were summoned to appear within fourteen
days before the Blood-Council. At the appointed time the procureur-general
was ready with an act of accusation, accompanied, as was usually the case,
with a simultaneous sentence of condemnation. The indictment revived and
recapitulated all previous offenses committed in the city and the province,
particularly during the troubles of 1566, and at the epoch of the treaty with
Duchess Margaret. The inhabitants and the magistrates, both in their individual
and public capacities, were condemned for heresy, rebellion, and misprision.
The city and province were accordingly pronounced guilty of high treason, were
deprived of all their charters, laws, privileges, freedoms, and customs, and
were declared to have forfeited all their property, real and personal, together
with all tolls, rents, excises, and imposts, the whole being confiscated to the
benefit of his Majesty.
The immediate execution of the sentence was, however, suspended, to allow
the estates opportunity to reply. An enormous mass of pleadings, replies,
replications, rejoinders, and apostilles was the result, which few eyes were
destined to read, and least of all those to whom they were nominally
addressed. They were of benefit to none save in the shape of fees which they
engendered to the gentlemen of the robe. It was six months, however, before
the case was closed. As there was no blood to be shed, a summary process was
not considered necessary. At last, on the 14th of July, the voluminous pile of
documents was placed before Vargas. It was the first time he had laid eyes
upon them, and they were, moreover, written in a language of which he did
d not understand a word. Such, however, was his capacity for affairs, that a
glance only at the outside of the case enabled him to form his decision. Within
half an hour afterwards, booted and spurred, he was saying mass in the church
of Saint Gudule, on his way to pronounce sentence at Antwerp. That judgment
was rendered the same day, and confirmed the preceding act of condemnation.
Vargas went to his task as cheerfully as if it had been murder. The act of
outlawry and beggary was fulminated against the city and province, and a
handsome amount of misery for others, and of plunder for himself, was the
result of his promptness. Many thousand citizens were ruined, many millions of
property confiscated.
Thus was Utrecht deprived of all its ancient liberties, as a punishment for
having dared to maintain them. The clergy, too, of the province, having
invoked the bull "in Cœna Domini," by which clerical property was declared
exempt from taxation, had excited the wrath of the duke. To wield so slight a
bulrush against the man who had just been girded with the consecrated and
jeweled sword of the pope, was indeed but a feeble attempt at defense. Alva
treated the Cœna Domini with contempt, but he imprisoned the printer who
had dared to republish it at this juncture. Finding, moreover, that it had been put in press by the orders of no less a person than Secretary La Torre, he threw that officer also into prison, besides suspending him from his functions for a year.

The estates of the province and the magistracy of the city appealed to his Majesty from the decision of the duke. The case did not directly concern the interests of religion, for although the heretical troubles of 1566 furnished the nominal motives of the condemnation, the resistance to the tenth and twentieth penny was the real crime for which they were suffering. The king, therefore, although far from clement, was not extremely rigorous. He refused the object of the appeal, but he did not put the envoys to death by whom it was brought to Madrid. This would have certainly been the case in matters strictly religious, or even had the commissioners arrived two years before, but even Philip believed, perhaps, that for the moment almost enough innocent blood had been shed. At any rate he suffered the legates from Utrecht to return, not with their petition granted, but at least with their heads upon their shoulders. Early in the following year, the provinces still remaining under martial law, all the Utrecht charters were taken into the possession of government, and deposited in the castle of Vredenberg. It was not till after the departure of Alva, that they were restored, according to royal command, by the new governor, Requesens.

By the middle of the year 1569, Alva wrote to the king, with great cheerfulness of tone, announcing that the estates of the provinces had all consented to the tax. He congratulated his Majesty upon the fact that this income might thenceforth be enjoyed in perpetuity, and that it would bring at least two millions yearly into his coffers, over and above the expenses of government. The hundredth penny, as he calculated, would amount to at least five millions. He was, however, very premature in his triumph, for the estates were not long in withdrawing a concession which had either been wrung from them by violence or filched from them by misrepresentation. Taking the ground that the assent of all had been stipulated before that of any one should be esteemed valid, every province now refused to enforce or to permit the collection of the tenth or the twentieth penny within their limits. Dire were the threatenings and the wrath of the viceroy, painfully protracted the renewed negotiations with the estates. At last, a compromise was effected, and the final struggle postponed. Late in the summer it was agreed that the provinces should pay two millions yearly for the two following years, the term to expire in the month of August 1571. Till that period, therefore, there was comparative repose upon the subject.

The question of a general pardon had been agitated for more than a year, both in Brussels and Madrid. Viglius, who knew his countrymen better than the viceroy knew them, had written frequently to his friend Hopper, on the propriety of at once proclaiming an amnesty. There had also been many conferences between himself and the Duke of Alva, and he had furnished more than one draught for the proposed measure. The president knew full well that the point had been reached beyond which the force of tyranny could go no
further. All additional pressure, he felt sure, could only produce reaction, the
effect of which might be to drive the Spaniards from the Netherlands. There
might then be another game to play. The heads of those who had so assiduously
served the government throughout its terrible career might, in their turn, be
brought to the block, and their estates be made to enrich the Treasury.
Moreover, there were symptoms that Alva’s favor was on the wane. The king
had not been remarkably struck with the merits of the new financial measures,
and had expressed much anxiety lest the trade of the country should suffer.
The duke was known to be desirous of his recall. His health was broken, he felt
that he was bitterly detested throughout the country, and he was certain that
his enemies at Madrid were fast undermining his credit. He seemed also to
have a dim suspicion that his mission was accomplished in the Netherlands,
that as much blood had been shed at present as the land could easily absorb.
He wrote urgently and even piteously to Philip, on the subject of his return.
"Were your Majesty only pleased to take me from this country," he said, "I
should esteem it as great a favor as if your Majesty had given me life." He
swore "by the soul of the Duchess," that he "would rather be cut into little
pieces" than retire from his post were his presence necessary, but he expressed
the opinion that through his exertions affairs had been placed in such train that
they were sure to roll on smoothly to the end of time. "At present, and for the
future," he wrote, "your Majesty is and will be more strictly obeyed than any of
your predecessors," adding, with insane self-complacency, "and all this has
been accomplished without violence." He also assured his Majesty as to the
prosperous condition of financial affairs. His tax was to work wonders. He had
conversed with capitalists who had offered him four millions yearly for the
ten thousand penny, but he had refused, because he estimated the product at a much
higher figure. The hundredth penny could not be rated lower than five millions.
It was obvious, therefore, that instead of remitting funds to the provinces, his
Majesty would, for the future, derive from them a steady and enormous
income. Moreover, he assured the king that there was at present no one to
inspire anxiety from within or without. The only great noble of note in the
country was the Duke of Aerschot, who was devoted to his Majesty, and who,
moreover, "amounted to very little," as the king well knew. As for the Prince of
Orange, he would have business enough in keeping out of the clutches of his
creditors. They had nothing to fear from Germany. England would do nothing as
long as Germany was quiet, and France was sunk too low to be feared at all.
Such being the sentiments of the duke, the king was already considering the
propriety of appointing his successor. All this was known to the president. He
felt instinctively that more clemency was to be expected from that successor,
whoever he might be; and he was satisfied, therefore, that he would at least
not be injuring his own position by inclining at this late hour to the side of
mercy. His opposition to the tenth and twentieth penny had already
established a breach between himself and the viceroy, but he felt secretly
comforted by the reflection that the king was probably on the same side with
himself. Alva still spoke of him, to be sure, both in public and private, with
approbation, taking occasion to commend him frequently, in his private letters,
as a servant upright and zealous, as a living register, without whose universal knowledge of things and persons he should hardly know which way to turn. The president, however, was growing weary of his own sycophancy. He begged his friend Joachim to take his part, if his Excellency should write unfavorably about his conduct to the king. He seemed to have changed his views of the man concerning whose "prudence and gentleness" he could once turn so many fine periods. He even expressed some anxiety lest doubts should begin to be entertained as to the perfect clemency of the king's character. "Here is so much confiscation and bloodshed going on," said he, "that some taint of cruelty or avarice may chance to bespatter the robe of his Majesty." He also confessed that he had occasionally read in history of greater benignity than was now exercised against the poor Netherlanders. Had the learned Frisian arrived at these humane conclusions at a somewhat earlier day, it might perhaps have been better for himself and for his fatherland. Had he served his country as faithfully as he had served Time, and Philip, and Alva, his lands would not have been so broad, nor his dignities so numerous, but he would not have been obliged, in his old age, to exclaim, with whimsical petulance, that "the faithful servant is always a perpetual ass."

It was now certain that an act of amnesty was in contemplation by the king. Viglius had furnished several plans, which, however, had been so much disfigured by the numerous exceptions suggested by Alva, that the president could scarce recognize his work. Granvelle, too, had frequently urged the pardon on the attention of Philip. The cardinal was too astute not to perceive that the time had arrived when a continued severity could only defeat its own work. He felt that the country could not be rendered more abject, the spirit of patriotism more apparently extinct. A show of clemency, which would now cost nothing, and would mean nothing, might be more effective than this profuse and wanton bloodshed.

He saw plainly that the brutality of Alva had already overshot the mark. Too politic, however, openly to reprove so powerful a functionary, he continued to speak of him and of his administration to Philip in terms of exalted eulogy. He was a "sage seignior," a prudent governor, one on whom his Majesty could entirely repose. He was a man of long experience, trained all his life to affairs, and perfectly capable of giving a good account of everything to which he turned his hands. He admitted, however, to other correspondents, that the administration of the sage seignior, on whom his Majesty could so implicitly rely, had at last "brought the provinces into a deplorable condition."

Four different forms of pardon had been sent from Madrid, toward the close of 1569. From these four the duke was to select one, and carefully to destroy the other three. It was not, however, till July of the following year that the choice was made, and the viceroy in readiness to announce the pardon. On the 14th of that month a great festival was held at Antwerp, for the purpose of solemnly proclaiming the long-expected amnesty. In the morning, the duke, accompanied by a brilliant staff, and by a long procession of clergy in their gorgeous robes, paraded through the streets of the commercial capital, to offer up prayers and hear mass in the cathedral. The Bishop of Arras then began a
sermon upon the blessings of mercy, with a running commentary upon the royal clemency about to be exhibited. In the very outset, however, of his discourse, he was seized with convulsions, which required his removal from the pulpit, an incident which was not considered of felicitous augury. In the afternoon, the duke with his suite appeared upon the square in front of the Town House. Here a large scaffolding or theatre had been erected. The platform and the steps which led to it were covered with scarlet cloth. A throne, covered with cloth of gold, was arranged in the most elevated position for the duke. On the steps immediately below him were placed two of the most beautiful women in Antwerp, clad in allegorical garments to represent righteousness and peace. The staircase and platform were lined with officers, the square was beset with troops, and filled to its utmost verge with an expectant crowd of citizens. Toward the close of a summer’s afternoon, the duke wearing the famous hat and sword of the pope, took his seat on the throne with all the airs of royalty. After a few preliminary ceremonies, a civil functionary, standing between two herals, then recited the long-expected act of grace. His reading, however, was so indistinct, that few save the soldiers in the immediate vicinity of the platform could hear a word of the document. This effect was, perhaps, intentional. Certainly but little enthusiasm could be expected from the crowd, had the text of the amnesty been heard. It consisted of three parts—a recitation of the wrongs committed, a statement of the terms of pardon, and a long list of exceptions. All the sins of omission and commission, the heresy, the public preaching, the image-breaking, the Compromise, the confederacy, the rebellion, were painted in lively colors. Pardon, however, was offered to all those who had not rendered themselves liable to positive impeachment, in case they should make their peace with the Church before the expiration of two months, and by confession and repentance obtain their absolution. The exceptions, however, occupied the greater part of the document. When the general act of condemnation had been fulminated by which all Netherlanders were sentenced to death, the exceptions had been very few, and all the individuals mentioned by name. In the act of pardon, the exceptions comprehended so many classes of inhabitants, that it was impossible for any individual to escape a place in some one of the categories, whenever it should please the government to take his life. Expressly excluded from the benefit of the act were all ministers, teachers, dogmatizers, and all who had favored and harbored such dogmatizers and preachers; all those in the least degree implicated in the image-breaking; all who had ever been individually suspected of heresy or schism; all who had ever signed or favored the Compromise or the Petition to the regent; all those who had taken up arms, contributed money, distributed tracts; all those in any manner chargeable with misprision, or who had failed to denounce those guilty of heresy. All persons, however, who were included in any of these classes of exceptions might report themselves within six months, when, upon confession of their crime, they might hope for a favorable consideration of their case. Such, in brief, and stripped of its verbiage, was this amnesty for which the Netherlands had so long been hoping. By its provisions, not a man or woman
was pardoned who had ever committed a fault. The innocent alone were forgiven. Even they were not sure of mercy, unless they should obtain full absolution from the pope. More certainly than ever would the accustomed rigor be dealt to all who had committed any of those positive acts for which so many had already lost their heads. The clause by which a possibility of pardon was hinted to such criminals, provided they would confess and surrender, was justly regarded as a trap. No one was deceived by it. No man, after the experience of the last three years, would voluntarily thrust his head into the lion’s mouth, in order to fix it more firmly upon his shoulders. No man who had effected his escape was likely to play informer against himself, in hope of obtaining a pardon from which all but the most sincere and zealous Catholics were in reality excepted.

The murmur and discontent were universal, therefore, as soon as the terms of the act became known. Alva wrote to the king, to be sure, "that the people were entirely satisfied, save only the demagogues, who could tolerate no single exception from the amnesty," but he could neither deceive his sovereign nor himself by such statements. Certainly, Philip was totally disappointed in the effect which he had anticipated from the measure. He had thought "it would stop the mouths of many people." On the contrary, every mouth in the Netherlands became vociferous to denounce the hypocrisy by which a new act of condemnation had been promulgated under the name of a pardon. Viglius, who had drawn up an instrument of much ampler clemency, was far from satisfied with the measure which had been adopted. "Certainly," he wrote to his confidant, "a more benignant measure was to be expected from so merciful a Prince. After four years have past, to reserve for punishment and for execution all those who during the tumult did not, through weakness of mind, render as much service to government as brave men might have offered, is altogether unexampled."

Alva could not long affect to believe in the people’s satisfaction. He soon wrote to the king, acknowledging that the impression produced by the pardon was far from favorable. He attributed much evil effect to the severe censure which was openly pronounced upon the act by members of the government, both in Spain and the Netherlands. He complained that Hopper had written to Viglius that “the most severe of the four forms of pardon transmitted had been selected,” the fact being, that the most lenient one had been adopted. If this were so, whose imagination is powerful enough to portray the three which had been burned, and which, although more severe than the fierce document promulgated, were still entitled acts of pardon? The duke spoke bitterly of the manner in which influential persons in Madrid had openly abominated the cruel form of amnesty which had been decreed. His authority in the Netherlands was already sufficiently weakened, he said, and such censure upon his actions from headquarters did not tend to improve it. "In truth," he added, almost pathetically, “it is not wonderful that the whole nation should be ill-disposed towards me, for I certainly have done nothing to make them love me. At the same time, such language transmitted from Madrid does not increase their tenderness."
In short, viewed as a measure by which government, without disarming itself of its terrible powers, was to pacify the popular mind, the amnesty was a failure. Viewed as a net, by which fresh victims should be enticed to entangle themselves, who had already made their way into the distant atmosphere of liberty, it was equally unsuccessful. A few very obscure individuals made their appearance to claim the benefit of the act, before the six months had expired. With these it was thought expedient to deal gently, but no one was deceived by such clemency. As the common people expressed themselves, the net was not spread on that occasion for finches.

The wits of the Netherlands, seeking relief from their wretched condition in a still more wretched quibble, transposed two letters of the word *Pardona*, and re-baptized the new measure *Pandora*. The conceit was not without meaning. The amnesty, descending from supernal regions, had been ushered into the presence of mortals as a messenger laden with heavenly gifts. The casket, when opened, had diffused curses instead of blessings. There, however, the classical analogy ended, for it would have puzzled all the pedants of Louvain to discover Hope lurking, under any disguise, within the clauses of the pardon. Very soon after the promulgation of this celebrated act, the new bride of Philip, Anne of Austria, passed through the Netherlands, on her way to Madrid. During her brief stay in Brussels, she granted an interview to the Dowager Countess of Horn. That unhappy lady, having seen her eldest son, the head of her illustrious house, so recently perish on the scaffold, wished to make a last effort in behalf of the remaining one, then closely confined in the prison of Segovia. The archduchess solemnly promised that his release should be the first boon which she would request of her royal bridegroom, and the bereaved countess retired almost with a hope.

A short digression must here be allowed, to narrate the remaining fortunes of that son, the ill-starred Seigneur de Montigny. His mission to Madrid in company of the Marquis Berghen has been related in a previous volume. The last and most melancholy scene in the life of his fellow envoy has been described in a recent chapter. After that ominous event, Montigny became most anxious to effect his retreat from Spain. He had been separated more than a year from his few months’ bride. He was not imprisoned, but he felt himself under the most rigid although secret inspection. It was utterly impossible for him to obtain leave to return, or to take his departure without permission. On one occasion, having left the city accidentally for a ride on horseback to an adjoining village, he found himself surrounded by an unexpected escort of forty troopers. Still, however, the king retained a smiling mien. To Montigny’s repeated and urgent requests for dismissal, Philip graciously urged his desire for a continuance of his visit. He was requested to remain in order to accompany his sovereign upon that journey to the Netherlands which would not be much longer delayed. In his impatience anything seemed preferable to the state of suspense in which he was made to linger. He eagerly offered, if he were accused or suspected of crime, to surrender himself to imprisonment if he only could be brought to trial. Soon after Alva’s arrival in the Netherlands, the first part of this offer was accepted.
No sooner were the arrests of Egmont and Horn known in Madrid, than Montigny was deprived of his liberty, and closely confined in the alcazar of Segovia. Here he remained imprisoned for eight or nine months in a high tower, with no attendant save a young page, Arthur de Munter, who had accompanied him from the Netherlands. Eight men-at-arms were expressly employed to watch over him and to prevent his escape.

One day towards the middle of July, 1568, a band of pilgrims, some of them in Flemish attire, went through the streets of Segovia. They were chanting, as was customary on such occasions, a low, monotonous song, in which Montigny, who happened to be listening, suddenly recognized the language of his fatherland. His surprise was still greater when, upon paying closer attention, he distinguished the terrible meaning of the song. The pretended pilgrims, having no other means of communication with the prisoner, were singing for his information the tragic fates of his brother, Count Horn, and of his friend, Count Egmont. Mingled with the strain were warnings of his own approaching doom, if he were not able to effect his escape before it should be too late. Thus by this friendly masquerade did Montigny learn the fate of his brother, which otherwise, in that land of terrible secrecy, might have been concealed from him forever.

The hint as to his own preservation was not lost upon him, and he at once set about a plan of escape. He succeeded in gaining over to his interests one of the eight soldiers by whom he was guarded, and he was thus enabled to communicate with many of his own adherents without the prison walls. His major-domo had previously been permitted to furnish his master’s table with provisions dressed by his own cook. A correspondence was now carried on by means of letters concealed within the loaves of bread sent daily to the prisoner. In the same way files were provided for sawing through his window-bars. A very delicate ladder of ropes, by which he was to effect his escape into the court below, was also transmitted. The plan had been completely arranged. A certain Pole employed in the enterprise was to be at Hernani, with horses in readiness to convey them to San Sebastian. There a sloop had been engaged, and was waiting their arrival. Montigny accordingly, in a letter enclosed within a loaf of bread—the last, as he hoped, which he should break in prison—was instructed, after cutting off his beard and otherwise disguising his person, to execute his plan and join his confederates at Hernani.

Unfortunately, the major-domo of Montigny was in love. Upon the eve of departure from Spain, his farewell interview with his mistress was so much protracted that the care of sending the bread was left to another. The substitute managed so unskillfully that the loaf was brought to the commandant of the castle, and not to the prisoner. The commandant broke the bread, discovered the letter, and became master of the whole plot. All persons engaged in the enterprise were immediately condemned to death, and the Spanish soldier executed without delay. The others being considered, on account of their loyalty to their master as deserving a commutation of punishment, were sent to the galleys. The major-domo, whose ill-timed
gallantry had thus cost Montigny his liberty, received two hundred lashes in addition. All, however, were eventually released from imprisonment. The unfortunate gentleman was now kept in still closer confinement in his lonely tower. As all his adherents had been disposed of, he could no longer entertain a hope of escape. In the autumn of this year (1568) it was thought expedient by Alva to bring his case formally before the Blood-Council. Montigny had committed no crime, but he was one of that band of popular nobles whose deaths had been long decreed. Letters were accordingly sent to Spain, empowering certain functionaries there to institute that preliminary examination, which, as usual, was to be the only trial vouchsafed. A long list of interrogatories was addressed to him on February 7, 1569, in his prison at Segovia. A week afterwards, he was again visited by the alcalde, who read over to him the answers which he had made on the first occasion, and required him to confirm them. He was then directed to send his procuration to certain persons in the Netherlands, whom he might wish to appear in his behalf. Montigny complied by sending several names, with a clause of substitution. All the persons thus appointed, however, declined to act, unless they could be furnished with a copy of the procuration, and with a statement of the articles of accusation. This was positively refused by the Blood-Council. Seeing no possibility of rendering service to their friend by performing any part in this mockery of justice, they refused to accept the procuration. They could not defend a case when not only the testimony, but even the charges against the accused were kept secret. An individual was accordingly appointed by government to appear in the prisoner’s behalf. Thus the forms of justice were observed, and Montigny, a close prisoner in the tower of Segovia, was put upon trial for his life in Brussels. Certainly nothing could exceed the irony of such a process. The advocate had never seen his client, thousands of miles away, and was allowed to hold no communication with him by letter. The proceedings were instituted by a summons, addressed by the Duke of Alva to Madame de Montigny in Brussels. That unhappy lady could only appeal to the king. “Convinced,” she said, that her husband was innocent of the charges brought against him, she threw herself, overwhelmed and consumed by tears and misery, at his Majesty’s feet. She begged the king to remember the past services of Montigny, her own youth, and that she had enjoyed his company but four months. By all these considerations, and by the passion of Jesus Christ, she adjured the monarch to pardon any faults which her husband might have committed. The reader can easily judge how much effect such a tender appeal was like to have upon the heart of Philip. From that rock, thus feebly smitten, there flowed no fountain of mercy. It was not more certain that Montigny’s answers to the interrogatories addressed to him had created a triumphant vindication of his course, than that such vindication would be utterly powerless to save his life. The charges preferred against him were similar to those which had brought Egmont and Horn to the block, and it certainly created no ground of hope for him, that he could prove himself even more innocent of suspicious conduct than they had done. On March 4, 1570, accordingly, the Duke of Alva pronounced sentence against him. The sentence
declared that his head should be cut off, and afterwards exposed to public view upon the head of a pike. Upon the 18th of March, 1570, the duke addressed a requisitory letter to the alcaldes, corregidors, and other judges of Castile, empowering them to carry the sentence into execution. On the arrival of this requisition, there was a serious debate before the king in council. It seemed to be the general opinion that there had been almost severity enough in the Netherlands for the present. The spectacle of the public execution of another distinguished personage, it was thought, might now prove more irritating than salutary. The king was of this opinion himself. It certainly did not occur to him or to his advisers that this consideration should lead them to spare the life of an innocent man. The doubts entertained as to the expediency of a fresh murder were not allowed to benefit the prisoner, who, besides being a loyal subject and a communicant of the ancient Church, was also clothed in the white robes of an envoy, claiming not only justice but hospitality as the deputy of Philip's sister, Margaret of Parma. These considerations probably never occurred to the mind of his Majesty. In view, however, of the peculiar circumstances of the case, it was unanimously agreed that there should be no more blood publicly shed. Most of the councillors were in favor of slow poison. Montigny's meat and drink, they said, should be daily drugged, so that he might die by little and little. Philip, however, terminated these disquisitions by deciding that the ends of justice would not thus be sufficiently answered. The prisoner, he had resolved, should be regularly executed, but the deed should be secret, and it should be publicly announced that he had died of a fever.

This point having been settled, the king now set about the arrangement of his plan with all that close attention to detail which marked his character. The patient industry which, had God given him a human heart and a love of right, might have made him a useful monarch, he now devoted to a scheme of midnight murder with a tranquil sense of enjoyment which seems almost incredible. There is no exaggeration in calling the deed a murder, for it certainly was not sanctioned by any law, divine or human, nor justified or excused by any of the circumstances which are supposed to palliate homicide. Nor, when the elaborate and superfluous luxury of arrangements made by Philip for the accomplishment of his design is considered, can it be doubted that he found a positive pleasure in his task. It would almost seem that he had become jealous of Alva's achievements in the work of slaughter. He appeared willing to prove to those immediately about him, that however capable might be the viceroy of conducting public executions on a grand and terrifying scale, there was yet a certain delicacy of finish never attained by Alva in such business, and which was all his Majesty's own. The king was resolved to make the assassination of Montigny a masterpiece.

On August 17, 1570, he accordingly directed Don Eugenio de Peralta, concierge of the fortress of Simancas, to repair to Segovia, and thence to remove the Seigneur Montigny to Simancas. Here he was to be strictly immured, yet was to be allowed at times to walk in the corridor adjoining his chamber. On the seventh of October following, the licentiate Don Alonzo de Avellano, alcalde of
Valladolid, was furnished with an order addressed by the king to Don Eugenio de Peralta, requiring him to place the prisoner in the hands of the said licentiate, who was charged with the execution of Alva’s sentence. This functionary had, moreover, been provided with a minute letter of instructions, which had been drawn up according to the king’s directions, on the first of October. In these royal instructions, it was stated that, although the sentence was for a public execution, yet the king had decided in favor of a private one within the walls of the fortress. It was to be managed so that no one should suspect that Montigny had been executed, but so that, on the contrary, it should be universally said and believed that he had died a natural death. Very few persons, all sworn and threatened into secrecy, were therefore to be employed.

Don Alonzo was to start immediately for Valladolid, which was within two short leagues of Simancas. At that place he would communicate with Don Eugenio, and arrange the mode, day, and hour of execution. He would leave Valladolid on the evening before a holiday, late in the afternoon, so as to arrive a little after dark at Simancas. He would take with him a confidential notary, an executioner, and as few servants as possible. Immediately upon his entrance to the fortress, he was to communicate the sentence of death to Montigny, in presence of Don Eugenio and of one or two other persons. He would then console him, in which task he would be assisted by Don Eugenio. He would afterwards leave him with the religious person who would be appointed for that purpose. That night and the whole of the following day, which would be a festival, till after midnight, would be allotted to Montigny, that he might have time to confess, to receive the sacraments, to convert himself to God, and to repent. Between one and two o’clock in the morning the execution was to take place, in presence of the ecclesiastic, of Don Eugenio de Peralta, of the notary, and of one or two other persons, who would be needed by the executioner. The ecclesiastic was to be a wise and prudent person, and to be informed how little confidence Montigny inspired in the article of faith.

If the prisoner should wish to make a will, it could not be permitted. As all his property had been confiscated, he could dispose of nothing. Should he, however, desire to make a memorial of the debts which he would wish paid, he was to be allowed that liberty. It was, however, to be stipulated that he was to make no allusion, in any memorial or letter which he might write, to the execution which was about to take place. He was to use the language of a man seriously ill, and who feels himself at the point of death. By this infernal ingenuity it was proposed to make the victim an accomplice in the plot, and to place a false exculpation of his assassins in his dying lips.

The execution having been fulfilled, and the death having been announced with the dissimulation prescribed, the burial was to take place in the church of Saint Saviour, in Simancas. A moderate degree of pomp, such as befitted a person of Montigny’s quality, was to be allowed, and a decent tomb erected. A grand mass was also to be celebrated, with a respectable number, “say seven hundred,” of lesser masses. As the servants of the defunct were few in number, continued the frugal king, they might be provided each with a suit of mourning.
Having thus personally arranged all the details of this secret work, from the reading of the sentence to the burial of the prisoner, having settled not only the mode of his departure from life, but of his passage through purgatory, the king dispatched the agent on his mission.

The royal program was faithfully enacted. Don Alonzo arrived at Valladolid, and made his arrangements with Don Eugenio. It was agreed that a paper, prepared by royal authority, and brought by Don Alonzo from Madrid, should be thrown into the corridor of Montigny’s prison. This paper, written in Latin, ran as follows: "In the night, as I understand, there will be no chance for your escape. In the daytime there will be many; for you are then in charge of a single gouty guardian, no match in strength or speed for so vigorous a man as you. Make your escape from the 8th to the 12th of October, at any hour you can, and take the road contiguous to the castle gate through which you entered. You will find Robert and John, who will be ready with horses, and with everything necessary. May God favor your undertaking. —R. D. M."

The letter, thus designedly thrown into the corridor by one confederate, was soon afterwards picked up by the other, who immediately taxed Montigny with an attempt to escape. Notwithstanding the vehement protestations of innocence naturally made by the prisoner, his pretended project was made the pretext for a still closer imprisonment in the "Bishop’s Tower." A letter, written at Madrid, by Philip’s orders, had been brought by Don Alonzo to Simancas, narrating by anticipation these circumstances, precisely as they had now occurred. It moreover stated that Montigny, in consequence of his close confinement, had fallen grievously ill, and that he would receive all the attention compatible with his safe keeping. This letter, according to previous orders, was now signed by Don Eugenio de Peralta, dated October 10, 1570, and publicly dispatched to Philip. It was thus formally established that Montigny was seriously ill. A physician, thoroughly instructed and sworn to secrecy, was now ostentatiously admitted to the tower, bringing with him a vast quantity of drugs. He duly circulated among the townspeople, on his return, his opinion that the illustrious prisoner was afflicted with a disorder from which it was almost impossible that he should recover. Thus, thanks to Philip’s masterly precautions, not a person in Madrid or Simancas was ignorant that Montigny was dying of a fever, with the single exception of the patient himself.

On Saturday, the 14th of October, at nightfall, Don Alonzo de Avellano, accompanied by the prescribed individuals, including Fray Hernando del Castillo, an ecclesiastic of high reputation, made their appearance at the prison of Simancas. At ten in the evening the announcement of the sentence was made to Montigny. He was visibly agitated at the sudden intelligence, for it was entirely unexpected by him. He had, on the contrary, hoped much from the intercession of the queen, whose arrival he had already learned. He soon recovered himself, however, and requested to be left alone with the ecclesiastic. All the night and the following day were passed in holy offices. He conducted himself with great moderation, courage, and tranquility. He protested his entire innocence of any complicity with the Prince of Orange, or
of any disloyal designs or sentiments at any period of his life. He drew up a memorial, expressing his strong attachment to every point of the Catholic faith, from which *he had never for an instant swerved*. His whole demeanor was noble, submissive, and Christian. "In every essential," said Fray Hernando, "he conducted himself so well that we who remain may bear him envy." He wrote a paper of instructions concerning his faithful and bereaved dependents. He placed his signet ring, attached to a small gold chain, in the hands of the ecclesiastic, to be by him transmitted to his wife. Another ring, set with turquoise, he sent to his mother-in-law, the Princess Espinoy, from whom he had received it. About an hour after midnight, on the morning, therefore, of the 16th of October, Fray Hernando gave notice that the prisoner was ready to die. The alcalde Don Alonzo then entered, accompanied by the executioner and the notary. The sentence of Alva was now again recited, the alcalde adding that the king, "out of his clemency and benignity," had substituted a secret for a public execution. Montigny admitted that the judgment would be just and the punishment lenient, if it were conceded that the charges against him were true. His enemies, however, while he had been thus immured, had possessed the power to accuse him as they listed. He ceased to speak, and the executioner then came forward and strangled him. The alcalde, the notary, and the executioner then immediately started for Valladolid, so that no person next morning knew that they had been that night at Simancas, nor could guess the dark deed which they had then and there accomplished. The terrible secret they were forbidden, on pain of death, to reveal.

Montigny, immediately after his death, was clothed in the habit of Saint Francis, in order to conceal the marks of strangulation. In the course of the day the body was deposited, according to the king's previous orders, in the church of Saint Saviour. Don Eugenio de Peralta, who superintended the interment, uncovered the face of the defunct to prove his identity, which was instantly recognized by many sorrowing servants. The next morning the second letter, *prepared by Philip long before*, and brought by Don Alonzo de Avellano to Simancas, received the date of October 17, 1570, together with the signature of Don Eugenio de Peralta, keeper of Simancas fortress, and was then *publicly dispatched* to the king. It stated that, notwithstanding the care given to the Seigneur de Montigny in his severe illness by the physicians who had attended him, he had continued to grow worse and worse until the previous morning between three and four o'clock, when he had expired. The Fray Hernando del Castillo, who had accidentally happened to be at Simancas, had performed the holy offices, at the request of the deceased, who had died in so catholic a frame of mind, that great hopes might be entertained of his salvation. Although he possessed no property, yet his burial had been conducted very respectfully. On November 3, 1570, these two letters, ostensibly written by Don Eugenio de Peralta, were transmitted by Philip to the Duke of Alva. They were to serve as evidence of the statement which the governor-general was now instructed to make, that the Seigneur de Montigny had died a natural death in the fortress of Simancas. By the same courier, the king likewise forwarded a secret memoir, containing the exact history of the dark transaction, from which memoir the
foregoing account has been prepared. At the same time the duke was instructed publicly to exhibit the lying letters of Don Eugenio de Peralta, as containing an authentic statement of the affair. The king observed, moreover, in his letter, that there was not a person in Spain who doubted that Montigny had died of a fever. He added than if the sentiments of the deceased nobleman had been at all in conformity with his external manifestations, according to the accounts received of his last moments, it was to be hoped that God would have mercy upon his soul. The secretary who copied the letter, took the liberty of adding, however, to this paragraph the suggestion, that "if Montigny were really a heretic, the devil, who always assists his children in such moments, would hardly have failed him in his dying hour." Philip, displeased with this flippancy, caused the passage to be erased. He even gave vent to his royal indignation in a marginal note, to the effect that we should always express favorable judgments concerning the dead—a pious sentiment always dearer to writing masters than to historians. It seemed never to have occurred however to this remarkable moralist, that it was quite as reprehensible to strangle an innocent man as to speak ill of him after his decease. 

Thus perished Baron Montigny, four years after his arrival in Madrid as Duchess Margaret’s ambassador, and three years after the death of his fellow envoy Marquis Berghen. No apology is necessary for so detailed an account of this dark and secret tragedy. The great transactions of a reign are sometimes paltry things; great battles and great treaties, after vast consumption of life and of breath, often leave the world where they found it. The events which occupy many of the statelier pages of history, and which have most lived in the mouths of men, frequently contain but commonplace lessons of philosophy. It is perhaps otherwise when, by the resuscitation of secret documents, over which the dust of three centuries has gathered, we are enabled to study the internal working of a system of perfect tyranny. Liberal institutions, republican or constitutional governments, move in the daylight; we see their mode of operation, feel the jar of their wheels, and are often needlessly alarmed at their apparent tendencies. The reverse of the picture is not always so easily attainable. When, therefore, we find a careful portrait of a consummate tyrant, painted by his own hand, it is worth our while to pause for a moment, that we may carefully peruse the lineaments. Certainly, we shall afterwards not love liberty the less.

Towards the end of the year 1570, still another and a terrible misfortune descended upon the Netherlands. It was now the hand of God which smote the unhappy country, already so tortured by the cruelty of war. An inundation, more tremendous than any which had yet been recorded in those annals so prolific in such catastrophes, now swept the whole coast from Flanders to Friesland. Not the memorable deluge of the 13th century, out of which the Zuyder Zee was born; not that in which the waters of the Dollart had closed forever over the villages and churches of Gröningen; not one of those perpetually recurring floods by which the inhabitants of the Netherlands, year after year, were recalled to an anxious remembrance of the watery chaos out of which their fatherland had been created, and into which it was in daily
danger of resolving itself again; had excited so much terror and caused so much
destruction.
A continued and violent gale from the Northwest had long been sweeping the
Atlantic waters into the North Sea, and had now piled them upon the fragile
costs of the provinces. The dykes, tasked beyond their strength, burst in every
direction. The cities of Flanders, to a considerable distance inland, were
suddenly invaded by the waters of the ocean. The whole narrow peninsula of
North Holland was in imminent danger of being swept away for ever. Between
Amsterdam and Meyden, the great Diemer dyke was broken through in twelve
places. The Hand-bos, a bulwark formed of oaken piles, fastened with metal
clamps, moored with iron anchors, and secured by gravel and granite, was
snapped to pieces like packthread. The "Sleeper," a dyke thus called, because
it was usually left in repose by the elements, except in great emergencies,
alone held firm, and prevented the consummation of the catastrophe. Still the
ocean poured in upon the land with terrible fury. Dort, Rotterdam, and many
other cities were, for a time, almost submerged. Along the coast, fishing
vessels, and even ships of larger size, were floated up into the country, where
they entangled themselves in groves and orchards, or beat to pieces the roofs
and walls of houses. The destruction of life and of property was enormous
throughout the maritime provinces, but in Friesland the desolation was
complete. There nearly all the dykes and sluices were dashed to fragments; the
country, far and wide, converted into an angry sea. The steeples and towers of
inland cities became islands of the ocean. Thousands of human beings were
swep out of existence in a few hours. Whole districts of territory, with all
their villages, farms, and churches, were rent from their places, borne along by
the force of the waves, sometimes to be lodged in another part of the country,
sometimes to be entirely engulfed. Multitudes of men, women, children, of
horses, oxen, sheep, and every domestic animal, were struggling in the waves
in every direction. Every boat, and every article which could serve as a boat,
were eagerly seized upon. Every house was inundated; even the graveyards
gave up their dead. The living infant in his cradle, and the long-buried corpse
in his coffin, floated side by side. The ancient flood seemed about to be
renewed.
Everywhere, upon the top of trees, upon the steeples of churches, human
beings were clustered, praying to God for mercy, and to their fellow men for
assistance. As the storm at last was subsiding, boats began to ply in every
direction, saving those who were still struggling in the water, picking fugitives
from roofs and treetops, and collecting the bodies of those already drowned.
Colonel Robles, Seigneur de Billy, formerly much hated for his Spanish or
Portuguese blood, made himself very active in this humane work. By his
exertions, and those of the troops belonging to Gröningen, many lives were
rescued, and gratitude replaced the ancient animosity. It was estimated that at
least 20,000 persons were destroyed in the province of Friesland alone.
Throughout the Netherlands, 100,000 persons perished. The damage done to
property, the number of animals engulfed in the sea, were almost incalculable.
These events took place on the first and second of November, 1570. The former happened to be the day of All Saints, and the Spaniards maintained loudly that the vengeance of Heaven had descended upon the abode of heretics. The Netherlanders looked upon the catastrophe as ominous of still more terrible misfortunes in store for them. They seemed doomed to destruction by God and man. An overwhelming tyranny had long been chafing against their constitutional bulwarks, only to sweep over them at last; and now the resistless ocean, impatient of man’s feeble barriers, had at last risen to reclaim his prey. Nature, as if disposed to put to the blush the feeble cruelty of man, had thus wrought more havoc in a few hours, than bigotry, however active, could effect in many years.

Nearly at the close of this year (1570) an incident occurred, illustrating the ferocious courage so often engendered in civil contests. On the western verge of the Isle of Bommel, stood the castle of Lowesteen. The island is not in the sea. It is the narrow but important territory which is enclosed between the Meuse and the Waal. The castle, placed in a slender hook, at the junction of the two rivers, commanded the two cities of Gorcum and Dorcum, and the whole navigation of the waters. One evening, towards the end of December, four monks, wearing the cowls and robes of Mendicant Grey Friars, demanded hospitality at the castle gate. They were at once ushered into the presence of the commandant, a brother of President Tisnacq. He was standing by the fire, conversing with his wife. The foremost monk approaching him, asked whether the castle held for the Duke of Alva or the Prince of Orange. The castellian replied that he recognized no prince save Philip, King of Spain. Thereupon the monk, who was no other than Herman de Ruyter, a drover by trade, and a warm partisan of Orange, plucked a pistol from beneath his robe, and shot the commandant through the head. The others, taking advantage of the sudden panic, overcame all the resistance offered by the feeble garrison, and made themselves masters of the place. In the course of the next day they introduced into the castle four or five and twenty men, with which force they diligently set themselves to fortify the place, and secure themselves in its possession. A larger reinforcement which they had reckoned upon, was detained by the floods and frosts, which, for the moment, had made the roads and rivers alike impracticable.

Don Roderigo de Toledo, governor of Bois le Duc, immediately dispatched a certain Captain Perea, at the head of two hundred soldiers, who were joined on the way by a miscellaneous force of volunteers, to recover the fortress as soon as possible. The castle, bathed on its outward walls by the Waal and Meuse, and having two redoubts, defended by a double interior foss, would have been difficult to take by assault had the number of the besieged been at all adequate to its defense. As matters stood, however, the Spaniards, by battering a breach in the wall with their cannon on the first day, and then escalading the inner works with remarkable gallantry upon the second, found themselves masters of the place within eight and forty hours of their first appearance before its gates. Most of the defenders were either slain or captured alive. De Ruyter alone had betaken himself to an inner hall of the
castle, where he stood at bay upon the threshold. Many Spaniards, one after another, as they attempted to kill or to secure him, fell before his sword, which he wielded with the strength of a giant. At last, overpowered by numbers, and weakened by the loss of blood, be retreated slowly into the hall, followed by many of his antagonists. Here, by an unexpected movement, he applied a match to a train of powder, which he had previously laid along the floor of the apartment. The explosion was instantaneous. The tower, where the contest was taking place, sprang into the air, and De Ruyter with his enemies shared a common doom. A part of the mangled remains of this heroic but ferocious patriot were afterwards dug from the ruins of the tower, and with impotent malice nailed upon the gallows at Bois le Duc. Of his surviving companions, some were beheaded, some were broken on the wheel, some were hung and quartered—all were executed.

CHAPTER 6
The Fortitude of Orange, the Treachery of Philip, and Rebellion against Alva’s Taxation

While such had been the domestic events of the Netherlands during the years 1569 and 1570, the Prince of Orange, although again a wanderer, had never allowed himself to despair. During this whole period, the darkest hour for himself and for his country, he was ever watchful. After disbanding his troops at Strasburg, and after making the best arrangements possible under the circumstances for the eventual payment of their wages, he had joined the army which the Duke of Deux Ponts had been raising in Germany to assist the cause of the Huguenots in France. The prince having been forced to acknowledge that, for the moment, all open efforts in the Netherlands were likely to be fruitless, instinctively turned his eyes towards the more favorable aspect of the Reformation in France. It was inevitable that, while he was thus thrown for the time out of his legitimate employment, he should be led to the battles of freedom in a neighboring land. The Duke of Deux Ponts, who felt his own military skill hardly adequate to the task which he had assumed, was glad, as it were, to put himself and his army under the orders of Orange. Meantime the Battle of Jarnac had been fought; the Prince of Condé, covered with wounds, and exclaiming that it was sweet to die for Christ and country, had fallen from his saddle; the whole Huguenot army had been routed by the royal forces under the nominal command of Anjou, and the body of Condé, tied to the back of a she ass, had been paraded through the streets of Jarnac in derision. Affairs had already grown almost as black for the cause of freedom in France as in the provinces. Shortly afterwards, William of Orange, with a band of 1,200 horsemen, joined the banners of Coligny. His two brothers accompanied him. Henry, the stripling, had left the university to follow the fortunes of the prince. The indomitable Louis, after 7,000 of his army had been slain, had swum naked across the Ems, exclaiming “that his courage, thank God, was as fresh and lively as ever,” and had lost not a moment in renewing his hostile schemes against the Spanish government. In the meantime he had
joined the Huguenots in France. The battle of Moncontour had succeeded, Count Peter Mansfeld, with 5,000 troops sent by Alva, fighting on the side of the royalists, and Louis Nassau on that of the Huguenots, atoning by the steadiness and skill with which he covered the retreat, for his intemperate courage, which had precipitated the action, and perhaps been the main cause of Coligny’s overthrow. The Prince of Orange, who had been peremptorily called to the Netherlands in the beginning of the autumn, was not present at the battle. Disguised as a peasant, with but five attendants, and at great peril, he had crossed the enemy’s lines, traversed France, and arrived in Germany before the winter. Count Louis remained with the Huguenots. So necessary did he seem to their cause, and so dear had he become to their armies, that during the severe illness of Coligny in the course of the following summer all eyes were turned upon him as the inevitable successor of that great man, the only remaining pillar of freedom in France.

Coligny recovered. The deadly peace between the Huguenots and the Court succeeded. The admiral, despite his sagacity and his suspicions, embarked with his whole party upon that smooth and treacherous current which led to the horrible catastrophe of Saint Bartholomew. To occupy his attention, a formal engagement was made by the government to send succor to the Netherlands. The admiral was to lead the auxiliaries which were to be dispatched across the frontier to overthrow the tyrannical government of Alva. Long and anxious were the colloquies held between Coligny and the Royalists. The monarch requested a detailed opinion, in writing, from the admiral, on the most advisable plan for invading the Netherlands. The result was the preparation of the celebrated memoir, under Coligny’s directions, by young De Mornay, Seigneur de Plessis. The document was certainly not a paper of the highest order. It did not appeal to the loftier instincts which kings or common mortals might be supposed to possess. It summoned the monarch to the contest in the Netherlands that the ancient injuries committed by Spain might be avenged. It invoked the ghost of Isabella of France, foully murdered, as it was thought, by Philip. It held out the prospect of re-annexing the fair provinces, wrested from the king’s ancestors by former Spanish sovereigns. It painted the hazardous position of Philip, with the Moorish revolt gnawing at the entrails of his kingdom, with the Turkish war consuming its extremities, with the canker of rebellion corroding the very heart of the Netherlands. It recalled, with exultation, the melancholy fact that the only natural and healthy existence of the French was in a state of war—that France, if not occupied with foreign campaigns, could not be prevented from plunging its sword into its own vitals. It indulged in refreshing reminiscences of these halcyon days, not long gone by, when France, enjoying perfect tranquility within its own borders, was calmly and regularly carrying on its long wars beyond the frontier.

In spite of this savage spirit, which modern documents, if they did not scorn, would at least have shrouded, the paper was nevertheless a sagacious one; but the request for the memoir, and the many interviews on the subject of the invasion, were only intended to deceive. They were but the curtain which concealed the preparations for the dark tragedy which was about to be
enacted. Equally deceived, and more sanguine than ever, Louis Nassau during this period was indefatigable in his attempts to gain friends for his cause. He had repeated audiences of the king, to whose court he had come in disguise. He made a strong and warm impression upon Elizabeth's envoy at the French Court, Walsingham. It is probable that in the count's impetuosity to carry his point, he allowed more plausibility to be given to certain projects for subdividing the Netherlands than his brother would ever have sanctioned. The prince was a total stranger to these inchoate schemes. His work was to set his country free, and to destroy the tyranny which had grown colossal. That employment was sufficient for a lifetime, and there is no proof to be found that a paltry and personal self-interest had even the lowest place among his motives.

Meantime, in the autumn of 1569, Orange had again reached Germany. Paul Buys, Pensionary of Leyden, had kept him constantly informed of the state of affairs in the provinces. Through his means an extensive correspondence was organized and maintained with leading persons in every part of the Netherlands. The conventional terms by which different matters and persons of importance were designated in these letters were familiarly known to all friends of the cause, not only in the provinces, but in France, England, Germany, and particularly in the great commercial cities. The prince, for example, was always designated as Martin Willemzoon, the Duke of Alva as Master Powels van Alblas, the Queen of England as Henry Philipzoon, the King of Denmark as Peter Peterson. The twelve signs of the zodiac were used instead of the twelve months, and a great variety of similar substitutions were adopted. Before his visit to France, Orange had, moreover, issued commissions, in his capacity of sovereign, to various seafaring persons, who were empowered to cruise against Spanish commerce. The "beggars of the sea," as these privateersmen designated themselves, soon acquired as terrible a name as the wild beggars, or the forest beggars; but the prince, having had many conversations with Admiral Coligny on the important benefits to be derived from the system, had faithfully set himself to effect a reformation of its abuses after his return from France. The Seigneur de Dolhain, who, like many other refugee nobles, had acquired much distinction in this roving corsair life, had for a season acted as admiral for the prince. He had, however, resolutely declined to render any accounts of his various expeditions, and was now deprived of his command in consequence. Gillain de Fienennes, Seigneur de Lumbres, was appointed to succeed him. At the same time strict orders were issued by Orange, forbidding all hostile measures against the Emperor or any of the princes of the empire, against Sweden, Denmark, England, or against any potentates who were protectors of the true Christian religion. The Duke of Alva and his adherents were designated as the only lawful antagonists.

The prince, moreover, gave minute instructions as to the discipline to be observed in his fleet. The articles of war were to be strictly enforced. Each commander was to maintain a minister on board his ship, who was to preach God's word, and to preserve Christian piety among the crew. No one was to
exercise any command in the fleet save native Netherlanders, unless thereto
expressly commissioned by the Prince of Orange. All prizes were to be divided
and distributed by a prescribed rule. No persons were to be received on board,
either as sailors or soldiers, save "folk of good name and fame." No man who
had ever been punished of justice was to be admitted. Such were the principal
features in the organization of that infant navy which, in course of this and the
following centuries, was to achieve so many triumphs, and to which a powerful
and adventurous mercantile marine had already led the way. "Of their ships," said Cardinal Lentivoglio, "the Hollanders make houses, of their houses schools. Here they are born, here educated, here they learn their profession. Their sailors, flying from one pole to the other, practicing their art wherever the sun displays itself to mortals, become so skilful that they can scarcely be equaled, certainly not surpassed, by any nation in the civilized world."
The prince, however, on his return from France, had never been in so forlorn a
condition. "Orange is plainly perishing," said one of the friends of the cause.
Not only had he no funds to organize new levies, but he was daily exposed to
the most clamorously-urged claims, growing out of the army which he had been
recently obliged to disband. It had been originally reported in the Netherlands
that he had fallen in the Battle of Moncontour. "If he have really been taken
off," wrote Viglius, hardly daring to credit the great news, "we shall all of us
have less cause to tremble." After his actual return, however, lean and
beggared, with neither money nor credit, a mere threatening shadow without
substance or power, he seemed to justify the sarcasm of Granvelle. "Vana sine viribus ira," quoted the cardinal, and of a verity it seemed that not a man was
likely to stir in Germany in his behalf, now that so deep a gloom had descended
upon his cause. The obscure and the oppressed throughout the provinces and
Germany still freely contributed out of their weakness and their poverty, and
taxed themselves beyond their means to assist enterprises for the relief of the
Netherlands. The great ones of the earth, however, those on whom the prince
had relied; those to whom he had given his heart; dukes, princes, and electors,
in this fatal change of his fortunes, "fell away like water."
Still his spirit was unbroken. His letters showed a perfect appreciation of his
situation, and of that to which his country was reduced; but they never
exhibited a trace of weakness or despair. A modest but lofty courage, a pious
but unaffected resignation, breathed through every document, public or
private, which fell from his pen during this epoch. He wrote to his brother John
that he was quite willing to go to Frankfort, in order to give himself up as a
hostage to his troops for the payment of their arrears. At the same time he
begged his brother to move heaven and earth to raise at least 100,000 thalers.
If he could only furnish them with a month’s pay, the soldiers would perhaps be
for a time contented. He gave directions also concerning the disposition of
what remained of his plate and furniture, the greater part of it having been
already sold and expended in the cause. He thought it would, on the whole, be
better to have the remainder sold, piece by piece, at the fair. More money
would be raised by that course than by a more wholesale arrangement.
He was now obliged to attend personally to the most minute matters of domestic economy. The man who had been the mate of emperors, who was himself a sovereign, who had lived his life long in pomp and luxury, surrounded by countless nobles, pages, men-at-arms, and menials, now calmly accepted the position of an outlaw and an exile. He cheerfully fulfilled tasks which had formerly devolved upon his grooms and valets. There was an almost pathetic simplicity in the homely details of an existence which, for the moment, had become so obscure and so desperate. "Send by the bearer," he wrote, "the little hackney given me by the Admiral; send also my two pair of trunk hose; one pair is at the tailor's to be mended, the other pair you will please order to be taken from the things which I wore lately at Dillenburg. They lie on the table with my accoutrements. If the little hackney be not in condition, please send the gray horse with the cropped ears and tail."

He was always mindful, however, not only of the great cause to which he had devoted himself, but of the wants experienced by individuals who had done him service. He never forgot his friends. In the depth of his own misery he remembered favors received from humble persons. "Send a little cup, worth at least a hundred florins, to Hartmann Wolf," he wrote to his brother, "you can take as much silver out of the coffer, in which there is still some of my chapel service remaining." "You will observe that Affenstein is wanting a horse," he wrote on another occasion, "please look him out one, and send it to me with the price. I will send you the money. Since he has shown himself so willing in the cause, one ought to do something for him."

The contest between the duke and the estates, on the subject of the tenth and twentieth penny had been for a season adjusted. The two years' term, however, during which it had been arranged that the tax should be commuted, was to expire in the autumn of 1571. Early therefore in this year the disputes were renewed with greater acrimony than ever. The estates felt satisfied that the king was less eager than the viceroy. Viglius was satisfied that the power of Alva was upon the wane. While the king was not likely openly to rebuke his recent measures, it seemed not improbable that the governor's reiterated requests to be recalled might be granted. Fortified by these considerations, the president, who had so long been the supple tool of the tyrant, suddenly assumed the character of a popular tribune. The wranglings, the contradictions, the vituperations, the threatenings, now became incessant in the council. The duke found that he had exulted prematurely, when he announced to the king the triumphant establishment, in perpetuity, of the lucrative tax. So far from all the estates having given their consent, as he had maintained, and as he had written to Philip, it now appeared that not one of those bodies considered itself bound beyond its quota for the two years. This was formally stated in the council by Berlaymont and other members. The wrath of the duke blazed forth at this announcement. He berated Berlaymont for maintaining, or for allowing it to be maintained, that the consent of the orders had ever been doubtful. He protested that they had as unequivocally agreed to the perpetual imposition of the tax as he to its commutation during two years. He declared, however, that he was sick of quotas. The tax should
now be collected forthwith, and Treasurer Schetz was ordered to take his measures accordingly.

At a conference on the 29th of May, the duke asked Viglius for his opinion. The president made a long reply, taking the ground that the consent of the orders had been only conditional, and appealing to such members of the finance council as were present, to confirm his assertion. It was confirmed by all. The duke, in a passion, swore that those who dared maintain such a statement should be chastised. Viglius replied that it had always been the custom for councillors to declare their opinion, and that they had never before been threatened with such consequences. If such, however, were his Excellency’s sentiments, councillors had better stay at home, hold their tongues, and so avoid chastisement. The duke, controlling himself a little, apologized for this allusion to chastisement, a menace which he disclaimed having intended with reference to councillors whom he had always commended to the king, and of whom his Majesty had so high an opinion. At a subsequent meeting the duke took Viglius aside, and assured him that he was quite of his own way of thinking. For certain reasons, however, he expressed himself as unwilling that the rest of the council should be aware of the change in his views. He wished, he said, to dissemble. The astute president, for a moment, could not imagine the governor’s drift. He afterwards perceived that the object of this little piece of deception had been to close his mouth. The duke obviously conjectured that the president, lulled into security by this secret assurance, would be silent; that the other councillors, believing the president to have adopted the governor’s views, would alter their opinions; and that the opposition of the estates, thus losing its support in the council, would likewise very soon be abandoned. The president, however, was not to be entrapped by this falsehood. He resolutely maintained his hostility to the tax, depending for his security on the royal opinion, the popular feeling, and the judgment of his colleagues.

The daily meetings of the board were almost entirely occupied by this single subject. Although since the arrival of Alva the Council of Blood had usurped nearly all the functions of the state and finance councils, yet there now seemed a disposition on the part of Alva to seek the countenance, even while he spurned the authority, of other functionaries. He found, however, neither sympathy nor obedience. The president stoutly told him that he was endeavoring to swim against the stream, that the tax was offensive to the people, and that the voice of the people was the voice of God. On the last day of July, however, the duke issued an edict, by which summary collection of the tenth and twentieth pence was ordered. The whole country was immediately in uproar. The estates of every province, the assemblies of every city, met and remonstrated. The merchants suspended all business, the petty dealers shut up their shops. The people congregated together in masses, vowing resistance to the illegal and cruel impost. Not a farthing was collected. The “seven stiver people,” spies of government, who for that paltry daily stipend were employed to listen for treason in every tavern, in every huckster’s booth, in every alley of every city, were now quite unable to report all the curses which were hourly
heard uttered against the tyranny of the viceroy. Evidently, his power was declining. The councillors resisted him, the common people almost defied him. A mercer to whom he was indebted for 30,000 florins’ worth of goods, refused to open his shop, lest the tax should be collected on his merchandise. The duke confiscated his debt, as the mercer had foreseen, but this being a pecuniary sacrifice, seemed preferable to acquiescence in a measure so vague and so boundless that it might easily absorb the whole property of the country. No man saluted the governor as he passed through the streets. Hardly an attempt was made by the people to disguise their abhorrence of his person. Alva, on his side, gave daily exhibitions of ungovernable fury. At a council held on September 25, 1571, he stated that the king had ordered the immediate enforcement of the edict. Viglius observed that there were many objections to its form. He also stoutly denied that the estates had ever given their consent. Alva fiercely asked the president if he had not himself once maintained that the consent had been granted! Viglius replied that he had never made such an assertion. He had mentioned the conditions and the implied promises on the part of government, by which a partial consent had been extorted. He never could have said that the consent had been accorded, for he had never believed that it could be obtained. He had not proceeded far in his argument when he was interrupted by the duke—"But you said so, you said so, you said so," cried the exasperated governor, in a towering passion, repeating many times this flat contradiction to the president’s statements. Viglius firmly stood his ground. Alva loudly denounced him for the little respect he had manifested for his authority. He had hitherto done the president good offices, he said, with his Majesty, but certainly should not feel justified in concealing his recent and very unhandsome conduct.

Viglius replied that he had always reverently cherished the governor, and had endeavored to merit his favor by diligent obsequiousness. He was bound by his oath, however, to utter in council that which comported with his own sentiments and his Majesty’s interests. He had done this heretofore in presence of emperors, kings, queens, and regents, and they had not taken offense. He did not, at this hour, tremble for his gray head, and hoped his Majesty would grant him a hearing before condemnation. The firm attitude of the president increased the irritation of the viceroy. Observing that he knew the proper means of enforcing his authority, he dismissed the meeting.

Immediately afterwards, he received the visits of his son, Don Frederic of Vargas, and other familiars. To these he recounted the scene which had taken place, raving the while so ferociously against Viglius as to induce the supposition that something serious was intended against him. The report flew from mouth to mouth. The affair became the town talk, so that, in the words of the president, it was soon discussed by every barber and old woman in Brussels. His friends became alarmed for his safety, while, at the same time, the citizens rejoiced that their cause had found so powerful an advocate. Nothing, however, came of these threats and these explosions. On the contrary, shortly afterwards the duke gave orders that the tenth penny should be remitted upon four great articles—corn, meat, wine, and beer. It was also
not to be levied upon raw materials used in manufactures. Certainly, these were very important concessions. Still the constitutional objections remained. Alva could not be made to understand why the *alcabala*, which was raised without difficulty in the little town of Alva, should encounter such fierce opposition in the Netherlands. The estates, he informed the king, made a great deal of trouble. They withheld their consent at command of their satrap. The motive which influenced the leading men was not the interest of factories or fisheries, but the fear *that for the future they might not be able to dictate the law to their sovereign*. The people of that country, he observed, had still the same character which had been described by Julius Caesar.

The duke, however, did not find much sympathy at Madrid. Courtiers and councillors had long derided his schemes. As for the king, his mind was occupied with more interesting matters. Philip lived but to enforce what he chose to consider the will of God. While the duke was fighting this battle with the Netherland constitutionalists, his master had engaged at home in a secret but most comprehensive scheme. This was a plot to assassinate Queen Elizabeth of England, and to liberate Mary Queen of Scots, who was to be placed on the throne in her stead. This project, in which was of course involved the reduction of England under the dominion of the ancient Church, could not but prove attractive to Philip. It included a conspiracy against a friendly sovereign, immense service to the Church, and a murder. His passion for intrigue, his love of God, and his hatred of man, would all be gratified at once. Thus, although the Moorish revolt within the heart of his kingdom had hardly been terminated, although his legions and his navies were at that instant engaged in a contest of no ordinary importance with the Turkish empire, although the Netherlands, still maintaining their hostility and their hatred, required the flower of the Spanish army to compel their submission, he did not hesitate to accept the dark adventure which was offered to him by ignoble hands.

One Ridolfi, a Florentine, long resident in England, had been sent to the Netherlands as secret agent of the Duke of Norfolk. Alva read his character immediately, and denounced him to Philip as a loose, prating creature, utterly unfit to be entrusted with affairs of importance. Philip, however, thinking more of the plot than of his fellow actors, welcomed the agent of the conspiracy to Madrid, listened to his disclosures attentively, and, without absolutely committing himself by direct promises, dismissed him with many expressions of encouragement.

On July 12, 1571, Philip wrote to the Duke of Alva, giving an account of his interview with Roberto Ridolfi. The envoy, after relating the sufferings of the Queen of Scotland, had laid before him a plan for her liberation. If the Spanish monarch were willing to assist the Duke of Norfolk and his friends, it would be easy to put upon Mary’s head the crown of England. She was then to intermarry with Norfolk. The kingdom of England was again to acknowledge the authority of Rome, and the Catholic religion to be everywhere restored. The most favorable moment for the execution of the plan would be in August or September. As Queen Elizabeth would at that season quit London for the
country, an opportunity would be easily found for *seizing and murdering her*. Pius V, to whom Ridolfi had opened the whole matter, highly approved the scheme, and warmly urged Philip’s cooperation. Poor and ruined as he was himself, the pope protested that he was ready to sell his chalices, and even his own vestments, to provide funds for the cause. Philip had replied that few words were necessary to persuade him. His desire to see the enterprise succeed was extreme, notwithstanding the difficulties by which it was surrounded. He would reflect earnestly upon the subject, in *the hope that God, whose cause it was*, would enlighten and assist him. Thus much he had stated to Ridolfi, but he had informed his council afterwards that he was determined to carry out the scheme by certain means of which the duke would soon be informed. The end proposed was to *kill or to capture Elizabeth*, to set at liberty the Queen of Scotland, and to put upon her head the crown of England. In this enterprise he instructed the Duke of Alva secretly to assist, without however resorting to open hostilities in his own name or in that of his sovereign. He desired to be informed how many Spaniards the duke could put at the disposition of the conspirators. They had asked for 6,000 arquebusiers for England, 2,000 for Scotland, 2,000 for Ireland. Besides these troops, the viceroy was directed to provide immediately 4,000 arquebuses and 2,000 corslets. For the expenses of the enterprise Philip would immediately remit 200,000 crowns. Alva was instructed to keep the affair a profound secret from his councillors. Even Hopper at Madrid knew nothing of the matter, while the king had only expressed himself in general terms to the nuncio and to Ridolfi, then already on his way to the Netherlands. The king concluded his letter by saying that from what he had now *written with his own hand*, the duke could infer how much he *had this affair at heart*. It was unnecessary for him to say more, persuaded as he was that the duke would take as profound an interest in it as himself.

Alva perceived all the rashness of the scheme, and felt how impossible it would be for him to comply with Philip’s orders. To send an army from the Netherlands into England for the purpose of dethroning and killing a most popular sovereign, and at the same time to preserve the most amicable relations with the country, was rather a desperate undertaking. A force of 10,000 Spaniards, under Chiappin Vitelli, and other favorite officers of the duke, would hardly prove a trifle to be overlooked, nor would their operations be susceptible of very friendly explanations. The governor therefore assured Philip that he “*highly applauded his master for his plot. He could not help rendering infinite thanks to God for having made him vassal to such a Prince.*” He praised exceedingly the resolution which his Majesty had taken. After this preamble, however, he proceeded to pour cold water upon his sovereign’s ardor. He decidedly expressed the opinion that Philip should not proceed in such an undertaking until at any rate the party of the Duke of Norfolk had obtained possession of Elizabeth’s person. Should the king declare himself prematurely, he might be sure that the Venetians, breaking off their alliance with him, would make their peace with the Turk; and that Elizabeth would, perhaps, conclude that marriage with the Duke of Alençon, which now seemed
but a pleasantry. Moreover, he expressed his want of confidence in the Duke of Norfolk, whom he considered as a poor creature with but little courage. He also expressed his doubts concerning the prudence and capacity of Don Gueran de Espes, his Majesty’s ambassador at London.

It was not long before these machinations became known in England. The Queen of Scots was guarded more closely than ever, the Duke of Norfolk was arrested; yet Philip, whose share in the conspiracy had remained a secret, was not discouraged by the absolute explosion of the whole affair. He still held to an impossible purpose with a tenacity which resembled fatuity. He avowed that his obligations in the sight of God were so strict that he was still determined to proceed in the sacred cause. He remitted, therefore, the promised funds to the Duke of Alva, and urged him to act with proper secrecy and promptness.

The viceroy was not a little perplexed by these remarkable instructions. None but lunatics could continue to conspire, after the conspiracy had been exposed and the conspirators arrested. Yet this was what his Catholic Majesty expected of his governor-general. Alva complained, not unreasonably, of the contradictory demands to which he was subjected. He was to cause no rupture with England, yet he was to send succor to an imprisoned traitor; he was to keep all his operations secret from his council, yet he was to send all his army out of the country, and to organize an expensive campaign. He sneered at the flippancy of Ridolfi, who imagined that it was the work of a moment to seize the Queen of England, to liberate the Queen of Scotland, to take possession of the Tower of London, and to burn the fleet in the Thames. “Were your Majesty and the Queen of England acting together,” he observed, “it would be impossible to execute the plan proposed by Ridolfi.” The chief danger to be apprehended was from France and Germany. Were those countries not to interfere, he would undertake to make Philip sovereign of England before the winter. Their opposition, however, was sufficient to make the enterprise not only difficult, but impossible. He begged his master not to be precipitate in the most important affair which had been negotiated by man since Christ came upon earth. Nothing less, he said, than the existence of the Christian faith was at stake, for, should his Majesty fail in this undertaking, not one stone of the ancient religion would be left upon another. He again warned the king of the contemptible character of Ridolfi, who had spoken of the affair so freely that it was a common subject of discussion on the Bourse at Antwerp, and he reiterated in all his letters his distrust of the parties prominently engaged in the transaction.

Such was the general tenor of the long dispatches exchanged between the king and the Duke of Alva upon this iniquitous scheme. The duke showed himself reluctant throughout the whole affair, although he certainly never opposed his master’s project by any arguments founded upon good faith, Christian charity, or the sense of honor. To kill the Queen of England, subvert the laws of her realm, burn her fleets, and butcher her subjects, while the mask of amity and entire consideration was sedulously preserved—all these projects were admitted to be strictly meritorious in themselves, although objections were taken as to the time and mode of execution.
Alva never positively refused to accept his share in the enterprise, but he took care not to lift his finger till the catastrophe in England had made all attempts futile. Philip, on the other hand, never positively withdrew from the conspiracy, but, after an infinite deal of writing and intriguing, concluded by leaving the whole affair in the hands of Alva. The only sufferer for Philip’s participation in the plot was the Spanish envoy at London, Don Gueran de Espes. This gentleman was formally dismissed by Queen Elizabeth, for having given treacherous and hostile advice to the Duke of Alva and to Philip, but her Majesty at the same time expressed the most profound consideration for her brother of Spain.

Towards the close of the same year, however (December 1571), Alva sent two other Italian assassins to England, bribed by the promise of vast rewards, to attempt the life of Elizabeth, quietly, by poison or otherwise. The envoy, Mondoucet, in apprizing the French monarch of this scheme, added that the duke was so ulcerated and annoyed by the discovery of the previous enterprise, that nothing could exceed his rage. These ruffians were not destined to success, but the attempts of the duke upon the queen’s life were renewed from time to time. Eighteen months later (August 1573), two Scotchmen, pensioners of Philip, came from Spain, with secret orders to consult with Alva. They had accordingly much negotiation with the duke and his secretary, Albornoz. They boasted that they could easily capture Elizabeth, but said that the king’s purpose was to kill her. The plan, wrote Mondoucet, was the same as it had been before, namely, to murder the Queen of England, and to give her crown to Mary of Scotland, who would thus be in their power, and whose son was to be seized, and bestowed in marriage in such a way as to make them perpetual masters of both kingdoms.

It does not belong to this history to discuss the merits, nor to narrate the fortunes, of that bickering and fruitless alliance which had been entered into at this period by Philip with Venice and the Holy See against the Turk. The revolt of Granada had at last, after a two years’ struggle, been subdued, and the remnants of the romantic race which had once swayed the Peninsula been swept into slavery. The Moors had sustained the unequal conflict with a constancy not to have been expected of so gentle a people. "If a nation meek as lambs could resist so bravely," said the Prince of Orange, "what ought not to be expected of a hardy people like the Netherlanders?" Don John of Austria, having concluded a series of somewhat inglorious forays against women, children, and bed-ridden old men, in Andalusia and Granada, had arrived, in August of this year, at Naples, to take command of the combined fleet in the Levant. The Battle of Lepanto had been fought, but the quarrelsome and contradictory conduct of the allies had rendered the splendid victory as barren as the waves upon which it had been won. It was no less true, however, that the blunders of the infidels had previously enabled Philip to extricate himself with better success from the dangers of the Moorish revolt than might have been his fortune. Had the rebels succeeded in holding Granada and the mountains of Andalusia, and had they been supported, as they had a right to expect, by the forces of the Sultan, a different aspect might have been given
to the conflict, and one far less triumphant for Spain. Had a prince of vigorous ambition and comprehensive policy governed at that moment the Turkish empire, it would have cost Philip a serious struggle to maintain himself in his hereditary dominions. While he was plotting against the life and throne of Elizabeth, he might have had cause to tremble for his own. Fortunately, however, for his Catholic Majesty, Selim was satisfied to secure himself in the possession of the Isle of Venus, with its fruitful vineyards. "To shed the blood" of Cyprian vines, in which he was so enthusiastic a connoisseur, was to him a more exhilarating occupation than to pursue, amid carnage and hardships, the splendid dream of a re-established Eastern caliphate.

On September 25, 1571, a commission of governor-general of the Netherlands was at last issued to John de la Cerda, Duke of Medina Cœli. Philip, in compliance with the duke’s repeated requests, and perhaps not entirely satisfied with the recent course of events in the provinces, had at last, after great hesitation, consented to Alva’s resignation. His successor, however, was not immediately to take his departure, and in the meantime the duke was instructed to persevere in his faithful services. These services had, for the present, reduced themselves to a perpetual and not very triumphant altercation with his council, with the estates, and with the people, on the subject of his abominable tax. He was entirely alone. They who had stood unflinchingly at his side when the only business of the administration was to burn heretics, turned their backs upon him now that he had engaged in this desperate conflict with the whole money power of the country. The king was far from cordial in his support, the councillors much too crafty to retain their hold upon the wheel, to which they had only attached themselves in its ascent. Viglius and Berlaymont, Noircarmes and Aerschot, opposed and almost defied the man they now thought sinking, and kept the king constantly informed of the vast distress which the financial measures of the duke were causing.

Quite at the close of the year, an elaborate petition from the estates of Brabant was read before the State Council. It contained a strong remonstrance against the tenth penny. Its repeal was strongly urged, upon the ground that its collection would involve the country in universal ruin. Upon this, Alva burst forth in one of the violent explosions of rage to which he was subject. The prosperity of the Netherlands, he protested, was not dearer to the inhabitants than to himself. He swore by the cross, and by the most holy of holies, preserved in the church of Saint Gudule, that had he been but a private individual, living in Spain, he would, out of the love he bore the provinces, have rushed to their defense had their safety been endangered. He felt therefore deeply wounded that malevolent persons should thus insinuate that he had even wished to injure the country, or to exercise tyranny over its citizens. The tenth penny, he continued, was necessary to the defense of the land, and was much preferable to quotas. *It was highly improper that every man in the rabble should know how much was contributed, because each individual, learning the gross amount, would imagine that he had paid it all himself.* In conclusion, he observed that, broken in health and stricken in years
as he felt himself, he was now most anxious to return, and was daily looking with eagerness for the arrival of the Duke of Medina Cœli. During the course of this same year, the Prince of Orange had been continuing his preparations. He had sent his agents to every place where a hope was held out to him of obtaining support. Money was what he was naturally most anxious to obtain from individuals, open and warlike assistance what he demanded from governments. His funds, little by little, were increasing, owing to the generosity of many obscure persons, and to the daring exploits of the beggars of the sea. His mission, however, to the northern courts had failed. His envoys had been received in Sweden and Denmark with barren courtesy. The Duke of Alva, on the other hand, never alluded to the prince but with contempt, knowing not that the ruined outlaw was slowly undermining the very ground beneath the monarch’s feet, dreaming not that the feeble strokes which he despised were the opening blows of a century’s conflict, foreseeing not that long before its close the chastised province was to expand into a great republic and that the name of the outlaw was to become almost divine.

Granvelle had already recommended that the young Count de Buren should be endowed with certain lands in Spain, in exchange for his hereditary estates, in order that the name and fame of the rebel William should be forever extinguished in the Netherlands. With the same view, a new sentence against the Prince of Orange was now proposed by the viceroy. This was to execute him solemnly in effigy, to drag his escutcheon through the streets at the tails of horses, and after having broken it in pieces, and thus cancelled his armorial bearings, to declare him and his descendants ignoble, infamous, and incapable of holding property or estates. Could a leaf or two of future history have been unrolled to king, cardinal, and governor, they might have found the destined fortune of the illustrious rebel’s house not exactly in accordance with the plan of summary extinction thus laid down.

Not discouraged, the prince continued to send his emissaries in every direction. Diedrich Sonoy, his most trustworthy agent, who had been chief of the legation to the northern courts, was now actively canvassing the governments and peoples of Germany with the same object. Several remarkable papers from the hand of Orange were used upon this service. A letter, drawn up and signed by his own hand, recited, in brief and striking language, the history of his campaign in 1568, and of his subsequent efforts in the sacred cause. It was now necessary, he said, that others besides himself should partake of his sacrifices. This he stated plainly and eloquently. The document was in truth a letter asking arms for liberty. "For although all things," said the prince, "are in the hand of God, and although he has created all things out of nought, yet hath he granted to different men different means, whereby, as with various instruments, he accomplishes his almighty purposes. Thereto hath he endowed some with strength of body, others with worldly wealth, others with still different gifts, all of which are to be used by their possessors to His honor and glory, if they wish not to incur the curse of the unworthy steward, who buried his talent in the earth. ... "Now ye may easily see," he continued, "that the prince cannot carry out this great work alone, having lost land, people, and
goods, and having already employed in the cause all which had remained to
him, besides incurring heavy obligations in addition."
Similar instructions were given to other agents, and a paper called the
Harangue, drawn up according to his suggestions, was also extensively
circulated. This document is important to all who are interested in his history
and character. He had not before issued a missive so stamped with the warm,
religious impress of the reforming party. Sadly, but without despondency, the
Harangue recalled the misfortunes of the past, and depicted the gloom of the
present. Earnestly, but not fanatically, it stimulated hope and solicited aid for
the future. "Although the appeals made to the Prince," so ran a part of the
document, "be of diverse natures, and various in their recommendations, yet
do they all tend to the advancement of God's glory, and to the liberation of
the fatherland. This it is which enables him and those who think with him to
endure hunger, thirst, cold, heat, and all the misfortunes which Heaven may
send. Our enemies spare neither their money nor their labor; will ye be colder
and duller than your foes? Let, then, each church congregation set an example
to the others. We read that King Saul, when he would liberate the men of
Jabez from the hands of Nahad, the Ammonite, hewed a yoke of oxen in
pieces, and sent them as tokens over all Israel, saying, 'Ye who will not follow
Saul and Samuel, with them shall be dealt even as with these oxen. And the
fear of the Lord came upon the people, they came forth, and the men of Jabez
were delivered.' Ye have here the same warning, look to it, watch well ye that
despise it, lest the wrath of God, which the men of Israel by their speedy
obedience escaped, descend upon your heads. Ye may say that ye are banished
men. 'Tis true: but thereby are ye not stripped of all faculty of rendering
service; moreover, your assistance is asked for one who will restore ye to your
homes. Ye may say that ye have been robbed of all your goods; yet many of you
have still something remaining, and of that little ye should contribute, each his
mite. Ye say that you have given much already. 'Tis true: but the enemy is
again in the field, fierce for your subjugation, sustained by the largess of his
supporters. Will ye be less courageous, less generous, than your foes?"
These urgent appeals did not remain fruitless. The strength of the prince was
slowly but steadily increasing. Meantime the abhorrence with which Alva was
universally regarded had nearly reached to frenzy. In the beginning of the year
1572, Don Francis de Alava, Philip's ambassador in France, visited Brussels. He
had already been enlightened as to the consequences of the duke's course by
the immense immigration of Netherland refugees to France, which he had
witnessed with his own eyes. On his journey towards Brussels he had been met
near Cambray by Noircarmes. Even that "cruel animal," as Hoogstraaten had
called him, the butcher of Tournay and Valenciennes, had at last been roused
to alarm, if not to pity, by the sufferings of the country. "The Duke will never
disabuse his mind of this filthy tenth penny," said he to Alava. He sprang from
his chair with great emotion as the ambassador alluded to the flight of
merchants and artisans from the provinces. "Señor Don Francis," cried he,
"there are ten thousand more who are on the point of leaving the country, if
the Governor does not pause in his career. God grant that no disaster arise beyond human power to remedy."

The ambassador arrived in Brussels, and took up his lodgings in the palace. Here he found the duke just recovering from a fit of the gout, in a state of mind sufficiently savage. He became much excited as Don Francis began to speak of the emigration, and he assured him that there was gross deception on the subject. The envoy replied that he could not be mistaken, for it was a matter which, so to speak, he had touched with his own fingers, and seen with his own eyes.

The duke, persisting that Don Francis had been abused and misinformed, turned the conversation to other topics. Next day the ambassador received visits from Berlaymont and his son, the Seigneur de Hierges. He was taken aside by each of them, separately. "Thank God, you have come hither," said they, in nearly the same words, "that you may fully comprehend the condition of the provinces, and without delay admonish his Majesty of the impending danger." All his visitors expressed the same sentiments. Don Frederic of Toledo furnished the only exception, assuring the envoy that his father's financial measures were opposed by Noircarmes and others, only because it deprived them of their occupation and their influence. This dutiful language, however, was to be expected in one of whom Secretary Albornoz had written, that he was the greatest comfort to his father, and the most divine genius ever known. It was unfortunately corroborated by no other inhabitant of the country.

On the third day, Don Francis went to take his leave. The duke begged him to inform his Majesty of the impatience with which he was expecting the arrival of his successor. He then informed his guest that they had already begun to collect the tenth penny in Brabant, the most obstinate of all the provinces. "What do you say to that, Don Francis?" he cried, with exultation. Alava replied that he thought, nonetheless, that the tax would encounter many obstacles, and begged him earnestly to reflect. He assured him, moreover, that he should, without reserve, express his opinions fully to the king. The duke used the same language which Don Frederic had held, concerning the motives of those who opposed the tax. "It may be so," said Don Francis, "but at any rate, all have agreed to sing to the same tune." A little startled, the duke rejoined, "Do you doubt that the cities will keep their promises? Depend upon it, I shall find the means to compel them." "God grant it may be so," said Alava, "but in my poor judgment you will have need of all your prudence and of all your authority."

The ambassador did not wait till he could communicate with his sovereign by word of mouth. He forwarded to Spain an ample account of his observations and deductions. He painted to Philip in lively colors the hatred entertained by all men for the duke. The whole nation, he assured his Majesty, united in one cry, "Let him begone, let him begone, let him begone!" As for the imposition of the tenth penny, that, in the opinion of Don Francis, was utterly impossible. He moreover warned his Majesty that Alva was busy in forming secret alliances with the Catholic princes of Europe, which would necessarily lead to defensive leagues among the Protestants.
While thus, during the earlier part of the year 1572, the Prince of Orange, discouraged by no defeats, was indefatigable in his exertions to maintain the cause of liberty, and while at the same time the most stanch supporters of arbitrary power were unanimous in denouncing to Philip the insane conduct of his viceroy, the letters of Alva himself were naturally full of complaints and expostulations. It was in vain, he said, for him to look for a confidential councillor, now that matters which he had wished to be kept so profoundly secret that the very earth should not hear of them, had been proclaimed aloud above the tiles of every housetop. Nevertheless, he would be cut into little pieces but his Majesty should be obeyed, while he remained alive to enforce the royal commands.

There were none who had been ever faithful but Berlaymont, he said, and even he had been neutral in the affair of the tax. He had rendered therein neither good nor bad offices, but, as his Majesty was aware, Berlaymont was entirely ignorant of business, and "knew nothing more than to be a good fellow." That being the case, he recommended Hierges, son of the "good fellow," as a proper person to be governor of Friesland.

The deputations appointed by the different provinces to confer personally with the king received a reprimand upon their arrival, for having dared to come to Spain without permission. Farther punishment, however, than this rebuke was not inflicted. They were assured that the king was highly displeased with their venturing to bring remonstrances against the tax, but they were comforted with the assurance that his Majesty would take the subject of their petition into consideration. Thus, the expectations of Alva were disappointed, for the tenth penny was not formally confirmed; and the hopes of the provinces frustrated, because it was not distinctly disavowed.

Matters had reached another crisis in the provinces. "Had we money now," wrote the Prince of Orange, "we should, with the help of God, hope to effect something. This is a time when, with even small sums, more can be effected than at other seasons with ampler funds." The citizens were in open revolt against the tax. In order that the tenth penny should not be levied upon every sale of goods, the natural but desperate remedy was adopted—no goods were sold at all. Not only the wholesale commerce of the provinces was suspended, but the minute and indispensable traffic of daily life was entirely at a stand. The shops were all shut. "The brewers," says a contemporary, "refused to brew, the bakers to bake, the tapsters to tap." Multitudes, thrown entirely out of employment, and wholly dependent upon charity, swarmed in every city. The soldiery, furious for their pay, which Alva had for many months neglected to furnish, grew daily more insolent; the citizens, maddened by outrage and hardened by despair, became more and more obstinate in their resistance; while the duke, rendered inflexible by opposition and insane by wrath, regarded the ruin which he had caused with a malignant spirit which had long ceased to be human. "The disease is gnawing at our vitals," wrote Viglius, "everybody is suffering for the want of the necessaries of life. Multitudes are in extreme and hopeless poverty. My interest in the welfare of the commonwealth," he continued, "induces me to send these accounts to Spain."
For myself, I fear nothing. Broken by sickness and acute physical suffering, I should leave life without regret."
The aspect of the capital was that of a city stricken with the plague. Articles of the most absolute necessity could not be obtained. It was impossible to buy bread, or meat, or beer. The tyrant, beside himself with rage at being thus braved in his very lair, privately sent for Master Carl, the executioner. In order to exhibit an unexpected and salutary example, he had determined to hang eighteen of the leading tradesmen of the city in the doors of their own shops, with the least possible delay and without the slightest form of trial.

Master Carl was ordered, on the very night of his interview with the duke, to prepare eighteen strong cords, and eighteen ladders twelve feet in length. By this simple arrangement, Alva was disposed to make manifest on the morrow, to the burghers of Brussels, that justice was thenceforth to be carried to every man’s door. He supposed that the spectacle of a dozen and a half of butchers and bakers suspended in front of the shops which they had refused to open, would give a more effective stimulus to trade than any to be expected from argument or proclamation. The hangman was making ready his cords and ladders; Don Frederic of Toledo was closeted with President Viglius, who, somewhat against his will, was aroused at midnight to draw the warrants for these impromptu executions; Alva was waiting with grim impatience for the dawn upon which the show was to be exhibited, when an unforeseen event suddenly arrested the homely tragedy. In the night arrived the intelligence that the town of Brill had been captured. The duke, feeling the full gravity of the situation, postponed the chastisement which he had thus secretly planned to a more convenient season, in order without an instant’s hesitation to avert the consequences of this new movement on the part of the rebels. The seizure of Brill was the Deus ex machinâ which unexpectedly solved both the inextricable knot of the situation and the hangman’s noose.

Allusion has more than once been made to those formidable partisans of the patriot cause, the marine outlaws. Cheated of half their birthright by nature, and now driven forth from their narrow isthmus by tyranny, the exiled Hollanders took to the ocean. Its boundless fields, long arable to their industry, became fatally fruitful now that oppression was transforming a peaceful seafaring people into a nation of corsairs. Driven to outlawry and poverty, no doubt many Netherlanders plunged into crime. The patriot party had long since laid aside the respectful deportment which had provoked the sarcasms of the loyalists. The beggars of the sea asked their alms through the mouths of their cannon. Unfortunately, they but too often made their demands upon both friend and foe. Every ruined merchant, every banished lord, every reckless mariner, who was willing to lay the commercial world under contribution to repair his damaged fortunes, could, without much difficulty, be supplied with a vessel and crew at some northern port, under color of cruising against the viceroy’s government. Nor was the ostensible motive simply a pretext. To make war upon Alva was the leading object of all these freebooters, and they were usually furnished by the Prince of Orange, in his capacity of sovereign, with letters of marque for that purpose. The prince, indeed, did his utmost to
control and direct an evil which had inevitably grown out of the horrors of the time. His admiral, William de la Marck, was, however, incapable of comprehending the lofty purposes of his superior. A wild, sanguinary, licentious noble, wearing his hair and beard unshorn, according to ancient Batavian custom, until the death of his relative, Egmont, should have been expiated, a worthy descendant of the Wild Boar of Ardennes, this hirsute and savage corsair seemed an embodiment of vengeance. He had sworn to wreak upon Alva and upon popery the deep revenge owed to them by the Netherland nobility, and in the cruelties afterwards practiced by him upon monks and priests, the Blood-Council learned that their example had made at least one ripe scholar among the rebels. He was lying, at this epoch, with his fleet on the southern coast of England, from which advantageous position he was now to be ejected in a summary manner.

The negotiations between the Duke of Alva and Queen Elizabeth had already assumed an amicable tone, and were fast ripening to an adjustment. It lay by no means in that sovereign’s disposition to involve herself at this juncture in a war with Philip, and it was urged upon her government by Alva’s commissioners, that the continued countenance afforded by the English people to the Netherland cruisers must inevitably lead to that result. In the latter days of March, therefore, a sentence of virtual excommunication was pronounced against De la Marck and his rovers. A peremptory order of Elizabeth forbade any of her subjects to supply them with meat, bread, or beer. The command being strictly complied with, their farther stay was rendered impossible. Twenty-four vessels accordingly, of various sizes, commanded by De la Marck, Treslong, Adam van Haren, Brand, and other distinguished seamen, set sail from Dover in the very last days of March. Being almost in a state of starvation, these adventurers were naturally anxious to supply themselves with food. They determined to make a sudden foray upon the coasts of North Holland, and accordingly steered for Enkbuizen, both because it was a rich seaport and because it contained many secret partisans of the prince. On Palm Sunday they captured two Spanish merchantmen. Soon afterwards, however, the wind becoming contrary, they were unable to double the Helder or the Texel, and on Tuesday, the first of April, having abandoned their original intention, they dropped down towards Zealand, and entered the broad mouth of the river Meuse. Between the town of Brill, upon the southern lip of this estuary, and Maaslandsluis, about half a league distant, upon the opposite side, the squadron suddenly appeared at about two o’clock of an April afternoon, to the great astonishment of the inhabitants of both places. It seemed too large a fleet to be a mere collection of trading vessels, nor did they appear to be Spanish ships. Peter Koppelstok, a sagacious ferryman, informed the passengers whom he happened to be conveying across the river, that the strangers were evidently the water beggars. The dreaded name filled his hearers with consternation, and they became eager to escape from so perilous a vicinity. Having duly landed his customers, however, who hastened to spread the news of the impending invasion, and to prepare for defense or flight, the stout
ferryman, who was secretly favorable to the cause of liberty, rowed boldly out to inquire the destination and purposes of the fleet. The vessel which he first hailed was that commanded by William de Blois, Seigneur of Treslong. This adventurous noble, whose brother had been executed by the Duke of Alva in 1568, had himself fought by the side of Count Louis at Jemmingen, and although covered with wounds, had been one of the few who escaped alive from that horrible carnage. During the intervening period he had become one of the most famous rebels on the ocean, and he had always been well known in Brill, where his father had been governor for the king. He at once recognized Koppelstok, and hastened with him on board the admiral’s ship, assuring De la Marck that the ferryman was exactly the man for their purpose. It was absolutely necessary that a landing should be effected, for the people were without the necessaries of life. Captain Martin Brand had visited the ship of Adam van Harem as soon as they had dropped anchor in the Meuse, begging for food. “I gave him a cheese,” said Adam, afterwards relating the occurrence, ”and assured him that it was the last article of food to be found in the ship.” The other vessels were equally destitute. Under the circumstances, it was necessary to attempt a landing. Treslong, therefore, who was really the hero of this memorable adventure, persuaded De la Marck to send a message to the city of Brill, demanding its surrender. This was a bold summons to be made by a handful of men, three or four hundred at most, who were both metaphorically and literally beggars. The city of Brill was not populous, but it was well walled and fortified. It was moreover a most commodious port. Treslong gave his signet ring to the fisherman, Koppelstok, and ordered him, thus accredited as an envoy, to carry their summons to the magistracy. Koppelstok, nothing loath, instantly rowed ashore, pushed through the crowd of inhabitants, who overwhelmed him with questions, and made his appearance in the town-house before the assembled magistrates. He informed them that he had been sent by the admiral of the fleet and by Treslong, who was well known to them, to demand that two commissioners should be sent out on the part of the city to confer with the patriots. He was bidden, he said, to give assurance that the deputies would be courteously treated. The only object of those who had sent him was to free the land from the tenth penny, and to overthrow the tyranny of Alva and his Spaniards. Hereupon he was asked by the magistrates how large a force De la Marck had under his command. To this question the ferryman carelessly replied, that there might be some five thousand in all. This enormous falsehood produced its effect upon the magistrates. There was now no longer any inclination to resist the invaders; the only question discussed being whether to treat with them or to fly. On the whole, it was decided to do both. With some difficulty, two deputies were found sufficiently valiant to go forth to negotiate with the beggars, while in their absence most of the leading burghers and functionaries made their preparations for flight. The envoys were assured by De la Marck and Treslong that no injury was intended to the citizens or to private property, but that the overthrow of Alva’s government was to be instantly accomplished. Two hours
were given to the magistrates in which to decide whether or not they would surrender the town and accept the authority of De la Marck as Admiral of the Prince of Orange. They employed the two hours thus granted in making an ignominious escape. Their example was followed by most of the townspeople. When the invaders, at the expiration of the specified term, appeared under the walls of the city, they found a few inhabitants of the lower class gazing at them from above, but received no official communication from any source. The whole rebel force was now divided into two parties, one of which under Treslong made an attack upon the southern gate, while the other commanded by the admiral advanced upon the northern. Treslong after a short struggle succeeded in forcing his entrance, and arrested, in doing so, the governor of the city, just taking his departure. De la Marck and his men made a bonfire at the northern gate, and then battered down the half-burned portal with the end of an old mast. Thus rudely and rapidly did the Netherland patriots conduct their first successful siege. The two parties, not more perhaps than two hundred and fifty men in all, met before sunset in the center of the city, and the foundation of the Dutch Republic was laid. The weary spirit of freedom, so long a fugitive over earth and sea, had at last found a resting place, which rude and even ribald hands had prepared.

The panic created by the first appearance of the fleet had been so extensive that hardly fifty citizens had remained in the town. The rest had all escaped, with as much property as they could carry away. The admiral, in the name of the Prince of Orange, as lawful stadholder of Philip, took formal possession of an almost deserted city. No indignity was offered to the inhabitants of either sex, but as soon as the conquerors were fairly established in the best houses of the place, the inclination to plunder the churches could no longer be restrained. The altars and images were all destroyed, the rich furniture and gorgeous vestments appropriated to private use. Adam van Haren appeared on his vessel’s deck attired in a magnificent high mass chasuble. Treslong thenceforth used no drinking cups in his cabin save the golden chalices of the sacrament. Unfortunately, their hatred to popery was not confined to such demonstrations. Thirteen unfortunate monks and priests, who had been unable to effect their escape, were arrested and thrown into prison, from whence they were taken a few days later, by order of the ferocious admiral, and executed under circumstances of great barbarity.

The news of this important exploit spread with great rapidity. Alva, surprised at the very moment of venting his rage on the butchers and grocers of Brussels, deferred this savage design in order to deal with the new difficulty. He had certainly not expected such a result from the ready compliance of Queen Elizabeth with his request. His rage was excessive; the triumph of the people, by whom he was cordially detested, proportionally great. The punsters of Brussels were sure not to let such an opportunity escape them, for the name of the captured town was susceptible of a quibble, and the event had taken place upon All Fools’ Day.
“On April’s Fool’s Day,
Duke Alva’s spectacles were stolen away,”

became a popular couplet. The word *spectacles*, in Flemish, as well as the name of the suddenly surprised city, being Brill, this allusion to the duke’s loss and implied purblindness was not destitute of ingenuity. A caricature, too, was extensively circulated, representing De la Marck stealing the duke’s spectacles from his nose, while the governor was supposed to be uttering his habitual expression whenever any intelligence of importance was brought to him: *No es nada, no es nada*—’Tis nothing, ’tis nothing. The duke, however, lost not an instant in attempting to repair the disaster. Count Bossu, who had acted as stadholder of Holland and Zealand, under Alva’s authority, since the Prince of Orange had resigned that office, was ordered at once to recover the conquered seaport, if possible. Hastily gathering a force of some ten companies from the garrison of Utrecht, some of which very troops had recently and unluckily for government, been removed from Brill to that city, the count crossed the Sluis to the island of Voorn upon Easter day, and sent a summons to the rebel force to surrender Brill. The patriots being very few in number, were at first afraid to venture outside the gates to attack the much superior force of their invaders. A carpenter, however, who belonged to the city, but had long been a partisan of Orange, dashed into the water with his axe in his hand, and swimming to the Niewland sluice, hacked it open with a few vigorous strokes. The sea poured in at once, making the approach to the city upon the north side impossible. Bossu then led his Spaniards along the Niewland dyke to the southern gate, where they were received with a warm discharge of artillery, which completely staggered them. Meantime Treslong and Robol had, in the most daring manner, rowed out to the ships which had brought the enemy to the island, cut some adrift, and set others on fire. The Spaniards at the southern gate caught sight of their blazing vessels, saw the sea rapidly rising over the dyke, became panic-struck at being thus enclosed between fire and water, and dashed off in precipitate retreat along the slippery causeway and through the slimy and turbid waters, which were fast threatening to overwhelm them. Many were drowned or smothered in their flight, but the greater portion of the force effected their escape in the vessels which still remained within reach. This danger averted, Admiral de la Marck summoned all the inhabitants, a large number of whom had returned to the town after the capture had been fairly established, and required them, as well as all the population of the island, to take an oath of allegiance to the Prince of Orange as stadholder for his Majesty.

The prince had not been extremely satisfied with the enterprise of De la Marck. He thought it premature, and doubted whether it would be practicable to hold the place, as he had not yet completed his arrangements in Germany, nor assembled the force with which he intended again to take the field. More than all, perhaps, he had little confidence in the character of his admiral. Orange was right in his estimate of De la Marck. It had not been that rover’s design
either to take or to hold the place; and after the descent had been made, the ships victualed, the churches plundered, the booty secured, and a few monks murdered, he had given orders for the burning of the town, and for the departure of the fleet. The urgent solicitations of Treslong, however, prevailed, with some difficulty, over De la Marck’s original intentions. It is to that bold and intelligent noble, therefore, more than to any other individual, that the merit of laying this cornerstone of the Batavian commonwealth belongs. The enterprise itself was an accident, but the quick eye of Treslong saw the possibility of a permanent conquest, where his superior dreamed of nothing beyond a piratical foray.

Meantime Bossu, baffled in his attempt upon Brill, took his way towards Rotterdam. It was important that he should at least secure such other cities as the recent success of the rebels might cause to waver in their allegiance. He found the gates of Rotterdam closed. The authorities refused to comply with his demand to admit a garrison for the king. Professing perfect loyalty, the inhabitants very naturally refused to admit a band of sanguinary Spaniards to enforce their obedience. Compelled to parley, Bossu resorted to a perfidious stratagem. He requested permission for his troops to pass through the city without halting. This was granted by the magistrates, on condition that only a corporal’s command should be admitted at a time. To these terms the count affixed his hand and seal. With the admission, however, of the first detachment, a violent onset was made upon the gate by the whole Spanish force. The townspeople, not suspecting treachery, were not prepared to make effective resistance. A stout smith, confronting the invaders at the gate, almost singly, with his sledgehammer, was stabbed to the heart by Bossu with his own hand. The soldiers having thus gained admittance, rushed through the streets, putting every man to death who offered the slightest resistance. Within a few minutes four hundred citizens were murdered. The fate of the women, abandoned now to the outrage of a brutal soldiery, was worse than death. The capture of Rotterdam is infamous for the same crimes which blacken the record of every Spanish triumph in the Netherlands.

The important town of Flushing, on the Isle of Walcheren, was first to vibrate with the patriotic impulse given by the success at Brill. The Seigneur de Herpt, a warm partisan of Orange, excited the burghers assembled in the marketplace to drive the small remnant of the Spanish garrison from the city. A little later upon the same day a considerable reinforcement arrived before the walls. The duke had determined, although too late, to complete the fortress which had been commenced long before to control the possession of this important position at the mouth of the western Scheld. The troops who were to resume this too long intermitted work arrived just in time to witness the expulsion of their comrades. De Herpt easily persuaded the burghers that the die was cast, and that their only hope lay in a resolute resistance. The people warmly acquiesced, while a half-drunken, half-wined fellow in the crowd valiantly proposed, in consideration of a pot of beer, to ascend the ramparts and to discharge a couple of pieces of artillery at the Spanish ships. The offer was accepted, and the vagabond merrily mounting the height, discharged the guns.
Strange to relate, the shot thus fired by a lunatic’s hand put the invading ships to flight. A sudden panic seized the Spaniards, the whole fleet stood away at once in the direction of Middelburg, and were soon out of sight. The next day, however, Antony of Bourgoynne, governor under Alva for the Island of Walcheren, made his appearance in Flushing. Having a high opinion of his own oratorical powers, he came with the intention of winning back with his rhetoric a city which the Spaniards had thus far been unable to recover with their cannon. The great bell was rung, the whole population assembled in the market-place, and Antony, from the steps of the town-house, delivered a long oration, assuring the burghers, among other asseverations, that the king, who was the best natured prince in all Christendom, would forget and forgive their offenses if they returned honestly to their duties.

The effect of the governor’s eloquence was much diminished, however, by the interlocutory remarks of De Herpt and a group of his adherents. They reminded the people of the king’s good nature, of his readiness to forget and to forgive, as exemplified by the fate of Horn and Egmont, of Berghen and Montigny, and by the daily and almost hourly decrees of the Blood-Council. Each well-rounded period of the governor was greeted with ironical cheers. The oration was unsuccessful. "Oh, citizens, citizens!" cried at last the discomfited Antony, "ye know not what ye do. Your blood be upon your own heads; the responsibility be upon your own hearts for the fires which are to consume your cities and the desolation which is to sweep your land!" The orator at this impressive point was interrupted, and most unceremoniously hustled out of the city. The government remained in the hands of the patriots.

The party, however, was not so strong in soldiers as in spirit. No sooner, therefore, had they established their rebellion to Alva as an incontrovertible fact, than they sent off emissaries to the Prince of Orange, and to Admiral De la Marck at Brill. Finding that the inhabitants of Flushing were willing to provide arms and ammunition, De la Marck readily consented to send a small number of men, bold and experienced in partisan warfare, of whom he had now collected a larger number than he could well arm or maintain in his present position.

The detachment, two hundred in number, in three small vessels, set sail accordingly from Brill for Flushing, and a wild crew they were, of reckless adventurers under command of the bold Treslong. The expedition seemed a fierce but whimsical masquerade. Every man in the little fleet was attired in the gorgeous vestments of the plundered churches, in gold-embroidered cassocks, glittering mass-garments, or the more somber cowls and robes of Capuchin friars. So sped the early standard bearers of that ferocious liberty which had sprung from the fires in which all else for which men cherish their fatherland had been consumed. So swept that resolute but fantastic band along the placid estuaries of Zealand, waking the stagnant waters with their wild beggar songs and cries of vengeance.

That vengeance found soon a distinguished object. Pacheco, the chief engineer of Alva, who had accompanied the duke in his march from Italy, who had since earned a worldwide reputation as the architect of the Antwerp citadel, had
been just dispatched in haste to Flushing to complete the fortress whose construction had been so long delayed. Too late for his work, too soon for his safety, the ill-fated engineer had arrived almost at the same moment with Treslong and his crew. He had stepped on shore, entirely ignorant of all which had transpired, expecting to be treated with the respect due to the chief commandant of the place, and to an officer high in the confidence of the governor-general. He found himself surrounded by an indignant and threatening mob. The unfortunate Italian understood not a word of the opprobrious language addressed to him, but he easily comprehended that the authority of the duke was overthrown. Observing De Ryk, a distinguished partisan officer and privateersman of Amsterdam, whose reputation for bravery and generosity was known to him, he approached him, and drawing a seal ring from his finger, kissed it, and handed it to the rebel chieftain. By this dumb-show he gave him to understand that he relied upon his honor for the treatment due to a gentleman. De Ryk understood the appeal, and would willingly have assured him, at least, a soldier’s death, but he was powerless to do so. He arrested him, that he might be protected from the fury of the rabble; but Treslong, who now commanded in Flushing, was especially incensed against the founder of the Antwerp citadel, and felt a ferocious desire to avenge his brother’s murder upon the body of his destroyer’s favorite. Pacheco was condemned to be hanged upon the very day of his arrival. Having been brought forth from his prison, he begged hard but not abjectly for his life. He offered a heavy ransom, but his enemies were greedy for blood, not for money. It was, however, difficult to find an executioner. The city hangman was absent, and the prejudice of the country and the age against the vile profession had assuredly not been diminished during the five horrible years of Alva’s administration. Even a condemned murderer, who lay in the town-gaol, refused to accept his life in recompense for performing the office. It should never be said, he observed, that his mother had given birth to a hangman. When told, however, that the intended victim was a Spanish officer, the malefactor consented to the task with alacrity, on condition that he might afterwards kill any man who taunted him with the deed.

Arrived at the foot of the gallows, Pacheco complained bitterly of the disgraceful death designed for him. He protested loudly that he came of a house as noble as that of Egmont or Horn, and was entitled to as honorable an execution as theirs had been. "The sword! the sword!" he frantically exclaimed, as he struggled with those who guarded him. His language was not understood, but the names of Egmont and Horn inflamed still more highly the rage of the rabble, while his cry for the sword was falsely interpreted by a rude fellow who had happened to possess himself of Pacheco’s rapier, at his capture, and who now paraded himself with it at the gallows’ foot. "Never fear for your sword, Señor," cried this ruffian, "your sword is safe enough, and in good hands. Up the ladder with you, Señor; you have no further use for your sword."

Pacheco, thus outraged, submitted to his fate. He mounted the ladder with a steady step, and was hanged between two other Spanish officers. So perished miserably a brave soldier, and one of the most distinguished engineers of his
time, a man whose character and accomplishments had certainly merited for him a better fate. But while we stigmatize as it deserves the atrocious conduct of a few Netherland partisans, we should remember who first unchained the demon of international hatred in this unhappy land, nor should it ever be forgotten that the great leader of the revolt, by word, proclamation, example, by entreaties, threats, and condign punishment, constantly rebuked, and to a certain extent, restrained the sanguinary spirit by which some of his followers disgraced the noble cause which they had espoused.

Treslong did not long remain in command at Flushing. An officer, high in the confidence of the prince, Jerome van ’t Zeraerts, now arrived at Flushing, with a commission to be lieutenant-governor over the whole isle of Walcheren. He was attended by a small band of French infantry, while at nearly the same time the garrison was further strengthened by the arrival of a large number of volunteers from England.

Part Three

Alva

Chapters 7-9

Chapter 7  The Power and Self-Restraint of Orange, and the Atrocities of the Spaniards
Chapter 8  The Battles of Tergoes and Harlem
Chapter 9  The Siege of Alkmaar and the Eventual Failure of the Duke of Alva
Flemish Ballads
CHAPTER 7

The Power and Self-Restraint of Orange, and the Atrocities of the Spaniards

The example thus set by Brill and Flushing was rapidly followed. The first half of the year 1572 was distinguished by a series of triumphs rendered still more remarkable by the reverses which followed at its close. Of a sudden, almost as if by accident, a small but important seaport, the object for which the prince had so long been hoping, was secured. Instantly afterward, half the island of Walcheren renounced the yoke of Alva. Next, Enkhuizen, the key to the Zuyder Zee, the principal arsenal, and one of the first commercial cities in the Netherlands, rose against the Spanish admiral, and hung out the banner of Orange on its ramparts. The revolution effected here was purely the work of the people—of the mariners and burghers of the city. Moreover, the magistracy was set aside and the government of Alva repudiated without shedding one drop of blood, without a single wrong to person or property. By the same spontaneous movement, nearly all the important cities of Holland and Zealand raised the standard of him in whom they recognized their deliverer. The revolution was accomplished under nearly similar circumstances everywhere. With one fierce bound of enthusiasm the nation shook off its chain. Oudewater, Dort, Harlem, Leyden, Gorcum, Loewenstein, Gouda, Medenblik, Horn, Alkmaar, Edam, Monnikendam, Purmerende, as well as Flushing, Veer, and Enkhuizen, all ranged themselves under the government of Orange, as lawful stadholder for the king.

Nor was it in Holland and Zealand alone that the beacon fires of freedom were lighted. City after city in Gelderland, Overyssel, and the See of Utrecht; all the important towns of Friesland, some sooner, some later, some without a struggle, some after a short siege, some with resistance by the functionaries of government, some by amicable compromise, accepted the garrisons of the prince, and formally recognized his authority. Out of the chaos which a long and preternatural tyranny had produced, the first struggling elements of a new and a better world began to appear. It were superfluous to narrate the details which marked the sudden restoration of liberty in these various groups of cities. Traits of generosity marked the change of government in some, circumstances of ferocity disfigured the revolution in others. The island of Walcheren, equally divided as it was between the two parties, was the scene of much turbulent and diabolical warfare. It is difficult to say whether the mutual hatred of race or the animosity of religious difference proved the deadlier venom. The combats were perpetual and sanguinary, the prisoners on both sides instantly executed. On more than one occasion, men were seen assisting
to hang with their own hands and in cold blood their own brothers, who had been taken prisoners in the enemy's ranks. When the captives were too many to be hanged, they were tied back to back, two and two, and thus hurled into the sea. The islanders found a fierce pleasure in these acts of cruelty. A Spaniard had ceased to be human in their eyes. On one occasion, a surgeon at Veer cut the heart from a Spanish prisoner, nailed it on a vessel's prow, and invited the townspeople to come and fasten their teeth in it, which many did with savage satisfaction.

In other parts of the country, the revolution was, on the whole, accomplished with comparative calmness. Even traits of generosity were not uncommon. The burgomaster of Gonda, long the supple slave of Alva and the Blood Council, fled for his life as the revolt broke forth in that city. He took refuge in the house of a certain widow, and begged for a place of concealment. The widow led him to a secret closet which served as a pantry. "Shall I be secure there?" asked the fugitive functionary. "O yes, sir Burgomaster," replied the widow, "'twas in that very place that my husband lay concealed when you, accompanied by the officers of justice, were searching the house, that you might bring him to the scaffold for his religion. Enter the pantry, your worship; I will be responsible for your safety." Thus faithfully did the humble widow of a hunted and murdered Calvinist protect the life of the magistrate who had brought desolation to her hearth.

Not all the conquests thus rapidly achieved in the cause of liberty were destined to endure, nor were any to be retained without a struggle. The little northern cluster of republics which had now restored its honor to the ancient Batavian name was destined, however, for a long and vigorous life. From that bleak isthmus the light of freedom was to stream through many years upon struggling humanity in Europe, a guiding pharos across a stormy sea; and Harlem, Leyden, Alkmaar—names hallowed by deeds of heroism such as have not often illustrated human annals—still breathe as trumpet-tongued and perpetual a defiance to despotism as Marathon, Thermopylae, or Salamis.

A new board of magistrates had been chosen in all the redeemed cities, by popular election. They were required to take an oath of fidelity to the King of Spain, and to the Prince of Orange as his stadholder; to promise resistance to the duke of Alva, the tenth penny, and the inquisition, "to support every man's freedom and the welfare of the country; to protect widows, orphans, and miserable persons, and to maintain justice and truth."

Diedrich Sonoy arrived on the second of June at Enkhuizen. He was provided by the prince with a commission, appointing him Lieutenant-Governor of North Holland or Waterland. Thus, to combat the authority of Alva was set up the authority of the king. The stadholderate over Holland and Zealand, to which the prince had been appointed in 1559, he now reassumed. Upon this fiction reposed the whole provisional polity of the revolted Netherlands. The
government, as it gradually unfolded itself, from this epoch forward until the declaration of independence and the absolute renunciation of the Spanish sovereign power, will be sketched in a future chapter. The people at first claimed not an iota more of freedom than was secured by Philip's coronation oath. There was no pretense that Philip was not sovereign, but there was a pretense and a determination to worship God according to conscience, and to reclaim the ancient political "liberties" of the land. So long as Alva reigned, the Blood-Council, the inquisition, and martial law, were the only codes or courts, and every charter slept. To recover this practical liberty and these historical rights, and to shake from their shoulders a most sanguinary government, was the purpose of William and of the people. No revolutionary standard was displayed.

The written instructions given by the prince to his Lieutenant Sonoy were to "see that the Word of God was preached, without, however, suffering any hindrance to the Roman Church in the exercise of its religion; to restore fugitives and the banished for conscience sake, and to require of all magistrates and officers of guilds and brotherhoods an oath of fidelity." The prince likewise prescribed the form of that oath, repeating therein, to his eternal honor, the same strict prohibition of intolerance. "Likewise," said the formula, "shall those of ‘the religion’ offer no let or hindrance to the Roman churches."

The prince was still in Germany, engaged in raising troops and providing funds. He directed, however, the affairs of the insurgent provinces in their minutest details, by virtue of the dictatorship inevitably forced upon him both by circumstances and by the people. In the meantime, Louis of Nassau, the Bayard of the Netherlands, performed a most unexpected and brilliant exploit. He had been long in France, negotiating with the leaders of the Huguenots, and, more secretly, with the court. He was supposed by all the world to be still in that kingdom, when the startling intelligence arrived that he had surprised and captured the important city of Mons. This town, the capital of Hainault, situate in a fertile, undulating, and beautiful country, protected by lofty walls, a triple moat, and a strong citadel, was one of the most flourishing and elegant places in the Netherlands. It was, moreover, from its vicinity to the frontiers of France, a most important acquisition to the insurgent party. The capture was thus accomplished. A native of Mons, one Antony Oliver, a geographical painter, had insinuated himself into the confidence of Alva, for whom he had prepared at different times some remarkably well-executed maps of the country. Having occasion to visit France, he was employed by the duke to keep a watch upon the movements of Louis of Nassau, and to make a report as to the progress of his intrigues with the court of France. The painter, however, was only a spy in disguise, being in reality devoted to the cause of freedom, and a correspondent of Orange and his family. His communications with Louis, in Paris, had therefore a far different result from the one anticipated by Alva. A large number of adherents within the city of Mons had already been secured,
and a plan was now arranged between Count Louis, Genlis, De la Noue, and other distinguished Huguenot chiefs, to be carried out with the assistance of the brave and energetic artist.

On the 23rd of May, Oliver appeared at the gates of Mons, accompanied by three wagons, ostensibly containing merchandise, but in reality laden with arquebusses. These were secretly distributed among his confederates in the city. In the course of the day Count Louis arrived in the neighborhood, accompanied by five hundred horsemen and a thousand foot soldiers. This force he stationed in close concealment within the thick forests between Maubeuge and Mons. Towards evening he sent twelve of the most trusty and daring of his followers, disguised as wine merchants, into the city. These individuals proceeded boldly to a public house, ordered their supper, and while conversing with the landlord, carelessly inquired at what hour next morning the city gates would be opened. They were informed that the usual hour was four in the morning, but that a trifling present to the porter would ensure admission, if they desired it, at an earlier hour. They explained their inquiries by a statement that they had some casks of wine which they wished to introduce into the city before sunrise. Having obtained all the information which they needed, they soon afterwards left the tavern. The next day they presented themselves very early at the gate, which the porter, on promise of a handsome "drink-penny," agreed to unlock. No sooner were the bolts withdrawn, however, than he was struck dead, while about fifty dragoons rode through the gate. The count and his followers now galloped over the city in the morning twilight, shouting "France! liberty! the town is ours!" "The Prince is coming!" "Down with the tenth penny; down with the murderous Alva!" So soon as a burgher showed his wondering face at the window, they shot at him with their carbines. They made as much noise, and conducted themselves as boldly as if they had been at least a thousand strong.

Meantime, however, the streets remained empty; not one of their secret confederates showing himself. Fifty men could surprise, but were too few to keep possession of the city. The count began to suspect a trap. As daylight approached the alarm spread; the position of the little band was critical. In his impetuosity, Louis had far outstripped his army, but they had been directed to follow hard upon his footsteps, and he was astonished that their arrival was so long delayed. The suspense becoming intolerable, he rode out of the city in quest of his adherents, and found them wandering in the woods, where they had completely lost their way. Ordering each horseman to take a foot soldier on the crupper behind him, he led them rapidly back to Mons. On the way they were encountered by La Noue, "with the iron arm," and Genlis, who, meantime, had made an unsuccessful attack to recover Valenciennes, which within a few hours had been won and lost again. As they reached the gates of Mons, they found themselves within a hair’s breadth of being too late; their adherents had not come forth; the citizens had been aroused; the gates were all fast but one—and there the porter was quarrelling with a French soldier
about an arquebus. The drawbridge across the moat was at the moment rising; the last entrance was closing, when Guitoy de Chaumont, a French officer, mounted on a light Spanish barb, sprang upon the bridge as it rose. His weight caused it to sink again, the gate was forced, and Louis with all his men rode triumphantly into the town.

The citizens were forthwith assembled by sound of bell in the market-place. The clergy, the magistracy, and the general council were all present. Genlis made the first speech, in which he disclaimed all intention of making conquests in the interest of France. This pledge having been given, Louis of Nassau next addressed the assembly. "The magistrates," said he, "have not understood my intentions. I protest that I am no rebel to the king; I prove it by asking no new oaths from any man. Remain bound by your old oaths of allegiance; let the magistrates continue to exercise their functions—to administer justice. I imagine that no person will suspect a brother of the Prince of Orange capable of any design against the liberties of the country. As to the Catholic religion, I take it under my very particular protection. You will ask why I am in Mons at the head of an armed force: are any of you ignorant of Alva’s cruelties? The overthrow of this tyrant is as much the interest of the king as of the people, therefore there is nothing in my present conduct inconsistent with fidelity to his Majesty. Against Alva alone I have taken up arms; 'tis to protect you against his fury that I am here. It is to prevent the continuance of a general rebellion that I make war upon him. The only proposition which I have to make to you is this—I demand that you declare Alva de Toledo a traitor to the king, the executioner of the people, an enemy to the country, unworthy of the government, and hereby deprived of his authority."

The magistracy did not dare to accept so bold a proposition; the general council, composing the more popular branch of the municipal government, were comparatively inclined to favor Nassau, and many of its members voted for the downfall of the tyrant. Nevertheless the demands of Count Louis were rejected. His position thus became critical. The civic authorities refused to pay for his troops, who were, moreover, too few in number to resist the inevitable siege. The patriotism of the citizens was not to be repressed, however, by the authority of the magistrates; many rich proprietors of the great cloth and silk manufactories, for which Mons was famous, raised and armed companies at their own expense; many volunteer troops were also speedily organized and drilled, and the fortifications were put in order. No attempt was made to force the reformed religion upon the inhabitants, and even Catholics who were discovered in secret correspondence with the enemy were treated with such extreme gentleness by Nassau as to bring upon him severe reproaches from many of his own party.

A large collection of ecclesiastical plate, jewelry, money, and other valuables, which had been sent to the city for safe keeping from the churches and convents of the provinces, was seized, and thus, with little bloodshed and no
violence, was the important city secured for the insurgents. Three days afterwards, 2,000 infantry, chiefly French, arrived in the place. In the early part of the following month Louis was still further strengthened by the arrival of 1,300 foot and 1,200 horsemen, under command of Count Montgomery, the celebrated officer, whose spear at the tournament had proved fatal to Henry II.

Thus the Duke of Alva suddenly found himself exposed to a tempest of revolution. One thunderbolt after another seemed descending around him in breathless succession. Brill and Flushing had been already lost; Middelburg was so closely invested that its fall seemed imminent, and with it would go the whole island of Walcheren, the key to all the Netherlands. In one morning he had heard of the revolt of Enkhuizen and of the whole Waterland; two hours later came the news of the Valenciennes rebellion, and next day the astonishing capture of Mons. One disaster followed hard upon another. He could have sworn that the detested Louis of Nassau, who had dealt this last and most fatal stroke, was at that moment in Paris, safely watched by government emissaries; and now he had, as it were, suddenly started out of the earth, to deprive him of this important city, and to lay bare the whole frontier to the treacherous attacks of faithless France. He refused to believe the intelligence when it was first announced to him, and swore that he had certain information that Count Louis had been seen playing in the tennis-court at Paris, within so short a period as to make his presence in Hainault at that moment impossible. Forced, at last, to admit the truth of the disastrous news, he dashed his hat upon the ground in a fury, uttering imprecations upon the Queen Dowager of France, to whose perfidious intrigues he ascribed the success of the enterprise, and pledging himself to send her Spanish thistles enough in return for the Florentine lilies which she had thus bestowed upon him.

In the midst of the perplexities thus thickening around him, the duke preserved his courage, if not his temper. Blinded for a brief season by the rapid attacks made upon him, he had been uncertain whither to direct his vengeance. This last blow in so vital a quarter determined him at once. He forthwith dispatched Don Frederic to undertake the siege of Mons, and earnestly set about raising large reinforcements to his army. Don Frederic took possession, without much opposition, of the Bethlehem cloister in the immediate vicinity of the city, and with 4,000 troops began the investment in due form.

Alva had, for a long time, been most impatient to retire from the provinces. Even he was capable of human emotions. Through the sevenfold panoply of his pride he had been pierced by the sharpness of a nation’s curse. He was wearied with the unceasing expletions which assailed his ears. "The hatred which the people bear me," said he, in a letter to Philip, "because of the chastisement which it has been necessary for me to inflict, although with all the moderation in the world, make all my efforts vain. A successor will meet more sympathy and prove more useful." On the 10th of June, the Duke of Medina Cœli, with a fleet of more than forty sail, arrived off Blankenburg, intending to enter the
Scheld. Julian Romero, with 2,000 Spaniards, was also on board the fleet. Nothing, of course, was known to the newcomers of the altered condition of affairs in the Netherlands, nor of the unwelcome reception which they were like to meet in Flushing. A few of the lighter craft having been taken by the patriot cruisers, the alarm was spread through all the fleet. Medina Coeli, with a few transports, was enabled to effect his escape to Sluys, whence he hastened to Brussels in a much less ceremonious manner than he had originally contemplated. Twelve Biscayan ships stood out to sea, descried a large Lisbon fleet, by a singular coincidence, suddenly heaving in sight, changed their course again, and with a favoring breeze bore boldly up the Hond, passed Flushing in spite of a severe cannonade from the forts, and eventually made good their entrance into Rammekens, whence the soldiery, about one half of whom had thus been saved, were transferred at a very critical moment to Middelburg.

The great Lisbon fleet followed in the wake of the Biscayans, with much inferior success. Totally ignorant of the revolution which had occurred in the Isle of Walcheren, it obeyed the summons of the rebel fort to come to anchor, and, with the exception of three or four, the vessels were all taken. It was the richest booty which the insurgents had yet acquired by sea or land. The fleet was laden with spices, money, jewelry, and the richest merchandise. Five hundred thousand crowns of gold were taken, and it was calculated that the plunder altogether would suffice to maintain the war for two years at least. One thousand Spanish soldiers, and a good amount of ammunition, were also captured. The unexpected condition of affairs made a pause natural and almost necessary, before the government could be decorously transferred. Medina Coeli, with Spanish grandiloquence, avowed his willingness to serve as a soldier, under a general whom he so much venerated, while Alva ordered that, in all respects, the same outward marks of respect should be paid to his appointed successor as to himself. Beneath all this external ceremony, however, much mutual malice was concealed.

Meantime, the duke, who was literally "without a single real," was forced at last to smother his pride in the matter of the tenth penny. On the 24th of June, he summoned the estates of Holland to assemble on the 15th of the ensuing month. In the missive issued for this purpose, he formally agreed to abolish the whole tax, on condition that the estates-general of the Netherlands would furnish him with a yearly supply of two millions of florins. Almost at the same moment the king had dismissed the deputies of the estates from Madrid, with the public assurance that the tax was to be suspended, and a private intimation that it was not abolished in terms, only in order to save the dignity of the duke.

These healing measures came entirely too late. The estates of Holland met, indeed, on the appointed day of July, but they assembled not in obedience to Alva, but in consequence of a summons from William of Orange. They met, too,
not at the Hague, but at Dort, to take formal measures for renouncing the authority of the duke. The first congress of the Netherland commonwealth still professed loyalty to the Crown, but was determined to accept the policy of Orange without a question.

The prince had again assembled an army in Germany, consisting of 15,000 foot and 7,000 horse, besides a number of Netherlanders, mostly Walloons, amounting to nearly 3,000 more. Before taking the field, however, it was necessary that he should guarantee at least three months’ pay to his troops. This he could no longer do, except by giving bonds endorsed by certain cities of Holland as his securities. He had accordingly addressed letters in his own name to all the principal cities, fervently adjuring them to remember, at last, what was due to him, to the fatherland, and to their own character. "Let not a sum of gold," said he in one of these letters, "be to dear to you, that for its sake you will sacrifice your lives, your wives, your children, and all your descendants, to the latest generations; that you will bring sin and shame upon yourselves, and destruction upon us who have so heartily striven to assist you. Think what scorn you will incur from foreign nations, what a crime you will commit against the Lord God, what a bloody yoke ye will impose forever upon yourselves and your children, if you now seek for subterfuges; if you now prevent us from taking the field with the troops which we have enlisted. On the other hand, what inexpressible benefits you will confer on your country, if you now help us to rescue that fatherland from the power of Spanish vultures and wolves."

This and similar missives, circulated throughout the province of Holland, produced a deep impression. In accordance with his suggestions, the deputies from the nobility and from twelve cities of that province assembled on the 15th of July, at Dort. Strictly speaking, the estates or government of Holland, the body which represented the whole people, consisted of the nobles and six great cities. On this occasion, however, Amsterdam being still in the power of the king, could send no deputies, while, on the other hand, all the small towns were invited to send up their representatives to the Congress. Eight accepted the proposal; the rest declined to appoint delegates, partly from motives of economy, partly from timidity.

These estates were the legitimate representatives of the people, but they had no legislative powers. The people had never pretended to sovereignty, nor did they claim it now. The source from which the government of the Netherlands was supposed to proceed was still the divine mandate. Even now the estates silently conceded, as they had ever done, the supreme legislative and executive functions to the land’s master. Upon Philip of Spain, as representative of Count Dirk I of Holland, had descended, through many tortuous channels, the divine effluence originally supplied by Charles the Simple of France. That supernatural power was not contested, but it was now ingeniously turned against the sovereign. The king’s authority was invoked against himself in the person of the Prince of Orange, to whom, thirteen years
before, a portion of that divine right had been delegated. The estates of Holland met at Dort on the 15th of July, as representatives of the people, but they were summoned by Orange, royally commissioned in 1559 as stadholder, and therefore the supreme legislative and executive officer of certain provinces. This was the theory of the provisional government. The prince represented the royal authority, the nobles represented both themselves and the people of the open country, while the twelve cities represented the whole body of burghers. Together, they were supposed to embody all authority, both divine and human, which a congress could exercise. Thus the whole movement was directed against Alva and against Count Bossu, appointed stadholder by Alva in the place of Orange. Philip’s name was destined to figure for a long time, at the head of documents by which monies were raised, troops levied, and taxes used in deadly war against himself.

The estates were convened on the 15th of July, when Paul Buys, pensionary of Leyden, the tried and confidential friend of Orange, was elected Advocate of Holland. The convention was then adjourned till the 18th, when Saint Aldegonde made his appearance, with full powers to act provisionally in behalf of his Highness.

The distinguished plenipotentiary delivered before the Congress a long and very effective harangue. He recalled the sacrifices and efforts of the prince during previous years. He adverted to the disastrous campaign of 1568, in which the prince had appeared full of high hope, at the head of a gallant army, but had been obliged, after a short period, to retire, because not a city had opened its gates nor a Netherlander lifted his finger in the cause. Nevertheless, he had not lost courage nor closed his heart; and now that, through the blessing of God, the eyes of men had been opened, and so many cities had declared against the tyrant, the prince had found himself exposed to a bitter struggle. Although his own fortunes had been ruined in the cause, he had been unable to resist the daily flood of petitions which called upon him to come forward once more. He had again importuned his relations and powerful friends; he had at last set on foot a new and well-appointed army. The day of payment had arrived. Over his own head impended perpetual shame, over the fatherland perpetual woe, if the Congress should now refuse the necessary supplies. "Arouse ye, then," cried the orator, with fervor, "awaken your own zeal and that of your sister cities. Seize Opportunity by the locks, who never appeared fairer than she does today."

The impassioned eloquence of St. Aldegonde produced a profound impression. The men who had obstinately refused the demands of Alva, now unanimously resolved to pour forth their gold and their blood at the call of Orange. "Truly," wrote the duke, a little later, "it almost drives me mad to see the difficulty with which your Majesty’s supplies are furnished, and the liberality with which the people place their lives and fortunes at the disposal of this rebel." It seemed strange to the loyal governor that men should support their liberator
with greater alacrity than that with which they served their destroyer! It was resolved that the requisite amount should be at once raised, partly from the regular imposts and current "requests," partly by loans from the rich, from the clergy, from the guilds and brotherhoods, partly from superfluous church ornaments and other costly luxuries. It was directed that subscriptions should be immediately opened throughout the land, that gold and silver plate, furniture, jewelry, and other expensive articles should be received by voluntary contributions, for which inventories and receipts should be given by the magistrates of each city, and that upon these money should be raised, either by loan or sale. An enthusiastic and liberal spirit prevailed. All seemed determined rather than pay the tenth to Alva to pay the whole to the prince.

The estates, furthermore, by unanimous resolution, declared that they recognized the prince as the king’s lawful stadholder over Holland, Zealand, Friesland, and Utrecht, and that they would use their influence with the other provinces to procure his appointment as Protector of all the Netherlands during the king’s absence. His Highness was requested to appoint an admiral, on whom, with certain deputies from the Water-cities, the conduct of the maritime war should devolve. The conduct of the military operations by land was to be directed by Dort, Leyden, and Enkhuizen, in conjunction with the Count de la Marck. A pledge was likewise exchanged between the estates and the plenipotentiary, that neither party should enter into any treaty with the king, except by full consent and cooperation of the other. With regard to religion, it was firmly established that the public exercises of divine worship should be permitted not only to the Reformed Church, but to the Roman Catholic, the clergy of both being protected from all molestation.

After these proceedings, Count de la Marck made his appearance before the assembly. His commission from Orange was read to the deputies, and by them ratified. The prince, in that document, authorized "his dear cousin" to enlist troops, to accept the fealty of cities, to furnish them with garrisons, to re-establish all the local laws, municipal rights, and ancient privileges which had been suppressed. He was to maintain freedom of religion, under penalty of death, to those who infringed it; he was to restore all confiscated property; he was, with advice of his council, to continue in office such city magistrates as were favorable, and to remove those adverse to the cause.

The prince was, in reality, clothed with dictatorial and even regal powers. This authority had been forced upon him by the prayers of the people, but he manifested no eagerness as he partly accepted the onerous station. He was provisionally the depositary of the whole sovereignty of the northern provinces, but he cared much less for theories of government than for ways and means. It was his object to release the country from the tyrant who, five years long, had been burning and butchering the people. It was his determination to drive out the foreign soldiery. To do this, he must meet his enemy in the field. So little was he disposed to strengthen his own individual power, that he voluntarily
imposed limits on himself, by an act, supplemental to the proceedings of the Congress of Dort. In this important ordinance made by the Prince of Orange, as a provisional form of government, he publicly announced "that he would do and ordain nothing except by the advice of the estates, by reason that they were best acquainted with the circumstances and the humors of the inhabitants." He directed the estates to appoint receivers for all public taxes, and ordained that all military officers should make oath of fidelity to him, as stadholder, and to the estates of Holland, to be true and obedient, in order to liberate the land from the Albanian and Spanish tyranny, for the service of his royal Majesty as Count of Holland. The provisional constitution, thus made by a sovereign prince and actual dictator, was certainly as disinterested as it was sagacious.

Meanwhile the war had opened vigorously in Hainault. Louis of Nassau had no sooner found himself in possession of Mons than he had dispatched Genlis to France, for those reinforcements which had been promised by royal lips. On the other hand, Don Frederic held the city closely beleaguered; sharp combats before the walls were of almost daily occurrence, but it was obvious that Louis would be unable to maintain the position into which he had so chivalrously thrown himself unless he should soon receive important succor. The necessary reinforcements were soon upon the way. Genlis had made good speed with his levy, and it was soon announced that he was advancing into Hainault, with a force of Huguenots, whose numbers report magnified to 10,000 veterans. Louis dispatched an earnest message to his confederate, to use extreme caution in his approach. Above all things, he urged him, before attempting to throw reinforcements into the city, to effect a junction with the Prince of Orange, who had already crossed the Rhine with his new army.

Genlis, full of overweening confidence, and desirous of acquiring singly the whole glory of relieving the city, disregarded this advice. His rashness proved his ruin, and the temporary prostration of the cause of freedom. Pushing rapidly forward across the French frontier, he arrived, towards the middle of July, within two leagues of Mons. The Spaniards were aware of his approach, and well prepared to frustrate his project. On the 19th, he found himself upon a circular plain of about a league's extent, surrounded with coppices and forests, and dotted with farmhouses and kitchen gardens. Here he paused to send out a reconnoitering party. The little detachment was, however, soon driven in, with the information that Don Frederic of Toledo, with 10,000 men, was coming instantly upon them. The Spanish force, in reality, numbered 4,000 infantry, and 1,500 cavalry; but 3,000 half-armed boors had been engaged by Don Frederic, to swell his apparent force. The demonstration produced its effect, and no sooner had the first panic of the intelligence been spread, than Noircarmes came charging upon them at the head of his cavalry. The infantry arrived directly afterwards, and the Huguenots were routed almost as soon as seen. It was a meeting rather than a battle. The slaughter of the French was very great, while but an insignificant number of the Spaniards fell. Chiappin Vitelli was the hero of the day. It was to his masterly arrangements before the
combat, and to his animated exertions upon the field, that the victory was owing. Having been severely wounded in the thigh but a few days previously, he caused himself to be carried upon a litter in a recumbent position in front of his troops, and was everywhere seen, encouraging their exertions, and exposing himself, crippled as he was, to the whole brunt of the battle. To him the victory nearly proved fatal; to Don Frederic it brought increased renown. Vitelli’s exertions, in his precarious condition, brought on severe inflammation, under which he nearly succumbed, while the son of Alva reaped extensive fame from the total overthrow of the veteran Huguenots, due rather to his lieutenant and to Julian Romero.

The number of dead left by the French upon the plain amounted to at least 1,200, but a much larger number was butchered in detail by the peasantry, among whom they attempted to take refuge, and who had not yet forgotten the barbarities inflicted by their countrymen in the previous war. Many officers were taken prisoners, among whom was the commander-in-chief, Genlis. That unfortunate gentleman was destined to atone for his rashness and obstinacy with his life. He was carried to the castle of Antwerp, where, sixteen months afterwards, he was secretly strangled by command of Alva, who caused the report to be circulated that he had died a natural death. About one hundred foot soldiers succeeded in making their entrance into Mons, and this was all the succor which Count Louis was destined to receive from France, upon which country he had built such lofty and such reasonable hopes.

While this unfortunate event was occurring, the prince had already put his army in motion. On the seventh of July he had crossed the Rhine at Duisburg, with 14,000 foot, 7,000 horse, enlisted in Germany, besides a force of 3,000 Walloons. On the 23rd of July, he took the city of Roermond, after a sharp cannonade, at which place his troops already began to disgrace the honorable cause in which they were engaged, by imitating the cruelties and barbarities of their antagonists. The persons and property of the burghers were, with a very few exceptions, respected; but many priests and monks were put to death by the soldiery under circumstances of great barbarity. The prince, incensed at such conduct, but being unable to exercise very stringent authority over troops whose wages he was not yet able to pay in full, issued a proclamation, denouncing such excesses, and commanding his followers, upon pain of death, to respect the rights of all individuals, whether papist or Protestant, and to protect religious exercises both in Catholic and Reformed churches.

It was hardly to be expected that the troops enlisted by the prince in the same great magazine of hireling soldiers, Germany, from whence the duke also derived his annual supplies, would be likely to differ very much in their propensities from those enrolled under Spanish banners; yet there was a vast contrast between the characters of the two commanders. One leader inculcated the practice of robbery, rape, and murder, as a duty, and issued distinct orders to butcher “every mother’s son” in the cities which he captured;
the other restrained every excess to the utmost of his ability, protecting not only life and property, but even the ancient religion.

The Emperor Maximilian had again issued his injunctions against the military operations of Orange. Bound to the monarch of Spain by so many family ties, being at once cousin, brother-in-law, and father-in-law of Philip, it was difficult for him to maintain the attitude which became him, as chief of that Empire to which the peace of Passau had assured religious freedom. It had, however, been sufficiently proved that remonstrances and intercessions addressed to Philip were but idle breath. It had therefore become an insult to require pacific conduct from the prince on the ground of any past or future mediation. It was a still grosser mockery to call upon him to discontinue hostilities because the Netherlands were included in the Empire, and therefore protected by the treaties of Passau and Augsburg. Well did the prince reply to his Imperial Majesty’s summons in a temperate but cogent letter, which he addressed to him from his camp, that all intercessions had proved fruitless, and that the only help for the Netherlands was the sword.

The prince had been delayed for a month at Roermonde, because, as he expressed it, "he had not a single sou," and because, in consequence, the troops refused to advance into the Netherlands. Having at last been furnished with the requisite guarantees from the Holland cities for three months’ pay, on the 27th of August, the day of the publication of his letter to the Emperor, he crossed the Meuse and took his circuitous way through Diest, Tirlemont, Sichem, Louvain, Mechlin, Termonde, Oudenarde, Nivelles. Many cities and villages accepted his authority and admitted his garrisons. Of these Mechlin was the most considerable, in which he stationed a detachment of his troops. Its doom was sealed in that moment. Alva could not forgive this act of patriotism on the part of a town which had so recently excluded his own troops. "This is a direct permission of God," he wrote, in the spirit of dire and revengeful prophecy, "for us to punish her as she deserves, for the image-breaking and other misdeeds done there in the time of Madame de Parma, which our Lord was not willing to pass over without chastisement."

Meantime the prince continued his advance. Louvain purchased its neutrality for the time with 16,000 ducats; Brussels obstinately refused to listen to him, and was too powerful to be forcibly attacked at that juncture; other important cities, convinced by the arguments and won by the eloquence of the various proclamations which he scattered as he advanced, ranged themselves spontaneously and even enthusiastically upon his side. How different would have been the result of his campaign but for the unexpected earthquake which at that instant was to appall Christendom, and to scatter all his well-matured plans and legitimate hopes. His chief reliance, under Providence and his own strong heart, had been upon French assistance. Although Genlis, by his misconduct, had sacrificed his army and himself, yet the prince was still justly sanguine as to the policy of the French court. The papers which had been found
in the possession of Genlis by his conquerors all spoke one language. "You would be struck with stupor," wrote Alva’s secretary, "could you see a letter which is now in my power, addressed by the king of France to Louis of Nassau." In that letter the king had declared his determination to employ all the forces which God had placed in his hands to rescue the Netherlands from the oppression under which they were groaning. In accordance with the whole spirit and language of the French government, was the tone of Coligny in his correspondence with Orange. The admiral assured the prince that there was no doubt as to the earnestness of the royal intentions in behalf of the Netherlands, and recommending extreme caution, announced his hope within a few days to effect a junction with him at the head of 12,000 French arquebusiers, and at least 3,000 cavalry. Well might the Prince of Orange, strong, and soon to be strengthened, boast that the Netherlands were free, and that Alva was in his power. He had a right to be sanguine, for nothing less than a miracle could now destroy his generous hopes—and, alas! the miracle took place; a miracle of perfidy and bloodshed such as the world, familiar as it had ever been and was still to be with massacre, had not yet witnessed. On the 11th of August, Coligny had written thus hopefully of his movements towards the Netherlands, sanctioned and aided by his King. A fortnight from that day occurred the "Paris wedding," and the admiral, with thousands of his religious confederates, invited to confidence by superhuman treachery, and lulled into security by the music of august marriage bells, was suddenly butchered in the streets of Paris by royal and noble hands.

The prince proceeded on his march, during which the heavy news had been brought to him, but he felt convinced that, with the very arrival of the awful tidings, the fate of that campaign was sealed, and the fall of Mons inevitable. In his own language, he had been struck to the earth "with the blow of a sledgehammer"; nor did the enemy draw a different augury from the great event.

The crime was not committed with the connivance of the Spanish government. On the contrary, the two courts were at the moment bitterly hostile to each other. In the beginning of the summer, Charles IX and his advisers were as false to Philip, as at the end of it they were treacherous to Coligny and Orange. The massacre of the Huguenots had not even the merit of being a well-contrived and intelligently executed scheme. We have seen how steadily, seven years before, Catharine de’ Medici had rejected the advances of Alva towards the arrangement of a general plan for the extermination of all heretics within France and the Netherlands at the same moment. We have seen the disgust with which Alva turned from the wretched young king at Bayonne, when he expressed the opinion that to take arms against his own subjects was wholly out of the question, and could only be followed by general ruin. "’Tis easy to see that he has been tutored," wrote Alva to his master. Unfortunately, the same mother, who had then instilled those lessons of hypocritical benevolence, had now wrought upon her son’s cowardly but ferocious nature with a far
different intent. The incomplete assassination of Coligny, the dread of signal vengeance at the hands of the Huguenots, the necessity of taking the lead in the internecine struggle, were employed with Medicean art, and with entire success. The king was lashed into a frenzy. Starting to his feet, with a howl of rage and terror, "I agree to the scheme," he cried, "provided not one Huguenot be left alive in France to reproach me with the deed."

That night the slaughter commenced. The long premeditated crime was executed in a panic, but the work was thoroughly done. The king, who a few days before had written with his own hand to Louis of Nassau, expressing his firm determination to sustain the Protestant cause both in France and the Netherlands, who had employed the counsels of Coligny in the arrangement of his plans, and who had sent French troops, under Genlis and La Noue, to assist their Calvinist brethren in Flanders, now gave the signal for the general massacre of the Protestants, and with his own hands, from his own palace windows, shot his subjects with his arquebus as if they had been wild beasts.

Between Sunday and Tuesday, according to one of the most moderate calculations, 5,000 Parisians of all ranks were murdered. Within the whole kingdom, the number of victims was variously estimated at from 25,000 to 100,000. The heart of Protestant Europe, for an instant, stood still with horror. The Queen of England put on mourning weeds, and spurned the apologies of the French envoy with contempt. At Rome, on the contrary, the news of the massacre created a joy beyond description. The pope, accompanied by his cardinals, went solemnly to the church of Saint Mark to render thanks to God for the grace thus singularly vouchsafed to the Holy See and to all Christendom; and a Te Deum was performed in presence of the same august assemblage.

But nothing could exceed the satisfaction which the event occasioned in the mind of Philip II. There was an end now of all assistance from the French government to the Netherland Protestants. "The news of the events upon Saint Bartholomew's-day," wrote the French envoy at Madrid, Saint Goard, to Charles IX, "arrived on the 7th September. The King, on receiving the intelligence, showed, contrary to his natural custom, so much gaiety, that he seemed more delighted than with all the good fortune or happy incidents which had ever before occurred to him. He called all his familiars about him in order to assure them that your Majesty was his good brother, and that no one else deserved the title of Most Christian. He sent his secretary Cayas to me with his felicitations upon the event, and with the information that he was just going to Saint Jerome to render thanks to God, and to offer his prayers that your Majesty might receive Divine support in this great affair. I went to see him next morning, and as soon as I came into his presence he began to laugh, and with demonstrations of extreme contentment, to praise your Majesty as deserving your title of Most Christian, telling me there was no King worthy to be your Majesty's companion, either for valor or prudence. He praised the steadfast
resolution and the long dissimulation of so great an enterprise, which all the world would not be able to comprehend."

"I thanked him," continued the ambassador, "and I said that I thanked God for enabling your Majesty to prove to his Master that his apprentice had learned his trade, and deserved his title of most Christian King. I added, that he ought to confess that he owed the preservation of the Netherlands to your Majesty."

Nothing certainly could, in Philip's apprehension, be more delightful than this most unexpected and most opportune intelligence. Charles IX, whose intrigues in the Netherlands he had long known, had now been suddenly converted by this stupendous crime into his most powerful ally, while at the same time the Protestants of Europe would learn that there was still another crowned head in Christendom more deserving of abhorrence than himself. He wrote immediately to Alva, expressing his satisfaction that the King of France had disembarrassed himself of such pernicious men, because he would now be obliged to cultivate the friendship of Spain, neither the English Queen nor the German Protestants being thenceforth capable of trusting him. He informed the duke, moreover, that the French envoy, Saint Goard, had been urging him to command the immediate execution of Genlis and his companions, who had been made prisoners, as well as all the Frenchmen who would be captured in Mons, and that he fully concurred in the propriety of the measure. "The sooner," said Philip, "these noxious plants are extirpated from the earth, the less fear there is that a fresh crop will spring up." The monarch therefore added, with his own hand, to the letter, "I desire that if you have not already disembarrassed the world of them, you will do it immediately, and inform me thereof, for I see no reason why it should be deferred." This is the demoniacal picture painted by the French ambassador, and by Philip's own hand, of the Spanish monarch's joy that his "Most Christian" brother had just murdered 25,000 of his own subjects. In this cold-blooded way, too, did his Catholic Majesty order the execution of some thousand Huguenots additionally, in order more fully to carry out his royal brother's plans; yet Philip could write of himself, "that all the world recognized the gentleness of his nature and the mildness of his intentions."

In truth, the advice thus given by Saint Goard on the subject of the French prisoners in Alva's possessions, was a natural result of the Saint Bartholomew. Here were officers and soldiers whom Charles IX had himself sent into the Netherlands to fight for the Protestant cause against Philip and Alva. Already, the papers found upon them had placed him in some embarrassment, and exposed his duplicity to the Spanish government, before the great massacre had made such signal reparation for his delinquency. He had ordered Mondoucet, his envoy in the Netherlands, to use dissimulation to an unstinted amount, to continue his intrigues with the Protestants, and to deny stoutly all proofs of such connivance. "I see that the papers found upon Genlis," he wrote twelve days before the massacre, "have been put into the hands of Assonleville, and that they know everything done by Genlis to have been committed with my
consent. Nevertheless, you will tell the duke of Alva that these are lies invented to excite suspicion, against me. You will also give him occasional information of the enemy’s affairs, in order to make him believe in your integrity. Even if he does not believe you, my purpose will be answered, provided you do it dexterously. At the same time you must keep up a constant communication with the Prince of Orange, taking great care to prevent discovery of your intelligence with him.

Were not these masterstrokes of diplomacy worthy of a king whom his mother, from boyhood upwards, had caused to study Machiavelli’s “Prince,” and who had thoroughly taken to heart the maxim, often repeated in those days, that the “science of reigning was the science of lying”?

The joy in the Spanish camp before Mons was unbounded. It was as if the only bulwark between the Netherland rebels and total destruction had been suddenly withdrawn. With anthems in Saint Gudule, with bonfires, festive illuminations, roaring artillery, with trumpets also, and with shawms, was the glorious holiday celebrated in court and camp, in honor of the vast murder committed by the Most Christian King upon his Christian subjects; nor was a moment lost in apprising the Huguenot soldiers shut up with Louis of Nassau in the beleaguered city of the great catastrophe which was to render all their valor fruitless. “’Twas a punishment,” said a Spanish soldier, who fought most courageously before Mons, and who elaborately described the siege afterwards, “well worthy of a king whose title is ‘The Most Christian,’ and it was still more honorable to inflict it with his own hands as he did.” Nor was the observation a pithy sarcasm, but a frank expression of opinion, from a man celebrated alike for the skill with which he handled both his sword and his pen.

The French envoy in the Netherlands was, of course, immediately informed by his sovereign of the great event. Charles IX gave a very pithy account of the transaction. "To prevent the success of the enterprise planned by the Admiral," wrote the king on the 26th of August, with hands yet reeking, and while the havoc throughout France was at its height, "I have been obliged to permit the said Guises to rush upon the said Admiral, which they have done, the said admiral having been killed and all his adherents. A very great number of those belonging to the new religion have also been massacred and cut to pieces. It is probable that the fire thus kindled will spread through all the cities of my kingdom, and that all those of the said religion will be made sure of." Not often, certainly, in history, has a Christian king spoken thus calmly of butchering his subjects while the work was proceeding all around him. It is to be observed, moreover, that the usual excuse for such enormities, religious fanaticism, can not be even suggested on this occasion. Catharine, in times past had favored Huguenots as much as Catholics, while Charles had been, up to the very moment of the crime, in strict alliance with the heretics of both France and Flanders, and furthering the schemes of Orange and Nassau. Nay, even at this very moment, and in this very letter in which he gave the news of
the massacre, he charged his envoy still to *maintain the closest but most secret intelligence with the Prince of Orange*; taking great care that the Duke of Alva should not discover these relations. His motives were, of course, to prevent the prince from abandoning his designs, and from coming to make a disturbance in France. The king, now that the deed was done, was most anxious to reap all the fruits of his crime. "Now, M. de Mondoucet, it is necessary in such affairs," he continued, "to have an eye to every possible contingency. I know that this news will be most agreeable to the Duke of Alva, for it is most favorable to his designs. At the same time, I don't desire that he alone should gather the fruit. I don't choose that he should, according to his excellent custom, conduct his affairs in such wise as to throw the Prince of Orange upon my hands, besides sending back to France Genlis and the other prisoners, as well as the French now shut up in Mons."

This was a sufficiently plain hint, which Mondoucet could not well misunderstand. "Observe the duke's countenance carefully when you give him this message," added the king, "and let me know his reply." In order, however, that there might be no mistake about the matter, Charles wrote again to his ambassador, five days afterwards, distinctly stating the regret which he should feel if Alva should not take the city of Mons, or if he should take it by composition. "Tell the Duke," said he, "that it is most important for the service of his master and of God that those Frenchmen and others in Mons should be cut in pieces." He wrote another letter upon the same day, such was his anxiety upon the subject, instructing the envoy to urge upon Alva the necessity of chastising those rebels to the French crown. "If he tells you," continued Charles, "that this is tacitly requiring him to put to death all the French prisoners now in hand as well to cut in pieces every man in Mons, you will say to him that this is exactly what he ought to do, and that he will be guilty of a great wrong to Christianity if he does otherwise." Certainly, the duke, having been thus distinctly ordered, both by his own master and by his Christian Majesty, to put every one of these Frenchmen to death, had a sufficiency of royal warrant. Nevertheless, he was not able to execute entirely these ferocious instructions. The prisoners already in his power were not destined to escape, but the city of Mons, in his own language, "proved to have sharper teeth than he supposed."

Mondoucet lost no time in placing before Alva the urgent necessity of accomplishing the extensive and cold-blooded massacre thus proposed. "The Duke has replied," wrote the envoy to his sovereign, "that he is executing his prisoners every day, and that he has but a few left. Nevertheless, for some reason which he does not mention, he is reserving the principal noblemen and chiefs." He afterwards informed his master that Genlis, Jumelles, and the other leaders, had engaged, if Alva would grant them a reasonable ransom, to induce the French in Mons to leave the city, but that the duke, although his language was growing less confident, still hoped to take the town by assault. "I have urged him," he added, "to put them all to death, assuring him that he would be
responsible for the consequences of a contrary course." "Why does not your most Christian master," asked Alva, "order these Frenchmen in Mons to come to him under oath to make no disturbance? Then my prisoners will be at my discretion and I shall get my city." "Because," answered the envoy, "they will not trust his Most Christian Majesty, and will prefer to die in Mons."

This certainly was a most sensible reply, but it is instructive to witness the cynicism with which the envoy accepts this position for his master, while coldly recording the results of all these sanguinary conversations.

Such was the condition of affairs when the Prince of Orange arrived at Peronne, between Binche and the Duke of Alva's entrenchments. The besieging army was rich in notabilities of elevated rank. Don Frederic of Toledo had hitherto commanded, but on the 27th of August, the Dukes of Medina Cœli and of Alva had arrived in the camp. Directly afterwards came the warlike Archbishop of Cologne, at the head of 2,000 cavalry. There was but one chance for the Prince of Orange, and experience had taught him, four years before, its slenderness. He might still provoke his adversary into a pitched battle, and he relied upon God for the result. In his own words, "he trusted ever that the great God of armies was with him, and would fight in the midst of his forces." So long as Alva remained in his impregnable camp, it was impossible to attack him, or to throw reinforcements into Mons. The prince soon found, too, that Alva was far too wise to hazard his position by a superfluous combat. The duke knew that the cavalry of the prince was superior to his own. He expressed himself entirely unwilling to play into the prince's hands, instead of winning the game which was no longer doubtful. The Huguenot soldiers within Mons were in despair and mutiny; Louis of Nassau lay in his bed consuming with a dangerous fever; Genlis was a prisoner, and his army cut to pieces; Coligny was murdered, and Protestant France paralyzed; the troops of Orange, enlisted but for three months, were already rebellious, and sure to break into open insubordination when the consequences of the Paris massacre should become entirely clear to them; and there were, therefore, even more cogent reasons than in 1568, why Alva should remain perfectly still, and see his enemy's cause founder before his eyes. The valiant Archbishop of Cologne was most eager for the fray. He rode daily at the duke's side, with harness on his back and pistols in his holsters, armed and attired like one of his own troopers, and urging the duke, with vehemence, to a pitched battle with the prince. The duke commended, but did not yield to, the prelate's enthusiasm. "Tis a fine figure of a man, with his corslet and pistols," he wrote to Philip, "and he shows great affection for your Majesty's service."

The issue of the campaign was inevitable. On the 11th of September, Don Frederic, with a force of 4,000 picked men, established himself at Saint Florian, a village near the Havré gate of the city, while the prince had encamped at Hermigny, within half a league of the same place, whence he attempted to introduce reinforcements into the town. On the night of the 11th
and 12th, Don Frederic hazarded an encamisada upon the enemy’s camp, which proved eminently successful, and had nearly resulted in the capture of the prince himself. A chosen band of six hundred arquebusiers, attired, as was customary in these nocturnal expeditions, with their shirts outside their armor, that they might recognize each other in the darkness, were led by Julian Romero, within the lines of the enemy. The sentinels were cut down, the whole army surprised, and for a moment powerless, while, for two hours long, from one o’clock in the morning until three, the Spaniards butchered their foes, hardly aroused from their sleep, ignorant by how small a force they had been thus suddenly surprised, and unable in the confusion to distinguish between friend and foe. The boldest, led by Julian in person, made at once for the prince’s tent. His guards and himself were in profound sleep, but a small spaniel, who always passed the night upon his bed, was a more faithful sentinel. The creature sprang forward, barking furiously at the sound of hostile footsteps, and scratching his master’s face with his paws. There was but just time for the prince to mount a horse which was ready saddled, and to effect his escape through the darkness, before his enemies sprang into the tent. His servants were cut down, his master of the horse and two of his secretaries, who gained their saddles a moment later, all lost their lives, and but for the little dog’s watchfulness, William of Orange, upon whose shoulders the whole weight of his country’s fortunes depended, would have been led within a week to an ignominious death. To his dying day, the prince ever afterwards kept a spaniel of the same race in his bedchamber. The midnight slaughter still continued, but the Spaniards in their fury, set fire to the tents. The glare of the conflagration showed the Orangists by how paltry a force they had been surprised. Before they could rally, however, Romero led off his arquebusiers, every one of whom had at least killed his man. Six hundred of the prince’s troops had been put to the sword, while many others were burned in their beds, or drowned in the little rivulet which flowed outside their camp. Only sixty Spaniards lost their lives.

This disaster did not alter the plans of the prince, for those plans had already been frustrated. The whole marrow of his enterprise had been destroyed in an instant by the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. He retreated to Péronne and Nivelles, an assassin named Heist, a German by birth but a French chevalier, following him secretly in his camp, pledged to take his life for a large reward promised by Alva—an enterprise not destined, however, to be successful. The soldiers flatly refused to remain an hour longer in the field, or even to furnish an escort for Count Louis, if, by chance, he could be brought out of the town. The prince was obliged to inform his brother of the desperate state of his affairs, and to advise him to capitulate on the best terms which he could make. With a heavy heart, he left the chivalrous Louis besieged in the city which he had so gallantly captured, and took his way across the Meuse towards the Rhine. A furious mutiny broke out among his troops. His life was, with difficulty, saved from the brutal soldiery—influriated at his inability to pay them, except in the overdue securities of the Holland cities—by the exertions
of the officers who still regarded him with veneration and affection. Crossing the Rhine at Orsoy, he disbanded his army and betook himself, almost alone, to Holland.

Yet even in this hour of distress and defeat, the prince seemed more heroic than many a conqueror in his day of triumph. With all his hopes blasted, with the whole fabric of his country’s fortunes shattered by the colossal crime of his royal ally, he never lost his confidence in himself nor his unfaltering trust in God. All the cities which, but a few weeks before, had so eagerly raised his standard, now fell off at once. He went to Holland, the only province which remained true, and which still looked up to him as its savior, but he went thither expecting and prepared to perish. "There I will make my sepulchre," was his simple and sublime expression in a private letter to his brother.

He had advanced to the rescue of Louis, with city after city opening its arms to receive him. He had expected to be joined on the march by Coligny, at the head of a chosen army, and he was now obliged to leave his brother to his fate, having the massacre of the admiral and his confederates substituted for their expected army of assistance, and with every city and every province forsaking his cause as eagerly as they had so lately embraced it. "It has pleased God," he said, "to take away every hope which we could have founded upon man; the king has published that the massacre was by his orders, and has forbidden all his subjects, upon pain of death, to assist me; he has, moreover, sent succor to Alva. Had it not been for this, we had been masters of the duke, and should have made him capitulate at our pleasure." Yet even then he was not cast down.

Nor was his political sagacity liable to impeachment by the extent to which he had been thus deceived by the French court. "So far from being reprehensible that I did not suspect such a crime," he said, "I should rather be chargeable with malignity had I been capable of so sinister a suspicion. 'Tis not an ordinary thing to conceal such enormous deliberations under the plausible cover of a marriage festival."

Meanwhile, Count Louis lay confined to his couch with a burning fever. His soldiers refused any longer to hold the city, now that the altered intentions of Charles IX were known and the forces of Orange withdrawn. Alva offered the most honorable conditions, and it was therefore impossible for the count to make longer resistance. The city was so important, and time was at that moment so valuable, that the duke was willing to forego his vengeance upon the rebel whom he so cordially detested, and to be satisfied with depriving him of the prize which he had seized with such audacity. "It would have afforded me sincere pleasure," wrote the duke, "over and above the benefit to God and your Majesty, to have had the Count of Nassau in my power. I would overlap every obstacle to seize him, such is the particular hatred which I bear the
man.” Under the circumstances, however, he acknowledged that the result of the council of war could only be to grant liberal terms.

On the 19th of September, accordingly, articles of capitulation were signed between the distinguished De la Noue with three others on the one part, and the Seigneur de Noircarmes and three others on the side of Spain. The town was given over to Alva, but all the soldiers were to go out with their weapons and property. Those of the townspeople who had borne arms against his Majesty, and all who still held to the Reformed religion, were to retire with the soldiery. The troops were to pledge themselves not to serve in future against the kings of France or Spain, but from this provision Louis, with his English and German soldiers, was expressly excepted, the count indignantly repudiating the idea of such a pledge, or of discontinuing his hostilities for an instant. It was also agreed that convoys should be furnished, and hostages exchanged, for the due observance of the terms of the treaty. The preliminaries having been thus settled, the patriot forces abandoned the town.

Count Louis, rising from his sickbed, paid his respects in person to the victorious generals, at their request. He was received in Alva’s camp with an extraordinary show of admiration and esteem. The Duke of Medina Cœli overwhelmed him with courtesies and “basolomanos,” while Don Frederic assured him, in the high-flown language of Spanish compliment, that there was nothing which he would not do to serve him, and that he would take a greater pleasure in executing his slightest wish than if he had been his next of kin.

As the count next day, still suffering with fever, and attired in his long dressing-gown, was taking his departure from the city, he ordered his carriage to stop at the entrance to Don Frederic’s quarters. That general, who had been standing incognito near the door, gazing with honest admiration at the hero of so many a hard-fought field, withdrew as he approached, that he might not give the invalid the trouble of alighting. Louis, however, recognizing him, addressed him with the Spanish salutation, “Perdone vuestra Señoria la pesedumbre,” and paused at the gate. Don Frederic, from politeness to his condition, did not present himself, but sent an aid-de-camp to express his compliments and good wishes. Having exchanged these courtesies, Louis left the city, conveyed, as had been agreed upon, by a guard of Spanish troops. There was a deep meaning in the respect with which the Spanish generals had treated the rebel chieftain. Although the massacre of Saint Bartholomew met with Alva’s entire approbation, yet it was his cue to affect a holy horror at the event, and he avowed that he would “rather cut off both his hands than be guilty of such a deed”—as if those hangman’s hands had the right to protest against any murder, however wholesale. Count Louis suspected at once, and soon afterwards thoroughly understood, the real motives of the chivalrous treatment which he had received. He well knew that these very men would have sent him to the scaffold, had he fallen into their power, and he therefore estimated their courtesy at its proper value.
It was distinctly stated, in the capitulation of the city, that all the soldiers, as well as such of the inhabitants as had borne arms, should be allowed to leave the city, with all their property. The rest of the people, it was agreed, might remain without molestation to their persons or estates. It has been the general opinion of historians that the articles of this convention were maintained by the conquerors in good faith. Never was a more signal error. The capitulation was made late at night, on the 20th of September, without the provision which Charles IX had hoped for—the massacre, namely, of De la Noue and his companions. As for Geniis and those who had been taken prisoners at his defeat, their doom had already been sealed. The city was evacuated on the 21st of September. Alva entered it upon the 24th. Most of the volunteers departed with the garrison, but many who had, most unfortunately, prolonged their farewells to their families, trusting to the word of the Spanish Captain Molinos, were thrown into prison.

Noircarmes, the butcher of Valenciennes, now made his appearance in Mons. As grand bailiff of Hainault, he came to the place as one in authority, and his deeds were now to complete the infamy which must forever surround his name. In brutal violation of the terms upon which the town had surrendered, he now set about the work of massacre and pillage. A Commission of Troubles, in close imitation of the famous Blood-Council at Brussels, was established, the members of the tribunal being appointed by Noircarmes, and all being inhabitants of the town. The council commenced proceedings by condemning all the volunteers, although expressly included in the capitulation. Their wives and children were all banished, their property all confiscated. On the 15th of December, the executions commenced. The intrepid De Leste, silk manufacturer, who had commanded a band of volunteers, and sustained during the siege the assaults of Alva’s troops with remarkable courage at a very critical moment, was one of the earliest victims. In consideration “that he was a gentleman, and not among the most malicious,” he was executed by sword. “In respect that he heard the mass, and made a sweet and Catholic end,” it was allowed that he should be “buried in consecrated earth.” Many others followed in quick succession. Some were beheaded, some were hanged, some were burned alive. All who had borne arms or worked at the fortifications were, of course, put to death. Such as refused to confess and receive the Catholic sacraments perished by fire. A poor wretch, accused of having ridiculed these mysteries, had his tongue torn out before being beheaded. A cobbler, named Blaise Bouzet, was hanged for having eaten meat-soup upon Friday. He was also accused of going to the Protestant preachings for the sake of participating in the alms distributed on these occasions, a crime for which many other paupers were executed. An old man of sixty-two was sent to the scaffold for having permitted his son to bear arms among the volunteers. At last, when all pretexts were wanting to justify executions, the council assigned as motives for its decrees an adhesion of heart on the part of the victims to the cause of the insurgents, or to the doctrines of the Reformed Church.
Ten, twelve, twenty persons were often hanged, burned, or beheaded in a single day. Gibbets laden with mutilated bodies lined the public highways, while Noircarmes, by frightful expressions of approbation, excited without ceasing the fury of his satellites. This monster would perhaps be less worthy of execration had he been governed in these foul proceedings by fanatical bigotry or by political hatred, but his motives were of the most sordid description. It was mainly to acquire gold for himself that he ordained all this carnage. With the same pen which signed the death sentences of the richest victims, he drew orders to his own benefit on their confiscated property. The lion’s share of the plunder was appropriated by himself. He desired the estate of François de Glarges, Seigneur d’Eslesmes. The gentleman had committed no offense of any kind, and, moreover, lived beyond the French frontier. Nevertheless, in contempt of international law, the neighboring territory was invaded, and d’Eslesmes dragged before the blood tribunal of Mons. Noircarmes had drawn up beforehand, in his own handwriting, both the terms of the accusation and of the sentence. The victim was innocent and a Catholic, but he was rich. He confessed to have been twice at the preaching, from curiosity, and to have omitted taking the sacrament at the previous Easter. For these offenses he was beheaded, and his confiscated estate adjudged at an almost nominal price to the secretary of Noircarmes, bidding for his master. “You can do me no greater pleasure,” wrote Noircarmes to the council, “than to make quick work with all these rebels, and to proceed with the confiscation of their estates, real and personal. Don’t fail to put all those to the torture out of whom anything can be got.” Notwithstanding the unexampled docility of the commissioners, they found it difficult to extract from their redoubted chief a reasonable share in the wages of blood. They did not scruple, therefore, to display their own infamy, and to enumerate their own crimes, in order to justify their demand for higher salaries. “Consider,” they said, in a petition to this end, “consider closely all that is odious in our office, and the great number of banishments and of executions which we have pronounced among all our own relations and friends.”

It may be added, moreover, as a slight palliation for the enormous crimes committed by these men, that, becoming at last weary of their business, they urged Noircarmes to desist from the work of proscription. Longehaye, one of the commissioners, even waited upon him personally, with a plea for mercy in favor of “the poor people, even beggars, who, although having borne arms during the siege, might then be pardoned.” Noircarmes, in a rage at the proposition, said that “if he did not know the commissioners to be honest men, he should believe that their palms had been oiled,” and forbade any farther words on the subject. When Longehaye still ventured to speak in favor of certain persons “who were very poor and simple, not charged with duplicity, and good Catholics besides,” he fared no better. “Away with you!” cried Noircarmes in a great fury, adding that he had already written to have execution done upon the whole of them. “Whereupon,” said poor blood-
councillor Longehaye, in his letter to his colleagues, "I retired, I leave you to guess how."

Thus the work went on day after day, month after month. Till the 27th of August of the following year (1573) the executioner never rested, and when Requesens, successor to Alva, caused the prisons of Mons to be opened, there were found still seventy-five individuals condemned to the block, and awaiting their fate.

It is the most dreadful commentary upon the times in which these transactions occurred, that they could sink so soon into oblivion. The culprits took care to hide the records of their guilt, while succeeding horrors, on a more extensive scale, at other places, effaced the memory of all these comparatively obscure murders and spoliations. The prosperity of Mons, one of the most flourishing and wealthy manufacturing towns in the Netherlands, was annihilated, but there were so many cities in the same condition that its misery was hardly remarkable. Nevertheless, in our own days, the fall of a moldering tower in the ruined Chateau de Naast at last revealed the archives of all these crimes. How the documents came to be placed there remains a mystery, but they have at last been brought to light.

The Spaniards had thus recovered Mons, by which event the temporary revolution throughout the whole southern Netherlands was at an end. The keys of that city unlocked the gates of every other in Brabant and Flanders. The towns which had so lately embraced the authority of Orange now hastened to disavow the prince, and to return to their ancient, hypocritical, and cowardly allegiance. The new oaths of fidelity were in general accepted by Alva, but the beautiful archiepiscopal city of Mechlin was selected for an example and a sacrifice.

There were heavy arrears due to the Spanish troops. To indemnify them, and to make good his blasphemous prophecy of Divine chastisement for its past misdeeds, Alva now abandoned this town to the license of his soldiery. By his command Don Frederic advanced to the gates and demanded its surrender. He was answered by a few shots from the garrison. Those cowardly troops, however, having thus plunged the city still more deeply into the disgrace which, in Alva’s eyes, they had incurred by receiving rebels within their walls after having but just before refused admittance to the Spanish forces, decamped during the night, and left the place defenseless.

Early next morning there issued from the gates a solemn procession of priests, with banner and crozier, followed by a long and suppliant throng of citizens, who attempted by this demonstration to avert the wrath of the victor. While the penitent psalms were resounding, the soldiers were busily engaged in heaping dried branches and rubbish into the moat. Before the religious exercises were concluded, thousands had forced the gates or climbed the
walls, and entered the city with a celerity which only the hope of rapine could inspire. The sack instantly commenced. The property of friend and foe, of papist and Calvinist, was indiscriminately rifled. Everything was dismantled and destroyed. “Hardly a nail,” said a Spaniard, writing soon afterwards from Brussels, “was left standing in the walls.” The troops seemed to imagine themselves in a Turkish town, and wreaked the Divine vengeance which Alva had denounced upon the city with an energy which met with his fervent applause.

Three days long the horrible scene continued, one day for the benefit of the Spaniards, two more for that of the Walloons and Germans. All the churches, monasteries, religious houses of every kind, were completely sacked. Every valuable article which they contained, the ornaments of altars, the reliquaries, chalices, embroidered curtains, and carpets of velvet or damask, the golden robes of the priests, the repositories of the host, the precious vessels of chrism and extreme unction, the rich clothing and jewelry adorning the effigies of the Holy Virgin, all were indiscriminately rifled by the Spanish soldiers. The holy wafers were trampled underfoot, the sacramental wine was poured upon the ground, and, in brief, all the horrors which had been committed by the iconoclasts in their wildest moments, and for a thousandth part of which enormities heretics had been burned in droves, were now repeated in Mechlin by the especial soldiers of Christ, by Roman Catholics who had been sent to the Netherlands to avenge the insults offered to the Roman Catholic faith. The motive, too, which inspired the sacrilegious crew was not fanaticism, but the desire of plunder. The property of Romanists was taken as freely as that of Calvinists, of which sect there were, indeed, but few in the archiepiscopal city. Cardinal Granvelle’s house was rifled. The pauper funds deposited in the convents were not respected. The beds were taken from beneath sick and dying women, whether lady abbess or hospital patient, that the sacking might be torn to pieces in search of hidden treasure.

The iconoclasts of 1566 had destroyed millions of property for the sake of an idea, but they had appropriated nothing. Moreover, they had scarcely injured a human being, confining their wrath to graven images. The Spaniards at Mechlin spared neither man nor woman. The murders and outrages would be incredible, were they not attested by most respectable Catholic witnesses. Men were butchered in their houses, in the streets, at the altars. Women were violated by hundreds in churches and in graveyards. Moreover, the deed had been as deliberately arranged as it was thoroughly performed. It was sanctioned by the highest authority. Don Frederic, son of Alva, and General Noircarmes were both present at the scene, and applications were in vain made to them that the havoc might be stayed. “They were seen whispering to each other in the ear on their arrival,” says an eyewitness and a Catholic, “and it is well known that the affair had been resolved upon the preceding day. The two continued together as long as they remained in the city.” The work was, in truth, fully accomplished. The ultra-Catholic, Jean Richardot, member of the Grand
Council, and nephew of the Bishop of Arras, informed the State Council that the sack of Mechlin had been so horrible that the poor and unfortunate mothers had not a single morsel of bread to put in the mouths of their children, who were dying before their eyes, so insane and cruel had been the avarice of the plunderers. "He could say more," he added, "if his hair did not stand on end, not only at recounting, but even at remembering the scene."

Three days long the city was abandoned to that trinity of furies which ever wait upon War’s footsteps—Murder, Lust, and Rapine—under whose promptings human beings become so much more terrible than the most ferocious beasts. In his letter to his master, the duke congratulated him upon these foul proceedings as upon a pious deed well accomplished. He thought it necessary, however, to excuse himself before the public in a document, which justified the sack of Mechlin by its refusal to accept his garrison a few months before, and by the shots which had been discharged at his troops as they approached the city. For these offenses, and by his express order, the deed was done. Upon his head must the guilt forever rest.

CHAPTER 8

The Battles of Tergoes and Harlem

While thus Brabant and Flanders were scourged back to the chains which they had so recently broken, the affairs of the Prince of Orange were not improving in Zealand. Never was a twelvemonth so marked by contradictory fortune, never were the promises of a spring followed by such blight and disappointment in autumn than in the memorable year 1572. On the island of Walcheren, Middelburg and Arnemuyde still held for the king—Campveer and Flushing for the Prince of Orange. On the island of South Beveland, the city of Goes or Tergoes was still stoutly defended by a small garrison of Spanish troops. As long as the place held out, the city of Middelburg could be maintained. Should that important city fall, the Spaniards would lose all hold upon Walcheren and the province of Zealand.

Jerome de 't Zeraerts, a brave, faithful, but singularly unlucky officer, commanded for the prince in Walcheren. He had attempted by various hastily planned expeditions to give employment to his turbulent soldiery, but fortune had refused to smile upon his efforts. He had laid siege to Middelburg and failed. He had attempted Tergoes and had been compelled ingloriously to retreat. The citizens of Flushing, on his return, had shut the gates of the town in his face, and for several days refused to admit him or his troops. To retrieve this disgrace, which had sprung rather from the insubordination of his followers
and the dislike which they bore his person than from any want of courage or conduct on his part, he now assembled a force of 7,000 men, marched again to Tergoes, and upon the 26th of August laid siege to the place in form. The garrison was very insufficient, and although they conducted themselves with great bravery, it was soon evident that unless reinforced they must yield. With their overthrow it was obvious that the Spaniards would lose the important maritime province of Zealand, and the duke accordingly ordered d’Avila, who commanded in Antwerp, to throw succor into Tergoes without delay. Attempts were made, by sea and by land, to this effect, but were all unsuccessful. The Zealanders commanded the waters with their fleet, and were too much at home among those gulfes and shallows not to be more than a match for their enemies. Baffled in their attempt to relieve the town by water or by land, the Spaniards conceived an amphibious scheme. Their plan led to one of the most brilliant feats of arms which distinguishes the history of this war.

The Scheld, flowing past the city of Antwerp and separating the provinces of Flanders and Brabant, opens wide its two arms in nearly opposite directions, before it joins the sea. Between these two arms lie the isles of Zealand, half floating upon, half submerged by the waves. The town of Tergoes was the chief city of South Beveland, the most important part of this archipelago, but South Beveland had not always been an island. Fifty years before, a tempest, one of the most violent recorded in the stormy annals of that exposed country, had overthrown all barriers, the waters of the German Ocean, lashed by a succession of north winds, having been driven upon the low coast of Zealand more rapidly than they could be carried off through the narrow straits of Dover. The dykes of the island had burst, the ocean had swept over the land, hundreds of villages had been overwhelmed, and a tract of country torn from the province and buried forever beneath the sea. This “Drowned Land,” as it is called, now separated the island from the main. At low tide it was, however, possible for experienced pilots to ford the estuary, which had usurped the place of the land. The average depth was between four and five feet at low water, while the tide rose and fell at least ten feet; the bottom was muddy and treacherous, and it was moreover traversed by three living streams or channels, always much too deep to be fordable.

Captain Plomaert, a Fleming of great experience and bravery, warmly attached to the king’s cause, conceived the plan of sending reinforcements across this drowned district to the city of Tergoes. Accompanied by two peasants of the country, well acquainted with the track, he twice accomplished the dangerous and difficult passage, which, from dry land to dry land, was nearly ten English miles in length. Having thus satisfied himself as to the possibility of the enterprise, he laid his plan before the Spanish colonel, Mondragon.

That courageous veteran eagerly embraced the proposal, examined the ground, and after consultation with Sancho d’Avila, resolved in person to lead an expedition along the path suggested by Plomaert. Three thousand picked men,
a thousand from each nation—Spaniards, Walloons, and Germans—were speedily and secretly assembled at Bergen op Zoom, from the neighborhood of which city, at a place called Aggier, it was necessary that the expedition should set forth. A quantity of sacks were provided, in which a supply of biscuit and of powder was placed, one to be carried by each soldier upon his head. Although it was already late in the autumn, the weather was propitious; the troops, not yet informed as to the secret enterprise for which they had been selected, were already assembled at the edge of the water, and Mondragon, who, notwithstanding his age, had resolved upon heading the hazardous expedition, now briefly, on the evening of the 20th of October, explained to them the nature of the service. His statement of the dangers which they were about to encounter, rather inflamed than diminished their ardor. Their enthusiasm became unbounded, as he described the importance of the city which they were about to save, and alluded to the glory which would be won by those who thus courageously came forward to its rescue. The time of about half ebb-tide having arrived, the veteran, preceded only by the guides and Plomaert, plunged gaily into the waves, followed by his army, almost in single file. The water was never lower than the breast, often higher than the shoulder. The distance to the island, three and a half leagues at least, was to be accomplished within at most, six hours, or the rising tide would overwhelm them forever. And thus, across the quaking and uncertain slime, which often refused them a footing, that adventurous band, five hours long, pursued their midnight march, sometimes swimming for their lives, and always struggling with the waves which every instant threatened to engulf them.

Before the tide had risen to more than half-flood, before the day had dawned, the army set foot on dry land again, at the village of Irseken. Of the whole three thousand, only nine unlucky individuals had been drowned; so much had courage and discipline availed in that dark and perilous passage through the very bottom of the sea. The Duke of Alva might well pronounce it one of the most brilliant and original achievements in the annals of war. The beacon fires were immediately lighted upon the shore, as agreed upon, to inform Sancho d’Avila, who was anxiously awaiting the result at Bergen op Zoom, of the safe arrival of the troops. A brief repose was then allowed. At the approach of daylight, they set forth from Irseken, which lay about four leagues from Tergoes. The news that a Spanish army had thus arisen from the depths of the sea, flew before them as they marched. The besieging force commanded the water with their fleet, the land with their army; yet had these indomitable Spaniards found a path which was neither land nor water, and had thus stolen upon them in the silence of night. A panic preceded them as they fell upon a foe much superior in number to their own force. It was impossible for de’t Zeraerts to induce his soldiers to offer resistance. The patriot army fled precipitately and ignominiously to their ships, hotly pursued by the Spaniards, who overtook and destroyed the whole of their rearguard before they could embark. This done, the gallant little garrison which had so successfully held the city, was reinforced with the courageous veterans who had come to their
relief. His audacious project thus brilliantly accomplished, the "good old Mondragon," as his soldiers called him, returned to the province of Brabant.

After the capture of Mons and the sack of Mechlin, the Duke of Alva had taken his way to Nimwegen, having dispatched his son, Don Frederic, to reduce the northern and eastern country, which was only too ready to submit to the conqueror. Very little resistance was made by any of the cities which had so recently, and with such enthusiasm, embraced the cause of Orange. Zutphen attempted a feeble opposition to the entrance of the king’s troops, and received a dreadful chastisement in consequence. Alva sent orders to his son to leave not a single man alive in the city, and to burn every house to the ground. The duke’s command was almost literally obeyed. Don Frederic entered Zutphen, and without a moment’s warning put the whole garrison to the sword. The citizens next fell a defenseless prey, some beingstabbed in the streets, some hanged on the trees which decorated the city, some stripped stark naked, and turned out into the fields to freeze to death in the wintry night. As the work of death became too fatiguing for the butchers, five hundred innocentburghers were tied two and two, back to back, and drowned like dogs in the river Yssel. A few stragglers who had contrived to elude pursuit at first, were afterwards taken from their hiding places, and hung upon the gallows by the feet, some of which victims suffered four days and nights of agony before death came to their relief. It is superfluous to add that the outrages upon women were no less universal in Zutphen than they had been in every city captured or occupied by the Spanish troops. These horrors continued till scarcely chastity or life remained, throughout the miserable city.

This attack and massacre had been so suddenly executed, that assistance would hardly have been possible, even had there been disposition to render it. There was, however, no such disposition. The whole country was already cowering again, except the provinces of Holland and Zeeland. No one dared approach, even to learn what had occurred within the walls of the town, for days after its doom had been accomplished. "A wail of agony was heard above Zutphen last Sunday," wrote Count Nieuwenar, "a sound as of a mighty massacre, but we know not what has taken place."

Count Van den Berg, another brother-in-law of Orange, proved himself signally unworthy of the illustrious race to which he was allied. He had, in the earlier part of the year, received the homage of the cities of Gelderland and Overyssel, on behalf of the patriot prince. He now basely abandoned the field where he had endeavored to gather laurels while the sun of success had been shining. Having written from Kampen, whither he had retired, that he meant to hold the city to the last gasp, he immediately afterwards fled secretly and precipitately from the country. In his flight he was plundered by his own people, while his wife, Mary of Nassau, then far advanced in pregnancy, was left behind, disguised as a peasant girl, in an obscure village.
With the flight of Van den Berg, all the cities which, under his guidance, had raised the standard of Orange, deserted the cause at once. Friesland too, where Robles obtained a victory over 6,000 patriots, again submitted to the yoke. But if the ancient heart of the free Frisians was beating thus feebly, there was still spirit left among their brethren on the other side of the Zuyder Zee. It was not while William of Orange was within her borders, nor while her sister provinces had proved recreant to him, that Holland would follow their base example. No rebellion being left, except in the northwestern extremities of the Netherlands, Don Frederic was ordered to proceed from Zutphen to Amsterdam, thence to undertake the conquest of Holland. The little city of Naarden, on the coast of the Zuyder Zee, lay in his path, and had not yet formally submitted. On the 22nd of November a company of one hundred troopers was sent to the city gates to demand its surrender. The small garrison which had been left by the prince was not disposed to resist, but the spirit of the burghers was stouter than their walls. They answered the summons by a declaration that they had thus far held the city for the king and the Prince of Orange, and, with God’s help, would continue so to do. As the horsemen departed with this reply, a lunatic, called Adrian Krankhoeft, mounted the ramparts and discharged a culverine among them. No man was injured, but the words of defiance, and the shot fired by a madman’s hand, were destined to be fearfully answered.

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of the place, which was at best far from strong, and ill-provided with arms, ammunition, or soldiers, dispatched importunate messages to Sonoy, and to other patriot generals nearest to them, soliciting reinforcements. Their messengers came back almost empty-handed. They brought a little powder and a great many promises, but not a single man-at-arms, not a ducat, not a piece of artillery. The most influential commanders, moreover, advised an honorable capitulation, if it were still possible. Thus baffled, the burghers of the little city found their proud position quite untenable. They accordingly, on the first of December, dispatched the burgomaster and a senator to Amersfoort, to make terms, if possible, with Don Frederic. When these envoys reached the place, they were refused admission to the general’s presence. The army had already been ordered to move forward to Naarden, and they were directed to accompany the advance guard, and to expect their reply at the gates of their own city. This command was sufficiently ominous. The impression which it made upon them was confirmed by the warning voices of their friends in Amersfoort, who entreated them not to return to Naarden. The advice was not lost upon one of the two envoys. After they had advanced a little distance on their journey, the burgomaster Laurentszoon slid privately out of the sledge in which they were traveling, leaving his cloak behind him. “Adieu; I think I will not venture back to Naarden at present,” said he, calmly, as he abandoned his companion to his fate. The other, who could not so easily desert his children, his wife, and his fellow
citizens, in the hour of danger, went forward as calmly to share in their impending doom.

The army reached Bussem, half a league distant from Naarden, in the evening. Here Don Frederic established his headquarters, and proceeded to invest the city. Senator Gerrit was then directed to return to Naarden and to bring out a more numerous deputation on the following morning, duly empowered to surrender the place. The envoy accordingly returned next day, accompanied by Lambert Hortensius, rector of a Latin academy, together with four other citizens. Before this deputation had reached Bussem, they were met by Julian Romero, who informed them that he was commissioned to treat with them on the part of Don Frederic. He demanded the keys of the city, and gave the deputation a solemn pledge that the lives and property of all the inhabitants should be sacredly respected. To attest this assurance, Don Julian gave his hand three times to Lambert Hortensius. A soldier’s word thus plighted, the commissioners, without exchanging any written documents, surrendered the keys, and immediately afterwards accompanied Romero into the city, who was soon followed by five or six hundred musketeers.

To give these guests a hospitable reception, all the housewives of the city at once set about preparations for a sumptuous feast, to which the Spaniards did ample justice, while the colonel and his officers were entertained by Senator Gerrit at his own house. As soon as this conviviality had come to an end, Romero, accompanied by his host, walked into the square. The great bell had been meantime ringing, and the citizens had been summoned to assemble in the Gast Huis Church, then used as a town hall. In the course of a few minutes five hundred had entered the building, and stood quietly awaiting whatever measures might be offered for their deliberation. Suddenly a priest, who had been pacing to and fro before the church door, entered the building, and bade them all prepare for death; but the announcement, the preparation, and the death, were simultaneous. The door was flung open, and a band of armed Spaniards rushed across the sacred threshold. They fired a single volley upon the defenseless herd, and then sprang in upon them with sword and dagger. A yell of despair arose as the miserable victims saw how hopelessly they were engaged, and beheld the ferocious faces of their butchers. The carnage within that narrow space was compact and rapid. Within a few minutes all were dispatched, and among them Senator Gerrit, from whose table the Spanish commander had but just risen. The church was then set on fire, and the dead and dying were consumed to ashes together.

Inflamed but not satiated, the Spaniards then rushed into the streets, thirsty for fresh horrors. The houses were all rifled of their contents, and men were forced to carry the booty to the camp, who were then struck dead as their reward. The town was then fired in every direction, that the skulking citizens might be forced from their hiding places. As fast as they came forth they were put to death by their impatient foes. Some were pierced with rapiers, some
were chopped to pieces with axes, some were surrounded in the blazing streets by troops of laughing soldiers, intoxicated, not with wine but with blood, who tossed them to and fro with their lances, and derived a wild amusement from their dying agonies. Those who attempted resistance were crimped alive like fishes, and left to gasp themselves to death in lingering torture. The soldiers becoming more and more insane, as the foul work went on, opened the veins of some of their victims, and drank their blood as if it were wine. Some of the burghers were for a time spared, that they might witness the violation of their wives and daughters, and were then butchered in company with these still more unfortunate victims. Miracles of brutality were accomplished. Neither church nor hearth was sacred. Men were slain, women outraged at the altars, in the streets, in their blazing homes.

The life of Lambert Hortensius was spared, out of regard to his learning and genius, but he hardly could thank his foes for the boon, for they struck his only son dead, and tore his heart out before his father's eyes. Hardly any man or woman survived, except by accident. A body of some hundred burghers made their escape across the snow into the open country. They were, however, overtaken, stripped stark naked, and hung upon the trees by the feet, to freeze, or to perish by a more lingering death. Most of them soon died, but twenty, who happened to be wealthy, succeeded, after enduring much torture, in purchasing their lives of their inhuman persecutors. The principal burgomaster, Heinrich Lambertszoon, was less fortunate. Known to be affluent, he was tortured by exposing the soles of his feet to a fire until they were almost consumed. On promise that his life should be spared, he then agreed to pay a heavy ransom; but hardly had he furnished the stipulated sum when, by express order of Don Frederic himself, he was hanged in his own doorway, and his dismembered limbs afterwards nailed to the gates of the city.

Nearly all the inhabitants of Naarden, soldiers and citizens, were thus destroyed, and now Don Frederic issued peremptory orders that no one, on pain of death, should give lodging or food to any fugitive. He likewise forbade to the dead all that could now be forbidden them—a grave. Three weeks long did these unburied bodies pollute the streets, nor could the few wretched women who still cowered within such houses as had escaped the flames ever wave from their lurking-places without treading upon the festering remains of what had been their husbands, their fathers, or their brethren. Such was the express command of him whom the flatterers called the "most divine genius ever known." Shortly afterwards came an order to dismantle the fortifications, which had certainly proved sufficiently feeble in the hour of need, and to raze what was left of the city from the surface of the earth. The work was faithfully accomplished, and for a long time Naarden ceased to exist.

Alva wrote, with his usual complacency in such cases, to his sovereign, that "they had cut the throats of the burghers and all the garrison, and that they had not left a mother's son alive." The statement was almost literally correct,
nor was the cant with which these bloodhounds commented upon their crimes less odious than their guilt. "It was a permission of God," said the duke, "that these people should have undertaken to defend a city, which was so weak that no other persons would have attempted such a thing." Nor was the reflection of Mendoza less pious. "The sack of Naarden," said that really brave and accomplished cavalier, "was a chastisement which must be believed to have taken place by express permission of a Divine Providence; a punishment for having been the first of the Holland towns in which heresy built its nest, whence it has taken flight to all the neighboring cities."

It is not without reluctance, but still with a stern determination, that the historian should faithfully record these transactions. To extenuate would be base, to exaggerate impossible. It is good that the world should not forget how much wrong has been endured by a single harmless nation at the hands of despotism, and in the sacred name of God. There have been tongues and pens enough to narrate the excesses of the people, bursting from time to time out of slavery into madness. It is good, too, that those crimes should be remembered, and freshly pondered, but it is equally wholesome to study the opposite picture. Tyranny, ever young and ever old, constantly reproducing herself with the same stony features, with the same imposing mask which she has worn through all the ages, can never be too minutely examined, especially when she paints her own portrait, and when the secret history of her guilt is furnished by the confessions of her lovers. The perusal of her traits will not make us love popular liberty the less.

The history of Alva’s administration in the Netherlands is one of those pictures which strike us almost dumb with wonder. Why has the Almighty suffered such crimes to be perpetrated in His sacred name? Was it necessary that many generations should wade through this blood in order to acquire for their descendants the blessings of civil and religious freedom? Was it necessary that an Alva should ravage a peaceful nation with sword and flame—that desolation should be spread over a happy land, in order that the pure and heroic character of a William of Orange should stand forth more conspicuously, like an antique statue of spotless marble against a stormy sky?

After the army which the prince had so unsuccessfully led to the relief of Mons had been disbanded, he had himself repaired to Holland. He had come to Kampen shortly before its defection from his cause. Thence he had been escorted across the Zuyder Zee to Enkhuyzen. He came to that province, the only one which through good and ill report remained entirely faithful to him, not as a conqueror but as an unsuccessful, proscribed man. But there were warm hearts beating within those cold lagunes, and no conqueror returning from a brilliant series of victories could have been received with more affectionate respect than William in that darkest hour of the country’s history. He had but seventy horsemen at his back, all which remained of the 20,000 troops which he had a second time levied in Germany, and he felt that it would
be at that period hopeless for him to attempt the formation of a third army. He had now come thither to share the fate of Holland, at least, if he could not accomplish her liberation. He went from city to city, advising with the magistracies and with the inhabitants, and arranging many matters pertaining both to peace and war. At Harlem the States of the Provinces, according to his request, had been assembled. The assembly begged him to lay before them, if it were possible, any schemes and means which he might have devised for further resistance to the Duke of Alva. Thus solicited, the prince, in a very secret session, unfolded his plans, and satisfied them as to the future prospects of the cause. His speech has nowhere been preserved. His strict injunctions as to secrecy, doubtless, prevented or effaced any record of the session. It is probable, however, that he entered more fully into the state of his negotiations with England, and into the possibility of a resumption by Count Louis of his private intercourse with the French court, than it was safe, publicly, to divulge.

While the prince had been thus occupied in preparing the stout-hearted province for the last death struggle with its foe, that mortal combat was already fast approaching; for the aspect of the contest in the Netherlands was not that of ordinary warfare. It was an encounter between two principles, in their nature so hostile to each other that the absolute destruction of one was the only possible issue. As the fight went on, each individual combatant seemed inspired by direct personal malignity, and men found a pleasure in deeds of cruelty, from which generations not educated to slaughter recoil with horror. To murder defenseless prisoners; to drink, not metaphorically but literally, the heart’s blood of an enemy; to exercise a devilish ingenuity in inventions of mutual torture, became not only a duty but a rapture. The Liberty of the Netherlands had now been hunted to its lair. It had taken its last refuge among the sands and thickets where its savage infancy had been nurtured, and had now prepared itself to crush its tormentor in a last embrace, or to die in the struggle.

After the conclusion of the sack and massacre of Naarden, Don Frederic had hastened to Amsterdam, where the duke was then quartered, that he might receive the paternal benediction for his well-accomplished work. The royal approbation was soon afterwards added to the applause of his parent, and the duke was warmly congratulated in a letter written by Philip as soon as the murderous deed was known, that Don Frederic had so plainly shown himself to be his father’s son. There was now more work for father and son. Amsterdam was the only point in Holland which held for Alva, and from that point it was determined to recover the whole province. The Prince of Orange was established in the southern district; Diedrich Sonoy, his lieutenant, was stationed in North Holland. The important city of Harlem lay between the two, at a spot where the whole breadth of the territory, from sea to sea, was less than an hour’s walk. With the fall of that city the province would be cut in
twain, the rebellious forces utterly dissevered, and all further resistance, it was thought, rendered impossible.

The inhabitants of Harlem felt their danger. Bossu, Alva’s stadholder for Holland, had formally announced the system hitherto pursued at Mechlin, Zutphen, and Naarden, as the deliberate policy of the government. The king’s representative had formally proclaimed the extermination of man, woman, and child in every city which opposed his authority, but the promulgation and practice of such a system had an opposite effect to the one intended. The hearts of the Hollanders were rather steeled to resistance than awed into submission by the fate of Naarden. A fortunate event, too, was accepted as a lucky omen for the coming contest. A little fleet of armed vessels, belonging to Holland, had been frozen up in the neighborhood of Amsterdam. Don Frederic on his arrival from Naarden, dispatched a body of picked men over the ice to attack the imprisoned vessels. The crews had, however, fortified themselves by digging a wide trench around the whole fleet, which thus became from the moment an almost impregnable fortress. Out of this frozen citadel a strong band of well-armed and skilful musketeers sallied forth upon skates as the besieging force advanced. A rapid, brilliant, and slippery skirmish succeeded, in which the Hollanders, so accustomed to such sports, easily vanquished their antagonists, and drove them off the field, with the loss of several hundred left dead upon the ice. "’T was a thing never heard of before today," said Alva, "to see a body of arquebusiers thus skirmishing upon a frozen sea." In the course of the next four-and-twenty hours a flood and a rapid thaw released the vessels, which all escaped to Enkhuyzen, while a frost, immediately and strangely succeeding, made pursuit impossible.

The Spaniards were astonished at these novel maneuvers upon the ice. It is amusing to read their elaborate descriptions of the wonderful appendages which had enabled the Hollanders to glide so glibly into battle with a superior force, and so rapidly to glance away, after achieving a signal triumph. Nevertheless, the Spaniards could never be dismayed, and were always apt scholars, even if an enemy were the teacher. Alva immediately ordered 7,000 pairs of skates, and his soldiers soon learned to perform military evolutions with these new accoutrements as audaciously, if not as adroitly, as the Hollanders.

A portion of the Harlem magistracy, notwithstanding the spirit which pervaded the province, began to tremble as danger approached. They were base enough to enter into secret negotiations with Alva, and to send three of their own number to treat with the duke at Amsterdam. One was wise enough to remain with the enemy. The other two were arrested on their return, and condemned, after an impartial trial, to death. For, while these emissaries of a cowardly magistracy were absent, the stout commandant of the little garrison, Ripperda, had assembled the citizens and soldiers in the market-place. He warned them of the absolute necessity to make a last effort for freedom. In startling colors
he held up to them the fate of Mechlin, of Zutphen, of Naarden, as a prophetic mirror, in which they might read their own fate should they be base enough to surrender the city. There was no composition possible, he urged, with foes who were as false as they were sanguinary, and whose foul passions were stimulated, not slaked, by the horrors with which they had already feasted themselves.

Ripperda addressed men who could sympathize with his bold and lofty sentiments. Soldiers and citizens cried out for defense instead of surrender, as with one voice, for there were no abject spirits at Harlem, save among the magistracy; and Saint Aldegonde, the faithful minister of Orange, was soon sent to Harlem by the prince to make a thorough change in that body.

Harlem, over whose ruins the Spanish tyranny intended to make its entrance into Holland, lay in the narrowest part of that narrow isthmus which separates the Zuyder Zee from the German Ocean. The distance from sea to sea is hardly five English miles across. Westerly from the city extended a slender strip of land, once a morass, then a fruitful meadow, maintained by unflagging fortitude in the very jaws of a stormy ocean. Between the North Sea and the outer edge of this pasture surged those wild and fantastic downs, heaped up by wind and wave in mimicry of mountains; the long coils of that rope of sand, by which, plaited into additional strength by the slenderest of bulrushes, the waves of the North Sea were made to obey the command of man. On the opposite, or eastern side, Harlem looked towards Amsterdam. That already flourishing city was distant but ten miles. The two cities were separated by an expanse of inland water, and united by a slender causeway. The Harlem Lake, formed less than a century before by the bursting of four lesser meres during a storm which had threatened to swallow the whole Peninsula, extended itself on the South and East; a sea of limited dimensions, being only fifteen feet in depth with seventy square miles of surface, but, exposed as it lay to all the winds of heaven, often lashed into storms as dangerous as those of the Atlantic. Beyond the lake, towards the North, the waters of the Y nearly swept across the Peninsula. This inlet of the Zuyder Zee was only separated from the Harlem mere by a slender thread of land. Over this ran the causeway between the two sister cities, now so unfortunately in arms against each other. Midway between the two, the dyke was pierced and closed again with a system of sluice-works, which when opened admitted the waters of the lake into those of the estuary, and caused an inundation of the surrounding country.

The city was one of the largest and most beautiful in the Netherlands. It was also one of the weakest. The walls were of antique construction, turreted, but not strong. The extent and feebleness of the defenses made a large garrison necessary, but unfortunately, the garrison was even weaker than the walls. The city’s main reliance was on the stout hearts of the inhabitants. The streets were, for that day, spacious and regular, the canals planted with limes and poplars. The ancient church of Saint Bavon, a large imposing structure of brick,
stood almost in the center of the place, the most prominent object, not only of the town but of the province, visible over leagues of sea and of land more level than the sea, and seeming to gather the whole quiet little city under its sacred and protective wings. Its tall open-work leaden spire was surmounted by a colossal crown, which an exalted imagination might have regarded as the emblematic guerdon of martyrdom held aloft over the city, to reward its heroism and its agony.

It was at once obvious that the watery expanse between Harlem and Amsterdam would be the principal theatre of the operations about to commence. The siege was soon begun. The fugitive burgomaster, De Fries, had the effrontery, with the advice of Alva, to address a letter to the citizens, urging them to surrender at discretion. The messenger was hanged—a cruel but practical answer, which put an end to all further traitorous communications. This was in the first week of December. On the tenth, Don Frederic sent a strong detachment to capture the fort and village of Sparendam, as an indispensable preliminary to the commencement of the siege. A peasant having shown Zapata, the commander of the expedition, a secret passage across the flooded and frozen meadows, the Spaniards stormed the place gallantly, routed the whole garrison, killed three hundred, and took possession of the works and village. Next day, Don Frederic appeared before the walls of Harlem, and proceeded regularly to invest the place. The misty weather favored his operations, nor did he cease reinforcing himself, until at least 30,000 men, including 1,500 cavalry, had been encamped around the city. The Germans, under Count Overstein, were stationed in a beautiful and extensive grove of limes and beeches, which spread between the southern walls and the shore of Harlem Lake. Don Frederic, with his Spaniards, took up a position on the opposite side, at a place called the House of Kleef, the ruins of which still remain. The Walloons, and other regiments were distributed in different places, so as completely to encircle the town. On the edge of the mere, the Prince of Orange had already ordered a cluster of forts to be erected, by which the command of its frozen surface was at first secured for Harlem. In the course of the siege, however, other forts were erected by Don Frederic, so that the aspect of things suffered a change.

Against this immense force, nearly equal in number to that of the whole population of the city, the garrison within the walls never amounted to more than 4,000 men. In the beginning it was much less numerous. The same circumstances, however, which assisted the initiatory operations of Don Frederic, were of advantage to the Harlemers. A dense frozen fog hung continually over the surface of the lake. Covered by this curtain, large supplies of men, provisions, and ammunition were daily introduced into the city, notwithstanding all the efforts of the besieging force. Sledges skimming over the ice, men, women, and even children, moving on their skates as swiftly as the wind, all brought their contributions in the course of the short dark days and long nights of December, in which the wintry siege was opened. The
garrison at last numbered about one thousand pioneers or delvers, three thousand fighting men, and about three hundred fighting women. The last was a most efficient corps, all females of respectable character, armed with sword, musket, and dagger. Their chief, Kenau Hasselaer, was a widow of distinguished family and unblemished reputation, about forty-seven years of age, who, at the head of her amazons, participated in many of the most fiercely contested actions of the siege, both within and without the walls. When such a spirit animated the maids and matrons of the city, it might be expected that the men would hardly surrender the place without a struggle. The prince had assembled a force of three or four thousand men at Leyden, which he sent before the middle of December towards the city under the command of De la Marck. These troops were, however, attacked on the way by a strong detachment under Bossu, Noircarmes, and Romero. After a sharp action in a heavy snowstorm, De la Marck was completely routed. One thousand of his soldiers were cut to pieces, and a large number carried off as prisoners to the gibbets, which were already conspicuously erected in the Spanish camp, and which from the commencement to the close of the siege were never bare of victims. Among the captives was a gallant officer, Baptist van Trier, for whom De la Marck in vain offered 2,000 crowns and nineteen Spanish prisoners. The proposition was refused with contempt. Van Trier was hanged upon the gallows by one leg until he was dead, in return for which barbarity the nineteen Spaniards were immediately gibbeted by De la Marck. With this interchange of cruelties the siege may be said to have opened.

Don Frederic had stationed himself in a position opposite to the gate of the Cross, which was not very strong, but fortified by a ravelin. Intending to make a very short siege of it, he established his batteries immediately, and on the 18th, 19th, and 20th December directed a furious cannonade against the Cross-gate, the St. John’s-gate, and the curtain between the two. Six hundred and eighty shots were discharged on the first, and nearly as many on each of the two succeeding days. The walls were much shattered, but men, women, and children worked night and day within the city, repairing the breaches as fast as made. They brought bags of sand, blocks of stone, cart-loads of earth from every quarter, and they stripped the churches of all their statues, which they threw by heaps into the gaps. They sought thus a more practical advantage from those sculptured saints than they could have gained by only imploring their interposition. The fact, however, excited horror among the besiegers. Men who were daily butchering their fellow-beings, and hanging their prisoners in cold blood, affected to shudder at the enormity of the offense thus exercised against graven images.

After three days’ cannonade, the assault was ordered, Don Frederic only intending a rapid massacre, to crown his achievements at Zutphen and Naarden. The place, he thought, would fall in a week, and after another week of sacking, killing, and ravishing, he might sweep on to “pastures new” until Holland was overwhelmed. Romero advanced to the breach, followed by a
numerous storming party, but met with a resistance which astonished the Spaniards. The church bells rang the alarm throughout the city, and the whole population swarmed to the walls. The besiegers were encountered not only with sword and musket, but with every implement which the burghers' hands could find. Heavy stones, boiling oil, live coals, were hurled upon the heads of the soldiers; hoops, smeared with pitch and set on fire, were dexterously thrown upon their necks. Even Spanish courage and Spanish ferocity were obliged to shrink before the steady determination of a whole population animated by a single spirit. Romero lost an eye in the conflict, many officers were killed and wounded, and three or four hundred soldiers left dead in the breach, while only three or four of the townsmen lost their lives. The signal of recall was reluctantly given, and the Spaniards abandoned the assault. Don Frederic was now aware that Harlem would not fall at his feet at the first sound of his trumpet. It was obvious that a siege must precede the massacre. He gave orders therefore that the ravelin should be undermined, and doubted not that, with a few days' delay, the place would be in his hands.

Meantime, the Prince of Orange, from his headquarters at Sassenheim, on the southern extremity of the mere, made a fresh effort to throw succor into the place. Two thousand men, with seven field-pieces, and many wagon-loads of munitions, were sent forward under Batenburg. This officer had replaced De la Marck, whom the prince had at last deprived of his commission. The reckless and unprincipled freebooter was no longer to serve a cause which was more sullied by his barbarity than it could be advanced by his desperate valor. Batenburg’s expedition was, however, not more successful than the one made by his predecessor. The troops, after reaching the vicinity of the city, lost their way in the thick mists, which almost perpetually enveloped the scene. Cannons were fired, fog-bells were rung, and beacon fires were lighted on the ramparts, but the party was irretrievably lost. The Spaniards fell upon them before they could find their way to the city. Many were put to the sword, others made their escape in different directions; a very few succeeded in entering Harlem. Batenburg brought off a remnant of the forces, but all the provisions so much needed were lost, and the little army entirely destroyed.

De Koning, the second in command, was among the prisoners. The Spaniards cut off his head and threw it over the walls into the city, with this inscription: "This is the head of Captain de Koning, who is on his way with reinforcements for the good city of Harlem." The citizens retorted with a practical jest, which was still more barbarous. They cut off the heads of eleven prisoners and put them into a barrel, which they threw into the Spanish camp. A label upon the barrel contained these words: "Deliver these ten heads to Duke Alva in payment of his ten-penny tax, with one additional head for interest." With such ghastly merriment did besieged and besiegers vary the monotonous horror of that winter’s siege. As the sallies and skirmishes were of daily occurrence, there was a constant supply of prisoners, upon whom both parties might exercise their ingenuity, so that the gallows in camp or city was perpetually garnished.
Since the assault of the 21\textsuperscript{st} of December, Don Frederic had been making his subterranean attack by regular approaches. As fast, however, as the Spaniards mined, the citizens countermined. Spaniard and Netherlander met daily in deadly combat within the bowels of the earth. Desperate and frequent were the struggles within gangways so narrow that nothing but daggers could be used, so obscure that the dim lanterns hardly lighted the death-stroke. They seemed the conflicts, not of men but of evil spirits. Nor were these hand-to-hand battles all. A shower of heads, limbs, mutilated trunks, the mangled remains of hundreds of human beings, often spouted from the earth as if from an invisible volcano. The mines were sprung with unexampled frequency and determination. Still the Spaniards toiled on with undiminished zeal, and still the besieged, undismayed, delved below their works, and checked their advance by sword, and spear, and horrible explosions.

The Prince of Orange, meanwhile, encouraged the citizens to persevere, by frequent promises of assistance. His letters, written on extremely small bits of paper, were sent into the town by carrier pigeons. On the 28\textsuperscript{th} of January he dispatched a considerable supply of the two necessaries, powder and bread, on one hundred and seventy sledges across the Harlem Lake, together with four hundred veteran soldiers. The citizens continued to contest the approaches to the ravelin before the Cross-gate, but it had become obvious that they could not hold it long. Secretly, steadfastly, and swiftly they had, therefore, during the long wintry nights, been constructing a half moon of solid masonry on the inside of the same portal. Old men, feeble women, tender children, united with the able-bodied to accomplish this work, by which they hoped still to maintain themselves after the ravelin had fallen.

On the 31\textsuperscript{st} of January, after two or three days’ cannonade against the gates of the Cross and of Saint John, and the intervening curtains, Don Frederic ordered a midnight assault. The walls had been much shattered, part of the John’s-gate was in ruins; the Spaniards mounted the breach in great numbers; the city was almost taken by surprise; while the commander-in-chief, sure of victory, ordered the whole of his forces under arms to cut off the population who were to stream panic-struck from every issue. The attack was unexpected, but the forty or fifty sentinels defended the walls while they sounded the alarm. The tocsin bells tolled, and the citizens, whose sleep was not apt to be heavy during that perilous winter, soon manned the ramparts again. The daylight came upon them while the fierce struggle was still at its height. The besieged, as before, defended themselves with musket and rapier, with melted pitch, with firebrands, with clubs and stones. Meantime, after morning prayers in the Spanish camp, the trumpet for a general assault was sounded. A tremendous onset was made upon the gate of the Cross, and the ravelin was carried at last. The Spaniards poured into this fort, so long the object of their attack, expecting instantly to sweep into the city with sword and fire. As they mounted its wall they became for the first time aware of the new and stronger fortification which had been secretly constructed on the inner side. The reason
why the ravelin had been at last conceded was revealed. The half moon, whose existence they had not suspected, rose before them bristling with cannon. A sharp fire was instantly opened upon the besiegers, while at the same instant the ravelin, which the citizens had undermined, blew up with a severe explosion, carrying into the air all the soldiers who had just entered it so triumphantly. This was the turning point. The retreat was sounded, and the Spaniards fled to their camp, leaving at least three hundred dead beneath the walls. Thus was a second assault, made by an overwhelming force and led by the most accomplished generals of Spain, signally and gloriously repelled by the plain burghers of Harlem.

It became now almost evident that the city could be taken neither by regular approaches nor by sudden attack. It was therefore resolved that it should be reduced by famine. Still, as the winter wore on, the immense army without the walls were as great sufferers by that Scourge as the population within. The soldiers fell in heaps before the diseases engendered by intense cold and insufficient food, for, as usual in such sieges, these deaths far outnumbered those inflicted by the enemy’s hand. The sufferings inside the city necessarily increased day by day, the whole population being put on a strict allowance of food. Their supplies were daily diminishing, and with the approach of the spring and the thawing of the ice on the lake, there was danger that they would be entirely cut off. If the possession of the water were lost, they must yield or starve, and they doubted whether the prince would be able to organize a fleet. The gaunt specter of Famine already rose before them with a menace which could not be misunderstood. In their misery they longed for the assaults of the Spaniards, that they might look in the face of a less formidable foe. They paraded the ramparts daily, with drums beating, colors flying, taunting the besiegers to renewed attempts. To inflame the religious animosity of their antagonists, they attired themselves in the splendid, gold-embroidered vestments of the priests, which they took from the churches, and moved about in mock procession, bearing aloft images bedizened in ecclesiastical finery, relics, and other symbols, sacred in Catholic eyes, which they afterwards hurled from the ramparts, or broke, with derisive shouts, into a thousand fragments.

It was, however, at that season earnestly debated by the enemy whether or not to raise the siege. Don Frederic was clearly of opinion that enough had been done for the honor of the Spanish arms. He was wearied with seeing his men perish helplessly around him, and considered the prize too paltry for the lives it must cost. His father thought differently. Perhaps he recalled the siege of Metz, and the unceasing regret with which, as he believed, his imperial master had remembered the advice received from him. At any rate the duke now sent back Don Bernardino de Mendoza, whom Don Frederic had dispatched to Nimwegen, soliciting his father’s permission to raise the siege, with this reply: “Tell Don Frederic,” said Alva, “that if he be not decided to continue the siege till the town be taken, I shall no longer consider him my son, whatever my
opinion may formerly have been. *Should he fall in the siege*, I will myself take the field to maintain it, and when we have both perished, the Duchess, my wife, shall come from Spain to do the same.

Such language was unequivocal, and hostilities were resumed as fiercely as before. The besieged welcomed them with rapture, and, as usual, made daily the most desperate sallies. In one outbreak the Harlemer, under cover of a thick fog, marched up to the enemy’s chief battery, and attempted to spike the guns before his face. They were all slain at the cannon’s mouth, whither patriotism, not vainglory, had led them, and lay dead around the battery, with their hammers and spikes in their hands. The same spirit was daily manifested. As the spring advanced, the kine went daily out of the gates to their peaceful pasture, notwithstanding all the turmoil within and around; nor was it possible for the Spaniards to capture a single one of these creatures, without paying at least a dozen soldiers as its price.

"These citizens," wrote Don Frederic, "do as much as the best soldiers in the world could do."

The frost broke up by the end of February. Count Bossu, who had been building a fleet of small vessels in Amsterdam, soon afterwards succeeded in entering the lake with a few gunboats, through a breach which he had made in the Overtoom, about half a league from that city. The possession of the lake was already imperiled. The prince, however, had not been idle, and he, too, was soon ready to send his flotilla to the mere. At the same time, the city of Amsterdam was in almost as hazardous a position as Harlem. As the one on the lake, so did the other depend upon its dyke for its supplies. Should that great artificial road which led to Muyden and Utrecht be cut asunder, Amsterdam might be starved as soon as Harlem. "Since I came into the world," wrote Alva, "I have never been in such anxiety. If they should succeed in cutting off the communication along the dykes, we should have to raise the siege of Harlem, to surrender, hands crossed, or to starve." Orange was fully aware of the position of both places, but he was, as usual, sadly deficient in men and means. He wrote imploringly to his friends in England, in France, in Germany. He urged his brother Louis to bring a few soldiers, if it were humanly possible. "The whole country longs for you," he wrote to Louis, "as if you were the archangel Gabriel."

The prince, however, did all that it was possible for man, so hampered, to do. He was himself, while anxiously writing, and hoping, and waiting for supplies of troops from Germany or France, doing his best with such volunteers as he could raise. He was still established at Sassenheim, on the South of the city, while Sonoy with his slender forces was encamped on the North. He now sent that general with as large a party as he could muster to attack the Diemerdyk. His men entrenched themselves as strongly as they could between the Diemer and the Y, at the same time opening the sluices and breaking through the dyke.
During the absence of their commander, who had gone to Edam for reinforcements, they were attacked by a large force from Amsterdam. A fierce amphibious contest took place, partly in boats, partly on the slippery causeway, partly in the water, resembling in character the frequent combats between the ancient Batavians and Romans during the wars of Civilis. The patriots were eventually overpowered.

Sonoy, who was on his way to their rescue, was frustrated in his design by the unexpected faint-heartedness of the volunteers whom he had enlisted at Edam. Braving a thousand perils, he advanced, almost unattended, in his little vessel, but only to witness the overthrow and expulsion of his band. It was too late for him singly to attempt to rally the retreating troops. They had fought well, but had been forced to yield before superior numbers, one individual of the little army having performed prodigies of valor. John Haring, of Horn, had planted himself entirely alone upon the dyke, where it was so narrow between the Y on the one side and the Diemer Lake on the other, that two men could hardly stand abreast. Here, armed with sword and shield, he had actually opposed and held in check one thousand of the enemy, during a period long enough to enable his own men, if they had been willing, to rally, and effectively to repel the attack. It was too late, the battle was too far lost to be restored; but still the brave soldier held the post, till, by his devotion, he had enabled all those of his compatriots who still remained in the entrenchments to make good their retreat. He then plunged into the sea, and, untouched by spear or bullet, effected his escape. Had he been a Greek or a Roman, a Horatius or a Chabrias, his name would have been famous in history—his statue erected in the marketplace; for the bold Dutchman on his dyke had manifested as much valor in a sacred cause as the most classic heroes of antiquity.

This unsuccessful attempt to cut off the communication between Amsterdam and the country strengthened the hopes of Alva. Several hundreds of the patriots were killed or captured, and among the slain was Antony Oliver, the painter, through whose agency Louis of Nassau had been introduced into Mons. His head was cut off by two ensigns in Alva’s service, who received the price which had been set upon it of 2,000 caroli. It was then labeled with its owner’s name, and thrown into the city of Harlem. At the same time a new gibbet was erected in the Spanish camp before the city, in a conspicuous situation, upon which all the prisoners were hanged, some by the neck, some by the heels, in full view of their countrymen. As usual, this especial act of cruelty excited the emulation of the citizens. Two of the old board of magistrates, belonging to the Spanish party, were still imprisoned at Harlem, together with seven other persons, among whom was a priest and a boy of twelve years. They were now condemned to the gallows. The wife of one of the ex-burgomasters and his daughter, who was a beguin, went by his side as he was led to execution, piously exhorting him to sustain with courage the execrations of the populace and his ignominious doom. The rabble, irritated by such boldness, were not satisfied with wreaking their vengeance on the principal victims, but after the
execution had taken place they hunted the wife and daughter into the water, where they both perished. It is right to record these instances of cruelty, sometimes perpetrated by the patriots as well as by their oppressors—a cruelty rendered almost inevitable by the incredible barbarity of the foreign invader. It was a war of wolfish malignity. In the words of Mendoza, every man within and without Harlem "seemed inspired by a spirit of special and personal vengeance." The innocent blood poured out in Mechlin, Zutphen, Naarden, and upon a thousand scaffolds, had been crying too long from the ground. The Hollanders must have been more or less than men not to be sometimes betrayed into acts which justice and reason must denounce.

The singular mood which has been recorded of a high-spirited officer of the garrison, Captain Curey, illustrated the horror with which such scenes of carnage were regarded by noble natures. Of a gentle disposition originally, but inflamed almost to insanity by a contemplation of Spanish cruelty, he had taken up the profession of arms, to which he had a natural repugnance. Brave to recklessness, he led his men on every daring outbreak, on every perilous midnight adventure. Armed only with his rapier, without defensive armor, he was ever found where the battle raged most fiercely, and numerous were the victims who fell before his sword. On returning, however, from such excursions, he invariably shut himself in his quarters, took to his bed, and lay for days, sick with remorse, and bitterly lamenting all that bloodshed in which he had so deeply participated, and which a cruel fate seemed to render necessary. As the gentle mood subsided, his frenzy would return, and again he would rush to the field, to seek new havoc and fresh victims for his rage.

The combats before the walls were of almost daily occurrence. On the 25th of March, 1,000 of the besieged made a brilliant sally, drove in all the outposts of the enemy, burned three hundred tents, and captured seven cannon, nine standards, and many wagon-loads of provisions, all which they succeeded in bringing with them into the city. Having thus reinforced themselves, in a manner not often practiced by the citizens of a beleaguered town, in the very face of 30,000 veterans; having killed eight hundred of the enemy, which was nearly one for every man engaged, while they lost but four of their own party; the Harlemers, on their return, erected a trophy of funereal but exulting aspect. A mound of earth was constructed upon the ramparts, in the form of a colossal grave, in full view of the enemy’s camp, and upon it were planted the cannon and standards so gallantly won in the skirmish, with the taunting inscription floating from the center of the mound—"Harlem is the graveyard of the Spaniards."

Such were the characteristics of this famous siege during the winter and early spring. Alva might well write to his sovereign, that "it was a war such as never before was seen or heard of in any land on earth." Yet the duke had known near sixty years of warfare. He informed Philip that "never was a place defended with such skill and bravery as Harlem, either by rebels or by men
fighting for their lawful Prince.” Certainly his son had discovered his mistake in asserting that the city would yield in a week; while the father, after nearly six years’ experience, had found this “people of butter” less malleable than even those “iron people” whom he boasted of having tamed. It was seen that neither the skies of Greece or Italy, nor the sublime scenery of Switzerland, were necessary to arouse the spirit of defiance to foreign oppression—a spirit which beat as proudly among the wintry mists and the level meadows of Holland as it had ever done under sunnier atmospheres and in more romantic lands.

Mendoza had accomplished his mission to Spain, and had returned with supplies of money within six weeks from the date of his departure. Owing to his representations and Alva’s entreaties, Philip had, moreover, ordered Requesens, governor of Milan, to send forward to the Netherlands three veteran Spanish regiments, which were now more required at Harlem than in Italy. While the land force had thus been strengthened, the fleet upon the lake had also been largely increased. The Prince of Orange had, on the other hand, provided more than a hundred sail of various descriptions so that the whole surface of the mere was now alive with ships. Sea-fights and skirmishes took place almost daily, and it was obvious that the life and death struggle was now to be fought upon the water. So long as the Hollanders could hold or dispute the possession of the lake, it was still possible to succor Harlem from time to time. Should the Spaniards overcome the prince’s fleet, the city must inevitably starve.

At last, on the 28th of May, a decisive engagement of the fleets took place. The vessels grappled with each other, and there was a long, fierce, hand-to-hand combat. Under Bossu were one hundred vessels; under Martin Brand, admiral of the patriot fleet, nearly one hundred and fifty, but of lesser dimensions. Batenburg commanded the troops on board the Dutch vessels. After a protracted conflict, in which several thousands were killed, the victory was decided in favor of the Spaniards. Twenty-two of the prince’s vessels being captured, and the rest totally routed, Bossu swept across the lake in triumph. The forts belonging to the patriots were immediately taken, and the Harlemers, with their friends, entirely excluded from the lake.

This was the beginning of the end. Despair took possession of the city. The whole population had been long subsisting upon an allowance of a pound of bread to each man, and half a pound for each woman; but the bread was now exhausted, the famine had already begun, and with the loss of the lake, starvation was close at their doors. They sent urgent entreaties to the prince to attempt something in their behalf. Three weeks more they assigned as the longest term during which they could possibly hold out. He sent them word by carrier pigeons to endure yet a little time, for he was assembling a force, and would still succeed in furnishing them with supplies. Meantime, through the month of June the sufferings of the inhabitants increased hourly. Ordinary food had long since vanished. The population now subsisted on linseed and rape-
seed; as these supplies were exhausted they devoured cats, dogs, rats, and mice, and when at last these unclean animals had been all consumed, they boiled the hides of horses and oxen; they ate shoe-leather; they plucked the nettles and grass from the graveyards, and the weeds which grew between the stones of the pavement, that with such food they might still support life a little longer, till the promised succor should arrive. Men, women, and children fell dead by scores in the streets, perishing of pure starvation, and the survivors had hardly the heart or the strength to bury them out of their sight. They who yet lived seemed to flit like shadows to and fro, envying those whose sufferings had already been terminated by death.

Thus wore away the month of June. On the first of July the burghers consented to a parley. Deputies were sent to confer with the besiegers, but the negotiations were abruptly terminated, for no terms of compromise were admitted by Don Frederic. On the third, a tremendous cannonade was re-opened upon the city. One thousand and eight balls were discharged, the most which had ever been thrown in one day since the commencement of the siege. The walls were severely shattered, but the assault was not ordered, because the besiegers were assured that it was physically impossible for the inhabitants to hold out many days longer. A last letter, written in blood, was now dispatched to the Prince of Orange, stating the forlorn condition to which they were reduced. At the same time, with the derision of despair, they flung into the hostile camp the few loaves of bread which yet remained within the city walls. A day or two later, a second and third parley were held, with no more satisfactory result than had attended the first. A black flag was now hoisted on the cathedral tower, the signal of despair to friend and foe, but a pigeon soon afterwards flew into the town with a letter from the prince, begging them to maintain themselves two days longer, because succor was approaching.

The prince had indeed been doing all which, under the circumstances, was possible. He assembled the citizens of Delft in the market-place, and announced his intention of marching in person to the relief of the city, in the face of the besieging army, if any troops could be obtained. Soldiers there were none; but there was the deepest sympathy for Harlem throughout its sister cities, Delft, Rotterdam, Gouda. A numerous mass ofburghers, many of them persons of station, all people of respectability, volunteered to march to the rescue. The prince highly disapproved of this miscellaneous army, whose steadfastness he could not trust. As a soldier, he knew that for such a momentous enterprise, enthusiasm could not supply the place of experience. Nevertheless, as no regular troops could be had, and as the emergency allowed no delay, he drew up a commission, appointing Paulus Buys to be governor during his absence, and provisional stadholder, should he fall in the expedition. Four thousand armed volunteers, with six hundred mounted troopers, under Carlo de Noot, had been assembled, and the prince now placed himself at their head. There was, however, a universal cry of remonstrance from the magistracies and burghers of all the towns, and from the troops themselves, at
this project. They would not consent that a life so precious, so indispensable to the existence of Holland, should be needlessly hazarded. It was important to succor Harlem, but the prince was of more value than many cities. He at last reluctantly consented, therefore, to abandon the command of the expedition to Baron Batenburg, the less willingly from the want of confidence which he could not help feeling in the character of the forces. On the eighth of July, at dusk, the expedition set forth from Sassenheim. It numbered nearly five thousand men, who had with them four hundred wagon-loads of provisions and seven field-pieces. Among the volunteers, Oldenbarneveld, afterwards so illustrious in the history of the Republic, marched in the ranks, with his musket on his shoulder. Such was a sample of the spirit which pervaded the population of the province.

Batenburg came to a halt in the woods of Nordwyk, on the south side of the city, where he remained till midnight. All seemed still in the enemy’s camp. After prayers, he gave orders to push forward, hoping to steal through the lines of his sleeping adversaries and accomplish the relief by surprise. He was destined to be bitterly disappointed. His plans and his numbers were thoroughly known to the Spaniards, two doves, bearing letters which contained the details of the intended expedition, having been shot and brought into Don Frederic’s camp.

The citizens, it appeared, had broken through the curtain work on the side where Batenburg was expected, in order that a sally might be made in cooperation with the relieving force, as soon as it should appear. Signal fires had been agreed upon, by which the besieged were to be made aware of the approach of their friends. The Spanish Commander accordingly ordered a mass of green branches, pitch, and straw, to be lighted opposite to the gap in the city wall. Behind it he stationed 5,000 picked troops. Five thousand more, with a force of cavalry, were placed in the neighborhood of the downs, with orders to attack the patriot army on the left. Six regiments, under Romero, were ordered to move eastward, and assail their right. The dense mass of smoke concealed the beacon lights displayed by Batenburg from the observation of the townspeople, and hid the 5,000 Spaniards from the advancing Hollanders. As Batenburg emerged from the wood, he found himself attacked by a force superior to his own, while a few minutes later he was entirely enveloped by overwhelming numbers. The whole Spanish army was, indeed, under arms, and had been expecting him for two days. The unfortunate citizens alone were ignorant of his arrival. The noise of the conflict they supposed to be a false alarm created by the Spaniards, to draw them into their camp, and they declined a challenge which they were in no condition to accept. Batenburg was soon slain, and his troops utterly routed. The number killed was variously estimated at from six hundred to two and even three thousand. It is, at any rate, certain that the whole force was entirely destroyed or dispersed, and the attempt to relieve the city completely frustrated. The death of Batenburg was the less regretted, because he was accused, probably with great injustice, of
having been intoxicated at the time of action, and therefore incapable of properly conducting the enterprise entrusted to him.

The Spaniards now cut off the nose and ears of a prisoner and sent him into the city to announce the news, while a few heads were also thrown over the walls to confirm the intelligence. When this decisive overthrow became known in Delft, there was even an outbreak of indignation against Orange. According to a statement of Alva, which, however, is to be received with great distrust, some of the populace wished to sack the prince’s house, and offered him personal indignities. Certainly, if these demonstrations were made, popular anger was never more senseless; but the tale rests entirely upon a vague assertion of the duke, and is entirely at variance with every other contemporaneous account of these transactions. It had now become absolutely necessary, however, for the heroic but wretched town to abandon itself to its fate. It was impossible to attempt anything more in its behalf. The lake and its forts were in the hands of the enemy, the best force which could be mustered to make head against the besieging army had been cut to pieces, and the Prince of Orange, with a heavy heart, now sent word that the burghers were to make the best terms they could with the enemy.

The tidings of despair created a terrible commotion in the starving city. There was no hope either in submission or resistance. Massacre or starvation was the only alternative. But if there was no hope within the walls, without there was still a soldier’s death. For a moment the garrison and the able-bodied citizens resolved to advance from the gates in a solid column, to cut their way through the enemy’s camp, or to perish on the field. It was thought that the helpless and the infirm, who would alone be left in the city, might be treated with indulgence after the fighting men had all been slain. At any rate, by remaining, the strong could neither protect nor comfort them. As soon, however, as this resolve was known, there was such wailing and outcry of women and children as pierced the hearts of the soldiers and burghers, and caused them to forego the project. They felt that it was cowardly not to die in their presence. It was then determined to form all the females, the sick, the aged, and the children, into a square, to surround them with all the able-bodied men who still remained, and thus arrayed to fight their way forth from the gates, and to conquer by the strength of despair, or at least to perish all together.

These desperate projects, which the besieged were thought quite capable of executing, were soon known in the Spanish camp. Don Frederic felt, after what he had witnessed in the past seven months, that there was nothing which the Harlemers could not do or dare. He feared lest they should set fire to their city, and consume their houses, themselves, and their children, to ashes together; and he was unwilling that the fruits of his victory, purchased at such a vast expense, should be snatched from his hand as he was about to gather them. A letter was accordingly, by his order, sent to the magistracy and leading citizens, in the name of Count Overstein, commander of the German
forces in the besieging army. This dispatch invited a surrender at discretion, but contained the solemn assurance that no punishment should be inflicted except upon those who, in the judgment of the citizens themselves, had deserved it, and promised ample forgiveness if the town should submit without further delay. At the moment of sending this letter, Don Frederic was in possession of strict orders from his father not to leave a man alive of the garrison, excepting only the Germans, and to execute besides a large number of the burghers. These commands he dared not disobey, even if he had felt any inclination to do so. In consequence of the semi-official letter of Overstein, however, the city formally surrendered at discretion on the 12th of July.

The great bell was tolled, and orders were issued that all arms in the possession of the garrison or the inhabitants should be brought to the town-house. The men were then ordered to assemble in the cloister of Zyl, the women in the cathedral. On the same day, Don Frederic, accompanied by Count Bossu and a numerous staff, rode into the city. The scene which met his view might have moved a heart of stone. Everywhere was evidence of the misery which had been so bravely endured during that seven months’ siege. The smoldering ruins of houses, which had been set on fire by balls; the shattered fortifications; the felled trunks of trees; upturned pavements; broken images and other materials for repairing gaps made by the daily cannonade, strewn around in all directions; the skeletons of unclean animals from which the flesh had been gnawed; the unburied bodies of men and women who had fallen dead in the public thoroughfares; more than all, the gaunt and emaciated forms of those who still survived, the ghosts of their former selves; all might have induced at least a doubt whether the suffering inflicted already were not a sufficient punishment, even for crimes so deep as heresy and schism. But this was far from being the sentiment of Don Frederic. He seemed to read defiance as well as despair in the sunken eyes which glared upon him as he entered the place, and he took no thought of the pledge which he had informally but sacredly given.

All the officers of the garrison were at once arrested. Some of them had anticipated the sentence of their conqueror by a voluntary death. Captain Bordet, a French officer of distinction, like Brutus, compelled his servant to hold the sword upon which he fell, rather than yield himself alive to the vengeance of the Spaniards. Traits of generosity were not wanting. Instead of Peter Hasselaer, a young officer who had displayed remarkable bravery throughout the siege, the Spaniards by mistake arrested his cousin Nicholas. The prisoner was suffering himself to be led away to the inevitable scaffold without remonstrance, when Peter Hasselaer pushed his way violently through the ranks of the captors. "If you want Ensign Hasselaer, I am the man. Let this innocent person depart," he cried. Before the sun set his head had fallen. All the officers were taken to the House of Kleef, where they were immediately executed. Captain Ripperda, who had so heroically rebuked the craven conduct of the magistracy, whose eloquence had inflamed the soldiers and citizens to
resistance, and whose skill and courage had sustained the siege so long, was among the first to suffer. A natural son of Cardinal Granvelle, who could have easily saved his life by proclaiming a parentage which he loathed, and Lancelot Brederode, an illegitimate scion of that ancient house, were also among these earliest victims.

The next day Alva came over to the camp. He rode about the place, examining the condition of the fortifications from the outside, but returned to Amsterdam without having entered the city. On the following morning the massacre commenced. The plunder had been commuted for 240,000 guilders, which the citizens bound themselves to pay in four installments; but murder was an indispensable accompaniment of victory, and admitted of no compromise. Moreover, Alva had already expressed the determination to effect a general massacre upon this occasion. The garrison, during the siege, had been reduced from 4,000 to 1,800. Of these the Germans, six hundred in number, were, by Alva’s order, dismissed, on a pledge to serve no more against the king. All the rest of the garrison were immediately butchered, with at least as many citizens. Drummers went about the city daily, proclaiming that all who harbored persons having, at any former period, been fugitives, were immediately to give them up, on pain of being instantly hanged themselves in their own doors. Upon these refugees and upon the soldiery fell the brunt of the slaughter; although, from day to day, reasons were perpetually discovered for putting to death every individual at all distinguished by service, station, wealth, or liberal principles; for the carnage could not be accomplished at once, but, with all the industry and heartiness employed, was necessarily protracted through several days. Five executioners, with their attendants, were kept constantly at work; and when at last they were exhausted with fatigue, or perhaps sickened with horror, three hundred wretches were tied two and two, back to back, and drowned in the Harlem Lake.

At last, after twenty-three hundred human creatures had been murdered in cold blood, within a city where so many thousands had previously perished by violent or by lingering deaths; the blasphemous farce of a pardon was enacted. Fifty-seven of the most prominent burgurers of the place were, however, excepted from the act of amnesty, and taken into custody as security for the future good conduct of the other citizens. Of these hostages some were soon executed, some died in prison, and all would have been eventually sacrificed, had not the naval defeat of Bossu soon afterwards enabled the Prince of Orange to rescue the remaining prisoners. Ten thousand two hundred and fifty-six shots had been discharged against the walls during the siege. Twelve thousand of the besieging army had died of wounds or disease, during the seven months and two days, between the investment and the surrender. In the earlier part of August, after the executions had been satisfactorily accomplished, Don Frederic made his triumphal entry, and the first chapter in the invasion of Holland was closed. Such was the memorable siege of Harlem,
an event in which we are called upon to wonder equally at human capacity to inflict and to endure misery.

The Spaniards celebrated a victory, while in Utrecht they made an effigy of the Prince of Orange, which they carried about in procession, broke upon the wheel, and burned. It was, however, obvious, that if the reduction of Harlem were a triumph, it was one which the conquerors might well exchange for a defeat. At any rate, it was certain that the Spanish empire was not strong enough to sustain many more such victories. If it had required 30,000 choice troops, among which were three regiments called by Alva respectively, the "Invincibles," the "Immortals," and the "None-such," to conquer the weakest city of Holland in seven months, and with the loss of 12,000 men; how many men, how long a time, and how many deaths would it require to reduce the rest of that little province? For, as the sack of Naarden had produced the contrary effect from the one intended, inflaming rather than subduing the spirit of Dutch resistance, so the long and glorious defense of Harlem, notwithstanding its tragical termination, had only served to strain to the highest pitch the hatred and patriotism of the other cities in the province. Even the treasures of the New World were inadequate to pay for the conquest of that little sand-bank. Within five years, twenty-five millions of florins had been sent from Spain for war expenses in the Netherlands. Yet, this amount, with the addition of large sums annually derived from confiscations, of five millions, at which the proceeds of the hundredth penny was estimated, and the two millions yearly, for which the tenth and twentieth pence had been compounded, was insufficient to save the treasury from beggary and the unpaid troops from mutiny.

Nevertheless, for the moment the joy created was intense. Philip was lying dangerously ill at the wood of Segovia, when the happy tidings of the reduction of Harlem, with its accompanying butchery, arrived. The account of all the misery, minutely detailed to him by Alva, acted like magic. The blood of twenty-three hundred of his fellow creatures—coldly murdered, by his orders, in a single city—proved for the sanguinary monarch the elixir of life; he drank and was refreshed. "The principal medicine which has cured his Majesty," wrote Secretary Cayas from Madrid to Alva, "is the joy caused to him by the good news which you have communicated of the surrender of Harlem." In the height of his exultation, the king forgot how much dissatisfaction he had recently felt with the progress of events in the Netherlands, how much treasure had been annually expended with an insufficient result. "Knowing your necessity," continued Cayas, "his Majesty instantly sent for Doctor Velasco, and ordered him to provide you with funds, if he had to descend into the earth to dig for it." While such was the exultation of the Spaniards, the Prince of Orange was neither dismayed nor despondent. As usual, he trusted to a higher power than man. "I had hoped to send you better news," he wrote to Count Louis, "nevertheless, since it has otherwise pleased the good God, we must conform ourselves to His divine will. I take the same God to witness that I have done
everything according to my means, which was possible, to succor the city." A few days later, writing in the same spirit, he informed his brother that the Zealanders had succeeded in capturing the castle of Rammekens, on the isle of Walcheren. "I hope," he said, "that this will reduce the pride of our enemies, who, after the surrender of Harlem, have thought that they were about to swallow us alive. I assure myself, however, that they will find a very different piece of work from the one which they expect."

CHAPTER 9

The Siege of Alkmaar and the Eventual Failure of the Duke of Alva

For the sake of continuity in the narrative, the siege of Harlem has been related until its conclusion. This great event constituted, moreover, the principal stuff in Netherland history, up to the middle of the year 1573. A few loose threads must be now taken up before we can proceed farther.

Alva had for some time felt himself in a false and uncomfortable position. While he continued to be the object of a popular hatred as intense as ever glowed, he had gradually lost his hold upon those who, at the outset of his career, had been loudest and lowest in their demonstrations of respect. "Believe me," wrote Secretary Albornoz to Secretary Cayas, "this people abhor our nation worse than they abhor the Devil. As for the Duke of Alva, they foam at the mouth when they hear his name." Viglius, although still maintaining smooth relations with the governor, had been, in reality, long since estranged from him. Even Aerschot, for whom the duke had long maintained an intimacy half affectionate, half contemptuous, now began to treat him with a contumely which it was difficult for so proud a stomach to digest.

But the main source of discomfort was doubtless the presence of Medina Cœli. This was the perpetual thorn in his side, which no cunning could extract. A successor who would not and could not succeed him, yet who attended him as his shadow and his evil genius; a confidential colleague who betrayed his confidence, mocked his projects, derided his authority, and yet complained of ill treatment; a rival who was neither compeer nor subaltern, and who affected to be his censor; a functionary of a purely anomalous character, sheltering himself under his abnegation of an authority which he had not dared to assume, and criticizing measures which he was not competent to grasp—such was the Duke of Medina Cœli, in Alva’s estimation.

The bickering between the two dukes became unceasing and disgraceful. Of course, each complained to the king, and each, according to his own account,
was a martyr to the other's tyranny, but the meekness manifested by Alva, in all his relations with the newcomer, was wonderful, if we are to believe the accounts furnished by himself and by his confidential secretary. On the other hand, Medina Cœli wrote to the king, complaining of Alva in most unmitigated strains, and asserting that he was himself never allowed to see any dispatches, nor to have the slightest information as to the policy of the government. He reproached the duke with shrinking from personal participation in military operations, and begged the royal forgiveness if he withdrew from a scene where he felt himself to be superfluous.

Accordingly, towards the end of November, he took his departure, without paying his respects. The governor complained to the king of this unceremonious proceeding, and assured His Majesty that never were courtesy and gentleness so ill requited as his had been by this ingrate and cankered duke. "He told me," said Alva, "that if I did not stay in the field, he would not remain with me in peaceful cities, and he asked me if I intended to march into Holland with the troops which were to winter there. I answered, that I should go wherever it was necessary, even should I be obliged to swim through all the canals of Holland." After giving these details, the duke added, with great appearance of candor and meekness, that he was certain Medina Cœli had only been influenced by extreme zeal for His Majesty's service, and that, finding so little for him to do in the Netherlands, he had become dissatisfied with his position.

Immediately after the fall of Harlem, another attempt was made by Alva to win back the allegiance of the other cities by proclamations. It had become obvious to the governor that so determined a resistance on the part of the first place besieged augured many long campaigns before the whole province could be subdued. A circular was accordingly issued upon the 26th of July from Utrecht, and published immediately afterwards in all the cities of the Netherlands. It was a paper of singular character, commingling an affectation of almost ludicrous clemency, with honest and hearty brutality. There was consequently something very grotesque about the document. Philip, in the outset, was made to sustain towards his undutiful subjects the characters of the brooding hen and the prodigal’s father, a range of impersonation hardly to be allowed him, even by the most abject flattery. "Ye are well aware," thus ran the address, "that the king has, over and over again, manifested his willingness to receive his children, in however forlorn a condition the prodigals might return. His Majesty assures you once more that your sins, however black they may have been, shall be forgiven and forgotten in the plenitude of royal kindness, if you repent and return in season to his Majesty’s embrace. Notwithstanding your manifold crimes, his Majesty still seeks, like a hen calling her chickens, to gather you all under the parental wing. The King hereby warns you once more, therefore, to place yourselves in his royal hands, and not to wait for his rage, cruelty, and fury, and the approach of his army."
The affectionate character of the address, already fading towards the end of the preamble, soon changes to bitterness. The domestic maternal fowl dilates into the sanguinary dragon as the address proceeds. "But if," continues the monarch, "ye disregard these offers of mercy, receiving them with closed ears, as heretofore, then we warn you that there is no rigor, nor cruelty, however great, which you are not to expect by laying waste, starvation, and the sword, in such manner that nowhere shall remain a relic of that which at present exists, but his Majesty will strip bare and utterly depopulate the land, and cause it to be inhabited again by strangers; since otherwise his Majesty could not believe that the will of God and of his Majesty had been accomplished."

It is almost superfluous to add that this circular remained fruitless. The royal wrath, thus blasphemously identifying itself with divine vengeance, inspired no terror, the royal blandishments no affection.

The next point of attack was the city of Alkmaar, situate quite at the termination of the Peninsula, among the lagunes and redeemed prairies of North Holland. The Prince of Orange had already provided it with a small garrison. The city had been summoned to surrender by the middle of July, and had returned a bold refusal. Meantime, the Spaniards had retired from before the walls, while the surrender and chastisement of Harlem occupied them during the next succeeding weeks. The month of August, moreover, was mainly consumed by Alva in quelling a dangerous and protracted mutiny, which broke out among the Spanish soldiers at Harlem, between three and four thousand of them having been quartered upon the ill-fated population of that city. Unceasing misery was endured by the inhabitants at the hands of the ferocious Spaniards, flushed with victory, mutinous for long arrears of pay, and greedy for the booty which had been denied. At times, however, the fury of the soldiery was more violently directed against their own commanders than against the enemy. A project was even formed by the malcontent troops to deliver Harlem into the hands of Orange. A party of them, disguised as Baltic merchants, waited upon the prince at Delft, and were secretly admitted to his bedside before he had risen. They declared to him that they were Spanish soldiers, who had compassion on his cause, were dissatisfied with their own government, and were ready, upon receipt of 40,000 guilders, to deliver the city into his hands. The prince took the matter into consideration, and promised to accept the offer if he could raise the required sum. This, however, he found himself unable to do within the stipulated time, and thus, for want of so paltry a sum, the offer was of necessity declined.

Various were the excesses committed by the insubordinate troops in every province in the Netherlands upon the longsuffering inhabitants. Nothing, wrote Alva, had given him so much pain during his forty years of service. He avowed his determination to go to Amsterdam in order to offer himself as a hostage to the soldiery, if by so doing he could quell the mutiny. He went to Amsterdam accordingly, where by his exertions, ably seconded by those of the Marquis
Vitelli, and by the payment of thirty crowns to each soldier—fourteen on account of arrearages and sixteen as his share in the Harlem compensation money—the rebellion was appeased, and obedience restored.

There was now leisure for the general to devote his whole energies against the little city of Alkmaar. On that bank and shoal, the extreme verge of habitable earth, the spirit of Holland's Freedom stood at bay. The gray towers of Egmont Castle and of Egmont Abbey rose between the city and the sea, and there the troops sent by the Prince of Orange were quartered during the very brief period in which the citizens wavered as to receiving them. The die was soon cast, however, and the prince's garrison admitted. The Spaniards advanced, burned the village of Egmont to the ground as soon as the patriots had left it, and on the 21st of August, Don Frederic, appearing before the walls, proceeded formally to invest Alkmaar.* In a few days this had been so thoroughly accomplished that, in Alva's language, "it was impossible for a sparrow to enter or go out of the city." The odds were somewhat unequal. Sixteen thousand veteran troops constituted the besieging force. Within the city were a garrison of eight hundred soldiers, together with thirteen hundred burghers capable of bearing arms. The rest of the population consisted of a very few refugees, besides the women and children. Two thousand one hundred able-bodied men, of whom only about one third were soldiers, to resist sixteen thousand regulars?

* This is much the most important and detailed account of the siege of Alkmaar. The story is told with vigor and ferocity by a man who was daily and nightly on the walls during the whole siege, and who wrote his narrative as soon as the Spaniards had been repulsed.

The author [Kort Verhael], who was a magistrate and a pensionary of the city, observes that his "slumberous and sleepy fellow burghers were converted into experienced soldiers by the Spaniard, who summoned them every moment out of bed to the walls."

Nor was there any doubt as to the fate which was reserved for them, should they succumb. The duke was vociferous at the ingratitude with which his clemency had hitherto been requited. He complained bitterly of the ill success which had attended his monitory circulars, reproached himself with incredible vehemence, for his previous mildness, and protested that, after having executed only twenty-three hundred persons at the surrender of Harlem, besides a few additional burghers since, he had met with no correspondent demonstrations of affection. He promised himself, however, an ample compensation for all this ingratitude in the wholesale vengeance which he purposed to wreak upon Alkmaar. Already he gloated in anticipation over the havoc which would soon be let loose within those walls. Such ravings, if invented by the pen of fiction, would seem a puerile caricature; proceeding, authentically, from his own, they still appear almost too exaggerated for belief. "If I take Alkmaar," he wrote to Philip, "I am resolved not to leave a
single creature alive; the knife shall be put to every throat. Since the example of Harlem has proved of no use, perhaps an example of cruelty will bring the other cities to their senses."

He took occasion also to read a lecture to the party of conciliation in Madrid, whose counsels, as he believed, his sovereign was beginning to heed. Nothing, he maintained, could be more senseless than the idea of pardon and clemency. This had been sufficiently proved by recent events. It was easy for people at a distance to talk about gentleness, but those upon the spot knew better. *Gentleness had produced nothing*, so far; violence alone could succeed in future. "Let your Majesty," he said, "be disabused of the impression, that with kindness anything can be done with these people. Already have matters reached such a point that many of those born in the country, who have hitherto advocated clemency, are now undeceived, and acknowledge their mistake. They are of opinion that not a living soul should be left in Alkmaar, but that every individual should be put to the sword." At the same time he took occasion, even in these ferocious letters, which seem dripping with blood, to commend his own natural benignity of disposition. "Your Majesty may be certain," he said, "that no man on earth desires the path of clemency more than I do, notwithstanding my particular hatred for heretics and traitors." It was therefore with regret that he saw himself obliged to take the opposite course, and to stifle all his gentler sentiments.

Upon Diedrich Sonoy, lieutenant-governor for Orange in the province of North Holland, devolved the immediate responsibility of defending this part of the country. As the storm rolled slowly up from the South, even that experienced officer became uneasy at the unequal conflict impending. He dispatched a letter to his chief, giving a gloomy picture of his position. All looked instinctively towards the prince, as to a God in their time of danger; all felt as if upon his genius and fortitude depended the whole welfare of the fatherland. It was hoped, too, that some resource had been provided in a secret foreign alliance. "If your princely grace," wrote Sonoy, "have made a contract for assistance with any powerful potentate, it is of the highest importance that it should be known to all the cities, in order to put an end to the emigration, and to console the people in their affliction."

The answer of the prince was full of lofty enthusiasm. He reprimanded with gentle but earnest eloquence the despondency and little faith of his lieutenant and other adherents. He had not expected, he said, that they would have so soon forgotten their manly courage. They seemed to consider the whole fate of the country attached to the city of Harlem. He took God to witness that he had spared no pains, and would willingly have spared no drop of his blood to save that devoted city. "But as, notwithstanding our efforts," he continued, "it has pleased God Almighty to dispose of Harlem according to His divine will, shall we, therefore, deny and deride His holy word? Has the strong arm of the Lord thereby grown weaker? Has his Church therefore come to nought? You ask if I have entered into a firm treaty with any great king or potentate, to which I answer, that before I ever took up the cause of the oppressed Christians in these provinces, I had entered *into a close alliance with the King of kings*; and
I am firmly convinced that all who put their trust in Him shall be saved by His almighty hand. The God of armies will raise up armies for us to do battle with our enemies and His own." In conclusion, he stated his preparations for attacking the enemy by sea as well as by land, and encouraged his lieutenant and the citizens of the northern quarter to maintain a bold front before the advancing foe.

And now, with the dismantled and desolate Harlem before their eyes, a prophetic phantom, perhaps, of their own imminent fate, did the handful of people shut up within Alkmaar prepare for the worst. Their main hope lay in the friendly sea. The vast sluices called the Zyp, through which an inundation of the whole northern province could be very soon effected, were but a few miles distant. By opening these gates, and by piercing a few dykes, the ocean might be made to fight for them. To obtain this result, however, the consent of the inhabitants was requisite, as the destruction of all the standing crops would be inevitable. The city was so closely invested, that it was a matter of life and death to venture forth, and it was difficult, therefore, to find an envoy for this hazardous mission. At last, a carpenter in the city, Peter Van der Mey by name, undertook the adventure, and was entrusted with letters to Sonoy, to the Prince of Orange, and to the leading personages in several cities of the province. These papers were enclosed in a hollow walking staff, carefully made fast at the top.

Affairs soon approached a crisis within the beleaguered city. Daily skirmishes, without decisive result, had taken place outside the walls. At last, on the 18th of September, after a steady cannonade of nearly twelve hours, Don Frederic, at three in the afternoon, ordered an assault. Notwithstanding his seven months’ experience at Harlem, he still believed it certain that he should carry Alkmaar by storm. The attack took place at once upon the Frisian gate and upon the red tower on the opposite side. Two choice regiments, recently arrived from Lombardy, led the onset, rending the air with their shouts, and confident of an easy victory. They were sustained by what seemed an overwhelming force of disciplined troops. Yet never, even in the recent history of Harlem, had an attack been received by more dauntless breasts. Every living man was on the walls. The storming parties were assailed with cannon, with musketry, with pistols. Boiling water, pitch and oil, molten lead, and unslaked lime, were poured upon them every moment. Hundreds of tarred and burning hoops were skillfully quoited around the necks of the soldiers, who struggled in vain to extricate themselves from these fiery ruffs, while as fast as any of the invaders planted foot upon the breach, they were confronted face to face with sword and dagger by the burghers, who hurled them headlong into the moat below.

Thrice was the attack renewed with ever-increasing rage—thrice repulsed with unflinching fortitude. The storm continued four hours long. During all that period, not one of the defenders left his post, till he dropped from it dead or wounded. The women and children, unscares by the balls flying in every direction, or by the hand-to-hand conflicts on the ramparts, passed steadily to and fro from the arsenals to the fortifications, constantly supplying their
fathers, husbands, and brothers with powder and ball. Thus, every human being in the city that could walk had become a soldier. At last darkness fell upon the scene. The trumpet of recall was sounded, and the Spaniards, utterly discomfited, retired from the walls, leaving at least one thousand dead in the trenches, while only thirteen burghers and twenty-four of the garrison lost their lives. Thus was Alkmaar preserved for a little longer, thus a large and well-appointed army signally defeated by a handful of men fighting for their firesides and altars. Ensign Solis, who had mounted the breach for an instant, and miraculously escaped with life, after having been hurled from the battlements, reported that he had seen "neither helmet nor harness," as he looked down into the city—only some plain-looking people, generally dressed like fishermen. Yet these plain-looking fishermen had defeated the veterans of Alva.

The citizens felt encouraged by the results of that day’s work. Moreover, they already possessed such information concerning the condition of affairs in the camp of the enemy as gave them additional confidence. A Spaniard, named Jeronimo, had been taken prisoner and brought into the city. On receiving a promise of pardon, he had revealed many secrets concerning the position and intentions of the besieging army. It is painful to add that the prisoner, notwithstanding his disclosures and the promise under which they had been made, was treacherously executed. He begged hard for his life as he was led to the gallows, offering fresh revelations, which, however, after the ample communications already made, were esteemed superfluous. Finding this of no avail, he promised his captors, with perfect simplicity, to go down on his knees and worship the Devil precisely as they did, if by so doing he might obtain mercy. It may be supposed that such a proposition was not likely to gain additional favor for him in the eyes of these rigid Calvinists, and the poor wretch was accordingly hanged.

The day following the assault, a fresh cannonade was opened upon the city. Seven hundred shots having been discharged, the attack was ordered. It was in vain; neither threats nor entreaties could induce the Spaniards, hitherto so indomitable, to mount the breach. The place seemed to their imagination protected by more than mortal powers—otherwise how was it possible that a few half-starved fishermen could already have so triumphantly overthrown the time-honored legions of Spain? It was thought, no doubt, that the Devil, whom they worshipped, would continue to protect his children. Neither the entreaties nor the menaces of Don Frederic were of any avail. Several soldiers allowed themselves to be run through the body by their own officers, rather than advance to the walls, and the assault was accordingly postponed to an indefinite period.

Meantime, as Governor Sonoy had opened many of the dykes, the land in the neighborhood of the camp was becoming plashy, although as yet the threatened inundation had not taken place. The soldiers were already very uncomfortable and very refractory. The carpenter-envoy had not been idle, having, upon the 26th of September, arrived at Sonoy’s quarters, bearing letters from the Prince of Orange. These dispatches gave distinct directions to Sonoy
to flood the country at all risks, rather than allow Alkmaar to fall into the enemy’s hands. The dykes and sluices were to be protected by a strong guard, lest the peasants, in order to save their crops, should repair or close them in the night-time. The letters of Orange were copied, and, together with fresh communications from Sonoy, delivered to the carpenter. A note on the margin of the prince’s letter directed the citizens to kindle four beacon fires in specified places, as soon as it should prove necessary to resort to extreme measures. When that moment should arrive, it was solemnly promised that an inundation should be created which should sweep the whole Spanish army into the sea. The work had, in fact, been commenced. The Zyp and other sluices had already been opened, and a vast body of water, driven by a strong northwest wind, had rushed in from the ocean. It needed only that two great dykes should be pierced to render the deluge and the desolation complete. The harvests were doomed to destruction, and a frightful loss of property rendered inevitable, but, at any rate, the Spaniards, if this last measure were taken, must fly or perish to a man.

This decisive blow having been thus ordered and promised, the carpenter set forth towards the city. He was, however, not so successful in accomplishing his entrance unmolested, as he had been in effecting his departure. He narrowly escaped with his life in passing through the enemy’s lines, and while occupied in saving himself was so unlucky, or, as it proved, so fortunate, as to lose the stick in which his dispatches were enclosed. He made good his entrance into the city, where, by word of mouth, he encouraged his fellow burghers as to the intentions of the prince and Sonoy. In the meantime his letters were laid before the general of the besieging army. The resolution taken by Orange, of which Don Frederic was thus unintentionally made aware, to flood the country far and near, rather than fail to protect Alkmaar, made a profound impression upon his mind. It was obvious that he was dealing with a determined leader and with desperate men. His attempt to carry the place by storm had signally failed, and he could not deceive himself as to the temper and disposition of his troops ever since that repulse. When it should become known that they were threatened with submersion in the ocean, in addition to all the other horrors of war, he had reason to believe that they would retire ignominiously from that remote and desolate sand hook, where, by remaining, they could only find a watery grave. These views having been discussed in a council of officers, the result was reached that sufficient had been already accomplished for the glory of Spanish arms. Neither honor nor loyalty, it was thought, required that 16,000 soldiers should be sacrificed in a contest, not with man but with the ocean.

On the eighth of October, accordingly, the siege, which had lasted seven weeks, was raised,** and Don Frederic rejoined his father in Amsterdam. Ready to die in the last ditch and to overwhelm both themselves and their foes in a common catastrophe, the Hollanders had at last compelled their haughty enemy to fly from a position which he had so insolently assumed.
**Kort Verhael, etc.** The stout pensionary, after recording the events of the siege, before the smoke had fairly rolled away, gives his readers two ballads, effusions of the same spirit which had pervaded the city during its energetic resistance. They are as usual, martial and jocular; a single verse may be translated as a specimen:

De stad van Alkmaer behielt de kroon
Zy gaaven de Spangaeds kranzen.
Pypen en trommeln gingen daer schoon;
Men spelde daer vreemde danssen.

De Spangaeds stonden char vergaart;
Zy tansten ecee nieuwe Spaansche galjaert,
Maar zy vergeten to komen in de schanssen...

With double-quick time the Spaniard proud
Against Alkmaar advances.
The piping and drumming are merry and loud;
We play them the best of dances.

The Spaniards stop, though they look very big;
They dance a very new Spanish jig,
But forget the use of their lances...

These public transactions and military operations were not the only important events which affected the fate of Holland and its sister provinces at this juncture. The secret relations which had already been renewed between Louis of Nassau, as plenipotentiary of his brother, and the French court, had for some time excited great uneasiness in the mind of Alva. Count Louis was known to be as skillful a negotiator as he was valiant and accomplished as a soldier. His frankness and boldness created confidence. The "brave spirit in the loyal breast" inspired all his dealing; his experience and quick perception of character prevented his becoming a dupe of even the most adroit politicians, while his truth of purpose made him incapable either of overreaching an ally or of betraying a trust. His career indicated that diplomacy might be sometimes successful, even although founded upon sincerity.

Alva secretly expressed to his sovereign much suspicion of France. He reminded him that Charles IX, during the early part of the preceding year, had given the assurance that he was secretly dealing with Louis of Nassau, only that he might induce the Count to pass over to Philip’s service. At the same time Charles had been doing all he could to succor Mons, and had written the memorable letter which had fallen into Alva’s hands on the capture of Genlis, and which expressed such a fixed determination to inflict a deadly blow upon the king, whom the writer was thus endeavoring to cajole. All this the governor recalled to the recollection of his sovereign. In view of this increasing repugnance of the English court, Alva recommended that fair words should be employed, hinting, however, that it would be by no means necessary for his master to consider himself very strictly bound by any such pledges to Elizabeth, if they should happen to become inconveniently pressing. "A monarch’s promises," he
delicately suggested, "were not to be considered so sacred as those of humbler mortals." "Not that the king should directly violate his word, but at the same time," continued the duke, "I have thought all my life, and I have learned it from the Emperor, your Majesty’s father, that the negotiations of kings depend upon different principles from those of us private gentlemen who walk the world; and in this manner I always observed that your Majesty’s father, who was so great a gentleman and so powerful a prince, conducted his affairs." The governor took occasion, likewise, to express his regrets at the awkward manner in which the Ridolfi scheme had been managed. Had he been consulted at an earlier day, the affair could have been treated much more delicately; as it was, there could be little doubt but that the discovery of the plot had prejudiced the mind of Elizabeth against Spain. "From that dust," concluded the duke, "has resulted all this dirt." It could hardly be matter of surprise, either to Philip or his viceroy, that the discovery by Elizabeth of a plot upon their parts to take her life and place the crown upon the head of her hated rival, should have engendered unamiable feelings in her bosom towards them. For the moment, however, Alva’s negotiations were apparently successful. On the first of May, 1573, the articles of convention between England and Spain, with regard to the Netherland difficulty, had been formally published in Brussels. The duke, in communicating the termination of these arrangements, quietly recommended his master thenceforth to take the English ministry into his pay. In particular he advised his Majesty to bestow an annual bribe upon Lord Burleigh, "who held the kingdom in his hand." "For it has always been my opinion," he continued, "that it was an excellent practice for princes to give pensions to the ministers of other potentates, and to keep those at home who took bribes from nobody."

On the other hand, the negotiations of Orange with the English court were not yet successful, and he still found it almost impossible to raise the requisite funds for carrying on the war. Certainly, his private letters showed that neither he nor his brothers were self-seekers in their negotiations. "You know," said he in a letter to his brothers, "that my intention has never been to seek my private advantage. I have only aspired for the liberty of the country, in conscience and in polity, which foreigners have sought to oppress. I have no other articles to propose, save that religion, reformed according to the Word of God, should be permitted, that then the commonwealth should be restored to its ancient liberty, and, to that end, that the Spaniards and other soldiery should be compelled to retire."

The restoration of civil and religious liberty, the establishment of the great principle of toleration in matters of conscience, constituted the purpose to which his days and nights were devoted, his princely fortune sacrificed, his life-blood risked. At the same time, his enforcement of toleration to both religions excited calumny against him among the bigoted adherents of both. By the Catholics he was accused of having instigated the excesses which he had done everything in his power to repress. The enormities of De la Marck, which had inspired the prince’s indignation, were even laid at the door of him who had risked his life to prevent and to chastise them. De la Marck had, indeed, more
than counterbalanced his great service in the taking of Brill, by his subsequent cruelties. At last, Father Cornelius Musius, pastor of Saint Agatha, at the age of seventy-two, a man highly esteemed by the Prince of Orange, had been put to torture and death by this barbarian, under circumstances of great atrocity. The horrid deed cost the prince many tears, aroused the indignation of the estates of Holland, and produced the dismissal of the perpetrator from their service. It was considered expedient, however, in view of his past services, his powerful connections, and his troublesome character, that he should be induced peaceably to leave the country.

It was long before the prince and the estates could succeed in ridding themselves of this encumbrance. He created several riots in different parts of the province, and boasted that he had many fine ships of war and 3,000 men, devoted to him, by whose assistance he could make the estates “dance after his pipe.” At the beginning of the following year (1574), he was at last compelled to leave the provinces, which he never again troubled with his presence. Some years afterwards, he died of the bite of a mad dog—an end not inappropriate to a man of so rabid a disposition.

While the prince was thus steadily striving for a lofty and generous purpose, he was, of course, represented by his implacable enemies as a man playing a game which, unfortunately for himself, was a losing one. "That poor prince," said Granvelle, "has been ill advised. I doubt now whether he will ever be able to make his peace, and I think we shall rather try to get rid of him and his brother as if they were Turks. The marriage with the daughter of Maurice, unde mala et quia ipse tali, and his brothers have done him much harm. So have Schwendi and German intimacies. I saw it all very plainly, but he did not choose to believe me."

Ill-starred, worse counseled William of Orange! Had he but taken the friendly cardinal’s advice, kept his hand from German marriages and his feet from conventicles; had he assisted his sovereign in burning heretics and hunting rebels, it would not then have become necessary “to treat him like a Turk.” This is unquestionable. It is equally so that there would have been one great lamp the less in that strait and difficult pathway which leads to the temple of true glory.

The main reliance of Orange was upon the secret negotiations which his brother Louis was then renewing with the French government. The prince had felt an almost insurmountable repugnance towards entertaining any relation with that blood-stained court, since the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. But a new face had recently been put upon that transaction. Instead of glorying in their crime, the king and his mother now assumed a tone of compunction, and averred that the deed had been unpremeditated; that it had been the result of a panic or an ecstasy of fear inspired by the suddenly discovered designs of the Huguenots; and that, in the instinct of self-preservation, the king, with his family and immediate friends, had plunged into a crime which they now bitterly lamented. The French envoys at the different courts of Europe were directed to impress this view upon the minds of the monarchs to whom they were accredited. It was certainly a very different instruction from that which
they had at first received. Their cue had originally been to claim a full meed of praise and thanksgiving in behalf of their sovereign for his meritorious exploit. The salvos of artillery, the illuminations and rejoicings, the solemn processions and masses by which the auspicious event had been celebrated, were yet fresh in the memory of men. The ambassadors were sufficiently embarrassed by the distinct and determined approbation which they had recently expressed. Although the king, by formal proclamation, had assumed the whole responsibility, as he had notoriously been one of the chief perpetrators of the deed, his agents were now to stultify themselves and their monarch by representing, as a deplorable act of frenzy, the massacre which they had already extolled to the echo as a skillfully executed and entirely commendable achievement.

To humble the power of Spain, to obtain the hand of Queen Elizabeth for the Duke d’Alençon, to establish an insidious kind of protectorate over the Protestant princes of Germany, to obtain the throne of Poland for the Duke of Anjou, and even to obtain the imperial crown for the house of Valois—all these cherished projects seemed dashed to the ground by the Paris massacre and the abhorrence which it had created. Charles and Catharine were not slow to discover the false position in which they had placed themselves, while the Spanish jocularity at the immense error committed by France was visible enough through the assumed mask of holy horror.

Philip and Alva listened with mischievous joy to the howl of execration which swept through Christendom upon every wind. They rejoiced as heartily in the humiliation of the malefactors as they did in the perpetration of the crime. "Your Majesty," wrote Louis of Nassau, very bluntly, to King Charles, "sees how the Spaniard, your mortal enemy, feasts himself full with the desolation of your affairs; how he laughs, to split his sides, at your misfortunes. This massacre has enabled him to weaken your Majesty more than he could have done by a war of thirty years."

Before the year had revolved, Charles had become thoroughly convinced of the fatal impression produced by the event. Bitter and almost abject were his whinings at the Catholic king's desertion of his cause. "He knows well," wrote Charles to Saint Goard, "that if he can terminate these troubles and leave me alone in the dance, he will have leisure and means to establish his authority, not only in the Netherlands but elsewhere, and that he will render himself more grand and formidable than he has ever been. This is the return they render for the good received from me, which is such as every one knows."

Gaspar de Schomberg, the adroit and honorable agent of Charles in Germany, had at a very early day warned his royal master of the ill effect of the massacre upon all the schemes which he had been pursuing, and especially upon those which referred to the crowns of the Empire and of Poland. The first project was destined to be soon abandoned. It was reserved neither for Charles nor Philip to divert the succession in Germany from the numerous offspring of Maximilian; yet it is instructive to observe the unprincipled avidity with which the prize was sought by both. Each was willing to effect its purchase by abjuring what were supposed his most cherished principles. Philip of Spain,
whose mission was to extirpate heresy throughout his realms, and who, in pursuance of that mission, had already perpetrated more crimes, and waded more deeply in the blood of his subjects, than monarch had often done before—Philip, for whom his apologists have never found any defense, save that he believed it his duty to God rather to depopulate his territories than to permit a single heretic within their limits—now entered into secret negotiations with the princes of the Empire. He pledged himself, if they would confer the crown upon him, that he would withdraw the Spaniards from the Netherlands; that he would tolerate in those provinces the exercise of the Reformed religion; that he would recognize their union with the rest of the German Empire, and their consequent claim to the benefits of the Passau treaty; that he would restore the Prince of Orange "and all his accomplices" to their former possessions, dignities, and condition; and that he would cause to be observed, throughout every realm incorporated with the Empire, all the edicts and ordinances which had been constructed to secure religious freedom in Germany. In brief, Philip was willing, in case the crown of Charlemagne should be promised him, to undo the work of his life, to reinstate the arch-rebel whom he had hunted and proscribed, and to bow before that Reformation whose disciples he had so long burned and butchered. So much extent and no more had that religious conviction by which he had for years had the effrontery to excuse the enormities practiced in the Netherlands. God would never forgive him so long as one heretic remained unburned in the provinces, yet give him the Imperial scepter, and every heretic, without forsaking his heresy, should be purged with hyssop and become whiter than snow.

Charles IX, too, although it was not possible for him to recall to life the countless victims of the Parisian wedding, was yet ready to explain those murders to the satisfaction of every unprejudiced mind. This had become strictly necessary. Although the accession of either his Most Christian or Most Catholic Majesty to the throne of the Caesars was a most improbable event, yet the humbler elective throne actually vacant was indirectly in the gift of the same powers. It was possible that the crown of Poland might be secured for the Duke of Anjou. That key unlocks the complicated policy of this and the succeeding year. The Polish election is the clue to the labyrinthian intrigues and royal tergiversations during the period of the interregnum. Sigismund Augustus, last of the Jagellon’s, had died on July 7, 1512. The prominent candidates to succeed him were the Archduke Ernest, son of the Emperor, and Henry of Anjou. The Prince of Orange was not forgotten. A strong party were in favor of compassing his election, as the most signal triumph which Protestantism could gain, but his ambition had not been excited by the prospect of such a prize. His own work required all the energies of all his life. His influence, however, was powerful, and eagerly sought by the partisans of Anjou. The Lutherans and Moravians in Poland were numerous, the Protestant party there and in Germany holding the whole balance of the election in their hands.

It was difficult for the prince to overcome his repugnance to the very name of the man whose crime had at once made France desolate, and blighted the fair
prospects under which he and his brother had, the year before, entered the Netherlands. Nevertheless, he was willing to listen to the statements by which the king and his ministers endeavored, not entirely without success, to remove from their reputations, if not from their souls, the guilt of deep design. It was something, that the murderers now affected to expiate their offense in sackcloth and ashes; it was something that, by favoring the pretensions of Anjou, and by listening with indulgence to the repentance of Charles, the siege of Rochelle could be terminated, the Huguenots restored to freedom of conscience, and an alliance with a powerful nation established, by aid of which the Netherlands might once more lift their heads. The French government, deeply hostile to Spain, both from passion and policy, was capable of rendering much assistance to the revolted provinces.

"I entreat you most humbly, my good master," wrote Schomberg to Charles IX, "to beware of allowing the electors to take into their heads that you are favoring the affairs of the King of Spain in any manner whatsoever. Commit against him no act of open hostility, if you think that imprudent; but look sharp! if you do not wish to be thrown clean out of your saddle. I should split with rage if I should see you, in consequence of the wicked calumnies of your enemies, fail to secure the prize." Orange was induced, therefore, to accept, however distrustfully, the expression of a repentance which was to be accompanied with healing measures. He allowed his brother Louis to resume negotiations with Schomberg, in Germany. He drew up and transmitted to him the outlines of a treaty which he was willing to make with Charles. The main conditions of this arrangement illustrated the disinterested character of the man. He stipulated that the king of France should immediately make peace with his subjects, declaring expressly that he had been abused by those, who, under pretext of his service, had sought their own profit at the price of ruin to the crown and people. The king should make religion free. The edict to that effect should be confirmed by all the parliaments and estates of the kingdom, and such confirmations should be distributed without reserve or deceit among all the princes of Germany.

If his Majesty were not inclined to make war for the liberation of the Netherlands, he was to furnish the Prince of Orange with 100,000 crowns at once, and every three months with another 100,000. The prince was to have liberty to raise 1,000 cavalry and 7,000 infantry in France. Every city or town in the provinces which should be conquered by his arms, except in Holland or Zealand, should be placed under the scepter, and in the hands of the king of France. The provinces of Holland and Zealand should also be placed under his protection, but should be governed by their own gentlemen and citizens. Perfect religious liberty and maintenance of the ancient constitutions, privileges, and charters were to be guaranteed "without any cavilling whatsoever." The Prince of Orange, or the estates of Holland or Zealand, were to reimburse his Christian Majesty for the sums which he was to advance. In this last clause was the only mention which the prince made of himself, excepting in the stipulation that he was to be allowed a levy of troops in France. His only personal claims were to enlist soldiers to fight the battles of
freedom, and to pay their expense, if it should not be provided for by the estates. At nearly the same period, he furnished his secret envoys, Lumbres and Doctor Taijaert, who were to proceed to Paris, with similar instructions. The indefatigable exertions of Schomberg, and the almost passionate explanations on the part of the court of France, at length produced their effect. "You will constantly assure the princes," wrote the Duke of Anjou to Schomberg, "that the things written to you concerning that which had happened in this kingdom are true; that the events occurred suddenly, without having been in any manner premeditated; that neither the king nor myself have ever had any intelligence with the King of Spain, against those of the religion, and that all is utter imposture which is daily said on this subject to the princes."

Count Louis required peremptorily, however, that the royal repentance should bring forth the fruit of salvation for the remaining victims. Out of the nettles of these dangerous intrigues his fearless hand plucked the "flower of safety" for his downtrodden cause. He demanded not words, but deeds, or at least pledges. He maintained with the agents of Charles and with the monarch himself the same hardy skepticism which was manifested by the Huguenot deputies in their conferences with Catharine de Medici. "Is the word of a king," said the dowager to the commissioners, who were insisting upon guarantees, "is the word of a king not sufficient?" "No, madam," replied one of them, "by Saint Bartholomew, no!" Count Louis told Schomberg roundly, and repeated it many times, that he must have in a very few days a categorical response, "not to consist in words alone, but in deeds, and that he could not, and would not, risk for ever the honor of his brother, nor the property, blood, and life of those poor people who favored the cause."

On March 23, 1573, Schomberg had an interview with Count Louis, which lasted seven or eight hours. In that interview, the enterprises of the count, "which," said Schomberg, "are assuredly grand and beautiful," were thoroughly discussed, and a series of conditions, drawn up partly in the hand of one, partly in that of the other negotiator, definitely agreed upon. These conditions were on the basis of a protectorate over Holland and Zealand for the King of France, with sovereignty over the other places to be acquired in the Netherlands. They were in strict accordance with the articles furnished by the Prince of Orange. Liberty of worship for those of both religions, sacred preservation of municipal charters, and stipulation of certain annual subsidies on the part of France, in case his Majesty should not take the field, were the principal features.

Ten days later, Schomberg wrote to his master that the count was willing to use all the influence of his family to procure for Anjou the crown of Poland, while Louis, having thus completed his negotiations with the agent, addressed a long and earnest letter to the royal principal. This remarkable dispatch was stamped throughout with the impress of the writer’s frank and fearless character. "Thus diddest thou" has rarely been addressed to anointed monarch in such unequivocal tones. The letter painted the favorable position in which the king had been placed previously to the fatal summer of 1572. The Queen of England was then most amicably disposed towards him, and inclined to a yet
closer connection with his family. The German princes were desirous to elect him King of the Romans, a dignity for which his grandfather had so fruitlessly contended. The Netherlanders, driven to despair by the tyranny of their own sovereign, were eager to throw themselves into his arms. All this had been owing to his edict of religious pacification. How changed the picture now! Who now did reverence to a king so criminal and so fallen? "Your Majesty today," said Louis, earnestly and plainly, "is near to ruin. The State, crumbling on every side and almost abandoned, is a prey to any one who wishes to seize upon it; the more so, because your Majesty, having, by the late excess and by the wars previously made, endeavored to force men's consciences, is now so destitute, not only of nobility and soldiery, but of that which constitutes the strongest column of the throne, the love and good wishes of the lieges, that your Majesty resembles an ancient building propped up, day after day, with piles, but which it will be impossible long to prevent from falling to the earth." Certainly, here were wholesome truths told in straightforward style.

The count proceeded to remind the king of the joy which the "Spaniard, his mortal enemy," had conceived from the desolation of his affairs, being assured that he should, by the troubles in France, be enabled to accomplish his own purposes without striking a blow. This, he observed, had been the secret of the courtesy with which the writer himself had been treated by the Duke of Alva at the surrender of Mons. Louis assured the king, in continuation, that if he persevered in these oppressive courses towards his subjects of the new religion, there was no hope for him, and that his two brothers would, to no purpose, take their departure for England and for Poland, leaving him with a difficult and dangerous war upon his hands. So long as he maintained a hostile attitude towards the Protestants in his own kingdom, his fair words would produce no effect elsewhere. "We are beginning to be vexed," said the count, "with the manner of negotiation practiced by France. Men do not proceed roundly to business there, but angle with their dissimulation as with a hook." He bluntly reminded the king of the deceit which he had practiced towards the admiral—a sufficient reason why no reliance could in future be placed upon his word. Signal vengeance on those concerned in the attempted assassination of that great man had been promised, in the royal letters to the Prince of Orange, just before St. Bartholomew. "Two days afterwards," said Louis, "your Majesty took that vengeance, but in rather ill fashion." It was certain that the king was surrounded by men who desired to work his ruin, and who, for their own purposes, would cause him "to bathe still deeper than he had done before in the blood of his subjects. This ruin his Majesty could still avert, by making peace in his kingdom, and by ceasing to torment his poor subjects of the religion."

In conclusion, the count, with a few simple but eloquent, phrases, alluded to the impossibility of chaining men's thoughts. The soul, being immortal, was beyond the reach of kings. Conscience was not to be conquered, nor the religious spirit imprisoned. This had been discovered by the Emperor Charles, who had taken all the cities and great personages of Germany captive, but who had nevertheless been unable to take religion captive. "That is a sentiment,"
said Louis, "deeply rooted in the hearts of men, which is not to be plucked out by force of arms. Let your Majesty, therefore not be deceived by the flattery of those who, like bad physicians, keep their patients in ignorance of their disease, whence comes their ruin."

It would be impossible, without insight into these private and most important transactions, to penetrate the heart of the mystery which enwrapped at this period the relations of the great powers with each other. Enough has been seen to silence forever the plea, often entered in behalf of religious tyranny, that the tyrant acts in obedience to a sincere conviction of duty; that, in performing his deeds of darkness, he believes himself to be accomplishing the will of Heaven. Here we have seen Philip, offering to restore the Prince of Orange, and to establish freedom of religion in the Netherlands, if by such promises he can lay hold of the Imperial diadem. Here also we have Charles IX and his mother, their hands reeking with the heretic blood of St. Bartholomew, making formal engagements with heretics to protect heresy everywhere, if by such pledges the crown of the Jagellon’s and the hand of Elizabeth can be secured.

While Louis was thus busily engaged in Germany, Orange was usually established at Delft. He felt the want of his brother daily, for the solitude of the prince, in the midst of such fiery trials, amounted almost to desolation. Not often have circumstances invested an individual with so much responsibility and so little power. He was regarded as the protector and father of the country, but from his own brains and his own resources he was to furnish himself with the means of fulfilling those high functions. He was anxious thoroughly to discharge the duties of a dictatorship without grasping any more of its power than was indispensable to his purpose. But he was alone on that little isthmus, in single combat with the great Spanish monarchy. It was to him that all eyes turned, during the infinite horrors of the Harlem siege, and in the more prosperous leaguer of Alkmaar. What he could do, he did. He devised every possible means to succor Harlem, and was only restrained from going personally to its rescue by the tears of the whole population of Holland. By his decision and the spirit which he diffused through the country, the people were lifted to a pitch of heroism by which Alkmaar was saved. Yet, during all this harassing period, he had no one to lean upon but himself. "Our affairs are in pretty good condition in Holland and Zealand," he wrote, "if I only had some aid. 'Tis impossible for me to support alone so many labors, and the weight of such great affairs as come upon me hourly—financial, military, political. I have no one to help me, not a single man, wherefore I leave you to suppose in what trouble I find myself."

For it was not alone the battles and sieges which furnished him with occupation and filled him with anxiety. Alone, he directed in secret the politics of the country, and, powerless and outlawed though he seemed, was in daily correspondence not only with the estates of Holland and Zealand, whose deliberations he guided, but with the principal governments of Europe. The estates of the Netherlands, moreover, had been formally assembled by Alva in September, at Brussels, to devise ways and means for continuing the struggle. It seemed to the prince a good opportunity to make an appeal to the patriotism
of the whole country. He furnished the province of Holland, accordingly, with
the outlines of an address which was forthwith dispatched in their own and his
name, to the general assembly of the Netherlands. The document was a
nervous and rapid review of the course of late events in the provinces, with a
cogent statement of the reasons which should influence them all to unite in the
common cause against the common enemy. It referred to the old affection and
true-heartedness with which they had formerly regarded each other, and to the
certainty that the inquisition would be forever established in the land, upon
the ruins of all their ancient institutions, unless they now united to overthrow
it for ever. It demanded of the people, thus assembled through their
representatives, how they could endure the tyranny, murders, and extortions
of the Duke of Alva. The Princes of Flanders, Burgundy, Brabant, or Holland,
had never made war or peace, coined money, or exacted a stiver from the
people without the consent of the estates. How could the nation now consent
to the daily impositions which were practiced? Had Amsterdam and Middelburg
remained true, had those important cities not allowed themselves to be
seduced from the cause of freedom, the northern provinces would have been
impregnable. "'Tis only by the Netherlands that the Netherlands are crushed,"
said the appeal. "Whence has the Duke of Alva the power of which he boasts,
but from yourselves—from Netherland cities? Whence his ships, supplies,
money, weapons, soldiers? From the Netherland people. Why has poor
Netherland thus become degenerate and bastard? Whither has fled the noble
spirit of our brave forefathers, that never brooked the tyranny of foreign
nations, nor suffered a stranger even to hold office within our borders? If the
little province of Holland can thus hold at bay the power of Spain, what could
not all the Netherlands, Brabant, Flanders, Friesland, and the rest united,
accomplish?" In conclusion, the estates-general were earnestly adjured to come
forward like brothers in blood, and join hands with Holland, that together they
might rescue the fatherland and restore its ancient prosperity and bloom.
At almost the same time the prince drew up and put in circulation one of the
most vigorous and impassioned productions which ever came from his pen. It
was entitled, an "Epistle, in form of supplication, to his royal Majesty of Spain,
from the Prince of Orange and the estates of Holland and Zealand." The
document produced a profound impression throughout Christendom. It was a
loyal appeal to the monarch’s loyalty—a demand that the land-privileges should
be restored, and the Duke of Alva removed. It contained a startling picture of
his atrocities and the nation’s misery, and, with a few energetic strokes,
demolished the pretense that these sorrows had been caused by the people’s
guilt. In this connection the prince alluded to those acts of condemnation
which the governor-general had promulgated under the name of pardons, and
treated with scorn the hypothesis that any crimes had been committed for Alva
to forgive. "We take God and your Majesty to witness," said the epistle, "that if
we have done such misdeeds as are charged in the pardon, we neither desire
nor deserve the pardon. Like the most abject creatures which crawl the earth,
we will be content to atone for our misdeeds with our lives. We will not
murmur, O merciful King, if we be seized one after another, and torn limb from
limb, if it can be proved that we have committed the crimes of which we have been accused."

After having thus set forth the tyranny of the government and the innocence of the people, the prince, in his own name and that of the estates, announced the determination at which they had arrived. "The tyrant," he continued, "would rather stain every river and brook with our blood, and hang our bodies upon every tree in the country, than not feed to the full his vengeance, and steep himself to the lips in our misery. Therefore we have taken up arms against the Duke of Alva and his adherents, to free ourselves, our wives and children, from his bloodthirsty hands. If he prove too strong for us, we will rather die an honorable death and leave a praiseworthy fame, than bend our necks, and reduce our dear fatherland to such slavery. Herein are all our cities pledged to each other to stand every siege, to dare the utmost, to endure every possible misery, yea, rather to set fire to all our homes, and be consumed with them into ashes together, than ever submit to the decrees of this cruel tyrant."

These were brave words, and destined to be bravely fulfilled, as the life and death of the writer and the records of his country proved, from generation unto generation. If we seek for the mainspring of the energy which thus sustained the prince in the unequal conflict to which he had devoted his life, we shall find it in the one pervading principle of his nature—confidence in God. He was the champion of the political rights of his country, but before all he was the defender of its religion. Liberty of conscience for his people was his first object. To establish Luther's axiom, that thoughts are toll-free, was his determination. The Peace of Passau, and far more than the Peace of Passau, was the goal for which he was striving. Freedom of worship for all denominations, toleration for all forms of faith, this was the great good in his philosophy. For himself, he had now become a member of the Calvinist, or Reformed Church, having delayed for a time his public adhesion to this communion, in order not to give offence to the Lutherans and to the Emperor. He was never a dogmatist, however, and he sought in Christianity for that which unites, rather than for that which separates Christians. In the course of October he publicly joined the church at Dort.

The happy termination of the siege of Alkmaar was followed, three days afterwards, by another signal success on the part of the patriots. Count Bossu, who had constructed or collected a considerable fleet at Amsterdam, had, early in October, sailed into the Zuyder Zee, notwithstanding the sunken wrecks and other obstructions by which the patriots had endeavored to render the passage of the Y impracticable. The patriots of North Holland had, however, not been idle, and a fleet of five-and-twenty vessels, under Admiral Dirkzoon, was soon cruising in the same waters. A few skirmishes took place, but Bossu's ships, which were larger, and provided with heavier cannon, were apparently not inclined for the close quarters which the patriots sought. The Spanish admiral, Hollander as he was, knew the mettle of his countrymen in a close encounter at sea, and preferred to trust to the caliber of his cannon. On the 11th of October, however, the whole patriot fleet, favored by a strong easterly breeze, bore down upon the Spanish armada, which, numbering now
thirty sail of all denominations, was lying off and on in the neighborhood of Horn and Enkhuyzen.

After a short and general engagement, nearly all the Spanish fleet retired with precipitation, closely pursued by most of the patriot Dutch vessels. Five of the king’s ships were eventually taken; the rest effected their escape. Only the admiral remained, who scorned to yield, although his forces had thus basely deserted him. His ship, the “Inquisition,” for such was her insolent appellation, was far the largest and best manned of both the fleets. Most of the enemy had gone in pursuit of the fugitives, but four vessels of inferior size had attacked the “Inquisition” at the commencement of the action. Of these, one had soon been silenced, while the other three had grappled themselves inextricably to her sides and prow. The four drifted together, before wind and tide, a severe and savage action going on incessantly, during which the navigation of the ships was entirely abandoned. No scientific gunnery, no military or naval tactics were displayed or required in such a conflict. It was a life-and-death combat, such as always occurred when Spaniard and Netherlander met, whether on land or water. Bossu and his men, armed in bulletproof coats of mail, stood with shield and sword on the deck of the “Inquisition,” ready to repel all attempts to board. The Hollander, as usual, attacked with pitch hoops, boiling oil, and molten lead. Repeatedly they effected their entrance to the Admiral’s ship, and as often they were repulsed and slain in heaps, or hurled into the sea. The battle began at three in the afternoon, and continued without intermission through the whole night. The vessels, drifting together, struck on the shoal called the Nek, near Wydeness. In the heat of the action the occurrence was hardly heeded. In the morning twilight, John Haring, of Horn, the hero who had kept 1,000 soldiers at bay upon the Diemer dyke, clambered on board the “Inquisition” and hauled her colors down. The gallant but premature achievement cost him his life. He was shot through the body and died on the deck of the ship, which was not quite ready to strike her flag. In the course of the forenoon, however, it became obvious to Bossu that further resistance was idle. The ships were aground near a hostile coast, his own fleet was hopelessly dispersed, three quarters of his crew were dead or disabled, while the vessels with which he was engaged were constantly recruited by boats from the shore, which brought fresh men and ammunition, and removed their killed and wounded. At eleven o’clock, Admiral Bossu surrendered, and with three hundred prisoners was carried into Holland. Bossu was himself imprisoned at Horn, in which city he was received, on his arrival, with great demonstrations of popular hatred. The massacre of Rotterdam, due to his cruelty and treachery, had not yet been forgotten or forgiven.

This victory, following so hard upon the triumph at Alkmaar, was as gratifying to the patriots as it was galling to Alva. As his administration drew to a close, it was marked by disaster and disgrace on land and sea. The brilliant exploits by which he had struck terror into the heart of the Netherlanders, at Jemmingen and in Brabant, had been effaced by the valor of a handful of Hollanders, without discipline or experience. To the patriots, the opportune capture of so considerable a personage as the admiral and governor of the northern province
was of great advantage. Such of the hostages from Harlem as had not yet been executed, now escaped with their lives. Moreover, Saint Aldegonde, the eloquent patriot and confidential friend of Orange, who was taken prisoner a few weeks later, in an action at Maeslandslius, was preserved from inevitable destruction by the same cause. The prince hastened to assure the Duke of Alva that the same measure would be dealt to Bossu as should be meted to Saint Aldegonde. It was, therefore, impossible for the governor-general to execute his prisoner, and he was obliged to submit to the vexation of seeing a leading rebel and heretic in his power, whom he dared not strike. Both the distinguished prisoners eventually regained their liberty.

The duke was, doubtless, lower sunk in the estimation of all classes than he had ever been before, during his long and generally successful life. The reverses sustained by his army, the belief that his master had grown cold towards him, the certainty that his career in the Netherlands was closing without a satisfactory result, the natural weariness produced upon men’s minds by the contemplation of so monotonous and unmitigated a tyranny during so many years, all contributed to diminish his reputation. He felt himself odious alike to princes and to plebeians. With his cabinet councillors he had long been upon unsatisfactory terms. President Tisnacq had died early in the summer, and Viglius, much against his will, had been induced, provisionally, to supply his place. But there was now hardly a pretense of friendship between the learned Frisian and the governor. Each cordially detested the other. Alva was weary of Flemish and Frisian advisers, however subservient, and was anxious to fill the whole council with Spaniards of the Vargas stamp. He had forced Viglius once more into office, only that, by a little delay, he might expel him and every Netherlander at the same moment. “Till this ancient set of dogmatizers be removed,” he wrote to Philip, “with Viglius, their chief, who teaches them all their lessons, nothing will go right. ’Tis of no use adding one or two Spaniards to fill vacancies; that is only pouring a flask of good wine into a hogshead of vinegar; it changes to vinegar likewise. Your Majesty will soon be able to reorganize the council at a blow; so that Italians or Spaniards, as you choose, may entirely govern the country.”

Such being his private sentiments with regard to his confidential advisers, it may be supposed that his intercourse with his council during the year was not like to be amicable. Moreover, he had kept himself, for the most part, at a distance from the seat of government. During the military operations in Holland, his headquarters had been at Amsterdam. Here, as the year drew to its close, he had become as unpopular as in Brussels. The time-serving and unpatriotic burghers, who, at the beginning of the spring, set up his bust in their houses, and would give large sums for his picture in little, now broke his images and tore his portraits from their walls, for it was evident that the power of his name was gone, both with prince and people. Yet, certainly, those fierce demonstrations which had formerly surrounded his person with such an atmosphere of terror had not slackened or become less frequent than heretofore. He continued to prove that he could be barbarous, both on a grand and a minute scale. Even as in preceding years, he could ordain wholesale
massacres with a breath, and superintend in person the executions of individuals. This was illustrated, among other instances, by the cruel fate of Uitenhoove. That unfortunate nobleman, who had been taken prisoner in the course of the summer, was accused of having been engaged in the capture of Brill, and was, therefore, condemned by the duke to be roasted to death before a slow fire. He was accordingly fastened by a chain, a few feet in length, to a stake, around which the fagots were lighted. Here he was kept in slow torture for a long time, insulted by the gibes of the laughing Spaniards who surrounded him, until the executioner and his assistants, more humane than their superior, dispatched the victim with their spears—a mitigation of punishment, which was ill received by Alva. The governor had, however, no reason to remain longer in Amsterdam. Harlem had fallen; Alkmaar was relieved; and Leyden—destined in its second siege to furnish so signal a chapter to the history of the war—was beleaguered, it was true, but, because known to be imperfectly supplied, was to be reduced by blockade rather than by active operations. Don Francis Valdez was accordingly left in command of the siege, which, however, after no memorable occurrences, was raised, as will soon be related.

The duke had contracted in Amsterdam an enormous amount of debt, both public and private. He accordingly, early in November, caused a proclamation to be made throughout the city by sound of trumpet, that all persons having demands upon him were to present their claims, in person, upon a specified day. During the night preceding the day so appointed, the duke and his train very noiselessly took their departure, without notice or beat of drum. By this masterly generalship his unhappy creditors were foiled upon the very eve of their anticipated triumph; the heavy accounts which had been contracted on the faith of the king and the governor, remained for the most part unpaid, and many opulent and respectable families were reduced to beggary. Such was the consequence of the unlimited confidence which they had reposed in the honor of their tyrant.

On the 17th of November, Don Luis de Requesens y Cuñiga, Grand Commander of Saint Jago, the appointed successor of Alva, arrived in Brussels, where he was received with great rejoicings. The duke, on the same day, wrote to the king, “kissing his feet” for thus relieving him of his functions. There was, of course, a profuse interchange of courtesy between the departing and the newly-arrived governors. Alva was willing to remain a little while, to assist his successor with his advice, but preferred that the Grand Commander should immediately assume the reins of office. To this, Requesens, after much respectful reluctance, at length consented. On the 29th of November, he accordingly took the oaths, at Brussels, as lieutenant-governor and captain-general, in presence of the Duke of Aerschot, Baron Berlaymont, the President of the Council, and other functionaries.

On the 18th of December, the Duke of Alva departed from the provinces forever. With his further career this history has no concern, and it is not desirable to enlarge upon the personal biography of one whose name certainly never excites pleasing emotions. He had kept his bed for the greater part of
the time during the last few weeks of his government—partly on account of his
gout, partly to avoid being seen in his humiliation, but mainly, it was said, to
escape the pressing demands of his creditors. He expressed a fear of traveling
homeward through France, on the ground that he might very probably receive a
shot out of a window as he went by. He complained pathetically that, after all
his labors, he had not "gained the approbation of the king," while he had
incurred "the malevolence and universal hatred of every individual in the
country." Mondoucet, to whom he made the observation, was of the same
opinion, and informed his master that the duke "had engendered such an
extraordinary hatred in the hearts of all persons in the land, that they would
have fireworks in honor of his departure if they dared."

On his journey from the Netherlands, he is said to have boasted that he had
caused 18,600 inhabitants of the provinces to be executed during the period of
his government. The number of those who had perished by battle, siege,
starvation, and massacre, defied computation. The duke was well received by
his royal master, and remained in favor until a new adventure of Don Frederic
brought father and son into disgrace. Having deceived and abandoned a maid of
honor, he suddenly espoused his cousin, in order to avoid that reparation by
marriage which was demanded for his offense. In consequence, both the duke
and Don Frederic were imprisoned and banished, nor was Alva released till a
general of experience was required for the conquest of Portugal. Thither, as it
were with fetters on his legs, he went. After having accomplished the military
enterprise entrusted to him, he fell into a lingering fever, at the termination of
which he was so much reduced that he was only kept alive by milk, which he
drank from a woman’s breast. Such was the gentle second childhood of the
man who had almost literally been drinking blood for seventy years. He died on
the 12th of December, 1582.

The preceding pages have been written in vain, if an elaborate estimate be
now required of his character. His picture has been painted, as far as possible,
by his own hand. His deeds, which are not disputed, and his written words,
illustrate his nature more fully than could be done by the most eloquent pen.
No attempt has been made to exaggerate his crimes, or to extenuate his
superior qualities. Virtues he had none, unless military excellence be deemed,
as by the Romans, a virtue. In war, both as a science and a practical art, he
exelled all the generals who were opposed to him in the Netherlands, and he
was inferior to no commander in the world during the long and belligerent
period to which his life belonged. Louis of Nassau possessed high reputation
throughout Europe as a skillful and daring general. With raw volunteers he had
overthrown an army of Spanish regulars, led by a Netherland chieftain of fame
and experience; but when Alva took the field in person the scene was totally
changed. The duke dealt him such a blow at Jemmingen as would have
disheartened forever a less indomitable champion. Never had a defeat been
more absolute. The patriot army was dashed out of existence, almost to a man,
and its leader, naked and beggared, though not disheartened, sent back into
Germany to construct his force and his schemes anew.
Having thus flashed before the eyes of the country the full terrors of his name, and vindicated the ancient military renown of his nation, the duke was at liberty to employ the consummate tactics, in which he could have given instruction to all the world, against his most formidable antagonist. The country, paralyzed with fear, looked anxiously but supinely upon the scientific combat between the two great champions of Despotism and Protestantism which succeeded. It was soon evident that the conflict could terminate in but one way. The prince had considerable military abilities, and enthusiastic courage; he lost none of his well-deserved reputation by the unfortunate issue of his campaign; he measured himself in arms with the great commander of the age, and defied him, day after day, in vain, to mortal combat; but it was equally certain that the duke’s quiet game was played in the most masterly manner. His positions and his encampments were taken with faultless judgment, his skirmishes wisely and coldly kept within the prescribed control, while the inevitable dissolution of the opposing force took place exactly as he had foreseen, and within the limits which he had predicted. Nor in the disastrous commencement of the year 1572 did the duke less signally manifest his military genius. Assailed as he was at every point, with the soil suddenly upheaving all around him, as by an earthquake, he did not lose his firmness nor his perspicacity. Certainly, if he had not been so soon assisted by that other earthquake, which on Saint Bartholomew’s Day caused all Christendom to tremble, and shattered the recent structure of Protestant Freedom in the Netherlands, it might have been worse for his reputation. With Mons safe, the Flemish frontier guarded, France faithful, and 30,000 men under the Prince of Orange in Brabant, the heroic brothers might well believe that the duke was "at their mercy." The treason of Charles IX "smote them as with a club," as the prince exclaimed in the bitterness of his spirit. Under the circumstances, his second campaign was a predestined failure, and Alva easily vanquished him by a renewed application of those dilatory arts which he so well understood. The duke’s military fame was unquestionable when he came to the provinces, and both in stricken fields and in long campaigns, he showed how thoroughly it had been deserved; yet he left the Netherlands a baffled man. The prince might be many times defeated, but he was not to be conquered. As Alva penetrated into the heart of the ancient Batavian land, he found himself overmatched as he had never been before, even by the most potent generals of his day. More audacious, more inventive, more desperate than all the commanders of that or any other age, the spirit of national freedom, now taught the oppressor that it was invincible, except by annihilation. The same lesson had been read in the same thickets by the Nervii to Julius Caesar, by the Batavians to the legions of Vespasian; and now a loftier and a purer flame than that which inspired the national struggles against Rome glowed within the breasts of the descendants of the same people, and inspired them with the strength which comes from religious enthusiasm. More experienced, more subtle, more politic than Hermann; more devoted, more patient, more magnanimous than Civilis, and equal to either in valor and determination, William of Orange was a worthy embodiment of the Christian national
resistance of the German race to a foreign tyranny. Alva had entered the
Netherlands to deal with them as with conquered provinces. He found that the
conquest was still to be made, and he left the land without having
accomplished it. Through the sea of blood, the Hollanders felt that they were
passing to the promised land. More royal soldiers fell during the seven months’
siege of Harlem than the rebels had lost in the defeat of Jemmingen, and in
the famous campaign of Brabant. At Alkmaar the rolling waves of insolent
conquest were stayed, and the tide then ebbed forever.
The accomplished soldier struggled hopelessly with the wild and passionate
hatred which his tyranny had provoked. Neither his legions nor his consummate
strategy availed him against an entirely desperate people. As a military
commander, therefore, he gained, upon the whole, no additional laurels during
his long administration of the Netherlands. Of all the other attributes to be
expected in a man appointed to deal with a free country, in a state of incipient
rebellion, he manifested a signal deficiency. As a financier, he exhibited a
wonderful ignorance of the first principles of political economy. No man
before, ever gravely proposed to establish confiscation as a permanent source
of revenue to the state; yet the annual product from the escheated property of
slaughtered heretics was regularly relied upon, during his administration, to
replenish the king’s treasury, and to support the war of extermination against
the king’s subjects. Nor did statesman ever before expect a vast income from
the commerce of a nation devoted to almost universal massacre. During the
daily decimation of the people’s lives, he thought a daily decimation of their
industry possible. His persecutions swept the land of those industrious classes
which had made it the rich and prosperous commonwealth it had been so
lately; while, at the same time, he found a “Peruvian mine,” as he pretended,
in the imposition of a tenth penny upon every one of its commercial
transactions. He thought that a people, crippled as this had been by the
operations of the Blood-Council, could pay ten percent, not annually but daily;
not upon its income, but upon its capital; not once only, but every time the
value constituting the capital changed hands. He had boasted that he should
require no funds from Spain, but that, on the contrary, he should make annual
remittances to the royal treasury at home, from the proceeds of his imposts
and confiscations; yet, notwithstanding these resources, and notwithstanding
twenty-five millions of gold in five years, sent by Philip from Madrid, the
exchequer of the provinces was barren and bankrupt when his successor
arrived. Requesens found neither a penny in the public treasury nor the means
of raising one.
As an administrator of the civil and judicial affairs of the country, Alva at once
reduced its institutions to a frightful simplicity. In the place of the ancient laws
of which the Netherlanders were so proud, he substituted the Blood-Council.
This tribunal was even more arbitrary than the Inquisition. Never was a simpler
apparatus for tyranny devised, than this great labor-saving machine. Never was
so great a quantity of murder and robbery achieved with such dispatch and
regularity. Sentences, executions, and confiscations, to an incredible extent,
were turned out daily with appalling precision. For this invention, Alva is alone
responsible. The tribunal and its councillors were the work and the creatures of
his hand, and faithfully did they accomplish the dark purpose of their
existence. Nor can it be urged, in extenuation of the governor’s crimes, that he
was but the blind and fanatically loyal slave of his sovereign. A noble nature
could not have contaminated itself with such slaughterhouse work, but might
have sought to mitigate the royal policy, without forswearing allegiance. A
nature less rigid than iron would at least have manifested compunction, as it
found itself converted into a fleshless instrument of massacre. More decided
than his master, however, he seemed, by his promptness, to rebuke the
dilatory genius of Philip. The king seemed, at times, to loiter over his work,
teasing and tantalizing his appetite for vengeance, before it should be
gratified. Alva, rapid and brutal, scorned such epicureanism. He strode with
gigantic steps over haughty statutes and popular constitutions, crushing alike
the magnates who claimed a bench of monarchs for their jury and the ignoble
artisans who could appeal only to the laws of their land. From the pompous and
theatrical scaffolds of Egmont and Horn, to the nineteen halters prepared by
Master Karl, to hang up the chief bakers and brewers of Brussels on their own
thresholds; from the beheading of the twenty nobles on the Horse-market, in
the opening of the Governor’s career, to the roasting alive of Uitenhoove at its
close; from the block on which fell the honored head of Antony Straalen, to the
obscure chair in which the ancient gentlewoman of Amsterdam suffered death
for an act of vicarious mercy; from one year’s end to another’s; from the most
signal to the most squalid scenes of sacrifice, the eye and hand of the great
master directed, without weariness, the task imposed by the sovereign.
No doubt the work of almost indiscriminate massacre had been duly mapped
out. Not often in history has a governor arrived to administer the affairs of a
province, where the whole population, three millions strong, had been formally
sentenced to death. As time wore on, however, he even surpassed the bloody
instructions which he had received. He waved aside the recommendations of
the Blood-Council to mercy; he dissuaded the monarch from attempting the
path of clemency, which, for secret reasons, Philip was inclined at one period
to attempt. The governor had, as he assured the king, been using gentleness in
vain, and he was now determined to try what a little wholesome severity could
effect. These words were written immediately after the massacres at Harlem.
With all the bloodshed at Mons, and Naarden, and Mechlin, and by the Council
of Tumults, daily, for six years long, still crying from the ground, he taxed
himself with a misplaced and foolish tenderness to the people. He assured the
king that when Alkmaar should be taken, he would not spare a “living soul
among its whole population,” and, as his parting advice, he recommended that
every city in the Netherlands should be burned to the ground, except a few
which could be occupied permanently by the royal troops. On the whole, so
finished a picture of a perfect and absolute tyranny has rarely been presented
to mankind by history, as in Alva’s administration of the Netherlands.
The tens of thousands in those miserable provinces who fell victims to the
gallows, the sword, the stake, the living grave, or to living banishment, have
never been counted; for those statistics of barbarity are often effaced from
human record. Enough, however, is known, and enough has been recited in the preceding pages. No mode in which human beings have ever caused their fellow-creatures to suffer was omitted from daily practice. Men, women, and children, old and young, nobles and paupers, opulent burghers, hospital patients, lunatics, dead bodies, all were indiscriminately made to furnish food for the scaffold and the stake. Men were tortured, beheaded, hanged by the neck and by the legs, burned before slow fires, pinched to death with red-hot tongs, broken upon the wheel, starved, and flayed alive. Their skins, stripped from the living body, were stretched upon drums, to be beaten in the march of their brethren to the gallows. The bodies of many who had died a natural death were exhumed, and their festering remains hanged upon the gibbet, on pretext that they had died without receiving the sacrament, but in reality that their property might become the legitimate prey of the treasury. Marriages of long standing were dissolved by order of government, that rich heiresses might be married against their will to foreigners whom they abhorred. Women and children were executed for the crime of assisting their fugitive husbands and parents with a penny in their utmost need, and even for consoling them with a letter in their exile. Such was the regular course of affairs as administered by the Blood-Council. The additional barbarities committed amid the sack and ruin of those blazing and starving cities, are almost beyond belief; unborn infants were torn from the living bodies of their mothers; women and children were violated by thousands; and whole populations burned and hacked to pieces by soldiers in every mode which cruelty, in its wanton ingenuity, could devise. Such was the administration, of which Vargas affirmed, at its close, that too much mercy, "nimia misericordia," had been its ruin.

Even Philip, inspired by secret views, became wearied of the governor, who, at an early period, had already given offense by his arrogance. To commemorate his victories, the viceroy had erected a colossal statue, not to his monarch, but to himself. To proclaim the royal pardon, he had seated himself upon a golden throne. Such insolent airs could be ill forgiven by the absolute king. Too cautious to provoke an open rupture, he allowed the governor, after he had done all his work, and more than all his work, to retire without disgrace, but without a triumph. For the sins of that administration, master and servant are in equal measure responsible.

The character of the Duke of Alva, so far as the Netherlands are concerned, seems almost like a caricature. As a creation of fiction, it would seem grotesque; yet even that hardy, historical skepticism, which delights in reversing the judgment of centuries, and in re-establishing reputations long since degraded to the dust, must find it difficult to alter this man’s position. No historical decision is final; an appeal to a more remote posterity, founded upon more accurate evidence, is always valid, but when the verdict has been pronounced upon facts which are undisputed, and upon testimony from the criminal’s lips, there is little chance of a reversal of the sentence.*** It is an affectation of philosophical candor to extenuate vices which are not only avowed, but claimed as virtues.
The time is past when it could be said that the cruelty of Alva, or the enormities of his administration, have been exaggerated by party violence. Human invention is incapable of outstripping the truth upon this subject. To attempt the defense of either the man or his measures at the present day is to convict oneself of an amount of ignorance or of bigotry against which history and argument are alike powerless. The publication of the duke’s letters in the correspondence of Simancas and in the Besançon papers, together with that compact mass of horror, long before the world under the title of “Sententien van Alva,” in which a portion only of the sentences of death and banishment pronounced by him during his reign, have been copied from the official records—these in themselves would be a sufficient justification of all the charges ever brought by the most bitter contemporary of Holland or Flanders. If the investigator should remain skeptical, however, let him examine the “Registre des Condamnés et Bannis à Cause des Troubles des Pays Bas,” in three, together with the Records of the “Conseil des Troubles,” in forty-three folio volumes, in the Royal Archives at Brussels. After going through all these chronicles of iniquity, the most determined historic doubter will probably throw up the case.

### Flemish Ballads

As specimens of the songs made by the people while Alva was making their laws, the author ventures the following translations of popular ballads. The originals may be found, the one in the collection of Ernst Münch, Nederlandsches Museum, I, 125, 126; the other in Van Vloten’s excellent republication of Netherland Historical Songs—Nederlandsche Geschiedzangen, I, 393. Professor Altmeyer has also quoted them in his “Succursale du Tribunal de Sang.”

§

Slaet op den tromele, van dirre dom deyne;
Slaet op den tromele, van dirre dom does;
Slaet op den tromele, van dirre dom deyne;
Vive le geus! is nu de loes.

De Spaensche Inquisitie, voor Godt malitie,
De Spaensche Inquisitie, als draecx bloet fel;
De Spaensche Inquisitie gehoelt punitie
De Spaensche Inquisitie ontvaelt haer spel.
Vive le geus! wilt christenlyk leven;
Vive le geus! houdt fraeye moet;
Vive le geus! Godt behoedt voor sneven;
Vive le geus! edel christen bloedt.

Translation:

Beat the drum gaily, rub a dow, rub a dub;
Beat the drum gaily, rub a dub, rub a dow;
Beat the drum gaily, rub a dow, rub a dub;  
Long live the Beggars! is the watchword now.

The Spanish Inquisition, without intermission,  
The Spanish Inquisition has drunk our blood;  
The Spanish Inquisition, map God’s malediction  
Blast the Spanish Inquisition and all her brood.

Long live the Beggars! wilt thou Christ’s word cherish;  
Long live the Beggars! be bold of heart and hand;  
Long live the Beggars! God will not see thee perish;  
Long live the Beggars! oh noble Christian band.

§

De Paus en Papisten, Gods handt doet beven;  
Do Paus en Papisten zyn t’ eynden haer raet;  
De Paus en Papisten wreet boven schreven;  
Ghy Paus en Papisten, soet nu oflaet!  
’T swaert is getrokken, certeyn godts wraec naect;  
’T swaert is getrokken, daer Joannes a schryft;  
’T swaert is getrokken, dat Apocalypsis maect, naect;  
’T swaert is getrokken, ghy wert nu ontlyft.  
’T onschuldig bloet dat ghy heft vergoten,  
’T onschuldig bloet royt over u wraeck,  
’T onschuldig bloet te storten heeft u niet verdroten,  
’T onschuldig bloet dat dronet ghy met den draeck.  
U vleisschen arm, daer ghy op betroude;  
U vleisschen arm beschwyckt u nu;  
U vleisschen arm die u huys houde;  
U vleisschen arm, wyckt van u schoon.

Translation:

The Pope and Papists are shivering and shaking;  
The Pope and Papists are at their wits’ ends;  
The Pope and Papists at God’s right hand are quaking;  
Pope and Papists, find absolution now, my friends!

The sword is drawn now, God’s wakened vengeance lowers;  
The sword is drawn now, the Apocalypse unrolled;  
The sword is drawn now, God’s sword and wrath are ours;  
The sword is drawn now which Apostle John foretold.

The innocent blood which ye’ve caused to flow like water,  
The innocent blood which your wicked hands hath stained,
The innocent blood cries out for blood and slaughter,
That innocent blood which, like dragons fell, ye drained.

Your fleshly arm is withering and shrinking;
Your fleshly arm which ye trusted fierce and bold;
Your fleshly arm and the house it built are sinking;
Your fleshly arm now is marrowless and cold.

§
The bitter blasphemy of the following is but a faint expression of the hatred
which the tyranny of Alva had excited in the popular heart. It is called the
Ghent Paternoster (Gentsch Vaderonze), and is addressed to the Duke of Alva.
Helsche duvel, die tot Brussel syt,
Uwen naem ende faem sy vermaledyt.
U ryck vergae sonder respyt,
Want heeft geduyrt te langen tyd.
Uwen willen sal niet gewerden,
Noch in hemel noch op erden.
Ghy beneempt ons huyden ons dagelicx broot;
Wyff ende knyderen hebben ’t groote noot.
Ghy en vergeeft niemant syn schult;
Want ghy met haet ende nyt syt vervult.
Ghy en laet niemant ongetempteert;
Alle dese landen ghy perturbeert.
O hemelschen vader, die in den hemel syt,
Maeckt ons desen helschen duvel quyt,
Met synen bloedigen, valschen raet,
Daer hy meede handelt alle quaet.
En syn spaens chrychsvolk allegaer,
’T welck leeft of sy des duvels waer. Amen.

Translation:

Our devil, who dost in Brussels dwell,
Curst be thy name in earth and hell.
Thy kingdom speedily pass away,
Which hath blasted and blighted us many a day.
Thy will nevermore be done,
In heaven above nor under the sun.

Thou takest daily our daily bread;
Our wives and children lie starving or dead.
No man’s trespasses thou forgivest;
Revenge is the food on which thou livest.
Thou leadest all men into temptation;
Unto evil thou hast delivered this nation.
Our Father, in heaven which art,
Grant that this hellish devil may soon depart,
And with him his Council false and bloody,
Who make murder and rapine their daily study.
And all his savage war-dogs of Spain,
Oh send them back to the Devil, their father, again. Amen.

End of Part Three

Part Four
Administration of the Grand Commander
Chapters 1-3

Chapter 1  The Beginning of Requesens’ Administration and the Battle of Mookerheyde
Chapter 2  The Siege of Leyden
Chapter 3  Peace Negotiations

CHAPTER 1
The Beginning of Requesens’ Administration and the Battle of Mookerheyde

The horrors of Alva’s administration had caused men to look back with fondness upon the milder and more vacillating tyranny of the Duchess Margaret. From the same cause the advent of the Grand Commander was hailed with pleasure and with a momentary gleam of hope. At any rate, it was a relief that the man in whom an almost impossible perfection of cruelty seemed embodied was at last to be withdrawn. It was certain that his successor, however ambitious of following in Alva’s footsteps, would never be able to rival the intensity and the unswerving directness of purpose which it had been permitted to the duke’s nature to attain. The new governor-general was, doubtless, human, and it had been long since the Netherlanders imagined anything in common between themselves and the late viceroy.

Apart from this hope, however, there was little encouragement to be derived from anything positively known of the new functionary, or the policy which he was to represent. Don Luis de Requesens and Cuñiga, Grand Commander of Castile and late Governor of Milan, was a man of mediocre abilities, who possessed a reputation for moderation and sagacity which he hardly deserved. His military prowess had been chiefly displayed in the bloody and barren battle of Lepanto, where his conduct and counsel were supposed to have contributed, in some measure, to the victorious result. His administration at Milan had been characterized as firm and moderate. Nevertheless, his character was regarded with anything but favorable eyes in the Netherlands. Men told each other of his broken faith to the Moors in Granada, and of his unpopularity in Milan, where, notwithstanding his boasted moderation, he had, in reality, so oppressed the people as to gain their deadly hatred. They complained, too, that it was an insult to send, as governor-general of the provinces, not a prince of the blood, as used to be the case, but a simple "gentleman of cloak and sword."

Any person, however, who represented the royal authority in the provinces was under historical disadvantage. He was literally no more than an actor, hardly even that. It was Philip’s policy and pride to direct all the machinery of his extensive empire, and to pull every string himself. His puppets, however magnificently attired, moved only in obedience to his impulse, and spoke no syllable but with his voice. Upon the table in his cabinet was arranged all the business of his various realms, even to the most minute particulars. Plans, petty or vast, affecting the interests of empires and ages, or bounded within the narrow limits of trivial and evanescent detail, encumbered his memory and consumed his time. His ambition to do all the work of his kingdoms was aided by an inconceivable greediness for labor. He loved the routine of business, as some monarchs have loved war, as others have loved pleasure. The object, alike paltry and impossible, of this ambition, bespoke the narrow mind. His estates were regarded by him as private property; measures affecting the temporal and eternal interests of millions were regarded as domestic affairs,
and the eye of the master was considered the only one which could duly
superintend these estates and those interests. Much incapacity to govern was
revealed in this inordinate passion to administer. His mind, constantly fatigued
by petty labors, was never enabled to survey his wide domains from the height
of majesty.

In Alva, certainly, he had employed an unquestionable reality; but Alva, by a
fortunate coincidence of character, had seemed his second self. He was now
gone, however, and although the royal purpose had not altered, the royal
circumstances were changed. The moment had arrived when it was thought
that the mask and cothurn might again be assumed with effect, when a grave
and conventional personage might decorously make his appearance to perform
an interlude of clemency and moderation with satisfactory results. Accordingly,
the Great Commander, heralded by rumors of amnesty, was commissioned to
assume the government which Alva had been permitted to resign.

It had been industriously circulated that a change of policy was intended. It
was even supposed by the more sanguine that the duke had retired in disgrace.
A show of coldness was manifested towards him on his return by the king, while
Vargas, who had accompanied the governor, was peremptorily forbidden to
appear within five leagues of the court. The more discerning, however,
perceived much affectation in this apparent displeasure. Saint Goard, the keen
observer of Philip's moods and measures, wrote to his sovereign that he had
narrowly observed the countenances of both Philip and Alva; that he had
informed himself as thoroughly as possible with regard to the course of policy
intended; that he had arrived at the conclusion that the royal chagrin was but
dissimulation, intended to dispose the Netherlanders to thoughts of an
impossible peace, and that he considered the present merely a breathing time,
in which still more active preparations might be made for crushing the
rebellion. It was now evident to the world that the revolt had reached a stage
in which it could be terminated only by absolute conquest or concession.

To conquer the people of the provinces, except by extermination, seemed
difficult to judge by the seven years of execution, sieges, and campaigns,
which had now passed without a definite result. It was, therefore, thought
expedient to employ concession. The new governor accordingly, in case the
Netherlanders would abandon every object for which they had been so
heroically contending, was empowered to concede a pardon. It was expressly
enjoined upon him, however, that no conciliatory measures should be adopted
in which the king's absolute supremacy, and the total prohibition of every form
of worship but the Roman Catholic, were not assumed as a basis. Now, as the
people had been contending at least ten years long for constitutional rights
against prerogative, and at least seven for liberty of conscience against
papistry, it was easy to foretell how much effect any negotiations thus
commenced were likely to produce.
Yet, no doubt, in the Netherlands there was a most earnest longing for peace. The Catholic portion of the population were desirous of a reconciliation with their brethren of the new religion. The universal vengeance which had descended upon heresy had not struck the heretics only. It was difficult to find a fireside, Protestant or Catholic, which had not been made desolate by execution, banishment, or confiscation. The common people and the grand seigniors were alike weary of the war. Not only Aerschot and Viglius, but Noircarmes and Berlaymont, were desirous that peace should be at last compassed upon liberal terms, and the Prince of Orange fully and unconditionally pardoned. Even the Spanish commanders had become disgusted with the monotonous butchery which had stained their swords. Julian Romero, the fierce and unscrupulous soldier upon whose head rested the guilt of the Naarden massacre, addressed several letters to William of Orange, full of courtesy and good wishes for a speedy termination of the war, and for an entire reconciliation of the prince with his sovereign. Noircarmes also opened a correspondence with the great leader of the revolt, and offered to do all in his power to restore peace and prosperity to the country. The prince answered the courtesy of the Spaniard with equal, but barren, courtesy; for it was obvious that no definite result could be derived from such informal negotiations. To Noircarmes he responded in terms of gentle but grave rebuke, expressing deep regret that a Netherland noble of such eminence, with so many others of rank and authority, should so long have supported the king in his tyranny. He, however, expressed his satisfaction that their eyes, however late, had opened to the enormous iniquity which had been practiced in the country, and he accepted the offers of friendship as frankly as they had been made. Not long afterwards, the prince furnished his correspondent with a proof of his sincerity, by forwarding to him two letters which had been intercepted, from certain agents of government to Alva, in which Noircarmes and others who had so long supported the king against their own country, were spoken of in terms of menace and distrust. The prince accordingly warned his new correspondent that, in spite of all the proofs of uncompromising loyalty which he had exhibited, he was yet moving upon a dark and slippery pathway, and might even like Egmont and Horn, find a scaffold as the end and the reward of his career. So profound was that abyss of dissimulation which constituted the royal policy towards the Netherlands, that the most unscrupulous partisans of government could only see doubt and danger with regard to their future destiny, and were sometimes only saved by an opportune death from disgrace and the hangman’s hands.

Such, then, were the sentiments of many eminent personages, even among the most devoted loyalists. All longed for peace; many even definitely expected it, upon the arrival of the Great Commander. Moreover, that functionary discovered, at his first glance into the disorderly state of the exchequer, that at least a short respite was desirable before proceeding with the interminable measures of hostility against the rebellion. If any man had been ever disposed to give Alva credit for administrative ability, such delusion must have vanished.
at the spectacle of confusion and bankruptcy which presented itself at the
termination of his government. He resolutely declined to give his successor any
information whatever as to his financial position. So far from furnishing a
detailed statement, such as might naturally be expected upon so momentous
an occasion, he informed the Grand Commander that even a sketch was
entirely out of the question, and would require more time and labor than he
could then afford. He took his departure, accordingly, leaving Requesens in
profound ignorance as to his past accounts, an ignorance in which it is probable
that the duke himself shared to the fullest extent. His enemies stoutly
maintained that however loosely his accounts had been kept, he had been very
careful to make no mistakes against himself, and that he had retired full of
wealth, if not of honor, from his long and terrible administration.

His own letters, on the contrary, accused the king of ingratitude, in permitting
an old soldier to ruin himself, not only in health but in fortune, for want of
proper recompense during an arduous administration. At any rate it is very
certain that the rebellion had already been an expensive matter to the Crown.
The army in the Netherlands numbered more than 62,000 men, 8,000 being
Spaniards, the rest Walloons and Germans. Forty millions of dollars had already
been sunk, and it seemed probable that it would require nearly the whole
annual produce of the American mines to sustain the war. The transatlantic
gold and silver, disinterred from the depths where they had been buried for
ages, were employed, not to expand the current of a healthy, life-giving
commerce, but to be melted into blood. The sweat and the tortures of the
king’s pagan subjects in the primeval forests of the New World, were made
subsidiary to the extermination of his Netherland people, and the destruction
of an ancient civilization. To this end had Columbus discovered a hemisphere
for Castile and Aragon, and the new Indies revealed their hidden treasures?

Forty millions of ducats had been spent. Six and a half millions of arrearages
were due to the army, while its current expenses were 600,000 a month. The
military expenses alone of the Netherlands were accordingly more than seven
millions of dollars yearly, and the mines of the New World produced, during the
half century of Philip’s reign, an average of only eleven. Against this constantly
increasing deficit, there was not a stiver in the exchequer, nor the means of
raising one. The tenth penny had been long virtually extinct, and was soon to
be formally abolished. Confiscation had ceased to afford a permanent revenue,
and the estates obstinately refused to grant a dollar. Such was the condition to
which the unrelenting tyranny and the financial experiments of Alva had
reduced the country.

It was, therefore, obvious to Requesens that it would be useful at the moment
to hold out hopes of pardon and reconciliation. He saw what he had not at first
comprehended, and what few bigoted supporters of absolutism in any age have
ever comprehended, that national enthusiasm, when profound and general,
makes a rebellion more expensive to the despot than to the insurgents. “Before
my arrival," wrote the Grand Commander to his sovereign, "I did not understand how the rebels could maintain such considerable fleets, while your Majesty could not support a single one. It appears, however, that men who are fighting for their lives, their firesides, their property, and their false religion, for their own cause, in short, are contented to receive rations only, without receiving pay." The moral which the new governor drew from his correct diagnosis of the prevailing disorder was, not that this national enthusiasm should be respected, but that it should be deceived. He deceived no one but himself, however. He censured Noircarmes and Romero for their intermeddling, but held out hopes of a general pacification. He repudiated the idea of any reconciliation between the king and the Prince of Orange, but proposed at the same time a settlement of the revolt. He had not yet learned that the revolt and William of Orange were one. Although the prince himself had repeatedly offered to withdraw forever from the country, if his absence would expedite a settlement satisfactory to the provinces, there was not a patriot in the Netherlands who could contemplate his departure without despair. Moreover, they all knew better than did Requesens, the inevitable result of the pacific measures which had been daily foreshadowed.

The appointment of the Grand Commander was in truth a desperate attempt to deceive the Netherlanders. He approved distinctly and heartily of Alva’s policy, but wrote to the king that it was desirable to amuse the people with the idea of another and a milder scheme. He affected to believe, and perhaps really did believe, that the nation would accept the destruction of all their institutions, provided that penitent heretics were allowed to be reconciled to the Mother Church, and obstinate ones permitted to go into perpetual exile, taking with them a small portion of their worldly goods. For being willing to make this last and almost incredible concession, he begged pardon sincerely of the king. If censurable, he ought not, he thought, to be too severely blamed, for his loyalty was known. The world was aware how often he had risked his life for his Majesty, and how gladly and how many more times he was ready to risk it in future. In his opinion, religion had, after all, but very little to do with the troubles, and so he confidentially informed his sovereign. Egmont and Horn had died Catholics, the people did not rise to assist the prince’s invasion in 1568, and the new religion was only a lever by which a few artful demagogues had attempted to overthrow the king’s authority.

Such views as these revealed the measures of the new governor’s capacity. The people had really refused to rise in 1568, not because they were without sympathy for Orange, but because they were paralyzed by their fear of Alva. Since those days, however, the new religion had increased and multiplied everywhere, in the blood which had rained upon it. It was now difficult to find a Catholic in Holland and Zealand, who was not a government agent. The prince had been a moderate Catholic, in the opening scenes of the rebellion, while he came forward as the champion of liberty for all forms of Christianity. He had now become a convert to the new religion without receding an inch
from his position in favor of universal toleration. The new religion was, therefore, not an instrument devised by a faction, but had expanded into the atmosphere of the people’s daily life. Individuals might be executed for claiming to breathe it, but it was itself impalpable to the attacks of despotism. Yet the Grand Commander persuaded himself that religion had little or nothing to do with the state of the Netherlands. Nothing more was necessary, he thought, or affected to think, in order to restore tranquility, than once more to spread the net of a general amnesty.

The Duke of Alva knew better. That functionary, with whom, before his departure from the provinces, Requesens had been commanded to confer, distinctly stated his opinion that there was no use of talking about pardon. Brutally, but candidly, he maintained that there was nothing to be done but to continue the process of extermination. It was necessary, he said, to reduce the country to a dead level of unresisting misery, before an act of oblivion could be securely laid down as the foundation of a new and permanent order of society. He had already given his advice to his Majesty, that every town in the country should be burned to the ground, except those which could be permanently occupied by the royal troops. The king, however, in his access of clemency at the appointment of a new administration, instructed the Grand Commander not to resort to this measure unless it should become strictly necessary." Such were the opposite opinions of the old and new governors with regard to the pardon. The learned Viglius sided with Alva, although manifestly against his will. "It is both the duke’s opinion and my own," wrote the Commander, "that Viglius does not dare to express his real opinion, and that he is secretly desirous of an arrangement with the rebels." With a good deal of inconsistency, the governor was offended, not only with those who opposed his plans, but with those who favored them. He was angry with Viglius, who, at least nominally, disapproved of the pardon, and with Noircarmes, Aerschot, and others, who manifested a wish for a pacification. Of the chief characteristic ascribed to the people by Julius Caesar, namely, that they forgot neither favors nor injuries, the second half only, in the Grand Commander’s opinion, had been retained. Not only did they never forget injuries, but their memory, said he, was so good, that they recollected many which they had never received.

On the whole, however, in the embarrassed condition of affairs, and while waiting for further supplies, the Commander was secretly disposed to try the effect of a pardon. The object was to deceive the people and to gain time, for there was no intention of conceding liberty of conscience, of withdrawing foreign troops, or of assembling the states-general. It was, however, not possible to apply these hypocritical measures of conciliation immediately. The war was in full career and could not be arrested even in that wintry season. The patriots held Mondragon closely besieged in Middelburg, the last point in the Isle of Walcheren which held for the king. There was a considerable treasure in money and merchandise shut up in that city; and, moreover, so deserving and distinguished an officer as Mondragon could not be abandoned to
his fate. At the same time, famine was pressing him sorely, and, by the end of the year, garrison and townspeople had nothing but rats, mice, dogs, cats, and such repulsive substitutes for food, to support life withal. It was necessary to take immediate measures to relieve the place.

On the other hand, the situation of the patriots was not very encouraging. Their superiority on the sea was unquestionable, for the Hollanders and Zealanders were the best sailors in the world, and they asked of their country no payment for their blood, but thanks. The land forces, however, were usually mercenaries, who were apt to mutiny at the commencement of an action if, as was too often the case, their wages could not be paid. Holland was entirely cut in twain by the loss of Harlem and the leaguer of Leyden, no communication between the disjoined portions being possible, except with difficulty and danger. The estates, although they had done much for the cause, and were prepared to do much more, were too apt to wrangle about economical details. They irritated the Prince of Orange by huckstering about subsidies to a degree which his proud and generous nature could hardly brook. He had strong hopes from France. Louis of Nassau had held secret interviews with the Duke of Alençon and the Duke of Anjou, now King of Poland, at Blamont. Alençon had assured him secretly, affectionately, and warmly, that he would be as sincere a friend to the cause as were his two royal brothers. The count had even received 100,000 livres in hand, as an earnest of the favorable intentions of France, and was now busily engaged, at the instance of the prince, in levying an army in Germany for the relief of Leyden and the rest of Holland, while William, on his part, was omitting nothing, whether by representations to the estates or by secret foreign missions and correspondence, to further the cause of the suffering country.

At the same time, the prince dreaded the effect of the promised pardon. He had reason to be distrustful of the general temper of the nation when a man like Saint Aldegonde, the enlightened patriot and his own tried friend, was influenced, by the discouraging and dangerous position in which he found himself, to abandon the high ground upon which they had both so long and so firmly stood. Saint Aldegonde had been held a strict prisoner since his capture at Maeslandsluis, at the close of Alva’s administration. It was, no doubt, a predicament attended with much keen suffering and positive danger. It had hitherto been the uniform policy of the government to kill all prisoners, of whatever rank. Accordingly, some had been drowned, some had been hanged, some beheaded, some poisoned in their dungeons—all had been murdered. This had been Alva’s course. The Grand Commander also highly approved of the system, but the capture of Count Bossu by the patriots had necessitated a suspension of such rigor. It was certain that Bossu’s head would fall as soon as Saint Aldegonde’s, the prince having expressly warned the government of this inevitable result. Notwithstanding that security, however, for his eventual restoration to liberty, a Netherland rebel in a Spanish prison could hardly feel himself at ease. There were so many footmarks into the cave and not a single
one coming forth. Yet it was not singular, however, that the prince should read
with regret the somewhat insincere casuistry with which Saint Aldegonde
sought to persuade himself and his fellow countrymen that a reconciliation
with the monarch was desirable, even upon unworthy terms. He was somewhat
shocked that so valiant and eloquent a supporter of the Reformation should
coolly express his opinion that the king would probably refuse liberty of
conscience to the Netherlanders, but would, no doubt, permit heretics to go
into banishment. “Perhaps, after we have gone into exile,” added Saint
Aldegonde, almost with baseness, “God may give us an opportunity of doing
such good service to the king, that he will lend us a more favorable ear, and,
peradventure, permit our return to the country.”

Certainly, such language was not becoming the pen which wrote the famous
Compromise. The prince himself was, however, not to be induced, even by the
captivity and the remonstrances of so valued a friend, to swerve from the path
of duty. He still maintained, in public and private, that the withdrawal of
foreign troops from the provinces, the restoration of the old constitutional
privileges, and the entire freedom of conscience in religious matters, were the
indispensible conditions of any pacification. It was plain to him that the
Spaniards were not ready to grant these conditions, but he felt confident that
he should accomplish the release of Saint Aldegonde without condescending to
an ignominious peace.

The most pressing matter, upon the Great Commander’s arrival, was obviously
to relieve the city of Middelburg. Mondragon, after so stanch a defense, would
soon be obliged to capitulate, unless he should promptly receive supplies.
Requesens, accordingly, collected seventy-five ships at Bergen op Zoom, which
were placed nominally under the command of Admiral de Glimes, but in reality
under that of Julian Romero. Another fleet of thirty vessels had been
assembled at Antwerp under Sancho d’Avila. Both, amply freighted with
provisions, were destined to make their way to Middelburg by the two different
passages of the Honde and the Eastern Scheld. On the other hand, the Prince of
Orange had repaired to Flushing to superintend the operations of Admiral
Boisot, who already, in obedience to his orders, had got a powerful squadron in
readiness at that place. Late in January 1574, d’Avila arrived in the
neighborhood of Flushing, where he awaited the arrival of Romero’s fleet.
United, the two commanders were to make a determined attempt to reinforce
the starving city of Middelburg. At the same time, Governor Requesens made
his appearance in person at Bergen op Zoom to expedite the departure of the
stronger fleet, but it was not the intention of the Prince of Orange to allow this
expedition to save the city. The Spanish generals, however valiant, were to
learn that their genius was not amphibious, and that the Beggars of the Sea
were still invincible on their own element, even if their brethren of the land
had occasionally quailed.
Admiral Boisot’s fleet had already moved up the Scheld and taken a position nearly opposite to Bergen op Zoom. On the 20th of January, the Prince of Orange, embarking from Zierick Zee, came to make them a visit before the impending action. His galley, conspicuous for its elegant decorations, was exposed for some time to the artillery of the fort, but providentially escaped unharmed. He assembled all the officers of his armada, and, in brief but eloquent language, reminded them how necessary it was to the salvation of the whole country that they should prevent the city of Middelburg—the key to the whole of Zealand, already upon the point of falling into the hands of the patriots—from being now wrested from their grasp. On the sea, at least, the Hollanders and Zealanders were at home. The officers and men, with one accord, rent the air with their cheers. They swore that they would shed every drop of blood in their veins, but they would sustain the prince and the country; and they solemnly vowed not only to serve, if necessary, without wages, but to sacrifice all that they possessed in the world rather than abandon the cause of their fatherland. Having by his presence and his language aroused their valor to so high a pitch of enthusiasm, the prince departed for Delft, to make arrangements to drive the Spaniards from the siege of Leyden.

On the 29th of January, the fleet of Romero sailed from Bergen, disposed in three divisions, each numbering twenty-five vessels of different sizes. As the Grand Commander stood on the dyke of Schakerloo to witness the departure, a general salute was fired by the fleet in his honor, but with most unfortunate augury. The discharge, by some accident, set fire to the magazines of one of the ships, which blew up with a terrible explosion, every soul on board perishing. The expedition, nevertheless, continued its way. Opposite Romerswael, the fleet of Boisot awaited them, drawn up in battle array. As an indication of the spirit which animated this hardy race, it may be mentioned that Schot, captain of the flagship, had been left on shore, dying of a pestilential fever. Admiral Boisot had appointed a Flushinger, Klaaf Klaafzoon, in his place. Just before the action, however, Schot, "scarcely able to blow a feather from his mouth," staggered on board his ship, and claimed the command. There was no disputing a precedency which he had risen from his deathbed to vindicate. There was, however, a short discussion, as the enemy’s fleet approached, between these rival captains regarding the manner in which the Spaniards should be received. Klaafzoon was of opinion that most of the men should go below till after the enemy’s first discharge. Schot insisted that all should remain on deck, ready to grapple with the Spanish fleet, and to board them without the least delay. The sentiment of Schot prevailed, and all hands stood on deck, ready with boarding pikes and grappling irons.

The first division of Romero came nearer, and delivered its first broadside, when Schot and Klaafzoon both fell mortally wounded. Admiral Boisot lost an eye, and many officers and sailors in the other vessels were killed or wounded. This was, however, the first and last of the cannonading. As many of Romero’s vessels as could be grappled with in the narrow estuary found themselves
locked in close embrace with their enemies. A murderous hand-to-hand conflict succeeded. Battle axe, boarding pike, pistol, and dagger were the weapons. Every man who yielded himself a prisoner was instantly stabbed and tossed into the sea by the remorseless Zealanders. Fighting only to kill, and not to plunder, they did not even stop to take the gold chains which many Spaniards wore on their necks. It had, however, been obvious from the beginning that the Spanish fleet were not likely to achieve that triumph over the patriots which was necessary before they could relieve Middelburg. The battle continued a little longer, but after fifteen ships had been taken and twelve hundred royalists slain, the remainder of the enemy's fleet retreated into Bergen. Romero himself, whose ship had grounded, sprang out of a porthole and swam ashore, followed by such of his men as were able to imitate him. He landed at the very feet of the Grand Commander, who, wet and cold, had been standing all day upon the dyke of Schakerloo, in the midst of a pouring rain, only to witness the total defeat of his armada at last. "I told your Excellency," said Romero, coolly, as he climbed, all dripping, on the bank, "that I was a land-fighter and not a sailor. If you were to give me the command of a hundred fleets, I believe that none of them would fare better than this has done." The governor and his discomfited, but philosophical lieutenant, then returned to Bergen, and thence to Brussels, acknowledging that the city of Middelburg must fall, while Sancho d'Avila, hearing of the disaster which had befallen his countrymen, brought his fleet, with the greatest expedition back to Antwerp. Thus the gallant Mondragon was abandoned to his fate.

That fate could no longer be protracted. The city of Middelburg had reached and passed the starvation point. Still Mondragon was determined not to yield at discretion, although very willing to capitulate. The Prince of Orange, after the victory of Bergen, was desirous of an unconditional surrender, believing it to be his right, and knowing that he could not be supposed capable of practicing upon Middelburg the vengeance which had been wreaked on Naarden, Zutphen, and Harlem. Mondragon, however, swore that he would set fire to the city in twenty places, and perish with every soldier and burgher in the flames together, rather than abandon himself to the enemy's mercy. The prince knew that the brave Spaniard was entirely capable of executing his threat. He granted honorable conditions, which, on the 18th of February, were drawn up in five articles, and signed. It was agreed that Mondragon and his troops should leave the place, with their arms, ammunition, and all their personal property. The citizens who remained were to take oath of fidelity to the prince, as stadholder for his Majesty, and were to pay besides a subsidy of 300,000 florins. Mondragon was, furthermore, to procure the discharge of Saint Aldegonde, and of four other prisoners of rank, or, failing in the attempt, was to return within two months, and constitute himself prisoner of war. The Catholic priests were to take away from the city none of their property but their clothes. In accordance with this capitulation, Mondragon, and those who wished to accompany him, left the city on the 21st of February, and were conveyed to the Flemish shore at Neuz. It will be seen in the sequel that the
governor neither granted him the release of the five prisoners, nor permitted him to return, according to his parole. A few days afterwards, the prince entered the city, re-organized the magistracy, received the allegiance of the inhabitants, restored the ancient constitution, and liberally remitted two thirds of the sum in which they had been mulcted.

The Spaniards had thus been successfully driven from the isle of Walcheren, leaving the Hollanders and Zealanders masters of the seacoast. Since the siege of Alkmaar had been raised, however, the enemy had remained within the territory of Holland. Leyden was closely invested, the country in a desperate condition, and all communication between its different cities nearly suspended. It was comparatively easy for the Prince of Orange to equip and man his fleets. The genius and habits of the people made them at home upon the water, and inspired them with a feeling of superiority to their adversaries. It was not so upon land. Strong to resist, patient to suffer, the Hollanders, although terrible in defense, had not the necessary discipline or experience to meet the veteran legions of Spain, with confidence, in the open field. To raise the siege of Leyden, the main reliance of the prince was upon Count Louis, who was again in Germany. In the latter days of Alva’s administration, William had written to his brothers, urging them speedily to arrange the details of a campaign, of which he forwarded them a sketch. As soon as a sufficient force had been levied in Germany, an attempt was to be made upon Maestricht. If that failed, Louis was to cross the Meuse, in the neighborhood of Stochem, make his way towards the prince’s own city of Gertruidenberg, and thence make a junction with his brother in the neighborhood of Delft. They were then to take up a position together between Harlem and Leyden. In that case it seemed probable that the Spaniards would find themselves obliged to fight at a great disadvantage, or to abandon the country. "In short," said the prince, "if this enterprise be arranged with due diligence and discretion, I hold it as the only certain means for putting a speedy end to the war, and for driving these devils of Spaniards out of the country, before the Duke of Alva has time to raise another army to support them."

In pursuance of this plan, Louis had been actively engaged all the earlier part of the winter in levying troops and raising supplies. He had been assisted by the French princes with considerable sums of money, as an earnest of what he was in future to expect from that source. He had made an unsuccessful attempt to effect the capture of Requesens, on his way to take the government of the Netherlands. He had then passed to the frontier of France, where he had held his important interview with Catharine de’ Medici and the Duke of Anjou, then on the point of departure to ascend the throne of Poland. He had received liberal presents, and still more liberal promises. Anjou had assured him that he would go as far as any of the German princes in rendering active and sincere assistance to the Protestant cause in the Netherlands. The Duke d’Alençon—soon, in his brother’s absence, to succeed to the chieftainship of the new alliance between the "politiques" and the Huguenots—had also pressed his
hand, whispering in his ear, as he did so, that the government of France now belonged to him, as it had recently done to Anjou, and that the prince might reckon upon his friendship with entire security.

These fine words, which cost nothing when whispered in secret, were not destined to fructify into a very rich harvest, for the mutual jealousy of France and England, lest either should acquire ascendancy in the Netherlands, made both governments prodigal of promises, while the common fear entertained by them of the power of Spain rendered both languid, insincere, and mischievous allies. Count John, however, was indefatigable in arranging the finances of the proposed expedition, and in levying contributions among his numerous relatives and allies in Germany, while Louis had profited by the occasion of Anjou’s passage into Poland, to acquire for himself 2,000 German and French cavalry, who had served to escort that prince, and who, being now thrown out of employment, were glad to have a job offered them by a general who was thought to be in funds. Another thousand of cavalry and 6,000 foot were soon assembled, from those ever-swarming nurseries of mercenary warriors, the smaller German states. With these, towards the end of February, Louis crossed the Rhine in a heavy snowstorm, and bent his course towards Maestricht. All the three brothers of the prince accompanied this little army, besides Duke Christopher, son of the Elector Palatine.

Before the end of the month the army reached the Meuse, and encamped within four miles of Maestricht, on the opposite side of the river. The garrison, commanded by Montesdoca, was weak, but the news of the warlike preparations in Germany had preceded the arrival of Count Louis. Requesens, feeling the gravity of the occasion, had issued orders for an immediate levy of 8,000 cavalry in Germany, with a proportionate number of infantry. At the same time he had directed Don Bernardino de Mendoza, with some companies of cavalry, then stationed in Breda, to throw himself without delay into Maestricht. Don Sancho d’Avila was entrusted with the general care of resisting the hostile expedition. That general had forthwith collected all the troops which could be spared from every town where they were stationed, had strengthened the cities of Antwerp, Ghent, Nimwegen, and Valenciennes, where there were known to be many secret adherents of Orange; and with the remainder of his forces had put himself in motion, to oppose the entrance of Louis into Brabant and his junction with his brother in Holland. Braccamonte had been dispatched to Leyden, in order instantly to draw off the forces which were besieging the city. Thus Louis had already effected something of importance by the very news of his approach.

Meantime the Prince of Orange had raised 6,000 infantry, whose rendezvous was the Isle of Bommel. He was disappointed at the paucity of the troops which Louis had been able to collect, but he sent messengers immediately to him, with a statement of his own condition, and with directions to join him in the Isle of Bommel, as soon as Maestricht should be reduced. It was, however, not
in the destiny of Louis to reduce Maestricht. His expedition had been marked with disaster from the beginning. A dark and threatening prophecy had, even before its commencement, enwrapped Louis, his brethren, and his little army, in a funeral pall. More than a thousand of his men had deserted before he reached the Meuse. When he encamped, opposite Maestricht, he found the river neither frozen nor open, the ice obstructing the navigation, but being too weak for the weight of an army. While he was thus delayed and embarrassed, Mendoza arrived in the city with reinforcements. It seemed already necessary for Louis to abandon his hopes of Maestricht, but he was at least desirous of crossing the river in that neighborhood, in order to effect his junction with the prince at the earliest possible moment. While the stream was still encumbered with ice, however, the enemy removed all the boats. On the third of March, Avila arrived with a large body of troops at Maestricht, and on the 18th, Mendoza crossed the river in the night, giving the patriots so severe an encamisada, that seven hundred were killed, at the expense of only seven of his own party. Harassed, but not dispirited by these disasters, Louis broke up his camp on the 21st, and took a position farther down the river, at Fauquemont and Gulpen, castles in the Duchy of Limburg. On the third of April, Braccamonte arrived at Maestricht, with twenty-five companies of Spaniards and three of cavalry, while on the same day Mondragon reached the scene of action with his sixteen companies of veterans.

It was now obvious to Louis, not only that he should not take Maestricht, but that his eventual junction with his brother was at least doubtful, every soldier who could possibly be spared seeming in motion to oppose his progress. He was to be sure, not yet outnumbered, but the enemy was increasing, and his own force diminishing daily. Moreover, the Spaniards were highly disciplined and experienced troops; while his own soldiers were mercenaries, already clamorous and insubordinate. On the eighth of April, he again shifted his encampment, and took his course along the right bank of the Meuse, between that river and the Rhine, in the direction of Nimwegen. Avila promptly decided to follow him, upon the opposite bank of the Meuse, intending to throw himself between Louis and the Prince of Orange, and by a rapid march to give the count battle, before he could join his brother.

On the eighth of April, at early dawn, Louis had left the neighborhood of Maestricht, and on the 13th he encamped at the village of Mook, on the Meuse, near the confines of Cleves. Sending out his scouts, he learned, to his vexation, that the enemy had outmarched him, and were now within cannon-shot. On the 13th, Avila had constructed a bridge of boats, over which he had effected the passage of the Meuse with his whole army, so that on the count’s arrival at Mook, he found the enemy facing him, on the same side of the river, and directly in his path. It was, therefore, obvious that, in this narrow space between the Waal and the Meuse, where they were now all assembled, Louis must achieve a victory, unaided, or abandon his expedition, and leave the Hollanders to despair. He was distressed at the position in which he found
himself, for he had hoped to reduce Maestricht, and to join his brother in Holland. Together, they could, at least, have expelled the Spaniards from that territory, in which case it was probable that a large part of the population in the different provinces would have risen. According to present aspects, the destiny of the country, for some time to come, was likely to hang upon the issue of a battle which he had not planned, and for which he was not fully prepared. Still he was not the man to be disheartened, nor had he ever possessed the courage to refuse a battle when offered. Upon this occasion, it would be difficult to retreat without disaster and disgrace, but it was equally difficult to achieve a victory. Thrust, as he was, like a wedge into the very heart of a hostile country, he was obliged to force his way through, or to remain in his enemy's power. Moreover, and worst of all, his troops were in a state of mutiny for their wages. While he talked to them of honor, they howled to him for money. It was the custom of these mercenaries to mutiny on the eve of battle—of the Spaniards, after it had been fought. By the one course, a victory was often lost which might have been achieved; by the other, when won, it was rendered fruitless.

Avila had chosen his place of battle with great skill. On the right bank of the Meuse, upon a narrow plain which spread from the river to a chain of hills within cannon-shot on the North, lay the little village of Mook. The Spanish general knew that his adversary had the superiority in cavalry, and that within this compressed space it would not be possible to derive much advantage from the circumstance.

On the 14th, both armies were drawn up in battle array at earliest dawn, Louis having strengthened his position by a deep trench, which extended from Mook, where he had stationed ten companies of infantry, which thus rested on the village and the river. Next came the bulk of his infantry, disposed in a single square. On their right was his cavalry, arranged in four squadrons, as well as the narrow limits of the field would allow. A small portion of them, for want of space, were stationed on the hillside.

Opposite, the forces of Don Sancho were drawn up in somewhat similar fashion. Twenty-five companies of Spaniards were disposed in four bodies of pikemen and musketeers, their right resting on the river. On their left was the cavalry, disposed by Mendoza in the form of a half moon—the horns garnished by two small bodies of sharpshooters. In the front ranks of the cavalry were the mounted carabineers of Schenk; behind were the Spanish lancers. The village of Mook lay between the two armies.

The skirmishing began at early dawn, with an attack upon the trench, and continued some hours, without bringing on a general engagement. Towards ten o'clock, Count Louis became impatient. All the trumpets of the patriots now rang out a challenge to their adversaries, and the Spaniards were just returning the defiance, and preparing a general onset, when the Seigneur de Hierges and
Baron Chevreaux arrived on the field. They brought with them a reinforcement of more than a thousand men, and the intelligence that Valdez was on his way with nearly five thousand more. As he might be expected on the following morning, a short deliberation was held as to the expediency of deferring the action. Count Louis was at the head of 6,000 foot and 2,000 cavalry. Avila mustered only 4,000 infantry and not quite a thousand horse. This inferiority would be changed on the morrow into an overwhelming superiority. Meantime, it was well to remember the punishment endured by Aremberg at Heiliger-Lee, for not waiting till Meghen’s arrival. This prudent counsel was, however, very generally scouted, and by none more loudly than by Hierges and Chevreaux, who had brought the intelligence. It was thought that at this juncture nothing could be more indiscreet than discretion. They had a wary and audacious general to deal with. While they were waiting for their reinforcements, he was quite capable of giving them the slip. He might thus effect the passage of the stream and that union with his brother which had been thus far so successfully prevented. This reasoning prevailed, and the skirmishing at the trench was renewed with redoubled vigor, an additional force being sent against it. After a short and fierce struggle it was carried, and the Spaniards rushed into the village, but were soon dislodged by a larger detachment of infantry, which Count Louis sent to the rescue. The battle now became general at this point.

Nearly all the patriot infantry were employed to defend the post; nearly all the Spanish infantry were ordered to assail it. The Spaniards, dropping on their knees, according to custom, said a Paternoster and an Ave Mary, and then rushed, in mass, to the attack. After a short but sharp conflict, the trench was again carried, and the patriots completely routed. Upon this, Count Louis charged with all his cavalry upon the enemy’s horse, which had hitherto remained motionless. With the first shock the mounted arquebusiers of Schenk, constituting the vanguard, were broken, and fled in all directions. So great was their panic, as Louis drove them before him, that they never stopped till they had swum or been drowned in the river, the survivors carrying the news to Grave and to other cities that the royalists had been completely routed. This was, however, very far from the truth. The patriot cavalry, mostly carabineers, wheeled after the first discharge, and retired to reload their pieces, but before they were ready for another attack, the Spanish lancers and the German black troopers, who had all remained firm, set upon them with great spirit. A fierce, bloody, and confused action succeeded, in which the patriots were completely overthrown.

Count Louis, finding that the day was lost, and his army cut to pieces, rallied around him a little band of troopers, among whom were his brother, Count Henry, and Duke Christopher, and together they made a final and desperate charge. It was the last that was ever seen of them on earth. They all went down together, in the midst of the fight, and were never heard of more. The battle terminated, as usual in those conflicts of mutual hatred, in a horrible butchery, hardly any of the patriot army being left to tell the tale of their
disaster. At least 4,000 were killed, including those who were slain on the field, those who were suffocated in the marshes or the river, and those who were burned in the farmhouses where they had taken refuge. It was uncertain which of those various modes of death had been the lot of Count Louis, his brother, and his friend. The mystery was never solved. They had, probably, all died on the field; but, stripped of their clothing, with their faces trampled upon by the hoofs of horses, it was not possible to distinguish them from the less illustrious dead. It was the opinion of many that they had been drowned in the river; of others, that they had been burned. There was a vague tale that Louis, bleeding but not killed, had struggled forth from the heap of corpses where he had been thrown, had crept to the riverside, and, while washing his wounds, had been surprised and butchered by a party of rustics. The story was not generally credited, but no man knew, or was destined to learn, the truth.

A dark and fatal termination to this last enterprise of Count Louis had been anticipated by many. In that superstitious age, when emperors and princes daily investigated the future, by alchemy, by astrology, and by books of fate, filled with formulæ, as gravely and precisely set forth as algebraical equations; when men of every class, from monarch to peasant, implicitly believed in supernatural portents and prophecies, it was not singular that a somewhat striking appearance, observed in the sky some weeks previously to the battle of Mookerheyde, should have inspired many persons with a shuddering sense of impending evil.

Early in February, five soldiers of the burgher guard at Utrecht, being on their midnight watch, beheld in the sky above them the representation of a furious battle. The sky was extremely dark, except directly over their heads, where, for a space equal in extent to the length of the city, and in breadth to that of an ordinary chamber, two armies, in battle array, were seen advancing upon each other. The one moved rapidly up from the Northwest, with banners waving, spears flashing, trumpets sounding, accompanied by heavy artillery and by squadrons of cavalry. The other came slowly forward from the Southeast, as if from an entrenched camp, to encounter their assailants. There was a fierce action for a few moments, the shouts of the combatants, the heavy discharge of cannon, the rattle of musketry, the tramp of heavy-armed foot soldiers, the rush of cavalry, being distinctly heard. The firmament trembled with the shock of the contending hosts, and was lurid with the rapid discharges of their artillery. After a short, fierce engagement, the northwestern army was beaten back in disorder, but rallied again, after a breathing time, formed again into solid column, and again advanced. Their foes, arrayed, as the witnesses affirmed, in a square and closely serried grove of spears and muskets, again awaited the attack. Once more the aerial cohorts closed upon each other, all the signs and sounds of a desperate encounter being distinctly recognized by the eager witnesses. The struggle seemed but short. The lances of the southeastern army seemed to snap "like hemp-stalks," while their firm columns all went down together in mass, beneath the onset of their enemies. The
overthrow was complete, victors and vanquished had faded, the clear blue space, surrounded by black clouds, was empty, when suddenly its whole extent, where the conflict had so lately raged, was streaked with blood, flowing athwart the sky in broad crimson streams; nor was it till the five witnesses had fully watched and pondered over these portents that the vision entirely vanished.

So impressed were the grave magistrates of Utrecht with the account given next day by the sentinels, that a formal examination of the circumstances was made, the deposition of each witness, under oath, duly recorded, and a vast deal of consultation of soothsayers’ books and other auguries employed to elucidate the mystery. It was universally considered typical of the anticipated battle between Count Louis and the Spaniards. When, therefore, it was known that the patriots, moving from the Southeast, had arrived at Mookerheyde, and that their adversaries, crossing the Meuse at Grave, had advanced upon them from the Northwest, the result of the battle was considered inevitable, the phantom battle of Utrecht its infallible precursor.

Thus perished Louis of Nassau in the flower of his manhood, in the midst of a career already crowded with events such as might suffice for a century of ordinary existence. It is difficult to find in history a more frank and loyal character. His life was noble, the elements of the heroic and the genial so mixed in him that the imagination contemplates him, after three centuries, with an almost affectionate interest. He was not a great man. He was far from possessing the subtle genius or the expansive views of his brother; but, called as he was to play a prominent part in one of the most complicated and imposing dramas ever enacted by man, he nevertheless always acquitted himself with honor. His direct, fearless and energetic nature commanded alike the respect of friend and foe. As a politician, a soldier, and a diplomatist, he was busy, bold, and true. He accomplished by sincerity what many thought could only be compassed by trickery. Dealing often with the most adroit and most treacherous of princes and statesmen, he frequently carried his point, and he never stooped to flattery. From the time when, attended by his “twelve disciples,” he assumed the most prominent part in the negotiations with Margaret of Parma, through all the various scenes of the revolution, through all the conferences with Spaniards, Italians, Huguenots, Malcontents, Flemish councillors, or German princes, he was the consistent and unflinching supporter of religious liberty and constitutional law.

The Battle of Heiliger-Lee and the capture of Mons were his most signal triumphs, but the fruits of both were annihilated by subsequent disaster. His headlong courage was his chief foible. The French accused him of losing the battle of Moncontour by his impatience to engage, yet they acknowledged that to his masterly conduct it was owing that their retreat was effected in so successful, and even so brilliant a manner. He was censured for rashness and precipitancy in this last and fatal enterprise, but the reproach seems entirely
without foundation. The expedition as already stated, had been deliberately arranged, with the full cooperation of his brother, and had been preparing several months. That he was able to set no larger force on foot than that which he led into Gueldres was not his fault. But for the floating ice which barred his passage of the Meuse, he would have surprised Maestricht; but for the mutiny, which rendered his mercenary soldiers cowards, he might have defeated Avila at Mookerheyde. Had he done so, he would have joined his brother in the Isle of Bommel in triumph; the Spaniards would, probably, have been expelled from Holland, and Leyden saved the horrors of that memorable siege which she was soon called upon to endure. These results were not in his destiny. Providence had decreed that he should perish in the midst of his usefulness, that the prince, in his death, should lose the right hand which had been so swift to execute his various plans, and the faithful fraternal heart which had always responded so readily to every throb of his own.

In figure, he was below the middle height, but martial and noble in his bearing. The expression of his countenance was lively, his manner frank and engaging. All who knew him personally loved him, and he was the idol of his gallant brethren. His mother always addressed him as her dearly beloved, her heart’s-cherished Louis. "You must come soon to me," she wrote in the last year of his life, "for I have many matters to ask your advice upon; and I thank you beforehand, for you have loved me as your mother all the days of your life; for which may God Almighty have you in his holy keeping."

It was the doom of this high-born, true-hearted dame to be called upon to weep oftener for her children than is the usual lot of mothers. Count Adolphus had already perished in his youth on the field of Heiliger-Lee, and now Louis and his young brother Henry, who had scarcely attained his twenty-sixth year, and whose short life had been passed in that faithful service to the cause of freedom which was the instinct of his race, had both found a bloody and an unknown grave. Count John, who had already done so much for the cause, was fortunately spared to do much more. Although of the expedition, and expecting to participate in the battle, he had, at the urgent solicitation of all the leaders, left the army for a brief season, in order to obtain at Cologne a supply of money for the mutinous troops. He had started upon this mission two days before the action in which he, too, would otherwise have been sacrificed. The young Duke Christopher, "optimæ indolis et magnæ spei adolescens," who had perished on the same field, was sincerely mourned by the lovers of freedom. His father, the elector, found his consolation in the Scriptures, and in the reflection that his son had died in the bed of honor, fighting for the cause of God. "'T was better thus," said that stern Calvinist, whose dearest wish was to "Calvinize the world," "than to have passed his time in idleness, which is the Devil’s pillow."

Vague rumors of the catastrophe had spread far and wide. It was soon certain that Louis had been defeated, but, for a long time, conflicting reports were in
circulation as to the fate of the leaders. The Prince of Orange, meanwhile, passed days of intense anxiety, expecting hourly to hear from his brothers, listening to dark rumors, which he refused to credit and could not contradict, and writing letters, day after day, long after the eyes which should have read the friendly missives were closed.

The victory of the king’s army at Mookerheyde had been rendered comparatively barren by the mutiny which broke forth the day after the battle. Three years’ pay were due to the Spanish troops, and it was not surprising that upon this occasion one of those periodic rebellions should break forth, by which the royal cause was frequently so much weakened, and the royal governors so intolerably perplexed. These mutinies were of almost regular occurrence, and attended by as regular a series of phenomena. The Spanish troops, living so far from their own country, but surrounded by their women, and constantly increasing swarms of children, constituted a locomotive city of considerable population, permanently established on a foreign soil. It was a city walled in by bayonets, and still further isolated from the people around by the impassable moat of mutual hatred. It was a city obeying the articles of war, governed by despotic authority, and yet occasionally revealing, in full force, the irrepressible democratic element. At periods which could almost be calculated, the military populace were wont to rise upon the privileged classes, to deprive them of office and liberty, and to set up in their place commanders of their own election. A governor-in-chief, a sergeant-major, a board of councillors and various other functionaries, were chosen by acclamation and universal suffrage. The Eletto, or chief officer thus appointed, was clothed with supreme power, but forbidden to exercise it. He was surrounded by councillors, who watched his every motion, read all his correspondence, and assisted at all his conferences, while the councillors were themselves narrowly watched by the commonalty. These movements were, however, in general, marked by the most exemplary order. Anarchy became a system of government; rebellion enacted and enforced the strictest rules of discipline; theft, drunkenness, violence to women, were severely punished. As soon as the mutiny broke forth, the first object was to take possession of the nearest city, where the Eletto was usually established in the town-house, and the soldiery quartered upon the citizens.

Nothing in the shape of food or lodging was too good for these marauders. Men who had lived for years on camp rations—coarse knaves who had held the plough till compelled to handle the musket—now slept in fine linen and demanded from the trembling burghers the daintiest viands. They ate the land bare, like a swarm of locusts. "Chickens and partridges," says the thrifty chronicler of Antwerp, "caponos and pheasants, bares and rabbits, two kinds of wines; for sauces, capers and olives, citrons and oranges, spices and sweetmeats; wheaten bread for their dogs, and even wine to wash the feet of their horses"—such was the entertainment demanded and obtained by the mutinous troops. They were very willing both to enjoy the luxury of this forage,
and to induce the citizens, from weariness of affording compelled hospitality, to submit to a taxation by which the military claims might be liquidated.

A city thus occupied was at the mercy of a foreign soldiery, which had renounced all authority but that of self-imposed laws. The king’s officers were degraded, perhaps murdered, while those chosen to supply their places had only a nominal control. The Eletto, day by day, proclaimed from the balcony of the town-house the latest rules and regulations. If satisfactory, there was a clamor of applause; if objectionable, they were rejected with a tempest of hisses, with discharges of musketry. The Eletto did not govern; he was a dictator who could not dictate, but could only register decrees. If too honest, too firm, or too dull for his place, he was deprived of his office and sometimes of his life. Another was chosen in his room, often to be succeeded by a series of others, destined to the same fate. Such were the main characteristics of those formidable mutinies, the result of the unthriftiness and dishonesty by which the soldiery engaged in these interminable hostilities were deprived of their dearly earned wages. The expense of the war was bad enough at best, but when it is remembered that of three or four dollars sent from Spain, or contributed by the provinces for the support of the army, hardly one reached the pockets of the soldier, the frightful expenditure which took place may be imagined. It was not surprising that so much peculation should engender revolt.

The mutiny which broke out after the defeat of Count Louis was marked with the most pronounced and inflammatory of these symptoms. Three years’ pay was due to the Spaniards, who, having just achieved a signal victory, were disposed to reap its fruits, by fair means or by force. On receiving nothing but promises, in answer to their clamorous demands, they mutinied to a man, and crossed the Meuse to Grave, whence, after accomplishing the usual elections, they took their course to Antwerp. Being in such strong force, they determined to strike at the capital. Rumor flew before them. Champagny, brother of Granvelle, and royal governor of the city, wrote in haste to apprise Requesens of the approaching danger. The Grand Commander, attended only by Vitelli, repaired instantly to Antwerp. Champagny advised throwing up a breastwork with bales of merchandise, upon the esplanade, between the citadel and the town, for it was at this point, where the connection between the fortifications of the castle and those of the city had never been thoroughly completed, that the invasion might be expected. Requesens hesitated. He trembled at a conflict with his own soldiery. If successful, he could only be so by trampling upon the flower of his army. If defeated, what would become of the king’s authority, with rebellious troops triumphant in rebellious provinces? Sorely perplexed, the commander could think of no expedient. Not knowing what to do, he did nothing. In the meantime, Champagny, who felt himself odious to the soldiery, retreated to the Newtown, and barricaded himself, with a few followers, in the house of the Baltic merchants.
On the 26th of April, the mutinous troops in perfect order, marched into the city, effecting their entrance precisely at the weak point where they had been expected. Numbering at least 3,000, they encamped on the esplanade, where Requesens appeared before them alone on horseback, and made them an oration. They listened with composure, but answered briefly and with one accord, "Dineros y non palabras"—dollars not speeches. Requesens promised profusely, but the time was past for promises. Hard silver dollars would alone content an army which, after three years of bloodshed and starvation, had at last taken the law into their own hands. Requesens withdrew to consult the Broad Council of the city. He was without money himself, but he demanded 400,000 crowns of the city. This was at first refused, but the troops knew the strength of their position, for these mutinies were never repressed, and rarely punished. On this occasion the commander was afraid to employ force, and the burghers, after the army had been quartered upon them for a time, would gladly pay a heavy ransom to be rid of their odious and expensive guests. The mutineers foreseeing that the work might last a few weeks, and determined to proceed leisurely, took possession of the great square. The Eletto, with his staff of councillors, was quartered in the town-house, while the soldiers distributed themselves among the houses of the most opulent citizens, no one escaping a billet who was rich enough to receive such company—bishop or burgomaster, margrave or merchant. The most famous kitchens were naturally the most eagerly sought, and sumptuous apartments, luxurious dishes, delicate wines, were daily demanded. The burghers dared not refuse.

The six hundred Walloons, who had been previously quartered in the city, were expelled, and for many days the mutiny reigned paramount. Day after day the magistracy, the heads of guilds, all the representatives of the citizens were assembled in the Broad Council. The governor-general insisted on his demand of 400,000 crowns, representing, with great justice, that the mutineers would remain in the city until they had eaten and drunk to that amount, and that there would still be the arrearages, for which the city would be obliged to raise the funds. On the ninth of May, the authorities made an offer, which was duly communicated to the Eletto. That functionary stood forth on a window-sill of the town-house, and addressed the soldiery. He informed them that the Grand Commander proposed to pay ten months’ arrears in cash, five months’ in silks and woolen cloths, and the balance in promises, to be fulfilled within a few days. The terms were not considered satisfactory, and were received with groans of derision. The Eletto, on the contrary, declared them very liberal, and reminded the soldiers of the perilous condition in which they stood, guilty to a man of high treason, with a rope around every neck. It was well worth their while to accept the offer made them, together with the absolute pardon for the past, by which it was accompanied. For himself, he washed his hands of the consequences if the offer were rejected. The soldiers answered by deposing the Eletto and choosing another in his room.
Three days after, a mutiny broke out in the citadel—an unexampled occurrence. The rebels ordered Sancho d’Avila, the commandant, to deliver the keys of the fortress. He refused to surrender them but with his life. They then contented themselves with compelling his lieutenant to leave the citadel, and with sending their Eletto to confer with the Grand Commander, as well as with the Eletto of the army. After accomplishing his mission, he returned, accompanied by Chiappin Vitelli, as envoy of the governor-general. No sooner, however, had the Eletto set foot on the drawbridge than he was attacked by Ensign Salvatierra of the Spanish garrison, who stabbed him to the heart and threw him into the moat. The ensign, who was renowned in the army for his ferocious courage, and who wore embroidered upon his trunk hose the inscription, “El castigador de los Flamencos,” then rushed upon the sergeant-major of the mutineers, dispatched him in the same way, and tossed him likewise into the moat. These preliminaries being settled, a satisfactory arrangement was negotiated between Vitelli and the rebellious garrison. Pardon for the past and payment upon the same terms as those offered in the city were accepted, and the mutiny of the citadel was quelled. It was, however, necessary that Salvatierra should conceal himself for a long time, to escape being torn to pieces by the incensed soldiery.

Meantime, affairs in the city were more difficult to adjust. The mutineers raised an altar of chests and bales upon the public square, and celebrated mass under the open sky, solemnly swearing to be true to each other to the last. The scenes of carousing and merry-making were renewed at the expense of the citizens, who were again exposed to nightly alarms from the boisterous mirth and ceaseless mischief-making of the soldiers. Before the end of the month, the Broad Council, exhausted by the incubus which had afflicted them so many weeks, acceded to the demand of Requesens. The 400,000 crowns were furnished, the Grand Commander accepting them as a loan, and giving in return bonds duly signed and countersigned, together with a mortgage upon all the royal domains. The citizens received the documents, as a matter of form, but they had handled such securities before, and valued them but slightly. The mutineers now agreed to settle with the governor-general, on condition of receiving all their wages, either in cash or cloth, together with a solemn promise of pardon for all their acts of insubordination. This pledge was formally rendered with appropriate religious ceremonies, by Requesens, in the cathedral. The payments were made directly afterwards, and a great banquet was held on the same day, by the whole mass of the soldiery, to celebrate the event. The feast took place on the place of the Meer, and was a scene of furious revelry. The soldiers, more thoughtless than children, had arrayed themselves in extemporaneous costumes, cut from the cloth which they had at last received in payment of their sufferings and their blood. Broadcloths, silks, satins, and gold-embroidered brocades, worthy of a queen’s wardrobe, were hung in fantastic drapery around the sinewy forms and bronzed faces of the soldiery, who, the day before, had been clothed in rags. The mirth was fast and furious, and scarce was the banquet finished before every drumhead became a
gaming table, around which gathered groups eager to sacrifice in a moment their dearly-bought gold.

The fortunate or the prudent had not yet succeeded in entirely plundering their companions, when the distant booming of cannon was heard from the river. Instantly, accoutered as they were in their holiday and fantastic costumes, the soldiers, no longer mutinous, were summoned from banquet and gaming table, and were ordered forth upon the dykes. The patriot Admiral Boisot, who had so recently defeated the fleet of Bergen, under the eyes of the Grand Commander, had unexpectedly sailed up the Scheld, determined to destroy the fleet of Antwerp, which upon that occasion had escaped. Between the forts of Lillo and Callao, he met with twenty-two vessels under the command of Vice-Admiral Haemstede. After a short and sharp action, he was completely victorious. Fourteen of the enemy’s ships were burned or sunk, with all their crews, and Admiral Haemstede was taken prisoner. The soldiers opened a warm fire of musketry upon Boisot from the dyke, to which he responded with his cannon. The distance of the combatants, however, made the action unimportant, and the patriots retired down the river, after achieving a complete victory. The Grand Commander was farther than ever from obtaining that foothold on the sea, which as he had informed his sovereign, was the only means by which the Netherlands could be reduced.

CHAPTER 2

The Siege of Leyden

The invasion of Louis of Nassau had, as already stated, effected the raising of the first siege of Leyden. That leaguer had lasted from the 31st of October, 1573, to the 21st of March, 1574, when the soldiers were summoned away to defend the frontier. By an extraordinary and culpable carelessness, the citizens, neglecting the advice of the prince, had not taken advantage of the breathing time thus afforded them to victual the city and strengthen the garrison. They seemed to reckon more confidently upon the success of Count Louis than he had even done himself, for it was very probable that, in case of his defeat, the siege would be instantly resumed. This natural result was not long in following the Battle of Mookerheyde.

On the 26th of May, Valdez reappeared before the place, at the head of 8,000 Walloons and Germans, and Leyden was now destined to pass through a fiery ordeal. This city was one of the most beautiful in the Netherlands. Placed in the midst of broad and fruitful pastures, which had been reclaimed by the hand of industry from the bottom of the sea, it was fringed with smiling villages,
blooming gardens, fruitful orchards. The ancient and, at last, decrepit Rhine, flowing languidly towards its sandy deathbed, had been multiplied into innumerable artificial currents, by which the city was completely interlaced. These watery streets were shaded by lime trees, poplars, and willows, and crossed by one hundred and forty-five bridges, mostly of hammered stone. The houses were elegant, the squares and streets spacious, airy and clean, the churches and public edifices imposing, while the whole aspect of the place suggested thrift, industry, and comfort. Upon an artificial elevation, in the center of the city, rose a ruined tower of unknown antiquity. By some it was considered to be of Roman origin, while others preferred to regard it as a work of the Anglo-Saxon Hengist, raised to commemorate his conquest of England. Surrounded by fruit trees, and overgrown in the center with oaks, it afforded, from its moldering battlements, a charming prospect over a wide expanse of level country, with the spires of neighboring cities rising in every direction. It was from this commanding height, during the long and terrible summer days which were approaching, that many an eye was to be strained anxiously seaward, watching if yet the ocean had begun to roll over the land.

Valdez lost no time in securing himself in the possession of Maeslandsluis, Vlaardingen, and the Hague. Five hundred English, under command of Colonel Edward Chester, abandoned the fortress of Valkenburg, and fled towards Leyden. Refused admittance by the citizens, who now, with reason, distrusted them, they surrendered to Valdez, and were afterwards sent back to England. In the course of a few days, Leyden was thoroughly invested, no less than sixty-two redoubts, some of them having remained undestroyed from the previous siege, now girdling the city, while the besiegers already numbered nearly 8,000, a force to be daily increased. On the other hand, there were no troops in the town, save a small corps of “freebooters,” and five companies of the burgher guard. John Van der Does, Seigneur of Nordwyck, a gentleman of distinguished family, but still more distinguished for his learning, his poetical genius, and his valor, had accepted the office of military commandant.

The main reliance of the city, under God, was on the stout hearts of its inhabitants within the walls, and on the sleepless energy of William the Silent without. The prince, hastening to comfort and encourage the citizens, although he had been justly irritated by their negligence in having omitted to provide more sufficiently against the emergency while there had yet been time, now reminded them that they were not about to contend for themselves alone, but that the fate of their country and of unborn generations would, in all human probability, depend on the issue about to be tried. Eternal glory would be their portion if they manifested a courage worthy of their race and of the sacred cause of religion and liberty. He implored them to hold out at least three months, assuring them that he would, within that time, devise the means of their deliverance. The citizens responded, courageously and confidently, to these missives, and assured the prince of their firm confidence in their own fortitude and his exertions.
And truly they had a right to rely on that calm and unflinching soul, as on a rock of adamant. All alone, without a being near him to consult, his right arm struck from him by the death of Louis, with no brother left to him but the untiring and faithful John, he prepared without delay for the new task imposed upon him. France, since the defeat and death of Louis, and the busy intrigues which had followed the accession of Henry III, had but small sympathy for the Netherlands. The English government, relieved from the fear of France, was more cold and haughty than ever. An Englishman, employed by Requesens to assassinate the Prince of Orange, had been arrested in Zealand, who impudently pretended that he had undertaken to perform the same office for Count John, with the full consent and privity of Queen Elizabeth. The provinces of Holland and Zealand were stanch and true, but the inequality of the contest between a few brave men, upon that handbreadth of territory, and the powerful Spanish Empire, seemed to render the issue hopeless.

Moreover, it was now thought expedient to publish the amnesty which had been so long in preparation, and this time the trap was more liberally baited. The pardon, which had passed the seals upon the eighth of March, was formally issued by the Grand Commander on the sixth of June. By the terms of this document the king invited all his erring and repentant subjects to return to his arms, and to accept a full forgiveness for their past offenses, upon the sole condition that they should once more throw themselves upon the bosom of the Mother Church. There were but few exceptions to the amnesty, a small number of individuals, all mentioned by name, being alone excluded; but although these terms were ample, the act was liable to a few stern objections. It was easier now for the Hollanders to go to their graves than to mass, for the contest, in its progress, had now entirely assumed the aspect of a religious war. Instead of a limited number of heretics in a state which, although constitutional was Catholic, there was now hardly a papist to be found among the natives. To accept the pardon then was to concede the victory, and the Hollanders had not yet discovered that they were conquered. They were resolved, too, not only to be conquered, but annihilated, before the Roman Church should be re-established on their soil, to the entire exclusion of the Reformed worship. They responded with steadfast enthusiasm to the sentiment expressed by the Prince of Orange, after the second siege of Leyden had been commenced: “As long as there is a living man left in the country, we will contend for our liberty and our religion.” The single condition of the amnesty assumed, in a phrase, what Spain had fruitlessly striven to establish by a hundred battles, and the Hollanders had not faced their enemy on land and sea for seven years to succumb to a phrase at last.

Moreover, the pardon came from the wrong direction. The malefactor gravely extended forgiveness to his victims. Although the Hollanders had not yet disembarrassed their minds of the supernatural theory of government, and felt still the reverence of habit for regal divinity, they naturally considered themselves outraged by the trick now played before them. The man who had
violated all his oaths; trampled upon all their constitutional liberties; burned and sacked their cities; confiscated their wealth; hanged, beheaded, burned, and buried alive their innocent brethren, now came forward, not to implore, but to offer forgiveness. Not in sackcloth, but in royal robes; not with ashes, but with a diadem upon his head, did the murderer present himself vicariously upon the scene of his crimes. It may be supposed that, even in the sixteenth century, there were many minds which would revolt at such blasphemy. Furthermore, even had the people of Holland been weak enough to accept the pardon, it was impossible to believe that the promise would be fulfilled. It was sufficiently known how much faith was likely to be kept with heretics, notwithstanding that the act was fortified by a papal bull, dated on the 30th of April, by which Gregory XIII promised forgiveness to those Netherland sinners who duly repented and sought absolution for their crimes, even although they had sinned more than seven times seven.

For a moment the prince had feared lest the pardon might produce some effect upon men wearied by interminable suffering, but the event proved him wrong. It was received with universal and absolute contempt. No man came forward to take advantage of its conditions, save one brewer in Utrecht, and the son of a refugee peddler from Leyden. With these exceptions, the only ones recorded, Holland remained deaf to the royal voice. The city of Leyden was equally cold to the messages of mercy, which were especially addressed to its population by Valdez and his agents. Certain Netherlanders, belonging to the king’s party, and familiarly called "Glippers," dispatched from the camp many letters to their rebellious acquaintances in the city. In these epistles the citizens of Leyden were urgently and even pathetically exhorted to submission by their loyal brethren, and were implored "to take pity upon their poor old fathers, their daughters, and their wives." But the burghers of Leyden thought that the best pity which they could show to those poor old fathers, daughters, and wives, was to keep them from the clutches of the Spanish soldiery; so they made no answer to the Clippers, save by this single line, which they wrote on a sheet of paper, and forwarded, like a letter, to Valdez:

"Fistula dulce canit, volucrem cum decipit auceps."

According to the advice early given by the Prince of Orange, the citizens had taken an account of their provisions of all kinds, including the livestock. By the end of June, the city was placed on a strict allowance of food, all the provisions being purchased by the authorities at an equitable price. Half a pound of meat and half a pound of bread was allotted to a full grown man, and to the rest, a due proportion. The city being strictly invested, no communication, save by carrier pigeons and by a few swift and skilful messengers called jumpers, was possible. Sorties and fierce combats were, however, of daily occurrence, and a handsome bounty was offered to any man who brought into the city gates the head of a Spaniard. The reward was paid many times, but the population was becoming so excited and so apt, that the
authorities felt it dangerous to permit the continuance of these conflicts. Lest the city, little by little, should lose its few disciplined defenders, it was now proclaimed, by sound of church bell, that in future no man should leave the gates.

The prince had his headquarters at Delft and at Rotterdam. Between those two cities, an important fortress, called Polderwaert, secured him in the control of the alluvial quadrangle, watered on two sides by the Yssel and the Meuse. On the 29th of June, the Spaniards, feeling its value, had made an unsuccessful effort to carry this fort by storm. They had been beaten off, with the loss of several hundred men, the prince remaining in possession of the position, from which alone he could hope to relieve Leyden. He still held in his hand the keys with which he could unlock the ocean gates and let the waters in upon the land, and he had long been convinced that nothing could save the city but to break the dykes. Leyden was not upon the sea, but he could send the sea to Leyden, although an army fit to encounter the besieging force under Valdez could not be levied. The battle of Mookerheyde had, for the present, quite settled the question of land relief, but it was possible to besiege the besiegers with the waves of the ocean. The Spaniards occupied the coast from the Hague to Vlaardingen, but the dykes along the Meuse and Yssel were in possession of the prince. He determined that these should be pierced, while, at the same time, the great sluices at Rotterdam, Schiedam, and Delftshaven should be opened. The damage to the fields, villages, and growing crops would be enormous, but he felt that no other course could rescue Leyden, and with it the whole of Holland from destruction. His clear expositions and impassioned eloquence at last overcame all resistance. By the middle of July the estates fully consented to his plan, and its execution was immediately undertaken.

"Better a drowned land than a lost land," cried the patriots, with enthusiasm, as they devoted their fertile fields to desolation. The enterprise for restoring their territory, for a season, to the waves, from which it had been so patiently rescued, was conducted with as much regularity as if it had been a profitable undertaking. A capital was formally subscribed, for which a certain number of bonds were issued, payable at a long date. In addition to this preliminary fund, a monthly allowance of forty-five guldens was voted by the estates, until the work should be completed, and a large sum was contributed by the ladies of the land, who freely furnished their plate, jewelry, and costly furniture to the furtherance of the scheme.

Meantime, Valdez, on the 30th of July, issued most urgent and ample offers of pardon to the citizens, if they would consent to open their gates and accept the king’s authority, but his overtures were received with silent contempt, notwithstanding that the population was already approaching the starvation point. Although not yet fully informed of the active measures taken by the prince, yet they still chose to rely upon his energy and their own fortitude, rather than upon the honied words which had formerly been heard at the gates of Harlem and of Naarden. On the third of August, the prince, accompanied by Paul Buys, chief of the commission appointed to execute the enterprise, went in person along the Yssel, as far as Kappelle, and superintended the rupture of
the dykes in sixteen places. The gates at Schiedam and Rotterdam were opened, and the ocean began to pour over the land. While waiting for the waters to rise, provisions were rapidly collected, according to an edict of the prince, in all the principal towns of the neighborhood, and some two hundred vessels, of various sizes, had also been got ready at Rotterdam, Delfthaven, and other ports.

The citizens of Leyden were, however, already becoming impatient, for their bread was gone, and of its substitute malt cake, they had but slender provision. On the 12th of August they received a letter from the prince, encouraging them to resistance, and assuring them of a speedy relief, and on the 21st they addressed a dispatch to him in reply, stating that they had now fulfilled their original promise, for they had held out two months with food, and another month without food. If not soon assisted, human strength could do no more; their malt cake would last but four days, and after that was gone, there was nothing left but starvation. Upon the same day, however, they received a letter, dictated by the prince, who now lay in bed at Rotterdam with a violent fever, assuring them that the dykes were all pierced, and that the water was rising upon the "Land-scheiding," the great outer barrier which separated the city from the sea. He said nothing however of his own illness, which would have cast a deep shadow over the joy which now broke forth among the burghers.

The letter was read publicly in the market-place, and to increase the cheerfulness, burgomaster Van der Werf, knowing the sensibility of his countrymen to music, ordered the city musicians to perambulate the streets, playing lively melodies and martial airs. Salvos of cannon were likewise fired, and the starving city for a brief space put on the aspect of a holiday, much to the astonishment of the besieging forces, who were not yet aware of the prince's efforts. They perceived very soon, however, as the water everywhere about Leyden had risen to the depth of ten inches, that they stood in a perilous position. It was no trifling danger to be thus attacked by the waves of the ocean, which seemed about to obey with docility the command of William the Silent. Valdez became anxious and uncomfortable at the strange aspect of affairs; for the besieging army was now in its turn beleaguered, and by a stronger power than man's. He consulted with the most experienced of his officers, with the country people, with the most distinguished among the Glippers, and derived encouragement from their views concerning the prince's plan. They pronounced it utterly futile and hopeless. The Glippers knew the country well, and ridiculed the desperate project in unmeasured terms.

Even in the city itself, a dull distrust had succeeded to the first vivid gleam of hope, while the few royalists among the population boldly taunted their fellow citizens to their faces with the absurd vision of relief which they had so fondly welcomed. "Go up to the tower, ye Beggars," was the frequent and taunting cry, "go up to the tower, and tell us if ye can see the ocean coming over the dry land to your relief"; and day after day they did go up to the ancient tower of Hengist, with heavy heart and anxious eye, watching, hoping, praying, fearing, and at last almost despairing of relief by God or man. On the 27th they
addressed a desponding letter to the estates, complaining that the city had been forgotten in its utmost need, and on the same day a prompt and warm-hearted reply was received, in which the citizens were assured that every human effort was to be made for their relief. "Rather," said the estates, "will we see our whole land and all our possessions perish in the waves, than forsake thee, Leyden. We know full well, moreover, that with Leyden, all Holland must perish also." They excused themselves for not having more frequently written, upon the ground that the whole management of the measures for their relief had been entrusted to the prince, by whom alone all the details had been administered, and all the correspondence conducted.

The fever of the prince had, meanwhile, reached its height. He lay at Rotterdam, utterly prostrate in body, and with mind agitated nearly to delirium, by the perpetual and almost unassisted schemes which he was constructing. Relief, not only for Leyden, but for the whole country, now apparently sinking into the abyss, was the vision which he pursued as he tossed upon his restless couch. Never was illness more unseasonable. His attendants were in despair, for it was necessary that his mind should for a time be spared the agitation of business. The physicians who attended him agreed, as to his disorder, only in this, that it was the result of mental fatigue and melancholy, and could be cured only by removing all distressing and perplexing subjects from his thoughts, but all the physicians in the world could not have succeeded in turning his attention for an instant from the great cause of his country. Leyden lay, as it were, anxious and despairing at his feet, and it was impossible for him to close his ears to her cry. Therefore, from his sickbed he continued to dictate words of counsel and encouragement to the city; to Admiral Boisot, commanding the fleet, minute directions and precautions. Towards the end of August a vague report had found its way into his sick chamber that Leyden had fallen, and although he refused to credit the tale, yet it served to harass his mind, and to heighten fever. Cornelius Van Mierop, Receiver General of Holland, had occasion to visit him at Rotterdam, and strange to relate, found the house almost deserted. Penetrating, unattended, to the prince’s bedchamber, he found him lying quite alone. Inquiring what had become of all his attendants, he was answered by the prince, in a very feeble voice, that he had sent them all away. The receiver-general seems, from this, to have rather hastily arrived at the conclusion that the prince’s disorder was the pest, and that his servants and friends had all deserted him from cowardice.

This was very far from being the case. His private secretary and his maître d’hôtel watched, day and night, by his couch, and the best physicians of the city were in constant attendance. By a singular accident, all had been dispatched on different errands, at the express desire of their master, but there had never been a suspicion that his disorder was the pest, or pestilential. Nerves of steel, and a frame of adamant could alone have resisted the constant anxiety and the consuming fatigue to which he had so long been exposed. His illness had been aggravated by the rumor of Leyden’s fall, a fiction which Cornelius Mierop was now enabled flatly to contradict. The prince began to mend from that hour. By the end of the first week of September, he wrote a
long letter to his brother, assuring him of his convalescence, and expressing, as usual, a calm confidence in the divine decrees: “God will ordain for me,” said he, “all which is necessary for my good and my salvation. He will load me with no more afflictions than the fragility of this nature can sustain.”

The preparations for the relief of Leyden, which, notwithstanding his exertions, had grown slack during his sickness, were now vigorously resumed. On the first of September, Admiral Boisot arrived out of Zealand with a small number of vessels, and with eight hundred veteran sailors. A wild and ferocious crew were those eight hundred Zealanders. Scarred, hacked, and even maimed, in the unceasing conflicts in which their lives had passed; wearing crescents in their caps, with the inscription, "Rather Turkish than Popish," renowned far and wide, as much for their ferocity as for their nautical skill; the appearance of these wildest of the "Sea-beggars" was both eccentric and terrific. They were known never to give nor to take quarter, for they went to mortal combat only, and had sworn to spare neither noble nor simple, neither king, kaiser, nor pope, should they fall into their power.

More than two hundred vessels had been now assembled, carrying generally ten pieces of cannon, with from ten to eighteen oars, and manned with twenty-five hundred veterans, experienced both on land and water. The work was now undertaken in earnest. The distance from Leyden to the outer dyke, over whose ruins the ocean had already been admitted, was nearly fifteen miles. This reclaimed territory, however, was not maintained against the sea by these external barriers alone. The flotilla made its way with ease to the Landscheiding, a strong dyke within five miles of Leyden, but here its progress was arrested. The approach to the city was surrounded by many strong ramparts, one within the other, by which it was defended against its ancient enemy, the ocean, precisely like the circumvallations by means of which it was now assailed by its more recent enemy, the Spaniard. To enable the fleet, however, to sail over the land, it was necessary to break through this twofold series of defenses. Between the Land-scheiding and Leyden were several dykes, which kept out the water; upon the level territory, thus encircled, were many villages, together with a chain of sixty-two forts, which completely occupied the land. All these villages and fortresses were held by the veteran troops of the king, the besieging force being about four times as strong as that which was coming to the rescue.

The prince had given orders that the Land-scheiding, which was still one and a half feet above water, should be taken possession of, at every hazard. On the night of the 10th and 11th of September this was accomplished, by surprise, and in a masterly manner. The few Spaniards who had been stationed upon the dyke were all dispatched or driven off, and the patriots fortified themselves upon it, without the loss of a man. As the day dawned the Spaniards saw the fatal error which they had committed in leaving this bulwark so feebly defended, and from two villages which stood close to the dyke, the troops now rushed in considerable force to recover what they had lost. A hot action succeeded, but the patriots had too securely established themselves. They completely defeated the enemy, who retired, leaving hundreds of dead on the
field, and the patriots in complete possession of the Land-scheiding. This first action was sanguinary and desperate. It gave an earnest of what these people, who came to relieve their brethren, by sacrificing their property and their lives, were determined to effect. It gave a revolting proof, too, of the intense hatred which nerved their arms. A Zealander, having struck down a Spaniard on the dyke, knelt on his bleeding enemy, tore his heart from his bosom, fastened his teeth in it for an instant, and then threw it to a dog, with the exclamation, "'Tis too bitter." The Spanish heart was, however, rescued, and kept for years, with the marks of the soldier’s teeth upon it, a sad testimonial of the ferocity engendered by this war for national existence.

The great dyke having been thus occupied, no time was lost in breaking it through in several places, a work which was accomplished under the very eyes of the enemy. The fleet sailed through the gaps; but, after their passage had been effected in good order, the admiral found, to his surprise, that it was not the only rampart to be carried. The prince had been informed, by those who claimed to know the country, that, when once the Land-scheiding had been passed, the water would flood the country as far as Leyden, but the “Green-way,” another long dyke, three quarters of a mile farther inward, now rose at least a foot above the water, to oppose their further progress. Fortunately, by a second and still more culpable carelessness, this dyke had been left by the Spaniards in an unprotected state as the first had been. Promptly and audaciously Admiral Boisot took possession of this barrier also, leveled it in many places, and brought his flotilla, in triumph, over its ruins. Again, however, he was doomed to disappointment. A large mere, called the Freshwater Lake, was known to extend itself directly in his path about midway between the Land-scheiding and the city. To this piece of water, into which he expected to have instantly floated, his only passage lay through one deep canal. The sea which had thus far borne him on, now diffusing itself over a very wide surface, and under the influence of an adverse wind, had become too shallow for his ships. The canal alone was deep enough, but it led directly towards a bridge, strongly occupied by the enemy. Hostile troops, moreover, to the amount of 3,000, occupied both sides of the canal. The bold Boisot, nevertheless, determined to force his passage, if possible. Selecting a few of his strongest vessels, his heaviest artillery, and his bravest sailors, he led the van himself, in a desperate attempt to make his way to the mere. He opened a hot fire upon the bridge, then converted into a fortress, while his men engaged in hand-to-hand combat with a succession of skirmishers from the troops along the canal. After losing a few men, and ascertaining the impregnable position of the enemy, he was obliged to withdraw, defeated, and almost despairing.

A week had elapsed since the great dyke had been pierced, and the flotilla now lay motionless in shallow water, having accomplished less than two miles. The wind, too, was easterly, causing the sea rather to sink than to rise. Everything wore a gloomy aspect, when, fortunately, on the 18th, the wind shifted to the northwest, and for three days blew a gale. The waters rose rapidly, and before the second day was closed the armada was afloat again. Some fugitives from Zoetermeer village now arrived, and informed the admiral that, by making a
detour to the right, he could completely circumvent the bridge and the mere. They guided him, accordingly, to a comparatively low dyke, which led between the villages of Zoetermeer and Benthuyzen. A strong force of Spaniards was stationed in each place, but, seized with a panic, instead of sallying to defend the barrier, they fled inwardly towards Leyden, and halted at the village of North Aa. It was natural that they should be amazed. Nothing is more appalling to the imagination than the rising ocean tide, when man feels himself within its power; and here were the waters, hourly deepening and closing around them, devouring the earth beneath their feet, while on the waves rode a flotilla, manned by a determined race, whose courage and ferocity were known throughout the world. The Spanish soldiers, brave as they were on land, were not sailors, and in the naval contests which had taken place between them and the Hollanders had been almost invariably defeated. It was not surprising, in these amphibious skirmishes, where discipline was of little avail, and habitual audacity faltered at the vague dangers which encompassed them, that the foreign troops should lose their presence of mind.

Three barriers, one within the other, had now been passed, and the flotilla, advancing with the advancing waves, and driving the enemy steadily before it, was drawing nearer to the beleaguered city. As one circle after another was passed, the besieging army found itself compressed within a constantly contracting field. The "Ark of Delft," an enormous vessel, with shot-proof bulwarks, and moved by paddle-wheels turned by a crank, now arrived at Zoetermeer, and was soon followed by the whole fleet. After a brief delay, sufficient to allow the few remaining villagers to escape, both Zoetermeer and Benthuyzen, with the fortifications, were set on fire, and abandoned to their fate. The blaze lighted up the desolate and watery waste around, and was seen at Leyden, where it was hailed as the beacon of hope. Without further impediment, the armada proceeded to North Aa, the enemy retreating from this position also, and flying to Zoeterwoude, a strongly fortified village but a mile and three quarters from the city walls. It was now swarming with troops, for the bulk of the besieging army had gradually been driven into a narrow circle of forts, within the immediate neighborhood of Leyden. Besides Zoeterwoude, the two posts where they were principally established were Lammen and Leyderdorp, each within three hundred rods of the town. At Leyderdorp were the headquarters of Valdez; Colonel Borgia commanded in the very strong fortress of Lammen.

The fleet was, however, delayed at North Aa by another barrier, called the "Kirk-way." The waters, too, spreading once more over a wider space, and diminishing under an east wind, which had again arisen, no longer permitted their progress, so that very soon the whole armada was stranded anew. The waters fell to the depth of nine inches, while the vessels required eighteen and twenty. Day after day the fleet lay motionless upon the shallow sea. Orange, rising from his sickbed as soon as he could stand, now came on board the fleet. His presence diffused universal joy; his words inspired his desponding army with fresh hope. He rebuked the impatient spirits who, weary of their compulsory idleness, had shown symptoms of ill-timed ferocity, and those eight
hundred mad Zealanders, so frantic in their hatred to the foreigners, who had so long profaned their land, were as docile as children to the prince. He reconnoitered the whole ground, and issued orders for the immediate destruction of the Kirk-way, the last important barrier which separated the fleet from Leyden. Then, after a long conference with Admiral Boisot, he returned to Delft.

Meantime, the besieged city was at its last gasp. The burghers had been in a state of uncertainty for many days, being aware that the fleet had set forth for their relief, but knowing full well the thousand obstacles which it had to surmount. They had guessed its progress by the illumination from the blazing villages; they had heard its salvos of artillery, on its arrival at North Aa; but since then, all had been dark and mournful again, hope and fear, in sickening alternation, distracting every breast. They knew that the wind was unfavorable, and at the dawn of each day every eye was turned wistfully to the vanes of the steeple. So long as the easterly breeze prevailed, they felt, as they anxiously stood on towers and housetops, that they must look in vain for the welcome ocean. Yet, while thus patiently waiting, they were literally starving, for even the misery endured at Harlem had not reached that depth and intensity of agony to which Leyden was now reduced. Bread, malt-cake, horseflesh, had entirely disappeared; dogs, cats, rats, and other vermin, were esteemed luxuries. A small number of cows, kept as long as possible, for their milk, still remained; but a few were killed from day to day, and distributed in minute proportions, hardly sufficient to support life among the famishing population. Starving wretches swarmed daily around the shambles where these cattle were slaughtered, contending for any morsel which might fall, and lapping eagerly the blood as it ran along the pavement; while the hides, chopped and boiled, were greedily devoured. Women and children, all day long, were seen searching gutters and dunghills for morsels of food, which they disputed fiercely with the famishing dogs. The green leaves were stripped from the trees, every living herb was converted into human food, but these expedients could not avert starvation. The daily mortality was frightful; infants starved to death on the maternal breasts, which famine had parched and withered; mothers dropped dead in the streets, with their dead children in their arms. In many a house the watchmen, in their rounds, found a whole family of corpses—father, mother, and children, side by side; for a disorder called the plague, naturally engendered of hardship and famine, now came, as if in kindness, to abridge the agony of the people. The pestilence stalked at noonday through the city, and the doomed inhabitants fell like grass beneath its scythe. From 6,000 to 8,000 human beings sank before this scourge alone, yet the people resolutely held out, women and men mutually encouraging each other to resist the entrance of their foreign foe—an evil more horrible than pest or famine.

The missives from Valdez, who saw more vividly than the besieged could do, the uncertainty of his own position, now poured daily into the city, the enemy becoming more prodigal of his vows, as he felt that the ocean might yet save the victims from his grasp. The inhabitants, in their ignorance, had gradually
abandoned their hopes of relief, but they spurned the summons to surrender. Leyden was sublime in its despair. A few murmurs were, however, occasionally heard at the steadfastness of the magistrates, and a dead body was placed at the door of the burgomaster, as a silent witness against his inflexibility. A party of the more faint-hearted even assailed the heroic Adrian Van der Werf with threats and reproaches as he passed through the streets. A crowd had gathered around him, as he reached a triangular place in the center of the town, into which many of the principal streets emptied themselves, and upon one side of which stood the church of Saint Pancras, with its high brick tower surmounted by two pointed turrets, and with two ancient lime trees at its entrance. There stood the burgomaster, a tall, haggard, imposing figure, with dark visage, and a tranquil but commanding eye. He waved his broadleaved felt hat for silence, and then exclaimed, in language which has been almost literally preserved, "What would ye, my friends? Why do ye murmur that we do not break our vows and surrender the city to the Spaniards? a fate more horrible than the agony which she now endures. I tell you I have made an oath to hold the city, and may God give me strength to keep my oath! I can die but once; whether by your hands, the enemy’s, or by the hand of God. My own fate is indifferent to me, not so that of the city entrusted to my care. I know that we shall starve if not soon relieved, but starvation is preferable to the dishonored death which is the only alternative. Your menaces move me not; my life is at your disposal; here is my sword, plunge it into my breast, and divide my flesh among you. Take my body to appease your hunger, but expect no surrender, so long as I remain alive."

The words of the stout burgomaster inspired a new courage in the hearts of those who heard him, and a shout of applause and defiance arose from the famishing but enthusiastic crowd. They left the place, after exchanging new vows of fidelity with their magistrate, and again ascended tower and battlement to watch for the coming fleet. From the ramparts they hurled renewed defiance at the enemy. "Ye call us rat-eaters and dog-eaters," they cried, "and it is true. So long, then, as ye hear dog bark or cat mew within the walls, ye may know that the city holds out. And when all has perished but ourselves, be sure that we will each devour our left arms, retaining our right to defend our women, our liberty, and our religion, against the foreign tyrant. Should God, in his wrath, doom us to destruction, and deny us all relief, even then will we maintain ourselves forever against your entrance. When the last hour has come, with our own hands we will set fire to the city and perish, men, women, and children together in the flames, rather than suffer our homes to be polluted and our liberties to be crushed." Such words of defiance, thundered daily from the battlements, sufficiently informed Valdez as to his chance of conquering the city, either by force or fraud, but at the same time, he felt comparatively relieved by the inactivity of Boisot’s fleet, which still lay stranded at North Aa. "As well," shouted the Spaniards, derisively, to the citizens, "as well can the Prince of Orange pluck the stars from the sky as bring the ocean to the walls of Leyden for your relief."
On the 28th of September, a dove flew into the city, bringing a letter from Admiral Boisot. In this dispatch, the position of the fleet at North Aa was described in encouraging terms, and the inhabitants were assured that, in a very few days at furthest, the long-expected relief would enter their gates. The letter was read publicly upon the market-place, and the bells were rung for joy. Nevertheless, on the morrow, the vanes pointed to the east, the waters, so far from rising, continued to sink, and Admiral Boisot was almost in despair. He wrote to the prince, that if the spring-tide, now to be expected, should not, together with a strong and favorable wind, come immediately to their relief, it would be in vain to attempt anything further, and that the expedition would, of necessity, be abandoned. The tempest came to their relief. A violent equinoctial gale, on the night of the first and second of October, came storming from the Northwest, shifting after a few hours full eight points, and then blowing still more violently from the Southwest. The waters of the North Sea were piled in vast masses upon the southern coast of Holland, and then dashed furiously landward, the ocean rising over the earth, and sweeping with unrestrained power across the ruined dykes.

In the course of twenty-four hours, the fleet at North Aa, instead of nine inches, had more than two feet of water. No time was lost. The Kirk-way, which had been broken through according to the prince’s instructions, was now completely overflowed, and the fleet sailed at midnight, in the midst of the storm and darkness. A few sentinel vessels of the enemy challenged them as they steadily rowed towards Zoeterwoude. The answer was a flash from Boisot’s cannon, lighting up the black waste of waters. There was a fierce naval midnight battle, a strange spectacle among the branches of those quiet orchards, and with the chimney stacks of half-submerged farmhouses rising around the contending vessels. The neighboring village of Zoeterwoude shook with the discharges of the Zealanders’ cannon, and the Spaniards assembled in that fortress knew that the rebel admiral was at last afloat and on his course. The enemy’s vessels were soon sunk, their crews hurled into the waves. On went the fleet, sweeping over the broad waters which lay between Zoeterwoude and Zwieten. As they approached some shallows, which led into the great mere, the Zealanders dashed into the sea, and with sheer strength shouldered every vessel through. Two obstacles lay still in their path—the forts of Zoeterwoude and Lammen, distant from the city five hundred and two hundred and fifty yards respectively. Strong redoubts, both well supplied with troops and artillery, they were likely to give a rough reception to the light flotilla, but the panic, which had hitherto driven their foes before the advancing patriots, had reached Zoeterwoude. Hardly was the fleet in sight when the Spaniards, in the early morning, poured out from the fortress, and fled precipitately to the left, along a road which led in a westerly direction towards the Hague. Their narrow path was rapidly vanishing in the waves, and hundreds sank beneath the constantly deepening and treacherous flood. The wild Zealanders, too, sprang from their vessels upon the crumbling dyke and drove their retreating foes into the sea. They hurled their harpoons at them, with an accuracy acquired in many a polar chase; they plunged into the waves
in the keen pursuit, attacking them with boat-hook and dagger. The numbers who thus fell beneath these corsairs, who neither gave nor took quarter, were never counted, but probably not less than a thousand perished. The rest effected their escape to the Hague.
The first fortress was thus seized, dismantled, set on fire, and passed, and a few strokes of the oars brought the whole fleet close to Lammen. This last obstacle rose formidable and frowning directly across their path. Swarming as it was with soldiers, and bristling with artillery, it seemed to defy the armada either to carry it by storm or to pass under its guns into the city. It appeared that the enterprise was, after all, to founder within sight of the long expecting and expected haven. Boisot anchored his fleet within a respectful distance, and spent what remained of the day in carefully reconnoitering the fort, which seemed only too strong. In conjunction with Leyderdorp, the headquarters of Valdez, a mile and a half distant on the right, and within a mile of the city, it seemed so insuperable an impediment that Boisot wrote in despondent tone to the Prince of Orange. He announced his intention of carrying the fort, if it were possible, on the following morning, but if obliged to retreat, he observed, with something like despair, that there would be nothing for it but to wait for another gale of wind. If the waters should rise sufficiently to enable them to make a wide detour, it might be possible, if, in the meantime, Leyden did not starve or surrender, to enter its gates from the opposite side.
Meantime, the citizens had grown wild with expectation. A dove had been dispatched by Boisot, informing them of his precise position, and a number of citizens accompanied the burgomaster, at nightfall, toward the tower of Hengist. "Yonder," cried the magistrate, stretching out his hand towards Lammen, "yonder, behind that fort, are bread and meat, and brethren in thousands. Shall all this be destroyed by the Spanish guns, or shall we rush to the rescue of our friends?" "We will tear the fortress to fragments with our teeth and nails," was the reply, "before the relief, so long expected, shall be wrested from us." It was resolved that a sortie, in conjunction with the operations of Boisot, should be made against Lammen with the earliest dawn. Night descended upon the scene, a pitch dark night, full of anxiety to the Spaniards, to the armada, to Leyden. Strange sights and sounds occurred at different moments to bewilder the anxious sentinels. A long procession of lights issuing from the fort was seen to flit across the black face of the waters, in the dead of night, and the whole of the city wall, between the Cow-gate and the Tower of Burgundy, fell with aloud crash. The horrorstruck citizens thought that the Spaniards were upon them at last; the Spaniards imagined the noise to indicate a desperate sortie of the citizens. Everything was vague and mysterious.
Day dawned, at length, after the feverish night, and the admiral prepared for the assault. Within the fortress reigned a death-like stillness, which inspired a sickening suspicion. Had the city, indeed, been carried in the night; had the massacre already commenced; had all this labor and audacity been expended in vain? Suddenly a man was descried, wading breast-high through the water from Lammen towards the fleet, while at the same time, one solitary boy was
seen to wave his cap from the summit of the fort. After a moment of doubt, the happy mystery was solved. The Spaniards had fled, panic-struck, during the darkness. Their position would still have enabled them, with firmness, to frustrate the enterprise of the patriots, but the hand of God, which had sent the ocean and the tempest to the deliverance of Leyden, had struck her enemies with terror likewise. The lights which had been seen moving during the night were the lanterns of the retreating Spaniards, and the boy who was now waving his triumphant signal from the battlements had alone witnessed the spectacle. So confident was he in the conclusion to which it led him, that he had volunteered at daybreak to go thither all alone. The magistrates, fearing a trap, hesitated for a moment to believe the truth, which soon, however, became quite evident. Valdez, flying himself from Leyderdorp, had ordered Colonel Borgia to retire with all his troops from Lammen. Thus, the Spaniards had retreated at the very moment that an extraordinary accident had laid bare a whole side of the city for their entrance. The noise of the wall, as it fell, only inspired them with fresh alarm; for they believed that the citizens had sallied forth in the darkness, to aid the advancing flood in the work of destruction. All obstacles being now removed, the fleet of Boisot swept by Lammen, and entered the city on the morning of the third of October. Leyden was relieved.

The quays were lined with the famishing population, as the fleet rowed through the canals, every human being who could stand, coming forth to greet the preservers of the city. Bread was thrown from every vessel among the crowd. The poor creatures who, for two months had tasted no wholesome human food, and who had literally been living within the jaws of death, snatched eagerly the blessed gift, at last too liberally bestowed. Many choked themselves to death, in the greediness with which they devoured their bread; others became ill with the effects of plenty thus suddenly succeeding starvation; but these were isolated cases, a repetition of which was prevented. The admiral, stepping ashore, was welcomed by the magistracy, and a solemn procession was immediately formed. Magistrates and citizens, wild Zealanders, emaciated burgher guards, sailors, soldiers, women, children, nearly every living person within the walls, all repaired without delay to the great church, stout Admiral Boisot leading the way. The starving and heroic city, which had been so firm in its resistance to an earthly king, now bent itself in humble gratitude before the King of kings. After prayers, the whole vast congregation joined in the thanksgiving hymn. Thousands of voices raised the song, but few were able to carry it to its conclusion, for the universal emotion, deepened by the music, became too full for utterance. The hymn was abruptly suspended, while the multitude wept like children. This scene of honest pathos terminated, the necessary measures for distributing the food and for relieving the sick were taken by the magistracy. A note dispatched to the Prince of Orange, was received by him at two o’clock, as he sat in church at Delft. It was of a somewhat different purport from that of the letter which he had received early in the same day from Boisot—the letter in which the admiral had informed him that the success of the enterprise depended, after all, upon the desperate
assault upon a nearly impregnable fort. The joy of the prince may be easily imagined, and so soon as the sermon was concluded, he handed the letter just received to the minister, to be read to the congregation. Thus, all participated in his joy, and united with him in thanksgiving.

The next day, notwithstanding the urgent entreaties of his friends, who were anxious lest his life should be endangered by breathing, in his scarcely convalescent state, the air of the city where so many thousands had been dying of the pestilence, the prince repaired to Leyden. He, at least, had never doubted his own or his country’s fortitude. They could, therefore, most sincerely congratulate each other, now that the victory had been achieved. "If we are doomed to perish," he had said a little before the commencement of the siege, "in the name of God, be it so! At any rate, we shall have the honor to have done what no nation ever did before us—that of having defended and maintained ourselves, unaided, in so small a country, against the tremendous efforts of such powerful enemies. So long as the poor inhabitants here, though deserted by all the world, hold firm, it will still cost the Spaniards the half of Spain, in money and in men, before they can make an end of us."

The termination of the terrible siege of Leyden was a convincing proof to the Spaniards that they had not yet made an end of the Hollanders. It furnished, also, a sufficient presumption that until they had made an end of them, even unto the last Hollander, there would never be an end of the struggle in which they were engaged. It was a slender consolation to the governor-general, that his troops had been vanquished, not by the enemy, but by the ocean. An enemy whom the ocean obeyed with such docility might well be deemed invincible by man. In the headquarters of Valdez, at Leydordorp, many plans of Leyden and the neighborhood were found lying in confusion about the room. Upon the table was a hurried farewell of that general to the scenes of his discomfiture, written in a Latin worthy of Juan Vargas: "Vale civitas, valete castelli parvi, qui relictis estis propter aquam et non per vim inimicorum!" In his precipitate retreat before the advancing rebels, the commander had but just found time for this elegant effusion, and for his parting instructions to Colonel Borgia that the fortress of Lammen was to be forthwith abandoned. These having been reduced to writing, Valdez had fled so speedily as to give rise to much censure and more scandal. He was even accused of having been bribed by the Hollanders to desert his post, a tale which many repeated, and a few believed.

On the fourth of October, the day following that on which the relief of the city was effected, the wind shifted to the Northeast, and again blew a tempest. It was as if the waters, having now done their work, had been rolled back to the ocean by an Omnipotent hand, for in the course of a few days, the land was bare again, and the work of reconstructing the dykes commenced.

After a brief interval of repose, Leyden had regained its former position. The prince, with advice of the estates, had granted the city, as a reward for its sufferings, a ten days' annual fair, without tolls or taxes, "and as a further manifestation of the gratitude entertained by the people of Holland and Zealand for the heroism of the citizens, it was resolved that an academy or university should be forthwith established within their walls. The University of
Leyden, afterwards so illustrious, was thus founded in the very darkest period of the country’s struggle.

The university was endowed with a handsome revenue, principally derived from the ancient abbey of Egmont, and was provided with a number of professors, selected for their genius, learning, and piety among all the most distinguished scholars of the Netherlands. The document by which the institution was founded was certainly a masterpiece of ponderous irony, for as the fiction of the king’s sovereignty was still maintained, Philip was gravely made to establish the university, as a reward to Leyden for rebellion to himself.

"Considering," said this wonderful charter, "that during these present wearisome wars within our provinces of Holland and Zealand, all good instruction of youth in the sciences and liberal arts is likely to come into entire oblivion. ... Considering the differences of religion—considering that we are inclined to gratify our city of Leyden, with itsburghers, on account of the heavy burthens sustained by them during this war with such faithfulness—we have resolved, after ripely deliberating with our dear cousin, William, Prince of Orange, stadholder, to erect a free public school and university," etc., etc., etc. So ran the document establishing this famous academy, all needful regulations for the government and police of the institution being entrusted by Philip to his "above-mentioned dear cousin of Orange."

The university having been founded, endowed, and supplied with its teachers, it was solemnly consecrated in the following winter, and it is agreeable to contemplate this scene of harmless pedantry, interposed, as it was, between the acts of the longest and dreariest tragedy of modern time. On the fifth of February, 1575, the city of Leyden, so lately the victim of famine and pestilence, had crowned itself with flowers. At seven in the morning, after a solemn religious celebration in the Church of St. Peter, a grand procession was formed. It was preceded by a military escort, consisting of the burgher militia and the five companies of infantry stationed in the city. Then came, drawn by four horses, a splendid triumphal chariot, on which sat a female figure, arrayed in snow-white garments. This was the Holy Gospel. She was attended by the Four Evangelists, who walked on foot at each side of her chariot. Next followed Medicine, on horseback, holding in one hand a treatise of the healing art, in the other a garland of drugs. The curative goddess rode between the four eminent physicians, Hippocrates, Galen, Dioscorides, and Theophrastus, and was attended by two footmen and four pike-bearers. Last of the allegorical personages came Minerva, prancing in complete steel, with lance in rest, and bearing her Medusa shield. Aristotle and Plato, Cicero and Virgil, all on horseback, with attendants in antique armor at their back, surrounded the daughter of Jupiter, while the city band, discoursing eloquent music from hautboy and viol, came upon the heels of the allegory. Then followed the mace-bearers and other officials, escorting the orator of the day, the newly-
appointed professors and doctors, the magistrates and dignitaries, and the body of the citizens generally completing the procession. Marshaled in this order, through triumphal arches, and over a pavement strewed with flowers, the procession moved slowly up and down the different streets, and along the quiet canals of the city. As it reached the Nuns’ Bridge, a barge of triumph, gorgeously decorated, came floating slowly down the sluggish Rhine. Upon its deck, under a canopy enwreathed with laurels and oranges, and adorned with tapestry, sat Apollo, attended by the Nine Muses, all in classical costume; at the helm stood Neptune with his trident. The Muses executed some beautiful concerted pieces; Apollo twanged his lute. Having reached the landing-place, this deputation from Parnassus stepped on shore, and stood awaiting the arrival of the procession. Each professor, as he advanced, was gravely embraced and kissed by Apollo and all the Nine Muses in turn, who greeted their arrival besides with the recitation of an elegant Latin poem. This classical ceremony terminated, the whole procession marched together to the cloister of Saint Barbara, the place prepared for the new university, where they listened to an eloquent oration by the Rev. Caspar Kolhas, after which they partook of a magnificent banquet. With this memorable feast, in the place where famine had so lately reigned, the ceremonies were concluded.

CHAPTER 3

Peace Negotiations
Marriage of William of Orange to Charlotte de Bourbon
The Death of Requesens

The Council of Troubles, or, as it will be forever denominated in history, the Council of Blood, still existed, although the Grand Commander, upon his arrival in the Netherlands, had advised his sovereign to consent to the immediate abolition of so odious an institution. Philip, accepting the advice of his governor and his cabinet, had accordingly authorized him by a letter of March 10, 1574, to take that step if he continued to believe it advisable. Requesens had made use of this permission to extort money from the obedient portion of the provinces. An assembly of deputies was held at Brussels on June 7, 1574, and there was a tedious interchange of protocols, reports, and remonstrances. The estates, not satisfied with the extinction of a tribunal which had at last worn itself out by its own violence, and had become inactive through lack of victims, insisted on greater concessions. They demanded the departure of the Spanish troops, the establishment of a council of Netherlanders in Spain for Netherland affairs, the restoration to offices in the provinces, of natives and natives only; for these drawers of documents thought it possible, at that epoch, to recover by pedantry what their brethren of Holland and Zealand were maintaining with the sword. It was not the moment for historical disquisition, citations from Solomon, nor chopping of logic; yet with such lucubrations were reams of paper filled, and days and weeks occupied. The result was what might have been expected. The Grand
Commander obtained but little money; the estates obtained none of their demands; and the Blood-Council remained, as it were, suspended in mid-air. It continued to transact business at intervals during the administration of Requesens, and at last, after nine years of existence, was destroyed by the violent imprisonment of the Council of State at Brussels. This event, however, belongs to a subsequent page of this history.

Noircarmes had argued, from the tenor of Saint Aldegonde’s letters, that the prince would be ready to accept his pardon upon almost any terms. Noircarmes was now dead, but Saint Aldegonde still remained in prison, very anxious for his release, and as well disposed as ever to render services in any secret negotiation. It will be recollected that, at the capitulation of Middelburg, it had been distinctly stipulated by the prince that Colonel Mondragon should at once effect the liberation of Saint Aldegonde, with certain other prisoners, or himself return into confinement. He had done neither the one nor the other. The patriots still languished in prison, some of them being subjected to exceedingly harsh treatment, but Mondragon, although repeatedly summoned as an officer and a gentleman, by the prince, to return to captivity, had been forbidden by the Grand Commander to redeem his pledge.

Saint Aldegonde was now released from prison upon parole, and dispatched on a secret mission to the prince and estates. As before, he was instructed that two points were to be left untouched—the authority of the king and the question of religion. Nothing could be more preposterous than to commence a negotiation from which the two important points were thus carefully eliminated. The king’s authority and the question of religion covered the whole ground upon which the Spaniards and the Hollanders had been battling for six years, and were destined to battle for three quarters of a century longer. Yet, although other affairs might be discussed, those two points were to be reserved for the more conclusive arbitration of gunpowder. The result of negotiations upon such a basis was easily to be foreseen. Breath, time, and paper were profusely wasted and nothing gained. The prince assured his friend, as he had done secret agents previously sent to him, that he was himself ready to leave the land, if by so doing he could confer upon it the blessing of peace; but that all hopes of reaching a reasonable conclusion from the premises established was futile. The envoy treated also with the estates, and received from them in return an elaborate report, which was addressed immediately to the king. The style of this paper was bold and blunt, its substance bitter and indigestible. It informed Philip what he had heard often enough before, that the Spaniards must go and the exiles come back, the inquisition be abolished and the ancient privileges restored, the Roman Catholic religion renounce its supremacy, and the Reformed religion receive permission to exist unmolested, before he could call himself master of that little hook of sand in the North Sea. With this paper, which was entrusted to Saint Aldegonde, by him to be delivered to the Grand Commander, who was, after reading it, to forward it to its destination, the negotiator returned to his prison. Thence he did not emerge again till the course of events released him, upon the 15th of October, 1574.
This report was far from agreeable to the governor, and it became the object of a fresh correspondence between his confidential agent, Champagny, and the learned and astute Junius de Jonge, representative of the Prince of Orange and Governor of Veere. The communication of De Jonge consisted of a brief note and a long discourse. The note was sharp and stinging, the discourse elaborate and somewhat pedantic. Unnecessarily historical and unmercifully extended, it was yet bold, bitter, and eloquent. The presence of foreigners was proved to have been, from the beginning of Philip’s reign, the curse of the country. Doctor Sonnius, with his batch of bishops, had sowed the seed of the first disorder. A prince, ruling in the Netherlands, had no right to turn a deaf ear to the petitions of his subjects. If he did so, the Hollanders would tell him, as the old woman had told the Emperor Adrian, that the potentate who had no time to attend to the interests of his subjects, had not leisure enough to be a sovereign. While Holland refused to bow its neck to the Inquisition, the King of Spain dreaded the thunder and lightning of the pope. The Hollanders would, with pleasure, emancipate Philip from his own thralldom, but it was absurd that he, who was himself a slave to another potentate, should effect unlimited control over a free people. It was Philip’s councillors, not the Hollanders, who were his real enemies, for it was they who held him in the subjection by which his power was neutralized and his crown degraded.

It may be supposed that many long pages, conceived in this spirit and expressed with great vigor, would hardly smooth the way for the more official negotiations which were soon to take place, yet Doctor Junius fairly and faithfully represented the sentiment of his nation.

Towards the close of the year, Doctor Elbertus Leoninus, professor of Louvain, together with Hugo Bonte, ex-pensionary of Middelburg, was commissioned by the Grand Commander to treat secretly with the prince. He was, however, not found very tractable when the commissioners opened the subject of his own pardon and reconciliation with the king, and he absolutely refused to treat at all except with the cooperation of the estates. He, moreover, objected to the use the word “pardon” on the ground that he had never done anything requiring his Majesty’s forgiveness. If adversity should visit him, he cared but little for it; he had lived long enough, he said, and should die with some glory, regretting the disorders and oppressions which had taken place, but conscious that it had not been in his power to remedy them. When reminded by the commissioners of the king’s power, he replied that he knew his Majesty to be very mighty, but that there was a King more powerful still—even God the Creator, who, as he humbly hoped, was upon his side.

At a subsequent interview with Hugo Bonte, the prince declared it almost impossible for himself or the estates to hold any formal communication with the Spanish government, as such communications were not safe. No trust could be reposed either in safe-conducts or hostages. Faith had been too often broken by the administration. The promise made by the Duchess of Parma to the nobles, and afterwards violated, the recent treachery of Mondragon, the return of three exchanged prisoners from the Hague, who died next day of poison administered before their release, the frequent attempts upon his own
life—all such constantly recurring crimes made it doubtful, in the opinion of the prince, whether it would be possible to find commissioners to treat with his Majesty’s government. All would fear assassination, afterwards to be disavowed by the king and pardoned by the pope. After much conversation in this vein, the prince gave the Spanish agents warning that he might eventually be obliged to seek the protection of some foreign power for the provinces. In this connection he made use of the memorable metaphor, so often repeated afterwards, that “the country was a beautiful damsel, who certainly did not lack suitors able and willing to accept her and defend her against the world.” As to the matter of religion, he said he was willing to leave it to be settled by the estates-general, but doubted whether anything short of entire liberty of worship would ever satisfy the people.

Subsequently there were held other conferences, between the prince and Doctor Leoninus, with a similar result, all attempts proving fruitless to induce him to abandon his position upon the subject of religion, or to accept a pardon on any terms save the departure of the foreign troops, the assembling of the estates-general, and entire freedom of religion. Even if he were willing to concede the religious question himself, he observed that it was idle to hope either from the estates or people a handbreadth of concession upon that point. Leoninus was subsequently admitted to a secret conference with the estates of Holland, where his representations were firmly met by the same arguments as those already used by the prince.

These proceedings on the part of Saint Aldegonde, Champagny, Junius, and Elbertus Leoninus extended through the whole summer and autumn of 1574, and were not terminated until January of the following year.

Changes, fast becoming necessary in the internal government of the provinces, were also undertaken during this year. Hitherto the prince had exercised his power under the convenient fiction of the king’s authority, systematically conducting the rebellion in the name of his Majesty, and as his Majesty’s stadholder. By this process an immense power was lodged in his hands, nothing less, indeed, than the supreme executive and legislative functions of the land; while since the revolt had become, as it were, perpetual, ample but anomalous functions had been additionally thrust upon him by the estates and by the general voice of the people. The two provinces, even while deprived of Harlem and Amsterdam, now raised 210,000 florins monthly, whereas Alva had never been able to extract from Holland more than 271,000 florins yearly. They paid all rather than pay a tenth. In consequence of this liberality, the cities insensibly acquired a greater influence in the government. The coming contest between the centrifugal aristocratic principle, represented by these corporations, and the central popular authority of the stadholder, was already foreshadowed, but at first the estates were in perfect harmony with the prince. They even urged upon him more power than he desired, and declined functions which he wished them to exercise. On September 7, 1573, it had been formally proposed by the general council to confer a regular and unlimited dictatorship upon him, but in the course of a year from that time, the cities had begun to feel their increasing
importance. Moreover, while growing more ambitious, they became less liberal.
The prince, dissatisfied with the conduct of the cities, brought the whole subject before an assembly of the estates of Holland on October 20, 1574. He stated the inconveniences produced by the anomalous condition of the government. He complained that the common people had often fallen into the error that the money raised for public purposes had been levied for his benefit only, and that they had, therefore, been less willing to contribute to the taxes. As the only remedy for these evils, he tendered his resignation of all the powers with which he was clothed, so that the estates might then take the government, which they could exercise without conflict or control. For himself, he had never desired power, except as a means of being useful to his country, and he did not offer his resignation from unwillingness to stand by the cause, but from a hearty desire to save it from disputes among its friends. He was ready, now as ever, to shed the last drop of his blood to maintain the freedom of the land.

This straightforward language produced an instantaneous effect. The estates knew that they were dealing with a man whose life was governed by lofty principles, and they felt that they were in danger of losing him through their own selfishness and low ambition. They were embarrassed, for they did not like to relinquish the authority which they had begun to relish, nor to accept the resignation of a man who was indispensable. They felt that to give up William of Orange at that time was to accept the Spanish yoke for ever. At an assembly held at Delft on November 12, 1574, they accordingly requested him “to continue in his blessed government, with the council established near him,” and for this end, they formally offered to him, "under the name of Governor or Regent," absolute power, authority, and sovereign command. In particular, they conferred on him the entire control of all the ships of war, hitherto reserved to the different cities, together with the right to dispose of all prizes and all monies raised for the support of fleets. They gave him also unlimited power over the domains; they agreed that all magistracies, militia bands, guilds, and communities should make solemn oath to contribute taxes and to receive garrisons, exactly as the prince, with his council, should ordain; but they made it a condition that the estates should be convened and consulted upon requests, impositions, and upon all changes in the governing body. It was also stipulated that the judges of the supreme court and of the exchequer, with other high officers, should be appointed by and with the consent of the estates.

The prince expressed himself willing to accept the government upon these terms. He, however, demanded an allowance of 45,000 florins monthly for the army expenses and other current outlays. Here, however, the estates refused their consent. In a mercantile spirit, unworthy the occasion and the man with whom they were dealing, they endeavored to chaffer where they should have been only too willing to comply, and they attempted to reduce the reasonable demand of the prince to 30,000 florins. The prince, who had poured out his own wealth so lavishly in the cause—who, together with his brothers,
particularly the generous John of Nassau, had contributed all which they could raise by mortgage, sales of jewelry and furniture, and by extensive loans, subjecting themselves to constant embarrassment, and almost to penury, felt himself outraged by the paltriness of this conduct. He expressed his indignation, and denounced the niggardliness of the estates in the strongest language, and declared that he would rather leave the country forever, with the maintenance of his own honor, than accept the government upon such disgraceful terms. The estates, disturbed by his vehemence, and struck with its justice, instantly, and without further deliberation, consented to his demand. They granted the 45,000 florins monthly, and the prince assumed the government, thus remodeled.

During the autumn and early winter of the year 1574, the Emperor Maximilian had been actively exerting himself to bring about a pacification of the Netherlands. He was certainly sincere, for an excellent reason. "The Emperor maintains," said Saint Goard, French ambassador at Madrid, "that if peace is not made with the Beggars, the Empire will depart from the house of Austria, and that such is the determination of the electors." On the other hand, if Philip were not weary of the war, at any rate his means for carrying it on were diminishing daily. Requesens could raise no money in the Netherlands; his secretary wrote to Spain, that the exchequer was at its last gasp, and the cabinet of Madrid was at its wits' end, and almost incapable of raising ways and means. The peace party was obtaining the upper hand; the fierce policy of Alva regarded with increasing disfavor. "The people here," wrote Saint Goard from Madrid, "are completely desperate, whatever pains they take to put a good face on the matter. They desire most earnestly to treat, without losing their character." It seemed, nevertheless, impossible for Philip to bend his neck. The hope of wearing the Imperial crown had alone made his bigotry feasible. To less potent influences it was adamant; and even now, with an impoverished exchequer, and, after seven years of unsuccessful warfare, his purpose was not less rigid than at first. "The Hollanders demand liberty of conscience," said Saint Goard, "to which the king will never consent, or I am much mistaken."

As for Orange, he was sincerely in favor of peace—but not a dishonorable peace, in which should be renounced all the objects of the war. He was far from sanguine on the subject, for he read the signs of the times and the character of Philip too accurately to believe much more in the success of the present than in that of the past efforts of Maximilian. He was pleased that his brother-in-law, Count Schwartzburg, had been selected as the Emperor’s agent in the affair, but expressed his doubts whether much good would come of the proposed negotiations. Remembering the many traps which in times past had been set by Philip and his father, he feared that the present transaction might likewise prove a snare. "We have not forgotten the words ‘ewig’ and ‘einig’ in the treaty with Landgrave Philip," he wrote, "at the same time we beg to assure his Imperial Majesty that we desire nothing more than a good peace, tending to the glory of God, the service of the King of Spain, and the prosperity of his subjects."
This was his language to his brother, in a letter which was meant to be shown to the Emperor. In another, written on the same day, he explained himself with more clearness, and stated his distrust with more energy. There were no papists left, except a few ecclesiastics, he said, so much had the number of the Reformers been augmented, through the singular grace of God. It was out of the question to suppose, therefore, that a measure, dooming all who were not Catholics to exile, could be entertained. None would change their religion, and none would consent, voluntarily, to abandon forever their homes, friends, and property. "Such a peace," he said, "would be poor and pitiable indeed."

These, then, were the sentiments of the party now about to negotiate. The mediator was anxious for a settlement, because the interests of the Imperial house required it. The King of Spain was desirous of peace, but was unwilling to concede a hair. The Prince of Orange was equally anxious to terminate the war, but was determined not to abandon the objects for which it had been undertaken. A favorable result, therefore, seemed hardly possible. A whole people claimed the liberty to stay at home and practice the Protestant religion, while their king asserted the right to banish them forever, or to burn them if they remained. The parties seemed too far apart to be brought together by the most elastic compromise. The prince addressed an earnest appeal to the assembly of Holland, then in session at Dort, reminding them that, although peace was desirable, it might be more dangerous than war, and entreatng them, therefore, to conclude no treaty which should be inconsistent with the privileges of the country and their duty to God.

It was now resolved that all the votes of the assembly should consist of five—one for the nobles and large cities of Holland, one for the estates of Zealand, one for the small cities of Holland, one for the cities Bommel and Buren, and the fifth for William of Orange. The Prince thus effectually held in his hands three votes—his own, that of the small cities, which through his means only had been admitted to the assembly, and thirdly, that of Buren, the capital of his son's earldom. He thus exercised a controlling influence over the coming deliberations. The ten commissioners, who were appointed by the estates for the peace negotiations, were all his friends. Among them were Saint Aldegonde, Paul Buys, Charles Boisot, and Doctor Junius. The plenipotentiaries of the Spanish government were Leoninus, the Seigneur de Rassinghem, Cornelius Suis, and Arnold Sasbout.

The proceedings were opened at Breda upon the third of March, 1575. The royal commissioners took the initiative, requesting to be informed what complaints the estates had to make, and offering to remove, if possible, all grievances which they might be suffering. The states' commissioners replied that they desired nothing, in the first place, but an answer to the petition which they had already presented to the king. This was the paper placed in the hands of Saint Aldegonde during the informal negotiations of the preceding year. An answer was accordingly given, but couched in such vague and general language as to be quite without meaning. The estates then demanded a categorical reply to the two principal demands in the petition, namely, the departure of the foreign troops and the assembling of the states-general.
were asked what they understood by foreigners and by the assembly of states-general. They replied that by foreigners they meant those who were not natives, and particularly the Spaniards. By the states-general they meant the same body before which, in 1555, Charles had resigned his sovereignty to Philip. The royal commissioners made an extremely unsatisfactory answer, concluding with a request that all cities, fortresses, and castles, then in the power of the estates, together with all their artillery and vessels of war, should be delivered to the king. The Roman Catholic worship, it was also distinctly stated, was to be re-established at once exclusively throughout the Netherlands, those of the Reformed religion receiving permission, *for that time only*, to convert their property into cash within a certain time, and to depart the country.

Orange and the estates made answer on the 21st of March. It could not be called hard, they said, to require the withdrawal of the Spanish troops, for this had been granted in 1559, for less imperious reasons. The estates had, indeed, themselves made use of foreigners, but those foreigners had never been allowed to participate in the government. With regard to the assembly of the states-general, that body had always enjoyed the right of advising with the sovereign on the condition of the country, and on general measures of government. Now it was only thought necessary to summon them, in order that they might give their consent to the king’s “requests.” Touching the delivery of cities and citadels, artillery and ships, the proposition was pronounced to resemble that made by the wolves to the sheep, in the fable—that the dogs should be delivered up, as a preliminary to a lasting peace. It was unreasonable to request the Hollanders to abandon their religion or their country. The reproach of heresy was unjust, for they still held to the Catholic Apostolic Church, wishing only to purify it of its abuses. Moreover, it was certainly more cruel to expel a whole population than to dismiss three or four thousand Spaniards who for seven long years had been eating their fill at the expense of the provinces. It would be impossible for the exiles to dispose of their property, for all would, by the proposed measure, be sellers, while there would be no purchasers.

The royal plenipotentiaries, making answer to this communication upon the first of April, signified a willingness that the Spanish soldiers should depart, if the states would consent to disband their own foreign troops. They were likewise in favor of assembling the states-general, but could not permit any change in the religion of the country. His Majesty had sworn to maintain the true worship at the moment of assuming the sovereignty. The dissenters might, however, be allowed a period of six months in which to leave the land, and eight or ten years for the sale of their property. After the heretics had all departed, his Majesty did not doubt that trade and manufactures would flourish again, along with the old religion. As for the Spanish inquisition, there was not, and there never had been, any intention of establishing it in the Netherlands. No doubt there was something specious in this paper. It appeared to contain considerable concessions. The prince and estates had claimed the departure of the Spaniards. It was now promised that they should depart. They had
demanded the assembling of the states-general. It was now promised that they should assemble. They had denounced the inquisition. It was now averred that the Spanish inquisition was not to be established. Nevertheless, the commissioners of the prince were not deceived by such artifices. There was no parity between the cases of the Spanish soldiery and of the troops in service of the estates. To assemble the estates-general was idle, if they were to be forbidden the settlement of the great question at issue. With regard to the Spanish inquisition, it mattered little whether the slaughter-house were called Spanish or Flemish, or simply the Blood-Council. It was, however, necessary for the states’ commissioners to consider their reply very carefully, for the royal plenipotentiaries had placed themselves upon specious grounds. It was not enough to feel that the king’s government was paltering with them; it was likewise necessary for the states’ agents to impress this fact upon the people.

There was a pause in the deliberations. Meantime, Count Schwartzburg, reluctantly accepting the conviction that the religious question was an insurmountable obstacle to a peace, left the provinces for Germany. The last propositions of the government plenipotentiaries had been discussed in the councils of the various cities, so that the reply of the prince and estates was delayed until the first of June. They admitted, in this communication, that the offer to restore ancient privileges had an agreeable sound, but regretted that if the whole population were to be banished, there would be but few to derive advantage from the restoration. If the king would put an end to religious persecution, he would find as much loyalty in the provinces as his forefathers had found. It was out of the question, they said, for the states to disarm and to deliver up their strong places, before the Spanish soldiery had retired, and before peace had been established. It was their wish to leave the question of religion, together with all other disputed matters, to the decision of the assembly. Were it possible, in the meantime, to devise any effectual method for restraining hostilities, it would gladly be embraced.

On the eighth of July, the royal commissioners inquired what guarantee the states would be willing to give, that the decision of the general assembly, whatever it might be, should be obeyed. The demand was answered by another, in which the king’s agents were questioned as to their own guarantees. Hereupon it was stated that his Majesty would give his word and sign manual, together with the word and signature of the Emperor into the bargain. In exchange for these promises, the prince and estates were expected to give their own oaths and seals, together with a number of hostages. Over and above this, they were requested to deliver up the cities of Brill and Enkhuizen, Flushing and Arnemuyde. The disparity of such guarantees was ridiculous. The royal word, even when strengthened by the imperial promise, and confirmed by the autographs of Philip and Maximilian, was not so solid a security, in the opinion of Netherlanders, as to outweigh four cities in Holland and Zealand, with all their population and wealth. To give collateral pledges and hostages upon one side, while the king offered none, was to assign a superiority to the royal word, over that of the prince and the estates which
there was no disposition to recognize. Moreover, it was very cogently urged that to give up the cities was to give as security for the contract, some of the principal contracting parties.

This closed the negotiations. The provincial plenipotentiaries took their leave by a paper dated July 13, 1575, which recapitulated the main incidents of the conference. They expressed their deep regret that his Majesty should insist so firmly on the banishment of the Reformers, for it was unjust to reserve the provinces to the sole use of a small number of Catholics. They lamented that the proposition which had been made, to refer the religious question to the estates, had neither been loyally accepted, nor candidly refused. They inferred, therefore, that the object of the royal government had been to amuse the states, while time was thus gained for reducing the country into a slavery more abject than any which had yet existed. On the other hand, the royal commissioners as solemnly averred that the whole responsibility for the failure of the negotiations belonged to the estates.

It was the general opinion in the insurgent provinces that the government had been insincere from the beginning, and had neither expected nor desired to conclude a peace. It is probable, however, that Philip was sincere, so far as it could be called sincerity to be willing to conclude a peace, if the provinces would abandon the main objects of the war. With his impoverished exchequer, and ruin threatening his whole empire, if this mortal combat should be continued many years longer, he could have no motive for further bloodshed, provided all heretics should consent to abandon the country. As usual, however, he left his agents in the dark as to his real intentions. Even Requesens was as much in doubt as to the king’s secret purposes as Margaret of Parma had ever been in former times. Moreover, the Grand Commander and the government had, after all, made a great mistake in their diplomacy. The estates of Brabant, although strongly desirous that the Spanish troops should be withdrawn, were equally stanch for the maintenance of the Catholic religion, and many of the southern provinces entertained the same sentiments. Had the governor, therefore, taken the states' commissioners at their word, and left the decision of the religious question to the general assembly, he might perhaps have found the vote in his favor. In this case, it is certain that the Prince of Orange and his party would have been placed in a very awkward position.

The internal government of the insurgent provinces had remained upon the footing which we have seen established in the autumn of 1574, but in the course of this summer (1575), however, the foundation was laid for the union of Holland and Zealand, under the authority of Orange. The selfish principle of municipal aristocracy, which had tended to keep asunder these various groups of cities, was now repressed by the energy of the Prince and the strong determination of the people.

In April 1575, certain articles of union between Holland and Zealand were proposed, and six commissioners appointed to draw up an ordinance for the government of the two provinces. This ordinance was accepted in general assembly of both. It was in twenty articles. It declared that, during the war,
the prince, as sovereign, should have absolute power in all matters concerning the defense of the country. He was to appoint military officers, high and low, establish and remove garrisons, punish offenders against the laws of war. He was to regulate the expenditure of all money voted by the estates. He was to maintain the law, in the king’s name, as Count of Holland, and to appoint all judicial officers upon nominations by the estates. He was, at the usual times, to appoint and renew the magistracies of the cities, according to their constitutions. He was to protect the exercise of the Evangelical Reformed religion, and to suppress the exercise of the Roman religion, without permitting, however, that search should be made into the creed of any person. A deliberative and executive council, by which the jealousy of the corporations had intended to hamper his government, did not come into more than nominal existence.

The articles of union having been agreed upon, the prince, desiring an unfettered expression of the national will, wished the ordinance to be laid before the people in their primary assemblies. The estates, however, were opposed to this democratic proceeding. They represented that it had been customary to consult, after the city magistracies, only the captains of companies and the deans of guilds on matters of government. The prince, yielding the point, the captains of companies and deans of guilds accordingly alone united with the aristocratic boards in ratifying the instrument by which his authority over the two united provinces was established. On the fourth of June this first union was solemnized.

Upon the 11th of July, the prince formally accepted the government. He, however, made an essential change in a very important clause of the ordinance. In place of the words, the “Roman religion,” he insisted that the words, “religion at variance with the Gospel,” should be substituted in the article by which he was enjoined to prohibit the exercise of such religion. This alteration rebuked the bigotry which had already grown out of the successful resistance to bigotry, and left the door open for a general religious toleration.

Early in this year the prince had dispatched Saint Aldegonde on a private mission to the Elector Palatine. During some of his visits to that potentate he had seen at Heidelberg, the Princess Charlotte of Bourbon. That lady was daughter of the Duc de Montpensier, the most ardent of the Catholic Princes of France, and the one who at the conferences of Bayonne had been most indignant at the Queen Dowager’s hesitation to unite heartily with the schemes of Alva and Philip for the extermination of the Huguenots. His daughter, a woman of beauty, intelligence, and virtue, forced before the canonical age to take the religious vows, had been placed in the convent of Joüarrs, of which she had become abbess. Always secretly inclined to the Reformed religion, she had fled secretly from her cloister, in the year of horrors, 1572, and had found refuge at the court of the Elector Palatine, after which step her father refused to receive her letters, to contribute a farthing to her support, or even to acknowledge her claims upon him by a single line or message of affection. Under these circumstances the outcast princess, who had arrived at years of maturity, might be considered her own mistress, and she was neither morally
nor legally bound, when her hand was sought in marriage by the great
champion of the Reformation, to ask the consent of a parent who loathed her
religion and denied her existence. The legality of the divorce from Anne of
Saxony had been settled by a full expression of the ecclesiastical authority
which she most respected; the facts upon which the divorce had been founded
having been proved beyond peradventure.

Nothing, in truth, could well be more unfortunate in its results than the famous
Saxon marriage, the arrangements for which had occasioned so much pondering
to Philip, and so much diplomatic correspondence on the part of high
personages in Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain. Certainly, it was of but
little consequence to what church the unhappy princess belonged, and they
must be slightly versed in history or in human nature who can imagine these
nuptials to have exercised any effect upon the religious or political sentiments
of Orange. The princess was of a stormy, ill-regulated nature, almost a lunatic
from the beginning. The dislike which succeeded to her fantastic fondness for
the prince, as well as her general eccentricity, had soon become the talk of all
the court at Brussels. She would pass week after week without emerging from
her chamber, keeping the shutters closed and candles burning, day and night.
She quarreled violently with Countess Egmont for precedence, so that the
ludicrous contentions of the two ladies in antechambers and doorways were the
theme and the amusement of society. Her insolence, not only in private but in
public, towards her husband became intolerable. "I could not do otherwise than
bear it with sadness and patience," said the prince, with great magnanimity,
hoping that with age would come improvement." Nevertheless, upon one
occasion, at a supper party, she had used such language in the presence of
Count Horn and many other nobles, "that all wondered that he could endure
the abusive terms which she applied to him."

When the clouds gathered about him, when he had become an exile and a
wanderer, her reproaches and her violence increased. The sacrifice of their
wealth, the mortgages and sales which he effected of his estates, plate,
jewels, and furniture, to raise money for the struggling country, excited her
bitter resentment. She separated herself from him by degrees, and at last
abandoned him altogether. Her temper became violent to ferocity. She beat
her servants with her hands and with clubs; she threatened the lives of herself,
of her attendants, of Count John of Nassau, with knives and daggers, and
indulged in habitual profanity and blasphemy, uttering frightful curses upon all
around. Her original tendency to intemperance had so much increased, that
she was often unable to stand on her feet. A bottle of wine, holding more than
a quart, in the morning, and another in the evening, together with a pound of
sugar, was her usual allowance. She addressed letters to Alva, complaining that
her husband had impoverished himself "in his good-for-nothing Beggar war," and
begging the duke to furnish her with a little ready money and with the means
of arriving at the possession of her dower. An illicit connection with a certain
John Rubens, an exiled magistrate of Antwerp, and father of the celebrated
painter, completed the list of her delinquencies, and justified the marriage of
the prince with Charlotte de Bourbon. It was therefore determined by the
Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave William to remove her from the custody of the Nassau's. This took place with infinite difficulty, at the close of the year 1575. Already, in 1572, Augustus had proposed to the landgrave that she should be kept in solitary confinement, and that a minister should preach to her daily through the grated aperture by which her food was to be admitted. The landgrave remonstrated at so inhuman a proposition, which was, however, carried into effect. The wretched princess, now completely a lunatic, was imprisoned in the electoral palace, in a chamber where the windows were walled up and a small grating let into the upper part of the door. Through this wicket came her food, as well as the words of the holy man appointed to preach daily for her edification.

Two years long, she endured this terrible punishment, and died mad, on the 18th of December, 1577. On the following day, she was buried in the electoral tomb at Meissen, a pompous procession of "school children, clergy, magistrates, nobility, and citizens" conducting her to that rest of which she could no longer be deprived by the cruelty of man nor her own violent temperament. So far, therefore, as the character of Mademoiselle de Bourbon and the legitimacy of her future offspring were concerned, she received ample guarantees. For the rest, the prince, in a simple letter, informed her that he was already past his prime, having reached his forty-second year, and that his fortune was encumbered not only with settlements for his children by previous marriages, but by debts contracted in the cause of his oppressed country. A convention of doctors and bishops of France, summoned by the Duc de Montpensier, afterwards confirmed the opinion that the conventual vows of the Princess Charlotte had been conformable neither to the laws of France nor to the canons of the Trent Council. She was conducted to Brill by Saint Aldegonde, where she was received by her bridegroom, to whom she was united on the 12th of June. The wedding festival was held at Dort with much revelry and holiday making, "but without dancing."

In this connection, no doubt, the prince consulted his inclination only. Eminently domestic in his habits, he required the relief of companionship at home to the exhausting affairs which made up his life abroad. For years he had never enjoyed social converse, except at long intervals, with man or woman; it was natural, therefore, that he should contract this marriage. It was equally natural that he should make many enemies by so impolitic a match. The Elector Palatine, who was in place of guardian to the bride, decidedly disapproved, although he was suspected of favoring the alliance. The Landgrave of Hesse for a time was furious, the Elector of Saxony absolutely delirious with rage. The Diet of the Empire was to be held within a few weeks at Frankfort, where it was very certain that the outraged and influential elector would make his appearance, overflowing with anger, and determined to revenge upon the cause of the Netherland Reformation the injury which he had personally received. Even the wise, considerate, affectionate brother, John of Nassau, considered the marriage an act of madness. He did what he could, by argument and entreaty, to dissuade the prince from its completion, although he afterwards voluntarily confessed that the Princess Charlotte had been deeply
calumniated and was an inestimable treasure to his brother. The French
government made use of the circumstance to justify itself in a still further
alienation from the cause of the prince than it had hitherto manifested, but
this was rather pretense than reality.
It was not in the nature of things, however, that the Saxon and Hessian
indignation could be easily allayed. The landgrave was extremely violent.
"Truly, I cannot imagine," he wrote to the Elector of Saxony, "quo consilio
that wiseacre of an Aldegonde, and whosoever else has been aiding and abetting,
have undertaken this affair. Nam si pietatem respicias, it is to be feared that,
considering she is a Frenchwoman, a nun, and moreover a fugitive nun, about
whose chastity there has been considerable question, the Prince has got out of
the frying-pan into the fire. Si formam it is not to be supposed that it was her
beauty which charmed him, since, without doubt, he must be rather frightened
than delighted, when he looks upon her. Si spem prolis, the Prince has
certainly only too many heirs already, and ought to wish that he had neither
wife nor children. Si amicitiam, it is not to be supposed, while her father
expresses himself in such threatening language with regard to her, that there
will be much cordiality of friendship on his part. Let them look to it, then, lest
it fare with them no better than with the Admiral, at his Paris wedding; for
those gentlemen can hardly forgive such injuries, sine mercurio et arsenico
sublimato."
The Elector of Saxony was frantic with choler, and almost ludicrous in the
vehemence of its expression. Count John was unceasing in his exhortations to
his brother to respect the sensitiveness of these important personages, and to
remember how much good and how much evil it was in their power to compass,
with regard to himself and to the great cause of the Protestant religion. He
reminded him, too, that the divorce had not been, and would not be
considered impregnable as to form, and that much discomfort and detriment
was likely to grow out of the whole proceeding, for himself and his family. The
prince, however, was immovable in his resolution, and from the whole tone of
his correspondence and deportment it was obvious that his marriage was one
rather of inclination than of policy. "I can assure you, my brother," he wrote to
Count John, "that my character has always tended to this—to care neither for
words nor menaces in any matter where I can act with a clear conscience, and
without doing injury to my neighbour. Truly, if I had paid regard to the threats
of princes, I should never have embarked in so many dangerous affairs,
contrary to the will of the King, my master, in times past, and even to the
advice of many of my relatives and friends."
The evil consequences which had been foreseen were not slow to manifest
themselves. There was much discussion of the prince’s marriage at the Diet of
Frankfort, and there was even a proposition, formally to declare the Calvinists
excluded in Germany from the benefits of the Peace of Passau. The Archduke
Rudolph was soon afterwards elected King of the Romans and of Bohemia,
although hitherto, according to the policy of the Prince of Orange, and in the
expectation of benefit to the cause of the Reformation in Germany and the
Netherlands, there has been a strong disposition to hold out hopes to Henry III, and to excite the fears of Maximilian.
While these important affairs, public and private, had been occurring in the South of Holland and in Germany, a very nefarious transaction had disgraced the cause of the patriot party in the northern quarter. Diedrich Sonoy, governor of that portion of Holland, a man of great bravery but of extreme ferocity of character, had discovered an extensive conspiracy among certain of the inhabitants, in aid of an approaching Spanish invasion. Bands of landloupers had been employed, according to the intimation which he had received or affected to have received, to set fire to villages and towns in every direction, to set up beacons, and to conduct a series of signals by which the expeditions about to be organized were to be furthered in their objects. The governor, determined to show that the Duke of Alva could not be more prompt nor more terrible than himself, improvised, of his own authority, a tribunal in imitation of the infamous Blood-Council. Fortunately for the character of the country, Sonoy was not a Hollander, nor was the jurisdiction of this newly established court allowed to extend beyond very narrow limits. Eight vagabonds were, however, arrested and doomed to tortures the most horrible, in order to extort from them confessions implicating persons of higher position in the land than themselves. Seven, after a few turns of the pulley and the screw, confessed all which they were expected to confess, and accused all whom they were requested to accuse. The eighth was firmer, and refused to testify to the guilt of certain respectable householders, whose names he had, perhaps, never heard, and against whom there was no shadow of evidence. He was, however, reduced by three hours and a half of sharp torture to confess, entirely according to their orders, so that accusations and evidence were thus obtained against certain influential gentlemen of the province, whose only crime was a secret adherence to the Catholic Faith.
The eight wretches who had been induced by promises of unconditional pardon upon one hand, and by savage torture on the other, to bear this false witness, were condemned to be burned alive, and on their way to the stake, they all retracted the statements which had only been extorted from them by the rack. Nevertheless, the individuals who had been thus designated, were arrested. Charged with plotting a general conflagration of the villages and farmhouses, in conjunction with an invasion by Hierges and other papist generals, they indignantly protested their innocence, but two of them, a certain Kopp Corneliszoon, and his son, Nanning Koppezoom, were selected to undergo the most cruel torture which had yet been practiced in the Netherlands. Sonoy, to his eternal shame, was disposed to prove that human ingenuity to inflict human misery had not been exhausted in the chambers of the Blood-Council, for it was to be shown that Reformers were capable of giving a lesson even to inquisitors in this diabolical science. Kopp, a man advanced in years, was tortured during a whole day. On the following morning he was again brought to the rack, but the old man was too weak to endure all the agony which his tormentors had provided for him. Hardly had he been placed upon the bed of torture than he calmly expired, to the great indignation of the tribunal. "The Devil has broken
his neck and carried him off to hell," cried they ferociously. "Nevertheless, that shall not prevent him from being hung and quartered." This decree of impotent vengeance was accordingly executed. The son of Kopp, however, Nanning Koppezoon, was a man in the full vigor of his years. He bore with perfect fortitude a series of incredible tortures, after which, with his body singed from head to heel, and his feet almost entirely flayed, he was left for six weeks to crawl about his dungeon on his knees. He was then brought back to the torture room, and again stretched upon the rack, while a large earthen vessel, made for the purpose, was placed, inverted, upon his naked body. A number of rats were introduced under this cover, and hot coals were heaped upon the vessel, till the rats, rendered furious by the heat, gnawed into the very bowels of the victim, in their agony to escape. The holes thus torn in his bleeding flesh were filled with red-hot coals. He was afterwards subjected to other tortures too foul to relate; nor was it till he had endured all this agony, with a fortitude which seemed supernatural, that he was at last discovered to be human. Scorched, bitten, dislocated in every joint, sleepless, starving, perishing with thirst, he was at last crushed into a false confession, by a promise of absolute forgiveness. He admitted everything which was brought to his charge, confessing a catalogue of contemplated burnings and beacon firings of which he had never dreamed, and avowing himself in league with other desperate papists, still more dangerous than himself. Notwithstanding the promises of pardon, Nanning was then condemned to death. The sentence ordained that his heart should be torn from his living bosom, and thrown in his face, after which his head was to be taken off and exposed on the church steeple of his native village. His body was then to be cut in four, and a quarter fastened upon different towers of the city of Alkmaar, for it was that city, recently so famous for its heroic resistance to the Spanish army, which was now sullied by all this cold-blooded atrocity. When led to execution, the victim recanted indignantly the confessions forced from him by weakness of body, and exonerated the persons whom he had falsely accused. A certain clergyman, named Jurian Epeszoon, endeavored by loud praying to drown his voice, that the people might not rise with indignation, and the dying prisoner with his last breath solemnly summoned this unworthy pastor of Christ to meet him within three days before the judgment-seat of God. It is a remarkable and authentic fact, that the clergyman thus summoned, went home pensively from the place of execution, sickened immediately and died upon the appointed day. Notwithstanding this solemn recantation, the persons accused were arrested, and in their turn subjected to torture, but the affair now reached the ears of Orange. His peremptory orders, with the universal excitement produced in the neighborhood, at last checked the course of the outrage, and the accused persons were remanded to prison, where they remained till liberated by the Pacification of Ghent. After their release they commenced legal proceedings against Sonoy, with a view of establishing their own innocence, and of bringing the inhuman functionary to justice. The process languished, however, and was finally abandoned, for the powerful governor had rendered such eminent
service in the cause of liberty, that it was thought unwise to push him to extremity. It is no impeachment upon the character of the prince that these horrible crimes were not prevented. It was impossible for him to be omnipresent. Neither is it just to consider the tortures and death thus inflicted upon innocent men an indelible stain upon the cause of liberty. They were the crimes of an individual who had been useful, but who, like the Count De la Marck, had now contaminated his hand with the blood of the guiltless. The new tribunal never took root, and was abolished as soon as its initiatory horrors were known.

On the 19th of July, Oudewater, entirely unprepared for such an event, was besieged by Hierges, but the garrison and the population, although weak, were brave. The town resisted eighteen days, and on the seventh of August was carried by assault, after which the usual horrors were fully practiced, after which the garrison was put to the sword, and the townspeople fared little better. Men, women, and children were murdered in cold blood, or obliged to purchase their lives by heavy ransoms, while matrons and maids were sold by auction to the soldiers at two or three dollars each. Almost every house in the city was burned to the ground, and these horrible but very customary scenes having been enacted, the army of Hierges took its way to Schoonhoven. That city, not defending itself, secured tolerable terms of capitulation, and surrendered on the 24th of August.

The Grand Commander had not yet given up the hope of naval assistance from Spain, notwithstanding the abrupt termination to the last expedition which had been organized. It was, however, necessary that a foothold should be recovered upon the seaboard, before a descent from without could be met with proper cooperation from the land forces within, and he was most anxious, therefore, to effect the re-conquest of some portion of Zealand. The island of Tholen was still Spanish, and had been so since the memorable expedition of Mondragon to South Beveland. From this interior portion of the archipelago the governor now determined to attempt an expedition against the outer and more important territory. The three principal islands were Tholen, Duiveland, and Schouwen. Tholen was the first which detached itself from the continent. Next, and separated from it by a bay two leagues in width, was Duiveland, or the Isle of Doves. Beyond, and parted by a narrower frith, was Schouwen, fronting directly upon the ocean, fortified by its strong capital city, Zierickzee, and containing other villages of inferior consequence.

Requesens had been long revolving in his mind the means of possessing himself of this important island. He had caused to be constructed a numerous armada of boats and light vessels of various dimensions, and he now came to Tholen to organize the expedition. His prospects were at first not flattering, for the gulfs and estuaries swarmed with Zealand vessels, manned by crews celebrated for their skill and audacity. Traitors, however, from Zealand itself now came forward to teach the Spanish commander how to strike at the heart of their own country. These refugees explained to Requesens that a narrow flat extended under the sea from Philipsland, a small and uninhabited islet situate close to Tholen, as far as the shore of Duiveland. Upon this submerged tongue
of land the water, during ebb-tide, was sufficiently shallow to be waded, and it
would therefore be possible for a determined band, under cover of the night,
to make the perilous passage. Once arrived at Duiveland, they could more
easily cross the intervening creek to Schouwen, which was not so deep and only
half as wide, so that a force thus sent through these dangerous shallows, might
take possession of Duiveland and lay siege to Zierickzee, in the very teeth of
the Zealand fleet, which would be unable to sail near enough to intercept their
passage.

The commander determined that the enterprise should be attempted. It was
not a novelty, because Mondragon, as we have seen, had already most
brilliantly conducted a very similar expedition. The present was, however, a
much more daring scheme. The other exploit, although sufficiently hazardous,
and entirely successful, had been a victory gained over the sea alone. It had
been a surprise, and had been effected without any opposition from human
enemies. Here, however, they were to deal, not only with the ocean and
darkness, but with a watchful and determined foe. The Zealanders were aware
that the enterprise was in contemplation, and their vessels lay about the
contiguous waters in considerable force. Nevertheless, the determination of
the Grand Commander was hailed with enthusiasm by his troops. Having
satisfied himself by personal experiment that the enterprise was possible, and
that therefore his brave soldiers could accomplish it, he decided that the glory
of the achievement should be fairly shared, as before, among the different
nations which served the king.

After completing his preparations, Requesens came to Tholen, at which
rendezvous were assembled 3,000 infantry, partly Spaniards, partly Germans,
partly Walloons. Besides these, a picked corps of two hundred sappers and
miners was to accompany the expedition, in order that no time might be lost in
fortifying themselves as soon as they had seized possession of Schouwen. Four
hundred mounted troopers were, moreover, stationed in the town of Tholen,
while the little fleet, which had been prepared at Antwerp, lay near that city
ready to cooperate with the land force as soon as they should complete their
enterprise. The Grand Commander now divided the whole force into two parts.
One half was to remain in the boats, under the command of Mondragon; the
other half, accompanied by the two hundred pioneers, were to wade through
the sea from Philipsland to Duiveland and Schouwen. Each soldier of this
detachment was provided with a pair of shoes, two pounds of powder, and
rations for three days in a canvas bag suspended at his neck. The leader of this
expedition was Don Osorio d'Ulloa, an officer distinguished for his experience
and bravery.

On the night selected for the enterprise, that of the 27th September, the moon
was a day old in its fourth quarter, and rose a little before twelve. It was low
water at between four and five in the morning. The Grand Commander, at the
appointed hour of midnight, crossed to Philipsland, and stood on the shore to
watch the setting forth of the little army. He addressed a short harangue to
them, in which he skillfully struck the chords of Spanish chivalry and the
national love of glory, and was answered with loud and enthusiastic cheers.
Don Osorio d’Ulloa then stripped and plunged into the sea immediately after the guides. He was followed by the Spaniards, after whom came the Germans and then the Walloons. The two hundred sappers and miners came next, and Don Gabriel Peralta, with his Spanish company, brought up the rear. It was a wild night. Incessant lightning alternately revealed and obscured the progress of the midnight march through the black waters, as the anxious commander watched the expedition from the shore, but the soldiers were quickly swallowed up in the gloom. As they advanced cautiously, two by two, the daring adventurers found themselves soon nearly up to their necks in the waves, while so narrow was the submerged bank along which they were marching, that a misstep to the right or left was fatal. Luckless individuals repeatedly sank to rise no more. Meantime, as the sickly light of the waning moon came forth at intervals through the stormy clouds, the soldiers could plainly perceive the files of Zealand vessels through which they were to march, and which were anchored as close to the flat as the water would allow. Some had recklessly stranded themselves, in their eagerness to interrupt the passage of the troops, and the artillery played unceasingly from the larger vessels. Discharges of musketry came continually from all, but the fitful lightning rendered the aim difficult and the fire comparatively harmless, while the Spaniards were, moreover, protected, as to a large part of their bodies, by the water in which they were immersed.

At times, they halted for breath, or to engage in fierce skirmishes with their nearest assailants. Standing breast-high in the waves, and surrounded at intervals by total darkness, they were yet able to pour an occasional well-directed volley into the hostile ranks. The Zealanders, however, did not assail them with firearms alone. They transfixed some with their fatal harpoons; they dragged others from the path with boathooks; they beat out the brains of others with heavy flails. Many were the mortal duels thus fought in the darkness, and, as it were, in the bottom of the sea; many were the deeds of audacity which no eye was to mark save those by whom they were achieved. Still, in spite of all impediments and losses, the Spaniards steadily advanced. If other arms proved less available, they were attacked by the fierce taunts and invectives of their often invisible foes, who reviled them as water-dogs, fetching and carrying for a master who despised them; as mercenaries who coined their blood for gold, and were employed by tyrants for the basest uses. If stung by these mocking voices, they turned in the darkness to chastise their unseen tormentors, they were certain to be trampled upon by their comrades, and to be pushed from their narrow pathway into the depths of the sea. Thus many perished.

The night wore on, and the adventurers still fought it out manfully, but very slowly, the main body of Spaniards, Germans, and Walloons, soon after daylight, reached the opposite shore, having sustained considerable losses, but in perfect order. The pioneers were not so fortunate. The tide rose over them before they could effect their passage, and swept nearly every one away. The rear-guard, under Peralta, not surprised, like the pioneers, in the middle of their passage, by the rising tide, but prevented, before it was too late, from
advancing far beyond the shore from which they had departed, were fortunately enabled to retrace their steps. Don Osorio, at the head of the successful adventurers, now effected his landing upon Duiveland. Reposing themselves but for an instant after this unparalleled march through the water of more than six hours, they took a slight refreshment, prayed to the Virgin Mary and to Saint James, and then prepared to meet their new enemies on land. Ten companies of French, Scotch, and English auxiliaries lay in Duiveland, under the command of Charles Van Boisot. Strange to relate, by an inexplicable accident, or by treason, that general was slain by his own soldiers, at the moment when the royal troops landed. The panic created by this event became intense, as the enemy rose suddenly, as it were, out of the depths of the ocean to attack them. They magnified the numbers of their assailants, and fled terror-stricken in every direction. Some swam to the Zealand vessels which lay in the neighborhood; others took refuge in the forts which had been constructed on the island, but these were soon carried by the Spaniards, and the conquest of Duiveland was effected.

The enterprise was not yet completed, but the remainder was less difficult and not nearly so hazardous, for the creek which separated Duiveland from Schouwen was much narrower than the estuary which they had just traversed. It was less than a league in width, but so encumbered by rushes and briers that, although difficult to wade, it was not navigable for vessels of any kind. This part of the expedition was accomplished with equal resolution, so that, after a few hours’ delay, the soldiers stood upon the much-coveted island of Schouwen. Five companies of states’ troops, placed to oppose their landing, fled in the most cowardly manner at the first discharge of the Spanish muskets, and took refuge in the city of Zierickzee, which was soon afterwards beleaguered.

The troops had been disembarked upon Duiveland from the armada, which had made its way to the scene of action, after having received, by signal, information that the expedition through the water had been successful. Brouwershaven, on the northern side of Schouwen, was immediately reduced, but Bommenede resisted till the 25th of October, when it was at last carried by assault, and delivered over to fire and sword. Of the whole population and garrison not twenty were left alive. Siege was then laid to Zierickzee, and Colonel Mondragon was left in charge of the operations. Requesens himself came to Schouwen to give directions concerning this important enterprise. Chiapin Vitelli also came thither in the middle of the winter, and was so much injured by a fall from his litter, while making the tour of the island, that he died on shipboard during his return to Antwerp. This officer had gained his laurels upon more than one occasion, his conduct in the important action near Mons, in which the Huguenot force under Genlis was defeated, having been particularly creditable. He was of a distinguished Umbrian family, and had passed his life in camps, few of the generals who had accompanied Alva to the Netherlands being better known or more odious to the inhabitants. He was equally distinguished for his courage, his cruelty, and his corpulence. The last characteristic was so remarkable that he was almost monstrous in his personal
appearance. His protuberant stomach was always supported in a bandage suspended from his neck, yet in spite of this enormous impediment, he was personally active on the battlefield, and performed more service, not only as a commander but as a subaltern, than many a younger and lighter man. The siege of Zierickzee was protracted till the following June, the city holding out with firmness. Want of funds caused the operations to be conducted with languor, but the same cause prevented the prince from accomplishing its relief. Thus the expedition from Philipsland, the most brilliant military exploit of the whole war, was attended with important results. The communication between Walcheren and the rest of Zealand was interrupted, the province cut in two, a foothold on the ocean, for a brief interval at least, acquired by Spain. The prince was inexpressibly chagrined by these circumstances, and felt that the moment had arrived when all honorable means were to be employed to obtain foreign assistance. The Hollanders and Zealanders had fought the battles of freedom alone hitherto, and had fought them well, but poverty was fast rendering them incapable of sustaining much longer the unequal conflict. Offers of men, whose wages the states were to furnish, were refused, as worse than fruitless. Henry of Navarre, who perhaps deemed it possible to acquire the sovereignty of the provinces by so barren a benefit, was willing to send two or three thousand men, but not at his own expense. The proposition was respectfully declined. The prince and his little country were all alone. "Even if we should not only see ourselves deserted by all the world, but also all the world against us," he said, "we should not cease to defend ourselves even to the last man. Knowing the justice of our cause, we repose entirely in the mercy of God." He determined, however, once more to have recourse to the powerful of the earth, being disposed to test the truth of his celebrated observation, that "there would be no lack of suitors for the bride that he had to bestow." It was necessary, in short, to look to the great question of formally renouncing Philip directly in the face. Hitherto the fiction of allegiance had been preserved, and even by the enemies of the prince it was admitted that it had been retained with no disloyal intent. The time, however, had come when it was necessary to throw off allegiance, provided another could be found strong enough and frank enough to accept the authority which Philip had forfeited. The question was, naturally, between France and England, unless the provinces could effect their re-admission into the body of the Germanic Empire. Already in June the prince had laid the proposition formally before the states, "whether they should not negotiate with the Empire on the subject of their admission, with maintenance of their own constitutions," but it was understood that this plan was not to be carried out, if the protection of the Empire could be obtained under easier conditions. Nothing came of the proposition at that time. The nobles and the deputies of South Holland now voted, in the beginning of the ensuing month, "that it was their duty to abandon the King, as a tyrant who sought to oppress and destroy his subjects; and that it behooved them to seek another protector." This was while the Breda negotiations were still pending, but when their inevitable result was very visible. There was still a reluctance at taking the last and
decisive step in the rebellion, so that the semblance of loyalty was still retained, that ancient scabbard in which the sword might yet one day be sheathed. The proposition was not adopted at the diet. A committee of nine was merely appointed to deliberate with the prince upon the “means of obtaining foreign assistance, without accepting foreign authority, or severing their connection with his Majesty.” The estates were, however, summoned a few months later, by the prince, to deliberate on this important matter at Rotterdam. On the first of October, he then formally proposed either to make terms with their enemy, and that the sooner the better, or else, once for all, to separate entirely from the King of Spain, and to change their sovereign, in order, with the assistance and under protection of another Christian potentate, to maintain the provinces against their enemies. Orange, moreover, expressed the opinion that upon so important a subject it was decidedly incumbent upon them all to take the sense of the city governments. The members for the various municipalities acquiesced in the propriety of this suggestion, and resolved to consult their constituents, while the deputies of the nobility also desired to consult with their whole body. After an adjournment of a few days, the diet again assembled at Delft, and it was then unanimously resolved by the nobles and the cities, “that they would forsake the King and seek foreign assistance; referring the choice to the Prince, who, in regard to the government, was to take the opinion of the estates.” Thus, the great step was taken, by which two little provinces declared themselves independent of their ancient master. That declaration, although taken in the midst of doubt and darkness, was not destined to be canceled, and the germ of a new and powerful commonwealth was planted. So little, however, did these republican fathers foresee their coming republic, that the resolution to renounce one king was combined with a proposition to ask for the authority of another. It was not imagined that those two slender columns, which were all that had yet been raised of the future stately peristyle, would be strong enough to stand alone. The question now arose, to what foreign power application should be made. But little hope was to be entertained from Germany, a state which existed only in name, and France was still in a condition of religious and intestine discord. The attitude of revolt maintained by the Duc d’Alençon seemed to make it difficult and dangerous to enter into negotiations with a country where the civil wars had assumed so complicated a character, that a loyal and useful alliance could hardly be made with any party. The Queen of England, on the other hand, dreaded the wrath of Philip, by which her perpetual dangers from the side of Scotland would be aggravated, while she feared equally the extension of French authority in the Netherlands, by which increase her neighbor would acquire an overshadowing power. She was also ashamed openly to abandon the provinces to their fate, for her realm was supposed to be a bulwark of the Protestant religion. Afraid to affront Philip, afraid to refuse the suit of the Netherlands, afraid to concede an aggrandizement to France, what course was open to the English queen? That which, politically and personally, she loved the best—a course of barren coquetry. This the Prince of Orange foresaw, and although not disposed to
leave a stone unturned in his efforts to find assistance for his country, he on
the whole rather inclined for France. He, however, better than any man, knew
how little cause there was for sanguine expectation from either source.
It was determined, in the name of his Highness and the estates, first to send a
mission to England, but there had already been negotiations this year of an
unpleasant character with that power. At the request of the Spanish envoy, the
foremost Netherland rebels, in number about fifty, including by name the
Prince of Orange, the Counts of Berg and Culemburg, with Saint Aldegonde,
Boisot, Junius, and others, had been formally forbidden by Queen Elizabeth to
enter her realm. The prince had, in consequence, sent Aldegonde and Junius
on a secret mission to France, and the queen, jealous and anxious, had
thereupon sent Daniel Rogers secretly to the prince. At the same time she had
sent an envoy to the Grand Commander, counseling conciliatory measures, and
promising to send a special mission to Spain with the offer of her mediation,
but it was suspected by those most in the confidence of the Spanish
government at Brussels, that there was a great deal of deception in these
proceedings. A truce for six months having now been established between the
Duc d’Alençon and his brother, it was supposed that an alliance between
France and England, and perhaps between Alençon and Elizabeth, was on the
carpet, and that a kingdom of the Netherlands was to be the wedding present
of the bride to her husband. These fantasies derived additional color from the
fact that, while the queen was expressing the most amicable intentions
towards Spain, and the greatest jealousy of France, the English residents at
Antwerp and other cities of the Netherlands had received private instructions
to sell out their property as fast as possible, and to retire from the country. On
the whole, there was little prospect either of a final answer, or of substantial
assistance from the queen.
The envoys to England were Advocate Buis and Doctor Francis Maalzon,
nominated by the estates, and Saint Aldegonde, chief of the mission, appointed
by the prince. They arrived in England at Christmas-tide. Having represented to
the queen the result of the Breda negotiations, they stated that the prince and
the estates, in despair of a secure peace, had addressed themselves to her as
an upright protector of the Faith, and as a princess descended from the blood
of Holland. This allusion to the intermarriage of Edward III of England with
Philippa, daughter of Count William III, of Hainault and Holland, would not, it
was hoped, be in vain. They furthermore offered to her Majesty, in case she
were willing powerfully to assist the states, the sovereignty over Holland and
Zealand, under certain conditions.
The queen listened graciously to the envoys, and appointed commissioners to
treat with them on the subject. Meantime, Requesens sent Champagny to
England, to counteract the effect of this embassy of the estates, and to beg
the queen to give no heed to the prayers of the rebels, to enter into no
negotiations with them, and to expel them at once from her kingdom.
The queen gravely assured Champagny "that the envoys were no rebels, but
faithful subjects of his Majesty." There was certainly some effrontery in such a
statement, considering the solemn offer which had just been made by the
envoys. If to renounce allegiance to Philip and to propose the sovereignty to Elizabeth did not constitute rebellion, it would be difficult to define or to discover rebellion anywhere. The statement was as honest, however, as the diplomatic grimace with which Champagny had reminded Elizabeth of the ancient and unbroken friendship which had always existed between herself and his Catholic Majesty. The attempt of Philip to procure her dethronement and assassination but a few years before was, no doubt, thought too trifling a circumstance to have for a moment interrupted those harmonious relations. Nothing came of the negotiations on either side. The queen coquetted, as was her custom. She could not accept the offer of the estates; she could not say them nay. She would not offend Philip; she would not abandon the provinces; she would therefore negotiate—thus there was an infinite deal of diplomatic nothing spun and unraveled, but the result was both to abandon the provinces and to offend Philip.

In the first answer given by her commissioners to the states’ envoys, it was declared, "that her Majesty considered it too expensive to assume the protection of both provinces." She was willing to protect them in name, but she should confer the advantage exclusively on Walcheren in reality. The defense of Holland must be maintained at the expense of the Prince and the estates. This was certainly not munificent, and the envoys insisted upon more ample and liberal terms. The queen declined, however, committing herself beyond this niggardly and inadmissible offer. The states were not willing to exchange the sovereignty over their country for so paltry a concession. The queen declared herself indisposed to go further, at least before consulting parliament. The commissioners waited for the assembling of parliament. She then refused to lay the matter before that body, and forbade the Hollanders taking any steps for that purpose. It was evident that she was disposed to trifle with the provinces, and had no idea of encountering the open hostility of Philip. The envoys accordingly begged for their passports. These were granted in April 1576, with the assurance on the part of her Majesty that "she would think more of the offer made to her after she had done all in her power to bring about an arrangement between the provinces and Philip."

After the result of the negotiations of Breda, it is difficult to imagine what method she was likely to devise for accomplishing such a purpose. The king was not more disposed than during the preceding summer to grant liberty of religion, nor were the Hollanders more ready than they had been before to renounce either their faith or their fatherland. The envoys, on parting, made a strenuous effort to negotiate a loan, but the frugal queen considered the proposition quite inadmissible. She granted them liberty to purchase arms and ammunition, and to levy a few soldiers with their own money, and this was accordingly done to a limited extent. As it was not difficult to hire soldiers or to buy gunpowder anywhere, in that warlike age, provided the money were ready, the states had hardly reason to consider themselves under deep obligation for this concession. Yet this was the whole result of the embassy. Plenty of fine words had been bestowed, which might or might not have meaning, according to the turns taken by coming events. Besides these cheap
and empty civilities, they received permission to defend Holland at their own expense, with the privilege of surrendering its sovereignty, if they liked, to Queen Elizabeth—and this was all.

On the 19th of April, the envoys returned to their country, and laid before the estates the meager result of their negotiations. Very soon afterwards, upon an informal suggestion from Henry III and the Queen Mother, that a more favorable result might be expected, if the same applications were made to the Duc d’Alençon which had been received in so unsatisfactory a manner by Elizabeth, commissioners were appointed to France. It proved impossible, however, at that juncture, to proceed with the negotiations, in consequence of the troubles occasioned by the attitude of the duke. The provinces were still, even as they had been from the beginning, entirely alone.

Requesens was more than ever straitened for funds, wringing, with increasing difficulty, a slender subsidy, from time to time, out of the reluctant estates of Brabant, Flanders, and the other obedient provinces. While he was still at Duiveland, the estates-general sent him a long remonstrance against the misconduct of the soldiery, in answer to his demand for supplies. "Oh, these estates! these estates!" cried the Grand Commander, on receiving such vehement reproaches instead of his money, "may the Lord deliver me from these estates!" Meantime, the important siege of Zierickzee continued, and it was evident that the city must fall. There was no money at the disposal of the prince. Count John, who was seriously embarrassed by reason of the great obligations in money which he, with the rest of his family, had incurred on behalf of the estates, had recently made application to the prince for his influence towards procuring him relief. He had forwarded an account of the great advances made by himself and his brethren in money, plate, furniture, and endorsements of various kinds, for which a partial reimbursement was almost indispensable to save him from serious difficulties. The prince, however, unable to procure him any assistance, had been obliged once more to entreat him to display the generosity and the self-denial which the country had never found wanting at his hands or at those of his kindred. The appeal had not been in vain, but the count was obviously not in a condition to effect anything more at that moment to relieve the financial distress of the states. The exchequer was crippled. Holland and Zealand were cut in twain by the occupation of Schouwen and the approaching fall of its capital. Germany, England, France, all refused to stretch out their hands to save the heroic but exhaustless little provinces. It was at this moment that a desperate but sublime resolution took possession of the prince’s mind. There seemed but one way left to exclude the Spaniards forever from Holland and Zealand, and to rescue the inhabitants from impending ruin. The prince had long brooded over the scheme, and the hour seemed to have struck for its fulfillment. His project was to collect all the vessels, of every description, which could be obtained throughout the Netherlands. The whole population of the two provinces, men, women, and children, together with all the moveable property of the country, were then to be embarked on board this numerous fleet, and to seek a new home beyond the seas. The windmills were then to be burned, the dykes
pierced, the sluices opened in every direction, and the country restored forever to the ocean, from which it had sprung.

It is difficult to say whether the resolution, if Providence had permitted its fulfillment, would have been, on the whole, better or worse for humanity and civilization. The ships which would have borne the heroic prince and his fortunes might have taken the direction of the newly-discovered western hemisphere. A religious colony, planted by a commercial and liberty-loving race, in a virgin soil, and directed by patrician but self-denying hands, might have preceded, by half a century, the colony which a kindred race, impelled by similar motives, and under somewhat similar circumstances and conditions, was destined to plant upon the stern shores of New England. Had they directed their course to the warm and fragrant islands of the East, an independent Christian commonwealth might have arisen among those prolific regions, superior in importance to any subsequent colony of Holland, cramped from its birth by absolute subjection to a far distant metropolis.

The unexpected death of Requesens suddenly dispelled these schemes. The siege of Zierickzee had occupied much of the governor’s attention, but he had recently written to his sovereign that its reduction was now certain. He had added an urgent request for money, with a sufficient supply of which he assured Philip that he should be able to bring the war to an immediate conclusion. While waiting for these supplies, he had, contrary to all law or reason, made an unsuccessful attempt to conquer the post of Embden, in Germany. A mutiny had, at about the same time, broken out among his troops in Harlem, and he had furnished the citizens with arms to defend themselves, giving free permission to use them against the insurgent troops. By this means the mutiny had been quelled, but a dangerous precedent established. Anxiety concerning this rebellion is supposed to have hastened the Grand Commander’s death. A violent fever seized him on the first, and terminated his existence on the fifth of March, in the fifty-first year of his life.

It is not necessary to review elaborately his career, the chief incidents of which have been sufficiently described. Requesens was a man of high position by birth and office, but a thoroughly commonplace personage. His talents either for war or for civil employments were not above mediocrity. His friends disputed whether he were greater in the field or in the council, but it is certain that he was great in neither. His bigotry was equal to that of Alva, but it was impossible to rival the duke in cruelty. Moreover, the condition of the country, after seven wars of torture under his predecessor, made it difficult for him, at the time of his arrival to imitate the severity which had made the name of Alva infamous. The Blood-Council had been retained throughout his administration, but its occupation was gone, for want of food for its ferocity. The obedient provinces had been purged of Protestants, while crippled, too, by confiscation, they offered no field for further extortion. From Holland and Zealand, whence Catholicism had been nearly excluded, the King of Spain was nearly excluded also. The Blood-Council, which, if set up in that country, would have executed every living creature of its population, could only gaze from a distance at those who would have been its victims. Requesens had been previously distinguished
in two fields of action—the Granada massacres and the carnage of Lepanto. Upon both occasions he had been the military tutor of Don John of Austria, by whom he was soon to be succeeded in the government of the Netherlands. To the imperial bastard had been assigned the preeminence, but it was thought that the Grand Commander had been entitled to a more than equal share of the glory. We have seen how much additional reputation was acquired by Requesens in the provinces. The expedition against Duiveland and Schouwen, was, on the whole, the most brilliant feat of arms during the war, and its success reflects an undying luster on the hardihood and discipline of the Spanish, German, and Walloon soldiery. As an act of individual audacity in a bad cause, it has rarely been equaled. It can hardly be said, however, that the Grand Commander was entitled to any large measure of praise for the success of the expedition. The plan was laid by Zealand traitors. It was carried into execution by the devotion of the Spanish, Walloon, and German troops, while Requesens was only a spectator of the transaction. His sudden death arrested, for a moment, the ebb-tide in the affairs of the Netherlands, which was fast leaving the country bare and desolate, and was followed by a train of unforeseen transactions, which it is now our duty to describe.

Part Four
Administration of the Grand Commander
Chapters 4-5

Chapter 4 The Continued Vigilance of Orange and the Outbreak of Mutiny in the Spanish Troops
Chapter 5 The Congress of Ghent and the “Spanish Fury”
CHAPTER 4

The Continued Vigilance of Orange and the Outbreak of Mutiny in the Spanish Troops

The death of Requesens, notwithstanding his four days’ illness, occurred so suddenly that he had not had time to appoint his successor. Had he exercised this privilege, which his patent conferred upon him, it was supposed that he would have nominated Count Mansfeld to exercise the functions of governor-general, until the king should otherwise ordain.

In the absence of any definite arrangement, the Council of State, according to a right which that body claimed from custom, assumed the reins of government. Of the old board, there were none left but the Duke of Aerschot, Count Berlaymont, and Viglius. To these were soon added, however, by royal diploma, the Spaniard, Jerome de Roda, and the Netherlanders, Assonleville, Baron Rassenghiem and Arnold Sasbout. Thus, all the members, save one, of what had now become the executive body, were natives of the country. Roda was accordingly looked askance upon by his colleagues. He was regarded by Viglius as a man who desired to repeat the part which had been played by Juan Vargas in the Blood Council, while the other members, although stanch Catholics, were all of them well-disposed to vindicate the claim of Netherland nobles to a share in the government of the Netherlands.

For a time, therefore, the transfer of authority seemed to have been smoothly accomplished. The Council of State conducted the administration of the country. Peter Ernest Mansfeld was entrusted with the supreme military command, including the government of Brussels, and the Spanish commanders, although dissatisfied that any but a Spaniard should be thus honored, were for a time quiescent. When the news reached Madrid, Philip was extremely disconcerted. The death of Requesens excited his indignation. He was angry with him, not for dying, but for dying at so very inconvenient a moment. He had not yet fully decided either upon his successor, or upon the policy to be enforced by his successor. There were several candidates for the vacant post; there was a variety of opinions in the cabinet as to the course of conduct to be adopted. In the impossibility of instantly making up his mind upon this unexpected emergency, Philip fell, as it were, into a long reverie, than which nothing could be more inopportune. With a country in a state of revolution and exasperation, the trance, which now seemed to come over the government, was like to be followed by deadly effects. The stationary policy, which the death of Requesens had occasioned, was allowed to prolong itself indefinitely, and almost for the first time in his life, Joachim Hopper was really consulted
about the affairs of that department over which he imagined himself, and was
generally supposed by others, to preside at Madrid. The creature of Viglius,
having all the subserviency, with none of the acuteness of his patron, he had
been long employed as chief of the Netherland bureau, while kept in profound
ignorance of the affairs which were transacted in his office. He was a privy
councillor, whose counsels were never heeded, a confidential servant in whom
the king reposed confidence, only on the ground that no man could reveal
secrets which he did not know. This deportment of the king’s showed that he
had accurately measured the man, for Hopper was hardly competent for the
place of a chief clerk. He was unable to write clearly in any language, because
incapable of a fully developed thought upon any subject. It may be supposed
that nothing but an abortive policy, therefore, would be produced upon the
occasion thus suddenly offered. "'Tis a devout man, that poor Master Hopper," said Granvelle, "but rather fitted for platonic researches than for affairs of
state."

It was a proof of this incompetence, that now, when really called upon for
advice in an emergency, he should recommend a continuance of the interim.
Certainly nothing worse could be devised. Granvelle recommended a
reappointment of the Duchess Margaret. Others suggested Duke Eric of
Brunswick, or an archduke of the Austrian house, although the opinion held by
most of the influential councillors was in favor of Don John of Austria. In the
interests of Philip and his despotism, nothing, at any rate, could be more fatal
than delay.

In the condition of affairs which then existed, the worst or feeblest governor
would have been better than none at all. To leave a vacancy was to play
directly into the hands of Orange, for it was impossible that so skilful an
adversary should not at once perceive the fault, and profit by it to the utmost.
It was strange that Philip did not see the danger of inactivity at such a crisis.
Assuredly, indolence was never his vice, but on this occasion indecision did the
work of indolence.

Unwittingly, the despot was assisting the efforts of the liberator. Viglius saw
the position of matters with his customary keenness, and wondered at the
blindness of Hopper and Philip. At the last gasp of a life, which neither learning
nor the accumulation of worldly prizes and worldly pelf could redeem from
intrinsic baseness, the sagacious but not venerable old man saw that a chasm
was daily widening, in which the religion and the despotism which he loved
might soon be hopelessly swallowed. "The Prince of Orange and his Beggars do
not sleep," he cried, almost in anguish, "nor will they be quiet till they have
made use of this interregnum to do us some immense grievance."

Certainly the Prince of Orange did not sleep upon this nor any other great
occasion of his life. In his own vigorous language, used to stimulate his friends
in various parts of the country, he seized the swift occasion by the forelock. He
opened a fresh correspondence with many leading gentlemen in Brussels and other places in the Netherlands—persons of influence, who now, for the first time, showed a disposition to side with their country against its tyrants. Hitherto the land had been divided into two very unequal portions. Holland and Zealand were devoted to the prince; their whole population, with hardly an individual exception, converted to the Reformed religion. The other fifteen provinces were, on the whole, loyal to the king, while the old religion had, of late years, taken root so rapidly again, that perhaps a moiety of their population might be considered as Catholic. At the same time, the reign of terror under Alva, the paler, but not less distinct tyranny of Requesens, and the intolerable excesses of the foreign soldiery, by which the government of foreigners was supported, had at last maddened all the inhabitants of the seventeen provinces. Notwithstanding, therefore, the fatal difference of religious opinion, they were all drawn into closer relations with each other, to regain their ancient privileges, and to expel the detested foreigners from the soil, being objects common to all. The provinces were united in one great hatred and one great hope.

The Hollanders and Zealanders, under their heroic leader, had well-nigh accomplished both tasks, so far as those little provinces were concerned. Never had a contest, however, seemed more hopeless at its commencement. Cast a glance at the map. Look at Holland, not the Republic, with its sister provinces beyond the Zuyder Zee, but Holland only, with the Zealand archipelago. Look at that narrow tongue of half-submerged earth. Who could suppose that upon that slender sand-bank, one hundred and twenty miles in length, and varying in breadth from four miles to forty, one man, backed by the population of a handful of cities, could do battle nine years long with the master of two worlds, the "Dominator of Asia, Africa, and America"—the despot of the fairest realms of Europe—and conquer him at last. Nor was William even entirely master of that narrow shoal where clung the survivors of a great national shipwreck. North and South Holland were cut in two by the loss of Harlem, while the enemy was in possession of the natural capital of the little country, Amsterdam. The Prince affirmed that the cause had suffered more from the disloyalty of Amsterdam than from all the efforts of the enemy.

Moreover, the country was in a most desolate condition. It was almost literally a sinking ship. The destruction of the bulwarks against the ocean had been so extensive, in consequence of the voluntary inundations which have been described in previous pages and by reason of the general neglect which more vital occupations had necessitated, that an enormous outlay, both of labor and money, was now indispensable to save the physical existence of the country. The labor and the money, notwithstanding the crippled and impoverished condition of the nation, were, however, freely contributed; a wonderful example of energy and patient heroism was again exhibited. The dykes which had been swept away in every direction were renewed at a vast expense. Moreover, the country, in the course of recent events, had become almost
swept bare of its cattle, and it was necessary to pass a law forbidding, for a considerable period, the slaughter of any animals, "oxen, cows, calves, sheep, or poultry." It was, unfortunately, not possible to provide by law against that extermination of the human population which had been decreed by Philip and the pope.

Such was the physical and moral condition of the provinces of Holland and Zealand. The political constitution of both assumed, at this epoch, a somewhat altered aspect. The union between the two states, effected in June 1575, required improvement. The administration of justice, the conflicts of laws, and more particularly the levying of monies and troops in equitable proportions, had not been adjusted with perfect smoothness. The estates of the two provinces, assembled in congress at Delft, concluded, therefore, a new act of union, which was duly signed upon April 25, 1576. Those estates, consisting of the knights and nobles of Holland, with the deputies from the cities and countships of Holland and Zealand, had been duly summoned by the Prince of Orange. They as fairly included all the political capacities, and furnished as copious a representation of the national will, as could be expected, for it is apparent upon every page of his history, that the Prince, upon all occasions, chose to refer his policy to the approval and confirmation of as large a portion of the people as any man in those days considered capable or desirous of exercising political functions.

The new union consisted of eighteen articles. It was established that deputies from all the estates should meet, when summoned by the Prince of Orange or otherwise, on penalty of fine, and at the risk of measures binding upon them being passed by the rest of the Congress. Freshly arising causes of litigation were to be referred to the Prince. Free intercourse and traffic through the united provinces was guaranteed. The confederates were mutually to assist each other in preventing all injustice, wrong, or violence, even towards an enemy. The authority of law and the pure administration of justice were mutually promised by the contracting states. The common expenses were to be apportioned among the different provinces, "as if they were all included in the republic of a single city." Nine commissioners, appointed by the Prince on nomination by the estates, were to sit permanently, as his advisers, and as assessors and collectors of the taxes. The tenure of the union was from six months to six months, with six weeks’ notice.

The framers of this compact having thus defined the general outlines of the confederacy, declared that the government thus constituted, should be placed under a single head. They accordingly conferred supreme authority on the Prince, refining his powers in eighteen articles. He was declared chief commander by land and sea. He was to appoint all officers, from generals to subalterns, and to pay them at his discretion. The whole protection of the land was devolved upon him. He was to send garrisons or troops into every city and village at his pleasure, without advice or consent of the estates, magistrates of
the cities, or any other persons whatsoever. He was, in behalf of the king as Count of Holland and Zealand, to cause justice to be administered by the supreme court. In the same capacity he was to provide for vacancies in all political and judicial offices of importance, choosing, with the advice of the estates, one officer for each vacant post out of three candidates nominated to him by that body. He was to appoint and renew, at the usual times, the magistracies in the cities, according to the ancient constitutions. He was to make changes in those boards, if necessary, at unusual times, with consent of the majority of those representing the great council and corpus of the said cities. He was to uphold the authority and preeminence of all civil functionaries, and to prevent governors and military officers from taking any cognizance of political or judicial affairs. With regard to religion, he was to maintain the practice of the Reformed Evangelical religion, and to cause to surcease the exercise of all other religions contrary to the Gospel. He was, however, not to permit that inquisition should be made into any man’s belief or conscience, or that any man by cause thereof should suffer trouble, injury, or hindrance.

The league thus concluded was a confederation between a group of virtually independent little republics. Each municipality, was, as it were, a little sovereign, sending envoys to a congress to vote and to sign as plenipotentiaries. The vote of each city was, therefore, indivisible, and it mattered little, practically, whether there were one deputy or several. The nobles represented not only their own order, but were supposed to act also in behalf of the rural population. On the whole, there was a tolerably fair representation of the whole ration. The people were well and worthily represented in the government of each city, and therefore equally so in the assembly of the estates. It was not till later that the corporations, by the extinction of the popular element, and by the usurpation of the right of self-election, were thoroughly stiffened into fictitious personages which never died, and which were never thoroughly alive.

At this epoch the provincial liberties, so far as they could maintain themselves against Spanish despotism, were practical and substantial. The government was a representative one, in which all those who had the inclination possessed, in one mode or another, a voice. Although the various members of the confederacy were locally and practically republics or self-governed little commonwealths, the general government which they established was, in form, monarchical. The powers conferred upon Orange constituted him a sovereign ad interim, for while the authority of the Spanish monarch remained suspended, the Prince was invested, not only with the whole executive and appointing power, but even with a very large share in the legislative functions of the state.

The whole system was rather practical than theoretical, without any accurate distribution of political powers. In living, energetic communities, where the
blood of the body politic circulates swiftly, there is an inevitable tendency of
the different organs to sympathize and commingle more closely than à priori
philosophy would allow. It is usually more desirable than practicable to keep
the executive, legislative, and judicial departments entirely independent of
each other.

Certainly, the Prince of Orange did not at that moment indulge in speculations
concerning the nature and origin of government. The Congress of Delft had just
clothed him with almost regal authority. In his hands were the powers of war
and peace, joint control of the magistracies and courts of justice, absolute
supremacy over the army and the fleet. It is true that these attributes had
been conferred upon him ad interim, but it depended only upon himself to
make the sovereignty personal and permanent. He was so thoroughly absorbed
in his work, however, that he did not even see the diadem which he put aside.
It was small matter to him whether they called him stadholder or guardian,
prince or king. He was the father of his country and its defender. The people,
from highest to lowest, called him "Father William," and the title was enough
for him. The question with him was, not what men should call him, but how he
should best accomplish his task.

So little was he inspired by the sentiment of self-elevation, that he was
anxiously seeking for a fitting person—strong, wise, and willing enough—to
exercise the sovereignty which was thrust upon himself, but which he desired
to exchange against an increased power to be actively useful to his country. To
expel the foreign oppressor, to strangle the Inquisition, to maintain the ancient
liberties of the nation—here was labor enough for his own hands. The vulgar
thought of carving a throne out of the misfortunes of his country seems not to
have entered his mind. Upon one point, however, the prince had been
peremptory. He would have no persecution of the opposite creed. He was
requested to suppress the Catholic religion, in terms. As we have seen, he
caused the expression to be exchanged for the words, "religion at variance with
the Gospel." He resolutely stood out against all meddling with men’s
consciences, or inquiring into their thoughts. While smiting the Spanish
Inquisition into the dust, he would have no Calvinist inquisition set up in its
place. Earnestly a convert to the Reformed religion, but hating and denouncing
only what was corrupt in the ancient Church, he would not force men, with fire
and sword, to travel to heaven upon his own road. Thought should be toll free.
Neither monk nor minister should burn, drown, or hang his fellow creatures,
when argument or expostulation failed to redeem them from error. It was no
small virtue, in that age, to rise to such a height. We know what Calvinists,
Zwinglians, Lutherans, have done in the Netherlands, in Germany, in
Switzerland, and almost a century later in New England. It is, therefore, with
increased veneration that we regard this large and truly catholic mind. His
tolerance proceeded from no indifference. No man can read his private
writings, or form a thorough acquaintance with his interior life, without
recognizing him as a deeply religious man. He had faith unaltering in God. He
had also faith in man and love for his brethren. It was no wonder that in that age of religious bigotry he should have been assaulted on both sides. While the pope excommunicated him as a heretic, and the king set a price upon his head as a rebel, the fanatics of the new religion denounced him as a godless man. Peter Dathenus, the unfrocked monk of Poperingen, shrieked out in his pulpit that the "Prince of Orange cared nothing either for God or for religion."

The death of Requesens had offered the first opening through which the watchful prince could hope to inflict a wound in the vital part of Spanish authority in the Netherlands. The languor of Philip and the procrastinating counsel of the dull Hopper unexpectedly widened the opening. On the 24th of March, letters were written by his Majesty to the states-general, to the provincial estates, and to the courts of justice, instructing them that, until further orders, they were all to obey the Council of State. The king was confident that all would do their utmost to assist that body in securing the holy Catholic Faith and the implicit obedience of the country to its sovereign. He would, in the meantime, occupy himself with the selection of a new governor-general, who should be of his family and blood. This uncertain and perilous condition of things was watched with painful interest in neighboring countries.

The fate of all nations was more or less involved in the development of the great religious contest now waging in the Netherlands. England and France watched each other’s movements in the direction of the provinces with intense jealousy. The Protestant queen was the natural ally of the struggling Reformers, but her despotic sentiments were averse to the fostering of rebellion against the Lord’s anointed. The thrifty queen looked with alarm at the prospect of large subsidies which would undoubtedly be demanded of her. The jealous queen could as ill brook the presence of the French in the Netherlands as that of the Spaniards whom they were to expel. She therefore embarrassed, as usual, the operations of the prince by a course of stale political coquetry. She wrote to him, on the 18th of March, soon after the news of the Grand Commander’s death, saying that she could not yet accept the offer which had been made to her, to take the provinces of Holland and Zealand under her safe keeping, to assume, as countess, the sovereignty over them, and to protect the inhabitants against the alleged tyranny of the King of Spain. She was unwilling to do so until she had made every effort to reconcile them with that sovereign. Before the death of Requesens she had been intending to send him an envoy, proposing a truce, for the purpose of negotiation. This purpose she still retained. She should send commissioners to the Council of State and to the new governor, when he should arrive. She should also send a special envoy to the King of Spain. She doubted not that the king would take her advice, when he heard her speak in such straightforward language. In the meantime, she hoped that they would negotiate with no other powers.
This was not very satisfactory. The queen rejected the offers to herself, but begged that they might, by no means, be made to her rivals. The expressed intention of softening the heart of Philip by the use of straightforward language seemed but a sorry sarcasm. It was hardly worth while to wait long for so improbable a result. Thus much for England at that juncture. Not inimical, certainly; but over-cautious, ungenerous, teasing, and perplexing, was the policy of the Maiden Queen. With regard to France, events there seemed to favor the hopes of Orange. On the 14th of May, the "Peace of Monsieur," the treaty by which so ample but so short-lived a triumph was achieved by the Huguenots, was signed at Paris. Everything was conceded, but nothing was secured. Rights of worship, rights of office, political and civil, religious enfranchisement, were recovered, but not guaranteed. It seemed scarcely possible that the king could be in earnest then, even if a Medicean Valois could ever be otherwise than treacherous. It was almost, certain, therefore, that a reaction would take place; but it is easier for us, three centuries after the event, to mark the precise moment of reaction, than it was for the most far-seeing contemporary to foretell how soon it would occur. In the meantime, it was the prince’s cue to make use of this sunshine while it lasted. Already, so soon as the union of the 25th of April had been concluded between Holland and Zealand, he had forced the estates to open negotiations with France. The provinces, although desirous to confer sovereignty upon him, were indisposed to renounce their old allegiance to their king in order to place it at the disposal of a foreigner. Nevertheless, a resolution, at the reiterated demands of Orange, was passed by the estates, to proceed to the change of master, and, for that purpose, to treat with the King of France, his brother, or any other foreign potentate, who would receive these provinces of Holland and Zealand under his government and protection. Negotiations were accordingly opened with the Duke of Anjou, the dilettante leader of the Huguenots at that remarkable juncture. It was a pity that no better champion could be looked for among the anointed of the earth than the false, fickle, foolish Alençon, whose career, everywhere contemptible, was nowhere so flagitious as in the Netherlands. By the fourteenth article of the Peace of Paris, the prince was reinstated and secured in his principality of Orange, and his other possessions in France. The best feeling, for the time being, was manifested between the French court and the Reformation.

Thus much for England and France. As for Germany, the prospects of the Netherlands were not flattering. The Reforming spirit had grown languid, from various causes. The self-seeking motives of many Protestant princes had disgusted the nobles. Was that the object of the bloody wars of religion, that a few potentates should be enabled to enrich themselves by confiscating the broad lands and accumulated treasures of the Church? Had the creed of Luther been embraced only for such unworthy ends? These suspicions chilled the ardor of thousands, particularly among the greater ones of the land. Moreover, the discord among the Reformers themselves waxed daily, and became more and more mischievous. Neither the people nor their leaders could learn that, not a
new doctrine, but a wise toleration for all Christian doctrines was wanted. Of new doctrines there was no lack. Lutherans, Calvinists, Flaccianists, Majorists, Adiaphorists, Brantianists, Ubiquitists, swarmed and contended pell-mell. In this there would have been small harm, if the Reformers had known what reformation meant. But they could not invent or imagine toleration. All claimed the privilege of persecuting. There were sagacious and honest men among the great ones of the country, but they were but few. Wise William of Hesse strove hard to effect a concordia among the jarring sects; Count John of Nassau, though a passionate Calvinist, did no less; while the Elector of Saxony, on the other hand, raging and roaring like a bull of Bashan, was for sacrificing the interest of millions on the altar of his personal spite. Cursed was his tribe if he forgave the prince. He had done what he could at the Diet of Ratisbon to exclude all Calvinists from a participation in the religious peace of Germany, and he redoubled his efforts to prevent the extension of any benefits to the Calvinists of the Netherlands. These determinations had remained constant and intense.

On the whole, the political appearance of Germany was as menacing as that of France seemed for a time favorable to the schemes of Orange. The quarrels of the princes, and the daily widening schism between Lutherans and Calvinists, seemed to bode little good to the cause of religious freedom. The potentates were perplexed and at variance, the nobles lukewarm and discontented. Among the people, although subdivided into hostile factions, there was more life. Here, at least, were heartiness of love and hate, enthusiastic conviction, earnestness and agitation. "The true religion," wrote Count John, "is spreading daily among the common men. Among the powerful, who think themselves highly learned, and who sit in roses, it grows, alas, little. Here and there a Nicodemus or two may be found, but things will hardly go better here than in France or the Netherlands."

Thus, then, stood affairs in the neighboring countries. The prospect was black in Germany, more encouraging in France, dubious, or worse, in England. More work, more anxiety, more desperate struggles than ever, devolved upon the prince. Secretary Brunynck wrote that his illustrious chief was tolerably well in health, but so loaded with affairs, sorrows, and travails, that, from morning till night, he had scarcely leisure to breathe. Besides his multitudinous correspondence with the public bodies, whose labors he habitually directed; with the various estates of the provinces, which he was gradually molding into an organized and general resistance to the Spanish power; with public envoys and with secret agents to foreign cabinets, all of whom received their instructions from him alone; with individuals of eminence and influence, whom he was eloquently urging to abandon their hostile position to their fatherland, and to assist him in the great work which he was doing; besides these numerous avocations, he was actively and anxiously engaged during the spring of 1576, with the attempt to relieve the city of Zierickzee.
That important place, the capital of Schouwen, and the key to half Zealand, had remained closely invested since the memorable expedition to Duiveland. The prince had passed much of his time in the neighborhood, during the month of May, in order to attend personally to the contemplated relief, and to correspond daily with the beleaguered garrison. At last, on the 25th of May, a vigorous effort was made to throw in succor by sea. The brave Admiral Boisot, hero of the memorable relief of Leyden, had charge of the expedition. Mondragon had surrounded the shallow harbor with hulks and chains, and with a loose submerged dyke of piles and rubbish. Against this obstacle Boisot drove his ship, the "Red Lion," with his customary audacity, but did not succeed in cutting it through. His vessel, the largest of the fleet, became entangled; he was, at the same time, attacked from a distance by the besiegers. The tide ebbed and left his ship aground, while the other vessels had been beaten back by the enemy. Night approached, and there was no possibility of accomplishing the enterprise. His ship was hopelessly stranded. With the morning’s sun his captivity was certain. Rather than fall into the hands of his enemy, he sprang into the sea, followed by three hundred of his companions, some of whom were fortunate enough to effect their escape. The gallant admiral swam a long time, sustained by a broken spar. Night and darkness came on before assistance could be rendered, and he perished. Thus died Louis Boisot, one of the most enterprising of the early champions of Netherland freedom—one of the bravest precursors of that race of heroes, the commanders of the Holland navy. The prince deplored his loss deeply as that of a “valiant gentleman, and one well affectioned to the common cause.” His brother, Charles Boisot, as will be remembered, had perished by treachery at the first landing of the Spanish troops, after their perilous passage from Duiveland. Thus both the brethren had laid down their lives for their country, on this its outer barrier, and in the hour of its utmost need. The fall of the beleaguered town could no longer be deferred. The Spaniards were, at last, to receive the prize of that romantic valor which had led them across the bottom of the sea to attack the city. Nearly nine months had, however, elapsed since that achievement; and the Grand Commander, by whose orders it had been undertaken, had been four months in his grave. He was permitted to see neither the long-delayed success which crowned the enterprise, nor the procession of disasters and crimes which were to mark it as a most fatal success.

On June 21, 1576, Zierickzee, instructed by the Prince of Orange to accept honorable terms, if offered, agreed to surrender. Mondragon, whose soldiers were in a state of suffering, and ready to break out in mutiny, was but too happy to grant an honorable capitulation. The garrison were allowed to go out with their arms and personal baggage. The citizens were permitted to retain or resume their privileges and charters, on payment of 200,000 guldens. Of sack ing and burning there was, on this occasion, fortunately, no question; but the first half of the commutation money was to be paid in cash. There was but little money in the impoverished little town, but mint-masters were appointed by the magistrates to take their seats at once in the Hôtel de Ville. The citizens
brought their spoons and silver dishes, one after another, which were melted and coined into dollars and half-dollars, until the payment was satisfactorily adjusted. Thus fell Zierickzee, to the deep regret of the Prince. "Had we received the least succor in the world from any side," he wrote, "the poor city should never have fallen. I could get nothing from France or England, with all my efforts. Nevertheless, we do not lose courage, but hope that, although abandoned by all the world, the Lord God will extend His right hand over us."

The enemies were not destined to go farther. From their own hand now came the blow which was to expel them from the soil which they had so long polluted. No sooner was Zierickzee captured, than a mutiny broke forth among several companies of Spaniards and Walloons, belonging to the army in Schouwen. A large number of the most influential officers had gone to Brussels, to make arrangements, if possible, for the payment of the troops. In their absence there was more scope for the arguments of the leading mutineers—arguments assuredly, not entirely destitute of justice or logical precision. If ever laborers were worthy of their hire, certainly it was the Spanish soldiery. Had they not done the work of demons for nine years long? Could Philip or Alva have found in the wide world men to execute their decrees with more unhesitating docility, with more sympathizing eagerness? What obstacle had ever given them pause in their career of duty? What element had they not braved? Had not they fought within the bowels of the earth, beneath the depths of the sea, within blazing cities, and upon fields of ice? Where was the work which had been too dark and bloody for their performance? Had they not slaughtered unarmed human beings by townfulls, at the word of command? Had they not eaten the flesh, and drank the hearts’ blood of their enemies? Had they not stained the house of God with wholesale massacre? What altar and what hearthstone had they not profaned? What fatigue, what danger, what crime, had ever checked them for a moment? And for all this obedience, labor, and bloodshed, were they not even to be paid such wages as the commonest clown, who only tore the earth at home, received? Did Philip believe that a few thousand Spaniards were to execute his sentence of death against three millions of Netherlanders, and be cheated of their pay at last?

It was in vain that arguments and expostulations were addressed to soldiers who were suffering from want, and maddened by injustice. They determined to take their cause into their own hand, as they had often done before. By the 15th of July, the mutiny was general on the isle of Schouwen. Promises were freely offered, both of pay and pardon; appeals were made to their old sense of honor and loyalty; but they had had enough of promises, of honor, and of work. What they wanted now were shoes and jerkins, bread and meat, and money. Money they would have, and that at once. The King of Spain was their debtor. The Netherlands belonged to the King of Spain. They would therefore levy on the Netherlands for payment of their debt. Certainly this was a logical deduction. They knew by experience that this process had heretofore excited more indignation in the minds of the Netherland people than in that of their
master. Moreover, at this juncture, they cared little for their sovereign’s displeasure, and not at all for that of the Netherlanders. By the middle of July, then, the mutineers, now entirely beyond control, held their officers imprisoned within their quarters at Zierickzee. They even surrounded the house of Mondragon, who had so often led them to victory, calling upon him with threats and taunts to furnish them with money. The veteran, roused to fury by their insubordination and their taunts, sprang from his house into the midst of the throng. Baring his breast before them, he fiercely invited and dared their utmost violence. Of his life-blood, he told them bitterly, he was no niggard, and it was at their disposal. His wealth, had he possessed any, would have been equally theirs. Shamed into temporary respect, but not turned from their purpose by the choler of their chief, they left him to himself. Soon afterwards, having swept Schouwen island bare of everything which could be consumed, the mutineers swarmed out of Zealand into Brabant, devouring as they went.

It was their purpose to hover for a time in the neighborhood of the capital, and either to force the Council of State to pay them their long arrears, or else to seize and sack the richest city upon which they could lay their hands. The compact, disciplined mass, rolled hither and thither, with uncertainty of purpose, but with the same military precision of movement which had always characterized these remarkable mutinies. It gathered strength daily. The citizens of Brussels contemplated with dismay the eccentric and threatening apparition. They knew that rapine, murder, and all the worst evils which man can inflict on his brethren were pent within it, and would soon descend. Yet, even with all their past experience, did they not foresee the depth of woe which was really impending. The mutineers had discarded such of their officers as they could not compel to obedience, and had, as usual, chosen their Eletto. Many straggling companies joined them as they swept to and fro. They came to Herenthals, where they were met by Count Mansfeld, who was deputed by the Council of State to treat with them, to appeal to them, to pardon them, to offer them everything but money. It may be supposed that the success of the commander-in-chief was no better than that of Mondragon and his subalterns. They laughed him to scorn when he reminded them how their conduct was tarnishing the glory which they had acquired by nine years of heroism. They answered with their former cynicism, that glory could be put neither into pocket nor stomach. They had no use for it; they had more than enough of it. "Give them money, or give them a city"—these were their last terms.

Sorrowfully and bodingly Mansfeld withdrew to consult again with the State Council. The mutineers then made a demonstration upon Mechlin, but that city having fortunately strengthened its garrison, was allowed to escape. They then hovered for a time outside the walls of Brussels. At Grimsberg, where they paused for a short period, they held a parley with Captain Montesdocca, whom they received with fair words and specious pretences. He returned to Brussels with the favorable tidings, and the mutineers swarmed off to Assche. Thither Montesdocca was again dispatched, with the expectation that he would be able
to bring them to terms, but they drove him off with jeers and threats, finding that he brought neither money nor the mortgage of a populous city. The next day, after a feint or two in a different direction, they made a sudden swoop upon Alost, in Flanders. Here they had at last made their choice, and the town was carried by storm. All the inhabitants who opposed them were butchered, and the mutiny, at last established in a capital, was able to treat with the State Council upon equal terms. They were now between two and three thousand strong, disciplined, veteran troops, posted in a strong and wealthy city. One hundred parishes belonged to the jurisdiction of Alost, all of which were immediately laid under contribution.

The excitement was now intense in Brussels. Anxiety and alarm had given place to rage, and the whole population rose in arms to defend the capital, which was felt to be in imminent danger. This spontaneous courage of the burghers prevented the catastrophe, which was reserved for a sister city. Meantime, the indignation and horror excited by the mutiny were so universal that the Council of State could not withstand the pressure. Even the women and children demanded daily in the streets that the rebel soldiers should be declared outlaws. On the 26th of July, accordingly, the King of Spain was made to pronounce his Spaniards traitors and murderers. All men were enjoined to slay one or all of them, wherever they should be found; to refuse them bread, water, and fire, and to assemble at sound of bell, in every city, whenever the magistrates should order an assault upon them. A still more stringent edict was issued on the second of August, and so eagerly had these degrees been expected, that they were published throughout Flanders and Brabant almost as soon as issued. Hitherto the leading officers of the Spanish army had kept aloof from the insurgents, and frowned upon their proceedings. The Spanish member of the State Council, Jerome de Roda, had joined without opposition in the edict. As, however, the mutiny gathered strength on the outside, the indignation waxed daily within the capital. The citizens of Brussels, one and all, stood to their arms. Not a man could enter or leave without their permission. The Spaniards who were in the town, whether soldiers or merchants, were regarded with suspicion and abhorrence. The leading Spanish officers, Romero, Montesdocca, Verdugo, and others, who had attempted to quell the mutiny, had been driven off with threats and curses, their soldiers defying them and brandishing their swords in their very faces. On the other hand, they were looked upon with ill-will by the Netherlanders.

The most prominent Spanish personages in Brussels were kept in a state of half-imprisonment. Romero, Roda, Verdugo, were believed to favor at heart the cause of their rebellious troops, and the burghers of Brabant had come to consider all the king’s army in a state of rebellion. Believing the State Council powerless to protect them from the impending storm, they regarded that body with little respect, keeping it, as it were, in durance, while the Spaniards were afraid to walk the streets of Brussels for fear of being murdered. A retainer of
Roda, who had ventured to defend the character and conduct of his master before a number of excited citizens, was slain on the spot.

In Antwerp, Champagny, brother of Granvelle, and governor of the city, was disposed to cultivate friendly relations with the Prince of Orange. Champagny hated the Spaniards, and the hatred seemed to establish enough of sympathy between himself and the liberal party to authorize confidence in him. The Prince dealt with him, but regarded him warily. Fifteen companies of German troops, under Colonel Altaemst, were suspected of a strong inclination to join the mutiny. They were withdrawn from Antwerp, and in their room came Count Oberstein, with his regiment, who swore to admit no suspicious person inside the gates, and in all things to obey the orders of Champagny. In the citadel, however, matters were very threatening. Sancho d’Avila, the governor, although he had not openly joined the revolt, treated the edict of outlawry against the rebellious soldiery with derision. He refused to publish a decree which he proclaimed infamous, and which had been extorted, in his opinion, from an impotent and trembling council. Even Champagny had not desired or dared to publish the edict within the city. The reasons alleged were his fears of irritating and alarming the foreign merchants, whose position was so critical and friendship so important at that moment. On the other hand, it was loudly and joyfully published in most other towns of Flanders and Brabant. In Brussels there were two parties, one holding the decree too audacious for his Majesty to pardon, the other clamoring for its instantaneous fulfillment. By far the larger and more influential portion of the population favored the measure, and wished the sentence of outlawry and extermination to be extended at once against all Spaniards and other foreigners in the service of the king. It seemed imprudent to wait until all the regiments had formally accepted the mutiny, and concentrated themselves into a single body.

At this juncture, on the last day of July, the Marquis of Havré, brother to the Duke of Aerschot, arrived out of Spain. He was charged by the king with conciliatory but unmeaning phrases to the estates. The occasion was not a happy one. There never was a time when direct and vigorous action had been more necessary. It was probably the king’s desire then, as much as it ever had been his desire at all, to make up the quarrel with his provinces. He had been wearied with the policy which Alva had enforced, and for which he endeavored at that period to make the duke appear responsible. The barren clemency which the Grand Commander had been instructed to affect, had deceived but few persons, and had produced but small results. The king was, perhaps, really inclined at this juncture to exercise clemency—that is to say, he was willing to pardon his people for having contended for their rights, provided they were now willing to resign them forever. So long as the Catholic religion and his own authority were exclusively and inviolably secured, he was willing to receive his disobedient provinces into favor. To accomplish this end, however, he had still no more fortunate conception than to take the advice of Hopper. A soothing procrastination was the anodyne selected for the bitter pangs of the body
politic—a vague expression of royal benignity the styptic to be applied to its mortal wounds. An interval of hesitation was to bridge over the chasm between the provinces and their distant metropolis. "The Marquis of Havré has been sent," said the king, "that he may expressly witness to you of our good intentions, and of our desire, with the grace of God, to bring about a pacification." Alas, it was well known whence those pavements of good intentions had been taken, and whither they would lead. They were not the material for a substantial road to reconciliation. "His Majesty," said the marquis, on delivering his report to the State Council, "has long been pondering over all things necessary to the peace of the land. His Majesty, like a very gracious and bountiful Prince, has ever been disposed, in times past, to treat these, his subjects, by the best and sweetest means." There being, however, room for an opinion that so bountiful a prince might have discovered sweeter means, by all this pondering, than to burn and gibbet his subjects by thousands, it was thought proper to insinuate that his orders had been hitherto misunderstood. Alva and Requesens had been unfaithful agents, who did not know their business, but it was to be set right in future. "As the good-will and meaning of his Majesty has by no means been followed," continued the envoy, "his Majesty has determined to send Councillor Hopper, keeper of the privy seal, and myself, hitherto, to execute the resolutions of his Majesty." Two such personages as poor, plodding, confused, time-serving Hopper, and flighty, talkative Havré, whom even Requesens despised, and whom Don John, while shortly afterwards recommending him for a state councillor, characterized to Philip as "a very great scoundrel," would hardly be able, even if royally empowered, to undo the work of two preceding administrations. Moreover, Councillor Hopper, on further thoughts, was not dispatched at all to the Netherlands.

The provinces were, however, assured by the king’s letters to the Brabant estates, to the State Council, and other public bodies, as well as by the report of the Marquis, that efficacious remedies were preparing in Madrid. The people were only to wait patiently till they should arrive. The public had heard before of these nostrums, made up by the royal prescriptions in Spain; and were not likely to accept them as a panacea for their present complicated disorders. Never, in truth, had conventional commonplace been applied more unseasonably. Here was a general military mutiny flaming in the very center of the land. Here had the intense hatred of race, which for years had been gnawing at the heart of the country, at last broken out into most malignant manifestation. Here was nearly the whole native population of every province, from grand seigneur to plebeian, from Catholic prelate to Anabaptist artisan; exasperated alike by the excesses of 6,000 foreign brigands, and united by a common hatred, into a band of brethren. Here was a State Council too feeble to exercise the authority which it had arrogated, trembling between the wrath of its sovereign, the menacing cries of the Brussels burghers, and the wild threats of the rebellious army; and held virtually captive in the capital which it was supposed to govern.
Certainly, the confirmation of the Council in its authority, for an indefinite, even if for a brief period, was a most unlucky step at this juncture. There were two parties in the provinces, but one was far the most powerful upon the great point of the Spanish soldiery. A vast majority were in favor of a declaration of outlawry against the whole army, and it was thought desirable to improve the opportunity by getting rid of them altogether. If the people could rise en masse, now that the royal government was in abeyance, and, as it were, in the nation’s hands, the incubus might be cast off for ever. If any of the Spanish officers had been sincere in their efforts to arrest the mutiny, the sincerity was not believed. If any of the foreign regiments of the king appeared to hesitate at joining the Alost crew, the hesitation was felt to be temporary. Meantime, the important German regiments of Fugger, Fronsberger, and Polwiller, with their colonels and other officers, had openly joined the rebellion, while there was no doubt of the sentiments of Sancho d’Avila and the troops under his command. Thus there were two great rallying-places for the sedition, and the most important fortress of the country, the key which unlocked the richest city in the world, was in the hands of the mutineers. The commercial capital of Europe, filled to the brim with accumulated treasures, and with the merchandice of every clime, lay at the feet of this desperate band of brigands. The horrible result was but too soon to be made manifest.

Meantime, in Brussels, the few Spaniards trembled for their lives. The few officers shut up there were in imminent danger. “As the Devil does not cease to do his work,” wrote Colonel Verdugo, “he has put it into the heads of the Brabanters to rebel, taking for a pretext the mutiny of the Spaniards. The Brussels men have handled their weapons so well against those who were placed there to protect them, that they have begun to kill the Spaniards, threatening likewise the Council of State. Such is their insolence, that they care no more for these great lords than for so many varlets.” The writer, who had taken refuge, together with Jerome de Roda and other Spaniards, or "Hispaniolized" persons, in Antwerp citadel, proceeded to sketch the preparations which were going on in Brussels, and the counter-measures which were making progress in Antwerp. "The states," he wrote, "are enrolling troops, saying ’tis to put down the mutiny; but I assure you ’tis to attack the army indiscriminately. To prevent such a villainous undertaking, troops of all nations are assembling here, in order to march straight upon Brussels, there to enforce everything which my lords of the State Council shall ordain." Events were obviously hastening to a crisis—an explosion, before long, was inevitable. "I wish I had my horses here," continued the colonel, "and must beg you to send them. I see a black cloud hanging over our heads. I fear that the Brabantines will play the beasts so much, that they will have all the soldiery at their throats."

Jerome de Roda had been fortunate enough to make his escape out of Brussels, and now claimed to be sole governor of the Netherlands, as the only remaining representative of the State Council. His colleagues were in durance at the capital. Their authority was derided. Although not yet actually imprisoned,
they were in reality bound hand and foot, and compelled to take their orders either from the Brabant estates or from the burghers of Brussels. It was not an illogical proceeding, therefore, that Roda, under the shadow of the Antwerp citadel, should set up his own person as all that remained of the outraged majesty of Spain. Till the new governor, Don Juan, should arrive, whose appointment the king had already communicated to the government, and who might be expected in the Netherlands before the close of the autumn, the solitary councillor claimed to embody the whole Council. He caused a new seal to be struck—a proceeding very unreasonably charged as forgery by the provincials—and forthwith began to thunder forth proclamations and counter-proclamations in the king’s name and under the royal seal. It is difficult to see any technical crime or mistake in such a course. As a Spaniard, and a representative of his Majesty, he could hardly be expected to take any other view of his duty. At any rate, being called upon to choose between rebellious Netherlanders and mutinous Spaniards, he was not long in making up his mind.

By the beginning of September the mutiny was general. All the Spanish army, from general to pioneer, were united. The most important German troops had taken side with them. Sancho d’Avila held the citadel of Antwerp, vowing vengeance, and holding open communication with the soldiers at Alost. The Council of State remonstrated with him for his disloyalty. He replied by referring to his long years of service, and by reproving them for affecting an authority which their imprisonment rendered ridiculous. The Spaniards were securely established. The various citadels which had been built by Charles and Philip to curb the country now effectually did their work. With the castles of Antwerp, Valenciennes, Ghent, Utrecht, Culemburg, Viane, Alost, in the hands of 6,000 veteran Spaniards, the country seemed chained in every limb. The foreigner’s foot was on its neck. Brussels was almost the only considerable town out of Holland and Zealand which was even temporarily safe. The important city of Maestricht was held by a Spanish garrison while other capital towns and stations were in the power of the Walloon and German mutineers. The depredations committed in the villages, the open country, and the cities were incessant, the Spaniards treating every Netherlander as their foe. Gentleman and peasant, Protestant and Catholic, priest and layman, all were plundered, maltreated, outraged. The indignation became daily more general and more intense. There were frequent skirmishes between the soldiery and promiscuous bands of peasants, citizens, and students, conflicts in which the Spaniards were invariably victorious. What could such half-armed and wholly untrained partisans effect against the bravest and most experienced troops in the whole world? Such results only increased the general exasperation, while they impressed upon the whole people the necessity of some great and general effort to throw off the incubus.
Meantime, the Prince of Orange sat at Middelburg, watching the storm. The position of Holland and Zealand with regard to the other fifteen provinces was distinctly characterized. Upon certain points there was an absolute sympathy, while upon others there was a grave and almost fatal difference. It was the task of the prince to deepen the sympathy, to extinguish the difference.

In Holland and Zealand, there was a warm and nearly universal adhesion to the Reformed religion, a passionate attachment to the ancient political liberties. The prince, although an earnest Calvinist himself, did all in his power to check the growing spirit of intolerance toward the old religion, omitted no opportunity of strengthening the attachment which the people justly felt for their liberal institutions.

On the other hand, in most of the other provinces, the Catholic religion had been regaining its ascendancy. Even in 1574, the estates assembled at Brussels declared to Requesens that they would rather die the death than see any change in their religion. That feeling had rather increased than diminished. Although there was a strong party attached to the new faith, there was perhaps a larger, certainly a more influential body, which regarded the ancient Church with absolute fidelity. Owing partly to the persecution which had, in the course of years, banished so many thousands of families from the soil, partly to the coercion, which was more stringent in the immediate presence of the Crown’s representative, partly to the stronger infusion of the Celtic element, which from the earliest ages had always been so keenly alive to the more sensuous and splendid manifestations of the devotional principle—owing to these and many other causes, the old religion, despite of all the outrages which had been committed in its name, still numbered a host of zealous adherents in the fifteen provinces. Attempts against its sanctity were regarded with jealous eyes. It was believed, and with reason, that there was a disposition on the part of the Reformers to destroy it root and branch. It was suspected that the same enginery of persecution would be employed in its extirpation, should the opposite party gain the supremacy, which the papists had so long employed against the converts to the new religion.

As to political convictions, the fifteen provinces differed much less from their two sisters. There was a strong attachment to their old constitutions, a general inclination to make use of the present crisis to effect their restoration. At the same time, it had not come to be the general conviction, as in Holland and Zealand, that the maintenance of those liberties was incompatible with the continuance of Philip’s authority. There was, moreover, a strong aristocratic faction which was by no means disposed to take a liberal view of government in general, and regarded with apprehension the simultaneous advance of heretical
notions both in church and state. Still there were, on the whole, the elements of a controlling constitutional party throughout the fifteen provinces. The great bond of sympathy, however, between all the seventeen was their common hatred to the foreign soldiery. Upon this deeply imbedded, immovable fulcrum of an ancient national hatred, the sudden mutiny of the whole Spanish army served as a lever of incalculable power. The prince seized it as from the hand of God. Thus armed, he proposed to himself the task of upturning the mass of oppression under which the old liberties of the country had so long been crushed. To effect this object, adroitness was as requisite as courage. Expulsion of the foreign soldiery, union of the seventeen provinces, a representative constitution, according to the old charters, by the states-general, under a hereditary chief, a large religious toleration, suppression of all inquisition into men’s consciences—these were the great objects to which the prince now devoted himself with renewed energy.

To bring about a general organization and a general union, much delicacy of handling was necessary. The sentiment of extreme Catholicism and Monarchism was not to be suddenly scared into opposition. The prince, therefore, in all his addresses and documents was careful to disclaim any intention of disturbing the established religion, or of making any rash political changes. "Let no man think," said he, to the authorities of Brabant, "that, against the will of the estates, we desire to bring about any change in religion. Let no one suspect us capable of prejudicing the rights of any man. We have long since taken up arms to maintain a legal and constitutional freedom, founded upon law. God forbid that we should now attempt to introduce novelties, by which the face of liberty should be defiled."

In a brief and very spirited letter to Count Lalain, a Catholic and a loyalist, but a friend of his country and fervent hater of foreign oppression, he thus appealed to his sense of chivalry and justice: "Although the honorable house from which you spring," he said, "and the virtue and courage of your ancestors have always impressed me with the conviction that you would follow in their footsteps, yet am I glad to have received proofs that my anticipations were correct. I cannot help, therefore, entreating you to maintain the same high heart, and to accomplish that which you have so worthily begun. Be not deluded by false masks, mumming faces, and borrowed titles, which people assume for their own profit, persuading others that the King’s service consists in the destruction of his subjects."

While thus careful to offend no man’s religious convictions, to startle no man’s loyalty, he made skillful use of the general indignation felt at the atrocities of the mutinous army. This chord he struck boldly, powerfully, passionately, for he felt sure of the depth and strength of its vibrations. In his address to the estates of Gelderland, he used vigorous language, inflaming and directing to a practical purpose the just wrath which was felt in that, as in every other province. "I write to warn you," he said, "to seize this present opportunity.
Shake from your necks the yoke of the godless Spanish tyranny, join yourselves at once to the lovers of the fatherland, to the defenders of freedom. According to the example of your own ancestors and ours, redeem for the country its ancient laws, traditions, and privileges. Permit no longer, to your shame and ours, a band of Spanish landloupers and other foreigners, together with three or four self-seeking enemies of their own land, to keep their feet upon our necks. Let them no longer, in the very wantonness of tyranny, drive us about like a herd of cattle—like a gang of well-tamed slaves."

Thus, day after day, in almost countless addresses to public bodies and private individuals, he made use of the crisis to pile fresh fuel upon the flames. At the same time, while thus fanning the general indignation, he had the adroitness to point out that the people had already committed themselves. He represented to them that the edict, by which they had denounced his Majesty’s veterans as outlaws, and had devoted them to the indiscriminate destruction which such brigands deserved, was likely to prove an unpardonable crime in the eyes of majesty. In short, they had entered the torrent. If they would avoid being dashed over the precipice, they must struggle manfully with the mad waves of civil war into which they had plunged. "I beg you, with all affection," he said to the states of Brabant, "to consider the danger in which you have placed yourselves. You have to deal with the proudest and most overbearing race in the world. For these qualities they are hated by all other nations. They are even hateful to themselves. ’Tis a race which seeks to domineer wheresoever it comes. It particularly declares its intention to crush and to tyrannize you, my masters, and all the land. They have conquered you already, as they boast, for the crime of lese-majesty has placed you at their mercy. I tell you that your last act, by which you have declared this army to be rebels, is decisive. You have armed and excited the whole people against them, even to the peasants and the peasants’ children, and the insults and injuries thus received, however richly deserved and dearly avenged, are all set down to your account. Therefore, ‘tis necessary for you to decide now, whether to be utterly ruined, yourselves and your children, or to continue firmly the work which you have begun boldly, and rather to die a hundred thousand deaths than to make a treaty with them, which can only end in your ruin. Be assured that the measure dealt to you will be ignominy as well as destruction. Let not your leaders expect the honorable scaffolds of Counts Egmont and Horn. The whipping post and then the gibbet will be their certain fate."

Having by this and similar language, upon various occasions, sought to impress upon his countrymen the gravity of the position, he led them to seek the remedy in audacity and in union. He familiarized them with his theory, that the legal, historical government of the provinces belonged to the states-general, to a congress of nobles, clergy, and commons, appointed from each of the seventeen provinces. He maintained, with reason, that the government of the Netherlands was a representative constitutional government, under the hereditary authority of the king. To recover this constitution, to lift up these
down-trodden rights, he set before them most vividly the necessity of union. 
"'Tis impossible," he said, "that a chariot should move evenly having its wheels unequally proportioned; and so must a confederation be broken to pieces, if there be not an equal obligation on all to tend to a common purpose." Union, close, fraternal, such as became provinces of a common origin and with similar laws, could alone save them from their fate. Union against a common tyrant to save a common fatherland. Union, by which differences of opinion should be tolerated, in order that a million of hearts should beat for a common purpose, a million hands work out, invincibly, a common salvation. "'Tis hardly necessary," he said, "to use many words in recommendation of union. Disunion has been the cause of all our woes. There is no remedy, no hope, save in the bonds of friendship. Let all particular disagreements be left to the decision of the states-general, in order that with one heart and one will we may seek the disenthralment of the fatherland from the tyranny of strangers."

The first step to a thorough union among all the provinces was the arrangement of a closer connection between the now isolated states of Holland and Zealand on the one side, and their fifteen sisters on the other. The prince professed the readiness of those states which he might be said to represent in his single person, to draw as closely as possible the bonds of fellowship. It was almost superfluous for him to promise his own ready cooperation. "Nothing remains to us," said he, "but to discard all jealousy and distrust. Let us, with a firm resolution and a common accord, liberate these lands from the stranger. Hand to hand let us accomplish a just and general peace. As for myself, I present to you, with very good affection, my person and all which I possess, assuring you that I shall regard all my labors and pains in times which are past, well bestowed, if God now grant me grace to see the desired end. That this end will be reached, if you hold fast your resolution and take to heart the means which God presents to you, I feel to be absolutely certain."

Such were the tenor and the motives of the documents which he scattered broadcast at this crisis. They were addressed to the estates of nearly every province. Those bodies were urgently implored to appoint deputies to a general congress, at which a close and formal union between Holland and Zealand with the other provinces might be effected. That important measure secured, a general effort might, at the same time, be made to expel the Spaniard from the soil. This done, the remaining matters could be disposed of by the assembly of the estates-general. His eloquence and energy were not without effect. In the course of the autumn, deputies were appointed from the greater number of the provinces, to confer with the representatives of Holland and Zealand, in a general congress. The place appointed for the deliberations was the city of Ghent. Here, by the middle of October, a large number of delegates were already assembled.

Events were rapidly rolling together from every quarter, and accumulating to a crisis. A congress—a rebellious congress, as the king might deem it—was
assembling at Ghent; the Spanish army, proscribed, lawless, and terrible, was strengthening itself daily for some dark and mysterious achievement; Don John of Austria, the king’s natural brother, was expected from Spain to assume the government, which the State Council was too timid to wield and too loyal to resign, while, meantime, the whole population of the Netherlands, with hardly an exception, was disposed to see the great question of the foreign soldiery settled, before the chaos then existing should be superseded by a more definite authority. Everywhere, men of all ranks and occupations—the artisan in the city, the peasant in the fields—were deserting their daily occupations to furbish helmets, handle muskets, and learn the trade of war. Skirmishes, sometimes severe and bloody, were of almost daily occurrence. In these the Spaniards were invariably successful, for whatever may be said of their cruelty and licentiousness, it cannot be disputed that their prowess was worthy of their renown. Romantic valor, unflinching fortitude, consummate skill, characterized them always. What could half-armed artisans achieve in the open plain against such accomplished foes? At Tisnacq, between Louvain and Tirlemont, a battle was attempted by a large miscellaneous mass of students, peasantry, and burghers, led by country squires. It soon changed to a carnage, in which the victims were all on one side. A small number of veterans headed by Vargas, Mendoza, Tassis, and other chivalrous commanders, routed the undisciplined thousands at a single charge. The rude militia threw away their arms, and fled panic-struck in all directions, at the first sight of their terrible foe. Two Spaniards lost their lives and two thousand Netherlanders. It was natural that these consummate warriors should despise such easily slaughtered victims. A single stroke of the iron flail, and the chaff was scattered to the four winds; a single sweep of the disciplined scythe, and countless acres were in an instant mown. Nevertheless, although beaten constantly, the Netherlanders were not conquered. Holland and Zealand had read the foe a lesson which he had not forgotten, and although on the open fields, and against the less vigorous population of the more central provinces, his triumphs had been easier, yet it was obvious that the spirit of resistance to foreign oppression was growing daily stronger, notwithstanding daily defeats.

Meantime, while these desultory but deadly combats were in daily progress, the Council of State was looked upon with suspicion by the mass of the population. That body, in which resided provisionally the powers of government, was believed to be desirous of establishing relations with the mutinous army. It was suspected of insidiously provoking the excesses which it seemed to denounce. It was supposed to be secretly intriguing with those whom its own edicts had outlawed. Its sympathies were considered Spanish. It was openly boasted by the Spanish army that, before long, they would descend from their fastnesses upon Brussels, and give the city to the sword. A shuddering sense of coming evil pervaded the population, but no man could say where the blow would first be struck. It was natural that the capital should be thought exposed to imminent danger. At the same time, while every man who had hands was disposed to bear arms to defend the city, the Council seemed
paralyzed. The capital was insufficiently garrisoned, yet troops were not enrolling for its protection. The state councillors obviously omitted to provide for defense, and it was supposed that they were secretly assisting the attack. It was thought important, therefore, to disarm, or, at least, to control thin body which was impotent for protection, and seemed powerful only for mischief. It was possible to make it as contemptible as it was believed to be malicious.

An unexpected stroke was therefore suddenly leveled against the Council in full session. On the fifth of September, the Seigneur de Héze, a young gentleman of a bold, but unstable character, then entertaining close but secret relations with the Prince of Orange, appeared before the doors of the palace. He was attended by about five hundred troops, under the immediate command of the Seigneur de Glimes, bailiff of Walloon Brabant. He demanded admittance, in the name of the Brabant estates, to the presence of the State Council, and was refused. The doors were closed and bolted. Without further ceremony the soldiers produced iron bars brought with them for the purpose, forced all the gates from the hinges, entered the hall of session, and at a word from their commander, laid hands upon the councillors, and made every one prisoner. The Duke of Aershot, President of the Council, who was then in close alliance with the prince, was not present at the meeting, but lay, forewarned, at home, confined to his couch by a sickness assumed for the occasion. Viglius, who rarely participated in the deliberations of the board, being already afflicted with the chronic malady under which he was ere long to succumb, also escaped the fate of his fellow senators. The others were carried into confinement. Berlaymont and Mansfeld were imprisoned in the Brood-Huyse where the last mortal hours of Egmont and Horn had been passed. Others were kept strictly guarded in their own houses. After a few weeks, most of them were liberated. Councillor Del Rio was, however, retained in confinement, and sent to Holland, where he was subjected to a severe examination by the Prince of Orange, touching his past career, particularly concerning the doings of the famous Blood-Council. The others were set free, and even permitted to resume their functions, but their dignity was gone, their authority annihilated. Thenceforth the states of Brabant and the community of Brussels were to govern for an interval, for it was in their name that the daring blow against the Council had been struck. All individuals and bodies, however, although not displeased with the result, clamorously disclaimed responsibility for the deed. Men were appalled at the audacity of the transaction, and dreaded the vengeance of the king. The Abbot Van Perch, one of the secret instigators of the act, actually died of anxiety for its possible consequences. There was a mystery concerning the affair. They in whose name it had been accomplished, denied having given any authority to the perpetrators. Men asked each other what unseen agency had been at work, what secret spring had been adroitly touched. There is but little doubt, however, that the veiled but skillful hand which directed the blow, was the same which had so long been guiding the destiny of the Netherlands.
It had been settled that the congress was to hold its sessions in Ghent, although the citadel commanding that city was held by the Spaniards. The garrison was not very strong, and Mondragon, its commander, was absent in Zealand, but the wife of the veteran ably supplied his place, and stimulated the slender body of troops to hold out with heroism, under the orders of his lieutenant, Avilos Maldonado. The mutineers, after having accomplished their victory at Tisnacq, had been earnestly solicited to come to the relief of this citadel. They had refused and returned to Alost. Meantime, the siege was warmly pressed by the states. There being, however, a deficiency of troops, application for assistance was formally made to the Prince of Orange. Count Reulx, governor of Flanders, commissioned the Seigneur d’Haussy, brother of Count Bossu, who, to obtain the liberation of that long-imprisoned and distinguished nobleman, was about visiting the prince in Zealand, to make a request for an auxiliary force. It was, however, stipulated that care should be taken lest any prejudice should be done to the Roman Catholic religion or the authority of the king. The prince readily acceded to the request, and agreed to comply with the conditions under which only it could be accepted. He promised to send twenty-eight companies. In his letter announcing this arrangement, he gave notice that his troops would receive strict orders to do no injury to person or property, Catholic or Protestant, ecclesiastic or lay, and to offer no obstruction to the Roman religion or the royal dignity. He added, however, that it was not to be taken amiss, if his soldiers were permitted to exercise their own religious rites, and to sing their Protestant hymns within their own quarters. He moreover, as security for the expense and trouble, demanded the city of Sluys. The first detachment of troops, under command of Colonel Vander Tympel, was, however, hardly on its way, before an alarm was felt among the Catholic party at this practical alliance with the rebel prince. An envoy, named Ottingen, was dispatched to Zealand, bearing a letter from the estates of Hainault, Brabant, and Flanders, countermanding the request for troops, and remonstrating categorically upon the subject of religion and loyalty. Orange deemed such tergiversation paltry, but controlled his anger. He answered the letter in liberal terms, for he was determined that by no fault of his should the great cause be endangered. He reassured the estates as to the probable behavior of his troops. Moreover, they had been already admitted into the city, while the correspondence was proceeding. The matter of the psalm singing was finally arranged to the satisfaction of both parties, and it was agreed that Niewport, instead of Sluys, should be given to the prince as security.

The siege of the citadel was now pressed vigorously, and the deliberations of the congress were opened under the incessant roar of cannon. While the attack was thus earnestly maintained upon the important castle of Ghent, a courageous effort was made by the citizens of Maestricht to wrest their city from the hands of the Spaniards. The German garrison having been gained by the burghers, the combined force rose upon the Spanish troops, and drove them from the city. Montesdocca, the commander, was arrested and
imprisoned, but the triumph was only temporary. Don Francis d’Ayala, Montesdocca’s lieutenant, made a stand, with a few companies, in Wieck, a village on the opposite side of the Meuse, and connected with the city by a massive bridge of stone. From this point he sent information to other commanders in the neighborhood. Don Ferdinand de Toledo soon arrived with several hundred troops from Dalem. The Spaniards, eager to wipe out the disgrace to their arms, loudly demanded to be led back to the city. The head of the bridge, however, over which they must pass, was defended by a strong battery, and the citizens were seen clustering in great numbers to defend their firesides against a foe whom they had once expelled. To advance across the bridge seemed certain destruction to the little force. Even Spanish bravery recoiled at so desperate an undertaking, but unscrupulous ferocity supplied an expedient where courage was at fault. There were few fighting men present among the population of Wieck, but there were many females. Each soldier was commanded to seize a woman, and, placing her before his own body, to advance across the bridge. The column, thus buckled, to the shame of Spanish chivalry, by female bosoms, moved in good order toward the battery. The soldiers leveled their muskets with steady aim over the shoulders or under the arms of the women whom they thus held before them. On the other hand, the citizens dared not discharge their cannon at their own townswomen, among whose numbers many recognized mothers, sisters, or wives. The battery was soon taken, while at the same time Alonzo Vargas, who had effected his entrance from the land side by burning down the Brussels gate, now entered the city at the head of a band of cavalry. Maestricht was recovered, and an indiscriminate slaughter instantly avenged its temporary loss. The plundering, stabbing, drowning, burning, ravishing, were so dreadful that, in the words of a cotemporary historian, "the burghers who had escaped the fight had reason to think themselves less fortunate than those who had died with arms in their hands."

This was the lot of Maestricht on the 20th of October. It was instinctively felt to be the precursor of fresh disasters. Vague, incoherent, but widely disseminated rumors had long pointed to Antwerp and its dangerous situation. The Spaniards, foiled in their views upon Brussels, had recently avowed an intention of avenging themselves in the commercial capital. They had waited long enough, and accumulated strength enough. Such a trifling city as Alost could no longer content their cupidty, but in Antwerp there was gold enough for the gathering. There was reason for the fears of the inhabitants, for the greedy longing of their enemy. Probably no city in Christendom could at that day vie with Antwerp in wealth and splendor. Its merchants lived in regal pomp and luxury. In its numerous, massive warehouses were the treasures of every clime. Still serving as the main entrepot of the world’s traffic, the Brabantine capital was the center of that commercial system which was soon to be superseded by a larger international life. In the midst of the miseries which had so long been raining upon the Netherlands, the stately and egotistical city seemed to have taken stronger root and to flourish more freshly than ever. It was not wonderful
that its palaces and its magazines glittering with splendor and bursting with treasure, should arouse the avidity of a reckless and famishing soldiery. Had not a handful of warriors of their own race rifled the golden Indies? Had not their fathers, few in number, strong in courage and discipline, reveled in the plunder of a new world? Here were the Indies in a single city. Here were gold and silver, pearls and diamonds, ready and portable; the precious fruit dropping, ripened, from the bough. Was it to be tolerated that base, pacific burghers should monopolize the treasure by which a band of heroes might be enriched?

A sense of coming evil diffused itself through the atmosphere. The air seemed lurid with the impending storm, for the situation was one of peculiar horror. The wealthiest city in Christendom lay at the mercy of the strongest fastness in the world; a castle which had been built to curb, not to protect, the town. It was now inhabited by a band of brigands, outlawed by government, strong in discipline, furious from penury, reckless by habit, desperate in circumstance—a crew which feared not God, nor man, nor Devil. The palpitating quarry lay expecting hourly the swoop of its trained and pitiless enemy, for the rebellious soldiers were now in a thorough state of discipline. Sancho d’Avila, castellan of the citadel, was recognized as the chief of the whole mutiny, the army and the mutiny being now one. The band, entrenched at Alost, were upon the best possible understanding with their brethren in the citadel, and accepted without hesitation the arrangements of their superior. On the side of the Scheld, opposite Antwerp, a fortification had been thrown up by Don Sancho’s orders, and held by Julian Romero. Lier, Breda, as well as Alost, were likewise ready to throw their reinforcements into the citadel at a moment’s warning. At the signal of their chief, the united bands might sweep from their impregnable castle with a single impulse.

The city cried aloud for help, for it had become obvious that an attack might be hourly expected. Meantime an attempt, made by Don Sancho d’Avila to tamper with the German troops stationed within the walls, was more than partially successful. The forces were commanded by Colonel Van Ende and Count Oberstein. Van Ende, a crafty traitor to his country, desired no better than to join the mutiny on so promising an occasion, and his soldiers shared his sentiments. Oberstein, a brave but blundering German, was drawn into the net of treachery by the adroitness of the Spaniard and the effrontery of his comrade. On the night of the 29th of October, half-bewildered and half-drunk, he signed a treaty with Sancho d’Avila and the three colonels—Fugger, Frondsberger, and Polwiller. By this unlucky document, which was of course subscribed also by Van Ende, it was agreed that the Antwerp burghers should be forthwith disarmed, that their weapons should be sent into the citadel, that Oberstein should hold the city at the disposition of Sancho d’Avila, that he should refuse admittance to all troops which might be sent into the city, excepting by command of Don Sancho, and that he should decline compliance with any orders which he might receive from individuals calling themselves the
council of state, the states-general, or the estates of Brabant. This treaty was signed, moreover, by Don Jeronimo de Roda, then established in the citadel, and claiming to represent exclusively his Majesty’s government.

Hardly had this arrangement been concluded than the count saw the trap into which he had fallen. Without intending to do so, he had laid the city at the mercy of its foe, but the only remedy which suggested itself to his mind was an internal resolution not to keep his promises. The burghers were suffered to retain their arms, while, on the other hand, Don Sancho lost no time in dispatching messages to Alost, to Lier, to Breda, and even to Maestricht, that as large a force as possible might be assembled for the purpose of breaking immediately the treaty of peace which he had just concluded. Never was a solemn document regarded with such perfectly bad faith by all its signers as the accord of the 29th of October.

Three days afterwards, a large force of Walloons and Germans was dispatched from Brussels to the assistance of Antwerp. The command of these troops was entrusted to the Marquis of Havré, whose brother, the Duke of Aerschot, had been recently appointed chief superintendent of military affairs by the deputies assembled at Ghent. The miscellaneous duties comprehended under this rather vague denomination did not permit the duke to take charge of the expedition in person, and his younger brother, a still more incompetent and unsubstantial character, was accordingly appointed to the post. A number of young men, of high rank but of lamentably low capacity, were associated with him. Foremost among them was Philip, Count of Egmont, a youth who had inherited few of his celebrated father’s qualities, save personal courage and a love of personal display. In character and general talents he was beneath mediocrity. Beside these were the reckless but unstable De Heze, who had executed the coup d’etat against the State Council, De Berselen, De Capres, D’Oyngies, and others, all vaguely desirous of achieving distinction in those turbulent times, but few of them having any political or religious convictions, and none of them possessing experience or influence enough to render them useful at the impending crisis.

On Friday morning, the second of November, the troops appeared under the walls of Antwerp. They consisted of twenty-three companies of infantry and fourteen of cavalry, amounting to 5,000 foot and 1,200 horse. They were nearly all Walloons, soldiers who had already seen much active service, but unfortunately of a race warlike and fiery indeed, but upon whose steadiness not much more dependence could be placed at that day than in the age of Civilis. Champagny, brother of Granvelle, was governor of the city. He was a sincere Catholic, but a still more sincere hater of the Spaniards. He saw in the mutiny a means of accomplishing their expulsion, and had already offered to the Prince of Orange his eager cooperation towards this result. In other matters there could be but small sympathy between William the Silent and the
cardinal’s brother, but a common hatred united them, for a time at least, in a
common purpose.

When the troops first made their appearance before the walls, Champagny was
unwilling to grant them admittance. The addle-brained Oberstein had
confessed to him the enormous blunder which he had committed in his
midnight treaty, and at the same time ingenuously confessed his intention of
sending it to the winds. The enemy had extorted from his dullness or his
drunkenness a promise, which his mature and sober reason could not consider
binding. It is needless to say that Champagny rebuked him for signing, and
applauded him for breaking the treaty. At the same time its ill effects were
already seen in the dissensions which existed among the German troops. Where
all had been tampered with, and where the commanders had set the example
of infidelity, it would have been strange if all had held firm. On the whole,
however, Oberstein thought he could answer for his own troops. Upon Van
Ende’s division, although the crafty colonel dissembled his real intentions, very
little reliance was placed. Thus there was distraction within the walls. Among
those whom the burghefs had been told to consider their defenders, there
were probably many who were ready to join with their mortal foes at a
moment’s warning. Under these circumstances, Champagny hesitated about
admitting these fresh troops from Brussels. He feared lest the Germans, who
knew themselves doubted, might consider themselves doomed. He trembled,
lest an irrepressible outbreak should occur within the walls, rendering the
immediate destruction of the city by the Spaniards from without inevitable.
Moreover, he thought it more desirable that this auxiliary force should be
disposed at different points outside, in order to intercept the passage of the
numerous bodies of Spaniards and other mutineers, who from various quarters
would soon be on their way to the citadel. Havré, however, was so peremptory,
and the burghefs were so importunate, that Champagny was obliged to recede
from his opposition before twenty-four hours had elapsed. Unwilling to take
the responsibility of a farther refusal, he admitted the troops through the
Burgherhout gate, on Saturday, the third of November, at ten o’clock in the
morning.

The Marquis of Havré, as commander-in-chief, called a council of war. It
assembled at Count Oberstein’s quarters, and consulted at first concerning a
bundle of intercepted letters which Havré had brought with him. These
constituted a correspondence between Sancho d’Avila with the heads of the
mutiny at Alost, and many other places. The letters were all dated
subsequently to Don Sancho’s treaty with Oberstein, and contained
arrangements for an immediate concentration of the whole available Spanish
force at the citadel.

The treachery was so manifest, that Oberstein felt all self-reproach for his own
breach of faith to be superfluous. It was, however, evident that the attack was
to be immediately expected. What was to be done? All the officers counseled
the immediate erection of a bulwark on the side of the city exposed to the
castle, but there were no miners nor engineers. Champagny, however,
recommended a skillful and experienced engineer to superintend the work in
the city, and pledged himself that burghers enough would volunteer as miners.
In less than an hour, ten or twelve thousand persons, including multitudes of
women of all ranks, were at work upon the lines marked out by the engineer. A
ditch and breastwork extending from the gate of the Beguins to the street of
the Abbey Saint Michael, were soon in rapid progress. Meantime, the newly
arrived troops, with military insolence, claimed the privilege of quartering
themselves in the best houses which they could find. They already began to
insult and annoy the citizens whom they had been sent to defend, nor were
they destined to atone, by their subsequent conduct in the face of the enemy,
for the brutality with which they treated their friends. Champagny, however,
was ill-disposed to brook their licentiousness. They had been sent to protect
the city and the homes of Antwerp from invasion. They were not to establish
themselves at every fireside on their first arrival. There was work enough for
them out of doors, and they were to do that work at once. He ordered them to
prepare for a bivouac in the streets, and flew from house to house, sword in
hand, driving forth the intruders at imminent peril of his life. Meantime, a
number of Italian and Spanish merchants fled from the city, and took refuge in
the castle. The Walloon soldiers were for immediately plundering their houses,
as if plunder had been the object for which they had been sent to Antwerp. It
was several hours before Champagny, with all his energy, was able to quell
these disturbances.

In the course of the day, Oberstein received a letter from Don Sancho d’Avila,
calling solemnly upon him to fulfil his treaty of the 29th of October. The
German colonels from the citadel, had, on the previous afternoon, held a
personal interview with Oberstein beneath the walls, which had nearly ended
in blows, and they had been obliged to save themselves by flight from the
anger of the Count’s soldiers, enraged at the deceit by which their leader had
been so nearly entrapped. This summons of ridiculous solemnity to keep a
treaty which had already been torn to shreds by both parties, Oberstein
answered with defiance and contempt. The reply was an immediate cannonade
from the batteries of the citadel, which made the position of those erecting
the ramparts excessively dangerous. The wall was strengthened with bales of
merchandise, casks of earth, upturned wagons, and similar bulky objects,
 hastily piled together. In some places it was sixteen feet high; in others less
than six. Night fell before the fortification was nearly completed.
Unfortunately it was bright moonlight. The cannon from the fortress continued
to play upon the half-finished works. The Walloons, and at last the citizens,
feared to lift their heads above their frail rampart. The senators, whom
Champagny had deputed to superintend the progress of the enterprise, finding
the men so ill disposed, deserted their posts. They promised themselves that,
in the darkest hour of the following night, the work should be thoroughly
completed. Alas! all hours of the coming night were destined to be dark
enough, but in them was to be done no manner of work for defense. On Champagny alone seemed devolved all the labor and all the responsibility. He did his duty well, but he was but one man. Alone, with a heart full of anxiety, he wandered up and down all the night. With his own hands, assisted only by a few citizens and his own servants, he planted all the cannon with which they were provided, in the "Fencing Court," at a point where the battery might tell upon the castle. Unfortunately, the troops from Brussels had brought no artillery with them, and the means of defense against the strongest fortress in Europe were meager indeed. The rampart had been left very weak at many vital points. A single upturned wagon was placed across the entrance to the important street of the Beguins. This negligence was to cost the city dear. At daybreak, there was a council held in Oberstein's quarters. Nearly all Champagny's directions had been neglected. He had desired that strong detachments should be posted during the night at various places of security on the outskirts of the town, for the troops which were expected to arrive in small bodies at the citadel from various parts, might have thus been cut off before reaching their destination. Not even scouts had been stationed in sufficient numbers to obtain information of what was occurring outside. A thick mist hung over the city that eventful morning. Through its almost impenetrable veil, bodies of men had been seen moving into the castle, and the tramp of cavalry had been distinctly heard, and the troops of Romero, Vargas, Oliveira, and Valdez had already arrived from Lier, Breda, Maestricht, and from the forts on the Scheld.

The whole available force in the city was mustered without delay. Havré had claimed for his post the defense of the lines opposite the citadel, the place of responsibility and honor. Here the whole body of Walloons were stationed, together with a few companies of Germans. The ramparts, as stated, were far from impregnable, but it was hoped that this living rampart of 6,000 men, standing on their own soil, and in front of the firesides and altars of their own countrymen; would prove a sufficient bulwark even against Spanish fury. Unhappily, the living barrier proved more frail than the feeble breastwork which the hands of burghers and women had constructed. Six thousand men were disposed along the side of the city opposite the fortress. The bulk of the German troops was stationed at different points on the more central streets and squares. The cavalry was posted on the opposite side of the city, along the Horse-market, and fronting the "New-town." The stars were still in the sky when Champagny, got on horseback and rode through the streets, calling on the burghers to arm and assemble at different points. The principal places of rendezvous were the Cattle-market and the Exchange. He rode along the lines of the Walloon regiments, conversing with the officers, Egmont, De Héze, and others, and encouraging the men, and went again to the Fencing Court, where he pointed the cannon with his own hand, and ordered their first discharge at the fortress. Thence he rode to the end of the Beguin street, where he dismounted and walked out upon the edge of the esplanade which stretched between the city and the castle. On this battleground a combat was even then
occurring between a band of burghers and a reconnoitering party from the citadel. Champagny saw with satisfaction that the Antwerpers were victorious. They were skirmishing well with their disciplined foe, whom they at last beat back to the citadel. His experienced eye saw, however, that the retreat was only the signal for a general onslaught, which was soon to follow; and he returned into the city to give the last directions.

At ten o’clock, a moving wood was descried, approaching the citadel from the Southwest. The whole body of the mutineers from Alost, wearing green branches in their helmets, had arrived under command of their Eletto, Navarrete. Nearly 3,000 in number, they rushed into the castle, having accomplished their march of twenty-four miles since three o’clock in the morning. They were received with open arms. Sancho d’Avila ordered food and refreshments to be laid before them, but they refused everything but a draught of wine. They would dine in Paradise, they said, or sup in Antwerp. Finding his allies in such spirit, Don Sancho would not balk their humor. Since early morning, his own veterans had been eagerly awaiting his signal, "straining upon the start." The troops of Romero, Vargas, Valdez, were no less impatient. At about an hour before noon, nearly every living man in the citadel was mustered for the attack, hardly men enough being left behind to guard the gates. Five thousand veteran foot soldiers, besides six hundred cavalry, armed to the teeth, sallied from the portals of Alva’s citadel. In the counterscarp they fell upon their knees, to invoke, according to custom, the blessing of God upon the Devil’s work, which they were about to commit. The Eletto bore a standard, one side of which was emblazoned with the crucified Saviour, and the other with the Virgin Mary. The image of Him who said, "Love your enemies," and the gentle face of the Madonna, were to smile from heaven upon deeds which might cause a shudder in the depths of hell. Their brief orisons concluded, they swept forward to the city. Three thousand Spaniards, under their Eletto, were to enter by the street of Saint Michael; the Germans, and the remainder of the Spanish foot, commanded by Romero, through that of Saint George. Champagny saw them coming, and spoke a last word of encouragement to the Walloons. The next moment the compact mass struck the barrier, as the thunderbolt descends from the cloud. There was scarcely a struggle. The Walloons, not waiting to look their enemy in the face, abandoned the posts which they had themselves claimed. The Spaniards crashed through the bulwark, as though it had been a wall of glass. The Eletto was first to mount the rampart; the next instant he was shot dead, while his followers, undismayed, sprang over his body, and poured into the streets. The fatal gaps, due to timidity and carelessness, let in the destructive tide. Champagny, seeing that the enemies had all crossed the barrier, leaped over a garden wall, passed through a house into a narrow lane, and thence to the nearest station of the German troops. Hastily collecting a small force, he led them in person to the rescue. The Germans fought well, died well, but they could not re-animate the courage of the Walloons, and all were now in full retreat, pursued by the ferocious Spaniards. In vain Champagny stormed among them; in vain he strove to rally
their broken ranks. With his own hand he seized a banner from a retreating ensign, and called upon the nearest soldiers to make a stand against the foe. It was to bid the flying clouds pause before the tempest. Torn, broken, aimless, the scattered troops whirled through the streets before the pursuing wrath. Champagny, not yet despairing, galloped hither and thither, calling upon the burghers everywhere to rise in defence of their homes, nor did he call in vain. They came forth from every place of rendezvous, from every alley, from every house. They fought as men fight to defend their hearths and altars, but what could individual devotion avail, against the compact, disciplined, resistless mass of their foes? The order of defense was broken, there was no system, no concert, no rallying point, no authority. So soon as it was known that the Spaniards had crossed the rampart, that its six thousand defenders were in full retreat, it was inevitable that a panic should seize the city.

Their entrance once effected, the Spanish force had separated, according to previous arrangement, into two divisions, one half charging up the long street of Saint Michael, the other forcing its way through the street of Saint Joris. "Santiago, Santiago! España, España! à sangre, à carne, à fuego, à sacco!"—Saint James, Spain, blood, flesh, fire, sack!—such were the hideous cries which rang through every quarter of the city, as the savage horde advanced. Van Ende, with his German troops, had been stationed by the Marquis of Havré to defend the Saint Joris gate, but no sooner did the Spaniards under Vargas present themselves, than he deserted to them instantly with his whole force. United with the Spanish cavalry, these traitorous defenders of Antwerp dashed in pursuit of those who had only been faint-hearted. Thus the burghers saw themselves attacked by many of their friends, deserted by more. Whom were they to trust? Nevertheless, Oberstein’s Germans were brave and faithful, resisting to the last, and dying every man in his harness. The tide of battle flowed hither and thither, through every street and narrow lane. It poured along the magnificent Place de Meer, where there was an obstinate contest. In front of the famous Exchange, where in peaceful hours, 5,000 merchants met daily, to arrange the commercial affairs of Christendom, there was a determined rally, a savage slaughter. The citizens and faithful Germans, in this broader space, made a stand against their pursuers. The tesselated marble pavement, the graceful, cloister-like arcades ran red with blood. The ill-armed burghers faced their enemies clad in complete panoply, but they could only die for their homes. The massacre at this point was enormous, the resistance at last overcome.

Meantime, the Spanish cavalry had cleft its way through the city. On the side farthest removed from the castle; along the Horse-market, opposite the Newtown, the states dragoons and the light horse of Beveren had been posted, and the flying masses of pursuers and pursued swept at last through this outer circle. Champagny was already there, He essayed, as his last hope, to rally the cavalry for a final stand, but the effort was fruitless. Already seized by the panic, they had attempted to rush from the city through the gate of Eeker. It
was locked; they then turned and fled towards the Red-gate, where they were met face to face by Don Pedro Tassis, who charged upon them with his dragoons. Retreat seemed hopeless. A horseman in complete armor, with lance in rest, was seen to leap from the parapet of the outer wall into the moat below, whence, still on horseback, he escaped with life. Few were so fortunate. The confused mob of fugitives and conquerors, Spaniards, Walloons, Germans, burgheis, struggling, shouting, striking, cursing, dying, swayed hither and thither like a stormy sea. Along the spacious Horse-market, the fugitives fled onward towards the quays. Many fell beneath the swords of the Spaniards, numbers were trodden to death by the hoofs of horses, still greater multitudes were hunted into the Scheld. Champagny, who had thought it possible, even at the last moment, to make a stand in the New-town, and to fortify the Palace of the Hanna, saw himself deserted. With great daring and presence of mind, he effected his escape to the fleet of the Prince of Orange in the river. The Marquis of Havré, of whom no deeds of valor on that eventful day have been recorded, was equally successful. The unlucky Oberstein, attempting to leap into a boat, missed his footing, and oppressed by the weight of his armor, was drowned.

Meantime, while the short November day was fast declining, the combat still raged in the interior of the city. Various currents of conflict, forcing their separate way through many streets, had at last mingled in the Grande Place. Around this irregular, not very spacious square, stood the gorgeous Hôtel le Ville, and the tall, many-storied, fantastically gabled, richly decorated palaces of the guilds. Here a long struggle took place. It was terminated for a time by the cavalry of Vargas, who, arriving through the streets of Saint Joris, accompanied by the traitor Van Ende, charged decisively into the mêlée. The masses were broken, but multitudes of armed men found refuge in the buildings, and every house became a fortress. From every window and balcony a hot fire was poured into the square, as, pent in a corner, the burgheis stood at last at bay. It was difficult to carry the houses by storm, but they were soon set on fire. A large number of sutlers and other varlets had accompanied the Spaniards from the citadel, bringing torches and kindling materials for the express purpose of firing the town. With great dexterity, these means were now applied, and in a brief interval, the City-hall, and other edifices on the square were in flames. The conflagration spread with rapidity, house after house, street after street, taking fire. Nearly a thousand buildings, in the most splendid and wealthy quarter of the city, were soon in a blaze, and multitudes of human beings were burned with them. In the City-hall many were consumed, while others leaped from the windows to renew the combat below. The many tortuous streets which led down a slight descent from the rear of the Town-house to the quays were all on one vast conflagration. On the other side, the magnificent cathedral, separated from the Grande Place by a single row of buildings, was lighted up, but not attacked by the flames. The tall spire cast its gigantic shadow across the last desperate conflict. In the street called the Canal au Sucre, immediately behind the Town-house, there was a fierce
struggle, a horrible massacre. A crowd ofburghers, grave magistrates, and such of the German soldiers as remained alive, still confronted the ferocious Spaniards. There, amid the flaming desolation, Goswyn Verreyck, the heroic margrave of the city, fought with the energy of hatred and despair. The burgomaster, Van der Meere, lay dead at his feet; senators, soldiers, citizens, fell fast around him, and he sank at last upon a heap of slain. With him effectual resistance ended. The remaining combatants were butchered, or were slowly forced downward to perish in the Scheld. Women, children, old men, were killed; countless numbers, and still, through all this havoc, directly over the heads of the struggling throng, suspended in mid-air above the din and smoke of the conflict, there sounded, every half-quarter of every hour, as if in gentle mockery, from the belfry of the cathedral, the tender and melodious chimes.

Never was there a more monstrous massacre, even in the blood-stained history of the Netherlands. It was estimated that, in the course of this and the two following days, not less than 8,000 human beings were murdered. The Spaniards seemed to cast off even the vizard of humanity. Hell seemed emptied of its fiends. Night fell upon the scene before the soldiers were masters of the city, but worse horrors began after the contest was ended. This army of brigands had come thither with a definite, practical purpose, for it was not blood-thirst, nor lust, nor revenge, which had impelled them, but it was avarice, greediness for gold. For gold they had waded through all this blood and fire. Never had men bore simplicity of purpose, more directness in its execution. They had conquered their India at last; its golden mines lay all before them, and every sword should open a shaft. Riot and rape might be deferred; even murder, though congenial to their taste, was only subsidiary to their business. They had come to take possession of the city’s wealth, and they set themselves faithfully to accomplish their task. For gold, infants were dashed out of existence in their mothers’ arms; for gold, parents were tortured in their children’s presence; for gold, brides were scourged to death before their husbands’ eyes. Wherever treasure was suspected, every expedient which ingenuity, sharpened by greediness, could suggest, was employed to extort it from its possessors. The fire, spreading more extensively and more rapidly than had been desired through the wealthiest quarter of the city, had unfortunately devoured a vast amount of property. Six millions, at least, had thus been swallowed, a destruction by which no one had profited. There was, however, much left. The strong-boxes of the merchants, the gold, silver, and precious jewelry, the velvets, satins, brocades, laces, and similar well concentrated and portable plunder, were rapidly appropriated. So far the course was plain and easy, but in private houses it was more difficult. The cash, plate, and other valuables of individuals were not so easily discovered. Torture was, therefore, at once employed to discover the hidden treasures. After all had been given, if the sum seemed too little, the proprietors were brutally punished for their poverty or their supposed dissimulation. A gentlewoman, named Fabry, with her aged mother and other females of the family, had taken refuge in the
cellar of her mansion. As the day was drawing to a close, a band of plunderers entered, who, after ransacking the house, descended to the cellarage. Finding the door barred, they forced it open with gunpowder. The mother, who was nearest the entrance, fell dead on the threshold. Stepping across her mangled body, the brigands sprang upon her daughter, loudly demanding the property which they believed to be concealed. They likewise insisted on being informed where the master of the house had taken refuge. Protestations of ignorance as to hidden treasure, or the whereabouts of her husband, who, for aught she knew, was lying dead in the streets, were of no avail. To make her more communicative, they hanged her on a beam in the cellar, and after a few moments cut her down before life was extinct. Still receiving no satisfactory reply, where a satisfactory reply was impossible, they hanged her again. Again, after another brief interval, they gave her a second release, and a fresh interrogatory. This barbarity they repeated several times, till they were satisfied that there was nothing to be gained by it, while, on the other hand, they were losing much valuable time. Hoping to be more successful elsewhere, they left her hanging for the last time, and trooped off to fresher fields. 

Strange to relate, the person thus horribly tortured, survived. A servant in her family, married to a Spanish soldier, providentially entered the house in time to rescue her perishing mistress. She was restored to existence, but never to reason. Her brain was hopelessly crazed, and she passed the remainder of her life wandering about her house, or feebly digging in her garden for the buried treasure which she had been thus fiercely solicited to reveal.

A wedding feast was rudely interrupted. Two young persons, neighbors of opulent families, had been long betrothed, and the marriage day had been fixed for Sunday, the fatal fourth of November. The guests were assembled, the ceremony concluded, the nuptial banquet in progress, when the horrible outcries in the streets proclaimed that the Spaniards had broken loose. Hour after hour of trembling expectation succeeded. At last, a thundering at the gate proclaimed the arrival of a band of brigands. Preceded by their captain, a large number of soldiers forced their way into the house, ransacking every chamber, no opposition being offered by the family and friends, too few and powerless to cope with this band of well-armed ruffians. Plate chests, wardrobes, desks, caskets of jewelry, were freely offered, eagerly accepted, but not found sufficient, and to make the luckless wretches furnish more than they possessed, the usual brutalities were employed. The soldiers began by striking the bridegroom dead. The bride fell shrieking into her mother’s arms, whence she was torn by the murderers, who immediately put the mother to death, and an indiscriminate massacre then followed the fruitless attempts to obtain by threats and torture treasure which did not exist. The bride, who was of remarkable beauty, was carried off to the citadel. Maddened by this last outrage, the father, who was the only man of the party left alive, rushed upon the Spaniards. Wresting a sword from one of the crew, the old man dealt with it so fiercely, that he stretched more than one enemy dead at his feet, but it is needless to add that he was soon dispatched. Meantime, while the party were
concluding the plunder of the mansion, the bride was left in a lonely apartment of the fortress. Without wasting time in fruitless lamentation, she resolved to quit the life which a few hours had made so desolate. She had almost succeeded in hanging herself with a massive gold chain which she wore, when her captor entered the apartment. Inflamed, not with lust, but with avarice, excited not by her charms, but by her jewelry, he rescued her from her perilous position. He then took possession of her chain and the other trinkets with which her wedding dress was adorned, and caused her to be entirely stripped of her clothing. She was then scourged with rods till her beautiful body was bathed in blood, and at last alone, naked, nearly mad, was sent back into the city. Here the forlorn creature wandered up and down through the blazing streets, among the heaps of dead and dying, till she was at last put out of her misery by a gang of soldiers.

Such are a few isolated instances, accidentally preserved in their details, of the general horrors inflicted on this occasion. Others innumerable have sunk into oblivion. On the morning of the fifth of November, Antwerp presented a ghastly sight. The magnificent marble Town-house, celebrated as a "world's wonder," even in that age and country, in which so much splendor was lavished on municipal palaces, stood a blackened ruin—all but the walls destroyed, while its archives, accounts, and other valuable contents, had perished. The more splendid portion of the city had been consumed; at least five hundred palaces, mostly of marble or hammered stone, being a smoldering mass of destruction. The dead bodies of those fallen in the massacre were on every side, in greatest profusion around the Place de Meer, among the Gothic pillars of the Exchange, and in the streets near the Town-house. The German soldiers lay in their armor, some with their heads burned from their bodies, some with legs and arms consumed by the flames through which they had fought. The Margrave Goswyn Verreyck, the burgomaster Van der Meere, the magistrates Lancelot van Urselen, Nicholas van Boekholt, and other leading citizens, lay among piles of less distinguished. Slain. They remained unburied until the overseers of the poor, on whom the living had then more importunate claims than the dead, were compelled by Roda to bury them out of the pauper fund. The murderers were too thrifty to be at funeral charges for their victims. The ceremony was not hastily performed, for the number of corpses had not been completed. Two days longer the havoc lasted in the city. Of all the crimes which men can commit, whether from deliberate calculation or in the frenzy of passion, hardly one was omitted, for riot, gaming, rape, which had been postponed to the more stringent claims of robbery and murder, were now rapidly added to the sum of atrocities. History has recorded the account indelibly on her brazen tablets; it can be adjusted only at the judgment-seat above.

Of all the deeds of darkness yet compassed in the Netherlands, this was the worst. It was called The Spanish Fury, by which dread name it has been known for ages. The city, which had been a world of wealth and splendor, was
changed to a charnel-house, and from that hour its commercial prosperity was blasted. Other causes had silently girdled the yet green and flourishing tree, but the Spanish Fury was the fire which consumed it to ashes. Three thousand dead bodies were discovered in the streets, as many more were estimated to have perished in the Scheld, and nearly an equal number were burned or destroyed in other ways. Eight thousand persons undoubtedly were put to death. Six millions of property were destroyed by the fire, and at least as much more was obtained by the Spaniards. In this enormous robbery no class of people was respected. Foreign merchants, living under the express sanction and protection of the Spanish monarch, were plundered with as little reserve as Flemings. Ecclesiastics of the Roman Church were compelled to disgorge their wealth as freely as Calvinists. The rich were made to contribute all their abundance, and the poor what could be wrung from their poverty. Neither paupers nor criminals were safe. Captain Caspar Ortis made a brilliant speculation by taking possession of the Stein, or city prison, whence he ransomed all the inmates who could find means to pay for their liberty. Robbers, murderers, even Anabaptists, were thus again let loose. Rarely has so small a band obtained in three days' robbery so large an amount of wealth. Four or five millions divided among 5,000 soldiers made up for long arrearages, and the Spaniards had reason to congratulate themselves upon having thus taken the duty of payment into their own hands. It is true that the wages of iniquity were somewhat unequally distributed, somewhat foolishly squandered. A private trooper was known to lose 10,000 crowns in one day in a gambling transaction at the Bourse, for the soldiers, being thus handsomely in funds, became desirous of aping the despised and plundered merchants, and resorted daily to the Exchange, like men accustomed to affairs. The dearly purchased gold was thus lightly squandered by many, while others, more prudent, melted their portion into sword-hilts, into scabbards, even into whole suits of armor, darkened, by precaution, to appear made entirely of iron. The brocades, laces, and jewelry of Antwerp merchants were converted into coats of mail for their destroyers. The goldsmiths, however, thus obtained an opportunity to outwit their plunderers, and mingled in the golden armor which they were forced to furnish much more alloy than their employers knew. A portion of the captured booty was thus surreptitiously redeemed.

In this Spanish Fury many more were massacred in Antwerp than in the Saint Bartholomew at Paris. Almost as many living human beings were dashed out of existence now as there had been statues destroyed in the memorable image-breaking of Antwerp, ten years before, an event which had sent such a thrill of horror through the heart of Catholic Christendom. Yet the Netherlanders and the Protestants of Europe may be forgiven, if they regarded this massacre of their brethren with as much execration as had been bestowed upon that fury against stocks and stones. At least, the image-breakers had been actuated by an idea, and their hands were polluted neither with blood nor rapine. Perhaps the Spaniards had been governed equally by religious fanaticism. Might not they believe they were meriting well of their Mother Church while they were
thus disencumbering infidels of their wealth and earth of its infidels? Had not the pope and his cardinals gone to church in solemn procession, to render thanks unto God for the massacre of Paris? Had not cannon thundered and beacons blazed to commemorate that auspicious event? Why should not the Antwerp executioners claim equal commendation? Even if in their delirium they had confounded friend with foe, Catholic with Calvinist, and church property with lay, could they not point to an equal number of dead bodies, and to an incredibly superior amount of plunder?

Marvelously few Spaniards were slain in these eventful days. Two hundred killed is the largest number stated. The discrepancy seems monstrous, but it is hardly more than often existed between the losses inflicted and sustained by the Spaniards in such combats. Their prowess was equal to their ferocity, and this was enough to make them seem endowed with preterhuman powers. When it is remembered, also, that the burghers were insufficiency armed, that many of their defenders turned against them, that many thousands fled in the first moments of the encounter, and when the effect of a sudden and awful panic is duly considered, the discrepancy between the number of killed on the two sides will not seem so astonishing.

A few officers of distinction were taken alive and carried to the castle. Among these were the Seigneur de Capres and young Count Egmont. The councillor Jerome de Roda was lounging on a chair in an open gallery when these two gentlemen were brought before him, and Capres was base enough to make a low obeisance to the man who claimed to represent the whole government of his Majesty. The worthy successor of Vargas replied to his captive’s greeting by a "kick in his stomach," adding, with a brutality which his prototype might have envied, "Ah puto tradidor,"—whoreson traitor—"let me have no salutations from such as you." Young Egmont, who had been captured, fighting bravely at the head of coward troops, by Julian Romero, who nine years before had stood on his father’s scaffold, regarded this brutal scene with haughty indignation. This behavior had more effect upon Roda than the suppleness of Capres. "I am sorry for your misfortune, count," said the councillor, without however rising from his chair, "such is the lot of those who take arms against their king." This was the unfortunate commencement of Philip Egmont’s career, which was destined to be inglorious, vacillating, base, and on more than one occasion unlucky.

A shiver ran through the country as the news of the horrible crime was spread, but it was a shiver of indignation, not of fear. Already the negotiations at Ghent between the representatives of the prince and of Holland and Zealand with the deputies of the other provinces were in a favorable train, and the effect of this event upon their counsels was rather quickening than appalling. A letter from Jerome de Roda to the king was intercepted, giving an account of the transaction. In that document the senator gave the warmest praise to Sancho d’Avila, Julian Romero, Alonzo de Vargas, Francis Verdugo, as well as to the German colonels Fugger, Frondsberger, Polwiller, and others who had most
exerted themselves in the massacre. "I wish your Majesty much good of this victory," concluded the councillor, "'tis a very great one, and the damage to the city is enormous." This cynical view was not calculated to produce a soothing effect on the exasperated minds of the people. On the other hand, the estates of Brabant addressed an eloquent appeal to the states-general, reciting their wrongs, and urging immediate action. "'Tis notorious," said the remonstrants, "that Antwerp was but yesterday the first and principal ornament of all Europe, the refuge of all the nations of the world, the source and supply of countless treasure, the nurse of all arts and industry, the protectress of the Roman Catholic religion, the guardian of science and virtue, and, above all these preeminences, more than faithful and obedient to her sovereign prince and lord. The city is now changed to a gloomy cavern, filled with robbers and murderers, enemies of God, the king, and all good subjects." They then proceeded to recite the story of the massacre, "whereof the memory shall be abominable so long as the world stands," and concluded with an urgent appeal for redress. They particularly suggested that an edict should forthwith be passed, forbidding the alienation of property and the exportation of goods in any form from Antwerp, together with concession of the right to the proprietors of reclaiming their stolen property summarily, whenever and wheresoever it might be found. In accordance with these instructions, an edict was passed, but somewhat tardily, in the hope of relieving some few of the evil consequences by which the Antwerp Fury had been attended.

At about the same time the Prince of Orange addressed a remarkable letter to the states-general then assembled at Ghent, urging them to hasten the conclusion of the treaty. The news of the massacre, which furnished an additional and most vivid illustration of the truth of his letter, had not then reached him at Middelburg, but the earnestness of his views, taken in connection with this last dark deed, exerted a powerful and indelible effect. The letter was a masterpiece, because it was necessary, in his position, to inflame without alarming; to stimulate the feelings which were in unison, without shocking those which, if aroused, might prove discordant. Without, therefore, alluding in terms to the religious question, he dwelt upon the necessity of union, firmness, and wariness. If so much had been done by Holland and Zealand, how much more might be hoped when all the provinces were united? "The principal flower of the Spanish army has fallen," he said, "without having been able to conquer one of those provinces from those whom they call, in mockery, poor beggars; yet what is that handful of cities compared to all the provinces which might join us in the quarrel?" He warned the states of the necessity of showing a strong and united front, the king having been ever led to consider the movement in the Netherlands a mere conspiracy of individuals.

"The king told me himself, in 1559," said Orange, "that if the estates had no pillars to lean upon, they would not talk so loud." It was, therefore, necessary to show that prelates, abbots, monks, seigniors, gentlemen,burghers, and
peasants, the whole people in short, now cried with one voice, and desired with one will. To such a demonstration the king would not dare oppose himself. By thus preserving a firm and united front, sinking all minor differences, they would, moreover, inspire their friends and foreign princes with confidence. The princes of Germany, the lords and gentlemen of France, the Queen of England, although sympathizing with the misfortunes of the Netherlanders, had been unable effectually to help them, so long as their disunion prevented them from helping themselves, so long as even their appeal to arms seemed merely "a levy of bucklers, an emotion of the populace, which, like a wave of the sea, rises and sinks again as soon as risen."

While thus exciting to union and firmness, he also took great pains to instill the necessity of wariness. They were dealing with an artful foe. Intercepted letters had already proved that the old dissimulation was still to be employed, that while Don John of Austria was on his way, the Netherlanders were to be lulled into confidence by glozing speeches. Roda was provided by the king with a secret program of instructions for the new governor’s guidance, and Don Sancho d’Avila, for his countenance to the mutineers of Alost, had been applauded to the echo in Spain. Was not this applause a frequent indication of the policy to be adopted by Don John, and a thousand times more significative one than the unmeaning phrases of barren benignity with which public documents might be crammed? "The old tricks are again brought into service," said the prince, “therefore 'tis necessary to ascertain your veritable friends, to tear off the painted masks from those who, under pretence of not daring to displease the King, are seeking to swim between two waters. 'Tis necessary to have a touchstone; to sign a declaration in such wise that you may know whom to trust, and whom to suspect."

The massacre at Antwerp and the eloquence of the Prince produced a most quickening effect upon the Congress at Ghent. Their deliberations had proceeded with decorum and earnestness, in the midst of the cannonading against the citadel, and the fortress fell on the same day which saw the conclusion of the treaty.

This important instrument, by which the sacrifices and exertions of the prince were, for a brief season, at least, rewarded, contained twenty-five articles. The Prince of Orange, with the estates of Holland and Zealand, on the one side, and the provinces signing, or thereafter to sign the treaty, on the other, agreed that there should be a mutual forgiving and forgetting, as regarded the past. They vowed a close and faithful friendship for the future. They plighted a mutual promise to expel the Spaniards from the Netherlands without delay. As soon as this great deed should be done, there was to be a convocation of the states-general, on the basis of that assembly before which the abdication of the Emperor had taken place. By this congress, the affairs of religion in Holland and Zealand should be regulated, as well as the surrender of fortresses and other places belonging to his Majesty. There was to be full liberty of
communication and traffic between the citizens of the one side and the other. It should not be legal, however, for those of Holland and Zealand to attempt anything outside their own territory against the Roman Catholic religion, nor for cause thereof to injure or irritate anyone, by deed or word. All the placards and edicts on the subject of heresy, together with the criminal ordinances made by the Duke of Alva, were suspended, until the states-general should otherwise ordain. The prince was to remain lieutenant, admiral, and general for his Majesty in Holland, Zealand, and the associated places, till otherwise provided by the states-general, after the departure of the Spaniards. The cities and places included in the prince’s commission, but not yet acknowledging his authority, should receive satisfaction from him, as to the point of religion and other matters, before subscribing to the union. All prisoners, and particularly the Comte de Bossu, should be released without ransom. All estates and other property not already alienated should be restored, all confiscations since 1566 being declared null and void. The Countess Palatine, widow of Brederode, and Count de Buren, son of the Prince of Orange, were expressly named in this provision. Prelates and ecclesiastical persons, having property in Holland and Zealand, should be reinstated, if possible; but in case of alienation, which was likely to be generally the case, there should be reasonable compensation. It was to be decided by the states-general whether the provinces should discharge the debts incurred by the Prince of Orange in his two campaigns. Provinces and cities should not have the benefit of this union until they had signed the treaty, but they should be permitted to sign it when they chose.

This memorable document was subscribed at Ghent, on the eighth of November, by Saint Aldegonde, with eight other commissioners appointed by the Prince of Orange and the estates of Holland on the one side, and by Elbertus Leoninus and other deputies appointed by Brabant, Flanders, Artois, Hainault, Valenciennes, Lille, Douay, Orchies, Namur, Tournay, Utrecht, and Mechlin on the other side.

The arrangement was a masterpiece of diplomacy on the part of the prince, for it was as effectual a provision for the safety of the Reformed religion as could be expected under the circumstances. It was much, considering the change which had been wrought of late years in the fifteen provinces, that they should consent to any treaty with their two heretic sisters. It was much more that the Pacification should recognize the new religion as the established creed of Holland and Zealand, while at the same time the infamous edicts of Charles were formally abolished. In the fifteen Catholic provinces, there was to be no prohibition of private Reformed worship, and it might be naturally expected that with time and the arrival of the banished religionists, a firmer stand would be taken in favor of the Reformation. Meantime, the new religion was formally established in two provinces, and tolerated, in secret, in the other fifteen; the Inquisition was forever abolished, and the whole strength of the nation enlisted to expel the foreign soldiery from the soil. This was the work of William the Silent, and the great prince thus saw the labor of years crowned with at least a
momentary success. His satisfaction was very great when it was announced to him, many days before the exchange of the signatures, that the treaty had been concluded. He was desirous that the Pacification should be referred for approval, not to the municipal magistrates only, but to the people itself. In all great emergencies, the man who, in his whole character, least resembled a demagogue, either of antiquity or of modern times, was eager for a fresh expression of the popular will. On this occasion, however, the demand for approbation was superfluous. The whole country thought with his thoughts, and spoke with his words, and the Pacification, as soon as published, was received with a shout of joy. Proclaimed in the market-place of every city and village, it was ratified, not by votes, but by hymns of thanksgiving, by triumphal music, by thundering of cannon, and by the blaze of beacons, throughout the Netherlands. Another event added to the satisfaction of the hour. The country so recently, and by deeds of such remarkable audacity, conquered by the Spaniards in the North, was recovered almost simultaneously with the conclusion of the Ghent treaty. It was a natural consequence of the great mutiny. The troops having entirely deserted Mondragon, it became necessary for that officer to abandon Zierickzee, the city which had been won with so much valor. In the beginning of November, the capital, and with it the whole island of Schouwen, together with the rest of Zealand, excepting Tholen, was recovered by Count Hohenlo, lieutenant-general of the Prince of Orange, and acting according to his instructions.

Thus, on this particular point of time, many great events had been crowded. At the very same moment Zealand had been redeemed, Antwerp ruined, and the league of all the Netherlands against the Spaniards concluded. It now became known that another and most important event had occurred at the same instant. On the day before the Antwerp massacre, four days before the publication of the Ghent treaty, a foreign cavalier, attended by a Moorish slave and by six men-at-arms, rode into the streets of Luxemburg. The cavalier was Don Ottavio Gonzaga, brother of the Prince of Melfi. The Moorish slave was Don John of Austria, the son of the Emperor, the conqueror of Granada, the hero of Lepanto. The new governor-general had traversed Spain and France in disguise with great celerity, and in the romantic manner which belonged to his character. He stood at last on the threshold of the Netherlands, but with all his speed he had moved a few days too late.

End of Part Four
CHAPTER 1

The Beginning of Don John’s Administration and the Perpetual Edict

Don John of Austria was now in his thirty-second year, having been born in Ratisbon on February 24, 1545. His father was Charles V, Emperor of Germany, King of Spain, Dominator of Asia, Africa, and America; his mother Barbara Blomberg, washerwoman of Ratisbon. Introduced to the Emperor, originally, that she might alleviate his melancholy by her singing, she soon exhausted all that was harmonious in her nature, for never was a more uncomfortable, unmanageable personage than Barbara in her after life. Married to one Pyramus
Kegell, who was made a military commissary in the Netherlands, she was left a widow in the beginning of Alva’s administration. Placed under the especial superintendence of the duke, she became the torment of that warrior’s life. The terrible governor, who could almost crush the heart out of a nation of three millions, was unable to curb this single termagant. Philip had expressly forbidden her to marry again, but Alva informed him that she was surrounded by suitors. Philip had insisted that she should go into a convent, but Alva, who, with great difficulty, had established her quietly in Ghent, assured his master that she would break loose again at the bare suggestion of a convent. Philip wished her to go to Spain, sending her word that Don John was mortified by the life his mother was leading, but she informed the governor that she would be cut to pieces before she would go to Spain. She had no objection to see her son, but she knew too well how women were treated in that country. The duke complained most pathetically to his Majesty of the life they all led with the ex-mistress of the Emperor. Never, he frequently observed, had woman so terrible a head. She was obstinate, reckless, abominably extravagant. She had been provided in Ghent with a handsome establishment, “with a duenna, six other women, a major domo, two pages, one chaplain, an almoner, and four menservants,” and this seemed a sufficiently liberal scheme of life for the widow of a commissary. Moreover, a very ample allowance had been made for the education of her only legitimate son, Conrad, the other having perished by an accident on the day of his father’s death. While Don John of Austria was gathering laurels in Granada, his half-brother, Pyramus junior, had been ingloriously drowned in a cistern at Ghent.

Barbara’s expenses were exorbitant, her way of life scandalous. To send her money, said Alva, was to throw it into the sea. In two days she would have spent in dissipation and feasting any sums which the king might choose to supply. The duke, who feared nothing else in the world, stood in mortal awe of the widow Kegell. ”A terrible animal, indeed, is an unbridled woman,” wrote secretary Cayas, from Madrid, at the close of Alva’s administration, for, notwithstanding, every effort to entice, to intimidate, and to kidnap her from the Netherlands, there she remained, through all vicissitudes, even till the arrival of Don John. By his persuasions or commands she was, at last, induced to accept an exile for the remainder of her days, in Spain, but revenged herself by asserting that he was quite mistaken in supposing himself the Emperor’s child, a point, certainly, upon which her authority might be thought conclusive. Thus there was a double mystery about Don John. He might be the issue of august parentage on one side; he was, possibly, sprung of most ignoble blood. Base-born at best, he was not sure whether to look for the author of his being in the halls of the Caesar’s or the booths of Ratisbon mechanics.

Whatever might be the heart of the mystery, it is certain that it was allowed to enwrap all the early life of Don John. The Emperor, who certainly never doubted his responsibility for the infant’s existence, had him conveyed instantly to Spain, where he was delivered to Louis Quixada, of the Imperial
household, by whom he was brought up in great retirement at Villa-Garcia. Magdalen Ulloa, wife of Quixada, watched over his infancy with maternal and magnanimous care, for her husband’s extreme solicitude for the infant’s welfare had convinced her that he was its father. On one occasion, when their house was in flames, Quixada rescued the infant before he saved his wife, “although Magdalen knew herself to be dearer to him than the apple of his eye.” From that time forth she altered her opinion, and believed the mysterious child to be of lofty origin. The boy grew up full of beauty, grace, and agility, the leader of all his companions in every hardy sport. Through the country round there were none who could throw the javelin, break a lance, or ride at the ring like little Juan Quixada. In taming unmanageable horses he was celebrated for his audacity and skill. These accomplishments, however, were likely to prove of but slender advantage in the ecclesiastical profession, to which he had been destined by his Imperial father. The death of Charles occurred before clerical studies had been commenced, and Philip, to whom the secret had been confided at the close of the Emperor’s life, prolonged the delay thus interposed.

Juan had already reached his fourteenth year, when one day his supposed father Quixada invited him to ride towards Valladolid to see the royal hunt. Two horses stood at the door—a splendidly caparisoned charger and a common hackney. The boy naturally mounted the humbler steed, and they set forth for the mountains of Toro, but on hearing the bugles of the approaching huntsmen, Quixada suddenly halted, and bade his youthful companion exchange horses with himself. When this had been done, he seized the hand of the wondering boy and kissing it respectfully, exclaimed, "Your Highness will be informed as to the meaning of my conduct by his Majesty, who is even now approaching." They had proceeded but a short distance before they encountered the royal hunting party, when both Quixada and young Juan dismounted, and bent the knee to their monarch. Philip, commanding the boy to rise, asked him if he knew his father’s name. Juan replied, with a sigh, that he had at that moment lost the only father whom he had known, for Quixada had just disowned him. "You have the same father as myself," cried the king, "the Emperor Charles was the august parent of us both." Then tenderly embracing him, he commanded him to remount his horse, and all returned together to Valladolid, Philip observing with a sentimentality that seems highly apocryphal, that he had never brought home such precious game from any hunt before.

This theatrical recognition of imperial descent was one among the many romantic incidents of Don John’s picturesque career, for his life was never destined to know the commonplace. He now commenced his education, in company with his two nephews, the Duchess Margaret’s son, and Don Carlos, Prince-Royal of Spain. They were all of the same age, but the superiority of Don John was soon recognized. It was not difficult to surpass the limping, malicious, Carlos, either in physical graces or intellectual accomplishments, but the graceful, urbane, and chivalrous Alexander, destined afterwards to
such wide celebrity, was a more formidable rival, yet even the professed panegyrist of the Farnese family, exalts the son of Barbara Blomberg over the grandson of Margaret van Geest.

Still destined for the clerical profession, Don John, at the age of eighteen, to avoid compliance with Philip's commands, made his escape to Barcelona. It was his intention to join the Maltese expedition. Recalled peremptorily by Philip, he was for a short time in disgrace, but afterwards made his peace with the monarch by denouncing some of the mischievous schemes of Don Carlos. Between the Prince-Royal and the imperial bastard, there had always been a deep animosity, the Infante having on one occasion saluted him with the most vigorous and offensive appellation which his illegitimate birth could suggest. "Base-born or not," returned Don John, "at any rate I had a better father than yours." The words were probably reported to Philip and doubtless rankled in his breast, but nothing appeared on the surface, and the youth rose rapidly in favor. In his twenty-third year, he was appointed to the command of the famous campaign against the insurgent Moors of Granada. Here he reaped his first laurels, and acquired great military celebrity. It is difficult to be dazzled by such glory. He commenced his operations by the expulsion of nearly all the Moorish inhabitants of Granada, bedridden men, women, and children, together, and the cruelty inflicted, the sufferings patiently endured in that memorable deportation, were enormous.

But few of the many thousand exiles survived the horrid march, those who were so unfortunate as to do so being sold into slavery by their captors. Still a few Moors held out in their mountain fastnesses, and two years long the rebellion of this handful made head against the power of Spain. Had their envoys to the Ports succeeded in their negotiation, the throne of Philip might have trembled, but Selim hated the Republic of Venice as much as he loved the wine of Cyprus. While the Moors were gasping out their last breath in Granada and Ronda, the Turks had wrested the island of Venus from the grasp of the haughty Republic. Famagosta had fallen; thousands of Venetians had been butchered with a ferocity which even Christians could not have surpassed; the famous General Bragadino had been flayed, stuffed, and sent hanging on the yardarm of a frigate, to Constantinople, as a present to the Commander of the Faithful; and the mortgage of Catherine Cornaro, to the exclusion of her husband's bastards, had been thus definitely cancelled. With such practical enjoyments, Selim was indifferent to the splendid but shadowy vision of the Occidental caliphate—yet the revolt of the Moors was only terminated, after the departure of Don John, by the Duke of Arcos.

The war which the Sultan had avoided in the West, came to seek him in the East. To lift the Crucifix against the Crescent, at the head of the powerful but quarrelsome alliance between Venice, Spain, and Rome, Don John arrived at Naples. He brought with him more than a hundred ships and 23,000 men, as the Spanish contingent. Three months long the hostile fleets had been cruising in
the same waters without an encounter; three more were wasted in barren maneuvers. Neither Mussulman nor Christian had much inclination for the conflict, the Turk fearing the consequences of a defeat, by which gains already secured might be forfeited; the allies being appalled at the possibility of their own triumph. Nevertheless, the Ottomans maneuvered themselves at last into the Gulf of Lepanto; the Christians maneuvered themselves towards its mouth as the foe was coming forth again. The conflict thus rendered inevitable, both Turk and Christian became equally eager for the fray, equally confident of victory. Six hundred vessels of war met face to face. Rarely in history had so gorgeous a scene of martial array been witnessed. An October sun gilded the thousand beauties of an Ionian landscape. Athens and Corinth were behind the combatants, the mountains of Alexander’s Macedon rose in the distance; the rock of Sappho and the heights of Actium were before their eyes. Since the day when the world had been lost and won beneath that famous promontory, no such combat as the one now approaching had been fought upon the waves. The chivalrous young commander dispatched energetic messages to his fellow chieftains, and now that it was no longer possible to elude the encounter, the martial ardor of the allies was kindled. The Venetian High-Admiral replied with words of enthusiasm. Colonna, lieutenant of the league, answered his chief in the language of St. Peter, "Though I die, yet will I not deny thee."

The fleet was arranged in three divisions. The Ottomans, not drawn up in crescent form, as usual, had the same triple disposition. Barbarigo and the other Venetians commanded on the left, John Andrew Doria on the right, while Don John himself and Colonna were in the center. Crucifix in hand, the High-Admiral rowed from ship to ship exhorting generals and soldiers to show themselves worthy of the cause which he had persuaded himself was holy. Fired by his eloquence and by the sight of the enemy, his hearers answered with eager shouts, while Don John returned to his ship, knelt upon the quarter-deck, and offered a prayer. He then ordered the trumpets to sound the assault, commanded his sailing-master to lay him alongside the Turkish Admiral, and the battle began. The Venetians, who were first attacked, destroyed ship after ship of their assailants after a close and obstinate contest, but Barbarigo fell dead ere the sunset, with an arrow through his brain. Meantime the action, immediately after the first onset, had become general. From noon till evening the battle raged, with a carnage rarely recorded in history. Don John’s own ship lay yardarm and yardarm with the Turkish Admiral, and exposed to the fire of seven large vessels besides. It was a day when personal audacity, not skillful tactics, was demanded, and the imperial bastard showed the metal he was made of. The Turkish Admiral’s ship was destroyed, his head exposed from Don John’s deck upon a pike, and the trophy became the signal for a general panic and a complete victory. By sunset the battle had been won.

Of nearly three hundred Turkish galleys, but fifty made their escape. From twenty-five to thirty thousand Turks were slain, and perhaps ten thousand Christians. The galley slaves on both sides fought well, and the only beneficial
result of the victory was the liberation of several thousand Christian captives. It is true that their liberty was purchased with the lives of a nearly equal number of Christian soldiers, and by the reduction to slavery of almost as many thousand Mussulmen, duly distributed among the Christian victors. Many causes contributed to this splendid triumph. The Turkish ships, inferior in number, were also worse manned than those of their adversaries, and their men were worse armed. Every bullet of the Christians told on muslin turban and embroidered tunics, while the arrows of the Moslems fell harmless on the casques and corslets of their foes. The Turks, too, had committed the fatal error of fighting upon a lee shore. Having no sea room, and being repelled in their first onset, many galleys were driven upon the rocks, to be destroyed with all their crews.

But whatever the cause of the victory, its consequence was to spread the name and fame of Don John of Austria throughout the world. Alva wrote, with enthusiasm, to congratulate him, pronouncing the victory the most brilliant one ever achieved by Christians, and Don John the greatest general since the death of Julius Caesar. At the same time, with a sarcastic fling at the erection of the Escorial, he advised Philip to improve this new success in some more practical way than by building a house for the Lord and a sepulchre for the dead. "If," said the duke, "the conquests of Spain be extended in consequence of this triumph, then, indeed, will the Cherubim and Seraphim sing glory to God." A courier, dispatched post haste to Spain, bore the glorious news, together with the sacred standard of the Prophet, the holy of holies, inscribed with the name of Allah 28,900 times, always kept in Mecca during peace, and never since the conquest of Constantinople lost in battle before. The king was at vespers in the Escorial. Entering the sacred precincts, breathless, travel-stained, excited, the messenger found Philip impassible as marble to the wondrous news. Not a muscle of the royal visage was moved, not a syllable escaped the royal lips, save a brief order to the clergy to continue the interrupted vespers. When the service had been methodically concluded, the king made known the intelligence and requested a Te Deum.

The youthful commander-in-chief obtained more than his full meed of glory. No doubt he had fought with brilliant valor of Courage, yet in so close and murderous a conflict, the no single individual could decide the day, and the result was due to the combined determination of all. Had Don John remained at Naples, the issue might have easily been the same. Barbarigo, who sealed the victory with his blood, Colonna, who celebrated a solemn triumph on his return to Philip’s entreaty, conferred the baton of command upon Don John. The meager result of the contest is as notorious as the victory. While Constantinople was quivering with apprehension, the rival generals were already wrangling with animosity. Had the Christian fleet advanced, every soul would have fled from the capital, but Providence had ordained otherwise, and Don John sailed westwardly with his ships. He made a descent on the Barbary coast, captured Tunis, destroyed Biserta, and brought King Amidus and his two
sons prisoners to Italy. Ordered by Philip to dismantle the fortifications of Tunis, he replied by repairing them thoroughly, and by placing a strong garrison within the citadel. Intoxicated with his glory, the young adventurer already demanded a crown, and the pope was disposed to proclaim him King of Tunis, for the Queen of the Lybian seas was to be the capital of his Empire, the new Carthage which he already dreamed.

Philip thought it time to interfere, for he felt that his own crown might be insecure, with such a restless and ambitious spirit indulging in possible and impossible chimeras. He removed John de Soto, who had been Don John’s chief councillor and emissary to the pope, and substituted in his place the celebrated and ill-starred Escovedo. The new secretary, however, entered as heartily but secretly into all these romantic schemes. Disappointed of the Empire which he had contemplated on the edge of the African desert, the champion of the Cross turned to the cold islands of the northern seas. There sighed, in captivity, the beauteous Mary of Scotland, victim of the heretic Elizabeth. His susceptibility to the charms of beauty—a characteristic as celebrated as his courage—was excited, his chivalry aroused. What holier triumph for the conqueror of the Saracens than the subjugation of these northern infidels? He would dethrone the proud Elizabeth; he would liberate and espouse the Queen of Scots, and together they would reign over the two united realms. All that the pope could do with bulls and blessings, letters of excommunication, and patents of investiture, he did with his whole heart. Don John was at liberty, to be King of England and Scotland as soon as he liked; all that was left to do was to conquer the kingdoms.

Meantime, while these schemes were flitting through his brain, and were yet kept comparatively secret by the pope, Escovedo, and himself, the news reached him in Italy that he had been appointed governor-general of the Netherlands. Nothing could be more opportune. In the provinces were ten thousand veteran Spaniards, ripe for adventure, hardened by years of warfare, greedy for gold, audacious almost beyond humanity, the very instruments for his scheme. The times were critical in the Netherlands, it was true; yet he would soon pacify those paltry troubles, and then sweep forward to his prize. Yet events were rushing forward with such feverish rapidity, that he might be too late for his adventure. Many days were lost in the necessary journey from Italy into Spain to receive the final instructions of the king. The news from the provinces grew more and more threatening. With the impetuosity and romance of his temperament, he selected his confidential friend Ottavio Gonzaga, six men-at-arms, and an adroit and well-experienced Swiss courier, who knew every road of France. It was no light adventure for the Catholic Governor-General of the Netherlands to traverse the kingdom at that particular juncture. Staining his bright locks and fair face to the complexion of a Moor, he started on his journey, attired as the servant of Gonzaga. Arriving at Paris, after a rapid journey, he descended at a hostelry opposite the residence of the Spanish ambassador, Don Diego de Cuñiga. After nightfall he had a secret interview
with that functionary, and learning, among other matters, that there was to be a great ball that night at the Louvre, he determined to go thither in disguise. There, notwithstanding his hurry, he had time to see and to become desperately enamored of “that wonder of beauty,” the fair and frail Margaret of Valois, Queen of Navarre. Her subsequent visit to her young adorer at Namur, to be recorded in a future page of this history, was destined to mark the last turning point in his picturesque career. On his way to the Netherlands he held a rapid interview with the Duke of Guise, to arrange his schemes for the liberation and espousal of that noble’s kinswoman, the Scottish queen, and on the third of November arrived at Luxemburg.

There stood the young conqueror of Lepanto, his brain full of schemes, his heart full of hopes, on the threshold of the Netherlands, at the entrance to what he believed the most brilliant chapter of his life-schemes, hopes, and visions, loomed speedily to fade before the cold reality with which he was to be confronted. Throwing off his disguise after reaching Luxemburg, the youthful paladin stood confessed. His appearance was as romantic as his origin and his exploits. Every contemporary chronicler, French, Spanish, Italian, Flemish, Roman, have dwelt upon his personal beauty and the singular fascination of his manner. Symmetrical features, blue eyes of great vivacity, and a profusion of bright curling hair, were combined with a person not much above middle height, but perfectly well proportioned. Owing to a natural peculiarity of his head, the hair fell backward from the temples, and he had acquired the habit of pushing it from his brows. The custom became a fashion among the host of courtiers, who were but too happy to glass themselves in so brilliant a mirror. As Charles V, on his journey to Italy to assume the iron crown, had caused his hair to be clipped close, as a remedy for the headaches with which, at that momentous epoch, he was tormented, bringing thereby close shaven polls into extreme fashion; so a mass of hair pushed backward from the temples, in the style to which the name of John of Austria was appropriated, became the prevailing mode wherever the favorite son of the Emperor appeared.

Such was the last crusader whom the annals of chivalry were to know, the man who had humbled the crescent as it had not been humbled since the days of the Tancreds, the Baldwins, the Plantagenets—yet, after all, what was this brilliant adventurer when weighed against the tranquil Christian champion whom he was to meet face to face? The contrast was striking between the real and the romantic hero. Don John had pursued and achieved glory through victories with which the world was ringing; William was slowly compassing a country’s emancipation through a series of defeats. He molded a commonwealth and united hearts with as much contempt for danger as Don John had exhibited in scenes of slave driving and carnage. Amid fields of blood, and through webs of tortuous intrigue, the brave and subtle son of the Emperor pursued only his own objects. Tawdry schemes of personal ambition, conquests for his own benefit, impossible crowns for his own wearing, were the motives
which impelled him, and the prizes which he sought. His existence was feverish, fitful, and passionate. "Tranquil amid the raging billows," according to his favorite device, the father of his country waved aside the diadem which for him had neither charms nor meaning. Their characters were as contrasted as their persons. The curled darling of chivalry seemed a youth at thirty-one. Spare of figure, plain in apparel, benignant, but haggard of countenance, with temples bared by anxiety as much as by his helmet, earnest, almost devout in manner, in his own words, "Calvus et Calvinista," William of Orange was an old man at forty-three.

Perhaps there was as much good faith on the part of Don John, when he arrived in Luxemburg, as could be expected of a man coming directly from the cabinet of Philip. The king had secretly instructed him to conciliate the provinces, but to concede nothing, for the governor was only a new incarnation of the insane paradox that benignity and the system of Charles V were one. He was directed to restore the government to its state during the imperial epoch. Seventeen provinces, in two of which the population were all dissenters, in all of which the principle of mutual toleration had just been accepted by Catholics and Protestants, were now to be brought back to the condition according to which all Protestants were beheaded, burned, or buried alive. So that the Inquisition, the absolute authority of the monarch, and the exclusive worship of the Roman Church were preserved intact, the king professed himself desirous of "extinguishing the fires of rebellion, and of saving the people from the last desperation." With these slight exceptions, Philip was willing to be very benignant. "More than this," said he "cannot and ought not be conceded." To these brief but pregnant instructions was added a morsel of advice, personal in its nature, but very characteristic of the writer. Don John was recommended to take great care of his soul, and also to be very cautious in the management of his amours.

Thus counseled and secretly directed, the new captain-general had been dismissed to the unhappy Netherlands. The position, however, was necessarily false. The man who was renowned for martial exploits, and notoriously devoured by ambition, could hardly inspire deep confidence in the pacific dispositions of the government. The crusader of Granada and Lepanto, the champion of the ancient Church, was not likely to please the rugged Zealanders who had let themselves be hacked to pieces rather than say one Paternoster, and who had worn crescents in their caps at Leyden, to prove their deeper hostility to the pope than to the Turk. The imperial bastard would derive but slight consideration from his paternal blood, in a country where illegitimate birth was more unfavorably regarded than in most other countries, and where a Brabantine edict, recently issued in name of the king, deprived all political or civil functionaries not born in wedlock, of their offices. Yet he had received instructions, at his departure, to bring about a pacification, if possible, always maintaining, however, the absolute authority of the crown and the exclusive exercise of the Catholic religion. How the two great points of his instructions
were to be made entirely palatable, was left to time and chance. There was a vague notion that with the new governor’s fame, fascinating manners, and imperial parentage, he might accomplish a result which neither fraud nor force, not the arts of Granvelle, nor the atrocity of Alva, nor the licentiousness of a buccaneering soldiery, had been able to effect. As for Don John himself, he came with no definite plans for the Netherlanders, but with very daring projects of his own, and to pursue these misty visions was his main business on arriving in the provinces. In the meantime he was disposed to settle the Netherland difficulty in some showy, off-hand fashion, which should cost him but little trouble, and occasion no detriment to the cause of papacy or absolutism. Unfortunately for these rapid arrangements, William of Orange was in Zealand, and the Pacification had just been signed at Ghent.

It was, naturally, with very little satisfaction that the prince beheld the arrival of Don John. His sagacious combinations would henceforth be impeded, if not wholly frustrated. This he foresaw. He knew that there could be no intention of making any arrangement in which Holland and Zealand could be included. He was confident that any recognition of the Reformed religion was as much out of the question now as ever. He doubted not that there were many Catholic magnates, wavering politicians, aspirants for royal favor, who would soon be ready to desert the cause which had so recently been made a general cause, and who would soon be undermining the work of their own hands. The Pacification of Ghent would never be maintained in letter and spirit by the viceregent of Philip; for however its sense might be commented upon or perverted, the treaty, while it recognized Catholicism as the state religion, conceded, to a certain extent, liberty of conscience. An immense stride had been taken, by abolishing the edicts, and prohibiting persecution. If that step were now retraced, the new religion was doomed, and the liberties of Holland and Zealand destroyed. "If they make an arrangement with Don John, it will be for us of the religion to run," wrote the prince to his brother, "for their intention is to suffer no person of that faith to have a fixed domicile in the Netherlands." It was, therefore, with a calm determination to counteract and crush the policy of the youthful governor that William the Silent awaited his antagonist. Were Don John admitted to confidence, the peace of Holland and Zealand was gone. Therefore it was necessary to combat him both openly and secretly—by loud remonstrance and by invisible stratagem. What chance had the impetuous and impatient young hero in such an encounter with the foremost statesman of the age? He had arrived, with all the self-confidence of a conqueror; he did not know that he was to be played upon like a pipe, to be caught in meshes spread by his own hands, to struggle blindly, to rage impotently, to die ingloriously.

The prince had lost no time in admonishing the states-general as to the course which should now be pursued. He was of opinion that, upon their conduct at this crisis depended the future destinies of the Netherlands. "If we understand how to make proper use of the new governor’s arrival," said he, "it may prove
very advantageous to us; if not, it will be the commencement of our total ruin." The spirit of all his communications was to infuse the distrust which he honestly felt, and which he certainly took no pains to disguise; to impress upon his countrymen the importance of improving the present emergency by the enlargement, instead of the threatened contraction of their liberties, and to enforce with all his energy the necessity of a firm union. He assured the estates that Don John had been sent, in this simple manner, to the country, because the king and cabinet had begun to despair of carrying their point by force. At the same time he warned them that force would doubtless be replaced by fraud. He expressed his conviction that so soon as Don John should attain the ascendancy which he had been sent to secure, the gentleness which now smiled upon the surface would give place to the deadlier purposes which lurked below. He went so far as distinctly to recommend the seizure of Don John’s person. By so doing, much bloodshed might be saved, for such was the king’s respect for the Emperor’s son that their demands would be granted rather than that his liberty should be permanently endangered. In a very striking and elaborate letter which he addressed from Middelburg to the estates-general, he insisted on the expediency of seizing the present opportunity in order to secure and to expand their liberties, and urged them to assert broadly the principle that the true historical polity of the Netherlands was a representative, constitutional government. Don John, on arriving at Luxemburg, had demanded hostages for his own security, a measure which could not but strike the calmest spectator as an infraction of all provincial rights. "He asks you to disarm," continued William of Orange, "he invites you to furnish hostages, but the time has been when the lord of the land came unarmed and uncovered, before the estates-general, and swore to support the constitutions before his own sovereignty could be recognized."

He reiterated his suspicions as to the honest intentions of the government, and sought, as forcibly as possible, to infuse an equal distrust into the minds of those he addressed. "Antwerp," said he, "once the powerful and blooming, now the most forlorn and desolate city of Christendom, suffered because she dared to exclude the king’s troops. You may be sure that you are all to have a place at the same banquet. We may forget the past, but princes never forget, when the means of vengeance are placed within their hands. Nature teaches them to arrive at their end by fraud, when violence will not avail them. Like little children, they whistle to the birds they would catch. Promises and pretences they will furnish in plenty."

He urged them on no account to begin any negotiation with the governor, except on the basis of the immediate departure of the soldiery. "Make no agreement with him, unless the Spanish and other foreign troops have been sent away beforehand; beware, meantime, of disbanding your own; for that were to put the knife into his hands to cut your own throats withal." He then proceeded to sketch the outlines of a negotiation, such as he could recommend. The plan was certainly sufficiently bold, and it could hardly cause
astonishment, if it were not immediately accepted by Don John, as the basis of an arrangement. "Remember this is not play," said the prince, "and that you have to choose between the two, either total ruin or manly self-defense. Don John must command the immediate departure of the Spaniards. All our privileges must be revised, and an oath to maintain them required. New councils of state and finance must be appointed by the estates. The general assembly ought to have power to come together twice or thrice yearly, and, indeed, as often as they choose. The states-general must administer and regulate all affairs. The citadels must be demolished everywhere. No troops ought to be enlisted, nor garrisons established, without the consent of the estates."

In all the documents, whether public memorials or private letters, which came at this period from the hand of the prince, he assumed, as a matter of course, that in any arrangement with the new governor the Pacification of Ghent was to be maintained. This, too, was the determination of almost every man in the country. Don John, soon after his arrival at Luxemburg, had dispatched messengers to the states-general, informing them of his arrival. It was not before the close of the month of November that the negotiations seriously began. Provost Fonck, on the part of the governor, then informed them of Don John’s intention to enter Namur, attended by fifty mounted troopers. Permission, however, was resolutely refused, and the burghers of Namur were forbidden to render oaths of fidelity until the governor should have complied with the preliminary demands of the estates. To enunciate these demands categorically, a deputation of the estates-general came to Luxemburg. These gentlemen were received with courtesy by Don John, but their own demeanor was not conciliatory. A dislike to the Spanish government, a disloyalty to the monarch with whose brother and representative they were dealing, pierced through all their language. On the other hand, the ardent temper of Don John was never slow to take offense. One of the deputies proposed to the governor, with great coolness, that he should assume the government in his own name, and renounce the authority of Philip. Were he willing to do so, the patriotic gentleman pledged himself that the provinces would at once acknowledge him as sovereign and sustain his government. Don John, enraged at the insult to his own loyalty which the proposition implied, drew his dagger and rushed towards the offender. The deputy would, probably, have paid for his audacity with his life had there not been bystanders enough to prevent the catastrophe. This scene was an unsatisfactory prelude to the opening negotiations.

On the sixth of December the deputies presented to the governor at Luxemburg a paper, containing their demands, drawn up in eight articles, and their concessions in ten. The states insisted on the immediate removal of the troops, with the understanding that they were never to return, but without prohibition of their departure by sea; they demanded the immediate release of all prisoners; they insisted on the maintenance of the Ghent treaty, there being nothing therein which did not tend to the furtherance of the Catholic religion;
they claimed an act of amnesty; they required the convocation of the states-general, on the basis of that assembly before which took place the abdication of Charles V; they demanded an oath, on the part of Don John, to maintain all the charters and customs of the country. Should these conditions be complied with, the deputies consented on the part of the estates, that he should be acknowledged as governor, and that the Catholic religion and the authority of his Majesty should be maintained. They agreed that all foreign leagues should be renounced, their own foreign soldiery disbanded, and a guard of honor, native Netherlanders, such as his Majesty was contented with at his "Blythe Entrance," provided. A truce of fifteen days, for negotiations, was furthermore proposed.

Don John made answers to these propositions by adding a brief comment, as apostille, upon each of the eighteen articles, in succession. He would send away the troops, but, at the same time, the states must disband their own. He declined engaging himself not to recall his foreign soldiery, should necessity require their service. With regard to the Ghent Pacification, he professed himself ready for a general peace negotiation, on condition that the supremacy of the Catholic Church and the authority of his Majesty were properly secured. He would settle upon some act of amnesty after due consultation with the State Council. He was willing that the states should be convoked in general assembly, provided sufficient security were given him that nothing should be there transacted prejudicial to the Catholic religion and the king's sovereignty. As for their privileges, he would govern as had been done in the time of his imperial father. He expressed his satisfaction with most of the promises offered by the estates, particularly with their expression in favor of the Church and of his Majesty's authority, the two all-important points to secure which he had come thither unattended, at the peril of his life, but he received their offer of a bodyguard, by which his hirelings were to be superseded, with very little gratitude. He was on the point, he said, of advancing as far as Marche en Famine, and should take with him as strong a guard as he considered necessary, and composed of such troops as he had at hand. Nothing decisive came of this first interview. The parties had taken the measures of their mutual claims, and after a few days, fencing with apostilles, replies, and rejoinders, they separated, their acrimony rather inflamed than appeased.

The departure of the troops and the Ghent treaty were the vital points in the negotiation. The estates had originally been content that the troops should go by sea. Their suspicions were, however, excited by the pertinacity with which Don John held to this mode of removal. Although they did not suspect the mysterious invasion of England, a project which was the real reason why the governor objected to their departure by land, yet they soon became aware that he had been secretly tampering with the troops at every point. The effect of these secret negotiations with the leading officers of the army was a general expression of their unwillingness, on account of the lateness of the season, the difficult and dangerous condition of the roads and mountain-passes, the plague
in Italy, and other pretexts, to undertake so long a journey by land. On the other hand, the states, seeing the anxiety and the duplicity of Don John upon this particular point, came to the resolution to thwart him at all hazards, and insisted on the land journey. Too long a time, too much money, too many ships would be necessary, they said, to forward so large a force by sea, and in the meantime it would be necessary to permit them to live for another indefinite period at the charge of the estates.

With regard to the Ghent Pacification, the estates, in the course of December, procured an express opinion from the eleven professors of theology, and doctors *utriusque juris* of Louvain, that the treaty contained nothing which conflicted with the supremacy of the Catholic religion. The various bishops, deacons, abbots, and pastors of the Netherlands made a similar decision. An elaborate paper, drawn up by the State-Council, at the request of the states-general, declared that there was nothing in the Pacification derogatory to the supreme authority of his Majesty. Thus fortified with opinions which, it must be confessed, were rather dogmatically than argumentatively drawn up, and which it would have been difficult very logically to defend, the states looked forward confidently to the eventual acceptance by Don John of the terms proposed. In the meantime, while there was still an indefinite pause in the negotiations, a remarkable measure came to aid the efficacy of the Ghent Pacification.

Early in January, 1577, the celebrated "Union of Brussels" was formed. This important agreement was originally signed by eight leading personages, the Abbot of Saint Gertrude, the Counts Lalain and Bossu, and the Seigneur de Champagny being among the number. Its tenor was to engage its signers to compass the immediate expulsion of the Spaniards and the execution of the Ghent Pacification, to maintain the Catholic religion and the king’s authority, and to defend the fatherland and all its constitutions. Its motive was to generalize the position assumed by the Ghent treaty. The new act was to be signed, not by a few special deputies alone, like a diplomatic convention, but by all the leading individuals of all the provinces, in order to exhibit to Don John such an array of united strength that he would find himself forced to submit to the demands of the estates. The tenor, motive, and effect were all as had been proposed and foreseen. The agreement to expel the Spaniards, under the Catholic and loyal manifestations indicated, passed from hand to hand through all the provinces. It soon received the signature and support of all the respectability, wealth, and intelligence of the whole country. Nobles, ecclesiastics, citizens, hastened to give to it their adhesion. The states-general had sent it, by solemn resolution, to every province, in order that every man might be forced to range himself either upon the side of the fatherland or of despotism. Two copies of the signatures procured in each province were ordered, of which one was to be deposited in its archives, and the other forwarded to Brussels. In a short time, every province, with the single exception of Luxemburg, had loaded the document with signatures. This was a
great step in advance. The Ghent Pacification, which was in the nature of a
treaty between the prince and the estates of Holland and Zealand on the one
side, and a certain number of provinces on the other, had only been signed by
the envoys of the contracting parties. Though received with deserved and
universal acclamation, it had not the authority of a popular document. This,
however, was the character studiously impressed upon the "Brussels Union."
The people, subdivided according to the various grades of their social
hierarchy, had been solemnly summoned to council, and had deliberately
recorded their conviction. No restraint had been put upon their freedom of
action, and there was hardly a difference of opinion as to the necessity of the
measure.

A rapid revolution in Friesland, Groningen, and the dependencies, had recently
restored that important country to the national party. The Portuguese De Billy
had been deprived of his authority as king's stadholder, and Count
Hoogstraaten's brother, Baron de Ville, afterwards as Count Renneberg,
infamous for his treason to the cause of liberty, had been appointed by the
estates in his room. In all this district the "Union of Brussels" was eagerly signed
by men of every degree. Holland and Zealand, no less than the Catholic
provinces of the South, willingly accepted the compromise which was thus laid
down, and which was thought to be not only an additional security for the past,
not only a pillar more for the maintenance of the Ghent Pacification, but also a
sure precursor of a closer union in the future. The Union of Brussels became, in
fact, the stepping stone to the "Union of Utrecht," itself the foundation stone
of a republic destined to endure more than two centuries. On the other hand,
this early union held the seed of its own destruction within itself. It was not
surprising, however, that a strong declaration in favor of the Catholic religion
should be contained in a document intended for circulation through all the
provinces. The object was to unite as large a force, and to make as striking a
demonstration before the eyes of the governor-general as was practicable
under the circumstances. The immediate purpose was answered, temporary
union was formed, but it was impossible that a permanent crystallization
should take place where so strong a dissolvent as the Catholic clause had been
admitted. In the sequel, therefore, the union fell asunder precisely at this fatal
flaw. The next union was that which definitely separated the provinces into
Protestant and Catholic, into self-governing republics, and the dependencies of
a distant despotism. The immediate effect, however, of the "Brussels Union"
was to rally all lovers of the fatherland and haters of a foreign tyranny upon
one vital point—the expulsion of the stranger from the land. The foot of the
Spanish soldier should no longer profane their soil. All men were forced to
pronounce themselves boldly and unequivocally, in order that the patriots
might stand shoulder to shoulder, and the traitors be held up to infamy. This
measure was in strict accordance with the advice given more than once by the
Prince of Orange, and was almost in literal fulfillment of the Compromise,
which he had sketched before the arrival of Don John.
The deliberations were soon resumed with the new governor, the scene being shifted from Luxemburg to Huy. Hither came a fresh deputation from the states-general—many signers of the Brussels Union among them—and were received by Don John with stately courtesy. They had, however, come, determined to carry matters with a high and firm hand, being no longer disposed to brook his imperious demeanor, nor to tolerate his dilatory policy. It is not surprising, therefore, that the courtesy soon changed to bitterness, and that attack and recrimination usurped the place of the dignified but empty formalities which had characterized the interviews at Luxemburg.

The envoys, particularly Sweveghem and Champagny, made no concealment of their sentiments towards the Spanish soldiery and the Spanish nation, and used a freedom of tone and language which the petulant soldier had not been accustomed to hear. He complained, at the outset, that the Netherlanders seemed new-born—that instead of bending the knee, they seemed disposed to grasp the scepter. Insolence had taken the place of pliancy, and the former slave now applied the chain and whip to his master. With such exacerbation of temper at the commencement of negotiations, their progress was of necessity stormy and slow.

The envoys now addressed three concise questions to the governor. Was he satisfied that the Ghent Pacification contained nothing conflicting with the Roman religion and the king’s authority? If so, was he willing to approve that treaty in all its articles? Was he ready to dismiss his troops at once, and by land, the sea voyage being liable to too many objections?

Don John answered these three questions—which, in reality, were but three forms of a single question—upon the same day, the 24th of January. His reply was as complex as the demand had been simple. It consisted of a proposal in six articles, and a requisition in twenty-one, making in all twenty-seven articles. Substantially he proposed to dismiss the foreign troops, to effect a general pacification of the Netherlands, to govern on the basin of the administration in his imperial father’s reign, to arrange affairs in and with regard to the assembly-general as the king should judge to be fitting, to forgive and forget past offenses, and to release all prisoners. On the other hand he required the estates to pay the troops before their departure, and to provide ships enough to transport them, as the Spaniards did not choose to go by land, and as the deputies at Luxemburg had consented to their removal by sea. Furthermore, he demanded that the states should dismiss their own troops. He required ecclesiastical authority to prove the Ghent Pacification not prejudicial to the Catholic religion; legal authority that it was not detrimental to his Majesty’s supremacy, and an oath from the states-general to uphold both points inviolably, and to provide for their maintenance in Holland and Zealand. He claimed the right to employ about his person soldiers and civil functionaries of any nation he might choose, and he exacted from the states a promise to
prevent the Prince of Orange from removing his son, Count van Buren, forcibly or fraudulently, from his domicile in Spain.

The deputies were naturally indignant at this elaborate trifling. They had, in reality, asked him but one question, and that a simple one—would he maintain the treaty of Ghent? Here were twenty-seven articles in reply, and yet no answer to that question. They sat up all night, preparing a violent protocol, by which the governor’s claims were to be utterly demolished. Early in the morning, they waited upon his Highness, presented the document, and at the same time asked him plainly, by word of mouth, did he or did he not intend to uphold the treaty. Thus pressed into a corner in presence of the deputies, the members of the State Council who were in attendance from Brussels, and the envoys whom the Emperor had recently sent to assist at these deliberations, the governor answered, No. He would not and could not maintain the treaty, because the Spanish troops were in that instrument denounced as rebels, because he would not consent to the release of Count Van Buren—and on account of various other reasons not then specified. Hereupon ensued a fierce debate, and all day long the altercation lasted, without a result being reached. At ten o’clock in the evening, the deputies having previously retired for a brief interval, returned with a protest that they were not to be held responsible for the termination of the proceedings, and that they washed their hands of the bloodshed which might follow the rupture. Upon reading this document, Don John fell into a blazing passion. He vehemently denounced the deputies as traitors. He swore that men who came to him thus prepared with ready-made protests in their pockets, were rebels from the commencement, and had never intended any agreement with him. His language and gestures expressed unbounded fury. He was weary of their ways, he said. They had better look to themselves, for the king would never leave their rebellion unpunished. He was ready to draw the sword at once—not his own, but his Majesty’s—and they might be sure that the war which they were thus provoking, should be the fiercest ever waged.

More abusive language in this strain was uttered, but it was not heard with lamb-like submission. The day had gone by when the deputies of the states-general were wont to quail before the wrath of vicarious royalty. The fiery words of Don John were not oil to troubled water, but a match to a mine. The passions of the deputies exploded in their turn, and from hot words they had nearly come to hard blows. One of the deputies replied with so much boldness and vehemence that the governor, seizing a heavy silver bell which stood on the table, was about to hurl it at the offender’s head, when an energetic and providential interference on the part of the imperial envoys, prevented the unseemly catastrophe.

The day thus unprofitably spent had now come to its close, and the deputies left the presence of Don John with tempers as inflamed as his own. They were, therefore, somewhat surprised at being awakened in their beds, after
midnight, by a certain Father Trigoso, who came to them with a conciliatory message from the governor. While they were still rubbing their eyes with sleep and astonishment, the Duke of Aerschot, the Bishop of Liege, and several councillors of state, entered the room. These personages brought the news that Don John had at last consented to maintain the Pacification of Ghent, as would appear by a note written in his own hand, which was then delivered. The billet was eagerly read, but unfortunately did not fulfill the anticipations which had been excited. "I agree," said Don John, "to approve the peace made between the states and the Prince of Orange, on condition that nothing therein may seem detrimental to the authority of his Majesty and the supremacy of the Catholic religion, and also with reservation of the points mentioned in my last communication."

Men who had gone to bed in a high state of indignation were not likely to wake in much better humor, when suddenly aroused in their first nap, to listen to such a message as this. It seemed only one piece of trifling the more. The deputies had offered satisfactory opinions of divines and juris-consults, as to the two points specified which concerned the Ghent treaty. It was natural, therefore, that this vague condition concerning them, the determination of which was for the governor's breast alone, should be instantly rejected, and that the envoys should return to their disturbed slumbers with an increase of ill humor.

On the morrow, as the envoys, booted and spurred, were upon the point of departure for Brussels, another communication was brought to them from Don John. This time, the language of the governor seemed more to the purpose. "I agree," said he, "to maintain the peace concluded between the states and the Prince of Orange, on condition of receiving from the ecclesiastical authorities, and from the University of Louvain, satisfactory assurance that the said treaty contains nothing derogatory to the Catholic religion—and similar assurance from the State Council, the Bishop of Liege, and the imperial envoys, that the treaty is in no wise prejudicial to the authority of his Majesty." Here seemed, at last, something definite. These conditions could be complied with. They had, in fact, been already complied with. The assurances required as to the two points had already been procured, as the deputies and as Don John well knew. The Pacification of Ghent was, therefore, virtually admitted. The deputies waited upon the governor accordingly, and the conversation was amicable. They vainly endeavored, however, to obtain his consent to the departure of the troops by land—the only point then left in dispute. Don John, still clinging to his secret scheme, with which the sea voyage of the troops was so closely connected, refused to concede. He reproached the envoys, on the contrary, with their importunity in making a fresh demand, just as he had conceded the Ghent treaty, upon his entire responsibility and without instructions. Mentally resolving that this point should still be wrung from the governor, but not suspecting his secret motives for resisting it so strenuously,
the deputies took an amicable farewell of the Governor, promising a favorable
report upon the proceedings, so soon as they should arrive in Brussels.

Don John, having conceded so much, was soon obliged to concede the whole.
The Emperor Rudolph had lately succeeded his father, Maximilian. The
deceased potentate, whose sentiments on the great subject of religious
tolerations were so much in harmony with those entertained by the Prince of
Orange, had, on the whole, notwithstanding the ties of relationship and
considerations of policy, uniformly befriended the Netherlands, so far as words
and protestations could go, at the court of Philip. Active cooperation, practical
assistance, he had certainly not rendered. He had unquestionably been too
much inclined to accomplish the impossibility of assisting the states without
offending the king—an effort which, in the homely language of Hans Jenitz, was
“like wishing his skin washed without being wet.” He had even interposed many
obstacles to the free action of the prince, as has been seen in the course of
this history, but nevertheless, the cause of the Netherlands, of religion, and of
humanity had much to lose by his death. His eldest son and successor, Rudolph
II, was an ardent Catholic, whose relations with a proscribed prince and a
reformed population could hardly remain long in a satisfactory state. The new
Emperor had, however, received the secret envoys of Orange with bounty, and
was really desirous of accomplishing the pacification of the provinces. His
envoys had assisted at all the recent deliberations between the estates and
Don John, and their vivid remonstrances removed, at this juncture, the last
objection on the part of the governor-general. With a secret sigh, he deferred
the darling and mysterious hope which had lighted him to the Netherlands, and
consented to the departure of the troops by land.

All obstacles having been thus removed, the memorable treaty called the
Perpetual Edict was signed at Marche en Famine on the 12th, and at Brussels on
February 17, 1577. This document, issued in the name of the king, contained
nineteen articles. It approved and ratified the Peace of Ghent, in consideration
that the prelates and clergy, with the doctors utriusque juris of Louvain, had
decided that nothing in that treaty conflicted either with the supremacy of the
Catholic Church or the authority of the king, but, on the contrary, that it
advanced the interests of both. It promised that the soldiery should depart
“freely, frankly, and without delay, by land, never to return except in case of
foreign war”—the Spaniards to set forth within forty days, the Germans and
others so soon as arrangements had been made by the states-general for their
payment. It settled that all prisoners, on both sides, should be released,
excepting the Count Van Buren, who was to be set free so soon as, the states-
general having been convoked, the Prince of Orange should have fulfilled the
resolutions to be passed by that assembly. It promised the maintenance of all
the privileges, charters, and constitutions of the Netherlands. It required of the
states an oath to maintain the Catholic religion. It recorded their agreement to
disband their troops. It settled that Don John should be received as governor-
general, immediately upon the departure of the Spaniards, Italians, and Burgundians from the provinces.

These were the main provisions of this famous treaty, which was confirmed a few weeks afterwards by Philip, in a letter addressed to the states of Brabant, and by an edict issued at Madrid. It will be seen that everything required by the envoys of the states, at the commencement of their negotiations, had been conceded by Don John. They had claimed the departure of the troops, either by land or sea. He had resisted the demand a long time, but had at last consented to dispatch them by sea. Their departure by land had then been insisted upon. This again he had most reluctantly conceded. The ratification of the Ghent Treaty he had peremptorily refused. He had come to the provinces, at the instant of its conclusion, and had, of course, no instructions on the subject. Nevertheless, slowly receding, he had agreed, under certain reservations, to accept the treaty. Those reservations relating to the great points of Catholic and royal supremacy, he insisted upon subjecting to his own judgment alone. Again he was overruled. Most unwillingly he agreed to accept, instead of his own conscientious conviction, the dogmas of the State Council and of the Louvain doctors. Not seeing very clearly how a treaty which abolished the edicts of Charles V and the ordinances of Alva—which removed the religious question in Holland and Zealand from the king’s jurisdiction to that of the states-general, which had caused persecution to surcease, had established toleration, and which moreover, had confirmed the arch rebel and heretic of all the Netherlands in the government of the two rebellious and heretic provinces, as stadholder for the king—not seeing very clearly how such a treaty was “advantageous rather than prejudicial to royal absolutism and an exclusive Catholicism,” he naturally hesitated at first.

The governor had thus disconcerted the Prince of Orange, not by the firmness of his resistance, but by the amplitude of his concessions. The combinations of William the Silent were, for an instant, deranged. Had the prince expected such liberality, he would have placed his demands upon a higher basis, for it is not probable that he contemplated or desired a pacification. The Duke of Aerschot and the Bishop of Liege in vain essayed to prevail upon his deputies at Marche en Famine, to sign the agreement of the 27th of January, upon which was founded the Perpetual Edict. They refused to do so without consulting the prince and the estates. Meantime, the other commissioners forced the affair rapidly forward. The states sent a deputation to the prince to ask his opinion, and signed the agreement before it was possible to receive his reply. This was to treat him with little courtesy, if not absolutely with bad faith. The prince was disappointed and indignant. In truth, as appeared from all his language and letters, he had no confidence in Don John. He believed him a consummate hypocrite, and as deadly a foe to the Netherlands as the Duke of Alva or Philip himself. He had carefully studied twenty-five intercepted letters from the king, the governor, Jerome de Roda, and others, placed recently in his hands by the Duke of Aerschot, and had found much to confirm previous and induce fresh
suspicion. Only a few days previously to the signature of the treaty, he had also intercepted other letters from influential personages, Alonzo de Vargas and others, disclosing extensive designs to obtain possession of the strong places in the country, and then to reduce the land to absolute subjection. He had assured the estates, therefore, that the deliberate intention of the government, throughout the whole negotiation, was to deceive, whatever might be the public language of Don John and his agents. He implored them, therefore, to have "pity upon the poor country," and to save the people from falling into the trap which was laid for them. From first to last, he had expressed a deep and wise distrust, and justified it by ample proofs. He was, with reason, irritated, therefore, at the haste with which the states had concluded the agreement with Don John—at the celerity with which, as he afterwards expressed it, "they had rushed upon the boar-spear of that sanguinary heart." He believed that everything had been signed and sworn by the governor, with the mental reservation that such agreements were valid only until he should repent having made them. He doubted the good faith and the stability of the grand seigniors. He had never felt confidence in the professions of the time-serving Aerschot, nor did he trust even the brave Champagny, notwithstanding his services at the sack of Antwerp. He was especially indignant that provision had been made, not for demolishing but for restoring to his Majesty those hateful citadels, nests of tyranny, by which the flourishing cities of the land were kept in perpetual anxiety. Whether in the hands of king, nobles, or magistrates, they were equally odious to him, and he had long since determined that they should be razed to the ground. In short, he believed that the estates had thrust their heads into the lion’s mouth, and he foresaw the most gloomy consequences from the treaty which had just been concluded. He believed, to use his own language, "that the only difference between Don John and Alva or Requesens was, that he was younger and more foolish than his predecessors, less capable of concealing his venom, more impatient to dip his hands in blood."

In the Pacification of Ghent, the prince had achieved the prize of his life-long labors. He had banded a mass of provinces by the ties of a common history, language, and customs, into a league against a foreign tyranny. He had grappled Holland and Zeeland to their sister provinces by a common love for their ancient liberties, by a common hatred to a Spanish soldiery. He had exorcised the evil demon of religious bigotry by which the body politic had been possessed so many years; for the Ghent treaty, largely interpreted, opened the door to universal toleration. In the Perpetual Edict the prince saw his work undone. Holland and Zealand were again cut adrift from the other fifteen provinces, and war would soon be let loose upon that devoted little territory. The article stipulating the maintenance of the Ghent treaty he regarded as idle wind, the solemn saws of the State Council and the quiddities from Louvain being likely to prove but slender bulwarks against the returning tide of tyranny. Either it was tacitly intended to tolerate the Reformed religion, or to hunt it down. To argue that the Ghent treaty, loyal
interpreted, strengthened ecclesiastical or royal despotism, was to contend that a maniac was more dangerous in fetters than when armed with a sword; it was to be blind to the difference between a private conventicle and a public scaffold. The Perpetual Edict, while affecting to sustain the treaty, would necessarily destroy it at a blow, while during the brief interval of repose, tyranny would have renewed its youth like the eagles. Was it possible, then, for William of Orange to sustain the Perpetual Edict, the compromise with Don John? Ten thousand ghosts from the Lake of Harlem, from the famine and plague-stricken streets of Leyden, from the smoking ruins of Antwerp, rose to warn him against such a composition with a despotism as subtle as it was remorseless.

It was, therefore, not the policy of William of Orange, suspecting, as he did, Don John, abhorring Philip, doubting the Netherland nobles, confiding only in the mass of the citizens, to give his support to the Perpetual Edict. He was not the more satisfied because the states had concluded the arrangement without his sanction, and against his express advice. He refused to publish or recognize the treaty in Holland and Zealand. A few weeks before, he had privately laid before the states of Holland and Zealand a series of questions, in order to test their temper, asking them, in particular, whether they were prepared to undertake a new and sanguinary war for the sake of their religion, even although their other privileges should be recognized by the new government, and a long and earnest debate had ensued, of a satisfactory nature, although no positive resolution was passed upon the subject. As soon as the Perpetual Edict had been signed, the states-general had sent to the prince, requesting his opinion and demanding his sanction. Orange, in the name of Holland and Zealand, instantly returned an elaborate answer, taking grave exceptions to the whole tenor of the Edict. He complained that the constitution of the land was violated, because the ancient privilege of the states-general to assemble at their pleasure, had been invaded, and because the laws of every province were set at nought by the continued imprisonment of Count Van Buren, who had committed no crime, and whose detention proved that no man, whatever might be promised, could expect security for life or liberty. The ratification of the Ghent treaty, it was insisted, was in no wise distinct and categorical, but was made dependent on a crowd of deceitful subterfuges. He inveighed bitterly against the stipulation in the Edict that the states should pay the wages of the soldiers, whom they had just proclaimed to be knaves and rebels, and at whose hands they had suffered such monstrous injuries. He denounced the cowardice which could permit this band of hirelings to retire with so much jewelry, merchandise, and plate, the result of their robberies. He expressed, however, in the name of the two provinces, a willingness to sign the Edict, provided the states-general would agree solemnly beforehand, in case the departure of the Spaniards did not take place within the stipulated time, to abstain from all recognition of, or communication with, Don John, and themselves to accomplish the removal of the troops by force of arms.
Such was the first and solemn manifesto made by the prince in reply to the Perpetual Edict, the states of Holland and Zealand uniting heart and hand in all that he thought, wrote and said. His private sentiments were in strict accordance with the opinions thus publicly recorded. “Whatever appearance Don John may assume to the contrary,” wrote the prince to his brother, “'tis by no means his intention to maintain the Pacification, and less still to cause the Spaniards to depart, with whom he keeps up the most strict correspondence possible.”

On the other hand, the governor was most anxious to conciliate the prince. He was most earnest to win the friendship of the man without whom every attempt to recover Holland and Zealand, and to re-establish royal and ecclesiastical tyranny, he knew to be hopeless. “This is the pilot,” wrote Don John to Philip, “who guides the bark. He alone can destroy or save it. The greatest obstacles would be removed if he could be gained.” He had proposed, and Philip had approved the proposition, that the Count Van Buren should be clothed with his father’s dignities, on condition that the prince should himself retire into Germany. It was soon evident, however, that such a proposition would meet with little favor, the office of father of his country and protector of her liberties not being transferable.

While at Louvain, whither he had gone after the publication of the Perpetual Edict, Don John had conferred with the Duke of Aerschot, and they had decided that it would be well to send Doctor Leoninus on a private mission to the prince. Previously to his departure on this errand, the learned envoy had therefore a full conversation with the governor. He was charged to represent to the prince the dangers to which Don John had exposed himself in coming from Spain to effect the pacification of the Netherlands. Leoninus was instructed to give assurance that the treaty just concluded should be maintained, that the Spaniards should depart, that all other promises should be inviolably kept, and that the governor would take up arms against all who should oppose the fulfillment of his engagements. He was to represent that Don John, in proof of his own fidelity, had placed himself in the power of the states. He was to intimate to the prince that an opportunity was now offered him to do the crown a service, in recompense for which he would obtain, not only pardon for his faults, but the favor of the monarch, and all the honors which could be desired; that by so doing he would assure the future prosperity of his family; that Don John would be his good friend, and, as such, would do more for him than he could imagine. The envoy was also to impress upon the prince, that if he persisted in his opposition, every man’s hand would be against him, and the ruin of his house inevitable. He was to protest that Don John came but to forgive and to forget, to restore the ancient government and the ancient prosperity, so that, if it was for those objects the prince had taken up arms, it was now his duty to lay them down, and to do his utmost to maintain peace and the Catholic religion. Finally, the envoy was to intimate that if he chose to write to Don John, he might be sure to receive a satisfactory answer. In these
pacific instructions and friendly expressions, Don John was sincere. "The name of your majesty," said he, plainly, in giving an account of this mission to the king, "is as much abhorred and despised in the Netherlands as that of the Prince of Orange is loved and feared. I am negotiating with him, and giving him every security, for I see that the establishment of peace, as well as the maintenance of the Catholic religion, and the obedience to your Majesty, depend now upon him. Things have reached that pass that 'tis necessary to make a virtue of necessity. If he lend an ear to my proposals, it will be only upon very advantageous conditions, but to these it will be necessary to submit, rather than to lose everything."

Don John was in earnest; unfortunately he was not aware that the prince was in earnest also. The crusader, who had sunk 30,000 paynims at a blow, and who was dreaming of the Queen of Scotland and the throne of England, had not room in his mind to entertain the image of a patriot. Royal favors, family prosperity, dignities, offices, orders, advantageous conditions, these were the baits with which the governor angled for William of Orange. He did not comprehend that attachment to a half-drowned land and to a despised religion, could possibly stand in the way of those advantageous conditions and that brilliant future. He did not imagine that the rebel, once assured not only of pardon but of advancement, could hesitate to refuse the royal hand thus amicably offered. Don John had not accurately measured his great antagonist.

The results of the successive missions which he dispatched to the prince were destined to enlighten him. In the course of the first conversation between Leoninus and the prince at Middelburg, the envoy urged that Don John had entered the Netherlands without troops, that he had placed himself in the power of the Duke of Aerschot, that he had since come to Louvain without any security but the promise of the citizens and of the students, and that all these things proved the sincerity of his intentions. He entreated the prince not to let slip so favorable an opportunity for placing his house above the reach of every unfavorable chance, spoke to him of Marius, Sylla, Julius Caesar, and other promoters of civil wars, and on retiring for the day, begged him to think gravely on what he had thus suggested, and to pray that God might inspire him with good resolutions.

Next day, William informed the envoy that, having prayed to God for assistance, he was more than ever convinced of his obligation to lay the whole matter before the states, whose servant he was. He added, that he could not forget the deaths of Egmont and Horn, nor the manner in which the promise made to the confederate nobles by the Duchess of Parma had been visited, nor the conduct of the French monarch towards Admiral Coligny. He spoke of information which he had received from all quarters, from Spain, France, and Italy, that there was a determination to make war upon him and upon the states of Holland and Zealand. He added that they were taking their measures in consequence, and that they were well aware that a papal nuncio had arrived
in the Netherlands, to intrigue against them. In the evening, the prince complained that the estates had been so precipitate in concluding their arrangement with Don John. He mentioned several articles in the treaty which were calculated to excite distrust, dwelling particularly on the engagement entered into by the estates to maintain the Catholic religion. This article he declared to be in direct contravention to the Ghent treaty, by which this point was left to the decision of a future assembly of the estates-general. Leoninus essayed, as well as he could, to dispute these positions. In their last interview, the prince persisted in his intention of laying the whole matter before the states of Holland and Zealand. Not to do so, he said, would be to expose himself to ruin on one side, and on the other, to the indignation of those who might suspect him of betraying them. The envoy begged to be informed if any hope could be entertained of a future arrangement. Orange replied that he had no expectation of any, but advised Doctor Leoninus to be present at Dort when the estates should assemble.

Notwithstanding the unfavorable result of this mission Don John did not even yet despair of bending the stubborn character of the prince. He hoped that, if a personal interview between them could be arranged, he should be able to remove many causes of suspicion from the mind of his adversary. "In such times as these," wrote the governor to Philip, "we can make no election, nor do I see any remedy to preserve the state from destruction, save to gain over this man, who has so much influence with the nation." The prince had, in truth, the whole game in his hands. There was scarcely a living creature in Holland and Zealand who was not willing to be bound by his decision in every emergency. Throughout the rest of the provinces, the mass of the people looked up to him with absolute confidence, the clergy and the prominent nobles respecting and fearing him, even while they secretly attempted to thwart his designs. Possessing dictatorial power in two provinces, vast influences in the other fifteen, nothing could be easier for him than to betray his country. The time was singularly propitious. The revengeful king was almost on his knees to the denounced rebel. Everything was proffered: pardon, advancement, power. An indefinite vista was opened. "You cannot imagine," said Don John, "how much it will be within my ability to do for you." The governor was extremely anxious to purchase the only enemy whom Philip feared. The prince had nothing personally to gain by a continuance of the contest. The ban, outlawry, degradation, pecuniary ruin, assassination, martyrdom—these were the only guerdons he could anticipate. He had much to lose, but yesterday loaded with dignities, surrounded by pomp and luxury, with many children to inherit his worldly gear, could he not recover all, and more than all, today? What service had he to render in exchange? A mere nothing. He had but to abandon the convictions of a lifetime, and to betray a million or two of hearts which trusted him.

As to the promises made by the governor to rule the country with gentleness, the prince could not do otherwise than commend the intention, even while
distrusting the fulfillment. In his reply to the two letters of Don John, he thanked his Highness, with what seemed a grave irony, for the benign courtesy and signal honor which he had manifested to him, by inviting him so humanely and so carefully to a tranquil life, wherein, according to his Highness, consisted the perfection of felicity in this mortal existence, and by promising him so liberally favor and grace. He stated, however, with earnestness, that the promises in regard to the pacification of the poor Netherland people were much more important. He had ever expected, he said, beyond all comparison, the welfare and security of the public before his own, "having always placed his particular interests under his foot, even as he was still resolved to do, as long as life should endure."

Thus did William of Orange receive the private advances made by the government towards himself. Meantime, Don John of Austria came to Louvain. Until the preliminary conditions of the Perpetual Edict had been fulfilled, and the Spanish troops sent out of the country, he was not to be received as governor-general, but it seemed unbecoming for him to remain longer upon the threshold of the provinces. He therefore advanced into the heart of the country, trusting himself without troops to the loyalty of the people, and manifesting a show of chivalrous confidence which he was far from feeling. He was soon surrounded by courtiers, time-servers, noble office-seekers. They who had kept themselves invisible, so long as the issue of a perplexed negotiation seemed doubtful, now became obsequious and inevitable as his shadow. One grand seignior wanted a regiment, another a government, a third a chamberlain's key; all wanted titles, ribbons, offices, livery, wages. Don John distributed favors and promises with vast liberality. The object with which Philip had sent him to the Netherlands, that he might conciliate the hearts of its inhabitants by the personal graces which he had inherited from his imperial father, seemed in a fair way of accomplishment, for it was not only the venal applause of titled sycophants that he strove to merit, but he mingled gaily and familiarly with all classes of citizens. Everywhere his handsome face and charming manner produced their natural effect. He dined and supped with the magistrates in the Town-house, honored general banquets of the burghers with his presence, and was affable and dignified, witty, fascinating, and commanding, by turns.

At Louvain the five military guilds held a solemn festival. The usual invitations were sent to the other societies, and to all the martial brotherhoods, the country round. Gay and gaudy processions, sumptuous banquets, military sports, rapidly succeeded each other. Upon the day of the great trial of skill, all the high functionaries of the land were, according to custom, invited, and the governor was graciously pleased to honor the solemnity with his presence. Great was the joy of the multitude when Don John, complying with the habit of imperial and princely personages in former days, enrolled himself, crossbow in hand, among the competitors. Greater still was the enthusiasm, when the conqueror of Lepanto brought down the bird, and was proclaimed king of the
year, amid the tumultuous hilarity of the crowd. According to custom, the
captains of the guild suspended a golden popinjay around the neck of his
Highness, and placing themselves in procession, followed him to the great
church. Thence, after the customary religious exercises, the multitude
proceeded to the banquet, where the health of the new king of the
crossbowmen was pledged in deep potations. Long and loud was the merriment
of this initiatory festival, to which many feasts succeeded during those brief
but halcyon days, for the good-natured Netherlanders already believed in the
blessed advent of peace. They did not dream that the war, which had been
consuming the marrow of their commonwealth for ten flaming years, was but in
its infancy, and that neither they nor their children were destined to see its
close.

For the moment, however, all was hilarity at Louvain. The governor, by his
engaging deportment, awoke many reminiscences of the once popular Emperor.
He expressed unbounded affection for the commonwealth, and perfect
confidence in the loyalty of the inhabitants. He promised to maintain their
liberties, and to restore their prosperity. Moreover, he had just hit the
popinjay with a skill which his imperial father might have envied, and presided
at burgher banquets with a grace which Charles could have hardly matched. His
personal graces, for the moment, took the rank of virtues. "Such were the
beauty and vivacity of his eyes," says his privy councillor, Tassis, "that with a
single glance he made all hearts his own"; yet, nevertheless, the predestined
victim secretly felt himself the object of a marksman who had no time for
painted popinjays, but who rarely missed his aim. "The whole country is at the
devotion of the prince, and nearly every one of its inhabitants"—such was his
secret language to his royal brother, at the very moment of the exuberant
manifestations which preceded his own entrance to Brussels.

While the governor still tarried at Louvain, his secretary, Escovedo, was busily
engaged in arranging the departure of the Spaniards, for, notwithstanding his
original reluctance and the suspicions of Orange, Don John loyally intended to
keep his promise. He even advanced 27,000 florins towards the expense of
their removal, but to raise the whole amount required for transportation and
arrears, was a difficult matter. The estates were slow in providing the 150,000
florins which they had stipulated to furnish. The king’s credit, moreover, was
at a very low ebb. His previous bonds had not been duly honored, and there
had even been instances of royal repudiation, which by no means lightened the
task of the financier, in effecting the new loans required. Escovedo was very
blunt in his language upon this topic, and both Don John and himself urged
punctuality in all future payments. They entreated that the bills drawn in
Philip’s name upon Lombardy bankers, and discounted at a heavy rate of
interest, by the Fuggers of Antwerp, might be duly provided for at maturity. "I
earnestly beg," said Escovedo, "that your Majesty will see to the payment of
these bills, at all events," adding, with amusing simplicity, "this will be a means
of recovering your Majesty’s credit, and as for my own, I don’t care to lose it,
small though it be." Don John was even more solicitous. "For the love of God, Sire," he wrote, "do not be delinquent now. You must reflect upon the necessity of recovering your credit. If this receives now the final blow, all will desert your Majesty, and the soldiers too will be driven to desperation."

By dint of great diligence on the part of Escovedo, and through the confidence reposed in his character, the necessary funds were raised in the course of a few weeks. There was, however, a difficulty among the officers, as to the right of commanding the army on the homeward march. Don Alonzo de Vargas, as chief of the cavalry, was appointed to the post by the governor, but Valdez, Romero, and other veterans, indignantly refused to serve under one whom they declared their inferior officer. There was much altercation and heartburning, and an attempt was made to compromise the matter by the appointment of Count Mansfeld to the chief command. This was, however, only adding fuel to the flames. All were dissatisfied with the superiority accorded to a foreigner, and Alonzo de Vargas, especially offended, addressed most insolent language to the governor. Nevertheless, the arrangement was maintained, and the troops finally took their departure from the country, in the latter days of April. A vast concourse of citizens witnessed their departure, and could hardly believe their eyes, as they saw this incubus at last rolling off, by which the land had so many years been crushed. Their joy, although extravagant, was, however, limited by the reflection that 10,000 Germans still remained in the provinces, attached to the royal service, and that there was even yet a possibility that the departure of the Spaniards was a feint. In truth, Escovedo, although seconding the orders of Don John, to procure the removal of these troops, did not scruple to express his regret to the king, and his doubts as to the result. He had been ever in hopes that an excuse might be found in the condition of affairs in France, to justify the retention of the forces near that frontier. He assured the king that he felt very doubtful as to what turn matters might take, after the soldiers were gone, seeing the great unruliness which even their presence had been insufficient completely to check. He had hoped that they might be retained in the neighborhood, ready to seize the islands at the first opportunity. "For my part," he wrote, "I care nothing for the occupation of places within the interior, but the islands must be secured." "To do this," he continued, with a deceitful allusion to the secret projects of Don John, "is, in my opinion, more difficult than to effect the scheme upon England. If the one were accomplished, the other would be easily enough managed, and would require but moderate means. Let not your Majesty suppose that I say this as favoring the plan of Don John, for this I put entirely behind me."

Notwithstanding these suspicions on the part of the people, this reluctance on the part of the government, the troops readily took up their line of march, and never paused till they reached Lombardy. Don John wrote repeatedly to the king, warmly urging the claims of these veterans, and of their distinguished officers, Romero, Avila, Valdez, Montesdocca, Verdugo, Mondragon, and others, to his bountiful consideration. They had departed in very ill humor, not
having received any recompense for their long and arduous services. Certainly, if unflinching endurance, desperate valor, and congenial cruelty, could atone in the monarch’s eyes for the mutiny, which had at last compelled their withdrawal, then were these laborers worthy of their hire. Don John had pacified them by assurances that they should receive adequate rewards on their arrival in Lombardy, and had urged the full satisfaction of their claims and his promises in the strongest language. Although Don Alonzo de Vargas had abused him “with flying colors,” as he expressed himself, yet he hastened to intercede for him with the king in the most affectionate terms. “His impatience has not surprised me,” said the governor, “although I regret that he has been offended, for I love and esteem him much. He has served many years with great distinction, and I can certify that his character for purity and religion is something extraordinary.”

The first scene in the withdrawal of the troops had been the evacuation of the citadel of Antwerp, and it had been decided that the command of this most important fortress should be conferred upon the Duke of Aerschot. His claims as commander-in-chief, under the authority of the State Council, and as chief of the Catholic nobility, could hardly be passed over, yet he was a man whom neither party trusted. He was too visibly governed by interested motives. Arrogant where he felt secure of his own, or doubtful as to another’s position, he could be supple and cringing when the relations changed. He refused an interview with William of Orange before consulting with Don John, and solicited one afterwards when he found that every effort was to be made to conciliate the prince. He was insolent to the governor-general himself in February, and respectful in March. He usurped the first place in the church, before Don John had been acknowledged governor, and was the first to go forth to welcome him after the matter had been arranged. He made a scene of virtuous indignation in the State Council, because he was accused of place-hunting, but was diligent to secure an office of the highest dignity which the governor could bestow. Whatever may have been his merits, it is certain that he inspired confidence neither in the adherents of the king nor of the prince, while he by turns professed the warmest regard both to the one party and the other. Spaniards and patriots, Protestants and Catholics, suspected the man at the same moment, and ever attributed to his conduct a meaning which was the reverse of the apparent. Such is often the judgment passed upon those who fish in troubled waters only to fill their own nets.

The duke, however, was appointed governor of the citadel. Sancho d’Avila, the former constable, refused, with Castillian haughtiness, to surrender the place to his successor, but appointed his lieutenant, Martin d’Oyo, to perform that ceremony. Escovedo, standing upon the drawbridge with Aerschot, administered the oath. “I, Philip, Duke of Aerschot,” said the new constable, “solemnly swear to hold this castle for the king, and for no others.” To which Escovedo added, “God help you, with all his angels, if you keep your oath; if not, may the Devil carry you away, body and soul.” The few bystanders cried
Amen, and with this hasty ceremony, the keys were delivered, the prisoners, Egmont, Capres, Goignies, and others, liberated, and the Spaniards ordered to march forth.

CHAPTER 2

The Convictions of the Prince of Orange and his Negotiations with Don John

As already narrated, the soldiery had retired definitely from the country at the end of April, after which Don John made his triumphal entrance into Brussels on the first of May. It was long since so festive a May-day had gladdened the hearts of Brabant. So much holiday magnificence had not been seen in the Netherlands for years. A solemn procession of burgheers, preceded by 6,000 troops, and garnished by the free companies of archers and musketeers, in their picturesque costumes, escorted the young prince along the streets of the capital. Don John was on horseback, wrapped in a long green cloak, riding between the Bishop of Liege and the papal nuncio. He passed beneath countless triumphal arches. Banners waved before him, on which the battle of Lepanto, and other striking scenes in his life, were emblazoned. Minstrels sang verses, poets recited odes, rhetoric clubs enacted fantastic dramas in his honor, as he rode along. Young virgins crowned him with laurels. Fair women innumerable were clustered at every window, roof, and balcony, their bright robes floating like summer clouds above him. “Softly from those lovely clouds,” says a gallant chronicler, “descended the gentle rain of flowers.” Garlands were strewn before his feet, laureled victory sat upon his brow. The same conventional enthusiasm and decoration which had characterized the holiday marches of a thousand conventional heroes were successfully produced. The proceedings began with the church, and ended with the banquet; the day was propitious, the populace pleased, and after a brilliant festival, Don John of Austria saw himself governor-general of the provinces.

Three days afterwards, the customary oaths, to be kept with the customary conscientiousness, were rendered at the Town-house, and for a brief moment all seemed smiling and serene.

There was a reverse to the picture. In truth, no language can describe the hatred which Don John entertained for the Netherlands and all the inhabitants. He had come to the country only as a stepping-stone to the English throne, and he never spoke, in his private letters, of the provinces or the people but in terms of abhorrence. He was in a “Babylon of disgust,” in a “Hell,” surrounded by “drunkards,” “wineskins,” “scoundrels,” and the like. From the moment of his
arrival he had strained every nerve to retain the Spanish troops, and to send
them away by sea when it should be no longer feasible to keep them. Escovedo
shared in the sentiments and entered fully into the schemes of his chief. The
plot, the secret enterprise, was the great cause of the advent of Don John in
the uncongenial clime of Flanders. It had been, therefore, highly important, in
his estimation, to set, as soon as possible, about the accomplishment of this
important business. He accordingly entered into correspondence with Antonio
Perez, the king’s most confidential Secretary of State at that period. That the
governor was plotting no treason is sufficiently obvious from the context of his
letters. At the same time, with the expansiveness of his character, when he
was dealing with one whom he deemed his close and trusty friend, he
occasionally made use of expressions which might be made to seem equivocal.
This was still more the case with poor Escovedo. Devoted to his master, and
depending most implicitly upon the honor of Perez, he indulged in language
which might be tortured into a still more suspicious shape, when the devilish
arts of Perez and the universal distrust of Philip were tending steadily to that
end. For Perez—on the whole, the boldest, deepest, and most unscrupulous
villain in that pit of duplicity, the Spanish court—was engaged at that moment
with Philip, in a plot to draw from Don John and Escovedo, by means of this
correspondence, the proofs of a treason which the king and minister both
desired to find. The letters from Spain were written with this view—those from
Flanders were interpreted to that end. Every confidential letter received by
Perez was immediately laid by him before the king, every letter which the
artful demon wrote was filled with hints as to the danger of the king’s learning
the existence of the correspondence, and with promises of profound secrecy
upon his own part, and was then immediately placed in Philip’s hands, to
receive his comments and criticisms, before being copied and dispatched to the
Netherlands. The minister was playing a bold, murderous, and treacherous
game, and played it in a masterly manner. Escovedo was lured to his
destruction, Don John was made to fret his heart away, and Philip—more
deceived than all—was betrayed in what he considered his affections, and
made the mere tool of a loan as false as himself and infinitely more
accomplished.

Almost immediately after the arrival of Don John in the Netherlands, he had
begun to express the greatest impatience for Escovedo, who had not been able
to accompany his master upon his journey, but without whose assistance the
governor could accomplish none of his undertakings. "Being a man, not an
angel, I cannot do all which I have to do," said he to Perez, "without a single
person in whom I can confide." He protested that he could do no more than he
was then doing. He went to bed at twelve and rose at seven, without having an
hour in the day in which to take his food regularly, in consequence of all which
he had already had three fevers. He was plunged into a world of distrust. Every
man suspected him, and he had himself no confidence in a single individual
throughout that whole Babylon of disgust. He observed to Perez that he was at
liberty to show his letters to the king, or to read them in the Council, as he
meant always to speak the truth in whatever he should write. He was sure that Perez would do all for the best; and there is something touching in these expressions of an honest purpose towards Philip, and of generous confidence in Perez, while the two were thus artfully attempting to inveigle him into damaging revelations. The Netherlanders certainly had small cause to love or trust their new governor, who very sincerely detested and suspected them, but Philip had little reason to complain of his brother. "Tell me if my letters are read in Council, and what his Majesty says about them," he wrote, "and, above all, send money. I am driven to desperation at finding myself sold to this people, utterly unprovided as I am, and knowing the slow manner in which all affairs are conducted in Spain."

He informed the king that there was but one man in the Netherlands, and that he was called the Prince of Orange. To him everything was communicated, with him everything was negotiated, opinions expressed by him were implicitly followed. The governor vividly described the misgivings with which he had placed himself in the power of the states by going to Louvain and the reluctance with which he had consented to send away the troops. After this concession, he complained that the insolence of the states had increased. "They think that they can do and undo what they like, now that I am at their mercy," he wrote to Philip. "Nevertheless, I do what you command without regarding that I am sold, and that I am in great danger of losing my liberty, a loss which I dread more than anything in the world, for I wish to remain justified before God and men." He expressed, however, no hopes as to the result. Disrespect and rudeness could be pushed no further than it had already gone, while the Prince of Orange, the actual governor of the country, considered his own preservation dependent upon maintaining things as they then were. Don John, therefore, advised the king steadily to make preparations for "a rude and terrible war," which was not to be avoided, save by a miracle, and which ought not to find him in this unprepared state. He protested that it was impossible to exaggerate the boldness which the people felt at seeing him thus defenseless. "They say publicly," he continued, "that your Majesty is not to be feared, not being capable of carrying on a war, and having consumed and exhausted every resource. One of the greatest injuries ever inflicted upon us was by Marquis Havré, who, after his return from Spain, went about publishing everywhere the poverty of the royal exchequer. This has emboldened them to rise, for they believe that, whatever the disposition, there is no strength to chastise them. They see a proof of the correctness of their reasoning in the absence of new levies, and in the heavy arrearages due to the old troops."

He protested that he desired, at least, to be equal to the enemy, without asking, as others had usually done, for double the amount of the hostile force. He gave a glance at the foreign complications of the Netherlands, telling Philip that the estates were intriguing both with France and England. The English envoy had expressed much uneasiness at the possible departure of the Spanish troops from the Netherlands by sea, coupling it with a probable attempt to
liberate the Queen of Scots. Don John, who had come to the provinces for no other purpose, and whose soul had been full of that romantic scheme, of course stoutly denied and ridiculed the idea. "Such notions," he had said to the envoy, "were subjects for laughter. If the troops were removed from the country, it was to strengthen his Majesty's force in the Levant." Mr. Rogers, much comforted, had expressed the warm friendship which Elizabeth entertained both for his Majesty and his Majesty's representative; protestations which could hardly seem very sincere, after the series of attempts at the Queen's life, undertaken so recently by his Majesty and his Majesty's former representative. Nevertheless, Don John had responded with great cordiality, had begged for Elizabeth's portrait, and had expressed the intention, if affairs went as he hoped, to go privately to England for the purpose of kissing her royal hand. Don John further informed the king, upon the envoy's authority, that Elizabeth had refused assistance to the estates, saying, if she stirred it would be to render aid to Philip, especially if France should meddle in the matter. As to France, the governor advised Philip to hold out hopes to Alençon of espousing the Infanta, but by no means ever to fulfill such a promise, as the duke, "besides being the shield of heretics, was unscrupulously addicted to infamous vices."

A month later, Escovedo described the downfall of Don John's hopes and his own in dismal language. "You are aware," he wrote to Perez, "that a throne—a chair with a canopy—is our intention and our appetite, and all the rest is good for nothing. Having failed in our scheme, we are desperate and like madmen. All is now weariness and death." Having expressed himself in such desponding accents, he continued, a few days afterwards, in the same lugubrious vein, "I am ready to hang myself," said he, "and I would have done it already, if it were not for keeping myself as executioner for those who have done us so much harm. Ah, Senor Antonio Perez!" he added, "what terrible pertinacity have those devils shown in making us give up our plot. It seems as though Hell were opened and had sent forth heaps of demons to oppose our schemes." After these vigorous ejaculations he proceeded to inform his friend that the English envoy and the estates, governed by the Prince of Orange, in whose power were the much-coveted ships, had prevented the departure of the troops by sea. "These devils complain of the expense," said he, "but we would willingly swallow the cost if we could only get the ships." He then described Don John as so cast down by his disappointment as to be fit for nothing, and most desirous of quitting the Netherlands as soon as possible. He had no disposition to govern these wineskins. Anyone who ruled in the provinces was obliged to do exactly what they ordered him to do. Such rule was not to the taste of Don John. Without any comparison, a woman would answer the purpose better than any man, and Escovedo accordingly suggested the Empress Dowager, or Madame de Parma, or even Madame de Lorraine. He further recommended that the Spanish troops, thus forced to leave the Netherlands by land, should be employed against the heretics in France. This would be a salvo for the disgrace of removing them. "It would be read in history," continued the secretary, "that the
troops went to France in order to render assistance in a great religious necessity; while, at the same time, they will be on hand to chastise these drunkards, if necessary to have the troops in France is almost as well as to keep them here. He begged to be forgiven if he spoke incoherently. 'Twas no wonder that he should do so, for his reason had been disordered by the blow which had been received. As for Don John, he was dying to leave the country, and although the force was small for so great a general, yet it would be well for him to lead these troops to France in person. "It would sound well in history," said poor Escovedo, who always thought of posterity, without ever dreaming that his own private letters would be destined, after three centuries, to comment and earnest investigation, "it would sound well in history, that Don John went to restore the French kingdom and to extirpate heretics, with six thousand foot and two thousand horse. 'Tis a better employment, too, than to govern such vile creatures as these."

If, however, all their plans should fail, the secretary suggested to his friend Antonio that he must see and make courtiers of them. He suggested that a strong administration might be formed in Spain, with Don John, the Marquis de Los Velez, and the Duke of Sesa. "With such chiefs, and with Anthony and John for acolytes," he was of opinion that much good work might be done, and that Don John might become "the staff for his Majesty's old age." He implored Perez, in the most urgent language, to procure Philip’s consent that his brother should leave the provinces. "Otherwise," said he, "we shall see the destruction of the friend whom we so much love! He will become seriously ill, and if so, good night to him! His body is too delicate." Escovedo protested that he would rather die himself. "In the catastrophe of Don John’s death," he continued, "adieu the court, adieu the world!" He would incontinently bury himself among the mountains of San Sebastian, "preferring to dwell among wild animals than among courtiers." Escovedo, accordingly, not urged by the most disinterested motives certainly, but with as warm a friendship for his master as princes usually inspire, proceeded to urge upon Perez the necessity of aiding the man who was able to help them. The first step was to get him out of the Netherlands. That was his constant thought, by day and night. As it would hardly be desirable for him to go alone, it seemed proper that Escovedo should, upon some pretext, be first sent to Spain. Such a pretext would be easily found, because, as Don John had accepted the government, "it would be necessary for him to do all which the rascals bade him." After these minute statements, the secretary warned his correspondent of the necessity of secrecy, adding that he especially feared "all the court ladies, great and small, but that he in everything confided entirely in Perez."

Nearly at the same time, Don John wrote to Perez in a similar tone. "Ah, Señor Antonio," he exclaimed, "how certain is my disgrace and my misfortune. Ruined is our enterprise, after so much labor and such skillful management." He was to have commenced the work with the very Spanish soldiers who were now to be sent off by land, and he had nothing for it but to let them go, or to come to an
open rupture with the states. "The last, his conscience, his duty, and the time, alike forbade." He was therefore obliged to submit to the ruin of his plans, and "could think of nothing save to turn hermit, a condition in which a man’s labors, being spiritual, might not be entirely in vain." He was so overwhelmed by the blow, he said, that he was constantly thinking of an anchorite’s life. That which he had been leading had become intolerable. He was not fitted for the people of the Netherlands, nor they for him. Rather than stay longer than was necessary in order to appoint his successor, there was no resolution he might not take, even to leaving everything and coming upon them when they least expected him, although he were to receive a bloody punishment in consequence. He, too, suggested the Empress, who had all the qualities which he lacked himself, or Madame de Parma, or Madame de Lorraine, as each of them was more fit to govern the provinces than he pretended to be. "The people," said he, plainly, "are beginning to abhor me, and I abhor them already." He entreated Perez to get him out of the country by fair means or foul, "per fas aut per nefas." His friends ought to procure his liberation, if they wished to save him from the sin of disobedience, and even of infamy. He expressed the most unbounded confidence in the honor of his correspondent, adding that if nothing else could procure his release, the letter might be shown to the king. In general, the governor was always willing that Perez should make what changes he thought advisable in the letters for his Majesty, altering or softening whatever seemed crude or harsh, provided always the main point—that of procuring his recall—were steadily kept in view. "In this," said the governor, vehemently, "my life, my honor; and my soul are all at stake; for as to the two first, I shall forfeit them both certainly, and, in my desperate condition, I shall run great risk of losing the last."

On the other hand, Perez was profuse in his professions of friendship both to Don John and to Escovedo, dilating in all his letters upon the difficulty of approaching the king upon the subject of his brother’s recall, but giving occasional information that an incidental hint had been ventured which might not remain without effect. All these letters were, however, laid before Philip, for his approval, before being dispatched, and the whole subject thoroughly and perpetually discussed between them, about which Perez pretended that he hardly dared breathe a syllable to his Majesty. He had done what he could, he said, while reading, piece by piece to the king, during a fit of the gout, the official dispatches from the Netherlands, to insinuate such of the arguments used by the governor and Escovedo as might seem admissible, but it was soon obvious that no impression could be made upon the royal mind. Perez did not urge the matter, therefore, "because," said he, "if the king should suspect that we had any other object than his interests, "we should all be lost." Every effort should be made by Don John and all his friends to secure his majesty’s entire confidence, since by that course more progress would be made in their secret plans, than by proceedings concerning which the governor wrote "with such fury and piety of heart." Perez warned his correspondent, therefore, most solemnly, against the danger of "striking the blow without hitting the mark,"
and tried to persuade him that his best interests required him to protract his residence in the provinces for a longer period. He informed Don John that his disappointment as to the English scheme had met with the warmest sympathy of the king, who had wished his brother success. "I have sold to him, at as high a price as I could," said Perez, "the magnanimity with which your Highness had sacrificed, on that occasion, a private object to his service."

The minister held the same language, when writing, in a still more intimate and expansive style, to Escovedo. "We must avoid, by a thousand leagues, the possibility of the king's thinking us influenced by private motives," he observed, "for we know the king and the delicacy of these matters. The only way to gain the good-will of the man is carefully to accommodate ourselves to his tastes, and to have the appearance of being occupied solely with his interests." The letter, like all the rest, being submitted to "the man" in question before being sent, was underlined by him at this paragraph and furnished with the following annotation: "But you must enlarge upon the passage which I have marked—say more, even if you are obliged to copy the letter, in order that we may see the nature of the reply."

In another letter to Escovedo, Perez enlarged upon the impropriety, the impossibility of Don John’s leaving the Netherlands at that time. The king was so resolute upon that point, he said, that "twas out of the question to suggest the matter. "We should, by so doing, only lose all credit with him in other things. You know what a terrible man he is; if he should once suspect us of having a private end in view, we should entirely miss our mark." Especially the secretary was made acquainted with the enormous error which would be committed by Don John in leaving his post. Perez "had ventured into the water" upon the subject, he said, by praising the governor warmly to his Majesty. The king had responded by a hearty eulogium, adding that the greatest comfort in having such a brother was, that he might be where his Majesty could not be. Therefore, it was out of the question for Don John to leave the provinces. The greatest tact was necessary, urged Perez, in dealing with the king. If he should once "suspect that we have a private purpose, we are lost, and no Demosthenes or Cicero would be able to influence him afterwards." Perez begged that his ardent attachment to Don John might be represented in the strongest colors to that high personage, who was to be assured that every effort would be made to place him at the head of affairs in Spain, according to the suggestion of Escovedo. "It would never do, however," he continued, "to let our man see that we desire it, for then we should never succeed. The only way to conquer him is to make him believe that things are going on as he wishes, not as his Highness may desire, and that we have none of us any will but the king’s." Upon this passage the "terrible man" made a brief annotation: "This paragraph does admirably," he said, adding, with characteristic Tautology, "and what you say in it is also excellent."
"Therefore," continued the minister, "God forbid, Master Escovedo, that you should come hither now; for we should all be lost. In the English matter, I assure you that his Majesty was extremely anxious that the plan should succeed, wither through the Pope, or otherwise. That puts me in mind," added Perez, "to say, body of God! Señor Escovedo! how the devil came you to send that courier to Rome about the English plot without giving me warning?" He then proceeded to state that the papal nuncio in Spain had been much troubled in mind upon the subject, and had sent for him. "I went," said Perez, "and after he had closed the door, and looked through the keyhole to see that there were no listeners, he informed me that he had received intelligence from the Pope as to the demands made by Don John upon his Holiness for bulls, briefs, and money to assist him in his English scheme, and that eighty thousand ducats had already been sent to him in consequence." Perez added that the nuncio was very anxious to know how the affair should best be communicated to the king, without prejudice to his Highness. He had given him the requisite advice, he continued, and had himself subsequently told the king that, no doubt, letters had been written by Don John to his Majesty, communicating these negotiations at Rome, but that probably the dispatches had been forgotten. Thus, giving himself the appearance of having smoothed the matter with the king, Perez concluded with a practical suggestion of much importance—the necessity, namely, of procuring the assassination of the Prince of Orange as soon as possible. "Let it never be absent from your mind," said he, "that a good occasion must be found for finishing Orange, since, besides the service which will thus be rendered to our master, and to the states, it will be worth something to ourselves."

No apology is necessary for laying a somewhat extensive analysis of this secret correspondence before the reader. If there be any value in the examples of history, certainly few chronicles can furnish a more instructive moral. Here are a despotic king and his confidential minister laying their heads together in one cabinet; the viceroy of the most important provinces of the realm, with his secretary, deeply conferring in another, not as to the manner of advancing the great interests, moral or material, of the people over whom God has permitted them to rule, but as to the best means of arranging conspiracies against the throne and life of a neighboring sovereign, with the connivance and subsidies of the Pope. In this scheme, and in this only, the high conspirators are agreed. In every other respect, mutual suspicion and profound deceit characterize the scene. The governor is filled with inexpressible loathing for the whole nation of "drunkards and wineskins" who are at the very moment strewing flowers in his path, and deafening his ears with shouts of welcome; the king, while expressing unbounded confidence in the viceroy, is doing his utmost, through the agency of the subtlest intriguer in the world, to inveigle him into confessions of treasonable schemes, and the minister is filling reams of paper with protestations of affection for the governor and secretary, with sneers at the character of the king, and with instructions as to the best method of deceiving him, and then laying the dispatches before his Majesty for correction.
and enlargement. To complete the picture, the monarch and his minister are seen urging the necessity of murdering the foremost man of the age upon the very dupe who, within a twelvemonth, was himself to be assassinated by the self-same pair; while the arch-plotter who controls the strings of all these complicated projects is equally false to king, governor, and secretary, and engaging all the others in these blind and tortuous paths, for the accomplishment of his own secret and most ignoble aims.

In reply to the letters of Perez, Don John constantly expressed the satisfaction and comfort which he derived from them in the midst of his annoyances. "He was very disconsolate," he said, "to be in that hell, and to be obliged to remain in it," now that the English plot had fallen to the ground, but he would nevertheless take patience, and wait for more favorable conjuncture.

Escovedo expressed the opinion, however, notwithstanding all the suggestions of Perez, that the presence of Don John in the provinces had become entirely superfluous. "An old woman with her distaff," suggested the secretary, "would be more appropriate; for there would be nothing to do, if the states had their way, save to sign everything which they should command." If there should be war, his Highness would, of course, not abandon his post, even if permitted to do so; but otherwise, nothing could be gained by a prolonged residence. As to the scheme of assassinating the Prince of Orange, Escovedo prayed Perez to believe him incapable of negligence on the subject. "You know that the finishing of Orange is very near my heart," wrote the poor dupe to the man by whom he was himself so soon to be finished. "You may believe that I have never forgotten it, and never will forget it, until it be done. Much, and very much artifice is, however, necessary to accomplish this object. A proper person to undertake a task fraught with such well-known danger, is hard to find. Nevertheless, I will not withdraw my attention from the subject till such a person be procured, and the deed be done."

A month later, Escovedo wrote that he was about to visit Spain. He complained that he required rest in his old age, but that Perez could judge how much rest he could get in such a condition of affairs. He was, unfortunately, not aware, when he wrote, how soon his correspondent was to give him a long repose. He said, too, that the pleasure of visiting his home was counterbalanced by the necessity of traveling back to the Netherlands, but he did not know that Perez was to spare him that trouble, and to send him forth upon a much longer journey.

The governor-general, had, in truth, not inspired the popular party or its leader with confidence, nor did he place the least reliance upon them. While at Louvain, he had complained that a conspiracy had been formed against his life and liberty. Two French gentlemen, Bonnivet and Bellangreville, had been arrested on suspicion of a conspiracy to secure his person, and to carry him off a prisoner to Rochelle. Nothing came of the examination which followed; the
prisoners were released, and an apology was sent by the states-general to the Duke of Alençon, as well for the indignity which had been offered to two of his servants, as for the suspicion which had been cast upon himself. Don John, however, was not satisfied. He persisted in asserting the existence of the conspiracy, and made no secret of his belief that the Prince of Orange was acquainted with the arrangement. As may be supposed, nothing was discovered in the course of the investigation to implicate that astute politician. The prince had indeed secretly recommended that the governor should be taken into custody on his first arrival, not for the purpose of assassination or personal injury, but in order to extort better terms from Philip, through the affection or respect which he might be supposed to entertain for his brother. It will be remembered that unsuccessful attempts had also been made to capture the Duke of Alva and the Commander Requesens. Such achievements comported with the spirit of the age, and although it is doubtful whether any well-concerted plot existed against the liberty of the governor, it is certain that he entertained no doubt on the subject himself. In addition to these real or suspected designs, there was an ever-present consciousness in the mind of Don John that the enthusiasm which greeted his presence was hollow, that no real attachment was felt for his person, that his fate was leading him into a false position, that the hearts of the people were fixed upon another, and that they were never to be won by himself. Instinctively he seemed to feel a multitude of invisible threads twining into a snare around him, and the courageous heart and the bounding strength became uneasily conscious of the act in which they were to be held captive till life should be wasted quite away.

The universal affection for the rebel prince, and the hopeless abandonment of the people to that deadliest of sins, the liberty of conscience, were alike unquestionable. "They mean to remain free, sire," wrote Escovedo to Philip, "and to live as they please. To that end they would be willing that the Turk should come to be master of the country. By the road which they are traveling, however, it will be the Prince of Orange—which comes to quite the same thing." At the same time, however, it was hoped that something might be made of this liberty of conscience. All were not equally sunk in the horrible superstition, and those who were yet faithful to Church and King might be set against their besotted brethren. Liberty of conscience might thus be turned to account. While two great parties were "by the ears, and pulling out each other’s hair, all might perhaps be reduced together." His Majesty was warned, nevertheless, to expect the worst, and to believe that the country could only be cured with fire and blood. The position of the governor was painful and perplexing. "Don John," said Escovedo, "is thirty years old. I promise your Majesty nothing, save that if he finds himself without requisite assistance, he will take himself off when your Majesty is least thinking of such a thing."

Nothing could be more melancholy than the tone of the governor’s letters. He believed himself disliked, even in the midst of affectionate demonstrations. He felt compelled to use moderate counsels, although he considered moderation
of no avail. He was chained to his post, even though the post could, in his opinion, be more advantageously filled by another. He would still endeavor to gain the affections of the people, although he believed them hopelessly alienated. If patience would cure the malady of the country, he professed himself capable of applying the remedy, although the medicine had so far done but little good, and although he had no very strong hopes as to its future effects "Thus far, however," said he, "I am but as one crying in the wilderness." He took occasion to impress upon his Majesty, in very strong language, the necessity of money. Secret agents, spies, and spies upon spies, were more necessary than ever, and were very expensive portions of government machinery. Never was money more wanted. Nothing could be more important than to attend faithfully to the financial suggestions of Escovedo, and Don John, therefore, urged his Majesty, again and again, not to dishonor their drafts. "Money is the gruel," said he, "with which we must cure this sick man," and he therefore prayed all those who wished well to his efforts, to see that his Majesty did not fail him in this important matter. Notwithstanding, however, the vigor of his efforts, and the earnestness of his intentions, he gave but little hope to his Majesty of any valuable fruit from the pacification just concluded. He saw the Prince of Orange strengthening himself, "with great fury," in Holland and Zealand; he knew that the prince was backed by the Queen of England, who, notwithstanding her promises to Philip and himself, had offered her support to the rebels in case the proposed terms of peace were rejected in Holland, and he felt that "nearly the whole people was at the devotion of the prince."

Don John felt more and more convinced, too, that a conspiracy was on foot against his liberty. There were so many of the one party, and so few of the other, that if he were once fairly "trussed," he affirmed that not a man among the faithful would dare to budge an inch. He therefore informed his Majesty that he was secretly meditating a retreat to some place of security, judging very properly that, if he were still his own master, he should be able to exert more influence over those who were still well disposed, than if he should suffer himself to be taken captive. A suppressed conviction that he could effect nothing, except with his sword, pierced through all his more prudent reflections. He maintained that, after all, there was no remedy for the body but to cut off the diseased parts at once, and he therefore begged his Majesty for the means of performing the operation handsomely. The general expressions which he had previously used in favor of broths and mild treatment hardly tallied with the severe amputation thus recommended. There was, in truth, a constant struggle going on between the fierceness of his inclinations and the shackles which had been imposed upon him. He already felt entirely out of place, and although he scorned to fly from his post so long as it seemed the post of danger, he was most anxious that the king should grant him his dismissal, so soon as his presence should no longer be imperiously required. He was sure that the people would never believe in his Majesty’s forgiveness until the man concerning whom they entertained so much suspicion should be
removed, for they saw in him only the “thunderbolt of his Majesty’s wrath.” Orange and England confirmed their suspicions, and sustained their malice. Should he be compelled, against his will, to remain, he gave warning that he might do something which would be matter of astonishment to everybody.

Meantime, the man in whose hands really lay the question of war and peace, sat at Middelburg, watching the deep current of events as it slowly flowed towards the precipice. The whole population of Holland and Zealand hung on his words. In approaching the realms of William the Silent, Don John felt that he had entered a charmed circle, where the talisman of his own illustrious name lost its power, where his valor was paralyzed, and his sword rusted irrevocably in its sheath. “The people here,” he wrote, “are bewitched by the Prince of Orange. They love him, they fear him, and wish to have him for their master. They inform him of everything, and take no resolution without consulting him.”

While William was thus directing and animating the whole nation with his spirit, his immediate friends became more and more anxious concerning the perils to which he was exposed. His mother, who had already seen her youngest-born, Henry, her Adolphus, her chivalrous Louis, laid in their bloody graves for the cause of conscience, was most solicitous for the welfare of her “heart’s-beloved lord and son,” the Prince of Orange. Nevertheless, the high-spirited old dame was even more alarmed at the possibility of a peace in which that religious liberty for which so much dear blood had been poured forth should be inadequately secured. “My heart longs for certain tidings from my lord,” she wrote to William, “for methinks the peace now in prospect will prove but an oppression for soul and conscience. I trust my heart’s dearly-beloved lord and son will be supported by Divine grace to do nothing against God and his own soul’s salvation. ’Tis better to lose the temporal than the eternal.” Thus wrote the mother of William, and we can feel the sympathetic thrill which such tender and lofty words awoke in his breast. His son, the ill-starred Philip, now for ten years long a compulsory sojourner in Spain, was not yet weaned from his affection for his noble parent, but sent messages of affection to him whenever occasion offered, while a less commendable proof of his filial affection he had lately afforded, at the expense of the luckless captain of his Spanish guard. That officer having dared in his presence to speak disrespectfully of his father, was suddenly seized about the waist by the enraged young count, hurled out of the window, and killed stone-dead upon the spot. After this exhibition of his natural feelings, the Spanish government thought it necessary to take more subtle means to tame so turbulent a spirit. Unfortunately they proved successful.

Count John of Nassau, too, was sorely pressed for money. Six hundred thousand florins, at least, had been advanced by himself and brothers to aid the cause of Netherland freedom. Louis and himself had, unhesitatingly and immediately, turned into that sacred fund the hundred thousand crowns which the King of
France had presented them for their personal use, for it was not the Prince of Orange alone who had consecrated his wealth and his life to the cause, but the members of his family, less immediately interested in the country, had thus furnished what may well be called an enormous subsidy, and one most disproportionate to their means. Not only had they given all the cash which they could command by mortgaging their lands and rents, their plate and furniture, but, in the words of Count John himself, "they had taken the chains and jewels from the necks of their wives, their children, and their mother, and had hawked them about, as if they had themselves been traders and hucksters." And yet, even now, while stooping under this prodigious debt, Count John asked not for present repayment. He only wrote to the prince to signify his extreme embarrassment, and to request some obligation or recognition from the cities of Holland and Zealand, whence hitherto no expression of gratitude or acknowledgment had proceeded.

The prince consoled and assured, as best he could, his mother, son, wife, and brother, even at the same moment that he comforted his people. He also received at this time a second and more solemn embassy from Don John. No sooner had the governor exchanged oaths at Brussels, and been acknowledged as the representative of his Majesty, than he hastened to make another effort to conciliate the prince. Don John saw before him only a grand seignior of lofty birth and boundless influence, who had placed himself towards the Crown in a false position, from which he might even yet be rescued; for to sacrifice the whims of a reforming and transitory religious fanaticism, which had spun itself for a moment about so clear a brain, would, he thought, prove but a trifling task for so experienced a politician as the prince. William of Orange, on the other hand, looked upon his young antagonist as the most brilliant impersonation which had yet been seen of the foul spirit of persecution.

It will be necessary to follow, somewhat more in detail than is usually desirable, the interchange of conversations, letters, and protocols, out of which the brief but important administration of Don John was composed, for it was exactly in such manifestations that the great fight was really proceeding.

Don John meant peace, wise William meant war, for he knew that no other issue was possible. Peace, in reality, was war in its worst shape. Peace would unchain every priestly tongue, and unsheath every knightly sword in the fifteen provinces against little Holland and Zealand. He had been able to bind all the provinces together by the hastily forged chain of the Ghent treaty, and had done what he could to strengthen that union by the principle of mutual religious respect. By the arrival of Don John that work had been deranged. It had, however, been impossible for the prince thoroughly to infuse his own ideas on the subject of toleration into the hearts of his nearest associates. He could not hope to inspire his deadly enemies with a deeper sympathy. Was he not himself the mark of obloquy among the Reformers, because of his leniency to Catholics? Nay more, was not his intimate councillor, the accomplished Saint
Aldegonde, in despair because the prince refused to exclude the Anabaptists of Holland from the rights of citizenship? At the very moment when William was straining every nerve to unite warring sects, and to persuade men’s hearts into a system by which their consciences were to be laid open to God alone—at the moment when it was most necessary for the very existence of the fatherland that Catholic and Protestant should mingle their social and political relations—it was indeed a bitter disappointment for him to see wise statesmen of his own creed unable to rise to the idea of toleration. "The affair of the Anabaptists," wrote Saint Aldegonde, "has been renewed. The Prince objects to exclude them from citizenship. He answered me sharply, that their yea was equal to our oath, and that we should not press this matter, unless we were willing to confess that it was just for the Papists to compel us to a divine service which was against our conscience." It seems hardly credible that this sentence, containing so sublime a tribute to the character of the prince, should have been indited as a bitter censure, and that, too, by an enlightened and accomplished Protestant. "In short," continued Saint Aldegonde, with increasing vexation, "I don’t see how we can accomplish our wish in this matter. The Prince has uttered reproaches to me that our clergy are striving to obtain a mastery over consciences. He praised lately the saying of a monk who was not long ago here, that our pot had not gone to the fire as often as that of our antagonists, but that when the time came it would be black enough. In short, the prince fears that after a few centuries the clerical tyranny on both sides will stand in this respect on the same footing."

Early in the month of May, Doctor Leoninus and Caspar Schetz, Seigneur de Grobbendonck, had been sent on a mission from the states-general to the Prince of Orange. While their negotiations were still pending, four special envoys from Don John arrived at Middelburg. To this commission was informally adjoined Leoninus, who had succeeded to the general position of Viglius. Viglius was dead. Since the memorable arrest of the State Council, he had not appeared on the scene of public affairs. The house-arrest, to which he had been compelled by a revolutionary committee, had been indefinitely prolonged by a higher power, and after a protracted illness he had noiselessly disappeared from the stage of life. There had been few more learned doctors of both laws than he. There had been few more adroit politicians, considered from his point of view. His punning device was "Vita mortalium vigilia," and he acted accordingly, but with a narrow interpretation. His life had indeed been a vigil, but it must be confessed that the vigils had been for Viglius. The weather-beaten Palinurus, as he loved to call himself, had conducted his own argosy so warily that he had saved his whole cargo, and perished in port at last, while others, not sailing by his compass, were still tossed by the tempest.

The agents of Don John were the Duke of Aerschot, the Seigneur de Hierges, Seigneur de Willerval, and Doctor Meetkercke, accompanied by Doctor Andrew Gaill, one of the imperial commissioners. The two envoys from the states-general, Leoninus and Schetz, being present at Gertruydenberg were added to
the deputation. An important conference took place, the details of which have been somewhat minutely reserved. The Prince of Orange, accompanied by Saint Aldegonde and four other councillors, encountered the seven champions from Brussels in a long debate, which was more like a passage of arms or a trial of skill than a friendly colloquy with a pacific result in prospect, for it must be remembered that the Prince of Orange did not mean peace. He had devised the Pacification of Ghent as a union of the other provinces with Holland and Zealand, against Philip. He did not intend that it should be converted into a union of the other provinces with Philip, against Holland and Zealand.

Meetkercke was the first to speak. He said that the governor had dispatched them to the prince, to express his good intentions, to represent the fidelity with which his promises had thus far been executed, and to entreat the prince, together with the provinces of Holland and Zealand, to unite with their sister provinces in common allegiance to his Majesty. His Highness also proposed to advise with them concerning the proper method of convoking the states-general.

As soon as Meetkercke had finished his observations, the prince demanded that the points and articles should be communicated to him in writing. Now this was precisely what the envoys preferred to omit. It was easier, and far more agreeable to expatiate in a general field of controversy, than to remain tethered to distinct points. It was particularly in these confused conferences, where neither party was entirely sincere, that the volatile word was thought preferable to the permanent letter. Already so many watery lines had been traced, in the course of these fluctuating negotiations, that a few additional records would be, if necessary, as rapidly effaced as the rest.

The commissioners, after whispering in each other’s ears for a few minutes, refused to put down anything in writing. Protocols, they said, only engendered confusion.

"No, no," said the prince, in reply, "we will have nothing except in black and white. Otherwise things will be said on both sides, which will afterwards be interpreted in different ways. Nay, it will be denied that some important points have been discussed at all. We know that by experience. Witness the solemn treaty of Ghent, which ye have tried to make fruitless, under pretence that some points, arranged by word of mouth, and not stated particularly in writing, had been intended in a different sense from the obvious one. Governments given by royal commission, for example; what point could be clearer? Nevertheless, ye have hunted up glosses and cavils to obscure the intention of the contracting parties. Ye have denied my authority over Utrecht, because not mentioned expressly in the treaty of Ghent."

"But," said one of the envoys, interrupting at this point, "neither the Council of State nor the Court of Mechlin consider Utrecht as belonging to your
"Neither the Council of State," replied the prince, "nor the Court of Mechlin have anything to do with the matter. It is in my commission, and all the world knows it." He added that instead of affairs being thrown into confusion by being reduced to writing, he was of opinion, on the contrary, that it was by that means alone they could be made perfectly clear.

Leoninus replied, good naturedly, that there should be no difficulty upon that score, and that writings should be exchanged. In the meantime, however, he expressed the hope that the prince would honor them with some preliminary information as to the points in which he felt aggrieved, as well as to the pledges which he and the states were inclined to demand.

"And what reason have we to hope," cried the prince, "that your pledges, if made, will be redeemed? That which was promised so solemnly at Ghent, and ratified by Don John and his Majesty, has not been fulfilled."

"Of what particular point do you complain?" asked Schetz. "Wherein has the Pacification been violated?"

Hereupon the prince launched forth upon a flowing stream of invective. He spoke to them of his son detained in distant captivity, of his own property at Breda withheld, of a thousand confiscated estates, of garrisons of German mercenaries, of ancient constitutions annihilated, of the infamous edicts nominally suspended, but actually in full vigor. He complained bitterly that the citadels, those nests and dens of tyranny, were not yet demolished. "Ye accuse me of distrust," he cried, "but while the castles of Antwerp, Ghent, Namur, and so many more are standing, 'tis yourselves who show how utterly you are without confidence in any permanent and peaceful arrangement."

"And what," asked a deputy, smoothly, "is the point which touches you most nearly? What is it that your Excellency most desires? By what means will it be possible for the government fully to give you contentment?"

"I wish," he answered, simply, "the full execution of the Ghent Pacification. If you regard the general welfare of the land, it is well, and I thank you. If not, 'tis idle to make propositions, for I regard my country's profit, not my own." Afterwards, the prince simply repeated his demand that the Ghent treaty should be executed, adding that, after the states-general should have been assembled, it would be time to propose the necessary articles for mutual security.

Hereupon Doctor Leoninus observed that the assembly of the states-general could hardly be without danger. He alluded to the vast number of persons who would thus be convoked, to the great discrepancy of humors which would thus be manifested. Many men would be present neither discreet nor experienced. He therefore somewhat coolly suggested that it might be better to obviate the
necessity of holding any general assembly at all. An amicable conference, for the sake of settling doubtful questions, would render the convocation superfluous, and save the country from the dangers by which the step would be attended. The doctor concluded by referring to the recent assemblies of France, the only result of which had been fresh dissensions. It thus appeared that the proposition on the part of Don John meant something very different from its apparent signification. To advise with the prince as to the proper method of assembling the estates, really meant to advise with him as to the best means of preventing any such assembly. Here, certainly, was a good reason for the preference expressed by the deputies, in favor of amicable discussions over formal protocols. It might not be so easy in a written document to make the assembly, and the prevention of the assembly, appear exactly the same thing.

The prince replied that there was a wide difference between the condition of France and of the Netherlands. Here, was one will and one intention. There, were many factions, many partialities, many family intrigues. Since it had been agreed by the Ghent treaty that certain points should be provisionally maintained and others settled by a speedy convocation of the states-general, the plainest course was to maintain the provisional points, and to summon the states-general at once. This certainly was concise and logical. It is doubtful, however, whether he were really as anxious for the assembly-general as he appeared to be. Both parties were fencing at each other, without any real intention of carrying their points, for neither wished the convocation, while both affected an eagerness for that event. The conversation proceeded.

"At least," said an envoy, "you can tell beforehand in what you are aggrieved, and what you have to propose."

"We are aggrieved in nothing, and we have nothing to propose," answered the prince, "so long as you maintain the Pacification. We demand no other pledge, and are willing to refer everything afterwards to the assembly."

"But," asked Schetz, "what security do you offer us that you will yourselves maintain the Pacification?"

"We are not bound to give assurances," answered the prince. "The Pacification is itself an assurance. 'Tis a provisional arrangement, to be maintained by both parties, until after the decision of the assembly. The Pacification must therefore be maintained or disavowed. Choose between the two. Only, if you mean still to acknowledge it, you must keep its articles. This we mean to do, and if up to the present time you have any complaint to make of our conduct, as we trust you have not, we are ready to give you satisfaction."
"In short," said an envoy, "you mean, after we shall have placed in your hands the government of Utrecht, Amsterdam, and other places, to deny us any pledges on your part to maintain the Pacification."

"But," replied the prince, "if we are already accomplishing the Pacification, what more do you wish?"

"In this fashion," cried the others, "after having got all that you ask, and having thus fortified yourselves more than you were ever fortified before, you will make war upon us."

"War?" cried the prince, "what are you afraid of? We are but a handful of people; a worm compared to the King of Spain. Moreover, ye are fifteen provinces to two. What have you to fear?"

"Ah," said Meetkercke, "we have seen what you could do, when you were masters of the sea. Don’t make yourselves out quite so little."

"But," said the prince, "the Pacification of Ghent provides for all this. Your deputies were perfectly satisfied with the guarantees it furnished. As to making war upon you, 'tis a thing without foundation or appearance of probability. Had you believed then that you had anything to fear, you would not have forgotten to demand pledges enough. On the contrary, you saw how roundly we were dealing with you then, honestly disgarnishing the country, even before the peace had been concluded. For ourselves, although we felt the right to demand guarantees, we would not do it, for we were treating with you on terms of confidence. We declared expressly that had we been dealing with the king, we should have exacted stricter pledges. As to demanding them of us at the moment, 'tis nonsense. We have neither the means of assailing you, nor do we deem it expedient to do so."

"To say the truth," replied Schetz, "we are really confident that you will not make war upon us. On the other hand, however, we see you spreading your religion daily, instead of keeping it confined within your provinces. What assurance do you give us that, after all your demand shall have been accorded, you will make no innovation in religion?"

"The assurance which we give you," answered the prince, "is that we will really accomplish the Pacification."

"But," persisted Schetz, "do you fairly promise to submit to all which the states-general shall ordain, as well on this point of religious exercise in Holland and Zealand, as on all the others?"

This was a home-thrust. The prince parried it for a while. In his secret thoughts he had no expectation or desire that the states-general, summoned in a solemn
manner by the governor-general, on the basis of the memorable assembly before which was enacted the grand ceremony of the imperial abdication, would ever hold their session, and although he did not anticipate the prohibition by such assembly, should it take place, of the Reformed worship in Holland and Zealand, he did not intend to submit to it, even should it be made.

"I cannot tell," said he, accordingly, in reply to the last question, "for ye have yourselves already broken and violated the Pacification, having made an accord with Don John without our consent, and having already received him as governor."

"So that you don’t mean," replied Schetz, "to accept the decision of the states?"

"I don’t say that," returned the prince, continuing to parry, "it is possible that we might accept it; it is possible that we might not. We are no longer in our entire rights, as we were at the time of our first submission at Ghent."

"But we will make you whole," said Schetz.

"That you cannot do," replied the prince, "for you have broken the Pacification all to pieces. We have nothing, therefore, to expect from the states, but to be condemned off-hand.

"You don’t mean, then," repeated Schetz, "to submit to the estates touching the exercise of religion?"

"No, we do not!" replied the prince, driven into a corner at last, and striking out in his turn. "We certainly do not. To tell you the truth, we see that you intend our extirpation, and we don’t mean to be extirpated."

"Ho!" said the Duke of Aerschot, "there is nobody who wishes that."

"Indeed, but you do," said the prince. "We have submitted ourselves to you in good faith, and you now would compel us and all the world to maintain exclusively the Catholic religion. This cannot be done except by extirpating us."

A long, learned, vehement discussion upon abstract points, between Saint Aldegonde, Leoninus, and Doctor Gaill, then ensued, during which the prince, who had satisfied himself as to the result of the conference, retired from the apartment. He afterwards had a private convention with Schetz and Leoninus, in which he reproached them with their inclination to reduce their fatherland to slavery. He also took occasion to remark to Hierges, that it was a duty to content the people, that whatever might be accomplished for them was durable, whereas the will of kings was perishing. He told the Duke of Aerschot that if Utrecht were not restored, he would take it by force. He warned the duke that to trust the king was to risk his head. He, at least, would never
repose confidence in him, having been deceived too often. The king cherished the maxim, *haereticis non est servanda fides*; as for himself he was *calbo y calbanista*, and meant to die so.

The formal interchange of documents soon afterwards took place. The conversation thus held between the different parties shows, however, the exact position of affairs. There was no change in the intentions of either Reformers or Royalists. Philip and his representatives still contended for two points, and claimed the praise of moderation that their demands were so few in number. They were willing to concede everything, save the unlimited authority of the king and the exclusive maintenance of the Catholic religion. The Prince of Orange, on his side, claimed two points also—the ancient constitutions of the country and religious freedom. It was obvious enough that the contest was the same, in reality, as it had ever been. No approximation had been made towards reconciling absolutism with national liberty, persecution with toleration. The Pacification of Ghent had been a step in advance. That Treaty opened the door to civil and religious liberty, but it was an agreement among the provinces, not a compact between the people and the monarch. By the casuists of Brussels and the licentiates of Louvain, it had, to be sure, been dogmatically pronounced orthodox, and had been confirmed by royal edict. To believe, however, that his Catholic Majesty had faith in the dogmas propounded, was as absurd as to believe in the dogmas themselves. If the Ghent Pacification really had made no breach in royal and Roman infallibility, then the efforts of Orange and the exultation of the Reformers had indeed been idle.

The envoys accordingly, in obedience to their instructions, made a formal statement to the Prince of Orange and the states of Holland and Zealand, on the part of Don John. They alluded to the departure of the Spaniards, as if that alone had fulfilled every duty and authorized every claim. They therefore demanded the immediate publication in Holland and Zealand of the Perpetual Edict. They insisted on the immediate discontinuance of all hostile attempts to reduce Amsterdam to the jurisdiction of Orange, required the prince to abandon his pretensions to Utrecht, and denounced the efforts making by him and his partisans to diffuse their heretical doctrines through the other provinces. They observed, in conclusion, that the general question of religion was not to be handled, because reserved for the consideration of the states-general, according to the treaty of Ghent.

The reply, delivered on the following day by the Prince of Orange and the deputies, maintained that the Perpetual Edict was widely different from the Pacification of Ghent which it affected to uphold, that the promises to abstain from all violation of the ancient constitutions had not been kept, that the German troops had not been dismissed, that the property of the prince in the Netherlands and Burgundy had not been restored, that his son was detained in captivity, that the government of Utrecht was withheld from him, that the
charters and constitution of the country, instead of being extended, had been contracted, and that the governor had claimed the right to convokes the states-general at his pleasure, in violation of the ancient right to assemble at their own. The document further complained that the adherents of the Reformed religion were not allowed to frequent the different provinces in freedom, according to the stipulations of Ghent; that Don John, notwithstanding all these short-comings, had been acknowledged as governor-general, without the consent of the prince; that he was surrounded with a train of Spaniards, Italians, and other foreigners—Gonzaga, Escovedo, and the like—as well as by renegade Netherlanders like Tassis, by whom he was unduly influenced against the country and the people, and by whom a "back door was held constantly open" to the admission of evils innumerable. Finally, it was asserted that, by means of this last act of union, a new form of inquisition had been introduced, and one which was much more cruel than the old system, inasmuch as the Spanish Inquisition did not take information against men except upon suspicion, whereas, by the new process, all the world would be examined as to their conscience and religion, under pretence of maintaining the union.

Such was the result of this second mission to the Prince of Orange on the part of the governor-general. Don John never sent another. The swords were now fairly measured between the antagonists, and the scabbard was soon to be thrown away. A few weeks afterwards, the governor wrote to Philip that there was nothing in the world which William of Orange so much abhorred as his Majesty, adding, with Castillian exaggeration, that if the prince could drink the king’s blood he would do so with great pleasure.

Don John, being thus seated in the saddle, had a moment’s leisure to look around him. It was but a moment, for he had small confidence in the aspect of affairs, but one of his first acts after assuming the government afforded a proof of the interpretation which he had adopted of the Ghent Pacification. An edict was issued, addressed to all bishops, "heretic-masters," and provincial councils, commanding the strict enforcement of the Canons of Trent, and other ecclesiastical decrees. These authorities were summoned instantly to take increased heed of the flocks under their charge, "and to protect them from the ravening wolves which were seeking to devour them."

The measure bore instant fruit. A wretched tailor of Mechlin, Peter Panis by name, an honest man, but a heretic, was arrested upon the charge of having preached or exhorted at a meeting in that city. He confessed that he had been present at the meeting, but denied that he had preached. He was then required to denounce the others who had been present, and the men who had actually officiated. He refused, and was condemned to death. The Prince of Orange, while the process was pending, wrote an earnest letter to the Council of Mechlin, imploring them not now to rekindle the fires of religious persecution. His appeal was in vain. The poor tailor was beheaded at Mechlin on the 15th of June, the Conqueror of Lepanto being present at the execution,
and adding dignity to the scene. Thus, at the moment when William of Orange
was protecting the Anabaptists of Middelburg in their rights of citizenship, even
while they refused its obligations, the son of the Emperor was dipping his hands
in the blood of a poor wretch who had done no harm but to listen to a prayer
without denouncing the preacher. The most intimate friends of the prince were
offended with his liberality. The imperial shade of Don John’s father might
have risen to approve the son who had so dutifully revived his bloody edicts
and his ruthless policy.

Three parties were now fairly in existence—the nobles, who hated the
Spaniards, but who were disposed to hold themselves aloof from the people;
the adherents of Don John, commonly called "Johanists"; and the partisans of
the Prince of Orange—for William the Silent had always felt the necessity of
leaning for support on something more substantial than the court party, a reed
shaken by the wind, and failing always when most relied upon. His efforts were
custom to elevate the middle class, to build up a strong third party which
should unite much of the substantial wealth and intelligence of the land,
drawing constantly from the people, and deriving strength from national
enthusiasm—a party which should include nearly all the political capacity of the
country; and his efforts were successful. No doubt the governor and his
secretary were right when they said the people of the Netherlands were
inclined to brook the Turk as easily as the Spaniard for their master, and that
their hearts were in reality devoted to the Prince of Orange.

As to the grandees, they were mostly of those who "sought to swim between
two waters," according to the prince’s expression. There were but few
unswerving supporters of the Spanish rule, like the Berlaymont and the Tassis
families. The rest veered daily with the veering wind. Aerschot, the great chief
of the Catholic party, was but a cringing courtier, false and fawning both to
Don John and the prince. He sought to play a leading part in a great epoch; he
only distinguished himself by courting and betraying all parties, and being
thrown away by all. His son and brother were hardly more respectable. The
prince knew how little dependence could be placed on such allies, even
although they had signed and sworn the Ghent Pacification. He was also aware
how little it was the intention of the governor to be bound by that famous
Treaty. The Spanish troops had been, indeed, disbanded, but there were still
between ten and fifteen thousand German mercenaries in the service of the
king; these were stationed in different important places, and held firm
possession of the citadels. The great keys of the country were still in the hands
of the Spaniards. Aerschot, indeed, governed the castle of Antwerp, in room of
Sancho d’Avila, but how much more friendly would Aerschot be than Avila,
when interest prompted him to sustain Don John against the prince?

Meanwhile, the estates, according to their contract, were straining every nerve
to raise the requisite sum for the payment of the German troops. Equitable
offers were made, by which the soldiers were to receive a certain proportion of
the arrears due to them in merchandise, and the remainder in cash. The arrangement was rejected, at the secret instance of Don John. While the governor affected an ingenuous desire to aid the estates in their efforts to free themselves from the remaining portion of this encumbrance, he was secretly tampering with the leading German officers, in order to prevent their acceptance of any offered terms. He persuaded these military chiefs that a conspiracy existed, by which they were not only to be deprived of their wages but of their lives. He warned them to heed no promises, to accept no terms. Convincing them that he, and he only, was their friend, he arranged secret plans by which they should assist him in taking the fortresses of the country into still more secure possession, for he was not more inclined to trust to the Aerschot's and the Havré's than was the prince himself.

The governor lived in considerable danger, and in still greater dread of capture, if not of assassination. His imagination, excited by endless tales of ambush and half-discovered conspiracies, saw armed soldiers behind every bush, a pitfall in every street. Had not the redoubtable Alva been nearly made a captive? Did not Louis of Nassau nearly entrap the Grand Commander? No doubt the Prince of Orange was desirous of accomplishing a feat by which he would be placed in regard to Philip on the vantage ground which the king had obtained by his seizure of Count Van Buren, nor did Don John need for warnings coming from sources far from obscure. In May, the Viscount De Gand had forced his way to his bedside in the dead of night, and wakening him from his sleep, had assured him, with great solemnity, that his life was not worth a pin’s purchase if he remained in Brussels. He was aware, he said, of a conspiracy by which both his liberty and his life were endangered, and assured him that in immediate flight lay his only safety.

The governor fled to Mechlin, where the same warnings were soon afterwards renewed, for the solemn sacrifice of Peter Panis, the poor preaching tailor of that city, had not been enough to strike terror to the hearts of all the Netherlanders. One day, toward the end of June, the Duke of Aerschot, riding out with Don John, gave him a circumstantial account of plots, old and new, whose existence he had discovered or invented, and he showed a copy of a secret letter, written by the Prince of Orange to the estates, recommending the forcible seizure of his Highness. It is true that the duke was, at that period and for long after, upon terms of the most “fraternal friendship” with the prince, and was in the habit of signing himself “his very affectionate brother and cordial friend to serve him,” yet this did not prevent him from accomplishing what he deemed his duty, in secretly denouncing his plans. It is also true that he, at the same time, gave the prince private information concerning the government, and sent him intercepted letters from his enemies, thus easing his conscience on both sides, and trimming his sails to every wind which might blow. The duke now, however, reminded his Highness of the contumely with which he had been treated at Brussels, of the insolent threats with which the citizens had pursued his servants and secretaries even to the
very door of his palace. He assured him that the same feeling existed at Mechlin, and that neither himself nor family were much safer there than in the capital, a plot being fully organized for securing his person. The conspirators, he said, were openly supported by a large political party, who called themselves anti-Johanists, and who clothed themselves in symbolic costume, as had been done by the disaffected in the days of Cardinal Granvelle. He assured the governor that nearly all the members of the states-general were implicated in these schemes. "And what becomes, then, of their promises?" asked Don John. "That for their promises!" cried the duke, snapping his fingers, "no man in the land feels bound by engagements now." The governor demanded the object of the states in thus seeking to deprive him of his liberty. The duke informed him that it was to hold him in captivity until they had compelled him to sign every paper which they chose to lay before him. Such things had been done in the Netherlands in former days, the duke observed, as he proceeded to narrate how a predecessor of his Highness and a prince of the land, after having been compelled to sign innumerable documents, had been, in conclusion, tossed out of the windows of his own palace, with all his retinue, to perish upon the pikes of an insurgent mob below. The governor protested that it did not become the son of Charles V and the representative of his Catholic Majesty to hear such intimations a second time. After his return, he brooded over what had been said to him for a few days, and he then broke up his establishment at Mechlin, selling off his superfluous furniture and even the wine in his cellars. Thus showing that his absence, both from Brussels and Mechlin, was to be a prolonged one, he took advantage of an unforeseen occurrence again to remove his residence.

CHAPTER 3

Further Activities and Correspondence of the Prince of Orange and Don John

There were few cities of the Netherlands more picturesque in situation, more trimly built, and more opulent of aspect than the little city of Namur. Seated at the confluence of the Sombre with the Meuse, and throwing over each river a bridge of solid but graceful structure, it lay in the lap of a most fruitful valley. A broad crescent-shaped plain, fringed by the rapid Meuse, and enclosed by gently rolling hills cultivated to their crests, or by abrupt precipices of limestone crowned with verdure, was divided by numerous hedgerows, and dotted all over with cornfields, vineyards, and flower gardens. Many eyes have gazed with delight upon that well-known and most lovely valley, and many torrents of blood have mingled with those glancing waters since that long-buried and most sanguinary age which forms our theme; and
still placid as ever is the valley, brightly as ever flows the stream. Even now, as in that vanished, but never-forgotten time, nestles the little city in the angle of the two rivers; still directly over its head seems to hang in mid-air the massive and frowning fortress, like the gigantic helmet in the fiction, as if ready to crush the pigmy town below.

It was this famous citadel, crowning an abrupt precipice five hundred feet above the river’s bed, and placed near the frontier of France, which made the city so important, and which had now attracted Don John’s attention in this hour of his perplexity. The unexpected visit of a celebrated personage furnished him with the pretext which he desired. The beautiful Margaret of Valois, Queen of Navarre, was proceeding to the baths of Spa, to drink the waters. Her health was as perfect as her beauty, but she was flying from a husband whom she hated, to advance the interest of a brother whom she loved with a more than sisterly fondness—for the worthless Duke of Alençon was one of the many competitors for the Netherland government, the correspondence between himself and his brother with Orange and his agents being still continued. The hollow truce with the Huguenots in France had, however, been again succeeded by war. Henry of Valois had already commenced operations in Gascony against Henry of Navarre, whom he hated almost as cordially as Margaret herself could do, and the Duke of Alençon was besieging Issoire. Meantime, the beautiful queen came to mingle the golden thread of her feminine intrigues with the dark woof of the Netherland destinies.

Few spirits have been more subtle, few faces so fatal as hers. True child of the Medicean mother, worthy sister of Charles, Henry, and Francis—princes for ever infamous in the annals of France—she possessed more beauty and wit than Mary of Scotland, more learning and accomplishments than Elizabeth of England. In the blaze of her beauty, according to the inflated language of her most determined worshiper, the wings of all rivals were melted. Heaven required to be raised higher and earth made wider, before a full sweep could be given to her own majestic flight. We are further informed that she was a Minerva for eloquence, that she composed matchless poems which she sang most exquisitely to the sound of her lute, and that her familiar letters were so full of genius, that "poor Cicero" was but a fool to her in the same branch of composition. The world has shuddered for ages at the dark tragedy of her nuptials. Was it strange that hatred, incest, murder, should follow in the train of a wedding thus hideously solemnized?

Don John, as in his Moorish disguise he had looked upon her perfections, had felt in danger of becoming really the slave he personated—"her beauty is more divine than human," he had cried, "but fitter to destroy men’s souls than to bless them"; and now the enchantress was on her way to his dominions. Her road led through Namur to Liege, and gallantry required that he should meet her as she passed. Attended by a select band of gentlemen and a few horsemen of his bodyguard, the governor came to Namur.
Meantime the queen crossed the frontier, and was courteously received at Cambray. The bishop—of the loyal house of Berlaymont—was a stanch supporter of the king, and although a Fleming, was Spanish to the core. On him the cajolery of the beautiful queen was first essayed, but was found powerless. The prelate gave her a magnificent ball, but resisted her blandishments. He retired with the appearance of the confections, but the governor of the citadel, the Seigneur d’Inchy remained, with whom Margaret was more successful. She found him a cordial hater of Spain, a favorer of France, and very impatient under the authority of the bishop. He obtained permission to accompany the royal visitor a few stages of her journey, and returned to Cambray, her willing slave, holding the castle in future, neither for king nor bishop, but for Margaret’s brother, Alençon, alone. At Mons she was received with great state by the Count Lalain, who was governor of Hainault, while his countess governed him. A week of festivities graced the advent of the Queen, during which period the hearts of both Lalain and his wife were completely subjugated. They agreed that Flanders had been too long separated from the parental France to which it of right belonged. The count was a stanch Catholic, but he hated Spain. He was a relative of Egmont, and anxious to avenge his death, but he was no lover of the people, and was jealous of Orange. Moreover, his wife had become entirely fascinated by the designing queen. So warm a friendship had sprung up between the two fair ladies as to make it indispensable that Flanders and Hainault should be annexed to France. The count promised to hold his whole government at the service of Alençon, and recommended that an attempt should be made to gain over the incorruptible Governor of Cambray. Margaret did not inform him that she had already turned that functionary round her finger, but she urged Lalain and his wife to seduce him from his allegiance, if possible.

The count, with a retinue of mounted men, then accompanied her on her way towards Namur, but turned as the distant tramp of Don John’s cavalcade was heard approaching, for it was not desirable for Lalain, that moment, to find himself face to face with the governor. Don John stood a moment awaiting the arrival of the Queen. He did not dream of her political intrigues, nor see in the fair form approaching him one mortal enemy the more. Margaret traveled in a splendid litter with gilt pillars, lined with scarlet velvet, and entirely enclosed in glass, which was followed by those of the Princess de la Roche sur Yon, and of Madame de Tournon. After these came ten ladies of honor on horseback, and six chariots filled with female domestics. These, with the guards and other attendants, made up the retinue. On meeting the queen’s litter, Don John sprang from his horse and presented his greetings. The queen returned his salutation, in the French fashion, by offering her cheek to his embrace, extending the same favor to the Duke of Aerschot and the Marquis of Havré. The cavaliers then remounted and escorted the queen to Namur, Don John riding by the side of the litter, and conversing with her all the way.
It was late in the evening when the procession arrived in the city. The streets had, however, been brilliantly illuminated; houses and shops, although it was near midnight, being in a blaze of light. Don John believing that no attentions could be so acceptable at that hour as to provide for the repose of his guest, conducted the queen at once to the lodgings prepared for her. Margaret was astonished at the magnificence of the apartments into which she was ushered. A spacious and stately hall, most gorgeously furnished, opened into a series of chambers and cabinets, worthy, in their appointments, of a royal palace. The tent and bed coverings prepared for the queen were exquisitely embroidered in needlework with scenes representing the battle of Lepanto. The great hall was hung with gorgeous tapestry of satin and velvet, ornamented with columns of raised silver work, and with many figures in antique costume, of the same massive embroidery. The rest of the furniture was also of satin, velvet, cloth of gold, and brocade. The Queen was dazzled with so much magnificence, and one of the courtiers could not help expressing astonishment at the splendor of the apartments and decorations, which, as he observed to the Duke of Aerschot, seemed more appropriate to the palace of a powerful monarch than to the apartments of a young bachelor prince. The duke replied by explaining that the expensive embroidery which they saw was the result, not of extravagance, but of valor and generosity. After the battle of Lepanto, Don John had restored, without ransom, the two sons, who had been taken prisoners, of a powerful Turkish bashaw. The father, in gratitude, had sent this magnificent tapestry as a present to the conqueror, and Don John had received it at Milan, in which city, celebrated for the taste of its upholsterers, it had been arranged for furniture.

The next morning a grand mass with military music was performed, followed by a sumptuous banquet in the grand hall. Don John and the queen sat at a table three feet apart from the rest, and Ottavio Gonzaga served them wine upon his knees. After the banquet came, as usual, the ball, the festivities continuing till late in the night, and Don John scarcely quitting his fair guest for a moment. The next afternoon, a festival had been arranged upon an island in the river. The company embarked upon the Meuse, in a fleet of gaily scarfed and painted vessels, many of which were filled with musicians.

Margaret reclined in her gilded barge, under a richly embroidered canopy. A fairer and falser queen than “Egypt” had bewitched the famous youth who had triumphed, not lost the world, beneath the heights of Actium. The revelers landed on the island, where the banquet was already spread within a spacious bower of ivy, and beneath umbrageous elms. The dance upon the sward was protracted to a late hour, and the summer stars had been long in the sky when the company returned to their barges.

Don John, more than ever enthralled by the bride of St. Bartholomew, knew not that her sole purpose in visiting his dominion had been to corrupt his servants and to undermine his authority. His own purpose, however, had been
less to pay court to the queen than to make use of her presence to cover his own designs. That purpose he proceeded instantly to execute. The queen next morning pursued her voyage by the river to Liege, and scarcely had she floated out of his sight than he sprang upon his horse and, accompanied by a few trusty attendants, galloped out of the gate and across the bridge which led to the citadel. He had already dispatched the loyal Berlaymont, with his four equally loyal sons, the Seigneurs de Meghen, Floyon, Hierges, and Haultepenne to that fortress. These gentlemen had informed the castellan that the governor was about to ride forth hunting, and that it would be proper to offer him the hospitalities of the castle as he passed on his way. A considerable number of armed men had been concealed in the woods and thickets of the neighborhood. The Seigneur de Froymont, suspecting nothing, acceded to the propriety of the suggestion made by the Berlaymont’s. Meantime, with a blast of his horn, Don John appeared at the castle gate. He entered the fortress with the castellan, while one of the gentlemen watched outside, as the ambushed soldiers came toiling up the precipice. When all was ready the gentleman returned to the hall, and made a signal to Don John, as he sat at breakfast with the constable. The governor sprang from the table and drew his sword; Berlaymont and his four sons drew their pistols, while at the same instant, the soldiers entered. Don John, exclaiming that this was the first day of his government, commanded the castellan to surrender. De Froymont, taken by surprise, and hardly understanding this very melodramatic attack upon a citadel by its own lawful governor, made not much difficulty in complying. He was then turned out of doors, along with his garrison, mostly feeble old men and invalids. The newly arrived soldiers took their places, at command of the Governor, and the stronghold of Namur was his own.

There was little doubt that the representative of Philip had a perfect right to possess himself of any fortress within his government; there could be as little that the sudden stratagem by which he had thus made himself master of this citadel would prove offensive to the estates, while it could hardly be agreeable to the king; and yet it is not certain that he could have accomplished his purpose in any other way. Moreover, the achievement was one of a projected series by which he meant to re-vindicate his dwindling authority. He was weary of playing the hypocrite, and convinced that he and his monarch were both abhorred by the Netherlanders. Peace was impossible—war was forbidden him. Reduced almost to a nullity by the Prince of Orange, it was time for him to make a stand, and in this impregnable fastness his position at least was a good one. Many months before, the Prince of Orange had expressed his anxious desire that this most important town and citadel should be secured for the estates.

"You know," he had written to Bossu in December, "the evil and the dismay which the loss of the city and fortress of Namur would occasion to us. Let me beseech you that all possible cares be taken to preserve them." Nevertheless,
their preservation had been entrusted to a feeble-minded old constable, at the head of a handful of cripples.

We know how intense had been the solicitude of the prince, not only to secure but to destroy these citadels, "nests of tyranny," which had been built by despots to crush, not protect, the towns at their feet. These precautions had been neglected, and the consequences were displaying themselves, for the castle of Namur was not the only one of which Don John felt himself secure. Although the Duke of Aerschot seemed so very much his humble servant, the Governor did not trust him, and wished to see the citadel of Antwerp in more unquestionable keeping. He had therefore withdrawn, not only the duke, but his son, the Prince of Chimay, commander of the castle in his father's absence, from that important post, and insisted upon their accompanying him to Namur. So gallant a courtier as Aerschot could hardly refuse to pay his homage to so illustrious a princess as Margaret of Valois, while during the absence of the duke and Prince the keys of Antwerp citadel had been, at the command of Don John, placed in the keeping of the Seigneur de Treslong, an unscrupulous and devoted royalist. The celebrated Colonel Van Ende, whose participation, at the head of his German cavalry, in the terrible sack of that city, which he had been ordered to defend, has been narrated, was commanded to return to Antwerp. He was to present himself openly to the city authorities, but he was secretly directed by the governor-general to act in cooperation with the Colonels Fugger, Frondsberger, and Polwiller, who commanded the forces already stationed in the city. These distinguished officers had been all summer in secret correspondence with Don John, for they were the instruments with which he meant by a bold stroke to recover his almost lost authority. While he had seemed to be seconding the efforts of the states-general to pay off and disband these mercenaries, nothing had in reality been farther from his thoughts, and the time had now come when his secret plans were to be executed, according to the agreement between himself and the German colonels. He wrote to them, accordingly, to delay no longer the accomplishment of the deed—that deed being the seizure of Antwerp citadel, as he had already successfully mastered that of Namur. The Duke of Aerschot, his brother, and son, were in his power, and could do nothing to prevent the cooperation of the colonels in the city with Treslong in the castle, so that the governor would thus be enabled, laying his head tranquilly upon "the pillow of the Antwerp citadel," according to the reproachful expression subsequently used by the estates, to await the progress of events.

The current of his adventurous career was not, however, destined to run thus smoothly. It is true that the estates had not yet entirely lost their confidence in his character, but the seizure of Namur, and the attempt upon Antwerp, together with the contents of the intercepted letters written by himself and Escovedo to Philip, to Perez, to the Empress, to the Colonels Frondsberger and Fugger, were soon destined to open their eyes. In the meantime, almost exactly at the moment when Don John was executing his enterprise against
Namur, Escovedo had taken an affectionate farewell of the estates at Brussels, for it had been thought necessary, as already intimated, both for the apparent interests and the secret projects of Don John, that the secretary should make a visit to Spain. At the command of the governor-general he had offered to take charge of any communication for his Majesty which the estates might be disposed to entrust to him, and they had accordingly addressed a long epistle to the king, in which they gave ample expression to their indignation and their woe. They remonstrated with the king concerning the continued presence of the German mercenaries, whose knives were ever at their throats, whose plunder and insolence impoverished and tortured the people. They reminded him of the vast sums which the provinces had contributed in times past to the support of government, and they begged assistance from his bounty now. They recalled to his vision the melancholy spectacle of Antwerp, but lately the "nurse of Europe, the fairest flower in his royal garland, the foremost and noblest city of the earth, now quite desolate and forlorn," and with additional instructions to Escovedo, that he should not fail, in his verbal communications, to represent the evil consequences of the course hitherto pursued by his Majesty’s governors in the Netherlands, they dismissed him with good wishes, and with "crowns for convoy" in his purse to the amount of a revenue of 2,000 yearly. His secret correspondence was intercepted and made known a few weeks after his departure for that terrible Spain whence so few travelers returned.

For a moment we follow him thither. With a single word in anticipation, concerning the causes and the consummation of this celebrated murder, which was delayed till the following year, the unfortunate Escovedo may be dismissed from these pages. It has been seen how artfully Antonio Perez, Secretary of State, paramour of Princess Eboli, and ruling councillor at that day of Philip, had fostered in the king’s mind the most extravagant suspicions as to the schemes of Don John, and of his confidential secretary. He had represented it as their fixed and secret intention, after Don John should be finally established on the throne of England, to attack Philip himself in Spain, and to deprive him of his crown, Escovedo being represented as the prime instigator and controller of this astounding plot, which lunatics only could have engendered, and which probably never had existence.

No proof of the wild design was offered. The language which Escovedo was accused by Perez of having held previously to his departure for Flanders—that it was the intention of Don John and himself to fortify the rock of Mogro, with which, and with the command of the city of Santander, they could make themselves masters of Spain after having obtained possession of England—is too absurd to have been uttered by a man of Escovedo’s capacity. Certainly, had Perez been provided with the least scrap of writing from the hands of Don John or Escovedo which could be tortured into evidence upon this point, it would have been forthcoming, and would have rendered such fictitious hearsay superfluous. Perez, in connivance with Philip, had been systematically
conducting his correspondence with Don John and Escovedo, in order to elicit some evidence of the imputed scheme. "'T was the only way," said Perez to Philip, "to make them unbare their bosoms to the sword." "I am quite of the same opinion," replied Philip to Perez, "for, according to my theology, you would do your duty neither to God nor the world, unless you did as you are doing." Yet the excellent pair of conspirators at Madrid could wring no damning proofs from the lips of the supposititious conspirators in Flanders, save that Don John, after Escovedo's arrival in Madrid, wrote, impatiently and frequently, to demand that he should be sent back, together with the money which he had gone to Spain to procure. "Money, more money, and Escovedo," wrote the governor, and Philip was quite willing to accept this most natural exclamation as evidence of his brother's designs against his crown. Out of these shreds and patches—the plot against England, the pope's bull, the desire expressed by Don John to march into France as a simple adventurer, with a few thousand men at his back—Perez, according to his own statement, drew up a protocol, afterwards formally approved by Philip, which concluded with the necessity of taking Escovedo's life, instantly but privately, and by poison. The Marquis de Los Velos, to whom the memorial was submitted for his advice, averred that if the deathbed wafer were in his own lips, he should vote for the death of the culprit; Philip had already jumped to the same conclusion; Perez joyfully undertook the business, having received carte blanche from the king, and thus the unfortunate secretary was doomed. Immediately after the arrival of Escovedo in Madrid, he addressed a letter to the king. Philip filed it away among other dispatches, with this annotation: "the avant courier has arrived—it is necessary to make great haste, and to dispatch him before he murders us."

The king, having been thus artfully inflamed against his brother and his unfortunate secretary, became clamorous for the blood of Escovedo. At the same time, that personage, soon after his return to Spain, was shocked by the discovery of the amour of Perez with the princess Eboli. He considered it his duty, both towards the deceased prince and the living king, to protest against this perfidy. He threatened to denounce to the king, who seemed the only person about the court ignorant of the affair, this double treason of his mistress and his minister. Perez and Anna of Eboli, furious at Escovedo's insolence, and anxious lest he should execute his menace determined to disembarrass themselves of so meddlesome a person. Philip's rage against Don John was accordingly turned to account, and Perez received the king's secret orders to procure Escovedo's assassination. Thus an imaginary conspiracy of Don John against the crown of Philip was the pretext, the fears and rage of Eboli and her paramour were the substantial reason, for the crime now projected.

The details of the murder were arranged and executed by Perez, but it must be confessed in justice to Philip, with much inferior nicety to that of his own performances in the same field. Many persons were privy to the plot. There was much blundering, there was great public scandal in Madrid, and no one
ever had a reasonable doubt as to the instigators and the actual perpetrators of the crime. Two attempts to poison Escovedo were made by Perez, at his own table, through the agency of Antonio Enriquez, a confidential servant or page. Both were unsuccessful. A third was equally so, but suspicions were aroused. A female slave in the household of Escovedo, was in consequence arrested, and immediately hanged in the public square, "for a pretended attempt to murder her master. A few days afterwards (on March 31, 1578) the deed was accomplished at nightfall in the streets of Madrid, by six conspirators. They consisted of the majordomo of Perez, a page in his household, the page’s brother from the country, an ex-scullion from the royal kitchens, Juan Rubio by name, who had been the unsuccessful agent in the poisoning scheme, together with two professional bravos, hired for the occasion. It was Insausti, one of this last-mentioned couple, who dispatched Escovedo with a single stab, the others aiding and abetting, or keeping watch in the neighborhood.

The murderers effected their escape, and made their report to Perez, who for the sake of appearances, was upon a visit in the country. Suspicion soon tracked the real culprits, who were above the reach of justice; nor, as to the motives which had prompted the murders, were many ignorant, save only the murderer himself. Philip had ordered the assassination, but he was profoundly deceived as to the causes of its accomplishment. He was the dupe of a subtler villain than himself, and thought himself sacrificing a conspirator against his crown, while he had really only crushed a poor creature who had been but too solicitous for what he thought his master’s honor.

The assassins were, of course, protected from prosecution, and duly recompensed. Miguel Bosque, the country boy, received one hundred crowns in gold, paid by a clerk of Perez. Mesa, one of the bravos, was rewarded with a gold chain, fifty doubloons of eight, and a silver cup, besides receiving from the fair hand of Princess Eboli herself a certificate as under-steward upon her estates. The second bravo, Insausti, who had done the deed, the page Enriquez, and the scullion, were all appointed ensigns in his Majesty’s army, with twenty gold crowns of annual pension besides. Their commissions were signed by Philip on April 19, 1578. Such were the wages of murder at that day in Spain—gold chains, silver cups, doubloons, annuities, and commissions in the army! The reward of fidelity, as in poor Escovedo’s case, was oftener the stiletto. Was it astonishing that murder was more common than fidelity?

With the subsequent career of Antonio Perez—his famous process, his banishment, his intrigues, his innuendos, his long exile, and his miserable death—this history has no concern. We return from our brief digression.

Before narrating the issue of the plot against Antwerp citadel, it is necessary to recur for a moment to the Prince of Orange. In the deeds and the written words of that one man is comprised nearly all the history of the Reformation in the Netherlands—nearly the whole progress of the infant Republic. The rest,
during this period, is made up of the plottings and counter-plottings, the mutual wranglings and recriminations of Don John and the estates.

In the brief breathing-space now afforded them, the inhabitants of Holland and Zealand had been employing themselves in the extensive repairs of their vast system of dykes. These barriers, which protected their country against the ocean, but which their own hands had destroyed to preserve themselves against tyranny, were now thoroughly reconstructed, at a great expense, the prince everywhere encouraging the people with his presence, directing them by his experience, inspiring them with his energy. The task accomplished was stupendous and worthy, says a contemporary, of eternal memory.

At the popular request, the prince afterwards made a tour through the little provinces, honoring every city with a brief visit. The spontaneous homage which went up to him from every heart was pathetic and simple. There were no triumphal arches, no martial music, no banners, no theatrical pageantry—nothing but the choral anthem from thousands of grateful hearts. "Father William has come! Father William has come!" cried men, women, and children to each other, when the news of his arrival in town or village was announced. He was a patriarch visiting his children, not a conqueror, nor a vulgar potentate displaying himself to his admirers. Happy were they who heard his voice, happier they who touched his hands, for his words were full of tenderness, his hand was offered to all. There were none so humble as to be forbidden to approach him, none so ignorant as not to know his deeds. All knew that to combat in their cause he had descended from princely station, from luxurious ease, to the position of a proscribed and almost beggared outlaw. For them he had impoverished himself and his family, mortgaged his estates, stripped himself of jewels, furniture, almost of food and raiment. Through his exertions the Spaniards had been banished from their little territory, the Inquisition crushed within their borders, nearly all the sister provinces but yesterday banded into a common cause.

He found time, notwithstanding congratulating crowds who thronged his footsteps, to direct the labors of the states-general, who still looked more than ever to his guidance, as their relations with Don John became more complicated and unsatisfactory. In a letter addressed to them, on the 20th of June, from Harlem, he warned them most eloquently to hold to the Ghent Pacification as to their anchor in the storm. He assured them, if it was torn from them, that their destruction was inevitable. He reminded them that hitherto they had got but the shadow, not the substance of the Treaty; that they had been robbed of that which was to have been its chief fruit—union among themselves. He and his brothers, with their labor, their wealth, and their blood, had laid down the bridge over which the country had stepped to the Pacification of Ghent. It was for the nation to maintain what had been so painfully won; yet he proclaimed to them that the government were not acting in good faith, that secret preparations were making to annihilate the authority
of the states, to restore the edicts, to put strangers into high places, and to set up again the scaffold and the whole machinery of persecution.

In consequence of the seizure of Namur Castle, and the accusations made by Don John against Orange, in order to justify that act, the prince had already dispatched Taflin and Saint Aldegonde to the states-general with a commission to declare his sentiments upon the subject. He addressed, more over, to the same body a letter full of sincere and simple eloquence. "The Seigneur Don John," said he, "has accused me of violating the peace, and of countenancing attempts against his life, and in endeavoring to persuade you into joining him in a declaration of war against me and against Holland and Zealand; but I pray you, most affectionately, to remember our mutual and solemn obligations to maintain the treaty of Ghent." He entreated the states, therefore, to beware of the artifices employed to seduce them from the only path which led to the tranquility of their common country, and her true splendor and prosperity. "I believe there is not one of you," he continued, "who can doubt me, if he will weigh carefully all my actions, and consider closely the course which I am pursuing and have always pursued. Let all these be confronted with the conduct of Don John, and any man will perceive that all my views of happiness, both for my country and myself, imply a peaceable enjoyment of the union, joined with the legitimate restoration of our liberties, to which all good patriots aspire, and towards which all my designs have ever tended. As all the grandeur of Don John, on the contrary, consists in war, as there is nothing which he so much abhors as repose, as he has given ample proof of these inclinations in all his designs and enterprises, both before and after the Treaty of Marche en Famine, both within the country and beyond its borders, as it is most manifest that his purpose is, and ever has been, to embroil us with our neighbors of England and Scotland in new dissensions, as it must be evident to every one of you that his pretended accusations against me are but colors and shadows to embellish and to shroud his own desire for war, his appetite for vengeance, and his hatred not only to me but to yourselves, and as his determination is, in the words of Escovedo, to chastise some of us by means of the rest, and to excite the jealousy of one portion of the country against the other—therefore, gentlemen, do I most affectionately exhort you to found your decision, as to these matters, not upon words but upon actions. Examine carefully my conduct in the points concerning which the charges are made; listen attentively to what my envoys will communicate to you in my behalf; and then, having compared it with all the proceedings of Seigneur Don John, you will be able to form a resolution worthy the rank which you occupy, and befitting your obligations to the whole people, of whom you have been chosen chiefs and protectors by God and by men. Put away all considerations which might obscure your clear eye-sight; maintain with magnanimity, and like men, the safety of yourselves, your wives, your children, your estates, your liberties; see that this poor people, whose eyes are fixed upon you, does not perish; preserve them from the greediness of those who would grow great at your expense; guard them from the yoke of miserable servitude; let not all our
posterity lament that, by our pusillanimity, they have lost the liberties which our ancestors had conquered for them, and bequeathed to them as well as to us, and that they have been subjugated by the proud tyranny of strangers."

"Trusting," said the prince, in conclusion, "that you will accord faith and attention to my envoys, I will only add an expression of my sincere determination to employ myself incessantly in your service, and for the welfare of the whole people, without sparing any means in my power, nor my life itself."

The vigilant prince was indeed not slow to take advantage of the governor’s false move. While in reality intending peace, if it were possible, Don John had thrown down the gauntlet; while affecting to deal openly and manfully, like a warrior and an emperor’s son, he had involved himself in petty stratagems and transparent intrigues, by all which he had gained nothing but the character of a plotter, whose word could not be trusted. Saint Aldegonde expressed the hope that the seizure of Namur Castle would open the eyes of the people, and certainly the prince did his best to sharpen their vision.

While in North Holland, William of Orange received an urgent invitation from the magistracy and community of Utrecht to visit that city. His authority, belonging to him under his ancient commission, had not yet been recognized over that province, but there was no doubt that the contemplated convention of "satisfaction" was soon to be arranged, for his friends there were numerous and influential. His princess, Charlotte de Bourbon, who accompanied him on his tour, trembled at the danger to which her husband would expose himself by venturing thus boldly into a territory which might be full of his enemies, but the prince determined to trust the loyalty of a province which he hoped would be soon his own. With anxious forebodings, the princess followed her husband to the ancient episcopal city. As they entered its gates, where an immense concourse was waiting to receive him, a shot passed through the carriage window, and struck the prince upon the breast. The affrighted lady threw her arms about his neck, shrieking that they were betrayed, but the prince, perceiving that the supposed shot was but a wad from one of the cannon, which were still roaring their welcome to him, soon succeeded calming her fears. The carriage passed slowly through the streets, attended by the vociferous greetings of the multitude, for the whole population had come forth to do him honor. Women and children clustered upon every roof and balcony, but a painful incident again marred the tranquility of the occasion. An apothecary’s child, a little girl of ten years, leaning eagerly from a lofty balcony, lost her balance and fell to the ground, directly before the horses of the prince’s carriage. She was killed stone dead by the fall. The procession stopped; the prince alighted, lifted the little corpse in his arms, and delivered it, with gentle words and looks of consolation, to the unhappy parents. The day seemed marked with evil omens, which were fortunately destined to prove fallacious. The citizens of Utrecht became more than ever inclined to accept
the dominion of the prince, whom they honored and whom they already regarded as their natural chief. They entertained him with banquets and festivities during his brief visit, and it was certain before he took his departure that the treaty of “Satisfaction” would not be long delayed. It was drawn up, accordingly, in the autumn of the same year, upon the basis of that accepted by Harlem and Amsterdam—a basis wide enough to support both religions, with a nominal supremacy to the ancient Church.

Meantime, much fruitless correspondence had taken place between Don John and the states. Envoys, dispatched by the two parties to each other, had indulged in bitterness and recrimination. As soon as the governor had taken possession of Namur Castle, he had sent the Seigneur de Rassinghem to the states-general. That gentleman carried with him copies of two anonymous letters, received by Don John upon the 19th and 21st of July, 1577, in which a conspiracy against his life and liberty was revealed. It was believed by the governor that Count Lalain, who had secretly invited him to a conference, had laid an ambush for him. It was known that the country was full of disbanded soldiers, and the governor asserted confidently that numbers of desperadoes were lying in wait for him in every village alehouse of Hainault and Flanders. He called on the states to ferret out these conspirators, and to inflict condign punishment upon their more guilty chiefs; he required that the soldiers, as well as the citizens, should be disarmed at Brussels and throughout Brabant, and he justified his seizure of Namur, upon the general ground that his life was no longer safe, except in a fortress.

In reply to the letter of the governor, which was dated the 24th of July, the states dispatched Marolles, Archdeacon of Ypres, and the Seigneur de Bresse, to Namur, with a special mission to enter into the whole subject of these grievances. These gentlemen, professing the utmost devotion to the cause of his Majesty’s authority and the Catholic religion, expressed doubts as to the existence of the supposed conspiracy. They demanded that Don John should denounce the culprits, if any such were known, in order that proper chastisement might be instantly inflicted. The conversation which ensued was certainly unsatisfactory. The governor used lofty and somewhat threatening language, assuring Marolles that he was at that moment in possession, not only of Namur but of Antwerp citadel; and the deputies accordingly departed, having accomplished very little by their journey. Their backs were scarcely turned, when Don John, on his part, immediately appointed another commission, consisting of Rassinghem and Grobbendonck, to travel from Namur to Brussels. These envoys carried a long letter of grievances, enclosing a short list of demands. The letter reiterated his complaints about conspiracies, and his protestations of sincerity. It was full of censure upon the Prince of Orange, stigmatized his intrigues to obtain possession of Amsterdam, without a proper “Satisfaction,” and of Utrecht, to which he had no claim at all. It maintained that the Hollanders and Zealanders were bent upon utterly exterminating the Catholic religion, and that they avowed publicly their intention to refuse
obedience to the assembly-general, should it decree the maintenance of the ancient worship only. His chief demands were that the states should send him a list of persons qualified to be members of the general assembly, that he might see whether there were not individuals among them whom he might choose to reject. He further required that, if the Prince of Orange did not instantly fulfil the treaty of Ghent, the states should cease to hold any communication with him. He also summoned the states to provide him forthwith with a suitable bodyguard.

To these demands and complaints, the estates replied by a string of resolutions. They made their usual protestations of attachment to his Majesty and the Catholic faith, and they granted willingly a foot-guard of three hundred archers. They, however, stoutly denied the governor’s right to make eliminations in their lists of deputies, because, from time immemorial, these representatives had been chosen by the clergy, nobles, cities, and boroughs. The names might change daily, nor were there any suspicious ones among them, but it was a matter with which the governor had no concern. They promised that every effort should be made to bring about the execution of the treaty by the Prince of Orange. They begged Don John, however, to abandon the citadel of Namur, and gave him to understand that his secret practices had been discovered, a large packet of letters having recently been intercepted in the neighborhood of Bourdeaux, and sent to the Prince of Orange. Among them were some of the dispatches of Don John and Escovedo, to his Majesty and to Antonio Perez, to which allusion has already been made.

Count Bossu, De Bresse, and Meetkercke were the envoys deputed to convey these resolutions to Namur. They had a long and bitter conversation with Don John, who complained more furiously than ever of the conspiracies against his person, and of the intrigues of Orange. He insisted that this arch-traitor had been sowing the seed of his damnable doctrines broadcast through the Netherlands, that the earth was groaning with a daily ripening harvest of rebellion and heresy. It was time, he cried, for the states to abandon the prince, and rally round their king. Patience had been exhausted. He had himself done all, and more than could have been demanded. He had faithfully executed the Ghent Pacification, but his conduct had neither elicited gratitude nor inspired confidence.

The deputies replied, that to the due execution of the Ghent treaty it was necessary that he should disband the German troops, assemble the states-general, and carry out their resolutions. Until these things, now undone, had been accomplished, he had no right to plead his faithful fulfillment of the Pacification. After much conversation—in which the same grievances were repeated, the same statements produced and contradicted, the same demands urged and evaded, and the same menaces exchanged as upon former occasions—the deputies returned to Brussels.
Immediately after their departure, Don John learned the result of his project upon Antwerp Castle. It will be remembered that he had withdrawn Aerschot, under pretext of requiring his company on the visit to Queen Margaret, and that he had substituted Treslong, an unscrupulous partisan of his own, in the government of the citadel. The temporary commander soon found, however, that he had undertaken more than he could perform. The troops under Van Ende were refused admittance into the town, although permission to quarter them there had been requested by the governor-general. The authorities had been assured that the troops were necessary for the protection of their city, but the magistrates had learned, but too recently, the nature of the protection which Van Ende, with his mercenaries, would afford. A detachment of states troops under De Vers, Champagny's nephew, encountered the regiment of Van Ende, and put it to flight with considerable loss. At the same time, an officer in the garrison of the citadel itself, Captain De Bours, undertook secretly to carry the fortress for the estates. His operations were secret and rapid. The Seigneur de Liedekerke had succeeded Champagny in the government of the city. This appointment had been brought about by the agency of the Greffier Martini, a warm partisan of Orange. The new governor was known to be very much the prince's friend, and believed to be at heart a convert to the Reformed religion. With Martini and Liedekerke, De Bours arranged his plot. He was supplied with a large sum of money, readily furnished in secret by the leading mercantile houses of the city. These funds were successfully invested in gaining over the garrison, only one company holding firm for Treslong. The rest, as that officer himself informed Don John, were ready at any moment "to take him by the throat."

On the first of August, the day fixed upon in concert with the governor and Greffier, he was, in fact, taken by the throat. There was but a brief combat, the issue of which became accidentally doubtful in the city. The white-plumed hat of De Bours had been struck from his head in the struggle, and had fallen into the foes. Floating out into the river, it had been recognized by the scouts sent out by the personages most interested, and the information was quickly brought to Liedekerke, who was lying concealed in the house of Martini, awaiting the result. Their dismay was great, but Martini, having more confidence than the governor, sallies forth to learn the whole truth. Scarcely had he got into the streets than he heard a welcome cry. "The Beggars have the castle! the Beggars have the castle!" shouted a hundred voices. He soon met a lieutenant coming straight from the fortress, who related to him the whole affair. Learning that De Bours was completely victorious, and that Treslong was prisoner, Martini hastened with the important intelligence to his own home, where Liedekerke lay concealed. That functionary now repaired to the citadel, whither the magistrates, the leading citizens, and the chief merchants were instantly summoned. The castle was carried, but the city was already trembling with apprehension lest the German mercenaries quartered within its walls, should rise with indignation or panic, and repeat the horrid tragedy of The Antwerp Fury.
In truth, there seemed danger of such a catastrophe. The secret correspondence of Don John with the colonels was already discovered, and it was seen how warmly he had impressed upon the men with whom he had been tampering, “that the die was cast, and that all their art was necessary to make it turn up successfully. The castle was carried, but what would become of the city? A brief and eager consultation terminated in an immediate offer of 300,000 crowns by the leading merchants. This money was to be employed in amicably satisfying, if possible, the German soldiers, who had meanwhile actually come to arms, and were assembled in the Place de Meer. Feeling unsafe, however, in this locality, their colonels had led them into the new town. Here, having barricaded themselves with gun-carriages, bales, and boxes, they awaited, instead of initiating, the events which the day might bring forth. A deputation soon arrived with a white flag from the castle, and commissioners were appointed by the commanding officers of the soldiery. The offer was made to pay over the arrears of their wages, at least to a very large amount, on condition that the troops should forthwith and forever evacuate the city. One hundred and fifty thousand crowns were offered on the nail. The merchants stood on the bridge leading from the old town to the new, in full sight of the soldiers. They held in their bands their purses, filled with the glittering gold. The soldiers were frantic with the opportunity, and swore that they would have their officers’ lives, if the tempting and unexpected offer should be declined. Nevertheless, the commissioners went to and fro, ever finding something to alter or arrange. In truth, the merchants had agreed to furnish, if necessary, 300,000 crowns, but the thrifty negotiators were disposed, if diplomacy could do it, to save the moiety of that sum. Day began to sink, ere the bargain was completed, when suddenly sails were descried in the distance, and presently a large fleet of war vessels, with banner and pennon flying before a favoring breeze, came sailing up the Scheld. It was a squadron of the prince’s ships, under command of Admiral Haultain. He had been sent against Tholen, but, having received secret intelligence, had, with happy audacity, seized the opportunity of striking a blow in the cause which he had served so faithfully. A shot or two fired from the vessels among the barricades had a quickening effect. A sudden and astounding panic seized the soldiers. “The Beggars are coming! the Beggars are coming!” they yelled in dismay, for the deeds of the ocean-beggars had not become less appalling since the memorable siege of Leyden. The merchants still stood on the bridge with their purses in their hand. The envoys from the castle still waved their white flags. It was too late. The horror inspired by the wild Zealanders overpowered the hope of wages, extinguished all confidence in the friendship of the citizens. The mercenaries, yielding to a violent paroxysm of fear, fled hither and thither, panting, doubling, skulking, like wolves before the hounds. Their flight was ludicrous. Without staying to accept the money which the merchants were actually offering, without packing up their own property, in many cases even throwing away their arms, they fled, helter-skelter, some plunging into the Scheld, some skimming along the dykes, some rushing across the open fields.
A portion of them under Colonel Fugger, afterwards shut themselves up in Bergen op Zoom, where they were at once besieged by Champagny, and were soon glad to compromise the matter by surrendering their colonel and laying down their arms. The remainder retreated to Breda, where they held out for two months, and were at length overcome by a neat stratagem of Orange. A captain, being known to be in the employment of Don John, was arrested on his way to Breda. Carefully sewed up in his waistband was found a letter, of a finger’s breadth, written in cipher, and sealed with the governor-general’s seal. Colonel Frondsberger, commanding in Breda, was in this missive earnestly solicited to hold out two months longer, within which time a certain relief was promised. In place of this letter, deciphered with much difficulty, a new one was substituted, which the celebrated printer, William Sylvius, of Antwerp, prepared with great adroitness, adding the sin-nature and seal of Don John. In this counterfeit epistle, the colonel was directed to do the best he could for himself, by reason that Don John was himself besieged, and unable to render him assistance. The same captain who had brought the real letter was bribed to deliver the counterfeit. This task he faithfully performed, spreading the fictitious intelligence besides, with such ardor through the town, that the troops rose, upon their leader, and surrendered him with the city and their own arms, into the custody of the estates. Such was the result of the attempt by Don John to secure the citadel of Antwerp. Not only was the fortress carried for the estates, but the city itself, for the first time in twelve years, was relieved from a foreign soldiery.

The rage and disappointment of the governor-general were excessive. He had boasted to Marolles a day too soon. The prize which he thought already in his grasp had slipped through his fingers, while an interminable list of demands which he dreamed not of, and which were likely to make him bankrupt, were brought to his door. To the states, not himself, the triumph seemed for the moment decreed. The "dice" had taken a run against him, notwithstanding his pains in loading and throwing. Nevertheless, he did not yet despair of revenge. "These rebels," he wrote to the Empress-Dowager, his sister, "think that fortune is all smiles for them now, and that all is ruin for me. The wretches are growing proud enough, and forget that their chastisement, some fine morning, will yet arrive."

On the seventh of August he addressed another long letter to the estates. This document was accompanied, as usual, by certain demands, drawn up categorically in twenty-three articles. The estates considered his terms hard and strange, for in their opinion it was themselves, not the governor, who were masters of the situation. Nevertheless, he seemed inclined to treat as if he had gained, not missed, the citadel of Antwerp; as if the troops with whom he had tampered were mustered in the field, not shut up in distant towns, and already at the mercy of the states party. The governor demanded that all the forces of the country should be placed under his own immediate control; that Count Bossu, or some other person nominated by himself, should be appointed to the
government of Friesland; that the people of Brabant and Flanders should set themselves instantly to hunting, catching, and chastising all vagrant heretics and preachers. He required, in particular, that Saint Aldegonde and Theron, those most mischievous rebels, should be prohibited from setting their foot in any city of the Netherlands. He insisted that the community of Brussels should lay down their arms, and resume their ordinary handicrafts. He demanded that the Prince of Orange should be made to execute the Ghent treaty; to suppress the exercise of the Reformed religion in Harlem, Schoonhoven, and other places; to withdraw his armed vessels from their threatening stations, and to restore Nieuport, unjustly detained by him. Should the prince persist in his obstinacy, Don John summoned them to take arms against him, and to support their lawful governor. He, moreover, required the immediate restitution of Antwerp citadel, and the release of Treslong from prison.

Although, regarded from the Spanish point of view, such demands might seem reasonable, it was also natural that their audacity should astonish the estates. That the man who had violated so openly the Ghent treaty should rebuke the prince for his default, that the man who had tampered with the German mercenaries until they were on the point of making another Antwerp Fury should now claim the command over them and all other troops, that the man who had attempted to gain Antwerp citadel by a base stratagem, should now coolly demand its restoration, seemed to them the perfection of insolence. The baffled conspirator boldly claimed the prize which was to have rewarded a successful perfidy. At the very moment when the Escovedo letters and the correspondence with the German colonels had been laid before their eyes, it was a little too much that the double-dealing bastard of the double-dealing Emperor should read them a lecture upon sincerity. It was certain that the perplexed and outwitted warrior had placed himself at last in a very false position. The Prince of Orange, with his usual adroitness, made the most of his adversary’s false moves. Don John had only succeeded in digging a pitfall for himself. His stratagems against Namur and Antwerp had produced him no fruit, saving the character, which his antagonist now fully succeeded in establishing for him, of an unscrupulous and artful schemer. This reputation was enhanced by the discovery of the intercepted letters, and by the ingenuity and eagerness with which they were turned to account against him by the prince, by Saint Aldegonde, and all the anti-Catholic party. The true key to his reluctance against dispatching the troops by land, the states had not obtained. They did not dream of his romantic designs upon England, and were therefore excusable in attributing a still deeper perfidy to his arrangements.

Even had he been sent to the Netherlands in the full possession of his faculties, he would have been no match in political combinations for his powerful antagonists. Hoodwinked and fettered, suspected by his master, baffled, bewildered, irritated by his adversary, what could he do but plunge from one difficulty to another and oscillate between extravagant menace and desponding concession, until his hopes and life were wasted quite away. His
instructions came from Philip through Perez, and that most profound dissembler, as we have seen, systematically deceived the governor, with the view of eliciting treasonable matters, Philip wishing, if possible, to obtain proofs of Don John’s secret designs against his own crown. Thus every letter from Spain was filled with false information and with lying persuasions. No doubt the governor considered himself entitled to wear a crown, and meant to win it, if not in Africa, then in England, or wherever fate might look propitiously upon him. He was of the stuff of which crusaders and dynasty founders had been made, at a somewhat earlier epoch. Who could have conquered the holy sepulchre, or wrested a crown from its lawful wearer, whether in Italy, Muscovy, the Orient, or in the British Ultima Thule, more bravely than this imperial bastard, this valiant and romantic adventurer? Unfortunately, he came a few centuries too late. The days when dynasties were founded, and European thrones appropriated by a few foreign freebooters, had passed, and had not yet returned. He had come to the Netherlands desirous of smoothing over difficulties and of making a peaceful termination to that rebellion a stepping-stone to his English throne. He was doomed to a profound disappointment, a broken heart, and a premature grave, instead of the glittering baubles which he pursued. Already he found himself bitterly deceived in his hopes. The obstinate Netherlanders would not love him, notwithstanding the good wishes he had manifested. They would not even love the King of Spain, notwithstanding the blessings which his Majesty was declared to have heaped upon them. On the contrary, they persisted in wasting their perverse affections upon the pestilent Prince of Orange. That heretic was leading them to destruction, for he was showing them the road to liberty, and nothing, in the eyes of the governor, could be more pitiable than to behold an innocent people setting forth upon such a journey. "In truth," said he, bitterly, in his memorable letter to his sister the Empress, "they are willing to recognize neither God nor king. They pretend to liberty in all things: so that ’tis a great pity to see how they are going on; to see the impudence and disrespect with which they repay his Majesty for the favors which he has shown them, and me for the labors, indignities, and dangers which I have undergone for their sakes."

Nothing, indeed, in the governor’s opinion, could surpass the insolence of the Netherlanders save their ingratitude. That was the serpent’s tooth which was ever wounding the clement king and his indignant brother. It seemed so bitter to meet with thanklessness, after seven years of Alva and three of Requesens, after the labors of the Blood Council, the massacres of Naarden, Zutphen, and Harlem, the siege of Leyden, and the Fury of Antwerp. "Little profit there has been," said the Governor to his sister, "or is like to be from all the good which we have done to these bad people. In short, they love and obey in all things the most perverse and heretic tyrant and rebel in the whole world, which is this damned Prince of Orange, while, on the contrary, without fear of God or shame before men, they abhor and dishonor the name and commandments of their natural sovereign." Therefore, with a doubting spirit, and almost with a broken heart, had the warrior shut himself up in Namur Castle, to await the
progress of events, and to escape from the snares of his enemies. "God knows how much I desire to avoid extremities," said he, "but I know not what to do with men who show themselves so obstinately rebellious."

Thus pathetically Don John bewailed his fate. The nation had turned from God, from Philip, from himself; yet he still sat in his castle, determined to save them from destruction and his own hands from bloodshed, if such an issue were yet possible. Nor was he entirely deserted, for among the faithless a few were faithful still. Although the people were in open revolt, there was still a handful of nobles resolved to do their duty towards their God and king. "This little band," said the governor, "has accompanied me hither, like gentlemen and chevaliers of honor." Brave Berlaymont and his four sons were loyal to the last, but others of this limited number of gentlemen and chevaliers of honor were already deserting him. As soon as the result of the enterprise against Antwerp citadel was known, and the storm was gathering most darkly over the royal cause, Aerschot and Havré were first to spread their wings and flutter away in search of a more congenial atmosphere. In September, the duke was again as he had always professed himself to be, with some important intervals of exception—"the affectionate brother and cordial friend of the Prince of Orange."

The letter addressed by Don John to the states upon the seventh of August, had not yet been answered. Feeling, soon afterwards, more sensible of his position, and perhaps less inflamed with indignation, he addressed another communication to them, upon the 13th of the same month. In this epistle he expressed an extreme desire for peace, and a hearty desire to be relieved, if possible, from his most painful situation. He protested, before God and man, that his intentions were most honest, and that he abhorred war more than anything else in the world. He averred that, if his person was as odious to them as it seemed, he was only too ready to leave the land, as soon as the king should appoint his successor. He reminded them that the question of peace or war lay not with himself, but with them, and that the world would denounce as guilty those with whom rested the responsibility. He concluded with an observation which, in its humility, seemed sufficiently ironical, that if they had quite finished the perusal of the dispatches from Madrid to his address, which they had intercepted, he should be thankful for an opportunity of reading them himself. He expressed a hope, therefore, that they would be forwarded to Namur.

This letter was answered at considerable length, upon the second day. The states made their customary protestations of attachment to his Majesty, their fidelity to the Catholic church, their determination to maintain both the Ghent treaty and the Perpetual Edict. They denied all responsibility for the present disastrous condition of the relations between themselves and government, having disbanded nearly all their own troops, while the governor had been strengthening his forces up to the period of his retreat into Namur. He
protested, indeed, friendship and a sincere desire for peace, but the intercepted letters of Escovedo and his own had revealed to them the evil counsels to which he had been listening, and the intrigues which he had been conducting. They left to his conscience whether they could reasonably believe, after the perusal of these documents, that it was his intention to maintain the Ghent treaty, or any treaty; and whether they were not justified in their resort to the natural right of self-defense.

Don John was already fully aware of the desperate error which he had committed. In seizing Namur and attempting Antwerp, he had thrown down the gauntlet. Wishing peace, he had, in a panic of rage and anxiety, declared and enacted war. The bridge was broken behind him, the ships burned, a gulf opened, a return to peace rendered almost impossible. Let it is painful to observe the almost passionate longings which at times seemed to possess him for accommodating the quarrel, together with his absolute incapacity to appreciate his position. The prince was triumphant, the governor in a trap. Moreover, it was a trap which he had not only entered voluntarily, but which he had set himself; he had played into the prince’s hands, and was frantic to see his adversary tranquilly winning the game. It was almost melancholy to observe the gradation of his tone from haughty indignation to dismal concession. In an elaborate letter which he addressed “to the particular states, bishops, councillors, and cities of the Netherlands,” he protested as to the innocence of his intentions, and complained bitterly of the calumnies circulated to his discredit by the Prince of Orange. He denied any intention of recalling the troops which he had dismissed, except in case of absolute necessity. He affirmed that his Majesty sincerely desired peace. He averred that the country was either against the king, against the Catholic religion, against himself, or against all three together. He bitterly asked what further concessions were required. Had he not done all he had ever promised? Had he not discharged the Spaniards, placed the castles in the hands of natives, restored the privileges, submitted to insults and indecencies? Yet, in spite of all which had passed, he declared his readiness to resign, if another prince or princess of the blood more acceptable to them could be appointed. The letter to the states was followed by a proposition for a cessation of hostilities, and for the appointment of a commission to devise means for faithfully executing the Ghent treaty. This proposition was renewed, a few days later, together with an offer for an exchange of hostages.

It was not difficult for the estates to answer the letters of the Governor. Indeed, there was but little lack of argument on either side throughout this unhappy controversy. It is dismal to contemplate the interminable exchange of protocols, declarations, demands, apostilles, replications and rejoinders, which made up the substance of Don John’s administration. Never was chivalrous crusader so out of place. It was not a soldier that was then required for Philip’s exigency, but a scribe. Instead of the famous sword of Lepanto, the “barbarous pen” of Hopperus had been much more suitable for the work required.
Scribbling Joachim in a war galley, yardarm and yardarm with the Turkish capitan pacha, could have hardly felt less at ease than did the brilliant warrior thus condemned to scrawl and dissemble. While marching from concession to concession, he found the states conceiving daily more distrust, and making daily deeper encroachments. Moreover, his deeds up to the time when he seemed desirous to retrace his steps had certainly been, at the least, equivocal. Therefore, it was natural for the estates, in reply to the questions in his letter, to observe that he had indeed dismissed the Spaniards, but that he had tampered with and retained the Germans; that he had indeed placed the citadels in the hands of natives, but that he had tried his best to wrest them away again; that he had indeed professed anxiety for peace, but that his intercepted letters proved his preparations for war. Already there were rumors of Spanish troops returning in small detachments out of France. Already the governor was known to be enrolling fresh mercenaries to supply the place of those whom he had unsuccessfully endeavored to gain to his standard. As early as the 26th of July, in fact, the Marquis d’Ayamonte in Milan, and Don Juan de Idiaquez in Genoa, had received letters from Don John of Austria, stating that, as the provinces had proved false to their engagements, he would no longer be held by his own, and intimating his desire that the veteran troops which had but so recently been dismissed from Flanders, should forthwith return. Soon afterwards, Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, received instructions from the king to superintend these movements, and to carry the aid of his own already distinguished military genius to his uncle in the Netherlands.

On the other hand, the states felt their strength daily more sensibly. Guided, as usual, by Orange, they had already assumed a tone in their correspondence which must have seemed often disloyal, and sometimes positively insulting, to the governor. They even answered his hints of resignation in favor of some other prince of the blood, by expressing their hopes that his successor, if a member of the royal house at all, would at least be a legitimate one. This was a severe thrust at the haughty chieftain, whose imperial airs rarely betrayed any consciousness of Barbara Blomberg and the bend sinister on his shield. He was made to understand, through the medium of Brabantine bluntness, that more importance was attached to the marriage ceremony in the Netherlands than he seemed to imagine. The categorical demands made by the estates seemed even more indigestible than such collateral affronts, for they had now formally affirmed the views of Orange as to the constitutional government of the provinces. In their letter of 26th August, they expressed their willingness, notwithstanding the past delinquencies of the governor, to yield him their confidence again; but, at the same time, they enumerated conditions which, with his education and views, could hardly seem to him admissible. They required him to disband all the soldiers in his service, to send the Germans instantly out of the country, to dismiss every foreigner from office, whether civil or military, and to renounce his secret league with the Duke of Guise. They insisted that he should thenceforth govern only with the advice and consent of the State Council, that he should execute that which should by a
majority of votes be ordained there, that neither measures nor dispatches should be binding or authentic unless drawn up at that board. These certainly were views of administration which, even if consonant with a sound historical view of the Netherland constitutions, hardly tallied with his monarch’s instructions, his own opinions, or the practice under Alva and Requesens, but the country was still in a state of revolution, and the party of the prince was gaining the upper hand.

It was the determination of that great statesman, according to that which he considered the legitimate practice of the government, to restore the administration to the State Council, which executive body ought of right to be appointed by the states-general. In the states-general, as in the states-particular, a constant care was to be taken towards strengthening the most popular element, the “community” of each city, the aggregate, that is to say, of its guild representatives and its admitted burghers. This was, in the opinion of the prince, the true theory of the government—republican in all but form—under the hereditary protection, not the despotic authority, of a family, whose rights were now nearly forfeited. It was a great step in advance that these views should come to be thus formally announced, not in Holland and Zealand only, but by the deputies of the states-general, although such a doctrine, to the proud stomach of Don John, seemed sufficiently repulsive. Not less so was the cool intimation with which the paper concluded, that if he should execute his threat of resigning, the country would bear his loss with fortitude, coupled as was that statement with a declaration that, until his successor should be appointed, the State Council would consider itself charged ad interim with the government. In the meantime, the governor was requested not to calumniate the estates to foreign governments, as he had so recently done in his intercepted letter to the empress-dowager.

Upon receiving this letter, "Don John," says a faithful old chronicler, "found that the cranes had invited the fox to dinner." In truth, the illustrious soldier was never very successful in his efforts, for which his enemies gave him credit, to piece out the skin of the lion with that of the fox. He now felt himself exposed and outwitted, while he did not feel conscious of any very dark design. He answered the letter of the states by a long communication, dated from Namur Castle, 28th of August. In style, he was comparatively temperate, but the justification which he attempted of his past conduct was not very happy. He noticed the three different points which formed the leading articles of the accusation brought against him, the matter, namely, of the intercepted letters, of the intrigues with the German colonels, and the seizure of Namur. He did not deny the authorship of the letters, but contented himself with a reference to their date, as if its priority to his installation as governor furnished a sufficient palliation of the bad faith which the letters revealed. As to the dispatches of Escovedo, he denied responsibility for any statements or opinions which they might contain. As the Secretary, however, was known to be his most confidential friend, this attempt to shuffle off his own complicity was
held to be both lame and unhandsome. As for the correspondence with the
colonels, his defense was hardly more successful, and rested upon a general
recrimination upon the Prince of Orange. As that personage was agitating and
turbulent, it was not possible, the governor urged, that he should himself
remain quiet. It was out of his power to execute the treaty and the edict, in
the face of a notorious omission on the part of his adversary to enforce the one
or to publish the other. It comported neither with his dignity nor his safety to
lay down his weapons while the prince and his adherents were arming. He
should have placed himself “in a very foolish position,” had he allowed himself
unarmed to be dictated to by the armed. In defense of himself on the third
point, the seizure of Namur Castle, he recounted the various circumstances
with which the reader is already acquainted. He laid particular stress upon the
dramatic manner in which the Vicomte De Gand had drawn his curtains at the
dead of night; he narrated at great length the ominous warning which he had
likewise received from the Duke of Aerschot in Brussels, and concluded with a
circumstantial account of the ambush which he believed to have been laid for
him by Count De Lalain. The letter concluded with a hope for an arrangement
of difficulties, not yet admitted by the governor to be insurmountable, and
with a request for a formal conference, accompanied by an exchange of
hostages.

While this correspondence was proceeding between Namur and Brussels, an
event was occurring in Antwerp which gave much satisfaction to Orange. The
Spanish Fury, and the recent unsuccessful attempt of Don John to master the
famous citadel, had determined the authorities to take the counsel which the
prince had so often given in vain, and the fortress of Antwerp was at length
razed to the ground, on the side towards the city. It would be more correct to
say that it was not the authorities, but the city itself which rose at last and
threw off the saddle by which it had so long been galled. More than 10,000
persons were constantly at work, morning, noon, and night, until the
demolition was accomplished. Grave magistrates, great nobles, fair ladies,
citizens and their wives, beggars and their children, all wrought together pell-
mell. All were anxious to have a hand in destroying the nest where so many
murders had been hatched, whence so much desolation had flown. The task
was not a long one for workmen so much in earnest, and the fortress was soon
laid low in the quarter where it could be injurious to the inhabitants. As the
work proceeded, the old statue of Alva was discovered in a forgotten crypt,
where it had lain since it had been thrown down by the order of Requesens.
Amid the destruction of the fortress, the gigantic phantom of its founder
seemed to start suddenly from the gloom, but the apparition added fresh fuel
to the rage of the people. The image of the execrated governor was fastened
upon with as much fierceness as if the bronze effigy could feel their blows, or
comprehend their wrath. It was brought forth from its dark hiding place into
the daylight. Thousands of hands were ready to drag it through the streets for
universal inspection and outrage. A thousand sledgehammers were ready to
dash it to pieces, with a slight portion, at least, of the satisfaction with which
those who wielded them would have dealt the same blows upon the head of
the tyrant himself. It was soon reduced to a shapeless mass. Small portions
were carried away and preserved for generations in families as heirlooms of
hatred. The bulk was melted again and reconverted, by a most natural
metamorphosis, into the cannon from which it had originally sprung.

The razing of the Antwerp citadel set an example which was followed in other
places; the castle of Ghent, in particular, being immediately leveled, amid
demonstrations of universal enthusiasm. Meantime, the correspondence
between Don John and the estates at Brussels dragged its slow length along,
while at the same time, two elaborate letters were addressed to the king, on
the 24th of August and the eighth of September, by the estates-general of the
Netherlands. These documents, which were long and able, gave a vigorous
representation of past evils and of the present complication of disorders under
which the commonwealth was laboring. They asked, as usual, for a royal
remedy, and expressed their doubts whether there could be any sincere
reconciliation so long as the present governor, whose duplicity and insolence
they represented in a very strong light, should remain in office. Should his
Majesty, however, prefer to continue Don John in the government, they
signified their willingness, in consideration of his natural good qualities, to
make the best of the matter. Should, however, the estrangement between
themselves and the governor seem irremediable, they begged that another and
a legitimate prince of the blood might be appointed in his place.

Part Five
Don John of Austria
Chapters 4-5
CHAPTER 4

The New Brussels Union and the Destruction of the States’ Army

While these matters were in progress, an important movement was made by the estates-general. The Prince of Orange was formally and urgently invited to come to Brussels to aid them with his counsel and presence. The condemned traitor had not set foot in the capital for eleven years. We have narrated the circumstance of his departure, while the advancing trumpets of Alva’s army were almost heard in the distance. His memorable and warning interview with Egmont has been described. Since that period, although his spirit had always been manifesting itself in the capital like an actual presence, although he had been the magnet towards which the states throughout all their oscillations had involuntarily vibrated, yet he had been ever invisible. He had been summoned by the Blood-Council to stand his trial, and had been condemned to death by default. He answered the summons by a defiance, and the condemnation by two campaigns, unsuccessful in appearance, but which had in reality prostrated the authority of the sovereign.

Since that period, the representative of royalty had sued the condemned traitor for forgiveness. The haughty brother of Philip had almost gone upon his knees, that the prince might name his terms, and accept the proffered hand of majesty. The prince had refused, not from contumely, but from distrust. He had spurned the supplications, as he had defied the proscription of the king. There could be no friendship between the destroyer and the protector of a people. Had the prince desired only the reversal of his death sentence, and the infinite aggrandizement of his family, we have seen how completely he had held these issues in his power. Never had it been more easy, plausible, tempting, for a proscribed patriot to turn his back upon an almost sinking cause. We have seen how his brave and subtle Batavian prototype, Civilis, dealt with the representative of Roman despotism. The possible or impossible Netherland Republic of the first century of our era had been reluctantly abandoned, but the modern Civilis had justly more confidence in his people.
And now again the scene was changed. The son of the Emperor, the king’s brother, was virtually beleaguered; the proscribed rebel had arrived at victory through a long series of defeats. The nation everywhere acknowledged him master, and was in undisguised revolt against the anointed sovereign. The great nobles, who hated Philip on the one hand, and the Reformed religion on the other, were obliged, in obedience to the dictates of a people with whom they had little sympathy, to accept the ascendancy of the Calvinist prince, of whom they were profoundly jealous. Even the fleeting and incapable Aerschot was obliged to simulate adhesion; even the brave Champagny, cordial hater of Spaniards, but most devotedly Catholic, “the chiepest man of wysedome and stomach at that tyme in Brussels,” so envoy Wilson wrote to Burghley, had become “Brabantized,” as his brother Granvelle expressed himself, and was one of the commissioners to invite the great rebel to Brussels. The other envoys were the Abbot of Saint Gertrude, Dr. Leoninus, and the Seigneur de Liesvelt. These gentlemen, on arriving at Gertruydenberg, presented a brief but very important memorial to the prince. In that document they informed him that the states-general, knowing how efficacious would be his presence, by reason of his singular prudence, experience, and love for the welfare and repose of the country, had unanimously united in a supplication that he would incontinent transport himself to the city of Brussels, there to advise with them concerning the necessities of the land; but, as the principal calumny employed by their adversaries was that all the provinces and leading personages intended to change both sovereign and religion, at the instigation of his Excellency, it was desirable to disprove such fictions. They therefore very earnestly requested the prince to make some contrary demonstration, by which it might be manifest to all that his Excellency, together with the estates of Holland and Zealand, intended faithfully to keep what they had promised. They prayed, therefore, that the prince, permitting the exercise of the Roman Catholic religion in the places which had recently accepted his authority, would also allow its exercise in Holland and Zealand. They begged, further, that he would promise by a new and authentic act, that the provinces of Holland and Zealand would not suffer the said exercise to be impugned, or any new worship to be introduced, in the other provinces of the Netherlands.

This letter might almost be regarded as a trap, set by the Catholic nobles. Certainly the Ghent Pacification forbade the Reformed religion in form, and as certainly winked at its exercise in fact. The proof was, that the new worship was spreading everywhere, that the exiles for conscience’ sake were returning in swarms, and that the synod of the Reformed churches, lately held at Dort, had been publicly attended by the ministers and deacons of numerous dissenting churches established in many different places throughout all the provinces. The pressure of the edicts, the horror of the inquisition being removed, the down-trodden religion had sprung from the earth more freshly than ever.
The prince was not likely to fall into the trap, if a trap had really been intended. He answered the envoys loyally, but with distinct reservations. He did not even accept the invitation, save on condition that his visit to Brussels should be expressly authorized by Holland and Zealand. Notwithstanding his desire once more to behold his dear country, and to enjoy the good company of his best friends and brothers, he felt it his duty to communicate beforehand with the states of those two provinces, between which and himself there had been such close and reciprocal obligations, such long-tried and faithful affection. He therefore begged to refer the question to the assembly of the said provinces about to be held at Gouda, where, in point of fact, the permission for his journey was, not without considerable difficulty, a few days afterwards obtained.

With regard to the more difficult requests addressed to him in the memorial, he professed generally his intention to execute the treaty of Ghent. He observed, however, that the point of permitting the exercise of the Roman Catholic religion in Holland and Zealand regarded principally the estates of these provinces, which had contracted for no innovation in this matter, at least till the assembling of the states-general. He therefore suggested that he neither could, nor ought to, permit any innovation, without the knowledge and consent of those estates. As to promising by authentic act, that neither he nor the two provinces would suffer the exercise of the Catholic religion to be in any wise impugned in the rest of the Netherlands, the prince expressed himself content to promise that, according to the said Ghent Pacification, they would suffer no attempt to be made against the public repose or against the Catholic worship. He added that, as he had no intention of usurping any superiority over the states-general assembled at Brussels, he was content to leave the settlement of this point to their free will and wisdom, engaging himself neither to offer nor permit any hindrance to their operations.

With this answer the deputies are said to have been well pleased. If they were so, it must be confessed that they were thankful for small favors. They had asked to have the Catholic religion introduced into Holland and Zealand. The prince had simply referred them to the estates of these provinces. They had asked him to guarantee that the exercise of the Reformed religion should not be "procured" in the rest of the country. He had merely promised that the Catholic worship would not be prevented. The difference between the terms of the request and the reply was sufficiently wide.

The consent to his journey was with difficulty accorded by the estates of Holland and Zealand, and his wife, with many tears and anxious forebodings, beheld him depart for a capital where the heads of his brave and powerful friends had fallen, and where still lurked so many of his deadly foes. During his absence, prayers were offered daily for his safety in all the churches of Holland and Zealand, by command of the estates.
He arrived at Antwerp on the 17th of September, and was received with extraordinary enthusiasm. The prince, who had gone forth alone, without even a bodyguard, had the whole population of the great city for his buckler. Here he spent five days, observing, with many a sigh, the melancholy changes which had taken place in the long interval of his absence. The recent traces of the horrible "Fury," the blackened walls of the Hôtel de Ville, the prostrate ruins of the marble streets, which he had known as the most imposing in Europe, could be hardly atoned for in his eyes even by the more grateful spectacle of the dismantled fortress.

On the 23rd of September he was attended by a vast concourse of citizens to the new canal which led to Brussels, where three barges were in waiting for himself and suite. In one a banquet was spread; in the second, adorned with emblematic devices and draped with the banners of the seventeen provinces, he was to perform the brief journey; while the third had been filled by the inevitable rhetoric societies, with all the wonders of their dramatic and plastic ingenuity. Rarely had such a complication of vices and virtues, of crushed dragons, victorious archangels, broken fetters, and resurgent nationalities, been seen before, within the limits of a single canal boat. The affection was, however, sincere, and the spirit noble, even though the taste which presided at these demonstrations may have been somewhat pedantic.

The prince was met several miles before the gates of Brussels by a procession of nearly half the inhabitants of the city, and thus escorted, he entered the capital in the afternoon of the 23rd of September. It was the proudest day of his life. The representatives of all the provinces, supported by the most undeniable fervor of the united Netherland people, greeted "Father William." Perplexed, discordant, hating, fearing, doubting, they could believe nothing, respect nothing, love nothing, save the "Tranquil" Prince. His presence at that moment in Brussels was the triumph of the people and of religious toleration. He meant to make use of the crisis to extend and to secure popular rights, and to establish the supremacy of the states-general under the nominal sovereignty of some prince, who was yet to be selected, while the executive body was to be a state-council, appointed by the states-general. So far as appears, he had not decided as to the future protector, but he had resolved that it should be neither himself nor Philip of Spain. The outlaw came to Brussels prepared at last to trample out a sovereignty which had worked its own forfeiture. So far as he had made any election within his breast, his choice inclined to the miserable Duke of Anjou, a prince whom he never came to know as posterity has known him, but whom he at least learned to despise. Thus far the worthless and paltry intriguer still wore the heroic mask, deceiving even such farsseeing politicians as Saint Aldegonde and the prince.

William’s first act was to put a stop to the negotiations already on foot with Don John. He intended that they should lead to war, because peace was impossible, except a peace for which civil and religious liberty would be
bartered, for it was idle, in his opinion, to expect the maintenance by the Spanish governor of the Ghent Pacification, whatever promises might be extorted from his fears. A deputation, in the name of the states, had already been sent with fresh propositions to Don John, at Namur. The envoys were Caspar Schetz and the Bishop of Bruges. They had nearly come to an amicable convention with the governor, the terms of which had been sent to the states-general for approval, at the very moment of the prince’s arrival in Brussels. Orange, with great promptness, prevented the ratification of these terms, which the estates had in reality already voted to accept. New articles were added to those which had originally been laid before Don John. It was now stipulated that the Ghent treaty and the Perpetual Edict should be maintained. The governor was required forthwith to abandon Namur Castle, and to dismiss the German troops. He was to give up the other citadels and strong places, and to disband all the soldiers in his service. He was to command the governors of every province to prohibit the entrance of all foreign levies. He was forthwith to release captives, restore confiscated property, and reinstate officers who had been removed; leaving the details of such restorations to the council of Mechlin and the other provincial tribunals. He was to engage that the Count Van Buren should be set free within two months. He was himself, while waiting, for the appointment of his successor, to take up his residence in Luxemburg, and while there, he was to be governed entirely by the decision of the State Council, expressed by a majority of its members. Furthermore, and as not the least stinging of these sharp requisitions, the Queen of England—she who had been the secret ally of Orange, and whose crown the governor had secretly meant to appropriate—was to be included in the treaty.

It could hardly excite surprise that Don John, receiving these insolent propositions at the very moment in which he heard of the triumphant entrance into Brussels of the prince, should be filled with rage and mortification. Never was champion of the Cross thus braved by infidels before. The Ghent treaty, according to the Orange interpretation—that is to say, heresy made legitimate—was to be the law of the land. His Majesty was to surrender—colors and cannon—to his revolted subjects. The royal authority was to be superseded by that of a State Council, appointed by the states-general, at the dictation of the prince. The governor-general himself, brother of his Catholic Majesty, was to sit quietly with folded arms in Luxemburg, while the arch heretic and rebel reigned supreme in Brussels. It was too much to expect that the choleric soldier would be content with what he could not help regarding as a dishonorable capitulation. The arrangement seemed to him about as reasonable as it would have been to invite Sultan Selim to the Escorial, and to send Philip to reside at Bayonne. He could not but regard the whole proposition as an insolent declaration of war. He was right. It was a declaration of war, as much so as if proclaimed by trump of herald. How could Don John refuse the wager of battle thus haughtily proffered? Smooth Schetz, Lord of Grobbendonck, and his episcopal colleague, in vain attempted to calm the governor’s wrath, which now flamed forth, in defiance of all considerations.
They endeavored, without success, to palliate the presence of Orange, and the circumstances of his reception, for it was not probable that their eloquence would bring the governor to look at the subject with their eyes. Three days were agreed upon for the suspension of hostilities, and Don John was highly indignant that the estates would grant no longer a truce. The refusal was, however, reasonable enough on their part, for they were aware that veteran Spaniards and Italians were constantly returning to him, and that he was daily strengthening his position. The envoys returned to Brussels, to give an account of the governor’s rage, which they could not declare to be unnatural, and to assist in preparations for the war, which was now deemed inevitable. Don John, leaving a strong garrison in the citadel of Namur, from which place he dispatched a final communication to the estates-general, dated the second of October, retired to Luxemburg. In this letter, without exactly uttering defiance, he unequivocally accepted the hostilities which had been pressed upon him, and answered their hollow professions of attachment to the Catholic religion and his Majesty’s authority by denouncing their obvious intentions to trample upon both. He gave them, in short, to understand that he perceived their intentions, and meant them to comprehend his own.

Thus the quarrel was brought to an issue, and Don John saw with grim complacency, that the pen was at last to be superseded by the sword. A remarkable pamphlet was now published, in seven different languages, Latin, French, Flemish, German, Italian, Spanish, and English, containing a succinct account of the proceedings between the governor and the estates, together with copies of the intercepted letters of Don John and Escovedo to the king, to Perez, to the German colonels, and to the Empress. This work, composed and published by order of the estates-general, was transmitted with an accompanying address to every potentate in Christendom. It was soon afterwards followed by a counter-statement, prepared by order of Don John, and containing his account of the same matters, with his recriminations against the conduct of the estates.

Another important movement had, meanwhile, been made by the third party in this complicated game. The Catholic nobles, jealous of the growing influence of Orange, and indignant at the expanding power of the people, had opened secret negotiations with the Archduke Matthias, then a mild, easy-tempered youth of twenty, brother of the reigning emperor, Rudolph. After the matter had been discussed some time in secret, it was resolved, towards the end of September, to send a messenger to Vienna, privately inviting the young prince to Brussels, but much to the surprise of these nobles, it was discovered that some fifteen or sixteen of the grandees of the land, among them Aerschot, Havré, Champagny, De Ville, Lalain, De Héze, and others, had already taken the initiative in the matter. On the 26th of August, the Seigneurde Maalsteede had set forth, by their appointment, for Vienna. There is no doubt that this step originated in jealousy felt towards Orange, but at the same time it is certain that several of the leaders in the enterprise were still his friends.
Some, like Champagny, and De Héze, were honestly so; others, like Aerschot, Havré, and De Ville, always traitors in heart to the national cause, loyal to nothing but their own advancement, were still apparently upon the best terms with him. Moreover, it is certain that he had been made aware of the scheme, at least, before the arrival of the Archduke in the Netherlands, for the Marquis Havré, on his way to England, as special envoy from the estates, had a conference with him at Gertruydenberg. This was in the middle of September, and before his departure for Brussels. Naturally, the proposition seemed, at first, anything but agreeable, but the marquis represented himself afterwards as having at last induced the prince to look upon it with more favorable eyes. Nevertheless, the step had been taken before the consultation was held, nor was it the first time that the advice of Orange had been asked concerning the adoption of a measure after the measure had been adopted.

Whatever may have been his original sentiments upon the subject, however, he was always less apt to complain of irrevocable events than quick to reconcile them with his own combinations, and it was soon to be discovered that the new stumbling-block which his opponents had placed in his path, could be converted into an additional stepping-stone towards his goal. Meanwhile, the secret invitation to the archduke was regarded by the people and by foreign spectators as a plot devised by his enemies. Davison, envoy from Queen Elizabeth, was then in Brussels, and informed his royal mistress, whose sentiments and sympathies were unequivocally in favor of Orange, of the intrigues against the princes. The efforts of England were naturally to counteract the schemes of all who interfered with his policy, the queen especially, with her customary sagacity, foreseeing the probable inclination of the Catholic nobles towards the protectorate of Alençon. She did not feel certain as to the precise plans of Orange, and there was no course better adapted to draw her from barren coquetry into positive engagements, than to arouse her jealousy of the French influence in the provinces. At this moment, she manifested the warmest friendship for the prince. Costly presents were transmitted by her to his wife, among others, an ornament, of which a sculptured lizard formed a part. The princess, in a graceful letter to her husband, desiring that her acknowledgments should be presented to her English Majesty, accepted the present as significative. "'Tis the fabled virtue of the lizard (she said) to awaken sleepers whom a serpent is about to sting. You are the lizard, and the Netherlands the sleepers—pray Heaven they may escape the serpent’s bite!" The prince was well aware, therefore, of the plots which were weaving against him. He had small faith in the great nobles, whom he trusted "as he would adders fanged," and relied only upon the communities, upon the mass of burghers. They deserved his confidence, and watched over his safety with jealous care. On one occasion, when he was engaged at the State Council till a late hour, the citizens conceived so much alarm, that a large number of them spontaneously armed themselves, and repaired to the palace. The prince, informed of the circumstance, threw open a window and addressed them, thanking them for their friendship and assuring them of his safety. They were
not satisfied, however, to leave him alone, but remained under arms below till the session was terminated, when they escorted him with affectionate respect to his own hotel.

The secret envoy arrived in Vienna, and excited the ambition of the youthful Matthias. It must be confessed that the offer could hardly be a very tempting one, and it excites our surprise that the archduke should have thought the adventure worth the seeking. A most anomalous position in the Netherlands was offered to him by a slender and irresponsible faction of Netherlanders. There was a triple prospect before him—that of a hopeless intrigue against the first politician in Europe, a mortal combat with the most renowned conqueror of the age, a deadly feud with the most powerful and revengeful monarch in the world. Into this threefold enterprise he was about to plunge without any adequate resources, for the archduke possessed no experience, power, or wealth. He brought, therefore, no strength to a cause which was itself feeble. He could hope for no protection, nor inspire any confidence. Nevertheless, he had courage, pliability, and a turn for political adventure. Visions of the discomfited Philip conferring the hand of his daughter, with the Netherlands as her dowry, upon the enterprising youth who, at this juncture, should succeed in overturning the Spanish authority in that country, were conjured up by those who originated the plot, and he was weak enough to consider such absurdities plausible, and to set forth at once to take possession of this castle in the air.

On the evening of October 3, 1577, he retired to rest at eight o’clock, feigning extreme drowsiness. After waiting till his brother Maximilian, who slept in another bed in the same chamber, was asleep, he slipped from his couch and from the room in his night apparel, without even putting on his slippers. He was soon after provided by the companions of his flight with the disguise of a servant, arrayed in which, with his face blackened, he made his escape by midnight from Vienna, but it is doubtful whether Rudolph were as ignorant as he affected to be of the scheme. The archduke arrived at Cologne, attended only by two gentlemen and a few servants. The governor was beside himself with fury; the Queen of England was indignant; the prince only, against whom the measure was mainly directed, preserved his usual tranquility.

Secretary Walsingham, as soon as the news reached England, sent for Meetkercke, colleague of Marquis Havré in the mission from the estates. He informed that functionary of the great perplexity and excitement which, according to information received from the English resident, Davison, were then prevailing in Brussels, on account of the approach of the archduke. Some, he said, were for receiving him at one place, some at another; others were in favor of forbidding his entrance altogether. Things had been sufficiently complicated before, without this additional cause of confusion. Don John was strengthening himself daily, through the secret agency of the Duke of Guise and his party. His warlike genius was well known, as well as the experience of the soldiers who were fast rallying under his banner. On the other hand, the
Duke of Alençon had come to La Fére, and was also raising troops, while to oppose this crowd of rival enemies, to deal with this host of impending disasters, there was but one man in the Netherlands. On the Prince of Orange alone could the distracted states rely. To his prudence and valor only could the queen look with hopeful eyes. The secretary proceeded to inform the envoy, therefore, that her Majesty would feel herself compelled to withdraw all succor from the states if the Prince of Orange were deprived of his leadership, for it was upon that leadership only that she had relied for obtaining a successful result. She was quite indisposed to encounter indefinite risk with an impossibility of profit.

Meetkercke replied to the secretary by observing that the great nobles of the land had been unanimous in desiring a new governor-general at this juncture. They had thought Matthias, with a strong Council of State, composed of native Netherlanders, to control him, likely to prove a serviceable candidate for the post. They had reason to believe that, after he should be received, the Emperor would be reconciled to the measure, and that by his intercession the King of Spain would be likewise induced to acquiesce. He alluded, moreover, to the conference between the Marquis of Havré and Orange at Gertruydenberg, and quoted the opinion of the prince that it would be unwise, after the invitation had been given, to insult the archduke and his whole imperial house, by treating him with indignity upon his arrival. It was inevitable, said the envoy, that differences of opinion should exist in large assemblies, but according to information which he had recently received from Marquis Havré, then in Brussels, affairs had already become smooth again. At the conclusion of the conference, Walsingham repeated emphatically that the only condition upon which the queen would continue her succor to the Netherlands was that the prince should be forthwith appointed lieutenant-general for the archduke.

The immediate result of this movement was that Matthias was received at Antwerp by Orange at the head of 2,000 cavalry, and attended by a vast concourse of inhabitants. Had the prince chosen a contrary course, the Archduke might have been compelled to return, somewhat ridiculously, to Vienna; but, at the same time, the anger of the Emperor and of all Germany would have been aroused against Orange and the cause he served. Had the prince, on the contrary, abandoned the field himself, and returned to Holland, he would have left the game in the hands of his adversaries. Ever since he had made what his brother John called that “dangerous gallows journey” to Brussels, his influence had been culminating daily, and the jealousy of the great nobles rising as rapidly. Had he now allowed himself to be driven from his post, he would have exactly fulfilled their object. By remaining, he counteracted their schemes. By taking Matthias wholly into his own possession, he obtained one piece the more in the great game which he was playing against his antagonist in the Escorial. By making adroit use of events as they arose, he made the very waves which were to sink him, carry his great cause triumphantly onward.
The first result of the invitation to Matthias was the election of Orange as Ruward of Brabant. This office was one of great historical dignity, but somewhat anomalous in its functions. The province of Brabant, having no special governor, was usually considered under the immediate superintendence of the governor-general. As the capital of Brabant was the residence of that functionary, no inconvenience from this course had been felt since the accession of the house of Burgundy. At present, however, the condition of affairs was so peculiar—the seat of government being empty without having been permanently vacated—that a special opportunity was offered for conferring both honor and power on the prince. A ruward was not exactly dictator, although his authority was universal. He was not exactly protector, nor governor, nor stadholder. His functions were unlimited as to time—therefore superior to those of an ancient dictator; they were commonly conferred on the natural heir to the sovereignty—therefore more lofty than those of ordinary stadholders. The individuals who had previously held the office in the Netherlands had usually reigned afterwards in their own right. Duke Albert, of the Bavarian line, for example, had been Ruward of Hainault and Holland, for thirty years, during the insanity of his brother, and on the death of Duke William had succeeded to his title. Philip of Burgundy had declared himself Ruward of Brabant in 1427, and had shortly afterwards deprived Jacqueline of all her titles and appropriated them to himself. In the one case the regent, in the second case the usurper, had become reigning prince. Thus the movement of the jealous nobles against the prince had for its first effect his immediate appointment to an office whose chief characteristic was that it conducted to sovereignty.

The election was accomplished thus. The "members," or estates of Brussels, together with the deans, guilds, and other of the principal citizens of Antwerp, addressed a request to the states of Brabant, that William of Orange should be appointed Ruward, and after long deliberation the measure was carried. The unsolicited honor was then solemnly offered to him. He refused, and was only, after repeated and urgent entreaties, induced to accept the office. The matter was then referred to the states-general, who confirmed the dignity, after some demur, and with the condition that it might be superseded by the appointment of a governor-general. He was finally confirmed as Ruward on the 22nd of October, to the boundless satisfaction of the people, who celebrated the event by a solemn holiday in Antwerp, Brussels, and other cities. His friends, inspired by the intrigues of his enemies, had thus elevated the prince to almost unlimited power, while a strong expression in favor of his government had been elicited from the most important ally of the Netherlands—England. It soon rested with himself only to assume the government of Flanders, having been elected stadholder, not once only, but many times, by the four estates of that important province, and having as constantly refused the dignity. With Holland and Zealand devoted to him, Brabant and Flanders formally under his government, the Netherland capital lavishing testimonials of affection upon him, and the mass of the people almost worshipping him, it would not have
been difficult for the prince to play a game as selfish as it had hitherto been close and skillful. He might have proved to the grand seigniors that their suspicions were just, by assuming a crown which they had been intriguing to push from his brows. Certainly the nobles deserved their defeat. They had done their best to circumvent Orange, in all ways and at all times. They had paid their court to power when it was most powerful, and had sought to swim on the popular tide when it was rising. He avenged himself upon their perfidy only by serving his country more faithfully than ever, but it was natural that he should be indignant at the conduct of these gentlemen, "children of good houses" (in his own words), "issue of worthy sires," whose fathers, at least, he had ever loved and honored.

"They serve the Duke of Alva and the Grand Commander like varlets," he cried, "they make war upon me to the knife. Afterwards they treat with me, they reconcile themselves with me, they are sworn foes of the Spaniard. Don John arrives, and they follow him; they intrigue for my ruin. Don John fails in his enterprise upon Antwerp citadel; they quit him incontinently and call upon me. No sooner do I come than, against their oath and without previous communication with the states or myself, they call upon the Archduke Matthias. Are the waves of the sea more inconstant—is Euripus more uncertain than the counsels of such men?"

While these events were occurring at Brussels and Antwerp, a scene of a different nature was enacting at Ghent. The Duke of Aerschot had recently been appointed to the government of Flanders by the State Council, but the choice was exceedingly distasteful to a large number of the inhabitants. Although, since the defeat of Don John’s party in Antwerp, Aerschot had again become "the affectionate brother" of Orange, yet he was known to be the head of the cabal which had brought Matthias from Vienna. Flanders, moreover, swarmed with converts to the Reformed religion, and the duke’s strict Romanism was well known. The people, therefore, who hated the pope and adored the prince, were furious at the appointment of the new governor, but by dint of profuse promises regarding the instant restoration of privileges and charters which had long lain dormant, the friends of Aerschot succeeded in preparing the way for his installation. On the 20th of October, attended by twenty-three companies of infantry and three hundred horse, he came to Ghent. That famous place was still one of the most powerful and turbulent towns in Europe. Although diminished in importance since the commercial decline which had been the inevitable result of Philip’s bloody government, it was still swarming with a vigorous and dangerous population, and it had not forgotten the days when the iron tongue of Roland could call 80,000 fighting men to the city banner. Even now, 20,000 were secretly pledged to rise at the bidding of certain chieftains resident among them, noble by birth, warmly attached to the Reformed religion, and devoted to Orange. These gentlemen were perfectly conscious that a reaction was to be attempted in favor of Don John and of Catholicism, through the agency of the newly appointed governor
of Flanders. Aerschot was trusted or respected by neither party. The only
difference in the estimates formed of him was that some considered him a
deep and dangerous traitor, others that he was rather foolish than malicious,
and more likely to ruin a good cause than to advance the interests of a bad
one. The leaders of the popular party at Ghent believed him dangerous. They
felt certain that it was the deeply laid design of the Catholic nobles—foiled as
they had been in the objects with which they had brought Matthias from
Vienna, and enraged as they were that the only result of that movement had
been to establish the power of Orange upon a firmer basis—to set up an
opposing influence in Ghent. Flanders, in the possession of the Catholics, was
to weigh up Brabant, with its recent tendencies to toleration. Aerschot was to
counteract the schemes of Orange. Matthias was to be withdrawn from the
influence of the great heretic, and be yet compelled to play the part set down
for him by those who had placed him upon the stage. A large portion, no doubt,
of the schemes here suggested, was in agitation, but the actors were hardly
equal to the drama which they were attempting. The intrigue was, however, to
be frustrated at once by the hand of Orange, acting as it often did from
beneath a cloud.

Of all the chieftains possessing influence with the inhabitants of Ghent, two
young nobles, named Ryhove and Imbize, were the most conspicuous. Both
were of ancient descent and broken fortunes, both were passionately attached
to the prince, both were inspired with an intense hatred for all that was
Catholic or Spanish. They had traveled further on the reforming path than
many had done in that day, and might even be called democratic in their
notions. Their heads were filled with visions of Greece and Rome; the praise of
republics was ever on their lips, and they avowed to their intimate associates
that it was already feasible to compose a commonwealth like that of the Swiss
Cantons out of the seventeen Netherlands. They were regarded as dreamers by
some, as desperadoes by others. Few had confidence in their capacity or their
purity, but Orange, who knew mankind, recognized in them useful instruments
for any hazardous enterprise. They delighted in stratagems and sudden feats of
arms. Audacious and cruel by temperament, they were ever most happy in
becoming a portion of the desolation which popular tumults engender.

There were several excited meetings of the four estates of Flanders
immediately after the arrival of the Duke of Aerschot in Ghent. His coming had
been preceded by extensive promises, but it soon became obvious that their
fulfillment was to be indefinitely deferred. There was a stormy session on the
27th of October, many of the clergy and nobility being present, and
comparatively few members of the third estate. Very violent speeches were
made, and threats openly uttered, that the privileges, about which so much
noise had been heard, would be rather curtailed than enlarged under the new
administration. At the same session, the commission of Aerschot was formally
presented by Champagny and Sweveghem, deputed by the State Council for
that purpose. Champagny was in a somewhat anomalous position. There was
much doubt in men’s minds concerning him. He had seemed lately the friend of Orange, but he was certainly the brother of Granvelle. His splendid but fruitless services during the Antwerp Fury had not been forgotten, but he was known to be a determined Catholic. He was a hater of Spaniards, but no lover of popular liberty. The nature of his sentiments towards Orange was perhaps unjustly suspected. At any rate, two or three days after the events which now occupy our attention, he wrote him a private letter, in which he assured him of his attachment. In reference to the complaints of the prince, that he had not been seconded as he ought to have been, he said, moreover, that he could solemnly swear never to have seen a single individual who did not hold the prince in admiration, and who was not affectionately devoted to him, not only by public profession, but by private sentiment. There was little doubt entertained as to the opinions held by the rest of the aristocratic party, then commencing their maneuvers in Ghent. Their sentiments were uttered with sufficient distinctness in this remarkable session.

Hessels, the old Blood-Councillor, was then resident in Ghent, where he discharged high governmental functions. It was he, as it will be remembered, who habitually fell asleep at that horrible council board, and could only start from his naps to shout "ad patibulum," while the other murderers had found their work less narcotic. A letter from Hessels to Count de Reux, late royal governor of Flanders, was at the present juncture intercepted. Perhaps it was invented, but genuine or fictitious, it was circulated extensively among the popular leaders, and had the effect of proving Madame de Hessels a true prophet. It precipitated the revolution in Flanders, and soon afterwards cost the Councillor his life. "We have already brought many notable magistrates of Flanders over to the side of his Highness Don John," wrote Hessels. "We hope, after the Duke of Aerschot is governor, that we shall fully carry out the intentions of his Majesty and the plans of his Highness. We shall also know how to circumvent the scandalous heretic with all his adherents and followers."

Certainly, if this letter were true, it was high time for the friends of the "scandalous heretic" to look about them. If it were a forgery, which is highly probable, it was ingeniously imagined, and did the work of truth. The revolutionary party, being in a small minority in the assembly, were advised by their leaders to bow before the storm. They did so, and the bluster of the reactionary party grew louder as they marked the apparent discomfiture of their foes. They openly asserted that the men who were clamoring for privileges should obtain nothing but halters. The buried charters should never be resuscitated, but the spirit of the dead Emperor, who had once put a rope around the necks of the insolent Ghenters, still lived in that of his son. There was no lack of denunciation. Don John and the Duke of Aerschot would soon bring the turbulent burghers to their senses, and there would then be an end to this renewed clamor about musty parchments. Much indignation was secretly excited in the assembly by such menaces. Without doors the subterranean flames spread rapidly, but no tumult occurred that night. Before the session
was over, Ryhove left the city, pretending a visit to Tournay. No sooner had he left the gates, however, than he turned his horse’s head in the opposite direction, and rode off post haste to Antwerp. There he had a conference with William of Orange, and painted in lively colors the alarming position of affairs. “And what do you mean to do in the matter?” asked the prince, rather dryly. Ryhove was somewhat disconcerted. He had expected a violent explosion, well as he knew the tranquil personage whom he was addressing. “I know no better counsel,” he replied, at length, “than to take the duke, with his bishops, councillors, lords, and the whole nest of them, by the throat, and thrust them all out together.”

“Rather a desperate undertaking, however?” said the prince, carelessly, but interrogatively.

“I know no other remedy,” answered Ryhove, “I would rather make the attempt, relying upon God alone, and die like a man, if needful, than live in eternal slavery.” “Like an ancient Roman,” continued the young republican noble, in somewhat bombastic vein, “I am ready to wager my life, where the Netherlands’ welfare is at stake.”

“Bold words!” said the prince, looking gravely at Ryhove, “but upon what force do you rely for your undertaking?”

“If I can obtain no assistance from your Excellency,” was the reply, “I shall throw myself on the mass of the citizens. I can arouse them in the name of their ancient liberties, which must be redeemed now or never.”

The prince, believing probably that the scheme, if scheme there were, was but a wild one, felt little inclination to compromise himself with the young conspirator. He told him he could do nothing at present, and saying that he must at least sleep upon the matter, dismissed him for the night. Next morning, at daybreak, Ryhove was again closeted with him. The prince asked his sanguine partisan if he were still determined to carry out his project, with no more definite support than he had indicated. Ryhove assured him, in reply, that he meant to do so, or to die in the attempt. The prince shrugged his shoulders, and soon afterwards seemed to fall into a reverie. Ryhove continued talking, but it was soon obvious that his Highness was not listening, and he therefore took his leave somewhat abruptly. Hardly had he left the house, however, when the prince dispatched Saint Aldegonde in search of him. That gentleman, proceeding to his hotel, walked straight into the apartment of Ryhove, and commenced a conversation with a person whom he found there, but to his surprise lie soon discovered, experienced politician though he was, that he had made an egregious blunder. He had opened a dangerous secret to an entire stranger, and Ryhove coming into the apartment a few minutes afterwards, was naturally surprised to find the prince’s chief councillor in close conversation about the plot with Van Rooyen, the burgomaster of Denremonde.
The Flemish noble, however, always prompt in emergencies, drew his rapier, and assured the astonished burgomaster that he would either leave his life on the instant, or his oath never to reveal a syllable of what he had heard. That functionary, who had neither desired the young noble’s confidence, nor contemplated the honor of being run through the body as a consequence of receiving it, was somewhat aghast at the rapid manner in which these gentlemen transacted business. He willingly gave the required pledge, and was permitted to depart.

The effect of the conference between Saint Aldegonde and Ryhove was to convince the young partisan that the prince would neither openly countenance his project, nor be extremely vexed should it prove successful. In short, while, as in the case of the arrest of the State Council, the subordinates were left to appear the principals in the transaction, the persons most intimate with William of Orange were allowed to form satisfactory opinions as to his wishes, and to serve as instruments to his ends. "Vive qui vince!" cried Saint Aldegonde, encouragingly, to Ryhove, shaking hands with him at parting. The conspirator immediately mounted, and rode off towards Ghent. During his absence there had been much turbulence, but no decided outbreak, in that city. Imbue had accosted the Duke of Aerschot in the street, and demanded when and how he intended to proclaim the restoration of the ancient charters. The haughty duke had endeavored to shake off his importunate questioner, while Imbize persisted, with increasing audacity, till Aerschot lost his temper at last. "Charters, charters!" he cried in a rage, "you shall learn soon, ye that are thus howling for charters, that we have still the old means of making you dumb, with a rope on your throats. I tell you this—were you ever so much hounded on by the Prince of Orange."

The violence of the new governor excited the wrath of Imbize. He broke from him abruptly, and rushed to a rendezvous of his confederates, every man of whom was ready for a desperate venture. Groups of excited people were seen vociferating in different places. A drum was heard to rattle from time to time. Nevertheless, the rising tumult seemed to subside again after a season, owing partly to the exertions of the magistrates, partly to the absence of Ryhove. At four in the afternoon that gentleman entered the town, and riding directly to the head-quarters of the conspiracy, was incensed to hear that the work, which had begun so bravely, had been allowed to cool. "’Tis a time," he cried, "for vigilance. If we sleep now, we shall be dead in our beds before morning. Better to fan the fire which has begun to blaze in the people’s heart. Better to gather the fruit while it is ripe. Let us go forward, each with his followers, and I pledge myself to lead the way. Let us scuttle the old ship of slavery; let us hunt the Spanish Inquisition, once for all, to the hell from whence it came!"

"There spoke the voice of a man!" cried the Flemish captain, Meghem, one of the chief conspirators, "lead on, Ryhove, I swear to follow you as far as our legs will carry us." Thus encouraged, Ryhove, rushed about the city, calling upon
the people everywhere to rise. They rose almost to a man. Arming and mustering at different points, according to previous arrangements, a vast number assembled by toll of bell, after nightfall, on the public square, whence, under command of Ryhove, they swept to the residence of Aerschot at Saint Bavon. The guards, seeing the fierce mob approaching, brandishing spears and waving torches, had scarce time to close the gates, as the people loudly demanded entrance and the delivery to them of the governor. Both claims were refused. "Let us burn the birds in their nests," cried Ryhove, without hesitation. Pitch, light wood, and other combustibles, were brought at his command, and in a few moments the palace would have been in flames, had not Aerschot, seeing that the insurgents were in earnest, capitulated. As soon as the gates were open, the foremost of the mob rushed upon him, and would have torn him limb from limb, had not Ryhove resolutely interfered, and twice protected the life of the governor, at the peril of his own. The duke was then made a prisoner, and, under a strong guard, was conveyed, still in his nightgown, and bare-footed, to the mansion of Ryhove. All the other leading members of the Catholic party were captured, the arrests proceeding till a late hour in the night. Rassinghem, Sweveghem, Fisch, De la Porta, and other prominent members of the Flemish estates or council, were secured, but Champagny was allowed to make his escape. The Bishops of Bruges and Ypres were less fortunate. Blood-councillor Hessels, whose letter—genuine or counterfeited—had been so instrumental in hastening this outbreak, was most carefully guarded, and to him and to Senator Fisch the personal consequences of that night’s work were to be very tragic.

Thus audaciously, successfully, and hitherto without bloodshed, was the anti-Catholic revolution commenced in Flanders. The event was the first of a long and most signal series. The deed was done. The provisional government was established, at the head of which was placed Ryhove, to whom oaths of allegiance were rendered, subject to the future arrangements of the states-general and Orange. On the ninth of November, the nobles, notables, and community of Ghent published an address, in which they elaborately defended the revolution which had been effected and the arrests which had taken place, while the Catholic party, with Aerschot at its head, was declared to be secretly in league with Don John to bring back the Spanish troops, to overthrow the Prince of Orange, to deprive him of the protectorate of Brabant, to set at nought the Ghent treaty, and to suppress the Reformed religion.

The effect of this sudden rising of the popular party was prodigious throughout the Netherlands. At the same time, the audacity of such extreme proceedings could hardly be countenanced by any considerable party in the states-general. Champagny wrote to the Prince of Orange that, even if the letter of Hessels were genuine, it proved nothing against Aerschot, and he urged the necessity of suppressing such scene of license immediately, through the influence of those who could command the passions of the mob. Otherwise, he affirmed that all legitimate forms of justice would disappear, and that it would be easy
to set the bloodhounds upon any game whatever. Saint Aldegonde wrote to the prince that it would be a great point, but a very difficult one, to justify the Ghent transaction, for there was little doubt that the Hessels letter was a forgery. It was therefore as well, no doubt, that the prince had not decidedly committed himself to Ryhove’s plot, and thus deprived himself of the right to interfere afterwards, according to what seemed the claims of justice and sound policy.

He now sent Arend van Dorp to Ghent, to remonstrate with the leaders of the insurrection upon the violence of their measures, and to demand the liberation of the prisoners—a request which was only complied with in the case of Aerschot. That nobleman was liberated on the 14th of November, under the condition that he would solemnly pledge himself to forget and forgive the treatment which he had received, but the other prisoners were retained in custody for a much longer period. A few weeks afterwards, the Prince of Orange visited Ghent, at the earnest request of the four estates of Flanders, and it was hoped that his presence would contribute to the restoration of tranquility.

This visit was naturally honored by a brilliant display of "rhetorical" spectacles and tableaux vivants; for nothing could exceed the passion of the Netherlanders of that century for apologues and charades. In allegory they found an ever-present comforter in their deepest afflictions. The prince was escorted from the Town-gate to the Jacob’s church amid a blaze of tar-barrels and torches, although it was mid-day, where a splendid exhibition had been arranged by that sovereign guild of rhetoric, "Jesus with the Balsam Flower." The drama was called Judas Maccabæus, in compliment to the prince. In the center of the stage stood the Hebrew patriot, in full armor, symbolizing the illustrious guest doing battle for his country. He was attended by the three estates of the country, ingeniously personified by a single individual, who wore the velvet bonnet of a noble, the cassock of a priest, and the breeches of a burgher. Groups of allegorical personages were drawn up on the right and left—Courage, Patriotism, Freedom, Mercy, Diligence, and other estimable qualities upon one side, were balanced by Murder, Rapine, Treason, and the rest of the sisterhood of Crime on the other. The Inquisition was represented as a lean and hungry hag. The "Ghent Pacification" was dressed in cramoisy satin, and wore a city on her head for a turban, while, tied to her apron-strings were Catholicism and Protestantism, bound in a loving embrace by a chain of seventeen links, which she was forging upon an anvil. Under the anvil was an individual in complete harness, engaged in eating his heart; this was Discord. In front of the scene stood History and Rhetoric, attired as "triumphant maidens, in white garments," each with a laurel crown and a burning torch. These personages, after holding a rhymed dialogue between themselves, filled with wonderful conceits and quibbles, addressed the Prince of Orange and Maccabæus, one after the other, in a great quantity of very detestable verses.
After much changing of scenes and groups, and an enormous quantity of Flemish-woven poetry, the "Ghent Peace" came forward, leading a lion in one hand, and holding a heart of pure gold in the other. The heart, upon which was inscribed *Sinceritas*, was then presented to the real Prince, as he sat "reposing after the spectacle," and perhaps slightly yawning, the gift being accompanied by another tremendous discharge of complimentary verses. After this, William of Orange was permitted to proceed towards the lodgings provided for him, but the magistrates and notables met him upon the threshold, and the pensionary made him a long oration. Even after the prince was fairly housed, he had not escaped the fangs of allegory; for, while he sat at supper refreshing his exhausted frame after so much personification and metaphor, a symbolical personage, attired to represent the town corporation, made his appearance, and poured upon him a long and particularly dull heroic poem. Fortunately, this episode closed the labors of the day.

On December 7, 1577, the states-general formally declared that Don John was no longer stadholder, governor, nor captain-general, but an infractor of the peace which he had sworn to maintain, and an enemy of the fatherland. All natives of the country who should show him favor or assistance were declared rebels and traitors; and by a separate edict, issued the same day, it was ordained that an inventory of the estates of such persons should forthwith be taken.

Thus the war, which had for a brief period been suspended during the angry, tortuous, and hopeless negotiations which succeeded the arrival of Don John, was once more to be let loose. To this point had tended all the policy of Orange—faithful as ever to the proverb with which he had broken off the Breda conferences, "that war was preferable to a doubtful peace." Even, however, as his policy had pointed to a war as the necessary forerunner of a solid peace with Spain, so had his efforts already advanced the cause of internal religious concord within the provinces themselves. On the 10th of December, a new act of union was signed at Brussels, by which those of the Roman Church and those who had retired from that communion bound themselves to respect and to protect each other with mutual guarantees against all enemies whatsoever. Here was a step beyond the Ghent Pacification, and in the same direction. The first treaty tacitly introduced toleration by suppressing the right of persecution, but the new union placed the Reformed religion on a level with the old. This was the result of the prince’s efforts; and, in truth, there was no lack of eagerness among these professors of a faith which had been so long under ban, to take advantage of his presence. Out of dark alleys, remote thickets, subterranean conventicles, where the dissenters had so long been trembling for their lives, the oppressed now came forth into the light of day. They indulged openly in those forms of worship which persecution had affected to regard with as much holy horror as the Badahuennan or Hercynian mysteries of Celtic ages could inspire, and they worshipped boldly the common God of
Catholic and Puritan, in the words most consonant to their tastes, without dreading the gibbet as an inevitable result of their audacity.

In truth, the time had arrived for bringing the northern and southern, the Celtic and German, the Protestant and Catholic, hearts together, or else for acquiescing in their perpetual divorce. If the sentiment of nationality, the cause of a common fatherland, could now overcome the attachment to a particular form of worship—if a common danger and a common destiny could now teach the great lesson of mutual toleration—it might yet be possible to create a united Netherland, and defy forever the power of Spain. Since the Union of Brussels, of January 1577, the internal cancer of religious discord had again begun to corrode the body politic. The Pacification of Ghent had found the door open to religious toleration. It had not opened, but had left it open. The union of Brussels had closed the door again. Contrary to the hopes of the Prince of Orange and of the patriots who followed in his track, the sanction given to the Roman religion had animated the Catholics to fresh arrogance and fresh persecution. In the course of a few months, the only fruits of the new union, from which so much had been hoped, were to be seen in imprisonments, confiscations, banishments, executions. The Perpetual Edict, by which the fifteen provinces had united in acknowledging Don John while the Protestant stronghold of Holland and Zeeland had been placed in a state of isolation by the wise distrust of Orange, had widened the breach between Catholics and Protestants. The subsequent conduct of Don John had confirmed the suspicions and demonstrated the sagacity of the prince. The seizure of Namur and the open hostility avowed by the governor once more forced the provinces together. The suppressed flames of nationality burst forth again. Catholic and Protestant, Fleming and Hollander, instinctively approached each other, and felt the necessity of standing once more shoulder to shoulder in defense of their common rights. The Prince of Orange was called for by the unanimous cry of the whole country. He came to Brussels. His first step, as already narrated, was to break off negotiations which had been already ratified by the votes of the states-general. The measure was reconsidered, under pretense of adding certain amendments. Those amendments were the unconditional articles of surrender proposed for Don John’s signature on the 25th of September—articles which could only elicit words of defiance from his lips.

Thus far the prince’s object was accomplished. A treacherous peace, which would have ensured destruction, was averted, but a new obstacle to the development of his broad and energetic schemes arose in the intrigue which brought the archduke from Vienna. The cabals of Orange’s secret enemies were again thwarted with the same adroitness to which his avowed antagonists were forced to succumb. Matthias was made the exponent of the new policy, the standard-bearer of the new union which the prince now succeeded in establishing; for his next step was immediately to impress upon the provinces which had thus united in casting down the gauntlet to a common enemy, the necessity of uniting in a permanent league. One province was already lost by
the fall of Namur. The bonds of a permanent union for the other sixteen could be constructed of but one material—religious toleration—and for a moment, the genius of Orange, always so far beyond his age, succeeded in raising the mass of his countrymen to the elevation upon which he had so long stood alone.

The "new or nearer Union of Brussels" was signed on the 10th of December, eleven months after the formation of the first union. This was the third and, unfortunately, the last confederation of all the Netherlands. The original records have been lost, but it is known that the measure was accepted unanimously in the estates-general as soon as presented. The leading Catholic nobles were with the army, but a deputation, sent to the camp, returned with their signatures and hearty approval—with the signatures and approval of such determined Catholics as the Lalains, Meluns, Egmont, and La Motte. If such men could unite for the sake of the fatherland in an act of religious toleration, what lofty hopes for the future was not the prince justified in forming, for it was the prince alone who accomplished this victory of reason over passion. As a monument, not only of his genius, but of the elevated aspirations of a whole people in an age of intolerance, the "closer Union of Brussels" deserves especial place in the history of human progress. Unfortunately, it was destined to a brief existence. The battle of Gemblours was its death-blow, and before the end of a month, the union thus hopefully constructed was shattered forever. The Netherland people was never united again. By the Union of Utrecht, seven states subsequently rescued their existence, and lived to construct a powerful republic. The rest were destined to remain for centuries in the condition of provinces to a distant metropolis, to be shifted about as make-weights in political balances, and only in our own age to come into the honorable rank of independent constitutional states.

The prince had, moreover, strengthened himself for the coming struggle by an alliance with England. The thrifty but politic queen, fearing the result of the secret practices of Alençon—whom Orange, as she suspected, still kept in reserve to be played off, in case of need, against Matthias and Don John—had at last consented to a treaty of alliance and subsidy. On January 7, 1578, the Marquis Havré, envoy from the estates, concluded an arrangement in London, by which the queen was to lend them her credit—in other words, to endorse their obligations, to the amount of 100,000 pounds sterling. The money was to be raised wherever the states might be able to negotiate the bills, and her liability was to cease within a year. She was likewise to be collaterally secured by pledges from certain cities in the Netherlands. This amount was certainly not colossal, while the conditions were sufficiently parsimonious. At the same time a beginning was made, and the principle of subsidy was established. The queen, furthermore, agreed to send 5,000 infantry and 1,000 cavalry to the provinces, under the command of an officer of high rank, who was to have a seat and vote in the Netherland Council of State. These troops were to be paid by the provinces, but furnished by the queen. The estates were to form no treaty without her knowledge, nor undertake any movement of importance
without her consent. In case she should be herself attacked by any foreign power, the provinces were to assist her to the same extent as the amount of aid now afforded to themselves, and in case of a naval war, with a fleet of at least forty ships. It had already been arranged that the appointment of the Prince of Orange as lieutenant-general for Matthias was a *sine qua non* in any treaty of assistance with England. Soon after the conclusion of this convention, Sir Thomas Wilkes was dispatched on a special mission to Spain, and Mr. Leyton sent to confer privately with Don John. It was not probable, however, that the diplomatic skill of either would make this new arrangement palatable to Philip or his governor.

Within a few days after their signature of this important treaty, the prince had, at length, wholly succeeded in conquering the conflicting passions in the states-general, and in reconciling them, to a certain extent, with each other. The closer union had been accepted, and now thirty articles, which had been prepared under his superintendence, and had already on the 17th of December been accepted by Matthias, were established as the fundamental terms, according to which the archduke was to be received as governor-general. No power whatever was accorded to the young man, who had come so far with eager and ambitious views. As the prince had neither solicited nor desired a visit which had, on the contrary, been the result of hostile machinations, the archduke could hardly complain that the power accorded him was but shadowy, and that his presence was rendered superfluous. It was not surprising that the common people gave him the name of *Greffier*, or registering clerk to the prince; for his functions were almost limited to the signing of acts which were countersigned by Orange. According to the stipulations of the Queen of England, and the views of the whole popular party, the prince remained Ruward of Brabant, notwithstanding the appointment of a nominal governor-general, by whom his own duties were to be superseded.

The articles which were laid down as the basis upon which the archduke was to be accepted, composed an ample representative constitution, by which all the legislative and many of the executive powers of government were bestowed upon the states-general or upon the council by them to be elected. To avoid remaining in the condition of a people thus left without a head, the states declared themselves willing to accept Matthias as governor-general, on condition of the king’s subsequent approbation, and upon the general basis of the Ghent treaty. The archduke, moreover, was to take an oath of allegiance to the king and to the states-general at the same time. He was to govern the land by the advice of a state council, the members of which were to be appointed by the states-general, and were “to be native Netherlanders, true patriots, and neither ambitious nor greedy.” In all matters discussed before the state council, a majority of votes was to decide. The governor-general, with his Council of State, should conclude nothing concerning the common affairs of the nation—such as requests, loans, treaties of peace or declarations of war, alliances or confederacies with foreign nations—without the consent of the
states-general. He was to issue no edict or ordinance, and introduce no law, without the consent of the same body duly assembled, and representing each individual province. A majority of the members was declared necessary to a *quorum* of the council. All acts and dispatches were to be drawn up by a member of the board. The states-general were to assemble *when, where, and as often as*, and remain in session as long as, they *might think it expedient*. At the request of any individual province, concerning matters about which a convention of the generality was customary, the other states should be bound to assemble without waiting for directions from the governor-general. The estates of each particular province were to assemble at their pleasure. The governor and council, with advice of the states-general, were to appoint all the principal military officers. Troops were to be enrolled and garrisons established by and with the consent of the states. Governors of provinces were to be appointed by the governor-general, with advice of his council, and with the consent of the estates of the province interested. All military affairs were to be conducted during war by the governor, with advice of his council, while the estates were to have absolute control over the levying and expenditure of the common funds of the country.

It is sufficiently plain from this brief summary, that the powers thus conferred upon Matthias alone, were absolutely null, while those which he might exercise in conjunction with the state council, were not much more extensive. The actual force of the government—legislative, executive, and administrative—was lodged in the general assembly, while no authority was left to the king, except the nominal right to approve these revolutionary proceedings, according to the statement in the preamble. Such a reservation in favor of his Majesty seemed a superfluous sarcasm. It was furthermore resolved that the Prince of Orange should be appointed lieutenant-general for Matthias, and be continued in his office of Ruward. This constitution, drawn up under the superintendence of the prince, had been already accepted by Matthias, while, still at Antwerp, and upon the 18th of January, 1578, the ceremony of his inauguration took place.

It was the third triumphal procession which Brussels had witnessed within nine months. It was also the most brilliant of all, for the burghers, as if to make amends to the archduke for the actual nullity to which he had been reduced, seemed resolved to raise him to the seventh heaven of allegory. By the rhetorical guilds he was regarded as the most brilliant constellation of virtues which had yet shone above the Flemish horizon. A brilliant cavalcade, headed by Orange, accompanied by Count John of Nassau, the Prince de Chimay, and other notables, met him at Vilvoorde, and escorted him to the city gate. On an open field, outside the town, Count Bossu had arranged a review of troops, concluding with a sham-fight, which, in the words of a classical contemporary, seemed as "bloody a rencontre as that between Duke Miltiades of Athens and King Darius upon the plains of Attica." The procession entered the Louvain gate, through a splendid triumphal arch, filled with a band of invisible musicians. "I believe that Orpheus had never played so melodiously on his
harp," says the same authority, "nor Apollo on his lyre, nor Pan on his lute, as the city waits then performed." On entering the gates, Matthias was at once delivered over to the hands of mythology, the burghers and rhetoricians taking possession of their illustrious captive, and being determined to outdo themselves in demonstrations of welcome. The representatives of the "nine nations" of Brussels met him in the Ritter-street, followed by a gorgeous retinue. Although it was mid-day, all bore flaming torches. Although it was January, the streets were strewed with flowers. The houses were festooned with garlands, and hung with brilliant silks and velvets. The streets were thronged with spectators, and encumbered with triumphal arches. On the Grande Place, always the central scene in Brussels, whether for comedies, or tournaments, or executions, the principal dramatic effects had been accumulated. The splendid front of the Hôtel de Ville was wreathed with scarves and banners; its windows and balconies, as well as those of the picturesque houses which formed the square, were crowded with gaily-dressed women. Upon the area of the place, twenty-four theatres had been erected, where a series of magnificent living pictures were represented by the most beautiful young females that could be found in the city. All were attired in brocades, embroideries, and cloth of gold. The subjects of the *tableaux vivants* were, of course, most classic, for the Netherlanders were nothing, if not allegorical; yet, as spectacles, provided by burghers and artisans for the amusement of their fellow-citizens, they certainly proved a considerable culture in the people who could thus be amused. All the groups were artistically arranged. Upon one theatre stood Juno with her peacock, presenting Matthias with the city of Brussels, which she held, beautifully modeled, in her hand. Upon another, Cybele gave him the keys, Reason handed him a bridle, Hebe a basket of flowers, Wisdom a looking glass and two law books, Diligence a pair of spurs; while Constancy, Magnanimity, Prudence, and other virtues furnished him with a helmet, corslet, spear, and shield. Upon other theatres, Bellona presented him with several men-at-arms, tied in a bundle; Fame gave him her trumpet, and Glory her crown. Upon one stage Quintus Curtius, on horseback, was seen plunging into the yawning abyss; upon six others Scipio Africanus was exhibited, as he appeared in the most picturesque moments of his career. The beardless archduke had never achieved anything, save his nocturnal escape from Vienna in his night-gown; but the honest Flemings chose to regard him as a reincarnation of those two eminent Romans. Carried away by their own learning, they already looked upon him as a myth; and such indeed he was destined to remain throughout his Netherland career. After surveying all these wonders, Matthias was led up the hill again to the ducal palace, where, after hearing speeches and odes till he was exhausted, he was at last allowed to eat his supper and go to bed.

Meantime the citizens feasted in the streets. Bonfires were blazing everywhere, at which the people roasted "geese, pigs, capons, partridges, and chickens," while upon all sides were the merriest piping and dancing. Of a sudden, a fiery dragon was seen flying through the air. It poised for a while
over the heads of the reveling crowd in the Grande Place, and then burst with
a prodigious explosion, sending forth rockets and other fireworks in every
direction. This exhibition, then a new one, so frightened the people, that they
all took to their heels, "as if a thousand soldiers had assaulted them," tumbling
over each other in great confusion, and so dispersing to their homes.

The next day Matthias took the oaths as Governor-General, to support the new
constitution, while the Prince of Orange was sworn in as Lieutenant-General
and Governor of Brabant. Upon the next, a splendid banquet was given them in
the grand hall of the Hôtel de Ville, by the states-general, and when the cloth
was removed, Rhetoric made her last and most ingenious demonstration,
through the famous guild of "Mary with the Flower Garland."

Two individuals—the one attired as respectable burgher, the other as a clerical
personage in gown and bands—made their appearance upon a stage, opposite
the seats of their Highnesses, and pronounced a long dialogue in rhyme. One of
the speakers rejoiced in the appellation of the "Desiring Heart," the other was
called "Common Comfort." Common Sense might have been more to the
purpose, but appeared to have no part in the play. Desiring Heart, being of an
inquisitive disposition, propounded a series of puzzling questions, mythological
in their nature, which seemed like classical conundrums, having reference,
mainly, to the proceedings of Venus, Neptune, Juno, and other divinities. They
appeared to have little to do with Matthias or the matter in hand, but Common
Comfort knew better. That clerical personage, accordingly, in a handsome
allowance of rhymes, informed his despairing colleague that everything would
end well, that Jupiter, Diana, Venus, and the rest of them would all do their
duty, and that Belgica would be relieved from all her woes, at the advent of a
certain individual. Whereupon cried Desiring Heart:

    Oh Common Comfort! who is he?
    His name, and of what family?

To which Comfort responded by mentioning the archduke, in a poetical and
highly-complimentary strain, with handsome allusions to the inevitable Quintus
Curtius and Scipio Africanus. The concluding words of the speech were not
spoken, but were taken as the cue for a splendid charade, the long-suffering
Scipio again making his appearance in company with Alexander and Hannibal,
the group typifying the future government of Matthias. After each of these
heroic individuals had spouted a hundred lines or so, the play was terminated,
and Rhetoric took her departure. The company had remained at table during
this long representation, and now the dessert was served, consisting of a "richly
triumphant banquet of confectionary, marmalade, and all kinds of
genteelnesses in sugar."

Meanwhile, Don John sat chafing and almost frenzied with rage at Namur.
Certainly he had reasons enough for losing his temper. Never since the days of
Maximilian had king’s brother been so bearded by rebels. The Cross was
humbled in the dust, the royal authority openly derided, his Majesty’s representative locked up in a fortress, while "the accursed Prince of Orange" reigned supreme in Brussels, with an imperial archduke for his private secretary.

The governor addressed a long, private, and most bitter letter to the Emperor, for the purpose of setting himself right in the opinion of that potentate, and of giving him certain hints as to what was expected of the imperial court by Philip and himself. He expressed confidence that the imperial commissioners would have some effect in bringing about the pacification of the Netherlands, and protested his own strong desire for such a result, provided always that the two great points of the Catholic religion and his Majesty’s authority were preserved intact. "In the hope that those articles would be maintained," said he, "I have emptied cities and important places of their garrisons, when I might easily have kept the soldiers, and with the soldiers the places, against all the world, instead of consigning them to the care of men who at this hour have arms in their hand against their natural prince." He declared vehemently that in all his conduct, since his arrival in the provinces, he had been governed exclusively by the interests of Philip, an object which he should steadily pursue to the end. He urged, too, that the Emperor, being of the same house as Philip, and therefore more obliged than all others to sustain his quarrel, would do well to espouse his cause with all the warmth possible. "The forgetfulness by vassals," said Don John, "of the obedience due to their sovereign is so dangerous, that all princes and potentates, even those at the moment exempt from trouble, should assist in preparing the remedy, in order that their subjects also may not take it into their heads to do the like, liberty being a contagious disease, which goes on infecting one neighbour after another, if the cure be not promptly applied." It was, he averred, a desperate state of things for monarchs, when subjects having obtained such concessions as the Netherlanders had obtained, nevertheless loved him and obeyed him so little. They showed, but too clearly, that the causes alleged by them had been but pretenses, in order to effect designs, long ago conceived, to overthrow the ancient constitution of the country, and to live thenceforward in unbridled liberty. So many indecent acts had been committed prejudicial to religion and to his Majesty’s grandeur, that the governor avowed his determination to have no farther communication with the provinces without fresh commands to that effect. He begged the Emperor to pay no heed to what the states said, but to observe what they did. He assured him that nothing could be more senseless than the reports that Philip and his governor-general in the Netherlands were negotiating with France, for the purpose of alienating the provinces from the Austrian crown. Philip, being chief of the family, and sovereign of the Netherlands, could not commit the absurdity of giving away his own property to other people, nor would Don John choose to be an instrument in so foolish a transaction. The governor entreated the Emperor, therefore, to consider such fables as the invention of malcontents and traitors, of whom there were no lack at his court, and to remember that nothing was more necessary for the preservation of the greatness of his family than to cultivate the best relations
with all its members. "Therefore," said he, with an absurd affectation of candor, "although I make no doubt whatever that the expedition hitherto of the Archduke Matthias has been made with the best intentions, nevertheless, many are of opinion that it would have been better altogether omitted." "If the Archduke," he continued, with hardly dissembled irony, "be desirous of taking charge of his Majesty’s affairs, it would be preferable to employ himself in the customary manner. Your Majesty would do a laudable action by recalling him from this place, according to your Majesty’s promise to me to that effect." In conclusion, Don John complained that difficulties had been placed in his way for making levies of troops in the Empire, while every facility had been afforded to the rebels. He therefore urgently insisted that so unnatural and unjust a condition of affairs should be remedied.

Don John was not sorry in his heart that the crisis was at last come. His chain was broken. His wrath exploded in his first interview with Leyton, the English envoy, whom Queen Elizabeth had dispatched to calm, if possible, his inevitable anger at her recent treaty with the states. He knew nothing of England, he said, nor of France, nor of the Emperor. His Catholic Majesty had commissioned him now to make war upon these rebellious provinces. He would do it with all his heart. As for the Emperor, he would unchain the Turks upon him for his perfidy. As for the burghers of Brussels, they would soon feel his vengeance.

It was very obvious that these were not idle threats. War had again broken loose throughout these doomed provinces. A small but well-appointed army had been rapidly collecting under the banner of Don John at Luxemburg. Peter Ernest Mansfeld had brought many well-trained troops from France, and Prince Alexander of Parma had arrived with several choice and veteran regiments of Italy and Spain. The old schoolfellow, playmate, and comrade of Don John, was shocked on his arrival, to witness the attenuated frame and care-worn features of his uncle. The son of Charles V, the hero of Lepanto, seemed even to have lost the air of majesty which was so natural to him, for petty insults, perpetual crosses, seemed to have left their squalid traces upon his features.

Nevertheless, the crusader was alive again, at the notes of warlike preparations which now resounded throughout the land.

On the 25th of January, he issued a proclamation, couched in three languages—French, German, and Flemish. He declared in this document that he had not come to enslave the provinces, but to protect them. At the same time he meant to re-establish his Majesty’s authority, and the down-trod religion of Rome. He summoned all citizens and all soldiers throughout the provinces to join his banners, offering them pardon for their past offences, and protection against heretics and rebels. This declaration was the natural consequence of the exchange of defiances which had already taken place, and it was evident also that the angry manifesto was soon to be followed up by vigorous blows. The army of Don John already numbered more than 20,000 well-seasoned and disciplined veterans. He was himself the most illustrious chieftain in Europe. He was surrounded by lieutenants of the most brilliant reputation. Alexander of Parma, who had fought with distinction at Lepanto, was already recognized as
possessing that signal military genius which was soon to stamp him as the first soldier of his age, while Mansfeld, Mondragon, Mendoza, and other distinguished officers, who had already won so much fame in the Netherlands, had now returned to the scene of their former achievements.

On the other hand, the military affairs of the states were in confusion. Troops in nearly equal numbers to those of the royal army had been assembled, but the chief offices had been bestowed, by a mistaken policy, upon the great nobles. Already the jealousy of Orange, entertained by their whole order, was painfully apparent. Notwithstanding the signal popularity which had made his appointment as lieutenant-general inevitable, it was not easy for him always to vindicate his authority over captious and rival magnates. He had every wish to conciliate the affections of men whom he could not in his heart respect, and he went as far in gratifying their ambition as comporting with his own dignity, perhaps farther than was consistent with the national interests. He was still willing to trust Lalain, of whose good affection to the country he felt sure. He had even been desirous of declining the office of lieutenant-general, in order to avoid giving that nobleman the least occasion to think "that he would do him, or any other gentleman of the army, prejudice in any single matter in the world." This magnanimity had not been repaid with corresponding confidence. We have already seen that Lalain had been secretly in the interest of Anjou ever since his wife and himself had lost their hearts to Margaret of Navarre; yet the count was chief commander of the infantry in the states’ army then assembled. Robert Melun, Vicomte de Gand, was commander of the cavalry, but he had recently been private envoy from Don John to the English queen. Both these gentlemen, together with Pardieu De la Motte, general of the artillery, were voluntarily absent from the forces, under pretext of celebrating the wedding of the Seigneur De Bersel with the niece and heiress of the unfortunate Marquis of Berghen. The ghost of that ill-starred noble might almost have seemed to rise at the nuptial banquet of his heiress, to warn the traitors of the signal and bloody massacre which their treachery was soon to occasion. Philip Egmont, eldest son of the famous Lamoral, was with the army, as was the Seigneur de Héze, hero of the State Council’s arrest, and the unstable Havré. But little was to be hoped from such leaders. Indeed, the affairs of the states continued to be in as perplexed a condition as that which honest John of Nassau had described some weeks before. "There were very few patriots," he had said, "but plenty of priests, with no lack of inexperienced lads—some looking for distinction, and others for pelf."

The two armies had been mustered in the latter days of January. The pope had issued a bull for the benefit of Don John, precisely similar to those formerly employed in the crusades against the Saracens. Authority was given him to levy contributions upon ecclesiastical property, while full absolution, at the hour of death, for all crimes committed during a whole lifetime, was proclaimed to those who should now join the standard of the Cross. There was at least no concealment. The Crescent-wearing Zealanders had been taken at their word, and the whole nation of Netherlanders were formally banned as unbelievers. The forces of Don John were mustered at Marche in Luxemburg, those of the
states in a plain within a few miles of Namur. Both armies were nearly equal in number, amounting to nearly 20,000 each, including a force of 2,000 cavalry on each side. It had been the original intention of the patriots to attack Don John in Namur. Having learned, however, that he purposed marching forth himself to offer battle, they decided to fall back upon Gemblours, which was nine miles distant from that city. On the last day of January, they accordingly broke up their camp at Saint Martius, before dawn, and marched towards Gemblours. The chief commander was De Goignies, an old soldier of Charles V, who had also fought at Saint Quintin. The states’ army was disposed in three divisions. The van consisted of the infantry regiments of De Héze and Montigny, flanked by a protective body of light horse. The center, composed of the Walloon and German regiments, with a few companies of French, and thirteen companies of Scotch and English under Colonel Balfour, was commanded by two most distinguished officers, Bossu and Champagny. The rear, which, of course, was the post of responsibility and honor, comprised all the heavy cavalry, and was commanded by Philip Egmont and Lumey de la Marck. The Marquis Havré and the General-in-Chief, Goignies, rode to and fro, as the army proceeded, each attended by his staff.

The troops of Don John broke up from before Namur with the earliest dawn, and marched in pursuit of the retiring foe. In front was nearly the whole of the cavalry—carabineers, lancers, and heavy dragoons. The center, arranged in two squares, consisted chiefly of Spanish infantry, with a lesser number of Germans. In the rear came the Walloons, marching also in a square, and protecting the baggage and ammunition. Charles Mansfeld had been left behind with a reserved force, stationed on the Meuse; Ottavio Gonzaga commanded in front; Ernest Mansfeld brought up the rear; while in the center rode Dan John himself, attended by the Prince of Parma. Over his head streamed the crucifix-emblazoned banner, with its memorable inscription—In hoc signo vici Turcos, in hoc Haereticos vincam.

Small detachments of cavalry had been sent forward, under Olivera and Acosta, to scour the roads and forests, and to disturb all ambuscades which might have been prepared. From some stragglers captured by these officers, the plans of the retreating generals were learned. The winter’s day was not far advanced, when the rearward columns of the states’ army were descried in the distance. Don John, making a selection of some six hundred cavalry, all picked men, with a thousand infantry, divided the whole into two bodies, which he placed under command of Gonzaga and the famous old Christopher Mondragon. These officers received orders to hang on the rear of the enemy, to harass him, and to do him all possible damage consistent with the possibility of avoiding a general engagement, until the main army under Parma and Don John should arrive. The orders were at first strictly obeyed. As the skirmishing grew hotter, however, Gonzaga observed that a spirited cavalry officer, named Perotti, had already advanced, with a handful of men, much further within the reach of the hostile forces than was deemed expedient. He sent hastily to recall the too eager chieftain. The order, delivered in a tone more peremptory than agreeable, was flatly disobeyed. "Tell Ottavio Gonzaga," said Perotti, "that I
never yet turned my back on the enemy, nor shall I now begin. Moreover, were I ever so much inclined to do so, retreat is impossible." The retreating army was then proceeding along the borders of a deep ravine, filled with mire and water, and as broad and more dangerous than a river. In the midst of the skirmishing, Alexander of Parma rode up to reconnoiter. He saw at once that the columns of the enemy were marching unsteadily to avoid being precipitated into this creek. He observed the waving of their spears, the general confusion of their ranks, and was quick to take advantage of the fortunate moment. Pointing out to the officers about him the opportunity thus offered of attacking the retreating army unawares in flank, he assembled, with great rapidity, the foremost companies of cavalry already detached from the main body. Mounting a fresh and powerful horse, which Camillo Monte held in readiness for him, he signified his intention of dashing through the dangerous ravine, and dealing a stroke where it was least expected. "Tell Don John of Austria," he cried to an officer whom he sent back to the Commander-in-chief, "that Alexander of Parma has plunged into the abyss, to perish there, or to come forth again victorious."

The sudden thought was executed with lightning-like celerity. In an instant the bold rider was already struggling through the dangerous swamp; in another, his powerful charger had carried him across. Halting for a few minutes, lance in rest, till his troops had also forced their passage, gained the level ground unperceived, and sufficiently breathed their horses, he drew up his little force in a compact column. Then, with a few words of encouragement, he launched them at the foe. The violent and entirely unexpected shock was even more successful than the prince had anticipated. The hostile cavalry reeled and fell into hopeless confusion, Egmont in vain striving to rally them to resistance. That name had lost its magic. Goignies also attempted, without success, to restore order among the panic-stricken ranks. The sudden conception of Parma, executed as suddenly and in so brilliant a manner, had been decisive. Assaulted in flank and rear at the same moment, and already in temporary confusion, the cavalry of the enemy turned their backs and fled. The center of the states’ army thus left exposed, was now warmly attacked by Parma. It had, moreover, been already thrown into disorder by the retreat of its own horse, as they charged through them in rapid and disgraceful panic. The whole army broke to pieces at once, and so great was the trepidation, that the conquered troops had hardly courage to run away. They were utterly incapable of combat. Not a blow was struck by the fugitives. Hardly a man in the Spanish ranks was wounded; while, in the course of an hour and a half, the whole force of the enemy was exterminated. It is impossible to state with accuracy the exact numbers slain. Some accounts spoke of 10,000 killed, or captive, with absolutely no loss on the royal side. Moreover, this slaughter was effected, not by the army under Don John, but by so small a fragment of it, that some historians have even set down the whole number of royalists engaged at the commencement of the action, at six hundred, increased afterwards to twelve hundred. By this calculation, each Spaniard engaged must have killed ten enemies with his own hand, and that within an hour and a half’s space! Other historians more wisely omit the exact statistics of the massacre, and allow that
a very few—ten or eleven, at most—were slain within the Spanish ranks. This, however, is the utmost that is claimed by even the Netherland historians, and it is, at any rate, certain that the whole states’ army was annihilated. Rarely had a more brilliant exploit been performed by a handful of cavalry. To the distinguished Alexander of Parma, who improvised so striking and complete a victory out of a fortuitous circumstance, belonged the whole credit of the day, for his quick eye detected a passing weakness of the enemy, and turned it to terrible account with the promptness which comes from genius alone. A whole army was overthrown. Everything belonging to the enemy fell into the hands of the Spaniards. Thirty-four standards, many field-pieces, much camp equipage, and ammunition, besides some seven or eight thousand dead bodies, and six hundred living prisoners, were the spoils of that winter’s day. Of the captives, some were soon afterwards hurled off the bridge at Namur, and drowned like dogs in the Meuse, while the rest were all hanged, none escaping with life. Don John’s clemency was not superior to that of his sanguinary predecessors. And so another proof was added—if proofs were still necessary—of Spanish prowess. The Netherlanders may be pardoned if their foes seemed to them supernatural, and almost invulnerable. How else could these enormous successes be accounted for? How else could thousands fall before the Spanish swords, while hardly a single Spanish corpse told of effectual resistance? At Jemmingen, Alva had lost seven soldiers, and slain seven thousand; in the Antwerp Fury, two hundred Spaniards, at most, had fallen, while eight thousandburghers and states’ troops had been butchered; and now at Gemblours, six, seven, eight, ten—Heaven knew how many—thousand had been exterminated, and hardly a single Spaniard had been slain! Undoubtedly, the first reason for this result was the superiority of the Spanish soldiers. They were the boldest, the best disciplined, the most experienced in the world. Their audacity, promptness, and ferocity made them almost invincible. In this particular action, at least half the army of Don John was composed of Spanish or Spanish-Italian veterans. Moreover, they were commanded by the most renowned captains of the age—by Don John himself, and Alexander of Parma, sustained by such veterans as Mondragon, the hero of the memorable submarine expeditions; Mendoza, the accomplished cavalry officer, diplomatist, and historian; and Mansfeld, of whom Don John had himself written to the king that his Majesty had not another officer of such account in all the Netherlands. Such officers as these, besides Gonzaga, Camillo Monte, Mucio Pagano, at the head of such troops as fought that day under the banner of the Cross, might go far in accounting for this last and most tremendous victory of the Inquisition. On the other hand, although Bossu and Champagny were with the states’ army, yet their hearts were hardly with the cause. Both had long been loyal, and had earned many laurels against the rebels, while Champagny was still devoutly a papist, and wavered painfully between his hatred to heresy and to Spain. Egmont and De Héze were raw, unpracticed lads, in whom genius did not come to supply the place of experience. The Commander, De Moignies, was a veteran, but a veteran who had never gained much glory, and the chiefs of the cavalry, infantry, and artillery, were absent
at the Brussels wedding. The news of this additional massacre inflicted upon a nation, for which Berghen and Montigny had laid down their lives, was the nuptial benediction for Berghen’s heiress; for it was to the chief wedding guests upon that occasion that the disaster was justly attributed. The rank and file of the states’ army were mainly mercenaries, with whom the hope of plunder was the prevailing motive; the chief commanders were absent, while those officers who were with the troops were neither heartily friendly to their own flag, nor sufficiently experienced to make it respected.

CHAPTER 5
The Struggles, Failures, and Death of Don John of Austria

Don John having thus vindicated his own military fame and the amazing superiority of the Spanish arms, followed up his victory by the rapid reduction of many towns of second-rate importance—Louvain, Judoigne, Tirlemont, Aerschot, Bouvignes, Sichem, Nivelle, Roeux, Soignies, Binch, Beaumont, Walcourt, Maubeuge, and Chimay, either submitted to their conqueror, or were taken after short sieges. The usual atrocities were inflicted upon the unfortunate inhabitants of towns where resistance was attempted. The commandant of Sichem was hanged out of his own window, along with several chief burghers and officers, while the garrison was put to the sword, and the bodies cast into the Demer. The only crime committed by these unfortunates was to have ventured a blow or two in behalf of the firesides which they were employed to protect.

In Brussels, on the other hand, there was less consternation excited by these events than boundless rage against the aristocratic party, for the defeat of Gemblours was attributed, with justice, to the intrigues and the incapacity of the Catholic magnates. It was with difficulty that Orange, going about by night from house to house, from street to street, succeeded in calming the indignation of the people, and in preventing them from sweeping in a mass to the residence of the leading nobles, in order to inflict summary vengeance on the traitors. All looked to the prince as their only savior, not a thought nor a word being wasted upon Matthias. Not a voice was raised in the assembly to vindicate the secret proceedings of the Catholic party, nor to oppose the measures which the prince might suggest. The terrible disaster had taught the necessity of union. All parties heartily joined in the necessary steps to place the capital in a state of complete defense, and to assemble forthwith new troops to take the place of the army just annihilated. The victor gained nothing by his victory, in comparison with the profit acquired by the states through their common misfortune. Nor were all the towns which had recently fallen into the hands of Don John at all comparable in importance to the city of Amsterdam, which now, by a most timely arrangement, furnished a rich compensation to the national party for the disaster of Gemblours.

Since the conclusion of the Ghent Pacification, it had been the most earnest wish of the prince, and of Holland and Zealand, to recover possession of this most important city. The wish was naturally shared by every true patriot in the
states-general. It had, however, been extremely difficult to arrange the terms of the "Satisfaction." Every fresh attempt at an amicable compromise was wrecked upon the obstinate bigotry of the leading civic authorities. They would make no agreement to accept the authority of Orange, except, as Saint Aldegonde expressed himself, upon terms which would enable them "to govern their governor." The influence of the monks, who were resident in large numbers within the city, and of the magistrates, who were all stanch Catholics, had been hitherto sufficient to outweigh the efforts made by the large masses of the Reformed religionists composing the bulk of the population. It was, however, impossible to allow Amsterdam to remain in this isolated and hostile attitude to the rest of Holland. The prince, having promised to use no coercion, and loyally adhering to his pledge, had only with extreme difficulty restrained the violence of the Hollanders and Zealanders, who were determined, by fair means or foul, to restore the capital city to its natural place within his stadholderate. He had been obliged, on various occasions, particularly on the 21st of October of the preceding year, to address a most decided and peremptory letter to the estates of Holland and Zealand, forbidding the employment of hostile measures against Amsterdam. His commands had been reluctantly, partially, and only temporarily obeyed. The states desisted from their scheme of reducing the city by famine, but they did not the less encourage the secret and unofficial expeditions which were daily set on foot to accomplish the annexation by a sudden enterprise.

Late in November, a desperate attempt had been made by Colonel Helling, in conjunction with Governor Sonoy, to carry the city by surprise. The force which the adventurer collected for the purpose was inadequate, and his plans were unskillfully arranged. He was himself slain in the streets, at the very commencement of the action, whereupon, in the quaint language of the contemporary chronicler, "the hearts of his soldiers sank in their shoes," and they evacuated the city with much greater rapidity than they had entered it. The prince was indignant at these violent measures, which retarded rather than advanced the desired consummation. At the same time it was an evil of immense magnitude—this anomalous condition of his capital. Ceaseless schemes were concerted by the municipal and clerical conspirators within its walls, and various attempts were known, at different times, to have been contemplated by Don John, to inflict a home-thrust upon the provinces of Holland and Zealand at the most vulnerable and vital point. The "Satisfaction" accepted by Utrecht, in the autumn of 1577, had, however, paved the way for the recovery of Amsterdam; so that upon the eighth of February, 1578, certain deputies from Utrecht succeeded at last in arranging terms, which were accepted by the sister city. The basis of the treaty was, as usual, the nominal supremacy of the Catholic religion, with toleration for the Reformed worship. The necessary effect would be, as in Harlem, Utrecht, and other places, to establish the new religion upon an entire equality with the old. It was arranged that no congregations were to be disturbed in their religious exercises in the places respectively assigned to them. Those of the Reformed faith were to celebrate their worship without the walls. They were, however, to enjoy the
right of burying their dead within these precincts, and it is singular how much importance was attached at that day to a custom, at which the common sentiment and the common sense of modern times revolt. "To bury our dead within our own cities is a right hardly to be denied to a dog," said the Prince of Orange, and accordingly this right was amply secured by the new Satisfaction of Amsterdam. It was, however, stipulated that the funerals should be modest, and attended by no more than twenty-four persons at once. The treaty was hailed with boundless joy in Holland and Zealand, while countless benedictions were invoked upon the "blessed peace-makers," as the Utrecht deputies walked through the streets of Amsterdam. There is no doubt that the triumph thus achieved by the national party far counterbalanced the governor-general’s victory at Gemblours.

Meantime, the Seigneur de Selles, brother of the deceased Noircarmes, had arrived from Spain. He was the special bearer of a letter from the king to the states-general, written in reply to their communications of the 24th of August and eighth of September of the previous year. The tone of the royal dispatch was very affectionate, the substance such as entirely to justify the whole policy of Orange. It was obvious that the penetrating and steadfast statesman had been correct in refusing to be moved to the right or the left by the specious language of Philip’s former letters, or by the apparent frankness of Don John. No doubt the governor had been sincere in his desire for peace, but the prince knew very well his incapacity to confer that blessing. The prince knew—what no man else appeared fully to comprehend at that epoch—that the mortal combat between the Inquisition and the Reformation was already fully engaged. The great battle between divine reason and right divine, on which the interests of unborn generations were hanging, was to be fought out, before the eyes of all Christendom, on the plain of the Netherlands.

Orange was willing to lay down his arms if he could receive security for the Reformed worship. He had no desire to exterminate the ancient religion, but he meant also to protect the new against extermination. Such security, he felt, would never be granted, and he had therefore resolutely refused to hearken to Don John, for he was sure that peace with him was impossible. The letters now produced by De Selles confirmed his positions completely. The king said not a word concerning the appointment of a new governor-general, but boldly insisted upon the necessity of maintaining the two cardinal points—his royal supremacy, and the Catholic religion upon the basis adopted by his father, the Emperor Charles V.

This was the whole substance of his communication—the supremacy of royalty and of papacy as in the time of Charles V. These cabalistic words were repeated twice in the brief letter to the estates. They were repeated five times in the instructions furnished by his Majesty to De Selles. The letter and the instructions indeed contained nothing else. Two simples were offered for the cure of the body politic, racked by the fever and convulsion of ten horrible years—two simples which the patient could hardly be so unreasonable as to reject—unlimited despotism and religious persecution. The whole matter lay in a nutshell, but it was a nutshell which enclosed the flaming edicts of Charles V,
with their scaffolds, gibbets, racks, and funeral piles. The prince and the
states-general spurned such pacific overtures, and preferred rather to gird
themselves for the combat.
That there might be no mistake about the matter, Don John, immediately after
receiving the letter, issued a proclamation to enforce the king’s command. He
mentioned it as an acknowledged fact that the states-general had long ago
sworn the maintenance of the two points of royal and Catholic supremacy,
according to the practice under the Emperor Charles. The states instantly
published an indignant rejoinder, affirming the indisputable truth that they had
sworn to the maintenance of the Ghent Pacification, and proclaiming the
assertion of Don John an infamous falsehood. It was an outrage upon common
sense, they said, that the Ghent treaty could be tortured into sanctioning the
placards and the Inquisition, evils which that sacred instrument had been
expressly intended to crush.
A letter was then formally addressed to his Majesty, in the name of the
Archduke Matthias and of the estates, demanding the recall of Don John and
the maintenance of the Ghent Pacification. De Selles, in reply, sent a brief,
deprecatory paper, enclosing a note from Don John, which the envoy
acknowledged might seem somewhat harsh in its expressions. The letter
contained, indeed, a sufficiently fierce and peremptory summons to the states
to obey the king’s commands with regard to the system of Charles V, according
to their previous agreement, together with a violent declaration of the
governor’s displeasure that they had dared to solicit the aid of foreign princes.
On the 18th of February came a proposition from De Seller that the Prince of
Orange should place himself in the hands of Don John, while the Prince of
Parma, alone and without arms, would come before the assembly, to negotiate
with them upon these matters. The reply returned by the states-general to this
absurd suggestion expressed their regret that the son of the Duchess Margaret
should have taken part with the enemy of the Netherlanders, complained of
the bull by which the pope had invited war against them as if they had been
Saracens, repeated their most unanswerable argument—that the Ghent
Pacification had established a system directly the reverse of that which existed
under Charles V—and affirmed their resolution never more to submit to Spanish
armies, executioners, edicts, or inquisitions, and never more to return to the
principles of the Emperor and of Alva. To this diplomatic correspondence
succeeded a war of words and of pamphlets, some of them very inflammatory
and very eloquent.
Meantime, the preparations for active hostilities were proceeding daily. The
Prince of Orange, through his envoys in England, had arranged for subsidies in
the coming campaign, and for troops which were to be led to the Netherlands,
under Duke Casimir of the palatinate. He sent commissioners through the
provinces to raise the respective contributions agreed upon, besides an
extraordinary quota of 400,000 gilders monthly. He also negotiated a loan of
120,000 gilders from the citizens of Antwerp. Many new taxes were imposed
by his direction, both upon income and upon consumption. By his advice,
however, and with the consent of the states-general, the provinces of Holland
and Zealand held no community of burthens with the other provinces, but of their own free will contributed more than the sums for which they would have been assessed. Mr. Leyton, who was about to return from his unsuccessful mission from Elizabeth to Don John, was requested by the states-general to convey to her Majesty a faithful report of the recent correspondence, and especially of the language held by the governor-general. He was also urged to use his influence with the queen, to the end that her promises of assistance might be speedily fulfilled.

Troops were rapidly enrolled, and again, by the same honest but mistaken policy, the chief offices were conferred upon the great nobles—Aerschot, Champagny, Bossu, Egmont, Lalain, the Viscount of Ghent, Baron de Ville, and many others, most of whom were to desert the cause in the hour of its need. On the other hand, Don John was proceeding with his military preparations upon an extensive scale. The king had recently furnished him with 1,900,000 dollars, and had promised to provide him with 200,000 more, monthly. With these funds his Majesty estimated that an army of 30,000 foot, 16,000 cavalry, and thirty pieces of artillery, could be levied and kept on foot. If more remittances should prove to be necessary, it was promised that they should be forthcoming.

This was the result of many earnest remonstrances made by the governor concerning the dilatory policy of the king. Wearied with being constantly ordered "to blow hot and cold with the same breath," he had insisted that his Majesty should select the hot or the cold, and furnish him with the means of enforcing the choice. For himself, Don John assured his brother that the hottest measures were most to his taste, and most suitable to the occasion. Fire and sword could alone save the royal authority, for all the provinces had "abandoned themselves, body and soul, to the greatest heretic and tyrant that prince ever had for vassal." Unceasing had been the complaints and entreaties of the captain-general, called forth by the apathy or irresolution of Philip. It was only by assuring him that the Netherlands actually belonged to Orange, that the monarch could be aroused. "His they are, and none other’s," said the governor, dolefully. The king had accordingly sent back De Billy, Don John’s envoy, with decided injunctions to use force and energy to put down the revolt at once, and with an intimation that funds might be thenceforth more regularly depended upon, as the Indian fleets were expected in July. Philip also advised his brother to employ a portion of his money in purchasing the governors and principal persons who controlled the cities and other strong places belonging to the states.

Meantime, Don John thundered forth a manifesto which had been recently prepared in Madrid, by which the estates, both general and particular, were ordered forthwith to separate, and forbidden to assemble again, except by especial license. All commissions, civil or military, granted by states’ authority, were moreover annulled, together with a general prohibition of any act of obedience to such functionaries, and of contribution to any imposts which might be levied by their authority. Such thunders were now comparatively harmless, for the states had taken their course, and were busily engaged, both
at home and abroad, in arming for the conflict. Saint Aldegonde was deputed
to attend the Imperial diet, then in session at Worms, where he delivered an
oration, which was very celebrated in its day as a composition, but which can
hardly be said to have produced much practical effect. The current was setting
hard in Germany against the Reformed religion and against the Netherland
cause, the Augsburg Confessionists showing hardly more sympathy with Dutch
Calvinists than with Spanish papists.
Envoyes from Don John also attended the diet, and requested Saint Aldegonde to
furnish them with a copy of his oration. This he declined to do. While in
Germany, Saint Aldegonde was informed by John Casimir that Duke Charles of
Sweden had been solicited to furnish certain ships of war for a contemplated
operation against Amsterdam. The duke had himself given information of this
plot to the Prince Palatine. It was therefore natural that Saint Aldegonde
should forthwith dispatch the intelligence to his friends in the Netherlands,
warning them of the dangers still to be apprehended from the machinations of
the Catholic agents and functionaries in Amsterdam; for although the
Reformation had made rapid progress in that important city since the
conclusion of the Satisfaction, yet the magistracy remained Catholic.
William Bardez, son of a former high-sheriff, a warm partisan of Orange and of
the "religion," had already determined to overthrow that magistracy and to
expel the friars who infested the city. The recent information dispatched by
Saint Aldegonde confirmed him in his purpose. There had been much wrangling
between the popish functionaries and those of the Reformed religion
concerning the constitution of the burgher guard. The Calvinists could feel no
security for their own lives, or the repose of the commonwealth of Holland,
unless they were themselves allowed a full participation in the government of
those important bands. They were, moreover, dissatisfied with the assignment
which had been made of the churchyards to the members of their communion.
These causes of discord had maintained a general irritation among the body of
the inhabitants, and were now used as pretexts by Bardez for his design. He
knew the city to be ripe for the overthrow of the magistracy, and he had
arranged with Governor Sonoy to be furnished with a sufficient number of well-
tried soldiers, who were to be concealed in the houses of the confederates. A
large number of citizens were also ready to appear at his bidding with arms in
their hands.
On the 24th of May, he wrote to Sonoy, begging him to hold himself in
readiness, as all was prepared within the city. At the same time, he requested
the governor to send him forthwith a "morion and a buckler of proof," for he
intended to see the matter fairly through. Sonoy answered encouragingly, and
sent him the armor, as directed. On the 28th of May, Bardez, with four
confederates, went to the council-room, to remonstrate with the senate
concerning the grievances which had been so often discussed. At about mid-
day, one of the confederates, upon leaving the council-room, stepped out for a
moment upon the balcony, which looked towards the public square. Standing
there for a moment, he gravely removed his hat, and then as gravely replaced
it upon his head. This was a preconcerted signal. At the next instant a sailor
was seen to rush across the square, waving a flag in both hands. "All ye who love the Prince of Orange, take heart and follow me!" he shouted. In a moment the square was alive. Soldiers and armed citizens suddenly sprang forth, as if from the bowels of the earth. Bardez led a strong force directly into the council-chamber, and arrested every one of the astonished magistrates. At the same time, his confederates had scoured the town and taken every friar in the city into custody. Monks and senators were then marched solemnly down towards the quay, where a vessel was in readiness to receive them. "To the gallows with them—to the gallows with them!" shouted the populace, as they passed along. "To the gibbet, whither they have brought many a good fellow before his time!" Such were the openly expressed desires of their fellow citizens, as these dignitaries and holy men proceeded to what they believed their doom. Although treated respectfully by those who guarded them, they were filled with trepidation, for they believed the execrations of the populace the harbingers of their fate. As they entered the vessel, they felt convinced that a watery death had been substituted for the gibbet. Poor old Heinrich Direkzoon, ex-burgomaster, pathetically rejected a couple of clean shirts which his careful wife had sent him by the hands of the housemaid. "Take them away; take them home again," said the rueful burgomaster, "I shall never need clean shirts again in this world." He entertained no doubt that it was the intention of his captors to scuttle the vessel as soon as they had put a little out to sea, and so to leave them to their fate. No such tragic end was contemplated, however, and, in fact, never was a complete municipal revolution accomplished in so good-natured and jocose a manner. The Catholic magistrates and friars escaped with their fright. They were simply turned out of town, and forbidden, for their lives, ever to come back again. After the vessel had proceeded a little distance from the city, they were all landed high and dry upon a dyke, and so left unharmed within the open country.

A new board of magistrates, of which stout William Bardez was one, was soon appointed; the train-bands were reorganized, and the churches thrown open to the Reformed worship, to the exclusion, at first, of the Catholics. This was certainly contrary to the Ghent treaty, and to the recent Satisfaction; it was also highly repugnant to the opinions of Orange. After a short time, accordingly, the Catholics were again allowed access to the churches, but the tables had now been turned forever in the capital of Holland, and the Reformation was an established fact throughout that little province.

Similar events occurring upon the following day at Harlem, accompanied with some bloodshed—for which, however, the perpetrator was punished with death—opened the great church of that city to the Reformed congregations, and closed them for a time to the Catholics.

Thus, the cause of the new religion was triumphant in Holland and Zealand, while it was advancing with rapid strides through the other provinces. Public preaching was of daily occurrence everywhere. On a single Sunday, fifteen different ministers of the Reformed religion preached in different places in Antwerp. "Do you think this can be put down?" said Orange to the remonstrating burgomaster of that city. "'Tis for you to repress it," said the functionary, "I
grant your Highness full power to do so." "And do you think," replied the prince, "that I can do at this late moment, what the Duke of Alva was unable to accomplish in the very plenitude of his power?" At the same time, the Prince of Orange was more than ever disposed to rebuke his own Church for practicing persecution in her turn. Again he lifted his commanding voice in behalf of the Anabaptists of Middelburg. He reminded the magistrates of that city that these peaceful burghers were always perfectly willing to bear their part in all the common burthens, that their word was as good as their oath, and that as to the matter of military service, although their principles forbade them to bear arms, they had ever been ready to provide and pay for substitutes. "We declare to you therefore," said he, "that you have no right to trouble yourselves with any man's conscience, so long as nothing is done to cause private harm or public scandal. We therefore expressly ordain that you desist from molesting these Baptists, from offering hindrance to their handicraft and daily trade, by which they can earn bread for their wives and children, and that you permit them henceforth to open their shops and to do their work, according to the custom of former days. Beware, therefore, of disobedience and of resistance to the ordinance which we now establish."

Meantime, the armies on both sides had been assembled, and had been moving towards each other. Don John was at the head of nearly 30,000 troops, including a large proportion of Spanish and Italian veterans. The states' army hardly numbered 18,000 foot and 2,000 cavalry, under the famous François de la Noue, surnamed Bras de Fer, who had been recently appointed Maréchal de Camp, and, under Count Bossu, commander-in-chief. The muster-place of the provincial forces was in the plains between Herenthals and Lier. At this point they expected to be reinforced by Duke Casimir, who had been, since the early part of the summer, in the country of Zutphen, but who was still remaining there inglorious and inactive, until he could be furnished with the requisite advance-money to his troops.

Don John was determined if possible, to defeat the states' army, before Duke Casimir, with his 12,000 Germans, should effect his juncture with Bossu. The governor therefore crossed the Demer, near Aerschot, towards the end of July, and offered battle, day after day, to the enemy. A series of indecisive skirmishes was the result, in the last of which, near Rijnemants, on the first day of August, the royalists were worsted and obliged to retire, after a desultory action of nearly eight hours, leaving a thousand dead upon the field. Their offer of "double or quits," the following morning was steadily refused by Bossu, who, secure within his entrenchments, was not to be induced at that moment to encounter the chances of a general engagement. For this he was severely blamed by the more violent of the national party.

His patriotism, which was of such recent origin, was vehemently suspected; and his death, which occurred not long afterwards, was supposed to have alone prevented his deserting the states to fight again under Spanish colors. These suspicions were probably unjust. Bossu's truth of character had been as universally recognized as was his signal bravery. If he refused upon this occasion a general battle, those who reflected upon the usual results to the
patriot banner of such engagements, might confess, perhaps, that one disaster
the more had been avoided. Don John, finding it impossible to accomplish his
purpose, and to achieve another Gemblours victory, fell back again to the
neighborhood of Namur.
The states’ forces remained waiting for the long-promised succor of John
Casimir. It was the 26th of August, however, before the duke led his 12,000 men
to the neighborhood of Mechlin, where Bossu was encamped. This young prince
possessed neither the ability nor the generosity which were requisite for the
heroic part which he was ambitious to perform in the Netherland drama. He
was inspired by a vague idea of personal aggrandizement, although he
professed at the same time the utmost deference to William of Orange. He
expressed the hope that he and the prince "should be but two heads under one
hat," but he would have done well to ask himself whether his own contribution
to this partnership of brains would very much enrich the silent statesman.
Orange himself regarded him with respectful contempt, and considered his
interference with Netherland matters but as an additional element of mischief.
The duke’s right-hand man, however, Peter Peutterich, the "equestrian
docto"—as Sir Philip Sydney called him—equally skilful with the sword as with
the pen, had succeeded, while on a mission to England, in acquiring the
queen’s favor for his master.
To Casimir, therefore, had been entrusted the command of the levies, and the
principal expenditure of the subsidies which she had placed at the disposition
of the states. Upon Casimir she relied, as a counterweight to the Duke of
Alençon, who, as she knew, had already entered the provinces at the secret
solicitation of a large faction among the nobles. She had as much confidence as
ever in Orange, but she imagined herself to be strengthening his cause by
providing him with such a lieutenant. Casimir’s immediate friends had but little
respect for his abilities. His father-in-law, Augustus of Saxony, did not approve
his expedition. The Landgrave William, to whom he wrote for counsel,
answered, in his quaint manners, that it was always difficult for one friend to
advise another in three matters—to wit, in taking a wife, going to sea, and
going to war—but that, nevertheless, despite the ancient proverb, he would
assume the responsibility of warning Casimir not to plunge into what he was
pleased to call the “confusum chaos of Netherland politics.” The duke felt no
inclination, however, to take the advice which he had solicited. He had been
stung by the sarcasm which Alva had once uttered, that the German potentates
carried plenty of lions, dragons, eagles, and griffins on their shields, but that
these ferocious animals were not given to biting or scratching. He was
therefore disposed, once for all, to show that the teeth and claws of German
princes could still be dangerous. Unfortunately, he was destined to add a fresh
element of confusion to the chaos, and to furnish rather a proof than a
refutation of the correctness of Alva’s gibe.
This was the hero who was now thrust, head and shoulders as it were, into the
entangled affairs of the Netherlanders, and it was Elizabeth of England, more
than ever alarmed at the schemes of Alençon, who had pushed forward this
Protestant champion, notwithstanding the disinclination of Orange.
The queen was right in her uneasiness respecting the French prince. The Catholic nobles, relying upon the strong feeling still rife throughout the Walloon country against the Reformed religion, and inflamed more than ever by their repugnance to Orange, whose genius threw them so completely into the shade, had already drawn closer to the duke. The same influences were at work to introduce Alençon, which had formerly been employed to bring Matthias from Vienna. Now that the archduke, who was to have been the rival, had become the dependent of William, they turned their attention to the son of Catherine de’ Medici, Orange himself having always kept the duke in reserve, as an instrument to overcome the political coquetry of Elizabeth. That great princess never manifested less greatness than in her earlier and most tormenting connection with the Netherlands. Having allured them for years with bright but changeful face, she still looked coldly down upon the desolate sea where they were drifting. She had promised much; her performance had been nothing. Her jealousy of French influence had at length been turned to account; a subsidy and a levy extorted from her fears. Her ministers and prominent advisers were one and all in favor of an open and generous support to the provinces. Walsingham, Burleigh, Knollys, Davidson, Sidney, Leicester, Fleetwood, Wilson, all desired that she should frankly espouse their cause. A bold policy they believed to be the only prudent one in this case; yet the queen considered it sagacious to dispatch envoys both to Philip and to Don John, as if, after what they knew of her secret practices, such missions could effect any useful purpose. Better, therefore, in the opinion of the honest and intrepid statesmen of England, to throw down the gauntlet at once in the cause of the oppressed than to shuffle and palter until the dreaded rival should cross the frontier. A French Netherlands they considered even more dangerous than a Spanish, and Elizabeth partook of their sentiments, although incapable of their promptness. With the perverseness which was the chief blot upon her character, she was pleased that the duke should be still a dangler for her hand, even while she was intriguing against his political hopes. She listened with undisguised rapture to his proposals of love, while she was secretly thwarting the plans of his ambition.

Meanwhile, Alençon had arrived at Mons, and we have seen already the feminine adroitness with which his sister of Navarre had prepared his entrance. Not in vain had she cajoled the commandant of Cambray citadel; not idly had she led captive the hearts of Lalain and his countess, thus securing the important province of Hainault for the duke. Don John might, indeed, gnash his teeth with rage, as he marked the result of all the feasting and flattery, the piping and dancing at Namur.

Francis, Duke of Alençon and—since the accession of his brother Henry to the French throne—Duke of Anjou, was, upon the whole, the most despicable personage who had ever entered the Netherlands. His previous career at home had been so flagrantly false that he had forfeited the esteem of every honest man in Europe, Catholic or Lutheran, Huguenot or Malcontent. The world has long known his character. History will always retain him as an example to show mankind the amount of mischief which may be perpetrated by a prince—
ferocious without courage, ambitious without talent, and bigoted without opinions. Incapable of religious convictions himself, he had alternately aspired to be a commander of Catholic and of Huguenot zealots, and he had acquired nothing by his vacillating course, save the entire contempt of all parties and of both religions. Scared from the side of Navarre and Condé by the menacing attitude of the "league," fearing to forfeit the succession to the throne, unless he made his peace with the court, he had recently resumed his place among the Catholic commanders. Nothing was easier for him than to return shamelessly to a party which he had shamelessly deserted, save perhaps to betray it again, should his interest prompt him to do so, on the morrow. Since the peace of 1576, it had been evident that the Protestants could not count upon his friendship, and he had soon afterwards been placed at the head of the army which was besieging the Huguenots of Issoire. He sought to atone for having commanded the troops of the new religion by the barbarity with which he now persecuted its votaries. When Issoire fell into his hands, the luckless city was spared none of the misery which can be inflicted by a brutal and frenzied soldiery. Its men were butchered, its females outraged, its property plundered with a thoroughness which rivaled the Netherland practice of Alva, or Frederic Toledo, or Julian Romero. The town was sacked and burned to ashes by furious Catholics, under the command of Francis Alençon, almost at the very moment when his fair sister, Margaret, was preparing the way in the Netherlands for the fresh treason which he already meditated to the Catholic cause. The Treaty of Bergerac, signed in the autumn of 1577, again restored a semblance of repose to France, and again afforded an opportunity for Alençon to change his politics, and what he called his religion. Reeking with the blood of the Protestants of Issoire, he was now at leisure to renew his dalliance with the Queen of Protestant England, and to resume his correspondence with the great chieftain of the Reformation in the Netherlands.

It is perhaps an impeachment upon the perspicacity of Orange, that he could tolerate this mischievous and worthless "son of France," even for the grave reasons which influenced him. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that he only intended to keep him in reserve, for the purpose of irritating the jealousy and quickening the friendship of the English Queen. Those who see anything tortuous in such politics must beware of judging the intriguing age of Philip and Catherine de’ Medici by the higher standard of later, and possibly more candid times. It would have been puerile for a man of William the Silent’s resources, to allow himself to be outwitted by the intrigues of all the courts and cabinets in Europe. Moreover, it must be remembered that, if he alone could guide himself and his country through the perplexing labyrinth in which they were involved, it was because he held in his hand the clue of an honest purpose. His position in regard to the Duke of Alençon, had now become sufficiently complicated, for the tiger that he had led in a chain had been secretly unloosed by those who meant mischief. In the autumn of the previous year, the aristocratic and Catholic party in the states-general had opened their communications with a prince, by whom they hoped to be indemnified for their previous defeat.
The ill effects of Elizabeth’s coquetry too plainly manifested themselves at last, and Alençon had now a foothold in the Netherlands. Precipitated by the intrigues of the party which had always been either openly or secretly hostile to Orange, his advent could no longer be delayed. It only remained for the prince to make himself his master, as he had already subdued each previous rival. This he accomplished with his customary adroitness. It was soon obvious, even to so dull and so base a nature as that of the duke, that it was his best policy to continue to cultivate so powerful a friendship. It cost him little to crouch, but events were fatally to prove at a later day, that there are natures too malignant to be trusted or to be tamed. For the present, however, Alençon professed the most friendly sentiments towards the prince. Solicited by so ardent and considerable a faction, the duke was no longer to be withheld from trying the venture, and if he could not effect his entrance by fair means, was determined to do so by force. He would obtrude his assistance, if it were declined. He would do his best to dismember the provinces, if only a portion of them would accept his proffered friendship. Under these circumstances, as the prince could no longer exclude him from the country, it became necessary to accept his friendship, and to hold him in control. The duke had formally offered his assistance to the states-general, directly after the defeat of Gemblours, and early in July had made his appearance in Mons. Hence he dispatched his envoys, Des Pruneaux and Rochefort, to deal with the states-general and with Orange, while he treated Matthias with contempt, and declared that he had no intention to negotiate with him. The archduke burst into tears when informed of this slight, and feebly expressed a wish that succor might be found in Germany which would render this French alliance unnecessary. It was not the first nor the last mortification which the future Emperor was to undergo. The prince was addressed with distinguished consideration, Des Pruneaux protesting that he desired but three things—the glory of his master, the glory of God, and the glory of William of Orange. The French king was naturally supposed to be privy to his brother’s schemes, for it was thought ridiculous to suggest that Henry’s own troops could be led by his own brother, on this foreign expedition, without his connivance. At the same time, private letters, written by him at this epoch, expressed disapprobation of the schemes of Alençon, and jealousy of his aggrandizement. It was, perhaps, difficult to decide as to the precise views of a monarch who was too weak to form opinions for himself, and too false to maintain those with which he had been furnished by others. With the Medicean mother it was different, and it was she who was believed to be at the bottom of the intrigue. There was even a vague idea that the Spanish sovereign himself might be privy to the plot, and that a possible marriage between Alençon and the Infanta might be on the cards. In truth, however, Philip felt himself outraged by the whole proceedings. He resolutely refused to accept the excuses proffered by the French court, or to doubt the complicity of the queen dowager, who, it was well known, governed all her sons. She had, to be sure, thought proper to read the envoys of the states-general a lecture upon the impropriety of subjects opposing the commands of their lawful prince, but such artifices were thought
too transparent to deceive. Granvelle scouted the idea of her being ignorant of Anjou’s scheme, or opposed to its success. As for William of Hesse, while he bewailed more than ever the luckless plunge into “confusum chaos” which Casimir had taken, he unhesitatingly expressed his conviction that the invasion of Alençon was a masterpiece of Catherine. The whole responsibility of the transaction he divided, in truth, between the dowager and the comet, which just then hung over the world, filling the soul of the excellent Landgrave with dismal apprehension.

The Queen of England was highly incensed by the actual occurrence of the invasion which she had so long dreaded. She was loud in her denunciations of the danger and dishonor which would be the result to the provinces of this French alliance. She threatened not only to withdraw herself from their cause, but even to take arms against a commonwealth which had dared to accept Alençon for its master. She had originally agreed to furnish 100,000 pounds by way of loan. This assistance had been afterwards commuted into a levy of 3,000 foot and 2,000 horse, to be added to the forces of John Casimir, and to be placed under his command. It had been stipulated, also, that the Palatine should have the rank and pay of an English general-in-chief, and be considered as the queen’s lieutenant. The money had been furnished and the troops enrolled. So much had been already bestowed, and could not be recalled, but it was not probable that, in her present humor, the queen would be induced to add to her favors.

The prince, obliged by the necessity of the case, had prescribed the terms and the title under which Alençon should be accepted. Upon the 13th of August, the duke’s envoy concluded a convention in twenty-three articles, which were afterwards subscribed by the duke himself, at Mons, upon the twentieth of the same month. The substance of this arrangement was that Alençon should lend his assistance to the provinces against the intolerable tyranny of the Spaniards and the unjustifiable military invasion of Don John. He was, moreover, to bring into the field 10,000 foot and 2,000 horse for three months. After the expiration of this term, his forces might be reduced to 3,000 foot and 500 horse. The states were to confer upon him the title of “Defender of the Liberty of the Netherlands against the tyranny of the Spaniards and their adherents.” He was to undertake no hostilities against Queen Elizabeth. The states were to aid him, whenever it should become necessary, with the same amount of force with which he now assisted them. He was to submit himself contentedly to the civil government of the country, in everything regarding its internal polity. He was to make no special contracts or treaties with any cities or provinces of the Netherlands. Should the states-general accept another prince as sovereign, the duke was to be preferred to all others, upon conditions afterwards to be arranged. All cities which might be conquered within the territory of the united provinces were to belong to the states. Such places not in that territory, as should voluntarily surrender, were to be apportioned, by equal division, between the duke and the states. The duke was to bring no foreign troops but French into the provinces. The month of August was reserved, during which the states were, if possible, to make a composition with Don John.
These articles were certainly drawn up with skill. A high-sounding but barren title, which gratified the duke’s vanity and signified nothing, had been conferred upon him, while at the same time he was forbidden to make conquests or contracts, and was obliged to submit himself to the civil government of the country; in short, he was to obey the Prince of Orange in all things—and so here was another plot of the prince’s enemies neutralized. Thus, for the present at least, had the position of Anjou been defined.

As the month of August, during which it was agreed, that negotiations with the governor-general should remain open, had already half expired, certain articles, drawn up by the states-general, were at once laid before Don John. Lord Cobham and Sir Francis Walsingham were then in the Netherlands, having been sent by Elizabeth for the purpose of effecting a pacification of the estates with the governor, if possible. They had also explained—so far as an explanation was possible—the assistance which the English government had rendered to the rebels, upon the ground that the French invasion could be prevented in no other way. This somewhat lame apology had been passed over in silence rather than accepted by Don John. In the same interview, the envoys made an equally unsuccessful effort to induce the acceptance by the governor of the terms offered by the states. A further proposition, on their part, for an "Interim," upon the plan attempted by Charles V in Germany, previously to the Peace of Passau, met with no more favor than it merited, for certainly that name—which became so odious in Germany that cats and dogs were called "Interim" by the common people, in derision—was hardly a potent word to conjure with, at that moment, in the Netherlands. They then expressed their intention of retiring to England, much grieved at the result of their mission. The governor replied that they might do as they liked, but that he, at least, had done all in his power to bring about a peace, and that the king had been equally pacific in his intentions. He then asked the envoys what they themselves thought of the terms proposed. "Indeed, they are too hard, your Highness," answered Walsingham, "but 'tis only by pure menace that we have extorted them from the states, unfavorable though they seem."

"Then you may tell them," replied the Governor, "to keep their offers to themselves. Such terms will go but little way in any negotiation with me."

The envoys shrugged their shoulders.

"What is your own opinion on the whole affair?" resumed Don John. "Perhaps your advice may yet help me to a better conclusion."

The envoys continued silent and pensive.

"We can only answer," said Walsingham, at length, "by imitating the physician, who would prescribe no medicine until he was quite sure that the patient was ready to swallow it. 'Tis no use wasting counsel or drugs."

The reply was not satisfactory, but the envoys had convinced themselves that the sword was the only surgical instrument likely to find favor at that juncture. Don John referred, in vague terms, to his peaceable inclinations, but protested that there was no treating with so unbridled a people as the Netherlanders. The ambassadors soon afterwards took their leave. After this conference, which was on August 24, 1578, Walsingham and Cobham addressed a letter to
the states-general, deploiring the disingenuous and procrastinating conduct of
the governor, and begging that the failure to effect a pacification might not be
imputed to them. They then returned to England.

The Imperial envoy, Count Schwartzburg, at whose urgent solicitation this
renewed attempt at a composition had been made, was most desirous that the
governor should accept the articles. They formed, indeed, the basis of a
liberal, constitutional, representative government, in which the Spanish
monarch was to retain only a strictly limited sovereignty. The proposed
convention required Don John, with all his troops and adherents, forthwith to
leave the land after giving up all strongholds and cities in his possession. It
provided that the Archduke Matthias should remain as governor-general, under
the conditions according to which he had been originally accepted. It left the
question of religious worship to the decision of the states-general. It provided
for the release of all prisoners, the return of all exiles, the restoration of all
confiscated property. It stipulated that upon the death or departure of
Matthias, his Majesty was not to appoint a governor-general without the
consent of the states-general.

When Count Schwartzburg waited upon the governor with these astonishing
propositions—which Walsingham might well call somewhat hard—he found him
less disposed to explode with wrath than he had been in previous conferences.
Already the spirit of the impetuous young soldier was broken, both by the ill
health which was rapidly undermining his constitution and by the helpless
condition in which he had been left while contending with the great rebellion.
He had soldiers, but no money to pay them withal; he had no means of
upholding that supremacy of crown and church which he was so vigorously
instructed to maintain; and he was heartily wearied of fulminating edicts which
he had no power to enforce. He had repeatedly solicited his recall, and was
growing daily more impatient that his dismissal did not arrive. Moreover, the
horrible news of Escovedo’s assassination had sickened him to the soul. The
deed had flashed a sudden light into the abyss of dark duplicity in which his
own fate was suspended. His most intimate and confidential friend had been
murdered by royal command, while he was himself abandoned by Philip,
exposed to insult, left destitute of defense. No money was forthcoming, in
spite of constant importunities and perpetual promises. Plenty of words were
sent him; he complained, as if he possessed the art of extracting gold from
them, or as if war could be carried on with words alone.

Being in so desponding a mood, he declined entering into any controversy with
regard to the new propositions, which, however, he characterized as most
iniquitous. He stated merely that his Majesty had determined to refer the
Netherland matters to the arbitration of the Emperor, that the Duke de Terra
Nova would soon be empowered to treat upon the subject at the imperial
court, and that, in the meantime, he was himself most anxiously awaiting his
recall.

A synod of the Reformed churches had been held, during the month of June, at
Dort. There they had laid down a platform of their principles of church
government in one hundred and one articles. In the same month, the leading
members of the Reformed Church had drawn up an ably reasoned address to Matthias and the Council of State on the subject of a general peace of religion for the provinces.

William of Orange did his utmost to improve the opportunity. He sketched a system of provisional toleration, which he caused to be signed by the Archduke Matthias, and which, at least for a season, was to establish religious freedom. The brave, tranquil, solitary man still held his track across the raging waves, shedding as much light as one clear human soul could dispense; yet the dim lantern, so far in advance, was swallowed in the mist, ere those who sailed in his wake could shape their course by his example. No man understood him. Not even his nearest friends comprehended his views, nor saw that he strove to establish not freedom for Calvinism, but freedom for conscience. Saint Aldegonde complained that the prince would not persecute the Anabaptists, Peter Dathenus denounced him as an atheist, while even Count John, the only one left of his valiant and generous brothers, opposed the religious peace—except where the advantage was on the side of the new religion. Where the Catholics had been effectually put down, as in Holland and Zealand, honest John saw no reason for allowing them to lift themselves up again. In the popish provinces, on the other hand, he was for a religious peace. In this bigoted spirit he was followed by too many of the Reforming mass, while, on their part, the Walloons were already banding themselves together in the more southern provinces, under the name of Malcontents. Stigmatized by the Calvinists as "Paternoster Jacks," they were daily drawing closer their alliance with Alençon, and weakening the bonds which united them with their Protestant brethren.

Count John had at length become a permanent functionary in the Netherlands. Urgently solicited by the leaders and the great multitude of the Reformers, he had long been unwilling to abandon his home, and to neglect the private affairs which his devotion to the Netherland cause had thrown into great confusion. The landgrave, too, whose advice he had asked, had strongly urged him not to "dip his fingers into the olla podrida." The future of the provinces was, in his opinion, so big with disaster, that the past, with all its horrors, under Alva and Requesens, had only furnished the "preludiu" of that which was to ensue. For these desperate views his main reason, as usual, was the comet—that mischievous luminary still continuing to cast a lurid glare across the landgrave's path. Notwithstanding these direful warnings from a prince of the Reformation, notwithstanding the "olla podrida" and the "comet," Count John had nevertheless accepted the office of Governor of Gelderland, to which he had been elected by the estates of that province on the 11th of March. That important bulwark of Holland, Zealand, and Utrecht on the one side, and of Groningen and Friesland on the other—the main buttress, in short, of the nascent republic—was now in hands which would defend it to the last.

As soon as the discussion came up in the states-general on the subject of the Dort petitions, Orange requested that every member who had formed his opinions should express them fully and frankly. All wished, however, to be guided and governed by the sentiments of the prince. Not a man spoke, save to demand their leader's views, and to express adherence in advance to the course
which his wisdom might suggest. The result was a projected convention, a draft for a religious peace, which, if definitely established, would have healed many wounds and averted much calamity. It was not, however, destined to be accepted at that time by the states of the different provinces where it was brought up for discussion; and several changes were made, both of form and substance, before the system was adopted at all. Meantime, for the important city of Antwerp, where religious broils were again on the point of breaking out, the prince preferred a provisional arrangement, which he forthwith carried into execution. A proclamation, in the name of the Archduke Matthias and of the State Council, assigned five special places in the city where the members of the "pretended Reformed religion" should have liberty to exercise their religious worship, with preaching, singing, and the sacraments. The churchyards of the parochial churches were to be opened for the burial of their dead, but the funerals were to be unaccompanied with exhortation, or any public demonstration which might excite disturbance. The adherents of one religion were forbidden to disturb, to insult, or in any way to interfere with the solemnities of the other. All were to abstain from mutual jeering—by pictures, ballads, books, or otherwise—and from all injuries to ecclesiastical property. Every man, of whatever religion, was to be permitted entrance to the churches of either religion, and when there, all were to conform to the regulations of the church with modesty and respect. Those of the new religion were to take oaths of obedience to the authorities, and to abstain from meddling with the secular administration of affairs. Preachers of both religions were forbidden to preach out of doors, or to make use of language tending to sedition. All were to bind themselves to assist the magistrates in quelling riots, and in sustaining the civil government.

This example of religious peace, together with the active correspondence thus occasioned with the different state assemblies, excited the jealousy of the Catholic leaders and of the Walloon population. Champagny, who, despite his admirable qualities and brilliant services, was still unable to place himself on the same platform of toleration with Orange, now undertook a decided movement against the policy of the prince. Catholic to the core, he drew up a petition, remonstrating most vigorously against the draft for a religious peace, then in circulation through the provinces. To this petition he procured many signatures among the more ardent Catholic nobles. De Héze, De Glimes, and others of the same stamp, were willing enough to follow the lead of so distinguished a chieftain. The remonstrance was addressed to the archduke, the Prince of Orange, the State Council, and the States-general, and called upon them all to abide by their solemn promises to permit no schism in the ancient Church. Should the exercise of the new religion be allowed, the petitioners insisted that the godless licentiousness of the Netherlands would excite the contempt of all peoples and potentates. They suggested, in conclusion, that all the principal cities of France, and in particular the city of Paris, had kept themselves clear of the exercise of the new religion, and that repose and prosperity had been the result.
This petition was carried with considerable solemnity by Champagny, attended
by many of his confederates, to the Hôtel de Ville, and presented to the
magistracy of Brussels. These functionaries were requested to deliver it
forthwith to the archduke and Council. The magistrates demurred. A discussion
ensued, which grew warmer and warmer as it proceeded. The younger nobles
permitted themselves abusive language, which the civic dignitaries would not
brook. The session was dissolved, and the magistrates, still followed by the
petitioners, came forth into the street. The confederates, more inflamed than
ever, continued to vociferate and to threaten. A crowd soon collected in the
square. The citizens were naturally curious to know why their senators were
thus browbeaten and insulted by a party of insolent young Catholic nobles. The
old politician at their head, who, in spite of many services, was not considered
a friend to the nation, inspired them with distrust. Being informed of the
presentation of the petition, the multitude loudly demanded that the
document should be read. This was immediately done. The general drift of the
remonstrance was anything but acceptable, but the allusion to Paris, at the
close, excited a tempest of indignation. "Paris! Paris! Saint Bartholomew! Saint
Bartholomew! Are we to have Paris weddings in Brussels also?" howled the mob,
as is often the case, extracting but a single idea, and that a wrong one, from
the public lecture which had just been made. "Are we to have a Paris massacre,
a Paris bloodbath here in the Netherland capital? God forbid! God forbid! Away
with the conspirators! Down with the papists!"
It was easily represented to the inflamed imaginations of the populace that a
Brussels Saint Bartholomew had been organized, and that Champagny, who
stood there before them, was its originator and manager. The ungrateful
Netherlanders forgot the heroism with which the old soldier had arranged the
defense of Antwerp against the "Spanish Fury" but two years before. They
heard only the instigations of his enemies; they remembered only that he was
the hated Granvelle’s brother; they believed only that there was a plot by
which, in some utterly incomprehensible manner, they were all to be
immediately engaged in cutting each other’s throats and throwing each other
out of the windows, as had been done half a dozen years before in Paris. Such
was the mischievous intention ascribed to a petition, which Champagny and his
friends had as much right to offer—however narrow and mistaken their opinions
might now be considered—as had the synod of Dort to present their
remonstrances. Never was a more malignant, or more stupid perversion of a
simple and not very alarming phrase. No allusion had been made to Saint
Bartholomew; but all its horrors were supposed to be concealed in the
sentence which referred to Paris. The nobles were arrested on the spot and
hurried to prison, with the exception of Champagny, who made his escape at
first, and lay concealed for several days. He was, however, finally ferreted out
of his hiding place and carried off to Ghent. There he was thrown into strict
confinement, being treated in all respects as the accomplice of Aerschot and
the other nobles who had been arrested in the time of Ryhove’s revolution.
Certainly, this conduct towards a brave and generous gentleman was ill
calculated to increase general sympathy for the cause, or to merit the
approbation of Orange. There was, however, a strong prejudice against
Champagny. His brother Granvelle had never been forgotten by the
Netherlanders, and was still regarded as their most untiring foe, while
Champagny was supposed to be in close league with the cardinal. In these
views the people were entirely wrong.
While these events were taking place in Brussels and Antwerp, the two armies
of the states and of Don John were indolently watching each other. The sinews
of war had been cut upon both sides. Both parties were cramped by the most
abject poverty. The troops under Bossu and Casimir, in the camp near Mechlin,
were already discontented, for want of pay. The 100,000 pounds of Elizabeth
had already been spent, and it was not probable that the offended queen
would soon furnish another subsidy. The states could with difficulty extort
anything like the assessed quotas from the different provinces. The Duke of
Alençon was still at Mons, from which place he had issued a violent
proclamation of war against Don John—a manifesto which had, however, not
been followed up by very vigorous demonstrations. Don John himself was in his
fortified camp at Bouge, within a league of Namur, but the here was consuming
with mental and with bodily fever. He was, as it were, besieged. He was left
entirely without funds, while his royal brother obstinately refused compliance
with his earnest demands to be recalled, and coldly neglected his importunities
for pecuniary assistance.
Compelled to carry on a war against an armed rebellion with such gold only as
could be extracted from royal words; stung to the heart by the suspicion of
which he felt himself the object at home, and by the hatred with which he was
regarded in the provinces; outraged in his inmost feelings by the murder of
Escovedo; foiled, outwitted, reduced to a political nullity by the masterly
tactics of the “odious heretic of heretics” to whom he had originally offered his
own patronage and the royal forgiveness, the high-spirited soldier was an
object to excite the tenderness even of religious and political opponents.
Wearied with the turmoil of camps without battle and of cabinets without
counsel, he sighed for repose, even if it could be found only in a cloister or the
grave. “I rejoice to see by your letter,” he wrote, pathetically, to John Andrew
Doria, at Genoa, “that your life is flowing on with such calmness, while the
world around me is so tumultuously agitated. I consider you most fortunate
that you are passing the remainder of your days for God and yourself; that you
are not forced to put yourself perpetually in the scales of the world’s events,
nor to venture yourself daily on its hazardous games.” He proceeded to inform.
his friend of his own painful situation, surrounded by innumerable enemies,
without means of holding out more than three months, and cut off from all
assistance by a government which could not see that if the present chance
were lost, all was lost. He declared it impossible for him to fight in the position
to which he was reduced, pressed as he was within half a mile of the point
which he had always considered as his last refuge. He stated also that the
French were strengthening themselves in Hainault, under Alençon, and that the
King of France was in readiness to break in through Burgundy, should his
brother obtain a firm foothold in the provinces. “I have besought his Majesty
over and over again," he continued, "to send to me his orders; if they come they shall be executed, unless they arrive too late. They have cut off our hands, and we have now nothing for it but to stretch forth our heads also to the axe. I grieve to trouble you with my sorrows, but I trust to your sympathy as a man and a friend. I hope that you will remember me in your prayers, for you can put your trust where, in former days, I never could place my own."

The dying crusader wrote another letter, in the same mournful strain, to another intimate friend, Don Pedro Mendoza, Spanish envoy in Genoa. It was dated upon the same day from his camp near Namur, and repeated the statement that the King of France was ready to invade the Netherlands, so soon as Alençon should prepare an opening. "His Majesty," continued Don John, "is resolved upon nothing; at least, I am kept in ignorance of his intentions. Our life is doled out to us here by moments. I cry aloud, but it profits me little. Matters will soon be disposed, through our negligence, exactly as the Devil would best wish them. It is plain that we are left here to pine away till our last breath. God direct us all as He may see fit; in His hands are all things."

Four days later he wrote to the king, stating that he was confined to his chamber with a fever, by which he was already as much reduced as if he had been ill for a month. "I assure your Majesty," said he, "that the work here is enough to destroy any constitution and any life." He reminded Philip how often he had been warned by him as to the insidious practices of the French. Those prophecies had now become facts. The French had entered the country, while some of the inhabitants were frightened, others disaffected. Don John declared himself in a dilemma. With his small force, hardly enough to make head against the enemy immediately in front, and to protect the places which required guarding, 'twas impossible for him to leave his position to attack the enemy in Burgundy. If he remained stationary, the communications were cut off through which his money and supplies reached him. "Thus I remain," said he, "perplexed and confused, desiring, more than life, some decision on your Majesty’s part, for which I have implored so many times." He urged the king most vehemently to send him instructions as to the course to be pursued, adding that it wounded him to the soul to find them so long delayed. He begged to be informed whether he was to attack the enemy in Burgundy, whether he should await where he then was the succor of his Majesty, or whether he was to fight, and if so with which of his enemies: in fine, what he was to do; because, losing or winning, he meant to conform to his Majesty’s will. He felt deeply pained, he said, at being disgraced and abandoned by the king, having served him, both as a brother, and a man, with love and faith and heartiness. "Our lives," said he, "are at stake upon this game, and all we wish is to lose them honorably."

He begged the king to send a special envoy to France, with remonstrance on the subject of Alençon, and another to the pope to ask for the duke’s excommunication. He protested that he would give his blood rather than occasion so much annoyance to the king, but that he felt it his duty to tell the naked truth. The pest was ravaging his little army. Twelve hundred were now in hospital, besides those nursed in private houses, and he had no means or money to remedy the evil. Moreover, the enemy, seeing that they were not
opposed in the open field, had cut off the passage into Liege by the Meuse, and had advanced to Nivelles and Chimay for the sake of communications with France, by the same river.

Ten days after these pathetic passages had been written, the writer was dead. Since the assassination of Escovedo, a consuming melancholy had settled upon his spirits, and a burning fever came, in the month of September, to destroy his physical strength. The house where he lay was a hovel, the only chamber of which had been long used as a pigeon-house. This wretched garret was cleansed, as well as it could be of its filth, and hung with tapestry emblazoned with armorial bearings. In that dovecot the hero of Lepanto was destined to expire. During the last few days’ of his illness, he was delirious. Tossing upon his uneasy couch, he again arranged in imagination, the combinations of great battles, again shouted his orders to rushing squadrons, and listened with brightening eye to the trumpet of victory. Reason returned, however, before the hour of death, and permitted him the opportunity to make the dispositions rendered necessary by his condition. He appointed his nephew, Alexander of Parma, who had been watching assiduously over his deathbed, to succeed him, provisionally, in the command of the army and in his other dignities, received the last sacraments with composure, and tranquilly breathed his last upon the first day of October, the month which, since the battle of Lepanto, he had always considered a festive and a fortunate one.

It was inevitable that suspicion of poison should be at once excited by his decease. Those suspicions have been never set at rest, and never proved. Two Englishmen, Ratcliff and Gray by name, had been arrested and executed on a charge of having been employed by Secretary Walsingham to assassinate the governor. The charge was doubtless an infamous falsehood, but had Philip, who was suspected of being the real criminal, really compassed the death of his brother, it was nonetheless probable that an innocent victim or two would be executed, to save appearances. Now that time has unveiled to us many mysteries, now that we have learned from Philip’s own lips and those of his accomplices the exact manner in which Montigny and Escovedo were put to death, the world will hardly be very charitable with regard to other imputations. It was vehemently suspected that Don John had been murdered by the command of Philip, but no such fact was ever proved.

The body, when opened that it might be embalmed, was supposed to offer evidence of poison. The heart was dry, the other internal organs were likewise so desiccated as to crumble when touched, and the general color of the interior was of a blackish brown, as if it had been singed. Various persons were mentioned as the probable criminals; various motives assigned for the commission of the deed. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that there were causes, which were undisputed, for his death, sufficient to render a search for the more mysterious ones comparatively superfluous. A disorder called the pest was raging in his camp, and had carried off a thousand of his soldiers within a few days, while his mental sufferings had been acute enough to turn his heart to ashes. Disappointed, tormented by friend and foe, suspected, insulted,
broken-spirited, it was not strange that he should prove an easy victim to a pestilent disorder before which many stronger men were daily falling. On the third day after his decease, the funeral rites were celebrated. A dispute between the Spaniards, Germans, and Netherlanders in the army arose, each claiming precedence in the ceremony, on account of superior national propinquity to the illustrious deceased. All were, in truth, equally near to him, for different reasons, and it was arranged that all should share equally in the obsequies. The corpse, disemboweled and embalmed, was laid upon a couch of state. The hero was clad in complete armor; his sword, helmet, and steel gauntlets lying at his feet; a coronet, blazing with precious stones, upon his head; the jeweled chain and insignia of the Golden Fleece about his neck; and perfumed gloves upon his hands. Thus royally and martially arrayed, he was placed upon his bier and borne forth from the house where he had died, by the gentlemen of his bedchamber. From them he was received by the colonels of the regiments stationed next to his own quarters. These chiefs, followed by their troops with inverted arms and muffled drums, escorted the body to the next station, where it was received by the commanding officers of other national regiments, to be again transmitted to those of the third. Thus by soldiers of the three nations, it was successively conducted to the gates of Namur, where it was received by the civic authorities. The pall-bearers, old Peter Ernest Mansfeld, Ottavio Gonzaga, the Marquis de Villa Franca, and the Count de Reux, then bore it to the church, where it was deposited until the royal orders should be received from Spain. The heart of the hero was permanently buried beneath the pavement of the little church, and a monumental inscription, prepared by Alexander Farnese, still indicates the spot where that lion heart returned to dust.

It had been Don John’s dying request to Philip that his remains might be buried in the Escorial by the side of his imperial father, and the prayer being granted, the royal order in due time arrived for the transportation of the corpse to Spain. Permission had been asked and given for the passage of a small number of Spanish troops through France. The thrifty king had, however, made no allusion to the fact that those soldiers were to bear with them the mortal remains of Lepanto’s hero, for he was disposed to save the expense which a public transportation of the body and the exchange of pompous courtesies with the authorities of every town upon the long journey would occasion. The corpse was accordingly divided into three parts, and packed in three separate bags; and thus the different portions, to save weight, being suspended at the saddle-bows of different troopers, the body of the conqueror was conveyed to its distant resting-place.

"Expende Hannibalem: quot libras in duce summo Invenies?"...

Thus irreverently, almost blasphemously, the disjointed relics of the great warrior were hurried through France—France, which the romantic Saracen slave had traversed but two short years before, filled with high hopes, and pursuing extravagant visions. It has been recorded by classic historians, that the
different fragments, after their arrival in Spain, were re-united, and fastened together with wire; that the body was then stuffed, attired in magnificent habiliments, placed upon its feet, and supported by a martial staff, and that thus prepared for a royal interview, the mortal remains of Don John were presented to his Most Catholic Majesty. Philip is said to have manifested emotion at sight of the hideous specter—for hideous and spectral, despite of jewels, balsams, and brocades, must have been that unburied corpse, aping life in attitude and vestment, but standing there only to assert its privilege of descending into the tomb. The claim was granted, and Don John of Austria at last found repose by the side of his imperial father.

A sufficient estimate of his character has been apparent in the course of the narrative. Dying before he had quite completed his thirty-third year, he excites pity and admiration almost as much as censure. His military career was a blaze of glory. Commanding in the Moorish wars at twenty-three, and in the Turkish campaigns at twenty-six, he had achieved a matchless renown before he had emerged from early youth; but his sun was destined to go down at noon. He found neither splendor nor power in the Netherlands, where he was deserted by his king and crushed by the superior genius of the Prince of Orange. Although he vindicated his martial skill at Gemblours, the victory was fruitless. It was but the solitary spring of the tiger from his jungle, and after that striking conflict, his life was ended in darkness and obscurity. Possessing military genius of a high order, with extraordinary personal bravery, he was the last of the paladins and the crusaders. His accomplishments were also considerable, and he spoke Italian, German, French, and Spanish with fluency. His beauty was remarkable, his personal fascinations acknowledged by either sex, but as a commander of men, excepting upon the battlefield, he possessed little genius. His ambition was the ambition of a knight-errant, an adventurer, a Norman pirate; it was a personal and tawdry ambition.

Vague and contradictory dreams of crowns, of royal marriages, of extemporized dynasties, floated ever before him; but he was himself always the hero of his own romance. He sought a throne in Africa or in Britain; he dreamed of espousing Mary of Scotland at the expense of Elizabeth, and was even thought to aspire secretly to the hand of the great English queen herself. Thus, crusader and bigot as he was, he was willing to be reconciled with heresy, if heresy could furnish him with a throne.

It is superfluous to state that he was no match, by mental endowments, for William of Orange; but even had he been so, the moral standard by which each measured himself placed the Conqueror far below the Father of a people. It must be admitted that Don John is entitled to but small credit for his political achievements in the Netherlands. He was incapable of perceiving that the great contest between the Reformation and the Inquisition could never be amicably arranged in those provinces, and that the character of William of Orange was neither to be softened by royal smiles, nor perverted by appeals to sordid interests. It would have been perhaps impossible for him, with his education and temperament, to have embraced what seems to us the right cause, but it ought, at least, to have been in his power to read the character of
his antagonist, and to estimate his own position with something like accuracy. He may be forgiven that he did not succeed in reconciling hostile parties, when his only plan to accomplish such a purpose was the extermination of the most considerable faction; but although it was not to be expected that he would look on the provinces with the eyes of William the Silent, he might have comprehended that the Netherland chieftain was neither to be purchased nor cajoled. The only system by which the two religions could live together in peace had been discovered by the prince; but toleration, in the eyes of Catholics and of many Protestants, was still thought the deadliest heresy of all.

End of Part Five

Part Six
Alexander of Parma
Chapters 1-2

Chapter 1  Alexander Farnese of Parma, Treason among the Nobles, and the Union of Utrecht
Chapter 2  Religious Tumults in the Cities and the Siege of Maestricht

CHAPTER 1
A fifth governor now stood in the place which had been successively vacated by Margaret of Parma, by Alva, by the Grand Commander, and by Don John of Austria. Of all the eminent personages to whom Philip had confided the reins of that most difficult and dangerous administration, the man who was now to rule was by far the ablest and the best fitted for his post. If there were living charioteer skillful enough to guide the wheels of state, whirling now more dizzily than ever through "confusum chaos," Alexander Farnese was the charioteer to guide, his hand the only one which could control.

He was now in his thirty-third year, his uncle Don John, his cousin Don Carlos, and himself having all been born within a few months of each other. His father was Ottavio Farnese, the faithful lieutenant of Charles V, and grandson of Pope Paul III; his mother was Margaret of Parma, first Regent of the Netherlands after the departure of Philip from the provinces. He was one of the twins by which the reunion of Margaret and her youthful husband had been blessed, and the only one that survived. His great-grandfather, Paul, whose secular name of Alexander he had received, had placed his hand upon the newborn infant’s head, and prophesied that he would grow up to become a mighty warrior. The boy, from his earliest years, seemed destined to verify the prediction. Though apt enough at his studies, he turned with impatience from his literary tutors to military exercises and the hardiest sports. The din of arms surrounded his cradle. The trophies of Ottavio, returning victorious from beyond the Alps, had dazzled the eyes of his infancy, and when but six years of age he had witnessed the siege of his native Parma, and its vigorous defense by his martial father. When Philip was in the Netherlands—in the years immediately succeeding the abdication of the Emperor—he had received the boy from his parents as a hostage for their friendship. Although but eleven years of age, Alexander had begged earnestly to be allowed to serve as a volunteer on the memorable day of Saint Quentin, and had wept bitterly when the amazed monarch refused his request.

His education had been completed at Alcalá, and at Madrid, under the immediate supervision of his royal uncle, and in the companionship of the Infante Carlos and the brilliant Don John. The imperial bastard was alone able to surpass, or even to equal the Italian prince in all martial and manly pursuits. Both were equally devoted to the chase and to the tournay; both longed impatiently for the period when the irksome routine of monkish pedantry, and the fictitious combats which formed their main recreation, should be exchanged for the substantial delights of war. At the age of twenty he had been affianced to Maria of Portugal, daughter of Prince Edward, granddaughter of King Emanuel, and his nuptials with that peerless princess were, as we have seen, celebrated soon afterwards with much pomp in Brussels. Sons and daughters were born to him in due time, during his subsequent residence in
Parma. Here, however, the fiery and impatient spirit of the future illustrious commander was doomed for a time to fret under restraint, and to corrode in distasteful repose. His father, still in the vigor of his years, governing the family duchies of Parma and Piacenza, Alexander had no occupation in the brief period of peace which then existed. The martial spirit, pining for a wide and lofty sphere of action, in which alone its energies could be fitly exercised, now sought delight in the pursuits of the duelist and gladiator. Nightly did the hereditary prince of the land perambulate the streets of his capital, disguised, well-armed, alone, or with a single confidential attendant. Every chance passenger of martial aspect whom he encountered in the midnight streets was forced to stand and measure swords with an unknown, almost unseen, but most redoubtable foe, and many were the single combats which he thus enjoyed, so long as his incognito was preserved. Especially, it was his wont to seek and defy every gentleman whose skill or bravery had ever been commended in his hearing. At last, upon one occasion it was his fortune to encounter a certain Count Torelli, whose reputation as a swordsman and duelist was well established in Parma. The blades were joined, and the fierce combat had already been engaged in the darkness, when the torch of an accidental passenger flashed full in the face of Alexander. Torelli, recognizing thus suddenly his antagonist, dropped his sword and implored forgiveness, for the wily Italian was too keen not to perceive that even if the death of neither combatant should be the result of the fray, his own position was, in every event, a false one. Victory would ensure him the hatred, defeat the contempt of his future sovereign. The unsatisfactory issue and subsequent notoriety of this encounter put a termination to these midnight joys of Alexander, and for a season he felt obliged to assume more pacific habits, and to solace himself with the society of that "phoenix of Portugal," who had so long sat brooding on his domestic hearth.

At last the holy league was formed, the new and last crusade proclaimed, his uncle and bosom friend appointed to the command of the united troops of Rome, Spain, and Venice. He could no longer be restrained. Disdaining the pleadings of his mother and of his spouse, he extorted permission from Philip, and flew to the seat of war in the Levant. Don John received him with open arms, just before the famous action of Lepanto, and gave him an excellent position in the very front of the battle, with the command of several Genoese galleys. Alexander’s exploits on that eventful day seemed those of a fabulous hero of romance. He laid his galley alongside of the treasure-ship of the Turkish fleet, a vessel, on account of its importance, doubly manned and armed. Impatient that the Crescent was not lowered, after a few broadsides, he sprang on board the enemy alone, waving an immense two-handed sword—his usual weapon—and mowing a passage right and left through the hostile ranks for the warriors who tardily followed the footsteps of their vehement chief. Mustapha Bey, the treasurer and commander of the ship, fell before his sword, besides many others, whom he hardly saw or counted. The galley was soon his own, as well as another, which came to the rescue of the treasure-ship only to share its
defeat. The booty which Alexander’s crew secured was prodigious, individual soldiers obtaining two and three thousand ducats each. Don John received his nephew after the battle with commendations, not, however, unmixed with censure. The successful result alone had justified such insane and desperate conduct, for had he been slain or overcome, said the commander-in-chief, there would have been few to applaud his temerity. Alexander gaily replied by assuring his uncle that he had felt sustained by a more than mortal confidence, the prayers which his saintly wife was incessantly offering in his behalf since he went to the wars being a sufficient support and shield in even greater danger than he had yet confronted.

This was Alexander’s first campaign, nor was he permitted to reap any more glory for a few succeeding years. At last, Philip was disposed to send both his mother and himself to the Netherlands, removing Don John from the rack where he had been enduring such slow torture. Granvelle’s intercession proved fruitless with the duchess, but Alexander was all eagerness to go where blows were passing current, and he gladly led the reinforcements which were sent to Don John at the close of the year 1577. He had reached Luxemburg on the 18th of December of that year, in time, as we have seen, to participate, and, in fact, to take the lead in the signal victory of Gemblours. He had been struck with the fatal change which disappointment and anxiety had wrought upon the beautiful and haughty features of his illustrious kinsman. He had since closed his eyes in the camp, and erected a marble tablet over his heart in the little church. He now governed in his stead.

His personal appearance corresponded with his character. He had the head of a gladiator—round, compact, combative, with something alert and snake-like in its movements. The black, closely-shorn hair was erect and bristling. The forehead was lofty and narrow. The features were handsome, the nose regularly aquiline, the eyes well opened, dark, piercing, but with something dangerous and sinister in their expression. There was a habitual look askance, as of a man seeking to parry or inflict a mortal blow—the look of a swordsman and professional fighter. The lower part of the face was swallowed in a bushy beard, the mouth and chin being quite invisible. He was of middle stature, well formed, and graceful in person, princely in demeanor, sumptuous and stately in apparel. His high ruff of point lace, his badge of the Golden Fleece, his gold-inlaid Milan armor, marked him at once as one of high degree. On the field of battle he possessed the rare gift of inspiring his soldiers with his own impetuous and chivalrous courage. He ever led the way upon the host dangerous and desperate ventures, and, like his uncle and his imperial grandfather, well knew how to reward the devotion of his readiest followers with a poniard, a feather, a riband, a jewel, taken with his own hands from his own attire.

His military abilities—now for the first time to be largely called into employment—were unquestionably superior to those of Don John, whose name
had been surrounded with such splendor by the world-renowned battle of Lepanto. Moreover, he possessed far greater power for governing men, whether in camp or cabinet. Less attractive and fascinating, he was more commanding than his kinsman. Decorous and self-poised, he was only passionate before the enemy, but he rarely permitted a disrespectful look or word to escape condign and deliberate chastisement. He was no schemer or dreamer. He was no knight-errant. He would not have crossed seas and mountains to rescue a captive queen, nor have sought to place her crown on his own head as a reward for his heroism. He had a single and concentrated kind of character. He knew precisely the work which Philip required, and felt himself to be precisely the workman that had so long been wanted. Cool, incisive, fearless, artful, he united the unscrupulous audacity of a condottiere with the wily patience of a Jesuit. He could coil unperceived through unsuspected paths, could strike suddenly, sting mortally. He came prepared, not only to smite the Netherlands in the open field, but to cope with them in tortuous policy, to outwatch and outweary them in the game to which his impatient predecessor had fallen a baffled victim. He possessed the art and the patience as time was to prove, not only to undermine their most impregnable cities, but to delve below the intrigues of their most accomplished politicians. To circumvent at once both their negotiators and their men-at-arms was his appointed task. Had it not been for the courage, the vigilance, and the superior intellect of a single antagonist, the whole of the Netherlands would have shared the fate which was reserved for the more southern portion. Had the life of William of Orange been prolonged, perhaps the evil genius of the Netherlands might have still been exorcised throughout the whole extent of the country.

As for religion, Alexander Farnese was, of course, strictly Catholic, regarding all seceders from Romanism as mere heathen dogs. Not that he practically troubled himself much with sacred matters—for, during the lifetime of his wife, he had cavalierly thrown the whole burden of his personal salvation upon her saintly shoulders. She had now flown to higher spheres, but Alexander was, perhaps, willing to rely upon her continued intercessions in his behalf. The life of a bravo in time of peace; the deliberate project in war to exterminate whole cities full of innocent people, who had different notions on the subject of image-worship and ecclesiastical ceremonies from those entertained at Rome, did not seem to him at all incompatible with the precepts of Jesus. Hanging, drowning, burning, and butchering heretics were the legitimate deductions of his theology. He was no casuist nor pretender to holiness; but in those days every man was devout, and Alexander looked with honest horror upon the impiety of the heretics, whom he persecuted and massacred. He attended mass regularly—in the winter mornings by torch-light—and would as soon have foregone his daily tennis as his religious exercises. Romanism was the creed of his caste. It was the religion of princes and gentlemen of high degree. As for Lutheranism, Zwinglianism, Calvinism, and similar systems, they were but the fantastic rites of weavers, brewers, and the like—an ignoble herd whose presumption in entitling themselves Christian, while rejecting the pope, called
for their instant extermination. His personal habits were extremely temperate. He was accustomed to say that he ate only to support life, and he rarely finished a dinner without having risen three or four times from table to attend to some public business which, in his opinion, ought not to be deferred.

His previous connections in the Netherlands were of use to him, and he knew how to turn them to immediate account. The great nobles, who had been uniformly actuated by jealousy of the Prince of Orange, who had been baffled in their intrigue with Matthias, whose half-blown designs upon Anjou had already been nipped in the bud, were now peculiarly in a position to listen to the wily tongue of Alexander Farnese. The Montigny’s, the La Motte’s, the Melun’s, the Egmont’s, the Aerschot’s, the Havré’s, foiled and doubly foiled in all their small intrigues and their base ambition, were ready to sacrifice their country to the man they hated, and to the ancient religion which they thought that they loved. The Malcontents ravaging the land of Hainault and threatening Ghent, the "Paternoster Jacks" who were only waiting for a favorable opportunity and a good bargain to make their peace with Spain, were the very instruments which Parma most desired to use at this opening stage of his career. The position of affairs was far more favorable for him than it had been for Don John when he first succeeded to power. On the whole, there seemed a bright prospect of success. It seemed quite possible that it would be in Parma’s power to reduce, at last, this chronic rebellion, and to re-establish the absolute supremacy of Church and King. The pledges of the Ghent treaty had been broken, while in the unions of Brussels which had succeeded, the fatal religious cause had turned the instrument of peace into a sword. The "religion-peace" which had been proclaimed at Antwerp had hardly found favor anywhere. As the provinces, for an instant, had seemingly got the better of their foe, they turned madly upon each other, and the fires of religious discord, which had been extinguished by the common exertions of a whole race trembling for the destruction of their fatherland, were now re-lighted with a thousand brands plucked from the sacred domestic hearth. Fathers and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, were beginning to wrangle, and were prepared to persecute. Catholic and Protestant, during the momentary relief from pressure, forgot their voluntary and most blessed Pacification, to renew their internecine feuds. The banished Reformers, who had swarmed back in droves at the tidings of peace and good will to all men, found themselves bitterly disappointed. They were exposed in the Walloon provinces to the persecutions of the Malcontents, in the Frisian regions to the still powerful coercion of the royal stadholders.

Persecution begat counter-persecution. The city of Ghent became the center of a system of insurrection, by which all the laws of God and man were outraged under the pretence of establishing a larger liberty in civil and religious matters. It was at Ghent that the opening scenes in Parma’s administration took place. Of the high-born suitors for the Netherland bride, two were still watching each other with jealous eyes. Anjou was at Mons, which city he had secretly but
unsuccessfully attempted to master for his own purposes. John Casimir was at
Ghent, fomenting an insurrection which he had neither skill to guide nor
intelligence to comprehend. There was a talk of making him Count of Flanders,
and his paltry ambition was dazzled by the glittering prize. Anjou, who meant
to be Count of Flanders himself, as well as Duke or Count of all the other
Netherlands, was highly indignant at this report, which he chose to consider
true. He wrote to the estates to express his indignation. He wrote to Ghent to
offer his mediation between the burghers and the Malcontents. Casimir wanted
money for his troops. He obtained a liberal supply, but he wanted more.
Meantime, the mercenaries were expatiating on their own account throughout
the southern provinces, eating up every green leaf, robbing and pillaging,
where robbery and pillage had gone so often that hardly anything was left for
rapine. Thus dealt the soldiers in the open country, while their master at
Ghent was plunging into the complicated intrigues spread over that
unfortunate city by the most mischievous demagogues that ever polluted a
sacred cause. Well had Cardinal Granvelle, his enemy, William of Hesse, his
friend and kinsman, understood the character of John Casimir. Robbery and
pillage were his achievements, to make chaos more confounded was his
destiny.

Anjou, disgusted with the temporary favor accorded to a rival whom he
affected to despise, disbanded his troops in dudgeon, and prepared to retire to
France. Several thousand of these mercenaries took service immediately with
the Malcontents under Montigny, thus swelling the ranks of the deadliest foes
to that land over which Anjou had assumed the title of protector. The states’
army, meanwhile, had been rapidly dissolving. There were hardly men enough
left to make a demonstration in the field, or properly to garrison the more
important towns. The unhappy provinces, torn by civil and religious
dissensions, were overrun by hordes of unpaid soldiers of all nations, creeds,
and tongues—Spaniards, Italians, Burgundians, Walloons, Germans, Scotch and
English—some who came to attack and others to protect, but who all achieved
nothing and agreed in nothing save to maltreat and to outrage the defenseless
peasantry and denizens of the smaller towns. The contemporary chronicles are
full of harrowing domestic tragedies, in which the actors are always the
insolent foreign soldiery and their desperate victims.

Ghent—energetic, opulent, powerful, passionate, unruly Ghent—was now the
focus of discord, the center from whence radiated not the light and warmth of
reasonable and intelligent liberty, but the bale-fires of murderous license and
savage anarchy. The second city of the Netherlands, one of the wealthiest and
most powerful cities of Christendom, it had been its fate so often to overstep
the bounds of reason and moderation in its devotion to freedom, so often to
incur ignominious chastisement from power which its own excesses had made
more powerful, that its name was already becoming a byword. It now, most
fatally and forever, was to misunderstand its true position. The Prince of
Orange, the great architect of his country’s fortunes, would have made it the
keystone of the arch which he was laboring to construct. Had he been allowed
to perfect his plan, the structure might have endured for ages, a perpetual
bulwark against tyranny and wrong. The temporary and slender frame by which
the great artist had supported his arch while still unfinished, was plucked away
by rude and ribald hands, the keystone plunged into the abyss to be lost
forever, and the great work of Orange remained a fragment from its
commencement. The acts of demagogues, the conservative disgust at license,
the jealousy of rival nobles, the venality of military leaders, threw daily flesh
stumbling blocks in his heroic path. It was not six months after the advent of
Farnese to power, before that bold and subtle chieftain had seized the double-
edged sword of religious dissension as firmly as he had grasped his celebrated
brand when he boarded the galley of Mustapha Bey, and the Netherlands were
cut in twain, to be re-united nevermore. The separate treaty of the Walloon
provinces was soon destined to separate the Celtic and Romanesque elements
from the Batavian and Frisian portion of a nationality, which, thoroughly fused
in all its parts, would have firmed as admirable a compound of fire and
endurance as history has ever seen.

Meantime, the grass was growing and the cattle were grazing in the streets of
Ghent, where once the tramp of workmen going to and from their labor was
like the movement of a mighty army. The great majority of the burghers were
of the Reformed religion, and disposed to make effectual resistance to the
Malcontents, led by the disaffected nobles. The city, considering itself the
natural head of all the southern country, was indignant that the Walloon
provinces should dare to reassert that supremacy of Romanism which had been
so effectually suppressed, and to admit the possibility of friendly relations with
a sovereign who had been virtually disowned. There were two parties,
however, in Ghent. Both were led by men of abandoned and dangerous
character. Imbize, the worse of the two demagogues, was inconstant, cruel,
cowardly, and treacherous, but possessed of eloquence and a talent for
intrigue. Ryhove was a bolder ruffian—wrathful, bitter, and unscrupulous.
Imbize was at the time opposed to Orange, disliking his moderation, and
trembling at his firmness. Ryhove considered himself the friend of the prince.
We have seen that he had consulted him previously to his memorable attack
upon Aerschot, in the autumn of the preceding year, and we know the result of
that conference.

The prince, with the slight dissimulation which belonged less to his character
than to his theory of politics, and which was perhaps not to be avoided, in that
age of intrigue, by any man who would govern his fellow men, whether for
good or evil, had winked at a project which he would not openly approve. He
was not thoroughly acquainted, however, with the desperate character of the
man, for he would have scorned an instrument so thoroughly base as Ryhove
subsequently proved. The violence of that personage on the occasion of the
arrest of Aerschot and his colleagues was mildness compared with the deed
with which he now disgraced the cause of freedom. He had been ordered out
from Ghent to oppose a force of Malcontents which was gathering in the neighborhood of Courtray, but he swore that he would not leave the gates so long as two of the gentlemen whom he had arrested on the twenty-eighth of the previous October, and who yet remained in captivity, were still alive. These two prisoners were ex-procurator Visch and Blood-Councillor Hessels. Hessels, it seemed, had avowed undying hostility to Ryhove for the injury sustained at his hands, and he had sworn, "by his grey beard," that the ruffian should yet hang for the outrage. Ryhove, not feeling very safe in the position of affairs which then existed, and knowing that he could neither trust Imbize, who had formerly been his friend, nor the imprisoned nobles, who had ever been his implacable enemies, was resolved to make himself safe in one quarter at least, before he set forth against the Malcontents. Accordingly, Hessels and Visch, as they sat together in their prison, at chess, upon the fourth of October, 1578, were suddenly summoned to leave the house, and to enter a carriage which stood at the door. A force of armed men brought the order, and were sufficiently strong to enforce it. The prisoners obeyed, and the coach soon rolled slowly through the streets, left the Courtray gate, and proceeded a short distance along the road towards that city.

After a few minutes a halt was made. Ryhove then made his appearance at the carriage window, and announced to the astonished prisoners that they were forthwith to be hanged upon a tree which stood by the roadside. He proceeded to taunt the aged Hessels with his threat against himself, and with his vow "by his grey beard." "Such grey beard shalt thou never live thyself to wear, ruffian," cried Hessels, stoutly, furious rather than terrified at the suddenness of his doom. "There thou liest, false traitor!" roared Ryhove in reply, and to prove the falsehood, he straightway tore out a handful of the old man’s beard, and fastened it upon his own cap like a plume. His action was imitated by several of his companions, who cut for themselves locks from the same gray beard, and decorated themselves as their leader had done. This preliminary ceremony having been concluded, the two aged prisoners were forthwith hanged on a tree, without the least pretense of trial or even sentence.

Such was the end of the famous councillor who had been wont to shout "ad patibulum" in his sleep. It was cruel that the fair face of civil liberty showing itself after years of total eclipse, should be insulted by such bloody deeds on the part of her votaries. It was sad that the crimes of men like Imbize and Ryhove should have cost more to the cause of religious and political freedom than the lives of twenty thousand such ruffians were worth. But for the influence of demagogues like these, counteracting the lofty efforts and pure life of Orange, the separation might never have occurred between the two portions of the Netherlands. The prince had not power enough, however, nor the nascent commonwealth sufficient consistency, to repress the disorganizing tendency of a fanatical Romanism on the one side, and a retaliatory and cruel ochlocracy on the other.
Such events, with the hatred growing daily more intense between the Walloons and the Ghenters, made it highly important that some kind of an accord should be concluded, if possible. In the country, the Malcontents, under pretense of protecting the Catholic clergy, were daily abusing and plundering the people, while in Ghent the clergy were maltreated, the cloisters pillaged, under the pretense of maintaining liberty. In this emergency the eyes of all honest men turned naturally to Orange.

Deputies went to and fro between Antwerp and Ghent. Three points were laid down by the prince as indispensable to any arrangement—firstly, that the Catholic clergy should be allowed the free use of their property; secondly, that they should not be disturbed in the exercise of their religion; thirdly, that the gentlemen kept in prison since the memorable twenty-eighth of October should be released. If these points should be granted, the Archduke Matthias, the states-general, and the Prince of Orange would agree to drive off the Walloon soldiery, and to defend Ghent against all injury. The two first points were granted, upon condition that sufficient guarantees should be established for the safety of the Reformed religion. The third was rejected, but it was agreed that the prisoners, Champagny, Sweveghem, and the rest—who, after the horrid fate of Hessels and Vinch, might be supposed to be sufficiently anxious as to their own doom—should have legal trial and be defended in the meantime from outrage.

On November 3, 1578, a formal act of acceptance of these terms was signed at Antwerp. At the same time, there was murmuring at Ghent, the extravagant portion of the liberal party averring that they had no intention of establishing the "religious peace" when they agreed not to molest the Catholics. On the 11th of November, the Prince of Orange sent messengers to Ghent in the name of the archduke and the states-general, summoning the authorities to a faithful execution of the act of acceptance. Upon the same day, the English envoy, Davidson, made an energetic representation to the same magistrates, declaring that the conduct of the Ghenters was exciting regret throughout the world, and affording a proof that it was their object to protract, not suppress, the civil war which had so long been raging. Such proceedings, he observed, created doubts whether they were willing to obey any law or any magistracy. As, however, it might be supposed that the presence of John Casimir in Ghent at that juncture was authorized by Queen Elizabeth—inasmuch as it was known that he had received a subsidy from her—the envoy took occasion to declare that her Majesty entirely disavowed his proceedings. He observed further that, in the opinion of her Majesty, it was still possible to maintain peace by conforming to the counsels of the Prince of Orange and of the states-general. This, however, could be done only by establishing the three points which he had laid down. Her Majesty likewise warned the Ghenters that their conduct would soon compel her to abandon the country's cause altogether, and, in conclusion, she requested, with characteristic thriftiness, to be immediately furnished with a city bond for 45,000 pounds sterling.
Two days afterwards, envoys arrived from Brussels to remonstrate, in their turn, with the sister city, and to save her, if possible, from the madness which had seized upon her. They recalled to the memory of the magistrates the frequent and wise counsels of the Prince of Orange. He had declared that he knew of no means to avert the impending desolation of the fatherland save union of all the provinces and obedience to the general government. His own reputation, and the honor of his house, he felt now to be at stake, for, by reason of the offices which he now held, he had been ceaselessly calumniated as the author of all the crimes which had been committed at Ghent. Against these calumnies he had avowed his intention of publishing his defense. After thus citing the opinion of the prince, the envoys implored the magistrates to accept the religious peace which he had proposed, and to liberate the prisoners as he had demanded. For their own part, they declared that the inhabitants of Brussels would never desert him, for, next to God, there was no one who understood their cause so entirely, or who could point out the remedy so intelligently.

Thus reasoned the envoys from the states-general and from Brussels, but even while they were reasoning, a fresh tumult occurred at Ghent. The people had been inflamed by demagogues, and by the insane howlings of Peter Dathenus, the unfrocked monk of Poperingen, who had been the servant and minister both of the pope and of Orange, and who now hated each with equal fervor. The populace, under these influences, rose in its wrath upon the Catholics, smote all their images into fragments, destroyed all their altar pictures, robbed them of much valuable property, and turned all the papists themselves out of the city. The riot was so furious that it seemed, says a chronicler, as if all the inhabitants had gone raving mad. The drums beat the alarm, the magistrates went forth to expostulate, but no commands were heeded till the work of destruction had been accomplished, when the tumult expired at last by its own limitation.

Affairs seemed more threatening than ever. Nothing more excited the indignation of the Prince of Orange than such senseless iconomachy. In fact, he had at one time procured an enactment by the Ghent authorities, making it a crime punishable with death. He was of Luther’s opinion, that idol worship was to be eradicated from the heart, and that then the idols in the churches would fall of themselves. He felt too with Landgrave William, that “the destruction of such worthless idols was ever avenged by torrents of good human blood.” Therefore it may be well supposed that this fresh act of senseless violence, in the very teeth of his remonstrances, in the very presence of his envoys, met with his stern disapprobation. He was on the point of publishing his defense against the calumnies which his toleration had drawn upon him from both Catholic and Calvinist. He was deeply revolving the question, whether it were not better to turn his back at once upon a country which seemed so incapable of comprehending his high purposes, or seconding his virtuous efforts. From both projects he was dissuaded, and although bitterly wronged by both friend
and foe, although feeling that even in his own Holland, there were whispers against his purity, since his favorable inclinations towards Anjou had become the general topic, yet he still preserved his majestic tranquility, and smiled at the arrows which fell harmless at his feet. "I admire his wisdom, daily more and more," cried Hubert Languet, "I see those who profess themselves his friends causing him more annoyance than his foes; while, nevertheless, he ever remains true to himself, is driven by no tempests from his equanimity, nor provoked by repeated injuries to immoderate action."

The prince had that year been chosen unanimously by the four "members" of Flanders to be governor of that province, but had again declined the office. The inhabitants, notwithstanding the furious transactions at Ghent, professed attachment to his person, and respect for his authority. He was implored to go to the city. His presence, and that alone, would restore the burghers to their reason, but the task was not a grateful one. It was also not unattended with danger; although this was a consideration which never influenced him, from the commencement of his career to its close. Imbize and his crew were capable of resorting to any extremity or any ambush, to destroy the man whom they feared and hated. The presence of John Casimir was an additional complication, for Orange, while he despised the man, was unwilling to offend his friends. Moreover, Casimir had professed a willingness to assist the cause, and to defer to the better judgment of the prince. He had brought an army into the field, with which, however, he had accomplished nothing except a thorough pillaging of the peasantry, while, at the same time, he was loud in his demands upon the states to pay his soldiers’ wages. The soldiers of the different armies who now overran the country, indeed, vied with each other in extravagant insolence. "Their outrages are most execrable," wrote Marquis Havré, "they demand the most exquisite food, and drink Champagne and Burgundy by the bucketful." Nevertheless, on the fourth of December, the prince came to Ghent. He held constant and anxious conferences with the magistrates. He was closeted daily with John Casimir, whose vanity and extravagance of temper he managed with his usual skill. He even dined with Imbize, and thus, by smoothing difficulties and reconciling angry passions, he succeeded at last in obtaining the consent of all to a religious peace, which was published on December 27, 1578. It contained the same provisions as those of the project prepared and proposed during the previous summer throughout the Netherlands. Exercise of both religions was established; mutual insults and irritations—whether by word, book, picture, song, or gesture—were prohibited, under severe penalties, while all persons were sworn to protect the common tranquility by blood, purse, and life. The Catholics, by virtue of this accord, re-entered into possession of their churches and cloisters, but nothing could be obtained in favor of the imprisoned gentlemen.

The Walloons and Malcontents were now summoned to lay down their arms, but, as might be supposed, they expressed dissatisfaction with the religious peace, proclaiming it hostile to the Ghent treaty and the Brussels union. In
short, nothing would satisfy them but total suppression of the Reformed religion, as nothing would content Imbize and his faction but the absolute extermination of Romanism. A strong man might well seem powerless in the midst of such obstinate and worthless fanatics.

The arrival of the prince in Ghent was, on the whole, a relief to John Casimir. As usual, this addle-brained individual had plunged headlong into difficulties, out of which he was unable to extricate himself. He knew not what to do, or which way to turn. He had tampered with Imbize and his crew, but he had found that they were not the men for a person of his quality to deal with. He had brought a large army into the field, and had not a stiver in his coffers. He felt bitterly the truth of the landgrave’s warning “that ’twas better to have thirty thousand devils at one’s back than thirty thousand German troopers, with no money to give them; it being possible to pay the devils with the sign of the cross, while the soldiers could be discharged only with money or hard knocks.” Queen Elizabeth, too, under whose patronage he had made this most inglorious campaign, was incessant in her reproofs, and importunate in her demands for reimbursement. She wrote to him personally, upbraiding him with his high pretensions and his shortcomings. His visit to Ghent, so entirely unjustified and mischievous; his failure to effect that junction of his army with the states’ force under Bossu, by which the royal army was to have been surprised and annihilated; his having given reason to the common people to suspect her Majesty and the Prince of Orange of collusion with his designs, and of a disposition to seek their private advantage and not the general good of the whole Netherlands; the imminent danger, which he had aggravated, that the Walloon provinces, actuated by such suspicions, would fall away from the “generality” and seek a private accord with Parma—these and similar sins of omission and commission were sharply and shrewishly set forth in the queen’s epistle. ’Twas not for such marauding and intriguing work that she had appointed him her lieutenant, and furnished him with troops and subsidies. She begged him forthwith to amend his ways, for the sake of his name and fame, which were sufficiently soiled in the places where his soldiers had been plundering the country which they came to protect.

The queen sent Daniel Rogers with instructions of similar import to the states-general, repeatedly and expressly disavowing Casimir’s proceedings and censuring his character. She also warmly insisted on her bonds. In short, never was unlucky prince more soundly berated by his superiors, more thoroughly disgraced by his followers. In this contemptible situation had Casimir placed himself by his rash ambition to prove before the world that German princes could bite and scratch like griffins and tigers as well as carry them in their shields. From this position Orange partly rescued him. He made his peace with the states-general. He smoothed matters with the extravagant Reformers, and he even extorted from the authorities of Ghent the 45,000 pounds bond, on which Elizabeth had insisted with such obduracy. Casimir repaid these favors of the prince in the coin with which narrow minds and jealous tempers are apt to
discharge such obligations—ingratitude. The friendship which he openly
manifested at first grew almost immediately cool. Soon afterwards he left
Ghent and departed for Germany, leaving behind him a long and tedious
remonstrance, addressed to the states-general, in which document he narrated
the history of his exploits, and endeavored to vindicate the purity of his
character. He concluded this very tedious and superfluous manifesto by
observing that—for reasons which he thought proper to give at considerable
length—he felt himself “neither too useful nor too agreeable to the provinces.”
As he had been informed, he said, that the states-general had requested the
Queen of England to procure his departure, he had resolved, in order to spare
her and them inconvenience, to return of his own accord, “leaving the issue of
the war in the high and mighty hand of God.”

The estates answered this remonstrance with words of unlimited courtesy,
expressing themselves “obliged to all eternity” for his services, and holding out
vague hopes that the monies which he demanded on behalf of his troops should
er long be forthcoming.

Casimir having already answered Queen Elizabeth’s reproachful letter by
throwing the blame of his apparent misconduct upon the states-general, and
having promised soon to appear before her Majesty in person, tarried
accordingly but a brief season in Germany, and then repaired to England. Here
he was feasted, flattered, caressed, and invested with the order of the Garter.
Pleased with royal blandishments, and highly enjoying the splendid hospitalities
of England, he quite forgot the “thirty thousand devils” whom he had left
running loose in the Netherlands, while these wild soldiers, on their part, being
absolutely in a starving condition—for there was little left for booty in a land
which had been so often plundered—now had the effrontery to apply to the
Prince of Parma for payment of their wages. Alexander Farnese laughed
heartily at the proposition, which he considered an excellent jest. It seemed in
truth, a jest, although but a sorry one. Parma replied to the messenger of
Maurice of Saxony who had made the proposition, that the Germans must be
mad to ask him for money, instead of offering to pay him a heavy sum for
permission to leave the country. Nevertheless, he was willing to be so far
indulgent as to furnish them with passports, provided they departed from the
Netherlands instantly. Should they interpose the least delay, he would set upon
them without further preface, and he gave them notice, with the arrogance
becoming a Spanish general, that the courier was already waiting to report to
Spain the number of them left alive after the encounter. Thus deserted by
their chief and hectored by the enemy, the mercenaries, who had little
stomach for fight without wages, accepted the passports proffered by Parma.
They revenged themselves for the harsh treatment which they had received
from Casimir and from the states-general, by singing, everywhere as they
retreated, a doggerel ballad—half Flemish, half German—in which their wrongs
were expressed with uncouth vigor.
Casimir received the news of the departure of his ragged soldiery on the very day which witnessed his investment with the Garter by the fair hands of Elizabeth herself. A few days afterwards he left England, accompanied by an escort of lords and gentlemen, especially appointed for that purpose by the queen. He landed in Flushing, where he was received with distinguished hospitality, by order of the Prince of Orange, and on February 14, 1579, he passed through Utrecht. Here he conversed freely at his lodgings in the "German House" on the subject of his vagabond troops, whose final adventures and departure seemed to afford him considerable amusement, and he, moreover, diverted his company by singing, after supper, a few verses of the ballad already mentioned.

The Duke of Anjou, meantime, after disbanding his troops, had lingered for a while near the frontier. Upon taking his final departure, he sent his resident minister, Des Pruneaux, with a long communication to the states-general, complaining that they had not published their contract with himself, nor fulfilled its conditions. He excused, as well as he could, the awkward fact that his disbanded troops had taken refuge with the Walloons, and he affected to place his own departure upon the ground of urgent political business in France, to arrange which his royal brother had required his immediate attendance. He furthermore most hypocritically expressed a desire for a speedy reconciliation of the provinces with their sovereign, and a resolution that—although for their sake he had made himself a foe to his Catholic Majesty—he would still interpose no obstacle to so desirable a result.

To such shallow discourse the states answered with infinite urbanity, for it was the determination of Orange not to make enemies, at that juncture, of France and England in the same breath. They had foes enough already, and it seemed obvious at that moment, to all persons most observant of the course of affairs, that a matrimonial alliance was soon to unite the two crowns. The probability of Anjou’s marriage with Elizabeth was, in truth, a leading motive with Orange for his close alliance with the duke. The political structure, according to which he had selected the French prince as protector of the Netherlands, was sagaciously planned; but unfortunately its foundation was the shifting sandbank of female and royal coquetry. Those who judge only by the result, will be quick to censure a policy which might have had very different issue. They who place themselves in the period anterior to Anjou’s visit to England, will admit that it was hardly human not to be deceived by the political aspects of that moment. The queen, moreover, took pains to upbraid the states-general, by letter, with their disrespect and ingratitude towards the Duke of Anjou—behavior with which he had been "justly scandalized." For her own part, she assured them of her extreme displeasure at learning that such a course of conduct had been held with a view to her especial contentment—"as if the person of Monsieur, son of France, brother of the king, were disagreeable to her, or as if she wished him ill," whereas, on the contrary, they would best satisfy her wishes by
showing him all the courtesy to which his high degree and his eminent services entitled him.

The estates, even before receiving this letter, had, however, acted in its spirit. They had addressed elaborate apologies and unlimited professions to the duke. They thanked him heartily for his achievements, expressed unbounded regret at his departure, with sincere hopes for his speedy return, and promised “eternal remembrance of his heroic virtues.” They assured him, moreover, that should the first of the following March arrive without bringing with it an honorable peace with his Catholic Majesty, they should then feel themselves compelled to declare that the king had forfeited his right to the sovereignty of these provinces. In this case they concluded that, as the inhabitants would be then absolved from their allegiance to the Spanish monarch, it would then be in their power to treat with his Highness of Anjou concerning the sovereignty, according to the contract already existing.

These assurances were ample, but the states, knowing the vanity of the man, offered other inducements, some of which seemed sufficiently puerile. They promised that “his statue, in copper, should be placed in the public squares of Antwerp and Brussels, for the eternal admiration of posterity,” and that a “crown of olive leaves should be presented to him every year.” The duke, not inexorable to such courteous solicitations, was willing to achieve both immortality and power by continuing his friendly relations with the states, and he answered accordingly in the most courteous terms. The result of this interchange of civilities it will be soon our duty to narrate.

At the close of the year, the Count of Bossu died, much to the regret of the Prince of Orange, whose party—since his release from prison by virtue of the Ghent treaty—he had warmly espoused. “We are in the deepest distress in the world,” wrote the prince to his brother, three days before the count’s death, “for the dangerous malady of Count de Bossu. Certainly, the country has much to lose in his death, but I hope that God will not so much afflict us.” Yet the calumniators of the day did not scruple to circulate, nor the royalist chroniclers to perpetuate, the most senseless and infamous fables on the subject of this nobleman’s death. He died of poison, they said, administered to him "in oysters," by command of the Prince of Orange, who had likewise made a point of standing over him on his deathbed, for the express purpose of sneering at the Catholic ceremonies by which his dying agonies were solaced. Such were the tales which grave historians have recorded concerning the death of Maximilian of Bossu, who owed so much to the prince. The command of the states’ army, a yearly pension of 5,000 florins, granted at the especial request of Orange but a few months before, and the profound words of regret in the private letter just cited, are a sufficient answer to such slanders.

The personal courage and profound military science of Parma were invaluable to the royal cause, but his subtle, unscrupulous, and subterranean
combinations of policy were even more fruitful at this period. No man ever understood the art of bribery more thoroughly or practiced it more skillfully. He bought a politician, or a general, or a grandee, or a regiment of infantry, usually at the cheapest price at which those articles could be purchased, and always with the utmost delicacy with which such traffic could be conducted. Men conveyed themselves to government for a definite price—fixed accurately in florins and groats, in places and pensions—while a decent gossamer of conventional phraseology was ever allowed to float over the nakedness of unblushing treason. Men high in station, illustrious by ancestry, brilliant in valor, huckstered themselves, and swindled a confiding country for as ignoble motives as ever led counterfeiters or braves to the gallows, but they were dealt with in public as if actuated only by the loftiest principles. Behind their ancient shields, ostentatiously emblazoned with fidelity to church and king, they thrust forth their itching palms with the mendicity which would be hardly credible, were it not attested by the monuments more perennial than brass, of their own letters and recorded conversations.

Already, before the accession of Parma to power, the true way to dissever the provinces had been indicated by the famous treason of the Seigneur de la Motte. This nobleman commanded a regiment in the service of the states-general, and was Governor of Gravelines. On promise of forgiveness for all past disloyalty, of being continued in the same military posts under Philip which he then held for the patriots, and of a “merced” large enough to satisfy his most avaricious dreams, he went over to the royal government. The negotiation was conducted by Alonzo Curiel, financial agent of the king, and was not very nicely handled. The paymaster, looking at the affair purely as a money transaction—which in truth it was—had been disposed to drive rather too hard a bargain. He offered only 50,000 crowns for La Motte and his friend Baron Montigny, and assured his government that those gentlemen, with the soldiers under their command, were very dear at the price. La Motte higgled very hard for more, and talked pathetically of his services and his wounds—for he had been a most distinguished and courageous campaigner—but Alonzo was implacable. Moreover, one Robert Bien-Aimé, Prior of Renty, was present at all the conferences. This ecclesiastic was a busy intriguer, but not very adroit. He was disposed to make himself useful to government, for he had set his heart upon putting the miter of Saint Omer upon his head, and he had accordingly composed a very ingenious libel upon the Prince of Orange, in which production, "although the Prior did not pretend to be Apelles or Lysippus," he hoped that the governor-general would recognize a portrait colored to the life. This accomplished artist was, however, not so successful as he was picturesque and industrious. He was inordinately vain of his services, thinking himself, said Alonzo, splenetically, worthy to be carried in a procession like a little saint, and as he had a busy brain but an unruly tongue, it will be seen that he possessed a remarkable faculty of making himself unpleasant. This was not the way to earn his bishopric.
La Motte, through the candid communications of the prior, found himself the subject of mockery in Parma’s camp and cabinet, where treachery to one’s country and party was not, it seemed, regarded as one of the loftier virtues, however convenient it might be at the moment to the royal cause. The prior intimated especially that Ottavio Gonzaga had indulged in many sarcastic remarks at La Motte’s expense. The brave but venal warrior, highly incensed at thus learning the manner in which his conduct was estimated by men of such high rank in the royal service, was near breaking off the bargain. He was eventually secured, however, by still larger offers, Don John allowing him three hundred florins a month, presenting him with the two best horses in his stable, and sending him an open form, which he was to fill out in the most stringent language which he could devise, binding the government to the payment of an ample and entirely satisfactory "merced." Thus La Motte’s bargain was completed—a crime which, if it had only entailed the loss of the troops under his command, and the possession of Gravelines, would have been of no great historic importance. It was, however, the first blow of a vast and carefully sharpened treason, by which the country was soon to be cut in twain forever—the first in a series of bargains by which the noblest names of the Netherlands were to be contaminated with bribery and fraud.

While the negotiations with La Motte were in progress, the government of the states-general at Brussels had sent Saint Aldegonde to Arras. The states of Artois, then assembled in that city, had made much difficulty in acceding to an assessment of 7,000 florins laid upon them by the central authority. The occasion was skillfully made use of by the agents of the royal party to weaken the allegiance of the province, and of its sister Walloon provinces, to the patriot cause. Saint Aldegonde made his speech before the assembly, taking the ground boldly, that the war was made for liberty of conscience and of fatherland, and that all were bound, whether Catholic or Protestant, to contribute to the sacred fund. The vote passed, but it was provided that a moiety of the assessment should be paid by the ecclesiastical branch, and the stipulation excited a tremendous uproar. The clerical bench regarded the tax as both a robbery and an affront. "We came nearly to knife-playing," said the most distinguished priest in the assembly, "and if we had done so, the ecclesiastics would not have been the first to cry Enough." They all withdrew in a rage, and held a private consultation upon "these exorbitant and more than Turkish demands."

John Sarrasin, Prior of Saint Vaast, the keenest, boldest, and most indefatigable of the royal partisans of that epoch, made them an artful harangue. This man—a better politician than the other prior—was playing for a miter too, and could use his cards better. He was soon to become the most invaluable agent in the great treason preparing. No one could be more delicate, noiseless, or unscrupulous, and he was soon recognized both by governor-general and king as the individual above all others to whom the re-establishment of the royal authority over the Walloon provinces was owing.
With the shoes of swiftness on his feet, the coat of darkness on his back, and the wishing purse in his hand, he sped silently and invisibly from one great Malcontent chieftain to another, buying up centurions, and captains, and common soldiers; circumventing Orangists, Ghent democrats, Anjou partisans; weaving a thousand intrigues, ventilating a hundred hostile mines, and passing unharmed through the most serious dangers and the most formidable obstacles. Eloquent, too, at a pinch, he always understood his audience, and upon this occasion unsheathed the most incisive, if not the most brilliant weapon which could be used in the debate. It was most expensive to be patriotic, he said, while silver was to be saved, and gold to be earned by being loyal. They ought to keep their money to defend themselves, not give it to the Prince of Orange, who would only put it into his private pocket on pretense of public necessities. The reward would soon be slinking back to his lair, he observed, and leave them all in the fangs of their enemies. Meantime, it was better to rush into the embrace of a bountiful king, who was still holding forth his arms to them. They were approaching a precipice, said the prior; they were entering a labyrinth, and not only was the "sempiternal loss of body and soul impending over them, but their property was to be taken also, and the cat to be thrown against their legs." By this sudden descent into a very common proverbial expression, Sarrasin meant to intimate that they were getting themselves into a difficult position, in which they were sure to reap both danger and responsibility.

The harangue had much effect upon his hearers, who were now more than ever determined to rebel against the government which they had so recently accepted, preferring, in the words of the prior, "to be maltreated by their prince, rather than to be barbarously tyrannized over by a heretic." So much anger had been excited in celestial minds by a demand of 3,500 florins. Saint Aldegonde was entertained in the evening at a great banquet, followed by a theological controversy, in which John Sarrasin complained that "he had been attacked upon his own dunghill." Next day the distinguished patriot departed on a canvassing tour among the principal cities, the indefatigable monk employing the interval of his absence in aggravating the hostility of the Artesian orders to the pecuniary demands of the general government. He was assisted in his task by a peremptory order which came down from Brussels, ordering, in the name of Matthias, a levy upon the ecclesiastical property, "rings, jewels, and reliquaries," unless the clerical contribution should be forthcoming. The rage of the bench was now intense, and by the time of Saint Aldegonde’s return a general opposition had been organized. The envoy met with a chilling reception; there were no banquets anymore, no discussions of any kind. To his demands for money, "he got a fine nihil," said Saint Vaast; and as for polemics, the only conclusive argument for the country would be, as he was informed on the same authority, the "finishing of Orange and of his minister along with him." More than once had the prior intimated to government—as so many had done before him—that to "dispatch Orange, author of all the troubles," was the best preliminary to any political arrangement.
From Philip and his governor-general, down to the humblest partisan, this conviction had been daily strengthening. The knife or bullet of an assassin was the one thing needful to put an end to this incarnated rebellion.

Thus matters grew worse and worse in Artois. The prior, busier than ever in his schemes, was one day arrested along with other royal emissaries, kept fifteen days "in a stinking cellar, where the scullion washed the dishes," and then sent to Antwerp to be examined by the states-general. He behaved with great firmness, although he had good reason to tremble for his neck. Interrogated by Leoninus on the part of the central government, he boldly avowed that these pecuniary demands upon the Walloon estates, and particularly upon their ecclesiastical branches, would never be tolerated. "In Alva's time," said Sarrasin, "men were flayed, but not shorn." Those who were more attached to their skin than their fleece might have thought the practice in the good old times of the duke still more objectionable. Such was not the opinion of the prior and the rest of his order. After an unsatisfactory examination and a brief duress, the busy ecclesiastic was released; and as his secret labors had not been detected, he resumed them after his return more ardently than ever.

A triangular intrigue was now fairly established in the Walloon country. The Duke of Alençon's headquarters were at Mons; the rallying-point of the royalist faction was with La Motte at Gravelines; while the ostensible leader of the states' party, Viscount Ghent, was governor of Artois, and supposed to be supreme in Arras. La Motte was provided by government with a large fund of secret-service money, and was instructed to be very liberal in his bribes to men of distinction, having a tender regard, however, to the excessive demands of this nature now daily made upon the royal purse. The "little Count," as the prior called Lalain, together with his brother, Baron Montigny, were considered highly desirable acquisitions for government, if they could be gained. It was thought, however, that they had the "fleur-de-lys imprinted too deeply upon their hearts," for the effect produced upon Lalain, governor of Hainault, by Margaret of Valois, had not yet been effaced. His brother also had been disposed to favor the French prince, but his mind was more open to conviction. A few private conferences with La Motte, and a course of ecclesiastical tuition from the Prior, whose golden opinions had irresistible resonance, soon wrought a change in the Malcontent chieftain's mind. Other leading seigniors were secretly dealt with in the same manner. Lalain, Héze, Havré, Capres, Egmont, and even the Viscount of Ghent, all seriously inclined their ears to the charmer, and looked longingly and lovingly as the wily prior rolled in his tangles before them—"to mischief swift." Few had yet declared themselves, but of the grandees who commanded large bodies of troops, and whose influence with their order was paramount, none were safe for the patriot cause throughout the Walloon country.

The nobles and ecclesiastics were ready to join hands in support of church and king, but in the city of Arras, the capital of the whole country, there was a
strong Orange and liberal party. Gosson, a man of great wealth, one of the most distinguished advocates in the Netherlands, and possessing the gift of popular eloquence to a remarkable degree, was the leader of this burgess faction. In the earlier days of Parma’s administration, just as a thorough union of the Walloon provinces in favor of the royal government had nearly been formed, these Orangists of Arras risked a daring stroke. Inflamed by the harangues of Gosson, and supported by five hundred foot soldiers and fifty troopers under one Captain Ambrose, they rose against the city magistracy, whose sentiments were unequivocally for Parma, and thrust them all into prison. They then constituted a new board of fifteen, some Catholics and some Protestants, but all patriots, of whom Gosson was chief. The stroke took the town by surprise, and was for a moment successful. Meantime, they depended upon assistance from Brussels. The royal and ecclesiastical party was, however, not so easily defeated, and an old soldier, named Bourgeois, loudly denounced Captain Ambrose, the general of the revolutionary movement, as a vile coward, and affirmed that with thirty good men-at-arms he would undertake to pound the whole rebel army to powder—"a pack of scarecrows," he said, "who were not worth as many owls for military purposes."

Three days after the imprisonment of the magistracy, a strong Catholic rally was made in their behalf in the Fish-market, the ubiquitous Prior of Saint Vaast flitting about among the Malcontents, blithe and busy as usual when storms were brewing. Matthew Doucet, of the revolutionary faction—a man both martial and pacific in his pursuits, being eminent both as a gingerbread baker and a sword-player—swore he would have the little monk’s life if he had to take him from the very horns of the altar; but the prior had braved sharper threats than these. Moreover, the grand altar would have been the last place to look for him on that occasion. While Gosson was making a tremendous speech in favor of conscience and fatherland at the Hôtel de Ville, practical John Sarrasin, purse in hand, had challenged the rebel general, Ambrose to private combat. In half an hour, that warrior was routed, and fled from the field at the head of his scarecrows, for there was no resisting the power before which the Montigny’s and the La Motte’s had succumbed. Eloquent Gosson was left to his fate. Having the Catholic magistracy in durance, and with nobody to guard them, he felt, as was well observed by an ill-natured contemporary, like a man holding a wolf by the ears, equally afraid to let go or to retain his grasp.

His dilemma was soon terminated. While he was deliberating with his colleagues—Mordacq, an old campaigner, Crugeot, Bertoul, and others—whether to stand or fly, the drums and trumpets of the advancing royalists were heard. In another instant the Hôtel de Ville was swarming with men-at-arms, headed by Bourgeois, the veteran who had expressed so slighting an opinion as to the prowess of Captain Ambrose. The tables were turned, the miniature revolution was at an end, the counter-revolution effected. Gosson and his confederates escaped out of a back door, but were soon afterwards arrested. Next morning, Baron Capres, the great Malcontent seignior, who was
stationed with his regiment in the neighborhood, and who had long been secretly coquetting with the prior and Parma, marched into the city at the head of a strong detachment, and straightway proceeded to erect a very tall gibbet in front of the Hôtel de Ville. This looked practical in the eyes of the liberated and reinstated magistrates, and Gosson, Crugeot, and the rest were summoned at once before them. The advocate thought, perhaps, with a sigh, that his judges, so recently his prisoners, might have been the fruit for another gallows-tree, had he planted it when the ground was his own, but taking heart of grace, he encouraged his colleagues—now his fellow-culprits. Crugeot, undismayed, made his appearance before the tribunal, arrayed in a corselet of proof, with a golden hilted sword, a scarf embroidered with pearls and gold, and a hat bravely plumaged with white, blue, and orange feathers—the colors of William the Silent—of all which finery he was stripped, however, as soon as he entered the court.

The process was rapid. A summons from Brussels was expected every hour from the general government, ordering the cases to be brought before the federal tribunal, and as the Walloon provinces were not yet ready for open revolt, the order would be an inconvenient one. Hence the necessity for haste. The superior court of Artois, to which an appeal from the magistrates lay, immediately held a session in another chamber of the Hôtel de Ville while the lower court was trying the prisoners, and Bertoul, Crugeot, Mordacq, with several others, were condemned in a few hours to the gibbet. They were invited to appeal, if they chose, to the council of Artois, but hearing that the court was sitting next door, so that there was no chance of a rescue in the streets, they declared themselves satisfied with the sentence. Gosson had not been tried, his case being reserved for the morrow.

Meantime, the short autumnal day had drawn to a close. A wild, stormy, rainy night then set in, but still the royalist party—citizens and soldiers intermingled—all armed to the teeth, and uttering fierce cries, while the whole scene was fitfully illuminated with the glare of flambeaux and blazing tar-barrels, kept watch in the open square around the city hall. A series of terrible Rembrandt-like night-pieces succeeded—grim, fantastic, and gory. Bertoul, an old man, who for years had so surely felt himself predestined to his present doom that he had kept a gibbet in his own house to accustom himself to the sight of the machine, was led forth the first, and hanged at ten in the evening. He was a good man, of perfectly blameless life, a sincere Catholic, but a warm partisan of Orange.

Valentine de Mordacq, an old soldier, came from the Hôtel de Ville to the gallows at midnight. As he stood on the ladder, amid the flaming torches, he broke forth into furious excreations, wagging his long white beard to and fro, making hideous grimaces, and cursing the hard fate which, after many dangers on the battlefield and in beleaguered cities, had left him to such a death. The cord strangled his curses. Crugeot was executed at three in the morning,
having obtained a few hours’ respite in order to make his preparations, which he accordingly occupied himself in doing as tranquilly as if he had been setting forth upon an agreeable journey. He looked like a phantom, according to eyewitnesses, as he stood under the gibbet, making a most pious and Catholic address to the crowd.

The whole of the following day was devoted to the trial of Gosson. He was condemned at nightfall, and heard by appeal before the superior court directly afterwards. At midnight of October 25, 1578, he was condemned to lose his head, the execution to take place without delay. The city guards and the infantry under Capres still bivouacked upon the square; the howling storm still continued, but the glare of fagots and torches made the place as light as day. The ancient advocate, with haggard eyes and features distorted by wrath, walking between the sheriff and a Franciscan monk, advanced through the long lane of halberdiers, in the grand hall of the Town-house, and thence emerged upon the scaffold erected before the door. He shook his fists with rage at the released magistrates, so lately his prisoners, exclaiming that to his misplaced mercy it was owing that his head, instead of their own, was to be placed upon the block. He bitterly reproached the citizens for their cowardice in shrinking from dealing a blow for their fatherland, and in behalf of one who had so faithfully served them. The clerk of the court then read the sentence amid a silence so profound that every syllable he uttered, and every sigh and ejaculation of the victim, were distinctly heard in the most remote corner of the square. Gosson then, exclaiming that he was murdered without cause, knelt upon the scaffold. His head fell while an angry imprecation was still upon his lips.

Several other persons of lesser note were hanged during the week—among others, Matthew Doucet, the truculent man of gingerbread, whose rage had been so judiciously but so unsuccessfully directed against the Prior of Saint Vaast. Captain Ambrose, too, did not live long to enjoy the price of his treachery. He was arrested very soon afterwards by the states’ government in Antwerp, put to the torture, hanged, and quartered. In troublous times like those, when honest men found it difficult to keep their heads upon their shoulders, rogues were apt to meet their deserts, unless they had the advantage of lofty lineage and elevated position.

"Ille crucem sceleris pretium tuli, hic diadema."

This municipal revolution and counter-revolution, obscure though they seem, were in reality of very grave importance. This was the last blow struck for freedom in the Walloon country. The failure of the movement made that scission of the Netherlands certain, which has endured till our days, for the influence of the ecclesiastics in the states of Artois and Hainault, together with the military power of the Malcontent grandees, whom Parma and John Sarrasrin had purchased, could no longer be resisted. The liberty of the Celtic provinces
was sold, and a few high-born traitors received the price. Before the end of the year (1578) Montigny had signified to the Duke of Alençon that a prince who avowed himself too poor to pay for soldiers was no master for him. The baron, therefore, came to an understanding with La Motte and Sarrasin, acting for Alexander Farnese, and received the command of the infantry in the Walloon provinces, a merced of 4,000 crowns a year, together with as large a slice of La Motte's 100,000 florins for himself and soldiers, as that officer could be induced to part with.

Baron Capres, whom Sarrasin—being especially enjoined to purchase him—had, in his own language, "sweated blood and water" to secure, at last agreed to reconcile himself with the king's party upon condition of receiving the government-general of Artois, together with the particular government of Hesdin—very lucrative offices, which the Viscount of Ghent then held by commission of the states-general. That politic personage, however, whose disinclination to desert the liberty party which had clothed him with such high functions, was apparently so marked that the prior had caused an ambush to be laid both for him and the Marquis Havré, in order to obtain bodily possession of two such powerful enemies, now, at the last moment, displayed his true colors. He consented to reconcile himself also, on condition of receiving the royal appointment to the same government which he then held from the patriot authorities, together with the title of Marquis de Richebourg, the command of all the cavalry in the royalist provinces, and certain rewards in money besides. By holding himself at a high mark, and keeping at a distance, he had obtained his price. Capres, for whom Philip, at Parma's suggestion, had sent the commission as governor of Artois and of Hesdin, was obliged to renounce those offices, notwithstanding his earlier "reconciliation," and the "blood and water" of John Sarrasin. Ghent was not even contented with these guerdons, but insisted upon the command of all the cavalry, including the band of ordnance which, with handsome salary, had been assigned to Lalain as a part of the wages for his treason, while the "little Count"—fiery as his small and belligerent cousin whose exploits have been recorded in the earlier pages of this history—boldly taxed Parma and the king with cheating him out of his promised reward, in order to please a noble whose services had been less valuable than those of the Lalain family. Having thus obtained the lion's share, due, as he thought, to his well-known courage and military talents, as well as to the powerful family influence which he wielded—his brother, the Prince of Espinoy, hereditary seneschal of Hainault, having likewise rallied to the king's party—Ghent jocosely intimated to Parma his intention of helping himself to the two best horses in the prince's stables in exchange for those lost at Gemblours, in which disastrous action he had commanded the cavalry for the states. He also sent two terriers to Farnese, hoping that they would "prove more useful than beautiful." The prince might have thought, perhaps, as much of the viscount's treason.

John Sarrasin, the all-accomplished prior, as the reward of his exertions, received from Philip the abbey of Saint Vaast, the richest and most powerful
Thus the "troubles of Arras," as they were called, terminated. Gosson, the respected, wealthy, eloquent, and virtuous advocate, together with his colleagues—all Catholics, but at the same time patriots and liberals—died the death of felons for their unfortunate attempt to save their fatherland from an ecclesiastical and venal conspiracy; while the actors in the plot, having all performed well their parts, received their full meed of prizes and applause. The private treaty by which the Walloon provinces of Artois, Hainault, Lille, Douay, and Orchies, united themselves in a separate league was signed upon the sixth of January, 1579, but the final arrangements for the reconciliation of the Malcontent nobles and their soldiers were not completed until April sixth, upon which day a secret paper was signed at Mount Saint Eloi. The secret current of the intrigue had not, however, flowed on with perfect smoothness until this placid termination. On the contrary, there had been much bickering, heart-burning, and mutual suspicions and recriminations. There had been violent wranglings among the claimants of the royal rewards. Lalain and Capres were not the only Malcontents who had cause to complain of being cheated of the promised largess. Montigny, in whose favor Parma had distinctly commanded La Motte to be liberal of the king's secret-service money, furiously charged the Governor of Gravelines with having received a large supply of gold from Spain, and of "locking the rascal counters from his friends," so that Parma was obliged to quiet the baron, and many other barons in the same predicament, out of his own purse. All complained bitterly, too, that the king, whose promises had been so profuse to the nobles while the reconciliation was pending, turned a deaf ear to their petitions and left their letters unanswered, after the deed was accomplished. The unlucky Prior of Renty, whose disclosures to La Motte concerning the Spanish sarcasms upon his venality, had so nearly caused the preliminary negotiation with that seignior to fail, was the cause of still further mischief through the interception of Alonzo Curiel's private letters. Such revelations of corruption, and of contempt on the part of the corrupters, were eagerly turned to account by the states' government. A special messenger was dispatched to Montigny with the intercepted correspondence, accompanied by an earnest prayer that he would not contaminate his sword and his noble name by subserviency to men who despised even while they purchased traitors. That noble, both confounded and exasperated, was for a moment inclined to listen to the voice of honor and patriotism, but reflection and solitude induced him to pocket up his wrongs and his "merced" together. The states-general also sent the correspondence to the Walloon provincial authorities, with an eloquent address, begging them to study well the pitiful part which La Motte had enacted in the private comedy then performing, and to behold as in a mirror their own position, if they did not recede ere it was too late. The only important effect produced by the discovery was upon the Prior of Renty himself. Ottavio Gonzaga, the intimate friend of Don John, and now high in the confidence of Parma, wrote to La Motte, indignantly denying the truth of
Bien Aimé’s tattle, and affirming that not a word had ever been uttered by himself or by any gentleman in his presence to the disparagement of the Governor of Gravelines. He added that if the prior had worn another coat, and were of quality equal to his own, he would have made him eat his words or a few inches of steel. In the same vehement terms he addressed a letter to Bien Aimé himself. Very soon afterwards, notwithstanding his coat and his quality, that unfortunate ecclesiastic found himself beset one dark night by two soldiers, who left him severely wounded and bleeding nearly to death upon the high road, but escaping with life, he wrote to Parma, recounting his wrongs and the “sword-thrust in his left thigh,” and made a demand for a merced. The prior recovered from this difficulty only to fall into another, by publishing what he called an apologue, in which he charged that the reconciled nobles were equally false to the royal and to the rebel government, and that, although “the fatted calf had been killed for them, after they had so long been feeding with perverse heretical pigs,” they were, in truth, as mutinous as ever, being bent upon establishing an oligarchy in the Netherlands, and dividing the territory among themselves, to the exclusion of the sovereign. This naturally excited the wrath of the viscount and others. The Seigneur d’Auberlieu, in a letter written in what the writer himself called the “gross style of a gendarme,” charged the prior with maligning honorable lords and—in the favorite colloquial phrase of the day—with attempting “to throw the cat against their legs.” The real crime of the meddling priest, however, was to have let that troublesome animal out of the bag. He was accordingly waylaid again, and thrown into prison by Count Lalain. While in durance he published an abject apology for his apologue, explaining that his allusions to “returned prodigals,” “heretic swine,” and to “Sodom and Gomorrah,” had been entirely misconstrued. He was, however, retained in custody until Parma ordered his release on the ground that the punishment had been already sufficient for the offense. He then requested to be appointed Bishop of Saint Omer, that see being vacant. Parma advised the king by no means to grant the request, the prior being neither endowed with the proper age nor discretion for such a dignity, but to bestow some lesser reward, in money or otherwise, upon the discomfited ecclesiastic, who had rendered so many services and incurred so many dangers. The states-general and the whole national party regarded, with prophetic dismay, the approaching dismemberment of their common country. They sent deputation on deputation to the Walloon states, to warn them of their danger, and to avert, if possible, the fatal measure. Meantime, as by the already accomplished movement, the “generality” was fast disappearing, and was indeed but the shadow of its former self, it seemed necessary to make a vigorous effort to restore something like unity to the struggling country. The Ghent Pacification had been their outer wall, ample enough and strong enough to enclose and to protect all the provinces. Treachery and religious fanaticism had undermined the bulwark almost as soon as reared. The whole beleaguered country was in danger of becoming utterly exposed to a foe who grew daily more threatening. As in besieged cities, a sudden breastwork is thrown up internally, when the outward defenses are crumbling, so the energy of Orange
had been silently preparing the Union of Utrecht, as a temporary defense until
the foe should be beaten back, and there should be time to decide on their
future course of action.
During the whole month of December, an active correspondence had been
carried on by the prince and his brother John with various agents in
Gelderland, Friesland, and Groningen, as well as with influential personages in
the more central provinces and cities. Gelderland, the natural bulwark to
Holland and Zeeland, commanding the four great rivers of the country, had
been fortunately placed under the government of the trusty John of Nassau,
that province being warmly in favor of a closer union with its sister provinces,
and particularly with those more nearly allied to itself in religion and in
language.
Already, in December (1578), Count John, in behalf of his brother, had laid
before the states of Holland and Zeeland, assembled at Gorcum, the project of
a new union with "Gelderland, Ghent, Friesland, Utrecht, Overysssel, and
Groningen." The proposition had been favorably entertained, and
commissioners had been appointed to confer with other commissioners at
Utrecht, whenever they should be summoned by Count John. The prince, with
the silence and caution which belonged to his whole policy, chose not to be the
ostensible mover in the plan himself. He did not choose to startle unnecessarily
the Archduke Matthias—the cipher who had been placed by his side, whose
sudden subtraction would occasion more loss than his presence had conferred
benefit. He did not choose to be cried out upon as infringing the Ghent
Pacification, although the whole world knew that treaty to be hopelessly
annulled. For these and many other weighty motives, he proposed that the new
Union should be the apparent work of other hands, and only offered to him and
to the country, when nearly completed.
After various preliminary meetings in December and January, the deputies of
Gelderland and Zutphen, with Count John, stadholder of these provinces, at
their head, met with the deputies of Holland, Zeeland, and the provinces
between the Ems and the Lauwers, early in January 1579, and on the 23rd of
that month, without waiting longer for the deputies of the other provinces,
they agreed provisionally upon a treaty of union which was published
afterwards on the 29th, from the Town-house of Utrecht.
This memorable document—which is ever regarded as the foundation of the
Netherland Republic—contained twenty-six articles. The preamble stated the
object of the union. It was to strengthen, not to forsake the Ghent
Pacification, already nearly annihilated by the force of foreign soldiery. For
this purpose, and in order more conveniently to defend themselves against
their foes, the deputies of Gelderland, Zutphen, Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht,
and the Frisian provinces thought it desirable to form a still closer union. The
contracting provinces agreed to remain eternally united, as if they were but
one province. At the same time, it was understood that each was to retain its
particular privileges, liberties, laudable and traditionary customs, and other
laws. The cities, corporations, and inhabitants of every province were to be
guaranteed as to their ancient constitutions. Disputes concerning these various
statutes and customs were to be decided by the usual tribunals, by "good men," or by amicable compromise. The provinces, by virtue of the Union, were to defend each other "with life, goods, and blood," against all force brought against them in the king’s name or behalf. They were also to defend each other against all foreign or domestic potentates, provinces, or cities, provided such defense were controlled by the "generality" of the union.

For the expense occasioned by the protection of the provinces, certain imposts and excises were to be equally assessed and collected. No truce or peace was to be concluded, no war commenced, no impost established affecting the "generality," but by unanimous advice and consent of the provinces. Upon other matters the majority was to decide, the votes being taken in the manner then customary in the assembly of states-general. In case of difficulty in coming to a unanimous vote when required, the matter was to be referred to the stadholders then in office. In case of their inability to agree, they were to appoint arbitrators, by whose decision the parties were to be governed. None of the united provinces, or of their cities or corporations, were to make treaties with other potentates or states, without consent of their confederates. If neighboring princes, provinces, or cities, wished to enter into this confederacy, they were to be received by the unanimous consent of the united provinces. A common currency was to be established for the confederacy.

In the matter of divine worship, Holland and Zealand were to conduct themselves as they should think proper. The other provinces of the union, however, were either to conform to the religious peace already laid down by Archduke Matthias and his council, or to make such other arrangements as each province should for itself consider appropriate for the maintenance of its internal tranquility—provided always that every individual should remain free in his religion, and that no man should be molested or questioned on the subject of divine worship, as had been already established by the Ghent Pacification. As a certain dispute arose concerning the meaning of this important clause, an additional paragraph was inserted a few days afterwards. In this it was stated that there was no intention of excluding from the confederacy any province or city which was wholly Catholic, or in which the number of the Reformed was not sufficiently large to entitle them, by the religious peace, to public worship. On the contrary, the intention was to admit them, provided they obeyed the articles of union, and conducted themselves as good patriots, it being intended that no province or city should interfere with another in the matter of divine service. Disputes between two provinces were to be decided by the others, or—in case the generality were concerned—by the provisions of the ninth article.

The confederates were to assemble at Utrecht whenever summoned by those commissioned for that purpose. A majority of votes was to decide on matters then brought before them, even in case of the absence of some members of the confederacy, who might, however, send written proxies. Additions or amendments to these articles could only be made by unanimous consent. The articles were to be signed by the stadholders, magistrates, and principal officers of each province and city, and by all the train-bands, fraternities, and sodalities which might exist in the cities or villages of the union.
Such were the simple provisions of that instrument which became the foundation of the powerful Commonwealth of the United Netherlands. On the day when it was concluded, there were present deputies from five provinces only. Count John of Nassau signed first, as stadholder of Gelderland and Zutphen. His signature was followed by those of four deputies from that double province; and the envoys of Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, and the Frisian provinces then signed the document.

The prince himself, although in reality the principal director of the movement, delayed appending his signature until May 3, 1579. Herein he was actuated by the reasons already stated, and by the hope which he still entertained that a wider union might be established, with Matthias for its nominal chief. His enemies, as usual, attributed this patriotic delay to baser motives. They accused him of a desire to assume the governor-generalship himself, to the exclusion of the archduke—an insinuation which the states of Holland took occasion formally to denounce as a calumny. For those who have studied the character and history of the man, a defense against such slander is superfluous. Matthias was but the shadow, Orange the substance. The archduke had been accepted only to obviate the evil effects of a political intrigue, and with the express condition that the prince should be his lieutenant-general in name, his master in fact. Directly after his departure in the following year, the prince’s authority, which nominally departed also, was re-established in his own person, and by express act of the states-general.

The Union of Utrecht was the foundation stone of the Netherland Republic, but the framers of the confederacy did not intend the establishment of a republic, or of an independent commonwealth of any kind. They had not forsworn the Spanish monarch. It was not yet their intention to forswear him. Certainly the act of union contained no allusion to such an important step. On the contrary, in the brief preamble they expressly stated their intention to strengthen the Ghent Pacification, and the Ghent Pacification acknowledged obedience to the king. They intended no political innovation of any kind. They expressly accepted matters as they were. All statutes, charters, and privileges of provinces, cities, or corporations were to remain untouched. They intended to form neither an independent state nor an independent federal system. No doubt the formal renunciation of allegiance, which was to follow within two years, was contemplated by many as a future probability, but it could not be foreseen with certainty.

The simple act of union was not regarded as the constitution of a commonwealth. Its object was a single one—defense against a foreign oppressor. The contracting parties bound themselves together to spend all their treasure and all their blood in expelling the foreign soldiery from their soil. To accomplish this purpose, they carefully abstained from intermeddling with internal politics and with religion. Every man was to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. Every combination of citizens, from the provincial states down to the humblest rhetoric club, was to retain its ancient constitution. The establishment of a republic, which lasted two centuries, which threw a girdle of rich dependencies entirely round the globe,
and which attained so remarkable a height of commercial prosperity and political influence, was the result of the Utrecht Union; but it was not a premeditated result. A state, single towards the rest of the world, a unit in its external relations, while permitting internally a variety of sovereignties and institutions—in many respects the prototype of our own much more extensive and powerful union—was destined to spring from the act thus signed by the envoys of five provinces. Those envoys were acting, however, under the pressure of extreme necessity, and for what was believed an evanescent purpose. The future confederacy was not to resemble the system of the German empire, for it was to acknowledge no single head. It was to differ from the Achaian league, in the far inferior amount of power which it permitted to its general assembly, and in the consequently greater proportion of sovereign attributes which were retained by the individual states. It was, on the other hand, to furnish a closer and more intimate bond than that of the Swiss confederacy, which was only a union for defense and external purposes, of cantons otherwise independent. It was, finally, to differ from the American federal commonwealth in the great feature that it was to be merely a confederacy of sovereignties, not a representative republic. Its foundation was a compact, not a constitution. The contracting parties were states and corporations, who considered themselves as representing small nationalities de jure et de facto, and as succeeding to the supreme power at the very instant in which allegiance to the Spanish monarch was renounced. The general assembly was a collection of diplomatic envoys, bound by instructions from independent states. The voting was not by heads, but by states. The deputies were not representatives of the people, but of the states; for the people of the United States of the Netherlands never assembled—as did the people of the United States of America two centuries later—to lay down a constitution, by which they granted a generous amount of power to the union, while they reserved enough of sovereign attributes to secure that local self-government which is the life-blood of liberty.

The Union of Utrecht, narrowed as it was to the nether portion of that country which, as a whole, might have formed a commonwealth so much more powerful, was in origin a proof of this lamentable want of patriotism. Could the jealousy of great nobles, the rancor of religious differences, the Catholic bigotry of the Walloon population on the one side, contending with the democratic insanity of the Ghent populace on the other, have been restrained within bounds by the moderate counsels of William of Orange, it would have been possible to unite seventeen provinces instead of seven, and to save many long and blighting years of civil war.

The Utrecht Union was, however, of inestimable value. It was time for some step to be taken, if anarchy were not to reign until the inquisition and absolutism were restored. Already, out of Chaos and Night, the coming Republic was assuming substance and form. The union, if it created nothing else, at least constructed a league against a foreign foe whose armed masses were pouring faster and faster into the territory of the provinces. Farther than this it did not propose to go. It maintained what it found. It guaranteed
religious liberty, and accepted the civil and political constitutions already in existence. Meantime, the defects of those constitutions, although visible and sensible, had not grown to the large proportions which they were destined to attain. Thus by the Union of Utrecht on the one hand, and the fast approaching reconciliation of the Walloon provinces on the other, the work of decomposition and of construction went hand in hand.

CHAPTER 2
Religious Tumults in the Cities and the Siege of Maestricht

The political movements in both directions were to be hastened by the military operations of the opening season. On the night of March 2, 1579, the Prince of Parma made a demonstration against Antwerp. A body of 3,000 Scotch and English, lying at Borgerhout, was rapidly driven in, and a warm skirmish ensued, directly under the walls of the city. The Prince of Orange, with the Archduke Matthias, being in Antwerp at the time, remained on the fortifications, superintending the action, and Parma was obliged to retire after an hour or two of sharp fighting, with a loss of four hundred men. This demonstration was, however, only a feint. His real design was upon Maestricht, before which important city he appeared in great force, ten days afterwards, when he was least expected.

Well fortified, surrounded by a broad and deep moat, built upon both sides of the Meuse, upon the right bank of which river, however, the portion of the town was so inconsiderable that it was merely called the village of Wyk, this key to the German gate of the Netherlands was, unfortunately, in brave but feeble hands. The garrison was hardly 1,000 strong; the trained bands of burghers amounted to 1,200 more; while between three and four thousand peasants, who had taken refuge within the city walls, did excellent service as sappers and miners. Parma, on the other hand, had appeared before the walls with 20,000 men, to which number he received constant reinforcements. The Bishop of Liege, too, had sent him 4,000 pioneers, a most important service, for mining and countermining was to decide the fate of Maestricht.

Early in January the royalists had surprised the strong chateau of Carpen, in the neighborhood of the city, upon which occasion the garrison were all hanged by moonlight on the trees in the orchard. The commandant shared their fate; and it is a curious fact that he had, precisely a year previously, hanged the royalist captain, Blomaert, on the same spot, who, with the rope around his neck, had foretold a like doom to his destroyer.

The Prince of Orange, feeling the danger of Maestricht, lost no time in warning the states to the necessary measures, imploring them "not to fall asleep in the shade of a peace negotiation," while meantime Parma threw two bridges over the Meuse, above and below the city, and then invested the place so closely that all communication was absolutely suspended. Letters could pass to and fro only at extreme peril to the messengers, and all possibility of reinforcing the city at the moment was cut off.
While this eventful siege was proceeding, the negotiations with the Walloons were ripening. The siege and the conferences went hand in hand. Besides the secret arrangements already described for the separation of the Walloon provinces, there had been much earnest and eloquent remonstrance on the part of the states-general and of Orange—many solemn embassies and public appeals. As usual, the Pacification of Ghent was the two-sided shield which hung between the parties to cover or to justify the blows which each dealt at the other. There is no doubt as to the real opinion entertained concerning that famous treaty by the royal party. “Through the peace of Ghent,” said Saint Vaast, “all our woes have been brought upon us.” La Motte informed Parma that it was necessary to pretend a respect for the Pacification, however, on account of its popularity, but that it was well understood by the leaders of the Walloon movement, that the intention was to restore the system of Charles V. Parma signified his consent to make use of that treaty as a basis, “provided always it were interpreted healthily, and not dislocated by cavillations and sinister interpolations, as had been done by the Prince of Orange.” The Malcontent generals of the Walloon troops were inexpressibly anxious lest the cause of religion should be endangered, but the arguments by which Parma convinced those military casuists as to the compatibility of the Ghent peace with sound doctrine have already been exhibited. The influence of the reconciled nobles was brought to bear with fatal effect upon the states of Artois, Hainault, and of a portion of French Flanders. The Gallic element in their blood, and an intense attachment to the Roman ceremonial, which distinguished the Walloon population from their Batavian brethren, were used successfully by the wily Parma to destroy the unity of the revolted Netherlands. Moreover, the king offered good terms. The monarch, feeling safe on the religious point, was willing to make liberal promises upon the political questions. In truth, the great grievance of which the Walloons complained was the insolence and intolerable outrages of the foreign soldiers. This, they said, had alone made them malcontent. It was, therefore, obviously the cue of Parma to promise the immediate departure of the troops. This could be done the more easily, as he had no intention of keeping the promise.

Meantime, the efforts of Orange, and of the states-general, where his influence was still paramount, were unceasing to counteract the policy of Parma. A deputation was appointed by the generality to visit the estates of the Walloon provinces. Another was sent by the authorities of Brussels. The Marquis of Havrée, with several colleagues on behalf of the states-general, waited upon the Viscount of Ghent, by whom they were received with extreme insolence. He glared upon them, without moving, as they were admitted to his presence, "looking like a dead man, from whom the soul had entirely departed." Recovering afterwards from this stony trance of indignation, he demanded a sight of their instructions. This they courteously refused, as they were accredited not to him, but to the states of Artois. At this he fell into a violent passion, and threatened them with signal chastisement for daring to come thither with so treasonable a purpose. In short, according to their own expression, he treated them "as if they had been rogues and vagabonds." The
Marquis of Havré, high-born though he was, had been sufficiently used to such conduct. The man who had successively served and betrayed every party, who had been the obsequious friend and the avowed enemy of Don John within the same fortnight, and who had been able to swallow and inwardly digest many an insult from that fiery warrior, was even fain to brook the insolence of Robert Melun.

The papers which the deputation had brought were finally laid before the states of Artois, and received replies as prompt and bitter as the addresses were earnest and eloquent. The Walloons, when summoned to hold to that ægis of national unity, the Ghent peace, replied that it was not they, but the heretic portion of the states-general, who were for dashing it to the ground. The Ghent treaty was never intended to impair the supremacy of the Catholic religion, said those provinces, which were already on the point of separating forever from the rest. The Ghent treaty was intended expressly to destroy the inquisition and the placards, answered the national party. Moreover, the "very marrow of that treaty" was the departure of the foreign soldiers, who were even then overrunning the land. The Walloons answered that Alexander had expressly conceded the withdrawal of the troops. "Believe not the fluting and the piping of the crafty foe," urged the patriots. "Promises are made profusely enough—but only to lure you to perdition. Your enemies allow you to slake your hunger and thirst with this idle hope of the troops’ departure, but you are still in fetters, although the chain be of Spanish pinchbeck, which you mistake for gold." "'Tis not we," cried the Walloons, "who wish to separate from the generality; 'tis the generality which separates from us. We had rather die the death than not maintain the union." In the very same breath, however, they boasted of the excellent terms which the monarch was offering, and of their strong inclination to accept them. "Kings, struggling to recover a lost authority, always promise golden mountains and every sort of miracles," replied the patriots; but the warning was uttered in vain.

Meantime the deputation from the city of Brussels arrived on the 28th of March at Mons, in Hainault, where they were received with great courtesy by Count de Lalain, governor of the province. The enthusiasm with which he had espoused the cause of Queen Margaret and her brother Anjou had cooled, but the count received the Brussels envoys with a kindness in marked contrast with the brutality of Melun. He made many fine speeches—protesting his attachment to the union, for which he was ready to shed the last drop of his blood—entertained the deputies at dinner, proposed toasts to the prosperity of the united provinces, and dismissed his guests at last with many flowery professions. After dancing attendance for a few days, however, upon the estates of the Walloon provinces, both sets of deputies were warned to take their instant departure as mischief-makers and rebels. They returned, accordingly, to Brussels, bringing the written answers which the estates had vouchsafed to send.

The states-general, too, inspired by William of Orange, addressed a solemn appeal to their sister provinces, thus about to abjure the bonds of relationship forever. It seemed right, once for all, to grapple with the Ghent Pacification
for the last time, and to strike a final blow in defense of that large, statesmanlike interpretation, which alone could make the treaty live. This was done eloquently and logically. The Walloons were reminded that at the epoch of the Ghent peace the number of Reformers outside of Holland and Zealand was supposed small. Now the new religion had spread its roots through the whole land, and innumerable multitudes desired its exercise. If Holland and Zealand chose to re-establish the Catholic worship within their borders, they could manifestly do so without violating the treaty of Ghent. Why then was it not competent to other provinces, with equal allegiance to the treaty, to sanction the Reformed religion within their limits?

Parma, on his part, publicly invited the states-general, by letter, to sustain the Ghent treaty by accepting the terms offered to the Walloons, and by restoring the system of the Emperor Charles, of very lofty memory. To this superfluous invitation the states-general replied, on the 19th of March, that it had been the system of the Emperor Charles, of lofty memory, to maintain the supremacy of Catholicism and of Majesty in the Netherlands by burning Netherlanders—a custom which the states, with common accord, had thought it desirable to do away with.

In various fervently-written appeals by Orange, by the states-general, and by other bodies, the wavering provinces were warned against seduction. They were reminded that the Prince of Parma was using this minor negotiation "as a second string to his bow," that nothing could be more puerile than to suppose the Spaniards capable, after securing Maestricht, of sending away their troops, thus "deserting the bride in the midst of the honeymoon." They expressed astonishment at being invited to abandon the great and general treaty which had been made upon the theatre of the whole world by the intervention of the principal princes of Christendom, in order to partake in underhand negotiation with the commissioners of Parma—men "who, it would not be denied, were felons and traitors." They warned their brethren not to embark on the enemy’s ships in the dark, for that, while chaffering as to the price of the voyage, they would find that the false pilots had hoisted sail and borne them away in the night. In vain would they then seek to reach the shore again. The example of La Motte and others, "birdlimed with Spanish gold," should be salutary for all—men who were now driven forward with a whip, laughed to scorn by their new masters, and forced to drink the bitter draught of humiliation along with the sweet poison of bribery. They were warned to study well the intercepted letters of Curiel, in order fully to fathom the deep designs and secret contempt of the enemy.

Such having been the result of the negotiations between the states-general and the Walloon provinces, a strong deputation now went forth from those provinces, towards the end of April, to hold a final colloquy with Parma, then already busied with the investment of Maestricht. They were met upon the road with great ceremony, and escorted into the presence of Farnese with drum, trumpet, and flaunting banners. He received them with stately affability, in a magnificently decorated pavilion, carelessly inviting them to a repast, which he called an afternoon’s lunch, but which proved a most
sumptuous and splendidly appointed entertainment. This “trifling foolish banquet” finished, the deputies were escorted, with great military parade, to the lodgings which had been provided for them in a neighboring village. During the period of their visit, all the chief officers of the army and the household were directed to entertain the Walloons with showy festivals, dinners, suppers, dances, and carousals of all kinds. At one of the most brilliant of these revels—a magnificent ball, to which all the matrons and maids of the whole country round had been bidden—the Prince of Parma himself unexpectedly made his appearance. He gently rebuked the entertainers for indulging in such splendid hospitality without, at least, permitting him to partake of it. Charmingly affable to the ladies assembled in the ballroom, courteous, but slightly reserved, towards the Walloon envoys, he excited the admiration of all by the splendid decorum of his manners. As he moved through the halls, modulating his steps in grave cadence to the music, the dignity and grace of his deportment seemed truly majestic; but when he actually danced a measure himself the enthusiasm was at its height. They should, indeed, be rustics, cried the Walloon envoys in a breath, not to give the hand of fellowship at once to a prince so condescending and amiable. The exclamation seemed to embody the general wish, and to foreshadow a speedy conclusion.

Very soon afterwards a preliminary accord was signed between the king’s government and the Walloon provinces. The provisions on his Majesty’s part were sufficiently liberal. The religious question furnishing no obstacle, it was comparatively easy for Philip to appear benignant. It was stipulated that the provincial privileges should be respected; that a member of the king’s own family, legitimately born, should always be governor-general; and that the foreign troops should be immediately withdrawn. The official exchange and ratification of this treaty were delayed till the fourth of the following September, but the news that the reconciliation had been definitely settled soon spread through the country. The Catholics were elated, the patriots dismayed. Orange—the “Prince of Darkness,” as the Walloons of the day were fond of calling him—still unwilling to despair, reluctant to accept this dismemberment, which he foresaw was to be a perpetual one, of his beloved country, addressed the most passionate and solemn adjurations to the Walloon provinces, and to their military chieftains. He offered all his children as hostages fur his good faith in keeping sacredly any covenant which his Catholic countrymen might be willing to close with him. It was in vain. The step was irretrievably taken; religious bigotry, patrician jealousy, and wholesale bribery had severed the Netherlands in twain forever. The friends of Romanism, the enemies of civil and religious liberty, exulted from one end of Christendom to the other, and it was recognized that Parma had, indeed, achieved a victory which although bloodless, was as important to the cause of absolutism as any which even his sword was likely to achieve.

The joy of the Catholic party in Paris manifested itself in a variety of ways. At the principal theatre an uncouth pantomime was exhibited, in which his Catholic Majesty was introduced upon the stage, leading by a halter a sleek cow, typifying the Netherlands. The animal by a sudden effort, broke the cord,
and capered wildly about. Alexander of Parma hastened to fasten the fragments together while sundry personages, representing the states-general, seized her by the horns, some leaping upon her back, others calling upon the bystanders to assist in holding the restive beast. The Emperor, the King of France, and the Queen of England—which last personage was observed now to smile upon one party, now to affect deep sympathy with the other—remained stationary; but the Duke of Alençon rushed upon the stage, and caught the cow by the tail. The Prince of Orange and Hans Casimir then appeared with a bucket, and set themselves busily to milk her, when Alexander again seized the halter. The cow gave a plunge, upset the pail, prostrated Casimir with one kick and Orange with another, and then followed Parma with docility as he led her back to Philip. This seems not very "admirable fooling," but it was highly relished by the polite Parisians of the 16th century, and has been thought worthy of record by classical historians.

The Walloon accord was an auspicious prelude, in the eyes of the friends of absolutism, to the negotiations which were opened in the month of May, at Cologne. Before sketching, as rapidly as possible, those celebrated but barren conferences, it is necessary, for the sake of unity in the narrative, to cast a glance at certain synchronical events in different parts of the Netherlands. The success attained by the Catholic party in the Walloon negotiations had caused a corresponding bitterness in the hearts of the Reformers throughout the country. As usual, bitterness had begot bitterness; intolerance engendered intolerance. On May 28, 1579, as the Catholics of Antwerp were celebrating the Ommegang—the same festival which had been the exciting cause of the memorable tumults of the year sixty-five—the irritation of the populace could not be repressed. The mob rose in its wrath to put down these demonstrations—which, taken in connection with recent events, seemed ill-timed and insolent—of a religion whose votaries then formed but a small minority of the Antwerp citizens. There was a great tumult. Two persons were killed. The Archduke Matthias, who was himself in the Cathedral of Notre Dame assisting at the ceremony, was in danger of his life. The well-known cry of "paapen uit" (out with the papists) resounded through the streets, and the priests and monks were all hustled out of town amid a tempest of execrations. Orange did his utmost to quell the mutiny, nor were his efforts fruitless—for the uproar, although seditious and disgraceful, was hardly sanguinary. Next day the prince summoned the magistracy, the Monday council, the guild officers, with all the chief municipal functionaries, and expressed his indignation in decided terms. He protested that if such tumults, originating in that very spirit of intolerance which he most deplored, could not be repressed for the future, he was determined to resign his offices, and no longer to affect authority in a city where his counsels were derided. The magistrates, alarmed at his threats, and sympathizing with his anger, implored him not to desert them, protesting that if he should resign his offices, they would instantly lay down their own. An ordinance was then drawn up and immediately proclaimed at the Town-house, permitting the Catholics to re-enter the city, and to enjoy the privileges of
religious worship. At the same time, it was announced that a new draft of a
religious peace would be forthwith issued for the adoption of every city.
A similar tumult, arising from the same cause, at Utrecht, was attended with
the like result. On the other hand, the city of Brussels was astonished by a
feeble and unsuccessful attempt at treason, made by a youth who bore an
illustrious name. Philip, Count of Egmont, eldest son of the unfortunate
Lamoral, had command of a regiment in the service of the states. He had,
besides, a small body of cavalry in immediate attendance upon his person. He
had for some time felt inclined—like the Lalain's, Melun's, La Motte's, and
others—to reconcile himself with the Crown, and he wisely thought that the
terms accorded to him would be more liberal if he could bring the capital of
Brabant with him as a peace-offering to his Majesty. His residence was in
Brussels. His regiment was stationed outside the gates, but in the immediate
neighborhood of the city. On the morning of the fourth of June he dispatched
his troopers—as had been frequently his custom—on various errands into the
country. On their return, after having summoned the regiment, they easily
mastered and butchered the guard at the gate through which they had
reentered, supplying their place with men from their own ranks. The Egmont
regiment then came marching through the gate in good order—Count Philip at
their head—and proceeded to station themselves upon the Grande Place in the
center of the city. All this was at dawn of day. The burghers, who looked forth
from their houses, were astounded and perplexed by this movement at so
unwonted an hour, and hastened to seize their weapons.
Egmont sent a detachment to take possession of the palace. He was too late.
Colonel Van der Tympel, commandant of the city, had been beforehand with
him, had got his troops under arms, and now secured the rebellious
detachment. Meantime, the alarm had spread. Armed burghers came from
every house, and barricades were hastily thrown up across every one of the
narrow streets leading to the square. Every issue was closed. Not a man of
Egmont's adherents—if he indeed had adherents among the townsmen—dared
to show his face. The young traitor and his whole regiment, drawn up on the
Grande Place, were completely entrapped. He had not taken Brussels, but
assuredly Brussels had taken him. All day long he was kept in his self-elected
prison and pillory, bursting with rage and shame. His soldiers, who were
without meat or drink, became insolent and uproarious, and he was doomed
also to hear the bitter and well-merited taunts of the townspeople. A thousand
stinging gibes, suggested by his name and the locality, were mercilessly
launched upon him. He was asked if he came thither to seek his father's head.
He was reminded that the morrow was the anniversary of that father's murder
—upon that very spot—by those with whom the son would now make his
treasonable peace. He was bidden to tear up but a few stones from the
pavement beneath his feet, that the hero's blood might cry out against him
from the very ground. Tears of shame and fury sprang from the young man's
eyes as he listened to these biting sarcasms, but the night closed upon that
memorable square, and still the count was a prisoner. Eleven years before, the
summer stars had looked down upon a more dense array of armed men within
that place. The preparations for the pompous and dramatic execution, which on the morrow was to startle all Europe, had been carried out in the midst of a hushed and overawed population; and now, on the very anniversary of the midnight in which that scaffold had risen, should not the grand specter of the victim have started from the grave to chide his traitorous son?

Thus for a whole day and night was the baffled conspirator compelled to remain in the ignominious position which he had selected for himself. On the morning of the fifth of June, he was permitted to depart, by a somewhat inexplicable indulgence, together with all his followers. He rode out of the gate at early dawn, contemptible and crest-fallen, at the head of his regiment of traitors, and shortly afterwards—pillaging and levying blackmail as he went—made his way to Montigny’s quarters.

It might have seemed natural, after such an exhibition, that Philip Egmont should accept his character of renegade, and confess his intention of reconciling himself with the murderers of his father. On the contrary, he addressed a letter to the magistracy of Brussels, denying with vehemence "any intention of joining the party of the pernicious Spaniards" warmly protesting his zeal and affection for the states, and denouncing the "perverse inventors of these calumnies against him as the worst enemies of the poor afflicted country." The magistrates replied by expressing their inability to comprehend how the count, who had suffered villainous wrongs from the Spaniards, such as he could never sufficiently deplore or avenge, should ever be willing to enslave himself to those tyrants. Nevertheless, exactly at the moment of this correspondence, Egmont was in close negotiation with Spain, having fifteen days before the date of his letter to the Brussels senate, conveyed to Parma his resolution to "embrace the cause of his Majesty and the ancient religion"—an intention which he vaunted himself to have proved "by cutting the throats of three companies of states’ soldiers at Nivelle, Grandmont, and Ninove." Parma had already written to communicate the intelligence to the king, and to beg encouragement for the count. In September, the monarch wrote a letter to Egmont, full of gratitude and promises, to which the count replied by expressing lively gratification that his Majesty was pleased with his little services, by avowing profound attachment to Church and King, and by asking eagerly for money, together with the government of Alost. He soon became singularly importunate for rewards and promotion, demanding, among other posts, the command of the "band of ordnance," which had been his father’s. Parma, in reply, was prodigal of promises, reminding the young noble "that he was serving a sovereign who well knew how to reward the distinguished exploits of his subjects." Such was the language of Philip II and his governor to the son of the headless hero of Saint Quentin; such was the fawning obsequiousness with which Egmont could kiss that royal hand reeking with his father’s blood.

Meanwhile, the siege of Maestricht had been advancing with steady precision. To military minds of that epoch—perhaps of later ages—this achievement of Parma seemed a masterpiece of art. The city commanded the Upper Meuse, and was the gate into Germany. It contained 34,000 inhabitants. An army,
numbering almost as many souls, was brought against it, and the number of deaths by which its capture was at last effected, was probably equal to that of a moiety of the population. To the technical mind, the siege no doubt seemed a beautiful creation of human intelligence. To the honest student of history, to the lover of human progress, such a manifestation of intellect seems a sufficiently sad exhibition. Given, a city with strong walls and towers, a slender garrison and a devoted population on one side; a consummate chieftain on the other, with an army of veterans at his back, no interruption to fear, and a long season to work in; it would not seem to an unsophisticated mind a very lofty exploit for the soldier to carry the city at the end of four months’ hard labor. The investment of Maestricht was commenced upon the 12th of March, 1579. In the city, besides the population, there were 2,000 peasants, both men and women, a garrison of 1,000 soldiers, and a trained burgher guard, numbering about 1,200. The name of the military commandant was Melchior. Sebastian Tappin, a Lorraine officer of much experience and bravery, was next in command, and was, in truth, the principal director of the operations. He had been dispatched thither by the Prince of Orange, to serve under La Noue, who was to have commanded in Maestricht, but had been unable to enter the city. Feeling that the siege was to be a close one, and knowing how much depended upon the issue, Sebastian lost no time in making every needful preparation for coming events. The walls were strengthened everywhere; shafts were sunk, preparatory to the countermining operations which were soon to become necessary; the moat was deepened and cleared, and the forts near the gates were put in thorough repair. On the other hand, Alexander had encircled the city, and had thrown two bridges, well fortified, across the river. There were six gates to the town, each provided with ravelins, and there was a doubt in what direction the first attack should be made. Opinions wavered between the gate of Bois-le-Duc, next the river, and that of Tongres on the southwestern side, but it was finally decided to attempt the gate of Tongres. Over against that point the platforms were accordingly constructed, and after a heavy cannonade from forty-six great guns continued for several days, it was thought, by the 25th of March, that an impression had been made upon the city. A portion of the brick curtain had crumbled, but through the breach was seen a massive terreplein, well moated, which, after 6,000 shots already delivered on the outer wall, still remained uninjured. It was recognized that the gate of Tongres was not the most assailable, but rather the strongest portion of the defenses, and Alexander therefore determined to shift his batteries to the gate of Bois-le-Duc. At the same time, the attempt upon that of Tongres was to be varied, but not abandoned. Four thousand miners, who had passed half their lives in burrowing for coal in that anthracite region, had been furnished by the Bishop of Liege, and this force was now set to their subterranean work. A mine having been opened at a distance, the besiegers slowly worked their way towards the Tongres gate, while at the same time the more ostensible operations were in the opposite direction. The besieged had their miners also, for the peasants in the city had been used to work with mattock and pickaxe. The women, too, enrolled themselves into
companies, chose their officers—or "mine-mistresses," as they were called—and did good service daily in the caverns of the earth. Thus a whole army of gnomes were noiselessly at work to destroy and defend the beleaguered city. The mine advanced towards the gate; the besieged delved deeper, and intersected it with a transverse excavation, and the contending forces met daily, in deadly encounter, within these sepulchral gangways. Many stratagems were mutually employed. The citizens secretly constructed a dam across the Spanish mine, and then deluged their foe with hogsheads of boiling water. Hundreds were thus scalded to death. They heaped branches and light fagots in the hostile mine, set fire to the pile, and blew thick volumes of smoke along the passage with organ-bellows brought from the churches for the purpose. Many were thus suffocated.

The discomfited besiegers abandoned the mine where they had met with such able countermining, and sunk another shaft, at midnight, in secret, at a long distance from the Tongres gate. Still towards that point, however, they burrowed in the darkness, guiding themselves to their destination with magnet, plumbline and level, as the mariner crosses the trackless ocean with compass and chart. They worked their way, unobstructed, till they arrived at their subterranean port, directly beneath the doomed ravelin. Here they constructed a spacious chamber, supporting it with columns, and making all their architectural arrangements with as much precision and elegance as if their object had been purely aesthetic. Coffers full of powder, to an enormous amount, were then placed in every direction across the floor, the train was laid, and Parma informed that all was ready. Alexander, having already arrayed the troops destined for the assault, then proceeded in person to the mouth of the shaft, and gave orders to spring the mine. The explosion was prodigious; a part of the tower fell with the concussion, and the moat was choked with heaps of rubbish. The assailants sprang across the passage thus afforded, and mastered the ruined portion of the fort. They were met in the breach, however, by the unflinching defenders of the city, and, after a fierce combat of some hours, were obliged to retire, remaining masters, however, of the moat, and of the ruined portion of the ravelin. This was upon the third of April. Five days afterwards, a general assault was ordered. A new mine having been already constructed towards the Tongres ravelin, and a faithful cannonade having been kept up for a fortnight against the Bois-le-Duc gate, it was thought advisable to attack at both points at once. On the eighth of April, accordingly, after uniting in prayer, and listening to a speech from Alexander Farnese, the great mass of the Spanish army advanced to the breach. The moat had been rendered practicable in many places by the heaps of rubbish with which it had been encumbered, and by the fagots and earth with which it had been filled by the besiegers. The action at the Bois-le-Duc gate was exceedingly warm. The tried veterans of Spain, Italy, and Burgundy, were met face to face by theburghers of Maestricht, together with their wives and children. All were armed to the teeth, and fought with what seemed superhuman valor. The women, fierce as tigresses defending their young, swarmed to the walls, and fought in the foremost rank. They threw pails of boiling water on the besiegers, they
hurled firebrands in their faces, they quoited blazing pitch-hoops with unerring
dexterity about their necks. The rustics too, armed with their ponderous flails,
worked as cheerfully at this bloody harvesting as if thrashing their corn at
home. Heartily did they winnow the ranks of the royalists who came to butcher
them, and thick and fast fell the invaders, fighting bravely, but baffled by
these novel weapons used by peasant and woman, coming to the aid of the
sword, spear, and musket of trained soldiery. More than a thousand had fallen
at the Bois-le-Duc gate, and still fresh besiegers mounted the breach, only to
be beaten back, or to add to the mangled heap of the slain.
At the Tongres gate, meanwhile, the assault had fared no better. A herald had
been dispatched thither in hot haste, to shout at the top of his lungs,
"Santiago! Santiago! the Lombards have the gate of Bois-le-Duc!" while the
same stratagem was employed to persuade the invaders on the other side of
the town that their comrades had forced the gate of Tongres. The soldiers,
animated by this fiction, and advancing with fury against the famous ravelin,
which had been but partly destroyed, were received with a broadside from the
great guns of the unshattered portion, and by a rattling discharge of musketry
from the walls. They wavered a little. At the same instant the new mine—which
was to have been sprung between the ravelin and the gate, but which had been
secretly countermined by the townspeople—exploded with a horrible
concussion, at a moment least expected by the besiegers. Five hundred
royalists were blown into the air. Ortiz, a Spanish captain of engineers, who
had been inspecting the excavations, was thrown up bodily from the
subterranean depth. He fell back again instantly into the same cavern, and was
buried by the returning shower of earth which had spouted from the mine.
Forty-five years afterwards, in digging for the foundations of a new wall, his
skeleton was found. Clad in complete armor, the helmet and cuirass still sound,
with his gold chain around his neck, and his mattock and pickaxe at his feet,
the soldier lay unmutilated, seeming almost capable of resuming his part in the
same war which—even after his half century's sleep—was still ravaging the
land.
Five hundred of the Spaniards perished by the explosion, but none of the
defenders were injured, for they had been prepared. Recovering from the
momentary panic, the besiegers again rushed to the attack. The battle raged.
Six hundred and seventy officers, commissioned or non-commissioned, had
already fallen, more than half mortally wounded. Four thousand royalists,
horribly mutilated, lay on the ground. It was time that the day's work should
be finished, for Maestricht was not to be carried upon that occasion. The best
and bravest of the surviving officers besought Parma to put an end to the
carnage by recalling the troops; but the gladiator-heart of the commander was
heated, not softened, by the savage spectacle. "Go back to the breach," he
cried, "and tell the soldiers that Alexander is coming to lead them into the city
in triumph, or to perish with his comrades." He rushed forward with the fury
which had marked him when he boarded Mustapha's galley at Lepanto, but all
the generals who were near him threw themselves upon his path, and implored
him to desist from such insensate rashness. Their expostulations would have
probably been in vain, had not his confidential friend, Serbelloni, interposed with something like paternal authority, reminding him of the strict commands contained in his Majesty’s recent letters, that the governor-general, to whom so much was entrusted, should refrain, on pain of the royal displeasure, from exposing his life like a common fighter.

Alexander reluctantly gave the signal of recall at last, and accepted the defeat. For the future he determined to rely more upon the sapper and miner, and less upon the superiority of veterans to townsmen and rustics in open fight. Sure to carry the city at last, according to line and rule, determined to pass the whole summer beneath the wall, rather than abandon his purpose, he calmly proceeded to complete his circumvallations. A chain of eleven forts upon the left, and five upon the right side of the Meuse, the whole connected by a continuous wall, afforded him perfect security against interruptions, and allowed him to continue the siege at leisure. His numerous army was well housed and amply supplied, and he had built a strong and populous city in order to destroy another. Relief was impossible. But a few thousand men were now required to defend Farnese’s improvised town, while the bulk of his army could be marched at any moment against an advancing foe. A force of seven thousand, painfully collected by the Prince of Orange, moved towards the place, under command of Hohenlo and John of Nassau; but struck with wonder at what they saw, the leaders recognized the hopelessness of attempting relief. Maestricht was surrounded by a second Maestricht.

The efforts of Orange were now necessarily directed towards obtaining, if possible, a truce of a few weeks from the negotiators at Cologne. Parma was too crafty, however, to allow Terranova to consent, and as the duke disclaimed any power over the direct question of peace and war, the siege proceeded. The gates of Bois-le-Duc and Tongres having thus far resisted the force brought against them, the scene was changed to the gate of Brussels. This adjoined that of Tongres, was farthest from the river, and faced westwardly towards the open country. Here the besieged had constructed an additional ravelin, which they had christened, in derision, “Parma,” and against which the batteries of Parma were now brought to bear. Alexander erected a platform of great extent and strength directly opposite the new work, and after a severe and constant cannonade from this elevation, followed by a bloody action, the “Parma” fort was carried. One thousand, at least, of the defenders fell, as, forced gradually from one defense to another, they saw the triple walls of their ravelin crumble successively before their eyes. The tower was absolutely annihilated before they abandoned its ruins, and retired within their last defenses. Alexander being now master of the foss and the defenses of the Brussels gate, drew up a large force on both sides of that portal, along the margin of the moat, and began mining beneath the inner wall of the city.

Meantime, the garrison had been reduced to four hundred soldiers, nearly all of whom were wounded. Wearied and driven to despair, these soldiers were willing to treat. The townspeople, however, answered the proposition with a shout of fury, and protested that they would destroy the garrison with their own hands if such an insinuation were repeated. Sebastian Tappin, too,
encouraged them with the hope of speedy relief, and held out to them the wretched consequences of trusting to the mercy of their foes. The garrison took heart again, while that of the burghers and their wives had never faltered. Their main hope now was in a fortification which they had been constructing inside the Brussels gate—a demilune of considerable strength. Behind it was a breastwork of turf and masonry, to serve as a last bulwark when every other defense should be forced. The whole had been surrounded by a foss thirty feet in depth, and the besiegers, as they mounted upon the breaches which they had at last effected in the outer curtain, near the Brussels gate, saw for the first time this new fortification.

The general condition of the defenses, and the disposition of the inhabitants, had been revealed to Alexander by a deserter from the town. Against this last fortress the last efforts of the foe were now directed. Alexander ordered a bridge to be thrown across the city moat. As it was sixty feet wide and as many deep, and lay directly beneath the guns of the new demilune, the enterprise was sufficiently hazardous. Alexander led the way in person, with a mallet in one hand and a mattock in the other. Two men fell dead instantly, one on his right hand and his left, while he calmly commenced, in his own person, the driving of the first piles for the bridge. His soldiers fell fast around him. Count Berlaymont was shot dead, many officers of distinction were killed or wounded, but no soldier dared recoil while their chieftain wrought amid the bullets like a common pioneer. Alexander, unharmed, as by a miracle, never left the spot till the bridge had been constructed, and till ten great guns had been carried across it, and pointed against the demilune. The battery was opened, the mines previously excavated were sprung, a part of the demilune was blown into the air, and the assailants sprang into the breach. Again a furious hand-to-hand conflict succeeded; again, after an obstinate resistance, the townspeople were forced to yield. Slowly abandoning the shattered fort, they retired behind the breastwork in its rear—their innermost and last defense. To this barrier they clung as to a spar in shipwreck, and here at last they stood at bay, prepared dearly to sell their lives.

The breastwork, being still strong, was not attempted upon that day. The assailants were recalled, and in the meantime a herald was sent by Parma, highly applauding the courage of the defenders, and begging them to surrender at discretion. They answered the messenger with words of haughty defiance, and, rushing in a mass to the breastwork, began with spade, pickax, and trowel, to add to its strength. Here all the able-bodied men of the town took up their permanent position, and here they ate, drank, and slept upon their posts, while their food was brought to them by the women and children.

A little letter, "written in a fine neat handwriting," now mysteriously arrived in the city, encouraging them in the name of the archduke and the Prince of Orange, and assuring them of relief within fourteen days. A brief animation was thus produced, attended by a corresponding languor upon the part of the besiegers, for Alexander had been lying ill with a fever since the day when the demilune had been carried. From his sickbed he rebuked his officers severely that a temporary breastwork, huddled together by boors and burghers in the
midst of a siege, should prove an insurmountable obstacle to men who had
carried everything before them. The morrow was the festival of Saint Peter and
Saint Paul, and it was meet that so sacred a day should be hallowed by a
Christian and Apostolic victory. Saint Peter would be there with his keys to
open the gate; Saint Paul would lead them to battle with his invincible sword.
Orders were given accordingly, and the assault was assigned for the following
morning.
Meantime, the guards were strengthened and commanded to be more than
usually watchful. The injunction had a remarkable effect. At the dead of night,
a soldier of the watch was going his rounds on the outside of the breastwork,
listening, if perchance he might catch, as was not unusual, a portion of the
conversation among the beleaguered burghers within. Prying about on every
side, he at last discovered a chink in the wall, the result, doubtless, of the last
cannonade, and hitherto overlooked. He enlarged the gap with his fingers, and
finally made an opening wide enough to admit his person. He crept boldly
through, and looked around in the clear starlight. The sentinels were all
slumbering at their posts. He advanced stealthily in the dusky streets. Not a
watchman was going his rounds. Soldiers, burghers, children, women,
exhausted by incessant fatigue, were all asleep. Not a footfall was heard; not a
whisper broke the silence; it seemed a city of the dead. The soldier crept back
through the crevice, and hastened to apprise his superiors of his adventure.
Alexander, forthwith instructed as to the condition of the city, at once ordered
the assault, and the last wall was suddenly stormed before the morning broke.
The soldiers forced their way through the breach or sprang over the
breastwork, and surprised at last—in its sleep—the city which had so long and
vigorously defended itself. The burghers, startled from their slumber,
bewildered, unprepared, found themselves engaged in unequal conflict with
alert and savage foes. The battle, as usual when Netherland towns were
surprised by Philip’s soldiers, soon changed to a massacre. The townspeople
rushed hither and thither, but there was neither escape, nor means of resisting
an enemy who now poured into the town by thousands upon thousands.
An indiscriminate slaughter succeeded. Women, old men, and children, had all
been combatants; and all, therefore, had incurred the vengeance of the
conquerors. A cry of agony arose which was distinctly heard at the distance of
a league. Mothers took their infants in their arms, and threw themselves by
hundreds into the Meuse—and against women the blood-thirst of the assailants
was especially directed. Females who had fought daily in the trenches, who
had delved in mines and mustered on the battlements, had unsexed themselves
in the opinion of those whose comrades they had helped to destroy. It was
nothing that they had laid aside the weakness of women in order to defend all
that was holy and dear to them on earth. It was sufficient that many a Spanish,
Burgundian, or Italian mercenary had died by their hands. Women were
pursued from house to house, and hurled from roof and window. They were
hunted into the river; they were torn limb from limb in the streets. Men and
children fared no better; but the heart sickens at the oft-repeated tale.
Horrors, alas, were commonplaces in the Netherlands. Cruelty too monstrous
for description, too vast to be believed by a mind not familiar with the outrages practiced by the soldiers of Spain and Italy upon their heretic fellow creatures, were now committed afresh in the streets of Maestricht. On the first day four thousand men and women were slaughtered. The massacre lasted two days longer, nor would it be an exaggerated estimate, if we assume that the amount of victims upon the two last days was equal to half the number sacrificed on the first. It was said that not four hundred citizens were left alive after the termination of the siege. These soon wandered away, their places being supplied by a rabble rout of Walloon sutlers and vagabonds. Maestricht was depopulated as well as captured. The booty obtained after the massacre was very large, for the city had been very thriving, its cloth manufacture extensive and important. Sebastian Tappin, the heroic defender of the place, had been shot through the shoulder at the taking of the Parma ravelin, and had been afterwards severely injured at the capture of the demilune. At the fall of the city he was mortally wounded, and carried a prisoner to the hostile camp, only to expire. The governor, Swartsenberg, also lost his life. Alexander, on the contrary, was raised from his sickbed with the joyful tidings of victory, and as soon as he could be moved, made his appearance in the city. Seated in a splendid chair of state, borne aloft on the shoulders of his veterans, with a golden canopy above his head to protect him from the summer’s sun, attended by the officers of his staff, who were decked by his special command in their gayest trappings, escorted by his bodyguard, followed by his "plumed troops," to the number of 20,000, surrounded by all the vanities of war, the hero made his stately entrance into the town. His way led through deserted streets of shattered houses. The pavement ran red with blood. Headless corpses, mangled limbs—an obscene mass of wretchedness and corruption—were spread on every side, and tainted the summer air. Through the thriving city which, in the course of four months Alexander had converted into a slaughter-house and a solitude, the pompous procession took its course to the church of Saint Servais. Here humble thanks were offered to the God of Love, and to Jesus of Nazareth, for this new victory. Especially was gratitude expressed to the Apostles Paul and Peter, upon whose festival, and by whose sword and key the crowning mercy had been accomplished, and by whose special agency 8,000 heretics now lay unburied in the streets. These acts of piety performed, the triumphal procession returned to the camp, where, soon afterwards, the joyful news of Alexander Farnese’s entire convalescence was proclaimed. The Prince of Orange, as usual, was blamed for the tragical termination to this long drama. All that one man could do, he had done to awaken his countrymen to the importance of the siege. He had repeatedly brought the subject solemnly before the assembly, and implored for Maestricht, almost upon his knees. Lukewarm and parsimonious, the states had responded to his eloquent appeals with wrangling addresses and insufficient votes. With a special subsidy obtained in April and May, he had organized the slight attempt at relief, which was all which he had been empowered to make, but which proved entirely unsuccessful. Now that the massacre to be averted was accomplished, men
were loud in reproof, who had been silent and passive while there was yet time to speak and to work. It was the prince, they said, who had delivered so many thousands of his fellow countrymen to butchery. To save himself, they insinuated he was now plotting to deliver the land into the power of the treacherous Frenchman, and he alone, they asserted, was the insuperable obstacle to an honorable peace with Spain.

A letter, brought by an unknown messenger, was laid before the states’ assembly, in full session, and sent to the clerk’s table, to be read aloud. After the first few sentences, that functionary faltered in his recital. Several members also peremptorily ordered him to stop, for the letter proved to be a violent and calumnious libel upon Orange, together with a strong appeal in favor of the peace propositions then under debate at Cologne. The prince alone, of all the assembly, preserving his tranquility, ordered the document to be brought to him, and forthwith read it aloud himself, from beginning to end. Afterwards, he took occasion to express his mind concerning the ceaseless calumnies of which he was the mark. He especially alluded to the oft-repeated accusation that he was the only obstacle to peace, and repeated that he was ready at that moment to leave the land, and to close his lips for ever, if by so doing he could benefit his country, and restore her to honorable repose. The outcry, with the protestations of attachment and confidence which at once broke from the assembly, convinced him, however, that he was deeply rooted in the hearts of all patriotic Netherlanders, and that it was beyond the power of slanderers to loosen his hold upon their affection.

Meantime, his efforts had again and again been demanded to restore order in that abode of anarchy, the city of Ghent. After his visit during the previous winter, and the consequent departure of John Casimir to the palatinate, the pacific arrangements made by the prince had for a short time held good. Early in March, however, that master of misrule, John van Imbize, had once more excited the populace to sedition. Again the property of Catholics, clerical and lay, was plundered; again the persons of Catholics, of every degree, were maltreated. The magistrates, with first senator Imbize at their head, rather encouraged than rebuked the disorder; but Orange, as soon as he received official intelligence of the event, hastened to address them in the words of earnest warning and wisdom. He allowed that the inhabitants of the province had reason to be discontented with the presence and the misconduct of the Walloon soldiery. He granted that violence and the menaces of a foreign tyranny made it difficult for honest burghers to gain a livelihood. At the same time he expressed astonishment that reasonable men should seek a remedy for such evils in tumults which would necessarily bring utter destruction upon the land. “It was,” he observed, “as if a patient should from impatience, tear the bandages from his wounds, and, like a manic, instead of allowing himself to be cured, plunge a dagger into his own heart.”

These exhortations exerted a wholesome effect for a moment, but matters soon went from bad to worse. Imbize, fearing the influence of the prince, indulged in open-mouthed abuse of a man whose character he was unable even to comprehend. He accused him of intriguing with France for his own benefit,
of being a papist in disguise, of desiring to establish what he called a "religious peace," merely to restore Roman idolatry. In all these insane ravings, the demagogue was most ably seconded by the ex-monk. Incessant and unlicensed were the invectives hurled by Peter Dathenus from his pulpit upon William the Silent’s head. He denounced him, as he had often done before, as an atheist in heart, as a man who changed his religion as easily as his garments, as a man who knew no God but state expediency, which was the idol of his worship, a mere politician who would tear his shirt from his back and throw it in the fire, if he thought it were tainted with religion.

Such witless but vehement denunciation from a preacher who was both popular and comparatively sincere, could not but affect the imagination of the weaker portion of his hearers. The faction of Imbize became triumphant. Ryhove—the ruffian whose hands were stained with the recent blood of Visch and Hessels—rather did damage than service to the cause of order. He opposed himself to the demagogue who was prating daily of Greece, Rome, and Geneva, while his clerical associate was denouncing William of Orange, but he opposed himself in vain. An attempt to secure the person of Imbize failed, but by the influence of Ryhove, however, a messenger was dispatched to Antwerp in the name of a considerable portion of the community of Ghent. The counsel and the presence of the man to whom all hearts in every part of the Netherlands instinctively turned in the hour of need, were once more invoked.

The prince again addressed them in language which none but he could employ with such effect. He told them that his life, passed in service and sacrifice, ought to witness sufficiently for his fidelity. Nevertheless, he thought it necessary—in view of the calumnies which were circulated—to repeat once more his sentiment that no treaty of peace, war, or alliance, ought to be negotiated, save with the consent of the people. His course in Holland and Zealand had proved, he said, his willingness always to consult the wishes of his countrymen. As for the matter of religion, it was almost incredible that there should be any who doubted the zeal which he bore the religion for which he had suffered so much. "I desire," he continued, fervently, "that men should compare that which has been done by my accusers during ten years past with that which I have done. In that which touches the true advancement of religion, I will yield to no man. They who so boldly accuse me have no liberty of speech, save that which has been acquired for them by the blood of my kindred, by my labors, and my excessive expenditures. To me they owe it that they dare speak at all." This letter (which was dated on July 24, 1579) contained an assurance that the writer was about to visit Ghent.

On the following day, Imbize executed a coup d'état. Having a body of near 2,000 soldiers at his disposal, he suddenly secured the persons of all the magistrates and other notable individuals not friendly to his policy, and then, in violation of all law, set up a new board of eighteen irresponsible functionaries, according to a list prepared by himself alone. This was his way of enforcing the democratic liberty of Greece, Rome, and Geneva, which was so near to his heart. A proclamation, in fourteen articles, was forthwith issued, justifying this arbitrary proceeding. It was declared that the object of the
somewhat irregular measure "was to prevent the establishment of the religious peace, which was merely a method of replanting uprooted papistry and the extirpated tyranny of Spain." Although the arrangements had not been made in strict accordance with formal usage and ceremony, yet they were defended upon the ground that it had been impossible, by other means, to maintain their ancient liberties and their religious freedom. At the same time a pamphlet, already prepared for the occasion by Dathenus, was extensively circulated. In this production the arbitrary revolution effected by a demagogue was defended with effrontery, while the character of Orange, was loaded with customary abuse. To prevent the traitor from coming to Ghent, and establishing what he called his religious peace, these irregular measures, it was urged, had been wisely taken.

Such were the efforts of John Imbize, such the calumnies of Peter Dathenus, in order to counteract the patriotic endeavors of the prince; but neither the ruffianism of John nor the libels of Peter were destined upon this occasion to be successful. William the Silent treated the slanders of the scolding monk with dignified contempt. "Having been informed," said he to the magistrates of Ghent, "that Master Peter Dathenus has been denouncing me as a man without religion or fidelity, and full of ambition, with other propositions hardly becoming his cloth, I do not think it worthwhile to answer more at this time than that I willingly refer myself to the judgment of all who know me."

The prince came to Ghent, great as had been the efforts of Imbize and his partisans to prevent his coming. His presence was like magic. The demagogue and his whole flock vanished like unclean birds at the first rays of the sun. Imbize dared not look the Father of his country in the face. Orange rebuked the populace in the strong and indignant language that public and private virtue, energy, and a high purpose enabled such a leader of the people to use. He at once set aside the board of eighteen—the Grecian-Roman-Genevese establishment of Imbize—and remained in the city until the regular election, in conformity with the privileges, had taken place. Imbize, who had shrunk at his approach, was meantime discovered by his own companions. He had stolen forth secretly on the night before the prince's arrival, and was found cowering in the cabin of a vessel, half dead with fear, by an ale-house keeper who had been his warm partisan. "No skulking," cried the honest friend, seizing the tribune of the people by the shoulder, "no sailing away in the night-time. You have got us all into this bog, and must come back, and abide the issue with your supporters."

In this collapsed state was the windy demagogue, who had filled half Flanders with his sound and fury, conveyed before the patriot prince. He met with grave and bitter rebukes, but felt sufficiently relieved when allowed to depart unharmed. Judging of his probable doom by the usual practice of himself and his fellows in similar cases, he had anticipated nothing short of the gibbet. That punishment, however, was to be inflicted at a later period, by other hands, and not until he had added treason to his country and a shameless recantation of all his violent professions in favor of civil and religious liberty to the list of his crimes. On the present occasion he was permitted to go free. In
company with his clerical companion, Peter Dathenus, he fled to the abode of his excellent friend, John Casimir, who received both with open arms and allowed them each a pension.

Order being thus again restored in Ghent by the exertions of the prince, when no other human hand could have dispelled the anarchy which seemed to reign supreme, William the Silent, having accepted the government of Flanders, which had again and again been urged upon him, now returned to Antwerp.

---

Part Six

Alexander of Parma

Chapters 3-4

---

Chapter 3  Negotiations, Dissensions, and Treason
Chapter 4  The Declaration of Independence of the United Provinces

---

CHAPTER 3

Negotiations, Dissensions, and Treason

Since the beginning of May, the Cologne negotiations had been dragging their slow length along. Few persons believed that any good was likely to result from these stately and ponderous conferences; yet men were so weary of war, so desirous that a termination might be put to the atrophy under which the
country was languishing, that many an eager glance was turned towards the place where the august assembly was holding its protracted session. Certainly, if wisdom were to be found in mitered heads—if the power to heal angry passions and to settle the conflicting claims of prerogative and conscience were to be looked for among men of lofty station—then the Cologne conferences ought to have made the rough places smooth and the crooked paths straight throughout all Christendom. There was the Archbishop of Rossano, afterwards Pope Urban VII, as plenipotentiary from Rome; there was Charles of Aragon, Duke of Terranova, supported by five councillors, as ambassador from his Catholic Majesty; there were the Duke of Aerschot, the Abbot of Saint Gertrude, the Abbot of Marolles, Doctor Bucho Aytta, Caspar Schetz, Lord of Grobbendonck, that learned Frisian, Aggeus van Albada, with seven other wise men, as envoys from the states-general. There were their Serene Highnesses the Elector and Archbishops of Cologne and Treves, with the Bishop of Wurtzburg. There was also a numerous embassy from his Imperial Majesty, with Count Otto de Schwartzenburg at its head.

Here then were holiness, serenity, dignity, law, and learning in abundance. Here was a pope in posse, with archbishops, princes, dukes, jurisconsults, and doctors of divinity in esse, sufficient to remodel a world, if worlds were to be remodeled by such instruments. If protocols, replications, annotations, apostilles, could heal a bleeding country, here were the physicians to furnish those drugs in unlimited profusion. If reams of paper, scrawled over with barbarous technicalities, could smother and bury a quarrel which had its origin in the mutual antagonism of human elements, here were the men to scribble unflinchingly, till the reams were piled to a pyramid. If the same idea presented in many aspects could acquire additional life, here were the wordmongers who could clothe one shivering thought in a hundred thousand garments, till it attained all the majesty which decoration could impart. In truth, the envoys came from Spain, Rome, and Vienna, provided with but two ideas. Was it not a diplomatic masterpiece, that from this frugal store they could contrive to eke out seven mortal months of negotiation? Two ideas—the supremacy of his Majesty's prerogative, the exclusive exercise of the Roman Catholic religion—these were the be-all and the end-all of their commission. Upon these two strings they were to harp, at least till the walls of Maestricht had fallen. The envoys did their duty well; they were sent to enact a solemn comedy, and in the most stately manner did they walk through their several parts. Not that the king was belligerent—on the contrary, he was heartily weary of the war. Prerogative was weary, Romanism was weary, Conscience was weary, the Spirit of Freedom was weary, but the Prince of Orange was not weary. Blood and treasure had been pouring forth so profusely during twelve flaming years, that all but that one tranquil spirit were beginning to flag.

At the same time, neither party had more disposition to concede than stomach to fight. Certainly the royal party had no inclination to yield. The king had granted easy terms to the Walloons, because upon the one great point of
religion there was no dispute, and upon the others there was no intention of keeping faith. With regard to the present negotiation, it was desirable to gain a little time. It was thought probable that the religious difference, judiciously managed at this juncture, might be used to effect a permanent severance of the provinces so lately banded together in a common union. "To divide them," wrote Tassis, in a very confidential letter, "no better method can be found than to amuse them with this peace negotiation. Some are ready for a pacification from their desire of repose, some from their fear of war, some from the differences which exist among themselves, and which it is especially important to keep alive." Above all things, it was desirable to maintain the religious distraction till Maestricht had been taken. That siege was the key to the whole situation. If the separate Walloon accord could be quietly made in a corner, while Parma was battering that stronghold on the Meuse, and while decorous negotiation was smoothly holding its course on the Rhine, much disorganization, it was hoped, would be handsomely accomplished before the end of the year.

"As for a suspension of arms," wrote Alexander to Terranova, on the 21st of May, "the longer 'tis deferred the better. With regard to Maestricht, everything depends upon it that we possess, or desire to possess. Truly, if the Prince of Orange can relieve the city he will do it. If he does so, neither will this expedition of ours, nor any other expedition, be brought to a good end. As soon as men are aware that our affairs are looking badly, they will come again to a true union, and all will join together, in hope to accomplish their boasts." Therefore, it was natural that the peace-wrights of Cologne should industriously ply their task.

It is not desirable to disturb much of that learned dust, after its three centuries' repose. A rapid sketch of the course of the proceedings, with an indication of the spirit which animated the contending parties, will be all that is necessary. They came and they separated with precisely opposite views. "The desires of Terranova and of the estates," says the royalist, Tassis, "were diametrically contrary to each other. The king wished that the exercise of the Roman Catholic religion should be exclusively established, and the absolute prerogative preserved in its integrity." On the other hand, the provinces desired their charters and a religious peace. In these perpetual lines and curves ran the asymptotical negotiation from beginning to end—and so it might have run for two centuries, without hope of coincidence. Neither party was yet vanquished. The freshly united provinces were no readier now than before to admit that the Holy Office formed part of their national institutions. The despotic faction was not prepared to renounce that establishment. Foiled, but not disheartened, sat the Inquisition, like a beldame, upon the border, impotently threatening the land whence she had been forever excluded; while industrious as the Parcae, distaff in hand, sat, in Cologne, the inexorable three—Spain, the Empire, and Rome—grimly spinning and severing the web of mortal destinies.
The first step in the proceedings had been a secret one. If by any means the Prince of Orange could be detached from his party—if by bribery, however enormous, he could be induced to abandon a tottering cause, and depart for the land of his birth—he was distinctly but indirectly given to understand that he had but to name his terms. We have seen the issue of similar propositions made by Don John of Austria. Probably there was no man living who would care to make distinct application of this dishonorable nature to the Father of his country. The Aerschot’s, the Melun’s, the Lalain’s, and a swarm of other nobles, had their price, and were easily transferable from one to another, but it was not easy to make a direct offer to William of Orange. They knew—as he said shortly afterwards in his famous Apology—that "neither for property nor for life, neither for wife nor for children, would he mix in his cup a single drop of treason." Nevertheless, he was distinctly given to understand that "there was nothing he could demand for himself personally that would not be granted." All his confiscated property, restoration of his imprisoned son, liberty of worship for himself, payment of all his debts, reimbursement of all his past expenses, and anything else which he could desire, were all placed within his reach. If he chose to retire into another land, his son might be placed in possession of all his cities, estates, and dignities, and himself indemnified in Germany, with a million of money over and above as a gratuity. The imperial envoy, Count Schwartzenburg, pledged his personal honor and reputation that every promise which might be made to the prince should be most sacredly fulfilled. It was all in vain.

The indirect applications of the imperial commissioners made to his servants and his nearest relations were entirely unsuccessful. The prince was not to be drawn into a negotiation in his own name or for his own benefit. If the estates were satisfied, he was satisfied. He wanted no conditions but theirs, "nor would he directly, or indirectly," he said, "separate himself from the cause on which hung all his evil or felicity." He knew that it was the object of the enemy to deprive the country of its head, and no inducements were sufficient to make him a party to the plot. At the same time, he was unwilling to be an obstacle, in his own person, to the conclusion of an honorable peace. He would resign his offices which he held at the solicitation of the whole country, if thus a negotiation were likely to be more successful. "The Prince of Parma and the disunited provinces," said he to the states general, "affect to consider this war as one waged against me and in my name—as if the question alone concerned the name and person of the general. If it be so, I beg you to consider whether it is not because I have been ever faithful to the land. Nevertheless, if I am an obstacle, I am ready to remove it. If you, therefore, in order to deprive the enemy of every right to inculpate us, think proper to choose another head and conductor of your affairs, I promise you to serve and to be obedient to him with all my heart. Thus shall we leave the enemy no standing-place to work dissensions among us." Such was his language to friend and foe, and here, at least, was one man in history whom kings were not rich enough to purchase.
On the 18th of May, the states’ envoys at Cologne presented fourteen articles, demanding freedom of religion and the ancient political charters. Religion, they said, was to be referred, not to man, but to God. To him the king was subject as well as the people. Both king and people—"and by people was meant every individual in the land"—were bound to serve God according to their conscience."

The imperial envoys found such language extremely reprehensible, and promptly refused, as umpires, to entertain the fourteen articles. Others drawn up by Terranova and colleagues, embodying the claims of the royal and Roman party, were then solemnly presented, and as promptly rejected. Then the imperial umpires came forward with two bundles of propositions, approved beforehand by the Spanish plenipotentiaries. In the political bundle, obedience due to the king was insisted upon, "as in the time of the Emperor Charles." The religious category declared that "the Roman religion—all others excluded—should thenceforth be exercised in all the provinces." Both these categories were considered more objectionable by the states’ envoys than the terms of Terranova, and astonishment was expressed that mention should again be made of the edicts, as if blood enough had not been shed already in the cause of religion.

The Netherland envoys likewise gave the imperial commissioners distinctly to understand that, in case peace were not soon made, "the states would forthwith declare the king fallen from his sovereignty," would forever dispense the people from their oaths of allegiance to him, and would probably accept the Duke of Anjou in his place. The states-general, to which body the imperial propositions had been sent, also rejected the articles in a logical and historical argument of unmerciful length.

An appeal secretly made by the imperial and Spanish commissioners, from the states’ envoys to the states themselves, and even to the people of the various provinces, had excited the anger of the plenipotentiaries. They complained loudly of this violation of all diplomatic etiquette, and the answer of the states-general, fully confirming the views of their ambassadors, did not diminish their wrath.

On November 13, 1573, the states’ envoys were invited into the council-chamber of the imperial commissioners, to hear the last solemn commonplaces of those departing functionaries. Seven months long they had been waiting in vain, they said, for the states’ envoys to accede to moderate demands. Patience was now exhausted. Moreover, their mediatory views had been the subject of bitter lampooning throughout the country, while the authorities of many cities had publicly declared that all the inhabitants would rather die the death than accept such terms. The peace-makers, accordingly, with endless protestations as to their own purity, wisdom, and benevolence, left the whole "in the hands of God and the parties concerned."
The reply to this elaborate farewell was curt and somewhat crusty. "Had they known," said the states’ envoys, "that their transparencies and worthinesses had no better intention, and the Duke of Terranova no ampler commission, the whole matter might have been dispatched, not in six months, but in six days."

Thus ended the conferences, and the imperial commissioners departed. Nevertheless, Schwartzenburg remained yet a little time at Cologne, while five of the states’ envoys also protracted their stay, in order to make their private peace with the king. It is hardly necessary to observe that the chief of these penitents was the Duke of Aerschot. The ultimatum of the states was deposited by the departing envoys with Schwartzenburg, and a comparison of its terms with those offered by the imperial mediators, as the best which could be obtained from Spain, shows the hopelessness of the pretended negotiation. Departure of the foreign troops, restitution of all confiscated property, unequivocal recognition of the Ghent treaty and the perpetual edict, appointment to office of none but natives, oaths of allegiance to the king and the states-general, exercise of the Reformed religion and of the Confession of Augsburg in all places where it was then publicly practiced—such were the main demands of the patriot party.

In the secret instructions furnished by the states to their envoys, they were told to urge upon his Majesty the absolute necessity, if he wished to retain the provinces, of winking at the exercise of the Reformed and the Augsburg creeds. "The new religion had taken too deep root," it was urged, "ever to be torn forth, save with the destruction of the whole country."

Thus, after seven dreary months of negotiation, after protocols and memoranda in ten thousand folia, the august diplomatists had traveled round to the points from which they had severally started. On the one side, unlimited prerogative and exclusive Catholicism; on the other, constitutional liberty, with freedom of conscience for Catholic and Protestant alike—these were the claims which each party announced at the commencement, and to which they held with equal firmness at the close of the conferences.

The congress had been expensive. Though not much had been accomplished for the political or religious advancement of mankind, there had been much excellent eating and drinking at Cologne during the seven months. Those drouthy deliberations had needed moistening. The Bishop of Wurtzburg had consumed "eighty hogsheads of Rhenish wine and twenty great casks of beer." The expense of the states’ envoys were 24,000 guldens. The Archbishop of Cologne had expended 40,000 thalers. The deliberations were, on the whole, excessively detrimental to the cause of the provinces, "and a great personage" wrote to the states-general that the king had been influenced by no motive save to cause dissension. This was an exaggeration, for his Majesty would have been well pleased to receive the whole of the country on the same terms which had been accepted by the Walloons. Meantime, those southern provinces had
made their separate treaty, and the Netherlands were permanently dismembered. Maestricht had fallen. Disunion and dismay had taken possession of the country.

During the course of the year, other severe misfortunes had happened to the states. Treachery, even among the men who had done good service to the cause of freedom, was daily showing her hateful visage. Not only the great chieftains who had led the Malcontent Walloon party, with the fickle Aerschot and the wavering Havré besides, had made their separate reconciliation with Parma, but the epidemic treason had mastered such bold partisans as the Seigneur de Bours, the man whose services in rescuing the citadel of Antwerp had been so courageous and valuable. He was governor of Mechlin; Count Renneberg was governor of Friesland. Both were trusted implicitly by Orange and by the estates; both were on the eve of repaying the confidence reposed in them by the most venal treason.

It was already known that Parma had tampered with De Bours, but Renneberg was still unsuspected. "The Prince," wrote Count John, "is deserted by all the noblemen, save the stadholder of Friesland and myself, and has no man else in whom he can repose confidence." The brothers were doomed to be rudely awakened from the repose with regard to Renneberg, but previously the treason of a less important functionary was to cause a considerable but less lasting injury to the national party.

In Mechlin was a Carmelite friar, of audacious character and great eloquence, a man who, "with his sweet, poisonous tongue, could ever persuade the people to do his bidding." This dangerous monk, Peter Lupus, or Peter Wolf, by name, had formed the design of restoring Mechlin to the Prince of Parma, and of obtaining the bishopric of Namur as the reward of his services. To this end he had obtained a complete mastery over the intellect of the bold but unprincipled De Bours. A correspondence was immediately opened between Parma and the governor, and troops were secretly admitted into the city. The Prince of Orange, in the name of the archduke and the estates, in vain endeavored to recall the infatuated governor to his duty. In vain he conjured him, by letter after letter, to be true to his own bright fame so nobly earned. An old friend of De Bours, and like himself a Catholic, was also employed to remonstrate with him. This gentleman, De Fromont by name, wrote him many letters, but De Bours expressed his surprise that Fromont, whom he had always considered a good Catholic and a virtuous gentleman, should wish to force him into a connection with the Prince of Orange and his heretic supporters. He protested that his mind was quite made up, and that he had been guaranteed by Parma not only the post which he now held, but even still farther advancement.

De Fromont reminded him, in reply, of the frequent revolutions of fortune's wheel, and warned him that the advancement of which he boasted would
probably be an entire degradation. He bitterly recalled to the remembrance of
the new zealot for Romanism his former earnest efforts to establish Calvinism.
He reproached him, too, with having melted up the silver images of the
Mechlin churches, including even the renowned shrine of Saint Rombout, which
the Prince of Orange had always respected. "I don’t say how much you took of
that plunder for your own share," continued the indignant De Fromont, "for the
very children cry it in your ears as you walk the streets. 'Tis known that if God
himself had been changed into gold you would have put him in your pocket."

This was plain language, but as just as it was plain. The famous shrine of Saint
Rombout—valued at 70,000 guldens, of silver gilt, and enriched with precious
stones—had been held sacred alike by the fanatical iconoclasts and the greedy
Spaniards who had successively held the city. It had now been melted up, and
appropriated by Peter Lupus, the Carmelite, and De Bours, the Catholic
convert, whose mouths were full of devotion to the ancient Church and of
horror for heresy.

The efforts of Orange and of the states were unavailing. De Bours surrendered
the city and fled to Parma, who received him with cordiality, gave him 5,000
florins—the price promised for his treason, besides a regiment of infantry—but
expressed surprise that he should have reached the camp alive. His subsequent
career was short, and he met his death two years afterwards, in the trenches
before Tournay. The archiepiscopal city was thus transferred to the royal
party, but the gallant Van der Tympel, governor of Brussels, retook it by
surprise within six months of its acquisition by Parma, and once more restored
it to the jurisdiction of the states. Peter Lupus, the Carmelite, armed to the
teeth, and fighting fiercely at the head of the royalists, was slain in the street,
and thus forfeited his chance for the miter of Namur.

During the weary progress of the Cologne negotiations, the prince had not been
idle, and should this august and slow-moving congress be unsuccessful in
restoring peace, the provinces were pledged to an act of abjuration. They
would then be entirely without a head. The idea of a nominal republic was
broached by none. The contest had not been one of theory, but of facts, for
the war had not been for revolution, but for conservation, so far as political
rights were concerned. In religion, the provinces had advanced from one step
to another, till they now claimed the largest liberty—freedom of conscience—
for all. Religion, they held, was God’s affair, not man’s, in which neither
people nor king had power over each other, but in which both were subject to
God alone. In politics it was different. Hereditary sovereignty was
acknowledged as a fact, but at the same time, the spirit of freedom was
already learning its appropriate language. It already claimed boldly the natural
right of mankind to be governed according to the laws of reason and of divine
justice. If a prince were a shepherd, it was at least lawful to deprive him of his
crook when he butchered the flock which he had been appointed to protect.
“What reason is there,” said the states-general, “why the provinces should suffer themselves to be continually oppressed by their sovereign, with robbings, burnings, stranglings, and murderings? Why, being thus oppressed, should they still give their sovereign—exactly as if he were well conducting himself—the honor and title of lord of the land?” On the other hand, if hereditary rule were an established fact, so also were ancient charters. To maintain, not to overthrow, the political compact, was the purpose of the states. “Je maintiendrai” was the motto of Orange’s escutcheon. That compact existed between prince and people, and that the sovereign held office only on condition of doing his duty, were startling truths which men were beginning, not to whisper to each other in secret, but to proclaim in the market-place. “’Tis well known to all,” said the famous Declaration of Independence, two years afterwards, “that if a prince is appointed by God over the land, ’tis to protect them from harm, even as a shepherd to the guardianship of his flock. The subjects are not appointed by God for the behoof of the prince, but the prince for his subjects, without whom he is no prince. Should he violate the laws, he is to be forsaken by his meanest subject, and to be recognized no longer as prince.”

William of Orange always recognized these truths, but his scheme of government contemplated a permanent chief, and as it was becoming obvious that the Spanish sovereign would soon be abjured, it was necessary to fix upon a substitute. “As to governing these provinces in the form of a republic,” said he, speaking for the states-general, “those who know the condition, privileges, and ordinances of the country, can easily understand that ’tis hardly possible to dispense with a head or superintendent.” At the same time, he plainly intimated that this “head or superintendent” was to be, not a monarch—a one-ruler—but merely the hereditary chief magistrate of a free commonwealth.

Where was this hereditary chief magistrate to be found? His own claims he absolutely withdrew. The office was within his grasp, and he might easily have constituted himself sovereign of all the Netherlands. Perhaps it would have been better at that time had he advanced his claims and accepted the sovereignty which Philip had forfeited. As he did not believe in the possibility of a republic, he might honestly have taken into his own hands the scepter which he considered indispensable. His self-abnegation was, however, absolute. Not only did he decline sovereignty, but he repeatedly avowed his readiness to lay down all the offices which he held, if a more useful substitute could be found. “Let no man think,” said he, in a remarkable speech to the states-general, “that my good will is in any degree changed or diminished. I agree to obey—as the least of the lords or gentlemen of the land could do—whatever person it may please you to select. You have but to command my services wheresoever they are most wanted, to guard a province or a single city, or in any capacity in which I may be found most useful. I promise to do my duty, with all my strength and skill, as God and my conscience are witnesses that I have done it hitherto.”
The negotiations pointed to a speedy abjuration of Philip; the republic was contemplated by none; the Prince of Orange absolutely refused to stretch forth his own hand—who then was to receive the scepter which was so soon to be bestowed? A German prince had been tried—in a somewhat abnormal position—but had certainly manifested small capacity for aiding the provinces. Nothing could well be more insignificant than the figure of Matthias, and, moreover, his imperial brother was anything but favorably disposed. It was necessary to manage Rudolph. To treat the archduke with indignity, now that he had been partly established in the Netherlands, would be to incur the Emperor’s enmity. His friendship, however, could hardly be secured by any advancement bestowed upon his brother, for Rudolph’s services against prerogative and the pope were in no case to be expected. Nor was there much hope from the Protestant princes of Germany. The day had passed for generous sympathy with those engaged in the great struggle which Martin Luther had commenced. The present generation of German Protestants were more inclined to put down the Calvinistic schism at home than to save it from oppression abroad. Men were more disposed to wrangle over the thrice-gnawed bones of ecclesiastical casuistry, than to assist their brethren in the field. "I know not," said Gaultherus, "whether the calamity of the Netherlands, or the more than bestial stupidity of the Germans, be most deplorable. To the insane contests on theological abstractions we owe it that many are ready to breathe blood and slaughter against their own brethren. The hatred of the Lutherans has reached that point that they can rather tolerate Papists than ourselves."

In England, there was much sympathy for the provinces, and there—although the form of government was still arbitrary—the instincts for civil and religious freedom, which have ever characterized the Anglo-Saxon race, were not to be repressed. Upon many a battlefield for liberty in the Netherlands, "men whose limbs were made in England" were found contending for the right. The blood and treasure of Englishmen flowed freely in the cause of their relatives by religion and race, but these were the efforts of individuals. Hitherto but little assistance had been rendered by the English Queen, who had, on the contrary, almost distracted the provinces by her fast-and-loose policy, both towards them and towards Anjou. The political rivalry between that prince and herself in the Netherlands had, however, now given place to the memorable love-passage from which important results were expected, and it was thought certain that Elizabeth would view with satisfaction any dignity conferred upon her lover.

Orange had a right to form this opinion. At the same time, it is well known that the chief councillors of Elizabeth—while they were all in favor of assisting the provinces—looked with anything but satisfaction upon the Anjou marriage. "The Duke," wrote Davidson to Walsingham (in July 1579), "seeks, forsooth, under a pretext of marriage with her Highness, the rather to espouse the Low Countries—the chief ground and object of his pretended love, howsoever it be disguised." The envoy believed both Elizabeth and the provinces in danger of
taking unto themselves a very bad master. "Is there any means," he added, "so apt to sound the very bottom of our estate, and to hinder and breake the neck of all such good purpose as the necessity of the tyme shall set abroch?"

The provinces of Holland and Zealand, notwithstanding the love they bore to William of Orange, could never be persuaded by his arguments into favoring Anjou. Indeed, it was rather on account of the love they bore the prince—whom they were determined to have for their sovereign—that they refused to listen to any persuasion in favor of his rival, although coming from his own lips. The states-general, in a report to the states of Holland, drawn up under the superintendence of the prince, brought forward all the usual arguments for accepting the French duke, in case the abjuration should take place. They urged the contract with Anjou (of August 13, 1578), the great expenses he had already incurred in their behalf; the danger of offending him; the possibility that in such case he would ally himself with Spain; the prospect that, in consequence of such a result, there would be three enemies in the field against them—the Walloons, the Spaniards, and the French, all whose forces would eventually be turned upon Holland and Zealand alone. It was represented that the selection of Anjou would, on the other hand, secure the friendship of France—an alliance which would inspire both the Emperor and the Spanish monarch with fear, for they could not contemplate without jealousy a possible incorporation of the provinces with that kingdom. Moreover, the geographical situation of France made its friendship inexpressibly desirable. The states of Holland and Zealand were, therefore, earnestly invited to send deputies to an assembly of the states-general, in order to conclude measures touching the declaration of independence to be made against the king, and concerning the election of the Duke of Anjou.

The official communications by speech or writing of Orange to the different corporations and assemblies were at this period of enormous extent. He was moved to frequent anger by the parsimony, the interprovincial jealousy, the dull perception of the different estates, and he often expressed his wrath in unequivocal language. He dealt roundly with all public bodies. His eloquence was distinguished by a bold, uncompromising, truth-telling spirit, whether the words might prove palatable or bitter to his audience. His language rebuked his hearers more frequently than it caressed them, for he felt it impossible, at all times, to consult both the humors and the high interests of the people, and he had no hesitation, as guardian of popular liberty, in denouncing the popular vices by which it was endangered.

By both great parties, he complained, his shortcomings were all noted, the good which he had accomplished passed over in silence. He solemnly protested that he desired, out of his whole heart, the advancement of that religion which he publicly professed, and with God’s blessing, hoped to profess to the end of his life, but nevertheless, he reminded the states that he had sworn, upon taking office as lieutenant-general, to keep "all the subjects of the land equally
under his protection," and that he had kept his oath. He rebuked the parsimony which placed the accepted chief of the provinces in a sordid and contemptible position. "The Archduke has been compelled," said he, in August, to the states-general, "to break up housekeeping, for want of means. How shameful and disreputable for the country, if he should be compelled, for very poverty, to leave the land!" He offered to lay down all the power with which he had himself been clothed, but insisted, if he were to continue in office, upon being provided with larger means of being useful. "'Twas impossible," he said, for him to serve longer on the same footing as heretofore," finding himself "without power or authority, without means, without troops, without money, without obedience." He reminded the states-general that the enemy, under pretext of peace negotiations, were ever circulating calumnious statements to the effect that he was personally the only obstacle to peace. The real object of these hopeless conferences was to sow dissension through the land, to set burgher against burgher, house against house. As in Italy, Guelphs and Ghibellines; as in Florence, the Neri, and Bianchi; as in Holland, the Hooks and Cabbeljaws had, by their unfortunate quarrels, armed fellow countrymen and families against each other—so also, nothing was so powerful as religious difference to set friend against friend, father against son, husband against wife.

He warned the states against the peace propositions of the enemy. Spain had no intention to concede, but was resolved to extirpate. For himself, he had certainly everything to lose by continued war. His magnificent estates were withheld, and, added he with simplicity, there is no man who does not desire to enjoy his own. The liberation of his son, too, from his foreign captivity, was, after the glory of God and the welfare of the fatherland, the dearest object of his heart. Moreover, he was himself approaching the decline of life. Twelve years he had spent in perpetual anxiety and labor for the cause. As he approached old age, he had sufficient reason to desire repose. Nevertheless, considering the great multitude of people who were leaning upon him, he should account himself disgraced if, for the sake of his own private advantage, he were to recommend a peace which was not perfectly secure. As regarded his own personal interests, he could easily place himself beyond danger—yet it would be otherwise with the people. The existence of the religion which, through the mercy of God he professed, would be sacrificed, and countless multitudes of innocent men would, by his act, be thrown bodily into the hands of the bloodthirsty inquisitors who, in times past, had murdered so many persons, and so utterly desolated the land. In regard to the ceaseless insinuations against his character which men uttered "over their tables and in the streets," he observed philosophically, that "mankind were naturally inclined to calumny, particularly against those who exercised government over them." His life was the best answer to those slanders. Being overwhelmed with debt, he should doubtless "do better in a personal point of view to accept the excellent and profitable offers which were daily made to him by the enemy." He might be justified in such a course, when it was remembered how many had deserted him and forsworn their religion. Nevertheless, he had ever refused,
and should ever refuse to listen to offers by which only his own personal
interests were secured. As to the defense of the country, he had thus far done
all in his power, with the small resources placed at his command. He was urged
by the "nearer-united states" to retain the post of lieutenant-general. He was
ready to consent. He was, however, not willing to hold office a moment, unless
he had power to compel cities to accept garrisons, to enforce the collection of
needful supplies throughout the provinces, and in general to do everything
which he judged necessary for the best interests of the country.

Three councils were now established—one to be in attendance upon the
archduke and the Prince of Orange, the two others to reside respectively in
Flanders and in Utrecht. They were to be appointed by Matthias and the
prince, upon a double nomination from the estates of the united provinces.
Their decisions were to be made according to a majority of votes, and there
was to be no secret cabinet behind and above their deliberations. It was long,
however, before these councils were put into working order. The fatal jealousy
of the provincial authorities, the small ambition of local magistrates,
interposed daily obstacles to the vigorous march of the generality. Never was
jealousy more mischievous, never circumspection more misapplied. It was not a
land nor a crisis in which there was peril of centralization. Local municipal
government was in truth the only force left. There was no possibility of its
being merged in a central authority which did not exist. The country was
without a center. There was small chance of apoplexy where there was no
head. The danger lay in the mutual repulsiveness of these atoms of sovereignty
—in the centrifugal tendencies which were fast resolving a nebulous
commonwealth into chaos. Disunion and dissension would soon bring about a
more fatal centralization—that of absorption in a distant despotism.

At the end of November, 1579, Orange made another remarkable speech in the
states-general at Antwerp. He handled the usual topics with his customary
vigor, and with that grace and warmth of delivery which always made his
eloquent so persuasive and impressive. He spoke of the countless calumnies
against himself, the chaffering niggardliness of the provinces, the slender
result produced by his repeated warnings. He told them bluntly the great cause
of all their troubles. It was the absence of a broad patriotism; it was the
narrow power grudged rather than given to the deputies who sat in the general
assembly. They were mere envoys, tied by instructions. They were powerless to
act, except after tedious reference to the will of their masters, the provincial
boards. The deputies of the Union came thither, he said, as advocates of their
provinces or their cities, not as councillors of a commonwealth, and sought to
further those narrow interests, even at the risk of destruction to their sister
states. The contributions, he complained, were assessed unequally, and
expended selfishly. Upon this occasion, as upon all occasions, he again
challenged inquiry into the purity of his government, demanded chastisement,
if any act of mal-administration on his part could be found, and repeated his
anxious desire either to be relieved from his functions, or to be furnished with the means of discharging them with efficiency.

On December 12, 1579, he again made a powerful speech in the states-general. Upon the ninth of January, 1580, following, he made an elaborate address upon the state of the country, urging the necessity of raising instantly a considerable army of good and experienced soldiers. He firmed the indispensable number of such a force at 12,000 foot, 4,000 horse, and at least 1,200 pioneers. "Weigh well the matters," said he, in conclusion, "which I have thus urged, and which are of the most extreme necessity. Men in their utmost need are daily coming to me for refuge, as if I held power over all things in my hand." At the same time he complained that by reason of the dilatoriness of the states, he was prevented from alleviating misery when he knew the remedy to be within reach. "I beg you, however, my masters," he continued, "to believe that this address of mine is no simple discourse. 'Tis a faithful presentment of matters which, if not reformed, will cause the speedy and absolute ruin of the land. Whatever betide, however, I pray you to hold yourselves assured, that with God’s help, I am determined to live with you or to die with you."

Early in the year 1580, the prince was doomed to a bitter disappointment, and the provinces to a severe loss, in the treason of Count Renneberg, Governor of Friesland. This young noble was of the great Lalain family. He was a younger brother of Anthony, Count of Hoogstraaten, the unwavering friend of Orange. He had been brought up in the family of his cousin, the Count de Lalain, Governor of Hainault, and had inherited the title of Renneberg from an uncle, who was a dignitary of the church. For more than a year there had been suspicions of his fidelity. He was supposed to have been tampered with by the Duke of Terranova, on the first arrival of that functionary in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, the Prince of Orange was unwilling to listen to the whispers against him. Being himself the mark of calumny, and having a tender remembrance of the elder brother, he persisted in reposing confidence in a man who was in reality unworthy of his friendship. George Lalain, therefore, remained stadholder of Friesland and Drenthe, and in possession of the capital city, Groningen.

The rumors concerning him proved correct. In November 1579, he entered into a formal treaty with Terranova, by which he was to receive, as the price of "the virtuous resolution which he contemplated," the sum of 10,000 crowns in hand, a further sum of 10,000 crowns within three months, and a yearly pension of 10,000 florins. Moreover, his barony of Ville was to be erected into a marquisate, and he was to receive the order of the Golden Fleece at the first vacancy. He was likewise to be continued in the same offices under the king which he now held from the estates. The bill of sale, by which he agreed with a certain Quislain le Bailly to transfer himself to Spain, fixed these terms with the technical scrupulousness of any other mercantile transaction. Renneberg sold himself as one would sell a yoke of oxen, and his motives were no whit
nobler than the cynical contract would indicate. "See you not," said he in a
private letter to a friend, "that this whole work is brewed by the Nassau's for
the sake of their own greatness, and that they are everywhere provided with
the very best crumbs? They are to be stadholders of the principal provinces; we
are to content ourselves with Overyssel and Drenthe. Therefore I have thought
it best to make my peace with the king, from whom more benefits are to be
got."

Jealousy and selfishness, then, were the motives of his virtuous resolution. He
had another, perhaps a nobler incentive. He was in love with the Countess
Meghen, widow of Lancelot Berlaymont, and it was privately stipulated that
the influence of his Majesty's government should be employed to bring about
his marriage with the lady. The treaty, however, which Renneberg had made
with Quislain le Bailly was not immediately carried out. Early in February,
1580, his sister and evil genius, Cornelia Lalain, wife of Baron Monceau, made
him a visit at Groningen. She implored him not to give over his soul to perdition
by oppressing the Holy Church. She also appealed to his family pride, which
should keep him, she said, from the contamination of companionship with
"base-born weavers and furriers." She was of opinion that to contaminate his
high-born fingers with base bribes were a lower degradation. The pension, the
crowns in hand, the marquisate, the collar of the Golden Fleece, were all held
before his eyes again. He was persuaded, moreover, that the fair hand of the
wealthy widow would be the crowning prize of his treason, but in this he was
destined to disappointment. The countess was reserved for a more brilliant and
a more bitter fate. She was to espouse a man of higher rank, but more
worthless character, also a traitor to the cause of freedom, to which she was
herself devoted, and who was even accused of attempting her life in her old
age, in order to supply her place with a younger rival.

The artful eloquence of Cornelia de Lalain did its work, and Renneberg entered
into correspondence with Parma. It is singular with how much indulgence his
conduct and character were regarded both before and subsequently to his
treason. There was something attractive about the man. In an age when many
German and Netherland nobles were given to drunkenness and debauchery, and
were distinguished rather for coarseness of manner and brutality of intellect
than for refinement or learning, Count Renneberg, on the contrary, was an
elegant and accomplished gentleman—the Sydney of his country in all but
loyalty of character. He was a classical scholar, a votary of music and poetry, a
graceful troubadour, and a valiant knight. He was "sweet and lovely of
conversation," generous and bountiful by nature. With so many good gifts, it
was a thousand pities that the gift of truth had been denied him. Never did
treason look more amiable, but it was treason of the blackest die. He was
treacherous, in the hour of her utmost need, to the country which had trusted
him. He was treacherous to the great man who had leaned upon his truth,
when all others had abandoned him. He was treacherous from the most sordid
of motives—jealousy of his friend and love of place and pelf—but his
subsequent remorse and his early death have cast a veil over the blackness of his crime.

While Cornelia de Lalain was in Groningen, Orange was in Holland. Intercepted letters left no doubt of the plot, and it was agreed that the prince, then on his way to Amsterdam, should summon the count to an interview. Renneberg’s trouble at the proximity of Orange could not be suppressed. He felt that he could never look his friend in the face again. His plans were not ripe; it was desirable to dissemble for a season longer; but how could he meet that tranquil eye which "looked quite through the deeds of men?" It was obvious to Renneberg that his deed was to be done forthwith, if he would escape discomfiture. The prince would soon be in Groningen, and his presence would dispel the plots which had been secretly constructed.

On the evening of March 3, 1580, the count entertained a large number of the most distinguished families of the place at a ball and banquet. At the supper-table, Hildebrand, chief burgomaster of the city, bluntly interrogated his host concerning the calumnious reports which were in circulation, expressing the hope that there was no truth in these inventions of his enemies. Thus summoned, Renneberg, seizing the hands of Hildebrand in both his own, exclaimed, "Oh, my father! you whom I esteem as my father, can you suspect me of such guilt? I pray you, trust me, and fear me not!"

With this he restored the burgomaster and all the other guests to confidence. The feast and dance proceeded, while Renneberg was quietly arranging his plot. During the night all the leading patriots were taken out of their beds, and carried to prison, notice being at the same time given to the secret adherents of Renneberg. Before dawn, a numerous mob of boatmen and vagrants, well armed, appeared upon the public square. They bore torches and standards, and amazed the quiet little city with their shouts. The place was formally taken into possession, cannon were planted in front of the Town-house to command the principal streets, and barricades erected at various important points. Just at daylight, Renneberg himself, in complete armor, rode into the square, and it was observed that he looked ghastly as a corpse. He was followed by thirty troopers, armed like himself, from head to foot. "Stand by me now," he cried to the assembled throng, "fail me not at this moment, for now I am for the first time your stadholder."

While he was speaking, a few citizens of the highest class forced their way through the throng and addressed the mob in tones of authority. They were evidently magisterial persons endeavoring to quell the riot. As they advanced, one of Renneberg’s men-at-arms discharged his carabine at the foremost gentleman, who was no other than burgomaster Hildebrand. He fell dead at the feet of the stadholder—of the man who had clasped his hands a few hours before, called him father, and implored him to entertain no suspicions of his honor. The death of this distinguished gentleman created a panic, during which
Renneberg addressed his adherents, and stimulated them to atone by their future zeal in the king’s service for their former delinquency. A few days afterwards the city was formally reunited to the royal government, but the count’s measures had been precipitated to such an extent, that he was unable to carry the province with him, as he had hoped. On the contrary, although he had secured the city, he had secured nothing else. He was immediately beleaguered by the states’ force in the province under the command of Barthold Entes, Hohenlo, and Philip Louis Nassau, and it was necessary to send for immediate assistance from Parma.

The Prince of Orange, being thus bitterly disappointed by the treachery of his friend, and foiled in his attempt to avert the immediate consequences, continued his interrupted journey to Amsterdam. Here he was received with unbounded enthusiasm.

CHAPTER 4

The Declaration of Independence of the United Provinces

The war continued in a languid and desultory manner in different parts of the country. At an action near Ingelmunster, the brave and accomplished De la Noue was made prisoner. This was a severe loss to the states, a cruel blow to Orange, for he was not only one of the most experienced soldiers, but one of the most accomplished writers of his age. His pen was as celebrated as his sword. In exchange for the illustrious Frenchman, the states in vain offered Count Egmont, who had been made prisoner a few weeks before, and De Selles, who was captured shortly afterwards. Parma answered, contemptuously, that he would not give a lion for two sheep. Even Champagny was offered in addition, but without success.

Parma had written to Philip, immediately upon the capture, that, were it not for Egmont, Selles, and others, then in the power of Orange, he should order the execution of La Noue. Under the circumstances, however, he had begged to be informed as to his Majesty’s pleasure, and in the meantime had placed the prisoner in the castle of Limburg, under charge of De Billy. His Majesty, of course, never signified his pleasure, and the illustrious soldier remained for five years in a loathsome dungeon more befitting a condemned malefactor than a prisoner of war. It was in the donjon keep of the castle, lighted only by an aperture in the roof, and was therefore exposed to the rain and all inclemencies of the sky, while rats, toads, and other vermin housed in the miry floor. Here this distinguished personage, Francis with the Iron Arm, whom all Frenchmen, Catholic or Huguenot, admired for his genius, bravery, and purity
of character, passed five years of close confinement. The government was most anxious to take his life, but the captivity of Egmont and others prevented the accomplishment of their wishes.

During this long period, the wife and numerous friends of La Noue were unwearied in their efforts to effect his ransom or exchange, but none of the prisoners in the hands of the patriots were considered a fair equivalent. The hideous proposition was even made by Philip II to La Noue, that he should receive his liberty if he would permit his eyes to be put out, as a preliminary condition. The fact is attested by several letters written by La Noue to his wife. The prisoner, wearied, shattered in health, and sighing for air and liberty, was disposed and even anxious to accept the infamous offer, and discussed the matter philosophically in his letters. That lady, however, horror-struck at the suggestion, implored him to reject the condition, which he accordingly consented to do. At last, in June 1585, he was exchanged, on extremely rigorous terms, for Egmont. During his captivity in this vile dungeon, he composed not only his famous political and military discourses, but several other works, among the rest, Annotations upon Plutarch and upon the Histories of Guicciardini.

The siege of Groningen proceeded, and Parma ordered some forces under Martin Schenck to advance to its relief. On the other hand, the meager states’ forces under Sonoy, Hohenlo, Entes, and Count John of Nassau’s young son, William Louis, had not yet made much impression upon the city. There was little military skill to atone for the feebleness of the assailing army, although there was plenty of rude valor. Barthold Entes, a man of desperate character, was impatient at the dilatoriness of the proceedings. After having been in disgrace with the states, since the downfall of his friend and patron, the Count De la Marck, he had recently succeeded to a regiment in place of Colonel Ysselstein, “dismissed for a homicide or two.” On the 17th of May, he had been dining at Rolda, in company with Hohenlo and the young Count of Nassau. Returning to the trenches in a state of wild intoxication, he accosted a knot of superior officers, informing them that they were but boys, and that he would show them how to carry the faubourg of Groningen on the instant. He was answered that the faubourg, being walled and moated, could be taken only by escalade or battery. Laughing loudly, he rushed forward toward the counterscarp, waving his sword, and brandishing on his left arm the cover of a butter firkin, which he had taken instead of his buckler. He had advanced, however, but a step, when a bullet from the faubourg pierced his brain, and he fell dead without a word.

So perished one of the wild founders of the Netherland commonwealth—one of the little band of reckless adventurers who had captured the town of Brill in 1572, and thus laid the foundation stone of a great republic, which was to dictate its laws to the empire of Charles V. He was in some sort a type. His character was emblematical of the worst side of the liberating movement.
Desperate, lawless, ferocious—a robber on land, a pirate by sea—he had rendered great service in the cause of his fatherland, and had done it much disgrace. By the evil deeds of men like himself, the fair face of liberty had been profaned at its first appearance. Born of a respectable family, he had been noted, when a student in this very Groningen where he had now found his grave, for the youthful profligacy of his character. After dissipating his patrimony, he had taken to the sea, the legalized piracy of the mortal struggle with Spain offering a welcome refuge to spendthrifts like himself. In common with many a banished noble of ancient birth and broken fortunes, the riotous student became a successful corsair, and it is probable that his prizes were made as well among the friends as the enemies of his country. He amassed in a short time 100,000 crowns—no contemptible fortune in those days. He assisted La Marck in the memorable attack upon Brill, but behaved badly and took to flight when Mondragon made his memorable expedition to relieve Tergoes. He had subsequently been imprisoned with La Marck for insubordination, and during his confinement had dissipated a large part of his fortune. In 1576, after the violation of the Ghent treaty, he had returned to his piratical pursuits, and having prospered again as rapidly as he had done during his former cruises, had been glad to exchange the ocean for more honorable service on shore. The result was the tragic yet almost ludicrous termination which we have narrated. He left a handsome property, the result of his various piracies, or, according to the usual euphemism, prizes. He often expressed regret at the number of traders whom he had cast into the sea, complaining, in particular, of one victim whom he had thrown overboard, who would never sink, but who for years long ever floated in his wake, and stared him in the face whenever he looked over his vessel’s side. A gambler, a profligate, a pirate, he had yet rendered service to the cause of freedom, and his name, sullying the purer and nobler ones of other founders of the commonwealth, “is enrolled in the capitol.”

Count Philip Hohenlo, upon whom now devolved the entire responsibility of the Groningen siege and of the Friesland operations, was only a few degrees superior to this northern corsair. A noble of high degree, nearly connected with the Nassau family, sprung of the best blood in Germany, handsome and dignified in appearance, he was, in reality only a debauchee and a drunkard. Personal bravery was his main qualification for a general, a virtue which he shared with many of his meanest soldiers. He had never learned the art of war, nor had he the least ambition to acquire it. Devoted to his pleasures, he depraved those under his command, and injured the cause for which he was contending. Nothing but defeat and disgrace were expected by the purer patriots from such guidance. "The benediction of God," wrote Albada, "cannot be hoped for under this chieftain, who by life and manners is fitter to drive swine than to govern pious and honorable men."

The event justified the prophecy. After a few trifling operations before Groningen, Hohenlo was summoned to the neighborhood of Coewerden, by the
reported arrival of Martin Schenck, at the head of a considerable force. On the 15th of June, the count marched all night and a part of the following morning, in search of the enemy. He came up with them upon Hardenberg Heath, in a broiling summer forenoon. His men were jaded by the forced march, overcome with the heat, tormented with thirst, and unable to procure even a drop of water. The royalists were fresh, so that the result of the contest was easily to be foreseen. Hohenlo’s army was annihilated in an hour’s time, the whole population fled out of Coewerden, the siege of Groningen was raised, Renneberg was set free to resume his operations on a larger scale, and the fate of all the northeastern provinces was once more swinging in the wind. The boors of Drenthe and Friesland rose again. They had already mustered in the field at an earlier season of the year, in considerable force. Calling themselves "the desperates," and bearing on their standard an eggshell with the yolk running out—to indicate that, having lost the meat they were yet ready to fight for the shell—they had swept through the open country, pillaging and burning. Hohenlo had defeated them in two encounters, slain a large number of their forces, and reduced them for a time to tranquility. His late overthrow once more set them loose. Renneberg, always apt to be over-elated in prosperity, as he was unduly dejected in adversity, now assumed all the airs of a conqueror. He had hardly 8,000 men under his orders, but his strength lay in the weakness of his adversaries. A small war now succeeded, with small generals, small armies, small campaigns, small sieges. For the time, the Prince of Orange was even obliged to content himself with such a general as Hohenlo. As usual, he was almost alone. "Donec eris felis," said he, emphatically,

"multos numerabis amicos,  
Tempora cum erunt nubila, nullus erit,"

and he was this summer doomed to a still harder deprivation by the final departure of his brother John from the Netherlands.

The count had been wearied out by petty miseries. His stadholderate of Gelderland had overwhelmed him with annoyance, for throughout the northeastern provinces there was neither system nor subordination. The magistrates could exercise no authority over an army which they did not pay, or a people whom they did not protect. There were endless quarrels between the various boards of municipal and provincial government, particularly concerning contributions and expenditures. During this wrangling, the country was exposed to the forces of Parma, to the private efforts of the Malcontents, to the unpaid soldiery of the states, to the armed and rebellious peasantry. Little heed was paid to the admonitions of Count John, who was of a hotter temper than was the Tranquil Prince. The stadholder gave way to fits of passion at the meanness and the insolence to which he was constantly exposed. He readily recognized his infirmity, and confessed himself unable to accommodate his irascibility to the "humores" of the inhabitants. There was often sufficient cause for his petulance. Never had praetor of a province a more penurious civil list. "The baker has given notice," wrote Count John, in
November, "that he will supply no more bread after tomorrow, unless he is paid." The states would furnish no money to pay the bill. It was no better with the butcher. "The cook has often no meat to roast," said the count, in the same letter, "so that we are often obliged to go supperless to bed." His lodgings were a half-roofed, half-finished, unfurnished barrack, where the stadholder passed his winter days and evenings in a small, dark, freezing cold chamber, often without firewood. Such circumstances were certainly not calculated to excite envy.

When in addition to such wretched parsimony, it is remembered that the count was perpetually worried by the quarrels of the provincial authorities with each other and with himself, he may be forgiven for becoming thoroughly exhausted at last. He was growing "grey and grizzled" with perpetual perplexity. He had been fed with annoyance, as if—to use his own homely expression—"he had eaten it with a spoon." Having already loaded himself with a debt of 600,000 florins, which he had spent in the states' service, and having struggled manfully against the petty tortures of his situation, he cannot be severely censured for relinquishing his post. The affairs of his own countship were in great confusion. His children—boys and girls—were many, and needed their fathers' guidance, while the eldest, William Louis, was already in arms for the Netherlands, following the instincts of his race. Distinguished for a rash valor, which had already gained the rebuke of his father and the applause of his comrades, he had commenced his long and glorious career by receiving a severe wound at Coewerden, which caused him to halt for life. Leaving so worthy a representative, the count was more justified in his departure. His wife, too, had died in his absence, and household affairs required his attention. It must be confessed, however, that if the memory of his deceased spouse had its claims, the selection of her successor was still more prominent among his anxieties. The worthy gentleman had been supernaturally directed as to his second choice, ere that choice seemed necessary, for before the news of his wife's death had reached him, the count dreamed that he was already united in second nuptials to the fair Cunigunda, daughter of the deceased Elector Palatine—a vision which was repeated many times. On the morrow he learned, to his amazement, that he was a widower, and entertained no doubt that he had been specially directed towards the princess seen in his slumbers, whom he had never seen in life. His friends were in favor of his marrying the Electress Dowager, rather than her daughter, whose years numbered less than half his own. The honest count, however, "after ripe consideration," decidedly preferred the maid to the widow. "I confess," he said, with much gravity, "that the marriage with the old Electress, in respect of her God-fearing disposition, her piety, her virtue, and the like, would be much more advisable. Moreover, as she hath borne her cross, and knows how to deal with gentlemen, so much the better would it be for me. Nevertheless, inasmuch as she has already had two husbands, is of a tolerable age, and is taller of stature than myself, my inclination is less towards her than towards her daughter."

For these various considerations, Count John, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his brother, definitely laid down his government of
Gelderland, and quitted the Netherlands about midsummer. Enough had not been done, in the opinion of the prince, so long as aught remained to do, and he could not bear that his brother should desert the country in the hour of its darkness, or doubt the Almighty when his hand was veiled in clouds. "One must do one’s best," said he, "and believe that when such misfortunes happen, God desires to prove us. If He sees that we do not lose our courage, He will assuredly help us. Had we thought otherwise, we should never have pierced the dykes on a memorable occasion, for it was an uncertain thing and a great sorrow for the poor people; yet did God bless the undertaking. He will bless us still, for his arm hath not been shortened."

On July 22, 1580, the Archduke Matthias, being fully aware of the general tendency of affairs, summoned a meeting of the generality in Antwerp. He did not make his appearance before the assembly, but requested that a deputation might wait upon him at his lodgings, and to this committee he unfolded his griefs. He expressed his hope that the states were not—in violation of the laws of God and man—about to throw themselves into the arms of a foreign prince. He reminded them of their duty to the holy Catholic religion, and to the illustrious house of Austria, while he also pathetically called their attention to the necessities of his own household, and hoped that they would, at least, provide for the arrears due to his domestics.

The states-general replied with courtesy as to the personal claims of the archduke. For the rest, they took higher grounds, and the coming Declaration of Independence already pierced through the studied decorum of their language. They defended their negotiation with Anjou on the ground of necessity, averring that the King of Spain had proved inexorable to all intercession, while, through the intrigues of their bitterest enemies, they had been entirely forsaken by the Empire.

Soon afterwards, a special legation, with Saint Aldegonde at its head, was dispatched to France to consult with the Duke of Anjou, and settled terms of agreement with him by the treaty of Plessis les Tours (on September 29, 1580), afterwards definitely ratified by the convention of Bordeaux, signed on the 23rd of the following January.

The states of Holland and Zealand, however, kept entirely aloof from this transaction, being from the beginning opposed to the choice of Anjou. From the first to the last, they would have no master but Orange, and to him, therefore, this year they formally offered the sovereignty of their provinces, but they offered it in vain.

The conquest of Portugal had effected a diversion in the affairs of the Netherlands. It was but a transitory one. The provinces found the hopes which they had built upon the necessity of Spain for large supplies in the peninsula—to their own consequent relief—soon changed into fears, for the rapid success of Alva in Portugal gave his master additional power to oppress the heretics of the North. Henry, the Cardinal King, had died in 1580, after succeeding to the youthful adventurer, Don Sebastian, slain during his chivalrous African campaign (August 4, 1578). The contest for the succession which opened upon the death of the aged monarch was brief, and in fifty-eight days, the bastard
Antonio, Philip’s only formidable competitor, had been utterly defeated and driven forth to lurk, like a hunted wild beast, among rugged mountain caverns, with a price of 100,000 crowns upon his head. In the course of the succeeding year, Philip received homage at Lisbon as King of Portugal. From the moment of this conquest, he was more disposed, and more at leisure than ever, to vent his wrath against the Netherlands, and against the man whom he considered the incarnation of their revolt.

Cardinal Granvelle had ever whispered in the king’s ear the expediency of taking off the prince by assassination. It has been seen how subtly distilled, and how patiently hoarded, was this priest’s venom against individuals, until the time arrived when he could administer the poison with effect. His hatred of Orange was intense and of ancient date. He was of opinion, too, that the prince might be scared from the post of duty, even if the assassin’s hand were not able to reach his heart. He was in favor of publicly setting a price upon his head—thinking that if the attention of all the murderers in the world were thus directed towards the illustrious victim, the prince would tremble at the dangers which surrounded him. “A sum of money would be well employed in this way,” said the cardinal, “and, as the Prince of Orange is a vile coward, fear alone will throw him into confusion.” Again, a few months later, renewing the subject, he observed, “’twould be well to offer a reward of thirty or forty thousand crowns to any one who will deliver the prince, dead or alive; since from very fear of it—as he is pusillanimous—it would not be unlikely that he should die of his own accord.”

It was insulting even to Philip’s intelligence to insinuate that the prince would shrink before danger, or die of fear. Had Orange ever been inclined to bombast, he might have answered the churchman’s calumny, as Caesar the soothsayer’s warning:

   “…Danger knows full well
       That Caesar is more dangerous than he…”

and in truth, Philip had long trembled on his throne before the genius of the man who had foiled Spain’s boldest generals and wiliest statesmen. The king, accepting the priest’s advice, resolved to fulminate a ban against the prince, and to set a price upon his head. “It will be well,” wrote Philip to Parma, “to offer thirty thousand crowns or so to any one who will deliver him dead or alive. Thus the country may be rid of a man so pernicious; or at any rate he will be held in perpetual fear, and therefore prevented from executing leisurely his designs.”

In accordance with these suggestions and these hopes, the famous ban was accordingly drawn up, and dated on March 15, 1580. It was, however, not formally published in the Netherlands until the month of June of the same year.

This edict will remain the most lasting monument to the memory of Cardinal Granvelle. It will be read when all his other state-papers and epistles, able as they incontestably are, shall have passed into oblivion. No panegyric of friend,
no palliating magnanimity of foe, can roll away this rock of infamy from his tomb. It was by Cardinal Granvelle and by Philip that a price was set upon the head of the foremost man of his age, as if he had been a savage beast, and that admission into the ranks of Spain’s haughty nobility was made the additional bribe to tempt the assassin.

The ban consisted of a preliminary narrative to justify the penalty with which it was concluded. It referred to the favors conferred by Philip and his father upon the prince, to his signal ingratitude and dissimulation. It accused him of originating the Request, the image-breaking, and the public preaching. It censured his marriage with an abbess, even during the lifetime of his wife; alluded to his campaigns against Alva, to his rebellion in Holland, and to the horrible massacres committed by Spaniards in that province, as the necessary consequences of his treason. It accused him of introducing liberty of conscience, of procuring his own appointment as Ruward, of violating the Ghent treaty, of foiling the efforts of Don John, and of frustrating the counsels of the Cologne commissioners by his perpetual distrust. It charged him with a newly-organized conspiracy, in the erection of the Utrecht Union; and for these and similar crimes—set forth with involutions, slow, spiral, and cautious as the head and front of the indictment was direct and deadly—it denounced the chastisement due to the "wretched hypocrite" who had committed such offenses.

"For these causes," concluded the ban, "we declare him traitor and miscreant, enemy of ourselves and of the country. As such we banish him perpetually from all our realms, forbidding all our subjects, of whatever quality, to communicate with him openly or privately, to administer to him victuals, drink, fire, or other necessaries. We allow all to injure him in property or life. We expose the said William Nassau as an enemy of the human race, giving his property to all who may seize it. And if any one of our subjects or any stranger should be found sufficiently generous of heart to rid us of this pest, delivering him to us, alive or dead, or taking his life, we will cause to be furnished to him immediately after the deed shall have been done, the sum of twenty-five thousand crowns in gold. If he have committed any crime, however heinous, we promise to pardon him; and if he be not already noble, we will ennoble him for his valor."

Such was the celebrated ban against the Prince of Orange. It was answered before the end of the year by the memorable "Apology of the Prince of Orange," one of the most startling documents in history. No defiance was ever thundered forth in the face of a despot in more terrible tones. It had become sufficiently manifest to the royal party that the prince was not to be purchased by "millions of money," or by unlimited family advancement, not to be cajoled by flattery or offers of illustrious friendship. It had been decided, therefore, to terrify him into retreat, or to remove him by murder. The government had been thoroughly convinced that the only way to finish the revolt, was to "finish Orange," according to the ancient advice of Antonio Perez. The mask was thrown off. It had been decided to forbid the prince bread, water, fire, and shelter; to give his wealth to the fisc, his heart to the assassin, his soul, as it
was hoped, to the Father of Evil. The rupture being thus complete, it was right that the "wretched hypocrite" should answer ban with ban, royal denunciation with sublime scorn. He had ill deserved, however, the title of hypocrite, he said. When the friend of government, he had warned them that by their complicated and perpetual persecutions they were twisting the rope of their own ruin. Was that hypocrisy? Since becoming their enemy, there had likewise been little hypocrisy found in him—unless it were hypocrisy to make open war upon government, to take their cities, to expel their armies from the country. The proscribed rebel, towering to a moral and even social superiority over the man who affected to be his master by right divine, swept down upon his antagonist with crushing effect. He repudiated the idea of a king in the Netherlands. The word might be legitimate in Castille, or Naples, or the Indies, but the provinces knew no such title. Philip had inherited in those countries only the power of Duke or Count—a power closely limited by constitutions more ancient than his birthright. Orange was no rebel then, Philip no legitimate monarch. Even were the prince rebellious, it was no more than Philip’s ancestor, Albert of Austria, had been towards his anointed sovereign, Emperor Adolphus of Nassau, ancestor of William. The ties of allegiance and conventional authority being severed, it had become idle for the king to affect superiority of lineage to the man whose family had occupied illustrious stations when the Habsburg’s were obscure squires in Switzerland, and had ruled as sovereign in the Netherlands before that overshadowing house had ever been named.

But whatever the hereditary claims of Philip in the country, he had forfeited them by the violation of his oaths, by his tyrannical suppression of the charters of the land; while by his personal crimes he had lost all pretension to sit in judgment upon his fellow man. Was a people not justified in rising against authority when all their laws had been trodden under foot, "not once only, but a million of times"?—and was William of Orange, lawful husband of the virtuous Charlotte de Bourbon, to be denounced for moral delinquency by a lascivious, incestuous, adulterous, and murderous king? With horrible distinctness he laid before the monarch all the crimes of which he believed him guilty, and having thus told Philip to his beard, "thus diddest thou," he had a withering word for the priest who stood at his back. "Tell me," he cried, "by whose command Cardinal Granvelle administered poison to the Emperor Maximilian? I know what the Emperor told me, and how much fear he felt afterwards for the king and for all Spaniards."

He ridiculed the effrontery of men like Philip and Granvelle, in charging "distrust" upon others, when it was the very atmosphere of their own existence. He proclaimed that sentiment to be the only salvation for the country. He reminded Philip of the words which his namesake of Macedon—a schoolboy in tyranny, compared to himself—had heard from the lips of Demosthenes—that the strongest fortress of a free people against a tyrant was distrust. That sentiment, worthy of eternal memory, the prince declared that he had taken from the "divine philippic," to engrave upon the heart of the nation, and he
prayed God that he might be more readily believed than the great orator had been by his people. He treated with scorn the price set upon his head, ridiculing this project to terrify him, for its want of novelty, and asking the monarch if he supposed the rebel ignorant of the various bargains which had frequently been made before with cutthroats and poisoners to take away his life. "I am in the hand of God," said William of Orange, "my worldly goods and my life have been long since dedicated to His service. He will dispose of them as seems best for His glory and my salvation."

On the contrary, however, if it could be demonstrated, or even hoped, that his absence would benefit the cause of the country, he proclaimed himself ready to go into exile. "Would to God," said he, in conclusion, "that my perpetual banishment, or even my death, could bring you a true deliverance from so many calamities. Oh, how consoling would be such banishment, how sweet such a death! For why have I exposed my property? Was it that I might enrich myself? Why have I lost my brothers? Was it that I might find new ones? Why have I left my son so long a prisoner? Can you give me another? Why have I put my life so often in danger? What reward can I hope after my long services, and the almost total wreck of my earthly fortunes, if not the prize of having acquired, perhaps at the expense of my life, your liberty? If then, my masters, you judge that my absence or my death can serve you, behold me ready to obey. Command me—send me to the ends of the earth—I will obey. Here is my head, over which no prince, no monarch, has power but yourselves. Dispose of it for your good, for the preservation of your Republic, but if you judge that the moderate amount of experience and industry which is in me, if you judge that the remainder of my property and of my life can yet be of service to you, I dedicate them afresh to you and to the country."

His motto—most appropriate to his life and character—"Je maintiendrai," was the concluding phrase of the document. His arms and signature were also formally appended, and the Apology, translated into most modern languages, was sent to nearly every potentate in Christendom. It had been previously, on December 13, 1580, read before the assembly of the united states at Delft, and approved as cordially as the ban was indignantly denounced.

During the remainder of the year 1580, and the half of the following year, the seat of hostilities was mainly in the Northeast—Parma, while waiting the arrival of fresh troops, being inactive. The operations, like the armies and the generals, were petty. Hohenlo was opposed to Renneberg. After a few insignificant victories, the latter laid siege to Steenwyk, a city in itself of no great importance, but the key to the province of Drenthe. The garrison consisted of six hundred soldiers, and half as many trained burghers. Renneberg, having 6,000 foot and 1,200 horse, summoned the place to surrender, but was answered with defiance. Captain Cornput, who had escaped from Groningen, after unsuccessfully warning the citizens of Renneberg’s meditated treason, commanded in Steenwyk, and his courage and cheerfulness sustained the population of the city during a close winter siege. Tumultuous mobs in the streets demanding that the place should be given over ere it was
too late, he denounced to their faces as “flocks of gabbling geese,” unworthy the attention of brave men. To a butcher who, with the instinct of his craft, begged to be informed what the population were to eat when the meat was all gone, he coolly observed, “We will eat you, villain, first of all, when the time comes; so go home and rest assured that you, at least, are not to die of starvation.”

With such rough but cheerful admonitions did the honest soldier, at the head of his little handful, sustain the courage of the beleaguered city. Meantime Renneberg pressed it hard. He bombarded it with red-hot balls, a new invention introduced five years before by Stephen Bathor, King of Poland, at the siege of Dantzig. Many houses were consumed, but still Cornput and the citizens held firm. As the winter advanced, and the succor which had been promised still remained in the distance, Renneberg began to pelt the city with sarcasms, which, it was hoped, might prove more effective than the red-hot balls. He sent a herald to know if the citizens had eaten all their horses yet, a question which was answered by an ostentatious display of sixty starving hacks—all that could be mustered—upon the heights. He sent them on another occasion, a short letter, which ran as follows:

Most Honorable, Most Steadfast: As, during the present frost, you have but little exercise in the trenches—as you cannot pass your time in twirling your finger-rings, seeing that they have all been sold to pay your soldiers’ wages—as you have nothing to rub your teeth upon, nor to scour your stomachs withal, and as, nevertheless, you require something if only to occupy your minds, I send you the enclosed letter, in hope it may yield amusement. — January 15, 1581."

The enclosure was a letter from the Prince of Orange to the Duke of Anjou, which, as it was pretended, had been intercepted. It was a clumsy forgery, but it answered the purpose of more skillful counterfeiting, at a period when political and religious enmity obscured men’s judgment. "As to the point of religion," the prince was made to observe, for example, to his illustrious correspondent, "that is all plain and clear. No sovereign who hopes to come to any great advancement ought to consider religion, or hold it in regard. Your Highness, by means of the garrisons, and fortresses, will be easily master of the principal cities in Flanders and Brabant, even if the citizens were opposed to you. Afterwards you will compel them without difficulty to any religion which may seem most conducive to the interests of your Highness.” Odious and cynical as was the whole tone of the letter, it was extensively circulated. There were always natures base and brutal enough to accept the calumny and to make it current among kindred souls. It may be doubted whether Renneberg attached faith to the document, but it was natural that he should take a malicious satisfaction in spreading this libel against the man whose perpetual scorn he had so recently earned. Nothing was more common than such forgeries, and at that very moment a letter, executed with equal
grossness, was passing from hand to hand, which purported to be from the count himself to Parma. History has less interest in contradicting the calumnies against a man like Renneberg. The fictitious epistle of Orange, however, was so often republished, and the copies so carefully distributed, that the prince had thought it important to add an express repudiation of its authorship, by way of appendix to his famous Apology. He took the occasion to say that, if a particle of proof could be brought that he had written the letter, or any letter resembling it, he would forthwith leave the Netherlands, never to show his face there again.

Notwithstanding this well known denial, however, Renneberg thought it facetious to send the letter into Steenwyk, where it produced but small effect upon the minds of the burghers. Meantime, they had received intimation that succor was on its way. Hollow balls containing letters were shot into the town, bringing the welcome intelligence that the English colonel, John Norris, with 6,000 states’ troops, would soon make his appearance for their relief, and the brave Cornput added his cheerful exhortations to heighten the satisfaction thus produced. A day or two afterwards, three quails were caught in the public square, and the commandant improved the circumstance by many quaint homilies. The number three, he observed, was typical of the Holy Trinity, which had thus come symbolically to their relief. The Lord had sustained the fainting Israelites with quails. The number three indicated three weeks, within which time the promised succor was sure to arrive. Accordingly, upon the 22nd of February, 1581, at the expiration of the third week, Norris succeeded in victualling the town, the merry and steadfast Cornput was established as a true prophet, and Count Renneberg abandoned the siege in despair.

The subsequent career of that unhappy nobleman was brief. On the 19th of July, his troops were signally defeated by Sonoy and Norris, the fugitive royalists retreating into Groningen at the very moment when their general, who had been prevented by illness from commanding them, was receiving the last sacraments. Remorse, shame, and disappointment had literally brought Renneberg to his grave. “His treason,” says a contemporary, “was a nail in his coffin,” and on his deathbed he bitterly bemoaned his crime. “Groningen! Groningen! would that I had never seen thy walls!” he cried repeatedly in his last hours. He refused to see his sister, whose insidious counsels had combined with his own evil passions to make him a traitor, and he died on July 23, 1581, repentant and submissive. His heart, after his decease, was found “shriveled to the dimensions of a walnut,” a circumstance attributed to poison by some, to remorse by others. His regrets, his early death, and his many attractive qualities, combined to save his character from universal denunciation, and his name, although indelibly stained by treason, was ever mentioned with pity rather than with rancor.

Great changes, destined to be perpetual, were steadily preparing in the internal condition of the provinces. A preliminary measure of an important character had been taken early this year by the assembly of the united provinces held in the month of January at Delft. This was the establishment of a general executive council. The constitution of the board was arranged on the
13th of the month, and was embraced in eighteen articles. The number of councillors was fixed at thirty, all to be native Netherlanders, a certain proportion to be appointed from each province by its estates. The advice and consent of this body as to treaties with foreign powers were to be indispensable, but they were not to interfere with the rights and duties of the states-general, nor to interpose any obstacle to the arrangements with the Duke of Anjou.

While this additional machine for the self-government of the provinces was in the course of creation, the Spanish monarch, on the other hand, had made another effort to recover the authority which he felt slipping from his grasp. Philip was in Portugal, preparing for his coronation in that new kingdom—an event to be nearly contemporaneous with his deposition from the Netherland sovereignty, so solemnly conferred upon him a quarter of a century before in Brussels; but although thus distant, he was confident that he could more wisely govern the Netherlands than the inhabitants could do, and unwilling as ever to confide in the abilities of those to whom he had delegated his authority. Provided, as he unquestionably was at that moment, with a more energetic representative than any who had before exercised the functions of royal governor in the provinces, he was still disposed to harass, to doubt, and to interfere. With the additional cares of the Portuguese conquest upon his hands, he felt as irresistibly impelled as ever to superintend the minute details of provincial administration. To do this was impossible. It was, however, not impossible, by attempting to do it, to produce much mischief. "It gives me pain," wrote Granvelle, "to see his Majesty working as before—choosing to understand everything and to do everything. By this course, as I have often said before, he really accomplishes much less." The king had, moreover, recently committed the profound error of sending the Duchess Margaret of Parma to the Netherlands again. He had the fatuity to believe her memory so tenderly cherished in the provinces as to ensure a burst of loyalty at her reappearance, while the irritation which he thus created in the breast of her son he affected to disregard. The event was what might have been foreseen.

The Netherlanders were very moderately excited by the arrival of their former regent, but the Prince of Parma was furious. His mother actually arrived at Namur in the month of August, 1580, to assume the civil administration of the provinces, and he was himself, according to the king’s request, to continue in the command of the army. Anyone who had known human nature at all, would have recognized that Alexander Farnese was not the man to be put into leading strings. A sovereign who was possessed of any administrative sagacity, would have seen the absurdity of taking the reins of government at that crisis from the hands of a most determined and energetic man, to confide them to the keeping of a woman. A king who was willing to reflect upon the consequences of his own acts, must have foreseen the scandal likely to result from an open quarrel for precedence between such a mother and son. Margaret of Parma was instantly informed, however, by Alexander, that a divided authority like that proposed was entirely out of the question. Both offered to resign, but Alexander was unflinching in his determination to retain all the power or none.
The duchess, as docile to her son after her arrival as she had been to the king on undertaking the journey, and feeling herself unequal to the task imposed upon her, implored Philip’s permission to withdraw, almost as soon as she had reached her destination. Granvelle’s opinion was likewise opposed to this interference with the administration of Alexander, and the king at last suffered himself to be overruled. By the end of the year 1581, letters arrived confirming the Prince of Parma in his government, but requesting the Duchess of Parma to remain privately in the Netherlands. She accordingly continued to reside there under an assumed name until the autumn of 1583, when she was at last permitted to return to Italy.

During the summer of 1581, the same spirit of persecution which had inspired the Catholics to inflict such infinite misery upon those of the Reformed faith in the Netherlands, began to manifest itself in overt acts against the papists by those who had at last obtained political ascendancy over them. Edicts were published in Antwerp, in Utrecht, and in different cities of Holland, suspending the exercise of the Roman worship. These statutes were certainly a long way removed in horror from those memorable placards which sentenced the Reformers by thousands to the axe, the cord, and the stake, but it was still melancholy to see the persecuted becoming persecutors in their turn. They were excited to these stringent measures by the noisy zeal of certain Dominican monks in Brussels, whose extravagant discourses were daily inflaming the passions of the Catholics to a dangerous degree. The authorities of the city accordingly thought it necessary to suspend, by proclamation, the public exercise of the ancient religion, assigning, as their principal reason for this prohibition, the shocking jugglery by which simple-minded persons were constantly deceived. They alluded particularly to the practice of working miracles by means of relics, pieces of the holy cross, bones of saints, and the perspiration of statues. They charged that bits of lath were daily exhibited as fragments of the cross; that the bones of dogs and monkeys were held up for adoration as those of saints; and that oil was poured habitually into holes drilled in the heads of statues, that the populace might believe in their miraculous sweating. For these reasons, and to avoid the tumult and possible bloodshed to which the disgust excited by such charlatanry might give rise, the Roman Catholic worship was suspended until the country should be restored to greater tranquility. Similar causes led to similar proclamations in other cities. The Prince of Orange lamented the intolerant spirit thus showing itself among those who had been its martyrs, but it was not possible at that moment to keep it absolutely under control.

A most important change was now to take place in his condition, a most vital measure was to be consummated by the provinces. The step, which could never be retraced, was, after long hesitation, finally taken upon the 26th of July, 1581, upon which day the united provinces, assembled at the Hague, solemnly declared their independence of Philip, and renounced their allegiance forever. This act was accomplished with the deliberation due to its gravity. At the same time it left the country in a very divided condition. This was inevitable. The prince had done all that one man could do to hold the Netherlands together
and unite them perpetually into one body politic, and perhaps, if he had been inspired by a keener personal ambition, this task might have been accomplished. The seventeen provinces might have accepted his dominion, but they would agree to that of no other sovereign. Providence had not decreed that the country, after its long agony, should give birth to a single and perfect commonwealth. The Walloon provinces had already fallen off from the cause, notwithstanding the entreaties of the prince. The other Netherlands, after long and tedious negotiation with Anjou, had at last consented to his supremacy, but from this arrangement Holland and Zealand held themselves aloof. By a somewhat anomalous proceeding, they sent deputies along with those of the other provinces, to the conferences with the duke, but it was expressly understood that they would never accept him as sovereign. They were willing to contract with him and with their sister provinces—over which he was soon to exercise authority—a firm and perpetual league, but as to their own chief, their hearts were fixed. The Prince of Orange should be their lord and master, and none other. It lay only in his self-denying character that he had not been clothed with this dignity long before. He had, however, persisted in the hope that all the provinces might be brought to acknowledge the Duke of Anjou as their sovereign, under conditions which constituted a free commonwealth with a hereditary chief, and in this hope he had constantly refused concession to the wishes of the northern provinces. He in reality exercised sovereign power over nearly the whole population of the Netherlands. Already in 1580, at the assembly held in April, the states of Holland had formally requested him to assume the full sovereignty over them, with the title of Count of Holland and Zealand forfeited by Philip. He had not consented, and the proceedings had been kept comparatively secret. As the negotiations with Anjou advanced, and as the corresponding abjuration of Philip was more decisively indicated, the consent of the prince to this request was more warmly urged. As it was evident that the provinces, thus bent upon placing him at their head, could by no possibility be induced to accept the sovereignty of Anjou; as, moreover, the act of renunciation of Philip could no longer be deferred; the Prince of Orange reluctantly and provisionally accepted the supreme power over Holland and Zealand. This arrangement was finally accomplished upon the 24th of July, 1581, and the act of abjuration took place two days afterwards. The offer of the sovereignty over the other united provinces had been accepted by Anjou six months before.

Thus, the Netherlands were divided into three portions, the reconciled provinces, the united provinces under Anjou, and the northern provinces under Orange, the last division forming the germ, already nearly developed, of the coming republic. The constitution, or catalogue of conditions, by which the sovereignty accorded to Anjou was reduced to such narrow limits as to be little more than a nominal authority, while the power remained in the hands of the representative body of the provinces, will be described, somewhat later, together with the inauguration of the duke. For the present it is necessary that the reader should fully understand the relative position of the prince and of
the northern provinces. The memorable act of renunciation—the Netherland declaration of independence—will then be briefly explained. On March 29, 1580, a resolution passed the assembly of Holland and Zealand never to make peace or enter into any negotiations with the King of Spain on the basis of his sovereignty. The same resolution provided that his name—hitherto used in all public acts—should be forever discarded, that his seal should be broken, and that the name and seal of the Prince of Orange should be substituted in all commissions and public documents. At almost the same time, the states of Utrecht passed a similar resolution. These offers were, however, not accepted, and the affair was preserved profoundly secret. On July 5, 1581, "the knights, nobles, and cities of Holland and Zealand," again, in an urgent and solemn manner, requested the prince to accept the "entire authority as sovereign and chief of the land, as long as the war should continue." This limitation as to time was inserted most reluctantly by the states, and because it was perfectly well understood that without it the prince would not accept the sovereignty at all. The act by which this dignity was offered, conferred full power to command all forces by land and sea, to appoint all military officers, and to conduct all warlike operations, without the control or advice of any person whatsoever. It authorized him, with consent of the states, to appoint all financial and judicial officers, created him the supreme executive chief, and fountain of justice and pardon, and directed him "to maintain the exercise only of the Reformed evangelical religion, without, however, permitting that inquiries should be made into any man’s belief or conscience, or that any injury or hindrance should be offered to any man on account of his religion."

The sovereignty thus pressingly offered, and thus limited as to time, was finally accepted by William of Orange, according to a formal act dated at the Hague, July 5, 1581, but it will be perceived that no powers were conferred by this new instrument beyond those already exercised by the prince. It was, as it were, a formal continuance of the functions which he had exercised since 1576 as the king’s stadholder, according to his old commission of 1555, although a vast difference existed in reality. The king’s name was now discarded and his sovereignty disowned, while the proscribed rebel stood in his place, exercising supreme functions, not vicariously, but in his own name. The limitation as to time was, moreover, soon afterwards secretly, and without the knowledge of Orange, cancelled by the states. They were determined that the prince should be their sovereign, if they could make him so, for the term of his life. The offer having thus been made and accepted upon the fifth of July, oaths of allegiance and fidelity were exchanged between the prince and the estates upon the 24th of the same month. In these solemnities, the states, as representing the provinces, declared that because the King of Spain, contrary to his oath as Count of Holland and Zealand, had not only not protected these provinces, but had sought with all his might to reduce them to eternal slavery, it had been found necessary to forsake him. They therefore proclaimed every inhabitant absolved from allegiance, while at the same time, in the name of
the population, they swore fidelity to the Prince of Orange, as representing the supreme authority.

Two days afterwards, upon the 26th of July, 1581, the memorable Declaration of Independence was issued by the deputies of the united provinces, then solemnly assembled at the Hague. It was called the Act of Abjuration. It deposed Philip from his sovereignty, but was not the proclamation of a new form of government, for the united provinces were not ready to dispense with a hereditary chief. Unluckily, they had already provided themselves with a very bad one to succeed Philip in the dominion over most of their territory, while the northern provinces were fortunate enough and wise enough to take the Father of the country for their supreme magistrate.

The document by which the provinces renounced their allegiance was not the most felicitous of their state papers. It was too prolix and technical. Its style had more of the formal phraseology of legal documents than befitted this great appeal to the whole world and to all time. Nevertheless, this is but matter of taste. The Netherlanders were so eminently a law-abiding people, that, like the American patriots of the eighteenth century, they on most occasions preferred punctilious precision to florid declamation. They chose to conduct their revolt according to law. At the same time, while thus decently wrapping herself in conventional garments, the spirit of Liberty revealed nonetheless her majestic proportions.

At the very outset of the Abjuration, these fathers of the Republic laid down wholesome truths, which at that time seemed startling blasphemies in the ears of Christendom. “All mankind know,” said the preamble, “that a prince is appointed by God to cherish his subjects, even as a shepherd to guard his sheep. When, therefore, the prince does not fulfil his duty as protector; when he oppresses his subjects, destroys their ancient liberties, and treats them as slaves, he is to be considered, not a prince, but a tyrant. As such, the estates of the land may lawfully and reasonably depose him, and elect another in his room.”

Having enunciated these maxims, the estates proceeded to apply them to their own case, and certainly never was an ampler justification for renouncing a prince since princes were first instituted. The states ran through the history of the past quarter of a century, patiently accumulating a load of charges against the monarch, a tithe of which would have furnished cause for his dethronement. Without passion or exaggeration, they told the world their wrongs. The picture was not highly colored. On the contrary, it was rather a feeble than a striking portrait of the monstrous iniquity which had so long been established over them. Nevertheless, they went through the narrative conscientiously and earnestly. They spoke of the king’s early determination to govern the Netherlands, not by natives but by Spaniards; to treat them not as constitutional countries, but as conquered provinces; to regard the inhabitants not as liege subjects, but as enemies; above all, to supersede their ancient liberty by the Spanish Inquisition, and they alluded to the first great step in this scheme—the creation of the new bishoprics, each with its staff of inquisitors.
They noticed the memorable Petition, the mission of Berghen and Montigny, their imprisonment and taking off, in violation of all national law, even that which had ever been held sacred by the most cruel and tyrannical princes. They sketched the history of Alva's administration; his entrapping the most eminent nobles by false promises, and delivering them to the executioner; his countless sentences of death, outlawry, and confiscation; his erection of citadels to curb; his imposition of the tenth and twentieth penny to exhaust the land; his Blood-Council and its achievements; and the immeasurable woe produced by hanging, burning, banishing, and plundering, during his seven years of residence. They adverted to the Grand Commander, as having been sent, not to improve the condition of the country, but to pursue the same course of tyranny by more concealed ways. They spoke of the horrible mutiny which broke forth at his death; of the Antwerp Fury; of the express approbation rendered to that great outrage by the king, who had not only praised the crime, but promised to recompense the criminals. They alluded to Don John of Austria and his duplicity, to his pretended confirmation of the Ghent treaty, to his attempts to divide the country against itself, to the Escovedo policy, to the intrigues with the German regiments. They touched upon the Cologne negotiations, and the fruitless attempt of the patriots upon that occasion to procure freedom of religion, while the object of the royalists was only to distract and divide the nation. Finally, they commented with sorrow and despair upon that last and crowning measure of tyranny—the ban against the Prince of Orange.

They calmly observed, after this recital, that they were sufficiently justified in forsaking a sovereign who for more than twenty years had forsaken them. Obeying the law of nature; desirous of maintaining the rights, charters, and liberties of their fatherland; determined to escape from slavery to Spaniards; and making known their decision to the world, they declared the King of Spain deposed from his sovereignty, and proclaimed that they should recognize thenceforth neither his title nor jurisdiction. Three days afterwards, on the 29th of July, the assembly adopted a formula by which all persons were to be required to signify their abjuration.

Such were the forms by which the united provinces threw off their allegiance to Spain, and ipso facto established a republic, which was to flourish for two centuries. This result, however, was not exactly foreseen by the congress which deposed Philip. The fathers of the commonwealth did not baptize it by the name of Republic. They did not contemplate a change in their form of government. They had neither an aristocracy nor a democracy in their thoughts. Like the actors in our own great national drama, these Netherland patriots were struggling to sustain, not to overthrow; unlike them, they claimed no theoretical freedom for humanity, promulgated no doctrine of popular sovereignty; they insisted merely on the fulfillment of actual contracts, signed, sealed, and sworn to by many successive sovereigns. Acting upon the principle that government should be for the benefit of the governed, and in conformity to the dictates of reason and justice, they examined the facts by those divine lights, and discovered cause to discard their ruler. They
did not object to being ruled. They were satisfied with their historical institutions, and preferred the mixture of hereditary sovereignty with popular representation, to which they were accustomed. They did not devise an à priori constitution. Philip, having violated the law of reason and the statutes of the land, was deposed, and a new chief magistrate was to be elected in his stead. This was popular sovereignty in fact, but not in words. The deposition and election could be legally justified only by the inherent right of the people to depose and to elect; yet the provinces, in their Declaration of Independence, spoke of the divine right of kings, even while dethroning, by popular right, their own king!

So also, in the instructions given by the states to their envoys charged to justify the abjuration before the Imperial diet held at Augsburg, twelve months later, the highest ground was claimed for the popular right to elect or depose the sovereign, while at the same time, kings were spoken of as "appointed by God." It is true that they were described, in the same clause, as "chosen by the people"—which was, perhaps, as exact a concurrence in the maxim of Vox populi, vox Dei, as the boldest democrat of the day could demand. In truth, a more democratic course would have defeated its own ends. The murderous and mischievous pranks of Imbize, Ryhove, and such demagogues, at Ghent and elsewhere, with their wild theories of what they called Grecian, Roman, and Helvetian republicanism, had inflicted damage enough on the cause of freedom, and had paved the road for the return of royal despotism. The senators assembled at the Hague gave more moderate instructions to their delegates at Augsburg. They were to place the king’s tenure upon contract—not an implied one, but a contract as literal as the lease of a farm. The house of Austria, they were to maintain, had come into the possession of the seventeen Netherlands upon certain express conditions, and with the understanding that its possession was to cease with the first condition broken. It was a question of law and fact, not of royal or popular right. They were to take the ground, not only that the contract had been violated, but that the foundation of perpetual justice upon which it rested, had likewise been undermined. It was time to vindicate both written charters and general principles. "God has given absolute power to no mortal man," said Saint Aldegonde, "to do his own will against all laws and all reason." "The contracts which the king has broken are no pedantic fantasies," said the estates, "but laws planted by nature in the universal heart of mankind, and expressly acquiesced in by prince and people."

All men, at least, who speak the English tongue, will accept the conclusion of the provinces, that when laws which protected the citizen against arbitrary imprisonment and guaranteed him a trial in his own province, which forbade the appointment of foreigners to high office, which secured the property of the citizen from taxation except by the representative body, which forbade intermeddling on the part of the sovereign with the conscience of the subject in religious matters—when such laws had been subverted by blood tribunals, where drowsy judges sentenced thousands to stake and scaffold without a hearing; by excommunication, confiscation, banishment; by hanging, beheading, burning, to such enormous extent and with such terrible monotony
that the executioner’s sword came to be looked upon as the only symbol of justice; then surely it might be said, without exaggeration, that the complaints of the Netherlanders were "no pedantic fantasies,” and that the king had ceased to perform his functions as dispenser of God’s justice. The Netherlanders dealt with facts. They possessed a body of laws, monuments of their national progress, by which as good a share of individual liberty was secured to the citizen as was then enjoyed in any country of the world. Their institutions admitted of great improvement, no doubt; but it was natural that a people so circumstanced should be unwilling to exchange their condition for the vassalage of "Moors or Indians."

At the same time it may be doubted whether the instinct for political freedom only would have sustained them in the long contest, and whether the bonds which united them to the Spanish Crown would have been broken, had it not been for the stronger passion for religious liberty, by which so large a portion of the people was animated. Boldly as the united states of the Netherlands laid down their political maxims, the quarrel might perhaps have been healed if the religious question had admitted of a peaceable solution. Philip’s bigotry amounting to frenzy, and the Netherlanders of "the religion" being willing, in their own words, "to die the death" rather than abandon the Reformed faith, there was upon this point no longer room for hope. In the act of abjuration, however, it was thought necessary to give offense to no class of the inhabitants, but to lay down such principles only as enlightened Catholics would not oppose. All parties abhorred the Inquisition, and hatred to that institution is ever prominent among the causes assigned for the deposition of the monarch. "Under pretence of maintaining the Roman religion," said the estates, "the king has sought by evil means to bring into operation the whole strength of the placards and of the Inquisition—the first and true cause of all our miseries."

Without making any assault upon the Roman Catholic faith, the authors of the great act by which Philip was forever expelled from the Netherlands showed plainly enough that religious persecution had driven them at last to extremity. At the same time, they were willing, for the sake of conciliating all classes of their countrymen, to bring the political causes of discontent into the foreground, and to use discreet language upon the religious question. Such, then, being the spirit which prompted the provinces upon this great occasion, it may be asked, who were the men who signed a document of such importance? In whose name and by what authority did they act against the sovereign? The signers of the Declaration of Independence acted in the name and by the authority of the Netherland people. The estates were the constitutional representatives of that people. The statesmen of that day discovering, upon cold analysis of facts, that Philip’s sovereignty was legally forfeited, formally proclaimed that forfeiture. Then inquiring what had become of the sovereignty, they found it not in the mass of the people, but in the representative body, which actually personated the people. The estates of the different provinces—consisting of the knights, nobles, and burgesses of each—sent, accordingly, their deputies to the general assembly at the Hague, and by
this congress the decree of abjuration was issued. It did not occur to anyone to summon the people in their primary assemblies, nor would the people of that day have comprehended the objects of such a summons. They were accustomed to the action of the estates, and those bodies represented as large a number of political capacities as could be expected of assemblies chosen then upon general principles. The hour had not arrived for more profound analysis of the social compact. Philip was accordingly deposed justly, legally, formally—justly, because it had become necessary to abjure a monarch who was determined not only to oppress but to exterminate his people; legally, because he had habitually violated the constitutions which he had sworn to support; formally, because the act was done in the name of the people, by the body historically representing the people.

What, then, was the condition of the nation, after this great step had been taken? It stood, as it were, with its sovereignty in its hand, dividing it into two portions, and offering it, thus separated, to two distinct individuals. The sovereignty of Holland and Zealand had been reluctantly accepted by Orange. The sovereignty of the united provinces had been offered to Anjou, but the terms of agreement with that duke had not yet been ratified. The movement was therefore triple, consisting of an abjuration and of two separate elections of hereditary chiefs, these two elections being accomplished in the same manner, by the representative bodies respectively of the united provinces, and of Holland and Zealand. Neither the abjuration nor the elections were acted upon beforehand by the communities, the train-bands, or the guilds of the cities—all represented, in fact, by the magistrates and councils of each; nor by the peasantry of the open country—all supposed to be represented by the knights and nobles. All classes of individuals, however, arranged in various political or military combinations, gave their acquiescence afterwards, together with their oaths of allegiance. The people approved the important steps taken by their representatives.

Without a direct intention on the part of the people or its leaders to establish a republic, the Republic established itself. Providence did not permit the whole country, so full of wealth, intelligence, healthy political action, so stocked with powerful cities and an energetic population, to be combined into one free and prosperous commonwealth. The factious ambition of a few grandees, the cynical venality of many nobles, the frenzy of the Ghent democracy, the spirit of religious intolerance, the consummate military and political genius of Alexander Farnese, the exaggerated self-abnegation and the tragic fate of Orange, all united to dissever this group of flourishing and kindred provinces.

The want of personal ambition on the part of William the Silent inflicted perhaps a serious damage upon his country. He believed a single chief requisite for the united states; he might have been, but always refused to become that chief; and yet he has been held up for centuries by many writers as a conspirator and a self-seeking intriguer. "It seems to me," said he, with equal pathos and truth, upon one occasion, "that I was born in this bad planet that all which I do might be misinterpreted." The people worshipped him, and there was many an occasion when his election would have been carried with
enthusiasm. "These provinces," said John of Nassau, "are coming very unwillingly into the arrangement with the Duke of Alençon. The majority feel much more inclined to elect the prince, who is daily, and without intermission, implored to give his consent. His Grace, however, will in no wise agree to this; not because he fears the consequences, such as loss of property or increased danger, for therein he is plunged as deeply as he ever could be; on the contrary, if he considered only the interests of his race and the grandeur of his house, he could expect nothing but increase of honor, gold, and gear, with all other prosperity. He refuses only on this account—that it may not be thought that, instead of religious freedom for the country, he has been seeking a kingdom for himself and his own private advancement. Moreover, he believes that the connection with France will be of more benefit to the country and to Christianity than if a peace should be made with Spain, or than if he should himself accept the sovereignty, as he is desired to do."

The unfortunate negotiations with Anjou, to which no man was more opposed than Count John, proceeded therefore. In the meantime, the sovereignty over the united provinces was provisionally held by the national council, and, at the urgent solicitation of the states-general, by the prince. The Archduke Matthias, whose functions were most unceremoniously brought to an end by the transactions which we have been recording, took his leave of the states, and departed in the month of October. Brought to the country a beardless boy, by the intrigues of a faction who wished to use him as a tool against William of Orange, he had quietly submitted, on the contrary, to serve as the instrument of that great statesman. His personality during his residence was null, and he had to expiate, by many a petty mortification, by many a bitter tear, the boyish ambition which brought him to the Netherlands. He had certainly had ample leisure to repent the haste with which he had got out of his warm bed in Vienna to take his bootless journey to Brussels. Nevertheless, in a country where so much baseness, cruelty, and treachery was habitually practiced by men of high position, as was the case in the Netherlands, it is something in favor of Matthias that he had not been base, or cruel, or treacherous. The states voted him, on his departure, a pension of 50,000 guldens annually, which was probably not paid with exemplary regularity.

Part Six
Alexander of Parma

Chapters 5-7

Chapter 5  The Inauguration of the Duke of Anjou, and an Attempt to Assassinate the Prince of Orange
Chapter 6  The Treachery of Anjou and the “French Fury”
Chapter 7  The Legacy of William the Silent

CHAPTER 5

The Inauguration of the Duke of Anjou, and an Attempt to Assassinate the Prince of Orange

Thus it was arranged that, for the present, at least, the prince should exercise sovereignty over Holland and Zealand; although he had himself used his utmost exertions to induce those provinces to join the rest of the United Netherlands in the proposed election of Anjou. This, however, they sternly refused to do. There was also a great disinclination felt by many in the other states to this hazardous offer of their allegiance, and it was the personal influence of Orange that eventually carried the measure through. Looking at the position of affairs and at the character of Anjou, as they appear to us now, it seems difficult to account for the prince’s policy. It is so natural to judge only by the result, that we are ready to censure statesmen for consequences which beforehand might seem utterly incredible, and for reading falsely human characters whose entire development only a late posterity has had full opportunity to appreciate. Still, one would think that Anjou had been sufficiently known to inspire distrust.

There was but little, too, in the aspect of the French court to encourage hopes of valuable assistance from that quarter. It was urged, not without reason, that the French were as likely to become as dangerous as the Spaniards, that they would prove nearer and more troublesome masters, that France intended the incorporation of the Netherlands into her own kingdom, that the provinces would therefore be dispersed forever from the German Empire, and that it was
as well to hold to the tyrant under whom they had been born, as to give themselves voluntarily to another of their own making. In short, it was maintained, in homely language, that "France and Spain were both under one coverlid." It might have been added that only extreme misery could make the provinces take either bedfellow. Moreover, it was asserted, with reason, that Anjou would be a very expensive master, for his luxurious and extravagant habits were notorious, that he was a man in whom no confidence could be placed, and one who would grasp at arbitrary power by any means which might present themselves. Above all, it was urged that he was not of the true religion, that he hated the professors of that faith in his heart, and that it was extremely unwise for men whose dearest interests were their religious ones, to elect a sovereign of opposite creed to their own. To these plausible views the Prince of Orange and those who acted with him, had, however, sufficient answers. The Netherlands had waited long enough for assistance from other quarters. Germany would not lift a finger in the cause; on the contrary, the whole of Germany, whether Protestant or Catholic, was either openly or covertly hostile. It was madness to wait till assistance came to them from unseen sources. It was time for them to assist themselves, and to take the best they could get, for when men were starving they could not afford to be dainty. They might be bound hand and foot, they might be overwhelmed a thousand times before they would receive succor from Germany, or from any land but France. Under the circumstances in which they found themselves, hope delayed was but a cold and meager consolation.

"To speak plainly," said Orange, "asking us to wait is very much as if you should keep a man three days without any food in the expectation of a magnificent banquet, should persuade him to refuse bread, and at the end of three days should tell him that the banquet was not ready, but that a still better one was in preparation. Would it not be better, then, that the poor man, to avoid starvation, should wait no longer, but accept bread wherever he might find it? Such is our case at present."

It was in this vein that he ever wrote and spoke. The Netherlands were to rely upon their own exertions, and to procure the best alliance, together with the most efficient protection possible. They were not strong enough to cope single-handed with their powerful tyrant, but they were strong enough if they used the instruments which Heaven offered. It was not trusting but tempting Providence to wait supinely, instead of grasping boldly at the means of rescue within reach. It became the character of brave men to act, not to expect. "Otherwise," said the prince, "we may climb to the tops of trees, like the Anabaptists of Munster, and expect God’s assistance to drop from the clouds." It is only by listening to these arguments so often repeated, that we can comprehend the policy of Orange at this period. "God has said that he would furnish the ravens with food, and the lions with their prey," said he, "but the birds and the lions do not, therefore, sit in their nests and their lairs waiting for their food to descend from heaven, but they seek it where it is to be
found." So also, at a later day, when events seemed to have justified the distrust so generally felt in Anjou, the prince, nevertheless, held similar language. "I do not," said he, "calumniate those who tell us to put our trust in God. That is my opinion also. But it is trusting God to use the means which he places in our hands, and to ask that his blessings may come upon them."

There was a feeling entertained by the more sanguine that the French king would heartily assist the Netherlands, after his brother should be fairly installed. He had expressly written to that effect, assuring Anjou that he would help him with all his strength, and would enter into close alliance with those Netherlands which should accept him as prince and sovereign. In another and more private letter to the duke, the king promised to assist his brother, "even to his last shirt." There is no doubt that it was the policy of the statesmen of France to assist the Netherlands, while the "mignons" of the worthless king were of a contrary opinion. Many of them were secret partisans of Spain, and found it more agreeable to receive the secret pay of Philip than to assist his revolted provinces. They found it easy to excite the jealousy of the monarch against his brother—a passion which proved more effective than the more lofty ambition of annexing the Low Countries, according to the secret promptings of many French politicians. As for the Queen Mother, she was fierce in her determination to see fulfilled in this way the famous prediction of Nostradamus. Three of her sons had successively worn the crown of France. That she might be "the mother of four kings," without laying a third child in the tomb, she was greedy for this proffered sovereignty to her youngest and favorite son. This well-known desire of Catherine de Medici was duly insisted upon by the advocates of the election; for her influence, it was urged, would bring the whole power of France to support the Netherlands.

At any rate, France could not be worse—could hardly be so bad—as their present tyranny. "Better the government of the Gaul, though suspect and dangerous," said Everard Reyd, "than the truculent dominion of the Spaniard. Even thus will the partridge fly to the hand of man, to escape the talons of the hawk." As for the individual character of Anjou, proper means would be taken, urged the advocates of his sovereignty, to keep him in check, for it was intended so closely to limit the power conferred upon him, that it would be only supreme in name. The Netherlands were to be, in reality, a republic, of which Anjou was to be a kind of Italian or Frisian podesta. "The Duke is not to act according to his pleasure," said one of the negotiators, in a private letter to Count John, "we shall take care to provide a good muzzle for him." How conscientiously the "muzzle" was prepared, will appear from the articles by which the states soon afterwards accepted the new sovereign. How basely he contrived to slip the muzzle, in what cruel and cowardly fashion he bathed his fangs in the blood of the flock committed to him, will also but too soon appear.

As for the religious objection to Anjou, on which more stress was laid than upon any other, the answer was equally ready. Orange professed himself "not
theologian enough" to go into the subtleties brought forward. As it was intended to establish most firmly a religious peace, with entire tolerance for all creeds, he did not think it absolutely essential to require a prince of the Reformed faith. It was bigotry to dictate to the sovereign, when full liberty in religious matters was claimed for the subject. Orange was known to be a zealous professor of the Reformed worship himself, but he did not therefore reject political assistance, even though offered by a not very enthusiastic member of the ancient Church.

"If the priest and the Levite pass us by when we are fallen among thieves," said he, with much aptness and some bitterness, "shall we reject the aid proffered by the Samaritan, because he is of a different faith from the worthy fathers who have left us to perish?" In short, it was observed with perfect truth that Philip had been removed, not because he was a Catholic, but because he was a tyrant, not because his faith was different from that of his subjects, but because he was resolved to exterminate all men whose religion differed from his own. It was not, therefore, inconsistent to choose another Catholic for a sovereign, if proper guarantees could be obtained that he would protect and not oppress the Reformed churches. "If the duke have the same designs as the king," said Saint Aldegonde, "it would be a great piece of folly to change one tyrant and persecutor for another. If, on the contrary, instead of oppressing our liberties, he will maintain them, and in place of extirpating the disciples of the true religion, he will protect them, then are all the reasons of our opponents without vigor."

By midsummer the Duke of Anjou made his appearance in the western part of the Netherlands. The Prince of Parma had recently come before Cambray with the intention of reducing that important city. On the arrival of Anjou, however, at the head of 5,000 cavalry—nearly all of them gentlemen of high degree, serving as volunteers—and of 12,000 infantry, Alexander raised the siege precipitately, and retired towards Tournay. Anjou victualled the city, strengthened the garrison, and then, as his cavalry had only enlisted for a summer’s amusement, and could no longer be held together, he disbanded his forces. The bulk of the infantry took service for the states under the Prince of Espinoy, Governor of Tournay. The duke himself, finding that, notwithstanding the treaty of Plessis les Tours and the present showy demonstration upon his part, the states were not yet prepared to render him formal allegiance, and being, moreover, in the heyday of what was universally considered his prosperous courtship of Queen Elizabeth, soon afterwards took his departure for England.

Parma, being thus relieved of his interference, soon afterwards laid siege to the important city of Tournay. The Prince of Espinoy was absent with the army in the North, but the princess commanded in his absence. She fulfilled her duty in a manner worthy of the house from which she sprang, for the blood of Count Horn was in her veins. The daughter of Mary de Montmorency, the admiral’s
sister, answered the summons of Parma to surrender at discretion with
defiance. The garrison was encouraged by her steadfastness. The princess
appeared daily among her troops, superintending the defenses, and personally
directing the officers. During one of the assaults, she is said, but perhaps
erroneously, to have been wounded in the arm, notwithstanding which she
refused to retire.

The siege lasted two months. Meantime, it became impossible for Orange and
the estates, notwithstanding their efforts, to raise a sufficient force to drive
Parma from his entrenchments. The city was becoming gradually and surely
undermined from without, while at the same time the insidious art of a
Dominican friar, Father Géry by name, had been as surely sapping the fidelity
of the garrison from within. An open revolt of the Catholic population being on
the point of taking place, it became impossible any longer to hold the city.
Those of the Reformed faith insisted that the place should be surrendered, and
the princess, being thus deserted by all parties, made an honorable
capitulation with Parma. She herself, with all her garrison, was allowed to
retire with personal property, and with all the honors of war, while the sack of
the city was commuted for 100,000 crowns, levied upon the inhabitants. The
princess, on leaving the gates, was received with such a shout of applause from
the royal army that she seemed less like a defeated commander than a
conqueror. Upon the 30th of November, Parma accordingly entered the place
which he had been besieging since the first of October.

By the end of the autumn, the Prince of Orange, more than ever dissatisfied
with the anarchical condition of affairs, and with the obstinate jealousy and
parsimony of the different provinces, again summoned the country in the most
earnest language to provide for the general defense, and to take measures for
the inauguration of Anjou. He painted in somber colors the prospect which lay
before them, if nothing was done to arrest the progress of the internal
disorders and of the external foe, whose forces were steadily augmenting. Had
the provinces followed his advice, instead of quarreling among themselves,
they would have had a powerful army on foot to second the efforts of Anjou,
and subsequently to save Tournay. They had remained supine and stolid, even
while the cannonading against these beautiful cities was in their very ears. No
man seemed to think himself interested in public affairs, save when his own
province or village was directly attacked. The general interests of the
commonwealth were forgotten in local jealousy. Had it been otherwise, the
enemy would have long since been driven over the Meuse. "When money,"
continued the prince, "is asked for to carry on the war, men answer as if they
were talking with the dead Emperor. To say, however, that they will pay no
more, is as much as to declare that they will give up their land and their
religion both. I say this, not because I have any desire to put my hands into the
common purse. You well know that I have never touched the public money, but
it is important that you should feel that there is no war in the country except
the one which concerns you all."
The states, thus shamed and stimulated, set themselves in earnest to obey the mandates of the prince, and sent a special mission to England, to arrange with the Duke of Anjou for his formal installation as sovereign. Saint Aldegonde and other commissioners were already there. It was the memorable epoch in the Anjou wooing, when the rings were exchanged between Elizabeth and the duke, and when the world thought that the nuptials were on the point of being celebrated. Saint Aldegonde wrote to the Prince of Orange, on the 22nd of November, that the marriage had been finally settled upon that day. Throughout the Netherlands, the auspicious tidings were greeted with bonfires, illuminations, and cannonading, and the measures for hailing the prince, thus highly favored by so great a queen, as sovereign master of the provinces, were pushed forward with great energy.

Nevertheless, the marriage ended in smoke. There were plenty of tournays, pageants, and banquets—a profusion of nuptial festivities, in short, where nothing was omitted but the nuptials. By the end of January, 1582, the duke was no nearer the goal than upon his arrival three months before. Acceding, therefore, to the wishes of the Netherland envoys, he prepared for a visit to their country, where the ceremony of his joyful entrance as Duke of Brabant and sovereign of the other provinces was to take place. No open rupture with Elizabeth occurred. On the contrary, the queen accompanied the duke, with a numerous and stately retinue, as far as Canterbury, and sent a most brilliant train of her greatest nobles and gentlemen to escort him to the Netherlands, communicating at the same time, by special letter, her wishes to the estates-general, that he should be treated with as much honor "as if he were her second self."

On the 10th of February, fifteen large vessels cast anchor at Flushing. The Duke of Anjou, attended by the Earl of Leicester, the Lords Hunsdon, Willoughby, Sheffield, Howard, Sir Philip Sidney, and many other personages of high rank and reputation, landed from this fleet. He was greeted on his arrival by the Prince of Orange, who, with the Prince of Espinoy and a large deputation of the states-general, had been for some days waiting to welcome him. The man whom the Netherlands had chosen for their new master stood on the shores of Zealand. Francis Hercules, Son of France, Duke of Alençon and Anjou, was at that time just twenty-eight years of age; yet not even his flatterers, or his "minions," of whom he had as regular a train as his royal brother, could claim for him the external graces of youth or of princely dignity. He was below the middle height, puny and ill-shaped. His hair and eyes were brown, his face was seamed with the smallpox, his skin covered with blotches, his nose so swollen and distorted that it seemed to be double. This prominent feature did not escape the sarcasms of his countrymen, who, among other gibes, were wont to observe that the man who always wore two faces, might be expected to have two noses also. It was thought that his revolting appearance was the principal reason for the rupture of the English marriage, and it was in vain that his supporters maintained that if he could forgive her age, she might, in return,
excuse his ugliness. It seemed that there was a point of hideousness beyond which even royal princes could not descend with impunity, and the only wonder seemed that Elizabeth, with the handsome Robert Dudley ever at her feet, could even tolerate the addresses of Francis Valois.

His intellect was by no means contemptible. He was not without a certain quickness of apprehension and vivacity of expression which passed current among his admirers for wit and wisdom. Even the experienced Saint Aldegonde was deceived in his character, and described him after an hour and half’s interview, as a prince overflowing with bounty, intelligence, and sincerity. That such men as Saint Aldegonde and the Prince of Orange should be at fault in their judgment, is evidence not so much of their want of discernment, as of the difference between the general reputation of the duke at that period, and that which has been eventually established for him in history. Moreover, subsequent events were to exhibit the utter baseness of his character more signally than it had been displayed during his previous career, however vacillating. No more ignoble yet more dangerous creature had yet been loosed upon the devoted soil of the Netherlands. Not one of the personages who had hitherto figured in the long drama of the revolt had enacted so sorry a part. Ambitious but trivial, enterprising but cowardly, an intriguer and a dupe, without religious convictions or political principles, save that he was willing to accept any creed or any system which might advance his own schemes, he was the most unfit protector for a people who, whether wrong or right, were at least in earnest, and who were accustomed to regard truth as one of the virtues. He was certainly not deficient in self-esteem. With a figure which was insignificant, and a countenance which was repulsive, he had hoped to efface the impression made upon Elizabeth’s imagination by the handsomest man in Europe. With a commonplace capacity, and with a narrow political education, he intended to circumvent the most profound statesman of his age. And there, upon the pier at Flushing, he stood between them both—between the magnificent Leicester, whom he had thought to outshine, and the silent Prince of Orange, whom he was determined to outwit. Posterity has long been aware how far he succeeded in the one and the other attempt.

The duke’s arrival was greeted with the roar of artillery, the ringing of bells, and the acclamations of a large concourse of the inhabitants; suitable speeches were made by the magistrates of the town, the deputies of Zealand, and other functionaries, and a stately banquet was provided, so remarkable “for its sugar-work and other delicacies, as to entirely astonish the French and English lords who partook thereof.” The duke visited Middelburg, where he was received with great state, and to the authorities of which he expressed his gratification at finding two such stately cities situate so close to each other on one little island.

On the 17th of February, he set sail for Antwerp. A fleet of fifty-four vessels, covered with flags and streamers, conveyed him and his retinue, together with
the large deputation which had welcomed him at Flushing, to the great commercial metropolis. He stepped on shore at Kiel within a bowshot of the city—for, like other Dukes of Brabant, he was not to enter Antwerp until he had taken the oaths to respect the constitution—and the ceremony of inauguration was to take place outside the walls. A large platform had been erected for this purpose, commanding a view of the stately city, with its bristling fortifications and shady groves. A throne, covered with velvet and gold, was prepared, and here the duke took his seat, surrounded by a brilliant throng, including many of the most distinguished personages in Europe.

It was a bright winter’s morning. The gaily bannered fleet lay conspicuous in the river, while an enormous concourse of people were thronging from all sides to greet the new sovereign. Twenty thousand burgher troops, in bright uniforms, surrounded the platform, upon the tapestried floor of which stood the magistrates of Antwerp, the leading members of the Brabant estates, with the Prince of Orange at their head, together with many other great functionaries. The magnificence everywhere displayed, and especially the splendid costumes of the military companies, excited the profound astonishment of the French, who exclaimed that every soldier seemed a captain, and who regarded with vexation their own inferior equipments.

Andrew Hessels, doctor utriusque juris, delivered a salutatory oration, in which, among other flights of eloquence, he expressed the hope of the provinces that the duke, with the beams of his greatness, wisdom, and magnanimity, would dissipate all the mists, fogs, and other exhalations which were pernicious to their national prosperity, and that he would bring back the sunlight of their ancient glory.

Anjou answered these compliments with equal courtesy, and had much to say of his willingness to shed every drop of his blood in defense of the Brabant liberties, but it might have damped the enthusiasm of the moment, could the curtain of the not very distant future have been lifted. The audience, listening to these promises, might have seen that it was not so much his blood as theirs which he was disposed to shed, and less, too, in defense than in violation of those same liberties which he was swearing to protect.

Orator Hessels then read aloud the articles of the Joyous Entry, in the Flemish language, and the duke was asked if he required any explanations of that celebrated constitution. He replied that he had thoroughly studied its provisions, with the assistance of the Prince of Orange, during his voyage from Flushing, and was quite prepared to swear to maintain them. The oaths, according to the antique custom, were then administered. Afterwards, the ducal hat and the velvet mantle, lined with ermine, were brought, the Prince of Orange assisting his Highness to assume this historical costume of the Brabant dukes, and saying to him, as he fastened the button at the throat, "I
must secure this robe so firmly, my lord, that no man may ever tear it from your shoulders."

Thus arrayed in his garment of sovereignty, Anjou was compelled to listen to another oration from the pensionary of Antwerp, John van der Werken. He then exchanged oaths with the magistrates of the city, and received the keys, which he returned for safe-keeping to the burgomaster. Meanwhile the trumpets sounded, largess of gold and silver coins was scattered among the people, and the heralds cried aloud, "Long live the Duke of Brabant."

A procession was then formed to escort the new duke to his commercial capital. A stately and striking procession it was. The Hanseatic merchants in ancient German attire, the English merchants in long velvet cassocks, the heralds in their quaint costume, the long train of civic militia with full bands of music, the chief functionaries of city and province in their black mantles and gold chains, all marching under emblematical standards or time-honored blazons, followed each other in dignified order. Then came the duke himself, on a white Barbary horse, caparisoned with cloth of gold. He was surrounded with English, French, and Netherland grandees, many of them of worldwide reputation. There was the stately Leicester; Sir Philip Sidney, the mirror of chivalry; the gaunt and imposing form of William the Silent; his son, Count Maurice of Nassau, destined to be the first captain of his age, then a handsome, dark-eyed lad of fifteen; the Dauphin of Auvergne; the Maréchal de Biron and his sons; the Prince of Espinoy; the Lords Sheffield, Willoughby, Howard, Hunsdon, and many others of high degree and distinguished reputation. The ancient guilds of the crossbowmen and archers of Brabant, splendidly accoutered, formed the bodyguard of the duke, while his French cavaliers, the lifeguardsmen of the Prince of Orange, and the troops of the line, followed in great numbers, their glittering uniforms all gaily intermingled, "like the flowers de luce upon a royal mantle." The procession, thus gorgeous and gay, was terminated by a dismal group of three hundred malefactors, marching in fetters, and imploring pardon of the duke, a boon which was to be granted at evening. Great torches, although it was high noon, were burning along the road, at intervals of four or five feet, in a continuous line reaching from the platform at Kiel to the portal of Saint Joris, through which the entrance to the city was to be made.

Inside the gate a stupendous allegory was awaiting the approach of the new sovereign. A huge gilded car, crowded with those emblematical and highly bedizened personages so dear to the Netherlanders, obstructed the advance of the procession. All the virtues seemed to have come out for an airing in one chariot, and were now waiting to offer their homage to Francis Hercules Valois. Religion "in red satin," holding the gospel in her hand, was supported by Justice, "in orange velvet," armed with blade and beam. Prudence and Fortitude embraced each other near a column enwreathed by serpents "with their tails in their ears to typify deafness to flattery," while Patriotism as a
pelican, and Patience as a brooding hen, looked benignantly upon the scene. This greeting duly acknowledged, the procession advanced into the city. The streets were lined with troops and with citizens; the balconies were filled with fair women; "the very gables," says an enthusiastic contemporary, "seemed to laugh with ladies’ eyes." The market-place was filled with waxen torches and with blazing tar-barrels, while in its center stood the giant Antigonus—founder of the city 1,300 years before the Christian era—the fabulous personage who was accustomed to throw the right hands of all smuggling merchants into the Scheld. This colossal individual, attired in a "surcoat of sky-blue," and holding a banner emblazoned with the arms of Spain, turned its head as the duke entered the square, saluted the new sovereign, and then dropping the Spanish scutcheon upon the ground, raised aloft another bearing the arms of Anjou.

And thus, amid exuberant outpouring of confidence, another lord and master had made his triumphal entrance into the Netherlands. Alas! how often had this sanguine people greeted with similar acclamations the advent of their betrothers and their tyrants! How soon were they to discover that the man whom they were thus receiving with the warmest enthusiasm was the most treacherous tyrant of all.

It was nightfall before the procession at last reached the palace of Saint Michael, which had been fitted up for the temporary reception of the duke. The next day was devoted to speech making, various deputations waiting upon the new Duke of Brabant with congratulatory addresses. The Grand Pensionary delivered a pompous oration upon a platform hung with sky-blue silk, and carpeted with cloth of gold. A committee of the German and French Reformed Churches made a long harangue, in which they expressed the hope that the Lord would make the duke "as valiant as David, as wise as Solomon, and as pious as Hezekiah." A Roman Catholic deputation informed his Highness that for eight months the members of the Ancient Church had been forbidden all religious exercises, saving baptism, marriage, visitation of the sick, and burials. A promise was therefore made that this prohibition, which had been the result of the disturbances recorded in a preceding chapter, should be immediately modified, and on the 15th of March, accordingly, it was arranged, by command of the magistrates, that all Catholics should have permission to attend public worship, according to the ancient ceremonial, in the church of Saint Michael, which had been originally designated for the use of the new Duke of Brabant. It was, however, stipulated that all who desired to partake of this privilege should take the oath of abjuration beforehand, and go to the church without their arms.

Here then had been oaths enough, orations enough, compliments enough, to make any agreement steadfast, so far as windy suspurations could furnish a solid foundation for the social compact. Bells, trumpets, and the brazen throats of men and of cannons had made a sufficient din, torches and tar-barrels had made a sufficient glare, to confirm—so far as noise and blazing
pitch could confirm—the decorous proceedings of church and Town-house, but
time was soon to show the value of such demonstrations. Meantime, the
"muzzle" had been fastened with solemnity and accepted with docility. The
terms of the treaty concluded at Plessis les Tours and Bordeaux were made
public. The duke had subscribed to twenty-seven articles, which made as
stringent and sensible a constitutional compact as could be desired by any
Netherland patriot. These articles, taken in connection with the ancient
charters which they expressly upheld, left to the new sovereign no vestige of
arbitrary power. He was merely the hereditary president of a representative
republic. He was to be Duke, Count, Margrave, or Seignior of the different
provinces on the same terms which his predecessors had accepted. He was to
transmit the dignities to his children. If there were more than one child, the
provinces were to select one of the number for their sovereign. He was to
maintain all the ancient privileges, charters, statutes, and customs, and to
forfeit his sovereignty at the first violation. He was to assemble the states-
general at least once a year. He was always to reside in the Netherlands. He
was to permit none but natives to hold office. His right of appointment to all
important posts was limited to a selection from three candidates, to be
proposed by the estates of the province concerned, at each vacancy. He was to
maintain "the Religion" and the religious peace in the same state in which they
then were, or as should afterwards be ordained by the estates of each
province, without making any innovation on his own part. Holland and Zealond
were to remain as they were, both in the matter of religion and otherwise. His
Highness was not to permit that anyone should be examined or molested in his
house, or otherwise, in the matter or under pretext of religion. He was to
procure the assistance of the King of France for the Netherlands. He was to
maintain a perfect and a perpetual league, offensive and defensive, between
that kingdom and the provinces, without, however, permitting any
incorporation of territory. He was to carry on the war against Spain with his
own means and those furnished by his royal brother, in addition to a yearly
contribution by the estates of 2,400,000 guldens. He was to dismiss all troops
at command of the states-general. He was to make no treaty with Spain
without their consent.

It would be superfluous to point out the great difference between the notions
entertained upon international law in the 16th century and in our own. A state
of nominal peace existed between Spain, France and England; yet here was the
brother of the French monarch, at the head of French troops, and attended by
the grandees of England, solemnly accepting the sovereignty over the revolted
provinces of Spain. It is also curious to observe that the constitutional compact
by which the new sovereign of the Netherlands was admitted to the
government, would have been repudiated as revolutionary and republican by
the monarchs of France or England, if an attempt had been made to apply it to
their own realms, for the ancient charters—which in reality constituted a
republican form of government—had all been re-established by the agreement
with Anjou.
The first-fruits of the ban now began to display themselves. Sunday, March 18, 1582, was the birthday of the Duke of Anjou, and a great festival had been arranged, accordingly, for the evening, at the palace of Saint Michael, the Prince of Orange as well as all the great French lords being of course invited. The prince dined, as usual, at his house in the neighborhood of the citadel, in company with the Counts Hohenlo and Laval, and the two distinguished French commissioners, Bonnivet and Des Pruneaux. Young Maurice of Nassau, and two nephews of the prince, sons of his brother John, were also present at table. During dinner the conversation was animated, many stories being related of the cruelties which had been practiced by the Spaniards in the provinces. On rising from the table, Orange led the way from the dining room to his own apartments, showing the noblemen in his company as he passed along, a piece of tapestry upon which some Spanish soldiers were represented. At this moment, as he stood upon the threshold of the antechamber, a youth of small stature, vulgar mien, and pale dark complexion, appeared from among the servants and offered him a petition.

He took the paper, and as he did so, the stranger suddenly drew a pistol and discharged it at the head of the prince. The ball entered the neck under the right ear, passed through the roof of the mouth, and came out under the left jaw-bone, carrying with it two teeth. The pistol had been held so near, that the hair and beard of the prince were set on fire by the discharge. He remained standing, but blinded, stunned, and for a moment entirely ignorant of what had occurred. As he afterwards observed, he thought perhaps that a part of the house had suddenly fallen. Finding very soon that his hair and beard were burning, he comprehended what had occurred, and called out quickly, "Do not kill him—I forgive him my death!" and turning to the French noblemen present, he added, "Alas! what a faithful servant does his Highness lose in me!"

These were his first words, spoken when, as all believed, he had been mortally wounded. The message of mercy came, however, too late, for two of the gentlemen present, by an irresistible impulse, had run the assassin through with their rapiers. The halberdiers rushed upon him immediately after wards, so that he fell pierced in thirty-two vital places. The prince, supported by his friends, walked to his chamber, where he was put to bed, while the surgeons examined and bandaged the wound. It was most dangerous in appearance, but a very strange circumstance gave more hope than could otherwise have been entertained. The flame from the pistol had been so close that it had actually cauterized the wound inflicted by the ball. But for this, it was supposed that the flow of blood from the veins which had been shot through would have proved fatal before the wound could be dressed. The prince, after the first shock, had recovered full possession of his senses, and believing himself to be dying, he expressed the most unaffected sympathy for the condition in which the Duke of Anjou would be placed by his death. "Alas, poor prince!" he cried frequently, "alas, what troubles will now beset thee!" The surgeons enjoined and implored his silence, as speaking might cause the wound to prove
immediately fatal. He complied, but wrote incessantly. As long as his heart
could beat, it was impossible for him not to be occupied with his country.

Lion Petit, a trusty captain of the city guard, forced his way to the chamber, it
being absolutely necessary, said the honest burgher, for him to see with his
own eyes that the prince was living, and report the fact to the townspeople;
otherwise, so great was the excitement, it was impossible to say what might be
the result. It was in fact believed that the prince was already dead, and it was
whispered that he had been assassinated by the order of Anjou. This horrible
suspicion was flying through the city, and producing a fierce exasperation, as
men talked of the murder of Coligny, of Saint Bartholomew, of the murderous
propensities of the Valois race. Had the attempt taken place in the evening, at
the birth-night banquet of Anjou, a horrible massacre would have been the
inevitable issue. As it happened, however, circumstances soon occurred to
remove the suspicion from the French, and to indicate the origin of the crime.
Meantime, Captain Petit was urged by the prince, in writing, to go forth
instantly with the news that he yet survived, but to implore the people, in case
God should call him to Himself, to hold him in kind remembrance, to make no
tumult, and to serve the duke obediently and faithfully.

Meantime, the youthful Maurice of Nassau was giving proof of that cool
determination which already marked his character. It was natural that a boy of
fifteen should be somewhat agitated at seeing such a father shot through the
head before his eyes. His situation was rendered doubly grave by the suspicions
which were instantly engendered as to the probable origin of the attempt. It
was already whispered in the hall that the gentlemen who had been so
officious in slaying the assassin, were his accomplices, who, upon the principle
that dead men would tell no tales, were disposed, now that the deed was
done, to preclude inconvenient revelations as to their own share in the crime.
Maurice, notwithstanding these causes for perturbation, and despite his grief at
his father’s probable death, remained steadily by the body of the murderer. He
was determined, if possible, to unravel the plot, and he waited to possess
himself of all papers and other articles which might be found upon the person
of the deceased.

A scrupulous search was at once made by the attendants, and everything
placed in the young count’s own hands. This done, Maurice expressed a doubt
lest some of the villain’s accomplices might attempt to take the articles from
him, whereupon a faithful old servant of his father came forward, who with an
emphatic expression of the importance of securing such important documents,
took his young master under his cloak, and led him to a retired apartment of
the house. Here, after a rapid examination, it was found that the papers were
all in Spanish, written by Spaniards to Spaniards, so that it was obvious that the
conspiracy, if one there were, was not a French conspiracy. The servant,
therefore, advised Maurice to go to his father, while he would himself instantly
descend to the hall with this important intelligence. Count Hohenlo had, from
the instant of the murder, ordered the doors to be fastened, and had permitted no one to enter or to leave the apartment without his permission. The information now brought by the servant as to the character of the papers caused great relief to the minds of all, for, till that moment, suspicion had even lighted upon men who were the firm friends of the prince.

Saint Aldegonde, who had meantime arrived, now proceeded, in company of the other gentlemen, to examine the papers and other articles taken from the assassin. The pistol with which he had done the deed was lying upon the floor; a naked poniard, which he would probably have used also, had his thumb not been blown off by the discharge of the pistol, was found in his trunk hose. In his pockets were an *Agnus Dei*, a taper of green wax, two bits of hareskin, two dried toads—which were supposed to be sorcerer’s charms—a crucifix, a Jesuit catechism, a prayer-book, a pocket-book containing two Spanish bills of exchange—one for 2,000, and one for 877 crowns—and a set of writing tablets. These last were covered with vows and pious invocations, in reference to the murderous affair which the writer had in hand. He had addressed fervent prayers to the Virgin Mary, to the Angel Gabriel, to the Savior, and to the *Savior’s Son*, “as if,” says the Antwerp chronicler, with simplicity, “the Lord Jesus had a son”—that they might all use their intercession with the Almighty towards the certain and safe accomplishment of the contemplated deed. Should he come off successful and unharmed, he solemnly vowed to fast a week on bread and water. Furthermore, he promised to Christ a "new coat of costly pattern," to the Mother of God, at Guadalupe, a new gown; to Our Lady of Montserrat, a crown, a gown, and a lamp; and so on through a long list of similar presents thus contemplated for various shrines. The poor fanatical fool had been taught by deeper villains than himself that his pistol was to rid the world of a tyrant, and to open his own pathway to Heaven, if his career should be cut short on earth. To prevent so undesirable a catastrophe to himself, however, his most natural conception had been to bribe the whole heavenly host, from the Virgin Mary downwards, for he had been taught that absolution for murder was to be bought and sold like other merchandise. He had also been persuaded that, after accomplishing the deed, *he would become invisible*.

Saint Aldegonde hastened to lay the result of this examination before the Duke of Anjou. Information was likewise instantly conveyed to the magistrates at the Town-house, and these measures were successful in restoring confidence throughout the city as to the intentions of the new government. Anjou immediately convened the State Council, issued a summons for an early meeting of the states-general, and published a proclamation that all persons having information to give concerning the crime which had just been committed, should come instantly forward, upon pain of death. The body of the assassin was forthwith exposed upon the public square, and was soon recognized as that of one Juan Jaureguy, a servant in the employ of Gaspar d’Anastro, a Spanish merchant of Antwerp. The letters and bills of exchange had also, on nearer examination at the Town-house, implicated Anastro in the
affair. His house was immediately searched, but the merchant had taken his
departure, upon the previous Tuesday, under pretext of pressing affairs at
Calais. His cashier, Venero, and a Dominican friar, named Antony Zimmermann,
both inmates of his family, were, however, arrested upon suspicion. On the
following day the watch stationed at the gate carried the foreign post-bags, as
soon as they arrived, to the magistracy, when letters were found from Anastro
to Venero, which made the affair quite plain. After they had been thoroughly
studied, they were shown to Venero, who, seeing himself thus completely
ruined, asked for pen and ink, and wrote a full confession.

It appeared that the crime was purely a commercial speculation on the part of
Anastro. That merchant, being on the verge of bankruptcy, had entered with
Philip into a mutual contract, which the king had signed with his hand and
sealed with his seal, and according to which Anastro, within a certain period,
was to take the life of William of Orange, and for so doing was to receive
80,000 ducats and the cross of Santiago. To be a knight companion of Spain’s
proudest order of chivalry was the guerdon, over and above the 80,000 pieces
of silver, which Spain’s monarch promised the murderer, if he should succeed.
As for Anastro himself, he was too frugal and too wary to risk his own life, or to
lose much of the premium. With tears streaming down his cheeks, he pointed
to his faithful cashier the picture which his master would present, when men
should point at him and say, "Behold yon bankrupt!" protesting, therefore, that
he would murder Orange and secure the reward, or perish in the attempt.
Saying this, he again shed many tears. Venero, seeing his master thus
disconsolate, wept bitterly likewise, and begged him not to risk his own
precious life. After this pathetic commingling of their grief, the merchant and
his book-keeper became more composed, and it was at last concerted between
them that John Jaureguy should be entrusted with the job.

Anastro had intended—as he said in a letter afterwards intercepted—"to
accomplish the deed with his own hand; but, as God had probably reserved him
for other things, and particularly to be of service to his very affectionate
friends, he had thought best to entrust the execution of the design to his
servant." The price paid by the master to the man, for the work, seems to have
been but 2,877 crowns. The cowardly and crafty principal escaped. He had
gone post haste to Dunkirk, pretending that the sudden death of his agent in
Calais required his immediate presence in that city. Governor Sweveseel, of
Dunkirk, sent an orderly to get a passport for him from La Motte, commanding
at Gravelingen. Anastro being on tenter-hooks lest the news should arrive that
the projected murder had been consummated before he had crossed the
border, testified extravagant joy on the arrival of the passport, and gave the
messenger who brought it thirty pistoles. Such conduct naturally excited a
vague suspicion in the mind of the governor, but the merchant’s character was
good, and he had brought pressing letters from Admiral Treslong. Sweveseel
did not dare to arrest him without cause, and he neither knew that any crime
had been committed, nor that the man before him was the criminal. Two hours
after the traveler’s departure, the news arrived of the deed, together with orders to arrest Anastro, but it was too late. The merchant had found refuge within the lines of Parma.

Meanwhile, the prince lay in a most critical condition. Believing that his end was fast approaching, he dictated letters to the states-general, entreating them to continue in their obedience to the duke, than whom he affirmed that he knew no better prince for the government of the provinces. These letters were dispatched by Saint Aldegonde to the assembly, from which body a deputation, in obedience to the wishes of Orange, was sent to Anjou, with expressions of condolence and fidelity.

On Wednesday a solemn fast was held, according to proclamation, in Antwerp, all work and all amusements being prohibited, and special prayers commanded in all the churches for the recovery of the prince. "Never, within men’s memory," says an account published at the moment, in Antwerp, "had such crowds been seen in the churches, nor so many tears been shed."

The process against Venero and Zimmermann was rapidly carried through, for both had made a full confession of their share in the crime. The prince had enjoined from his sickbed, however, that the case should be conducted with strict regard to justice, and, when the execution could no longer be deferred, he had sent a written request, by the hands of Saint Aldegonde, that they should be put to death in the least painful manner. The request was complied with, but there can be no doubt that the criminals, had it not been made, would have expiated their offense by the most lingering tortures. Owing to the intercession of the man who was to have been their victim, they were strangled, before being quartered, upon a scaffold erected in the market-place, opposite the Town-house. This execution took place on Wednesday, the 28th of March.

The prince, meanwhile, was thought to be mending, and thanksgivings began to be mingled with the prayers offered almost every hour in the churches, but for eighteen days he lay in a most precarious state. His wife hardly left his bedside, and his sister, Catharine, Countess of Schwartzburg, was indefatigable in her attentions. The Duke of Anjou visited him daily, and expressed the most filial anxiety for his recovery, but the hopes, which had been gradually growing stronger, were on the fifth of April exchanged for the deepest apprehensions. Upon that day the cicatrix by which the flow of blood from the neck had been prevented, almost from the first infliction of the wound, fell off. The veins poured forth a vast quantity of blood; it seemed impossible to check the hemorrhage, and all hope appeared to vanish. The prince resigned himself to his fate, and bade his children "good night for ever," saying calmly, "it is now all over with me."
It was difficult, without suffocating the patient, to fasten a bandage tightly enough to staunch the wound, but Leonardo Botalli, of Asti, body physician of Anjou, was nevertheless fortunate enough to devise a simple mechanical expedient, which proved successful. By his advice, a succession of attendants, relieving each other day and night, prevented the flow of blood by keeping the orifice of the wound slightly but firmly compressed with the thumb. After a period of anxious expectation, the wound again closed, and by the end of the month the prince was convalescent. On the second of May he went to offer thanksgiving in the Great Cathedral, amid the joyful sobs of a vast and most earnest throng.

The prince was saved, but unhappily the murderer had yet found an illustrious victim. The Princess of Orange, Charlotte de Bourbon—the devoted wife who for seven years had so faithfully shared his joys and sorrows—lay already on her deathbed. Exhausted by anxiety, long watching, and the alternations of hope and fear during the first eighteen days, she had been prostrated by despair at the renewed hemorrhage. A violent fever seized her, under which she sank on the fifth of May, three days after the solemn thanksgiving for her husband’s recovery. The prince, who loved her tenderly, was in great danger of relapse upon the sad event, which, although not sudden, had not been anticipated. She was laid in her grave on the ninth of May, amid the lamentations of the whole country, for her virtues were universally known and cherished. She was a woman of rare intelligence, accomplishment, and gentleness of disposition, whose only offense had been to break, by her marriage, the church vows to which she had been forced in her childhood, but which had been pronounced illegal by competent authority, both ecclesiastical and lay. For this, and for the contrast which her virtues afforded to the vices of her predecessor, she was the mark of calumny and insult. These attacks, however, had cast no shadow upon the serenity of her married life, and so long as she lived she was the trusted companion and consoler of her husband. "His Highness," wrote Count John in 1580, "is in excellent health, and, in spite of adversity, incredible labor, perplexity, and dangers, is in such good spirits that it makes me happy to witness it. No doubt a chief reason is the consolation he derives from the pious and highly-intelligent wife whom the Lord has given him—a woman who ever conforms to his wishes, and is inexpressibly dear to him."

The princess left six daughters—Louisa Juliana, Elizabeth, Catharina Belgica, Flandrina, Charlotta Brabantica, and Emilia Secunda.

Parma received the first intelligence of the attempt from the mouth of Anastro himself, who assured him that the deed had been entirely successful, and claimed the promised reward.

Alexander, in consequence, addressed circular letters to the authorities of Antwerp, Brussels, Bruges, and other cities, calling upon them, now that they had been relieved of their tyrant and their betrayer, to return again to the
path of their duty and to the ever-open arms of their lawful monarch. These letters were premature. On the other hand, the states of Holland and Zealand remained in permanent session, awaiting with extreme anxiety the result of the prince’s wound. “With the death of his Excellency, if God should please to take him to himself,” said the magistracy of Leyden, “in the death of the prince we all foresee our own death.” It was, in truth, an anxious moment, and the revulsion of feeling consequent on his recovery was proportionately intense.

In consequence of the excitement produced by this event, it was no longer possible for the prince to decline accepting the countship of Holland and Zealand, which he had refused absolutely two years before, and which he had again rejected, except for a limited period, in the year 1581. It was well understood, as appears by the treaty with Anjou, and afterwards formally arranged, “that the duke was never to claim sovereignty over Holland and Zealand,” and the offer of the sovereign countship of Holland was again made to the Prince of Orange in most urgent terms. It will be recollected that he had accepted the sovereignty on July 5, 1581, only for the term of the war. In a letter, dated Bruges, August 14, 1582, he accepted the dignity without limitation. This offer and acceptance, however, constituted but the preliminaries, for it was further necessary that the letters of “Renversal” should be drawn up, that they should be formally delivered, and that a new constitution should be laid down, and confirmed by mutual oaths. After these steps had been taken, the ceremonious inauguration or rendering of homage was to be celebrated.

All these measures were duly arranged, except the last. The installation of the new Count of Holland was prevented by his death, and the northern provinces remained a Republic, not only in fact but in name.

In political matters, the basis of the new constitution was the ”Great Privilege” of the Lady Mary, the Magna Charta of the country. That memorable monument in the history of the Netherlands and of municipal progress had been overthrown by Mary’s son, with the forced acquiescence of the states, and it was therefore stipulated by the new article, that even such laws and privileges as had fallen into disuse should be revived. It was furthermore provided that the little state should be a free Countship, and should thus silently sever its connection with the Empire.

With regard to the position of the prince, as hereditary chief of the little commonwealth, his actual power was rather diminished than increased by his new dignity. What was his position at the moment? He was sovereign during the war, on the general basis of the authority, originally bestowed upon him by the king’s commission of stadholder. In 1581, his Majesty had been abjured, and the stadholder had become sovereign. He held in his hands the supreme power, legislative, judicial, executive. The Counts of Holland—and Philip as their successor—were the great fountains of that triple stream. Concessions and
exceptions had become so extensive, no doubt, that the provincial charters constituted a vast body of "liberties" by which the whole country was reasonably well supplied. At the same time, all the power not expressly granted away remained in the breast of the Count. If ambition, then, had been William’s ruling principle, he had exchanged substance for shadow, for the new state now constituted was a free commonwealth—a republic in all but name.

By the new constitution he ceased to be the source of governmental life, or to derive his own authority from above by right divine. The sacred oil which had flowed from Charles the Simple’s beard was dried up. Orange’s sovereignty was from the estates, as legal representatives of the people, and, instead of exercising all the powers not otherwise granted away, he was content with those especially conferred upon him. He could neither declare war nor conclude peace without the cooperation of the representative body. The appointing power was scrupulously limited. Judges, magistrates, governors, sheriffs, provincial and municipal officers, were to be nominated by the local authorities or by the estates, on the triple principle. From these triple nominations he had only the right of selection by advice and consent of his council. He was expressly enjoined to see that the law was carried to every man’s door, without any distinction of persons, to submit himself to its behests, to watch against all impediments to the even flow of justice, to prevent false imprisonments, and to secure trials for every accused person by the local tribunals. This was certainly little in accordance with the arbitrary practice of the past quarter of a century.

With respect to the great principle of taxation, stricter bonds even were provided than those which already existed. Not only the right of taxation remained with the states, but the Count was to see that, except for war purposes, every impost was levied by a unanimous vote. He was expressly forbidden to tamper with the currency. As executive head, save in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief by land or sea, the new sovereign was, in short, strictly limited by self-imposed laws. It had rested with him to dictate or to accept a constitution. He had, in his memorable letter of August 1582 from Bruges, laid down generally the articles prepared at Plessis and Bourdeaux, for Anjou—together with all applicable provisions of the Joyous Entry of Brabant—as the outlines of the constitution for the little commonwealth then forming in the North. To these provisions he was willing to add any others which, after ripe deliberation, might be thought beneficial to the country.

Thus limited were his executive functions. As to his judicial authority, it had ceased to exist. The Count of Holland was now the guardian of the laws, but the judges were to administer them. He held the sword of justice to protect and to execute, while the scales were left in the hands which had learned to weigh and to measure.
As to the Count’s legislative authority, it had become coordinate with, if not subordinate to, that of the representative body. He was strictly prohibited from interfering with the right of the separate or the general states to assemble as often as they should think proper; and he was also forbidden to summon them outside their own territory. This was one immense step in the progress of representative liberty, and the next was equally important. It was now formally stipulated that the estates were to deliberate upon all measures which "concerned justice and polity," and that no change was to be made—that is to say, no new law was to pass—without their consent as well as that of the council. Thus, the principle was established of two legislative chambers, with the right, but not the exclusive right, of initiation on the part of government, and in the 16th century, one would hardly look for broader views of civil liberty and representative government. The foundation of a free commonwealth was thus securely laid, which, had William lived, would have been a representative monarchy, but which his death converted into a federal republic. It was necessary for the sake of unity to give a connected outline of these proceedings with regard to the sovereignty of Orange. The formal inauguration only remained, and this, as will be seen, was forever interrupted.

CHAPTER 6

The Treachery of Anjou and the "French Fury"

During the course of the year 1582, the military operations on both sides had been languid and desultory, the Prince of Parma, not having a large force at his command, being comparatively inactive. In consequence, however, of the treaty concluded between the United States and Anjou, Parma had persuaded the Walloon provinces that it had now become absolutely necessary for them to permit the entrance of fresh Italian and Spanish troops. This, then, was the end of the famous provision against foreign soldiery in the Walloon treaty of reconciliation. The Abbot of Saint Vaast was immediately dispatched on a special mission to Spain, and the troops, by midsummer, had already begun to pour into the Netherlands.

In the meantime, Farnese, while awaiting these reinforcements, had not been idle, but had been quietly picking up several important cities. Early in the spring he had laid siege to Oudenarde, a place of considerable importance upon the Scheld, and celebrated as the birthplace of his grandmother, Margaret van Geest. The burghers were obstinate; the defense was protracted; the sorties were bold, the skirmishes frequent and sanguinary. Alexander commanded personally in the trenches, encouraging his men by his example, and often working with the mattock, or handling a spear in the assault, like a private
pioneer or soldier. Towards the end of the siege, he scarcely ever left the scene of operation, and he took his meals near the outer defenses, that he might lose no opportunity of superintending the labors of his troops. One day his dinner was laid for himself and staff in the open air, close to the entrenchment. He was himself engaged in planting a battery against a weak point in the city wall, and would on no account withdraw for an instant. The tablecloth was stretched over a number of drumheads, placed close together, and several nobles of distinction—Aremberg, Montigny, Richebourg, La Motte, and others—were his guests at dinner. Hardly had the repast commenced, when a ball came flying over the table, taking off the head of a young Walloon officer who was sitting near Parma, and who was earnestly requesting a foremost place in the morrow’s assault. A portion of his skull struck out the eye of another gentleman present. A second ball from the town fortifications, equally well directed, destroyed two more of the guests as they sat at the banquet—one a German captain, the other the judge-advocate-general. The blood and brains of these unfortunate individuals were strewn over the festive board, and the others all started to their feet, having little appetite left for their dinner. Alexander alone remained in his seat, manifesting no discomposure. Quietly ordering the attendants to remove the dead bodies, and to bring a clean tablecloth, he insisted that his guests should resume their places at the banquet which had been interrupted in such ghastly fashion. He stated with very determined aspect that he could not allow the heretic burghers of Oudenarde the triumph of frightening him from his dinner, or from the post of danger. The other gentlemen could, of course, do no less than imitate the impassibility of their chief, and the repast was accordingly concluded without further interruption. Not long afterwards, the city, close pressed by so determined a commander, accepted terms, which were more favorable by reason of the respect which Alexander chose to render to his mother’s birthplace. The pillage was commuted for 30,000 crowns, and on the fifth of July, the place was surrendered to Parma almost under the very eyes of Anjou, who was making a demonstration of relieving the siege.

Ninove, a citadel then belonging to the Egmont family, was next reduced. Here, too, the defense was more obstinate than could have been expected from the importance of the place, and as the autumn advanced, Parma’s troops were nearly starved in their trenches, from the insufficient supplies furnished them. They had eaten no meat but horseflesh for weeks, and even that was gone. The cavalry horses were all consumed, and even the chargers of the officers were not respected. An aid-de-camp of Parma fastened his steed one day at the door of the prince’s tent, while he entered to receive his commander’s instructions. When he came out again, a few minutes afterwards, he found nothing but the saddle and bridle hanging where he had fastened the horse. Remonstrance was useless, for the animal had already been cut into quarters, and the only satisfaction offered to the aid-de-camp was in the shape of a steak. The famine was long familiarly known as the “Ninove starvation,” but notwithstanding this obstacle, the place was eventually surrendered.
An attempt upon Lochum, an important city in Gelderland, was unsuccessful, the place being relieved by the Duke of Anjou’s forces, and Parma’s troops forced to abandon the siege. At Steenwyk, the royal arms were more successful, Colonel Tassis, conducted by a treacherous Frisian peasant, having surprised the city which had so long and so manfully sustained itself against Renneberg during the preceding winter. With this event the active operations under Parma closed for the year. By the end of the autumn, however, he had the satisfaction of numbering, under his command, full 60,000 well-appointed and disciplined troops, including the large reinforcements recently dispatched from Spain and Italy. The monthly expense of this army—half of which was required for garrison duty, leaving only the other moiety for field operations—was estimated at 650,000 florins. The forces under Anjou and the united provinces were also largely increased, so that the marrow of the land was again in fair way of being thoroughly exhausted by its defenders and its foes.

The incidents of Anjou’s administration, meantime, during the year 1582, had been few and of no great importance. After the pompous and elaborate “homage-making” at Antwerp, he had, in the month of July, been formally accepted, by writing, as Duke of Gueldres and Lord of Friesland. In the same month he had been ceremoniously inaugurated at Bruges as Count of Flanders, an occasion upon which the Prince of Orange had been present. In that ancient and stately city there had been, accordingly, much marching about under triumphal arches, much cannonading and haranguing, much symbol work of suns dispelling fogs, with other cheerful emblems, much decoration of ducal shoulders with velvet robes lined with weasel skin, much blazing of tar-barrels and torches. In the midst of this event, an attempt was made upon the lives both of Orange and Anjou. An Italian, named Basa, and a Spaniard, called Salseda, were detected in a scheme to administer poison to both princes, and when arrested, confessed that they had been hired by the Prince of Parma to compass this double assassination. Basa destroyed himself in prison. His body was, however, gibbetted, with an inscription that he had attempted, at the instigation of Parma, to take the lives of Orange and Anjou. Salseda, less fortunate, was sent to Paris, where he was found guilty, and executed by being torn to pieces by four horses. Sad to relate, Lamoral Egmont, younger son and namesake of the great general, was intimate with Salseda, and implicated in this base design. His mother, on her deathbed, had especially recommended the youth to the kindly care of Orange. The prince had ever recognized the claim, manifesting uniform tenderness for the son of his ill-starred friend; and now the youthful Lamoral—as if the name of Egmont had not been sufficiently contaminated by the elder brother’s treason at Brussels—had become the comrade of hired conspirators against his guardian’s life. The affair was hushed up, but the story was current and generally believed that Egmont had himself undertaken to destroy the prince at his own table by means of poison which he kept concealed in a ring. Saint Aldegonde was to have been taken off in the same way, and a hollow ring filled with poison was said to have been found in Egmont’s lodgings.
The young noble was imprisoned; his guilt was far from doubtful, but the powerful intercessions of Orange himself, combined with Egmont’s near relationship to the French queen, saved his life, and he was permitted, after a brief captivity, to take his departure for France.

The Duke of Anjou, a month later, was received with equal pomp, in the city of Ghent. Here the ceremonies were interrupted in another manner. The Prince of Parma, at the head of a few regiments of Walloons, making an attack on a body of troops by which Anjou had been escorted into Flanders, the troops retreated in good order, and without much loss, under the walls of Ghent, where a long and sharp action took place, much to the disadvantage of Parma. The Prince of Orange and the Duke of Anjou were on the city walls during the whole skirmish, giving orders and superintending the movements of their troops, and at nightfall Parma was forced to retire, leaving a large number of dead behind him.

The 15th day of December, in this year was celebrated—according to the new ordinance of Gregory XIII—as Christmas. It was the occasion of more than usual merry-making among the Catholics of Antwerp, who had procured, during the preceding summer, a renewed right of public worship from Anjou and the estates. Many nobles of high rank came from France to pay their homage to the new Duke of Brabant. They secretly expressed their disgust, however, at the close constitutional bonds in which they found their own future sovereign imprisoned by the provinces. They thought it far beneath the dignity of the "Son of France" to play the secondary part of titular Duke of Brabant, Count of Flanders, Lord of Friesland, and the like, while the whole power of government was lodged with the states. They whispered that it was time to take measures for the incorporation of the Netherlands into France, and they persuaded the false and fickle Anjou that there would never be any hope of his royal brother’s assistance, except upon the understanding that the blood and treasure of Frenchmen were to be spent to increase the power, not of upstart and independent provinces, but of the French Crown.

They struck the basest chords of the duke’s base nature by awakening his jealousy of Orange. His whole soul vibrated to the appeal. He already hated the man by whose superior intellect he was overawed, and by whose pure character he was shamed. He stoutly but secretly swore that he would assert his own rights, and that he would no longer serve as a shadow, a statue, a zero, a Matthias. It is needless to add, that neither in his own judgment nor in that of his mignons, were the constitutional articles which he had recently sworn to support, or the solemn treaty which he had signed and sealed at Bordeaux, to furnish any obstacles to his seizure of unlimited power, whenever the design could be cleverly accomplished. He rested not, day or night, in the elaboration of his plan.
Early in January 1583, he sent one night for several of his intimate associates, to consult with him after he had retired to bed. He complained of the insolence of the states, of the importunity of the council which they had forced upon him, of the insufficient sums which they furnished both for him and his troops, of the daily insults offered to the Catholic religion. He protested that he should consider himself disgraced in the eyes of all Christendom, should he longer consent to occupy his present ignoble position. But two ways were open to him, he observed—either to retire altogether from the Netherlands, or to maintain his authority with the strong hand, as became a prince. The first course would cover him with disgrace. It was therefore necessary for him to adopt the other. He then unfolded his plan to his confidential friends, La Fougère, De Fazy, Valette, the sons of Maréchal Biron, and others. Upon the same day, if possible, he was determined to take possession, with his own troops, of the principal cities in Flanders. Dunkirk, Dixmuyde, Denremonde, Bruges, Ghent, Vilvoorde, Alost, and other important places, were to be simultaneously invaded, under pretext of quieting tumults artfully created and encouraged between the burghers and the garrisons, while Antwerp was reserved for his own especial enterprise. That important capital he would carry by surprise at the same moment in which the other cities were to be secured by his lieutenants.

The plot was pronounced an excellent one by the friends around his bed—all of them eager for Catholic supremacy, for the establishment of the right divine on the part of France to the Netherlands, and for their share in the sacking of so many wealthy cities at once. These worthless mignons applauded their weak master to the echo, whereupon the duke leaped from his bed, and kneeling on the floor in his nightgown, raised his eyes and his clasped hands to heaven, and piously invoked the blessing of the Almighty upon the project which he had thus announced. He added the solemn assurance that, if favored with success in his undertaking, he would abstain in future from all unchastity, and forego the irregular habits by which his youth had been stained. Having thus bribed the Deity, and received the encouragement of his flatterers, the duke got into bed again. His next care was to remove the Seigneur du Plessis, whom he had observed to be often in colloquy with the Prince of Orange, his suspicious and guilty imagination finding nothing but mischief to himself in the conjunction of two such natures. He therefore dismissed Du Plessis, under pretext of a special mission to his sister, Margaret of Navarre, but in reality, that he might rid himself of the presence of an intelligent and honorable countryman.

On January 15, 1583, the day fixed for the execution of the plot, the French commandant of Dunkirk, Captain Chamois, skillfully took advantage of a slight quarrel between the citizens and the garrison, to secure that important frontier town. The same means were employed simultaneously, with similar results, at Ostend, Dixmuyde, Denremonde, Alost, and Vilvoorde, but there was a fatal delay at one important city. La Fougère, who had been with Chamois at Dunkirk, was arrested on his way to Bruges by some patriotic citizens who had
got wind of what had just been occurring in the other cities, so that when Valette, the provost of Anjou, and Colonel la Rebours, at the head of 1,500 French troops, appeared before the gates, entrance was flatly refused. De Grijse, burgomaster of Bruges, encouraged his fellow townsmen by words and stout action, to resist the nefarious project then on foot against religious liberty and free government, in favor of a new foreign tyranny. He spoke to men who could sympathize with, and second his courageous resolution, and the delay of twenty-four hours, during which the burghers had time to take the alarm, saved the city. The whole population was on the alert, and the baffled Frenchmen were forced to retire from the gates, to avoid being torn to pieces by the citizens whom they had intended to surprise.

At Antwerp, meanwhile, the Duke of Anjou had been rapidly maturing his plan, under pretext of a contemplated enterprise against the city of Endhoven, having concentrated what he esteemed a sufficient number of French troops at Borgerhout, a village close to the walls of Antwerp.

On the 16th of January, suspicion was aroused in the city. A man in a mask entered the mainguard-house in the night, mysteriously gave warning that a great crime was in contemplation, and vanished before he could be arrested. His accent proved him to be a Frenchman. Strange rumors flew about the streets. A vague uneasiness pervaded the whole population as to the intention of their new master, but nothing was definitely known, for of course there was entire ignorance of the events which were just occurring in other cities. The colonels and captains of the burgher guard came to consult the Prince of Orange. He avowed the most entire confidence in the Duke of Anjou, but, at the same time, recommended that the chains should be drawn, the lanterns hung out, and the drawbridge raised an hour earlier than usual, and that other precautions, customary in the expectation of an attack, should be duly taken. He likewise sent the Burgomaster of the Interior, Dr. Alostanus, to the Duke of Anjou, in order to communicate the suspicions created in the minds of the city authorities by the recent movements of troops.

Anjou, thus addressed, protested in the most solemn manner that nothing was farther from his thoughts than any secret enterprise against Antwerp. He was willing, according to the figure of speech which he had always ready upon every emergency, “to shed every drop of his blood in her defense.” He swore that he would signalize punish all those who had dared to invent such calumnies against himself and his faithful Frenchmen, declaring earnestly, at the same time, that the troops had only been assembled in the regular course of their duty. As the duke was so loud and so fervent; as he, moreover, made no objections to the precautionary measures which had been taken; as the burgomaster thought, moreover, that the public attention thus aroused would render all evil designs futile, even if any had been entertained; it was thought that the city might sleep in security for that night at least.
On the following morning, as vague suspicions were still entertained by many influential persons, a deputation of magistrates and militia officers waited upon the duke, the Prince of Orange—although himself still feeling a confidence which seems now almost inexplicable—consenting to accompany them. The duke was more vehement than ever in his protestations of loyalty to his recent oaths, as well as of deep affection for the Netherlands—for Brabant in particular, and for Antwerp most of all—and he made use of all his vivacity to persuade the prince, the burgomasters, and the colonels, that they had deeply wronged him by such unjust suspicions. His assertions were accepted as sincere, and the deputation withdrew, Anjou having first solemnly promised—at the suggestion of Orange—not to leave the city during the whole day, in order that unnecessary suspicion might be prevented.

This pledge the duke proceeded to violate almost as soon as made. Orange returned with confidence to his own house, which was close to the citadel, and therefore far removed from the proposed point of attack, but he had hardly arrived there when he received a visit from the duke’s private secretary, Quinsay, who invited him to accompany his Highness on a visit to the camp. Orange declined the request, and sent an earnest prayer to the duke not to leave the city that morning. The duke dined as usual at noon. While at dinner, he received a letter, was observed to turn pale on reading it, and to conceal it hastily in a muff which he wore on his left arm. The repast finished, the duke ordered his horse. The animal was restive, and so strenuously resisted being mounted that, although it was his usual charger, it was exchanged for another. This second horse started in such a flurry that the duke lost his cloak, and almost his seat. He maintained his self-possession, however, and placing himself at the head of his bodyguard and some troopers, numbering in all three hundred mounted men, rode out of the palace-yard towards the Kipdorp gate.

This portal opened on the road towards Borgerhout, where his troops were stationed, and at the present day bears the name of that village. It is on the side of the city farthest removed from and exactly opposite the river. The town was very quiet, the streets almost deserted, for it was one o’clock, the universal dinner hour, and all suspicion had been disarmed by the energetic protestations of the duke. The guard at the gate looked listlessly upon the cavalcade as it approached, but as soon as Anjou had crossed the first drawbridge, he rose in his stirrups and waved his hand. "There is your city, my lads," said he to the troopers behind him, "go and take possession of it!"

At the same time he set spurs to his horse, and galloped off towards the camp at Borgerhout. Instantly afterwards, a gentleman of his suite, Count Rochepeot, affected to have broken his leg through the plunging of his horse, a circumstance by which he had been violently pressed against the wall as he entered the gate. Kaiser, the commanding officer at the guard-house, stepped kindly forward to render him assistance, and his reward was a desperate thrust
from the Frenchman's rapier. As he wore a steel cuirass, he fortunately escaped with a slight wound.

The expression "broken leg" was the watch-word, for at one and the same instant, the troopers and guardsmen of Anjou set upon the burgher watch at the gate, and butchered every man. A sufficient force was left to protect the entrance thus easily mastered, while the rest of the Frenchmen entered the town at full gallop, shrieking "Ville gaignée, ville gaignée! Vive la messe! Vive le Duc d'Anjou!" They were followed by their comrades from the camp outside, who now poured into the town at the preconcerted signal, at least 600 cavalry and 3,000 musketeers, all perfectly appointed, entering Antwerp at once. From the Kipdorp gate, two main arteries, the streets called the Kipdorp and the Meer, led quite through the heart of the city, towards the Town-house and the river beyond. Along these great thoroughfares the French soldiers advanced at a rapid pace, the cavalry clattering furiously in the van, shouting "Ville gaignée, ville gaignée! Vive la messe, vive la messe! Tue, tue, tue!"

The burghers, coming to door and window to look for the cause of all this disturbance, were saluted with volleys of musketry. They were for a moment astonished, but not appalled, for at first they believed it to be merely an accidental tumult. Observing, however, that the soldiers, meeting with but little effective resistance, were dispersing into dwellings and warehouses, particularly into the shops of the goldsmiths and lapidaries, the citizens remembered the dark suspicions which had been so rife, and many recalled to mind that distinguished French officers had during the last few days been carefully examining the treasures of the jewelers, under pretext of purchasing, but, as it now appeared, with intent to rob intelligently.

The burghers, taking this rapid view of their position, flew instantly to arms. Chains and barricades were stretched across the streets; the trumpets sounded through the city; the municipal guards swarmed to the rescue. An effective rally was made, as usual, at the Bourse, whither a large detachment of the invaders had forced their way. Inhabitants of all classes and conditions, noble and simple, Catholic and Protestant, gave each other the hand, and swore to die at each other’s side in defense of the city against the treacherous strangers. The gathering was rapid and enthusiastic. Gentlemen came with lance and cuirass, burghers with musket and bandoleer, artisans with axe, mallet, and other implements of their trade. A bold baker, standing by his oven—stark naked, according to the custom of bakers at that day—rushed to the street as the sound of the tumult reached his ear. With his heavy bread shovel, which he still held in his hand, he dealt a French cavalry officer, just riding and screaming by, such a hearty blow that he fell dead from his horse. The baker seized the officer’s sword, sprang, all unattired as he was, upon his steed, and careered furiously through the streets, encouraging his countrymen everywhere to the attack, and dealing dismay through the ranks of the enemy. His services in that eventful hour were so signal that he was publicly thanked afterwards by
the magistrates for his services, and rewarded with a pension of three hundred florins for life.

The invaders had been forced from the Bourse, while another portion of them had penetrated as far as the Market-place. The resistance which they encountered became every instant more formidable, and Fervacques, a leading French officer, who was captured on the occasion, acknowledged that no regular troops could have fought more bravely than did these stalwart burghers. Women and children mounted to roof and window, whence they hurled, not only tiles and chimney pots, but tables, ponderous chairs, and other bulky articles, upon the heads of the assailants, while such citizens as had used all their bullets, loaded their pieces with the silver buttons from their doublets, or twisted gold and silver coins with their teeth into ammunition. With a population so resolute, the 4,000 invaders, however audacious, soon found themselves swallowed up. The city had closed over them like water, and within an hour nearly a third of their whole number had been slain. Very few of the burghers had perished, and fresh numbers were constantly advancing to the attack. The Frenchmen, blinded, staggering, beaten, attempted to retreat. Many threw themselves from the fortifications into the moat. The rest of the survivors struggled through the streets, falling in large numbers at every step, towards the point at which they had so lately entered the city. Here at the Kipdorp gate was a ghastly spectacle, the slain being piled up in the narrow passage full ten feet high, while some of the heap, not quite dead, were striving to extricate a hand or foot, and others feebly thrust forth their heads to gain a mouthful of air.

From the outside, some of Anjou’s officers were attempting to climb over this mass of bodies in order to enter the city; from the interior, the baffled and fugitive remnant of their comrades were attempting to force their passage through the same horrible barrier; while many dropped at every instant upon the heap of slain, under the blows of the unrelenting burghers. On the other hand, Count Rochepot himself, to whom the principal command of the enterprise had been entrusted by Anjou, stood directly in the path of his fugitive soldiers, not only bitterly upbraiding them with their cowardice but actually slaying ten or twelve of them with his own hands, was the most effectual mode of preventing their retreat. Hardly an hour had elapsed from the time when the Duke of Anjou first rode out of the Kipdorp gate, before nearly the whole of the force which he had sent to accomplish his base design was either dead or captive. Two hundred and fifty nobles of high rank and illustrious name were killed, recognized at once as they lay in the streets by their magnificent costume. A larger number of the gallant chivalry of France had been sacrificed—as Anjou confessed—in this treacherous and most shameful enterprise, than had often fallen upon noble and honorable fields. Nearly 2,000 of the rank and file had perished, and the rest were prisoners. It was at first asserted that exactly 1,583 Frenchmen had fallen, but this was only because this number happened to be the date of the year, to which the lovers of
marvelous coincidences struggled very hard to make the returns of the dead correspond. Less than one hundred burghers lost their lives.

Anjou, as he looked on at a distance, was bitterly reproached for his treason by several of the high-minded gentlemen about his person, to whom he had not dared to confide his plot. The Duke of Montpensier protested vehemently that he washed his hands of the whole transaction, whatever might be the issue. He was responsible for the honor of an illustrious house, which should never be stained, he said, if he could prevent it, with such foul deeds. The same language was held by Laval, by Rochechoucauld, and by the Maréchal de Biron, the last gentleman, whose two sons were engaged in the vile enterprise, bitterly cursing the duke to his face, as he rode through the gate after revealing his secret undertaking.

Meanwhile, Anjou, in addition to the punishment of hearing these reproaches from men of honor, was the victim of a rapid and violent fluctuation of feeling. Hope, fear, triumph, doubt, remorse, alternately swayed him. As he saw the fugitives leaping from the walls, he shouted exultingly, without accurately discerning what manner of men they were, that the city was his, that 4,000 of his brave soldiers were there, and were hurling the burghers from the battlements. On being made afterwards aware of his error, he was proportionally depressed; and when it was obvious at last that the result of the enterprise was an absolute and disgraceful failure, together with a complete exposure of his treachery, he fairly mounted his horse, and fled conscience-stricken from the scene.

The attack had been so unexpected, in consequence of the credence that had been rendered by Orange and the magistracy to the solemn protestations of the duke, that it had been naturally out of anyone’s power to prevent the catastrophe. The prince was lodged in a part of the town remote from the original scene of action, and it does not appear that information had reached him that anything unusual was occurring, until the affair was approaching its termination. Then there was little for him to do. He hastened, however, to the scene, and mounting the ramparts, persuaded the citizens to cease cannonading the discomfited and retiring foe. He felt the full gravity of the situation, and the necessity of diminishing the rancor of the inhabitants against their treacherous allies, if such a result were yet possible. The burghers had done their duty, and it certainly would have been neither in his power nor his inclination to protect the French marauders from expulsion and castigation.

Such was the termination of the French Fury, and it seems sufficiently strange that it should have been so much less disastrous to Antwerp than was the Spanish Fury of 1576, to which men could still scarcely allude without a shudder. One would have thought the French more likely to prove successful in their enterprise than the Spaniards in theirs. The Spaniards were enemies against whom the city had long been on its guard. The French were friends in
whose sincerity a somewhat shaken confidence had just been restored. When the Spanish attack was made, a large force of defenders was drawn up in battle array behind freshly strengthened fortifications. When the French entered at leisure through a scarcely guarded gate, the whole population and garrison of the town were quietly eating their dinners. The numbers of the invading forces on the two occasions did not materially differ, but at the time of the French Fury there was not a large force of regular troops under veteran generals to resist the attack. Perhaps this was the main reason for the result, which seems at first almost inexplicable. For protection against the Spanish invasion, the burghers relied on mercenaries, some of whom proved treacherous, while the rest became panic-struck. On the present occasion the burghers relied on themselves. Moreover, the French committed the great error of despising their enemy. Recollecting the ease with which the Spaniards had ravished the city, they believed that they had nothing to do but to enter and take possession. Instead of repressing their greediness, as the Spaniards had done, until they had overcome resistance, they dispersed almost immediately into by-streets, and entered warehouses to search for plunder. They seemed actuated by a fear that they should not have time to rifle the city before additional troops should be sent by Anjou to share in the spoil. They were less used to the sacking of Netherland cities than were the Spaniards, whom long practice had made perfect in the art of methodically butchering a population at first, before attention should be diverted to plundering and supplementary outrages. At any rate, whatever the causes, it is certain that the panic, which upon such occasions generally decides the fate of the day, seized upon the invaders and not upon the invaded, almost from the very first. As soon as the marauders faltered in their purpose and wished to retreat, it was all over with them. Returning was worse than advance, and it was the almost inevitable result that hardly a man escaped death or capture.

The duke retreated the same day in the direction of Denremonde, and on his way met with another misfortune, by which an additional number of his troops lost their lives. A dyke was cut by the Mechlin citizens to impede his march, and the swollen waters of the Dill, liberated and flowing across the country which he was to traverse, produced such an inundation, that at least a thousand of his followers were drowned.

As soon as he had established himself in a camp near Berghen, he opened a correspondence with the Prince of Orange, and with the authorities of Antwerp. His language was marked by wonderful effrontery. He found himself and soldiers suffering for want of food; he remembered that he had left much plate and valuable furniture in Antwerp; and he was therefore desirous that the citizens, whom he had so basely outraged, should at once send him supplies and restore his property. He also reclaimed the prisoners who still remained in the city, and to obtain all this he applied to the man whom he had bitterly deceived, and whose life would have been sacrificed by the duke, had the enterprise succeeded.
It had been his intention to sack the city, to re-establish exclusively the Roman Catholic worship, to trample upon the constitution which he had so recently sworn to maintain, to deprive Orange, by force, of the Renversal by which the duke recognized the prince as sovereign of Holland, Zealant, and Utrecht, yet notwithstanding that his treason had been enacted in broad daylight, and in a most deliberate manner, he had the audacity to ascribe the recent tragic occurrences to chance. He had the farther originality to speak of himself as an aggrieved person, who had rendered great services to the Netherlands, and who had only met with ingratitude in return. His envoys, Messieurs Landmater and Escolières, dispatched on the very day of the French Fury to the burgomasters and senate of Antwerp, were instructed to remind those magistrates that the duke had repeatedly exposed his life in the cause of the Netherlands. The affronts, they were to add, which he had received, and the approaching ruin of the country, which he foresaw, had so altered his excellent nature, as to engender the present calamity, which he infinitely regretted. Nevertheless, the senate was to be assured that his affection for the commonwealth was still so strong, as to induce a desire on his part to be informed what course was now to be pursued with regard to him. Information upon that important point was therefore to be requested, while at the same time the liberation of the prisoners at Antwerp, and the restoration of the duke’s furniture and papers, were to be urgently demanded.

Letters of similar import were also dispatched by the duke to the states of the Union, while to the Prince of Orange, his application was brief but brazen. "You know well, my cousin," said he, "the just and frequent causes of offense which this people has given me. The insults which I this morning experienced cut me so deeply to the heart, that they are the only reasons of the misfortune which has happened today. Nevertheless, to those who desire my friendship I shall show equal friendship and affection. Herein I shall follow the counsel you have uniformly given me, since I know it comes from one who has always loved me. Therefore I beg that you will kindly bring it to pass, that I may obtain some decision, and that no injury may be inflicted upon my people. Otherwise the land shall pay for it dearly."

To these appeals, neither the prince nor the authorities of Antwerp answered immediately in their own names. A general consultation was, however, immediately held with the estates-general, and an answer forthwith dispatched to the duke by the hands of his envoys. It was agreed to liberate the prisoners, to restore the furniture, and to send a special deputation for the purpose of making further arrangements with the duke by word of mouth, and for this deputation his Highness was requested to furnish a safe-conduct.

Anjou was overjoyed when he received this amicable communication. Relieved for a time from his fears as to the result of his crime, he already assumed a higher ground. He not only spoke to the states in a paternal tone, which was sufficiently ludicrous, but he had actually the coolness to assure them of his
forgiveness. He felt hurt, he said, that they should deem a safe-conduct necessary for the deputation which they proposed to send. If they thought that he had reason on account of the past, to feel offended, he begged them to believe that he had forgotten it all, and that he had buried the past in its ashes, even as if it had never been. He furthermore begged them—and this seemed the greatest insult of all—in future to trust to his word, and to believe that if anything should be attempted to their disadvantage, he would be the very first to offer himself for their protection.

It will be observed that in his first letters the duke had not affected to deny his agency in the outrage—an agency so flagrant that all subterfuge seemed superfluous. He in fact avowed that the attempt had been made by his command, but sought to palliate the crime on the ground that it had been the result of the ill treatment which he had experienced from the states. "The affronts which I have received," said he, both to the magistrates of Antwerp and to Orange, "have engendered the present calamity." So also, in a letter written at the same time to his brother, Henry III, he observed that "the indignities which were put upon him, and the manifest intention of the states to make a Matthias of him, had been the cause of the catastrophe."

He now, however, ventured a step farther. Presuming upon the indulgence which he had already experienced, and bravely assuming the tone of injured innocence, he ascribed the enterprise partly to accident and partly to the insubordination of his troops. This was the ground which he adopted in his interviews with the states’ commissioners. So also, in a letter addressed to Van der Tympel, commandant of Brussels, in which he begged for supplies for his troops, he described the recent invasion of Antwerp as entirely unexpected by himself and beyond his control. He had been intending, he said, to leave the city and to join his army. A tumult had accidentally arisen between his soldiers and the guard at the gate. Other troops rushing in from without, had joined in the affray, so that to his great sorrow, an extensive disorder had arisen. He manifested the same Christian inclination to forgive, however, which he had before exhibited. He observed that "good men would never grow cold in his regard, or find his affection diminished." He assured Van der Tympel, in particular, of his ancient good will, as he knew him to be a lover of the common weal.

In his original communications he had been both cringing and threatening—but, at least, he had not denied truths which were plain as daylight. His new position considerably damaged his cause. This forgiving spirit on the part of the malefactor was a little more than the states could bear, disposed as they felt, from policy, to be indulgent, and to smooth over the crime as gently as possible. The negotiations were interrupted, and the authorities of Antwerp published a brief and spirited defense of their own conduct. They denied that any affront or want of respect on their part could have provoked the outrage of which the duke had been guilty. They severely handled his self-contradiction,
in ascribing originally the recent attempt to his just vengeance for past injuries, and in afterwards imputing it to accident or sudden mutiny, while they cited the simultaneous attempts at Bruges, Denremonde, Alost, Dixmuyde, Newport, Ostend, Vilvoorde, and Dunkirk, as a series of damning proofs of a deliberate design.

The publication of such plain facts did not advance the negotiations when resumed. High and harsh words were interchanged between his Highness and the commissioners, Anjou complaining, as usual, of affronts and indignities but when pushed home for particulars, taking refuge in equivocation. "He did not wish," he said, "to re-open wounds which had been partially healed." He also affected benignity, and wishing to forgive and to forget, he offered some articles as the basis of a fresh agreement. Of these it is sufficient to state that they were entirely different from the terms of the Bordeaux Treaty, and that they were rejected as quite inadmissible.

He wrote again to the Prince of Orange, invoking his influence to bring about an arrangement. The prince, justly indignant at the recent treachery and the present insolence of the man whom he had so profoundly trusted, but feeling certain that the welfare of the country depended at present upon avoiding, if possible, a political catastrophe, answered the duke in plain, firm, mournful, and appropriate language. He had ever manifested to his Highness, he said, the most uniform and sincere friendship. He had, therefore, the right to tell him that affairs were now so changed that his greatness and glory had departed. Those men in the Netherlands, who, but yesterday, had been willing to die at the feet of his Highness, were now so exasperated that they avowedly preferred an open enemy to a treacherous protector. He had hoped, he said, that after what had happened in so many cities at the same moment, his Highness would have been pleased to give the deputies a different and a more becoming answer. He had hoped for some response which might lead to an arrangement. He, however, stated frankly, that the articles transmitted by his Highness were so unreasonable that no man in the land would dare open his mouth to recommend them. His Highness, by this proceeding, had much deepened the distrust. He warned the duke accordingly, that he was not taking the right course to reinstate himself in a position of honor and glory, and he begged him, therefore, to adopt more appropriate means. Such a step was now demanded of him, not only by the country, but by all Christendom.

This moderate but heartfelt appeal to the better nature of the duke, if he had a better nature, met with no immediate response. While matters were in this condition, a special envoy arrived out of France, dispatched by the king and queen-mother, on the first reception of the recent intelligence from Antwerp. M. de Mirambeau, the ambassador, whose son had been killed in the Fury, brought letters of credence to the states of the Union and to the Prince of Orange. He delivered also a short confidential note, written in her own hand, from Catherine de Medici to the prince, to the following effect:
“My Cousin— The King, my son, and myself, send you Monsieur de Mirambeau, to prove to you that we do not believe—for we esteem you an honorable man—that you would manifest ingratitude to my son, and to those who have followed him for the welfare of your country. We feel that you have too much affection for one who has the support of so powerful a prince as the King of France, as to play him so base a trick. Until I learn the truth, I shall not renounce the good hope which I have always indulged—that you would never have invited my son to your country, without intending to serve him faithfully. As long as you do this, you may ever reckon on the support of all who belong to him.

"Your good Cousin,
"Catherine."

It would have been very difficult to extract much information or much comfort from this wily epistle. The menace was sufficiently plain, the promise disagreeably vague. Moreover, a letter from the same Catherine de Medici had been recently found in a casket at the duke’s lodgings in Antwerp. In that communication, she had distinctly advised her son to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion, assuring him that by so doing, he would be enabled to marry the Infanta of Spain. Nevertheless, the prince, convinced that it was his duty to bridge over the deep and fatal chasm which had opened between the French prince and the provinces, if an honorable reconciliation were possible, did not attach an undue importance either to the stimulating or to the upbraiding portion of the communication from Catherine. He was most anxious to avert the chaos which he saw returning. He knew that while the tempers of Rudolph, of the English queen, and of the Protestant princes of Germany, and the internal condition of the Netherlands remained the same, it were madness to provoke the government of France, and thus gain an additional enemy, while losing their only friend. He did not renounce the hope of forming all the Netherlands—excepting of course the Walloon provinces already reconciled to Philip—into one independent commonwealth, freed forever from Spanish tyranny. A dynasty from a foreign house he was willing to accept, but only on condition that the new royal line should become naturalized in the Netherlands, should conform itself to the strict constitutional compact established, and should employ only natives in the administration of Netherland affairs. Notwithstanding, therefore, the recent treachery of Anjou, he was willing to treat with him upon the ancient basis. The dilemma was a very desperate one, for whatever might be his course, it was impossible that it should escape censure. Even at this day, it is difficult to decide what might have been the result of openly braving the French government, and expelling Anjou. The Prince of Parma—subtle, vigilant, prompt with word and blow—was waiting most anxiously to take advantage of every false step of his adversary. The provinces had been already summoned,
in most eloquent language, to take warning by the recent fate of Antwerp, and
to learn by the manifestation just made by Anjou, of his real intentions, that
their only salvation lay in a return to the king’s arms. Anjou himself, as devoid
of shame as of honor, was secretly holding interviews with Parma’s agents,
Acosta and Flaminio Carnero, at the very moment when he was alternately
expressing to the states his resentment that they dared to doubt his truth, or
magnanimously extending to them his pardon for their suspicions. He was
writing letters full of injured innocence to Orange and to the states, while
secretly caviling over the terms of the treaty by which he was to sell himself to
Spain. Scruples as to enacting so base a part did not trouble the “Son of
France.” He did not hesitate at playing this doubly and trebly false game with
the provinces, but he was anxious to drive the best possible bargain for himself
with Parma. He offered to restore Dunkirk, Dixmuyde, and the other cities
which he had so recently filched from the states, and to enter into a strict
alliance with Philip, but he claimed that certain Netherland cities on the
French frontier should be made over to him in exchange. He required, likewise,
ample protection for his retreat from a country which was likely to be
sufficiently exasperated. Parma and his agents smiled, of course, at such
exorbitant terms. Nevertheless, it was necessary to deal cautiously with a man
who, although but a poor baffled rogue today, might tomorrow be seated on
the throne of France.

While they were all secretly haggling over the terms of the bargain, the Prince
of Orange discovered the intrigue. It convinced him of the necessity of closing
with a man whose baseness was so profound, but whose position made his
enmity, on the whole, more dangerous than his friendship. Anjou, backed by so
astute and unscrupulous a politician as Parma, was not to be trifled with. The
feeling of doubt and anxiety was spreading daily through the country; many
men, hitherto firm, were already wavering, while at the same time the prince
had no confidence in the power of any of the states, save those of Holland and
Utrecht, to maintain a resolute attitude of defiance, if not assisted from
without.

He therefore endeavored to repair the breach, if possible, and thus save the
Union. Mirambeau, in his conferences with the estates, suggested, on his part,
all that words could effect. He expressed the hope that the estates would use
their discretion “in compounding some sweet and friendly medicine” for the
present disorder, and that they would not judge the duke too harshly for a
fault which he assured them did not come from his natural disposition. He
warned them that the enemy would be quick to take advantage of the present
occasion to bring about, if possible, their destruction, and he added that he
was commissioned to wait upon the Duke of Anjou, in order to assure him that,
however alienated he might then be from the Netherlands, his Majesty was
determined to effect an entire reconciliation.

The envoy conferred also with the Prince of Orange, and urged him most
earnestly to use his efforts to heal the rupture. The prince, inspired by the
sentiments already indicated, spoke with perfect sincerity. His Highness, he
said, had never known a more faithful and zealous friend than himself. He had
begun to lose his own credit with the people by reason of the earnestness with which he had ever advocated the duke’s cause, and he could not flatter himself that his recommendation would now be of any advantage to his Highness. It would be more injurious than his silence. Nevertheless, he was willing to make use of all the influence which was left to him for the purpose of bringing about a reconciliation, provided that the duke were acting in good faith. If his Highness were now sincerely desirous of conforming to the original treaty, and willing to atone for the faults committed by him on the same day in so many cities—offenses which could not be excused upon the ground of any affronts which he might have received from the citizens of Antwerp—it might even now be possible to find a remedy for the past. He very bluntly told the envoy, however, that the frivolous excuses offered by the duke caused more bitterness than if he had openly acknowledged his fault. It were better, he said, to express contrition, than to excuse himself by laying blame on those to whom no blame belonged, but who, on the contrary, had ever shown themselves faithful servants of his Highness.

The estates of the Union, being in great perplexity as to their proper course, now applied formally, as they always did in times of danger and doubt, to the prince, for a public expression of his views. Somewhat reluctantly, he complied with their wishes in one of the most admirable of his state papers.

He told the states that he felt some hesitation in expressing his views. The blame of the general ill success was always laid upon his shoulders, as if the chances of war could be controlled even by a great potentate with ample means at his disposal. As for himself, with so little actual power that he could never have a single city provided with what he thought a sufficient garrison, it could not be expected that he could command fortune. His advice, he said, was always asked, but ever judged good or evil according to the result, as if the issue were in any hands but God’s. It did not seem advisable for a man of his condition and years, who had so often felt the barb of calumny’s tongue, to place his honor again in the judgment scale of mankind, particularly as he was likely to incur fresh censure for another man’s crime. Nevertheless, he was willing, for the love he bore the land, once more to encounter this danger.

He then rapidly reviewed the circumstances which had led to the election of Anjou and reminded the estates that they had employed sufficient time to deliberate concerning that transaction. He recalled to their remembrance his frequent assurances of support and sympathy if they would provide any other means of self-protection than the treaty with the French prince. He thought it, therefore, unjust, now that calamity had sprung from the measure, to ascribe the blame entirely to him, even had the injury been greater than the one actually sustained. He was far from palliating the crime, or from denying that the duke’s rights under the Treaty of Bordeaux had been utterly forfeited. He was now asked what was to be done. Of three courses, he said, one must be taken—they must make their peace with the king, or consent to a reconciliation with Anjou, or use all the strength which God had given them to resist, single-handed, the enemy. With regard to the first point, he resumed the argument as to the hopelessness of a satisfactory arrangement with the monarch of Spain.
The recent reconciliation of the Walloon provinces and its shameful infraction by Parma in the immediate recall of large masses of Spanish and Italian troops, showed too plainly the value of all solemn stipulations with his Catholic Majesty. Moreover, the time was unpropitious. It was idle to look, after what had recently occurred, for even fair promises. It was madness then to incur the enmity of two such powers at once. The French could do the Netherlands more harm as enemies than the Spaniards. The Spaniards would be more dangerous as friends, for in cases of a treaty with Philip, the Inquisition would be established in the place of a religious peace. For these reasons the prince declared himself entirely opposed to any negotiations with the Crown of Spain.

As to the second point, he admitted that Anjou had gained little honor by his recent course, and that it would be a mistake on their part to stumble a second time over the same stone. He foresaw, nevertheless, that the duke—irritated as he was by the loss of so many of his nobles, and by the downfall of all his hopes in the Netherlands—would be likely to inflict great injuries upon their cause. Two powerful nations like France and Spain would be too much to have on their hands at once. How much danger, too, would be incurred by braving at once the open wrath of the French king and the secret displeasure of the English queen. She had warmly recommended the Duke of Anjou. She had said that honors to him were rendered to herself, and she was now entirely opposed to their keeping the present quarrel alive. If France became their enemy, the road was at once opened through that kingdom for Spain. The estates were to ponder well whether they possessed the means to carry on such a double war without assistance. They were likewise to remember how many cities still remained in the hands of Anjou, and their possible fate if the duke were pushed to extremity.

The third point was then handled with vigor. He reminded the states of the perpetual difficulty of raising armies, of collecting money to pay for troops, of inducing cities to accept proper garrisons, of establishing a council which could make itself respected. He alluded briefly and bitterly to the perpetual quarrels of the states among themselves, to their mutual jealousy, to their obstinate parsimony, to their jealousy of the general government, to their apathy and inertness before impending ruin. He would not calumniate those, he said, who counseled trust in God. That was his sentiment also. To attempt great affairs, however, and, through avarice, to withhold sufficient means, was not trusting, but tempting God. On the contrary, it was trusting God to use the means which He offered to their hands.

With regard, then, to the three points, he rejected the first. Reconciliation with the King of Spain was impossible. For his own part, he would much prefer the third course. He had always been in favor of their maintaining independence by their own means and the assistance of the Almighty. He was obliged, however, in sadness, to confess that the narrow feeling of individual state rights, the general tendency to disunion, and the constant wrangling, had made this course a hopeless one. There remained, therefore, only the second, and they must effect an honorable reconciliation with Anjou. Whatever might be their decision, however, it was meet that it should be a speedy one. Not an
hour was to be lost. Many fair churches of God, in Anjou’s power, were
trembling on the issue, and religious and political liberty was more at stake
than ever. In conclusion, the prince again expressed his determination,
whatever might be their decision, to devote the rest of his days to the services
of his country.
The result of these representations by the prince, of frequent letters from
Queen Elizabeth urging a reconciliation, and of the professions made by the
duke and the French envoys, was a provisional arrangement, signed on the 26th
and 28th of March. According to the terms of this accord, the duke was to
receive 30,000 florins for his troops, and to surrender the cities still in his
power. The French prisoners were to be liberated, the duke’s property at
Antwerp was to be restored, and the duke himself was to await at Dunkirk the
arrival of plenipotentiaries to treat with him as to a new and perpetual
arrangement.
The negotiations, however, were languid. The quarrel was healed on the
surface, but confidence so recently and violently uprooted was slow to revive.
On the 28th of June, the Duke of Anjou left Dunkirk for Paris, never to return to
the Netherlands, but he exchanged on his departure affectionate letters with
the prince and the estates. M. des Pruneaux remained as his representative,
and it was understood that the arrangements for re-installing him as soon as
possible in the sovereignty which he had so basely forfeited, were to be pushed
forward with earnestness.

In the spring of the same year, Gerard Truchses, Archbishop of Cologne, who
had lost his see for the love of Agnes Mansfeld, whom he had espoused in
defiance of the pope, took refuge with the Prince of Orange at Delft. A civil
war in Germany broke forth, the Protestant princes undertaking to support the
archbishop, in opposition to Ernest of Bavaria, who had been appointed in his
place. The palatine, John Casimir, thought it necessary to mount and ride as
usual. Making his appearance at the head of a hastily collected force, and
prepared for another plunge into chaos, he suddenly heard, however, of his
elder brother’s death at Heidelberg. Leaving his men, as was his habit, to shift
for themselves, and Baron Truchses, the archbishop’s brother, to fall into the
hands of the enemy, he disappeared from the scene with great rapidity, in
order that his own interests in the palatinate and in the guardianship of the
young palatines might not suffer by his absence.

At this time, too, on the 12th of April, the Prince of Orange was married, for the
fourth time, to Louisa, widow of the Seigneur de Teligny, and daughter of the
illustrious Coligny.

In the course of the summer, the states of Holland and Zealand, always bitterly
opposed to the connection with Anjou, and more than ever dissatisfied with the
resumption of negotiations since the Antwerp catastrophe, sent a committee to
the prince in order to persuade him to set his face against the whole
proceedings. They delivered at the same time a formal remonstrance, in
writing (August 25, 1583), in which they explained how odious the arrangement
with the duke had ever been to them. They expressed the opinion that even
the wisest might be sometimes mistaken, and that the prince had been bitterly
deceived by Anjou and by the French court. They besought him to rely upon
the assistance of the Almighty, and upon the exertions of the nation, and they
again hinted at the propriety of his accepting that supreme sovereignty over all
the united provinces which would be so gladly conferred, while, for their own
parts, they voluntarily offered largely to increase the sums annually
contributed to the common defense.

Very soon afterwards, in August 1583, the states of the united provinces
assembled at Middelburg formally offered the general government—which
under the circumstances was the general sovereignty—to the prince, warmly
urging his acceptance of the dignity. He manifested, however, the same
reluctance which he had always expressed, demanding that the project should
beforehand be laid before the councils of all the large cities, and before the
estates of certain provinces which had not been represented at the Middelburg
diet. He also made use of the occasion to urge the necessity of providing more
generously for the army expenses and other general disbursements. As to
ambitious views, he was a stranger to them, and his language at this moment
was as patriotic and self-denying as at any previous period. He expressed his
thanks to the estates for this renewed proof of their confidence in his
character, and this additional approbation of his course, a sentiment which he
was always ready "as a good patriot to justify by his most faithful service." He
reminded them however, that he was no great monarch, having in his own
hands the means to help and the power to liberate them, and that even were
he in possession of all which God had once given him, he should be far from
strong enough to resist, single-handed, their powerful enemy. All that was left
to him, he said, was an "honest and moderate experience in affairs." With this
he was ever ready to serve them to the utmost, but they knew very well that
the means to make that experience available were to be drawn from the
country itself. With modest simplicity, he observed that he had been at work
fifteen or sixteen years, doing his best, with the grace of God, to secure the
freedom of the fatherland and to resist tyranny of conscience, that he alone,
assisted by his brothers and some friends and relatives, had borne the whole
burthen in the beginning, and that he had afterwards been helped by the states
of Holland and Zealand, so that he could not but render thanks to God for His
great mercy in thus granting His blessing to so humble an instrument, and thus
restoring so many beautiful provinces to their ancient freedom and to the true
religion. The prince protested that this result was already a sufficient reward
for his labors, a great consolation in his sufferings. He had hoped, he said, that
the estates, taking into consideration his "long-continued labors," would have
been willing to excuse him from "a new load of cares," and would have granted
him "some little rest in his already advanced age," that they would have
selected "some other person more fitted for the labor," whom he would himself
faithfully promise to assist to the best of his abilities, "rendering him willing
obedience proportionate to the authority conferred upon him."

Like all other attempts to induce the acceptance, by the prince, of supreme
authority, this effort proved ineffectual, from the obstinate unwillingness of his
hand to receive the proffered scepter.
In connection with this movement, and at about the same epoch, Jacob Swerius, member of the Brabant Council, with other deputies, waited upon Orange, and formally tendered him the sovereign dukedom of Brabant, forfeited and vacant by the late crime of Anjou. The prince, however, resolutely refused to accept the dignity, assuring the committee that he had not the means to afford the country as much protection as they had a right to expect from their sovereign. He added that he "would never give the King of Spain the right to say that the Prince of Orange had been actuated by no other motives in his career than the hope of self-aggrandizement, and the desire to deprive his Majesty of the provinces in order to appropriate them to himself." Accordingly, firmly refusing to heed the overtures of the United States, and of Holland in particular, he continued to further the re-establishment of Anjou—a measure in which, as he deliberately believed, lay the only chance of union and independence.

The Prince of Parma, meantime, had not been idle. He had been unable to induce the provinces to listen to his wiles, and to rush to the embrace of the monarch whose arms he described as ever open to the repentant. He had, however, been busily occupied in the course of the summer in taking up many of the towns which the treason of Anjou had laid open to his attacks. Eindhoven, Diest, Dunkirk, Newport, and other places, were successively surrendered to royalist generals. On September 22, 1583, the city of Zutphen, too, was surprised by Colonel Tassis, on the fall of which most important place, the treason of Orange’s brother-in-law, Count Van den Berg, governor of Gueldres, was revealed. His fidelity had been long suspected, particularly by Count John of Nassau, but always earnestly vouched for by his wife and by his sons. On the capture of Zutphen, however, a document was found and made public, by which Van den Berg bound himself to deliver the principal cities of Gueldres and Zutphen, beginning with Zutphen itself, into the hands of Parma, on condition of receiving the pardon and friendship of the king.

Not much better could have been expected of Van den Berg. His pusillanimous retreat from his post in Alva’s time will be recollected, and it is certain that the prince had never placed implicit confidence in his character. Nevertheless, it was the fate of this great man to be often deceived by the friends whom he trusted, although never to be outwitted by his enemies. Van den Berg was arrested, on the 15th of November, carried to the Hague, examined and imprisoned for a time in Delftshaven. After a time he was, however, liberated, when he instantly, with all his sons, took service under the king.

While treason was thus favoring the royal arms in the North, the same powerful element, to which so much of the Netherland misfortunes had always been owing, was busy in Flanders. Towards the end of the year 1583, the Prince of Chimay, eldest son of the Duke of Aerschot, had been elected governor of that province. This noble was as unstable in character, as vain, as unscrupulous, and as ambitious as his father and uncle. He had been originally desirous of espousing the eldest daughter of the Prince of Orange, afterwards the Countess of Hohenlo, but the Duchess of
Aerschot was too strict a Catholic to consent to the marriage, and her son was afterwards united to the Countess of Meghen, widow of Lancelot Berlaymont. As affairs seemed going on prosperously for the states in the beginning of this year, the Prince of Chimay had affected a strong inclination for the Reformed religion, and as governor of Bruges, he had appointed many members of that church to important offices, to the exclusion of Catholics. By so decided a course, he acquired the confidence of the patriot party and at the end of the year he became Governor of Flanders. No sooner was he installed in this post, than he opened a private correspondence with Parma, for it was his intention to make his peace with the king, and to purchase pardon and advancement by the brilliant service which he now undertook, of restoring this important province to the royal authority. In the arrangement of his plans he was assisted by Champagny, who, as will be recollected, had long been a prisoner in Ghent, but whose confinement was not so strict as to prevent frequent intercourse with his friends without. Champagny was indeed believed to be the life of the whole intrigue. The plot was, however, forwarded by Imbize, the roaring demagogue whose republicanism could never reconcile itself with what he esteemed the aristocratic policy of Orange, and whose stern Puritanism could be satisfied with nothing short of a general extermination of Catholics. This man, after having been allowed to depart, infamous and contemptible, from the city which he had endangered, now ventured after five years, to return, and to engage in fresh schemes which were even more criminal than his previous enterprises. The uncompromising foe to Romanism, the advocate of Grecian and Genevan democracy, now allied himself with Champagny and with Chimay, to effect a surrender of Flanders to Philip and to the Inquisition. He succeeded in getting himself elected chief senator in Ghent, and forthwith began to use all his influence to further the secret plot. The joint efforts and intrigues of Parma, Champagny, Chimay, and Imbize were near being successful. Early in the spring of 1584 a formal resolution was passed by the government of Ghent, to open negotiations with Parma. Hostages were accordingly exchanged, and a truce of three weeks was agreed upon, during which an animated correspondence was maintained between the authorities of Ghent and the Prince of Chimay on the one side, and the United States-General, the magistracy of Antwerp, the states of Brabant, and other important bodies on the other.

The friends of the Union and of liberty used all their eloquence to arrest the city of Ghent in its course, and to save the province of Flanders from accepting the proposed arrangement with Parma. The people of Ghent were reminded that the chief promoter of this new negotiation was Champagny, a man who owed a deep debt of hatred to their city, for the long, and as he believed, the unjust confinement which he had endured within its walls. Moreover, he was the brother of Granvelle, source of all their woes. To take counsel with Champagny was to come within reach of a deadly foe, for “he who confesses himself to a wolf,” said the burgomasters of Antwerp, “will get wolf’s absolution.” The Flemings were warned by all their correspondents that it was puerile to hope for faith in Philip, a monarch whose first principle was that
promises to heretics were void. They were entreated to pay no heed to the "sweet singing of the royalists," who just then affected to disapprove of the practice adopted by the Spanish Inquisition, that they might more surely separate them from their friends. "Imitate not," said the magistrates of Brussels, "the foolish sheep who made with the wolves a treaty of perpetual amity, from which the faithful dogs were to be excluded." It was armed—and the truth was certainly beyond peradventure—that religious liberty was dead at the moment when the treaty with Parma should be signed. "To look for political privilege or evangelical liberty," said the Antwerp authorities, "in any arrangement with the Spaniards, is to look for light in darkness, for fire in water." "Philip is himself the slave of the Inquisition," said the states-general, "and has but one great purpose in life—to cherish the institution everywhere, and particularly in the Netherlands. Before Margaret of Parma’s time, 100,000 Netherlanders had been burned or strangled, and Alva had spent seven years in butchering and torturing many thousands more." The magistrates of Brussels used similar expressions. "The King of Spain," said they to their brethren of Ghent, "is fastened to the Inquisition. Yea, he is so much in its power, that even if he desired, he is unable to maintain his promises." The Prince of Orange, too, was indefatigable in public and private efforts to counteract the machinations of Parma and the Spanish party in Ghent. He saw with horror the progress which the political decomposition of that most important commonwealth was making, for he considered the city the keystone to the union of the provinces, for he felt with a prophetic instinct that its loss would entail that of all the southern provinces, and make a united and independent Netherland state impossible. Already in the summer of 1583, he addressed a letter full of wisdom and of warning to the authorities of Ghent, a letter in which he set fully before them the iniquity and stupidity of their proceedings, while at the same time he expressed himself with so much dexterity and caution as to avoid giving offense, by accusations which he made, as it were, hypothetically, when, in truth, they were real ones. These remonstrances were not fruitless, and the authorities and citizens of Ghent once more paused ere they stepped from the precipice. While they were thus wavering, the whole negotiation with Parma was abruptly brought to a close by a new incident, the demagogue Imbize having been discovered in a secret attempt to obtain possession of the city of Denremonde, and deliver it to Parma. The old acquaintance, ally, and enemy of Imbize, the Seigneur de Ryhove, was commandant of the city, and information was privately conveyed to him of the design, before there had been time for its accomplishment. Ryhove, being thoroughly on his guard, arrested his old comrade, who was shortly afterwards brought to trial, and executed at Ghent. John van Imbize had returned to the city from which the contemptuous mercy of Orange had permitted him formerly to depart, only to expiate fresh turbulence and fresh treason by a felon’s death. Meanwhile the citizens of Ghent, thus warned by word and deed, passed an earnest resolution to have no more intercourse with Parma, but to abide faithfully by the Union. Their example was followed by the other Flemish cities, excepting, unfortunately, Bruges, for that important
town, being entirely in the power of Chimay, was now surrendered by him to the royal government. On May 20, 1584, Baron Montigny, on the part of Parma, signed an accord with the Prince of Chimay, by which the city was restored to his Majesty, and by which all inhabitants not willing to abide by the Roman Catholic religion were permitted to leave the land. The prince was received with favor by Parma, on conclusion of the transaction, and subsequently met with advancement from the king, while the princess, who had embraced the Reformed religion, retired to Holland. The only other city of importance gained on this occasion by the government was Ypres, which had been long besieged, and was soon afterwards forced to yield. The new bishop, on taking possession, resorted to instant measures for cleansing a place which had been so long in the hands of the infidels, and as the first step in this purification, the bodies of many heretics who had been buried for years were taken from their graves, and publicly hanged in their coffins. All living adherents to the Reformed religion were instantly expelled from the place.

Ghent and the rest of Flanders were, for the time, saved from the power of Spain, the inhabitants being confirmed in their resolution of sustaining their union with the other provinces by the news from France. Early in the spring the negotiations between Anjou and the states-general had been earnestly renewed, and Junius, Mouillerie, and Asseliers, had been dispatched on a special mission to France, for the purpose of arranging a treaty with the duke. On April 19, 1584, they arrived in Delft, on their return, bringing warm letters from the French court, full of promises to assist the Netherlands, and it was understood that a constitution, upon the basis of the original arrangement of Bordeaux, would be accepted by the duke. These arrangements were, however, forever terminated by the death of Anjou, who had been ill during the whole course of the negotiations. On the 10th of June, 1584, he expired at Chateau Thierry, in great torture, sweating blood from every pore, and under circumstances which, as usual, suggested strong suspicions of poison.

CHAPTER 7

The Legacy of William the Silent

It has been seen that the Ban against the Prince of Orange had not been hitherto without fruits, for although unsuccessful, the efforts to take his life and earn the promised guerdon had been incessant. The attempt of Jaureguy at Antwerp, of Salseda and Baza at Bruges, have been related, and in March 1583, moreover, one Pietro Dordogno was executed in Antwerp for endeavoring to assassinate the prince. Before his death, he confessed that he had come from Spain solely for the purpose, and that he had conferred with La Motte, Governor of Gravelines, as to the best means of accomplishing his design. In April 1584, Hans Hanzoon, a merchant of Flushing, had been executed for attempting to destroy the prince by means of gunpowder, concealed under his house in that city, and under his seat in the church. He confessed that he had deliberately formed the intention of performing the deed, and that he had
discussed the details of the enterprise with the Spanish ambassador in Paris. At about the same time, one Le Goth, a captive French officer, had been applied to by the Marquis de Richebourg, on the part of Alexander of Parma, to attempt the murder of the prince. Le Goth had consented, saying that nothing could be more easily done, and that he would undertake to poison him in a dish of eels, of which he knew him to be particularly fond. The Frenchman was liberated with this understanding, but being very much the friend of Orange, straightway told him the whole story, and remained ever afterwards a faithful servant of the states. It is to be presumed that he excused the treachery to which he owed his escape from prison on the ground that faith was no more to be kept with murderers than with heretics. Thus, within two years, there had been five distinct attempts to assassinate the prince, all of them with the privity of the Spanish government. A sixth was soon to follow.

In the summer of 1584, William of Orange was residing at Delft, where his wife, Louisa de Coligny, had given birth, in the preceding winter, to a son, afterwards the celebrated stadholder, Frederic Henry. The child had received these names from his two godfathers, the Kings of Denmark and of Navarre, and his baptism had been celebrated with much rejoicing on the 12th of June, in the place of his birth.

It was a quiet, cheerful, yet somewhat drowsy little city, that ancient burgh of Delft. The placid canals by which it was intersected in every direction were all planted with whispering, umbrageous rows of limes and poplars, and along these watery highways the traffic of the place glided so noiselessly that the town seemed the abode of silence and tranquility. The streets were clean and airy, the houses well built, the whole aspect of the place thriving.

One of the principal thoroughfares was called the old Delft-street. It was shaded on both sides by lime trees, which in that midsummer season covered the surface of the canal which flowed between them with their light and fragrant blossoms. On one side of this street was the "old kirk," a plain, antique structure of brick, with lancet windows, and with a tall, slender tower, which inclined, at a very considerable angle, towards a house upon the other side of the canal. That house was the mansion of William the Silent. It stood directly opposite the church, being separated by a spacious courtyard from the street, while the stables and other offices in the rear extended to the city wall. A narrow lane, opening out of Delft-street, ran along the side of the house and court, in the direction of the ramparts. The house was a plain, two-storied edifice of brick, with red-tiled roof, and had formerly been a cloister dedicated to Saint Agatha, the last prior of which had been hanged by the furious Lume de la Marck.

The news of Anjou’s death had been brought to Delft by a special messenger from the French court. On Sunday morning, July 8, 1584, the Prince of Orange, having read the dispatches before leaving his bed, caused the man who had brought them to be summoned, that he might give some particular details by word of mouth concerning the last illness of the duke. The courier was accordingly admitted to the prince’s bedchamber, and proved to be one Francis Guion, as he called himself. This man had, early in the spring, claimed and
received the protection of Orange, on the ground of being the son of a Protestant at Besançon, who had suffered death for his religion, and of his own ardent attachment to the Reformed faith. A pious, psalm-singing, thoroughly Calvinistic youth he seemed to be, having a Bible or a hymnbook under his arm whenever he walked the street, and most exemplary in his attendance at sermon and lecture. For the rest, a singularly unobtrusive personage, twenty-seven years of age, low of stature, meager, mean-visaged, muddy complexioned, and altogether a man of no account—quite insignificant in the eyes of all who looked upon him. If there were one opinion in which the few who had taken the trouble to think of the puny, somewhat shambling stranger from Burgundy at all coincided, it was that he was inoffensive, but quite incapable of any important business. He seemed well educated, claimed to be of respectable parentage, and had considerable facility of speech, when any person could be found who thought it worthwhile to listen to him, but on the whole he attracted little attention.

Nevertheless, this insignificant frame locked up a desperate and daring character; this mild and inoffensive nature had gone pregnant seven years with a terrible crime, whose birth could not much longer be retarded. Francis Guion, the Calvinist, son of a martyred Calvinist, was in reality Balthazar Gérard, a fanatical Catholic, whose father and mother were still living at Villefans in Burgundy. Before reaching man’s estate, he had formed the design of murdering the Prince of Orange, “who, so long as he lived, seemed like to remain a rebel against the Catholic King, and to make every effort to disturb the repose of the Roman Catholic Apostolic religion.”

When but twenty years of age, he had struck his dagger with all his might into a door, exclaiming, as he did so, “Would that the blow had been in the heart of Orange!” For this he was rebuked by a bystander, who told him it was not for him to kill princes, and that it was not desirable to destroy so good a captain as the prince, who, after all, might one day reconcile himself with the king.

As soon as the Ban against Orange was published, Balthazar, more anxious than ever to execute his long-cherished design, left Dôle and came to Luxemburg. Here he learned that the deed had already been done by John Jaureguy. He received this intelligence at first with a sensation of relief, was glad to be excused from putting himself in danger, and believing the prince dead, took service as clerk with one John Duprel, secretary to Count Mansfeld, Governor of Luxemburg. Here he learned that the deed had already been done by John Jaureguy. He received this intelligence at first with a sensation of relief, was glad to be excused from putting himself in danger, and believing the prince dead, took service as clerk with one John Duprel, secretary to Count Mansfeld, Governor of Luxemburg. Ere long, the ill success of Jaureguy’s attempt becoming known, the “inveterate determination” of Gérard aroused itself more fiercely than ever. He accordingly took models of Mansfeld’s official seals in wax, in order that he might make use of them as an acceptable offering to the Orange party, whose confidence he meant to gain.

Various circumstances detained him, however. A sum of money was stolen, and he was forced to stay till it was found, for fear of being arrested as the thief. Then his cousin and employer fell sick, and Gérard was obliged to wait for his recovery. At last, in March 1584, “the weather,” as he said, “appearing to be fine,” Balthazar left Luxemburg and came to Tréves. While there, he confided his scheme to the regent of the Jesuit college, a “red-haired man” whose name
has not been preserved. That dignitary expressed high approbation of the plan, gave Gerard his blessing, and promised him that, if his life should be sacrificed in achieving his purpose, he should be enrolled among the martyrs. Another Jesuit, however, in the same college, with whom he likewise communicated, held very different language, making great efforts to turn the young man from his design, on the ground of the inconveniences which might arise from the forging of Mansfeld's seals, adding that neither he nor any of the Jesuits liked to meddle with such affairs, but advising that the whole matter should be laid before the Prince of Parma. It does not appear that this personage, “an excellent man and a learned,” attempted to dissuade the young man from his project by arguments drawn from any supposed criminality in the assassination itself, or from any danger, temporal or eternal, to which the perpetrator might expose himself. Not influenced, as it appears, except on one point, by the advice of this second ghostly confessor, Balthazar came to Tournay, and held council with a third—the celebrated Franciscan, Father Géry—by whom he was much comforted and strengthened in his determination. His next step was to lay the project before Parma, as the “excellent and learned” Jesuit at Tréves had advised. This he did by a letter, drawn up with much care, and which he evidently thought well of as a composition. One copy of this letter he deposited with the guardian of the Franciscan convent at Tournay; the other he presented with his own hand to the Prince of Parma. “The vassal,” said he, “ought always to prefer justice and the will of the king to his own life.” That being the case, he expressed his astonishment that no man had yet been found to execute the sentence against William of Nassau, “except the gentle Biscayan, since defunct.” To accomplish the task, Balthazar observed, very judiciously, that it was necessary to have access to the person of the prince—wherein consisted the difficulty. Those who had that advantage, he continued, were therefore bound to extirpate the pest at once, without obliging his Majesty to send to Rome for a chevalier, because not one of them was willing to precipitate himself into the venomous gulf, which by its contagion infected and killed the souls and bodies of all poor abused subjects exposed to its influence. Gérard avowed himself to have been so long goaded and stimulated by these considerations, so extremely nettled with displeasure and bitterness at seeing the obstinate wretch still escaping his just judgment, as to have formed the design of baiting a trap for the fox, hoping thus to gain access to him, and to take him unawares. He added, without explaining the nature of the trap and the bait, that he deemed it his duty to lay the subject before the most serene Prince of Parma, protesting at the same time that he did not contemplate the exploit for the sake of the reward mentioned in the sentence, and that he preferred trusting in that regard to the immense liberality of his Majesty. Parma had long been looking for a good man to murder Orange, feeling—as Philip, Granvelle, and all former governors of the Netherlands had felt—that this was the only means of saving the royal authority in any part of the provinces. Many unsatisfactory assassins had presented themselves from time to time, and Alexander had paid money in hand to various individuals—Italians,
Spaniards, Lorrainers, Scotchmen, Englishmen—who had generally spent the sums received without attempting the job. Others were supposed to be still engaged in the enterprise, and at that moment there were four persons—each unknown to the others, and of different nations—in the city of Delft, seeking to compass the death of William the Silent. Shag-eared, military, hirsute ruffians—ex-captains of free companies and such marauders—were daily offering their services; there was no lack of them, and they had done but little. How should Parma, seeing this obscure, under-sized, thin-bearded, runaway clerk before him, expect pith and energy from him? He thought him quite unfit for an enterprise of moment, and declared as much to his secret councillors and to the king. He soon dismissed him, after receiving his letters, and it may be supposed that the bombastic style of that epistle would not efface the unfavorable impression produced by Balthazar's exterior. The representations of Haultepenne and others induced him so far to modify his views as to send his confidential councillor, d'Assonleville, to the stranger, in order to learn the details of the scheme. Assonleville had accordingly an interview with Gérard, in which he requested the young man to draw up a statement of his plan in writing, and this was done upon the 11th of April, 1584.

In this letter Gérard explained his plan of introducing himself to the notice of Orange, at Delft, as the son of an executed Calvinist, as himself warmly, though secretly, devoted to the Reformed faith, and as desirous, therefore, of placing himself in the prince's service, in order to avoid the insolence of the papists. Having gained the confidence of those about the prince, he would suggest to them the great use which might be made of Mansfeld's signet in forging passports for spies and other persons whom it might be desirous to send into the territory of the royalists. "With these or similar feints and frivolities," continued Gérard, "he should soon obtain access to the person of the said Nassau," repeating his protestation that nothing had moved him to his enterprise "save the good zeal which he bore to the faith and true religion guarded by the Holy Mother Church Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman, and to the service of his Majesty." He begged pardon for having purloined the impressions of the seals—a turpitude which he would never have committed, but would sooner have suffered a thousand deaths, except for the great end in view. He particularly wished forgiveness for that crime before going to his task, "in order that he might confess, and receive the holy communion at the coming Easter, without scruples of conscience." He likewise begged the Prince of Parma to obtain for him absolution from his Holiness for this crime of pilfering, the more so "as he was about to keep company for some time with heretics and atheists, and in some sort to conform himself to their customs."

From the general tone of the letters of Gérard, he might be set down at once as a simple, religious fanatic, who felt sure that, in executing the command of Philip publicly issued to all the murderers of Europe, he was meriting well of God and his king. There is no doubt that he was an exalted enthusiast, but not purely an enthusiast. The man's character offers more than one point of interest, as a psychological phenomenon. He had convinced himself that the work which he had in hand was eminently meritorious, and he was utterly
without fear of consequences. He was, however, by no means so disinterested as he chose to represent himself in letters which, as he instinctively felt, were to be of perennial interest. On the contrary, in his interviews with Assonleville, he urged that he was a poor fellow, and that he had undertaken this enterprise in order to acquire property—to make himself rich—and that he depended upon the Prince of Parma’s influence in obtaining the reward promised by the Ban to the individual who should put Orange to death. This second letter decided Parma so far that he authorized Assonleville to encourage the young man in his attempt, and to promise that the reward should be given to him in case of success, and to his heirs in the event of his death. Assonleville, in the second interview, accordingly made known these assurances in the strongest manner to Gérard, warning him, at the same time, on no account, if arrested, to inculpate the Prince of Parma. The councillor, while thus exhorting the stranger, according to Alexander’s commands, confined himself, however, to generalities, refusing even to advance crowns, which Balthazar had begged from the governor-general in order to provide for the necessary expenses of his project. Parma had made similar advances too often to men who had promised to assassinate the prince and had then done little, and he was resolute in his refusal to this new adventurer, of whom he expected absolutely nothing. Gérard, notwithstanding this rebuff, was not disheartened. “I will provide myself out of my own purse,” said he to Assonleville, “and within six weeks you will hear of me.” “Go forth, my son,” said Assonleville, paternally, upon this spirited reply, “and if you succeed in your enterprise, the king will fulfil all his promises, and you will gain an immortal name beside.”

The “inveterate deliberation,” thus thoroughly matured, Gérard now proceeded to carry into effect. He came to Delft, obtained a hearing of Villers, the clergyman and intimate friend of Orange, showed him the Mansfeld seals, and was, somewhat against his will, sent to France, to exhibit them to Maréchal Biron, who, it was thought, was soon to be appointed Governor of Cambray. Through Orange’s recommendation, the Burgundian was received into the suite of Noel de Caron, Seigneur de Schoneval, then setting forth on a special mission to the Duke of Anjou. While in France, Gérard could rest neither by day nor night, so tormented was he by the desire of accomplishing his project, and at length he obtained permission, upon the death of the duke, to carry this important intelligence to the Prince of Orange. The dispatches having been entrusted to him, he traveled post-haste to Delft, and, to his astonishment, the letters had hardly been delivered before he was summoned in person to the chamber of the prince. Here was an opportunity such as he had never dared to hope for. The arch-enemy to the Church and to the human race, whose death would confer upon his destroyer wealth and nobility in this world, besides a crown of glory in the next, lay unarmed, alone, in bed, before the man who had thirsted seven long years for his blood. Balthazar could scarcely control his emotions sufficiently to answer the questions which the prince addressed to him concerning the death of Anjou, but Orange, deeply engaged with the dispatches, and with the reflections
which their deeply important contents suggested, did not observe the
countenance of the humble Calvinist exile, who had been recently
recommended to his patronage by Villers. Gérard, had, moreover, made no
preparation for an interview so entirely unexpected, had come unarmed, and
had formed no plan for escape. He was obliged to forego his prey when most
within his reach, and after communicating all the information which the prince
required, he was dismissed from the chamber.
It was Sunday morning, and the bells were tolling for church. Upon leaving the
house he loitered about the courtyard, furtively examining the premises, so
that a sergeant of halberdiers asked him why he was waiting there. Balthazar
meekly replied that he was desirous of attending divine worship in the church
opposite, but added, pointing to his shabby and travel-stained attire, that,
without at least a new pair of shoes and stockings, he was unfit to join the
congregation. Insignificant as ever, the small, pious, dusty stranger excited no
suspicion in the mind of the good-natured sergeant. He forthwith spoke of the
wants of Gérard to an officer, by whom they were communicated to Orange
himself, and the prince instantly ordered a sum of money to be given him. Thus
Balthazar obtained from William’s charity what Parma’s thrift had denied—a
fund for carrying out his purpose!
Next morning, with the money thus procured, he purchased a pair of pistols, or
small carabines, from a soldier, chaffering long about the price because the
vender could not supply a particular kind of chopped bullets or slugs which he
desired. Before the sunset of the following day, that soldier had stabbed
himself to the heart, and died despairing, on hearing for what purpose the
pistols had been bought.
On Tuesday, July 10, 1584, at about half past twelve, the prince, with his wife
on his arm, and followed by the ladies and gentlemen of his family, was going
to the dining room. William the Silent was dressed upon that day, according to
his usual custom, in very plain fashion. He wore a wide-leaved, loosely-shaped
hat of dark felt, with a silken cord round the crown—such as had been worn by
the Beggars in the early days of the revolt. A high ruff encircled his neck, from
which also depended one of the Beggar’s medals, with the motto, “Fidèles au
roy jusqu’à la besace,” while a loose surcoat of gray frieze cloth, over a tawny
leather doublet, with wide, slashed underclothes completed his costume.
Gérard presented himself at the doorway and demanded a passport. The
princess, struck with the pale and agitated countenance of the man, anxiously
questioned her husband concerning the stranger. The prince carelessly
observed that “it was merely a person who came for a passport,” ordering, at
the same time, a secretary forthwith to prepare one. The princess, still not
relieved, observed in an undertone that “she had never seen so villainous a
countenance.” Orange, however, not at all impressed with the appearance of
Gérard, conducted himself at table with his usual cheerfulness, conversing
much with the burgomaster of Leewarden, the only guest present at the family
dinner, concerning the political and religious aspects of Friesland. At two
o’clock the company rose from table. The prince led the way, intending to pass
to his private apartments above. The dining room, which was on the ground
floor, opened into a little square vestibule, which communicated, through an arched passageway, with the main entrance into the courtyard. This vestibule was also directly at the foot of the wooden staircase leading to the next floor, and was scarcely six feet in width. Upon its left side, as one approached the stairway, was an obscure arch, sunk deep in the wall, and completely in the shadow of the door. Behind this arch a portal opened to the narrow lane at the side of the house. The stairs themselves were completely lighted by a large window, half way up the flight. The prince came from the dining room, and began leisurely to ascend. He had only reached the second stair, when a man emerged from the sunken arch, and, standing within a foot or two of him, discharged a pistol full at his heart. Three balls entered his body, one of which, passing quite through him, struck with violence against the wall beyond. The prince exclaimed in French, as he felt the wound, "O my God, have mercy upon my soul! O my God, have mercy upon this poor people!"

These were the last words he ever spoke, save that when his sister, Catherine of Schwartzburg, immediately afterwards asked him if he commended his soul to Jesus Christ, he faintly answered, "Yes." His master of the horse, Jacob van Maldere, had caught him in his arms as the fatal shot was fired. The prince was then placed on the stairs for an instant, when he immediately began to swoon. He was afterwards laid upon a couch in the dining room, where in a few minutes, he breathed his last in the arms of his wife and sister.

The murderer succeeded in making his escape through the side door, and sped swiftly up the narrow lane. He had almost reached the ramparts, from which he intended to spring into the moat, when he stumbled over a heap of rubbish. As he rose, he was seized by several pages and halberdiers, who had pursued him from the house. He had dropped his pistols upon the spot where he had committed the crime, and upon his person were found a couple of bladders, provided with a piece of pipe with which he had intended to assist himself across the moat, beyond which a horse was waiting for him. He made no effort to deny his identity, but boldly avowed himself and his deed. He was brought back to the house, where he immediately underwent a preliminary examination before the city magistrates. He was afterwards subjected to excruciating tortures, for the fury against the wretch who had destroyed the Father of the country was uncontrollable, and William the Silent was no longer alive to intercede, as he had often done before, in behalf of those who assailed his life. The organization of Balthazar Gérard would furnish a subject of profound study, both for the physiologist and the metaphysician. Neither wholly a fanatic, nor entirely a ruffian, he combined the most dangerous elements of both characters. In his puny body and mean exterior were enclosed considerable mental powers and accomplishments, a daring ambition, and a courage almost superhuman. Yet those qualities led him only to form upon the threshold of life a deliberate determination to achieve greatness by the assassin’s trade. The rewards held out by the Ban, combining with his religious bigotry and his passion for distinction, fixed all his energies with patient concentration upon the one great purpose for which he seemed to have been born, and after seven years’ preparation, he had at last fulfilled his design.
Upon being interrogated by the magistrates, he manifested neither despair nor contrition, but rather a quiet exultation. "Like David," he said, he had "slain Goliath of Gath."

When falsely informed that his victim was not dead, he showed no credulity or disappointment. He had discharged three poisoned balls into the prince’s stomach, and he knew that death must have already ensued. He expressed regret, however, that the resistance of the halberdiers had prevented him from using his second pistol, and avowed that if he were a thousand leagues away he would return in order to do the deed again, if possible. He deliberately wrote a detailed confession of his crime, and of the motives and manner of its commission, taking care, however, not to implicate Parma in the transaction.

After sustaining day after day the most horrible tortures, he subsequently related his interviews with Assonleville and with the president of the Jesuit college at Tréves, adding that he had been influenced in his work by the assurance of obtaining the rewards promised by the Ban. During the intervals of repose from the rack he conversed with ease, and even eloquence, answering all questions addressed to him with apparent sincerity. His constancy in suffering so astounded his judges that they believed him supported by witchcraft. "Ecce homo!" he exclaimed, from time to time, with insane blasphemy, as he raised his blood-streaming head from the bench. In order to destroy the charm which seemed to render him insensible to pain, they sent for the shirt of a hospital patient, supposed to be a sorcerer. When clothed in this garment, however, Balthazar was nonetheless superior to the arts of the tormentors, enduring all their inflictions, according to an eyewitness, “without once exclaiming, Ah me!” and avowing that he would repeat his enterprise, if possible, were he to die a thousand deaths in consequence. Some of those present refused to believe that he was a man at all. Others asked him how long since he had sold himself to the Devil, to which he replied, mildly, that he had no acquaintance whatever with the Devil. He thanked the judges politely for the food which he received in prison, and promised to recompense them for the favor. Upon being asked how that was possible, he replied that he would serve as their advocate in Paradise.

The sentence pronounced against the assassin was execrable—a crime against the memory of the great man whom it professed to avenge. It was decreed that the right hand of Gérard should be burned off with a red-hot iron, that his flesh should be torn from his bones with pincers in six different places, that he should be quartered and disemboweled alive, that his heart should be torn from his bosom and flung in his face, and that, finally, his head should be taken off. Not even his horrible crime, with its endless consequences, nor the natural frenzy of indignation which it had excited, could justify this savage decree, to rebuke which the murdered hero might have almost risen from the sleep of death. The sentence was literally executed on the 14th of July, the criminal supporting its horrors with the same astonishing fortitude. So calm were his nerves, crippled and half roasted as he was ere he mounted the scaffold, that when one of the executioners was slightly injured in the ear by the flying from the handle of the hammer with which he was breaking the fatal pistol in
pieces, as the first step in the execution—a circumstance which produced a
general laugh in the crowd—a smile was observed upon Balthazar’s face in
sympathy with the general hilarity. His lips were seen to move up to the
moment when his heart was thrown in his face—"Then," said a looker-on, "he
gave up the ghost."
The reward promised by Philip to the man who should murder Orange was paid
to the heirs of Gérard. Parma informed his sovereign that the "poor man" had
been executed, but that his father and mother were still living, to whom he
recommended the payment of that "merced" which "the laudable and generous
deed had so well deserved." This was accordingly done, and the excellent
parents, ennobled and enriched by the crime of their son, received instead of
the 25,000 crowns promised in the Ban, the three seignories of Lievremont,
Hostal, and Dampmartin, in the Franche Comté, and took their place at once
among the landed aristocracy. Thus the bounty of the prince had furnished the
weapon by which his life was destroyed, and his estates supplied the fund out
of which the assassin’s family received the price of blood. At a later day, when
the unfortunate eldest son of Orange returned from Spain after twenty-seven
years’ absence, a changeling and a Spaniard, the restoration of those very
estates was offered to him by Philip II, provided he would continue to pay a
fixed proportion of their rents to the family of his father’s murderer. The
education which Philip William had received, under the king’s auspices, had
however, not entirely destroyed all his human feelings, and he rejected the
proposal with scorn. The estates remained with the Gérard family, and the
patents of nobility which they had received were used to justify their
exemption from certain taxes, until the union of Franche Comté with France,
when a French governor tore the documents in pieces and trampled them
under foot.
William of Orange, at the period of his death, was aged fifty-one years and
sixteen days. He left twelve children. By his first wife, Anne of Egmont, he had
one son, Philip, and one daughter, Mary, afterwards married to Count Hohenlo.
By his second wife, Anna of Saxony, he had one son, the celebrated Maurice of
Nassau, and two daughters, Anna, married afterwards to her cousin, Count
William Louis, and Emilie, who espoused the Pretender of Portugal, Prince
Emanuel. By Charlotte of Bourbon, his third wife, he had six daughters, and by
his fourth, Louisa de Coligny, one son, Frederic William, afterwards stadholder
of the Republic in her most palmy days. The prince was entombed on the third
of August, at Delft, amid the tears of a whole nation. Never was a more
extensive, unaffected, and legitimate sorrow felt at the death of any human
being.
The life and labors of Orange had established the emancipated commonwealth
upon a secure foundation, but his death rendered the union of all the
Netherlands into one republic hopeless. The efforts of the Malcontent nobles,
the religious discord, the consummate ability, both political and military, of
Parma, all combined with the lamentable loss of William the Silent to separate
forever the southern and Catholic provinces from the northern confederacy. So
long as the prince remained alive, he was the Father of the whole country, the
Netherlands—saving only the two Walloon provinces—constituting a whole. Notwithstanding the spirit of faction and the blight of the long civil war, there was at least one country, or the hope of a country, one strong heart, one guiding head, for the patriotic party throughout the land. Philip and Granvelle were right in their estimate of the advantage to be derived from the prince’s death, in believing that an assassin’s hand could achieve more than all the wiles which Spanish or Italian statesmanship could teach, or all the armies which Spain or Italy could muster. The pistol of the insignificant Gérard destroyed the possibility of a united Netherland state, while during the life of William there was union in the policy, unity in the history of the country.

In the following year, Antwerp, hitherto the center around which all the national interests and historical events group themselves, fell before the scientific efforts of Parma. The city which had so long been the freest, as well as the most opulent, capital in Europe, sank forever to the position of a provincial town. With its fall, combined with other circumstances, which it is not necessary to narrate in anticipation, the final separation of the Netherlands was completed. On the other hand, at the death of Orange, whose formal inauguration as sovereign Count had not yet taken place, the states of Holland and Zealand reassumed the sovereignty. The commonwealth which William had liberated forever from Spanish tyranny continued to exist as a great and flourishing republic during more than two centuries, under the successive stadholderates of his sons and descendants.

His life gave existence to an independent country—his death defined its limits. Had he lived twenty years longer, it is probable that the seven provinces would have been seventeen, and that the Spanish title would have been forever extinguished both in Nether Germany and Celtic Gaul. Although there was to be the length of two human generations more of warfare ere Spain acknowledged the new government, yet before the termination of that period the United States had become the first naval power and one of the most considerable commonwealths in the world; while the civil and religious liberty, the political independence of the land, together with the total expulsion of the ancient foreign tyranny from the soil, had been achieved ere the eyes of William were closed. The republic existed, in fact, from the moment of the abjuration in 1581.

The most important features of the polity which thus assumed a prominent organization have been already indicated. There was no revolution, no radical change. The ancient rugged tree of Netherland liberty—with its moss-grown trunk, gnarled branches, and deep-reaching roots—which had been slowly growing for ages, was still full of sap, and was to deposit for centuries longer its annual rings of consolidated and concentric strength. Though lopped of some luxuriant boughs, it was sound at the core, and destined for a still larger life than even in the healthiest moments of its medieval existence.

The history of the rise of the Netherland Republic has been at the same time the biography of William the Silent. This, while it gives unity to the narrative, renders an elaborate description of his character superfluous. That life was a noble Christian epic, inspired with one great purpose from its commencement
to its close, the stream flowing ever from one fountain with expanding fulness,
but retaining all its original purity. A few general observations are all which are
necessary by way of conclusion.

In person, Orange was above the middle height, perfectly well made and
sinewy, but rather spare than stout. His eyes, hair, beard, and complexion
were brown. His head was small, symmetrically shaped, combining the
alertness and compactness characteristic of the soldier, with the capacious
brow furrowed prematurely with the horizontal lines of thought, denoting the
statesman and the sage. His physical appearance was, therefore, in harmony
with his organization, which was of antique model. Of his moral qualities, the
most prominent was his piety. He was more than anything else a religious man.
From his trust in God, he ever derived support and consolation in the darkest
hours. Implicitly relying upon Almighty wisdom and goodness, he looked danger
in the face with a constant smile, and endured incessant labors and trials with
a serenity which seemed more than human. While, however, his soul was full of
piety, it was tolerant of error. Sincerely and deliberately himself a convert to
the Reformed Church, he was ready to extend freedom of worship to Catholics
on the one hand, and to Anabaptists on the other, for no man ever felt more
keenly than he, that the Reformer who becomes in his turn a bigot is doubly
odious.

His firmness was allied to his piety. His constancy in bearing the whole weight
of struggle as unequal as men have ever undertaken, was the theme of
admiration even to his enemies. The rock in the ocean, “tranquil amid raging
billows,” was the favorite emblem by which his friends expressed their sense of
his firmness. From the time when, as a hostage in France, he first discovered
the plan of Philip to plant the Inquisition in the Netherlands, up to the last
moment of his life, he never faltered in his determination to resist that
iniquitous scheme. This resistance was the labor of his life. To exclude the
Inquisition, to maintain the ancient liberties of his country, was the task which
he appointed to himself when a youth of three-and-twenty. Never speaking a
word concerning a heavenly mission, never deluding himself or others with the
usual phraseology of enthusiasts, he accomplished the task, through danger,
amid toils, and with sacrifices such as few men have ever been able to make on
their country’s altar—for the disinterested benevolence of the man was as
prominent as his fortitude.

A prince of high rank and with royal revenues, he stripped himself of station,
wealth, almost at times of the common necessaries of life, and became, in his
country’s cause, nearly a beggar as well as an outlaw. Nor was he forced into
his career by an accidental impulse from which there was no recovery. Retreat
was ever open to him. Not only pardon but advancement was urged upon him
again and again. Officially and privately, directly and circuitously, his
confiscated estates, together with indefinite and boundless favors in addition,
were offered to him on every great occasion. On the arrival of Don John, at the
Breda negotiations, at the Cologne conferences, we have seen how calmly
these offers were waved aside, as if their rejection was so simple that it hardly
required many words for its signification, yet he had mortgaged his estates so
deeply that his heirs hesitated at accepting their inheritance, for fear it should involve them in debt. Ten years after his death, the account between his executors and his brother John amounted to 1,400,000 florins due to the count, secured by various pledges of real and personal property, and it was finally settled upon this basis. He was besides largely indebted to every one of his powerful relatives, so that the payment of the encumbrances upon his estate very nearly justified the fears of his children. While on the one hand, therefore, he poured out these enormous sums like water, and firmly refused a hearing to the tempting offers of the royal government, upon the other hand he proved the disinterested nature of his services by declining, year after year, the sovereignty over the provinces, and by only accepting, in the last days of his life, when refusal had become almost impossible, the limited, constitutional supremacy over that portion of them which now makes the realm of his descendants. He lived and died, not for himself, but for his country. "God pity this poor people!" were his dying words.

His intellectual faculties were various and of the highest order. He had the exact, practical, and combining qualities which make the great commander, and his friends claimed that, in military genius, he was second to no captain in Europe. This was, no doubt, an exaggeration of partial attachment, but it is certain that the Emperor Charles had an exalted opinion of his capacity for the field. His fortification of Philippeville and Charlemont, in the face of the enemy; his passage of the Meuse in Alva’s sight; his unfortunate but well-ordered campaign against that general; his sublime plan of relief, projected and successfully directed at last from his sickbed, for the besieged city of Leyden; will always remain monuments of his practical military skill. Of the soldier’s great virtues—constancy in disaster, devotion to duty, hopefulness in defeat—no man ever possessed a larger share. He arrived, through a series of reverses, at a perfect victory. He planted a free commonwealth under the very battery of the Inquisition, in defiance of the most powerful empire existing. He was therefore a conqueror in the loftiest sense, for he conquered liberty and a national existence for a whole people. The contest was long, and he fell in the struggle, but the victory was to the dead hero, not to the living monarch. It is to be remembered, too, that he always wrought with inferior instruments. His troops were usually mercenaries, who were but too apt to mutiny upon the eve of battle, while he was opposed by the most formidable veterans of Europe, commanded successively by the first captains of the age. That, with no lieutenant of eminent valor or experience, save only his brother Louis, and with none at all after that chieftain’s death, William of Orange should succeed in baffling the efforts of Alva, Requesens, Don John of Austria, and Alexander Farnese—men whose names are among the most brilliant in the military annals of the world—is in itself sufficient evidence of his warlike ability. At the period of his death he had reduced the number of obedient provinces to two, only Artois and Hainault acknowledging Philip, while the other fifteen were in open revolt, the greater part having solemnly forsworn their sovereign.
The supremacy of his political genius was entirely beyond question. He was the first statesman of the age. The quickness of his perception was only equaled by the caution which enabled him to mature the results of his observations. His knowledge of human nature was profound. He governed the passions and sentiments of a great nation as if they had been but the keys and chords of one vast instrument, and his hand rarely failed to evoke harmony even out of the wildest storms. The turbulent city of Ghent, which could obey no other master, which even the haughty Emperor could only crush without controlling, was ever responsive to the master-hand of Orange. His presence scared away Imbize and his bat-like crew, confounded the schemes of John Casimir, frustrated the wiles of Prince Chimay, and while he lived, Ghent was what it ought always to have remained, the bulwark, as it had been the cradle, of popular liberty. After his death it became its tomb.

Ghent, saved thrice by the policy, the eloquence, the self-sacrifices of Orange, fell within three months of his murder into the hands of Parma. The loss of this most important city, followed in the next year by the downfall of Antwerp, sealed the fate of the Southern Netherlands. Had the prince lived, how different might have been the country’s fate! If seven provinces could dilate, in so brief a space, into the powerful commonwealth which the Republic soon became, what might not have been achieved by the united seventeen, a confederacy which would have united the adamantine vigor of the Batavian and Frisian races with the subtler, more delicate, and more graceful national elements in which the genius of the Frank, the Roman, and the Romanized Celt were so intimately blended. As long as the Father of the country lived, such a union was possible. His power of managing men was so unquestionable that there was always a hope, even in the darkest hour, for men felt implicit reliance, as well on his intellectual resources as on his integrity.

This power of dealing with his fellow men he manifested in the various ways in which it has been usually exhibited by statesmen. He possessed a ready eloquence, sometimes impassioned, oftener argumentative, always rational. His influence over his audience was unexampled in the annals of that country or age, yet he never condescended to flatter the people. He never followed the nation, but always led her in the path of duty and of honor, and was much more prone to rebuke the vices than to pander to the passions of his hearers. He never failed to administer ample chastisement to parsimony, to jealousy, to insubordination, to intolerance, to infidelity, wherever it was due, nor feared to confront the states or the people in their most angry hours, and to tell them the truth to their faces. This commanding position he alone could stand upon, for his countrymen knew the generosity which had sacrificed his all for them, the self-denial which had eluded rather than sought political advancement, whether from king or people, and the untiring devotion which had consecrated a whole life to toil and danger in the cause of their emancipation. While, therefore, he was ever ready to rebuke, and always too honest to flatter, he at the same time possessed the eloquence which could convince or persuade. He knew how to reach both the mind and the heart of his hearers. His orations, whether extemporaneous or prepared; his written messages to the states-
general, to the provincial authorities, to the municipal bodies; his private correspondence with men of all ranks, from emperors and kings down to secretaries, and even children—all show an easy flow of language, a fulness of thought, a power of expression rare in that age, a fund of historical allusion, a considerable power of imagination, a warmth of sentiment, a breadth of view, a directness of purpose, a range of qualities, in short, which would in themselves have stamped him as one of the master minds of his century, had there been no other monument to his memory than the remains of his spoken or written eloquence. The bulk of his performances in this department was prodigious. Not even Philip was more industrious in the cabinet. Not even Granvelle held a more facile pen. He wrote and spoke equally well in French German, or Flemish, and he possessed, besides, Spanish, Italian, Latin. The weight of his correspondence alone would have almost sufficed for the common industry of a lifetime, and although many volumes of his speeches and letters have been published, there remain in the various archives of the Netherlands and Germany many documents from his hand which will probably never see the light. If the capacity for unremitting intellectual labor in an honorable cause be the measure of human greatness, few minds could be compared to the "large composition" of this man. The efforts made to destroy the Netherlands by the most laborious and painstaking of tyrants were counteracted by the industry of the most indefatigable of patriots.

Thus his eloquence, oral or written, gave a him almost boundless power over his countrymen. He possessed, also, a rare perception of human character, together with an iron memory which never lost a face, a place, or an event, once seen or known. He read the minds, even the faces, of men, like printed books. No man could overreach him, excepting only those to whom he gave his heart. He might be mistaken where he had confided, never where he had been distrustful or indifferent. He was deceived by Renneberg, by his brother-in-law Van den Berg, by the Duke of Anjou. Had it been possible for his brother Louis or his brother John to have proved false, he might have been deceived by them. He was never outwitted by Philip, or Granvelle, or Don John, or Alexander of Parma. Anna of Saxony was false to him, and entered into correspondence with the royal governors and with the King of Spain; Charlotte of Bourbon or Louisa de Coligny might have done the same had it been possible for their natures also to descend to such depths of guile.

As for the Aerschot’s, the Havré’s, the Chimay’s, he was never influenced either by their blandishments or their plots. He was willing to use them when their interest made them friendly, or to crush them when their intrigues against his policy rendered them dangerous. The adroitness with which he converted their schemes in behalf of Matthias, of Don John, of Anjou, into so many additional weapons for his own cause, can never be too often studied. It is instructive to observe the wiles of the Machiavellian school employed by a master of the craft, to frustrate, not to advance, a knavish purpose. This character, in a great measure, marked his whole policy. He was profoundly skilled in the subtleties of Italian statesmanship, which he had learned as a youth at the Imperial court, and which he employed in his manhood in the
service, not of tyranny, but of liberty. He fought the Inquisition with its own weapons. He dealt with Philip on his own ground. He excavated the earth beneath the king’s feet by a more subtle process than that practiced by the most fraudulent monarch that ever governed the Spanish empire, and Philip, chain-mailed as he was in complicated wiles, was pierced to the quick by a keener policy than his own.

Ten years long the king placed daily his most secret letters in hands which regularly transmitted copies of the correspondence to the Prince of Orange, together with a key to the ciphers and every other illustration which might be required. Thus the secrets of the king were always as well known to Orange as to himself, and the prince being as prompt as Philip was hesitating, the schemes could often be frustrated before their execution had been commenced. The crime of the unfortunate clerk, John de Castillo, was discovered in the autumn of the year 1581, and he was torn to pieces by four horses. Perhaps his treason to the monarch whose bread he was eating, while he received a regular salary from the king’s most determined foe, deserved even this horrible punishment, but casuists must determine how much guilt attaches to the prince for his share in the transaction. This history is not the eulogy of Orange, although, in discussing his character, it is difficult to avoid the monotony of panegyric. Judged by a severe moral standard, it cannot be called virtuous or honorable to suborn treachery or any other crime, even to accomplish a lofty purpose; yet the universal practice of mankind in all ages has tolerated the artifices of war, and no people has ever engaged in a holier or more mortal contest than did the Netherlands in their great struggle with Spain. Orange possessed the rare quality of caution, a characteristic by which he was distinguished from his youth. At fifteen he was the confidential counsellor, as at twenty-one he became the general-in-chief, to the most politic, as well as the most warlike potentate of his age, and if he at times indulged in wiles which modern statesmanship, even while it practices, condemns, he ever held in his hand the clue of an honorable purpose to guide him through the tortuous labyrinth.

It is difficult to find any other characteristic deserving of grave censure, but his enemies have adopted a simpler process. They have been able to find few flaws in his nature, and therefore have denounced it in gross. It is not that his character was here and there defective, but that the eternal jewel was false. The patriotism was counterfeit; the self-abnegation and the generosity were counterfeit. He was governed only by ambition, by a desire of personal advancement. They never attempted to deny his talents, his industry, his vast sacrifices of wealth and station, but they ridiculed the idea that he could have been inspired by any but unworthy motives. God alone knows the heart of man. He alone can unweave the tangled skein of human motives, and detect the hidden springs of human action, but as far as can be judged by a careful observation of undisputed facts, and by a diligent collation of public and private documents, it would seem that no man—not even Washington—has ever been inspired by a purer patriotism. At any rate, the charge of ambition and self-seeking can only be answered by a reference to the whole picture which
these volumes have attempted to portray. The words, the deeds, of the man are there. As much as possible, his inmost soul is revealed in his confidential letters, and he who looks in a right spirit will hardly fail to find what he desires.

Whether originally of a timid temperament or not, he was certainly possessed of perfect courage at last. In siege and battle, in the deadly air of pestilential cities, in the long exhaustion of mind and body which comes from unduly protracted labor and anxiety, amid the countless conspiracies of assassins, he was daily exposed to death in every shape. Within two years, five different attempts against his life had been discovered. Rank and fortune were offered to any malefactor who would compass the murder. He had already been shot through the head, and almost mortally wounded. Under such circumstances even a brave man might have seen a pitfall at every step, a dagger in every hand, and poison in every cup. On the contrary, he was ever cheerful, and hardly took more precaution than usual. "God in his mercy," said he, with unaffected simplicity, "will maintain my innocence and my honor during my life and in future ages. As to my fortune and my life, I have dedicated both, long since, to His service. He will do therewith what pleases Him for His glory and my salvation." Thus his suspicions were not even excited by the ominous face of Gérard, when he first presented himself at the dining room door. The prince laughed off his wife's prophetic apprehension at the sight of his murderer, and was as cheerful as usual to the last.

He possessed, too, that which to the heathen philosopher seemed the greatest good—the sound mind in the sound body. His physical frame was after death found so perfect that a long life might have been in store for him, notwithstanding all which he had endured. The desperate illness of 1574, the frightful gunshot wound inflicted by Jaureguy in 1582, had left no traces. The physicians pronounced that his body presented an aspect of perfect health. His temperament was cheerful. At table, the pleasures of which, in moderation, were his only relaxation, he was always animated and merry, and this jocoseness was partly natural, partly intentional. In the darkest hours of his country's trial, he affected a serenity which he was far from feeling, so that his apparent gaiety at momentous epochs was even censured by dullards, who could not comprehend its philosophy, nor applaud the flippancy of William the Silent.

He went through life bearing the load of a people's sorrows upon his shoulders with a smiling face. Their name was the last word upon his lips, save the simple affirmative, with which the soldier who had been battling for the right all his lifetime, commended his soul in dying "to his great captain, Christ." The people were grateful and affectionate, for they trusted the character of their "Father William," and not all the clouds which calumny could collect ever dimmed to their eyes the radiance of that lofty mind to which they were accustomed, in their darkest calamities, to look for light. As long as he lived, he was the guiding-star of a whole brave nation, and when he died the little children cried in the streets.
End of Part Six